

***Koine* formation and arrested de-dialectalization in Cypriot Greek: structural and sociolinguistic factors**

This paper examines processes of de-dialectalization and *koine* formation in Cypriot Greek, with special focus on instances of ‘arrested convergence’ to Standard Greek, the ‘H’ variety in the diglossic context of Cyprus. In recent research a strong claim has been put forward for the levelling of local varieties and the concomitant emergence of a Cypriot Greek *koine*, a variety that is arguably still young but, interestingly, already quite coherent (Tsiplakou et al. 2006, 2016) as regards central aspects of its phonology and morphosyntax. On the sociolinguistic side, the argument has been made that the *koine* is by now a (c)overt prestige variety (Rowe & Grohmann 2013), and this for a complex host of reasons, not least among which is the fact that the *koine* is (perceived as) structurally mixed due to prolonged and dense contact with Standard Greek, and the nature of the mix is such that it allows for both local and Standard-like features to co-occur in a form of a sociolinguistically driven ‘compromise’ that allows for the survival and the visibility of both (Tsiplakou 2014a, b). This contribution explores some of the reasons why full convergence of the *koine* with Standard Greek is arrested and why certain dialect features which are purportedly marked and/or perceived as ‘odd’ or exceptional have found their way into the *koine*. The paper presents results from a series of rating surveys and from elicitation tasks targeting a variety of phenomena which at first blush may invite different explanations:

- (i) the semantic and pragmatic properties of innovative Past Perfect (Tsiplakou et al. 2016, 2018), which point to the fact that the pragmatic import of the latter *qua* focaliser in narratives allows for its perception as a bona fide Cypriot structure, and which may also relate to its fuller couching in Cypriot phonology and morphology than the also innovative Present Perfect;
- (ii) the survival and spread of ‘shibboleths’ such as the palatal [j] in lieu of Standard-like [ʎ] (cf. Pappas 2015) or the preservation of old ones, a typical case being basilectal [ç] as opposed to *koine* [ʃ] (Tsiplakou & Kontogiorgi 2016), both instances of resistance to levelling associated with (local) identity issues, but different in that that the latter is lexically constrained;
- (iii) the different behaviour of focus clefts and pronominal object clitics *bis-a-vis* levelling and convergence to Standard Greek. Syntactic focusing and object clitic placement are structurally different in Standard and Cypriot Greek. As regards focusing, clefting is the Cypriot syntactic focusing strategy *par excellence* (Grohmann et al. 2006, Tsiplakou et al. 2007) while focus movement, the Standard Greek syntactic strategy for focusing, is largely unattested in the acrolectal production of bilectal speakers. As regards pronominal object clitics, ‘clitic-second’ effects are generally pervasive in the dialect, while Standard Greek displays preverbal clitics with finite verb forms. Of particular interest therefore are cases of unexpected proclisis or exceptional clitic placement in the immediately preverbal position in Cypriot Greek acrolectal/Standard-like production in matrix clauses (Leivada et al 2017, Pappas 2014, Tsiplakou et al. 2016), especially when compared to ‘residual clefting’ data, also in acrolectal/standard-like production (Tsiplakou 2014a, b, 2017). The two sets of data invite an approach whereby aspects of the syntax of the target variety which relate to the syntax-discourse interface have strong effects on its acquisition, while structural aspects of the target variety which arguably

pertain to narrow syntax, e.g. clitic placement, are fully acquired and even seep into the syntax of the first variety.

Overall, such data help reveal aspects of the intricate interplay of structural and sociolinguistic factors which accounts for the complexity of the processes of *koine* formation and/or de-dialectalization.

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