

Second Edition

Routledge Comprehensive Grammars

Turkish

A Comprehensive Grammar

Aslı Göksel and Celia Kerslake



Turkish

Turkish: A Comprehensive Grammar has been extensively revised in this second edition to provide a complete reference guide to modern Turkish grammar, presenting an accessible description of the language with a thorough description of the sound system, intonation patterns, word structure and sentence structure of Turkish.

The book presents a stimulating analysis of the complexities of the language through detailed descriptions and illustrative examples. Relevant parts of the examples are highlighted for better understanding and are accompanied by grammatical glosses that will facilitate the parsing of the constructions. An extensive system of cross-referencing makes it easy for the reader to see the connection between topics.

The book is designed as a source for intermediate and advanced learners and users of Turkish and for students of linguistics. It can be used as a reference book and supplementary material in colleges, universities, and continuing education classes, both in Turkish courses and specialized linguistics classes.

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Aslı Göksel and Celia Kerslake

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Introduction to the second edition

In the twenty years since the publication of *Turkish, A Comprehensive Grammar* there have been many occasions where we have had to reevaluate our book. We have been fortunate enough to see it used by researchers, colleagues, students and a broader group of readers. Their suggestions, together with our own observations, lead to major revisions, reformulated descriptions and updated examples.

As we were embarking on the new edition, we were asked by some colleagues whether Turkish had changed during the last twenty years. This is a difficult question to answer since linguistic changes over short periods of time are not easy to pinpoint, but it certainly has become easier to find information thanks to the arrival of search engines. While in the first edition we mostly had to rely on our own insights and notes drawn from literary sources, we now have at our disposal online sources to check usages. Some of the changes we made are a result of having this access. One change concerns the words, which, in the first edition, we considered dated. Most of them are still in use today and we decided to remove the symbol we previously used to indicate that a form was decreasing in usage. We have also removed from this edition the symbol that referred to informal usage. Now we merely mention whether a form is formal or colloquial.

We have made major changes to Chapter 4 (Word stress and phrasal stress), Chapter 10 (Compounds), Chapter 11 (Clitics), Chapter 12 (Sentence structure), and Chapter 23 (Word order). In Chapter 4 we added new sections on phrasal stress and revised the section on unstressable suffixes, moving the main part to Chapter 11. Chapter 10 has been expanded to contain types of compound previously not included. We have expanded Chapters 12 and 23 to include additional examples of linking and existential sentences, thus shifting the focus from verbal sentences to achieve a more balanced coverage. We have added new sections to Chapter 15 (Adjectival constructions), 18 (Pronouns and pronominal constructions), Chapter 19 (Questions), Chapter 20 (Negation), Chapter 24 (Noun clauses), and Chapter 25 (Relative clauses). The revision of many subsections includes new examples, expanded descriptions and coverage of novel forms.

A large body of work on Turkish linguistics has been produced after the publication of the first edition. As in the first edition, the format of the publication does

not allow references to the work of others in the text. In the revised bibliography, we confine ourselves to those that provide insights about the description of a particular item.

We became aware of various aspects of Turkish as they were presented in our book during discussions in linguistics conferences or in private conversations with colleagues and students. Their comments and questions are reflected in the revisions. We are grateful to Christian Bassac, Sinan Bayraktaroğlu, Monik Charette, Geoffrey Haig, Atakan İnce, Meltem Kelepir, Hakan Keser, Nihan Ketrez and Anthony E.R. Taylor for their contribution, whether they were aware of it or not. During the preparation of the first edition, we drew heavily on the expertise or grammaticality judgements of the following colleagues, students and friends: Didar Akar, Dimitris Antoniou, Ceyda Arslan, Öznur Ayman, Ercan Balcı, Cem Çakır, Georgia Catsimali, Monik Charette, Ruth Christie, Ann Denwood, Dilek Elçin, Gülen Ergin, Eser Erguvanlı-Taylan, Kate Fleet, Jorge Hankamer, Katerina Hardiman, Onat Işık, Atakan İnce, Meltem Kelepir, Elisabeth Kendall, Zeynep Kulelioğlu, Wilfried Meyer-Viol, Güneş Müftüoğlu, Mine Nakipoğlu, Mehmet Ölmez, A. Sumru Özsoy, Müfide Pekin, Andras Riedlmayer and Şükriye Ruhi. We are indebted to all these people for sparing the time to help us. We do not claim to have represented their ideas correctly and needless to say, any remaining errors are ours. We would also like to thank our editors at Routledge, Iola Ashby and Andrea Hartill for their efforts in providing us with an editable copy of the first edition and for their patience, and to our anonymous copy-editor for their comments and suggestions.

In this introduction I use the word ‘we’ with a heavy heart as my dear friend and co-author Celia Kerslake died on February 2023, more than a year before I submitted the manuscript. Prior to her death, Celia and I had gone over each chapter several times. I was left with many emails and notes to sift through, to organize and to implement. I hope I have done Celia’s well-known diligence, high standards and scholarship justice. I shall remember her with love and gratitude.

Aslı Göksel
May 2024

Introduction (first edition)

Turkish and its speakers

Turkish belongs to the Turkic family of languages, which have been spoken for many centuries across a vast territory from the Balkans to China. Within this family, which includes such languages as Uighur, Uzbek, Tatar and Kazakh, Turkish forms part of the southwestern or Oghuz branch. Its closest relatives are Gagauz (spoken by less than 200,000 people of Orthodox Christian religion, mostly in southern Moldova), Azerbaijani (spoken by up to 20 million people in Iran and Azerbaijan) and Turkmen (spoken by some 3 million people in Turkmenistan and by about 400,000 in Iraq).

Turkish itself is spoken predominantly in the Republic of Turkey, of which it is the official language. No statistics are available as to how many of Turkey's population of 70 million have Turkish as their first language. Most of the ethnic minorities have undergone considerable (in some cases, total) linguistic assimilation. In the largest ethnic minority, that of the Kurds (which is variously estimated to make up between 8 per cent and 20 per cent of the country's population), a large number of people are bilingual. A reasonable estimate would probably be that Turkish is now the first language of 55–60 million of Turkey's citizens, with another few million people speaking it with equal fluency to their native language.

Turkish speakers outside Turkey fall into two groups. The first consists of communities located in various lands that were formerly, for several centuries, part of the Ottoman Empire. There are populations of this kind in Bulgaria (760,000), Greece (115,000), Macedonia (80,000) and Romania (23,000). Cyprus, also a former Ottoman territory, has seen its Turkish-speaking population considerably enlarged by migration from Turkey since 1974. There may be as many as 150,000–200,000 Turkish speakers living in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus at the time of writing.

The second group of Turkish speakers outside Turkey comprises those who, since the 1960s, have taken up residence in various western European countries, Australia and North America. The number in western Europe is nearly 4 million, of whom half live in Germany. The Australian Turkish community numbers some

40,000, and the number of Turkish speakers in North America is 50,000–60,000. Although in all these migrant communities there is a tendency for the use of Turkish to decline with each succeeding generation, it can probably be stated with reasonable certainty that Turkish is spoken as a first language or with native fluency by about 65 million people worldwide.

Break with the Ottoman past

The Turkish language underwent two kinds of radical change as part of the revolutionary reform programme launched by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) after the establishment of the Republic in 1923. The first was a sudden and comprehensive change in the medium in which it was written, with the introduction of a specially adapted form of the Latin alphabet in 1928, accompanied by a total prohibition on any further use of the Arabic script for teaching or publication in Turkish. The second affected the substance of the language itself, particularly its lexicon, and comprised a systematic campaign, launched by the official Turkish Language Foundation in 1932, to ‘liberate’ Turkish from its ‘subjugation’ to other languages, i.e. to Arabic and Persian. In order to give some indication of the significance of this change it will be necessary to say something about the Ottoman form of Turkish, the precursor of the modern language.

As a linguistic term, ‘Ottoman’ denotes the form of Turkic which became the official and literary language of the Ottoman Empire (1300–1922). This was, essentially, the variety of Oghuz Turkic which developed in Anatolia after that region was settled by Oghuz Turks in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. It was written in the Arabic script, the form of writing adopted not only by the Oghuz but by all the Turkic-speaking peoples who, from about the tenth century onwards, had accepted the Islamic faith. The primacy accorded in Islam to the Arabic language itself, the language of the Qur’an, had a profound impact on the intellectual life of Ottoman society. The language of scholarship and of Islamic law, and the medium of instruction in the only schools available to the Muslim population before the nineteenth century, the *medreses*, was Arabic. In literature, on the other hand, the influence that was more directly felt was that of Persian, since it was the aesthetics of Persian poetry and ornate prose that provided inspiration for the Ottoman literati. A truly cultured Ottoman was expected to have a fluent command of ‘the three languages’, and many Turkish-speaking Ottomans did indeed write treatises in Arabic and/or poetry in Persian.

As far as Ottoman itself was concerned, the degree to which written texts reflected the spoken idiom varied greatly according to the level of education of the writer and the purpose and intended readership of the document. In any kind of sophisticated writing the Turkish structural base became all but submerged, surfacing mainly in the inflectional morphology and in other non-lexical items such as pronouns, determiners, and auxiliary verbs. Arabic and Persian borrowings were not confined to the lexicon, but included grammatical elements also. Arabic words were often used in their distinctive plural forms, and adjectives were made to agree

with them in terms of gender, as they would in Arabic itself. A host of Arabic prepositional phrases, completely alien to Turkish syntax, were imported more or less as lexical units. A number of Persian constructions became particularly prevalent. One was the ubiquitous *izafet*, by which the head of a noun phrase was linked to the modifying noun or adjective that *followed* it (as in *asakir-i İslam* ‘armies of Islam’ or *memalik-i Osmaniye* ‘Ottoman dominions’). Another was the compound adjective, used mainly for ornamental or rhetorical reasons, and often designed to rhyme with its head noun (as in *padişah-ı alem-penah*, ‘world-sheltering monarch’ or *vezir-i Asaf-tebdir* ‘vizier wise as Asaf’). It should be noted that the majority of these imported elements were totally absent from the language of the unschooled Turkish-speaking masses. On the other hand, some common words of Arabic or Persian origin, such as *perde* ‘curtain’, *kitap* ‘book’, *namaz* ‘ritual prayer’, *cami* ‘mosque’, had become fully integrated into the general lexicon. The only significant foreign *grammatical* influence to be seen in the popular language was the Indo-European type of subordinate clause (introduced by a subordinating conjunction and having a finite verb. (See the clauses with *ki* discussed in Chapters 24–6 of this book.)

The term ‘Ottoman’ was not applied to the language of the Ottoman state until the mid-nineteenth century, when, as part of the reform movement known as the Tanzimat, attempts were made by the government to foster a sense of Ottoman identity that might save the ailing empire. Before then, when it was necessary to distinguish Turkish from any other language, it had been called precisely that (*Türki* or *Türkçe*), however impregnated it might have been with Arabic and Persian elements. It was in the Tanzimat period that Turkish (under the politicized name ‘Ottoman’) first began to be taught in schools, the new state schools designed to train soldiers, bureaucrats and technical experts for the service of a modernized state. There was now a clear need for the language to be defined and streamlined, through the production of grammars and dictionaries, in order to maximize its effectiveness as a means of public communication. A newly emerging class of Turkish intellectuals, who had access to Western writings and were full of new ideas that they wanted to convey to a wide public, shared the state’s interest in regularizing and simplifying the language, although their standpoint – liberal and patriotic – was largely opposed to the government. The new genres of writing in which they were involved, principally journalism, drama and the novel, all played their part in the evolution of a modern form of Ottoman, shorn of much of its rhetorical opacity, and with a regularized, transparent sentence structure much closer to that of modern Turkish.

The closing decades of the life of the Ottoman Empire witnessed the emergence of a new sense of ethnic identity among the Turkish educated elite, which had hitherto defined itself only as Ottoman and Muslim. The discoveries of European Turcologists drew attention to the long-forgotten linguistic and cultural links existing between the Turks of the Ottoman Empire and other peoples spread out far across Asia. The first scholarly dictionary of Ottoman Turkish to be written by a Turk, the *Lehçe-i Osmani* (Ottoman Dialect) of Ahmet Vefik (1877), clearly

identified Ottoman as just one branch of a much wider, 'Turkish' language.¹ This revolutionary idea was at the heart of an incipient Turkish national consciousness that gathered strength as the empire increasingly fell victim to internal disintegration and the predations of the European powers.

After the constitutional revolution of 1908 the politically dominant Committee of Union and Progress gave all but overt encouragement to the formation of a number of societies and publications devoted to the promotion of this new sense of Turkish nationhood, which was incompatible with the official ideology of Ottomanism. As the Ottoman state teetered on the brink of final collapse, the Turkish language became for many intellectuals and writers the key to unlocking the spirit of unity and common purpose that alone, they believed, would enable the nation (in some as yet unknown form) to survive.

This message was first clearly enunciated in 1911 in the journal *Genç Kalemler* (Young Pens), which called on young writers to put themselves in the service of the nation by creating a 'national literature' in a 'new language'. The rules of this 'new language' (*yeni lisan*) were defined quite precisely: no Arabic and Persian grammatical constructions were to be used, except in lexicalized phrases for which there was no available alternative; Arabic and Persian plural forms were to be avoided; Arabic and Persian words that were not current in the spoken language, and for which a Turkish equivalent was in common use, should similarly be rejected (e.g. for 'water' Arabic *ma* and Persian *ab* should both be abjured in favour of Turkish *su*). Already at this period there were extremists who wanted to see *all* Arabic and Persian loanwords, even those long integrated into the popular language, replaced by Turkish synonyms, if necessary, retrieved from old texts or imported from eastern 'dialects.' But at this stage the moderate view prevailed, and the 'new language' campaign was remarkably successful in its aims. By the period of the First World War the use of a natural, unadorned Turkish, close to the language of speech, had become the unquestioned stylistic imperative of literary writing. However, bureaucratic, legal and scholarly discourse remained more resistant to change, as evidenced even in the diction of Atatürk's famous six-day speech of 1927, the *Nutuk*.

The Kemalist language reform (*dil devrimi*) begun in the 1930s differed from all previous efforts in two important ways.² First, despite the nominally autonomous status of the Turkish Language Foundation (Türk Dil Kurumu, TDK), this was an openly state-sponsored campaign, funded by annual grants from the state budget and having at its disposal all the implementational apparatus of the bureaucracy, the education system and the state radio monopoly. Second, the aims and scope of this project were far more radical and ambitious than anything that had gone before. There was now an overt commitment to complete purification of the language, and any word that was deemed worthy of acceptance was designated

1 The Turkic/Turkish distinction is a recent terminological innovation of western origin.

2 For a recent study in English of the language reform movement see Lewis (1999).

öztürkçe ‘pure Turkish’. This new lexicon included, in addition to native words already in general use, the following new categories: (1) words used in Anatolian dialects but not part of the current standard language of the urban elite; (2) obsolete Turkish words discovered by searching through relatively unpretentious texts from the early and middle Ottoman periods; (3) neologisms derived from Turkish roots and suffixes; (4) other more dubious coinages, often similar in form to European words, which were justified by pseudo-etymologies. It should be noted that there was very little antagonism to the quite conspicuous European borrowings (such as *otobüs*, *gazete*, *elektrik*, *demokrasi*) which had entered the language as part of the general process of modernization from the late eighteenth century onwards, predominantly from French.

The remarkable fact about the project of socio-linguistic engineering comprising the language reform is the enthusiasm with which it was embraced by a large majority of the Turkish educated class. This applies not only to first-generation Kemalists but also to their children, some of whom, in the 1960s and 1970s, were inspired as much by socialism as by nationalism. In the middle decades of the twentieth century the ‘language question’ was a subject of fierce controversy, with the Kemalists and leftists equally committed to the purist ideal, regarding it as representing all that was modern, secular and progressive, while conservatives fought a rearguard action in defence of the nation’s cultural heritage, and the moral, emotional and aesthetic values attached to many of the words that had been consigned to disuse. Since the 1980s the heat has gone out of this debate, but this is due as much as anything to the fact that in large measure the aims of the reformers have been achieved, and that, for better or for worse, the lexicon of Turkish in the early twenty-first century is radically different from that of the early twentieth century.

Previous grammars of Turkish

The first comprehensive modern treatment of Turkish grammar was Jean Deny’s monumental *Grammaire de la langue turque, dialecte osmanli* (Paris, 1921). This was a significant first step towards the creation of a terminology that would accurately reflect the features of the language without trying to assimilate them into Indo-European preconceptions. While Deny’s main focus was on the standard spoken and written language of Istanbul at the time of writing (pre-1914), his work also encompasses current popular and dialectal forms and older Ottoman usages. A Turkish translation by Ali Ulvi Elöve, with useful additional notes, was published twenty years later by the Turkish Ministry of Education (*Türk Dili Grameri* (*Osmanlı Lehçesi*), 1941).

Within Turkey itself, the change of alphabet and the language reform movement generated both a surge of interest in the structure of the language and a great pedagogical need for a new conceptualization and a new terminology. Tahsin Banguoğlu’s *Ana Hatlariyle Türk Grameri* (Outlines of Turkish Grammar) (1940), was produced in response to a ministerial request for a work that might serve as a basis for school textbooks. Modern in its approach, and drawing on contemporary

French linguistics, Banguoğlu's book identified itself as a descriptive, not a historical grammar, and was rich in examples reflecting the spoken language. It was reprinted in 1974 with updated terminology, under the title *Türkçenin Grameri* (The Grammar of Turkish), and is still highly regarded. Ahmet Cevat Emre's *Türk Dilbilgisi* (Turkish Grammar) (1945) was the earliest comprehensive grammar to be published by the Turkish Language Foundation (TDK). It was less systematic than Banguoğlu's work, and was not reprinted, but it remains of considerable historical interest.

Muharrem Ergin's *Türk Dil Bilgisi* (Turkish Grammar) (1952), a historical grammar of Oghuz Turkic, is a very different kind of work and was written from a standpoint opposed to the radicalism of the TDK. It is highly traditional in its approach and concentrates almost entirely on phonological and morphological phenomena.

The next milestone in the description of Turkish was the grammar published in Russian by the Soviet Turcologist A. N. Kononov in 1956. This work, unfortunately not linguistically accessible to the present authors, is recognized as having provided a highly valuable and original synthesis of research on Turkish down to that date.³ Four years later appeared the *Osmanisch-Türkische Grammatik* of H. J. Kissling (Wiesbaden, 1960). Despite its title (which was intended to emphasize the essential continuity between Ottoman and modern Turkish), this book was designed as a practical reference tool for German-speaking learners of Turkish.

The first Turkish grammar to be written from a theoretical-linguistic standpoint was Lloyd B. Swift's *A Reference Grammar of Modern Turkish* (Bloomington, Ind., 1963). This was a pioneering attempt to describe the grammatical phenomena of Turkish in structural terms, i.e. as a complete system, and it marked an important new beginning in conceptual terms. At about the same time, two further grammars of a broadly pedagogical nature appeared in Turkey. Haydar Ediskun's *Yeni Türk Dilbilgisi* (New Turkish Grammar) (1963), reissued as *Türk Dilbilgisi* in 1985 and regularly reprinted down to today, was designed as a university textbook for non-specialist students. It includes an introductory section on language in general, and on the Turkish language reform movement in particular. Tahir Nejat Gencan's clearly arranged and readable *Dilbilgisi* (Grammar), published by the TDK in 1964 and reprinted many times since, had the avowed objective of deriving the rules of Turkish from a wide-ranging assemblage of examples from admired writers (old and new), and from time-honoured usages such as proverbs.

The two grammars that are best known to English-speaking learners of, and researchers on, Turkish are those of Lewis (1967) and Underhill (1976). Geoffrey Lewis's philologically based *Turkish Grammar* (2nd edition 2000) is insightful and highly readable. The author uses examples drawn from mid-twentieth-century Turkish literary and journalistic texts, and devotes particular attention to the structures that are most alien to an English-speaking learner of Turkish. Robert

3 See Hazai (1978), 77; Johanson (1990), 152

Underhill's *Turkish Grammar* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976) is arranged as a course-book. This means that pedagogical concerns determine the way in which the material is organized, and some space is allocated to vocabulary, exercises and matters of usage. Nevertheless, this work by a linguist from the generative tradition brought increased clarity to a number of topics and continues to be much in demand both as a teaching tool (particularly in the USA) and as a resource for linguists.

The influence of generative linguistics had already been seen in the concise survey of Turkish grammar published by Yüksel Göknel in 1974 under the title *Modern Türkçe Dilbilgisi* (Modern Turkish Grammar). This includes, as well as a description of Turkish phonology, morphology and syntax, a section in which linguistic theories, predominantly generative, are applied to the structures discussed. A more recent comprehensive grammar in Turkish, Mehmet Hengirmen's *Türkçe Dilbilgisi* (Turkish Grammar) (1995), which describes itself as a textbook for students and teachers, is also inspired by this approach. In addition to the sections on Turkish grammar, it has a chapter on the application of generative theories of syntax to Turkish, as well as a chapter on the Turkic languages.

Jaklin Kornfilt's volume *Turkish* (London, 1997), is the most recent comprehensive grammar to appear in English. It forms part of Routledge's Descriptive Grammars series, addressed mainly to linguists who seek data on specific points across languages. The structure of the book is determined by a research questionnaire that has been applied uniformly to all the languages covered in the series. Kornfilt's analyses are well supported by examples, some illustrating little discussed or hitherto unnoticed aspects of Turkish.

The last few years have also seen the appearance of pedagogical presentations of Turkish grammar in both French and German. Bernard Golstein's *Grammaire du Turc: ouvrage pratique à l'usage des francophones* (1997; second edition 1999) and Brigitte Moser-Weithmann's *Türkische Grammatik* (2001) are addressed respectively to French-speaking and German-speaking learners of Turkish. Despite their limitations of scope and analysis, the French-Turkish and German-Turkish comparative dimensions of these works furnish some interesting insights.

Scientific linguistic research on the structure and use of contemporary Turkish was a rare phenomenon before 1970.⁴ The situation has, however, changed radically in the last three decades, as modern linguistic methodologies have increasingly made their impact. Already by the beginning of the 1980s there was sufficient research activity, both in and outside Turkey, for a series of biennial international conferences on Turkish linguistics to be launched, and the twelfth of these was about to take place as this book went to press. Attempting a scholarly description of Turkish grammar is no longer an isolated struggle. On the contrary, it requires an engagement with the collective achievement of an international body of scholars in a field that is increasingly well connected to the linguistic mainstream.

4 See Underhill (1986)

Aims and organizations of this grammar

What we have aimed to do in this book is to provide a description of the structure of contemporary standard Turkish that is both systematic and comprehensive. We have divided the book into three main parts, dealing respectively with phonology (the sound system), morphology (the structure of words) and syntax (the structure of sentences). We have paid particular attention to the distinction between morphology and syntax, in order to bring out as clearly as possible the systems in place at each level.

The chapters in Part 2 are concerned exclusively with the forms that words can take. In Turkish, because of its highly agglutinative structure, the description of word structure is largely a matter of identifying the different categories of suffixes, and the rules determining what kinds of stem they may attach to and in what order. All discussion of how words combine into phrases, clauses and sentences is confined to Part 3. This is also where semantic issues, i.e. the effects of structure on meaning, are discussed.

There is a hierarchy among the structures discussed in Part 3. For example, adjectival structures (Chapter 15) usually form part of noun phrases (Chapter 14). Noun phrases, for their part, can occur as complements within the verb phrase (Chapter 13), and/or combine with verb phrases to form clauses or sentences (Chapter 12). Furthermore, there is a parallelism between the phrasal structures described in Chapters 14–16 (having respectively a nominal, adjectival and adverbial function) and the clausal structures described in Chapters 24–6 (which follow the same sequence). The ample use that we have made of cross-references throughout the text serves in part to draw attention to the systematic links between different levels of the language. It also makes it possible to draw the reader's attention from one use of a particular form (e.g. a suffix or clitic) to others described in another part of the book, and in so doing to help readers both to connect and to distinguish between different functions of the one form.

The book is intended to be useful to a wide range of people interested in Turkish, first and foremost university students and other advanced learners of the language, but also teachers and translators of Turkish, and academic linguists. Our methodology has been informed by questions of concern to general linguistic scholarship, but we have taken care to make all our explanations accessible to those without a formal linguistic training. We have strictly avoided any involvement with theoretical issues, and have kept our terminology as simple and neutral as possible. Every point has been clearly illustrated with examples. All the examples are translated, and selective use has also been made of linguistic glosses, which indicate the grammatical functions of individual suffixes. It should be noted that in the examples which are thus glossed, the segmentation is morphological, not phonological, i.e. the hyphens show the boundaries between roots and suffixes, and between the suffixes in a sequence; they do not mark syllable boundaries (as required by the conventions of Turkish orthography). A glossary of grammatical terms has been provided at the end of the book, and terms that can be found in the glossary are shown in bold on their first occurrence in a chapter.

Limitations of space make any claim to totally comprehensive coverage unrealistic, and we have had to exercise a degree of selectivity with regard to forms or usages that have marginal currency. Arabic and Persian inflectional forms are no longer a productive part of the Turkish language, and we have therefore excluded them entirely.

It is very important to note that this is a descriptive, not in any sense a prescriptive, grammar. In other words, we have tried to record how the language is actually used at the present time, without offering any judgements as to what is 'right' or 'wrong'. We have sought to reflect *variety* of usage as well as regularity, and in this connection, we have had to indicate in some places that a particular construction is used only by some speakers and not favoured by others. Another kind of variation is that relating to register, i.e. to the formality or otherwise of the speech situation or text type. In our discussion of particular forms and constructions we have been careful to mention if there is any stylistic restriction on their use. Unless we have mentioned in the text that a particular form or construction is formal, informal, colloquial, etc., it can be assumed that it is in unrestricted use.

Most suffixes in Turkish are variable in form according to the rules of vowel harmony and consonant alternation, which are explained in Chapters 3 and 6 respectively. In this book any parts of a suffix that are subject to such variation are shown in capital letters, e.g. *-lAr*, *-sIn*, *-DI*. Similarly, many suffixes have an initial vowel or consonant that is dropped in certain contexts. Such deletable elements are shown in brackets when a suffix is cited, e.g. *-(y)mİş*.

The English translations of the example sentences have been made as idiomatic as possible. Where the structure of the idiomatic translation is so different from that of the Turkish as to make it possibly difficult to see how it was arrived at, we have added in brackets a literal translation of all or part of the sentence. Where translations are provided for individual words (e.g. in Parts 1 and 2) it should not be assumed that these represent the only meanings that these words can have.

July 2004

Abbreviations

ABL	ablative case
ACC	accusative case
ADJ	adjective/adjectival/adjectivizer
ADV	adverb/adverbializer
AOR	aorist
Ar.	Arabic
AT	attributive
AUX	auxiliary verb
C	consonant
CAUS	causative
CL	clitic
COM	comitative
COND	conditional
COND.COP	conditional copula
CONJ	conjunction/connective
COP	copula
crs.	corresponds to
CV	converb marker
DAT	dative case
DEF	definite
DER	derivational suffix
DET	determiner
EMPH	emphatic
ENUM	enumerator
EV.COP	evidential copula
EV/PF	evidential/perfective
Fr.	French
FUT	future
GEN	genitive case
GM	generalizing modality
IMP	imperative

IMPF	imperfective
INDEF	indefinite
INF	infinitival
INFL	inflectional suffix
INS	instrumental
INT	interrogative
INTR	intransitive
LIT.	literally
LOC	locative case
N	noun
NC	noun compound
NCM	noun compound marker
N.DER	noun-/nominal-deriving suffix
NEG	negative
NEG.AOR	negative aorist
OBL	oblique case
OBLG	obligative
obs.	obsolete
OPT	optative
PART	participle
PASS	passive
P.COP	past copula
PF	perfective
PL	plural
POSS	possessive
POT	potentiality
PROG	progressive
PRON	pronominalizer
PSB	possibility
REC	reciprocal
REF	reflexive
RP	relative pronoun
SG	singular
s/he	she, he (also 'it', depending on the context)
s.o.	someone
s.t.	something
s.w.	somewhere
SUB	subordinator
TAM	tense/aspect/modality
TR	transitive
V	vowel
V.DER	verb-deriving-suffix
VN	verbal noun marker

- 1 first person
- 2 second person
- 3 third person
- Ø zero

List of conventions observed in this book

italics in the text or in lists are used for Turkish examples

italics in the text are used for highlighting a point in the text

italics in the English translations correspond to the highlighted parts in the Turkish examples

italics in the text are used for English examples cited for explanatory purposes

bold in the Turkish examples highlights the point which is being discussed

bold italics in the Turkish examples emphasize a particular part in a highlighted section

bold in the text (apart from headings) is used to highlight the key concepts under discussion in a chapter, and/or to indicate a term that is explained in the glossary

. (full stop) between two English words in the glosses indicates that the corresponding item in Turkish is either one word, or two (or more) words which do not have a word-for-word translation into English

‘ ’ indicates a letter in the alphabet

‘ ’ in the text indicates a mention of a part of a suffix, or one of the forms of a suffix

‘ ’ indicates English translations of Turkish words, phrases and sentences

/ shows that either form is grammatical

// indicates the phonemic representation of a phonological unit

| indicates the boundary between two intonational phrases

[] indicates the phonetic realization of a phonological unit (i.e. the sound of a particular segment)

[] in the Turkish examples indicates a subordinate clause

[] in the translations indicates either (i) a word or phrase which is required for the grammaticality of the English translation or for stylistic reasons, but which does not occur in the Turkish example or (ii) in cases where a subordinate clause is marked in the Turkish example, a subordinate clause

() in a suffix indicates that the enclosed item is present only under certain morpho-phonological conditions

() in an example indicates that the item enclosed is optional

(...) indicates the omission or dislocation of a particular item

{ } is used selectively to mark the boundaries of a noun phrase

(hyphen) in front of a form indicates that it is a suffix

(hyphen) after a form indicates either that it is a verb (e.g. *gül-* ‘laugh’) or that it cannot occur without a suffix (e.g. *bura-* ‘here’)

(hyphen) in the Turkish glosses indicates suffix boundaries

~ indicates syllable boundaries

‘A.’ and ‘B.’ at the beginning of examples indicate different speakers

capital letters in the suffixes indicate variability

capital letters in the Turkish examples and English translations indicate stressed words or syllables

small capital letters in the Turkish examples indicate secondary stress

’ (acute accent) indicates stress within individual words

: (colon) after a vowel indicates that the vowel is long, and after a consonant it indicates delayed release

In the English translations, we refrained from using the pronouns they/them/their in their third person singular references, as this would have compounded the ambiguity of pronominal reference in Turkish. See e.g. p.176 (45-6).

The Turkish alphabet and writing conventions

The list below provides a rough guide to the pronunciation of the 22 consonants and 8 vowels in Turkish. Only the most prominent aspects of pronunciation are highlighted. The explanations are based on the speech habits of native speakers of British English and should be read in conjunction with Section 1.1.

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>
A, a	pronounced as <i>u</i> in 'cup'
B, b	<i>b</i> as in 'bit'
C, c	<i>j</i> as in 'jam'
Ç, ç	<i>ch</i> as in 'chip'
D, d	<i>d</i> as in 'deep'
E, e	<i>e</i> as in 'ten'
F, f	<i>f</i> as in 'fit' or 'full'
G, g	<i>g</i> as in 'get' or 'gull'
ğ	either lengthens the sound of the vowel preceding it or is silent between two vowels
H, h	<i>h</i> as in 'hope'; pronounced also in word medial and final positions and sometimes silent between two vowels
I, ı	pronounced as <i>a</i> in 'among', 'alone'
İ, i	a shorter form of <i>ee</i> as in 'beet' or <i>i</i> as in 'bit'
J, j	<i>s</i> as in 'leisure'
K, k	<i>k</i> as in 'kept', 'cure' and 'calf'
L, l	<i>l</i> as in 'lamp', 'bull' or 'lurid'
M, m	<i>m</i> as in 'milk'
N, n	<i>n</i> as in 'no'
O, o	<i>o</i> as in 'off'
Ö, ö	resembles the sound which is produced when <i>e</i> as in 'bet' is pronounced with the lips rounded, as in the German sound 'ö'
P, p	<i>p</i> as in 'pin'
R, r	produced with the tip of the tongue touching the alveolar ridge
S, s	<i>s</i> as in 'hiss'

Ş, ş	<i>sh</i> as in ‘ <i>sheep</i> ’
T, t	<i>t</i> as in ‘ <i>time</i> ’
U, u	<i>u</i> as in ‘ <i>cute</i> ’ or <i>put</i> ’
Ü, ü	resembles the sound which is produced when <i>i</i> as in ‘ <i>bit</i> ’ is pronounced with the lips rounded, as in the German sound ‘ <i>ü</i> ’
V, v	<i>v</i> as in ‘ <i>very</i> ’
Y, y	<i>y</i> as in ‘ <i>you</i> ’
Z, z	<i>z</i> as in ‘ <i>zigzag</i> ’

Circumflex

In the writing system, a circumflex ‘^’ has different functions:

- (i) It is sometimes placed over a vowel to indicate that it is long, e.g. *kâtil* [k^ha:t^hil] ‘murderer’, but this is neither regular nor a reliable means of identifying a long vowel (see 1.1.2.2).
- (ii) In some words of Persian or Arabic origin, a circumflex may be placed on a vowel to palatalize the previous consonant, e.g. *kâr* ‘profit’ [c^hağ].
- (iii) In words such as *hâlâ* ‘still’, the circumflex fulfils both functions by showing as long the vowels (in both syllables) and palatalizing ‘l’.

In view of the functional ambiguity of the circumflex, and the fact that its use is not consistent in publications, it has been avoided altogether in this book except in the cases of *hâlâ* ‘still’, *kâr* ‘profit’, *kâh ... kâh* ‘now... now’, where its omission could lead to ambiguity.

Apostrophe

The apostrophe is used for separating a proper noun from its inflectional suffixes (Chapter 8), as in:

<i>Semra</i> ’ <i>dan</i>	‘from <i>Semra</i> ’
<i>Hürriyet</i> ’ <i>te</i>	‘in <i>Hürriyet</i> ’ (a newspaper)

When the plural suffix *-lar* or a derivational suffix (Chapter 7) is attached to a proper name, no apostrophe is used:

<i>Türkler</i>	‘the Turks’
<i>Ankaralılar</i>	‘the people of Ankara’
<i>İngilizce</i>	‘English’ (the language)
<i>Atatürkçülük</i>	‘Kemalism’

If the proper name is a *-(s)I* compound (10.2) the apostrophe before an inflectional suffix is placed after *-(s)I* or *-larI*:

<i>Van Gölü'nden</i>	'from Lake Van'
<i>Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde</i>	'in the United States of America'

(Note that the 'n' of the suffixes *-(s)I(n)* and *-lArI(n)* is placed after the apostrophe.)

An apostrophe is not used when adding suffixes of any sort to the names of political institutions (other than states) and commercial establishments:

<i>Milli Eğitim Bakanlığına</i>	'to the Ministry of National Education'
<i>Ticaret Odalarının</i>	'of the Chamber of Commerce'
<i>Sheraton Otelinde</i>	'in the Sheraton Hotel'

Proper names are spelt as in their bare form, even in cases where the addition of a suffix changes the pronunciation (2.1):

<i>Ahmet'in</i>	[axmedín]	'Ahmet's'
<i>Tarık'ın</i>	[tʰa:rí:n]	'Tarık's'

Syllabification and dividing a word at the end of a line

All syllables contain one vowel in Turkish. A vowel cannot be the first item in a syllable unless it is at the beginning of a word, that is, it always belongs to the same syllable as a preceding consonant if there is one:

<i>a~ta~ma~dım</i>	'I could not throw'
<i>at~tım</i>	'I threw'
<i>park~tan</i>	'from the park'

The silent consonant 'ğ' conforms to the conditions on consonants:

<i>ba~ğ~ı~ra~ma~ya~ca~ğ~ım</i>	'I will not be able to shout'
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At the end of a line, a word can be divided at any syllable boundary, *irre- spective* of whether the division breaks up a single semantic unit (such as a stem or a suffix):

<i>park</i>	'park'	<i>par~ka</i>	'to the park'
<i>git-</i>	'go'	<i>gi~di~le~me~ye~ce~ğ~i~ne</i>	'instead of [one] not being able to go [there]'

(Note that in the second example the verb root 'git', the passive suffix 'il' and the converbial suffix 'yeceğ' are broken up.)



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Part 1

Phonology: The sound system



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Phonological units

Words are made up of sequences of distinct **phonological units** called **consonants** and **vowels**. Some consonants and vowels sound the same wherever they occur within a word and have a single pronunciation. Others have more than one way of being pronounced, depending on the surrounding sounds. The various pronunciations of a phonological unit conditioned by its position are called its **allophones**.

In 1.1 we discuss the consonants and vowels of Turkish and in 1.2 their distribution within a word.

In this chapter (and sometimes elsewhere in this book) phonological units are indicated by double slashes (/ /) and their allophones by square brackets ([]). The corresponding Turkish alphabetical symbols are indicated by inverted commas (‘ ’). Consonants pronounced with a delayed release (i.e. doubled consonants) and long vowels are indicated by a following colon (:). Stress is indicated by an acute accent (´).

1.1 Consonants and vowels

1.1.1 Consonants

The consonants in Turkish differ from each other in terms of whether they are **voiced** or **voiceless**, their **point of articulation** and their **manner of articulation**. The voiced/voiceless contrast is the most prevalent one in processes involving phonology and word structure (2.1, 6.1.2).

<i>Voiceless consonants</i>	<i>Voiced consonants</i>
/p/	/b/
/t/	/d/
/k/	/g/
/tʃ/ ('ç')	/dʒ/ ('c')
/f/	/v/
/s/	/z/
/ʃ/ ('ş')	/ʒ/ ('j')
/h/	
	/m/
	/n/
	/l/
	/r/
	/j/ ('y')

/ɣ/ ('ğ') does not correspond to a consonantal sound (1.1.1.1).

1.1.1.1 Consonants and their allophones

The following factors affect the pronunciation of particular consonants in certain environments:

- (i) **palatalization** (producing a consonant with the blade of the tongue against the hard palate) affects the velar consonants /k/, /g/, /t/ and the glottal consonant /h/ in front vowel environments
- (ii) **aspiration** (producing a consonant with a forceful release of air) affects the voiceless plosives /p/, /t/, /k/ and the voiceless affricate /tʃ/
- (iii) **bilabialization** (producing a consonant by bringing the lips together) affects the voiced labio-dental consonant /v/ and to a lesser extent, its voiceless counterpart /f/

The descriptions below regarding the pronunciation of consonants in 'word-final position' apply only to those cases where a word is followed by a pause or uttered in isolation. Otherwise, the pronunciation of a word-final consonant is, in most cases, conditioned by the initial sound in the following word. For example, /p/, which is described below as aspirated at the end of a word or before a vowel, sounds so in word-final position only if it is followed by a pause or a word beginning with a vowel. If it is followed by a word starting with a consonant, it is an unaspirated /p/. In other words, the 'p' of *tıpa* 'stopper', *Tip Ansiklopedisi* 'Encyclopaedia of Medicine' and *tıp* 'medicine' (pronounced in isolation) are all aspirated, whereas the 'p' in *tıpkı* 'just like' or in *Tip Dergisi* 'Journal of Medicine' is unaspirated.

Another point about pronunciation concerns two identical consonants that occur next to each other. Such **doubled consonants** are pronounced with a delayed release, as in *attım* [atʰ:ım] ‘I threw [it]’ (as opposed to *atım* [atʰım] ‘my horse’) and *kaç çocuk* [kʰáʦʰ:odʒukʰ] ‘how many children’ (as opposed to *kaç okul* [kʰáʦʰ:okʰuɫ] ‘how many schools’).

The consonants of Turkish and their allophones are detailed below. Where the phonetic symbol is different from the orthography, the latter is indicated in brackets (e.g. /tʃ/ (‘ç’)).

/p/	[p]	<i>kapla-</i> ‘cover’, <i>şapka</i> ‘hat’, <i>kitapçı</i> ‘bookshop’, <i>iplik</i> ‘thread’
	[pʰ]	<i>parla-</i> ‘shine’, <i>pirinç</i> ‘rice’, <i>pirasa</i> ‘leek’, <i>kapak</i> ‘cover’, <i>ipek</i> ‘silk’, <i>top</i> ‘ball’, <i>ip</i> ‘rope’

[p] is an unaspirated voiceless **bilabial plosive** which occurs before a consonant. [pʰ] is an aspirated voiceless bilabial plosive which occurs before vowels or in word-final position.

/b/	[b]	<i>bak-</i> ‘look’, <i>bebek</i> ‘baby’, ‘doll’, <i>bora</i> ‘gale’, <i>biz</i> ‘we’, <i>öbek</i> ‘group’, <i>abla</i> ‘elder sister’
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[b] is a voiced bilabial plosive. It does not occur in word-final position except in a few loanwords such as *rab* ‘(the) Lord’, *rob* ‘robe’ and *ab* ‘water’.

/t/	[t]	<i>katla-</i> ‘fold’, <i>saatçi</i> ‘clockmaker’, <i>etnik</i> ‘ethnic’, <i>atkı</i> ‘scarf’
	[tʰ]	<i>tara-</i> ‘comb’, <i>türev</i> ‘derivative’, <i>etek</i> ‘skirt’, <i>otuz</i> ‘thirty’, <i>it-</i> ‘push’, <i>inat</i> ‘insistence’

[t] is a voiceless unaspirated **denti-alveolar plosive** which occurs before a consonant. [tʰ] is an aspirated dental plosive which occurs before a vowel or in word-final position.

/d/	[d]	<i>dışla-</i> ‘exclude’, <i>doğru</i> ‘correct’, <i>diz</i> ‘knee’, <i>ada-</i> ‘dedicate’, <i>badem</i> ‘almond’, <i>ödür</i> ‘compromise’, <i>adlı</i> ‘named’, <i>fidye</i> ‘ransom’
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[d] is a voiced denti-alveolar plosive. It does not occur in word-final position except in a few words such as *ud* ‘lute’, *had* ‘limit’ and *ad* ‘name’, most of which are borrowed.

/k/	[k]	<i>okşa-</i> ‘caress’, <i>bakla</i> ‘broad beans’, <i>sıkma</i> ‘squeezed’, <i>parkta</i> ‘in the park’
	[kʰ]	<i>katıl-</i> ‘join’, <i>sıkı</i> ‘tight’, <i>doruk</i> ‘zenith’, <i>sok-</i> ‘push in’, <i>kazak</i> ‘sweater’
	[c]	<i>ikna (et-)</i> ‘convince’, <i>ekle-</i> ‘add’, <i>eksi</i> ‘minus’
	[cʰ]	<i>kemir-</i> ‘gnaw’, <i>kömür</i> ‘coal’, <i>iki</i> ‘two’, <i>sök-</i> ‘dismantle’, <i>bölük</i> ‘squadron’, <i>erk</i> ‘power’

[k] is a voiceless unaspirated **velar** plosive which occurs between a **back vowel** (one of /ɪ/, /a/, /o/ or /u/) and a consonant. Its aspirated counterpart [k^h] occurs before a back vowel or in word-final position following a back vowel. [c] and [c^h] are voiceless **palatal** plosives which occur with **front vowels** (one of /e/, /i/, /ø/ or /ü/). [c] occurs between a front vowel and a consonant, and its aspirated counterpart [c^h] occurs before a front vowel or in word-final position following a front vowel. The palatalization of [c^h] is more pronounced when it follows /i/ or /ü/ and occurs at the end of a word, as in *delik* ‘hole’ or the final ‘k’ in *küçük* ‘small’.

A slightly more palatalized version of [c^h] occurs before back vowels in some loanwords, as in *kağıt* ‘paper’, *katip*, ‘clerk, secretary’, *mahkum* ‘prisoner’, *kufi* ‘Kufic’. The vowels following ‘k’ in these words are alternatively spelt with a circumflex (^), e.g. *kâğıt*, *mahkûm*.

/g/	[g]	<i>gıdıkla-</i> ‘tickle’, <i>gırtlak</i> ‘throat’, <i>gaz</i> ‘gas’, <i>gocuk</i> ‘duffle coat’, <i>gaga</i> ‘beak’
	[ɟ]	<i>gez-</i> ‘stroll’, <i>giy-</i> ‘wear’, <i>göç</i> ‘migration’, <i>Ege</i> ‘Aegean’

[g] is a voiced velar plosive which occurs in syllables with the back vowels /ɪ/, /a/, /o/ and /u/. Its palatal counterpart [ɟ] occurs in syllables with the front vowels /i/, /e/, /ø/ and /ü/. /g/ does not occur in syllable-final or in word-final position except in loanwords such as *program* ‘programme’, *psikolog* ‘psychologist’, *katalog* ‘catalogue’, *lig* ‘league’.

A slightly more palatalized version of the sound [ɟ] can also occur before a back vowel in loanwords, as in *yegane* ‘only’, *gavur* ‘infidel’ (derogatory), *dergah* ‘dervish convent’. The vowels following ‘g’ in these words are alternatively spelt with a circumflex (^), e.g. *yegâne*.

/tʃ/ (‘ç’)	[tʃ]	<i>biçki</i> ‘cutting out’, <i>saçma</i> ‘nonsense’, <i>içmeler</i> ‘spa’
	[tʃ ^h]	<i>çene</i> ‘chin’, <i>çabuk</i> ‘quickly’, <i>çöp</i> ‘rubbish’, <i>uçuk</i> ‘pale’, <i>ölçü</i> ‘measurement’, <i>kılıç</i> ‘sword’, <i>ilgeç</i> ‘postposition’

[tʃ] is a voiceless **post-alveolar affricate** which occurs before a consonant. Its aspirated counterpart [tʃ^h] precedes vowels or occurs in word-final position.

/dʒ/ (‘c’)	[dʒ]	<i>caz</i> ‘jazz’, <i>cebir</i> ‘algebra’, <i>cuma</i> ‘Friday’, <i>cins</i> ‘type’, <i>acı</i> ‘pain’, <i>böcek</i> ‘insect’
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[dʒ] is a voiced post-alveolar affricate. It rarely occurs in word-final position (e.g. *hac* ‘pilgrimage’ and *sac* ‘sheet iron’, mostly for purposes of distinguishing these words from words containing its voiceless counterpart /tʃ/, i.e. *haç* ‘cross’ and *saç* ‘hair’).

/f/	[Φ]	<i>ufuk</i> ‘horizon’, <i>küfür</i> ‘curse’, <i>kof</i> ‘rotten’, <i>örf</i> ‘common usage’, ‘custom’
	[f]	<i>fakat</i> ‘but’, <i>nefes</i> ‘breath’, <i>defter</i> ‘notebook’, <i>lif</i> ‘fibre’

[Φ] is a voiceless bilabial **fricative** which occurs in the pronunciation of some speakers before the rounded vowels /u/, /ü/, /o/ and /ö/ and to a lesser extent in word-final position following a rounded vowel. [f] is a voiceless **labio-dental** fricative which occurs elsewhere.

/v/	[ω]	<i>avun-</i> ‘console (oneself)’, <i>tavuk</i> ‘chicken’, <i>havuç</i> ‘carrot’
	[β]	<i>vur-</i> ‘hit’, <i>vücut</i> ‘body’, <i>ov-</i> ‘massage’, <i>döv-</i> ‘beat’
	[v]	<i>virgül</i> ‘comma’, <i>vatan</i> ‘motherland’, <i>ev</i> ‘house’, <i>tava</i> ‘frying pan’

[ω] is a bilabial **glide** which occurs between two vowels where at least one of the vowels, usually the one following it, is rounded. [β] is a voiced bilabial fricative, which also occurs with rounded vowels but only when it is not intervocalic (i.e. when it is in word-initial or syllable-final position). The difference between [ω] and [β] is very slight and is not audible in the speech of some speakers. [v], the voiced labio-dental fricative, occurs elsewhere.

/s/	[s]	<i>somurt-</i> ‘sulk’, <i>sarı</i> ‘yellow’, <i>su</i> ‘water’, <i>süt</i> ‘milk’, <i>ısı</i> ‘heat’, <i>askı</i> ‘hanger’, <i>pas</i> ‘rust’

[s] is a voiceless denti-alveolar fricative.

/z/	[z]	<i>zorla-</i> ‘force’, <i>zar</i> ‘dice’, ‘membrane’, <i>zehir</i> ‘poison’, <i>otuz</i> ‘thirty’, <i>doz</i> ‘dosage’, <i>uzun</i> ‘long, tall’, <i>azınlık</i> ‘minority’

[z] is a voiced denti-alveolar fricative.

/ʃ/ (‘ş’)	[ʃ]	<i>şiş-</i> ‘swell’, <i>işlek</i> ‘busy’, <i>şarkı</i> ‘song’, <i>meşin</i> ‘leather’, <i>kaş</i> ‘eyebrow’, <i>güneş</i> ‘sun’

[ʃ] is a voiceless post-alveolar fricative.

/ʒ/ (‘j’)	[ʒ]	<i>jüpon</i> ‘underskirt’, <i>jet</i> ‘jet’, <i>jilet</i> ‘razor blade’, <i>garaj</i> ‘garage’, <i>bej</i> ‘beige’, <i>Jülide</i> (a name), <i>ajan</i> ‘agent’, <i>ejderha</i> ‘dragon’

[ʒ] is a voiced post-alveolar fricative. It occurs in words borrowed from Indo-European languages, in particular from Persian and French.

/ɣ/ (‘ğ’)		<i>soğuk</i> ‘cold’, <i>bağır-</i> ‘shout’, <i>eğik</i> ‘bent’, <i>dağ</i> ‘mountain’, <i>gittiğim</i> ‘that I went’

The so-called ‘soft-g’ is pronounced as a velar fricative in some dialects but in standard Turkish, rather than having a consonantal sound, it affects the pronunciation of a word in a way that depends on its position in that word:

- (i) The vocal omission of ‘ğ’ between identical vowels creates vowel sequences that are sometimes pronounced as long vowels within a single syllable and sometimes as vowels belonging to consecutive syllables: *uğur* [u:ɾ]/[uúɾ] ‘good luck’, *sığın-* [sɪ:n]/[siún] ‘take shelter’, *sevdiğim* [sevdí:m]/[sevdiím] ‘that I love’. Between identical front vowels ‘ğ’ may sound like a palatal glide (*düğün* [dújún] ‘wedding’, *eğer* [éjæɾ] ‘if’).
- (ii) Between rounded vowels ‘ğ’ is mostly inaudible but can also be pronounced as a bilabial glide: *soğuk* ([soúk^h] or [sooúk^h] ‘cold’).
- (iii) Between a rounded vowel and an unrounded vowel ‘ğ’ is mostly inaudible but can also be pronounced as a bilabial glide: (*soğan* [soán] or [sooán] ‘onion’).
- (iv) In word-final or syllable-final position, it lengthens a preceding back vowel (*dağdan* [da:dán] ‘from the mountain’, *sığ* [sɪ:] ‘shallow’), but may be pronounced as a palatal glide [j] when following a front vowel (*eğlen-* [ejlæn] ‘have fun’).
- (v) ‘a+ğ+i’ sequences are either pronounced as [aɪ] or like a long ‘a’ (*ağır* [aíɾ] or [a:ɾ] ‘heavy’).
- (vi) ‘ı+ğ+a’ sequences, on the other hand, are only pronounced as [ɪa] (*sığan* [sían] ‘[one] which fits’).
- (vii) When ‘ğ’ occurs between an ‘e’ and an ‘i’ it is either inaudible or pronounced as a palatal glide [j]. Hence the sequences ‘e+ğ+i’ and ‘i+ğ+e’ can be pronounced as [ei] or [ie] respectively, or they can be pronounced as if they have an intervening ‘y’, as in *değil* [dejl] ‘not’ and *diğer* [díjæɾ] ‘other’ (similar in pronunciation to words *written* with a palatal glide, e.g. *meyil* ‘slope’, *diyen* ‘who says’). The sequence ‘e+ğ+i’ may also be pronounced as the long vowel [i:] and sometimes as two ‘i’ vowels belonging to consecutive syllables: *değil* [di:l]/[diíl] ‘not’, *eğil-* [i:l]/[iíl] ‘bend’.

For the pronunciation of ‘ğ’ in forms containing the future/participle suffix *-(y)AcAK*, see 8.2.3.3. For the consonantal behaviour of ‘ğ’ when a suffix follows it, see 6.1.3.

/h/	[ç]	<i>hislen-</i> ‘become emotional’, <i>hemen</i> ‘immediately’, <i>hürriyet</i> ‘freedom’, <i>ihtimal</i> ‘possibility’, <i>Salih</i> (a name)
	[x]	<i>ıhlamur</i> ‘linden’, <i>ahşap</i> ‘wooden’, <i>kahve</i> ‘coffee’, <i>sabah</i> ‘morning’
	[h]	<i>hala</i> ‘paternal aunt’, <i>horla-</i> ‘snore’, <i>ahır</i> ‘barn’

[ç] is a voiceless palatal fricative that occurs with front vowels in the following environments: before a front vowel, between a front vowel and a consonant, and after a front vowel in word-final position. When the vowel is /i/, the palatalization is more pronounced. [x], the voiceless velar fricative, follows a back vowel and precedes a consonant, or follows a back vowel in word-final position. [h], the voiceless glottal fricative, occurs before a back vowel. /h/ may be silent between

two identical vowels, as in *pastahane* [p^hast^ha:né] ‘cake shop’ and *daha* [da:] ‘more’, or between a vowel (usually /a/) and a consonant, causing the preceding vowel to lengthen, as in *kahve* [k^ha:vé] ‘coffee’ and *Ahmet* [a:mét^h].

/m/ [m] *masal* ‘fairytale’, *mine* ‘enamel’, *müzik* ‘music’, *emin* ‘sure’,
kumar ‘gambling’, *kambur* ‘hunchback’, *tarım* ‘agriculture’

[m] is a bilabial **nasal**.

/n/ [n] *nasıl* ‘how’, *nine* ‘grandmother’, *inek* ‘cow’, *ünlü* ‘famous’,
sorun ‘problem’, *on* ‘ten’
[ŋ] *bank* ‘bench’, *banka* ‘bank’, *yangın* ‘fire’, *mangal* ‘brazier’
[ɲ] *renk* ‘colour’, *engin* ‘boundless’, *dingin* ‘calm’, *süngü* ‘bayonet’

[n] is a dental nasal which occurs in all positions except when /n/ is followed by /k/ or /g/. In such cases /n/ is realized as a velar nasal [ŋ] following a back vowel and preceding a velar plosive, and as a palatal nasal [ɲ] following a front vowel and preceding a palatal plosive.

There is no audible difference between ‘n’ and ‘m’ when either of these occurs before a labio-dental fricative (/f/ or /v/). In such cases the vowel preceding ‘n’ or ‘m’ becomes slightly nasalized: *Enver* [ëvæɟ] (a name), *amfi* [ãfi] ‘lecture room’.

/l/ [l] *leylek* ‘stork’, *lira* ‘lira’, *elli* ‘fifty’, *ölüm* ‘death’, *gül* ‘rose’
[ɭ] *oluk* ‘gutter’, *kalın* ‘thick’, *bal* ‘honey’, *pul* ‘stamp’

[l] is a palatalized post-alveolar **lateral** which occurs adjacent to front vowels, and [ɭ] is a velarized dental lateral which occurs adjacent to back vowels. /l/ generally gets assimilated with a preceding /n/ in fast speech, e.g. *kadınlar* ‘women’ may be pronounced [k^hadın:âɟ] *anla-* ‘understand’ as [an:â].

The palatal sound [l] can also occur adjacent to back vowels in loanwords such as *lale* ‘tulip’, *laf* ‘word(s)’, *ulufe* ‘service pay in the Ottoman empire’, *lokum* ‘Turkish delight’, *rol* ‘role’. The vowels ‘a’ and ‘u’ following ‘l’ in these words are sometimes spelt with a circumflex (^), e.g. *lâle*, *ulûfe*.

/r/ [r] *rahat* ‘comfort’, *renk* ‘colour’, *iri* ‘big’, *oruç* ‘fasting’, *karşı*
‘against’, *artık* ‘waste’
[ɾ] *ört* ‘cover’, *kork-* ‘(be) afraid’, *karşı* ‘against’, *artık* ‘leftover’
[ɾ̥] *tür* ‘type’, *ger-* ‘stretch’, *öksir* ‘elixir’, *kar* ‘snow’, *var* ‘there is/are’,
mor ‘violet’

[r] is a voiced alveolar **flap** produced with the tip of the tongue touching the alveolar ridge. It occurs in initial and intervocalic positions. The voiced alveolar **approximant** [ɹ] is used where /r/ is followed by a consonant in the same syllable. The pronunciation of /r/ in words where it is followed by a syllable (i.e. minimally a consonant-vowel sequence, as in *karşı* ‘against’ or *artık* ‘leftover’) varies between

a flap and an approximant. The devoiced alveolar fricative [ɬ] occurs in word-final position.

/ɾ/ is sometimes deleted in colloquial speech, in particular in the imperfective suffix *-Iyor* (8.2.3.3) and in *bir* ‘a’, ‘one’. In the case of *bir*, this usually occurs when it is not stressed (*bir ev* [bi év] ‘a house’), but also sometimes when it is stressed (*bir daha* [bída:] ‘again’, *sadece bir ev* [sá:dedʒe bí ev] ‘only one house’). See 15.6.1. for further examples.

/j/(‘y’) [j] *ye-* ‘eat’, *yoğurt* ‘yogurt’, *yağ* ‘oil’, *ayak* ‘foot’, *oyun* ‘game’, *ayna* ‘mirror’, *kay-* ‘slide’, *huy* ‘disposition’

[j] is a palatal glide. The sequence ‘i + y’ can be realized as a long vowel, as in *iyi* [i:] ‘good’ and *diyeceğim* [di:ɟəém] ‘I will say’.

The **glottal stop** (‘?’) survives mainly in the speech of some elderly speakers and is going out of usage. It is confined to words of Arabic origin and mostly to those in which it is intervocalic (*saat* [saʔátʰ] ‘clock’, ‘watch’, *fil* [fiʔíl] ‘verb’, *teessüf* [tʰeʔes:úʔ] ‘sorrow’, *taarruz* [tʰaʔar:úz] ‘assault’). Note that an intervocalic glottal stop can also be pronounced as a long vowel (1.1.2.2).

1.1.2 Vowels

Turkish has a very symmetrical vocalic system, consisting of the eight vowels /a/, /e/, /u/ (‘ı’), /i/, /o/, /œ/ (‘ö’), /u/, /y/ (‘ü’). Here, the symbols u/, /œ/ and /y/ of the International Phonetic Alphabet will be replaced by their counterparts in the Turkish orthography, /ı/, /ö/ and /ü/ respectively.

The eight vowels differ from each other in terms of the height of the tongue, the **roundedness** of the lips and the **frontness** of the tongue involved in their articulation.

	High		Non-high (mid and low)	
	Rounded	Unrounded	Rounded	Unrounded
Front	ü	ı	ö	e
Back	u	ı	o	a

In addition, Turkish has the long vowels /a:/, /u:/, /i:/ and /e:/ in loanwords of Arabic and Persian origin.

1.1.2.1 Vowels and their allophones

Vowels can occur at the beginning and end of words and between two consonants. In words of native origin, /o/ and /ö/ occur only in the first syllable (except for words which contain the imperfective suffix *-Iyor* (3.4 (vi) and 8.2.3.3).

The back vowels /a/, /o/ and /u/ are palatalized when following or preceding the palatal consonants [ç], [j] and [ɲ], and /i/, /u/ and /ü/ are lowered in word-final position.

/a/	[a]	<i>kara</i> ‘black’, <i>aşı</i> ‘vaccination’, <i>kurak</i> ‘arid’, <i>algı</i> ‘perception’, <i>banka</i> ‘bank’
	[a̠]	<i>laf</i> ‘word(s)’, ‘banter’, <i>lapa</i> ‘mush’, <i>alfabe</i> ‘alphabet’, <i>kağıt</i> ‘paper’

[a] is a low, back and unrounded vowel. Its **fronted** allophone [a̠] occurs before or after the palatal consonants [ç], [j] and [ɲ] in loanwords. An alternative spelling for words in which [a̠] follows one of these consonants is with a circumflex on the vowel (^), e.g. *lâf*, *kâğıt*.

/e/	[e]	<i>sevgi</i> ‘love’, <i>ekim</i> ‘October’, <i>bez</i> ‘cloth’, <i>senin</i> ‘your’
	[ɛ]	<i>ile</i> ‘with’, <i>küfe</i> ‘large basket’, <i>bale</i> ‘ballet’, <i>dene-</i> ‘try’
	[æ]	<i>gel-</i> ‘come’, <i>ver-</i> ‘give’, <i>ben</i> ‘I’, <i>sen</i> ‘you’, <i>gizem</i> ‘mystery’

The non-high, front and unrounded vowel /e/ has three allophones. Going from the highest, that is, mid, to the lowest, these are: the mid, front, closed vowel [e], its lowered counterpart [ɛ], an open-mid, front vowel, and [æ], a low front vowel. [e] sounds like a shorter form of the vowel sound in the English word *late*, [æ] resembles a shorter form of the vowel sound in *bat* and [ɛ] is between the two, with a sound similar to the first vowel in *air* in English. [æ] occurs before /l/, /m/, /n/ and /r/ in instances where the sequences ‘el’, ‘em’ ‘en’ and ‘el’ are not followed by a vowel, as in *gerdi* ‘s/he stretched’, *kent* ‘town’, *pergel* ‘pair of compasses’ and *iner* ‘s/he/it goes down’. [ɛ] occurs in word-final position. [e] occurs in all other places. All three occur in words such as *gezegende* [ʒezɛʒændɛ] ‘on the planet’ and *perende* [perændɛ] ‘somersault’ (see also 2.5). Note that /e/ may be pronounced either as [e] or [æ] in a limited number of words before /l/, /m/ and /n/. Hence speakers may pronounce *el* ‘hand’, *kendi* ‘self’ and *hem* ‘both’ either with [e] or with [æ].

/i/	[i]	<i>erik</i> ‘plum’, <i>iletişim</i> ‘communication’
	[ɪ]	<i>ilgi</i> ‘interest’, <i>deri</i> ‘skin’, <i>kedi</i> ‘cat’

[ɪ] is a higher-than-mid, front, unrounded vowel which occurs in word-final position. Its pronunciation resembles the vowel sound in *bit* in English. [i], which occurs elsewhere, is a front, high, unrounded vowel, a shorter version of the vowel sound in *beat* in English.

/ɹ/ [ɹ] *asıl* ‘real’, *kışla* ‘barracks’, *ılık* ‘lukewarm’, *kırmızı* ‘red’

[ɹ] is an unrounded, high, back vowel.

/o/ [o] **o** ‘he/she/it/that’, *bol* ‘abundant’, *otur-* ‘sit’, *kop-* ‘snap’,
protokol ‘protocol’

[ɔ] *lokum* ‘Turkish delight’, *rol* ‘role’

[o] is a mid, back, rounded vowel. Its palatalized counterpart [ɔ] occurs before or after /ɹ/ in loanwords. A circumflex (^) is sometimes placed on the vowel in these words, e.g. *lôkum*, *rôl*. /o/ occurs only in the initial syllable in words of Turkic origin but it may appear in any syllable in loanwords.

/ö/ [ö] *göl* ‘lake’, *ölçü* ‘measurement’, *dökül-* ‘be spilt’, *sözlük*
‘dictionary’, *kuvöz* ‘incubator’, *şoför* ‘chauffeur’

[ö] is a mid, front, rounded vowel. In loanwords /ö/ can occur in any syllable, but like /o/ it appears only in the first syllable in native words.

/u/ [u] *buluş* ‘finding’, *ufak* ‘small’, *koşul* ‘condition’

[ɯ] *ulema* ‘the learned (ones)’, *blucin* ‘denims’, *lûgat* ‘dictionary’,
kûfi ‘Cufic’

[ʊ] *bu* ‘this’, *kutu* ‘box’, *ordu* ‘army’

[u] is a rounded, high, back vowel which sounds like the vowel sound in the English word *hood*. [ɯ] is its palatalized allophone, which occurs before or after the palatal consonants [ç], [j] and [ɹ] in loanwords. An alternative spelling for some words in which [u] follows one of these consonants is with a circumflex (^) on the vowel, e.g. *lûgat*, *kûfi*. [ʊ] is more lowered than [u] and occurs in word-final position. It is pronounced in a similar way to the vowel in *put* in English.

/ü/ [ü] *üzüntü* ‘sadness’, *püre* ‘mash’, *süprüntü* ‘rubbish’, *ömür* ‘life’

[y] *üzüntü* ‘sadness’, *örgü* ‘knitted’, *sövgü* ‘curse’

[ü] is a rounded, high, front vowel. [y] is more lowered than [ü] and occurs only in word-final position.

1.1.2.2 Long vowels

In addition to the long vowels created by ‘ğ’ above, words borrowed from Persian and Arabic can contain long vowels. Sometimes long vowels are indicated by a circumflex (^) in the orthography. The list below provides a few examples:

/a:/ *matbaa* ‘press’, *kira* ‘rent’, *mavi* ‘blue’, *arif* ‘wise person’

/u:/ *mevzu* ‘topic’, *suret* ‘copy’, *buse* ‘kiss’, *Numan* (a name)

/i:/ *fîil* ‘verb’, *ilan* ‘advertisement’, *sine* ‘bosom’, *Didem* (a name)

/e:/ *teessüf* ‘sorrow’, *temin* ‘acquisition’, *tesir* ‘effect’

For the effect of ‘ğ’ and ‘h’ on preceding vowels, see 1.1.1.1 and for vowel length under other circumstances, see 2.4

1.2 The distribution of consonants and vowels

In Turkish, roots are predominantly monosyllabic, that is, they contain a single vowel. The most common combinations of consonants (C) and vowels (V) in native Turkish roots are VC (*at* ‘horse’, *ol-* ‘be’, *in-* ‘descend’, *iş* ‘work’, *üç* ‘three’) and CVC sequences (*gel-* ‘come’, *bak-* ‘look’, *güz* ‘autumn’, *göl* ‘lake’). There are also CV sequences such as *bu* ‘this’, *şu* ‘that’, *su* ‘water’, *ne* ‘what’, *de-*, ‘say’, but these are fewer in number and those which are nominals usually require an additional consonant (‘n’ or ‘y’) when they combine with suffixes (6.1.3). Other types are VCV sequences such as *ara-* ‘look for’, *ile* ‘with’, *öte* ‘far side’, and VCC and CVCC sequences such as *ört-* ‘cover’, *sert* ‘hard’, *genç* ‘young’. There is a single occurrence of a root which consists only of a single vowel, the word *o* ‘he, she, it, that’. This word requires a consonant when it combines with a suffix (6.2 (ii)).

In most cases, a root which contains more than one syllable in Turkish is a derived word (7.2). For the rules of syllabification in Turkish, see p. xlv.

1.2.1 Consonant clusters

Consonant clusters, that is, sequences of two different consonants, occur word-initially only in loanwords. Some speakers insert one of the vowels /i/ or /ɪ/ in or before the cluster:

	<i>Alternative pronunciation</i>
<i>spor</i> ‘sport’	[isp ^h oɣ, sip ^h oɣ]
<i>stil</i> ‘style’	[ist ^h ıl, sit ^h ıl] ^o
<i>stres</i> ‘stress’	[sitrés]
<i>stüdyo</i> ‘studio’	[süt ^h údjo]
<i>tren</i> ‘train’	[t ^h ıræn]
<i>psikoloji</i> ‘psychology’	[p ^h isk ^h oloɟı]/ [p ^h isik ^h oloɟı]
<i>kral</i> ‘king’	[k ^h ırál]
<i>grev</i> ‘strike’	[gırév]
<i>plan</i> ‘plan’	[p ^h ılán]

Consonant clusters are frequently found in word-final position, as in *ilk* ‘first’, *alt* ‘lower’, *sark-* ‘hang’, *kork-* ‘fear’, *zamk* ‘adhesive’, *renk* ‘colour’, *kart* ‘tough’, *üst* ‘top’, *aşk* ‘love’, *baht* ‘luck’, *teyp* ‘tape recorder’, *genç* ‘young’, *felç* ‘paralysis’, *bronz* ‘bronze’, *şans* ‘luck’, *alarm* ‘alarm’.

Sound changes produced in the word by suffixation

There are a number of contexts where the addition of a suffix causes a change in the quality of the last consonant of a word. Some of these changes are confined to specific words, whereas others occur as part of general phonological processes in the language. Those which occur only in certain words are:

- (i) A voiceless consonant alternating with its voiced counterpart, e.g. *kitap* 'book' but *kitabım* 'my book' (2.1)
- (ii) A single consonant alternating with its doubled counterpart, e.g. *sır* 'secret' but *sırrım* 'my secret' (2.2)
- (iii) A high vowel alternating with zero (i.e. absence of that vowel), e.g. *burun* 'nose' but *burnum* 'my nose' (2.3)
- (iv) A short vowel alternating with a long vowel, e.g. *zaman* 'time' but *zamanım* [zama:nım] 'my time' (2.4)

The changes which are part of general phonological processes are:

- (v) Final 'k' alternating with 'ğ' in nominals, e.g. *çocuk* 'child' but *çocuğum* 'my child' (2.1)
- (vi) [æ] alternating with [e], e.g. *ben* [bæn] 'I' but *benim* [bením] 'mine' (2.5)
- (vii) Final 'a', 'e', 'u' and 'ü' alternating with 'ı' or 'i', e.g. *de-* 'say' but *diyecek* 's/he will say' (2.6)

2.1 Alternations of voiceless/voiced consonants: 'p'/'b', 't'/'d', 'k'/'g', 'k'/'ğ', 'ç'/'c'

In some words ending in one of the voiceless consonants 'p', 't', 'k' and 'ç', this final consonant changes to its voiced counterpart before a suffix beginning with a vowel.

'p'	is replaced by	'b'
't'	is replaced by	'd'
'(n)k'	is replaced by	'(n)g'
'ç'	is replaced by	'c'
'k'	is replaced by	'ğ'

Some of these alternations take place in words borrowed from Arabic or Persian, where the word originally ends in a voiced consonant ('b', 'd', 'g' or 'c', as in *kitab* 'book'). The final segment is devoiced in the bare form (hence *kitap*) or in syllable-final position (i.e. when followed by a suffix beginning with a consonant, e.g. *kitaptan* 'from the book'). The original voiced consonant is retained where it is followed by a suffix beginning with a vowel (e.g. *kitabım* 'my book'). Alternations in voiceless/voiced consonants also occur in some words of Turkish origin or words borrowed from languages other than Arabic or Persian. Note that only some of the words which in their bare form end in a voiceless consonant are subject to change, and most of these words are nouns.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| (i) final 'p' | → | 'b' |
| <i>dolap</i> 'cupboard' | | <i>dolaba</i> 'to the cupboard' |
| <i>cep</i> 'pocket' | | <i>cebim</i> 'my pocket' |
| <i>küp</i> 'cube' | | <i>kübik</i> 'cubic' |
| (ii) final 't' | → | 'd' |
| <i>kilit</i> 'lock' | | <i>kilidim</i> 'my lock' |
| <i>kanat</i> 'wing' | | <i>kanadı</i> 'its wing' |
| <i>yarat-</i> 'create' | | <i>yaradan</i> 'creator' |

The class of nouns ending in a non-changing 't' includes the large number of Arabic borrowings which end in the Arabic feminine suffix *-et/at*, such as *cumhuriyet* 'republic' → *cumhuriyetin* 'of the republic' and French loanwords ending in 't', e.g. *bilet* 'ticket' → *biletim* 'my ticket', *ceket* 'jacket' → *ceketim* 'my jacket'.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| (iii) final 'n' + 'k' | → | 'n' + 'g' |
| <i>renk</i> 'colour' | | <i>renge</i> 'to the colour' |
| <i>denk</i> 'equal' | | <i>dengi</i> 'his/her/its equal' |

'k' alternates with 'g' only when it is preceded by 'n' (otherwise it alternates with 'ğ', see (v) below). Nouns of this form which have been borrowed in recent times from European languages do not normally undergo 'k'/'g' alternation:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| <i>tank</i> 'tank' | | <i>tankı</i> 'his/her/its tank' |
| <i>bank</i> 'bench' | | <i>bankı</i> 'his/her/its bench' |
| (iv) final 'ç' | → | 'c' |
| <i>ağaç</i> 'tree' | | <i>ağacı</i> 'his/her/its tree' |
| <i>güç</i> 'power' | | <i>gücün</i> 'your power' |
| <i>taç</i> 'crown' | | <i>taca</i> 'to the crown' |
| <i>aç</i> 'hungry' | | <i>acı</i> 'be hungry' |

- (v) While the scope of the aforementioned alternations is limited to particular words and is a lexical matter, the next alternation is a general rule which applies to nominals ending with ‘k’ when they are combined with a suffix beginning with a vowel. In such cases ‘k’ alternates with ‘ğ’. Due to the pronunciation properties of ‘ğ’ (1.1.1.1) this process is also referred to as ‘k’/Ø (zero) alternation.

final ‘k’	→	‘ğ’
<i>yaprak</i> ‘leaf’		<i>yaprağı</i> ‘its leaf’
<i>gök</i> ‘sky’		<i>göğe</i> ‘to the sky’
<i>otomatik</i> ‘automatic’		<i>otomatığın</i> ‘of the automatic (switch)’

Note that only a final ‘k’ which is preceded by a vowel undergoes ‘k’/‘ğ’ alternation. Final ‘k’ alternates with ‘g’ when preceded by ‘n’ (see (iii) above), otherwise it remains as ‘k’ (eg. *zamak* ‘adhesive’ and *zamakı* ‘the adhesive’ (ACC)). ‘k’/‘ğ’ alternation also affects suffixes ending in ‘k’, such as *-DIK* (8.5.1.1), *-(y)AcAK* (8.2.3.3, 8.5.1.1) and *-mAK* (8.5.1.2):

<i>gelecek</i>	‘s/he’s going to come’	<i>geleceğim</i>	‘I’m going to come’
<i>aldık</i>	‘we bought’	<i>aldığımız</i>	‘the one/that we bought’

In the case of *-mAK*, ‘k’ also alternates with ‘y’:

<i>almak</i>	‘to buy’	<i>almaya/almağa</i>	‘(in order) to buy’ (also pronounced [aɫmijá] or [aɫmá:])
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‘k’/‘ğ’ alternation does not affect words with long vowels (2.4). For example, *tebrik* ‘congratulation(s)’, where ‘i’ is originally long, does not undergo ‘k’/‘ğ’ alternation, hence, *tebriki* [t^hebri:c^hi] ‘his/her congratulation(s)’.

There are certain categories to which alternations of voiceless/voiced consonants do not generally apply:

- (i) Most monovocalic words are not subject to these changes:

<i>saç</i>	‘hair’	<i>saçım</i>	‘my hair’
<i>yük</i>	‘load’	<i>yüküm</i>	‘my load’
<i>top</i>	‘ball’	<i>topum</i>	‘my ball’
<i>at</i>	‘horse’	<i>atım</i>	‘my horse’

- (ii) The vast majority of verbal roots are not subject to these changes. A verbal root such as *kap-* ‘snatch’ retains its final consonant in suffixation, hence *kapın* ‘snatch!’, although this is not the case with nominals, e.g. *kap* ‘container’, but *kabın* ‘your container’. Similarly the verb *ak-* ‘flow’ retains its final consonant under suffixation (e.g. *akan* ‘flowing’) but the adjective *ak*

‘white’ may not (cf. *ağar-* ‘become white’, but *akı* ‘its white (part)’). There are only a few verbs that have a change in their final consonant when followed by a suffix beginning with a vowel:

<i>et-</i>	(auxiliary verb/‘do’)	<i>eder</i>	‘s/he does’
<i>git-</i>	‘go’	<i>gidiyor</i>	‘s/he is going’
<i>tat-</i>	‘taste’	<i>tadınca</i>	‘upon tasting’

2.2 Alternations of single consonants with doubled consonants

In a small number of nouns ending in ‘b’, ‘t’, ‘d’, ‘k’, ‘l’, ‘s’, ‘z’, ‘m’ and ‘n’ the final consonant is duplicated when a vowel is attached to it. These are words borrowed from Arabic, which, in their original form, have geminates, that is, doubled consonants. In Turkish such words appear with a single consonant in their bare form or when followed by a suffix beginning with a consonant.

<i>hak</i>	‘right’	<i>haklar</i>	‘rights’	<i>hakkın</i>	‘your right’
<i>his</i>	‘emotion’	<i>histen</i>	‘of the emotion’	<i>hissi</i>	‘emotional’
<i>sır</i>	‘secret’	<i>sırlar</i>	‘secrets’	<i>sırrımız</i>	‘our secret’
<i>hat</i>	‘line’	<i>hatlar</i>	‘lines’	<i>demiryolu hattı</i>	‘railway line’
<i>zıt</i>	‘opposite’	<i>zıtsa</i>	‘if [it’s] the opposite’	<i>zıddı</i>	‘the opposite of it’

Some of these words keep their original double consonants in nominal-verb compounds where they combine with the auxiliaries *et-* ‘do’ and *ol-* ‘be’ (13.3.2): *hallet-* ‘solve’, *hallol-* ‘be solved’, *hisset-* ‘feel’. Others appear in nominal-verb compounds with a single consonant: *hak et-* ‘deserve’. It should be noted that since bare forms do not give any indication that they end in geminates, such words have to be learned individually.

2.3 Vowel/Ø (zero) alternation

There are a number of nouns in which the high vowel (‘ı’, ‘i’, ‘u’ or ‘ü’) of the final syllable in the bare form does not appear when a suffix beginning with a vowel is attached (e.g. *isim* ‘name’ but *ismi* ‘his/her name’). Many of these are words of Arabic origin, which do not have a vowel in this position (e.g. the Arabic word *ism* ‘name’ does not contain a vowel between ‘s’ and ‘m’). In Turkish when such a word appears in its bare form an **epenthetic vowel** is inserted, hence the second ‘i’ in *isim*. It is important to remember that this is not a general phonological process. It occurs in some words of Arabic origin and in a few words of Turkish origin. When such words combine with a stressable suffix (4.3.1) containing a high vowel such as the accusative case marker *-(y)ı*, there is invariably no epenthetic vowel in the inflected form. However, there may be variation among speakers regarding the

inclusion of epenthetic vowels in words with a suffix containing a non-high vowel (such as the dative case marker *-(y)A*):

	ACC	DAT
<i>karın</i> ‘belly’	<i>karnı</i>	<i>karna</i> or <i>karına</i>
<i>şehir</i> ‘town’	<i>şehri</i>	<i>şehre</i> or <i>şehire</i>
<i>izin</i> ‘permission’	<i>izni</i>	<i>izne</i> or <i>izine</i>

It is not possible to know whether the final high vowel in the bare form of a word is epenthetic or not. Words which look identical may differ in this respect:

<i>koyun</i> ‘bosom’	→	<i>koynu</i> ‘his/her bosom’
<i>koyun</i> ‘sheep’	→	<i>koyunu</i> ‘his/her sheep’
<i>nehir</i> ‘river’	→	<i>nehri</i> ‘the river’ (ACC)
<i>Nehir</i> ‘Nehir’ (a name)	→	<i>Nehir’i</i> ‘Nehir’ (ACC)

If a word containing an epenthetic vowel is followed by an auxiliary verb beginning with a vowel (*et-* ‘do’ or *ol-* ‘be’ (13.3.2)), the epenthetic vowel does not appear, and the noun and verb coalesce into a single word:

<i>sabr</i> ‘patience’	<i>sabrı</i> ‘his/her patience’	<i>sabret-</i> ‘be patient’
<i>kahr</i> ‘distress’	<i>kahrı</i> ‘his/her distress’	<i>kahrol-</i> ‘be damned’

2.4 Short/long vowel alternations

In a number of words which have ‘a’, ‘u’ or ‘i’ in the final syllable, these vowels are replaced with their long counterparts /a:/, /u:/ and /i:/ when a suffix beginning with a vowel is attached:

<i>meram</i> ‘plight’	<i>mera:mini</i> ‘your/his/her plight’ (ACC)
<i>hukuk</i> ‘law’	<i>huku:ken</i> ‘legally’
<i>zaman</i> ‘time’	<i>zama:nım</i> ‘my time’
<i>zemin</i> ‘ground’	<i>zemi:ni</i> ‘the ground’ (ACC)

As in gemination (2.2) and in most cases of epenthesis (2.3), the alternation of short vowels with their long counterparts occurs in words of Arabic origin, in this case those which originally contain a long vowel. These words have to be learned individually, as there is no indication in the words that they contain a long vowel. This process can also take place across word boundaries when such words are followed by an auxiliary verb beginning with a vowel (*et-* ‘do’ or *ol-* ‘be’ (13.3.2)):

<i>merak</i> ‘curiosity’	<i>mera:k et-</i> ‘be curious’
<i>emin</i> ‘sure’	<i>emi:n ol-</i> ‘be sure’