Perspectives On Cross-Linguistic Transference: Greek And English In Multicultural Australia

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RÉSUMÉ

Les linguistes acceptent que les langues en contact ne soient pas complètement pures et dépourvues des formes de transferts linguistiques, des aspects caractéristiques distinctifs et des constructions. Les transferts inter-linguistiques sont un phénomène naturel, universel et non accidentel, quelqu'en soient les motifs. Au cours des deux dernières décennies cette interaction linguistique est devenue une question centrale de la linguistique appliquée, fournissant une aide précieuse à la planification et l'organisation de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère et seconde. Cet article met l'accent sur la situation linguistique diachronique dûe au contact inter-linguistique entre le grec et l'anglais australien, c'est-à-dire l'impact de l'anglais australien sur le grec et celui du grec sur l'anglais australien dans le contexte de l'Australie. Afin de présenter un tableau plus complet des transferts, cet article examine les transferts à la fois directs et indirects ainsi que leur impact sur diférents niveaux de langue, illustrés par une variété d'exemples oraux et écrits.

ABSTRACT

Linguists accept that no languages in contact are completely pure and free of transferred language forms, features and constructions. Cross-linguistic transfers are a natural, universal phenomenon and not accidental, whatever the motives. In the past two decades this linguistic interaction has become a central issue in applied linguistics, providing valuable assistance with the planning and organising of foreign and second language teaching/learning. This paper focuses on the diachronic linguistic situation due to the cross-linguistic contact between Greek and Australian English, that is, the impact of Australian English upon Greek in the immigrant context of Australia and that of Greek upon Australian English. To present a more comprehensive picture of transference, this paper examines both direct and indirect transfers, as well as their impact on different levels of language, illustrated by a variety of oral and written examples

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Recent demographic profile of Australia and Australian Hellenism

Australia, apart from its indigenous people, is a country of immigrants. The Australian resident population on 4 December 2008 was estimated to be 21,522,662 (ABS 2008b: 1). In the latest census (2006) the people of Australia reported more than 270 different ancestries, with many claiming two (ABS 2008a: 7), and almost 400 different languages (ABS 2007b: 1), while 16% of the population speak a language other than English at home (Cook 2006: 1), apart from about 145 indigenous languages still spoken by the 455,031 indigenous persons (ABS 2007c: 2; Australian State of the Environment Committee 2007: 2).

This census revealed the people of self-reported Greek origin to be 365,200 (1.8% of the total population) (ABS 2008a: 8), but in reality their number may increase to even around 400,000 if we consider those of Greek ancestry born in areas other than Greece (Cyprus, Turkey, Egypt, South Africa, etc.) who may have identified themselves on the basis of their country of birth. The total number of Greeks is a contentious issue, however. Claims of 650,000, 700,000 or even 800,000, frequently flaunted by politicians from Greece and members of Australia's Greek communities, are exaggerations.[1]

Compared with past years, the census revealed that the number of Greek-speaking individuals has declined significantly from 269,775 in 1996 to 263,075 in 2001 to 252,222 in 2006 (ABS 2007a: n.p.), yet Greek has remained the second most popular language other than English spoken at home in Australia, 1.3% of the entire population after Italian (1.6%).[2] Mainly due to the dramatic decline in the number of new Greek arrivals (187 persons in 1995-96, 142 in 1998-99 (see also Καναράκης 2000: 141 fn.38 and Καναράκης 2003: 72 fn.31), 145 in 2005-06 (Hadzimanolis 2007: 2), etc.), the increasing number of interethnic marriages and the dominance of English resulting in the diminution of Greek from an effective communicative tool to a feature of ethnic identity, the Modern Greek language is experiencing critical difficulties, socially and educationally, being taught at school to second and third generation children of Greek origin as a second and in some cases as a foreign language.

On the character of Australian English

Australian English is a national variation of British English[3] with a distinctive vocabulary and accent, which developed in Australia after its settlement by the British in 1788. The original influences derived from Cockney and Irish

English, since many convicts and settlers came from London and Ireland (Mitchell & Delbridge 1965a). The geographical isolation, the different environmental features, their feelings of social independence promoting reaction to the preservation of British cultural values, evident in the contrast between the Cultivated and Broad accents of Australian English and their increasing contact with the aborigines and immigrants gave rise to the development of a different culture resulting in separate modes of speech and writing. These factors introduced Aboriginal names of plants (*waratah*, *wilga*), animal names (*wallaby*, *wombat, dingo, kangaroo, koala, kookaburra*), and quite a few place names (*Woolloomooloo, Coonabarabran, Wee Waa*, etc.), but also *boomerang*, *billabong* (water hole), *corroboree* (a ceremonial dance), *cooee* (a loud call) etc., as well as over 10,000 lexical items of Australian English origin, many referring to the biogeography of Australia (*banksia* (tree), *brush* (dense vegetation), etc.), some established in the lexicon of international English such as *pavlova* (a dessert), several descriptive of life styles, and others colloquial including slang (*bathers* (swimming costume), *frock* (dress), *bush* (countryside), *dunny* (outside toilet), *drongo* (fool), *biggie* (big one), *crook* (unwell, irritable), *dinkum* (honest), hooroo (goodbye), galah (stupid person), *sheila* (woman, girlfriend), *cobber* (friend), etc.), or derivatives and compounds (*Pommyland* (England from *pommy* (English immigrant) + land), *outback*, *iron bark*, *ticket-of-leave*, *bush telegraph* (informal means of communication, gossip), *weekender* (holiday cottage), etc.), and even vivid idioms (*drag the chain* (hinder others by doing something slowly), *scarce as rocking horse manure* (non-existent), *starve the crows* (exclamation of astonishment), *five-finger discount* (shoplifting), *beyond the black stump* (very remote place), *she'll be right, mate* (don' t worry, everything will be OK) etc.).[4]

Many words considered pure Australian, in reality were started in England and exist alongside the earlier British meanings (*washer* (facecloth), *cockatoo* (a look-out), *identity* (a well-known person)), some of which are still used in British local dialects (*dinkum*, *cobber*, *tucker* (food), joker (person) etc. (Crystal 1988: 240)). Quite a few words reflecting the way of life, history and other aspects of Australian society, as well as the physical environment, have transferred into or re-entered the English of Britain (*bush* (stretch of land with bushy vegetation; countryside as opposed to towns), *sheila, larrikin* (a mischievous (but likable) young man), *digger* (Australian soldier), etc.) or others deriving from British English, are used in both countries (*miniskirt* (cf. the Australian diminutive *mini-budget*), s*kinhead*, etc. and colloquial words like *loo* (has replaced the Australian *dunny* and *dyke*), *knickers* etc.).

Furthermore, an increasing influence of American English on Australian English apparent since the sound films of the 1930s, intensified during World War II, has accelerated more recently, due to the presence of the USA as a cultural and political superpower and the loosening of ties between Britain and Australia (Maslen 1995:44; Peters 2001: 297-309). Examples of Americanisms are found in many aspects of its structure. On the **phonological level** we notice transfers on features of stress (pri**mar**ily instead of **pri**marily) or on the voicing of the inter-vocalic /t/ (*latter* and *ladder* become similar in pronunciation), on the **grammatical level**, though very few, on verb constructions (*to protest* and *to appeal (something)* instead of *to protest against* and *to appeal against (something)*, on the **graphemic level** (spelling) with an increasing preference for noun and verb endings (*-or* over *-our* (*color/colour*, *honor/honour*), *-m* over *-mme* (*program/programme*), *-e-* over *-ae/oe-* (*encyclopedia/encyclopaedia*, *maneuver/manoeuvre*, etc.), although the situation still remains fluid across states and age groups. Most American transfers are located on the **lexical level**: new **nouns** like *truck* (Br. E. lorry), *station wagon* (Br. E. estate car), *high school* (Br. E. secondary school), *freeway* (Br. E. highway), *billboard* (Br. E. hoarding), *baggage* (Br. E. luggage), *eggplant* (Br. E. aubergine), *zucchini* (Br. E. courgette); **adjectives** like *off campus*, *upfront*; **phrasal nouns** like *rip-off*, *teach-in*; **verbs** like *to trial*, *to oversight*; **phrasal verbs** like *to suss out*, *to psych up*; **prefixed verbs** like *de-escalate*; **sentence modifiers** like *healthwise*; and **truncated forms** like *hi-fi*, *hi-tech*, *sci-fi* and others (See also Taylor 1989: 239-244; Delbridge 1991: 75). Some of these words are parallels like *trail* and *track*, some are new objects with new names and some are pushing out existing Australian words (See also Taylor 1989: 239-244; Burridge & Mulder 1998: 280-284; Peters 2001: 297-309). There is nothing surprising about this, as Australian English, with the passage of time, will incorporate more words from its immigrants and other varieties of British and American English.

Although Australia is a vast island continent, it exhibits very little internal linguistic variation (Turner 1966: 163). Dialects have not developed in Australia, except a few regional lexical variations (*pixie* (small ice cream carton), *cantaloupe*, and *bathers* or *togs* in Victoria but *bucket*, *rockmelon* and *cozzie* in New South Wales, *stroller* (a child's push chair) and *peanut butter* in New South Wales but *pusher* and *peanut paste* in South Australia and Queensland, *port* in Queensland but *school bag* in New South Wales), and certain words with alternative pronunciation in certain geographical areas, such as *castle* usually pronounced /kæsl/ in Melbourne and parts of Queensland but /kasl/ in Sydney.

Phonologically, based on vowel and diphthong variables, three categories of the accent range appear in Australia, indicating a great deal of social variation: *Broad* (34%), most nationalistic ("Australian twang"), *General* (55%), the mainstream accent, and *Cultivated Australian* (11%), most conservative and close to educated British, influenced by Received Pronunciation (Mitchell & Delbridge 1965a: 19; Delbridge 1970: 19). *Broad* is the most different from British Received Pronunciation, spoken by more men than women and the other two (*Cultivated,* spoken more by women than men, and *General*) are progressively less so. Mitchell & Delbridge (1965b) added a fourth variety, *Modified* (less than 1%), a type more similar to Received Pronunciation than *Cultivated* and associated with the British upper classes.

Some main features of Australian English are:

1. The rising intonation pattern in statements within a sentence, making the non-Australian listener think that the sentence spoken is interrogative rather than affirmative.
2. The pronunciation principally of the vocalic nuclei /ei/ and /'u/ as /ai/ and /au/ respectively in Broad and General Australian, causing semantic deviation from Cultivated Australian and therefore misunderstanding to the foreign or immigrant ear (/lain/ (line) instead of /lein/ (lane)) or mere confusion, as in /tɔ dai/ (to die) instead of /tɔ dei/ (today); /gau/ a non-existent word instead of /g'u/ (go).
3. The tendency for strong nasalisation of the vowels or vocalic nuclei before nasal consonants (/m, n, ŋ/) in Broad Australian speech, as in *down* or in *bean*, *boom* and *bong*. Women seem to have a higher nasality ratio than men.
4. The slow and drawling tendency most notable among Broad accent speakers.
5. The tendency for word abbreviation (*uni* for university, *Tassie* for Tasmania, *Chrissie* for Christmas, *prezzie/pressie* for present (Chrissie pressie), *darl* for darling, *roo* for kangaroo, *Salvo* for Salvation Army member, *sickie* for day off from work due to illness, *mozzie* for mosquito, *Aussie* for Australian, *Oz* for Australia, *beg yours* for I beg your pardon, *this arvo* for this afternoon, etc.).

On the character of Greek

The Greek language, having the oldest written and oral traditions in Europe, for over 3400 years (Chadwick 1987: 8) and at least 4000 years respectively, is

the historically unifying language of Europe. Some scholars even talk of "Eurogreek". According to Alan Kirkness, the cliché that Greek (along with Latin) is a dead language "needs to be reconsidered".[5] Greek is also distinguished by an ongoing historical continuity and cohesion, despite the changes which have occurred (Browning 1969: 9). It plays a most significant role in the enrichment of other European languages, and through them of other languages. Other factors have been its early and in depth development by internationally celebrated Greek minds in the sciences and humanities, the Greeks' word-making creativity, as well as the cultural and purely linguistic prestige that Greek acquired out of the geographic context where it was spoken as a native language.

The Greek language became transnational (once during the Alexandrian and Roman times (Alexandrian or Hellenistic Koine) and later during the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine periods (12th-15th and 15th-18th centuries) to South Italy, the Balkans, South Russia, Georgia and further East, as well as areas of the Eastern Mediterranean (Kanarakis 2008[2]: 275-280)) as an oral or even written communication medium (in cultural matters, commerce, diplomacy and administration) among peoples frequently living far from each other and not having it as their mother tongue.

Greek became a base of accurate semantic expression, a steady point of reference and, therefore, a source of continuous direct and indirect influence on other languages without ever losing its vitality and plasticity or even breaking down into daughter languages, as happened with Demotic Latin into the Neolatin or Romance languages. Despite the small population which always used Greek as a mother tongue, its influx into Latin and more recent European languages, has been diachronic and multifaceted.

In older times Greek words and word stems entered mainly indirectly through Latin, French and other European languages, while in modern times, especially since the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution, through newly structured words, using Greek word stems adopted in everyday communication, and in scholarly and scientific expression. This is why European education and science, as well as Western civilization in general, continue to utilise the linguistic and cultural qualities of the Greek language. The French linguists Bouffartigue and Delrieu, referring to their native language, point out that "the understanding of our language, the rediscovery of its essence – this is the usefulness of knowing the Greek word stems. The Greek stems give the French language its deepest support and, at the same time, they provide it with the highest ability for abstraction. Greece is a

distant source of our civilisation, and is alive in the words we say. It shapes our language every day" (1993: 9), while the British linguist David Crystal states: "But in many ways more important that the historical perspective is…to see the Classical languages continuing to be used as a dynamic source of new words of lexical creation…. What is so fascinating is to see how we still rely on Latin and Greek to talk about entities and events which are at the heart of modern life" (2001: 21).

The impact of Australian English on the Greek ethnolect in Australia

Although the English language in Australia, from the first European settlement (1788) spans only 200-plus years, the foundation of Antipodean Greek began just forty-one years later (1829),[6] and it is now established as an Australian ethnolect – a native language in an immigrant sociolinguistic situation spoken under the influence of the national language of the new country.

Greek and Australian English exhibit a dynamic ability to enrich each other on various language levels. Since no languages coming into constant contact with one another, manage to remain free of transferred language forms, features or constructions.[7] Thus cross-linguistic transference is a natural, universal phenomenon, and not accidental. Eventually the transfers no longer reflect language characteristics of individuals but steady, well established language qualities used by the majority of bilinguals and multilinguals in daily communication.

The degree of the transference process varies among bilingual Greek immigrants according to the level of their English and Greek mastery. Among Greek-born individuals, in general, the better their knowledge of Greek, the weaker the influence of Australian English appears when they communicate in Greek. In contrast, Australian-born Greeks and those whose knowledge of English is better, use more transfers from Australian English. Also, when individuals of Greek origin in Australia encounter transfers used by Greek speakers from other English-language countries, if these transfers belong exclusively to different national variations of the two main branches of English, they are not understood.[8]

From USA English: elevated (electric) train [the el] > *ελεβέτα*, quarter (25 cents) > *κοράκι*, [seating] hostess > *χοστέσα* (waitress in charge), short order cook (in restaurant) > *σόρορεκουκ*.

From Canadian English: hot dog cook > *χαντοκάς* > *χαντοκάδικο* (canteen for cooking hot dogs), Park Avenue (a road in Montreal) > *Παρκαβενέικα*, St Laurent (river) > *(το) σελόραν*, street car (tram in Toronto) > *στριτικάρι*.

Non-intelligibility can arise sometimes where the same word exists in national variations of English but is rendered differently in the oral and written communication of the Greek speakers in these English-language countries. Cf. hamburger > *χέμπρικα* in Canada, *χεμπούργκο* in the USA and *χαμπούργκα* in Australia.[9]

Non-intelligibility is also possible among members of the same ethnolect in the same country due to regional variations which are sometimes significant enough to cause confusion or misunderstanding. In Australia this has been observed among Greek speakers of rural versus urban environments (*μπλόκος* (< block) by the Greeks in the rural area of Mildura, Victoria, but *φάρμα* (< farm) by the Sydney and Melbourne Greeks), and among the Greeks of different urban centres, such as Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, etc. (zip > *ζίπα*, *η* in Sydney but *ζιπ, το,* in Melbourne) (Tamis 1986-87: 134).

The influence of Australian English on Greek in Australia is evident on two language levels, the phonological and especially the lexical.

Phonological level

a. Speech sounds

Usually second and third generation individuals, as well as some first generation ones with high proficiency in Australian English, tend to transfer phonological elements (mainly phones) into their Greek oral performance, causing the speaker an obvious accent. Such distinctive transferred sounds in the Greek ethnolect are the Greek voiceless stops /p, t, k/ with aspiration, as in English word initially, after a pause, before stressed vowels and sometimes in word final position. The tendency also occurs to pronounce the rolled (trill) /r / as a post-alveolar fricative (retroflex) /r/, the velar fricative /χ/ as a glottal fricative /h/, and in some cases the clear alveolar /l/ as a dark alveolar /ʎ/(/p‘as s/ (pasha), /t‘mba/ (somersault), /ek‘£/ (there), instead of /pas s/, /tmba/, /ek£/. Also, /akr£δa/ (grasshopper), /h ni/ (inn), /eλp£δa/ (hope) instead of /akr £δa/, /χ ni/, /elp£δa/).

b. Intonation

Many second and third generation Greek Australians (especially women) tend to use intonation patterns of Australian English, particularly for certain

interrogative sentences known as wh- questions, where instead of using the standard rising Greek intonation pattern 2-3-3 they use the rising-falling Australian English pattern 2-3-1, sometimes with semantic implications.

Wh- questions:

Πού πας; (Where are you going?)

[Tendency for 2-3-1 instead of 2-3-3, semantically sounding stern and imperative].

Πώς σε λένε; (What is your name?)

[Tendency for 2-3-1 instead of 2-3-3, semantically as above].

Lexical level

These transfers are the most common, classified as independent unadjusted words, adjusted words ("hellenised" words) and loan translations.

a. Independent unadjusted transfers

These are noticed mainly in the ethnolect of Australian-born Greeks who are more proficient in English than Greek (*ντίγκο, το* (dingo – Australian wild dog), *λέιμπαϊ, το* (lay-by – retail item reserved by cash deposit), *στράϊκ, το* (strike), *σέιλ, το* (sale)).[10]

In this category we encounter at least two cases:

i. Phrase structures composed of the verb *κάνω* + an independent English noun or nominalised verb, most frequently unadjusted, although sometimes adjusted as well: *κάνω στράικ* (n.) (I go on strike), *κάνω σάουαρ* (n.) (I take a shower), *κάνω τράι* (v.) (I try), but also *κάνω τσόπισμα* [adjusted noun] (I chop onions, nuts, etc.).

ii. The phenomenon of *simplification* which characterises the English inflectional system, compared with the more synthetic Greek one, appearing especially in the formation of the genitive case of Greek surnames. For example *του κου Πετράκης, του κου Πετρόπουλος* after Mr Petrakis > of Mr Petrakis, Mr Petropoulos > of Mr Petropoulos, imitating the uninflected English noun system (Mr. Turner > of Mr Turner).

b. Adjusted transfers ("hellenised" words)

These are transferred Australian words morphologically adjusted to the Greek inflectional system by acquiring Greek endings ("hellenised words").

This category appears to be the largest and can be subdivided into three groups:

i. Transferred words which in Australian English end in a consonant or consonant cluster (non-comparable in Greek). These are added a Greek ending to form mainly nouns and verbs (Melbourne > *Μελβούρνη*, Adelaide > *Αδελαΐδα*, agent > *ατζέντης*, basket > *μπασκέτα* [> μπασκετούλα (diminutive)], sandwich > *σέμιτζα* [Broad Aust. English /s ˈmidz/], I drive > *ντραϊβάρω*[11]).

Additionally, one-syllable Australian English transferred nouns ending phonologically in a consonant or consonant cluster, in the process of adjustment to the Greek inflectional system become two-syllable nouns, most frequently neuter gender, with the ending *-ι* (pl. *-ια*), although sometimes feminine or masculine (bill > *μπίλ-ι*, cake > *κέκ-ι* [> *κεκάδικο* (shop making and/or selling cakes)], job > *ντζόμπ-ι*, flat > *φλάτ-ι* [> *φλατάκι* (diminutive)], jar > *τζάρ-ι* [> *τζαράκι* (diminutive)], steak > *στέκι- ι*, floor > *φλόρ- ι*, bus > *μπάσ-ι* [> *μπασιέρης*], although fan > φένα or block > μπλόκος).

Also, two or more syllable Australian English nouns ending in *n* drop it in their Greek adjustment (television > τελεβίζιο, immigration > *ιμιγκρέσιο*, station > *στέσιο).*

The Australian nouns, and English nouns in general, ending in *-er* /-ə/, because of lack of this ending in Greek, are usually adjusted by taking the Greek feminine gender noun ending *-a*, due to the phonological proximity of the Greek sound /a/ and the English /ə/, especially when it occurs word finally (blinker > *μπλίνκα*, heater > *χίτα*, stroller > *στρόλα*, freezer > *φρίζα*, but Peter > *Πίτας* (masc.), baker > *μπέκερης* (masc.).

ii. The transfers (nouns) are frequently substituted by Greek ones (one of the three Greek genders), acquired according to their corresponding nouns in SMG (accountant > *ακέοντας, ο* (λογιστής, ο), professor > *προφέσας, ο* > (καθηγητής, ο), bank > *μπάνκα, η* (*τράπεζα, η*), birthday > *μπερθντέγια, τα* (< *γενέθλια, τα*), Newtown (suburb of Sydney) > *Νιουτέικα, τα* (< Αρωνιάδικα τα, Κατσουλιάνικα, τα).

iii. Several "hellenised" transfers carry a double meaning, one for the Greek ethnolect in Australia and another for SMG:

Greek ethnolect in Australia		*Standard Modern Greek*	
stamp >	*στάμπα*	stamp (for letters)	seal, imprint
boot >	*μπούτι*	car trunk	thigh
deposit >	*ντεπόζιτο*	down payment, bond	container for liquids
metre >	*μήτρα*	parking metre	womb

c. Loan translations

These are words, phrases or even syntactic structures transferred from Australian English to the Greek ethnolect and used in word for word translation, frequently resulting in constructions like: write down > *γράψε κάτω* instead of *γράψε*, I am right > *είμαι σωστός* instead of *έχω δίκιο*, the money he put down > *το χρήμα που έβαλε κάτω* instead of *το χρήμα που κατέθεσε*, the girl turned red > *το κορίτσι γύρισε κόκκινη* instead of *το κορίτσι κοκκίνισε / ντράπηκε*.

In general, the three lexical categories are encountered on the oral level and sometimes in written texts, including Greek-language literary writings of Australia, quite frequently in light-hearted ones.[12] Occasionally this influence is so strong that the result is a mixture of both languages (*Greeklish*).

The impact of Greek on Australian English

Australian English exhibits a wide range of Greek influences, often unique, as well as characteristic of its own sociocultural and historical structure. The influences from both SMG and the Greek ethnolect in Australia are found in many fields, such as the scientific (botany, zoology, medicine, etc.), military, social, geographical, tourist, and immigration (Καναράκης, 2008[2]: 324-329).

Many of the transfers are *indirect* via British English, but also in recent times via USA English, while others are *direct* because of its straight cross-linguistic contact with the two aforementioned aspects of Greek.

Indirect transfers to Australian English, especially through British English, constitute material charged with cultural, social, political and ecclesiastical meanings and concepts, a fact which has played a role in its linguistic flexibility and lexical richness. Unfortunately some lexicographers sometimes erroneously credit transfers to the Latin language instead of to Greek. According to the lexicographer J.C. Smock "the relative contributions of Latin and Greek to the English vocabulary had come to be misunderstood

greatly to the disadvantage of Greek….most learned Latin words were taken from Greek and in the chief Latin authors were commonly used as alien words, in the best old manuscripts usually without transliteration. They were Latin in about the same sense that *blasé*, *contretemps*, and *nouveau riche* are English" (1931: xii).

Regarding *direct* transfers, two notable sources have been the long and quantitatively high immigration to this country and Australian tourism to Greece. They include words, mainly since the 1950s and 1960s, on everyday matters, such as foodstuffs and meals (*fet(t)a*, *filo/phyllo* (pastry), *kalamari*, *souvlaki*, *taramosalata*), beverages (*ouzo*, *retsina*), entertainent (*bouzouki*), handicraft (*flokati*), etc. There are also those received straight from the Greek of Greece but which have new meanings in Australian English, as well as those directly received to render names of plants, animals and phenomena exclusively Australian.

All this linguistic polymorphism of Greek influence covers the history of Australia as a nation, and it exhibits influences from the Greek ethnolect and SMG, as well as quite largely from Ancient Greek (words and word stems). In general, the Greek transfers to Australian English are encountered on the morphological and lexical levels.

Morphological level

a. Synthesis

Combination of Greek elements

μέλας + *λευκός* > melaleuca (Australian plant cultivated as an ornamental) [1814]

Combination of Greek with a non-Greek element

λύρα + bird > lyre-bird [1824]

Compound words whose components are linked with the connective vowel -o[13]

coal + -o- + *πόλις* > coalopolis (term attributed to the Australian coal mining city of Newcastle) [1891]

Combination of synthesis and suffixation

τένων + Lat. synovia/sinovia (liquid greasing the joints and tenons) + *-ίτις* > tenosynovitis (teno) [1984]

b. Derivation

Apart from *prefixation* and *suffixation* to form new words based on Greek transfers (*αντί-* in anticlockwise, *-ισμός* in truism, etc.), a process producing exclusively Australian English words from Greek ones is *abbreviation* [14] (*ευκάλυπτος* > eucalyptus (oil) > eucy or euky [1977], *έκσταση* >ecstasy (recreational drug) > eccy [early 21st c.] etc.).

Lexical level

Independent transfers

Australian English has received independent Greek words either directly from Greek or indirectly through other languages, both adjusted and unadjusted. An example of an adjusted direct Greek transfer is cleft-y/-ie or clift-y/-ie (< *κλέφτης* < *κλέπτης* < *κλέπτω*) [1918], brought by the Australian soldiers returning from World War I. Unadjusted direct transfers to Australian English especially after World War II, were mainly through Greek immigrants but also Australian tourists to Greece. Unadjusted transfers before the mid-twentieth century are mainly scientific terms (zoological, botanical, etc.). Additionally, several Greek names (anthroponyms, names of places, trees, plants, etc.) have enriched its lexicon. Such names have been given to Australian towns and topographic features (Olympus, Labyrinth, Scamander, etc.) and people (Daphne, Achilles, Hector, Diamantina, Theodore, etc.). An unadjusted transfer through other languages such as Latin is *acacia* (Australian family of trees [1903]) (< Latin acacia < most probably from Ancient Greek *ακακία* (harmlessness) < adj. Άκακος).

Semantic neologisms

Some neologisms of Greek origin are the terms *platypus*, *echidna* and *Eureka*. *Platypus* (flat-footed person) (< *πλατύπους* < *πλατύς* + *πους*) was transferred directly to Australian English to indicate the semi-aquatic burrowing monotreme mammal of Australia [1799]. *Echidna,* for another Australian monotreme mammal, was acquired by Australian English indirectly through Latin (echidna <Greek *έχιδνα* (< *έχις* (snake)). *Eureka*, Archimedes' famous exclamation, became the place name of a gold mine in Victoria [1853]. Since the second half of the twentieth century, this term is also associated with the republican movement in Australia.

Concluding remarks

The impact of Australian English on Greek in the ethnolectic context of Australia, and that of Greek (SMG and Ancient Greek) on Australian English over time, directly and indirectly, appears mainly in oral but sometimes in written communication, reflected on various language levels: phonological, morphological and lexical. This phenomenon of cross-linguistic transference – a natural and age-old process among languages in contact – as long as it is not the result of blind imitation, fashion or mindless "progressiveness", does not therefore destabilise or undermine the identity of a language. To the contrary it reveals an opening towards the cultures of other peoples, as well as a willingness for exchange of meanings, ideas and learning in general.

NOTES

1. Similarly estimates of the total Greek diaspora vary between 2,700,000 - 4,500,000 (Χασιώτης 1993: 168) to "7 million and more" (Νιώτης [2000]: 5, 21).
2. The third position is shared by Cantonese and Arabic (1.2% each). (ABS 2008a: 1, 2).
3. British English and American English constitute the two main English-language branches which, under particular sociopolitical, cultural and linguistic conditions eventually gave rise to new national variations with a new character. From American English derived the variations of the USA, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Canada etc. and from British English those of Australian, New Zealand, Nigerian, Singaporean, Indian "Englishes" etc. (See also Καναράκης 2008[2]: 106-125).
4. For comprehensive discussions on Australian English, see, among others, Collins & Blair (eds.) 1989; Delbridge 1991: 67-82 and Crystal 1995: 350-353.
5. For Kirkness' comment in *English Today* (49, 1997), see Crystal 2001: 22.
6. The first documented information relates to seven Hydriots transported to Sydney on 27 August 1829 by the British as convicts punished for "piracy" because they had attacked a British vessel carrying supplies to the Ottoman port of Alexandria (Gilchrist 1977: 1-7).
7. For the causes of transference, among others, see Clyne 1967: ch. IV.
8. Many of the transfers are encountered not only in Australia but also across the wider spectrum of the Greek ethnolects in other English-speaking countries, because of the common language ancestry of these national variations.

9. Obviously, non-intelligibility can be caused in Greek-language communication among Greek residents of English and non-English-language countries, since the transference on Greek, derives from two different languages. Cf. *φλέκτης* from Swedish *fläkt* /flekt/ with *φένα* from Australian English *fan*.
10. Unadjusted and adjusted transfers to Standard Modern Greek (SMG) are not unknown in both spoken and written communication, as from English: *χιούμορ, σλόγκαν*; from French: *ασανσέρ, ρεστωράν*; from Latin: *κάστρο, σκάλα*; from Italian: *καπέλο, όπερα*; from Hebrew or Aramaic: *αμήν*, *σεραφείμ*, *Μιχάλης*, and others.
11. The Modern Greek verbal derivational suffix {-άρω} links with non-Greek nominal stems or nouns from various languages including English in both British English and American English and in their daughter variations in SMG and the Greek ethnolects. For example, in SMG: *παρκάρω* (< French parquer), *σουτάρω* (< British English shoot), and in the Greek ethnolect of Australia: *σερφάρω* (< Australian English surf), etc.
12. For relevant literary texts, see Kanarakis' anthology (1985).
13. This pattern is quite common in SMG as well (Nominal Stem + -ο + Noun: τυρόπιτα, γιδοπρόβατα etc.).
14. The abbreviation process in colloquial Australian English word formation is very common (barbecue > barbie/barby, registration (of cars) > rego, etc.).

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