The interaction of prosody and morphology
in interpreting morpheme sequences
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The purpose of this paper is to show (a) that the semantic effects of affix ordering cannot be understood without taking prosodic factors into account, and (b) that morphological ordering restrictions can manipulate syntactic constraints. In Turkish, the suffix *-lar* is ambiguious between the 3rd person plural agreement marker (3PL) and the plural marker (PL) and its interaction with copular markers gives rise to multiple ambiguities in finite predicates. Positional restrictions would be expected to resolve the ambiguity according to various models that assume a unique source for the sequencing of morpho-syntactic operations (e.g. Baker 1988, Halle & Marantz 1993, i.a.). However, morphological positioning is both dependent on other factors (cf. DiSciullo 2005), and can manipulate syntax:

(i) 3PL and P.COP are variable, with no effect on (event structure) interpretation:

(1) a. koş-acak-**lar-dı**   b. koş-acak-**tı-lar**
     run-FUT-3PL-P.COP   run- FUT-P.COP-3PL
     'They were supposed to run.' 'They were supposed to run.'

(ii) When the stem is a noun, the positioning of *-lar* signals the difference between a definite (2a) and a categorial reading (2b&c) of that noun (concomitant with its interpretation as plural vs. 3rd person plural ageement), but only in conjunction with phonological information where the stressed segment marks the right edge of a phonological word (Kabak & Vogel 2001):

(2) a. doktor-**LAR-dı**   b. dokTOR-**lar-dı**   c. dokTOR-**du-lar**
     doctor-PL-P.COP   doctor-3PL-P.COP   doctor-P.COP-3PL
     'They were the doctors.''They USED TO BE doctors.' 'They used to be DOCTORS.'
                                                        'They USED TO BE doctors.'

(iii) That prosodic factors are crucial is further supported by the impossibility of certain orders under focusing. The focusing of the subject in (2a) is only possible where, inside a predicate, a subject pronoun occurs (3a) (rather than an agreement marker (3b), contrary to expectation, cf. Kornfilt 1984), this violating the general pattern of syntactic agreement (3c):

(3) a. doktor onLAR-dı.   b. *doktor-lar-LAR-dı   c. doktor BİZ-di-k
     doctor they-P.COP   doctor-PL-3PL-P.COP   doctor we-P.COP-1PL
     'THEY were the doctors.' (Int. 'THEY were the doctors.') 'WE were the doctors.'

This data suggests that the form and interpretation of a construction with multiple affixation is determined by the simultaneous input of different components, which favours a multi-dimensional approach to grammar over a sequential one, and one in which morphology is characterised separately from syntax (cf. Ackema & Neeleman 2005).

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