

# [+SELF / +R] Anaphoric Expressions: Further Supporting Evidence from Modern Greek

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## 1. Anagnostopoulos & Everaert's Analysis of Greek Reflexives

Anagnostopoulos & Everaert 1999 (hereafter A&E) argue, based on evidence from Modern Greek, that the typology of anaphoric expressions must be enriched beyond the three types proposed by Reinhart & Reuland 1993 (hereafter R&R). In particular, R&R posit a classification based on the semantic<sup>1</sup> properties  $\pm$ SELF and  $\pm$ R(eferentially independent) into +SELF/-R, -SELF/+R, -SELF/-R, and +SELF/+R, and provide examples of the first three types, “assum[ing] that +SELF, +R elements do not exist” (A&E, 98). A&E demonstrate however that the +SELF/+R combination is instantiated by the Modern Greek reflexive form *o eafto-*, a noun phrase<sup>2</sup> consisting of a noun *eaftó-* ‘self’ (in an appropriate case) with a preceding definite article plus a Possessive Pronoun that agrees with the antecedent, as in (1):

(1) o jánis pánda frondízi ton eaftó tu  
the-John/NOM always cares-for/3SG the-self/ACC his

‘John always takes care of himself’ (literally: “... the self of him”).

They further argue, following R&R 1991, for Incorporation at LF,<sup>3</sup> whereby SELF-anaphors enter into complex predicate formation; the possessor of *eaftó-* is then “promoted” in the incorporation process, and the whole reflexive NP inherits the possessor’s index.

An important piece of A&E’s argument concerning the properties of *o eaftó-* reflexives comes from the reference found in complex sentences with multiple reflexives, such as (2):

(2) o jánis ákuse ton eaftó tu na kritikári ton eaftó tu  
the-John/NOM heard/3SG the-self/ACC his SUBJUNC criticize/3SG the-self/ACC his

‘John heard himself criticize himself’

for which the intended coreference relations among the reflexives and antecedents are as in (3), with both whole reflexive anaphoric NPs *ton eaftó tu* referring back to the antecedent *o jánis*, just as the possessive pronoun *tu* does, but with different indices on each occurrence of the independent noun *eaftó*:-

(3) *o jánis<sub>i</sub> en ákuse [ton eaftó<sub>k</sub> tu<sub>i</sub>]<sub>i</sub> na kritikári [ton eaftó<sub>q</sub> tu<sub>i</sub>]<sub>i</sub>*

The only way to achieve this intended coreference, A&E argue, is by adopting incorporation, for that guarantees that the index of the possessive is assumed by the whole NP in which it occurs; without incorporation, and following Iatridou 1988’s assumptions on indexing with *eafto*-, what results is the coreference relations given in (4), at odds with the intended (3):<sup>4</sup>

(4) *o jánis<sub>i</sub> en ákuse [ton eaftó<sub>k</sub> tu<sub>i</sub>]<sub>k</sub> na kritikári [ton eaftó<sub>q</sub> tu<sub>k</sub>]<sub>q</sub>*

## 2. Problems with A&E’s Evidence

A&E’s interesting analysis, however, runs into some difficulty, since there is a problem with the supporting evidence they cite. In particular, the sentences such as (3) that they draw on all involve reflexive anaphors controlled by third person antecedents (*o jánis* and *ton eaftó*); however, an examination of parallel sentences with nonthird-person reflexive antecedents reveals a very different schema for binding/coindexing from that indicated in (3).

An example of such a sentence with a non-third-person reflexive antecedent and thus a non-third person possessive with *eaftó*- is given in (5):

(5) \**eγó en áfisa ton eaftó mu na katastrépsi ton eaftó mu*  
I/NOM not let/1SG the-self/ACC my destroy the-self/ACC my  
‘I didn’t let myself destroy myself’

Indeed, as indicated in (5), such sentences are ungrammatical, suggesting that chains of reflexives are impossible in Greek.<sup>5</sup> Significantly, what the ungrammaticality of (5) suggests is

that the to the extent that a sentence such as (3) is possible, the coreference relations for the multiple reflexive in it is not as indicated in (3) but rather as in (6):

(6) *o jánis<sub>i</sub> en áfise [ton eaftó<sub>k</sub> tu<sub>i</sub>]<sub>i</sub> na katastrépsi [ton eaftó<sub>q</sub> tu<sub>k</sub>]<sub>k</sub>*

with the reference of the second (rightmost) reflexive NP going back to the first reflexive, and thus not directly back to *o jánis*. Thus the basis for A&E’s argument is weakened somewhat, all the more so since there is additional evidence suggesting that there is no direct linkage between the higher clause subject and the lower clause object in such sentences.

Importantly, though, such sentences ultimately do support A&E’s basic claims concerning [ $\pm R$  /  $\pm SELF$ ] anaphors, but at the same time they reveal a very interesting and heretofore unrecognized syntactic side to the  $\pm R$  feature, counter to the semantically-based characterization given by R&R.

### 3. The Truth about Multiple Coreference Chains in Greek

The additional evidence in question are some facts discussed in Joseph 1978/1990 concerning Greek reflexives which give a clear picture of what is really going on with these sentences with chains of multiple coreferent elements. It turns out that the best way of expressing the intended meaning of (5) using the *eaftó*- reflexive strategy<sup>6</sup> is as indicated in (7):

(7) εγώ en áfisa ton eaftó mu na me katastrépsi  
 I/NOM not let/1SG the-self/ACC my me/ACC destroy/3SG  
 ‘I didn’t let myself destroy myself’  
 (literally: “I didn’t let myself destroy me”)

which can be described and explained as follows. From a semantic standpoint, there is indeed reflexivity in (7) but the meaning of *eaftó*- here is rather as if the *self* exists as a separate entity from the “*ego*” though still linked to it in some way;<sup>7</sup> syntactically, moreover, reflexivity is “switched off” in the lower clause — the real-world referent of the underlined NPs in (7) is identical (first-person-singular, i.e. the speaker) yet *eaftó*- must be referentially independent of

*ežó*, not just semantically, but also with syntactic consequences. The syntactic consequences are that a nonreflexive pronoun (*me*) is required referring back to the main-clause subject *ežó*, and the subordinate verb (*katastrépsi*) is third person singular (and cannot be anything else) as its subject is linked to (i.e., controlled by) *eaftó-*, which, as noted above (see footnote 2), is a third-person nominal.

Moreover, there is additional evidence like (7) that shows the syntactic effects of the referential independence of *eaftó-* in multiple coreference chain sentences. In particular, expressions with possessives that are restricted to obligatorily agreeing with the subject of a clause, as with *vrísko to belá mu* ‘I get into trouble’ (literally: “I-find the trouble of-me”) in (8), block first person possessives in the multiple coreference sentences (but not in simplex sentences):

(8) a. *ežó vrísko to belá mu / \*su / \*tu*

I/NOM find/1SG the-trouble/ACC my / your / his

‘I get into trouble’ (literally: “I find my trouble”)

b. *ežó<sub>i</sub> en áfisa ton eaftó<sub>j</sub> mu<sub>i</sub> na vrí to belá tu<sub>j</sub> / \*mu<sub>i</sub> / \*su*

I/NOM NEG let/1SG the-self/ACC my SUBJNC find/3SG the-trouble his / my / your

‘I didn’t let myself get into trouble’

(literally: “I didn’t let myself find his trouble”)

Similarly, with expressions that require nonagreement between a possessive and a subject, as with *xriázome ti voú<sub>ia</sub> kapyanú* ‘I need someone’s help’ (literally “I-need the help of-someone”) in (9), the range of possible possessives in multiple coreference sentences is different from that in simplex sentences:

(9) a. *ežó xriázome ti voú<sub>ia</sub> \*mu / su / tu*

I/NOM need/1SG the-help/ACC my / your / his

‘I need your/his/\*my help’

- b. εγώ<sub>i</sub> en áfisa ton eaftó<sub>j</sub> mu<sub>i</sub> na xriastí ti voú<sub>i</sub>fiá \*mu<sub>i</sub> / su / tu\*<sub>j/k</sub>  
 I/NOM NEG let/1SG the-self/ACC my SUBJNC need/3SG the-help my /your/ his\*<sub>j/k</sub>  
 ‘I didn’t let myself need your/his<sub>k</sub> help’

#### 4. Conclusion

The upshot of these additional facts is that the Greek reflexive form *o eaftó-* + possessive pronoun is indeed +SELF **and** +R, but the +R specification is realized not just semantically (as R&R would have it) but also syntactically; *eaftó-*, as others have concluded (e.g. Iatridou 1988), is therefore best treated as a base-generated NP triggering a reflexive interpretation while maintaining its own syntactic requisites. This conclusion is consistent with A&E’s account, but goes beyond it. Thus, A&E were indeed right about the status of *eaftó-* but in a sense they were right for the wrong reason and in any case were not as right as they might have been — the situation is more complicated, but also more interesting, than they realized.

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<sup>1</sup>R&R call ±SELF semantic since it represents the ability to make a predicate reflexive — a semantic feature; ‘referential independence’ (±R) for them is a semantic property that is encoded through the morphological property of being fully specified for  $\Phi$ -features of number, gender, and person.

<sup>2</sup>Though this formation is traditionally referred to as a “reflexive pronoun” (so Tzartanos 1946, Theofanopoulou-Kontou (1980:1)), see Joseph (1978/1990: Chap. 11), Joseph &

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Philippaki-Warburton (1987: 78), and Iatridou 1988 for arguments that these reflexives in fact have the internal structure of ordinary possessed (and thus, grammatically third person) NPs. Regarding case, the reflexive most typically occurs in the accusative case, but genitive is possible, as in (i), and even nominative can occur, as in (ii):

(i) afti i ikona tu eaftu tu ton tromazi  
this-the-picture the-self/GEN his him/ACC frightens  
'This vision of himself frightens him'

(ii) simera en ise o eaftos su  
today not are/2SG the-self/NOM your  
'You are not yourself today'

<sup>3</sup>This is not to be confused with the putative “anaphor incorporation” of Rivero 1992, which Smirniotopoulos & Joseph 1999 argue is not a syntactic noun incorporation at all, but rather an instance of a lexical compounding rule.

<sup>4</sup>In terms of coreference relations, (4) is the type of A&E’s (20e) and while it is legitimate on various grounds, it does not reflect the intended meaning. They consider, but reject for various reasons, other possible indexing; for instance, (i) (their (20b)) is rejected since it contains a violation of the *i*-within-*i* Condition of Chomsky 1981:

(i) o jánis<sub>i</sub> en ákuse [ton eaftó<sub>i</sub> tu<sub>j</sub>]<sub>i</sub> na kritikári [ton eaftó<sub>q</sub> tu<sub>i</sub>]<sub>q</sub>

<sup>5</sup>I don’t want to get into a grammaticality-judgment “battle” with A&E (A after all is a native speaker of Greek and I am not), but the many speakers of Greek that I have consulted over several years concerning such sentences typically judge sentences like (3) as ungrammatical or marginal at best, but certainly not straightforwardly grammatical.

<sup>6</sup>Greek has other reflexivization strategies, e.g. ones involving special non-active verb morphology on the verb; see Joseph & Philippaki-Warburton (1987: 75-83) for details.

<sup>7</sup>Cho 2000 describes a similar semantics for reflexivity in Korean.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Anagnostopoulos & Everaert 1999 argue that the Modern Greek reflexive form *o eafto-* instantiates a +SELF/+R type of anaphoric expression (where  $\pm R$  = 'referentially independent'), supplementing the three types (+SELF/-R, -SELF/+R, -SELF/-R) proposed by Reinhart & Reuland 1993. Key supporting evidence is the behavior of *o eafto-* in sentences with multiple third person reflexives. The situation, however, is more complex, since multiple reflexive sentences with non-third person reference show different syntactic behavior. Importantly, such sentences are still consistent with Anagnostopoulos & Everaert's claims, but reveal a syntactic side to referential independence, complementing the already recognized semantic side.

**Key Words:** anaphor, Modern Greek, reflexive, semantics, syntax