

THE LISTENER'S VIEW OF STYLE AND THE LEXICON: ATTITUDES TO /i/ AND /j/ IN LEXICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS

C. Anton Rytting

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Περίληψη

Οι ρυθμιστικοί παράγοντες της συνίζησης και της χασμωδίας στα νεοελληνικά έχουν προκαλέσει μακρά συζήτηση. Άλλες εξηγήσεις (π.χ. Καζάζης [1968,1992]) υπονοούν ότι η εμφανής προέλευση μίας λέξης (ή εναλλακτικά το πόσο δόκιμη είναι) επηρεάζει την προφορά της. Άλλες εξηγήσεις (π.χ. Nyman [1981]) αντιπαρέχονται αυτό τον παράγοντα. Ο Πετρούνας (1987) αναφέρει την συχνότητα της λέξης ως έναν άλλο παράγοντα, λέγοντας ότι «οι σπανιότερες λέξεις προσαρμόζονται λιγότερο», ιδιαίτερα αν οι λέξεις ακούγονται πιο επίσημες. Ως εξέταση της επίδρασης της συχνότητας και της οικειότητας των λέξεων με {-ia} στην προφορά της, διεξάχθηκαν δυο πειράματα κατά τα οποία δέκα ελληνόφωνοι άκουσαν ορισμένες λέξεις με την προφορά /i/ (π.χ. «σχέδια») και /j/ (π.χ. «πόδια»). Στη συνέχεια αξιολόγησαν τις λέξεις για (1) το πόσο γνωστές ήταν, (2) το πόσο φυσιολογικές φάνηκαν σε τόπο ανεπίσημης κουβέντας, και (3) το πόσο φυσιολογικές φάνηκαν σε τόπο επίσημων διαδικασιών. Στο πρώτο πείραμα άκουσαν σωστές προφορές. Στο δεύτερο άκουσαν και λανθασμένες προφορές, π.χ., [σχέ.δja] και [πό.δι.a]. Τα αποτελέσματα των πειραμάτων συμφωνούν με την πρόρρηση του Πετρούνα.

Λέξεις - κλειδιά

συνίζηση, συχνότητα της λέξης, συλλαβισμός, ορολογία

Kostas Kazazis in his discussion of "Sunday Greek" 35 years ago, made an observation about a particular hypercorrection he observed during a tape-recorded interview with one of his students. As Kazazis (1968) told it, this young man was quite intimidated both by the tape recorder and by the professor himself, and produced the following non-natural pronunciation:

- (1) *βρά[ci.]α 'rocks' (instead of βρά[c]α)

We may assume this did *not* represent natural speech for the young man, but Kazazis (1968) claimed that there is something deeper to be learned from the hypercorrection. Specifically, he used it as evidence for the underlying representation of βράχια. The young student's error was evidence that MG spelling closely resembles the underlying phonological representation of MG words in the mind, and that "people often make heavy use of underlying or near-underlying phonological forms when they are under certain conditions of emotional stress... [or] talking to foreigners or to children" (1968). In a sense, they "forget" to apply the rules. An abstract representation of the rule hypothesized for (1) is shown below:

- (2a) Palatalize velars before front vowels (/i/ or /e/).
(2b) Change an unstressed /i/ to /j/ next to another vowel.

/i/ → [-syllabic] // % V $\left[\overline{-stress} \right]$ (Glide Formation Rule; cf. also Nyman 1981)

(2c) Delete non-syllabic /j/ after palatal consonants.¹

The assumption that spelling, formal varieties, or even earlier stages of the language reflects underlying forms is of course highly debatable, especially if underlying forms are assumed to be learnable by pre-literate children. There are, moreover, words where a fully syllabic /i/ is perfectly normal:

- (3a) *ἱμάτιο*, *ἱμάτια* 'garment(s)'
(3b) *εμβόλιο*, *εμβόλια* 'vaccination(s)'
(3c) *δωμάτιο*, *δωμάτια* 'room(s)', etc. (Nyman 1981)

How do Kazazis' rules know which words to change and which to leave alone? Kazazis assumed that words in (3) are marked in the lexicon as borrowings of [+learned origin], and that (2b,c) are obligatory only in inherited (demotic) words.

With this claim Kazazis added his voice to a controversy that had already been raging for some time, and seems not to have been resolved even today. The two principal sides are those who argue for a unitary phoneme behind all instances of orthographic {i} (usually accompanied by some sort of feature to get the right words in the right place), and those who represent the split between the words with two different underlying phonemes /i/ and /j/.² A partial bibliography of each side is given below.

One-phoneme accounts

The rule-based or one-phoneme approach is taken not only by Kazazis (1968, 1992), but also by Malavakis (1984), Nikolopoulos (1985), Warburton (1976), and enshrined in Holton et al.'s (1997) reference grammar. Arvaniti (1999) also assumes it in passing, on the grounds that it makes the morphology of the language simpler to describe.

Evidence for the allophonic view comes from not just from the history of the language, but also from certain synchronic phenomena such sociolinguistic variation and language acquisition. Kazazis (1968) claims (1) as evidence for /vracia/ as the underlying form. However, given that *βράχια* is spelled with an orthographic {i} in Greek, the hypercorrection could be based on "spelling pronunciation" just as plausibly as an underlying /i/ in the speaker's native lexicon.

More convincing is Thomadaki & Magoula's (1998) finding that young children acquiring MG show two patterns of deviation before acquiring /j/ and its associated palatal consonants. Some (particularly at earlier stages) delete /j/ entirely (and de-palatalize palatal consonants). Other children, particularly at later stages, produce a semi-vocalic or even fully syllabic /i/ (following either a palatal or non-palatal consonant). This same effect is also found in previous studies of child-speech (cited in Thomadaki & Magoula 1998). Although very interesting in its implications, this data is based on very small samples of children, and should be established with a broader base of data, as the authors themselves emphasize.

Nikolopoulos (1985) further accounts for the underlying variation on certain words such as *teliono* 'finish', which shows variation between two different accentuation patterns in its past

(*tel.yo.sa* & *te.li.o.sa*) though an underspecified (or doubly marked) [learned origin] feature. In contrast, those who posit the /j/ phoneme would need two separate but synonymous lexical items for *tel{i/j}ono*.

Two-phoneme accounts

The main opposing view is that /j/ is simply a separate phoneme from /i/. Held by e.g., Householder (1964), Newton (1961,1972), Nyman (1981), Setatos (1974), and implicitly assumed in the lexical pronunciations given in the Triandafyllidis dictionary (1999), this seems to be the majority view, but by no means universally accepted.

The most compelling evidence for this position is the existence of minimal pairs between /i/ and /j/.³ There are a number of minimal pairs in the current language both homographs and non-, as shown in (4):

(4a) Spelling	Syllabic /i./ (gloss)	Desyllabified /j/	(gloss)
	δόλιος [ðo.li.os] ‘devious’	/ do.ljos/ [ðo.ɫos]	‘poor ...!’
	ἄδεια [a.ði.a] ‘license’	/ad.ja/ [a.ðja]	‘empty.N.PL/ F.SG’
	σκιάζω [sci.a.zo] ‘I shade’	/scja.zo/ [sca.zo]	‘I scare’
(b) Spelling	Syllabic /i./ (gloss)	Spelling	Desyllabified /j/ (gloss)
	κάλιο [ka.li.o] ‘potassium’	κάλλιο / ka.ljo/	[ka.ɫo] ‘better’
	όπιον [o.pi.on] ‘opium’	όποιον	/o.pjon/ [o.pɕon] ‘whomever’
	φυλάκια [fi.la.ci.a] ‘guardposts’	φιλάκια / fi.la.cja/	[fi.la.ca] ‘little kisses’

In this view, no other evidence is really necessary, since minimal pairs by definition force a phonemic analysis. The fact that even those words with underlying syllabic /i/ can optionally be de-syllabified (partially if not completely obscuring the lexical contrast) is accounted for by an articulation reduction rule applied during fast speech. In response to the purported sociolinguistic differences between /i/ and /j/, Nyman (1981) replies: “[Glide Formation] is scarcely such a watershed between Katharevousa and Demotike as is, say, the manner dissimilation: ptochos [+Kath] / ftochos [+Dem]. ...”

Sidestepping the debate

This paper, while certainly cognizant of the phonemicization debate, will not attempt to address it directly. Indeed, direct, unequivocal evidence for either position is a tall order. Rather, this paper will deal with a theme more closely related to the evidence presented in Kazazis (1968, 1992), namely, the socially contextualized intuitions of native speakers. While Kazazis (1968) deals with normative pressure from the High register (Katharevousa), Kazazis (1992) explores the contrary pressures from both High and Low, as well as the changing nature of the standard itself.

Despite the flux of the changing linguistic situation, however, we would expect certain degree of consistency in the social affect of particular sound patterns and the words that contain

them, and particularly for those that are known to have been a distinct point of difference in the phonologies of Katharevousa and Demotiki. We have reviewed three differing opinions on the social significance of /j/ vs. /i/ : Nyman (1981), who implies that it is not significant enough to take notice of; Kazazis (1968, 1992) and Nikolopoulos (1985), who accord it sufficient salience to accord it a place (through the [learned origin] feature) in the native speaker's grammar.

Malavakis (1984) goes further, stating that "in the current state of things, where the demotic language is not yet settled in view of sociolinguistic factors ([or] context of the communicative situation), one may observe that the diphthongs are very unstable [in their] phonological status; it is hence difficult to classify them among the phonemes of the language" (my translation).

Naturally, there is middle ground between these viewpoints; one can hold, for example, that /i/ and /j/ are separate phonemes, but that speakers feel an "interlectal awareness" of their divergent sociolinguistic history, just as speakers are aware of the special status of /tz/ and /dz/ (see Joseph (1992)). However, the question of interlectal awareness in this instance is an empirical one, and one worth revisiting in its own right, given the changing state of the language. If such an awareness has disappeared from the language, then an account based on a [learned origin] feature is unlikely at best. If it is still present, however, then the role it plays in maintaining the distinction between /i/ & /j/ is open to further exploration.

Intuitively, given that [+learned origin] words generally--and words with [i.a] in hiatus particularly--are associated historically with Katharevousa, we would expect these words by and large to be more appropriate in formal situations, and perhaps less appropriate in informal situations. In order to operationalize this, we focus then on formal and informal contexts, and see if our difference lies there. However, in making this determination, we will want to control for frequency and familiarity: more frequent or familiar words may correspondingly more appropriate in any circumstance, formal or informal.⁴

Indeed, the role that word frequency plays in the /i/ ~ /j/ distinction may turn out to be interesting in its own right. First, highly frequent words might, through their general usage in many different contexts, come to lose any special distinction as [+learned origin]. Secondly, several scholars (e.g., Hooper 1976, Phillips 1984, 2001) have noted sound changes involving reduction (such as desyllabification) typically affect the most frequent words first, but sound changes involving some type of analysis (in this case, reference to spelling, morphology, and social factors) affect the least frequent words first. In other words, items that the speakers have only rarely encountered are more vulnerable to the effects (whether good or bad) of analytic processes.

Petrounias (1987) predicted for MG specifically: "Στα άτομα '-ια παρατηρείται τάση για εφαρμογή του κανόνα της συνίζησης, με πρώτο στάδιο την τροπή του [i] σε ημίφωνο. Η εφαρμογή ή η μη εφαρμογή του κανόνα εξαρτάται από πολλούς παράγοντες. [...] Φυσικά, σπανιότερες λέξεις προσαρμόζονται λιγότερο ή καθόλου. [...] Τέλος, είναι πιθανό η δυνατότητα ολοκληρωμένης μορφολογικής ανάλυσης, δηλαδή η ύπαρξη αναγνωρίσιμου λόγιου επιθήματος και όχι μόνο κάποιας γενικής 'κατάληξης', να δυσχεραίνει την προσαρμογή."

To my knowledge, the specific claim that rare words apply GF less has not been formally tested. One goal of this paper is verify this claim. Data on actual production studies in a variety of social contexts is not currently available. However, preliminary insight on the question may be obtained through a few simple surveys of native listeners' intuitions regarding the social implications of these variables.

Experiment 1

Materials

A list of twenty matched pairs of words, consisting of neuter plural and feminine singular nouns and adjectives ending in $\{-\iota\}$, was compiled. These pairs were controlled for wordform frequency and further divided into ten high-frequency and ten low-frequency pairs, with frequency determined by the ILSP's Hellenic National Corpus (Hatzigeorgiu et al. 2000). Each of the high-frequency words was found to have a frequency of at least 170, with an average frequency of 551 for /j/-words and 693 for /i/-words. The low-frequency words each occurred fewer than 60 times in the corpus, and had average frequencies of 20.1 (/j/) and 20.6 (/i/). The difference between the frequencies of the high- and low-frequency groups was significant ($p < .05$).

The slightly greater frequency for the /i/ items in both lists is intentional: it prevents effects of phoneme and frequency from being confounded (as they would be if the inequality went the other direction). However, a matched-pair t-test did not find this slight bias to be significant ($p > .2$).

In eight of the ten high-frequency pairs, the words come from two distinct morphological classes that predict the appropriate realization of the orthographic {i}. For the /j/ list, the singular nom/acc form ends in /-i/; for the /i/ list, the singular ends in /-i.o/. Pairs are matched by number of syllables, word type (feminine noun, neuter noun, or adjective), and preceding consonant, as well as frequency.⁵

The 40 test words were combined with 19 pilot items and 85 fillers for a total of 144 items, in four counterbalanced orderings. Each participant listened to each item.

Participants

Ten native speakers of MG (6 male, 4 female) participated in the experiment ranging in age from 20 to 50. Six were interviewed in Columbus, Ohio, and four in the area around Athens, Greece. None reported a history of hearing or speech impairment.

Method

The participants listened over headphones to a series of words being pronounced by a native speaker of Greek. They were asked to rate each word according to three 7-point scales: one scale of general familiarity, and two of stylistic appropriateness:

- (1) How familiar are you with this word generally?

- (2) How natural would it be to use/ hear this word among close friends in a bar or coffeehouse (assuming the topic of conversation made it relevant)?
- (3) How natural would it be to use/ hear this word with your lawyer, in court, with a priest, or in church (again, assuming the topic of conversation made it relevant)?

The stimuli were presented in a counterbalanced order, using the E-Prime experiment design studio (Schneider et al. 2002).

Analysis

Frequency & Familiarity

Familiarity ratings are very strongly correlated with the HNC word frequency (Spearman's $\rho = .832$, $p < .001$). On average, high-frequency words were 1.2 points higher on the familiarity scale than low-frequency words. Nevertheless, there is an effect of word type on familiarity: the average rating for /j/ words were found to be 0.6 points higher than for /i/ words (Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test $Z = -2.13$, $p = .03$).

If familiarity is a good approximation for perceived frequency of everyday spoken Greek, this suggests that the HNC is a biased sample, in that /i/ words show up more frequently, and /j/ words less frequently, than they ought for spoken Greek. While this is by no means a surprising finding (given that the HNC is mostly derived from news-text, textbooks, and the like), it is worth bearing in mind in interpreting results. Fortunately, the bias appears to be small compared to other effects, as we will see below.

Informal Appropriateness

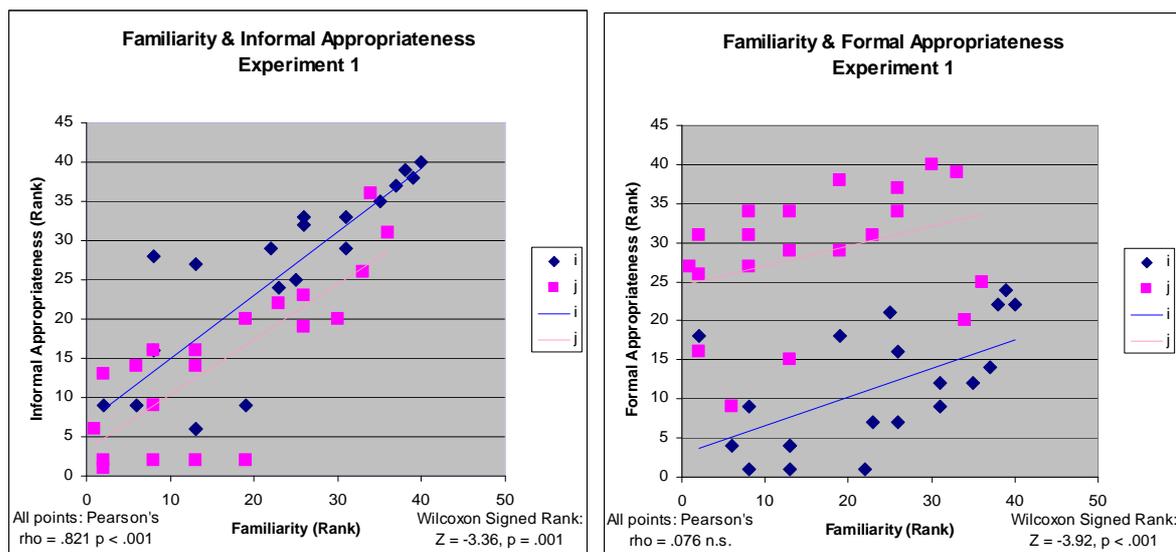
The scale for informal appropriateness showed a moderate effect of word type, in the predicted direction: /j/ words were rated 1.3 points higher than /i/ words (Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test $Z = -3.36$, $p = .001$). However, there is still some overlap between the two categories, as can be seen in Figure 1, below. Three /i/ words show higher scores for informal than their /j/ counterpart (τιάττα 3.9 > δεμάττα 3.4; εμβόλια 6.7 > αμπέλια 6.4; σχέδια 6.6 > πόδια 6.5).

An effect is also found with frequency: high-frequency words are rated on average 1.4 points more appropriate in informal situations than low-frequency words. Rank-correlation measures find this significant (Spearman's $\rho = .564$, $p < .001$). However, a stronger mean difference (1.9 points) and rank-correlation (Spearman's $\rho = .821$, $p < .001$) is found with familiarity ratings. This closer fit lends some credence to the assumption that the familiarity rating is a better measure of 'true' familiarity than the HNC (written) frequency. In any case, the correlations suggest that frequency and especially familiarity are more important factors in determining informal appropriateness than word class. The correlation between familiarity and informal appropriateness is graphed in Figure 1.

Formal Appropriateness

The scale for formal appropriateness showed the strongest effect of word type, in the opposite direction from the informal scale, as predicted. The /i/ words were rated 1.7 points higher than

the /j/ words (Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test $Z = -3.92$, $p < .001$). All /i/ words were higher-ranked than their /j/ counterparts. Unlike the informal appropriateness ranking, neither frequency nor familiarity showed significant correlation with formal appropriateness (Spearman's $\rho = .308$ & $.076$). The strong separation of /i/ from /j/ points and the relatively small slopes of the trend lines in Figure 2 reflect these findings.



Figures 1 (left) and 2 (right). Informal appropriateness shows a strong rank-correlation with familiarity; formal appropriateness shows a strong separation between words marked /i/ and words marked /j/ in the Triandafyllidis dictionary (1999).

Discussion

The directions of the effect of word class on informal and formal appropriateness are exactly as predicted, with /j/ felt to be more informal and /i/ more formal. Since these differences are greater than the effect of word class on familiarity, it seems unlikely that the bias of familiarity alone accounts for the differences observed.

What is particularly interesting is not only that the direction reverses, but that the important factors switch: familiarity and frequency largely determine informality, with word class as a minor factor, but word class determines formality almost exclusively. This suggests that if there is a special marking of [+learned origin] words, it is more likely defined in terms of the words' appropriateness in formal situations, not their inappropriateness for informal situations. In informal situations, just about any commonly used word (within reason!) is fair game, regardless of word class or other markers of origin.

Experiment 2

Experiment 1 offers some insight into native listeners' sense of the social appropriateness of various /i/ and /j/ words, and suggests that the historical relationship between the /i/ word class and formal situations is still felt. However, it does not clarify whether this relationship is a direct one between sound and social sensibility, or if it is mediated by the meaning of the

words. It could be argued that /i/ words just happen to mean the sorts of things that are appropriate in formal situations, and /j/ words mean the wrong sorts of things. Historically, this explanation may be seen as just as plausible as the direct connection between sound and register.

Just as Kazazis (1968, 1992) used hypercorrections and hyperdemoticisms as evidence for the various sociolinguistic pressures on MG speakers, so the perception of these same ‘errors’ may be relevant for teasing apart these questions. The second experiment was designed with this end in mind: to see the effect of various pronunciations of the same word on its ratings, as a window into the sense of the sound itself.

Materials

The same list of 40 words was rerecorded by the same native speaker as in Experiment 1. The speaker read each word with two pronunciations: once with [i] and once with [j], regardless of the canonical pronunciation. Hence, the new list contains 40 tokens of ‘normal’ (though deliberately articulated) tokens, 20 ‘hypercorrections’ (/j/ → [i] e.g. ζεβ.γά.ρι.α [zev'ɣa.ri.a]) and 20 ‘hyperdemoticisms’ (/i/ → [j], e.g. σε.νά.ρjα [se'na.rja]). No fillers were used for this task.

Participants & Method

Eight listeners (4 male, 4 female, a subset of the original 10) participated in this experiment. It was administered as the last task of three tasks, after Experiment 1 and immediately after a related production task. Four subjects were in Ohio, and four in the Athens, Greece area. The three survey questions were the same as in Experiment 1.

Analysis

The familiarity survey was not analyzed for Experiment 2; rather, the values obtained in Experiment 1 were used in all analyzes. The new ratings for informal and formal appropriateness of the 80 stimuli were ranked with respect to one another. The change in appropriateness refers to the difference in ranking between a word’s mis-pronunciation and its corresponding correct pronunciation.

Informal Appropriateness

As before in Experiment 1, the informal appropriateness rating for canonical pronunciations showed a moderate (though smaller) effect of word class, in the predicted direction: /j/ words were rated 1.0 points higher than /i/ words (Wilcoxon $Z = -3.14$, $p = .002$). Similarly, normal pronunciations of high-familiarity words are rated on average 0.8 points higher than low-familiarity words, and rank-correlated (Spearman’s $\rho = .747$, $p < .001$). This correlation is stronger for /i/-words (.841, $p < .001$) than for /j/-words (.608, $p = .004$).

However, the mispronunciations did not show main effect for informal appropriateness overall, either for word class or for frequency or familiarity. This is due to strong interactions between word class and familiarity. The /i/ → [j] (hyperdemotic) tokens show the same

relationship to familiarity as the canonical pronunciations: the more familiar ones are also felt to be more appropriate (Spearman's $\rho = .696$, $p = .001$), though on average they are 1.2 points less appropriate than normal /i/ words. Indeed, there is a strong correlation between the normal and mispronunciations of the /i/ words (Spearman's $\rho = .712$, $p < .001$). Two exceptions to this trend are νημάτια 'filaments' & οξειδία 'oxides', where the mispronunciations are ranked slightly higher than the standard, though this may not be general across speakers.

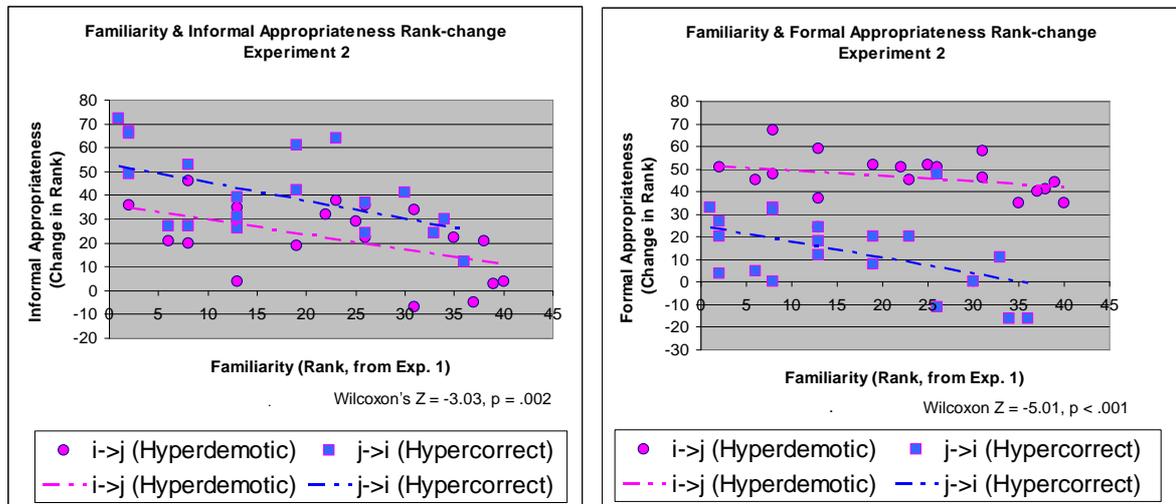
The /j/ → [i] (hypercorrect) mispronunciations, on the other hand, show a (non-significant) negative correlation between familiarity and informal appropriateness (Spearman's $\rho = -.138$, $p = .562$). This may be due to a counterbalancing tendency for a stronger penalty on hypercorrect pronunciations of /j/ words, particularly familiar ones. When *change* in appropriateness is measured by taking the difference in ranks between the mispronunciation and the canonical token, hypercorrections show a larger change than hyperdemotisms (Wilcoxon's $Z = -3.03$, $p = .002$). It appears that this change in appropriateness grows with the (canonical) word's familiarity: the more familiar the /j/-word, the greater the "penalty" for using a hypercorrecting [i] for it. This tendency (admittedly slight) can be seen from the downward slope of the blue line in Figure 3 (below to the left). A similar tendency seems also to hold for hyperdemotisms (as seen in the pink line), though this was not strong enough to negate the over all trends mentioned above.

Formal Appropriateness

For the canonical pronunciations, formal appropriateness showed the strongest effect of word type, in the opposite direction from the informal scale, as found in Experiment 1. The /i/ words were rated 1.4 points higher than the /j/ words (Wilcoxon $Z = -4.04$, $p < .001$). Familiarity did not show a significant correlation with formal appropriateness, although frequency did (Spearman's $\rho = .413$, $p = .008$).

For the mispronunciations, there was no main effect for word class or for frequency (although a slight effect was found for familiarity: Spearman's $\rho = .319$, $p = .045$). This correlation was almost entirely due to the /i/ → [j] (hyperdemotic) tokens, which had a correlation of .513 ($p = .021$). The /j/ → [i] (hypercorrect) mispronunciations, on the other hand, show no correlation between familiarity and formal appropriateness (Spearman's $\rho = .002$).

However, the *change* in formal appropriateness is strongly affected by word class: the "penalty" for hyperdemotism is more than three times as large (measured in rank displacement) as that for hypercorrection (Wilcoxon $Z = -5.01$, $p < .001$). Indeed, for three items (καθάρια 'clean', δεμάτια 'bundles' & κανάρια 'pitchers'), an [i] pronunciation caused a rise in the formal appropriateness ranking. Speakers seem to feel either that these are correct or at least alternate pronunciations of these words, or that hypercorrection of certain (low-frequency) lexical items is actually a desirable thing in formal situations. These trends are shown in Figure 4, below on the right.



Figures 3 (left) and 4 (right). Change in informal appropriateness shows a slight negative rank-correlation with familiarity; change in formal appropriateness is much greater for hyperdemoticisms than for hypercorrections (especially for rarer words).

Discussion

We have seen that, as far as the canonical pronunciations are concerned, Experiment 2 essentially replicates the findings of Experiment 1. As for the mispronunciations, we see fairly clear differences between hypercorrections and hyperdemoticisms, in both formal and informal contexts. Hyperdemoticisms do not pattern very differently than actual words, as far as frequency and familiarity are concerned. Hypercorrections, on the other hand, behave in almost an opposite matter, in that the least frequent items are most acceptable when hypercorrected. Strikingly, this is just what Petrounias (1987) would predict (applying his comments on speakers to listeners as well).

In both cases of hypercorrection and hyperdemoticism, we saw cases of very infrequent words that seemed to be more acceptable with the 'wrong' pronunciation than with the dictionary marked one. This is an interesting effect, but hard to interpret. It could suggest that the Triandafyllidis dictionary does not match these speakers' intuitions with regards to those items (not implausible, given that the editors admit to uncertainty on some words in the front matter).⁶ However, it is just as likely that speakers' intuitions are less firmly grounded with infrequent items, and that there is more variation of the 'analysis' type, as Hooper (1976) and Phillips (1984, 2001) would predict.

Finally, the reaction against hyperdemoticism in formal situations appeared to be the strongest effect of any in Experiment 2. This situation could be an effect of extreme ratings given by certain of the older participants. However, it suggests that at least for those speakers, despite the general undesirability of mispronouncing words anywhere, and the pressure against hypercorrection in informal situations particularly, the opposing pressure against hyperdemoticism in formal situations is so strong that speakers may very well say things like *βρά[ci].α not just 35 years ago, but even today.

Further Research: A Production Study of /i/ & /j/

A full-scale production study of these phenomena is difficult largely because of the difficulties of controlling for sociolinguistic context (particularly in obtaining a sufficiently casual context) and yet soliciting enough tokens and a wide enough array of types of the relevant words, particularly from the low-frequency end. Some preliminary studies of the more formal context are currently underway, and while it is too early to draw generalizations, there are relatively few divergences from the pronunciation listed in the dictionary. However, those few that do occur are (just as Petrounias 1987 would predict) by and large the less frequent items, and indeed often the same items that yielded counterintuitive ratings in the earlier tasks.

For example, δεμάτια ‘bundles’ & καθάρια ‘clean’ were both pronounced with [j] by at least three of the speakers in a preliminary study. Incidentally, these are right at the bottom of both corpus frequency and familiarity: the HNC frequency is 5 (out of over 30 million words) for each; their familiarity ratings are 5.2 and 4.9 (34 and 36 out of 40 in rank). Furthermore, the formal rating exceeded the informal rating for both words. While this does not provide direct evidence for a [learned origin] feature, it does suggest that perceived formality may influence the norms of actual pronunciation.

Conclusion: So does “Sunday Greek” still happen?

Given uncertainty about the underlying forms that people actually know, and the reliability of trusting a dictionary to mirror these accurately, some caveats are needed. However, the indirect evidence of the participants’ reactions as listeners strongly suggests “yes”, and the preliminary production data collected thus far confirms this prediction. The additional question is when and where and particularly with what words it is most likely to occur. For that, the data here presented give tentative support to Petrounias’ (1987) claim that low-frequency words are especially susceptible, but given the right context, any /j/-word might well succumb.

Finally, these findings qualify the two quotes by Malavakis (1984) and Nyman (1981) above: the situation between /i/ and /j/ is in fact fairly stable, at least for high-frequent words (contra Malavakis), in terms of agreement on pronunciation of words, although there are some exceptions to this stability. On the other hand, while the /i/ ~ /j/ distinction may not be a watershed of stylistic difference, it is still robust enough to be observable even today (counter to what Nyman implies). It may not be sufficiently strong to predict completely the distribution of /i/ and /j/, but it certainly plays a role, as evidenced by our exceptional items δεμάτια & καθάρια.

Σημειώσεις

¹ Rule (2c), along with a number of other rules dependent on the type of consonant following the /j/, yield a variety of surface forms such as [j], [ç], [ɲ], and a number of palatalization effects. Since the appropriate realization of /j/ is determined from text, this paper follows Koutsoudas (1962) in abstracting over those details, treating the entire class together in one category /j/, compared and contrasted with /i/.

² A third position, perhaps best viewed as a compromise between the two previous, is the underspecification solution espoused by Malikouti-Drachman & Drachman (1990), as reiterated in Malikouti-Drachman (2001). Troublesome cases, where /i/ is required to alternate with /j/ morphologically, are handled via the symbol /I/ “unspecified for consonantality or vocalicity.” Apparently, the process of syllabification determines the realization of the /I/. However, as it does not make any specific predictions as to the sociolinguistic affects of /i/ and /j/, it is not relevant to the ensuing discussion.

³ An additional point of evidence discussed in (Nyman, 1984) is the problem of stress assignment. If /j/ is treated as underlyingly identical to /i/ (and therefore syllabic), then certain words like /ga.i.da.ros/ “donkey” will have stress four syllables back, violating the “trisyllabic stress condition” common to most dialects of Greek (including the standard). However, this argument only applies to post-vocalic /i~j/, which has quite different distributional and phonetic properties than pre-vocalic /i/ and /j/ discussed here.

⁴ Naturally, there are exceptions to this tendency: curses, taboo words, and other strongly charged or specialized words may retain a very circumscribed locus of appropriateness despite having very high frequencies. This does not affect the general point, however, that familiarity and general appropriateness might be expected to correlate to some degree.

⁵ In preceding consonant, /s/, /t/, /θ/, and /ð/ are treated as a single class, with matches between them allowed, although strict matches are preferred when possible.

⁶ For example, while Triandafyllidis (1999) lists only δεμάτι as a possible singular for δεμάτια, another dictionary lists δεμάτιον ‘fasciculus’ as well. If speakers are aware of this other form, it could explain the exception discussed above. However, informal inquiries to my participants suggest that they prefer δεμάτι.

References

- Arvaniti, Amalia. 1999. “Illustrations of the IPA: Modern Greek”. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 19.167-172.
- Hooper, Joan Bybee. 1976. “Word frequency in lexical diffusion and the source of morphophonological change”. In Christie, W. ed. *Current Progress in Historical Linguistics*. Amsterdam: North Holland, 96-105.
- Householder, Fred W. 1964. “Three dreams of Modern Greek phonology”. *Papers in Memory of George C. Pappageotes*. Ed. by Robert Austerlitz. Supplement to *Word* 20.17-27.
- Holton, David, Peter Mackridge & Irene Philippaki-Warbuton. 1997. *Greek: A Comprehensive Grammar of the Modern Language*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Joseph, Brian D. 1992. “Interlectal Awareness as a Reflex of Linguistic Dimensions of Power: Evidence from Greek”. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 10.71-85.
- Kazazis, Kostas. 1968. “Sunday Greek”. In *Papers from the Fourth Regional Meeting, Chicago Linguistics Society (CLS 4)* 130-140. Chicago: Department of Linguistics, The U of Chicago.
- Kazazis, Kostas. 1992. “Sunday Greek Revisited”. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 10.57-69.
- Koutsoudas, A. 1962. *Verb Morphology in Modern Greek. A Descriptive Analysis*. Bloomington & The Hague: Indiana University / Mouton & Co.
- Λεξικό της Κοινής Νέοελληνικής. [Lexicon of Common Modern Greek]. 1998. Thessaloniki: Aristoteleio Panepistimio Thessalonikis, Instituto Neoellinikon Spoudon [Idryma Manoli Triandafyllidi].

-
- Malikouti-Drachman, Angeliki & Gaberell Drachman. 1990. "Φωνολογική Κυβέρνηση και Προβολή: Αφομοιώσεις, Ανομοιώσεις". [Phonological Government and Projection: Assimilations, Dissimilations]. *Working Papers in Greek Grammar* 1-20. University of Salzburg.
- Malikouti-Drachman, Angeliki. 2001. "Greek phonology: A contemporary perspective". *Journal of Greek Linguistics* 2.187-243
- Malavakis, Th. I. 1984. "Φωνεντικές συνέχειες: Διφθογοποίηση, Ουρανικοποίηση και Φωνηματική Κατάταξη τους." *Μελέτες για την Ελληνική Γλώσσα, Πρακτικά της 4ης συνάντησης εργασίας του Τομέα Γλωσσολογίας της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Α.Π.Θ., Θεσσαλονίκη, Απρ. 16-18, 1983.*
- Newton, Brian. 1961. "The Rephonemicization of Modern Greek". *Lingua* 10.275-284.
- Newton, Brian. 1972. *The Generative Interpretation of Dialect. A Study of Modern Greek Phonology.* Cambridge UP, Cambridge Cambridge Studies in Linguistics, 8).
- Nikolopoulos, Giannis. 1985. "Επανεξέταση του τόνου και της συνίζησης στα Νέα Ελληνικά". *Μελέτες για την Ελληνική Γλώσσα, Πρακτικά της 6ης συνάντησης εργασίας του Τομέα Γλωσσολογίας της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Α.Π.Θ., Θεσσαλονίκη, 22-24 Απρ. 1985.*
- Nyman, Martti. 1981. "Paradigms and Transderivational Constraints: Stress and Yod in Modern Greek". *Journal of Linguistics* 17.231-246.
- Phillips, Betty S. 2001. "Lexical diffusion, lexical frequency, and lexical analysis". *Frequency and the Emergence of Language Structure*, ed by J. L. Bybee & Paul Hopper, 123-136. Amsterdam: Johns Benjamins.
- Petrounias, Evangelos. 1987. "Ελληνικά επιθήματα κοινής καταγωγής και πολλαπλής συγγενικής εξέλιξης: η ομάδα *-ia*. (Αμοιβαίες επιδράσεις ανάμεσα στην Ελλάδα και στη Δόση)". *Μελέτες για την Ελληνική Γλώσσα, Πρακτικά της 8ης συνάντησης εργασίας του Τομέα Γλωσσολογίας της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Α.Π.Θ., Θεσσαλονίκη, 2-4 Μαΐου 1987.* 193-213.
- Setatos, M. 1974. *Φωνολογία της Νέας Ελληνικής Κοινής.* [Phonology of Modern Greek Koine]. Αθήνα: Παπαζήση. [Athens: Papazisi.]
- Schneider, W., A. Eschman, & A. Zuccolotto. 2002. *E-Prime User's Guide.* Pittsburgh: Psychology Software Tools inc.
- Thomadaki, Evangelia & Magoula, E. / Θωμαδάκη, Ευαγγελία & Μαγουλά, Ευγενία 1998. "Κατάκτηση του φωνολογικού συστήματος της Ν.Ε.: η περίπτωση των ουρανικών [i'] και [n']". *Μελέτες για την Ελληνική Γλώσσα, Πρακτικά της 18ης συνάντησης εργασίας του Τομέα Γλωσσολογίας της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Α.Π.Θ., Θεσσαλονίκη, 2-4 Μαΐου 1997.* 211-222.
- Warburton, I. 1970. *On the Verb in Modern Greek.* Bloomington & The Hague: Indiana University / Mouton & Co. (Language Science Monographs Volume 4.)
- Warburton, I. 1976. "On the Boundaries of Morphology and Phonology: A Case Study from Modern Greek". *Journal of Linguistics* 12.258-278.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.