Psych Verbs and the Experiencer in Turkish

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1. Introduction
The systematic correspondences between thematic information encoded in predicates and syntactic positions in which they appear are captured in different linking rules. Baker (1988: 46) proposes UTAH to account for the observed regularities:

Uniformity of Theta Assignment Hypothesis

Identical thematic relationships between items are represented by identical structural relationships between those items at the level of D-Structure.

Psych verbs, however, seem to project structures that defy UTAH, as the following illustrates:

(1) a. John fears the dog.
    b. The dog frightens John.

Both fear and frighten refer to a change in psychological states of individuals and they impose the same type of selectional restrictions on their two arguments, the Experiencer and the Theme. Yet, as opposed to

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1 Following from the labels of their thematic roles, they are also called Experiencer verbs, or Stimulus verbs; following from the particular type of psychological state they denote, they are called Emotion verbs or Mental verbs, among others. There are different labels for the arguments of these verbs: Theme is sometimes called Stimulus or Trigger.

2 It is not always easy to identify a particular verb as a psych verb, neither is it possible to determine its membership to a particular subclass. It is generally assumed that these verbs have an Experiencer and a Theme argument and describe a situation in which the Theme argument is responsible for the change in the psychological or emotional state of the Experiencer. Levin (1993, 188-193) identifies four basic types: those that are transitive are of two subtypes; amuse verbs and admire verbs. With amuse verbs, the Experiencer appears as the subject, and with admire verbs, as the object. The remaining two subtypes are intransitive and surface with different PPs, namely, marvel verbs and appeal verbs. Here again, the classification is based on the syntactic position of the Experiencer argument. Experiencer appears as the subject with marvel verbs, and as PP object with appeal
predictions of UTAH, they cross the syntactic positions of their thematic arguments when they are projected onto a syntactic structure.

The puzzle presented by psych verbs produce different types of solutions. Pesetsky (1995: 12-13) summarizes three logical possibilities:

i. Finer-grained syntax
ii. Finer-grained semantics
iii. Abandonment of UTAH

Belletti and Rizzi (1988) represent the finer-grained syntax solution. They argue that no other verb class displays such freedom of inversion of thematic roles, and this suggests that the lexical gap is far from being accidental and it does not result from lexical idiosyncracy either. Furthermore, the freedom of inversion with psych verbs is not a peculiarity of one language but observed cross-linguistically. Thus, a closer inspection reveals that inverted structures are transformationally related and can be explained through familiar unaccusative analysis. Their study on Italian data distinguishes three basic lexical types:

(2) Gianni teme questo.
Gianni fears this.
(3) Questo preoccupa Gianni
this worries Gianni.
(4a) A Gianni piace questo.
to Gianni pleases this.
(4b) Questo piace a Gianni.
this pleases to Gianni.

Both (2) and (3) are simple transitive structures with crossing of thematic roles, and (4a) and (4b) are intransitive structures with prepositional objects. Theme argument in (3) is in fact a DS object and is moved to an empty subject position by DP movement\(^3\). Thus (2) and (3) are transformationally related and the Theme is theta marked by the verb directly. The verb and the

verbs. However, as noted by Levin, some of these verbs are also cross-listed: the transitive use of *marvel* verbs and the intransitive use of certain verbs of the *amuse* class are the examples (worry vs. worry about).

\(^3\) Movement takes the underlying Theme argument from a VP-internal position and moves it to open subject position:

\[
[ \_\_\_\_ [ VP \text{ Theme} ] \text{ Experiencer} ] \\
[\text{Theme } j [ VP \ t \ j ] \text{ Experiencer} ]
\]
Theme compositionally theta mark the Experiencer. Thus, there is no crossing of theta roles and no problem for UTAH.

Finer-grained semantic analysis comes in different forms. Pesetsky’s own proposal calls for a rethinking of the Theme role. He argues that Theme argument of psych verbs is in fact represents two different roles, namely, Target of Emotion, and Subject Matter of Emotion with different psych verbs. Furthermore, with verbs that map their Experiencer argument to the object position, the subject position is filled by a Cause. The Experiencer Object (EO) verbs, as opposed to Experiencer Subject (ES) verbs, are in fact causatives. In English the causative affix is zero as opposed to some other languages in which similar verbs appear in overt causative form. Since, there are different thematic roles, there is no crossing of thematic roles and no problem with the hierarchy.

Grimshaw’s (1990), solution, on the other hand, assigns EO and ES verbs onto different aspectual tiers. It is argued that lexical entries contain two tiers, and these two types of psych verbs do not differ at thematic level but project their arguments to different positions at the aspectual tier.

The third option has not yet pursued seriously. However, there are proposals for weakening of UTAH. Bouchard (1995) proposes a theory of Homomorphic Mapping in which syntactic structure reflects semantic structure in a more direct manner. Bouchard argues that thematic roles are context dependent, and, as they stand, the linking of argument positions to grammatical function positions is indexical. In Homomorphic Mapping, the relative relations between arguments in semantic structure are carried over to

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4 Pesetsky’s analysis identifies the following classes:

Class 1a. Experiencer Subject, Target of Emotion, Object or PP object:
angry at, like, love, satisfied with, content with;

Class 1b: Experiencer Subject, Subject Matter of Emotion, Object:
worried about, bored with, concerned about, fear, afraid of)  

Class 2: Cause Subject, Experiencer Object:
anger, please, delight, satisfy, content, worry, concern, frighten).

5 It is not only the Theme role that is reanalyzed. Recent studies (e.g.Broekhuis) reconsider the Experiencer role such that it may be interpreted as either Agent, Cause, or Cause due to the eventive or stative nature of the psych verb.

6 Two recent studies that differ from those referred here are Reinhart (2002) which proposes a feature system and a set of arity operations for theta system, and Wanner (2000) which adopts OT analysis.
syntactic structure. Thus, any syntactic position must be justified by a corresponding position in the semantic structure, making linking more straightforward. This will not allow for an empty position in syntax and hence there will be no movement to such position. Furthermore, there are many verbs of contact which may easily receive psych interpretation with shift in their senses. Thus, in addition to psych verbs that incorporate their psych objects, there are “normal” verbs with nonincorporated psych objects. Then it is more appropriate to refer to psych construction rather than psych verbs since this type of construction is very productive where psych verbs constitute only a subset.

In this paper, we will present a descriptive account of psych verbs in Turkish. We will mainly follow the proposed classifications for psych verbs in general and illustrate the emerging lexical classes in Turkish. Our emphasis is on the Experiencer and its representation in different constructions. Here we will draw insights from psych construction analysis. We will display that psych construction analysis not only allows for many verbs to be analyzed as psych verbs that will not be interpreted as such otherwise. Such analysis also helps to identify verbs that would allow object Experiencers with nonincorporating verbs in Turkish.

This paper is organized as follows: In the first section, we discuss the basic lexical classes of psych verbs in Turkish, listing the structures projected by incorporating psych verbs. In the second section, we will present the basics of the psych construction analysis and follow the consequences of this analysis to determine the structures emerging with various nonincorporating psych verbs. We will provide a tentative list of psych constructions that map the Experiencer argument to different positions.

2. Experiencer in Turkish: Nonderived incorporating verbs
Like in many other languages, psych verbs in Turkish also derive transitive and intransitive constructions. The incorporating root verbs in Turkish project following classes of psych constructions:

Ali-NOM Ayşe-ACC love/like-PROG-3sg
‘Ali loves/likes Ayşe’

Ali-NOM Ayşe-DAT angry-PAST-3sg
‘Ali angered at Ayşe.’

Ali-NOM Ayşe-ABL fear-PAST-3sg
'Ali feared Ayşe'

(8) Ali çıldırm-dı/ afalla-dı.
    Ali-NOM get mad/stun-PAST-3sg
'Ali got mad/stunned'

The structure in (5) is like any other transitive construction with nominative subject and accusative object. Structures in (6) and (7) also surface as any other verb that appears with dative and ablative adverbials, both of which are intransitive. The status of (8) is rather suspicious, since, given the defining semantics of psych verbs; it is not expected to find a monovalent verb that refers to a change in psychological state of an experiencer. However, these verbs clearly refer to a situation in which a sentient being undergoes a change in psychological state. At this point, we simply note that there is only one type of transitive psych construction in Turkish, as exemplified in (8). In other words, non-incorporating root psych verbs do not project a transitive EO structure. In all of the above sentences, the Experiencer is projected onto the subject position, and there is no crossing of thematic roles or violation of thematic hierarchy. The Theme argument is marked with accusative, dative and ablative in the above sentences.

3. Experiencer in Turkish: Derived incorporated verbs

Turkish rarely displays transitivity alternations with root verbs as discussed in Levin (1993). Transitivity alternations generally occur with productive valency changing operations which are governed morphosyntactically.

Turkish causativization introduces a new argument (a Causer) to the structure and alters the case marking of the arguments in the underlying structure. The regularity of Turkish psych constructions that are listed above disappears under causativization and derived structures display unexpected causative patterns.

The causative of (5) derives an expected pattern:

(9) Ben Ali-ye Ayşe-yi beğen-dir/sev-dir-di-m
    l-NOM Ali-DAT Ayşe-ACC like/love-CAUS-PAST-1sg
'I made Ali like/love Ayşe'

7 The existence of root monovalent psych verbs is suspicious. As Reinhart (2002) argues, they are quite rare in English and commonly appear in the passive. Broekhuis (ed.) cites only one such verb in Dutch, the archaic verb versagen 'to despond' which appears only in combination with a negative adverb. The existence of such verbs points to language-particular properties of verb lexicon.
As expected, the introduction of the new argument shifts the existing ones to the next available slot. This construction cites the first instance of dative Experiences in Turkish, which does not occur with nonincorporating root verbs. The accusative marked Theme argument retains its original case marking, as it would with any other verb with accusative object under causativization.

Causatives of (6) and (7), on the other hand, are ungrammatical:

(10) *Ben Ali-ı Ayşe-ye kız-dir-di-m.
'I made Ali angry at Ayşe'

'I made Ali fear Ayşe'

Göksel (1993) indicates that the ungrammaticality of these sentences has nothing to do with their logical type. The ungrammaticality of these sentences is not related to the event type but rather arises from different factors. She argues that such patterns do not also render psychological predicates as a “special” class. The ungrammaticality of these sentences is related to semantic incompatibility induced in a causative construction by the semantics of ablative or dative adverbial. The situation here, as argued by Göksel (1993:222-227) resembles theta-criterion violation since the adverbials in these sentences are causally construed in a sentence which already incorporates a cause, the introduced subject. Kural (1996) on the other hand, argues that the restriction relates to the event structure properties of these verbs. He notes that the proper analysis of these verbs should refer to event argument of the VP and individual/stage level distinction. Note that tıksın- ‘disgust’, occurs with ablative adverbial causativizes freely:

(12) Ayşe balık-tan tıksın-di
Ayşe-NOM fish-ABL disgust-PAST-3sg.
‘Ayşe disgusted fish.’

‘Ali made Ayşe disgust fish.’

Kural (1996:133) argues that verbs that denote temporary emotions differ from those that denote more permanent types of emotion behave differently
with respect to cooccurrence restrictions, i.e., causative with the target of emotion.  

The causatives of these verbs display an unexpected, “odd” pattern. The grammatical sentences are without their respective dative and ablative adverbials:

‘Ayşe made Ali angry’  

‘Ayşe frighten Ali’  

The sentences above, with their noncausative forms, display pairs similar to (2) and (3) above, the only difference is the existence of overt causative marking. For our purposes here, we will simply note that EO verbs in Turkish occur in the causative. Thus, the causative of intransitive psych verbs with dative and ablative adverbials derive EO verbs in Turkish, where the derived pattern is similar to the causative of other intransitive verbs with dative or ablative adverbials.

The causative of (8), derives a regular pattern and constitutes another instance of EO psych construction with a cause argument projected onto the subject position:

[His problems/students]-NOM Ali-ACC go mad-CAUS-PAST-3sg.  
‘His problems/students made Ali gone mad.’

4. Psych construction analysis and Experiencer

Bouchard (1995), following Dowty (1991), argues that psych verbs are not grammatically ‘special’. There is no reason to assert for such verbs an ability to generate specific underlying structures when this option is not available for other types of verbs.

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8 *Korkmak* ‘to fear’ behaves differently with respect to cooccurrence restriction. With a generic object, it can occur in a regular causative pattern:

Suna Mehmet-i köpek-ten kork-ut-tu.  
‘Suna frightened Mehmet of dogs’  
(Kural 1996:133).
There are basically two problems with previous analyses: First, the syntactic processes in which psych verbs are said to be behaving differently are not limited only to these verbs, but many other non-psych verbs also display similar behavior with respect to these special cases. Second, thematic analysis of psych verbs is incorrect and it in fact obscures many other factors. Psych roles can be assigned to several different positions when psych construction analysis is adopted.

In Bouchard’s terms, psych verbs themselves are just a subcase of psych constructions, since, “For a vast class of verbs, if one of their argument positions is filled by a psy-chose — a psychological object found only in mental space, such as emotion — the construction is a psych construction (1995:265). This approach extends the data of psych verbs considerably including almost all verbs of contact. Following the suggestions of Ruwet (1972), verbs like *frapper* ‘strike’ in French are to be considered as psych verbs:

(17)  
\[
\begin{align}
\text{a. Paul a frappé/ébloui/empoisonné Marie par son discours} \\
\text{Paul struck/blinded/poisoned Marie with his talk.} \\
\text{b. Paul strikes Mary as intelligent.}
\end{align}
\]

There are thus two basic types: (i) psych verbs will always form a Psych construction since their psy-chose is incorporated into the verb (eg. *feare, love, hate*), and (ii) other verbs that occur with but do not incorporate a psy-chose to form a psych construction.

In a psych construction, psy-chose contacts with an Intentional Subject, and psych constructions are not different from other constructions. With verbs of physical contact, the contact induces a change of state in one of the arguments. Similarly, psy-chose contacts with the argument it effects in a psych construction, not in physical but in mental space. This abstract relation of contact comes in two types: \(x\) is oriented toward \(y\), and, \(x\) relates with \(y\).

With nonincorporating psy-chose, Experiencer may appear as Goal, Place Agent, Theme, or Source. We list the following as illustrative from Bouchard (1995: 266-286):

(18)  
\[
\begin{align}
\text{Jean fait peur à Marie.} & \quad \text{(Exp = Goal)} \\
\text{Jean makes scare to Marie.} \\
\text{Paul a puer de Marie.} & \quad \text{(Exp = Place)} \\
\text{Paul has scare of Marie.} \\
\text{Jean donne du soucis à Marie.} & \quad \text{(Exp = Goal)}
\end{align}
\]
Jean gives some worry to Marie.

Paul voue une haine féroce à Virgine.  
(Exp = Agent and Source)

Paul vows a ferocious hate to Marie.

Cela a mis Marie en colère.  
(Exp = Theme)

That puts Marie in anger.

Together with incorporating and nonincorporating structures, these two types of abstract relations derives four classes of psych constructions⁹.

5. Extensions through psych construction analysis

We have previously indicated that Turkish lacks root EO verbs. Following psych construction analysis suggested by Bouchard, we now suggest that there exist, though very limited in number, a number of verbs primarily express a sense of "contact" in the physical space. These verbs, quite easily, receive psych interpretation, with a nonincorporating psychose and come to express a sense of "contact" in the mental space.


'Ali broke the glass/squeezed the sponge/ shook the table.'

Shift in their semantics, occurring with an animate sentient affected object, they express "contact in the mental space".¹⁰

(20) Ali Ayşe-yi üz-/kır-/sars-/sık-tı.

Ali-NOM Ayşe-ACC sad-/break-/shake-/squeeze-PAST-3sg.

'Ali worried/hurt/shook/bored Ayşe.'

Similar to frapper verbs of French, together with a Experiencer object, these verbs represent the only nonderived EO verbs in Turkish. It is interesting to note that their agentive derivations (kir-ıcı, sik-ıcı, sars-ıcı) select their psych senses rather than physical contact. Furthermore, like other EO verbs noted earlier, these verbs do not causativize in Turkish when they express psych

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9 Class 1: fear, mépriser  
Experiencer  Verb  Trigger
Class 2: frighten, dégoûter  
Trigger  Verb  Experiencer
Class 3: strike, frapper  
Trigger  Verb  Experiencer
Class 4: all other nonincorporating constructions

10 Almost all verbs of physical contact may come to express psych sense when they occur with a sentient psychose: Ali Ayşe-yi çarp-/boz-/yık-tı, etc.
meaning. No such restriction occurs when they are used in their normal senses.

Psych construction analysis, also picks other verbs of change of state as psych verbs. The shifted senses of the verbs like, çökmek ‘to collapse’ gevşemek ‘to loosen’, tükenmek ‘to finish’, derives psych senses and when used in this manner, they constitute another case of monovalent psych verbs:

(21) Ali çök-/gevše-/tüken-di
    Ali-NOM collapse/loosen/exhaust-PAST-3sg.
    ‘Ali collapsed/relaxed/exhausted.’

The extended senses of certain other verbs of change of state further derive psych interpretations as illustrated below:

(22) Ali Ayşe-ye ısın-di
    Ali-NOM Ayşe-DAT warm-PAST-3sg.
    Lit. ‘Ali feels warmth towards Ayşe.’

(23) Ali Ayşe-den soğu-di
    Ali-NOM Ayşe-ABL. cold-PAST-3sg.
    Lit. ‘Ali feels cold towards Ayşe.’

Sentences in (19) and (20) represent the same case marking of their oblique arguments with (4) and (5). Here, verbs of change of state in the physical space, receive psych interpretation with metaphorical extension. Particularly, as observed by Pesetsky (1995:111) in many languages, expressions of emotions are quite like weather or “meteorology” changes (eg. stormy feelings, sunny dispositions, dark thoughts, etc.).

Verbs of change of possession also receive psych interpretation when they occur with a psy-chose.

    ‘Ali gave the book to Ayşe.’

    Ali-NOM we-DAT boredom/worry give-PAST-3sg.
    ‘Ali gave us many worries.’

The nonincorporating Theme argument, in this case, is a derived psych noun. (23) illustrates another case of dative Experiencer.
Psych construction analysis of certain others derives locative Experiencers in Turkish, when they occur with an appropriate psy-chose:

   ‘Ali awakened Ayşe.’

   Ali-NOM Ayşe-loc interest wake-CAUS-PAST-3sg.
   ‘Ali aroused interest in Ayşe’

To summarize, incorporating psych verbs in Turkish derive 4 different lexical classes, all of which map their Experiencer to the subject position.

**ExpSub verbs**

(5) Ali Ayşe-yi sev-iyor.
(8) Ali çıldır-di.

Other Experiencer subject verbs are identified through Psych construction analysis, includes:

(21) Ali gevşe-di.
(22) Ali Ayşe-ye ısın-di.

The causative of the ES verbs derived the following instances of EO:

**ExpObj Verbs**

**ExpObj-ACC**

(13) Ben Ayşe-yi balık-tan tıksin-dir-di-m.
(15) Ayşe Ali -yi çıldır-t-tı.

Contact in the mental state shifted the sense of *kırmak* ‘break’ and similar other verbs to come to express psych sense and the further instance of EO:

(20) Ali Ayşe-yi kır-di.

The dative and locative Experiencers are cited in the derived structures and in nonincorporating verbs:
ExpObj-DAT

(9) Ben Ali-ye Ayşe-yi beğen-dir-di-m.


Excluded here are psych verbs that are derived from nominals (etki-le-mek 'to effect') and light verbs verbalizing borrowed psych nominals (nefret etmek 'to hate'). There are also verbs that consistently appear with "psychose", like, duymak 'to feel', beslemek 'to feed', bırakmak 'to leave', çekmek 'to suffer from', dokunmak 'to touch', getirmek, 'to bring about', among others, that express psych senses. However, it is unlikely that these verbs together with their appropriate psychose can produce another case of Experiencer construction that is not cited here.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have presented a partial representation of Experiencer constructions in Turkish. We did not pursue the finer-syntactic analysis since, as is concluded in many studies, the standard tests of unaccusativity do not apply to Turkish verbs, neither does the syntactic processes discussed by Belletti and Rizzi. Second, given the productive nature of psych construction as proposed by Bourchard (1995), we should be positing two different DS representations for verbs kırmak 'to break, to hurt', for psych sense that would involve movement and non-psych sense, with no such movement, thus avoiding the problem of homonymy as discussed in Bouchard (1995). Finer-semantic analysis of the type proposed by Pesetsky is also partially tested in Kural (1996) where he concludes that in many cases Turkish overrides the Target/Subject Matter of Emotion distinction. Instead, we have concentrated on the psych construction analysis to determine the cases that are otherwise obscured by standard thematic analysis.

References


