Transplanting diglossia: attitudes towards Standard and Cypriot Greek among London’s Greek Cypriot community
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This is an electronic version of a paper presented at Sociolinguistics Symposium 21, Murcia, Spain, 15 - 18 June 2016.

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Transplanting diglossia: Attitudes towards Standard and Cypriot Greek among London’s Greek Cypriot community

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Research questions

① What happens to existing attitudinal systems when specific linguistic varieties are transplanted by their speakers to new geographical and social contexts?

② Do transplanted speakers and speaker communities bring attitudes with them or do they leave them behind? What conditions the fate of attitudes?

③ What types of attitude-driven practices do we find in transplanted communities?
Greek as a case-in-point

• **Standard Modern Greek (SModGr)**
  — the official language of the Hellenic Republic and one of the two official languages of the Republic of Cyprus.

• **Cypriot Greek (CypGr)**
  — the ModGr varieties spoken in Cyprus.
## Diglossia in Cyprus?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SModGr</th>
<th>CypGr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official status</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and education</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codification, standardisation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗     (\sim \checkmark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗     (\sim \checkmark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First language acquisition</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diglossia in Cyprus?

• More recent proposals (Katsoyannou et al. 2006; Sophocleous 2006; Tsiplakou et al 2006; Papapavlou & Sophocleous 2009) describe a register/stylistic continuum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basilect(s)</th>
<th>Acrolect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>telēa</em>/<em>vareta xorkatika</em></td>
<td><em>sistarismena</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘total/heavy peasantry’</td>
<td>‘tidied up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>evjenika</em></td>
<td><em>kalamaristika</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘polite’</td>
<td>‘pen-pusher’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Attitudes in Cyprus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SModGr</th>
<th>CypGr</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attractive, ambitious,</td>
<td>sincere, friendly, kind</td>
<td>Papapavlou (1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intelligent, educated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polite</td>
<td>rural, low education</td>
<td>Papapavlou &amp; Sophocleous (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʃ dʒ]: rural, peasant-like, unappealing</td>
<td>Papapavlou (2001)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reinforcement through education

“Educators should use Standard Modern Greek during class time and they should expect the same from their students. The Greek-Cypriot dialect is respected and can be used by students in certain cases for communication, such as in role plays representing scenes from everyday life, when reciting poems etc. … The above mentioned should be performed within logical boundaries and not at the expense of the development of Standard Modern Greek, which constitutes our national language.”

(original in Greek; Ministry of Education and Culture 2002, cited in Sophocleous & Wilks 2010)
Reinforcement through education

• Teachers
  — actively discourage the use of CypGr in the classroom on behalf of the students through explicit corrections
  — codeswitch to CypGr in informal instances of communication (encouragement, commenting)
  — use SModGr to assert authority

(Papapavlou & Pavlou 2005; Ioannidou 2009; Sophocleous & Wilks 2010; Yiakoumetti 2007)
Reinforcement through education

Erato: *ciría ti ενα kamume?*
Miss, what will *(CypGr)* we do?

Teacher: *όçi ti ενα kamume ti θα kamume*
Not what will *(CypGr)* we do, what will *(SModGr)* we do?

*(Ioannidou 2009: 274)*
The UK *parikia* (‘expat community’)

- Office for National Statistics (2011 census):
  
  Cypriot-born UK residents
  
  England: 78,795
  Scotland: 1,941
  Wales: 1,215
  Northern Ireland: 344

  **TOTAL:** 82,295

- National Federation of Cypriots in the UK: 200,000–300,000 UK residents with a Cypriot background.
The London parikia

- Enfield (2.6%)
- Barnet (1.3%)
- Haringey (0.7%)
- Islington (0.5%)
- Camden (0.4%)

(London Datastore, London Borough of Newham, Languages Spoken by Pupils, Borough & MSOA; all data from the 2008 Annual School Census)
The London parikia
## Linguistic repertoires in the *parikia*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>CypGr</th>
<th>English (Adult)</th>
<th>English (Child)</th>
<th>SModGr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} generation</td>
<td>L1</td>
<td>L2</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
<td>L2 (adult)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} generation</td>
<td>L1</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– sequential</td>
<td>L1</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– simultaneous</td>
<td>2L1</td>
<td>2L1</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd} generation</td>
<td>L2 (child)</td>
<td>L1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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Heritage speakers of CypGr
Usage in the *parikia*

- **CypGr:** at home and within the community, with family and friends.

- **SModGr:** in formal occasions and official institutions in the community (supplementary schools, the Greek Orthodox church, media).
Usage in the *parikia*

- Papapavlou & Pavlou (2001): 12–18 year-olds’ use of CypGr and English
Usage in the *parikia*

- Gardner-Chloros et al. (2005):
  - older speakers (> 56 years) use both CypGr and SModGr more than younger speakers.
  - younger speakers and speakers of high SES use English to a greater extent than older speakers and speakers of low SES.
  - CypGr is more extensively used than SModGr across all age groups and by speakers in manual occupations.
Attitudes in the *parikia*

- Papapavlou & Pavlou (2001: 104):
  - “there are no signs of negative attitudes towards Cypriot Greek, which [UK Cypriots] seem to master at higher levels than Modern Standard Greek”.
Attitudes in the *parikia*

- Gardner-Chloros et al. (2005):
  - less educated speakers and speakers in manual occupations favour CypGr over SModGr as part of their cultural heritage and as the language to be learnt first at home.
  - more educated speakers view SModGr as more important than CypGr and favour SModGr as first language.
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- 22 speakers
  - 13 female, 9 male
- Average age: 40.5 years
- 2nd generation (born in the UK, both parents born in Cyprus)
  - 20 successive bilinguals, 2 simultaneous bilinguals
- Language usage: 73% English, 26% Greek
- 9.5 years of Greek school
Zooming in on attitudes in the parikia

- CypGr is part of the identity of British-born Cypriots:

aresci mu na milo tin ylos:an mu | na men
xaso tin eliinicin ylos:an
| na men xaso oti ime
ciprios jati nomiz:o an
xaso tin ylos:an eθ:a
’me ciprios | eθ:a νιοθο
oti ime ekaton tis
ekaton ciprios

“I like to speak my language, [I do not want] to lose the Greek language, [I do not want] to lose the fact that I am Cypriot because I think that, if I lose the language, I will not be Cypriot anymore, I will not feel that I am 100% Cypriot.”

[2M36A]
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- A traditional, authentic type of CypGr is the desired end result:

  *The nicest thing was when I went to the bank and they say ‘Can I have your identity card?’*. I tell them ‘But I am English, I am not Cypriot’. ‘Oh, sorry. I thought you were Cypriot’. So that was a great pleasure.”
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- Negative awareness of the growing differences in the way CypGr is spoken in the UK and Cyprus:

  PK: *i ylosa pos ine stin cipro?*
  
  2F52B: *peritu san tus elines | ðen ine san emas pu stin ciprii milumen xorkatika ... pienumen stin cipro kapos ðen katalavo ti leosin*

  PK: How is the language in Cyprus today?
  
  2F52B: More like the one the Greeks speak. It’s not like ours. We as Cypriots speak *peasanty* ... we go to Cyprus [and] somehow I don’t understand what they say
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- The CypGr variety spoken in the UK is perceived as heavy and peasanty due to the nature of migration:

> i məːa mu emacən tundes lekisis tis *varitates* διοτι pu ’rten stin anglian … eminiscen me tin jajen mu ce ton papʰ:un mu | ta peferika tis | ce etsini milusan pu prin to çiːa eɲakoʃa saranda

> “My mother learned those *most heavy* words because when she came to England … she stayed with my grandmother and grandfather, her in-laws, and they spoke [a type of Cypriot] from before 1940.”

[2F34C]
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- Postalveolar fricatives and affricates, and lexical items are marked as *xorkatika*, *vareta* or *spazmena* ‘broken’:

  ta elinika ðame sto lonðino ine *spazmena* | ta poli spazmena eçi tse

  “Greek here in London is broken. The very broken type has tse [and.CypGr].”

  ipamen ja tin tsixla pis:a | as pumen stin cipro an ðelis na pis eci leun tsame | eðo ðame

  “We talked about *tsixla* [chewing gum.SM0dGr] and *pis:a* [chewing gum.CypGr]. “For example, in Cyprus, instead of eci [there.SM0dGr], they say *tsame* [there.CypGr]. eðo [here.SM0dGr] is ðame “[here.CypGr].”
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

• The use of phonologically and morphologically adapted English loanwords is marked:

  *lalumen ce leksis pu in englezis | pu kamnumen ta cipreika me Greek accent | it helps*

  “We also use words that are English, that we render them Cypriot by means of a Greek accent. It helps.”

  [2F52B]

  *to pason ne | tfʰéčʰin ocʃ epitaji*

  “*pason [bus] yes, it exists. tfʰéčʰin [cheque] also and not epitaji [cheque.SM OdGR].”*

  [2M43D]
Among some speakers, the use of material marked as CypGr is considered improper and incorrect:

2F45F: Well, I don’t say tse jo [and I], let’s put it that way.
PK: jati [why]?
2F45F: ’cause that’s not correct
PK: ne ala den ine lathos [yes, but it is not an error]
2F45F: tse jo? No, I’m a believer in speaking correctly.

PK: jati to lene i anthropi? [Why do people say it?]
2F45F: It’s laziness.
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

• The use of SModGr is considered proper and polite:

> an ine apo tin elːaːda  ... 
> ἵνα θο δι πρέπει να καμό 
> τψ’ εύο προσπαθίαν ασ
> πομεν να ιμέ ευζενις τσ
> να λεοντς αντι χαι τσε

[2F47A]

“It’s talking with someone from Greece ... I feel that I, too, have to make the effort, let’s say, to be polite and say *ce [and.SMODGR]* instead of *tse [and.CYPGR]*.”
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- Negative perceptions of CypGr are deeply rooted in the supplementary educational system:

  `afimume pu stin protin taksi ... arcisa man an imeran na pao ce en icen kareklan na katso | ce tis ipa tis daskalas | lalo tis | en exo tsaera ce i daskala ekitaksen me me enan ifos | lali mu | ti ine afto | chair lalo tis chair sta anglika | ce lali mu | den ine tsaera | ine karekla ...`

  “I remember when I was in the first grade ... one day I was late and there was no chair for me to sit. And I said to the teacher ‘I don’t have a *tsaera* [chair.CYPGR],’ and the teacher gave me that look. She said ‘What is that?’ ‘Chair’, I said, ‘chair’ in English. And she said ‘It’s not *tsaera*, it’s *karekla* [chair.SMODGR]’..."
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- Negative perceptions of CypGr are deeply rooted in the supplementary educational system:

  … *ce istera ekatalava eyo ta cipreika pu eksera | pu maxa | itan vareta cipriaka so istera ekatalava ðen itan sosta | itan laxos pu milun*

  … and then I realised that the Cypriot that I knew, the Cypriot that I had learnt was heavy Cypriot so then I realised I didn’t speak correctly, I spoke in a mistaken way.”  [2F34C]
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- Negative perceptions are also present in less formal settings within the community:

  *pu imasten mikri pu itan na ’rtun spitin mas … stus yonis mu itan na milisumen* you know with *xorjatici* sort of accent | *e i mama* *mu itan na pi en ine sosti i leksi tuti … if we try to use it* | *an to xrisimopias* | *en en sosti i leksi* | *en tuti i leksi pu prepi na xrisimopiisis* | *en en tuti ḏioti en xorjatici*

  “When we were young, when someone would come visit … we would talk to our parents with a peasantry sort of accent so my mother would say ‘This word is not correct’. If we tried to use it, ‘if you use it, it is not correct. You have to use that other word, because this one is peasantry’.”
• Positive attitudes are present in the community:

  * o papas μυ | he used to get annoyed … itan na mas pi tuta ta elinika en en kalith:era apo tuta ta elinika | en tse ta θco elinika tuta omos en xoriatika | There’s nothing to be embarassed about and it’s where we come from. You know, don’t be embarassed about it

  “My father, he used to get annoyed … He would say to us ‘This type of Greek is not any better than that type of Greek. Both types are Greek, it’s just that this type is peasanty. There’s nothing to be embarassed about and it’s where we come from. You know, don’t be embarassed about it.” [2F36A]
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- Attitudes lead to the preference of SModGr for use in education and among the community:

  AG: ʝati | afu kamnis parea me ciprius | ʝati prospaθis na milas eλinika

  2F43I: etsi mas emaθan sto eλiniko sxolio | itan papaes | i eklisia

  AG: Why? Since you hang out with Cypriot people, why do you try to speak Greek?

  2F43I: That’s what we were taught at school. They were priests, the church.
Zooming in on attitudes in the *parikia*

- Attitudes lead to the preference of SModGr for use in education and among the community:

  PK: *sto sxolio ti elinika prepi na διδασκιν*  
  2F45F: *ta elinika ta sosta opos ine yramæna*  
  PK: What type of Greek should be taught at schools?  
  2F45F: The correct type of Greek, the way it is written.
Summing up

• Existing attitudinal systems can be transplanted from old, traditional geographical and social contexts to new ones such as heritage language contexts.

• Attitudes are preserved and reinforced by the same social institutions that preserve and reinforce attitudes in the original geographical and social context.
Summing up

• Negative attitudes target both traditionally stigmatised variants and new variants that develop in the new, heritage language context due to contact with the dominant language.

• Attitude-driven practices in the new contexts show high degrees of similarity to the practices adopted in the original context.
Summing up

- Attitudes in heritage language contexts can be one of the most crucial factors driving language shift.¹

¹No sh*t, Sherlock.
Thank you for your attention

Θέκκιου!
[θέκκιου]
References


References


References


References


