Bare N(ominal)N(ominal) Concatenations in Turkish: Compounds or Syntactic Fallacies?

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Bare NN concatenations in Turkish, such as TAŞ DUVAR 'stone wall', TAHTA KAFA lit. *wood head* 'idiot' or DEMİR EL lit. *iron hand* 'squeezer', have long been cited as compounds (Kornfilt 1997; Göksel & Kerslake 2005; Gökdayı 2007) even though there is a disagreement on whether these concatenations are AN or NN compounds (see Kornfilt (1997) for a NN view, and Gökdayı (2007) among others for arguments in favor of a AN structure).

In this paper, we argue that: a) many of these NN concatenations are not true compounds, b) the real reason for the disagreement about the grammatical category of their internal constituents results from accepting the existence of two different nominal categories, nouns and adjectives, and c) NN concatenations are distinguished into three types, compounds, constructs, and mere noun phrases, all of them members of a continuum.

Following Braun & Haig (2000), we argue that in Turkish there are no distinct categories of nouns and adjectives, but rather a set of nominals, the members of which belong to a categorial continuum: '(more) nouny', 'no-pref(erence)', '(more) adjective-like'. In order to determine where a nominal stands on this continuum, we use five tests, three of them (3-5) have been proposed by Braun & Haig (2000): 1) modifiability, 2) *bir* insertion, 3) suffixation with *-lI* and *−sIz*, 4) gradability, and 5) intensifying reduplication. Assuming that the lexical items *kara* 'black', *taş* 'stone', and *duvar* 'wall' are adjective-like, no-pref. and nouny, respectively, they respond to these tests as follows:

1. Modifiability: As can be seen by the examples (1a-c) modification is leftwards, i.e. *adjective-like + no-pref*; *no-pref + nouny*; *adjective-like + nouny*:

(1)a. KARA TAŞ   b. TAŞ DUVAR   c. KARA DUVAR
   black stone   *stone wall*   *black wall*
   'black stone'   'stone wall'   'black wall'

Rightward modification is bound to the emergence of a suffix *−{(s)I(n)}* on the right periphery, which, according to Kornfilt (1997), Göksel & Kerslake (2005), and Ralli (2008) is a compound marker (COMP):

(2)a. *DUVAR TAŞ   b. DUVAR TAŞ −I   c. TAŞ KARA -SI
   wall   stone   *wall   stone -COMP*   *stone black-COMP*
   ?   'wall stone/stone for wall'   'stone black'

2. *bir* insertion: *[X bir Y]* '[a(n) X Y] as X**: While adjective-like and no-pref items can occur in the position X, which is the modifier of Y, nouny items cannot:

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(3)a. KARA BİR TAŞ   b. TAŞ   BİR DUVAR   c. *DUVAR BİR TAŞ
black one stone   *stone one wall*   *wall   one stone*
'a black stone'   'a stone wall'   ?

3. Suffixation with 'relational (REL)' *{-lI}* **and 'privative (PRV)'** *{-sIz}*:
Adjective-like items do not allow combination of a REL or a PRV suffix, whereas such suffixation is grammatical for no-pref and nouny items:

(4)a. *KARA-LI   b. TAŞ -LI   c. DUVAR-LI
     black-REL   *stone-REL*   *wall-REL*
     'with/in black'   'with stone(s)'   'with wall(s)'
   d. *KARA-SIZ   e. TAŞ -SIZ   f. DUVAR-SIZ
     black-PRV   *stone-PRV*   *wall-PRV*
     'without black'   'without stone(s)'   'without wall(s)'

4. Gradability: While adjective-like items can be graded with *daha* 'more' or *en* 'the most', nouny items cannot. Although questionable, non-pref items can be acceptable:

(5)a. DAHA KARA   b. ?DAHA TAŞ   c. *DAHA DUVAR
    more black   *more stone*   *more   wall*
    'more black'   ?   ?
   d. EN   KARA   e. ?EN   TAŞ   f. *EN DUVAR
    the most black   *the most stone*   *the most wall*
    'the most black'   ?   ?

5. Intensifying reduplication: While the meaning of adjective-like items can be intensified by a reduplicated syllable (INT), nouny items do not allow this type of intensification. No-pref items with reduplication are questionable, but can be acceptable:

(6)a. KAP-KARA   b. ?TAP-TAŞ   c. *DUP-DUVAR
    INT-black   *INT-stone*   *INT- wall*
    'dark/black as a pitch'   'all in stone'   ?

     As a result of the five tests described above, adjective-like items fulfill the criteria (1,2,4,5), nouny items fulfill the criterion (3), and no-pref items fulfill almost all criteria with a certain degree of ease. Therefore, concatenations cited as NN or AN compounds can be analyzed as combinations of the following types:

(7)a. [[no-pref][nouny]]   b. [[adj-like][nouny]]   c. [[adj-like][no-pref]]
    TAŞ DUVAR   YENİ YIL   KARA TAHTA
    stone wall   *new year*   *black board*
    'stone wall'   'new year'   'blackboard '

     As for the remaining combinations, i.e. [[nouny][nouny]], [[adj-like][adj-like]], and [[no-pref][no-pref]], they are not productively built in Turkish.
     The question that arises now is whether there are true NN compounds in Turkish. We will claim that this category also exists, the members of which display a semantic non-compositionality   or   semi-compositionality,   and   have   the   following

characteristics, as illustrated in (8): a) internal structure negative to insertion, c) no *hangi* ('which') substitution of the non-head, d) no non-head ellipsis, and e) no transformation of the non-head as a modificational phrase [*X olan…*] '[the … which is (made of) X]':

(8)

	True Compounds		
CATEGORIES	[[adj-like][nouny]]	[adj-like][no-pref]	[[no-pref][nouny]]
	KABA KULAK *rough ear* 'mumps'	KARA DUL *black widow* 'black widow'	TAHTA KAFA *wood head* 'idiot'
TESTS			
Element Insertion	*KABA BİR KULAK *rough one ear* ?	*KARA BİR DUL *black one widow* ?	*TAHTA BİR KAFA *wood one head* ?
Substitution with *hangi* 'which'	-HANGİ KULAK? *which ear?* -* KABA KULAK *rough ear* ?	HANGİ DUL? *which widow?* -* KARA DUL *black widow* ?	-HANGİ KAFA? *which head?* -* TAHTA KAFA *wood head* ?
Ellipsis of the non-head	* KABA KULAK VE EL *rough ear and hand* ?	*KARA DUL VE TAHTA *black widow and board* ?	* TAHTA KAFA VE MASA *wood head and table* ?
Modificational phrase	* KABA OLAN KULAK *rough be-ADJ ear* ?	*KARA OLAN DUL *black be-ADJ widow* ?	* TAHTA OLAN KAFA *wood be-ADJ head* ?

We will further argue that compounds differ from other NN concatenations, which could also be distinguished into two different categories: *constructs* (Borer 1988, 2009) and *mere NPs*. In order to define the properties of the last two categories, we will compare them with compounds with respect to compound-proper properties according to the tests described in (8). The results of such a comparison are summarized in the following table:

(9)

	COMPOUNDS	CONSTRUCTS	NPs
	DEMİR EL *iron hand* 'squeezer'	KURŞUN KALEM *lead pen(cil)* 'pencil'	TAŞ DUVAR *stone wall* 'stone wall'
TESTS			
Element insertion	*DEMİR BİR EL *wood one hand* ? <u>while,</u> BİR DEMİR EL *one iron hand* 'a squeezer'	?KURŞUN BİR KALEM *lead one pen(cil)* 'a pencil' <u>while,</u> BIR KURŞUN KALEM *one lead pen(cil)* 'a pencil'	TAŞ BİR DUVAR *stone one wall* 'a stone wall' <u>and,</u> BİR TAŞ DUVAR *one stone wall* 'a stone wall'
Substitution with *hangi* 'which'	-HANGİ EL? *which hand?* -* DEMİR EL *iron hand* ?	-HANGİ KALEM? *which pen(cil)?* -KURŞUN KALEM *lead pen(cil)* 'pencil'	-HANGİ DUVAR? *which wall?* -TAŞ DUVAR *stone wall* 'stone wall'

Ellipsis of the non-head	* DEMİR EL VE MASA *iron hand and table* ?	*KURŞUN KALEM VE PARA *lead pen(cil) and coin* 'pen(cil) and coin which are (made of) lead'	TAŞ DUVAR VE BINA *stone wall and building* 'stone wall and (stone) table'
Modificational phrase	* DEMİR OLAN EL *iron be-ADJ hand* ?	KURŞUN OLAN KALEM *lead be-ADJ pencil* 'the pencil which is (made of) lead'	TAŞ OLAN DUVAR *stone be-ADJ wall* 'the wall which is (made of) stone(s)

In accordance with Borer (1988, 2009) and Ralli & Stavrou (1998), who have identified the existence of constructs in Hebrew and Greek, respectively, it seems that their internal structure is visible to syntax only to a certain degree. Insertion of an element does not lead to ungrammaticality but to a slight change in meaning. The non-head of constructs can be substituted by *hangi* 'which', and transformed to a modificational phrase, but the ellipsis of the non-head triggers ungrammaticality. In contrast, the internal structure of NPs is totally visible to syntax, as they themselves are syntactic creations.

Finally, we propose that NN constructions are parts of a continuum, where the two poles are occupied by *compounds* and *NPs*, while *constructs* are placed in between. The internal structure of *compounds* is totally opaque to syntax, the structure of *constructs* exhibits a relative visibility to syntax, and that of *NPs* is fully accessible to syntactic operations. The existence of a continuum can also apply to nominals, the members of which range from more-nouny to more adjective-like, resolving the problems which are posed by accepting two radically distinct categories, nouns and adjectives.

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