

On the Structure of Postpositional Phrases in Turkish

This paper proposes an analysis of postpositional phrases (PPs) in Turkish based on their semantic and morphological properties, supported by the empirical evidence which comes from both the case marking properties of the NP complements of PPs and the licensing of the anaphor *kendi* ‘self’ as the complement of PPs. That PPs are categorized into two classes in Turkish based on the morphological marking (or its absence) of the head is well-recorded in the literature (Kornfilt 1997, Göksel and Kerslake, 2005); (i) those headed by bare postpositions such as *için* ‘for’, *göre* ‘according to’ and *önce* ‘before’ and (ii) those headed by possessive-marked postpositions such as *yerine* ‘instead’ and *hakkında* ‘about’. PPs headed by bare postpositions are further categorized into two based on the nature of the case marker on their complements as the following table presents:

	PP- I
NP abstract-case marked <i>o</i> -Genitive case marked <i>*kendi</i>	<i>için</i> , <i>ile</i> , <i>kadar</i> , <i>gibi</i>
	PP- II
NP – Dative/ablative marked <i>o</i> -Dative/ablative marked <i>kendi</i>	<i>göre</i> , <i>doğru</i> <i>önce</i> , <i>başka</i>

As observed in the lack of contrast between the case marking of their complements, PP-II postpositions do not distinguish between the lexical category of their complements - the personal pronoun *o* bears the same case marker as its NP counterpart (1). Yet as the complement of PP-I postpositions, *o* is overtly marked Genitive whereas its NP counterpart is not (2). Since PPs are considered to be predicates (cf. Becker and Arms, 1969) similar to verbs and the lexical property of a verb can determine its syntactic structure (Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 1995), I suggest event structures are reflected in linguistic forms of postpositions. Following the spirit of Kornfilt (2001)’s claim for the genitive marked subjects of nominalized subordinate clauses in Turkish, I assume there is an Operator participating in the case marking potential of PP-I postpositions. Semantically, *için* ‘for’ gives a reason, *ile* ‘with’ denotes togetherness, *kadar* ‘as much as’ is a comparative, and *gibi* ‘similar to’ denotes similarity, hence *için* comes to the derivation with a reason Operator, *kadar* with a comparative Operator, and *ile* and *gibi* with event Operators.

Crucially, PP-I and PP-II categories also contrast with respect to licensing the anaphor *kendi* and its variant inflected with the agreement marker *kendi-si* ‘him/her-self + 3SGPOSS’ as their complements. *Kendi* obeys Condition A of the Binding Theory as initially formulated by Chomsky (1986) whereas *kendisi* does not as in (3) and (4). Within the literature, there are several accounts which discuss the conditions that obtain in the case of *kendisi*, which does not conform to the predictions of local binding (Özsoy, 1983, 1990; Kornfilt, 2001; Safir, 2004; Meral, 2010). As a complement of a verb, both *kendi* and *kendisi* seem to be interchangeable for a number of speakers of Turkish when bound by a local antecedent yet the licensing environments of *kendi* and *kendisi* as a complement of PPs differ. *kendi* is licensed as the complement of PP-II postpositions (5) whereas it yields ungrammaticality as the complement of PP-I (6). I argue that this empirical evidence supports the claim that PP-I postpositions occur with an Operator, which defines a domain for their complement and renders the domain opaque for binding. Yet lacking an Operator, PP-II postpositions remain as transparent domains for *kendi* to be bound by the coreferential subject of the clause. As an extension of Kornfilt (2001)’s proposal for nominalized clauses, I propose either an Operator or an AgrP is sufficient to assign Genitive to the complement of PPs, and create an opaque domain for binding.

Within these lines, I also propose an Agr projection above PPs headed by possessive marked postpositions. Possessive marked postpositions are derived from nouns and their morphological structure is the same of a possessive NP construction. Thus, I assume an Agr head above the possessive marked PPs in Turkish in line with possessive NP constructions, which differs from Kornfilt (1984)’s assumption that genitive marking on the complement of PPs is an instance of case insertion. PPs headed by possessive marked postpositions create an opaque domain resulting from the presence of AgrP, thus *kendi* becomes illicit as a complement of these PPs as it lacks a c-commanding

antecedent within this domain. *kendisi* as in (7), however, occurs in this environment irrespective of Condition A since it is not a true anaphor.

Based on the theoretical considerations and empirical evidence, the proposal in this study suggests a three-way distinction among postpositional constructions in Turkish. The clausal nature of postpositions headed by PP-I differs from the ones headed by PP-II due to the presence of the Operator related to the event structures of PP-I postpositions; and the morphological properties of possessive marked PPs as well as the data based on the binding relations provides evidence for the Agr projection analysis of PPs headed by possessive marked postpositions.

- (1) Ayşe [Ahmet-ten / on-dan önce] Ali'yi düşün-ür.
Ayşe Ahmet-Abl. / 3rd person sing.-Abl. before Ali-Acc think-Aorist
'Ayşe thinks of Ali before Ahmet/him.'
- (2) Ayşe kimse-yi [Ali / o-nun kadar] sev-me-z.
Ayşe nobody-Acc. Ali / 3rd person sing.-Gen. as much as like-Neg.-Aorist
Intended meaning: 'Ayşe_i likes nobody as much as Ali.'
- (3) [Ayşe_i [Ahmet-in_j kendi-e_{i/j} haksızlık et-tiğ-in-i] düşün-üyor].
Ayşe Ahmet-Gen *kendi*-Dative unfair-Ger.-3sg.-Acc. think-Pres.Progr.
"Ayşe thinks that Ahmet is unfair to himself/*herself."
- (4) [Ayşe_i [Ahmet-in_j kendi-sin-e_{i/j/k} haksızlık et-tiğ-in-i] düşün-üyor.]
Ayşe Ahmet-Gen *kendisi*-3sg.-Dative unfair-Ger.-3sg.-Acc. think-Pres.Progr.
"Ayşe thinks that Ahmet is unfair to himself/herself/someone else."
- (5) Ayşe_i [kendi-e_i göre] başarılı ol-du.
Ayşe kendi-Dat. according to successful become-Past
'Ayşe_i became successful according to herself_i.'
- (6) Ayşe_i bütün yıl [* kendi_i / kendisi_{i/j} için] çalış-tı.
Ayşe whole year *kendi kendisi* for study-Past.
'Ayşe_i studied for herself_i the whole year.'
- (7) Ayşe_i ben-im-le [* kendi_i / kendisi_{i/j} hakkında] pek konuş-ma-z.
Ayşe I- Gen-with *kendi kendisi* about much talk-Neg.-Aorist
'Ayşe_i does not talk about herself_i much with me.'

Selected References

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