

## Fragmentary Expressions and Adpositions in Turkish: Can Marked Sluices still Represent Pseudosluicing?

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The ellipsis site for clausal ellipsis is often ambiguous between a ‘full’ sentential source (e.g., *what Sally ate*) and a copular clausal source with a null subject and copular verb (e.g., *what (it) (is)*); so-called pseudosluicing). In Turkish, pivots of clefts must be nominatively case-marked (İnce 2006; Şener 2010), suggesting that a full source is disambiguated whenever a remnant of a clausal ellipsis bears non-nominative case (1) (İnce 2009, 2012; Palaz, 2019).

- (1) Cem-Ø biri-ne kız-mış ama KİM-e sor-ma-dı-m.  
Cem-NOM s.o-DAT get.angry-EV.3SG but who-DAT ask-NEG-PST-1SG  
‘Cem got angry at someone, but I didn’t ask who (that was).’ (Palaz, 2019, p.64)

Based on the results of 5 large-scale acceptability judgment experiments, I argue that the remnant’s case (or the presence of a postposition) is not a reliable disambiguator of a fragment’s underlying syntactic structure in Turkish, and that even non-nominative fragments can be derived by pseudosluicing. I maintain this argument by providing evidence from TAM mismatch conditions where evidential marker *-miş* is used in the remnants. A subset of the stimuli is given below which are each responses to (2A). (B1-B8) vary in the presence/absence of case-marking, in the postposition *karşı* ‘against’, and in whether the remnant is a wh- or non-wh-phrase. (B1-2) and (B5-6) involve clausal ellipsis, whereas (B3-4) and (B7-8) are copula clauses (generated by the evidential *-miş*).

- (2) A: Ahmet biri-ne karşı güreş-ecek.  
Ahmet s.o.-dat against wrestle-FUT  
‘Ahmet will wrestle against someone.’  
B1: Evet, Mert-Ø B2: Evet, Mert-e karşı  
Evet, Mert-Ø Yes, Mert-DAT against  
B3: Evet, Mert-e-y-miş B4: Evet, Mert-e karşı-y-miş  
Yes, Mert-DAT-COP-EVD Yes, Mert-DAT against-EVD  
B5: Öyle mi, kim-Ø B6: Öyle mi, kim-e karşı?  
Really, who-Ø Really, who-DAT against?  
B7: Öyle mi, kim-e-miş? B8: Öyle mi, kim-e karşı-y-miş?  
Really, who-DAT-EVD? Really, who-DAT against-EVD?

I have particularly tested dative and accusative case markers as well as genuine postpositions (Kabak, 2006) *karşı* ‘against’ and *ile* ‘with’ (Figure 1 and 2 represent the results of these two 2x2x2 experiments). Using such postposition is important because Palaz (2019a), using *hakkında* ‘about’ (share-POS-LOC) -a fake postposition derived from a noun-, has claimed an interaction effect between case markers and postpositions (3) (which has been proven otherwise in this study). I have also tested how other factors interact with the overt presence of a TAM mismatch between the remnants and their correlates in the antecedent clauses. Earlier research on pseudo-/sluicing has consistently exemplified TAM match conditions by using markers that can also conjugate copular predicates e.g., (4) (e.g., İnce, 2006; Palaz, 2019b; Kiper 2020 among others). In these experiments, I, on the other hand, have used the future tense marker *-ecek* which requires the presence of a (light) verb (e.g., “ol” ‘be’); thus, creating a contrast between the antecedent and the ellipsis site as well as precluding the possible interpretation of TAM of the antecedent being saved from deletion under ellipsis in the remnant (\*kim<sub>who</sub>-e<sub>dat</sub>-y<sub>cop</sub>-ecek<sub>fut</sub>).

- (3) Cem-Ø birisi hakkında konuş-tu ama KİM-İN \*(hakkında) hatırlamıyorum.  
Cem-NOM s.o about speak-PST but who-gen \*(about) remember-NEG-PROG-1.SG  
‘Cem talked about someone but I don’t remember about who?’ (Palaz, 2019-TOWARDS)

- (4) Fatih-Ø biri-nin ara-dığ-ın-ı söyle-di-Ø, ama kim-di hatırla-m-ıyor-um.

F.-NOM s.o.-GEN call-NOM-POSS.3SG-ACC tell-PST-3SG but who-PST remember-NEG-PROG-1SG  
‘Fatih said that someone called, but I don’t remember who (that was).’ (Kiper, 2020, p.84)

Each experiment used a 1-7 Likert-type scale (1 = completely unnatural) with 3 repetitions per condition. Test items and standardized fillers (min 1:1.5 ratio) were distributed across pseudo-randomized and counterbalanced lists according to a Latin square design. The standardized fillers mapped out 7 equally-spaced points on the scale. The statistical reliability of cross-experimental analysis was ensured by z-scoring results over standardized fillers that were employed across all experiments.

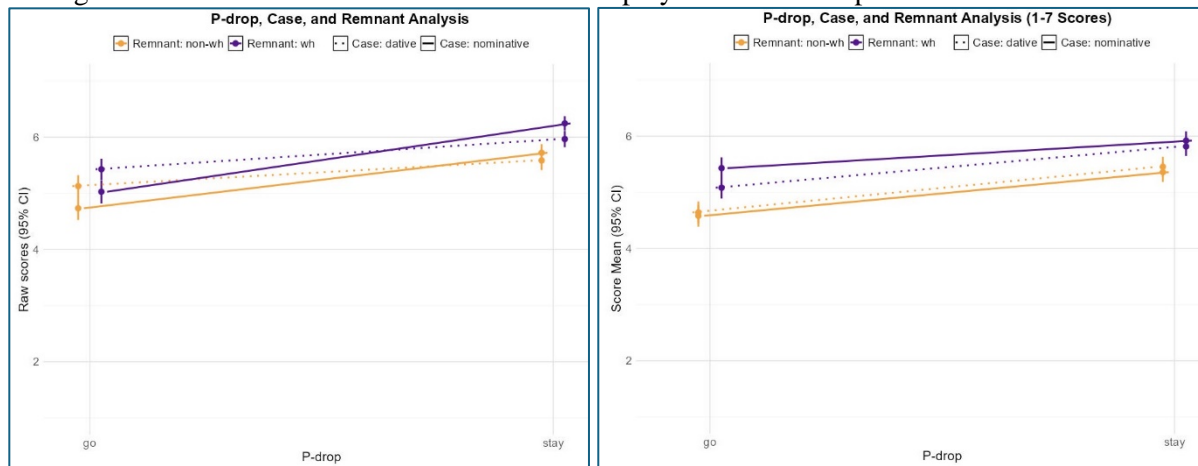


Figure 1: P-drop experiment with no evidential

Figure 2: P-drop experiment with the evidential *-miş*

The results show that, contrary to prior assumptions, there is no significant difference in acceptability between the copular responses in (2), each of which have non-nominative NP or PP pivots, and a baseline copular response with a nominative pivot (Mert- $\emptyset$ -*miş<sub>evd</sub>* / kim- $\emptyset$ -*miş<sub>evd</sub>*). Note that although in accusatively-marked remnants (kim<sub>who</sub>-i<sub>acc</sub>-y<sub>cop</sub>-*miş<sub>evd</sub>* ‘*who it was<sub>EVD</sub>*?’) ratings dropped minimally, they still remain above a critical threshold (4.45/7) which is higher than what Kiper 2020 had previously found (kim<sub>who</sub>-i<sub>acc</sub>-y<sub>cop</sub>-*d<sub>pst</sub>* ‘*who it was<sub>PST</sub>*?’). This entails that the fragmentary expressions in (2), which are judged as acceptable as their non-elliptic counterparts, could be generated by pseudosluicing: i.e., each could be copular clauses with a null subject and null copula. Thus, the presence of non-nominative case cannot be viewed as a reliable sign of English-style clausal ellipsis in Turkish, neither can the presence of a ‘true’ postposition, as responses such as (B4) and (B8) are acceptable. These results – the evidential marker being somewhat omnipresent although not overtly specified- might be what Palaz has overlooked when suggesting PP Head case marker mismatch is ungrammatical.<sup>1</sup> Among other potential explanations, the possibility that the null evidential marker *-miş* is present in the ellipsis site is a strong argument. Last but not least, the presence of *-miş* – which has an inherent past meaning (Kornfilt, 1997) – in the acceptable responses in (B3-4) and (B7-8), shows that remnants may mismatch in TAM with antecedents. These and the rest of the results will be explained in detail during the talk.

**Keywords:** ellipsis, adposition, experimental syntax, evidential marker

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<sup>1</sup>I have found ~5.84/7 average rating for the mismatch condition with no postposition while ~6.04/7 for the condition with postposition. Linear regression models showed no significant difference.