

RHOTICIZATION AND GENDER STEREOTYPING IN A RURAL COMMUNITY IN CRETE*

NIKOS VERGIS

MARINA TERKOURAFI

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The so-called “sex/prestige pattern” (Trudgill, 1972; Hudson, 1980/1996: 195), according to which women use standard forms more than men, has been criticized both for its empirical validity and the explanations offered. More recently, researchers (e.g., Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992, 1999) have stressed the construction of gender at a local level and its dynamic interaction with other aspects of identity such as age. In this paper, we offer evidence supporting this second view by examining the social meanings of a rhotic found in Anogia, a rural community in Greece through various methodologies (attitudinal questionnaire, sociolinguistic interviews and a perceptual experiment). The results are interpreted as indicating that the rhotic is associated to stances and qualities attributed to the persona of the Anogian male. Women do not choose the standard variant because of its associations with supra-locality, but rather *avoid* using the local variant because of its associations with masculinity.

*Isolated up in the mountains, Anogians kept,
for so many centuries, from generation to generation,
their customs and their anthropological character uncorrupted.
They differ even in the pronunciation: They say r instead of l.
From the website of the Municipality of Anogia¹*

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¹ See http://www.anogialand.gr/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=15&Itemid=47 (last accessed June 21, 2012.)

1. Background

1.1 The sex/prestige pattern

Research on the expression of the social category of gender in language use has revealed differences in the linguistic behavior of men and women at various levels of linguistic structure including, among many others, word choice, the use of polite forms, and tag-questions (e.g., Lakoff, 1975; Coates, 1993; Holmes, 1993), as well as the preferential use of some phonological variants over others (e.g., Trudgill, 1972). Phonological variation has held pride of place in these sociolinguistic investigations since early on.² What numerous studies from different communities (e.g., Trudgill, 1972; Holmquist, 1985) have seemed to suggest is the generalization that, compared with male speakers of the same socioeconomic class, female speakers tend to be more sensitive to issues of prestige in language³ and that this behavior also has implications for language change. However, this so-called “sex/prestige pattern” (Hudson 1980/1996:195) has also been heavily criticized for its empirical validity, and several alternative explanations have been put forward.

Some researchers (e.g., Nichols, 1983) have argued that in modern Western societies, the pattern is due to the fact that working-class women are exposed to the standard variety more than men because their jobs put them in contact with middle class speakers (although counterexamples exist, e.g. Holmquist, 1985). This explanation may be considered a subcase of one focusing on social networks. Milroy 1980 found that in three communities in Belfast, Ireland, when women lacked close-knit networks, they adopted more standard forms than men. Close-knit networks, on the other hand, “create among their members a strong sense of solidarity and loyalty towards a community, and local non-standard speech features function as important symbols of membership in the community” (James, 1996:101). Nevertheless, this is not always the case. As Gal (1978) showed, women may participate in strong social networks and still make linguistic choices (in Gal’s study, between two different languages rather than two registers of the same language) towards the language code with the most favorable connotations in their view. Gal showed that, although the inhabitants of Oberwart, Austria, had a linguistic repertoire that ranged from standard German to standard Hungarian including various dialects of these two languages, Hungarian was symbolically associated with the poor peasantry while German represented the prestige of the new worker class, who made more money and guaranteed a better quality of life. Gal provided evidence that the crucial factor for the young women of the village was a lack of loyalty towards the peasant community and their orientation towards a lifestyle that was different from that of the peasant wife.⁴

² See Cheshire (2002) and Romaine (2003) for two recent overviews.

³ Note that the notion of prestige variety does not always coincide with that of standard variety. Writing about Arabic, Ibrahim notes there may be cases where “a locally recognized standard of prestige exists apart from the standard High variety” (1986:118).

⁴ Although Gal’s study is about code-switching, researchers such as Cheshire and Chloros (1998) have argued that the symbolic functions served by dichotomies such as standard vs. non-standard variants in monolingual speech can be equally served by different languages in bilingual speech. As Coupland 1985 points out, “the difference between monolingual and bilingual behavior lies only in the choice of linguistic symbols for socially equivalent processes” (cited in Cheshire and Chloros, 1998:6).

Probably the most influential and enduring explanation for the sex-prestige pattern has been Trudgill's (1972) own suggestion that women use a higher proportion of standard forms as a way of acquiring social status (or, what we may, following Bourdieu (1990), call "symbolic capital"), which men acquire through their occupation. Furthermore, according to Trudgill, men use non-standard forms because they are associated with the toughness of working class life, which in turn is associated with masculinity. These are not considered to be desirable feminine features, as "refinement and sophistication" are preferred instead. A related explanation has been offered by Gordon (1997), who argues that the adoption of prestige patterns by women in New Zealand English is a matter of avoidance, rather than self-promotion, constituting a self-defense mechanism against the stereotypes of promiscuity associated with lower-class women. These class-based explanations have been criticized by, among others, James (1996: 105-106) for assuming that socioeconomic class is a more fundamental variable than gender and that all women share the same social goals, i.e. the desire to appear to be of a higher socioeconomic class. For example, Milroy J., Milroy L., Hartley and Walshaw (1994) discuss evidence from various studies that show that "gender-marking may override class-marking as the underlying social mechanism whereby linguistic change is implemented" (1994: 26).

One problem with all of the explanations discussed above is that they ignore 'atypical' cases, those where the sex/prestige pattern is not borne out empirically. A number of studies have found that in non-Western societies (e.g., Bakir, 1986) but also in some Western communities (e.g., Nichols, 1983, for one of the communities she studied, and Bortoni-Ricardo, 1985, among others) men actually use more standard speech forms than women. These findings can be hard to accommodate, even allowing for the two riders to the sex/prestige pattern introduced by Hudson (1980/1996), namely, that the variable studied be socially stratified and, crucially for the present argument, that men and women have equal access to the standard variety.

Through their work, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992, 1999 and references therein) have shown that the sex/prestige pattern may be an artifact of the quantitative paradigm that necessarily treated categories such as gender in a decontextualized way. Using the notion of Communities of Practice, they have argued that gender is socially constructed even at a very local level and that only in this way can cases that do not conform to the expected pattern be accounted for. They have also emphasized the idea that gender cannot be viewed in isolation from other aspects of social identity such as life-stage, ethnicity, social class etc. — something which is exemplified in Eckert's study of adolescents in the Detroit suburban area (1989, 1999).

In more recent work, Eckert (2008) has argued that in order to capture the social meaning of linguistic variation, we have to think of categories like gender as bearing not a direct but an indirect relationship to the linguistic variables under study. Drawing on Ochs's (1992, 1993, 1996) and Silverstein's (2003) ideas about indexicality, she has suggested that variables index these categories "through their association with qualities and stances that enter into the construction of the categories" (2008: 455). Furthermore, the social meanings of variables are not "precise or fixed but rather constitute a field of potential meanings — an *indexical field*, or constellation of ideologically related meanings, any one of which can be activated in the situated use of the variable" (2008: 454). Variationist studies have often ignored this multiplicity of meanings of linguistic variables with the result that proposed correlations between gender and specific linguistic variables were at best mediated by one monolithic, stereotyped, and ideologically laden meaning (e.g. masculinity = toughness, femininity = gentility; see, e.g., Trudgill, 1972).

The present study of gender-based linguistic patterns in Anogia, Crete, proposes a context-sensitive account of the observed gender differences that takes into account the conditions under which women came to employ a higher proportion of standard variants than men. The explanation that is offered is that young women avoid the non-standard variant as it indexes a series of stereotypical qualities perceived to be associated with the persona of the *local male*, where the latter identity is both gendered *and* local at the same time.

1.2 Dialect and gender on Crete

Before going over previous work on dialect and gender in Crete, it is useful to briefly examine the place and history of the Cretan dialect among Modern Greek dialects. Cretan belongs to the Southern group of Greek dialects, which share as one of their best known features the extreme palatalization and (af)rication of velar consonants, such that, for instance, /k, g, x, ɣ/ before /i, e, j/ are fronted to [tɕ, dz, ɕ, z] or to [tʃ, dʒ, ʃ, ʒ] (Fig. 1).⁵



Figure 1. Dialects of Greece (cited in Trudgill, 2003: 61). Area 8 represents the Southern dialects of Greece (Crete, Kithyra, Antikythira, Santorini).

The Cretan dialect itself is divided into Eastern Cretan and Western Cretan. The rhotic that constitutes the focus of our article is found in areas of Central and Western Crete where it occurs as an allophone of /l/ (Fig. 2) (Pangalos, 1955; Contossopoulos 1972, 1988; Mansfield, 1964/1992; Newton 1972; Trudgill, 1989, 2001). This rhotic has a special place in the Cretan

⁵ With respect to this phenomenon, Contossopoulos (2006: 30) writes that “to this rule neither Anogians nor Sfakians [the two varieties of the Cretan dialect discussed in more detail below; NV & MT] present an exception, although some authors mistakenly believe that this phenomenon does not occur in these areas” (our translation).

dialect and in Standard Modern Greek, since it is unusual both in terms of the phonetic inventory of Greek and as an allophone of /l/.

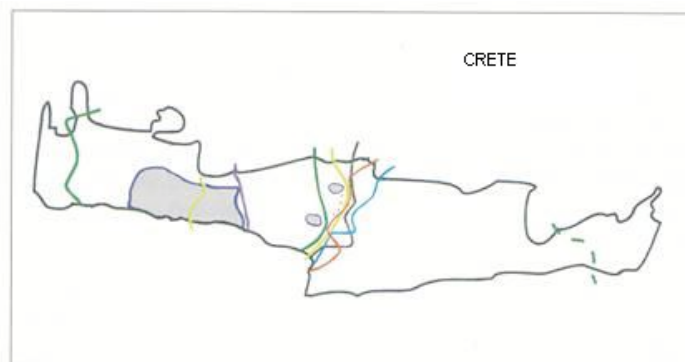


Figure 2. Cretan isoglosses. The shaded areas represent enclaves of the rhotic (cited in Contossopoulos, 2006: 36).

According to Malikouti-Drachman (1999), the Greek dialects are currently undergoing attrition. As far as Cretan is concerned, Contossopoulos (1988) claims that a weakening of dialectal phenomena has also occurred there, especially after World War II, due to higher education levels, better living conditions, and the increased mobility of the population following migration from rural to urban areas. However, he also notes that, along with the dialect of Cyprus, Cretan is considered one of the best preserved among Greek dialects (Contossopoulos 1969, 1970, 1985). Specifically, Contossopoulos (1969) argues that, compared with the lexical, syntactic and morphological levels, phonology has been the most resilient to standardization and lists several historical reasons for this: first, sustained and large-scale contact between Cretans and other Greeks did not begin until after the annexation of Crete to the Greek state in 1913. Second, unlike other parts of Greece (mainly in the North), the population exchange after the war with Turkey in 1920 did not have a major effect on the dialect, since only a small number of refugees speaking other dialects of Greek settled around urban centers in Crete. Third, the Cretan dialect is highly valued among its speakers.

To the best of our knowledge, only one prior sociolinguistic study of a Cretan community is currently available. Trudgill and Mansfield (1994) (see also Trudgill, 1989) studied a community in Western Crete, Chora Sfakion, where a rhotic (a retroflex approximant) is used exclusively by men. The purpose of their study was to show that even among European dialects, one can find structural features that are gender-specific. The authors hypothesize that, in previous stages of the variety, both males and females shared this feature, which gradually became a characteristic of male speech. They note that, even in the speech of men, it is slowly dying out mainly because of demographic changes in the community (tourism and mixed marriages). The patterns that they found are the following: younger speakers use the retroflex approximant much less than older speakers, and people tied to the tourist industry use it much less than fishermen and shepherds. Trudgill and Mansfield (1994) conclude that, because this sound is so phonetically distinct from other allophones of /l/ both in Standard Greek and in the Cretan dialect itself (even native speakers of the Sfakian variety of the Cretan dialect are very aware of that), it is becoming

heavily stigmatized given the changing demographic profile of the community. “This is especially true for younger speakers, some of whom tease older dialect speakers for being boors and peasants by imitating [ɰɰ]” (Trudgill, 1989: 20). The case of the Sfakian retroflex is in some respects similar to that of the Anogian rhotic that constitutes our focus in this article, but also different in others. Overall, in Anogia, the rhotic continues to be produced by both men and women, but it is avoided by young and middle aged women between 30 and 65 based on interview data, which we report below.

Against this background, this study examines gender and age as two factors that may influence language patterns in the Anogian speech community. The first research question is whether the sociolinguistic variables of gender and age play a role in the varying patterns of use of the rhotic. Anecdotal evidence and preliminary observation suggests that rhotic usage is lower among young females. A second research question is, then, what is the sociocultural basis of the observed gender patterns. Below, we present evidence that can help us provide some answers to these questions. In what follows, we outline how fieldwork was conducted, the variables examined, and the methods that were employed for the analysis of the data. Finally, we present the results of the analysis and discuss our findings.

2. Fieldwork

2.1 The community

The village of Anogia is a rural community of 2,500 inhabitants located in the mountains of central Crete, 30 miles southwest of the biggest urban center of the island, Iraklio. The economy of the village revolves around shepherding and farming, but over the last four decades there is a growing tourist industry.⁶ As one of the largest and oldest villages of central Crete, it attracts many tourists, both Greeks and foreigners. The reasons that are claimed to be behind this are the village’s history, especially Anogians’ resistance to various invaders (notably, Ottomans and Germans), and its cultural products (music, dance, and textiles).

A recent development in Anogia over the past few decades is an increase in educational opportunities, at the primary and secondary school level, and through private tutoring schools and foreign language institutes. The big difference from the past is that the village is no longer isolated and shows signs of modernization, despite the fact that the culture remains traditionally androcentric and a strong feeling of localism is prevalent among the villagers.

The position of women in this community has changed over the years. In the past, women used to be restricted to the home (the domestic sphere), although it was not at all uncommon for them to work in the fields or to take care of livestock (as is typical of women in rural Greek communities; Dubisch, 1986). Nowadays, women in Anogia work in the public and private sector and in the tourist industry. Unlike men, many of them continue their education beyond high school. These changes are perhaps not unrelated to changes also noted in other studies regarding the changing roles of Cretan women in family decision making and their increased autonomy. Terkenli, Bellas and Jenkins (2007: 42) note that

while Cretan women still appear in more traditional contexts to accept and uphold the dominant values, they use discourse (“loghos”) in very powerful ways in occasions of

⁶ See Koussis 1989 on how the tourist industry transformed Crete.

private association, i.e. voicing social criticism and an often severe critique of men. Increasing participation in family decision-making and the possibility of increased autonomy for women in our days (Koussis, 1989) stands in sharp contrast to the fact that traditionally women were expected not to voice opinions.

These observations point to a change in gender roles and ideologies that need further exploration in the context of Anogia.

The position of men in this community does not differ from their position in other shepherding communities of Crete (Herzfeld, 1985). If women were restricted to the domestic sphere until recently, the men's arena was — and still is — the public sphere, where they traditionally compete in dancing, rhyme-making, drinking, gambling, and even using guns on public occasions such as weddings, and occasional animal theft. In that way they perform their masculinity (Herzfeld, 1985).⁷ Men are usually shepherds (a profession traditionally associated with this mountain community), farmers or both, and/or they work in the tourist industry, in the public or in the private sector.

It is also noteworthy that among the villagers in the community of Anogia there is an aggressive localism and clashes with police authorities are not uncommon. Disobedience to the state laws is motivated by obedience to unwritten laws of the community such as resolving their differences in their own way and not resorting to the justice system. The problem for the Greek state is that these unwritten laws involve in many cases violent practices (e.g. vendettas, animal theft, threats, and abductions). These practices, *usually carried out by men*, were more developed in other areas of Crete in the past, but in Anogia they have been more recently reinforced with young men taking the lead (Astrinaki, 2003).

Recourse to community-based unwritten laws, which are found also in other mountain areas of Crete, led to the formation of a series of negative stereotypes that the Cretans of the valleys and city-dwellers attributed to the Cretans of the mountains (Astrinaki, 2003): to them, Anogians (and the rest of Cretans from mountainous regions) are arrogant, selfish and violent, bullies, sheep-thieves and show-offs, but at the same time they are heroes due to their resistance to foreign invaders in the past, and represent something 'uniquely and genuinely' Greek (manifested "in their language, their dances, their customs, and especially their hospitality, and their physique"; Astrinaki, 2003: 7). One can speculate that these stereotypes were firmly established after the end of World War II, when a huge wave of internal migration from rural areas towards the cities took place across Greece. Indirect evidence for this hypothesis is provided by a local historian of Anogia (Manousos, 2007), who describes how the urbanites of Iraklio were disturbed by the massive presence of Anogians after WWII and their uncivilized/unorthodox behavior. Of course, this does not mean that stereotyping goes only one way. Mountain Cretans view the Cretans of the valleys and the cities ("pasparites", as they call them, meaning 'those who live in the dust') as having lost their connection with tradition and "look at them from above mingling and mixing in the course of centuries with all sorts of 'others' and living 'in the dust'" (Astrinaki, 2003: 8, our translation). It has to be stressed that the target of this stereotyping are men — and this fact, as we will see below, plays a crucial role in conditioning the linguistic behavior of age and gender groups.

⁷ Additionally, see Photiadis 1965, and Papataxiarchis 1988, on the significance of *kafenio*, the traditional Greek coffee-shop found in rural areas, as a field of public display.

2.2 Methodology

The fieldwork reported in this article was conducted by the first author during the summer of 2010. For a period of a month and a half, he visited the community of Anogia about twice a week and spent several hours collecting data in the form of interviews, a questionnaire and personal observations. He arrived as a friend of a friend with no personal ties with the community. Through this friend, he was introduced to a married couple and it was with their help that he met almost all other informants. The guiding criterion in selecting informants was to have a relatively balanced sample in terms of gender and age. Before the interview, he would introduce himself as a native of Iraklio, the urban center closest to Anogia, and explain that he is conducting research on the culture of rural areas of Crete. In interactions with informants, he used the urban variety of Iraklio.

To answer the research questions outlined at the end of section 1.2 above, the linguistic variable identified for analysis (the Anogian rhotic; see the next section) was studied in relation to the independent variables of gender and age. Two methods were used to answer the research questions: a) interviews (N=12), and b) a questionnaire (N=29). These methods provided self-reports of Anogian men and women's use of the rhotic and helped establish their own perceptions and attitudes toward their local variety and the more standard variety of Iraklio. To assess the extent to which these subjective reports correlated with the individual interviewees' rates of rhoticization, a perceptual experiment was conducted.⁸ For the needs of this experiment, L1 speakers of American English rated word tokens extracted from the interviews. The results of this experiment are described in section 2.3.1 below.

2.2.1 The linguistic variable: the Anogian rhotic

As mentioned in section 1.2 above, a rhotic as a realization of a lateral /l/ has been attested in some areas of Central and Western Crete (see Fig. 2). In Trudgill and Mansfield's (1994) study in Chora Sfakion, this rhotic was identified phonetically as a retroflex approximant occurring before a back vowel as an allophone of /l/. For example, the word /ka.'la/ ('well'), which in Standard Greek and in the Cretan dialect is realized as [ka.'la],⁹ in Chora Sfakion is realized as [ka.'ɭa]. By way of an illustration, we provide below different forms of the adjective *kalos* ('good') realizing the phoneme /l/ in Standard/Cretan Greek and in the Sfakian variety (examples taken from Trudgill, 1989:19-20):

(1) Cretan dialect and Standard Greek	Sfakian variety
ka.'li	ka.'li
ka.'le	ka.'le
ka.'lo	ka.'ɭo
ka.'lu	ka.'ɭu
ka.'la	ka.'ɭa

⁸ Unfortunately, the interviews were not conducted in lab-controlled conditions, resulting in very variable sound quality that did not allow for a robust acoustic analysis.

⁹ Usually it is realized as an alveolar lateral approximant (Arvaniti, 2007:112).

Kappa and Vergis (2011) also identified the existence of this rhotic in Anogia as a retroflex approximant occurring in back vowel contexts as an allophone of /l/. It was found to occur in all prosodic conditions (stressed and unstressed syllables, word-initially and word-medially) and in single and complex onsets, as in the following examples:

(2) ['la.ði]	>	['ɣa.ði]	‘oil’
['te.los]	>	['te.ɣos]	‘end’
[pla.sti.'ko]	>	[pɣa.sti.'ko]	‘plastic’

The rhotic is expected, then, in the following environment:

(3) (C) __ [+back V]

In the present study we examine variation in the rhotic in all these positions, namely in (single and complex) onsets followed by a back vowel in word-initial and word-medial positions (in stressed and unstressed syllables).

2.2.2 The independent variables

Several independent variables are examined in relation to variation in rhotic usage in Anogia. Among them, gender and age are most relevant to our purposes, and to a lesser degree, education and occupation. Informants are broadly categorized in two age groups, younger (age 30-65) and older (66 and over).¹⁰ Although people aged 18-29 are very important as a social group, difficulties encountered during the fieldwork did not permit the collection of interview data from this group.

As explained above, gender is an important variable in this community and gender roles and discourses are clearly delineated, although changes are also taking place regarding women's place in this community (see Section 2.1). The level of education is also important. Those born before WWII did not go to school or, at most, completed elementary education. Things changed considerably for post-WWII generations. For present purposes, the level of education is also important because of its interaction with gender. During the course of the research, many informants pointed out that nowadays women tend to continue on to tertiary education, while men start working as soon as they graduate from high school. Finally, occupation is important as well. While most men follow the traditional professions of shepherding and, to a lesser extent, farming (although it is also not uncommon to combine the two),¹¹ in the case of Anogian women, things have changed compared with the past (see Section 2.1). In addition, new occupations, tied to the tourist industry (tavern, hotel and tourist-shop owner), have emerged. Informal observation suggests that these new occupations show no significant gender or age differentiation.

¹⁰ The age of 65 was chosen as a cut-off point in order to distinguish between those speakers born before and after WWII. People who were born after the war had different life-experiences from those born before the war. The post-war period for Greece is one of intense mobility of population and dramatic socio-economic changes (Vakalopoulos, 1987).

¹¹ Despite the fact that after the war many people abandoned their villages to migrate to the cities, during the 1980s, in the area of Mylopotamos that includes Anogia, traditional professions such as shepherding and farming were supported by European Union subsidies.

2.3 Interviews

Overall, 12 participants (6 women and 6 men) were recruited for the interviews. All were born and grew up in Anogia.¹² Some of the young men are shepherds/farmers and others work in the private sector, but nobody seems to rely exclusively on one mode of earning a living as evidenced by the interviews. The older men are retirees who reported shepherding and farming as their profession; one of them worked in the tourist industry. In the group of younger women, two are housewives and one works in the public sector. The group of older women consisted entirely of retirees, two of whom run small tourist shops.

Interviews were conducted at the interviewees' homes or at their workplace and lasted approximately 30 minutes, although there was considerable variation depending on the interviewee's talkativeness. The structure of the interview was the following: First, questions about their age, profession, and the like were asked. These were followed by questions about the village of Anogia, differences in the life-style between the present and the past, the professions that women and men have or used to have, whether the village attracts tourists and why. Towards the end of the interview, questions about the language variety of Anogia were asked. The first question was whether the speech of Anogians differs from that of other villages. If the answer was positive, then the next question was "What do you think is the most salient feature of the Anogian variety?". A question about the setting in which they would use the rhotic (Anogia vs. the city of Iraklio) was also included.

To analyze the interview results, the 12 interviewees were split into two age groups: 30-65 (younger) and 66 and above (older). The first aim of the analysis was to correlate the independent variables noted earlier (gender, age, level of education, and occupation) with the linguistic variable, that is, interviewees' rate of rhoticization of /l/ in expected contexts. This was assessed on the basis of a perceptual experiment, which we describe next.

2.3.1 Perceptual experiment

To assess the rate of rhoticization in each interviewee's speech production, we conducted a perceptual experiment, in which six L1 speakers of American English (3 men and 3 women) with no knowledge of Greek were recruited and asked to rate 381 word tokens containing this variable extracted from the recorded interviews. The choice of raters was made on the grounds that, by using speakers with no knowledge of Greek, semantic bias toward the content of speech could be avoided, and that the phonetic properties of the Anogian rhotic approximate those of some varieties of English (Mansfield and Trudgill 1994: 382), making it perceptually relevant to English-speaking raters.¹³

¹² Only one speaker (S5 in Table 1) moved to another village for two decades but later returned and has been living in Anogia for many decades now.

¹³ The issue is complicated by the fact that the sound that Mansfield and Trudgill (1994) compared the Sfakian retroflex to is the SW Anglo-English approximant /r/, which is widely regarded as retroflex, while our experiment was run on speakers of American English (specifically: Midwestern varieties). This raises the question whether the realizations of /r/ in the two varieties (SW Anglo-English and Midwestern American English) are similar enough to make the sound in question perceptually salient to our subjects. However, while the presence of retroflexion in American English remains a moot point, American English does seem to have a long-term articulatory setting of pharyngealisation, which has acoustic effects that mimic (and perhaps enhance) the impression of retroflexion. In other words, the key issue is not the articulation per se, but rather the acoustic cues present, which involve lowering

Materials—The experimental materials consisted of 381 word tokens extracted from interviewees' speech. The software package Praat (Boersma and Weenink, 2005) was used to isolate and segment the word tokens, which were at most three syllables long. In the rare occasion when a word token was longer than three syllables, it was shortened to three (again using Praat). The purpose of this last step was to maintain some comparability among tokens so as to facilitate raters' processing.

Raters—Six native speakers of American English were recruited for this experiment, three women and three men, ranging from 24 to 34 years old. None of them had received any linguistics training or had any knowledge of Greek, and none grew up bilingual. Some learned languages other than English after the age of 12 in a classroom environment. Most of them grew up in the Midwestern United States. Raters took part in the experiment for a small fee.

Procedure—The experiment was built in E-Prime 2 and consisted of one practice session and two trial sessions (all word tokens in each session were randomized by rater). For the main part of the experiment, each rater rated 20-40 word tokens per interviewee for a total of 381 word tokens. The procedure was the following: raters were first presented with three slides of instructions on a computer screen. The instructions asked them to listen to some words that contained a sound that was closer to an L or a sound that was closer to an R, and to rate the L-ness or the R-ness of that sound. Before the trial sessions, they took a short practice session that familiarized them with the process. The same process was followed for both the practice session and the trial sessions. They heard each word token twice and then saw a screen with a numbered scale from 1 to 5 (1 representing an L-sound and 5 representing an R-sound) as well as the option 'Do not know' to the right of the screen (Fig. 3). All options on the scale were numbered and raters used the mouse to click on one of these options. The whole task took about one hour to complete with a short break between the two trial sessions.

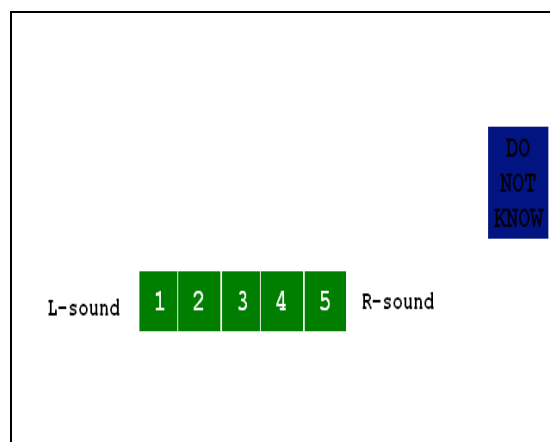


Figure 3. Computer screen where the participants of the perceptual experiment rated the interviewees' tokens.

of F3 and F4; and while F4 lowering is not universal, it is nonetheless present in American English, so our subjects should be familiar with it — indeed, their performance in the experiment seems to confirm this.

Results —Each rater rated 381 word tokens. Of these, some were rated as “Do Not Know” and some corresponded to mistakes.¹⁴ These were excluded from further analysis. The percentage of excluded items per rater is given in Table 1.

Rater	Excluded tokens (“Do Not Know”)	By mistake	(out of 381 tokens)
R1	25	3	28 (7.3%)
R2	9	0	9 (2.3%)
R3	16	0	16 (4.2%)
R4	27	1	28 (7.3%)
R5	15	0	15 (3.9%)
R6	10	2	12 (3.1%)

Table 1. Excluded Tokens by rater.

Table 2 presents the detailed ratings that each interviewee (S1-S12) received by all the raters. The low degree of dispersion in these data (evidenced by the low values of standard deviation) provides strong evidence that raters rated the interviewees in a fairly consistent way. Furthermore, these results are interesting because they show that listeners do not perceive sounds categorically by giving extreme ratings but as a gradient, evaluating sounds on different positions on a scale. In addition, the non-categorical ratings provide indirect evidence that raters paid attention to the sounds they heard and did not just opt for the extremes.

Rater	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12
1	4.00	3.54	3.72	4.09	4.10	3.27	1.52	1.76	2.85	4.39	3.92	4.00
2	4.28	4.25	4.35	4.39	4.31	3.82	1.25	1.60	2.74	4.61	4.16	4.52
3	4.04	3.41	3.75	4.03	4.07	3.00	1.04	1.00	2.00	4.73	2.80	3.95
4	3.84	3.57	4.08	3.92	3.96	3.41	1.54	1.73	2.70	4.27	3.54	3.21
5	4.52	4.08	4.58	4.38	4.38	3.68	1.12	1.67	2.57	4.77	4.17	4.38
6	4.31	3.55	4.15	3.95	3.97	4.03	1.59	1.52	2.65	4.52	3.44	3.90
Mean	4.17	3.73	4.11	4.13	4.13	3.54	1.34	1.55	2.59	4.55	3.67	3.99
SD	0.25	0.34	0.34	0.21	0.18	0.38	0.24	0.28	0.30	0.19	0.53	0.46

Table 2. Ratings by rater and by interviewee’s perceived production of rhoticization.

¹⁴ The category *By mistake* refers to mistakes that the raters made by clicking on the blank space of the screen.

2.3.2 Quantitative results

Table 3 correlates the mean rates of rhoticization assigned to interviewees during the perceptual experiment with their sociolinguistic profiles.

	Gender	Occupation	Education	Age Group	Age	Degree of rhoticization (1 = l-sound, 5 = r-sound)	Standard Deviation
S1	M	Shepherd	Elementary	Younger	29	4.17	0.25
S2	M	Shepherd-Farmer	Elementary	Younger	55	3.73	0.34
S3	M	Electrician	Post-secondary education	Younger	30	4.11	0.34
S4	M	Pensioner (Shepherd)	No education	Older	81	4.13	0.21
S5	M	Pensioner (Shepherd)	Elementary	Older	80	4.13	0.18
S6	M	Pensioner (Tavern owner)	Elementary	Older	85	3.54	0.38
S7	W	Public sector employee	High school	Younger	32	1.34	0.24
S8	W	Housewife	High school	Younger	38	1.55	0.28
S9	W	Housewife	Elementary	Younger	62	2.59	0.30
S10	W	Pensioner-Tourist shop owner	Elementary	Older	70	4.55	0.19
S11	W	Pensioner-Tourist shop owner	<i>missing</i>	Older	90	3.67	0.53
S12	W	Pensioner (Housewife)	<i>missing</i>	Older	80	3.99	0.46

Table 3. Sociolinguistic profile of the interviewees, and degree of perceived rhoticization in their speech.

We see here that nearly all of the interviewees were assigned a rate of perceived rhoticization higher than 3.5 by our naïve raters; however, interviewees S7, S8 and S9 were exceptional in this respect, scoring noticeably low, at 1.34, 1.55, and 2.59, respectively. Significantly, these interviewees constitute the group of younger women that were recorded in this sample. It is moreover interesting to note that, although the two youngest women (S7 and S8, who are assigned particularly low degrees of rhoticization) have a higher educational level, for men the level of education does not seem to be relevant: S3 has achieved a higher level of education (post-secondary education) than S7 and S8, but nevertheless scores considerably higher (4.11) than them.

Below are a few examples of some word tokens that received very high ratings of rhoticization:¹⁵

(4) /ka.'lo/	>	[ka.'ɭo]	“good” (S10)
/ma.la.'ka/	>	[ma.ɭa.'ka]	“softly” (S1)
/pla.'ni.ti/	>	[pɭa.'ni.ti]	“planet” (S4)
/xa.'ɭun/	>	[xa.'ɭun]	“they spoil” (S12)

Figure 4 summarizes these findings by age and gender group. The mean ratings presented here reveal that the group of younger men (S1, S2, S3) are assigned higher degrees of rhoticization, and the same holds true for the group of older men (S4, S5, S6) and the group of older women (S10, S11, S12), who score slightly higher.¹⁶

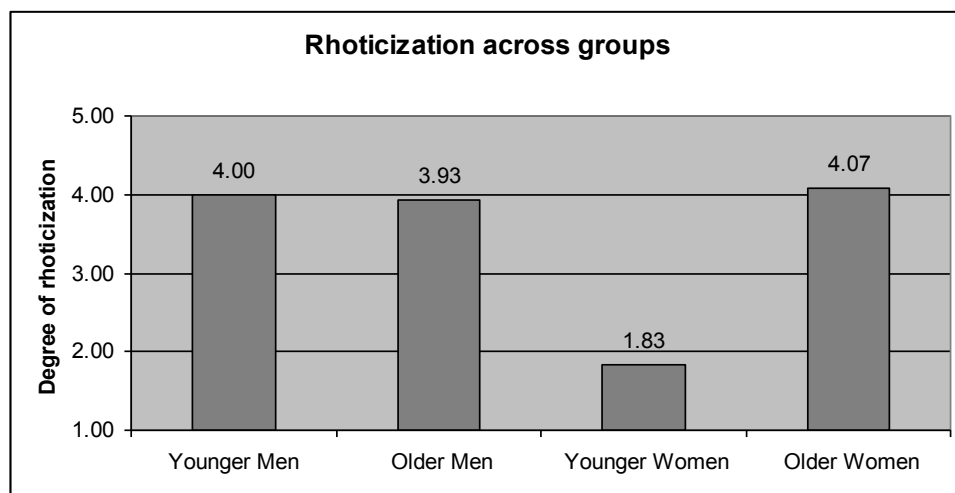


Figure 4. Group Means of degree of perceived rhoticization (1 = L-sound, 5 = R-sound).

As far as the effect of occupation is concerned, no clear pattern emerged. If we adopt Trudgill and Mansfield’s (1994) distinction between, on the one hand, professions related to the tourist industry and, on the other hand, all other professions, according to which people in the tourist industry produce fewer retroflexes than shepherds and fishermen, then we see that in the men’s group a shepherd (S2) and a tavern owner (S6) produce the lowest degrees of rhoticization. Of course, S6 belongs to the older men’s group and, in this respect, the difference from the older shepherds (S4 and S5) is more pronounced than the difference between S2 on the one hand, and S1 and S3 on the other in the younger men’s group. At any rate, a bigger sample is needed to assess reliably the effect of occupation.

¹⁵ Although we represent the rhotic phonetically as a retroflex approximant, we are not making any claims about its acoustic properties.

¹⁶ Given the small sample size, we did not run any ANOVAs.

2.3.3 Metapragmatic comments

Apart from these quantitative results regarding the degree of rhoticization and the effect of age and gender, the interviews also provided us with qualitative data in the form of participants' metapragmatic comments about the rhotic and its usage.

It is interesting to note how men in general and older women, on the one hand, and younger women, on the other, responded when they were asked towards the end of the interview about the rhotic and how they use it themselves. Men and older women did not generally elaborate on the rhotic. A leitmotif in their speech was that "Every village, even the neighboring ones, has its own particular speech". When men were asked about whether they change their speech when they go to the city of Iraklio or generally outside Anogia, a common answer was that they do not do so.

On the other hand, younger women commented extensively on the rhotic and its usage. S9, a slightly older woman, talked about how producing the rhotic is not necessarily a sign of educated, civilized behavior and that the Anogian variety is not something that the Anogians should be necessarily proud of ("It's just a thing of our village"), although "men are very proud, and even if they are educated — doctors or professors — they keep their Anogian accent. [...] They refuse to adapt." S7, a 32-year old woman, talked about how people outside Anogia ("kseni", outsiders) believe that Anogians produce the rhotic on purpose. She conveyed the accusation made by outsiders that Anogians fake the sound in question. When asked if women produce the rhotic at all, she said that women produce a light version of it: "Men say it heavier, but we women do it less, because we are delicate (*lepta*) creatures. We do say it but not as intensely as men". When asked if she changes her language outside Anogia or depending on the interlocutor, she admitted that she is careful with her language on formal occasions when "important" persons are present. Similar comments were encountered in the responses of S8, a woman in her late 30s: "So, for example, when I go to Iraklio, I don't speak with an Anogian accent, because sometimes city people laugh at me or they don't understand me. I switch automatically. I change my speech." The way she commented on the differences between young and old people when asked if people from Iraklio make fun of the Anogian accent is even more revealing:

No, I don't think that they make fun of it. It is just so strange to them. When a young person uses it, they don't really like it because *they think that young people are different nowadays*. They like it though when they hear it from the elders. They accept the Anogian accent when an old person uses it. So, young people change their speech — not here, in the neighborhood, but in the city. When I go shopping or to the doctor's, sometimes it will slip in by mistake, and other women who are present will laugh because they don't understand a word of what I say. (emphasis added)

Younger women's extensive commentary on the rhotic and the Anogian accent suggests that the rhotic has emerged above the level of consciousness to become a *stereotype* in Labov's (1971) terms, or a *third order index* in Silverstein's (2003) terms.¹⁷ Further commentary

¹⁷ In Labov's (1971) trichotomy between *indicators*, *markers* and *stereotypes*, *stereotypes* are linguistic forms that are socially marked and are subject to metapragmatic discussion because they have become very salient, rising above the level of consciousness. Stereotypes can become heavily stigmatized and may be avoided, resulting in their gradual disappearance — however the reverse is also possible. Reanalyzing Labov's (1971) trichotomy, Silverstein

confirms this: one of the female respondents to the questionnaire (see the next section) asked after completing it if she should generally use the rhotic or not, because, when she was in school, her teachers told her and her classmates to avoid it. If young women in Anogia complain about the rhotic being ridiculed by the urbanites of Iraklio, then this must mean that not only Anogians but also city-dwellers are well aware of the dialectal difference. This is corroborated by linguistic jokes that circulate in the city of Iraklio targeting this sound. But it is not only in linguistic jokes that the rhotic emerges as a stereotype and third order index. This picture is completed by jokes regarding the deeds of Anogians that circulate widely (orally in the city of Iraklio, in local printed editions on Crete,¹⁸ or even on the internet).¹⁹ Generalizing somewhat, we may say that in these jokes the Anogian character is usually presented as a cunning *male* who can turn a difficult situation around by giving a smart answer.

To summarize, the Anogian *persona* that has been constructed in contexts outside the community (presumably in urban centers like Iraklio) consists of a number of positive and negative qualities, some of which are shared with Cretans from mountain areas while others are specific to this community: Anogians are perceived as rough and violent, involved in violent practices,²⁰ cunning, ostentatious (to the point that they allegedly even fake sounds like the rhotic), rebellious, traditional and authentic. Furthermore, this persona is *gendered* referring exclusively to Anogian males.

2.4 Questionnaire

2.4.1 Participants

In addition to the 12 interviewees, 29 participants were recruited to answer an attitudinal questionnaire. Starting with the female respondents (N=17), the age range is 20-50 and the mean age is 33 ($SD = 9.3$). In terms of occupation, two are college students, six are housewives, four work in the private sector as business employees or as freelancers, and four work in the public sector (one did not answer the question). As far as their educational level is concerned, most of them (11) have completed Middle-High School, one has completed only Elementary school, four have college education (of whom two are currently students), and one went to a postsecondary technical school.

For the male respondents (N=12), the age range is 20-50 and the mean age is 33 ($SD = 8.2$). In terms of occupation, the majority are shepherds (5) or farmers (4). One works in the public sector and another in the private sector (one respondent did not provide an answer). In regard to their level of education, five have completed Elementary school, four have completed Middle school or High school, and two have postsecondary education (technical school); one of them did not provide an answer.

conceives of a *third order index* as emerging when a second order index gets reinterpreted giving rise to more social meanings.

¹⁸ Chourdakis (1990) dedicates an entire chapter to jokes on Anogians.

¹⁹ See for example <http://www.krassanakis.gr/astia.htm> (last accessed: June 20, 2012).

²⁰ The local Cretan press is contributing to this stereotyping of the Anogian male with a number of reports on clashes between the police and the Anogians in the area of Mylopotamos. See for example: <http://www.cretalive.gr/posts/view/379> (last accessed: June 21, 2012).

2.4.2 Procedure

The questionnaire consisted of two basic parts: i) Demographic information about age, gender, occupation, education, place where one grew up, any moves etc. and ii) 15 questions on the local variety and the rhotic. Although the term “Anogian speech” (*Anogiani omilia*) was used in the questionnaire, it was stressed that “when we refer to the Anogian speech, we also include the Anogian *la*”.²¹ The subjects were asked to answer these questions using a five-point Likert scale (5=Yes, very much to 1=No, not at all).

2.4.3 Results

The questions are grouped into four sets according to A) general attitudes towards the variety (Questions 1-3), B) stated preferences for production in various contexts/with outsiders (Questions 4-7), C) stated preferences for perception (Questions 8-13), and D) stated preference for the local variety over the urban variety of Iraklio (Questions 14-15). Participants’ responses to these questions reveal some important facts about younger Anogians’ attitudes towards the variety and the rhotic (Table 4). To test for significant differences between men and women, a t-test was also run.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1. How do you like the Anogian Variety (AV)?	W	17	4.76	0.56
	M	12	5.00	0.00
Q2. Do you like using AV?	W	17	4.53	1.07
	M	12	4.92	0.29
Q3. Are you proud of AV?	W	17	4.94	0.24
	M	12	5.00	0.00
Q4. Do you like using AV when talking to people who are not from Anogia?	W	17	4.00	1.37
	M	12	4.83	0.39
Q5. Do you like using AV when going to Iraklio (in public services or at stores)?	W	17	3.94	1.30
	M	12	4.92	0.29
Q6. Do you think it is appropriate to use AV when talking to people who are not from Anogia?	W	17	3.88	1.36
	M	11	5.00	0.00
Q7. Do you think it is appropriate to use AV when going to Iraklio (in public services or at stores?)	W	17	4.35	1.11
	M	12	5.00	0.00
Q8. Do you like hearing AV?	W	17	4.82	0.73
	M	12	5.00	0.00
Q9. Do you like hearing AV outside Anogia (e.g. when you go to Iraklio)?	W	17	4.76	0.75
	M	12	5.00	0.00
Q10. Do you like hearing Anogian men use heavy AV?	W	17	4.71	0.77
	M	10	4.90	0.32
Q11. Do you like hearing Anogian women use heavy AV?	W	17	4.35	1.22
	M	12	4.67	0.65

²¹ This is how the locals refer to the rhotic in question.

Q12. Do you like hearing young Anogian women use heavy AV?	W	17	3.94	1.39
	M	12	4.67	0.65
Q13. Do you like hearing old Anogian women use heavy AV?	W	17	4.88	0.49
	M	12	5.00	0.00
Q14. Does AV sound more pleasant than the variety of Iraklio?	W	17	4.35	0.93
	M	12	4.83	0.58
Q15. Does AV sound more correct than the variety of Iraklio?	W	17	4.29	1.26
	M	12	4.83	0.58

Table 4. Attitudes towards the Anogian variety, and production and perception preferences by gender.

In responses to Group A (Questions 1-3), both men and women state that they like the Anogian variety (Question 1): they like to use it (Question 2) and they are very proud of it (Question 3). There is no statistically significant difference between men and women for Question 1 ($p = .104$), Question 2 ($p = .171$), or Question 3 ($p = .411$).²² In responses to Group B (Questions 4-7), unlike men, women seem relatively reserved when it comes to using the variety outside the community, and specifically in the city of Iraklio, or with outsiders both in terms of their stated usage and the degree of appropriateness (Questions 4-7). In this group of questions, the difference between men and women was found to be statistically significant for all questions (Question 4, $p = .028$; Question 5, $p = .008$; Question 6, $p = .004$; Question 7, $p = .029$). The difference is particularly pronounced in responses to Question 5: women do not feel as comfortable as men using their local variety when they go to the city to visit public services or to stores for shopping. In responses to Group C (Questions 8-13), both men and women seem to enjoy hearing their local variety (Question 8, $p = .411$), even outside the community (Question 9, $p = .216$). Both genders enjoy hearing both men and women use a heavy (*varja*)²³ version of the Anogian variety (AV) without significant difference (Question 10, $p = .458$, Question 11, $p = .425$). However, when it comes to hearing *young* women use heavy AV, these scores drop significantly, and this happens for women as well as men (Question 12, $p = .105$).²⁴ Nevertheless, this negative preference does not extend to older women using heavy AV. Both men and women equally like hearing older women use a heavy version of the variety (Question 13, $p = .411$). Finally, in responses to Group D (Questions 14-15), women score slightly lower than men when asked if the Anogian variety is more pleasant than the variety of Iraklio (Question 14, $p = .099$), or if it is less correct than the variety of Iraklio (Question 15, $p = .135$), but not to a significant degree.

To summarize, compared with men whose responses generally score high and are characterized by consensus, women display a wider range of attitudes towards the variety and the rhotic: although they are proud of, and like, their local variety, especially when heard from the lips of older women, they restrict its use in the community and among its members. In contrast, men generally score high when it comes to using and hearing the local variety outside or inside

²² The statistical analysis was done using SPSS version 17.

²³ Although the addition of the adjective *heavy* creates an asymmetry, this choice was motivated by the fact that some informants provided a distinction between the heavy rhotic that is produced by men and a lighter version produced by women. See also related comments by S7 in the section on *Metapragmatic Comments*.

²⁴ In fact, responses to questions 11 and 12 score the lowest and achieve the least consensus among all responses given by men.

the community, and they do not seem to be bothered about distinctions such as community *vs.* city, or insider *vs.* outsider. The only questions where men score lower compared with the rest of their responses concern hearing women, and young women in particular, use a heavy version of the variety. We suggest below that this last point may be crucial and may in fact hold the key to the gendered use of the rhotic observed in this community.

3. Discussion

The results of the perceptual experiment reported earlier revealed that women in the younger age range are perceived as producing lower degrees of rhoticization, in contrast to men and older women. In a study of lateral variants in Patras, Greece, Papazachariou (2006) shows that, although the younger generation of males shows a slight increase in the production of the standard alveolar lateral as compared to the previous generation, younger females exhibit a clear preference towards the standard variant regardless of educational background. According to Papazachariou, this is explained by a loss of prestige for the local variety resulting from a worsening of the economic situation in Patras over the last two decades. Results from another study, this time of lateral and nasal variables in a rural community on the Greek island of Kefalonia (Pappas, 2008), showed that young people, and especially women, preferred the more prestigious and innovative alveolar pronunciation of /li/ and /ni/ “as [do] speakers who are negatively disposed toward life in the community” (2008: 521). On the other hand, men, even those with an advanced level of education, tended to favor the less standard palatal pronunciation of these variants. Although at the descriptive level the results of these studies are reminiscent of our own, the explanation we would like to propose is slightly different.

Our starting point is the finding that the use of a heavy local accent by younger women in particular was frowned upon (in the sense of scoring lowest among all questions and achieving the least consensus) not only by women themselves but also by men. In other words, a broader social consensus appears to exist in this case, with speakers of both genders and all ages agreeing that a heavy local accent is undesirable for younger women. Why should this be the case? We would like to suggest that this is so because Anogian identity is not simply defined in local terms but also in gender-specific terms; that is, it is at once local *and* male, and this makes it inappropriate for younger women (who, contrary to older women, are of child-bearing age and therefore need to assert and display their femininity, including linguistically) to embrace without reservation. If this suggestion is along the correct lines, then younger women’s more standard-like linguistic behavior in this case could be more the unintended result of their avoidance of a male variant (which also happens to be local) than their intentional adoption of a standard one. This explanation is quite different from previous explanations of the sex/prestige pattern (see section 1 and immediately above), which rely on the assumption that women consciously orient themselves toward the overtly prestigious, standard or out-group variant in a quest for (symbolic) power, improved quality of life, etc. Although on the surface of it the outcome is the same (women use more of the standard, lateral variant, rather than the local, rhoticized, one), in the case of the Anogian rhotic, the underlying motivation may be quite different, having to do more with the undesirable connotations — linked directly to gender rather than mediated by social class — that the local variant additionally carries than with any desirable connotations that the standard variant itself carries. This conclusion can be reached if one combines the interview and questionnaire results, and specifically the findings that everyone in the community, *including young women*, is proud of the local variety and loyal to the community, while at the same time

also disproving of the use of its most salient feature, the rhotic, *by young women only*. This last point is reminiscent of identity theorists' frequent claim that "identities are never autonomous or independent but always acquire social meaning in relation to other available identity positions and other social actors" (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005: 598). In other words, identity is never a matter of the individual speaker's agency alone but also constrained by the roles and expectations projected upon the speaker by those around her.

Alongside this macro-social explanation, we believe that additional micro-social explanations having to do with the particular interview setting of the research situation are also possible for our data. Recall here that one of the attitudes expressed by younger women in the questionnaire is that they are more reserved than men when it comes to speaking the Anogian variety to outsiders. If the interview setting with an outsider (the researcher, in this case) plays any part in determining the female participants' linguistic behavior, then their perceived low rates of rhoticization – and, conversely, men's overall higher rates – in this particular setting should be expected. An answer as to why this happens can be traced in younger women's comments (S7, S8 and S9). They offer seemingly different explanations: using the rhotic a) is a sign of failing to adapt to the modern world on behalf of the men regardless of occupation, b) might not be acceptable as young people's speaking style, c) might generate perceptions of showiness or fakeness. These social meanings capture some of the qualities that are attributed to the Anogian persona by the urbanites, a persona that is, as we saw earlier, crucially, a gendered one. As previously discussed, men are considered to be the perpetrators of unorthodox behaviors and violent practices (lack of adaptation), the ones who fake their rhotics (because they are ostentatious), and prefer to become shepherds and farmers instead of furthering their education. These social meanings constitute, at least in part, the *indexical field* of the Anogian rhotic as defined by Eckert 2008, that is, "a constellation of ideologically related meanings, any one of which can be activated in the situated use of the variable" (2008: 454). "Variables", Eckert argues, "have indexical fields rather than fixed meanings because speakers use variables not simply to reflect or reassert their particular pre-ordained place on the social map but to make ideological moves" (2008:464). By avoiding the rhotic, these younger women distance themselves not only from the masculinity that men perform by means of this same variant, but also from qualities that are relevant in the context of the interview such as, for example, traditionalism, understood, in this case, as lack of adaptation to the modern world. In other words, they adopt an identity that is desirable in *this* context, positioning themselves in contrast to an 'Other', represented in this case by men, who are the agents of traditional and authentic, albeit unorthodox, practices, and by older women, who can also be viewed as the bearers of tradition.²⁵

This does not mean, however, that these same women necessarily wish to distance themselves wholesale from the life-style of the community à la Gal 1978. Significantly, they might produce the rhotic in another context where they deem that traditionalism is positively evaluated. For instance, S9 admits that she speaks differently to her niece when they are by themselves, while S8 actually produces rhotics when she interrupts her father-in-law to narrate a local story from the past. Meyerhoff (1996) discusses evidence from Jabeur (1987) and Trabelsi (1991), who report on the case of a Tunisian woman who selects from a range of female

²⁵ Not surprisingly, every time the researcher asked to interview a woman, the villagers directed him to older women, who readily offered to tell stories from the past or sing traditional songs.

positions (educated woman, traditional woman) and manipulates linguistic variants from different languages to index those positions. Similarly, Holmes (1997) discusses the case of a woman who constructs different identities in different contexts — a predominantly conservative identity at one time, a less conservative one at another.

Although social meanings such as the ones discussed above in relation to the Anogian rhotic — traditional, non-adaptable etc. — are constructed at a local level, they ultimately connect to the political economy of language and broader language ideologies (Eckert, 2008: 456) that emerged in Greece in the past. To understand the construction of these meanings, we must take into account the impact of Greek state-ideological forces that, since the early 20th century, aimed at linguistic homogenization and viewed dialects as obstacles to the creation of a national Standard (Terkourafi, 2007: 77 and references therein):

Thus ‘while universal education, access to the mass media, the flight of the young to the cities, and the advent of easy mobility’ (Horrocks, 1997: 301) undoubtedly constitute practical reasons for the abandonment of regional varieties, they were decidedly not alone in bringing about Greece’s current degree of linguistic homogeneity. Rather, their impact was heightened by an ideology of linguistic homogeneity, which for a long time denied or marginalized social and/or geographical variation in the country.

In other words, top-down ideological processes cannot be ignored. The linguistic signs (both the rhotic and the standard lateral variant) are ultimately connected to such dichotomies as *urban vs. rural*, *educated vs. uneducated*, *legitimate vs. non-legitimate*, *distant vs. intimate*, and their political economy constrains local practice — but this does not mean that it always remains uncontested. The social changes that took place after World War II (the intense mobility of the population and the modernization of this community with tourism), along with the impact of nation-state ideologies (through education, for example), created the ecological conditions for the rhotic to become more salient than ever before and opened up a space of possibilities for its interpretation and the generation of varied social meanings. The young Anogian women who present themselves as the modern and adaptable part of this community in the context of the interview, are simultaneously creating new possibilities by projecting a new Anogian persona, an alternative to the heavily gendered existing one, the persona of the modern Anogian woman, who nevertheless remains loyal to the local culture.

4. Conclusions and suggestions for further research

The focus of the present study is gender differences in speech examined through a variant that is found in the village of Anogia, a rural community on the island of Crete, Greece. The results of sociolinguistic interviews, a perceptual experiment and an attitudinal questionnaire jointly reveal variation between men and women in the proportion of rhotics they are perceived to produce in the context of the interview, as well as in the attitudes they express towards the rhotic. The low degrees of rhoticization in younger women’s perceived production can be explained by suggesting that they internalize social meanings attributed to the rhotic by both those inside the community (the masculine indexicality of the rhotic) and those outside of it, specifically city-dwellers, who entertain several stereotypes not just for Anogians but for the Anogian males in particular. By avoiding the rhotic younger women dissociate themselves from undesirable qualities the persona of the Anogian male represents. But this avoidance is also a function of the

communicative event (interview) and of the interlocutor (interviewer). In principle, the possibility that younger women produce various rates of rhoticization depending on the ideological positionings they wish to claim at different times cannot be excluded. Further research could fruitfully investigate which (other) indexicalities are activated and what kind of ideological moves not only women but also men from various social categories (in terms of age, occupation etc.) make by manipulating different rates of rhoticization in different communicative events and with different types of interlocutors.

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