

# **The *-ki* suffix annotation in Turkic languages**

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UDTW - SyntaxFest 2025, Ljubljana, 26 August 2025

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- The suffix *-ki-* has been examined in various Turkic languages from multiple perspectives, often yielding divergent results.
- Its interpretation and annotation are **inconsistent** across existing Turkic UD treebanks.
- In this talk, I summarize the outcomes of recent online discussions within the **UD Turkic group**.
- The focus is on **new aspects** of the phenomenon, primarily based on Turkish and Kyrgyz data.

- Our discussions indicate that **two distinct constructions** involve the suffix *-ki-*.
- In the first construction, *-ki-* functions as the **head of a ModP**, licensing locative PPs as nominal modifiers.

(1) [ModP [PP -loc] *-ki-* [ N ]]

- The second construction is an **anaphoric possessive structure**, specialized for contexts lacking an overt possessum. In this case, *-ki* itself serves as the **pro-form**, i.e. the anaphoric element.

(2) [PossP N-gen [-*ki* ]]

- From the perspective of the UD framework, three issues are central:
  - Whether the suffix *-ki-*, realized as a bound morpheme, should be **segmented**.
  - Which **POS** tag should be assigned to the construction.
  - How the **syntactic relation** is established within, and outside of, the phrase containing *-ki-*.

- At first sight, three constructions containing the suffix *-ki* can be distinguished:

(3)    *oda-da-ki    çocuk(-lar-im)*  
      room-loc-**KI** child-pl-1sg  
      N-loc-*ki* N(+Infl)

(4)    *oda-da-ki(-ler-im-i)*  
      room-loc-**KI**-pl-1sg-acc  
      N-loc-*ki*(+Infl)

(5)    *Ivan'-in-ki(-nde)*  
      Ivan-gen-**KI**-loc  
      N-gen-*ki*(+Infl)

- First, let us compare the two structures in (3) and (4):

(3) N-loc-*ki* N(+Infl)

(4) N-loc-*ki*(+Infl)

- Structure (3) represents the **regular construction**, where the suffix *-ki*- attaches to a locative-marked noun modifying an overt noun.
- Structure (4), by contrast, lacks an overt noun. This pattern is interpreted as an instance of **regular noun ellipsis**.

(3) N-loc-*ki* N(+Infl)

- Two pieces of evidence support the ellipsis analysis of (4):
  - **Evidence 1:** Lack of concord within the NP when the noun is overt. → If the noun is elided, one of the **modifiers** must take over its **inflection**.

(6) *masa-da-ki kitap-lar-im-da*  
table-loc-KI book-pl-poss.1sg-loc  
'in my books that are on the table'

(7) *masa-da-ki-ler-im-de* N  
table-loc-KI-pl-poss.1sg-loc  
'in my books that are on the table'

- **Evidence 2:** The modifier that is **linearly closest** to the elided noun carries the remnant inflection.

(8) *oda-da-ki zeki-ler-im* N  
room-loc-ki smart-pl-1sg  
'my smart ones in the room'

(9) #*oda-da-ki-ler-im zeki* N  
room-loc-ki-pl-1sg smart  
(intended: 'my smart ones in the room')

⇒ The resulting construction can be represented as:

(10) N-loc-*ki* (N)

- At first sight, it appears that a noun inflected for locative case takes the suffix *-ki-*.
- Beyond nouns, *-ki-* can also attach to PPs expressing location:

(11)    *masa-nin alt-in-da-ki*                      *cocuk*  
table-gen under-poss.3sg-loc-KI child  
‘the child under the table’

- Likewise, *-ki-* can attach to **adverbs** expressing spatial and temporal location:

(12) *Dün-kü yemeğ-i yi-yor-um*  
yesterday-KI food-acc eat-prog-1sg  
'I am eating the food from yesterday.' (lit. 'the  
yesterday's food')

- Apart from these contexts, the suffix *-ki-* does not appear to be productive.

- As a result, three main constructions with the suffix *-ki*- can be distinguished:

(13) N-loc-*ki* (N)

(14) Adv-*ki* (N)

(15) Postp-loc-*ki* (N)

- We assume that cases and adverbs can be analyzed as postpositions, leading to the generalization (see e.g. Johanson (2021) for adverbs):

(16) PP-*ki* (N)

- Regarding the **function** of *-ki*: it is traditionally assumed to modify a noun and to serve as a derivational suffix forming an adjective (i.e., an adjectivalizer).

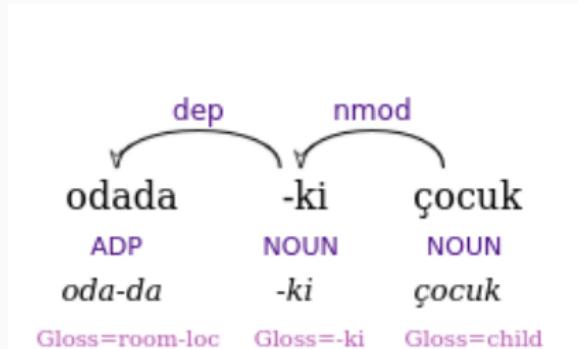
<b>Property</b>	<b>Adjective</b>	<b>PP-<i>ki</i></b>
Position w.r.t. the modified noun	only precedes	only precedes
Intensifier	yes	no/?
Comparative degree	yes	no/?
Predicate complement	yes	no/?
Base for adverb derivation	?	?

**Table 1:** Comparison of adjectives and PP-*ki* constructions

- As evidenced, [PP-*ki*] does not exhibit adjective-like properties; rather, it behaves as **nominal**.
- Following Kenesei (2014) on the Hungarian -*i*- suffix, we adopted the analysis that -*ki* in Turkic languages functions as the **licensor of locative PPs modifying nouns**. That is, it projects a functional layer, i.e. it is a “function suffix”.

(17) [ModP [PP -loc] -*ki*- [ (N) ]]

- **Segmentation:** According to UD, “The lemma does not remove derivational morphology.” However, in the case of *-ki*, it is not a derivational suffix but a syntactic operation.
- **UPOS:** Treat the PP as ADP, and *-ki* itself as N.
- **Syntactic relation:** Assign `amod` or `nmod` as appropriate. In cases of ellipsis, apply the “promotion” analysis.



**Figure 1:** Illustration of the PP-*ki* (N) construction.

- Now, let us turn to the N-gen-*ki* construction.
- The [N-gen-*ki*] construction does **not** involve **noun ellipsis**: inserting a noun is ungrammatical.

(18) *Ivan'-in-ki \*ev-in-de*  
Ivan-gen-KI house-poss.3sg-loc  
intended: ‘in Ivan’s house’

- The N-gen-*ki* construction can take inflection, and its syntactic behavior resembles that of **ordinary nouns**.

(19) *Bu kitap-lar Ivan'-in-ki-ler.*  
this book-pl Ivan-gen-ki-pl  
'These books are Ivan's.'

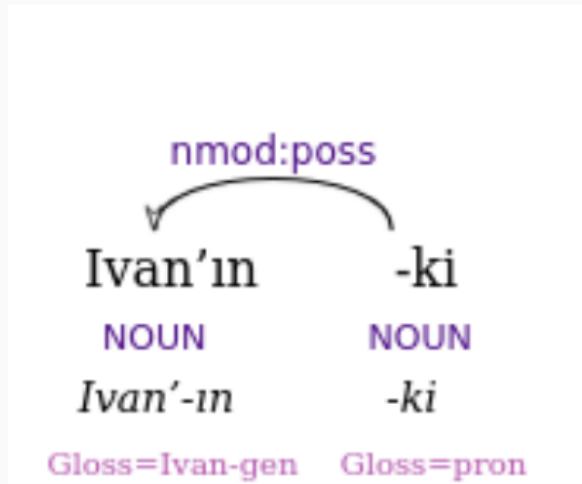
- In other words, it functions as a noun in its own right and can only serve as a **noun** or a **predicate**.

- Semantically, the N-gen-*ki* construction expresses **anaphoric possession**: expressing belonging and highlighting (and possibly emphasizing) the possessor.
- The construction lacks an overt nominal possessum, with the suffix *-ki* itself serving as the possessum pro-form, i.e., the anaphoric element.

(20) [<sub>PossP</sub> N-gen [-*ki*]]

→ The N-gen-*ki* construction is to be analyzed as a regular PossP.

- **Segmentation:** According to UD, “The lemma does not remove derivational morphology.” In the case of *-ki*, however, it is not a derivational suffix but a pro-form.
- **UPOS:** Treat the N-gen construction as **NOUN**, and *-ki* itself also as **NOUN**.
- **Syntactic relation:** Assign **nmod:poss**.



**Figure 2:** Illustration of the N-gen-ki construction.

**Thank you!**