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A Constraint on Certain Relative Clauses in Turkic

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Abstract: This paper studies pre-nominal, nominalized relative clauses in five modern Turkic languages (Turkish, Sakha, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur) and illustrates a constraint on their distribution in some of them. In Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur (representing other, similar Turkic languages), one type of relative clause (with subject agreement) cannot be possessed, while another, synonymous type (without agreement), can. This paper accounts for this constraint by extending an account designed to explain different data from Turkish, whose relative clauses (with agreement) *can* be possessed (as can those in Sakha). That account explains why nominal compounds can't be possessed without losing their compound marker, and why possessive phrases cannot be possessed at all. Labelled "The Stuttering Prohibition", this account states that morphemes of the same syntactic and morphological type and with similar syntactic features (e.g. predicate — subject agreement, also case) cannot enter immediate sequences.

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Keywords: nominal compounds, possessed nominal compounds, possessed relative clauses, possessive phrases, possessor agreement, relative clauses, stuttering prohibition, subject agreement

1. Introduction

In his insightful investigations of Old Turkic, Professor Talat Tekin has paved the way for studying properties of modern Turkic languages. This short study is offered to him, in gratitude to him and to the insights of his lifetime work.

This paper looks at pre-nominal, nominalized relative clause constructions in five modern Turkic languages (Turkish, Sakha, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur) and illustrates a constraint on their distribution in some of those languages. In Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur (as representatives of other Turkic languages with similar properties), one type of relative clause cannot be possessed, while another, synonymous type of construction can be possessed. This paper attempts to account for this constraint by extending an account designed to explain rather different data from Turkish, whose relative clauses *can* be possessed.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 looks at the interaction between relative clauses in five Turkic languages and possessive phrases; different subsections present examples in each of these languages: Turkish, Sakha, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur, in that order. While Turkish and Sakha each have only one type of (non-subject) relative clause, they allow for that construction to be possessed; the other three languages have two, essentially equivalent, types of (non-subject) relative clauses, and they allow only one type—the type with a nominative subject—to be possessed. The alternative construction with a genitive subject cannot be possessed in these languages. Section 3 proposes a generalization based on genitive case, and based on data from Sakha and Turkish, that generalization is refined, so as to refer primarily to the agreement morpheme (which is the same for genitive subjects and for possessors) and to a ban against immediate sequences of more than one agreement morpheme (the "Stuttering Prohibition" of Kornfilt 1986). A distinction is drawn between genitive as a licensed case versus nominative as a default case; this distinction is shown to cover all the data. A

parallel is drawn between this application of the Stuttering Prohibition and its original motivation, namely to explain why Turkish possessive phrases cannot be possessed, and why Turkish nominal compounds lose their compound marking when possessed. Section 4 concludes the paper.

2. Relative clauses and possession: The importance of genitive case and of agreement

2.1. Turkish

Turkish relative clauses can be embedded within possessive phrases; in other words, a noun phrase modified by a relative clause can be possessed[1]:

(1) Ali-nin [[sen-in geçen yıl çek-tiğ-in] resm]-i
Ali-GEN you-GEN last year pull-FN-2.SG picture-3.SG.
'Ali's picture which you took last year'

Although this example is somewhat awkward, due to the immediate repetition of two genitive noun phrases, it is acceptable. If the subject is "dropped", as is often the case in Turkish, the example becomes perfect:

(2) Ali-nin [[geçen yıl çek-tiğ-in] resm]-i
Ali-GEN last year pull-FN-2.SG picture-3.SG
'Ali's picture which you took last year'

Although such examples have a perfectly natural feel to them in Turkish, the possibility of possessed relative clauses cannot be taken for granted cross-linguistically, not even across Turkic languages. I start by showing that some Turkic languages do offer the same possibility, such as Sakha (also known as *Yakut*)—a language to which I shall return in section 3:

[1]In this paper, I focus on relative clauses whose head corresponds to a non-subject in the modifying clause. The cross-linguistic contrasts and limitations with respect to possession are concerned with such non-subject relative clauses exclusively; subject relative clauses can be possessed in general, in all of the Turkic languages considered here. The reason for the ability of Turkic subject relative clauses of all types to be freely possessed will emerge in the course of this paper.

(3) [[aqa -n öl-ör-büt] (min) oquh -**um**
father-2.SG(NOM) die-CAUS-P (I[NOM]) ox -**1.SG**
'My ox which your father killed'

(4) [min öl-ör-büt] (kini) oquh-**a**
I(NOM) die-CAUS-P he(NOM) ox-**3.SG**
'His ox which I killed'

On the other hand, Turkic languages such as Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur, which have two distinct types of (non-subject) relative clauses (one type with genitive subjects, and the other type with nominative subjects), do not allow the first type (with genitive subjects) to be possessed[2]. I start discussion of this observation by presenting examples from Kazakh.

2. 2. Kazakh

The following three examples consist of relative clauses whose intended meaning is that the relative clause head is possessed; in these examples, the possessor is a first person singular. Also, in all three examples, the subject of the modifying clause is in the genitive case.

(5)a. *Ali-**nıŋ** öl-tir-gen buqa-**m**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**
Intended reading: 'My ox which Ali killed'

(6)a. *Sen-**iŋ** öl-tir-gen buqa-**m**
you-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**
Intended reading: 'My ox which you killed'

(7)a. *[Sen-iŋ äke -ŋ]-**niŋ** öl -tir -gen buqa-**m**
you-GEN father- 2.SG-**GEN** die -CAUS -P ox-**1.SG**
Intended reading: 'My ox which your father killed'

The counterparts of these examples using the relative clause construction with the nominative subjects rather than genitive subjects are fine:

[2]I follow the practice in generative linguistics of marking with an asterisk utterances judged as ill-formed by native speakers.

(5)b. Ali öl-tir-gen buqa-**m**
Ali[**NOM**] die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**
'My ox which Ali killed'

(6)b. Sen öl-tir-gen buqa-**m**
you [**NOM**] die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**
'My ox which you killed'

(7)b .[Sen-iŋ äke-ŋ] öl-tir-gen buqa-**m**
you –GEN father-2.SG [**NOM**] die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**
'My ox which your father killed'

The reader may think at this point that in Kazakh, non-subject relative clauses must exhibit nominative subjects rather than genitive subjects. But this is true only when the relative clause is possessed; otherwise, both options are equally well-formed:

(8)a. Ali-**nıŋ** öl-tir-gen buqa-sı
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-3.SG
'The ox which Ali killed'

(8)b. Ali öl-tir-gen buqa
Ali [**NOM**] die-CAUS-P ox
'The ox which Ali killed'

These two examples are synonymous. While the first example, (8a.), can also mean 'Ali's ox which he, Ali, killed', this is a secondary reading, and given certain contexts, this reading would be ruled out altogether. The primary reading is that of a regular, simple relative clause, i.e. just the same reading that (8b.) with its nominative subject has.

These two equivalent options are systematically possible for the other examples, as well, when we take away any markers of possession:

(9)a. Sen-**iŋ** öl-tir-gen buqa-n
you-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-2.SG
(9)b. Sen öl-tir-gen buqa
you (**NOM**) die-CAUS-P ox
Both examples: 'The ox which you killed'

(10)a. [Sen-iŋ	äke-ŋ]-**niŋ**	öl-tir-gen	buqa-sı
you-GEN	father-2.SG-**GEN**	die-CAUS-P	ox-3.SG

(10)b. [Sen	äke-ŋ]	öl-tir-gen	buqa
you	father-2.SG [**NOM**]	die-CAUS-P	ox-3.SG

Both examples: 'The ox which your father killed'

We thus see clearly that in Kazakh, in relative clauses whose head corresponds to a non-subject in the modifying clause, both "strategies" are fine, i.e. the version with a genitive subject is well-formed, as well as the version with a nominative subject. There is one property that we have to note here, because it is going to be important for this paper: the version with the genitive subject needs the (possessive) agreement element to show up on the head of the relative clause; that element expresses the person and number features of the subject, as the examples above illustrate. The version with the nominative subject doesn't need such an agreement element and in fact cannot have one—when such an element does show up, it has to be interpreted as a possessive marker rather than as a subject-agreement marker.

What is important for us here is the version with the genitive subject and the overt agreement marker; the following example shows clearly that without that marker, the genitive subject is not possible:

(10)c. *[Sen-**iŋ**	äke-ŋ]-**niŋ**	öl-tir-gen	buqa
you-**GEN**	father-2.SG-**GEN**	die-CAUS-P	ox

Intended reading: 'The ox which your father killed'

Here, *buqa*, the head of the relative clause construction, does not bear a ("possessive", i.e. nominal) agreement element that agrees with *seniŋ äkeŋniŋ*, the genitive subject; as a consequence, the example is ill-formed. Without the genitive on the subject, as in (10b), the utterance would be perfectly fine. We thus conclude that the genitive marking on the subject is obligatorily dependent on the nominal (so-called "possessive") marker, expressing the person and number features of the subject.

We have now seen that in Kazakh, non-subject relative clauses are equally well-formed with a nominative or a genitive subject, as long as

the genitive subject co-occurs with an agreement marker on the head of the relative clause. However, only the version with the nominative subject can be possessed; the version with the genitive subject cannot. Why should the two versions differ in this way?

Before we turn to finding an answer, let us first convince ourselves that Kazakh isn't an exception, and that other Turkic languages have corresponding relative clauses with the very same properties and restrictions. I shall illustrate this claim with examples from two Turkic languages: Kirghiz and Uighur, in that order.

2. 3. Kirghiz

I start with regular, simple non-subject relative clauses. Just as in Kazakh, there are two possible versions of such constructions, one with a genitive subject, the other with a nominative subject:

(11) a.	Ali-**nin**	öl-tür-gön	öküz-**ü**
	Ali-**GEN**	die-CAUS-P	ox-**3.SG**

(11) b.	Ali	öl-tür-gön	öküz
	Ali (**NOM**)	die-CAUS-P	ox

Both examples: 'The ox which Ali killed'

Also as in Kazakh, the construction with the genitive subject and a ("possessive") agreement marker on the head, as in (11a), has a secondary reading of possessivity: 'Ali's ox which he, Ali, killed'; however, the primary reading is that of a simple relative clause, as stated under the examples, without possessivity. Under that primary reading, there is synonymy between the two versions of the construction.

Likewise, just as in Kazakh, the genitive subject in Kirghiz non-subject relative clauses obligatorily co-occurs with an agreement marker on the construction's head, while the nominative subject cannot co-occur with such a marker, as illustrated in (11b)—unless the head is possessed, but not by the subject:

(12)	Ali	öl-tür-gön	öküz-ü
	Ali (**NOM**)	die-CAUS-P	ox-3.SG

This example cannot mean 'the ox which Ali killed', but only '*his* ox which Ali killed', with the possessor of the ox most probably someone else than Ali (We will return to such examples shortly.).

We find both versions, one with a genitive, the other with a nominative subject, when the subject has other person and number features, as well:

(13) a.	Sen-**in**	öl-tür-gön	öküz-**üŋ**
	you-**GEN**	die-CAUS-P	ox-**3.SG**

(13) b.	Sen	öl-tür-gön	öküz
	you (**NOM**)	die-CAUS-P	ox

Both examples: 'The ox which you killed'

The same possibilities and restrictions hold when the subject is itself complex, i.e. consists of a possessive phrase, also just as in Kazakh, as we saw earlier:

(14)a. [(Sen-in) ata-ŋ]	**-dıŋ**	öl-tür-gön	öküz-**ü**
you-GEN father-2.SG-**GEN**		die-CAUS-P	ox-**3.SG**

(14)b. [(Sen-in) ata-ŋ]		öl-tür-gön	öküz
you-GEN father-2.SG(**NOM**)		die-CAUS-P	ox

Both examples: 'The ox which your father killed'

Now, let us attempt to combine possessivity with relative clauses; we observe the same generalization as in Kazakh, namely that the version with the nominative subject can be possessed, while the version with the genitive subject cannot:

(15)a. *Ali-**nin**		öl-tür-gön	öküz-**üm**
Ali-**GEN**		die-CAUS-P	ox-**1.SG.**

(15)b. Ali		öl-tür-gön	öküz-**üm**
Ali (**NOM**)		die-CAUS-P	ox-**1.SG.**

The reading of the well-formed (15b) and the intended reading of the ill-formed (15a) is: 'my ox which Ali killed'.

The same question we asked for Kazakh has to be asked here, too: why can the version with the nominative subject be possessed, while the version with the genitive subject cannot?

2. 4. Uighur

Let us address this question once we have illustrated the counterparts of these examples in Uighur. In Uighur, too, non-subject relative clauses can have either a genitive or a nominative subject:

(16)a.	Äli-**niŋ**	öl-tür-gän	kali-**si**
	Ali-**GEN**	die-CAUS-P	ox-**3.SG**

(16)b.	Äli	öl-tür-gän	kala
	Ali (**NOM**)	die-CAUS-P	ox

Both examples: 'The ox which Ali killed'

Just as in Kazakh and Kirghiz, the genitive subject requires the presence of a ("possessive") agreement marker on the head of the relative clause, while no such marker can show up when the subject is nominative. Also as in Kazakh and Kirghiz, the version with the genitive subject and the agreement marker, as in (16a), can have a second reading of possession (here, 'Ali's ox which he, Ali, killed'); what's important for this paper is the systematic availability of the first reading, i.e. the regular, simple, non-possessive reading, just as in these other Turkic languages.

Likewise, just as in Kazakh and Kirghiz, the same two versions are systematically available for non-subject relative clauses for all the possible combinations of person and number features; the following are an illustrative sample:

(17)a.	min-**iŋ**	öl-tür-gän	kala-**m**
	I-**GEN**	die-CAUS-P	ox-**1.SG**

(17)b.	män	öl-tür-gän	kala
	I (**NOM**)	die-CAUS-P	ox

Both examples: 'The ox which I killed' (again, with the possible additional reading for possession in (17a), i.e. 'my ox which I killed')

Now turning to the possibility of possession for such non-subject relative clauses, we see that Uighur behaves just like Kazakh and Kirghiz, i.e. the nominative version can be possessed, but the genitive version cannot:

(18)a. *Äli-**niŋ** öl-tür-gän kala-**m**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**

(18)b. Äli öl-tür-gän kala-**m**
Ali (**NOM**) die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**

The reading of the well-formed (18b) and the intended reading of the ill-formed (18a) is 'my ox which Ali killed'. (Note that (18a) is also ill-formed under the conceivable reading of 'Ali's ox which I killed'.)

Similar facts hold for subjects with other person (and number) features; e.g.:

(19)a. *min-**iŋ** öl-tür-gän kali-**si**
I-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-**3.SG**

(19)b. män öl-tür-gän kali-**si**
I (**NOM**) die-CAUS-P ox-**3.SG**

The reading of the well-formed (19b) and the intended reading of the ill-formed (19a) is 'his/her ox which I killed' (Note that (19a) is also ill-formed under the conceivable reading of 'my ox which s/he killed'.)

Finally, similar facts hold of complex subjects such as possessive phrases. Because we did look at such subjects earlier, for Sakha, Kazakh, and Kirghiz, let us illustrate such constructions for Uighur, as well:

(20)a. *[sin-iŋ dada-ŋ]-**niŋ** öl-tür-gän kala-**m**
you-GEN father-2.SG-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**

(20)b. [sin-iŋ dada-ŋ] öl-tür-gän kala-**m**
you-GEN father-2.SG(**NOM**) die-CAUS-P ox-**1.SG**

The reading of the well-formed (20b) and the intended reading of the ill-formed (20a) is 'my ox which your father killed'. (Note that (20a) is also ill-formed under the conceivable reading of 'your father's ox which I killed'.)

3. A genitive-based generalization and its refinement

3. 1. Genitive versus nominative subjects

Now that we have seen the relevant data in the five Turkic languages under consideration, let's go back to our original question, with its subquestions: why can only the non-subject relative clauses with the nominative subjects be possessed in Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur? Why can the similar relative clauses with the genitive subjects in these languages not be possessed? To what extent are these relative clauses in these three languages similar or different to their counterparts in Sakha, on the one hand, and in Turkish, on the other?

Let us address the first question first. Can it be that there is something about the genitive case that precludes these relative clauses from being possessed? After all, the possessor in these languages is also in the genitive, and there may be a ban in these languages against a single clause having two genitive noun phrases. The fact that the (otherwise very similar) non-subject relative clauses with nominative subjects in these languages *can* be possessed does suggest an explanation of this kind.

Other facts appear to point in the same direction. For example, my Kirghiz informant, Kenjegül Kalieva, volunteered the following example, when trying to come up with a well-formed example for a possessed relative clause with a non-agentive target:

(21) Ali-nin tarab-ın-dan öl-tür-ül-gön öküz-üm
Ali-GEN side-3.SG-ABL die-CAUS-PASS-P ox-1.SG

'My ox which was killed by Ali'

Here, the genitive doesn't mark the subject; it marks the agentive 'by-phrase' of the modifying clause, whose subject would have been *öküz* 'ox', if it had been realized. Due to the passive, the understood direct object, i.e. *öküz* 'ox', is a derived subject, and at the same time, it is the target of the relative clause, i.e. it corresponds to the head of the relative clause construction. Notice that this relative clause *can* be possessed.

In this last example, we don't have a nominative subject, but at the same time, we don't have a genitive subject, either. Thus, the relevant generalization appears to be not so much that relative clauses with nomi-

native subjects can be possessed, but that relative clauses *can* be possessed *in general*, unless they have a genitive subject. This new generalization covers all the facts that we have seen so far for Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur.

3. 2. Sakha

This generalization seems to be further supported by the facts in Sakha. Note that in that language, the genitive case has largely disappeared. Thus, subjects in nominalized clauses, as well as possessors in possessive phrases are in the nominative rather than in the genitive; in this respect, Sakha is different from Turkish as well as from the other Turkic languages we are dealing with in this paper. There is only one type of exception to this: complex possessors, i.e. possessors which themselves consist of possessive phrases (and are third persons) have to be marked with a (relic) genitive marker in Sakha.

To illustrate the usage of the nominative instead of the genitive, note the following two possessive phrases:

(22)a. kini aqa-ta
he (**NOM**) father-3.SG
'His father'

(22)b. min oquh–um
I(**NOM**) ox-1.SG
'My ox'

Now, let's illustrate that if the possessor is itself a possessive phrase (and a third person), then the complex possessor does get marked with a morpheme which is a relic of a previously productive genitive case; the possessor within that complex possessor is, as expected, in the nominative:

(23) a. [kini aqa -tï] -**n** oquh-**a**
he (NOM) father -3.SG -**GEN** ox -**3.SG**
'His father's ox'

(23) b. [kïïs oquh-u] -**n** kuturug –**a**
girl(NOM) ox -3.SG -**GEN** tail -**3.SG**
'The girl's ox's tail'

In a regular Sakha relative clause with a subject that is third person and does consist of a possessive phrase, that subject must be in the nominative; it cannot be in the genitive:

(24)a. [[kini aqa -ta] öl-ör-büt] oquh-**a**
he(NOM)father-3.SG (**NOM**) die-CAUS-P ox-**3.SG**
'The ox which his father killed'

(24)b. *[[kini aqa -tï] -**n** öl-ör-büt] oquh-**a**
he(NOM) father-3.SG-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-**3.SG**
Intended reading: 'The ox which his father killed'

First of all, these two examples, and specifically the ungrammaticality of the genitive subject, show us that the nominative subject in the well-formed relative clause is indeed a subject and not a possessor. If that noun phrase had been in the position of the possessor, then that noun phrase should have been in the genitive, as in (24b); but under the intended reading of a non-possessed relative clause, the genitive is bad.

Thus, Sakha does seem to provide some support to the generalization proposed on the basis of Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur: there is a ban on possessed relative clauses, when the subject of the modifying clause within the relative clause is genitive; given that in Sakha (non-subject) relative clauses in general, that subject is always in the nominative and never in the genitive (as shown by the ill-formedness of (24b) and other examples of this sort with genitive subjects), the fact that Sakha does allow for possessed relative clauses is expected. To refresh the reader's memory that Sakha does allow for such possessed relative clauses, I repeat the previously seen examples (3) and (4) as (25) and (26), respectively:

(25) [[aqa-n öl-ör-büt] (min) oquh-**um**
father-2.SG (**NOM**) die-CAUS-P I(NOM) ox -**1.SG**
'***My*** ox which your father killed'

(26) [min öl-ör-büt] (kini) oquh-**a**
I (**NOM**) die-CAUS-P he (NOM) ox-**3.SG**
'***His*** ox which I killed'

In these examples, the subjects *aqan* 'your father' and *min* 'I' are in the nominative, not in the genitive. Thus, our generalization banning possessed relative clauses with genitive subjects would not apply here, and these constructions are thus allowed (in the absence of any other known ban).

While our generalization appears to cover the data so far presented, there are reasons for at least refining it. The next section addresses that issue.

3. 3. Refining the generalization: Agreement and banning its repetition

We should not be completely satisfied with the solution just presented. First of all, there is a conceptual reservation we have to raise: *why* should our generalization hold? What is it about genitive subjects that should preclude possession? Nothing general and simple comes to mind. We should ask for a general principle that would *motivate* our very specific ban and would actually *predict* the existence of such a ban.

Secondly, there is an empirical problem with our ban, as well. That problem is posed by Turkish. We started this paper by noting that in Turkish, non-subject relative clauses can be possessed; in contrast to Sakha and the other Turkic languages we have looked at here, the subjects of such relative clauses are in the genitive. Our original example was as follows:

(27) Ali-nin [[geçen yıl çek-tiğ-in] resm]-i
Ali-GEN last year pull-FN-2.SG picture-3.SG
'Ali's picture which you took last year'

Furthermore, the Turkish counterparts of the type of examples we have been looking at for Sakha, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur are perfectly fine, as well—the non-subject relative clauses can be possessed, even though the subject is in the genitive:

(28) Ali-**nin** öl-dür-düğ-ü öküz-**üm**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-FN-3.SG ox-**1.SG**
'***My*** ox which Ali killed'

(29) Sen-**in** öl-dür-düğ-ün öküz-**üm**
you-**GEN** die-CAUS-FN-3.SG ox-**1.SG**
'***My*** ox which you killed'

(30) [Sen-in baba-n]-**ın** öl-dür-düğ-ü öküz-**üm**
you-GEN father-2.SG-**GEN** die-CAUS-FN-3.SG ox-**1.SG**
'***My*** ox which your father killed'

There must be something that makes the genitive subject in these Turkish relative clauses different from the genitive subject in the corresponding relative clause constructions in Sakha, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur. I address this issue next.

To give the answer away at the beginning of the discussion: In Turkish, the genitive subject is made possible by the agreement marker on the *predicate*, while in Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur, the genitive subject is made possible by the agreement marker on the *head noun*, as we saw. I shall claim that this different placement explains the different facts concerning possession. As for Sakha, it patterns with Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur with respect to the placement of the agreement marker; however, given that the subject in Sakha's relative clauses is always in the nominative and never in the genitive, this is not a problem: I shall ultimately claim that the nominative, at least in Sakha, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur, is a so-called default case (a notion I shall address later on) and does not need particular licensing. Therefore, it can show up in the absence of any agreement marker, especially in Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur relative clauses, as we saw earlier. In contrast, the genitive in these languages is not a default case; it is a licensed case, and its licenser is the agreement marker. The key to our puzzle lies in the nature of the genitive as a licensed case.

The special property of possessed relative clauses with genitive subjects in the Turkic languages is the following: the possessor must be in the genitive, as well. Given that the genitive case is a licensed case, as I just mentioned, this means that the possessed relative clause must have two agreement morphemes, one each for the two genitives: one for the

possessor, and one for the genitive subject. This is what we see in Turkish possessed relative clauses:

(31) Ali-**nin** öl-dür-düğ-ü (ben-**im**) öküz-**üm**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-FN-3.SG I-**GEN** ox-**1.SG**
'***My*** ox which Ali killed'

Here, the genitive suffix *–nin* on *Ali*, the subject, is licensed by the 3. person singular suffix *–ü*, and the genitive suffix *–im* on *ben* 'I', the possessor, is licensed by the 1. person singular suffix *–üm*. We thus see that in Turkish relative clauses, the two agreement suffixes are placed on two different hosts. Consequently, no problem with respect to licensing the two genitive noun phrases arises, and the utterance is well-formed.

What about genitive noun phrases in the relative clauses of some of the other Turkic languages we saw?

Let us discuss examples from Uighur, as a representative for at least Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur. I start with a regular, non-possessed relative clause, which we saw earlier as (16a):

(32) Äli-**niŋ** öl-tür-gän kali-**si**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-P ox-**3.SG**
'The ox which Ali killed'

Just as in Turkish, the genitive case on the subject (here: *Äli*) is licensed by the agreement marker (here: *-si*). We saw earlier that in the absence of this agreement marker, the subject cannot be genitive—it must be nominative. The only difference between Turkish and Uighur is the position of the 3. person singular agreement marker: in Turkish, it is on the predicate of the modifying clause, while in Uighur, it is placed on the head of the relative clause. This difference will become crucial in a moment.

Now let us illustrate a possessive phrase in Uighur:

(33) min-**iŋ** kala-**m**
I-**GEN** ox-**1.SG**
'My ox'

Just as in Turkish, and as is typical for most Turkic languages, the possessor and the possessee agree overtly; the genitive case on the pos-

sessee, here marked with *–iŋ*, is licensed by the agreement marker for person and number features of the possessee, i.e. here *–m*, the 1. person singular marker.

Combining the relative clause and the possessive phrase, in the way we did for Turkish, should yield something similar to the Turkish (31):

(34) *Äli-**niŋ** öl-tür-gän (min-**iŋ**) kali-**si-m**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-P I-**GEN** ox-**3.SG-1.SG**
Intended reading: 'My ox which Ali killed'

As we know, this combination is disallowed in Uighur. One reason, I claim, is due to the ill-formed morphological combination of the two agreement markers on the possessee, yielding the ill-formed word **kalisim*: more than one agreement marker is not possible in immediate sequence, even if those markers are not identical.

Such a ban against sequences of agreement morphemes was proposed in Kornfilt (1986) for Turkish, and was named "Stuttering Prohibition". This proposal was based on the observation that nominal compounds in Turkish, when they enter a possessive phrase, lose their compound marker—and the compound marker is nothing but an unchanging 3. person singular agreement marker. For example, note the marker *–(s)I* in the following nominal compound:

(35) spor araba-**sı**
sports car-**3.SG**
'Sports car'

When we combine such a nominal compound with a possessive phrase, the compound marker, which is always in the shape of the 3. person singular agreement marker, disappears, and the agreement marker for the possessee is the only agreement marker that survives; a sequence of the two agreement markers is ill-formed:

(36)a. (ben-**im**) spor araba-**m**
I-**GEN** sports car-**1.SG.**
'My sports car'

(36)b.*(ben-**im**) spor araba-**sı-m**
I-**GEN** sports car-**3.SG -1.SG.**
Intended reading: 'My sports car'

> Although the compound marker *–(s)I* is otherwise obligatory for nominal compounds in Turkish, we see that it can disappear, when its presence would violate the Stuttering Prohibition; its function as a marker for a nominal compound can obviously be taken over by the genuine agreement marker which agrees with the possessor, and whose presence is obligatory due to the necessity to license the genitive on the possessor (even when that possessor is left out—a possibility expressed by the parentheses in the examples).

In contrast, when the Stuttering Prohibition is violated by a sequence of two genuine agreement markers, there is no way out: leaving out either one of the two markers leads to ill-formedness. The following examples illustrate this observation. Suppose we want to embed the following possessive phrase into (36a), another possessive phrase:

(37) Volkswagen-**in** yeni spor araba-**sı**
Volkswagen-**GEN** new sports car-**3.SG**
'Volkswagen's new sports car'

Here, we have a similar situation to (36a): the nominal compound *spor arabası* 'sports car', with its compound marker *–sı*, has been embedded into a possessive phrase, whose possessor is *Volkswagen*—a possessor which is in the genitive. That genitive must be licensed by a genuine agreement marker on the possessee; that marker is (also) *–sı*, because the possessor has the features 3. person singular. In a sequence of compound marker and genuine agreement marker, the latter wins, and we have only one occurrence of *–sı*: the genuine 3. person singular agreement marker.

Now let us try to embed the possessive phrase in (37) into the possessive phrase in (36a):

(38)a. *(ben-**im**) Volkswagen-**in** yeni spor araba-**sı-m**
I-**GEN** Volkswagen-**GEN** new sports car-**3.SG-1.SG**

(38)b. *(ben-**im**) Volkswagen-**in** yeni spor araba-**m**
I-**GEN** Volkswagen-**GEN** new sports car-**1.SG**

(38)c. *(ben-**im**) Volkswagen-**in** yeni spor araba-**sı**
I-**GEN** Volkswagen-**GEN** new sports car-**3.SG**

Intended reading for all three examples: 'Volkswagen's new sports car of mine'

The results are bad for all three possibilities, even if for different reasons:

In (38a), the Stuttering Prohibition has been violated: two agreement markers appear in an immediate sequence.

In (38b), the Stuttering Prohibition is respected; there is only one agreement marker. However, as a consequence, only one genitive possessor can be licensed: *benim* 'my', with which the agreement marker *–m* '1.SG.' agrees. Because *Volkswagen'in* 'Volkswagen's' is not licensed as a genitive possessor, due to the absence of a matching agreement marker, the result is ill-formed.

Likewise, in (38c), the Stuttering Prohibition is respected; there is only one agreement marker. But as a consequence, only one genitive possessor can be licensed: *Volkswagen'in* 'Volkswagen's', with which the agreement marker *–sı* '3.sg' agrees. Because *benim* 'my' is not licensed as a genitive possessor, due to the absence of a matching agreement marker, the result is ill-formed.

Why can't we omit one of the agreement markers and have the surviving marker take over the function of the omitted marker, similarly to the omitted compound marker, whose function is successfully taken over by the surviving agreement marker, as we saw it happen in nominal compounds embedded in possessive phrases, such as in (36a)?

3. 4. Genuine versus apparent agreement in licensing genitive case

The answer to this question lies in the difference between the nature of the compound marker, which is unchanging in always expressing the

feature 3. person singular, and the nature of the genuine agreement marker, which expresses wide-ranging possible features, depending on the features of the possessor. In other words, even when the compound marker is absent, its shape and existence can be easily predicted, and thus the existence of the adjacent possessive marker is sufficient for such a prediction. But when a genuine agreement marker is absent, its duty of licensing a matching genitive possessor cannot be taken over by another agreement marker, whose features are different and which must license a matching possessor of its own.

I propose that this account can be easily used to explain why in languages such as Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur, relative clauses with genitive subjects cannot be possessed, i.e. such relative clauses can't be embedded into possessive phrases. We saw that in such relative clauses, the genitive subject is licensed by the agreement marker on the head of the relative clause. If the entire relative clause is embedded in a possessive phrase, then the possessor, being genitive, would also need to be licensed by a genuine agreement marker—a marker which would also need to be placed on the head of the relative clause.

To illustrate this situation, I repeat the Uighur example (34) as (39):

(39) *Äli-**niŋ** öl-tür-gän (min-**iŋ**) kali-**si -m**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-P I-**GEN** ox-**3.SG-1.SG**
Intended reading: 'My ox which Ali killed'

This example is ill-formed, because the Stuttering Prohibition has been violated. But leaving out one of the two agreement markers on the head noun, in an attempt to respect that prohibition, leads to ungrammaticality, as well, for reasons similar to those we saw in Turkish possessive phrases that are possessed themselves. The following two examples illustrate such ungrammaticality:

(40)a. *Äli-**niŋ** öl-tür-gän (min-**iŋ**) kala-**m**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-P I-**GEN** ox-**1.SG**

(40)b. *Äli-**niŋ** öl-tür-gän (min-**iŋ**) kali-**si**
Ali-**GEN** die-CAUS-P I-**GEN** ox-**3.SG**

Intended reading for both examples: 'My ox which Ali killed'

In (40a), the possessor *miniŋ* 'my' is licensed as a genitive possessor, due to the 1. person singular agreement marker *–m* on the head of the relative clause. However, the genitive subject *Äliniŋ* 'Ali's' needs to be licensed by its own agreement marker in Uighur; in the absence of a matching 3. person singular agreement marker, the genitive subject is not licensed; this leads to ungrammaticality.

Likewise, in (40b), the genitive subject *Äliniŋ* is licensed properly, due to the 3. person singular agreement marker *–si* on the head of the relative clause. However, the possessor *miniŋ* 'my' needs to be licensed by its own agreement marker in Uighur; in the absence of a matching 1. person singular agreement marker, the genitive possessor is not licensed; this leads to ungrammaticality.

Thus, no matter what we do to avoid the ill effects of the Stuttering Prohibition, we cannot make a relative clause with a genitive subject be possessed.

3. 5. Why can relative clauses with nominative subjects be possessed? Default versus licensed subject case

The remaining question is now about the well-formed possessed relative clauses with nominative subjects in these Turkic languages. What makes such constructions possible?

We saw that in relative clauses that have nominative subjects, there is no agreement marker at all. How does the nominative case get licensed on the subject?

When we look at other languages of the world, it is obvious that in languages that lack agreement morphology, subject case has to be handled differently than what this paper has proposed for genitive subjects in Turkic relative clauses, simply because there is no obvious morphological licenser of subject case in such languages. It has therefore been proposed that cross-linguistically, there has to be an additional mechanism available that simply provides an unmarked case for the subject in such instances; that type of case is often referred to as "default case". For example, the nominative case on the subject in languages such as Japa-

nese or Chinese, neither of which has subject agreement markers, has often been characterized in the literature as a default case.

Default case has also been referred to in languages such as English, to account for the case on certain noun phrases where no case licenser can be established; e.g. in answers to questions of the following kind:

(41)a. Who is there?
(41)b. It's *me*.

The noun phrase *me* appears in the accusative; however, there is no licenser for that case in the utterance. Usually, the accusative is licensed in English by a transitive verb or a preposition; in this utterance, there is neither. This has led a number of syntacticians to propose that this is an instance of default case, and that in English, the default case is accusative.[3]

In most languages, however, the default case is the nominative. For example, in Turkish, in contexts such as (41b), it would be the nominative that would be used rather than the accusative:

(42)a. Kim o?
(42)b. Ben /*Ben-i

Another probable reason for the nominative as the preferred default case cross-linguistically is that it is (morphologically) unmarked in many languages, such as in Turkish and the other Turkic languages.

Let us then analyze the nominative subject in the relative clauses that lack agreement in Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur as a default case.

At this point in the discussion, we see that it isn't a mystery any longer why relative clauses with nominative subjects can be possessed in these languages: the single agreement marker on the head noun of the construction agrees with the possessor and licenses the genitive case on that possessor. The subject is in the default nominative case; that case does not need to be licensed, and thus does not need its own agreement marker. Thus, no violation of the Stuttering Prohibition can arise; at the same time, there is no other case that needs licensing, other than the

[3]For a detailed source on default case, see Schütze (2001).

genitive on the possessor, and that genitive is taken care of by the existing, single, agreement marker on the head.

What about the two genitives in Turkish possessed relative clauses? Those are not problematic, either. As we said earlier, in Turkish, the two separate agreement markers needed to license the two genitives are placed on different constituents: the agreement that licenses the genitive subject is placed on the predicate of the modifying clause; the agreement that licenses the genitive possessor is placed on the head noun of the entire relative clause construction. Because the two agreement markers are not located on the same constituent, they don't enter an immediate sequence; consequently, the Stuttering Prohibition is not violated, and both agreement markers can survive, each one licensing a separate genitive noun phrase.

As for Sakha, we saw that the subject in its regular (i.e. non-possessed) relative clauses is in the nominative, not in the (relic) genitive. Possessors, on the other hand, are in the genitive (if they are complex themselves and are third persons). I propose here that in Sakha, just as in Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur, the nominative is a default case rather than a licensed case. This means that there is no need for an independent agreement marker in Sakha relative clauses to license the subject's case; when a relative clause is part of a possessive phrase, the head noun can therefore bear just one single agreement marker: the one for the possessor, whose genitive case it licenses. There is no violation of the Stuttering Prohibition, and there is no extra noun phrase whose case needs licensing. Consequently, relative clauses in Sakha can be possessed. The situation is quite similar to the one we saw with respect to the second possible relative clause construction in Kazakh, Krighiz, and Uighur, namely the relative clauses with nominative subjects.

But Sakha is somewhat different from those languages: it has just one type of relative clause, not two types, as those three other Turkic languages do. The Sakha (non-subject) relative clauses have properties that are a mixture of those exhibited by the two distinct constructions in those languages. On the one hand, the Sakha relative clause has a nominative subject and is therefore similar to the *second* construction in the other three languages; on the other hand, the Sakha relative clause has an

agreement marker on the head noun and is thus similar to the *first* construction in the other three languages.

The important question to be asked in this regard about Sakha is the following: what role does the agreement play in Sakha relative clauses? If I was correct in characterizing the nominative case on the subject as a default case rather than a case licensed by agreement, then the agreement element's function is clearly a different one than that of a case licenser in Sakha, at least in relative clauses. In addition to simply expressing the person and number features of the subject, the agreement characterizes the entire construction as a complex noun phrase, i.e. a noun phrase whose head is modified by more than a simple adjective. We find an agreement marker on the head of three types of complex noun phrases in Sakha: 1. on the head of a possessive phrase, as illustrated earlier in this paper; 2. on the head of nominal compounds, as in Turkish; and 3. on the head of non-subject relative clauses, differently from Turkish. In this last property, the Sakha agreement marker is similar to its counterpart in Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur; but it is different from it, as well, because in contrast to that counterpart, I claim, it does not license case on the subject, because the subject is not genitive, but nominative, i.e. in the default case.

Because in Sakha relative clauses, the agreement marker on the head is not needed as a case licenser, it can be omitted without ill effect, when its presence would cause a violation of the Stuttering Prohibition. For example, when a relative clause which would have, in isolation, a subject agreement marker on its head, is embedded in a possessive phrase, the agreement marker for the possessor gets realized (because it has to license the possessor's genitive case), while the agreement marker for the subject can be omitted so as to avoid violating the Stuttering Prohibition. The absence of the subject agreement marker has no bearing on the subject, whose nominative case is a default case and doesn't need licensing. The function of the subject agreement marker of characterizing the entire construction as a complex noun phrase can be taken over by the possessive agreement marker, which has the same function as well, given its role in possessive phrases in general.

This account of the possessed Sakha relative clauses is reminiscent of what we said happens to nominal compounds in Turkish when they are possessed, i.e. to what we said about examples such as *spor arabam* (rather than **spor arabasım*) 'my sports car'. In isolation, a nominal compound in Turkish must bear the compound marker, i.e. the 3. person singular agreement marker: it is not possible to say **spor araba*; it must be *spor arabası*. I suggest that this compound marker *–(s)I*, similarly to the subject agreement marker in Sakha relative clauses, is needed to characterize nominal compounds as what they are: complex nouns with nominal modification. But this agreement marker is not needed as a case licenser, and can therefore be omitted when its presence would violate the Stuttering Prohibition. The genuine agreement marker (in this paragraph's example, *-m*) cannot be omitted, since it has to license the genitive of the possessor; however, since the genuine (possessive) agreement also types the entire phrase as a complex noun phrase with nominal modification, it can take over the compound marker's function in its absence.

Conclusions

We have seen in this paper that a mysterious restriction holding for just one type of relative clauses in certain Turkic languages (namely that relative clauses with genitive subjects cannot be possessed, while their counterparts with nominative subjects can) receives a principled explanation, when we extend to it an account for an observation about a rather different area of Turkish syntax—an account for why nominal compounds can't be possessed without losing their compound marker, and for why possessive phrases cannot be possessed at all. Studying the syntax (and morphology) of Turkic languages together, as a group, clearly helps synergistically in gaining insights into the properties of the individual languages.

Abbreviations:

1., 2., 3.: First, second, and third person, respectively

CAUS: Causative; GEN: Genitive; FN: Factive nominalization marker; NOM: Nominative;

P: Participle; PASS: Passive; PL: Plural; SG: Singular

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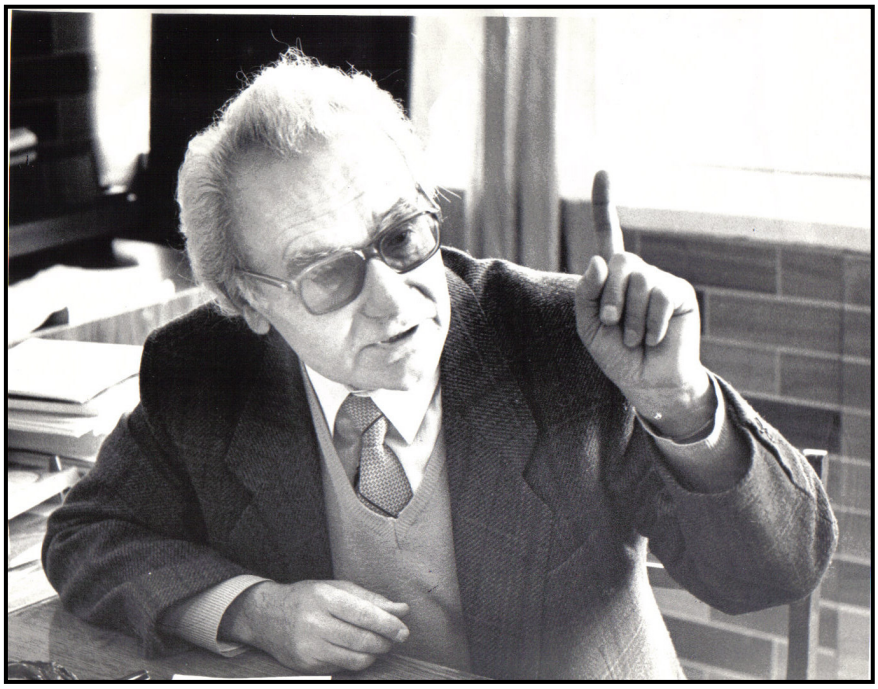

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