In this paper, I present an analysis of what Johanson (2002:59) terms ‘compartmentalization’ of Turkish and Perso-Arabic material in Middle Ottoman Turkish, where ‘islands’ of Perso-Arabic morphosyntax are embedded within and are impenetrable to a morphosyntactically Turkish clause. I argue that this structure is the result of a constraint on the percolation of a feature [+foreign] associated with all Perso-Arabic lexical and functional items. This correctly predicts that structures interweaving Turkish and Perso-Arabic material are impossible. Data corroborating this analysis is taken from the Şehnâme-yi Hümédân of Talizade, composed in the late 16th century.

Middle Ottoman Turkish was developed by an ‘effectively trilingual elite’ (Kerslake, (1998:180)) trained in Turkish, Persian, and Arabic. It incorporated numerous lexical items alongside fully productive morpho-syntactic structures from both Persian and Arabic which were used alongside pre-existing Turkish equivalents. In spite of the trilingualism of Ottoman authors, the division of labour between Perso-Arabic and Turkish material is highly constrained.

The structure of a Middle Ottoman clause is shown in (1-a), where two fully Perso-Arabic NPs are embedded within a syntactically Turkish clause. Each NP productively uses Perso-Arabic morphosyntactic structures as well as borrowed lexical items. The first NP contains the noun kâffâr ‘unbelievers’, derived via Arabic templatic morphology (singular kâfir), as well as the Persian adjective hâksâr ‘base’. It uses the Persian nominal linker (glossed iz) to link the noun kâffâr to its attributive adjective hâksâr. The otherwise Perso-Arabic NP then receives the Turkish accusative suffix -ı. The second NP has a similar structure. There are two borrowed lexical items, Persian duzâh ‘hell’ and Arabic ‘anâ ‘pain’. This NP also uses the Persian nominal linker, this time to link the possessor ‘anâ with its possessum duzâh. This NP too receives Turkish case marking, here the dative -(y)a. The verb virmîşdi ‘had given’ is fully Turkish. The structure of (1-a) thus consists of two fully Perso-Arabic NPs with Turkish case marking assigned by a Turkish verb.

(1) An Ottoman Clause1 (Woodhead, 1983:138)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \ldots \text{ [PRS kâffâr-ı } \text{ hâksâr]-1 } \ldots \text{ [PRS duzâh-ı } \text{ anâ]-ya vir-miş-di} \\
& \ldots \text{ [PRS unbeliever.pl-ar-ız base]-ACC } \ldots \text{ [PRS hell-ız pain]-DAT give-PTCP-PST} \\
& \ldots \text{ ‘... he had consigned the base unbelievers to a painful hell...’}
\end{align*}
\]

Most Middle Ottoman clauses follow the general pattern of (1-a). When Perso-Arabic NPs occur, no Turkish morphology may appear within them. Turkish morphology only appears at the periphery, as with case suffixes. This is observable in the distribution of co-existing equivalent Turkish and Perso-Arabic constructions. While Turkish equivalents can be used freely with Perso-Arabic lexical items in the default case, they are avoided when these Perso-Arabic lexical items are embedded within a larger morphosyntactically Perso-Arabic NP, such as a nominal linker construction. This is shown in (2) and (3). Consider in (2) the choice of numeral type depending on the morpho-syntactic context of the noun that it quantifies, iklîm ‘clime’. In (2-a), where iklîm occurs outside of a nominal linker construction, it is quantified with the Turkish numeral yedi ‘seven’. In (2-b), however, it occurs within a nominal linker construction, here linked to the possessum mâlikiyet ‘ownership’. When quantified in this context, the Persian numeral heft ‘seven’ is used in lieu of the Turkish equivalent. The same pattern is observed in (3) with plural marking. When the Perso-Arabic lexical item pâdišâh occurs without additional Perso-Arabic morphology, as in (3-a), it can be pluralized with the Turkish plural marker -lar. However, when embedded within a nominal linker construction as in (3-b), where pâdišâh is linked to an attributive adjective kelân

---

1All Perso-Arabic lexical and functional items in examples are italicized.
‘great’, it is pluralized instead with the Persian suffix -ân. Forms such as *pâdişâh-lar-i kelân are so far unattested, as is (with very few lexical exceptions) the occurrence of Turkish lexical items with Perso-Arabic morphology such as the nominal linker.

(2) More Ottoman Examples  
(Woodhead, 1983:120)

a. yedi iklim-e hâkim
seven clime-DAT dominant
‘...ruling over the seven climes...’
b. mâlikiyet-i heft iklim...
ownership-iz seven clime...
‘ownership of the seven climes.’

(3) More Ottoman Examples  
(Woodhead, 1983:117, 120)

a. pâdişâh-lar-dan
padishah-pl-ABL
‘of the padishahs’
b. pâdişâh-ân-i kelân-dan
padishah-pl-iz great-ABL
‘From the great padishahs’

The pattern thus involves an asymmetry between Perso-Arabic and Turkish material: Turkish material can embed Perso-Arabic material, but not the opposite. Structures that interweave Perso-Arabic and Turkish material, such as *pâdişâh-lar-i kelân, where a Turkish plural embedding a Perso-Arabic noun is then embedded by a Persian nominal linker, are impossible. This can be accounted for with a constraint on a feature [+foreign], where Perso-Arabic morphemes are [+foreign] while all other morphemes are [-foreign]:

(4) Embeddedness Constraint

This constraint ensures that structures like *pâdişâh-lar-i kelân will be impossible, while allowing for padishah-lar outside of a nominal linker construction. *pâdişâh-lar-i kelân is precluded because it would require the percolation of the [+foreign] feature of IZ upon its merger with the [-foreign] node from the Turkish plural -lar as in (5-a), labelled NUM. The use of the Persian plural -ân in pâdişâh-ân-i kelân avoids this problem, since there is no [-foreign] feature and the constraint is not activated. This is shown in (5-b). The structure in pâdişâh-lar is, however, permissible in isolation because the [+foreign] feature of pâdişâh need not percolate upon merger with the [-foreign] feature of Turkish plural -lar.

(5) a.  

b.

The References section includes the following:

References

Darragh Winkelman, The University of Chicago