‘As for the dialect, I will now tell you how we spoke at home’: On the performance of dialectal talk

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Abstract

The point of departure of this paper is the claim that dialectal variation should be approached not only as a geographical reflex but also, in line with recent discourse analytic approaches, as an interactional resource for various communicative objectives. Our analysis is based on 11 spontaneous conversational narratives produced by a Greek dialectophone from the island of Lesbos. We observe that she does not straightforwardly comply with the researcher's request to speak the (northern Greek) dialect. Rather, in order to produce dialectal features, she discursively constructs the spatio-temporal context of her village as it used to be half a century ago. It is mainly by animating, via direct speech, the voices of the foretime inhabitants of her village that she shows, rather than speaks, the local dialect. She achieves this by successfully adopting the discourse identity of performer, using devices like ellipsis, narrative present tense and prosodic differentiation.

Keywords

conversational narratives, direct speech, discourse identity of performer, northern Greek dialect, prosodic differentiation, stylization

1 Introduction

Research within the framework of dialect geography and traditional dialectology was mainly based on the assumption that region acts as the cause for a particular kind of linguistic variation called dialectal variation. This assumption includes the beliefs that dialects are spoken by homogeneous, non-mobile and often rural social groups living in a situation of communicative isolation within a particular region. However, in our modern, or post-modern, world we scarcely meet this sort of homogeneous and stable local groupings. Rather, the contemporary world is characterized by heterogeneous communities

consisting of mobile people who spend periods of their life in different places and who quite often change occupations and life styles (see Johnstone, 1999: 506–507, 515).

Concentrating on the reasons for people's mobility we should stress the fact that people frequently abandon their origins and migrate, usually to big(ger) cities (either of their own or of foreign countries), in order to find (better) jobs and better conditions of living. In the Greek countryside, economic migration has been a customary outlet for poor people to improve their living conditions since the beginning of the twentieth century (see Kanelopoulos, 1995; Kiriazi-Allison, 2009). In order to accomplish their goals and integrate into the urban environments, immigrants usually have to acquire the variety or the language of their new place of residence and become bi-dialectals or bilinguals. In Greece, and presumably elsewhere, successful immigrants, after having spent some twenty or more years working abroad, very frequently return to their home village for their retirement, financially enriched as well as with new linguistic resources and repertoires.

Traditional dialectology, along with social and urban dialectology, as well as recently established variation studies, formulates a broad theoretical paradigm where the main research questions are concerned with why and how a language varies, what a dialect or a variety is and what are its defining and differentiating features, at all or some levels of linguistic analysis. However, since the last fifteen years or so, the research focus gradually has moved from questions relating to language variation depending on stable extra-linguistic categories, such as region and social groups, to questions regarding issues of identity construction via linguistic variation. This is the case because, as De Fina (2007: 371) points out, “[r]esearchers in the area have realised that neither can we take for granted membership in social categories . . . nor can we presuppose the aspects of social life that are relevant for the configuration of these categories.” Moreover, taking into account the new diverse population composition in contemporary countrysides, modern approaches to dialect analysis are not constrained to pose research questions of the traditional type. From a discourse analytic perspective, they are mainly interested in how a dialect can be used so that a bilingual or bi-dialectal speaker can attain various communicative goals in various contexts of communication (see, for example, Bucholtz, 1999; Rampton, 1999; De Fina, 2007). This means that regional dialectal differences are not so much approached as situational reflexes, but also as indices of symbolic values, being one of the speakers' strategic means for activating meaning potential relevant at different points of their interactions (Coupland, 2001: 209; Rickford and Eckert, 2001: 4–6).

Drawing upon Coupland's (2007) remarks, the broad aim of our paper is to cast doubts on the commitment of traditional dialectology and variationist

sociolinguistics to consider “speakers as naive but perfect and authentic members of speech communities”, “full owners of their speech” (ibid: 217) and, therefore, detect “structured regularities in speech communities” (ibid: 216). Our main question concerns the social contextualisation of language and our basic assumption considers style as “contextualising of social meaning” (ibid: 217), i.e. as “part of the construction and deployment of a speaker’s and others’ social identities, which might be to invoke and to consolidate the values and attributes associated with a ‘speech community’” (ibid: 221).

The specific aim of this article is to discuss certain performative functions of a northern Greek dialect, namely the Lesbian dialect. For this purpose we present and analyse conversational narratives produced by an old Greek woman throughout her conversation with a field-worker. The Greek woman, Matoula,¹ was an immigrant in Athens for twenty-five years (i.e. from her thirties to her mid-fifties) and she returned home, i.e. the village of Afalonas, ten years before the recording. Matoula agreed to talk the local dialect and about the local dialect with the field-worker. We analyse the instances of dialectal talk she produced, mainly identified within narrative direct speech. We particularly focus on the discursive conditions that obtain in order for her to speak dialectally as well as on the linguistic marking of dialect production. We argue that her switching from the Standard Modern Greek (henceforth SMG) to dialectal talk is closely related to the discourse identity she adopts. More particularly, we show that when she is asked to use the dialect, she does not code-switch and speak it, but rather discursively constructs it, by acting as a performer and presenting it under specific conditions. Special attention is given to the way she stylizes two main characters in the stories under investigation, namely her father and her mother.

2 Key concepts

2.1. *Time, place and direct speech in conversational narratives*

As we have already pointed out, in the conversation under consideration the dialectal talk is mainly identified in narratives and more particularly in direct speech instances. However, it is not in every narrative with direct speech produced by Matoula that we find dialectal talk. A crucial condition is that the time and place of the represented sequence of events should belong to the

¹ A pseudonym is used, in order to protect the informant’s privacy, as prescribed by research ethics.

remote past, when her parents and their relatives and neighbors were alive. After all, it is the voice of those people that Matoula animates in order to present the dialect. Thus, in what follows we elaborate on these basic concepts of narrative analysis, i.e. *time*, *place* and *direct speech*.

According to Labov (1972), narratives are recountings of *complicating actions* consisting of at least two temporally ordered clauses. This narrative core is usually accompanied by *orientation*, namely pieces of information introducing the temporal and physical setting and the characters, as well as by *evaluative elements* that show or comment on what is interesting or unusual about the related/narrated events.

Narrowing down our focus on physical setting, we introduce a distinction, proposed by cultural geographers, between *physical 'spaces'* and *cultural 'places'* which is highly relevant to dialectology, as it is the discipline that explores the connection between geographical and linguistic facts. Johnstone (1999: 516) aptly points out that “[p]hysically delimited areas – spaces – are not places unless they have meaning for people as distinct from other places”. As we see below in the analysis of our data, the fact that Matoula returned to her village and lives there is not enough for her to speak the dialect on every occasion. It seems that she perceives the dialect as part and parcel of a foretime cultural place.

In connection with the roles of *narrative time and place* in the development of a story, Georgakopoulou (2003: 415) stresses their exploitation as interactive resources in the here and now of a storytelling situation. She explains (ibid: 419) that “[t]he negotiability of time and place in narrative tellings is intimately linked with their indexing of socio-symbolic meanings.” This means that different places in their interaction with time “create affordances” for “different sets of expectations about what sorts of action and interaction with what sorts of participants can take place where and when” (ibid: 424). Based on this observation, we show in the analysis of our data how Matoula discursively constructs and locates the narrative time and place in the remote past so that her story participants can afford to speak the dialect. This precondition seems to obtain for Matoula to produce dialectal talk because, as Johnstone (1990: 128) remarks, people engage in the encounters that “are made possible for them by the social world they live in.”

If the dialect, according to Matoula’s practice, can mainly be spoken by people of a cultural past, then a possible way for Matoula to comply with the request of the researcher and speak the dialect is to animate the voices of these people via *direct speech*. Thus, our focus is placed on direct speech, namely the report of voices that were uttered in anterior context to the

current/representing context. We could point out that direct speech, due to its grammatical characteristics (e.g. the maintenance of time, space and person deixis of the original utterances), gives the impression of an authentic reproduction, i.e. a verbatim reenactment of the original utterance (Holt, 2000). In view of this property, direct speech, appearing mostly at the climax points of narratives, can be seen as an internal evaluative device (Labov, 1972) contributing to the vividness and dramatization of the reporting utterances and to interpersonal involvement (Tannen, 1989). However, despite creating expectations of faithfulness on the part of the addressees (see Short et al., 2002), direct speech cannot involve the accurate reproduction of the original utterances, mainly due to fact that utterances when changing context, they inevitably carry the subjective contribution of the current speaker/reporter (see Tannen, 1989), but also due to memory limitations (see Lehrer, 1989).² To this end, direct speech is better seen as a construction on the part of the reporter, in order to fulfil his/her current conversational and identity goals (Tannen, 1989).³

In order to elaborate on the constructed nature of direct speech, we consider the distinction proposed by Goffman (1981) between *animator*, *author* and *principal* as relevant and useful to our analysis. This distinction concerns the different roles a person may have in relation to the production of an utterance. The *principal* is the person responsible for and committed to what is said; the *author* is the person choosing the wording; and the *animator* is the one who speaks out the words. As becomes clear in the analysis of our data, Matoula keeps for herself the role of narrator-animator whereas her relatives and their neighbours are authors and principals of the represented utterances. However, we should bear in mind that in the case of direct speech, although the authorial and principal rights appear to be attributed to the figures whose voices are reported, these rights are actually reserved for the narrator-animator, who eventually makes the final verbal choices for the figures' voices. This ability of a speaker to switch roles throughout interaction enables him/her to use specific language varieties in greater freedom (see also Hill, 1995; Lampropoulou,

² There is further evidence that corroborates the claim for the constructed nature of direct speech. For instance, the quotative use of 'like' which in contemporary English seems to have its origins in the approximative use. When used as part of a reporting clause introducing direct speech, it is evident that the quoted material is presented as an approximation of the speaker and not as verbatim report (see among others Blyth et al., 1990).

³ For similar observations, see also Lampropoulou, 2007: 24–29; Archakis and Papazachariou, 2008: 629.

2007). In this sense, a speaker might decide to use the dialect when representing the words of another person (therefore acting as animator) rather than speaking in his/her own voice (therefore acting both as animator and author). Therefore, when a speaker decides to use specific language features when reporting the words of another person, he/she “means to stand in a relation of reduced personal responsibility for what he is saying. He splits himself off from the content of the words by expressing that the speaker is not he himself” (Goffman, 1974/1986: 512).

2.2. Discourse identity

Our analysis draws upon a dynamic approach to identity construction according to which language is conceived as a social practice and has a central role in the construction of social identities. In turn, identities are not static and stable properties that reside in peoples’ minds, but rather they emerge through discourse, where they are dynamically recreated. To this end, people project different aspects of their identities depending on different contexts on the basis of various and different forms of verbal behaviour (Antaki and Widdicombe, 1998).

In our attempt to trace the reasons for Matoula’s shifting from the SMG to a variety full of dialectal features and vice-versa, we apply the concept of *discourse identity* proposed by Zimmerman (1998), who, following the approach of discursive psychology, treats identity as “an element of context for the talk-in-interaction” (ibid: 87). According to Zimmerman, discourse identities emerge from the sequential organization of talk and “are integral to the moment-by-moment organisation of the interaction” (ibid: 90). Thus, participants assume discourse identities which orient them to certain activity types and their respective interactional roles within them, such as the roles of current speaker, listener, story teller, story recipient, questioner, and answerer.

In our analysis, we claim that the narrator, Matoula, adopts a specific discourse identity, namely that of the performer, in order to assign voices to the represented characters of her stories who are the foretime inhabitants of her village and presumed authentic speakers of the dialect. According to Bauman (1986: 3), *performance* is a mode of communication that highlights “the way in which communication is carried out, above and beyond its referential content”. Georgakopoulou (1997: 124), based as well on Bauman’s (ibid.) approach, points out that “[w]hen spoken discourse takes on the features of a performance, it becomes a form of verbal artistry in which the teller assumes the responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative skill and

effectiveness”. Concentrating in particular on the main purpose of Greek performances, Georgakopoulou maintains that they “create an immediate, empathetic narration. It is by staging a multi-media show (auditory and visual) that storytellers aim at creating an internal emotional connection with the narration and the audience” (ibid: 144).

According to the up-to-date analysis of oral Greek narratives in natural settings proposed by Tannen (1983) and, more recently, by Georgakopoulou (1995; 1997), the performance of Greek stories is usually based on the frequent co-occurrence of evaluative devices like narrative (historical) present, direct speech, repetition, ellipsis, the *na*-imperfect (a narrative specific structure), the deictic *tora* ‘now’ for ‘then’ and *edō* ‘here’ for ‘there’, and various instances of expressive phonology in the process of imitation of characters’ voices. Georgakopoulou (1997: 141–142) has shown that these devices signal “a shift into the ‘visualizing’ mode of the ‘here and ‘now’”, adding also an ‘auditory element’ through the animation of characters’ voices in the constructed dialogues.⁴

What is important for our study is to elaborate on the ‘auditory element’ that accompanies the direct speech sequences, i.e. the main loci for dialectal talk production in our data. More particularly, we demonstrate how Matoula constructs the direct speech quotations, whose voices she animates and in what prosodic patterns she utters these voices. In other words, we show how Matoula performs, rather than speaks, the dialect.

Based on Rampton’s (1995) notion of crossing, special attention is given to Matoula’s crossing practices, that is the fact that she selects the appropriate dialectal and prosodic features in order not only to construct herself as capable of switching from SMG to the dialect and vice versa, but also in order to assign different identities to the represented voices.⁵ In other words, we show how she employs different dialectal and prosodic features in order to represent the voices of her father and her mother, styling them in different ways (see Rampton, 1999).

Summarizing the theoretical observations, this paper follows a discourse analytic approach towards the exploration of dialect talk. In particular, the

⁴ For similar observations, see also Archakis and Tzanne (2009).

⁵ *Crossing*, in general, “focuses on code alternation by people who are not accepted members of the group associated with the second language they employ. It is concerned with switching into languages that are not generally thought to belong to you” (Rampton 1995: 280). We consider this concept relevant for our analysis, as Matoula does not qualify anymore as a member of the community of the times of her parents, who are presented by her as the authentic speakers of the Lesbian dialect.

employment of the framework of identity construction enables us to trace the different identities constructed by Matoula through her talk. In this way, we examine both the identity Matoula projects for herself and the identities assigned to the different represented voices within Matoula's stories. Via this type of analysis, not only do we move beyond the treatment of the dialect as a geographical reflex but we also are able to show how discourse (and social) identities are sustained through dialectal talk.

3 The data of the study

The recording of Matoula's conversation was part of a bigger project aiming to record and analyse the dialect of Eastern Lesbos.⁶ The field-worker was one of the authors of the present article, who is not a speaker of the dialect, and has no social ties with the speech community. Nevertheless, the recordings followed the ethnographic principles for data collection. In this direction, the help of a local 'intermediate' speaker was required. The 'intermediate' was a central member of the speech community who was held responsible for the casual communicative settings of the recording. He had made all the arrangements with the locals who agreed to accept the recording. The aim was to record dyads with the intermediate speaker who was present in order to initiate a casual conversation with the informants and create a casual atmosphere on the communicative event. Under these circumstances, the field-worker managed to minimise the influence of his presence, remaining silent most of the time.

Nevertheless, this particular informant, i.e. Matoula, having lived for more than twenty years in the capital of Greece and being capable of using SMG for her profession – a nurse –, displayed a very interesting behavioural and speech pattern. In particular, she mainly communicated with the field-worker, instead of talking with the intermediate and another local old woman, and she talked to him in SMG, although she knew beforehand that the researcher was interested in recording the dialect. To a straightforward request from the field-worker to speak the dialect, she replied that she would do so only in particular contexts. This speech behaviour adopted by Matoula seems to correlate with the negative attitudes towards Greek dialects that have been cultivated in

⁶ The name of the research project is *Documentation and Description of the Dialect of Eastern Lesbos. Comparison with the Asia Minor Dialect of Aivali and Moschonisia*, and it is funded by the EU and the Greek Ministry of Education (Program EPEAEK-PYTHAGORAS), under the supervision of Prof. Ralli. The recorded material became part of the *Greek Dialects' Corpus*, which is hosted at the Linguistics Lab of Modern Greek dialects at the University of Patras, Greece.

Greece since the foundation of the Greek state (see Petrounias, 1984). In other words, the fact that Matoula does not seem to feel free to straightforwardly speak the dialect in front of a member of the academic community presumably reveals her belief that the dialect will not be approved by a literate person. It is only after the researcher's invitation and insistence and by putting forward her performative capacities that she speaks the dialect; even then, it is operated only in particular contexts which are created discursively. Thus, audience design proves to be an important factor that determines, in a way, the type of speech produced (Bell, 1984).

Careful study of her recorded dialogues with the field-worker reveal that Matoula's dialectal talk mainly lies in the 11 occurring conversational narratives that were inspired by topics referring to the cultural past of her village, such as the customs of the neighbourhood, her father's quarrels with her mother and with others, the clothes-washing in the sea, the difficulties women faced with giving birth, problems related to kids, births out of marriage, etc. More specifically, a variety full of dialectal features is spoken in the 80 direct speech instances that are identified within these narratives. Matoula alternates between the SMG and the dialect, according to a particular pattern upon which we comment in the analysis that follows.

4 Main features of the Lesbian dialect

The linguistic particularities of the Lesbian dialect have been well presented even from the beginning of the twentieth century (see, among others, Kretschmer, 1905; Anagnostou, 1915; Andriotis, 1954; Ralli, In preparation). Many of them appear in Matoula's dialectal instances, within the direct speech quotations included in her narratives. In particular, in Matoula's representation of the dialect, there are three phonetic consonantal free variants, two phonological phenomena of the vowel system of the Lesbian dialect, and a phonological phenomenon that creates optimal syllable structure. Moreover, we came across three morphological dialectal features, one syntactic feature, one prosodic dialectal pattern and many particular words that are characterized as typical words of the dialect of Eastern Lesbos.

More analytically, in Matoula's direct speech quotations, we identified instances of prepalatal [ɬ] and [ɲ], free variants of /l/ and /n/ respectively, when followed by the vowel /i/ (for example: [kai'celi] and [kai'ceɬi] 'small ship'), [pa'ni] and [pa'ɲi] 'cloth'). Furthermore, there are instances of [ts] as a free variant of the palatal [c], which appears as an allophone of the velar /k/ before the front vowels /i/ and /e/, (for example: [ci] and [tsi] 'and').

The most common phonological phenomena of the Lesbian dialect seem to be a) the raising of the unstressed middle vowels /e/ and /o/ to the high vowels [i] and [u] respectively (as in /men'duðes/ → [min'duðis] 'mints' and /bo'ro/ → [bu'ro] '(I) can'), and b) the deletion of the unstressed high vowels /i/ and /u/ (as in /'exis/ → ['exs] '(you) have', and /ke'fali+su/ → [tsi'fals] 'your head'). The occurrence of both phonological phenomena is frequent in Matoula's dialectal instances as well.⁷ Finally, another common dialectal phonological phenomenon that appears in Matoula's voice is the epenthesis of a consonant between two adjacent vowels, for example, /fa'i/ → [fa'ji] 'food', or /fθi'mia/ → [fθi'mija] = 'Efthimia' – i.e. a female name-, in order to avoid the appearance of two nuclei vowels next to each other.

Apart from these phonetic and phonological dialectal features, during her mimicry Matoula uses the following three distinctive morphological features: a) the masculine determiner which in the nominative case is /i/, instead the /o/ of SMG (for example, [i 'ðjavulus] 'the devil'), b) the negative particle /e/ instead of SMG /ðe /: [e θa se 'parun i ya'bri es'ena] 'the grooms will not marry you', and c) the diminutive suffix *-eli*: [poti sa var'celi, poti sa kai'cexi] 'sometimes like a small boat, sometimes like a small ship'. She further uses many words from the dialect's lexicon (for example: ['kufitirjo], [fa'sulis], etc. On one instance, Matoula also uses another form of future, quite typical of many of the Greek northern dialects, i.e. the form /θe na/ + verb, instead of SMG's /θa/ + verb: [pu θe na kano ena muro] 'so I will give birth to a baby'.

Finally, Matoula very frequently uses a distinct intonation pattern particularly typical of her village, Afalonas, i.e. a steep drop (usually more than 100 Hz) that starts at the stressed syllable of the final word of the intonation phrase – regardless whether it is the accented one or not – which continues as a low flat contour to the end of the utterance, if there are further syllables after the stressed one,⁸ as is shown in Figure 1.⁹

5 Analysis

In the analysis that follows we demonstrate a recurrent switch in the presentational mode of Matoula's stories. According to Bauman (1986: 66), "there is a need for ways of marking the difference between the voice of the narrator in

⁷ For absolute numbers and percentages of the variants, see section 5.1.

⁸ For an extended discussion on the intonation patterns of the dialect of Afalonas, see Papazachariou, In preparation.

⁹ The horizontal line within the spectrogram presents the intonation contour of two intonation phrases.

Figure 1. Two examples of the typical Afalonian intonation contour¹⁰ on declaratives.

the present storytelling context and the reported speech of the actors in the original event being reported". This holds true for our informant, as she systematically distinguishes the way she recounts circumstances and actions (i.e. her *diegesis*) from the way she replays interactions (i.e. her *mimeses*) (see Bauman, 1986: 65). In particular, the *diegesis* mode is carried out mainly in the SMG, whereas the *mimesis* mode is carried out in various dialectal features and subordinated by expressive prosodic features, such as loudness and pitch register. It should be noted that Matoula's *mimesis* mode includes a mixture of dialectal and standard forms that are in part inconsistent.¹¹ However, the focus of our analysis lies in the transition between SMG and the production of dialectal features and particularly in the way this transition is carried out, as Matoula switches from telling to showing and reenacting. In other words, she shifts to acquiring the discourse identity of the performer.

¹⁰ The displayed intonation contours have been produced by Matoula. They have been compared with the intonation contours of other Afalonian speakers, and recognized by two native speakers as typical Afalonian prosodic phrases.

¹¹ According to Prof. Ralli, who is a native speaker of the Lesbian dialect, Matoula's direct speech instances are not representative of the system of the Lesbian dialect. There are cases where dialectal features appear even in environments where they shouldn't appear and cases which are neither dialectal nor of Standard Modern Greek. Due to these inconsistencies, Matoula's talk, although including various and different dialectal features, cannot be considered as representative of a Northern Greek dialect. This observation corroborates our approach relating to the performative aspect of her speech.

In order to underpin this claim, we provide three different narrative extracts where Matoula represents events of a past spatiotemporal context, including the representation of utterances that were produced in anterior context. These are events that deal with the everyday life of her family in the village when Matoula was very young, i.e. approximately sixty years ago (relative to the time of the recording). As we observe, Matoula herself makes her own meta-comment at the beginning of every story where she explicitly states that she will be using the dialect only in relation to narratives that are concerned with events of her distant cultural past.

Episode 1

[Context: the following episode describes a habitual event that occurred when Matoula's father came back home after work. In particular, it includes a small quarrel he occasionally had with her mother concerning lunch, as part of the father's bad mood due to hard work.]

1. MT: Τη διάλεκτο να σου πω τώρα πώς μιλάγαμε στο σπίτι τον καιρό που ζούσε η μάνα μ, η γιαγιά μου πριν και πριν μάθουμε τα γράμματα τελospάντων και αυτά ε;¹²
'As for the dialect, I will now tell you how we spoke at home when my mom and my grandma were alive and before, before we learnt how to read and write and so on'
2. Fw: Αυτό ακριβώς
'Exactly'
3. MT: Ναι. Ε να σας πω μόλις ερχόταν ο πατέρας μ και ήταν λίγο θυμωμένος άρχιζε
 1a.¹³ **Μωρή Φθυμίγια** ((γέλιο)) **που είσαι μωρή τσι σ' έχασα;** Η μάνα μ ήταν η Φθυμίγια
 [mo'ri fθi'mi:ja:: ... ((laugh)) 'pu 'ise mo'ri tsi 'sexasa?]
'Yes, let me tell you, whenever my dad came home and was a bit angry he would start 1a.mori¹⁴ Fthimigia ((laughing)) where have you been and I've lost you? Fthimigia was my mom'
4. Fw: Μμ
'Hmm'

¹² Words in italics reveal the setting of the story. The location is the village of Afalonas and the time is approximately fifty years ago.

¹³ Direct speech instances appear in bold and are numbered. They are also phonetically transcribed. In order to facilitate the tagging of the turn-taking instances, we include a letter which stands for a different represented voice, just after the serial numbers: *a* stands for the father's voice and *b* for the mother's voice. MT stands for Matoula and Fw for fieldworker. Double parentheses include metalinguistic comments made by the authors.

¹⁴ *Mori* is an untranslatable Greek discourse marker that signals intimacy.

5. MT: 2b. **Ναι Γιάννη, έδγγω είμαι, ούι, ούι, τι κάνς;**
 ['ne 'jani 'eðjo ime 'ui 'ui 'ti 'ka:ns?]
Yianni I'm here no no how are you?
- 3a. **καλά, εσύ τι γίνεσαι. Ε τι φαγί έκανες σήμερα; Λέει**
 [ka'la: e'si ti 'jinese.. E: 'ti fa'ji 'ekanes 'simera?]
'Fine, and you? Um what kind of food have you made for today? she says'
- 4b. **φασούλες.**
 [fa'sules]
'Beans'
- 5a. **Πάλι φασούλες λεγ' θα φάμε; Άντε μωρ' τσε δε μπορώ να τρώγ' όλ μέρα φασούλς.**
 ['pali fa'sules θα 'fame?] ['ade 'mor tse δε bo'ro na 'troγ 'ol 'mera fa'su:ls]
'Will we have beans again? I can't eat beans all the time'.
Τον πιάναν και τα νεύρα. Να πάρ η διάολος ς φασούλς τσι σένα κι το κεφάλ σ.
 [na 'par i 'ðalos s fa'suls tsi 'sena ci to ce'fal s]
'He would get pissed off. Damn the beans and you and your head'.
- 6b. **Αχ τι πάθαμ.**
 ['ax ti 'paθam]
'Oh my goodness'.
- 7a. **Θα πά να φάου έξω ((γέλιο))**
 [θa 'pa na 'fau 'ekso]
'I'll eat out' ((laughing))
- 8b. **ε που θα πας βρε άθρουπε, έχεις φαγί, μα έχς παράδες για θα πας να φας έξ ((γέλιο))**
 [e 'pu θα 'pas vre 'aθrupe .. 'eçis fa'ji ma . 'exs par'aðes 'ja θα 'pas na fas 'eks]
'but where will you go man, there is food, and do you have money in order to go out?' ((laughing))
λοιπόν γινόταν ένα καβγαδάκι τελικά
'Well there was a small quarrel and finally'
- 9a. **άντε φασουλάδα μι ελιές είναι μια χαρά. Φάγαν τα μωρά;**
 ['ade fasu'laða mi e'les 'ine 'mja xa'ra .. 'fayan ta mo'ra?]
'ok beans with olives are fine. Did the kids eat?'
- 10b. **Φάγαν. Τά'παιρνε.**
 ['fayan]
'They did. He took them in his arms'

- 11a. Για έλα βρε μορέλι, έφερα τσι μιντούδισ, τσι
καραμιλούδισ, τσι πραματέλια να φάτε.

[ˈja ˈela vre moˈreli ˈefera tsi miˈnduðis tsi karamiˈluðis, tsi
pragmaˈteɫa na ˈfaɛ]

‘come here my baby I’ve brought candies and stuff to
eat’.

Τρώγαμε τον φλούσαμε τον πατέρα, τον αγκαλιάζαμε, τα
κάναμε όλα αυτά.

‘We would eat them, kiss dad we hug him we did all these’.

Episode 2

[Context: The following episode describes ordinary talk between women from Matoula’s neighbourhood. This talk is mainly concerned with needle-point, which was one of the main activities of women in the village. The ability of a woman to do good needle-point work was considered as a qualification for finding a husband.]

1. MT: Ναι. Ε λοιπόν αυτά και πολλά άλλα. Εμείς πάντως εδώ μιλούσαμε την καθεαυτού Μυτιληνιά. Που όλες τις εκφράσεις που κάναμε ήταν τοπικές. Δεν υπήρχε να πούμε, ... δε μάθαμε, δε μάθαμε απ’ έξω γιατί ως επιτοπλείστον όλοι οι άνθρωποι ήταν αγράμματοι του δημοτικού. Ε στο δημοτικό αυτά λέγαμε.
‘Well, all this and many other things. As for us we spoke the original Mitilinia [the dialect]. And all the expressions we used were local. For example there wasn’t, we didn’t, we didn’t learn by heart, because mostly the people were illiterate [they’d only been to] primary school. Well in primary school we said these’.
2. Fw: Τώρα όμως δε μου μιλάτε στη διάλεκτο. ((γέλιο))
‘But now you haven’t been speaking the dialect to me’ ((laughing))
3. MT: Τώρα τι να σε πω;
‘Now what could I tell you?’
4. Fw: Τώρα έτσι όπως μιλάτε με, δε δεν χρησιμοποιείτε την διάλεκτο.
‘Now as you are speaking, you are not using the dialect’
5. MT: Ναι
‘Yes’
6. Fw: Δεν πειράζει ντάξει δε
‘It doesn’t matter, it’s ok, it’
7. MT: Λοιπόν θα την χρησιμοποιήσω σε ορισμένες καταστάσεις όπως είπαμε τώρα που ερχόταν η γειτονιά και λέγαμε
‘Well I will use it only in specific context like we just said, when we were in the neighbourhood and we used to say’

- 1a. Τι κανς μωρή; Είσαι καλά; Τι φάγατε σήμερα;
 ['ti kans mo'ri? 'ise ka'la? 'ti 'fayati 'simera?]
 'Mori how are you? Are you fine? What did you have [for lunch] today?'
- 2b. Φασόλες φάγαμε ή κρεμμύδια φάγαμε και δεν ξέρω τι.
 [fa'soles 'fayami, i kre'miðja 'fayame]
 'We had beans and onions you know'
- 3a. Για να δω το θκό σ του ιργόχειρου, είνι καλό; Αα ε έκανες τίποτα, σαχλαμάρες είνι. Τούτο είνι για να το πας, τσ γιουρούκ τσουμπάδης.
 [ja na 'ðo t'θ'ko s tu i'r'goçiru? 'Ini ka'lo:ʔ a:: 'e 'ekanis 'tipota. saxla'mares 'ini. 'tuto 'ine ja na to 'pas, ts ju'ruk tsu'baðis]
 'Let me see your needle-point work is it good? Uh you didn't do anything, this is crap. This is for [juruk tsobaðes]
8. Fw: ((γέλιο))
 ((laughing))
9. MT: Λοιπόν γιουρούκ τσουχτάδες είναι τουρκικιά λέξη
 'Well, *juruk tsopaðes* is a Turkish word'
10. Fw: Και τα λέγατε έτσι χωρίς; Πειράζατε η μία την άλλη;
 'And you talked like this, you would tease each other?'
11. MT: 4a. Ναι έφτου θα πας να το στρώς, έ θα το σθώς στο σαλόν, έ θα σε πάρουν οι γαμπροί εσένα, έ έκανς καλή δουλειά.
 Ε άλλη έλεγε
 ['eftu θa 'pas na to 'stro:s? 'e: θa to 'stros sto sa'lon. 'e: θa se 'parun i ya'bri e'sena. 'e: 'gans ka'ði ðu'ða]
 4a. 'Are you going to put this here? You will not put this in the living room, the grooms will not marry you, you did not do a good job. And the other [woman] would say'
- 5c. γδια δε:, τι σχαμένα ναι τούτα που κάνς, δε μ' αρέσει καθόλ, άντε πήγαινε τ(η) κυρά Φθυμία να σι δείξ, αυτή ξέρ τα καλά τα:, τα κινήματα και τα ωραία. Αρχιζε η κυρά Φθυμία, έλεγε
 [γðja 'ðe:, 'ti sxa'mena 'ini 'tuta pu 'kans? 'ðe m a'resi ka'θol, 'ade 'piçini d j'i'ra pθi'mia na si 'ði:ks, a'fti 'kser ta ka'la ta:, ta cin'dimata ce ta o'rea]
 'Look at that, what is this crap you are doing? I don't like it at all, go to Mrs Efthimia to show you, she knows the good and fine needle point work. And Mrs Efthimia was starting'
- 6d. Συ σι ντιπ μουλάρ, ντιπ. ((γέλιο)) Δε νουγάς τίπουτα, λοιπόν τι να σε κάνω;

[‘si si ‘dip m‘lar, ‘di:p. ‘ðe nu‘yas ‘tiputa, ‘ti na se ‘kano?]

‘You’re completely stupid, completely. ((laughing)) **You don’t get a word, what am I going to do with you?’**

12. Fw: ((γέλιο))

((laughing))

Episode 3

[Context: the following narrative describes the interactions of several women with Matoula’s grandmother, who was a midwife. Apart from helping women give birth, her grandmother was also involved in abortions, as some women became pregnant outside marriage, which at the time was considered immoral and sinful. These events generated much gossip on the part of her grandmother who, in this way, learned the intimate secrets of some of the women.]

1. MT: *Θυμόμουν να πω ένα περιστατικό το οποίο τώρα μου έχει φύγει. Δεν θυμάμαι και πολλά πράγματα, αλλά ήξερα πάρα πολλά, πάρα πολλά παλιά. Που έρχονταν η γιαγιά μου κι έλεγε*

I was about to tell an event which has now slipped my mind. I don’t remember many things but I used to know a lot, about long ago. Then, when my grandma would come and say

1a. **Μωρή; τα μαθις, μωρή; κάτσε να στα πω γιατί θα σκάσω. Η τάδε έκανε μωρό.** ((ψιθυριστά))

[mo‘ri: ‘tamaθis mo‘ri? ‘katsi na sta po: ʒa‘ti θa ‘skaso. i ‘taðe ‘ekane mo‘ro]

‘Mori did you learn [the news] let me tell you coz I’ll explode [by not telling anyone] this woman had a baby’ ((whispering))

2b. **Τι μωρό κανι πάλι αυτή;**

[‘ti mo‘ro kani ‘paλ a‘fti?]

‘What kind of baby did she have again?’

3a. **Μωρή μπάσταρδος κρυφά, μωρό. Τι θα γίνει τώρα αυτό το μωρό; Τι δουλειά θα το βγάν στον άντρα τσ γιουλόμαυρο που δεν ηντράπκε, π δεν έκανε.**

[mo‘ri ‘bastarðos, kri‘fa, mo‘ro: ti θa ʒini to ra afto to mu‘ro? ti ðu‘la θa to ‘vyan stun ‘andra ts ʒu‘lomavro, pu ‘ðen i‘drapce, p ‘ðen ‘ekane]

‘Mori a bastard baby [she had it] secretly. And what will happen now to this baby? Won’t she uncover [the secret] to her husband poor him wasn’t she ashamed wasn’t she?’

4b. **Ποιος μα δε, με ποιον;**

[‘pjos? Ma ‘ðe, me ‘pjon?]

‘Who? with whom [did she have it]?’

5a. Μην τα ρουτάς μι ποιον, με τουν τάδε, μ' έναν ξένο.

['mi ta ru'tas mi 'bjon, me tu 'daðe, m 'ena 'kseno]

'Don't ask with whom, with someone, with a stranger'

The three stories above describe events that occurred in a past spatiotemporal context in relation to the time of the recording. They all share certain linguistic patterns that are discussed below. First of all, in all three narratives Matoula provides an introduction that consists of an orientation, namely the information related to the physical and temporal setting of the story. From the information provided, Matoula states that she will be narrating events that occurred very long ago when her grandmother was still alive (e.g. episode 3, turn 1: *'I used to know a lot, about long ago. Then, when my grandma...'*) Also, she gives the setting of the stories, which is her village. What is particularly interesting is the fact that this information on orientation is mainly produced in SMG on the part of Matoula (e.g. episode 1, turn 1: 'as for the dialect, I will now tell you how spoke at home'). Additionally, in the second story, she makes her own meta-comment where she declares that she will be using the dialect only in specific circumstances, namely the representation of events of a distant cultural past (episode 2, turn 7: 'Well I will use it only in specific context'). In this way, Matoula is presented as capable not only of speaking both varieties of Greek, namely the norm (SMG) and the dialectal one, but also of switching between the two.

In the sections that follow, we provide a detailed analysis of the three narratives which are representative cases of all the stories that occur throughout the conversation at hand. These stories are analysed in terms of linguistic and non linguistic patterns. In particular, the point of departure is direct speech and then the various features associated with it are presented. Based on the discussion of all these features, we will highlight why and how Matoula projects the identity of performer throughout the conversation.

5.1. Direct speech and dialectal features

These three stories include the representation of dialectal voices that are firmly related to socio-cultural circumstances of a remote past. This seems to show Matoula's attitude concerning the dialect, namely that it can be spoken mainly by people belonging to this cultural period. In particular, the voices that are represented as speaking are the following: the mother, the father and the grandmother of Matoula, women from the neighbourhood who do needle-point, and finally, women from the neighbourhood who gossip. All these voices are represented in direct speech. These instances include a variety of dialectal features, which have been briefly presented in section 4 but are further analysed below.

It is not really surprising to see that the most common dialectal features in the eighty direct speech instances that appear in Matoula's mimicry are the phonological phenomena of raising of the unstressed middle vowels (for example: episode 2, turn 7: [ir'ɣoçiru] ← /er'ɣoxiro/), in 97 instances out of 497 possible ones (i.e. 20%), and deletion (for example: episode 1, turn 5: [tse'faʌ s] ← /ke'fali su/), in 79 out of 416 possible instances (19%), i.e. the stereotypical phonological phenomena of the dialect.

Additionally, the epenthesis of a consonant between two nuclei vowels (for example: episode 1, turn 5: [fa'ji] ← /fa'i/), appears 15 times, out of possible 30 (i.e. 50%), in Matoula's direct speech representations.

The dialectal phonetic features are not present frequently in Matoula's mimicry, as tsitakism (as in episode 1, turn 3: [tsi]) appears only seven times, out of 57 possible instances, (i.e. 12%), prepalatal /l/ (as in episode 1, turn 5: [mo'reʌi] appears only 6 times, out of 46 possible ones (i.e. 13%), and prepalatal /n/ appears only in three cases, out of 51 possible ones, (i.e. 6%).

There are also 92 dialectal realizations out of 262 intonation variables, (i.e. 35%) of the Afalonian intonation contour that we presented earlier in the data section, i.e. the high pitch dropping at the stressed syllable of the final word of the intonation phrase.

Another characteristic dialectal feature of Lesbian that appears quite systematically in the direct speech representation of Matoula is the /e/ morpheme of negation, which appears 11 times, out of the 14 possible ones (i.e. 79%) (for example, three times in episode 2, turn 11).

The masculine determiner of the Lesbian dialect which in the nominative case is /i/, appears rarely in Matoula's voice, i.e., only three times out of 25 possible instances (i.e. 12%) (as in episode 1, turn 5: [i ðjaolos]).

The diminutives do not appear very frequently in Matoula's direct speech quotations. However, whenever she uses diminutives, she uses the dialectal variants /eli/ (eight times) and /uða/ (three times), as in episode 1, turn 5: [min'duðis] and [prɣma'teʌa]).

According to the above observations, Matoula manages to present herself as capable of speaking the dialect, but, only by attributing it to people from her distant past and not to her own voice. In Goffman's terms (1981), Matoula acts as the animator of dialectal talk, whereas her relatives and neighbours act as the authors and principals of the reported dialectal talk. In this way, Matoula distances herself from the imposition of speaking the specific variety of Greek in the current context, but, at the same time, presents herself as capable of extracting it from a distant past. Thus, Matoula performs different roles within a play that is concerned with the past life and customs in the village.

5.2. Direct speech and reporting verb

Since, according to Matoulas' reaction to the researcher's request, the dialect belongs to and can be spoken by people of the remote past, the most appropriate way to demonstrate this is by acquiring the identity of performer. Thus, the projection of the identity of performer on the part of Matoula is further indicated by the fact that direct speech is accompanied by other linguistic features that contribute to the vividness and dramatisation of the telling. These are mainly concerned with the absence of a reporting verb and the presence of the historical present, in the cases where the reporting verb occurs.

More specifically, in the three episodes above, eighteen out of the twenty three instances include ellipsis of reporting verb (e.g. episode 1, turn 5, 9a: 'Well there was a small quarrel and finally, **ok beans with olives are fine, did the kids eat? They did**'); that is more than eighty per cent of the overall direct speech instances included in the narratives at hand involve ellipsis of reporting verb. The reporting verb alerts in a way the hearer for what is going to follow, namely the representation of a voice, and signals the switch from narrative flow to direct speech representation. Therefore, the omission of the reporting verb results in the introduction of the subsequent direct speech instance in a more direct way. This means that the characters appear to speak more directly, "without the narrator as an intermediate" (Leech and Short, 1981: 322). Mathis and Yule (1994: 67) define this phenomenon as *zero quotatives*. As they usefully suggest, zero quotatives are used for a range of dramatic purposes because narrators would like to avoid "clear indications of reporter presence which necessarily come with other quotatives such as *say, go* etc" (ibid). To this end, the omission of reporting verb contributes to the vividness and dramatisation of the story.

Also, in many instances, in this case three out of the five instances that include a reporting verb, the reporting verb appears in the historic present tense (e.g. episode 1, turn 5, 3a: '**what kind of food have you made for today?** she says **beans**'). Due to its presence in narrative, the historic present has also been referred to as narrative present. Georgakopoulou (1997) argues that in Greek narratives, via the use of the narrative present, the speaker manages to bring past events to the forefront of the story (see also Wolfson, 1979; Schiffrin, 1981; Johnstone, 1987) and to present them as happening in front of the hearer's eyes, therefore attributing vividness to the narration and creating involvement with the hearer. Therefore, direct speech marked by narrative present can be described as a device of performance (see also Wolfson, 1979; Bauman 1986), in the sense that narrators do not just report what was said but seem to perform it, as if they performed a role in a play.

5.3. Direct speech and prosody

The identity of performer projected by Matoula throughout the conversation due to her vivid and dramatized style does not only lie in the use of the historic present tense or zero vocatives. Matoula uses further prosodic features which seem to carry out the discoursal function of the missing reporting verbs, i.e. the indication of the switch from the narration to direct speech quotation. In particular, Matoula uses loudness and pitch register as successful indicators of the shift from narration to the direct speech representation. More specifically, the shift from narration to direct speech, especially in the cases where the reporting verb is omitted, is marked by a difference of at least 4 dBs, i.e. the equivalent of talking almost twice as loud as she talked during the narration (Johnson 1997). At the same time, Matoula uses a distinctively higher pitch register when she performs the direct speech quotations, at least 60 to 80 Hz higher than the pitch register of her narrations, and sometimes 300 or even 400 Hz higher than those. With these two prosodic features, Matoula manages to perform a mimicry of voices which are acoustically distinct from the rest of the narration, as the following example in Figures 2 and 3 shows.

In particular, the last phrase of a narration and the beginning of a direct speech quotation appear without any introductory verb. Comparing the two sentences, there is a clear pitch register difference of 109 Hz between the two

Figure 2. A narrative utterance and the immediately following direct speech quotation, with distinctive pitch registers.

Figure 3. A narrative utterance and the immediately following direct speech quotation, with distinctive intensity.

utterances (see figure 2). Furthermore, there is a clear differentiation of intensity between these two utterances, as the direct speech quotation is produced 4.3 dB louder than the immediately previous utterance of narration, i.e. almost twice as loud as Matoula's speech during her narration (see figure 3).

5.4. Direct speech and stylization

This section includes the detailed analysis of the first narrative episode where Matoula represents interaction between her parents. We highlight Matoula's *crossing practices* (see Rampton, 1995), that is the fact that she selects the appropriate dialectal and prosodic features in order not only to construct herself as capable of switching from SMG to the dialect and vice versa, but also in order to assign different identities to the represented voices. Once again, it is due to her efficient performance of different roles within the dramatised interaction, concerned with the past life and customs in her village, that Matoula manages to accomplish this demanding discursive practice, namely to meticulously and delicately style the gender roles of her parents. In what follows, we show that she employs different dialectal and prosodic features in order to represent the voices of her father and her mother, *styling* them in different ways (see Rampton 1999). For this purpose, we examine the direct speech instances as such and not the verbs that accompany them.

In terms of dialectal features, we observe that both genders employ a variety of those throughout all the narratives. Nevertheless, Matoula seems to allocate

different dialectal features to her father's voice and her mother's mimicry. In particular, in the first narrative episode, the father is represented as using many more instances of raising of the unstressed middle vowels /e/ and /o/ (ten out of thirty six possible locations, in turns 3 and 5) than Matoula's mother (one out of seven possible locations). The same pattern appears in another narrative with a dialogue between Matoula's parents, where the father is represented as using 17 raisings of the unstressed middle vowels and Matoula's mother only 3. Furthermore, Matoula presents her father as using six deletions of unstressed high vowels – out of six possible locations – in opposition to her mother who deletes only three – out of five possible cases.

Another dialectal feature that is not used in a similar manner and frequency by Matoula when she mimics her parents' voices is tsitakism. In particular, only Matoula's father uses this phonological feature of the Lesbian dialect (see, for example, episode 1, turns 3 and 5), by contrast to the representation of her mother who does not use it at all when she is presented as talking to her husband. Interestingly, the above three dialectal features are all well known stereotypes of the Lesbian dialect.

Matoula also assigns another stereotypical dialectal feature to her father when she mimics his voice, i.e. the local diminutives *-eli/* and *-ouði/*, as we can see in episode 1, turn 5. Again, this feature does not appear in her mother's direct speech quotations when she is presented as talking with Matoula's father.

Finally, the voices of Matoula's parents are also differentiated in terms of pitch register¹⁵. The pitch register of an intonation phrase is determined by the value of F0 at the pre-accented part of the intonation phrase, i.e. the intonation contour formed by the lexical stresses preceding the accented syllable. In 5.2, we mentioned that direct speech quotations in Matoula's speech are produced at least 60 - 80 Hz higher than the pitch register of her narrations, and sometimes 300 or 400 Hz higher than those. Further study revealed that this variation is not accidental. In particular, when Matoula is mimicking her father's speech she produces a 'low' pitch register – although higher than her pitch register in her narrations by at least 80 - 100 Hz (see Figure 4). By contrast, she performs her mother's voice at a very high pitch register, sometimes 250 - 300 Hz higher¹⁶ than the pitch register of her father's voice (see Figure 5).

Based on the above observations, we could argue that Matoula seems to assign different identities to the different voices she represents. In particular,

¹⁵ For a detailed discussion on how speakers manage to use voice quality in order to construct narrative frames and fictional identities in role playing games, see Lacy (2006).

¹⁶ This difference becomes obvious if we compare the Hz values that appear on the right end of the dotted line within the spectrograms in figure 4 (i.e. 232,5 Hz) and figure 5 (i.e. 476,9 Hz).

Figure 4. A typical low pitch register declarative sentence of the father's voice.

the father is presented as employing more frequently the features stereotypically associated with the local dialect. On the other hand, the mother, when she is represented as talking to her husband, does not seem to employ the stereotypical dialectal features so frequently; actually, in some cases she does not employ them at all. Taking into consideration the constructed nature

Figure 5. A typical high pitch register declarative sentence of the mother's speech.

of direct speech, namely that the narrator-animater eventually reserves for herself the authorial and principal rights and, thus, direct speech representation is constructed on the basis of the narrator's communicative goals, we could argue that Matoula constructs her mother and her father in different ways. Gender identity seems to play an important role in this construction.

In particular, it seems that identities like masculinity and femininity come into play and are related to stereotypical assumptions concerning gender and dialect. Drawing on Rampton's remarks (1999: 421), we could point out that Matoula uses a variety full of dialectal features in the discursive practices of direct speech to appropriate and reproduce influential images and stereotypes of gender groups that she does not herself straightforwardly belong to. More specifically, the way Matoula stylizes her father with regionally marked variety deviates from the linguistic norm that, in this case, is SMG. On the other hand, the mother seems to be represented much more aligned with the norm, as the ellipsis of many dialectal features result in her speech approaching SMG and, in a way, distancing herself from the dialect (see Georgakopoulou, 2005: 175). The association of femininity with normative linguistic behavior and of masculinity with more deviant, in a way, linguistic behavior is a sociolinguistic pattern that has been observed by many researchers (see Labov 1972, 1990; Trudgill, 1974). To sum up, in the first narrative episode Matoula's speech can be represented along a continuum, ranging from the use of Koine, as observed in the orientation parts of the story, moving towards the use of some dialectal features in the representation of the mother's voice and reaching towards the end with the use of many dialectal features in the representation of the father's voice. Therefore, Matoula completely distances herself from the dialect when she is speaking herself and gradually becomes more involved with the dialect when she speaks on behalf of other figures. The maximum involvement between Matoula and the dialect is observed only through the representation of a male voice, i.e. her father. On this basis, we assume that through her discursive constructions, Matoula seems to exploit the sociolinguistic stereotypes in order to construct gender identities contrastively.¹⁷

¹⁷ We would like to point out that we do not consider the provided excerpts as significant for an undisputable claim on gender identities, as we, moreover, lack ethnographic information concerning the time when Matoula's parents were alive. However, we do consider the dialectal differences between the father and the mother in the first narrative episode as worth noticing and as capable of providing evidence on the principle that "men use a higher frequency of non-standard forms than women" (Labov 1990: 210). (For a more detailed discussion on this issue, see Papazachariou, 1998: 253–282).

The preceding analysis has shown how through the employment of direct speech, and particularly through the use of dialectal and prosodic features at strategic places, Matoula's narratives exploit a stereotypical gender differentiation that seems to interact with language and particularly with dialectal talk and the SMG. In the following concluding section, we bring together our analysis and theoretical framework in order to elaborate on the discourse identity projected by Matoula throughout the conversation.

6 Discussion and concluding remarks

In this article, we have presented narrative data produced by a bi-dialectal speaker who, throughout the conversation with the researcher, switched between SMG and a variety full of dialectal features for different communicative purposes. We pointed out that Matoula considers the dialect as part and parcel of a distant cultural past. Thus, she speaks it out mainly through the representation of voices that belong to this past. We observed that Matoula employs a variety of different features that result in the performance of dialectal talk rather than just the speaking of it. The main vehicle for this performance is direct speech representation associated with a number of features such as the ellipsis of reporting verb, the reporting verb in narrative present tense and the prosodic differentiation in terms of voice representation. We therefore argued that Matoula, when representing the voices of other people, extracts the dialect from a distant past, as if she performs a role in a play, thus acting as animator of the dialect, while securing the roles of author and principal for the different characters that participate in her stories (Goffman, 1981). To this end, Matoula adopts the discourse identity of the performer and she realizes this performance by employing distinct phonological and phonetic characteristics for each communicative role. In this way, she potentially serves her conversational goals, namely not only to show the researcher that she is able to speak the dialect, as this was his request, but also to highlight that she is capable of switching between the norm-SMG and the dialect as she has been away from the village for more than twenty years. This discursive strategy on the part of Matoula can presumably be explained by the fact that she aims to align herself with the normative linguistic behaviour, namely the speaking of the SMG, whereas, at the same time, she aims to fulfil the researcher's request that she speaks the dialect.

Additionally, we observed that, by adopting the discourse identity of the performer, Matoula is able to assign different identities to the represented

voices, mainly due to the constructed nature of speech representation. In particular, we observed that the identities attributed to her father and mother correspond to gender stereotypes. We therefore argued that the (represented) dialectal talk may consist of a vehicle that exploits socio-cultural values and (stereotyped) assumptions regarding gender.

To conclude, in this article we have stressed the fact that dialectal variation should not only be approached as a geographical reflex. Rather, we argued that the study of dialectal variation should not be a one-dimensional examination of geographical distinctions, but that a further dimension should be added, that of the communicative goal of the dialectophone on the basis of his/her communicative needs. In this way, we favored the more general theoretical claim that the matching of language varieties to contexts is characterized by indeterminacy and heterogeneity (see Fairclough, 1995: 241, 245). We have shown that dialectal features embedded in direct speech quotations and accompanied by performative devices (such as the ellipsis of reporting verb, the reporting verb in narrative present tense and prosodic differentiation in terms of voice representation) constitute an interactional resource for various communicative objectives such as performing and stylizing roles that belong to a different spatiotemporal context from that of the immediate communicative situation. Following Rampton's claims (1999: 423), instead of simply concentrating on the functioning of the dialect of Lesbos within a context, we paid particular attention to "the complex (...) sociolinguistic processes involved in moving it *across* from one context to another". In our case study, we examined how and why an old bi-dialectal speaker alternates from SMG to the local dialect. To this end, we did not apply a traditional dialectological description, but employed discourse analytic methods for investigating identity construction within and via narrative direct speech quotations. In this framework of analysis, our main finding lies in the fact that the old dialectophone switches from SMG to the local dialectal talk on the precondition that she guides her audience to her socio-cultural past. For this purpose, she discursively constructs this socio-cultural past and its fore-time characters. In this way, she creates the affordances for the dialect to be spoken. It is the people who belong to this past that, according to her discursive practice, have the right to speak the dialect, at least in front of an out-group. This can be concluded by the fact that the old dialectophone keeps for herself only the role of the animating performer of their voices. Thus she is able to invoke and index their tradition and its symbolic value that she attempts to preserve in the current geographical space of her village.

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