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The Matter of Homonymy and Salience in Terms of Attention Phenomenon in Turkish: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach

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Abstract

The cognitive linguistic study of the words classified as homonyms which have the same orthography and pronunciation has an important role in answering the questions of how language competence works and how this process categorizes the linguistic units. The study of how a language user will react to a homonymous word in both a context-free and context-added environment is new for Turkish in terms of cognitive linguistic perspective. According to Talmy's (2007) "salience hierarchy" words are first divided into "open-class words" and closed-class words." In classical lexical-semantics approach the "content-words" constitute the "open-class" while "function-words" form the group of "closed-class" words (Fromkin, and Rodman, 2003). In Talmy's hiererachy the "content-words" are at the highest level. In the class of content-words there is also another sub-classification. In this sub-classification "nouns" precede "verbs," thus, they are more salient. In this study, whether the randomly chosen 20 homonymous words each of which has both a "noun" and a "verb" meaning will come up with the results in harmony with Talmy's (2007) "salience hierarchy" classification or not was analyzed. Also, this would lead to speculate on the universality of this classification despite surface differences between different languages. Another variable in the study is the link between the pre-activation of the homonymous word with "salience." In order to accomplish this, an open-ended data collection tool was applied for 20 native Turkish speakers. Ten of the informants read a text in which the 20 homonymous words were used as verbs while the other ten informants were detained from any context in which they could see the homonymous words used in a context. All the informants were asked to use each of the homonymous words in a sentence with the first meaning popped up in their minds. At the end of the study it is observed that when homonymous words are not given in a determined context the informants used them as nouns in accordance with the salience hierarchy. On the contrary, when the words are given in a context, in which each of them were used as verbs, the informants used them as verbs in their own productions. The use of the words having both

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"noun" and "verb" meanings in "noun" form in a context-free environment shows a parallelism with Talmy's "salience hierarchy," this finding is new for Turkish. The informants' use of the words with their meanings in the forms given in a context also shows a correlation with Croft and Cruse's (2004) emphasis on the pre-activated role of "salience" in terms of attention phenomenon.

Keywords: Cognitive Linguistics, salience hierarchy, open-class words, closed-class words, attention phenomenon

Öz

"Sesteş olarak sınıflandırılan aynı sesletime ve yazılışa sahip farklı anlamlardaki sözcüklerin bilişsel dilbilim yaklaşımı çerçevesinde çalışılması zihnin dil yetisinin nasıl işlediği ve bu işleyişin dil öğelerini nasıl sınıflandırdığı sorularının cevaplandırılması bağlamında önemli rol oynamaktadır. "Sesteş" özelliğe sahip bir sözcükle gerek bir bağlam içerisinde, gerekse herhangi bir bağlamdan bağımsız karşılaşan bir anadil kullanıcısının bu sözcüğe tepkisinin bilişsel dilbilim yaklaşımı çerçevesinde nasıl gerçekleşeceğinin incelenmesi Türkçe bağlamında yeni bir girişimdir. Talmy'nin (2007) "belirginlik hiyerarşisi" sınıflandırmasına göre sözcükler öncelikle "açık sınıf sözcükler" ve "kapalı sınıf sözcükler" olarak ikiye ayrılır. Klasik sözcük-anlambilim yaklaşımında "açık sınıf sözcükler" grubunu "içerik bildiren sözcükler" oluştururken "kapalı sınıf sözcükler" grubunu "işlevsel sözcükler" oluşturur (Fromkin, and Rodman, 2003). Talmy'nin hiyerarşisinde "içerik bildiren sözcükler" en üst seviyededir. "İçerik bildiren sözcükler" içerisinde de yine alt bir sınıflama mevcuttur ve bu sınıflamada da "adlar" "eylemlerden" önce gelir, dolayısıyla daha belirgindir. Bu çalışmada Türkçe rastgele seçilen ve anlamlarından biri bir eylemi diğeri de bir adı gösteren yirmi ayrı sesteş sözcüğün Talmy (2007)'de öne sürülen "belirginlik hiyerarşisi" sınıflamasına uygun sonuçlar verip vermeyeceği ve sonuç olarak bu sınıflamanın diller arası yüzeysel farklılıklara rağmen bir evrensellik gösterebilme durumu sınanmıştır. Çalışmadaki bir başka önemli değişken de "belirginliğin" söz konusu dil öğesinin daha önceden aktif duruma getirilmiş olmasıyla bağlantısıdır. Bu doğrultuda anadili Türkçe olan yirmi denek üzerinde açık uçlu bir veri toplama aracı uygulanmıştır. On denek daha önceden sözü edilen yirmi sesteş sözcüğün eylem olarak kullanıldığı bir metin okumuş, diğer on denek ise sözcüklerin kullanıldığı herhangi bir bağlamla karşılaştırılmamıştır. Deneklerin tümünden veri toplama aracında gördükleri yirmi sesteş sözcüğü ilk düşündükleri anlamla bir tümce içinde kullanmaları istenmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda sesteş sözcüklerin herhangi bir bağlam içerisinde kullanılmadıkları takdirde deneklerin bu sözcükleri "belirginlik hiyerarşisi"ne uyumlu bir şekilde "ad" olarak kullanıldıkları, tam tersi durumda da çoğunluğun bağlamdan etkilendiği ve sözcükleri "eylem" olarak kullandığı görülmüştür. Bağlam duyarsız ortamda konuşucuların hem ad, hem eylem anlamı olan sesteş sözcükleri çoğunlukla ad anlamlarıyla kullanmış olmaları Talmy'nin "belirginlik hiyerarşisi" sınıflamasına uygun sonuçlar vermiştir; bu bulgu Türkçe için yenidir. Bağlam söz konusu olduğunda ise, deneklerin sözcükleri bağlamda karşılaştıkları anlamda kullanmış olmaları daha önceden aktive edilmiş olan "belirginliğin" dikkat olgusu bağlamında Croft ve Cruse (2004)'te de vurgulanmış olduğu gibi etkili olduğunu ortaya çıkartmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Bilişsel dilbilim, belirginlik hiyarerşisi, açık sınıf sözcükler, kapalı sınıf sözcükler, dikkat olgusu

Introduction

Considering the expression of any concept in one or another lexical category Talmy (2007, p. 268) states that "open-class words have more salience than closed-class words". Open-class words are defined by Fromkin and Rodman (2003, p. 73) as content words like nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs, and in this class, new words can be added regularly. Closed-class words, on the other hand, are defined as function words, and it is not very probable new prepositions, conjunctions, or pronouns to enter into a language through time, thus the class is named as closed. Talmy (2007) through the examination of the open-class words argues that "nouns" may outrank "verbs". In the salience hierarchy of open-class words the "noun" comes before the "verb" as shown below;

Open-class (N>V) > closed-class (phonological > aphonological)

Several factors can converge on the same linguistic entity to reinforce a particular level of salience and make it especially high or low and in terms of a conflict one factor overrides the other or they fall into a competition in which case the hearer's attention is divided or swings between the two claims on it. For instance in (1.a.) the concept of "aircraft" is foregrounded via the constituent "plane". It is foregrounded through four factors. The first one is its being expressed in the lexical category highest on the attentional hierarchy as a noun. But in (1.b.) the same concept "aircraft" is backgrounded via using the verb "flew". It is stated that it appears in a lexical category, which is a verb, lower on the attentional hierarchy.

1.a. I went to Key West last month by plane.
1.b. I flew to Key West last month. Talmy (2007, p. 283)

As seen above, in the matter of salience of a category in open-class words, the nouns are considered to be higher than verbs in hierarchy.

On the matter of direct reference to attention in the addressee Talmy (2007, p. 283) indicates that many predicate morphemes refer to higher or lower attention in the sentinent referent of their subject NP and when the same predicate morphemes are used as directives to the addressee for instance in imperative, hortative or modal forms they directly call on the hearer to allocate either more or less attention to an indicated entity as shown in 2.a.b and 3.a.b.;

2.a. I alerted her to the risk.
2.b. Be alerted that this is only a copy of the original painting.

3.a. I paid attention to the movie.
3.b. Pay attention to the movie. Talmy (2007, p. 283)

Besides the salience of any form as being a member of a closed or open-class word or as being a noun or a predicate when a morpheme is heard by a listener some of the word's senses may come to mind more strongly, while other senses are more obscure. If there is no effect of the context, i.e. if the context does not impose one of the senses, the more salient sense may overwhelm the less salient sense even if the speaker does not target the less salient one. Cruse, (2000) in Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008) indicates that of all the meanings of a word form, the meaning which will come to mind in the absence of any context is called "the default meaning". The high degree of entrenchment in the speaker's mind provides some meanings to be "established" while some others are non-established. Also, Croft and Cruse (2004, p. 46) indicate that attention seems to be closest to the focus of consciousness and usually modeled in terms of degree of activation of conceptual structures in a neural network model of the mind. In an undetermined context where a morpheme's most salient sense tends to be the one that first pops into attention a speaker might best use the form evoking the target concept with minimal confusion. In accordance with one's conceptualization of any given morpheme, a morpheme's extended reference can have indefinitely many different aspects, parts, or sector. When a morpheme occurs as a particular token in an utterance, its context may indicate the current relevance of only certain elements of the morpheme's extended reference. Such context thus largely determines where greater attention is to be located within this extended reference (Talmy, 2007, p. 279-280). A particular morphemic form in a language can have a number of distinct referents. These may be related with the same morpheme's polysemous range of senses or the separate senses of distinct homophonous morphemes. The hearer is always aware of only one sense and the one sense of a morphemic shape seeming the most relevant in the current context is picked out and foregrounded (Talmy, 2007, p. 280).

Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (2007) states that the "polysemy - homonymy" distinction is traditionally made with the help of historical criteria. While identical forms with historically related meanings are considered to be "polysemic" items, "homonymic" items are indicated to be etymologically unrelated; and further states that the boundaries between homonymy, polysemy, and vagueness are not well-established in cognitive linguistic terms. In this study, 20 items which have both a "noun" and a "verb" reading are classified under the title of "homonymy" taking into account the above mentioned definitions.

This study aims at testing Talmy's (2007) salience hierarchy and Croft and Cruse's (2004) assertion stating that the attention phenomenon is related with the focus of consciousness and modeled in terms of degree of activation in terms of 20 Turkish homonymic words, each of which includes both a "noun" and a "verb" meaning taking into consideration the attention phenomenon which is either inherently coded or activated through relevant context. Although the data used in the study are the final

outputs of native speakers' derivations, the gathered data are considered to be the reflections of informants' cognitive processes that are active in choosing between the two schematizations of the same isolated lexical items. The choices of the informants will be regarded as derived out of the first meaning of the homonymic item that popped up into their minds as the lexical selection. As Levelt (2001) states the process in which a speaker first selects the appropriate item from the mental lexicon in order to produce a content word is called the "lexical selection". The next step is the preparation of the selected item's articulatory shape which is called "form encoding". The "lexical selection" issue will form the basis of the classification of the productions of the informants in this study. For instance, a selection will be classified as a "noun" even if the final derivation of the selected item functions as a verb in the sentence if the input for the final derivation is originally a "noun" as seen below;

Çok güzel bir andı. "It was a very nice moment".

The homonymic item tested in the sentence above is "*an*". It has two meanings, "*the moment*" as the noun meaning, and "*to commemorate*" as the verb meaning. The selection is classified as "noun" although it seems to function as the predicate of the sentence. The reason for this classification is the aim to determine the first "lexical selection" of the informant. It is clear that in order to construct the sentence the informant first selects the "noun" meaning (the moment) of the homonymic item "*an*", and then, as a second step, s/he encodes it as a nominal verb. This means that the "lexical selection" targeted the "noun" form of the homonymic item; then as a form encoding, s/he transformed it into a nominal verb, but the first meaning popped up into the informant's mind is the "noun" form. As Levelt (2001) indicates the function of lexical selection is to rapidly focus on a single lexical item, given the speaker's intentional state. The "form encoding" of the informant will not be taken into consideration since lexical selection precedes form encoding in a serial two-system architecture. Also, the use of the homonymic words in a simple or complex sentence is out of consideration in this study. Any item in the data may have been used as the verb of the embedded sentence as shown below;

- *Kalemi aldı ve yazmaya başladı.* "S/he took the pen and began to write".

The homonymic item tested in the sentence is "*yaz*". As it is seen, the item is used as the "verb" of the embedded sentence. So, this means that the lexical selection is the "verb" meaning of the homonymic item, and its location in the sentence is not taken into consideration parallel to the aim of the study. Also, some of the homonymic items were used by the informants in forming relative clause. In the sentence below, the homonymic item tested is "*al*". It constructs a relative clause, it is the predicate in the clause and it is certain to assert that the "verb" meaning of the item was selected by the informant in order to form the relative clause.

Devletten aldığını millete ödeme zamanı geldi.

"It is time to pay back what you got from the state to people."

In the light of the explanations and instances given above, this study aims at answering the following two questions;

Are "nouns" or "verbs" more salient cognitively in lexical selection in terms of homonymic items having both "noun" and "verb" meanings?

What is the role of activating the attention of native speakers in lexical selection?

Method of the Study

Participants

In order to explain the homonymy and salience phenomenon in Turkish, the use of 20 Turkish speakers' 20 homonymic words have been examined. 20 native speakers of Turkish have been attributed as the informants. All the informants are undergraduate first-year students in the Department of English Linguistics, University of Hacettepe.

Data Collection Tool

A text created by the researcher in which 20 homonymic words used in "verb" forms, and papers which included 20 homonymic words in isolation with required spaces for the participants to write their own sentences were used as the data collection tool in the study. The 20 homonymic lexical items and their meanings are as given below;

yaz - the noun form "summer",
the verb form "to write"

taş - the noun form "stone",
the verb form "to overflow"

dal - the noun form "branch",
the verb form "to dive, or "to be engrossed in"

tat - the noun form "flavor",
the verb form "to taste"

ara - the noun form "space"
the verb form "to call", or "to look for"

yan - the noun form "side",
the verb form "to burn"

at - the noun form "an animal used for riding",
the verb form "to throw"

ak - the noun form “white”,
the verb form “to flow”

kan - the noun form “blood”,
the verb form “to be fooled”

çek - the noun form “cheque”,
the verb form “to pull”

kur - the noun form “rate of exchange”,
the verb form “to install” or “to wind”

aç - the noun form “hungry”
the verb form “to open”

yat - the noun form “yacht”,
the verb form “to go to bed”

koy - the noun form “bay”,
the verb form “to put”

soy - the noun form “race”, or “family”
the verb form “to peel”, or “to rob”

boz - the noun form “ash-gray”, or “rough”,
the verb form “to spoil”

ek - the noun form “supplement”, or “suffix”,
the verb form “to sow”

al - the noun form “red”,
the verb form “to take”

yay - the noun form “bow”,
the verb form “to spread”

an - the noun form “moment”,
the verb form “to commemorate”

Procedure

The informants have been divided into two groups each including ten participants. A text which was created by the researcher including all 20 homonymic items which were used in “verb” forms was delivered to the informants of the first group. The informants of the first group read the text. After they finished reading the papers were collected by the researcher and then the data collection tool was delivered to the each participant. Their task was to form new sentences using the given homonymic items in the forms which first popped up into their minds when they saw the items on the sheet. The sheet included all the homonymic words in isolation with adequate spaces for the participants to write down their own novel sentences. Via the application of the data

collection tool for the first group, the study aimed to test Talmy's (2007) claim pointing to the determinant power of context where greater attention is to be located within the extended reference phenomenon; Croft and Cruse's (2004) claim defending that attention is usually modeled in terms of degree of activation of conceptual structures in a neural network model and Thepkanjana and Uehara's (2008) proposal stating that the high degree of entrenchment in the speaker's mind provides some meanings to be "established".

The second group also had ten participants. The ones included in this group did not come up with any previous text including the "homonymic" expressions used in sentences. Just the sheets including all the homonymic items in isolation were delivered to them. The test applied on the second group aimed at experiencing Talmy's (2007) claim purporting that in the salience hierarchy of open-class words, the "noun" comes before the "verb".

No time limitation has been applied for none of the subject groups. The total time of the application of the experiment for the first subject group has been noted as approximately 12 minutes, while for the second subject group it was about eight minutes.

Limitations of the Study

20 native speakers of Turkish were administered as the informants of the study. A further study with a higher number of informants could be much more satisfying for the reliability of the research. All the informants in the study were from the Department of English Linguistics. Although this may raise some questions in terms of applicants' acquaintance with the homonymic words in Turkish, this does not constitute a major drawback for the study for two reasons. First, this study was conducted to first-year students in their first semester at the department. Second, even if they were well acquainted with homonymic items in Turkish their acquaintance with these items did not have a direct effect on the aim of this study since they were not asked to fill-out a questionnaire testing their awareness with these words, or their usage in a fill-in the blanks test. They were just demanded to use the words they saw in the first meaning popped up into their minds. Any possible knowledge of the words' twofold meaning could not have any impact on the choice of their uses by the informants.

Another issue to be discussed may be the informants' subjective real life experiences with the concepts associated with the lexical items used in the study. It is possible for each informant to have a different acquaintance level with the items; and so, this may have been affected the choices of the informants between a "noun" and a "verb" form of the homonymic item.

Findings

Section 1.

The first 10 participants (from number 1 to number 10 inc.) are among the first subject group. The first group has read the text created by the researcher before applying the data collection tool. The results gathered from the subjects of the first group are given in table 1 below.

Table 1: The results of the First Subject Group which has read the created text

	Verb	**Noun**
Subject.1	12 – 60%	8 – 40%
Subject.2	8 – 40%	12 – 60%
Subject.3	13 – 65%	7 – 35%
Subject.4	12 – 60%	8 – 40%
Subject.5	14 – 70%	6 – 30%
Subject.6	5 – 25%	15 – 75%
Subject.7	10 – 50%	10 – 50%
Subject.8	10 – 50%	10 – 50%
Subject.9	14 – 70%	6 – 30%
Subject.10	6 – 30%	14 – 70%

Subject 1

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 1, 12 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 60; and 8 of those words have been used as nouns with 40%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 1 are as follows;

"kur" – Saati 8.00'a kurar mısın? *(verb)*
Would you wind the clock for 8?

"ara" – Bu aralar canım biraz sıkkın. *(noun)*
I am distressed nowadays.

Subject 2

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 2, 8 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 40; and 12 of those words have been used as nouns with 60%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 2 are as follows;

"at" – Topu bana at. *(verb)*
Throw the ball to me.

"tat" – Bu yemeğin tadını alamadım. *(noun)*
I could not get the taste of this meal.

Subject 3

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 3, 13 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 65; and 7 of those words have been used as nouns with 35%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 3 are as follows;

"koy" – Kitabı rafa koydu. *(verb)*
S/he put the book on the shelf.

"an" – Çok güzel bir andı. *(noun)*
It was a very nice moment.

Subject 4

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 4, 12 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 60; and 8 of those words have been used as nouns with 40%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 4 are as follows;

"yaz" – Kalemi aldı ve yazmaya başladı. *(verb)*
S/he took the pen and began to write.

"kan" – Kan görmeye dayanamam. *(noun)*
I cannot bare seeing blood.

Subject 5

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 5, 14 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 70; and 6 of those words have been used as nouns with 30%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 5 are as follows;

"aç" – Kapıyı açtı. *(verb)*
S/he opened the door.

"at" – Jokey atını aldı. *(noun)*
The jockey got his horse.

Subject 6

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 6, 5 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 25; and 15 of those words have been used as nouns with 75%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 6 are as follows;

"al" – Devletten aldığını millete ödeme zamanı geldi. *(verb)*
"It is time to pay back what you got from the state to people."

"soy" – Bizim soyumuz saraya dayanıyor. *(noun)*
"Our family goes back to the court."

Subject 7

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 7, 10 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 50; and 10 of those words have been used as nouns with 50%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 7 are as follows;

"soy" – Asla patates soyamam. *(verb)*
"I can never peel potato."

"yay" – Yayını gerdi ve ilk okunu atmasıyla savaş başladı. *(noun)*
"He drew his bow and the fight began with his first shot."

Subject 8

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 8, 10 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 50; and 10 of those words have been used as nouns with 50%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 8 are as follows;

"al" – Marketten ekmek almaya gitti. *(verb)*
"S/he went to buy bread from the market."

"taş"– Yerdeki taşı alıp, adamın kafasına fırlattı. *(noun)*
"S/he took the stone on the ground and threw to the man's head."

Subject 9

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 9, 14 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 70; and 6 of those words have been used as nouns with 30%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 9 are as follows;

"ara" – Dün akşam seni aradım. *(verb)*
"I called you last night."

"ek" – Dediklerime ek olarak bir kaç cümle söyledi. *(noun)*
"S/he added a few to what I said."

Subject 10

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 10, 6 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 30; and 14 of those words have been used as nouns with 70%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 10 are as follows;

"dal" – Denizde çok derinlere dalmaktan çekinirim. *(verb)*
"I am cautious at diving to deep in the sea."

"kur" – Döviz kurları bu ay çok değer kaybetti. *(noun)*
"The foreign rates of exchange decreased a lot this month."

The second group of participants (from number 11 to number 20 inc.) is the one which has not read the text created by the researcher before applying the data collection tool. The results obtained from the second subject group are given in table 2 below.

Table 2: The results of the Second Subject Group which has not read the created text

	Verb	**Noun**
Subject.11	12 – 60%	8 – 40%
Subject.12	10 – 50%	10 – 50%
Subject.13	11 – 55%	9 – 45%
Subject.14	3 – 15%	17 – 85%
Subject.15	11 – 55%	9 – 45%
Subject.16	10 – 50%	10 – 50%
Subject.17	4 – 20%	16 – 80%
Subject.18	5 – 25%	15 – 75%
Subject.19	10 – 50%	10 – 50%
Subject.20	9 – 45%	11 – 55%

Subject 11

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 11, 12 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 60; and 8 of those words have been used as nouns with 40%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 11 are as follows;

"çek" – Koltuğu kenara çeker misin? *(verb)*
"Could you move the armchair a little bit?"

"*yan"* – Yanında git. *(noun)*
"Go near her/him."

Subject 12

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 12, 10 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 50; and 10 of those words have been used as nouns with 50%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 12 are as follows;

"çek" – Arabayı atlar çekti. *(verb)*
"The horses pulled the car."

"koy" – Bu koyu çok severim. *(noun)*
"I love this bay too much."

Subject 13

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 13, 11 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 55; and 9 of those words have been used as nouns with 45%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 13 are as follows;

"yat" – Bütün gün yattı. *(verb)*
"S/he rested all the day."

"yaz" – Yaz mevsimini çok severim. *(noun)*
"I like the summer season too much."

Subject 14

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 14, 3 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 15; and 17 of those words have been used as nouns with 85%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 14 are as follows;

"koy" – Elindekileri tezgaha koy. *(verb)*
"Put what you got on the counter."

"ak" – Saçlarına ak düşmüş. *(noun)*
"Her/his hairs began to gray."

Subject 15

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 15, 11 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 55; and 9 of those words have been used as nouns with 45%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 15 are as follows;

"ara" – Pazartesi telefonla arayacağını söyledi. *(verb)*
"S/he told that s/he would call on Monday."

"aç" – Karnım çok aç. *(noun)*
"I am too hungry."

Subject 16

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 16, 10 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 50; and 10 of those words have been used as nouns with 50%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 16 are as follows;

"soy" – Portakalı soydum başucuma koydum. *(verb)*
"I peeled the orange and put it beside my bed."

"çek" – Karşılıksız çek mafyası yakalandı. *(noun)*
"A band of gratis cheque was captured."

Subject 17

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 17, 4 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 20; and 16 of those words have been used as nouns with 80%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 17 are as follows;

"çek" – Valizi tek başıma çekerek getirdim. *(verb)*
"I brought the luggage on my own by pulling."

"ara" – Senin şemsiyen dolapla duvarın arasında. *(noun)*
"Your umbrella is between the cupboard and the wall."

Subject 18

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 18, 5 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 25; and 15 of those words have been used as nouns with 75%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 18 are as follows;

"dal" – Suya daldı. *(verb)*
"S/he dove into the water."

"kur" – Döviz kuru çok düşüktü. *(noun)*
"The foreign exchange rate was too low."

Subject 19

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 19, 10 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 50; and 10 of those words have been used as nouns with 50%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 19 are as follows;

"boz" – Bana telefonunu bozduğunu söyledi. *(verb)*
"S/he told me that s/he broke her/his telephone."

"yay" – Burcunun bana yay olduğunu söylediler. *(noun)*
"They told me that your zodiac is Sagittarius.

Subject 20

Out of 20 sentences produced by subject 20, 9 of the homonymic words have been used as verbs with a percentage of 45%; and 11 of those words have been used as nouns with 55%.

Some Examples Produced by Subject 20 are as follows;

"yaz" – Sen de yaz yaz yaz bir kenara yaz bütün sözlerimi. *(verb)*
"You also write all my words somewhere."

"an" – Bir an geldi herkes sustu. *(noun)*
"A moment came and everyone got silent."

Section 2.

In section 2, the total results gathered out of the two subject groups will be given.

The Results of the First Subject Group

The subjects classified under this group have read the text in which all the homonymic words have been used in "verb" form before the data collection tool has been applied. 10 subjects are labeled in this group. Each of the subjects has replied for 20 homonymic words, thus the total amount of the replies gathered is 200. Out of 200 replies, 104 have been used in "verb" form with a percentage of 52, and 96 have been used as "noun" with 48% as seen in Table 3 below;

Table 3: The first subject group n=200

Group 1 (The ones who have read the given text)	**Verb**	**Noun**
	104 – 52%	96 – 48%

As it is seen in Table 3 most of the subjects who have read the given text just before the application of the data collection tool preferred to form sentences using the homonymic words in "verb" form.

Table 4: The Homonymic words and their uses by the subjects of the 1st group n=200

Group 1	Verb	Noun
yaz	5	5
taş	2	8
dal	4	6
tat	2	8
ara	6	4
yan	6	4
at	4	6
ak	5	5
kan	4	6
çek	5	5
kur	8	2
aç	4	6
yat	7	3
koy	10	0
soy	8	2
boz	6	4
ek	4	6
al	8	2
yay	4	6
an	2	8
Total	**104 – 52%**	**96 – 48%**

Table 4 gives the total range of homonymic items and the replies of the informants in the first group to these items in the study as a whole. As it is seen in the table, the total number of the "verb" selection by the informants in the first subject group outnumbers the "noun" selection. This finding correlates with Croft and Cruse (2004) stating that attention seems to be closest to the focus of consciousness; and it is often modeled in terms of degree of activation of conceptual structures. The conceptual structure which includes the "verb" meaning of the item was activated before the application of the data collection tool and the results showed that the replies of the informants were in accordance with this activation process. But when we have a look at the items one by one, it is also observed that there are some contradictory outcomes. The items which showed contradictory results are *taş, dal, tat, at, kan, aç, ek, yay*, and *an*. The informants used them as nouns more frequently than verbs although they completed the task just after reading the text in which all these items were used as verbs. It seems that the use of these homonymic items in verb form did not dramatically affect the activation of the verb meaning in informants' lexical selections. This may also be evaluated as a

convergence to Talmy's salience hierarchy in which the "noun" precedes the "verb" among open class category of lexical selection.

The Results of the Second Subject Group

In this group there exist 10 subjects who have not read the text before applying the data collection tool. 200 replies have been gathered in total. Out of these replies 85 of them have been used in "verb" form with a percentage of 42.5, and 115 of them have been formed in "noun" form with 57.5% as seen in Table 5 below;

Table 5: The second subject group n=200

Group 2 (The ones who have not read the given text)	**Verb**	**Noun**
	85 – 42.5%	115 – 57.5%

As it is seen above, most of the subjects who have not read the formerly given text chose to construct sentences by using the homonymic words in "noun" form.

Table 6: The Homonymic words and their uses by the subjects of the 2nd group n=200

Group 2	**Verb**	**Noun**
yaz	4	6
taş	0	10
dal	2	8
tat	2	8
ara	6	4
yan	2	8
at	3	7
ak	1	9
kan	4	6
çek	6	4
kur	5	5
aç	7	3
yat	8	2
koy	6	4
soy	6	4
boz	5	5
ek	6	4
al	5	5
yay	3	7
an	3	7
Total	**85 – 42.5%**	**115 – 57.5%**

Table 6 gives the second group informants' replies to homonymic items in total. The table shows that the total number of the "noun" selection (115 – 57.5%) by the informants in the second group, who did not read the text, and just saw the homonymic

items in isolation, outnumbers the "verb" selection (85 – 42.5%). As for the first subject group, this one also includes some individual contradictions to the general outcome of the group. In the use of *ara, çek, aç, yat, koy, soy*, and *ek*, the "verb" use of the items outnumbers the "noun" uses. Although the subjects in this group did not come up with any stimulus to activate the "verb" uses of these items the first senses of these items popped up into the informants' minds were the "verb" meanings. This finding contradicts with Talmy's salience hierarchy and cannot be explained through Croft and Cruse's (2004) focus of consciousness and open to debate. But as a whole the total outcome of the replies of the second subject group does not contradict with the salience hierarchy of Talmy stating that "nouns" precede "verbs" in lexical coding.

Table 7: The total replies of the two subject groups.

Group 1 (The ones who have read the given text)			**Group 2 (The ones who have not read the given text)**		
	Verb	**Noun**		**Verb**	**Noun**
yaz	5	5	yaz	4	6
taş	2	8	taş	0	10
dal	4	6	dal	2	8
tat	2	8	tat	2	8
ara	6	4	ara	6	4
yan	6	4	yan	2	8
at	4	6	at	3	7
ak	5	5	ak	1	9
kan	4	6	kan	4	6
çek	5	5	çek	6	4
kur	8	2	kur	5	5
aç	4	6	aç	7	3
yat	7	3	yat	8	2
koy	10	0	koy	6	4
soy	8	2	soy	6	4
boz	6	4	boz	5	5
ek	4	6	ek	6	4
al	8	2	al	5	5
yay	4	6	yay	3	7
an	2	8	an	3	7
Total	**104 – 52%**	**96 – 48%**	**Total**	**85 – 42.5%**	**115 – 57.5%**

Table 7 above gives the total number of the replies of both groups as a whole. When we have a general look at the results it is seen that while the first group tended to choose the "verb" meanings of the homonymic items more frequently (104 – 52%) than the "noun" meaning (96 – 52%); the second group showed a different reaction while choosing the "noun" meaning more frequently (115 – 57.5) than the "verb" meaning (85 – 42.5%). If these results are evaluated in total it is clear that while the "verb" meaning of a homonymic item is activated the cognitive processes in lexical selection of the

informant provided the "verb" classification of the item to pop up into his/her mind. On the other hand, if any activation was not realized, or if any context in which the homonymic items were used was not provided to the informant, the cognitive process ended with giving the "noun" meanings priority independent from attention phenomenon as Talmy (2007) showed in the hierarchical organization of the cognitive process in lexical selection. Also, a one to one checking of the items provides some critical issues to mention. For instance there are two ten to zero selections among 20 items. One of these was realized by the second subject group which has not read the created text. This group used "*taş*" with its "noun" meaning totally, without any exception as parallel to what was expected while the two informants in the other group selected this item as "verb". Another ten to zero selection is from the first subject group who read the text before the application of the data collection tool. All of the subjects in this group tended choose the "verb" meaning of "*koy*" which shows the role of activation of the attention by the created text while four of the other group selected this item to use as "noun".

Discussion

The theoretical ground of the study is based on Talmy (2007) indicating that open-class words have more salience than closed-class ones and among the open-class words it is the "nouns" which may outrank "verbs" in terms of salience in as shown below:

Open-class (N>V) > closed-class (phonological > aphonological)

Taking this proposal into account, the salience hierarchy of some Turkish homonymic expressions is tried to be pointed out through a two-leveled applied study. It has been aimed at figuring out which category to be the more salient one in Turkish native speakers' use of homonymic expressions which have both a "noun" and a "verb" meaning. In order to accomplish this aim one of the subject group has come up with the list of 20 homonymic items firstly at the application process of the study. The findings gathered out of the analysis of the second subject group's results indicate that among a total of 200 sentences produced by the subjects, the number of the usages of homonymic words in sentences as "verb" is 85 with a proportion of 42.5%, while the usages as "noun" are 115 with the proportion of 57.5%. This finding indicates that the subjects who have not read the text in which all the homonymic words included in the study have been used in "verb" form, tended to use the homonymic expression in the sentences they have created in "noun" form. Cruse (2000) in Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008) states that in a situation in which a word has more than one senses, if the context does not have an effect on the meaning of the word or any of the senses are not imposed by the context, the more salient sense overwhelms the less salient one. In the application of the data collection tool for the second subject group the homonymic expressions have not been used in any context, as mentioned above. It is evident throughout the study that the

subjects chose to label and use them mostly in "noun" form. In accordance with Thepkanjana (2008) the category "noun" or the meaning carried through this category seems to be more salient in a context free situation. Cruse (2000), in Thepkanjana (2008) states that the meaning of a word coming to the mind among a bundle of other meanings is the "default meaning". It is entrenchment which makes some meanings in the speaker's mind be "established" and in a context-free situation, the speaker may best use the form evoking the target concept with minimal confusion. It is the most salient sense which first pops into attention and be used with minimal confusion by the speaker. In that sense, it may be asserted that it has been the "noun" form which first pops into the attention of the subjects since the "noun" forms of the homonymic expressions have been preferred to be used to create novel sentences in a context-free situation. The "noun" formation seems to be more salient and thus it can be asserted that it is better established than the "verb" form in terms of homonymic expressions. This finding also correlates with and supports Talmy's (2007) claim indicating that among the open-class words, "nouns" precede "verbs" in salience hierarchy.

The results gathered out of the application of the data collection tool on the first group in which the subjects have read the text before the application indicate different results but paves the way for a new dimension to speculate on. The subjects have used the homonymic expressions in 200 sentences in total. 104 of these sentences included the homonymic words in "verb" form with 52%, while 96 of them included sentences with the homonymic words in "noun" form with 48%. The difference between the frequencies seems to have little importance but it is clear that the rate of the usages differs dramatically between the two groups. While the "noun" usage of the homonymic expressions seem to be dominant (115 – 57.5%) by the applicants of the second group in which the homonyms have been given context-free, in the first group the rate decreases dramatically (96 – 48%). This indicates that the subjects clearly have been affected by the texts they have just read before the application of the data collection tool. The homonymic expressions given in the text have all been used in "verb" form and clearly affected the choice of the subjects in the application. This situation may be interpreted in the way Croft and Cruse (2004) indicating that attention seems to be closest to the focus of consciousness, it comes in degrees and often modeled in terms of degree of activation of conceptual structures in a neural network model of the mind, and also (Talmy, 2007, p. 279-280) stating that when a morpheme is used particularly in an utterance, its context may denote the current relevance of only certain elements of the morpheme's extended reference and such context largely determines where greater attention to be located within this extended reference. The productions of the first subject group seem to be affected by the context created by the researcher. It seems that the "verb" meanings of the homonymic expressions have been entrenched for the time being and thus this category has been more strongly established. This activation resulted in the creations of the subjects'. Table 8 depicts the results of the two groups together.

Table 8: The two subject groups together n=200

	Verb	**Noun**
Group 1 (The ones who have read the given text)	**104 – 52%**	96 – 48%
Group 2 (The ones who have not read the given text)	85 – 42.5%	**115 – 57.5%**

Conclusion

The phenomenon of salience is tried to be examined in terms of some Turkish homonymic words. Each of the homonymic expression chosen for the study has both a "verb" and a "noun" reading. The analysis is based on an experiment which includes an off-line data collection tool. The subjects filled out the data collection tool by using each of the homonymic expressions in a sentence by the first meaning that pops into their minds. The subjects have been divided into two groups, the members of the first group have read a text in which all the homonymic expressions have been used in "verb" form. The subjects of the first group aimed at using the homonymic expressions in "verb" form with 52%. The results of this first group supports the claim of Croft and Cruse (2004) indicating that the attention phenomenon is related with the focus of consciousness and modeled in terms of degree of activation and Talmy, (2007, p. 279-280) stating that context may denote the current relevance of only certain elements of the extended reference of the morpheme and determines the location of the greater attention.

The subjects in the second group have not read the above mentioned text. They tended to use the homonymic expressions mostly in "noun" form with 57.5%. This finding indicates that when the tested expressions are given out of context the salience hierarchy comes into play. Talmy's (2007) salience hierarchy indicates that always open-class words precede the closed-class ones, and among the open-class words, "nouns" precede "verbs". The findings seem to support this claim. It seems that it is the "noun" reading of the homonymic expression which first comes to the minds of the language users. While the precedence of the "noun" meaning opposed to the "verb" meaning of the same word supports Talmy's salience hierarchy claim, further evidence, which may still be open to debate, favoring the hierarchy comes from another cognitive based study of (Gillette, Gleitman, Gleitman, & Lederer, 2001 in Boroditsky, 2001) stating that in a test of guessing what was said in a silent movie in which mothers were talking to their children, the adult participants were able to correctly guess nouns three times more often than verbs.

While the findings of the study reveal the coding of the "nouns" hierarchically in a higher degree than the "verbs" in a context-free manner, the use of the utterances in a controlled context affect the salience of the same words in terms of coding them as "nouns" or "verbs" by the speakers.

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Appendix I

The Text which has been applied for the subject group.1

Kitaplarını masanın üzerine dikkatlice yaydı, kalemini aldı ve az önce bozduğu metni tekrar yazmak için oturdu. Birden çekmeceyi açtı ve gözüne, oraya dün koymuş olduğu, yatmış vaziyette duran masa saati ilişti. Bir an için daldı farkında olmadan, saati kendisine hediye eden arkadaşını andı, sonra saati çıkarttı ve kurdu. Saatin çıkarttığı ses, yazarken kendisini rahatsız etmesin diye kalkıp mutfağa bıraktı. Mutfakta gözüne önce akan musluk, sonra taşmış suyun ocaktaki yansıması ve son olarak da eve girer girmez büyük bir iştahla soyduğu ama sonra yanmış ekmeklerin yanına attığı kararmış muz parçası ilişti. Şöyle bir tattı, beğenmedi. Buzdolabını açıp içecek bir şeyler aradı. Su şişesini aldı, biraz limon suyu ve şeker ekleyip içti. Tekrar çalışma odasına döndü. Sandalyesini çekti, masaya yerleşti. Yazıyı düzeltmesini söyleyen editöre kızdı bir an için, nasıl kandım o adama diye düşündü ve yazmaya başladı tekrar.

Appendix II

The Data Collection Tool

Aşağıda verilen sözcüklerin her biriyle, sözcüğü okuduğunuz anda aklınıza ilk gelen anlamını kullanarak bir tümce oluşturunuz.

Yaz, Taş, Dal, Tat, Ara, Yan, At, Ak, Kan, Çek, Kur, Aç, Yat, Koy, Soy, Boz, Ek, Al, Yay, An