

RELATIVE CLAUSES II

by Seda Sürel

INTRODUCTION

Case-marked relative clauses in Turkish are formed by adding case suffixes to nominalized relative clauses. These structures allow the relative clause to function as a fully inflected noun phrase while modifying a head noun.

1. Function

Case-marked relative clauses specify a noun by embedding a nominalized clause that carries grammatical case.

The case marking reflects the syntactic role of the entire relative clause within the main sentence.

2. Forms

Case-marked relative clauses are built on –DIK nominalization and include:

- possessive suffixes marking the subject of the relative clause,
- case suffixes marking the syntactic role of the whole structure.

The case suffix attaches to the end of the nominalized clause.

3. Morphology

The verb stem is nominalized with –DIK, followed by possessive suffixes and then case suffixes.

Nominalizer shape:

- –DIK → dık / dik / duk / dük

Order of suffixes:

Verb stem → –DIK → possessive suffix → case suffix

Consonant softening (k → ğ) applies when vowel-initial possessive or case suffixes follow.

4. Syntax

The case-marked relative clause precedes the noun it modifies.

The entire case-marked structure functions as an adjective modifying the head noun, while the case ending reflects the role of the entire noun phrase within the main sentence.

The case suffix marks the syntactic role of the clause as a whole, not of the verb stem.

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5. Usage

- –(y)An is used when the modified noun corresponds to the subject of the action.
- –DIK is used when the modified noun corresponds to the object of the action.

The choice of participle is determined by grammatical role, not by tense.

Examples

- Gelen adam kapıyı açtı.
- (The man who came opened the door.)
- Konuşan kadın öğretmen.
- (The woman who is speaking is the teacher.)
- Okuduğum kitap çok ilginç.
- (The book that I read is very interesting.)
- Gördüğün filmi hatırlıyor musun?
- (Do you remember the movie that you saw?)
- Yaptığımız çalışma uzun sürdü.
- (The work that we did took a long time.)
- Aradığın kişi burada değil.
- (The person that you are looking for is not here.)

Notes

- Relative clauses precede the noun they modify.
- –(y)An forms subject relative clauses.
- –DIK forms object relative clauses and requires possessive suffixes.
- No finite verb or relative pronoun appears in the relative clause.