The Errors Kyrgyz Students Make in Learning Turkish Case Suffixes and Solutions

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ABSTRACT

The most difficult topic for both foreign students and students of Turkish origin is the case suffixes. Turkish and English or French are not languages of the same language family. However, in the case of dialects in the same language family as Turkish, the situation is not different. The same applies to Kyrgyz students. Although most of the verbs take the same case suffixes both in Turkish and Kyrgyz languages, some verbs such as gurur duy- [to be proud of], beğen- [to like], kutla- [to congratulate] take different case suffixes leading negative transfer of native language, which negatively affects learning. There were 36 Kyrgyz students in total with A2 language level in Turkish, 26 of whom are at the Banking Department and 13 of whom are at Tourism Department. In the questionnaire applied to the students who learn Turkish through measuring the information, 24 sentences were given and it was stated that the participants should use only one of the four case suffixes (accusative, dative, locative, ablative). As a result of the questionnaire study, it was revealed that most errors were made in the dative case, and the fewest errors were made in the accusative case. It has been determined that the main cause of the errors made is the negative transfer from the mother tongue. In this study, we have identified the errors that Kyrgyz students made while using case suffixes, and we have discussed their reasons and suggested solutions.

1. Introduction

Different terms are used for case suffixes in Turkish and the classification of suffixes is also examined in some studies. In addition to the works of classifying by functional grammaticality, there are also studies which regard these suffixes at the suffix level in terms of form. Therefore, controversies continue over the category of Turkish case suffixes. Ergin (2009) gives the following information about the case suffixes:

Cases are grammatical categories which express the relation between the words except for the nouns they are attached to. Cases usually indicate the relationship of nouns with the elements that are not subject to them. Cases in Turkish are, of course, conjugated. These conjugations are made with inflectional case suffixes, which are the main nominal inflectional suffixes. (Ergin, 2009, p. 129). These suffixes establish many relationships by

linking nouns to nouns, prepositions, and especially to verbs and sentences come out of these relations with many nouns, prepositional and verbal phrases. (Ergin, 2009, pp. 226-227).

It is understood from Ergin's explanations that the main function of the case suffixes is to link nouns to verbs. In his work "Türk Dil Bilgisi", Ergin (2009) examines the subject under the title of "Case Suffixes (Genitive, Accusative, Dative, Locative, Ablative, Instrumental, Equative, and Directive Suffixes)" (Ergin, 2009, pp. 226-243).

Gülsevin (2011) has examined the subject in his work "Eski Anadolu Türkçesinde Ekler" under the title of "Noun Case Suffixes (Nominative, Genitive, Accusative, Locative, Ablative, Instrumental, and Equative Cases)" (pp. 16-78).

Alyılmaz (2010) has indicated that the case category in Turkish essentially consists of the following subgroups under the light of semantic based functional perspective, which was started by Gemalmaz and maintained by graduate / doctoral students, about the case category:

> 1. Nominative Case; 2. Vocative Case; 3. Subjective Case; 4. Objective Case: 4.1. Indirect Object, 4.2. Direct Object; 5. Accusative Case; 6. Genitive Case 7. Locative Case: 7.1. Locative in time, 7.2. Locative in place; 8. Ablative Case; 9. Originative Case 10. Dative Case; 11. Lative Case 12. Comitative Case; 13. Oppositive Case 14. Benefective Case 15. Causal Case; 16. Instrumental Case; 17. Relative Case; 18. Qualitative Case 19.Quantitative Case: 19.1. Certain number case, 19.2. Approximate number case; 20. Comparative Case; 21. Limitative Case: 21.1. Limitative in place, 21.2. Limitative in time; 22. Semblative Case (Alyılmaz, 2010, pp. 110-111).

The most difficult topic for both foreign students and students of Turkish origin is the case suffixes. Case suffixes have a large variety of usage areas in terms of function. Dative case, for example, demonstrates the direction of the verb, gives the meaning of "for" and "against", gives the meaning "on something, onto something" and used with other prepositions. Also, it is used for the function of other nominal case suffixes. Dative case, for instance, can substitute functions of locative, accusative, ablative, genitive, and instrumental cases.

Mert (2003) illustrates the following examples as the functions of ablative case in his article "Türkçe'de Hâl Kategorisi ve Öğretimi":

> *1*.Ev+den çıktı [He went out of the house]. 2. Hastalık+tan öldü [He died of disease]. 3. Bu yol+dan gitti [He went from this road] 4. Onlar+dan biri geldi [One of them came]. As one can see, it expresses the ablative case in the first sentence, the causal case in the second sentence, the instrumental case in the third sentence, and the genitive case in the fourth sentence. In this regard, firstly, the case categories in Turkish and the task elements to be represented by these case categories should be determined. Otherwise, it will be difficult to learn and teach this topic at any level. (Mert, 2003, pp. 28-29)

Some studies in the Turkish Language Teaching Center (TÖMER) of the Ankara University have shown that the most errors are made in the use of case suffixes during teaching Turkish to speakers of foreign languages and other Turkic dialects. These studies show that the errors made by students of different levels and groups are the result of negative transfers from their own language. This situation reveals the importance of case suffixes in teaching Turkish. There are other studies that demonstrate most of the errors are made in the use of case suffixes in teaching Turkish. Yılmaz and Temiz (2015) noted that the most common problems in teaching the Turkish

language occur in learning grammar and the main problem experienced in teaching grammar is the case suffixes. According to them, one of the reasons for this problem is that Turkish is an agglutinative language. According to Yılmaz and Temiz (2015, as cited in Aksan, 1989), one of the challenges that a foreigner experiences while learning Turkish is the use of noun case suffixes. As the task of the noun case suffixes is to make a direct interest between the verb and the noun, the verbs in Turkish are always used with a nominal case suffix. Which suffixes learners should use with the verbs is a frequently asked question.

> It really seems difficult for a foreigner. For example, the verb " yardım etmek [to help]" is used with dative case in Turkish while it requires the accusative case in English, French, and Dutch. Thus, students who are based on their mother tongue might be mistaken in noun case suffixes used with verbs. (Yılmaz & Temiz, 2015, p. 144 , as quoted in Vandewalle, 2000, p. 27).

Turkish and English or French are not languages of the same language family. However, for dialects in the same language family as Turkish, the situation is not different. The same applies to Kyrgyz students. A verb in the Kyrgyz language may be used with the accusative case while the same verb might require another case suffix şn Turkish; similarly, a verb that requires the dative case in Kyrgyz might require the locative case in Turkish. There is a fact that whether the verbs are abstract or concrete affects the use of case suffixes. In this regard, Güven states:

> Noun case morphemes specify the object, becoming distant from the object, getting closer to the object, and being located in the object. However, this rule does not always apply if the influence of the mother tongue is also considered. For example, when it comes to abstract verbs such as "bir şeyden hoşlan- (to like something)", "bir şeyden nefret et- (to hate something)" etc., the situation becomes more complicated. Therefore, it is useful to give the students a list with example clauses showing which verb to use with morphemes after all the case morphemes are given. (Güven, 2007, pp. 173-174)

The same applies to the other Turkish dialects. Although most of the verbs take the same case suffixes both in Turkish and Kyrgyz languages, some verbs such as gurur duy- [to be proud of], beğen- [to like], kutla- [to congratulate] take different case suffixes leading negative transfer of native language, which negatively affects learning. Moreover, two languages are spoken in Kyrgyzstan: Kyrgyz is the state language and Russian is the official language. It is seen that noun case suffixes are sometimes not used correctly due to the influence of the Russian language. The verb for congratulation in Russian is conjugated with the preposition "ile" (with). Similarly, the same verb is conjugated with the word "menen (with)" in the Kyrgyz language instead of the accusative case suffix. As a result of the negative transfer, instead of using the phrases "Bayramınızı kutluyorum" or "Bayramınız kutlu olsun.", students use the expression "bayramınız ile", which is not a correct expression in Turkish. In this study, we have identified the errors that Kyrgyz students made while using case suffixes, and we have discussed their reasons and suggested solutions.

2. Method
2.1. Participants
This study consists of the participants who learn Turkish as a second language. Suitability of sampling method was used. The participants were Kyrgyz students who studied at the University of Economy and Entrepreneurship Turkish World International Kyrgyz-Turkish Vocational School in the academic year 2015-

2016 (Spring Semester). There were a total of 36 students of Kyrgyz citizen with A2 language level in Turkish. 26 of the students involved in the study were from the Banking Department and 13 of them were in the Tourism Department.

2.2. Procedure

In the questionnaire study applied to the students learning Turkish by measuring the information, 24 sentences were given. In these sentences, the places where the case suffixes have to be used are left blank. In the research questionnaire, it was stated that the participants should use only one of the four case suffixes (accusative, dative, locative, ablative) in places left empty in the sentence. The time given to students to fill in the gaps is 40 minutes. The data (the errors made about the use of suffixes) obtained from the case suffixes to be used in the sentences were analyzed by error analysis method and the analysis of the errors was made.

3. Results

It is seen that misappropriations related to suffixes are encountered when the data of this survey research, which was conducted to measure the ability of university students to use state suffixes that are part of Turkish written expressions, are examined. These errors are classified under the heading that is relevant to it.

3.1. The Accusative Case

The sentences that participants need to use the accusative case are: "Babası çocuk_ çağırdı [His father called him].", "Duvar_ beyaza boyamış [He painted the wall white].", "Annem biz_ eve götürdü (My mother took us to the house].", "Bulaşıklar_ yıkadım [I washed the dishes].", "Odunlar_ kestim [I cut the woods]", "Şimdi sorular_ cevaplayın [Now answer the questions].".

Table 1. *The Errors Made in the Use of Accusative Case*

	Accusative Case	Another Suffix instead of Accusative Case	Negative Transfer		Lack of Accusative Case	Empty	Total (Error)
			Grammatical	Logical			
Number	161	37	11	-	7	-	55
Rate	74.53%	17.13%	5.09%		3.25%	-	25.47%

As can be understood from the Table 1, when compared with other case suffixes, the accusative case has the highest correctness percentage with 74.53%. Aydın (1997), in his article, has pointed out that in many studies, the errors are in the first place concerning the use of the case suffixes while learning Turkish as a second language. Smoke (2013) has also revealed the same fact by conducting a study in which the Kyrgyz students examine the case suffixes in written expression papers. In our study, however, there are six sentences that measure the accusative case suffix knowledge of students', and the majority of participants used accusative case suffix in all six sentences. Since the survey research method was used in our study, it can be assumed that the participants did not have to distinguish between the direct and indirect objects, which is why the percentage of correctness is high.

Among the errors made, it seems that the highest percentage is because of the use of another suffix rather than the accusative case. The second highest error percentage was found to be due to negative transfer. The type of negative transfer here is grammaticality. This means that the participant understood that he should use the accusative case suffix even though he chose to benefit from the phonetic variant of the suffix in their mother tongue. Unlike Turkish, there are twelve variants of the Kyrgyz accusative case suffix. In addition to this, there is an "n" which is added to the third-person singular in the position of the accusative case. If the last letter of the

noun is a vowel, + ni, + ni, + nu, + nü; if it is a soft consonant + di, + di, + du, + dü; if it is a strong consonant + ti, + ti, + tu, + tü forms are used in Kyrgyz language. In the first three activities, there is one negative transfer for each; two negative transfers in the fourth one; three negative transfers for each in the fifth and sixth activities, which makes a total of 11 grammatical negative transfer of the accusative case suffix.

3.2. Dative Case

The sentences that participants need to use the dative case are: "Bizi karşılamak için kapı_ geldi [He came to the door to meet us].", "Bu yaz Rusya'_ gideceğiz [We will go to Russia this summer].", "Bu iş kaç para_ olur [How much will it cost]?", "Bu iş sabah_ biter [This job will be finished till morning].", "Yaz_ gelecekler [They will come in summer]", "Beş bin lira_ aldım [I bought it for five thousand lira].".

Table 2. *The Errors Made in the Use of Dative Case*

	Dative Case	Another Suffix instead of Dative Case	Negative Transfer		Lack of Dative Case	Empty	Total (Error)
			Grammatical	Logical			
Number	65	65	1	77	-	8	151
Rate	30.09%	30.09%	36.11%		-	3.71%	69.91%

As can be understood from the Table 2, when compared with other case suffixes, the dative case has the highest error percentage with 74.53%. A total of 78 negative transfers, one of which is grammatical and 77 of which is logical, is seen. Negative transfer is the most common error with 36.11%.

In the sentence "Bizi karşılamak için kapı_ geldi [He came to the door to meet us]", 20 of the 36 participants used the ablative case suffix. In Turkish and Kyrgyz languages, ablative case is used with the verb "gel- [to come]". However, as can be seen in the example above, dative case is used in some cases. In the Kyrgyz language, "eşikke çıguu [to go to the door]" is used instead of "kapıya gelmek [to come to the door]". Namely, if the verb of the sentence in this example was "çık- [to go]", most of the Kyrgyz students would use the dative case suffix. As the verb is "gel- (to come)", 20 students used the ablative case. One of the participants used the phonetic variant of the suffix in Kyrgyz language and made a negative transfer of the mother tongue: "Bizi karşılamak için kapıga geldi [He came to the door to meet us]".

In the sentence "Bu iş kaç para_ olur [How much will it cost]?", 17 of the 36 participants used the ablative case suffix. Participants acted with the logic of their mother tongue here and made a logical negative transfer because, in the Kyrgyz language, this sentence is not "Bu iş kaç paraya olur?" but "Bu iş kaç paradan olur?". Namely, in Kyrgyz language, the interrogative adverb "kançadan" is used instead of "kançaga".

In the sentence "Bu iş sabah_ biter", 22 out of the 36 participants used the locative case suffix. Participants have acted also in this sentence with the logic of their mother tongue and made a logical negative transfer. If an adverb of time is used before the verb in the Turkish language, this type of time expressions sometimes takes the dative case suffix. In the Kyrgyz language, the situation is different. The locative case suffix is used for such cases in the Kyrgyz language. Thus, 22 of the participants used the locative case suffix in this example.

In the sentence "Yaz_ gelecekler", 24 of the 36 participants used the locative case suffix as they did in the previous example "Bu iş sabah… biter". Participants acted in this sentence with the logic of their mother tongue and hence made a logical negative transfer. The word "yaz (summer)" is also an expression of time and in Turkish, time expressions take the locative case suffix in order to establish a relationship with the verb they follow.

In the sentence "Beş bin lira_ aldım", 14 of the 36 participants used the ablative case suffix. Participants acted in this sentence with the logic of their mother tongue and hence made a logical negative transfer. In Turkish, dative

case is added to the currency names that come before the verb satın almak (to buy). But the situation in the Kyrgyz language is different. In Kyrgyz, ablative case suffix is used for such situations. Namely, the same sentence in the Kyrgyz language is formed as "beş ming somnan aldım". Therefore, 14 of the participants used the ablative case suffix.

3.3. Locative Case

The following are the sentences in which participants must use the locative case suffix: "Çamaşırları el… yıkıyormuş", "Hafta… bir geliyor", "Çocukluğu… çok yaramazmış", "Saat üç… gelecek", "Valiyi herkes ayak… karşıladı".

Table 3. *The Errors Made in the Use of Locative Case*

	Locative Case	Another Suffix instead of Locative Case	Negative Transfer		Lack of Locative Case	Empty	Total (Error)
			Grammatical	Logical			
Number	128	73	-	13	-	2	88
Rate	%59.25	%33.80	%6.02		-	%0.93	%40.75

As shown in Table 3, the locative case has the second highest percentage of correctness with 59.25% after the accusative case. Most errors were made by using other suffixes instead of locative case suffix. Negative transfer has a percentage of 6.02 and all transfers are logical negative transfer.

In the sentence "Suyu bir yudum… içti ", 16 out of the 36 participants used the ablative case suffix while 11 participants used the locative case suffix. There is a special situation here. The linguistic task elements that are within the structure of verbal idioms and reduplications and which are the same as the task elements that indicate the case categories in terms of the form must be considered in a different category (Mert, 2003, p.30). That is to say, "bir yudumda içmek "[to drink at a draught] is an idiom, so, it is normal that most participants with a Turkish level of A2 have responded incorrectly.

In the sentence "Çamaşırları el… yıkıyormuş", 23 out of the 36 participants used the locative case suffix as it should be. However, the most commonly used case suffix after locative case is the instrumental case. Participants acted in this sentence with the logic of their mother tongue and hence made a logical negative transfer because the clothes are washed "elde [in hand]" in Turkish while they are washed "kolmen [by hand]" in Kyrgyz.

In the sentence "Hafta… bir geliyor.", 31 out of the 36 respondents answered correctly. However, it was determined that two participants used the dative case. The reason for this is the negative transfer from the mother tongue. In Turkish, time expressions, which are used to describe how often something is done, take the locative case suffix such as iki günde bir (defa) [once in two days], haftada iki (defa) [twice a week], yılda üç (defa) [three times a year]. In Kyrgyz, however, time expressions that are used to describe how often something is done take the third-person singular suffix first, which is followed by the dative case suffix such as aptasına bir (colu) [once a week], cılına eki (colu) [twice a year]. For this reason, it is thought that participants used the dative case even if it is small in number.

In the sentence "Valiyi herkes ayak… karşıladı", 18 out of the 36 respondents answered correctly. However, after the locative case, the most commonly used case suffixes are ablative and instrumental cases, respectively. Negative transfer might be considered as the reason for the use of the instrumental case. It appears that some of the participants did not understand the sentence. However, "karşılamak" [to welcome] is a verb that requires the use of instrumental case after a noun. Participants felt the need to use the instrumental case at this point as it is used in the phrase "saygıyla karşılamak" [to treat with respect].

3.4. Ablative Case

The following are the sentences in which participants must use the ablative case suffix: "Her taraf kâğıt… uçaklarla doluydu", "Gece… yola çıkalım ki törene yetişelim", "Yağmur hafif… yağıyor", "Sıra… insanlardı onlar", "Baş ağrısı… hiç ders çalışamamış", "Soruların cevabını sözlerim… çıkaracaksınız".

Table 4. *The Errors Made in the Use of Ablative Case*

	Ablative Case	Another Suffix instead of Ablative Case	Negative Transfer		Lack of Ablative Case	Empty	Total (Error)
			Grammatical	Logical			
Number	83	108	1	17	-	7	133
Rate	38.42%	50%	8.34%		-	3.24%	61.58%

As can be understood from the table, the ablative case has the second highest percentage error with 61.58% after the dative case. Most errors were made due to the use of other suffixes instead of the ablative case suffix. Negative transfer has a percentage of 8.34. While one of the negative transfers is grammatical, the others are logical.

In the sentence "Gece… yola çıkalım ki törene yetişelim", 14 out of 36 participants used the ablative case while the 17 of them used the locative case, which means that the rate of wrong answers is higher than the rate of correct answers. Participants acted in this sentence with the logic of their mother tongue and hence made a logical negative transfer. If an adverb of time is used before the verb in the Turkish language, these time expressions sometimes take the ablative case suffix. However, the situation in the Kyrgyz language is different as they use locative case in such situations. Therefore, 17 participants used the locative case suffix in this example sentence.

10 out of the 36 participants used the ablative case in the sentence "Sıra… insanlardı onlar " while the 12 of them used the locative case. The rate of wrong answers is higher than the rate of correct answers also in this sentence as the phrase "sıradan insan" is an idiom. We mentioned above that the linguistic elements involved in the idiomatic expressions expressing the case categories in terms of form should be evaluated in another category. Therefore, the fact that most of the participants who speak Turkish at A2 level answered wrongly is normal.

In the sentence "Baş ağrısı… hiç ders çalışmamış [He couldn't study because of his headache]", one of the participants made a negative transfer of grammar because of the mother tongue. In Turkish, when the ablative case suffix is added to the third-person singular possessive suffix, an "n" of pronoun appears in the middle such as "masanın alt+ı+n+dan". This is true also in the Kyrgyz language; however, there are some phonetic changes. In the Kyrgyz language, the consonant of the ablative case suffix undergoes a regressive assimilation and then one of the double consonants undergoes consonant deletion and the suffix is written in the form of "+nan". As a result, one of the participants used the suffix "+nan" as it is in the Kyrgyz language.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Turkish language, which belongs to the Ural-Altaic language family, is an agglutinative language with regard to its structure and is flexible in terms of syntax. As the verb is located at the end of the sentence and it has some distinctive aspects such as emphasis, Turkish language is extremely difficult and complicated to understand, especially for those who are foreign to this language structure. Yet, the use of the Turkish language shows an increase across the world day by day. There is a difference in teaching Turkish to agnatic communities and to the speakers of languages with different origins and structures. Teaching the Turkish language to communities of Turkish origin is not a scientifically researched or examined topic. As a consequence, the curricula and materials

to be used have not been prepared. Teaching Turkish to the learners of Turkish origin is still within the scope of "Teaching Turkish to Foreigners", and the speakers of the Turkic language and the speakers of non-Turkic languages are still being subjected to the same curriculum. Our study, which we have restricted with noun case suffixes, reveals that a special curriculum and special materials should be developed for teaching Turkish to the learners of Turkish origin.

In our study, it is identified that the main reason for the errors of the Kyrgyz students with A2 Turkish level made is negative transfers from the mother tongue. There are two types of negative transfer from the mother tongue:

1. Logical negative transfer: In this type of negative transfer, noun case suffixes are added to the nouns before the verbs that are used in the same meaning in both Turkish and Kyrgyz languages as they are used in the Kyrgyz language.

2. Grammatical negative transfer: In this type of transfer, participants understand which noun case suffix to use in the sentence; however, they use the phonetic variants of the suffix they have in their mother tongue.

Our suggestions for eliminating these errors are:

1. A teacher who teaches the Turkish language to Kyrgyz students should be knowledgeable with the phonetic variants of noun case suffixes both in Turkish and Kyrgyz languages. The vowel and consonant harmonies in the Turkish language should be reinforced at the beginning of the language teaching.

2. Lists of example sentences showing which verbs are to be used with the suffixes should be prepared. In addition to this, it should not be forgotten that teaching a language also means teaching the culture at the same time. Therefore, the role of the texts that include the verbs correlating different case suffixes in Turkish and Kyrgyz should be increased. The grammatical structures students are to use should be made understandable through the texts.

3. In particular, the activities involving the verbs that confuse students as they take different noun case suffixes should be increased. Also, Mahmud al-Kashgari also followed the path of reaching the rule by moving from many samples in his work *Divânu Lügati't-Türk* (Arabic: Compendium of the languages of the Turks), which was written in order to teach the Turkish language to the Arabs, and adopted the induction method in foreign language teaching.

4. Focusing on the similarities between the two languages at the beginning of language teaching, contrary to popular opinion, can lead students to think that the language the students are learning is same or similar to their mother tongue. For this reason, the learning motive of the student should be triggered by going through the differences.

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