Chapter 7

Cypriot Maronite Arabic

Mary Ann Walter
Middle East Technical University, Northern Cyprus Campus

Cypriot Maronite Arabic is a severely endangered variety that has been in intensive language contact with Greek for approximately a millennium. It presents an interesting case of a language with extensive contact effects which are largely limited to the phonological domain.

1 Current state and historical development of Cypriot Maronite Arabic

Cypriot Maronite Arabic (CyA) is a minority language spoken by a small community on the island of Cyprus. Although essentially moribund, it is currently the focus of preservation and revitalization efforts.

1.1 Historical development of Cypriot Maronite Arabic

The time of arrival of this community of Arabic speakers to Cyprus is unknown. The island was occupied by an Arab garrison subsequent to Muʕāwiya's invasion of 649 CE, but the garrison was then removed and, presumably, the Arabic speakers left as well. More likely, a permanent presence dates back to the population movements of the ninth and tenth centuries during disruptions to Byzantine rule.[1] Subsequent waves of Arab emigration to Cyprus are documented during the early crusading period. Such movements also quite likely took place during Lusignan (French crusader) rule in Cyprus (1192–1489), for some portion of which the Anatolian city of Adana, where Arabic is still widely spoken (see Procházka,

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[1]See §2 for a discussion of where the CyA-speaking community originated from and the dialectological affiliation of this variety of Arabic.

this volume), was also held by Lusignan rulers. Speakers of not only Arabic but a locally distinct version of Arabic in Cyprus are mentioned by Arab historians beginning in the thirteenth century, thereby providing a *terminus ad quem* to its dialectal development (Borg 2004).

As fellow communicants in the Catholic church, the Maronite community was granted certain privileges of independent worship during the Lusignan period, which were later lost during Venetian (1489–1571) and Ottoman rule (1571–1878), at which time some retaliation occurred on the part of the Orthodox community (Gulle 2016). After the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1571, the Maronite community was at first placed under the administration of the Orthodox bishop, but regained religious autonomy shortly thereafter.

The number of Maronite villages underwent a steady decline during the Ottoman period, from over thirty to only five at the time of British occupation of the island in 1878 (Baider & Kariolemou 2015; though it is unclear if this is associated with any actual population decline). The remaining five villages are all located in the northwestern area of the island. However, as of the twentieth century at least, only one of them was home to speakers of CyA, the others having linguistically assimilated to Cypriot Greek entirely. The CyA-speaking village is Kormakiti(s) (also known as Kormacit and Koruçam in CyA and in Turkish, respectively).

Both the Cypriot liberation struggle of the 1950s against the British, and the years after independence was attained in 1960, saw increased communal conflict between the Turkish and Greek communities on the island. This period witnessed increasing separation of communities, as Turkish Cypriots withdrew into ethnic enclaves, and culminated in the 1974 conflict between Greece-sponsored coup plotters, military forces of Turkey, and local Cypriots on various sides, the result of which was a *de facto* division of the island between the Republic of Cyprus-controlled territory in the south, which was majority Greek Orthodox and Greek-speaking, and the Muslim and Turkish-speaking northern part of the island. This northern area subsequently declared independence, but remains unrecognized by any other country except the Republic of Turkey to this day.

It is important to note that the relative geographical separation between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots dates only from this recent period, as refugees sought safety within their own communities. This entailed a radical change in the social circumstances of CyA speakers, who moved to the capital city of Nicosia essentially *en masse*. Thus, they went from living in a Maronite village in which community life could be conducted in CyA, to being a tiny percentage of a large urban population. Not only that, but the pre-1974 population surrounding the CyA-speaking Maronite village of Kormakiti was composed of Greek speakers, whereas the current local population around the village is comprised of Turkish

speakers (many of whom also know Greek, but no longer use it as a language of public life).

Since 1974 the permanent population of the village of Kormakiti has amounted to at most a couple of hundred residents, with the rest of the Maronite community residing primarily in the capital city Nicosia. The Maronite community has occupied a special place in Cypriot society, as for three decades they alone had the ability to freely cross the UN-monitored "Green Line" (buffer zone) dividing the island. Thus connections with the village have been maintained throughout this period, and weekend visits are common. Since 2003 the line has been crossable for all Cypriots.

1.2 Current situation of Cypriot Maronite Arabic

The Cypriot Maronite community currently numbers roughly 5,000 individuals. However, only approximately one thousand are CyA speakers (estimates range from 900 to perhaps 1300; Council of Europe 2017).

All CyA speakers are bilingual in Cypriot Greek, with Greek as their dominant language, and currently living in a heavily Greek-dominant urban area. There are currently no fluent native speakers under the age of thirty. Due to these factors, the CyA language was designated as severely endangered by UNESCO in 2002.

However, the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the European Union in 2004 has led to an influx of both institutional and financial support for CyA. In its 2004 initial report on its implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML), which it ratified in 2002, the Republic of Cyprus declared Armenian as such a language in Cyprus. Although CyA was explicitly excluded as being "only" a dialect and therefore in no need of protection, this formulation was not accepted by ECRML, and CyA was thenceforth officially recognized as a minority language of Cyprus as well. Since 2008 Maronites have been officially recognized as a separate community within Cyprus, and are no longer required to identify themselves as Greek Cypriots (or Turkish Cypriots) on government documents.

The change in designation of the Cypriot Maronites as a linguistic as well as religious minority community led to associated changes in the linguistic rights legally accorded to them. After decades of waiting, one state school in Nicosia is now designated as Maronite and offers optional after-school classes in CyA for its approximately 100 Maronite students, the majority of whom have now joined the classes. Adults may also study CyA now at the new community center. Funding was also made available for a one-to-two week summer language immersion camp for Maronite youth in Kormakiti village, attendance at which

has risen to approximately 100. For the first time, training seminars for teachers have also been organized, concomitantly with codification efforts towards a written version of CyA. Sporadic writing in CyA has been carried out using the Greek alphabet. (See the community websites in the Further reading section at the end of this chapter).

Outside the government, there is also an NGO *Hki fi Sanna* ('speak in our language') with the goal of promoting CyA use. Usage remains community- and home-based, as Standard Greek (and English) is the language of written and broadcast media. The Cyprus Center of the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) has undertaken a project entitled *The protection and revival of Cypriot Maronite Arabic*. The scope of the project included a variety of community activities, as well as meetings with Sami (Norway) community members for sharing revitalization strategies, described in the resulting publication (PRIO 2009). Finally, a project at the University of Cyprus titled *The creation of an archive of oral tradition for Cypriot Maronite Arabic* is currently underway under the supervision of Dr. Marilena Karyolemou, though with no web presence or published deliverables to date. There is thus some reason for optimism regarding the future of CyA.

2 Contact languages

CyA has undergone intensive language contact with Cypriot Greek for the entirety of its presence in Cyprus, which may extend to a millennium (see §1.1). This contact has intensified since the removal of the population from the traditionally Maronite and CyA-speaking village of Kormakiti to the capital city, Nicosia.

This move has also resulted in a concomitantly larger social role for Standard Greek. Cyprus is a diglossic society in which Cypriot Greek coexists with Standard Greek, the language of education and formal domains.[2] In moving to Nicosia, the children of the community also began attending schools with Greek Cypriot children, rather than their own village schools. Only in the last few years has a primary school been designated specifically for Maronite children. Most of them still attend other schools, and the Maronite school is in any case also (Standard-)Greek-medium and follows the same national curriculum (with the addition of optional after-school weekly CyA language classes).

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[2]Some in fact refer to triglossia, encompassing Standard Greek, koinéized Cypriot Greek, and various other local varieties, with the island-wide koine taking a mesolectal position (Arvaniti 2010).

Therefore, the influence of Greek has increased radically through contact with Greek classmates and neighbors, as well as intermarriages with Greek Cypriots and Maronites from other, non-CyA speaking villages. Such situations are common due to the small size of the Maronite community, and typically CyA is not used in these households.

In comparison, contact with Turkish has been limited. Although remaining residents of Kormakiti are now surrounded by Turkish speakers, the village remains quite set apart socially, to the extent that all water supplies are trucked in rather than plumbing systems being shared. In Borg's (1985) texts, speakers do mention using Turkish with some speakers employed as farm workers, however. Contact with Turkish speakers in Nicosia is, of course, rare.

Cyprus is "double-diglossic": the same situation as with Cypriot and Standard Greek holds also with respect to Cypriot and Standard Turkish. To the extent that contact with Turkish does occur, it is with Cypriot Turkish rather than Standard Turkish, unlike Greek, where both varieties are prominent in the lives of CyA speakers.

There is next to no contact with other varieties of Arabic. The Maronite clergy in Cyprus often come from Lebanon, and some intermarriage occurred in the more distant past between the Cypriot and Lebanese Maronite communities, but this no longer occurs. Roth (2004) refers to the "double minoritization" of CyA speakers with respect to both the Cypriot context and the wider Arabophone context – in both, their speech variety is considered deviant and unintelligible.

While early research on CyA identifies it as a Levantine variety of Arabic (Tsiapera 1969), Borg (1985; 2004) argues strongly for an Anatolian origin with significant Aramaic substrate influence. Because the Aramaic influence, if any, must have occurred in the pre-Cyprus period, contact with Aramaic will not be considered further here, despite its putative influence. A substantial discussion can be found in Borg (2004).

Another Semitic language, Syriac, is the liturgical language of the Maronite community. However, no instruction is available in Syriac in Cyprus, so its use is limited to rote recitation during (very sparsely attended) church services, at which transliterations and Greek translations are also provided.

English is the third official language of the Republic of Cyprus (along with Greek and Turkish) and is widely spoken. Instruction in English begins in primary school in the national curriculum, and private English-medium schools are also widespread. However, contact with English postdates contact with Greek and Turkish (beginning only after 1878 and intensifying in the twentieth century) and appears to have had no effects on CyA language structures.

The French school in Nicosia is traditionally a popular choice for Maronite families, so that competence in French has also been common in the community – a shared characteristic with Lebanese Maronite society. However, like English, this appears not to have influenced CyA grammar in any significant way.

Remaining minority languages of Cyprus include Armenian and a variety of Romani locally called Kurbetça/Gurbetça. The reports of ECRML specify that there has been no contact requested or arranged between the Armenian and Maronite community institutions, however. The small size of the communities (each less than 1% of the population) no doubt also reduces the chances of contact. As for Kurbetça, it is unclear whether or not it is still actually spoken on the island. Members of this community are Turkish-speaking and interact little if at all with the Maronite community.

Finally, the most common immigrant language after English is Russian, which occupies an increasingly prominent place in the linguistic landscape of Cyprus. There are now several Russian-medium schools on the island. However, these are primarily located outside the capital, and its recent appearance means that it also has not influenced CyA.

Therefore, the next section will focus on contact effects from Greek on CyA.

3 Contact-induced changes

According to Borg, the doyen of CyA studies, "linguistic acculturation to Greek in [CyA] is fairly extensive…and involves transfer of allophonic rules, function words, and virtually unrestricted borrowing of content words in the context of codeswitching" as well as "a significant degree of calquing on Greek idioms" (2004: 64). This occurs to such an extent that he describes CyA as "Greek in transparent Arabic garb", although "the degree of hellenization…tends to be concealed…the inflectional pattern of [CyA] having largely resisted significant intrusion of Greek morphological elements" (2004: 65).

In the remainder of this section, we will examine examples of such Greek influence, particularly in the phonological domain. At the same time, the remarkable persistence of CyA language patterns in the face of intensive contact, especially in the morphological domain, will be discussed.

3.1 Phonology

CyA phonology has been heavily restructured in comparison with other varieties of Arabic, resulting in what Roth (2004: 55) calls "total convergence" of the

phonological system with Cypriot Greek. Similarly, Gulle (2016: 47) refers to the "complete adoption of Greek phonology."

Like other varieties of Arabic in intense contact with non-Semitic languages, CyA has lost the series of so-called emphatic, guttural or pharyngealized consonants. The obstruents have merged with their non-emphatic counterparts, and the pharyngeal fricative *ḥ* has merged with the original glottal fricative *h*, which in turn is now pronounced as a velar fricative [x] under the influence of Greek, as in the examples in Table 1.[3]

Table 1: Reflexes of emphatic and guttural consonants in CyA

CyA	Arabic	Gloss
taraf	*ṭaraf*	'end'
txin	*ṭaḥīn*	'flour'
pakar	*baqar*	'cattle'
axsen	*aḥsan*	'better'

The sole survivals among the Arabic consonants that have no counterparts in Greek are the interdental consonants and the pharyngeal glide /ʕ/ (see example 5b below). It is interesting that the pharyngeal glide, perhaps the most typologically unusual, remains as a sort of iconic survivor of the Arabic phonemic inventory. The retention of this phoneme, alongside the loss of so many others, implies that the radical changes to the consonant inventory of CyA, though clearly linked to Greek influence, cannot be wholly attributed to imposition in the sense of Van Coetsem (1988; 2000) – or at least, is evidence of significant resistance to such imposition. In any case, imposition would presumably be due to late learners of CyA, and it is doubtful that CyA was ever acquired in this way by speakers from outside the community.

As for the vowels, the Arabic vowel length contrast has also been lost, unstressed (formerly) short vowels deleted, and mid vowels have joined the inventory, resulting in a five-vowel inventory matching that of Greek, as illustrated in Table 2.

This unsurprising result also occurred in other contact varieties such as Maltese and Andalusi Arabic, although may have evolved without the influence of contact, as in some Levantine varieties.

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[3]Examples are taken from Borg's (2004) glossary except where noted otherwise. CyA forms are given in his orthography. "Arabic" forms are the presumed etymological source forms, typically shared by Standard Arabic as well as other varieties.

Table 2: Illustration of the innovative vowel system of CyA

CyA	Arabic	CyA Gloss
ipn	*ibn*	'son'
umm	*umm*	'mother'
tarp	*darb*	'road'
klep	*kilāb*	'dogs'
yaxtop	*yaktub*	'he writes'
ten	*yadayn*	'hands.ᴅᴜ'

Phonotactically speaking, CyA remains more permissive than Cypriot Greek, in that it "allows a wider range of final consonants and is alone [relative to Cypriot Greek] in allowing final clusters" (Newton 1964: 51).

The effect of (Cypriot) Greek has not been limited to the phonemic inventory. CyA also conforms in the realm of alternations. Like Cypriot Greek, CyA has absolute neutralization of voicing in stop consonants, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Voicing neutralization in CyA stop consonants

CyA	Arabic	Gloss
sipel	*sabal*	'stubble'
ʕates	*ʕadas*	'lentils'
pakar	*baqar*	'cattle'

It also has the same palatalization and spirantization rules (with the latter applying to the first member of consonant clusters), as well as epenthesis of transitional occlusives in clusters (Tsiapera 1969; Borg 1985; Roth 2004), as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4: Greek-derived phonological processes in CyA

CyA	Arabic	Gloss	Phonological process
kʲilp	*kalb*	'dog'	Palatalization
xtuft	*katabt*	'I wrote'	Spirantization
pkyut	*buyūt*	'houses'	Consonant epenthesis

As with changes in the phoneme inventory, these additions to the phonological rules of CyA imply considerable L2 pronunciation effects of Cypriot Greek, even though it was presumably typically acquired later in life than CyA, a puzzling apparent contradiction.

3.2 Morphology

According to Newton (1964: 43), "words of Arabic […] origin retain the full morphological apparatus of Arabic while those of Cypriot-Greek […] origin appear exactly as they do in the mouths of monolingual speakers of the Greek dialect." He goes on to state that "the exceptions to the rule that the morphemes of any one word are either exclusively [Cypriot Greek] or exclusively [Arabic] in origin would seem to be few," and that Greek verbs "are conjugated exactly as they are when they occur in [Greek]." Example sentences that he provides contain multiple code-switches between Arabic and Greek-origin words, as in (1), where Greek words are highlighted in bold.

(1) CyA Newton 1964: 49
paxsop **na enicaso** xamse **kamares**
intend.IMPF.1SG SBJV rent.PRS.1SG five room.PL
'I intend to rent five rooms.'

Newton (1964: 50) concludes that neither source "would be in a position to claim an undisputed majority [of words/morphemes]." Gulle (2016) also discusses examples of "loss of systemic integration" morphologically, with respect to noun plurals, meaning that Greek-origin nouns are used with Greek affixal morphology rather than being integrated into the CyA morphological system. The example in (2) illustrates the use of Greek-origin nouns with Greek plural morphology intact (in bold) in a CyA matrix sentence.

(2) CyA Borg 1985: 183, 193
allik p-**petrokop-i** n-tammet l-**ispiriðk-ya** ta
DEM.PL DEF-stonecutter-PL PASS-end.PRF.3SG.F DEF-match-PL COMP
kan-yišelu **fayy-es**
PROG.PST-light.IMPF.3PL dynamite.hole-PL
'While those stonecutters were igniting sticks of dynamite, the matches got used up.'

On the whole, the picture is of a language somewhat similar to Maltese (see Lucas & Čéplö, this volume), in that we have two morphological systems operating in parallel, depending on the etymological origin of the root (Romance or

Arabic, in the case of Maltese; Greek or Arabic, in the case of CyA). Alternatively, we could say that speech in CyA is replete with code-switching, and the use of such Greek forms says nothing about the system of CyA itself.

The main exception to morphological non-interaction between CyA and Greek is the use of the Greek diminutive suffix *-ui* (feminine *-ua*) with native CyA words, noted by all three of the major authors on CyA (Borg, Tsiapera, and Newton). For example, this suffix is used with Arabic nouns such as *xmara* 'female donkey' and *pint* 'girl', yielding *xmarua* 'small donkey' and *pindua* 'girl' (Newton 1964: 43–44). Tsiapera (1964) additionally notes the borrowing of two adjectival suffixes, *-edin* (which makes nouns into adjectives) and nominal masculine singular *-o*.

Relatedly, Gulle (2016) observes that CyA lacks marking for directive and locative, unlike other Arabic varieties but like spoken Greek. Accusative case marking is used in spoken Greek for this purpose, but due to the lack of overt case marking in CyA, such constructions are unmarked entirely.

(3)   CyA Gulle 2016: 44
      a. k-kafene   b. fi-l-lixkali
          DEF-cafe   in-DEF-field
          '(in) the cafe'   'in the field'

Occasional use of Arabic *fi* 'in,' as in other varieties and example (3b), was attributed by some CyA speakers of Gulle's acquaintance to the influence of Levantine Arabic. For at least one speaker, the usage of locative/directional *fi* appeared to be influenced by calquing from Standard Greek.

However, Borg (2004: 3) notes similar usage in Old Arabic and Hebrew, such that Greek is not necessarily the source of this pattern. Gulle (2016: 47) concludes that "the tense–aspect–modality (TAM) system [of CyA] is surprisingly almost completely intact", adding only the exception of the use of the Greek modal verb *prepi* in necessitative constructions.

Finally, the occasional borrowing of the Greek plural morpheme is observed. However, this is sporadic, and a quantitative investigation of pluralization based on Borg's (2004) glossary (Walter 2017) reveals that native non-suffixal plurals are still used for over half of all pluralizable nouns, at percentages even higher than those posited for other Arabic varieties. Greek plurals were given for only 8 of the 251 nouns.

Therefore, although the typically-Arabic use of non-concatenative plural morphology is indeed subject to some degree of suffixal regularization (17% of cases) and somewhat more restricted in terms of the variety of plural forms in CyA, the effect of Greek plural forms has been negligible.

Plural formation, perhaps the most distinctive and cross-linguistically idiosyncratic morphological characteristic of CyA, thus appears remarkably robust in the face of contact. This echoes the retention of the pharyngeal glide in the phonological domain.

On the whole, as Borg (1994: 57) states, "the external impact on the native morphological patterns of [CyA] is slight."

3.3 Syntax

According to Roth (2004: 70), "syntax is a linguistic domain particularly permeable to interference from Greek" (author's translation). By this she means that function words are doubled with loans from Greek, in particular with relative clause markers and more complex constructions, as well as the use of Greek and Arabic-origin negation markers in combination. The example in (4) demonstrates the CyA use of the native *ma* negation morpheme concurrently with Greek *me…me*. In this case, phonetic similarity may have aided the adoption of *me*.

(4) a. CyA Borg 1985: 149
         ma-pišrap   me pira me mpit
         NEG-drink.IMPF.1SG NEG beer NEG wine
         'I don't drink either beer or wine.'

    b. Cypriot Greek
         em-pinno   me piran   me krasin
         PROG-drink.PRS.1SG NEG beer.ACC NEG wine.ACC
         'I don't drink either beer or wine.'

It is unclear, however, whether all or most of this is simply code-switching and whether it should be termed syntactic rather than lexical influence.

A syntactic change which does not involve code-switching or lexical borrowing is the development of a predicative copula (lacking in the present tense in most varieties of Arabic) from Arabic pronouns, discussed by both Roth (2004) and Borg (1985), and illustrated in (5).

(5) CyA Borg 1985: 134
    a. l-iknise   e   maftux-a   b. p-pkyara   enne maʕak
        DEF-church 3SG.F open-F   DEF-well.PL 3PL deep.PL
        'The church is open.'   'The wells are deep.'

In example (5a), the copula corresponds to the third-person feminine pronoun 'she' (also *e*, < *hiya*). Likewise, the copula *enne* in (5b) corresponds to the third-

person plural pronoun 'they' (also *enne*, < *hunna*). The development of this copula presumably replicates the obligatory present-tense copula found in Greek. See Lucas & Čéplö (this volume) for a similar phenomenon in Maltese.

Finally, both Roth (2004) and Newton (1964) document variable placement of adjectives, according to both Arabic and Greek norms, as illustrated in (6).

(6) a. CyA Roth 2004: 72
        m-mor-a   li-zˤar
        DEF-child-PL DEF-small.PL
        'small children'

    b. Lebanese Arabic Newton 1964: 48
        l-bēt   l-ikbīr
        DEF-house DEF-big
        'the big house'

    c. CyA Newton 1964: 47
        li-kbir   payt
        DEF-big house
        'the big house'

    d. Cypriot GreekNewton 1964: 48
        to   meálo spítin
        DEF big   house
        'the big house'

However, Borg (2004) notes that so-called "peripheral" varieties of colloquial Arabic have been said to employ freer word order than others, so the variation in noun–adjective ordering may be an independent internal development (or alternatively, perhaps peripheral varieties are by nature more subject to contact, which leads to this pattern of variation).

In summary, syntax, like morphology, shows relatively little influence of language contact, especially in contrast to the phonological system. As word order is already relatively flexible in both CyA and Cypriot Greek (e.g. with respect to subject–verb ordering; Newton 1964: 48–49), this is perhaps to be expected.

3.4 Lexicon

According to Newton (1964), of the 630 common lexical items which he elicited, 38% were Greek in origin. However, he goes on to say that the percentage is lower in running speech, in which typically the most common (and therefore native Arabic origin) vocabulary was used. Newton raises the possibility (1964: 51) that

CyA consists of "Arabic plus a large number of Cypriot [Greek] phrases thrown in whenever [a speaker's] Arabic fails him or the fancy takes him." Tsiapera (1964: 124) concurs, stating that "any speaker of [CyA] has a minimum of about thirty per cent of Greek lexical items in his speech which are not assimilated into the phonological and morphological system of his native language." She identifies the semantic fields of government and politics, numerical systems including weights and measures, and adverbial particles as particularly dominated by words of Greek origin.

This percentage contrasts with the relatively small number of Greek-origin items appearing in Borg's (2004) glossary. However, the difference in elicitation contexts must be kept in mind – Newton's work occurring in the Cypriot context and himself being competent in Greek, versus Borg's work occurring partly overseas and himself an Arabist rather than a scholar of Greek.

Roth (2004) refers to the drastic reduction of the lexicon, and estimates that it includes at most 1300 items. Borg's (2004) glossary contains roughly 2000 entries (corresponding to 720 lexical consonantal roots), which he considers to be a "substantial portion" (though not all) of the "depleted" Arabic-origin CyA lexicon.

Gulle (2016: 45) notes suppletion in the paradigm of the verb 'to come', with imperative forms borrowed from Greek. The consonantal root of the verb 'to come', in CyA as elsewhere in Arabic, is √žy, as seen in the form ža 'he came'. However, CyA imperative forms of this verb (*ela, eli, elu*, in masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural forms, respectively) are clearly based on Greek *ela, elate* (singular and plural, respectively). This particular case seems to reflect a pan-Balkan spread of this item, as *ela/elate* are also used in Bulgarian (personal knowledge).

In summary, universal bilingualism and Greek dominance among CyA speakers results in widespread use of code-switched Greek vocabulary and associated morphology, with marginal lexical suppletion. However, there is very little loan material integrated into the CyA grammatical system.

As a final note, Hadjidemetriou's (2009) doctoral dissertation examines language contact between CyA and Cypriot Greek (as well as Armenian and Cypriot Greek), in the opposite direction, to identify any effects of CyA on Cypriot Greek. Unsurprisingly, however, given the current dominance of Cypriot Greek for these speakers, no such effects were found, in any of the above domains.

4 Conclusion

CyA appears to present a counterexample to Van Coetsem's notion of the stability gradient, which claims that phonology (and syntax) are more stable than

other domains (the lexicon). It is clear that for CyA, phonology has been the least stable domain. The observed phonological convergence to Greek is of the type that suggests pervasive effects of L2 pronunciation (except for the retention of the pharyngeal glide). Yet it is difficult to imagine any sociolinguistic scenario in which CyA was taken up in any significant numbers by Greek speakers from outside the community, and the typical acquisition scenario (when CyA was still acquired by children) has been use of CyA as a home language, and Greek as a school language, thereby generating sequential (though eventually probably Greek-dominant) bilinguals. The historical record is unfortunately lacking any relevant information that could shed light on the situation.

The most urgent issue for future research on CyA is undoubtedly the need for additional documentation efforts. In particular, naturalistic texts and audio recordings are a desideratum. It is to be hoped that the documentation and revitalization efforts currently underway will remedy this situation.

Further reading

➤ Tsiapera's (1969) work is the only one so far to consider CyA in its totality as a spoken language, although not at great length, and it drew subsequent criticism of the author's lack of background knowledge of the Arabic language. This monograph does, however, have the additional advantage of a publication date very close in time to the radical change in the sociolinguistic circumstances of CyA speakers due to ethnic tensions in the island, culminating in their near-unanimous relocation from traditionally Maronite villages to the capital city Nicosia.

➤ Borg's (1985) foundational work on morphophonology is still the most extensive resource on CyA grammar. He takes a historical perspective on changes from earlier Arabic to contemporary CyA, both contact-driven and otherwise, and also includes substantial textual material in CyA at the end. These texts are currently the only published ones available.

➤ The follow-up volume by Borg (2004) includes a substantial introductory essay situating CyA within the range of Arabic dialects and elucidating the influences of the main contact language, Cypriot Greek. The lexical entries are enriched by comparisons with dialectal forms from other varieties of Arabic, as well as Greek, Aramaic, and other contact languages where relevant.

➤ The most up-to-date and reliable information regarding CyA and its speakers, including documentation, preservation and revival efforts, may be found in the Council of Europe (2017) report.

➤ The following two community websites contain information on CyA institutions and activities in both Greek and English, including contact information, historical background, archived copies of the monthly (Greek-language) community newsletter, and so on.

- http://www.maronitesofcyprus.com (in both Greek and English)
- http://kormakitis.net/portal/ (in Greek)

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Abbreviations

ACC	accusative	PRF	perfect (suffix conjugation)
CE	Common Era	PL	plural
CyA	Cypriot Maronite Arabic	PRIO	Peace Research Institute Oslo
COMP	complementizer		
DEF	definite	PROG	progressive
DEM	demonstrative	PRS	present
DU	dual	PST	past tense
ECRML	European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages	SBJV	subjunctive
		SG	singular
		TAM	tense–aspect–modality
F	feminine	UN	United Nations
IMPF	imperfect (prefix conjugation)	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
PASS	passive		

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