TURKİSH EFL LEARNERS NAMİNG MOTİON EVENTS İN ENGLİSH

Eda Duruk

English İnstructor, Ph.D., School of Foreign Languages, Pamukkale University.

ABSTRACT: *It has been claimed that learners of Turkish and English have different patterns of thinking about motion linguistically (Özçalışkan, 2005; Talmy, 1985). For instance, Turkish speakers' expressions of path tend to occur with path verbs, while English speakers tend to occur with satellites (adverbs or prepositions) and verbs + satellites. This study investigates the applicability of the proposed distinctions of the typology proposed by Talmy (1985) to non-metaphorical extensions of motion events, in a comparison between English (S-language) and Turkish (V-language). Results reveal some similarities and differences between Turkish learners of English and English speakers about the expression of motion events in English.*

KEYWORDS*: Motion Events, Second Language Acquisition, Typological Differences*

INTRODUCTİON

Theoretical work on the linguistic organization of motion events has shown it to be a domain that can be constructed in different ways within different languages, but which at the same time can be described by a limited set of underlying universal patterns (Talmy 1985, 2000). As proposed by Talmy, the world's languages can be grouped into a two-category typology in terms of the way the core feature of a literal motion event—which is the path of motion—is expressed linguistically, with some languages encoding this feature in the verb, and others in a satellite to the verb (a particle or a prefix). Talmy refers to these two types as verb-framed and satellite-framed languages (or V-languages and S-languages), respectively. Thus, the present study focuses specifically on then non-metaphorical extensions of motion events, and compares the lexicalization patterns of two typologically distinct languages, English (an S-language) and Turkish (a V-language). The study investigates whether the typological differences proposed by Talmy (1985) can be extended to the non-metaphorical uses of spatial motion among Turkish learners of English.

Talmy's Typology

Talmy (2000) suggested that path of motion constitutes the core feature of a motion event. He added that languages show two distinct lexicalization patterns by typically encoding path of motion in either a verb (e.g., exit, ascend) or an associated satellite (e.g., go out, go down). There is also a difference among motion events in terms of their degree of structural complexity. Thus, one can differentiate between a unitary event (e.g., he went into the room) and a complex one (e.g., he crawled into the room). As Özçalışkan (2005) proposed, a unitary event indicates only one dimension of motion, which, in this case is the path information (into). On the other hand, a complex event encodes both the manner (crawling) and the path (into) components of a motion event within a single clause (Talmy 2000).

Languages differ in their ways of expressing the components of a complex event, with S-languages typically conflating manner with motion, and V-languages conflating path with motion in the main verb of a clause. The difference in conflation patterns has significant effects

on the relative codability of the semantic domains that constitute the components of a motion event. Since S-languages prefer to encode path using satellites, the main-verb slot becomes available for a manner verb (e.g., walk/run/crawl . . . in/out/across . . .). This provides S-language speakers with a more accessible and easily codable linguistic option for indicating manner of motion. Consequently, S-language speakers encode manner habitually, develop a richer lexicon of manner verbs, and make finer lexical distinctions within the domain of manner (Slobin 2000, 2003). By contrast, in V-languages, the main verb is mainly reserved for encoding path information, and there is no other easily codable linguistic slot with which to encode manner of motion. As a consequence, in contexts in which attention to manner is salient, V-language speakers typically rely on subordinated manner verb constructions (e.g., enter/exit by running) to indicate manner, but due to the relative syntactic complexity of subordinated expressions, manner information is omitted in most instances in V-languages.

Motion events: Turkish vs. English

As Talmy mentioned, a motion event is the movement of some entity through space and includes five components (1985): motion, figure, ground, path, and manner. Languages differ in how they indicate manner and path. Talmy (1985, 1991, 2001) classified languages into two categories according to the place where path is encoded: verb-framed and satellite-framed languages. Verb-framed languages such as Romance, Semitic, and Japanese encode directionality on the verb, whereas satellite-framed languages like Indo-European except Romance, Finno-Ugric and Chinese encode directionality on a satellite, an adverb or a particle.

Turkish and English are examples of these two typologically different languages. Turkish is a verb-framed language. Motion and path are indicated by the verb, and if there is manner in speech, it is indicated outside the verb by an adjunct or a subordinated manner verb.   In Example 1 below, the verb *çıktı* indicates path while the subordinating verb *koşarak* indicates manner.

(1) *evden koşarak çıktı* 'he exit the house flying'

English, in contrast, is a satellite-framed language. Motion and manner are indicated by the verb, and path is indicated by a satellite, such as a particle or an adverb.

In Example 2 below, the verb *flies* indicates manner while the adverb *out* indicates path.

(2) *he flies out of the cage*

According to Slobin (2000, 2003), it is highly probable that these linguistic differences have effects on the organization of mental representations, which, in turn, leads to different mental imagery regarding how one navigates in space. In other words, speakers of English have linguistic access to a richer array of motion events that involve manner due to the high codability of this dimension in their native language. Thus, unlike Turkish speakers, English speakers are more likely to pay greater linguistic attention to and detect more fine-grained variations in the manner dimension of motion events, which in turn may increase the conceptual salience of this dimension for them (Özçalışkan, 2005).

Empirical Studies

Lots of researchers have investigated the applicability of the Talmy's taxonomy by examining different distinctive languages.

McNeill and Duncan (2000) examined speech and gesture in motion event narrations of Spanish and English speakers. They found that the two languages have different patterns of thinking for speaking gesturally as well as linguistically. The findings revealed that Spanish speakers tended to focus their path gestures on path verbs or ground noun phrases, and they might have manner in gesture when there was none in the accompanying speech. They reported that English speakers, on the other hand, tended to focus their path gestures on satellites or ground noun phrases, accumulated path components, and almost never had manner in gesture when there was none in the accompanying speech.

McNeill (2000) also found that Spanish speakers and English speakers treat border crossings differently. Spanish speakers either

a) add a special gesture not in the path sequence for the border, together with a linguistic reference to the border crossing itself in the form of *se mete* (with the semantic effect of 'he forces himself'), or

b) omit the border altogether and describe the path instead as going 'up to (*hasta*) the border"(McNeill 2000: 49).

Empirical research on written texts and orally elicited narratives from child and adult native speakers also provided strong evidence for the proposed typological differences, with clear indications of differential linguistic attention paid to manner of motion by speakers of two groups of languages (Turkish-English) for literal motion events (e.g., Ibarretxe-Antunano 2001; Naigles et al. 1998; Oh 2003; Ohara 1999; Papafragou et al. 2002; Özçalışkan and Slobin 1999a, 1999b, 2000a, 2000b, 2003; Slobin 1996, 1997, 2000).

All of the studies have shown higher frequency of mention and greater lexical with regard to the manner component of motion events by S-language speakers. As Slobin (1997, 2003) suggested, the typological contrast seems to have even wider applicability across various other languages of the world, and to crosscut boundaries of culture, language family and geographical location.

METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

The purpose of the present study is to expand the line of research by investigating how Turkish-speaking learners of English describe motion events in their L2. The research question sought to answer in the study is formulated as follows:

1.   How do Turkish learners express motion events in English which is typologically different from their L1?

The first prediction is that, while Turkish learners express motion events in English which is typologically different from their L1, they will also use the main verb to express path to a certain extent because of L1 influence. However, the extent predicted for the use of path is very few. The second prediction is that, because of their high proficiency level in English, Turkish learners of English will use much more satellites.

Participants

Participates were 40 undergraduate students selected from the Department of Foreign Language Education at Pamukkale University. They took part in the study during the semester. All were native Turkish speakers and had been educated in Turkey continuously between the ages of 6 and 23 years. They were from high-proficiency L2 level and were randomly selected from among the undergraduate student population of their department. They were all being trained to become English teachers. The group consisted of 10 male and 30 female participants, ranging in age from 18 to 23 (mean age: 20.5).

All participants were Junior students. All of them have two years of background at the same University. Due to the fact that they are students in the Department of Foreign Language Education, they received heavy hours of exposure to English which included various courses such as listening, reading, writing, speaking, methodology, translation, teaching young learners, etc.

Data Collection

The study employed two different tasks as the method of data elicitation. First, the researcher presented the participants with two short passages (adapted from Ferez & Gentner, 2006) each containing a novel verb. After making the participants read each of them, they were asked "What does X mean?" In order to prevent participants from simply translating the novel words into existing words, the passages described unusual events such as rolling a device designed to remove burrs over one's clothes; moving across a hall by using cleaning-rags underneath one's shoes, etc. The descriptions of the events always included both a path and a manner, so that participants could lexicalize either or both. Appendix A shows the passages used. Next, a picture-cued written task (see Appendix B) was used to elicit data.

Procedure

Participants were given a two-page booklet containing the two short passages and picture-cued written task. They were run individually in a quiet room. First, they were told to read the short stories at their own pace and to take the time they needed to answer each question after each story. It was followed by the picture-cued written task. Instructions were given in the participants' native language. No time limit was given.

Data Analysis

Two raters (the researcher- another instructor as the independent scorer) worked together to code and score all responses, and any disagreements were resolved by discussion. They coded the way the participants interpreted the novel verbs. While coding verb interpretations, the raters first coded the main verbs as path, manner or satellite. Some examples of path verbs are *traverse*, *descend*, and *enter* in English. Some manner verbs are *shuffle, roll,* and *climb*. The raters also coded for the presence of satellites: prepositions, adverbs, and gerunds/participles. The same procedure was applied while analyzing the data obtained from the picture-cued written task.

RESULTS AND DİSCUSSİON

The results of the reading task revealed that Turkish learners of English produced more Satellites. Table 1 shows the dominance of satellite over path and manner. As can be seen, not only the number of different lexicalized path information by satellites but also the frequency of them are higher than the other two. There are 6 different satellites but just 3 path verbs and again 3 manner verbs. As for the overall percentage of satellite, path, and manner, they are 64%, 21% and 15%, respectively.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage statistics of path, manner, manner + path for Turkish participants across two passages

Path (freq)	%	Manner (freq)	%	Satellite (freq)	%
enter (8)	8.5	walk (6)	6.5	climb up (12)	13
cross (8)	8.5	climb (6)	6.5	go through (10)	11
go (4)	4	travel (2)	2	go down (8)	9
				walk into (6)	6.5
				walk through (6)	6.5
				get into (4)	4
				climb through (4)	4
				walk carefully (4)	4
				climb carefully (2)	2
				enter into (2)	2
				enter slowly (2)	2
Total: (20)	21%	(14)	15%	(60)	64%

The results of the picture-cued written task showed similar tendency towards the use of satellite detected in the previous task. Thus, Turkish learners of English used more Satellites. Table 2 shows the tendency towards the use of satellite over path and manner. It can be seen that both the number of different lexicalized path information by satellites and their frequencies are higher than the other two. There are 5 different satellites but just 3 path verbs and again 2 manner verbs. As for the overall percentage of satellite, path, and manner, they are 64%, 22% and 14%, respectively.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage statistics of path, manner, manner + path for Turkish participants across picture-cued written task

Path (freq)	%	Manner (freq)	%	Satellite (freq)	%
leave (8)	10	walk (6)	7	come up (16)	19
exist (6)	7	bring (6)	7	get out (14)	17
come (4)	5			go out (12)	15
				walk out (4)	5
				leave walking (2)	2
				leave slowly (2)	2
				come in (2)	2
				get in (2)	2
Total: (18)	22%	(12)	14%	(54)	64%

The results of the both tasks are striking in that Turkish learners of English express motion events in English in the same way as English speakers would do. As discussed earlier, in Turkish path is expressed by the main verb (e.g., girdi "enter"), whereas in English path is expressed by a satellite—a verb particle or preposition (e.g., go down, go across). Thus, while Turkish learners express motion events in English which is typologically different from their L1, the first prediction was that they would also use the main verb to express path to a certain extent because of L1 influence. That prediction was confirmed because they expressed path by using the main verb. However, the frequency is very limited. That can be because the participants are from advanced level, and so, L1 effect is decreased as they become proficient in their L2. Because of their high proficiency level in English, the next prediction was that Turkish learners of English would use much more satellites. That prediction was also verified. Generally, the participants expressed path by using a satellite. The English satellites consisted of 6 prepositions (through, into, down, up, out, in) that encoded path information, plus two adverbs (slowly, carefully) and a subordinated manner verb (walking). These findings are in line with the previous research on typologically different languages (Talmy 1985, 1991; Slobin 1996; McNeill and Duncan 2000) in which speakers of Spanish (it is also V-framed like Turkish) were found to express path with a verb to a certain extent and more proficient English speakers expressed it with a satellite (an adverb particle) or a preposition. The participants sometimes indicated path linguistically in English with a satellite. However, there were also instances where the verb in English was not followed by an adverb particle or a preposition. In the cases where no satellite was produced, it was difficult for the researcher to understand how the participants expressed path exactly. As final remarks, it can be concluded that, unlike the native English speakers, the use of satellites or prepositions to express path by Turkish speakers of English is not consistently very high. This can suggest that the participants have not acquired L2 thinking completely for speaking and writing patterns in English; on the other hand, it is probable that this isn't because they are applying L1 thinking for speaking and writing patterns when they do not have a satellite or preposition. The data alone does not give us enough information.

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APPENDİX A

1. Story:

Fragel in a strange world

Fragel lived a quiet live. Every time Fragel read the letters from his uncle's book ''The Adventurer'', he was completely impressed. His uncle had spent 10 years exploring the far places of the earth. Every night, Fragel started a new adventure in his dreams. But one day, he woke up in a strange world. Fragel was baffled. He was on a mountain next to a green trunk tree with red flowers. The mountain seemed to be ten times his height. He had to get home somehow. Fragel tried to think what to do. He knew he could not jump, because it was too high, and he could not climb down because there was nothing to grab.

Suddenly, he noticed a hole. It looked like a perpendicular tunnel. Then, he had a brilliant idea!. He took his unbreakable rope, tied it firmly around the tree, threw the rope down the tunnel and then, Fragel started to **monse** the tunnel.

What do you think ''**monse**'' means?_____

2. Story:

The River

Cathy was lost in the forest and she desperately wanted to turn back to her house. So she decided to keep walking up the river and look for a bridge. After a while she noticed the river had become shallow and not so dangerous. So she took off her shoes and socks, rolled up her jeans and **ransined** the river. That night she was very happy to be back among friends again.

What do you think ''**ransined**'' means?_____
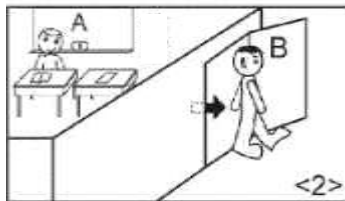
Appendix B. Picture-Cued Written Task

Part I

Instruction: You will see 1 set of sequential pictures describing a **physical movement**. The picture comes with a brief explanation. When you are responding to the question, **pretend you were A** in the situation. Your job is to describe B's movement **from A's perspective** and complete the sentence in English. You will start with **B** as the subject and use the **designated verb**. Remember to include the noun specified in the picture in your sentence.
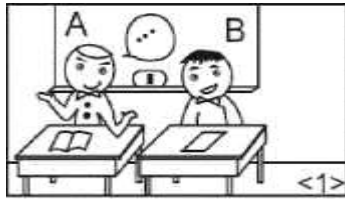
Picture <1>

A and B were talking to each other in the classroom.
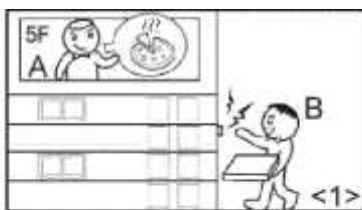
Picture <2>

Later, A saw B…

Q: If you were A, what would you say to describe B's movement?

B:_____(use "classroom")

Part II

Instruction: You will see 1 set of sequential pictures describing a **request**. The picture comes with a brief explanation. When you are responding to the question, **pretend you were A** in the situation. Your job is to describe B's movement **from A's perspective** and complete the sentence in English. **Use the designated verb**. Remember to include the noun specified in the picture in your sentence.

Picture <1>

A lived in an apartment and had just ordered a pizza. When B was at the building door, A was too lazy to get the pizza.

Picture <2>

So, A told B…

Q: If you were A, what would you say to ask for B's help?

B:　　Please_____(use "pizza").