

Chapter 3

MINIMIZERS IN TURKISH: A CORPUS ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is concerned with minimizers as a subclass of negative polarity items (NPIs henceforth) and their distributional and semantic properties in Turkish. Even though various characteristics of NPIs like ‘hiç’ *never/ever*, ‘kimse’ *anyone* and ‘katiyyen’ *in any way* were analyzed by different researchers such as Zidani-Eroğlu (1997ab), Besler (2000), Keleşir (2001), Yanılmaz (2009) and Görgülü (2017), the nature of minimizers as a subtype of NPIs have never been investigated. In this work, based on an online corpus study as well as an online Google and Twitter search, I first present an overview of various groups of minimizers in Turkish. After that, I investigate their distributional properties and compare their behavior to that of other NPIs in the language. The results show that an overwhelming majority of minimizers appear in syntactically and semantically negative contexts. The findings also demonstrate that minimizers can occur in conditional clauses as well. This is an important finding since conditionals are contexts where other NPIs have been claimed in previous work to not actually appear. Another result is that minimizers can also appear in yes/no questions even though this constitutes a very small sample of the data. Finally, it is proposed that these characteristics of minimizers can be accounted for by assuming that minimizers are allowed to appear only in nonveridical contexts (Zwarts, 1995; Giannakidou, 2002, 2007, 2011). These are the contexts where the truth condition of the proposition is not entailed or guaranteed.

The structure of the paper is as follows: the next section is a brief introduction to minimizers across languages. In the section following, I present an overview of different groups of minimizers in Turkish. After that, I analyze their distributional and semantic properties and then provide a unified semantic account. The last section is the conclusion with some suggestions for future work.

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MINIMIZERS IN LANGUAGES

Minimizers are defined as indefinite expressions that denote a minimal quantity or measure along certain dimensions such as size, distance, shape and time (Vallduvi, 1994; Postal, 2004; Israel, 2011; Chierchia, 2013; Suleymanova & Hoeksema, 2018, among others). They are known as denoting scalar endpoints on a scale and these endpoints generally occupy the low end of the scale. Some well-known examples of minimizers in English are a red cent, a word, a finger and a clue. Consider the sentences in (1), taken from Vallduvi (1994).

1. a. She didn't say a word. = She didn't say anything (at all).
- b. I don't have a red cent. = I don't have any money (at all).
- c. He doesn't have a clue. = He doesn't have any idea.

Vallduvi (1994) notes that minimizers are always polarity items in languages like English, not generally appearing in affirmative contexts. Following Horn (1989), he states that "when minimizers occur in negative contexts, the negation denotes the absence of a minimal quantity, and hence the presence of no quantity at all". In that sense, minimizers are used as a means of negative reinforcement in languages. Note that one could find minimizers in other languages as well. Consider the examples from Catalan and Spanish (Vallduvi, 1994) and Greek (Giannakidou, 2007) below.

2. a. No va dir *(ni) *una paraula*. Catalan
 no 3SG say-PAST even one word
 'S/he didn't say even a word.'²
- b. No dijo (ni) *una palabra*. Spanish
 no 3SG even one word
 'S/he didn't say even a word.'
- c. Dhen ipe (oute) *mia leksi* oli nixta. Greek
 not say even one word all evening
 'He did not say even a word all evening.'

Note that the minimizers in (2) are accompanied by the word *even* which in some languages such as Catalan, is sometimes obligatorily in the presence of minimizers. On the other hand, it is optionally used in languages like Spanish and Greek.

² Abbreviations in the glosses are: 1 = first person; 2 = second person; 3 = third person; ABIL = ability; ABL = ablative case; ACC = accusative case; AOR = aorist marker; CON = conditional; CONJ = conjunction; COP = copula; CVB = converb; DAT = dative case; FNOM = factive nominal; GEN = genitive marker; LOC = locative case; MADV = adverb of manner; NEG = negative marker; NMN = nominalizer; OPT = optative marker; SG = singular; PL = plural; PASS = passive voice; PAST = past tense; PERF = perfective marker; POSS = possessive marker; PROG = progressive aspect; REL = relativizer

It goes without saying that negation is not the only context in which minimizers are allowed to appear. There is a number of studies where the licensing contexts of these elements have been analyzed. For instance, Giannakidou (2007, 2011) shows that minimizers in Greek, Japanese and Korean are licensed by strict negation, whereas this is not the case in a language like English, as shown below.

3. If you *give a damn*, you'll listen.
4. Did Ruth *lift a finger* to help?
5. till the pianist finished, we left, and I dropped off tom and
went home. Now I wish I had said *a word*. It would have
come out lame though, I just know it.

As can be seen from the examples in (3), (4) and (5), minimizers in English can appear in conditionals, questions as well as directive propositional attitudes. In that sense, there is some cross-linguistic variation in terms of the licensing conditions of minimizers. This variation was also noted in Eckardt and Csipak (2013) in which minimizers are argued to have a much stricter distribution than other types of NPIs across languages.

The question that arises at this point is how minimizers behave in Turkish in terms of their characteristics and the contexts in which they are allowed to appear. In the next section, I present an overview of Turkish minimizers. I will then look into their distributional and semantic properties.

MINIMIZERS IN TURKISH

In this section, I provide a broad overview of minimizers in Turkish. The data presented here were collected through the TS Corpus v2 (Sezer & Sezer, 2013) as well as an online internet search using Google and Twitter. The reason for this type of data collection was to reach and analyze as many naturally occurring written (and spoken) data as possible, rather than working on a constructed set of examples. In the study, 339 occurrences of minimizers were collected and were entered into a data file, based on their licensing contexts (e.g. negation, conditionals or yes/no questions) and the predicates they co-occur with. Following Suleymanova and Hoeksema (2018), I present them below in groups with a similar lexical/semantic background rather than providing a long and haphazard alphabetical list.³

³ It should be noted that the set of minimizers presented in this work is not meant to be an exhaustive list in Turkish. In that sense, it would not be unexpected to find different minimizers in various groups.

Group One: Units of Speech and Language

From a linguistic point, it is easy to divide language, both written and spoken language, into its smaller parts. As far as minimizers are concerned, one can talk about a word, a syllable, a letter, a jot and an iota in English, as exemplified in (6) and (7).

6. Don't say a word!
7. People will swallow anything the government tells them without applying an iota of rational thought...

In Turkish, on the other hand, this group includes expressions such as 'bir kelime/söz' *one word*, 'bir harf' *one letter*, 'bir mısra' *one verse*, 'bir virgül' *one comma* as well as 'bir cümle' *one sentence*. This is shown in (8).

8. a. Son-u-nda kavga çık-ıyor ve biz-e bir
end-3SG.POSS-LOC fight break-PROG and we-DAT one
kelime de-me-den komisyon-u terk ed-iyor.
word say-NEG-ABL committee-ACC leave do-PROG.3SG
'A fight breaks at the end and he leaves the committee without
saying a word to us.'
- b. Ama bu gün-e kadar, bu kara sayfa-yı kınay-an
but this day-DAT until this black page-ACC condemn-REL
bir cümle ağz-ı-ndan duy-ma-dı-m.
one sentence mouth-3SG-ABL hear-NEG-PAST-1SG
'But I didn't hear one sentence that would condemn this black page
(incident) until this day.'
- c. Ağzı-nız-dan bu durum-a tepki göster-en en ufak
mouth-2PL-ABL this situation-DAT reaction show-REL most small
bir söz duy-ma dı-k.
one word hear-NEG-PAST-1PL
'We didn't hear one word, however small, from his/her mouth
reacting to this situation.'

Note that these minimizers usually co-occur with predicates that denote saying or ways of communicating such as 'söylemek' *to tell*, 'demek' *to say* and 'duymak' *to hear*. Another finding is that the range of minimizers in this group is somewhat bigger than that of minimizers in English, Dutch and Azerbaijani. In their study, Suleymanova and Hoeksema (2018) note that such minimizers as *a/one letter* and *a/one comma* do not exist in English. The same is true for *a/one comma* in Dutch and for *a/one letter* in Azerbaijani. On the other hand, one can find all of these minimizers in Turkish. In that sense, the Turkish data support the

observations that minimizers are selected and used in a random fashion from a potential set within and across languages.

Another thing one can notice from the data is the frequent co-occurrence of the word ‘bile’ *even* with minimizers in this group (and with most of the minimizers in other groups). The word ‘bile’ is known as a focus/emphatic particle that usually comes after the emphasized constituent (Kornfilt, 1997). Consider the examples below.

9. a. Kendi-si *bir harf bile* yanlış ol-ma-sın isti-yor-du.
self-3SG one letter even wrong be-NEG-OPT want-PROG-PAST
‘He himself wanted even one letter not to be wrong.’
- b. Ezber-ler-in-de *bir misra bile* yok-tur.
by heart-PL-3PL-LOC one verse even not exist-COP
‘They don’t even have one verse they know by heart.’
- c. Bu büyük oyun-da Kıbrıs Türk-ü *bir virgül bile*
this big game-LOC Cyprus Turk-3SG one comma even
değil-dir.
not-COP
‘The Cypriot Turk is not even a comma in this big game.’

As was already noted in the previous section, this finding should in fact not be surprising. Cross-linguistic studies on negative polarity have shown that the combination of minimizers with *even* or a similar element is a very common phenomenon. For instance, minimizers often appear with ‘ook maar’ in Dutch (Hoeksema and Rullmann, 2001), ‘bhii’ in Hindi (Vasishth, 1998), ‘də/da’ in Azerbaijani (Suleymanova and Hoeksema, 2018), ‘-to’ in Korean (Lee, 1999), ‘sem’ in Hungarian (Surányi, 2006) and ‘oute’ in Greek (Giannakidou, 2007), all of which can be translated as *even*.

One last thing to note is the occurrence of the word ‘tek’ *single* along with the minimizers in this group. However, the data also indicate that ‘tek’ only co-occurs with ‘bile’ in the minimizer use. In other words, ‘tek’ appears only when ‘bile’ is also in the sentence, as illustrated in (10).

- 10.a. Tek bir kelime bile konuş-ma-dı-k.
single one word even talk-NEG-PAST-1PL
‘We didn’t utter even a single word.’
- b. Hesab-m-ı ver-e-me-yeceğ-i tek bir harf
account-GEN-ACC give-ABIL-FUT-3SG single one letter
bile yok şiir-i-nde.
even not exist poem-3SG-LOC

'There is not even a single letter in his poems that he cannot account for.'

The co-occurrence of the word 'tek' along with 'bile' can be accounted for if we assume that its presence is to strengthen the (negative) meaning of the minimizer.

Group Two: Units of Distance

The second group includes units of distance. The minimizers in this group are 'bir karış' one inch, 'bir adım' one step, 'bir arpa boyu' a very short distance and 'bir milim' one millimeter. Some examples are below.

11. a. Valla hentüz *bir arpa boy-u* bile yol
honestly yet one barley height-3SG even road
al-in-a-ma-dı.
take-PASS-ABIL-NEG-PAST
'To tell the truth, not even a short distance has been taken.'
- b. Sabah-a kadar *bir milim* bile
morning-DAT until one millimeter even
kıpırda-ma-dı-m.
move-NEG-PAST-1SG
'I didn't move even one inch till morning.'
- c. Yat-acak *bir karış* bile toprağ-ınız ol-ma-yacak.
sleep-FUT one inch even land-2PL be-NEG-FUT
'You won't have even one inch of land to sleep.'

Not surprisingly, this group of minimizers co-occurs with verbs of movement and direction such as 'yol almak' *proceed/move forward* and 'kıpırdamak' *move*. However, our data also indicate that these minimizers appear with other verbs such as 'yatmak' *to lie/sleep* and 'tanımak' *get to know*, among some others. The reason for that is one can use these minimizers in the literal sense as well as metaphorically. That is to say, they not only denote distance but also indicate some advancement and progress.

Group Three: Units of Weight

Minimizers that denote minimal units of weight are in this group. Some examples are 'bir gram' *one gram*, 'bir dirhem' *one dirhem* and 'bir zerre' *one grain*. Note that dirhem and zerre were (small) units of weight that were used in the Ottoman Empire. One dirhem equals 3.20 grams while one zerre is 1.56 milligrams. Consider the examples below.

- 12.a. Tülin-e *bir gram* bile bir şey hisset-mi-yor-um.
Tülin-DAT one gram even one thing feel-NEG-PROG-1SG
'I don't feel (anything) even one gram for Tülin.'
- b. Vücut-un-da *bir dirhem* bile yağ
body-2SG.POSS-LOC one dirhem even fat
bırak-mı-yor.
leave-NEG-PROG.3SG
'It does not leave even one dirhem of fat in your body.'
- c. Ama sevda-n-dan *bir zerre* bile git-me-di.
but love-2SG.POSS-ABL one grain even go-NEG-PAST
'But my love for you did not diminish even one bit.'

Note that the fact that minimizers include words that have an archaic usage is not uncommon in languages. For instance, Suleymanova and Hoeksema (2018:186) report that Dutch 'Ik heb geen sou' *I do not have a sou* uses the word *sou* which is the name of a French that is no longer in use in France. Similarly, 'Ik heb geen duit' *I don't have a duit* is a minimizer that uses the ancient Dutch coin *duit*. In that sense, the Turkish minimizers support the arguments that when a country stops using some unit of weight or distance, it does not automatically update its expressions and lexicon.

Group 4: Units of Time

The minimizer expressions that denote time belong to this group. Such representative examples are 'bir saniye' *one second*, 'bir an' *one split second* and 'bir dakika' *one minute*. This is illustrated below.

- 13.a. *Bir saniye* bile boş-a geçir-il-ecek zaman-ımız
one second even empty-DAT spend-PASS-FUT time-1PL
yok.
not exist
'We don't have even one second to spend in vain.'
- b. Bu yürek sen-siz *bir an* bile at-ma-yacak.
this heart you-without one split sec even beat-NEG-FUT
'This heart will not beat even one split second without you.'
- c. O-nun üzülme-sin-i *bir dakika* bile
she-GEN worry-3SG.POSS-ACC one minute even
iste-mi-yor-um.
want-NEG-PROG-1SG
'I do not want her to worry even one minute.'

As can be observed from the examples above, the minimizers in this group generally indicate exact periods of time, however short they might be, rather than denoting indeterminate measurements.

Group Five: Units of Money

The minimizers denoting very small amounts of money in Turkish are in this group. One thing to note here is that most minimizers follow ‘bir’ *one* and its counterparts in other languages. However, Turkish also uses the numeral ‘beş’ *five*. The minimizers here are ‘bir kuruş’ *one cent* and ‘beş kuruş’ *five cents*, as shown in (14).⁴

- 14.a. Kimse-ye *bir kuruş* borc-umuz yok.
anyone-DAT one cent debt-1PL not exist
‘We do not owe (even) one cent to anyone.’
- b. Ama o-na *beş kuruş* bile ver-me-yeceğ-im.
but s/he-DAT five cent even give-NEG-FUT-1SG
‘But I will not give her/him even five cents.’

These minimizers usually co-occur with the negative existential ‘yok’ *not exist / there is not* even though they appear with other predicates as well. Note that units of money that include some color is very common in languages. For instance one could find *a red cent* in English, ‘geen rooie cent’ *no red cent* in Dutch, ‘qara qapik’ *black cent* or *wretched cent* in Azerbaijani (Suleymanova and Hoeksema, 2018), ‘fils ahmar’ *red cent* in Jordanian Arabic (Alsarayreh, 2012) and ‘pruta leforta’ *a red cent* (literally: a penny to split) in Hebrew (Sharvit, 2008). However, the data did not return a similar minimizer in Turkish.

Group Six: Small Amounts

The minimizers denoting small amounts are widespread across languages. As noted by Suleymanova and Hoeksema (2018), quite a few languages have minimizing expressions that mean a single bite like *bit* in English, ‘bisschen’ *a bit* in German as well as *drop* and *sip* for liquid substances. The minimizers that fall into this group are ‘bir kırıntı’ *one crumb*, ‘bir yudum’ *one sip* and ‘bir lokma’ *one morsel/bite* in Turkish. The examples are in (15).

- 15.a. Biraz daha orada dikil-me-ye devam ed-er-sen,
some more there stand-NMN-DAT keep do-AOR-2SG
bir kırıntı bile bul-a-ma-yacak-sın.
one crumb even find-ABIL-NEG-FUT-2SG
‘If you keep standing there some more, you will not be able to
find even one crumb.’

⁴ Note that the Azerbaijani minimizer ‘beş qepik’ *five cents* also uses a numeral other than one.

- b. Kahve-n-den *bir yudum* bile al-ma-mış-sm.
coffee-2SG-ABL one sip even take-NEG-PERF-2SG
'You have not taken even one sip from your coffee.'

Group Seven: Slang Expressions

It is well-attested that languages have minimizing words that denote swear words and taboo expressions such as *beans*, *jack*, *crap* and *squat* (Horn, 2001; Postal, 2004; Hoeksema, 2009). Some examples in Turkish are 'bir halt' *a damn thing* and 'bir bok' *one shit*, as shown in (16) and (17).

- 16.a. Savaş imren-il-ecek *bir halt* değil.
war envy-PASS-FUT one damn thing not
'There is nothing desirable about war.'
- b. Bu dünya-da iki kişi-den harbiden *bir halt*
this world-LOC two person-ABL honestly one damn thing
ol-ma-z.
be-NEG-AOR
'Two people in this world are really not any good.'
- 17.a. Yaz-ma-sa-m *bir bok* ol-acağ-ı yok.
write-NEG-CON-1SG one shit be-FUT-3SG not exist
'No shit will happen if I do not write.'
- b. Kendi de *bir bok* değil-miş, roman-lar-ı da.
self FOC one shit not-PERF novel-PL-3SG FOC
'Neither he himself nor his novels are any good.'

As can be observed from the examples above, these minimizer expressions are used as pejorative markers as well as adverbs of degree in informal and perhaps rude language. One thing that the data have revealed is that these two minimizers consistently do not co-occur with the emphatic particle 'bile'. In the next section, I motivate a semantic account for the distribution of Turkish minimizers.

NEGATION AND NONVERIDICALITY

It was shown in previous sections that all of the minimizers in Turkish are allowed to appear in negative contexts. It was also indicated that this finding is in line with the behavior of minimizers across languages. However, it should be noted that negation is not the only environment in which minimizers are licensed in the language. The findings have also shown that minimizers can occur in conditional clauses too. This is illustrated in (18).

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- 18.a. *Türkü-den bir kelime* bile çıkar-ıl-ır-sa,
folk song-ABL one word even take-PASS-AOR-COND
çek-ip gid-eceğ-im-i söyle-di-m.
pull-CONJ go-FUT-1SG-ACC tell-PAST-1SG
'I told (them) if any word of the folk ballad is taken off, I will take
my leave and go.'
- b. *Bir dakika* bile ertele-n-se, geç
one minute even postpone-PASS-COND late
kal-ın-mış de-mek-tir.
be-PASS-PERF tell-INF-COP
'If it is postponed even one minute that means it is too late.'
- c. Bak, yan-ın-a bir gram bile alkol
look side-2SG-DAT one gram even alcohol
al-ır-sa-n, sen-inle gel-me-m.
take-AOR-COND-2SG you-with come-NEG-1SG
'Look, if you take even one gram of alcohol with you, I
will not come with you.'

This is in fact not surprising given the fact that minimizers are also licensed in conditional structures in other languages like English and Azerbaijani.

Another context in which minimizers can occur is yes/no questions in Turkish. However, it should be noted that the number of occurrences in this context is very low when compared to other licensing contexts. Consider (19).

- 19.a. *Savaşçı bir din ol-ma-dığ-ı-nı söyle-yerek*
fighter one religion be-NEG-FNOM-3SG-ACC tell-MADV
bir adım bile gid-ebil-ir-mi-yiz?
one step even go-ABIL-AOR-Q-1PL
'Can we go even one step further saying that it is not a fighting
religion?'
- b. *Fi tarih-i-nden bu yan-a bir arpa boy-u*
old time-3SG-ABL this side-DAT one barley height-3SG
bile kat et-miş-mi-yiz?
even travel do-PERF-Q-1PL
'Have we gone even a short distance from very old times?'

This result is again not unexpected either, since it is well-attested that minimizers are licensed in both wh-questions and yes/no questions in certain languages.

The last context in which minimizers are allowed to appear also includes negation as well. However, these are not strictly sentential negation. These are con-

texts that include the negative morpheme *-sİz* *without* and semantically negative predicates, as respectively exemplified in (20) and (21).

20. Ban-a *bir virgül* bile bağışla-mak-sızın

I-DAT one comma even donate-CVB-without
 son-lar-ı-na doğru yuvarlan-ıp gid-iyor-lar-dı.
 end-PL-3SG-DAT towards roll-CONJ go-PROG-PL-PAST
 ‘They were going towards their end without leaving me even a comma.’

21 a. Tek *bir cümle* bile yaz-maktan aciz-dir-ler.

single one sentence even write-CVB unable-COP-3PL
 ‘They are unable to write even a single sentence.’

b. Sonsuz hırs-lar-ı ve ego-lar-ı,

infinite ambition-PL-3SG and ego-PL-3SG
 göz-ler-i-nin *bir milim* öte-si-ni
 eye-PL-3SG-GEN one millimeter beyond-3POSS-ACC
 gör-me-ler-i-ni engell-iyor.
 see-VN-PL-3POSS-ACC prevent-PROG
 ‘Their endless ambition and ego prevent them from seeing one millimeter ahead of their eyes.’

In (20), it is the negative suffix ‘*-sİz*’ on the verb that licenses the minimizer. On the other hand, in (21), the sentences respectively have the negative predicates ‘*aciz*’ *unable* and ‘*engellemek*’ *to prevent*. Note that both the negative element meaning *without* and negative predicates have been shown to be licensors for minimizers in various languages (Lee, 1999, 2003; Giannakidou, 2011; Suleymanova & Hoeksema, 2018). Therefore, the Turkish data further confirms the different licensing conditions of minimizers.

The discussion above has shown that minimizers in Turkish are allowed to occur in a number of different contexts. Table 1 illustrates their distribution in terms of where and how often they appear.

Table 1. The distribution of minimizers in Turkish

Context	Number	Percentage
Negation	311	91,7%
Conditional	26	7,6%
Interrogative	2	0,7%
Total	339	100%

Table 1 clearly shows that the vast majority of Turkish minimizers co-occur with negation. Note that this includes *without* and (semantically) negative predicates as well as sentential negation. The second context in which minimizers appear is conditionals and the third one is yes/no questions even though the number of occurrences in this group is very low.

The question that arises at this point is whether it is possible to capture the licensing conditions of minimizers in a unified manner. Note that all the three environments (e.g. negation, conditionals and questions) have been identified as nonveridical environments in the studies on negation, negative polarity and minimizers (Zwarts, 1995, 1996; Giannakidou 2011; Xherija, 2015; Suleymanova & Hoeksema, 2018). Nonveridicality is a semantic concept that was originated by Zwarts (1995, 1996) and was developed by Giannakidou (2002, 2007, 2011) in subsequent work. Nonveridical contexts are those in which the truth of the proposition is not entailed. Hoeksema (2013) provides the following pair to show how nonveridicality works.

- 22.a. It is raining.
b. John hopes it is raining.

The truth of the proposition in (22a), the fact that it is raining at the moment of speaking, is not entailed in the context of (22b). Thus the latter is typically a nonveridical context whereas the former is veridical. The same is also true for sentential negation, as in (23).

23. It is not the case that it is raining.

Therefore, we can say that if a statement of the form XYZ such that Y denotes a proposition that does not entail X , then the context X_Z is said to be nonveridical. Giannakidou (2002) defines veridicality and nonveridicality in terms of truth, as shown below.

(Non)veridicality for propositional operators

- i. A propositional operator F is veridical iff Fp entails p :
 $Fp \rightarrow p$; otherwise F is nonveridical.
- ii. A nonveridical operator F is antiveridical iff Fp entails
not p : $Fp \rightarrow \neg p$.

A propositional operator is basically a proposition embedding function. It is either a sentence modifier (e.g. a sentence-level adverb), or a question operator. The sentence in (i) states that F is veridical iff whenever Fp is true, p is also true. If that does not hold, F is nonveridical. Note also that a nonveridical F is antive-

ridical iff whenever Fp is true p is not true. In that sense, antiveridical operators are a proper subset of nonveridicals. Positive operators like past tense adverbials are veridical and do not license NPIs. In contrast, modal verbs, intensional operators, and questions are nonveridical and license NPIs. Antiveridical operators, on the other hand, are negation and *without* that are considered to be prototypical licensers of NPIs across languages (Zwarts, 1995; Giannakidou, 2002, 2011).

Note that minimizers in Turkish occur in (i) negative contexts, (ii) conditionals, and (iii) yes/no questions. These are the contexts where the truth of the proposition is not entailed. Thus if we motivate a semantic account and argue that minimizers are licensed in nonveridical environments, we can capture their distribution in a uniform manner in the language. Note also that the findings that minimizers appear in nonveridical environments indicate that Turkish minimizers pair with their counterparts in English and Azerbaijani and differ from those in Greek, Korean and Japanese.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have investigated minimizers as a subtype of NPIs in Turkish. First, I provided an overview of various minimizers by dividing them into different lexical/semantic groups. The findings have shown that minimizers appear in (i) negative contexts including sentential negation, negative predicates and the negative suffix, (ii) conditional sentences and (iii) yes/no questions. I argued that the distribution of minimizers can be uniformly captured if we argue that minimizers are allowed to occur in nonveridical contexts. For future work, it seems necessary to investigate minimizing predicates such as 'parmağını oynatmamak' *to not lift one's finger* and 'karıncayı bile incitmemek' *to not even harm an ant* and see whether their distribution is similar to the minimizers in the language.

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