THE GRAMMATICAL METAPHOR OF "PROCESS AND RANGE" IN MODERN GREEK

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Abstract

Σκοπός αυτού του άρθρου είναι η αναγνώριση και ο προκαταρκτικός καθορισμός ενός των «συνδρόμων» του φαινομένου της «γραμματικής μεταφοράς», σύμφωνα με τον Halliday (1987, 1994), στη Νέα Ελληνική. Με παραδείγματα θέλουμε να δείξουμε ότι το φαινόμενο υπάρχει και μπορεί να αναγνωριστεί μέσω ορισμένων δοκιμαστικών «ανασχηματισμών» που φέρνουν στο φως τις ιδιαιτερότητες συγκεκριμένων τύπων γραμματικής μεταφοράς. Οι λόγοι που διαμορφώνουν το φαινόμενο εξερευνούνται με συντομία. Η έρευνα αποτελεί μέρος μιας ευρύτερης εφαρμογής της Συστημικής Λειτουργικής γλωσσολογίας (Systemic Functional Linguistics) του Halliday στη Νέα Ελληνική.

Keywords

Systemic Functional linguistics, grammatical metaphor, specificity.

1   Introduction

"Grammatical metaphor" has been proposed by Halliday as a useful concept in describing certain constructions and language mechanisms. Halliday also proposed that its origin is to be found in ancient Greek (at least for a certain type of grammatical metaphor). We posit that the "syndrome" of grammatical metaphor called "Process and Range" (Halliday 1987: 146, Halliday & Matthiessen 2001: 168ff) is a widespread phenomenon in Modern Greek (as already attested for English). For a phenomenon to be so widely spread there must be important reasons. For the purposes of this study, we only look at its importance from the experiential metafunction point of view (as we shall explain below).

Halliday posits a very important function of all types of grammatical metaphor: nouns are stable in time and space (as opposed to processes, encoded as verbs) and are therefore susceptible and open to modification and expansion. This characteristic is essential to language and to people using it, since it allows specification of participants (mainly Things but also Qualities) leading to the possibility of classification, which is very important for describing and making sense of the world (Halliday 1998: 197, 201).

With this study we are going to explore the domain of the grammatical metaphor "Process and Range", as it is encoded in Modern Greek. The participant in these constructions is Patient belonging to the category of "Thing", which in this case presents fuzzy boundaries with the category of Qualities, a property especially obvious in Modern Greek. Following up on that, we shall look briefly at the complementarity between processes and participants, with Things occurring mostly with processes of doing, and Qualities belonging almost exclusively to processes of being.

This work is important in its own right, since grammatical metaphor is a phenomenon inadequately mentioned in grammars and almost never described in any work in linguistics.

However, it is also important as part of the overall application of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to Modern Greek.

2   The framework of this study

SFL was proposed in the 1960s by M.A.K. Halliday, a British linguist, drawing on the European functionalist tradition beginning with the Prague School. According to SFL (also termed "Hallidayan linguistics") language is seen as a network of choices, some of which are taken up and others rejected in every instantiation of a register or of a text. Furthermore, and with more interesting implications, certain options are taken up systematically in registers, offering the possibility of predictability. Emphasis is placed on the functions of language in the socio-cultural and historical context, functions which are then realized by means of semantics, lexicogrammar and phonology/ graphology on three different and parallel levels. In SFL, great attention is paid to the lexicogrammar in particular, which is seen as encoding the semantics of language.

In the framework of SFL, three metafunctions are seen as running parallel through language: the experiential, the textual and the interpersonal. The experiential metafunction construes human experience and is realised on the syntagmatic axis through process, participant and circumstance types, while on the paradigmatic axis it is realised through process types. We will consider this function in greater detail below. The textual metafunction creates discourse and is realised through information packaging and text structuring. The interpersonal metafunction enacts human relationships and is realised through Subject and verb roles.

In this study we focus on the experiential function, in which we find elements representing the world as experienced by the speaker. At the heart of the experiential metafunction lies the 'process' which is the dynamic part of the utterance. It is usually realised through the verbal group. The process is commonly accompanied by participants, i.e. entities which bring about or are affected by a process. These are normally realised by nominal groups. Participants are static but offer the possibility of grounding the utterance in space and time, and, as we shall see below, of modification and classification. Two main categories of participants can be found: Things and Qualities (Halliday & Matthiessen 2001: 184ff). Finally, there is the option of circumstances, which further specify the process and are commonly realised through a prepositional phrase or an adverbial.

There are three types of entities categorised under "Things" in SFL. These can be categorised according to the degree of participation. The Actor is the logical Subject, the doer of the action, the one who brings the process about ("John" in example 1). The Goal is a type of Patient, an impacted participant ("a house" in example 1). Finally there is the Range, which is neither performing nor impacted. It is defined as specifying the scope or Range of the process ("a bath" in example 2).

1   "John built a house"

2   "John took a bath"

However not all participant types are self-evident, and Range is one of those complicated cases. Following Whorf, quoted by Halliday, we call these "cryptotypic". According to Whorf (1956: 132), cryptotypes are "covert word categories with subtle meaning marked only by reactances". Reactances are defined as systematic reactions or repercussions on the grammar, which can be used as probes for assigning linguistic phenomena to a particular category (Halliday 1987: 106ff, Halliday & Matthiessen 2001: 134ff). We look at reactances of the English and Greek Range in section 4.

As mentioned in the introduction, the process constructed as "Process and Range" is considered to be a type of grammatical metaphor. Below we present an overview of grammatical metaphor as defined by Halliday and the 'syndromes' that are related to it.

3   Grammatical metaphor and its syndromes

Metaphor is taken to be (as the name suggests in Greek) a "transfer" of some kind. Grammatical metaphor is the replacement of one type of grammatical construction (a 'typical' one) through another (an 'atypical') one. Therefore it is realised through a type of transcategorisation, mainly (according to Halliday) the replacement of processes through participants (mainly Things), a fact which points to a tendency towards nominalization (Halliday & Matthiessen 2001: 269) as seen in example 2 (taken from Halliday & Matthiessen 2001: 268). In example 2a we have the typical realisation of the process, while in 2b the metaphorical, therefore 'incongruent' one. However, it must be said that, with time, certain of these types of incongruent constructions become congruent, so that their use becomes unmarked.

2   a   "The engine failed"
     b   "Engine failure"

Halliday considers the phenomenon of grammatical metaphor to be essential to language and a very common one indeed, therefore he has given it much attention in his work. He mentions that, when considering the grammatical metaphor on the syntagmatic axis, we find organic clusters or "syndromes" connected to different registers (Halliday & Matthiessen 2001: 249).

In scientific discourse we find the common syndrome of "things and relations", a syndrome Halliday has explored in many of his writings (1987, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2001). He claims that this syndrome began with the written work of Greek philosophers (for work on this syndrome in ancient Greek see Kappagoda 2002). In the frame of this syndrome, processes are replaced by nominal groups, nominal groups are transformed into qualities (genitives and prepositional groups) and connectives (usually causative connectors) are turned into a

relational process, effectively turning the clause complex into a simple clause with packed lexical information (example 3).

3   a   "CO_2 increases, so temperature rises"
     b   "Increases in CO_2 cause temperature rises"
     c   "CO_2 increases are the cause of temperature rises"

This syndrome needs investigation in Modern Greek as well, in order to define its similarities and differences with the other languages and in order to see how different it is from the ancient Greek syndrome. However, this syndrome is not the one under study here.

The syndrome of grammatical metaphor under study, "Process and Range", has so far been accorded much less attention. Sometimes it is partly treated under the heading "cognate objects". Halliday mentions it already in his earlier work (Halliday 1967) and expands on it further in his later writings (Halliday 1987, Halliday & Matthiessen 2001), but it has not so far been studied in Modern Greek. We consider it to be a very important phenomenon, which is worth investigating.

This syndrome appears (in English at least) in children's speech and in general seems to be a natural phenomenon of spoken language, in contrast to the syndrome used in scientific language. In contrast, the scientific discourse "things and relations" syndrome is the result of education. However, it is derived from "Process and Range" and points at the same tendency towards nominalization in language. Therefore the syndrome "Process and Range" can be seen as the original metaphor and as the source of the more elaborate scientific discourse metaphor. This study will shed some light on the processes taking place in language and offer a fruitful point of research to which diachronic and synchronic but also cross-linguistic analyses can be compared in the future.

As we shall see, when defining Range, it is fruitful to compare it with Goal. As mentioned in section 2, Goal and Range are similar in many ways. Both Goal and Range are Things and function as Patients, therefore (for Greek) they must be cast in the accusative. However, in contrast to Goal, Range is a cryptotype. By looking at its proposed properties and reactances, we can run a search for it in Greek.

Halliday posits that Range is more general than Goal, therefore less definite and akin to a quality. Range is usually a general class name and as such it has the lowest degree of participation on the scale of individuation. The verb of the process which it accompanies and specifies is often very common and general, such as "to do" or "to have".

Halliday (1994, 2001) defines two main types of Range: Elaborating and Enhancing Range. Elaborating Range carries the weight of the process (erxample 3a), so that a synonymous verb can be given for the process (example 3b).

3   a   "To make a mistake"
     b   "To err"

Enhancing Range (example 4a) can be repeated with the addition of a circumstantial element (example 4b).

4   a   "To cross the street"
     b   "To cross over the street"

In order to define Range, we need to look at the scale of individuation in Modern Greek. Since Range is more general and Goal more specific, as seen in fig. 1. below, an important reactance involves the grammatical realisation of noun specificity.
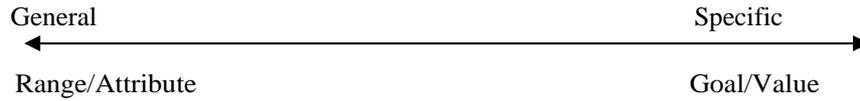
General   Specific
⟵——————————————————————————————⟶
Range/Attribute   Goal/Value

Fig. 1. Scale of individuation

On the scale of noun specificity, as given in fig. 2 below, we find three major degrees of specificity (see also Mackridge et al. 1999):

- 'Class nouns' (example "δρόμος" in fig 2): these are nouns in the accusative without the article (definite or indefinite). They are non-specific and therefore both in meaning and form resemble qualities, which are congruently realised by the adjectival group.
- 'Generic specification nouns' (example "δρόμοι" in fig 2): these are nouns in the plural with the definite article. They represent a class of items as a whole, therefore containing the implication of quantity.
- 'Definite nouns' (example "ο δρόμος" in fig 2): these are nouns with the definite article. They refer to a specific referent which is then found either in the preceding or immediately following co-text or in the textual or extra-textual context.

General   Specific
⟵——————————————————————————————⟶
ο δρόμος (the street)   οι δρόμοι (the streets)   δρόμος (street)
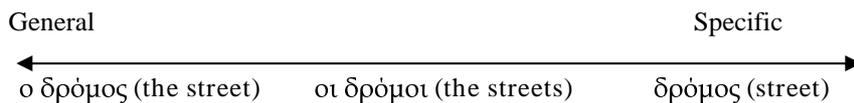
Fig. 2. Example of specificity scale in Greek

Therefore we propose, at this initial stage, that processes constructed with a count noun and no article in Greek, functioning as Patient, are cases of Range. Just as Qualities are prototypically constructed without article, so is Range in Greek as well.

4   Greek "Ranges"

In fig. 3 we can see the similarities between Goal and Value, and between Range and Attribute. As Value is on the boundary between Quality and Thing, tending towards Quality, so is Range on the boundary between Quality and Thing, tending towards Thing. Process represents change and "staying the same" and "not changing becomes just the limiting case" (Halliday 1998: 188). Therefore, processes of doing are the prototypical processes, with processes of being becoming the limiting case. Processes of doing are predominantly constructed with Thing as Patient, while processes of being are predominantly constructed with a Quality as a kind of "Patient". However, as we have just seen, the boundaries are in some cases fuzzy. When a participant

"Thing" tends towards a "Quality", then that participant is realized as inextricable part of the process. On the other hand, when a Quality is realized as Thing (as is often the case with Values), then it is more independent from the process, allowing it more freedom of movement in the clause (for example, Values can be fronted vs. Attributes which cannot, at least in English). The fuzzy boundary between a Thing and a Quality in Greek is further obvious if we consider that most adjectives only require an article in order to become specific nouns, e.g. η ωραία του κοιμωμένου δάσους ("The beautiful of the sleeping forest", i.e. "Sleeping beauty").

Process: doing	Process: being
Goal	Value
Πήρε *τον δρόμο*	Ήταν *ο δρόμος του*
Take-3SG the-ACC *street_ACC*	Be-3SG the-NOM *street*-NOM his-POSS
Range	Attribute
Πήρε *δρόμο* (έφυγε)	Ήταν *δρόμος* (όχι μονοπάτι)
Take-3SG *street_ACC*	Be-3SG *street*-NOM (not a path)

Fig. 3. Affinities of participant types

Apart from the prototypical Range, discussed above, there is another type of Range in Greek, also very common and functioning in a similar way. It is realised by means of a verb and a Generic specification noun. This type is particular to Greek, or, at least, does not exist in English. As represented on the specificity scale (see Fig. 3), the plural in this case implies a whole category of things, and this notion of quantity is present in the grammatical metaphor (example 5a), also made evident by the synonymous expression (example 5b). Accordingly, as given in Fig. 4, instances of "Process and Range", as found in everyday expressions, are placed on the specificity scale in Greek.

5   a   "Έβαλε τις φωνές"
            Put-3SG the-PL-ACC cries-PL-ACC
        b   "Άρχισε να φωνάζει"
            Begin-3SG shout-SUBJ-3SG

General   Specific

πήρε το δρόμο   πήρε τους δρόμους   πήρε δρόμο

Fig. 4. Example of expressions along the specificity scale in Greek

The grammatical metaphor using Generic specification nouns serves the same purposes of modification, expansion and classification, as the type of Range using Class nouns. This is exemplified with example 6a, which can be modified into example 6b.

6   a   "Έβαλε τις φωνές"
            Put-3SG the-PL-ACC cries-PL-ACC

b   "Έβαλε κάτι δυνατές φωνές"
     Put-3SG some loud-PL-ACC cries-PL-ACC

The affinities between Range and Attribute, already discussed above, allow both to be elaborated, a process which enables speakers to better classify participants in their model of the world. Through elaboration and expansion, an almost infinite number of premodifiers (and in some cases postmodifiers) can be added to the NP, as in the example given in Fig. 5.

Range	Attribute
Έκανε υπόκλιση	Ήταν υπόκλιση
Έκανε μια βαθιά και εντυπωσιακή υπόκλιση	Ήταν μια βαθιά και εντυπωσιακή υπόκλιση

Fig. 5. Affinities of range and attribute

5   Probing tests

As we mentioned above, Range is a cryptypic category, and we therefore need probing tests in order to recognise it. Halliday & Matthiessen (2001: 169ff) propose the following probing for the identification of Range in English:

1. Search for a "synonymous" verb (as example 7a which can be replaced through example 7b).

7   a   "To make a mistake"
     b   "To err"

2. Add a circumstantial element to the participant (as example 8a can be replaced by example 8b).

8   a   "To become a prince"
     b   "To turn into a prince"

3. Turn the utterance into a passive with a specific agent, which is not acceptable with Range (example 9a can be transformed into a passive as in example 9b, but the specific agent "by him" is not acceptable, while 'by all' is acceptable).

9   a   "To play the piano"
     b   "The piano is played" *by him*

Our research indicates that similar probing can be used for the identification of Range in Greek:

1. Search for a "synonymous" verb (example 10a can be replaced through example 10b).

10   a   "Έκανε υπόκλιση",
      Take-3SG bow-ACC

b   Υποκλίθηκε
       Bow-3SG

2. Add a circumstantial element to the participant and in some cases use a different verb as well (to example 11a one can add a spatial adverb or preposition, as in example 11b).

11   a   Ανέβηκε το βουνό
              Ascend-3SG the-ACC mountain-ACC
       b   Ανέβηκε **πάνω** στο βουνό
              Ascend-3SG **on** the-ACC mountain-ACC

3. Turn the utterance into passive, regardless of agent specificity, is not acceptable with Range in Greek (example 12a is turned into a passive in 12b).

12   a   Πήρε δρόμο
              Take-3SG street-ACC
       b   *Ο δρόμος *πάρθηκε (από εκείνον)*
              The-NOM street-NOM take-PASSIVE-3SG (by him-ACC)

At this point, with Goal and Range as well as their reactances defined, we can propose a system of prototypical participants as "Things" for Modern Greek (Fig. 6). The system represents the prototypical categories and does not display borderline cases or cases modified by means of elaboration.
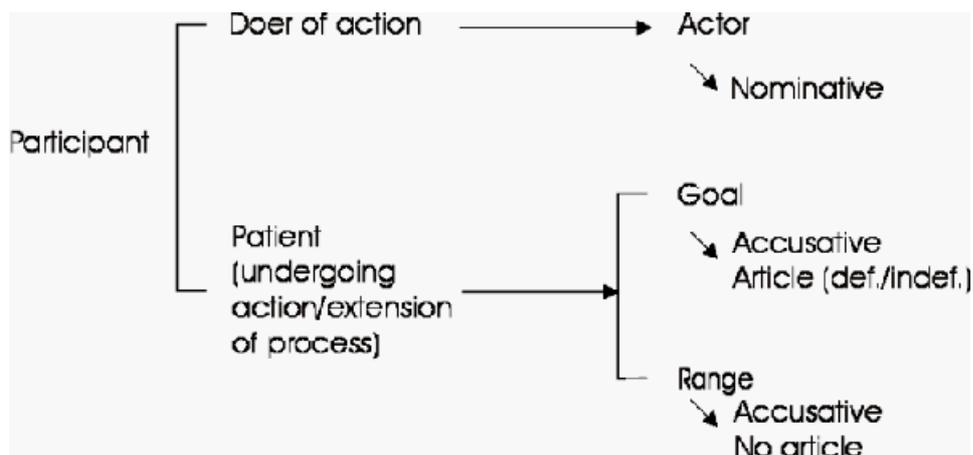
As mentioned above, the essential function of grammatical metaphor in the experiential domain is modification, expansion and classification of things. However, when the metaphor becomes the norm, and Ranges become congruent, they become what is called "dead" metaphors which can no longer be modified. They are then stock expressions. For example see the grammatical metaphor in example which goes through the process of modification in example 13 b vs. the

dead metaphor of example 14a which cannot be modified without a radical change of meaning as in example 14b.

13   a   ʺΚάνω μπάνιοʺ
            Make-1SG bath-ACC (take a bath)
        b   ʺΚάνω ένα ζεστό μπάνιοʺ
            Make-1SG one-ACC warm-ACC bath-ACC (take a warm bath)

14   a   ʺΤραβώ όπλοʺ
            Pull-1SG gun-ACC (pull the gun on somebody)
        b   ʺΤραβώ ένα τυχαίο όπλοʺ
            Pull-1SG one-ACC random-ACC gun-ACC (pull any random gun from its holster)

6   Conclusions

The cryptotypic participant category ʺRangeʺ is attested in Modern Greek by means of reactances and probing. The prototypical Greek Range, due to its role as class specifying agent (quality), co-occurs with absence of article/ determiner. Another typical type of Range involves the use of plural with the use of (predominantly definite) article which implies a notion of quantity absent from the previous type. Greek Range (like the English one) has affinities in meaning and form with Attribute. Its original function is modification and information flow. The question however remains whether this is a new phenomenon in Modern Greek or an old one. The need of a diachronic study is evident. Although this is but a preliminary study and its aim was to find, define and contrast the syndrome ʺProcess and Rangeʺ in Modern Greek, more investigation is needed in order to see in which registers it usually occurs and how abundant it is, especially whether it is attested in child speech and in older Greek texts.

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