

How Turkish Structural Cases Behave in Causative Constructions: A Dependent Case Theoretic Analysis

Keywords: dependent case theory, causatives, structural case

In this paper, I analyze how valence-changing operations interact with dependent accusative and dative cases in Turkish. Baker and Vinokurova (2010, p. 595) claims that accusative and dative cases in Sakha (Turkic) are assigned by dependent case assignment rules. Dikmen et al. (2023) modify these rules to account for the assignment of Turkish accusative and dative cases as they fail to capture the case assignment in the agent-pseudo incorporation constructions. I also make use of the same configurational rules provided by Dikmen et al. (2023) in this study as they are capable of accounting for most of the canonical constructions, except for the causative structures formed based on some light verbs. I claim that these structures pose a challenge with respect to the dependent case assignment in Turkish. **ACCUSATIVES** In Turkish, accusative case is a structural case, meaning that its existence is dependent on the structure, and it can disappear when the structure changes via passivization, as observed in (1a) & (1b).

- (1) a. Can bu kitab-ı sev-di. b. Bu kitap sev-il-di.
Can.NOM this book-ACC like-PST.3SG this book.NOM like-PASS-PST.3SG
'Can liked this book.' 'This book was liked.'

DATIVES Dative case, on the other hand, has both inherent and structural functions. Göksel and Kerslake (2005) provide various environments where it is possible to observe dative cases in Turkish. Among these environments, there are causee NPs of causative structures formed based on transitive verbs, which I believe is the only environment where dative case is truly structural. In those structures, dative case is assigned neither to an NP bearing a specific thematic role, such as goal or recipient, nor lexically by the verb. In addition to that, it is possible for a causee NP in Turkish to be marked with either accusative or dative case depending on whether the verb is transitive or intransitive, as observed in (2a) & (2b).

- (2) a. Serdar Ege-yi/*Ege-ye koş-tur-du.
Serdar.NOM Ege-ACC/*Ege-DAT run-CAUS-PST.3SG
'Serdar made Ege run.'
b. Serdar Ege-ye/*Ege-yi maraton-u koş-tur-du.
Serdar.NOM Ege-DAT/*Ege-ACC marathon-ACC run-CAUS-PST.3SG
'Serdar made Ege run the marathon.'

LIGHT VERBS Tabak and Demirok (2024) claim that nominal+*et* constructions in Turkish do not behave uniformly because nominals in them are not uniform. They argue that while the NP *küfür* in (3a) is argumental, *muayene* in (3b) is a $\sqrt{\text{ }}$ by itself. Following that, while *et* in (3a) realizes a the complex $\sqrt{\text{ }}+v$, it is just an agentive verbalizer in (3b) (Tabak & Demirok, 2024).

- (3) a. Furkan Ömer-e küfür et-ti.
Furkan.NOM Ömer-DAT curse ET-PST.3SG
'Furkan cursed at Ömer.'

- b. Doktor Ayşe-yi muayene et-ti.
 Doctor.NOM Ayşe-ACC examination ET-PST.3SG
 ‘The doctor examined Ayşe.’

Given their analysis, the dependent case assignment rules also account for the case assignment in (3a) & (3b). Since *muayene* in (3b) is a $\sqrt{\text{ }}$ by itself, it does not go into case calculus, and *Ayşe* gets an accusative case instead of dative. However, I argue that the dependent case assignment rules that account for the case assignment in canonical structures fail to capture the case assignment in causative structures based on these light verbs.

- (4) a. Umut doktor-a Ayşe-yi muayene et-tir-di.
 Umut.NOM doctor-DAT Ayşe-ACC examination ET-CAUS-PST.3SG
 ‘Umut made the doctor examine Ayşe.’
 b. Furkan Ömer-i Ali-ye küfür et-tir-di.
 Furkan.NOM Ömer-ACC Ali-DAT curse ET-CAUS-PST.3SG
 ‘Furkan made Ömer curse at Ali.’

ANALYSIS Following Harley (2017) and Key (2013)’s proposal, I argue that Turkish is a vP-splitting language, where CausP is in between VoiceP and vP. As a result, CausP is inside the domain where the dependent dative assignment rule applies. This explains the case assignment in (4a). The dative case is assigned to *doktor* as soon as it is merged to the structure, and the accusative case is assigned to *Ayşe* when *Umut* is merged to the structure, as observed in (5). However, if CausP is indeed inside the domain where the dative assignment rule applies, then we should have observed dative case on the causee NP *Ömer* instead of accusative in (4b) since it is still inside the domain for the rule to apply. I argue that in Turkish, it is not possible for dative and accusative to appear on more than one NP. In other words, I claim that Turkish has a morphological constraint, similar to DISTINGUISHABILITY constraint provided by de Hoop and Malchukov (2008), that prevents the same case morpheme from appearing in a single structure. Due to this

morphological constraint, although it is possible for the dependent dative assignment rule to apply, we do not observe the dative case marker twice.

