Gidecen/Gidecek min/Gidecek misin?
Where Turkish Cypriots Think Dialect Variation Is Going

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Abstract   This study is a first look at the public perception of variation in Cypriot Turkish by young adult Turkish Cypriots. Young adult Turkish Cypriots indicated their opinions on a map and in comments. All asserted that regional variation within Cypriot Turkish does exist, despite ongoing dialect levelling. Variation is primarily attributed to each of the main urban centers of the area and is largely associated with differing positions along the continuum between Cypriot and Standard Turkish. The amount of Greek vocabulary is also identified as a source of variation.

Keywords   Sociolinguistics. Dialectology. Turkish. Cyprus. Variation.

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1   Introduction

The title of this chapter includes three different ways of asking the question 'will you go?' in Turkish. *Gidecek misin?* is the Standard Turkish acrolectal version, which would be used especially in formal contexts and written texts both in Turkey and in northern Cyprus, where Standard Turkish is the primary language variety of education, broadcasting and writing.

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Gidecen? on the other hand, is the hyperlocal, basilectal form of the question which would normally be used by Turkish Cypriots, especially in speech and with other Turkish Cypriots and when asserting Turkish Cypriot identity. Notably, the 'question marker' *mi* from Standard Turkish is not present. This question word is not a feature of Cypriot Turkish – one of the major grammatical differences between it and the standard variety.

There is also a mesolectal, intermediate version of this question: *Gidecek min?* This third alternative incorporates the Standard Turkish *mi* question particle, while still remaining grammatically distinct from the fully Standard form of the question, by retaining a different version of the second-person verbal suffix (/n/ rather than /sin/). This use of *mi* combined with a variant of the person suffix is an innovation in Cypriot Turkish grammar, originating from the increased prominence of Standard Turkish in the northern part of the island since the post-conflict *de facto* division of the island in the 1970s.

Thus, a basic question reveals considerable complexity in terms of grammatical variants and the social significance of the choice between them. The answer(s) to this question, in dialectological terms, may be equally complex. In this study, I explore young adult Turkish Cypriots' views of dialect variation in the past and present, with particular attention to the role of geographical variation within Cyprus. In doing so, I use the theoretical and methodological approach of 'perceptual dialectology'.

Perceptual dialectology (Preston 1999; Long, Preston 2002) investigates how 'non'-linguists perceive dialect variation. It addresses questions like: According to the general public, what different dialects of their language exist? Where is each one used? What are they like? How are they different, either from your own speech, or from the 'standard' version? Why?

Of course, the views of the general public may differ from those of language professionals. Nevertheless, such language attitudes have important effects on social structures and linguistic behavior, and are worthy of investigation in their own right. In addition, when a linguistic literature is relatively lacking, they provide an important starting point for in-depth investigations of language variation. To my knowledge, this is the first perceptual dialectology study of northern Cyprus.

In the following section, I outline the existing literature on linguistic variation within Turkish in northern Cyprus, as well as the methods used in this study. Section 3 discusses the results of the study with respect to geographical variation, while Section 4 discusses the results thematically. In Section 5 I summarize the conclusions and compare the situation in the Greek-speaking southern region controlled by the Republic of Cyprus.

2 Setting the Linguistic Scene in Northern Cyprus

Northern Cyprus presents a special case to observe the rise of dialect ideologies. Prior to 1974, a newly-independent (from the UK) Cyprus was majority Greek-speaking, with a significant Turkish Cypriot minority, of whom many were bilingual in Cypriot Greek. English was still widely used institutionally, and the role of standard Turkish was relatively small in Turkish Cypriot life, although educational materials in Turkish schools was imported from Turkey.

This situation changed drastically with the large-scale relocations starting in the 1960s and culminating in the *de facto* division of the island in to Greek and Turkish zones in 1974. In the intervening and following periods, there was widespread dialect mixing among speakers of Cypriot Turkish (as for Cypriot Greek), leading to a kind of koineization of the dialect (Petraki 2011; Gülle 2014; Kappler, Tsiplakou 2018).

At the same time, the role of Standard Turkish significantly expanded, both in the schools and in the society in general, particularly after the 1974 division and the large-scale arrival of mainland Turks from the Republic of Turkey. This wave of immigration was numerically significant. Yet it also had a profound impact beyond numbers and demographics, due to the employment of skilled workers from Turkey in leadership positions, and the increased presence of Standard Turkish in these domains (rather than Greek or English, as in the past; Hatay 2005).

As a result of historical processes, therefore, northern Cyprus represents today a bidialectal, diglossic society. Two related varieties of one language are used in different domains, with one of higher status than the other. In this case of diglossia, Standard Turkish is the 'high' variety of education and administration, and is also the native dialect of the many immigrants coming from mainland Turkey. Cypriot Turkish is the 'low' variety spoken inside the Turkish Cypriot community and family life. English is still widely used – in higher education, almost exclusively – as well as in tourism.

Most of the literature on Cypriot Turkish focuses on its unique dialectal features and differences from Standard Turkish (Demir, Johanson 2006). Sociolinguistics-oriented work explores the attitudes toward dialect differences. In a familiar and typical bifurcation, according to Turkish Cypriots, Standard Turkish is relatively educated and well-mannered, while Cypriot Turkish is rough and rustic (Kızılyürek, Gautier-Kızılyürek 2004); similarly, Cypriot Turkish is seen as less educated but more sincere, honest and friendly (Osam 2004).

The extant research posits the existence of a new, shared variety of Cypriot Turkish (Petraki 2011; Gülle 2014) – therefore presupposing the existence of geographical variation. According to Kappler and Tsiplakou (2018), there is "partial convergence to the standard

variety together with loss of local or basilectal features […] koinei-zation […] hand-in-hand with the levelling of local features". Kappler and Tsiplakou highlight the maintenance and spread of certain dialectal features as newly regionally unmarked (i.e. no longer geographically localized). They also document the emergence of hybrid, mixed forms drawing on both different previously-existing regional dialects, and mixing with the standard variety.

These sources all acknowledge that variation 'within' Cypriot Turkish does exist, although it is mentioned only briefly and not described in detail. Indeed, the emergence of a new koine presupposes the pre-existence of different dialectal varieties. Petraki states that there are "several CT [Cypriot Turkish] dialects, not just one" (2011). Gülle (2014, 94) states that:

> as far as the literature on Cypriot Turkish goes, there is no complete categorization of these sub-varieties. Several such varieties are mentioned here and there, such as the Paphian variety and the variety of Limassol. It is, however, unknown how many of these varieties there were and what the clear differences between them were.

Evripidou and Çavuşoğlu (2015, 131) also report relevant comments from their Turkish Cypriot participants regarding within-dialect variation, such as the following:

> Cypriot Turkish has changed a lot; now people here [Nicosia] speak it differently from people living in village in Karpaz Peninsula [Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso] for example. It has many forms. The way it's spoken in Nicosa [Nicosia] is closer to Standard Turkish, but still different and it carries more prestige.

As they conclude,

> Ones used in cities carry more prestige than the ones used in villages or other parts of the island. The level of respect accorded to city Cypriot Turkish as compared to that of other varieties in the speech community is clearly shown by the quote above. The prestige it may carry (in comparison to the rest of the language varieties) is also associated with the idea that city Cypriot Turkish is believed to be closer to Standard Turkish, but at the same time different from it. (2015, 131)

Clearly, based on these quotations, Cypriot Turkish young adult speakers subscribe to the idea that internal dialect variation exists. Interestingly, these speakers seem to view it through the lens of proximity/distance to or from Standard Turkish.

3   Methods

In this study, the classic perceptual dialectology method of the 'map task' is used to investigate young adult Turkish Cypriots' knowledge of and attitudes toward regional variation in Cypriot Turkish (for an overview of the map task method and its previous use in the sociolinguistic literature, see Cramer 2016). In the map task, a printed map is provided for participants, who are asked to annotate the map according to how [they think] people speak differently in different areas.

Fifteen Turkish Cypriot university students, currently undertaking English-medium undergraduate education in northern Cyprus, were provided with Google Maps print-outs of northern Cyprus. All were born at least twenty years after the *de facto* division of the island. The names of major towns and cities of the area appear on the map in both Latin script (Turkish names) and Greek script (Greek names). The following instructions were given:

> Cypriot Turkish is spoken all over this island, but this dialect (or language?) can be different from place to place.
> Draw lines on the map showing where people speak Cypriot Turkish differently.
> Please add your observations about the speech of the people living in each area.

4   Geographical Aspects of Cypriot Turkish Dialect Variation

Participants unanimously accepted the premise that within-dialect variation exists in Cypriot Turkish. Every participant drew some boundary lines and added some comments about variation to the map.

Participants were consistent in perceiving variation between each of the main urban areas in northern Cyprus. Thus, some frequently-observed patterns regarding variation were implicitly rejected. For example, there was no mention of an urban/rural divide (often seen in the Arab world and elsewhere) or regional divides such as north versus south (standard perceptual divisions in both the US and UK) or coastal/inland.

Therefore, participant comments are collated and discussed on a city-by-city basis in the remainder of this section. These comments are provided exhaustively and *in toto* – readers have access to the full range of responses, which are sorted by topic but not otherwise. They are provided verbatim and are not 'corrected' or modified, although translations and annotations are provided when appropriate.

4.1   Nicosia

Nicosia – Turkish Lefkoşa – is the main administrative city of northern Cyprus, located inland and centrally. It is the last and now only 'divided city' in Europe. The 'Green Line', or UN-controlled buffer zone running through it, is monitored by international troops and subject to border controls.

Participants made the following comments about Cypriot Turkish as used in this city:

1.   basic Cypriot Turkish
2.   more like local Cypriot Turkish
3.   more polite talking compared to other regions of northern cyprus; use a dialect much more like Turkish people; use *gidecek min?*, more like *gidecek misin?* in Turkish dialect
4.   people are careful a bit as here is a city but again we can see the use of Greek words especially from older people
5.   Cypriot Turkish is used most obviously and dialect is faster
6.   people speak faster than other places
7.   dialect is very slow and words are being swallowed while talking
8.   they speak so loud
9.   by transitivity,[1] talk differently from in Guzelyurt and Famagusta

Participants variably identify Nicosia Cypriot Turkish as both 'more' local or 'basic' (comments 1, 2 and 5) and 'less' local (comments 3 and 4, where 'careful' means 'more like the standard variety').

Specific examples of variation relate to perceived proximity/distance from Standard Turkish as well as to use of Greek words and rate of speech (e.g. perceived speed of speaking). As with 'standardness', the precise nature of rate of speech variation is evaluated in contradictory ways, as either exceptionally fast or exceptionally slow. Finally, one participant explicitly and accurately identifies the grammatical variation in question formation which constitutes the title of this paper.

In sum, participants identify similar parameters of variation (degree of standardness, rate of speech) although are inconsistent in how they apply in Nicosia.

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1 Transitivity because this participant elsewhere identifies the other cities as different – therefore it is entailed that Nicosia speech is also different from them, as they are different from it.

4.2   Kyrenia

Kyrenia – Turkish Girne – is the main tourist city of northern Cyprus, located on the central coast. Participants made the following comments about Cypriot Turkish as used in this city, as compared to other northern Cyprus locations (hence the use of terms like 'more', 'less' and 'most'):

1. compared to other areas, the use of old words is less
2. use typical northern cypriot dialect such as gadeh,[2] gICCaCCIk,[3] galem,[4] ilan,[5] and so on; rigidly northern Cypriot type
3. in Girne which is my hometown people try to use Turkish correctly but even they try it, they also make words a bit longer as we used to speak Turkish this way
4. calm speaking voice, pronouncing every consonant, vowel, short 'i', 'a'
5. most fluent
6. their dialect are the most clear one
7. they talk slower; more correct Turkish
8. more like Turkey Turks!
9. mostly tourists, Istanbul Turkish is also spoken commonly

Once again, as for Nicosia, several comments refer to the degree of standardness. In this case, all participants agree that Cypriot Turkish in Kyrenia is closer to standard Turkish, with none claiming the opposite, unlike the situation for Nicosia. Predictably, according to diglossic criteria, this variety is also assumed to also be more 'correct', 'fluent', and 'clear', and perhaps 'calm' (comments 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9), with only one exception (comment 2). This property is attributed to the presence of tourists and tourism.

Again, lexical variation is specifically mentioned, although here in the opposite direction – according to comment 1, Kyrenia Cypriot Turkish uses fewer 'old words' (probably Greek) rather than more (as is claimed for other locations). Comment 2 accurately identifies use of stop consonant voicing in its example words, which is typical of Cypriot Turkish.

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2 Nonstandard pronunciation of Turkish *kadeh* 'drinking glass' with initial stop consonant voicing.

3 Nonstandard word form with obstruent voicing and gemination.

4 Nonstandard pronunciation of Turkish *kalem* 'pen' with initial stop consonant voicing.

5 Nonstandard pronunciation of Turkish *yılan* 'snake' with initial glide deletion and fronting of the high vowel.

Participants also made some comments about outlying areas of the Kyrenia district, in addition to the city proper:

10. mixed Cypriot Turkish
11. a lot of local Cypriot Turkish. They pronounce vowels more long
12. quick tight vowels and consonants, faster spoken than the rest
13. Karşıyaka – most of the people who live there are Turkish people so that we come across with Cypriot Turkish less than other places
14. in Karşıyaka, they emphasize vowels longer
15. Alsancak – they use Turkish similarly as people do in Girne, but as it's a small place people tend to compensatory lengthening[6] as most of them know each other
16. Esentepe – they are connected with Cypriot culture and they even protect some traditions. They generally do not change Cypriot Turkish, they rather tend to preserve it;
17. Kaplıca – one of the places in which the original Cypriot Turkish is preserved

Comments 13, 14 and 15 refer to villages west of the city center, and the influence of immigrants from mainland Turkey is acknowledged. Comments 16 and 17 refer to villages east of the city center, which is said to retain more local dialect features, which are construed as in need of protection.

4.3 Famagusta

Famagusta – Cypriot Turkish Magosa – is also a coastal city, and hosts the only deepwater harbor in northern Cyprus. It is also the home of the largest public university. Due probably to its location on the east side, relatively far away from the place of research and other cities of northern Cyprus, it received fewer comments from participants.

1. they are loud and un-understandable
2. talk a bit different from the people who live in Nicosia
3. people in this area do not use the whole letters[7] in a word
4. their dialect are so different as they swallow letters[8]
5. louder speaking voice. Swallow 'r' 'l' consonants

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[6] Due to their curriculum as prospective English language teachers, participants are familiar with linguistics terms such as this one – although in this case, it is not used appropriately.

[7] I.e. speech sounds / phonemes.

[8] I.e. speech sounds / phonemes.

6. normal Cypriot Turkish! (do not know a lot of people from here); special words for (only) their region. Ex: *garga suyu*[9] =coke
7. much more non-Cypriot speaking. Closer to Istanbul Turkish

Nevertheless it is identified as a distinct dialect region. Again we see the familiar pattern of contradictory evaluations of 'standardness'. City-specific lexical variation is mentioned, as well as some segmental variation/deletion.

4.4 Morphou

Morphou – still often referred to as such as well as by the Turkish name Güzelyurt – is a much smaller city located inland in the western part of the island. It is the location of the university at which this research was conducted. Presumably due to its proximity and the higher levels of interaction with residents in the students' daily lives, it receives a relatively large number of comments.

Morphou also presents a special case as it is numerically and socially dominated by Turkish Cypriot refugees from Paphos, which is now located on the Greek 'other side' of the island, in the area controlled by the Republic of Cyprus in the south. There is a very active social organization in Morphou for this refugee community originating in Paphos, and a recently-erected public memorial monument in Morphou to the Turkish Cypriot victims of intercommunal violence in Paphos.

Therefore, there may be a 'founder effect' in which a relatively small but influential number of people play an outsized role in future developments, in this case the potential development of a distinctive subdialect based on Paphian Cypriot Turkish. In addition, as a smaller city, Morphou may have experienced less dialect mixing compared to the other locations.

Participants made the following comments about Cypriot Turkish as used in this city:
1. old Turkish words are used, such as *gancelli*,[10] *bandofla*;[11] stronger Cypriot Turkish is used
2. talk a bit different from the people who live in Nicosia; they use some different words like *olan*[12]

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9   Standard Turkish 'mouthwash water'.

10   'garden gate', from Italian *cancello/cancelli* (plural), 'gate, house front', also with typically Cypriot initial stop consonant voicing.

11   'slipper', from Italian *pantofola*, also with typically Cypriot initial stop consonant voicing.

12   *Olan* 'being' i.e. 'the one who'.

3. as this place is small most of the people are affected from each other and generally people use Greekwords…
4. Greek words use commonly
5. they use so many Greek words. (Greek influenced)
6. louder. *Gölge=kölge*.[13] They use k instead of g sometimes.[14]
7. in Guzelyurt, Cypriot people emphasize consonants longer
8. a lot of local Cypriot Turkish. They pronounce vowels more long
9. a very peculiar emphasis system.[15] Long vowels, slow speech overall. Vowels are very pronounced
10. inverted sentences[16] are used while talking
11. people who migrated from Paphos to Guzelyurt, most of them tend to use 'bre' sound (word) in front of their sentences. And as I heard from my grandparents, they said that this sound comes from the Greek dialect (it makes easier for some people to show stress in words). However, we cannot see that 'bre' sound that much in other cities.

Morphou Cypriot Turkish is described as more local (less standard) by multiple participants, and for the first time, no one claims the contrary – probably due to the smaller size and relatively smaller political role of this city.

Lexical variation is emphasized, in particular, the role of Greek-origin vocabulary. Interestingly, comment 1 gives several examples of local dialect words and describes them as 'old Turkish' although they are of non-Turkish origin. However, they are perceived as both local (therefore Turkish) and 'old' in presumed contrast to the more 'modern' standard Turkish.

Comment 6 provides a beautiful example of hypercorrection. Stop consonant voicing is typical of Cypriot Turkish, as noted earlier – a property it shares with Cypriot Greek. In this case, however, the local example word *kölge* 'shade' shows initial /k/ where standard Turkish has /g/.

Comment 10 refers to greater use of 'inverted' sentences, which in this case refers to sentences with SVO word order, rather than the SOV order of standard Turkish. This SVO order is also typical of Cypriot Turkish and usually attributed to influence from Greek.

Finally, the last comment refers to a specific lexical item *bre*, which does indeed stem from Greek as the participant relates. This term ultimately derives from /m(o)re/ 'man!' (fool!), a Greek vocative form which was also used in Ottoman Turkish.

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[13] Standard Turkish *gölge* 'shade' pronounced with initial consonant voicing.

[14] An accurate observation about stop voicing in Cypriot Turkish.

[15] Probably referring to differences in phrasal intonation, e.g. in question formation.

[16] Refers to the use of SVO word order, rather than primarily SOV as in Standard Turkish.

4.5   Karpaz

The most remote area of northern Cyprus is the Karpaz peninsula extending to the east, in which there are villages but no cities. Participants made the following comments about Cypriot Turkish as used in this region:

1. a small place so that people talk very similar with each other. They use words as it is longer like *napan*[17] but they pronounce it *napaan*. But in most of the other places in Cyprus they pronounce it as it is[18]
2. their dialect are the most interesting one, they speak incredibly fast, generally others do not understand their dialect
3. Turkey Turkish is more popular in these regions
4. Turkish spoken like Greek Cypriot. Some Greek words used within Turkish
5. some words are implemented from Cypriot Greeks
6. Greek and Turkish are mixed
7. Mehmetcik – also one of the places where people talk Turkish as the natural way of speaking Cypriot Turkish
8. Bafra – they speak stronger Cypriot Turkish compared to other areas

Again, participants made seemingly contradictory comments about the relative Cypriotness of speech in this region, and also about the role of Greek. In this case, they do so with a firm empirical basis, due to recent settlement patterns. The remoteness and relatively small population of the area meant that new settlements were created there after the *de facto* division of the island in 1974. Some of these settlements consisted primarily of immigrants from mainland Turkey, speaking their non-Cypriot variety of Turkish. However, others consisted of refugees from south Cyprus, a well-established and substantial proportion of whom were Greek-dominant or even monolingual Cypriot Greek speakers.

Participant comments reveal that, fifty years later, young Turkish Cypriots are well aware of these different communities and their complicated social history, as well as its ongoing linguistic consequences.

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[17]   Nonstandard version of *napıyorsun* 'what (~how) are you doing'.

[18]   Meaning, how it is written (i.e. in a more Standard Turkish way).

4.6 Lefke

Lefke is a western coastal city, very close to Morphou. It was less often singled out as a distinctive region. However, participants made the following comments about Cypriot Turkish as used in this city:

1. very old verbs,[19] loud speaking
2. people in this area do not use the whole letters in a word;[20] each village has its own dialect
3. they are making the vowels short and more implied (slow talkers)
4. loan words from Greek language. South Cyprus version; a lot of special words for their region
5. Greek words used frequently and talk fast

Again the role of Greek in local vocabulary is highlighted (and again they are referred to as 'old').

5 Thematic Aspects of Cypriot Turkish Dialect Variation

In this section, I collate comments according to the themes observed in participants' comments. As before, the comments on each theme are provided exhaustively and verbatim.

The descriptive terminology that participants use when describing varieties of Turkish fit closely with the expected patterns for a bidialectal, diglossic society. Words used to describe Standard Turkish include the following: polite, clear, careful, correctly, fluent, calm.

It is clear that Standard Turkish is of higher status (polite, correct) and viewed with some emotional distance (calm, careful). The term 'careful' also implies that speaking Standard Turkish is 'effortful' in a way that the native dialect is not.

Words used to describe Cypriot Turkish include the following: natural, protect/protected, old.

The term 'natural' provides the perfect contrast with 'careful' as used for Standard Turkish. Use of Cypriot Turkish is clearly construed as less effortful and more normal. Despite this, however, the term 'protect(ed)' implies that Cypriot Turkish may be under threat from Standard Turkish, and therefore in need of protection. Finally, Cypriot Turkish dialect features are at times described as old. This is certainly true in terms of their widespread presence on the island, which predates the influx of Standard Turkish forms and speakers in recent decades.

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19 Probably meaning vocabulary in general, not specifically verbs.

20 I.e. some phonemes / speech sounds are dropped as compared to standard Turkish / written language.

5.1   The Standard-Cypriot Continuum

A good deal of the commentary on Cypriot Turkish variation focuses on its relative proximity to Standard Turkish. Variation is largely associated with differing positions along the basilectal-acrolectal continuum between Cypriot and Standard Turkish, or differences in the balance between how much Standard or Cypriot Turkish is spoken. Comments on this specific aspect of variation are collated below.

1.   Nicosia
    a. more like local Cypriot Turkish
    b. more like Turkish people
2.   Kyrenia
    a. a lot of local Cypriot Turkish
    b. rigidly northern Cypriot type
    c. original Cypriot Turkish
    d. mixed Cypriot Turkish
    e. more like Turkey Turks
    f. Istanbul Turkish is also spoken commonly
    g. more correct/clear Turkish
3.   Famagusta
    a. Closer to Istanbul Turkish
4.   Morphou
    a. stronger Cypriot Turkish
    b. a lot of local Cypriot Turkish
5.   Karpaz
    a. Turkey Turkish is more popular
    b. stronger Cypriot Turkish is used

Note that there is very little agreement about this variation according to location. Different participants identify different places as being more or less Standard or Cypriot in their speech. For a given location, contradictory statements can be made, as for Nicosia, Kyrenia, and Karpaz. There is therefore no consensus on the precise distribution of this aspect of variation – however, it constitutes a 'shared parameter' of variation, which is mentioned again and again by participants.

5.2   Vocabulary Variation

A second perceived parameter of variation is the amount of Greek vocabulary used in different locations within northern Cyprus. Comments on this specific aspect of variation are collated below.

1.   General
    a. we can see some Greek words that affected Turkish dialect
2.   Nicosia
    b. use of Greek words especially from older people

   3.   Morphou
       a. people use some of the words from Greek language…
       b. Greek words use commonly
       c. they use so many Greek words. (Greek influenced)
   4.   Karpaz
       a. some Greek words used within Turkish
       b. some words are implemented from Cypriot Greeks
       c. Greek and Turkish are mixed
   5.   Lefke
       a. loan words from Greek language. South Cyprus version;
         a lot of special words for their region
       b. Greek words used frequently

Once again, there is no consensus on the precise distribution of this aspect of variation. Instead, 'every single area' (except Kyrenia) is identified as having more Greek lexical influence, compared to all the others!

Also again, however, Greek lexical influence constitutes a 'shared parameter' of variation, which is mentioned again and again by participants.

Notably, Greek is the only language which is singled out in this way. Italian, French, and Arabic, for example, also made significant lexical contributions to Cypriot Turkish. Some of the most enregistered, widely used dialectal words are of Italian origin, such as *gancelli* 'garden gate'.

More recently, there is of course the influence of English, which is considerable. Russian too is more and more often heard, and seen in public signage, in recent years. Yet none of these languages are mentioned as a source of variation, even when it seems quite plausible (e.g. in Kyrenia given its role in tourism, or Nicosia as the seat of British colonial government).

6   Conclusions

The results of this investigation reveal that young Turkish Cypriots do perceive dialect variation in Cypriot Turkish. They attribute differences to each urban center. Interestingly, this is consistent with what Fotiou and Grohmann (2022) observe in the Greek-speaking southern part of the island, controlled by the Republic of Cyprus. Greek Cypriots also "viewed the different cities and their districts [...] as the different regional dialect areas they perceive to exist in Cyprus" (1), which they interpret as characteristic of koineization and regional dialect leveling.

Although the perceived characteristics of this variation in Cypriot Turkish are inconsistent, and at times contradictory, they tend to

focus on two separate dimensions. First, variation is attributed to the relative 'standardness' of the speech of each area – that is, proximity to or distance from Standard Turkish of mainland Turkey. This often occurs in conjunction with mentions of tourists and other visitors. Given the diglossic, bidialectal nature of Turkish Cypriot society, the salience of this aspect of variation is perhaps not surprising.

A second perceived locus of variation is the amount of Greek vocabulary used in different areas, given the proximity of (Cypriot) Greek and awareness of its role before the Turkish presence and widespread bilingualism among older generations of Turkish Cypriots. The influence of other languages which are also widespread locally – particularly English, and also more recently Russian – is not singled out in this way.

Neither of these factors are salient for Greek Cypriots regarding variation in Cypriot Greek, according to Fotiou and Grohmann (2022).

If there is regional variation in Cypriot Turkish in other domains – e.g. phonological or syntactic – then young Turkish Cypriots are not aware of it or able to describe it. Rather, they may make impressionistic observations regarding rate of speech or intonation. This also parallels the perceptions of Greek Cypriots regarding Cypriot Greek, which are largely lacking in linguistic detail (Fotiou, Grohmann 2022). Rather, Greek Cypriots primarily mention intonation and variation in a particular palatal consonant (which does relate indirectly to standardness, however).

In summary, young Turkish Cypriots perceive geographical variation in Cypriot Turkish according to urban centers. In doing so, they parallel the perceptions of Greek Cypriots on the 'other side' with respect to Cypriot Greek. The Turkish Cypriots attribute variation primarily to differing degrees of 'standardness' and amount of persistent Greek vocabulary (which is quite different from Greek Cypriots). Ongoing research investigates the perceptions of older generations of Turkish Cypriots and of long-term residents originally from mainland Turkey.

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