



## DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF TENSE ASPECT MODALITY IN NARRATIVES \*

### ANLATILARDA KULLANILAN ZAMAN GÖRÜNÜŞ KİPLİK YAPILARININ KULLANIMINDAKİ GELİŞİMSEL FARKLAR

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**ÖZET:** Bu çalışmanın amacı, 3-9 yaş arası ve 13 yaş grubu çocukların ürettiği anlatılarda, Türkçe'deki Zaman-Görünüş-Kiplik işaretleyicilerinin kullanım sıklığı ve işlevinde bir farklılığın olup olmadığını, varsa, farkların neler olduğunu araştırmaktır. Veri, Mayer'in (1969), bir çocuk ile köpeğinin, kaybolan bir evcil kurbağayı ararken başlarından geçen macerayı betimleyen, yazısız, resimli, "Frog, where are you?" başlıklı kitabı kullanılarak, 112 Türkçe tekdilli çocuktan ve 14 yetişkinden toplanmıştır. Verinin nicel analizi, Zaman-Görünüş-Kiplik işaretleyicilerinin kullanımında, yaşa bağlı olarak önemli farkların bulunduğunu göstermiştir. Küçük yaştaki denekler anlatı zaman işaretleyicisi olarak daha çok *-mİş*'i tercih ederken, artan yaş ile birlikte tercih *-(I)yor*'a kaymaktadır. Verinin nitel analizi ise, Zaman-Görünüş-Kiplik işaretleyicilerinin tümcecik içindeki işlevleri ile metin boyutundaki işlevleri arasında önemli farkların olduğunu göstermiştir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** anlatı üretimi, çocuklarda anlatı gelişimi, zihinsel gelişim

**ABSTRACT:** This study investigates how/whether the emergence and function of Turkish Tense Aspect Modality (TAM) markers that are used in narratives by children from 3 to 9 plus 13-year-olds show differences relative to the age of the narrator both quantitatively and qualitatively. The data were collected, by using Mayer's (1969) wordless picture book *Frog, where are you?*, cross-sectionally from 112 Turkish monolingual children from 3 to 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds and 14 adults, as normative group. The quantitative analysis of the data shows that there are significant differences in the preference of TAM markers relative to age. While younger narrators anchor to *-mİş*, older ones prefer *-(I)yor* as the dominant TAM marker. The qualitative analysis of the data renders results showing that the clause level function of each TAM marker differs from its text level function in narratives produced by children.

**Keywords:** narrative production, narrative development in children, cognitive development

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tense Aspect Modality (henceforward TAM) markers, either individually or all together, have been studied in various studies for different purposes. Aksu-Koç (1988a) studied the acquisition of Turkish TAM markers with perspectives of first language acquisition and theoretical linguistics. Comrie (1976) and Comrie (1986) studied aspect and tense with a more theoretical point of view and Erguvanlı-Taylan (1992) studied aspect within the framework of the theory of Principles and Parameters proposed by Chomsky and Lasnik (1993).

This study investigates how/whether the emergence and function of Turkish TAM markers that are used in narratives by children from 3 to 9 plus 13-year-olds show differences relative (a) to the age of the narrator and (b) to the story units both at clausal and discourse levels. In the *conclusions* section, the study comes up with suggestions about educational benefits of the findings for educators.

### 1.1. TAM Markers in Turkish

Under the title of TAM markers, we have analyzed simple TAM markers *-mİş*, *-(I)yor*, *-DI*, *-(A)r*, *-(y)AcAk*, and complex TAM markers *-(I)yordu*, *-(I)yormuş*, and *-mİştİ*. The functions of these TAM markers are as follows: *-mİş* is used for expressing information about past events/processes not directly or consciously experienced by the speaker; *-(I)yor* indicates progressive aspect; *-DI* indicates past of direct experience; *-(A)r* is the aorist (Aksu-Koç, 1988a, p.18); and *-(y)AcAk* is used to code

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both epistemic and deontic modality. As for the functions of complex markers, *-(I)yordu* is used to express the progressive nature of a past direct experience or narrative mode; *-(I)yormuş* is used to express a heard or inferred progressive past event or process; and *-mİştİ* is mainly used to express the priority of a past event/process over another past event/process on the time line or the result of an action in the past [e.g. Adam olmazı başarmıştı. (The man had achieved what is/was impossible)].

## 2.METHODOLOGY

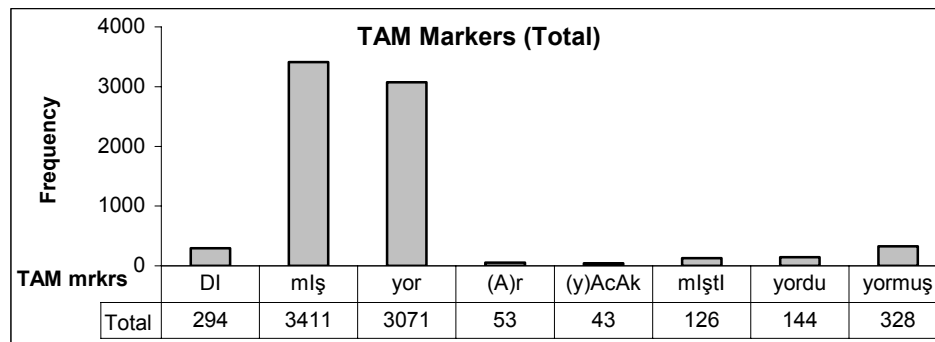
Participants in this study are 112 (14 subjects from each age group) Turkish monolingual normal children from 3 to 9, 13-year-olds and 14 adults, as normative group.

Data were collected, by using Mercer Mayer's (1969) wordless picture book *Frog, where are you?*, which illustrates the adventure of a boy and his dog who are in search of a pet frog. During data collection, the book was introduced to each subject individually in a reserved room, in the presence of the class teacher, and s/he was asked to go through the book. Having completed going through the book, the subject was asked to produce a story while the book was open before her/him. The narratives they produced were audio-recorded and then transcribed by both the researcher and two different pre-trained transcribers for the inter-transcriber reliability check. Then, the occurrences of the TAM markers in question were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively with both developmental and discourse analytic perspectives.

## 3.FINDINGS

It is observed that the default TAM markers that are used in narratives by all age groups are *-mİş* (3411 tokens) and *-(I)yor* (3071 tokens).

**Chart 3.1: The Total Emergence of TAM Markers in All Age Groups.**



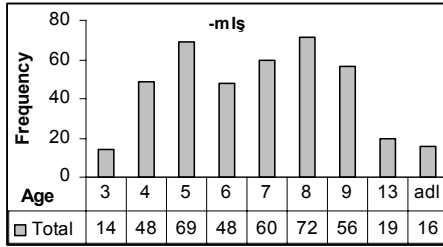
The frequency of the emergence of other markers is incomparably low relative to those of *-mİş* and *-(I)yor*. Other TAM markers are produced in the following frequencies: *-DI* (294), *-(A)r* (53), *-(y)AcAk* (43), *-mİştİ* (126), *-yordu* (144) and *-(I)yormuş* (328) (see Chart 3.1).

### 3.1. *-mİş* and *-(I)yor*

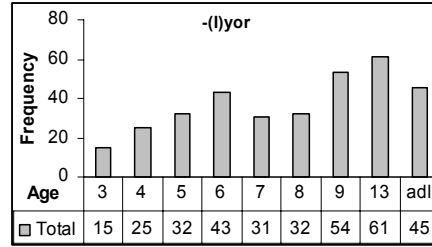
#### 3.1.1. Emergence and Developmental Differences

The reason why these two TAM markers are analyzed under the same subtitle is because they are complementary in the sense that while the emergence of *-mİş* decreases with increasing age, the emergence of *-(I)yor* increases with increasing age.

**Chart 3.1.1.1 The Frequency of *-mİş* Relative to the Age of the Narrator.**



**Chart 3.1.1.2 The Frequency of *-(I)yor* Relative to Age of the Narrator.**



As it is shown in both Chart 3.1.1.1 and Chart 3.1.1.2, both of the markers are used with a relatively low frequency by 3-year-olds. Data from 3-year-olds show that the reference to the existence of objects is more frequent than the reference to the events and actions that the characters perform in 3-year-olds' narratives. Thus, the use of TAM markers, which are appended to verbs, presents a lower frequency in 3-year-old narrators' narratives than in those of older narrators. On the other hand, the age of 3 seems to be the transitional period during which the preference to either *-mİş* or *-(I)yor*, as the narrative TAM marker, has not yet been settled. The comparative analysis of the charts 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.1.2 shows that the preference is more obvious at the age of 4 (in favor of *-mİş*) and it is clear that narrative time moves from *-mİş* to *-(I)yor* at the age of 13 while 9-year-olds produce both of the markers in very close frequencies.

### 3.1.1.1. Function

#### 3.1.1.2. The Function of *-mİş* and *(I)yor* at Clausal Level

It is observed that *-mİş* mostly functions, at clausal level, to indicate *inference*, and stative and perfective aspect as opposed to observable, dynamic and progressive aspect in the narratives that are elicited by means of the picture-book *Frog, where are you?* (P-3.1.2.1.1).

(P-3.1.2.1.1)

- a sonra da bir kalkmıŝ  
'then (he) suddenly stood up'
- b galiba ŝeyin sesini duymuŝ  
'I think (he) heard the voice of the thing'
- c kurbađanın sesini duymuŝ  
'(he) heard the voice of the frog'  
(Age 7:02)

*-mİş* in clause *a* in P-3.1.2.1.1 marks perfective aspect. The occurrences of *-mİş* in clauses *b* and *c* indicate inference since, in the picture-book, the protagonist is depicted as holding his hand behind his ear in such a way as to try to hear something better. Because *duymak* 'to hear' is an achievement verb in the context in P-3.1.2.1.1, *-mİş* in these clauses marks perfective aspect as well.

The progressive aspect *-(I)yor* functions, at clausal level, to indicate the progression of ongoing and observable events as opposed to inferred and/or perfective nature of events, which is marked by *-mİş* (P-3.1.2.1.2).

(P-3.1.2.1.2)

- a köpeđi de uyanmıŝ  
'his dog woke up, too'
- b kaçmıŝ  
'(the frog) escaped'
- c kaçmıŝ  
'escaped'

- d giysilerin altına arıyorlar  
‘they are searching beneath the clothes’
- e kurbağanın küpünü arıyorlar  
‘they are searching the jar’
- f her yeri arıyorlar  
‘they are searching everywhere’
- g köpeğin kafasında bir tane küp  
‘as dog’s head is in the jar’
- h ali de camdan bakıyor  
‘and Ali is looking through the window’
- i köpek de çok üzülmüş  
‘and the dog got very sad’  
(Age 7:02)

The occurrences of *-mİş* in clauses *a*, *b*, and *c* in P-3.1.2.1.2 indicate perfective aspect and inference. It indicates perfective because the act of escape has been completed (the jar is empty), and they indicate inference because the narrator infers, in that particular scene, from an empty jar that the frog is gone (see Aksu-Koç, 1988a, p. 24 for inferential use of *-mİş*). The occurrence of *-mİş* in clause *i* indicates inferential, but not perfective aspect because the narrator infers from the boy and the dog’s facial expressions that they are sad because of the frog’s disappearance and their sadness is not at an end because the frog is still missing. The occurrences of *-(I)yor* in clauses *d*, *e*, *f* and *h*, on the other hand, mark the dynamic, observable and progressive nature of the events.

*-mİş* and *-(I)yor* are present to serve various functions in the linguistic repertoire of children aging between 21 and 30 months and even at the age of 4, children can tell why they prefer *-mİş* to *-DI* or other markers, which shows that they possess metalinguistic awareness of the functions of these markers (Aksu-Koç, 1988a: p. 73 and p. 148). The same study shows that children at the age of 27 months do not only show preference between durative and non-durative or past and/or non-past but they also produce *-mİş* to serve the function to indicate inference, hearsay and late realization. The youngest informant who participated in the present study is 3:03 (39 months) old. Thus, the use of *-mİş* and *-(I)yor* does not render developmental differences at clausal level, whereas there may be developmental differences in the use of these markers to organize the macrostructure of a narrative.

### 3.1.1.3. The Function of *-mİş* and *(I)yor* at Discourse Level

The perfect aspect marker *-mİş* functions in folktales to indicate hearsay and inference, and it is used as a tool with which the narrator distances the story world from the world of narration both psychologically and spatio-temporally (see Zeyrek, 1995 for further information).

The function of *-mİş* to distance story world from the world of narration, and thus some degree of hearsay, is observed in some of the older informants’ narratives, though distancing is never at a high degree as it is in folktales.

When used alternately, *-mİş* and *-(I)yor* are used for the purpose of *grounding* (see Ehrlich 1987, Khalil, 2000 and Khalil, 2002) which is defined by Berman and Slobin (1994, p. 6) as “the differentiation of main line events (foreground) from commentary (background) in narrative”. While *-mİş* is used to create a background, by marking either the stative or the perfective nature of the events, *-(I)yor* is used, at discourse level, to foreground the dynamic events that move narrative forward on the time line. Thus, it seems that one of the major functions of the shift between *-mİş* and *-(I)yor* is on the basis of backgrounding and foregrounding (see Aksu-Koç, 1988b for the use of *-(I)yor* to create background).

### 3.1.1.4. Developmental Differences

The analysis of the data on which the present study based showed that there are not significant developmental differences in the discourse level function of *-mİş* and *(I)yor* in narrative texts. This

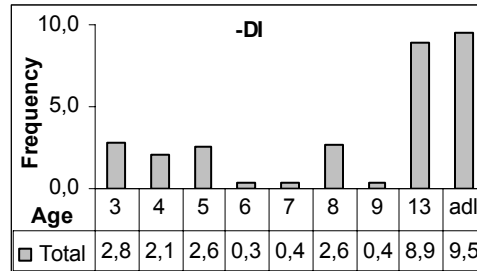
finding implies that the acquisition of the functions of the two markers at both clausal and discourse level is complete between the ages of 3 and 4.

### 3.2. *-DI*

#### 3.2.1. The Emergence of *-DI* and Developmental Differences

Compared to the emergence of *-mİş* and *-(I)yor*, *-DI* is observed to emerge in relatively low frequency. What is significant in the quantitative findings related to the use of *-DI* in narrative texts is that it is used mostly by 13-year-olds and adults.

**Chart 3.2.1.1 The Emergence of *-DI* Relative to the Age of the Narrator.**



Although the acquisition of *-DI* precedes that of *-mİş* (Aksu-Koç, 1988a, p. 69), it is observed that the frequency of the use of *-mİş* (14%) is significantly higher than that of *-DI* (2,8%) in narratives by 3-year-olds. This shows that even children at the age of 3 possess the stylistic knowledge of “narrative text” which fosters the use of *-mİş* (see Zeyrek, 1995).

#### 3.2.2. The Function of *-DI*

*-DI* is used, at clausal level, to express that the event that is denoted by the verb to which this marker is appended occurs in past, that it is complete, and that it is witnessed by the speaker, or the truth of the event is known publicly.

*-DI* is used by 13-year-olds and adults in narratives to foreground narrative events against the background events that are marked by the post-clitic *-(y)DI* ‘to be: past’, which is preceded either by *-(I)yor* or *-mİş*.

##### 3.2.2.1. Developmental Differences

3- and 4-year-olds do not use *-DI* to mark foreground events. Thus, the function of *-DI* in the narratives of these two age groups is at clausal level to encode the viewpoint of the narrator for a particular action rather than being at discourse level to organize the macro temporal structure of an episode or that of the whole story.

The function of *-DI* to foreground narrative events at local level does not render developmental differences in the narratives of 5-year-olds and older informants. Thus, it can be argued that the age of 5 is a turning point regarding the use of *-DI* to realize grounding in narratives. However, the fact that the use of *-DI* as an anchored TAM marker is observed first at the age of 13 implies that the function of this TAM marker in the organization of the macrostructure of a story shows developmental differences after the age of 5. Although *-mİş* and *-(I)yor* are used as anchored TAM markers by informants from 3 to 9, it is observed that *-DI* is used as an anchored TAM marker by 13-year-olds and adults only. This shows that *-DI* gains a new discourse function around the age of 13. Although it has been stated that *-DI* has a proximating function as opposed to the distancing function of *-mİş*, 13-year-olds and adults use *-DI* to create a new spatio-temporal and psychological location between distant *-mİş* and proximal *-DI*. At this customized location, the narrator attempts to preserve the believability of the narrative by not constructing the narrative time by means of *-mİş* and at the same time he implies the reader that he did not experienced the events/processes he is narrating but he takes the responsibility of the truthfulness of the events/processes, which increases the “truth value” of the narrative in the listener’s mind. Since such a linguistic and discourse organization, which seriously

takes the listener into consideration, requires a high level cognitive ability (see Bamberg, 1997), *-DI* is not used as the anchored TAM marker to construct narrative time until the age of 13.

### 3.3. *-(A)r*

#### 3.3.1. The Emergence *-(A)r*

None of the children participated in this study produces *-(A)r* in their frog stories. It occurs in the stories of 13-year-olds only once. One of the adults anchors to *-(A)r* and this adult is the only one who uses this TAM marker.

#### 3.3.2. The Function of *-(A)r*

When *-(A)r* is used in narratives, it gains a reading of pastness simply because narratives are the recapitulation of *past* events. It seems that the use of this TAM marker is the most neutral one among others in that it neither approximates the narrator to the story world, which is done by the use of *-DI*, nor distances him from the story world, which is done by the use of *-mİş*.

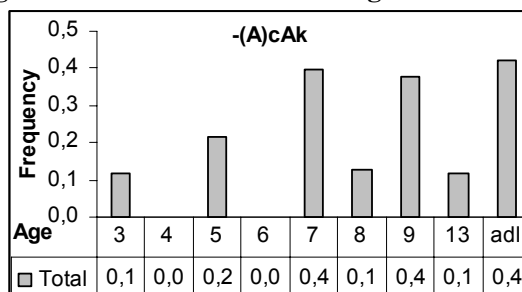
Since *-(A)r* is used by 13-year-olds only once and is not observed in the stories of younger informants, this study does not present results showing any developmental differences in the use of this TAM marker.

### 3.4. *-(y)AcAk*

#### 3.4.1. The Emergence of *-(y)AcAk* and Developmental Differences

At the outset, it should be noted that the frequency of the use of *-(y)AcAk* is relatively low compared to the emergence of other TAM markers. None of the age groups uses it even with a frequency value of 1%.

**Chart 3.4.1.1 The Emergence of *-DI* Relative to the Age of the Narrator.**



Although the frequency of the use of *-(y)AcAk* by older ages seems higher in Chart 3.4.1.1, than its use by younger narrators, the total frequency of the use of this TAM marker is so low that interpreting its emergence with a developmental perspective would be unreliable.

#### 3.4.2. The Function of *-(y)AcAk*

Regardless of age, informants who participated in this study use it to express a future event either in epistemic or deontic mood and no significant developmental differences are observed relative to the age of the narrator.

## 4. Complex TAM Markers

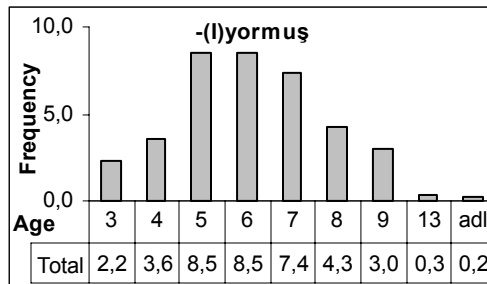
### 4.1. *-(I)yormuş*

The complex markers are constructed by appending either of the post-clitics *-IdI* (to be:Past, narrative, direct experience) or *-Imİş* (to be: past, narrative, hearsay, inference) to the verb that is already marked with a TAM marker. When these two postclitics are agglutinated to verbs that are already marked with TAM markers, the abstract forms of the postclitics turn out to be *-DI* and *-mİş*. Thus, they are often confused with the TAM markers *-mİş* and *-DI* because the functions of *-IdI* and *-Imİş* overlap in many occurrences with those of *-DI* and *-mİş*.

#### 4.1.1. Emergence and Developmental Differences

The frequency of the emergence of *-(I)yormuş* is higher than both *-(I)yordu* and *-mİştİ*. One reason for this might be because *-mİş* at the end of *-(I)yormuş* is identified with the TAM marker *-mİş*, whose occurrence is relatively high in narratives.

**Chart 4.1.1.1 The Emergence of *-(I)yormuş* Relative to the Age of the Narrator.**



It can be seen in Chart 3.1.1.1 that the preference to use either *-mİş* or *-(I)yor* is reflected in the use of *-(I)yormuş* as well. 3-year-olds do not have a clear preference between the two TAM markers. But with the age of 4, a clearer preference to *-mİş* is observed and a conspicuous preference to *-(I)yor* starts at the age of 13 (see the Charts 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.1.2). It seems that younger ages, who use *-mİş* more than *-(I)yor* in narrative texts, identify *-(I)yormuş* with *-mİş*, since it ends in *-mİş*, while 13-year-olds and adults, who use *-(I)yor* more than *-mİş*, do not have such an identification.

**4.1.2. The Function of *-(I)yormuş***

It is observed that *-(I)yormuş* is used in narratives to create a background for the foreground events that are marked with *-mİş*. While *-mİş* is used to mark foreground events, *-(I)yormuş* is used to mark background events/processes.

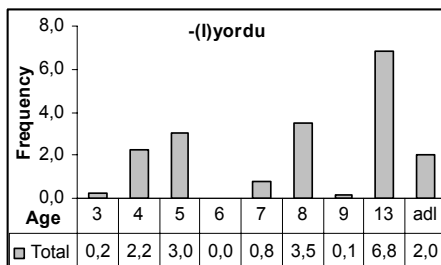
The occurrences of *-(I)yormuş* in the narratives produced by 3 and 4-year-olds are difficult to interpret because these two age groups are observed to use *-(I)yormuş* to mark both mainline events and commentary events. Although preliminary attempts for grounding are observed in the narratives of 4-year-olds, the use of *-(I)yormuş* for the purpose of grounding becomes clear at the age of 5 and after this age significant developmental differences are not observed.

**4.2. *-(I)yordu* and *-mİştİ***

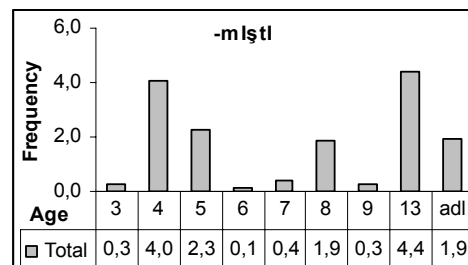
**4.2.1. Emergence and Developmental Differences**

As is the case with the emergence of TAM marker *-DI*, the emergence of complex markers that end in *-IDI* (*-(I)yordu* and *-mİştİ*) is relatively low.

**Chart 4.2.1.1 The Emergence of *-(I)yordu* Relative to the Age of the Narrator.**



**Chart 4.2.1.2 The Emergence of *-mİştİ* Relative to the Age of the Narrator.**



While 3-year-olds use *-(I)yormuş* more frequently than 13-year-olds and adults use it in narrative texts, it is found out that 3-year-olds use both *-(I)yordu* and *-mİştİ* with lower frequencies than 13-

year-olds and adults use them. This preference is related to the overwhelming power of  $-mIş$  as narrative time in 3-year-olds' narrative development. This finding implies that morphological development, related to TAM markers, is almost complete at the age of 3 because, although the morpheme  $-mIş$  or other TAM markers are realized in the form of their various allomorphs, children at the age of 3 are pretty well able to use these allomorphs deriving them from the prototype or the abstract form of the morphemes in their mental storage.

Although it is observed that certain ages use both  $-(I)yordu$  and  $-mIştI$  in higher frequencies than other age groups produce them in Chart 4.2.1.1 and 4.2.1.2, it is difficult to claim that there is a developmentally interpretable pattern in the quantitative values of the emergence of these two complex markers.

#### 4.2.2. The Function of $-(I)yordu$ and $-mIştI$

The complex marker  $-(I)yordu$  functions in narratives to create a background when past tense marker  $-DI$  is used to mark foreground events. This function of  $-(I)yordu$  is first observed in 3-year-olds' narratives (though it occurs only four times) and a difference relative to age of the narrator is not qualitative but only quantitative. The frequency of grounding by means of  $-(I)yordu$  and  $-DI$  interaction increases with increasing age.

The function of  $-mIş$  in the complex marker  $-mIştI$  is similar to the function of  $-mIş$  when it occurs on its own as a simple TAM marker. Comparatively, while  $-(I)yordu$  proximates the narrator to the world of narrative,  $-mIştI$  distances the narrator from the narrative world both spatio-temporally and psychologically.

When the verb to which  $-(I)yordu$  is appended is a non-durative one (such as *bulmak* "to find")  $-mIş$  replaces  $-(I)yor$ . This replacement does not change the function of the complex marker in that it still functions to create a background for the action marked with  $-DI$ .

### 5. CONCLUSION

Two different kinds of conclusions are presented here: (a) results related to the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the TAM markers under the focus of this paper, and (b) educational benefits that are derived from a broader commentary on these results.

The quantitative analysis of narratives produced by children from 3 to 9 plus 13-year-olds and adults showed that  $-mIş$  and  $-(I)yor$  are the two default TAM markers in the construction of narrative time. The frequency of the emergence of other TAM markers, namely,  $-DI$ ,  $-(A)r$ ,  $-(A)cAk$ ,  $-(I)yordu$ ,  $-(I)yormuş$  and  $-mIştI$  is significantly low compared to the frequencies of  $-mIş$  and  $-(I)yor$ .

The qualitative analysis of the data renders results showing that the clause level function of each TAM marker differs from its discourse level function in narrative texts produced by children. While, for instance,  $-DI$  is used at clause level to express that the event that is denoted by the verb to which this marker is appended occurs in past; that it is complete, and that it is witnessed by the speaker, or the truth of the event is known publicly, it is used at discourse level to foreground narrative events against the background events that are marked by the post-clitic  $-(I)DI$  'to be: past' which is preceded either by  $-(I)yor$  or  $-mIş$ .

There are developmental differences in the use of TAM markers in narrative texts. The differences are both quantitatively and qualitatively. While the use of  $-mIş$  decreases with increasing age, the use of  $-(I)yor$  increases with increasing age. While 3-year-olds fail to use TAM markers for the purpose of grounding, 4-year-olds are observed to attempt to use them for this purpose. The ability to use TAM markers for the purpose of grounding is clear and reaches almost to adult proficiency level at the age of 5. Thus after the age of 5, significant developmental differences related to *grounding* in narrative texts are not observed.

The use of the allomorphs of  $-mIş$ , by 3-year-olds, to construct narrative time implies that the developmental process of the acquisition of morphology of TAM markers is complete at the age of 3.

As for the educational implications, the findings of this paper will particularly be beneficial for those who are to evaluate the skills underlying the production of narrative texts, which are very likely



to be encountered in almost any type of speaking and writing activities, and general language skills of students in elementary schools. As it is revealed in the preceding paragraphs, the frequency and function of some of the TAM markers (e.g. –miş and –iyor) are closely related with the age of the narrator. This implies that there is not a normative narrative temporal pattern that applies to all of the narratives produced by different age groups. Rather than evaluating the *narrativeness* or *storiness* of a text by comparing it with the “narrative or story pattern” in our mind, as an adult teacher, the findings of this study imply that the temporal organization of a narrative text should be analyzed according to the normative temporal pattern of the narrative texts produced by elementary students at a certain age.

The findings of this study will also help educators to have an insight into the cognitive potentials of different age groups about the use of temporal elements which they can assimilate and accommodate to understand the nature of other cognitive skills such as, for instance, the conceptualization of scientific terms, distances, graphics etc.

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### Extended Abstract

This study investigates how/whether the emergence and function of Turkish Tense Aspect Modality Markers (TAMM) that are used in narratives by children from 3 to 9 plus 13-year-olds show differences relative to the age of the narrator both quantitatively and qualitatively. The data were collected, by using Mercer Mayer's (1969) wordless picture book *Frog, where are you?*, crosssectionally from 112 Turkish monolingual children from 3 to 9-year-olds successively, 13-year-olds and 14 adults, as normative group. The book was open before the subject during the narration. The narratives were audio recorded and then transcribed. Two pre-trained transcribers other than the researcher transcribed 20% of the data to check the intertranscriber reliability. Agreement between transcribers was 100%. The quantitative analysis of the data shows that there are significant differences in the preference of TAM markers relative to age. While younger narrators anchor to *-mİş*, older ones prefer *-(I)yor* as the dominant TAM marker. When used alternately, *-mİş* and *-(I)yor* are used for the purpose of grounding; the former is used to construct a background, the latter is used to mark foreground events. Thus it is observed that one of the most significant functions of the alternate use of *-mİş* and *-(I)yor* in narratives is to create grounding. The fact that there are not significant developmental differences in the functional use of these two TAM markers shows that children at the age of three have already acquired the grounding function of *-mİş* and *-(I)yor* pairs. *-DI* is used with a high frequency by 13-year-olds and adults while the frequency of the emergence of *-DI* in narratives produced by younger children is relatively low. As for the function of *-DI*, it is used, at clausal level, to express that the event that is denoted by the verb to which this marker is appended occurs in past, that it is complete, and that it is witnessed by the speaker, or the truth of the event is known publicly. In narratives, *-DI* is used by 13-year-olds and adults to foreground narrative events against the background events that are marked by the post-clitic *-(y)DI* 'to be: past' which is preceded either by *-(I)yor* or *-mİş*. Developmental differences are observed in the use of *-DI*. It is not used for the purpose of foregrounding by 3- and 4-year-olds, whereas 5-year-olds use *-DI* to construct grounding in narratives. The function of *-DI* to foreground narrative events at local level does not render developmental differences in the narratives of 5-year-olds and older informants. Thus, it can be argued that the age of 5 is a turning point regarding the use of *-DI* to realize grounding in narratives. However, the fact that the use of *-DI* as an anchored TAM marker is observed first at the age of 13 implies that the function of this TAM marker in the organization of the macrostructure of a story shows developmental differences after the age of 5. Although *-mİş* and *-(I)yor* are used as anchored TAM markers by informants from 3 to 9, it is observed that *-DI* is used as an anchored TAM marker by 13-year-olds and adults only. This shows that *-DI* gains a new discourse function around the age of 13. Although it has been stated that *-DI* has a proximating function as opposed to the distancing function of *-mİş*, 13-year-olds and adults use *-DI* to create a new spatio-temporal and psychological location between distant *-mİş* and proximal *-DI*. At this customized location, the narrator attempts to preserve the believability of the narrative by not constructing the narrative time by means of *-mİş* and, at the same time, he implies the reader that he did not experienced the events/processes he is narrating but he takes the responsibility of the truthfulness of the events/processes, which increases the "truth value" of the narrative in the listener's mind. Since such a linguistic and discourse organization, which seriously takes the listener into consideration, requires a high level cognitive ability (see Bamberg 1997), *-DI* is not used as the anchored TAM marker to construct narrative time until the age of 13.

The use of *-(A)r* is relatively low in narratives. This TAM marker is used only by 13-year-olds and adults in our data corpus. When *-(A)r* is used in narratives it gains a function of pastness because of the nature of the narrative discourse; which is the recapitulation of past events.

The emergence of *-(A)cak* is comparatively low (43 tokens whereas *-mİş* 1411). All of the tokens of *-(A)cak* are used to express a future event either in epistemic or deontic mood.

The frequency of the emergence of *-(I)yormuş* is higher than both *-(I)yordu* and *-mİştİ*. One reason for this might be because *-Imİş* at the end of *-(I)yormuş* is identified with the TAM marker *-mİş*, whose occurrence is the highest in narratives. It is observed that *-(I)yormuş* is used in narratives to create a background for the foreground events that are marked with *-mİş*. While *-mİş* is used to mark foreground events, *-(I)yormuş* is used to mark background events/processes.

As is the case with the emergence of TAM marker *-DI*, the emergence of complex markers that end in *-IDI* (*-(I)yordu* and *-mIştI*) is relatively low. The complex marker *-(I)yordu* functions in narratives to create a background when past tense marker *-DI* is used to mark foreground events. This function of *-(I)yordu* is first observed in 3-year-olds' narratives (though it occurs only four times) and a difference relative to age of the narrator is not qualitative but only quantitative. The frequency of grounding by means of *-(I)yordu* and *-DI* interaction increases with increasing age.

The function of *-mIş* in the complex marker *-mIştI* is similar to the function of *-mIş* when it occurs on its own as a simple TAM marker. Comparatively, while *-(I)yordu* proximates the narrator to the world of narrative, *-mIştI* distances the narrator from the narrative world both spatio-temporally and psychologically.

As for the educational implications, the findings of this paper will particularly be beneficial for those who are to evaluate the skills underlying the production of narrative texts, which are very likely to be encountered in almost any type of speaking and writing activities, and general language skills of students in elementary schools. As it is revealed in the preceding paragraphs, the frequency and function of some of the TAM markers (e.g. *-mIş* and *-Iyor*) are closely related with the age of the narrator. This implies that there is not a normative narrative temporal pattern that applies to all of the narratives produced by different age groups. Rather than evaluating the *narrativeness* or *storiness* of a text by comparing it with the "narrative or story pattern" in our mind, as an adult teacher, the findings of this study imply that the temporal organization of a narrative text should be analyzed according to the normative temporal pattern of the narrative texts produced by elementary students at a certain age.

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