

### Information Structure inside Turkish Noun Phrases

The claim that the structures of CPs and DPs parallel each other has led some researchers to argue that similar to CP, the DP also possesses information structure with layers such as Topic and Focus (Giusti 1996, Aboh 2004, Haegeman 2004, Villalba&Bartra-Kaufmann 2009, among others), along the lines of Rizzi (1997). According to Aboh et al. (2010), such projections have either a morphological or movement reflex. The aim of this study is to examine whether Turkish noun phrases possess such kind of information structure. I will show that Turkish has a split-DP projection and this projection displays movement properties.

Before dealing with the main issues, first it needs to be established whether Turkish, an articleless language, possesses a DP layer or not. It will be argued that Turkish NPs are dominated by a functional head such as D, due to the behavior of demonstratives such as *şu* “that” in (1a) which behave like determiners and are in close relationship with the accusative case, which licenses definiteness and specificity (Öztürk 2005). This DP layer is left-headed since these determiner-like demonstratives occur as the leftmost element.

However, some constituents can show up in front of these demonstratives. In (1) when the order of the genitive-marked DP and the demonstrative is swapped, the interpretations change:

- (1) a. *şu Burak-ın şapka-sı*  
that Burak-GEN hat-POSS.3SG  
“that hat of Burak”  
b. *Burak-ın şu şapka-sı*  
Burak-GEN that hat-POSS.3SG  
“that hat of Burak’s hats”

(1a) implies that Burak might have only one hat; it does not have any implication regarding Burak’s possession of other hats. In (1b), however, it is entailed that Burak has more than one hat. I will argue that the base structure is that of (1a), and (1b) is derived from that order to obtain the relevant reading. What is also peculiar with (1b) is that the demonstrative *şu* “that” receives focus. Thus, I will claim that (1b) is obtained through information structure-related movement. Above the DP layer, there are TopP and FocP projections in that order. The demonstrative *şu* “that” moves into FocP, and the genitive-marked DP *Burak-ın* “Burak-GEN” moves into TopP.

The same interpretation is obtained with respect to the position of an adjectival phrase. The phrases below also have different interpretations:

- (2) a. *şu kırmızı şapka*                      b. *kırmızı şu şapka*  
that red hat                                      red that hat  
“that red hat”                                      “that red hat among red hats”

(2a) merely points to a red hat; there is no entailment involved with respect to the number of hats. (2b), however, entails that there is more than one red hat, and it points to a specific red hat among the set of red hats. Just like (1b), the demonstrative *şu* in (2b) is focused and moves to the FocP, while the adjective *kırmızı* “red” moves into the TopP.

The claim that there are TopP and FocP phrases in the left periphery of the Turkish DP in this order is supported by the behavior of wh-elements, as we observe in (3):

- (3) a. \**Hangi şu elbise-yi beğen-di-n?*  
Which that dress-ACC like-PAST-2SG  
Intended reading: “That dress of whom did you like?”  
b. \**Hangi kim-in elbise-sin-i beğen-di-n?*  
Which who-GEN dress-POSS.3SG-ACC like-PAST-2SG  
“Which dress of whom did you like?”  
c. *Kim-in hangi elbise-sin-i beğen-di-n?*  
Who-GEN which dress-POSS.3SG-ACC like-PAST-2SG

“Which dress of whom did you like?”

Among the questions above, only (3d) is grammatical. In (3a-c), there are two elements competing for the focus position. In (3d), however, *kim-in* “whose” sets the contrastive topic, and *hangi* “which” is the focus. According to Büring (2003), a question with two wh-elements has discourse-dependent sub-questions. One wh-word represents a definite set of entities, which is the contrastive topic, and the other wh-word represents the questioned information, which is the focus. Then, the subquestions of (3d) are such as “which dress of Mary did you like?”, “which dress of Jane did you like?” etc. Its subquestions cannot be, for instance, “whose blue dress did you like?”, “whose red dress did you like?” etc. Thus, the part that is questioned is *hangi* “which”, rather than *kimin* “whose”, so *kimin* is the contrastive topic, and *hangi* is the focus. As a result, it is obvious from the question forms in (3) that the genitive-marked possessor moves into the topic phrase, and the demonstrative goes into the focus phrase.

In summary, it will be shown that Turkish noun phrases possess a split DP above the NP level in its left periphery. This periphery is composed of a TopP and FocP above the DP. The order alternations result from the relevant information structure reflected on the surface syntax. Thus, there is no free ordering of nominal elements in Turkish. Rather, Turkish noun phrases employ a split-DP bearing the information structure.

#### Selected References

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