

# Linguistic results from Turkey: Orthography and literate structures

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# Congratulations!

- Great mix of ethnographic insight with micro linguistic analyses

# Some thoughts

- Orate-literate distinction
- Orthographic measures
  
- Other school readiness measures
- Home environment?

# Orate-literate distinction

- How valid for 1st graders, novices in exposure to literacy?
  - Only proto-literate structure for 1st graders
  - Use different criteria for judging discourse competence of 1st graders?
    - Narrative structure, carried over from oral competence
      - Orientation
        - » Reference introductions, but maintenance and switches? (“complement forms”)
      - Action complexity, resolution, story embellishments
    - Why not picture stories? Video narratives involve memory constraints
- Also, 1st graders more Kurdish dominant than older children
  - Thus monolingual testing might be problematic for some of the children

# Orthographic measures

- Orthographic readiness rather than focusing on errors
- Phonological awareness--- pseudoword test very useful
  - Proposals for supporting weaker pupils?
- Letter recognition
- Exposure to print media
- All before children enter school

# Other school-readiness measures

- Cognitive
  - Vocabulary--- picture receptive vocabulary tests
    - Expressive vocab from oral narrations
  - Numeracy--- could be predicted from linguistic competence, at least for 1st graders
  - Executive functions– cognitive inhibition, working memory
- Social-emotional competence
  - Parent reports?
  - Vignettes, story completion from children

# Home environment

- Big individual differences (these groups are not homogeneous at all, as evidenced in the LAS data)
  - Determinants could be searched for at earlier ages and at the homes and neighborhoods of children
- Child-directed interaction/speech– amount, nature, multilingualism/mixed language
- Exposure to literacy-related activities, print media, extended discourse

## Part 2

Comparison of linguistic results from Turkey and  
from Germany: Focus on Written Texts



# Good idea to collect written texts

For orthography

For linguistic sophistication

# Audience issue

- Would be good to give specifications about the potential reader
  - Knowledgeable vs. Non-knowledgeable reader
- Although potentially plausible, the instructions might still not have worked
- Will literate structures increase?

# Different set of factors for different components

- Although the use of literate forms and acquisition of appropriate orthography are parallel in some 1<sup>st</sup> graders, there is often a dissociation between these two components of literacy
- Understandable given that both the child-based and environmental factors that lead to orthographic and discourse development are different
  - Orthographic
    - attention, working memory...
    - Exposure to letters and words as visual objects in addition to phonological objects
  - Discourse development
    - all of the above plus “discourse organizational ability”
    - Exposure to larger linguistic structures such as certain types of constructions and extended discourse such as narratives and maybe expository discourse

# Oral language skills

- p. 349: ...”oral communicative skills do not necessarily lead to school-related linguistic skills.”
  - Very true that temperamental and self-confidence are hardly ever related to early language competence
    - Shyness, reluctance to cooperate, high motivation to express oneself... Are not yet crucial factors in language development literature
  - And exposure to written materials and well-formed discourse is important for school-based linguistic skills
  - However, early language skills whether in L1 or L2, if measured before grade 1, might be found to predict the outcomes in grade 1
    - Measures at preschool ages and in the environments where the children grow up (homes and neighborhoods)

# Crucial direction

- What factors enable and restrict these children in terms of learning and growing during younger ages?
  - Before entry into mandatory schooling
    - Ideal would be starting with infancy, at most at 3
  - Homes, neighborhoods, streets with extended family, siblings, peers

# Thank you!

- LAS Team
- People here