A Comparative Analysis of Romeyka and Turkish Personal Experience Narratives

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Abstract

This senior thesis is a comparative study on personal experience narratives in Turkish and Romeyka (or Pontic Greek), an endangered Greek dialect spoken in northern Turkey. This study compares and contrasts Turkish and Romeyka narratives produced by Turkish-Romeyka bilingual speakers in aspects of Turkish influence, Labovian framework, and similarity with Modern Greek narrative with a touch on speakers' own perception of their identity in Turkey as Romeyka speakers. Narrative is considered a very important element for our mental and social life (Cortazzi 1994). One of the most groundbreaking studies about narrative was done by Labov and Waletzky (1966), who proposed a structural model for personal experience narratives. More specifically, they proposed that personal experience narratives could be segmented and categorized into parts according to their function in the narrative. They emphasized the temporal juncture in what differentiates narrative from other kinds of discourse. Other approaches to narratives were on their linguistic characteristics and what they tell us about the narrative or their social action. A third approach is about the unconscious organization of oral narrative. In the Standard Modern Greek context, specifically, Georgakopoulou (1997) studied forty Standard Modern Greek oral narratives and claimed that there was a visible pattern of number three in the narrations. These kinds of patterns are attributed to "shared cultural modes of thinking", and as Johnstone (1990: 99) argues and Georgakopoulou agrees that number 'three' is a key number in European and American cultural norms.

Keywords: Narrative, Romeyka, Turkish, Bilingual

1. Introduction

Narrative is a very broad concept, definitions of which change according to the approach one adopts. Brian Richardson (2000) explains four main approaches to the definition of narrative; temporal, causal, minimal, and transactional. For this study, I adopted the temporal narrative definition, which is the representation of events that had happened in a time interval before the narration time. The main characteristic of this approach is that narratives are produced in a time sequence Narrative in this study, is a temporally structured discourse of people's personal experiences.

Narrative is considered a very important element for our mental and social life. (Cortazzi 1994) Different models were used for certain disciplines to unearth different aspects of interaction through narratives; for instance, Labov and Waletzky (1966), proposes an underlying linguistic structure model for narratives; made up of different components that are not necessarily sequential in a narrative.

Although narratives have been studied from different perspectives in different fields of study, to my knowledge, the study of the same narratives by bilinguals in a comparative manner is still in its infancy. In this study, I look at the characteristics of narratives uttered in both languages by Romeyka-Turkish bilinguals and compare the structure and components of them to see the differences and parallels between them.

2. Romeyka

Romeyka, or Pontic Greek, is a dialect of Greek spoken in northern Anatolia, Georgia, Ukraine, Russia, and northern Greece. The language was historically spoken outside Greece until the Treaty of Lausanne between Greece and Turkey in 1923. (Kaltsa and Sitaridou 2010).[1] Due to the treaty, many Romeyka speakers of Turkey had to emigrate to Greece. This led to a great decline in the number of Romeyka speakers in the Pontus region of northern Turkey. However, there are some remaining Muslim Romeyka speakers of Turkey that have been preserving their language and identity, although the current number of speakers is unknown.

Similarly, with some other minority languages in Turkey, Romeyka does not have a formal written system. Romeyka speakers in Turkey are bilingual speakers of Turkish and Romeyka; therefore, they individually use either Turkish Latin alphabet or very rarely Modern Greek alphabet to write in Romeyka. The close coexistence with Turkish both culturally and individually makes the Turkish influence inevitable.

In its social and historical context, using Romeyka in social life has not been easy. After the foundation of the republic in Turkey, the state adopted a policy that was supposed to 'unify' all of the people under the republic under one nation and one language. The pressure against speaking Romeyka from that era continues to affect its speakers. At the beginning of my research, I asked my speakers if their older family members, who were also Turkish-Romeyka bilingual speakers, can contribute to this study. Speaker 1 stated that her family members refrain from publicly promoting Romeyka out of fear and did not want to participate in the study. Due to this pressure, Speaker 2 said that those who migrate to cities

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[1] Today, it is estimated that there are more than two million Pontic Greek speakers in Greece, but only 200.000-300.000 people use this dialect actively (Kaltsa and Sitaridou 2010).

from her village hid their Romeyka identities and did not speak Romeyka there to avoid being in the middle of a political dispute. According to Özkan (2013), although many of the speakers deny the connection between their language and Greek, some of them acknowledged their *Rum* identity beneath their Turkish national identity.

Despite this adverse situation, there has been progressing in the social status of Romeyka, and the state-induced pressure is relaxed in recent years (Özkan 2013). A documentary about Romeyka was filmed with the financial support of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism[2], Romeyka songs are aired by the official national television broadcasting corporation *TRT* (Özkan 2013). Although there might be still some prejudices in public, especially in older generations, things have been improving for Romeyka and other minority languages of Turkey.

3. Participants and Methodology

This study was done with two female speakers. Speaker 1 is from Trabzon, Çaykara, Aşağı (lower) Ogene village. Speaker 2 is a 34 years old female and is from Trabzon, Çaykara, Yukarı (higher) Ogene village. Both were born and raised in predominantly Romeyka spoken environments and acquired Romeyka first, Turkish second. Both speakers are now bilingual Romeyka and Turkish speakers, living in predominantly Turkish-speaking cities and circles, except for family context and their personal studies about Romeyka.

I asked these speakers to report me an event first in Romeyka, then in Turkish. Due to global COVID-19 restrictions, no face-to-face recording sessions were possible. I asked the speakers to record themselves report an event and send them to me online. I collected four recordings in total, two from each speaker, each of which has two versions, Turkish and Romeyka. First, I compared the dialectal differences between speakers. Then, I applied Labov's analytical framework for personal experience narratives, analyzed the Turkish influence, and compared the Romeyka narratives with Modern Greek.

4. Literature Review

As mentioned in section 1, narrative is a multi-dimensional area, hence studied by plenty of researchers from different fields. Studies about narratives are generally divided into two branches: narratives studies that focus on cultural folk stories, narrated through generations after generations, and narratives of personal experience, uttered in everyday conversations. In my literature review, I focused on narratives of personal experience.

4.1. Labov and Personal Experience Narratives

In the area of personal experience narratives, sociolinguists Labov and Waletzky's theories roughly shaped the later research on narrative studies. (Labov & Waletsky, 1966; Labov, 1972; Labov & Fanshel, 1977) After analyzing narratives about personal experience from American English speakers, Labov suggests that a 'fully formed' narrative has a structure model that chunks the narrative into six parts based on the sentences. The model considers uttered sentences' content and their function in the narrative. The model includes

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[2] Romeyika'nın Türküsü ('The Song of Romeyka', 2009) by Yeliz Karakütük

Abstract	the point of telling the story
Orientation	the characters and the backstage information that gives an introduction to the narrative's context
Complicating action	the event of the narrative takes place
Evaluation	narrator's attitude to the event, comments about the narration
Result	the conclusion to the event
Coda	connecting the narrative to present time

Table 1. Labovian PEN Framework

The sequence of the elements is not fixed. The fact that this model is mapped from unconscious, vernacular narratives, makes it very important in showing that "talk" is structured and can be analyzed and modeled (Johnstone 2001). However, it is useful to note that their definition of narrative is heavily based upon its temporal juncture. Any series of clauses with a temporal juncture is defined as narrative. Furthermore, they take into consideration only the narrations that follow the same temporal order as original events. To illustrate this;
a. Well, this person had a little too much to drink
b. and he attacked me
c. and the friend came in
d. and she stopped it

The above example is a narrative that follows the same temporal order as the real-life event.

Below is an alternative interpretation of the same event;
c. a friend of mine came in
d. just in time to stop
a. this person who had a little too much to drink
b. from attacking me.

Although both versions are acceptable and semantically parallel, the latter is not considered as a narrative and thus Labov's analytical framework cannot be applied to it.

To further improve the above studies about personal experience narratives, research can be done on narratives in conversation analysis. The above model is based upon elicited narratives and may not be easily applied to spontaneous narratives in daily conversation. (Georgakopoulou 1997) There are a lot of external factors coming into consideration in conversation analysis. One is that narrators are more familiar and share more background information about their experiences with their listeners in a conversational setting. That those shared assumptions may not be known to the interviewer and hence need to be explained in an experimental environment leads to longer orientation in narratives (Georgakopoulou 1997).

Nonetheless, two points of Labov's work also caused confusion in narrative studies. One is the definition of narrative. While Labov defines narrative as any sequence of clauses with a temporal juncture parallel with the original event, he also includes non-narrative sections as

orientation and evaluation in a 'fully formed' narrative (Johnstone 2001). In addition, many researchers continued to use the term 'narrative' as an umbrella term for both any talk concerning a past event and talk designed to be presented and attract an audience. (Johnstone 2001) Later, some researchers adopted the distinction that "narrative" is used to represent past events and "story" is used to refer to a 'narrative with a point' (Johnstone 2001).

The second point is related to the aforementioned feature of Labov's stories: the fact that they are elicited in an interview environment. Labov's claim that all 'fully formed' narratives have the structure above was not valid for narratives produced in a different context. (Johnstone 2001) It can be observed that not all narratives have all of the sections described in the model, but according to Johnstone (2001), this supports Labov's suggestion that narrative structure is dependent on the context it is produced.

4.2 Other Works on Narrative and Greek Narration

There have been other structural studies in the field of narrative research as well. One approach focuses on how narrative is dependent on its social context. Narration evolves and changes according to the environment it is produced, its audience, and the audience's reaction to the ongoing narration. Schiffrin (1984, 1996) examines how structures of narratives reflect their social action. Moreover, how audiences are also a part of the construction process, either directly or indirectly is also studied by different scholars (Ochs et al. 1989; Norrick 1997). (Johnstone 2001)

Another approach is about the linguistic characteristics of the narrative and what they tell us about the narrative. Schiffrin (1981) studied the tense shift from past tense to historical present tense in narrative. She analyzed the structure of the clauses concerning their relation to the Labovian framework of the narrative. Then, she examines the historical present tense use in narrative and its possible reasons.

A third approach is about the unconscious organization of oral narrative. Dell Hymes (1981) showed that Native American myth was performed in recurring literal and numeral patterns. Coming back to the Greek context, Alexandra Georgakopoulou (1997), studied forty Standard Modern Greek oral narratives, and claimed that there was a visible pattern of number three in the narrations. These kinds of patterns are attributed to "shared cultural modes of thinking", and, as Johnstone (1990: 99) argues and Georgakopoulou agrees, that number 3 is a key number in European and American cultural norms. The three pattern is seen in the following examples.

1. Three elements presented in a sentence (mostly adjectival phrases)
(a) akusa mŋa δinati δjaperastici aδjakopi foni
I heard a loud penetrating continuous voice

2. Three micro-actions related to each other in an event-schema
(b) opote jirnai, perni fora, ce tsap piδai to fraχti
and so he turns around, makes a bounce, and "tsap" jumps over the fence

3. Focus on three characters and their actions in a story
(c) a. aftos etreçe ce kornarize, eyo krataya ti Vivi, i mana su travaje ta malja tis c 'ekleje as pume...

he was running and honking, I was holding Vivi in my arms, your mum was pulling at her hair and crying...

4. The three elements in the pattern are most times bound with reiteration device (e.g. parallelism, paraphrase, repetition)
(e) . itan ena prayma me ute steji ute tavani ute tipota
it was a thing with no roof no ceiling no nothing

In some cases, the number three appears in the narration even when it is not relevant to the plotline and does not appear again. We also see the three pattern in the number of phrases in the sentences of a narrative.

Although there are studies on Ancient and Standard Modern Greek narrative and discourse – such as Georgakopoulou's-, there have been no studies on Romeyka narrative structure.

5. Results

5.1. Dialectal Differences

Although both speakers were from the Ogene village there were differences in their dialects. Speaker 2 who was from Aşağı Ogene part of the village, put stress on the second syllable of most of the verbs. This led to the deletion of the initial *e-* in the verbs.

1) (e)Seven   apes.
    enter-3SG.M.PST   inside.
    He went inside too.

The verb *eseven* 'he entered' is pronounced as *seven*. This is not peculiar to sentence-initial position. The verb *egolisen* 'he burned' is pronounced without initial *e-* in the sentence.

2) So   közin (e)GOlisen   to   dhadhin.
    LOC   ember burn-3SG.M.PST   ACC   kindling
    He burned the kindling in the ember

Another difference was seen in the nominal form of nouns that end with a vowel. Speaker 1 pronounces nouns with proper determiner and noun's bare form in nominal case in the context where the plural is needed.

3) Emis   tin   kosara   uç   exume
    we   ACC.PL.F   chickens   NEG   have.1PL.PRES
    We do not have any chickens.

Speaker 2, adds an additional *–n* to nouns in nominal case.

4) O   Leyon   ne   insanin   en   ne   hayvanin   en.
    DET.1SG.M   Leyo.NOM   neither human   COP   nor   animal   COP
    Leyo is neither a human nor an animal.

5.2. Comparison with Labovian Framework

Below are four tables of speakers' narratives divided into six parts of Labov's personal experience narrative framework. The tables show the durations of each function in speakers' narratives. Through this table, I tried to see whether speakers spent visibly more or less time when they narrated in two languages. This could show speakers' tendencies when they speak to a Turkish speaker who did not know Romeyka.

Speaker 1.1-TR (01.44 min)	**Speaker 1.1-ROM** (01.59 min)
Abstract: -- Orientation: 0.00 - 0.11 Complicating action: 0.12 – 1.20 Embedded orientation: 0.32 – 0.42 Result: 1.21 – 1.44 Evaluation: -- Coda: --	Abstract: -- Orientation: 0.00 - 0.10 Complicating action: 0.12 – 1.26 Embedded orientation: 0.32 – 0.40 Result: 1.27 – 1.59 Evaluation: -- Coda:--
Speaker 1.2-TR (0.48 min)	**Speaker 1.2-ROM** (0.58 min)
Abstract: -- Orientation: 0.00 – 0.03 Complicating action: 0.03 – 0.36 Embedded orientation: 0.02 / 0.10-0.16 Result: 0.36 – 0.48 Evaluation: -- Coda: --	Abstract: -- Orientation: 0.00 – 0.01 Complicating action: 0.01 – 0.37 Embedded orientation: -- Result: 0.38 – 0.58 Evaluation: -- Coda: --
Speaker 2.1-TR (2.14 min)	**Speaker 2.1-ROM** (2.14 min)
Abstract:-- Orientation: 0.00 – 0.14 Complicating action: : 0.18-0.22 / 0.29-0.44 / 0.50-1.14 / 1.19-1.49 / 1.52-2.13 Embedded orientation: 0.22-0.29 / 0.45-0.49 Result: 2.13 - 2.14 Evaluation: Coda:	Abstract:-- Orientation: 0.00-0.25 Complicating action: 0.31-0.55 / 0.58-1.27 / 1.33-2.10 Embedded orientation: 0.55-0.58 / 1.28-1.32 Result: 2.11- 2.14 Evaluation: 0.28 – 0.30 / 01.53-01.55 Coda:
Speaker 2.2-TR (3.38 min)	**Speaker 2.2-ROM** (3.24 min)
Abstract:1.11-1.16 Orientation: 0.00 – 1.10 Complicating action:1.16-1.25 / 1.36-2.16 / 2.26-2.52 Embedded orientation: 1.26-1.35 / 2.17-2.24 Result: 2.52 - 2.58 Evaluation: -- Coda: 2.59-3.38	Abstract: 0.00-0.05 Orientation: -- Complicating action: 0.16-2.42 Embedded orientation: -- Result: 2.42- 2.49 Evaluation:-- Coda: 0.06-0.15 / 2.50-3.24

Table 2. Narratives According to Labovian Narrative Framework

5.3 Turkish Loanwords Usage

Table 3 shows the Turkish loanword usage rate of speakers and narratives per minute. This ratio shows the speakers' conscious or unconscious stance on using Turkish loanwords while speaking Romeyka.
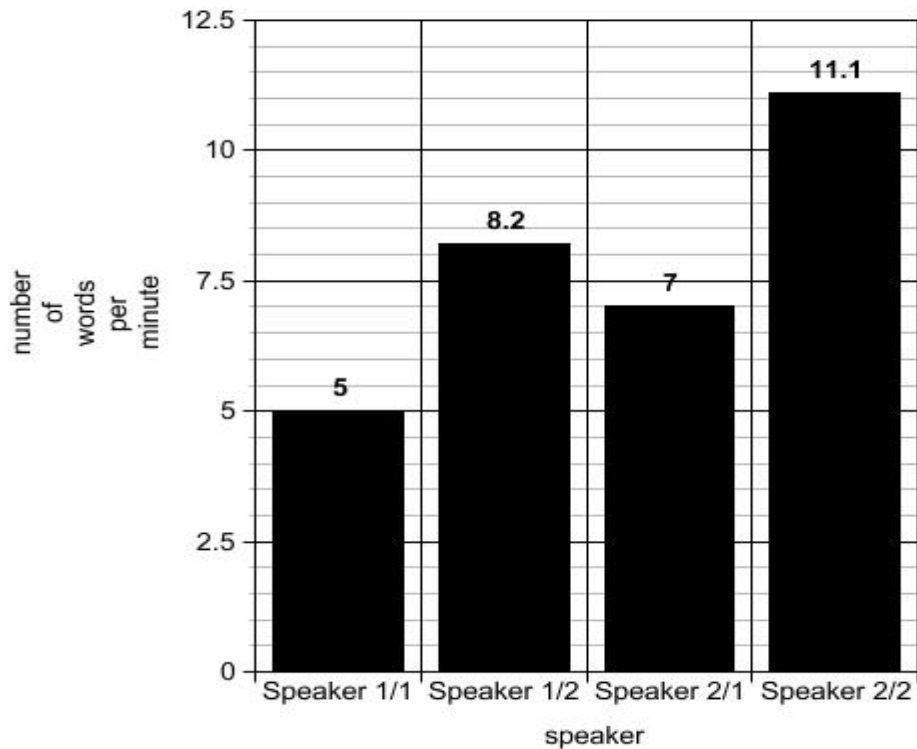

Table 3. Turkish Loanwords Usage Rate per Minute

Table 4 demonstrates classes of Turkish loanwords. There were 62 different Turkish words in total from four narratives. This data helps us see what classes of words are more likely to be borrowed from Turkish. The result can help to see Romeyka's morphological system and lexicon.
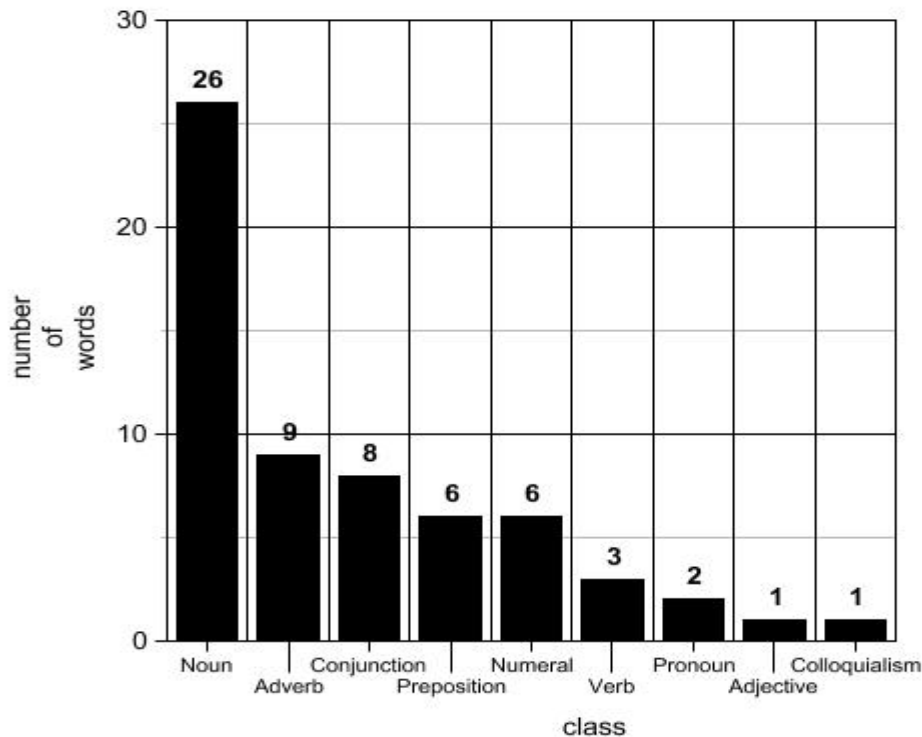
Table 4. Turkish Loanwords' Use Count and Word Classes

6. Discussion and Analysis

6.1. Dialect Differences

There were dialectal differences in pronunciation although the villages were both southern mountain villages quite close to each other geographically. Trabzon is a city with many mountains and most non-urban villages are on mountain slopes. My opinion is that the traditional settlement layout has hindered the communication between even very close villages. This may have caused the still preserving dialectal differences in Romeyka. The cultural isolation due to topography in the Black Sea region is prominent also in Turkish-speaking villages.

6.2 Comparison with Labovian Framework

One immediately visible result of putting the narratives into the Labovian model is that except for one narrative, there is generally no abstract in narratives. The only abstract is a very short one from narrative 2.2 in both languages, taking up roughly only 2% of the narration. Another interesting point is that, in all of the recordings, orientation, before complicating action or embedded, took more time in the Turkish versions. The reason for this may be that I, the experimenter, was a Turkish-speaking person. When the speakers were narrating their stories, they may have felt the need to explain more things to me about their village life and culture. This would not be necessary when they spoke Romeyka to a person who can also speak it, since the person who knows the language would be more familiar with their life and daily practices. This is direct evidence on how the audience determines the narrative's content and the unconscious choices the narrator makes, depending on the audience's relation to the narration. The audience can co-narrate the story even without participating in the actual utterance, only through existing and having its characteristics.

Overall, the Labovian narrative model does not fully meet both Romeyka and Turkish narratives I have collected. Mostly the narratives directly get to the point of the story, usually starting with orientation, continuing with a long complicating action with sometimes a few embedded orientations, and finally the result. There is little evaluation and only one case of coda, in both Turkish and Romeyka versions of narrative 2.2.

6.3 Turkish Loanwords Usage

When we look at the Turkish word usage in speakers, we can see that Speaker 2 uses more Turkish loanwords in her speech. Speaker 1's reluctance may be due to the fact that she is a journalist who actively promotes Romeyka and Romeyka identity in Turkey. It is possible that she deliberately avoids using Turkish loanwords as a way of preservation of ethnic identity.

The loanwords' classes were determined by their function in the narrative. It is possible to see some of the words listed below in other categories with respect to their context. As for the distribution of their classes, it is not surprising to see that nouns are the most borrowed words from Turkish. Out of 61 loanwords, 26 is noun. It is widely known that nouns are the word group that is most likely to be borrowed from a donor language. Haspelmath (2008) noted that "according to Myers-Scotton (2002: 240), nouns are borrowed preferentially "because they receive, not assign, thematic roles", so "their insertion in another language is less disruptive of predicate-argument structure". Turkish is also the language that has the most influence on Romeyka spoken in Asia Minor. Hence the Turkish nouns' are the most suitable candidate to be borrowed.

Among the second most borrowed words are adverbs. In 61 words, there were 9 different adverbs. Out of the 7 adverbs, 5 of them is adverb of time (*her gün* 'everyday', *sabahtan* 'in the morning', *en son* 'at last', *o zaman* 'then', *anda* 'the moment (something happens)'); 2 is adverb of frequency (*bazen* 'sometimes', *genelde* 'usually'); and 1 is and adverb of manner (*kendi kendine* 'by/to himself'); and 1 is an adverb of degree (*epey* 'very much').

The eight conjunctions, namely *ye.. ye..* 'either.. or..', *yani* 'in other words', *ama* 'but', *neyse* 'anyways', *hani* 'I mean', *ki* 'which/that', *ne.. ne..* 'neither.. nor..' and *eğer* 'if', are among the most used conjunctions in colloquial Turkish. Thus it is no surprise that they were borrowed by Romeyka speakers, who are also speakers of Turkish.

As for the numerals, Romeyka borrows all of the numeral system from Turkish. Only numbers up to 5 are used in Romeyka, but even that is not common in daily life according to Speaker 2. The first 5 Romeyka numbers are *ena* 'one', *dhio* 'two', *dria* 'three', *desera* 'four', and *pedhe* 'five'. The rest of the numbers are borrowed directly from Turkish.

The six prepositions are *işte* 'well', *tabi* 'of course', *gibi* 'like', *bir de* 'also', *belki* 'maybe', *artuk* 'or/well'.

The three verbs are *kız-* 'be angry with', *başla-* 'start', *paxla-* 'clean'. There is another questionable verb that is used inside a sentence, *hallediyor* 'he takes care of it'.The interesting thing about this verb is that while the first three verbs are used with Romeyka time and person markers as seen in examples (5) and (6), *hallet-* is entirely borrowed with its Turkish time and person markers as seen in example (7).

(5) İyneka kız<u>epse</u>.
The woman got angry.

(6) Ama Leyon başla<u>yepsen</u> sablesimon.
But Leyo started to burn.

(7) Halledi<u>yor</u> ejega efdeyise perişan artık.
He takes care of it, he makes (you) miserable there.

Although *hallediyor* is used at the beginning of the sentence which is unusual for Turkish but very common in Romeyka, the way it is used entirely with Turkish markers is notable. However, as there is already a Romeyka verb *efdeyise* 'he does' in the sentence, I did not consider *hallediyor* as a loanword. I considered it as an example of code-switching. Whether this kind of use of Turkish words is common or not is not clear, but can be further studied with more speakers.

Lastly, the one adjective is *perişan* 'miserable', one colloquialism is *tamam* 'okay' and two pronouns are *ondan* 'that.ABL' –a pronoun directly borrowed with its markers from Turkish– and the reflexive pronoun *gendi*[3]. *Gendi* is also used with Romeyka markers.

(8) Hayes leğune dipo anda efdey gendis
The elderly say so when they bring something upon themselves.

Moreover, the adverb *kendi kendine* 'by/to itself' is made using this reflexive pronoun and it is borrowed directly from Turkish with its Turkish markers. While speaker 2 prefers to write the *gendi* with voiced consonant [g], she writes *kendi kendine* with voiceless consonant [k]. The fact that the latter is borrowed directly as a phrase from Turkish, probably causes her to write it in Turkish form.

6.4. Comparison with Modern Greek Narrative

Georgakopoulou's number 3 pattern is not distinctly apparent in the narratives. There are a few examples where number 3 can be traced as in examples (9) and (10).

(9) Sa ğardelie is <u>ye eğo ye i Fatoş ye o Salihis</u> ebeybame.
Among the children, either I or Fatoş or Salih would go.

(10) Binami is tin mamim yerdimin. Pername do storaçi muna. Da za elename.
We used to help my grandmother. We would get our sticks. We would herd the cows.

However, there is not enough evidence to say that a number 3 pattern is prominently observable.

This difference was not surprising. As mentioned in Section 2, almost every Romeyka speaker is also a Turkish speaker. Being raised in a culturally Turkish environment may have cut their ties with the "common Indo-European culture" mentioned by Georgakopoulou. The stories they hear, the way they speak are probably more interrelated with the Turkish language and Turkish culture than any other. Accordingly, this disconnection with Modern

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[3] *Kendi* in Standard Modern Turkish.

Greek must be due to the geographical disconnection that has damaged Romeyka's ties with it for centuries.

Concerning the connection with Modern Greek, conforming to the issue in section 2, Speaker 2 specifically requested me to transcribe the narratives using voiced consonants [b], [d], etc. in certain words when I transcribed her dialect. She said that when I use voiceless consonants, the language sounds 'more like Greek (*Yunan*)' and she did not want that. She did not deny the possibility that Romeyka 'might be Greek in the end', but she claimed that she did not see it as a political issue. She also expressed her disapproval of Romeyka being used as a tool in political discourse.

6.4 Overall Linguistic Comparison

One notable difference between the linguistic qualities of the narratives in two languages is the tense. Romeyka uses its regular past tense.

(11) Erthen i manam çe i thiam.
My mother and my aunt came.

(12) O toxtor, "esi", ipen atona, "her gün ena ovo na tros."
The doctor; "you" he said to him, "should eat one egg every day."

Turkish has two suffixes that are used for past tense, *-mIş* and *-DI*. The evidential *–mIş* suffix is mainly used to talk about past events that the speaker "was not a direct or fully conscious participant" (Slobin and Aksu 1982). But it also has a narrative function that is special to unreal events, used for telling folktales, myths, or jokes (Slobin and Aksu 1982). Inside the narrative 2.2, Speaker 2 talks about a folktale she heard when she was a child. In the Turkish version of the narrative 2.2 when she starts with a little anecdote about "Leyo", the fictitious character she was scared of as a child, she uses the *–mış* tense as expected as seen in example (13).

(13) Leyo'ya sor<u>muş</u>lar 'Seni kim yaktı?', 'Ben kendimi yakmışım, ben kendimi yakmışım.' de<u>miş</u>.
People (literally 'they') asked Leyo 'Who burned you?', it said 'I burned myself, I burned myself.'

However, in the very next sentence, when she goes on about her memories about the tale, she also uses *–mış* tense, which is unexpected. Stories about self are usually told in *–DI* tense in Turkish, which, unlike *–mış*, indicates that the speaker is a direct participant in the event.

(14) E ben de merak et<u>miş</u>im 'Leyo kimdir, nedir, niye kendini yakmış'.
So I wondered, 'who's this Leyo, what is it, why did it burn itself?'

Moreover, immediately after example (14), she continues with *–yor* suffix, which indicates imperfect aspect and –when it is used without any other tense marker- present continuous tense. The *–yor* marker is rarely used in narrating past events in Turkish.

(15) İşte babaanneme soru<u>yor</u>um "Nene bu Leyo kimdir, niye kendi kendini yaktı, niye böyle bir şeyi yaptı?"

So I ask my grandmother, "Grandma who is this Leyo, why did it burn itself, why did it do such a thing?"

Then, right after example (15), she finally goes on with past tense –DI marker, which is the expected one in telling personal experience narratives.

(16) Babaannem de<u>di</u> ki "Leyo insanımsı bir canlı, artık insan desen insan değil hayvan desen hayvan değil."
My grandma said, "Leyo is a humanlike creature, it is neither a human nor an animal."

Then again, the tense shifts to –yor again and goes on mostly with –yor until the folktale, hence –mIş begins.

The mixed tense use is interesting because it is rarely mixed in daily conversation in Turkish, except for intentional shifts made by the speaker to create an effect.

7. Conclusion

This research was aimed to compare and contrast Romeyka and Turkish personal experience narratives produced by bilingual speakers of both languages. Based on the results, there are a lot of differences in the narration of the same event in Romeyka and Turkish, even if they are narrated by the same people. Among Romeyka narratives, there were dialectic differences and different ratios of Turkish loanword usages. Between Romeyka and Turkish narratives, there were differences in style and tense use. When both versions were put into the Labovian personal experience narrative framework, we see that more time was devoted to orientation in the Turkish version. When we compare Romeyka narratives to Modern Greek narratives, we do not see parallelism in number three pattern of Modern Greek narratives. This is attributed to the cultural disunity between Romeyka speakers and Modern Greek speakers.

To better understand the relation between two languages, this study can be further improved by adding more speakers from different genders, ages, and villages. Furthermore, the scope can be expanded into different discourse types in two languages. This study answers the question of how bilingual speakers of a minority language make conscious or unconscious choices when they speak either language, what are those choices and why do they do them. Although there has been some research on Romeyka and its grammatical structure, the sociolinguistic aspect of the language has a great potential to work on and improve. This study shows one viewpoint from this aspect, and many more exciting research questions are waiting to be addressed.

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