

tu agri. U vidzui apostasita
 at fields.ACC.DEF. she.FEM.SG.ACC.DEF saw.PAST.PERF.1SG tired.FEM.SG.ACC
 ‘My mother was working a lot. She was working in the fields. I saw her tired.’

Based on this evidence we argue that the grammar of older VA speakers is pro-drop with *pro* being licensed through morphological agreement marking; *pro*’s reference is provided via the agreement affix in the case of fully inflected verbs, or through discourse-linking with a previously mentioned antecedent.

With respect to (b) we found that younger L1Greek-L2VA bilinguals, unlike older bilinguals, produce deviations in verbal agreement morphology marking mainly in the plural ($\approx 25\%$) with variability in the produced form, hence these types may not be considered as cases of heritage/L2 syncretism but evidence of deficient L2 agreement morphology:

(3) *Voi durna *instead of* Voi durnatsi
 you.2PL sleep.PAST.IMPERF.3SG you.2PL sleep.PAST.IMPERF.2PL

Additionally, younger speakers also use significantly more overt subjects (pronouns & DPs) even in contexts of discourse linking (topic continuity) ($\approx 30\%$ more than the two older groups):

(4) Tatalu multi cindizi candai.
 father.MASC.SG.NOM.DEF many songs.NEUT.PL.AC.DEF sang.PAST.PERF.3SG
 Atselu horepsi cum para.
 that.MASC.SG.NOM danced.PAST.PERF.3SG with friends

‘The father sang many songs. He (that one) danced with friends.’

The overuse of overt subjects attested in younger speakers could be attributed to an overspecification strategy employed by bilinguals even in the case of two null subject languages (see e.g. Sorace et al., 2009; Etxebarria & Montrul, 2025). However, the errors in verbal agreement morphology could signal deviant L2 attainment associated with the quality and quantity of input in VA as well as with the more restricted use of the heritage language by younger bilinguals. Additionally, since agreement morphology is especially vulnerable in bilingualism contexts (Polinsky & Scontras, 2020; Scontras et al., 2018) and based on comparative data from our older and younger informants, we argue that the heritage grammar of younger bilinguals shows signs of an incipient change towards a non-pro drop grammar, with a restricted use of null forms.

4. Conclusions. The data from three generations of VA (heritage) speakers show that VA can be characterized as a pro-drop language which is becoming non-pro drop, although the younger speakers have Greek as their dominant language which has consistent pro-drop. Despite intensive language contact, changes affecting the expression of the subject in heritage grammar are morphosyntactically conditioned.

Selected references

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