

Vehicle-Related Expressions in Turkish Cypriot Dialect

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Abstract: Turkish Cypriot dialect (henceforth TCD), being one of the Anatolian dialects, is nowadays different with respect to vocabulary, from both Anatolian dialects and Turkish. This difference is due to its borrowed vocabulary stock, the frequent use of non-standard sentence structure, intonation pattern and so on.

The primary reasons causing the difference can be cited as:

- (I) the isolation of the TCD from Anatolian dialects for a significant period,
- (II) the multicultural and multilingual context of the island.

In this study, a detailed analysis of the vocational language (mechanics) will be carried out with specific reference to car, car parts and engine parts.

Today when the language of mechanics is analyzed, it can be clearly noted that borrowed words constitute their language significantly. In addition to this, various words were derived from Turkish and new meanings were given to words in Turkish and Anatolian dialects. Finally there will be an opportunity to reflect the fact that a new type of vocabulary is generated with a different meaning from that of the Turkish and Anatolian dialects.

Key Words: Turkish Cypriot Dialect, Cypriot Turkish, mechanics' language, jargon, loanwords.

Introduction

Turks came to Cyprus from different regions of Anatolia and naturally they brought their dialects to Cyprus. Therefore, the roots of Turkish Cypriot Dialect (henceforth TCD) go back the Anatolian dialects. In literature, there are studies which show bonds of TCD with Anatolian dialects (Eren 1969: 345-361, Hakeri 1986: 135-143). In fact, the studies of Eren (1969: 345-361) and Hakeri (1986: 135-143), clearly show that many words of the TCD

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are also used in Anatolian dialects. Despite being one of the Anatolian dialects, the contemporary TCD displays some differences from Anatolian dialects (Argunşah 2003: 193). Despite the unity in origin and similarities of which Demir (2002: 101-110) argues that TCD with some peculiarities constitutes a group distinct from Anatolian and other Turkish dialects. This difference can be attributed to linguistic attitudes (Osam 2002: 207-219) of Turkish Cypriots since they lived as a closed society and they interacted with other communities in Cyprus in the past.

It is said that TCD has been mostly influenced by Turkish (Spoken in Turkey) since the Tanzimat Edict. The movement towards purifying Turkish in the Ottoman Empire during that time had been closely watched in Cyprus by the Turkish Cypriot Community (Fedai 1993: 34-38). With the declaration of the Republic of Turkey, the language and linguistic matters gained more value and the Turkish Cypriot Community followed them accordingly.

It is a fact that the Turkish Cypriot Community was in search of developing close ties with Turkey during that time. As known in Social Identity Theory, language plays a significant role in divergence and convergence of identities as pointed out by Tajfel (1982). As a result, it was the convergence that stemmed from the problems occurring on the island. Two different identities (Turks and Greeks) were under the regime of British Empire and both communities had been trying to free themselves and unite with their motherlands (Kızılyürek&Kızılyürek 2004: 37-54). Especially at the beginning of the second half of the 20th Century the separation of Turks and Greeks and the English on the island decreased the language contact of TCD with English and Greek (Özerk 2001: 253-265) and increased the language contact with Turkish (Pehlivan 2003: 12-46). Although borrowing from the Turkish is not equal and at the same level in every aspect of language use (Öztürk 2000: 27-46, Pehlivan 2003), it has influenced TCD together with the existence of the borrowed words from Greek and English in the dialect vocabulary stock. The process of Turkish's influence is still in progress (Pehlivan 2003).

As can be understood from the political and linguistic situation between 1878-1959, English was dominating both Turkish and Greek languages resulting in major linguistic contact among these three languages. The outcome of the contact resulted in various linguistic matters but the most significant of them had been borrowing. As Labov (1994) puts forward, words are dynamic which lead to borrowing whereas structures are static and not open to change.

The types of borrowing referred to by Osam (1997: 60-69) will be considered as the primary basis in this study. In brief, borrowing is a continual

process, it is like a never ending story, and TCD reflects borrowing very explicitly.

As stated in earlier studies, TCD differs from the Turkish in various aspects such as syntax, vocabulary, intonation and so on (Demir 2002a: 101-110, 2002b, Osam 2002: 207-219, Vancı 1990: 242-256). The difference has a number of reasons; but in this study, the reasons of the change of TCD are assumed to have a close relationship with language contact and multilingualism. As put forward in earlier studies (Demir&Johanson 2006: 1-11, Vancı 2006: 23-43) the location of the island has always been a major reason in the change of TCD. For instance the Latin origin words *basadembo* “passatempo” ‘a type of seed that people peel with their teeth and eat in order to spend time’, *gurva* “kurva” ‘curve’, English origin word *isviç* “switch”, and Greek origin words *rayma*, *ebisgevi* ‘reconditioning the engine’ have been observed significantly in the vocabulary stock of the TCD. A recent dictionary of TCD can be considered as good example to indicate the borrowings (Osam 2006). It is highly important to underline the fact that even today (after 34 years of no-contact) many Turkish borrowings can be seen in Greek Cypriot dialect (Papapavlou 1994: 46-82, Öztürk 2005: 89-113). This is also a good example of the effect of language contact resulting in qualitative borrowings (Osam 1996: 213-218). Here, it is necessary to state that borrowing in its original sense is simply Numerical Increase (SA) in the vocabulary stock of the host language. If the borrowed word begins to be used in the society and becomes functional, thereby becoming a part of the vocabulary, then the numerical increase becomes Qualitative Borrowing (Nsa) (Osam 1996: 213-218, Osam 1997: 60-69).

In TCD, many borrowings are used as a result of qualitative borrowing; that is, the borrowed words have become functional in the host language (Osam 1997: 60-69). However, what is important is that sometimes, some specific lexicon acquires a distinct meaning from its original form resulting in a new meaning. Although these words are not too many, they contribute to the uniqueness of TCD in depth.

Objective: The objective of this study is to reveal vocabulary stock in the language of the mechanics in the TCD with regard to language contact and its own formation on the island. Here in this study, it should be noted that tracing the origin of the borrowed words is beyond the scope of the study.

Method: This is a descriptive study. Both document analysis and interviews with mechanics on car parts and engine parts were held. In the process of document analysis, previous publications (Duman 1999: 115-129, Pehlivan

2003, Saracoğlu 1992, Taşçı 1986, Vancı 1990: 242-256) were analyzed and the lexicon which contained mechanics was compiled. Besides this, various dictionaries written in TCD were scanned (Gökçeoğlu 1997, Hakeri 2003, Osam 2006) and the lexicon of mechanics was noted.

Finally, an interview was conducted with 4 master mechanics, who had been in the business for more than 30 years. In the process of the interview, each mechanic was shown an engine part, a car part on flash cards and asked what they were. In other words, the researcher expected to hear the names of the parts.

Results

In light of the analysis of the documents and the interviews, the following points can be stated:

- (1) English and Greek borrowings have been influential in Turkish Cypriot mechanics' language,
- (2) New meanings were given to words in Turkish and Anatolian dialects,
- (3) Various words were derived from Turkish.

In this study, it is explicitly seen that professional terms given to some vehicles and vehicle parts have come into the language from English and Greek. Some of them which were borrowed from English are *bas* 'bus,' *tirulli* 'trolley,' *kombay* 'combine' and *van* 'van'. The binary usage of the word *bas* and *otobüs* 'autobus,' is currently widespread in the TCD. While young people favor the word *otobüs*, the elderly use the word *bas* (Pehlivan 2003: 48). Other words related to car parts are *giyarboks* 'gearbox,' *glaj* 'clutch,' *ısbarg* 'spark-plug,' *ıstarter* 'starter,' *ıstop* 'stop,' *ısbeyar* 'spare,' *ısviç* 'switch,' *vayper* 'wiper,' *rims* 'wheel rim,' *tip* 'signal'. Besides these, *tekalimit* 'to wash and oil the car,' *randabavut* 'roundabout,' and *frifri* or *frivil* 'freewheel' are also borrowed from English.

Cyprus was a British colony between 1878 and 1960 (Gazioğlu 1997) and moreover, the first car came to the island (Keshishian 1978: 233, Sayıl 1996: 43) during this period. Also the first law on motor vehicles was passed in 1909 (Motor Car Law 1909). There may have been significant reasons for the borrowings cited above. Even today, they are used widely although their counterparts exist in Turkish. Here it is necessary to say that new borrowings such as *ABS*, *airbag*, *EBS*, *immobilizer* are used both in Turkish and TCD. What is notable here is that all these new technology driven borrowings have their counterparts in Turkish. However, as Osam (2002: 207-219) stated "The attitudes play an important role in the use of language".

As pointed out in the earlier part of the study, the island has two different speech communities as Turks and Greeks. This leads to language contact between the communities and as a result, Greek borrowings in TCD can be seen in the following examples: *şiro* 'bulldozer, shovel', *fortigo* 'truck', *garut-sa* 'carriage'. However, it must be stated that the latter two words are not commonly used today. *Asvalya* 'fuse', *begga* 'carburetor spinneret', *baso* 'screw thread', *biyella* 'piston rod', *rulema* 'roller bearing', *agsona* 'axe', *valvida* 'valve', *cilindiri* 'cylinder', *gubba* 'distributor cap', *gondura sustası* 'shock absorber (only the first word is from Cypriot Greek), *cilya* 'cartel', *fago* 'headlights' (cf. 'magnifier' in Greek *Türkçe-Yunanca Sözlük* 1994: 783), *gabo* 'hood', *gavuggo* 'air filter socket', *gorona* 'differential gear', *pata-riya* 'battery'; all constitute a good example of the effects of language contact between Greeks and Turks. In addition, the words *gursa*, *langufa*, *rammi*, *rayma* are from Greek. *langufa* means 'a hole on the road' and *gursa* and *rammi* means 'journey' (Kabataş 2007: 303-481). The word *rayma* which mechanics used in both TCD and Greek Cypriot Dialect (henceforth GCD), in fact, has a meaning of 'dividing something in to two'. However, the word has acquired a different meaning in the mechanics' jargon as 'servicing the engine at a brand new capacity' or 'reconditioning it'.

The study also signals the fact that some of the words which¹ are borrowed from Greek are, in fact, originated from Italian, Latin and English languages. Their Greek or Greek-like pronunciation reflects that they were actually borrowed from the Greek language. The words *biyella* /bi:yəllə/ 'piston rod', *rulema* /rɛləmə/ 'roller bearing', *agsona* /aɡsəvənə/, *valvida* /vəlvɛidə/, *cilindiri* /dʒilɪndəri/, *gabo* /ɡəbə/, *garutsa* /ɡarutsə/, *gubba* /ɡubbə/, *gondura* /ɡəndurə/ provide some examples of this.

New words can be formed in various ways in morphology. According to Zülfikar (1991: 149-181), new terms can be generated by using affixes with roots and stems, forming compounds, using phrases, changing the word classes, generating words from general language and the popular language, and using words from other dialects. While forming terms in the TCD, besides borrowed words from other languages, words peculiar to the dialect have been formed by using one of the ways that were stated (Zülfikar 1991: 149-181). *Ayakça* 'pedal' and *doğrultmacı* 'panel beater' can be shown as examples of mechanics' language formed by derivation. *Ayakça* is derived by adding the derivational suffix *-CA*, to the word stem *ayak* 'foot'. On the other hand, the word *doğrultmacı* is formed by adding the derivational suffix *-CI*, which forms professional terms from words related to the work done. The word *doğrultmacı*, which is derived from the word *doğru* 'straight' in-

stead of *kaportacı* is being used in TCD. The compound word *lambasuyu* ‘kerosene’ also belongs to TCD and is sometimes used for diesel oil, as well.

Regarding the words related with vehicles, the most notable feature is that the professional terms related to cars have been formed by attributing new meanings to the words that have already existed in Turkish. These are the words *makinist* ‘machinist’, *at* ‘100 cc,’ *hava* ‘choke’, *boru* ‘horn,’ *dümen* ‘steering wheel,’ *susta* ‘shock absorber,’ *ruhsat* ‘license’ and *değirmi* ‘round’. The former, in Turkish, means a person who operates the railway engines or steamboats (*Türkçe Sözlük* 1988: 981). In the TCD a new meaning has been attributed to this word, namely ‘mechanic’. *At* ‘litre’ means litre of engine in TCD. Similarly in GCD the word *alogo*, which also means *at* ‘horse’ is used in the same meaning. *Hava* ‘choke,’ *boru* ‘horn’ are among words that are also used in a different meaning from Turkish. For instance, *boru* ‘pipe’ in Turkish has gained a new meaning in the TCD. According to Eren (1999: 58), the word has been borrowed from neighboring languages. The word *boru* also exists in GCD. The word ‘choke’ is replaced by a French word *jikle* in Turkish. It is evident that a new meaning has been attributed to the word *hava* in TCD instead of the word *jikle* used in Turkish. The word *susta* ‘shock absorber’ is another one that has been formed by attributing a new meaning to an existing word. Another one is *dümen* ‘steering wheel’. While it is defined as the part only on air and water vehicles, which is used ‘to give the vehicle the desired direction and to keep it in a certain direction’ in Turkish (Eren 1999: 126). The word is used in the TCD as a steering wheel, as well. Interestingly, the word has a phonetic similarity with the Greek counterpart *timoni* ‘steering wheel’ (*Türkçe-Yunanca Sözlük* 1994: 738). The word *ruhsat* is used both in Turkish and TCD with slightly different meaning in terms of its referents. *Ruhsat* ‘license’ in Turkish refers to the license of the vehicle whereas in the TCD its referent is the driving license. As it can be understood, the word *ruhsat* has gained a new sense in terms of its referent. The license of a vehicle in TCD is called *değirmi* ‘round’. This is the actual shape of the license, and it is believed to have arisen from a metaphor.

From the beginning of the second half of the 20th Century (early 1960’s) to 2002, there had been no contact between the Turkish and Greek people. In this non-contact period, trade and commerce developed with Turkey, and as a result, lexicon with specific reference to engine and car parts began to be borrowed from Turkish replacing the Greek and English ones. The significant examples to this change can be given as follow: TCD- *gondura sustası* ‘shock absorber’- Turkish *amortisör*, TCD- *vayper* ‘wiper’- Turkish *cam sileceği*, TCD *glaj* ‘clutch’-Turkish *debriyaj*, TCD- *fago* ‘headlights’-Turkish, TCD- *lambasuyu* ‘kerosene’-Turkish *mazot*.

Apart from the lexicon of the engine and car parts pointed out above, there are other words and expressions related to vehicles in TCD. These terms and expres-

sions have come into the language from Anatolian dialects. For example, the word *doşan*, which means 'used old clothing item' in Anatolian dialects (*Derleme Sözlüğü* 1993: 1567), is also used to refer to old used cars in TCD. Similarly, in TCD the word *sırma* is used instead of the word *kablo* 'cable'. The other word *gurrada* means 'junk' in Anatolian dialects (*Derleme Sözlüğü* 1993: 3004).

The vocabulary stock related to mechanics in the TCD does not only comprise of individual lexical items but also expressions and compound verbs. Some of these expressions and compounds are formed with at least one English or Greek word. These are, in fact, the hybrids. Some of the expressions are formed with at least one Greek word: *Agsonası g... gaçmak* 'the axe to go up his ass': 'to suffer a great loss as a result of a breakdown of the vehicle' (Gökçeoğlu 1997: 126), *tabbos gitmek*, 'to drive the car at full speed', *tabba lamarina gitmek* 'to reach the top speed the vehicle can go.'

Some compound verbs are formed by adding the auxiliary verbs *ol-* 'to be', *yap-*, *et-* 'make, do' to a foreign word such as *mayna etmek* 'to become unusable,' *maccez olmak* 'to be crushed/squashed in the car,' *ebisgevi yapmak* 'to do the necessary maintenance to the car and to repair it' (Gökçeoğlu 1997: 214) and *rayma yapmak*: 'servicing the engine at a brand new capacity'. Here it as can be noted that either of the auxiliary verbs is used with the Greek borrowed words such as *mayna+etmek*, *maccez+olmak*, *ebisgevi+etmek/yapmak* and *rayma+etmek/yapmak*.

Four other examples of hybrids from English are *ful ispit+gitmek* 'to go full-speed', *tip+yakmak* 'to turn on the tip' 'to signal', *isdoba basmak* 'to step on the brakes,' 'to hit the breaks' and *arabayı+çek+etmek* 'to have a look at the car if it needs to be serviced'.

There are other expressions formed by various other verbs such as *benzine basmak* 'to step on the gas pedal,' 'to accelerate, to go faster', *boruya basmak* 'to hit/press the horn,' 'to honk,' *boru çalmak* 'to honk,' *arabayı söndürmek* 'to turn off the car' 'to stop the car's engine, *tumba etmek* 'to cause to topple over' and *tumba olmak* 'to topple over.' *Tumba* means 'to be come upside-down' in Turkish. The examples cited earlier are from the TCD and are significantly different from Turkish. It is necessary to state that the cited examples are unique to TCD.

Conclusion

The primary aim of the study was to overview the TCD vocabulary stock with specific reference to vehicle, vehicle parts, and the mechanics' language. As stated in the study, from the examples, the effect of the language contact in the island can be seen. In the study it has been noted that a number of car and related lexical items have been borrowed from English since first motor car law

passed in 1909 in Cyprus. Besides this, the period of English rule had left its mark on TCD by means of the borrowings. As Labov (1994) pointed out, the lexicon of a language is always open to changes and it does not resist borrowings, at all. This view of Labov was also mentioned by Weinreich (1979), Arlotto (1972) and Haugen (1972). In the light of these views, it can be said that, TCD acted naturally and had borrowings from English and Greek.

It is a sociological fact that the island has two major speech communities namely Greeks and Turks. This is also stated in the 1960 Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus. This sociological fact has always been a significant impetus behind the language contact in the island, specifically, between Turkish and Greek speech communities resulting in rich and extensive borrowings in both languages. When we look at the mechanics' language with specific reference to lexicon, we understand that there has been a kind of interaction on the basis of labor; neighboring together with different role relations.

While forming terms in TCD, besides borrowed words from other languages, words peculiar to the dialect have been formed by using affixes with roots and stems, forming compounds, using phrases, using words from other dialects and using words with different meaning from Turkish.

From the beginning of the second half of the 20th Century (early 1960's) to 2002, there had been no contact between the Turkish and Greek people. In this non-contact period, trade and commerce developed with Turkey, and as a result, lexicon with specific reference to engine and car parts began to be borrowed from Turkish replacing the Greek and English ones.

In 2003 April, a new contact has been initiated between Turks and Greeks. Many Turkish people now are working at building companies and some are at the service garages. Moreover, many Turkish mechanics in the North began to buy engine parts from the south instead of importing them from Turkey. In time we shall see if the case will be reversed in the lexicon of TCD and all the new lexicon cited above be replaced by the new ones due to the new language contact situation in Cyprus!

Notes

1. As stated in the objective of the study, the origin of the borrowed words from Greek and other languages is beyond the scope of this study.

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Kıbrıs Türk Ağzında Taşıtlar ile İlgili Söz Varlığı

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Özet: Kıbrıs Türk Ağzı (KTA) Anadolu ağızlarından biri sayılsa da günümüzde bunlardan ve Türkçeden (Türkiye Türkçesi) özellikle söz varlığı açısından farklılıklar göstermektedir. Farklı ödünçlemeler, ölçünlü olmayan cümle yapıları, değişik ezgileme düzeni KTA'yı Türkçeden ayırmaktadır. Bu farklılıkların temel nedenleri şöyle sıralanabilir:

- (I) KTA'nın belirli bir zaman dilimi içinde Türkçeden farklı gelişimi,
- (II) Adadaki çok kültürlü ve çok dilli durum.

Günümüzde Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki taşıt ve taşıtlar ile ilgili dil incelendiğinde bunlarla ilgili söz varlığının Türkçeden farklı olduğu dikkat çeker. Dolayısıyla bu söz varlığının araştırılması geçmişte adadaki çok kültürlü ve çok dilli yaşama ışık tutacaktır. Bu çalışmada KTA'da taşıtlar ile ilgili söz varlığı incelenmeye çalışılmıştır. Çalışmada KTA ile ilgili kaynaklar taranmış, oto tamircileri ile mülakat yapılmıştır. Araştırmanın sonucunda KTA'daki taşıtlar ile ilgili söz varlığının bir bölümünün Rumca ve İngilizceden ödünçleme olduğu görülmüştür. Buna ek olarak dilin türetim yollarıyla Türkçede olmayan bazı yeni sözcüklerin türetildiği veya Türkçe ve Anadolu ağızlarındaki sözcüklere yeni anlamlar yüklediği de belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kıbrıs Türk Ağzı, Kıbrıs Türkçesi, taşıtların dili, jargon.

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Словарный запас киприотского диалекта турецкого языка, связанный с транспортными средствами

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Резюме: Диалект турков киприотов хотя и считается одним из диалектов Анатолии сегодня имеет значительные отличия от них и турецкого языка, особенно с точки зрения словарного запаса. Различные заимствования, нестандартная структура предложения, различная структура отклонения отличают диалект Кипра от турецкого языка. Основными причинами этих различий являются:

(I) Отличное от турецкого языка развитие диалекта Кипра в течение определенного периода времени,

(II) Разнообразие культур и языков на острове.

На сегодняшний день при исследовании лексики Кипра, связанной с транспортом и транспортными средствами обращает на себя внимание существенное различие от турецкого языка. Поэтому исследование этого словарного запаса прольет свет на многообразие культур и языков острова в прошлом. В данном исследовании был изучен словарный запас, связанный с транспортными средствами. Были проанализированы источники и проведены беседы с автомеханиками. В результате исследования выяснилось, что часть словарного запаса языка, связанного с транспортом, была заимствована из греческого и английского языков. Кроме того, выявлено образование некоторых новых слов путем преобразований в турецком языке или придания новых значений словам турецкого языка и анатолийского диалекта.

Ключевые слова: диалект турков киприотов, турецкий язык Кипра, носитель языка, жаргон.

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