GENDER-BASED USE OF CONCESSION: INSIGHTS FROM TURKISH SPOKEN DISCOURSE

TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET TEMELLİ ÖDÜNLEME KULLANIMI: TÜRKÇE SÖZLÜ SÖYLEME DAYALI BULGULAR

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Abstract

Concessive relations have been defined in terms of concepts such as surprise, counter-expectation, incompatibility, or conflict between clauses in literature. Concession can be marked explicitly by a range of linguistic resources or expressed implicitly and perceived by the hearer based on contextual cues. In previous studies, various functions of concession including expressing a contrast, preventing potential misunderstandings, correction/repair, alignment, and topic management have been reported. Traditional view on gender and language allege that women tend to seek common ground, avoid disagreement and be polite. The current view, on the other hand, claim that discourse context is determinant on such tendencies. Considering the discursive functions of concession, it can be presumed that women opt for concession more frequently than men do. Therefore, the aim of this study is twofold: to determine (if any) gender-based differences (i) in the marking and use of concessive resources and (ii) in the functions of concession in Turkish spoken discourse within the framework of Interactional Linguistics. The database of the study consists of the transcriptions of six-

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Ödünleyici ilişkiler alanyazında şaşırma, karşıt beklenti, iki tümce arasında uyumsuzluk, çatışma ya da uygunsuzluk olarak tanımlanmıştır. Ödünleme çeşitli dilsel kaynaklar kullanılarak açık biçimde işaretlenebildiği gibi, örtük olarak da gerçekleştirilebilmekte ve bağlamsal bilgiye dayalı olarak dinleyici tarafından yorumlanabilmektedir. Önceki çalışmalarda ödünlemenin karşıtlığın gösterilmesi, olası yanlış anlaşılmaların önlenmesi, düzeltme/onarım, uzlaşma ve konu yönetimi işlevleriyle kullanıldığı ortaya konmuştur. Diğer taraftan, dil kullanımı ve cinsiyet ile ilgili geleneksel bakış açısı, kadınların ortak paydada buluşma, anlaşmazlıktan kaçınma ve kibar dil kullanma eğiliminde olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Ödünlemenin söylemsel işlevleri dikkate alındığında, kadınların ödünlemeyi erkeklerden daha sık kullandığı savlanabilir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı Türkçe sözlü söylemde (i) ödünlenmenin işaretlenmesi ve ödünleyici dilsel kaynakların kullanımında ve (ii) ödünlemenin işlevlerinde (varsa) cinsiyet farklılıklarının Etkileşimsel Dilbilim çerçevesinde belirlenmesidir. Çalışmanın veri tabanı altı saatlik Türkçe gündelik söylem kayıtlarından elde edilen

hour daily Turkish conversations. Our findings have revealed that concession is mostly marked explicitly (83.5%) with no significant difference between the female and male participants and the most used concessive marker is 'ama' (but) by both genders (33.7%). As for the functions, the concessions are mostly used to express a contrast (49.4%) with no significant difference between male and female speakers. These findings support the view that it is not the gender of the speakers but the discourse context that shapes the language use.

çevriyazı metinlerinden oluşmaktadır. Bulgularımız, ödünlemenin en çok açık biçimde gerçekleştirildiğini (83.5%), ancak cinsiyetler arasında anlamlı bir fark olmadığını göstermiştir. Türkçe sözlü söylemde en sık kullanılan ödünleyici dilsel kaynağın 'ama' olduğu saptanmıştır (33.7%). Ödünlemenin işlevleri açısından ise, veri tabanımızda ödünlemenin en çok karşıtlığın gösterilmesi (49.4%) amacıyla kullanıldığı, ancak cinsiyetler açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olmadığı ortaya konmuştur. Çalışmamızda ödünlemenin işaretlenmesi ve işlevleri bakımından cinsiyete dayalı bir farklılık saptanmamıştır. Bu bulgular, dil kullanımının konuşucuların cinsiyetine göre değil, söylem bağlamına göre biçimlendiği ortaya koyması bakımından cinsiyet ve konuşma biçemleri ile ilgili güncel görüşü desteklemektedir.

INTRODUCTION

Concession is a particular relation holding between the interpretations of two clausal arguments, where the situation described in the main clause is contrary to what is expected in the subordinate clause (König, 1986). Therefore, concessive constructions are used to assert two propositions against the background assumption that the relevant situations do not normally go together (Haspelmath & König, 1998, p. 566).

Considered as a ubiquitous and universal feature of communication across languages (González & Taboada, 2021, p.96) concessive relation has been addressed from various viewpoints in the literature. There is a large body of research devoted to the description of concession in syntactic, logical, semantic, textual and rhetorical aspects in an attempt to provide a clear understanding of the formal and functional properties of this relation, which still lacks a generally accepted definition (Heine, 2002, p.91). From a discourse-functional perspective, concessive practices are considered as a recurrent phenomenon in conversation and have been shown to have important roles in social interplay (Lindström & Londen, 2013, p.4). In recent years, due to growing interest in spoken discourse, concession has begun to be analyzed in conversational settings to identify its interactional functions.

Conversation, through which interpersonal actions are performed, displays regular patterns emerging out of the contributions of different participants. Ordinary conversation or everyday talk is considered as the central and most prototypical form of language (Chafe 1998, p. 98; Wooffitt, 2005, p. 19; Pianese, 2006, p.1043). Thus, the analysis of spoken discourse explicates what language accomplishes in our lives and in society in general (Cameron, 2001, p. 7) and enables researchers to understand the dynamics of social life and how individuals pursue their relationships (Sert, Balaman, Daşkın, Büyükgüzel & Ergül, 2015, p. 3). As a recurrent pattern in conversation, concession is employed by discourse participants to achieve certain tasks in talk-in-interaction as a means to maintain social relationships.

Interactional Linguistics (IL) attempts to describe linguistic structures and their meanings over the social goals they serve to achieve in naturally occurring spoken language (Lindström, 2009, p. 96), adopting the view that linguistic analysis should seek to uncover how language is used for particular tasks and purposes in conversation (Kern & Selting, 2013, p.1). This interactional line of research has revealed that concession is used to achieve various interactional goals in spoken discourse. In addition to its function to express two contrasting situations as its name denotes, concession has been shown to facilitate social interaction through several mechanisms such as managing disrupting viewpoints, acknowledging opposite viewpoints, seeking alignment, building intersubjectivity, preventing disagreement through the use of hedges, repairs, corrections, and politeness strategies (Pomerantz, 1984; Couper-Kuhlen

& Thompson, 2000; Barth, 2000; Barth-Weingarten, 2003; Koivisto, 2012; Linström & Londen, 2013; Günthner, 2016; Pfänder, 2016).

Considering these discursive functions of concession, women might be expected to use concession more often than men because women have been associated with facilitative, conciliatory, collaborative, indirect, supportive, affectively-oriented, person/process-oriented interactional styles in the literature (Holmes, 2006, p.6). Extensive research on language and gender has revealed interactional styles indexing femininity including the use of facilitative language, giving supportive feedback, preferring indirectness, and using conciliatory strategies (Ochs, 1992; Eckert and McConnell and Ginet, 2003).

Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to determine (if any) gender-based differences (i) in the marking and use of concessive resources and (ii) in the functions of concession in Turkish spoken discourse within the framework of Interactional Linguistics. To this end, we first present how concession is marked in Turkish and then its interactional functions as found in the related literature.

1.1. Concessive Relations and the Marking of Concession in Turkish

Various definitions have been proposed for concessive relations in the literature from different perspectives. Morphosyntactic studies focus on the typical realizations of concession through two syntactic mechanisms, namely, hypotaxis and parataxis or with several grammatical mechanisms including concessive connectives, prepositional phrases, adverbial clauses, conjunctional adverbs among others (Vergaro, 2014, p.554). Considering that speakers usually strive to make their contributions to discourse coherent, concessivity has also been studied in terms of adverbial clause linking (Hilpert, 2013), coherence relations and discourse markers (Stede & Umbach, 1998; Zeyrek & Soycan, 2018).

From a semantic point of view, concession is defined by comparing it to the contrastive and causal relations (König, 1985; Verhagen, 2000). Concessive relations are asserted to arise from a contrast between the effects of two causal relations, where the first relation 'creates' and the second relation 'denies' the expectation (Robaldo & Miltsakaki, 2014, p.3). Concessive sentences indicate that the situation described in the main clause (B) is contrary to what is expected in relation to what is expressed in the subordinate clause (A) (König, 1986).

For example, the presupposition arising from Example (1)a below can be expressed as in (1)b (Crevels, 2000, p. 313):

(1)   a. *Even though* he had not eaten for days, he looked strong and healthy.

       b. If one does not eat for days, one normally does not look strong and healthy.

In (1a) the incompatibility between one's not eating for days and their strong and healthy look is explicitly marked with *even though*, which emphasizes the concessive nature of the sentence it introduces.

(2)   It was raining *but* Peter went out.

In Example (2), the information that Peter went out could be considered as surprising in the light of the information that it was raining. This time, the incompatibility between the clauses is marked with *but* (Iten, 2005, p.106).

Previous research on the formal categorization of concession strived to determine how concession is marked in different languages, particularly by taking a concessive item such as 'although' in English or 'obwohl' in German as a point of departure. This method has been criticized for overlooking the less established markers and ignoring the contribution of context to draw a concessive interpretation from a speaker's utterance without any explicit concessive marker (Barth-Weingarten, 2003:78). The fact that the established concessive connectives can also signal other relations (Thompson, 1987, p.69), and that different constructions and lexical items can be used to express the same relation (Iten, 2005, p.108) calls for a pragmatic perspective especially when concession is analyzed in spoken discourse.

From a discourse-pragmatic perspective, concession is considered as a text relation connecting clauses and larger units in discourse as suggested by Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST), where a presupposition between the propositions is denied (Mann and Thompson, 1987). It is also analyzed as a type of coherence/discourse relation combining two clauses in a potential or apparent contradiction (Taboada & Gómez-González, 2012; Aksan & Demirhan, 2018; Zeyrek-Bozşahin & Soycan, 2018). Adopting this point of view, Antaki &Wetherell (1999) introduced *show concessions*, a three-part discourse pattern of *proposition*, *concession,* and *reassertion* in conversation. Similarly, Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson (2000) developed a tripartite move structure called *Cardinal Concessive Schema* prototypically consisting of *claim*, *acknowledgement* and *counterclaim* in their action-oriented approach and have put emphasis on the functions of concession in talk-in-interaction.

The fuzziness in literature regarding what concession is holds for how concession is marked. Various linguistic items such as conjunctions, prepositions, prepositional phrases, correlative conjuncts, discourse markers, subordinators, converbs have been reported in the literature as concessive markers (Stede & Umbach, 1998; Taboada & Gómez-González, 2012). However, it is difficult to classify linguistic cues signaling concession, and to make an informed choice among a set of candidate markers and constructions (Grote et al., 1997, p. 89). According to Chen (2000), a concessive sentence is a complex structure made up of a subordinate clause and a matrix clause, where the subordinate clause involves conceding or presupposing the existence of an

actual or hypothetical adverse situation and the matrix clause denotes a situation contrary to the expectation. Any linguistic device serving to mark this relationship is a concessive marker.

On the other hand, participants of discourse are able to understand discourse-pragmatic relations even when they aren't explicitly marked. As well as overt markers, concessive relations can also be expressed implicitly in discourse (Taboada & Gomez-Gonzalez, 2012, p. 21). In studies on English (Barth-Weingarten, 2003) and Polish (Szczyrbak, 2014), the spoken data have shown that concessivity does not have to be expressed overtly, the discourse-pragmatic relations between segments of talk can be understood by the participants of discourse based on the context even when they are not signaled by a concessive marker.

Adopting the working definition proposed by Chen (2000), in the present study concessive resources in Turkish mostly draws on Göksel & Kerslake (2005). Both explicitly marked concessive relations and implicit constructions have been taken into account in the data analysis. Through literature review, it has been found that there are fifteen concessive markers in Turkish from various lexical categories (Table 1).

Table 1. Concessive markers in Turkish

Categories with concessive function	Concessive resources
Discourse connectives	bununla birlikte/beraber (in spite of this, despite this, nevertheless), gerçi/hoş/aslında (it's true that/admittedly/ actually), halbuki/oysa (ki) (whereas/however), gene de/yine de (and yet/still), her ne kadar (although)
Conjunctions	ama/ancak/fakat/lakin/yalnız (but), ne var ki/gel gör ki/ gelgelelim/ mamafih (however), dA/ya (but)
Postpositions	-e rağmen/karşın (in spite of)
Converbs/Adverbials	-dIğI halde/AcAğI halde (although), -mAklA birlikte/beraber (although) -(y)ken (while), hala (still)
Conditional suffix+clitic	-sA dA-/sA bile (even if)
Universal conditional concessives	Question phrase + sA dA/sA bile (no matter wh-)

As indicated in Table 1, concessive resources in Turkish are coded by a range of linguistic resources. In Turkish, in addition to the established discourse connectives, conjunctions, postpositions, converb/adverbials, universal conditional concessives also code concessivity (Menz, 2016). Question phrases combined with –sA e.g. Nereye giderseniz gidin (No matter

where you go) denote the failure (predicted or actual) to achieve an objective despite the efforts expressed in the conditional clause (Göksel & Kerslake, 2005, p. 435). The concessive function of *hala* (still) in spoken discourse has been document in a recent study (Aydın & Ercan, 2020). The said linguistic resources of concession perform various functions as presented in the following section.

1.2. Functions of Concession in Spoken Discourse

A review of the literature on the functions of concession in spoken discourse have revealed that discourse participants use concession to achieve various interactional goals. Results of the studies on English (Barth-Weingarten, 2003), French (Pfänder, 2016), Spanish (Taboada & Gomez-Gonzalez, 2012), German (Grote el a., 1997; Günthner, 2016), Polish (Szczyrbak, 2014), Swedish (Lindström & Londen, 2013), and Finnish (Koivisto, 2012) spoken data have determined various functions, some of which have been termed differently although they in fact denote similar functions. Therefore, within the scope of this study, these functions have been gathered under five functions (Table 2).

Table 2. Functions of Concession in Spoken Discourse

Function	Explanation	Example
Expressing a contrast	Suggesting a different conclusion by pointing out the existence of a state of affairs which would not normally be expected to co-exist with the previous statement (Barth-Weingarten, 2003).	Although it was December, no snow fell, and the temperature rose to 20 degrees (Grote et al., 1997).
Preventing potential misunderstandings	Preventing the hearer from drawing false implicatures from discourse based on general world knowledge (Grote et al., 1997).	Windows is very cheap. That doesn't mean you should buy it though, because it is full of bugs (Grote et al., 1997).
Correction/repair	a. other-correction: Restricting the validity of the other speaker's previous claim (Barth-Weingarten, 2003).	Klaus: This is really the best beer. I mean among the alcohol-free ones. Hans: Hmm. Although there are better ones. For example, Becks is far more drinkable (Günthner, 2000).
	b. self-correction: the speaker's backing down from their earlier position (Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson, 2000; Barth-Weingarten, 2003).	I haven't had a piece of meat. I had a little bit of meat in tacos on Monday but not much (Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson, 2005).

Alignment	Enhancing intersubjectivity in interaction by acknowledging other viewpoints, signalling reciprocity between participants, and contributing to preference for agreement (Lindström & Londen, 2013)	Because it... It is a regular full-time job even though it might not be the great great school (Taboada & Gomez-Gonzalez, 2012).
Topic management	Changing the topic in a conversation (Taboada & Gomez-Gonzalez, 2012). Helping the topic develop away from a controversial topic (Barth-Weingarten, 2003)	...and she is the same, like really lovely, just like Mom was, only more lively, and Monica, on the other hand, has grown a lot (Taboada & Gomez-Gonzalez, 2012).

As seen on Table 2, participants in an interaction use concession in order to *express a contrast with the previous statement uttered*, *prevent potential misunderstanding of the hearer*, *correct/repair their own or the other's statement*, *align their viewpoints with the listener's for agreement* and *manage the topic for avoiding controversy with the listener* in spoken discourse, some of which are attributed to women's speech in the traditional approach in gender studies as briefly explained under the next title.

1.3. Gender and Language Use

Much of the literature on gender and language have attempted to reveal how gender and language use is interrelated, and to what extent men and women use language differently (Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1991, 1993; Holmes, 1995, 2006; Coates, 1998; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003). Adopting explanatory theories such as dominance, deficiency, and difference, much of early work reported gendered ways of communication. For example, it has been alleged that women interrupt less than men in mixed-sex conversations (Zimmerman & West, 1975, West & Zimmerman,1983); ask more questions in dyadic interactions (Mulac, Weimann, Widenmann & Gibson, 1988); use more polite forms, hedges and tag questions that make them sound tentative, hesitant or uncertain (Lakoff, 1975; Fishman, 1980); use more positive politeness strategies (Holmes, 1995), and indirect speech (Lakoff, 1975; Conley, O'Barr & Lind, 1978).

According to Tannen (1991) for most women, conversation is primarily a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships, which she calls *rapport-talk*, whereas for most men, talk is primarily a means to preserve independence, negotiate, and maintain status in a hierarchical social order, which she calls *report-talk*. This suggests that men use language mostly for instrumental purposes to convey information, while women use language for social purposes (Newman, Groom, Handelman & Pennebaker, 2008, p. 212). Such findings

have given rise to the idea that women talk to build solidarity, while men talk to maintain status and hierarchical order (Tannen, 1994).

As for the linguistic marking of the so-called women's language, a range of linguistic devices have been reported in the literature. For example, tag questions (e.g., isn't it?) and pragmatic particles (e.g., you know) have been considered as facilitative devices; minimal responses (e.g., yeah) have been considered to provide encouraging feedback; the use of interrogatives (e.g., could you pass that file?) rather than imperatives have been associated with indirectness, and the use of mitigating epistemic modals (e.g., might) and attenuating pragmatic particles (e.g., sort of) have been associated with conciliatory strategies used by women to soften and hedge requests and statements (Lakoff, 1975; Ochs, 1992; Holmes, 2001).

More recent research however, adopts the view that the differences between women and men in language involves more complex processes rather than gender alone, and researchers should consider the context in which interactions take place (Prabhakaran & Rambow, 2017, p.23). 'Context' here refers to not only the time and place, but also the structure and function of a communicative event and the relationship between its members (Mizokami, 2001, p. 149). Bergvall (1999) draws attention to the importance of context as well and states that it would be more appropriate to analyze linguistic data in a linguistic and behavioral continuum rather than categorizing people and their verbal behavior into opposed groups. For example, tag questions may have numerous communicative functions in actual discourse (Hellinger & Bussmann, 2003). Similarly, Holmes (1984) makes a distinction between 'modal tags' and 'affective tags'. While 'modal tags' request confirmation and signal speaker's uncertainty; 'affective tags' indicate concern for the addressee. In this regard, 'affective tags' are considered as facilitative as they serve to saving the face of the addressee (e.g. you don't look too good today, do you?) or to encourage the addressee to take the floor (e.g. her pictures are quite static in comparison, aren't they?). The use of affective tags by women have been associated with cooperative speech style reflecting women's competence as conversationalists (Holmes, 1984).

Along the same line, politeness has been associated with women and interpreted as a way to seek approval and avoid strong statements. However, it has also been reported that politeness can be used strategically by women to change or affect power relations (Cameron & Coates, 1985). Analysis of politeness requires attention to context, the community of practice in which the people are taking part and cannot be codified according to linguistic form alone (Mills, 2003; Holmes & Schnurr, 2005).

Similarly, in certain contexts, questions, and qualifiers (e.g. just, you know), indirectness (e.g. perhaps), rapport-building expressions (e.g. why don't we) serve to facilitate or control the conversation rather than signaling hesitance or uncertainty (Litoselliti, 2013, p.33). Coates

(2013) argues that the use of hedges by women can be explained by topic change, women's tendency to self-disclosure or preference for open discussion and a collaborative floor. On the other hand, Ercan (2003) found no statistically significant difference between male and female op-ed writers representing liberal ideology in terms of the frequency of using hedges and associated this finding with the mitigating role of liberal media on the case at hand, rather than the gender of the writers.

Apparently, as manifested by the examples, a linguistic form may have multiple functions in context and particular social meanings coded by conversational styles can only be interpreted in discourse contexts (Weatherell, 2002, p. 62; Holmes, 2006, p.7).

In the present study, we aim to reveal if females' and males' use of concessions in spoken discourse vary in terms of linguistic marking and functions. Considering that concession fulfills various goals in spoken discourse and expressed explicitly using various linguistic resources and implicitly, the examination of concession requires an analytical framework that takes into account both ways. Offering researchers these methodological means and studying language use in talk-in-interaction, Interactional Linguistics comes forward as the most appropriate model for the analysis of spoken discourse.

2. INTERACTIONAL LINGUISTICS

Interactional linguistics (IL) is a relatively new theory and method with a functional approach to language. Conceptualizing linguistic structure as a resource for social action IL perspective holds the view that linguistic categories and structures are designed for service in the organization of social interaction and thus, they must be analyzed and described functionally. IL seeks to explain how interaction is shaped by language and, in turn, how language shapes interaction (Selting &Couper-Kuhlen &, 2001, p.1; Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2017, p.15).

The goal of IL is to provide a description of both the forms and functions of linguistic phenomena in talk-in-interaction (Kern & Selting, 2013, p.1). Profoundly influenced by Conversation Analysis (CA), IL is considered as a multidisciplinary approach to language. Its methodology takes into account both the sequential analysis of naturally occurring talk as practiced by CA and rhetorical, lexico-semantic, morpho-syntactic, segmental-phonetic, vocal-prosodic means used in sequences (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2017, p.9).

According to IL methodology, researchers can choose one of the two possible starting points for their research: i) they may start with a particular interactional task and then look for the grammatical constructions used to carry out that task; ii) they may start with a particular grammatical construction and then proceed to analyze what interactional purposes those

constructions serve (Pfänder, 2016, p. 96). IL is an empirical and data-driven approach to language use in social interaction and its principle source of data is interaction in everyday, private or institutional contexts between minimum two participants who directly converse with each other (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2017, p.11).

IL approaches talk-in-interaction from the point of view of talk. Its main interest is in "conceptualizing linguistic structure as resources for social interaction" (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2017: 4; Rühlemann, 2020, p.1). Considering that concession is also a resource for social action through the functions it fulfills in talk-in-interaction, the present study adopts IL as its theoretical framework to determine the functions of concession in Turkish spoken data.

3. METHOD AND DATABASE

3.1. Data Collection and Participants

According to Cameron (2001) spoken language data consists of audio or video recordings of people talking, which is then transcribed to represent the talk in written form to serve as the main input of the study for analysis. The aim of the researcher determines the type of data and method used in the study. In principle, analysis of spoken discourse uses language produced in natural environment as data (Akar & Martı, 2015, p.245). In recent years, quantification has come to be accepted as an addition to the methodological toolbox in IL (Couper- Kuhlen & Selting 2017: 13). As required by IL, the study uses naturally spoken language as its research material and employs quantitative data analysis methods.

Accordingly, this study uses six-hour audio recordings of Turkish daily spoken discourse consisting of sixteen conversations among a total of 32 participants (22 females, 10 males) between the ages of 26-50. The participants, who were all Turkish native speakers, were chosen among people who were friends, colleagues or partners, with no superior-subordinate relationship; and from various professions including university lecturers, teachers, engineers, office workers, a lawyer and a software developer. All of the participants were at least university graduates and were informed that the recording would be used for academic purposes.

The recordings were transcribed using simple orthographic transcription method without any speech delivery markers since the study did not take into account prosodic or paralinguistic features (Jenks, 2011, p. 22). The database of the study consisted of the resulting 43.815-word transcription text. In the transcriptions, the participants have been coded as S1, S2 (Speaker 1, Speaker 2).

Two-proportion Z test was run on Minitab 19 Statistical Package Program to compare frequency and percentages of explicit and implicit concessions. The functions of concession

determined in our database have been double-checked by an independent researcher who specializes in linguistics. Fisher's Exact Chi-Square Test and Pearson Chi-Square tests were used to compare the use of concessive markers and concessive functions between genders using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows version 25.0.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first aim of the study is to determine whether there are differences between the female and male participants in terms of the use of concessive markers and the second aim is to determine the functions of concession in Turkish spoken discourse. To this end, we have first identified whether concession is mostly marked explicitly or implicitly and then determined the functions they serve in our database. Examples of explicit and implicit concessions are presented below:

(3)   Aşağıda dün canım tatlı istedi diye bir tane aldım. *Hala* duruyor.

         (Downstairs, I bought a dessert yesterday as I craved for it. It is *still* there.)

In (3) from our database, the speaker draws attention to the incompatibility between the situations of 'wanting to eat and thus buying some dessert' and 'not eating the dessert'. The dissonance between the clauses is marked explicitly with *hala.*

(4)   Annem ve kayınvalidem benim evliliğim süresince on sekiz yıl bir ya da iki kez görüştüler. Şimdi her Perşembe görüşüyorlar.

         (My mother and mother-in-law met only once or twice during the course of my marriage for eighteen years. Now, they meet every Thursday.)

In example (4), the speaker talks about his mother and mother-in-law's frequency of coming together during the course of his eighteen years of marriage and after his divorce. The fact that the two women met quite rarely during their children's eighteen years of marriage raises an expectation that they might not enjoy each other's company. However, this expectation fails when the speaker announces that, after his divorce, the two women now meet regularly on a weekly basis. This failed expectation could have been expressed with an explicit marker such as *but*, however, the speaker chooses to express concessive meaning implicitly in this statement.

In order to determine (potential) gender-based differences in the marking of concession and in functions of concession in our database, we have to identify the frequency and percentages of explicit and implicit concessions. Analysis of the transcriptions found a total of 174 concessive expressions in our database. Of these 174 expressions, concession is explicitly marked in 145 (83.5%) and implicitly in the remaining 29 (16.5%). The frequency, percentage, and Z test values of concessive clauses are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Explicit and implicit concessions in database

Type of concession	Frequency	(%)	Z test value	p value
Explicit	145	83.5	16,69	0,000
Implicit	29	16.5		
Total	174	100		

The results of the two-proportions Z test revealed a significant difference between explicit and implicit concession (P<0,005) showing that explicit concessions are more frequently used in the database than implicit concessions.

This finding supports the results of corpus-based studies on the marking of concession in Turkish in written medium (Zeyrek, 2017; Zeyrek-Bozşahin & Soycan, 2018; Aksan & Demirhan, 2018). Furthermore, our findings support those of Barth-Weingarten (2003) in English, Taboada & Gomez-Gonzalez (2012) in English and Spanish and Xu et al. (2018) in Chinese languages in that concessive relations are mostly marked explicitly. As reported by Blumenthal-Drame & Kortmann, (2017) there is a general tendency for concessive relations to be marked overtly and this is attributed to the fact that processing concession is a cognitively demanding process (Xu et al., 2018).

Based on our findings we could state that concessions are mostly expressed explicitly in Turkish spoken discourse. Gender differences in terms of frequency of implicit concessions and the distribution of explicit markers are presented in the following section.

4.1. Gender-based differences in the use of concessive markers

Of the 174 concessive expressions in our database, 145 are constructed with explicit concessive markers. In this section, we demonstrate the distribution of the use of 15 Turkish concessive markers according to gender (Table 4).

Of the fifteen concessive markers presented in Section 1.1. (Table 1) *–dIĞI halde/-AcAĞI halde* (although), *-mAklA birlikte/beraber* (although), *bununla birlikte/beraber* (despite/in spite of this, nevertheless), *ne var ki/gel gör ki/gelgelelim/maamafih* (however) have not been identified in our database and therefore are not included in the analysis.

Table 4. Use of concessive markers according to gender

		Gender		
		Female n (%)	Male n (%)	Total
Concessive marker	-*E* rağmen/karşın (in spite of)	2 (2,2)	2 (2,4)	4 (2,3)
	-yken (*while*)	2 (2,2)	2 (2,4)	4 (2,3)
	sA dA/sA bile (*even if*)	5 (5,6)	8 (9,4)	13 (7,4)
	her ne kadar (*although*)	2 (2,2)	1 (1,2)	3 (1,7)
	ama/ancak/fakat/lakin/yalnız (*but*)	32 (35,6)	27 (31,8)	59 (33,7)
	gerçi/hoş/aslında (*it's true that/admittedly/ actually*)	17 (18,9)	14 (16,5)	31 (17,7)
	Question phrase+sA dA/-sA bile (*no matter wh-*)	3 (3,3)	2 (2,4)	5 (2,9)
	gene de/yine de (*and yet/still*)	5 (5,6)	0 (0,0)	5 (2,9)
	halbuki/oysa ki (*whereas/however*)	0 (0,0)	1 (1,2)	1 (0,6)
	dA/yA (*but*)	9 (10,0)	11 (12,9)	20 (11,4)
	hala (*still*)	1 (1,1)	0 (0,0)	1 (0,6)
	Implicit concession	12 (13,3)	17 (20,0)	29 (16,6)
	Total	90 (100,0)	85 (100,0)	175 (100,0)
	Test value p value	10,006 0,535		

As for the differences between the genders in terms of implicit concessions, we found that the male speakers use a higher rate of implicit concession (20%) than the female speakers (13,3%) however, with no statistically significant difference.

Fisher's Exact Chi-Square Test has been conducted to test whether there is a significant relationship between the use of explicit concessive markers and gender. Results have revealed no statistically significant difference between the genders in terms of the use of concessive markers in Turkish spoken data (p>0,535).

Table 4 demonstrates that the most common concessive marker in our database is *ama* (but), which has been categorized collectively with its functional equivalents *fakat*, *lakin*, *ancak* and *yalnız*. Of the total of 145 explicit concessive expressions in our database, 59 (33,7%) have been marked with *ama*.

(5)   Elektrik kesiliyor *ama* adam kitaptan hikaye okumaya devam ediyor.

        (The electricity goes out, *but* the man continues to read a story from the book.)

The situation expressed in Example (5) involves a man reading a book to his son at night. Normally, when the electricity goes out at night one could no longer read. The unexpected situation that the father continues reading is expressed with *ama* (but) in this example.

Our finding that *ama* (but) is the most used concessive marker supports previous studies in Turkish and other languages. For Turkish, Ruhi (1998) and Zeyrek (2014) analyzed the similarities and differences between two contrastive-concessive discourse connectives *ama* (but/yet) and *fakat* (but) in written Turkish in the Turkish Discourse Bank. Zeyrek (2014) concluded that *ama* signals concession and pragmatic interpretations more readily than *fakat* does, suggesting that *ama* has a better ability to access inferences in discourse. Similarly, for English, Robaldo et al. (2014, p.13) reported that among a total of 1193 tokens of explicit connectives annotated with concession, contra-expectation and expectation in Penn Discourse Bank, 508 tokens (42%) were marked with *but*. Another study analyzing concessive markers in written and spoken data found that *but* and its Spanish equivalent *pero* were by far the most commonly used markers for English and Spanish in both the written and spoken modes (Taboada & Gomez-Gonzalez, 2012).

The second most used concessive marker in our database is the group of discourse connectives *gerç*i, *hoş*, *aslında*. These connectives have been collectively analyzed in the database as they are considered as functionally equivalent (Göksel & Kerslake, 2005, p. 449; Aksan & Demirhan, 2018, p. 181).

(6)   Devlet hastaneleri yapmıyordu. Hala yapmıyor. *Gerçi* burası başlamış ama.

        (Public hospitals didn't use to run that (test). They still don't. *Actually*, this hospital started to run it.

In (6) the speaker talks about a medical test that she asserts that is not run in the public hospitals. She then corrects her statement that the hospital in her town started to run the test. The incompatibility between the two clauses is marked with *gerçi* in this example.

In functional terms, *gerçi*, *hoş*, *aslında* mark the statement they introduce as contradictory to what has previously been said (Göksel & Kerslake, 2005: 449). Aksan & Demirhan (2018) analyzed the instances of *gerçi*, *hoş*, *aslında* discourse connectives in the Turkish National Corpus. The study found *gerçi… ama* (admittedly/true…but) sequence as the most commonly used concessive-contrast connective.

In the present study, of the 31 instances of *gerçi*, *hoş*, *aslında,* 17 (18,9%) are used by the female participants, while 14 (16,5%) are used by the male participants, with no statistically significant difference (P>0,535)

The third most commonly used concessive marker in the database is *dA* and its relatively older equivalent ya. The analysis found 20 instances of concessive *dA* and no instances of *ya*.

(7)   Bizimkiler nefret ediyor doktora gitmekten *de* mecbur gidiyorlar.

        (My parents hate going to doctor, *but* they go because they have to).

In Example (7), the speaker talks about her parents stating that they hate going to the doctor, but finally they end up going to the doctor. The incompatibility between the two situations is marked with *dA*.

In our database, of the 20 instances of *dA* among 145 explicitly marked concessions, 9 (10,0%) are used by the female participants, while 11 (12,9%) are used by the male participants, without a significant difference.

Our findings reveal no statistically significant difference between genders in terms of the use of concessive markers in Turkish belonging to various lexical categories. This finding contradicts the results of Mondorf (2002) who compared gender-based usage frequency of finite adverbial clauses in a corpus of spoken British English. The study reported that concessives are the only type of adverbial clauses that are used more frequently by men than women (2002, p.86).

In the present study, our first aim was to determine gender-based differences firstly in the marking and use of concessive resources. Now that we identified no gender-based difference in terms of the use of concessive markers in our database, We continue with the second aim of the study, which is to uncover gender-based differences in terms of the functions of the concession in spoken discourse in the following section.

4.2. Gender-based differences in functions of concession

Earlier in section 1.2. we have touched upon the five functions of concession in spoken discourse based on literature data. Across languages, concession has been reported to fulfil the functions of *expressing a contrast*, *preventing potential misunderstandings*, *correction/repair*, *alignment,* and *topic management* in spoken discourse.

At this stage, we first present the distribution of these functions in our database and then document gender-based differences in terms of these functions.

The most used functions of concession in our database are *expressing a contrast* (49,4%), *correction/repair* (25,3%), *alignment* (11,5%), *preventing potential misunderstandings* (9,2%), and *topic management* (4,6%) respectively. Distribution of these functions according to gender is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Gender-based distribution of concessive functions

| | | Gender | | |
		Female n (%)	Male n (%)	Total
Functions of concession	Expressing a contrast	44 (53,0)	42 (46,2)	86 (49,4)
	Preventing potential misunderstandings	6 (7,2)	10 (11,0)	16 (9,2)
	Correction/repair (self-correction + other-correction)	19 (22,9)	25 (27,5)	44 (25,3)
	Alignment	11 (13,3)	9 (9,9)	20 (11,5)
	Topic Management	3 (3,6)	5 (5,5)	8 (4,6)
	Total	83 (100,0)	91 (100,0)	174 (100,0)
	Test value		2,202	
	p value		0,699	

Pearson Chi-Square test was used to determine whether the functions of concession varied significantly between genders. Results showed no statistically significant difference between the male and female participants in terms of the functions of concession (p>0,699).

Expressing a contrast was the most frequently used concessive function in our database (49,4%). Of the 86 uses of concession for the purpose of *expressing a contrast*, 44 (53,0%) are used by the females, while 42 (46,2%) are used by the males. Defined as a contrast between the effects of two causal relations, concession is closely linked to the relation of contrast by nature (Robaldo, Miltsakaki & Hobbs., 2008, p.210). This function has been described by Barth-Weingarten (2003) as pointing out the existence of state of affairs, which would normally not be expected to co-exist. Our findings report that the speakers in our study use concession mostly to emphasize two states creating counter-expectation in relation to each other, as in the case in the following example:

(8)   Bak benim babamın özel hastanesi var ben on*a rağmen* gittim fuarda çalıştım.

        (Listen, my father owns a private hospital, *despite that*, I worked in the fair.)

The speaker in Example (8) emphasizes two unexpected, incompatible states: his father's owning a hospital and his working in a fair instead of working in his father's hospital. It is understood from the statement that the speaker's father can offer him a position in his hospital or provide him with a certain degree of financial security. Despite this, the speaker states that he worked at a fair and highlights this dissonance with an explicit concessive marker *–E* rağmen.

The second most commonly used function of concession in our database is *correction/repair* with 44 instances in 145 explicitly marked concessive expressions (25.3%). As for the

distribution of 44 instance of *correction/repair* according to gender, we found that males use concession for *correction/repair* purposes more than women, with 25 instances (27,5%) and 19 instances (22,9%) respectively.

The use of concession for *correction/repair* function has two sub-categories, namely *self-correction* and *other-correction*. Thus, we further analyzed the database to determine if the use of *self-correction* and *other-correction* varied according to gender. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Gender-based differences in use of self-correction and other correction

| | | Gender | | |
| | | Female | Male | Total |
Correction/repair		n (%)	n (%)	
Other-correction		13 (56,5)	14 (66,7)	17 (61,4)
Self-correction		10 (43,5)	7 (33,3)	17 (38,6)
Total		23 (100,0)	7 (33,3)	44 (100,0)
	Test value		0,477	
	p value		0,490	

Pearson Chi-Square test has been run to determine whether the use of *self-correction* and *other-correction* varied according to gender. However, results showed no statistically significant differences (p>0,05).

(9)   Şeyse ben gideyim olmazsa yardıma. *Gerçi* sonradan soruşturma açılıp da senin ne işin vardı demesinler.

        (I could go to help. *Though,* I don't want them to hold an inquiry and ask me why I was there.)

In (9) the speaker talks about offering help to an interlocutor during an exam at a university. She then cancels out her statement about going to the exam room and offering help to the interlocutor using "gerçi", on the grounds that she might be criticized for unauthorized presence in the exam room.

In talk-in-interaction, *self-correction* is a strategy used by the speakers to restrict the validity of their previous claims. This is frequently accomplished when a speaker attempts to minimize a potential disagreement in conversation. In this respect, self-correction, which is closely linked to politeness, is a discursive strategy to tone down a previous claim and thus can be used to redress the speaker's own face if she feels that her claim was too strong and might not be met with agreement (Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson, 2000; Barth-Weingarten, 2003).

Considering the dominant view in the literature that women use politeness strategies more than men do, one might have expected more frequent use of self-correction by women in spoken data. However, our findings reveal no statistically significant difference between genders in terms of self-correction. In this sense, this finding contradicts with previous literature on women's tendency to use the language of rapport, suggesting that this discursive strategy is deliberately used by discourse participants for backing down from their earlier positions, irrespective of their gender.

Other-correction serves to restrict the validity of another speaker's claim (Barth-Weingarten, 2003). As a recurrent pattern in conversation, *other-correction* occurs when an error has been detected. However, in everyday talk among friends and family members, *other-corrections* do not necessarily display orientation to the problematic nature of the action and corrections are generally not modulated by the interactants. In spoken Finnish data, this finding has been associated with the degree of intimacy among participants, who know each other well (Haakana & Kurhila, 2009, p.174).

(10)   S1: Bizim odada üç tane bilgisayar var. Üçünde de ses var.

(There are three computers in our room. All have audio.)

S2: *Ama* kulaklıkla.

(*But* with earphones.)

In Example (10) from our database, the speakers are talking about audio output in the computers in the first speaker's room. Upon the statement of the first speaker, the second speaker restricts the validity of that claim stating that they can listen to music only with earphones. The second speaker makes an explicit concession through the use of *ama*.

The third most commonly used function of concession in our database was *alignment* (20%). In interaction, *alignment* allows speakers to acknowledge a counter opinion while purposing their own position (Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson, 2000) and thus alleviate potential negative effects of their statement (Szczyrbak, 2014, p. 245).

(11)   S3: Bunun evlilikle alakası yok. Biz de aynı şeyi yapıyoruz.

(This has nothing to do with marriage. We are doing the same thing, too.)

S4: *Her ne kadar* çok birşey değişmemiş *dahi de* olsa, bunun bir evlendin bıraktın modu var anladın mı?

(*Although* many things remain unchanged, you are in a mood like you got married and let everything go, do you get it?)

In (11), the speakers are discussing about what changes in partners' lives after marriage. Contextual cues reveal that the first speaker asserts that marriage does not bring much change in a couple's life. The second speaker first supports the other speaker's statement by 'Although many things remain unchanged…' and then makes a counter-statement by ''you are in a mood like you got married and let everything go.' This discursive move allows the second speaker to partially acknowledge the other speaker's statement while preserving his own position, resulting in intersubjectivity between participants.

As for the usage of *alignment* according to gender in our database, of a total of 20 concessive sentences for alignment purposes, 11 (55%) are used by the females, while 9 (45%) are used by the males. The act of conceding has long been considered as a means for managing disrupting viewpoints between two speakers (Pomerantz, 1984). The conceding party is able to acknowledge other parties' viewpoints and signal an orientation to reflexivity, reciprocity, and compromise (Lindström & Londen, 2013, p.349). From these aspects, women might have been expected to use concession for alignment purposes. The fact that our data showed no significant different between genders point out that discourse participants use concession to achieve dialogic cooperation irrespective of their gender.

Preventing potential misunderstanding has been found to be the fourth most common function of concession in our database (9,2%). Discourse participants use this function to prevent the hearer draw false implications (Grote et al., 1997, p.92).

(12)   S5: Dünyayi gezmeye başladığınızda satarsınız artık.

(You'll sell it when you start travelling around the world.)

S6: *Her ne kadar* dünyayı gezme projemiz olsa da bir yerimiz yurdumuz olacak yani.

(*Although* we have a plan to travel around the world, we will still have a permanent place.)

In Example (12) the speakers are talking about second speaker's (S6) future plans about travelling around the world with his wife and for that reason selling his house and car. The second speaker's assertion draws attention to the fact that although they have a plan to travel around the world, they will have a permanent residence to return to. With 'Although we have a plan to travel around the world…' the second speaker prevents the hearer to deduce that they will travel and never come back.

Pearson Chi-Square test found no statistically significant difference between the male and female participants in terms of the use of concession for *preventing potential misunderstandings* (7,2% female, 11,0% male). Our finding contradicts previous research on gendered ways of

talking documenting once more that discursive strategies used by participants are determined by contextual factors, rather than speakers' gender.

The least commonly used function of concession in our database is *topic management* (4,6%). *Topic management* is used as a strategy for changing the topic in a conversation or helping the topic develop away from a controversial topic, and concessive markers can serve to introduce a new topic in conversation (Jefferson, 1984; Barth-Weingarten, 2003; Taboada & Gomez-Gonzalez, 2012).

(13)   S7: Abim gelmek istiyor *ama* çocuklar için gelmiyor.

(My elder brother wants to come *but* he doesn't because of the children.)

S8*:* Burada *aslında* çok iyi standartta iş de bulabilirler.

(*Actually* they can find a job of a good standard here.)

S7: Çocukların hepsi Türkçe konuşuyor, Almanca konuşuyor.

(All of the children speak Turkish and German.)

S8: İngilizce de vardır.

(They must be speaking English, too).

S7: Anadilleri gibi var... Büyük oğlan zaten tercümanlık okuyor.

(They are like native speakers (of English). The eldest son studies translation at university).

In (13) the first speaker talks about his brother in Germany who wants to permanently come back to Turkey but continues to stay there for his children. The second speaker, on the other hand, opens a new topic, namely job opportunities in Turkey, which then develops into language skills of the children. This new topic is introduced with the concessive marker, *actually.*

Of the 8 instances of concessive use for *topic management* purposes, 5 (5,5%) are used by the males, while 3 (3,6%) are used by the females. Similar to our findings regarding the use of concession for the purposes of *expressing a contrast*, *preventing potential misunderstandings*, *correction/repair,* and *alignment*, we found no statistically significant difference between the genders. These findings suggest that the use of concession in spoken discourse does not vary according to gender. These findings support the current view on language and gender studies that gender is not a determinant factor on language use since all meanings are situated and the use of any linguistic form depends on various contextual and social parameters (Christie, 2000; Litosseliti, 2013).

5. CONCLUSIONS

In the present study we attempted to determine how concession is marked in Turkish and for what interactional purposes concessions are used in spoken data within the framework of IL. We further analyzed our data to find out whether the preference for the marking of concession and its functional uses varied according to gender. Our findings revealed no statistically significant difference between genders in terms of the use of concessive markers and functions of concession in Turkish spoken discourse.

We found that concession is mostly explicitly marked in Turkish spoken discourse, which is attributed to the fact that processing concession without explicit marking is cognitively demanding. The most common Turkish concessive marker is *ama* (but) in parallel to the previous literature in Turkish and other languages. We found no significant differences between genders in terms of the use of concessive markers.

As for the functions of concession in talk-in-interaction, most commonly used functions of concession in our database are *expressing a contrast* (49,4%), *correction/repair* (25,3%), *alignment* (11,5%), *preventing potential misunderstandings* (9,2%), and *topic manage*ment (4,6%) respectively, with no statistically significant difference between the male and female participants.

Concession itself, and especially its functions of *correction/repair* and *alignment* could be closely linked to politeness as the speaker who concedes acknowledges the other parties' views and shows an orientation to reflexivity, agreement, and cooperation, which have long been associated with women. Our findings contradict the dominant view in literature that women tend to speak in a cooperative or a polite way in conversation, since no significant difference has been found. Our findings support the view that everything that occurs in a conversation results from interactional purposes of participants irrespective of their gender, and the meaning of any linguistic behavior is renewed in each conversational context.

The significance of our study is twofold. Firstly, it is the first study on gender-related use of concession in Turkish and thus serves as a reference for the researchers in the related field. Secondly, the study supports the current view on gender and language which argues that the relationship between gender and language use is not indexical, but it is context-dependent.

Our study contributes to the current literature which holds that contextual factors including demographic characteristics of participants (such as age, class, educational background etc.), their relationships to one another, the setting, the length of the encounter, and the participants' interactional goals are relevant in the way language is used. Depending on context, each women and men speak differently and the meanings of a specific linguistic behavior, in our case concessive behavior, is determined by communicative goals discourse participants want to accomplish, rather than their gender.

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