

On complex sentences in Gagauz

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1. Introduction

Gagauz is a Turkish dialect mainly spoken nowadays in the southern region of the Republic of Moldova. According to the 1989 census,¹ about 200,000 Gagauz live on the territory of the former Soviet Union, most of them (about 92 %) in the Republic of Moldova and the Odessa oblast of the Ukraine, where they migrated from Bulgaria at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries. Smaller groups of Gagauz people live in Bulgaria, Rumania and Greece, but in these countries their number is uncertain. Their language belongs to the western group of Oghuz Turkic and is closely related to Turkish (Doerfer 1990: 19). According to the 1989 census, 80 % of the Gagauz living in the former Soviet Union are bilingual, with Russian as their second language. Rumanian, the language of the major ethnic group in the Republic of Moldova is spoken by 4% of the Gagauz people. Their religion is Orthodox Christianity. In 1957, Gagauz was established as a written language in the Moldovian SSR and was taught at school from 1959 to 1962. Today Gagauz is part of the curriculum in all schools in the *Gagauz Yeri* or *Gagauzia*, the autonomous region in Southern Moldova.² Since 1957, several books have been published in Gagauz; however, it has never been a real written language, i.e. in everyday life, apart from some professional writers, nobody actually uses it for any kind of writing.

Gagauz phonology and morphology are very similar to those of Turkish, but within the lexicon and syntax many differences can be observed, due to the fact that Gagauz has been spoken for centuries in regions where the Slavic languages Bulgarian and Russian are dominant (Doerfer 1959).

The first Gagauz texts were gathered by Moškov and published in 1904 in Radloff's *Proben* (Moškov 1904). These materials contain folklore texts (tales, songs, proverbs, and riddles) collected in Bessarabia. Dmitrijev (1932-1933) and Dmitriev (1939) based his observations on phonetics, morphology, and syntax on this material. He focuses, however, on phonetics and phonology and observations on syntactic phenomena are not very extensive. Pokrovskaja (1964, 1974, 1979) and Gajdarži (1971a, 1971b, 1973, 1981) carried out a number of investigations on Gagauz syntax, with Gajdarži focusing mainly on complex sentences. In 1966, Zajączkowski published folklore texts collected in Bulgaria in the late fifties. His observations, too, mainly

1 All ethnographic data from the 1989 census in the former Soviet Union is cited after Fane (1993).

2 On December 23, 1994, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted a law on the special juridical status of this region. An abridged English translation of it was published by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems in 1995.

focus on phonetics and morphology. He only makes a few remarks on syntactic features of the language. However, all studies on Gagauz comment that the syntax is Slavic rather than Turkic.

In what follows, I will mention several syntactic characteristics of Gagauz complex sentences, which developed under the influence of the dominant Slavic languages. For the sake of clarity, I will present examples from my own material, which I recorded in southern Moldova in the summer of 1995. Examples from the written language will only be cited sporadically. Dealing mostly with syntactic phenomena, I have chosen a rather broad transcription for the data representation in this article. Examples are labelled for spoken (S) versus written (W). Spoken language examples from my own material are also labelled for gender (female (f), male (m)) and age. In general, it can be said that the younger the speaker, the higher his formal education and the more extensive his knowledge of Russian. The female speakers in their sixties had none or very little formal education and their knowledge of Russian and/or Rumanian was very limited. All male informants had Russian as their dominant language, at least in their professional life. The sources of written language examples are given in abbreviations (see list of sources) followed by the relevant page number. The abbreviation M indicates examples quoted from Moškov's material.

2. Word order

In what follows, syntactic structures of Gagauz are compared with those of Turkish, because Gagauz is considered to be a Turkish dialect, sharing with it a lot of features at all language levels. I therefore found it quite natural to take Turkish as a basis on which the kind of deviation can be demonstrated. On the syntactic level, as mentioned above, Gagauz deviates from Turkish and from the common Turkic pattern.

Within a noun phrase, attributive elements are ordinarily pre-nominal; i.e. adjectives, demonstratives, and the indefinite article are pre-nominal as in Turkish. Within the genitive construction, the neutral word order, as in Turkish, is possessor – head noun. The possessor bears the genitive case marker and the head noun is marked with a possessive suffix.

An inverted order is possible in Turkish under certain conditions (for details, see Erdal 1999). In Gagauz, the genitive-marked possessor follows its head noun only in a few cases even in positions where it would be impossible to have the inverted order head noun – possessor in Turkish; compare examples [1-2] with their constructed Turkish counterparts.

- [1] *Bän kötülüünü istemirem senin sölemää.*
 I badness-POSS2.ACC want-NEG.PRES1SG you-GEN say-INF
 'I don't want to mention your faults.' [S, m, 32]
 Turkish: **Ben kötülüğünü istemiyorum senin söylemek.*
- [2] *Köpeji onun olaşam, annadın mi?*
 dog-DIM.POSS3SG he-GEN become-FUT1SG understand-PST.2SG QUE
 'I will be his dog (i.e. his servant), you know?' [S, m, 32]
 Turkish: **Köpeği onun olacağım anladsın mı?*

Although this inverted order can be observed among younger speakers with higher education, I did not observe it among the older people with little or no formal education. It should also be noted that, in genitive constructions with the inverted order, the possessor in most cases is a pronoun³ and the preposed head noun is clearly in focus position (see Menz 1999: 42).

Within verb phrases, adverbs can follow the verb as in Russian:

- [3] /.../ *geldii gibi gēri*
 come-CONV back
 /.../ 'as soon as [we] come back' [s, f, 59]

2.1. Word order in declarative sentences

Although the word order in declarative sentences is relatively free, there is a clear tendency to SVO word order in Gagauz; i.e. sentences with the predicate in final position are scarce in comparison to Turkish and Turkic languages in general. Direct and indirect objects as well as adverbials (examples [4-6]) usually follow the predicate.

- [4] *Onnar bilmerlar aačlii.*
 they know-NEG.PRES.3PL famine-ACC
 'They don't know the famine.' [s, f, 62]
- [5] *Büük batüm da almiš bir parča tel*
 big brother-POSS1SG and take-PERF3SG one piece wire

sikištirmiš o teli orayı
 stick-PERF3SG that wire-ACC there-DAT⁴
 'And my elder brother took a piece of wire and stuck it into it (the fire)' [s, m, 45]
- [6] *Bän onun gözlerini bilmärdim ani kara /.../*
 I his eye-PL.POSS3SG.ACC know-NEG.AOR.PSTCOP1SG that black

bän bakmadım onun suradına hiç.
 I look-NEG.PST1SG his face-POSS3SG.DAT at all
 'I didn't know his eyes, which (they were) black. /.../
 I hadn't looked at his face at all.' [s, f, 62]

Even in non-finite verb phrases of the gerundial type, which tend to be stricter with regard to word order than declarative sentences, adverbial elements can be found after their predicate (see examples [32-34] below).

³ Constructions with the same word order and pragmatic function also occur in Russian and Bulgarian.

⁴ Formally the spatial pronouns *ora*, *bura*, and *nere* are identical in accusative and dative case. As *orayı* in this example refers to a direction, I annotated it as a dative-case marked pronoun. One could also argue that a syntactic feature of Russian, namely to mark the directive with accusative, case is copied upon these pronouns. As this would only be valid for these pronouns and not for nominal directives, I think this is not the case.

Gagauz, like Turkic languages in general, is postpositional and does not copy any prepositions from the surrounding languages, like, for example, Karaim does.

3. Complex sentences

Especially in the area of complex sentences, Gagauz shows significant deviations from the genuine Turkic pattern, where the modifying non-finite clause generally precedes the modified element. Under the influence of the surrounding Slavic languages Bulgarian and Russian, Gagauz, as a result of selective copying,⁵ developed a series of semantically diverse right-branching clauses. These clauses are introduced by various conjunctions and based on finite predicates. The conjunctions used in right-branching finite sentences are almost always derived from Turkish material; globally copied conjunctions are few in number and infrequent in use.⁶ Most prominent among these conjunctions is *ani*, cognate of Old Turkic **qani*, Turkish *hani*, which, similar to *ki* in Iranian-Turkic dialects, introduces relative and complement clauses as well as clauses of purpose. Other conjunctions are, for example, combinations of interrogatives and *ani*,⁷ like *onuştan ani* ‘because’, *nečîn ani* ‘because’ to introduce clauses of reason, or interrogatives like *ačan* ‘when’, *nezaman* ‘when’ to introduce temporal clauses. Copied clause patterns are very frequent in both written and spoken Gagauz.

Left-branching nonfinite clauses based on participles and verbal nouns, i.e. relative and complement clauses of the genuine Turkic type, are extremely rare. As for adverbial clauses, gerundial clauses of the Turkic type are relatively frequent in spoken Gagauz as well, but selective copies of different types of adverbial clauses can also be observed.

3.1. Relative clauses

In Turkic languages, relative clauses are generally non-finite clauses, with a participle as predicate, and precede their head noun. In Gagauz, however, pre-posed non-finite relative clauses are quite rare and subject to certain restrictions (see Menz 1999: 76-82). Instead, relative clauses are almost exclusively postpositive finite clauses introduced by certain relative elements. In most cases, postpositive relative clauses are introduced either by *ani* or the question word *angî* ‘which’. *Ani* is consistent; i.e. it does not take case morphology, while *angî* takes third-person possessive suffixes, singular or plural in agreement with the number of the head noun, and case morphology according to its role within the relative clause. Thus *angî* as an in-

5 For the applied model of code-copying see Johanson (1992, 1993b, 2002a).

6 Gajdarži (1981) cites some examples with *raz* ‘when’ and *už* ‘as if’. I could not find any example of these junctors in my own and Moškov’s material or in the written language material I went through until now, so that the usage of these globally copied conjunctions might be an idiolectal feature. Exceptions are globally copied from Persian, already present in Old Ottoman, as for example, *čînkü* < Persian *čon keh*.

7 *Ki* can be used instead of *ani* in this position. This, however, is not very frequent in my material. According to Gajdarži (1981: 13), the usage of *ki* instead of *ani* is typical of the language of the elder generation.

roducing element in relative clauses behaves much like Russian and Bulgarian relative pronouns. In colloquial speech, relative clauses introduced by *ani* are much more frequent than those with the relative pronoun *angi*, which are most prominent in the written language.⁸ Besides *ani* and *angi*, many other interrogatives denoting semantic differences can function as introducing elements in relative clauses, see below. They are, however, not very frequent in either written or spoken language.

The constructed examples [7-9] illustrate the possible variations of the two main relativization strategies in Gagauz:

- [7] a. *adam ani geler*
 man ani come-PRES3SG
- b. *adam, angişi geler*
 man which-POSS3SG come-PRES3SG
 ‘the man who comes’
- [8] a. *adam ani gördüm*
 man ani see-PST.1SG
- b. *adam angişini gördüm*
 man which-POSS3SG.ACC see-PST.1SG
 ‘the man whom I saw’
- [9] a. *adam ani para verdim*
 man ani money give-PST.1SG
- b. *adam angişina para verdim*
 man which-poss3s.DAT money give-PST.1SG
 ‘the man to whom I gave money’

As can be seen in the above examples, *ani* can always be replaced by *angi*. Note, however, that example [9a] is only possible in Gagauz spoken in Bulgaria. In the written language of Moldova *ani* is used as an introducing element for relative clauses with co-reference between head noun and first or second actant of the relative clause only, just like *это* in Russian relative clauses. For relative constructions showing co-reference between the head noun and third actant or adverbials of the relative clause, either *angişi* or, in the case of spatial adverbials, *nere-* + location case morphology is used. In other words, relativization of an NP of any grammatical relation to the relative clause predicate with *ani* is possible in Gagauz of Bulgaria. In Gagauz of Moldova, relativization with *ani* is only possible if the head noun NP is the subject or direct object of the relative clause.

In my spoken language material, there are only examples of *ani*-introduced relative clauses showing co-reference between first (example [10]) or second actant (example [11]) and the head

8 There is also a correlation between extensive knowledge of Russian and the usage of the relative pronoun *angi(şi)*. Thus in the language of the well-educated younger generation, relative clauses introduced by *angi(şi)* are frequent, while they are absent in the language of the elder generation.

noun or a possessive relationship between head noun and subject (example [13]) of the relative clause.

As can be seen in example [9a], it is not necessary to have a pro-element within the relative clause representing the co-referential element in the appropriate case.⁹ In other Turkish dialects on the Balkans, such as, for example, the dialect of Vidin described by Németh (1965), the overall introducing element is *ne* ‘what’. A personal pronoun in the appropriate case also is not obligatory, even if the head noun is the indirect object or an adverbial in the relative clause. In Bulgarian however, which without doubt served as a model for the copying of finite relative clauses, a resumptive pronoun is obligatory if the head noun is the indirect object or an adverbial of the relative clause predicate.

Usually, the relative clause immediately follows its head noun.¹⁰ In contrast to finite main clauses, there seems to be at least a strong tendency within the relative clauses to put the predicate in clause-final position, as can be seen in example [10]. This, however, is not obligatory, as shown by example [12].

- [10] *Birdä benim komuşum*
 finally my neighbor-POSS1SG

ani bilä gittik hesabı oldu.
ani together go-PST1PL realize-PST3SG
 ‘Finally my neighbor, with whom I had gone (there) realized (what had happened).’ [S, m, 45]

Note that, in the above example, the head-noun is part of the subject of the relative clause predicate, which, however, is opaque in the English translation.

- [11] *Onnar alerlar bizim Moldavyanin*
 they buy-PRES.3PL our Moldova-GEN

o şarabini ani biz içmeriz.
 that wine-POSS3.ACC ani we drink-NEG.PRES.1PL
 ‘They buy the wine of our Moldova that we don’t drink.’ [S, m, 45]

9 Neither in Moškov’s and Zajączkowski’s nor in my own material, is there any example of a relative clause with pro-element to be found, so it is at least quite uncommon to have one. I do not know, however, if it is impossible to have a pro-element to mark the role of the head within the relative clause.

10 This is also valid for cases where the head noun is coreferential with the ‘possessor’ of a complement or a satellite of the relative clause predicate. This shows that, although Gagauz has copied the Russian relative clause pattern almost exactly in most cases, it has nevertheless kept the Turkic pattern implying the relative clause cannot be separated from its head noun. Compare (1) Russian and (2) Gagauz:

- (1) *učitel’, syn kotorogo rabotaet v teatre*
 teacher son rel-MASC.SG.GEN work-PRES3SG in theater-OBL
 (2) *üürediji, angışinin oolu işleer teatruda*
 teacher rel-POSS3SG.GEN son-POSS3SG work-PRES3SG theater-LOC
 ‘the teacher, whose son works in the theater’

- [12] *Da düšündä göreer diivesini,*
and dream-POSS3SG.LOC see-AOR3SG calf-POSS3.ACC
ani vermiş Allah.
ani give-PST3SG God
'But in his dream, he sees the calf that God gave to him.' [S, M 6]
- [13] *bir inek ani az südü var*
one cow *ani* little milk-POSS3SG exist
'a cow that gives little milk' [S, f, 59]

Ani-introduced relative clauses may precede their head noun if the head noun co-refers with the first actant of the relative clause predicate. Examples of this construction are absent from my material, but can be found in Moškov's material (example [14]). Gajdarži (1981: 20) states that this construction has a colloquial character and is possible only with co-reference between head noun and first-actant of the relative clause. According to Gajdarži, the head-noun can be any element within its clause. His only example, however, exactly like the examples we found in Moškov's material shows the head-noun in subject position within its clause.

- [14] *Ani iki muntä mamaliga*
ani two hill porridge
aazında varmiş, o deer.
mouth-POSS3SG.LOC existing-INFCOP he say-AOR3SG
'The one who had two hills of porridge in his mouth said:' [S, M 107]
- [15] *Ani bana el verdi,*
ani I-DAT hand give-PST3SG
o adam kolhozun kontabili.
that man kolkhoz-GEN book-keeper-POSS3SG
'The man who gave me his hand is the book-keeper of the kolkhoz.'
[S, Gajdarži 1981, 20]

Relative clauses introduced by the question adverb *angi* are most frequent in the written language. *Angi* signals subordination and agrees with the head noun with regard to singular or plural. It is case-marked according to the role within the relative clause the head noun co-refers with, see examples [16] and [17]. Thus in general it shows the same properties as the Russian relative pronoun *kotoryj*.

- [16] *Yahudi o bir halk hangisi kalmış.*
Jew that one people which-POSS3SG remain-PERF3SG
'The Jews, those are a people who remained (unchanged).' [S, m, 32]

As can be seen below in example [17], relative clauses introduced by a relative pronoun can be subordinated to one and the same head noun and coordinated with each other. This is a

remarkable difference from, for example, *ki*-introduced relative clauses in Turkic languages influenced by Modern Persian (see Johanson 1975 and Kiral 1997).

- [17] *Aşaadaki laflara bulunuz otürlü formalar,*
 below word-PL.DAT find-IMP2PL those form-PL

angülarında K konsonu bitkidä
 which-POSS3PL.LOC K consonant-ACC end-LOC

düşmeer hem angülarında düşer.
 fall-NEG.PRES3SG and which-POSS3PL.LOC fall-PRES3SG

‘For the words listed below, find those forms in which the final consonant K is not dropped and those in which it is.’ [w, GD7: 54]

Examples [18] and [19] illustrate the usage of various interrogatives as introducing elements for relative clauses. These are spatial interrogatives built on *ner-* + spatial case morphology for spatial relations, *ne* ‘what’ and *kim* ‘who’. *Kim* is used as a relative element only when the head noun is a pronoun referring to a human being, whereas *ne* is used when the pronominal head noun refers to a non-human.

- [18] *Üürekten inanirdim sanirdim olmali*
 heart-ABL believe-AOR.PSTCOP.1SG think-AOR.PSTCOP.1SG be-NEC

bir öbür dünya neredä insanlarin janlari
 one other world where-LOC human being-PL.GEN soul-PL.POSS3SG

neredä suçlular yanařak / burada kabaatsizlar
 where-LOC sinner-PL burn-FUT3SG here innocent-PL

bu yanda onnar kim fena yaptı.
 that side-LOC those who bad make-PST3SG

‘From my heart I believed, I thought there must be another world, where the souls of the people (are), where the guilty ones will burn. Here (are) the innocent, on that side those who sinned.’ [S, m, 67]

- [19] *O hep düşünürmiş nasıl*
 he always think-AOR.INFCOP3SG how

yapsin onu ne simarladı padiřah.
 do-OPT3SG that-ACC what command-PST3SG sultan

‘He was thinking all the time how he should do what the sultan commanded.’ [w, BS 131]

3.2. Complement clauses

As a rule, complement clauses are postpositive finite clauses introduced by *ani*, as in example [20], or rarely by *ki*. The latter can be found as a stylistic variant of *ani* in the written language in order to avoid a frequent usage of *ani* in one and the same complex sentence.

- [20] *Yesap alärlar ani altında maşinanın*
 notice-AOR3PL ani under-POSS3SG.LOC car-GEN
asili bu yavru kaldı.
 hang-ADJ this child stay-PST3SG
 ‘They notice that this child was being dragged by the car.’ [s, m, 45]

Two complement clauses introduced by *ani* can be subordinated to one and the same predicate and coordinated by *hem* ‘and’. As in the relative clauses, such a coordination of complement clauses is impossible in Turkic languages influenced by modern Persian where *ki* is the introducing element.

- [21] *Kızı duyardı ani gözleri*
 girl feel-AOR.PSTCOP3SG that eye-PL.POSS3SG
yaşlan dolardı, hem ani darsä
 tear-WITH fill-AOR.PSTCOP3SG and that say-COND
taa bir kerä ‘boba’, oı dayanamayağak.
 more one time father she stand-NEG.ABIL-FUT3SG
 ‘The girl felt that her eyes were filling with tears and that if she said ‘father’ again, she wouldn’t be able to stand it.’ [w, AD 6]

Complement clauses of the Turkic type, based on verbal nouns, are very scarce both in spoken ([22]) and written ([23]) language, but not completely absent, as can be seen in the following examples.

- [22] *Buradan stadyona kaa bän üüzeğem*
 here-ABL stadium.DAT to I swim-FUT1SG
a ğeri gelmem deil belli.
 but back come-NR.POSS1SG not clear
 ‘I can swim from here to the stadium, but it’s not certain that I will come back.’
 [s, m, 45]
- [23] *Sevinärdi benim gelmemä.*
 be happy-AOR.PSTCOP3SG I-GEN come-NR.POSS1SG.DAT
 ‘She was happy that I came.’ [w, AD 11]

Example [22] is our only example of this type within a corpus of approximately 30 pages. It shows the typical Turkic word order in that the subject clause precedes its main clause. In the

written-language example [23], on the other hand, the object clause follows its main clause, which is the dominant order among the few written-language examples for non-finite complement clauses. It should also be noted that most of the examples I have found in the written language are complements of the verb *sevin-* ‘to rejoice’.

3.3. Adverbial clauses

There are basically two syntactically different types of adverbial clauses in Gagauz: subordinated non-finite clauses of the Turkic type and coordinated or subordinated finite clauses, which are selective copies of Slavic models. Among the former, it is remarkable that converb clauses are very frequent both in spoken and written language.

Clauses of purpose. The predicate of clauses of purpose is in the infinitive if the subject is shared (example [24]) and in the optative if the subordinated clause has its own subject (example [25]). In the spoken language, in most cases the particle *deyni*,¹¹ which functionally corresponds to Turkish *diye*, immediately follows the predicate of the subordinated clause. Furthermore, *ani* or *ki* can additionally introduce this type of clause.

While most clauses of purpose employ both *ani/ki* and *deyni* as in the cited examples, they can optionally omit either if the predicate of the subordinated clause is in the optative.

- [24] *Onu alardik da atardik*
 that-ACC take-AOR.PSTCOP.1PL and throw-AOR.PSTCOP.1PL
aazimiza ani ölmemää deyni
 mouth-POSS1PL.DAT ani die-NEG.INF deyni
 ‘We took it and threw it into our mouths in order not to die.’ [s, f, 70]

- [25] *Centralisovani bir gosudarstva*
 centralized one state
upravlyat etsin bizimnän ani biz yaşiyalim deyni
 govern AUX-OPT3SG we-WITH ani we live-OPT1PL deyni
 ‘A centralized state should govern us so that we can live.’ [s, m, 65]

In the written language, clauses of purpose can either precede or follow their matrix clause. In the spoken language, however, the first option is uncommon.

Clauses of purpose subordinated to verbs of motion are normally based on the infinitive, as in Turkish.¹² The only difference between the Turkish and the Gagauz construction lies in the fact that the Gagauz non-finite subordinated clause usually follows its main clause. Within the subordinated clause, however, we usually find OV word order:

¹¹ This particle is a petrified converb form of the verb *de-* ‘to say’. It can also be used as a postposition meaning ‘for’.

¹² The infinitive *-mAA* goes back to *-mAk + DAT*.

- [26] *Gittiler komşuları çağırmaa.*
 go-PST.3PL neighbor-PL.ACC call-INF
 ‘They went to call the neighbors.’ [S, m, 67]

Clauses of reason. There are two basic models to build clauses of reasons in Gagauz. One is the non-finite clause of the ‘Turkic’ type, based on a predicate in the indicative mood followed by the particle *deyni*, the other a finite clause introduced by various conjunctions. The *deyni* type is very common in most Turkic languages. In the Turkish vernacular, for example, this type is very frequent. In Gagauz, however, its frequency has decreased in favour of the copied finite type.

- [27] *Ama onnarın familyası X. deyni*
 but they-GEN surname-POSS3SG X. deyni

onu fronda çağırırlar.
 he-ACC front-DAT call-PRES.3PL
 ‘But because their surname is X., they call him to the front.’
 (i.e. because he bears a Russian surname, he has to join the military) [S, m, 67]

Non-finite clauses of reason can either precede or follow their main clause. In some cases, clauses of this type are additionally introduced by a conjunction, mostly *neçin* ‘because’. This element, however, can be omitted without any semantic differences. If *deyni* is omitted, the actual semantic content of the clause can only be interpreted from the context.

Finite clauses of reason are introduced by several elements. These are, for example, *onun için* ‘therefore’ and *onuştan* ‘because of that’, *zerä* ‘for’, *çünkü* ‘because’, *neçin* ‘because’ sometimes accompanied by *ki/ani*, and *ani*. These elements signal various degrees of semantic expressiveness. Whereas in most cases clauses of reasons of this type follow their main clause, clauses introduced by *ani*, *çünkü*, and *zerä* can also be prepositive (see example [29]).

- [28] *Bouldum zär ne /*
 drown-PST1S of course what /

onuştan bän korkiim hep sudan
 therefore I fear-PRES1SG always water-ABL
 ‘I drowned sure / Therefore I always fear water.’ [S, m, 45]

- [29] *Ani gagauz yinan yok onnara.*
 for Gagauz confidence Is.not they-DAT
 ‘Because they are Gagauz, [they] have no confidence in them.’ [S, m, 43]

Temporal clauses with ačan. For the introduction of temporal clauses based on finite predicates, the Turkish element *ačan* ‘when’ is often used as the conjunction. Although *ačan* is derived from the Turkic interrogative *qačan*, it never introduces questions. The predicate is in the indicative mood. As can be seen in example [30], an element of the temporal clause—mostly, though not always the subject—can be extracted, so that it actually precedes the conjunction and appears in topic position.

- [30] *A boba ačan geldi*
 but father when come-PST3SG

hič ne tuz yemišlär ne tuzlanmišlar.
 nothing neither salt eat-PERF.3PL nor be.salted-PERF.3PL
 ‘But when the father came in, nothing, as if nothing was going on.’ [s, m, 45]
- [31] *Ačan gördü ani šindänsoram*
 when see-PST3SG that at last

yumušadim brakti beni.
 become.weak-PST.1SG let.go-PST3SG I-ACC
 ‘When he saw that I had become weak at last, he let me go.’ [s, m, 45]

Besides *ačan*, the question adverbs *nezaman* ‘when’ and *nevakit* ‘when’ as well as *niĵä* ‘when, as soon as’ and *nasil* ‘when, as soon as’ can introduce temporal clauses (Menz 1999: 118-121).

Converb clauses. Whereas the frequency of non-finite nominal clauses has significantly decreased in modern Gagauz under the influence of the surrounding dominant Slavic languages, non-finite adverbial sentences based on converbs are still very frequent. Despite the fact that Russian and Bulgarian have only one converb form, the inventory of converbs in Gagauz is relatively intact.

Even in the spoken language, several converb forms are used to form subordinated clauses. Most prominent among these are the primary converbs in *-ip*, *-erek* (examples [32] and [33]), and the secondary converbs *-diinän* and *-dii gibi* formed by means of participles + case marking or postpositions (examples [34] and [35]). In most cases, a converb clause precedes its matrix clause as in Turkish.

- [32] *Bän her zaman gidip ašaa ičerim birer stakan su.*
 I every time go-CONV down drink-PRES.1SG one glass water
 ‘Every time I go under, I drink a glass of water.’ [s, m, 43]
- [33] *Čiktim / aalayarak niĵä ušak čiktim.*
 go.out-PST1SG cry-CONV like child go.out-PST1SG
 ‘I went out / crying like a child I went out.’ [s, m, 43]
- [34] *Bän uzandıynan almaa aldı*
 I reach-CONV take-INF take-PST3SG

altımdan škemneĵii / bän bašašaa düštüm.
 under-POSS1SG.ABL stool-DIM.ACC I headlong fall-PST.1SG
 ‘When I reached out to take (it), she took away the stool from under me / I fell headlong.’ [s, f, 58]
- [35] *Yaamur yaadıĵ gibi o su durer.*
 rain rain-CONV that water stand-PRES3SG
 ‘When it rains, that water remains.’ [s, m, 43]

As illustrated in example [32] and [34], elements of the subordinated clause can follow its predicate. This is especially common with spatial adverbials.

As was illustrated above, in Gagauz Turkic nominal clauses are more or less replaced by selectively copied finite clause patterns. In the field of adverbial clauses built on converbs, however, Turkic clause patterns show significant stability despite the fact that this pattern is not very common in the surrounding languages. This could be due to the fact that the latter pattern is more 'attractive' than the former and thus not easily replaced by a copied pattern (on 'attractiveness', see Johanson 1992: 199-206, 2002). Converbs are semantically and functionally relatively transparent and the respective converb signals a special function and meaning, whereas participles and the infinitive serve for more than one function and in more than one sentence type.

Sources

AD = *Ana dili: Literatura okumakları hem grammatika: 6-ji klass için*. Kişinev 1991.

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M = Moşkov 1904.