

Mark Janse
Ghent University
mark.janse@rug.ac.be

CAPPADOCIAN VARIABLES

Abstract

In this paper I describe some phonological processes in Cappadocian. Language contact, linguistic interference, and external and internal linguistic change have resulted in extreme variation in the various subdialects. If anything, the evidence shows that linguistic change is not teleological but diverse, if in accordance with a number of established universals.

1. Introduction

There was a time when linguistic theory was thought to be “concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community” (Chomsky 1965: 3). What exactly constitutes a speech-community, let alone a completely homogeneous speech-community, was (and often is) left in the air, so any speaker-listener would be ideal — including theoretical linguists, who could remain seated “in their armchairs consulting their intuitions about language structure” (Trudgill-Cheshire 1998: v), without having to worry about the variable data that linguists conducting fieldwork inevitably encounter. Variability in language was assumed to be “unmanageable, or uninteresting, or both” (Chambers & Trudgill 1998: 127). It was a time when linguistic theory was concerned primarily with English and theoretical linguists were recruited primarily from the English speech-community. It was a time when a linguist who was a native speaker of English was by definition an ideal linguist, as he or she was, also by definition, an ideal speaker-listener.

Things have changed. English is no longer the preferential and privileged “language of paradise” for theoretical linguists, who have taken a renewed interest in other languages and, indeed, dialects. Languages are entities that are “as much political, geographical, historical, sociological and cultural as linguistic” (Chambers-Trudgill 1998: 4). If we talk about the French language, for instance, we are not referring to a completely homogeneous speech-community, but to a more or less abstract, codified and standardised norm with which speakers of French identify themselves one way or the other. The *ideal* speaker-listener of French would at the very least have to be a distinguished member of the Académie Française. Most if not all speakers of French are not so much speakers of the French language as speakers of one, and often more than one, variety of the French language. Such varieties are commonly referred to as dialects, whether they be social, regional, urban or whatever (Chambers-Trudgill 1998: 45). Dialects are defined by Chambers and Trudgill (1998: 5) as “varieties which are grammatically (and perhaps lexically) as well as phonologically different from other varieties”.

How can dialects be of relevance to linguistic theory? Theoretical linguists tend to treat dialects in exactly the same way as they used to treat languages in the old days, viz. the speech of a completely homogeneous speech-community — the only difference being the size of the speech-community, which is now reduced to a subdivision of the original one. In other words, theoretical linguists are still not as much interested in the variability of

a particular speech-community as in its homogeneity. Dialect variation is a matter of parameter setting and the difference between one dialect and another is treated on the same level as the difference between one language and another, or between a language and one of its dialects. The very notion of parameter setting suggests a homogeneity that is actually missing in most if not all speech-communities. Variability is an inherent feature of language in all of its varieties, including dialects, and “more and more linguists are coming to see that variability is not only interesting but also that it can be made manageable and integrated into linguistic theory” (Chambers-Trudgill 1998: 127).

It is not my intention to discuss how variability can be integrated into linguistic theory as such. Although homogeneity as a concept underlies much if not all work in theoretical linguistics, it cannot be said that homogeneity is an essential characteristic of linguistic theory itself. It would seem that variability much better reflects the state of the art in linguistic theory and it is perhaps better to speak of linguistic theories in the plural. So instead of building a new theory based on variability in language I will present a number of interesting case studies from a particular Greek dialect. Some of them provide homogeneous evidence against particular claims made in various linguistic theories. Others testify to the inherent variability of language in all of its varieties and show how different options are made in identical situations.

Language is a system always in a state of flux. As Coseriu (1974: 236) puts it: “Das System existiert, weil es geschaffen wird” — a remark congenial with Hopper’s idea of “emergent grammar” (Hopper 1987): grammar is not so much a construct as a construction, that is a system under construction. Linguistic change is not a matter of replacing one system with another, but of exploiting the inherent variability of the system. To quote Coseriu once again: “Es darf nicht einmal von ‘System’ und ‘Bewegung’ — wie von einander entgegengesetzten Dingen — gesprochen werden, sondern nur von ‘System *in* Bewegung’” (1974: 236). Ever since the work of Labov, Trudgill and other sociolinguists we have come to appreciate that the principles of linguistic change are not exclusively linguistic, but also political, geographical, historical, sociological and cultural.

If anything these case studies show that anything is possible in language. Linguistic change is not teleological: different options can be and are made in comparable situations, often resulting in a complete typological break, especially in cases of language contact. The case studies all testify to the inherent variability of language, thus challenging the idea that everything in language should be determined, discrete, categorial and, indeed, homogeneous. Our performance models our competence as much as our competence models our performance: both are interdependent. The case studies that I am about to present I would like to see as small contributions towards the construction of a performance grammar.

Cappadocian is a dialect or rather a cluster of dialects that used to spoken in central Turkey until the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s. Until then, Cappadocian had been developing in an isolated area separated from the rest of the Greek-speaking world following the conquest of Asia Minor by the Turks. As a result of this long-term cultural pressure, Cappadocian was heavily influenced by the language of the conquerors. Kontosopoulos goes so far as to say: *ὅποιος ακούει—ή μάλλον διαβάζει [...] την καππαδοκική διάλεκτο, δεν ξέρει αν έχει να κάνει με τουρκικά σε ελληνικό στόμα ή με ελληνικά σε στόμα τούρκικο* “whoever hears — or rather reads ... the Cappadocian dialect, does not know whether he has to do with Turkish spoken by a Greek or with Greek spoken by a Turk” (1994: 7). This is an intriguing remark, as it seems to suggest that from a

synchronic, and I hasten to add: strictly linguistic, perspective, it is impossible to classify Cappadocian genetically as either a Greek or a Turkish dialect. Considered from a political, historical, sociological and cultural perspective, however, Cappadocian cannot but be considered a Greek dialect, albeit an extremely divergent one. The following case studies all testify to this.

1. Phonological borrowing

Compared to the sound system of Standard Modern Greek (SMG), Cappadocian has at least six additional phonemes, all borrowed from Turkish. All of these have entered the language through loanwords, as can be gathered from the following examples:

- (1) a. *šekér* < *şeker* < Persian *sākār* “sugar”
 b. *čalgí* < *çalgı* “musical instrument”
 c. *öpüdzük* < *öpücük* “kiss”

Before front vowels, the postalveolar fricative /š/ appears in Cappadocian words of Greek origin as an allophone of the unvoiced velar fricative /x/ and the unvoiced alveolar fricative /s/, the unvoiced palatal fricative /č/ as an allophone of the unvoiced alveolar plosive /t/ and the unvoiced velar plosive /k/:

- (2) a. *šón* < *xióni* “snow”
 b. *šímera* < *símera* “today”
 c. *čís* < *tís* “who?”
 d. *čiló* < *kiló* “roll”

The unvoiced palatal fricative /č/ is sometimes voiced as a result of lenition:

- (3) a. *džó* < *čó* < **či* < *uxí* “not” (cf. Pontic *k^hi-* < *uxí*)
 b. *džufáli* < *čufáli* < **čofáli* < **čefáli* < *kefáli* “head”

2. Vowel harmony

The so-called “Turkish” vowels, however, also appear in Greek suffixes as a result of vowel harmony. The Turkish suffix *-ci*, for instance, is used to derive nouns “denoting persons who are professionally or habitually concerned with, or devoted to, the object, person, or quality denoted by the basic word” (Lewis 1967: 59). These words are naturally integrated into the old declension in *-is*, but usually with the appropriate vowel harmony:

- (4) a. *šekér-džis* < *şeker-ci* < “sugar-merchant”
 b. *čalgí-džis* < *çalgı-cı* “musician”
 c. *öpüdzük-čüs* < *öpücük-çü* “(obdurate) kisser”

As for the examples just quoted, it could be argued that the vowel harmony is based on the Turkish source. In that case, the process would have to be represented as follows:

- (5) a. *šekerdži-s* < *šeker-ci* < “sugar-merchant”
 b. *čalgídži-s* < *čalgı-cı* “musician”
 c. *öpüdžükčü-s* < *öpücük-çü* “(obdurate) kisser”

I will have occasion to return to this issue in a moment. For the time being, it will suffice to note that vowel harmony is not always observed, as can be gathered from the variation in the following examples (Dawkins 1916: 113):

- (6) a. *patišáx* < *padišah* “king” (Ulagáč)
 b. *patišáx-is* (Aksó, Araván, Mistí, Delmesó)
 c. *patišáx-is* (Silli)
 d. *patišáx-os* (Delmesó)

Here we have four different ways of adapting a loanword to the rules of Cappadocian. In (6a), the word is borrowed as such, but is inflected as if it were a neutre. In (6b) and (6c), the word is integrated into the old declension in *-is*, but whereas vowel harmony is observed in (6b), it is not in (6c). In (6d) the word has passed to the declension in *-os*, but note that at Delmesó (6b) was attested as well (Dawkins 1916: 668). It will be clear that the suffix in (6b) and (6c) is Greek, not Turkish, and that the vowel harmony in (6b) applies to a Greek, not a Turkish suffix.

Vowel harmony is also observed Cappadocian verbs borrowed from Turkish. The borrowing takes place in the aorist (Janse 2001a), the unmarked and hence basic stem in Cappadocian as in SMG (Mackridge 1985: 106). The process can be represented as follows:

- (7) *iste-mek* “wish” → past 3sg *iste-di* “I wished”
iste-di → aor. 1sg *istédi-s-a* > *istét-s-a*, subj. *istedi-s-o*
istedi-s-o → pres. 1sg *istedá-o* > *istedó*
istedi-s-o → pres. 1sg *istedíz-o*

The past tense of *iste-mek* “wish” is *iste-di* (with vowel harmony). *Iste-di* is the unmarked 3rd person singular which was reanalysed as a stem (in accordance with Watkins’ Law) and borrowed as an aorist stem in Cappadocian. The resulting form was 1sg *istédisa* > *istétsa*, subjunctive *istediso* (Dawkins 1916: 68), which could be interpreted as being derived from either *istedó* < *istedáo* or *istedízo*. The interpretation of *istédisa* > *istétsa* and *istediso* as being derived from a present *istedízo* should not come as a surprise, as the *-izo* suffix has always been extremely productive. Verbs in *-ó* < *-áo* constitute of course a very important category in the verb system of SMG generally, so the alternative interpretation of *istediso* as being derived from a present *istedó* < *istedáo* is quite natural as well.

In the case of *istemek* → *istedizo*, the vowel harmony has no consequences for the vocalism of the Greek suffix. There are, however, numerous other cases where the vowel harmony has indeed been observed. Such is the case of, e.g., *düşündüzo*, from the Turkish verb *düşünmek* “consider”, the derivational process of which can be represented as follows:

- (8) *düşün-mek* “consider” → past 3sg *düşün-dü* “I considered”
düşün-dü → aor. 1sg *düşündü-s-a* > *düşünd-s-a*, subj. *düşündü-s-o*
düşündü-s-o → pres. 1sg *düşündüz-o*

The vowel harmony is sometimes extended to the verbal endings as well. Consider, for instance, the inflection of *düşündüzo* at Malakopí:

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|-----|-------|-------------------------------|------|-------------------------------|
| (9) | pres. | <i>düşündüzu</i> “I consider” | aor. | <i>düşünda</i> “I considered” |
| | | <i>düşündüs</i> | | <i>düşündsüs</i> |
| | | <i>düşündüş</i> | | <i>düşündsü</i> |
| | | <i>düşündüzumi</i> | | <i>düşündsami</i> |
| | | <i>düşündüziti</i> | | <i>düşündsüti</i> |
| | | <i>düşündüžni</i> | | <i>düşündsani</i> |

In other verbs, attested at Malakopí as well, the vowel harmony is not observed, as in the case of *jurulmak* → *juruldizu* “be tired”:

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|------|-------|-------------------------------|------|-------------------------------|
| (10) | pres. | <i>juruldizu</i> “I am tired” | aor. | <i>jurúltsa</i> “I was tired” |
| | | <i>juruldízis</i> | | <i>jurúltsas</i> |
| | | <i>juruldízi</i> | | <i>jurúltsa</i> |
| | | <i>juruldízumi</i> | | <i>jurúltsami</i> |
| | | <i>juruldíti</i> | | <i>jurúltsati</i> |
| | | <i>juruldízuni</i> | | <i>jurúltsani</i> |

An intriguing kind of vowel harmony is also found to apply in native Cappadocian verbs. An extremely interesting case is the inflection of *éxo* (έχω) at Flojitá (Dawkins 1916: 71):

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|------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|
| (11) | pres. | <i>éxo</i> “I have” | impf. | <i>íxa</i> “I had” |
| | | <i>éxis</i> < <i>éxis</i> | | <i>íxas</i> < <i>íxes</i> |
| | | <i>éx</i> < <i>éxi</i> < <i>éxi</i> | | <i>íxa</i> < <i>íxe</i> |
| | | <i>éxume</i> | | <i>íxame</i> |
| | | <i>éxíte</i> < <i>éxíte</i> | | <i>íxate</i> |
| | | <i>éxne</i> | | <i>íxane</i> |

The unvoiced velar fricative /x/ usually changes to a postalveolar fricative /š/ before front vowels, so the expected outcome would have been as follows:

(12)	pres.	<i>éxo</i> “I have” * <i>éṣ̌is</i> < <i>éxis</i> * <i>éṣ̌</i> < <i>éxi</i> <i>éxume</i> * <i>éṣ̌ite</i> < <i>éxite</i> <i>éxne</i>	impf.	<i>íxa</i> “I had” * <i>íṣ̌es</i> < <i>íxes</i> * <i>íṣ̌e</i> < <i>íxe</i> <i>íxame</i> <i>íxate</i> <i>íxane</i>
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What has happened instead is that the velar pronunciation of the /x/ is maintained throughout and as a result it has changed the quality of the following vowel, /i/ becoming /i/ and /e/ becoming /a/.

The examples just quoted are taken from Dawkins, who notes that “[t]he fullness with which the vowel-harmony is observed clearly depends on how far the individual speaker is accustomed to talk Turkish and has the Turkish ear for these distinctions. It must therefore be largely a personal matter and more or less prevalent and thorough in proportion as more or less Turkish is spoken alongside of the Greek dialect” (Dawkins 1916: 68).

3. Phonological substitution

So far, I have considered instances of additional phonemes and additional phonological oppositions in Cappadocian as a result of Turkish interference. This interference also works the other way around in that some phonological oppositions are suppressed and as a result a number of phonemes have disappeared. Such is the case of the unvoiced dental fricatives /θ/ and its voiced counterpart /ð/. Turkish has no such sounds and as a result various others are substituted for them, particularly in initial and intervocalic positions. The various changes are all well-known from other historical languages, but it is interesting to notice how different options have been made at such a small distance (Dawkins 1916: 75-78). At Ferték, the dental fricatives have consistently been substituted by interdental plosives, as in the following examples:

- (13) a. *tira* < *θira* “door”
 b. *émata* < *émaθa* “I learned”
 c. *den* < *ðen* “not”
 d. *ída* < *íða* “I saw”

At Araván, the dental fricatives have changed to the alveolar trill /r/ in intervocalic position. In initial position, the unvoiced dental fricative /θ/ is substituted by an unvoiced velar fricative /x/ — which Turkish lacks as well, the voiced dental fricative /ð/ by a voiced interdental plosive /d/:

- (14) a. *xíra* < *θira* “door”
 b. *émara* < *émaθa* “I learned”
 c. *den* < *ðen* “not”
 d. *íra* < *íða* “I saw”

At Gúrzonο, the unvoiced velar fricative /x/ appears also in intervocalic position:

- (15) a. *xíra* < *θíra* “door”
 b. *émaxa* < *émaθα* “I learned”
 c. *den* < *ðen* “not”
 d. *íra* < *íða*

At Semenderé, the voiced dental fricative /ð/ has been substituted by a voiced alveolar fricative /z/:

- (16) a. *xíra* < *θíra* “door”
 b. *émaxa* < *émaθα* “I learned”
 c. *den* < *ðen* “not”
 d. *íza* < *íða* “I saw”

At Ulagač, the unvoiced dental fricative /θ/ has changed in initial position to an unvoiced palatal fricative /ç/ — not attested in Turkish, whereas both the voiced dental fricative /ð/ and its unvoiced counterpart /θ/ are substituted by a palatal approximant /j/ in intervocalic position:

- (17) a. *çíra* < *θíra* “door”
 b. *émaja* < *émaθα* “I learned”
 c. *den* < *ðen* “not”
 d. *íja* < *íða* “I saw”

At Silli, the unvoiced dental fricative /θ/ has been substituted by an alveolar fricative /s/, its voiced counterpart /ð/ by an alveolar trill /r/, both in initial and intervocalic position:

- (18) a. *síra* < *θíra* “door”
 b. *émasa* < *émaθα* “I learned”
 c. *ren* < *ðen* “not”
 d. *íra* < *íða* “I saw”

Other combinations are attested for other villages, and lexical diffusion occurs everywhere. Thus, for instance, the word for “door” is *tíra* at Semenderé and Ulagač, instead of the expected *xíra* or *çíra*. At Araván, two variants for *θékno*, the Cappadocian equivalent of SMG *θéto* “place”, are attested: *tékno* (with an unvoiced interdental fricative) and *sékno* (with an alveolar fricative), instead of the expected *xékno*.

It should be noted, however, that the situation not only differs from village to village, but also from person to person. A major factor in the retention of the velar fricatives will have been the presence of a Greek school in the village, or the contact with other Greek-speaking communities, especially in Constantinople, where many Cappadocian

men went to work. As a matter of fact, in many bilingual villages, the men spoke SMG — or some standard variety — and Turkish, whereas the women spoke Cappadocian and Turkish.

The phenomena discussed so far can also be used to test a number of general claims about phonological borrowing (Campbell 1996: 102). The Cappadocian data seem to support the traditional claim that phonological borrowing is usually accompanied by lexical borrowing, though the application of the Turkish vowel harmony to native Cappadocian words is noteworthy.

Another traditional claim is the so-called compatible structure claim as formulated by Jakobson: “A language accepts foreign structural elements only when they correspond to its tendencies of development” (Jakobson 1938: 54). The introduction of the palatal fricatives /č/ and /dž/ and the postalveolar fricative /ʃ/ may be considered structurally compatible with the Cappadocian sound system, as these sounds already existed as allophones. However, the borrowing of the so-called “Turkish” vowels and the accompanying vowel harmony can hardly be considered structurally compatible with the Cappadocian sound system or its “tendencies of development”.

Finally, it may be useful to stress the fact that the Cappadocian evidence supports the claim that sound changes due to language contact need not be regular. As a matter of fact, language contact may be considered a major factor in disturbing the regularity of internal sound change.

4. Lenition and fortition

Lenition or weakening is a rather loose notion applied to a variety of sound changes in which the resulting sound after the change is somehow conceived of as weaker in articulation than the original sound. Fortition or strengthening is the opposite of lenition. Both processes are well represented in Cappadocian.

The most extreme case of lenition is of course the complete loss of sounds and this can have a profound effect on the shape of the affected words. To take a well-known example, unaccented /i/ and /u/ are generally dropped in final and often also medial position. Among the examples already quoted I would like to draw your attention to *šón* (2a), *düşúnda* < *düşúndisa* (9), *jurúltsa* < *jurúldisa* (10), *éx* < *éxi* < *éxi* and *éxne* < *éxune* (11). Another example is the following:

- (19) *áθropos* “man” (nom. sg.)
áθropo / *áθropos* (acc. Sg. def. / indef.)
aθróp < *aθrópu* (gen. sg.)
aθróp < *aθrópi* (nom. pl.)
aθrópus / *aθropjús* (acc. pl.)

In this particular case, the apocope of the final /i/ and /u/ has resulted in syncretism in the genitive singular and the nominative plural. Final /i/ and /u/ are restored if a clitic is attached:

- (20) *aθrópu*=*m* “my man” (gen. sg.)
aθrópi=*m* “my men” (nom. pl.)

Apocope of final /i/ has profound effects on the shape of neuter nouns originally ending in *-i*, e.g.:

- (21) *spít* < *spíti* “house”
to=*spíti*=*m* “my house”

Most of these now end in a consonant, which opened up the way to borrow many Turkish words ending in a consonant without further modification, e.g. *šekér* (1a), *öpüdžúk* (1c) and *patišáx* (6a). Another example is the following:

- (22) *korič* < *korítsi*, pl. *koričja* “girl”
to=*koriči*=*m* “my girl”

After two consonants, final *-i* is preserved when the resulting cluster would be unpronounceable or, alternatively, an anaptyctic or “svarabhakti” vowel is inserted. Variation is not at all uncommon, as can be gathered from the following example:

- (23) a. *alétri*, pl. *alétrja* “plough” (Araván, Ulagáč)
 b. *alétir*, pl. *alétrja* (Delmesó)
 c. *alétir*, *alétirja* (Mistí)

Apocope of final *-i* generally results in final devoicing of the preceding consonant, if it is voiced, which is again a case of Turkish interference. The voicing is preserved in intervocalic position. I start with a Turkish example:

- (24) *kılıç*, acc. *kılıcı* “sword”

Cappadocian examples include the following:

- (25) a. *kilíç* < *kilídži*, pl. *kilídžja* < Turkish *kılıç* “sword”
 b. *kanáf* < *kanávi*, pl. *kanávja* “rope”
 c. *lulúθ* < *lulúði*, pl. *lulúđja* “flower”

Since in many villages the voiced dental fricative /ð/ has been substituted by another sound, as illustrated in (13) to (18), this sound change has had its impact on inflection as well. Consider, for instance, the various forms for *apíði* “pear” (Dawkins 1916: 91-92):

- (26) a. *apíθ* < *apíði*, pl. *apíðja* (Malakopí) “pear”
 b. *apít* < *apídi*, pl. *apíja* (Ferték)
 c. *apíx* < *apíxi*, pl. *apíja* (Malakopí)
 d. *apír* < *apíri*, pl. *apírja* Araván)
 e. *apíz* < *apízi*, pl. *apízja* (Semenderé)

Final unaccented *-i* is not dropped if it is preceded by an accented vowel. In these cases /i/ is strengthened to an unvoiced velar fricative /x/, which in its turn is sometimes dropped. The Turkish word *şey* “thing”, for instance, takes the following forms in Cappadocian:

- (27) a. *šěj* (Sílli) < Turkish *şey* “thing”
 b. *šěx* (Silli, Gúrzone, Axó, Flojitá)
 c. *šě* (Flojitá, Malakopí, Ulagáč)

I conclude with a word which illustrates almost all of the phenomena discussed so far:

- (28) a. *pođári* “foot”
 b. *pođár*, pl. *pođárja* (Delmesó)
 c. *píjár*, pl. *píjárja* (Axó)
 d. *apír* < *apíri*, pl. *apírja* Araván)
 e. *apíz* < *apízi*, pl. *apízja* (Semenderé)

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