

# On modeling the interaction between prominence and clitic placement in Turkish yes/no questions

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The yes/no question clitic in Turkish can attach to a narrowly focused element or the element that bears main intonational prominence in broad focus (1). Focus also receives main prominence, therefore the clitic has an affinity with prominence (underlined). In contrast, the semantic scope of focus is mismatched with the morphological host in (0c).

- (1) a. Ali dün yemek yaptı.  
 Ali yesterday dinner made  
 ‘Ali made dinner yesterday.’ *Declarative*
- b. [Ali]<sub>F</sub> **mi** dün yemek yaptı?  
 Ali Q yesterday dinner made  
 ‘Was it Ali who made dinner yesterday?’ *Subject focus question*
- c. Why all smiles?  
 [Ali dün yemek **mi** yaptı]<sub>F</sub>?  
 Ali yesterday dinner Q made  
 ‘Did Ali make dinner yesterday?’ *Broad focus question*

Kamali (2011) proposes that in broad focus as in (1c) the clitic is a second position clitic in the VP. She bases her argument on other constituents than the sentential object that can host the clitic in broad focus, including unaccusative subjects and low secondary predicates. They receive main prominence due to their position in the VP, as in (Kratzer and Selkirk 2007). She does not, however, discuss narrow focus attachment as in (1b). Are these second position clitics of other phrases than the VP? Or are they different, and if so, why?

I first show that the question clitic is not in the second position in any other phrase than the VP. An NP with an adjective or a PP will not show second position effects; the clitic rather attaches at the edge (2a, b). It can attach inside an NP to a genitive phrase, but this is the edge of an NP of its own (2c).

- (2) a. Emre [<sub>NP</sub> beyaz <\***mi**> (bir) araba] <**mi**> aldı?  
 Emre white Q one car Q bought  
 ‘Did Emre buy a white car?’
- b. [<sub>PP</sub> Arabaya <\***mi**> doğru] <**mu**> yür-üyor-uz?  
 car-dat Q toward Q walk-pres-1pl  
 ‘Are we walking toward the car.’

- c. Emre [<sub>NP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> kumarbaz amcası-nın] <mi> arabası-nı] <mi>  
 Emre gambler uncle-gen Q car-3sg Q  
 aldı?  
 bought  
 ‘Did Emre buy his gambling uncle’s car?’

(2) attests to the syntactic nature of the placement as well. The clitic does not attach to the word that bears intonational prominence, but rather at the end of a syntactically-defined domain. Note that in the literature of Turkish prosody, similar judgements for two-piece VPs, NPs and PPs have been reported (Kabak and Vogel 2001 among others). All are claimed to have prominence on the left. So, from a prosodic point of view, the illicit attachments in (2) should be fine.

This means we need a syntactic explanation for the distribution. On the one hand, the VP and the other phrases must be different in the availability of second position placement. On the other, the placement must mirror prosodic prominence. One or both of these must be syntactic in nature. I discuss some alternatives. The cartographic approach (Rizzi 1997 among many others), for instance, would derive all of these in syntax, but I will argue that it is undesirable in the absence of word order restrictions. I propose a linearization algorithm that is sensitive to focus and focus projection.

## References

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