

(OVER)PASSIVIZATION ERRORS OF TURKISH LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

İngilizce'yi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenen Anadili Türkçe Olan
Öğrencilerin (Aşırı) Edilgenleştirilmesi

Özlem Kurtoğlu

Mersin Üniversitesi

Özet: İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrenciler, İngilizcede edilgen yapıda birçok (aşırı)edilgenleştirme hatası yapmaktadırlar. Bu çalışmada, amaçlarımızdan biri bu hataların asıl kaynaklarını bulmak ve İngiliz Dili Öğretimi açısından bazı çıkarımları yapmaktır. Bu hataların altında yatan nedenleri bulmak için, edilgen yapıda sıklıkla yanlış kullanılan eylemlerin anlambilimsel özellikleri, geçişli/geçişsiz ve etkilenmeli/etkilenmesiz ayrımı açısından incelenmiştir. Verinin incelenmesinde Perlmutter (1978) tarafından ortaya atılan Etkilenmeli Hipotezine odaklanılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın diğer amacı ise edilgenleştirmedeki hata oranları ile ikinci dil yeterlik derecesi arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığını bulmaktır. Bu nedenle, anadili olarak Türkçe konuşan ve İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Mersin Üniversitesi öğrencileri arasından, İngilizce seviyeleri Michigan Yerleştirme Testi ile belirlenen ileri seviyedeki 30 öğrenci ile üst-orta seviyedeki 30 öğrenci, bu çalışmanın katılımcıları olarak seçilmişlerdir. 4 yazılı araç kullanılarak toplanan veri, nicel olarak incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Edilgenleştirme Hataları, Fazla-Edilgenleştirme, Geçişli Eylemler, Geçişsiz Eylemler, Etkilenmeliler, Etkilenmesizler*

Abstract: Turkish learners of English as a foreign language make many (over) passivization errors in English. In this study, one of our aims is to find out the underlying reasons for these errors, and to provide some implications on

English Language Teaching. In order to find out the underlying reasons for these errors, the semantic properties of the verbs which are frequently used incorrectly in the passive voice are analyzed in terms of transitive/intransitive and unaccusative/unergative distinctions. We focused on the Unaccusative Hypothesis presented by Perlmutter (1978) in investigating our data. The other aim is to find out if there is a relationship between the error rates and L2 proficiency levels. Therefore, 30 students from advanced levels and 30 students from upper-intermediate levels are chosen among Turkish speaking students who learn English as a foreign language at Mersin University, by using the Michigan Placement Test. Data is collected through 4 written tasks and analyzed quantitatively.

Key Words: *Passivization Errors, Overpassivization, Transitives, Intransitives, Unaccusatives, Unergatives*

1. INTRODUCTION

Learners commit errors and they do this on regular basis with certain structures. The sources of L2 learners' errors may be related to two types of transfers. One of them is interlingual transfer, which means transfer from L1. Negative transfer from L1 is also known as L1 interference. The other one is intralingual transfer which means transfer within target language, such as overgeneralization of grammatical rules (Brown, 1980; Richards, 1974). Passive voice is a complex structure for most of the Turkish students who learn English as a foreign language. In this study, our aim is to identify the semantic and syntactic features that cause the students to make passivization errors and to account for the relationship between the number of errors and the proficiency level of students.

1.1. Passivization in English

In the unmarked case, any active sentence with an object can be made passive in English. Verbs that express high transitivity, in other words, verbs that assign Agent role to their subject and Patient role to their objects, produce acceptable passive sentences. Passivization simply moves the object NP to the subject position and the subject of the active clause is demoted to the object of preposition position.

On the other hand, verbs that express low transitivity, even if they have objects, cannot be passivized in English. This means that verbs that are semantically marked cannot be made passive. For example, a

verb like *like* which projects a seemingly transitive construction cannot passivize grammatically (E.g. a. *John likes beer.* b. **The beer is liked by John.*)

Verbs that subcategorize for double objects, in other words, verbs with direct and indirect objects can be made passive. In this case, each object may be moved to the subject position (E.g. a. *A book was given to Mary by John.* b. *Mary was given a book by John.*)

1.2. Passivization in Turkish

Turkish is an agglutinative language and voice is indicated by attachment of a number of suffixes to active verbs to make them passive. In the order of the verbal suffixes on a verbal complex, passive is inserted between verb and tense marker. The passive suffix in Turkish has three forms:

- a. *-n* (attached to stems ending in a vowel),
- b. *-In* (attached to stems ending with the consonant ‘l’),
- c. *-Il* (attached to stems ending with all other consonants) (Göksel & Kerslake, 2005:76).

The process of passivization of transitives in Turkish is the same as the passivization of transitives in English. Any active sentence with an object can be passivized in Turkish. Passive sentences are constructed if verbs that assign Agent role to their subject and Patient role to their objects. The object NP is moved to the subject position in passivization. Just like English, Turkish allows passivization from ditransitives.

There is an important distinction between English and Turkish passive constructions. In English, we can passivize only some transitive verbs. However, in Turkish we can make passives from intransitives as well as from transitives.

(1) Adalara artık deniz otobüsüyle mi gidilecek?

(Göksel & Kerslake, 2005:151)

Another difference between English and Turkish is that Turkish allows double passivization whereas English does not. The suffix */-In/* doesn't

always give passive meaning because reflexive and passive forms are homophonous. To prevent ambiguity, the passive is distinguished by a double passive suffix in such words.

Firstly, /-In/ suffix is used; then, /-Il/ is used after the /n/ of /-in/ (Şahinel, 1988:19). (E.g. *Söylemek* ‘say’ - *söyle-n-il-mek* ‘be said’) Özkaraköz (1986) argues that there are grammatical sentences in Turkish formed by impersonally passivizing a personal passive. In the following example, the sentence contains a verb which is suffixed with two passive morphemes.

(2) Bu şato-da boğ-ul-un-ur.

‘In this chateau one is strangled by one.

1.3. The Transitive-Intransitive Distinction in English and in Turkish

Some verbs have both transitive and intransitive uses in English. Verbs which can be used as transitive or intransitive are called causative alternation verbs (Levin, 1989:27). The first sentence is intransitive and the second is transitive:

(3) a. The stick broke.

b. The boy broke the stick.

In Turkish (unlike in English), passives are not restricted to transitive verbs. Turkish allows the passivization of certain intransitive verbs, most of which are action verbs:

(4) Hep beraber maça gidildi.

‘We went to the match altogether’

1.4. Unaccusative Hypothesis

As formulated by Perlmutter (1978), Unaccusative Hypothesis claims that intransitives are divided into two classes: unaccusatives and unergatives. There are semantic and syntactic determinants of unaccusativity.

As semantic determinants, Perlmutter suggests that unergatives denote activities whereas unaccusatives denote states or events. Nakipoğlu (1998:8) makes a list of predicates determining initially unergative clauses and predicates determining unaccusative clauses. According to

this list, predicates describing willed or volitional acts (e. g. *work, play, hunt, whistle, walk, laugh, dance, etc.*), manner of speaking verbs (e.g. *whisper, shout, mumble, etc.*), predicates describing sounds made by animals (e.g. *bark, roar, neigh, etc.*), certain involuntary bodily processes (e.g. *cough, sneeze, sleep, breath, etc.*) are classified unergatives. She also explains that predicates expressed by adjectives in English (e.g. *sizes, shapes, colours etc.*), predicates whose initial nuclear term is semantically a patient (e.g. *burn, fall, sink, float, etc.*), inchoatives (e.g. *melt, freeze, evaporate, etc.*), predicates of existing and happening (e.g. *exist, happen, occur, etc.*), involuntary emission of the stimuli that impinge on the senses (e.g. *shine, glitter, smell, etc.*), aspectual predicates (e.g. *begin, start, stop, cease, continue*), and duratives (e.g. *last, remain, stay, survive, etc.*) are classified as unaccusatives. As syntactic determinants of unaccusativity, Perlmutter suggests that certain intransitives have an initial 2 (i.e. object) but no initial 1 (i.e. subject). All initially unaccusative clauses involve an advancement to 1. According to Unaccusative Hypothesis, certain intransitives cannot have prepositional or impersonal passive equivalents because, it would require more than one advancement from the object position to the subject position and therefore, it would violate the 1Advancement Exclusiveness Law. Perlmutter and Postal (cited in Nakipoğlu, 1998:14) illustrate this with an example:

(5) a. The bed was jumped on by the children

(Active: The children jumped on the bed.)

b. * The bed was fallen on by dust.

(Active: Dust fell on the bed.)

(5a) is a correct prepositional passive whereas (5b) is unacceptable because it violates the 1AEX Law which does not allow two advancements in one clause from a non-subject to a subject position.

Perlmutter argues that the syntactic representation of arguments can always be predicted from the meaning of the verb ¹.

Harris (1982), Rosen (1984), and Legendre (1989) accept the fact that

1. The Universal Alignment Hypothesis, (U.A.H: There exists some set of universal principles on the basis of which, given the representation of a clause, one can predict which initial grammatical relation each nominal bears.)

there is a strong tendency for particular meanings to be connected with unaccusativity or unergativity but they reject the assumption that there is consistent and universal characteristics which are taken as a basis for it. They suggest that the unaccusative-unergative distinction should be characterized in terms of syntax rather than semantics. They propose two different syntactic representation to show the distinction between unaccusatives and unergatives. The syntactic difference between these two types of intransitives are that the sole argument of an unergative verb is underlying a subject while the sole argument of an unaccusative verb is underlying a direct object (Nakipoğlu,1998: 4).

The difference between an unaccusative and an unergative verb is presented in both Relational Grammar and Government and Binding Theory by showing that there is an advancement derivation which is triggered by the fact that ‘the sole argument of an unaccusative verb is underlying a direct object which advances to the subject position on the surface’ (Perlmutter, 1978). According to Perlmutter’s claim, *Donna* is the agent of the semantically active unergative clause in (a) whereas it is the patient of the semantically inactive unaccusative clause (Knecht,1986:54).

- (6) a. Donna danced.
b. Donna ached.

Both the unaccusative advancement and the passive rule involve 2-1 advancement. In order to prevent confusion, Perlmutter (1978) explains the difference between them: If a stratum contains both a 1 and a 2, it is subject to passive. If a stratum contains a 2 but no 1, it is subject to Unaccusative Advancement.

The relational grammar analysis of passives shows that before passive can apply, an initially unaccusative clause must undergo Unaccusative Advancement. The passive of the initially unaccusative clause must involve two advancements to subject. But, 1 Advancement Exclusiveness Law (1AEX) does not permit more than one advancement to subject in a clause (Knecht,1986:57).

Violation of this rule may be one of the underlying reasons for errors in passivization. In this study, our aim is to identify the semantic and syntactic features that lead the students to make errors in passivization.

Therefore, we will analyze the errors according to transitive-intransitive distinction and unaccusative-unergative distinction.

1.5. Transfer from the First Language

Lado (1957:2) states that a foreign language learner tends to find some elements easy to learn and some elements difficult to learn because foreign language learners may ‘transfer’ the forms and meanings of their first language to the foreign language. There are two types of transfer. Positive transfer facilitates learning the foreign language. Negative transfer (also called ‘interference’) is defined as “cross-linguistic influences resulting in errors, overproduction, underproduction, miscomprehension, and other effects that constitute a divergence between the behavior of native and nonnative speakers of a language” (Odlin, 1997:167). The studies of Ringbom and Palmer 1976; Ard and Homburg 1983; White 1985; Schumann 1986; Singler 1988 show that cross-linguistic influence may cause differences in acquisition (Odlin, 1997:24).

There are some similarities and differences between English and Turkish passivization. Both languages are alike in the passivization of transitives and ditransitives. In English, only transitive verbs can be passivized whereas in Turkish certain intransitive verbs can also be passivized. This distinction between English and Turkish passivization may cause a negative transfer. In other words, ‘L1 interference’ (negative transfer) may be the reason for some passivization errors in English.

2. METHOD

Data is collected from 30 advanced students and 30 upper-intermediate students of Mersin University. The proficiency level of students is found by using Michigan Placement Test. All of the students’ first language is Turkish and they do not know any other language (except for English that they learnt at school). The students are given 4 tasks; a free writing activity (Task 1), a paraphrase task (Task 2), a translation task (Task 3) and a grammaticality judgement test (Task 4).

In the free writing task, we asked the students to write a brief story using the given words. 10 transitive verbs and 10 intransitive verbs were given to the students. 5 of the intransitive verbs were unaccusatives and 5 of the intransitive verbs were unergatives. (Transitive verbs were *build, call, tell, buy, paint, make, bring, complete, write, and find*. Unergative verbs were *walk, whisper, shout, bark, and sleep*. Unaccusative verbs were *burn, sink, freeze, occur, and survive*) The students were asked to use passive voice whenever possible.

In the paraphrasing task, students were given 20 sentences. 10 of them were constructed with transitive verbs, and 10 of them were constructed with intransitive verbs. 10 intransitive verbs included 5 unaccusative verbs and 5 unergative verbs. (Transitive verbs were *decide, say, build, finish, cook, speak, prove, plant, require, and kill*. Unergative verbs were *breathe, cough, dance, roar, and whistle*. Unaccusative verbs were *fall, exist, float, begin, and shine*) The students were asked to rewrite those sentences using the verbs in parentheses, without changing the meaning of the sentences.

The translation task was given to the students to comment on the L1 interference on passivization errors. As English does not allow passives from intransitives unlike Turkish, Turkish learners of English might passivize intransitives as well as transitives and cause overpassivization errors. In this task, total 20 passive sentences in Turkish were given to the students. 10 of them were constructed with transitive verbs and 10 of them were constructed with intransitive verbs. [Transitive verbs were *çal(in)-, seyred(il)-, yakala(n)-, düzenle(n)-, oku(n)-, al(in)-, sat(il)-, boya(n)-, öğret(il)-, tamir ed(il)-*. Intransitive verbs were *çalış(il)-, konuş(ul)-, oyna(n)-, gir(il)-,bağır(il)-, koybol(un)-, hastalan(il)-, terle(n)-, ihtiyarla(n)-, titre(n)-*]. The students were asked to translate those sentences into English.

In the grammaticality judgement test with sentences with 20 transitive verbs and sentences with 20 intransitive verbs were given to the students. 10 of the intransitive verbs were unaccusatives and 10 of the intransitives were unergatives. (Transitive verbs were *help, teach, take, see, make, plant, wash, brush, invite, throw, open, rob, sell, build, kill, clean, write, paint, steal, and send*. Unergative verbs were *pass, play, dance, go, exit, sneeze, work, cry, stay, and escape*. Unaccusative verbs were *leak, fall, grow, melt, die, shine, collapse, perish, freeze, and*

appear). All sentences were constructed in passive voice and as English does not allow making passives from intransitives, the test include 20 sentences which are overpassivized and therefore incorrect. Then, the students are asked to judge on the grammaticality or ungrammaticality of the sentences.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, our aim is to identify the semantic and syntactic features that lead the students to make (over)passivization errors. Therefore, we will analyze the errors in terms of transitive-intransitive distinction and unaccusative-unergative distinction. We will also find out if there is a relationship between the number of errors and L2 proficiency level.

For our purposes, we collected the data from 30 advanced students and 30 upper-intermediate students of a language school. A free writing task, a paraphrasing task, a translation task and a grammaticality judgement test are given to the students.

In the free writing task, we asked the students to write a brief story using the given words which consist of 10 transitives and 10 intransitives. The students were asked to use passive voice whenever possible. Table 1 shows the use of passive voice of transitive verbs and the differences between the number of advanced students' passives of transitives and the number of upper-intermediate students' passives of transitives.

Table 1- Passives of Transitives of Advanced Students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Free Writing Task

Transitive Verbs	Advanced Students' Passives of Transitives (N=30 students)	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Transitives (N=30 students)
<i>build</i>	16	19
<i>call</i>	5	8
<i>tell</i>	6	9
<i>buy</i>	10	8
<i>paint</i>	12	17
<i>make</i>	6	7
<i>bring</i>	7	8

<i>complete</i>	8	15
<i>write</i>	10	18
<i>find</i>	3	4
Total	83	113
Total %	27.66 %	37.66 %

The difference between the number of passives of transitive verbs of advanced students and the number of passives of transitive verbs of upper-intermediate students is not statistically significant. ($\chi^2 = 2.810$, $p = 0.971 > 0.05$)

As shown in Table 1, both groups' number of passives is less than expected. *Build*, *paint* and *write* were used in passive voice by most of the students in both groups. However, the verb *find* was used in passive voice by only 3 advanced students and 4 upper-intermediate students. There is no difference between these verbs in terms of transitivity; therefore, the difference occurs because of the stylistic reasons. If we consider total passives of transitives of both groups, we realize that upper intermediate students (113 passives) used more passives than advanced students (83 passives). However, this difference is not statistically significant. When the total passives of advanced students and total passives of upper intermediate students are compared to the total number of expected passives; it is obvious that both groups did not preferred to use some transitive verbs although they were told to use them in passive voice if possible. The reason for these results might be the stylistic restrictions.

Intransitives in this task included 5 unergatives and 5 unaccusatives. Table 2 shows passives of unergatives (overpassivization errors on unergatives) of advanced students and upper intermediate students. *Walk* and *bark* were used in active voice and they were correct because English does not allow passives from unaccusatives and unergatives. Advanced students made total 2 overpassivization errors and upper-intermediate students made 3 overpassivization errors on unaccusatives.

Table 2- Passives of Unergatives of Advanced students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Free Writing Task

Unergatives	Number of Advanced Students' Passives of Unergatives	Number of Upper-intermediate Students' Passives of Unergatives
<i>walk</i>	0	0
<i>whisper</i>	0	1
<i>shout</i>	2	1
<i>bark</i>	0	0
<i>sleep</i>	0	1
Total	2	3
Total %	1.33%	2%

In this table of 5X2 crosstabs, the expected value is smaller than 5 and the number of cells are higher than 20% (It's 100%). Therefore, chi-square test could not be applied.

Table 3 shows passives of unaccusatives of advanced students and upper-intermediate students. *Burn* (Advanced:13, Upper-Intermediate:17) is the most problematic verb for both groups. Unlike unergatives represented in Table 2, there are not unaccusative verbs with no errors for both groups. Total number of errors on unergatives of advanced students is 2 (see Table 2) and total numbers of errors on unaccusatives of advanced students is 31 (see Table 3). Total number of errors on unergatives of upper-intermediate students is 3 (see Table 2) and total number of errors on unaccusatives of advanced students is 58 (see Table 3). It is obvious that both groups made more errors on unaccusatives and the difference between error rates of unaccusatives and unergatives are significant.

Table 3- Passives of Unaccusatives of Advanced students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Free Writing Task

Unaccusatives	Number of Advanced Students' Passives of Unaccusatives	Number of Upper-intermediate Students' Passives of Unaccusatives
<i>burn</i>	13	17
<i>sink</i>	3	14
<i>freeze</i>	11	17
<i>occur</i>	1	4
<i>survive</i>	3	6
Total	31	58
Total %	20.66%	38.66%

In this table of 5X2 crosstabs, the expected value is smaller than 5 and the number of cells are higher than 20%. Therefore, chi-square test couldn't be applied.

Table 4 shows passives of transitives vs intransitives of advanced students and upper-intermediate students. Advanced students made 83 passives of transitives whereas upper-intermediate students made 113 passives of transitives. Advanced students' number of passives of intransitives is 33 whereas upper-intermediate students' number of passives is 61. Upper-intermediate students tend to passivize both transitives and intransitives more than advanced students.

Table 4- Passives of Transitives vs Intransitives of Advanced students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Free Writing Task

Advanced Students' Passives of Transitives	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Transitives	Advanced Students' Passives of Intransitives	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Intransitives
83	113	33	61
27.66 %	37.66 %	11%	20.33%

The first task was a free writing activity. Therefore, the students used some transitive verbs in active voice although they might know that these verbs can be passivized. These stylistic choices may have an influence on the use of active voice of intransitive verbs. For this reason,

a different kind of task was given to the students. In the second task, a paraphrasing activity was applied. Students were given 20 sentences 10 of which included transitive verbs, and 10 of which included intransitives. The students were asked to rewrite those sentences using the verbs in parentheses, without changing the meaning of the sentences. Table 5 shows passives of transitives of advanced students and upper-intermediate students. Passivization is not the only way of paraphrasing the sentences in this activity. Therefore, although it was possible to make total 300 passives, advanced students made 236 passives and upper-intermediate students made 254 passives of transitive verbs. Table 5 shows that the difference between the number of passives of transitive verbs of advanced students and the number of passives of transitive verbs of upper-intermediate students is not statistically significant. *Build* is used only in passive voice by both groups. Other most passivized transitive verbs are *kill* (Advanced:28, Upper-Intermediate:29) and *plant* (Advanced:28, Upper-Intermediate:29). *Decide* is used mostly in active voice by both groups (Advanced:11, Upper-Intermediate:14).

Table 5- Passives of Transitives of Advanced students & Upper-Intermediate Students in the Paraphrasing Task

Transitive Verbs	Advanced Students' Passives of Transitives	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Transitives
<i>decide</i>	11	14
<i>say</i>	27	25
<i>build</i>	30	30
<i>finish</i>	23	23
<i>cook</i>	18	21
<i>speak</i>	20	27
<i>prove</i>	26	29
<i>plant</i>	28	29
<i>require</i>	25	27
<i>kill</i>	28	29
Total	236	254
Total %	78.66%	84.66%

The difference between the number of passives of transitive verbs of advanced students and the number of passives of transitive verbs of

upper-intermediate students is not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 1.326$, $p = 0.998 > 0.05$)

Number of passives of unergatives of advanced students and upper-intermediate students are shown in Table 6. The verb with the most overpassivization errors made by advanced students was *whistle* (5 overpassivization errors), whereas the verb with the most overpassivization errors made by upper intermediate students was *dance* (6 overpassivization errors). *Breathe* and *roar* were used in active voice by all advanced students and *cough* was used in active voice by all upper-intermediate students. There were not any unergative verbs used in active voice by both groups. Totally, 9 overpassivization errors were made by advanced students and 11 overpassivization errors were made by upper-intermediate students.

Table 6- Number of Passives of Unergatives of Advanced Students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Paraphrasing Task

Unergatives	Number of Advanced Students' Passives of Unergatives	Number of Upper-intermediate Students' Passives of Unergatives
<i>breathe</i>	0	1
<i>cough</i>	2	0
<i>dance</i>	2	6
<i>roar</i>	0	2
<i>whistle</i>	5	2
Total	9	11
Total %	6%	7.33%

Table 7 shows the number of passives of unaccusatives of advanced students and upper-intermediate students. The most passivized verb for both groups was *fall* with 9 overpassivization of advanced students and 12 overpassivization of upper-intermediate students. *Exist* and *shine* were used in active voice by all upper-intermediate students. Total 19 overpassivization of unaccusatives were made by advanced students and 17 overpassivization of unaccusatives were made by upper-intermediate students.

If we compare Table 6 and Table 7, we realize that total numbers of errors on unaccusatives (Advanced:19, Upper-Intermediate:17) of both

groups (Advanced:19, Upper-Intermediate:17, Total: 36) are more than total numbers of errors of unergatives of both groups (Advanced:9, Upper-Intermediate:11, Total: 20).

Table 7- Number of Passives of Unaccusatives of Advanced students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Paraphrasing Task

Unaccusatives	Number of Advanced Students' Passives of Unaccusatives	Number of Upper-intermediate Students' Passives of Unaccusatives
<i>fall</i>	9	12
<i>exist</i>	1	0
<i>float</i>	5	1
<i>begin</i>	3	4
<i>shine</i>	1	0
Total	19	17
Total %	12.66%	11.33%

The number of errors on unergatives and unaccusatives of two groups are compared in Table 8. The difference between the number of errors on unaccusatives and unergatives is not statistically significant.

Table 8- The Proficiency Level of Students and the Number of Errors on Unergatives & Unaccusatives in the Paraphrasing Task

Types of Intransitives	Advanced	Upper-Intermediate
Unergatives	9	11
Unaccusatives	19	17

The difference is not statistically significant. ($\chi^2 = 0.311$, $p = 0.977 > 0.05$)

Table 9 shows the number of passives of transitives versus intransitives of advanced students and upper-intermediate students. Advanced students made 236 passives of transitives while upper-intermediate students made 254 passives of transitives. Advanced students' number of passives and upper-intermediate students' number of passives were the same (28 passives in each group).

Table 9- Passives of Transitives vs Intransitives of Advanced students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Paraphrasing Task

Advanced Students' Passives of Transitives	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Transitives	Advanced Students' Passives of Intransitives	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Intransitives
236	254	28	28
78.66%	84.66%	9.33%	9.33%

English does not allow passives from intransitives whereas Turkish does. This difference might lead to some overpassivization errors of Turkish learners of English as a foreign language. In order to comment on L1 interference, a translation task, which included 10 transitives and 10 intransitives, was given to the students. The students were asked to translate them into English. They were told that they did not have to translate everything word for word. What we wanted from them was to express the same idea in English.

Table 10- Passives of Transitives of Advanced students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Translation Task

Transitive Verbs	English translations		Advanced Students' Passives of Transitives	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Transitives
	Active	Passive		
<i>çalındı</i>	stole	is/was stolen	30	30
<i>seyredilirdi</i>	would watch	was watched	15	23
<i>yakalandı</i>	caught, arrested	were caught, were arrested	30	30
<i>düzenlendi</i>	organized	was organized	30	30
<i>okunur</i>	read	was read	14	18
<i>alındı</i>	bought	was bought	30	28
<i>satılacak</i>	will sell	will be sold	30	30
<i>boyanmış</i>	painted	were painted	30	30
<i>öğretilir</i>	teach	is taught	26	26

<i>tamir ediliyor</i>	is repairing, is mending, is fixing	is being repaired, is being mend, is being fixed	30	30
Total			265	275
Total %			83.33%	91.66%

The difference between the number of passives of transitives of advanced students and the number of passives of transitives of upper-intermediate students is not statistically significant. ($\chi^2 = 2.069$, $p=0.990>0.05$)

As all the transitive verbs given in Table 10 can be passivized in English, expected number of passives was 30 for each verb for both groups of students. *çal-* 'steal', *yakala-* 'catch', *düzenle-* 'organize', *sat-* 'sell', *boya-* 'paint', *tamir et-* 'repair' were the verbs which were passivized by all students. *Öğret-* 'teach' was used in passive voice by 26 students in both groups. The difference between the total number of passives made by advanced students (265 passives) and the total number of passives made by upper-intermediate students (275 passives) is only 10. However, the difference between the number of passives of intransitives of advanced students (54 passives) and upper-intermediate students (83 passives) is 29 (See Table 11). The verb *ihiyarla-n-ır* was used correctly by all of the advanced students. Nevertheless, as shown in Table 11, there are not any other verbs with no errors in both groups of students. The verb which was used in passive voice by most students in both groups was *kaybol-* but we cannot accept it as an overpassivization error because it is an adjectival passive and 'lost' was used as an adjective by the students.

Table 11- Passives of Intransitives of Advanced students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Translation Task

Intransitive Verbs	English translations		Number of Advanced Students' Passives of Intransitives	Number of Upper-intermediate Students' Passives of Intransitives
	Active	Passive		

<i>çalışılır</i>	work	is worked	4	9
<i>konusulmaz</i>	mustn't talk, can't speak	mustn't be talked, can't/ shouldn't be spoken	4	8
<i>oylanır</i>	dance	is danced	6	5
<i>girilmez</i>	mustn't enter, mustn't come in, shouldn't go in	mustn't be gone in,	2	8
<i>bağırıldı</i>	shouted	was shouted	7	7
<i>kaybolunur</i>	lose	is lost	24	22
<i>hastalanılır</i>	become ill, get ill	is got ill	1	7
<i>terlenir</i>	sweat, perspire	is sweated is perspired	3	5
<i>ihtiyarlanır</i>	become old	is old	0	6
<i>titrenir</i>	shiver, tremble, shake	is shivered, is trembled, is shaken	3	6
Total			54	83
Total %			18%	27.66%

In this table of 10X2 crosstabs, the value of 95% of the cells is smaller than 5. Therefore, chi-square test could not be applied.

Table 12 gives the total numbers of passives of transitives vs intransitives of advanced students and upper-intermediate students. While the difference between the number of passives of transitives is 10, the number of passives of intransitives is 29. These results show that the upper-intermediate students made more overpassivization errors on intransitives than advanced students made. They also show that total 137 errors were made, which means that intransitive verbs are problematic for Turkish students who learn English as a foreign language.

Table 12- Passives of Transitives vs Intransitives of Advanced students & Upper Intermediate Students in the Translation Task

Advanced Students' Passives of Transitives	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Transitives	Advanced Students' Passives of Intransitives	Upper Intermediate Students' Passives of Intransitives
265	275	54	83
83.33%	91.66%	18%	27.66%

Students were also given a grammaticality judgement test with 20 transitive verbs and 20 intransitive verbs. 10 unaccusatives and 10 unergatives were given as intransitive verbs. All of the sentences were constructed in passive voice and as English does not allow making passives from intransitives, the test included 20 sentences with overpassivization errors. Students were asked to judge on the grammaticality or ungrammaticality of the sentences. The errors on passivization of transitives were given in Table 13, the number of overpassivization errors of unergatives is given in Table 14, and the number of overpassivization errors of unaccusatives is shown in Table 15.

Table 13- Number of Errors on Transitives in the Grammaticality Judgement Test

Transitive verbs	Advanced	Upper-Intermediate
<i>help</i>	10	14
<i>teach</i>	1	1
<i>take</i>	9	7
<i>see</i>	0	0
<i>make</i>	2	2
<i>plant</i>	1	0
<i>wash</i>	2	0
<i>brush</i>	5	4
<i>invite</i>	0	0
<i>throw</i>	2	0
<i>open</i>	2	4

<i>rob</i>	0	3
<i>sell</i>	1	0
<i>build</i>	0	4
<i>kill</i>	0	0
<i>clean</i>	0	1
<i>write</i>	0	0
<i>paint</i>	0	0
<i>steal</i>	0	0
<i>send</i>	0	0
Total:	35	40
Total %	5.83%	6.66%

As indicated in Table 13, *see*, *invite*, *kill*, *write*, *paint*, *steal* and *send* were analyzed correctly by both groups of students. All of the advanced students' judgements on *rob*, *build*, and *clean* were correct. All of the upper-intermediate students' judgements on *plant*, *wash*, *throw*, *sell*, and *kill* were also correct. An incorrect judgement was made on *help* by 10 advanced students and 14 upper-intermediate students. Passive voice is not merely another way of expressing a sentence in the active voice. It has some functional properties such as concealing the performer of the action, drawing attention to the person or thing acted upon, to focus on the result of the activity, etc. Because of this, some of the students might have judged the passive sentence constructed with the verb *help* as ungrammatical. Total 35 errors were made by advanced students and total 40 errors were made by upper-intermediate students.

In Table 14, the number of errors on unergatives is shown. Most errors were made by both groups on *pass*, *play*, and *sneeze*. *Go* was analyzed correctly by all advanced students and *cry* was analyzed correctly by all upper intermediate students. Total 73 errors were made on unergatives in this task by advanced students and total 78 errors were made on unergatives by upper-intermediate students.

Table 14 - Number of Errors on Unergatives in the Grammaticality Judgement Test

Unergative verbs	Advanced	Upper-Intermediate
<i>pass</i>	17	15
<i>play</i>	16	16
<i>dance</i>	8	8
<i>go</i>	0	2
<i>exit</i>	11	12
<i>sneeze</i>	15	12
<i>work</i>	1	7
<i>cry</i>	1	0
<i>stay</i>	2	3
<i>escape</i>	2	3
Total:	73	78
Total %	24.33%	26%

The following table shows the unaccusative verbs and the number of errors. Unlike unergatives, there were not any unaccusative verbs with no errors. The verb with most errors in both groups was *grow* with 19 errors by advanced students and 16 errors by upper-intermediate students. Another problematic unaccusative verb for upper-intermediate students was *perish* with 26 errors.

Table 15 - Number of Errors on Unaccusatives in the Grammaticality Judgement Test

Unaccusative verbs	Advanced	Upper-Intermediate
<i>leak</i>	4	3
<i>fall</i>	5	6
<i>grow</i>	19	16
<i>melt</i>	5	1
<i>die</i>	5	2
<i>shine</i>	1	3
<i>collapse</i>	4	2
<i>perish</i>	7	26

<i>freeze</i>	7	10
<i>appear</i>	3	1
Total:	60	70
Total %	20%	23.33%

As indicated in Table 15, total 60 errors were made by advanced students and 70 errors were made by upper-intermediate students. Table 16 shows that the total number of errors on unergatives of advanced students (73 errors) and the total number of errors on unergatives of upper-intermediate students (78 errors) are more than the total number of errors on unaccusatives of advanced students (60 errors) and the total number of errors on unaccusatives of upper-intermediate students (70 errors). We had expected more errors of both groups on unaccusatives rather than unergatives on the basis of Unaccusative Hypothesis. However, the results of the grammaticality test shows that the difference between the number of errors on intransitives of advanced students and the number of errors on intransitives of upper-intermediate students is not statistically significant.

Table 16 - The proficiency level of students and the number of errors on unergatives & unaccusatives

Types of Intransitives	Advanced	Upper-intermediate
Unergatives	73	78
Unaccusatives	60	70

The difference between the number of errors on intransitives of advanced students and the number of errors on intransitives of upper-intermediate students is not statistically significant. ($\chi^2=0.134$, $p=0.714>0.05$)

As shown in Table 17, total 133 errors were made on intransitive verbs by advanced students and 148 errors were made on intransitive verbs by upper-intermediate students. If we compare the number of errors on advanced students' passives of intransitive verbs (133 errors) and the number of errors on advanced students' passives of transitive verbs (35 errors), we realize that there is a significant difference between them. Likewise, when the number of errors on upper-intermediate students' passives of intransitive verbs (148 errors) and the number of errors on upper-intermediate students' passives of transitive verbs (40 errors) are

compared, it is found that there is a significant difference between them.

Table 17- Number of Errors on Transitives and Intransitives in the Grammaticality Judgement Test

Transitives	
Advanced	Upper-intermediate
35	40
5.83%	6.66%
Intransitives	
Advanced	Upper-intermediate
133	148
22.16%	24.66%

If we compare both groups' total number of errors of transitive verbs and intransitive verbs, we understand that intransitive verbs are more problematic for both groups of students.

4. CONCLUSION

In this study, we have analyzed the (over)passivization errors stemming from transitive-intransitive distinction and unaccusative-nergative distinction in Turkish and in English. We have administered four tasks; a free writing activity (Task 1), a paraphrase task (Task 2), a translation task (Task 3) and a grammaticality judgement test (Task 4). We did not find any statistically significant difference between the number of correct passives on transitives of advanced students and those of upper-intermediate students. We also found out that there isn't a statistically significant difference between the passivization errors (a) on intransitives of advanced students and on intransitives of upper-intermediate students; (b) on unergatives of advanced students and on unergatives of upper-intermediate students; and (c) on unaccusatives of advanced students and on unaccusatives of upper-intermediate students. As the proficiency levels of advanced students and upper-intermediate students are very close to each other, we couldn't find any significant relationship between (over)passivization and the proficiency level of students.

Both groups made more errors on intransitives. There isn't a significant difference between both groups' unergative errors and unaccusative errors. On the basis of Unaccusative Hypothesis, we expected more errors on unaccusatives. However, there is not a significant difference

between the passivization errors of unaccusatives of these groups. Not only upper-intermediate but also advanced students made more errors on intransitives.

The results indicate that the problem is in fact with intransitives in general. In Turkish it is possible to make passives from intransitives whereas in English it is not. Therefore, the effect of L1 might play an important role on the passivization errors made by Turkish learners of English as a foreign language.

Implications for ELT: There is a need to make the students and teachers aware of the fact that L1 interference is a problem that may affect the students who learn English as a foreign language. Data of this study shows that Turkish students who learn English as a foreign language may passivize intransitives. English does not allow passivization of intransitives whereas Turkish does. Therefore, teachers can compare the structures and focus on the similarities and differences between their L1 and EFL.

Implications for further study: This study is carried out on advanced students and upper-intermediate students. The errors of other levels of proficiency might also be analyzed. In this study, data is collected through written tasks. Oral tasks might also be given to the students. According to the findings of this research, students tend to make passives of intransitives. Turkish allows making passives of intransitives but English does not. L1 interference might have an effect on overpassivization errors. In another study, data might be collected from groups of students with different native languages; L1 interference might be analyzed and errors of students of different languages might be compared.

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