



L2 metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners

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Abstract

The present study investigates the relationship between L2 metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners studying at a large scale Turkish university. Metalinguistic knowledge refers to the ability to correct a grammatically incorrect structure in English and explain why it is incorrect, and identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences. It is assessed using the two-section Metalinguistic Knowledge Test (MKT) designed by the researcher. L2 achievement, on the other hand, refers to the participants' L2 knowledge at a specific level and is operationalized as the ability to repeat language elements that have been taught and mastered. It is assessed using the mid-term exam that consists of grammar, vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking and writing sub-tests. Results of the MKT indicate that L2 metalinguistic knowledge is weak among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners. In addition to this, a correlation analysis and a series of bivariate and multiple regression analyses reveal that L2 metalinguistic knowledge significantly contributes to L2 writing achievement explaining 19.9% of the variance in participants' writing exam scores. The findings of the present study are discussed within the light of the previous research. Additionally, considering that metalinguistic knowledge benefits second language acquisition (SLA), some implications are suggested accordingly.

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Keywords: Second language acquisition; metalinguistic knowledge; L2 proficiency; EFL learners

1. Introduction

Since the emergence of communicative approach to teaching and learning a second language (L2), communicative activities have come into prominence to enhance learners' fluency (Renou, 2001). Communicative language teaching, where the emphasis is on meaning as opposed to form or grammar, has enabled language learners to use the modern foreign language but de-emphasized accuracy and metalanguage (Alderson & Steel, 1994). Therefore, explicit L2 instruction has been glossed over (Gutierrez, 2013). In this sense, it is essential to consider the differences between learning one's mother tongue and learning a second language. For one, it is well known that we learn our mother

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tongue without an awareness or knowledge about grammar (Renou, 2001). However, in learning a second language, linguistic accuracy is interrupted unless emphasis is placed on language form (Renou, 2001). Additionally, certain types of knowledge and skills in a second language may be difficult to obtain through untutored learning and thus require instruction (Gutierrez, 2013). Consequently, communicative language teaching has been criticized recently for neglecting attention to forms of language, and SLA research has begun to underscore the developmental value of “enhanced noticing” and “consciousness raising” in L2, paving the way for the language awareness movement to develop (Carter, 2003). Language awareness, also known as “knowledge about language”, refers to “the consciousness of and sensitivity to the forms and functions of language” (Carter, 2003:64). Although initial research in language awareness has shown findings on its behalf, some factors have been densely researched, such as “the role of metalanguage in learners’ responses and whether metalinguistic knowledge can enhance or hinder language development” (Carter, 2003:65). Of these limited number of research studies, some found weak or no correlation between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 proficiency, while some others found positive correlations between the two. After all, the results are inconclusive and thus it is not clear how metalinguistic knowledge contributes to SLA. Therefore, further research is needed on the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 proficiency in order to gain better and clearer insights into the role of metalinguistic knowledge in SLA development.

With regard to why it is necessary to gain better and clearer insights into the role of metalinguistic knowledge in SLA development, Berry (2005) points out that knowledge and use of metalanguage is likely to make the development of an L2 learner’s metalinguistic awareness, which in turn is likely to foster second language development. Additionally, Zipke (2007) states that bilinguals’ better ability to understand an unknown language compared to monolinguals may be attributed mostly to their greater metalinguistic awareness. Moreover, studies investigating learner strategies and good language learners reveal the benefits of metalinguistic skills such as treating language as a system and paying attention to form (Siegel, 2005). Furthermore, some SLA researchers note usefulness of explicit L2 knowledge (R.Ellis, 1994; R. Ellis, 2009, & N. Ellis, 2011). To exemplify, explicit L2 knowledge may make learners’ establishment of links between form and meaning faster and thus facilitates L2 acquisition. It may also provide saliency for certain grammar features, which is likely to enable learners to notice them. In addition to this, explicit L2 knowledge may contribute to linguistic problem solving where implicit knowledge is insufficient. It may help L2 learners to produce the target language consciously as well, which may turn into implicit learning through practice.

1.1. Theoretical Background

1.1.1. Instructed SLA

Adult second language acquisition (SLA) is difficult, varied and often poor in terms of outcome (Doughty, 2003). Second language (L2) instruction aims at solving, or at least ameliorating, these problems. However, the issue of instructed second language acquisition has been contentious among SLA researchers (Doughty, 2003). At one end of the continuum, there is the non-interventionist position by Long and Robinson (1998). According to the non-interventionist position, SLA is driven by the Universal Grammar (UG), and is entirely incidental just like first language acquisition. The claim that SLA is driven by the UG is also contentious. According to the full-transfer, full-access hypothesis (Schwartz, 1993), for instance, both first and second language acquisition heavily rely on positive evidence (input), and there is no role for negative evidence (instruction). For some others (White, 1987; 1991), on the other hand, “negative evidence that is provided by instruction is also necessary, but the need for instruction is limited to cases where the triggering evidence is not informative enough”. In other words, from the UG perspective, instruction is either required too rarely

or considered totally unnecessary. When it comes to the claim that SLA is incidental just like first language acquisition, according to the Input Hypothesis within the Monitor Theory by Krashen (1982, 1985), traditional instructional devices such as grammar teaching, linguistic grading and error correction are proscribed because of the non-interface between learned and acquired knowledge. In other words, rich and comprehensible input is crucial for acquisition, whereas L2 instruction might provide learning only. However, considering that learning cannot become acquisition, L2 instruction is unnecessary.

Doughty (2003) states that both versions of the non-interventionist position, namely, no-negative-evidence and non-interface, are too extreme. Additionally, child language acquisition and adult SLA differ in the cognitive processes they involve, and thus adult SLA is likely to be more difficult, slower and less successful without instruction (Doughty, 2003). So, at the other end of the continuum, there is the necessity of L2 instruction in the classroom. However, this is not free from debate, either. In this sense, Doughty and Williams (1998) point out that the crucial question is what would make the most effective and efficient instructional plan considering the normal constraints of SLA in the classroom. As for the overall effectiveness of L2 instruction, Long (1983), having reviewed a handful of empirical studies, stated that L2 learners are likely to benefit from instruction if they are exposed to L2 input only in the classroom. Long (1988) expanded his study with regard to the effectiveness of L2 instruction within four operationalized domains of SLA, namely SLA processes, SLA route, SLA rate and level of ultimate SL attainment. A review of the studies investigating SLA processes such as transfer, generalization, elaboration, stabilization, destabilization, noticing, omission and oversuppliance, revealed that although both instructed and untutored learners follow similar paths in SLA, the processes they observe vary. For example, Pica (1983) found that although morphemes emerge in more or less the same order for both instructed and untutored learners, untutored learners tend to omit obligatory morphemes at lower proficiency levels, while instructed learners tend to oversupply them, which is attributed to the role of instruction. With regard to SLA route and SLA rate, it was found that developmental sequences such as the acquisition of negation, interrogatives, relativization and word order, are affected by instruction although the stages are not skipped and the whole route cannot be changed (Pienemann, 1989). In addition to this, the rate of instructed SLA is faster than the rate of untutored SLA (Doughty, 2003). The studies investigating the final domain of SLA, namely the ultimate attainment in the L2, pointed out that instruction enables learners to make more progress towards L2. To exemplify, research has shown that if learners are exposed to marked aspects of L2 via instruction, they can acquire unmarked aspects as well (Doughty, 1988; Eckman, Bell, and Nelson, 1988; Gass, 1982). However, untutored L2 learners may never gain access to marked input and can acquire only the unmarked aspects of L2 (Pavesi, 1986). In sum, these studies contributed to the assumption that L2 instruction is effective.

Apart from the overall effectiveness of L2 instruction, another equally important issue is the relative effectiveness of different types and categories of the instruction. In this sense, the main questions are whether explicit or implicit instruction is better, and to what extent and how learner attention should be focused on the elements of the second language (Doughty, 2003). Prior to defining explicit and implicit instruction, it is first necessary to make a distinction between direct and indirect instruction. Direct instruction is specifying what is learnt beforehand, whereas indirect instruction is creating conditions in which learners can learn experientially through learning how to communicate in L2 (Ellis, 2005). Explicit instruction includes direct intervention, while implicit instruction includes indirect intervention. Explicit approach to instruction refers to explaining rules to learners, or helping learners find rules by drawing their attention to forms. Implicit approach to instruction, on the other hand, indicates making no overt reference to rules or forms. Directing learners' attention to language forms may be in isolation, during meaning processing (explicit instruction) or not at all (implicit

instruction), which can be better understood by the tripartite distinction among, focus on form, forms and meaning. Long (1991) notes that focus-on-form refers to “overtly drawing students’ attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication.” (p.46) Doughty and Williams (1998) point out that “a focus on form entails a focus on formal elements of language, whereas focus on formS is limited to such a focus, and focus on meaning excludes it.” (p.4) Based on this distinction, Doughty and Williams (1998) list a number of differences between form-focused instruction and forms-focused instruction in SLA. To begin with, “form” refers to the general language form, whereas “forms” refers to isolated, specific language forms. Second, in focus-on-form instruction, learners engage in meaning before they explore some linguistic features, and there is an occasional shift of attention to form, whereas in focus-on-forms instruction, the focus is primarily on linguistic features. Moreover, focus-on-form instruction depends on perceived problems in comprehension or production; however, focus-on-form instruction is pre-selected in the syllabus. Finally, focus-on-form is an analytic approach to SLA, in which linguistic features are explored in contexts, whereas focus-on-forms is a synthetic approach to SLA, in which forms are taught in isolation.

Doughty and Williams (1998) signifies that focus-on-form requires presence of form and meaning at the same time so that learners’ attention could be drawn to the linguistic elements of the language in order to get the meaning across, which may be one of the reasons why it is preferred over focus-on-forms and focus-on-meaning alone. Additionally, research studies conducted in immersion programs in Canada have shown that L2 learners are not able to attain target-like levels of some linguistic features if classroom second language learning focuses merely on meaning. Moreover, some kind of pedagogical intervention is necessary for some aspects of the language that learners cannot notice on their own (Doughty, 2003). Furthermore, classroom SLA is limited, which can be overcome with help of pedagogical interventions embedded in communicative activities. Therefore, recently, SLA practitioners have been more interested in focus-on-form approaches that merge formal instruction into communicative language use. There are a variety of research issues on focus-on-form instruction such as whether or not to focus on form, timing for focus on form, contextual factors affecting focus on form, proactive versus reactive focus on form, what forms to focus on, the degree of explicitness, curricular decision and cognitive underpinings on focus on form (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Doughty, 2001; Long & Robinson, 1998). Ways of focusing on form include conscious reflection, noticing the gap, hypothesis formulation and testing, meta-talk, recasting, visual input enhancement such as utilizing italics, bolding, enlargement, underlining, coloring. Additionally, Gass and Selinker (2008) maintain that metalinguistic training in focusing on form is likely to enable learners to be sensitive to grammatical form as well rather than to lexical form only.

1.1.2. Explicit and Implicit Knowledge

Prior to defining explicit and implicit knowledge, it is first necessary to make a distinction between explicit/implicit knowledge and explicit/implicit learning (Han & Ellis, 1998). Schmidt (1994) states that explicit/implicit learning indicates the learning process, whereas explicit/implicit knowledge refers to what learners obtain at the end of the learning process, or the innate knowledge that is not learned at all (as cited in Han & Ellis, 1998). When it comes to the difference between explicit and implicit L2 knowledge, the latter is simply “knowledge of language” (Han & Ellis, 1998:5). Implicit L2 behavior is evident in language behavior, and cannot be accessed independently of this behavior (Bialystok, 1990). Mathews et al. (1989) maintain that implicit knowledge is memory-based rather than rule-based. Reber (1989), however, claims that implicit knowledge may be rule-based to some extent depending on Berko (1958), who reveals that child language learners are able to apply rules that they have internalized to new languages (as cited in Han & Ellis, 1998).

Explicit knowledge, on the other hand, is simply “knowledge about the L2” (Han & Ellis, 1998:5). Han and Ellis (1998) break down explicit knowledge into analyzed knowledge and metalanguage. Analyzed knowledge is the knowledge about the L2 items and structures of which learners are not fully conscious, whereas metalanguage is the language used to describe or analyze the language of which learners are fully conscious. VanPatten and Benati (2010) state that declarative knowledge is sometimes used as a synonym for explicit knowledge. Declarative knowledge is defined as some kind of conscious awareness of the rules and the skill of verbalizing what is known.

The two factors that distinguish implicit L2 knowledge from explicit L2 knowledge are accessibility and awareness (Han & Ellis, 1998). Implicit knowledge is easily accessed in tasks that require fluent language performance, is unanalyzed and thus held without awareness. Explicit knowledge, however, is not easily accessed without controlled effort and thus is employed in tasks requiring careful planning and monitoring. In addition to this, explicit knowledge is analyzed and model-based and consequently held consciously. Furthermore, explicit knowledge may involve metalingual knowledge, which is addressed below along with its counterpart, metalinguistic knowledge.

1.1.3. Metalingual and Metalinguistic Knowledge

The term ‘metalingual’ is used as the adjective of ‘metalanguage’ although there is controversy over the uses of the terms ‘metalingual’ and ‘metalinguistic’. Prior to dealing with this controversy, it is first necessary to define the term ‘metalanguage’. Having been the property of Linguistics, Philosophy, Logic and Semantics for long, the term ‘metalanguage’ is currently found increasingly in the Applied Linguistics literature (Berry, 2005). It is used with reference to such issues as the language use of language teachers, language of pedagogic grammars and the relationship between language awareness and language learners’ proficiency. Berry (2005) provides a list of definitions of metalanguage, according to which metalanguage is a language that is used to talk about, discuss, describe or make statements about a language. It may be used to talk about another language as well. In addition to these definitions, Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language (1996), a non-specialist source, describes metalanguage as “any language or symbolic system used to discuss, describe or analyze another language or symbolic system.” (as cited in Berry, 2005:5)

In this respect, ‘metalingual’ is the knowledge or awareness of ‘metalanguage’ (Ellis, 1994; Berry, 2005). Additionally, Dakowska (1993) and Ellis (1994) use the term ‘metalingual’ for the knowledge and awareness of language, too. Berry (2005), however, uses the term ‘metalinguistic’ for the knowledge and awareness of language. Gutierrez (2012) makes a distinction between metalinguistic knowledge and metalingual knowledge noting that metalinguistic knowledge is the explicit knowledge of the language. In this sense, metalinguistic knowledge and explicit knowledge are used interchangeably (Alderson, Clapham & Steel, 1997; Elder, 2009; Hu, 2002; Roehr, 2008, as cited in Gutierrez, 2012). Gutierrez (2012) further states that metalinguistic knowledge is measured through identification of speech parts, identification and correction of errors and verbalization of rules. Metalingual knowledge, on the other hand, is the knowledge of metalinguistic terminology or the knowledge of metalanguage. Considering this, metalingual knowledge can be measured checking whether learners use metalanguage in identifying and correcting errors.

Roehr (2007) points out “that metalinguistic knowledge has been operationalized as learners’ ability to correct, describe and explain L2 errors” (p.172). Metalinguistic awareness, on the other hand, is the conscious knowledge of the formal aspects of the language, specifically grammar (Renou, 2001). Some SLA researchers claim that metalinguistic awareness sheds light on the developing L2 competence (Arthur, 1980; Gass, 1994; Masny, 1991, as cited in Renou, 2001). Considering that

metalinguistic awareness is often measured using grammaticality judgment tests and error correction and justification tasks, Kellerman (1986) and Sharwood Smith's (1988) claim that learners' ability to judge whether a sentence is grammatically correct or not shows their competence also supports the role of metalinguistic awareness in L2 competence (as cited in Renou, 2001). Moreover, Germain and Seguin (1995) maintain that metalinguistic awareness, operationalized as knowledge about grammar, is essential for a number of reasons. First of all, knowledge about grammar is important because L2 learners are required to sit a variety of language exams that are based on explicit knowledge such as placement tests and proficiency exams. Second, metalinguistic awareness helps L2 learners better understand input. Third, knowledge about language enhances L2 learners' motivation and reduces stress with regard to learning a L2. Furthermore, Andrew (2004) signifies that metalinguistic awareness, which is the awareness of the language itself, its structures and functions, enables the speakers of a language to think about and use that language consciously. Similarly, Kuile and Weldhuis (2010) state that metalinguistic awareness is likely to provide learners of a L2 with the ability to discuss different ways of using that language. Lack of metalinguistic awareness, on the other hand, may result in difficulty in comprehending the structure of a language (Swain & Lapkin, 1995).

1.1.4. Metalinguistic Knowledge/Awareness in L2 Learning

Research on the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge/awareness and L2 proficiency dates back to Alderson and Steel (1994), in which a battery of tests of metalinguistic knowledge, language aptitude, grammatical accuracy in French and French linguistic proficiency were constructed and the relations amongst these measures were explored with a view to establishing levels of metalinguistic knowledge in first-year students of French at a British university. The tests were all found appropriate and reliable. Besides, moderate correlations were found between metalinguistic knowledge and French grammatical accuracy, and metalinguistic knowledge and language aptitude. However, proficiency in French reading did not correlate with either aptitude or metalinguistic knowledge, but correlated with French grammatical accuracy only moderately. These preliminary findings indicate that metalinguistic knowledge makes almost no contribution to L2 proficiency. Subsequently, Alderson, Clapham and Steel (1997) administered the battery to first-year students of French in six more British universities this time. As a result, the relationship metalinguistic knowledge and language proficiency was reported to be weak. They note that there is no evidence to support the belief that students with the highest metalinguistic knowledge will perform better at French, or develop their French at a high rate than others. Similarly, Yeşilyurt (2005) investigated the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and foreign language proficiency of 43 Turkish EFL learners majoring in English Language Teaching (ELT). No relationship was found between the participants' metalinguistic knowledge and their proficiencies the reading, language structure and writing tests. The correlation coefficient between the participants' metalinguistic knowledge and the means of the scores of the proficiency test given to them was found to be moderate. However, it was reported that because the listening test was the only test that affected the means so speaking of a significant evidence for the role of metalinguistic knowledge in foreign language proficiency would not be very realistic.

On the other hand, there have been some other studies that found significant relationships between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 proficiency. Renou (2000), for instance, explored metalinguistic awareness among advanced-level French second language learners and its relationship to certain aspects of L2 proficiency (listening, reading, vocabulary and grammar). In addition to this, the role of communicative and grammar approaches, error types, and mode of presentation, namely oral and written, in metalinguistic awareness was also examined. It was found that the participants who had been exposed to grammar approach were better at correcting the grammar rules and providing the rule in the judgment test created to assess metalinguistic awareness. Moreover, certain items (adjective

errors, verb errors and pronoun errors) were more difficult depending on the mode of presentation. Lastly, there was a significant correlation between the judgment tests and the proficiency test, which indicates that metalinguistic awareness may have a role in L2 proficiency. Renou (2001) reinvestigated the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 proficiency of university level-French second language learners. This study also sought an answer to the relationship between metalinguistic awareness and L2 proficiency when learners have been exposed to different learning approaches, namely communicative approach and grammar approach. The data were collected using a grammaticality judgment test (both oral and written), in which the participants were asked to identify and correct the error and provide the rule that the correction entailed, a French proficiency test and a questionnaire providing information about the learning approaches that the participants had been exposed to. As a result, a moderate significant correlation was found between both oral and written versions of the judgment test and French proficiency for the entire sample. However, the correlation was non-significant for the participants who had been exposed to communicative approach, whereas it remained significant and even increased in the case of the participants who had been exposed to grammar approach. In other words, increases in metalinguistic awareness are associated with increases in proficiency once learners have been exposed to explicit grammar instruction; however, indicating that metalinguistic awareness may be only one of the factors influencing L2 development along with many others. In a different L2 environment, Elder and Manwaring (2004) also investigated the role of metalinguistic knowledge in learning a foreign language among Chinese second language learners. For this purpose, the study sought answers to 1) what intermediate-level learners of Chinese know about the grammar of the Chinese language, 2) whether their different experiences with regard to learning a foreign language are associated with different levels of grammatical knowledge, and 3) whether there is a relationship between their L2 grammar knowledge and their Chinese proficiency. The data were collected using a Chinese metalinguistic assessment, designed by the researcher based on Alderson et al. (1997), and Chinese achievement tests. The Chinese metalinguistic assessment consisted of two sections, in which the participants were asked to match metalinguistic terms of parts of speech to the relevant items in sentences in Chinese, and correct the error in a number of Chinese sentences, formulate the rule and use appropriate metalinguistic terminology. Results reveal that L2 metalinguistic knowledge is low among Chinese second language learners. However, surprisingly, the participants who had studied L2 for a shorter term performed better in grammatical knowledge. With regard to the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 performance, the relationship was stronger for the late-starters than the participants who had studied L2 for a longer time, indicating that late-starters are more reliant on grammatical knowledge for L2 success. In another L2 context, Roehr (2007) carried out an investigation to find out the relationship between L2 proficiency and L2 metalinguistic knowledge among advanced university-level English learners of German. The secondary aim of the current study is to look into the relationship between the ability to correct, describe and explain L2 errors and language-analytic ability, which refers to the ability to identify the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences. The data were collected employing a proficiency test, consisting of gap-filling and multiple-choice test items, and a metalinguistic test. The metalinguistic test also consisted of two sections. The first section assessed the participants' ability to correct, describe and explain L2 errors, whereas the second section assessed the participants' ability to identify the grammatical of parts of speech in L2 sentences. Consequently, a strong positive correlation was found between L2 proficiency and metalinguistic knowledge. Another important finding of the current study is that the ability to correct, describe and explain L2 errors and the ability to identify the grammatical of parts of speech in L2 sentences may be the components of the same complex construct: metalinguistic awareness. A very recent related study, Alipour (2014), looked into the issue among university-level Iranian EFL learners. Similar to the previous studies, the metalinguistic knowledge test assessed learners' ability to correct, describe and explain L2 errors

embedded in L2 sentences. L2 proficiency, operationalized as L2 grammar, on the other hand, was assessed using a cloze-test. As a result of a bivariate regression analysis, a moderate significant relationship was found between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 proficiency among Iranian EFL learners. Another recent study, Tokunaga (2014), investigated 1) what metalinguistic features can be recognized by low-intermediate level Japanese university students, and 2) the correlation between their English proficiency and metalinguistic knowledge. The participants had difficulty identifying basic parts of speech and parts of sentences, which suggests that many of them lack the metalinguistic knowledge. In addition to this, significant correlations were found between the participants' proficiency test scores and metalinguistic knowledge, with the strongest correlation being between reading scores and metalinguistic knowledge.

Still some other researchers have looked into the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and metalingual knowledge as well. Hu (2011), for one, focused on the relationship between L2 learners' metalinguistic and metalingual knowledge. Result revealed that the participants possessed a great deal of metalinguistic knowledge and used a large amount of metalingual terms in the rule-verbalization task. For another, Gutierrez (2013) examined the development of metalinguistic and metalingual knowledge among university-level learners of Spanish, and the relationship between these two types of knowledge and L2 proficiency. Unlike Hu (2011), results revealed that the participants showed limited metalinguistic and metalingual knowledge. It was also found that metalinguistic and metalingual knowledge correlated with written L2 proficiency but not with oral L2 proficiency.

The relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and some language-related variables other than L2 proficiency has also been examined. To illustrate, Hu (2002) explored the psychological factors that influence access to metalinguistic knowledge in L2 production. Results revealed that there are major psychological constraints on the use of metalinguistic knowledge in L2 performance. First, prototypicality contributes to grammatical accuracy. In other words, L2 learners are likely to show more grammatical accuracy for more prototypical target uses. Moreover, attention to form also predicts greater grammatical accuracy. Furthermore, there is a significant relationship between prototypicality and attention to form, which underscores the influence of processing automaticity. Roehr and Ganem-Gutierrez (2009) investigated the relationship among L2 metalinguistic knowledge, language learning aptitude and working memory for language among university-level English learners of German and Spanish. Findings indicate that cumulative years of study of other foreign languages and years of formal L2 study significantly predicted metalinguistic knowledge along with the fourth and the fifth section of Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT), namely words in sentences and paired associates. Working memory, however, did not contribute to metalinguistic knowledge. This study is significant in the sense that it supports the claim that the development of metalinguistic knowledge is influenced by external variables such as exposure to formal L2 study as well as learner-internal individual differences.

1.2. Research questions

The primary purpose of the current study is to find out the nature of metalinguistic knowledge that intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners have developed, and to examine the relationship between their metalinguistic knowledge and L2 (English) achievement. For this purpose, the current study seeks answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of metalinguistic knowledge that intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners have developed?
2. What is the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners?

2. Method

2.1. Participants

Convenience sampling was used to select the participants of the present study. A total of 38 intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners attending a large scale Turkish university were randomly chosen to participate in the present study. The participants were studying at two A-level classes, corresponding to intermediate level in Global Scale of English (GSE), according to which this university determines learners' proficiency level. The participants had been learning English for almost ten years and reported having been exposed to mostly explicit grammar instruction throughout those years. They were all native speakers of Turkish, and learned Turkish grammar formally in classroom as well.

2.2. Instruments

For the purpose of the present study, a metalinguistic knowledge test (MKT) was developed by the researcher within the light of the previous research (Roehr, 2007; Tokunaga, 2014). MKT consists of two sections, namely MKT-I and MKT-II. MKT-I consists of 15 items and assesses learners' ability to correct a grammatically incorrect structure in L2 (English) and define and explain why it is incorrect. For the accomplishment of MKT-I, the participants were asked to correct an underlined word or phrase embedded in an L2 sentence, and describe the error or explain why the underlined part is grammatically incorrect. The grammar subjects covered in this section of the test include question forms (2 items), modals/modal like expressions (3 items), relative clauses (2 items), tenses (3 items), if-clauses (2 items), countable-uncountable nouns/articles (2 items) and comparative/superlative (1 item). MKT-II consists of 15 items and assesses learners' ability to identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences. For the accomplishment of MKT-II, the participants were provided with 15 sentence pairs, in the first of which there is an underlined word whose part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb and preposition) the participants were asked to write next to the sentence. In the second sentence of each pair, there were four underlined words, and the participants were asked to circle the one which has the same part of speech with the underlined word in the first sentence. There were three items for each part of speech used in this test. A practice item was provided for each section of the test. The sentences were in English, whereas the instructions were all in Turkish. As for the error description/explanation in MKT-I, the participants were allowed to use either L1 (Turkish) or L2 (English).

To ensure the reliability and validity of the MKT, three experienced English instructors, who were teaching at A-level and working at testing unit at AUSFL, were asked for their opinion, and accordingly necessary amendments were made. Subsequently, the test was piloted with ten intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners sharing similar characteristics with the actual participants of the present study.

With regard to scoring of MKT-I, the participants who both correct the error and describe/explain it receive 2 points, whereas those who correct the error but partially describe/explain it receive 1 point. It is worth noting that correcting the error but not describing/explaining it reflect 0 since the ability to describe a L2 error or explain why a L2 structure is grammatically incorrect is an essential part of metalinguistic knowledge/awareness. As for MKT-II, the participants who both explicitly state the part of speech of the underlined word in the first sentence and choose the word that has the same part of speech with the underlined word in the first sentence receive 2 points, whereas the participants who either state the part of speech of the underlined word in the first sentence or choose the word that has the same part of speech with the underlined word in the first sentence receive 1 point.

The participants' L2 achievement, referring to their L2 knowledge at some level level, on the other hand, was determined depending on their scores from the first mid-term exam that the university administered. This exam consists of three sections. The first section is a multiple-choice test on reading, listening, vocabulary and grammar, which makes up 60 percent of learner's overall mid-term score. The second section, making up 20 percent of learners' overall mid-term score, is a writing exam, in which students are required to write a well-organized essay on one of the two given topics. Finally, the third section is a speaking exam, in which learners orally answer two sets of individual questions, and discuss a topic in pairs. All of the questions are parallel to the learning outcomes of A level (intermediate) according to GSE. It is worth mentioning that each of the writing and speaking exams are evaluated by two raters and the average of their grades make a student's final score for each exam.

2.3. Data collection procedures

The present study was conducted in the spring semester of 2015-2016 year. First, the mid-term exam was administered in the ninth week of the semester. Two weeks later, in the eleventh week of the semester, MKT was administered to the participants. The participants completed MKT at their own pace with the presence of the researcher. Prior to the administration of the test, the participants were informed about the purpose of the study, told that they would not be graded doing this test, and warned not to cheat.

2.4. Data analysis

Quantitative data collected by means of the Metalinguistic Knowledge Test (MKT), designed by the researcher, and AUSFL mid-term exam were computed in SPSS version 20. In order to answer the first research question, which is about the nature of metalinguistic knowledge developed by intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners, the participants' scores from the MKT were analyzed employing descriptive statistics. In addition to this overall analysis, the participants' scores from two separate sections of the MKT were compared using paired samples t-test so as to detect whether the participants differ in their abilities to correct and describe/explain an incorrect L2 item, and to identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences. In order to answer the second research question, which is about the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficients were calculated. To gain better insights into the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement, a series of bivariate and multiple regression analyses were carried out for further analysis.

3. Results

Regarding the first research question, which is about the nature of metalinguistic knowledge developed by intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners, descriptive statistics reveals that intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners participating in the present study have moderate metalinguistic knowledge, indicating that they have moderate ability to correct a grammatically incorrect L2 structure and explain why it is incorrect, and to identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences. As the first row of Table 1 below shows, the minimum and maximum scores are 17 and 90 respectively, whereas the mean score is 63.89 for the overall metalinguistic knowledge test (MKT). In addition to this, half of the participants (n=19, 50%) fall into the interquartile range (Q2) in terms of their MKT scores. With regard to the other half of the

participants, 10 of them (26.3%) fall into the first quartile (Q1), namely the lower achievers, whereas 9 participants (23.7%) fall into the third quartile (Q3), namely the high achievers.

Table 1. MKT: Descriptive Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
MKT	17	90	63.89	18.71
MKT-I	13	90	53.50	22.45
MKT-II	13	100	73.63	19.37

With regard to the sections of the MKT, the second and third rows of Table 1 above reveals that the participants' mean score for the first section of the metalinguistic test ($M=53.50$, $SD=22.45$) is lower than that of the second section ($M=73.63$, $SD=19.37$). This finding may indicate that intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners participating in the present study performed better in one type of metalinguistic ability than another. In order to verify this assumption, a paired samples t-test was carried out on the participants' scores from MKT-I ($M=53.50$, $SD=22.45$) and MKT-II ($M=73.63$, $SD=19.37$). A statistically significant difference was found between MKT-I and MKT-II among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners participating in the present study $t(37)=-6.665$, $p<0.01$. This means that intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners are better at identifying and explicitly stating the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences than correcting a grammatically incorrect L2 structure and explaining why it is incorrect.

Regarding the second research question, which is about the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners, results of the correlation analysis, as shown in Table 2 below, indicate that there is not a statistically significant difference between MKT and overall L2 achievement, assessed using the mid-term exam, among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners participating in the present study, $r=.093$. Subsections of the MKT do not correlate with overall L2 achievement, either, $r=.158$ and $r=-.011$ respectively. This indicates that there is not a significant relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners participating in the present study.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

	Mida	Mid-Ib	Mid-IIc	Mid-IIId
MKT	.093	.019	.016	.446**
MKT-I	.158	.103	.063	.403*
MKT-II	-.011	-.087	-.041	.383*

a: Overall mid-term score

b: Listening, reading, vocabulary, grammar

c: Speaking

d: Writing

*: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

However, there are statistically significant correlations between the participants' overall MKT scores as well as their scores from the sub-sections of the MKT and writing sub-test of the mid-term exam. As Table 2 above shows, there is a significant moderate correlation between MKT and writing exam, $r=.446$. Additionally, both sections of the MKT significantly moderately correlate with the

writing exam, $r=.403$ and $r=.383$ respectively. This finding indicates that there is a significant correlation between metalinguistic knowledge and writing achievement. In other words, learners' ability to correct, describe/explain an incorrect L2 item; identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences may contribute to their ability to write a well-developed essay in L2 on a given topic. With the purpose of (dis)confirming this potential contribution of metalinguistic knowledge to L2 writing, a bivariate regression analysis was computed with the dependent and independent variables being writing exam and MKT respectively.

As a result of the regression analysis, metalinguistic knowledge significantly explains the 19.9 % of the variance in writing achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners, $p<.01$. Considering that the two subsections of the MKT assess different aspects of metalinguistic knowledge, two more bivariate regression analyses were carried out in order to find out independent contributions each section makes to writing achievement. Results reveal that MKT-I, namely the ability to correct, describe/explain an incorrect L2 item, significantly explains 16.2% of the variance in writing achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners, whereas MKT-II, namely the ability to identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences, explains 14.7 % of the variance in writing achievement. Moreover, a further multiple regression analysis with the independent variables being MKT-II and MKT-I respectively, reveals that MKT-I, the ability to correct, describe/explain an incorrect L2 item, makes a unique 4.5% contribution to writing achievement above and beyond MKT-II, the ability to identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences. These findings indicate that two different aspects of metalinguistic knowledge predict writing achievement with the ability to correct, describe/explain an incorrect L2 item playing a more crucial role.

4. Discussion

As far as the participants' performance on the metalinguistic knowledge test (MKT) is concerned, the results reveal that intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners participating in the current study are able to correct a grammatically incorrect L2 structure as well as explaining why it is incorrect, and identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences to a moderate extent (RQ1). However, metalinguistic knowledge test (MKT) utilized in the current study assesses only the basics of English grammar knowledge in accordance with the curriculum and the course book used at intermediate-level at a large scale Turkish university. In other words, all of the items in MKT cover the grammar topics the participants had already been taught by the time of the current study, and the sentences were grammatically at their level. Despite this, they performed relatively lower. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to state that the explicit metalinguistic understanding of intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners is weak. In this respect, the current study is in keeping with the previous research (Alderson et al, 1997; Elder & Manwaring, 2004). The explanation might be first that the participants are not used to verbalizing what they know with regard to grammar rules in English. This is reasonable because the participants' grammar knowledge has been assessed using mostly multiple-choice tests so far. When it comes to the cases where grammar knowledge is assessed through learners' production as part of writing or speaking exams, they just produce the language that they believe is correct without any rule verbalization. This was probably the first time that they were formally asked to verbalize what they know with regard to grammar rules in English; therefore, they may have not reflected their explicit metalinguistic understanding well enough. Second, the participants of the present study may not be knowledgeable enough in metalanguage of English, which will be further discussed below. Third, their lack of metalinguistic and metalingual knowledge related to their L1 may have a negative influence on their L2 metalinguistic knowledge. This explanation, for

sure, requires further research, which will investigate L1 metalinguistic and metalingual knowledge, and its relationship with L2 metalinguistic and metalingual knowledge as well as L2 proficiency. However, the participants' off-the-record comments on the MKT, indicating that they cannot perform well at such a test even in their native language, and the researcher's observations as a teacher at the research site suggest that it sounds reasonable, too.

The MKT assessed two different aspects of metalinguistic knowledge, namely the ability to correct a grammatically incorrect L2 structure as well as explaining why it is incorrect, and the ability to identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences. The participants of the current study differed in their performance with respect to different aspects of metalinguistic knowledge. The participants' significantly better performance at the second section of the MKT, assessing their ability to identify and explicitly state the grammatical role of parts of speech in L2 sentences, makes no surprise since it depends heavily on recognition of parts of speech, and requires only a bit of production (namely writing the part of speech of an underlined word next to it). Nevertheless, there are still those students who cannot label the appropriate part of speech of a word although they can recognize the word in the second sentence with the same part of speech of the underlined word in the first sentence. This also supports that metalinguistic knowledge is low among Turkish EFL learners.

When it comes to the first section of the MKT, assessing Turkish EFL learners' ability to correct a grammatically incorrect L2 structure and explain why it is incorrect, their performance would have been far better if correction only had received full score. In other words, almost all of the participants were good at correcting the L2 error, but had difficulty describing the error or explaining why it is incorrect. Therefore, it would be plausible to maintain that for Turkish EFL learners, the ability to correct erroneous sentences may not always go hand in hand with the ability to explain the rule that has been violated in those sentences. This finding also corresponds with Alderson et al. (1997) and Elder and Manwaring (2004). Additionally, in order to gain better insights into the participants' metalinguistic knowledge, it is necessary to consider how they attempted to describe or explain the error. A further examination of the participants' description or explanation of the L2 errors reveal that they are in fact not knowledgeable enough in English metalanguage. They either just corrected the rule and avoided describing the error or explaining why it is grammatically incorrect, or provided a very brief and superficial explanation for the error. In their explanations, majority of the participants used very common terminology such as subject, verb, modal, passive and tense, and mentioned such suffixes as -ed and -ing. Higher achievers mentioned more terms such as auxiliary verb, uncountable noun, relative clause, article, conditional, infinitive, comparative. The participants who scored the lowest, on the other hand, did not use even very basic terms such as uncountable and definite/indefinite article. It is also evident that the participants misuse some terminology. For example, they labeled *to infinitive* as *preposition* and *relative pronouns* as *connectors* considering that they are used to combine two sentences. To illustrate:

Participant 28: "We cannot use preposition to between 'should' and the main verb."

(MKT-I, Item-9)

"We should use the connector 'whose' in this sentence because the sentence is about his brother."

(MKT-I, Item-10)

A further examination of the participants' description or explanation of the L2 errors, as described above, indicates the role of the relationship between L2 metalingual knowledge and metalinguistic knowledge on L2 achievement. In other words, the relatively lower performance of the participants on the metalinguistic knowledge test in the present study may be attributed to the lack of their metalingual knowledge rather than the lack of their metalinguistic knowledge alone.

With respect to the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners (RQ2), statistical analysis reveals that metalinguistic knowledge, assessed using a test based on error correction, rule verbalization and recognition of parts of speech, does not significantly correlate with grammar knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, reading achievement and speaking achievement at all. Writing achievement, however, is significantly correlated with metalinguistic knowledge at a moderate strength. In this sense, the findings of the present study are somehow intriguing. On one hand, the present study seems to be in line with the previous research studies that have not found a significant relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 proficiency (Alderson & Steel, 1994; Alderson, Clapham & Steel, 1997). On the other hand, the significant moderate correlation between metalinguistic knowledge and writing achievement in the present study makes it corroborate the research studies that have found a significant relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and L2 proficiency (Renou, 2000; 2001; Elder & Manwaring, 2004; Alipour, 2014; Tokunaga, 2014). Both similar and divergent findings between the present study and the previous studies may be attributed to the data collection instruments used. First, considering that there is not an established metalinguistic knowledge test and each researcher has to design their own test, there may be variations across the metalinguistic knowledge tests used in different studies. However, since almost all of these tests have been designed in a similar way (as previous research shows), this is a weak possibility. Therefore, a better explanation might lie in the achievement tests used in these studies. It is first necessary to take into consideration that in some of these studies, proficiency tests were used, whereas in some others achievement tests were utilized. Second, most of the previous studies operationalize L2 proficiency/achievement as grammar knowledge only or grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Few studies involve reading, speaking and writing skills as a part of L2 proficiency/achievement. Therefore, the finding of the present study that there is a significant moderate correlation between metalinguistic knowledge and writing achievement among EFL learners is likely to make it stand out among others.

Apart from the bivariate correlation between the two, the significant contribution of metalinguistic knowledge to writing achievement, obtained as a result of a series of bivariate and multiple regression analyses, confirms the relationship. Therefore, the significant relationship between metalinguistic knowledge and writing achievement requires further attention. It is first necessary to consider what the writing exam used in the present study is like. In this exam, students are provided with two different topics along with a number of key words, and are asked to write an essay accordingly. Writing criteria consist of five components, namely task achievement, writing fluency, grammatical competence, lexical competence and mechanics. In this sense, the writing exam in question covers what previous research operationalizes as L2 proficiency: grammatical and lexical competence. Apparently, metalinguistic knowledge does not contribute to grammar knowledge assessed using a multiple-choice test but grammatical competence assessed as a part of a written exam. The reason might lie in the way these exams were designed. The grammar subtest used in the present study is a multiple-choice exam, which requires learners to recognize grammar. The grammatical competence covered in the writing exam, on the other hand, assesses learners' ability to produce appropriate L2 grammar, which may require them to use their metalinguistic knowledge. Therefore, those who are good at metalinguistic knowledge may be able to produce grammatically better sentences. For example, being aware of grammatical roles of parts of speech in L2 sentences may not be essential in order to perform well at a multiple-choice grammar test but at writing well-formed sentences. In other words, it may be safe to arrive at the conclusion that metalinguistic knowledge matters in written production although it has nothing worthy of note to do with recognition of L2 grammar, generally assessed using multiple-choice tests.

5. Implications

The findings of the current study can contribute to the importance of metalinguistic knowledge in second language acquisition among adult EFL learners, which has been regaining attention recently after having been overshadowed by communicative language teaching for a long time. Metalinguistic knowledge is likely to enable teachers and learners to explain, clarify, practice, use and reflect on the use of the target language, which will improve their understanding of linguistic constructs. Considering that metalinguistic knowledge benefits language learning, teachers may help learners to connect their metalinguistic knowledge to language production in the forms of production exercises and writing tasks so that they can learn target grammar structures more easily and reinforce what they have already learned. Teachers can show learners how the written language may be a good source of information about the formal aspects of the language, which is likely to enhance critical reflection and thus learner autonomy. Additionally, they can encourage learners to produce the language making use of their both linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge. Regarding that grammatical analysis is necessary for accurate language production (Swain & Lapkin, 1995, as cited in Roehr, 2000), teachers can carry out brainstorming activities in which they tap learners' opinions of why a certain grammar form is appropriate in one context but not in another (Roehr, 2000). Moreover, grammaticality judgment tasks can be employed in foreign language classes to focus learners' attention on formal aspects of the target language and raise awareness without formal grammar instruction. Furthermore, L2 teachers may provide metalinguistic knowledge and use metalanguage in class for L2 learners' good during self-study, and in order to enable them to gain access to accounts in grammar materials (Berry, 2001),

On the other hand, as Gutierrez (2013) and Elder and Manwaring (2004) note, metalinguistic knowledge may be useful for some structures but not for others. Therefore, teachers should be careful in selecting L2 structures to focus on. Moreover, while focusing on form and attempting to raise awareness of the target language, teachers should try not to trivialize the role of meaning and communicative purposes for learning a foreign language. In addition to this, learners' L1 background and L1 metalinguistic/metalingual awareness should also be taken into consideration because it may be easier for learners to grasp some aspects of the target language once they are familiar with metalinguistic/metalingual aspects of their native language.

6. Conclusions

The present study, examining the relationship between L2 metalinguistic knowledge and L2 achievement among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners, reveals that L2 metalinguistic knowledge is weak among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners. This may be explained with a number of reasons such as the participants' unfamiliarity with rule verbalization, lack of their L2 metalingual knowledge and lack of their L1 metalinguistic knowledge. The findings of the present study also suggest that L2 metalinguistic knowledge significantly contributes to L2 writing achievement explaining some of the variance in participants' writing exam scores. The fact that L2 metalinguistic knowledge does not contribute to grammar achievement, assessed using a multiple choice test, but grammatical competence, assessed as part of a writing test, indicates that metalinguistic knowledge is related to grammar production rather than recognition.

It goes without saying that the findings of the present study as well as those of the previous ones would benefit from further research. For instance, a larger-scale study might investigate the relationship between L1 metalinguistic knowledge and L2 metalinguistic knowledge and their contribution to L2 proficiency. The relationship between L2 metalingual knowledge and L2

metalinguistic knowledge may be probed as well. Additionally, it would be necessary to conduct a study to draw comparisons across several proficiency levels in order to provide better insights into the relationship between L2 metalinguistic knowledge and L2 proficiency. Furthermore, future research may include other L2 proficiency-related variables such as language aptitude, and investigate unique contribution of metalinguistic knowledge to L2 proficiency above and beyond those other variables.

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Appendix A. Metalinguistic Knowledge Test (MKT)

Section I: Correct, Describe, Explain

Instruction: There are 15 sentences in English below. In each sentence, there is one underlined word or phrase that is grammatically incorrect. First, provide the correct form of this underlined word or phrase next to “Correction” below the sentence. Then, describe the error or explain why the underlined part is grammatically incorrect next to “Description/Explanation”. Have a look at the practice item below.

Practice Item: This is the worstest film that I have ever seen.

Correction: the worst

Description/Explanation: The adjective “bad” has got an irregular superlative form and it must be “the worst”. It cannot take the –est suffix that we use to form regular superlative adjectives.

1. Who did teach you a valuable lesson?

Correction:

Description/Explanation:

2. Everybody must leaving the building by 6 p.m.

Correction:

Description/Explanation:

3. Barbara works for a company where makes washing machines.

Correction:

Description/Explanation:

4. She is only 27, but she has been visiting almost 50 countries so far.

Correction:

Description Explanation:

5. Children used to played around on the streets in the old days.

Correction:

Description Explanation:

6. It wouldn't be as bad if we don't have so many exams this year.

Correction:

Description Explanation:

7. Liz doesn't usually wear jewelry but yesterday she was wearing necklace.

Correction:

Description Explanation:

8. When you first thought yourself as an adult?

Correction:

Description Explanation:

9. I think you should to check what time the film starts.

Correction:

Description Explanation:

10. I have a friend who brother is a famous singer.

Correction:

- A. B. C. D.
6. The discovery of penicillin was an accident. →
- She asked her boss for some time off work, but he said no.
- A. B. C. D.
7. Ideas spread quickly because of the Internet. →
- A recent study tells us that men and women really think differently.
- A. B. C. D.
8. For the last two hours I have been working in the garden, so I' m tired. →
- The movie Die Hard stars Bruce Willis as a policeman battling against terrorists.
- A. B. C. D.
9. The road that we wanted to take was closed. →
- While we were going to our village, the train was stopped by deep snow.
- A. B. C. D.
10. If this is a bad time, I can come later. →
- When a truly shocking event happens, the brain takes a picture of that moment.
- A. B. C. D.
11. He went to school without eating any breakfast. →
- We moved to Krakow fifty years ago, but my family's roots are in Warsaw.
- A. B. C. D.
12. If I were you, I would pack some spare shoes. →
- This science fiction film describes what happens when aliens attack Planet Earth.
- A. B. C. D.
13. I' m a hundred percent certain of the answer. →
- When we arrived, it was cold because Dad did not open the heating.
- A. B. C. D.
14. Children usually start to walk at about twelve months. →
- The police want to know what you were doing between 6.30 a.m. and 7.00 a.m. yesterday.
- A. B. C. D.
15. He can't survive if he doesn't take his medicine. →
- Instead of talking for hours around the issue, why don't you just say what you mean.
- A. B. C. D.

İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen orta seviye yetişkin öğrencilerin üstdil işlevi bilgisi ve dil başarısı

Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de büyük bir devlet üniversitesinin Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu'nda İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen orta seviye yetişkin öğrencilerin üstdil işlevi bilgisi ve İngilizce dil başarısı arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, üstdil işlevi bilgisi, İngilizce dilbilgisi bakımından hatalı bir cümleyi düzeltebilme ve neden hatalı olduğunu açıklayabilme, ve İngilizce cümleleri oluşturan her bir sözcüğün türünü (isim, sıfat, fiil vb.) ve görevini söyleyebilme yetisini ifade etmektedir. Bu yeti, araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanmış ve iki bölümden oluşan bir ölçekle ölçülmüştür. Yabancı dil başarısı ise, dilbilgisi, kelime bilgisi, dinleme, okuma, konuşma ve yazma bölümlerinden oluşan vize sınavı ile ölçülmüştür. Sonuçlar, katılımcıların üstdil işlevine dair bilgilerinin zayıf olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, yapılan korelasyon ve regresyon analizleri, katılımcıların üstdil işlevi bilgilerinin, yazma sınavından elde ettikleri puanların %19.9'unu açıklayabildiğini göstermiştir. Bu çalışmadan elde edilen sonuçlar, daha önceki çalışmalardan elde edilen veriler ışığında tartışılmaktadır. Ayrıca, üstdil işlevi bilgisinin ikinci dil edinimine sağladığı faydalar göz önünde bulundurularak, bazı öneriler sunulmaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: İkinci dil edinimi; üstdil işlevi bilgisi; yabancı dil başarısı; İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenenler.

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