

THE EFFECT OF UPDATING ON THE PRODUCTION OF ASPECT IN GREEK-AMERICAN HERITAGE BILINGUAL SPEAKERS

Ifigeneia Dosi

Democritus University of
Thrace, **GREECE**
idosi@helit.duth.gr

ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study is to investigate the impact of executive functions (i.e. updating) on the production of aspect by Greek-American heritage speakers. Previous studies on grammatical aspect have found that heritage speakers prefer to use more often the perfective aspect over the imperfective one (Montrul, 2002; Polinsky, 2007; Dosi, 2017). Moreover, they suggest that the habitual feature is more problematic than the continuous feature (Montrul, 2002; Dosi, Papadopoulou & Tsimpli, 2016a; Dosi, 2017). To date, very limited studies have tested the influence of cognitive abilities on linguistic abilities in heritage speakers (Dosi et al., 2016b; Andreou et al., to appear); similarly, very few studies have examined the role of updating on the acquisition of aspect (Dosi, 2016; Dosi, 2017). The present study examines the impact of updating in the production of grammatical aspect in Greek-American heritage speakers, who live in the States. The findings have shown that heritage speakers scored really low, almost at chance level. Moreover, confirming previous studies imperfective aspect was found to be particularly problematic. Interestingly, only habitual feature correlates with the performance on updating task, indicating that this feature of imperfective aspect is more demanding, since it is interpreted as a series of completed events and the speaker should remember to use imperfective aspect instead of the perfective aspect.

Keywords: Heritage bilingual speakers, updating, grammatical aspect, habituality.