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Titel: "Perfect" in Turkish

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Ort: Wiesbaden

Jahr: 2006

PURL: https://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?666048797_0010 | LOG_0033

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“Perfect” in Turkish

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Z. Ceyda Arslan-Kechriotis 2006. “Perfect” in Turkish. *Turkic Languages* 10, 246-270.

In this paper, I investigate the semantics of “perfect” in Turkish. I show that Turkish does not have a marker purely reserved for perfect. Assuming the generative framework in which functional items are projected in syntax, I claim that there is no perfect projection in the syntax of Turkish; in other words, no PerfP. I argue that the perfect interpretation of the structures under investigation results from the interaction of the meaning of the temporal/aspectual/modal markers and the adverbial at the semantic interface. In other words, perfect in Turkish is expressed in the semantic module of the grammar and not in syntax.

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0. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to investigate the semantics of perfect in Comrie’s (1976) sense and how this concept is expressed in Turkish. As is well known, the classification of the category perfect has been problematic since it captures both a temporal and an aspectual property. This dual character of perfect shows itself in its being marked with an auxiliary plus a past participle of the verb in Germanic languages. Turkish, being an agglutinative language where the morphemes of tense/aspect/modality appear as suffixes on the verb stem, seems not to have a marker purely reserved for the category of perfect. It has been argued that there is a suffix *-miş* which expresses perfect in addition to marking the evidential mood (Aksu-Koç 1988, Kelepir 2000 among others). Kelepir (2000) claims that the suffix *-miş* is the marker of perfect only in perfective verb phrases. She posits a zero morpheme, $-\emptyset$, for perfect in imperfective contexts. The first sentence below exemplifies the imperfective, and the second the perfective in Turkish within this analysis:

- (1) a. *Hasan iki senedir burada çalış-ıyor-ø.*
Hasan for two years here work-IMPERFV-PERFECT
‘Hasan has been working here for two years.’
b. *Hasan dörtte çoktan git-miş-ti.*
Hasan four-LOC already go-PERFECT-PAST
‘Hasan had already left at four’

I will argue in this paper that positing *-miş* and a zero morpheme for perfect cannot account for all the structures that have the semantics of the perfect. Assuming the generative framework in which functional items are projected in syntax, I claim that there is no perfect in the syntax of Turkish, that is, there is no functional projection headed by Perfect⁰. The perfect interpretation that the structure receives results from the interaction of the meaning of the verbal form and the adverbial at the semantic interface. The implication of this analysis would be that the same functional head would have different semantic properties when it occurs with different types of adverbials.

Within the organization of this paper, first a brief presentation of various types of perfect will be given. Following section 1, the expression of types of perfect in Turkish will be discussed focusing on the form of the markers and on the effect of context and adverbials on the interpretation of the sentences. In the last section, I will discuss the problems that arise from assuming a projection of perfect (PerfP) in Turkish and claim that syntax does not have a category perfect and that the semantics is accounted for in the logical form where the adverbial interacts with the meaning of the verb phrase.

1. Definition and types of perfect

Perfect expresses a relation between two time-points, which can be stated as the time of the state resulting from a prior situation, and the time of that prior situation. The general meaning it conveys is “the continuing present relevance of a past situation” (Comrie 1976). Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) argue that perfect is described as expressing anteriority since it temporally locates an eventuality relative to some reference point. In Johanson’s (1971, 2000) framework, where there are only three dimensions of aspectual terminality, i.e. intraterminality, postterminality and adterminality, postterminality includes the so-called perfect in that it envisages the event after the transgression of its relevant limit, which can be the initial or the final one. Johanson states that postterminality “focuses attention on a situation obtaining beyond the relevant limit, where the event, whether totally or partially past, is still relevant in one way or another” (Johanson 2000: 103).

There have been different approaches to perfect: Klein (1992) and Cinque (2001) proposed an adverbial based analysis, whereas Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) and Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) argued for a syntactic account. Before discussing the advantages and drawbacks of each approach, the different types of perfect need to be considered. It has been widely assumed that there are four different types of perfect (Comrie 1976, Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski 2001, among others): (i) universal perfect, (ii) experiential perfect, (iii) perfect of result, and (iv) perfect of recent past. Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) point out that the term *existential perfect* is used as a cover term for the last three categories. Note, however, that Johanson’s (1971, 2000) postterminality is different from these approaches in that it focuses on the event which “extends to the orientation point, has

effects relevant to the orientation point, or allows a conclusive judgment at the orientation point” but it does not include notions such as ‘change of situation’, ‘state’, ‘result’ or ‘recentness’, which arise as a result of the interaction of transformativity, dynamicity and focality (Johanson 2000: 103).

In the following sections, I will focus on the former approach and discuss the kinds of perfect listed above (i-iv) using English examples in order for the reader to have a clear understanding.

1.1. Universal perfect

The universal perfect is defined by Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) as conveying the meaning that the predicate holds throughout some interval stretching from a certain point in the past up to the present. Comrie (1976) refers to the U-perfect as the perfect of persistent situation and states that it “is the use of perfect to describe a situation that started in the past but continues (persists) into the present”. He notes that this use of perfect (as in English) is mainly expressed by the present tense in many other languages with the same meaning.

Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) introduce the term “Perfect Time Span” (PTS) to refer to the interval throughout which an eventuality holds. The left boundary (LB) of the PTS is specified by the adverb, whereas the right boundary (RB) is specified by the Tense morpheme in the perfect. The U-perfect is formed only if the underlying eventuality is a stative verb, an adjective or a progressive/imperfective. Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) state that what is required is *unboundedness*, and they define an eventuality as unbounded when it is ongoing at an interval and is therefore not asserted to have reached an endpoint. A bounded eventuality, on the other hand, is one that is asserted to have been completed.¹ The structures below are English examples where the eventuality is interpreted to hold from the time specified by the *since*- and *for*-adverbial till the time of speech:

(2) I have been sick since 1990. (Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski 2001, ex. 2)

(3) She has been working in this firm for 15 years.

The sentence in (2) is understood to mean that the eventuality of sickness holds from the time specified by the *since*-adverbial, i.e. 1990, up to the right boundary, which is

¹ Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) argue that the universal reading is never available to a perfect unless it is modified by certain adverbials. They also posit an underlying adverb for cases where there is perfect morphology but no overt perfect adverbial in the structure.

present. The sentence in (3) has a progressive eventuality, and it is asserted to hold from the period starting 15 years ago up to the time of speech.

1.2. Experiential perfect

The experiential perfect, according to Comrie (1976: 58), indicates that a given situation has held at least once during some time in the past leading up to the present. Therefore, it is in opposition with the universal perfect, in which the situation holds throughout the interval starting from a past point up to the present. Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) argue that the experiential perfect asserts that the subject has a certain experience. They illustrate the difference between the universal perfect and the experiential perfect as follows. (Sentence (1) is repeated):

- (4) I have been sick since 1990.
 a. universal perfect reading: 1990 _____ NOW
 b. experiential perfect reading: 1990 _____ NOW

As seen above, the universal perfect reading takes place when the situation holds throughout the interval. The experiential-perfect reading, however, includes at least one occurrence of the situation throughout the interval. In Johanson’s (2000) framework, the “experiential” meaning is present in constative low focal postterminals.

1.3. Perfect of result

In the perfect of result, “a recent present state is referred to as being the result of some past situation” (Comrie 1976: 56). The resultative value of the perfect has been widely discussed in the literature in different terms (see among others Smith (1997), Klein (1992), Tobin (1993)² and the ones discussed briefly below).

According to Johanson (1971, 2000), “resultatives” are high focal postterminals, which place “high focus on the postterminal state obtaining at the orientation point after the transgression of the relevant limit of the event” (2000: 109-110). Johanson further states that high focal postterminals signal a property-like state and therefore are possible only with a restricted set of verbs.

According to Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca (1994: 69), there is a distinction between perfect and resultative: “A resultative ... expresses the rather complex meaning that a present state exists as the result of a previous action. An anterior [=perfect], in contrast, expresses the sense that a past action is relevant in a much more general

² Tobin (1993) attributes the concept of resultativeness to perfect. The concept of invariant meaning is significant in his approach as he assumes that “all the discourse and contextual functions, uses, and ‘meanings’ ... are derived from and accounted for by the invariant meaning itself”. He postulates an invariant meaning for perfect, which he argues to be resultativeness and derives the other meanings from that via contextual information.

way to the present moment". Dimitrova-Vulchanova (1999: 178) discusses the implications of a monograph on the typology of resultative constructions by Nedjalkov and Jaxontov (1988), who make a distinction between the category perfect and the category resultative, even though they may be expressed linguistically in a non-distinct form. The first distinction is that perfect is not specific about the effect of the situation, whereas the resultative attributes the effect of a previous act to one participant in particular. Secondly, perfect applies "irrespective of the lexical specification of the verb, whereas the resultative is related to lexical constraints in that it selects only verbs whose meaning implies a change for at least one of the participants in the situation".³ One should note that within Johanson's framework (2000), there is no attempt at setting up absolute categories such as "statives" vs. "resultatives" (p. 111).

The perfect of result is possible only with telic predicates and only as long as the effect of the underlying eventuality holds. The use of grammatical morphemes in encoding the perfect of result differs across languages. Comrie (1976: 57) observes that "where one [language] uses the perfect (or, in the absence of a distinct perfect, a past tense), the other uses the present of a stative verb (or adjective), i.e., one language expresses this as (a state resulting from) a past action, while the other just expresses it as a present state without any overt mention of how this state came about". The English sentence below is an example of the perfect of result only in the case where the glasses are still missing; otherwise it is interpreted as experiential perfect:

- (5) I have lost my glasses. (Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001), ex. 4)

1.4. Perfect of recent past

Another type of perfect is what has been referred to as the perfect of recent past in the literature.⁴ As Comrie (1976: 60) points out, "the perfect may be used where the present relevance of the past situation referred to is simply one of temporal closeness, i.e. the past situation is very recent". The use of the perfect to "report an eventuality that has just happened" (Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski 2001) is significant in the sense that there are, in most of the cases, adverbials in the structure, like *just*, *recently*, etc.:

- (6) She has just graduated from college.

³ There is also a third distinction between perfect and resultative which lies in the difference between a "canonical vs. non-canonical expansion" in Dimitrova-Vulchanova's (1999) terms. I refer the reader to Dimitrova-Vulchanova (1999: 178-179) for details.

⁴ Dik (1989: 190) refers to perfect of recent past as recent perfect, and treats it as a type of phasal aspect distinct from perfect.

Johanson (2000) notes that low focal postterminals express relevance of the event to the situation obtaining at the orientation point. He states that “this relevance may be of different kinds: temporal closeness, importance with respect to the effect, some other affinity or psychological link to O (orientation point)” (p. 114). He, however, points out that readings such as “recent past” are only contextual interpretations of non-past low focal postterminals (p. 116).

1.5. Adverbials

Before proceeding with how the different types of perfect are expressed in Turkish, I would like to discuss the properties of adverbials that can or cannot occur with perfect.

Klein (1992), in his “Present Perfect Puzzle”, analyzes the ungrammaticality of present perfect with certain temporal adverbials but grammaticality with others. He distinguishes time expressions as being either p(osition)-definite time expressions, which are those which specify the location of the situation along the time axis, or b(oundary)-definite time expressions, which do not specify the point of the event on the time axis, but tell us about the boundaries of it.

Klein (1992) claims that the account for the present perfect puzzle is formulated as his position-definiteness constraint: “In an utterance, the expression of Topic Time and the expression of Tsit (situation time) cannot both be independently position-definite” (p. 546).

Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) assume that there are two levels of adverbials: the perfect level and the eventuality level. They argue that perfect level adverbials have a scope over the eventuality level adverbials, and this situates perfect adverbials higher in the structure.⁵ They take the occurrence of perfect morphology as diagnostic for whether the adverbial in the structure is perfect level or not. When there is perfect morphology but no overt adverbial, they argue, there is a covert adverbial in the structure. The function of the covert adverbial is to distinguish between different types of perfect in English. Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) further assume that adverbs can be either durational or inclusive. What is intended by durational is that the predicate holds at every subinterval of the Perfect Time Span yielding the universal perfect reading. When the adverb is inclusive, on the other hand, “the perfect sentence asserts that a particular eventuality is properly included in the Perfect Time Span yielding the E-perfect reading”.

⁵ See also Giorgi & Pianesi (1997: 101-111) for the discussion on temporal adverbials. They make a distinction between E-adverbials, which fix the event time, and R-adverbials, which fix the reference time, and which appear only with perfect tenses. That is, they appear only with those tenses where R differs from E and from S. They argue that R-modifiers are always lower than E-ones.

Cinque (1999) argues for the existence of a fixed universal hierarchy of functional projections by presenting an analysis of adverb phrases as the specifiers of distinct maximal projections rather than adjuncts. Cinque's proposal for the position of the perfect aspect in the hierarchy is as follows:

V- voice/ completive aspect/ progressive aspect- perfect aspect- anterior tense/ habitual aspect/ root modality- grammatical mood- future tense- past tense- epistemic modality- evidential mood- evaluative mood- speech act mood (Cinque 1999: 56)⁶

Giorgi and Pianesi (1997:67) classify languages in two groups with regard to the present perfect puzzle, i.e. the impossibility for the present perfect to occur with certain temporal adverbials. Group A languages show the effect of the perfect puzzle. In Group B languages, however, the puzzle does not occur.

As opposed to adverbial based analyses like Klein (1992), Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) propose a syntactic account where they claim that, in Group A languages, which show the effect of the present perfect puzzle, i.e. present perfect not occurring with certain time adverbials, T (tense) appears in the syntax as part of the hybrid category AGR/T (Agreement/Tense). Group B languages, on the other hand, where the puzzle does not occur, have a split-INFL (inflection), and present tense forms do not exhibit any T morpheme, i.e., there is no T category in syntax. In this case, the present tense form is assigned a default interpretation, which corresponds to a looser value as compared to the one found in Group A languages. This is represented as $S \leq R$. This means that speech time can be after the reference time, in which case we have a perfect interpretation; or the speech time can be simultaneous with the reference time, in which case we have the Present tense interpretation. English and Mainland Scandinavian are examples of Group A languages, whereas Italian, Dutch and German are examples of Group B languages.

Before going on to the second section, one should note that the so-called "present perfect puzzle" is viewed as valid only on the form, that is, the perfect morphology with present tense yields ungrammaticality in the presence of certain adverbs. There is, however, a different approach to the phenomenon under discussion, proposed by Johanson (p.c., 2000), asserting that the perfect morphology in the structures displaying "the puzzle", the case in Giorgi and Pianesi's Group B languages, does not carry any "perfect" meaning today due to a diachronic defocalization process. The high focal postterminal ("resultative, stative") gets defocalized whereby it becomes a low focal postterminal ("perfect"). The low focal postterminal itself undergoes defo-

⁶ See also Cinque (2001) where he gives the following hierarchy for Turkish: Mood_{EVALUATIVE} > Mood_{EVIDENTIAL} > Mood_{EPISTEMIC} > T_{PAST} > T_{FUTURE} > Mod_{ALETHIC} > Asp_{PERFECT} > Asp_{PROGRESSIVE} > NEG > Mod_{ABILITY}/Asp_{RESULTATIVE} (>V)

calization whereby it comes to be used as a basic past tense even though the form is kept. Hence, the cooccurrence of the (position-definite) adverbials and perfect morphology does not result in ungrammaticality or unacceptability in the languages where defocalization has taken place.

2. Types of perfect in Turkish

We now turn to Turkish to discuss the manner in which the language encodes the various types of perfect in its verbal system by focusing on the grammatical forms employed in the structures and the effect of adverbials and context.

2.1. Universal perfect in Turkish

The Turkish sentences with universal perfect interpretation have the following markers on their predicates: zero marking on a non-verbal predicate (7), the imperfective suffix⁷ *-Iyor* (8) and the locative form *-mAk-tA* (9). Turkish, thus, expresses the meaning of the universal perfect via the present tense coded by zero marking, together with the use of the adverbials formed by *beri* ‘since’ and *-DIr* ‘for’:

- (7) *1998'den beri hasta-yım.*
 1998-ABL since sick-1SG
 ‘I have been sick since 1998.’

- (8) *On yıl-dır aynı semt-te otur-uyor-um.*
 ten year-ADVsame neighborhood-LOC live-IMPF-1SG
 ‘I have lived/have been living in the same neighborhood for 10 years.’

- (9) *Beş sene-dir bu bölüm-de çalış-mak-ta-yım.*
 five year-ADVthis department-LOC work-INF-LOC-1SG
 ‘I have worked/ have been working in this department for five years.’

Note that Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) distinguish between languages which have a hybrid AGR/T category and those which have Split-INFL. Turkish, being a Split-INFL language (see Aygen-Tosun 1998), is in line with the languages in their Group B, in which present tense forms do not exhibit any overt T category in syntax. Yavaş (1980) argues that, on a purely temporal level, Turkish can be analyzed as having a two-way opposition: past vs. non-past. She argues that there is no morphological marking for present tense (i.e., non-past tense) and the marker for past tense, *-DI*, is

⁷ The marker *-Iyor* is the marker of intraterminality in Johanson’s framework (1971, 2000). Johanson (personal communication) suggests that it is an intraterminal of a lower focality in Turkish spoken today.

the only tense marker in the language.⁸ She further claims that all sentences in the non-past must be aspectually marked (with the exception of copular sentences). Since Turkish does not have an overt marking for present tense, the absence of *-DI* would suggest “present”. Giorgi and Pianesi (1997: 85) claim that in this case, the present tense form is assigned a default interpretation, “which corresponds to a looser value as compared to the one found in Group A languages- that is, $S \leq R$ ”. This means, in other words, that speech time can be after the reference time, in which case we have a perfect interpretation; or the speech time can be simultaneous with the reference time, in which case we have the present tense interpretation.

The adverbials in the sentences above (7-9) are crucial in the perfect interpretation yielded. Note that they are interpreted as present sentences without the adverbials formed by the postposition *beri* ‘since’ and the suffix *-DIr* ‘for’ following a temporal expression, i.e. *1998’den beri* ‘since 1998’, *on yıldır* ‘for ten years’, *beş senedir* ‘for five years’. Erguvanlı Taylan (2001) points out that these adverbials are compatible with all situation types except achievements and they are grammatical only with the imperfective viewpoint (*-(I)yor*), in which the presence of these adverbials shifts the aspectual reading to “present perfect continuous”. These adverbials are durational in the sense that the predicate holds at every subinterval of the time span yielding the universal perfect reading.

Turkish expresses universal perfect in the past via the suffix *-(y)DI* ‘past’ on a non-verbal predicate; with the suffix *-(I)yor* ‘imperfective’ or *-mAk-tA* ‘inf-LOC’ on a verb. Note that the sentences again are interpreted as perfect due to the semantic properties of the adverbials in the structure:

- (10) *Ayşe-yle 1998-de tanış-tı-m. O zaman üç sene-dir/*
 Ayşe-with 1998-LOC meet-PAST-1SG that time three year-DIR/
1995-ten beri öğretmenlik yap-ıyor-du-ø / yap-mak-ta-ydı-ø.
 1995-ABL since teaching do-IMPV-PAST-3SG/ do-INF-LOC-PAST-3SG
 ‘I met Ayşe in 1998. Then, she had been teaching for three years/ since 1995.’

⁸ As well known, Turkish has another past denoting suffix, *-(y)DI*, which has been analyzed in a variety of ways by different linguists. For an extensive discussion of the different semantics of *-DI* vs. *-(y)DI*, see Johanson (1971), where he argues that the suffix *-DI* belongs to the aspectual system and marks non-intraterminality, whereas the suffix *-(y)DI* belongs to the temporal domain and marks anteriority, that is, it is a marker of past tense. Note that Yavaş (1980) does not make a distinction between *-DI* which attaches to verb stems and *-(y)DI*, which attaches to non-verbal predicates and participial forms (i.e. verb forms that are aspectually marked). Keleş (2000) also argues that *-DI* and *-(y)DI* are not different morphemes. She claims that *-(y)DI* is composed of the copula + past tense marker. In the following examples I will gloss *-DI* as PAST.

- (11) *Ayşe-yle 1998-de tanış-tı-m. O zaman üç sene-dir/*
 Ayşe-with 1998-LOC meet-PAST-1SG that time three year-DIR/
1995-ten beri öğretmen-di-ø.
 1995-ABL since teacher-PAST-3SG
 ‘I met Ayşe in 1998. Then, she had been a teacher for three years/ since 1995.’

The sentences above are interpreted as universal perfect since the underlying eventuality holds at every subinterval of the Perfect Time Span (which is the period from 1995 to 1998 in the examples). The adverbials are crucial in the perfect interpretation of these structures as well. The interpretation without the adverbials would be past imperfective corresponding to ‘past continuous’ in English.

The strategy of marking universal perfect in the future is *V+-(I)yor ol-acak*; the copula *ol-* marked with the future suffix *-(y)AcAK* following the verb marked with the imperfective suffix *-(I)yor*. The sentences below follow the examples in (10-11) where Ayşe started working as a teacher in 1995 and *gelecek sene* ‘next year’ is 2007:

- (12) *Ayşe gelecek sene on iki sene-dir öğretmenlik yap-ıyor ol-acak-ø.*
 Ayşe next year twelve year-DIR teaching do-IMPV be-FUT-3SG
 ‘Next year Ayşe will have been working as a teacher for twelve years’.
- (13) *Ayşe gelecek sene on iki sene-dir öğretmen ol-acak-ø.*
 Ayşe next year twelve year-DIR teacher be-FUT-3SG
 ‘Next year Ayşe will have been a teacher for twelve years’.

Note again that the adverbs play a crucial role in the perfect interpretation of the sentence. The adverb *gelecek sene* ‘next year’ sets the right boundary, and the adverb *on iki senedir* ‘for twelve years’ indicates the left boundary of the eventuality. Ayşe’s career as a teacher holds/will hold throughout the interval calculated twelve years backwards from next year, i.e. from 1995 to 2007. Without the adverbial *on iki senedir* ‘for twelve years’, the sentence would be interpreted as future imperfective corresponding to ‘future continuous’ in English.

As seen in the discussion above, the universal perfect in the present, past and future can be expressed only if the underlying eventuality is stative (i.e., non-verbal predicate), or imperfective (i.e. marked with *-(I)yor*). The adverbials in the structures play a significant role in that in the case of their absence the same structures would be interpreted as imperfective forms in the present, past or future rather than perfect.

There is another structure in Turkish which is interpreted as universal perfect in the future even though the underlying eventuality is not marked with the imperfective. As seen below, the verb is marked with the modal/aspectual marker *-mİş* followed by the copula *ol-*:

- (14) *Ayşe gelecek sene iş-i bırak-acak-ø. O zaman on iki sene-dir⁹*
 Ayşe next year job-ACC quit-FUT-3SG that time twelve year-DIR
öğretmenlik yap-mış ol-acak-ø.
 teaching do-MİŞ be-FUT-3SG.
 ‘Next year Ayşe will quit her job. Then, she will have worked as a teacher for twelve years’.

The sentence above is interpreted as universal perfect of future in the sense that the eventuality of working as a teacher is understood to hold throughout the interval of twelve years. There is, however, a slight difference in meaning whereby the participant property is focused on as a result of the use of *-mİş*.¹⁰

It is significant that the claim of Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) that *unmodified perfects are never U-perfects* is attested in Turkish. Stative predicates and imperfective eventualities seem not to be interpreted as universal perfect without the appropriate adverbial in the structure.

2.2. Experiential perfect in Turkish

The experiential perfect is expressed in Turkish mainly with the suffix *-DI*. In a question it may be modified by the adverbial *hiç* ‘ever’.¹¹

- (15) *Hiç uç-ağ-a bin-di-n mi?*
 everplane-DAT get on-DI-2SG Q
 ‘Have you ever gotten onto a plane?/ Have you ever traveled by plane?’

⁹ The structure is also possible with the bare adverb *on iki sene* ‘twelve years’, which according to Keleş (2000) would be an eventuality level adverbial. I claim, however, that this structure also conveys the universal perfect reading with a modal coloring.

¹⁰ There are a significant number of investigations on the properties of the suffix *-mİş* (see among others Johanson (1971, 1994), Aksu-Koç (1988), Kornfilt (1997), Cinque (2001)). Due to its “multifunctional character” carrying both modal and aspectual meanings, I will gloss it as *-MİŞ* in the following examples.

¹¹ Another way of expressing experiential perfect is via the complex structure *verb-DIK-POSS ol-DI* ‘verb-nominalizer be-PAST or another complex structure *verb-mİş-lik-poss var*, which would translate into an English interrogative as ‘have (subj) ever (verb) ...’ inquiring if the given situation has held at least once throughout the Perfect Time Span:

- (i) *Geçen kış-tan beri hastalan-dığ-in ol-du mu?*
 last winter-ABL since be sick-NOMIN-POSS2SG be-PAST Q
 ‘Have you gotten sick since last winter?’
- (ii) *Oraya git-miş-liğ-in var mı?*
 there-DAT go-MİŞ-DERIV-POSS2SG exist Q
 ‘Have you ever gone there?’

- (16) [*Geçen kış-tan beri*] *hiç hastalan-dı-n* *mi?*¹²
 last winter-ABL since ever be sick-PAST-2SG Q
 ‘Have you gotten sick since last winter?’

The sentence in (15) has the adverbial *hiç* ‘ever’ but no adverbial to specify the left boundary. The structure, being an interrogative sentence, inquires if the situation has held at least once in the interval whose left boundary is unspecified until the time of speech. Note that without the adverb *hiç* ‘ever’, the structure would be interpreted as perfective, that is, the eventuality would be understood as completed. The example in (16) contains the adverbial *hiç* ‘ever’ and also the adverbial *geçen kıştan beri* ‘since last winter’, which sets the left boundary of the interval. Note that the adverbial formed by *beri* ‘since’ was interpreted in the previous section as a durative adverb, that is, the underlying predicate was interpreted to hold of every subinterval of the perfect time span, thus yielding the universal perfect reading. In the sentence in (16), we see that it can also be interpreted as inclusive, that is the underlying event is properly included in the Perfect Time Span, thus yielding the experiential perfect reading. The question is asking if there is at least one occurrence of being sick in the interval starting from the left boundary set by the adverb *geçen kıştan beri* ‘since last winter’ till the time of speech.

2.3. Perfect of result in Turkish

Comrie (1976) has observed that some languages express the perfect of result by using the perfect form (or, in the absence of a distinct perfect, a past tense), whereas the others use the present of a stative verb (or adjective). This means that “one language expresses this as (a state resulting from) a past action, while the other just expresses it as a present state without any overt mention of how this state came about” (p. 57). Turkish is one of the languages that mark the perfect of result, or resultant perfect by the past suffix *-DI* (17-18) or the modal/aspectual marker *-miş* (19):

- (17) *Gözlük-ler-im-i kaybet-ti-m.*
 glasses-PL-POSS1SG-ACC lose-PAST-1SG
 ‘I lost/ have lost my glasses.’

¹² As can be noted, all the examples are interrogative sentences. This, however, does not mean that Turkish does not express experiential perfect in declarative sentences. The choice is interrogative as it sounds more natural. But see the following example which also exemplifies an experiential perfect:

- (i) *Hayat-ım-da hiç uçağ-a bin-me-di-m.*
 life-1SG-LOC ever plane-DAT get on-NEG-PAST-1SG
 ‘I have never gotten on a plane in my life.’

- (18) *Ayakkabı-m su al-di.*
 shoe-POSS1SG water take-PAST
 'My shoes took in/up water (eg. because of the heavy rain)'

- (19) *Ayakkabı-m su al-mış.*
 shoe-POSS1SG water take-MIŞ
 'My shoes have taken in/up water[, as I noticed] (eg. because of the heavy rain)'

The sentence in (17) is ambiguous in the sense that it may be interpreted either as perfective or as perfect of result, as shown in the translation. If we continue by saying *ama hemen buldum* 'but I found them immediately' the sentence is interpreted as perfective. However, it shows a perfect of result only if uttered while the glasses are still missing. The structures in (18) and (19) have a different interpretation: sentence (18) is interpreted as an accomplishment, not a state (cf. Smith 1997's resultant statives), whereas sentence (19) focuses on the resultant state with an additional meaning element of evidentiality.

Consider the following sentences in the context (adapted from Giorgi and Pianesi (1997:93)) that Ayşe wins the race, but then tests positive on the drug test, and is disqualified:

- (20) a. *Ayşe Cuma günü yarış-ı kazan-mış-tı-Ø.*
 Ayşe Friday day race-ACC win-MIŞ-PAST-3SG
 'Ayşe won the race on Friday.'
- b. *Cumartesi günü disqualifiye ol-du-Ø.*
 Saturday day disqualified be-PAST-3SG
 'She was disqualified on Saturday.'
- c. **Yarış-ı kazan-ma-dı-Ø.*
 race-ACC win-NEG-PAST-3SG
 'She did not win the race.'
- d. *Yarış-ı kazan-ma-mış ol-du-Ø.*
 race-ACC win-NEG-MIŞ be-PAST-3SG
 'She became someone who hasn't won the race.'

The sentences in (20c) and (20d) are significant in that Ayşe, having won the race on Friday and being disqualified on Saturday, cannot be the 'winner', but the expression of this by *-DI* results in unacceptability. For the contrast in (c) and (d), one could argue that the simple past is event-oriented in the sense of Johanson (1971, 2000), that it merely asserts the existence of a certain kind of event where the subject plays the role determined by the theta-relation defined by the verb (Giorgi and Pianesi 1997). The perfect in (d), on the other hand, asserts that the subject holds a certain

property by virtue of his/her having been a participant in that event. This line of argument goes parallel to Smith’s (1997) ‘participant property’.

We assume that structures like (20d) are perfect of result. Note that the structure has the non-finite *-miş*. As seen in the example in (19), the finite *-miş* is a marker of inferentiality having a low focal postterminality. Johanson (2000:119) notes that the finite *-miş* in Turkish “is not a ‘resultative’ perfect but has, besides its inferential uses, also a low focal constative function. [...] The corresponding Azerbaijani *-miş*, however, has more ‘perfect-like’ uses than the Turkish item, probably due to influence from the Persian non- past low focal postterminal item”.

In order to see if there is a distinction between resultatives in opposition to perfect, one can apply Nedjalkov and Jaxontov’s (1988) test (quoted by both Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca (1994) and Dimitrova-Vulchanova (1999)) on the compatibility of the adverb *still*. Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca (1994:65) state that the resultative with *still* indicates that the state persists, but the perfect with *still* requires that *still* take on a non-temporal sense of ‘nevertheless’. Erguvanlı Taylan (2001) points out that the adverb *hâlâ* ‘still’ behaves like the adverbials formed by *-Dir* and *beri* in the sense that it is possible in all situation types except for achievements, and is felicitous with the imperfective viewpoint. It is, however, not a perfect level adverbial with the *-(I)yor* imperfective suffix: *Hâlâ ödevimi yazıyorum* ‘I am still writing my paper’. The adverb *hâlâ* ‘still’ (or *yine de* ‘still’ meaning nevertheless) is interpreted as a perfect level adverbial when the sentences are in negative mode: **Hâlâ okumuş* ‘He has still read’ vs. *Hâlâ okumamış* ‘He hasn’t still/yet read’. Consider, however, the sentences below connected to (20):

- (20’) a. *Ayşe yarış-ı kazan-mış-tı-ø*
 Ayşe race-ACC win-MİŞ-PAST-3SG
 ‘Ayşe had won the race.’
- b. *Sonra diskalifiye ol-du-ø.*
 Then disqualified be- PAST-3SG
 ‘Then she was disqualified.’
- c. *Ama herkes o-nu hâlâ/yine de yarış-ı*
 But everyone she- ACC still/nevertheless race-ACC
kazan-mış san-ıyor-ø.
 win-MİŞ consider-IMPF-3SG
 ‘But everyone still/nevertheless considers her to have won the race.’

As seen in (c), both of the adverbials can occur in this structure yielding different interpretations. This suggests either that this test is not functional for Turkish, or that Turkish does not distinguish between perfect and resultative. There are works, however, which assume a distinction between the two. Cinque (2001: 51), for example, argues that *-miş* is ambiguous between a perfect interpretation and a resultative inter-

pretation. He argues that it is quite general that perfect aspect appears to be higher than progressive aspect. Turkish seems to be problematic. He discusses one of the examples given by Kornfilt (1997): *Hasan böylelikle yarışı kazanmış oluyordu* 'Hasan would thus be the winner of the race' (Kornfilt 1997: 363). He argues that the pure perfect reading of *-miş* is marginal in this sentence, which has more of a resultant state reading as also seen in the gloss given by Kornfilt (1997). Cinque (2001: 51-52) claims that *-miş* gets a marginal perfect aspect interpretation when it is located higher than the progressive aspect (as in ??*Bir aydır hastanede yat-ıyor ol-muş ol-acak* [lie-IMPV be-MİŞ be-FUT] 'He would be staying in the hospital for a month'); it receives a pure resultative aspect interpretation when it is lower than the progressive (as in Kornfilt's example given above). In cases where we have two *-miş* suffixes, as in Kornfilt's (1997: 363) example, ??*Hasan böylelikle yarışı kazanmış olmuştu*. 'Hasan had thus been the winner of the race', Cinque would argue for an analysis of marginal cooccurrence of perfect *-miş* and resultative *-miş*.

Aksu-Koç (1988: 22) states that the *-miş* participle embraces both process and result in its scope and relates the result to the process. The fundamental element is the enduring resultant state, rather than the antecedent process. She therefore calls it the RESULTATIVE PERFECT and notes that its primary function is to indicate STATIVITY.

Aksu-Koç (1988: 21) discusses the adjectives formed by the participle *-miş*. She points out that *-miş* can form a participial adjective freely only with achievement verbs as in *ölmüş adam* 'a dead man' [lit. 'a man (who has) died'] vs. **öğrenmiş adam* 'a learned man' [lit. 'a man (who has) learned']. Adjectives formed with *-miş* have the additional information, in contrast to a regular adjective, that the state has resulted from a preceding process.¹³

- (21) *kır-ık* *vazo*
 break-DER vase
 'broken vase'
- (22) *kır-ıl-mış* *vazo*
 break-PASS-MİŞ vase
 'broken vase' (resultant state)
- (23) *süs-lü* *bir* *kız*
 ornament-with a girl
 'An elaborately dressed girl'

¹³ Aksu-Koç (1988) claims that there is a constraint whereby the participle is acceptable only if all of the semantic roles inherent in the case frame are specified in the clause in which it occurs (p. 22). These structures, being adjectivals, are statives, and, as said above, what distinguishes them from regular adjectives is their resultative value.

- (24) *süsle-n-miş* *bir kız*
 decorate-REFL-MİŞ a girl
 ‘An elaborately dressed girl’ (a girl who has dressed elaborately)

As can be easily detected in the discussion here, neither Cinque and Kornfilt nor Aksu-Koç makes a distinction between the finite *-miş* vs. the non-finite counterpart. One should note that the non-finite form of *-miş* discussed above is perfect of result (*-miş+ol-*, *-miş+san-* or the adjectival use of *-miş*). Johanson (1971: 310-314) discusses the combinations with the non-finite *-miş* form with either *ol-* or *bulun-* where he points out that these constructions are interpreted with an additional meaning element such as ‘therewith, as a result of this, by doing this’. The finite form of *-miş*, on the other hand, is a marker of evidentiality/inferentiality and does not at all carry a meaning of perfect or resultativity. One should, therefore, be careful about the form under question.

2.4. Perfect of recent past in Turkish

Turkish expresses perfect of recent past with the suffix *-DI* together with adverbials like *yeni*, *henüz* ‘just, recently’:

- (25) *Ali okul-dan yeni mezun ol-du-ø.*
 Ali school-ABL just graduate-DI-3SG
 ‘Ali has just graduated.’
- (26) *Börek-ler fırın-dan henüz çık-tı-ø.*
 pastry-PL oven-ABL just come out-DI-3SG
 ‘The pastries have just been taken out of the oven.’

As seen in these structures, the interpretation of perfect of recent past occurs as the result of *-DI* and the adverbs *yeni*, *henüz* ‘just, recently’. The structures would be interpreted as perfective without the adverbials. The adverb *yeni* (lit. ‘new’) means ‘just’ in contexts where it occurs with the past suffix *-DI* (and it occurs in the affirmative mode). The adverbial *henüz*, however, can mean either ‘yet’ or ‘just’ depending on the negative or affirmative mode of the sentence. Note that the cooccurrence of these adverbials with the morpheme *-DI* yields perfect interpretation. The occurrence of *henüz* or *yeni* with the imperfective suffix *-(I)yor* or zero marking does not yield a perfect interpretation but present:

- (27) a. *Ayşe henüz çalış-mı-yor-ø.*
 Ayşe yet work-NEG-IMPV-3SG
 ‘Ayşe is not working yet.’
- b. *Ayşe henüz burada değil-ø.*

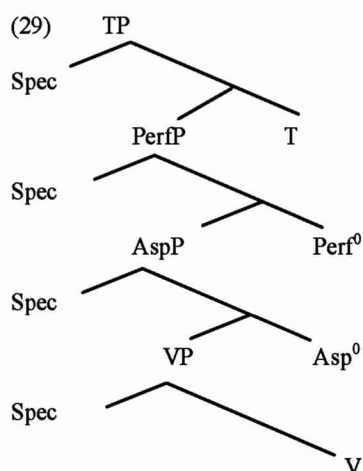
Ayşe yet here not-3SG
 'Ayşe is not here yet'.

- (28) *Ali bunu yeni öğren-iyor-ø.*
 Ali this-ACC new learn-IMPV-3SG
 'Ali is just learning this.'

3. Discussion

As stated at the beginning, the aim of this paper has been to discuss how Turkish would express "perfect". The perfect category has been discussed in quite some detail for Germanic languages, which mark it by an auxiliary and a past participle form. Turkish, however, does not mark perfect as such, but utilizes several forms like the modal/aspectual marker *-mİş*, zero-marking indicating present tense, which gets a default interpretation as discussed by Giorgi and Pianesi (1997), the perfective or past tense marker *-DI*, and the imperfective marker *-Iyor*.

As we have seen above, the occurrence of certain adverbials in the structure leads to the interpretation of perfect, and the type of the adverbial is the crucial factor affecting the type of perfect interpretation. A syntactic account following Cinque (2001) would be to argue that the perfect level adverbials occur in the specifier position of the perfect projection. Keleşir (2000) proposes such an analysis for Turkish claiming that there is a Perfect^0 head in syntax whose Spec position hosts the adverbials. She assumes the following syntactic structure following Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001):



Keleşir assumes that there are two markers for perfect in Turkish: \emptyset and the suffix *-mİş*. We have seen in the previous sections that Turkish expresses the universal perfect with imperfective morphology and tense marking; \emptyset for present tense, *-DI* for

past tense, and *-(y)AcAK* for future¹⁴. Since there is no overt marker for perfect in the universal reading, Kelepir assumes that the Perfect⁰ is \emptyset when it occurs either with non-verbal predicates or with imperfective eventualities. Note that according to this analysis, a structure cannot have the universal perfect reading unless the underlying eventuality is stative or imperfective as claimed also in Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001). Kelepir makes a distinction between the universal perfect (U-perfect) and the existential perfect (E-perfect), which is used as a cover term for all the three uses of the perfect, that is, experiential perfect, perfect of result, and perfect of recent past. She argues that E-perfect is expressed when the underlying eventuality is perfective and the marker of perfect in this case is the suffix *-mİş*. She exemplifies this as follows (examples (30) and (31) are adapted from Kelepir 2000, ex. 41a and 42a):

- (30) *Hasan eve geldiğinde Elif çoktan git-miş-ø-ti-ø./* **git-ti-ø.*
 When Hasan came home Elif already go-MİŞ-COPULA-PAST-3SG/ go-PAST-3SG
 ‘When Hasan came home Elif had already left.’
- (31) *Hasan eve geldiğinde Elif çoktan git-miş ol-acak-ø./* **gid-ecek-ø.*
 When Hasan comes home Elif already go-MİŞ be-FUT-3SG/ go-FUT-3SG
 ‘When Hasan comes home Elif will have already left.’

The left boundary in these sentences is set by the temporal phrase ‘when Hasan came/comes home’, and the right boundary is signaled by the tense, past in (30) and future in (31). This led Kelepir to propose that perfect in Turkish is expressed either by a zero marker yielding the universal reading or by the suffix *-mİş* yielding the existential reading. This is represented in the following chart:

(32) (Kelepir 2000)

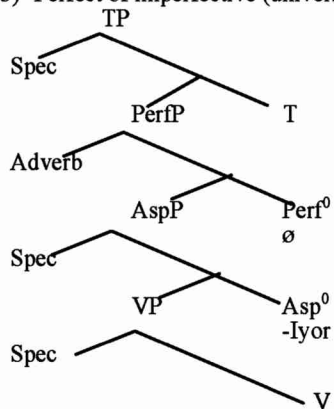
	Aspect	Perfect	Reading
verb	-Iyor (impf)	\emptyset	Universal
A/N	--	\emptyset	Universal
verb	\emptyset (perfective)	-mİş	Existential

Kelepir revises her analysis and argues that there is in fact no perfective marker at all, i.e. no Asp⁰ (Aspect) hosting \emptyset , and the perfective interpretation is argued to be the default interpretation in the absence of the imperfective marker *-Iyor* (see Kelepir

¹⁴ I leave aside the discussion of whether future belongs to the temporal or the modal domain.

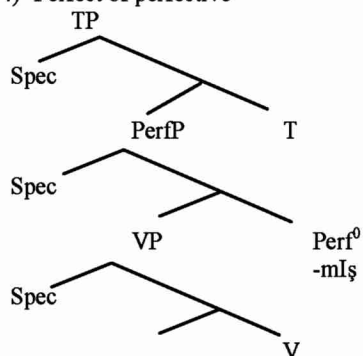
2000 for details). This would mean that there are two different trees for perfect in perfective/imperfective contexts illustrated below:

(33) Perfect of imperfective (universal perfect)



(adapted from Kelepir 2000)

(34) Perfect of perfective



(adapted from Kelepir 2000)

This analysis accounts for the universal perfect in Turkish: Universal perfect reading is possible when the underlying eventuality is imperfective and the adverb occurs in the Spec position of the perfect phrase whose head is not phonologically realized.

There is, however, a problem with respect to the other uses of the perfect. As seen in sentences (30-31) above, Kelepir deals with what she calls “the existential perfect”. But (30-31) are the structures traditionally labeled as “pluperfect” and “future perfect” respectively. Assuming Comrie’s (1985) theory of tense, I claim that perfect is different from pluperfect and future perfect. Comrie makes a distinction between absolute tenses and relative tenses. Absolute tense refers to tenses which take the

present moment as their deictic center (e.g. present, past and future tenses); relative tense, on the other hand, refers to cases where the reference point for location of a situation is some point in time given by the context, not necessarily the present moment (e.g. English non-finite verb forms). There are also absolute-relative tenses which combine these two meanings in that they express a reference point that is situated at, before, or after the present moment; and in addition to that, a situation is located at, before, or after that reference point (Comrie 1985: 65). Pluperfect and future perfect are absolute-relative tenses whereby the situation is located at, before or after the reference point, which is in turn located at, before or after the moment of speech. Comrie is against the parallelism of perfect and absolute-relative tenses. He notes that some languages have a distinct perfect while lacking a distinct pluperfect and future perfect, while others have a distinct pluperfect and future perfect but no perfect. Another evidence against forming a parallelism is the fact that in some languages the formation of perfect on the one hand and absolute-relative tenses on the other does not show parallelism of compositionality, and even in the cases where there is a formal compositional parallelism between perfect and absolute-relative tenses their functions are different (e.g. Portuguese) (see Comrie 1985: 80-81 for details).

The examples Kelepir (2000) discusses as existential perfect are in fact examples of pluperfect and future perfect and not perfect per se. There are different types within the cover term E-perfect, i.e. experiential perfect, perfect of result and perfect of recent past. We have seen in the discussion in the previous sections that these uses of the perfect are mainly expressed by the past tense suffix *-DI* in Turkish. Kelepir’s analysis cannot account for the fact that when the underlying eventuality is perfective the sentence could be interpreted as perfect even though there is no marker *-mİş* in the structure. Recall the examples repeated below:

- (35) a. *Hiç uç-ağ-a bin-di-n mi?* (experiential perfect)
 ever plane-DAT get on-PAST-2sg Q
 ‘Have you ever gotten onto a plane?/ Have you ever traveled by plane?’
- b. *Gözlük-ler-im-i kaybet-ti-m.* (perfect of result)
 glasses-PL-1SG-ACC lose-PAST-1SG
 ‘I have lost my glasses.’ (said when the glasses are still missing)
- c. *Ali okul-dan yeni mezun ol-du-ø.* (perfect of recent past)
 Ali school-ABL just graduate-PAST-3SG
 ‘Ali has just graduated.’

As seen above, the types of perfect, except for the universal perfect, are expressed by *-DI*. Following Kelepir’s approach and assuming again a zero morpheme for perfect in these contexts would make the analysis more complicated since there would be no predictability offered by the analysis. I would like to claim that one could analyze the

examples which led Kelepir (2000) to propose that perfect is expressed by *-miş* in perfective contexts (30-31) as not perfect per se as in the argument of Comrie (1985). This would then mean that Turkish is like Maltese, where there is pluperfect and future perfect distinctly marked with the non-finite *-miş* but no perfect.

In trying to account for the data above, one could claim that the non-finite *-miş* is not the marker of pluperfect and future perfect as such but is a marker of resultativity or high focal postterminality in Johanson's (1971, 2000) sense. I'd like to discuss the structures where *-miş* occurs in order to test the acceptability of this approach. Note that the "pluperfect" is expressed by the suffix *miş+DI* as in (30). Arslan (2001a) discusses different uses of the morpheme sequence *-miş+DI*. I will just give a few examples for the discussion here:

- (36) *O-nun-la sene-ler önce ilk kez burada tanış-tı-k/*
 he-GEN-with year-PL before first time here meet-PAST-1PL
tanış-mış-tı-k.
 meet-MİŞ-PAST-1PL
 'We met here for the first time years ago.'
- (37) *Savaş yıl-lar-ın-da ev-in alt-ın-da-ki sığınak-ta*
 war year-PL-3-LOC house-GEN under-POSS3SG-LOC-ADV dugout-LOC
saklan-dı-k/ saklan-mış-tı-k.
 hide-PAST-1PL/ hide-MİŞ-PAST-1PL
 'We hid in the dugout under the house during the war years.'

The examples above are not perfect structures in that there is no interval upon which a predication is made as to whether the event holds throughout the interval or there is at least one occurrence within the interval. There is a modal distinction between the two options given. The first option with the past tense marker can be argued to be perfective, and the second option with the suffix *-miş* plus the past tense marker can be seen as a narrative perfective where the speaker is focusing on the resultative value of the eventuality, or it can also be seen as modal, that is, as a way of expressing what is distant in one's consciousness.

We must also account for the so-called future perfect constructions where the underlying eventuality is marked with *-miş* and followed by the copula plus the future marker as in sentence (31) above (*Hasan eve geldiğinde Elif çoktan gitmiş olacak*. 'Elif will have already left when Hasan comes home.'). Note that the copula *ol-* marked with the future marker is possible in the following combinations:

- (38) a. *gid-iyor ol-acak*
 go-IMPFV be-FUT
- b. *gid-er ol-acak*
 go-HABITUAL be-FUT

- c. *git-miş ol-acak*
go-MİŞ be-FUT
- d. **git-ti ol-acak*
go-PAST be-FUT
- e. **gid-ecek ol-acak*
go-FUTURE be-FUT

As seen above, the copula marked with the future is not possible with the past tense marker and the future marker. It is however grammatical in imperfective and habitual contexts. Treating habituality either as a subcategory of imperfectivity or in the realm of modality,¹⁵ one may argue that Turkish makes a distinction in (im)perfectivity in this case, that is, it marks the imperfective future as in (a) (and (b)), and the only way of marking perfective future would be (c) making use of the suffix *-miş*. Viewing an event via its results is in line with perfectivity in that we see the eventuality as a whole without focusing on the individual phases that make it up but instead focusing on the result. In Turkish it seems that using *-miş* is the only way to express perfectivity in the copular structures discussed above. Thus we may claim that the use of *-miş* in the so-called future perfect cases does not mean that it is the marker of perfect *per se*.

The argument that the suffix *-miş* is the marker of resultativity has been suggested by Aksu-Koç (1988) and Cinque (2001) in different contexts above. Recall Aksu-Koç’s examples such as *kırık vazo* ‘broken vase’ vs. *kır-ıl-mış vazo* ‘broken vase’ [break-PASS-MİŞ vase] = a vase which has been broken. She has argued that the adjectives formed with the suffix *-miş* have the additional information that the state has *resulted* from a preceding process, which is absent in the case of regular adjectives. Cinque (2001: 51) has also argued that the suffix *-miş* is ambiguous between a perfect interpretation and a resultative interpretation (see the discussion above). Arguing that there is no perfect in Turkish, I claim that the non-finite *-miş* is not ambiguous, but is the marker of postterminality as argued by Johanson (1971, 2000) including the resultative meaning in high focal forms.

What we need to take into account is the fact that Turkish uses the finite *-miş* as the marker of evidentiality. The question to be raised is the following: Is there a semantic similarity between the evidential and the resultative (or more generally a postterminal)? The answer to this question is suggested by Johanson (1971), who

¹⁵ Comrie (1985) notes that habituality lies on the boundary of the three systems of tense, aspect and mood but there is empirical evidence that the expression of habituality is integrated into the aspectual or modal system of a language (see Comrie 1985: 40 for further discussion).

points out how evidential markers emerge from a postterminal category; and by Comrie (1976), who states that “the semantic similarity between perfect and evidential lies in the fact that both categories present an event not in itself, but via *its results*” (p. 110) [*italics mine*]. With the evidential, the event is inferred from a result of the action like second hand report or evidence, etc. Johanson (2000: 111 and 121–2) also points out that the high focal postterminals are connected to indirective meanings since they signal property-like states, whereby the event may be manifested only by inference from perception or present knowledge, a conclusion based on given facts, effects, the traces left, or hearsay reports of other people. He argues that the indirective (evidential/inferential) in Turkic has developed from high focal postterminals. Therefore, using the same form as the marker of postterminality and evidentiality is not at all surprising.¹⁶

The above discussion indicates that Turkish does not have a perfect projection in syntax and the perfect interpretation of the sentences discussed throughout this paper emerges as a result of a suitable context and/or a perfect level adverbial interacting at the semantic component.

The effect of context plays a very significant role in the interpretation of perfect. Klein (1992: 539) has pointed out the fact that different readings of the perfect are not due to an inherent ambiguity in the perfect itself. The differences are context-based in that contextual information tells us, for example, that TSit (situation/event time) immediately precedes TT (topic time) (thus, we interpret the structure as perfect of recent past), or that the consequences are still to be felt (in which case we have the resultative perfect).

Tobin (1993), pointing out the importance of context, has argued against assigning different ‘meanings’ to the perfect, which means assigning different functions to the category. Tobin (1993)’s theory assumes that there is an invariant meaning and each distinction is a result of “just a discourse or contextual message derived from the unitary invariant meaning” (p. 9). In the light of these arguments, consider the sentence below, where it is the context which allows us to interpret the structures as perfect: *Sen uçağa bindin mi?* ‘Have you (ever) traveled by plane?’. In a context where children are talking about their ‘experiences’ trying to show each other how ‘experienced’ they are, this sentence would be interpreted as experiential perfect. Note that there is no overt adverbial in the structure. Hence, the perfect interpretation depends highly on the context. Thus, we can argue that context helps the users of the language to decipher the meaning of certain grammatical morphemes in Turkish.

4. Conclusion

Previous accounts of the category perfect have assumed that ‘perfect’ is a hybrid category encompassing both tense and aspect within a specific semantic definition. In

¹⁶ See also Izvorski 1997 for the discussion of present perfect vs. perfect of evidentiality.

this paper I have argued that there is no projection of Perfect⁰ in the syntax of Turkish, that is, there is not a separate perfect marker as such. This, however, does not mean that Turkish does not have a means of expressing the semantics of perfect. The perfect interpretation, I propose, results from the interaction of the temporal/aspectual/modal markers and the adverbials in the structure within the semantic module of the grammar. Consider the following pair of sentences to make this point clear:

- (39) a. *Ali geçen sene mezun ol-du-ø.*
 Ali last year graduate be-PAST-3SG
 ‘Ali graduated last year.’
- b. *Ali yeni mezun ol-du-ø.*
 Ali just graduate be-PAST-3SG
 ‘Ali has just graduated.’

The first sentence is interpreted as a perfective and past sentence where the eventual-ity took place *last year*. The sentence in (b), however, has the adverb *just* and the interpretation the structure gets is the perfect of recent past. Note that the verbs are marked with the same morpheme, i.e. the past tense marker *-DI*. I have argued in this paper that assuming there is a Perfect⁰ projection cannot account for all the structures carrying perfect meaning. Perfect in Turkish is expressed in the semantic module of the grammar, not in syntax.

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