

Abstract category: Oral presentation

Theme session: Generalized Noun Modifying Clause Constructions

**Title: Noun (phrase) modifying clause constructions in Turkish and some other Turkic languages**

This talk proposes an account for a difference between two types of Altaic languages: One type allows noun—complement clause constructions with very loose semantic and formal connections between the external noun and the complement clause. We refer to such constructions as ‘the smell of roasting meat’ structures. The other type doesn’t allow such constructions.

The talk is concerned with some formal factors which influence this dichotomy. Turkic languages which allow ‘the smell of roasting meat’ also have other properties which set them apart from Turkish, which doesn’t allow this type of construction. We refer to those languages as Turkic 1. Considering three types of complex constructions (1. those without external nouns, 2. those with external nouns corresponding to relative clauses, and 3. those with external nouns corresponding to noun—complement clause constructions), Turkic 1 languages have the *same* range of nominalization morphology for *all three types* of constructions. In Turkish and most dialects of Azerbaijani, languages which we dub Turkic 2, the nominalization morphology is only *partially* similar across these three types of embedded clauses. The “indicative nominalization” morphology is found in all three types; however, “subjunctive nominalization” occurs only with noun—clausal complement constructions and in embedded clauses without external nominal head, but not with relative clauses. Furthermore, in Turkic 2, subject relative clauses require a special marker.

**Summary of facts: A:** The “subjunctive nominalization” morphology doesn’t show up in Turkic 2 relative clauses; **B:** the special morpheme for subject relative clauses doesn’t show up in other subordinate clauses. In Turkic 1, no such distinctions among nominalization morphemes, determined by distinct syntactic structures, are found. We propose that languages such as Turkic 2 with fine differences among nominalization morphemes also don’t permit constructions such as ‘the smell of meat roasting’. In Turkic 2, the syntax and external morphology of noun-complement constructions show that these are phrasal *compounds* in Turkic 2, with a close relation between a compound head and its complement, and in relative clauses, which aren’t compounds in Turkic 2, the relativization target, corresponding to the external noun, determines the shape of the clause’s predicate. Sakha, as a representative of Turkic 1, does not show these special properties of noun—complement clause constructions and of relative clauses in either morphology or syntax.

We hypothesize that the possibility of exhibiting constructions such as ‘the smell of meat roasting’ depends on how close a relationship an embedded clause has with an external noun *in general, elsewhere in the language*. In Turkic 2, which has a tight subcategorization-like relation between the external noun and the embedded clause in all externally headed constructions in terms of semantics and morphology, utterances such as ‘the smell of meat roasting’ are not possible. In contrast, because these tight relationships between external noun and clause don’t exist in Sakha/Turkic 1 or in Standard Mongolian, such languages do allow utterances such as ‘the smell of meat roasting’, ‘the sound of wind blowing’ etc.