# A Nanosyntactic Analysis of -AsI Desideratives in Turkish

## The Gap in -AsI Desideratives

- -AsI Desideratives are nominalized clauses that can be taken as complement by a restricted set of verbs (var, yok, gel-, git-, kaç- and a few more).
- They have a subject marked with GEN and a main predicate marked with a possessive marker which reflects the person and number of the GEN subject.
- They denote a desire and the matrix predicate which takes -AsI desiderative as complement denotes the presence or absence of that desire.

(1) a. [(Ben-im) bugün yemek yap -**ası** -m] yok.
(I-GEN) today dinner do -DESID -1SG.POS NOT.EXIST
'I don't feel like cooking dinner today.' DESIDERATIVE

b. [(Ben-im) bugün yemek yap -**ma** -m] lazım.
(I-GEN) today dinner do -NMLZ -1SG.POS EXIST
'I need to cook dinner today.' -MA NOMINALIZATION

- The possessive markers on the -AsI bearing verbs come from the regular possessive suffix inventory. There is one irregularity though: the suffix -AsI in the 3SG desiderative assumes the function of both 3SG.POS and DESID.
- Moreover, there are two possible forms for 3PL desideratives. Some speakers produce one form and some produce the other when they are hard-pressed to utter a form. These two forms differ only in their DESID exponents.

| | SG | PL |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | yap-ası-**m** | yap-ası-**mız** |
| **2** | yap-ası-**n** | yap-ası-**nız** |
| **3** | yap-ası | yap-ası-**ları** / yap-a-**ları** |

Table 1: -AsI Agreement Paradigm

| | SG | PL |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | -(I)**m** | -(I)**mIz** |
| **2** | -(I)**n** | -(I)**nIz** |
| **3** | -(s)I(n) | **-lArI** |

Table 2: Possessive Agreement Paradigm

- However, acceptability judgments show that neither of the possible forms for 3PL desideratives is acceptable for most Turkish speakers. This cannot result from a general unacceptability of the 3PL.POS suffix since it is attested in other parts of the grammar, such as in -mA nominalizations, and is acceptable.

(2) a. ??[(Onlar-ın) kahve yap-**a(sı)-ları**] gel-miş.
They-GEN coffee make-DESID-3PL.POS come-EVID
'They want to make coffee.'

b. [(Onlar-ın) kahve yap-**ma-ları**] lazım-mış.
They-GEN coffee make-NMLZ-3PL.POS necessary-EVID
'They need to make coffee.'

- **FACT 1:** The -AsI suffix in 3SG desideratives is DESID.3SG.POS.
- **FACT 2:** Some speakers prefer *yapasıları* type and some prefer *yapaları* type 3PL desideratives. There are also speakers who find both forms completely unacceptable. Speakers are consistent in their preference.

Based on these two observations, we claim that a speaker's preference depends on if they have a portmanteau lexical item for 3PL desideratives like the one they have for 3SG desideratives. We will show that speakers who have this portmanteau lexical item produce *yapaları* whereas speakers who use the regular lexical item for 3PL produce *yapasıları*. We will also discuss that 3PL desideratives are ungrammatical for speakers who don't have either a portmanteau for 3PL desideratives or a simpler lexical item for 3PL.

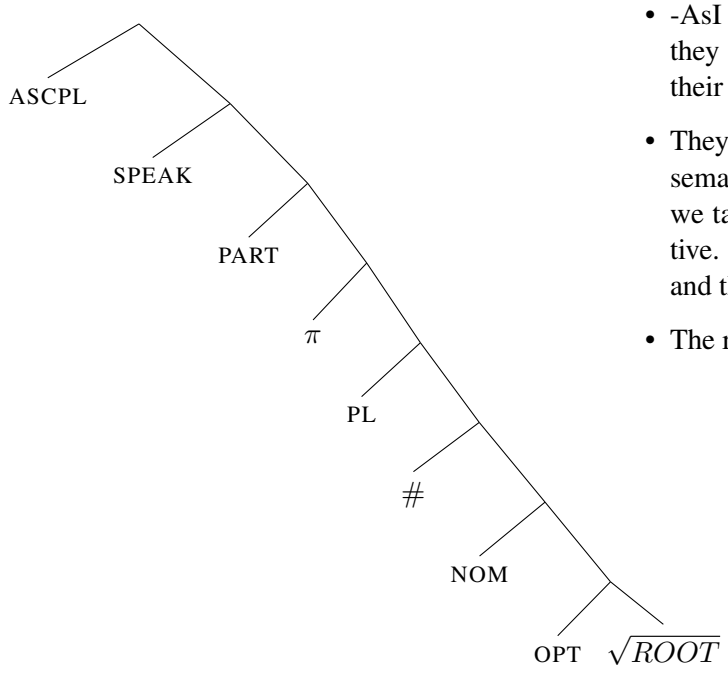
- In what follows, we will illustrate a nanosyntactic analysis of desideratives to account for how some speakers produce one form and some others produce the other. We will also provide an analysis for how yet some other speakers can produce neither form.

## A Nanosyntactic Analysis

### Functional Sequence

- This is the maximal functional sequence we posit for desideratives. We assume that the plural in 1st and 2nd persons is associative plural à la Dékány (2021) and that 1PL and 2PL trigger associative plural agreement, which is represented by ASCPL in the tree. We take ASCPL to be highest in the structure based on its position in words like *abla-m-lar* 'my sister and her associates'.

(3)




- -AsI desideratives are nominalized clauses and they have person/number agreement markers on their main predicate.
- They have a desire meaning, which resembles the semantics of the optative marker -A in Turkish. So, we take the -A part of the -AsI suffix as the optative. We assume that the root first merges with OPT and then with a nominalizer NOM.[1]
- The remaining features are due to agreement.

- Based on this functional sequence, first we will posit a lexicon for the *yapasıları* preferring speakers. Then, combining the lexical items with the functional sequence in (3), we will illustrate the derivations of desideratives with various person/number features for *yapasıları* speakers. Afterwards, we will repeat the same

[1] "Optative utterances express a wish, regret, hope or desire without an overt lexical item that means wish, regret, hope or desire." (Grosz 2012: 1)

procedure with the *yapaları* preferring speakers. Finally, we will discuss what kind of a lexicon is needed for speakers who do not accept any form for 3PL desideratives.

- Before we start, remember that these speakers diverge only in their 3PL desiderative forms. All the other person number agreeing desideratives should have a stable form across the board.

**The Lexicon for *yapasıları* speakers**

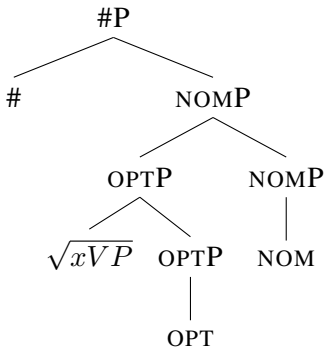
1. OPTP $\Longleftrightarrow$ -A
   - OPT
2. PLP $\Longleftrightarrow$ -lAr
   - PL
3. $\pi$P $\Longleftrightarrow$ -sI
   - $\pi$ #P
     - # NOMP
       - NOM
4. $\pi$P $\Longleftrightarrow$ -lArI
   - $\pi$ PLP
     - PL
5. PARTP $\Longleftrightarrow$ -n
   - PART
6. SPEAKP $\Longleftrightarrow$ -m
   - SPEAK PARTP
     - PART
7. ASCPLP $\Longleftrightarrow$ -Iz
   - ASCPL
8. $\sqrt{xVP}$ $\Longleftrightarrow$ yap

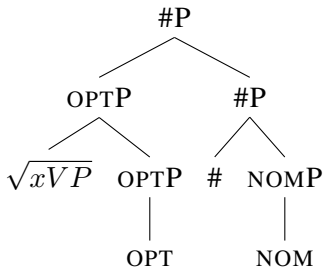
**Derivations for *yapasıları* speakers**

YAPASI

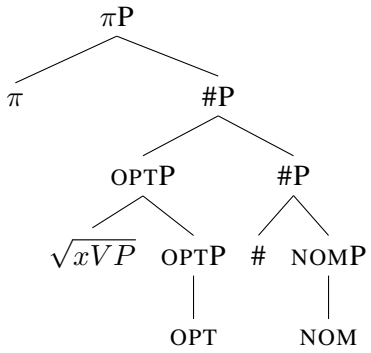
1. OPTP Comp-to-Spec OPTP $\Longleftrightarrow$ yap(8)+a(1)
   - OPT $\sqrt{xVP}$
   - $\sqrt{xVP}$ OPTP
     - OPT
2. NOMP Spec-to-Spec fails. Comp-to-Spec NOMP $\Longleftrightarrow$ yap(8)+a(1)+sı(3)
   - NOM OPTP
     - $\sqrt{xVP}$ OPTP
       - OPT
   - OPTP NOMP
     - $\sqrt{xVP}$ OPTP NOM
       - OPT

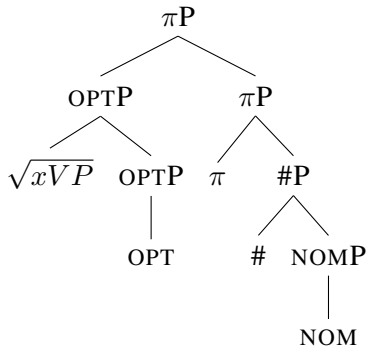
3. Spec-to-Spec $\Longleftrightarrow$ yap(8)+a(1)+sı(3)



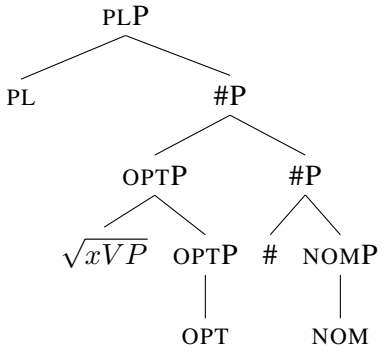

4. Spec-to-Spec $\Longleftrightarrow$ yap(8)+a(1)+sı(3)

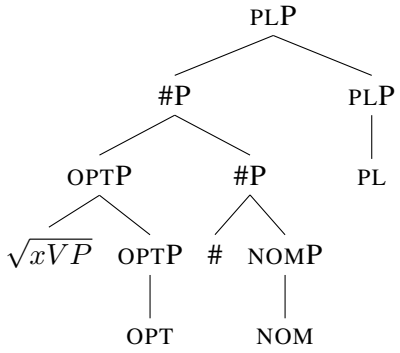


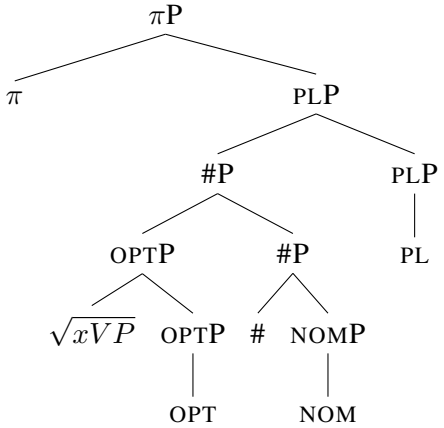

YAPASILARI

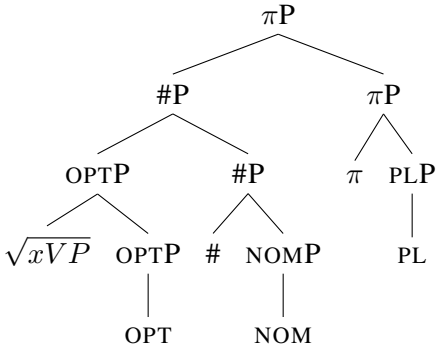
4. FAIL. Comp-to-Spec $\Longleftrightarrow$ yap(8)+a(1)+sı(3)+lar(2)




5. Spec-to-Spec $\Longleftrightarrow$ yap(8)+a(1)+sı(3)+ları(4)



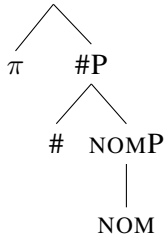



**The Lexicon for *yapaları* speakers**

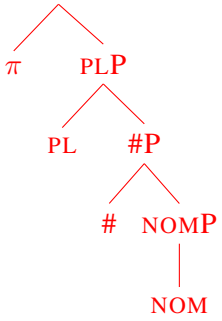
1. OPTP ⟺ -A


2. PLP ⟺ -lAr


3. πP ⟺ -sI

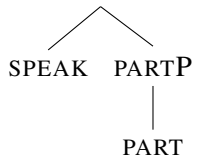



4. πP ⟺ -lArI




5. PARTP ⟺ -n


6. SPEAKP ⟺ -m



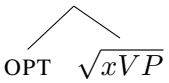

7. ASCPLP ⟺ -Iz

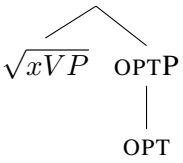

8. $\sqrt{xVP}$ ⟺ yap

**Derivations for *yapaları* speakers**

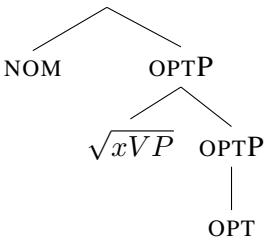
YAPASI

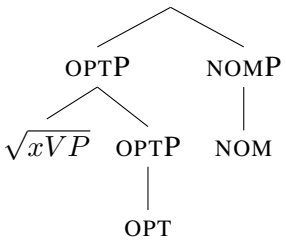
1. OPTP Comp-to-Spec OPTP ⟺ yap(8)+a(1)



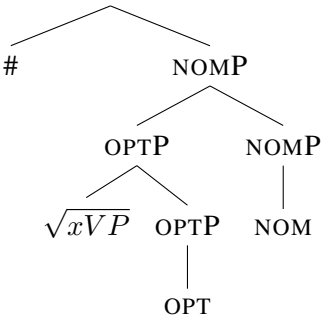



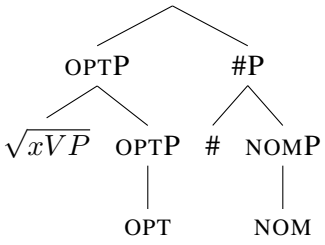

2. NOMP Spec-to-Spec fails. Comp-to-Spec NOMP ⟺ yap(8)+a(1)+sı(3)



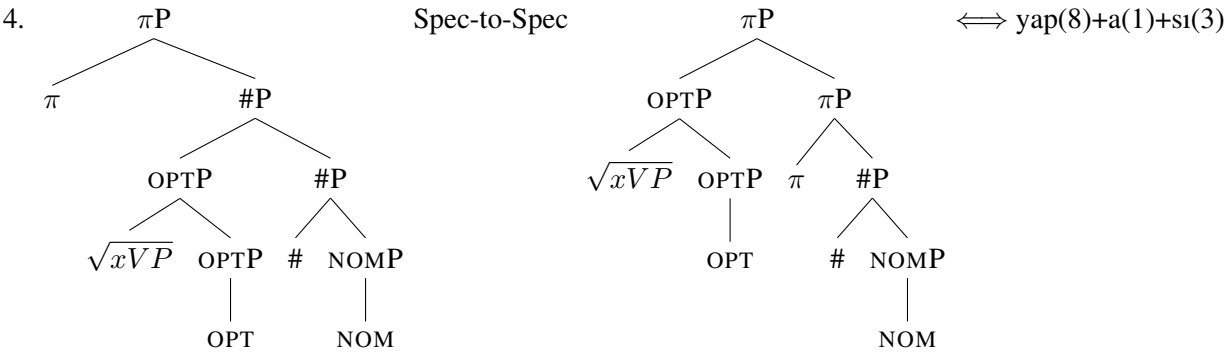

3. #P Spec-to-Spec #P ⟺ yap(8)+a(1)+sı(3)



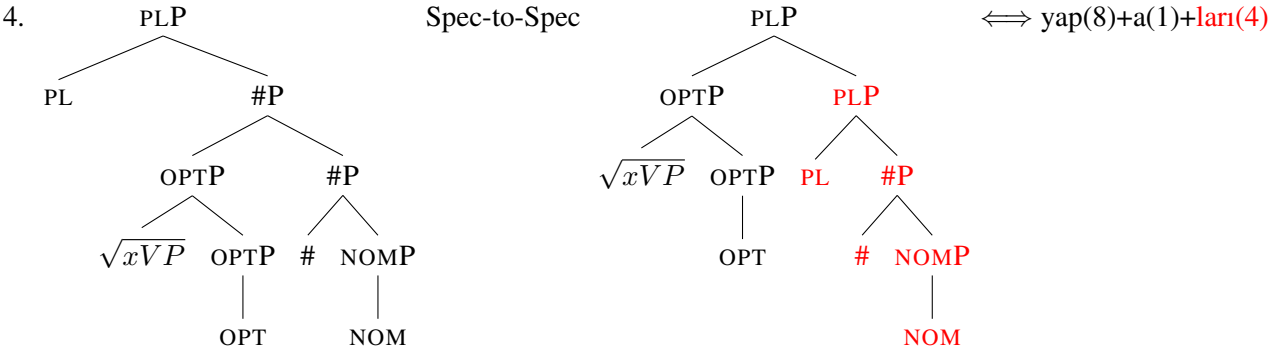



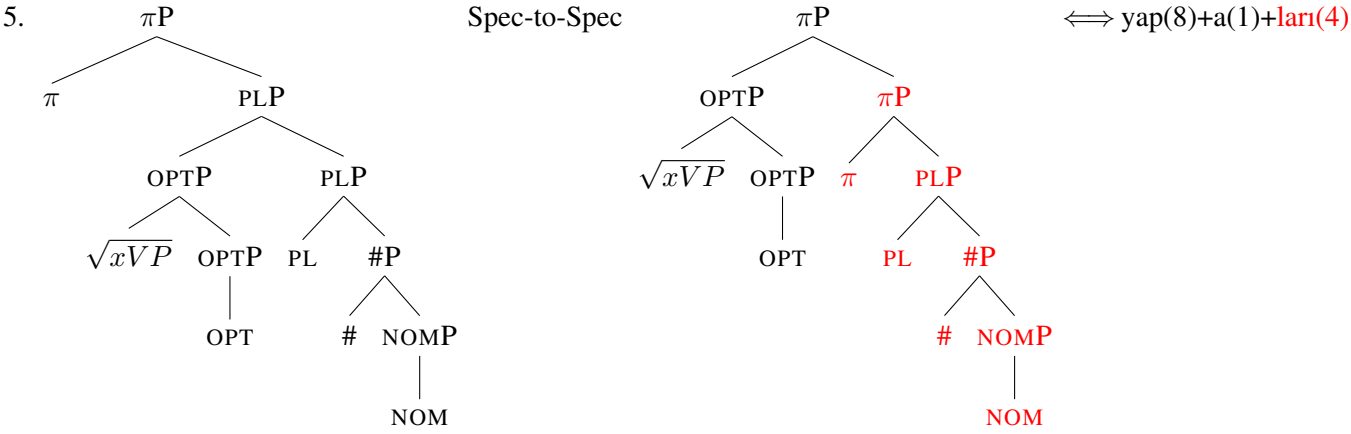

- **MINIMIZE JUNK** (Elsewhere Condition): In case two rules, R1 and R2, can apply in an environment E, R1 takes precedence over R2 if it applies in a proper subset of environments compared to R2. (Caha 2009;

Kiparsky 1973: 18).

4. 


YAPALARI

4. 


5. 

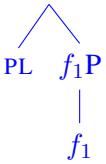

**The Lexicon for speakers who find both 3PL forms completely unacceptable**

- If the Lexicon did not have a lexical item to spell out PL in desideratives, then 3PL desideratives would not have a grammatical output.
- We can achieve this with a lexical item like (2). If (2) is the only lexical item that can spell out PL, a feature such as $f_1$ that is not found in desideratives but in other constructions would make sure 3PL desideratives are ungrammatical while 3PL is grammatical in other constructions.

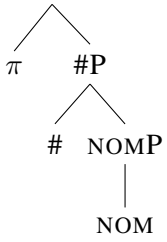
1. OPTP ⟺ -A




2. PLP ⟺ -lAr



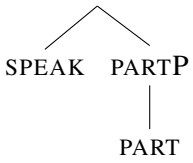

3. $\pi$P ⟺ -sI




4. PARTP ⟺ -n




5. SPEAKP ⟺ -m




6. ASCPLP ⟺ -Iz




7. $\sqrt{xVP}$ ⟺ yap

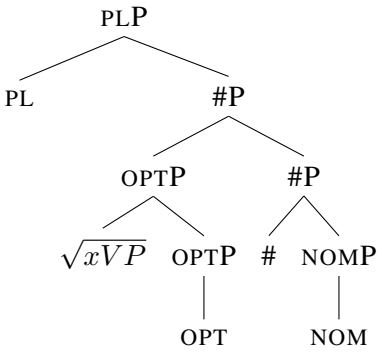
**Derivations for 'no-output' speakers**

YAPASI is derived just like in *yapasıları* and *yapaları* speakers.

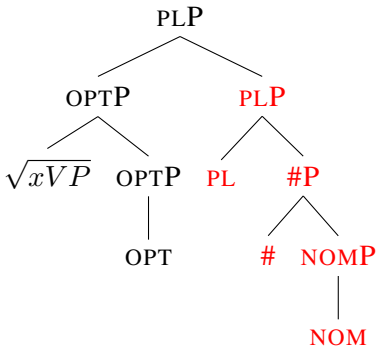
*YAP(ASI)LARI

- As soon as PL is added, there is no item in these speakers' lexicon to spell out the structure.
- Spec-to-Spec fails since there is no match for the red-marked structure in the lexicon.

4.



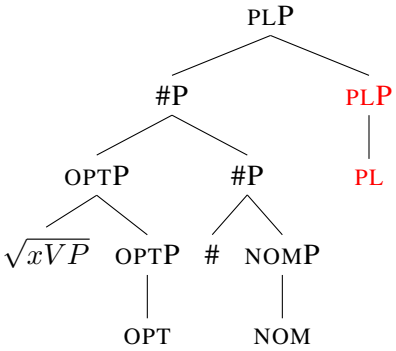

Spec-to-Spec




⟺ NO MATCH

- Because there is no lexical item to spell out PLP, Comp-to-Spec fails, too.
- Backtracking would not work either since the lexical item that can spell out PLP includes a feature $f_1$ that is not found in desideratives.

Comp-to-Spec




⟺ NO MATCH

## Summary and Discussion

- The analysis relies on the assumption that the plural in the first and second persons are different from the plural in the third person. The first and second person plurals have only the associative plural while the third person plural has the additive plural. This asymmetry also extends to plural agreement features.
- All speakers produce 3SG desideratives by using the same lexical items in the derivation.
- The three gropus of speakers diverge at the point where PL is merged when deriving 3PL desideratives.
- *yapaları* speakers have a lexical item to spell out the structure obtained after Spec-to-Spec.
- *yapasıları* speakers fail after Spec-to-Spec for they do not have a lexical item to realize the PL, # and NOM features as a portmanteau.
- Having failed, they try Comp-to-Spec movement and continue the derivation by spelling out NOM with -sI and the 3rd person plural features with -lArI, eventually.
- Even if *yapaları* speakers have a separate lexical item to spell out plural feature to the exclusion of nominalizer (which is most likely the case intuitively), they do not need that lexical item when deriving 3PL desideratives. They already spell out the stored chunk after Spec-to-Spec.
- 'No-output' speakers cannot spell out desideratives that include the feature PL. Since this feature is only present in 3PL structures, 1PL and 2PL structures are not affected.
- This analysis is similar to an analogical account which can explain the difference between *yapasıları* and *yapaları* speakers by positing that *yapasıları* speakers simply add the third person plural agreement marker to the common root *yapası* whereas *yapaları* speakers replace the -sI in 3SG desideratives with -lArI to produce 3PL desideratives on the assumption that -sI marks 3SG in 3SG desideratives (e.g. *yapma-sı* $\sim$ *yapma-ları*).
- However, due to Nanosyntax's deterministic algorithm, this analysis predicts that speakers should find the form compatible with their grammar grammatical. Then, the question of why most speakers hesitate to accept even the 3PL desiderative form they produce/favor arises.
- By following a framework such as Nanosyntax, this question is very difficult, if not impossible, to answer.
- In this system, all we can account are the following observations:
  - *yapaları* is grammatical for some speakers
  - *yapasıları* is grammatical for some speakers
  - both *yapaları* and *yapasıları* are ungrammatical for some speakers.

## References

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