Pontic Greek as a conservative innovator in the development of gender agreement in Asia Minor Greek

Petros Karatsareas
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

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5th International Conference on Modern Greek Dialects and Linguistic Theory — 21 September 2012

Petros Karatsareas (pk299@cam.ac.uk)
(1) a. Phloïtá Cappadocian (Costakis 1962: 114)
   \[s’ \textit{ena orfano} \textit{neklifa} \textit{(cf. SMGr mia, orfani)}\]
   in a.N deserted.N church.*F

b. Argyroúpolis Pontic (Lianidis 2007 [1962]: 50)
   \[\textit{ecino i karšia eruksen eks} \textit{(cf. SMGr ecini)}\]
   that.N the.F heart.F it.sprang out

c. Pharasiot (Dawkins 1916: 550-551)
   \[\textit{adžino o fovēs} \textit{(cf. SMGr ecinos)}\]
   that.N the.M coward.M
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Pontic Greek: the language and its speakers

(1)  a. Phloïtá Cappadocian (Costakis 1962: 114)

\[
\text{s’} \quad \text{ena} \quad \text{orfano} \quad \text{neklifa} \quad \text{(cf. SMGr mia, orfani)}
\]

\[
in \quad \text{a.N} \quad \text{deserted.N} \quad \text{church.*F}
\]

b. Argyroúpolis Pontic (Lianidis 2007 [1962]: 50)

\[
\text{ecino} \quad \text{i} \quad \text{karðia} \quad \text{eruksen} \quad \text{eks} \quad \text{(cf. SMGr ecini)}
\]

\[
\text{that.N} \quad \text{the.F} \quad \text{heart.F} \quad \text{it.sprang out}
\]

c. Pharasiot (Dawkins 1916: 550-551)

\[
\text{adžino} \quad \text{o} \quad \text{fovæs} \quad \text{(cf. SMGr ecinos)}
\]

\[
\text{that.N} \quad \text{the.M} \quad \text{coward.M}
\]
(2) Semantic assignment rules:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANIMATE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>ANIMATE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>ANIMATE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>ANIMATE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animate</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>aðelfos ‘brother’</td>
<td>yatos ‘male cat’</td>
<td>MASCULINE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>aðelfi ‘sister’</td>
<td>yata ‘female cat’</td>
<td>FEMININE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>filo ‘leaf’, poði ‘foot’, kreas ‘meat’, onoma ‘name’, provato ‘sheep’</td>
<td>NEUTER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Gender in Modern Greek: assignment

(3) Morphological assignment rules:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>IC</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MASCULINE</td>
<td>IC1</td>
<td><em>faros</em> ‘lighthouse’, <em>payos</em> ‘ice’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC2</td>
<td><em>kanonas</em> ‘rule’, <em>mezes</em> ‘meze’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMININE</td>
<td>IC3</td>
<td><em>ora</em> ‘hour’, <em>avli</em> ‘yard’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEUTER</td>
<td>IC5</td>
<td><em>vuno</em> ‘mountain’, <em>dendro</em> ‘tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC6</td>
<td><em>spiti</em> ‘house’, <em>koritsi</em> ‘girl’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC7</td>
<td><em>onoma</em> ‘name’, <em>yrapsimo</em> ‘writing’, <em>kreas</em> ‘meat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC8</td>
<td><em>dassos</em> ‘forest’, <em>mikos</em> ‘length’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Gender in Modern Greek: assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Semantic/Formal</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MASCULINE</strong></td>
<td>SEMANTIC/FORMAL</td>
<td><em>aďelfos</em> ‘brother’, <em>γatos</em> ‘male cat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FORMAL</td>
<td><em>faros</em> ‘lighthouse’, <em>mezes</em> ‘meze’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEMININE</strong></td>
<td>SEMANTIC/Formal</td>
<td><em>aďelfi</em> ‘sister’, <em>γata</em> ‘female cat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FORMAL</td>
<td><em>bukla</em> ‘curl’, <em>avli</em> ‘yard’, <em>trexala</em> ‘scamper’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEUTER</strong></td>
<td>SEMANTIC/Formal</td>
<td><em>spiti</em> ‘house’, <em>vuno</em> ‘mountain’, <em>onoma</em> ‘name’, <em>yrapsimo</em> ‘writing’, <em>kreas</em> ‘meat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FORMAL</td>
<td><em>ayori</em> ‘boy’, <em>koritsi</em> ‘girl’, <em>mezeďaki</em> ‘meze.ĎIM’, <em>buklaki</em> ‘curl.ĎIM’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender in Modern Greek: agreement

- Agreement in MGr is **strictly syntactic**.
- Targets (adjectives, articles, some numerals, participles, pronouns) agree with the **morphological gender** of their controllers:

(4) SMGr

\[
\text{Afti} \quad i \quad \text{tris} \quad \text{tiçi} \quad \text{ine} \quad \text{vameni} \quad \text{kocini.}
\]

\[
\text{these.}M \quad \text{the.}M \quad \text{three.}M \quad \text{walls.}M \quad \text{are} \quad \text{painted.}M \quad \text{red.}M
\]

‘These four walls have been painted red.’
Gender in Modern Greek: agreement

• Semantic agreement is ungrammatical.

(4’) SMGr

* Afta ta tria tiçi ine vamena kokina.
these.N the.N three.N walls.M are painted.N red.N
‘These four walls have been painted red.’

• Except in...
• ... conjoined nouns denoting inanimate entities.

(5) SMGr

\[ O \ tixos \ ce \ i \ karekla \ ine \ vamena \ kocina. \]
\[ \text{the.M wall.M and the.F chair.F are painted.N red.N} \]

‘These four walls have been painted red.’
# Gender in Pontic Greek: assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Semantic/Formal</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MASCULINE</strong></td>
<td><strong>SEMANTIC/FORMAL</strong></td>
<td>vasileas ‘king’, josmas ‘young man’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>FORMAL</strong></td>
<td>simos ‘winter’, ceros ‘time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEMININE</strong></td>
<td><strong>SEMANTIC/FORMAL</strong></td>
<td>nifæ ‘bride’, yari ‘woman’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>FORMAL</strong></td>
<td>laistera ‘hammock’, læcæ ‘stain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>FORMAL</strong></td>
<td>ayur(in) ‘boy’, koridz(in) ‘girl’, kardopo(n) ‘heart.DIM’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender in Pontic Greek: agreement

(6) Argyroúpolis Pontic (Papadopoulos 1955: 194)

a. erθan s’ enan tranon mayaran (...) 
   they.came to a.N big.N cave.F
   ki ekin’(o) i mayara
   and that.N the.F cave.F

b. sa prota ta cerus
   in.the.N first.N the.N times.M

(7) Chaldía Pontic (Drettas 1997: 531)

i Turk (...) ta yariďas epernane
   the Turks the.N women.F they.took
Gender in Pontic Greek: previous accounts

• Neuter attributive modifiers are accounted for by a series of analogical reanalyses operating on the sentence level:

(11) a. eçi lalian amon koðonin
s/he.has voice.ʃ like bell.ʃ

b. eçi lalian koðonin

c. eçi koðonin lalian

d. eçi emorfon lalian
s/he.has beautiful.ʃ voice.ʃ (Papadopoulos 1955: 163)
Gender in Pontic Greek: synchronic analysis

- Gender agreement in Pontic Greek can be:
  1. syntactic
  2. semantic
  3. neuter.

- The distribution of the three agreement patterns is conditioned by a variety of factors:
  1. animacy
  2. morphological gender
  3. controller type
  4. number
Gender in Pontic Greek: synchronic analysis

1. Animacy Hierarchy (adapted from Dahl 2000: 99)
   HUMAN > NON-HUMAN ANIMATE > INANIMATE

2. Morphological gender
   {MASCULINE, FEMININE, NEUTER}

   ATTRIBUTIVE > PREDICATE > RELATIVE PRONOUN > PERSONAL PRONOUN

4. Number
   {SINGULAR, PLURAL}
A. Human nouns generally exhibit syntactic/semantic agreement:

(12) Chaldía Pontic (Drettas 1997: 531, 684)

i mikresa i nifæ eton
the.F young.F the.F daughter-in-law.F she.was

ci allo poniresa
more crafty.F

!! (13) i Turk (...) ta yariðas epernane
the Turks the.N women.F they.took
B. Inanimate nouns trigger predominantly semantic agreement on all targets except the definite article in the singular when it immediately precedes the noun:

(14) Oenóe Pontic (Lianidis 2007 [1962]: 228)
    t’(o) asimenion o mastrapas pali kremete
    the.N silver.N the.M tankard.M again it.is.hanging

(15) Argyroúpolis Pontic (Papadopoulous 1955: 194)
    i porta$_i$ mono imson oran esteknen anixton$_i$
    the.F door.F only half.N hour.F it.stayed open.N
The agreement patterns triggered by non-human animate nouns illustrate the combined effect of animacy and morphological gender:

a. masculine nouns of this type trigger syntactic agreement

(16) Soúrmena Pontic (Papadopoulos 1955: 226)

epire ton petino ke ksomoloγa-tona
he.took the.M cockerel.M and he.shroves-him

ke lei-atonas ke efajen-aton
and he.says-him and he.ate-him
C. The agreement patterns triggered by non-human animate nouns illustrate the combined effect of animacy and morphological gender:

b. feminine nouns of this type trigger semantic agreement

(17) Soúrmena Pontic (Papadopoulos 1955: 226)

epire tin papi ke ksomoloγa-to
he.took the.F duck.F and he.shroves-it

ke lei-ato ke efajen-ato
and he.says-it and he.ate-it
Gender in Pontic Greek: synchronic analysis

- The distribution of agreement patterns wrt gender and animacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>human</th>
<th>non-human animate</th>
<th>inanimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masculine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syntactic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feminine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syntactic/neuter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>semantic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender in Pontic Greek: synchronous analysis

- The distribution of syntactic and semantic agreement wrt targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Hierarchy</th>
<th>attributive</th>
<th>predicate</th>
<th>personal pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prenominal definite article</td>
<td>adjectival modifiers</td>
<td>pre-adjectival definite article</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG: syntactic</td>
<td></td>
<td>semantic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL: semantic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20
• When novel semantic distinctions are introduced into an existing gender agreement system, they are first expressed on the personal pronoun.

• After their introduction, their subsequent development follows the path defined by the Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 1991, 2006):

  ATTRIBUTIVE  >  PREDICATE  >  PERSONAL PRONOUN

• When a novel distinction is expressed on all possible targets for a given noun, then that noun undergoes gender shift.
Gender in Pontic Greek: diachronic analysis

- Novel distinctions that are most often introduced to existing gender systems generally refer to common semantic oppositions (human vs. non-human, animate vs. inanimate, count vs. mass).

- In languages with formal assignment systems, such as MGr, oppositions of this type normally play no role in gender agreement that is typically syntactic.
Gender in Pontic Greek: diachronic analysis

- Cross-linguistic evidence supporting this trajectory of developments is very robust:
  
  i. English dialects (Siemund 2002a, b, 2005, 2008)
  iii. Swedish (Enger 2004)
  iv. Danish (Fernández-Ordóñez 2009)
  v. Spanish dialects (Fernández-Ordóñez 2006, 2007a, b, 2009)
  vi. Bantu languages (Wald 1975)
In the case of languages that have a neuter gender (Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Spanish), it is the one that is always associated with the part of the novel semantic opposition found at the lowest end of the animacy hierarchy (see Matasović 2004: 134).

(18) South Cantabrian Spanish (Fernández-Ordóñez 2006: 89)

\begin{align*}
\text{salía} & \quad \text{la} & \quad \text{miel} & \quad \text{pero} & \quad \text{ahora} & \quad \text{sale} \\
\text{it.came.up} & \quad \text{the.F} & \quad \text{honey.F} & \quad \text{but} & \quad \text{now} & \quad \text{it.comes.up} \\
\text{limpio,} & \quad \text{una} & \quad \text{miel} & \quad \text{buenísimo,} & \quad \text{buenísimo} \\
\text{clean.N} & \quad \text{a.F} & \quad \text{honey.F} & \quad \text{very.good.N} & \quad \text{very.good.N}
\end{align*}
Gender in Pontic Greek: diachronic analysis

- Synchronic evidence in Pontic suggests that the development of semantic agreement in the dialect followed this cross-linguistically common path:

(a) the only target to preserve syntactic agreement with inanimate nouns is the singular definite article when it immediately precedes the noun

(19) Matsoúka Pontic

piason tin akran ti scini, ḍeson-ato sa mesa-s
you.grab the.F end.F the rope you.tie-it at.the waist-
(b) the only target with which semantic agreement is possible when controlled by a masculine noun denoting a non-human animate entity is the personal pronoun

(20) Nikópolis Pontic (Lianidis 2007 [1962]: 208)

eskotsen  ton  skorpon  (...)  eksiven
he.killed  this.M  scorpion.M  it.came.out

all’  enan,  eino  pa  eskotsen
another  one.N  that.N  PART  he.killed
The distribution of agreement patterns in nouns denoting animals suggests that the semantic distinction that first became operative in agreement was animate *versus* inanimate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASCULINE</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>human</td>
<td>non-human animate</td>
<td>inanimate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>syntactic</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>semantic</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEMININE</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>human</td>
<td>non-human animate</td>
<td>inanimate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>syntactic/neuter</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>semantic</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender in Pontic Greek: diachronic analysis

• Semantic agreement emerged when the animate versus inanimate distinction was extended from the gender assignment to the gender agreement system in Pontic Greek.

• It was first expressed on personal pronouns, the targets found farther away from their controllers.

• It was gradually extended to other controllers that were found closer to their controllers (predicate, attributive modifiers) without ever reaching immediately prenominal definite articles.
Gender in Pontic Greek: diachronic analysis

- The advancement of semantic agreement was not uniform:

  (a) **ANIMACY**
    - inanimate > non-human animate (> human)

  (b) **GENDER**
    - feminine > masculine

  (c) **NUMBER**
    - plural > singular
• The trigger for the emergence of semantic agreement were non-prototypical masculine and feminine nouns denoting inanimate entities, nouns that were found in the right gender for their morphology but the wrong gender for their semantics (Anastassiadis-Symeonidis & Chila-Markopoulou 2003; see also Audring 2009: 156, Corbett 1991: 256).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MORPHOLOGY</th>
<th>SEMANTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>fimos</em> ‘winter’, <em>ceros</em> ‘time’</td>
<td><em>laistera</em> ‘hammock’, <em>læcæ</em> ‘stain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASCULINE</td>
<td>FEMININE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEUTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The genders are of three kinds: masculine, feminine and neuter (...) Gender does not always correspond to the nature of beings, for example ο υρανον [the sky] is masculine when it should be neuter; ι πετρα [the stone] is feminine when it too should be neuter.’

(Topcharas 1998 [1932]: 12)
Thank you!

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The Trebizond Almanac

- Written in 1336 (Lamprou 1916)

(21) a. ἔσται ὑγρὸν καὶ χαροποιὸν καιρὸς
it.will.be wet.N and gladdening.N weather.M

(b. φῆμαι δὲ τινὰ ἀληθεῖ
rumours.F and some.N true.N

(p. 42, l. 4-5)

(p. 39, l. 10)
The loss of gender agreement in Cappadocian

• A crucial morphological connection:

(22) a. Chaldía Pontic (Papadopoulos 1928: 196)
   eðevan xronæ ce cerus
   they.passed years and times.\textit{NOM} cerus ‘times.\textit{ACC}’

b. Axó Cappadocian (Mavrochalyvidis & Kesisoglou 1960)
   ta dixus exne aftça
   the walls.\textit{NOM} they.have ears ‘walls.\textit{ACC}’
The ‘typical’ completion of the change

• The Pontic variety of Ukraine.

• Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 1991, 2006)
  ATTRIBUTIVE > PREDICATE > RELATIVE PRONOUN > PERSONAL PRONOUN

(23) Rumeic (Symeonidis & Tompaidis 1999: 54)
  
  tu  ko  mas  to  fumos  en  xlitsku
  the.N  our.N  our  the.N  winter.M  is  tepid.N
An ‘untypical’ progression of the change

(24) Óphis Pontic (Dawkins 1914: 158)
  a.  \(i\, \text{kalesa}\, i\, \text{mana} \sim to\, \text{kalon}\, i\, \text{mana}\)
  b.  \(ta\, \text{kalesas}\, ta\, \text{manaḍæs}\)

(25) Chaldía Pontic (Drettas 1997: 169)
  a.  \(i\, \text{kalesa}\, i\, \text{ɣari} \sim to\, \text{kalon}\, i\, \text{ɣari}\)
  b.  \(i\, \text{kaleses}\, i\, \text{ɣariḍæs} \sim ta\, \text{kalesas}\, ta\, \text{ɣariḍas}\)
The Asia Minor Greek dialects

ASIA MINOR GREEK

Proto-Cappadocian

Silliot

Cappadocian/Pontic

Pharasiot

Pontic Cappadocian

(Karatsareas 2011)


References


Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 55-68.


References


References