

Attrition of Oral Communicative Ability among English Language Graduates in Turkey

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Abstract

This study explored the relationship between the period of Turkish EFL (English as a Foreign Language) graduates' not using English as well as their ages with the attrition of their oral communicative ability. The study also indicated the language maintenance strategies the Turkish EFL graduates pursue to prevent the attrition of their oral communicative ability. To investigate the issues, the present study used a quantitative design and the convenience sampling. The participants included 153 Turkish graduates majoring in English fields. A test of oral communicative ability as well as a checklist including 20 'Language Maintenance Strategies' were used to collect the required data. The results showed that the longer the period of language non-use, the more likely the attrition of oral communicative abilities of Turkish EFL graduates will occur. As for the language maintenance strategies, the item 'watching movies with its corresponding subtitle in English' was the most frequent, followed by 'listening to English songs', whereas 'speaking in English with Turkish friends' was the least frequent one, and this was followed by 'speaking in English with foreigners'. The study highly recommends enhancing the conditions and quality of the EFL teacher education programs in Turkey.

Keywords: Turkish EFL graduates, Attrition of oral communicative ability, Period of English non-use, Language maintenance strategies

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