

# Emotional and Functional Speaker Attitudes towards Gagauz as an Endangered Language \*

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## Abstract

The Gagauz language spoken in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia in Moldova is one of the endangered languages. This article aims to investigate the Gagauz speakers' attitudes towards the Gagauz, Russian and Moldovan languages. The results were analyzed on the basis of age, gender and the place of residence. It is seen that Gagauz speakers who are younger and living in cities have more positive functional attitudes towards the Russian language. On the other hand, the participants who are older and reside in villages have more positive emotional attitudes towards the Gagauz language.

## Keywords

The Gagauz language, endangered languages, functional language attitudes, emotional language attitudes, language vitality.

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## Introduction

Language endangerment is the situation in which a language is at the risk of death as a result of politic repression, natural disasters or some other cultural and economic reasons. Among these, Austin et al. (2011) have stated that cultural, political and economic dominance are the common factors leading to language endangerment. It is asserted that due to the lack of political representation and recognition, the use of language by the minority groups can be prohibited or the economic problems may lead to the migration of the native speakers. In his classification, Crystal (2000) has drawn attention to the distinction of physical and cultural factors. Earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, etc. are the threats to physical safety. On the other hand, cultural factors include demographic submersion, assimilation, etc.

A more detailed categorization of the factors of endangerment is proposed by Brenzinger et al. (2003: 7-14). Adopted by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereafter, UNESCO), the criteria include three main topics which are “(1) degree of endangerment, (2) language attitudes and policies, and (3) urgency of documentation. Degree of endangerment is explored under six sub-topics: (a) intergenerational language transmission, (b) absolute numbers of speakers, (c) proportion of speakers within the total population, (d) loss of existing language domains, (e) response to new domains and media, and (f) material for language education and literacy”. Brenzinger et al. (2003: 7-14) has divided (2) Language attitudes and policies into two categories: “(g) governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies,” including official language status and use and “(h) community members’ attitudes towards their own language”. Lastly, “(3) urgency of documentation is investigated on the basis of (i) amount and quality of documentation”.

Being one of the endangered languages classified by UNESCO, the Gagauz language is spoken in many regions in Europe. Moseley (2010) has reported that it is spoken in Bessarabia (in Comrat, Ceadir-Lunga, Basarabeasca, Taraclia, Vulcanești in Moldova and İzmail region in Ukraine), Maritime (surroundings of Varna in Bulgaria), Deliorman (Deliorman region in Bulgaria) and South Balkans (Greece, Turkey and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). These varieties are listed as definitely endangered, severely endangered, critically endangered and severely endangered, respectively.

## **The Gagauz Language and the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia**

The Gagauz language is one of the members of the Turkic languages. As a member of South western branch (West Oghuz Turkic) of the group, it has similar genetic and typological features with “Anatolian Turkish and Azerbaijanian” (Johanson 1998: 82). This language includes various elements from Bulgarian Turkish, Ottoman language, Kipchak and Karaim language (Dilaçar 1964). Although phonology and morphology of the Gagauz language are very similar to Anatolian Turkish, the Gagauz language differs from the others on the basis of its syntax. The influence of surrounding Slavic languages can be easily seen in syntax and vocabulary.

The variety that the Gagauz language investigated in this study is spoken in the Autonomous Territorial Unit (ATU) of Gagauzia which was officially recognized in 1994 by the Moldovan authorities. The Gagauz, Russian and Moldovan are the official languages of the autonomous unit. The National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova (2004) reported that according to the census held in 2004, 147.500 Gagauz people were living in the Republic of Moldova. This number accounts for the 4,4% of the total population in Moldova. It was stated that 128.580 of the total Gagauz population were living within the borders of the Gagauzia ATU. There are also other ethnic groups in the area. The population of the autonomy is composed of the Gagauz (82,6%), Bulgarians (5,1%), Moldovans/Romanians (4,6%), Russians (3,7%) and Ukrainians (3,0%).

When the languages spoken in the area are taken into consideration, it is seen that the Gagauzia ATU is multilingual. According to census by the Republic of Moldova (2004), 102.395 Gagauz speak the Gagauz language, 40.445 speak the Russian language, 2.756 speak Moldovan language, 821 speak Bulgarian language, 609 speak Romanian language, and 413 speak Ukrainian language. It was also reported that 137.774 people declared the Gagauz language as their mother tongue. According to census in 1989, the Gagauz society is apparently bilingual (Menz 2006: 139). It is reported that “80% of the Gagauz people within the borders of former Soviet Union (mostly in Moldova and Ukraine) were bilingual”. The Russian language was declared as the second language by these respondents.

Gagauzia ATU was officially recognized by the Moldovan authorities in 1994. The Gagauz People Assembly (Halk Topluşu) and the president (bashkan) are the core elements of the parliamentary procedure. The use of the Gagauz language is also supported by the Law of Gagauzia Autonomous Territorial Unit. Sirkeli et al. (2012: 9) have reported that according to the provisions of Gagauzia, “the President and Chairperson of the National Assembly of Gagauzia should have command of the Gagauz language”. According to Article 35, which is related to the right to education, “the state would ensure its citizens’ right to choose the language of education” (Constitutional Court of Moldova, 2017). However, it is seen that Gagauz people do not have an option for education in their native language. As Sirkeli et al. (2012) have pointed out, language is taught as a ‘native language’ class for several hours a week, at the request of students. It is seen that although it is supported by law, it is not the medium of instruction in classroom environment.

Regarding the use of the Gagauz language in media, it is seen that access to language is not easy. *Ana Sözü, Açık Göz, Gagauz Yeri, Gagauz Sesi, Halk Birliği, Noviy Vzglyad, Vesti Gagauzii, Znamea* and *Panorama* are the newspapers that have been published in the area up to now. Among these, *Ana Sözü* is the only newspaper which is published only in the Gagauz language (Güngör et al. 2002, Sirkeli et al. 2012). GRT (Gagauz Radio Television) company has a TV and radio channel. The broadcasts are in the three official languages, but mostly in Russian language.

### **Language Attitudes**

A considerable amount of literature has been published on attitudes. A great deal of the research into attitudes has focused on language attitudes. Baker (1992) has labelled language attitudes as an umbrella term which includes many types from attitudes towards learning a language to language preference. Romaine (1995: 43) has emphasized that “attitudes towards one language or another, towards bilingualism and towards code-switching generally will all affect an individual’s language choice in a given situation, and a community’s propensity (or not) for language shift”. In the same vein, Sadanand (1993: 129) has asserted that “speakers’ perception of the role of different languages and their functions motivate their attitudes toward those languages”. Accordingly, Ferguson (1996: 275) has asked two fundamental questions to explore the attitude. These questions are given below:

“What do the speakers of a language believe or feel about its esthetic, religious, and ‘logical’ values? About the appropriateness of its use for literature, education, and ‘national’ purposes?”

“What do the speakers of a language believe or feel about other languages in the country? Are they better or inferior to their own language in general or for specific purposes?”

As can be seen above, belief and feelings about the value and usefulness of the languages partly form the language attitudes. The speaker’s reaction to his/her native or mainstream language would determine the role of that language. Appel et al. (1987) have emphasized the relationship between the attitudes and the society. The authors claim that this interaction forms the attitudes and the role of attitudes in a society is a chain like process. It is asserted that ethnic groups develop attitudes towards each other. These attitudes influence attitudes towards cultural institutions and language. Finally, attitudes towards cultural institutions and language contribute to the development of the attitudes towards the members of the ethnic group.

Two important concepts emerge from previous attitude studies: instrumental and integrative attitudes. The term instrumental attitude is used by Baker (1992) to refer to the pragmatic and utilitarian nature of attitudes. On the other hand, according to McClelland (1958), integrative attitudes are self-oriented and individualistic ones. A well-known example of instrumental language attitude is given by Gardner (1985: 17). “Studying French can be important to me because I think it will some-day be useful in getting a good job”. It can be seen from the sentence given that learning a language is important as it will help the speaker to find a well-paid job. In other words, the speaker considers the language as a tool to achieve prosperity. On the other hand, the example of what is meant by integrative attitude can be exemplified by Gardner (1985: 18). “Studying French can be important for me because other people will respect me more if I have a knowledge of a foreign language”. As the sentence given very clearly demonstrates, speaking a language is a component of being a member of a language community. At this point, the attitude is driven by the intention to ‘be like others’ which provides a social recognition. The distinction between instrumental and integrative attitudes sheds light to language teaching practices. However, it does not fully explain the speaker attitudes of a minority language. Moreover,

these terms poorly define attitudes towards an endangered and a dominant language which is not a foreign language apparently. To this end, two new terms are proposed in this study: functional and emotional attitudes. The term functional attitude is used to refer to the functional strength of the language. Whether the Gagauz or Russian language is preferred to have higher education, to describe certain uses in science and technology, to write and read literary works, etc. would form functional attitudes to the Gagauz and Russian languages in this study. Secondly, participants' affective evaluations about their native and mainstream language would be called emotional attitudes. The protection and transfer of their native language are the items of emotional attitudes to be asked participants. It is important to bear in mind that the terms emotional and functional language attitudes are mainly proposed to describe an endangered but ethnic language (the Gagauz language) and a mainstream language (the Russian language) which is used in various domains of life. Therefore, in the current study the Russian is not a foreign language which is learnt in classroom setting; rather it is used in daily-life and formally taught in schools. The observations show that the Russian language is clearly more prestigious than the Gagauz language. It is possible to see the effects of the Soviet period in the language policies, attitudes, uses and functions.

Being one of the factors contributing to endangerment, speaker attitude has an important role in language maintenance. The attitudes towards the Gagauz and the Russian languages are the dependent variables of the current research. The difference in the nature of language attitudes and their possible influences on the endangerment will be showed using the distinction of functional and emotional language attitudes.

In this study, how speaker attitudes and languages differ on the basis of the factors such as age, gender and the place of residence, which are the independent variables of the current research, are also investigated. The first of these variables, the factor of age explores the differences under three age groups: 13-20, 21-40 and 41-74 years old participants. As a second variable, whether the gender of the participants influences the language attitudes and uses is investigated. Thirdly, the possible effects of living in city or village to language attitudes are within the scope of this investigation.

It is thought that the results of empirical speaker attitudes research would provide important insights to understand the status the Gagauz and the Russian languages spoken officially in the area. To this end, this study aims to address the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the emotional and functional attitudes of the Gagauz speakers living within the borders of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia towards their native language and Russian?

According to the observations made prior to data collection process, Gagauz speakers had more positive emotional attitudes towards the Gagauz language than to Russian. Being their ethnic language, the Gagauz language has a function to symbolize the Gagauz identity in the society. In order to investigate participants' emotional attitudes towards the Gagauz and Russian languages in detail, the items such as the endangerment, easiness in expression, future expectations, etc. were included in the attitude scale. On the other hand, it was observed that the Russian language is a mean of communication in various domains such as education, trade, bureaucracy, etc. Therefore, it is hypothesized that the functional attitude scores towards Russian would be higher than the Gagauz language when official documentation, higher education, trade, etc. are asked.

Research Question 2: To what extent do the independent variables such as age, gender and the place of residence have an influence on the emotional and functional attitudes?

The observations showed that Gagauz speakers' attitudes could be directly influenced by their age, gender and the place of residence. The first of these variables, the factor of age explores whether the attitudes of the participants of three age groups differ from the other significantly. It was hypothesized that older participants were more likely to have positive attitudes towards the Gagauz language.

When gender is taken into consideration, it is hypothesized that women might more likely to use the Gagauz language as traditionally they are 'home-makers' and 'caregivers'. On the other hand, men are 'bread-winners' working outside home where the knowledge of the Russian is comparably obligatory. Finally, the place of residence is taken as a variable that might

differ from one participant to the other. The observations showed that the participants living in the villages had more positive attitudes and language use the Gagauz language more than the other languages. There are many possible reasons for the choice of using the Gagauz language. First, the villages in Gagauzia are ethnically more homogenous when compared with cities. Thus, apparently the likelihood of speaking the Gagauz language is higher than for the participants living in the cities. Secondly, it is observed that most of the official institutions, where the official documentation and work were written and carried out in the Russian language, are located in the cities. Therefore, it is expected that the participants living in cities have more positive functional attitudes towards the Russian language. The above mentioned research questions are posed on the basis of the current situation of the Gagauz language as an endangered language.

## Method

### Participants

The data was collected from 137 participants living in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia in Moldova. The participants' age ranges from 13 to 74. The study included 75 female and 62 male participants. The number of participants who live in villages is 84, while 47 participants reported that they were living in cities. The participants reported to be from Comrat, Ceadâr-Lunga, Besalma, Congaz, Copceac, Dezghingea, Chirsova, Tomai, Baurci, Ferapontievca, Avdarma, etc.

### Data collection tools

The data collection tool adopted in this study is a paper-and-pencil questionnaire. The participants were asked to choose the best option among *I strongly agree, I agree, I don't know, I disagree, I strongly disagree* for the Gagauz and the Russian languages. The attitude items in the scale were divided into two categories on the basis of the type of the attitude such as emotional and functional. The items of emotional and functional attitude categories are given in Table 1.



**Table 1.** *The Categories of Emotional and Functional Attitudes*

Emotional Category
I like this language
I express myself comfortably in this language
I (will) try hard to make my children speak this language
I enjoy listening to music in this language
I think using this language makes me feel superior
I think this language should be protected as it is an endangered language
If I had choice, I would use only this language
Functional Category
I think using this language is advantageous in higher education
I think the expressive strength of this language is high
I think this language is suitable for writing and reading literary works
I think this language is suitable for writing official documents
I think this language is suitable for doing trade
I think not having a good command of this language is a disadvantage
I think it is useful to teach this language to children as early as possible
I think using this language is beneficial on the basis of scientific and technological terms

The questionnaire was prepared in the Gagauz and Russian languages. Before administering the test, the linguistic validity analysis was performed to find out whether the Gagauz and Russian scales are comparable and their items have the same meaning. The correlation was found .999 ( $p < .05$ ) and .959 ( $p < .05$ ) for the Gagauz and Russian versions, respectively. The analysis showed that the items in Gagauz and Russian versions are conceptually equivalent. Thus, two versions, the Gagauz and Russian ones, were used in the study.

### **Data Analysis**

As mentioned above, the items under the emotional category investigate the participants' disposition, motivation, and sympathy for using the Gagauz and the Russian languages, while functional items explore the attitudes of the participants towards these languages' functional roles in daily life. These categories were determined using a set of statistical procedures. First, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (hereafter, KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and

the Bartlett test were performed in order to examine the suitability of the scale for factor analysis. According to the results of these analyses, the KMO value of the scale was 0.902 and  $p$  significance value (0.00) show that the scale is excellently suitable for using factor analysis. Second, Eigenvalue Statistics and Scree Plot techniques were adopted to precisely determine the categories. Finally, the categories were examined whether they share some conceptual meaning. The analysis categorized items into two groups which were named as emotional and functional on the basis of their content. After the categories were determined, Gagauz and the Russian languages were compared using paired-samples test. The results of paired samples statistics are given below.

**Table 2.** *Paired Samples Statistics*

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Emotional	The Gagauz language	,1530	103	,89658	,08834
Attitudes	The Russian language	-,2558	103	1,05113	,10357
Functional	The Gagauz language	-,5728	103	1,02528	,10102
Attitudes	The Russian language	,6111	103	,49522	,04880

The results suggested that the mean score of emotional attitudes for the Gagauz language is 0.1539, while it is -0.2558 for the Russian language. On the other hand, the mean score for the Gagauz language is -0.5728 and 0.6111 for the Russian language in terms of the functional attitudes. Taken together, these results suggested that emotional attitudes' mean scores were higher for the Gagauz language, while functional attitudes' mean scores were found higher for the Russian language. As a second step, a  $t$ -test was performed. The results indicate that the  $p$  values for the Gagauz (0.012) and Russian (0.00) languages are lower than  $\alpha$  (0.05). The dependent  $t$ -test revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between these languages for emotional and functional categories.

Apart from the differences between the attitudes of the speakers, this paper also attempts to demonstrate whether age, gender and the place of residence cause variation in the attitudes towards using the Gagauz and Russian languages. To this end mean scores were calculated and variance analysis

was performed to investigate the differences between groups. The results would be discussed in the further section.

## **Results**

A comparison of the two types of attitudes reveals that there is a statistically important difference between two groups. The results have shown that the participants have rated more positively for the Gagauz language. In other words, the participants have more positive emotional attitudes towards the Gagauz language. The findings are consistent with the observations made in the field. During the data collection process, it was observed that the Gagauz people generally have optimistic opinions about the future and the current situation of the Gagauz language. It was also observed that although the Russian language is functionally dominant, the Gagauz speakers are generally optimistic about the future of their mother language, most probably because they are neither fully aware nor knowledgeable enough about language endangerment as the field specialists or linguists understand. They display rather an emotional attitude disregarding the present and future risks.

Secondly, within the scope of this study, age, gender and the place of residence are investigated on the basis of the emotional and functional attitudes of the Gagauz speakers. In the section that follows, how speakers' attitudes varied according to their age, gender and the place of residence will be explored.

### **Emotional Attitudes**

Field observations suggest that there might be a link between demographics of the participants and their language attitudes. It can be seen from the data (see Appendix A) that the speakers of the third group (41-74) have significantly positive attitudes for the items. However, no difference between the age groups were found for the items. When the gender of the participants' are investigated, it is seen that the gender of the participant is not effective in the emotional attitudes towards the Gagauz language apart from an item *I enjoy listening music in this language*. Female participants rated this item more positively than the males. The place where the participants live is also found effective in the forming emotional attitudes towards the Gagauz language. According to the results, the participants living in village rated the items more positively than the ones living in city.

The emotional attitudes of the Gagauz speakers towards the Russian language were also investigated. It was found that younger age groups such as 13-20 and 21-40 have more positive emotional attitudes towards the Russian language. Taken together, these results suggest that there is an association between the age and the emotional attitudes for the Russian language. As for gender of the participants it can be said that females and males' responses differ for some items. These items are *I express myself comfortably in this language* a language and *I enjoy listening music in this language*. It is found that the responses of male participants are more positive than the responses of female participants for the item *I express myself comfortably in this language*. Similarly, male participants rated the item *I enjoy listening music in this language* more positively than female participants. The place of residence is also investigated to discuss the role of the place of residence in the emotional attitudes towards the Russian language. The results show that the participants living in cities have more positive attitudes for the items about the easiness of expression, listening music, intergenerational transmission of language, etc.

### **Functional Attitudes**

The second group of language attitudes in the present study is functional attitudes. As described on the previous section, the variables age, gender and place of residence were investigated in relation to functional attitudes. It was found that oldest participants (ages 41-74) are remarkably more positive for the Gagauz language. On the other hand, it is seen that the participants' gender is not effective on the functional attitudes towards the Gagauz language. With respect to the place of residence, it is clearly seen that the place of residence has influence on the attitudes. The participants living in villages have statistically more positive attitudes towards some of the items such as expressive strength, the use in trade, etc.

The participants' attitudes towards Russian language are also explored. The results show that younger groups such as 13-20 and 21-40 are generally more positive when the functional attitudes towards Russian language are asked. According to the analysis, the items such as the use of language in higher education and reading and writing literary works received higher scores by the participants of 13-20 and 21-40 age groups. Interestingly, no significant differences were found between the gender and the functional attitudes

towards Russian language. Regarding the place of residence, it was found that the participants living in cities were more positive for Russian language in terms of the items such as the use of language in higher education and scientific and technological terminology. In the following section the results of the questionnaires will be discussed in the light of the current state of Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia and language endangerment.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The present study investigated the speaker attitudes of an endangered language. The first research question was formulated to investigate the participants' attitudes towards the emotional and functional attitudes towards the Gagauz and Russian language. It was found that the Gagauz speakers have different attitudes towards the functionality and emotional value of the Gagauz and Russian languages. Although the participants consider Russian as the linguistically dominant language, it is seen that they are emotionally attached to their native Gagauz language. This finding suggests that the speakers are not fully aware of the current vitality and the functions of the Gagauz language. Austin et al. (2011: 33) have discussed the phenomena within the transitional bilingualism:

[...] as the speaker population is in the process of shift, certain groups primarily speak the local language and others the language of wider communication. Because this type of attrition is gradual, speaker communities may be unaware that it is in progress until it is quite advanced and the local language is seriously endangered. This is exacerbated in regions where multilingualism has traditionally been the norm, so that the older generations are not troubled to hear the children speaking a more dominant language, and sometimes miss the fact that they are not speaking their parents' (or grandparents') first language.

Similar to what is defined above, the gradual loss of the Gagauz language is observable in the attitudes of the younger participants. Emotional attachment can be said to a positive indicator of the vitality of an endangered language. It is expected that a strong attachment may empower the Gagauz identity and the vitality of the language. Demirdirek (2008: 234) has suggested that national awareness about being a Gagauz through language can be traced back to period between 1937 and 1989. The author states that

“Gagauz national awareness was initially activated as a struggle to save the Gagauz language and thus (sic) population from disappearing during Soviet rule”. However, today the attachment to and the use of native language are not encouraged institutionally. In the same vein, Neukirch (2002: 117) has asserted that “the new Gagauz leadership used its power primarily for the promotion of its very particular goals rather than for the development of Gagauz identity”. At this point, the official language planning efforts by authorities and informal practices by the society and the leaders of the community assume more importance in contributing to maintenance and the survival of the Gagauz identity.

The tendency to use Russian language in various domains of life such as higher education and literary works especially by the young generation suggests that the Gagauz language has been rapidly losing its functions in modern life. Previously implemented language policies are important to evaluate the current situation in the autonomy. Being a part of a Soviet country, Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia experienced Russification during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Russification, a type of cultural assimilation, included various official and unofficial attempts of Russian authorities which primarily aimed to shift in demographics and language. Pavlenko (2008) has emphasized that language status and corpus planning were the main objectives of the Russification process in 1930s. After the Soviet Union collapsed, the post-Soviet republics adopted various policies regarding the status of Russian language. Some countries like Moldova, eliminated the Russian language in official and public life, adopted Latin alphabet and enacted some regulations about the role of Russian in education. Nevertheless, these did not totally remove the use of Russian language in daily life. Sirkeli et al.’s (2012: 15) account for the role of Russian in Gagauz daily life summarizes the current situation in the region: “Due to the fact that the Gagauz of Moldova were heavily Russified during the Soviet period of our history, including through education, which was available for the Gagauz mostly in Russian, it has become an official language for them”.

As can be seen, it is still possible to observe the domination of Russian language in daily life. When the lack of official and unofficial efforts to maintain the Gagauz language is taken into consideration, it is not surprising that it has been losing its functions day by day. As Romaine (2002: 14) has emphasized on the importance of additional measures.

[...] without additional measures to support teacher training, materials development, and a variety of other enabling factors, policy statements which merely permit, encourage, or recommend the use of a language in education or in other domains of public life cannot be very effective

The Gagauz people's optimistic opinions about the future and the current situation of the Gagauz language would not be sufficient to language maintenance. The second research question explored the role of age, gender and the place of residence. Age of the participants is an important factor which is expected to gain a better insight to understand intergenerational transmission of the Gagauz Language. The results obtained from the analysis showed that there is difference between age groups: young participants had more positive functional attitudes towards Russian language while the older participants are more emotionally positive to the Gagauz language. Overall, these results indicate that there are different perceptions about the value of the Gagauz and Russian languages.

The young speakers' attachment to Russian language can be explained in many ways. However, the most prominent factor is the economic advantages that Russian language provides. Austin et al. (2011: 405) have asserted that "These [economic] disruptions create the circumstances under which minority languages come into unequal competition with others in the linguistic marketplace". Low-income and the increasing unemployment rates are the main issues that Gagauz people are dealing with. Politically limited commerce and trade practices which result in the insufficient number of domestic and foreign investments lead people to labour migration to Russia and Turkey. At this point a good command of Russian is required to find a (well-paid) job. It is quite apparent that Gagauz speakers of young generation are advanced level of Russian speakers. Similarly, the results of Dağdeviren-Kırmızı's (2016) study show that Gagauz youth are more proficient in Russian while their native language use is very limited.

In this study it is also examined that whether being female or male is important in speaker attitudes. It was expected that Gagauz woman might be 'home-makers' and 'caregivers' working inside home which does not make Russian language mandatory. Thus, higher rates of positive attitudes towards the Gagauz language were expected. Interestingly, except from some items, there are not many differences between genders. In other

words, Gagauz female participants' attitudes from Gagauz language do not drastically differentiate from male participants. The results and observations showed that Gagauz women are not 'home-makers' and 'caregivers' today. As mentioned before they are the significant part of Gagauz labour force in abroad. Keough (2006: 441) has pointed out that "what has developed over the years is a transnational migration circuit whereby, as locals explain, to run a Gagauz household, wives and mothers, usually in their thirties, go to Turkey to work as domestics for six months at a time [...]". It is seen that Gagauz woman are not only bilingual, but also can they speak the languages of the countries they live in.

Lastly, Gagauz speakers' attitudes towards these languages on the basis of the place of residence were investigated. Generally, the participants in cities are more positive for Russian language on the basis of functional attitudes. It was found that the participants in villages are more eager and emotionally more attached their ancestral language. A note of caution is due here since the demographics of the Gagauz cities and villages are different. As villages are more homogenous ethnically, people living there have more opportunity to experience Gagauz culture and language. As mentioned by Menz (2003) the Gagauz language was the medium of communication in *kolkhozs* in Soviet period. Therefore, there has been a potential difference between rural and town for years. The results of this study supported the existence of the distinction.

The results have significant implications for the understanding of the endangerment of the Gagauz language in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, Moldova. The implications can be listed as follows: First, economic and political survivals are the top priorities of the Gagauz society. Low-income rates, unemployment, labour migration are the prominent factors in the deterioration in the social prosperity. A healing in socioeconomic growth might indirectly contribute the maintenance of the Gagauz language. Second, the revitalization of the Gagauz language should include official and unofficial parties. The use of the Gagauz language needs to be encouraged in various domains such as education, bureaucracy and media.

The findings from this study make several contributions to understand the language endangerment and its socio-psychological effects on speaker attitudes. It also explores, for the first time, the emotional and the functional language attitudes on the basis of an endangered language.



Being similar to but not the same concepts, integrative and instrumental language motivation, emotional and functional language attitudes provided insights about the Gagauz speakers' perception and approach towards the heritage Gagauz and mainstream Russian languages. When the age of the participants was taken into consideration, it was seen that it is possible to see the difference between older and younger participants. As became evident in field observations done in Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, the younger speakers associate Russian as the functional language that can be used in many domains of life. More research is needed to better understand endangerment and maintenance of the Gagauz language.

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# Tehlike Altında Bir Dil Olan Gagauzca'ya Karşı Duygusal ve İşlevsel Tutumlar\*

Gülin Dağdeviren Kırmızı\*\*

## Öz

Moldova'nın Gagauz Yeri Özerk Bölgesinde konuşulan Gagauzca tehlike altındaki dillerden biridir. Bu makale Gagauz konuşurların Gagauzca, Rusça ve Moldovanca'ya karşı tutumlarını incelemektedir. Sonuçlar yaş, cinsiyet ve yerleşim yeri açısından değerlendirilmiştir. Daha genç olan ve şehirlerde yaşayan Gagauz konuşurların Rusça'ya karşı daha olumlu işlevsel tutumlarının olduğu görülmektedir. Öte yandan daha yaşlı ve köylerde yaşayan katılımcıların ise Gagauzca'ya karşı daha olumlu duygusal tutumlara sahiptir.

## Anahtar Kelimeler

Gagauzca, tehlike altındaki diller, işlevsel dil tutumları, duygusal dil tutumları, dil canlılığı.

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# Эмоциональные и функциональные подходы к гагаузскому как к языку, находящемуся под угрозой исчезновения\*

Гюлин Дагдевирен Кырмызы\*\*

## Аннотация

Гагаузский язык - один из находящихся под угрозой исчезновения языков, на которых говорят в Гагаузии (Автономное территориальное образование Гагаузия) Молдовы. В этой статье рассматривается отношение говорящих на гагаузском к родному языку, к русскому и молдавскому языкам. Результаты оценивались по возрасту, полу и местоположению. Отмечается, что более молодые городские жители, говорящие на гагаузском языке, имеют более позитивное функциональное отношение к русскому языку. С другой стороны, более старшие и живущие в деревне участники, имеют более позитивное эмоциональное отношение к гагаузскому языку.

## Ключевые слова

Гагаузский язык, исчезающий язык, функциональные языковые установки, эмоциональные языковые установки, лингвистическая жизнеспособность.

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