

NARRATIVE DEVICES AMONG GREEK AUSTRALIAN BILINGUALS

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1. Introduction and Methodology

This paper comprises a sociolinguistic study on the *narrative devices*, that is the temporal referential elements of language (see below), devised by bilingual native-speaking Greek-born settlers in their new environment, under the influence of Australian English in a discourse situation. The focus has been on the nature, function and causes of discourse based transfers which were classified and accounted for, in a corpus of approximately 500,000 words (Tamis 1986). The term bilingual in this paper is used to designate the 1st generation Australian Greek settler who knows and/or uses both languages involved, irrespective of degree of competence, range of skills and social use. The basic accepted notion here, dictates that in language contact situation significant changes occur in the inter-linguistic systems of one or both languages when the conditions of keeping the languages apart is not met (Haugen 1973:5 ff.) The process and the result of these linguistic variations will be called *transference* (the adoption of any element from another language) assuming that the phenomenon occurs mainly in the speech of native-speaking Greek bilinguals after their immigration into Australia, despite the low incidence of the opposite.

The recorded findings were collected by means of (a) a self-administered, structured and open-ended linguistic and socio-cultural questionnaire and (b) interviews in depth on the basis of an open-ended and structured interview schedule to gauge the participant's interest of discourse. A set of pictures for description is also employed to elicit a speech sample for the observation of eventual linguistic deviations from the norm in the Australian speech situation and to elicit an old possibly forgotten vocabulary.

On the basis of findings reported in earlier studies (Tamis 1985, 1986, 1988) the following variables (sex, education, density, occupation and age) were taken into consideration in obtaining a stratified sample of 200 informants. The composition of the sample, in terms of the demographic characteristics satisfactorily reflects the distribution of these characteristics amongst the Greek community of Australia (See Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 1986). All 200 cases studied are post-war immigrants having Modern Greek (henceforth MG) as their primary language. Their place of origin satisfactorily reflects the demographic distribution of the Australian Greek community (Tamis 1986). Most of the informants (89%) were married. As the year of arrival relates to education, perhaps to occupation and social status, one third of the informants (32%) arrived in Australia by 1960, whereas almost twice as many (60%) arrived during the period 1961-1969 and the remaining 8% during the 1970-1973 period. For most of the

informants the main cause for immigration was financial (82%), whereas 10% of them decided to migrate in order to be with close relatives, 2% to study, 1% for political reasons and 3% for other reasons (curiosity, involuntary immigration). Most of the aforementioned informants (82%), had visited Greece more than once and thus had spoken MG with monolinguals and became more aware of their own *Ethnolect* (the substandard communicative norm which is adopted and used by an ethnic community in a language contact situation). Many (74%) of the informants attained only a low educational qualifications (more than half of whom, e.g. 53% had completed primary education) and most (78%) were from rural areas of Greece. Only three informants claimed that English was the language normally used in their homes, of whom two were involved in inter-ethnic marriages with an Australian spouse.

As far as their bilingual experience is concerned, the data collected show that 97% of the immigrants were monolingual on arrival. Regarding literacy skills in Australian English, 64% reported either «no» or «poor» proficiency in writing and reading.

The linguistic data for the study was obtained by means of tape-recorded interviews conducted in MG. Most informants (N = 178) were interviewed in their homes, which provided an environment conducive to fruitful interviews. In certain instances recording sessions were conducted in church halls (N = 4), churches (N = 6) and schools (N = 12). In several cases (N = 27) while recording was in progress, uninvited individuals participated in the interview, thus providing an opportunity for participant observation and making the encounter more natural, but making data collection and description very difficult. In almost all other cases formal interview procedures were followed, involving the interviewer (this writer), and only one, or rarely two participants, and lasting for between 40 and 90 minutes. I have been inclined to employ a formal, structured interview for collecting data because a participant-observation technique presupposes familiarity with the informants and an appropriate attitude on their part; this could not always be secured. The vast majority received me with friendliness and some degree of shyness and have employed, at least in the early stages of the interview, a formal language variety. It should be noted that the real purpose of the interview was not mentioned to them. It was explained to them that the research was a social one investigating their immigration and settlement in Australia. This made them less cautious about their speech behaviour since the focus was shifted from «how to speak», to «what to say», enabling the investigator to record less formal «natural» speech. In fact, many informants urged me to present a full account of their sufferings for the whole community to know.

The interviews were structured and the topics were relevant to the informants' experience of immigration and settlement. Nevertheless, some issues (personal attitudes on migration and various conversational topics-jokers and anecdotes from their pioneer days, stories recalling their first experiences) were left open and the interviewer's participation reduced to a minimum. The structured interview schedule included questions on first impressions upon arrival in Australia, positive and negative aspects of early days of immigration, work, the normal way of spending a day, and experience of the Australian way of life and institutions.

In using the pictures as stimuli, informants were asked to describe as well as to interpret the action contained. The use of pictures enabled the control of the speech sample as well as its examination in comparison with that of other informants. This constraint resulted in less productive answers compared to the material elicited in the context of the conversation.

The term MG refers to common MG, a southern Greek dialect which is now used by most Greek speakers in Greece and abroad. MG is taken as the result of an intra-linguistic influence and synthesis not of two different languages, as some authors (Ferguson 1959; Petrounias 1970) have considered *Katharevousa* (the superimposed and purified variety) and *Dimotiki* (the popular variety), to be, but of two forms of one and the same language. For the purposes of the present study the term *Australian English* (henceforth English), refers to Broad Australian English as defined by Mitchell and Delbridge (1965).

Finally, two basic assumptions need to be made here: first that the structural systems of both MG and English have remained unchanged over the period when the interviews were conducted and second, that both the sound systems and the grammatical and syntactical structures of the aforementioned languages are accepted as being different from each other.

2. Preformulated Discourse Segments

In the field of research into language contact, increasing prominence is being given to the study of immigrant languages, as the relevant bibliography attests. The more substantial studies conducted in North America¹ have concluded in general that a linguistic community is never homogeneous and hardly ever self-contained and have commonly found that immigrant languages are in the process of decay. They also concluded that immigrants are undergoing language shift (a) under the constant pressure of an asymmetrical and unstable bilingual contact in which the language of the host country tends to replace the mother tongue and (b) because of functional limitations of the mother tongue, that is its limited elaboration of function and its restricted acceptability in the community. Similar substantial studies in Europe² and in Australia³ have concluded that immigrant languages are doomed through contact with the dominant language.

Interlingual influences, that is any form of transference (the adoption of any element from another language), resulting from language contact of MG with English affect various levels of language. The transferred elements could be *phonic* (the transference of phonemes or allophones), *lexical* (the transference of words in form and meaning), *semantic* (the transference of words in meaning only), *morphosyntactic* (the transference of morphological and syntactic rules), *multiple* (the transference of two or more con-

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1. Reference is made here to the writings of Leo Pap 1949 (Portuguese); Haugen 1953, 1973 (Norwegian); Weinreich 1953; Hasselmo 1961 (Swedish); Lyra 1962 (Polish); Fishman 1968; Lieberman 1972; Gilbert 1970 (Spanish, French, German, Czech, Polish, Serbian, Norwegian); Correa-Zoli 1974 (Italian); Blanco 1980 (Portuguese); Cefola 1981 (Thai). For a comprehensive survey with relevant bibliography on the implications of language contact, see also Haugen 1973:115 ff.
 2. See especially Afendras 1969 (Arumanian); Famiglietti 1975 (Italo-Albanian); Riffer - Macek 1976 (Slavic Languages); Rubattel 1976 (Italian, French, German, Rumanian in contact in Switzerland); Bakos 1977 (Rumanian).
 3. See Clyne 1967, 1972 (German); Andreoni 1967 (Italian); Ramson 1971 (English); Rando 1971 (Italian); Kouzmin 1976, 1980 (Russian); Pauwels 1980 (Dutch); Bettoni 1981 (Italian); Tamis 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989 (Greek).

secutive words), *pragmatic* (the transference of speech act rules caused by bicultural differences), *prosodic* (the transference of stress and/or intonation). This paper concentrates only on the three main elements of the transference of bilingual narrative devices employed by Australian Greeks, namely the *discourse segments* (linguistic routines used by the speaker in the course of a speech event), the *discourse markers* (linguistic patterns which are used by the speaker with a specific function of expression, e.g. stylistic) and the *couplets* (linguistic pattern in English or in MG immediately followed by the equivalent word in the other language).

Interlingual preformulated discourse segments are rather rare in the speech of Australian Greek bilinguals and their incidence is dependent of other types of transference. The incidence of transferred discourse segments is related to the narrative performance of the bilingual, irrespective of his/her ability to keep the two languages apart lexically. This further suggests that the speaker uses the transferred discourse segments as a rhetorical device, functioning independently of his/her lexical repertoire (see below). Intralingual preformulated linguistic patterns from Katharevousa occur only with certain domains of language use (religion, institutional life).

Interlingual discourse markers are narrative patterns associated with the stylistic mode of linguistic behaviour. Their incidence depends on the personal style and ability on the part of the speaker to perform lengthy narrations. The main factors which promote the incidence of discourse markers are the topic, the setting, the role-relationship and the narrative style of the speaker.

Coupling is influenced by the level of proficiency in the mother tongue, the education and the sex. They constitute a more flexible narrative device if compared with other discourse markers, since they can be found in both lengthy narrations as well as short conversations.

Hasselmo in his pioneering article of 1970 investigated the role of preformulated discourse segments and discourse markers (see below). Basing his research on Hasselmo's article, Clyne (1978) proposed a discourse model for bilingual corpuses. His considerations (1978:114 ff) are based on *reference* (the relationship between a morphosemantic transfer in one sentence and an item for either code in other sentences), on *quotation* (citation and its effect on transference, integration and switching) and on *switching within the discourse* (how and where switching is likely to occur beyond the sentence level).

Certain *linguistic routines* (discourse segments which the speaker formulates anew in the course of a speech event), are formulated by a bilinguals talking about stories from the army, using jokes, greetings, daily exchange on the weather, impressions about the early days of immigrations and their experiences. From the data collected it becomes obvious that Australian Greeks apply some degree of preformulation in descriptions of customs and religious ceremonies, routines from institutional life in Greece, stories about immigration and first impressions of Australia, on the basis that their exact repetition is common amongst them, whereas only some of them are commonly used by members of the Greek community. Although some transferred discourse segments are whole clauses:

...vlepo 'oti 'ine i θia litur 'γia, 'ai dont 'nou..
 (... I see that it is the Holy Mass, I don't know...)

some preformulated discourse segments constitute smaller units:

... pu na vris du'lja kje me'ta bai bai Tsarli...
 (...Where could you find a job and then bye-bye Charlie...).

Most preformulated transfers refer to impressions from their first days in Australia, including stories from their workplace, the difficulties that they experienced to adapt into the new industrial environment. Of the shorter linguistic routines the most common are greetings, either as transfers:

...Si γju, 'xai. Ail si γju tu'morou (... See you, Hi, I'll see you tomorrow)

or as loan translations:

θα σε δω 'avrio (I'll see you tomorrow)
 θα σε δω (I'll see you)

Australian Greek bilinguals often use linguistic routines as a narrative device. The incidence of preformulation depends mainly on the topic, place and role relationship among the interlocutors. They function as opening and closing formulae to establish a better rapport between the speaker and the listener (see below).

On an intralinguistic level, narrations about religious ceremonies and ritual activities, past experiences from the schooling years, recollections of old stereotype phraseology from the institutional life of Greece, attracted more preformulated discourse segments:

e'vriskete pjo konta is to 'pimnion tis
 (... is closer to her {Church} flock)

No correlation was found between lexical and discourse segments transfers. For instance it was shown (Tamis 1986:262ff) that certain speakers of MG with a low incidence of lexical transfers employed a high incident of transferred discourse segments, whereas bilinguals with high incidence of lexical transfers used a lesser quantity of discourse segments. This indicates that the incidence of transferred discourse segment is related to the narrative performance of the bilingual, irrespective of his / her ability to keep the two languages apart lexically. This further suggests that the speaker uses the transferred discourse segments as a rhetorical device, functioning independently of his / her lexical repertoire.

2.1 Discourse Markers

Previous researchers (Hasselmo 1970:183; Clyne 1978:114; Bettoni 1981:82) have distinguished three main types of discourse markers according to their function:

- (a) Markers signalling the beginning of a sentence, e.g. *anyway, consequently, however, but, and*, and so on.
- (b) Markers keeping the channel open between interlocutors, e.g. *look, listen, you know, I tell you, you know what I mean* and so on.
- (c) Markers signalling specific types of units, e.g. *for instance, that is, something like this, and so on*, etc.

Nevertheless, the diversity of the discourse markers found in the corpus and the complexity arising out of the overlap of their functions lead me to divide them into three classes according to their implications in the discourse:

- (a) *Stylistic Markers* (speech devices expressing the narrative attitude of the bilingual)
- (b) *Discourse Intelligibility Markers* (markers denoting explanation in order to satisfy a particular communicative need)
- (c) *Discourse Evaluation Markers* (markers indicating what is worth emphasizing).

2.1.1 The Stylistic Markers (*yes, yah, all right, that's all right, OK, not bad, that's it, of course*) expressing confirmation, agreement, disagreement, strong opinion, have a high incidence:

... den 'ine 'efkola, 'rait, 'prepi na du'lepis 'rait
(... things are not ease, right, you must work, right).

Another group of transferred discourse markers (*no, nah, no good, not good enough*) indicates disagreement:

...na pas sto ta'mio aner' yias, no gud i'naf, 'oxi, no gud i'naf
(... to go to the unemployment office, not good enough).

Certain transferred markers (*at least, any time, no way, right through*) indicate strong opinion:

...a'fti apo'kiete na pe'rasi, no yu'ei..
(... it is impossible for her to come, no way...)

whereas almost always, stylistic markers denoting doubt are frequently tagged on to the end of a sentence:

...'eprepe na vy is kje na bis, m'epjane' fovos, 'never 'nou...
(... you had to enter and come out, I was frightened, {you} never know...)

One group of transferred markers refer back to the previous sentence of the discourse, producing assurance (*no worries*), concluding (*that's it, that's about it*), erasing (*what ever, never mind*) and expressing regret or surprise (*sorry, oh, gosh, oh boy*):

...θα to simbli'roso, no yu'oriz
(...I well complete it, no worries).

Verbal markers (*look, listen, you know*) are used in initial position to keep the channel open for the next part of the discourse to follow:

luk, 'lisen, mas a'finis 'isixus se paraka'lo
(look, listen, will you leave us alone, please)

whereas some markers (*anyway, just about, doesn't matter, well*) signal a point of significance to Australian Greek bilinguals:

... 'mono 'ena 'pente tis ekato mbo'ri. dzast e'baut
 (... only five percent can make it, just about).

2.1.2 The Discourse Intelligibility Markers (*so, well, any way*) mainly render discourse intelligible by way of introducing explanation:

...mas masti'yon i aner'γia, so o 'kaθe loyi'kos γo'neas
 (...unemployment scourges us, so {therefore} every reasonable parent...)

Their function, however, is not consistent in introducing an explanation as Dorian (1981:98) claimed, but often overlaps with other functions. For example, *anyway* can be a narrative device to keep the communication channel open or to be used as an «erasing hesitation phenomenon» (Clyne 1978:117) or as a sequence signal (Hasselmo 1970:198ff). In my corpus the marker is used to make the discourse intelligible, with considerable frequency (almost 15% of the informants) and with a variety of points of occurrence within the structure of the sentence (initially, medially and terminally):

... 'eni γu'ei me'ta pa'ljosame e' do 'pera, 'arxises na ta xa'las ta le'fta
 (... anyway, then we spent many years here, you started spending money...)

The marker *well* (used by 19% of the informants) is mainly used as a «lexicalized filled pause» (Clyne 1978:123) as well as a hesitation marker:

..i ku'zina peri'exi a'fta pu xri'azete 'ena 'spiti, γu'el, to sing, to gaz, ta'fota...
 (... the kitchen includes everything needed by a home, well, the sink, the gas {stove}, the lights...).

2.1.3. The Discourse Evaluation Markers occur in the narration of personal experience among Australian Greek bilinguals and indicate what the narrator considers worth emphasizing. The point of emphasis is indicated either through the use of a contrastive clause introduced by a MG contrastive conjunction (*a'la, 'omos* = but, nevertheless) followed by *still* (10% of the informants) or through the transfer *but* or through the use of coupling.

Still is employed invariably by the informants following a contrastive conjunction and retaining its semantic function within a sentence:

... 'ine 'ekting 'sekre'teri, a'la stil epi'vlepi tus er 'γates...
 (...he is acting secretary, but still he supervises the workers...)

Computing the incidences of the transferred discourse markers it was found that discourse-intelligibility markers, although limited in range, occurred frequently in the corpus. For instance *well* is used by 19% of the informants, *anyway* by 15%. It should be noted, though, that their function was not always to introduce an explanation, and therefore little can be added to the description of this kind of markers. Stylistic markers were transferred with a greater variety of lexemes, making their sub-total the highest. Markers expressing confirmation, agreement, or disagreement occurred frequently, e.g. *yes, yeah*, (12%), *all right* (10%), *that's all right* (10%), *of course* (5%) and so on. This

again shows their function as narrative devices on the part of the speaker, rather than as structural concomitants of the utterance. Evaluation markers appear to be limited and are characteristic of fairly long narrations. Their main function is to indicate what the narrator considers worth emphasizing. It was also found that a total of 34% of the informants used a limited number of discourse markers.

No particular variable seems to influence the extent of transference at the discourse level. As with the discourse segments, it appears that there is no apparent correlation between the number of lexical and discourse-marker transfers. The last two findings support the opinion that the transference of discourse markers (with the exception of the discourse-intelligibility markers) is related to the narrative competence of the informant.

Another MG-English language phenomenon at the discourse level is the semantic transference of English discourse markers, such as *'kseris* (= you know), *'kita* and *'kitakse* (= look), which keep the channel open between the interlocutors:

...*'oxi 'vevea 'xilja 'atoma, a'la, 'kseris, ka'feðes, 'semutzes, 'kseris...*
 (...of course not 1,000 people, but you know, coffes. sandwiches you know...)

Otherwise MG discourse markers do not appear to be influenced by English. In certain instances, Australian Greek bilinguals employ a limited range of MG discourse markers. Most informants were consistent in the use of their idiosyncratic markers. The most popular MG marker is *as 'pume* (= let's say), *na' pume* (= let's say), *as ipo 'thesume* (= let's suppose). One informant employed the marker *as 'pume* (= let's say) 27 times in a 40 minute interview. It was also found that interlinguistic routines were not found in the same informants.

In conclusion, there seems to be a clear correlation between the incidence of English discourse markers and the topic of the discussion. Lengthy narration, which presupposes a personal style and ability on the part of the speaker, attracts more discourse markers. In contrast, short descriptions or dialogues lead to their almost complete elimination. Topics with reference to bilinguals' first impressions of Australia and their early days of immigration, concentrated the vast majority of markers from all three types. This implies that the role-relationship factor is also important, particularly in the transference of discourse - evaluation and stylistic markers, in that the informant attempts the narration in a way designed to secure the interest of his/her interlocutor(s).

3. The phenomenon of Coupling

More than a quarter of my informants used *couplets* during the interview. The phenomenon must not be seen as a clear instance either of transference (in the sense of substitution or clear importation to replace or enrich the lexical repertoire of a bilingual) or as an instance of automatization (since it constitutes a speech device) but as a rather separate psycholinguistic phenomenon related to the attitude of the bilingual at the discourse level (see below). The coupling can involve a mere lexeme or a multiple transfer:

kj 'ena ku'ti, boks (...and a box, box...)

kanoni'ka fo'rao γjd'lja, γúering 'glasis

(...as a rule {I am} wearing glasses, wearing glasses)

a'la to most 'difikald, to pjo 'diskolo 'itan
 (...but the most difficult, the most difficult, was...).

Couplets can contain morphosemantic transfers:

...er'γazome sto ku'oliti ko'ntrol, ston pioti'ko 'elenxo
 (...I work in quality control, quality control, quality control...)

or semantic transfer:

...'perni 'kati fotoγra'fies, 'vyazi 'kati fotoγra'fies...
 (...he takes some photographs, he takes photographs..)
 {In MG only the latter 'vyazi is correct}

Furthermore lexical couplets can contain a transfer:

...'epesa 'pali sti γra'mi, sto 'lain...
 (...I fell on the line again, on the line...)

or of an integrated word:

...δu'levame 'siftja, 'varδjes po'la 'xronja...
 (... We were working shifts, shifts for many years...)

Computing the incidence of coupling, I found that instances where English lexical items precede the MG are more numerous (60%). Tsitsipis (1981:280-287; 1983:31) in his analysis of Greek phrase insertions in the dying *Arvanitika* language (the language spoken by Greek Albanians) in Greece claimed, contrary to what Dorian has established (1981:98-99) for the dying *Scottish Gaelic*, that the fact that the Greek lexeme preceded the Albanian seems to argue against its use for the purpose of making the discourse intelligible. Couplets in MG cannot be explained in this manner. In most instances the precedence factor is not relevant. Most informants use the MG or English lexeme alternately when it is obvious that their main purpose is to make the discourse intelligible (see below).

...'piγe na pso'nisi se 'kapjo delika'tesen, γrosa'ria δila'δi...
 (... she went to shop in a delicatessen, a grocery shop that is...)

...kje 'vazo 'kati fur'ketes 'dropers δila'δi...
 (...and I put some droppers, droppers that is...)

...'δuleva pis γu'erk, me to ko'mati pu'lene...
 (...I was working piece work, piece work as they say...)

Some Australian Greeks employ *integrated couplets* (morphosemantic transfer in English, immediately followed by the integrated equivalent):

...e'δo 'ine to kul, i 'kula...
 (...here is a cooler, a cooler...).

28% of the informants used some type of coupling in the corpus. It occurred more frequently among the male speakers (70%). Correlating the various personal character-

istics it was revealed that education through the medium of MG appears to be an important factor, since 20% of the informants who used couplets obtained secondary or higher education (the highest educated group). The findings suggest that age on arrival, length of stay in Australia, occupation and proximity to the city do not correlate with a higher proportion of couplets. Informants with a higher proficiency in MG seem to employ couplets in an attempt either to evaluate their utterance or to repair immediately a lexical transference of which they are aware.

90% of the couplets are lexemes. Informants employed multiple transfers in coupling mainly when quoting English-speaking people. Morphosemantic couplets occurred most frequently (78%). Semantic couplets were used only by informants with a moderate or lower incidence of lexical transference. This implies that couplets may represent an attempt on the part of the speaker to retain his native language free from transfers.

Integrated couplets were used by some informants (4%). It was noticed that they were employed almost exclusively in an attempt to correct their speech behaviour after using an English transfer, since the latter always preceded the integrated equivalent. It was also noticed that before the informant attempted to utter the second portion of the couplet, he/she took a short pause. The second portion (integrated equivalent) was not uttered with any increase in volume or change of tone:

...pirame *ði'ko mas xo'tel, xo'teli...*
 (...we bought our own hotel, hotel...)

We have already note above that in certain cases an explanation usually follows the coupling. This corrective and explanatory role of the couplets indicates that certain integrated words become stabilized in the usage of Greek-born Australian Greeks:

...kje to '*kuking as'pume to'exume, 'pos na'pume ti'stofa, pu'exume me gazi...*
 (and the cooker, let's say, we have it, -what should we call the stove that we have with gas...)

The use of integrated couplets could be seen, therefore, as transitional, with both lexemes being maintained for a period of time until the integrated one is established. This is further evidenced by the high frequency of the integrated words.

Couplets as discourse markers fulfil the role of all three types of markers mentioned above. Analysing the incidence of coupling, it was found that certain couplets (29%), interpolated in the utterance, aiming at making the discourse intelligible. It has already been shown that the precedence factor is irrelevant in this kind of coupling. The informant using discourse-intelligibility couplets may alternate MG and English lexemes but always uses an explanatory word or phrase, e.g. *ðila'di* (= that is to say), *pu'lene* (= as they say), and so on.

In most instances (44%), informants made evaluative or emphatic use of the couplet. I found that in this kind of discourse-evaluation couplet there was always a correlation between the coupling and the incidence of transference in other linguistic deviations. It was noticed for instance that informants with few or no lexical transfers employed couplets to raise a point of significance. Certain Australia Greek bilinguals keep their speech free of any transference, including lexical, other than couplets. This suggests that coupling characterizes the attitude of the speaker and his narrative style rather than his lexical repertoire. Furthermore, my data show that this type of couplet occurs almost

exclusively with nouns, verbs and adjectives. Only a few instances of pronoun and conjunction coupling were recorded in the corpus:

...*'kaθe 'evri 'γiar, 'kati θa 'γini...* (...each year something will happen...)

It seems to me, therefore, that the main function of coupling is to signal a point of significance, since they are usually the parts of speech which stress a point in the utterance of the informant. This is particularly more evident when MG lexical item precedes the English one, despite the fact that the interlocutor was known to be dominant in the former language:

...*na tin 'barume sti dimopra'sia, 'okSION..* (...to take it to auction, auction...)
 ...*'vazame ta soli'naria, ta 'tjumbja..* (...we were putting the tubes, tubes...)

This is further evidenced by the fact that the second part of the coupling is almost always uttered at increased volume:

...*to 'spiti mas to 'kaname 'rino'veit ! to anake'nisame..*
 (...we renovated our house, we renovated it...)

...*'avrio ti'xeni 'naxume de'liveri. ! pa'raδosi...*
 (...tomorrow we happen to have a delivery, a delivery...)

The notion that the coupling is mainly used as a discourse - evaluation marker is further reinforced by the fact that coupling almost always (90% of the cases) follows a verb in the third person singular or plural, or a personal pronoun in the nominative case:

...*'xoriza ta xarto'kutja, ta 'boksja..*
 (...I was separating the boxes...)

...*'ixa 'pai sta γra'fia tu imi'gresjon, tu ipur'γiu meta'nastefsis...*
 (...I had gone to the offices of the Immigration, of the Immigration Department...)

Another function of coupling is the demonstration of bilingual skills on the part of the bilingual:

...*tu 'kaθe konsol, tis kaθe dimar'xias..*
 (...of every council, of every council..)

It was found that couplets of this type constitute 12% of the total incidence of coupling. It was further established that informants who employed them use lexical transfers widely.

Some couplets (8%) are used in the corpus as stylistic (rhetorical) devices to increase the dramatic element, to attract attention and so on. Their structure is different in that the couplets are always introduced with an isometric repetition of a MG lexeme – that is both parts of the coupling are uttered with equal volume. Their main function is to express strong argument on the part of the informant:

...*den i'parxun 'ute 'sjoping, 'ute maya'zja...*
 (... there are neither shopping {shops}, nor shops...)

... 'ute 'straik 'ixame, 'ute aper'γia...
 (... we had neither strike, nor strike...)
 ... 'imuna im'porta, 'imuna isay'o'yeas...
 (... I was an importer, I was an importer ...)

Some couplets, finally, were used as a result of an inability on the part of the informant to identify the correct lexeme while constructing the utterance:

... 'ama 'kseris 'pos ... na ... tus ... 'kanis ... naa ... 'xau tu trit oem ...
 (... if you know how to ... do them, how to treat them ...)
 ... sti 'stofa, 'somba 'malon, si'γnomi γjd'ti 'ipa 'stofa ...
 (... on the stove, stove {heater} rather, I'm sorry, why did I say stove...)

Correlating the incidence of coupling with the personal characteristics of the informants, it was found that no particular variable other than sex appears to influence it. The higher proportion of coupling by males could be related to the fact that, overall, male informants with secondary or higher education constitute the majority of the sample, but also to other extra-linguistic factors. For example, it appears that women tended to manifest a more passive attitude in speaking about their social transition in Australia, their occupational affiliation and their experience. By contrast, men tend to be more outspoken. This is perhaps in accordance with the Greek inter-family role relationship, that is male usually being the more dominant in conversation. Thus, male informants more often chose to select from this particular pattern of lexemes to emphasize a point.

Overall it is apparent that couplets, unlike other discourse markers, not only occur in lengthy narrations, but also in short descriptions and conversation. This shows even more clearly their multiple role as a speech device. Even more importantly, there seems to be a correlation between the incidence and distribution of transference and the couplets. The latter occur independently according to the particular needs of the speaker in the various functions described above.

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