

Tackling the Augmentative Puzzle in Turkish

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The present paper deals with the suffix *-cIk* in Turkish. The suffix *-cIk* has generally been accepted to be a diminutive/endearment morpheme in Turkish; moreover, the different effects resulting from *-cIk* attaching to nominal versus adjectival bases have not been discussed (Zimmer, 1970; Sezer, 1981; Sebüktekin, 1984; Taylan, 2015). One work that does mention this difference is Göksel & Kerslake (2005). They state that when *-cIk* is attached to an adjectival base, it amplifies the “smallness” meaning of the adjective, as in (1), which is unlike (2), a nominal base.

- (1) *küçücük* from *küçük* (2) *kitapçık* from *kitap*
very small small booklet book

However, these studies cannot predict items such as (3) and (4) in which there is no clear smallness meaning associated with the adjective. Previous accounts also do not explain why the voiceless velar stop [k] is omitted in adjectival bases, whereas no sound, including the [k] found in words such as *köpekçik* (small dog), is deleted when the base is nominal. Additionally, the stress change triggered by *-cIk* on adjectival bases, but not on nominal bases, is said to be unpredictable.

- (3) *sıcacık* from *sıcak* (4) *yumuşacık* from *yumuşak*
very warm warm very soft soft

In this paper, I argue that the nominal and adjectival *-cIk* are two different suffixes and that the adjectival *-cIk* is a complex suffix which is a combination of the suffix *-cI* and *-k*. Whereas *-k* is a spell-out of the interpretable features of scale and lower boundary, *-cI* is an augmentative suffix which only targets adjectival constructions that reside in the lower part of the scale or adjectival constructions that are somewhat lowered in the scale, as in (6) (Göksel & Kerslake, 2005). I also argue that the sound [k] is never deleted in examples like (1), (3), and (4); instead, they are placed at the end of the word, which makes *küçü-* a bound form, as shown in (5).

- (5) [[[*küçü-*]_{aP} *-cü*]_{AugP} *-k*]_{MinP+ScaleP} (6) [[[[*yakın*]_{aP} *-ca*]_{DimP} *-cI*]_{AugP} *-k*]_{MinP+ScaleP}

The analysis in (5) implies that the adjective *küçük* itself is also decomposable as [[*küçü-*]-*k*]. One of the motivations for such a decomposition is the unclear distinction between Turkish adjectives and nominals, as discussed in Braun and Haig (2000). Another motivation for such a decomposition is the existence and displacement of the final [k] in every adjectival base that can have the so-called *-cIk* suffix. With the exception of a limited number of words (*daracık*, *incecik*, *azıcık*, *gencecik*--very narrow, very thin, very few, and very young), all other forms end with a [k]. Moreover, all of these adjectives, including the ones that do not end with a final [k], can be used with the adverb *biraz* meaning ‘slightly,’ which means that they reside in the lower part of the scale. Based on these motivations and previous discussions (Hale and Kayser, 2002; Uygun, 2009; Fábregas, 2016), I assume that adjectives in Turkish are not natural or independent constructions; rather they are parasitic constructions that require complex syntactic formations in order to project and stand-alone. I argue that in addition to their internal syntactic formations, Turkish adjectives are projected with their own scale information, following Fábregas and Marin (2018). As seen in (5), relative and absolute adjectives behave differently when they are subjected to the *too* test.

- 7) Ahmet_i bir cellad_i-a göre sıcakkanlı.
Ahmet a executioner-Dat according.to friendly.
‘Ahmet is friendly for an executioner.’
- 8) *Ahmet_i bir şoför_i-e göre sarhoş.
Ahmet a driver-Dat according.to drunk.

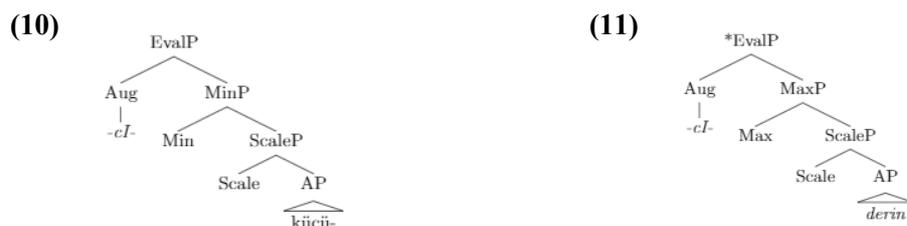
Intended: ‘Ahmet is drunk for a driver.’

The only reading available in (8) is that a driver, passing by, thought that Ahmet was drunk. However, using *fazla* (meaning ‘too’) would make the sentence completely acceptable with the intended reading. This reading difference is not present in (7). This example is ambiguous between two readings: (i) Ahmet is friendly for an executioner, (ii) Ahmet is seen by an executioner who thinks Ahmet is friendly.

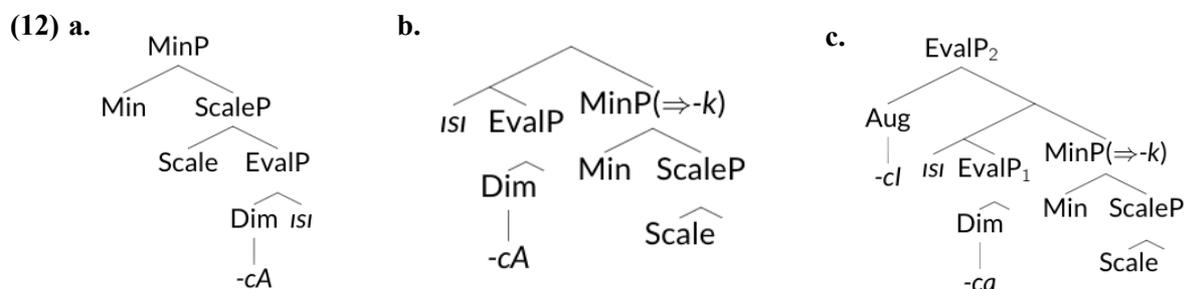
Following these observations and assumptions, I argue that the unproductivity of the so-called suffix *-cik* can be explained via the selection of a set of features, i.e. scalarity and lower boundary information. In the nanosyntactic model I posit following Starke (2010), Caha (2009), and Pantcheva (2011), the Turkish augmentative suffix *-ci* only targets adjectival formations that projects to MinP (1) or with a diminutive suffix (9d), which are scalable projections that are located at the lower part of the scale, unlike (9b), which projects to MaxP.

- (9) a. *derin göl* b. **derin-cik göl* c. *derin-ce göl* d. *derin-ce-cik göl*
deep lake *very deep lake* *deepish lake* *not-so-deep lake*

The ungrammaticality of (9b) is a result of mismatching sub-morphemic features, which requires an initial boundary and the information of scale in other cases and which spells-out as *-k* or *-ca*. This analysis puts forward an entirely predictable nature of the augmentative process and decomposition of previously attested *-cik* suffix, which spell-outs as [Min] and [Scale] features in the trees in (10) and (11).



To this generalization of scalarity, there is only one counterexample: *Sıcak* meaning ‘hot’. Even though it ends with a word-final *-k*, can host the suffix *-ci*, and it can be modified with *slightly*, it intuitively seems that it is not in the lower boundary of the scale. However, upon closer examination, historical data shows that it is formed from the root *ısı* (Clauson, 1972), with diminutive marker *-ca* and scalarity marker *-k*. In contrast with *ısılı* which means ‘very warm’, *ısıcak* means slightly warm. It bears the traces of previous processes: introducing a scale, placing the adjective low in the scale, and then in Modern Turkish, augmenting the smallness. The inner structure of the word *sıcak* and its derivation to *sıcacık* with assumed nanosyntactic movements that include outer merge with no trace are shown in (12a), (12b), and (12c).



For further research, I will analyze the implications of such movements with respect to stress placements. I believe that a non-linear look at the word-initial mechanism can give us clues with the help of theorization of stress placement with respect to phrase boundaries in Uriagereka (1999).