Contribution ID: **41** Type: **Poster**

The role of morphology in the processing of English-Turkish false cognates: Evidence from a backward lexical translation task

Saturday, June 24, 2017 10:50 AM (1h 55m)

False cognates are lexical items that display overlapping orthographic and/or phonological properties in two languages but little or no semantic similarity. Studies investigating the processing of false cognates have predominantly disregarded the effect of morphology (cf. Janke & Kolokonte, 2015). Additionally, studies on the processing of (false) cognates have almost exclusively dwelt on typologically-related language pairs like English-Italian and English-German, disregarding the processing of (false) cognates from typologically distant language pairs.

Against this background, the present study aimed to investigate the processing of real and false cognate word pairs from English and Turkish by examining the effect of morphological properties. 50 L1 Turkish learners of L2 English participated in a self-paced backward lexical translation task (Janke & Kolokonte, 2015), in which they had to provide Turkish translations for English words appearing on a computer screen.
The experiment employed Turkish-English word pairs in 6 different conditions:

1. False Cognate Simplex: monomorphemic false cognates (Turkish pasta –cake vs. English pasta)
2. False Cognate Mismatch: false cognates; monomorphemic in Turkish but polymorphemic in English (Turkish izolasyon –insulation vs. English isolation)
3. Real Cognate Simplex: monomorphemic real cognates (Turkish and English limit)
4. Real Cognate Mismatch: real cognates; monomorphemic in Turkish but polymorphemic in English (Turkish lider vs. English leader)
5. Control Simplex: non-cognate, monomorphemic equivalents (Turkish zehir vs. English poison)
6. Control Mismatch: non-cognate equivalents; monomorphemic in Turkish but polymorphemic in English (Turkish istisna vs. English exception)

The results revealed a significant cognate facilitation effect and a significant false cognate inhibition effect. Moreover, it was found that morphological mismatch played a significant role in the processing of cognates and false cognates, which was evident in longer reaction times to mismatch items compared to simplex items.

Primary author: KIRKICI, Bilal (Middle East Technical University)

Co-authors: ATAMAN, Esra (Middle East Technical University); ÇAĞLAR, Ozan Can (Middle East Technical University)

Presenter: KIRKICI, Bilal (Middle East Technical University)

Session Classification: Poster 2 (with coffee)

Track Classification: Freely Contributed Paper