

**On Çek- as a Light Verb
-A Contrastive View from Japanese-**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate if the Turkish verb çek- also has the role as a light verb in Turkish (i.e fotoğraf çek-, fotokopi çek-, çile çek- etc). In this study I also examined *gapping* of light verbs in coordination constructions and by using the same test on some çek- constructions I tried to improve that some çek- constructions have the same properties as the well-known light verbs like *et-*, *ol-*. We can observe the the same fact concerning *gapping* as in the case of çek- as a compound, neither backward nor forward gapping is unacceptable.

In the second section I also investigated the çek- compound when it takes double objects, which might be unacceptable to some Turkish speakers, but they could be find in the Turkish youth language, which is an evidence of çek's grammaticalization process. It is very interesting that double objects can be find also in the well-known light verb constructions as *hasta-yı muayene et-* (to examine the patient) etc.

It follows from this that some çek- constructions have a role as a light verb, some have idiomatic meanings and most of them have heavy verbal features. This study also shows some Japanese light and heavy verb data to make a comparison.

Keywords: light verbs, compound verbs, grammaticalization, polysemy

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı çok anlamlı bir eylem olan çek- eylemi'nin de Türkçe'de bulunan diğer yardımcı eylemlerle benzer özellikler taşıdığını göstermektir. Kendiliğinden prototip anlamlarını yitirip, önlerine gelen isim ya da isimleşmiş eylemlerden tekrar eylem yapma özelliğine sahip olan yardımcı eylemlerde görülen

çift nesne alma, birleşik cümle yapılarında görülen silinme gibi testler *fotoğraf çek-*, *fotokopi çek-*, *çile çek-* v.b birleşik eylemlerde ki çek- eylemi üzerinde de uygulanmış ve çek- eyleminin de aynı *et-*, *ol-*, *kıl-*, *eyle-* gibi yardımcı eylemler gibi dilbilgisel bir işlevinin olduğu öne sürülmüştür.

Yine, bu araştırmada Türkçe gibi özne nesne eylem sözdizimine sahip olan Japonca ile de karşılaştırmalı bir çalışma yapılarak kalıplaşmış yardımcı eylemler dışında kalan ve yardımcı eylem işlevleri taşıyan eylemlerin de hem tam eylem hem de yardımcı eylem işlevlerine sahip olabileceği sözdizimsel ve anlambilimsel testler ile açıklığa kavuşturulmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: yardımcı eylemler, katkısız eylemler, dilgisel işlev, çok anlamlılık

1. Introduction

The Turkish verb *çek-* which means ‘to pull’, ‘to draw’ in its prototype form, combines with nominal elements to make other meanings. Most of *çek-* compounds have a heavy verbal status; however some of them, especially *fotokopi çek-* ‘to xerox’, *röntgen çek-* ‘to take x-ray film(s)’, and *fotoğraf çek-* ‘to take photos’ have light verbal status. This is especially so when *çek-* gains meaning from the incorporated nouns (*fotoğraf/röntgen çek-*: to carry a visible image on a special flexible item). *çek-* differs from the well known light verbs *et-* *yap-* etc. It has levels which I will call here **weight of çek-**. The purpose of this study is to investigate how the lightest *çek-* shows almost the same properties as *et-* compound. I propose here that *fotokopi çek-* is the lightest and *röntgen çek-*, *fotoğraf çek-* gets progressively heavier. The heaviest *çek-* combines with numerous objects because *çek-* is a transitive verb.

Table 1.

IDIOMS	<u>çile çek-</u> , <u>kafa çek-</u>
Lightest	Fotokopi çek-
	Röntgen çek-
	Fotoğraf çek-
	Diş çek- , Kurek çek-
Heaviest	İp çek-, saç çek-, kulak çek-

In this study I also examined ‘Deletion’ of light verbs in Coordination Constructions with the aim of showing that deletion of the identical light verbs is not always acceptable to all native Turkish speakers. Based on these facts it seems that in some *çek-* constructions according to some informants (including me) coordinate deletion is not also acceptable. I propose that some *çek-* constructions have the same properties as the well-known Turkish light verbs *et-*, *ol-* in which a verbal noun can be incorporated with an external object marked by an accusative marker. I will also present facts and evidence from Japanese Light Verb Constructions to make a comparison.

2. An Overview of Light Verbs

The term *light verb* first appears in Jespersen(1954) and Cattell(1984). Here are some English light verb examples.

- (1) a. John permitted Nancy to go
b. John gave permission to Nancy to go
- (2) a. John offered a drink to Nancy
b. John made an offer of a drink to Nancy
- (3) a. John slept well
b. John had a good sleep

The well-known Turkish light verbs *et-* and *ol-* are mostly used with verbal nouns, which are borrowed from different languages such as Arabic, Persian, and French etc. As exemplified in (4) some of these constructions can also consist of an accusative-marked verbal noun, which is specific, however, the verb is not light.

- (4) a. Ali dua et-ti
Ali-NOM pray do-PAST
‘Ali prayed’
- b. Ali son dua-sı-nı et-ti
Ali-NOM last pray-POSS- ACC do- PAST
‘Ali made his last prayer’or ‘Ali kissed his life goodbye’

It is clearly shown in (4a) that there are no idiomatic or specific meanings, and the light verb *et-* gets its meaning from the verbal noun. On the other hand, in (4b) the verbal noun, which is preceded by the adjective ‘son-last’ has a specific and semi-idiomatic meaning such as ‘to kiss someone’s life goodbye’. Here *et-* has a heavier meaning than (4a).

Incorporation of a verbal noun into a light verb can be seen in many languages such as Japanese (5) by using *suru-* constructions.

- (5)
- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| a. Taroo ga | taisoo suru | |
| Taroo-NOM | exercise do | |
| ‘Taroo exercises’ | | |
| | | |
| b. Taroo ga | Tokyo ni | ryokoo suru |
| Taroo-NOM | Tokyo-DAT | travel do |
| ‘Taroo travels to Tokyo’ | | |
| | | |
| c. Taroo ga | eigo o | benkyoo suru |
| Taroo-NOM | English-ACC | study do |
| ‘Taroo studies English’ | | |

(Miyamoto 1999)

The verb *suru* could either be a light verb or a heavy verb (normal transitive verb). Most of the Japanese Verbal Nouns are of a Chinese origin and they may have argument taking properties and also show verbal properties.

There are two forms of Japanese VN+*suru* constructions: the incorporated (5) and the unincorporated form (6).

- (6)
- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------|------|
| a. Taroo ga | taisoo o | suru | |
| Taroo-NOM | exercise-ACC | do | |
| ‘Taroo exercises’ | | | |
| | | | |
| b. Taroo ga | Tokyo ni | ryokoo o | suru |
| Taroo-NOM | Tokyo-DAT | travel-ACC | do |
| ‘Taroo travels to Tokyo’ | | | |
| | | | |
| c. Taroo ga | eigo no | benkyoo o | suru |
| Taroo-NOM | English-GEN | study-ACC | do |
| ‘Taroo studies English’ | | | |

In the unincorporated counterparts of (5) that are illustrated in (6), the Verbal Nouns *taiso*, *ryokoo* and *benkyoo* are marked with an accusative marker *o*, combining with the verb *suru* as a normal complement. As defined in Miyamoto (1999), although the surface structures are different, both (5) and (6) have the same meanings and semantically *suru* is a light verb that its meaning is decided by the verbal noun(s). This shows us a big difference between Turkish and Japanese accusative markers; one gives a specific or a referential meaning to the object, while the other does not. In addition in both languages VN+Light Verb Constructions that have transitive meaning takes arguments as objects while Verbal Noun obligatorily is in the non marked form.

- (7) a. Doktor hasta-yı muayene et-ti
 Doctor-NOM patient-ACC examination do-PAST
 ‘The doctor examined the patient’
- b. *Doktor hasta-yı muayene-yi et-ti
 Doctor-NOM patient-ACC examination-ACC do-PAST
 ‘The doctor examined the patient’
- (8) a. isya ga kanja o shindan syi-ta
 Doctor-NOM patient-ACC examination do-PAST
 ‘The doctor examined the patient’
- b. * isya ga kanja o shindan o syi-ta
 Doctor-NOM patient-ACC examination-ACC do-PAST
 ‘The doctor examined the patient’

Showing similarity to Turkish, Japanese does not allow double accusative case marked objects in the same clause, I will return to this fact in section 5.

3. Coordinate Deletion

In contrast to Japanese, Turkish has both forward and backward coordinate deletion such that identical verbs are deleted as shown in (9) and (10).

- (9) a. Hasan yumurta-yı____, Ahmet patlıcan-ı ye-di.
 Hasan-NOM egg-ACC Ahmet-NOM eggplant-ACC eat-PAST
 ‘Hasan ate the egg and Ahmet the eggplant’ (deleted=yedi)
- b. Hasan yumurtayı ye-di, Ahmet patlıcan-ı____ .
 Hasan-NOM egg-ACC eat-PAST Ahmet-NOM eggplant-ACC
 ‘Hasan ate the egg and Ahmet the eggplant’ (deleted=yedi)
 (Hankamer 1979)

However, Japanese does not allow forward deletion as shown in (10b).

- (10) a. Taroo ga tamago o____, Hanako ga nasu o tabe-ta
 Taroo-NOM egg-ACC Hanako-NOM eggplant-ACC eat-PAST
 ‘Taroo ate the egg and Hanako the eggplant’(deleted=tabeta)
- b. * Taroo ga tamago o tabeta, Hanako ga nasu o____.
 Taroo-NOM egg-ACC eat-PAST Hanako-NOM eggplant-ACC
 ‘Taroo ate the egg and Hanako the eggplant’ (deleted=tabeta)

In what follows, I will show that it is not always possible to delete identical light verbs in coordinate structures. Kuribayashi (1997) applied some syntactic tests to show that nominal plus *ol-* verb has a compound word status. In his study it is shown that gapping does not apply to a certain part of the compound word.

- (11) a. * Ali dün tifo____, Mine de bugün tifo ol-du.
 Ali-NOM yesterday typhoid, Mine also today typhoid become-PAST
 ‘Yesterday Ali, and today Mine, became a typhoid carrier’ (deleted=oldu)
- b. Ali dün____, Mine de bugün tifo ol-du.
 Ali-NOM yesterday Mine also today typhoid become-PAST
 ‘Yesterday Ali, and today Mine, became a typhoid carrier’ (deleted=tifo oldu)
 (Kuribayashi 1997)

This shows us that compound words such as *olmak* are unanalyzable word units (Kuribayashi 1997). As shown in (12a), doing similar tests by using the light verb *et-*, the reduction of a single identical light verb or a single verbal noun from a compound violates Coordinate Deletion rules. Backward or Forward deletion is possible when both the light verb and the verbal noun are deleted as a word unit, which is why

examples (12b, c) are not acceptable for most native speakers.

- (12) a. Doktor hasta-yı dün____, cerrah da bugün ameliyat et-ti.
Doctor-NOM patient-ACC yesterday surgeon and today surgery do-PAST
'Yesterday it was the doctor, but today the surgeon operated on the patient'
(deleted= ameliyat etti)
- b. Doktor hasta-yı dün ameliyat etti, cerrah da bugün____.
Doctor-NOM patient-ACC yesterday surgery do-PAST surgeon and today
'Yesterday the doctor operated on the patient, today the surgeon did'
(deleted= ameliyat etti)
- c.* Doktor hasta-yı dün ameliyat etti, cerrah da bugün ameliyat____.
'Yesterday the it was the doctor, but today the surgeon operated on the patient'
(deleted= etti)
- d.* Doktor hasta-yı dün ameliyat etti, cerrah da bugün____etti.
'Yesterday it was the doctor, but today the surgeon operated on the patient'
(deleted= ameliyat)

It is interesting to observe the fact that some *çek-* constructions also do not allow a single element reduction from one unit. However, when *çek-* has a heavy verb status, some *çek-* constructions do. These facts are shown as follows.

***çek* (as a light verb)**

- (13) a. Ali dün fotokopi çekti, Veli ise bugün__.
Ali-NOM yesterday photocopy pull-PAST Veli-NOM but today
'Yesterday Ali, but today Veli xeroxed'
(deleted=fotokopi çekti)
- b. Ali dün ____,Veli but bugün fotokopi çekti.
Ali-NOM yesterday Veli-NOM and today photocopy pull-PAST
'Yesterday Ali, but today Veli xeroxed'
(deleted=fotokopi çekti)
- c. *Ali dün fotokopi çekti, Veli ise bugün ____çekti.
Ali-NOM yesterday photocopy pull-PAST Veli-NOM and today pull- PAST
'Yesterday Ali, and but today Veli xeroxed' (deleted=fotokopi)

d. *Ali dün ____çekti, Veli ise bugün fotokopi çekti.
Ali-NOM yesterday pull-PAST Veli-NOM and today photocopy pull- PAST
'Yesterday Ali, and but today Veli xeroxed'

(deleted=fotokopi)

çek (as a heavy verb)

(14) a. Dün Ali saç-ım-I çekti, Bugün de Veli ____çek-ti.
Yesterday Ali-NOM hair-POSS-ACC pull-PAST today and Veli-NOM pull- PAST
'Yesterday Ali pulled my hair, and today Veli did so'

(deleted= saçımı)

b. Dün Ali saç-ım-ı____, Bugün de Veli kulağımı çek-ti.
Yesterday Ali-NOM hair-POSS-ACC today and Veli-NOM ear-POSS-ACC pull- PAST
'Yesterday Ali pulled my hair, and today Veli did so'

(deleted= çekti)

In addition to these facts, it is also unacceptable to use light and heavy *çek-* verbs as identical verbs in the same coordinate structure.

(15) * Ayşe halat çek-ti, Ali ise fotokopi____.
Ayşe-NOM rope pull-PAST Ali-NOM but photocopy pull-PAST
'Ayşe pulled a rope but Ali xeroxed'

(deleted= çekti)

It is not possible to consider a large number of further examples, but what is clear is that as the light verb *çek-*, and its verbal noun develop a V', not a VP. On the other hand, heavy verbal *çek-*, which is a regular transitive verb develops VP with a NP in its domain and it exhibits a different category than V'. So we can explain the ungrammaticality of (15) by the reasons above.

4. Plural Suffix and Verbal Nouns

Turkish has a plural suffix *-lar*. Öztürk (2004) shows an interesting fact about Turkish nouns with plural suffix. Incorporation structures only bare nouns that are allowed to incorporate into the predicate. The ungrammaticality of (16b) comes from this reason. However, if we interpret (16b) as 'I ate different kinds of apples', this

sentence will be acceptable for many native speakers.

- (16) a. Ben elma yedim.
I apple ate
'I did apple eating.'
- b. */?Ben elma-lar yedim.
I apple-PL ate
'I ate apples.'
- c. Ben elma-lar-ı yedim.
I apple-PL- ACC ate
'I ate the apples.'

(Öztürk 2004)

Now I will consider verbal nouns, which are incorporated into light verbs. Verbal nouns show different characteristics than normal nouns. They can be considered as an object when they are accusative marked and they can also be considered as an unanalyzable part of a verb unit. Here the crucial point is that the plural suffix marker cannot be inserted into verbal nouns, which are incorporated into light verbs. I suggest that if there is a plural suffix on a verbal noun, it gives a referential or a specific meaning to the verbal noun. And in some cases different light verbs are used by the perception of the referential verbal noun. Recall the verbal noun *muayene* 'examine', when it is preceded by an adjective such as *değişik* 'different (kinds of)'. It is possible to make the verbal noun into the plural form *muayeneler*. In addition, in this case, instead of the light verb *et-*, another light verb *yap-* becomes the head of V', and the object should take the dative case (*hasta-ya*).

- (17) a.* Doktor hasta-yı muayeneler etti.
Doctor-NOM patient-ACC examine-PLR do-PAST
'The doctor did examinations on the patient'
- b. Doktor hasta-ya değişik muayeneler yaptı.
Doctor-NOM patient-DAT different examine-PLR do-PAST
'The doctor did different kinds of examinations on the patient'
- (cf, *değişik tamirler yap-*, *değişik ameliyatlar yap-*
**değişik tamirler et*, **değişik ameliyatlar et-*)

Now I turn to the *çek-* constructions. Recall that there are more than two types of *çek-* verbs depending on the noun that gives the meaning to the *çek-* verb. The head of *fotokopi çek-* is the lightest while *fotokopi* is in the verbal noun status. As shown above, one is not allowed to make *fotokopi* into the plural form if it is not preceded by an adjective (see 18b).

(18) a.* Ali fotokopi-ler çek-ti.

Ali-NOM fotocopy-PLR pull-PAST

‘Ali xeroxed several times’

b. Ali renkli renksiz fotokopi-ler çek-ti.

Ali-NOM colorful colorless fotocopy-PLR pull-PAST

‘Ali xeroxed some color and black and white papers’

Even though *çek-* lacks an alternative light verb it is not substituted by another light verb. However, this does not matter because *fotokopi* (in the plural form) is no longer incorporated into the head, it has a function of a direct object.

5. Direct Object Insertion

As mentioned above, Turkish and Japanese do not allow double accusative objects in the same clause.

(19) a.* Ali ekmeğ-i pasta-yı ye-di.

Ali-NOM bread-ACC cake-ACC eat-PAST

‘Ali ate the bread and the cake’

b.* Taroo ga pan o keeki o tabe-ta.

Taroo-NOM bread-ACC cake-ACC eat-PAST

‘Taroo ate the bread and the cake’

Öztürk (2004) points out that pseudo-incorporation structures and incorporation structures with light verbs show different conditions. She claims that light verbs function as denominalizers, whereas verbal nouns function as predicates by nature. But we cannot do this process within the normal incorporation structures.

(20) Meclis yasa-yı redd etti.

assembly law-ACC reject did

‘The assembly rejected the law.’

Öztürk (2004)

- (21) Ali defter-i-ni fotokopi çek-ti.
 Ali-NOM notebook-ACC photocopy pull-PAST
 ‘Ali xeroxed his notebook’

From these examples, we can observe an interesting fact concerning external objects insertion. As in the case of *çek-* with *fotokopi* an accusative marked object can be inserted. Some native speakers might find (21) ungrammatical or unacceptable. It is true that Turkish does not allow double NPs, however, almost every informant under 40 years old find (21) grammatical. This comes from the fact that in the form **fotokopi+çek-**, the noun *fotokopi* has almost lost its NP function, and therefore functions as N in a N+V unit, which should be considered as a single transitive verb formation with the meaning ‘to xerox’.

We cannot observe the same fact in other *çek-* constructions even though they are lighter than the heavy verbal ones. Another interesting fact is that although *röntgen çek-* cannot take any direct objects, it is slightly more acceptable than *fotoğraf çek-* when *röntgen çek-* has a direct object as shown in (22). This comes from the fact that *fotoğraf* still strongly possesses the meaning of a normal noun, but *röntgen* does not (23).

- (22) a. ??? Ali karaciğeri-ni röntgen çek-tir-di
 Ali NOM liver- ACC x-ray pull-Caus- PAST
 ‘Ali was taken an x-ray film of his liver’
- b. *Ayşe yeşil dağ-lar-ı fotoğraf çek-ti.
 Ayşe NOM green mountain- PLR- ACC photo pull- PAST
 ‘Ayşe took the photos of the green mountains’
- (23) a. Fotoğraf-lar-ım-a bak-mak ister misin?
 Photo- PLR-1sngPoss- DAT look- NOM want Q-2Psng
 ‘Do you want to see my photos’
- b. ??Röntgen-ler-im-e bak-mak ister misin?
 X-ray - PLR-1sngPoss- DAT look- NOM want Q-2Psng
 ‘Do you want to see my x-ray films’

(cf. ok Röntgen film-ler-im-e bak-mak ister misin?)

6. Conclusion

I have shown that *çek-* is used as a light verb in some compounds such as in *fotokopi çek-*, *röntgen çek-*, and *fotoğraf çek-*, and that *çek-* has levels depending on its **weight**. The heaviest *çek-* verb is a true transitive verb. It becomes lighter when it loses its prototype meaning 'to pull' and it borrows almost all its meaning from the verbal noun or the noun as a result of incorporation, in which case *çek-* changes its category to a functional verb or a light verb. *fotokopi çek-* becomes an especially unanalyzable unit when it takes an accusative object.

This paper is restricted to only *çek-* constructions. However there are also other light verb formations such as *at-* (*tekme at*, *göz at* etc). The last step of category changing is the idiomacalization that gives a intransitive verb meaning such as *çile çek-* 'to suffer', or *kafa çek-* 'to drink alcohol beverages' etc. This research is just a small step towards a more comprehensive research on Turkish light verbs, which are derived from heavy verbs and as well as changed categories.

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