

Phonetic Characteristics of Filled Pauses of Turkish Heritage Speakers

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Filled pauses (FPs) are the most common type in everyday spontaneous speech. In the way of communicative function of FPs, they provide the speaker to gain time for speech planning, self-monitoring, reflecting, or turn-taking (Christenfeld, 1996; Clark & Fox Tree, 2002; Levelt 1989; Shriberg 2001). The function of filled pauses is similar across the languages but they have language-specific configurations and are characterized by different phonetic features as well as divergent acoustic cues across different languages. Despite some cross-linguistic similarities, it is evident that filled pauses adhere to the phonology and phonotactics of the target languages (Bóna et al., 2020) Although there are limited studies on cross-language influence in FPs production, there exists a large body of research documenting cross-language effects in L2 phonological learning. The degree and directionality of influence between an L1 and an L2 generally differ depending on speakers' amount of L2 exposure and proficiency, as well as the usage-dominance relation between their two languages (Erker & Otheguy, 2016; Fowler et al., 2008). Models of L2 learning anticipate that such cross-language influence occurs as a result of the coexistence of L1 and L2 sounds within a shared phonetic space (Flege, 1995). The purpose of the present study is to investigate the phonetic characteristics of filled pauses in speech samples produced by Turkish heritage speakers (HSs). It has been analysed the use of different FP types (vowel only and vowel+nasal), the spectral properties of the vocalic segments contained by FPs (first and second formant values) and the durations of vocalic and consonantal segments contained by FPs. This paper provides further evidence by focusing on the similarities and differences between heritage speakers (HSs) and monolingually-raised speakers (MSs) of their heritage and majority languages. There are 33 participants who were locally born (or arrived before 23 months), heritage language (Turkish) uses in family, aged between 20-35 years old and to compare their filled pauses produced by their 31 monolingual German and 33 Turkish matched. All participants described a short video in two settings (formal/informal) and two modes (spoken/written). All HSs performed the settings in two languages (heritage and dominant language). In total 4.2-hr recordings from spoken mode analysed in *Praat* (Boersma & Weenink, 2018). The data for this study is openly accessible via the Research Unit Emerging Grammars (RUEG) 0.3.0 corpus (Wiese et al., 2019: <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3236069>). Turkish HSs were found to use vowel and vowel+nasal types of FPs like in monolingual German participants not only when they speak German but also when they speak Turkish. Since the vowel+nasal type of FP is not a typical FP produced by Turkish monolinguals the findings suggest that Turkish HSs tend to transfer the types of FPs of L2 to their L1. Both duration and spectral characteristics of FPs of HSs of Turkish differ from monolingual Turkish and German speakers. The results furthermore showed that L1 and L2 interactions affected the temporal and spectral features of the FPs of HSs of Turkish.

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