

(Some Notes on) Light Verbs and Complex Predicates in Turkic

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This paper examines some features of the complex predicate formations found in many Turkic languages, including Turkish, Tuvan, and Uzbek. The construction which I will examine comprises a verb with the converb marker *-(i)b* or *-(i)p* and one of a limited set of inflecting verbs. I will contrast -IB gerunds in complex predicates with their use in other non-finite constructions. There is a high degree of similarity between light verb constructions in a language like Urdu (Butt and Geuder 1999) and the -IB + inflecting verb structures found in Turkic, and I wish to suggest that the same phenomena are occurring in both groups of languages.

1. Introduction

This paper is an investigation of the analysis of -IB + verb constructions in Turkic. Traditionally such structures have been analysed as either coordination structures or as non-finite verbs plus auxiliary. I wish to argue in this paper for an analysis of some (but not all) -IB + verb constructions as complex predicates.¹

In just about all Turkic languages there exists a productive construction where a verb is inflected by the converb/gerund marker -IB and is used with one of a limited set of finite fully inflected verbs. Consider the following Kirghiz sentence, an example of the structures I will discuss:²

- (1) *Ali kitabı oqub turdu.* (Kirghiz)
 A. book-ACC read-CONV ‘stand/stop’-PST-3SG
 a. ‘Ali was reading the book and [then] stood up.’
 b. ‘Ali kept on reading the book.’

¹ Special thanks/teşekkürler/kata paхmat to Gülşat Aygen and Gulnora Aminova for suggestions and grammaticality judgments. They are not responsible for any errors in data or analysis. This paper arose through my search for parallels to the complex predicate constructions of Northern Australia and as such reports research which is still in progress.

² Some terminology: The verb marked by -IB I call the ‘converb’. The form -IB covers the harmony forms of the vowel and the variable voicing of the *b/p* across the Turkic languages, which does not concern us here. The verb which takes tense, aspect and subject inflection is the ‘inflecting verb’. Abbreviations are: ACC, accusative; ADJ, adjectival; ALL, allative; CONV, converb; DAT, dative; FOC, focus; INT, interrogative; LOC, locative; PL, plural; PST, past tense; SG, singular. Unless otherwise stated examples are from Turkish. Examples are quoted in the orthography they were encountered in, with the exception of the Turkish and Uzbek examples, which are in standard orthographies.

Sentence (1) is ambiguous between two readings: in (a), there are two consecutive events, that of book-reading and that of standing up, and -IB acts as a coordinator of the two. In (b), however, there is a single event (book-reading), and the inflected verb *durdu* gives the action the notion of duration.

In this paper I will briefly survey the -IB constructions found in Turkic languages, focusing on Modern Turkish and Uzbek as exemplars (but with brief discussion of a few other Turkic languages). I will then see how types of -IB constructions contrast, which I will call ‘single event’ -IB + verb constructions and consecutive/multiple event -IB constructions. Previous analyses of the suffix -IB as a conjunction do not satisfactorily cover the single event structures (which I am here claiming are complex predicates). Finally, I offer some evidence that the matrix inflected verb in the -IB + verb construction is a light verb and not an auxiliary.

2. Previous analyses of -IB constructions

It has long been noted for Turkish that constructions using a nonfinite verb marked by -IB are of several different ‘types’, however there have been several different analyses and not all analyses do anything with the observation that not all -IB constructions behave in the same way. That is, they note that some -IB constructions designate multiple events and others appear to be a single event, but both constructions are still given the same syntactic analysis. Here I survey a few of the prevailing analyses of -IB constructions as a whole, before concentrating on -IB light verb constructions in Section 4.

2.1 Soper (1996): -IB + verb is verbal modification

Soper (1996) defines 3 types of -IB constructions in Turkic languages, although his definitions are somewhat loose and he does not provide any detailed criteria by which to distinguish the structures under consideration. Type 1 are coordinated actions where the -IB verb modifies the action of the inflected verb in some way. The subject of both verbs must be co-referential. Example (2) illustrates this ‘adverbial’ type of construction in Uzbek:

- (2) *Барча студент-лар халқара аҳвал ҳақида-ди лекция-ни*
all student-PL international situation about-ADJ lecture-ACC

диққат қилиб тингла-ди-лар. (Uzbek)
attention do-IB listen to-PST-3PL

“All the students listened attentively to the lecture on the international situation.” [lit, ‘paying attention, listened ...’] (Ubayeva 1971:100-101)

Type II -IB clauses are similar to type I, but where in type I sentences the -IB-marked verb provides more information about the matrix verb, in type II constructions the two verbs stand in an equal relationship and represent a pair of sequential or connected actions. This is the multiple event type, and is illustrated here by Turkish:

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- (3) *Ali kitabı okuyup çayı içip eve*
A. book-ACC read-CONV, tea-ACC drink-CONV house-ALL
gitti.
go-PST-3SG.
'Ali read a book, drank some tea and went home.'

Type III actions in this schema are the ones we are interested in, where the second (inflecting verb) "is comparable to an auxiliary or a directional" (Soper 1996:33). These involve a single event. It appears that the inflecting verb is giving additional information about the event structure of the verb marked by -IB. Examples are given here from Kirghiz, Uzbek and Turkish:

- (4) a. *Oqub turdu.*³ (Kirghiz)
read-CONV 'stand'-PST-3SG.
'(S)he kept on reading.'
- b. *Күлүб ётибди.* (Uzbek)
laugh 'lie'-PART-PST-3SG
'(S)he kept on laughing.'
- c. *Kahveyi içip durdu.* (Turkish)
coffee-ACC drink-CONV 'stand/stop'-PST-3SG
'(S)he kept on drinking coffee.'

2.2 Johanson (1995): -IB constructions show a grammaticalization cline

Johanson (1995:314-315) identifies four types of converbial constructions in Turkic languages. They are defined in terms of the degree of grammaticalization shown, and the closeness of the relationship between the -IB-marked verb and the inflecting verb, and the degree of choice in inflecting verbs. The loosest level shows multiple predicates, while the most tightly grammaticalized level (5d) exhibits, in Johanson's terminology, a single 'predicate core'. His four levels are illustrated in (5) with sentences from Turkish.

- (5) a. different subjects:
Ali gelince Osman şarşırdı. 'When Ali came, Osman was surprised.'
- b. same subject, multiple actions:
Ali gelince şarşırdı. 'When Ali came, he was surprised.'
- c. more limited inflecting verb; 'two predicate cores'
Ali kitabı alıp geldi. 'Ali brought a book.' [take-CONV bring]

³ Note, incidentally, that the cognate verbs *dur-* (Turkish) and *tur-* (Kirghiz) have different primary meanings in the two languages, although they are both used in durative -IB constructions. In Turkish the primary meaning is 'stop', while in Kirghiz it is 'stand [up]'.

- d. single predicate:
Ali kitabı okuyup turdu. ‘Ali kept on reading a book.’ [read-
CONV stand/stop]

The structure in (d) is equivalent to Soper’s Type III, and my ‘light verb’ construction. Those in (b) and (c) are Soper’s Type II; type (a) is not addressed by Soper, who only deals with -IB constructions.

Johanson writes as though the four types of converb construction are ultimately very similar, and are just four different stages along a grammaticalization cline, differing in degree of union between -IB verb and inflecting verb and in the degree of bleaching of the semantics of the matrix verb. He is not explicit in treating the -IB verb as an ‘adverbial’ phrase, or as a participle or gerund. Like Soper, he gives no structural criteria for identifying members of the four levels.

2.3 Other analyses

Most other analyses either do not appear to make a formal distinction between the different types of -IB construction, or they treat the inflecting verb as an auxiliary (e.g. Schamiloglu 1996) with ‘an additional classificatory feature’. That is, either -IB + verb constructions are all treated as adverbial clauses, or the single-event -IB clauses (as in (4) above) are treated as a type of verbal compound, similar to the other tense/aspect/mood inflectional patterns found in the Turkic verb (for which see, amongst others, Johanson 1971, 1994 and Taylan 1996).

Lewis (2000:190) states that the gerund -IB + *durmak* or *gelmek* is a type of ‘compound verb construction’, with the second verb behaving as an auxiliary. Arakin *et al* (1988:328) write in similar terms. They describe the constructions as being built “из деепричастия на -IB или на -А основного глагола + вспомогательный глагол ...” [built from a verbal adverb in -IB or -A as a foundation verb, and from an auxiliary (helping verb).] and like Johanson (1995) they describe the Turkic languages as all exhibiting various stages of grammaticalization of the auxiliary. Note that Arakin includes in the grammaticalization cline the compound tense forms which were historically built on gerunds and auxiliaries, which Johanson does not discuss.

Kornfilt (1997:21) analyses Turkish *-ip* as a type of verbal conjunction when discussing the multiple event structures (*okuyup, su içti* [‘reading, he drank water’] type). In Kornfilt’s analysis *-ip* conjoins VPs. She does not mention Turkish -IB + *durmak* in her section on verb-verb compounding with light verb structures (Kornfilt 1997:477-8), although she does give close relative of the -IB + verb construction as an example, using *okuya duracak*, ‘he will keep on reading’, which exhibits the other converb/gerundial marker.

3. Some comparative Turkic data

To keep this paper under the length of a book I will examine only a few Turkic languages in any detail, and even their treatment is not very thorough. This is not to imply that -IB verb complex predicates only occur in these languages in

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Turkic. Also, I am aware of other non-finite constructions using morphology other than -IB (e.g. Uzbek *келд олмоқ* ‘to arrive’ [arrive-*A* take], Turkish *okuydu duracak* ‘will keep on reading’ [read-*A* stand-FUT]). My analysis only focuses on verbs marked by -IB, and not with other morphology, although the analysis could be extended.⁴

3.1 Turkish

In Modern Turkish the -IB ‘single event’ construction is common only with one inflecting verb: *durmak* ‘to stand, to stop’. An example was given in (4c) above. There are no (or few) paradigmatic restrictions on the aspect in which *dur-* may appear:

- (6) punctual: *okuyup durmuştur*
 aorist: *okuyup durur*
 pluperfect: *okuyup durduydı*
 inferential past: *okuyup durmuşum*
 present progressive: *okuyup duruyorum*

The subject of the verb may appear between the -*Ip* clause and the inflected verb, but only if the reading is conjoined:⁵

- (7) *Kitabı okuyup Mehmet yolda durdu.*
 book-ACC read-CONV M. road-LOC stand-PST-3SG
 ‘Reading a book, Mehmet stood in the road.’ (e.g. he waited for a taxi)

Another -IB + verb construction in Turkish which may show the same underlying structure involves phrases such as *alıp gelmek* ‘to bring’ [take-CONV come] .

- (8) *Kahveyi alıp geldim.*
 coffee-ACC take-CONV come-PAST-1SG
 ‘I brought the coffee.’ [lit. ‘taking came’]

More consideration of the Turkish data is given in Section 4 below.

⁴ For example, in many Turkic languages there is a co-occurrence restriction between -IB and negation; in Chagatay, for example, we find that *-map* is ‘kaum gebräuchlich’ [hardly used] (Eckman 1953) and the form *-may* is substituted. The same is true for the majority of Turkic languages. The interaction between the morphology of the converb and the matrix verb is clearly an important topic for further investigation. Note also that there are some other constructions in which -IB is used, which I am not overtly discussing here due to lack of space, although I am aware of their existence. These include, for example, the use of -IB in indirect yes/no questions, e.g.

- (i) *Gidip gitmediğin sordum.*
 go-CONV go-NEG-DIK-ACC ask-PST-1SG
 ‘I asked if he went or not.’

I assume for the time being that such constructions are also subsumable under the multiple event, co-ordinative reading of -IB.

⁵ Although this is not grammatical for all speakers.

3.2 Turkmen

There are some references in Clark's (1998) grammar of Turkmen to the use of gerunds in *-lp* with a few inflecting verbs, as verbal modifiers, as clause chainers, and in combination with an 'auxiliary'. Sentence (9) below shows all three uses.

- (9) *Ялкап болса еринден туруп, хошлашып*
 Yalka:p bolθo yerinnen turup, hoşloşup
 Y. then there-ABL stand-CONV welcome-CONV
- чыкып гитди.*
 čikıp gitdi.
 go out-CONV go-PST-3SG.
 'And Yalkap stood up and went out to welcome them.' (Clark 1998:356)

The first -IB-marked verb, *туруп*, is a gerund in the clause chaining use. The second verb, *хошлашып*, is an 'adverbial' use (Soper's type 1, the equivalent of the Uzbek sentence in (2) above), while the third, *чыкып (гитди)* shows the complex predicate use. Clark (1998:355), however, appears to treat all three uses of the -IB converb as having the same underlying construction.

3.3 Uzbek

In Uzbek one finds a number of verbs which are used as 'Hilfsverben' in the -IB construction. There is also copious evidence for -IB being used as an adverbial, or broader connective, such as in: *kūlip sözlä-* 'he spoke laughing' (Wurm 1953:512). It also functions as a participle, to denote actions which occurred temporally or logically before those of the matrix verb.⁶ Thus the -IB participle/converb in Uzbek can carry its own aspectual semantics. Some examples are given in (10).

- (10) a. *Еп болуп.* 'He ate it up.'
 b. *Кўприкдан ўтиб бўлими?* 'Can one cross the bridge?'
 (von Gabain 1945:§317)

The following table shows the light verbs for Uzbek given in Schamiloglu (1988). The light verb glosses are Schamiloglu's. A very similar list of verbs is given for Chagatay by Eckman (1953).

Sjoberg (1963:115) also notes this construction in Uzbek but says that it is a "perfective gerund (co-ordinate gerund denoting incomplete aspect)".⁷

⁶ 'Das Konverb auf -oB drückt eine Tätigkeit oder einen Zustand aus, der zeitlich oder logisch vor dem des finitem Hauptverbs liegt' (von Gabain 1945:98).

⁷ One wonders how a construction can be simultaneously "perfective" and "incomplete". Assumedly Sjoberg calls -IB forms perfective because of their use in denoting the first action of consecutive events; eg

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Elsewhere (Sjoberg 1963:131-4) gives a list of “auxiliaries” which create “compounds” with *-IB*.

Table 3.1 **Uzbek light verbs**

Form	lexical use	light verb use
<i>ол-</i>	take	autobenefactive (action for one’s own benefit)
<i>бор-</i>	go	progressive
<i>бер-</i>	give	allobenefactive (action for another’s benefit)
<i>бут-</i>	finish	completive
<i>бутур-</i>	finish	completive (transitive verbs)
<i>бул-</i>	be	full completive
<i>ет-</i>	suffice	action reaching completion
<i>юбор-</i>	send out	exhaustive completion
<i>кел-</i>	arrive	continuing action centered around speaker
<i>кўр-</i>	see	abilitative
<i>кет-</i>	go away	exhaustive completion
<i>қол-</i>	remain	exhaustive completion
<i>қўй-</i>	put	exhaustive completion (momentary action)
<i>сол-</i>	lay	intensive completion of action
<i>ташла-</i>	throw	intensive completion of action
<i>туш-</i>	descend	completed action
<i>чиқ-</i>	go out	full completion of action
<i>ўт-</i>	go	action slowing down in its development
<i>қара-</i>	look	attempt at completion
<i>боқ-</i>	look	attempt at completion
<i>ўл-</i>	die	intensive appearance of condition
<i>юр-</i>	go	duration, repetition
<i>ёт-</i>	lie	no gloss
<i>ўтур-</i>	sit	no gloss

Note also that the *-IB* forms in Uzbek can be used without further tense modification, especially in the literary language (examples from Sjoberg 1963:113-14; see also 10a above).⁸

- (11) a. *келибман* ‘(they say) I came (at that time)’
 b. *емабман* ‘(they say) I didn’t write (then)’
 c. *юринсамми* ‘were you walking (at that time)?’

In some cases it is possible to use two verbs in *-IB* to denote a single event. For example:

-
- (i) *Чой-ни* *ич-ди* *уи-га* *бор-ди-м.*
 tea-ACC drink-CONV home-DAT go-PAST-1SG.
 “Having drunk the tea, I went home.”
- (Sjoberg 1963:115)

⁸ I assume these structures to reflect a type of ‘insubordination’ (the term is from Evans 1995), whereby subordinate forms acquire the features associated with matrix clauses.

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- (12) *Қыу учуб кетиб қолди.*
bird fly-CONV go away-CONV stay-PST-3SG.
'The bird flew away.'

Such examples are rather rare, however, and their occurrence is rather restricted.

3.4 Kazan Tatar

Thomsen (1953:420) lists five verbs which are used to denote Aktionsart (her term) in Kazan Tatar. The examples she gives are (using her orthography):

- (13) a. -IP + *bul* 'become'; only in 3rd person, to denote possibility:
yasap bulmy 'it is impossible'
b. -IP + *qara* 'see'; to denote 'to try to do something':
yazıp qara 'to try to write'
c. -IP + *biter* 'bring to an end'; to denote a fully completed action:
uqıp biter 'to read to the end'
d. -IP + *ğit* 'reach, attain'; means the same as *biter*, used often with motion verbs:
kilep ğit 'to arrive at'
e. -IP + *ğiber* 'release, let go'; sudden entering into action:
kölep ğiber 'to burst out laughing'

3.5 Summary: typology of light verb marking in Turkic

It turns out that despite the rather large number of light verbs in some Turkic languages, the uses of those verbs fall into just a few types. These types are:

- ♦ Event structure: The light verb gives additional information about the internal structure of the event denoted by the verb in -IB.
- ♦ Directionality: The light verb marks associated motion (Koch 1984), the path of the action/event denoted by the -IB-marked verb.
- ♦ Quasi-modal: The light verb encodes modal information.⁹
- ♦ Participant information: The light verb provides information about the theta-role of clause participants.

The following tables give the a summary of the types of events which one finds in some representative Turkic languages being marked by -IB + verb. Due to lack of space only these languages are presented; however the same categories are found in Tuvan, Xakas, Kazakh, Bashkir and Nogay.

⁹ I am not convinced for Turkic languages that verbs such as Uzbek *қўй-* 'to try' are truly light verbs in such constructions, although compare Papakyriakou (2001) for a proposal that the equivalent verbs in Modern Greek form complex predicates.

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Table 3.2 Summary of light verb uses

Information added	Language	Examples
'event structure' (aspect or Aktionsart)	Turkish Kazan Tatar Uzbek	<i>okuyup dur-</i> 'keep on reading' <i>uqıp biter</i> 'to read to the end' <i>келип қол-</i> 'to arrive (<u>suddenly or unexpectedly</u>)'
Direction	Kazan Tatar Turkmen Uzbek	-IP + <i>ğit</i> 'reach, attain' <i>чыкып гит-</i> 'go' <i>олиб кел-</i> 'take'; <i>олиб кет-</i> 'take <u>away</u> '
Quasi-modal	Kazan Tatar Uzbek	<i>язып қара</i> 'to try to write' <i>кўр-</i> 'to <u>try</u> '
Participant Information	Uzbek	<i>ёзин ол-</i> 'to write down <u>for oneself</u> '

4. Tests for complex predicate status: why not a converb?

The analysis of the construction as a complex predicate, and not as a pair of conjoined verbs or as involving an auxiliary, comes from tests described in Butt (1995) and Butt and Geuder (1999). Arguments for the complex predicate analysis include for Turkic (but are not limited to):

- event structure – the predicate describes a single event and not a sequence of conjoined events;
- selection criteria – almost any verb can be in the coordinate construction as long as the two events are consecutive and the subjects are identical, but the verbs in complex predicate constructions are confined to a set of up to approximately 20 verbs (cf Wurm 1953:514ff) which are 'implicated' in light verb constructions in other languages;
- word order – the converb and the inflected verb cannot be separated by intervening material;
- the predicate behaves as a single unit for interrogative marking.

Each of these points will be addressed in turn, concentrating on Turkish and Uzbek.

4.1 Event structure

As mentioned previously, the event denoted by an -IB + verb construction is viewed as a single event by the syntax and by speakers of the languages. We can compare the variant readings in the Kirghiz sentence in (15), where (a) involves a complex predicate reading and (b) shows a conjoined reading;

- (14) *Oqub turdu.* (Kirghiz)
 read-CONV stand-PST-3SG.
 (a) '(S)he kept on reading.'
 (b) '(S)he read and [then] stood up.'

The same goes for the other languages. In the Uzbek cases, for example, even the multiple verbs in the -IB construction describe a single event:

- (15) *Қуш учиб кетиб қолди.* (Uzbek)
bird fly-CONV go away-CONV stay-PST-3SG.
'The bird flew away.'

The same is true for the Turkish sentence in (4c). This can be compared to the conjoined readings presented in examples such as (3), where there is no reading where the sentence contains a single event. The best we can do is a single action with multiple sub-events.

Aspect scope provides further evidence for the unity of the predicate. The tense and aspectual marking of the inflected verb has scope over the verb in -IB as well.

4.2 Selection of inflecting verb

Not all verbs can be used with the light verb reading. Any two verbs may be freely conjoined in the sequential event -IB structure, but the verbs in the single event structure are limited. We can see this, for example, by trying to map a Kazan Tatar 'light verb' onto a Turkish sentence.

- (16) a. *kölep ğiber-* 'burst out laughing' (Kazan Tatar)
b. **ġüliþ gebermek* 'id.' (pseudo-Turkish)
('to laugh and die')
c. *ġülmekten geberdi* 'id.' (the actual T. const)

4.3 Constituent order

For the single event reading to be admissible, the -IB verb and the inflected verb must be adjacent. If the -IB verb and the inflected verb are separated, it forces the conjoined reading. This is shown in (17)-(19) for Turkish.

- (17) *Kitabı okuyup durdu.*
book-ACC read-CONV stand-PST.
a. 'He was reading the book, (and) stood up.'
b. 'He kept on reading the book.'
- (18) *Kitabı okuyup sık sık durdu.*
book-ACC read-CONV often stand-PST.
a. 'He was reading a book, (and) often stood up.'
b. *'He kept on reading a book often.'
- (19) *Kitabı okuyup, yolda durdu.*
book-ACC read-CONV, road-LOC stand-PST.
a. 'He was reading the book, (and) then stood in the road.'
b. *'He kept on reading the book in the road.'

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4.4 Preverbal focus

In Turkish (and many other Turkic languages) focused arguments appear immediately before the ‘verb’. In the case of -IB constructions, the ‘preverbal’ focus position is before the -IB + verb.

- (20) a. *Kitabı Mehmet okuyup durdu.*
book-ACC M read-CONV stand-PST.
‘MEHMET kept on reading the book.’
- b. *Kitabı okuyup Mehmet durdu.*
book-ACC read-CONV M. stand-PST.
* ‘MEHMET kept on reading the book.’
(actual reading: ‘Reading the book, MEHMET stood up.’)

Another way to focus constituents in Turkish is by using the particle *da*. (21) shows what happens when we try to focus the -IB-marked verb.

- (21) *Kitabı okuyup da durdu.*
book-ACC read-CONV FOC stand-PST.
a. ‘He READ A BOOK, then he stopped.’
b. *‘He kept on READING the book.’

In this construction too, an attempt to focus the verb in -IB results in a conjoined reading of two events. Apparently the only strategy to focus the action of *reading* (*okuyup*) is by using intonation.

4.5 Interrogatives

Just as one cannot use the focus particle *da* to mark the converb of a complex predicate, one cannot use the interrogative particle *mi* focus the converb.

- (22) **Kitabı okuyup mu durdun?*
book-ACC read-CONV INT stand-PST
(Intended: ‘Was it READING a book that you kept on doing?’)

In such sentences, only the conjoined reading is admissible, as in (23) (with context supplied):

- (23) *Bugün kütüphanede seni gördüm. Tuhaftı.*
today library-LOC 2SG-ACC see-PST-3SG strange-PST-3SG
- Sen bir sayfayı söküp mü cebe soktun?*
2SG ONE page-ACC rip out-CONV INT pocket-ALL put-PAST-2SG
‘I saw you at the library today. It was strange. Did you really rip out a page and put it in your pocket?’

All these tests show that the -IB + verb construction behaves as a single unit.

5. Why not auxiliaries?

In the previous section I gave some evidence for treating -IB constructions (in all the Turkic languages under consideration) as being of two contrasting types: a ‘conjoined’ structure and a complex predicate structure. However, I have not given evidence for the treatment of the inflecting verb as a ‘light verb’ rather than as a type of auxiliary, as has been claimed in the literature. Butt and Geuder (1999) and Butt (1995) give the following intuitive criteria for the differing behavior of light verbs and auxiliaries.

- Auxiliaries usually have defective paradigms; light verbs never do;
- Light verbs exist alongside independent verbs; auxiliaries usually don’t.

Each point will be examined in turn.

5.1 Defective paradigms

As seen in example (6) above, *durmak* when used as a light verb in Turkish does not have gaps in the paradigm. Compare the use of *омак* in Uzbek (and other Turkic languages), however, used as an aux, which is limited in tense and aspect combinations.

5.2 Light verbs ~ independent status

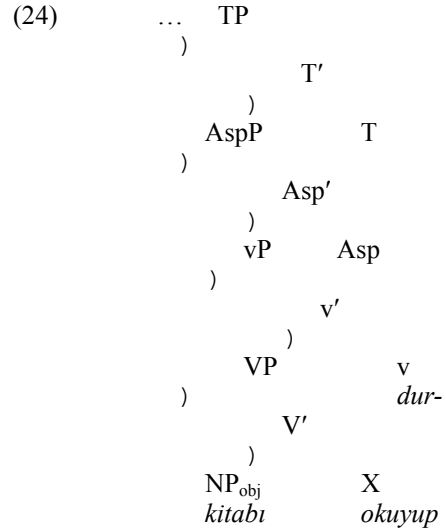
All the light verbs discussed here also exist as main verbs. This is very common cross-linguistically. Compare auxiliaries, which do not usually exist as matrix verbs. cf English, where *will*, *can*, *should*, etc have neither infinitives nor participial forms.

6. Summary: structure

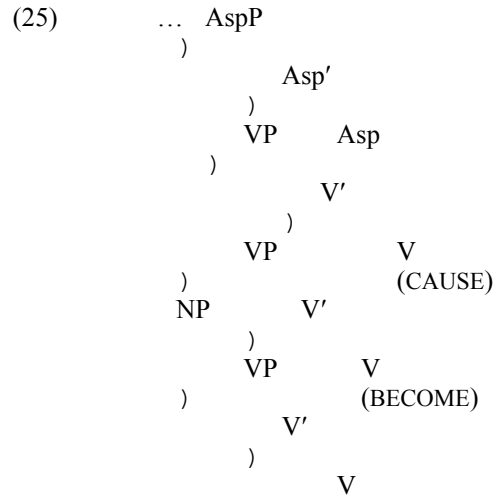
A first attempt at a tree might look like the tree in (24). This proposal simply embeds the -IB + verb construction within a vP. The -IB-marked verb is the lexical verb (+ a bunch of other morphology and structure) and *dur* occupies the generic ‘light verb’ head *v*.

This proposal is not the best we can do, however. *v* is usually used for applicatives, causatives and other argument-adding structures, which are compatible with -IB + light verb constructions (and note that Turkish *dur-* does not add an argument to the clause).

Turkic Complex Predicates

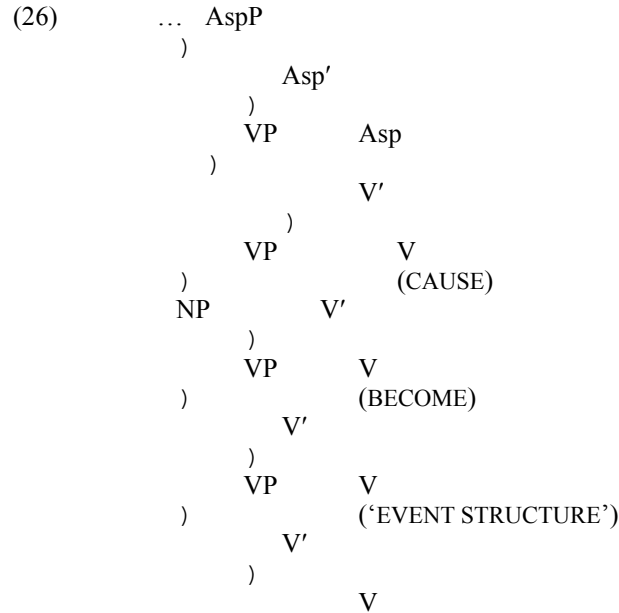


Thus a better proposal would be to adapt or adopt Lin's (2001) proposal (following Huang 1991, 1997) that different languages license different degrees of lexicalization of light verb structure. To adapt his structure to a Turkish verb phrase would produce something like the partial tree in (25).



The CAUSAL V is canonical *v*, while the BECOME tier is reminiscent of Ramchand's work using RvP (result phrases) (e.g. Ramchand and Butt 2002). While this could work structurally, we are presented with an obvious problem in that there is a very common class of light verb in Turkic languages that do not fit the semantics of the constituents normally associated with the heads CAUSE or BECOME (that is, causative or resultative heads). The 'event structure' class

(Aktionsart and the like) could be accommodated in a further tier. Turkish *-Ip dur-* would surface here.



While it may look as though I am proposing a new tier simply on the basis of Turkish, there is in fact various cross-linguistic support for the extra tier. Ramchand and Butt (2002), for example, propose a PROCESS layer in their model (although there are important structural differences between their analysis and my proposal that I am glossing over). Secondly, there is the evidence from Turkic itself, that ‘event structure’, including Aktionsart, is an important light verb category (and in Turkish perhaps the only category in this structure). Thirdly, there is the vast collection of languages with complex predicates of various types, where the ‘light verb’ marks something much more vague than ‘aspect’ or ‘Aktionsart’, and where it co-occurs with other aspectual categories in the language (e.g. Bardi, Hindi/Urdu, Dargi, etc; see, for example, Schultze-Berndt 2003, McGregor 2002), which has led to McGregor’s use of the term ‘verb classification’.

7. Conclusions

Coordination is one of the uses of -IB in Turkish, but when looking at multiple Turkic languages we see there are other ways of looking at the most grammaticalized forms. -IB + verb constructions are a type of complex predicate. Unlike -IB constructions which can be analysed as conjoined XPs, these constructions denote a single event. I have presented evidence that they also behave as a single syntactic unit.

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This proposal is just the beginning of the story. There is much more work to do, in examining Turkic and other language families to flesh out the arguments of this proposal (which has a number of gaps). I hope I have shown, however, that -IB constructions are not a syntactically unified phenomenon in Turkic languages and that one of the constructions can be equated with ‘event structures’ as are found in other languages with complex predicates.

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