A Principles and Parameters Account of the Case Marking Properties of the Turkish Postposition İcin and its Cognates in Other Turkic Languages

Alan Reed Libert
University of Newcastle, New South Wales

The Turkish word ıcin ‘for’ acts in a complex manner in terms of the cases which it assigns to its complements. The equivalent words in some other languages of the Turkic family, both modern and older, also have a complicated behavior and/or differ from ıcin in this respect. I propose an account for this set of facts which makes use of posited changes in the categorical features of these words, and which connects structural Case marking to different feature values than is standardly assumed.

1. Introduction: Theoretical Background

In this paper I attempt to account for the set of Cases assigned by the Turkish postposition ıcin ‘for’ and its cognates. The account is grounded in the concept of categorial or part of speech features and that of Case checking through spec-head agreement. However, the data to be presented here may call into question at least some aspects of the generally accepted statement of the former, and so could serve as a stimulus for rethinking and perhaps revising them.

I use the basic notions and constructs of the Minimalist framework as outlined in Chomsky (1992), including of Agr(eement) heads and projections. Of particular relevance here is the idea that in addition to the agreement heads posited in that work (AgrS and AgrO), I assume that there are agreement heads and projections of them in other domains, specifically those associated with NPs and PPs, as do e.g. Siloni (1997) for the former and de Jong (1994) and Merial (2004) for the latter.\(^1\) That is, NPs and PPs involve (at least) the structure in (1a) and (1b) respectively:\(^2\)

\(^1\) I thank audiences at the Middle East Technical University and at the WAFL 2 conference at Bosphorus University, where I presented this paper, for useful comments and suggestions. Thanks also to my Azerbaijan, Turkish, and Uzbek informants for their grammaticality judgements, and to Mengistu Amherber, Christo Moskovsky, Suzanne A. Wertheim, Susan Wood, and one or more anonymous referees for valuable assistance and/or contributions.

\(^2\) I shall not take a position on the existence of the various other categories and projections associated with NPs and PPs, e.g. Num\(^P\) and p\(^P\). However, if one adopts a multiple specifier approach rather than the Agr-based approach which I am using, a specifier of one such category, e.g. Spec, p\(^P\) may be the locus for feature and case checking of objects of adpositions,
These Agr heads, like Agrs in general, bear phi-features which, since they are uninterpretable, must be checked with a NP (whose phi-features are interpretable) which moves to their specifier position. In this position the Case of the NP can also be checked by a lexical head which has adjoined to Agr, and this is the way in which structural Cases are checked. The particular Case checked depends on the categorial feature matrix of the lexical head involved, an issue to which I now turn.

As canonically described, e.g. by Chomsky (1981:48), there are two binary categorial features, [±N] and [±V]. These distinguish four classes of words, namely nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions, which have the following values respectively: [+N, -V], [-N, +V], [+N, +V], and [±N, -V]. Chomsky (ibid.:49) links the former feature to Case marking properties, stating that “only the [-N] categories are Case-assigners”. This is a fact about English; Chomsky (ibid.:50) indicates that this does not necessarily hold for other languages. There have been disagreements of various sorts with this conception of categorial features. For one thing, it is not clear what meaning they are generally thought to have, if any; Baker (2003:2) makes the strong statement, “This theory [involving the features [±N] and [±V]] is widely recognized to have almost no content in practice.” However, as noted, Case marking has been linked to a particular feature value.

Feature values for particular word classes have not been universally accepted, nor have the features themselves for that matter; other features have been proposed in place of them, e.g. the [±subj] and [±obj] of Jackendoff (1977), and additional features have been posited; one such feature which might appear relevant here is the [±P] brought up by Hale and Platero (1985).

I shall also connect Case assignment to feature values, but to different feature values than Chomsky (1981). In particular, I shall claim that the change from [+N] to [-N] in the feature matrix of için has been responsible for a trend for its complements to bear nominative rather than genitive Case. If a [+N] lexical head (e.g. a noun) adjoins to Agr and its complement moves to the Spec position of its phrasal projection, genitive Case can be checked on the latter, while if the lexical head is [+V] (as with a verb), accusative case can be checked. If a feature value changes from positive to negative, the ability to check the Case is lost, and the only case that can appear is a default case (unless some inherent Case is assigned),

as suggested in Bošković (2004:106).

3 Chomsky (2001:7) feels that it is “reasonable on minimalist grounds” to not include categorial features in the grammar, but it is not clear to me that they can be dispensed with without significant complications to the grammar, and I shall continue to assume their existence, or the existence of some similar type of feature which is connected with case marking.

4 Another kind of revision of the standard scheme is to allow for categories to be unspecified for one or more of the features, i.e. to posit “incomplete feature specifications” (Reuland 1985:45). One could also claim that the features are not binary, but multi-valued, a radical step, but one which has been brought up by Maysken and van Riemsdijk (1985:5). Given the fact that için seems to have gone through a gradual change from one word class to another, this option may seem attractive, but I shall leave exploration of it for further work.

2. İçin in Turkish

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A small number of NPs consisting of an interrogative pronoun and a NP headed by a NP headed by a NP headed by gidi ‘like’, help us. NPs consisting of a NP headed by a NP headed by a NP headed by gidi are not rare.

b. o-כ התפה, oy means, "his father is a great man", oy means, "his father is a great man".

5 I assume a notion that is familiar to Icelandic that it “asymmetrically lexically connect to an appropriate head”. It is not an appropriate head.

6 Lewis (1988) argued for the grammatical postpositions and with it the presence of postposition agreement with their complements.

7 As we shall see, o-כ is fairly restricted, not like some other Turkish reflexive pronouns, e.g. De (2000) who checks the Case in a language which itself checks the Case of its own pronouns. For expository reasons I shall not enter into a full discussion of the possibilities of these constructions, although I shall not imagine that anything else is possible.

8 On the one hand, the possibility of two types of Case assignment to a word in a single language, as in the case of German, makes it difficult to assign a single feature to the Case.

9 As noted above, the existence of a Case feature is not the same thing as the assignment of a Case.

10 The feature is not the same as the Case.

11 The feature is not the same as the Case.

12 As noted above, the existence of a Case feature is not the same thing as the assignment of a Case.
which will be nominative in many languages, including Turkish.\(^5\) I shall argue that this is what has happened in some Turkic languages. I also posit a possible role for syntactic definiteness to account for some unusual Old Anatolian and Ottoman Turkish data.

2. **İçin in Turkish**

Objects of Modern Turkish (primary) postpositions can be in various Cases including the nominative (also known as the absolute, having no overt marker), the dative, or the ablative.\(^6\) Only one postposition takes accusative objects, *miitacak* ‘after’, which is “obsolescent” (Lewis 1988:85). The objects of secondary postpositions are in the nominative or the genitive.

A small number of postpositions, including *icolin* ‘for’, *ile* ‘with’, and *gibi* ‘like’, have a more complex Case-marking behavior: if the object is a NP headed by a noun it will be in the nominative Case, e.g. (2a), while NPs consisting of most personal or demonstrative pronouns or the interrogative pronoun *kim* ‘who’ are in the genitive, e.g. (2b). This postposition also occurs as a suffix, which is “an archaism” (Lewis ibid.:87), and then its form will depend on whether the word to which it is attached ends in a consonant or a vowel, and on the last vowel of that word, yielding the variants -cin, -çin, -çın, and -çüin. The Case marking facts just cited with respect to the independent postposition also hold for these affixal versions of the word, i.e. nominative Case with nominal complements, e.g. (2c), genitive with some pronominal complements, e.g. (2d).\(^7\)

\[(2)\]
\begin{enumerate}
\item a. yolculuk **icolin**
\quad journey(NOM) for
\quad ‘for the journey’ (ibid.)
\item b. o-nun **icolin**
\quad he/sha/it GEN for
\quad ‘for him/her/it’
\end{enumerate}

\(^5\) I assume a notion of default Case like that of Frampton and Gutmann (2000:9), who say of Icelandic that it “assigns (default) nominative case post-syntactically to nominals which are neither inherently case-marked nor in an appropriate feature sharing relation with an appropriate head”. For my analysis, a head which has no positive values for categorial features is not an appropriate head.

\(^6\) Lewis (1988) uses the term *secondary postposition* to refer to nouns which act as postpositions and which bear dative, ablative, or locative case marking as well as marking for agreement with their complement. Other postpositions are *primary*.

\(^7\) As we shall see, cognates of *icolin* can be attached to (the last word of) their complements in some other Turkic languages, and in fact have sometimes been referred to as case endings themselves, e.g. Dehghani (2000) considers it the benefactive Case marker. A Case marker which itself checks the Case of the stem to which it is attached (as also happens in various other languages, such as Estonian), could represent a problem for the Minimalist notion that words enter syntactic derivations fully inflected (and could provide support for an account along the lines of Distributed Morphology (see e.g. Halle and Marantz 1993). However, for present purposes I shall not consider affixed versions of *icolin* and its cognates to behave in any way differently from their morphologically independent counterparts.
A large proportion of the pronominal complements which do not follow this pattern consists of pronouns with the overt plural marker, -ler/-lar; they occur in the nominative before için, as in (3a). Note that it is not plurality as such that is the trigger for this, but the presence of the plural marker: a plural pronoun without this affix is in the genitive in this context, e.g. (3b); but if the plural marker is attached to such a pronoun, again there will be nominative rather than genitive marking, as shown in (3c).

(3) a. on-lar için he/she/it-PL for ‘for them’
b. biz-im için we-GEN for ‘for us’
c. biz-ler için we-PL for ‘for us’

This is the situation of the standard language. However, Lewis (1988:85-6) states that “colloquially” nominative forms of the singular pronouns occur as complements of için and the other postpositions of this type, and that “This is particularly frequent with kim; instead of kimle, kimin için, and kimin gibi ‘with whom’?, ‘for whom’?, ‘like whom’?, one hears kimle, kim için, and kim gibi, the last being a more respectable solecism than the first two.” On the other hand, in older Turkish, pronouns bearing the plural affix could receive genitive Case when preceding için, as shown by the following remark from Timurtaş (1992:140).

Although when the particles gibi, tek, için, ile are placed after the personal and demonstrative pronouns the genitive case is not used in the 3rd person plural, in Old Anatolian Turkish texts exceptionally the genitive case is used when ile and için are placed after the plural of these demonstrative pronouns.

Timurtaş (ibid.) then provides some examples, including that in (4):

(4) bun-lar-ın üçün this-PL-GEN for ‘for these’

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8 To my knowledge, two substantial grammars of Ottoman Turkish, Deny (1921) and Hagopian (1907), do not discuss this phenomenon, but another work on Old Anatolian Turkish, Gülesevin (1997), does (p. 30). Németz (1962:60) mentions it, but only with respect to ile.
I have some indication from an informant that for some speakers of modern Turkish such constructions are acceptable, although I am not entirely convinced of the reliability of the judgements. However, I also found phrases of this type on the World Wide Web by using the Google search engine, although genitive plural objects are much rarer than their nominative counterparts. For example, searches performed on 11 July 2004 yielded “about 38” hits for onların için as opposed to “about 24,400” hits for onlar için and 3 hits for bizlerin için as opposed to “about 16700” for bizler için. An example is given in (5):

(5) Bugün anıller günü. Özlemle sevdiğimiz anıellerimizin günü.
Onların için ne mutlu bir gün.
‘Today is Mothers’ Day. The day for our mothers whom we love with longing. What a happy day for them.’

A further complexity in Ottoman Turkish is that, according to Deny (1921:1130), “the particle ıcin could also govern the ablative” when it had “a weakened final sense: in relation to, concerning” (ibid.:591).

3. Cognates of İçin in Other Turkic Languages

The situation is still more complicated if we consider cognates of için in other languages of the Turkic family.

In some languages, cognates of için have (basically) the same case marking behavior as in Turkish, including, in a good proportion of languages, a degree of variation. For example, the Azerbaijani cognate, like Turkish için, can be an independent word or be attached to the preceding word. Schöning (1998:257) gives it only as a separate word, ıçin, and states that its objects, if headed by nouns, are nominative, but “singular personal and demonstrative pronouns” are in the genitive. Dehghani (2000), writing about the Iranian variety of Azerbaijani, has it only as a suffix, which apparently is attached to nominative stems even of singular pronouns, e.g. məniçi in ‘for me’ (p. 314). There is variation in Noghay: Csató and Karakoç (1998:340) state, “Some postpositions which normally govern the genitive of pronouns also occur with the nominative, e.g. son için ‘for you’.”

Uzbek represents a different situation: for some speakers there is (or was) the same sort of variation as with Turkish and Noghay, but for other speakers the nominative is the only Case possible on objects of this postposition, whether they are headed by nouns or pronouns. The former type of speaker is described by Poppe (1962:56): “Personal pronouns, when governed by yuqar, are as a rule in the genitive case, although there exists a tendency both in the spoken and in the written language to use nominative also with personal pronouns.” Boeschoten (1998:369) cites için as one of the examples of the “certain postpositions” which “govern the nominative.” On the next page he says, “Focused pronouns can stand in the genitive, e.g. sën için ~ sën için ‘for you’.” On the other hand, at least one of my informants preferred the nominative to the genitive with personal pronouns and one did not seem to find the genitive of pronouns acceptable in this context (with the intended meaning).

In contrast, in Bashkir, according to Poppe (1964:86) there is no variation: “Postpositions normally following the basic form of the
substantive never follow the nominative case of a pronoun. Pronouns, namely all personal pronouns and singular (note: only singular) forms of the demonstrative pronouns always appear in the genitive case".

In Orkhan Turkic there is also a split between different kinds of postpositional complements in this context, but one of the Cases involved is different and the split is along partly different lines: pronouns and nominal phrases bearing a possessed suffix are assigned accusative Case while other nominal phrases are in the nominative Case:

(6) a. anī extérieur
that(ACC) for
‘for that reason’ (Tekin 1968:165)

b. küränger-ือง Exterior unrruslin-2SG-ACC for
‘because of your unruliness’ (ibid.)

c. türk bodun extérieur
Turk people(NOM) for
‘for the sake of the Turkish people’ (ibid.)

Erickson (2004:84) makes an historical comparison: “in the modern languages a number of postpositions [including için] ... govern the genitive case of personal and demonstrative pronouns ..., unlike some of their earlier reflexes in Old Turkic ..., which used to govern the accusative case of these forms”. According to Erdal (1998:148), “The postpositions ara ‘among’, teg, birle, için, osyelik and ize govern the accusative of demonstrative and personal (not interrogative) pronouns, and the nominative of other nominals, e.g. ... yavlaquän için ‘because they are wicked’.”

Finally, Brockelmann’s (1954) Ostaürische Grammatik der Islamischen Litteratursprachen Mittelasiens has some examples (p. 173) of için with dative and locative-ablative complements headed by nouns, including the following:

(7) atöz-kä için
property-DAT for
‘for the sake of the property’ (Qutadgu Bilig 56, 24)

4. Towards an Account

Kornfilt (1984:61-2) has put forth an account of the Modern Turkish facts for postpositions with the split Case marking behaviour of için. According to her, the Cases which are assigned are structural and “an insertion rule” is involved (and not government); the morphological Case it inserts is sensitive to whether the element it attaches to is a pronoun (lacking -1Ar) or a lexical noun” (ibid.:61). However, one might then ask why the rule is sensitive to this distinction. Sezer (1991:36) states, “We believe it safe to assume that the postposition için ‘for’ in each example [i.e. with nominal and pronounal complements] assigns the same case – call it GENITIVE. When assigned by a postposition, this abstract GENITIVE case is morphologically represented with pronouns but not with lexical N’s.” Again we are left with a question, in this case why there is a difference in the realization of...

Van Schuur (2006:138) states, “a postposition is a word form that is derived from a personal pronoun and its other nouns, however, the personal pronoun preceding it is the case of the genitive of the genitive of the personal pronoun and it marker lost its original function.” However, in a cross-linguistic and theoretical framework there are some Principles and Parameters.

4.1 On the levels of the hierarchy

The account of the Modern Turkish facts (2001:138) shows that these languages “are not the case languages.” They are from a noun, from a verb, from the latter: “the verb ‘to aim’ (yavlaqu) marking of place (için) in Old Turkic” (ibid.:332) shows the details are ‘for’ aiming the verb ‘aiming’ in place. ‘‘for’ seem to mean ‘for the sake of’ probably having a more general meaning.

According to van Schuur (2006:332) for Turkish için “On the level of the noun, Bodrog and van Uytrecht (1966) write:

These languages lists Old Turkic (yavlaqu) as “not native origin” (ibid.:332). The rule is *ičin-’to aim’... then into a postposition...”

4.2 The (past) tense?

Let us imagine another word class, the word class of time, when it appears in a sentence it is maintained or replaced by the verb becoming a personal pronoun (e.g. -NJ. Let us then see how we can assign some of those languages (to be continued...).
The Case Marking Properties of İcin

4. Pronouns, forms of the

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Van Schaik (1998:424-5) has given a diachronically based account of a postposition with similar behavior, *gibi* 'like', according to which it is derived from a noun with a form such as *kip* 'model, resemblance'. Like other nouns, this word could be marked as possessed by means of the 3rd person singular possessed suffix, with the noun denoting the possessor preceding it and in the genitive Case. In this context there was then "a loss of the genitive case marker, except for highly frequent words such as personal pronouns and demonstratives" (ibid.:425). Finally the possessed marker lost its meaning (and was reinterpreted as part of the root).

However, to my knowledge no explanation of all the diachronic and cross-linguistic facts presented above has been attempted in a formal theoretical framework. The present paper represents such a proposal within a Principles and Parameters/Minimalist approach.

4.1 On the history of İcin

The account involves the origin of İcin and its cognates. Erickson (2001:138) says, "The etymology of this postposition has puzzled scholars since the early days of formal research into the structure of Turkic languages." He outlines the two main views on it, one of which derives it from a noun, the other from a verb, and indicates his preference for the latter: "the verbal origin seems most likely due to the required accusative marking of pronouns and other words inflected with possessive suffixes in Old Turkic" (ibid.). Johanson (1998:113) favors the former view: "Though the details are unclear, old unanalylatable Turkic postpositions such as *ucun* 'for' seem to be of similar lexical origin [to e.g. *önlinde* 'in front of'], probably having a career as case forms behind them."

A look at other sources also reveals apparent disagreement on the matter. Some authors derive cognates of İcin from a verb, e.g. Pritsak (1959:332) for Trakai Karaim *ucun* and von Gabain (1959:33) for Old Turkic *ucun*. On the other hand, Benzing (1959:401) derives Kumyk *ucun* from a noun. Bodrogligeti (2003:282) seems to be in agreement with this regarding Uzbek *yvu*.

These claims need not be contradictory: von Gabain (1974:142) lists Old Turkic *ucun* as a verb, one of the "postpositions of verbal origin" (ibid.:135), giving it the possible derivation "from *uc* 'goal', *ucu* > *ucu* 'to aim at'" (ibid.:142), i.e. it evolved from a noun into a verb and then into a postposition.

4.2 The (past and present) features of İcin and its cognates

Let us imagine that at one point İcin had positive values for at least one of the word class features: it was originally [+N], being a noun. Perhaps later, when it acquired verbal properties it also had the feature [+V], and maintained one or both of these features for some time, even as it was becoming a postposition. (Note that Ouhall (1988) asserts that prepositions are [+N]). Let us make the assumption that nouns and other [+N] lexemes can assign structural genitive Case in the context [np - NP] (at least in those languages in which a noun can have a noun phrase complement

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\textsuperscript{9} It is thought to be formed from either a nominal stem *uc* ~ *ccc* 'end, goal; reason' or *cc* 'inside', or from a verbal stem *ucu* ~ *uc* ~ *ccc* 'to strive for', plus the instrumental case -in for the nominal stems and a genwail suffix in -a for the verbal stems." (ibid.)
without requiring a dummy Case assigner such as English of); this is similar to the rule posited by Aoun (1981:4), "NP is genitive when governed by [+N]."

An anonymous referee has pointed out that "The feature [+N] in itself would not be sufficient to explain the genitive, as in (Modern) Turkish. Genitive specifiers of NPs/DPs which are themselves fully nominal correlate with Agreement on the nominal head, while there is no Agreement when that head is a (primary) P[ostposition]. Thus, some differentiation is necessary between N-head and P-heads in such constructions." A [+V] value for için would provide such differentiation, although 
then postpositions would have the same feature values as are generally attributed to adjectives; perhaps the feature values for the latter category should be reconsidered; cf. Lefèvre and Muysken (1988) in which this is done for Quechua. Recall the remark made by Erickson, linking Case marking and a "verbal origin" of için. As I have already noted, I assert that the feature [+V] signifies the ability to check structural accusative Case, while [+N] does the same with respect to structural genitive assignment.10

My claims about categorial features are partly at variance with the traditional model in 1) how they are defined, and 2) the feature values for adpositions (and therefore perhaps for some other category or categories). However, the particular features themselves are not crucial; one might simply claim that there are some features allowing (or requiring) items which have positive values for them to assign/check structural accusative and genitive Case: I am calling these feature values [+V] and [+N] respectively, but they could be something else. The main point is that there have been changes in the values for these features for için and its cognates, although I believe that whatever features are involved are connected with word classes.

We could posit an ancestor of için which assigned genitive to all its complements, whether nominal or pronominial, due to its [+N] feature (as still happens with secondary postpositions in e.g. Turkish). We can also envisage future stages of Turkic languages where complements of için are always in the nominative Case. This could be seen as a result of the change of value from [+N] to [-N] in this word, and the concomitant loss of the ability to check genitive, with the default nominative being the only Case marking option left. Uzbek seems to be on the way to this, if the nominative is indeed preferred to the genitive for personal pronoun objects, and for those speakers who only allow the nominative, the change has been completed.

10 Lefèvre and Muysken (1988:110) assert that "the features of Case assignment are parametrizable" and that the Case assigners of Quechua are [+V] elements and ARG. The former assign structural objective Case. Another possibility for differentiation would be to admit a further feature, such as Hale and Platero's (1985) [P]: için would be [+N, -V, +P] while secondary postpositions would be [+N, -V, -P]. I am reluctant to posit such a feature unless absolutely necessary. If some elements are both [+N] and [+V], and so, in principle can assign/check either genitive or accusative case, one may need some sort of case hierarchy to determine which case will be assigned. If için is taken to have positive values for both these features, then we would have to assume that genitive is higher in the hierarchy than accusative. Of course one would want some independent reason for positing such a hierarchy.

Kortmann and König (1992:687) bring up a possible account of the development of deverbal prepositions in terms of [N] and [V] features, but then reject it, stating that it is fundamentally unsuitable for any illuminating statement on the dynamics of the change involved.
However, some Turkic languages stand between the two extremes of having *ıçin always assigning genitive or always having complements in the nominative. In the case of Turkish and languages which act in the same way, one could say that *benim *cıın ‘for me’, etc. became fixed phrases, and so retained the genitive even when *ıcıın changed its [+N] feature value. An anonymous referee comments, “I don’t think that viewing such constructions with pronominal specifiers as frozen phrases is on the right track; as pronouns themselves are extremely wide-spread, and this isn’t what one typically thinks of as [a] frozen construction.” Nevertheless, I do not see any necessary connection between being fixed or frozen and being frequent. For example, Kita et al. (1994:27) cite thank you very much and I would like to as “frozen phrase patterns’. Naturally one should have a clear definition of and criteria for a frozen/fixed phrase, and there may be disagreement in the literature about this. These speakers who only accept nominative complements in this context have lost such frozen phrases from their vocabulary.

We may also consider those varieties of Old Anatolian and Ottoman Turkish which had both singular and plural pronominal genitive objects of *ıcıın (as well as the language of any modern Turkish speakers who may also find them acceptable). This intermediate stage is particularly difficult to account for unless one extends the frozen phrase account to plural pronominal complements, which I would be reluctant to do. One might argue that the genitive plural complements are sufficiently rare that they need not (and cannot) be accounted for in a principled matter but should be seen as performance errors. However, I shall make a suggestion for dealing with them.

Such occurrences seem to have occurred less in the latest stages of Ottoman Turkish. One could see a progressive loss of genitive marking: all noun phrases – only pronouns – only pronouns without plural marking – no noun phrases. For those speakers who did mark both singular and plural pronominal objects of *ıcıın with genitive, we can say that there was differential Case marking of some postpositional objects. Differential Case marking on subjects and objects has been much discussed, but to my knowledge there have been no accounts of differential Case marking of adpositional objects when such marking is not dependent on different meanings of the adposition (as happens in e.g. Latin with some prepositions having objects in different cases depending on whether they have a directional or locative meaning). This may be because such differential Case marking is quite rare – outside of the Turkish languages the only example I know of is in Latvian, where there is a split between singular and plural adpositional objects. Both of these splits can be seen to involve a definiteness/animacy hierarchy of sorts,12 with pronouns being higher than other NPs and with singular NPs being higher than plural ones.

It has been suggested (e.g. by Danon 2002) that definite, but not indefinite, NPs, must be checked for structural Case. Languages can differ

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12 Evidence for the frozen or fixed status of such phrases comes from the ill-formedness of *ben ve senin *ıcıın ‘for (NOM) and you-GEN’. Given that in Turkish one can generally drop the case marking on the first of two conjoined noun phrases, it may be difficult to understand why this example is not well-formed. (Thanks to Cem Bozüyük for this example.)

13 See e.g. Danon (2002: 4648) for the notion of ‘formal animacy’ paralleling that of definiteness.
in what they consider definite, as noted by Lyons (1999:160). One could then argue that languages can differ in the range of NPs which can or must check Case through Spec-head agreement (at least in certain contexts). We could imagine that over time Turkish has gradually narrowed the range of NPs which it considers definite for the purposes of genitive Case checking, from all NPs to only pronouns, with an intermediate stage in which pronouns in general could bear this feature value, following a general definiteness hierarchy.

Such an account might also be able to explain why in modern standard Turkish kim ‘who’ is genitive when a complement of içın but ne ‘what’ is not (since kim is higher on the definiteness/animacy scale), as well as the situation in Modern Turkish, with only singular personal pronouns being marked genitive (eliminating the need to posit frozen phrases). If this account is correct, one would expect singular and plural pronouns, and kim and ne, to behave in different ways with regard to Case checking in other domains in the relevant stages of Turkish. This is indeed the case with respect to kim and ne in modern Turkish: as a direct object ne can, but need not, bear accusative case marking (i.e. appearing as ne or neyi) while kim must have such marking.

At some point içın changed values for the [±N] feature, and no Case marking based on Spec-head agreement could occur, regardless of the properties of its complement – all NPs except for those in frozen phrases received default nominative Case. This represents the Modern Turkish of most speakers.

If (at least some) cognates of içın have one or more verbal features or properties, this could explain why içın assigns accusative in Orkhon Turkic. Its [±V] value allows it to act like a verb in doing this, but note that it only occurs with some objects, though with a broader set than those that receive genitive in this context in other Turkic languages. Again this could be explained in terms of definiteness. In Turkic languages the accusative Case is generally only marked on definite (or specific) NPs, and personal and demonstrative pronouns, like possessed noun phrases, are typically definite.

The following table summarizes the main case marking facts and mechanisms through which they occur.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Categorial features of içın</th>
<th>Case of complement of içın</th>
<th>Examples in text</th>
<th>Means of checking/ assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very early Turkish</td>
<td>[+N]</td>
<td>gen. (all types)</td>
<td>Spec-head agreement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Turkic languages, e.g. Orkhon</td>
<td>[+V]</td>
<td>pronouns and possessed NPs: acc.</td>
<td>(6a,b)</td>
<td>Spec-head agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>other NPs: nom.</td>
<td>(6c)</td>
<td>default</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 One can distinguish, as Danon (2002) does, between syntactic and semantic definiteness, with syntactically definite NPs bearing the feature [+def]. However, Danon (ibid.:67) does not believe that a feature [def] is present in Turkish.

Table 1: 

The ablative marker içın in Turkish and the related languages of the Turkic group is often marked as pronominal. It is inherent Case in its default state, and not composed of two Case features. It is therefore not simply a marker of Case. Instead, it is interpreted in a variety of ways, depending on the nature of the noun phrase it modifies.

5. Conclusion

In this way we may have a way to understand the differences between these languages. Perhaps there are other factors at play, such as differences in the features [±N] and [±V] of the verb içın and its cognates. We should consider other possibilities as well.

References

One could not assume that these case marking properties are universal. However, in modern Turkish, the case marking of nouns and pronouns is generally the same as in Ottoman Turkish, with the exception of the accusative case, which is now marked by the preposition *den*.

Table 1: Summary of Main Case Marking Data and Mechanisms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Marking</th>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Anatolian and Ottoman Turkish (small minority of speakers)</td>
<td>[+N]</td>
<td>pronouns (both singular and plural): gen. NPs headed by nouns: nom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Turkish (and majority of Ottoman speakers)</td>
<td>[-N]</td>
<td>pronouns without plural suffix: gen. NPs headed by Ns and pronouns with plural suffix: nom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbek (some speakers)</td>
<td>[-N]</td>
<td>Nom. (all types)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ablative marking which complements of *için* may receive in Ottoman Turkish and the dative and locative-ablative marking mentioned by Brockelmann (1954), as in (7), will presumably have to be seen as lexical or inherent Case marking. This must be posited in any case, since, as mentioned above, different Turkish postpositions take complements in a variety of Cases.

5. Conclusion

In this way we account for a very complex array of Case marking data and perhaps also may be able to give some content to the traditional categorial features [+N] and [+V]. Changes in the Case marking abilities of the word *için* and its cognates can be connected with changes in features associated with word classes.

References


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Discipline of Linguistics, University of New South Wales, Callaghan NSW 2308 Australia

Alan.Libert@unsw.edu.au

http://www.newsw.edu.au/