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# Convergence areas in the Caucasus-Western Iran area with respect to relativization strategies

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## ABSTRACT

Caucasus-Western Iran area displays an important genetic and typological linguistic diversity. The population of the area being most often bilingual, trilingual or even more, languages are in continuous contact. In this paper, I document the fact that genetically unrelated languages spoken in a same geographical area tend to converge in their relativization strategies, and may thus diverge from their respective families. Three convergence areas are identified regarding three main variation parameters- the position of the RC, the finiteness of the verb, and the nature of the relativizer in case there is one: languages spoken in Eastern Caucasus make a dominant use of prenominal participial RCs, languages spoken in Iran resort to finite postnominal RCs introduced by a complementizer, while languages spoken in the South-West Caucasus mainly resort to finite postnominal RCs with relative pronouns. Azeri of Azerbaijan, spoken at the junction of the three delimited isogloss, displays the three strategies and behaves thus as a sort of buffer zone.

**Keywords:** *relativization strategies; geographical convergence; genetic divergence; Caucasus; Iran.*

**Mots-clés:** *stratégies de relativisation; convergence géographique; divergence génétique; Caucase; Iran.*

## INTRODUCTION

Caucasus-Western Iran area displays an important linguistic and typological diversity with more than fifty languages belonging to six distinct families: Caucasian languages, which are divided into three distinct families whose genetic relationship is controversial, North-East (by far the most numerous family of the area with about thirty languages), North-West and South; Turkic languages (Azeri, Kumyk, Khalaj, etc.), Indo-European languages (mostly Iranian languages such as Persian, Kurdish, etc. but non-Iranian as well with Eastern Armenian), and Semitic languages (Arabic dialects and dialects of the Neo-Aramaic language spoken in Iran). The populations of the area being most often bilingual, trilingual or even more, languages are continuously in contact and influence one another. Several convergence phenomena have already been highlighted in this area (Vogt, 1988; Chirikba, 2008; Stilo, 2008, *inter alia*).

The aim of this paper is to identify convergence areas concerning the relativization strategies in the Caucasus and West part of Iran: genetically unrelated languages spoken in a same geographical area tend to resort to a similar strategy, and may thus diverge from their respective families.

A relative clause (henceforth RC) is a subordinate clause that modifies a noun. The modified noun (henceforth 'domain noun')<sup>1</sup> has a syntactic function in both the matrix clause and the relative one. The constructions singled out by this definition may vary according to numerous parameters, across languages or within a same language, leading to different relativization strategies. In this paper, I confine myself mainly to three variation parameters, *i.e.* the position of the RC with respect to the domain noun, the finiteness of the verbal form in the RC, and the presence or not of a relativizer and accordingly its nature. Three main convergence areas are thus identified in the Caucasus-West Iran area with respect to relativization strategies.

### 1. PARTICIPIAL PRENOMINAL STRATEGY IN EAST CAUCASUS

North-East Caucasian languages and Turkic languages spoken in Eastern Caucasus (Azeri Kumyk, and Nogay) make use of a similar construction as main relativization strategy: a RC with non-finite verbal form, which precedes the domain noun and is embedded within the main clause.

- (1) [de            \_    kumak            b-u:-ho            gola]            uži            c'aq'            razi            Ø-iq-iš  
I.ERG            help(III)            III-do-ICVB            be.PTCP            boy(I)            very            happy            I-happen-PST  
'The boy whom I helped was very happy'

*Hinuq, North-East Caucasian* (Forker, 2013, p. 554-555)

- (2) [mu            xu-yi            \_    ap'-ura-yi]            gaf-ar.i-z            lig-ay-čva  
this            dog-ERG            make-PRES-PTCP            word-PL-DAT            look-IMP-2PL  
'Be careful to the words that this dog says (lit. makes)' (Šahib, p.84)

*Tabasaran, North-East Caucasian* (Babaliyeva, 2013, p. 224)

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<sup>1</sup> In line with the terminology used by Keenan (1985) and Creissels (2006, p. 207).

- (3) *dağ-lar-a* [*Rovşan-in* – *gəl-əcəy-i*] *tərəf-ə* *bax-ır*  
 mountain-PL-DAT Rovshan-GEN come-PTCP-POSS.3SG side-DAT look.at-PRES  
 ‘He looks at the mountains, at the side where Rovshan will come’  
 (Uzeyir Hacıbəyov, Libretto– Koroğlu)

*Azeri, Turkic* (Babaliyeva, 2014)

- (4) [*ayt-ar-ıy]-ni* *mağa* *ayt-saŋ*  
 tell-PTCP-POSS.2SG-ACC PRO1SG.DAT tell-COND  
 ‘if you tell me what you will say’

*Kumyk, Turkic* (Pekacar, 2007, p. 996-997)

This strategy is also the dominant one found in most of the other Turkic languages (see the Turkish example (5) below), so Turkic languages spoken in this area do not diverge from their genealogical family:

- (5) [*Sen-in* – *al-dığ-in*] *kitap-lar-ı* *bul-a-m-iyor-um*  
 PRO.2SG-GEN buy-PTCP-POSS.2SG book-PL-ACC find-POT-NEG-PROG-1SG  
 ‘I cannot find the books you bought’

*Standard Turkish*

It is interesting to notice however that this prenominal participial strategy is also well developed in two Iranian languages spoken in Azerbaijan, namely Northern Talysh (Northwestern Iranian) and Tat of Şirvan (Southwestern Iranian), where it can relativize several different syntactic functions (Kaye, 2015; Suleymanov, in preparation):

- (6) [*zınæ* *rædio* *do-æ*] *ğonæğ-ım* *vind-e*  
 yesterday radio give-PTCP guest-1(A) see-PRET  
 ‘I saw the guest to whom (I) gave a radio yesterday’

*Northern Talyshi* (Kaye, 2015)

- (7) [*xole=män=ä* *şärüs* *raf-ta*] *dih=i* *diyä* *näzdik=i*  
 aunt.EZ=POSS1=OBL bride go-PTCP village=POSS3 more near=3  
 ‘The village that my (maternal) aunt married into is closer’

*Şirvan Tat* (Suleymanov, in preparation)

Iranian languages usually make a restricted use of participial RCs and prefer instead finite postnominal RCs introduced by a complementizer as their main strategy (see section 2). Northern Talysh and Şirvan Tat, which make a dominant use of the participial strategy (*ibid.*), thus diverge from the other Iranian languages.

We hence identify a first isogloss located in the Eastern Caucasus, where genetically unrelated languages (Turkic, North-East Caucasian and Iranian) converge concerning the relativization strategy they use, that is, the prenominal participial RC strategy. Moreover, Northern Talysh and Şirvan Tat diverge with respect to their own family.

## 2. POSTNOMINAL FINITE RCS INTRODUCED BY A COMPLEMENTIZER IN IRAN

A quite different strategy is observed in the south of the area under investigation, in Iran. As mentioned in the previous section, Iranian languages usually make use of finite postnominal RCs introduced by a complementizer as their main strategy. This is the case in Iranian languages spoken in Iran such as Persian or Sorani Kurdish:

- (8) *un(ân) doxtar-i [ke (man) mi-xâh-am] in nist*  
 that girl-LK COMP I IPFV-want-1SG this is.not  
 ‘This is not the girl whom I want’

*Persian*

- (9) *aw şâr-a-y [(ka)<sup>2</sup> dît-mân]*  
 that town-DEF-LK COMP see-PST.1PL  
 ‘The town that we visited’

*Sorani Kurdish (Samvelian, 2008)*

Similar examples are found in central and southern Talysh (Paul, 2011, p. 205-206), Gorani (Mahmoudveysi, Bailey, Paul, & Haig, 2012, p. 60-61; Bailey, 2013, p. 75-76) and Luri (Bakhtiari dialect, elicited with native speakers).

Several non-Iranian languages are also spoken in Iran, particularly numerous Turkic languages such as Azeri and other dialects belonging the Oghuz group (Kashkay, Sonqor, etc.), and Khalaj, a more archaic language belonging to the Arghu branch. It is interesting to notice that some of these Turkic languages have almost lost the participial prenominal strategy mentioned in the previous section (1.), which is usually the dominant strategy in Turkic languages. Instead, they resort to postnominal finite RCs introduced by a complementizer, exactly as in the Persian and Kurdish examples given above:

- (10) *O qîz-i [ke mân ese-r-äm] bu dâyl*  
 that girl-LK COMP PRO1SG want-PRES-1SG this NEG.COP  
 ‘This is not the girl whom I want’ (folktale 8: 85)

*Kashkay (Dolatkhah, 2012, p. 190)*

- (11) *O şâhâr-i [ki dost-um-u k'er-di-m] xeyli bidikâr*  
 that city-LK COMP friend-POSS.1SG-ACC see-PF-1SG very big.COP  
 ‘The city where I saw my friend is very big’

*Khalaj (Kıral, 2000, p. 183)*

- (12) *O nece îl-i [kê ‘umremnen geçmi]*  
 that much year-LK COMP life.POSS.1SG.ABL pass.PF.3SG  
 ‘all those years which have passed of my life time’

*Sonqor Turkic (Bulut, 2005, p. 264)*

The development of this strategy is most probably the result of contact with Persian, considered as a prestige language in Iran.<sup>3</sup> Note the similarity between the Turkic examples given above in

<sup>2</sup> The complementizer may be omitted when relativizing the object function (as for English).

example (10), (11) and (12), and the Iranian ones in example (8) and (9): the domain noun is preceded by a demonstrative, takes a linker<sup>4</sup> *-i*, and is followed by the RC which is introduced by a complementizer *ki*, *ke* or *kê*.

This strategy is also found in Iranian Azeri in concurrence with the participial one.<sup>5</sup> In the example below, both strategies are found in the same sentence modifying the same domain noun:

- (13) *[gör-düg-ün]*            *kiši*    *[ki*    *alma*    *yey-ir-di]*            *aj-ıdı*  
 see-PTCP-POSS.2SG    man    COMP    apple    eat-PROG-PST    hungry-COP.PST.3SG

‘The man whom you saw who was eating the apple was hungry’

*Iranian Azeri* (Dehghani, 2000, p. 280)

In Azeri of Azerbaijan this strategy however has not become as dominant as in the other Turkic varieties mentioned above. Moreover, the copy has occurred to a lesser extent, as no linker attaches to the domain noun. Note that the number of Iranian Azeri speakers is much more important than the speakers of other Turkic languages of Iran, that is, about 13 million according to Boeschoten (1998), against only 570 000 for Kashkay, 28 000 for Khalaj (*ibid*) and 40 000 for Sonqor Turkic, based on Bulut (2005). Thus it is likely that the number of speakers of a language is relevant for a language-contact induced change to occur or not.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, Semitic languages are also spoken in Iran: Arabic dialects and dialects of the Neo-Aramaic language. Semitic languages in general resort to finite postnominal RCs as their main relativization strategy, and thus do not differ from Iranian languages in this respect. According to the given language, the relative clause may be introduced by a particle, which may vary according the gender and the number of the domain noun (Retsö, 2009). It is interesting to notice here that some Neo-Aramaic dialects are reported to have borrowed the subordinating particle *ka* from Kurdish, which would have completely replaced the native Aramaic particle *d-* (Khan, 2007, p. 207):

- (14) *'o-baxta*            *[ka-xāzitta*            *ga-doka]*            *šwawt-i-ya*  
 that-woman    COMP-see.2.M.SG    in-there            neighbor-1SG.OBL-COP.3.F.SG

‘The woman whom you see there is my neighbour’

*North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic dialect* (Khan, 2007, p. 207)

Hence, once again, we have a geographical area where genetically unrelated languages converge in their relativization strategies: some Iranian, Turkic and Semitic languages spoken in Iran resort to finite postnominal RCs introduced by a complementizer as their main relativization strategy.

<sup>3</sup> For Sonqor Turkic, Bulut also suggests a possible influence from Sorani Kurdish (2005, p. 264). Both Persian and Sorani Kurdish strategies being very similar, it is difficult to decide which one may have influenced Sonqor- perhaps both.

<sup>4</sup> The enclitic *-i* is glossed ‘linker’ here for simplicity, but it also has a determinative value. For more details, one may refer to Samvelian (2006).

<sup>5</sup> It is also found to a lesser extent in spoken language in Azeri of Azerbaijan. This strategy was already available in Old Turkic, but with the Turkish interrogative *kim* (or rarely *kayu*) instead of *ki*; *kim* would then have progressively been replaced by the Persian *ki* (Hacıeminoğlu, 1996, p. 97). In standard Turkish it is not very frequent and is mainly limited to a non-restrictive function (see Göksel & Kerslake, 2005, p. 397 for a restrictive use).

<sup>6</sup> We may mention here an interesting study of Erfani (2012, p. 37-57), who shows that younger and/or more educated speakers produce more postnominal RCs than participial prenominal ones, while the older and/or less educated speakers produce more participial prenominal RCs than finite postnominal ones. Hence, one may expect that postnominal RCs will become the dominant strategy in a few generations, as for the other Turkic languages spoken in Iran.

Additionally, these Turkic languages diverge from the strategy commonly used in Turkic languages (*i.e.* a prenominal participial).

### 3. POSTNOMINAL FINITE RCs WITH A RELATIVE PRONOUN IN SOUTH-WEST PART OF CAUCASUS

A third isogloss may be identified in the South-West part of Caucasus. Several unrelated languages spoken in this area make use of postnominal finite RCs introduced by a relative pronoun. This is the main relativization strategy in Eastern Armenian:

- (15) *karabałc'i-ner*      *ēl*      *k-an*      [*or-onc'*      *hamar*  
Karabakhian-  
PL.NOM                  also                  exist-PTCP.PRES      RPRO-PL.DAT      POST  
  
*Samvel-ě*                  *heros*                  *ē]*  
Samvel.NOM-the          hero.NOM          he is

'There are also Karabakhians for whom Samvel is a hero'

*Eastern Armenian* (Dum-Tragut, 2009, p. 479)

Note that this strategy is also used in Russian as illustrated in example (16).

- (16) *Мужчина,*      [*которого*      *я*      *ждал,*]      *не*      *приишл*  
*mužčina,*      [*kotopogo*      *ja*      *ždal,*]      *ne*      *prišěl*  
man                  RPRO.ACC      I      wait.PST      NEG      come.PST  
'The man I was waiting for didn't come'

*Russian*

Interestingly enough, it is also the main relativization strategy in Udi, an endangered North-East Caucasian language of the Lezgian branch spoken in North-Western Azerbaijani and Eastern Georgia (Schulze-Fürhoff, 1994, p. 449):

- (17) *čoban-g'on*      [*mat' gôy-te*      *egêl-ux*<sup>^</sup>      *azarru-ne-bak-i]*      *q'eiri*  
shepherd-PL-ERG      which.GEN.PL-SUB      sheep-PL      ill-3SG-become-AOR      other  
  
*aš-n-ux*<sup>^</sup>                  *furu-q'un-p-sa*  
work-SA-DAT2                  search-3PL-AUX-PRES

'The shepherds whose sheep have become ill look for another job'

*Udi* (Schulze-Fürhoff, 1994, p. 503)

Udi makes a minor use of the participial strategy (Schulze-Fürhoff, 1994, p. 481), contrary to the other North-East Caucasian languages where the participial strategy is dominant (see section 1.).<sup>7</sup> Udi has been in a long standing contact with Classical Armenian, and is now in contact with Georgian, a South Caucasian language (Schulze-Fürhoff, 1994, p. 450-451). Interestingly, the

<sup>7</sup> (Holisky & Gagua, 1994) also mention beside the participial strategy a postnominal RC introduced by a relative pronoun strategy in Tsova-Tush (also called Bats, a Nakh language spoken in Georgia), that could be a calque from Georgian. Unfortunately no example is given.

relative pronoun strategy is also available in Georgian and some South Caucasian languages (in concurrence with a prenominal strategy using a complementizer):

- (18) *i-q'o*      *is*              *bič'-i.*              [*romel-ma-c*      *gušin*              *amxanag-s*  
SV-was      that.NOM      lad-NOM      who-ERG-SUB      yesterday      friend-DAT

*scema]*

he.hit.him.AOR

'He was that boy who yesterday hit his friend'

*Georgian* (Hewitt, 1987, p. 217)

- (19) *tis,*              [*namu-še-ti*      *sinatle*              *iziredu-ni]*  
that.DAT      which-ABL-SUB      light.NOM      show.1SG-COMP  
'that (residence), from which a light showed' (Khub. 7, 20)

*Mingrelian* (Abesadze, 1965, p. 231-237 in Harris, 1991, p. 383)

Furthermore, one may notice the similarity in the formation of the relative pronouns in Udi and in South Caucasian languages, that is, an interrogative pronoun inflected for case plus a subordinating suffix:<sup>8</sup> *ma* 'where' or *mano* 'which' + *-te* in Udi (Schulze-Fürhoff, 1994, p. 502-503, Gippert, 2011), *romel* + *-c(a)* in Georgian (Hewitt, 2001, p. 107), *namu* + *-t(i)* in Mingrelian (Harris, 1991, p. 332-333), *jer* 'who' or *ime* 'where' + *-wæ:j* in Svan (Tuite, 1997, p. 42), etc.<sup>9</sup>

A very similar formation of relative pronouns is found in Azeri (from Azerbaijan), in which the relative pronoun strategy is also available as a secondary strategy, especially in the spoken language (Babaliyeva, 2014):

- (20) 25 *kitab,*      [*hansı-lar-t*      *ki,*              *sən*      *bir*      *il*      *ərzində*      *oxu-yacaq-san]*  
25 book      which-PL-ACC      COMP      2SG      one      year      during      read-FUT-2SG  
'Twenty five books that you will read in one year'

*Azeri* (Babaliyeva, 2014)

The interrogative pronoun *hansı* is inflected in number and case according to the syntactic function of the domain noun in the RC, and is followed by the particle *ki*, which has a more generalized subordinating function in Azeri and some other Turkic languages.

Thus, once again, a same relativization strategy is found in several non-related languages spoken in a same geographical area. Armenian (Indo-European), Udi (North-East Caucasian) and some South Caucasian languages use as their main or among their main relativization strategies postnominal finite RCs introduced by a relative pronoun. This strategy is also found to a lesser extent in Azeri (Turkic), especially in spoken language.

<sup>8</sup> Subordinating suffix (Hewitt, 2001, p. 107) or particle (Aronson, 1991, p. 240).

<sup>9</sup> In Laz, the relative pronoun strategy is not much developed and the relative pronoun is based on an interrogative pronoun without any subordinating particle (Holisky, 1991: 419; Lacroix, 2009: 768-769).



#### 4. A FOURTH CONVERGENCE AREA?

Ossetic, an Iranian language spoken in the center of the North Caucasus, belongs to none of the three isogloss delimited previously and, consequently, diverges from its own family concerning the relativization strategy used: the main relativization strategy in Ossetic is a non-embedded preposed RC, commonly called 'correlative' (Belyaev, 2014; Erschler, 2014).<sup>10</sup>

- (21) *[uroč-ə sə lɜp:u qɜr-ɜj zərd-t-a], wə-sə fədwaž-ə*  
 lesson- what boy sound-ABL speak-TR-PST.3SG that-ATTR misbehavior-GEN  
 IN  
*nə-jjar-žət-ɜm fɜ-zur-zən-ɜn!*  
 PV-give.birth-PTCP-PL-ALL PV-speak-FUT-1SG

'I will summon the parents of the misbehaving boy who spoke loudly during the lesson!'

*Ossetics* (Belyaev, 2014)

This strategy is found as a secondary or minor strategy<sup>11</sup> in many non-related languages of the area, however, it usually has a non-specific reading, and is often headless:<sup>12</sup>

- (22) *ene [kim-ge soni ber-se-m], soni bek*  
 that\_is who-DAT DEM.ACC give-COND-1SG DEM.ACC a\_lot  
*süy-etayan-İM-di aŋla-r-siz*  
 like-PTCP-1SG-ACC understand-AOR-2LP

'You will understand that I love a lot the one to whom I will give this'

*Nogay* (Ergönenç Akbaba 2009, p. 245)

It is interesting to notice that examples seem to be possible with a specific reading in some languages of the investigated area:<sup>13</sup>

- (23) *[romel-i-c bat'on-i darča,] imas k'idev q'mebi hq'vda*  
 who-NOM-SUB lord-NOM he.stayed that still serfs he.had.them  
 '[There were two feudal lords, one of whom had to leave.] The lord who stayed still had serfs'

*Georgian* (Imnaišvili, 1974 in Boeder, 2005, p. 72)

<sup>10</sup> In Ossetic, a correlate co-referent with the domain noun is necessary in the matrix clause (*wə-sə* in the example (21) given here). However the correlate may be omitted for some other languages, that is why I prefer to use the 'non-embedded preposed RC' designation.

<sup>11</sup> In some languages, it seems to be rather common, e.g. in spoken language in Azeri (Babaliyeva 2014).

<sup>12</sup> Similar examples may be found at least in Abaza, Azeri, Georgian, Kabardian, Khwarsi, Koumyk, Kryz, Kurdish, Laz, Lezgian, Mingrelian, Neo-Aramaic, Nogay, Svan, Tabasaran, Talysh and Udi (Gandon, in preparation). Note that similar examples are possible in English with a non-specific reading, but to a lesser extent: 'whatever she asks for, that she gets' (Downing, 1978, p. 400).

<sup>13</sup> Actually it is not always easy to decide without context. In South Caucasian languages this strategy is often referred to as a variant of the postnominal finite RC introduced by a relative pronoun strategy seen in the previous section 3. Yet, it seems preferable to consider two different strategies as both constructions differ according to several features: the embeddedness of the RC, the expression of the domain noun in the matrix or in the RC, and the position of the RC with respect to the matrix one.

Georgian is a neighboring language of Ossetic; further investigations are needed in order to verify whether a phenomenon of areal diffusion can be highlighted here.

## CONCLUSION

Three isogloss have been identified in this paper in the Caucasus-West Iran area concerning relativization strategies:

in the East Caucasus, the participial prenominal strategy is dominant

in Iran, it is the postnominal finite RC introduced by a complementizer which is the dominant strategy

in the South-West Caucasus, the postnominal finite RC with a relative pronoun prevails.

The dominant strategy in Ossetic, non-embedded preposed RCs, is interesting in that it is also found as a minor or secondary strategy in many unrelated languages of the Caucasus-Iran area, and receives at least in some examples a specific reading in Georgian, a language geographically close to Ossetic. The two maps given in appendix show the convergence and the divergence in the relativization strategies of the languages under investigation. Unrelated languages spoken in a same area converge together, and diverge from their respective families. Azeri spoken in Azerbaijan is somewhat at the junction of the three delimited isogloss, and presents an interesting situation because it displays the three above-mentioned main strategies. Azerbaijan thus behaves as a sort of buffer zone.

Nevertheless, we must keep in mind that these are only observations and tendencies, which are confined to a few main variation parameters. All languages have not been taken into consideration, especially the North-Western Caucasus has not been taken into account in this paper due to lack of place.<sup>14</sup> Besides, more specific features of the RC strategies should be investigated: the copy of the Iranian relative clause linker into Turkic languages, and the similar formation of the relative pronoun in several unrelated languages (South-Caucasian languages, Udi and Azeri) have been mentioned. Possible diffusion of other features may be observed as well, *e.g.* some unrelated languages of the area may mark the subject of participial RCs with the genitive case: Turkic languages (see ex. (3) and (5) in Azeri and Turkish), Şirvan Tat (see ex. (7)),<sup>15</sup> Eastern Armenian dialects (Hodgson, 2014) and Georgian (Hewitt, 1995, p.611-612).<sup>16</sup> In addition, the domain noun may bear a possession mark co-referent with the subject/agent of the RC in Eastern Armenian dialects, Şirvan Tat and Turkic languages.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, a more rigorous methodology should be established before using the designation 'dominant strategy'. When several strategies co-exist in the same language, there are generally

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<sup>14</sup> Mainly North-West Caucasian languages and Karachay-Balkar, a Turkic language, are spoken there. Karachay-Balkar resorts to participial prenominal RCs as its main relativization strategy, and North-West Caucasian languages make use of another strategy, that is, a RC with an untypical relative marker, which usually precedes the domain noun but may also follow it (Charachidzé, 1989, p. 418-442, *inter alia*).

<sup>15</sup> The oblique case in Şirvan Tat is used to mark the direct object when definite, and the genitive case (Suleymanov, in preparation).

<sup>16</sup> Participial RCs are a secondary strategy in Georgian and Eastern Armenian.

<sup>17</sup> In Standard Turkish, the possession mark is on the verb. This genitive/possessive marking is systematic for Turkish, but not in all the other quoted languages; the conditions of its apparition need more investigations.

preferences for one strategy in a given context and according to different parameters, for instance, the language register (colloquial, literary, etc.), the relativized syntactic function, the semantic function of the RC (restrictive vs. non-restrictive), the specificity or the definiteness of the head noun, etc. Thus deciding whether a strategy is dominant in a given language or not is not an easy task. The identification of the parameters that determine the use of a specific strategy, and the use of statistical tools based on sufficiently diversified corpus is necessary in order to provide a reliable description of the situation.

## APPENDICES

### *Appendix 1: Glosses*<sup>18</sup>

1/2/3	= 1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> pers	IPFV	= imperfective
I/II/III/IV/V	= class	LK	= linker
ABL	= ablative	M	= masculine
ABS	= absolutive	NEG	= negation
ACC	= accusative	NOM	= nominative
ALL	= allative	OBL	= oblique
AOR	= aorist	PF	= perfective
ATTR	= attributive	PL	= plural
AUX	= auxiliary	POSS	= possessive
COMP	= complementizer	POST	= postposition
COND	= conditional	PRES	= present
COP	= copula	PRO	= pronoun
DAT	= dative	PROG	= progressive
DEF	= definite	PST	= past
DEM	= demonstrative	PTCP	= participle
ERG	= ergative	PV	= preverb
EZ	= ezafe	RPRO	= relative pronoun
F	= feminine	SA	= stem augment
FUT	= future	SG	= singular
GEN	= genitive	SUB	= subordinator
ICVB	= imperfective converb	SV	= subject version
IMP	= imperative	TR	= transitivity
IN	= inessive-illative		

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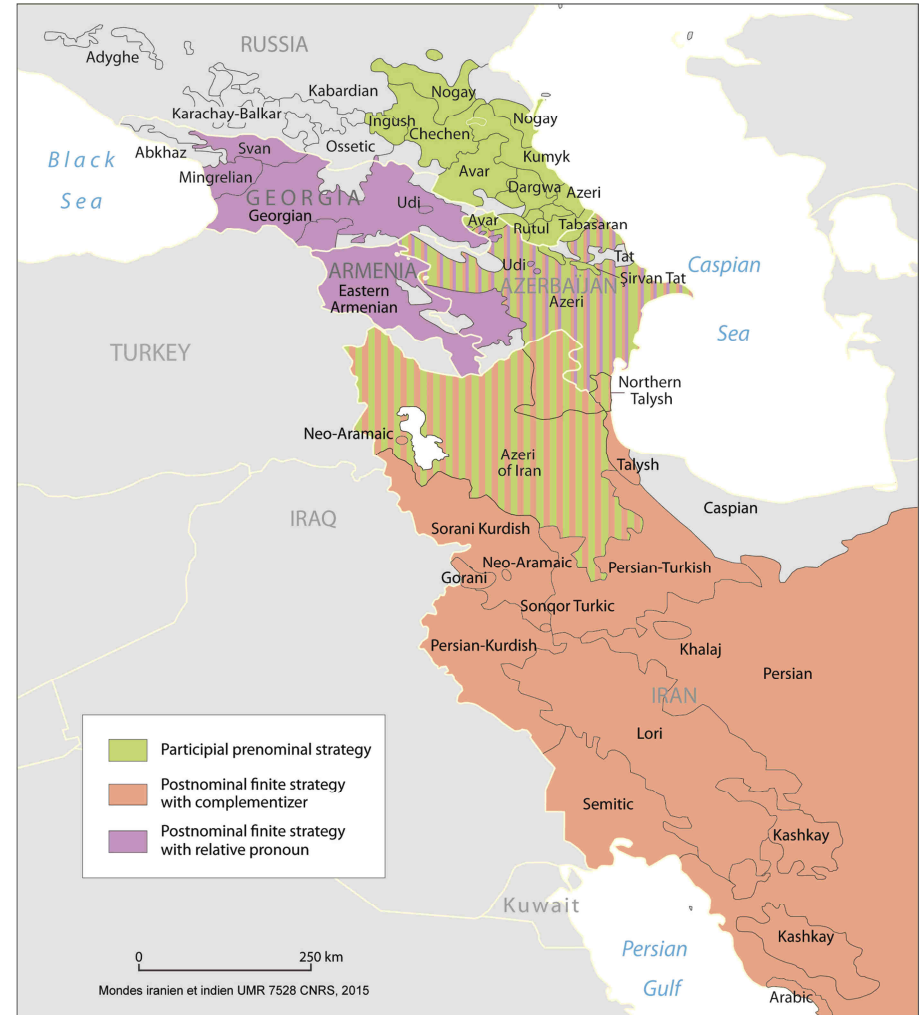
<sup>18</sup> The glosses of some quoted examples have been slightly modified in order to uniformize, and non-glossed examples have been glossed.

Appendix 2: Maps<sup>19</sup>

Figure 1: Languages of the Caucasus-Western Iran area



Figure 2: Relativization strategies in the Caucasus-Western Iran area



<sup>19</sup> Linguistic maps are realized from the different sources mentioned in references. Given the difficulty to realize such maps (impossibility to consider all speakers and villages, difficulty to decide which language to represent when several are spoken, the fact that populations may move through time, etc.), an exact delimitation of each language/strategy is not expected; the main purpose here is to give an overall picture of the situation regarding convergence and divergence phenomena. I am thankful to Emmanuel Giraudet for his help in the realization of the maps.

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