

## On Word Order Differences Between Turkish And Karaim

Éva Ágnes Csató  
University of Oslo-Mainz

Comparing the syntax of different Turkic languages or the syntax of one and the same language in different historical periods might lead to findings of theoretical importance. The Turkic syntax known to us from written sources of different periods displays an unusually high degree of stability. Many of the basic typological features of Old Turkic syntax as manifested in inscriptional texts (in so-called Runic script) are also characteristic of modern Turkic. Though they are spread over a huge geographical area, the Turkic languages spoken today also show a relatively high degree of syntactic similarity. In view of these facts, a rewarding object of research would seem to be the notion of a 'Turkic syntactic type', characterized in positive and negative terms, i.e. as sets of typical and non-typical features.

Even if the notion of syntactic type is theory-dependent, it is commonly admitted that a pure listing of features does not suffice for establishing a type. The notion of type gains in theoretical interest when it requires that features characterizing one type show a relatively high frequency of co-occurrence cross-linguistically and manifest implicational relations. Georg von der Gabelentz, in his programmatic article on language typology published in 1894, *Hypologie der Sprachen, eine neue Aufgabe der Linguistik*, formulated the idea of implicational universals as follows: "die Erscheinung A trifft mit so und so großer Wahrscheinlichkeit mit B, C, D usw. zusammen, selten mit E, nicht mit F" [The phenomenon A correlates with such and such a great probability with the phenomena B, C, D, etc. , seldom with E, not with F]. Accordingly, a syntactic type can be defined as a bundle of features which necessarily co-occur in a language.

This way of thinking has ever since Gabelentz been a leading idea of typology, just as much in Greenberg's word order typology as in Chomsky's

generative theory of parameters and principles, to name just two well-known examples.

From the idea that certain features necessarily imply each other follows that a change in one such feature should imply changes in other properties. A comparison of different Turkic languages that show typological similarities but nevertheless manifest different sets of syntactic features may provide us with interesting evidence of such relatedness phenomena.

An interesting case is Karaim, a Kipchak language spoken today (in Lithuania and Poland) by a very small number of native speakers. To illustrate some basic properties of its syntax, we shall quote some sentences from a work of Alexander Mardkowicz, a Polish Karaim, who published some texts in a special Latin script. The text chosen is a tale called *Elijahunun ucuru*, 'Elijah's adventure'.

1. Jigit ta siwer dostum!  
young and love: aorist-participle friend: 1.poss.  
'My young and beloved friend'
2. Tutasen kolunda burunhu jomakny, kajsy cykty karaj sezinde.  
tut:present:2 hand:2.poss:loc first tale:acc which appear:past:3 Karaim  
language:3.poss:loc  
'You hold in your hand the first tale which has appeared in the Karaim language.'

The first two sentences illustrate some syntactic traits characteristic of Karaim. In the first phrase, *Jigit ta siwer dostum*, we find an attributed aorist participle *siwer* which is used in the Turkic way, i.e., it precedes the head-noun *dostum*. The fact that the participle is an active form and not passive, although it should be interpreted 'beloved' and not 'loving', is also a regular characteristic of such constructions, which can be observed in different Turkic languages (e.g., *okuyacak kitap*). See for a discussion Csató 1990 and the literature cited here.

The second expression in the Karaim example 2, contains a relative clause which is introduced by a relative pronoun developed of a genuine Turkic pronoun and the 3.p.possessive suffix. The relative clause in example 2 contains a finite verb *cykty*. The word order in this example is also interesting since the main finite verb, *tutasen*, is in initial and not final position as usual in Turkish. A postpositive relative clause containing a relative pronoun follows immediately the head noun, in this example *burunhu jomakny*.

- 3 A relative clause of this type might be embedded in a clause, as in example 3  
 Bir kinni kieldi kachrasyna ol altyncynyn, kajсында Eljahu jiwrenired', jat  
 kartadam, andij uzunsahally ta itikiezli.  
 a day:acc come:past shop:3.poss:dat that goldsmith:gen,  
 which:3.poss:loc Eljahu learn:aorist:past copula:3 foreign old man such  
 long-bearded and sharp-eyed  
 'One day a foreign old man with such a long beard and sharp eyes, came to  
 the goldsmith's shop in which Eljahu was an apprentice.'

The properties of case-marking are typologically interesting. In Turkish, a non-specific object which precedes the verb is in the nominative (*bir kitap aldım*). However, when the object is separated from the verb, it must be in the accusative irrespective of specificity. In Karaim, the accusative case-marking seems to be dependent exclusively on the referential properties of the object constituent. The position of the object with respect to the verb does not seem to play any role. In sentence 4, the object, *jat tilde jazgan jomaklar*, follows the verb and is in the nominative. In example 5, the definite object, *ol sewutnu* 'the vessel', is in the accusative and the indefinite one, *nece kislem bahyr* 'many pieces of copper', in the nominative.

- 4 Bu zamanhadcin sen uchudun ancak jat tilde jazgan jomaklar.  
 this time:dat [converbial postposition] until you read:past:2 only foreign  
 language:loc write:gan-participle tale:plur.  
 'Until this time you have read only tales which were written in foreign  
 languages.'
- 5 Kacan Eljahu kieltirdi ol sawutnu, Pers turhuzdu any otisne ta ciwdi ortaha  
 nece kislem bahyr.

when Elijahu bring:past:3 that vessel:acc, Persian place:past:3 it:acc  
 fire:[postposition] on and throw:past:3 into many piece copper:nom  
 'When Elijahu brought that vessel, the Persian placed it on the fire and threw  
 many pieces of copper into it.'

- 6 Anynicin bolaldyn sahyslama, ki bizin tilimiz andij miskin ta tigieldiwil, ki  
 jetmejd' anyn chalyn jomakkada.  
 that:gen:[pdstposition] for can:past:2 think:infinitive, that *ki* we:gen  
 language:1.plur.poss. such poor and full:negation that *ki*  
 suffice:negation:present:*dir* it:gen strength:3.poss:old instr tale:dat[particle]  
 also  
 'Therefore you could think that our language is so poor and imperfect that  
 with its strength it does not even suffice for tales.'

The verb *bolaldyn* 'you could' is used as an auxiliary verb which is construed  
 with the infinitive of the main verb, *sahyslama* 'think, believe'. Note the word order;  
 the auxiliary precedes the main verb in Karaim. The normal order in Turkish is the  
 opposite (*söylenip durdu* 'he kept grumbling').

The complement clause in example 6 is a clause introduced by *ki*.  
 Appearingly similar clauses preceded by *ki* or *kim* have been used in certain Turkic  
 languages for a very long time. Their use was surely influenced by foreign patterns  
 which does not necessarily mean that their syntax is analogous to these patterns. In  
 modern Turkish, *ki*- clauses are juxtaposed to the preceding clause and not  
 syntactically subordinated (see the arguments in Johanson 1975).

The second *ki*- clause is introduced in the preceding clause by a demonstrative  
 pro-adverb *andij* 'such'. This is also very frequent, for example, in Chagatay, as an  
 example from the *Babur - name* illustrates:

- 7 Chagatay  
 Mir Sah Qučinnī *andaq* čaptılar *kim* boyiñin yarımğa yavuq čapılıp edi.  
 Mir Sah Qucin:acc so beat:past:plur that *kim* neck:3.poss:acc half:dat near  
 beat:pass:ip do:past  
 'They beat Mir Sah Qucin so much that his neck was nearly half cut.'  
 (Babur-name 40b)

Several *ki* /*kim*- clauses may follow each other both in the Chagatay language of the Babur-name and in Karaim, as our example 6 illustrates. What is the syntactic relation between these clauses? An important point has to be considered when studying the syntax of such constructions. The possibility of translating the first *ki*- clause as an object-complement and the second as an adverbial complement does not *per se* mean that the clauses are syntactically subordinated. Syntax and semantic interpretation should be kept apart. Thus, *ki* /*kim*- constructions might have rather different syntactic characteristics in different Turkic languages, a fact that has often been ignored in discussions on Indo-European types of subordination in Turkic. One interesting question is why *ki*- constructions have gained acceptance in several Turkic languages. Is it possible that they are used in a way that corresponds to genuine Turkic constructions? (See also Johanson 1992; 1993).

An important feature of *ki*- clauses in Karaim is that the choice of the verb-form in the complement clause may be influenced by the predicate of the preceding clause. The verb *kolma* 'beg' requires that the verb in the complement clause, *cyharhaj*, be in the optative.

- 8 Sondra baslared' Elijahu kolma Tenrini kim cyharhaj any bu zyndandan.  
 later begin:aorist:past copula:3 Elijahu beg:infinitive God:acc that *kim* bring  
 out:optative he:acc this prison:abl  
 'Then Elijahu began to beg God to bring him out of this prison.'

This can be easily accounted for, if we assume that the *kim*- clause is a subordinated complement clause just as well as a participle or infinitive clause in Turkish is. For arguments, see Csató 1991. Subordinated clauses, such as the Karaim one in example 8, are usual, among others, in varieties of Balkan Turkish.

The order of the genitive noun and the possessive noun in possessive constructions is free in case both members are marked, i.e., the possessor is in the genitive and the possessed bears a possessive suffix. See in example 10, *karaj kil'nin chaly* 'the strength of the Karaim language'; in example 11 *bizim sezimizbe*

'with our language'; in example 12 *senin koluna* 'into your hand'; *juwukluhun jazhasnyn* 'the nearness of the spring'; *balkuwun kujasnyn* 'the shine of the sun'; *jesillihin tizlernin* 'the greenness of the fields'; *ciecieklerin bachcalarnyn* 'the flowers of the gardens'.

- 10 Karaj kilinin chaly jeted' osolajze andij jazyslarha.  
 Karaim language:3.poss:gen strength:3.poss suffice:present:*dir* as much such writing:plur:dat  
 'The strength of the Karaim language suffices just as well for such writings.'
- 11 Ino biz, Karajlar, azbiz da jocht bizde kimhe jazma bizin sezimizbe.  
 only we, Karaim:plur few:1.plur and there isn't we:loc somebody:dat write:infinitive we:gen language:1.plur. poss:instr  
 'However, we Karaims are few and there is nobody among us to write for in our language.'
- 12 Bolalhaj bu jazyscyk, kajsyn men kojamen senin koluna, bolma ol burunhu cypcyk, kajsy anlatad juukluhun jazbasnyn ta kiertired' ezibe balkuwun kujasnyn, jesillihin tizlernin ta ciecieklerin bachcalarnyn.  
 can:optative 3 this writing:diminutive which:3.poss:acc I put:present:1 you:gen hand:2.poss:dat be:infinitive that first bird, which:3.poss tell:present:*dir* nearness:3.poss:acc spring:gen and bring:present:*dir* itself:3.poss:instr. shine:3.poss:acc sun:gen greenness:3.poss:acc field:plur:gen and flower:plur:gen garden:plur:gen  
 'Let this little writing which I put into your hand, be able to become the first bird which tells about the nearness of spring and which brings with itself the sunshine, the greenness of the fields and the flowers of the gardens.'

In Turkish, the normal word order in possessive constructions is the one in which the 'possessor' precedes the 'possessed'. When the possessor is in the genitive and the possessed is marked with a possessive suffix, other orderings are also possible (see Tietze 1958). In Karaim, both orderings are possible, as illustrated by *karaj kilinin chaly* 'the strength of the Karaim language' and *ciecieklerin bachcalarnyn* 'the flowers of the gardens'. It seems to me that in case the possessor is not a pronoun, the neutral order in Karaim is N<sub>poss</sub> + N<sub>gen</sub>. The order N<sub>gen</sub> + N<sub>poss</sub> is often used to put more emphasis on the possessor, as in sentence 10, where the expression *karaj kilinin* bears a specific communicative emphasis.

Assuming that the order N<sub>poss</sub> + N<sub>gen</sub> is a basic one, the two nouns in this order function as one syntactic unit, one phrase. This is also supported by the fact

that a relative clause which takes the first noun as head can follow this phrase, as in 3, *kachrasyna ol altyncynyn, kajсында Eljahu jiwrenired* 'to the workshop of the goldsmith, in which Eljahu was an apprentice'. In Turkish, a postpositive Ngen does not function together with the Nposs as a phrase.

In example 13, the postpositive position of the pronominal possessor makes it possible to contrast *tirlihim* 'my life' and *dzanym* 'my soul'. The neutral position of pronominal possessors seems to be the one in front of the head noun.

- 13 Eljahu karuw berdi karakcyha: – Tirlihim benim senin kolunda, wale dzanym benim kajtyr benim Tenrime.  
 Eljahu answer give:past:3 magician:dat: – life:1.poss I.gen you:gen hand:2.poss:loc but soul:1.poss I.gen return:aorist:3 I:gen God:1.poss:dat  
 'Eljahu answered the magician: – My life is in your hands, but my soul will return to my God.'

The following table summarizes some word order differences between Turkish and Karaim (For other features, see, e.g., Pritsak 1959).

WO- property	Turkish	Karaim
verb and object	O+V	V+O
lexical verb and auxiliary verb	lexV+auxV	auxV+lexV
relative clause and head noun	S <sup>rel</sup> N	N S <sup>rel</sup>
possessive constructions	N <sup>gen</sup> N <sup>poss</sup>	N <sup>poss</sup> N <sup>gen</sup>
attributed adjective and noun	Adj N	Adj N
adposition and noun	N postposition	N postposition (Preposition N)

With respect to word order properties, Turkish and Karaim represent basically different syntactic types. The main difference with regard to determinant and determined categories is that, in Turkish, the determinant tend to precede the

determined, whereas in Karaim, the opposite order is dominant. Our observations seem to point to the validity of some implicational word order universals as defined by Greenberg. Further research will confirm and modify the conclusions tentatively formulated in this paper. It will define differences and similarities in a typologically more elaborated way and also show to what extent Karaim may have retained characteristics of a possible 'Turkic syntactic type'.

## REFERENCES

- Csató, Éva Ágnes, 1990, A typological review of relative clause constructions in some Turkic languages. Paper presented at the Fifth Conference on Turkish Linguistics, 15-17 August 1990, SOAS, London.
- , 1991, Non-finite verbal constructions in Turkish, *Altaica Osloensia*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 75-88.
- Gabelentz, Georg von der, 1894, Hypotyposie der Sprachen, eine neue Aufgabe der Linguistik, *Indogermanische Forschungen*, 4, 1-7.
- Greenberg, Joseph H., 1966, Some universals of grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements, *Universals of Language*, MIT Press, 73-113.
- Johanson, Lars, 1975, Some remarks on Turkic hypotaxis, *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher* 47, 104-118. (Also in: Johanson, Lars, 1991, *Linguistische Beiträge zur Gesamturkologie*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó).
- , 1992, *Strukturelle Faktoren in türkischen Sprachkontakten*. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- , 1993, Code-copying in immigrant Turkish. In: Extra, Guus & Ludo Verhoeven (ed.), 1993, *Immigrant Languages in Europe*, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 197-221.
- Mardkowitz, Aleksander, 1930, *Elijahunun Ucuru*, Luck. (Also in: Johannes Benzing, *Arbeitsmaterialien aus dem Seminar für Orientkunde der Universität Mainz*, Nr.4)
- Musaev, K. M., 1977, *Kratkij grammatičeskij ocerk karaimskogo jazyka*. Moskva.
- Pritsak, Omeljan, 1959, Das Karaimische, in: *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, Wiesbaden: Steiner, I, 318-340.
- Tietze, Andreas, 1958, Der freistehende Genitiv im Türkei-Türkischen, *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher*, 30: 183-194.