

**İngilizce Öğrenen Yetişkin Türk Öğrencilerin  
İngilizce'de Dolaylı Nesnenin Tümce İçindeki Sıralamasını  
Edinmesinde Belirtlilik Kuramı**

117324



**T.C. YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KURULU  
DOKÜMANTASYON MERKEZİ**

**MARKEDNESS THEORY  
IN THE ACQUISITION ORDER OF  
DATIVE ALTERNATION BY TURKISH  
ADULT LEARNERS OF ENGLISH**

**Yücel Öz  
(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)  
Eskişehir 2002**

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Order of Dative Alternation  
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**THESIS OF MASTER OF ARTS  
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Anadolu Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü  
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## YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ÖZÜ

### İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENEREN YETİŞKİN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN İNGİLİZCE'DE DOLAYLI NESNENİN TÜMCE İÇİNDEKİ SIRALAMASINI EDİNMESİNDE BELİRTİLİK KURAMI

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Günümüzde Evrensel Dilbilgisi (Universal Grammar) kuramı ikinci dil edinimi alanında önemli teorik ve uygulamalı incelemelere yol açtı. İkinci dil edinimi alanındaki çalışmalara göre Evrensel Dilbilgisi kuramının yetişkinlerin dil ediniminde önemli bir rolü vardır. Bu alandaki bazı araştırmacılar, eğer Evrensel Dilbilgisi yetişkinlerin dil öğreniminde önemli bir rolü var ise, o zaman yabancı dil öğreniminde ki temel inançlarımızın yeniden gözden geçirilmesine gerek olduğunu düşünmektedirler. Onlara göre, öğrenim sürecinin yapısını belirlemek için, tamamen öğretim yöntemine, çevresel faktörlere, ve öğrencinin kendi psikolojisine yönelmek yeterli olmamalıdır. Bununla birlikte uygulamalı dilbilim ve onun öğrenim sürecine katkısı da dikkate alınmalıdır.

Bu çalışma İngilizce de dolaylı nesnenin (indirect object placement) tümce içinde ki yerinin ediniminin belirtilik kuramı ile bağlantısını araştırmaktadır. Bu çalışmada üç ana soruya yanıt aranmaktadır; a) dolaylı nesnenin tümce içindeki yerini gösteren hangi yapısı İngilizce öğrenen yetişkin öğrencilerimiz için belirtisizdir? b) İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrenciler "isim cümleciği- edat cümleciği" yapısını daha kolay mı öğreniyorlar? Yada bu yapı ile daha az mı problem yaşıyorlar? c) İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrenciler belirtili olan "isim cümleciği- isim cümleciği" yapısı ile daha mı çok sorun yaşıyorlar?

Bu sorulara yanıt verebilmek için, ileri düzeyde 70 öğrenciye iki değişik veri toplama aracı verilmiştir. Bunlar dilbilgisi doğruluk saptama testi ve tümce oluşturma testidir. Bulgular dolaylı nesnenin tümce içindeki yerini gösteren "isim cümleciği-edat cümleciği" yapısının Türk öğrenciler için belirtisiz iken, "isim cümleciği-isim cümleciği" yapısının belirtili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

## THESIS OF MASTER OF ARTS

## ABSTRACT

MARKEDNESS IN THE ACQUISITION  
ORDER OF DATIVE ALTERNATION  
BY TURKISH ADULT LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

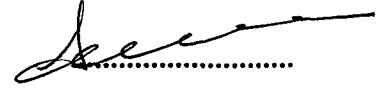
Most recently the theory of Universal Grammar (UG) has led to important theoretical and empirical advances in the field of second language acquisition. Research within fields of second language acquisition suggests that UG plays an important role in adult language learning. Some researchers claim that if UG plays an important role in adult language learning, then much of our belief that forms the fundamental belief of foreign language learning should be reconsidered. To them, it is not enough to completely focus on teaching methodology, environmental factors and the learner's internal psychological states in order to specify the nature of the learning process. Nevertheless language faculty and its contributions to the learning process should be taken into account as well.

This study aims at searching this claim by studying dative alternation in English within the framework of the theory of markedness. This study tries to find an answer to the questions of which feature of dative alternation of English verbs (NP PP) or (NP NP) is unmarked for our Turkish students learning English? , do Turkish learners of English learn (NP PP) form easily?, and do foreign language learners have more problem with the marked (NP NP) forms?

To answer research questions, 70 subjects (advanced level) have been given two different data collection instruments. These included grammaticality judgment test and a production test. The findings suggest that the lexical feature (NP PP) is unmarked and the lexical feature (NP NP) is marked.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ÖZ.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
DEĞERLENDİRME KURULU VE ENSTİTÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ ONAYI.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ÖZGEÇMİŞ.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
<b>CHAPTER I: Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Universal Grammar and Second Language Acquisition.....	1
1.1.1. Universal Grammar.....	4
1.1.2. Dative Alternation in English and Markedness.....	5
1.2. Teaching Grammar.....	7
1.3. Statement of the Problem.....	9
1.4. Aim and Scope.....	11
1.5. Research Questions.....	12
1.6. Limitations of the Study.....	12
1.7. Related Terminology Used in the Study.....	13
<b>CHAPTER II: Review of Literature.....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1. Definition of Grammar.....	14
2.2. Historical Background of the Place of Grammar Teaching.....	15
2.3. Current Issues for Teaching Grammar.....	17
2.4. Markedness in Second Language Acquisition.....	25



<b>CHAPTER III. Methodology</b> .....	30
3.1. Definitions of the Structures Used in the Study.....	30
3.2. Setting and Subjects.....	31
3.3. Materials.....	32
3.3.1. Placement Test.....	32
3.3.2. Grammaticality Judgment Test.....	33
3.3.3. Production Test.....	35
3.4. Data Collection Procedures .....	36
3.5 Scoring Procedures.....	37
3.6. Pilot Study.....	38
3.6.1. Setting and Subjects of the Pilot Study.....	40
<b>CHAPTER IV. Data Analysis and Discussion</b> .....	41
4.1. Analysis of Data .....	42
4.2. Discussion.....	44
<b>CHAPTER V. Conclusions</b> .....	48
5.1. Summary of the Study.....	48
5.2. Assessment of the Study.....	49
5.3. Pedagogical Implications.....	50
5.4. Suggestions for Further Research.....	53
5.5. Conclusions.....	55
APPENDICES.....	56
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	66

## LIST OF TABLES

		<u>Page</u>
Table 3.1	Result of Grammaticality Judgement Test of the Pilot Study .....	39
Table 3.2	Result of the Production Test of the Pilot Study .....	40
Table 4.1.	Result of Descriptive Statistics: Grammatical; Ungrammatical For Grammaticality Judgment Test.....	42
Table 4.2.	Result of Paired T-Test CI: Grammatical; Ungrammatical for Grammaticality Judgment Test.....	43
Table 4.3.	Result of Descriptive Statistics: C1; C2; C3 for Anova for the Production Test.....	43
Table 4.4.	Results of One-way Anova: C1; C2; C3 for the Production Test.....	44
Table 4.5.	Results of the Production Test.....	45

## LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 2.1. Whole Language and Guided Participation: An Alternative to Grammar Instruction.....	19
Figure 2.2. A Whole Language Approach to Grammar Instruction .....	21
Figure 3.1. The Evaluation Scale for the Placement Test.....	32
Figure 3.2. The Distribution of the Scores Obtained from The Placement Test.....	33



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Felix (1988), one of the followers of UG theory, claims that in order to specify the nature of the learning process, it is not enough to entirely focus on teaching methodology, environmental factors, and the learner's internal psychological state, but language faculty and its contributions to the learning process should be considered, as well. According to Felix (1988:291), UG plays an important role in adult language learning. In this study the relationship between UG and second language acquisition has been outlined. According to White (1989) the pure UG hypothesis claims that UG works identically in L1 and L2 acquisition and that UG can work together directly with L2 input. White (1989:121) states that this view is particularly relevant in the context of markedness. In this theory unmarked rules are the rules of "core grammar" and it is predicted that they are both easy to learn and they can be acquired on "the basis of minimal exposure to primary data. However, marked rules are the peripheral rules of the grammar and they are predicted to be relatively more difficult to learn. Thus, as teachers of English, we should reconsider whether Turkish EFL students can easily learn these marked rules or not. Another point to be reconsidered is whether grammar teaching should cover such topics. This study aims to find out an answer to such considerations.

#### 1.1. Universal Grammar and Second Language Acquisition

Flynn and O'Neil (1988) discuss that the theory of UG has led to important theoretical and empirical advances in the field of second language (L2) acquisition. Flynn (1988), argues that in order to begin to develop a principled, explanatory theory of L2 acquisition, the following minimal set of criteria must be met:

First, at the most general level, the theory must be viable both psychologically and linguistically. This means that discussion of adult L2 learning must take place within a context that reflects what we currently believe to be true about human cognition in general.

Second, the theory must account for the constructive component of L2 learning, as suggested by a Creative Construction (CC) theory. That is to say, it must specify the mechanisms necessary to explain the role of set of principles acquisition common to both L1 and L2 learning.

Third, the theory must account for the role of experience in the L2 learning process. It must predict precisely when and where properties of L1 experience will emerge in L2 learning. And, importantly, this constructive component must be integrated with the constructive component above in a meaningful way. (cf. Flynn and O'Neil 1988:7-8)

Keeping in mind the above mentioned set of criteria for developing a principled, explanatory theory of L2 acquisition, Flynn and O'Neil argue that the theory of UG can provide the theoretical scaffolding necessary to justify both the contrastive and constructive components summarized above.

Flynn and O'Neil also add that UG may be involved in the adult L2 acquisition process. According to them, it is reasonable to assume that if principles of UG do provide for a "language faculty that is biologically determined and that is sufficient to explain how language acquisition is possible, then UG may also determine the adult L2 acquisition process in some way." They also mention that this would be true under the assumption that the essential language faculty does not change significantly over time. If this were the case, they point out, "at the most general level we would expect to find evidence which confirmed claims for a theory of UG for child L1 acquisition to emerge for adult L2 acquisition." With this in mind, they think that L2 acquisition to be "theoretically driven, grammar-determined process and not primarily a data-driven or inductively determined process." According to them, data should show that learners do not simply transfer from their L1s to the new target language without "consultation of the deeper structural properties of the new grammar."

Travis (1988), when discussing UG and second language acquisition, and the question whether the adult second language learner has access to the principles and parameters of UG, refers to Flynn, Mazurkewich and White. Travis concludes that the principles involved in first language acquisition are indeed at work in second language learning. When trying to find an answer to the question of whether the adult language learner has access to the principles and parameters of UG, she thinks that the language of a Broca's aphasic may provide confirmation for linguistic theory "by showing that linguistic constructs such as theta theory and trace theory are relevant to the description of a grammatical impairments.

Final study that will be discussed here leads us to the conclusion that UG is active in L2 acquisition. This is the study of Jenkins with her classical dyslexic subject who was a 43 year-old bilingual woman when tested. As mentioned here, her history of classical dyslexic “including early diagnosis as mentally retarded. But she had fair social success and normal intelligence for tasks other than reading. The subject’s reading disability was morphosyntactic. The errors she made when she was reading aloud “both continuous text word-list stimuli indicated a markedly different pattern of error in English as compared to Hebrew.” In English she either deleted or substituted inflectional endings. In Hebrew, by contrast, errors were equally spread among word-final and inflectional endings and word initial prefixes and, in word-medial morphological errors indicating misrepresentation of the root morphology of Hebrew. The patterns of reading breakdown in the two languages reflect the differential structure of the two languages, as Jenkins would predict. Following Travis’ reasoning, we may conclude that linguistic explanations might account for those of L2, English. It is clearer in the case of English than it is in Hebrew. That is to say, the breakdown falls on morphological components. With this regard, we have further evidence that UG appears to be active in L2 acquisition from this developmentally dyslexic adult. Jenkins’ approach leads us to conclude that UG is active in L2 acquisition. (cf. Opler,1988:119).

Another similar statement that UG is active in L2 acquisition comes from Felix (1988). Felix argues that if child and adult learners use different modules for the purpose of language acquisition, then, we would think adult learners are unable to reach grammatical knowledge that occurs only through the mediation of UG. In contrast, according to Felix, adults do achieve this type of knowledge. So this makes us to conclude that UG continues to be active even after puberty. In order to make this claim more reasonable, Felix refers to his study with 48 German college students who learned English as an L2. In this study, Felix tested the subjects for their perceptions about grammaticality contrasts in structures containing different principles of UG. The result of this study suggests that adults do acquire knowledge “that must be attributed to the operation of the language faculty.”

According to Felix, there are two immediate consequences understood in these results. First, if both L1 and L2 learners importantly are dependent on UG to acquire knowledge of the language they are exposed to, both L1 and L2 data may be relevant to

problems concerning the interaction of UG and the students' linguistic experience. Second, if UG plays an important role in adult language learning, then much of what forms the basic belief of foreign language teaching needs to be re-evaluated.

### **1.1.1. Universal grammar**

Universal Grammar theory is accepted as a theory of knowledge not of behaviour concerning the internal structure of human mind. UG can briefly be described as the principles, conditions and rules that are elements or properties of all human languages. (Cook 1988, McLaughlin 1987). All human beings share part of their knowledge regardless of which language they speak. The nature of this knowledge cannot be separated from the problem how it is acquired. The speaker of a given language knows a set of principles applying to all languages. These parameters can vary from one language to another.

UG holds that acquiring language means learning how these common principles apply to a particular language and which value is appropriate for each parameter. In other words, despite the superficial differences among human languages, UG theory proposes that there are parts of grammar, which belong to all languages (Falk 1978). Besides these universal parts of grammar, there are also language specific properties and they constitute the particular grammars of each language. (Fromkin and Rodman 1988:17)

At the same time UG theory keeps a distinction between "core" and "peripheral" grammar. Core grammar refers to those parts of language that have grown in the child through the interaction of the UG with the relevant language setting. Of course, this does not mean that every language has a core grammar restricted by UG. On the other side, UG mentions peripheral elements, which are derived from the history of the language, that have been borrowed from other languages, or that have arisen accidentally. (McLaughlin 1987: 95)

### 1.1.2. Dative Alternation in English and Markedness

Dative alternation simply refers to the position of direct object in the sentence (Fotos and Ellis 1991). There are three patterns of indirect object replacement in English verbs. The first allows placement of indirect object either after the verb or as a prepositional phrase at the end of the sentence (*I gave her the book* or *I gave the book to her*). The second pattern allows placement of the indirect object only as a prepositional phrase and generally co-occurs with Latinate verbs (*The teacher pronounced the word for the students*). The third pattern is applicable only to a limited set of verbs such as the verb *ask* meaning “inquire”, and necessitates placement of the indirect object immediately after the verb (*She asked the teacher a question*).

White (1989) mentions several positions as to the relationship between UG and second language acquisition. One of these positions assumes that UG operates identically in L1 and L2 acquisition and that UG interact directly with L2 input. This view, according to White, is particularly relevant in the context of markedness. White states that:

“If L1 acquisition includes a developmental stage where unmarked structures or parameter settings are instantiated regardless of the actual situation in the target language, then the same would be predicted for L2 learners, on the assumption that the L2 learner reverts to the preset options of UG and tries these first. In addition, there should be no transfer of marked parameter settings or peripheral rules from the mother tongue. This is a strong hypothesis, which has the potential to predict similarities across learners of different L1s.” (White, 1989: 121)

As has been pointed out, unmarked rules are rules of the core grammar. Core grammar is often thought of as unmarked because it is acquired with minimal evidence or triggering data. Thus, it is predicted not only that unmarked rules are easy to learn but also they can be acquired on the basis of minimal exposure to primary data. However, marked rules are the peripheral rules of the grammar and they are predicted to be relatively more difficult to learn. Mazurkevich (1984) argues that marked rules must be learned on the basis of positive evidence of their existence in a particular language since they could not be assumed to exist in that language.

According to Mazurkevich (1984:93), the lexical feature (NP PP) represents the unmarked feature for dative verbs and the (NP NP) feature is the marked one. This



assumption is based primarily on a criterion of productivity since the vast majority of dative verbs in English take (NP PP) complements while only some are subcategorised for the (NP NP) feature. Based on the theory of markedness, Mazurkewich remarks that the prepositional phrase complement will be acquired before the double NP complement and this prediction is supported by the developmental studies that have been reported (Fischer 1971, 1976; Stayton 1972; Roeper et al 1981 (cf. Mazurkewich 1984)

A second assumption that the (NP PP) feature is the unmarked one is based on the claim that morphological and semantic factors govern the alternation, but these restrictions apply only to the occurrence of the (NP NP) feature. As far as the morphological constraint is considered, it has often been noted that dative verbs which alternate are mainly monosyllabic and of native origin, while nonaltering verbs are polysyllabic and of non-native or Latin origin. However, Mazurkewich states that there are exceptions to both classes. For example:

They named the child Ben	He called Jerry a liar.
* They named Ben to the child	*He called a liar to Jerry.

Mazurkewich (1984:93) states that verbs of this class are rare and take only double NP complements, and they have to be considered as an "idiosyncratic property of English.

In terms of semantic constraints which restricts the dative alternation, Goldsmith suggests an integrated theory which is applicable to both *to* and *for*-datives. There are as Goldsmith points out, some contexts in which the alternation is constrained with verbs that would otherwise permit the alternation, as in the following: (cf. Mazurkewich 1984:94)

- a. I owe this example to Joe Smith.
- b. I owe five bucks to Joe Smith.
- c. \*I owe Joe Smith this example.
- d. I owe Joe Smith five bucks.

Furthermore there are native verbs like *give* which alternate in certain contexts, but permit only the double-NP complement in contexts that involve inalienable property, as in:

- |                               |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. Pat gave Mike a kick.      | c. Pat gave Mike a black eye      |
| b. * Pat gave a kick to Mike. | d. *Pat gave a black eye to Mike. |

In order to account for the contrasts illustrated above, Goldsmith suggests that only verbs that present the indirect object as the “prospective possessor” of the direct object will be compatible with the double object construction (cf. Mazurkewich 1984:95)

Mazurkewich states that Goldsmith’s analysis also accounts for a number of other cases involving monosyllabic verbs, which do not allow the alternation as the following sentence show:

- |                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Tom proved the theory to Max | a. Tom washed the dishes for Max |
| b. *Tom proved Max the theory   | b. *Tom washed Max the dishes    |

The above sentences show that although Max may have benefited in some way from these activities, he cannot be considered the prospective possessor of the direct object.

Oehrle distinguishes between to- and for- datives in his formulation of the semantic constraint governing the dative alternation. He argues that if a to-dative verb occurs in the double object construction and has the property of transference, then it occurs in the prepositional phrase as well. For-dative verbs are problematic, because there does not seem to be a uniform semantic characterization of its domain (cf. Mazurkewich 1984).

## 1.2. Teaching Grammar

It is not possible to recommend a single approach or method for teaching grammar, as students have different learning strategies or styles. Studies in educational psychology show that people learning anything including second or foreign languages use at least two distinct strategies: Analytical and Holistic strategies. According to Celce-Murcia and Hilles (1988), analytical learners (rule learners) form and test hypotheses. Consciously or unconsciously, they take out paradigms and rules from examples. Holistic learners (data gatherers), on the other hand, learn best by doing little or no analysis. Instead, they learn by exposure to large chunks of language in meaningful contexts.

There are some other learner types who prefer visually-oriented grammar teaching like contextualized examples, sentences on the board or in a text book while

others respond better to listening to the same sentences being spoken. Any approach that is either visual, such as the grammar translation, or auditory, such as the audio-lingual method, works against the natural learning preferences of some students. To prevent this lack of differentiation, an approach to teaching grammar encouraging learners to use their eyes, their ears and as many of the other senses as possible is suggested.

The questions of when and how to teach grammar depend on many variables. For instance, students' needs change over the course of time and a teacher should be sensitive to these changes. Thus, as she states, children seem to prefer a holistic approach over analytical one, and even adults who are comfortable with analytical style often approach a completely new learning situation holistically and later switch to an analytical style.

Regardless of a teacher's methodological preferences, knowledge of grammar is essential to the ESL/EFL teaching professionals. It is unfortunate that grammar is often taught in isolated, unconnected sentences that give a disjointed, unrealistic picture of English and make it difficult for students to apply what they have learned in actual situations. It is not always easy to contextualize realistic and effective settings but it is fortunate that there is a strong tendency for grammar or structural points to occur with one of the three aspects of language: social, semantic and discourse factors.

Social factors refer to the social role of speakers, their relationship to each other and the purpose of the communication such as requesting, inviting, refusing, agreeing or disagreeing. Semantic factors involve meaning. The third factor includes notions such as topic continuity, word order and sequencing of new and old information. Grammar teaching should always include the matching of a structure or grammatical point with one of these three aspects of language. If that match can be made in preparing the grammar lesson and if it captures a natural tendency in the language, the lesson will be easier for the teacher to prepare and for the learners to understand.

Besides the three aspects of the language, Celce-Murcia and Hilles state that there is a second stage for grammar lesson that consists of four parts. They are "presentation", "focused practice", "communicative practice", and "teacher feedback and correction". There are a variety of techniques and resources used in the presentation

stage. Selection should be made in accordance with teacher strengths, student preferences and the nature of the structure.

So far, it has been stated that there is no single method or approach that can be advised for grammar teaching considering students' different learning strategies or styles. So with this in mind, when Universal Grammar and second language acquisition was discussed in part 1.1. it was stated that the theory of UG has led to important theoretical and empirical advances in the field of second language acquisition. It was also stated that UG plays an important role in adult language learning. Then much of our knowledge and belief about foreign language teaching should be reconsidered. Thus, as Felix (1988) states, it is not enough to focus only on teaching methodology, environmental factors, and the learner's internal psychological states to specify the nature of the learning process, but a language faculty and its contributions to the learning process as well.

### **1.3. Statement of the Problem**

Teaching grammar has been central and often synonymous with teaching foreign language for the past 2.500 years. There have been many disputes on teaching grammar such as how to teach it, when to teach it or whether to teach it or not. Of all the issues surrounding the teaching of grammar, perhaps the most controversial one is whether to teach it at all (Celce-Murcia and Hills 1988).

To some scholars, the important question in terms of grammar teaching is not whether teaching/learning grammar is necessary and sufficient to teach/learn a foreign language, but whether it helps or not. Most language teachers agree that teaching/learning grammar helps if it is taught consistently as a means to improving mastery of language, not as an end in itself

As far as it has been observed, in the field of grammar teaching in Turkey, most teachers emphasize teaching grammar as an end in itself and believe that knowledge of a language means knowing the grammar of that language.

In terms of grammar teaching in foreign language, the vital question should be "How do we teach grammar"? As Celce-Murcia (1991) mentions, there was not a general agreement among the major methodological approaches on language teaching

whether explicit grammar teaching has a role to play in the second or foreign language classroom. In order to make this situation clear, we should refresh briefly our knowledge about the major methodological approaches to language teaching in their chronological order.

To begin, the grammar translation approach is, as Richards and Rodgers point out, “a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, and applying this knowledge to the task of translating sentence texts into and out of the target language.

After the grammar translation method we can talk about the audiolingual approach, which viewed language learning as a habit formation and overlearning with grammatical structures sequenced from basic to more complex.

As a reaction to the audiolingual approach, we see the cognitive code approach, which was influenced by the work of linguists like Chomsky, psycholinguists like Miller. In this method, language learning is considered as a “hypothesis formation” and rule acquisition rather than habit formation. In this approach grammar is considered important and rules are presented deductively or inductively depending on the preference of the learners (cf. Celce-Murcia 1991).

Following the cognitive code approach, we come across with the comprehension approach, the practitioners of which presented grammar inductively. As for the final approach, we will discuss the communicative approach, which claims that communication is the goal of second, or foreign language instruction and the syllabus of language course should not be organized around grammar but around subject matter/tasks/ projects or semantic notions and/or pragmatic functions.

As it was pointed out earlier, we can clearly see that there has not been a general agreement in terms of methodological approaches to grammar. In fact, as stated earlier, the important question is not whether teaching and learning grammar is necessary and/or sufficient for language learning, but whether it helps or not. In the work of linguists supporting UG, there seemed a shift, as Chomsky states, “from behaviour or the products of the behaviour to the states of mind/brain that enter into behaviour.” (cf. Flynn and O’Neil 1988). This shift reflected itself in the cognitive code approach, which viewed grammar as important and presented the rules either deductively or inductively depending on the preference of learners.

Felix, a follower of UG, makes a striking suggestion. According to Felix, (1988) UG plays an important role in adult language learning. Thus, much of what constitutes the fundamental belief of foreign language teaching needs to be reconsidered. Here the fundamental belief means just focusing on teaching methodology, environmental factors and learner's psychological states for stating the features of the learning process. Felix further remarks that obviously it is then not enough to completely focus on "teaching methodology, environmental factors and the learner's internal psychological states in order to specify the nature of the learning process: rather the language faculty and its contributions to the learning process need to be taken into account.

This is the starting point of this study which aims at making use of the UG theory, which claims that there are parts of grammar having basic, underlying similarities shared by all human languages- and the theory of markedness, which has the potential to predict similarities across learners of different L1s and similar acquisition sequences.

Thus, this study aims at to find out whether dative alternation of English verbs (NP PP) or (NP NP) is unmarked for Turkish learners of English. This study concerns itself around dative alternation associated with its level of markedness that unmarked features are learnt easily whereas the marked ones are learnt with more difficulty in terms of learning/acquiring grammar of English.

#### **1.4. Aim and Scope**

Within the scope of this study, we should go back to the study of Mazurkewich in which she remarks that the subcategorization frame (NP PP) represents the unmarked feature for dative verbs and the feature (NP NP) is the marked one. Mazurkewich adds that this assumption is based primarily on a criterion of productivity since the vast majority of dative verbs in English take (NP PP) complements while only some are subcategorised for (NP NP) (Mazurkewich 1984).

Based on this theory of markedness, Mazurkewich suggests that prepositional phrase complements will be acquired before double NP complements.

In this study, it is believed that teachers could make use of the theory of UG and markedness in grammar classes. If the teachers and the book writers are aware of the

problematic areas of the grammar of the target language, they will be able to design the course syllabus appropriately, and this will enable language teachers to teach grammar in a better way.

### **1.5. Research Questions**

Within the theory of markedness, core grammar is often thought of as unmarked because it is acquired with minimal evidence. Unmarked properties of a language are identified with core grammar and marked properties with the periphery. If the language learner is acquiring a language with a marked structure, he or she will go through a stage of using the unmarked equivalent before the marked one is acquired. (Mazurkewich 1984)

This, as White (1989:122) puts forward, predicts that all target language learners will show the same developmental sequence of unmarked before marked, regardless of their mother tongue.

The research questions of the study are:

1. When the dative alternation is considered, which feature of dative alternation of English verbs (NP PP or NP NP forms) is unmarked for our Turkish students learning English?
2. Do Turkish learners of English learn (NP PP) form easily, i.e. do they face problems with this lexical feature?
3. Do they face problems with the marked (NP NP) forms?

### **1.6.Limitations of the Study**

The following are the limitations of the study:

- a) Learning styles and individual differences of the subjects are not taken into consideration in the discussion of the findings.
- b) In this study, L1 factors such as interference and transfer from mother tongue are not considered.
- c) In this study, morphological and semantic factors that govern the alternation for (NP NP) are not taken into consideration in the discussion of findings.

- d) “Interaction” between the learners and between the learners and the teacher is also thought to contribute to the acquisition of a foreign language. This study, by no means, considers the effects of interaction in that sense.
- e) Grammaticality judgment test used in this study consists of isolated sentences; therefore, it might not be regarded as naturalistic as a judgment test, which is contextualised.
- f) This study was carried out during the ongoing term of instruction. So, the study subjects were also the students of the researcher.
- g) There was about one-month period, which was a random period of time, between the grammaticality judgment -test and production-test given to subjects of the study. During this period, the subjects were not in experimental conditions. Therefore, their possible extra exposure to the target structures of the study (in or outside the classroom) was not taken into account in the discussion of the findings about retention.

### **1.7. Related terminology used in the study:**

**Universal Grammar:** Universal grammar theory proposes that there are parts of grammar, which belong to all languages. In addition to these universal parts of grammar, there are also language specific properties and these specific language properties constitute the particular grammars of each language.

**Markedness:** Markedness could be defined in terms of what is or what is not present in UG.

**Unmarked rules:** They are core grammar, and it is predicted that they are not only easy to learn but also can be acquired on the basis of minimal exposure to primary data.

**Marked rules:** They are peripheral rules of grammar and they are predicted to be relatively more difficult to learn.

**Dative Alternation:** It refers to the position of direct object in the sentence.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1. Definition of Grammar

What do we mean by grammar? There have been many attempts to answer this question. Alexander (1992) states that there is no point in learning grammar for the sake of learning grammar. To some scholars grammar is the support system of communication and we learn it to communicate better. That is to say; Grammar explains the “why” and “how” of language. We learn it because we just cannot do without it. Some scholars define grammar as the rules by which we put together meaningful words and parts of words of a language to communicate messages that are comprehensible. There are two aspects of grammar: (1) knowing the rules (2) applying the rules (Alexander 1992, Bowen et al 1985)

For Chastain (1988), grammar commonly means the rules that students study in school. However, he adds that psychologists view grammar as subconscious, mental rules that speakers follow to create language. For sociologists, it is the rules that govern the use of language in social situations and for linguists it is the study and analysis of linguistic structures.

Another definition is from Ur (1988). She thinks that grammar is the way a language manipulates and combines words in order to form longer units of meaning. Smith and Wilson (1979) note that “linguistic rules combine with each other to form a system- a grammar- which gives an explicit and exhaustive description of every sentence which goes to make up a language” (cf. Dickins and Wood 1988).

To Dickins and Wood, in most cases such definitions raise more questions than they answer. They also remark that, to determine what grammar means to us, it is probably better to look at the relationship between “linguistic competence” and “communicative competence” and what we expect the grammar to tell us.

In their model of communicative competence, Dickins and Wood (1988), cited from (Canale and Swain 1980), show three separate elements interacting and influencing each other as parts of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. Grammar is the

resource available to indicate a number of elements crucial to the appropriate and accurate interpretation of expression: “ (a) the relationship between the participants in an interaction, (b) the topic being discussed, (c) the time of the event, (d) the mood of the utterance(s), and (e) the attitude taken by the speaker.”

## **2.2 Historical Background of the Place of Grammar Teaching**

Whatever the definition of grammar is, as Fotos and Ellis (1991) remark, there is a continuing argument in second language education. That is whether grammar should be taught or not. On the one hand, there are some researchers who assume “zero position”. That is, they claim that the teaching of grammar has only a minimal effect on the acquisition of linguistic competence in a second language. On the other hand, some researchers claim that grammar teaching/learning is the necessary component of L2 learning/acquiring.

As Riggensbach (1992) brings up, in the history of the language teaching the idea that the teaching of a second language can be separated from instruction in the grammar of that language is a quite recent event. This idea has been around for more than a century or so and has been brought sharply into focus with the start of communicative approach, which has gained considerable support among teachers of English in the field of TESL/TEFL.

Rutherford (1987) states that opponents of grammar teaching claim that attention to grammatical form in the second language classroom helps the process of language acquisition because grammatical instruction teaches students about the language rather than giving them the opportunity to use it.

Those who argue for grammar teaching claim that it is not possible for some grammatical forms to be acquired only on the basis of comprehensible input and teacher- initiated grammar teaching may be necessary to ensure that learners get the data they need to acquire these forms (White 1987: 108)

Whatever the claim is, whether for or against, for the position of grammar teaching in the second language learning, it is a known fact that, as Rutherford (1987) states, for 2,500 years the teaching of grammar had often been synonymous with foreign language teaching.

If we have a look at the methodological approaches to language teaching, we first see the Grammar Translation Method. Grammar Translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules. So, it views language learning as consisting of little more than memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language.

In 1960s the audio-lingual approach had dominated language teaching in the U.S for over two decades with the well-known idea that language learning is a “habit formation”. Later the cognitive code approach sprung up and language learning was regarded “rule-governed behavior.” And later these were followed by comprehension approach and communicative approach (Richards and Rogers 1990:3-4).

Methodological approaches to language teaching have differed regarding whether grammar instruction is explicit or not. Explicit instruction is available to learners as a conscious representation, so that, if called upon, learners are able to say what is that they know, has a role to play in the second or foreign language classroom”. For instance, in the audio-lingual approach grammatical structures were carefully arranged from basic to more complex and vocabulary was strictly limited in the early stages (Bialystock 1981:33)

Cognitive code approach is a reaction to the Behaviorist features of Audiolingualism. This approach was influenced by the work of linguists like Chomsky and psycholinguists like Miller. In this approach language learning was viewed as “hypothesis formation and rule acquisition rather than habit formation” Here grammar was considered important and rules were presented either deductively or inductively depending on the preferences of the learners. Errors were viewed as inevitable by-products of language learning and as something that the teacher and the learner could use constructively in the learning process.

The comprehension approach tries to recreate the first language acquisition experience for the second/foreign language learner. Celce-Murcia states that

Some practitioners of the comprehension approach carefully sequence grammatical structures and lexical items in their instructional programs. They present grammar inductively. Others propose that a semantically based syllabus should be followed instead and that all grammar instruction should be

excluded from the classroom since they feel that it does not facilitate language acquisition. At best it merely helps learners to monitor or become aware of the forms they use. (1991:461)

Communicative approach, on the other hand, claims that communication is the goal of second or foreign language instruction and that the syllabus of a language course should not be organized around grammar but around subject matter, tasks/projects or semantic notions and/or pragmatic functions. In other words, language instruction should be content-based, meaningful, contextualised and discourse-based rather than sentence based.

### **2.3 Current Issues for Teaching Grammar**

When we come to the present time, we see that the situation is far from clear. Existing research strongly suggests that some focus on grammatical form may well be necessary for many learners to achieve accuracy as well as fluency in their acquisition of a second or foreign language. Celce-Murcia (1991) cites from Richards (1985) that there is no actual empirical evidence that proves “communicative” language classrooms produce better language learners than do more traditional classrooms.

However, there is an appealing and convincing clear evidence that a grammarless approach-whether comprehension-based or communicative- can lead to the development of a broken, ungrammatical, pidginized form of the target language beyond which students rarely progress, and it is believed that such learners are often said to have “fossilized knowledge” in the acquisition of the target language (Celce Murcia 1991, Selinker 1972).

Today, there is a tendency not to avoid “grammar teaching” in terms of foreign/second language teaching. Grammatical knowledge would be beneficial to second or foreign language learners, especially for those who need to reach a high level of proficiency and accuracy.

Guidelines have been provided to help teachers while they are deciding to what degree they should deal with grammar in their own classes. An observant teacher sees that individuals learn in different ways. With this in mind, attentive teachers must be aware of is learner variables. The first guideline Celce-Murcia (1985) puts forward is

learner variability. According to her, some learners have analytic style and learn best by formulating and testing “rules.” Other learners have a holistic style and learn best by experiencing, gathering and restructuring relevant data but doing little or no apparent analysis.

The second one is proficiency level. If the students are beginners, regardless of age, there is no need to focus on form except presenting and practicing “form-meaning correspondences in context.” She continues that if the students are at the intermediate or advanced level, there can be a need for the teacher to provide “some form-related feedback and correction in order for the learners to progress.

Next comes the educational background of the students. If students are “preliterate with little information”; it will not be a good idea to focus broadly on form. On the other hand, if the students are well educated, they may need the focus on the formal aspects of the target language, which would include correction of their errors and answers to their questions.

Following educational background of the students is “instructional variables”. If the learner’s immediate goal is survival communication, formal accuracy is given less importance. However, if the learner wants to work for an academic purpose, a diplomat or a business executive, there is a need for formal accuracy (Celce-Murcia 1985:298).

Earlier in this chapter, explicit method of grammar instruction was simply defined when we were discussing how to teach grammar. Most of the second or foreign language teachers have come across this method of grammar teaching, because most textbooks tend to present grammar in this way.

Explicit grammar teaching supports “a direct and overt role on the part of teacher.” This means that students have a passive role when they have such grammar instruction. On the other hand, implicit grammar explanation, adopted by researchers such as Krashen (1985) Terrel (1977) Dulay and Burt (1973), rejects the need for formal grammar analysis. These researchers argue that students can acquire language naturally if they are provided with sufficient comprehensible input from the teacher (cf. Shrum and Gilisan 1994:91)

Shrum and Glisan (1994) state that although explicit and implicit teachings are clearly opposites, they share some notable shortages. They add that neither of these acknowledges the contributions and backgrounds that the learners bring to the teaching setting. They also add that neither approach recognizes the natural learning tendencies

that occur between human beings outside the classroom. For this reason, they think that it is time for the profession to begin a serious review regarding the teaching of grammar and they support “a whole language and guided participatory approach” that contrasts with traditional explicit or implicit teaching. According to them, this alternative approach may serve as a practical cooperation between the explicit/implicit views shown in the figure 2.1. (p. 92)

**Figure 2.1. Whole Language and Guided Participation: An Alternative Approach to Grammar Instruction**

Implicite Explanation	Guided Participation	Explicite Explanation
Learners analyze The grammar explanation For themselves.	Teachers and learners collaborate on and co-construct the Grammar explanation	Teacher provides explanation for learners.

Shrum and Glisan claim that a whole language and guided participatory approach might hold the key to dramatic improvement in the teaching of grammar. They also point out that many second language specialists are currently emphasizing the importance of content based instruction, authentic texts for listening and reading comprehension and the need for connected discourse in grammar instruction. All of these emphasize the importance of “whole language” rather than “fragmented speech” in second/foreign language classrooms.

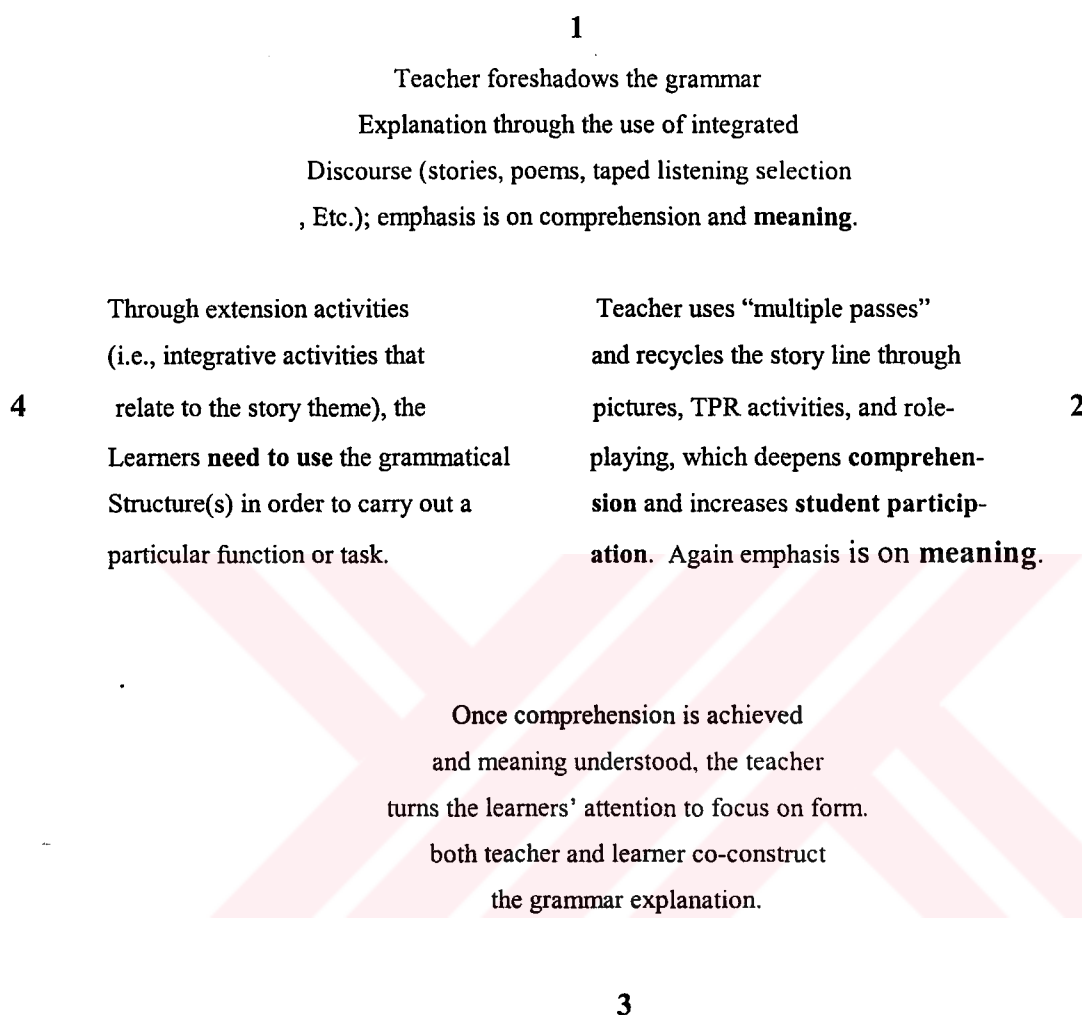
By introducing the lesson with a whole text (for example, a story poem, song, taped listening section, or cartoon), the teacher is foreshadowing the grammar explanation through the use of integrated discourse that will highlight the critical grammar structures to be taught. Galloway and Labarca explain that foreshadowing a new language element is beneficial, for it provides “learners with a feel or what is to come and can help students cast forward a familiarity net by which aspect of language prompt initial recognitions and later, gradually, are pulled into learners productive repertoire” ( Shrum and Glisan 1990: 136)

In this way, the lesson highlights the functional significance of the grammatical structure before the learners' attention is focused on form and unlike many classroom textbooks, which may offer a group of disconnected sentences or a contextualised drill, a whole language and guided participatory approach invites the learner to use language functionally and purposefully through "integrated discourse". This practice is in agreement with Krashen's Input hypothesis, which stresses the importance of comprehensible input that contains structures a little beyond our current level of comprehension.

To the whole language instruction, storytelling can be adopted. Because it is natural to tell stories orally, stressing listening comprehension, followed by role-plays and then reading and writing activities. As shown in Figure 2.2. grammar instruction using a whole language approach is recurring. During the first stage of the recurring, the teacher indicates the grammar structure with an appropriate text. At this point, the meaning or comprehension of the text has the prime importance. The second stage is actually an extension of the first stage, since once again, the emphasis is on meaning. However, the second stage differs due to an increased level of learner participation. Now the learners have a general idea of the importance of the story. Consequently they can become more participatory. Once comprehension is achieved and meaning is understood, the teacher moves into the third stage and turns the learners' attention to focus on form. After this stage, the teacher completes the recurring by encouraging the learners to interact with integrated discourse through expansion activities such as rewriting or recreating similar stories, paired activities or group activities. Through these extension activities, the students become more aware of the function of the grammatical structure. According to Shrum and Glisan 1994:96), this approach is in agreement with Larsen-Freeman's suggestion that meaning, form and function need to be "interacting dimensions of grammar instruction.

**Figure 2.2. A whole Language Approach to Grammar Instruction:  
Integrating Meaning, Form, and Function**

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A compelling body of evidence has accumulated recently supporting the position that formal instruction on language properties is related to the subsequent acquisition of those properties (see Ellis, 1991; Long, 1983a, 1988b; Pienemann, 1989). These studies present a dilemma for many teachers who have become committed to the use of communicative approaches to language learning where learners are given a rich variety of comprehensible input, and teacher- fronted grammar teaching is generally omitted. Empirical findings show that a return to some type of “formal instruction” may be necessary. After all, several lines of research have recently emerged which are exploring ways to integrate instruction on problematic grammar forms within a communicative frame” ( cf. Fotos, 1994: 323).



Fotos continues that one response has been to investigate whether grammar instruction can be conducted through meaning-focused activities. The study made by Doughty (1991) compared gains in relative clause usage achieved by learners. These students read passages containing the target structure. One group received a presentation of formal grammar rules together with the text. The other group received a meaning-focused treatment. The paraphrases and clarifications of the text content were presented to them. Target structures were visually highlighted and printed in capital letters. Both treatment groups showed similar significant increases on post-tests of the structure compared with a control group. This result provides evidence supporting the role of formal instruction in developing knowledge of grammatical features compared with communicative exposure alone. (cf. Fotos 1994)

This study also states that the meaning-focused treatment group showed a better recall of the content of the reading text than the group exposed to a formal presentation of grammar rules.

Doughty considered the format of the meaning-focused treatment to be an example of “focus on form” referring to content-oriented instruction which also draws learners’ attention in meaningful ways to the use of target structures in context. She suggested that such instruction could lead to improved mastery of language features as well as the language provision for meaning-focused use of target language. The result of this study also gave some confirmation to recent finding by VanPatten (1990), suggesting that learners have difficulty consciously attending to both form and meaning at the same time ( cf. Fotos 1994: 324).

Fotos mentions other studies where the focus is on the favorable learning outcomes resulting from instances of formal, teacher fronted grammar instruction and corrective feedback delivered within communicatively organized classrooms (Lightbown and Spada 1990, White, Spada, Lightbown and Ranta 1991) (cf. Fotos 1994)

These researchers suggested that an instructional focus on a grammatical feature improves language input and provide consciousness-raising in the sense that learners develop knowledge about the feature in communicative input afterwards- a process seen as essential for language acquisition.

Fotos and Ellis (1991) remark that grammar instruction is important in raising learners' consciousness awareness of a particular feature, and they recommended a task-based approach to the study of grammar for developing the theoretical framework. This approach aims at integrating grammar instruction with the provision of opportunities for meaning-focused use of the target language. Although the learners focus on the form of the grammar structure, they are also engaged in meaning-focused use of the target language as they solve the grammar problem. They develop grammatical knowledge while they are communicating.

Besides grammar consciousness-raising tasks, another one is proposed by Lsochky & Bley-Vroman (1990). They recommend the creation of "structure based communicative tasks". In this approach the target structure is essential to complete the task. (cf. Fotos, 1994).

Both types of tasks are consciousness-raising because the learners' attention is focused on the nature of the required target structure.

Fotos mentions that there are two main differences between the use of such consciousness-raising tasks and the type of grammar consciousness-raising tasks discussed in this part. The first concerns the nature of the task content. Whereas the formal task is nongrammatical, but requires either recognition of the target structure or its use in reaching the task solution, the content of the grammar consciousness-raising task is the target structure itself. Second, the grammar consciousness-raising task is not aimed at developing immediate ability to use the target structure but rather attempts to call learner attention to grammatical features, raising their consciousness of them, and thereby facilitating subsequent learner noticing of the features in communicative input. (Fotos 1994: 326)

It is claimed by Fotos that there are distinct pedagogic advantages in having grammar as the task content. The first one is that grammar problems make up serious task material, in contrast to the minor nature of many communicative tasks. According to Fotos, this point is very important in EFL teaching situation. As the former, teacher-fronted grammar teaching characterizes many classrooms, communicative activities may not be regarded as serious language study. Second, when learners share the same L1, it is often possible for them to complete task requirements in L1 by avoiding use of the target language. Having a grammar problem as task content necessitates students to

use and attend to utterances in the target language in order to solve the task. Another advantage is the ease of assessment of task performance through pre and posttests on the particular grammar structure.

In terms of communicative language use and task performance, Fotos remarks that “communicative interaction” is a very important issue to language acquisition. Besides, learner comprehension and production are necessary to produce acquisition. She states that a number of recent studies supply evidence that support the need for learners to be exposed to meaning-focused use of the target language, as opposed to teacher-fronted explanation of language features. When students use target language to communicate with native speakers or each other, they often ask and answer questions when some items of discourse are not understood.

Fotos also remarks that the use of tasks and group work has been found to expose learners to more comprehensible input and to require learners to make more adjustments in their own output, compared to a teacher-fronted language lesson. Moreover, research has indicated that the format of the tasks is important while producing opportunities for negotiated interaction.

In order to make grammar consciousness-raising tasks to be pedagogically acceptable in communicative classrooms as substitutes for traditional grammar lessons (teacher-fronted classrooms as a method of studying grammar) two general empirical results are necessary:

First, it must be shown that task performance is as effective at promoting gains in knowledge of the grammar structure as traditional, teacher-fronted grammar lessons. After all, there is no point in recommending grammar consciousness-raising tasks as communicative alternatives to formal grammar lesson if they fail to produce equally favourable learning outcomes. Second, it must be shown that performance of the grammar task produces amount of L2 task talk comparable to those produced by performance of regular, meaning-focused communicative tasks because it is through the provision of comprehensible input and the requirement for adjusted output that language acquisition has been suggested to take place (Fotos 1994:328).

So, the place and importance of grammar consciousness-raising tasks in teaching grammar have been discussed. There is one very important issue of using such tasks in grammar teaching; that is their pedagogic usefulness. In order to teach a problematic grammar point, just preparing some consciousness-raising tasks and applying it to

learners may not give the expected result. According to Fotos three factors are essential for the use of such grammar tasks while we are teaching grammar. The first one is “the sequencing of task performance from easy to difficult.” The second one is “the presence of a production section on the proficiency test” requiring the students to produce the structures they had studied. This is serving as an additional consciousness-raising activity. And finally “the subsequent communicative use of the structures.

With the knowledge obtained from formal instruction on the grammar points, it can be suggested that positive results of task performance may be widely applicable to a range of grammar structures. Another statement, which is in parallel with Fotos’s, comes from Higgs (1985). He suggests that teaching “communication” and teaching “grammar” are inseparable aspects of teaching language.

#### **2.4. Markedness in Second Language Acquisition**

In this part, we will touch upon one of the theories of second language learning. That is the theory of markedness within Universal Grammar theory, which forms the main body of this study and gives a summary of research done in the field of dative alternation and its relationship with the theory of markedness. For the theory of UG, we have talked about “core grammar” and periphery grammar. Greenberg (1966) discusses markedness with regard to criteria for what should be identified as unmarked and marked categories in phonology, grammar, and lexicon. Hyltenstam states that his summary of criteria should not be seen as anything other than a useful taxonomy. (cf. Hyltenstam 1987)

According to Greenberg, what has been suggested for markedness conditions in grammar and lexicon can be identified as:

1. Neutralization- contextual neutralization (an example is the use of the unmarked singular form of nouns when they appear in the context of cardinal numbers in Turkish and Hungarian).
2. Frequency-frequency.
3. Allophonic variation-allomorphic variation (the marked category shows greater allomorphic variation than the unmarked one, except when it is expressed by zero).
4. Phonological features-syncretization (some options that are upheld in the unmarked category, e.g. oral vowels, are neutralized in the marked category, nasal vowels); a corresponding

example from grammar is the opposition between masculine and feminine in the singular (the unmarked category) which is syncretized in the plural (the marked category).

5. Basic allophones-basic allomorphs (agreement is the example mentioned by Greenberg. Here the unmarked masculine appears in contexts like Spanish). (cf. Hyltenstam 1987:58)

Hyltenstam claims that all these criteria can be applied to the categories of a single language, and markedness conditions for various structures of that particular language can be arrived at.

Gair (1988) informs us that there are hopeful developments in the application of current theory in its GB (parameter setting) version to L2 acquisition “within the lines of contrastive-transfer and developmental approaches.” Interestingly, these approaches, as Gair mentions, work in the field of L2 acquisition. In 1977 Eckman pointed out the likely participation of markedness as a factor in L2 acquisition. According to Eckman, the notion of markedness can be explained in the following way:

1. Those areas of target language, which differ from the native language and are more marked than the native language, will be difficult.
2. The relative degree of difficulty of the areas of the target language, which are more marked than the native language, will correspond to the relative degree of markedness.
3. Those areas of the target language, which are different from the native language but are not more marked than the native language, will not be difficult (Gair 1988:237-238).

With respect to the criteria presented by Greenberg and suggestions by Hyltenstam, could we make use of the theory of markedness in teaching grammar? Referring to results of Felix’s (1988) study, there were two important consequences understood there. One of them was “if UG plays an important role in adult language learning, then much of what constitutes the fundamental belief of foreign language teaching needs to be reconsidered.” With this in mind then, Felix also adds that it is not enough to entirely focus on “teaching methodology, environmental factors and the learner’s internal psychological states in order to specify the nature of the learning process.” But, language faculty and its contributions to the learning process need to be taken into account, too.

In connection with what was pointed out in the previous paragraph, Mazurkewich’s research (1984) attempts to demonstrate that evidence based on the

acquisition of dative structures in English by second language learners provides support for a theory of markedness. Another study by Mazurkewich (1988) also supports the theory of markedness predicting that infinitives, “the unmarked structures” will be acquired before gerunds, “the marked one.” Back to Mazurkewich’s study about the acquisition of dative structures, using a test that elicited intuitive judgments, Mazurkewich obtained data from native French speaking and Inuktitut speaking (Eskimo) students as well as native English speaking students whose judgments were used as norm. The French group was made up of 45 students at the high school level whose average age was 18 years. The Inuktitut group was made up of 38 students at the high school level whose average age was 17 years. They used two control groups of native English speakers. One group was made up of 6 grade 7 students and whose mean age was 12 years and 6 grade 10 students whose mean age was 15 years. Dative structures in which the dative noun phrase appears either in a prepositional phrase or as the first noun phrase of a double object construction were tested.

Mazurkewich obtained intuitive judgments of simple declarative sentences containing a set of to-dative verbs that optionally take the dative alternation- *give, lend, read, send, and throw*- as well as to-dative verbs which obligatorily take prepositional phrase complements- *explain, report, suggest*. A parallel set of stimulus sentences containing for-dative verbs that optionally take the dative alternation- *bake, buy choose, make and save* and three for-dative which obligatorily take prepositional phrase complements- *capture, create and design*- were also included. She added a set of distracter stimulus sentences that did not contain dative verbs. The stimulus sentences used in this testing were classified in the following way:

### **Type 1**

This set of sentences contains dative verbs that optionally permit the alternation and the dative noun phrase (NP) appears in the prepositional phrase:

- a. Peter threw a football to Philip.
- b. Diane baked a cake for Nicole.

### **Type 2**

This set of sentences contains dative verbs that optionally permit the alternation and the dative NP appears as the first NP of a double-NP construction:

- a. Peter threw Philip a football.

- b. Diane backed Nicole a cake.

### **Type 3**

This set of sentences contains dative verbs that obligatorily take prepositional phrase complements and the dative NP appears in the preposition phrase:

- a. David suggested the trip to Ruth.
- b. Anne created a costume for Sarah

### **Type 4**

This set of sentences contains dative verbs that obligatorily take prepositional phrase complements but the dative NP appears at the first NP of a double-NP construction:

- a. David suggested Ruth the trip.
- b. Anne created Sarah a costume.

### **Type 5**

This set of sentences is made up of distracter sentences that do not contain dative structures:

- a. Dennis annoyed Karen yesterday.
- b. Patrick rescued Lisa from drowning.

The alternating dative verbs used were monosyllabic native verbs and the nonalternating verbs were polysyllabic of non-native origin. The responses, depending on whether they had been judged to be grammatical or ungrammatical were estimated on the basis of the performance of the subjects in each group according to the five stimulus sentence types described above. The results Mazurkewich obtained in her testing confirm the prediction that the second language learners of English will acquire dative prepositional phrase complements before double-NP complements.

The second study made by Tanaka (1987) examined the selective use of two *give* structures (NP NP) and (NP PP) in two (translation and judgment) tasks by Japanese college students within a framework of transfer and markedness. The students consisted of 273 collage students at Ibaraki University in Japan. There were 115 male and 158 female students with the mean age being 18.8 years. They had spent 6 years and 7 months, on average, studying English as a foreign language.

Tanaka used a close test to measure the subjects' level of proficiency in English. The test comprised two passages, 25 blanks in each. High redundancy scores, greater

than 0.95, were obtained for all the items from 18 native speakers of English. To determine the test reliability, the close test was piloted with 30 college students twice, obtaining high-test reliability ( $r = 0.92$ ) and internal consistency reliability ( $r = 0.89$ ) as measured by a split half method. Tanaka also used a translation test and an acceptability-judgment test. The translation test had three Japanese sentences typed on separate card and the acceptability-judgment test consisted of 6 categories, three items for each category.

The result of the translation test showed that in dealing with prototypical cases of dative *give*. The students used the two structures with equal frequency, while the (NP NP) was strongly favored with cases deviating from the prototype. In the acceptability-judgment test, Tanaka was concerned with the type of constraints on dative alternation. Three constraints were discussed in Tanaka's paper: discourse, semantic and perceptual. The students in this study were more sensitive to the perceptual than to the discourse constraint, which was subtler and more ambiguous than the semantic one from the students' point of view.

A third study, by Le Compagnon (1984), examines the role of interference in the acquisition of English dative verbs by native speakers of French one of who is 33 years old male who had studied English in secondary school in France. Le Compagnon recorded his spontaneous speech in half-hour sessions at one-to two-week intervals over the four-month period. Le Compagnon first looked at some examples of ungrammatical sentences using dative verbs produced by that French man. The second case study was conducted with a French woman, 27 years of age, who spoke English without great difficulty. This study was carried out in much the same way as the initial study with the only difference that recordings were made at one-one and a half-week intervals over a period of two months.

The result of this study indicates that process of lexical acquisition of verbs in English is essentially the same for both first and the second language learners. The difference in the errors produced by second language learners can be attributed to incorrect assumptions concerning marked and unmarked forms, for which the second language learner finds positive evidence in both L1 and L2.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This study was initiated by the theory of markedness within UG. This theory proposes that languages have similar properties. These properties are considered unmarked. It is estimated that unmarked properties can easily be acquired on the basis of minimal contact to primary data.

The primary aim of this study is to make the theory of markedness pedagogically acceptable in grammar teaching. Referring to Felix's (1988) claims about the role of UG in adult language learning, it has been pointed out that it is not enough just to highlight teaching methodology, environmental factors and learner's internal psychological states in order to indicate the nature of the learning process. Besides the theories of second/foreign language learning their contributions to the learning process need to be taken into account as well.

In this study, dative alternation, which refers to the position of the direct object in the sentences, was chosen to test whether the theory of markedness is working when Turkish students learning English are acquiring dative alternation. Thus, the study hypothesized that the lexical feature (NP PP) represents the unmarked feature for dative verbs and the (NP NP) feature is the marked one. (See part 1.1.1) As it can be seen, the study, by design, is a hypothesis –testing classroom research, which has proved to have brought about important findings with reference to applications recently. Since this is a descriptive study, the statistical analysis is based on the quantitative data collected through two instruments ( see Appendices A and B).

#### **3.1. Definition of the structures used in this study**

With regard to grammar structures used in the research, it would be better to start by explaining the patterns of indirect object placement (dative alternation) first. There are three patterns of indirect object replacement in English verbs. The first allows

placement of indirect object either after the verb or as a prepositional phrase at the end of the sentence (*I gave her the book* or *I gave the book to her*). The second pattern permits placement of the indirect object only as a prepositional phrase and generally co-occurs with Latinate verbs (*The teacher pronounced the word for the students*). The third pattern is applicable only to a limited set of verbs such as the verb *ask* meaning inquire, and necessitates placement of the indirect object immediately after the verb (*She asked the teacher a question*).

The two main lexical features used in this study are as follows:

### 1. Lexical feature (NP PP)

e.g. I gave the book to her.

(NP) (PP)

### 2. Lexical feature (NP NP)

e.g. I gave her the book.

(NP) (NP)

### 3.2. Setting and Subjects

The study was carried out in Eskişehir Anadolu University, Education Faculty, Department of English Language Teaching in the fall and spring term of the academic year 2000-2001. Three first year classes were selected for the study (53 females-17 males). That is, the test was given to 70 subjects (n=70). The subjects in these three groups of first year classes were all given a grammaticality judgment test during their own grammar lesson scheduled for the week. The test required only one class hour for each class. The subjects in this study were not enrolled in a program with an emphasis to any methodological emphasis. Only their own background knowledge about dative alternation was tested by asking them to decide and choose which pair of sentences in the grammaticality judgment test is grammatical or ungrammatical (see Appendix A). In the spring term of the academic year, the same subjects were given a production test (see Appendix B). In the production test, the subjects were asked to put the twenty sentences, in which dative verbs were presented, into meaningful sentences asking them to pay attention to the word order. The subjects in this study are all native Turkish students. The level of English proficiency of the subjects is determined by a standard

placement test- Michigan Placement. They have more or less similar language background. The teacher is a non-native of English with a teaching experience of seven years.

### 3.3. Materials

#### 3.3.1. Placement Test

Proficiency level in this study is an important criterion for control variable. Therefore the subjects in this study are expected to be in the same or similar language level. In order to control this variable, the grades of the subjects taken from a standard placement test- Michigan Placement- before the beginning of the fall term in the academic year 2000-2001 were obtained. The evaluation scale for the test is not the original one. Instead, the evaluation scale suggested by Anadolu University, Education Faculty, ELT Department Administration was used. The reason behind this is simply the original scale does not indicate the actual level of Turkish students. The altered scale has been used successfully for the past fifteen years in the English preparatory programme. The evaluation scale in consideration is as follows (figure 3.1)

76 – 100	Advanced
61 - 75	Upper intermediate
46 – 60	Intermediate
31 – 45	Lower intermediate
16 – 30	Elementary
00 – 15	Beginner

**Figure 3.1.** The Evaluation Scale for the Placement Test

The distribution of the scores (out 100) obtained from the subjects of the study is as follows (figure 3.2):

<u>Score</u>	<u>Number of the subjects</u>
95 – 100	4
90 – 95	17
85 – 90	5
80 – 85	18
75 – 80	14
70 – 75	6
65 – 70	2
60 – 65	4
55 – 60	0

**Figure 3.2.** The Distribution of the scores obtained from the placement test

The distribution indicates that the subjects in the study can be said to be at the advanced level (range 75-95) according to the scale.

### **3.3.2. Grammaticality Judgment Test**

In chapter II, in the part where current issues on teaching grammar were discussed, grammaticality judgment tests occupied a considerable place. There, it was mentioned that formal instruction and communicative language teaching could be integrated through the use of grammar tasks designed to encourage communication about grammar. According to Fotos and Ellis (1991), these grammar tasks have two primary aims. The first one is to develop explicit knowledge of L2 grammatical features and the second one is to provide opportunities for interaction focused on an exchange of information.

According to White (1989) one way of establishing whether L2 learners' competence includes knowledge that certain forms are impossible is by the use of grammaticality judgment (GJ) tasks. In these tasks learners are asked to judge the correctness or otherwise of various tasks. An advantage of GJ tasks as White points out is that the researcher can be sure that sentences that disturb universal constraints are included for investigation. She goes on to remark that, with GJ tasks, subjects are forced to consider whether a sentence that is "impossible" from the point of view of UG is also

impossible in their interlanguage. Keeping these assumptions in mind, a grammaticality judgment test was developed based on the position of dative verbs in English. The grammaticality judgment test was adapted from Fotos and Ellis (1991). With adaptation, the researcher added another ten –for or –to dative verbs to the ones mentioned. These ten –to or -for datives verbs were taken from Gethin (1992).

This test aimed to confirm that subjects would prefer the lexical feature (NP PP) as grammatical to the feature (NP NP). The test consisted of 40 sentences that contain unmarked and marked structures as well as distractor sentences (see Appendix A sentences beginning with the numbers, 13, 23, 25,) to test the hypothesis that L2 learners would prefer the unmarked L2 structures and would acquire these before the marked equivalents. Subjects were asked to indicate if a sentence was grammatical. A variety of different verbs (total 20) were used. Results are reported by grouping sentences into structural types. Appendix D reports the percentage of responses indicating that a given sentence type is grammatical. Since all the sentence types reported here are in fact grammatical, an answer confirming that a sentence is grammatical is a correct reply. Mazurkewich (1984) used a similar grammaticality judgement test with –to and –for dative verbs and the confirming results were reported in percentages.

As for the distribution of the lexical features (NP PP) and (NP NP) in the grammaticality judgment test, they were randomly designed by the researcher. None of the lexical features was given a priority. But in the organization of the test, a special attention was given to the lexical features (NP PP) or (NP NP) of any English dative verbs to follow each other, but no priority was given to any lexical feature. There was a random order. The idea behind this is simply to prevent the subjects from showing a tendency to accept all sentences regardless of their grammaticality, and judging the sentences according to criteria which are not those intended by the experimenter and judging the first lexical feature in each set of sentence is grammatical or vice versa.

The subjects in this study were asked only to decide if the sentences in the grammaticality judgment test are correct or incorrect. There was not any instructional treatment for the subjects.

The grammaticality judgment test consisted a total of 40 sentences. That is to say, two lexical features- (NP PP) or (NP NP)- with 20 dative verbs. For the

grammaticality judgment test, the choices of the subjects whether the given twenty lexical features- (NP PP) or (NP NP)- are correct or incorrect were gathered separately for each lexical feature in number and calculated in percentage. So the number of the choice of the subjects for any lexical feature would not be more than 70.

### 3.3.3. Production Test

The production section of the test was a simple sentence-level written task based on the sentences in the grammaticality judgment test (see Appendix B). In the production part, 20 sentences in the grammaticality judgment test were presented in a way that they were in different word order and the subjects were asked to put them into meaningful sentences by paying attention to the order. With this, the aim of the researcher was to examine and see the production of the subjects with the given English dative verb, and mainly, to see which lexical feature of dative alternation- (NP PP or NP NP)- the subjects would prefer to use in their production. In this production test, the subjects were orally informed that they would keep the tense of the dative verb the same. This was obvious in the production test. They were required only to put the words into meaningful sentences by paying attention to the word order. In the altered word order in the production test, the subjects were not given any -to or -for preposition to influence their choice of lexical feature of (NP PP or NP NP). Rather, they were expected to choose the lexical feature intuitively.

In order to make the above mentioned points more clear, an example of such word-order altered sentence could be shown as follow:

e.g. John / a present / gave / his close friend. (The production part consisted sentences of this type)

So the subjects, according to their preference of the lexical feature, would produce sentences either like “ John gave a present to his close friend.” Or “John gave his close friend a present.”

For the production task, each correct response to lexical feature (NP PP) was given a score of 2 points. For each correct response for the lexical feature (NP NP) was given a score of 1 point. Correct responses consisted of the appropriate word order for the mentioned two lexical features. If a subject had failed to put any or all of the word in

the appropriate word order, namely other than the lexical features mentioned or any use of wrong preposition where necessary, she or he received the score of 0. Only the responses without any mistake of the lexical features mentioned above were considered correct.

### **3.4. Data Collection Procedures**

As noted in part 3.2. There were 70 subjects for this study. The subjects were not given any instruction treatment during their regular programme. For all subjects in this study, the grammaticality judgment test was given during their regular grammar lesson, and this only took 45 minutes following 2 consecutive class hours.

The order for data collection was as follows:

1) All the subjects of this study were given a standard placement test- Michigan Placement- by the School of Foreign Languages in order to find out their level of proficiency in English before the fall term in the academic year 2000-2001. At this stage, the students were told that these tests were given to them in order to find out the proficiency level of the first year students. So their scores they got from the placement test were considered acceptable for this study, because the subjects took the grammaticality judgment test approximately 30 days after they had had their placement test.

2) Subjects were given a grammaticality judgment test at the end of the fall term in the academic year 2000-2001. Before the test, they were told that this test was being given to them to check their present knowledge about certain structures. They were never told that this test was aimed at testing their comprehension and production of dative alternation. Besides the points mentioned, instruction for the grammaticality judgment test was repeated in Turkish and clarified when problems arose. The test took about 30 minutes. Students did not have any time limitation.

3) Right after the beginning of the spring term in the academic year 2000-2001, the subjects were given a production test, the details of which were given in part 3.3.3. There was no specific purpose behind giving the production test in the term spring. It was just decided by the researcher with no specific purpose. The aim with this production test was just to examine and see their production of the dative verbs they

were tested during the grammaticality judgment test. Besides this, the main reason is just to check out their preference of the lexical features- (NP PP) or (NP NP). For the production part, the subjects demanded a lot of instruction of what they were going to do with those sentences. So the subjects were given instructions in Turkish, too. The questions mostly centered on the tense of the dative verb. And the subjects at this stage were clearly instructed by the researcher that they would not consider the tense of the verb, because the tense of the verb was already marked there in the production test and the subjects were informed not to change the tense unless otherwise was required. They were only told to pay attention to the word order. The production test took almost one hour.

### **3.5. Scoring Procedures**

For the grammaticality judgment test, the choices of the subjects whether the given twenty lexical features- (NP PP) or (NP NP)- are correct or incorrect were gathered separately for each lexical feature in number and calculated in percentage. So the number of the choice of the subjects for any lexical feature would not be more than 70. (See Appendix D for the results)

For the production task, each correct response to lexical feature (NP PP) was given a score of 2 points. For each correct response for the lexical feature (NP NP) was given a score of 1 point. Correct responses consisted of the appropriate word order for the mentioned two lexical features. If a subject had failed to put any or all of the word in the appropriate word order, namely other than the lexical features mentioned or any use of wrong preposition where necessary, she or he received the score of 0. Only the responses without any mistake of the lexical features mentioned above were considered correct. The scoring system for the production test was taken from Van Patten and Cadierno cited in Canturk (1998).

In the end, there were two sets of data: the choice of the subjects for the given lexical features and production. For each subject in the study, there were 2 types of data:

- 1) Interpretation scores obtained in the grammaticality judgment test
- 2) Production scores obtained in the production test



### 3.6. Pilot Study

To see the validity and reliability of the Grammaticality Judgement Test( GJ), which was formerly used by Fotos and Ellis , was also tested on our subjects though the validity and reliability of the test was checked by the originator of the instrument. As for the Production Test , which was developed by the researcher through hand in hand , namely, in close cooperation with an American instructor, it was also included into the pilot studies to observe the validity and reliability of the whole items used in the developed instrument.

This pilot study was carried out to see the reaction of the Turkish EFL learners who are considered to have a different cultural and educational milieu and background towards the grammaticality judgment and production tests than those of originators of the GJ test. Thus, validity and reliability of the above tests were evaluated and modified considering the Turkish subjects and the setting.

According to the results of the pilot study, to confirm the content validity of the test given in this study, a native speaker of English who formerly taught skill lessons in the department of ELT in the Education Faculty was asked to judge the degree to which the items on the test actually represented the elements in question. The expert was given a copy of the test. Her comments were taken into consideration and necessary modifications were done. For instance, the expert suggested that the researcher increase the number of the dative verbs. Therefore, the researcher added ten dative verbs to the original grammaticality judgment test and production test developed by the researcher. These verbs are award, find, send, leave, promise, recommend, build, keep, give, and write.

It was seen that the expert agreed that the items in the test represented comprehension as well as production of the selected dative alternation structures. Thus, the test was considered content-valid for the purposes of testing comprehension and production of the target structures. Only content validity was inquired for the test. It was thought that this would be enough to give a clear idea about the test together with its reliability.

**Table 3.1 Result of Grammaticality Judgment Test of the Pilot Study**

Sentence	No of Subjects confirmed True	In Percentage	No of Subjects confirmed False	In Percentage
1	11	24	35	76
2	44	96	2	4
3	45	98	1	2
4	5	11	41	89
5	4	9	42	91
6	46	100	--	--
7	7	15	39	85
8	45	98	1	2
9	42	91	4	9
10	11	24	35	76
11	40	87	6	13
12	10	22	36	78
13	45	98	1	2
14	17	37	29	63
15	28	61	18	39
16	43	93	3	7
17	34	74	12	26
18	29	63	17	37
19	45	98	1	2
20	5	11	41	89

**Table 3.2. Result of the Production Test of the Pilot Study**

Sentence	No of Subjects produced NP PP	In Percentage	No of Subject Produced NP NP	In Percentage
1	20	100	--	--
2	16	80	4	20
3	9	45	11	55
4	14	70	6	30
5	18	90	2	10
6	16	80	4	20
7	20	100	--	--
8	18	90	2	10
9	10	50	10	50
10	13	65	7	35

### 3.6.1. Setting and Subjects of the Pilot Study

The test was given to 46 prep class students of English Language Teaching Department with the mean age being 18 years. The study was carried out with two groups consisting 23 students in each. The level of English proficiency of the groups is "upper intermediate" determined by the placement test mentioned previously. To determine the level of the groups mentioned here the evaluation scale suggested by Anadolu University, Education Faculty, ELT Department students were used. Therefore it is possible to say that the subjects to whom the test was given were similar to the present subjects in this study. They were all native Turkish students.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, Turkish learners of English learning double object constructions (dative alternation) in English was discussed and the notion of the theory of markedness was presented. For this, the acquisition of dative alternation, mainly the preference of the lexical feature by Turkish learners of English for dative alternation, which refers to the position of the direct object in the sentence, was examined by giving a grammaticality judgment test in which the subjects were required to indicate if a sentence was grammatical. In connection to this, this study tried to find out which lexical feature- (NP PP) or (NP NP)- is unmarked or marked for our Turkish learners of English in terms of the theory of markedness. It was hypothesized that:

1) Taking into account the idea that Felix has put forward, it is claimed that it is not sufficient just to direct on teaching methodology, environmental factors and learner's psychological states in order to specify the nature of learning process. Beside these mentioned factors, the contributions of SLA theories to the learning process need to be taken into consideration. So, with this respect, the primary aim of this study is to make the theory of markedness, one of theories of SLA within UG, pedagogically acceptable in grammar teaching.

2) The lexical feature (NP PP) in double object construction is unmarked and the lexical feature (NP NP) is marked for our Turkish learners of English.

The research questions of the study were:

1. Which feature of dative alternation of English verbs (NP PP or NP NP forms) is unmarked for our Turkish students learning English?
2. Do Turkish learners of English learn (NP PP) form easily, i.e. do they face problems with this lexical feature?
3. Do they face problems with the marked (NP NP) forms?

Dative alternation with the lexical features (NP PP) and (NP NP) was selected as problematic target grammar structures by giving the subjects a grammaticality judgment test. No treatment was given. Only their current knowledge of the subjects

about the target grammar structures was taken into consideration. Following the grammaticality judgment test, the subjects were given a production test in order to see their own production with the selected target grammar structure in the spring term of the academic year 2000-2001.

#### 4.1. Analysis of Data

In order to discuss the scores of the subjects from the grammaticality judgment test and the production test, it is important to ensure that the subjects were similar with respect to their proficiency level English and their current knowledge of the target structure. As discussed in part 3.2, the subjects were all in the same proficiency level determined by Anadolu University, Education Faculty, and ELT Department. The result of the G-J tests can be seen in the tables 4.1 and 4.2. These results indicate that the lexical feature (NP PP) is unmarked for our Turkish learners of English whereas the lexical feature (NP NP) is marked. As it can be seen from the result of the paired T-test,  $H_0$ : accepted and according to this statistics, it was examined that the points between the lexical items (NP PP) and (NP NP) are equal.

**Table 4.1**

#### **Result of Descriptive Statistics: Grammatical; Ungrammatical for G-J Test**

Variable	N	Mean	Median	St Dev	SE Mean	Minimum	Maximum
GRAMMA	40	36.88	35,50	27,37	4,33	4,00	70
UNGRAM	40	33.13	34,50	27,37	4,33	0,00	66

**Table 4.2**  
**Result of Paired T-Test and CI: Grammatical; Ungrammatical for G-J Test**

	N	Mean	St Dev	Se Mean
Grammatical	40	36,88	27,37	4,33
Ungrammatical	40	33,13	27,37	4,33
Difference	40	3,75	54,75	8,66

95% CI for mean difference: (-13,76; 21,26)

T-Test of mean difference = 0 (vs not = 0) : T-Value = 0,43 P-Value = 0.667

0,05 > 0,667

Ho accepted

Ho: points the lexical features (NP PP) and (NP NP) are equal.

In order to compare the difference between the means for G-J test and production test between each lexical feature a “one-way analysis of variance” was used. The ANOVA results are reported in the following tables.

Table 4.3 and 4.4 show the ANOVA result for the production test. The results reveal that the difference between the lexical features- (NP PP), (NP NP) and the wrong produced- are statistically significant.

**Table 4.3**

**Result of descriptive statistics : C1; C2; C3 for ANOVA for the production test**

Variable	N	Mean	Median	St Dev	SE Mean	Minimum	Maximum
C1	20	40,40	39,00	13,87	3,10	20,00	63,00
C2	20	9,9	5,00	12,41	2,77	0,00	44,00
C3	20	19,70	15,50	13,80	3,09	3,00	44,00

C1: number of subjects produced (NP PP)

C2: number of subjects produced (NP NP)

C3: number of subjects produced wrong lexical features

**Table 4.4****Result of One-way ANOVA: C1; C2; C3 for the production test**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	2	9699	4849	27,10	0,00
Error	57	10201	179		
Total	59	19899			

**4.2. Discussion**

According to the data analysis of the G-J test obtained from paired T-test, the answer to the first, and second research questions (1. Which feature of dative alternation of English verbs (NP PP or NP NP forms) is unmarked for our Turkish students learning English? and 2. Do Turkish learners of English learn (NP PP) form easily, i.e. do they face problems with this form?) is that the points between the lexical items (NP PP) and (NP NP) are equal. However, for the first and the second research questions, it was observed in the production test that the lexical feature (NP PP) is unmarked, and the lexical feature (NP NP) is marked for our Turkish learners of English. Thus, the results of the production test also suggest that Turkish learners of English have difficulty in producing sentences with the lexical feature (NP NP). So, this answers the third research question: Turkish learners of English have problems with the lexical feature (NP NP) while they are producing their own sentences with the dative verbs given (see Appendix B).

For the analysis of the results of the production test, the subjects (n=70) who produced sentences with the lexical feature (NP NP) would get 2 points, those who produced lexical feature (NP PP) would get 1point, and those who produced lexical feature other than the two mentioned above would get 0. The result of the production test according to this scoring is shown in table 4.5

**Table 4.5**  
**The result of the Production Test**

SENTENCE NUMBER	NO SUBJ PRODUCED (NP PP) S. GIVEN 2	NO SUBJ PRODUCED (NP NP) S. GIVEN 1	NO SUBJ PRODUCED WRONG S. GIVEN 0
1	25	8	37
2	44	5	21
3	49	12	9
4	63	4	3
5	53	5	12
6	26	30	14
7	28	28	14
8	52	3	15
9	49	5	16
10	20	6	44
11	63	4	3
12	36	2	32
13	21	44	5
14	36	0	34
15	33	0	37
16	26	0	44
17	46	6	18
18	35	29	6
19	42	3	25
20	61	4	5

**NO SUBJ PRODUCED (NP PP)** : Number of subject produced (NP PP)

**NO SUBJ PRODUCED (NP NP)**: Number of subject produced (NP NP)

**NO SUBJ PRODUCED WRONG**: Number of subjects produced wrong lexical features

**S. GIVEN** : Score given



As it can be seen in table 4.5, the great majority of the subjects got 2 points. This result is more remarkable for some sentences in the production test where the subjects were asked to put the words in the right word order. Especially for the sentences 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 19 and 20, the great majority of the subjects got 2 points. For some sentences, the number of the subjects who got 2 points and 1 point were almost close to each other. This result can be seen in the sentence numbers 6 and 7. In these sentences the subjects were asked to put the words in the right order with the dative verbs “promise” and “recommend”. However in the case of the sentence 13, with the dative verb “suggest” the rate of the subjects who got 1 point was twice bigger than the subjects who got 2 points. This may suggest that our Turkish learners of English have enough target language input about this verb and the lexical feature of dative alternation used with the verb mentioned.

However, it can clearly be seen in the table 4.5. that the number of the subjects who got 0 point worth mentioning. In most cases, the number of the subjects who got 0 point were close to the number of the subjects who got 2 points and in some cases the number of the subjects who got 0 were higher than the number of the subjects who got 1. This was especially observed in sentences 1, 2, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 19. With these number of subjects who obtained 0 score, it was observed that the mother tongue played an important role. As the subjects were not given any preposition in the production test, the subjects had a tendency for -to datives and -for datives to transfer from the mother tongue. For example, the rate of the subjects who produced sentences with the preposition “with” for the first sentence. So sometimes, the subjects produced sentences like:

\* The judge awarded those hurt by the explosion with a large some of money.

The other cases with such wrong use of prepositions were also observed in sentence 10 with the preposition “to” e.g. \* The teacher wrote a sample resume to John.

\* The journalist repeated the question to the prime minister.

Depending on the analyses above, the research questions of the study can be answered by considering the results obtained from one-way ANOVA for the production test. The data analysis justifies that the lexical feature (NP PP) is unmarked- that is it is predicted not only that they are easy to learn but also that they can be acquired on the basis of minimal exposure to primary data- and the lexical feature (NP PP) is marked-

that is to say, they are the peripheral rules of the grammar and they are predicted to be relatively more difficult to learn.

In this respect, it can also be said for the second research question that Turkish learners of English do not face problems in producing sentences with the lexical feature (NP PP) for English dative verbs. As for the answer of the third research question, it was observed that the subjects had problems in producing sentences with the lexical feature (NP NP) for English dative verbs as they were marked for the subjects.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

#### 5.1 Summary of the Study

In learning a foreign language, the place and the role of grammar have always been discussed both by researchers and foreign language teachers. Of all the issues surrounding the teaching of grammar, the most well known one is whether to teach it or not. Despite the above-mentioned arguments, it is worth noticing that grammar teaching/learning has been synonymous with foreign language teaching/learning. Although there is a tendency to discuss its place and role in foreign language teaching or learning, it has been widely agreed that the grammar is the skeleton of a language that needs to be learned for the linguistic accuracy in the target language.

General educational principals suggest that teachers start with the simple structures and move toward the difficult, but structures that seem simple may in fact be quite difficult ones for some students to internalize. For example, inflection for the third person singular in the present tense or the definite article can become problematic for students. This list can be increased, but simple and complex are meaningless terms if they are not defined from the learners' point of view. Deciding what is simple and complex for the learners is the duty of the language teacher.

Some structures have exact parallels in the native language and they are thought to be mastered easily. Some have no such parallels, but fairly simple in themselves. However, there are others totally unfamiliar and very difficult to learn.

Therefore, having these exact parallels (unmarked structures) in the native language and unfamiliar or unshared structures (marked ones) will enable the language teacher to decide what to teach first. Thus, through the analysis of the theory of UG and markedness, it can be concluded that the identical properties of both languages may facilitate learning or teaching of English grammar meaningfully.

After making the place of grammar teaching in foreign language clear, the question to be asked is how to teach it. Besides the methodological approaches to teaching grammar discussed in chapter 2, this study approached the matter of teaching

grammar by considering the principles that UG theory proposes with a notion of the importance of the theory of markedness conditions in language learning in terms of dative alternation in English. It was hypothesized that teaching the structures (unmarked) shared by both the mother tongue and the target language would improve the learning process, and the lexical feature (NP PP) in double object construction is unmarked whereas the lexical feature (NP NP) is marked for our Turkish learners of English.

In order to test the hypotheses of the study, 70 subjects were given a grammaticality judgment test about 20 dative verbs in English both with the lexical feature (NP PP) and (NP NP) and a production test in order to see their own progress and their choice of the lexical feature with the given 20 dative verbs. Findings of this study suggested that Turkish learners of English mostly preferred the lexical feature (NP PP) both in the grammaticality judgment test and the production test. It was found out that the lexical feature (NP PP) of dative verbs in English is unmarked and the lexical feature (NP NP) is marked for our Turkish learners of English.

To sum up, this study can be considered as a descriptive study aimed at identifying learners' current stage of development in double object construction (dative alternation) and relating these findings to the claims of the theory of UG and markedness.

## **5.2. Assessment of the Study**

The collected data (the grammaticality judgment test and the production test) were submitted to statistical analysis. The grammaticality judgment test was submitted to paired T-test and CI: grammatical; ungrammatical. The statistical results showed the result as  $0,05 > 0,667$ . For this reason,  $H_0$  accepted. According to the statistical results, the points for the lexical features (NP PP) and (NP NP) are equal. The production test was submitted to a one-way analysis of variance. The statistical results for the production test showed that the difference between the lexical features (NP PP), (NP NP) and the ones produced wrong was statistically significant. According to this result, it was observed that the lexical feature (NP PP) is unmarked whereas the lexical feature (NP NP) is marked.

The results of this analysis also showed that the lexical feature (NP PP) is easy for the subjects of this study while the lexical feature (NP NP) is relatively more difficult to learn. Accordingly, the subjects of this study had difficulty in producing sentences with the lexical feature (NP NP).

The results of this study confirm the findings in the literature about the lexical feature (NP PP) that it is unmarked and it is expected that these two structures are both easy to learn and they can be acquired on the basis of minimal exposure to primary data.

As it can be seen from the results of production test, the subjects in this study appeared to have produced more and meaningful sentences with the lexical feature (NP PP). Therefore, it can be concluded that the production test seems to help more in these cases when the learners are expected to produce their own sentences with the given structures. However, it is worth mentioning that the learners might have transferred from their mother tongue and this suggests the influence of L1 in acquiring the target language. The transfer from L1 sometimes may cause problems in the form of error of the preferred (NP PP) lexical feature. It is this point that this study aims at reaching. This study hypothesized that if there were parts of grammar shared by all languages, this would ease the learning process in teaching the structures shared by both L2 and L1. According to the theory of markedness, these shared structures between L2 and L1 are unmarked and they are predicted to be easy to acquire unlike the marked ones, which are considered to be relatively more difficult to learn.

### **5.3 Pedagogical implications**

From a historical perspective, teaching grammar has often been synonymous with teaching/learning foreign language. Thus, grammar and language learning are considered to be the necessary part of a whole. This study has provided insight on how grammatical structures in the input might be selected in an order of acquisition. Markedness is considered to shed light on this process of intake. It points out that language learners are ready to learn every other marked form in the order of their markedness degree.

As teachers of English, most of us are aware that language learners make errors with certain structures. However, there are some cases that few problems occur with

some structures. This reflects the nature of the structure being learned and the cognitive readiness of the students to learn this structure. This study has showed that the lexical feature (NP PP) is learned easily whereas language learners have some difficulty while they are producing sentences with (NP NP) lexical feature.

This study attempted to emphasize the role of UG theory in language acquisition. According to Felix (1988), first, if both L1 and L2 learners crucially rely on UG to acquire knowledge of the language they are exposed to, then obviously both L1 and L2 data may be relevant concerning the interaction of UG and the learner's linguistic experience. Second, if UG plays an important role in adult language learning, then much of what sets up the basic belief in foreign language teaching needs to be reassessed.

As it was stated before, UG theory proposes that there are parts of grammar that belong to all languages. Moreover, in spite of the casual differences among human languages, there are basic, underlying similarities shared by all human languages. So, with this in mind, if language teachers, textbook writers and syllabus designers are aware of these similarities shared by both L2 and L1, this awareness will enable them to fulfill their objectives accordingly.

As for the role of the language teachers, if they are aware of the similarities and shared parts and problematic areas by both L2 and L1, this will enable them to sequence the order of the structure to be taught or learned from the shared structure to the problematic one. With this, it is hoped that the learning process will become more meaningful and productive both for the teacher and the learner.

Important implication of this study is to emphasize the role of sequencing the structures to be taught. That is to say, we start with the simple or very close to a parallel in the native language. Two structures differing in their degree of markedness were given and the result of this study confirms that the lexical feature (NP PP) is unmarked and this pattern can be acquired easily. Referring to Krashen's well-known  $i+1$  comprehensible input theory, McLaughlin (1987) claims that  $i$  represent the learner's existing interlanguage system, and in determining one level above (+), markedness could be one of the criteria. After having assessed students' current stage of interlanguage, the order to be followed in presenting new structures should be in line with the "one level above". Although it is not intended to mean that markedness degree

is the factor determining comprehensible input, it is suggested that it might shed light on defining this type of input by considering the markedness relationship as one of the criteria in operation.

In the case of problematic structures, one might ask the question of how these problematic target structures will be identified or what features are needed in choosing the problematic structures. According to Ellis (1995) there are two important factors. They are problemat�city and learnability. Problemat�city can be determined by examining samples of the learner output in order to determine (1) which grammatical structures have not been used yet, that is to say the forms that have not been acquired. (2) forms that are used wrongly due to the function(s) of target structures not being acquired. Learnability deals with whether the learner is able to integrate new grammatical information into the interlanguage system. If the new learning is a sort of assigning a different function to a previously acquired form, learnability cannot be a problem.

Back to the point of sequencing of the structures to teach and learnability of the structure under study have important implications for language teachers, textbook writers and syllabus designers. It can be observed in most of grammar books designed for language classrooms (like *A Practical English Grammar*, Thomson and Martinet, 1980; *How English Works*, Raimès, 1990; *English Grammar in Use*, Murphy, 1985) that they present and aim at teaching all types of structures at the same time without considering students' being cognitively ready for one aspect of a structure before another.

While designing the content of a text book, text book writers and syllabus designers must keep in their mind that learners are cognitively ready for a type of structure before another structure and must reconsider previous applications.

One example for such an approach to language teaching is integrated in the "Spiral Method," which comes to one structure again and again, each time adding more marked forms to what has already been taught (Baysal 2001:64)

The book "Grammar Dimensions" (1997) provides good examples for such a grammar course content and organization. For instance, there have been some studies for the markedness degree of Gerunds and Infinitives by Mazurkewich (1988), and markedness condition in language learning in terms of Noun Phrase Accessibility

Hierarchy (NPAH) and differing degrees of the components involved (Subject, Direct Object, Indirect object, Oblique, and Genitive relativizations by Baysal (2001). The markedness degree of these studies indicates that the infinitive is mastered before the gerund. For the NPAH, the order for acquisition has come out as S<DO<IO<OBL. So, when these structures are presented in the course content and organization, it can be noticed that their markedness degree are considered.

Accepting learners' existing knowledge, and building on this, considering cognitive processes would provide a chance to use data for prediction and further implementation in the language learning program at large.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

The nature of G-J test used in this study consisted of isolated sentences. Therefore, it might not be regarded as naturalistic as a judgment test, which is contextualised. A future study investigating grammar acquisition at the discourse level rather than sentence level could produce different outcomes using a contextualised G-J test. This could give an idea about whether accuracy or appropriacy of that structure within discourse could bring about similar or different results in terms of their acquisition order.

In this study, individual differences in terms of subject interest were not taken into consideration. Future studies can overcome this by taking student interest and willing participation and correlation between these factors and student performance could be studied.

In conducting a study, the number of the subjects included plays an important role both for generalization and interpretation of the findings. Studies in the future can be realized by taking into account a larger subject sample. This could be useful in terms of comparing results and suggesting stronger claims about the number of the subjects.

In this study, the number of tasks for dative alternation was limited. Studies looking at different tasks that contain more indications of the same construction can be needed. The variety of tasks and items could give a more reliable insight either supporting or contradicting the findings of the study.



The dative alternation in English was examined by considering the markedness degree of the lexical features (NP PP) and (NP NP). In this study morphological and semantic factors that govern the alternation were not taken into consideration. So a study looking at this part of dative alternation would provide more reliable evidence on which type of alternation is unmarked in terms of markedness.

The outcome of a written task and a spoken task may provide different results. Because in a written task, the subjects have a chance to see and evaluate his or her own production. This cannot be possible in a spoken task. So a study examining this relationship could give some idea about the acquisition order of the dative alternation consistent with various types of data on the same structure.

This study lacks contribution on whether error difficulty; such as using a wrong preposition instead of –to or –for dative, has any relationship with the markedness degree of the structure observed. A study controlling error types could be helpful to provide insight on whether error difficulty plays a useful role in determining the markedness degree of the structure studied.

Markedness is a very general phenomenon affecting not only double object construction in English but also other conjunctions of the target language. Hence, in order to suggest, it has a determinant role in processing contribution to intake and it plays an important role in language learning, studies searching other structures are also needed.

One of the pedagogical implications of this study is that if UG plays an important role in second language acquisition, and much of our belief that constitutes the major belief about foreign language teaching needs to be reconsidered. With this respect, it has been mentioned that it is not enough to totally focus on teaching methodology, environmental factors, and the learner's internal psychological states in order to specify the nature of language learning, rather the language faculty and its contributions to the learning process should be taken into consideration as well. So in this study, a notion of UG in relation to Turkish learners of English language learning double object constructions in English and its relationship with markedness was discussed and teachers were advised starting to teach from easy to difficult or rather from unmarked to marked. Effectiveness of this theory was assumed on the basis of the results of the present study. Therefore, further studies examining this theory in grammar

teaching with other structures would provide valuable insights both for teachers and researchers.

### **5.5. Conclusions**

This study has intended to investigate the application of the theory of Universal Grammar in relation to Turkish learners of English language learning double object construction in English with a notion of markedness theory. The primary aim was to discuss the role of UG in second language acquisition. The studies referred claim that UG plays an important role in the acquisition of foreign language. If this is taken for granted, then much of our ideas about foreign language teaching should be reconsidered. It was suggested that it is not enough to completely focus on teaching methodology, environmental factors, and the learner's internal psychological states in order to specify the nature of the learning process; rather the language faculty and its contribution to the learning process should be taken into account, too.

With probing the application of the theory UG and markedness, this study does not suggest that every problematic structure could be solved with UG and UG works in every part of foreign language acquisition and everything could be explained with the theory of markedness; rather, taking into account the applied linguistics and its contribution to the learning process, it is intended to give an insight to foreign language teachers, textbook writers and syllabus designers when their contribution for foreign language teaching is considered. Despite the superficial differences, UG theory proposes that there are parts of grammar that belong to all languages, and there are basic, underlying similarities- a core of linguistic universals- shared by all human languages. According to the theory of markedness, these parts are considered unmarked because it is predicted that they are not only easy to learn but also they can be acquired on the basis of minimal exposure to primary data. Thus, keeping this in mind, we can teach grammar in a better way.

**APPENDICES**

	<u>Page</u>
<b>Appendix A: Grammaticality Judgment Tes On Dative Alternation .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Appendix B: Production Test On Dative Alternation .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Appendix C: G-J Test Evaluation Chart .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Appendix D: Dative Structures, Confirming Results .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Appendix E: Production Test evaluation Chart.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Appendix F: Gramaticality Judgement Test of the Pilot Study.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Appendix G: Production Test of the Pilot Study.....</b>	<b>65</b>



**APPENDIX A**  
**GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT TEST ON DATIVE ALTERNATION**

**Age:** .....

**Sex:** .....

**High school you graduated from:** .....

**How long have you been studying English?** .....

**Do you speak any other foreign language? If yes, what?** .....

**Directions:** Read the following sentences and decide if they are correct or incorrect grammatically. Write **TRUE** if correct, or **FALSE** if incorrect.

1. ....The judge awarded those hurt by the explosion a large sum of money.
2. ....The judge awarded a large sum of money to those hurt by the explosion.
3. ....They found somewhere for Terry to live.
4. ....They found Terry somewhere to live.
5. ....The doctor gave the injured man treatment for shock.
6. ....The doctor gave treatment for shock to the injured man.
7. ....Someone has sent the bank manager a letter bomb.
8. ....Someone has sent a letter bomb to the bank manager.
9. ....She left all her property to her husband.
10. ....She left her husband all of her property.
11. ....Her parents promised Susan a new bike if she passes the exam.
12. ....Her parents promised a new bike to Susan if she passes the exam.
13. ....Can you recommend to George a good hotel?
14. ....Can you recommend a good hotel to George.
15. ....He built Jack a model ship out of wood.
16. ....He built a model ship out of wood for Jack.
17. ....Jane's mother cooked some Mexican food for her guests.
18. ....Jane's mother cooked her guests some Mexican food.
19. ....The teacher wrote John a sample resume.
20. ....The teacher wrote a sample resume for John.

21. ....Mary asked a question to the class.
22. ....Mary asked the class a question.
23. ....The journalist repeated the prime minister the question.
24. ....The journalist repeated the question for the prime minister.
25. ....Our manager suggested to us an idea.
26. ....Our manager suggested an idea to us.
27. ....The teacher pronounced for her the difficult word.
28. ....The teacher pronounced the difficult word for her.
29. ....Anya reviewed the sentences for Mary.
30. ....Anya reviewed for Mary the sentences.
31. ....We calculated for Ali the math problem.
32. ....We calculated the math problem for Ali.
33. ....I reported to the boss the sales-report.
34. ....I reported the sales report to the boss.
35. ....Vince offered a glass of beer to his friend.
36. ....Vince offered his friend a glass of beer.
37. ....Alan bought a present for his girl friend.
38. ....Alan bought his girl friend a present.
39. ....Brenda kept her friend a seat in the conference hall.
40. ....Brenda kept a seat for her friend in the conference hall.

**APPENDIX B**  
**PRODUCTION TEST ON DATIVE ALTERNATION**

**Age:** .....

**Sex:** .....

**High school you graduated from:** .....

**How long have you been studying English?** .....

**Do you speak any other foreign language? If yes, what?** .....

**Direction:** Arrange these words in the right order.

1. The judge / awarded / a large some of money / those hurt by the explosion.

.....

2. They / found / somewhere / Terry / to live.

.....

3. The doctor / gave / the injured man / treatment for shock.

.....

4. Someone / has sent / a letter bomb / the bank manager.

.....

5. She / left / all her property / her husband.

.....

6. Her parents / a new bike / promised / Susan / if she passes the exam.

.....

7. Can / you / recommend / George / a good hotel?

.....

8. He / built / Jack / a model ship out of wood.

.....

9. Jane's mother / cooked / her guests / some Mexican food.

.....

10. The teacher / wrote / a sample resume / John.

.....

11. Mary / a question / asked / the class.

.....

12. The journalist / the question / repeated / the prime minister.

.....

13. Our manager / us / suggested / an idea.

.....

14. The teacher / pronounced / the difficult word /her.

.....

15. Anya / reviewed / the sentences / Mary.

.....

16. We / the math problem / calculated / Ali.

.....

17. I / reported / the boss / the sales report.

.....

18. Vince / his friend / offered / a glass of beer.

.....

19. Alan / bought / a present / his girl friend.

.....

20. Brenda / kept / a seat / her friend / in the conference hall.

.....

**APPENDIX C**  
**GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT TEST EVALUATION CHART**

SENTENCE IN G-J TEST	NO.SUBJ. CONF. TRUE	IN PERCENTAGE	NO.SUBJ. CONF. FALSE	IN PERCENTAGE
1 (NP NP)				
2 (NP PP) (to)				
3 (NP PP) (for)				
4 (NP NP)				
5 (NP NP)				
6 (NP PP) (to)				
7 (NP NP)				
8 (NP PP) (to)				
9 (NP PP) (to)				
10 (NP NP)				
11 (NP NP)				
12 (NP PP) (to)				
13 (NP NP)				
14 (NP PP) (to)				
15 (NP NP)				
16 (NP PP) (for)				
17 (NP PP) (for)				
18 (NP NP)				
19 (NP NP)				
20 (NP PP) (for)				
21 (NP PP) (to)				
22 (NP NP)				
23 (NP NP)				
24 (NP PP) (for)				
25 (NP NP)				
26 (NP PP) (to)				
27 (NP NP)				
28 (NP PP) (for)				
29 (NP PP) (for)				
30 (NP NP)				
31 (NP NP)				
32 (NP PP) (for)				
33 (NP NP)				
34 (NP PP) (to)				
35 (NP PP) (to)				
36 (NP NP)				
37 (NP PP) (for)				
38 (NP NP)				
39 (NP NP)				
40 (NP PP) (for)				



## APPENDIX D

## DATIVE STRUCTURES – CONFIRMING RESULTS, IN PERCENTAGE

SENTENCE IN G-J TEST	NO.SUBJ. CONF. TRUE	IN PERCENTAGE	NO.SUBJ. CONF. FALSE	IN PERCENTAGE
1 (NP NP)	14	20	56	80
2 (NP PP) (to)	55	79	15	21
3 (NP PP) (for)	60	86	10	14
4 (NP NP)	5	7	65	93
5 (NP NP)	20	28	50	72
6 (NP PP) (to)	53	76	17	24
7 (NP NP)	8	11	62	89
8 (NP PP) (to)	70	100	0	0
9 (NP PP) (to)	58	83	12	17
10 (NP NP)	25	36	45	64
11 (NP NP)	28	40	42	60
12 (NP PP) (to)	43	61	27	39
13 (NP NP)	15	21	55	79
14 (NP PP) (to)	59	84	11	16
15 (NP NP)	4	6	66	94
16 (NP PP) (for)	67	96	3	4
17 (NP PP) (for)	68	97	2	3
18 (NP NP)	8	11	62	89
19 (NP NP)	5	7	65	93
20 (NP PP) (for)	68	97	2	3
21 (NP PP) (to)	67	96	3	4
22 (NP NP)	10	14	60	86
23 (NP NP)	4	6	66	94
24 (NP PP) (for)	66	94	4	6
25 (NP NP)	11	16	59	84
26 (NP PP) (to)	64	91	6	9
27 (NP NP)	5	7	65	93
28 (NP PP) (for)	68	97	2	3
29 (NP PP) (for)	68	97	2	3
30 (NP NP)	4	6	66	94
31 (NP NP)	6	9	64	91
32 (NP PP) (for)	68	97	2	3
33 (NP NP)	10	14	60	86
34 (NP PP) (to)	65	93	5	7
35 (NP PP) (to)	58	83	12	17
36 (NP NP)	20	28	50	72
37 (NP PP) (for)	67	96	3	4
38 (NP NP)	9	13	61	87
39 (NP NP)	4	6	66	94
40 (NP PP) (for)	68	97	2	3

**Sentence in G-J Test:** Sentence in Grammaticality judgment test

**No Subj. Conf. True:** Number of the subject confirmed true

**In percentage:** In percentage

**No Subj. Conf. False:** Number of the subject confirmed false

**APPENDIX E**  
**PRODUCTION TEST EVALUATION CHART**

SENTENCE NUMBER	NO SUBJ PRODUCED (NP PP) S. GIVEN 2	NO SUBJ PRODUCED (NP NP) S. GIVEN 1	NO SUBJ PRODUCED WRONG S. GIVEN 0
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

**NO SUBJ PRODUCED (NP PP):** Number of subject produced (NP PP)

**NO SUBJ PRODUCED (NP NP):** Number of subject produced (NP NP)

**NO SUBJ PRODUCED WRONG:** Number of subjects produced wrong

**S. GIVEN:** Score given

**APPENDIX F**  
**GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT TEST OF THE PILOT STUDY**

**Directions:** read the following sentences and decide if they are correct or incorrect grammatically. Write **Grammatical** if correct, or **Ungrammatical** if incorrect.

01. .... Mary asked a question to the class.
02. .... The journalist repeated the prime minister the question.
03. .... Our manager suggested us an idea.
04. .... My brother cooked us a delicious dinner.
05. .... The teacher pronounced her the difficult word.
06. .... Anya reviewed the sentences for Mary.
07. .... We calculated Ali the math problem.
08. .... I reported the boss the sales report.
09. .... Mary asked the class a question.
10. .... Vince offered a glass of beer to his friend.
11. ....: The journalist repeated the question for the prime minister.
12. .... Our manager suggested an idea to us.
13. .... My brother cooked a delicious dinner for us.
14. .... I pronounced the difficult word for the class.
15. .... Terry bought her boy friend a present.
16. .... Terry bought a present for her boy friend.
17. .... I reported the sales report to the boss.
18. .... We calculated the math problem for Ali.
19. .... He offered his friend a glass of beer.
- 20..... She reviewed Mary the sentences.

**APPENDIX G**  
**PRODUCTION TEST OF THE PILOT STUDY**

**Directions:** Read the following sentences and put them into meaningful sentences.  
Please pay attention to the word order.

01. Mary / a question / asked / the class

.....

02. The journalist / repeated / the prime minister/ the question.

.....

03. Our manager / suggested / an idea / us.

.....

04. My brother / cooked / a delicious dinner / us.

.....

05. The teacher / pronounced / her / the difficult word.

.....

06. Anya /reviewed / Mary / the sentences.

.....

07. We / calculated / the math problem / Ali.

.....

08. I / reported / the sales report / the boss.

.....

09. Their teacher / gave / a lot of homework / them.

.....

10. Vince / offered/ a glass of beer / his friend.

.....

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