DEFINITENESS AND CASE IN CAPPADOCIAN GREEK[1]

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This paper discusses an instance of structural interference between Greek and Turkish in Cappadocian Greek. Three dialectal varieties of Cappadocian Greek are investigated with respect to the interaction between case and definiteness/specificity marking. It is shown that these varieties exhibit a combining mode of marking definiteness/specificity: Definiteness is marked by means of articles, as in Greek, whereas a Differential Object Marking pattern, as in Turkish, is employed to mark specificity. This combining mode results in a system where a DOM pattern based on specificity is incorporated within the structural mode of marking definiteness by means of articles.

Keywords: nominative, accusative, definiteness, indefiniteness, Differential Object Marking, iconicity, specificity

1.   Introduction

Cappadocian Greek has been greatly influenced by Turkish at all levels (phonology: vowel harmony; morphology: agglutination; syntax: head-final constructions, e.g. OV order) as a result of their contact for centuries (Dawkins 1916, Kesisoglou 1951, Thomason & Kaufman 1988). In this paper we investigate a case of structural interference, which involves the grammatical marking of definiteness and is more salient in the varieties spoken at the areas of Potamia, Delmeso and Axo. These dialectal varieties employ a combining mode of marking definiteness/specificity: Although, they retain the substratum Greek mode of the article, they also facilitate the case distinction between nominative and accusative, which is used in Turkish (Janse 2004). The aim of this paper is to provide a detailed description of the emerged pattern and to investigate the implications of this pattern for the theory of *Differential Object/Subject Marking*.

2.   Background

2.1.   Definiteness and case in Greek and Turkish

Cappadocian Greek as a contact dialect employs a Greek substratum and a great scale of lexical borrowing and structural interference from Turkish at all levels. Thus, it will be useful to briefly introduce the mode of grammatical marking of definiteness/specificity and the grammatical function of case in these two languages, before we proceed to the investigation of their interaction in Cappadocian.

In Greek, case and definiteness/specificity do not interact, in the sense that case is exclusively used to mark grammatical relations. Thus, nominative and accusative mark the subject and the object respectively. Definiteness, on the other hand, is marked by the structural mode of articles (Joseph & Philippaki-Warburton 1987, Holton, Mackridge & Philippaki-Warburton 1997). The definite article is used to mark a definite NP (1), whereas the indefinite article marks an indefinite NP (2), which can be interpreted as either specific or non specific. Absence of the article marks an indefinite NP (3), which can be interpreted as either non specific (3a) or generic (3b).

(1)   metéfera   to   ksílo
        carried-1SG the-ACC.SG wood-ACC
        'I carried the wood'

(2)   metéfera   éna   ksílo
        carried-1SG a-ACC.SG wood-ACC
        'I carried a (certain) wood'

(3)   a.   metéfere   ksíla
                carried-3SG woods-ACC
                'He carried woods'

        b.   to   plío   aftó metaféri   ksíla
                the-NOM.SG ship-1SG this carry-3SG woods-ACC
                'This ship carries woods'

On the other hand, Turkish exhibits *Differential Object Marking* with respect to specificity (Enç 1991, Kornfilt 1997, Lyons 1999, Lewis 2000, a.o.). Thus, specific objects are marked by the accusative marker *-(y)I*, whereas non specific objects appear in the nominative/absolute form, which carries no overt case morphology:

(4)   a.   Ali bir kitab-ı   aldı
                Ali a   book-ACC bought-3SG
                'A book is such that Ali bought it'
        b.   Zeynep adam-ı   gördü

Zeynep man-ACC saw-3SG
'Zeynep saw the man'

(5)   a.   Ali bir kitab   aldı
              Ali a book-NOM bought-3SG
              'Ali bought some book or other'
     b.   Bilet   satıyorlar
              ticket-NOM sell-3PL
              'They are selling tickets'

2.2.   Differential Object Marking

Differential Object Marking (DOM) is a quite widespread phenomenon in the languages of the world and it is attested in the languages of different language families (Aissen 2003, Bossong 1985, Comrie 1979, 1989, Croft 1988, Lyons 1999, Silverstein 1976, 1981 a.o.). In DOM languages, an object may or may not be case marked depending on its semantic and/or pragmatic features.

Typological investigations on DOM have shown that it employs a situation in which the higher in prominence an object is, the more likely it is to be overtly case marked (Aissen 2003: 436). Prominence is assessed by the position that the object occupies in one (e.g. Turkish, Hebrew) or both (e.g. Persian, Rumanian) of the animacy and the definiteness scales.

(6)   a.   Animacy scale:
              Human > Animate > Inanimate
     b.   Definiteness scale:
              Personal pronoun > Proper name > Definite NP > Indefinite specific NP > Non-specific NP

According to these scales, a sentence with an object that is a human NP or a personal pronoun constitutes a marked construction. Such marked constructions are assumed to be avoided as a result of economy principles in the grammar. However, marked constructions can be tolerated, but at the cost of morphological marking. In this way DOM is highly iconic, in the sense that it favours morphological marking for marked constructions. Aissen (2003) also notices in this direction that DOM morphology is highly privative, in the sense that zero morphology contrasts with audible expressions. Based on these observations, she attempts to provide a formal account of DOM within the framework of *Optimality Theory* (Prince & Smolensky 1993, *et seq.*). According to her analysis, DOM arises as the result of the competition between *Iconicity* and *Economy* constraints on the specification of case features: An economy

principle that bans the morphological manifestation of case is associated with a certain point of the scales above. All elements lower in the scale from this point on cannot be morphologically marked for case, resulting in the relevant DOM pattern.

3. The case study

In order to determine the Cappadocian pattern we investigated definiteness/specificity in relation to the structure and the case marking of NPs in both object and subject functions. Our data were drawn from three dialectal varieties, which were classified in two groups: (a) Delmeso/Potamia (Del/Pot) and (b) Axo. We focused on the NPs with a head noun the declension of which distinguishes nominative from accusative. These are mainly masculine nouns ending in *-os, -as, -is*[2]. We extracted all the relevant examples from the texts included in Dawkins (1916) and Mavroxalyvidis & Kesisoglou (1960) (D and M&K respectively). These examples were examined in two ways. First, they were classified according to the nine possible constructions that derive from the combination of NP structure (Bare NPs – NPs with definite article – NPs with indefinite article) and case marking (nominative – accusative).

(7) <u>The Variables</u>
Bare NPs
a. Nominative
b. Accusative
NP with definite article
a. Nominative
b. Accusative
NP with indefinite article
a. Nominative
b. Accusative

Then, the definiteness/specificity interpretation of the examples in each variable was noted. The results of this investigation are presented and discussed in the next section.

4. The data and analysis

4.1 Delmeso/Potamia

Table 1. Object in Delmeso/Potamia

Bare NPs	
Nominative	indefinite & incorporating structures (example 8)
Accusative	-
NPs with definite article	
Nominative	definite (example 9)
Accusative	definite (example 10)
NPs with indefinite article	
Nominative	indefinite (example 11)
Accusative	indefinite specific (example 12)

(8)   ístera   píkan   γámos   (Pot: D456, §1)
afterwards made-3PL marriage-NOM.SG
'After that they got married'

(9)   ívren   to   mílos   (Del: D308, §3)
found-3SG the-ACC.SG mill-NOM.SG
'He found the mill'

(10)   to   layó   eskótosen   (Del: D94, §115)
the-ACC.SG hare-ACC.SG killed-3SG
'He killed the hare'

(11)   δéke   éna   layós   (Del: D94, §115)
hit-3SG a-ACC.SG hare-NOM.SG
'He struck a hare'

(12)   éxo   én   aδelfó   (Pot: D454, §4)
have-1SG a-ACC.SG brother-ACC.SG
'I have a certain brother'

The data, as summarized above, shows that definiteness vs. indefiniteness is marked by means of the structural mode of the article. Thus, bare NPs are indefinite, whereas NPs introduced by the definite article are definite. NPs introduced by the indefinite article are indefinite, either specific or non specific. However, a DOM pattern similar to that of Turkish is also observed: accusative case is associated with specificity, as indicated by the following two facts. First, no examples of accusative bare NP-objects were found. Bare NPs are inherently indefinite and tolerate no specific reading. The absence of accusative bare NPs, therefore, suggests that accusative is incompatible with non-specificity. Second, an NP with an indefinite article can

be either in the nominative (11) or in the accusative (12). When such an NP is in the accusative, it is always interpreted as specific.

Finally, it should be noted that an NP with a definite article can be either in the accusative (10) or in the nominative (9) without any effect on the definiteness/specificity reading. We suggest that the appearance of nominative case in such an inherently definite/specific environment indicates that nominative is unmarked in terms of definiteness/specificity.

Table 2. Subject in Delmeso/Potamia

Bare NPs	
Nominative	definite (example 13)
Accusative	definite (example 14)
NPs with definite article	
Nominative	definite (example 15)
Accusative	definite (example 16)
NPs with indefinite article	
Nominative	indefinite – indefinite specific (example 17)
Accusative	-

(13) élios   mávrosen   to   prósopo
      sun-NOM.SG blackened-3SG the-ACC.SG face-ACC.SG
      'The sun blackened the face'   (Del: D312, §3)

(14) írten   aδelfó   t   (Del: D320, §2)
      came-3SG brother-ACC.SG her
      'Her brother came'

(15) na pár   ke sás   to   δjávolos
      SUBJ take-3SG and you-2PL the-ACC.SG devil-NOM.SG
      'May the devil take you'   (Del: D316, §1)

(16) to   mílo   én   makrjá   (Pot: D94, §115)
      the-ACC.SG mill-ACC.SG be-3SG far away
      'The mill is far away'

(17) én   éna   aslános   ke éna   qaplános
      be-3SG a-ACC.SG lion-NOM.SG and a-ACC.SG leopard-NOM.SG
      'There are some lion and some leopard'   (Del: D320, §3)

We note the following. First, all bare subject NPs found are singular and definite. Given that in Greek singular bare NPs are excluded as subjects and that a bare NP is never interpreted as definite (Holton, Mackridge & Philippaki-

Warburton 1997: 276-285), we suggest that all these definite bare NPs are the result of the omission of the nominative definite article in a definite NP. This is because, as it has already been noticed (Dawkins 1916, Janse 2004, a.o.), the use of the definite nominative article has declined in Cappadocian Greek.

Second, from a first look, nominative and accusative seem to be in free variation in definite subject NPs. However, a closer look at the data shows that the distribution of accusative is in fact quite limited and constrained. First, only one example of an accusative subject NP with a definite article was found (example 16). In addition, in all accusative bare subject NPs, the head noun is followed by a possessive pronoun (18):

(18)   a.   írten aδelfó t   (Del: D320, §2)
               came-3SG brother-ACC her
               'Her brother came'

       b.   an   értʃ   aδelfó   sas   (Del: D322, §2)
               when came-3SG brother-ACC yours
               'When your brother come...'

       c.   ke aδelfó   tun   ge léx   (Del: D322, §3)
               and brother-ACC their and says'
               'and their brother says'

Janse (2004) has proposed that the nominative suffix *-s* has been reanalysed as an indefiniteness marker in Cappadocian. Thus, *-s* can be suggested to be omitted in these examples as a marker of indefiniteness, since it is incompatible with the definite reading of the NP imposed by the possessive pronoun. However, this suggestion is not supported by the data. Notice example (19), where the suffix *-s* appears in exactly the same environment.

(19)   írte   aδelfós   tun   (Del: D322, §3)
         came-3SG brother-NOM.SG their
         'Their brother came'

Moreover, as evident from the data, nominative is readily attested in definite environments, both in bare subject NPs and in subject NPs with a definite article. We can, therefore, conclude that the nominative marker *-s* has not been reanalysed as an indefiniteness marker. Nevertheless, it may be the case that such accusative examples are in fact nominative examples with the *-s* suffix being omitted for some phonological reason. We leave the issue open, since it requires further investigation.

4.2.   Axo

Table 3. Object in Axo

Bare NPs	
Nominative	indefinite & incorporating structure (example 20)
Accusative	incorporating structure (example 21)
NPs with definite article	
Nominative	-
Accusative	definite (example 22)
NPs with indefinite article	
Nominative	indefinite (example 23)
Accusative	indefinite specific (example 24)

(20)   méγa lóγos   mé lés   (M&K172, 39)
       big word-NOM.SG NEG say-2SG
       'Don't say big words'

(21)   píγan na vγálne   vasiljó   (M&K216, §3)
       went-3PL SUBJ take out-3PL king-ACC.SG
       'They went to raise a king'

(22)   to   djávole   rótsan   (M&K180, 96)
       the-ACC.SG devil-ACC.SG ask-3PL
       'They asked the devil'

(23)   ívren   éna   líkos   (D402, §1)
       found-3SG a-ACC.SG wolf-NOM.SG
       'He found some wolf'

(24)   ívra   éna   mílo   (D390, §3)
       found-1SG a-ACC.SG mill-ACC.SG
       'I found a certain mill'

We note the following: First, accusative is not excluded from bare NPs, despite the fact that only one example was found, which involves an incorporating structure (21). Second, there are no nominative definite NPs. This fact may be taken to suggest that nominative is incompatible with definite object NPs. Otherwise, the pattern is the same as the one observed in Delmeso/Potamia.

Table 4. Subject in Axo

Bare NPs	
Nominative	definite & indefinite (example 25)
Accusative	definite (example 26)
NPs with definite article	
Nominative	definite (example 27)
Accusative	definite (example 28)
NPs with indefinite article	
Nominative	indefinite (example 29)
Accusative	indefinite specific (example 30)

(25) érete   xasápis   (M&K192, §3)
     come-3SG butcher-NOM.SG
     'The butcher is coming'

(26) líko   éfaén   da   (D398, §1)
     wolf-ACC.SG ate-3SG them
     'The wolf ate them'

(27) to   kalós   árxopos   érete
     the-ACC.SG decent-NOM.SG man-NOM.SG come-3SG
     'The decent man is coming'   (M&K181, §102)

(28) to   mílo   djavoljú γjatáx ton
     the-ACC.SG mill-ACC.SG devils'   fastness was-3SG
     'The mill was devils' fastness'   (M&K196, §1)

(29) írten   énan   álo   insános
     came-3SG a-ACC.SG another-ACC.SG man-NOM.SG
     'Another man came'   (D394, §7)

(30) kíton   éna   koikonó   (D400, §6)
     there was-3SG a-ACC.SG rooster-ACC.SG
     'A rooster was there'

The data shows that subjects are predominantly marked by nominative case. Thus, only three examples of accusative subject NPs were found, one for each of the structure variables: bare NPs (26), NPs with definite article (28), NPs with indefinite article (30). Crucially, in the latter the accusative indefinite NP is interpreted as specific. These facts show that the distribution of the accusative in subject NPs is limited and/or constrained.

5.   The pattern

The examination of the data summarized above leads us to the conclusion that the predominant way of marking definiteness/indefiniteness in Cappadocian is the structural mode of the article, in the same way as in Greek. Bare NPs are interpreted as indefinite, with the exception of singular bare NP-subjects, which are the result of the omission of the nominative definite article and are, therefore, interpreted as definite. NPs with a definite or an indefinite article are interpreted as definite or indefinite respectively. In addition, a DOM pattern based on specificity and similar to the Turkish one supports the structural marking of definiteness in objects: accusative case is associated with specificity, whereas nominative is used with indefinite non-specific NPs. Thus, an NP-object with an indefinite article can be either in nominative or in accusative depending on its specificity interpretation. Furthermore, accusative is excluded from bare NPs with the exception of one example in the dialect of Axo (26). However, the association between nominative and non-specificity seems not to be complete in Delmeso/Potamia, since nominative can be used in NPs with a definite article. This fact suggests that nominative is rather unspecified for specificity. The association between accusative case and specificity can also explain the expansion of accusative case in NP-subjects as an instance of overgeneration of the emerged pattern. Thus, the existence of the rather few examples of accusative NP-subjects does not indicate the existence of a *Differential Subject Marking* pattern, since nominative is predominantly used to mark subjects regardless of their definiteness/specificity reading.

Cappadocian Greek exhibits a very interesting instance of DOM, since the morphologically unmarked case in the nouns that differentiate the nominative from the accusative (masculine nouns in *-os, -as, -is*) is not the nominative, which is marked by the suffix *-s*, but the accusative, which is marked by $\emptyset$. This means that the less prominent NP-object in the definiteness scale (indefinite non-specific) is marked by a marked case (nominative), whereas the unmarked case (accusative) marks the most prominent NP-objects (specific). This pattern clearly violates iconicity, which has been considered to be the hallmark of DOM (Aissen 2003). Thus, DOM in Cappadocian cannot be viewed as the result of an economy constraint that bans overt case marking, when an NP is low in prominence. We suggest that Cappadocian DOM is the result of the interference between the case systems of Greek and Turkish, by which specificity has been associated with the accusative case, irrespective of its morphological complexity.

6.   Conclusions

The dialectic varieties of Cappadocian Greek examined in this paper have been shown to exhibit an instance of DOM based on specificity, which is incorporated within the structural mode of marking definiteness by means of articles. We have observed that the association between accusative and specificity in Cappadocian is not compatible with the iconicity nature of DOM, but it should be viewed as the result of a direct interference from the Turkish case/definiteness system. Crucially, similar phenomena have been attested in other contact situations between Greek and Turkish, such as the Greek varieties spoken by the Muslims in Rhodes (Georgalidou, Spyropoulos & Kaili 2004). This suggests that such a phenomenon can be considered as a generalised structural interference between the two languages in contact situations.

7. Notes

[2] See Dawkins (1916), Mavroxalyvidis & Kesisoglou (1960) and more recently Tiliopoulou (2003) and Janse (2004).

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9. Περίληψη

Στην εργασία αυτή παρουσιάζουμε μια περίπτωση δομικής παρεμβολής της Τουρκικής στην Καππαδοκική Ελληνική. Πιο συγκεκριμένα εξετάζουμε την αλληλεπίδραση στη δήλωση της πτώσης και της οριστικότητας/ειδικότητας σε τρεις διαλεκτικές ποικιλίες της Καππαδοκικής. Στις ποικιλίες αυτές η δήλωση της οριστικότητας/ειδικότητας συνδυάζει τη συντακτική πραγμάτωση μέσω των άρθρων, όπως στην Ελληνική, με το μορφολογικό σχήμα της Διαφοροποιημένης Δήλωσης του Αντικειμένου της Τουρκικής. Η συνδυαστική αυτή πραγμάτωση ορίζει ένα σύστημα, σύμφωνα με το οποίο το σχήμα της Διαφοροποιημένης Δήλωσης του Αντικειμένου όσον αφορά τη δήλωση της ειδικότητας ενσωματώνεται στο δομικό σχήμα της δήλωσης της οριστικότητας με το άρθρο.

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