
Evidentiality in Immigrant Turkish Grammars: Retained or lost?

Tugba Karayayla*¹

¹University of Essex – Wivenhoe Park Colchester CO4 3SQ, Royaume-Uni

Résumé

Despite its well-understood psycholinguistic processes and semantics (Aksu-Koc 1988; Ozturk and Papafragou 2008), Turkish evidential system has received attention in bilingual contexts only very recently and been shown to be subject to attrition/incomplete acquisition (Arslan et al 2015a, 2015b). The current study aims to contribute to these pioneering findings by examining the degree of attrition of evidentials with respect to the amount of L1 contact and AoA in two Turkish adult immigrant groups in the UK: post puberty (AoA > 12) and pre-puberty ($7 \leq \text{AoA} \leq 11$) bilinguals.

The comparisons of the free speech data collected from 30 speakers in each bilingual group and a monolingual group indicate that while direct evidentials are robust to effects of AoA and L1 contact, indirect evidentials are subject to attrition. The severity of attrition shows a negative correlation with AoA in the pre-puberty group only, interacting with the amount of L1 contact. We suggest that under contact situations with a language that lacks a counterpart of the property, marked evidentials tend to be replaced by default forms and gradually lose their evidential meaning.

We discuss our findings within the premises of the incomplete acquisition theory and maturational constraints in L1 attrition.

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Mots-Clés: attrition, evidentiality, AoA, L1 contact

*Intervenant