
LAZIM in TİD: Lexical Borrowing Comes with the Structure

Serpil Karabüklü

University of Chicago

serpilkarabuklu@gmail.com

Sign languages have several mechanisms to borrow lexical items from the surrounding spoken languages. This study shows that some lexical borrowings also bring structural changes into the grammar. The modal sign LAZIM (necessary) in Turkish Sign Language (TİD) was borrowed to translate Turkish ‘lazım’ (Taşçı & Göksel, 2014). In Turkish, ‘lazım’ can be either deontic or epistemic (1). In TİD, LAZIM is used alone in deontic contexts (2) but is accompanied by another sign OL (be), also borrowed from Turkish, in epistemic contexts (2) (Karabüklü et al., 2018).

- (1) Ali'nin ev-de/gel-me-si *(ol-ma-sı)/* ol-ma-sı lazım.
Ali-gen. home-loc./ come-nom.-poss be-nom-poss. necessary
‘Ali must be home / must come (based on my deduction/ his parents’ rules)’
- (2) ALI COME LAZIM / OL LAZIM
‘Ali must (have) come (based on rules/ what I know)’

Experimental evidence from ratings of modal signs by 16 participants supports the claim that TİD has adjusted the semantics of borrowed LAZIM (M=1.87, sd=1.47 on 7-point slider) to deontic and created the OL LAZIM (M=3.28, sd=2.28) construction for expressing epistemic (Karabüklü, 2022). Furthermore, ‘ol’ in Turkish is only used after nominal predicates (1) while TİD OL is used after both nominal and verbal predicates (2). OL which can be signed alone, encodes the change of state (3) whereas Turkish ‘ol’ is the morphological realization of the copula in the embedded sentences (1). Based on OL’s pattern, I analyze epistemic interpretation of OL LAZIM via the semantic computations of OL and LAZIM separately. OL conveys the change of state and LAZIM attaches the structure above and binds the situation argument of OL, thus yielding the epistemic interpretation. Thus, lexical borrowing brought the structure along with itself but yielded structural adaptation to disambiguate the semantics of LAZIM.

- (3) IX-POSS-1 MOM BEFORE MEAL TASTE^GOOD++, NOW MEAL TASTE^BAD OL, SHOCK
‘Mom’s meal tasted good, now it happens to taste bad, I’m shocked.’

References: • Karabüklü, S. (2022). *Modal Signs and Cooccurring Nonmanual Markers in TİD*. Purdue University: Diss. • Karabüklü, S., Bross, F., Wilbur, R. B., & Hole, D. (2018). Modal signs and scope relations in TİD. *Proceedings of FEAST*, 2, 82–92. • Taşçı, S. & Göksel, A. (2014). The morphological categorization of polymorphemic lexemes: A study based on lexicalized fingerspelled forms in TİD. *Dilbilim Araştırmaları Dergisi*. (pp. 165-180).