Variable Affix Order on the Surface: The Case of Turkish

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Claim: The Turkish verb has two surface positions for the agreement suffix. We argue that, syntactically, there is only one position for the agreement marker (cf. also Kabak 2007) and that the variability is entirely due to surface-oriented precedence constraints that also derive the pattern of suspended affixation. We implement the idea in Standard OT.

Data: In Turkish, there are at least 4 agreement paradigms, the choice of which depends on the preceding marker. The k-paradigm (Agr_k) can follow or precede the copula ((1a) vs. (2a)); the z-paradigm Agr_z must follow it ((1b) vs. (2b)). With the coordinator ve ‚and‘, suspension is ungrammatical for precopular Agr_k (3a). Suspension of postcopular Agr_k is not possible if there is a non-suspended TAM_k ((3b) vs. (3c)). Suspension of Agr_z is grammatical (ex. omitted).

(1) a. Gör-dü-y-se-**k**
     see-pfv-cop-cond-**1pl**
     ‚If we have seen‘

   b. Gör-üyor-Ø-muş-**uz**.
     see-ipfv-cop-evid-**1pl**
     ‚Apparently we see.‘

(2) a. Gör-dü-**k**-Ø-se.
   b. *Gör-üyor-uz-Ø-**muş**.
     (Good & Yu 2005)

(3) a. *****[Çalış-tı]   ve [kazan-dı] -**k** mı?
     [work-pfv] and [earn-pfv] -**1pl** q

   b. *[Çalış-tı]   ve [kazan-dı] -y-dı-**k**
     [work-pfv] and [earn-pfv] -cop-pst-**1pl**

   c. [Çalış-ıyor] ve [kazan-ıyor] -du-**k**
     [work-ipfv] and [earn-ipfv] -pst-**1pl**   (Kabak 2007: 321)

Proposal: We assume a syntactic structure with a number of functional projections above the VP (cf. Kornfilt 1996): [[[[V-...-TAM_1]-C(op)]-TAM_2]-Agr]. Postsyntactically, the structure is linearized before vocabulary insertion (Arregi & Nevins 2012). Linearization is subject to optimization. We assume that Turkish presents a case of true optionality (Müller 2001), which is the result of identical constraint profiles. There are two morpheme ordering constraints (cf. Ryan 2010) in (4) (precedence vs. immediate precedence) with the ranking (4a) >> (4b). This accounts for both variable affix ordering ((5)-(6)) and suspended affixation (tableau omitted):

(4) a. Tz<*A: Count a violation for every TAM_z that does not precede an Agr.
   b. Tk-A: Count a violation for every morpheme that prevents a TAM_k from immediately preceding an Agr.

(5) I: [[[[V-Tk]-C]-Tk]-A]	Tz <*A	Tk-A	(6) I: [[[[V-Tz]-C]-Tz]-A]	Tz <*A	Tk-A
→ a. V-Tk-C-Tk-A		**	→ a. V-Tz-C-Tz-A		
→ b. V-Tk-A-C-Tk		**	b. V-Tz-A-C-Tz	*	

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References: Good, J. & A. Yu (2005). Morphosyntax of two Turkish subject pronominal paradigms. In L. Heggie & F.Ordóñez (eds.) Clitic and Affix Combinations: Theoretical perspectives. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 315–341. Kabak, B. (2013). Turkish Suspended Affixation. Linguistics 45, 311–347.