LANGUAGE ATTITUDES AMONG RUSSIANS OF GREEK ORIGIN TOWARDS THE LINGUISTIC VARIETY IN THE CYPRIOT GREEK SPEECH COMMUNITY

Pavlos Pavlou & Dionysios Zoumpalidis

University of Cyprus

Abstract

The study of the linguistic repertoire of the members of a particular speech community reveals linguistic properties such as unique and diverse language practices, the nature and the degree of interaction within the social networks, and the common linguistic norms of the group. From this point of view, the Pontic Greek immigrants, who moved from the former Soviet Union republics to Cyprus in the early and mid 1990s, are of particular interest to sociolinguistic research. Pontic Greeks, who possess a rather rich linguistic repertoire, tend to use specific language(s) in specific domains which is dictated by instrumental and/or integrative processes. The exposure as well as partial integration into the Cypriot Greek community and culture has undoubtedly enriched the linguistic profile of Pontic Greeks during and after the settlement period in Cyprus after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Taking into consideration the Greek roots of Pontic Greeks, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Greek language\(^1\) plays one of the major roles in the life of Pontic Greeks as an important factor in the confirmation and reaffirmation processes of the Greek (or Pontic Greek) identity.\(^2\)

The languages employed by the members of this speech community are usually Russian, Turkish\(^3\) and Greek. It must be noted, however, that each language is developed and used accordingly in terms of proficiency depending on factors such as age, geographical distribution (country of origin), domain, education, social networks, length of residence in Greece and/or Cyprus and the language attitudes towards the various languages they speak or come in contact with in their mundane interactions.

In this paper, we argue that Pontic Greeks in Cyprus tend to show preference towards the Standard Modern Greek (SMG) rather than the Cypriot Greek

\(^1\) Also read Standard Modern Greek (SMG).
\(^2\) It should be noted that the majority of Pontic Greeks (46%) identify themselves as Greeks (Zoumpalidis, in press).
\(^3\) The Turkish language that Pontic Greeks speak has some lexical and syntactic differences compared to the Turkish language spoken today in Turkey. Kolossov et al (2000) argue, in this respect, that the Turkish language that Pontic Greeks speak is an eastern Turkish dialect.
dialect. In addition, an attempt is made to account for the potential reasons lying behind this linguistic preference.

Introduction

The historical aspect of the Greeks from Pontos has been studied extensively before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, whereas little or no attention has been paid to the sociolinguistic and sociocultural profile of this group. Similarly, there are no sociolinguistic studies on the diaspora communities, including the one in Cyprus. Since little is known about the sociolinguistic behaviour of Pontic Greeks in Cyprus, this study attempts to investigate the linguistic repertoire and the language attitudes of this group. More specifically, this paper focuses on the following three main goals: to portray the linguistic profile of Pontic Greeks who live permanently in Cyprus; to detect and analyze the attitudes that Pontic Greeks hold toward the varieties of Greek spoken on the island; and finally, from the theoretical point of view to explore the extent to which the “ethnic community” of Pontic Greeks forms a single and homogeneous speech community and the community’s position in the greater Greek-speaking speech community in Cyprus.

Historical overview

The history of Pontos is rich with various social, political and other important aspects, which goes back as far as the 6th century B.C. The emergence of several towns along the coast of the Black Sea (Evksinos Pontos) marks the beginning of the rise of the Greek civilization in those areas.

Map 1: Pontos (in Greek)
The region of Pontos, in today’s North-Eastern Turkey until 1924 extended more than 400 kilometers along the shore of the Black Sea, and some 100 kilometers inland, as far as the mountains of the interior. The major and oldest towns of Pontos are Trapezounta, Samsunta, Bafra, Sinopi and Kerasunta (see map 1, above).

A great number of Pontic Greeks started migrating towards the neighboring countries to the north (mainly Russia and Georgia) right after the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453. Likewise, the consequent fall of Trapezunta seven years later, forced thousands of Pontic Greeks to migrate to the same countries. The consequent massive migration of Pontic Greeks to Russia was reported during the 19th century, which was marked by the Greek Revolution in 1821 and the Russian-Turkish war of 1876-1878. The last migration move of Pontic Greeks towards Russia, where the Soviet rule had already been established after the revolution of 1917, was during and after the disastrous defeat of the Greek army in the 1919-1922 Greco-Turkish war and the forced removal of Asia Minor Greeks from their ancestral lands. Having almost lost their ethnic language, Pontic Greeks, nonetheless, preserved their religion as well as their ethnic cultural heritage. The Pontic Greek dialect is considered as one of the most important varieties of the SMG, which belongs to the Eastern-Greek group (Drettas, 2000). However, the Pontic Greek dialect is very different from other dialects of Greek “because of the long period of separation and in some cases because of considerable influence from other languages, notably Turkish (Trudgill, 2002: 126). More specifically, Drettas (2000: 105) points out that the phonetic rules of Pontic Greek allow many combinations that are absent in other dialects of Greek. With regard to morpho-syntax and vocabulary of Pontic Greek, Drettas (2000) stresses that these areas of grammar have been greatly influenced by languages that the Pontic Greek dialect came in contact with, notably Turkish and Russian.

**Literature Review**

**Speech community**

The literature on speech community and language attitudes is quite extensive. Much has been written on the notion of “speech community” and numerous attempts have been made in order to give a clear definition of this notion, and define it from different points of view.

To begin with, there is no consensus among sociolinguists about what a speech community is. The basic definition of a speech community is the one provided by Lyons (1970: 326) who argues that it is made up of “all people who use a given language (or dialect)”. However, some other criteria apparently are needed to define this term. Thus, Gumperz (1962, cited in Hudson, 1996:25) stresses the importance of communication within a particular speech community arguing that speech
community is “a social group which may be either monolingual or multilingual, held together by frequency of social interaction patterns and set off from the surrounding areas by weaknesses in the lines of communication”. Thus, it is possible to talk about multilingual speech communities where two or more languages are employed in interactions between the members of a particular speech community on a regular basis. Later Gumperz (1968) modifies his definition of speech community and emphasizes the requirement of some specific linguistic differences between the members of speech community and those outside it. More specifically, Gumperz (1968, cited in Hudson, 1996:25) suggests that a speech community is “any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language use”. An interesting definition is provided by Labov (1972a) with emphasis on shared attitudes and knowledge. More concretely, Labov (1972a: 120) argues that “The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behaviour, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage”. Clearly, the shift from the language “of the community” towards “shared” evaluative norms within a community is quite important since it encompasses the potential multilingual character of the community where the members may not use the language in the same way. In this respect, Patrick (2002) poses the question whether the speech community is primarily a social or linguistic object. Therefore, Patrick (2002: 577) sees the speech community through the prism of Bucholtz’s (1999) definition, namely, as “a socially-based unit of linguistic analysis”. Thus, more emphasis is given to the social component of the speech community. From the theoretical point of view the present study is an attempt to investigate which criteria, present in the various definitions, best characterize the speech community under study.

Language attitudes
Moving to the views the people hold towards languages and/or dialects have been extensively examined by various sociolinguists. It is widely acknowledged in the literature that all languages and their varieties are ‘equal’. However, some folk beliefs suggest that some languages are inherently ‘better’ than others. More specifically, some people believe that some languages “are more ‘beautiful’, ‘melodic’ and ‘pure’ than others, and that certain dialects are more ‘correct’ and ‘complete’ whereas other dialects are ‘inferior’, ‘inexpressive’ and ‘incomplete”’ (Papapavlou, 2005: 53). Defining language attitudes is not easy as it may seem. Just as with the term speech community, there is no consensus among sociolinguists on the exact definition of language attitudes. Fasold (1984) outlines two major views on
the nature of attitudes, behaviorist and mentalist. The former view focuses on the attitudes found in the responses people make to social situations whereas the latter one sees an attitude as an intervening variable between a stimulus and a response (Fasold 1984: 176). The mentalist approach seems to be more attractive to the study of language attitudes since the attitudes can be divided into different subparts, such as cognitive (knowledge), affective (feeling), and conative (action) components (Agheyisi and Fishman 1970: 139, Cooper and Fishman 1974:7, cited in Fasold 1984). In this respect, various definitions of language attitudes stress different components of this term. Ryan et al. (1982:7), for instance, define language attitudes as “any affective, cognitive or behavioural index of evaluative reactions toward different language varieties or their speakers”. Another perspective on language attitudes deals with the attitudes toward neighboring languages and how they affect (negatively or positively) lexical borrowing (Haugen 1950; Weinreich 1967; Fishman 1972; Papapavlou 1994a). Here, language attitudes are seen in terms of motivation continuum as regards lexical borrowing from neighboring languages a speech community comes in contact with. Others have put more emphasis on the social aspect of the term language attitudes maintaining that language attitudes originate from the attitudes towards certain social class and the varieties they speak (Bernstein 1961; Cook 1971; Henderson 1972). A slightly different approach is adopted by other scholars who shift the emphasis onto the ethnic component of a particular group suggesting that language attitudes primarily deal with the attitudes people hold toward certain racial groups (or minority groups) and their languages (Labov 1972b; Trudgill 1975; Rickford 1977). Similarly, Fasold (1984:148) argues that attitudes toward language (or dialect) “are often the reflection of attitudes towards members of various ethnic groups”. In this light, it is feasible that certain nationalistic views may play an important role in language attitudes that originate from certain ethnic and/or social attitudes.

One of the main questions in language attitude studies is how these attitudes can be detected. There have been different methodological techniques introduced in studying the attitudes people hold towards a particular linguistic code as well as the speakers of this code such as matched guise technique (Lambert, 1967), magic boxes (Rosenthal, 1974; Cremona and Bates, 1977; Pavlou, 1999) observation, language preference and language use (Meyerhoff, 2006). In the current study an attempt is made to detect the language attitudes of the group under investigation by looking at their self-reported language choices.

**Method**

**Participants**

The participants that took part in the study (96) were of Pontic Greek origin and their ages ranged from 15 to 60. All the participants are residents of three major urban...
centres in Cyprus: Nicosia, Larnaca and Paphos. Most of the participants have moved from the former republics of the Soviet Union, mostly from Russia and Georgia. Determining to which social class this particular group belongs is a bit problematic since as Labov (1990) argues, the social stratum is far from uniform and the approach to social class may be based on occupation, education, or a combination of these with income. Taking into account these objective indicators of social stratification, it can be said that the majority of Pontic Greeks belong to the working class.

Data collection
For the purpose of this study two kinds of data were collected. Part of the data was collected through questionnaires. A questionnaire was designed in SMG for the purposes of this study and aimed at eliciting the relevant linguistic/social/cultural information. In total, 41 questions were included in the questionnaire, which consisted of completion statements, a five and four Likert-scale questions, an open-ended question and was divided into four parts. The first part elicited demographic information on the participants such as their age group, occupation, education, place of origin and the years spent in country(ies) where Greek is spoken. The second part focused on general linguistic information related to the participants’ linguistic profile and social networks. Part three was targeted at examining the attitude of Pontic Greeks towards the Cypriot Greek dialect and SMG. Lastly, part four aimed at eliciting information related to the ethnic/social identity of the participants. The English version of the questionnaire is found in the Appendix. A number of questionnaires were distributed but only 90 of them were returned (46 from male informants and 44 from female informants.

Interviews
On top of the data collected through questionnaires, data were also selected through interviews. In total six Pontic Greeks, three from Nicosia and three from Larnaca were interviewed for approximately 8-10 minutes each. The interview was based on the questionnaire mentioned above and attempted to elicit as much relevant and richer information as possible beyond the formalities of questions of the questionnaire. The interviews were recorded exclusively at each participant’s home. Although the effect of recording was present, the process of the interview was carried out in an informal style and in the comfortable atmosphere of each participant’s

---

4 The following age groups were designed: a) 15-24 b) 25-34 c) 35-44 and d) 45-… . It should be mentioned, however, that the groups c and d were merged into one age group (35-44…) as the results of the participants belonging to these two age groups showed many common characteristics.
home environment so as to lower any possible effects of what Labov (1984) labeled the observer’s paradox.

**Results and discussion**

**Linguistic profile**

It is important, in the context of language practices, to consider the role of place of origin, of social networks (Milroy, 2002) and the level of education of each participant as these factors may play an important role in the sociolinguistic description of a speech community under investigation. With regard to the participants who reported to have a degree of higher education, it appears that their linguistic profile is richer and thus they seem to be linguistically more aware as they express a wish to learn more foreign languages from the Romance and Germanic language families (i.e. the languages mostly spoken in Europe). At the same time, younger participants who attend (or who have recently graduated from) Greek state schools in Cyprus, also exhibit a high degree of knowledge in foreign languages. More specifically, the languages preferred to be learnt are mostly English, French, Italian and Spanish that secondary state schools offer today. The total number of the languages that have been mentioned by the participants in this study is eight, plus the two dialects of Greek spoken on the island. The linguistic profile of the participants is illustrated in chart 1 below:

**Chart 1. The languages (dialects) that the participants claimed to know**
As can be seen in the above chart, all of the participants speak Greek, which is partly expected to be (but not necessarily) natural in the context of a Greek-speaking country where one lives. There are many cases among immigrant communities, when many immigrants, especially non-working women and older people who have recently immigrated to the host country live in ghettos and often fail to be linguistically or otherwise assimilated to the host language/culture. Greek is treated as the dominant language of Pontic Greeks in this study. With regard to the Cypriot Greek, it seems that many of Pontic Greeks (almost 60%) claimed to use it in their daily speech, which is expected since it confirms the idea that Pontic Greeks are influenced by the local dialect and hence culture, and given the fact that this is the preferred code among the majority of Greek Cypriots in most domains of language use. Notice, that Russian which was the official language in the former Soviet Union, is spoken by the majority but not by all the participants. This may occur due to minimal or total absence of exposure to this language within the family domain as well as within the immediate social environment which is especially observed in younger generation coming from Georgia. Interestingly enough, the participants who declared to know Georgian are quite few in number, despite the fact that a many of them emigrated from Georgia where it is officially spoken. Moreover, of the 45 participants from Georgia, 8.8% refuse to talk this language.

The third largest language in use, according to the study, is Turkish, which is spoken by almost 70% of the participants. It must be noted, however, that in spite of the high percentage of the Turkish language use, it survives only in the spoken form. In other words, none of the participants who claimed to know this language can either read or write in it. At the same time, regardless of the significant number of its speakers, Turkish is becoming less popular among Pontic Greeks, especially among younger generation who came from Russia. This tendency is quite evident even among older speakers since many of them (42.8%) claimed that it is Turkish that they try to avoid (or even refuse) using in their interactions.

---

5 According to Cubberley (2002), Russian was not only the language of prestige but the administrative language of the Union, and educated people had to be competent in Russian.

6 In the comments, 4.4% of those who reject to speak Georgian emigrated from the then autonomous region of Abkhazia (now an independent republic), and stated that they could not speak the language of those who fought against them in a war in early 1990s.

7 This fact is particularly interesting from a historical-socio-linguistic point of view. The questions regarding how the Turkish language with its alleged archaic forms, and the total absence of literacy, is so commonly used by Pontic Greeks in their everyday interaction, need further investigation.
Equally important is the fact that 25% of the Pontic Greeks claimed to know English. It seems that some Pontic Greeks become gradually aware of the advantages that the knowledge of English may offer. Considering the fact that the majority belong to the working class, the problem with ascending the social scale becomes particularly acute in the contemporary, competitive society. In addition, it seems that the knowledge of more than one foreign (usually European) language is becoming more prestigious within the Pontic Greek community in Cyprus.

Lastly, the Pontic Greek dialect (which is believed to be the genuine means of communication of Pontic Greeks) survives only in 5.4% of the participants who claimed know and use it in their everyday interaction. It must be noted, that the reasons as to why the situation with the Pontic Greek dialect is so dramatic today are not clear. It seems that very few Pontic Greeks managed to maintain their “ethnic tongue” in the “face of competition from a regionally and socially more powerful language” (Mesthrie et al, 2000: 253) which in different periods were different languages (Turkish, Russian and recently SMG), and achieve to pass it from generation to generation. The participants who claimed to know Armenian, among other languages, on the other hand, are slightly more in number, 6.5%. It must be mentioned here that, Georgia has geographical boundaries with Armenia where many Pontic Greeks (used to) reside. The fact that the two languages come in contact due to geographical proximity must have played a role. Thus, analyzing the Pontic Greek community as a sociolinguistic entity, it is not surprising that its members exhibit such a rich linguistic profile.

Language Attitudes toward the varieties of Greek spoken on the island
People not familiar with the linguistic theory tend to believe that some languages are richer, more ‘precise’, ‘beautiful’, ‘expressive’, than others and that some dialects are ‘inferior’, ‘poor’, ‘ugly’ (Fasold 1984; Papapavlou and Pavlou, 2005). As far as Pontic Greeks are concerned, they do not seem to hold a homogeneous attitude towards the Cypriot dialect. Some have a positive and rather friendly attitude, while others hold from neutral and to negative attitudes. In this respect, the analysis of these three variables – positive, neutral and negative attitude – is examined in relation to the age factor of the participants. As indicated previously, the three age groups are used (a. 15-24; b. 25-34; c. 35-44...). We assume that their language attitudes are reflected in the language choices they make when they address a multilingual/multialectal interlocutor or when they feel equally competent in the various linguistic codes they use. The results are shown in the three tables below, each corresponding to a particular age group. The question in the questionnaire asked the participants which language (variety) they would prefer when speaking (a) Greek generally (usually within their community), (b) with Cypriots and (c) with (the mainland) Greeks.
As can be seen above, it is the representatives of the first age group that show higher results when choosing Cypriot Greek dialect when they speak Greek in general. The representatives of the groups (b) and (c) seem to favour SMG more than the Cypriot Greek dialect in their speech behaviour (89.7% and 78.6% respectively). Similarly, the younger generation appears to use the Cypriot Greek dialect more frequently (66.6%) when speaking to Greek Cypriots, and at the same time, almost 20% of Pontic Greeks claimed to use both the Cypriot Greek dialect and SMG when addressing Greek Cypriots. Still, more than half of the participants from the groups (b) and (c) prefer SMG. Finally, the majority of the participants from the all three age groups declared to use SMG when speaking with the mainland Greeks.

It seems that the younger generation of Pontic Greeks adjusts quicker to the new language and culture (in this case the Cypriot Greek dialect and culture) than older Pontic Greeks. This could be explained by the fact that children come in direct contact and interaction with the local language by attending local kindergartens, schools and/or by participating in general social life of the Cypriot speech community. Thus, the integrative processes of children seem to take place faster, since these children’s social networks include Greek Cypriot peers with whom they create friends more easily and without any preconceptions socialize faster and more effectively than the elders do. While growing within the local (cultural) environment the young generation seems to undergo the process of assimilation which

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. <em>Age group (a) 15-24</em></th>
<th>CG</th>
<th>SMG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When speaking Greek do you prefer</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When speaking with Greek Cypriots do you use</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When speaking with mainland Greeks do you use</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>93.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. <em>Age group (b) 25-34</em></th>
<th>CG</th>
<th>SMG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When speaking Greek do you prefer</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When speaking with Greek Cypriots do you use</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When speaking with mainland Greeks do you use</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>93.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. <em>Age group (c) 35-44…</em></th>
<th>CG</th>
<th>SMG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When speaking Greek do you prefer</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When speaking with Greek Cypriots do you use</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When speaking with mainland Greeks do you use</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>96.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
undoubtedly contributes to fostering each child’s positive attitude towards the host language (dialect) and culture in general. Similar processes could be argued to have taken place with older representatives of Pontic Greeks in Cyprus, but with a much slower pace, as the time passes. Thus, there seems to be a direct link between the amount of time spent in Cyprus and the attitude one holds towards the Cypriot dialect. Conversely, some Pontic Greeks show a negative attitude towards the Cypriot Greek dialect (as was reported, either because it is difficult to understand or because it sounds humorous). Here are some indicative comments made by Pontic Greeks with regard to the Cypriot Greek dialect:

“Την σεβόμαστε αλλά χρησιμοποιούμε την ΚΝΕ”
We respect it but we use SMG

“Λίγο χωριάτικη”/ “απότομη”/ “δύσκολη στην έκφραση”/ “δεν είναι γλυκιά”
It is a bit village-like/abrupt/difficult in expression/not sweet

“Μερικές λέξεις μοιάζουν με Τούρκικα”
Some words sound like Turkish

“Πάρα πολύ καλή διάλεκτος-πλούσια από πλευράς φωνητικής”
A very good dialect – rich sound system

“Ιδια όπως και άλλες γλώσσες”
It is the same as other languages

“Ενδιαφέρουσα ως διάλεκτος-πρέπει να διατηρηθεί αφού είναι μέρος πολιτισμού του ντόπιου λαού”
It is an interesting dialect – it should be maintained since it is part of the culture of the local people

“Έχει κοινά με την Ποντιακή διάλεκτο”
It has some similarities with the Pontic Greek dialect

“Κάθε λαός έχει το δικαίωμα να μιλά την γλώσσα του”
Every nation has the right to speak its language

Some of those who hold a negative attitude towards the Cypriot Greek dialect were reported to have lived some period in Greece where only SMG is practiced. These are usually older members of the Pontic Greek community who probably link their knowledge and use of SMG with their ethnic identity. Others tend to associate the
Cypriot Greek dialect with the local people and based on their personal (occasionally negative) experiences on the island they end up holding a negative attitude towards the Cypriot Greek dialect. In this respect, Papapavlou and Pavlou (2005) suggest that learning a particular language encompasses one’s beliefs about the members of the corresponding speech community. This is shown in the comments of the participants who rejected to speak a particular language based on the negative attitude they hold towards the people. As Papapavlou (2005) argues judgments of people are not linguistic or scientific but purely social ones when it comes to language attitudes. For instance, one of the Pontic Greeks who claimed that he rejected to speak Turkish, said that he could not (and even was not allowed) to speak the language of his enemy.

Conclusion
It is important to understand what a community is. Defining a community presupposes some kind of boundaries that delimit it from other communities. There are social and/or linguistic factors that may play the role of boundaries between communities. However, as has been discussed earlier (see literature review section) there are a number of different definitions of a “speech community” and that is why it is difficult to talk about clear cut and fixed boundaries. The fluid character of speech communities, in other words, contributes to the ongoing debates regarding the optimal definition which captures best the concept of the speech community.

It is evident that the community of Pontic Greeks in Cyprus is a bilingual (multilingual) one. The main question here is to see whether the Pontic Greek community is homogeneous. Bloomfield (1933: 43 cited in Patrick 2002) claims that bilinguals belong to disparate communities. This, in turn, suggests that communities overlap and therefore it is problematic to draw clear cut boundaries between speech communities. Furthermore, Bloomfield (1933) argues that variation within single communities occurs on geographic and social axis. Thus, it is unclear to what extent speech communities overlap and when they overlap, it is not clear whether there is the possibility of two or more speech communities to merge. Based on Labov’s (1972a) definition of a speech community, the Pontic Greek community in Cyprus does not constitute a single and homogeneous speech community as their evaluative norms in relation to the Cypriot Greek dialect are not the same, ranging from negative to positive attitudes. Likewise, the language choice within the community is not homogeneous when it comes to SMG and Cypriot Greek dialect. The linguistic behavior of Pontic Greeks seem to closely correlate with the age factor as well as with the geographical provenance of Pontic Greeks, the degree of their desire to get assimilated into the local linguistic and cultural landscape or maintain a distinct
identity which is often exhibited through the use (or the avoidance of use) of a particular language (dialect). If we take language attitudes as a criterion of membership in a given speech community, we could claim that the members of the Pontic speech community who have positive attitudes towards Cypriot Greek, they would be considered as members of the wider Greek Cypriot speech community.

References


Appendix: Questionnaire completed by Pontic Greeks in Cyprus.
(All the questionnaires were completed in SMG)

**Questionnaire**

**Part A > General Information**
*Fill in the blanks or circle the correct answer*
1. Sex:  (a) Male  (b) Female
2. Age:  (a) 15-24   (b) 25-34   (c) 35-44   (d) 45 -
3. Profession ________
4. Education:  (b) School   (b) Technical Institute   (c) University
5. Place of origin:  (a) Russia
                     (b) Georgia
                     (c) Other ________
6. How long have you been living in a Greek speaking area (Cyprus/Greece) ________
7. I live in Cyprus since (Date) __________ in the city of __________

**Part B > Linguistic Information**
*Fill in the blanks or circle the correct answer*
1. Your native language is ________
2. How many languages do you know? ________
3. Circle the languages (dialects) you speak:
   (a) Russian
   (b) Greek
   (c) Cypriot
   (d) Turkish
   (e) Georgian
   (f) Other ________
4. Which language(s) do you speak at home:
   (a) with parents ________
   (b) with children ________
   (c) with brothers ________
5. What language(s) do you speak at work ________
6. What language(s) do you speak at school ________
7. What language(s) do you speak with your friends ________
8. Your best friends are:
   (a) Russian-Pontians
   (b) Russians
8. In which language do you feel you can express yourself (speak) better?

9. Which language you feel that you understand better when you read literature, magazines, newspapers, etc.

10. Did you speak Greek before immigrating to a Greek speaking area?
    (a) Yes    (b) No    with whom?

11. Which language would you like to learn well?

Please answer accordingly (1)=Always (2)=Usually (3)=Rarely (4)=Never

12. Do you use two languages when describing something?
    Which?

13. Do you use two languages in one expression?
    Which?

14. While speaking do ever you feel that you do not know which language to use?

15. Do you answer in a particular language even though you have been asked in another?

16. When going back to your country for holidays do you still speak in Greek?

17. Is it an advantage to know foreign languages?

18. Do you speak your native language?

Part C> Attitudes towards Cypriot Dialect/ Standard Modern Greek (SMG)

Fill in the blanks or circle the correct answer

1. When speaking Greek do you prefer
   (a) Cypriot Dialect    (b) SMG

2. When speaking with Cypriots do you use
   (a) Cypriot Dialect    (b) SMG

3. When speaking with Greeks do you use
   (a) Cypriot Dialect    (b) SMG

4. What is your opinion about the Cypriot dialect?
Please answer accordingly (1)=Very much (2)=Much (3)=The same (4)=A little (5)=Nothing
5. How different is SMG from the Cypriot Dialect 
   1  2  3  4  5

6. Does the Cypriot dialect resemble (phonetically) your native language?
   1  2  3  4  5

Please answer accordingly (1) I totally agree (2) I agree (3) I don’t know (4) I disagree (5) I totally disagree

7. Expressing yourself in Cypriot Dialect is easier than in the SMG
   1  2  3  4  5

8. The Cypriot dialect transmits your speech message better than SMG
   1  2  3  4  5

9. The Cypriot Dialect is more useful than SMG in Cyprus
   1  2  3  4  5

Part D > Ethnicity
Fill in the blanks or circle the correct answer
1. I feel that I am
   (a) Greek
   (b) Pontius
   (c) Russian-Pontius
   (d) Greek-Pontius
   (e) Georgian
   (f) Russian
   (g) Other ________

2. Do you feel like belonging to both communities of which you speak the languages? (a) Yes (b) No
3. Which community do you feel is closer to you? ________
4. Is there any language you refuse to speak? (a) Yes (b) No
5. Why? __________________________________________
6. The languages that expresses you better is_________