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The decline of the Ottoman optative

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For Éva with infinite love,
admiration, and gratitude.

Turkic volutative and optative

The decline of the optative mood is a remarkable phenomenon in the history of some Turkic languages, particularly Turkish.

The volutative is an old Turkic volitional mood expressing desire, request, command, etc. Orkhon Turkic exhibits the following volutative markers:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{VOL-1SG} &: \{-\text{A}y\text{Im}\} \\
\text{VOL-3p} &: \{-zU(n)\} \\
\text{VOL-1PL} &: \{-\text{A}j\text{Im}\}
\end{align*}
\]

Examples include \textit{Kon-ayin} ‘I will settle’, \textit{yan-alim} ‘We will return’, ‘Let us return’ (cohortative call for joint action), \textit{bar-zun} ‘X shall go’, ‘Let X go’ (exhortative call for third persons). The known Orkhon Turkic texts do not contain any second-person volutatives.

Modern Turkish displays the following volutative markers:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{VOL-1SG} &: \{-\text{y}A\text{yIm}\} \\
\text{VOL-3SG} &: \{-\text{In}\} \\
\text{VOL-1PL} &: \{-\text{y}A\text{Im}\} \\
\text{VOL-3PL} &: \{-\text{In-1Ar}\}
\end{align*}
\]

The inventories are thus almost identical. The Orkhon Turkic situation appears to be preserved in modern Turkish. This impression of continuity is, however, deceptive. It is important to remember that Ottoman Turkish also possessed an optative mood that later disappeared almost without leaving any traces behind.

The Turkic optative, expressed by \{-\text{G}A\{y\} \sim \{-\text{G}A\}\}, is a volitional mood that signals meanings such as will, intention, wish, possibility, necessity, probability, and prediction. In Old Uyghur and East Middle Turkic, it conveys shades of meaning of necessity, obligation, wish, etc. Since a possible realization of a desired or foreseen event can only take place in the relative future, optative markers are sometimes referred to as “future” markers.

In the Northeastern branch of Turkic, the optative is still vital. It may, for instance, express epistemic assessment in the sense of probability. In Yakut, the probabilistic meaning is predominant, the assessment of a not yet realized event as possible or probable, e.g. \textit{Min bar-a-y-a-bin} ‘I might go’ (‘Ich könnte gehen’; Böhlingk 1851: 307). Further shades of meaning include deontic and epistemic necessity, obligation or permission to fulfill an action, request, hope, desire, intention, and promise.
In other Turkic branches, the optative participle expresses potentiality and desire. In Oghuz Turkic, it is represented by the markers -(y)Ay ~ -(y)A. The bracketed glide y is the normal Oghuz counterpart of the initial velar in -(G)Ay ~ -(GA), and not an inserted hiatus-preventing “binding consonant” (Adamović 1985: 254). The glide remains after vowel stems, e.g. basla-ya ← basla- ‘to begin’, and disappears after consonant stems, e.g. gâl-a ← gâl- ‘to come’. The corresponding marker in the non-Oghuz language Khalaj, spoken in Central Iran, is -(GA), e.g. Yâ-kâl-gâ ‘X shall come’, ‘Let X come’.

Ottoman Turkish possessed a complete and formally transparent optative paradigm. According to Deny, it expressed “le souhait” and “l’incitation” (1921: 416). According to Adamović, the basic and probably original meaning was the desire or willingness to act (“der Wunsch bzw. die Bereitschaft, eine Handlung zu unternehmen”; 1985: 254).

The first OPT-1SG marker was -(y)Ay-vAn ~ -(y)A-vAn, later followed by -(y)A-m, e.g. Gâl-â-m ‘I will come’. The OPT-1PL was first -(y)A-vUz, e.g. Gôr-â-vüz ‘We will see’, ‘Let us see’. It was followed by -(y)lzl, e.g. Gîr-â-lûz ‘We will not see’. There was also a second optative marker -(y)l, e.g. Otu-r-â-l ‘We will sit down’. Modern dialects know it in the contracted form -(y)AK, e.g. Gîr-â-k ‘We will see’, ‘Let us see’.

The OPT-2SG marker was -(y)A-sln, e.g. Gûl-â-sim ‘May you come’, and the OPT-2PL marker was -(y)A-slz, e.g. Gûl-â-siz, later -(y)A-slnlz > -(y)A-slnlz. The third-person markers were -(y)A and -(y)A-lAR, e.g. Gûl-â, Gûl-â-lâr.

Decline

Outside the Northeastern branch, the optative experienced a decline, losing ground and falling into decay. Only parts of its once complete paradigms were preserved. In modern Tatar, Uzbek, etc., the simple optative marker is missing almost entirely. The reason is that its semantics largely overlapped with that of the volitive. The moods conveyed similar meanings, both signaling “it is desirable that…”. There were mostly no clearcut boundaries between the types. The functions of the optative were largely taken over by the volutative, forms of the hypothetic mood in -(sA), and the aorist.

Some modern languages use optatives only in archaizing styles and formulaic expressions, e.g. Uzbek Yâz-yay ‘May X write’, Kazakh Köp şa-ya-say-sîg ‘May you live long’, Turkmen Tuy-un kut-il bol-a ‘May your feast be happy’. They are obsolete in other uses. Optatives are still common in Khorezmian varieties, which are not, however, Uzbek dialects. The Tatar optative in -(G)Ay was once vital, with forms such as OPT-1SG -(G)Ay-Im, OPT-2SG -(G)Ay-In, and OPT-3SG -(G)Ay-I. In modern Tatar, it has vanished except for some petrified remnants. Negated forms are sometimes still used in an adnomitive sense, warning against possible undesired events, e.g. Al-ma-yay-î ‘X should not take it’. Bashkir -(G)Ay is preserved in petrified remnants such as buyay ‘it seems’ < bul-yay. The Turkmen first-person optatives vanished early, ousted by volutatives.

The decline concerned the simple optative forms. Combinations of -(G)Ay + past copulas, expressing irreality, were more viable and largely remained. In many languages such as Turkmen, Karachay-Balkar, Crimean Tatar, Kumyk, and Kirghiz, optatives only occur in combination with past copulas or auxiliaries.

The close relations between the volutative and the optative have parallels in many other languages. The development of the Indo-European subjunctive and optative moods is a well-known old example. The close similarity led to their fusion, i.e. the absorption of the subjunctive by the optative.

The danger of confusion of the two Turkic moods optative and volutative was especially high in the Oghuz branch, where the optative marker had the shape -(y)A. It was often difficult to distinguish optative and volutative forms. The relationship between the two moods was close from the very beginning. The Ottoman optative overlapped semantically with the volutative and partly fused with it. The optative was also closely intertwined with the aorist, which typically expressed inclination and predisposition.

There were partial mergers. The functions of OPT-1SG were taken over by the volutative and the aorist. According to Deny, the VOL-1SG (“imperative”) marker was “en réalité simple doublet de la 1re personne de l’optative” (1921: 932). The negated OPT-1SG form -(m-Aylz) coincided with that of the aorist. The third-person markers had similar volitional functions as the volutative markers, e.g. OPT-3SG Gûl-â vs. VOL-3SG Gûl-sim ← gûl- ‘to come’. The prospective marker -(y)A-K, which emerged in the 15th century, could refer to the future in a more explicit way.

The first- and third-person markers went out of regular use by the 17th century. According to Adamović, who attempted to determine the chronology of the decline (1985: 262), the OPT-1SG -(y)A-m lost its future meaning to the corresponding optative. By 1600, the optative and subjunctive functions were taken over by the volutative -(y)A-ylm. The marker -(y)A-m mostly vanished in the vernacular, but it was used in the written language well into the 18th century. It is still employed in the dialects of Van, Muş, Bitlis, Malatya, Elazığ, and Tunceli. In the rest of the Turkish language area, it occurs in petrified form in folk songs and folk tales, or as a borrowing from eastern Anatolia.

The fate of the OPT-1PL marker -(y)A-ylz ~ -(y)Aylz was similar. According to Adamović (1985: 266), it vanished in the vernacular by 1600, and its function was taken over by the VOL-1PL marker -(y)Allm. As noted, the negated form -(m-Aylz) had already coincided with the negative form of the aorist. The changes were implemented much later in the written language, where -(y)A-ylz ~ -(y)ylz retained its old functions until the 18th century. Apart from -(m-Aylz), modern standard Turkish exhibits no remnants of the OPT-1PL form. The second-person markers OPT-2SG -(y)A-sln ~ -(y)A-slnz and OPT-2PL -(y)A-slnlz ~ -(y)A-slnlz, have, however, been partly preserved as vernacular elements.
In sum: Except for a few remnants, the simple optative paradigm almost vanished. As already noted, however, the decline affected the simple optative forms, whereas combinations with the past copula, expressing irreality, largely remained, e.g. Gäl-di i-di_i Gäl-di-y-di ‘X would come’.

The following replacements took place:

OPT-1SG {-(y)Am}, e.g. Gäl-dım, was replaced by VOL-1SG -(y)Ayım), e.g. Gäl-ayım. Up to the 15th century, the markers could still be distinguished.

OPT-1PL -(y)AvUz), e.g. Gäl-dí-viz, and -(A)yIz), e.g. Gäl-dí-yiz, were replaced by VOL-1PL -(y)AvIm), e.g. Gäl-avım.

The third-person markers {-(y)A} and -(y)A-1Ar), e.g. Gäl-á, Gäl-á-lär, were replaced by -(sn) and -(sn)1Ar), e.g. Gäl-sín, Gäl-sín-lär. The OPT-3SG marker -(y)A) once formed an opposition with VOL-3SG -(sn) ~ -(sn). The opposition became unstable, and -(y)A) was finally ousted. It is still preserved in some dialects, e.g. Gäl-d ‘X will come’, ‘May X come’ vs. Gäl-sín ‘X shall come’. In standard Turkish, the marker occurs in formulaic expressions such as ‘Kolay gel-e’ (easy come-OPT-3SG) ‘May it (the work) come easy’ and ‘Gülçül ol-a’ (good luck-PL become-OPT-3SG) ‘Good journey’. Even here, however, the optative is largely replaced by a volitive, e.g. ‘Kolay gel-sín (easy come-VOL-3SG). The OPT-3PL marker -(y)A-1Ar), e.g. Gær-e-lær ‘They will see’, is replaced by OPT-3PL -(sn)1Ar).

The second-person markers -(y)A-sn) and -(y)A-snA), e.g. Gäl-dí-sín, Gäl-dí-sín às could not be replaced, since no corresponding volutative markers existed. Gäl and Gäl-int(z) are imperative forms and thus not qualified as substitutes. This fact caused a delay of the decline: The second-person optative remained longer. Forms such as -(y)A-sn) and -(y)A-snA) are still used in vernaculars. The only optatives still alive in standard Turkish are OPT-2SG -(Gel-e-sin) and OPT-2PL -(Gel-e-sin) ‘You will come’. They are rarely used, at least in formal styles. Gagauz still makes use of second-person optatives, e.g. OPT-2SG Al-a-sn) and OPT-2PL Al-a-sín às al- ‘to take’.

“Colloquia familiaris turcico-latina”, a text in Russian-based script compiled in 1672 by Jakab Nagy de Harsányi, is based on spoken Istanbul Ottoman of the 17th century. It is thought to reflect the spoken language of its time: “Aus diesen Texten erhalten wir im wesentlichen ein Bild von der gesprochenen Sprache jener Zeit” (Havai 1973: 13-14). Here we almost always find the VOL-1SG marker -(y)Ayım), and rarely the OPT-1SG marker -(y)Am). The VOL-1PL marker -(y)AyIm) is generalized. The OPT-2SG marker -(y)A-snA) is still alive. Only in the third person there is still a real competition between optative and volutive, i.e. OPT-3SG -(y)A) and VOL-3SG -(sn). Examples:

VOL-1SG -(y)Ayım), e.g. Bul-ayım ‘I will find’, ‘Let me find’. İlää-yim ‘I will do’, ‘Let me do’. OPT-1SG -(y)Am), infrequent, occurring in negated forms such as Kal-ma-ya-m ‘I will not stay’.

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VOL-1PL -(y)AyIm), e.g. Kal-ayım ‘We will stay’, ‘Let us stay’, Basla-ya-lm ‘We will begin’, ‘Let us begin’. OPT-2SG -(y)A-snA), e.g. O-ya-sım ‘You shall be (come)’, Isl-ya-sn ‘You shall require’. VOL-3SG -(y)A), e.g. O-la ‘You shall be (come)’, ‘Let X be (come)’. OPT-3SG -(y)A), e.g. O-la ‘You shall be (come)’, ‘Düş-mi-yə ‘X shall not fall’.

We also find combinations with the past copula i-di ‘was’ to express irreality, e.g. Bulun-a-y-dist Bulun-a-adi. An example in the original notation: Hīts ommādum ki, Ojmanlida bu dengli söhret bulunadı ‘I would never have believed that so much fame would be found with the Ottomans’ (“Nie hätte ich vermutet, dass bei den Osmanen solcherei Ruhm zu finden wäre”; Havai 1973: 156).

Preserved optatives

The optatives are largely preserved in some Balkan and East Anatolian dialects, in Azeri and South Oghuz:

OPT-1SG -(y)A-m), e.g. Gör-dım ‘I will see’. OPT-1PL -(y)A-K), e.g. Gör-á-k ‘We will see’.

Many Turkish dialects maintain these differences.

OPT-2SG -(y)A-snA) ~ -(y)A-sn ~ -(y)A-snA), e.g. Gör-dí-san ‘May you see’. Owing to overlapping with the hypothetic (conditional) mood, the marker -(y)A-sn) sometimes occurs.


OPT-3SG -(y)A), e.g. Gör-á ‘May X see’. OPT-3PL -(y)A-1Ar), e.g. Gör-á-lär ‘May they see’.

Certain Azeri dialects of Iran such as Tebriz Azeri, northwestern South Oghuz dialects, and Khorasan Oghuz dialects maintain the opposition the optative vs. volutative oppositions. Examples of VOL-1SG -(y)A-m) vs. OPT-1SG -(y)A-m) and VOL-3SG -(y)A-sn) ~ -(y)A-sn) vs. OPT-3SG -(y)A):

VOL-1SG -(y)A-m), e.g. Gör-dım ‘I will see’, Ota-yu-m ‘I will read’. OPT-1SG -(y)A-m), e.g. Gör-dım ‘May I see’, Ota-yu-m ‘May I read’. OPT-1PL -(y)A-AG), e.g. Gör-á ‘May I see’, Ota-yu-ya ‘May I read’.

In many cases, the oppositions are suspended. Varieties have often fused the moods, replacing volutative markers with optative markers or vice versa. The neutralizations testify to the semantic proximity of the two moods. Some varieties have gener-
alized the OPT-1SG marker (-(y)A-m) and the OPT-1PL marker -(y)A-G. Certain Khorasan Oghuz dialects distinguish OPT-1SG -(y)A-m and VOL-1SG -(y)Im, while others use -(y)A-m in both functions. The 1PL marker -(y)A-G is normally used in both functions. There is usually an OPT-2PL marker -(y)A-Hlz. VOL-3SG markers have often replaced OPT-3SG markers.

In modern standard Azeri, the volutive ("ömr şəkkəl" in the indigenous Turco-
yology) and the optative ("arzu şəkkəl") are grammaticalized expressions of volition. Their relationship is as follows (get- 'to go'):

OPT-1SG -(y)A-m, e.g. Ged-ə-m. VOL-1SG -(y)Im, e.g. Ged-i-m.
OPT-1PL -(y)A-K, Ged-ə-k.
OPT-2SG -(y)A-sAn, e.g. Ged-ə-san.
OPT-2PL -(y)A-sInHz, -(y)A-sIz, e.g. Ged-ə-siniz - Ged-ə-siz.
OPT-3SG -(y)A, e.g. Ged-ə. VOL-3SG -(sIn), e.g. Get-sin.
OPT-3PL -(y)A-IAr, e.g. Ged-ə-lər. VOL-3PL -(sIn-IAr), e.g. Get-sin-lər.

Gagauz exhibits the following markers (gül- 'to come'):

VOL-1SG -(y)AyIm, e.g. Gül-əyim.
VOL-1PL -(y)AIm, e.g. Gül-altım.
OPT-2SG -(y)A, e.g. Gül-ə-sin.
OPT-2PL -(y)A-sInHz, -(y)A-sIz, e.g. Gül-ə-siniz.
VOL-3SG -(sIn), e.g. Gül-sin.
VOL-3PL -(sIn-ar), e.g. Gül-sin-nar.

In modern Turkish, the development has led to contamination of optatives and vol-
untatives. Grammarians tend to subsume volutive and imperative markers under one unified volitional pseudo-paradigm with members of heterogenous origin: voluntary for the first and third persons and optatives for the second person. Two paradigms are claimed to have fused (Kissling 1960: 88). The first- and second-person markers are sometimes claimed to share an alleged suffix -{A}. Examples ('get- 'to come'):

VOL-1SG -(y)A-(y)Im, e.g. (get-eyim)
VOL-1PL -(y)A-IIm, e.g. (get-e-em)
OPT-2SG -(y)A-sIn, e.g. (get-e-sin)
OPT-2PL -(y)A-sInHz, -(y)A-sIz, e.g. (get-e-siniz)
VOL-3SG -(sIn), e.g. (get-sin)
VOL-3PL -(sIn-IAr), e.g. (get-sin-lər)

Discontinuity

How to explain the strange and relatively long gap appearance of the optative in

Ottoman Turkish? Why did it disappear in the central area, whereas it is largely pre-
served in the periphery? If we would not possess older documents that prove the
existence of a complete Ottoman optative paradigm, it would be logical to con-
nclude that it has never existed and that the situation documented in East Old Turkic simply

continued. We would assume a strong continuity instead of a remarkable discontinu-
ity.

The volutive markers that finally prevailed were obviously older than the opta-
tive markers that they replaced. The uncertain nature of the documentation may
deceive us, the only sources available being written texts. To what extent do they
reflect the situation of the spoken language? It is methodologically questionable to
try to derive features of spoken languages from written sources. Was the optative in
western Anatolia, the dialect area that became constitutive for standard Turkish, es-
sentially limited to the written language? Does the optative mainly appear in texts
following eastern-style literary conventions? How else can we explain that modern
Western Anatolian dialects do not know otherwise widespread simple forms such as
Gid-ə-m and Gid-ə-k?

The preservation of the optative in peripheral areas of Ottoman and in neigh-
borin g Oghuz areas may have been partly context-induced. The influence of Persian and
Balkan languages may have played a crucial role. Optatives were, for instance, used as
subjunctives in modal structures to express need, desire, purpose, e.g. Gərık gəl-
ə necessary come-OPT) 'X must come'. On subjunctive constructions see Johanson
2011 and 2013.

Volitional moods can occur with subjunctive functions in constructions such as
Gərık-tur ki, ... ol-sun or Lazım-dur ki, ... ol-sun 'It is necessary that X is ..., 'X
must be ...'. It is noticeable that the few remaining optative forms in Harsany’s
above-mentioned texts are primarily used in subjunctive functions, e.g. Gərık-tur ki,
... ol-a 'It is necessary that X is ..., Lazım-dur ki, ... əgrən-ə-sən 'It is necessary that
you learn'. An example in the original notation: Onmazdam ki, bən birəzən olaşən 'I would not have believed that you are so rich' ("Ich hätte nicht vermutet, daß du so reich bist"; Hazai 1973: 52).

The Turkish standard language has moved away from constructions of this type.
Structures with non-finite verb forms have replaced the use of the optative as a sub-
junctive. The old structures are still alive in the periphery. They were strongly
promoted by influence from Persian and Balkan languages and became highly dominant
in written Ottoman. In the east, Persian has maintained its traditionally strong
position and continued to exert a powerful influence on the spoken language. On
the current situation in Tebriz Azeri see Kiral (2001); on the situation in Iraqi Turkic,
where also Kurdish influence is operative see Bulut (2000). In the west, however,
Persian has ceased to serve as a model for syntactic constructions.

The typical Balkan Sprachbund tendency to avoid infinitives may have reinforced
the old structures in Balkan Turkish. The replacement of structures with non-finite
verb forms by constructions with subjunctive forms has long been a characteristic of
the west Rumelian Turkish. Here also second-person forms have remained, for in-
stance in constructions such as Sən lazım otr-a-sən (you necessary sit-OPT-2SG)
'You must sit (down)'. On the situation in modern Gagauz see Menz (1999). Cypriot
Turkish behaves much like the Balkan dialects.
The text written by the Hungarian Jakab Nagy de Harsány may have been influenced by Balkan Turkish. Already as a young man, in the grammar school of Nagy-váréd, the author had acquired a thorough knowledge of Ottoman Turkish and other Oriental languages (Hazai 1973: 15).

It is also interesting to observe how the Ottoman world traveler Evliya Çelebi (*1611) uses optatives in his Seyhâname 'Book of Travels'. In her edition of the book that describes a journey from Bitlis to Van, Bulut notes that the author uses the optative in purposive clauses only when quoting direct speech from east Anatolian and Azeri dialects. The two optatives OPT-3PL Ol-ma-yâ-lar ← ol-ma- 'not to be(com)ing' and OPT-2PL Gür-â-siz ← gür- 'to see' occur in purposive clauses of the Iranian type, preceded by ki or ta: ki. Bulut assumes archaic forms that have survived in the vernacular, in local dialects, or in certain politeness formulas (1997: 112).

Lack of contact-induced support may have contributed to the strong decline of the optative in western Anatolia, in the dialect area that was decisive for the development of standard Turkish. Outside the core area, language contact may have prevented or attenuated the decline.

References

Scope of negation and phonological phrasing in Turkish

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1. Introduction
This paper presents novel data in Turkish describing a topic-related boundary tone and the interpretational consequences of the phrasing it induces with special reference to the scope of negation. It will be seen that this boundary tone serves to remove the constituent(s) it accompanies from the scope of matrix negation. I argue that this phenomenon is best captured as underlyingly syntactic. The specific claim is that whenever scopally active, separately phrased constituents are topicalized in the syntax of Turkish.

Evidence for such an approach comes from cases of boundary insertion that disrupts locality domains and cause unacceptability (Section 3) and a double-parallelism between phonological phrasing and overt movement, namely the observation that separate phrasing corresponds to the availability of overt movement while the lack thereof corresponds to a ban on movement (Section 4). Further support comes from a comparison between Japanese and Turkish, where parameterized EPP-induced raising is responsible for a bundle of concomitant LF and PF effects (Section 5). I use four case studies to support my claim that phrasing disrupts or otherwise alters syntactic locality domains: adverbiale scope with respect to negation, cross-clausal NPI licensing, agreement, and universal quantifier under negation. These are all locality effects that arise under the configurations of syntax. Still, the issue is far from being resolved, and many interesting questions that arise with respect to Turkish as well as with respect to alternative analyses have had to fall outside of the scope of this primarily descriptive paper.

2. Preliminaries: H tones in Turkish
In the recent literature on the intonation of Turkish, two distinct rising boundary tones have been described: a H+ tone at the end of phonological phrases (Kan 2009, Kamali 2011), and a H6 tone at the end of intonational phrases (iP) (Kan 2009).

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