

Article

The Greek Vocative-Based Marker *Moré* in Contexts of Disagreement

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Abstract

This study examines the functions of the vocative-based marker *moré* in contexts of disagreement in Greek conversation, drawing on interactional linguistics. The analysis of audio-recorded informal face-to-face conversations and telephone calls from the Corpus of Spoken Greek shows that, in such contexts, *moré* functions as an interpersonal marker, signaling solidarity and friendliness and thereby mitigating the potential face threat posed by disagreement. It also functions as a cognitive marker, conveying counterexpectation to the addressee. The study compares *moré* with its grammaticalized form, *vre*. Both *moré* and *vre* appear in contexts of ‘friendly’ disagreement with similar discourse functions. However, unlike *vre*, *moré* occurs in a broader range of disagreement types from the most to the least face-aggravating, including challenges, contradictions and counterclaims, and it also appears in contexts of impoliteness. This suggests that the two forms have different affordances, with *vre* displaying a higher level of solidarity than *more*.

Keywords: vocative-based markers; disagreement; *moré*; *vre*; Greek; interactional linguistics

1. Introduction

This study examines the interactional functions of the vocative-based marker *μωρέ* [*moré*] in contexts of disagreement in Greek conversation, where interpersonal relationships and social solidarity are at stake. It also offers a comparative perspective on the functions of its grammaticalized form *βρε* [*vre*] in similar contexts. The vocative-based markers *moré* and *vre* belong to familiarizers, a subclass of vocatives discussed extensively in previous research (see, e.g., Asprey & Tagg, 2019; Braun, 1988; Hultgren, 2017; Karachaliou, 2018; Leech, 1999; McCarthy & O’Keeffe, 2003; Palacios-Martínez, 2018; Tsakona & Sifianou, 2019; Zwicky, 1974). Familiarizers are conventionalized vocative forms, typically nouns or adjectives with a general meaning, used to denote simply a ‘person’, typically male. Examples include *man*, *dude*, and *mate* in varieties of English; *alter*, *mann* in German; and *hombre*, *huevoón*, *güey*, and *che* in varieties of Spanish. Rather than identifying a single addressed recipient, familiarizers signal solidarity and social proximity, operating as discourse markers with interpersonal and textual functions (see Kleinknecht & Souza, 2017, on *alter* in German and *güey* in Mexican Spanish).

Discourse markers are usually syntactically independent of their environment, carry little or no propositional content, and are most common in spoken discourse. They are positionally variable, and their function is metatextual and context-dependent (Fischer, 2006; Maschler, 2009; Pavlidou, 2020). According to Maschler (2009), discourse markers can be classified as: (a) textual, referring metalingually to the text itself; (b) interpersonal, refer-



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ring to the interaction between participants; and (c) cognitive, referring to the participants' cognitive processes.

Kleinknecht and Souza (2017) argue that familiarizers can serve as a source of discourse markers due to their semantic profile. As markers of affective stance (Ochs, 1996), i.e., of a speaker's affective orientation to ongoing talk, including feelings, moods, dispositions, and attitudes towards people or situations, and as affect intensifiers (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989), familiarizers play an important interactional role. Specifically, they modulate the affective intensity of an utterance, by expressing the speaker's heightened emotional involvement in the activity. In doing so, they enhance the expressivity or illocutionary force of an utterance, thereby fulfilling various pragmatic functions, such as signaling friendliness between participants or drawing attention to specific information (Kiesling, 2004; Rendle-Short, 2010).

As I demonstrate in this study, the familiarizer *moré* has evolved into a discourse marker often found in contexts of disagreement, among others. The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 outlines the diachronic development of the vocative-based markers *moré* and *vre* in Greek. Section 3 discusses the data and method, focusing on the relationship between turn position and the function of *vre* and *moré*. In Section 4, I analyze the use of *moré* in contexts of disagreement, including challenges, contradictions, and counterclaims. In Section 5, I compare the use of *moré* and *vre* in disagreement, showing that *vre* is a stronger marker of solidarity than *moré*.

2. The Development of the Greek Vocative-Based Markers *Moré* and *Vre*

In Modern Greek, the vocative-based marker *moré* co-exists with its grammaticalized form *vre*. Alvanoudi and Papadamou (forthcoming) trace the diachronic development of *vre* from the vocative *moré*, applying Heine et al.'s (2021) theoretical framework for the emergence of discourse/pragmatic markers. According to this framework, discourse markers arise through two distinct mechanisms: grammaticalization and co-optation. In its early stages, the historical development of a discourse marker follows the parameters of grammaticalization, namely context extension, desemanticization, decategorialization, and erosion. However, grammaticalization is cut across by co-optation, a cognitive-communicative process whereby the grammatical structure of a discourse marker undergoes a radical shift. The meaning of the item is no longer part of the meaning of the associated sentence, its function becomes metatextual, its status is syntactically unattached, and its semantic-pragmatic scope is broader.

Alvanoudi and Papadamou (forthcoming) draw on Tzitzilis's (forthcoming) reconstruction of the historical development of *vre*. Tzitzilis proposes that *vre* originates from the vocative singular form of the adjective *μωρός* [*morós*] ('stupid, foolish') (see also Joseph, 1997), specifically the form *ωρέ* [*oré*]. Tzitzilis classifies the etymologically related forms of *vre* derived from *moré* into two types: (a) those omitting the unstressed /o/ of the first syllable, and (b) those omitting the initial /m/. He places *moré* in the latter group and accounts for the major phonological changes in the grammaticalized form *vre* (see Alvanoudi & Papadamou, forthcoming for a detailed analysis). Following Heine et al. (2021), we propose that the historical development of the discourse marker *vre* unfolded in two stages: (a) early grammaticalization: adjective *morós* > vocative *moré*; and (b) co-optation and late grammaticalization: *moré* > *vre*.

The historical reconstruction of *vre*, based on written sources from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG), provides evidence of changes typical of early grammaticalization: (a) context extension, whereby *moré* appeared in new contexts and acquired additional discourse functions; (b) desemanticization, whereby *moré* lost its lexical meaning and its functions became generalized; (c) decategorialization, whereby *moré* became a vocative

marker that co-occurred with other vocatives; and (d) erosion, whereby *moré* lost its phonetic substance and became *μρε/μπρε* [*mre/bre*] and *ωρε* [*ore*]. We argue that the early grammaticalization of *moré* was interrupted by co-optation around the 15th century, when the reduced form *vre* first appeared as a discourse marker with a metatextual function. The co-opted form subsequently underwent late grammaticalization, as evidenced by context extension (*vre* appears in more contexts and acquires new pragmatic functions and greater positional flexibility within the sentence), desemanticization (*vre* becomes semantically neutral) and decategorialization (*vre* functions as a vocative particle that co-occurs with other vocatives) observed in the written data.

Both vocative-based markers are found in spoken discourse, raising questions about their distribution across different contexts as well as their similarities and differences. The next section outlines the design and usage of the two forms, presenting the data and methodology.

3. Data and Methods

In my data analysis, I adopt an interactional linguistic approach, namely an inductive, conversation analytic-informed approach to spoken language in interaction (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2018). This approach examines how speakers use linguistic resources (lexico-semantic, morpho-syntactic and prosodic) as practices in specific sequential contexts to perform actions. It draws on collections of fully transcribed, naturally occurring audio- or video-recorded talk (e.g., everyday face-to-face conversations or telephone calls) containing multiple instances of the phenomenon under investigation. My data stem from 145 audio-recorded telephone calls and 40 everyday conversations from the Corpus of Spoken Greek of the Institute of Modern Greek Studies (http://ins.web.auth.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=592:conversation-analysis6&catid=80&lang=en&Itemid=242) (URL: accessed on 13 January 2026). The data were fully transcribed following standard conversation analytic transcription conventions (see Appendix A), and all speakers were assigned pseudonyms. Written informed consent to record and use their conversations was obtained from all participants at the time the Corpus of Spoken Greek was compiled (see Pavlidou, 2016, for a detailed description of the features of the corpus). All annotations were carried out manually by the author. Using a single source for my data analysis enables a comparative perspective on the functional distribution of *vre* and *moré*.

3.1. Vre as an Interpersonal, Cognitive and Textual Marker

The functions of the vocative-based marker *vre* in synchrony are examined in Alvanoudi (2024). Conversation analysis of the data mentioned above reveals the following distribution. As can be seen in Table 1, *vre* most frequently occurs alone within the turn-constructional unit (TCU) (100 out of 165 cases), and less often in combination with another vocative form, such as a proper name (*vre Eleni*), a familiarizer (*vre pedi mou* ‘vre my dear’, *vre koritsia* ‘vre girls’), or an evaluative expression (*vre xazi* ‘vre stupid.F’) (65 out of 165 cases). A chi-square goodness of fit test showed that *vre* occurred significantly more often than *vre* + vocative ($\chi^2 = 7.42$, $p = 0.0065$).

Table 1. Occurrences of Vre.

Vre Forms	n (%)
<i>vre</i>	100 (60%)
<i>vre</i> + vocative	65 (40%)
Total	165 (100%)

As shown in Table 2, when *vre* occurs on its own, it most commonly occurs in TCU-final position (71%), less commonly in TCU-initial position (20%), and least often in TCU-medial position (9%). A chi-square test showed an uneven distribution of *vre* across positions ($\chi^2 = 65.77, p < 0.0001$). Pairwise comparisons indicated that TCU-final position was significantly more frequent than both TCU-initial ($\chi^2 = 29.87, p < 0.0001$) and medial positions ($\chi^2 = 48.40, p < 0.0001$), and TCU-initial position was more frequent than TCU-medial position ($\chi^2 = 4.16, p = 0.041$).

Table 2. Distribution of *Vre* by Its Position Within the TCU.

Position	n (%)
Initial position	20 (20%)
Medial position	9 (9%)
Final position	71 (71%)
Total	100 (100%)

In most cases, *vre* is not prosodically distinct from the rest of the TCU. The [Dictionary of Standard Modern Greek \(1998\)](#) describes *vre* as an interjection, typically accompanied by an exclamative phrase or clause, that expresses various emotions, such as joy, surprise, worry or indignation. That is, *vre* is characterized as an affective stance marker. In spoken language, evidence of the function of *vre* as an index of social proximity and an affect intensifier can be found in the following:

1. *Vre* co-occurs with vocatives that indicate social proximity, such as proper names, familiarizers, or evaluative expressions (discussed above).
2. *Vre* is mainly used with second-person singular/familiar T form and is never used with the second person plural/polite V form.
3. *Vre* is used in informal conversations among friends and relatives.
4. It co-occurs with other affective stance markers, such as prosodic features or interjections within exclamative constructions like $\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\epsilon\ \beta\rho\epsilon$ ('come on *vre*'), $\alpha\chi\ \beta\rho\epsilon$ ('oh *vre*'), $\epsilon\ \beta\rho\epsilon$ ('hey *vre*').
5. It is used as an exclamative particle in constructions such as $\beta\rho\epsilon\ \tau\omicron\ \Gamma\iota\acute{\omega}\rho\gamma\omicron$ (*vre*, Giorgos) or in repeated form (*vre vre vre*).

As an affective stance marker, *vre* fulfills various pragmatic functions, depending on its position (see [Alvanoudi, 2024](#) for an extensive discussion). In TCU-final position, *vre* operates as an interpersonal and/or cognitive discourse marker. It signals solidarity, social proximity and intimacy, and mitigates or downplays the threat involved in disagreements (more in Section 5) and responses that challenge the questioner's epistemic presuppositions, as well as in requests for action. *Vre* also has interpersonal functions in humorous turns and at the beginning of telephone calls. In certain contexts, such as disagreement, responses to requests for information or confirmation, and receipt of information, *vre* operates as a cognitive marker that signals the unexpected. In TCU-initial position, *vre* serves as a textual marker that draws the recipient's attention and introduces a new topic or action; in this position *vre* can function as both a textual and an interpersonal marker. I now turn to the vocative-based marker *moré*.

3.2. *Moré as an Interpersonal, Cognitive and Textual Marker*

I begin with some quantitative data. As shown in Table 3, *moré* predominantly occurs on its own (154 out of 156 instances), and only rarely in combination with another vocative form (2 out of 156 instances). A chi-square test showed a skewed distribution ($\chi^2 = 149.7, p < 0.0001$), with *moré* occurring more often than *moré* + vocative. The fact that

vre, unlike *moré*, frequently accompanies other vocative forms indicates that *vre* is more grammaticalized than *moré* (it reflects a higher degree of decategorialization).

Table 3. Occurrences of *Moré*.

<i>Moré</i> Forms	n (%)
<i>moré</i>	154 (99%)
<i>moré</i> + vocative form	2 (1%)
Total	156 (100%)

In Table 4, we can see that *moré* most frequently occurs in TCU-final position (85.1%), less often in TCU-medial position (8.4%), and least often in TCU-initial position (6.5%). A chi-square test showed an uneven distribution of *moré* across positions ($\chi^2 = 185.6$, $p < 0.0001$). Pairwise comparisons indicated no difference between TCU-initial and TCU-medial positions ($\chi^2 = 0.39$, $p > 0.5$), while TCU-final position was significantly more frequent than both TCU-initial ($\chi^2 = 103.8$, $p < 0.0001$) and medial positions ($\chi^2 = 96.7$, $p < 0.0001$). In all cases, *moré* is not prosodically separated from the rest of the utterance.

Table 4. Distribution of *Moré* by Its Position Within the TCU.

Position	n (%)
Initial position	10 (6.5%)
Medial position	13 (8.4%)
Final position	131 (85.1%)
Total	154 (100%)

In terms of the item's semantic profile, the *Dictionary of Standard Modern Greek* (1998) defines *moré* as an interjection typically accompanied by an exclamative phrase or clause, used to express various emotions, including joy, surprise, intimacy, admiration, concern, and mild or intense indignation. In other words, *moré* is described as an affective stance marker. In spoken language, evidence of the function of *moré* as an index of social proximity and an affect intensifier can be found in the following:

1. *Moré* is used alongside the informal/familiar singular 'you', e.g., *μετὰ μωρέ σν*: ('come on *moré* you/mate'), which indicates social proximity.
2. *Moré* is used in informal conversations among friends and relatives.
3. *Moré* co-occurs with other affective stance markers, such as prosodic features or interjections within exclamative constructions like *έλα μωρέ* (come.imp.2sg. *moré*), *σιγά μωρέ* ('get out of here/no way/come on *moré*'), *άντε μωρέ* ('come on *moré*'), *αχ μωρέ* ('oh *moré*'), *ε μωρέ* ('hey *moré*').

As an affective stance marker, *moré* fulfills different pragmatic functions that vary according to its position within the TCU.

Two indicative examples are discussed below. As with *vre*, in TCU-final or -medial position, *moré* functions as an interpersonal marker, signaling friendliness and solidarity in disagreement, in humorous turns, and at the opening or closing of telephone calls, among other contexts. In certain contexts, such as when disagreeing or responding to requests for information or confirmation, *moré* also operates as a cognitive marker, conveying counterexpectation. The function of *moré* as a cognitive marker is shown in Extract 1.

Extract 1

- 01 V: η κο↑μωτρία δε θα σου κά[νει: η] ιδία[: (.....)]
 Won't the hairdresser do as well
- 02 M: [h] [μáλλον <ό>χι.> =
 Probably not.
- 03 V: =όχι? [θα:: πά]ρεις áλλη: [μακιγιέρ.] ε?=
 No? You'll have a makeup artist with you, right?
- 04 → M: [όχι μωρέ.] [μ:(h)μ]
 No moré. M:(h)m
- 05 M: μ:.
 M:.

In the turns preceding Extract 1, Mary said that she would prefer a subtle makeup look for her wedding. In line 01, Vera asks if the hairdresser will also be responsible for the makeup, and in line 02, Mary disconfirms with uncertainty (*μáλλον <ό>χι.>* 'Probably not.'). In line 03, Vera uses the partial repetition of the negative response token *όχι* ('No?') to initiate repair for a problem of expectation, and in the next TCUs, she seeks confirmation about whether Mary will hire a makeup artist. In lines 04–05, Mary first confirms the unexpected by repeating the negative response token *όχι* ('no') and placing *moré* at the end of the TCU. She responds to the second request for confirmation with the particles *m:(h)m* and *m:*. In this extract, TCU-final *moré* functions as a cognitive marker conveying counterexpectation in response to a request for confirmation.

Like *vre*, TCU-initial *moré* fulfills textual functions, such as attracting the recipient's attention or shifting topic. These functions can also be combined with interpersonal functions. The use of *moré* as a textual marker is demonstrated in Extract 2.

Extract 2

- 01 O: [.h]hh σκέφτεσαι δηλαδή μετά το:: πανεπιστήμιο;
 So after you finish your degree,
 02 >με το καλό να πάρεις το πτυχίο< ° σου εύχο[μαι:°] (0.5)
 and I hope you do
- 03 M: [°(ναι:.)]
 Yes.
- 04 O: ότι θα κάνεις: ε μεταπτυχιακά εκεί?
 are you thinking of doing eh a Master's there?
 05 (.)
- 06 O: [°σκέφτεσαι: σοβάρá?]
 Are you seriously considering it?
- 07 → M: [μωρέ εγώ γενικότερα το σκ]έφτομαι να πα
 Moré in general I'm thinking of moving
 08 να ζήσω μονίμως εκεί αλλά,
 there for good but,
 09 (.)
- 10 O: .h είναι κι ωραίοι οι Ιτα↑λοί:.
 And Italian men are pretty attractive too.

In lines 01–02, and 04, Ourania uses a polar interrogative to request information about Maria's plans to do a Master's degree in Italy after graduation and repeats part of her question in line 06. In line 07, Maria responds in partial transitional overlap with Ourania's turn expansion. She gives a transformative answer (Stivers & Hayashi, 2010), which is

prefaced with *moré* and does not conform to the grammatical constraints of the polar question (Raymond, 2003), i.e., it responds to “a somewhat different question than was originally posed” (Stivers & Hayashi, 2010, p. 2) and shifts the topic (in response to the question about her plans to do a Master’s degree in Italy, she says that she is considering moving there permanently, lines 07–08). In this segment, the speaker uses TCU-initial *moré* as a textual marker to secure the addressee’s attention in a non-competitive overlap, and signal topic shift.

The next section focuses on the use of *moré* in contexts of disagreement.

4. Analysis: *Moré* in Contexts of Disagreement

Disagreement can result in conflict and impoliteness. However, in certain cultural contexts, such as Greek culture, it is often a means of expressing sociability and intimacy, especially in interactions between family members and friends (Sifianou, 2012, p. 1556). A number of studies (e.g., Georgakopoulou, 2001; Kakavá, 1993, 2002; Tannen & Kakavá, 1992) have highlighted the ‘friendly’ nature of Greek conversational arguing, which aligns with the Greek society’s positive politeness orientation (Brown & Levinson, 1987), namely the tendency to maintain solidarity among interlocutors (Pavlidou, 1994, 1997; Sifianou, 1992a, 1992b; Sifianou & Antonopoulou, 2005). As disagreements are considered positive-face threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 66) for both the speaker and the addressee, participants may use various strategies, such as prefaces, hedges, turn-initial delays, and pro-forma agreements (Heritage, 1984; Schegloff, 2007, pp. 64–72) to mitigate the face threat and maintain solidarity. Greek speakers often use positive politeness strategies for this purpose. These include informal address terms, such as first names, kin terms, and diminutive forms, as well as familiarity particles or vocative-based markers, such as *re*, *vre* and *moré* (Kakavá, 1993, 2002). These operate as markers of solidarity (Tannen & Kakavá, 1992, p. 31) reinforcing the involvement of co-participants, which could be threatened by disagreement. Although the vocative-based markers *moré* and *vre* are mentioned in the literature, their specific functions in contexts of disagreement have yet to be established.

Disagreement in conversation can manifest in various ways. Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) distinguish four main types of disagreement based on structural and pragmatic criteria: (a) irrelevancy claims, in which a speaker asserts that a previous claim is irrelevant to the discussion (p. 229) (e.g., *So what? You’re straying off topic*); (b) challenges, whereby “a speaker questions an addressee’s prior claim and demands that the addressee provide evidence for his/her claim, while suggesting that the addressee cannot do so” (pp. 229–230) (e.g., *Why? Who?*); (c) contradictions, whereby “a speaker contradicts by uttering the negated proposition expressed by the previous claim; that is, if A utters P, then B utters –P” (p. 231) (e.g., *No, I don’t*); and (d) counterclaims, whereby “speakers propose an alternative claim that does not directly contradict nor challenge other’s claim” (pp. 231–232). These are often preceded by pauses or mitigating devices and allow further negotiation of the initial claim (e.g., *Yeah, but...*). Muntigl and Turnbull (1998, p. 243) rank these types of disagreement from most to least face-aggravating in the following order: irrelevancy claims, challenges, contradictions, and counterclaims. Irrelevancy claims express pure opposition, halting further discussion and attacking the fundamental conversational skill of making relevant contributions. Challenges imply that the addressee cannot substantiate their claim, thus attacking their competence. Contradictions do not directly attack the addressee’s competence or rationality. Counterclaims avoid overt opposition by delaying and softening disagreement and offer an alternative claim or reasons for disagreement that invite negotiation and open up the topic for discussion.

In Table 5, we can see the distribution of *moré* in contexts of disagreement.

Out of the 154 instances of *moré* (see Table 4), 57 are cases of disagreement (38%); *moré* most frequently occurs in challenges, less frequently in counterclaims, and rarely in contra-

dictions. *Moré* is not found in irrelevancy claims. A chi-square test showed a significantly uneven distribution across disagreement contexts ($\chi^2 = 24.0, p < 0.0001$). Pairwise comparisons showed that challenges occurred more often than counterclaims ($\chi^2 = 6.23, p = 0.013$) and contradictions ($\chi^2 = 22.5, p < 0.0001$), and counterclaims were more frequent than contradictions ($\chi^2 = 6.55, p = 0.010$). Each type of disagreement is examined in turn.

Table 5. Distribution of *Moré* in Contexts of Disagreement.

Types of Disagreement	n (%)
Challenges	35 (61.4%)
Contradictions	5 (8.8%)
Counterclaims	17 (29.8%)
Total	57 (100%)

4.1. *Moré* in Challenges

A recurrent pattern in the data is the use of *moré* in challenging question-word interrogatives (QWIs) occurring in responses, as analyzed in [Alvanoudi \(forthcoming\)](#). QWIS-PLUS-*moré* are non-information seeking and challenge the prior speaker's assertion, which implies a claim to epistemic authority about a state of affairs that falls within the speaker's and the recipient's epistemic domain. In such contexts, *moré* minimizes the potential positive face threat posed by disagreement and conveys that the interlocutor's claim runs counter to the speaker's expectations. This function is illustrated in Extract 3.

Extract 3

- 01 R: εμείς που πηγαίναμε Θεσσαλονίκη Στάθη:,
Stathis when we used to go to Thessaloniki
- 02 τα: Σαββατοκύριακα είχαμε νταλίκες? λίγες.
at the weekends did we see any trucks? Only a few.
- 03 (0.7)
- 04 S: °(δε [θ'μάμαι.])
(I don't remember.)
- 05 R: [έχ' δέ]κιο η Μάρα.=
Mara is right.
- 06 M: =στις με↑γάλες εθνικές, >δεν^ γκζέρω εδώ για αh-<
On the major national highways, I don't know about here
- 07 ↑πάντως .hh αφού δεν^ γκυκλοφορούν στις μεγάλες εθνικές
anyway. Since trucks don't run on the major national highways
- 08 δεν^ ↑ντους βλέπ'ς μετά ούτε στην ε- τς, σ' αυτή εδώ
you don't really see them afterwards not even on this one here
- 09 [την εθνική ας πούμε την ε]παρχιακή:.=
the regional road let's say.
- 10 L: [στο επαρχιακό δίκτυο.]
On the regional road network.
- 11 → S: =πώς δεν είχαμε μωρέ, δεν είχαμε εδώ,
How could we *moré*, didn't we see trucks here,
- 12 [(..... στο Μέτσοβο?) σοβαρά μιλάμε?]
(... in Metsovo?) Are you serious?
- 13 M: [↑δεν έχει πολλές. >δηλαδή έχ' < ↑δυο:] μετρη↑μένες βρε παιδιά.
There aren't many trucks. I mean, guys, it's just two.
- 14 (1.4)

In the turns preceding the transcript, Mara said that there were more trucks on the national highway on Fridays, but not at the weekend. In lines 01–02, Roza asks Stathis if they had seen any trucks on their way to Thessaloniki at the weekend, and in the next TCU, she confirms that there were only a few. After a gap (line 03), in line 04, Stathis disclaims ability to inform. In overlapping talk, in line 05, Roza agrees with Mara’s assertion that there are fewer trucks on the national highway at the weekend. In lines 06–09, Mara claims that if trucks are not allowed on the national highway, they will not run on the regional roads either. In lines 11–12, Stathis uses the QWI *πώς δεν είχαμε μωρέ*, (‘How could we *moré*,’) to challenge Roza’s previous claim, and he uses the modified repetition of the verb *είχαμε* to link his current turn to her previous one. He uses *moré* in TCU-final position as an interpersonal and cognitive marker to minimize the face threat carried by the disagreement and convey that what Roza has said goes against his own expectations. In the next TCUs, he explains that they had seen trucks and further challenges Roza’s claim (*σοβαρά μιλάμε?* ‘Are you serious?’). In overlapping talk in line 13, Mara contradicts Stathis’s claim (*↑δεν έχει πολλές. >δηλαδή έχ’ <↑δυο: μετρη↑μένες βρε παιδιά.* ‘There aren’t many trucks. I mean, guys, it’s just two.’) and, thus, shows that she treats his prior QWI and subsequent talk as conversational arguing.

Moré is also found in challenging exclamative constructions, such as *έλα μωρέ* (Nikiforidou et al., 2014) and *σιγά μωρέ*. An example of this can be seen in Extract 4.

Extract 4

- 01 K: [*↑*ναι, >αφού μου *έ*πε.< θε-] (.) [*θε*ς ναι] κάνουμε λέει *πά*ρτι?
Yes, because he told me. Do- (.) he said do you want to organize
a party?
- 02 M:?: [(.....)]
((in laughing mode))
- 03 S: ναι ναι.
Yes yes.
- 04 K: .h >*↑*ε δεν^ γκζέρω άμα θα 'χω για-< όρεξη °για *πά*ρτι
Eh I don't know if I will be in the mood to party
- 05 *τό*[τε,° αλλά:]
then, but
- 06 S: [*πώς* δε θα °χει]ς ρε.=
How come you won't be re.
- 07 → M: =σι:γά *μω*ρέ. =γιατί να μην έχεις.
((in laughing mode))
Come on *moré*. Why wouldn't you.
- 08 *↑τό*τε θα έχεις που θα 'χεις.=
you will be in the mood when the time comes.
- 09 K: =γιατί να *έ*χω.
((noise))
Why would I be.

In line 01, Kostas informs his interlocutors that a mutual friend visiting has suggested organizing a party. Sifis enthusiastically accepts the proposal in line 03, but Kostas expresses his uncertainty about whether he will be in the mood to party in lines 04–05. In the following turns, neither Sifis nor Mirsini accepts his claim. In line 06, Sifis uses a QWI followed by the vocative-based marker *re* to question Kostas’s claim. In line 07, Mirsini uses the exclamative

construction *σι:γά μωρέ*. ('Come on *moré*.') to challenge his claim, and in the next TCU she demands that he back it up (*γιατί να μην έχεις*. 'Why wouldn't you.'). In line 08, Kostas responds with another challenge (*γιατί να έχω*. 'Why would I be.'). In this segment, Mirsini uses *moré* in turn-final position as an interpersonal marker to minimize the potential face threat involved in disagreeing.

4.2. *Moré* in Contradictions

In contradictions, *moré* is either preceded by the negative response token *όχι* ('no') or by a clause negating/correcting the presupposition of the previous claim. This is shown in Extract 5.

Extract 5

- 01 V: (τς,) *δεγ* ντους ήθελεζ
(Ts,) the Dutch audience didn't want the players_i
02 (0.9)
03 K: ↑*ντάξει*. =είναι νοοτροπίες. ο Έλληνας πιστεύω ότι
Okay. It's a matter of mindset. I believe the Greeks
04 °αυτά θα τα ήθελε.
would have wanted that.
05 (0.9)
06 → V: ↑*όχι μωρέ*:ζ (α) εδώέρα κάνανε:: .hh ε::
No *moré*:ζ (Ah) over here they organized eh
07 ολόκληρη διαμαρτυρία προτού καν ξεκινήσει.
a protest even before the show began.
08 (.)
09 V: προτού καν ξεκινήσει και δεν γκζέρανε τι πρόκειται να
10 παιχτ[εί.]
Even before the show began and despite not knowing what it
would be about.
11 K: [ν]αι αλλά τελικά όλοι το βλέπουμε.=
Yes but eventually everyone is watching it.

In the previous turns omitted in the transcript, Vaso and Katerina talked about the TV reality show *Big Brother*. Vaso reported on the sexual relationships between contestants on the Dutch TV show, as well as the audience's negative reaction. In line 01, Vaso reports that the Dutch audience voted against the players. After a gap (line 02), in line 03, Katerina minimally agrees with Vaso, using the particle ↑*ντάξει* ('Okay') (Balantani, 2015), and offers an assessment/account (*είναι νοοτροπίες*. 'It's a matter of mindset.'). In the next TCU (lines 03–04), she claims that the Greek audience would respond differently to a similar issue (*ο Έλληνας πιστεύω ότι °αυτά θα τα ήθελε*. 'I believe the Greeks would have wanted that.'). Following a gap that signals trouble (line 05), Vaso disagrees with Katerina in line 06. She uses the prosodically upgraded negative response token ↑*όχι* ('no') followed by *moré*: to contradict the prior speaker's claim. In the next TCU (lines 06–07), she explains why Katerina's expectation is invalid ((α) *εδώέρα κάνανε:: .hh ε:: ολόκληρη διαμαρτυρία προτού καν ξεκινήσει*. '(ah) over here they organized eh a protest even before the show began.'). In this extract, *moré* operates as both an interpersonal marker, signaling solidarity and framing the disagreement within the context of a friendly relationship, and a cognitive marker, conveying counterexpectation to the addressee.

4.3. *Moré* in Counterclaims

The use of *moré* in counterclaims is illustrated by the Extracts 6 and 7.

Extract 6

- 01 O: .h εγώ βέβαια μου τυ- μου τυχαίνει [στην^] Γκέρκυρα
Of course it has- it has happened to me in Corfu
- 02 A: [°μ.]
- 03 O: όταν γυρνάω από κει, .hh ε:: να μιλάω:: [κερ]κυραίικα.
when I go back there, eh I speak the Corfu dialect.
- 04 CH: [°μ.]
- 05 O: ή με άλλους. όταν βρεθώ [φίλους μου] απ' την^ Γκέρκυρα.=
Or with others. When I'm with friends from Corfu.
- 06 CH: [ε βέβαια.]
Eh of course.
- 07 A: =μ[(h)μ,]
M(h)m,
- 08 O: [h] αλλά όταν είμαι έτσι, με σας για παράδειγμα.
But when I'm like this, with you for example.
- 09 ή .h όταν είμαι μ- μεγάλο διάστημα >μακριά απ' την^
Or when I'm away from Corfu for a long time
- 10 Γκέρκυρα, μιλάω κανονικά.<
I speak properly.
- 11 → CH: αυτό συμβαίνει σε όλους °μωρέ.
This happens to everyone moré.
- 12 A: ναι ναι.=
Yes yes.
- 13 CH: =γιατί. εγώ άμα βρεθώ με Γιαννιώτες, δε θα μιλήσω
Why. If I'm with people from Gianena, won't I speak
- 14 πιο βαριά?=
with a stronger accent?
- 15 A: =μ(h)μ, και πιο γρήγο[ρα:;]
M(h)m, and faster.

In Extract 6, in lines 01, 03, 05, 08–10, Ourania reports that she switches to her regional dialect when she visits her home in Corfu but uses the standard variety when talking to her friends in Thessaloniki. She considers this behavior to be exceptional or unusual, as indicated by prosodic features (increased loudness or higher pitch when uttering the words *μιλάω*: 'I speak', *άλλους* 'others', *φίλους* 'friends'), and evaluative terms (*μιλάω κανονικά* 'I speak properly'). Athina and Chrysa produce information-receipt tokens in lines 02 and 04, and in line 06, Chrysa agrees with Ourania. In line 11, Chrysa provides a counterclaim, i.e., an alternative interpretation of Ourania's linguistic behavior (*αυτό συμβαίνει σε όλους* 'This happens to everyone'), construing it as a common experience and downplaying its unexpectedness. She uses *moré* at the end of the turn as an interpersonal marker that signals solidarity in the context of disagreement, and as a cognitive marker that conveys counterexpectation to the addressee. In line 12, Athina agrees with Chrysa's claim. In lines 13–14, Chrysa elaborates further on her counterclaim by referring to her personal experience of the matter.

In Extract 7, *moré* is used in the 'agreement + disagreement' package (Schegloff, 2007, pp. 69–70), whereby the speaker offers a pro-forma agreement to delay the disagreement. In this format, the dispreferred response "gets done as an exception or modification of an initial, apparently preferred, response" (p. 70), that is, the speaker partly agrees with the addressee, but also offers an alternative claim.

Extract 7

- 01 T: παιδιά καλή φάση τα χιόνια ε?
Guys the snow is great, right?
- 02 (1.5)
(noises)
- 03 S: °(ε ναι.)
(Eh yes.)
- 04 (0.7)
- 05 → N: καλή φάση είναι μωρέ, αλλά: δημιουργεί προβλήματα πολλά.
It's great moré, but it causes a lot of problems.
- 06 (.)
- 07 N: >εμείς δηλαδή στη δουλειά< είχαμε πολύ σοβαρό πρόβλημα.
I mean at work we had a very serious problem.

In line 01, Theodosia addresses the recipients with the vocative *παιδιά* ('Guys'), makes an assessment in first position (*καλή φάση τα χιόνια* 'the snow is great') and seeks agreement via the tag *ε?* ('huh/right'). After a gap (line 02), Smaragda agrees with Theodosia in line 03. Following another gap (line 04), Nikos delivers a counterclaim in line 05. In the first TCU, he provides a second agreeing assessment with a modified repetition (*καλή φάση είναι* 'It's great'), thus confirming the first assessment from a position of authority (Stivers, 2005). He uses *moré* in TCU-final position to mitigate the agreement and situate it in a context of trouble. In the next TCU, he makes an alternative claim (*αλλά: δημιουργεί προβλήματα πολλά* 'but it causes a lot of problems'). After a gap (line 06), he provides an account for his claim (*>εμείς δηλαδή στη δουλειά< είχαμε πολύ σοβαρό πρόβλημα*. 'I mean at work we had a very serious problem.'). In this segment, *moré* occurs in the agreement, which is a turn-initial component that breaks the contiguity between the first pair part and the dispreferred second to redress the potential threat to social solidarity posed by the dispreferred action of disagreeing (Heritage, 1984, p. 269). *Moré* is used as a hedging device with a down toning concessive function when agreeing with the prior speaker. This function is subject to interpersonal constraints (cf. Maschler, 2009).

In summary, *moré* is used in contexts of disagreement ranging from challenges and contradictions to counterclaims. It functions as an interpersonal marker, mitigating the potential face threat involved in disagreeing and, on some occasions, it also functions as a cognitive marker conveying counterexpectation to the addressee. The examples analyzed above are types of disagreement that do not lead to conflict but are instead understood as 'friendly' disagreements that occur within a context of affiliation. However, as we will see in the next section, *moré* can also occur in disagreements that indicate hostility.

4.4. *Moré* in Impoliteness

In Extract 8, *moré* is used in a context of language aggression and impoliteness, where the speaker deliberately communicates a face-attack and the recipient perceives this behavior as such (see, e.g., Culpeper, 2011). *Moré* appears in an exclamative construction belonging to conventionalized Greek impoliteness formulae (Culpeper, 2010), specifically silencers, and is interpreted by the recipient as offensive.

Extract 8

- 01 N: κυνηγημένη φάρα εμείς οι καπνιστ(η)έ:ς, [σ' αυτές τις]
We smokers are a hunted breed in these
- 02 P: [ε καλά:]
Oh well
- 03 N: πολιτισμένες χώρες. .hh [<τουλά]χιστον όμως,
so called civilized countries. But at least
- 04 T: [>°(μάλιστα.)<]
Yes.
- 05 T: °(ό:χι.)
No.
- 06 N: το τσιγά[:ρο το επιλέγεις να το] καπνίζεις.>
smoking is a choice.
- 07 T:? [°(.....)]
- 08 N: κανείς δε σου βάζει ένα τσιγάρο στο στόμα.
No one puts a cigarette in your mouth.
- 09 >↑TONˆ NTAΞITZH ΣΟΥ ΟΜΩΣ ΟΧΙ.<
Your taxi driver though isn't.
- 10 → T: σώ:πα μω]ρέ.
(*in ironic mode*)
Shut up / give me a break *moré*.
- 11 N: [((*laughter*))]
- 12 → N: τι [σώπα μωρέ.]
What's that supposed to mean, shut up *moré*.
- 13 P: [ναι. (όχ') αυτό είν'] αλήθεια.
Yes. No that's the truth.

In the previous turns, participants talked about the inappropriate behavior of taxi drivers in Greece and compared it with the situation in other countries. They also referred to the smoking ban in indoor spaces and made moral evaluations about how people should behave. In lines 01, 03, 06, and 08–09, Nepheli claims that one can choose whether to smoke or not, but one cannot choose one's taxi driver and is therefore condemned to their bad behavior. In line 10, Thanos responds with the silencer *σώ:πα μωρέ* ('Shut up/give me a break *moré*'), which expresses distrust. He disputes her claim as wrong and lacking support and does not invite any further cooperative discussion on the matter. In line 12, Nepheli responds to Thanos's challenge with another challenge. She uses a QWI and a modified repetition of Thanos's previous turn *τι σώπα μωρέ*. ('What's that supposed to mean, shut up *moré*.') to directly attack her interlocutor. In line 13, in overlapping talk Petros agrees with Nepheli. Unlike in previous examples, where *moré* was used in the context of friendly disagreement, here it is used as a marker of indignation or displeasure in an aggressive turn that contests the previous claim, causing offense and escalating into conflict.

5. *Moré* and *Vre*: A Comparative Perspective

As mentioned in Section 1, *moré* is used alongside its grammaticalized form *vre* in Standard Modern Greek. What are the parallel and different uses of these two vocative-based markers in contexts of disagreement? Are the two forms alternative ways of filling the same slot linguistically and performing the same action?

In Table 6, we can see the distribution of *vre* in contexts of disagreement.

Table 6. Distribution of *Vre* in Contexts of Disagreement.

Types of Disagreement	n (%)
Challenges	21 (75%)
Contradictions	7 (25%)
Total	28 (100%)

Out of the 100 instances of *vre*, 28 are cases of disagreement (approximately 28%): *vre* most frequently occurs in challenges and less frequently in contradictions. A chi-square goodness-of-fit test indicates that this difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 7.00$, $p = 0.008$). No instances of *vre* were found in counterclaims or irrelevancy claims. In other words, *vre* is used in a more limited range of disagreement types, namely the most face-aggravating ones, compared to those in which *more* occurs. In what follows I examine some indicative examples.

Like *more*, *vre* occurs in challenging QWIs in responses (Alvanoudi, forthcoming; see Section 4.1) to a prior speaker's assertion about a state of affairs that falls within the interlocutors' epistemic domains. In this context, *vre* operates as an interpersonal marker that mitigates the potential face threat posed by disagreement, and as a cognitive marker that conveys counterexpectation to the addressee. This is illustrated in Extract 9.

Extract 9

- 01 D: εσύ τι κάνεις? κάθεται και [°(.....)].
What are you doing? Just sitting there and
- 02 M: [διαβάζει]. πτυχιακό
She's studying. for her thesis
- 03 (αγάπη μου).
my dear.
- 04 S: [[να::] λίγα κάνουμε.=
Yes. As if we are doing nothing.
- 05 → D: [ποιο: βρε?]
What vre?
- 06 M: =τι:
What?
- 07 (0.5)
- 08 D: με το::: (0.6) ακουστικό στ' αυτί:, (0.8) ο Κλάσικ να παίζει.=
She's wearing earphones, with the Classic radio station playing,
- 09 S: =(laughs)

In the previous turns, participants talked about their friend Vagelis, who often goes clubbing during the week. Dimitra compared him to Sophia, who also enjoys clubbing, and said that Vagelis needs to have fun because he works hard, unlike Sophia, who does nothing all day (line 01). In lines 02–03, Mina claims that Sophia is working on her thesis in order to graduate. The vocative *αγάπη μου* 'my dear' gives her claim an ironic overtone. In line 04, Sophia mockingly disputes the claim (*να::: λίγα κάνουμε*. 'Yes. As if we are doing nothing.'). In overlapping talk, Dimitra uses the QWI *ποιο: βρε?* ('What *vre*.') to challenge Mina's claim. TCU-final *vre* minimizes the face threat carried by the disagreement, and signals that the previous claim runs counter to her expectations about their friend's behavior. In line 06, Mina challenges Sophia's claim. After a gap (a brief silence between turns, line 07), Dimitra explains her disagreement by describing Sophia's everyday habit of

from the grammaticalized form *vre*. Similarly to familiarizers in other languages (see, e.g., Kleinknecht & Souza, 2017, Section 1), *moré* has evolved into a discourse marker with interpersonal, cognitive, and textual functions. Specifically, when used in disagreement, *moré* serves as an interpersonal and/or cognitive marker, signaling solidarity, mitigating face threat, and conveying counterexpectation. *Vre* shows similar, overlapping functions. Both *moré* and *vre* appear in contexts of ‘friendly’ disagreement, which designate affiliation rather than hostility. They form part of the positive facework that helps to sustain solidarity and intimacy among interlocutors when performing acts that impinge on the interlocutor’s positive face.

However, the two forms are not perfectly interchangeable in contexts of disagreement, as they occur in different distributions. More specifically, *moré* occurs in a broader range of disagreement types, from the most to the least face-aggravating: challenges, contradictions, and counterclaims. By contrast, *vre* is restricted to the most face-aggravating types of disagreement: challenges and contradictions. Unlike *vre*, which always occurs in ‘friendly’ disagreement, *moré* can also appear in contexts of escalating impoliteness. Thus, although both *moré* and *vre* are markers of affective stance, displaying solidarity and intimacy, they are rated differently on a scale of affective intensity (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989) or expressivity (Kleinknecht & Souza, 2017, p. 263). The analysis of spoken language data indicates that the two forms have different affordances, with *vre* displaying a higher level of solidarity and intimacy than *moré*. This difference is most likely linked to two parameters of grammaticalization: decategorialization and erosion. Unlike *moré*, *vre* appears to have undergone a more advanced stage of decategorialization, as it frequently co-occurs with other vocative forms (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2). According to Hopper (1991, p. 31), the loss of morphosyntactic properties “goes hand-in-hand with the tendency of” these items “to assume discourse functions” and includes shifts in meaning or function. Furthermore, the erosion of *vre* has led to further desemanticization. As Heine et al. (2021, p. 81) observe, desemanticization typically precedes erosion; however, “the two can also coincide in time in the development of” discourse markers (see Suzuki, 2006, on the Japanese discourse marker *wake*). In the case of *vre*, both decategorialization and erosion have resulted in a further shift in meaning or function, namely an increase in the role of *vre* in contributing to the emotional involvement of the speaker in the activity. In the interpersonal realm, this translates into stronger friendliness and higher solidarity. Future research could further explore the subtle differences between the two markers when they occur alongside another vocative form, or when they are used in actions beyond disagreement. It would also be worth investigating whether preferences for one form over another when performing the action of disagreement depend on social variables such as the speaker’s gender, age, and dialectal background.

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Appendix A

Transcription conventions

[	point of onset of overlap
]	point of end of overlap
=	latching
(0.8)	silence in tenths of a second
(.)	micro-pause (less than 0.5 s)
.	falling/final intonation
,	continuing/non-final intonation
?	rising intonation
¿	rising intonation stronger than a comma and weaker than question mark
: ::	sound prolongation or stretching; the more colons, the longer the stretching
<u>word</u>	underlining is used to indicate some form of emphasis, either by increased loudness or higher pitch
WOrd	upper case is used to indicate especially loud talk
◦	following talk markedly quiet or soft
-	after a word or part of a word: cut-off or interruption
↑	sharp intonation rise
↓	sharp intonation fall
> <	talk between the ‘more than’ and ‘less than’ symbols is compressed or rushed
< >	talk between the ‘less than’ and ‘more than’ symbols is markedly slowed or drawn out
.h	inhalation
h	hearable aspiration
(())	transcriber’s description of events
(. . .)	unidentified syllables
(word)	uncertain transcription
→	refers to a line of transcript relevant in the argument

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