



A review on tenses in Turkish children's narratives between the ages of 3 and 4

Yusuf Polat¹, Mehmet Birgun²

Abstract

In this study, the acquisition of tenses in Turkish-speaking children between the ages of 3 and 4 is examined. Particular attention is given to the anchored tenses in narratives for kids, the connection between the ability to follow a plot structure and the propensity to maintain a dominant tense, and the emergence of the suffixes "-mİş" and "-(I)yor" with age. The study intends to examine the degree to which the relationship between tense and narrative structure is apparent in young children's language use and compare its findings with those of Aksu-Koç (1994) on 3 and 5-year-olds. Data were gathered through elicitation tasks and narrative retellings, and their accuracy and frequency of tense usage were analyzed. According to the findings, the children in this study exhibit tense acquisition patterns that are comparable to those seen in earlier studies, with a preference for present tense and present progressive markers. The study also demonstrates a relationship between narrative structure and tense usage, indicating that children's growing comprehension of narrative coherence may affect how they utilize tense and aspect markers. Last but not least, the results provide some credence to Özcan's (2007) assertion that the use of "-mİş" declines with age while the use of "-(I)yor" rises, however more studies are required to corroborate this pattern. These findings have consequences for how we see the linguistic growth of Turkish-speaking children.

Keywords: Language acquisition, tenses, anchoring tense, Turkish learning

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¹ Dr., Ministry of National Education, Gaziantep / Türkiye, yusufpolat58@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-1927-1965

² Corresponding Author: Dr., Kütahya Health Sciences University, Kütahya / Türkiye, mehmet.birgun@ksbu.edu.tr , ORCID: 0000-0001-6487-3554

Introduction

It is considered that all people have the intrinsic ability to learn the languages they are exposed to from birth. According to Chomsky (1965), this ability is explained by the existence of a "language acquisition device" (LAD), which is innate. The majority of linguists base their explanations of language learning on this widely recognized assumption from the literature.

Infants are said to be noun-biased during the early stages of language learning and learn nouns first, regardless of the society they were born into. Guasti (2004) questions how young children can connect a word with an item, and he presents two theories to address this. The word-to-world mapping technique is one of them, and hypothesis development and testing procedure is the other. Children in the first one make an assumption about the meaning of a word based on the co-occurrence of the word with either its referent or an act of pointing. The second viewpoint asserts that kids match spoken words with what they hear when they hear them.

Verbs are acquired only after nouns and for a while they are the minority in children. Guasti (2004) explains the relative differences between the ages at which nouns and verbs are acquired and the methods by which they are taught. It is said that children go through a vocabulary growth spurt between the ages of 20 and 24 months. They go on to construct longer, more complicated sentences after this vocabulary boom. Guasti (2004) hypothesized that this link could be the evidence that kids have access to syntactic information as a new source of knowledge for learning word meaning.

Verb learning is another challenge in language acquisition. According to Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff (2006), adults as well as children struggle with verb mapping. Guasti (2004) questions how young infants comprehend verb meaning and suggests that the concept of syntactic cueing of verb meaning may provide a solution. In accordance with this view, children interpret verbs by examining the syntactic context in which they are used. According to Guasti (2004), this concept is quite similar to the word-to-world mapping technique used to acquire nouns. Guasti (2004) refers to it as the "sentence-to-world mapping procedure" because of this similarity. Syntactic bootstrapping hypothesis is another theory pertaining to verb acquisition (Guasti, 2004; Göksun, Küntay & Naigles, 2008). This theory holds that kids make use of a verb's grammatical features and use them as a hint to determine what they imply. Turkish children are said to use both syntactic and morphological frames to learn verb tenses, demonstrating that this process is also present in Turkish (Göksun et al., 2008).

Literature Review

According to Küntay and Slobin (1999), "the degree of morphological productivity of Turkish preschool children goes far beyond what has been reported for child speech in Indo-European languages" (p. 156). Additionally, Turkish language morphology is agglutinating and very regular, with only a few deviations to its general principles, according to Aksu-Koç and Slobin (1985). Accordingly, they assert that Turkish children may construct highly elaborate strings of verb affixes even at a young age and that despite being brief and simple, children's utterances are rarely grammatical or incomplete (as reported by Slobin and Aksu, 1982). According to Aksu-Koç, Ögel-Balaban, and Alp (2009), Turkish children begin to learn the fundamental grammatical principles of their language around the age of three. On the other hand, Pinker (1998) observes that even in their third year, children acquiring English as a first language overregularize irregular verbs. Ekmekçi (1982) further points out that verbal inflections are noticeable in a Turkish child's early language development because in Turkish, inflections are typically used to indicate semantic conceptions. Turkish children between the ages of 2 and 3 learn to employ inflections to build present and past phrases relatively freely and without error, according to Aksu-Koç (1994). Similarly, Ekmekçi (1982) asserts that suffixation is the fundamental morphological method in Turkish and that one can create single-word phrases that are most likely articulated by multiple words in other languages.

According to Aksu-Koç and Slobin (1985), "verbal affixes mark voice, negation, modality, aspect, tense, person, and number, with person and number affixes bearing much similarity with nominal suffixes for the same functions" (p. 840). The following affixations are permitted for verbs in

Turkish, according to their report (p. 841): "stem-reflexive-reciprocal-causative-passive-potential-negative-necessitative-tense-conditional-question-person-number."

This method demonstrates how several particles attached to the verb represent various ideas (Aksu-Koç & Slobin, 1985). According to Aksu-Koç (1994), "the Turkish tense-aspect-modality system can be characterized in terms of two main dimensions, one temporal, Past-Nonpast, and one modal, Direct Experience-Indirect Experience" (p. 332). Slobin (2005) says that Turkish has two past tense morphemes that can be used to describe direct or indirect experience. According to Aksu-Koç (1994), one of these two forms must be selected when past occurrences are produced.

It should be emphasized that the suffix *-DI*, which might be read as di-past but is translated as D.PAST, denotes direct experience (Aksu-Koç et al., 2009). On the other hand, the suffix *-mIş* (Aksu-Koç et al., 2009) denotes indirect or nonwitnessed experience and might be interpreted as M.PAST referring to the *-mIş* -PAST (Aksu-Koç, 1994). According to Aksu-Koç et al. (2009), the *-mIş* inflection initially appears a few months after the *-DI* inflection. M.PAST is also the modality of folktales and traditional stories, according to Aksu-Koç (1994) and Aksu-Koç, Ögel-Balaban, and Alp (2009). Some narrators in their frog story research employ this "narrative modality" to talk about the entire story. These suffixes are referred to as evidentiary markers by Aksu-Koç et al. (2009), who claim that they "serve as indicators of the degree to which the speaker's consciousness has been involved in the experience" (p. 15).

The morpheme *-(I)yor* is glossed as progressive and is used as the present tense for both states and processes. Aksu-Koç (1994) analyzes this morpheme under the domain of aspect. According to Aksu-Koç (1994), they gloss *V + -(I)yor* as simply present and shorten it to PRES in their study. The current study makes use of the same acronyms for tenses as Aksu-Koç (1994) employed in their analysis of frog stories. In Aksu-Koç's study from 1994, the following abbreviations are also used to indicate different tenses: PROG- D.PAST ("düş-üyor-du"), PROG-M.PAST ("düş-üyor-muş"), and PERFECT-D.PAST ("düş-müş-tü"), which is used to produce a direct experience past perfect.

In addition, Aksu-Koç et al. (2009) claim that the morpheme *-(I)yor* denotes the speaker's use of linguistic reports from others to get information about a specific circumstance. Additionally, the morpheme *-ecek* is used to denote future tense, and *-(I)r* is used to denote denotic modality (Küntay & Slobin, 1999).

On the other hand, according to Özcan (2007), the age of three is a transitional stage at which time the preferred ending for narratives—*m(I)ş* or *-(I)yor*—has not yet been determined. Tense shifts are not systematic in the lower age groups, but they provide background information as people get older (Aksu-Koç, 1994).

Mean Length of Utterance (MLU) is a frequently used indicator of young children's language development in language development studies. According to Brown (1973, p. 107) it is "the average length of the child's utterances, in morphemes". MLU is derived by dividing the total number of morphemes by the total number of utterances in a child's language sample. MLU has been used in multiple research to evaluate language development in both generally developing children and in children with language disorders and has been shown to be a trustworthy indication of children's language development (Leonard, 2014; Rescorla, Ratner, & Cumenton, 2013).

Anchoring Tense

The basic past, present, and future tenses, known as anchoring tenses, lay the foundation for a language's more intricate tense and aspect systems (Aksu-Koç, 1994; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). They lay the groundwork for children to pick up increasingly complicated verb tenses and tense indicators as their language abilities advance (Slobin, 1991). Because they are frequently used and serve as the basis for other tense and aspect markers, the present tense marker *-(I)r/-Ar* and the past tense marker *-DI* in Turkish, for instance, are sometimes thought of as anchoring tenses (Özcan, 2007). Researchers can learn more about children's general development of the tense and aspect systems in the target language by examining how they pick up these fundamental tense forms (Aksu-Koç, 1994).

As stated by Aksu-Koç (1994), selecting a consistently preferred tense is one criterion for narrative well-formedness. According to Aksu-Koç (1994), this is the tense utilized in at least 75% of the clauses in a narration. Only then can we discuss how well-formed a child's narration is, for example, if she consistently utilizes a particular tense, indicating that it is either an anchor or a dominating tense. Turkish children begin using all three of these inflections between the ages of 2 and 3 years old, according to Aksu-Koç (1994), who claims that in Turkish narratives, either the present, the D.PAST, or the M.PAST might be the anchor tense or the dominating tense. Furthermore, Aksu-Koç (1994) points out that children as young as 3 can utilize all three of these forms, although they are unable to do so with obvious discourse organizing purposes. On the other hand, according to Aksu-Koç (1994), by the age of 5, more than half of the children in their study can maintain a dominant tense and use tense/aspect transitions in a way that is adequate for conversation.

The distribution of Turkish texts from Aksu-Koç (1994)'s narrative story, "frog story," that are grounded in the present, the D.PAST, and the M.PAST is shown in Table 1 by age. However, since the current study primarily focuses on these age groups, only the data for 3- and 5-year-olds are presented here.

Table 1.

Frequency Distribution of Turkish Texts Anchored in PRESENT, D.PAST, and M.PAST, by Age (Aksu-Koç, 1994)

Age Group	Mean Age	Mean No. Clauses	Present	Dominant Tense		
				D.PAST	M.PAST	Mixed
3 yrs	3;11	35	3	-	1	6
5 yrs	5;5	52	4	-	3	3

According to Aksu-Koç's (1994) study, more than half of the 3-year-olds switch between the three tense forms rather than sticking to an anchor tense. PRESENT or M.PAST are preferred by the other 3-year-olds. On the other hand, more 5-year-olds than 3-year-olds keep an anchor tense, and only three of the kids in this age group employ multiple tenses.

Another crucial finding from Aksu-Koç's study from 1994 is that keeping a dominant tense is directly related to one's capacity to follow a narrative structure. According to Aksu-Koç (1994), the narrators who include the main plot in their stories are the ones who utilize an anchor tense.

In similar studies, different narratives are widely used. Ilgaz and Aksu-Koç (2005) define narratives as units of discourse that represent a sequence of temporal-causally related events, and states that narratives are one of the prominent research areas that provide valuable insight to aspects of early cognitive development.

According to Slobin (2005), frog stories are a common category of narratives that were first identified by Michael Bamberg (1987) as a research tool. He claims that the "frog story" has proven to be an incredibly useful tool that has been used in many languages and has contributed to a significant amount of research in the field. The frog story is a valuable resource for studying the chronological or geographical arrangements of events in narratives, according to Brown (2004). Ilgaz and Aksu-Koç (2005) note that narratives are important areas of study that offer insightful information on early cognitive development. Similar to this, Slobin (2005) argues that the frog story's effectiveness comes from its wordless presentation of an easily understandable plot that is sufficiently complicated to for in-depth examination of the temporal, causal, and spatial dimensions of occurrences. A well-known frog story was used in the current investigation as well. As a result, the following are the research questions:

1. To what extent are the findings from this study on 3 and 4-year-olds similar to the findings on 3 and 5-year-olds in Aksu-Koç (1994)'s study in terms of the anchored tenses in Turkish children's narratives?
2. Is the relation between the ability to follow a plot structure and the tendency to maintain a dominant tense evident in the children's narratives?

3. Does the emergence of *-mİş* decrease with increasing age and the emergence of *-(I)yor* increase with increasing age among 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds?

Method

Participants and Materials

There are two groups of participants and two researchers in the study. Both groups consist of 6 children. The first group is 3-year-olds; Cevdet (CEV), Çınar (CIN), Ömer (OME), Furkan (FUR), Oğuz (OGU) and Selçuk (SEL). The second group is 4-year-olds; Elif (ELI), Ahmet (AHM), Samet (SAM), Hasan (HAS), Talha (TAL) and Cahit (CAH). In this study, only the children's utterances are investigated.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether Turkish children at the ages of 3 and 4 maintain an anchor tense in their narratives, to what extent the findings about them are similar to those about 3 and 5 year olds in Aksu-Koç's study, and to what extent this tendency to maintain a dominant tense is related to their ability to follow the plot structure of the narrative. Testing the claim made by Özcan (2007)—according to which the emergence of *-mİş* diminishes with age and the emergence of *-(I)yor* increases—is another objective of this study. The current study also aims to determine whether this notion is corroborated by the 3- and 4-year-old participants.

At the preschoolers' kindergarten, the wordless picture book *Frog, Where Are You?* by Mayer (1969) was used to collect the data. The story's plot involves a little kid and his dog searching for the child's beloved frog after it escapes at the beginning and eventually finding it. The researcher invited each participant to first look at each page of the book after individually introducing the book to each subject in a private room. The researcher instructed the participants to create a tale once they had finished reading the book. The researcher audio-recorded their stories and later had them transcribed. Then, using the discourse analysis method, the occurrences of the tenses they utilized in their tales were qualitatively examined.

Procedure

To explore all instances of tense, aspect, and modality inflections, the data were analyzed. The total number of tense, aspect, and modality inflections for the children was counted separately and calculated to determine the frequency of occurrences for each child. The percentages of the most dominant tense and the other tenses were then compared to obtain data to determine whether the participants use an anchor tense and to determine the degree to which the results from this category are comparable to those from Aksu-Koç's (1994) study on three and five-year-olds. The second research question, whether there is a relationship between the propensity to maintain a dominating tense and the capacity to follow the plot structure, was finally addressed using the collected data.

Data Analysis

Two perspectives were used to analyze the study's data. First, the data were examined to determine whether participants' narratives contained an anchor tense. To determine whether there is a connection between the presence of an anchor tense and the capacity to follow the plot structure, the data were then once again examined. The boy's pet frog escapes, and the boy and his dog search for it before discovering it. This is how the story is structured.

Findings

Anchor Tenses in Children's Narratives

Table 2 summarizes the anchor tenses used in the narratives by the 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds. To answer the first research question, it can be concluded that there is no similarity between the findings from this category and those of Aksu-Koç's study (1994). This result might be related with

the relatively less number of the participants, or any other cognitive factors, which are not intended to address in the current study.

Table 2.

Frequency Distribution of Turkish Texts Anchored in PRESENT, D.PAST, and M.PAST, by Age

Age Group	Mean Age	Mean Clauses	No. Present	Dominant Tense			Mixed
				D.PAST	M.PAST		
3 yrs	3;5	42	-	-	3	3	
4 yrs	4;5	33	-	-	2	4	

In Table 2, the frequency distribution of Turkish Texts anchored in present, M.PAST and D.PAST are displayed. These findings are in accordance with Aksu-Koç's (1994) another finding. She says that in Turkish narratives, either present, or the D.PAST, or the M.PAST is the anchor tense or the dominant tense. In the current study, it reveals that all participants with only one exception used either of these tenses. A 3-year-old, CIN kept using Perfect D.PAST in his narrative more often than any other tense. Despite this, he used D.PAST as the second most frequent tense.

Extract 1. CIN is 3;9.

- *CIN: Aa bir gün, aa çocuk kalkmıştı
(Umm, one day, umm the boy had woken up.)
- *CIN: Köpek de onun yanına gelmişti
(The dog had gone to him.)
- *CIN: Aa, aa çocuk da köpekle kurbağaya baktılar
(Umm, the boy with the dog looked at the frog.)
- *CIN: Çocuk *uraar*-ken kurbağa dışarı çıkmıştı
(While the boy was sleeping, the frog had gone out.)
- *CIN: Ondan son[ra], kurbağa içinde yoktu; gitmişti
(After that, the frog was not in [the jar]; it had left.)
- *CIN: Çocuk da üzgündü aa ve aa yatağa öyle görünüyordu, köpek de ona baktı
(The boy was sad. Umm and umm, to the bed he was appearing so, the dog looked at him too.)
- *CIN: Çocuk bir gün kalktı, köpeğine, köpek de vardı, ona, onun çocuğu baktı
(The boy one day woke up, to his dog, the dog was present too, its/his boy looked at.)
- *CIN: Okula giderken arkadaşları da ona dalga geçmişti
(While he was going to school, his friends made fun to [of] him.)
- *CIN: Bir gün, köpek, çocuk dışarı çıkmıştı ve ağaçlara bakmıştı
(One day, the dog, the boy had gone out and looked at the trees.)
- *CIN: Bir gün çocuk içeri gitmişti
(One day, the boy had gone inside.)

The Relation between the Plot Structure and Anchor Tense

To answer the second and the third research questions the data were analyzed for each participant separately in Table 3.

Table 3.

Total Number of Clauses in Three Main Tenses, the Percentage of the Dominant Tense and the Absence/Presence of a Plot Structure

	3-year-olds						4-year-olds					
	CEV	CIN	OME	FUR	OGU	SEL	ELI	AHM	SAM	HAS	TAL	CAH
# of PRES clauses	-	2	3	1	2	1	15	-	-	6	-	12
# of D.PAST clauses	5	23	-	-	18	28	3	7	-	1	-	-
# of M.PAST clauses	46	-	36	24	1	13	15	28	29	7	32	28
% of the most dominant tense	90	48	86*	96*	60	56	45	68	100*	50	84*	70
Following the Plot structure?	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: Ones with an asterisk symbol (*) used an anchor tense (According to the criteria by Aksu-Koç, 1994) while following the plot structure at the same time.

In Table 3, total number of clauses in three main tenses, the percentage of the dominant tense and the absence/presence of a plot structure are displayed. It was found out that 4 participants from the 3- year-olds and 5 participants from the 4-year-olds were able to follow the plot structure in the story. However, only 2 participants from each group, that is, a total of 4 participants used a dominant tense as they follow a plot structure; that is, a single tense in at least 75 % of their narratives (Aksu-Koç, 1994). In other words, 2 of the 3 participants who used a dominant tense in their narratives from 3-year-olds were able to follow the plot structure while all of the participants (N=2) who used a dominant tense in their narratives from 4-year-olds were able to follow the plot structure of the story. As an answer to the second research question, it might be concluded that the ability to follow a plot structure does not affect the tendency to maintain a dominant tense, however the tendency to maintain a dominant tense affects the ability to follow a plot structure in this context.

The only participant who did not follow the plot structure although he used M.PAST as an anchor tense is CEV, a 3-year-old.

Extract 2. CEV is 3;1.

*CEV: Bi köpek kurbağa içinde kalmış

(A dog has been stuck in a frog.)

*CEV: Bi çocuk kurbağanın içinde bunun içinde kalmış

(A boy is/was in a frog's inside; he has been stuck in it [the frog's.]

*CEV: Ve ona bakmış

(And it/he has looked at it/him.)

*CEV: Ve köpek bunun içinde bakmış

(And the dog has looked at [somewhere/something] inside this.)

*CEV: Bi çocuk uyumuş

(A boy has gone to sleep.)

*CEV: Ve kurbağa bunun içinde kalmış

(And the frog has been trapped/stuck in this.)

*CEV: Çıkmaya çalışıyomuş

(He was trying to climb up/get out.)

*CEV: Bi çocuk uyanmış, köpek de, bi kurbağa kaçmış

(A boy has woken up, the dog too, a frog has escaped)

*CEV: Aa, bunun içinde yok dedi-miş, bi de kaçmış

(Oh, he has-said it is not in this, and it has escaped.)

*CEV: *Havhav* da bunun içine bakmış, kaçmış
(*Havhav* [the dog] as well has looked into this; it has escaped.)

*CEV: Bunun içine ... bakmış
(It has looked into this.)

The last part of his narrative is as follows;

*CEV: Bi çocuk suyun içine bakmış
(A boy has looked into the water.)

*CEV: Ah, bi köpek balığı!
(Oh, a shark!)

*CEV: Bi çocuk ondan, aaa, suya düşmüş.
(A boy from [something/somewhere], oh, has fallen into the water.)

*CEV: Bi su aygırının, geyiğin dişi görünmüş
(A hippo's, a deer's teeth has appeared.)

*CEV: Onlar *mazurda* kalmış
(They got stuck.)

*CEV: Bi bundan, annesine bakmış
(From this, it has looked at its mother.)

*CEV: Ve ailesine *vrr* demiş
(And it has said *vrr* to its family.)

*CEV: Bi sevinmiş
(It cheered up.)

*CEV: saçına benzemiş
(It has looked like [someone or something's] hair.)

As is seen in Extract 2, the subject is unable to follow the plot structure of the story. This might be explained with that he is relatively younger than the other participants; 3;1 years of age.

The Decrease of *-mİş* with Increasing Age and the Increase of *-(I)yor* with Increasing Age

Özcan (2007) claims that the emergence of *-mİş* decreases with increasing age, and the emergence of *-(I)yor* increases with increasing age. The last question of the study addresses to this proposition. To answer the third research question, according to Table 3, it can be concluded that there is an observable increase in the use of *-(I)yor* with age. The present morpheme *-(I)yor* is used 7 times by 5 participants of the six 3-year-olds while it is used 33 times by 4 participants of the six 4-year-olds.

Extract 3. ELI is 4;1.

*ELI: Kurbağa bakıyor
(The frog is looking at [somewhere/something].)

*ELI: Köpek içinden izliyor
(The dog is watching from the inside [of something].)

*ELI: Burda çocuk uyuyor; kurbağa gidiyor; köpek de uyuyor
(Here the boy is sleeping; the frog is leaving; the dog is sleeping.)

*ELI: Köpek çocuğun üstüne çıkmış; duyuyorlar ki kurbağa yok
(The dog has gotten at the top of the boy; they are hearing that the frog is absent.)

*ELI: Ve kurbağa yukarı çıkmış, o da sandalyeden almak istiyor
(And the frog has gotten [risen] up, it wants to get [something] from the chair.)

*ELI: Köpeğin ağzında k... var; çocuk da kurbağa gel diyor
(In the dog's mouth, there is a k...; the boy is saying "frog come!".)

- *ELI: Düştü, köpek
(Has fallen, the dog.)
- *ELI: Kızdı
(It got angry.)
- *ELI: Üzüldü
(It got sad.)
- *ELI: Ağaçlar var tek, bi de arı, burda ayı var, köpek onları yakalıyor
(There are only trees, so is a bee; here is a bear; the dog is catching them.)
- *ELI: Çocuk da karıncalara bakıyor
(The boy is looking at the ants.)
- *ELI: Sincap çıkmış
(A squirrel has exited.)
- *ELI: *Bu*-da arılar var; köpek korkuyor, çocuk ağaca çıkmış, fare de burda
(There are bees in here; the dog is getting scared, the boy has climbed up the tree, the mouse is here too.)
- *ELI: Kuş ona bakıyor çocuğa, köpek koşuyor
(The bird is looking at him, the boy; the dog is running.)
- *ELI: Çocuk dağa tırmanıyor
(The boy is climbing up the mountain.)

This participant has used 15 present and 15 M.PAST clauses. She is the only one with this amount of PRES clauses, and it might be said that a relative increase of *-(I)yor* in 4-year-olds compared to the 3-year-olds is observable in her narrative too.

Table 3 also shows that there is a slight decrease in the emergence of *-mIş* by age with a total of 110 occurrences in 4-year-olds and a total of 120 occurrences in 3-year-olds. However, it can be concluded that this amount of occurrences are not enough to make a conclusion confidently on the decrease of *-mIş* by age.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

The use of narratives is a crucial and effective technique for gathering information regarding young children's early verbal development. The renowned story *Frog, where are you?* by Mayer (1969) served as another inspiration for the current investigation. Three research issues were investigated using the qualitative data from this study.

Turkish verbs with the *-mIş* inflection are said to be in the past tense. According to studies (e.g., Özsoy, 2000; Slobin, 1982), usually developing Turkish-speaking children begin to utilize the *-mIş* inflection at the age of 2;6 (i.e., 2 years and 6 months). Children could make mistakes when utilizing the *-mIş* inflection because it is not easy to learn. Some kids might overgeneralize the *-mIş* inflection and use it inappropriately (for instance, using "gördümüş" instead of "görmüş" for "he saw"), while others might completely omit it (for instance, using "gördü" instead of "gördüm" for "I saw").

Turkish verbs that express the present continuous tense utilize the *-(I)yor* inflection. According to studies (e.g. Aksu-Koç & Slobin, 1986; Özsoy, 2000), typically developing Turkish-speaking youngsters begin to utilize the *-(I)yor* inflection at the age of two and a half and six. However, just like the *-mIş* inflection, learning the *-(I)yor* inflection is not simple, and children may use it incorrectly. For instance, some children might completely ignore the inflection (for example, using "görü" instead of "görüyor" for "he is seeing"), while others might use it improperly (for instance, using "görüyordu" instead of "görüyorum" for "I am seeing").

In general, Turkish children's acquisition of the *-mIş* and *-(I)yor* inflections is a difficult process that involves both mastery of morphological norms and the capacity to use them in the right situations. Although children who are usually developing pick up these inflections at a young age, mistakes can be made when using them, and mistakes can linger even into later stages of language development.

These findings have significant ramifications for clinicians and educators who interact with children who speak Turkish because they emphasize the importance of targeted assessment and intervention to promote the development of these critical linguistic features.

The study found that, in terms of the anchored tenses in Turkish children's narratives, the findings from this study on 3 and 4-year-olds are not comparable to those from Aksu-Koç's (1994) study on 3 and 5-year-olds. The number of people who took part in this study may have an impact on the outcomes. The lack of MLU measures in the current investigation may be another factor contributing to the discrepancy between the outcomes of these two studies. It is possible that this outcome for this research question was caused by relying solely on the participants' physical ages without classifying them according to their MLU levels.

The capacity to follow a narrative structure might not have as big of an impact on the tendency to retain a dominant tense, but it may alter or trigger the tendency to do so. This is another argument made in this study. The study's final finding is that the development of *-(I)yor* grows with age; nevertheless, the data gathered in this study do not seem sufficient to conclusively state that the emergence of *-miş* diminishes with age in the participant target groups referring to understanding the potential of various age groups regarding the use of tenses. Therefore, similar studies can be conducted by taking children's mean length of utterances into consideration.

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