

# Syntactic considerations on Turkish Alternative Questions

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## 2 Is there a *wh*-element?

- A moving operator
- A *wh* without movement

## 3 Size of disjuncts

- Small vs. large disjuncts analyses
- Intervention effects and large disjuncts accounts

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# Alternative questions (in English)

- (1) a. Did John drink tea or coffee?  
 ≈ *Is it the case that John had a warm beverage?*  
 (Yes/no question)
- b. Did John drink TEA or COFFEE?  
 ≈ *Which one of the following did John drink: tea or coffee?*  
 (Alternative question)

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  - a. Did John drink tea or coffee?  
*≈ Is it the case that John had a warm beverage?*  
 (Yes/no question)
  - b. Did John drink TEA or COFFEE?  
*≈ Which one of the following did John drink: tea or coffee?*  
 (Alternative question)
- (2)
  - a. Dali      Filip piše kafe ili čaj?  
 whether Filip drank coffee or tea  
*≈ Is it the case that Philip had a warm beverage?*  
 (Yes/no question)
  - b. Dali      Filip piše KAFE ili ČAJ?  
 whether Filip drank coffee or tea  
*≈ Which one of the following did Philip drink: tea or coffee?*  
 (Alternative question)

# Alternative questions in Turkish (and others)

- (3) Hezal Dixit mi (yoksa) Codenames mi oynadı?  
 Hezal Dixit MI (or<sub>Alt</sub>) Codenames MI play-PST  
 ‘Did Hezal play Dixit or did she play Codenames?’
- a. \* Polar question: ‘Is it the case that Hezal played either one of these board games?’
  - b. Alternative question: ‘Which one of the following board games did Hezal play: Dixit, Codenames?’

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## *'whether'* in English

- (4) a. Did John drink tea or did he drink coffee?



## *'whether'* in English

- (4) a. Did John drink tea or did he drink coffee?  
b. I don't know whether John drank tea or coffee.

# A moving operator

Larson, 1985

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- (5) Do you believe [<sub>NP</sub> the claim [that Bill [resigned or retired]]]?  
a.  $\approx$  Is it the case that you believe Bill stopped working?  
b.  $\not\approx$  Which one of the following do you believe: that Bill resigned, that Bill retired?

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- (5) Do you believe [<sub>NP</sub> the claim [that Bill [resigned or retired]]]?  
 a.  $\approx$  Is it the case that you believe Bill stopped working?  
 b.  $\not\approx$  Which one of the following do you believe: that Bill resigned, that Bill retired?
- (6) a. Do you believe [<sub>NP</sub> the claim [that Bill [resigned or retired]]]?  
 b. \*  $Q_i$  Do you believe [<sub>NP</sub> the claim [that Bill  $t_i$  [resigned or retired]]]?

# Island effects in Turkish

Turkish allows *wh*-items inside islands with a wide scope reading. (Arslan, 1999; Özsoy, 1996).

- (7) [Can-ın hangi gün yaz-dı-ğ-ı] dilekçe uzun?  
 Can-GEN which day write-PST-COMP-POSS petition long  
 'The petition Can wrote on which day, is long?'  
 ≈ *On which day did Can write his long petition?*

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 ‘The petition Can wrote on which day, is long?’  
 ≈ *On which day did Can write his long petition?*

- (8) [Can-<sub>in</sub> dün mü (yoksa) önceki gün mü  
 Can-GEN yesterday MI (or<sub>Alt</sub>) previous day MI  
 yaz-dı-ğ-ı] dilekçe uzun?  
 write-PST-COMP-POSS petition long  
 ‘Is the letter that Can wrote yesterday or the day before long?’  
 ≈ *Which petition that Can wrote is the long one: the one he wrote yesterday, or the one he wrote the day before?*

# Turkish alternative questions in islands

Some *wh*-words in Turkish do rely on movement for interpretation.  
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- (9) \* [Can-ın niçin yaz-dı-ğ-ı] dilekçe uzun?  
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*Unavailable reading:* 'The petition Can wrote why, is long?'



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Can-GEN why write-PST-COMP-POSS petition long  
*Unavailable reading:* 'The petition Can wrote why, is long?'
- (10) [Can-ın izin için mi (yoksa) görevlendirme için mi  
Can-GEN leave for MI (or<sub>Alt</sub>) appointment for MI  
yaz-dı-ğ-ı] dilekçe uzun?  
write-PST-COMP-POSS petition long  
'Is the letter that Can wrote for a leave or for an appointment long?'  
≈ *Which petition that Can wrote is the long one: the one he wrote for a leave, or the one he wrote for an appointment?*

# A *wh* test without movement

- (11) a. I was surprised who attended.  
b. \* I was surprised whether Bill attended.

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- (11) a. I was surprised who attended.  
b. \* I was surprised whether Bill attended.
- (12) a. \* I was surprised whether Bill or George attended.  
b. I was surprised which of Bill and George attended.

(Beck & Kim, 2006)

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 ⇒ I was surprised that the Solstafir concert sold out.



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 ⇒ I was surprised that the Solstafir concert sold out.  
 ≠⇒ I was surprised that the Mayhem concert did not sell out.

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- (16) I wonder who attended.
- (17) I was surprised who attended.

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## 'wonder' and 'surprise' in Turkish

- (20) Cem dükkân-a gel-di mi?  
 Cem store-DAT come-PST MI?  
 'Did Cem come to the store?'



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- (20) Cem dükkân-a gel-di mi?  
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- (21) Eren [Cem dükkân-a gel-di mi] merak ed-iyor.  
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 'Eren wonders whether Cem came to the store.'

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- (22) Eren [kim dükkân-a gel-di] merak ed-iyor.  
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'Eren wonders who came to the store.'

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 'Eren wonders who came to the store.'  
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- (23) Eren [Cem-in dükkân-a gel-ip  
 Eren Cem-GEN store-DAT come-CONJ  
 gel-me-di-ğ-in]-i merak ed-iyor.  
 come-NEG-PST-COMP-POSS-ACC wonder-PROG  
 'Eren wonders whether Cem came to the store.'

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- (24) Eren [Cem-in dükkan-a gel-di-ğ-in]-e  
 Eren Cem-GEN store-DAT come-PST-COMP-POSS-DAT  
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 be surprised-PST  
 'Eren was surprised that Cem came to the store.'

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 'Eren was surprised who came to the store.'  
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 wasn't surprised that Purya didn't, he expected he wouldn't make  
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A *wh* without movement

# Acceptable answers to AltQs

Abenina-Adar and Sharvit, 2021; Biezma and Rawlins, 2012; Guerzoni and Sharvit, 2014; Karttunen, 1977; von Fintel and Heim, 2001

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# Acceptable answers to AltQs

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- (27) # I don't know whether this is one of the weeks when the garbage truck comes every day. When I'll sweep the sidewalk depends on whether it comes on Monday or on Tuesday.

(von Fintel & Heim, 2001)

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- (28) a. \* I was surprised whether Bill or George attended.  
b. I wonder whether Bill or George attended.

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- (28) a. \* I was surprised whether Bill or George attended.  
 b. I wonder whether Bill or George attended.  
 c. I was surprised which of Bill and George attended.  
 d. I wonder which of Bill and George attended.

# Acceptable answers to Turkish AltQs

(29) Zeynep çay mı iç-ti (yoksa) kahve mi?

Zeynep tea MI drink-PST (or<sub>Alt</sub>) coffee MI

Did Zeynep drink tea or coffee?

≈ *Which one of the following did Zeynep drink: tea or coffee?*

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Did Zeynep drink tea or coffee?

≈ Which one of the following did Zeynep drink: tea or coffee?

(30) a. #İki-sin-i de iç-ti.

two-POSS-ACC too drink-PST

She drank both.

b. #İki-sin-i de iç-me-di.

two-POSS-ACC too drink-NEG-PST

She drank neither.

# Turkish AltQs embedded under ‘*wonder*’ and ‘*surprise*’

- (31) Eren [Cem-in mi (yoksa) Hezal-ın mı dükkan-a  
 Eren Cem-GEN MI or<sub>Alt</sub> Hezal-GEN MI store-DAT  
 gel-di-ğ-in]-i merak ed-iyor.  
 come-PST-COMP-POSS-ACC wonder-PROG

‘Eren wonders whether Cem came to the store or Hezal came to the store.’



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- (32) \* Eren [Cem-in mi (yoksa) Hezal-ın mı dükkân-a  
 Eren Cem-GEN MI or<sub>Alt</sub> Hezal-GEN MI store-DAT  
 gel-di-ğ-in]-e şaşır-dı.  
 come-PST-COMP-POSS-DAT be surprised-PST  
 ‘Eren was surprised whether Cem or Hezal came to the store.’

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# Small or large disjuncts

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Beck and Kim, 2006; Han and Romero, 2004b; Larson, 1985; Schwarz, 1999, among others

- (33) Did John drink tea or coffee?
- a. Did John drink [tea or coffee]?
  - b. Did [[John drink tea] or [~~John drank~~ coffee]]?

# Small or large disjuncts

Beck and Kim, 2006; Han and Romero, 2004b; Larson, 1985; Schwarz, 1999, among others

- (33) Did John drink tea or coffee?  
 a. Did John drink [tea or coffee]?  
 b. Did [[John drink tea] or [~~John drank~~ coffee]]?
- (34) Seher Humboldt-ta mı (yoksa) Freie-de mi oku-yor?  
 Seher Humboldt-LOC MI (or<sub>Alt</sub>) Freie-LOC MI read-PROG  
 Does Seher study at Humboldt or Freie?  
 a. Seher [*DisjP*[Humboldt'ta] mı yoksa [Freie'de] mi] okuyor?  
 b. [*DisjP* [Seher Humboldt'ta mı okuyor] yoksa [Seher Freie'de mi okuyor]]?

# Turkish Alternative Questions

Turkish alternative questions have large disjuncts. Both sides of the disjunction are full CPs with elided material. (Gračanin-Yüksek, 2016)



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 Seher Humboldt-LOC MI read-PROG (or<sub>Alt</sub>) Freie-LOC MI  
 Does Seher study at Humboldt or Freie?
- a. Seher [Humboldt'ta mı] okuyor yoksa [Freie'de mi]?  
 b. [<sub>DisjP</sub> [Seher Humboldt'ta mı okuyor] yoksa [Seher Freie'de mi okuyor]]?

# Intervention effects

Beck and Kim, 2006

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## Focus Deletion Constraint

Focus-marked constituents at LF (or their phonological locus) cannot delete at Spell-Out. (Han & Romero, 2004a)

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(38) Hat [nur die erste Mannschaft gewonnen] oder [nur die zweite]?  
has only the first team won or only the second

Did only the first team win or only the second?

(Beck & Kim, 2006)

# Intervention effects in Turkish AltQs

- (39) Mete-yi mi sadece Ömer ara-dı (yoksa) Can-ı mı?  
 Mete-ACC MI only Ömer call-PST (or<sub>Alt</sub>) Can-ACC MI  
 ‘Did only Ömer call Mete, or did only Ömer call Can?’

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Mete-ACC MI only Ömer call-PST (or<sub>Alt</sub>) Can-ACC MI only  
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Ömer call-PST  
'Did only Ömer call Mete, or did only Ömer call Can?'

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Mete-ACC MI only Ömer call-PST (or<sub>Alt</sub>) Can-ACC MI only  
~~Ömer ara-dı?~~  
Ömer call-PST  
'Did only Ömer call Mete, or did only Ömer call Can?'

- (41) \* Sadece Ömer Mete-yi mi ara-dı (yoksa) sadece Ömer  
only Ömer Mete-ACC MI call-PST (or<sub>Alt</sub>) only Ömer  
Can-ı mı ara-dı?  
Can-ACC MI call-PST

*Intended:* 'Did only Ömer call Mete, or did only Ömer call Can?'



# Focus and its placement in Turkish

- (42) a. \* Ne zaman OKUL-A<sub>F</sub> gid-ecek-sin?  
           what time school-DAT go-FUT-2SG
- b. OKUL-A<sub>F</sub> ne zaman gid-ecek-sin?  
      school-DAT what time go-FUT-2SG

(Göksel & Özsoy, 2000)

- (43) Mete-yi mi sadece Ömer ara-dı (yoksa) Can-ı mı?  
 Mete-ACC MI only Ömer call-PST (or<sub>Alt</sub>) Can-ACC MI  
 'Did only Ömer call Mete, or did only Ömer call Can?'

- (43) Mete-yi mi sadece Ömer ara-dı (yoksa) Can-ı mı?  
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‘Did only Ömer call Mete, or did only Ömer call Can?’

- (44) \* Sadece Ömer Mete-yi mi ara-dı (yoksa) sadece Ömer  
 only Ömer Mete-ACC MI call-PST (or<sub>Alt</sub>) only Ömer  
 Can-ı mı ara-dı?  
 Can-ACC MI call-PST

*Intended:* ‘Did only Ömer call Mete, or did only Ömer call Can?’

