From derivation to inflection: a process of grammaticalization
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Since the early days of generative morphology, the extent to which derivation, i.e. the operation that creates new words, and inflection, i.e. the operation that creates the appropriate forms of a particular word to be used in syntax, may interact remains an open problem. The present paper builds on the assumption that inflection and derivation are two -in principle- distinct morphological processes and aims to explore one aspect of their interaction dealing with the historical process of grammaticalization. GRAMMATICALIZATION is defined by Kuryłowicz (1975) as consisting “in the increase of the range of a morpheme advancing from a lexical to a grammatical or from a grammatical to a more grammatical status”.

Grammaticalization is often detected in the relation of compounding and derivation (see, among others, Bauer 1983, Booij 2005, and Ralli 2008, 2010, in print). However, less attention has been paid to the particular phenomenon as far as the relation between derivation and inflection is concerned. The present paper discusses an instance of the latter type with the use of data from Griko, a Greek variety of Southern Italy which is spoken by approximately 20,000 speakers in 9 villages in the center of the Salentine peninsula.

Griko displays a range of verbal formations in which a derivational morpheme, -idz-, fails to meet the criteria of prototypical derivational affixes (cf. Stump, 2005 for these criteria), namely, the ability to form verbs out of nouns or adjectives. In fact, -idz- appears in a number of verbs containing an already verbal base:

\[(1) \quad \text{[[katal]v-o]v ‘to destroy’} \quad \text{> } \quad \text{[[katal]-idz]v-o]v ‘to destroy’}\]

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{STEM-INF}L & \text{STEM-DSUF-INF}L \\
\end{array}
\]

In (1), the verb *katalo* is also used as *katalidzo*, where the role of -idz- is to flag membership to a particular (inflection) C(lass), namely, membership to the most productive IC1. It is noteworthy that Griko verbs are inflected according to two major IC’s, i.e. IC1 and IC2, and IC2 is the class of those verbs which do not contain any derivational suffixes (see also Karanastasis, 1997). Therefore, the change from *katalo* to *katalidzo* is a cross-paradigmatic levelling. As argued by Ralli (2012), shifts from one class to another are often facilitated by a stem similarity which is observed in the aorist paradigm. In fact, this may also be the case for the example in (1), since both the verb containing -idz-, inflected according to IC1, and the verb without -idz, inflected according to IC2, display a common stem form *kateli-* in the aorist tense, as illustrated in Table 1 (verbal forms are given in the citation form):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>IC2</th>
<th>IC1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>katal-o</td>
<td>katal-idzo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aorist</td>
<td>kateli-sa</td>
<td>kateli-sa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The -idz- formations in Griko, constitute an important case for the hypothesis that derivational elements may acquire a more functional character, since -idz- seems to have lost its derivational nature, i.e. to form denominal verbs, and has become more functional. Finally, and more importantly, the Griko -idz- case illustrates the interaction between derivation and inflection, since crossing the border from one process to the other does not seem to be particularly difficult.

References


Ralli (in print). *Compounding in Modern Greek*. Springer
