

Turkish “Double Passives”
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Turkish has been claimed to exhibit passives of passives, (1), (Keenan and Timberlake 1985, Özkaragöz 1986, Baker et al. 1989, Bruening 2013, Kiparsky 2013, Murphy 2014, i.a.). This has motivated a generalized demotion analysis of the passive, whereby an operation or functional head suppresses the highest open argument, be it an agent or a theme (Bruening 2013, Kiparsky 2013, Murphy 2014, i.a.).

- (1) Harp-te vur-ul-un-ur.
war-LOC shoot-PASS-PASS-AOR

‘One is shot (by one) in the war.’ (Özkaragöz 1986, 77)

In this paper we demonstrate that (1) is the combination of two distinct constructions with identical morphology: (i) a passive, whereby the agent θ -role is introduced by Voice⁰, and is either realized in a ‘by’ phrase or is subject to existential closure applying directly to Voice⁰; and (ii) an impersonal, whereby the argument position is syntactically projected as a null impersonal human pronoun.

Background The Turkish passive applies to transitive verbs, promotes an ACC object to NOM, allows a ‘by’ phrase, and allows non-human agents, (3).

- (2) Sivrisinek adam-ı ısır-dı (3) Adam (sivrisinek tarafından) ısır-ıl-dı
mosquito.NOM man-ACC bite-PST man.nom (mosquito by) bite-PASS-PST
‘The mosquito bit the man.’ ‘The man was bitten by the mosquito.’

Passive is ungrammatical if the object is pseudo-incorporated, (4), (see Öztürk 2005 on Turkish pseudo-incorporation) or oblique, (5), or if the verb is unergative, (6), or unaccusative, (7).

- (4) * Ali tarafından hızlı kitap oku-n-du. (6) * Çocuk-lar tarafından dans ed-il-di.
Ali by quick book read-PASS-PST child-PL by dance do-PASS-PST
‘Book-reading was done quickly by Ali.’ ‘It was danced the whole night by the children.’
(5) * Top-a çocuk tarafından vur-ul-du. (7) * Kaza-da adam tarafından öl-ün-dü.
ball-DAT child by kick-PASS-PST accident-LOC man by die-PASS-PST
‘The ball was kicked by the child.’ ‘It was died by the man in the accident.’

(4)-(7) become grammatical if the ‘by’-phrases are removed. Such constructions have been considered impersonal passives, that is passives in which the agent is demoted, but there is no promotion to the grammatical subject position (Özkaragöz 1986, Nakipoğlu-Demiralp 2001, Öztürk 2005, Özsoy 2009, Kiparsky 2013). We demonstrate instead that these are impersonal constructions in which the argument is syntactically projected as a null pronoun.

Passive vs Impersonal We provide six arguments for a syntactically projected impersonal pronoun in the impersonal. (i) As seen in (4)-(7), a ‘by’-phrase is impossible, unlike in the passive, (1). (ii) A matrix impersonal agent can control an embedded impersonal agent, (8). (iii) A human interpretation is obligatory, (9), like impersonals (e.g. Italian *si*, German *Man*, English *one*), but unlike the passive (1). (iv) The impersonal agent can bind a reciprocal in a PP, (10).

- (8) [PRO yarın ayrıl-in-mak] iste-n-di, ama ...
[PRO tomorrow leave-PASS-INF] want-PASS-PST but
‘One wanted to leave tomorrow, but ...’

- (9) * Çöl-ler-de hisla-n-ıyor. (10) Düğün-ler-de birbiri için dans ed-il-ir.
desert-PL-LOC hiss-PASS-PROG wedding-PL-LOC each.other for dance do-PASS-AOR
‘It is hissed in the deserts.’ ‘During weddings, it is danced for each other.’

(v) The subject of a dependent *-ArAk* clause (Biktimir 1986, Knecht 1985) is licensed by the impersonal agent, (11), but not by the passive agent, (12).

(11) [Sakız çiğne-yerek] hoca-yla konuş-ul-maz.
 gum chew-ArAk teacher-with speak-PASS-NEG.AOR
 ‘One does not speak with the teacher while chewing gum.’ (Biktimir 1986, 64)

(12) * [Sakız çiğne-yerek] hoca öğrenci tarafından çağır-ıl-maz.
 gum chew-ArAk teacher student by call-PASS-NEG.AOR
 ‘The teacher is not called by a student while (student is) chewing gum.’

(vi) The impersonal agent can license a depictive, (13), but the passive agent cannot, (14).

(13) Sarhoş koş-ul-du. (14) * Mektup Ahmet tarafından sarhoş yaz-ıl-dı.
 drunk run-PASS-PST letter Ahmet by drunk write-PASS-PST
 ‘It was run drunk.’ ‘The letter was written by Ahmet drunk.’

Passive of Impersonal Returning to (1), we find the theme is an impersonal pronoun: it is obligatorily human, (15), and cannot appear in a ‘by’-phrase (17). In contrast, the agent has been demoted through the passive: it can be non-human, (16), and can appear in a ‘by’-phrase, (16), (17).

(15) # Burada güd-ül-ün-ür. (16) Orman-da (yılan-lar tarafından) sok-ul-un-ur.
 here herd-PASS-PASS-AOR forest-LOC snake-PL by bite-PASS-PASS-AOR
 ‘Here one is herded.’ ‘In the forest, one is bitten (by the snakes).’

(17) Harp-te askerler tarafından vur-ul-un-ur.
 war-LOC soldiers by shoot-PASS-PASS-AOR
 NOT: theme ‘by’-phrase ‘In war, soldiers are shot by one’
 YES: agent ‘by’-phrase ‘In war, one is shot by soldiers.’

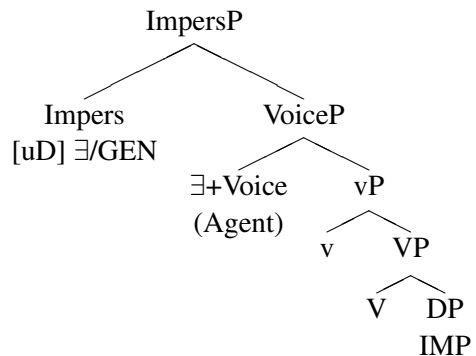
As predicted, a matrix impersonal agent can control the embedded impersonal theme, (18).

(18) Harp-te IMP [PRO_{IMP} kimse tarafından vur-ul-un-mak] iste-n-mez
 war-LOC [anyone by shoot-PASS-PASS-INF] want-PASS-NEG.AOR
 ‘In the war, it is not wanted to be shot by anyone.’

Morphology We analyse the impersonal morphology as heading a functional projection dominating VoiceP; ImpersP licenses the null impersonal morpheme, and hosts the generic/existential quantification. A [uD] feature on Impers⁰ attracts the highest argument (as in Landau 2015 on controlled PRO), hence the impersonal pronoun cannot be the theme of an active transitive, (19). Hence, (21) is the structure of (1) repeated as (20), (prior to verb movement).

(19) * Harp-te düşman vur-ul-ur. (21)
 war-LOC enemy shoot-PASS-AOR
 ‘In war, the enemy shoots one.’

(20) Harp-te vur-ul-un-ur.
 war-LOC shoot-PASS-PASS-AOR
 ‘One is shot (by one) in the war.’
 (Özkaragöz 1986, 77)



Conclusion We presented an analysis of the passive whereby existential closure applies directly to the Voice⁰ that introduces the agent; this predicts that only the agent may be suppressed in the passive. We presented an analysis of the impersonal whereby a null impersonal pronoun is licensed by Impers⁰; this predicts that impersonals may affect the highest argument, be it an agent or theme. We demonstrate that

the so-called “double passive” in Turkish confirms these predictions exactly. In contrast, a generalized demotion analysis of the passive, (Bruening 2013, Kiparsky 2013, Murphy 2014, i.a.), fails to make the correct predictions.

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