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YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN İNGİLİZCE SÜRERLİLİK GÖRÜNÜŞÜ KULLANIMINDA KAVRAMSAL YAPILANDIRMA VE ANADİL AKTARIMI

CONSTRUAL AND L1 TRANSFER IN TURKISH EFL LEARNERS' USE OF ENGLISH PROGRESSIVE ASPECT

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Öz

Bu çalışmada, Türkçedeki kavramsal yapılandırmanın (construal) yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin İngilizce sürerlik görünüşü kullanımını nasıl etkilediği incelenmektedir. Uluslararası İngilizce Öğrenici Derlemi'nin (ICLE) Türkçe alt derleminden seçilen 276 öğrenci metninde belirlenen 594 sürerlik kullanımı çözümlenmiştir. Çözümlenen metinlerin 214'ü en az bir sürerlik kullanımı içermektedir. İlk aşamada, adlaşmış ya da sıfat işlevli -ing kullanımlarını hariç tutan önceden tanımlı ölçütleri içeren kural tabanlı desenlerle metinlerdeki be + V-ing örnekleri derlemden çıkartılmıştır. İkinci aşamada bu örnekler tek bir kodlayıcı tarafından manuel biçimde incelenmiş ve zamansal sınırlandırma, kuvvet dinamikleri, sınırlılık kayması, bakış düzeni ve ölçek ayarlaması olmak üzere beş kavramsal işleme göre etiketlenmiştir. Bulgular betimsel olarak sunulmuş; anadil-uyum oranı için iki yönlü Wilson güven aralığı %95 olarak hesaplanmıştır. Şimdiki zaman yapısıyla kullanılan sürerlik görünüşü, toplam örneklerin %85,9'unu (510/594)

Abstract

This study examines how Turkish L1 construal shapes Turkish EFL learners' use of the English progressive and identifies where L1 transfer surfaces in learner production. Using the Turkish subcorpus of the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE), we analyzed 594 progressive constructions drawn from 276 learner essays (214 essays contained at least one progressive). Candidates were retrieved with rule-based patterns and explicit exclusion rules for nominal/attributive -ing, then manually screened by a single coder. Tokens were coded for five construal operations—temporal bounding, force dynamics, boundedness shift, viewing arrangement, and scalar adjustment—and summarized descriptively; the headline proportion is reported with a two-sided 95% Wilson confidence interval. Learners predominantly use the present progressive (510/594; 85.9%). Two operations dominate—temporal bounding and force dynamics (57 tokens each; 9.6% apiece)—followed by boundedness shift (20; 3.4%), viewing arrangement (17; 2.9%), and scalar adjustment (9;

oluşturmaktadır. Kavramsal işlem dağılımında zamansal sınırlandırma ve kuvvet dinamikleri işlemleri %9,6'lık (57) oranla öne çıkmaktadır; bu işlemleri %3,4'lük (20) oranla sınırlılık kayması, %2,9'luk (17) oranla bakış düzeni ve %1,5'lik (9) oranla ölçek ayarlaması işlemi izlemektedir. Genel olarak incelenen metinlerdeki sürerlik kullanımlarının %26,9'u (160/594) Türkçedeki –(I) yor ile %95 GA: %23,5–%30,6 oranındza uyumlu kullanımlardır. Bu örüntüler özellikle for/since ile kurulan süre belirten yapılarda, durum/tamamlama eylemleriyle kullanıldığı durumlarda, sıklık belirteçleriyle kurulan alışkanlık bağlamlarında ve geçmiş ya da genel/ansiklopedik ifadelerde görülen görünüş yapılarının birbirinin yerine kullanıldığı durumlarda yoğunlaşmaktadır. Hedef dilde doğru kabul edilen sürerlik kullanımları (örn. eşzamanlı gerçekleşen eylem betimlemelerinde try/struggle eylemleri ile) anadilden aktarılanların toplamından ayrı tutulmuştur. Sonuçlara göre görünüş edinimi, biçimbirimsel doğruluğun yanı sıra kavramsal bir yeniden ayarlamadır. Yabancı dil eğitimi açısından, çıktılar sürerlik görünüşü seçiminde rol oynayan kavramsal işlemleri öne çıkaran etkinliklere öncelik verilmesini; özellikle süre belirteçli yapılar (şimdiki zaman ile perfect/progressive karşılaştırması), durum-tamamlama karşıtlıkları ve alışkanlık-tutum ayrımları üzerinde durulması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır.

1.5%). Overall, 160/594 = 26.9% of tokens are –(I) yor-consistent (95% CI: 23.5–30.6), concentrated in long-span for/since contexts, progressive uses with stative/achievement verbs, habitual frames with frequency adverbs, and aspectual substitution in past or generic statements. Target-like progressives (e.g., live-process uses with try/struggle) were separated from transfer-consistent cases. Findings frame progressive-aspect acquisition as conceptual recalibration rather than only morphological learning. Pedagogically, instruction should make the relevant construal choices explicit at the point of use, especially in duration frames (present vs perfect/progressive), stative/achievement contrasts, and the habitual–stance distinction with frequency adverbs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Aspectual systems are fundamental cognitive–linguistic tools that describe how events unfold over time. Whereas tense places an event on a timeline, aspect specifies its internal structure, boundedness, and experiential qualities. At this interface, speakers' construal operations—mental processes that allow them to view experience from different perspectives—become crucial in both first-language (L1) and second-language (L2) use.

The English progressive, formed with the auxiliary *be* plus an –ing participle (e.g., *is running*), is a grammaticalized construal that presents an event as a dynamic process seen through a narrow temporal window. It does more than place the event in time; it distinguishes event boundaries, speaker perspective, and internal structure. In 'She is walking to school,' for example, the progressive highlights the middle of the action and backgrounds its start and end (Quirk et al., 1985). This view aligns with cognitive linguistic analyses of progressive construal operations (Langacker, 1987, 1991). Using the progressive is therefore an act of selecting a vantage point: speakers decide whether to foreground the unfolding process or present the event as a bounded whole, revealing the cognitive operations that organize our sense of time.

For L2 learners—especially those whose L1 encodes aspect differently—mastering the English progressive involves more than learning its morphology. It requires reshaping deeply embedded temporal concepts. Research shows that universal cognitive processes intersect with language-specific construal patterns during this reshaping (De Wit & Brisard, 2014; Kermer, 2020).

Since aspect links form and meaning, learners must master the –ing morphology and its conceptual force (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998). Typical errors include omitting *–ing* ("He drive now"), overusing the progressive, or avoiding it altogether. These patterns suggest that learners struggle with the idea of viewing an event as ongoing or temporary. The progressive also interacts with verb semantics—*know* or *love* rarely appear in the form unless their meanings shift—and with discourse context, where it often sets a narrative background (Bardovi-Harlig & Bergström, 1996). These interactions impose systematic constraints that go beyond isolated rules. L2 learners must therefore rebuild their mental models of time, which may clash with L1 patterns. Acquisition thus entails both learning forms and reorganizing temporal concepts.

Turkish EFL learners offer a clear test case because Turkish marks progressivity with suffixes such as –(I)yor and –mAktA. Although these suffixes seem to parallel English *–ing* (e.g., *Ali gidiyor* "Ali is going"), the match is only partial. Turkish applies –(I)yor in many contexts where English prefers the simple form, especially with stative verbs that resist the progressive ("I am knowing the answer"). It also uses the suffix with abstract verbs to express ongoing feelings

(*Seni seviyorum* "I love you"). English, by contrast, extends the progressive to pragmatic evaluations ("I'm loving this party!") or irritation at repeated actions ("He's always losing his keys"), functions without direct Turkish equivalents. Learners must therefore recalibrate their aspectual construals; if they do not, direct transfer leads to non-target-like expressions or to underuse where English discourse expects the progressive.

Much SLA research traces developmental sequences in aspect (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998) or documents L1 influence on grammar (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008), yet few studies link these findings to the cognitive operations that underlie progressive use. An explanatory model must show how specific construals, transferred from the L1, shape learners' aspectual choices. Recent work suggests that structure alone cannot account for these patterns. De Wit and Brisard (2014) view the English progressive as encoding epistemic contingency—a meaning that does not fully overlap with Turkish—and Kermer (2020) uses Cognitive Grammar to reveal subtle conceptual mismatches in learner production.

These patterns highlight the need to examine how construal operations and L1 conceptual schemas shape L2 output. Cognitive linguistics holds that language mirrors mental construals—the ways speakers perceive, segment, and portray events (Langacker, 1987). Yet SLA work on tense–aspect often splits into two camps: one charts form–meaning development; the other documents cross-linguistic influence, rarely linking either to cognitive semantics. Systematic studies that unite construal analysis with transfer evidence are still scarce.

Traditional SLA research lists morphosyntactic errors, and transfer studies highlight L1 influence on structure and meaning (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). Less is known about how L1-shaped event concepts interact with emerging L2 systems. Turkish learners, for instance, may impose Turkish viewing frames and temporal boundaries on English, overusing or underusing the progressive and altering its discourse functions.

This study addresses two primary research questions:

RQ1: How do Turkish EFL learners use construal operations—viewpoint arrangement, subjectification, foregrounding/backgrounding, temporal bounding, and scalar adjustment—when they deploy the English progressive?

RQ2: To what extent do Turkish progressive constructions shape non-standard patterns in their English?

Answering these questions bridges Cognitive Grammar theory and SLA data and yields a fuller account of aspect acquisition. The central hypothesis is that Turkish learners' progressive usage exposes not just morphosyntactic errors but the systematic transfer of L1 construal operations. These insights inform theories of aspect in interlanguage and guide pedagogy. A detailed look at Turkish learners' construals shows that effective instruction must address both form and

the cognitive operations that organize temporal experience. The findings can therefore support cognitively informed teaching that tackles the conceptual hurdles of aspect acquisition.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Cognitive Grammar and Aspectual Construal: Theoretical Elaborations

In cognitive linguistics, construal operations are the mental routines that let speakers structure and present a situation (Langacker, 2008). When describing the same event, speakers choose different construals by varying temporal scope, vantage point, attention, and segmentation. These dimensions—viewing arrangement, subjectification, figure-ground alignment, temporal bounding, and scalar adjustment—are central to explaining progressive aspect use in L2 acquisition.

Research shows that viewing arrangement concerns the scope and angle from which an event is seen. Speakers may adopt either a maximal frame that presents the whole event or a restricted frame that foregrounds its unfolding. The English progressive encodes this restricted frame, placing the conceptualizer "inside" the event and hiding its endpoints. This immediacy produces the imperfective paradox, in which ongoing events may never reach completion (Radden & Dirven, 2007; Langacker, 2008; De Wit & Brisard, 2014) and it adds an epistemic sense of contingency largely absent from Turkish –(I)yor.

Subjectification integrates the speaker's perspective into the very construal of an event, allowing utterances to carry the speaker's perception and evaluative stance rather than remaining purely objective (Langacker, 1991, 2008). In English, progressive aspect frequently encodes this subjectivity by conveying immediacy, emotional involvement, or tentativeness (Traugott, 2010). For example, in "I'm thinking you should reconsider," the progressive hedges the recommendation, softening its force and foregrounding the speaker's stance.

At the discourse level, the figure–ground organization further shapes how events are presented: progressive forms typically establish a background scene—setting the stage—against which perfective, foregrounded events unfold, thereby structuring narrative cohesion and guiding the listener's attention (Croft, 2012; Hopper, 1979; Talmy, 2000).

Temporal bounding distinguishes events portrayed with or without endpoints. By profiling internal phases through sequential scanning, the progressive imposes an unbounded construal that contrasts with perfective boundedness, creating an aspectual antinomy (Langacker, 2008; Croft, 2012). Its simulated unfolding also illustrates fictive motion, whereby dynamism is imposed on static scenes (Talmy, 2000).

Scalar adjustment concerns event granularity. The progressive "zooms in" highlighting fine-grained stages (Langacker, 1987). This explains why punctual achievements such as *explode* resist the form unless reinterpreted as extended processes ("The bomb is exploding"). English

relies on the progressive to modulate tempo and continuity, whereas Turkish typically achieves the same effect through adverbial modification (Vendler, 1967).

Applying these operations to L2 data sharpens the analysis of learner patterns. Turkish learners must retrain how they frame unfolding, background actions, encode stance, and manage granularity within an aspectual system that only partly overlaps with their own. Studies indicate that even advanced users often retain L1-typical construals (Bylund & Jarvis, 2011). Deviations such as marking bounded events as progressive or over-backgrounding actions therefore reveal cognitive transfer rather than simple formal error. The following sections connect each construal category to empirical findings on Turkish learners' English progressives.

2.2. Aspect in Second Language Acquisition of English

The English progressive has long occupied center stage in SLA research. Most studies adopt the Aspect Hypothesis, which holds that learners first map aspectual morphology onto verb classes defined by their inherent lexical aspect before aligning forms with target language distinctions (Andersen & Shirai, 1996). Beginners therefore use the progressive freely with activity verbs such as *run* or *play***,** whose continuous semantics match the form's imperfective meaning. Stative verbs like *know* or *love* resist this early marking, producing sentences such as "I am knowing the answer" (Zeng, Shirai & Chen, 2021). With rising proficiency, learners extend the construction to a wider set of predicates, eventually using it with statives for pragmatic effect and approximating native patterns (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000).

This sequence finds support in elicited production, narrative retelling, and grammaticality-judgment studies (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Li & Shirai, 2000). Although learners grasp the –ing morpheme early—its salience speeds morphological accuracy—context-appropriate deployment lags behind (Bardovi-Harlig & Bergström, 1996). Typical beginner errors include auxiliary omission ("He going home") and use of the simple present for ongoing actions ("The children play in the park now"). Even advanced learners occasionally misjudge pragmatics, overusing the progressive where native speakers rely on other tenses (Axelsson & Hahn, 2001).

Discourse studies add another layer. The Discourse Hypothesis claims that learners gradually learn to mark foregrounded narrative events with the simple past and backgrounded, ongoing scenes with the progressive. Empirical work confirms that intermediate learners begin to wield the progressive for backgrounding, aligning with native norms (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998). Turkish learners may find this narrative function easier because Turkish likewise uses progressive or converbial suffixes (-iyor, -iken) for scene-setting. Bada and Genc (2007) show that advanced Turkish speakers replicate native-like narrative structures, accurately placing progressive forms in backgrounded clauses.

Corpus analyses of advanced proficiency reveal subtle non-target uses—unneeded progressives with abstract or reporting verbs, and confusion over future arrangements ("I am meeting him tomorrow") (Axelsson & Hahn, 2001). Yet Turkish learners sometimes benefit from positive transfer because Turkish –(I)yor also expresses near-future meaning (e.g., *yarın gidiyor* "he is leaving tomorrow"). Thus, L1 influence can both ease and complicate acquisition, underlining the delicate balance between transfer and target-language constraints.

Bozdağ (2019) analyzed Turkish EFL learners' written productions from the Cambridge Learner Corpus and found that Present Simple and Past Simple were the most error-prone tense-aspect structures, with the most common errors involving inappropriate interchanges between these two forms. The study revealed that Activity Verbs and Mental Verbs were the semantic classes most prone to errors in simple tense constructions, while progressive aspect errors were relatively infrequent across all proficiency levels. Similarly, Aktuğ Ekinci (2022) examined 422 pre-intermediate Turkish EFL learner essays and confirmed that simple past generated the most tense-aspect errors overall, while present progressive was identified as problematic among present tense aspectual forms, with 33 aspect-related errors. Together, the two studies indicate that Turkish learners' difficulties span proficiency levels and reflect conceptual, not merely formal, challenges. Child L2 longitudinal data align with these results: Haznedar (2007) demonstrated that Turkish-speaking children acquiring English initially employ progressive marking almost exclusively with contexts where L1 and L2 aspectual semantics coincide—namely telic (achievement) predicates—and only gradually extend it to atelic or activity contexts, showing that early use of the progressive is constrained by L1-based semantic categories.

In sum, SLA evidence charts a clear path: learners first control the progressive in prototypical activity contexts and later extend it to richer semantic and pragmatic domains. Major hurdles include managing lexical-aspect interactions, narrative structuring, and pragmatic flexibility. Yet much existing work catalogs learner patterns without probing the cognitive operations that underlie aspectual choices. The next section therefore examines how construal mechanisms and L1 conceptual frameworks shape progressive acquisition, emphasizing comparative Turkish–English data.

2.3. Cross-Linguistic Influence and Transfer Effects in Progressive Aspect Acquisition

Earlier research on verb-level transfer is broadened by Şahin Kızıl and Kilimci's (2014) work on multi-word expressions. In their analysis of the LINDSEI-TR (Kilimci, 2014) spoken corpus of advanced Turkish-learner interviews, they found that while Turkish learners frequently used stance expressions like "I think" and "I don't know" they showed different patterns from native speakers in their use of discourse organizers and conversational expressions. Notably, Turkish

learners underused discourse markers like "I mean" for topic elaboration/clarification and employed fewer vagueness markers such as "sort of" and "you know" compared to native speakers (Şahin Kızıl & Kilimci, 2014). Because Turkish freely attaches –(I)yor to cognition verbs to foreground the speaker's viewpoint, these findings show that conceptual transfer in Turkish EFL production operates at both the morphological and the phraseological levels. Coupled with Bozdağ's (2019) error taxonomy, they imply that instruction should address multi-word progressive-based chunks, not just individual verb forms.

Cross-linguistic influence (CLI) research confirms that learners draw on L1 structures and conceptualizations in L2 production, with both facilitative and disruptive results (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). For Turkish EFL learners the dual impact is clear: the wide semantic range of –(I)yor invites transfer of its extended functions into English, producing non-target sentences such as "*I am knowing the answer."* This conceptual transfer exemplifies Slobin's (1996) "thinking-for-speaking," whereby L1 event-construal patterns outlast mere morphology. A learner's "I am loving this song," for instance, reflects Turkish norms that mark ongoing emotional states with the progressive—usage restricted in standard English.

Moreover, typological contrasts intensify these effects. Turkish is agglutinative, stacking tense, aspect, and mood on a single verb, whereas English relies on auxiliary + participle sequences; the difference shapes aspectual processing strategies (Jarvis, 2011). Learners used to morphological marking may struggle with English periphrasis. Moreover, because –(I)yor covers habitual as well as ongoing events, learners often conflate the two meanings in English, saying "The children play in the garden" where natives expect "are playing." These examples show that conceptual—not merely formal—adjustments are required for target-like aspect.

Corpus studies reveal broader patterns in progressive use across L1 backgrounds. Research using the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) shows that L2 writers often match native speakers in overall progressive frequency yet overextend the form to stative or abstract verbs (Axelsson & Hahn, 2001; Zeng, Shirai, & Chen, 2021). These patterns appear across different L1s—Swedish learners (Axelsson & Hahn, 2001) and Chinese learners (Zeng et al., 2021) show similar deviations to those found in Turkish learner corpora studies. The cross-linguistic consistency suggests that conceptual, rather than purely morphological, factors create persistent challenges in L2 aspectual acquisition.

2.4. Methodological Approaches to Investigating Progressive Aspect Acquisition

To comprehensively understand progressive aspect acquisition, researchers have adopted diverse methodologies, including elicited production tasks, grammaticality judgments, corpus

analyses, qualitative interviews, and psycholinguistic processing experiments. Each method contributes unique insights, and their integration provides robust multidimensional perspectives on learners' aspectual development.

Elicited production tasks, such as story retellings or controlled sentence completions, offer direct contexts prompting learners to produce specific aspectual distinctions (Bardovi-Harlig & Bergström, 1996; Robison, 1995). These tasks effectively document learners' emerging ability to differentiate narrative foreground (simple past) from background (past progressive), a skill increasingly mastered by intermediate and advanced learners. For Turkish speakers specifically, elicited narrative research has demonstrated learners' near-native competence in marking background actions, reflecting positive transfer from analogous Turkish narrative conventions (Bada & Genç, 2007). Grammaticality judgment and interpretation tasks assess learners' implicit aspectual knowledge, revealing underlying conceptual understanding beyond mere production. For instance, tasks requiring learners to evaluate non-standard constructions like "John was knowing the answer" elucidate their internalization of English progressive constraints (Gass & Mackey, 2013). Findings from such tasks indicate that learners' ability to reject inappropriate progressive uses develops gradually alongside explicit morphological accuracy, suggesting conceptual rather than merely formal acquisition.

Corpus analysis, exemplified by learner corpus studies, captures authentic and spontaneous usage patterns at scale. Corpora such as ICLE enable quantification of progressive form frequency and identification of patterns indicative of transfer effects or pragmatic deviations. Although corpus studies are observational and inferential in nature, they reliably demonstrate persistent subtle divergences from native norms, especially regarding verb-class associations and pragmatic functions, informing broader conceptual analyses. Qualitative methodologies, including think-aloud protocols and stimulated recall interviews, offer nuanced access to learners' conceptual processes and reasoning behind aspectual choices. Although less common due to their resource-intensive nature, such approaches provide critical insights into cognitive construal operations and L1-influenced reasoning patterns. Finally, psycholinguistic processing experiments employing techniques such as eye-tracking or self-paced reading, though relatively scarce in progressive aspect research, contribute insights into real-time processing and automatization of aspectual distinctions. Such experimental methods complement other approaches by highlighting implicit cognitive processes underlying learners' language production and comprehension.

In sum, the convergence of findings from these varied methodologies highlights progressive aspect acquisition as fundamentally a cognitive phenomenon influenced strongly by learners' L1 conceptual frameworks. Corpus analysis, central to the present research, uniquely captures

authentic interlanguage performance, allowing exploration of CLI's concrete manifestations. However, interpreting corpus-based data benefits substantially from theoretical and empirical insights gained through complementary methods. Thus, the current corpus-based analysis integrates established cognitive and cross-linguistic frameworks, interpreting learner usage patterns in terms of underlying conceptual representations and transfer mechanisms, rather than as isolated formal phenomena.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a multi-layered analytical approach to examine how Turkish L1 speakers use the English progressive aspect in their writing. The methodology combined corpus linguistics with cognitive linguistic frameworks to identify patterns specific to this language pairing.

3.1. Theoretical Foundation

The analysis was established on several fundamental theoretical frameworks, each contributing specialized lexical and analytical resources within a cognitive linguistic paradigm that focused on construal operations—the different ways speakers conceptualize and represent situations through language.

Cognitive Grammar (Langacker, 1987, 1991) provided the basis for analyzing progressive forms as cognitive conceptualization patterns and drew on viewpoint discussions in Langacker (1991: 316) as well as Radden & Dirven (2007: 179-180). This framework enabled examination of perspective-taking through progressive constructions. Force Dynamics (Talmy, 2000) constituted a framework for examining force conceptualization in progressive constructions, subsequently guiding the classification of force-dynamic interaction types according to Talmy's (2000: 409-470) framework and facilitating analysis of representations of forces, resistances, and interactions.

Boundedness distinctions (Slobin, 1996; Johanson ,2000) proved essential for interpreting Turkish-English differences in temporal boundary marking, complemented by temporal bounding markers derived from Comrie (1976) and Declerck (2006). This theoretical approach supported investigation of how learners mark time boundaries using progressive forms and the transformation of bounded events into unbounded processes. Fictive Motion (Talmy, 2000; Matlock, 2004) supplied the theoretical framework for analyzing static scenes conceptualized with motion verbs.

Corpus Linguistics contributed methodological approaches for examining authentic language patterns, including a stative verb list adopted from Biber et al. (1999) categorizing verbs unlikely to appear in progressive form in standard English. The investigation further incorpora-

ted subjectification analysis based on Langacker (2006) and Athanasiadou et al. (2006), which informed the selection of subjectification verbs and enabled examination of the expression of speaker stance through progressive forms.

The foreground/background framework from Croft & Cruse (2004: 57) guided the establishment of markers from Talmy (2000), supporting analysis of how main and secondary information is structured in learner texts. Scalar adjustment markers drawing on Langacker (2008) and Römer (2005) facilitated investigation of usage patterns indicating scaling of actions or states. Achievement verbs were categorized based on Vendler's verb classification system, while a custom-developed list of lexical and grammatical patterns indicating potential L1 influence constituted the Turkish transfer pattern markers essential for cross-linguistic analysis.

3.2. Identification Process

The study analyzed the Turkish subcorpus of the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE; Granger et al., 2020), consisting of 276 texts. Of these, 214 texts contained at least one validated progressive and were retained for analysis, yielding 594 tokens. Each text underwent initial preprocessing to standardize formatting and prepare for detailed examination. Progressive constructions were systematically identified through a dual-stage process combining computational pattern recognition with linguistic validation. The initial identification phase employed regular-expression matching to detect four primary progressive patterns: present progressive constructions with present-tense auxiliaries and present participles; past progressive patterns with past-tense auxiliaries; perfect progressive constructions combining perfect auxiliaries with "been" and present participles; and modal progressive patterns incorporating modal auxiliaries followed by "be" and present participles.

Linguistic validation was performed in a Python environment using spaCy's transformer English model (en_core_web_trf) to confirm part-of-speech tagging accuracy, dependency relations, and syntactic structure consistency. False progressives were excluded through predetermined filtering criteria that identified adjectival uses of present participles, gerund complements, and prepositional phrases containing gerunds. Candidate *be + V-ing* tokens were retrieved with rule-based patterns and explicit exclusion rules for nominal and attributive -ing uses. We then manually reviewed the entire set to confirm progressive status, remove gerund and attributive participle false positives, and assign construal labels according to predefined decision rules. Because validation was performed by a single coder, we do not report inter-annotator agreement; reported percentages are descriptive for this dataset. Each identified construction received a confidence score from 0 to 1, with constructions achieving scores above 0.7 retained for analysis.

The analysis proceeded through several sequential stages. Initially, pattern recognition identified all progressive constructions within the corpus. Subsequently, categorization classi-

fied each instance according to its form (present progressive, past progressive, etc.) and function. Each validated progressive construction was analyzed for five distinct cognitive construal operations through specific lexical and syntactic triggers. Temporal bounding operations were identified when sentences contained duration prepositions, time-unit expressions, or deictic temporal expressions. Scalar adjustment operations were coded when sentences demonstrated frequency modification through frequency adverbs or habitual phrases. Viewing arrangement operations were identified when progressive verbs belonged to perception-verb categories including visual, auditory, or other sensory verbs. Subjectification operations were coded when progressive verbs denoted cognitive, mental, or emotional processes, particularly with stative verbs in progressive form. Foreground/background organization was identified through syntactic analysis of subordinate-clause structures marked by temporal subordinators or relative pronouns.

Transfer pattern analysis then examined patterns potentially influenced by Turkish language structures. Progressive constructions were systematically analyzed for patterns characteristic of Turkish L1 transfer, including progressive constructions with stative verbs reflecting the broader functional range of the Turkish -(I)yor marker, habitual progressive constructions in contexts where simple present would be preferred in standard English, auxiliary placement irregularities reflecting potential SOV word order influence, and communication verb overuse patterns indicating potential transfer from Turkish discourse patterns. Construal operation mapping analyzed how each progressive construction realizes specific cognitive construal operations. Following this, quantification measured the frequency of patterns across the corpus. Finally, error analysis distinguished between standard usage and potential L1 interference patterns.

3.3. Pattern Validation and Statistical Analysis

For each identified pattern, examples were extracted to provide contextual validation. Each pattern was further analyzed for its relationship to specific Turkish language features, particularly the Turkish -(I)yor continuous aspect marker and how its semantic range differs from English progressive constructions. The nine-stage annotation pipeline included preprocessing/filtering, POS tagging and dependency parsing, progressive detection via pattern matching, false-positive removal, construal coding, semantic and verb-class labeling, lemmatization with context analysis, statistical and co-occurrence profiling, and final dataset export.

Statistical measures were applied to quantify pattern distribution, including frequency counts for each pattern type, co-occurrence with other linguistic features, and confidence scoring to indicate the reliability of pattern identification. A significant methodological limitation must be acknowledged regarding the absence of inter-annotator reliability measures. Given the

computational nature of the annotation process and the corpus size comprising 594 progressive constructions across 214 texts, traditional inter-annotator reliability procedures were not conducted. However, the systematic, rule-based annotation approach was designed to ensure consistency and replicability, with all coding criteria explicitly defined and grounded in established theoretical frameworks. As described in Section 3.2, identification and validation were rule-based with a single-coder manual screen; accordingly, inter-annotator agreement is not reported and percentages are descriptive. To communicate sampling uncertainty for the primary estimate, we report two-sided 95% Wilson score confidence intervals computed on observed counts; for example, 160/594 = 26.9% (95% CI: 23.5–30.6). Unless otherwise noted, token-level denominators are n = 594 and document-level denominators are n = 214.

4. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the analysis conducted on progressive constructions identified in the corpus of Turkish EFL learners' written texts. The analysis examined 594 progressive constructions across 214 texts, with particular focus on the distribution of progressive types, frequency patterns, and the cognitive construal operations associated with these forms. Results are organized according to construction types, frequency of occurrence, and semantic-pragmatic patterns observed in the corpus.

Table 1: *Distribution of Progressive Constructions in Turkish EFL Learners' Corpus*

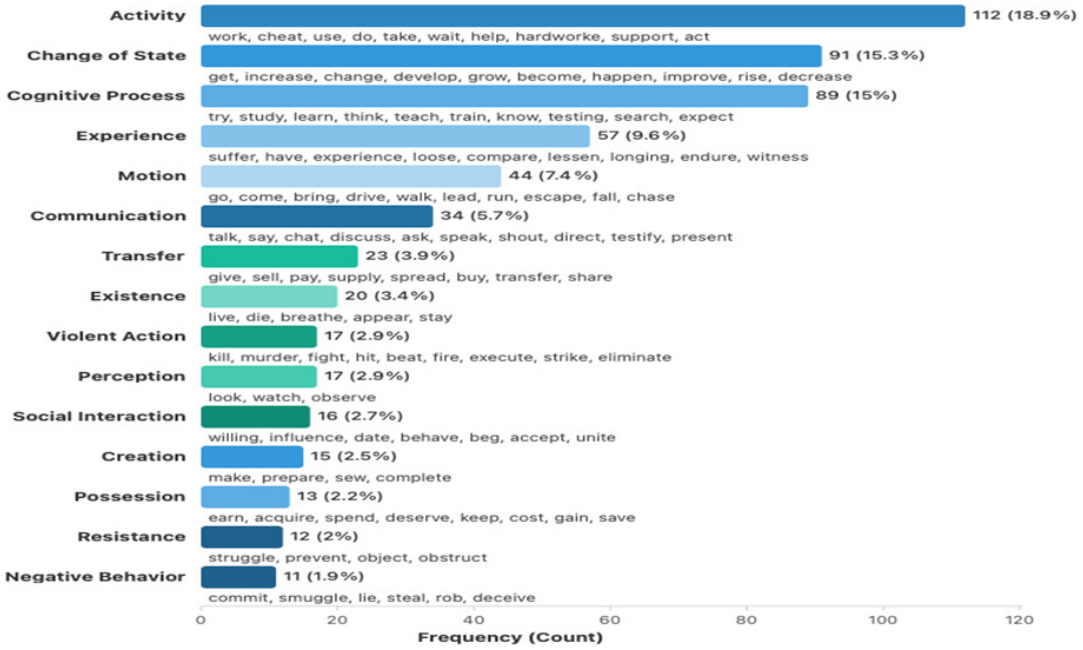
Construction Type	Frequency	Percentage
A. Progressive Construction Types		
Present progressive	510	85.9%
Past progressive	34	5.7%
Perfect progressive	28	4.7%
Modal progressive	22	3.7%
Total Progressive Constructions	594	100%
B. Distribution Across Documents		
1 progressive	66	30.8%
2-3 progressives	92	43.0%
4-5 progressives	39	18.2%
6+ progressives	17	7.9%
Total Documents	214	100%

Note. Data collected from 214 texts produced by Turkish EFL learners with an average of 2.78 progressive constructions per text.

The analysis revealed distinct patterns in both the types of progressive constructions employed and their distribution across documents, as shown in Table 1. Regarding progressive construction types, present progressive forms clearly predominate, constituting 85.9% (510 instances) of all progressive constructions in the corpus. Past progressive constructions were considerably less frequent, accounting for only 5.7% (34 instances), followed by perfect progressive forms at 4.7% (28 instances) and modal progressive constructions at 3.7% (22 instances).

The distribution of progressive constructions across documents demonstrates that most Turkish L1 writers use progressive forms sparingly. Nearly three-quarters of the documents (73.8%) contain relatively few progressive constructions (1-3 per text), with 30.8% (66 documents) containing exactly one progressive form and 43.0% (92 documents) containing 2-3 progressive forms. Only a small percentage of documents (7.9%, 17 texts) contain 6 or more progressive constructions. This distribution pattern might reflect either limited production of this grammatical feature by Turkish learners or appropriate constraints on progressive usage in formal academic writing. Overall, the corpus shows an average of 2.78% progressive constructions per text.

Figure 1. Semantic Categories of Verbs in Progressive Constructions



Note. *Distribution of semantic categories across all progressive constructions in the corpus (n = 594)*

Analysis of the semantic domains of verbs used in progressive constructions reveals patterns that may reflect L1 transfer from Turkish. Figure 1 presents the top verbs used in progressive form categorized by semantic domain. The most frequent verbs were “work” (29 occurrences, 4.9%) and “suffer” (29 occurrences, 4.9%), representing the Activity and Experience categories respectively. These were followed by “get” (24 occurrences, 4.0%) from the Change of State category, “cheat” (21 occurrences, 3.5%) from the Activity category, and “try” (20 occurrences, 3.4%) from the Cognitive Process category.

Examining the broader distribution across semantic categories in the entire corpus indicates that Activity verbs constituted the most frequent category in progressive constructions with 112 instances (18.9% of all progressives). Change of State verbs were the second most common category (91 instances, 15.3%), followed closely by Cognitive Process verbs (89 instances, 15.0%). Experience verbs, which include “suffer” and “have” accounted for 57 instances (9.6%), while Motion verbs represented 44 instances (7.4%).

Other significant categories included Communication (34 instances, 5.7%), Transfer (23 instances, 3.9%), Existence (20 instances, 3.4%), and both Violent Action and Perception (17 instances each, 2.9%). Notably, Creation verbs accounted for only 15 instances (2.5%) and Possession verbs for 13 instances (2.2%), which differs from the initial hypothesis.

The distribution across these semantic domains provides evidence that Turkish learners’ use of progressive forms may be influenced by the broader applicability of the Turkish progressive marker -(I)yor, which has fewer semantic restrictions than the English progressive. Particularly noteworthy is the high frequency of Change of State verbs like “get” and Experience verbs like “have” in progressive constructions, which are less commonly used with progressive aspect by native English speakers, suggesting potential transfer from Turkish.

Table 2: *Patterns of Turkish L1 Transfer in Progressive Constructions*

Transfer Pattern	Frequency	Percentage of Total Progressives	Example Pattern
Auxiliary + adverb + -ing verb	83	14.0%	(am/is/are) + word + verb-ing
Progressive with communication verbs	6	1.0%	(am/is/are) + saying/telling/ explaining
Progressive with frequency adverbs	6	1.0%	(am/is/are) + always/constantly + verb-ing
Progressive with stative verbs	4	0.7%	(am/is/are) + knowing/ understanding/believing
Total Turkish Transfer	**99**	**16.7%**	

A significant finding of this stusdy is the identification of systematic Turkish L1 transfer patterns in progressive constructions. As shown in Table 2, the analysis revealed 99 instances (16.7% of all progressive constructions) that exhibit clear Turkish L1 transfer patterns. The most prominent transfer pattern was the "auxiliary + adverb + -ing verb" construction, accounting for 83 instances (14.0% of all progressive forms). This syntactic pattern reflects Turkish word order preferences in progressive constructions, where adverbial elements often intervene between auxiliary and main verb components.

Additionally, the analysis identified three other specific transfer patterns: progressive with communication verbs (6 instances, 1.0%), where learners used progressive forms with verbs like "say", "tell" and "explain" in contexts where English would typically employ simple forms; progressive with frequency adverbs (6 instances, 1.0%), reflecting Turkish broader habitual marking with progressive forms; and progressive with stative verbs (4 instances, 0.7%), demonstrating the Turkish compatibility of -(I)yor with stative verbs where English typically requires simple forms.

Table 3: *Construal Operations Influenced by Turkish L1 Transfer*

Construal Operation	Primary Patterns	Frequency	Percentage	Transfer from Turkish
Temporal Bounding	progressive_with_for, progressive_with_during, progressive_with_until/till	57	9.6%	-DIr + -(I)yor construction
Force Dynamics	progressive_with_force_dynamic_verbs, progressive_with_despite_markers, progressive_against_resistance	57	9.6%	Force relationship marking
Boundedness Shift	progressive_with_achievement_verbs, progressive_with_sudden_markers, progressive_with_bounded_completion	20	3.4%	-(I)yor with achievement verbs
Viewing Arrangement	perception_verb_progressive, progressive_with_stative_perception_verbs	17	2.9%	-(I)yor compatibility with perception verbs
Scalar Adjustment	progressive_with_every, progressive_with_each, progressive_with_always	9	1.5%	Broader habitual marking
Total		160	26.9%	

The analysis investigated how Turkish L1 influences learners' conceptualization of situations through different construal operations. Table 3 presents the distribution of the five construal operations that appeared in the corpus data. Two construal operations were notably dominant: Temporal Bounding and Force Dynamics, each accounting for 57 instances (9.6 % of total progressives). Specifically, Temporal Bounding—primarily realized through progressive forms with *for*-type expressions—reflects the influence of the Turkish –DIr + –(I)yor construction, with learners using progressive forms to mark ongoing states rather than dynamic processes.

Temporal Bounding (long-span for/since frames)

- **[TRCU1033]** Since the last decade, scientists **are working** on cloning and related subjects.
  - **L1 Transfer:** –(I)yor licenses long-span "ongoing state"; English prefers perfect(-progressive).
  - **Native equivalent:** "Over the last decade, scientists **have been working** on cloning and related subjects."
- **[TRCU1068]** They say that they **are having** a good time there **for two years**.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Duration + present progressive; English marks span with perfect (-progressive).
  - **Native equivalent:** "They say they **have been having** a good time there for two years." (neutral: "**have had**")
- **[TRCU1068]** According to a research which **is going on for ten years**, the number of divorces is increasing.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Extended study framed as present; English requires perfect (-progressive) for the span.
  - **Native equivalent:** "According to a study that **has been going on** for ten years, the number of divorces **has been** increasing."

Meanwhile, Force Dynamics manifests through progressive forms with force-dynamic verbs and *despite*-type markers to emphasize effort, struggle, or resistance.

Force Dynamics (effort/struggle marking)

- **[TRCU1074]** Besides killing a living baby it is also important we **are preventing** the babies justices.
  - **Likely L1 Transfer:** Progressive used to encode resistance/effort in a general norm statement.
  - **Native equivalent:** "It is also important that we **prevent** the denial of babies' right to justice." *(lexis repaired)*

- **[TRCU1054]** Not only the individuals but also the states **are fighting** for the money and monetary values.
  - **Likely L1 Transfer:** If intended as a generic summary, English baseline is simple present.
  - **Native equivalent (generic):** "Individuals and states **fight** over money and material values."
- **[TRCU1076]** …saves patients who **are suffering** from the fatal disasters could not cured in the past...
  - **Not L1 Transfer:** Progressive with **suffer** is target-like for ongoing experience; issue is wording.
  - **Native equivalent:** "…**saves patients who suffer from** conditions that **could not be cured** in the past."

Other particular construal operations included Boundedness Shift (20 instances, 3.4 %), where learners used progressive forms with achievement verbs, sudden markers, and bounded-completion contexts, reflecting the Turkish compatibility of –(I)yor with achievement verbs.

Boundedness Shift (achievements/result states as progressive)

- **[TRCU1072]**[1] The number of illiterate people **is reaching** one billion.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Achievement framed as ongoing process.
  - **Native equivalent:** "The number of illiterate people **has reached** one billion." *(or "**is approaching** one billion" if not yet reached)*
- **[TRCU1071]** The developing countries **are losing** their well-educated people day by day.
  - **Likely L1 Transfer:** As a generic fact, English prefers simple present; progressive implies staged trend.
  - **Native equivalent:** "Developing countries **lose** their well-educated people day by day."
- **[TRCU1036]** Marriage **is losing** its magic and esteem.
  - **Likely L1 Transfer:** Acceptable as trend; non-target if intended as encyclopedic fact.
  - **Native equivalent (fact):** "Marriage **has lost** its magic and esteem."

Additionally, Viewing Arrangement (17 instances, 2.9 %) demonstrates the use of progressive forms with perception verbs:

1 Codes in brackets represent corresponding Document ID from TICLE Corpus.

Viewing Arrangement (perception/report frames)

- **[TRCU1066]** I see that my parents **are watching** us with their happy eyes.
  - **Not L1 Transfer:** Progressive stages a currently observed scene.
  - **Native equivalent:** "I can see my parents **watching** us with happy eyes."
- **[TRCU1067]** Every day we **are reading** in the newspapers or **watching** on television the crimes committed for money.
  - **Likely L1 Transfer:** Neutral habitual phrased as ongoing process.
  - **Native equivalent:** "Every day we **read** in the newspapers or **watch** on television the crimes committed for money."
- **[TRCU1034]** As we **are seeing** from the newspapers, television, or even from the people around us…
  - **Likely L1 Transfer:** Reportive/evidential frame prefers simple present in English.
  - **Native equivalent:** "As we **see** from the newspapers, television, and even the people around us…"
- **[TRCU1164]** …while they **are feeling** that irresistible agony
  - **L1 Transfer (stative progressive):** Stative verb marked with progressive.
  - **Native equivalent:** "…while they **feel** that irresistible agony."

whereas Scalar Adjustment (9 instances, 1.5 %) shows the use of the progressive with *every*, *each*, and *always* for habitual or repeated actions.

Scalar Adjustment (frequency/habitual adverbs)

- **[TRCU1068]** My friend's father is a rich man and he **is always buying** new cars.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Progressive used as unmarked habitual; in English it adds stance (annoyance/emphasis).
  - **Native equivalent (neutral):** "…and he **always buys** new cars."
- **[TRCU1135]** The children of rich people **are usually being** more extrovert, more dominant and more active.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Progressive on copular adjectives.
  - **Native equivalent:** "The children of rich people **are usually** more extroverted, more dominant, and more active."
- **[TRCU1034]** Young people **are always trying** to be fashionable.
  - **Likely L1 Transfer:** If neutral habitual is intended; progressive here signals stance.
  - **Native equivalent:** "Young people **always try** to be fashionable."
- **[TRCU1071]** Countries **are frequently facing** the problem of brain drain.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Neutral habitual framed as ongoing process.
  - **Native equivalent:** "Countries **frequently face** the problem of brain drain."

Collectively, these five construal operations affected 160 instances (26.9 % of all progressive constructions), thereby demonstrating the significant influence of Turkish aspect conceptualization on English progressive usage. Consequently, the patterns reveal that Turkish learners extend the English progressive to contexts where native speakers would typically use simple forms, thus reflecting the broader semantic scope of the Turkish –(I)yor progressive aspect.

Beyond the five core construal operations, three recurrent deviation types reveal direct L1 transfer from Turkish aspectual semantics to English verb selection. Learners attach the progressive morpheme to English stative verbs, an extension that mirrors the way Turkish –(I)yor routinely marks both dynamic and stative predicates. Such overgeneralisation surfaces in clauses like:

- **[TRCU1072]** I **am not knowing** the new economic situation exactly.
  - **L1 Transfer:** –(I)yor freely marks statives; English does not.
  - **Native equivalent:** "I **do not know** the new economic situation exactly."
- **[TRCU1067]** Richness **is not meaning** happiness.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Stative **mean** in progressive.
  - **Native equivalent:** "Richness **does not mean** happiness."
- **[TRCU1166]** …who **were living** without consciousness for three months
- **L1 Transfer:** State encoded with progressive.
- **Native equivalent:** "…who **were unconscious** for three months."

A second pattern involves the habitual progressive for neutral or encyclopaedic facts. Because –(I)yor is the unmarked form for generic statements in Turkish, learners transfer that default to English contexts where native usage prefers the simple present:

Habitual/Generic Overuse (encyclopedic or timeless facts)

- **[TRCU1072]** A human body **is having** 206 bones.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Generic fact cast as ongoing.
  - **Native equivalent:** "A human body **has** 206 bones."
- **[TRCU1034]** This television **is always causing** bad things for our children.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Neutral habitual phrased as progressive with stance; also phrasing issue.
  - **Native equivalent:** "This television **always causes** harm to our children." *(or "this programming")*
- **[TRCU1034]** they **are going on** their lives by being beaten by their husbands.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Habitual described as ongoing process.
  - **Native equivalent:** "they **go on with** their lives while **being beaten** by their husbands."

Finally, aspectual substitution occurs when the progressive replaces a simple tense in past- or future-oriented factual statements, reflecting an incomplete mapping of English aspectual distinctions:

Aspectual Substitution in Past/Future-oriented Facts

- **[TRCU1068]** In the past, people **were having** a more difficult life.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Past generic framed as past progressive.
  - **Native equivalent:** "In the past, people **had** a more difficult life."
- **[TRCU1166]** Some people **were thinking** that this woman should have been killed.
  - **Likely L1 Transfer:** If intended as a factual summary, English prefers simple past.
  - **Native equivalent:** "Some people **thought** that this woman should have been killed."
- **[TRCU1071]** In 1990, thirty per cent of the students **were going** to university.
  - **L1 Transfer:** Historical statistic given in progressive.
  - **Native equivalent:** "In 1990, thirty per cent of the students **went** to university."

Together these transfer-driven patterns reinforce the quantitative findings: Turkish learners repeatedly extend the progressive into semantic domains that native English construes with non-progressive forms, a direct consequence of the broader functional range of the Turkish –(I)yor aspect. Nonetheless, from pure error-analysis point of view, some sentences may also reflect unauthentic uses by Turkish EFL learners.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Construal Operations in Turkish Learners' Use of the Progressive Aspect

5.1.1. Viewing Arrangement and Temporal Perspective

Turkish EFL learners' use of the English progressive aspect reveals how they conceptualize events relative to the temporal vantage point of narration. In English, the viewing arrangement of tense–aspect forms typically follow a canonical pattern: present forms describe events happening at the moment of speaking, and past forms describe earlier events (Quirk et al., 1985). Flexible uses of the progressive—such as using the present progressive for future time reference—require a deliberate shift in this default viewing frame (Langacker, 2008; Radden & Dirven, 2007). In the Turkish learner corpus, most progressive instances adhere to canonical mappings, indicating that learners comfortably construe an event as unfolding "now" or at a given reference time. This pattern aligns with longitudinal evidence that L2 learners quickly acquire the core meaning of progressive aspect for ongoing actions (Bardovi Harlig & Bergström, 1996). The perceptual salience of the –ing form also promotes early accuracy in prototypical contexts (Bardovi Harlig, 2000).

However, learners struggle with non-default viewing arrangements. They often overextend the present progressive to habitual or scheduled events—e.g., "I am going to school every day"—where English mandates the simple present. Similar patterns in other learner populations signal difficulty shifting to a more abstract, de-anchored perspective needed for generic statements (Axelsson & Hahn, 2001). Even after learners master morphology, deploying aspect appropriately remains challenging (Bardovi Harlig & Bergström, 1996). Misuse of the progressive for futurate meanings without sufficient contextual support—"I am meeting him next week"—also illustrates incomplete control over non-canonical uses (De Wit & Brisard, 2014). Overall, Turkish learners default to the immediate-now construal of the progressive, supporting the view that aspect use in early interlanguage remains tied to concrete temporal viewpoints (Bardovi Harlig, 2000). Only at advanced stages do they master more elaborate shifts in viewing arrangement, such as employing the historical present for narrative effect (Hopper, 1979; Killie, 2004) or using the present progressive for scheduled future events (Bergs, 2010).

5.1.2. Subjectification and Perspective-Taking

The English progressive allows speakers to add a subjective or evaluative stance to event descriptions. Native speakers, for instance, may say "*You're always losing your keys*" to express irritation, or "*I was hoping …"* to soften a request (Killie, 2004; Traugott, 2010). In our data, Turkish learners rarely produce such subjective progressive constructions. This limited use matches corpus evidence showing that even advanced L2 users apply the progressive more rigidly—and with less pragmatic subtlety—than native speakers (Axelsson & Hahn, 2001; Zeng et al., 2021).

Turkish, by contrast, does not grammaticalize these evaluative functions to the same degree. Progressive forms with –iyor are mainly aspectual, and although adverbs can mark stance, Turkish lacks a direct counterpart to English "always + progressive" complaints. As a result, learners may overlook aspect as a vehicle for subjectivity. Because the English progressive encodes epistemic contingency, portraying events as tentative or indeterminate from the speaker's viewpoint (De Wit & Brisard, 2014), mastery demands sensitivity to this subjective layer. Our findings indicate that Turkish learners first grasp the concrete temporal meaning of ongoingness and only later acquire its interpersonal functions, corroborating claims that subjectification in L2 grammar trails formal accuracy.

5.1.3. Foreground vs. Background Organization

A critical discourse-level function of aspect is to manage foreground and background information in narratives. In English, the simple past propels the foreground storyline, whereas progressive

forms mark background or scene-setting events (Hopper, 1979; Bardovi Harlig, 1998). Our data show that Turkish learners have begun to use the progressive in this native-like discourse role, though with some inconsistencies. Many intermediate narratives correctly use the past progressive to set scenes—"*Music was playing in the background*"—while reserving the simple past for sequential events. This pattern supports the Discourse Hypothesis, which argues that growing control of verbal morphology enables learners to distinguish foreground from background (Bardovi Harlig, 1998).

Building on earlier analysis, learners who load their stories with such frames blur figure–ground distinctions, echoing the over-backgrounding noted by Bardovi Harlig (2000). Phrase-level transfer therefore compounds morphosyntactic overuse. Turkish narratives likewise place background information in imperfective forms (–iyor, –ken). Positive transfer is apparent: advanced learners mirror native-like English narrative structures (Bada & Genç, 2007). Yet some students still overgeneralize the progressive, diluting narrative salience—"*Then I was going home and was seeing an old friend and we were talking.*" This developmental overuse, documented by Bardovi Harlig (2000), parallels early interlanguage reliance on a single past form before discourse functions fully diverge (Klein & Perdue, 1997).

5.1.4. Temporal Bounding and Event Delimitation

Aspect inherently encodes temporal bounding: the progressive presents events as internally unbounded, whereas perfective forms mark completion (Comrie, 1976). Turkish learners generally respect this contrast, avoiding errors like*"I was breaking my arm"* for a punctual event. Their L1, which similarly distinguishes bounded and unbounded situations, likely facilitates this understanding.

Subtler divergences appear in marking extended ongoing situations. Learners occasionally write *"For many years, our economy is struggling,"* where English would use the present perfect progressive (*"has been struggling"*). Aktuğ Ekinci's (2022) quantitative analysis shows that Turkish EFL learners used the present progressive 377 times, with 33 (≈ 8.8%) of these uses containing aspect errors. The study found that among these aspectual errors, 28 could be corrected by using simple present tense, while 4 were related to present perfect tense, suggesting difficulties in distinguishing between progressive and other aspectual forms. Turkish routinely expresses such extended situations with the progressive (*ekonomi … gidiyor*), indicating conceptual transfer (Kanık, 2015). Learners hence overgeneralize the open-ended construal to multi-year spans, misaligning with English conventions (De Wit & Brisard, 2014).

5.1.5. Scalar Adjustment and Granularity of View

Scalar adjustment involves zooming in or out on an event's temporal grain (Radden & Dirven, 2007). The progressive can coerce punctual verbs into iterative or durative readings (e.g., *"The phone is ringing"*) (Wang & Wang, 2022). Turkish learners rarely apply progressive to achievements, likely due to cautious early strategies. Instances like "The *taxi was arriving"* mis-apply the progressive to single-endpoint events, revealing ongoing calibration of scalar construal.

5.2. Synthesis: Construal Patterns and Cognitive Processes

Across viewing arrangement, subjectification, foregrounding, bounding, and scalar adjustment, Turkish learners exhibit a mix of convergence with and divergence from native patterns. These findings reinforce cognitive-SLA models in which learners initially apply aspect in semantically prototypical ways and only later extend usage to complex construals (Robinson & Ellis, 2008). Divergences often stem from construal transfer: L1-shaped ways of packaging events intrude into L2 production, as seen in stative-progressive constructions (*"I am loving you"*) that mirror Turkish usage (Slobin, 1996; Bylund & Jarvis, 2011). As learners progress, cognitive restructuring fosters more target-like construal, evidenced by improved differentiation between habitual and temporary present contexts.

5.3. L1 Transfer Effects: Turkish Progressive Influence on L2 English Usage

5.3.1. Cross-Linguistic Influence and Transfer Patterns

Our findings confirm that Turkish-specific progressive constructions strongly shape non-standard English aspect use. Overextension of progressive to stative verbs (*"I am knowing the answer"*) reproduces Turkish patterns. Present progressive for habitual actions (*"She is smoking every day"*) likewise reflects the colloquial Turkish tendency to use *-Iyor* for both ongoing and iterative situations (Kanık, 2015). Evidence from Bozdağ (2019) and Haznedar (2007) indicates that auxiliary *be* omission declines sharply with increasing age and proficiency, whereas learners continue to over-extend the progressive to stative verbs from the very earliest productive stages. These converging findings strengthen the claim that conceptual transfer, not merely morpho-syntactic difficulty, underlies persistent progressive mis-use. Lastly, comparative studies show that Francophone learners, whose L1 restricts progressive use, underuse English -ing for ongoing actions, demonstrating mirror-image transfer (Collins, 2002).

Positive transfer occurs where Turkish and English overlap: both languages use progressive for planned near-future events (*"They are getting married next month"*) and for narrative backgrounding (Bada & Genç, 2007). Learners leverage these similarities with relatively high accuracy. Thus, L1 influence in aspect is bidirectional—both facilitating and hindering depending on functional equivalence (Daller et al., 2011; Odlin, 1989).

5.3.2. Typological Distance, Conceptual Transfer, and Thinking-for-Speaking

Although Turkish and English both grammaticize a progressive, their distributional norms differ. Learners transfer Turkish category boundaries into English, expanding the *progressive-worthy* (Jarvis, 2011) domain beyond native limits. This reflects thinking-for-speaking habits (Slobin, 1996): Turkish speakers habitually mark current cognitive states as ongoing, so they naturally produce *"I am understanding."* Languages lacking a progressive (e.g., German) yield underuse errors instead (Eriksson, 2008), exemplifying how typological distance shapes error profiles. Finally, cross-domain research (Cadierno, 2004; Navarro & Nicoladis, 2005) corroborates that conceptual transfer affects event construal across motion and aspect domains alike. Our aspect data echo these findings: partial form similarity masks deeper functional divergence, leading to conceptual interference.

5.4. Theoretical and Pedagogical Implications

The present findings reinforce cognitive views of second-language acquisition that foreground construal and conceptual transfer. Because Turkish –(I)yor covers both dynamic processes and stative or habitual meanings, Turkish learners routinely map that multifunctional suffix onto the English progressive. SLA models that aspire to explain developmental trajectories must therefore build in fine-grained, cross-linguistic meaning contrasts rather than treating aspect as a form-driven category alone (Han & Cadierno, 2012).

Pedagogically, effective instruction must tackle not only formal accuracy but also the deeper conceptual divergences between the two languages. Consciousness-raising tasks should juxtapose the broad semantic range of –(I)yor with the narrower aspectual scope of the English progressive, focusing on the three high-frequency transfer domains that emerged from the corpus: progressive marking on stative predicates, habitual or generic propositions, and durative frames introduced by *for* or *since*. Timeline and storyboard activities can help learners visualise temporal bounding and boundedness shift; perception-driven observation tasks can make viewing-arrangement construals salient; and scenario-based role-plays built around struggle or resistance can foreground force-dynamic uses. Error-correction workshops that incorporate authentic learner sentences will further sensitize students to systematic transfer patterns across registers.

Materials development should avoid presenting the progressive as a monolithic tense–form. Instead, teaching units ought to be organised around specific construal operations, each supported by curated Turkish-English contrastive exercises and corpus-derived exemplars. Input-enhancement techniques and corpus-informed activities can be used to highlight native-speaker distributions, while discourse-based tasks strengthen narrative aspect control. Exp-

licit discussion of the image-schemas underlying aspect (Tyler, 2012) can accelerate conceptual restructuring, fostering native-like flexibility in progressive choice.

Assessment must likewise extend beyond morpho-syntactic accuracy to capture pragmatic appropriateness and conceptual fit. Portfolio-based evaluation, untimed diagnostic tasks, and learner self-reflection checklists will provide more valid evidence of evolving aspectual control than conventional timed grammar tests. By embedding conceptual contrast, corpus authenticity, and operation-specific practice into instruction and evaluation, teachers can guide Turkish EFL learners toward a reconfigured aspectual system that aligns more closely with native-speaker usage.

6. CONCLUSION

Turkish EFL learners' progressive usage is best understood as an evolving interplay of cognitive construal operations and L1 transfer. Learners leverage L1-based conceptual resources to master core progressive meanings, yet must recalibrate category boundaries, pragmatic functions, and scalar adjustments to meet English norms. Additionally, this cognitive restructuring process occurs gradually as learners navigate the tensions between established L1 temporal representations and target language requirements.

Furthermore, the evidence suggests that non-target forms often reflect systematic application of L1 construal patterns rather than random errors. Consequently, learners' interlanguage represents an interim system with its own internal logic, combining elements from both languages. These findings underscore that acquiring aspect entails adopting new ways of construing temporal reality, not merely acquiring morphological rules. Therefore, effective pedagogy should address both the formal properties of the progressive and the underlying conceptual shifts necessary for target-like usage.

Finally, instructors should make the construal choices behind aspect explicit by designing brief, contrastive tasks that force selection among simple present, present progressive, and present perfect (progressive) in hallmark trouble spots: long-span for/since contexts, stative and achievement verbs, and habitual frames with frequency adverbs. Learners should justify each choice in a one-line rationale keyed to the implicated operation (temporal bounding, stative/achievement boundary, habitual vs stance, or viewpoint), turning feedback from form-only correction into conceptual guidance. Short rewrites in perception/report environments can highlight how viewpoint shifts license or disfavor progressive, while collocation work with force-dynamics verbs (e.g., try, struggle) shows where progressive is target-like rather than transfer-driven. This targeted, operation-aligned practice accelerates recalibration from –(I)yor-shaped habits to English-appropriate aspectual mappings.

7. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Several limitations should temper the interpretation of the present findings. First, the data consist exclusively of timed argumentative essays drawn from a single institutional examination; as a result, the study cannot speak to progressive usage in untimed, spoken, or narrative genres. Second, the design is cross-sectional and focuses on writers at one intermediate proficiency band, so developmental trajectories and acquisition sequences remain beyond the scope of the analysis. Third, progressive constructions were identified and coded using deterministic, rule-based scripts and a single-coder manual screen; accordingly, inter-rater agreement is not reported. Fourth, the semantic classification of verbs relied on a manually curated word list; marginal items such as *regret* or *value* may have received classifications that differ from expert judgments, which could in turn influence the distribution of construal categories.

Furthermore, the corpus-based methodology affords no direct window onto learners' cognitive processes or metalinguistic awareness, so attributions of construal operations to underlying conceptualisation remain inferential. Finally, concentrating on writers who share a Turkish L1 limits cross-linguistic generalisability. Future research might address these constraints through longitudinal or mixed-methods designs that include learner interviews, cross-genre corpora, and comparative samples from additional L1 backgrounds, while also translating construal-based insights into pedagogical interventions.

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