

Turkish

L. van der Zijden-Holstvoogd

1. Language description

Turkish is one of the Turkish languages from the Altaic language family. It is the official language in Turkey and is spoken by approximately 70 million people worldwide. There are different dialects within Turkey. Standard Turkish is basically a standardisation of the Istanbul dialect. Kurdish is not a dialect of Turkish, but a separate language. There are also regional accent differences that are comparable to the differences between Dutch and Flemish.

Tabel 1

Consonant system Turkish according to Kopkallı-Yavuz (2010).

	Coronal					Dorsal				
	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Faryngal	Glottal
plosives	p	b		t	d	(c) (ʃ)	k	g		
nasals	m			n		(ɲ)	(ŋ)			
tap flap				r						
fricatives		f	v ²	s	z	ʃ	ʒ	x	ʕ ₃	h
affricates						tʃ	dʒ			
liquids				l	ɫ ₄					
semi						j				
vowels										

() These are allophones

²ŋ does not appear in the consonant overview, but if the n is followed by a velar sound, then it is realised as ŋ.

³This fricative does not appear in the overview from Kopkallı

⁴Not everyone records this as a phoneme. Corresponds with grapheme ğ. Sometimes realised as an extension of the preceding vowel, sometimes as a soft g or uvular r

⁵In both languages, ɫ is an allophone of l. This is regional in Dutch (e.g. Amsterdam). In Turkish, the ɫ occurs in combination with back vowels

Syllable structure

Most of the syllables are open. If a word ends in a consonant and has a suffix that starts with a vowel, then resyllabification occurs. The consonant of the main word becomes the onset of the suffix: *aç im* → *a çim*

In Turkish, no consonant clusters are syllable initial or word initial. A cluster is 'broken apart' by placing a vowel between the consonants (*grup* → *gurup*) or placing a vowel in front of the word: (*iskelet* → *skelet*). This concerns words that are not Turkish in origin.

Clusters at the end of a syllable do occur, but not often. They consist of no more than two consonants.

Stress

Usually on the last syllable

Exceptions: place names (Ankara), adverbs, interjections

Due to the stress pattern, the complex morphology, and the vowel harmony, there is a lot of attention to final syllables. Therefore, omitting final syllables is something you do not expect.

2. Phonological development

Table 2

Age of acquisition of Turkish consonants

Ages	initial	final
1;6 – 1;11	b d k t	p t k
	m	m n j
2 – 2;5	p t g n	c
	tʃ dʒ	tʃ
	j l	ʊ
2;6 – 2;11	s ʃ	s ʃ l
3 – 3;5	f v z ʒ h	f ʒ z h
3;6 - 4	r	r
➤ 4		ɣ
		clusters

Acquired means: 90% of the children produces the phoneme correctly in at least 68% of the cases

3. Common phonological processes

With 3;6 years, in principle, all phonemes should have been acquired in syllable initial and final position. Errors are most frequent around the 2nd year, when a leap in the lexical development occurs. Most errors disappear by the 3rd year, but gliding and cluster reduction may persist until the 4th year. Note: children who grow up in a multilingual environment receive less input from the native language than monolingual children. This means the development in their own language may be slower.

The overview below lists many common processes, as reported by Topbaş (2004/2005). The examples on the right come from our own research among normally developing Turkish toddlers in the Netherlands. If no examples are given, then these processes were not found in our own research.

lateralization	araba → aɫaba, fare → fale, dɔktɔr → dɔktɔɫ
gliding	fare → fajɛ
cluster reduction	
fronting	bɛbɛc → bɛbɛt, dʒɛb → tɛb
stopping	fare → pare
assimilation	gɔbɛc → gɔcɛc
consonant deletion	mɛrdiɛn → mɛdiɛn, ɛcmɛc → ɛmɛc, karpuz → karpu/ kapu
devoicing	zejtin → sejtin, bisiklet → pisiklet
voicing	
de-affrication	uɫak → uɫak, dʒɛb → tɛb, ɫɔdʒuk → totuk
syllable reduction	bisiklet → bitet (bicycle) araba → aba, ajakabə → ajabə, telefɔn → tefɔn
affrication	
metathesis	bisiklet → bikislet
backing	

4. Lexical variation

The words for navel /gøbɛc/ and abdomen /kɑrɪn/ are used interchangeably. The image makes it possible to name both words. We chose the word 'navel' because of the /g/. When the child responds with 'abdomen', you can try to prompt the word 'navel' by asking: and what is in the middle of the abdomen? If the child still does not say /gøbɛc/, the word may be said for repetition.

5. Results of typically developing Turkish toddlers

In 2016, 7 Turkish toddlers (living in the Netherlands) were tested with the (paper) version of Speakaboo. Deletion of the (syllable) final consonant, both in the middle of a word and at the end of a word, was remarkably common. Deletion of the word-final consonant may also be a result of interference from Dutch. This also applies to devoicing of the 'z'.

6. Sources

Literature

- Kopkallı-Yavuz, H. (2010). *The sound inventory of Turkish: Consonant and Vowels*, in: Communication Disorders in Turkish, edited by S. Topbaş and M. Yavaş, Multilingual Matters, Bristol UK.
- Koşaner, O. et al, (2013). *Improving Turkish language training materials: Grapheme-to-phoneme conversion for adding phonemic transcription into dictionary entries en course books*. Procedia. Social and Behavioral Sciences 103 (473-484)
- Topbaş, S. (2004/2005). *Turkish Speech Acquisition*. In: The International Guide to Speech Acquisition. Edited by S. McLeod, Thomson Delmar Learning, NY, p. 565-579.
- Topbaş, S. (2006). *Does the speech of Turkish-speaking phonologically disordered children differ from that of children speaking other languages?* Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics, nr. 20: 509-522
- Topbaş, S., Konrot, A. (2006). *Variability in Phonological Disorders: Can we Search for Systematicity? Evidence from Turkish-Speaking Children*. In: Clinical Phonetics en Linguistics 20(7-8): 509-522.
- Topbaş, S., Yavaş, M. (2006). *Phonological Acquisition and Disorders in Turkish*. In: *Phonological Development and Disorders in Children. A multilingual Perspective*. Edited by Zhu Hua and Barbara Dodd. P. Multilingual Matters, Bristol UK.

Other sources

Nazife Çavuş, Klinisch Linguïst / Logopedist, Spraak & Taal Ambulatorium (STA) & Vroegbehandeling Koninklijke Kentalis

<http://meertaligheidentaalstoornissenvu.wikispaces.com/>

© Kentalis, 20-11-17, Sint Michielsgestel