

SYNTACTIC PHENOMENA IN MODERN GREEK DIALECTS: AN OVERVIEW

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In Modern Greek linguistics, there has been always a tendency to exclude dialectal phenomena from scientific investigation. There are various motives for such neglect, mostly extra-linguistic, which go back to an official state policy to promote the so-called “Standard Modern Greek Koine”.

In spite of the general negative context, there are certain important descriptive works dealing with some major dialectal systems, as for example, Lesvian (Kretschmer 1905), Cappadocian (Dawkins 1916, Janse forthcoming), the Northern Dialects (Papadopoulos 1927), Tsakonian (Pernot 1934), the Asia-Minor Dialect of Kydonies (Sakkaris 1940), Cretan (Pangalos 1955, Contossopoulos 1994), Cypriot (Newton 1972), Greek of South Italy (Rohlf's 1977), and Pontic (Drettas 1997). However, most of these works focus on the phonology or the morphology of the particular dialects, while giving only scarce elementary observations regarding syntax.

Modern Greek syntactic dialectal phenomena, although fewer compared to phonological and morphological ones, are worth studying, not only for typological reasons, but also because they raise a number of important issues regarding the development of syntactic theory in general.

In this presentation, I give an overview of several syntactic and morpho-syntactic phenomena applying to a range of Modern Greek dialects. I restrict myself to a descriptive account of them, suggesting some possible theoretical analyses that could advance our knowledge in linguistic theory. In certain cases, I offer evidence for the cross-dialectal occurrence of a particular phenomenon, as a contribution to the establishment of syntactic isoglosses. Furthermore, I try to trace back the diachronic development of a particular phenomenon when the sources allow this enterprise.

My data are drawn not only from written sources, but also from the oral material that has been collected in the last six years from several Greek areas, and has been stored in the *Modern Greek Dialects Laboratory* of the University of Patras.

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