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PROCEEDINGS OF THE ICGL12 IIPAKTIKA TOY ICGL12

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GENDER ASSIGNMENT TO ROMANCE LOANS IN KATOITALIÓTIKA: A CASE STUDY OF CONTACT MORPHOLOGY

Vasiliki Makri University of Patras vasmakri@upatras.gr

Περίληψη

Το παρόν άρθρο πραγματεύεται την εκχώρηση γένους σε ονοματικά δάνεια στα Κατωιταλιώτικα, ενός διαλεκτικού συστήματος που έχει έρθει σε επαφή και επηρεαστεί σημαντικά από τη Ρομανική. Ο δανεισμός ουσιαστικών στα Κατωιταλιώτικα καταδεικνύει το σημαντικό ρόλο που διαδραματίζουν οι γραμματικοί παράγοντες κατά την εκχώρηση γένους. Υποστηρίζεται ότι η ενσωμάτωση δανείων και η επιλογή μίας τιμής γένους κατά τον δανεισμό είναι μια διαδικασία εξαρτώμενη από ενδογλωσσικές διεργασίες του συστήματος αποδέκτη (Ελληνική), το φωνολογικό σχήμα των εισαγόμενων στοιχείων και τις δυναμικές διεργασίες της γλώσσας πηγής (Ρομανική).

Keywords: gender assignment, Katoitaliótika, noun borrowing, contact morphology, Romance

1. Introduction

Gender either as a term of natural classification of species or a linguistic grammatical category has admittedly turned out to be a favorite topic for many linguists (Wheeler 1899; Bloomfield 1933; Corbett 1991; Dahl 2000; Rice 2005; Thornton 2007). The grammatical gender in Greek has been thoroughly investigated in the light of the prevailing problem analysis and theoretical principles that have been introduced internationally. Several questions about gender assignment have arisen though, the most

important of which relate to the regularity and the potentially alternative gender assignment to nominals (assignment criteria, natural and grammatical gender, variation), the diachronic tendencies configured in gender change and the relationship between gender and inflection (Ralli 2002; Anastassiadis-Symeonidis et al. 2003).

Additionally, systematic studies examining gender from the perspective of language contact, that is focusing on loan nouns, have been conducted (Baran 2003; DuBord 2004; Kavitskaya 2005; Morin 2006; Friesner 2009). Gender assignment to loan nouns in Standard Modern Greek (henceforth SMG) has been exhaustively examined (Apostolou-Panara 1985; Anastassiadis-Symeonidis 1994). In recent years, the dialectal analyses of the gender-assignment process to loan nouns of Modern Greek dialects are seeing an upward trend (Melissaropoulou 2013a,b; Ralli et al. 2015; Makri 2015a,b, 2016).

This article focuses on gender assignment to loan nouns in Katoitaliótika, the dialect of Italiot Greek, a dialectal system which is spoken in the region of Magna Graecia in southern Italy, and more specifically in the area of Puglia (area of Salento, the so-called Grecia Salentina). It is also known as Griko, or Grekanika, and it is a contact-induced dialectal system which has been substantially affected by the semi-analytic local Romance dialects and Standard Italian. Its long-term contact with Romance resulted in the dialect developing a number of linguistic innovations. The aim of this paper is to inquire into the loan-noun adjustment mechanisms of the dialect under examination enlightening several aspects of the assignment of grammatical gender, as well as tendencies of the recipient system in accordance with Ibrahim (1973), Poplack et al. (1982), Anastassiadis-Symeonidis (1994), Kilarski (2003), and Stolz (2009).

The data in question have been extracted from the available written sources, the digitized material of the Laboratory of Modern Greek Dialects of the University of Patras and MORILAN database (http://morilandb.upatras.gr/) created under the Research Programme Morilan Project-Aristeia I/643, the scope of which focuses on how morphology can be affected in language-contact situations. The article is structured as follows: in Section 2, I present the basic assumptions underlying grammatical gender. In Section 3, I dissect the processes of loan-noun integration in Katoitaliótika and gender assignment in human and nonhuman loans. The paper ends with a summary of the key findings.

¹ Katoitaliótika competes with both the local Romance varieties and Italian, the official language of the state (Fanciullo, 2001; Manolessou, 2005: 106). Katoitaliótika is spoken in about nine villages (Calimera, Castrignano dei Greci, Corigliano di Otranto, Martano, Martignano, Melpignano, Soleto, Sternatia, and Zollino), where speakers extensively use Griko in informal family settings (Profili, 1985).

2. Basic Assumptions

This section emphasizes the most important aspects of the concept, the form and function of grammatical gender, for it is a complex linguistic phenomenon (Corbett 1991: 1) upon which various parameters have a significant effect (Anastassiadis-Symeonidis et al. 2003: 12). Gender is one of the first grammatical categories dealt with comprehensively in the work of the Ancient Greeks, such as Protagoras, Aristotle, Dionysius Thrax.

On a cross-linguistic scale, there are languages with the gender feature in their system, whereas in others it is completely absent. Depending on whether indicated on the structure of a noun, gender can be either *overt* or *covert* (Aronoff 1994). In the first case, the grammatical gender is indicated by a morphological marker -an inflectional or derivational suffix²- while in the second, agreement with other components of the sentence or the utterance, within which each noun appears, indicates gender (Matasovič 2004: 21).

The tripartite gender distinction into masculine, feminine and neuter found in Greek is a general rule for Indo-European languages. Languages around the world can be classified into categories according to the fundamental characteristics of the mechanism they employ; thus, linguistic systems based on semantic, morphological or/and phonological criteria are distinguishable (Corbett 1991: 7-62).

Regarding the semantic criteria, it is essential to make a distinction between natural and grammatical gender. The natural gender refers to the biological sex -male or female- as opposed to grammatical gender. In Indo-European languages, grammatical gender systems are primarily based on the differentiation between biological sexes (Aronoff 1994: 66). In gender assignment, a semantic core is detected which is connected to the features of [+/- animate], [+/- human] and biological sex (Corbett 1991; Dahl 2000; Aikhenvald 2006). By way of illustration, nouns denoting MALE or FEMALE belong to the masculine or feminine grammatical gender respectively. In Greek, there is such semantic core (Ralli 2002, 2003). However, morphological criteria are involved in the event that nouns do not carry the [+human] feature; consequently, grammatical gender is determined by the inflection class of the stem of the noun (op. cit.).

Grammatical gender is an inherent characteristic of nouns included in the Lexicon as an idiosyncratic feature of the noun specified either in each lexeme separately or allocated via general gender assignment rules (Corbett 1991; Matasovič 2004: 18; Aro-

² Note that in Greek the inflectional suffix is a marker and not carrier of grammatical gender (Ralli 2002, 2003). This analysis is based on the proposal of Ralli (op. cit.).

noff 1994: 66, 71).

In Greek, the gender feature rests in the stem of the noun and constitutes an idiosyncratic feature of derivational suffixes (Ralli 2002, 2003). Additionally, as a general rule, in the event of both integration and non-integration in the inflection of a morphologically rich language such as Greek, loanwords carry grammatical gender, which becomes evident in cases of agreement, certifying the active role gender plays in the process of borrowing, as well as that gender is a lexical feature (op. cit.).

In any language system which carries the grammatical category of gender, there is the so-called *default*, *unmarked* or *prototypical* gender. It is the gender a word is characterized by, when the widely applicable gender assignment or agreement rules are not fitting. The default gender varies from language to language (Corbett 1991; Matasovič 2004: 24).

Bearing on the two systems in contact, both Greek and Romance (source language, SL) have an overt gender system. Yet, unlike the tripartite distinction of Greek in masculine, feminine and neuter, Romance has a two-way system of gender values, masculine and feminine. It will be shown that the masculine, feminine and neuter genders are assigned to Romance loan nouns of Katoitaliótika (recipient language, RL) in line with Greek.

3. Grammatical factors underlying gender assignment to loans in Katoitaliótika

3.1 Semantic factors

3.1.1 [+human] loan nouns

According to Ralli (2002), there is a hierarchy in gender assignment in Modern Greek, where the role of semantics prevails over that of morphology: +human nouns are assigned the masculine or feminine value, depending on whether they are male or female, while the rest of nouns, that is, -human ones, are assigned the gender value depending on the inflection class to which they belong. We will see that the same priority to semantics is given to borrowed nouns as well, which are assigned the masculine or feminine gender in accordance with the semantically-driven gender assignment in Greek.³

³ The dialectical data are given in broad phonetic transcription for rendering the phonological and structural correspondences utterly perceivable.

(1)	Katoitaliótika	Romance ⁴
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Masculine loan nouns

a. kobanio 'companion' compagnio.MASC 'peasant' gualano calanu.MASC b. kavaleri 'rider' ca(v)alieri.MASC scolari 'schoolboy, pupil' scolaro.MASC

Feminine loan nouns

c vekia 'old woman' vecchia. FEM femena 'woman' fimmena.FEM

Therefore, the [+human] feature activates the gender-assignment process in loan nouns.

3.1.2 [-human] loan nouns

In the literature, in language-contact situations, as regards loanword integration, a clear tendency to assign loanwords to one particular grammatical gender without the assignment being instigated by any explicit motive is often cited (Haugen 1950: 217; Ibrahim 1973:61; Corbett 1991; Kilarski 1997; Clyne 2003). In this light, a more distinct gender value, which is allocated mostly to loans, can be looked on as preferred gender assignment.

In fact, the high frequency of borrowings allocated the neuter gender has been used as an indicative criterion for identifying neuter as the default/prototypical gender of -human nouns in SMG (cf. Dressler 1997; Anastassiadis-Symeonidis 1994: 191). For an illustration, consider the Italian word vapore which is adjusted as vapori in SMG and assigned the neuter gender value with the attachment of the ending -i (5).

(2)	Standard Modern Greek		Italian	
	vapori.NEU	'steamship'	vapore.MASC	

This premise seems to be attested in [-human] nouns of Katoitaliótika, where the neuter value occupies a preeminent position. We observe that the tendency for assigning the neuter gender to [-human] nouns applies to a great number of [-human] Romance lo-

For convenience, Standard Italian and Salentino will be referred to as Romance.

ans, which fall into the neuter category, and are divided into two inflection classes, those ending in -o grouped under IC5⁵ (3a), and those ending in -i forming part of IC6 (3b):

(3)	Katoitaliótika	Romance	
	Neuter loan nouns		
	a. [IC5] tziako	'jacket'	giacca.FEM
	krombutzolo	'berry'	corbezzola.FEM
	b. [IC6] kuluri	'colour'	culure.MASC
	rantsi	'orange'	arancia.FEM

The primacy of the semantic criteria which apply to SMG seems to be corroborated in the case of Romance loans in Katoitaliótika, for loanword integration confirms Ralli's (2012, 2013, 2014) proposal that the morphology of borrowed words appears to be predominantly conditioned by language-internal tendencies, i.e. by the Greek tendencies in our case.

3.2 Phonological factors

3.2.1 [+human] loan nouns

As far as the particular endings of human loans are concerned, that is, their integration into a specific inflection class, phonology⁶ seems to play a decisive role: most +human masculine nouns ending in -o in the Romance system (1a) are accommodated in Katoitaliótika according to IC1 -o (-os) masculine nouns, and the Romance masculine nouns ending in -i are adjusted in accordance with the IC2 -i (-is) masculine nouns (1b). At this point, it is important to mention that in Salentino, the mid vowels /e/ and /o/ are raised into /i/ and /u/ respectively when found in final position (cf. Maiden & Parry 1997). Thus, nouns in -o and -u are placed in the same group of Romance masculines.

Regarding nouns with the features [+human, +female], their phonological shape also triggers membership to a particular inflection class, since Romance feminine nouns in

⁵ This study follows the analysis proposed by Ralli (2002).

⁶ For the important role of phonology in the gender assignment of loans, see also Melissaropoulou (2013a,b), Makri et al. (2013, 2014), and Makri (2015a,b).

-a are accommodated in Katoitaliótika as feminine nouns belonging to IC3, that is, as those ending in -a (1c).

The integration of +human Romance loans shows that the properties of the donor, in this case, the phonological ones, also play a role in the transfer of words to a particular language if they match with those of the recipient⁷:

(4)	a. Greek	γiatr- o °	vs.	Italian	uom-o
		doctor-MASC			man-MASC
	b. Greek k	let- i	vs.	Salentino	scutier-i
		thief-MASC			equerry, esquire-MASC
	c. Greek γ	inek- a	vs.	Italian/ Salentino	donn-a
		woman-FEM			woman-FEM

As deduced, the particular inflection class to which they belong may be determined by a certain phonological matching between the donor and the recipient.

3.2.1 [-human] loan nouns

As concerns neuter nouns, we notice that gender assignment is realized on the basis of the phonological shape of the word of the donor, since the -*o* ending of masculine Romance nouns coincides with the -*o* ending of neuter Greek nouns, as illustrated in (5):

(5)	Neuter	loan	nouns	[IC5]	
(3)	INCUICI .	ioan	Houns		

Katoitaliótika		Romance
kiukio.NEU	'donkey'	ciuco.MASC
peto.NEU	'chest'	petto.MASC
trapito.NEU	'oil press'	trappitu.MASC

The phonological-structural shape of the Romance ending which evokes the -o ending of the recipient system is conducive to the enrichment of the inflection class 5 of neuter nouns in -o of Katoitaliótika.

The segments in bold illustrate the cross-linguistic phonological coincidence in question.

⁸ Note that the masculine endings – o and – i are reminiscent of -but not identical with- the SMG inflectional affixes - os and - is respectively, owing to the final -s deletion resulting from the preference of Italiot systems for open (CV) syllables.

It is remarkable that the neuter group in -i is enlarged by a small number of loanwords which are exceptionally incorporated in the inflectional paradigm of the plural number of the neuter-specific IC6 by way of a phonologically-driven gender assignment:

(6) Neuter loan nouns [IC6]

Katoitaliótika		Romance
veddhantzia.NEU.PL	'scale'	bilancia.FEM
kaneddha.NEU.PL	'barley bran'	canigghia.FEM

This behavior is justifiable on account of the perceived homophony of the borrowing with a pertinent word-formation scheme of the target language (cf. Clyne 2003), that is, by the form matching between the plural ending of neuter nouns of the recipient and the singular ending of feminine nouns of the donor (7). Interestingly, phonology is accountable for this characteristic gender assignment in favour of the neuter and IC6.

(7)	a. Greek	spiti	spiti a	
		house-NEU.SG	house-NEU.PL	
	b. Italian	bilanci- a	bilanc-e	
		scale-MASC.SG	scale-MASC.PL	

In addition, delving further into the phonologically-triggered gender assignment to loanwords in Katoitaliótika, it becomes evident that a certain phonological compatibility of the two systems based on the homophony of the endings (cf. Clyne, 2003) - α and - σ allows for gender assignment to [-human] loanwords in favor of the masculine and feminine gender value. In fact, in both the donor and the recipient language, - α prototypically indicates femininity in the citation forms. Thus, when transferring Romance nouns, the ending - α is considered to be the same as the corresponding Greek one in the nominative case of the singular number:

(8) Feminine loan nouns [IC3]

Katoitaliótika		Romance
fuddha	'hurry'	$fu\delta\delta a. {\tt FEM}$
puteka	'shop'	putèa.FEM
vroscia	'embers'	ròsçia.FEM
vroscera	'brazier'	brasçera.FEM

Similarly, the final -s dropping of the masculine -os inflectional suffix, as a consequence of the preference of Italiot systems for open (CV) syllables, contributes to it being perceived as phonologically analogous to the Romance masculine -o suffix:

(9) Masculine loan nouns [IC1]

Katoitaliótil	ĸa	Romance
guito	'elbow'	gomito.MASC
fundo	'bottom'	fondo.MASC
brondo	'soup'	brodo.MASC
mortzo	'bite'	morso.MASC

The phonological identification of the endings -a (8) and -o (9) of the two systems constitutes an indicator that they can be treated as *interlingual correspondences* (Weinreich 1953: 39-40) or *diaforms* by Selinker (1992: 83-84) between the two languages in contact. More specifically, the morpheme /a/ is a cross-linguistic index of femininity and /o/ a cross-linguistic index of masculinity, taking on the same gender function in both systems and fulfilling the phonological isomorphism, without any semantic differentiation between the two systems. Hence, this likeness in terms of form and function of the endings between the two languages in contact acts as a facilitator for loanword integration and gender assignment.

In aggregate, it becomes apparent that the formal (phonological-structural) shape of the word to be inserted determines the gender-assignment process.

3.3 Morphological factors

3.3.1 [+human] loan nouns

Apart from semantic and phonological criteria, morphological factors also ordain gender assignment to Romance loans. The productivity of the Greek inflection class of masculine nouns in -i(s) is substantiated by the incidence of a number of human nouns in -o or -u (10a) which are converted into words in -i instead of being adjusted as masculine words in -o, as is to be expected by the form of their ending. Additional evidence for it is provided by human nouns ending in -e, (10b) which are integrated into the dialect as masculine nouns in -i(s):

(10) Masculine loan nouns

Katoitaliótika Romance
a. scolari 'schoolboy, pupil' scolaro.MASC
ferari 'blacksmith' ferraru.MASC
b. muraturi 'bricklayer' muratore.MASC

This phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that in Greek, nouns whose semantic features are [male] and [profession] commonly display the inflected form in -i(s) as well as the fact that the productivity of the -is masculine suffix attached to this kind of nouns is pervasive in Greek and its dialects as well:

(11)	Pontic	kolayuzis.MASC 'driver'	< Turk. kılavuz
	Heptanesian	infermieris. MASC 'nurse.man'	< Ital. infermiere. MASC
	Cretan	δatseris. MASC 'customs officer'	< Ven. dazièr. MASC
	SMG	manavis. MASC 'greengrocer'	

Therefore, the choice of the -i(s) ending in order to morphologically incorporate loanwords with the [male] and [profession] features could indicate a certain strategy of the language to provide a classification for this type of loans. In this group of borrowings, the +humanness, +male and +profession features are overtly expressed, resulting in loanwords being assigned distinctively to the -i(s) gender-specific IC2, whereas the rest of the [-human] loanwords are idiosyncratically assigned to IC1 as shown below.

3.3.2 [-human] loan nouns

It is important to stress that the tendency for assigning the neuter value to -human loans does not only apply to nominals whose ending is phonologically compatible with the corresponding Greek ones (5), but also in cases where such structural similarity is not to be encountered:

(12) Neuter loan nouns

Katoitaliótika	Romance	
a. [IC5] tziako	'jacket'	giacca.FEM
krombutzolo	'berry'	corbezzola.FEM

b. [IC6]	kuluri	'colour'	culure.MASC
	altari	ʻaltar'	altare.MASC
	rantsi	'orange'	arancia.FEM
	visaci	'saddlebag'	bisaccia.FEM

More analytically, for Romance nouns ending in a vowel other than -o (12a) or for the IC6 that encompasses integrated nouns in -i (12b), there is no form similarity between the Romance original items and their integrated counterparts. Neuter nouns under (12a) could have been formed proportionally to neuters in -o (5) through the productive word-formation mechanism of analogy, whose inflection seems to be molded analogically to the form of the neuters in (5).

As regards accommodation to IC6, we could suppose that the already mentioned neuterization for -human nouns, seen as a language-internal tendency, is operative (for further elaboration on this issue, see Ralli et al. 2015; Makri 2016).

In fact, the existence of this tendency is also diachronically verified, as observed by Hatzidakis (1907) who has claimed that, in the medieval period, there was a shift of Ancient Greek -human masculine and feminine nouns towards the neuter value. These nouns have acquired the ending *-ion*, which, in subsequent periods, has been reduced into *-i*(n) (Georgacas 1948; Horrocks 2010: 175-176).⁹

(13)	Ancient Greek		Modern Greek
	pus.MASC	>	poδi.NEU 'leg'
	kormos.MASC	>	kormi.neu 'body'
	cefali.FEM	>	cefali.NEU 'head'
	trapeza.FEM	>	trapezi.NEU 'table'

With respect to the masculine [-human] loanwords, it should be highlighted that suffix productivity of the recipient language may sometimes overthrow the prevalence of neuter gender in [-human] nouns. Thus, the most productive Greek inflectional marker -os, characterizing masculine nouns (e.g. Greek *mil-os* 'mill'), is traceable in certain loanwords in -o when the phonological parametre of form similarity of the endings between the two systems is not at work:

⁹ Note that some of the original masculine or feminine nouns still exist today with a rather lexicalized meaning (e.g. *trapeza*, *kefali*).

(14) Masculine loan nouns

Katoitaliótika		Romance	
fjuro	'flower'	fiore.MASC	
levero ¹⁰	'ivy'	l' èllera/ ètera.MASC	

Nominal loans with the [-human] feature are massively adjusted entering one specific masculine inflection class, that in -o(s) (9, 14). This preference is not haphazard and can also be interpretable in terms of the productivity of the inflection class in -o both for Standard Italian and Salentino inflectional systems (Thornton 1998; Dressler and Thornton 1996; Gardani 2013):

(15) Romance productive masculine nominal declension

Standard Italian		Salentino	
Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
X-o	X-i	X-u	X-i
uccello	uccelli	aceδδu	aceδδi
	'bird'		

Similarly, as regards the inflection of feminine loanwords, the attested gender polarity to the -*a* ending of feminine gender value bears witness to a distinguishable preference of the system further intensified by the productivity of the feminine nominal declension class in -*a* of the donor language. Italian and Salentino feminine nouns in -*a* correspond to one admittedly very productive nominal class in both Italian and Salentino (Thornton 1998; Dressler and Thornton 1996; Gardani 2013):

(16) Italian productive feminine nominal declension

Standard Italiar	1	Salentino			
Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural		
X-a	X-e	X-a	X-e		
vincita	vincite	inceta	incete		
'victory'					

¹⁰ In this case, we observe change in the gender value during the transition of the loan into the recipient language with reanalysis and integration of the Romance noun with the Italian definite article ("early system morphemes", Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2000).

4. Conclusions

The dialectal data from Katoitaliótika highlight the complexity of the category of grammatical gender and reveal that semantic, morphological and phonological criteria underlie synergetically the gender-assignment process. I have shown the pivotal role the morphology of the recipient system assumes in the adaptation of noun loans and grammatical gender assignment. I have also argued that the phonological similarity between the ending items of the systems in contact appears to orient considerably gender assignment and loanword adaptation. Finally, I have pointed out the dynamics of the source system which ensues the end product of borrowing, as shown by the choice of specific gender values prevalent in the dialect.

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