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# Turkish relative clauses: A tale of two participles

Geoffrey Haig

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Hankamer and Knecht's 1976 account of the conditions governing the choice of participle in Turkish relative clauses has, with some minor modifications, remained the most widely accepted one up to the present. Their account rests on three assumptions: (a) Participle choice is primarily determined by the syntactic function of the target of relativization (TR); (b) the rules governing participle choice can be stated in positive terms for the free participle (i.e. the *-An* participle); (c) it is necessary to invoke a subject incorporation process to account for certain types of relative clauses.

In this paper, a condensed version of chapter 6 from Haig (forthcoming), I claim that all three assumptions are misguided. Some alternative proposals are then suggested which (a) are couched in positive terms for the possessed participle, rather than the free participle; (b) do not necessitate an incorporation process; and (c) ultimately relegate participle choice to an epiphenomenon of a language-specific constraint on subject expression in nominalizations.

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## 0. Introduction

It is well known that there are two types of participle used in Turkish relative clauses: Possessed participles (PP's), and free participles (FP's). PP's obligatorily carry possessive marking indicating the person of the subject of the relative clause. FP's on the other hand may not carry such possessive morphology. A large part of recent research on

relative clauses has concentrated on formulating rules to account for the distribution of FP's and PP's in different types of relative clause.<sup>1</sup>

The most widely accepted account of participle choice in Turkish was first formulated by Hankamer & Knecht (1976) and recently reiterated in Barker, Hankamer & Moore (1990). I will refer to these proposals as the "standard account". The standard account is based on three assumptions: (1) It assumes that the syntactic function of the target of relativization (TR) is the primary factor in determining participle choice; (2) it is framed in positive terms for the FP, defining the use of the PP in negative terms; and (3) it rests crucially on the existence of a subject incorporation process.

In this article, I will be arguing that all three assumptions are incorrect, and be suggesting an alternative account. My claims are discussed and motivated in more detail, and with extensive authentic examples, in Haig (forthcoming, ch. 6). Here I will be presenting, in a revised and condensed form, the major conclusions of that discussion. In section 1 of this paper, I will review the standard account and point out several drawbacks inherent to it. In section 2 I will develop some alternative proposals. More specifically, I will be (a) developing an idea of Dede (1978), according to which participle choice is not primarily linked to the form of the relative clause subject; (b) pointing out the inadequacies of the "subject incorporation" hypothesis; and (c) justifying why the rules for participle choice should be formulated in terms of the PP, rather than the FP. In section 3 I will recapitulate the main points of the argument and present some more general conclusions.

### 1. The standard account of participle choice

The standard account of participle choice is based on three principles, which I will refer to as the Primary Principle, the No-Subject Principle, and the Mother-Node Principle. In this section I will first briefly present

<sup>1</sup> See for example Underhill (1972), Hovdhaugen (1975), Hankamer & Knecht (1976), Dede (1978), Knecht (1979), Erdal (1981), Csató (1985), Nilsson (1985), Zimmer (1987), Johanson (1990: 204-206), Barker, Hankamer & Moore (1990), Kornfilt (1991: 72-78), Sezer (1991: 92-154), Erkman-Akerson & Ozil (1996), Zimmer (1996) and Haig (forthcoming, ch. 6). For an informed discussion of the views of earlier grammarians on this matter, see Erdal (1981).

and exemplify these three principles before going on to point out their major drawbacks.

### 1.1. The Primary Principle

The apparently fundamental insight on participle choice was formulated by Underhill as follows:

- (1) “The most obvious generalization is that when the head noun is the subject of the underlying sentence, a construction of the *-En* type (= FP) appears, while if the head noun is not the subject, a construction of the *-Dig* type (= PP) appears.” (Underhill 1972: 88)

We may term the observation made in 1 the Primary Principle. Notice that the tacit assumption behind it is that participle choice is primarily determined by the syntactic function of the TR.<sup>2</sup> Let us briefly examine how 1 applies to straightforward examples:

- (2) (Çiçekoğlu 1992<sup>4</sup>: 135)  
*(Kuşföör-den yeni çık-muş) iki kadın*  
 hairdresser-abl just go out-perfFP two woman  
 ‘Two women (who had just come from the hairdresser).’

The head noun, *iki kadın*, is the underlying subject of the verb *çık-* ‘go out’. 1 would predict the FP, and indeed this is what we find. Consider now 3:

<sup>2</sup> In his 1972 paper, Underhill himself actually abandoned this generalization in favor of another, based on word order and case in the syntactic structures from which relative clauses are allegedly derived. His claims, based on Standard Theory (Chomsky [1965] 1988), rest crucially on the assumption that the basic word order in the syntactic structures underlying the relative clause is the same as that in pragmatically neutral surface strings under the condition that all NP’s are definite. As it is difficult to justify this assumption on independent grounds, we may safely ignore Underhill (1972) henceforth—see Sezer (1991: 92-104) for an enlightened discussion. In Underhill’s grammar ([1976] 1987: 276), the Primary Principle regains preeminence.

- (3) (Pamuk 1993<sup>16</sup>: 199)  
 (Rüya'nın oku-duğ-u) polisiye roman-lar  
 Rüya-gen read-PP-poss3s detective novel-pl  
 'The detective novels (which Rüya reads).'

In 3, *polisiye romanlar* 'detective novels' is the underlying direct object of *oku-* 'read', and hence the PP is used, again in accordance with 1.

### 1.2. The No-Subject Principle and subject incorporation

The Primary Principle fails to correctly account for the data when the relative clause is subjectless, i.e. when the verb is a passivized intransitive. Consider the following example, in which the relative clause verb is the passive form of *gir-* 'enter':

- (4) (sokak-tan içeri gir-il-en) kapı  
 street-abl inside enter-pass-FP door  
 'door (through which one enters from the street)'

I would predict the PP rather than the FP in 4, because the TR *kapı* 'door' is a non-subject, a local argument. In fact, it turns out that the FP is almost invariably used with relativization out of a subjectless clause, regardless of the syntactic function of the TR. In other words, 4 is representative of a group of regular exceptions to the Primary Principle.

This fact was noted by Hankamer & Knecht (1976),<sup>3</sup> who formulated the following additional principle to account for it:

- (5) The No-Subject Principle:  
 "If there is no subject in the RC at the time of RC formation, the (PP)-construction is impossible, and only the (FP)-construction is chosen."  
 (Hankamer & Knecht 1976: 132)

A second group of exceptions to 1 is illustrated by 6, taken from Barker, Hankamer & Moore (1990: 26):

<sup>3</sup> In fact Lewis (1967: 262) had already noted that the FP is used in subjectless relative clauses. As Underhill (1972) draws heavily on Lewis, it is doubly odd that Underhill's account simply ignores examples such as 4.

- (6) (*bacağ-in-ı an sok-an*) *kız*  
 leg-poss3s-acc bee sting-FP girl  
 ‘the girl (whose leg a bee / some bees stung) [original translation]’<sup>4</sup>

Here again the TR has a non-subject syntactic function in the relative clause, yet, against the prediction made by 1, the FP is used. Hankamer & Knecht (1976) proposed the following solution: They noted that the subjects in relative clauses like 6 were “indefinite”. They then suggested that indefinite subjects “undergo a demotion which has the effect of rendering the sentence subjectless” (Hankamer & Knecht 1976: 133). Thus according to Hankamer and Knecht, subjects in examples such as 6 are in fact not subjects at all, and the use of the FP can felicitously be accounted for by the No-Subject Condition 5.

In more recent studies (e.g. Barker, Hankamer & Moore 1990), the terms “indefinite” and “subject demotion” have been replaced by “non-specific and generic” and “subject incorporation” respectively, but the basic insight remains unaltered. In section 2.2 I shall be examining the validity of this analysis in more detail.

### 1.3. The Mother-Node Principle

The final group of exceptions to 1, also noted by Underhill (1972), concerns relativization of genitive attributes of the subject. We may illustrate this with the following example:

- (7) (*kız-ı ağla-yan*) *kadın*  
 girl-poss3s cry-FP woman  
 ‘woman (whose daughter is crying)’  
 lit.: ‘(her-daughter-crying) the woman’

The finite clause corresponding to 7 is as follows:

- (8) *Kadın-ın kız-ı ağlı-yor*  
 woman-gen girl-poss3s cry-prog(3s)  
 ‘The woman’s daughter is crying.’

<sup>4</sup> I use this example solely because it is so widely quoted in the literature. It should be emphasized that it is in fact a totally atypical example of the process it is intended to illustrate (cf. detailed discussion in Haig, forthcoming, § 6.3.2.5).

The TR in 7, *kadın* ‘woman’, is not the underlying subject of the relative clause, but the possessor, i.e. a genitive attribute, of the relative clause subject (*kız-ı*). Therefore the Primary Principle 1 would predict the PP, but in 8 the FP is used.

It turns out that the FP is used whenever the TR is a genitive attribute of the relative clause subject. Furthermore, not only do genitive attributes of the subject relativize with the FP, but *any* type of subconstituent of the subject. Consider the following example of relativization out of a clausal subject:

- (9) (Ağaoğlu 1992: 106)  
*(daha önce çöz-me-m gerek-en bir şey*  
 still earlier solve-inf-poss1s be necessary-FP a matter  
 ‘a matter / problem (which (I) must solve / sort out first)’

The finite sentence corresponding to 9 has a nominalization as its subject, headed by the possessed infinitive *çöz-me-m*:

- (10) (*Daha önce bir şey çöz-me-m gerek-iyor*  
 still earlier a matter solve-inf-poss1s be necessary-prog(3s)  
 ‘It is necessary (that (I) first solve a matter / problem).’  
 lit.: ‘(My solving a matter first) is necessary.’

The TR, *bir şey* ‘something’, is not a subject, but the direct object of the possessed infinitive *çözmem* ‘that I solve’. Nevertheless, the FP is still used in 9.

Consider now a more complicated example:

- (11) (Yetiş 1993: 129)  
*(hangi devir-de yaz-ıl-dığ-ın-ı bil-me-miz*  
 which era-loc write-pass-PP-poss3s-acc know-inf-poss1pl  
  
*mümkün ol-ma-yan) bu not*  
 possible be-neg-FP this note  
 ‘this note, (of which our knowing in which era it was written is not possible)’

The finite clause corresponding to 11, with the subject NP in brackets, is given in 12:

- (12) (*Bu not-un hangi devir-de yaz-il-diğ-in-i*  
 this note-gen which era-loc write-pass.PP.poss3s.acc  
  
*bil-me-miz) mümkün değil*  
 know-inf.poss1pl possible not(3s)  
 ‘(Our knowing in which era this note was written) is not possible.’

Here again the TR (*bu not* ‘this note’) is not a subject, but the genitive attribute of one of the subconstituents of the subject NP. What 7, 9 and 11 illustrate is that, as far as participle choice is concerned, it appears to be irrelevant how deeply embedded in the relative clause subject the TR actually is. In other words, participle choice seems to treat both simple genitive attributes, as in 7, and all other types of subconstituents of the subject alike. Hankamer & Knecht (1976) proposed the following generalization to account for these facts:

- (13) The Mother-Node Principle:  
 “If a subconstituent of a major constituent of the RC is relativized, the participle is chosen which would be appropriate for relativization of the major constituent itself.” (Hankamer & Knecht 1976: 127)

Participle choice for the “major constituent itself” is of course determined by the Primary Principle 1. Therefore, because the relativized constituents in the examples 7, 9 and 11 are subconstituents of the relative clause subject, it follows from the Mother-Node Principle that the FP will be used.

Csató (1985) points out some counter-examples to the Mother-Node Principle, and it has since been the subject of considerable debate (see discussion and references in Haig (forthcoming, § 6.2.3.1). Nevertheless, I maintain that the Mother-Node Principle, or something very much like it (an alternative is given in 35 below), is necessary in any account of participle choice. In what follows, I will be assuming that it is valid, and ignoring those types of relative clause which are accounted for by the Mother-Node Principle, more specifically, relative clauses where the TR is some subconstituent of the relative clause subject.



#### 1.4. Summary and critique of the standard account

The standard account for participle choice in relative clauses may be summed up as follows (cf. Barker, Hankamer & Moore 1990: 23 and Kornfilt 1991: 74 for similar summaries):

1. The Primary Principle: The FP is used for relativization of subjects, the PP for non-subjects.
2. The No-Subject Principle: If the relative clause is subjectless at the time of relative clause formation, use the FP.
3. The Mother-Node Principle: When subconstituents of a major clause constituent are relativized, the choice of participle is in accordance with what would be predicted by the Primary Principle for the head of that constituent.

As Kornfilt notes (1994: 74), these three statements have remained largely unchallenged as an explanation for the choice of participles up to the present. She adds however that, “while being accurate generalizations, (they) are not explanatory”. Nor is it clear from what, if any, underlying principle the three conditions can be derived, for they are based on completely heterogeneous criteria: The Primary Principle rests on the syntactic function of the TR; the No-Subject Condition is based purely on the presence or absence of a subject in the relative clause. How the Mother-Node Principle relates to either of the other two is unclear.

On closer inspection, the second two principles appear suspiciously like arbitrary additions, serving the sole purpose of patching up the gaps not covered by the Primary Principle. Given the extent, and the systematic nature of those gaps, one might have expected that the Primary Principle itself be reconsidered, but oddly enough, with the sole exception of Dede (1978), to whom I return below, this option has scarcely been considered.

A further odd characteristic of the standard account is the following: There is no attempt to clearly state the conditions under which the PP is used. Rather, the conditions are stated in positive terms for the FP, and negative terms for the PP (this feature is more pronounced in the presentation of Barker, Hankamer & Moore 1990: 23). Yet, intuitively, one would consider the PP to be the more marked member of the opposition, an assumption I will justify in section 2.4. Therefore, one would expect the conditions to be stated in the reverse manner, i.e. in positive terms for the marked member, the PP, while the unmarked one is considered

the elsewhere case, used when the special conditions for the use of the marked member are not met.

Finally, the No-Subject Condition necessitates that certain types of errant subject, e.g. the subject in 6, be explained away via an incorporation process. But, as I will point out in section 2.2, there are no independent grounds for assuming such a process in Turkish.

## 2. Some alternative proposals

### 2.1. Collapsing the Primary Principle and the No-Subject Principle

Let us first consider two simple examples of FP-constructions:

(= 4) *(sokak-tan içeri gir-il-en) kapı*  
 street-abl inside enter-pass-FP door  
 ‘door (through which one enters from the street)’

(14) *(ev-e dön-en) kız*  
 house-dat return-FP girl  
 ‘girl (who is returning home)’

The standard account invokes two separate principles to account for the use of the FP in 4 and 14: The FP in 4 is accounted for by the No-Subject Principle 5, which states that the FP is used when the relative clause is subjectless “at the time of relative clause formation”. As the verb is an intransitive passive, the clause is of course subjectless. The use of the FP in 14 on the other hand is explained via the Primary Principle, which states that the FP is used when the TR is subject. This way of looking at things suggests that the two examples above have nothing in common, and the use of the FP in each case is motivated by two quite unrelated principles.

But there is another, and to my mind simpler approach: Neither of the relative clauses in 4 and 14 contains a surface subject, and indeed, none could be supplied without impairing grammaticality. Of course the respective *sources* of the subjectlessness in 4 and 14 are quite different: The relative clause in 4 is genuinely subjectless, because its predicate is a passivized intransitive, which is always subjectless in Turkish. We might term this *deep subjectlessness*. 14 on the other hand is subjectless because the TR is subject, and is hence deleted from the relative clause in the process of relative clause formation. But suppose participle choice

were not sensitive to the source of any subjectlessness, i.e. suppose participle choice were not a deep-level phenomenon in relative clause formation at all, but a fairly trivial surface process. If that were the case, we would not need to distinguish between the deep subjectlessness of 4 and the subjectlessness of 14, and we need not indulge in any conjecture about subjectlessness “at the time of RC-formation”, but simply rely on the criterion of surface subjectlessness. If we make that assumption, we can account for both with one and the same principle, which we may provisionally formulate as follows:

- (15) Use the FP when the relative clause is, for whatever reason, subjectless, i.e. a subject cannot be supplied without impairing grammaticality.

The immediate advantage of this approach is that we cover both 4 and 14 with a single principle, whereas the standard account needs two principles, the Primary Principle and the No-Subject Principle. 15 effectively makes the same statement as the No-Subject Principle, except that we dispense with any reference to subjectlessness “at the time of relative clause formation”. Notice that 15 makes no reference whatsoever to the syntactic function of the TR. In other words, we have rendered the Primary Principle redundant.

It should, however, be noted that we would need to modify 15 to cover examples where the TR is a sub-constituent of the subject, which I discussed in 1.3. Such an additional stipulation is perfectly feasible, and is briefly discussed in section 3. I will not be considering such cases further here.

## 2.2. Subjects, no subjects and semi-subjects

Our rule 15 binds participle choice to a single factor, namely the presence or absence of a subject in the relative clause. Now we have already encountered examples where the relative clause does contain a subject, but the FP is found, thereby violating 15. Consider for example 6:

- (= 6) (*bacağ-in-ı arı sok-an) kız*  
 leg-poss3s-acc bee sting-FP girl  
 ‘the girl (whose leg a bee / some bees stung) [original translation]’

The standard account offers a neat solution to this dilemma: Subjects such as *arı* ‘bee’ in 6 are said to be incorporated, hence the relative

clause contains no subject. This solution is unquestionably elegant, and as long as the examples contain the kind of bare noun subject found in 6, it appears to be quite plausible. But once the full range of data is considered, it appears considerably less so. Consider the following two authentic examples:

(16) (Nesin 1995: 89)

*(Arkeolojik kazı-lar yap-ıl-an)*  
 archaeological excavation-pl make-pass-FP

*bir bölge-ye gel-di-k.*

an area-dat come-pst-1pl

‘(We) arrived at an area (in which archaeological excavations were being carried out).’

(17) (Pamuk 1995<sup>9</sup>: 524)

*Ömer (iç-in-de kocaman bir soba yan-an)*  
 Ömer inside-poss3s-loc huge an oven burn-FP

*geniş bir oda-da bir satranç sorunu çöz-üyor-du.*

spacious a room-loc a chess problem solve-prog-pst(3s)

‘Ömer was in a spacious room (in which a huge stove was burning), solving a chess problem’

We notice that the FP is also used in the relative clauses in 16 and 17. There is only one possible explanation for this in terms of the standard account: The subject in 16, *arkeolojik kazı-lar* ‘archaeological excavation+pl’, and in 17, *kocaman bir soba* ‘a huge stove’, must have undergone incorporation.

This is a conclusion that few syntacticians would feel comfortable with. First of all, the subject in 16 has plural marking, while that in 17 has an indefinite article. Hopper & Thompson (1984: 711) state quite clearly that an incorporated noun “invariably loses the ability to take determiners and inflections”. I would like to note that this pattern is by no means unusual—in Appendix 3 of Haig (forthcoming) there are 23 authentic examples of such subjects with plural marking or articles. Nor is it possible to demonstrate by any type of independent syntactic test known to me that the subjects in these sentences have lost their subject status, i.e. that the clauses concerned are genuinely subjectless. Finally,

even in Baker's (1988) broader conception of noun incorporation, the possibility of incorporating a transitive subject is categorically excluded (1988: 81). Yet that is what proponents of the incorporation analysis are claiming for 6. Baker himself (1988: 452, fn. 8) is doubtful whether subject incorporation in Turkish qualifies as noun incorporation at all.

The only conclusion I can draw from these facts is that we must reject the incorporation analysis. One might, if one wished to salvage it at all costs, postulate two different processes: Noun incorporation, which only affects bare nouns, and some other type of looser "compounding by juxtaposition" (Reuse 1994: 2844). This would, I think, unnecessarily complicate matters: Surely we are dealing with one and the same process, namely a gradual and subtle loss of syntactic autonomy, the most prominent reflection of which is loss of genitive case marking. But the affected NP's (not just nouns) lose neither their argument status, nor their status as phonetic words. The process is not restricted to bare, generic and nonspecific nouns, but permeates to affect referential, quite elaborated, but usually indefinite NP's. The term "noun incorporation" is misleading when applied to Turkish because it implies that the affected entities are noun roots, whereas in Turkish they are NP's, and because it implies a greater degree of phonetic coalescence and loss of argument status than is justified by the Turkish data. I suggest that a more appropriate term would be *case stripping*.<sup>5</sup>

Rejecting the incorporation analysis leaves us with a terminological problem: What are we to call the genitiveless subjects in examples like 16 and 17? They are subjects, but not subjects enough to take genitive marking. "Genitiveless subjects" would be possible, but is confusing if we wish to talk about finite clauses, where subjects are normally nominative. I suggest therefore the term *semi-subjects* for those subjects of relative clauses (and of course of other types of nominalization, for example, complement clauses) which do not take genitive marking. "Semi-subject" is merely a convenient and relatively innocuous label, which avoids the unfortunate connotations of the term "incorporated subject". The term "semi-subject" is intended to convey the fact that such "subjects", while being ignored in terms of genitive marking, retain sufficient

<sup>5</sup> The same term can of course be applied to the loss of accusative marking on direct objects, for which I also feel that the term "noun incorporation" is misguided (cf. Haig forthcoming, § 6.2.5 for a justification of this view).

syntactic substance to enable them to take plural marking, articles and nominal modifiers. Semi-subjects may of course occur in finite clauses as well, but in that environment, the difference between a semi-subject and a subject is not expressed by any segmental means, but by a loss in word order freedom and a shift in stress pattern.<sup>6</sup> I will not be going into the semantic and pragmatic factors which trigger case stripping of relative clause subjects here—a detailed investigation of those factors may be found in Haig (forthcoming, § 6.3).

### 2.3. The Genitive Subject Condition

So far we have concentrated on identifying the conditions under which the FP is used. We have established that it is used when the relative clause is subjectless, or when it contains a semi-subject. These two environments are given in 18 and 19 respectively:

- (18) (... FP) head noun  
 (19) (subj.+Ø FP) head noun

Now, interestingly, it turns out that in both of these environments, the PP is also possible. Lewis (1967: 262) quotes an example of a subjectless relative clause, i.e. corresponding to 18, with a PP:

- (20) (*normal-e dönül-düğ-ü*)                      *bir sıra-da*  
           normal-dat return-pass-PP-poss3s a    time-dat  
           ‘at a time (when things were returning to normal)’

Johanson (1990: 213-214) also suggests that in subjectless relative clauses, both the FP and the PP are “in principle” possible.

The PP also cooccurs with semi-subjects, a fact that is pointed out in Nilsson (1985: 79) and in Erdal (1981: 33). Erdal quotes the following example with the semi-subject *dondurma* ‘icecream’:

- (21) (*dondurma sat-ıl-diğ-i*)                      *yer*  
           icecream sell-pass-PP-poss3s place  
           ‘place (where icecream is sold)’

<sup>6</sup> See Dede (1986: 153-154) on the shift in stress patterns (she, however, talks of “subject incorporation”).

There is no doubt that constructions such as 20 and 21 are marginal in modern Turkish—in the corpus of over 1,000 relative clauses used in Haig (forthcoming), there was nothing corresponding to them. They do however illustrate that the possibility of using the PP in these environments cannot be excluded completely. It may be then that the use of the FP in these environments should not be considered the result of a strict syntactic constraint, but simply evidence of an extremely strong tendency. I will explore this possibility further below.

Let us now turn to the PP. The single environment in which the PP must occur is quite straightforward: It is always required when the relative clause contains a genitive-marked subject, or when such a subject is suppliable without impairing grammaticality. We may represent this schematically as follows:

(22) (subj.+gen ... PP) head noun

In the environment 22 the FP never occurs. As this is the only type of environment where the rule for participle choice admits no exceptions, it would make more sense to base our account of participle choice on this environment, and frame it in terms of the PP rather than the FP. Thus we reformulate 15 in terms of the PP rather than the FP to yield the following rule:

(23) The Genitive Subject Condition:

When the subject of the relative clause takes genitive marking, the PP is used and the FP is impossible. Elsewhere, the FP is always possible and vastly preferred.

23 accounts for the same set of data that the Primary Principle and the No-Subject Principle of the standard account cover. Apart from being a more economical account, it is also preferable in other respects: Firstly, it obviates the necessity for assuming an incorporation process, because it is based on the criterion of presence or absence of genitive marking, not of a subject. Secondly, it admits the possibility of the PP occurring in environments such as 20. Thirdly, it is formulated in positive terms for the PP, whereas the FP is considered the elsewhere or default case. This is certainly correct, for reasons I will elaborate on in section 2.4.

I should hasten to add that a similar conclusion was reached by Dede (1978). She also rejected the standard account, and proposed instead a

“Genitive Suffix Attachment Rule” (GSAR), which conditioned the form of the subject. If the subject is genitive marked, the PP occurs, otherwise the FP. Thus for her the problem was reduced to the question “When does the GSAR apply?” (1978: 69). Up to this point, I share her conclusions entirely.

Unfortunately, Dede proceeded to explain the use of the genitive on subjects of nominalizations by appealing to its function as an indication of grammatical relations. This led her to the claim that the genitive suffix “does not apply unless it is needed to indicate the grammatical relation of the subject in the embedded sentence” (1978: 73). This claim is not tenable, for reasons that cannot be discussed here. Furthermore, Dede provided no viable alternative to Hankamer and Knecht’s Mother-Node Principle 13, which is, as I have stated, essential in any account of participle choice. The flaws in Dede’s argument were promptly pointed out in Knecht (1979), and as a result, Dede’s basically correct insight was ignored in subsequent research, which continued to work in the framework of the standard account.

#### **2.4. The possessed participle as the marked member of the participle opposition**

In Haig (forthcoming, ch. 6), I argue that the PP is the marked member of the participle opposition in relative clauses. I will briefly sum up the arguments in favor of that position here:

On purely formal grounds, the PP is the more marked member of the opposition, as it is the morphologically more complex, involving two morphemes, participle and possessive, rather than one (cf. also Zimmer 1996: 162-163). Further facts from language usage, and from related Turkic languages, point in the same direction:

1. PP’s are as tokens in texts (in attributive function), the rarer construction: Of the total participles in the corpus of over 1,000 relative clauses used in Haig (forthcoming), only 29% were PP’s.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> This may of course simply reflect the rather trivial fact that subjects are more commonly relativized on than non-subjects, as claimed for example in Keenan (1975) on the basis of written English data. However, the total number of subject relativizations does not exceed 50% in Keenan’s data, and in material from spoken data (e.g. Fox 1987 and Slobin 1986), it decreases.



2. In L1 acquisition, PP's are acquired later and with greater amounts of errors (Slobin 1986).<sup>8</sup>
3. The PP in relative clauses is seldom found in the Turkic languages outside of Turkish, and emerged later in Turkish itself.

It is important to note that my claim that the PP is the marked member of the opposition is restricted to the occurrence of the two forms in one particular syntactic function, namely as the verb of a relative clause. PP's of course occur in another syntactic function, namely as complement clauses. I would suggest that this is in fact their primary function, and their usage in relative clauses (which are, in terms of syntactic function, adnominal attributes) is an intrusion into a functional domain for which they are not suited. The FP on the other hand is a genuine verbal adjective, predestined to occur in attributive function—in fact the sole function of the FP is to create relative clauses. In many Turkic languages the etymological equivalent of the FP is found in all types of relative clause. Only in Turkish and Azerbaijani do we find the PP used in relative clauses at all.<sup>9</sup>

The claim that the PP is the marked member of the opposition in relative clauses leads us to the question of why the PP should be used in Turkish in relative clauses at all. Why cannot Turkish, like many other Turkic languages, get by with one and the same participle, the FP, for all types of relativization? In the next section I propose an answer to this question.

### 2.5. The function of the possessed participle in relative clauses

First of all, let us compare an FP and a PP construction. We can display the two types of relative clause schematically as follows:

- |      |                                    |                 |
|------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| (24) | ((semi-subject) FP) head noun      | FP-construction |
| (25) | (subj.+gen ... PP+poss.) head noun | PP-construction |

<sup>8</sup> According to Zimmer (1987: 59-60) the tendency to use the FP in contexts where the PP would be expected is even more widespread in the spoken language, particularly of younger speakers, i.e. there may be a diachronic shift towards increasing the domain of the less marked FP at the cost of the more marked PP.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Schönig (1997) and Csató (1996).

What is it that the PP-construction achieves which the FP-construction does not? The obvious answer is that the PP carries possessive marking, thereby enabling the person of the subject to be identified.

Assuming then that the principle difference lies in the presence of possessive marking on the participle, the question arises as to why Turkish should need an additional participle, the sole purpose of which is to act as a platform for that possessive morphology. In other words, why is it not possible for one and the same participle to be used both with and without possessive morphology? We could reasonably expect to find, instead of 25, something like 26:

(26) \*(subj+gen ... FP+poss.) head noun

But 26 is, as Sezer (1991: 120) puts it, “ruled out”. The question as to why 26 is impossible in Turkish is by no means trivial, especially in view of the fact that this type of construction is attested in other Turkic languages. Consider the following examples from East Middle Turkic (both examples from Eckmann 1959: 126):

(27) (*oltur-yan-ım*) *yär-dä* *monçuk-lar-ım-nı* *bul-du-m*  
 sit-FP-poss1s place-loc pearl-pl-poss1s-acc find-pst-1s  
 ‘(I) found my pearls at the place ((I) had been sitting)’

(28) (*äſit-gän-im*)-ni *unut-ma-dı-m*  
 hear-FP-poss1s-acc forget-neg-pst-1s  
 ‘(I) did not forget ((what) (I) had heard)’

In East Middle Turkic the same participle, the etymological equivalent of the Turkish FP, is also used for all types of relativization. In other words, there is no alternation between different types of participle, but simply an alternation [ $\pm$ possessive] on one and the same participle.

The reason that Turkish does not permit structures such as 26 is not in fact directly related to relative clause-formation at all, but lies in more general constraints on nominalizations in Turkish. In Turkish, all verbal nominals, i.e. infinitives and participles, must be characterizable as either possessed or non-possessed, but not both (see Haig, forthcoming, ch. 3 for detailed discussion). A possessed verbal nominal permits expression of its underlying subject via possessive morphology, a non-possessed one does not. For example, the infinitives in *-mA* and *-(y)Iſ* are pos-

sessed verbal nominals, the infinitive in *-mAk* is a non-possessed verbal nominal.

The FP is a non-possessed verbal nominal, a fact which can be illustrated with examples such as 29:

- (29) *ilk gel-en-imiz*  
 first come-FP-poss1pl  
 ‘our first visitors (lit. our first comers)’

The possessive marking on the FP in 29 does not, and *cannot*, refer to the underlying subject of *gel-* ‘come’. Sezer (1991: 120) reaches the same conclusion: With the FP “AGR [agreement] cannot govern anything inside the RC”.

The PP on the other hand is a possessed verbal nominal. The fundamental difference between the two types of participle is illustrated in 30, which contains a PP and an FP, both with 1s possessive marking:

- (30) *sev-diğ-im başka, sev-en-im başka*<sup>10</sup>  
 love-PP-poss1s different(3s) love-FP-1s different(3s)  
 ‘he / she that I love is one person, he / she that loves me is another’

The FP+1s possessive marking *sev-en-im* means literally ‘my lover’, i.e. ‘the one that loves me’. Thus the 1s possessive marking indicates the underlying object of the verb *sev-* ‘love’. Crucially, possessive marking on an FP can *never* refer to the underlying subject of the participle. The 1s possessive marking on the possessed participle *sev-diğ-im* ‘he / she that I love’ on the other hand can *only* refer to the person of the underlying subject.

The reason why structures such as 26 are not possible in Turkish is simply that the FP, as a non-possessed verbal nominal, is incapable of supporting possessive morphology as an indication of its underlying subject. Thus the answer to the question: Why is the PP necessary in Turkish relative clauses at all? is: The PP is necessary as a platform for possessive marking identifying the subject of the relative clause, some-

<sup>10</sup> Taken from the song *Düşler Sokağı* from the cassette entitled *Oyun* by the group Ezginin Günlüğü. I am grateful to Friederike Braun for drawing my attention to this example.

thing which the FP is simply incapable of supporting. This feature is rooted in a broader characteristic of Turkish verbal nominals generally, and has nothing to do with the syntactic function of the TR in relative clauses.

We have now established why the PP is necessary in some relative clauses: It is necessary as a platform for possessive morphology as an indication of the subject of the nominalized relative clause. Whenever it is not necessary to indicate the person of the relative clause subject (because there is no genitive-marked subject in the relative clause), the PP does not normally occur. In relative clauses, then, there appears to be a constraint which prevents PP's from occurring when the relative clause does not contain a genitive-marked subject. This is rather an odd fact, for if we look further afield at other types of nominalizations where PP's also occur, for example complement clauses, we discover that there the PP occurs freely with and without a genitive marked subject. Consider the following examples:

(31) (Riemann 1990: 108)

*(yatak-tan biraz önce çık-ıl-mış*  
bed-abl little before get out-pass-perf

*ol-duğ-u) belli-ydi*  
be-PP-poss3s clear-pst(3s)

'It was clear (that someone had got up out of the bed a short time ago).'  
lit.: 'It was clear (that out-of-the-bed a little earlier had been got out).'

In 31, the PP heads a genuinely subjectless complement clause. In 32, the PP occurs with a semi-subject, *bomba*:

(32) (Pamuk 1995<sup>9</sup>: 55)

*(Abdülhamit'e bomba at-ıl-acağ-ı)*  
Abdülhamit-dat bomb throw-pass-futPP-poss3s

*kim-in akl-ın-a gel-ir-di?*  
who-gen mind-poss3s-dat come-aor-pst(3s)

'Who could have imagined (lit.: 'to whose mind would have come ...') (that a bomb would be thrown at Abdülhamit)?'

31 and 32 illustrate that there is no fundamental constraint in the grammar that prevents a PP from heading a nominalized clause which does not contain a genitive-marked subject. Yet in relative clauses, just such a constraint is operative: Lack of a genitive-marked subject in the nominalized clause (overwhelmingly) results in a shift from one type of verbal nominal, the PP, to another, the FP.

My explanation for this fact is related to my earlier claim that in relative clauses (but nowhere else in the grammar), the PP is the more marked verbal nominal. Therefore, when the strict conditions necessitating its use are relaxed, the unmarked FP regains its position. Elsewhere, for example in complementization, the PP is the unmarked verbal nominal, and is not subject to any restrictions. It therefore occurs freely in subjectless nominalizations, such as 31. These facts also help to explain why the PP is occasionally tolerated in examples such as 20 and 21: The use of the FP in this environment is not the result of a strict syntactic constraint, but of a markedness condition, which may occasionally be violated.

### 3. Conclusions

My account differs from the standard account primarily in that I abandon the Primary Principle, according to which the syntactic function of the TR is the main factor in determining participle choice. To be sure, there is a rough correlation between subject and non-subject roles of the TR on the one hand and the use of the FP and PP on the other. But this does not necessarily justify assuming a causal relationship between the syntactic function of the TR and the form of the participle.

What participle choice in Turkish is all about is an alternation between constructions with and without possessive morphology. This emerges most clearly when we turn our attention to other Turkic languages. In many Turkic languages, for example Uzbek, one and the same participle, the etymological equivalent of the FP, can be used for all types of relativization. Consider the following two examples from Uzbek:

- (33) (Jarring 1938: 54)  
 (aqajat-kan) su (...) az waxt toxta-p qal-di  
 flow-FP water little time stop-ger stay-pst(3s)  
 ‘the (flowing) water stopped briefly’

The TR *su* ‘water’ is clearly the underlying subject of the relative clause verb. We find, as we would in Turkish, the FP (or rather its etymological equivalent). 34 on the other hand is an example of non-subject relativization, but again we find the same participle used as in 33:

- (34) (Jarring 1938: 145)
- sen agar'da (uşa-ni bujur-gan)*  
 you and if he-gen order-FP
- jol- i bilen ket-sa-η*  
 way-poss3s with go-cond.2s  
 ‘And if you go on the road (which he ordered)’

The sole structural difference between 33 and 34 is the presence of the possessive marking on the head noun *jol-i* ‘road+poss3s’ in 34. That in itself is motivated by the genitive-marked subject of the relative clause, the pronoun *uşa-ni* ‘he+gen’. One could of course proceed to formulate a rule such that the head noun takes possessive marking when it is in some non-subject role in the relative clause, but that would surely be a clumsy and indirect way of describing the structure. The more direct way is to link the possessive marking on the head noun to the presence of a genitive-marked subject in the relative clause.

The fact that there is a participle choice in Turkish at all can be attributed to the fact that (a) Turkish verbal nominals (of which the participles are a subset) are strictly specified according to whether or not they can express their underlying subject via possessive morphology; and (b) in Turkish, the possessive marking indicating the subject of the relative clause affixes to the participle, not the head noun. Thus what surfaces in other Turkic languages as an alternation [ $\pm$ possessive morphology] somewhere in the relative construction (usually on the head noun itself) turns up in Turkish as an alternation in the type of participle.

My account also differs from the standard account in that I frame the rule for participle choice in positive terms for the PP, while I consider the FP to be the default participle in relative clauses. If the FP is the default case, then we would expect to find it used in a variety of seemingly disconnected functions, and indeed this is the case (e.g. with subjectless relative clauses, when the head noun is a subconstituent of the relative clause subject etc.) Thus the standard account, which is framed in terms of the FP, is faced with the difficult task of finding a common denomi-

nator among quite diverse functions. It makes more sense to frame one's account in terms of the marked member of the opposition, the PP, because we would expect that its usage is bound to a more restricted set of conditions.

Finally, my proposals differ from the standard account in that I dispense with the incorporation hypothesis, for reasons outlined in section 2.2. Rather, I consider that there is a broader process at work, which I termed case stripping. Under case stripping, the subject of a nominalization (not just of a relative clause) loses its genitive marking, but it retains its syntactic status as a subject, and its status as a phonetic word. I termed such subjects semi-subjects.

My proposals may be summed up as follows: The FP and the PP are in complementary distribution in the function "verb of a relative clause". The FP is the unmarked, the PP the marked member of the opposition.

The basic principle governing participle choice is expressed in the Genitive Subject Condition:

When the subject of the relative clause takes genitive marking, the PP is used and the FP is impossible. Elsewhere, the FP is always possible and vastly preferred.

The Genitive Subject Condition itself is motivated by a general feature of Turkish nominalizations: Only certain types of verbal nominals are licensed to allow subject expression via possessive morphology. The FP does not allow this. Therefore, when subject identification via possessive morphology is necessary, a possessed verbal nominal, in this case the PP, steps in to do the job. But the use of the PP in relative clauses remains an intrusion into a domain for which it is not specialized. Whenever the conditions requiring its presence are relaxed, the unmarked FP regains its position.

The Genitive Subject Condition covers the same data as the Primary Principle and the No-Subject Principle of the standard account. But it is not a complete account of participle choice, as it does not account for those cases covered by the Mother-Node Principle of the standard account. We could augment the Genitive Subject Condition with a constraint along the lines of 35, which would enable the present account to cover the same set of data as the standard account:

## (35) The Subconstituent of Subject Condition:

When the TR is any subconstituent of the relative clause subject, then the relative clause subject does not take genitive marking.<sup>11</sup>

As I have stated above, there is no ready explanation for the Subconstituent of Subject Condition. Until one is forthcoming, we must simply accept it as an empirically adequate description.

In my view, progress in the analysis of Turkish relative clauses has been severely hampered by the following assumption, which is so firmly entrenched in traditional lore on Turkish relative clauses that it has virtually never been seriously questioned:

“In Turkish, as in English, the form of the relative clause is determined by the grammatical role of the head noun in the included sentence; in particular, this determines the choice between the subject and the object participles.” (Underhill 1987: 276)

The alternative proposals outlined here are framed in terms of readily observable surface features; I have made no attempt to postulate deeper syntactic structures from which the relative clause is derived. Nor do I assume that the Turkish relative clause is amenable to the same kind of structural analysis as, say, the English relative clause. The only independent evidence for such an assumption appears to me to be the rough translational equivalence of the two structures.

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<sup>11</sup> See Csató (1985) and Zimmer (1996) on some marginal exceptions to this rule.



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