

The Diachrony of Written Language Contact

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The Diachrony of Written Language Contact

A Contrastive Approach

By

Nikolaos Lavidas



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This book is an original research monograph. It belongs to the broad area of my research work, which includes my PhD thesis on argument structure in diachrony, my postdoctoral research on the diachrony of word order from a language change—language acquisition perspective, and a series of articles and organized workshops on contrastive Greek-English diachronic analyses and Indo-European linguistics, from the perspective of language change and bilingualism.

Nobody can deny that an account of grammatical change that takes written contact into consideration is a significant challenge for any theoretical perspective. The main contribution of the present book is to add a diachronic dimension to the study of written contact by examining aspects of the history of translation as they relate to grammatical changes in English and Greek in a contrastive way. In this respect, emphasis is placed on the analysis of diachronic retranslations. I examine translations from earlier periods of English and Greek in relation to various grammatical characteristics of these languages in different periods and in comparison to non-translated texts. Moreover, I add a second parameter of examination: translations can be seen as a source of evidence of grammatical change; a new grammar demands a new translation. The book has two clear-cut sections: (i) a theoretical one that discusses the history of translations in relation to grammatical changes in Greek and English, as well as the theoretical framework of the study of the relation between translations and diachrony; and (ii) a more research-based section that presents the results of corpus-based studies in the history of translations in English and Greek. Most of the data in the second part are related to characteristics of voice and argument structure.

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