What can vocatives tell us about the speech act layer?

Overview: Discourse markers such as English ‘oh’, ‘well’ etc. and vocatives are traditionally considered to be purely pragmatic phenomena and as such have not received much attention within the generative framework. In recent years, however, a substantial body of work has begun to emerge articulating a layer of structure, above the CP, to encode properties of the Speech Act (e.g. Speas & Tenny 2003, Haegeman 2014). Among other things, this layer has lent insight into the syntactic behavior of vocatives (e.g. Moro 2003, D’ Hulst et al. 2007, Hill 2007, 2014, Haegeman & Hill 2013, Haegeman 2014, Wiltschko et al. 2015). This paper aims to contribute to this body of literature by developing a syntactic analysis of vocatives of Turkish. We do this by providing novel syntactic and phonological evidence for a syntactic projection of vocatives.

Proposal: Building on Speas &Tenny (2003) and Hill (2007), we argue for an entire layer of structure above Rizzi’s 1997 structure of the left periphery. This topmost structure, the speech act layer, can be viewed as a syntactically encoded interface between the utterance and the discourse (Haegeman 2014). This structure is an articulated speech act layer that consists of two speech act projections, based on the distribution and types of vocatives, and their interaction with discourse particles. In this structure, vocatives are taken to be regular NPs or DPs and embedded in a functional layer that allows them to map the addressee.

(1) [ V O C 1 = call ] [ V O C 2 = address [ F O R C E CP ] ] ] ) (adapted from Haegeman 2014:129)

The higher vocative functions as a call vocative, while the lower level is associated with address vocative. The former is ‘designated to catch the addressee’s attention’, while the latter is intended for a bonding relationship between the speaker and the hearer (Zwicky 1974).

Evidence for the syntactic analysis of vocatives: The first piece of evidence for an articulated speech act layer comes from the ordering restrictions of vocative DPs in Turkish with respect to interjections (cf. Haegeman 2014). Certain interjections, such as vay ‘wow’ occur only in sentence initial position (Akar 1988) and they must follow a call vocative (1)a, indicated by the particle ey in Turkish (Akkuş 2015), while they may precede an address vocative (1)c.

(1) a. ey çocuklar[call]! vay bu ne şıkhlk!
   hey kids    wow this what chicness
   ‘Hey kids, wow, how chic (you are)’!

   b. *vay ey çocuklar[call], bu ne şıkhlk!
      wow hey kids    this what chicness

   c. vay çocuklar[address], bu ne şıkhlk!
      wow kids    this what chicness

Syntactically the hierarchical position of different types of vocatives is supported by the word order in (1)a - (1)c. This word order restriction yields the following:

(2) call vocative >> interjection >> address vocative

The second piece of evidence is built on analogy with the analysis of different kinds of topics in Italian in Frascarelli (2007) and Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007). On the basis of the intonational evidence and discourse-syntax considerations, the authors argue that topics correspond to different syntactic positions. Following a similar line of reasoning, we suggest that the intonational evidence in Göksel & Pöchtrager (G&P, 2013), coupled with the ordering restrictions in (1) provides support for the treatment in this paper.

In their discussion of the vocative contours in the light of prosodic contours, G&P (2013:96) conclude, on the basis of the intonational tunes in (3), that there are different types of prosodic contour for the call vocative, the address vocative, along with other vocative types.

(3) a. Prosodic Contour for Address Vocative

   Flórían Hûseyin Alexánder Hûsamettin

   b. Prosodic Contour for Call Vocative

   Flórían Hûseyin Alexánder Hûsamettin
The intonational patterns in (3) show that there is a difference in the location of stress between call and address vocatives in Turkish: in the address vocative stress can be on the penultimate or antepenultimate. In the calling pattern, however, stress can only be on the penultimate. Following Frascarelli (2007), we take this as supporting evidence for different vocative projections.

A third argument for distinct projections in the speech act layer for the vocatives comes from the so-called **evaluative vocatives** (Corver 2008), which are typically a combination of a second person pronoun and an evaluating epithet noun, such as you idiot! Languages exhibit different morphosyntactic manifestations of evaluative vocatives reflected on the pronoun, e.g. you\_NOM idiot!, you\_ACC/OBL idiot!, or you\_POSS idiot!, which are different from *we-linguists* constructions (Corver 2008). Turkish allows the pronoun to bear nominative and accusative case (4).

(4) a. sen \_NOM gerizekahi! \_idiot

you\_NOM idiot

you idiot!

b. sen-i \_ACC gerizekahi!

you\_ACC idiot

you idiot!

The two types of vocatives, however, are used in different contexts. For instance, Zwicky (1974) notes that a whole class of relative constructions with you can be used as, but not as addresses. In Turkish only the evaluative vocative with the nominative case is allowed in such a context (5).

(5) a. * sen arkadaki/kırmızı elbiseli, buraya gel.

you\_NOM who is in the back/with the red dress, come here.

b. *seni arkadaki/kırmızı elbiseli, buraya gel.

you\_ACC who is in the back/with the red dress, come here.

The contrast between a call context (6) and an address context (7) also shows the difference in use.

(6) **Context:** (teacher to a student in the garden during the break, from a distance)

sen gerizekahl!/*seni gerizekahl!, üzgünüm, ama derse girmen lazım artık.

you\_NOM idiot / *you\_ACC idiot

I am afraid, but you need to go to class now.’

(7) **Context:** (teacher to a student playing in the garden during the break, near him)

Üzgünüm ama, seni gerizekahl/*seni gerizekahl, derse girmen lazım artık.

you\_ACC idio/t / *you\_NOM idiot

you need to go to class now.’

The examples show that evaluative vocatives with the different cases are used for different functions. Interestingly, this contrast shows that the parallel treatment of vP-shells and speech act layer is extended to the relation between Case and syntactic positions, yielding a distinction between two Cases in the pragmatic field (cf. Hill 2007). Reflecting the hierarchy inside the CP, Nominative Case appears higher than the Accusative Case.

**Conclusion:** This paper has provided novel evidence for the body of the literature that explores a syntactic structure of vocatives and discourse markers above the Rizzi’s left periphery. The evidence includes the ordering restrictions, which has been reported in various languages, intonational properties of different types of vocatives, and the Case features that reflect the hierarchy in the clause corresponding to different functions of vocatives.