On the NSR and Focus Projection in Turkish

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1. Introduction

The literature on focus has continuously showed that there is a strict relation between focus and grammar. Recent literature in the generativist framework revealed that this relation is even deeper than it has been considered. It is shown that the focus structure (F-structure) of the sentence follows the general economy principles of the grammar (cf. Reinhart, 1996; Neeleman and Reinhart, 1997) and at the interfaces it relates both to PF by the rules of nuclear stress (NS) assignment, namely the Nuclear Stress Rule (NSR) (cf. Chomsky & Halle, 1968, Cinque, 1993, Zubizarreta, 1998 among others) and to LF by, e.g., the argument structure (cf. Gussenhoven, 1992; Selkirk, 1984, 1995). However, there is a considerable debate between the proponents of the NSR and those arguing for a relation between the focus and the argument structure.

This study aims to show that both the NSR and the argument structure are related to F-structure, by drawing on Turkish data. Hopefully, it also aims to contribute to the study of focus in Turkish, in general.

2. General Assumptions

As argued in Kural (1992) and Vallduví & Engdahl (1996), Turkish is an in situ focusing language. Thus, contrary to the traditional view, there is no focus position in Turkish where items have to move in order to be focused. On the other hand, in situ focusing is accomplished by different mechanisms in Turkish, exemplified in (1)\(^1\). (1)a presents the ‘default’ case with respect to focusing in Turkish. This default status of the position of focus is agreed on by almost every author who has discussed the issue (Erkü, 1983; Erguvanli, 1984; Kural, 1992; Kiliçaslan, 1994; Hoffman, 1995; Vallduví and Engdahl, 1996; Demircan, 1996; Kornfilt, 1997; Issever, 2000, 2003, among others). Note that, this does not necessarily mean that Turkish has a focus position in the immediately pre-verbal slot, as suggested in the traditional literature on Turkish (c.f. Erkü, 1983; Erguvanli, 1984; Kiliçaslan, 1994; Demircan, 1996 among others). Rather, focused items only need to ‘appear’ in this position. In other words, what is required is to be adjacent to the verb. Thus, as Kural (1992) and Vallduví and Engdahl (1996) have already pointed out, if the item to be focused is not adjacent to the verb, intervening elements may undergo defocus movement, as seen in (1)b. This type of movement is named (prosodically motivated)-movement in Zubizarreta (1998). Because of the requirement of verb-adjacency, I will call those types of foci, exemplified in

\[^1\] Following Jackendoff (1972), I use [+F] as a diacritic to indicate the focus feature. Thus, [+F] indicates that the item is in focus. Small capitals, on the other hand, mark nuclear stress.
(1)a and (1)b, adjacent-focus. In the case of intervening elements, Turkish may also focus an item by stress-shift, as shown in (1)c. I refer to this type of focus as non-adjacent-focus.²

(1) a. [F Volkan F ISTANBUL’A gitti]]. = default focus
    Istanbul-Dat go-Past
b. [F [F Istanbul’a, [F VOLKAN]] t gitti]. = focus by p-movement
    c. [F [F VOLKAN] Istanbul’a] gitti]. = focus by stress-shift

‘Volkan went to Istanbul.’

(2) a. Where did Volkan go?
    b. What did Volkan do?
    c. What happened? Any news?

(3) Who went to Istanbul?

Focus has to be phonologically marked by the NS of the sentence. The focused item may have either ‘narrow’ or ‘wide’ focus reading. With ‘wide focus’, I refer to the cases in which the focused item projects its focus feature to adjacent constituents, along the path to the entire sentence, i.e. IP. Following the general assumption held in the literature (cf. Kiss, 1998), I assume that only p(resentational)-focus can project focus feature. Following Neeleman and Reinhart (1997), on the other hand, I suppose that a sentence whose focus is marked by the NSR has a set of possible foci, consisting of the constituents of the sentence that can serve as the focus in a given context. Thus, a monotransitive sentence that has an unmarked order and with the NS on the object, for example, has the following ‘focus set’, each member of which provides an answer to the appropriate context question: {IP, VP, Object}. (1)a has this focus set, since it can answer all the questions in 0. Thus, this sentence has a three-way ambiguous F-structure, including the sentence-focus. The focus set of the sentences in (1)b-c, on the other hand, consists of only one member: {Subject}. Hence, these are sentences with narrow focus.

Issever (2000, 2003) proposes that there is a semantic/pragmatic difference between the interpretations of adjacent and non-adjacent foci in Turkish. Non-adjacent focus is obligatorily contrastive, while adjacent-focus may either be presentational or contrastive. In other words, adjacent-focus is the only means in Turkish to obtain a presentational reading for a focused item.³ Erguvanli (1984:37) points out that marked word order in Turkish results in a narrow⁴ focus reading of the item left-adjacent to the verb. This is what I call ‘focus by p-movement’, following Zubizarreta (1998). This implies that there is a difference between the types of adjacent-focus, as well. As shown in (1)a, unmarked word order can give rise to sentence-focus, while focus by p-movement cannot. On the other hand, to my knowledge at least, this difference has not been fully exploited. One of the aims of the present study is to explore their structural difference with respect to the NSR and focus projection.

² Adjacent and non-adjacent foci are referred to as ‘syntactic strategy’ and ‘phonological strategy’ of focusing in Vallduví and Engdahl (1996), respectively.
³ For a different view, see Göksel and Özsoy (2003).
⁴ Actually, Erguvanli uses the term ‘contrastive’ instead of ‘narrow’ here. Although there is an important difference between the two, and I suggest that p-focus reading is readily available in such a case, I think that her use of the term can be interpreted as ‘narrow focus’ as well, in the general framework of her study.
3. The NSR and Turkish

In the generativist framework, Chomsky and Halle (1968) is the first to put forth the NSR as a mapping rule between the phonological representation and the surface structure. Suggesting that the NS is a matter of phrasal stress, they argue for the existence of a phrasal stress in English, which is determined by the cyclic application of the (parameterized) NSR, as the rightmost world-level stress in a phrase. After a long period of debate in the literature, Cinque (1993), drawing on Chomsky and Halle’s NSR, proposes a non-parametric NSR which states that the most deeply embedded element in the syntactic structure carries the NS. Although there is a large body of literature regarding the properties of the NSR and its relation to focusing, I omit to review them, due to space limitations, and will present a brief background on Zubizarreta’s (1998) approach on the issue, which the present study largely draws on.


Drawing on Cinque (1993), Zubizarreta (1998) gives a comprehensive analysis of the NSR with respect to its relation to word order and focus. She proposes that the NSR is a non-parametric, late-syntactic rule applied in a cyclic fashion in the level between $\sum$-Structure and LF, $\sum$-Structure being a stretch of covert syntax. She also suggests that the NSR is on a par with other focus related mechanisms, which she named F(ocu s)-marking, Focus Prominence Rule (FPR) and p-movement. Her proposal for the architecture of the grammar is given below:

![Diagram of grammar architecture](image)

Following Jackendoff (1972) and Selkirk (1984), Zubizarreta assumes that the F-structure of the sentence is defined by marking constituents with the features [+F] and [-F], which shows that a constituent is focused or defocused, respectively. Since the focused constituent is generally assumed to be marked by prosodic prominence cross-linguistically, Zubizarreta inherits the well-formedness principle of Chomsky (1971) and Jackendoff (1972), with a slight modification, presented in (5). She also defines a more general prominency rule in (6), i.e. FPR, which is suggested to be applied in the same level of derivation with the NSR and other mechanisms, shown in (4):

(5) *Focus Prosody Correspondence Principle (FPCP)*

The F-marked constituent of a phrase must contain the rhythmically most prominent word in that phrase.

(Zubizarreta, 1998: 38)

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As is clear, Zubizarreta modifies the classic T-model where LF and PF are not ordered in a precedence relation. In the classic version, both LF and PF are branched at a single node by Spell-Out. She states that, in her version, Spell-Out begins at $\Sigma$-Structure. She also states that because overt movement occurs as a last resort, covert movement is the unmarked case. This implies that LF has priority over PF. For details, see Zubizarreta (1998:29-33).
(6) **Focus Prominence Rule (FPR)**

Given two sister categories \( C_i \) (marked [+F]) and \( C_j \) (marked [-F]), \( C_i \) is more prominent than \( C_j \).

(Zubizarreta, 1998: 21)

Thus, FPCP and FPR mediate between F-marking and (prosodic) prominence. It is the NSR’s role to determine the sentential position where prosodic prominence is marked. Zubizarreta proposes a modularized NSR to capture the cross-linguistic difference. She claims that selectional or asymmetric c-command ordering or both may be related to the application of the NSR in a language. Accordingly, she postulates the following modularized NSR (S-NSR stands for *selection-driven NSR* and C-NSR for *constituent-driven NSR*):

(7) **NSR**

S-NSR: Given two sister categories \( C_i \) and \( C_j \), if \( C_i \) and \( C_j \) are selectionally ordered, the one lower in the selectional ordering is more prominent.

C-NSR: Given two sister categories \( C_i \) and \( C_j \), the one lower in the asymmetric c-command ordering is more prominent.

Together with the modularized version of the NSR, Zubizarreta incorporates into her theory the notions of ‘metrical sisterhood’, ‘metrical (in)visibility’ and ‘metrical non-distinctness’, introduced by the metrical theory of Liberman (1975) (in Zubizarreta, 1998). It must be stated that the modularized NSR is applied between metrical sisters. According to her analysis, Germanic languages like English and German have both of the modules of the NSR, while in Romance languages like French, Spanish and Italian only the C-NSR is available. Due to space limitations, I omit her examples of the NSR here. I hope it will be clear in the next section, where I try to explore whether the modularized NSR can capture the facts of the Turkish data.

### 3.2. The NSR in Turkish

#### 3.2.1. Proposal

It is generally assumed in Turkish literature that in the unmarked word order the NS is assigned to the immediately pre-verbal focused element (Demircan, 1996; Erguvanlı, 1984; Erkö, 1983; Hoffman, 1995; Kilicaslan, 1994; Kornfilt, 1997; Kural, 1992), which I call ‘adjacent focus’. As stated above, adjacency of a focused item to the verb is required for the wide-focus reading. However, adjacency, in fact, is only the necessary condition for a wide-focus, but it is not sufficient by itself. As seen in (1)b, a focused item can also give rise to a necessary narrow-focus interpretation, although it is adjacent to the verb. Thus, adjacency is, in fact, the necessary and sufficient condition of p-focus, not of wide-focus. Both types of adjacent focus can give rise to a p-focus, but only in the default focus structures an item can be permitted to project its focus feature up to the sentence level. To see the different behaviors of the types of adjacent focus with respect to wide focus reading, consider the examples given in (1)a-b, repeated below in (8) (non-relevant parts are omitted):

(8) a. \([_{AgrSP} Volkan] [_{AgrS} \ldots [_{SP} [_{DP} t_1] [_{VP} [_{VP} [_{DP ISTANBUL'} A_2] [_{VP} [_{V'} [_{V1} t_1] [_{VP} [_{V'} [_{V2} t_2] \ldots gitti, ]]]]])

b. \([_{AgrSP ISTANBUL'A_2} [_{AgrSP VOLKAN_1} [_{AgrS} \ldots [_{SP} [_{DP} t_1] [_{VP} [_{VP} [_{V'} [_{V1} t_1] [_{VP} [_{VP} [_{V'} [_{V2} t_2] \ldots gitti, ]]]]]]]

...
Kural (1992) suggests that focus is defined by asymmetric c-command in Turkish. Turkish verbs undergo overt head movement to the head of AgrSP, due to the strong properties of AgrS°, and subjects are attracted to [Spec, AgrSP] due to the checking needs of AgrS°. Thus, in (8)a, the verb asymmetrically c-commands the focused object in VP, which stays in situ in the complement position of the moved verb, hence lower than the verb. Although Kural’s analysis of focus can capture (8)a, it fails in the case of focused subject as in (8)b, since the subject is positioned higher than the verb and asymmetrically c-commands it. Thus, if the sole mechanism under focusing in Turkish is asymmetric c-commanding, then (8)b remains unexplained regarding both a) its assignment of the NS and b) the difference it displays with respect to the obligatory narrow focus reading. As for the former problem, Zubizarreta’s (1998) formulation of the NSR can be helpful in search of an explanation for (8)b. Let us examine (8)a-b using the framework provided by Zubizarreta’s modularized NSR.

According to the modularized NSR, the NS must be assigned either by the S-NSR or C-NSR. Regarding (8)a, the NSR recognizes DP_1 (= Volkan) and [DP_2 V_2] (= [Istanbul’a2] ... [v_2 gitti]) as metrical sisters. Since no metrical sister to DP_1 is a head and, hence, a selector, we conclude that they are ordered with respect to asymmetric c-command rather than being selectionally ordered. Therefore, as shown in (9)a, the C-NSR applies and assigns prominence to [DP_2 V_2], which is lower in the asymmetric c-command ordering. In the next turn, the NSR reapplies to the metrical sisters DP_2 and V_2. Since these are selectionally ordered, the S-NSR assigns prominence to DP_2, as shown in (9)b.\(^6\)

\[
(9)\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & [\text{AgrSP Volkan}_1 \ldots ] \[\ldots [\text{VP } \text{V'} \text{DP } \text{ISTANBUL'}_2 \text{A}_2] \[\ldots ] \text{gitti}, ] \\
& \text{C-NSR}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{b. } \ldots [\ldots ] [\text{DP } \text{ISTANBUL'}_2] [\ldots ] \text{gitti}, ] \\
\text{S-NSR}
\]

Now consider the problematic case (8)b. As in (9)a, the first application of the NSR assigns prominence to [DP_1 V_2] (= [Volkan] ... [v_2 gitti]) by C-NSR, as seen in (10)a. In (10)b, the C-NSR cannot apply, since it is the subject which asymmetrically c-commands. Thus, S-NSR has to apply, which is the case we see in (10)b.

\[
(10)\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & [\text{AgrSP Istanbul’a2}] [\ldots ] [\text{AgrSP VOLKAN}_1 \ldots ] \[\ldots ] \text{gitti}, ] \\
& \text{C-NSR}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{b. } \ldots [\ldots ] [\text{AgrSP VOLKAN}_1 \ldots ] [\ldots ] \text{gitti}, ] \\
\text{S-NSR}
\]

Thus, it seems that the modularized NSR of Zubizarreta (1998) is confirmed by the Turkish data given above. Also note that, (8)b is a case of narrow focus. This is due to the application of p-movement. Zubizarreta notes that p-movement creates narrow focus structures in languages such as Spanish and Italian. It seems that Turkish obeys this generalization as well.

On the other hand, as I assume that only default focus can give rise to a sentence-focus reading, it is apparent that the focus in (8)a, but not in (8)b, can qualify as default focus. This leads us to the question that what difference they have would be responsible for the different

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6 Note that, given the fact that the verb is higher than the object, the NS assignment may also be thought to be accomplished by the application of the C-NSR. However, based on the definition of the S-NSR presented in (7), I assume that it is S-NSR which is responsible for the assignment of the NS where two metrical sisters are in selectional relation.
focus readings, i.e. to the second problem stated above. Zubizarreta (1998) does not provide an answer to this question. Let us explore this on Turkish data.

As far as Turkish is concerned, I suggest the following generalization for an item to be qualified as default focus:

(11) **Conditions for Default Focus in Turkish:**

The default focus of the sentence is the [+F]-marked constituent, which is

(a) left-adjacent to the verb,
(b) selected by, i.e. an argument of, a head,
and whose focus status is
(c) not defined by p-movement.

Under the analysis given so far, we may straightforwardly observe that only default focus can give rise to a sentence-focus reading. In other words, default focus is the only type which is able to project its focus feature up to the sentence-level. Reinhart (1996) and Neeleman and Reinhart (1997) point out that stress-shifting operation, which gives rise to narrow focus, is an economy violation. In the same line, Zubizarreta (1998) suggests that p-movement is a last resort operation. Thus, default focus, as a strategy of sentence-focus, is given support with respect to interface economy, as well. Hence, it can be stated that projection of focus feature up to the sentence-level is accomplished according to the following generalization:

(12) **Generalization on Focus Projection:**

Only default focus can be permitted to project the focus feature; i.e. only default focus can give rise to a sentence-focus reading.

Note that condition (a) of (11) guarantees that the focused item can be construed presentationally. Recall that being p-focus is the necessary condition for an item to project its focus feature up to the sentence-level. Condition (b) reveals that only arguments can project focus up to the sentence-level; in other words, only those categories NS is assigned to by the S-NSR can qualify as default focus. Hence, together with the other conditions, the S-NSR can give rise to a sentence-focus, while the C-NSR cannot. Finally, condition (c) guarantees that there is no last resort operation; hence, the derivation obeys the economy condition of the grammar, which, I assume, is the necessary condition for a sentence-focus. Thus, it can be said that all the three conditions together regularize the projection of the focus feature of an item in a sentence, if it is to be construed as a sentence-focus.

All of the three conditions defined in (11) must be met by an item to be qualified as default focus. (8)a meets all of the conditions, but (8)b only meets the conditions (a) and (b) of (11). Thus, (8)b is ruled out as a default focus by the condition (c).

As stated above, condition (b) of (11) rules out any non-argument to be the default focus. Thus, the NS on an adjunct will block the sentence-focus reading, by definition. Consider the examples below:

(13) a. [f Irmak [f bu] [f yil [f OKULA] basladi]]]

Recall that the present study is restricted to sentence-focus constructions only. In this framework, with ‘focus projection’ I meant only the projection of the focus feature which can be percolated up to the sentence-level, giving the whole sentence a focus reading. However, there may be different processes in projecting the focus feature to VP-level. Those cases are not discussed in this study.
b. [+F Irmak [+F okula, [+F BU YIL] t, basladi]]

‘Irmak has registered for school this year.’

(14) a. [+F Kemal [room odasinda [F YENI CD’LERINI dinliyor]]]

‘Kemal is listening to his new CDs in his room.’

b. [+F Kemal [+F yeni CD’lerini [ODASINDA] t, dinliyor]]

On the other hand, there may be some contexts in which focused adjuncts can project their focus features. For example, (15)a can be uttered in an out-of-the-blue context where Mustafa’s mother reports her husband at the phone that their little son is sleeping in his own room to give him the happy news that Mustafa is getting used to be alone. Similar contexts can be realized in real discourse for other adjuncts, as well. However, note that this is due to the pragmatic properties of such contexts, as noted by Kadmon (2001), and it is hardly possible to imagine an utterance which cannot be used in an out-of-the-blue context, although this context may be a very restricted one. Assuming that the properties of such cases belong to discourse pragmatics, I do not include the discussion of these cases here.

In this section, conditions on default focus and the generalization on focus projection have been discussed through the examination of monotransitive and intransitive structures. The following sections continue to observe these conditions and the generalization in intransitive and ditransitive structures.

3.2.2. Intransitive Structures

Following Hale & Keyser (1993, 2002), I assume that the subjects of unaccusatives originate in [Spec, VP], while the subjects of unergatives originate in [Spec, vP]. In both unaccusative and unergative structures, it is the subject that receives the NS in an unmarked stress pattern:
(16) a. [F [F Vazo] kirildi]  
   **vase** **break-Past**  
   ‘The/A vase broke.’ = unaccusatives

b. [F [F Gemi] battı]  
   **ship** **sink-Past**  
   ‘The/A ship sank.’

c. [F [F Burnum] kaniyor]  
   **nose-Poss** **bleed-Pres**  
   ‘My nose is bleeding.’

(17) a. [F [F Bebek] ağliyor]  
   **baby** **cry-Pres**  
   ‘The/A baby is crying.’ = unergatives

b. [F [F Ali] geldi]  
   **come-Past**  
   ‘Ali came.’

c. [F [F Çocuklar] oynuyor]  
   **children** **play-Pres**  
   ‘The kids are playing.’

The subjects in the sentences given above are all left-adjacent to the verbs that select them as arguments and there are no p-moved elements between them and the verbs. Thus, they all can qualify as default foci, according all of the conditions given in (11). Observe below that in the case of an intervening adjunct ((18)a, 0a), NS is assigned to the adjunct but sentence-focus construal is not possible. On the other hand, when the adjunct does not intervene ((18)b, 0b), sentence-focus reading is not blocked. Note that (18)a and 0a are ruled out by the (b) condition for default focus, which requires an argument status:

(18) a. [F Vazo [F Burada] kirilmis]  
   **vase** **here** **break_PastIndef**  
   ‘The/*A vase broke here.’

b. [F Burada [F Vazo] kirilmis]  
   **vase** **here** **break_PastIndef**  
   ‘The/A vase broke here.’

(19) a. [F Bebek [F Odada] agliyor]  
   **baby** **room-Loc** **cry-Pres**  
   ‘The/*A baby is crying in the room.’

b. [F Odada [F Bebek] agliyor]  
   **baby** **room-Loc** **cry-Pres**  
   ‘The/A baby is crying in the room.’

On the other hand, according to the intuitions of some native speakers of Turkish, as far as there is no intervening element between the subject and the verb, NS assignment on the verb in intransitive sentences are equally acceptable for a sentence-focus interpretation, shown in (20):

(20) a. [F Vazo [F Kirildi]]  
   **vase** **break-Past**  
   ‘The/*A vase broke.’

b. [F Bebek [F Ağliyor]]  
   **baby** **cry-Pres**  
   ‘The/*A baby is crying.’

Zubizarreta (1998) reports the same ambiguity with respect to the place of the NS in English, as well. Thus, both in English and Turkish, NS can be assigned either by S-NSR as in (16) and (17) or by C-NSR as in (20). However, it must be noted that the stress patterns of the sentences in (20) is restricted to a limited set of contexts in which the subject is presupposed, hence defocalised, which, I think, is evident by the fact that the subjects in (20) have the obligatory specific readings. For example, it is unnatural to ask for help in urgency with the sentence in (16)c, in which the NS is assigned to the verb instead of the subject, as shown in (21)a-b:

(21) a. ?[F Burnum [F Kaniyor]]

b. [F [F Burnum] kaniyor]

Thus, I assume that the correct stress pattern for intransitive sentences is as given in (16) and (17).

In the literature on focus projection, the issue of how the subjects of unaccusative and unergative verbs can project their focus features is under debate, since while the subjects of intransitives permit focus projection, those of transitives prevent it. Selkirk (1984, 1995)
suggest that internal arguments can, but external arguments cannot, project focus. With respect to unaccusatives, on the other hand, Selkirk (1995) proposes that the [+F]-marking of the subject in [Spec,IP] licenses its trace in the object position in VP and since the trace holds an internal position, it further projects its focus feature up to the sentence level. However, as Zubizarreta (1998: 81) points out, this proposal does not exclude the subjects of unergative verbs, whose traces are left in [Spec,vP], an external argument position. Because it does not need the external/internal argument distinction, the proposal presented in the present study, however, does not include the same problem of empirical coverage.

3.2.3. Ditransitive Structures

The relative order of the arguments in ditransitive structures in Turkish is an issue in dispute. Some authors state that Turkish has the IO>DO ordering (cf. Lewis, 1967), while some others suggest that DO precedes IO in Turkish (cf. Underhill, 1976; Erkü, 1983; Erguvanlı, 1984; Kornfilt, 1997). On the other hand, our main concern is not the relative ordering of the arguments, but their possibility of being default focus. It seems that the ambiguity of the relative ordering between the arguments affects their default focus status, as well. In the following examples, both DO>IO and IO>DO orderings seem to permit the sentence-focus readings of the sentences. Note that, these sentences equally answer the context question “What happened? Any news?”:

(22) a. [F Kaya [F kitabi [F ARKADASINA] gönderdi]]
   book-Acc friend-Poss-Dat send-Past
   ‘Kaya sent the book to his friend’

   b. [F Kaya [F arkadasina [F KITABI] gönderdi]]
   ‘Kaya sent the book to his friend’

(23) a. [F Mert [F arabasini [F BABASINA] verdi]]
   car-Pos-Acc father-Poss-Dat give-Past
   ‘Mert gave his car to his father.’

   b. [F Mert [F babasina [F ARABASINI] verdi]]
   ‘Mert gave his car to his father.’

(24) a. [F Isik [F bardaklari [F DOLABA] koydu]]
   glass-Pl-Acc cupboard-Dat put-Past
   ‘Isik put the glasses to the cupboard.’

   b. [F Isik [F dolaba [F BARDAKLARI] koydu]]
   ‘Isik put the glasses to the cupboard.’

Although the native speakers of Turkish who have been asked to judge the pairs given in (22)-0 interpret them as near equals, they show a tendency in using the forms in the (a) sentences above, which have DO>IO order. Even though this might not be seen as concrete evidence, considering their ‘tendency’ and the general assumptions in the literature mentioned above, I think that the (b) sentences in these examples can be interpreted as derived as derived by the movement of the IO in front of the DO. If this is true, then the ‘tendency’ of the native speakers mentioned can be attributed to the fact that they do not meet the (c) condition for default focus given in (11). On the other hand, the ‘near equal’ readings of the pairs in (22)-0 deserve an explanation. I think that this can be attributed to the fact that they follow the other conditions ((a) and (b)) to be the default focus. This implies that among the conditions for default focus there may be a ranking. So, obeying the (a) and (b) conditions might license the default focus status of the direct objects in the (b) sentences of (22)-0, even though they do not meet the (c) condition. However, it is clear that we need more detailed studies on the relative order of the arguments of ditransitive verbs in Turkish, as well as on their relation to focus projection and the argument structure in general.
4. Conclusion

This study aims to explore the general properties of sentence-focus structures in Turkish by relating the NSR and the argument structure. It is proposed that the two are equally related to the realization of sentence-focus in Turkish and thus can be combined in a single approach. In this regard, drawing on Turkish data, this study suggests that only default focus can give rise to sentence-focus construal and there are definitive conditions for sentence items to be the default focus. The conditions needed for an item to be a default focus are found to be applicable to transitive, intransitive, and ditransitive structures in Turkish. It is also concluded that the modularized NSR applies to Turkish, as supported by the data explored, which also reveals that a refinement is needed with respect to different functions of the S-NSR and the C-NSR. It is shown that only those categories that receive NS by the application of the S-NSR can project their focus features up to the sentence level in Turkish, while others that are assigned the NS by the C-NSR has to be construed as narrow-focus.

References


