Yawney, Heather

<u>The Yes/No Question Suffix in Turkish: Its Syntactic Distribution and its Irregular Stress within the Verbal Domain</u>

My current research is an investigation of the syntax/phonology interface as it pertains to the yes/no question suffix (Q) and its irregular stress pattern in verbal constructions in Turkish. Q shows positional variation in relation to other Tense/Aspect/Mood (T/A/M) suffixes and two agreement suffix groups (A and B agreement). Depending on the verbal group, Q follows agreement in a simple verbal construction (A) and precedes the verbal copula in a complex verbal construction (B) (Good & Yu 2005, Kornfilt 1996).

(1) Group A and Group B verbal constructions

    Group A: *git-t*í*   -**mi**-niz   vs.   git-ti   -n*í*z **-mi**
                 go-PAST-**Q** -2.PL   go-PAST-2.PL-**Q**
                                           "Did you go?"

    Group B: gid-ec*é*k-**mi**-Ø   -siniz   vs.   *gid-ec*é*k-Ø   -siniz-**mi**
                  go-FUT **-Q** -COP-2.PL   go -FUT-COP-2.PL-**Q**
                  "Will you go?"

<div align="right">(Kornfilt 1996)</div>

Additionally, it interacts with the phonology because main stress directly precedes Q, a deviation from the main stress rule which assigns main stress on the final syllable (Inkelas & Orgun 2003, Kabak & Vogel 2001).

Two different proposals try to account for Q's positional variation and have brought us closer to a better understanding of its syntactic position. A discussion based on both proposals will offer a better understanding of the correspondence the phonological form with what seems to be irregular stress in Turkish verbal constructions and the syntactic structure representation.

Firstly, Kahnemuyipour & Kornfilt (K&K) (2011) propose a focus phrase (FP) analysis to account for the stress behaviour when Q is present. They show Q being merged in a high focus position above T/AgrP in verbs having a simple syntactic construction or it being merged in a low *v*P-internal focus position above T/A/MP in verbs with complex syntactic construction. They take the obligatory low merger of Q due to the required merging as early as possible. The lower domain does not qualify for Q merger in A agreement as it lacks a fully functional T/A/M projection. They propose Q as the head of FP, and it attracts its complement to its specifier. This movement is accompanied by prosodic prominence emerging on the moved constituent.

Secondly, Skinner (SK) (2009) proposes that Q is an interrogative head generated in C°. The verb (*v*P) in does not raise to T°, but T° to C° is allowed. Agreement suffixes are merged above CP, in an assumed Topic position. A lowers to a complex head created by T°-to-C° movement but B does not and remains in situ during the Spell-out of CP. However, not all operations occur exclusively in narrow syntax (Adger 2006). The positioning of A/B agreement and Q are the result of post-syntactic processes on the PF branch, the former A lowering before Vocabulary Insertion (VI) licensed by the complex head via T°-to-C° raising, the latter prosodic inversion after VI with Q appearing on the right edge of all morphemes within the word corresponding with the complex head. B agreement follows Q because lowering is not licensed.

In this research I demonstrate a greater empirical success and theoretical appeal of the previous analyses of additional data introduced here.

(2) a. gid-ec*é*k-**mi**-y   -miş -siniz
       go -FUT-**Q** -COP-EVID-2.PL
       "Is it said that you were going to go?"
    b. *gid-ec*é*k-Ø   -miş -siniz-**mi**
         go -FUT-COP-EVID-2.PL-**Q**

<div align="right">(Kornfilt 1996)</div>

It is evident that Q is a focusing element from the research on Turkish information structure (i.e. Işsever 2003, Kılıçaslan 2004 and many others). K&K's focus phrase analysis predicts the phonological form correctly but predicts the logical form incorrectly of Turkish verbal constructions. (2) shows interesting evidence that Q seems to have a wide scope over the entire verb. This means Q must be interpreted high semantically and in a high position in the syntactic structure. If Q was interpreted low, the only part of the verb questioned would be go-FUT and the expected semantic interpretation would be along the line of *It was asked if you were going to go* or *It was said that there was a question if you were going to go*. In this case Q would only have a scope over the lower *v*P-domain in a semantic interpretation and would not take into account the higher domain. Following a Distributed Morphology framework (Harley & Noyer 1999), I propose a feature bundle [+Q, +Foc] in C° in the narrow syntax. Regarding SK, the merging of the feature bundles representing agreement above CP and the post-syntactic operation of lowering to check the feature [-nominal] in the complex head by inserting the A agreement allomorph results in unattested outputs. Post-syntactic operations and cyclic Spell-out predicts wrong positions of Q and incorrect main stress assignment within the verb seen in (2). For this reason, I propose agreement suffixes are merged in a position lower than CP.

Newell (2008) offers a brief beginning to an analysis of the facts regarding Q surfacing in two verbal positions suggesting that the question suffix is parasitic on domains that would be treated as independent stress domains regardless of the presence of Q or not. The distribution of Q seems to be dependent on a phonological rather than a syntactic domain. To take this into account, an operation of prosodic inversion on the PF branch is suggested. Infixion is a phenomenon that is possible (Yu 2003). They originate in peripherals and attach to edges. Therefore, I propose by an operation of prosodic inversion, Q is attracted to the right-edge of the phonological word previously interpreted.

Bibliography:

Adger, D. (2006). Post-Syntactic Movement and the Old Irish Verb. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 23(3), 605-654.

Good, J. & Yu, A. (2005). Morphosyntax of Two Turkish Subject Pronominal Paradigms. In *Clitic and Affix Combinations*, eds. Heggie, L. & Ordòñez, F., John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 315-342.

Harley, H. & Noyer, R. (1999). Distributed Morphology. *Glot International* 4:3-9.

Inkelas, S. & Orgun, C. O. (2003). Turkish stress: a review. *Phonology* 20(1), 139-161.

Işsever, S. (2003). Information structure in Turkish: the word-order prosody interface. *Lingua* 113(11), 1025-1053.

Kabak, B & Vogel, I. (2001). The phonological word and stress assignment in Turkish. *Phonology*, 1(3), 315-360.

Kahnemuyipour, A. & Kornfilt, J. (2011). The Syntax and Prosody of Turkish 'Pre-stressing' Verbs. In *Interfaces in Linguistics New Research Perspectives*, eds. R. Rolli & C. Ulbrich, Oxford Linguistics, Oxford, 205-221.

Kılıçaslan, Y. (2004). Syntax of information structure in Turkish. *Linguistics* 42(2), 717-765.

Kornfilt, J. (1996). On some copular clitics in Turkish. In *ZAS Papers in Linguistics: Papers on the conference 'The word as a phonetic unit'*, eds. A. Alexiadou, N. Fuhrop, P. Law & S. Lohken, Berlin: Zentrum für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft, 96-114.

Newell, H. (2008). *Aspects of the morphology and phonology of phases*. PhD Dissertation, McGill University.

Skinner, T. (2009). *Investigations of downward movement*. PhD Dissertation, McGill University.

Yu, A. (2003). *The Morphology and Phonology of Infixation*. PhD Dissertation, University of California-Berkeley.