

## Clitic Placement in Heritage Cappadocian

**Background:** Cappadocian Greek (CG) is a Modern Greek dialect that was spoken in modern-day Turkey until 1923, when its speakers were relocated in Greece by the compulsory population exchange between the two countries. The linguistic integration of CG-refugees into their new homeland took place rather quickly—and forcefully, and CG disappeared from the linguistic repertoire of almost all third-generation descendants of the CG-refugees (Tompaidis 1992). However, in few settlements such as the village called Varlantza in Northern Greece, where not only CG refugees were the majority but also many adult refugees were “illiterate” (i.e., did not Modern Greek, Stelakou 2008), CG has survived to this day, although limited to home/immediate environment.

**Aim:** We investigate (object) clitic placement in Heritage CG (HCG) and its baseline (BCG). We take as Baseline CG (BCG), CG as it was recorded shortly before (1909-1911) in CG-speaking villages or shortly after (1930-1932) in Greece. We take HCG as CG spoken by second-generation descendants of Cappadocian refugees in the village of Varlantza, as they themselves report that they acquired CG in their childhood first at home but then their use of or exposure to CG reduced significantly after schooling, which is carried out in Modern Greek. HCG data was extracted from recordings collected in 2007 from 17 HCG speakers (mean age at the time of recording: 68) in Varlantza. All speakers were born in Greece into parents who were born in Cappadocia and who moved to Greece in their early adolescence.

**Clitics in BCG and Modern Greek:** Whilst no information is available with respect to clitic realization in BCG, clitic placement has found enough attention in previous literature (Dawkins 1916, Condoravdi & Kiparsky 2001). CG is Tobler-Mussafia-type language, in which unless certain types of elements are present to the left of the finite verb, clitics are postverbal and enclitic on the verb. Specifically, the preverbal (yet still enclitic) positioning of clitics emerges only in the presence of a preverbal *wh*-word, a relative pronoun, a complementizer, a negation, a modal marker or a contrastive focus expression. In V1- contexts, as well as in the presence of a non-focal preverbal subject or a (CLLD-ed) topic, clitics remain postverbal. The role of preverbal (non-PP) adverbs in clitic position is not clear (Janse 1998). Modern Greek clitics on the other hand are always preverbal if the verb is finite (non-imperative mood). This means that the clitics appear preverbally in both Modern Greek and BCG if there is a preverbal trigger in the latter. The difference between the two languages appears in V1- context and in the presence of a non-focal preverbal subject or a (CLLD-ed) topic: Modern Greek clitics appear preverbally in these contexts too whereas in CG they do not.

**Clitics in HCG:** There are three points of divergence between HCG and BCG in terms of clitic placement. First, the *wh*-word *why* does not systematically trigger preverbal clitics. Second, there is one subordinator, *afu* ‘since/because’, that appears only with a postverbal clitic. Finally, in V1-context, with preverbal non-focal subjects and CLLD-ed objects, preverbal clitics abound but only if they express 1st- and 2nd-person features.

**Discussion:** The first two differences between HCG and BCG clearly have a lexical basis. First, there are two *wh*-words for reason in HCG; one that is associated with a TP-internal copy on par with other *wh*-words, and another, new, one that is externally-merged in its position. We do not know how two lexical items emerged in HCG but the result shows heritage languages should not by default be identified with simplification.

Second, we argue that *afu* spells out features of the highest subordinator head, whereas other subordinators spell out multiple heads syncretically. This is expected as *afu* is borrowed from Modern Greek. Finally, we argue that “unexpected” clitic placement interacts with the features that the clitics express. More specifically, under the assumption that third person clitics express only uninterpretable features whereas 1st- and 2nd-person clitics express the interpretable feature [person], clitic misplacement is seen as an outcome of how interpretable or uninterpretable features are processed in bilingual language acquisition/L2 acquisition. In fact, the Interpretability Hypothesis (Tsimplici 2003 et seq) claims that uninterpretable features in the target L2 are not accessible to the L2 acquirer and thus create learnability problems. Configurations involving such features are then prone to compensation with imposition from L1 (for empirical evidence, see Tsimplici & Dimitrakopoulou 2007, Lavidas & Tsimplici 2019 a.o.). While the Interpretability Hypothesis is a strong hypothesis in L2 acquisition, the data in this study show that its prediction is not born out. We would then like to revise it so that in language attrition, it is the interpretable features that become problematic and thus are more vulnerable to transfer from the dominant language.

## References

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