

## ELEMENTS WITH AMBIGUOUS MORPHOLOGICAL STATUS: THE MARKER *-IDZ(O)* IN GRIKO\*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

It is generally acknowledged that cross-linguistically meaningful (or lexical) elements may become more grammatical (or functional) in the course of time. The historical process which characterizes this kind of phenomena is generally referred to as *grammaticalization*.

Grammaticalization in word formation is a rather understudied phenomenon (Wischer, 2011). An often cited example is the development of derivational affixes whose origin can be traced back to autonomous lexical units (cf. Bauer, 1983; Ralli, 2013). However, less attention has been paid to the transition from derivation to inflection. In the present paper, we address this issue with the help of data from Griko, a Greek linguistic variety in South Italy spoken by approximately 20,000 speakers in nine neighbouring villages, situated in the centre of the Salentine peninsula.

We focus on a number of verbs which display both an ‘unaugmented’ and an ‘augmented’ form with *-idz(o)* and we show that certain association patterns between these two verbal forms have emerged. In these formations the otherwise genuine verb-forming suffix *-idz(o)* fails to meet the criteria of prototypical derivational affixes, that is, *-idz(o)* is categorially neutral and

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semantically empty, although in another context, it can still act as a verbalizer transforming nouns into verbs. We claim that *-idz(o)* has acquired the property of an inflection-class indicator in this type of formations. We also propose that the driving force behind this change is a general tendency for cross-paradigmatic levelling within the dialect. We argue that *-idz(o)* can serve as a pattern for the accommodation of verbs of the second inflection class (IC2) to the most frequent first inflection class (IC1).

## 2. VERBAL FORMATIONS IN GRIKO

Griko has been in contact with Standard Italian and the local Romance varieties (Salentino) for a long time. However, it has preserved the main structural characteristics of Greek, particularly with respect to word formation (cf. Colotti, 1997). For instance, it is a highly fusional and strongly suffixing language with a rich derivational system.

Like Standard Modern Greek (henceforth SMG) and all Modern Greek dialects, Griko has a number of verb-forming suffixes (verbalizers), which attach to nominal and adjectival bases. These verbalizers flag the verbal category, define the inflection class, carry stress, and allow the item to receive a Greek inflectional ending (see Ralli, 1988, 2005). For an illustration, consider the following examples, taken from SMG:

### (1) SMG formations

psar-év-o <sup>1</sup> ‘to fish’	<	psár-i ‘fish’
N-VBZR-INFL <sup>2</sup>		N.NEU-INFL
afr-íz-o ‘to foam’	<	afr-ós ‘foam’
N-VBZR-INFL		N.MASC-INFL
kamak-ón-o ‘to catch with a fish spear’	<	kamá-k-i ‘fish spear’
N-VBZR-INFL		N.NEU-INFL
zest-én-o ‘to heat up’	<	zest-ós ‘warm’
N-VBZR-INFL		ADJ.MASC-INFL

<sup>1</sup> Examples are given in a broad phonological transcription. Unless otherwise mentioned, verbs are conventionally given in the citation form, that is, in the first person singular of the present tense, and nouns are given in the nominative singular form. When needed, the inflectional material is given in parentheses.

<sup>2</sup> Glossing and abbreviations follow – mutatis mutandis – the *Leipzig Glossing Rules* (available at: <<http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>>). The following abbreviations have also been used for the analysis of the data in this paper: N=noun, V=verb, MASC=male, NEU=neuter, VBZR=verbalizer, INFL=inflectional suffix.

As far as Griko is concerned, *-idz(o)*<sup>3</sup> and *-ev(o)* are productively used as verbalizers, attaching to nominals in order to form both transitive and intransitive verbs:

## (2) Griko formations

klat-é(v)-o <sup>4</sup> ‘to lop off’	<	klat-í ‘branch’
N-VBZR-INFL		N.NEU-INFL
xor-é(v)-o ‘to dance’	<	xor-ós ‘dance’
N-VBZR-INFL		N.MASC-INFL
θer-idz-o ‘to reap’	<	θér-os ‘reaping’
N-VBZR-INFL		N.MASC-INFL

As has been argued by Ralli (2013), *-ev(o)* and *-idz(o)* show an interesting distribution: *-ev(o)* is the suffix that is called into play for the accommodation of verbs of Italian/Romance origin<sup>5</sup>, whereas *-idz(o)* seems to be confined to formations with a Greek base:

## (3) Griko loan verb integration

nat-é-o ‘to swim’	<	nature ‘to swim’ (Salentino)
V-VBZR-INFL		
kunt-é-o ‘to narrate’	<	kuntare ‘to narrate’ (Salentino)
V-VBZR-INFL		
vs.		
koššin-idz-o ‘to sift’	<	kóššin-o ‘sifter’ (Greek)
N-VBZR-INFL		N.NEU-INFL

3. THE *-IDZ(O)* SUFFIX

The Griko verbs in *-idz(o)* form an heterogeneous group which includes the following subgroups (cf. also Karanastasis, 1997: 94):

<sup>3</sup> *-idz(o)* is the equivalent of the SMG verb-forming suffix *-iz(o)*. In Griko, /z/ becomes /dz/ or /zz/ for phonological reasons (Karanastasis, 1997: 34).

<sup>4</sup> In Griko, /v/ is deleted in the intervocalic position (Karanastasis, 1997: 34).

<sup>5</sup> It is worth noticing that in Griko verbal loans, only the Romance root is retained; the Romance ending is truncated and replaced by the Greek verbalizer *-e(v)-* and the Greek inflectional ending (Ralli, 2013).

(i) Verbs which are directly inherited from Ancient Greek:

(4) $\theta\epsilon\text{r-}\acute{\iota}\text{d}\text{z-o}$ ‘to reap’	<	$\theta\acute{\epsilon}\text{r-os}$ ‘reaping’
N-VBZR-INFL		N.NEU-INFL

(ii) Synchronic formations where *-idz(o)* functions as a verbalizer:

(5) $\text{alat-}\acute{\iota}\text{d}\text{z-o}$ ‘to salt’	<	$\text{al}\acute{\alpha}\text{t-i}$ ‘salt’
N-VBZR-INFL		N.NEU-INFL

(iii) Verbal formations displaying *-idz-* between the verbal base and the inflectional ending (henceforth, ‘augmented formations’):

(6) $\text{apor-}\acute{\omicron}$ ‘to lack’	vs.	$[\text{apor-}\acute{\iota}\text{d}\text{z-o}]_v$ ‘to lack’
V-INFL		V-IDZ-INFL

It is important to notice that in subgroup (iii), most verbs originate in the Ancient Greek contract verbs, e.g. *agapáo*: > *agapó*: ‘to love’, which have always been inflected according to IC2<sup>6</sup>. However, in Griko, *-idz(o)* has also been extended to verbs which do not originate in the old contract verbs, but are synchronically inflected in the same manner as the former, that is, according to IC2. For an illustration, consider the following verb borrowed from Latin:

(7) $\text{akkoumb-}\acute{\omicron}$ ‘to lean’	→	$\text{akkoumb-}\acute{\iota}\text{d}\text{z-o}$ ‘to lean’
V-INFL		V-IDZ-INFL

### 3.1. *idzo*: A case of grammaticalization?

A fundamental question that arises now is the grammatical/ morphological nature of *-idz(o)* in the verbs of subgroup (iii). Interestingly, in these formations, *-idz(o)* displays a phonological and structural behavior similar to the behavior of the genuine verbalizer *-idz(o)* (see 8b), as well as to that of the other verbalizer *-ev(o)* (see 8a). For instance, it carries stress and signals the inflection class, i.e. IC1, of the construction as a whole:

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<sup>6</sup> These Ancient Greek verbs have been called ‘contract verbs’ because their stem-final/thematic vowel (/a/, /e/ or /o/) was fused together with the initial vowel of the inflectional ending due to a phonological rule of contraction. This rule had already disappeared in the Hellenistic period (ca 3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC – 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD), but its effects are still valid.

- |            |                       |         |                  |
|------------|-----------------------|---------|------------------|
| (8) a. IC1 | xor-é(v)-o ‘to dance’ | <       | xor-ós ‘dance’   |
|            | N-VBZR-INFL           |         | N-INFL           |
| b. IC1     | θer-íd-z-o ‘to reap’  | <       | θér-os ‘reaping’ |
|            | N-VBZR-INFL           |         | N-INFL           |
| c. IC1     | apor-íd-z-o ‘to lack’ | vs. IC2 | apor-ó ‘to lack’ |
|            | V-IDZ-INFL            |         | V-INFL           |

These properties suggest that *-idz(o)* behaves like a derivational suffix. However, there is still question of whether *idz(o)* meets the criteria of a prototypical derivational suffix in the formations like that of subgroup c. Let us examine the criteria:

- (a) *-idz(o)* does not affect the lexical category of the base. Following Ralli (1988, 2005), Greek morphologically complex items have a stem base, which is inherently specified as to its lexical/grammatical category<sup>7</sup>. Thus, both stems in (8c) are specified as verbs, suggesting that the addition of *idz(o)* does not bring any categorial information to the formation as a whole.
- (b) The augmented formations do not display any semantic difference with respect to their unaugmented counterparts, and thus *-idz(o)* does not signal any particular semantic relation between the two.
- (c) Formations belonging to the same pair, i.e. with or without *idz(o)*, do not show any difference in their argument structure or aspectual values.

These criteria show that no meaning or categorial function can be assigned to *-idz(o)* in the formations of subgroup (iii) in (6). However, the change of inflection class in the specific formations with *-idz(o)* suggests that we need to examine whether this element has been subject to grammaticalization.

Kuryłowicz’s (1975: 69) has defined grammaticalization as:

the increase of the range of a morpheme advancing from a lexical to a grammatical or from a grammatical to a more grammatical status.

On this assumption, the question that comes next is whether one could assume that *-idz(o)* has acquired a real inflectional status. Consider the following verbal pairs in table 1. In this table, we notice that unaugmented

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<sup>7</sup> Ralli’s analysis is based on the lexicalist framework, while within a different theoretical model, e.g. D(istributed) M(orphology), roots or stems do not bear any categorial specifications. In accordance to DM, Drachman (p.c.) argues that *-idz-* is attached to an unspecified root, turning it into a verb.

formations inflect according to IC2, while augmented formations belong to IC1 and that the only formal difference between the corresponding verbs is the presence (or absence) of *-idz-*. A great number of IC2 verbs show both an unaugmented and an augmented form with *-idz(o)* and certain patterns of associations between these two stems have emerged. Thus, we would like to propose that *-idz(o)* in this particular context is used as a *building block* for the accommodation of specific verbs to the first inflection class. In other words, *idz(o)* in the specific formations behaves like a simple formative which signals the inflection class.

TABLE 1: *-idz(o)* formations in Griko

UNAUUGMENTED FORMATIONS	AUGMENTED FORMATIONS
ayap-ó ‘to love’ IC2 V-INFL	[ayap-idz-o] <sub>v</sub> ‘to love’ IC1 V-IDZ-INFL
katar-ó ‘to curse’ IC2 V-INFL	[katar-izz-o] <sub>v</sub> ‘to curse’ IC1 V-IDZ-INFL
vast-ó ‘to hold’ IC2 V-INFL	[vast-idz-o] <sub>v</sub> ‘to hold’ IC1 V-IDZ-INFL

In this view, we could claim that *-idz(o)* has acquired a rather inflectional status. However, this status is not morphosyntactic, but rather purely morphological, since, contrary to the other inflectional features, the feature of inflection class does not have any syntactic relevance. Thus, *-idz(o)* in these particular augmented cases can be considered as a stem-forming morph or a *morphome* (cf. Aronoff, 1994). As Aronoff (1994: 44) puts it: “The morphomic function [...] is the equivalent of what Hockett [...] calls an empty morph. [...]” and regarding the function of this type of elements, Aronoff claims that “It has long been noticed that stem-forming morphs or operations may be semantically empty”.

The grammaticalization of derivational material is not common but not unknown cross-linguistically. For instance, Kuryłowicz (1975: 69) mentions the evolution of collective suffixes (derivational morphemes) which have become markers of plural (inflectional morphemes), as evidenced by the development of the Slavic collective *-ja, -je*.

Another interesting case can be found in the development of Italian from Latin. In the Italian verb system, we find verbs such as *sentire* ‘feel, hear,

smell, perceive, sense’ and *percepire* ‘perceive, sense’, which have the same formal make-up (stem+inflectional suffix), except that in the first, second and third persons of the singular number and in the third person of the plural of the Present indicative paradigm – and only in these cells – *percepire*, unlike *sentire*, displays an element *-isc-* immediately after the lexical stem. This element, which is a relic of the Latin derivational suffix *-sc-*, can be assumed to serve as an inflection-class indicator (see Vincent, 1988; Maiden, 2003). Nevertheless, the difference between the Griko and the Italian cases is that, unlike *-idz-*, the Italian *-isc-* does not retain any features of its former derivational character.

We believe that the triggering force behind the change of its status is a tendency shown in Griko to eliminate variation in its inflectional system by levelling its inflection classes in favour of IC1, which, according to Karanastasis (1997) and Katsoyiannou (1995), is the most frequent and the most productively used one. To this matter, we propose that the emergence of certain patterns of association between the augmented and unaugmented forms of verbs serves as a useful strategy for the levelling of the system.

It is important to underline that *-idz(o)* has not entirely lost its former derivational character: it is still productively added to nominal bases in order to form verbs, and, as shown in (8), still carries its phonological and structural properties which characterize a derivational suffix. The coexistence of the old status together with a new, more functional one is to be expected since, during the process of grammaticalization, the old and the new properties may co-exist (Heine, 2003). However, it should be pointed out that the different properties of *-idz(o)* are manifested in different contexts: *-idz(o)* as derivational suffix is attached to nominal bases, while *-idz(o)* as inflection-class indicator is combined with verbal ones.

### 3.2. *Why -idz(o)?*

In this section, we raise the question of why only *-idz(o)* – but not *-ev(o)* – underwent a change of status by acquiring a more grammatical function. In other words, *what makes -idz(o) more prone to a grammaticalization process?*

To answer this question, a variety of factors should be taken into account. Hatzidakis (1905) and Karanastasis (1997) first observed an important similarity between the Aorist [+perfective, +past] stem forms of verbs in *-idz(o)*, which inflect according to IC1, and those of verbs of IC2: the fact that a certain stem ends in /i/ prompts the selection of a suffix beginning with /i/ and thus paradigmatic pressure leads to the change of the Present stem and the addition of this ‘augmented’.

This is shown below, where IC1 verbs having a derivational suffix other than *-idz(o)*, for example *-ev(o)* (see Table 3), have different Aorist stems from those of verbs of IC2 (Table 4). On the contrary, verbs bearing *-idz(o)* (Table 2) have the same Aorist stem forms, as far as the stem-final vowel is concerned, with those of verbs inflected according to IC2 (Table 4). For an illustration, consider the paradigms of the Present and the Aorist tenses of the verbs *alatídzo* ‘to salt’ (IC1), *xoréo* ‘to dance’ (IC1) and *agapó* ‘to love’ (IC2):

TABLE 2: Griko IC1, *alatídzo* ‘to salt’, bearing *-idz(o)*

	PRESENT	AORIST
1 SG	alatíd-z-o	aláti-s-a <sup>8</sup>
2 SG	alatíd-z-is	aláti-s-es
3 SG	alatíd-z-i	aláti-s-e
1 PL	alatíd-z-ome	alati-s-ame / alati-s-amo
2 PL	alatíd-z-ete	alati-s-ato
3 PL	alatíd-z-une	alati-s-ane

TABLE 3: Griko IC1, *xoréo* ‘to dance’, bearing *-ev(o)*

	PRESENT	AORIST
1 SG	xoré-o (< xorévo)	exóret-s-a (< exórev-s-a)
2 SG	xoré-is	exóret-s-es
3 SG	xoré-i	exóret-s-e
1 PL	xoré-ome	exorét-s-ame / exoré-ts-amo
2 PL	xoré-ete > xoréte	exorét-s-ato
3 PL	xoré-une	exorét-s-ane

<sup>8</sup> In the Aorist forms, *-s-* indicates the [+perfective] aspectual value, while the ending incorporates the features [+past], [person], and [number].

TABLE 4: Griko IC2, *agapó* ‘to love’

	PRESENT	AORIST
1 SG	agap-ó	agápi-s-a
2 SG	agap-ás	agápi-s-es
3 SG	agap-á	agápi-s-e
1 PL	agap-úme	agápi-s-amo / egapi-s-ame
2 PL	agap-úte	agápi-s-ato
3 PL	agap-úne	agápi-s-ane

We suggest that the phonological similarity between the stem final vowel of the Aorist forms of verbs in *-idz(o)* and the stem final vowel of those of IC2 has significantly contributed to the cross-paradigmatic levelling of the Griko verbal system.

However, contrary to Hatzidakis (1905), we believe that this phonological similarity is not the driving force behind the change, but an important factor which facilitates the process. Significant evidence for this assertion comes from the fact that we never come across the reverse process in the formation of the Present forms; that is, we never find formations that originally have a verbalizer *-idz(o)* to display a parallel form without the verbalizer. In fact, if the process had as its only cause the phonological similarity of the forms, we would also expect to find verbs built according to the inverse process. As mentioned in the previous section, we claim that the motivation for the change must be the tendency to eliminate inflectional variation by reshaping verbs of the less productive class (IC2) on the basis of the most productive one, that is, IC1.

#### 4. FROM DERIVATION TO INFLECTION: CONTINUUM, PROBLEMS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The examination of the Griko data brings to light a number of formations in which the otherwise genuine verb-forming suffix *idz(o)*, when attached to IC2 verbs, is reanalyzed as an inflection-class indicator. We have argued that although *-idz(o)* keeps its derivational character when combined with nominals, its addition to verbs serves as a useful pattern for their accommodation according to the most productive IC1. Thus, this element can be reinterpreted as signaling membership in the default inflection class of the verbal system. An

important factor for this change is the tendency shown in Griko to eliminate complexity by levelling inflection classes.

These facts suggest that there is an interaction between inflection and derivation in the course of time and support the claim by Brinton & Traugott (2005: 87), who argue that

the consensus seems to be that derivation and inflection, which prototypically do have different functions, form a continuum not only synchronically but also diachronically.

However, it should be mentioned that this process is not unrestricted and that the whole process is rather uncommon. For example, as Hüning (2012) states, hardly ever can a derivational element become a morphosyntactic inflectional one. In the light of data analysed in this paper, we would like to propose that if a derivational element is to be grammaticalized, a possible developmental path to follow is to acquire a morphomic status, that is, a purely morphological status.

Finally, the reason why Griko shows a tendency for cross-paradigmatic levelling, while other Modern Greek dialects preserve a strong distinction of verbs into two inflection classes, remains an open problem. We believe that both extra-linguistic (such as language contact) and intra-linguistic factors (such as language-internal pressures) play a major role in the development of this tendency. We leave this matter for future research.

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