

Turkish Impersonal Passives

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What are Turkish Impersonal Passives?

- In Turkish, passives are formed by attaching a passive suffix *-Il/(I)n* to a verb stem (Göskel and Kerlake 2005).
- Attaching a passive suffix to a transitive verb → regular passive, and attaching a passive suffix to an intransitive, reciprocal, or reflexive verb → impersonal passive (IP)
- Unaccusative: intransitive verb whose subject originates in object position and is non-agentive.
- Unergative: intransitive verb with an agentive subject.

Regular passive (Özsoy 2009):

- a) Bahçıvan çiçek-ler-i sula-dı.
gardener flower-PL-ACC water-PAST.3
“The gardener watered the flowers.”
- b) Çiçek-ler (bahçıvan tarafından) sula-n-dı.
flower-PL (gardener by) water-PASS-PAST.3
“The flowers were watered (by the gardener).”

Impersonal passives:

Unergative (Özsoy 2009)

- a) Çocuk-lar bütün gece dans et-ti-ler.
child-PL whole night dance-PAST-PL
“The children danced the whole night.”
- b) Bütün gece *(çocuk-lar tarafından) dans ed-il-di.
whole night child-PL by dance -PASS-PAST.3
“It was danced the whole night *(by the children).”

Unaccusative (Özkaragöz 1986)

- a) İnsan bu göl-de boğul-ur.
human this lake-LOC drown-AOR.3
“A person can drown in this lake.”
- b) Bu göl-de boğul-un-ur.
this lake drown-PASS-AOR.3
“One can drown in this lake.”

Double passive (Özkaragöz 1986)

- a) Harp-te insan vur-ul-ur.
war-LOC one shoot-PASS-AOR.3
“One is shot in war.”
- b) Harp-te vur-ul-un-ur.
War-LOC shoot-PASS-PASS-AOR.3
“One is shot in war.”

Evidence for a Null Pronoun

- Turkish IPs have a lot of similarities with Cinque’s (1988) analysis of Italian impersonal argument “si” but also some differences.

T	Verb	Turkish	Italian [-arg]	Italian [+arg]
Specific	Transitive	any [+by-phrase]	arb	arb
	Unergative	arb/1pl [-by-phrase]	arb	arb
	Unaccusative	ungrammatical	1pl	NA
Non-specific	Transitive	any [+by-phrase]	NA	arb
	Unergative	arb [-by-phrase]	NA	arb
	Unaccusative	arb [-by-phrase]	ungram. /arb	NA

- Cinque’s (1988) Italian impersonal *si* must be human and is ungrammatical with *by-phrases*.
- Özsoy (2009) and Biktimir (1986) among others, point out that the implicit subject of Turkish IPs must be human, supporting an impersonal pronominal argument presence.
- These similarities and the ungrammaticality of IPs with *by-phrases* implies presence of an impersonal pronominal argument.
- Both must occur in non specific or suspended time reference

Voice Heads

- Sigurðsson’s (2011) analyzes Icelandic New Passive, which includes an impersonal argument, using the following Voice heads:

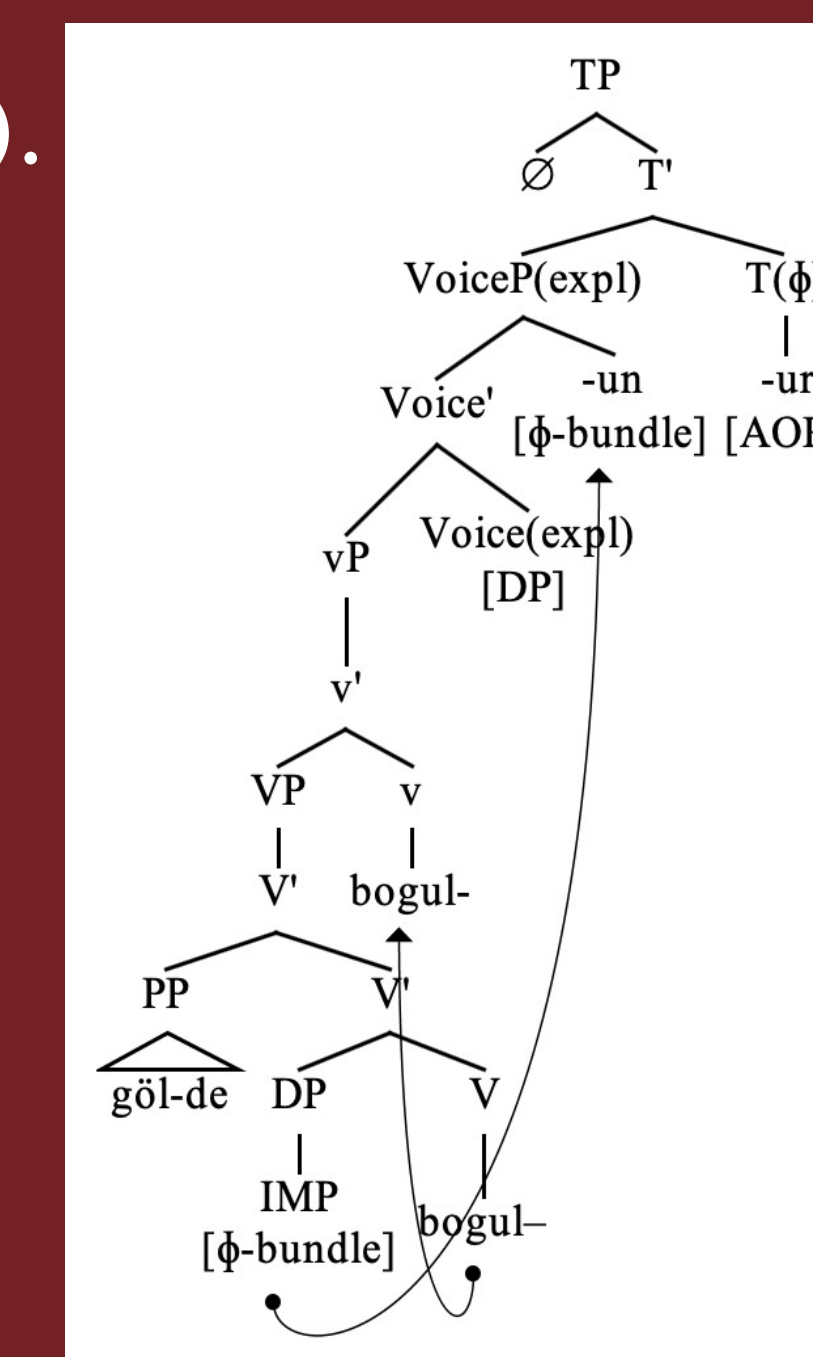
Voice_{ACT/+AG} (in structures with agentive predicates)
 Voice_{ACT/-AG} (with nonagentive predicates)
 Voice_{PASS/+AG} (with passive agentive predicates)
 Voice_{PASS/-AG} (with passive nonagentive predicates)
 Voice_{PSYCH} (with psych predicates)
 Voice_{FATE} (with unaccusative predicates with a fate reading, like *drift*, *swamp*, etc.)
 Voice_{EXPL} (with anticausative predicates and regular unaccusatives)

- Voice heads used in this analysis to account for different Turkish passives: Voice_{EXPL}, Voice_{PASS}, Voice_{ACT}

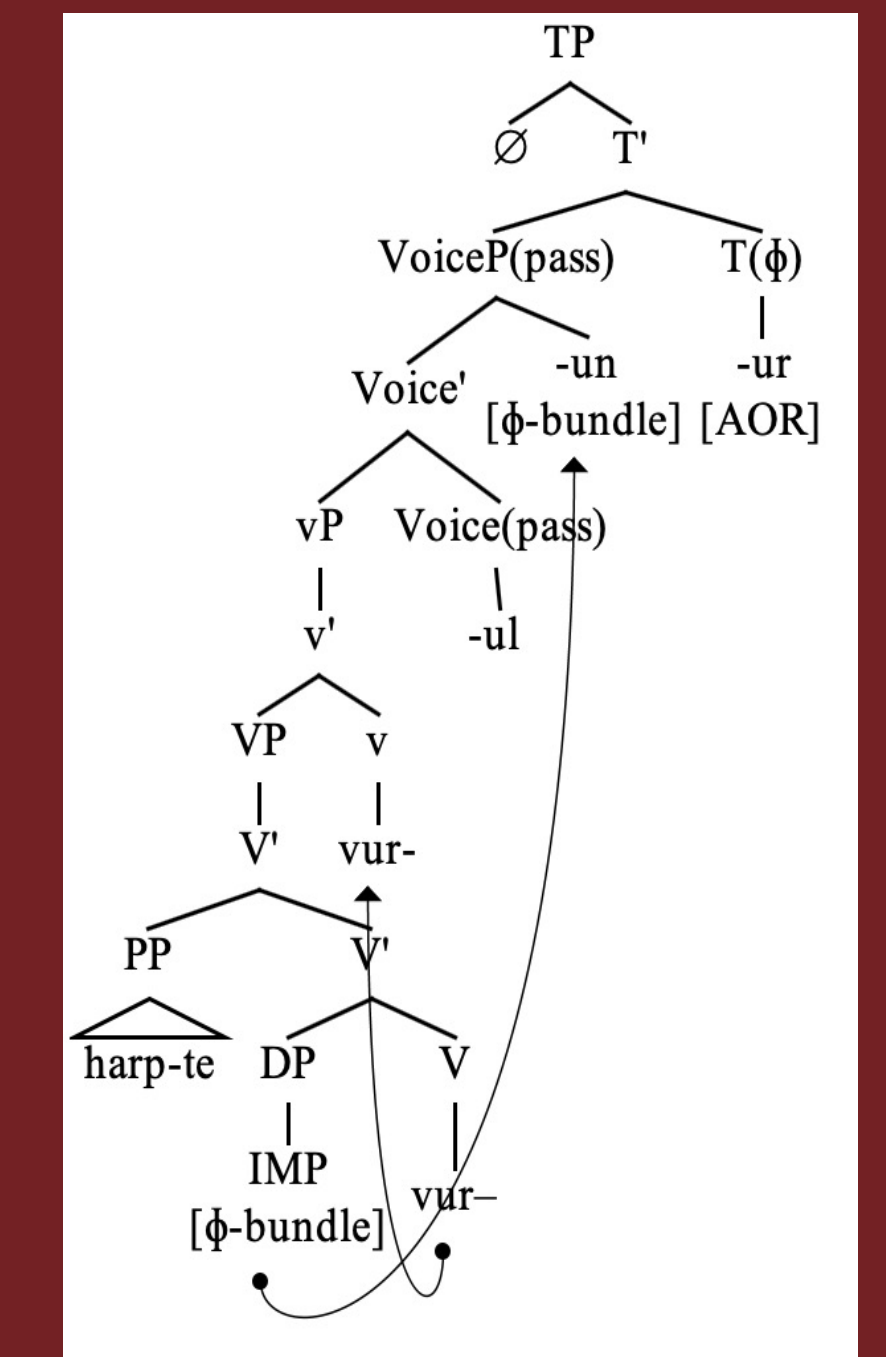
Analysis

- Distributed Morphology (DM)** (Halle and Marantz 1993): a framework where syntax and morphology use the same computational mechanisms which interact. Specifically, syntax is the derivational force.
- Assuming the DM framework, the impersonal pronominal argument can surface as a passive suffix (previously proposed by Baker et al. 1989)
- The passive of a transitive = Voice_{PASS} (normal passives)
- The passive of an unergative = Voice_{ACT} + external impersonal pronoun as passive morpheme
- The passive of an unaccusative = Voice_{EXPL}, meaning Voice has expletive θ -role + internal impersonal pronoun as passive morpheme
- Double passive = Voice_{PASS} + impersonal pronoun, which results in two passive morphemes
- The pronoun is licensed by T because Turkish IPs must occur in a non-specific or suspended time reference with unaccusative and passive IPs

(unacc.).



(double)



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