The Logic of Turkish

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Contents

0 Introduction 2
1 Origins 2
2 Alphabet 3
3 Pronunciation 3
4 Everyday words and expressions 4
5 A bit of grammar 6
6 Polysyllabism and euphony 6
7 Some common suffixes 8
8 Suffixes 9
9 Parts of speech, and word-order 10
10 Inflexion of nouns 11
11 Conjugation of verbs 12
12 Sayings 16
13 Journalese 17
14 Dictionary 19
0 Introduction

These notes are about the majority language of Turkey. To a native English speaker, such as the writer of these notes, Turkish is remarkable in a number of ways:

1. Turkish is an inflected language, like Greek or Latin (or French, as far as verbs are concerned).
2. Unlike Greek and Latin, Turkish has only one way to decline a noun.
3. Unlike French, Turkish has only one way to conjugate a verb.
4. Beyond mere inflexion, Turkish has manifold regular ways of building up complex words from simple roots.
5. Much Turkish grammar and vocabulary can be explained through morphology; but the explanation need not be cluttered up with many paradigms illustrating the several means to the same end.
6. Turkish does, like Finnish, show regular spelling variations that correspond to vowel harmony in speech.
7. Turkish has many regular formulas for use in social interactions.

The present notes aim to illustrate or demonstrate these points.

1 Origins

The Persian language is Indo-European; the Arabic language is Semitic. The Turkish language is neither Indo-European nor Semitic. However, Turkish has borrowed many words from Persian and Arabic.

English too has borrowed many words from another language—French—, but for opposite or complementary reasons. In the eleventh century, the Normans invaded England and spread their language there; but Selçuk Turks overran Persia and adopted Persian, with its Arabic borrowings, as their administrative and literary language [4, p. xx]. Selçuks also invaded Anatolia, defeating the Byzantine Emperor in 1071 at the Battle of Manzikert.¹

More barbarians invaded Anatolia from the west: the Crusaders. Finally, from the ruins of the Byzantine and Selçuk Empires, arose the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman Turkish freely borrowed words from Persian and Arabic [1]. Some Arabic and Persian words have been retained in the language of the Turkish Republic since its founding in 1923; others have been replaced, either by neologisms fashioned in the Turkish style, or by borrowings from European languages like French.

¹The Turkish name for the town is Malazgirt; the order of battle there is shown in an historical atlas used by schoolchildren in Turkey.
2 Alphabet

Ottoman Turkish was generally written in the Arabic or Arabo-Persian alphabet. Since 1928, Turkish has been written in an alphabet derived from the Latin. To obtain the Turkish from the English alphabet:

1. throw out (Q, q), (W, w), and (X, x);
2. replace the letter (I, i) with the two letters (İ, Ĩ) and (İ, Ĩ); and
3. introduce the new letters (Ç, ç), (Ğ, ğ), (Ö, ö), (Ş, ş), (Ü, ü).

In alphabetical order, the 29 Turkish letters are:

A B C Ç D E F G Ğ H İ Í J K L M N O Ö P R S Ş T Ü Ü V Y Z.

There are 8 vowels—a, e, i, o, ö, u, ü—and their names are themselves. The remaining 21 letters are consonants. The name of a consonant x is xe, with one exception: ğ is yumuşak ğe, soft ğ.

3 Pronunciation

Turkish words are spelled as they are spoken. They are usually spoken as they are spelled, although some words taken from Persian and Arabic are pronounced in ways that are not fully reflected in spelling. Except in these loanwords, there is no variation between long and short vowels. There is hardly any variation between stressed and unstressed syllables.

According to their pronunciation, the 8 Turkish vowels correspond to the vertices of a cube. I propose to understand all of the vowels as deviations from the dotless letter Ī; so I place this vowel at the origin of Cartesian 3-space. As fits its simple written form, Ī is pronounced by relaxing the mouth completely, but keeping the teeth nearly clenched: the opening of the mouth will then be like a sideways Ī. The Turkish national drink rakı is not pronounced like Rocky: in the latter syllable of this, the tongue is too far forward. Relax the tongue in the latter syllable, letting it fall back; then you can ask for a glass of rakı.

The letter Ī is the back, unround, close vowel. Other vowels deviate from this by being front, round, or open. Physically, these deviations correspond to movements of the tongue, lips, and jaw; in my geometric conception, they correspond respectively

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2 However, in the museum in Milas (the Mylasa mentioned in Herodotus) for example, there is a stone with a Turkish inscription in Greek letters.

3 This is by design: the alphabet was intended for transcribing ‘pure’ spoken Turkish [10, pp. 189 f.]. However, a circumflex might be used to indicate a peculiarity, or a distinction such as that between the Persian kār profit and the Turkish kar snow; but the circumflex does not affect the alphabetical order of a word.

4 I shall say presently that ğ lengthens the preceding vowel; but one can think of the extra length as belonging to the consonant.
to movement in the \( x\)-, \( y\)-, and \( z\)-directions (right, up, and forward). For later discussion of vowel harmony, I let \( \# \) stand for a generic close vowel; \( \Theta \), for a generic unround, open vowel. See Figure 1.

The vowel \( a \) is like \( uh \) in English; \( \ddot{u} \) and \( \ddot{u} \) are as in German, or are like the French \( eu \) and \( u \); and Turkish \( u \) is like the short English \( o \). Diphthongs are obtained by addition of \( y \): so, \( ay \) is English long \( i \), and \( ey \) is English long \( a \).

The consonants that need mention are: \( c \), like English \( j \); \( ç \), like English \( ch \); \( ş \), which lengthens the vowel that precedes it (and never begins a word); \( j \), as in French; and \( ş \), like English \( sh \). Consonants doubled are held longer.

4 Everyday words and expressions

By learning some of these, you can impress or amuse people, or at least avoid embarrassing yourself when trying to open a door or visit the loo.

Lütfen/T eş kémürler/Bir şey değil Please/Thanks/It’s nothing.
Evet/hayır Yes/no.
Var/yok There is/there isn’t.
Affedersiniz Excuse me.
Efendim Madam or sir (a polite way to address anybody, including when answering the telephone).
Merhaba Hello. Günaydın Good morning.

\(^5\) I do not know of anybody else who uses this notation. According to Lewis [4, I, 34, p. 17], some people write \(-l\) or \(-l\), for example, to indicate that there are two possibilities for the vowel; instead, I shall write \(-l\). Likewise, instead of \(-n\), I shall write \(-n\).

\(^6\) Literally, One thing [is] not.

\(^7\) Af, aff- is from an Arabic verbal noun, meaning a pardoning; and edersiniz is the second-person plural (or polite) aorist (present) form of et- make. Turkish makes a lot of verbs with et- this way. For example, thanks is also expressed by T eş kémür I make a thanking. Grammatically, affedersiniz is a statement, not a command; but it is used as a request.

\(^8\) Efendi is from the Greek αὐθέντης, whence also English authentic.

\(^9\) Literally Day [is] bright.
Hoş geldiniz/Hoş bulund Welcome/its response.

İyi günler/akşamlar/geceler Good day/evening/night.

Güle güle Fare well (said to the person leaving);

Allaha ısmarladık or Hoşça kalın Good bye (said to the person staying behind).

Bay/Bayan Mr./Ms., or gentlemen's/ladies' toilet, clothing, &c.

Beyefendi/Hanımfendi Sir/Madam.

İtiniz/çekiniz Push/pull the door; giriş/çıkış entrance/exit;

sol/sağ left/right; soğuk/sıcak cold/hot.

Nasılsmınız?/İyiym, teşekkürler; siz?/Ben de iyiym.

How are you?/I'm fine, thanks; you?/I'm also fine.

Elinize sağlık Health to your hand. This is a standard compliment to a chef, who will reply: Afiyet olsun May it be healthy. Anybody may say Afiyet olsun to somebody who is eating, is about to eat, or has finished eating. The closest expression that I know in English is not English: bon appétit.

Kolay gelsin May [your work] come easy.

Geçmiş olsun May [your sickness, difficulty, &c.] be [something that has] passed (this can also be said after the trouble has passed).

İnşallah If God wills: that is, if all goes according to plan.

Maşallah May God protect from the evil eye: used to avoid jinxing what one praises; also written on vehicles as if to compensate for maniacal driving.

Allah korusun May God protect: also written on vehicles.

Rica ederim I request, orEstağfurullah, can be used with the sense of I don't deserve such praise! or Don't say such [bad] things about yourself!

Çok yaşayın!/Siz de görün Live long!/You too see [long life] (the response to a sneeze, and the sneezer's acknowledgement).

Tann/tanrıca god/goddess.

Sıfır, bir, iki, üç, dört, beş, altı, yedi, sekiz, dokuz 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9;
on, yirmi, kirk, ellî, altmış, yetmiş, seksen, doksan 10, 20, 30, . . . , 90;
yüz, bin, milyon, milyar 10², 10³, (10³)², (10³)³;
yüz kirk dokuz milyon beş yüz doksan yedi bin sekiz yüz yetmiş 149,597,870.

Daha/en more/most; az less, en az least.

Al-/sat-/ver- take, buy/sell/give;
alis/satış/alışveriş buying (rate)/selling (rate)/shopping.

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10 Literally You came well/We found well.
11 Literally Go/ smiling.
12 Literally To-God we-commended and Pleasantly stay.
13 Literally I make a request; the same kind of formation as affedersiniz.
14 Literally You came well/We found well.
15 The second-person forms here are plural or polite; the familiar singular forms are Nasilsınız?/. . . sen?
The Logic of Turkish

5  A bit of grammar

The Turkish interrogatives just given—kim, ne, ne zaman, &c.—also function as rudimentary relatives: Ne zaman gelecekler bilmiyorum I don’t know when they will come (literally What time come-will-they know-not-I). But most of the work done in English by relative clauses is done in Turkish by verb-forms, namely participles: the book that I gave you in Turkish becomes size verdiğim kitap: you-wards given-by-me book, or the book given to you by me.

In Turkish, you can describe somebody for a long time without giving any clue to the sex of that person: there is no gender. Even accomplished Turkish speakers of English confuse he and she: in Turkish there is a unique third-person singular pronoun, (o, on-), meaning indifferently he/she/it. In translations in these notes, I shall use sie in place of he/she, and hir in place of kim/her/his.

6  Polysyllabism and euphony

Turkish is agglutinative or synthetic. Written as two words, but pronounced as one, is the question Avrupalılaştıramadıklarımızdan mısınız? This can be analyzed as a stem with 11 suffixes, which I number:

Avrupa^{0}lı^{1}la^{2}ș-tr{ama}^{3} dik^{6}lar^{7}ımuz^{8}dan^{9} mi^{10}sinz^{11}?

The suffixes translate mostly as separate words in English, in almost the reverse order: Are^{10} you^{11} one-of^{9} those^{8} whom^{6} we^{8} could-not^{7} Europeanize (make^{4} be^{2} come^{3} Europe^{1}an^{1})? ^{17}

The interrogative particle (with suffix) mısınız in Avrupalılaştıramadıklarımızdan mısınız? is enclitic: in particular, it shows vowel harmony with the preceding word. Moreover, each suffix in Avrupalılaştıramadıklarımızdan mısınız? harmonizes with the

^17The numbered correspondence between Turkish and English is somewhat strained here. The interrogative particle mı strictly corresponds to the inversion of you are to form are you. Also, one might treat -laş as an indivisible suffix.
preceeding syllable. If we change Europeanize to Turkify in the question, it becomes Türkleştiremediklerimizden misiniz?

In Avrupa European, I understand the suffix -lı as a specialization of -l#. The last vowel of Avrupa is a back, unround vowel; so, when -l# is attached to Avrupa, then #, the generic close vowel, settles down to the close vowel that is back and unround, namely i. (In the geometrical scheme above, i is the vowel in the plane z = 0 that is closest to (0, 0, 1).)

Likewise, the suffix -laş is a specialization of -l@s, with a generic unround, open vowel. Since i is back, the @ becomes the back unround, open vowel in the formation of Avrupalaş become European.

When the modern Turkish alphabet was invented, something like my ‘generic’ vowels # and @ could have been introduced for use in writing down the harmonizing suffixes. But then the Turkish alphabet would have needed 31 letters, since the distinct ‘specialized’ vowels are still needed for root-words (and some non-harmonizing suffixes):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>an</th>
<th>moment</th>
<th>bal</th>
<th>honey</th>
<th>al-</th>
<th>take, buy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>en</td>
<td>most, -est</td>
<td>bel</td>
<td>waist</td>
<td>el</td>
<td>hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in-</td>
<td>go down</td>
<td>bil-</td>
<td>know</td>
<td>il</td>
<td>province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on</td>
<td>ten</td>
<td>bol</td>
<td>ample</td>
<td>oł-</td>
<td>become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ön</td>
<td>front</td>
<td>böl-</td>
<td>divide</td>
<td>oł-</td>
<td>die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un</td>
<td>flour</td>
<td>bul-</td>
<td>find</td>
<td>ulaş-</td>
<td>arrive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ün</td>
<td>fame</td>
<td>bülbül</td>
<td>nightingale</td>
<td>üleş-</td>
<td>share</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for consonants, they may change voice, depending on phonetic context. In particular, some consonants oscillate within the following pairs: t/d; p/b; ç/c; k/ğ.

Agglutination or synthesis can be seen on signs all over: An inödirm is an instance of causing to go-down, that is, a reduction, a sale: you will see the word in shop-windows; inöilir means is got down-from, is an exit—it’s written at the rear door of city busses.

As the last two examples may suggest, not only can one word feature more than one suffix, but also, many different words can be formed from one root:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>öl-</th>
<th>die</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>öl-dür-</td>
<td>kill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-dür-en</td>
<td>killer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-dür-esiye</td>
<td>murderously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-dür-men</td>
<td>executioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-dür-menlik</td>
<td>(his post)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-dür-t-</td>
<td>have (s.o.) killed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>öl-dzić-ücü</th>
<th>deadly, fatal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>öl-dür-ül-</td>
<td>be killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-dür-ul-en</td>
<td>murder victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-esiye</td>
<td>to death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-et</td>
<td>(prov.) plague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-eyaz-</td>
<td>almost die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-gün</td>
<td>lifeless, withered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl-üm</td>
<td>corpse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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18 Disused neologism for cellât.
19 Disused neologism for cellâtlık.
20 Disused neologism for morg.
The Logi of Turkish

Some common suffixes

The meanings of the root-words in the examples here are probably obvious, but they are given later in the Dictionary (§ 14):

-č# person involved with: kebapçı kebab-seller, kilitçi locksmith, balıkçı fishmonger, dedikoducu rumor-monger, gazeteci journalist or newsagent.

-č@ language of: Türkçe Turkish (the language of the Turks), Hollandaça Dutch.

-č#/ -ş#z including/excluding: sütlü/sütsüz with/without milk, şekerli/şekersiz sweetened/sugar-free, etli/etşiz containing meat/meatless; also Hollandalı Dutch (person),22 köylü villager, sarılı (person) dressed in yellow.

-č#k container of or pertaining to: tuzluk salt cellar, kimlik identity, kitaplık bookcase, günlük daily or diary, gecelik nightly or nightgown.


-č@ (makes verbs from nouns and adjectives): başla- make a head: begin; köpekle- make like a dog: cringe;25 kilitle- make locked: lock; temizle- make clean: clean.


-(Ş)r each: birer, ikişer one each, two each; kaçar? how many each?

-(ş)z: ikiz, üçüz twin(s), triplet(s).

-čr more than one of (not normally used if a definite number is named): başlar heads; beş baş five head; kişiler people; on iki kişi twelve person.

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20 This would be passive, if öl- were transitive: öl- is intransitive, so öl-ün- must be impersonal, referring to the dying of some generic person. See §§ 11 and 12.

21 Somebody who does not wish to confuse ethnicity with nationality will refer to a citizen of Turkey as Türkiyeli rather than the usual Türk.

22 "I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs"—Iago in Shakespeare’s Othello. But in Turkish, a friend is not necessarily a lover, but is rather somebody with whom you would stand back to back while fending off the enemy with your swords.

23 That’s right, there’s no vowel harmony here, nor in the next example.

24 The example is in [4, XIV, 22, p. 227], but it appears that köpekle- normally means dog-paddle, while cringe is köpekles-.
Turkish grammarians distinguish between constructive and inflexional suffixes. Words with inflexional suffixes do not appear in the dictionary; words with constructive suffixes (usually) do. Of the suffixes listed in § 7, only -l@r is inflexional (but for -c@ see § 10).

There are several series of personal inflexional suffixes; they are in Figure 2 above, with the personal pronouns for comparison.²⁶

The plural ending -l@r combines with the third-person forms here to make onlar, -l@r#, -l@r, -l@r, -s#nl@r; but the distinct plural forms of the third-person endings are not always used.

Second-person plural forms are used politely to address individuals, as in French. In examples below, I use archaic English second-person singular forms—thou, thee, &c.—to translate the corresponding Turkish singular forms.

A suffix of possession attaches to a noun to show the person of the possessor of the named entity:

kitabım my book; ağam my lord.

The suffix does not indicate that this entity is a possessor of something else: that job would be done by the possessive case-ending, discussed below in § 10.

A predicative suffix can make a complete sentence: it turns an expression into a predicate whose subject is the person indicated:

kitabım I am a book; ağayım I am lord.

The ending -d#r²⁷ is also predicative in this way, in the third person.

Predicative suffixes are also used with some verb-forms. Verbal suffixes are used only with verb-forms; likewise for the imperative suffixes.

²⁶The names in the table are mine.
²⁷It derives from an ancient verb-form meaning sie stands [4, VIII, 3, p. 93].
### Figure 3: Some conjunctions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logical Symbol</th>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>¬A</td>
<td>A değil</td>
<td>not A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A ∧ B</td>
<td>A ve B</td>
<td>A and B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A ile B</td>
<td>A and B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A; B de</td>
<td>A; B too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A ama B</td>
<td>A but B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A fakat B</td>
<td>A but B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A ancak B</td>
<td>A but B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hem A hem B</td>
<td>both A and B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A ∨ B</td>
<td>A veya B</td>
<td>A or B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A ya da B</td>
<td>A or B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ya A ya B</td>
<td>either A or B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¬A ∧ ¬B</td>
<td>ne A ne B</td>
<td>neither A nor B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A → B</td>
<td>A ise B</td>
<td>if A then B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eğer A ise, o zaman B</td>
<td>if A then B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A ↔ B</td>
<td>A ancak ve ancak B</td>
<td>A if and only if B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nouns are **declined**, roughly as in Latin: they take case-endings. Adjectives are not inflected to ‘agree’ in any way with the nouns that they modify. Comparison of adjectives is achieved with the particles daha, en, and az given above, in § 4; these precede adjectives.

### 9 Parts of speech, and word-order

Besides nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs, Turkish has adverbs, conjunctions, and particles, in particular **postpositions**.

Some Turkish **conjunctions** are given in Fig. 3. (There, de is a specialization of the harmonizing enclitic d@; for ise, see § 11.)

**Postpositions** are somewhat like prepositions in English: they do some work that might otherwise be done with case-endings. The object of a postposition may be a case of a noun.

- **gibi** like, **kadar** as far as, **doğru** towards, **dolayi** because of, **göre** according to, **için** for, **ile** with.

The modifier **usually** comes before the modified. This means: adjective (used attributively) precedes noun; adverb precedes verb; object of postposition precedes postposition. In a sentence, subject precedes predicate; objects precede verb; indirect object precedes direct object. But these are not absolute rules.
10 Inflexion of nouns

A Turkish noun can take inflexional endings, usually in the following order:

1. the plural ending, -l@r;
2. a suffix of possession;
3. a case-ending;
4. a predicative suffix.

The cases of Turkish nouns include:

- the bare case, the dictionary-form of a noun, used for subjects and indefinite direct objects;
- the possessive case, in -(n)#n;  
- the dative case, in -(y)@, for indirect objects;
- the clarifying case, in (y)#, for definite direct objects;
- the ablative case, in -d@n, for that from which;
- the locative case, in -d@, for place where;
- the instrumental case, in -#n, obsolescent, mostly replaced by the locative, or by the postposition ile with, which can be suffixed as -l@;
- the relative case, in -c@, with meanings like according to or in the manner of; one use was given in § 7.

For example:

- Gül'ler güzel-dir; bana bir gül al  Roses are beautiful; buy me a rose.
- Gül'ün diken-i; gül-ü koparmayın  Rose’s thorn; don’t pick the rose.
- Gül'e/gül-den/gül-de to/from/on (a/the) rose.
- Gül'ce according to Gül; çocukça childishly or baby-talk.
- Yaz-in during the summer; Gül’le Ayşe Ayşe and Gül;
- biçak-la kes- cut with a knife.

The singular personal pronouns ben and sen, declined, show a vowel change in the dative:

ben/benim/bana/beni/benden/bende/benimle/bence

28 Some say ‘nominative’; I’m translating the Turkish term yalan.
29 The term ‘genitive’ is used, but some work done by genitive cases in other languages is done by the ablative in Turkish.
30 Turkish belirime; the Latin term ‘accusative’ does not quite fit here.
31 The Turkish term is görelık relation, or else eşitlik equality. Some grammarians [8, p. 155] [2, p. 40] treat this as a case; others [3, p. 120] [4, p. 194] don’t.
The third-person pronoun o is also the demonstrative adjective that; other demonstratives are bu/bun- this and şu/sun- (for the thing pointed to).

Nouns can indicate person in two senses. A suffix of possession shows the person of a possessor of the named entity; a predicative suffix shows the person of the entity itself. Therefore the plural ending -l@r can show multiplicity of the entity itself, its possessor, or the subject of which the entity is predicated. However, the plural ending will not be used more than once in a word. The plural ending can be used with -d@r in either order, with different shades of meaning.

gül-üm/gül-ümüz/gül-ün/gül-ünüz my/our/thy/your rose;
gül-ü/Deniz’in gül-ü kır rose/Deniz’s rose;
gül-ler-i their rose, their roses, kır roses.  
Gül-üm/Gül-üz/Gül-sün/Gül-sünüz I/We/Thou/You are a rose.  
Gül-dür-ler/Gül-ler-dir They are roses/the roses.  
Gül-ler-im-de-siniz You are in my roses.

A sentence made from a noun with a predicative ending is negated with değil; the predicative ending is added to this:

Gül değil-im I am not a rose, I am not Rose.

When two nouns are joined, even though the first doesn’t name a possessor of the second, the second tends to take the third-person suffix of possession: bölm-üm department; matematik bölm-üm-ü mathematics department. You can see this feature in business names:

İş Banka-si Business Bank; Tekirdağ rakısı Tekirdağ [brand] raki.

Still, the plural ending, if used, precedes the suffix of possession:

deniz ana-si, deniz ana-lar-i jellyfish\(32\) (one or several).

11 Conjugation of verbs

There is no verb corresponding to the English have. Possession is indicated by suffixes of possession. The existence of possession (or anything else) is expressed by the (predicative) adjective var; non-existence is expressed by yok.

Gül-üm var My rose exists; I have got a rose.  
Gül-üm yok I have not got a rose.

The dictionary-form of a verb is usually the infinitive, in -m@k; remove this ending, and you have a stem. There are two (or more) other kinds of verbal nouns that may be in the dictionary: one in -m@, resembling the English gerund; and on in -(y)#$.  

okumak/okuma/okuyuş to read/reading/way of reading.

\(32\)literally sea mother(s)
The common stem in the examples is *oku*-. This is the dictionary-form in one dictionary [1], and I wish it were so in all dictionaries, since then simple verbs would always come before those obtained from them by means of constructive suffixes (§ 8). Anyway, verbs are given as stems in these notes.

A finite Turkish verb generally consists of a simple stem, followed by endings that I call **vocal**, **dialectical**, **temporal** (or **temporal-modal**) and **personal**. The vocal endings (indicating ‘voice’) are generally treated as constructive, and the dialectical endings are inflexional; neither of these kinds of endings need be present. A verb without temporal and personal endings is a **stem**. Although stems with dialectical endings are not found in the dictionary, they can still be made into verbal nouns.

**Vocal** endings may be found in a stem in the following order:

1. **reflexive**: -(#)n;
2. **reciprocal**: -(#)ş;
3. **causative**: -(d)#r, -(#)t, -@r (depending on the verb);
4. **passive** or **impersonal**: -#l, -(#)n.

Two or more causative endings can be used. A reciprocal and a causative ending together make the **repetitive** ending, -(#)ş·t#r.

*oku*- be read, *oku*-t make [somebody] read,
öl-/öl-ďür-/öl-ďür-t-/öl-őn- (see § 6);
sev- love, sev-ş- make love;
bul- find, bul-ş- be;
ara- look for, ara-ş-tir- do research.

**Dialectical**\(^{33}\) endings indicate affirmation, denial, impossibility and the **possibility** of these. Strictly, **lack** of a dialectical ending indicates affirmation; denial is with -m@; impossibility, -(y)@m@; possibility, -(y)@bil:

oku- read;oku-yabil- can read;
oku-ma- not read;oku-ma-yabil- may not read;
oku-yama- cannot read;oku-yama-yabil- may be unable to read.

Again, a simple stem, possibly with vocal and dialectical endings added, is still a stem. From this, we can make verbal nouns, such as the infinitive. As a noun, the infinitive has a locative case; especially with -d#r added, this may stand as a finite verb. Likewise the gerund, with the ending -l# from § 7 added:

\(^{33}\)I chose this word, having failed to find a better. The six forms here can be analyzed as follows [4. VIII, 18(g), p. 109; VIII, 55, pp. 153 f.]. The suffix -m@ negates; the obsolete verb u- be able, negated, becomes the impotential suffix -(y)@m@; the (living) verb bil- know, with a buffer, becomes the potential suffix -(y)@bil. But you cannot combine these just as you please; only the six given formations are available. However, there are a few other verbs that can be suffixed as bil- is; one example is yaz- in öl-eyaz- (§ 6).
Oku·mak·ta·dir Sie is engaged in reading.
Oku·ma·h Sie must read.

Also from a stem, 5 participles—verbal adjectives—are obtained:

1. present, in -(y)@n;
2. future, in -(y)@c@k;
3. one past, in -d#k;
4. another past, in -m#$:;
5. aorist,\(^\text{35}\) in -(0)r or -#r.

Aorist participles with negative or impotential stems are anomalous, so we must speak of the negative aorist, in -m@z, and the impotential aorist, in -(y)@m@z.

A past participle in -d#k, or the future participle, can take a suffix of possession, indicating the person of the subject of the action indicated by the participle.

oku·du·ğ·um kitap book that I (did) read;
oku·yacağ·um kitap book that I shall read.

The future, the aorist, and the -m#$: past participles take predicative endings, thereby becoming finite verbs. Since the third-person predicative ending is empty, these participles themselves may also be finite verbs:

oku·yacak Sie will read.
oku·r Sie reads, is a reader.
oku·maz Sie does not read.
oku·yamaz Sie is illiterate.
oku·muṣ Sie read [in the past, according to what we are given to understand].

There is a present tense formed with -(#)yor and the predicative endings:

okuyor Sie is reading.

A difference between the aorist and present tenses is also illustrated in a comment\(^\text{36}\) on Turkish driving habits:

Başka memleketlerde kazara ölür·ler; biz kazara yaşar·yor·uz.
In other countries they die by accident; we are living by accident.

There is a definite past tense in -d#, and a conditional mood in -s@, but the personal endings used in these forms are the endings called verbal in § 8 (Fig. 2). The imperative mood\(^\text{37}\) is formed by imperative endings, attached directly to stems:

\(^{34}\)See § 5.
\(^{35}\)Geniş zaman broad tense; see below.
\(^{36}\)Quoted at [4. VIII, 25, p. 117].
\(^{37}\)Strictly, this should be two moods, an imperative and an optative, each with its own series of endings. The ‘imperative’ endings given in Fig. 2 on p. 9 are taken from both series; in my experience,
The interrogative particle m# (which appeared in § 6) precedes the predicative endings, but follows the other personal endings:

- Oku·du Sie read [as I witnessed];
- Oku·sa If only sie would read!
- Oku·sun Let hir read, may sie read.

The interrogative particle m# (which appeared in § 6) precedes the predicative endings, but follows the other personal endings:

- Oku·mak·ta mı·yım? Am I engaged in reading?
- Oku·ma·li mı·yım? Must I read?
- Oku·yacak mı·yım? Am I going to read?
- Oku·r·um mı? Do I read?
- Oku·ma·m mı? Do I not read? ³⁸
- Oku·yama·m mı? Can I not read?
- Oku·muş mı·yım? Did I supposedly read?
- Oku·yor mı·yım? Am I reading?
- Oku·dum mı? Did you see me reading?
- Oku·sa·m mı? Should I read, I wonder?
- Oku·yayım mı? Shall I read, do you want me to read?

A finite verb, without a personal ending, can be called a base. The suffixes that form participles and bases from stems can be called characteristics; they are collected in Fig. 4.

Compound tenses are formed by means of the defective verb i- be. The stem i- takes no vocal or dialectical endings. It forms no verbal nouns. It does form the participle iken, which has a suffixed form -(y)ken and may follow a verb-base:

Gel·ir·ken, bana oyun·cak tren get·ir·ir mi·sin? ³⁹

they are the only endings in daily use.

³⁸The -z in the negative and impotential aorists is lost before first-person endings.

³⁹Said in a cartoon (in Penguen) by a calf to his father, who is trying to explain why he (the bull) is going with the butcher on a long trip from which he will never return.
When you come, will you bring me a toy train?

The stem -i- forms the bases -i-miş, -i-di, and -i-se, which can be suffixed as -(y)m#ş, -(y)d#, and -(y)s@. Hence two compound bases in -i- are formed: -i-miş-se and -i-di-yse. Verbs in -i- are negated with a preceding değil, and ‘interrogated’ with a preceding m#; the değil precedes the m# if both are used. Verbs in -i- may be attached to nouns; verbs in -i- with simple (not compound) bases may be attached to verb-bases not in -i-. Missing forms in -i- are supplied by ol- become.

Kuş-muş It was apparently a bird.
Hayır, uçak-tı No, it was a plane.
Uçak ise, niçin uç-mu-yor? If it is a plane, why is it not flying?
Uç-acak-tı It was going to fly.
Uç-ar-ssa, bin-ecek mı-siniz? If it flies, will you board?
Çabuk ol! Be quick!
Ol-mak ve sahip ol-mak To be and to be an owner (the Turkish title of the movie Etre et avoir).

As noted, -(y)ken is used with a verb-base to subordinate the verb. There are various endings used with verb-stems that subordinate the verb to another:

- -(y)#nc@ (denotes action just before that of the main verb);
- -(y)#nc@y kadar until —ing;
- -(y)# (the ending used in Güle güle, § 4);
- -(y)#r@k by —ing;
- -m@d@n without —ing;
- -m@d@n önce before —ing;
- -d#kt@n sonra after —ing.

Here are a couple of literary examples given in [2]:

Çiftliğe doğru iste-me-yerek yürüdü.
Sie walked towards the farm without wanting to.

İlkyazlarla yeniden canlanışı doğanın, kış baş-la-yınca sönmesi.
With spring comes nature’s rebirth; with winter, its extinction.

12 Sayings

The reader may wish to translate some of these (taken mostly from [6, 9]), or check the loose translations offered in some cases. (All needed root-words should be in § 14.)

1. Bakmakla öğrenilse, köpekler kasap olurdu.
   If learning were done by watching, dogs would be butchers.
2. Bal tutan parmağını yalar. *The worker takes a share of the goods.*
3. Balcının var bal taşı; oduncunun var baltası.
   *A honey-seller has a honey-pot; a woodsman has an axe.*
4. Bir deli kuyuya taş atmış, kırık akılı çıkmamış.
5. Çok yaşayan bilmez, çok gezên bilir.
6. Geç olsun da, güç olmasın. *Let it be late; just don’t let it be difficult.*
8. Gönül ferman dinlemez.
9. Görünen köy kilavuz istemez.
   *You don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.*
10. Her yiğidin bir yoğurt yeyişi vardır.
   *Everyone has his own way of doing things.*
11. Hocanın dediğini yap, yaptığını yapma.
12. İsteyenin bir yüzü kara, vermeyenin iki yüzü. *The person who asks for something has a black face, but the person who doesn’t give it has two.*
15. Nasihat isterse, tembele iş buyur.
   *If you want to hear advice, ask a lazy person to work.*
17. Ölenle ölümmez. *One doesn’t die with the dead.*
18. Söz gümüşse, süküt altındır.
19. Üzümü ye, bağını sorma.
20. Yuvarlanan taş yosun tutmaz.

13 Journalese

Here are: a sentence taken almost at random from a newspaper; a word-by-word translation; and an English translation:

1701 numaralı kararda barış gücünün bu görevi yerine getirebilmesi için Lübnan ordusuna yardımcı olması istenirken, söz konusu görevinin
In the decision numbered 1701, as it is desired that the peace forces will help the Lebanese army so that it can fulfill this duty, it is made clear that, in case the duty under discussion is being hindered, force can be used.

I diagram the Turkish sentence in Figure 5 by the following principles:

1. No two verbs (or forms of verbs) are on the same line.
2. The complements of a verb are on the same line with the verb, or—if they involve verbs themselves—are attached to that line from above.
3. Modifiers of nouns are raised above the nouns.
4. The diagram retains the original word-order.

Another example: here I merely embolden all words that are verbs or are derived from verbs:

Özellikle işten eve geliş saatlerinde karşılaştıkları kesintilerin "bıktırdığını" söyleyen Ankaralılar, aile bireylerinin evde olduğu, bir arada yemek yediği saatlerin elektrik kesintileri yüzünden karanlıkta geçirilmesinin modern şehirlerde eşine az rastlanır bir durum olduğu ifade etti.

The sentence is from Birgün, November 7, 2006; I didn’t record the source of the earlier sentence.
Especially from-work homewards coming at-these-hours encountered by-the-cuts “fed-up-with” saying Ankarans, family members’ at-home being, one in-an-interval meal eating its-hours’ electric cuts from-their-face in-the-dark being-passed’s modern in-cities to-its-equal little encountered a state being expression made.

Saying they are fed up with cuts, experienced especially at the hours of coming home from work, Ankarans indicated that the passing of hours when family members are at home eating a meal together, in the dark because of electricity cuts, was a situation rarely meeting an equal in modern cities.

14 Dictionary

Nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs used elsewhere in these notes (except perhaps § 4) are listed here. For postpositions, see § 9. Verbs are given as stems, with a hyphen. Forms with constructive suffixes are generally not given, unless they are anomalous.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>(religious) teacher</td>
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kasap butcher
każara by chance
kebab kebab
kedi eat
kese cut
kilavuz guide
kış winter
kim who?
kışi person
kitap book
konu topic
konuş- speak
kop- break off
koru- protect
köpek dog
köy village
kul slave
kullan- use
kuş bird
kuyu well
memleket native land
meslek profession
meyva fruit
nasihat advice
numara number
odun firewood
oku- read

ol- become, be
ordu army
oyun game, play
öğren- learn
öğret- teach
öl- die
özel special, private
parmak finger
pis dirty
rakı arak
rastla- meet by chance
sahip owner
sari yellow
sat- sell
sev- love
son end
sor- ask (about)
sön- die down, go out
söz expression, word
söyle- say
sükütt silence
süt milk
şehir city
şeker sugar
tas pot
taş stone
temel lazy
temiz clean
tren train
tut- hold
tuz salt
uç- fly
uzla- get longer
üzüm grape
ver- give
yala- lick
yap- make, do
yardım aid
yaşa- live
yaz summer
yaz- write
ye- eat
yemek food
yeni new
yer ground, place
yigıt (brave) young man
yoğurt yogurt
yol road
yosun moss, seaweed
yumuşa- become soft
yuvarla- roll
yürei- walk
yüz 100
face

References

