

## A Note on *-mAdAn (önce)*\*

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### Abstract

The paper discusses the morphological make-up of the converbial ending *-mAdAn* in Turkish adverbial clauses denoting temporal antecedence (*before*-clauses) and negative manner (*without*-clauses). In clauses denoting temporal antecedence, the converbial ending is optionally followed by the postposition *önce* 'before'. The argument presented in the paper is that the converbial ending *-mAdAn* contains a negative marker *-mA* only in clauses where it is not followed by *önce*, while when the postposition follows, it contains the homophonous nominalizing suffix instead. Evidence for the claim comes on the one hand from the fact that *-mAdAn önce* clauses do not license negative polarity items (but *-mAdAn* clauses do), and on the other, from the fact that *-mAdAn önce* clauses allow an addition of a negation marker to the converb (but *-mAdAn* clauses do not).

*Keywords:* *-mAdAn (önce)*, temporal adverbial clauses, converb, negation, NPI's

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### 1 Introduction

The topic of this paper is the morphological structure of the Turkish converbial ending *-mAdAn*.<sup>1</sup> This ending is found in two types of adverbial clauses. On the

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the paper, I refer to the form in question as *converbial ending* rather than as *converbial suffix* or simply *converb*. This is motivated by the intuition that the term *converb* refers to the form that contains both the ending and the verb to which it is attached, while the term *suffix* appears inadequate given that *-mAdAn* is morphologically complex.

one hand, it appears in adverbial clauses denoting temporal antecedence, which correspond in meaning to English clauses headed by the subordinator *before*. In such clauses, the converb is optionally followed by the postposition *önce* ‘before’. An example of such an adverbial clause is given in (1).

- (1) Müdür tatil -e çık-ma -dan (önce) ev -in -i  
 director vacation-DAT go -NEG-ABL before home-3.SG.-ACC  
 ara -dı -m  
 seek-PAST-1.SG.  
 ‘Before the director went on vacation, I called his home.’  
 Kornfilt (1997: 70)

The second type of adverbial clauses in which *-mAdAn* appears denotes negative manner. Such clauses are parallel in meaning to English clauses headed by *without* (Göksel and Kerslake, 2005) and they disallow the presence of the postposition *önce*. An adverbial clause denoting negative manner is given in (2).

- (2) Ayşe-yi ziyaret et -me -den (\*önce) ev -e git-ti -m.  
 Ayşe-ACC visit do-NEG-ABL before home-DAT go -PAST-1SG  
 ‘I went home without visiting Ayşe.’

The ending *-mAdAn* is morphologically complex: it consists of the ablative case marker *-dAn*, and the morpheme *-mA*. As is obvious from the glosses in the examples (1) and (2), the latter is, in the literature on Turkish, classified as the negative suffix *-mA*, rather than the nominalization marker, which has the same form (Göksel and Kerslake, 2005: 412; Kornfilt, 1997: 70; Lewis, 1967: 182). The most convincing evidence that the *-mA* in *-mAdAn* is indeed the negation marker, rather than the homophonous nominalization suffix, comes from the stress pattern of words (converbs) containing *-mAdAn*. Although the word stress in Turkish by-and-large (although not exclusively) falls on the word-final syllable (Lewis, 1967: 21; Sezer, 1981: 61), converbs containing the ending *-mAdAn* receive stress on the syllable *preceding* the ending, as the capitalization in examples in (3) indicates. In these examples, as well as in (1) and (2), the main stress falls on the syllable preceding *-mAdAn*, rather than on the word-final syllable (*-dAn*). This is so both in temporal clauses (regardless of whether the converbial ending *-mAdAn* is followed by *önce* or not), as shown in (3) and in negative manner clauses, as shown in (4).

- (3) a. Sorun -lar ben GEL -me -den (önce) başla -mış.  
 problem-PL I come-NEG-ABL before begin-EVID  
 ‘The problems seem to have started before I came.’  
 Göksel and Kerslake (2005: 417)
- b. \*Sorun -lar ben gel -me -DEN (önce) başla -mış.  
 problem-PL I come-NEG-ABL before begin-EVID  
*Intended:* ‘The problems seem to have started before I came.’
- (4) a. Toplantı, Ali konu -yu AÇ -ma -dan bit -ti.  
 meeting Ali topic-ACC open-NEG-ABL end-PAST  
 ‘The meeting ended without Ali’s opening the subject.’
- b. \*Toplantı, Ali konu -yu aç -ma -DAN bit -ti.  
 meeting Ali topic-ACC open-NEG-ABL end-PAST  
*Intended:* ‘The meeting ended without Ali’s opening the subject.’

The irregular stress pattern observed in (1) through (4) is typical of the negative suffix *-mA*. This suffix is exceptional with respect to stress in any environment in which it appears: first, it cannot receive stress even when it is word-final, as shown by the contrast in (5).

- (5) a. Ora -ya GIT-me!  
 there-DAT go -NEG  
 ‘Don’t go there!’
- b. \*Ora-ya git-ME!

Next, when the negative marker *-mA* is not in the word-final position, it prevents stress from being assigned to the final syllable. Instead, the word stress falls on the syllable immediately preceding *-mA*.<sup>2</sup> This is shown in (6).

- (6) a. Toplantı -da Ayşe hiç koNUŞ-ma -dı.  
 meeting-LOC Ayşe at-all talk -NEG-PAST.3SG  
 ‘At the meeting, Ayşe didn’t talk at all.’
- b. \*Toplantı-da Ayşe hiç konuŞ-ma-DI.

A parallel example in (7) shows that it is indeed the presence of the negation in (6) that is responsible for the exceptional stress. In (7), which does not contain *-mA*, the stress falls on the word-final syllable of the verb.

<sup>2</sup> The negative marker is therefore one of Turkish *prestressing suffixes* (see, for example, Kabak and Vogel (2001) and Kahnemuyipor and Kornfilt (2006) for the discussion of the syntax of prestressing suffixes in Turkish).

- (7) Toplantı -da Ayşe çok konuř -TU.  
 meeting-LOC Ayşe a-lot talk -PAST.3SG  
 ‘At the meeting, Ayşe talked a lot.’

The nominalizing suffix *-mA*,<sup>3</sup> on the other hand, behaves regularly with respect to stress, i.e. not only can it bear stress, as shown in (8a), where it is found in the nominalized verb, but also when non-final, allows the stress to shift “across” it to the final syllable, as shown in (8b), where it is found in an embedded nominalized clause.<sup>4</sup>

- (8) a. Ne güzel konuř-MA!  
 what beautiful talk -N  
 ‘What a beautiful talk!’  
 b. Ali Ayşe-nin konuř-ma-sı -NI iste -di.  
 Ali Ayşe-GEN talk -N -3SG-ACC want-PAST.3SG  
 ‘Ali wanted Ayşe to talk.’

Given that in examples containing the converbial ending *-mAdAn* the stress invariably falls on the syllable preceding *-mA*, as shown in (3) and (4), we have a strong indicator that this converbial ending contains the negation suffix, rather than the nominalizer.

Support for this claim also comes from the fact, pointed out by Göksel and Kerslake (2005: 417) and Kornfilt (1997: 70), that the subject in adverbial clauses such as (3a) and (4a) does not carry the genitive case marker, and the converb itself does not appear with agreement morphology (Kornfilt, 1997). The absence of these two properties, normally associated with the nominalizing *-mA* (in embedded nominalized clauses), suggests that we are dealing here with the negative marker instead. When the subject of an adverbial clause containing *-mAdAn* is marked genitive and the converb appears *with* an agreement marker, as in (9) below, the irregular stress pattern is replaced by a regular one. In this case, the stress falls on the word-final syllable *-dAn*, as expected, suggesting that this time, the *-mA* in the converbial ending is in fact the nominalization marker.

<sup>3</sup> Kornfilt (1997) calls the nominalizing suffix *-mA* an *action nominal* and glosses it as *A.Nom*. For the purposes of this paper, I refer to it simply as the *nominalizer/nominalizing suffix -mA* and gloss it as *N*.

<sup>4</sup> The following pairs of words, from Sezer (1981), show a clear contrast between the behavior of the nominalizer and that of the negative marker with respect to stress:

- (i) *gelmé* ‘coming’      *sinamá* ‘testing’  
*gélme* ‘don’t come’      *sináma* ‘don’t test’

- (9) a. Ali [Hasan-ın o -nu uyar -ma-sın -DAN önce ]  
 Ali Hasan -GEN he-ACC warn-N -POSS.3SG-ABL before  
 oda -yı topladı -dı.  
 room-ACC tidy.up-PAST.3SG  
 ‘Ali tidied up the room before Hasan warned him.’
- b. \*Ali [Hasan-ın o -nu uyAR-ma-sın -dan önce ]  
 Ali Hasan-GEN he-ACC warn -N -POSS.3SG-ABL before  
 oda -yı topladı -dı.  
 room-ACC tidy.up-PAST.3SG  
*Intended:* ‘Ali tidied up the room before Hasan warned him.’

It is, however, interesting to note that in examples like (9a), where the subject of the adverbial clause is marked genitive and the converbial ending features the agreement marker, the postposition *önce* is obligatory, as shown by the ill-formedness of (10). Perhaps not surprisingly, (9a) can only denote temporal antecedence, but not negative manner.

- (10) \*Ali [Hasan-ın o -nu uyar -ma-sın -DAN] oda -yı  
 Ali Hasan -GEN he-ACC warn-N -POSS.3SG-ABL room-ACC  
 topladı -dı.  
 tidy.up-PAST  
*Intended:* ‘Ali tidied up the room without Hasan warning him.’

Thus, (9a) differs from (11) below in that the embedded clause in (11) is ambiguous between the *before*-reading and the *without*-reading.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> To make sure that *-mAdAn* clauses are indeed always ambiguous between the two readings, I followed a reviewer’s suggestion and asked my informants to judge them in the contexts that make one of the readings true and the other false, as in (i) below (a single informant was presented with only one of the contexts for each sentence):

- (i) Context I: Ali first decorated his living room and then his bedroom.  
 Context II: Ali was going to redecorate his living room and his bedroom.  
 However, he only had money for the living room, so the bedroom was not redecorated after all.

Experimental sentence:

Ali yatak oda -sı -nı yap-tır -ma -dan salon -u yap-tır -dı.  
 Ali bed room-POSS.3SG-ACC do -CAUS-MA-ABL living room-ACC do-CAUS-PAST.3SG  
 ‘Ali redecorated the living room without/before redecorating the bedroom.’

In some of the sentences, the subject of the matrix clause and the subject of the *-mAdAn* clause were co-referential and in some they were not. Both kinds of sentences were judged to be true in both contexts, indicating that the speakers were able to access both the *without*-reading and the *before*-reading of the *-mAdAn* clause.

- (11) Ali [Hasan o -nu uYAR -ma -dan] oda -yı topladı. -di.  
 Ali Hasan he-ACC warn -MA-ABL room-ACC tidy.up-PAST.3SG  
 ‘Ali tidied up the room before Hasan warned him.’  
 ‘Ali tidied up the room without Hasan warning him.’

The fact that the postposition *önce* is obligatory exactly in the environment where the suffix *-mA* is unambiguously a nominalizing suffix (as indicated by the case marking on the subject, agreement marking on the converbial ending, and regular stress) makes it plausible to ask whether this morpheme is in fact a nominalizer in *all* cases when the postposition is present, despite the identical stress pattern in clauses that contain *-mAdAn* followed by *önce* and those in which *önce* is absent. This is the question that I address here.

In the rest of the paper, I show that for a subset of speakers, the two constructions in fact show different properties. For these speakers, the converbial ending *-mAdAn* that precedes *önce* does not display properties normally associated with a negative element, while the converbial ending *-mAdAn* that is *not* followed by *önce* does. In particular, the relevant speakers do not allow adverbial clauses with *-mAdAn önce* to contain Negative Polarity Items (NPI’s), while no such restriction exists on adverbial clauses that contain *-mAdAn*, but do not contain *önce*. Furthermore, *-mAdAn önce* clauses marginally allow an addition of a negation marker, whereas this is completely impossible when *-mAdAn* is not followed by the postposition. I take these judgments to mean that in the grammar of the relevant speakers, the suffix *-mA* found in the converbial construction *-mAdAn önce* is not (or is no longer) analyzed as a negative marker, but is rather re-interpreted as the nominalizer *-mA*, regardless of the stress pattern. This re-analysis is not entirely unexpected, given that the converb in question, when followed by *önce*, looks like a nominal element based on two properties: (i) it is the complement of a postposition and postpositions take nominal complements, and (ii) it is case-marked, another salient property of nominals. However, since the same ending, when not followed by *önce*, is still interpreted as containing a negative suffix rather than the nominalizer despite the fact that it also carries a case marker, it seems that being the complement of a postposition is the crucial cue that drives the re-analysis from the negation marker *-mA* to the nominalizer *-mA* in the converbial construction *-mAdAn önce*.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> An anonymous reviewer asks how *-mA*, if it is a negative marker, can ever be followed by the ablative case marker. The reviewer suggests that in the cases in which *-mA* is a negation suffix, the structure also contains a null nominalizer, which is selected by the case marker. I thank the reviewer for this suggestion noting that a null nominalizer has been posited as part of the make-up of Turkish embedded clauses more generally (Aygen, 2002).

The paper is organized as follows: in section 2, I present the data which show diverging behavior of the converbial ending *-mAdAn* in environments where it is and is not followed by the postposition *önce*. The data involve the compatibility of *-mAdAn* with NPIs on the one hand, and with an addition of a negative marker on the other. The discussion leads to the conclusion that the *-mA* in *-mAdAn önce* is not a negative marker, while the one in the converbial ending *-mAdAn* that is not followed by *önce* is. This in turn points to the conclusion that the former morpheme is the nominalizer *-mA*. Section 3 is the conclusion.

## 2 *-mAdAn* vs. *-mAdAn önce*

Before we start reviewing evidence for the claim that *-mAdAn* and *-mAdAn önce* do not involve the same morphological make-up of the converbial ending, it has to be stated that the judgments reported by native speakers on the two constructions vary dramatically, not only across speakers, but often also within an individual speaker. While such variability obviously stands in the way of making categorical claims about the structure of the ending in question, it is nevertheless the case that a subset of speakers consistently report judgments on which the present analysis is based.<sup>7</sup> If I am correct that for this subset of speakers there is a shift from analyzing the *-mA* in *-mAdAn önce* as a negation marker to analyzing it as a nominalizer, perhaps it can be claimed that the variability found across and within speakers is due to the fact that this part of Turkish grammar is more generally unstable and that this shift may be gradually spreading. With this much in mind, let us proceed with the investigation of the two constructions.

### 2.1 *Negative Polarity Items*

Kelepir (2001) shows that the environments in which NPI's are licensed in Turkish do not overlap perfectly with those in which NPI's are licensed in English. Like in English, NPI's in Turkish are licensed in environments containing a negative operator and in yes/no questions, as illustrated by (12) and (13) respectively.

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<sup>7</sup> I consulted a total of 11 native Turkish speakers by asking them to judge the acceptability and the interpretation of sentences that contained the converbial ending *-mAdAn (önce)* and also (i) an NPI or (ii) an additional negation marker (the latter sentences were presented to the informants together with the contexts parallel to the one in (22) below).

- (12) a. John (**hiç**)kimse-yi gör-me -di. Kelepir (2001: 121)  
 John anybody -ACC see -NEG -PAST.3SG  
 ‘John didn’t see anybody.’  
 b. \*John (**hiç**)kimse-yi gör-dü. Kelepir (2001: 121)  
 John anybody -ACC see -PAST.3SG
- (13) Hasan **hiç** Amerika-ya gel -di mi? Kelepir (2001: 124)  
 Hasan ever America-DAT come -PAST.3SG Q  
 ‘Has Hasan ever come to America?’

However, unlike in English, NPI’s in Turkish are not licensed in the antecedent of a conditional, as shown in (14), nor are they licensed in complements of *önce* ‘before’, as (15) illustrates.

- (14) \***Hiçkimse-yi** gör-ür -se -n bana haber ver.  
 anybody-ACC see -AOR-COND-2SG me-DAT news give  
*Intended*: ‘If you see anybody, let me know.’ Kelepir (2001: 124)
- (15) \***Hiçkimse-den önce**, ben gel -di -m.  
 anybody -ABL before I come-PAST-1SG  
*Intended*: ‘I came before anybody else.’

Given these licensing conditions on NPI’s in Turkish, and especially the fact that negation does, but the postposition *önce* does not license NPI’s, we can form the following prediction about whether NPI’s will or will not be licensed in adverbial clauses containing *-mAdAn*: if the *-mA* in the converbial ending is invariably a negative marker, then such clauses should be fine with NPI’s regardless of whether they do or do not also contain the postposition *önce*. If, on the other hand, we find that NPI’s are licensed only in a subset of the clauses containing *-mAdAn*, then we are well advised to analyze the *-mA* in those clauses from which NPI’s are banned not as a negative marker, but as something else, most plausibly as the nominalizer *-mA*. While the judgments are highly heterogeneous both across and within individual speakers, there is a group of speakers who consistently confirm the latter prediction: for these speakers, NPI’s are banned whenever the converb containing *-mAdAn* is followed by *önce*, and are allowed whenever this is not the case. The relevant examples are given in (16) through (18). The embedded adverbial clause in (16) contains an NPI subject, the one in (17) an NPI object, while in (18), the NPI is an adverb. All of the examples are judged as ungrammatical when *-mAdAn* is



followed by *önce* (examples in (a)). However, when the postposition is not present, they become well-formed (examples in (b)).<sup>8,9</sup>

- (16) a. \*(Hiç)kimse fark -et -meden önce  
 anybody notice-do-MADAN before  
 hata -m -ı düzel -t -ti -m.  
 error-POSS.1SG-ACC correct-CAUS-PAST-1SG  
*Intended:* ‘I corrected my error before anybody noticed it.’
- b. (Hiç)kimse fark -et -meden hata -m -ı  
 anybody notice-do-MADAN error-POSS.1SG-ACC  
 düzel -t -ti -m.  
 correct-CAUS-PAST-1SG  
 ‘I corrected my error before anybody noticed it/without anybody noticing it.’
- (17) a. \*(Hiç)kimse-yi ziyaret et -meden önce bura-ya  
 anybody -ACC visit do-MADAN before here -DAT  
 gel -di -m.  
 come-PAST-1SG  
*Intended:* ‘Before I visited anybody, I came here.’
- b. (Hiç)kimse-yi ziyaret et -meden bura-ya gel -di -m.  
 anybody -ACC visit do-MADAN here-DAT come-PAST-1SG  
 ‘Before I visited anybody, I came here/I came here without visiting anybody.’
- (18) a. \*Ayşe’-yle hiç konuş-madan önce toplantı -dan  
 Ayşe -with at-all talk -MADAN before meeting-ABL  
 çık -tı -m.  
 exit-PAST-1SG  
*Intended:* ‘I left the meeting before talking to Ayşe at all.’
- b. Ayşe’-yle hiç konuş-madan toplantı -dan çık -tı -m.  
 Ayşe -with at-all talk -MADAN meeting-ABL exit-PAST-1SG  
 ‘I left the meeting before talking to Ayşe at all/I left the meeting without talking to Ayşe at all.’

<sup>8</sup> In these examples, I gloss the converbial ending simply as *-mAdAn*, without committing myself to analyzing the suffix *-mA* either as a negation marker or as a nominalizer.

<sup>9</sup> Recall from the Introduction that the present analysis is based on the judgments of a subset of native speakers of Turkish; so, not all the speakers report the contrast in (16) and (17). Interestingly, however, all of them do report the contrast in (18). The fact that all native speakers I consulted find (18a) ungrammatical lends support to the analysis I am proposing. I have no explanation, however, for why some of the speakers who find (18a) ill-formed also report that (16a) and (17a) are well-formed, regardless of whether the NPI in these examples do or do not contain *hiç*.

If the suffix *-mA* in the converbial ending *-mAdAn* were a negative marker across-the-board, we would not expect the contrast that we observe in (16)-(18). The fact that the contrast exists suggests that *-mA* is a negative marker only in the (b) examples, but not in the (a) examples in (16)-(18). In light of these data, I would like to propose that in (16a)-(18a), the *-mA* in *-mAdAn önce* is a nominalizing suffix, rather than a negation marker. This proposal receives support from the fact that, with respect to NPI's, these examples are parallel to adverbial clauses in which the subject is marked genitive, and the converbial ending *-mAdAn* contains an agreement marker. The latter also disallow NPI's, as (19) shows.

- (19) \*(Hiç)kimse-nin fark -et -me-sin -den önce  
 anybody -GEN notice-do-MA-POSS.3SG-ABL before  
 hata -m -ı düzel -t -ti -m.  
 error-POSS.1SG-ACC correct-CAUS-PAST-1SG  
*Intended:* 'I corrected my error before anybody noticed it.'

Recall from (9) above that the presence of both genitive marking on the subject of the adverbial clause and the agreement morphology on the embedded verb clearly indicates that the *-mA* in the converbial ending of such clauses is the nominalizer.<sup>10</sup> The fact that (16a) displays the same incompatibility with NPI's as (19) makes it plausible to explain this behavior by the absence of a negative marker in both examples.

An anonymous reviewer points out that in many languages, *before*-clauses (obligatorily or optionally) contain an expletive negation marker (EN), which makes no obvious negative semantic contribution to the clause (Thompson, Longacre, and Hwang, 2007). Some such languages are Mandarin Chinese, Lakhota, Italian, French, Polish, and Catalan. The cross-linguistically attested presence of EN in *before*-clauses makes it plausible to ask whether the *-mA* in *-mAdAn önce* clauses is EN as well. I believe, however, that there are reasons to not classify the *-mA* in Turkish *-mAdAn önce* as EN. First, no speakers I consulted accept an NPI in a phrasal complement of *önce* (all my informants find examples like (15) ungrammatical) and yet some of them allow an NPI in the complement clause of *-mAdAn önce*, indicating that something other than the postposition serves as the NPI licenser.<sup>11</sup> EN is not a likely licenser, since,

<sup>10</sup> This is also suggested by the regular stress pattern observed in examples like this.

<sup>11</sup> An anonymous reviewer asks how come NPI's are licensed in *before*-clauses in English. In fact, *before*-clauses license NPI's in many languages beside English: Italian (Del Prete, 2006), French (Horn, 2010), Japanese (Nam, 1997), Korean (Nam, 1997), Croatian, to name a few. For the discussion of the semantics of *before*, responsible, among other things, for NPI licensing, see Beaver and Condoravdi (2003), Condoravdi

given that it does not make any semantic contribution to the clause whatsoever, it does not create a downward entailing environment, which is necessary for the licensing of an NPI (Ladusaw, 1979). Therefore, those speakers who accept NPI's in the scope of *-mAdAn önce*, interpret the *-mA* in the converbial ending as sentential negation, not an EN. This still does not eliminate the option that those speakers who do not allow NPI's in *-mAdAn önce* clauses interpret this suffix as EN. However, by analyzing the *-mA* in *-mAdAn önce* as an EN in the grammar of those speakers who disallow NPI's in *-mAdAn önce* clauses, we lose the explanation for the observed similarities between the clauses that unquestionably contain the nominalizer *-mA* (in which the subject of the adverbial clause is marged genitive and the converb contains agreement marking, as in (19)) and the *-mAdAn önce* clauses. Thus, it seems likely that the *-mA* in Turkish converbial *-mAdAn* clauses is never an instance of EN.

If we wanted to argue that all of the examples in (16) through (18) do in fact contain a negative marker (as indicated by the identical stress pattern displayed by all of them, compatible only with such an analysis), we could possibly attribute the contrast between the examples in (a) and those in (b) to the presence of the negative *semantics* in the former and the absence thereof in the latter. Kornfilt (1997), in her discussion of the example (1) in this paper, which I borrowed from her work, explicitly states that “the subordinate clause illustrated in [this example] not only lacks agreement, [but] exhibits an unusual morpheme on its predicate: the negative morpheme *-mA* (*which, however, does not negate the predicate semantically in this usage* [emphasis mine]).” (pg. 70). So, one could possibly say that the (b) examples in (16)-(18), those that do not contain *önce*, license NPI's because the negative marker is not only syntactically present, but also contributes the semantic negativeness to the interpretation of the embedded clause (comparable to the negativeness of the parallel English clauses containing the preposition *without*). Note, however, that adverbial clauses which do not contain *önce* are semantically ambiguous: they can denote negative manner, *as well as temporal antecedence*, as indicated by the translation of the example in (20) below, which is identical to (17b), modulo the presence of the NPI object.

- (20) Ali'-yi ziyaret et -meden bura-ya gel -di -m.  
 Ali -ACC visit do-MADAN here-DAT come-PAST-1SG  
 'Before I visited Ali, I came here / I came here without visiting Ali.'

So, one of the possible interpretations of these examples is equivalent with the interpretation of examples that do contain *önce*. Crucially, this is also the case

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(2010), Krifka (2010), Ladusaw (1979), Landman (1991), Valencia, van der Wouden and Zwarts (1994).

with the sentences that contain NPI elements: the grammatical cases (those that do not contain *önce*) remain ambiguous. So, if we were to say that (16a)-(18a) are ungrammatical because the negative semantics is absent from adverbial clauses denoting temporal antecedence (and this is the only possible interpretation of these examples, as indicated by the presence of *önce*), then we are hard pressed to explain how come the absence of the negative semantics in clauses that also denote temporal antecedence but do not contain *önce* does not preclude the presence of NPI's. I conclude, therefore, that the contrasts we observe in the licensing of NPI's in clauses in which the converbial ending –*mAdAn* is and is not followed by *önce* argue against a uniform analysis of the morphological make-up of the converbial ending. In particular, when –*mAdAn* is not followed by *önce*, it contains a negative marker (which licenses the presence of NPI's); on the other hand, when –*mAdAn* is followed by *önce*, it is best analyzed as containing a nominalizing suffix (which is not capable of licensing NPI's).

In the following section, we will see some additional evidence for this claim, which comes from the marginal acceptability of an additional negation marker in adverbial clauses containing *önce*, and the absolute unacceptability of such a marker in adverbial clauses that do not contain the postposition.

## 2.2 Compatibility of –*mAdAn* (*önce*) with (an Additional) Negation

Adverbial clauses denoting both negative manner and temporal antecedence are normally not negated, as shown by (21) below.

- (21) a. ??\*I called him *without* not finishing dinner.  
 b. ??\*I called him *before* not finishing dinner.

Tsoulas (2013) argues that the reason why *before*-clauses are incompatible with negation is the presupposition failure that obtains in examples like (21b). According to him, “a *before*-clause carries a presupposition that there exists a unique, contextually salient and identifiable time *t* such that the relevant event expressed by the *before*-clause took place at *t*.”<sup>12</sup> If an event in the *before*-

<sup>12</sup> An anonymous reviewer asks whether such presupposition can be claimed to exist in non-finite *before*-clauses (or could it be that it is only present in finite ones). The literature on possible differences in interpretation between finite and non-finite complements of *before* is scarce, and I am aware of no claims that finite *before*-clauses are presupposed, but non-finite ones are not. Relevant to the presence of presupposition in *before*-clauses is Portner (1994), which discusses differences between the interpretations of Poss-*ing*, Acc-*ing*, and PRO-*ing* constructions and states that Poss-*ing* and PRO-*ing* complements are presuppositional, whereas Acc-*ing* complements are not. Since *before* takes a PRO-*ing* complement, it would appear that such clauses are presuppositional, just like their finite counterparts. This is compatible with the claim in

clause is negated, no such unique and identifiable time exists. This leads to a presupposition failure. I believe that the same argument (with minor modifications) may be extended to explaining the impossibility of negation in clauses denoting negative manner. A *without*-clause may not carry a presupposition that there is a unique *time* associated with the event denoted by the clause, but it seems to carry at least the presupposition that there is *an event* (denoted by the *without*-clause) such that this event is unique, contextually salient, and identifiable. By adding negation to the proposition expressed in the *without*-clause, the event loses its “uniqueness”, and the presupposition fails. So, clauses denoting temporal antecedence and clauses denoting negative manner both seem to carry a presupposition of the *uniqueness* of the event that they express and both are incompatible with negation (i.e., when the event denoted by such clauses is negated, presupposition fails).

However, if the presupposition of the uniqueness of the event denoted by the adverbial clause can be preserved even in the presence of the negation in the clause, the result is acceptable. Consider the following scenario:

(22) A student is accused of smoking in the lavatory of Hogwarts. He is interrogated by two staff members: Ms. McGonagall and Madam Pomfrey. Ms. McGonagall leads the interview:

Ms. McGonagall: So, you were alone in the lavatory, weren't you?

Student: Well, yes, mostly. At one point somebody did come in, and then left, but I didn't see who it was.

Ms. McGonagall: Ok, well tell me: did you smoke in the lavatory?

Student: — (doesn't say anything, just looks down at his lap)

Ms. McGonagall: I see. Ok, off you go, we'll talk again.

Afterwards, Ms. McGonagall and Madam Pomfrey are talking to one another:

Ms. McGonagall: I am certain we caught our smoker. We will punish him, so it will serve as an example for other kids not to do something like that.

Madam Pomfrey: I am actually not sure that he was the one who smoked in the lavatory.

Ms. McGonagall: What do you mean? When I asked him whether it was him, he didn't deny it.

(23) Madam Pomfrey: Yes, but **before not denying it**, he did say that someone else was there.

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the literature that “[s]ome adverbial clauses, such as those beginning with *when*, *before*, and *after*, are ... always presupposed and [root transformations] do not apply within them” (Hooper and Thompson, 1973: 494-495).

The last remark by Madam Pomfrey (numbered as example (23)) contains an acceptable negated *before*-clause (*before not denying it*). If the usual incompatibility of *before*-clauses with negation is due to a uniqueness presupposition failure, then the acceptability of this particular negated clause follows: the event in which the student did *not* deny the misconduct is unique and easily identifiable in the context causing the presupposition to go through.

What is of interest for our purposes is to see how (23) translates into Turkish (given the context in (22)). Given that adverbial clauses denoting temporal antecedence in Turkish may or may not contain the postposition *önce* following the converbial ending *-mAdAn* (without a change in meaning), it should be possible to render the meaning of the example in (23) equally with *önce*, as in (24a), and without *önce*, as in (24b). My informants, however, report that although neither of the two sentences in (24) is well-formed, there is a clear contrast between them: while (24a) is degraded, (24b) is completely impossible.

- (24) a. <sup>???</sup>Evet, ama inkar et -me -meden önce,  
 yes but denial do-NEG-MADAN before  
 tuvalet-te başka biri -nin ol-duğ-u -nu söyle-di.  
 toilet -LOC other someone-GEN be-DİK -3SG-ACC say -PAST.3SG
- b. \*Evet, ama inkar et -me -meden,  
 yes but denial do-NEG-MADAN  
 tuvalet-te başka biri -nin ol -duğ-u -nu söyle-di.  
 toilet -LOC other someone-GEN be-DİK -3SG -ACC say -PAST.3SG

Assuming that there is exactly one morphological slot for negation in the converbial ending *-mAdAn*, if this slot is already occupied, it is not surprising that another negation marker cannot be added to it. Thus, (24b) is completely out.<sup>13</sup> If, on the other hand, adding a negation marker to *-mAdAn* results in a comparatively better sentence, as in (24a), then, under the same assumption, we are led to conclude that the suffix *-mA* in *-mAdAn önce* does not fill the negation slot. This in turn suggests that the *-mA* which precedes the ablative

<sup>13</sup> This is not to say that a sentence cannot contain more than one negative element. The example in (i) below, from Kornfilt (1997), shows that such sentences are possible:

i. (Ben) bugün maç -a git-me -yecek değil -im. (Kornfilt, 1997: 126)  
 I today match-DAT go-NEG-FUT neg.COP-1SG

‘It is not the case that I will not go to the game today.’

The well-formedness of (i) thus indicates that the problem with (24b) is not in the semantics, but rather in the morphology.

ending *-dAn* in (24a) is in fact not a negation marker, but rather a nominalizer, in line with the argument from NPI licensing presented in 2.1 above.

Of course, if I am correct in arguing that the relatively improved status of (24a) is due to the absence of the negative marker in *-mAdAn önce*, we need an explanation for why this example is not perfect even for those speakers who disallow NPI's in the scope of the converbial ending followed by *önce*. For these speakers, the converbial ending in *-mAdAn önce* clauses does not contain the negation marker, so adding a negation marker to the converb should not result in degradation. While at the moment I can offer no explanation for this fact, I would like to note that an additional *-mA* in the converbial ending is not perfect even when the converb carries an agreement marker, which, as we saw in section 1 above, is an unambiguous indication that it contains a nominalizing suffix, rather than the negation marker *-mA*. This is shown by (25), which is judged as just marginally better than (24a).

- (25) <sup>???</sup>Evet, ama inkar et -me -me-sin -den önce,  
 yes but denial do-NEG-N -POSS.3SG-ABL before  
 tuvalet-te başka biri -nin ol-duğ-u -nu söyle-di.  
 toilet -LOC other someone-GEN be-DİK -3SG-ACC say -PAST.3SG

It is possible that the degraded status of both (24a) and (25) is related to the presupposition introduced by *önce* 'before', discussed above. In other words, perhaps the context in (22) is not sufficient for Turkish native speakers to save the presupposition of the uniqueness of the event expressed by the proposition in the adverbial clause, given that the event is negated. In any case, what is important for our purposes is to observe that (24a) and (25) are both judged as equally degraded, but crucially, as comparatively better than (24b). This suggests that the converbial endings found in (24a) and (25) have identical morphological make-up, different from the morphological make-up of the homophonous converbial ending in (24b). At the moment, I have to leave the problem of why these examples are not perfect for future research.

### 3 Conclusion

In this paper, we saw evidence which suggests that the converbial endings in *-mAdAn* and *-mAdAn önce* adverbial clauses, although superficially identical, are not composed of identical morphemes: the former contains a negation marker, while the latter seems to contain a nominalizing suffix instead. This analysis was based on two observations: (i) that *-mAdAn* clauses do, but *-mAdAn önce* clauses do not license NPI's and (ii) that *-mAdAn önce* clauses marginally allow an addition of a negation marker, but *-mAdAn* clauses resist it. As I mentioned in the Introduction to the paper, Turkish speakers do not all

report the judgments in line with the two above observations. Rather, this is true only of a subset of speakers. For these speakers *-mAdAn önce* clauses on the one hand cannot contain NPI's and on the other, they find such clauses relatively better than *-mAdAn* clauses with an additional negation marker. Let us call this group *T(urkish)1 group*. The other group of speakers report different judgments: they allow NPI's in the scope of *-mAdAn önce*,<sup>14</sup> which indicates that they invariably analyze the *-mA* in the converbial ending as a negative marker. With respect to the addition of negation, this group of speakers divides into two subgroups: one behaves like the T1 group, i.e. they judge the addition of a negation marker to *-mAdAn önce* clauses better than they judge such an addition to *-mAdAn* clauses. I will refer to this group as *T(urkish)2 group*. The remainder of the speakers allow extra negation neither in *-mAdAn önce* clauses nor in *-mAdAn* clauses. For these speakers, call them *T(urkish)2'*, both (24a) and (24b) are completely impossible and the only marginally allowed option is (25), where the converb contains an agreement marker. This distribution of judgments across different groups of speakers is summarized in Table 1 below.<sup>15</sup>

Table 1. Distribution of speakers with respect to the properties of *-mAdAn (önce)* clauses

Speaker group	NPI's licensed in <i>-mAdAn önce</i> clauses	Extra negation allowed in <i>-mAdAn önce</i> clauses	Extra negation allowed in <i>-mAdAn</i> clauses
T1 (4 speakers)	✗	✓	✗
T2 (3 speakers)	✓	✓	✗
T2' (4 speakers)	✓	✗	✗

<sup>14</sup> Except when the NPI is the adverb *hiç* 'at all', a fact that remains mysterious.

<sup>15</sup> An anonymous reviewer notes that T2 group of speakers report judgments that are contradictory: they allow NPI's in the scope of *-mAdAn önce*, indicating that they analyze the *-mA* in the converbial ending as negation, but at the same time allow an extra negation marker in the construction as well. I agree with the reviewer that the grammar of this group of speakers seems to contain internal inconsistencies. It is possible that these speakers indeed analyze the *-mA* in *-mAdAn önce* as negation, but then switch to analyzing it as the nominalizer only as a last resort, to accommodate the additional negation when it is present.



I suggested above that the variability in judgments that we observe across and within speakers with respect to the phenomena in question may be an indication that the grammar is shifting towards reanalyzing the *-mA* in the converbial ending *-mAdAn* as a nominalizer in exactly those cases when the clause containing the converb is selected by the postposition *önce*. The three groups in Table 1 then illustrate different degrees to which such a reanalysis is instantiated: T1 speakers show all the properties consistent with the “new” grammar, with the exception of the stress pattern. T2 speakers retain the stress pattern and also the licensing conditions on NPI’s in *-mAdAn önce* clauses from the “original” grammar, where *-mA* is the negative marker. Finally, the judgments of T2’ speakers indicate that they have not started to shift towards the “new” grammar at all.

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