

CHAPTER 2

PROSODIC MARKING IN NOMINAL PREDICATIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study aims to indicate that prosody interacts with both the syntactic and the informative makeup of sentences, which gives rise to language specific constraints of the syntaxS-phonology interface. The basic forms that are analyzed in terms of this interface are syntactic constructions which are composed of nominal strings in Turkish, as categorized below:

- (i) Modifier-Noun phrases (Adjective+Noun or Noun+Noun phrases),
- (ii) Argument-Predicate phrases (with the Arg+Pred order),
- (iii) Predicate-Argument phrases (with the Pred+Arg order).

I first exemplify the three types above, then explain the reason why such nominal strings are interesting in Turkish for the present study:

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|-----|----|--------------------|----|------------------------|
| (1) | a. | tatlı kedi | b. | yavru kedi |
| | | cute cat | | baby cat |
| | | 'cute cat' | | 'kitten' |
| | | (Mod+N) | | (Mod+N) |
| | | or | | or |
| | | 'The cat is cute.' | | 'The cat is a kitten.' |
| | | (Pred+Arg) | | (Pred+Arg) |

In (1a), we see a nominal string consisting of an adjective and a noun, which is structurally ambiguous as it can be a noun phrase (NP) with the meaning 'a/the cute cat' or a sentence (S) with the meaning 'The cat is cute'. Likewise, (1b) includes elements from the noun category where the first constituent can be in-

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boundary in between, or an S with a phonological phrase boundary between the constituents. The second, sentential case can hold either an Arg+Pred or a Pred+Arg order. The first structure is interesting in that the nuclear accent occurs on the the second nominal. This might result from the inherently informative, descriptive characteristics of the nominal predicates. On the other hand, what is common in all these three structures is the pitch accent at the PPh level, which is always assigned to the last syllable of the leftmost PWD in Turkish. The stress in the I-P level, however, shows alteration; according to the findings here, the I-P level stress assignment is related to the number of the PPhs and the type of the predicate. Next, we saw that there is a parallelism between the nominal and the verbal predicates in Turkish: The elements following them are deaccented.

3. Conclusions

The current study aimed to show the interaction of syntax and phonology by a few prosodic analyses of the phrasal nominal strings in Turkish. Two previous points have been supported: (i) The phonological parsing needs a hierarchical system and (ii) the top prosodic level, the I-P level, (as assumed here), interacts with the syntax, the information structure and the discourse. Moreover, three findings have been presented: (i) Turkish phonological phrases seem to require at least two phonological words; (ii) unlike the PPh level, the I-P level stress assignment shows alterations based on the number of the PPh, the type of the predicate, and the information structure; (iii) what cannot be accented in Turkish is the postpredicate, rather than only postverbal, position. Future research could investigate the I-P level stress with PPhs which differ in number, and sentences with both nominal and verbal predicates which differ in complexity.

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