

Turkish is not a Tongue-Twister.

I propose that Turkish Vowel Harmony (TVH) is no longer a phonological process of Turkish. Different models have been proposed to account for TVH, but all of them are faced with disharmonic phenomena that are hard to handle coherently. I first show that the previous analyses of TVH have the following logical implications: 1) Turkish borrowed an immense amount of disharmonic words from other languages without harmonizing them, but its phonological rules didn't change; 2) perceptual correction should forbid disharmony, but it doesn't; and more importantly 3) this situation increases the opacity of the Turkish lexicon, thus decreasing its learnability. I start with the traditional account of TVH in order to present the facts that need to be handled by a model of TVH. Some alternative models of TVH are then presented. I show some of the weaknesses of these proposals. I present new facts that show that all the logical possibilities of vowel combinations in Turkish are attested. I also present new cases of straight borrowings of disharmonic words and even borrowings that disharmonize previously harmonic words. The data is drawn from personal observations and from a brief linguistic survey conducted in 2014 with native speakers of Turkish in Istanbul. In concluding, I invite the audience to consider the possibility that TVH survives strictly as a morphological phenomenon, tied to certain suffixation operations, but that the idea that it is a general phonotactic condition of the language (both in roots and suffixation) must be definitely abandoned.