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## (28239) Lateral Phonemes in Turkish

GÖKTUĞ BÖRTLÜ<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SELÇUK UNIVERSITY

*goktug.bortlu@selcuk.edu.tr*

Traditionally, Turkish has always defined laterals with the letter 'l' just as most of the other languages around the world. Therefore, we should be focused on where the letter 'l' occurs most as we lack any other reference point than orthography. After the recordings were gathered from 20 university students (10 male, 10 female), their narrow-band spectrograms were examined in PRAAT. Consequently, it was possible to find out whether or not they were different phonemes and how many distinct laterals there are in Turkish. Along with Recasens and Espinosa's (2005) findings, F2 will play a huge role in determining the different occurrences of the laterals in Turkish. The results demonstrate that there are two distinct lateral phonemes in Turkish, which can be transcribed as /l/ and /ɭ/. In addition, the latter symbol has a diacritic, sort of a tilde going through it, denoting velarization. The non-velarized alveolar lateral approximant /l/ happens to occur word-initially and in such occurrence its environment (i.e. whether there is a back or front vowel preceding or following it) does not affect its quality. Also, when there is a front vowel preceding or following the lateral consonant, then it happens to be /l/ again. On the other hand, the velarized lateral approximant /ɭ/ needs to be preceded or followed by a back vowel if it is not at the word-initial position. However, if the following vowel is back and the lateral consonant occurs word-initially, then it is, once again, /l/ since the word-initial position only chooses for /l/. In general, the velarized lateral's F2 values seem to be much lower than those of the non-velarized one, which is in line with Recasens and Espinosa (2005). Ergenç and Uzun (2017) state that there are two distinct lateral phonemes in Turkish, however, they found those sounds to be apical/palatal, which was not the case in any of the findings in this paper. Both the velarized and non-velarized laterals are alveolar, not palatal. According to Taylan (2015), there exist two distinct lateral phonemes in the Turkish phonemic inventory, namely /ɭ/ and /ʎ/. The problem in this analysis is that the former is alveolar while the latter palatal. However, there seems to be no /ʎ/ phoneme in Turkish as there is no evidence of any palatal laterals in this language. The findings have showed us that the laterals in Turkish are both alveolar.

**Keywords :** phonetics, lateral, alveolar, PRAAT, velarization