

Defective genitives of ι-neuter nouns in Modern Greek: the role of synizesis

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Περίληψη

Παρότι η γενική πτώση είναι παραγωγική στα περισσότερα παραδείγματα της ονοματικής κλίσης της κοινής νέας ελληνικής, μία από τις κυριότερες περιπτώσεις όπου εμφανίζει παραδειγματικά κενά και αδυναμία σχηματισμού είναι τα ουδέτερα ονόματα που σχηματίζονται με υποκοριστικά και άλλα παραγωγικά επιθήματα σε *-ι*, π.χ. *παιδ-άκι* “little child”/ γεν.εν. **παιδακιού*/ γεν.πλ. **παιδακιών*. Η μελέτη αυτών των ελλειμματικών γενικών παρουσιάζει μεγάλο ενδιαφέρον, δεδομένου ότι διαχρονικά καταγράφεται η παρουσία τους στη μεσαιωνική ελληνική, ενώ σε διαλεκτολογικό επίπεδο υπάρχει μεγάλη ποικιλία στην απώλεια και τη διατήρησή τους. Το παρόν άρθρο στοχεύει εκτός από τη διαχρονική και διαλεκτολογική καταγραφή του φαινομένου στην αναζήτηση των παραγόντων που οδήγησαν στην απώλεια αυτών των γενικών. Σύμφωνα με την ανάλυση που ακολουθείται, ο κυριότερος παράγοντας της αντιγραμματικότητας της γενικής αυτών των υποκοριστικών και άλλων παράγωγων *i*-ουδετέρων είναι η αδυναμία καταβίβασης του τόνου από το παραγωγικό στο κλιτικό μόρφημα, άποψη που έχει υποστηριχθεί και από άλλες μελέτες (Καρρά 2008, Katramadou 2012) και που ενισχύεται από τη μεγαλύτερη συχνότητα παραγωγικότητας της γενικής σε διαλέκτους στις οποίες η έλλειψη συνίζησης δεν απαιτεί τον καταβίβαση του τόνου στην πτωτική κατάληξη.

Keywords: morphology, dialectology, defectivity, genitive, case loss, inflection

1. Introduction

Despite the fact that the genitive is productive in the majority of paradigms in the nominal inflection of Common Modern Greek, diminutive neuter nouns that end in *-ι* have genitive gaps in both numbers¹ as opposed to the majority of the rest of *i*-neuters, e.g.:

- (1) a. *παιδί* “child” / gen.sg *παιδι-ού* / gen.pl *παιδι-ών*
b. *παιδ-άκι* “little child” / gen.sg. **παιδ-ακι-ού* / gen.pl **παιδ-ακι-ών*

Apart from the suffix *-άκι* in the above example, there is a wide range of diminutive and other derivational suffixes with either completely ungrammatical or at least questionable genitive forms:

¹ As opposed to other defective paradigms which only have genitive plural gaps, e.g. *α-/η*-feminine nouns like *μπάλα* “ball” / gen.sg *μπάλα-ς* / gen.pl **μπαλ-ών* (see Mertyris 2014).

SUFFIX	EXAMPLE
-άδι	κοκκινάδι (“red make-up”): ?κοκκιναδιού/ -ων (<κόκκινος “red”)
-άκι	παιδάκι (“little child”): *παιδακιού/ -ων (<παιδί “child”)
-άρι	κατοστάρι (“100 meters”): ?κατοσταριού/ -ων (<εκατό “one hundred”)
-έλι	κοκκινέλι (“red wine”): ?κοκκινελιού/ -ων (<κόκκινος “red”)
-ίδι	βρισίδι (“tirade/ swearing”): ?βρισιδιού/ -ων (<βρισιά “swearword”)
-ίκι	αρχονταρίκι (“monastery dorm”): ?αρχονταρικιού/ -ων (<αρχοντάρης)
-λίκι	αρχηγιλίκι (“chieftainship”): *αρχηγιλικιού/ -ων (<αρχηγός “chief”)
-ούδι	αγγελούδι (“little angel”): *αγγελουδιού/ -ων (<άγγελος “angel”)
-ούλι	μικρούλι (“littlesie”): ?μικρουλιού/ -ων (<μικρός “little”)

Table 1: Defective ι-derivatives in Common Modern Greek

The questionable nature of some of these genitives is best reflected in the fact that the two major dictionaries of (Standard) Common Modern Greek, the *Dictionary of Standard Modern Greek* (Triantafyllidis Institute 1998) and the *Dictionary of Modern Greek* (Babiniotis 1998), do not always agree with regards to the defectivity of some of these nouns, as the genitives of a noun could be listed as defective in the former, but as productive in the latter and vice versa, which is an indication that speakers may disagree on the grammaticality of some of these forms.

To complicate things even further, defective ι-neuters are not limited to derivatives, but they can also include compound and simplex (monomorphemic) nouns, even though the former type will be the main focus in this study due to its higher frequency and attestation diachronically and dialectally:

- (2) σταυροδρόμι² “crossroad”/ *σταυροδρομού/ *σταυροδρομιών
 (3) κολύμπι “swimming”/ *κολυμπιού/ *κολυμπιών

Thus, the overall number of defective ι-derivatives seems to be quite high in the greater paradigm of ι-neuters, as they make up 13.7% according to the *Dictionary of Standard Modern Greek* (1998) of the Triantafyllidis Institute.

Speakers of Common Modern Greek employ two major strategies to avoid the use of these defective genitive forms. The first strategy involves suppletion, namely the use of the genitive of the root noun, while the second strategy, which is less frequent with animate nouns, features the use of the preposition *από* “from” as a possessive marker:

- (4) το παιδάκι έχει ένα παιχνίδι “the little child has a toy” →
 a. το παιχνίδι του παιδιού “the child’s toy”
 b. το παιχνίδι από το παιδάκι “the little child’s toy (lit. from the little child)”

Given the fact that this paper aims to provide an analysis of the diachronic course, the dialectal variation and also the factors that led to the defectivity of these genitives, it is important to clarify some useful terms before carrying on with the examination of these issues. Although Karlsson (2000: 647) considers paradigmatic gaps to be related to “natural” semantic restrictions, the defectivity of diminutives like *παιδάκι* “little child” could not be justified by this explanation due to the animacy of the noun and the

² <σταυρός “cross” + δρόμος “road”.

productivity of other diminutive genitives in Common Modern Greek, e.g. *πορτούλα* “little door” / gen.sg *πορτούλα-ς*. As Sims (2006: 3) draws a line between semantically driven and inflectional defectivity, it is clear that the latter is the one that applies to this study, which is a challenging task given the fact that paradigmatic gaps were essentially non-existent in Ancient Greek except for a handful of nouns like *ὄναρ* “dream” which lacked all plural and genitive and dative singular forms. Furthermore, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the (sometimes theoretical) productivity of a form and its actual use in spoken language, which is something that is remarked by Symeonidis (2006: 202) in his discussion of productive genitive plurals of feminine nouns in Cypriot Greek, which are typically defective in Common Modern Greek, e.g. *κοπέλ(λ)α* “young woman”: Cypriot gen.pl *κοπέλλων* # CMG gen.pl **κοπελών*.

2. Diachronic data

The major question that arises from what has been mentioned so far is the following: given the fact that most of the suffixes in Table 1 were developed during Medieval Greek, did ι-neuter diminutives and other derivatives have productive genitive forms in earlier periods of the language or were they always defective? In order to provide a detailed answer to this question, it is essential to examine the exact origin of these suffixes and the possible attestation of ι-diminutive genitives in medieval texts.

2.1 The origin of defective ι-suffixes

The productivity of some the suffixes in Table 1 becomes more complicated if we take into consideration that they seem to involve two distinct diachronic paths. As can be seen in the following table, early diminutives essentially replaced ancient lexemes and as they do not longer constitute derivatives, they have fully productive genitive forms, as opposed to later formations:

SUFFIX	EARLY FORMATIONS	LATER FORMATIONS
-άδι	<i>σημάδι</i> : <i>σημαδι-ού/ σημαδι-ών</i> “sign” <AG <i>σήμα</i> “sign”	<i>μαυρ-άδι</i> ³ : <i>?μαυρ-αδι-ού/ ?μαυρ-αδι-ών</i> “black spot” < <i>μαύρος</i> “black”
-άκι	<i>λαβράκι</i> : <i>λαβρακι-ού/ λαβρακι-ών</i> “sea bass” <AG <i>λάβραξ</i> “sea bass”	<i>παιδ-άκι</i> : * <i>παιδ-ακι-ού/ *παιδ-ακι-ών</i> “little child” < <i>παιδί</i> “child”
-άρι	<i>ζευγάρι</i> : <i>ζευγαρι-ού/ ζευγαρι-ών</i> “pair” <AG <i>ζεύγος</i> “pair”	<i>τετρακοσ-άρι</i> : * <i>τετρακοσ-αρι-ού/*-ών</i> “400 meters” < <i>τετρακόσια</i> “400”
-ίδι	<i>παιχνίδι</i> : <i>παιχνιδι-ού/ παιχνιδι-ών</i> “game” <AG <i>παίγνιον</i> “game”	<i>βρισ-ίδι</i> : <i>?βρισ-ιδι-ού/ ?βρισ-ιδι-ών</i> “swearing” < <i>βρισιά</i> “swearword”
-ούδι	<i>αρκούδι</i> : <i>αρκουδι-ού/ αρκουδι-ών</i> “bear” <AG <i>ἄρκ(τ)ος</i> “bear”	<i>μαθητ-ούδι</i> : * <i>μαθητ-ουδι-ού/ *-ών</i> “little student” < <i>μαθητής</i> “student”
-ούλι	<i>πεζούλι</i> : <i>πεζουλι-ού/ πεζουλι-ών</i> “stone bench” <MedG <i>πέζα</i>	<i>γατ-ούλι</i> : * <i>γατ-ουλι-ού/ *-ών</i> “little cat” < <i>γάτα</i> “cat”

Table 2: Productive and defective ι-derivatives

³ According to Triantafyllidis (1998), this noun is defective, but Babiniotis (1998) gives grammatical genitive forms.

As can be seen, these early formations date back to either the late Hellenistic or the early Medieval Greek period and they are quite indicative of the large-scale replacement of a great number of Ancient Greek nouns - especially those from the third declension -, while their development was largely based on the use of the diminutive suffix *-ιον* (Medieval Greek *-ιν*, Modern Greek *-ι*), e.g.: *ἀστήρ* (gen.sg *ἀστέρ-ος*) “star” → *ἀστέριον* (MG *αστέρι*). From such early diminutives, new diminutive suffixes were formed, while others were acquired at a later point, as can be summarized in the following table:

Ancient Greek suffixes	
<i>-άρι</i>	<AG <i>-άριον</i> , e.g. <i>πλοι-άριον</i> “skiff” < <i>πλοῖον</i> “floating vessel”
<i>-ίδι</i>	<AG <i>-ίδιον</i> , e.g. <i>σαρκ-ίδιον</i> “bit of flesh” < <i>σάρξ</i> “flesh”
Medieval Greek reanalyses of ι-diminutives	
<i>-άδι</i>	< <i>λιβάδ-ιον</i> “little spring” (later “meadow”) [< <i>λιβάς</i> “creek” (stem <i>λιβάδ-</i>)] e.g. <i>περιβολ-άδιον</i> “little yard” P.Bon 21, 12 (1 st c. AD) [< <i>περίβολος</i> “yard”]
<i>-άκι</i>	< <i>κοράκ-ιον</i> “small crow” [< <i>κόραξ</i> “crow” (stem <i>κορακ-</i>)] e.g. <i>στεν-άκιον</i> “little strait” Const. Porph., <i>De cer.</i> (1.1-92), 2. 40. 11 (10 th c.) [< <i>στενόν</i> “strait”]
<i>-ίκι</i>	< <i>περδίκ-ιον</i> “small partridge” [< <i>πέρδιξ</i> “partridge” (stem <i>περδικ-</i>)] e.g. <i>δελματ-ίκιν</i> “type of tunic” P.Oxy VII 1051, 10 (3 rd c. AD) [< <i>δέρμα</i> “leather”]
<i>-ούδι</i>	< <i>βού-διον</i> “small ox” [< <i>βουίδιον</i> < <i>βούς</i> + <i>-ίδιον</i>] e.g. <i>σακκ-ούδι-α</i> “little bags” P.Oxy VI 937, 29 (3 rd c. AD) [< <i>σάκκος</i> “bag”]
Medieval/ Early Modern Greek loans	
<i>-έλι</i>	Latin loanwords such as <i>τριβέλλιον</i> (< <i>terebellium</i> “drill”) e.g. <i>πανιτσ-έλιν</i> “the little clout” <i>War of Troy</i> 992 (13 th -14 th c.) < <i>παν(ίτσο-)ιν</i>
<i>-λίκι</i>	<Turkish <i>-lik</i> , e.g. <i>bekrilik</i> “drunkenness” (< <i>bekri</i> “drunk”) e.g. <i>πρωτομαστορ-λίκιν</i> “profession of master builder” Papa-Synadinus, <i>Chronicle of Serres</i> 3.8.8 (17 th c.) [< <i>πρωτομάστορας</i> “master builder”]
<i>-ούλι</i>	<Latin <i>-ula</i> , e.g. <i>lunula</i> “little moon” (< <i>luna</i>) → Hell/MedG <i>-ούλα</i> → <i>ούλι(ο)ν</i> e.g. <i>πεζ-ουλί-ω</i> “stone bench” Const.Porph., <i>De cer.</i> (1.1-92), 1.27.19 (10 th c.)

Table 3: The origin of defective derivational suffixes in *-ι*

2.2 The productivity of derivative ι-genitives in Medieval Greek

The early introduction of many of these suffixes into the language is a strong indicator of their ability to form the genitive in both numbers, which can be corroborated by the attestation of many such genitives in vernacular Medieval texts and also texts of archaic language that contain vernacular lexemes or phrases:

- (5) *τοῦ καστελλ-ακί-ου* “of the small castle” [<*καστέλλι(ν)* “castle”]
Southern Italy, 1141 AD (Minas 1994: 151)
- (6) *τοῦ καστελλ-ατζί-ου*⁴ “of the small castle” [<*καστέλλι(ν)* “castle”]
Southern Italy, 1143 AD (Minas 1994: 151)

⁴ It is possible that this form exhibits affrication (tsitacism; [c] → [ts]/ [tʃ]/ [tʃe]) found in Italiot varieties and other dialects in discussion here, e.g. Kymi and Megara.

- (7) *δέρμα κατ-ουδί-ου* “leather of a small cat” <κάτ(τ)ος (<Latin *cattus* “cat”)
Bartholomaeus Edessenus, *Confutatio Agareni*, 32.22 (8th c. AD)

3. Dialectal data

Most Modern Greek dialects behave similarly to Common Modern Greek, as they have paradigmatic gaps for the genitive of ι-derivatives. However, the fact that a large number of dialects from a diverse range of areas of the Greek-speaking world form these genitives does not leave any doubt regarding the grammaticality of these genitives in earlier periods of the language, as mentioned earlier in 2.2.

3.1 Maintenance of the genitive of ι-derivatives

As the following example show, the majority of the dialects that have grammatical genitives of ι-derivatives are found in the Southern Aegean, where the use of the genitive as an indirect object and in various other archaic functions (cf. Mertyrís 2014: 81) is quite strong:

- (8) a. *των κοπελλοδγκιών*⁵ <κοπελλ-ούδι <κοπέλλα “young girl”
Kos, Dodecanese (Dieterich 1908: 297)
b. *παιδ-ακ-ιούνε*⁶ <παιδ-άκι <παιδί “child”
Tenaro, Mani, Peloponnese (Koutsilieris 1962: 332)
c. *σκυλλ-ακ-ακι-ού* <σκυλλ-ακ-άκι⁷ <σκυλλ-άκι <σκυλί “dog”
Cythera, south-western Aegean (Kontosopoulos 1981: 132)
d. *του χωρι-ουλ-ακι-ού* <χωρι-ουλ-άκι <χωριό “village”
Mykonos, Cyclades (Veroni-Kammi 1992: 97)
e. *του κοπελλ-ουκι-ού*⁸ <κοπελλ-ούιν⁹ <κοπέλλιν “boy”
Cyprus (Symeonidis 2006: 383)
f. *μαντηλ-ακι-ού* <μαντηλ-άκιν <μαντήλι “kerchief”
Livisi, south-western Asia Minor (Andriotis 1961: 62)

Variation within the same dialect should also be taken into account, as can be shown in the case of the varieties of Crete and Rhodes. In the former, Pangalos (1955: 354) mentions that ι-neuter diminutives are defective, even though the following example shows that in some varieties diminutive genitives can be productive:

- (9) *στη βάφτιση του εγγον-ακι-ού μου* <εγγον-άκι <εγγόνι “grandchild”
“at the baptism of my little grandchild”
Paleochora, Chania, Crete (ILNE 1290: 268)

⁵ The cluster [ðj] is the result of the dissimilation of the original [ðj]. The form is not *κοπελλουδγκιών possibly due to a typographical error.

⁶ Gen.pl form with analogical -ού- by analogy to the gen.sg -ού and the development of -ε to avoid the closed syllable.

⁷ Note the double diminutive suffixes on that noun.

⁸ <κοπελλουθκιού (<*κοπελλουδιού) with simplification of the consonant cluster.

⁹ <*κοπελλ-ούδιν with deletion of intervocalic fricatives commonly found in Cyprus and the Dodecanese.

In the latter, Papachristodoulou (1958: 38) states that these genitives are ungrammatical in Rhodes (in contrast to most other Dodecanesian varieties, e.g. Symi, Chalki, Kos, Leros etc), but in the areas of Malona and Lindos these genitives are in full use. Furthermore, in Salakos, only place names formed with diminutive suffixes are able to form the genitive, e.g. *Καμινάκια* → gen.pl *Καμινακιών*, but *καμινάκι* “little kiln” (<*καμίνι*) / gen.pl **καμινακιών*. This element is very significant, as it shows the different treatment of toponyms to common nouns.

3.2 Loss of the genitive of ι-derivatives

Similarly to Common Modern Greek (examples 4a and 4b), the majority of modern dialects exhibit paradigmatic gaps in the genitives of ι-derivatives and the two commonest strategies of avoidance of defective genitives involve suppletion and the possessive use of the preposition *από* “from”. In the first example below, the genitive of the root noun is used instead that of the actual diminutive, while in the second example *από* is used as a last resort strategy in order to avoid the ungrammatical diminutive genitive:

- (10) a. *ένα γουρουν-άκι [...]* *ουρά του γουρουνι-ού*
 “a little pig [...] tail of the pig”
 Kythnos, Cyclades (Venetoulas 1995: 213)
- b. *το λουλούδι από το καλογερ-άκι*
 “the flower of the ‘little monk’ (=type of plant)”
 north-eastern Corfu (ILNE 807: 266)

Apart from these two strategies, a less common, but extremely interesting, strategy involves the indeclinable use of the nominative/accusative singular form of the diminutive with the genitive singular of the definite article, as can be seen in the following examples from Lesbos (Kretschmer 1905: 527 and Triantafyllidis 1963: 185 respectively):

- (11) a. *η γυναίκα τ' αχλιούπτ-αρ-έλ-Ø*¹⁰
 the:NOM.sg.f woman:N/A.sg.f the:GEN.sg.m/n name-DIM-N/A.sg.n
 “The woman of Achliuptareli”
- b. *του ρούχου τ' π'δ-ελ'-Ø*¹¹
 the:N/A.sg.n clothing:N/A.sg.n the:GEN.sg.m/n child-DIM-N/A.sg.n
 “the clothing of the little child”

The same pattern is used in Rhodes; as mentioned earlier, the use of neuter diminutive genitives is restricted to a small number of areas on the island, while the indeclinable strategy is more common elsewhere (Papachristodoulou 1958: 38):

¹⁰ This bizarre diminutive probably comes from the Lesbian surname *Αχλιόπτας* formed with the diminutive suffix *-αρέλ'* (<*-άρι* + *-έλι*). In the entire narrative from which this example is taken, the diminutive is neuter and never masculine (*του αχλιουπταρέλ'* and not **σου αχλιουπταρέλ'ς*), which shows that it is a clear example of the indeclinability of a neuter ι-diminutive.

¹¹ <**παιδ-έλι* <*παιδί*.

- (12) *του ριφ-άκι-Ø*
“of the little goat”

It should be clarified that the term indeclinable is used here for case and not for number, as these neuter diminutives can form the plural like in every other variety. However, the indeclinable use of a nominative/accusative plural is never attested, e.g. **των ριφάκια*.

4. The origin of the genitive gaps in the paradigm of ι-derivatives

4.1 Extant analyses

The genitive gaps in the paradigm of ι-diminutives have been a point of debate between two of the most prominent Greek linguists and philologists of the early 20th c., Manolis Triantafyllidis and Georgios Hatzidakis. According to the analysis of the former (1926), it is the incompatibility between the notions of diminution and possession that led to the genitive gaps, thus claiming that this is a case of semantic restriction. Hatzidakis (1928) refuted this clearly false claim, since other diminutives are perfectly able to form the genitive form in either earlier periods of the language or even in Common Modern Greek, e.g. *πορτούλα/ gen.sg πορτούλα-ς*. Instead, Hatzidakis (1928) emphasized the general defectivity of the genitive in Modern Greek, as can be seen with a great number of α-/η-feminines that lack the genitive plural. Nonetheless, Hatzidakis seems to exaggerate the unproductive status of the genitive, as in some occasions he lists nouns with fully grammatical genitives as defective, e.g. *ποτάμι* “river”/ *gen.sg ποταμιού/ gen.pl ποταμιών*. What is more, even if the genitive has a few gaps in the nominal inflection of (most) dialectal and Common Modern Greek, each paradigm needs to be examined on its own, as there are significant differences between them, which can be simply shown by the fact that ι-derivatives constitute the only (sub)paradigm that lacks the genitive in both numbers.

On the contrary, more recent studies have focused on the obvious factor of stress position. More specifically, Karra (2008) and Katramadou (2012) propose that there is a conflict between the stress properties of ι-neuter derivational suffixes (-άκι-) and the genitive suffixes -ου and -ων, which are introduced to the lexicon with the feature of stress postposing, since every noun of the ι-neuter paradigm has genitives stressed in the ultimate syllable regardless of the initial position of the stress in the nominative/accusative, e.g. *n/a.sg παιδί* “child”/ *gen.sg παιδι-ού/ n/a.pl παιδι-ά - gen.pl παιδι-ών*, *n/a.sg αγόρι* “boy”/ *gen.sg αγορι-ού/ n.a/sg αγόρι-α/ gen.pl αγορι-ών*.

This approach is very interesting, as the problematic feature of stress movement from the diminutive to the inflectional suffix can be confirmed by the productivity of diminutive genitives of other paradigms in various dialects where the stress does not need to be moved, as can be seen in the following examples:

- (13) a. *τσομπαν-όπλο* [*τσομπάνης* “shepherd” + *-όπλο* (<*-όπουλο* <*πουλί* “bird”)]
το τραγούδ’ του τσομπαν-όπλ-ου “the young shepherd’s song”
 Heraclea, Eastern Thrace (Stamouli-Sarantí 1941: 162)
- b. *κ^hουτζ-όκκο* [*κ^hούτζο(?)* “dog” + *-όκκο* (<**-όφοκο* <**-όπλο*¹² <*-όπουλο*)]
το κ^hουτζ-όκκ-ου το τζουφάλι “the little dog’s head”
 Pharasa, Central Asia Minor (Dawkins 1955: 276)

4.2 Proposed analysis: the role of synizesis

In order to test the accuracy of Karra’s (2006) and Katramadou’s (2012) analyses, it is extremely interesting to examine whether dialects without synizesis maintain the *ι*-derivative genitives to a higher degree than dialects where the vowel sequences /*iu*/, /*io*/ are not (always) affected by synizesis. As is well known, synizesis was established in most Medieval Greek dialects after the 13th c. and it involves the shift of stressed /*i*/ or /*e*/ to [j] (or [ç] after voiceless fricatives), when they are the first member of a vowel sequence:

- (14) early MedG gen.sg *ποδί-ου* → late MedG *ποδι-ού* [poðj’u]

4.2.1 Kymi, Central Euboea

According to Karatzas (1954: 42), in the dialect of Kymi in Central Euboea *ι*-neuter nouns that end in the diminutive suffixes *-άγι* (<**-άι* <**-άδι*), *-ίγι* (<**-ίι* <**-ίδι*), *-ούγι* (<**-ούι* <**-ούδι*) and *-άτσι* (<**-άκι*) form the genitive without a problem:

- (15) a. *κοσσυφ-άγι* (<*κοσσύφι* “blackbird”) → gen.sg *κοσσυφ-αγί-ου*
 gen.pl *κοσσυφ-αγί-ων*
- b. *αφφαλ-ούγι* (<*αφφαλός* “belly button”) → gen.sg *αφφαλ-ουγί-ου*
 gen.pl *αφφαλ-ουγί-ων*

Triantafyllidis (1963: 157) mentions the genitive *σκαμν-ατσί-ου* (<*σκαμν-άτσι* <*σκαμνί* “campstool”) for the village Avlonari near Kymi, which confirms the productivity of *άτσι*-diminutive genitives as well.

As noted earlier, micro-variation should never be overlooked, as in varieties of this dialect productive genitive forms can also be found (Karatzas 1954: 42), e.g. Vitalo, Central Euboea gen.sg *αφφαλονγιού*, while in the variety of Antroniani the gen.sg is used indeclinably and the genitive plural is nearly obsolete.

4.2.2 Megara: a counter-example?

The dialect of Megara is one of the most difficult to examine due to the fact that there is a serious lack of narratives and studies from the beginning of the 20th c. when it was spoken to a much higher degree than it is today. Personal communication with speakers, as well as the following instance from a narrative where suppletion is preferred over the

¹² For the shift of the consonant cluster *-πλ-* to *-κκ-*, cf. Symeonidis (1967).

use of a diminutive genitive prove that at least in its modern state the dialect has paradigmatic gaps:

- (16) *το γουρουν-άτσι [...] του γουρουνί-ου*
 “the little pig [...] of the little pig”
 Syrkou (2006: 343)

If the premise that dialects where synizesis has not taken place are more likely to allow the formation of ι-diminutive genitives, the explanation of their defectivity in Megara could be sought in two areas. First, it is likely that the dialect could form these genitives at an earlier stage, but eventually lost them due to contact with Common Modern Greek, to which the speakers of this dialect have been exposed for over a century and quite clearly to a much higher degree than most dialects in discussion here due to the close position of Megara to Athens, the capital of the Greek state since 1833. A possible remnant of these forms could be the genitive plural *Πλακ-ατσ-ίω* of the place name *Πλακάτσια*.

Second, it could be argued that similarly to a few Modern Greek varieties (cf. Karatsareas 2011: 229-230; Mertyris 2014: 98-101) the inflectional suffixes of ι-neuters may have been reanalyzed as follows:

- (17) a. n/a.sg *παιδί-Ø*/ gen.sg *παιδι-ού*/ n/a.pl *παιδι-ά*/ gen.pl *παιδι-ών* →
 b. n/a.sg *παιδ-ί*/ gen.sg *παιδ-ιού*/ n/a.pl *παιδ-ιά*/ gen.pl *παιδ-ιών*

If this is accurate, then the problem of stress movement from the derivational to the inflectional suffix could not have been avoided despite the lack of synizesis, as the genitives **παιδ-ατσ-ίου*/**παιδ-ατσ-ίων* would still require the movement of stress from the penultimate syllable of the nominative/accusative singular **παιδ-άτσ-ι* to the case ending.

4.2.3 Mani

Even though Maniot does not have consistent lack of synizesis, it is extremely useful in determining the relationship between synizesis and the defectivity of ι-diminutive genitives. More precisely, all Maniot varieties seem to exhibit maintenance of these genitives in both numbers (cf. example 8b):

- (18) *σταμν-άκι* → gen.sg *σταμν-ακι-ού* / gen.pl *σταμν-ακι-ούνε* (<*στάμνα* “urn”)
 (Koutsilieris 1962: 332)

Quite surprisingly, in some Maniot varieties the development of genitives without stress movement seems to have developed, e.g. *το παιδάκι* / gen.sg *του παιδάκιου* (personal communication with the relative of a speaker). The extreme rarity of this leveling phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that it would cause a major lack of balance with the much broader paradigm of productive ι-neuters, e.g. *κεφάλι* “head”/ gen.sg **κεφάλιου* instead of *κεφαλιού*. Moreover, it should be noted that in *Achilleis* (N) (l. 1241, 15th c.) the penult-stressed genitive *αθ-ίτσι-ων* is attested, instead of **αθ-ιτσι-ών*/**αθ-ιτσι-ων* (<*αθ-ίτσι* <*ά(ν)θος* “flower”), most likely for metrical reasons.

4.2.4 Pontic Greek

Pontic shows an intermediate stage between maintenance and loss, as Koutita-Kaimaki (1984: 121-2) mentions that diminutives that end in *-ίδι* and *-ούδι* are productive, while those that end in *-ίτσι* and *-άκι* are defective. The most peculiar case, however, is that of the suffix *-όπον*¹³, which is also the most frequent diminutive suffix in the dialect. More clearly, Oeconomides (1958: 195) mentions that *όπον*-diminutives are defective¹⁴ and Koutita-Kaimaki states that the genitive **παιδοπί*¹⁵ of *παιδόπον* would be ungrammatical.

This analysis needs to be reexamined for two main reasons. First, synizesis does not play a role here, as due to the reanalysis of the inflectional morphemes of ι-neuters in this dialect movement from the derivational to the inflectional suffix would still be required, as was mentioned earlier: *παιδ-όπ-ον* → **παιδ-οπ-ί*. Second, the defectivity could be explained by the unpredictability of what genitive suffix the *όπον*-neuters should get, given the morphological competition in nouns ending in *-όπουλλον*, from which *-όπον* is derived:

- (19) a. *βασιλόπουλλον* “offspring of a king” / gen.sg *βασιλοπούλλ’-(ου)*
(original suffix)
b. *βασιλόπουλλον* / gen.sg *βασιλοπουλλ-ί(ου)*
(Oeconomides 1958: 195; extension of *-ί(ου)/-ί(ου)* to most paradigms)
c. *βασιλόπουλλον* / gen.sg *βασιλοπούλλον-ος*¹⁶
(Lianidis 1962: 190)

Quite surprisingly, a productive genitive with the suffix *-ος* is attested, which shows once again the role of stress movement in the development of defective diminutive genitives:

- (20) *το κεφάλόπον ατ’ πα πουλ-όπον-ος ομοιάζε* (<*πουλ-όπον* <*πουλίν*)
“its head looked like that of a little bird”
(Selidou-Theodoulidou 2012)

4.2.5 Southern Italy

The ι-neuter diminutive suffixes are not as frequent in Italiot possibly due to the use of Italian Romance suffixes. The only example of a possessive use of an ι-neuter diminutive that I have encountered in narratives and studies is the following:

¹³ <-**όπλον* <*όπουλλον*, which is normally used for offsprings or young individuals, e.g. *βασιλόπουλλον* “king’s son” (<*βασιλέας*).

¹⁴ The researcher clarifies that nouns that end in *-όπουλλον* (<*πουλλίν* “bird”) are not diminutives, but compound nouns that denote a separate entity, namely the offspring of humans or animals, and thus are not defective.

¹⁵ <*-ί(ου)* due to the extension of the ending *-ί(ου)* of ι-neuters to most masculine and neuter paradigms.

¹⁶ Cf. *λύκον* / gen.sg *λύκον-ος* in the dialect and the extension of the third declension *-ος* to o-masculines.

- (21) *του μουνν-άτσι-Ø* (<**μουνν-ατσι-ου*, n/a.sg *μουνν-άτσι* <*μουννί* “vagina”)
(Rohlf’s 1971: 153)

This is indirect evidence of the productivity of ι-diminutive genitives, as this type of indeclinable genitive can be found with most ι-neuter nouns and not just diminutives:

- (22) *ο τσιούρη-Ø του παιτί-Ø* “the father’s child”
Sternatía, Salento (Stomeo 1980: 120)

The absence of the expected genitive *παιτί-ου* here can be attributed to the frequent merger between the nominative forms of the masculine and the neuter article, e.g. *ο τσιούρη* (<**ο κύρης*) “the father”/ *το παιτί* “the child” (N) → *ο παιτί*.

4.2.6 Zakynthos and Kefalonia

The lack of synizesis in Zakynthos and Kefalonia is quite limited compared to the rest of the dialects in discussion, thus they constitute indirect evidence. Nonetheless, some signs of maintenance of diminutive genitives are attested:

- (23) a. *το σκοινί μανού καμπαν-ελι-ού* (<*καμπαν-έλι* <*καμπάνα*)
“the rope of a small bell”
Kefalonia, Heptanese (Skiadaresis 1959: 128)
b. *του Λυκουδιού* (place name <*λύκος* “wolf” + *-ούδι*)
Zakynthos, Heptanese (Minotou 1933: 27)

5. Conclusions

The examination of data from these dialects which show little or no synizesis at all in the vowel sequences /’iu/, /’io/ indicate that the lack of movement from the derivational to the inflectional suffix does facilitate a greater degree of ι-diminutive genitive maintenance. However, as has been shown, the morphophonological ease of a case form does not guarantee its productivity, as various other factors like suffix reanalysis or language and dialect contact could also lead to the opposite direction (cf. 4.2.3, 4.2.4, 4.2.5).

Similarly, the lack of morphophonological ease does not guarantee the defectivity of a form, as was shown clearly in the case of many insular Southern Greek dialects in which the maintenance of ι-diminutive genitives can be attributed to their generally higher degree of use of the genitive.

Turning to the majority of the varieties in the Greek-speaking worlds and Common Modern Greek, ι-diminutive genitives were quite possibly in use until the establishment of synizesis (c. 13th-14th c.). After this period, the diminutive genitives did not undergo synizesis, as speakers preferred to avoid their use because of their marked stress position, in favor of morphologically unmarked alternatives (suppletion). This is supported by Karlsson (2000), who notes that the creation of a form is blocked if an already available item has the same meaning or function; for example, **stealer* was never formed from the verb *steal* and the derivational suffix *-er* (cf. *receive* - *receiver*)

because it was blocked by the already available noun *thief* that covered the need to express that meaning.

	-SYNIZESIS (before 13 th c.)		+/-SYNIZESIS (around 13 th c.)		+SYNIZESIS (after 13 th c.)	
n./a.sg	<i>παιδί(-ν)</i>	<i>παιδ-άκι(-ν)</i>	<i>παιδί</i>	<i>παιδ-άκι</i>	<i>παιδί</i>	<i>παιδ-άκι</i>
gen.sg	<i>παιδί-ου</i>	<i>παιδ-ακί-ου</i>	<i>παιδί-ου/ παιδι-ού</i>	<i>παιδ-ακί-ου /-∅</i>	<i>παιδί-ου</i>	<i>-∅</i>
n./a.pl	<i>παιδί-α</i>	<i>παιδ-άκι-α</i>	<i>παιδί-α/ παιδι-ά</i>	<i>παιδ-άκι-α</i>	<i>παιδι-ά</i>	<i>παιδ-άκι-α</i>
gen.pl	<i>παιδί-ων</i>	<i>παιδ-ακί-ων</i>	<i>παιδί-ων/ παιδι-ών</i>	<i>παιδ-ακί-ων /-∅</i>	<i>παιδι-ών</i>	<i>-∅</i>

Table 4: The process of defectivity

Finally, this analysis can also explain the defectivity of compound nouns, as they would also require stress movement from the second element to the inflectional suffix, e.g. *σταυρο-δρόμι* “crossroad”/ gen.sg *σταυρο-δρομι-ού*. As regards the defectivity of a very small number of simplex nouns, it can be observed that they have very low possessive functionality, as they are all inanimate, and limited morphological status (a few of them are *pluralia tantum*, e.g. *παρακάλια* “begging”), while a few of them are recent loanwords of low frequency, e.g. *αντέτι* “habit” (<Turkish *adet*). In contrast, loans of higher frequency were able to acquire productive genitive forms, e.g. *γκάζι/γκάζι-ού/γκάζι-ών* “gas”.

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