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Titel: Turkish verbs in theory and practice

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Ort: Wiesbaden

Jahr: 2006

PURL: https://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?666048797_0010 | LOG_0034

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Turkish verbs in theory and practice

Geoffrey Haig

Geoffrey Haig 2006. Turkish verbs in theory and practice. *Turkic Languages* 10, 271-284.

Traditional descriptions of Turkish tended to portray its rich verbal morphology basically as an inventory of suffixes, in much the same way as phonology was reduced to an inventory of phonemes. With the advent of generative grammar in the 1960s, more sophisticated models have successively been applied to Turkish phonology (e.g. autosegmental accounts of vowel harmony) and to Turkish syntax (e.g. Standard Theory, GB and MP, or RG and offshoots). This situation contrasts sharply with the status of morphology: Advances in theoretical morphology have generally been slow to find their way into Turkish linguistics, despite the obvious potential offered by the language, and the area remains very marginal. The publication of a high-profile book devoted entirely to the verb in Turkish thus signals an important development in modern Turkish linguistics, and offers a unique opportunity for rehabilitating morphology, or at least redressing the balance. This review article of *The verb in Turkish* edited by Eser Erguvanlı Taylan assesses the substantive content of the contributions to the volume, and closes with some more general comments regarding the theoretical background and the range of data considered.

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According to calculations made by Jorge Hankamer (1996:403), each verb lexeme in Turkish has well over a million potential different forms. Even though Hankamer's calculations are not without their problems, it remains an undeniable fact that verbs in Turkish have an extraordinarily rich morphological potential, and they are rightly considered to be the pivotal elements in Turkish morphosyntax. The book under review here, *The verb in Turkish* (2001, edited by Eser Erguvanlı Taylan), is dedicated to verbs, and represents therefore a milestone in Turkish linguistics. It also raises correspondingly high expectations. However, despite its title, the book under review does not offer a comprehensive overview of the Turkish verb (an impossible task for a book of this size), but a fairly selective collection of individual contributions by leading scholars from the field of Turkish linguistics. The book grew out of a workshop on clause structure held at Boğaziçi University in May 1999, and the nine chapters of the book clearly reflect these origins: six of the contributors are directly associated with Boğaziçi University, and half of the papers are primarily concerned with syntax rather than with verb morphology, or verb semantics. In her lengthy introduction, Eser Erguvanlı Taylan discusses the background of the volume and provides a careful and balanced summary of each contribution. In this review

article, I will take an admittedly less balanced look at each of the contributions, before turning to some more general points that a book of this scope raises, and also to those points that it does not raise.

The first, and longest contribution is by Engin Sezer, *Finite inflection in Turkish*, whereby “finite inflection” covers tense/aspect, and person agreement—essentially those formants which constitute the category of Infl within the Principles and Parameters framework. Sezer devotes considerable space to the work of Robert Lees (1961, 1962), described here as “the father of Turkish generative linguistics”, whose key insights Sezer rightly considers to have been neglected in much later research. Sezer’s paper is ambitious in its scope, and will be taken as the point of reference for much future work on verbal inflection. It is not possible to do full justice to it here, but I will touch on a couple of aspects which I think may require reconsideration. First, consider Sezer’s scheme for the “inflectional template” of the verb (p. 4):

(1)	Verb stem	Tense1	Tense2	Tense3	Agreement
	<i>gid</i>	<i>-ecek</i>	<i>-miş</i>	<i>-se</i>	<i>-m</i>
	go	FUT	INFER.PST	IND.COND	1SG
	‘If it is the case that they say I will/would go ...’				

Each of the three Tense slots is available to a set of affixes (or clitics, see below):

(2)	Tense1:	-DI, -sE, -mİş, -Iyor, -yEcEG, -Ir/-Er, -yE, -mEli, -mEkte
	Tense2:	i-DI, i-sE, i-mİş
	Tense3:	i-sE, i-mİş

These three represent “categories of forms (suffixes or clitics) which have to appear in a hierarchical order” (p. 4), that given in (1). One reservation with this account is the significance of Sezer’s “Tense3” category. According to the list of forms given in (2) above, Tense3 differs from Tense2 only through the absence of *i-DI*, and as it turns out, the Tense3 category plays virtually no role in the remainder of the chapter; where it is mentioned, it exhibits identical properties to Tense2. The fundamental issue is thus the difference between Tense1 and Tense2/Tense3, and the introduction of a Tense3 category at this point rather confuses the issues. The main difference between Tense1 and Tense2/3 is that the former affix to the stem of a full verb, while the latter are restricted to the defective auxiliary *-i-*, a form duly identified by Sezer as a verb (p. 8), echoing a conclusion reached by several researchers, including Göksel in the same book (see below).

A crucial point that Sezer emphasises is that his tense morphemes are forms with “lexical descriptive content” (p. 4), rather than functional categories. Thus there are observable semantic differences between the formally Tense1 suffixes *-mİş*, *-DI* and *-sE*, and their Tense2 counterparts. For example, the Tense1 *-mİş* has both an inferential past reading, and a present perfect reading. The Tense2 form, *i-mİş*, on the other hand, is always inferential, but can be either past or present (10-11). These semantic facts are

claimed to underlie the impossibility of certain combinations, for example **git-ti=ymış* go-PAST-INFERENTIAL (no reading), where the definite past reading of *-ti* is incompatible with the inferential clitic. Of course one might claim that the semantic differences between Tense1 and Tense2 forms simply follow from their structural differences: one group involves a single tense morpheme, while the other is, per definition, composed of a copular auxiliary (often with zero-realization) and a tense morpheme. Thus we should not expect semantic identity in the first place, unless of course we wish to claim that the auxiliary copula is semantically entirely empty.

A further crucial component in Sezer's theory is a more rigorous account of cliticization, and its interaction with suffixal inflection. While I agree with most of his "clitic theory for Turkish" (p. 35), I am not entirely in agreement with the analysis of the person agreement affixes *-(y)Im*, *-sIn*, *-(y)Iz* and *-sInIz* as clitics, while *-IEr* is treated as an affix. The justification for this move is that according to Sezer, the only clitic that can host another clitic is the interrogative clitic *mI*: "mI has to be the first clitic in the inflectional complex" (p. 35). This explains, among other things, the ungrammaticality of the following:

- (3) **alıyor-um-mu?* Intended reading: 'am I buying?'

Here, the clitic *mI* cannot follow another "clitic". Likewise, the ungrammaticality of the following is accounted for by stipulating that the final tense/mood clitics (underlined) cannot follow the clitic person markers:

- (4) **git-miş-im-di*
 (5) **git-miş-sin-se*

However, it seems to me that there is at least one other means of explaining these constraints: the person markers *-(y)Im*, etc. (unlike the other person paradigm with *-m*, *-n*, etc.) are simply not permitted to host clitics. Or to put it somewhat differently, they always constitute the outer layer of the prosodic word.¹ If we analyse them as clitics, as Sezer does, then we have to account for the fact that unlike the other clitics, they cannot be pronounced separated from their host (there is no alternation *öğretmen-sin/öğretmen* (pause) *sin* 'you are a teacher' that would parallel the possible variants in *öğretmen-din/öğretmen idin* 'you were a teacher').

In sum, although I do not necessarily agree with all aspects of Sezer's analysis, his paper is extremely rich in insights on the finer points of Turkish verbal inflection, and must be required reading for anyone seriously interested in the topic. It is a great

¹ An interesting avenue of further research, not taken up in this paper, would be non-standard colloquial Turkish, where the other set of person endings encroaches into environments reserved for *-sIn*, etc. We then find a corresponding reversal of the order of interrogative clitic and person ending (*gid-iyo-n mu?* instead of standard *gid-iyor mu-sun?* 'are you going').

pity that the other contributions, even those that deal with related topics, do not take up the many issues raised here.

The shortest contribution is Guglielmo Cinque's *A note on mood, modality, tense and aspect affixes in Turkish*. Its "limited goal" (p. 47) is to investigate the order of mood, modality, tense and aspect affixes in the light of some proposals made by the author in Cinque (1999). In that publication, Cinque claims that within the domains of mood, modality, tense, aspect and voice categories, finer sub-distinctions across grammatical heads are found which themselves appear to be rather rigidly ordered. Cinque finds that Turkish largely bears out these predictions. Apparent counter-examples, where for instance a formally identical affix may appear in two different positions, are argued to be instances of two functionally distinct affixes. That is, a difference in position corresponds to a difference in function, despite phonological identity. This contribution, which draws entirely on second-hand data, would have profited from greater attention to the differences between affixal and clitic tense/aspect markers (see the contributions of Sezer and Göksel) or to adverbials, as discussed in Erguvanlı Taylan's contribution. As it stands, it does not really contribute very much to our understanding of these categories and their combinability in Turkish.

In his contribution, *Periphrastic tense/aspect/mood*, Gerjan van Schaaik discusses certain combinations consisting of a tensed verb plus a form of *olmak* 'be, become' which are widely used in Turkish. Drawing on the work of Mixajlov (1961), van Schaaik limits the treatment to three types:

- (6) 1. -yor+olmak; 2. -EcEk+olmak; 3. -Er/mEz+olmak.

His investigation of these constructions draws on a "wide variety of electronic texts" including some transcribed spoken data, and comprising some two million words. Thus van Schaaik's is the sole study that draws on a corpus, rather than on native-speaker (in most cases the authors' own) intuitions. Van Schaaik also provides some frequency data for the occurrence of the constructions under consideration (p. 64), which give valuable insights into their actual usage. (But according to the table on page 64, the combination *-EcEk+olsa-* is not attested in the corpus. As this combination can be heard and read regularly in contemporary Turkish, I assume there is an error in the table at this point.) There is some fairly general discussion on aspect, Aktionsart and mood, but the main theoretical thrust of the chapter concerns how the different categories are related to the "layered structures" of clauses that are assumed in Functional Grammar. Four layers are distinguished: entity/term (1); state of affairs/predication (2); possible fact/proposition (3); speech act/clause (4). Different types of TMA-marker relate to different layers. For example, Tense is considered to apply to level 2 (predication), while inherent modality (e.g. *çalış-abil-* 'be able to work') is considered to be relevant to level 1 (clause). The bulk of the paper is concerned with a detailed semantic analysis of authentic examples.

One of the many issues raised in this chapter concerns the syntactic relationship between *olmak* and the main verb. Consider van Schaaik's example (22), repeated here as (7) with a simplified gloss:

- (7) [...] *banklarda bazen, bir iki kişi otur-uyor ol-ur-du.*
 on.the.benches sometimes one two person sit-PROG be-PRES-PST
 '[...] there used to be one or two people sitting on the benches.'

Van Schaaik suggests that the verb form *oturuyor* could be interpreted as the "complement of the independent verb *ol-* 'to happen/occur'" (p. 75). On this analysis, we would no longer have a periphrastic verb form (auxiliary verb plus main verb), but a verb+complement structure. However, van Schaaik later rejects this analysis because of the "general rule", according to which embedded complement clauses are nominalised (79-80). Nevertheless, I have some doubts; after all, forms such as *oturuyor* are arguably participial in nature, hence bringing them closer to the nominalisations normally used for sentential complements, so the question raised by van Schaaik does in fact merit more serious treatment. The paper ends rather abruptly with the observation that many of the periphrastic combinations are not compositionally analysable. The question of the semantic contribution of *ol-* to some of these forms remains open.

Like van Schaaik's paper, Eser Erguvanlı Taylan's contribution *On the relation between temporal/aspectual adverbs and the verb form in Turkish* is also concerned with form/function mapping in the area of tense and aspect. The main motive in the present study is to pinpoint how aspect operates in Turkish, despite the lack of dedicated aspect morphology. In particular, the author focusses on the interaction of certain adverbials with the imperfective, perfective or perfect viewpoint aspects. Her descriptive framework draws heavily on Smith (1997), where the oppositions [\pm telic], [\pm durative] play a crucial role. A welcome outcome of her analysis is that *-yor* is interpreted neither as a present tense marker, nor as a progressive, but as "the general imperfective" (p. 103), which constitutes the unmarked member of an aspectual opposition, contrasting with the marked *-DI* and *-mİş* (both non-imperfective).

The bulk of the analysis involves investigating the compatibility of different adverbs with different elements of Tense/Aspect morphology. Interestingly, she finds that compositional semantics is not always a good predictor of grammaticality. Of particular value is the discussion of the adverb *bile* (p. 118-119), for which the author suggests two homophonous items. The author notes that in Turkish, "aspectual adverbs play a determining role in the overall aspectual interpretation of a sentence" (p. 123). Some of the adverbs considered show features atypical of lexical items, hence resembling more closely aspectual particles. How they can be related to the view of adverbs as specifiers of functional heads is an issue raised for future research.

Another contribution concerned primarily with semantics is Mine Nakipoğlu-Demiralp's paper on *The referential properties of impersonal passive constructions*.

This paper investigates the semantic properties that determine whether a verb in Turkish may form an impersonal passive (IP), a feature that is crucial in classifying verbs as unergative or unaccusative (on the distinction originally drawn by Perlmutter). An important contribution made in this paper is that the ability of a verb to form an IP is not only dependent on the lexical semantics of the verb itself, but also on the tense of the verb. The past tense in *-DI* exerts greater restrictions on IP-formation than the aorist (*-Er/mEz*).

The aspect of lexical semantics considered to be most relevant is what the author terms internal vs. external instigation. Thus a verb such as *ağlamak* 'cry' expresses an event that, while not necessarily volitional, is nevertheless instigated by the subject, who is also in a position to register the 'internally driven changes'. A verb like *erimek* 'melt', on the other hand, implies a change of state instigated by an entity external to the subject, and the latter also lacks the ability to experience the changes. However, the internal vs. external instigation parameter is not sufficient by itself to account for all instances of IPs found with intransitive verbs, and the author is well aware of the difficulties here. The problems are indeed legion, and I can add the following footnote to the discussion: during a talk I gave on passive in Turkish some years ago, I suggested that the verb *pişmek* 'ripen, cook (intr.)' could not be passivized, but someone in the audience objected, citing as an example *Saunada pişilir* 'in the sauna one is cooked'. The lesson to be learned from this, and similar examples, is that lexical semantics alone is by itself insufficient; broader contextual semantics is also operative. Another minor point of contention is the inclusion of *bayılmak* in the list of problematic passive forms, because it lacks (in modern Turkish at least) an active counterpart **baymak*, hence hardly qualifying as a passive (see Haig (2000) for discussion of these fossilised passive forms).

The author also points out that the tense of the verb affects the interpretation of the suppressed argument: a verb form such as *koşuldu* 'it was run' implies, according to the author, a plural interpretation of the suppressed subject, and one that includes the first person (p. 137). The form *koşulur* (with aorist), on the other hand, implies an arbitrary interpretation, unspecified for number (someone/some people, etc.). The different behaviour of these verbs under different tense forms casts doubt on the original explanation of the ergative/unaccusative distinction in Relational Grammar. The author rounds off this well-balanced paper with a sketch of how a scalar view of the unergative/unaccusative distinction can be applied to a subset of Turkish verbs.

Aslı Göksel's contribution is titled *The auxiliary verb ol- at the morphology-syntax interface*. Göksel examines the status of *olmak* as an auxiliary verb in different syntactic configurations. In some contexts, *olmak* makes a significant semantic contribution, witnessed for example in the difference between (8) and (9):

- (8) *gör-müş-tül-m*
see-PERF-PAST-1SG

'I have/had seen'

- (9) *gör-müş ol-du-m* 'I ended up seeing'
 see-PERF ol-PAST-1SG

In other semantic configurations, it is required merely in order to satisfy morphological well-formedness constraints. This is claimed to be the case in, for example, (11):

- (10) *gör-dü-ğ-üm* 'that I saw/am seeing'
 see-PAST-COMPL-1SG
- (11) *gör-müş ol-du-ğ-um* 'that I saw'
 see-PERF AUX-PAST-COMPL-1SG

Note that Göksel analyses the verbal nominalizing suffixes *-DIğ* and *-(y)EcEğ* as a TAM-morpheme and a "complementizer" *-ğ-*; more on this below. The example (11), according to Göksel, "is a paraphrase of at least one of the interpretations of (10), indicating that it has no semantic content in the latter" (152). In these Object Relative Clauses (ORC), *olmak* is "semantically and syntactically inactive" (p. 159). Support for this claim comes from the neutralisation of the semantic distinctions shown above, from the scope of negation, and from the behaviour of clitics. This leads Göksel to exclude *olmak* from the syntactic representation of the ORC: it is not a functional head, and does not head its own projection. Göksel concludes that *olmak* is required in certain ORCs to satisfy requirements of morphological structure.

In a similar vein to Sezer (see above), Göksel argues that the clitic form *-(y)DI* results from the *-DI* plus the obsolete copula. But Göksel's analysis differs significantly from Sezer's. It will be recalled that Sezer refers to two distinct versions of *-DI* (one in his Tense1 morphemes, one in his Tense2). Göksel on the other hand assumes only one suffix *-DI*, and the differences between *-DI* and *-(y)DI* result from the latter being a composite of two morphemes, copula+*-DI*. This analysis is simpler than that of Sezer, and leads to a somewhat different statement of the morphological template for verbal inflection. Regrettably, neither author takes up the challenge of discussing the other's proposals.

Göksel also looks into the sources of the ungrammaticality of (13), as opposed to (12):

- (12) *gör-müş ol-du-ğ-um*
 see-PERF AUX-PAST-COMPL-1SG
 'that I saw/have seen'
- (13) **gör-müş-tü-ğ-üm*
 see-PERF-PAST-COMPL-1SG

Her account draws, among other things, on violations of constraints on "upper limits of affixation" (p. 166). However, there is, I believe, a simpler explanation, but it involves abandoning the view that the nominalizer *-duğ-* is composed of a tense marker

and a complementizer (see above). This explanation runs as follows: In (13), the only possibility to attach an additional tense marker to the suffix *-müs* would be via the copula (that is, a form *-i*+TAM). But the copula is defective, being able to host only three TAM suffixes. It cannot support any of the nominalizing suffixes of Turkish. Hence the ungrammaticality of (13) follows quite simply from the defective nature of the copula, which cannot support the participial suffix *-DIğ*. Thus if we distinguish two distinct simplex suffixes, *-DI* and *-DIğ*, with only the former being able to affix to the defective copula, then we do not have to invoke more complex explanations to account for the ungrammaticality of (13). I take this as an argument against the analysis of *DIğ* as *-DI*+*ğ*.

Göksel points to the importance of language-specific constraints on morphological structure, suggesting that verbs in Turkish cannot host more than three inflectional suffixes (p. 172). However, we still have to account for forms such as *gel-di-ğ-in-e* (*çok sevindim*) ‘(I was really pleased) that you came’, which exhibits four inflectional affixes, while *yap-tı-k-lar-in-ı* (*iyi bulmadım*) ‘(I didn’t approve of) the things you did’ has five (assuming the analysis of *di-ğ*-, as advocated by Göksel). These examples can of course be argued away on the grounds that the additional suffixes are not verbal, but nominal inflection. But then an account in terms of a surface constraint on “word size” will no longer be adequate, but must be refined through additional stipulations. With this paper, Göksel continues her long line of highly original research on the morphology/syntax interface, an area that has been much neglected in Turkish linguistics. I personally would greatly appreciate more coverage of this topic in the future.

In Jaklin Kornfilt’s contribution, *Functional projections and their subjects in Turkish clauses*, the case-marking of the subject in various kinds of non-finite clause is investigated. As is well known, in this position two possibilities are found: an unmarked case (possibly a Nominative), and the Genitive. She investigates four types of non-finite clause, distinguished according to their external syntactic functions: 1. Argument clauses, which fill argument positions in the thematic grid of the matrix predicate; 2. adverbial clauses, for example various converb types; 3. clauses that fill the complement position of postpositions; 4. relative clauses.

Kornfilt makes reference to the ambivalent nature of nominalized clauses: they exhibit many of the internal properties typical of finite clauses, while at the same time being cast in a “nominal” shell. This form/function mismatch has long been familiar to typologists (see especially Lehmann 1988), and the typological dimensions of the correlation between the form of the NP-internal subjects and the external syntactic functions of those NPs has been much discussed by Lehmann and others. Kornfilt provides a formal representation of such facts by positing, for nominalized clauses in argument positions, a clause-external case-projection (KP) above a “Nominal Agreement Phrase”, in which the Genitive-marked subject takes the Spec-Position. The important point is that the presence of the Genitive on the subject cannot be related solely to the presence of agreement on the embedded predicate, be-

cause in examples such as (14), the subject lacks Genitive, despite agreement on the embedded predicate *çık-tı-ğ-ım*:

- (14) *ben ev-den çık-tı-ğ-ım-da Oya yemek pişir-iyor-du.*
 1SG house-from go.out-PTCPL-1SG-LOC Oya food cook-PROG-PST(3S)
 'When I left the house Oya was cooking.'

The case of embedded subjects such as *ben* in (14) is accounted for by means of a default nominative case assignment, which steps in when the conditions for overt (non-null) case assignment are not met. The relevant condition for the above example is that the embedded nominalization must be theta-governed by the matrix clause in order to permit the embedded subject to be checked for Genitive. The same line of argument is applied to nominalized clauses as complements of postpositions, and in relative clauses. Kornfilt is careful to distinguish embedded subjects which lack overt case because they do not occur in the structural configuration required to assign case, from the kind of caseless subjects with generic/indefinite interpretations (the "semi-subjects" of Haig 1998). Thus not all apparently bare embedded subjects are equal; their lack of overt case arises for very different reasons. The important theoretical contribution of this paper lies in the postulation of the Nominative as the default case for Turkish, and the recognition of distinct motivations for assigning case to embedded subjects: from within the nominalized clause, and from outside it.

Another contribution to theoretical syntax comes from A. Sumru Özsoy, *On 'small' clauses, other 'bare' verbal complements and feature checking in Turkish*. The author points out that certain types of constructions in Turkish pose difficulties for accounts of case checking in the Minimalist Program. The constructions under consideration are the much-discussed sentential complements of the verb *sanmak*, 'believe, consider', such as the following:

- (15) *Herkes ben-i Ankara'ya git-ti-m san-ıyor-muş*
 everyone 1SG-ACC Ankara-DAT go-PAST-1SG consider-PROG-PERF(3S)
 'It seems everyone considered me to have gone to Ankara.'
- (16) *(Biz) sen-i taşın-dı-n san-dı-k.*
 we 2SG-ACC move-PAST-2SG consider-PAST-1PL
 'We considered you to have moved.'

The problem with these structures is that the accusative NPs *beni* and *seni* respectively "have skipped over a possible checking category", namely the Agreement phrase of the embedded clause. Furthermore, they violate the principle of Shortest Move. In sum, on whatever version of Mainstream Generative Grammar one works with, the expectation would be that the Agreement phrase licenses (or checks for) Nominative.

Özsoy discusses three different types of structure, each characterised by a distinct configuration of agreement and case-marking in the embedded clause. She argues for a small clause analysis of at least a subset of these constructions, and against accounts which relate the accusative NPs to matrix clause arguments (I assume this would include the raising accounts of earlier versions of Generative Grammar). A possible solution to the dilemma posed for case theory is that “Turkish distinguishes between strong and weak AgrSP” (p. 229). The weak version of agreement is “absorbed” by the lexical head, and is hence no longer available for case checking. Thus the accusative-marked NP can skip this agreement node and receive case from a higher one. Özsoy’s detailed discussion of these constructions offers considerable insights into the subtleties of its syntax and semantics, as well as spelling out their implications for the Minimalist Program.

There is a long history of research on complementation strategies with *sanmak*, but progress has been consistently hampered by conflicting grammaticality judgments. Brendemoen & Csato (1986) postulated the existence of “two dialects” to account for the variation found, a standpoint adopted by most researchers since and also by Özsoy in her paper. But recently Aygen (2006) and Haig (2006) have pointed out that this explanation is not really satisfactory, and the distribution of the supposed dialects has never been established independently. It is to be hoped that in the future, the theoretical analyses of these constructions may be complemented by empirical investigations where both the conditioning factors behind the variation, and the relative extent of the variants found can be established.

The final chapter in the volume, by Balkız Öztürk, carries the provocative title *Turkish as a non-pro-drop language*. The author argues against the view that overt subject pronouns in Turkish are merely optional exponents of the subject relation, licensed by the agreement morphology. On her view, the use of subject pronouns is determined by discourse pragmatic factors, and hence, is not amenable to a purely structural analysis as the Spec position in the AgrP. In particular, subject pronouns are required when a topic change is to be signalled (17-18), but with topic-continuity, use of the pronoun leads to unacceptable structures (19-20), as in (glosses simplified):

- (17) *Ben geldim. Ama sen gelmedin.*
 I came.1SG but you not.came.2SG
 ‘I came. But you did not come.’
- (18) *Ben geldim. Ama *pro gelmedin.*
 I came. but not.came
- (19) *Ben_i eve geldim. pro_i Kitap okudum.*
 I to.house came.1SG book read.1SG
 ‘I came home (and) read a book.’

(20)	<i>Ben_i</i>	<i>eve</i>	<i>geldim.</i>	<i>*Ben</i>	<i>Kitap</i>	<i>okudum.</i>
	I	to.house	came.1SG	I	book	read.1SG

Another reason for disassociating the overt pronouns from agreement morphology stems from their use with certain types of converb (*ben konuşurken* ‘... while I was talking ...’), where the pronouns may occur with verb forms that bear no overt person agreement. A similar set of arguments is also proposed for the genitive pronouns in possessive constructions (SpecDP position), which Öztürk also claims are discourse-determined, rather than reflecting a Spec-Head relation. The author concludes the first two sections by stating that “there is no interdependency between overt pronouns and the agreement morphology in terms of a Spec-Head relation as claimed by the canonical analysis of Turkish”.²

Generally the facts presented are uncontroversial, and have been pointed out by scholars such as Erguvanlı-Taylan (1986) in earlier work. However, the precise nature of the discourse constraints on pronoun retention vs. deletion are not fleshed out in Öztürk’s paper, where she is content to operate with fairly broad categories such as Topic. The main theoretical contribution of her work is to translate these facts into a structural analysis of the clause, presented in sections 4 and 5. The main problem is, according to Öztürk, that if the overt pronouns are generated at a higher level, then we are left with a structure where the subject position remains unfilled, something that “violates the EPP” (Extended Projection Principle, p. 247). Öztürk’s own analysis is to interpret agreement morphology as the VP-internal subject, hence salvaging the EPP. The obvious problem with this analysis is that clauses that lack overt agreement morphology (e.g. *ben konuşurken*) are left without subjects, but this problem is not addressed. The overt pronoun is assigned to a higher position, for which Öztürk adopts a suggestion of Rizzi (1995), according to which there is a ForcePhrase (presumably something like Illocutionary force) above the C-system, and dominating a Topic Phrase (TopP). Öztürk considers the most appropriate position for the overt pronouns to be SpecTopP. A further feature of this analysis is the elimination of the Agreement Phrase from the Inflection domain (p. 254-255). The proposed analysis is claimed to provide a simpler account of the choice of participle in relative clauses, and to be applicable to DPs, for which a TopP is also suggested.

Öztürk points to some important facts regarding the discourse functions of overt pronouns in Turkish, which are indeed ignored by purely structural accounts in terms of Spec-Head relations. But whether her alternative account is sufficient grounds for claiming that Turkish “is” a non-pro-drop language, and just what is implied by that label, are not fully clear to me. Her account essentially leaves languages like English

² Another piece of evidence for disassociating agreement and pronouns, not mentioned by Öztürk, is the existence of semantically-determined verb agreement, such as in the following example, where verbal agreement is first person plural, but this is not formally reflected in the overt pronouns: *Seninle ben caddelerde sokaklarda iki garip yabancı-yız.* ‘You and I, in the streets and alleys, (we are) two destitute strangers.’

and Turkish bearing the same value on the pro-drop parameter, and indeed actually casts considerable doubt on the relevance of the parameter in any general theory of syntax, or of typology. Actually this is a consequence I rather approve of, but the implications are not taken up in the paper.

The contributions to this volume are of a high standard, and each presents an analysis that merits close attention by all specialists in the field. Unfortunately, however, there is a lack of coherence across the individual contributions. For example, Sezer and Göksel both have interesting, and somewhat different, analyses of verb morphology, but neither makes reference to the analysis of the other. Likewise, both van Schaaik and Erguvanlı Taylan deal with similar periphrastic constructions, again with virtually no serious consideration of each other's analysis. Erguvanlı Taylan (p. 124) discusses how adverbs might be treated in the framework of Cinque (1999), but in Cinque's own contribution to the volume under review, no discussion of these issues is forthcoming. Öztürk's analysis of clause structure differs from that of Özsoy and Kornfilt, but again no attempt is made to compare the respective analyses, or to present counter-arguments. Nor is there consistency in glossing: the tense suffix in *gel-iyor* is glossed as PRES2 (van Schaaik), CONT (Sezer), PROG (Cinque) and IMPERF (Erguvanlı Taylan). Such examples could be multiplied at will. This variation will not be a source of confusion for those familiar with Turkish grammar, but it renders comparison across the different analyses difficult for the non-specialist. Lack of coherence is also evident in a good deal of irritating repetition of the basic facts of Turkish grammar (e.g. the types of nominalizations, the differences between clitic and affixal tense suffixes, different relativization strategies, etc.). The book is thus very much a collection of individual contributions on thematically related issues, rather than a book providing representative coverage of the verb in Turkish.

It is unreasonable to judge a book by what it does not contain, rather than what it does. However, a book with the present title arouses certain expectations, so a few words are in order at this point on the thematic and theoretical scope of the book. As far as the topics covered are concerned, the editor states in her introduction (viii) that the volume is mainly concerned with "clause structure in Turkish", which is determined to a great extent by the verb. Thus the emphasis is on syntax and inflectional morphology. It is somewhat surprising that a volume carrying this title should contain no in-depth analysis of valency-changing processes (with the exception of the discussion on passivization of intransitives in Nakipoğlu's paper). Nor, for example, is there any discussion of verbs from a psycholinguistic perspective (acquisition studies), or from a diachronic perspective, or of lexical semantics, and none of the contributors looks beyond the standard language.

As far as the range of theoretical approaches is concerned, the selection is also quite limited: of the nine contributions, six essentially adopt a version of what Culicover & Jackendoff (2005) refer to as "mainstream generative grammar", either Principles and Parameters or the Minimalist Program. The only other theory explicitly endorsed in any of the papers is Dik's Functional Grammar (van Schaaik). Erguvanlı Taylan draws on a broad functional/semantic framework for the analysis of tense and

aspect, and Nakipoğlu is basically theory-neutral. (Although her paper takes up claims put forward in Relational Grammar, it is not framed in RG.) With the exception of van Schaaik, and the references in Sezer, little attention is given to the European tradition of Turkology, although Johanson (1971) already made a seminal contribution to tense and aspect in Turkish. In view of this fairly narrow range of theoretical approaches, the editor's statement that the collection is a "sound reflection of the current state of research in Turkish linguistics" (viii) does not really bode well for Turkish linguistics.

These comments notwithstanding, *The verb in Turkish* is a must for anyone seriously interested in Turkish linguistics, in particular morphosyntax. The papers represent very high standards of scholarship, and have been edited and produced in a very professional manner. I sincerely hope that in the future, other aspects of the verb in Turkish, both thematic and theoretical, may find an outlet of an equally high standard.

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