

AVOIDANCE OF PAST PERFECT TENSE BY TURKISH LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

The present research investigated whether Turkish learners of English avoid Past Perfect Tense. This study also examined whether their avoidance, if any, differed according to their proficiency levels (upper-intermediate, intermediate) and test types used (multiple choice test, translation task). Whether the students' performance of using Past Perfect Tense in the translation task could be predicted by their scores in the multiple choice test was another issue investigated in this study. 17 intermediate level preparatory class students and 23 upper-intermediate level 1st grade students at a state university took two different tests. The analysis showed that there was not any significant difference between the test scores of the participants in relation to their proficiency levels. However, participants in both groups got high scores in the multiple choice test while their scores were relatively lower in the translation task. Furthermore, two different regression models suggested that the students' scores in the multiple choice test were not predictive of their scores in the translation task. Therefore, this study offers some pedagogical implications for language teachers to recognize Turkish learners' tendency to avoid using Past Perfect Tense.

Keywords

Avoidance, Past Perfect Tense, Turkish learners of English

INTRODUCTION

Avoidance in Language Learning

The term *avoidance* was first put forward by Schachter (1974) when he claimed that not only the production of language learners but also the target forms that are consistently avoided by the language learners should be examined in order to understand the process of language learning. Laufer (2000) defined avoidance as a strategy learners may resort to in order to overcome a communicative difficulty. To illustrate, in order to express the intended meaning in spoken or written language, learners may choose one form rather than another with which they feel safer. In order to feel secure from errors, learners might use avoidance as a strategy (Brown, 2000; Cook, 1993; Dagut&Laufer, 1985; Dobao, 2002; Faerch& Kasper, 1984). In line with these definitions, Richards et al. (1998) indicated that learners of a second language or foreign language may avoid using a difficult word or structure and use a simpler word or structure.

Laufer (2000) also indicated that learners cannot avoid something they do not know. In line with this argument, Seliger (1989) also pointed out that it is only possible to talk about avoidance when learners know what they are avoiding. Some knowledge of the target language feature is assumed when talking about avoidance in language learning.

There have been several studies which indicated that some forms in English are especially avoided by learners. Specifically, Schachter (1974) found out that Chinese and Japanese learners of L2 English made fewer errors regarding the use of relative clauses than Persian and Arabic learners because they produced fewer relative clauses. He indicated that Chinese and Japanese learners of English tended to avoid using relative clauses. However, this study is criticized because it does not provide any background information about the learners' previous knowledge of the target item. As already indicated by Seliger (1989) and Laufer (2000), when talking about avoidance of a linguistic form, some previous knowledge of that form is assumed.

Several studies focused on the avoidance of phrasal verbs in English. To illustrate, Dagut and Laufer (1985) looked at the performance of Israeli learners of English on PVs. Their results showed that most of the learners avoided using phrasal verbs and they preferred one-word verbs. They claimed that avoidance of the learners could only be related to L1 and L2 differences. However, Liayo and Fukuya (2002) criticized this study indicating that avoidance was much more frequent in the category of figurative phrasal verbs than in the case

of literal or complete ones. Therefore, they drew attention to an intralingual element in the avoidance behavior. In other words, they suggested that this avoidance of phrasal verbs by Israeli learners of English might be because of the inherent difficulty of English. In another study, Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) investigated the avoidance of phrasal verbs by Dutch learners. They hypothesized that Dutch learners would avoid using phrasal verbs because of semantic reasons. However, the results showed that Dutch learners did not avoid using phrasal verbs. In addition, the results did not change whether the students were at the intermediate or advanced level.

Laufer and Eliasson (1993) also looked at the avoidance of phrasal verbs. They found out that learners avoided phrasal verbs if their L1 lacked such a grammatical category (Hebrew). However, learners did not avoid phrasal verbs if their L1 had the same category (Swedish). Therefore, Laufer and Eliasson (1993) concluded that avoidance might be best predicted by L1 and L2 difference. While the similarities between two languages might make language learning process easier, the differences may be one of the reasons for avoidance of certain structures.

Moreover, Liayo and Fukuya (2002) tried to investigate the avoidance of phrasal verbs by Chinese learners of English who do not have the target language form in their native language. They found that intermediate Chinese learners of English avoid using phrasal verbs and preferred their one-word equivalents. In addition, both intermediate and advanced learners tended to produce less figurative phrasal verbs than literal ones. These results might also be related to both L1 and L2 difference and intralingual factors since the learners especially avoided producing figurative phrasal verbs.

Sara and Mohammadreza (2013) also investigated the avoidance of phrasal verbs in English by Persian EFL learners. Their results showed that both advanced and intermediate level learners avoided using phrasal verbs. They also indicated that learners mostly avoided using figurative phrasal verbs than literal ones. However, there was not any relationship between participants' avoidance and test types.

Although there have been several studies on the avoidance of some specific structures in English, there has not been any study focusing specifically on the avoidance of Past Perfect Tense by Turkish learners of English.

Classification of Avoidance

Seliger (1989) indicated that identification and classification of avoidance is not an easy task. Kellerman (1992) also pointed out that avoidance is a complex issue and identified three types of avoidance. In the first one, learners are aware that there is a problem with their production and they have at least some ideas about the target form. He also pointed out that being aware of the problem is the minimum condition for avoidance. In the second type, learners know the target form but they are not able to use it since they find it difficult. Concerning the third type of avoidance, learners know the target form but they are unwilling to use it in order not to flout their norms of behavior. Kellerman (1992) indicated that in all of these circumstances, L1 could not be the only factor for avoidance and there must be other factors involved.

Reasons for Avoidance

Traditionally, avoidance has been associated with cross linguistic difference (Kleinmann 1977, 1978; Levenston 1971; Schachter 1974). However, some studies also suggested that the similarity between L1 and L2 might also be a reason for avoidance (Jordens 1977; Kellerman 1978, 1986). These views were also supported by Laufer and Eliasson (1993) and they identified three reasons for avoidance (1) cross linguistic difference, (2) cross linguistic similarity and (3) intrinsic complexity of second language features. Considering the reasons of avoidance, Kamimoto et. al. (1992) indicated that L1 form, distribution and function of the specific linguistic feature might account for learners' avoidance behavior.

Rationale of the Present Research and Hypotheses

The present research had three purposes. Firstly, it investigated whether Turkish learners of English avoid using Past Perfect Tense. Secondly, whether the students' avoidance of Past Perfect Tense differ according to their proficiency levels (upper intermediate and intermediate) was investigated. Thirdly, it also examined whether the students' avoidance of Past Perfect tense differed according to two different test types (multiple

choice test and translation task). The last purpose of the present research was to find out whether it was possible to predict the students' performance of using Past Perfect Tense in the translation task based on their scores in the multiple choice test. It is expected that learners' avoidance will differ according to their proficiency level and the test type. Since the nature of the tests are different, results of multiple choice test are not expected to be predictive of the students' performance in the translation task. Students are expected to avoid Past Perfect Tense more in the translation task. There are four research questions for the present study:

- 1) Do Turkish learners of English avoid Past Perfect Tense?
- 2) Does their avoidance, if any, differ according to their proficiency level?
- 3) Does their avoidance, if any, differ according to the test type?
- 4) Do learners' results of the multiple choice test consisting of questions related to past perfect tense predict their performance of using past perfect tense on translation task?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

There were two groups of participants in this study. The first group consisted of 17 intermediate level preparatory class students at a state university. Their department was English Language Teaching. In the second group, there were 23 upper-intermediate level 1st grade students. Their department was also English Language Teaching. Their ages range between 18 and 26. The mean for their age is 19.05 and standard deviation is 1.93.

Instruments for Data Collection

For this study, two different test types, a multiple choice test and a translation task, were used in order to collect the relevant data.

Multiple Choice Test

Seliger (1989) pointed out that it only makes sense to talk about avoidance if the learners know what they are avoiding. Therefore, a multiple choice test was used in order to make sure that the learners know the target form that they are avoiding. In this test, there were 25 questions and 10 of them were related to Past Perfect Tense. The questions were mixed in order for the students not to notice the actual purpose of the test. The test was distributed to the students in the class and they were expected to complete it in 20 minutes.

Translation Task

The other test type used in the present study was a translation task. In this task, there were 11 Turkish sentences and the students were required to translate them into English in 30 minutes. For 5 sentences in the translation task, the students were expected to use Past Perfect Tense. These five sentences which include Past Perfect Tense are provided below:

Sentence 1: İlkokul, ortaokul ve liseyi bu küçük kasabada okuduktan sonra üniversite eğitimim için Ankara'ya gittim.

Sentence 2: Üniversiteden mezun olduğumda gördüm ki ülkemizdeki çalışma koşulları eskiye nazaran çok değişmişti.

Sentence 3: Bu yüzden mezun olduktan sonra yüksek lisans ve doktora eğitimi için Amerika'ya gittim.

Sentence 4: Daha önce Amerika'da hiç bulunmadığım için özellikle ilk aylarda bazı sorumlularım oldu.

Sentence 5: Eğitimi tamamlayıp memleketime döndüğümde eski dostlarımla beni çoktan unuttuklarını gördüm.

RESULTS

Multiple choice test was graded out of 25 and the results of the questions related to Past Perfect Tense were evaluated separately out of 10. Then the translation task was evaluated out of 5 since there were 5 sentences for which the students were expected to use Past Perfect Tense. Even if they had some errors related to mechanics in the translation task, they were regarded as correct if they used Past Perfect Tense. For each group, the sentences including Past Perfect Tense were analyzed one by one. For each sentence, the number of the tenses used for translating the sentences which required the usage of Past Perfect Tense was calculated. Following the analysis of the sentences, two different regression models were used in order to find out whether the students' scores in multiple choice test (only the questions related to Past Perfect Tense) predicted their performance of using Past Perfect Tense in the translation task. As can be seen in Table 1, regarding the first group, the mean score for the multiple choice test concerning 10 questions related to Past Perfect Tense was 8.17 out of 10 and it was 1.5 out of 5 for the translation task.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics For the First Group

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
StudentID	17	1,00	17,00	9,0000	5,04975
MCAI1	17	9,00	21,00	16,8235	4,24611
MCPASTPERFECT	17	4,00	10,00	8,1765	1,81091
TRANSLATION	17	,00	5,00	1,5882	1,58346

Table 2 shows the results of multiple choice test and translation task for the second group. As displayed in the table, the mean score for the multiple choice test was 8.13 and it was 1.5 for the translation task. There was not any significant difference between the test scores of the groups in both of the tests. Based on these results, it is possible to conclude that there was an obvious avoidance of Past Perfect Tense by the students in the translation task. Concerning the second research question, it might be concluded that the students' avoidance of Past Perfect Tense did not differ based on their proficiency level. However, regarding the third research question, although the students got high scores in the multiple choice test concerning the questions related to Past Perfect Tense, their scores in the translation task were not as high as their scores in the multiple choice test. Therefore, it might be possible to conclude that the students' avoidance differed according to the test type used.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics For the Second Group

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
StudentID	23	1,00	23,00	12,0000	6,78233
MCAI1	23	14,00	22,00	18,2609	2,26068
MCPASTPERFECT	23	4,00	10,00	8,1304	1,74002
TRANSLATION	23	,00	3,00	1,5217	,99405

Following the descriptive statistics for test scores of each group, the students' translations of the sentences which required the use of Past Perfect Tense are analyzed in the following section.

Analysis of the Sentences for the First Group

Tenses Used for Sentence 1 in the First Group

As can be seen in Table 3, for the first sentence, the most commonly used tense was Past Simple Tense followed by Past Perfect Tense. One of the students did not translate this sentence and one of them used Present Simple Tense.

Table 3: Tenses Used for S1 in the First Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	10	58,8	58,8	58,8
	Present Simple	1	5,9	5,9	64,7
	Past Perfect	5	29,4	29,4	94,1
	No Translation	1	5,9	5,9	100,0
	Total	17	100,0	100,0	

For each tense, some of the examples of the students' translation are provided below:

S1: I went to Ankara for my university education after I **graduated** my primary, secondary and high school in this small town.

S6: After I **graduate** school in that small city, I go to Ankara for educate.

S9: After I **had studied** primary school and high school there I went to Ankara for my high-education.

As can be seen in the examples, Student 1 used Past Simple Tense, Student 6 used Simple Present Tense and Student 9 used Past Perfect for translating this sentence. Moreover, the students had also some grammatical mistakes in their translations.

Tenses Used for Sentence 2 in the First Group

Table 4 displays the frequency of the tenses used for the second sentence in the first group. As can be seen in the table, the students mostly preferred using Past Simple Tense for this sentence and it was followed by Past Perfect Tense, as was the case for the first sentence. There are two students who used Present Simple Tense and one student who used Present Perfect Tense for this sentence.

Table 4: Tenses Used for S2 in the First Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	9	52,9	52,9	52,9
	Present Perfect	1	5,9	5,9	58,8
	Present Simple	2	11,8	11,8	70,6
	Past Perfect	3	17,6	17,6	88,2
	No Translation	2	11,8	11,8	100,0
	Total	17	100,0	100,0	

As can be seen in the following examples, Student 3 used Past Simple Tense, Student 1 used Present Perfect Tense, Student 6 used Simple Present Tense and Student 13 used Past Perfect Tense for this sentence.

S3: When I **graduated** from university, I saw that work situations changed so much according to past.

S1: When I graduated my study, I saw that the work rules **have changed** compare the past.

S6: When I graduate university, I see that in my country work places **change** than other years.

S13: When I graduated from university, I saw that the condition work of our country **had been** more different than past.

As can be seen in the last example, S13 changed the actual verb of the sentence. As was the case with the first sentence, some grammatical mistakes in the students' production might be observed.

Tenses Used for Sentence 3 in the First Group

The tenses used for sentence 3 in the first group are displayed in Table 5. Similar to the previous sentences, the students mostly used Past Simple Tense followed by Past Perfect Tense. 5 students avoided translating this sentence and 1 student used Present Simple Tense.

Table 5: Tenses Used for S3 in the First Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	6	35,3	35,3	35,3
	Present Simple	1	5,9	5,9	41,2
	Past Perfect	5	29,4	29,4	70,6
	No Translation	5	29,4	29,4	100,0
	Total	17	100,0	100,0	

The following sentences are some of the examples for each tense used by the students. Student 5 used Past Simple Tense, student 6 used Present Simple Tense and student 8 used Past Perfect Tense for translating this sentence.

S5: So I went to America for studying Master's degree and doctorate after I **graduated**.

S6: I go to America for master's degree and doctorate after I **graduate** university.

S8: So I went to America for master's degree and doctorate after I **had graduated**.

Tenses Used for Sentence 4 in the First Group

Different from the previous sentences, as can be seen in Table 6, most of the students used Past Perfect Tense for translating sentence 4. It was followed by Present Perfect Tense. The number of the students who used Past Simple Tense and who did not translate this sentence was equal.

Table 6: Tenses Used for S4 in the First Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	3	17,6	17,6	17,6
	Present Perfect	4	23,5	23,5	41,2
	Past Perfect	7	41,2	41,2	82,4
	No Translation	3	17,6	17,6	100,0
	Total	17	100,0	100,0	

Below are examples for the students' use of Past Simple, Present Perfect and Past Perfect Tense for sentence 4.

S15: Because I **was not** in America before, I had some problems in first months.

S1: At the beginning, I had some problems because I **have never been** in America before.

S4: I encountered some problems because I **had never been** in America before.

Tenses Used for Sentence 5 in the First Group

Regarding the last sentence, similar to the previous one, most of the students used Past Perfect Tense in their translation as displayed in Table 7. Past Simple Tense was the second most common tense used by the students.

Table 7: Tenses Used for S5 in the First Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	5	29,4	29,4	29,4
	Present Perfect	2	11,8	11,8	41,2
	Present Simple	1	5,9	5,9	47,1
	Past Perfect	7	41,2	41,2	88,2
	No Translation	2	11,8	11,8	100,0
	Total	17	100,0	100,0	

For each tense, examples of the students' translation are provided below. For instance, Student 5 used Past Simple Tense for this sentence. However, she did not translate the word “*çoktan*”. Student 6 used Present Simple Tense and as can be seen in his translation, he did not translate the word “*ama*” and wrote it in Turkish. Student 1 used Present Perfect Tense and Student 3 used Past Perfect Tense for translating this sentence.

S5: When I turned back my hometown after I completed my education, I saw that my old friends **forgot** me.

S1: When I returned to my home after I completed my education I saw that my old friends **have already forgotten** me.

S6: When I finished my education I come back my hometown, ama I see that my old friends **forget** me.

S3: Completing my education, when I came back, I saw that my old friends **had already forgotten** me.

All in all, regarding the first group, it might be concluded that for the first three sentences, they mostly used Past Simple Tense. However, for the last two sentences in the translation task, the most commonly used tense was Past Perfect Tense.

Analysis of the Sentences for the Second Group

Tenses Used for Sentence 1 in the Second Group

The tenses used for the first sentence in the second group might be seen in Table 8. Similar to the first group, the students mostly used Past Simple Tense for translating this sentence. It was followed by Past Perfect Tense. Moreover, different from the first group, as can be seen in Table 8, in this group, 3 students used V+ing instead of complete sentences.

Table 8: Tenses Used for S1 in the Second Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	14	60,9	60,9	60,9
	Present Perfect	1	4,3	4,3	65,2
	Past Perfect	5	21,7	21,7	87,0
	Ving	3	13,0	13,0	100,0
	Total	23	100,0	100,0	

Below are some of the examples of the students' translation for the first sentence. Student 8 was the only person who used Present Perfect Tense for the first sentence and Student 15 was one of the students who used V+ing instead of a complete sentence. Student 1 used Past Simple Tense and Student 2 used Past Perfect Tense for translating this sentence.

S1: After I **studied** primary school, middle school and university, I went to Ankara in order to study university.

S8: After I **have studied** primary, secondary and high school in a little town, I went to Ankara for my university.

S2: After I **had studied** in primary school, elementary school and high school in this small town, I went to Ankara for my education.

S15: After **studying** primary, secondary and high school in that small town, I went to Ankara for my education of university.

Tenses Used for Sentence 2 in the Second Group

Table 9 shows the results for the tenses used for the second sentence. As can be seen in the table, most of the students used Past Simple Tense for this sentence which was the case with the first group. It was followed by Present Perfect Tense. There was one student who used Present Simple Tense for this sentence.

Table 9: Tenses Used for S2 in the Second Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	12	52,2	52,2	52,2
	Present Perfect	6	26,1	26,1	78,3
	Present Simple	1	4,3	4,3	82,6
	Past Perfect	4	17,4	17,4	100,0
	Total	23	100,0	100,0	

Some of the students' sentences for each tense might be seen in the following examples. When translating the sentences, some students changed the words in the actual sentence. For instance, S2 changed the actual verb of the original sentence and used "to be" instead of "change".

S1: When I graduated at university, I figure out the working criter of the country **changed** radically.

S2: When I graduated the university, I saw that working conditions **are** very different from the old ones.

S9: When I graduated from the university, I saw that study opportunities **have changed** greatly according to old years.

S3: When I graduated from the university, I realized that the working opportunity **had all changed**.

Tenses Used for Sentence 3 in the Second Group

All of the tenses used for translating sentence 3 were also analyzed. As can be seen in Table 10, in line with the first group, the students mostly used Past Simple Tense for this sentence. The second most common structure was V+ing which was not used by the students in the first group. It was followed by Past Perfect Tense and several students did not translate this sentence.

Table 10: Tenses Used for S3 in the Second Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	11	47,8	47,8	47,8
	Past Perfect	4	17,4	17,4	65,2
	No Translation	3	13,0	13,0	78,3
	Ving	5	21,7	21,7	100,0
	Total	23	100,0	100,0	

Some example sentences might be seen in the following examples. Student 3 used Past Simple Tense and Student 5 used Past Perfect Tense. Student 4 was one of the students who use V+ing for this sentence.

S3: For this reason, after I **graduated** from the university I went to America for master's degree and for my doctorate.

S5: So, after I **had graduated** from university, I went to America for master's degree and doctorate.

S4: So, after **graduating** I went to America for Master's degree and Doctorate.

Tenses Used for Sentence 4 in the Second Group

As for sentence 4, similar to the results of the first group, most of the students used Past Perfect Tense for translating this sentence. Present Perfect Tense was the second most common tense. There was one student who used Past Simple Tense and one student who did not translate this sentence.

Table 11: Tenses Used for S4 in the Second Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	1	4,3	4,3	4,3
	Present Perfect	10	43,5	43,5	47,8
	Past Perfect	11	47,8	47,8	95,7
	No Translation	1	4,3	4,3	100,0
	Total	23	100,0	100,0	

For Past Simple Tense, Present Perfect Tense and Past Perfect Tense, some sentences of the students' translations might be seen in the following examples. As can be seen in the examples, some of the students had some grammatical errors in their translation. Student 23 used Past Simple Tense and he was the only student who used Past Simple Tense for this sentence. Student 6 used Present Perfect Tense and Student 7 used Past Perfect Tense, which was the most commonly used tense for this sentence.

S23: Because I never **came** to the States before, I experienced some issues especially in my first months.

S6: Especially, I had some problem in the first times because I **have never been** in America.

S7: I had some problems in the first months because I **hadn't been** to America before.

Tenses Used for Sentence 5 in the Second Group

As displayed in Table 12, in alignment with the results of the first group, the most common tense used by the students was Past Perfect Tense followed by Past Simple Tense. One of the students avoided translating this sentence.

Table 12: Tenses Used for S5 in the Second Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Past Simple	7	30,4	30,4	30,4
	Present Perfect	4	17,4	17,4	47,8
	Past Perfect	11	47,8	47,8	95,7
	No Translation	1	4,3	4,3	100,0
	Total	23	100,0	100,0	

Sentences for Past Simple, Present Perfect and Past Perfect Tense might be seen in the following examples respectively.

S14: When I turned back my hometown, after I finished my education, I saw that my old friends already **forgot** me.

S19: When I returned my country after I had finished my education, I saw that my old friends **have already forgotten** me.

S15: When I completed my education and turned back my hometown, I realized that my old friends **had already forgotten** me.

To summarize, concerning the second group, in alignment with the results of the first group, it might be concluded that for the first three sentences, they mostly used Past Simple Tense. However, for the last two sentences in the translation task, the most commonly used tense was Past Perfect Tense.

Regression Models

For the last research question of the present study, two different regression models were used in order to find out whether the students' scores in multiple choice test (only including the questions related to Past Perfect Tense) could predict their performances in the translation task. The first model was for intermediate level students and the second model was for the upper-intermediate level students.

As displayed in Table 13, there was not any statistically significant correlation between the students' scores in the multiple choice test and their scores in the translation task ($p > .05$).

Table 13: Correlations for the First Group

		TRANSLATIONC	MCPASTPERFECTC
Pearson Correlation	TRANSLATIONC	1,000	,354
	MCPASTPERFECTC	,354	1,000
Sig. (1-tailed)	TRANSLATIONC	.	,082
	MCPASTPERFECTC	,082	.
N	TRANSLATIONC	17	17
	MCPASTPERFECTC	17	17

Regression analysis showed that multiple choice test results could account for 12.5% of the variance in the translation test scores as displayed in Table 14. Moreover, the change created by this model was not statistically significant ($p > .05$).

Table 14: Regression Model for the First Group

Model	R	R Square	Change Statistics				
			R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,354 ^a	,125	,125	2,147	1	15	,163

Another regression model was used for the second group. As was the case with the first group, the correlation between the multiple choice test scores and translation task was not statistically significant ($p > .05$).

Table 15: Correlations for the Second Group

		TRANSLATIONElt	MCPASTPERFECTElt
Pearson Correlation	TRANSLATIONElt	1,000	,222
	MCPASTPERFECTElt	,222	1,000
Sig. (1-tailed)	TRANSLATIONElt	.	,155
	MCPASTPERFECTElt	,155	.
N	TRANSLATIONElt	23	23
	MCPASTPERFECTElt	23	23

As can be seen in Table 16, multiple choice test scores could account for 4.9% of the variance in the translation task. In addition, the change created by this model was not statistically significant ($p > .05$).

Table 16: Regression Model for the Second Group

Model	R	R Square	Change Statistics				
			R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,222 ^a	,049	,049	1,085	1	21	,309

These analyses suggested that the scores of the multiple choice test were not predictive of the scores of the translation task. In other words, even though the students know the target form, their competence did not result in performance in the translation task.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the avoidance of Past Perfect Tense in relation to two different proficiency levels and also two different test types. Firstly, the results of this study indicate that Turkish learners tend to avoid Past Perfect Tense especially in production activities. Although the participants in this study got high scores in the multiple choice test, they had relatively lower scores in the translation task. The reason might be the difference in the nature of the tests. Multiple choice tests are more related to competence while the translation tasks require production and performance. The results also provide some evidence that competence does not always result in performance.

Secondly, the results suggest that there was not any significant difference between the scores of the upper intermediate and intermediate level students in the multiple choice test and translation task. However, this might also result from the fact that there was not much difference between the proficiency levels which are intermediate and upper intermediate. This might be regarded as one of the limitations of the study. Different results might be obtained if this study is replicated with more different proficiency levels such as intermediate level and advanced level learners.

Concerning the last research question, the analyses show that the results of the multiple choice test were not predictive of the results of the translation task. As already indicated it is difficult to make predictions for the students' performance in translation task based on their scores in the multiple choice test.

The sentences which required the use of Past Perfect Tense were analyzed one by one. For both groups, the most commonly used tense for the first three sentences was Past Simple Tense while for the last two sentences, it was Past Perfect Tense. One of the possible reasons for these results might be the fact that in the last two sentences, two time markers which are commonly associated with perfect tenses were used. The first time marker used in the third sentence is "hiç" which means "never" in English and the second time marker used in the last sentence is "çoktan" which is "already" in English. These words are mostly used in sentences with perfect tenses. Therefore, they might have acted like clues for the students. On the other hand, there was not any separate time markers in the first three sentences except for "sonra" which is "after" in English. One possible reason for the students' confusion regarding the first three sentences might be related to the similarity between Past Perfect Tense and Past Simple Tense. In some sentences where there is not a long period between two actions which happened consecutively, both of the tenses are regarded as acceptable. However, if there is a clear time period between two events or actions, Past Perfect Tense is regarded as more appropriate.

Considering the translation task, an interesting difference between two proficiency levels was observed when the students in the upper-intermediate level group used V+ing for Past Perfect Tense. This structure was not observed in the sentences of the intermediate level students. Since this was only peculiar to the upper-intermediate level students, one possible explanation might be the participants' proficiency level. Upper-intermediate level students might have tried different structures in their translation rather than using only complete sentences.

These suggestions, however, depend on whether or not the present results will be backed up by future studies. One of the limitations of the study is that it was conducted with two proficiency levels which are similar to each other. Therefore, in order to conclude that avoidance of Past Perfect Tense does not differ in different proficiency levels, further studies including different levels of proficiency are needed. In addition, as a pedagogical implication, this study emphasizes the tendency of Turkish learners to avoid using Past Perfect Tense and calls teachers' attention to this issue. More emphasis and practice of Past Perfect Tense might be included in the syllabus prepared for English courses.

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