Analytic modal constructions in Gagauz
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1. Introduction
Gagauz is a Turkish variety that has been spoken for centuries in a non-Turkic environment in the Republic of Moldova, the Ukraine, and Bulgaria. Due to language-contact phenomena it shows significant deviations from Turkic patterns, most obvious on the syntactic level. In what follows, I will deal with a set of modal constructions expressing volition, necessity, ability and possibility. Expressions for volition and necessity are formed in Gagauz analytically using the same lexical and morphological material as their Turkish counterparts but deviate in respect to constituent order and/or frequency. For ability and possibility on the other hand, Turkish uses the synthetic construction in -Ebil-. This modal marker can be found in Gagauz too, but serves only to express ability, whereas for possibility Gagauz has invented new analytically built constructions copied from a Bulgarian pattern. The modal shades of finite predicates such as the prospective in -(y)EğEk and the low focal intraterminal present in -r will not be dealt with in my presentation. They seem, however, to exhibit the same modal connotations as their Turkish counterparts.

2. Modal constructions in Bulgarian and Russian and the infinitive
Gagauz has an infinitive marker in -MÄÄ, which is a contracted form of -mÄk plus dative see Pokrovskaja (1964, 162), and is frequently used in cases where Turkish uses the infinitive in -mEk. In addition, Gagauz shows a set of syntactic patterns copied from Bulgarian or Russian. This led to a significant decrease in the use of the verbal noun in -mÄ plus possessive marker, both in modal constructions where the modal predicate and embedded verb have different subjects, and in complement clauses.

In Bulgarian as well as in Russian, modal constructions are formed with a modal verb or auxiliary and an embedded verb. In Russian the embedded part in same-subject constructions consists of an infinitive, and a verb in the subjunctive in cases with different subjects. Bulgarian on the other hand uses in all cases a so-called da-construction consisting of the particle da and a finite verb. This construction without a modal marker serves as an optative or quasi-imperative similar to the usage of the optative mood in Turkish as in the first example.

(1) Da piše
   ti write3s
   ‘Let him/her write.’ (Rudin 1986, 56)

3. Volition
To express volition, Gagauz uses among other devices the modal verb istä- ‘want’, as does Turkish. In the modern language of Moldova one can observe a distinction
between constructions with same subject and those with different subjects.

3.1. Istä- + same subject
As mentioned above, in cases where the modal and embedded verb share the same subject, i.e. constructions with subject control, where Turkish uses the infinitive in -mEk, Gagauz in most cases uses the infinitive in -mÄÄ. The main difference between the Turkish and the Gagauz construction lies in the constituent order, which is always left-branching in Turkish but usually right-branching in Gagauz, as can be seen in example (2) and its translation into Turkish.

\[(2) \text{bir iš isterim sormaa} \quad TX^6 \]
\[\text{one thing want-PRS1SG ask-INF} \]
\[\text{‘One thing do I want to ask.’} \]
\[\text{Turkish: bir şey sormak istiyorum one thing ask-INF want-PRS1SG} \]

A left-branching construction, as in example (3), is also possible but is not frequent compared to the right-branching one.

\[(3) O \text{ uyumaa ister pek} \quad TX \]
\[\text{she sleep-INF want-PRS3SG very} \]
\[\text{‘She really wants to sleep’} \]

Another difference between the Turkish and Gagauz constructions is that whereas in the left-branching Turkish construction all complements of the infinitive precede the whole modal construction. In Gagauz on the other hand both in the left- and in the right-branching construction complements of the infinitive can come between it and the modal verb: compare examples (4) and (5) with their translations into Turkish. In example (4) the complement precedes the infinitive and is thus in focus position.

\[(4) \text{ister bolnicaya gitmää} \quad T3 266 \]
\[\text{want-PRS3SG hospital-DAT go-INF} \]
\[\text{‘She wants to go to the hospital.’} \]
\[\text{Turkish: Hastahaneye gitmek istiyor.} \]
\[\text{\textbf{(5) kesmää bán onu bu sïrada istemedim} \quad T3 176} \]
\[\text{cut-INF I it-ACC this celebration-LOC want-NEG-DL.PST-1SG} \]
\[\text{‘I didn’t want to slaughter it at this celebration.’} \]
\[\text{Turkish: Ben onu bu düğünde kesmek istemedim.} \]

Besides the infinitive in same-subject constructions in some cases we can observe that the subordinated predicate is in the optative mood, as in example (6) from the modern language of Moldova.

\[(6) \text{Isterim öleyim /.../} \quad TX \]
\[\text{want-PRS1SG die-OPT1SG} \]
\[\text{‘I want to die /.../.’} \]
Whereas this is very scarce in both the spoken and written language of Moldova, it accounts for nearly half the cases of same-subject constructions found in Zajączkowski’s (1966) material from Bulgaria. In my own material from Bulgaria the infinitive construction is the marginal one and the construction with a subordinated predicate in the optative mood clearly dominates. Example (7) from an informant from Varna illustrates the use of both infinitive and optative.

(6) kardašîn burda mî istee kalmaa? Bul. TX
    brother-POSS2SG here Q want-PRS3SG stay-INF

istemâa. Gelîn senäistee yasasin Sofyada
    want-NEG-PRS3SG coming year want-PRS3SG live-OPT3SG Sofia-LOC

‘Does your brother want to stay here? No, next year he wants to live in Sofia.’

The more frequent use of the infinitive in Moldova is clearly an effect of the influence of the Russian pattern for same-subject constructions based on the infinitive, whereas the increasing frequency of the optative mood in cases with same subject is a result of the fact that Bulgarian uses a da-construction in which the subordinated predicate is an inflected verb to express volition. Zajączkowski’s and my own material from Bulgaria, however, clearly demonstrate that the Gagauz variety spoken there has retained the infinitive in these constructions.

3.2. Istä- + different subjects

In cases with different subjects Gagauz, instead of the infinitive in -mÄ and a possessive as subject marker, uses the optative, as in example (8). All examples in my material from the spoken language of Moldova are right-branching.

(8) Istemišläri sa:de onnarï i fronda yollamasīnar. TX
    want-MIŠ-PST-3PL only they-ACC front-DAT send-NEG-OPT-3PL

‘They only wanted them not to send them to the front.’

In colloquial Turkish, different-subject constructions in which the complemented predicate is in the optative mood can be both left-branching, as in gitsin istedim ‘I wanted him to go’, or right-branching, as in ben istemiyorum köy okuluna gitsin ‘I don’t want him to go to a village school’. This construction is, however, far from being as frequent as its Gagauz counterpart and mostly displays a third person subject of the subordinated predicate. Nevertheless, its existence in Turkish could be one factor behind the complete loss of the infinitive construction in modern Gagauz.

In a few cases the embedded verb is introduced in Gagauz by one of the complementizers ki or ani. This happens both with identical and non-identical subjects. Constructions of this type are found, with a significantly lesser frequency, in colloquial Turkish too.

4. Necessity

Gagauz, like Turkish, has a necessitative marker in -mElI. This synthetic device to express necessity is, however, very infrequent in spoken and written Gagauz. In my material and in the modern written language it is used only in the petrified adverbial form olma‘ı ‘probably’. Pokrovskaja (1964) states that it is only used together with
personal pronouns and is itself not marked for person, i.e. the paradigm is *bän gelmel*i 'I must come', *sän gelmel*i you must come’ and so on. In Moškov’s data from Bessarabia on the other hand we encounter *-mElI*- forms with personal markers, as illustrated in example (9). In addition, one of my informants cited to me the whole paradigm with personal markers. Such forms are, however, absent in my data. In my opinion, the question of whether the necessitative form can be marked with personal markers may be a matter of dialect.6

(9) /.../ siz a:ç olmalixiniz Moškov, 112
    '...you hungry be-NEC-2PL
        ‘...you must be hungry.’

A construction with the modal predicate *la:zïm* is very frequently used to express necessity. In impersonal constructions this is used with the infinitive in –*mÄÄ*, as in example (10), which shows the same word order as its Turkish counterpart.

(10) işlemää la:zïm T7 38 (Turkish: çalısha lazïm)
    work-INF necessary
    ‘One must work’

In agentive constructions the embedded verb is in the optative mood and the right-branching neutral constituent order is one in which the modal predicate precedes its complement as in example (11).7

(11) laam köysunnar rengin T3 37
    necessary lay-OPT-3PL X-ray
    ‘They must X-ray (her).’

Example (12) shows that this word order can be inverted. The subject is expressed by a personal pronoun and in these cases always in the nominative. In the written language there is a strong tendency to express the subject explicitly.

(12) o göstersin la:zïm ani o başka adam TX
    he show-OPT3SG necessary that he different man
    ‘He must show that he is a different man.’

Tense markers such as the copula forms *idi* and *olaɡęk* or the inferentiality marker *imiš* are added to *la:zïm* in the third person singular, and personal markers are added to the embedded predicate. This is shown in examples (13) and (14). The prospective marker *olaɡęk* does not appear in my spoken-language material.

(13) Sän lääzïm olaɡęk gidäsîn bîrdan SB 151
    younecessary be-FUT3SG go-OPT-2SG from here
    ‘You will have to go away.’

(14) o la:zïmdï herzaman okusun T6 284
    he necessary-IDI3SG every time read-OPT3SG
    ‘He had to read each time (his speech).’
In this construction only copula elements, adverbs and possibly the question particle come between la:žim and the finite verb in the optative mood. In impersonal constructions on the other hand complements of the embedded verb can stand between it and la:žim as in example (15).

(15) önğedän la:žim anama bobama sormaa  
     at first necessary mother-POSS1SG-DAT father-POSS1SG-DAT ask-INF  
     ‘First one must ask my parents.’

Modality is negated by means of the negative copula diil, Turkish de©il, which, as in example (16), always precedes the modal predicate. In theory a negative verb should also be possible; this is, however, absent in my material.

(16) guvää diil laam koymaa TX  
     bridegroom-DAT not necessary put-INF  
     ‘One does not need to put it in front of the bridegroom.’

Another possible construction for expressing necessity is formed by la:žim and an infinitive and a pronominal subject in the dative. This construction which is a selective copy of the Russian type with modal nužno plus infinitive and a pronominal subject in the dative is not very frequent and seems to be used mainly in the written language.

(17) Sana lääzïm olağëk aaramaa eni konak SB 151  
     you-DAT necessary be-FUT3SG search-INF new lodging  
     ‘You will have to look for a new lodging.’

5. Ability and possibility

The synthetic form in -(y)Ebil, negated -(y)EmE-, in Turkish expresses ability as well as possibility. This modal marker is used in Gagauz only to express ability. It is worth noting that in my spoken-language data almost all examples are in the negative ability mood, which in Turkish, according to Boeschoten (1990, 87), ”/.../ exhibits a tendency to express stronger modalities than its indicative counterpart ‘yAbil=’” In my opinion this is also valid for Gagauz.

(18) otuzdokuz gündä üürenememiš Ş  
     39 day-LOC learn-NEG.ABIL-MIŠ.PST3SG one christmas song  
     ‘He couldn’t learn a single Christmas song in 39 days.’

5.2. Possibility

To express possibility Gagauz has invented a construction consisting of the predicative var ‘exist’ and the question words nasil or niğê ‘how’ plus a lexical verb either in the optative mood as in example (19) or, in impersonal constructions, in the infinitive as in (20).

(19) var nasil su kabuletseinnär T2 177  
     POSSIB water get-OPT-3PL  
     ‘They can get water (from a fountain).’
Negative possibility is expressed by yok and the same construction, while the negation of the lexical verb negates the lexical content: compare examples (21) and (22).

(21) üç kerä sira yok niğä yapiim
"It is impossible for me to make three celebrations."

(22) Fasıl, nasıl bän var nasıydı gör Meyim seni /.../ SB 70
"It is strange how I could stand not to see you /.../."

In my opinion this construction for expressing possibility, which is unique in Gagauz, is a copy of a very similar Bulgarian construction consisting of modal ima ‘exist’, negated as njama, and kak ‘how’, and a da-construction. As can be seen from the afore-mentioned constructions of volition and necessity, the Gagauz optative mood is often used in selective copies where the Bulgarian original uses a da-construction or Russian uses a subjunctive. The main difference between original and copy is that in the Bulgarian construction the first element ima/njama ‘exist’ can be marked for person, whereas this is never the case in Gagauz. One does, however, note a strong tendency to use the personal pronoun in the first and second person, immediately preceding or following the modal marker, as seen in (27b) and (24).

Anteriority and indirectivity markers, as well as the question-particle, follow var/yok in most cases. Only in a few examples from the written language does the anteriority marker idi follow nasıl: compare examples (23) and (24).

(23) Bu laflarî vardi nasıl sölesin saade en iy dost.
"Only the best friend could say these words."

(24) Nasıl bän var nasıldı amazlayım onu /.../ SB 50
"How could I have betrayed him ..."

The neutral word order in this construction is modality marker preceding the embedded predicate. An inverted word order with a preceding embedded predicate is very rare in my material. All examples of it are in impersonal constructions, as in (25). All in all I found five examples, of which four have a sentence initial-complement of the lexical verb, which is thus in focus position.

(25) her bir işi dä resimlemää yok niğä
"You cannot take a photograph of every single thing."

Var nasıl and yok nasıl can appear without a lexical verb, with a meaning similar to Turkish olur and olmaz. This usage is parallel to Bulgarian ima kak and njama kak without an embedded predicate, see Rudin (1986, 191).

I could not observe any difference in meaning between the usage of nasıl and niğä in these constructions. Some of the informants seemed to prefer one to the other, while others used both of them. However, nasıl seems to be more frequent. Speakers who prefer niğä in this combination tend to use a contracted form varïnäga.

In a very similar type of construction, which also bears modal connotations, instead of nasıl and niğä a set of question elements, such as kim ‘who’, naşey and ne ‘what’, nereyä ‘where’, neredä ‘where’, neredän ‘from where’, can occur. For this too we find a parallel construction in Bulgarian: compare examples (27a and b).

(27) a. Imam kakvo da çeta.          Rudin (1986, 156)  
   have-1s what to read-1s
   ‘I have something to read.’
   b. bân yok naşey yapïm                  T3 63
   I not exist what do-OPT1SG
   ‘There is nothing I can do’.

A difference, however, is that in Gagauz uses almost exclusively negative constructions with yok, as in example (27b).

Bulgarian ima denotes both ‘have’ and ‘be’. Since Turkish has no verbs expressing ‘have’ and ‘be’, var and yok are used in these constructions.

The same type of construction can be found in Turkish dialects of Bulgaria (see, for example, Németh’s material (1965) from the Turkish dialect of Vidin), whereas the modal construction with nasıl and niğä seems to be unique in Gagauz.

Conclusion
As can be seen from the material presented here, Gagauz has copied Slavic combinational patterns on to Turkic material. The invention of the modal constructions with var nasıl and yok nasıl by copying a Bulgarian pattern does not mean, as Pokrovskaja (1978, 104) states it, that Gagauz has invented a synonymous form that replaces the synthetic modality marker in -(y)Abil-. Rather, it has split the expressions for ability and possibility into two forms.

Notes
1 For the terminology employed see Johanson 1992 and 1993.
2 Some works on Gagauz state, that Gagauz has, as a result of language contact with Bulgarian, replaced its infinitive constructions with the optative mood, see Hetzer (1993). Pokrovskaja (1978: 91ff.) lists in paradigms for ‘want and ‘must’ the optative forms as the primary strategy and the infinitive as a variant. The infinitive in –maki clearly is very rare and mostly used as a derivative suffix which forms nouns, as for example in yasamak ‘life’. In this paper I will show that Gagauz does not lack infinitive constructions but employs them frequently, albeit exclusively in impersonal or same-subject modal constructions.
3 This Bulgarian pattern could be one explanation for the fact that Gagauz uses the optative in cases where Turkish uses a da-construction. However, in Turkic languages influenced by Iranian one can also observe the usage of the optative mood in modal constructions; see for example Bulut, in this volume and Kıral (1997).
Most of the cited examples are taken from my own material, gathered in 1996 in the Republic of Moldova. Other examples stem from Moškov (1904) or books published in Gagauz. The abbreviation SB after an example refers to Stepan Bulgar’s book, see references. TX refers to my own unpublished material, TT2 - 6 refers to texts published in Menz (1999). Spoken language material is given in italics.

Note that in this utterance the object bir iš is pre-located and in focus position. The unmarked order would be išerim sormaa bir iš.

This could also be valid for the -DIK-form in adnominal position; see Menz (1999).

Laam in this example is a colloquial form of lāzïm.

References


