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Balkan Expressive and Affective Phonology — The Case of Greek *ts/dz*

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Despite the considerable attention that the languages of the Balkans have commanded among scholars, as evidenced, for example, by the appearance in recent years of two new handbooks of Balkan linguistics (Schaller 1975 and Solta 1980) and of a bibliography of over 1500 items (Schaller 1977), the realm of expressive phonology has remained relatively unstudied. By "expressive phonology" is meant any aspect of the sounds and sound structure of a language that goes beyond the simple phonetic encoding associated with a morpheme; that is, those aspects in which the sounds themselves express something. Thus "expressive phonology" brings one into the realm of functional phonology, in which sounds, which are themselves intrinsically meaningless, take on, at least in part, the role of being carriers of meaning, thereby having a functional value in themselves. Inasmuch as this functional value is often highly connotative and expressive of attitudes, we may further speak of "affective phonology" in such cases.

The expressive/affective sector of the phonology, in this view, would take in a number of areas which Anttila (1976: 1) has termed "the 'less structured' domains of language." This would include such phenomena as onomatopoeia, sound-symbolism, ideophones, and the like; in short, the highly iconic aspects of language in which the connection between form and meaning is somewhat less than arbitrary.

Within the domain of Balkan linguistics, and especially the study of individual Balkan languages, works such as Marchand 1953, Boisson 1977, Grannes 1978, and Levy 1980 have all addressed aspects of the expressive phonology of a given language, or the phonological makeup of expressive, affective lexical items and phraseology. More recently, work on the expressive phonology of Modern Greek (Joseph 1982a, 1982b, 1983, to appear) has uncovered a feature of the structure of Greek which has interesting consequences for Balkan Linguistics in general. In what follows, these results are discussed and amplified upon with special attention given to their relevance for Balkan studies.

The basic discovery about Greek phonology that has emerged from this work is the recognition that two sounds¹ in the language, the voiceless *ts* and its voiced counterpart *dz*, have a synchronically special status in terms of their place and function in the overall system. In particular, they occur

primarily in expressive and affective vocabulary, and thus from a functional standpoint can be identified as prime phonological exponents of expressivity and affectivity in the language. Moreover, to use terminology introduced by Wescott 1975, and discussed at greater length below, these sounds can be said to be "allolinguistic."

In order to demonstrate the "allolinguistic" status of these sounds, and thereby allow for the examination of their relevance within the overall Balkan context, it is necessary to explicate further what is meant by "allolinguistic." Wescott's starting point is the classification provided by Trager 1955, in which a broad sense of "language," known as *macrolanguage* for Trager and taking in virtually all linguistic manifestations, is said to be distinguished from a narrow sense of "language," known as *microlanguage*, and taking in only straightforward, informational uses of language. For Trager, macrolanguage includes not only microlanguage but also *prelanguage*, i.e. the developing language of infants and children, *paralanguage*, i.e. such items as interjections and linguistic deformations of various sorts, and also *metalanguage*, i.e. such artistic uses of language as song or poetry. Wescott then provides the label *allolanguage* to cover the non-microlanguage components of macrolanguage, and defines allolanguage as "language that is alienated from conventionally structured speech" (497).

Allolanguage, therefore, takes in the whole range of items which might be termed expressive and/or affective in a language, including onomatopoeic words, words for noises and natural sounds, conventionalized child language deformations, sound symbolism, phonesthemes, ideophones, highly colorful language, anything that might be considered "slang" or colloquial usage, and the like. By contrast, as Wescott points out, "the thrust of microlanguage is toward decontextualization, deaffectualization, and disambiguation . . . [It] is oriented primarily toward quantifiable factual information rather than toward subjective personal emotion . . . it maximizes the precise and specific as against the vague and unspecified" (500).

To return to the question of *ts* and *dz* in Greek, it should be clear that the claim that they function primarily in expressive and affective vocabulary can be translated into Wescott's terms by saying that the primary lexical occurrences for these sounds are in words and phrases belonging to the allolanguage of Greek, i.e. in words which are themselves allolinguistic. Accordingly, the claim can be made that the sounds themselves are carriers of allolinguistic status, a functional role which thereby accords them a special status in the overall macrolanguage synchronic phonology of Greek.

The primary evidence for the allolinguistic status of *ts* and *dz* in Greek, then, comes from an examination of their lexical occurrences, though, as is

developed below, other evidence confirms this claim. This result is in keeping with the point made by Mirambel 1942, who, in discussing the multiple origins of these sounds in the modern language, stressed that since they are not the regular phonetic development of any earlier sounds in the dialect which underlies common *dhimotiki*, the study of how *ts* and *dz* developed is more a question of vocabulary than of phonology proper. The question becomes phonological, however, when one compares the lexical distribution of *ts/dz* with that of other sounds in Greek, for while it is the case that a good many sounds other than *ts* and *dz* occur in allolinguistic forms and that *ts* and *dz* themselves do occur in some forms that are not allolinguistic, it is also true that no other sounds have a lexical distribution parallel to that evinced by *ts* and *dz*.

Thus, in what follows, a survey of the types of lexical material demonstrating this distribution for *ts* and *dz* is given. This listing is meant to be representative only and not at all exhaustive. It neither covers all the categories of words these sounds occur in nor all the relevant words in each category; still, this listing is significant because of the uniqueness of this lexical distribution for sounds in the Greek phonological system.

The categories listed here and the sampling of words belonging to them are all ones that are legitimately considered allolinguistic, in Wescott's sense, i.e. outside of conventionally structured speech. A few important methodological points regarding this categorization need to be made clear. For one thing, in some cases the borderline between categories is somewhat fuzzy; however, given the nature of the categories and the words in them, that is perhaps to be expected. Moreover the decision on category "membership" for any given word is sometimes arbitrary and not all Greek speakers may agree on the classification given here; however, allolanguage is, as Wescott has pointed out, often somewhat "privatized," with considerable individual variation, so that arbitrary classification may be the most the researcher can do. In addition, some of the forms cited are legitimate dialectal forms, not necessarily known to all speakers of the language or even fully part of the standard language; however, an attempt was made to draw from forms known to at least some standard dialect speakers, since the claim that *ts* and *dz* have a special place in the Greek macrolanguage phonology makes the most sense for the standard language, inasmuch as neither *ts* nor *dz* is the result of regular sound changes in the dialects underlying the standard language. Finally, the forms listed here are given without regard for their origin,² for the simple reason that such facts are largely irrelevant for a determination of their synchronic status.

The first category is diminutives. Here *ts* occurs as the consonantal

nucleus of a number of diminutive suffixes,³ including the noun-forming suffixes *-ítsa*, as in *fuskítsa* 'little bubble', *voltítsa* 'little walk, stroll', *grítsa* 'little old woman', and *-ítsi* as in *korítsi* 'girl', and the diminutive adjective-forming suffix *-útsikos*, as in *kalútsikos* 'good-ish, sort of good', or *glikútsikos* 'cute'. Moreover, it is found in hypocoristic names—a use which may involve an independent diminutive formation or instead a variant of one of the noun-forming processes—such as *Mítsos* for *Dimítrios*. Finally, there are dialectal forms such as *katsí* 'little cat' which appear to be independent diminutives with *-ts-*, and thus not necessarily directly connected with the suffix in a form like *korítsi*.

A second category consists of conventionalized child language forms, conventionalized especially for adults using them in talking to children. These forms are not unlike the linguistic deformations Trager included under paralinguage, but in another sense are a special type of diminutive, part of a "diminutive language" instead of referring specifically to diminutive referents. Some representative forms in this group include *tsitsí* 'meat', *tsatsá* 'aunty', and *tsís(i)a* (with a variant, for some speakers, *dzís(i)a*) 'peepee'.

The third category takes in onomatopoeic words and words for noises or derived from noises. For example, there is *tsák* 'noise of wood breaking' and its derivative *tsakízo* 'break', *gráts* 'sound of scratching' (with its variants *kráts*, *xráts*) and its derivative *gratsunó* 'scratch', *tsitsirízo* 'sizzle', and numerous others.

Somewhat akin to onomatopoeia is the next group, consisting of words in which *ts* is at least partly sound-symbolic or phonesthematic. For example, the combination *tsi-* occurs at the beginning of a number of words with a meaning such as 'stretched out thin' or some related notion. Among these are *tsitóno* 'stretch out', *tsíta-tsíta* 'barely' (said of a narrow fit or tight squeeze) and its variant *tsíma-tsíma*, and the noun *tsíxla* 'thrush, very thin person'. The occurrence of the close vowel [i] in this apparent phonesthematic sequence is undoubtedly iconic, as the words generally denote a narrowing of some sort.

A second sound-symbolic sequence involving *ts* is the *tsu-/tsi-/tsa-* that occurs at the beginning of words sharing the notion 'sting' or 'bite'. Among these are *tsúzo* 'sting', *tsúxtra* 'jellyfish', *tsuknída* 'nettle', *tsatízo* 'tease, annoy, irritate', *tsimbó* 'pinch', *tsim(b)úri* 'tick, pest', and *tsivíki* 'tick', among others.

Yet another major category is a very large one, comprising the affective or generally expressive words of the language, those which lend it some "color." This class in general, of course, takes in numerous words and

phrases that do not have a *ts* or a *dz* in them, but nonetheless these sounds are well-represented in this group of words. For example, one finds words like *tsambunízo* 'whimper, prate', *tsapatsúlis* 'slovenly in one's work', *tsingúnis* 'stingy', *dzám̥ba* 'for free', *dziridzándzules* 'evasiveness, coquettish airs', and others. There is as well a subclass in which the words all refer to deficiencies of a physical nature, including *tsevdós* 'lispings', *kutsós* 'lame', *dzudzés* 'dwarf', and *tsátra-pátra* 'stumblingly (especially of speech)'. The occurrence of *tsevdós* is especially noteworthy because of its iconic self-referentiality—it denotes a speech deficiency, which is something automatically outside of conventionally structured speech, and it contains an element, *ts*, which appears to function outside of conventional language structures.

These categories and forms, while not an exhaustive survey of the relevant data, do give a good indication of the range of lexical occurrences of *ts* and *dz*. To be sure, there are numerous nonallolinguistic forms with *ts*, including place names, such as *Karditsa*, and words such as *vutsí* 'cask', *dzámi* 'glass', *klotsó* 'kick', *tsófli* 'shell, peel', *tsái* 'tea', *papútsi* 'shoe', and the like, which are all perfectly ordinary, nonaffective words. In addition, there are sounds other than *ts* and *dz* that occur in words in these categories—for example *k* occurs in the diminutive suffix *-aki* and the noise-word *krats* 'sound of scratching'. However the overwhelming majority of lexical occurrences of *ts* and *dz* is in allolinguistic words, despite *vutsí*, *dzámi*, etc., while the same cannot be said for *k* or for any other sound in Greek.

Thus the evidence from lexical distribution lends support to the claim of a synchronically special status for the sounds *ts* and *dz*. Moreover, there is another type of evidence which serves to confirm this conclusion, and it draws even on the nonaffective instances of *ts* and *dz*.

This second type of evidence concerns the comparisons of members of pairs of words whose meanings are similar and roughly synonymous, but whose connotations and stylistic value differ. As with many languages, but perhaps more so for Greek due to the Greek-particular situation of an imposed diglossia over a long period of time, the lexicon of Greek is stratified into different stylistic levels and words fit into these levels accordingly. While it is oversimplifying to refer to these distinctions solely in terms of a "higher style" and a "lower style," this nonetheless is a convenient way of labelling the words and serves present purposes perfectly adequately.⁴ For example, *líthos* 'stone' differs from *pétra* 'stone' as high-style versus lower-style, respectively, and *lefkós* 'white' versus *áspros* 'white' shows a similar primarily stylistic differentiation. Since allolinguistic words tend to be colorful and outside of linguistic convention, they generally tend to be sty-

listically less formal and belong to the "low style." Accordingly, a prediction concerning *ts* and *dz* can be made: in a pair of such synonymous but stylistically different words, if *ts* or *dz* occurs at all, it would be expected that the putative allolinguistic sound would occur in the stylistically lower form.

This prediction, for one thing, brings a degree of empirical verifiability to a classification which is necessarily subjective in its thrust. Moreover, it turns out to be correct, thereby confirming the conclusion drawn from lexical distribution alone. The evidence which bears out this prediction includes such pairs as the following: both the "colorful" or expressive word *dzám̥ba* and its synonym *doreán* mean 'for nothing, gratis', but only *dzám̥ba* can be considered low style—one Greek reported that one would never write such a word, for instance; similarly, both *tsángos* and *diskolos* mean 'difficult of temperament', but again, the form with *ts* has a lower stylistic value than its synonym. This type of distinction is even to be found with nonallolinguistic forms containing *ts* or *dz*, thus demonstrating the place of these sounds with apparent microlanguage forms; for example, *papútsi* 'shoe' differs from its synonym *ipodima* exactly as *líθos* and *pétra* cited above differ from one another, i.e. along a style dimension with *papútsi* as the lower form stylistically. Similarly, *fátsa* 'face' and its synonym *prósopo* show the same type of low-style/high-style contrast.⁵

To a certain extent, these two sets of facts, the lexical distribution of *ts* and *dz* and the stylistic value of words containing them relative to synonyms, are two aspects of the same phenomenon. Nonetheless, if this evidence is taken seriously, it indeed does seem to show clearly that there is something special from a synchronic standpoint about the sounds *ts* and *dz* in Greek that cannot be divorced from matters of style, usage, connotation, and the like; in short, the concerns Wescott's and Trager's classifications of linguistic sub-domains were aimed at. Thus the labelling of *ts* and *dz* as allolinguistic, following Wescott's lead, seems entirely appropriate and well-motivated by a variety of facts from Greek.

With the fact of special status for these phonological units established for Greek, the relevance of these findings for Balkan linguistics can now be explored. There are several ways, it turns out, in which the study of this aspect of Greek expressive phonology can be viewed as relevant and important from a Balkan perspective.

The first and perhaps most obvious way is that many of the words given as examples of synchronic Greek lexical items which show something about the distribution and thus special status of *ts* and *dz* are not native Greek words but instead have found their way into Greek from other Balkan

languages, especially Turkish.⁶ For example, *dzámba* is a borrowing from Turkish *caba*, and *dzudzés* is from Turkish *cüce*, and the nonallolinguistic form *papútsi* is from Turkish *papuç* (ultimately of Arabic origin). Further, the forms *tsúpa* and *tsúpra*, both meaning 'girl', are accepted by Andriotis (1967: s.vv.) as loanwords from Albanian, and numerous others could be added to this small sampling. In most cases, the borrowings involve what linguists have called *intimate borrowings*, loans that are not motivated by need for naming some borrowed cultural item. For example *dzámba* and *papútsi* were both borrowed even though the native, albeit somewhat learned, words *doreán* and *ipódima* were available.⁷ Given that these are intimate loans, it is not at all surprising that they are generally of low style, nor is it unusual that they have come into competition with and often supplant already existing words. These types of occurrences are exactly what is expected in situations of intimate borrowing, and moreover tie in with what is known about the nature of contact among the peoples of the Balkans in the Medieval period.

It is possible, too, that the existence of these sounds in these foreign loanwords may have enhanced the special status argued for here for *ts* and *dz* in Greek, in that they might at some point have had a "foreign ring" to them as heard by speakers of Greek. This effect would be not unlike the special feel that French [ü] or [ö] can have on the ears of speakers of English today. Thus it could well be the case that the fact that the sounds *ts* and *dz* (or their palatal counterparts *č* and *ǰ*) occur in non-Hellenic Balkan languages played a role in the spread of special status for *ts* and *dz* in Greek. This is admittedly speculative, but it seems to be a possibility that must at least be entertained.

The occurrence of so many Turkish loans in the Greek *ts/dz* vocabulary brings out another element of significance for Balkan studies. Marchand (1953: 59) has demonstrated that the palatal affricates *č* and *ǰ* (spelled <č> and <ǰ>, respectively) in Turkish occur in numerous words which he terms generally "lautsymbolisch," including words for murmured and vibrating noises, words of "affective" origin, and the like. From Marchand's discussion, it is clear that these words are allolinguistic in Wescott's sense, for he notes onomatopoetic forms like *civil-* 'twitter', affective pet names like *cici*, conventionalized child-language forms like *çiş* 'peepee', etc. Although it is not the case that Turkish *č* and *ǰ* have allolinguistic status within their overall phonological system in the way the Greek *ts* and *dz* appear to, inasmuch as they occur in many ordinary nonallolinguistic forms and thus have an entirely different lexical distribution from the Greek sounds, still they do have some sound-symbolic value and do occur in a number of allolinguistic

words. Thus, to a certain extent, the Turkish facts may point to at least a limited Balkan feature in the area of functional phonology.

A word of caution is needed here, though, and it presents the classical Balkanistic dilemma. Marchand also points out that a sound-symbolic *j* occurs in English and Old French, and in general *ts* or sounds like it, such as a palatal affricate, are of frequent occurrence in consonant symbolism, especially but not exclusively in diminutives, in languages throughout the world.⁸ Thus, as is so often the case with pan-Balkan features, it must be asked here whether the occurrence of particular forms in Greek with affective/expressive *ts* or *dz* is the result of language contact in some form or instead is the result of independent developments within Greek. For example, is *tsís(i)a* a borrowing from Turkish *çiş*, or is it an independent nursery-word creation? Is *tsitsirízo* a reduplicative formation within Greek based on *tsirízo* 'screech', itself supposedly from Ancient Greek *surízo*: 'whistle, pipe', or is it of Turkic origin (cf. Azerbaijani *jyzjyz* 'sizzle of oil burning'⁹), or a completely independent formation based on the sound of something sizzling? As with many similar dilemmas in Balkan linguistics, no clear answer is possible and it may well be the case that there is an element of truth to both sides, in that native developments may have interacted with and been enhanced by pressures from elements introduced through contact with other Balkan languages.

Despite this dilemma in deciding the origin of this feature in Greek, especially for some of the words that contain the allolinguistic *ts* or *dz*, in certain other words an origin from native Greek stock is clearly indicated. For example, many of the sound symbolic words with *tsV-* designating stinging and the like seem to have developed from Ancient Greek words with initial *k(C)i-* sequences, by various sound changes or morphological reshapings,¹⁰ e.g. *tsim(b)úri* 'tick, pest' is from earlier *kímmuros* (Hesychius, glossed as *mikrológos* 'counting trifles, caring about trifles'), *tsivíki* 'tick' is from earlier *kimbíks* 'skinflint', and *tsuknída* 'nettle' derives from *kníde*: 'nettle'. This suggests that the sequence *k(C)i-* may have had some sound-symbolic value in Ancient Greek, so that the change to *tsV-* as the bearer of sound-symbolism for this lexical group would have occurred only in the Post-Classical era.

It has now emerged that many Balkan connections for Greek *ts* and *dz* exist, from at least a lexical standpoint and possibly also a functional standpoint, if Marchand's evaluation of Turkish *ç* and *j* is accepted. Thus, one can speculate about the origin of *tsV-* in the sound-symbolic group discussed above. In particular, if the attachment of sound-symbolic value to *tsV-* and its replacement of *k(C)i-* as the exponent of this sound symbolism

took place only during the Post-Classical era, then possibly this shift was only after contact with a language in which similar sounds had a somewhat special status or occurred in words with a special status. In that case, then, even if a linguistically natural process like palatalization of velars before front vowels is partly responsible for the shift in form of this sound-symbol, the influence of external pressures cannot be discounted in the determination of how the sound-symbol was maintained as salient and appropriate for the language.

Relevant to such a hypothesis is the discussion of Levy 1980. He has shown that Greek, to a limited extent at least, has borrowed the Turkish affective reduplication pattern involving repetition of a word with substitution of *m-* for the initial consonant, as in *pipéri-mipéri* 'pepper and the like' based on *pipéri* 'pepper' (cf. the Turkish form *kitap-mitap* 'books and such' based on *kitap* 'book'). This finding shows that aspects of expressive phonology and phraseology can be borrowed,¹¹ so that there would not be anything typologically difficult with the assumption of language contact as a contributing factor to the development of *ts* as a sound-symbolic and perhaps thoroughly allolinguistic element in Greek.

It should be clear, then, that the study of the functional value of Greek *ts* and *dz* has much to offer Balkan linguistics. Not only is the understanding of the phonology of one of the Balkan languages advanced through a consideration of the facts discussed here, but in addition, this understanding can be fit into an overall Balkan context in several interesting ways. To close on a programmatic note, it seems that what is needed are numerous in-depth studies of these aspects of the phonology of all the Balkan language, and of the type of lexical stratification implied by the concepts "allo-language" and "microlanguage,"¹² for it is only through such studies that further ways in which the Balkan languages are similar to and differ from one another can be made explicit.

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NOTES

1. The term 'sound' is used here so as to be neutral on the question of whether *ts* and *dz* in Greek represent affricates (i.e. unitary but complex segments) or instead are clusters of two segments. Note also that especially for the voiced sound, variation between a pure dental [dz] and a palatal [dʒ] is found among Greek speakers. Modern Greek forms are given here in a roughly phonemic transcription, with *d*, however, except in combination with *z* (i.e. *dz*) and after *n* standing for the voiced interdental spirant [ð], and *g* standing for the voiced velar spirant [ɣ] except after a nasal. Ancient Greek forms are given in standard transliteration.