

# **CHALLENGES IN THE CODIFICATION OF ENDANGERED LANGUAGES: A CASE STUDY OF TSAKONIAN GREEK**

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## **Abstract**

Tsakonian is an endangered language in need of codification and digitization in order to allow its universal access and dissemination. This paper focuses on the processes of codification within a language planning framework and provides a historical review of the ‘graphization’ initiatives of the language in order to shed light on its evolution to the present date. Of interest is how ‘unplanned’ language planning activities influenced by political, social and economic factors at the micro-level have affected these processes in the present case. A valid and reliable script institutionalized by the local community is vital in the creation of an emerging standard. This is essential for the development of the Tsakonian corpus via the uniform transcription of the language and transliteration of existing texts supporting the language’s transmission and survival. The scientific, educational, technical and political issues involved in the development of a standard script and writing system are examined. A democratic model of language planning is proposed where the community is an active agent in the decision making process addressing ethical concerns of ownership and access.