Agreement patterns in the Turkish NP*

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February 8, 2020

1 Introduction

The basic explicandum: agreement asymmetries specific to the nominal domain (original observation from Kornfilt 2007; see Paparounas and Akkuş forthcoming and Satık 2020 for fuller descriptions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal Agr</th>
<th>Co-varying</th>
<th>Default 3sg</th>
<th>Nominal Agr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Default-triggering NP</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Pronouns obligatorily trigger full agreement in root, finite embedded, and nominalized clauses.

(1) Pronoun – Root clause
   a. Biz oraya git-ti-k.
      we there go-pst-1pl
   b. * Biz oraya git-ti-Ø.
      we there go-pst-3sg

   'We went there.'

(2) Pronoun – Finite embedded clause
   a. Kemal [ biz oraya git-ti-k ] san-dı-Ø.
      Kemal we go-pst-1pl think-pst-3sg
      Kemal we go-pst-3sg think-pst-3sg

   'Kemal thought that we went there.'

(3) Pronoun – Nominalized clause
   a. Kemal [ biz-im oraya git-tig-imiz ]-i san-dı-Ø.
      Kemal we-gen there go-fnmlz-1pl.poss -acc think-pst-3sg
   b. * Kemal [ biz-im oraya git-tig-in ]-i san-dı-Ø.
      Kemal we-gen there go-fnmlz-3sg.poss -acc think-pst-3sg

   'Kemal thought that we went there.'

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*This work has benefitted from many discussions with Julie Anne Legate, David Embick, and Martin Salzmann. We are also grateful to Elena Anagnostopoulou, Sabine Iatridou, Jaklin Kornfilt, Alec Marantz, Deniz Özyıldız, and audiences at FMART, the Syntax Reading Group at Penn, and the LSA 2020 Annual Meeting for feedback.

Glossing abbreviations: 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, abl = ablative, abl = ablative, acc = accusative, com = comitative, dat = dative, fnmlz = factive nominalizer, gen = genitive, loc = locative, neg = negative, nfnmlz = non-factive nominalizer, nmlz = nominalizer, nom = nominative, pl = plural, poss = possessive, prog = progressive, pst = past, sg = singular.
A set of larger nominals which we call default-triggering nominals trigger full agreement in root and finite embedded clauses, but default agreement in nominalized clauses:

- Anaphors (reflexive *kendi-* , reciprocal *birbir-*)
- Adnominal pronouns (biz Türkler ‘we Turks’)
- So-called ‘partitives' (*ikimiz ‘two of us’)
- The ‘inflected pronouns’ biz-ler ‘1pl-pl’ and siz-ler ‘2pl-pl’

(4) Inflected pronoun – Matrix clause
   we-LER there go-PST-1PL
b. * Biz-ler oraya git-ti-O.
   we-LER there go-PST-3SG

’We went there.’

(5) Inflected pronoun – Embedded finite clause
a. Kemal [ biz-ler oraya git-ti-k ] san-dı-Ø.
   Kemal we-LER there go-PST-1PL think-PST-3SG
   Kemal we-LER there go-PST-3SG think-PST-3SG

’Kemal thinks that we went there.’

(6) Inflected pronoun – Nominalized clause
a. * Kemal [ biz-ler-in oraya git-tiğ-imiz ]-i
   Kemal we-LER-gen there go-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS -ACC san-di-Ø.
   think-PST-3SG
b. Kemal [ biz-ler-in oraya git-tiğ-in ]-i
   Kemal we-LER-gen there go-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS -ACC san-di-Ø.
   think-PST-3SG

’Kemal thinks that we went there.’

1We use this term descriptively, as we doubt that these elements have the structure of true partitives.

Generalizations:

1. The factor responsible for the dissociation of pronouns and default-triggering nominals in nominalized clauses is *Genitive case*.
2. The opacifying effect of Genitive on default-triggering nominals is overridden in binding configurations.

2 Against binding-based accounts

Kornfilt’s (2007) binding-based account:

- Co-varying agreement defines binding domains in Turkish (George and Kornfilt 1981).
  - Anaphors construed with full agreement will thus not be bound in their BD, violating Condition A.
  - Pronouns construed with full agreement will be free in their BD, passing Condition B.
- Default agreement expands the BD.
  - Anaphors will now be bound in their binding domain, but so will pronouns.

Three arguments against this account:

- Referential pronouns as subjects of nominalized clauses are still ungrammatical with default agreement.

(7) a. Ayşê [ biz-im kek-i ye-diğ-imiz ]-e
   Ayşê.NOM we-GEN cake-ACC eat-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS -DAT
   inan-iyor-Ø.
   believe-PROG-3SG
b. * Ayşê [ biz-im kek-i ye-diğ-in ]-e
   Ayşê.NOM we-GEN cake-ACC eat-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS -DAT
   inan-iyor-Ø.
   believe-PROG-3SG

’Ayşê believes that we ate the cake.’

- Local vs long-distance anaphors
  - The reciprocal is a local anaphor, but the reflexive is a logophor.
A set of relevant observations: the Anaphor Agreement Effect (Rizzi 1990; Woolford 1999).

- Cross-linguistically, anaphors avoid occurring in positions construed with co-varying agreement.
- Perhaps the emergence of default agreement in Turkish is a repair strategy to avoid the illicit configuration (cf. Albanian; Woolford 1999).

One popular account of the AAE: underspecification of anaphors for phi-features (Kratzer 2009; Deal 2010; Reuland 2011 for different flavors of this idea).

Issues:

- Anaphors would have to be underspecified only in the nominal domain, by stipulation.
- Partitives, adnominal pronouns and inflected pronouns are not referentially deficient, thus cannot be $\phi$-underspecified.
3 The role of the genitive case

We argue that the correct generalization involves the genitive, as independently conjectured by Satık (2020).

**Generalization 1:**
- nom pronouns are transparent for agreement.
- nom default-triggering nominals are transparent for agreement.
- gen pronouns are transparent for agreement.
- gen default-triggering nominals are opaque for agreement.

→ Striking evidence for this fact comes from an asymmetry between argument and adjunct nominalized clauses.

Kornfilt (2003): the subjects of factive nominalized clauses must be nom if the clause is an adjunct.

(12) a. Ben [Ali-*(nin) cam-i kır-dığ-ı zaman ]-ı
I Ali-GEN glass-ACC break-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS time -ACC
bil-iyor-du-m.
knew-PROG-PST-1SG
'I knew when Ali broke the glass.'

b. Ben [Ali-*(nin) cam-i kır-dığ-ı zaman ]
I Ali glass-ACC break-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS time
gereç-ı bil-iyor-du-m.
truth-ACC know-PROG-PST-1SG
'I knew the truth when Ali broke the glass.' (Aygen 2007: 2)

Now consider that, in factive nominalized adjuncts, both pronouns and default-triggering nominals must be nom. Importantly, when this happens, default-triggering nominals trigger full agreement.

(13) a. [Biz-*(im) yemek pişir-dığ-imiz ]-den dolayı
we food cook-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS -ABL because konser-e gid-e-me-di-m.
concert-DAT go-ABIL-NEG-PST-1SG
'Because we cooked, I was unable to go to the concert.' (Kornfilt 2003: 151)

4 Binding-agreement interactions

So far: default-triggering nominals require default agreement when marked gen. But this requirement can be overridden when these elements are binders.

- In nominalized clauses with a default-triggering subject and a reciprocal object, we find the following pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reciprocal V</th>
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| ![](image)

Let’s begin by contrasting matrix with nominalized clauses again.

- In matrix clauses, full DP objects and reciprocal objects pattern together.

(15) **Matrix clause – Full DP IA**

a. İkimiz kitab-ı sev-iyor-uz.
two.of.us book-ACC like-prog-1PL
'The two of us like the book'

b. *İkimiz kitab-ı sev-iyor-Ø.
two.of.us book-ACC like-prog-3SG
'The two of us like the book'

Some of our consultants find these examples decidedly worse than the first two types, but better than the last type.

2
Matrix clause – Reciprocal IA
a. İkimiz birbir-imiz-i sev-iyor-uz.
   two.of.us each.other-1 PL.POSS-ACC like-PROG-1 PL
   ‘The two of us like each other.’  
   [rec: 1 PL, V: 1 PL]
b. * İkimiz birbir-imiz-i sev-iyor-Ø.
   two.of.us each.other-1 PL.POSS-ACC like-PROG-3 SG
   ‘The two of us like each other.’  
   [rec: 1 PL, V: 3 SG]
c. * İkimiz birbir-in-i sev-iyor-Ø.
   two.of.us each.other-3 SG.POSS-ACC like-PROG-3 SG
   ‘The two of us like each other.’  
   [rec: 3 SG, V: 3 SG]
   two.of.us each.other-3 SG.POSS-ACC like-PROG-1 PL
   ‘The two of us like each other.’  
   [rec: 3 SG, V: 1 PL]

Nominalized clause – Full DP IA
   say-PST
   ‘The child said that the two of us like the book.’  
   [V: 1 PL]
   say-PST
   ‘The child said that the two of us like the book.’  
   [V: 3 SG]
   • But if the object of the nominalized clause is a reciprocal, co-varying agreement becomes possible alongside full agreement.

Nominalized clause – Reciprocal IA
   like-FNMLZ-1 PL.POSS -ACC said-PL
   ‘They said that the two of us like each other.’  
   [rec: 1 PL, V: 1 PL]
b. * Onlar [ ikimiz-in birbir-in-i they two.of.us-GEN each.other-3 SG.POSS-ACC sev-diğ-in ]-i söyledi-ler. 
   like-FNMLZ-1 PL.POSS -ACC said-PL
   ‘They said that the two of us like each other.’  
   [rec: 3 SG, V: 3 SG]
   finish-FNMLZ-1 PL.POSS -ACC say-PST-3 SG
   ‘Leyla said that the two of us finally finished our theses.’  
   [BoundPro: 1 PL, V: 1 PL]
   finish-FNMLZ-3 SG.POSS -ACC say-PST-3 SG
   ‘Leyla said that the two of us finally finished our theses.’  
   [BoundPro: 1 PL, V: 3 SG]
   finish-FNMLZ-3 SG.POSS -ACC say-PST-3 SG
   ‘Leyla said that the two of us finally finished our theses.’  
   [BoundPro: 3 SG, V: 3 SG]
   finish-FNMLZ-1 PL.POSS -ACC say-PST-3 SG
   Intended: ‘Leyla said that the two of us finally finished our theses.’  
   [BoundPro: 3 SG, V: 1 PL]
Generalization 2:

- If a default-triggering nominal binds into a nominalized clause, it can agree.

Note that this is not an effect of linear order, as it persists when we scramble the internal argument out of the nominalized clause:

(20) Birbir-imiz-iₗ onlar [ ikimiz-in tₗ sev-diğ-imiz each.other-1PL.POSS-ACC they two.of.us-GEN like-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS ]-₁ söyle-iₗ-ler.

-ACC said-1PL

'They said that the two of us like each other.' [rec: 1PL, V: 1PL]

How local does the bound element need to be to the nominalized verb? Answer: not very.

- The pattern persists with dative-marked arguments of unaccusatives.

appear-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS -ACC said-3SG

'The teacher said that the two of us matched with each other in the draw.' [rec: 1PL, V: 1PL]

appear-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS -ACC said-3SG

'The teacher said that the two of us matched with each other in the draw.' [rec: 1PL, V: 3SG]

appear-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS -ACC said-3SG

'The teacher said that the two of us matched with each other in the draw.' [rec: 3SG, V: 3SG]

appear-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS -ACC said-3SG

'The teacher said that the two of us matched with each other in the draw.' [rec: 3SG, V: 1PL]

- The same pattern obtains even when the reciprocal is not an argument of the nominalized verb, being instead embedded in a comitative adjunct.

(22) a. Kemal [ hepimiz-in dün bütün günü birbir-imiz-i Kemal all.of.us-GEN yesterday whole day each.other-1PL-ACC öv-mek-le geçir-diğ-imiz ]-₁ söyle-di-Ø.

praise-NFNLZ-COM pass-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS -ACC say-PST-3SG

'Kemal said that all of us spent the whole day yesterday praising each other.' [rec: 1PL, V: 1PL]

b. Kemal [ hepimiz-in dün bütün günü birbir-imiz-i Kemal all.of.us-GEN yesterday whole day each.other-1PL-ACC öv-mek-le geçir-diğ-in ]-₁ söyle-di-Ø.

praise-NFNLZ-COM pass-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS -ACC say-PST-3SG

'Kemal said that all of us spent the whole day yesterday praising each other.' [rec: 1PL, V: 3SG]

- Note that the possibility of full agreement goes away if the adjunct contains a full DP, such as a proper name.


praise-NFNLZ-COM pass-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS -ACC say-PST-3SG

'Kemal said that all of us spent the whole day yesterday praising Ali.' [rec: 1PL, V: 1PL]

b. Kemal [ hepimiz-in dün bütün günü Ali-yi Kemal all.of.us-GEN yesterday whole day two.of.us-ACC öv-mek-le geçir-diğ-in ]-₁ söyle-di-Ø.

praise-NFNLZ-COM pass-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS -ACC say-PST-3SG

'Kemal said that all of us spent the whole day yesterday praising Ali.' [rec: 1PL, V: 3SG]

- And the effect persists under co-ordination.
Genitive case makes default-triggering nominals, but not pronouns, opaque. The same effect holds with the reverse order of conjuncts.

Biz birbir-imiz ve siz-ler için yaş-iyor-uz.
we each.other.1PL.POSS and you.PL.1ER for live-PROG-1PL.
‘We live for each other and for you.’

One child didn’t hear what their father said, so the mother says to them:

(24) a. Baba-n [ ikimiz-in birbir-imiz ve father-2SG.POSS two.of.us-GEN each.other-1PL.POSS and siz-ler için yaşa-diğ-imiz ]-i söyle-di-Ø.
you.PL.1ER for live-FNMLZ-1PL.POSS -ACC say-PST-3SG
‘Your father said that the two of us live for each other and you.’

b. Baba-n [ ikimiz-in birbir-imiz ve father-2SG.POSS two.of.us-GEN each.other-1PL.POSS and siz-ler için yaşa-diğ-un ]-i söyle-di-Ø.
you.PL.1ER for live-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS -ACC say-PST-3SG
‘Your father said that the two of us live for each other and you.’

c. * Baba-n [ ikimiz-in birbir-i ve father-2SG.POSS two.of.us-GEN each.other-3SG.POSS and siz-ler için yaşa-diğ-un ]-i söyle-di-Ø.
you.PL.1ER for live-FNMLZ-3SG.POSS -ACC say-PST-3SG
‘Your father said that the two of us live for each other and you.’

5 Conclusion

We have motivated two striking generalizations for Turkish:

- Genitive case makes default-triggering nominals, but not pronouns, opaque for agreement.
- But there is exactly one configuration where a gen default-triggering nominal can agree, namely, when it binds.

That binding licenses an otherwise impossible agreement configuration is consonant with the idea that binding is mediated by agreement.

- But note that the relationship is not one-to-one: default agreement remains possible although binding takes place.

At the same time, this is the first case that we know of where binding effects a structural difference on the binder: in Turkish, binding enables full agreement, a possibility otherwise unavailable with default-triggering nominals.

References


