

ON THE EXISTENCE OF [+SELF / +R] ANAPHORIC EXPRESSIONS FURTHER SUPPORTING EVIDENCE FROM MODERN GREEK*

Brian D. Joseph

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Περίληψη

Οι Αναγνωστοπούλου και Everaert (1999) δίνουν ένα επιχειρήματα, βασισμένο στα δεδομένα από τα νέα ελληνικά, ότι πρέπει η τυπολογία των αναφορικών εκφρασών να εμπλουτιστεί. Οι Reinhart και Reuland (1993), δουλεύοντας με τις σημασιολογικές ιδιότητες [\pm EAYTO] (« \pm SELF») και [\pm A] (για «Αναφορικώς ανεξάρτητος» (« \pm R(eferentially independent)»)) λένε ότι υπάρχουν [+EAYTO/ -A], [-EAYTO/ +A], και [-EAYTO/ -A] αλλά όχι ένας τέταρτος τύπος, με [+EAYTO/ +A]. Οι Αναγνωστοπούλου και Everaert, όμως, αποδεικνύουν ότι βρίσκεται [+EAYTO/ +A] στα νέα ελληνικά και βρίσκουν υποστήριξη στις προτάσεις με τον αυτοπαθή τύπο *ο εαυτο-*. Πολύ σημαντικές εδώ είναι προτάσεις με δυο αυτοπαθείς τύπους του τρίτου προσώπου. Τέτοιες προτάσεις είναι προβληματικές, όμως, επειδή η κατάσταση αλλάζει με δυο αυτοπαθείς τύπους του πρώτου προσώπου. Το βασικό συμπέρασμα των Αναγνωστοπούλου και Everaert δεν αλλάζει, όμως, δηλαδή είχαν δίκιο γύρω από το *εαυτό-* αλλά είχαν δίκιο για διαφορετικούς λόγους από αυτούς που έδωσαν.

Keywords

anaphor, Modern Greek, reflexive, semantics, syntax

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 semantic¹ 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 *ο εαυτο-*, a noun phrase² consisting of a noun *εαυτο-* ‘self’ (in an appropriate case) with a preceding definite article plus a Possessive Pronoun that agrees with the antecedent, as in (1):

- (1) ο janis panda frondizi ton eafto 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,³ whereby SELF-anaphors enter into complex predicate formation; the possessor of *eafto-* 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 eafto-* reflexives comes from the reference found in complex sentences with multiple reflexives, such as (2):

- (2) *o janis akuse ton eafto tu na kritikari ton eafto tu*
 the-John/NOM heard/3SG the-self/ACC his SUBJNC criticize/3SG the-self/ACC his
 ‘John heard himself criticize himself’

for which the intended coreference relations among the reflexives and antecedents are those seen in (3), in which both occurrences of the whole reflexive anaphoric NP *ton eafto tu* (in brackets) refer back to the antecedent *o janis*, just as the possessive pronoun *tu* does, but in which different indices are present on each occurrence of the independent noun *eafto-*:

- (3) *o janis_i den akuse [ton eafto_k tu_i]_i na kritikari [ton eafto_q tu_i]_i*

The only way to achieve this intended coreference, A&E argue, is through the adoption of incorporation, for only via incorporation is it guaranteed 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), a set of relations that is at odds with the intended one seen in (3):⁴

- (4) *o janis_i den akuse [ton eafto_k tu_i]_k na kritikari [ton eafto_q tu_k]_q*

2. Problems with A&E’s Evidence

A&E’s interesting analysis, however, runs into some difficulty, since there is a problem with the evidence they cite in support of their view. In particular, the sentences such as (3) that they draw on all involve reflexive anaphors (the first occurrence of *ton eafto* and the second occurrence of *ton eafto*, respectively) that are apparently controlled by third person antecedents (*o janis* and *ton eafto*, respectively). There is no overt sign of this anaphoric linkage, however, except through the possessive pronouns (third person singular masculine *tu* ‘his’, in each case) that occur with the reflexive noun *ton eafto*. In principle, these possessive pronouns in (3) are ambiguous between having a linkage with the main clause subject *o janis* (a third person singular masculine noun) and the leftmost occurrence of *ton eafto*, since the reflexive is also a third person singular masculine noun (see note 2). Therefore, one needs to examine structurally parallel cases where there is no possible ambiguity of this sort, for instance, those with nonthird-person reflexive antecedents.

Once one does that, there emerges 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 *eafto-* is given in (5):⁵

- (5) **eyo* *ðen afisa* *ton eafto* *mu na katastrepsi ton eafto* *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 (or at least certain reflexives) with a direct linkage to the main clause subject are actually impossible in Greek.⁶ Significantly, what the ungrammaticality of (5) suggests is that to the extent that a sentence such as (3) is possible (and see note 6), the coreference relations for the multiple reflexive in it are not as indicated in (3) but rather as in (6):

- (6) *o janis_i*, *ðen afise* [*ton eafto_k tu_i*]_i *na katastrepsi* [*ton eafto_q tu_k*]_k

with the reference of the second (rightmost) reflexive NP going back to and controlled by the first reflexive, and thus not directly linked to *o janis*; these binding relations are indicated by the fact that in the ungrammatical (5), the possessive form that occurs with the reflexives is the first person singular *mu*, which is necessarily linked to the main clause subject *eyo*, the only possible first person antecedent for *mu*. Thus the basis for A&E's argument is weakened somewhat on factual grounds since in the case where the antecedent is not ambiguous, the evidence points clearly to a linkage not directly with the main clause subject but with the some other nominal antecedent in the sentence, that is, the reflexive noun *ton eafto*. This weakening of support is all the more severe 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 centers on 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. In particular, the best way of expressing the intended meaning of (5), using the verbal construction in question and using the *eafto-* reflexive strategy,⁷ is actually that indicated in (7):

- (7) εγω den afisa ton eafto mu na me katastrepsi
 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), i.e. multiple references to the same “person” in the real world, but the meaning of *eafto-* here is rather as if the *self* exists as a separate entity from the “ego” though still linked to it in some way;⁸ 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 *eafto-* must be referentially independent of *εγω*, not just semantically, but also with syntactic consequences. The syntactic consequences are that a nonreflexive form, the pronoun *me* (accusative singular first person, ‘me’), is required for referring back to the main-clause subject *εγω*, and the subordinate verb (*katastrepsi*) is third person singular (and cannot be anything else) as its subject is linked to (i.e., controlled by) *eafto-*, which, as mentioned above (and see note 2), is a third-person nominal.

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

- (8) a. εγω vrisko to bela mu / *su / *tu
 I/NOM find/1SG the-trouble/ACC my / your / his
 ‘I get into trouble’ (literally: “I find my trouble”)
- b. εγω_i den afisa ton eafto_j mu_j na vri to bela tu_j / *mu_i / *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”)

Such sentences suggest that the relevant controlling subject in the subordinate clause, despite the first person reference (ultimately going back to *εγω*), is syntactically not a first person.

Similarly, with expressions that require nonagreement between a possessive and a subject, as with *xriazome ti voiθia kapyanu* ‘I need someone’s help’ (literally “I-need the help of-someone” – note that the equivalent of “I need my help” is impossible in Greek), seen in (9), the range of possible possessives in multiple coreference sentences is different from that in simplex sentences:

- (9) a. εγo xriazome ti voiθia *mu / su / tu
 I/NOM need/1SG the-help/ACC my / your / his
 ‘I need your/ his/ *my help’
- b. εγοj den afisa ton eaftoj muj na xriasti ti voiθia *muj / su / tu*j/k
 I/NOM NEG let/1SG the-self/ACC my SUBJNC need/3SG the-help my /your/ his*j/k
 ‘I didn’t let myself need your/his_k help’

Again, such sentences suggest that the controlling subject of the subordinate clause in (9b) is not the same as that found in the corresponding simplex in (9a).⁹

4. Conclusion

The upshot of these additional facts is that the Greek reflexive form *o eafto-* + possessive pronoun is indeed +SELF and at the same time +R, but the +R specification is realized not just semantically (as R&R would have it) but also syntactically; *eafto-*, 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, such as triggering third-person agreement, requiring certain possessive pronoun forms in binding contexts, and the like. This conclusion is thus actually consistent with A&E’s account, since both features +SELF and +R are instantiated in certain ways, but it goes beyond what they provide. Thus, A&E were indeed right about the status of *eafto-* 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 as a result also more interesting, than they realized.

Notes

⁹This paper is a somewhat expanded English rendition of the version in Greek presented at the 6th International Conference on Greek Linguistics, and published under the title “[+eafto / +A] Anaforikes Ekfrasis: Dedomena apo ta Nea Elinika” ([+Self / +A] Anaphoric Expressions: Data from Modern Greek), published in the 2003 Festschrift for Eirene Philippaki-Warburton (Sifianou et al., eds.).

¹R&R call ±SELF semantic since it represents the ability to make a predicate reflexive – a semantic feature; ‘referential independence’ (±R) for them is also a semantic property, though one that is encoded through the morphological property of being fully specified for f-features of number, gender, and person.

²Though this formation is traditionally referred to as a “reflexive pronoun” (so Tzartanos 1946, Theofanopoulou-Kontou (1980:1)), see Joseph (1978/ 1990: Chap. 11), Joseph & Philippaki-Warburton (1987: 78), and Iatridou 1988 regarding the ways in which these reflexives in fact have the internal structure of ordinary possessed (and thus, grammatically third person) NPs. For instance, they can be modified by adjectives and can be “doubled” by weak pronouns on the verb in the object reduplication construction. 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):

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- (i) afti i ikona tu eafu tu ton tromazi
 this-the-picture the-self/GEN his him/ACC frightens
 'This vision of himself frightens him'
- (ii) simera ðen ise o eafos su
 today NEG are/2SG the-self/NOM your
 'You are not yourself today'

³This 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.

⁴In 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 janis; ðen akuse [ton eafot_j tu_j]_i na kritikari [ton eafot_q tu_j]_q

⁵ The change here from a perception verb *akuse* 'he heard' in (2) to *afisa* 'I let' (perhaps an Exceptional Case Marking verb or even a Subject-to-Object Raising verb) in (5) is due to my wanting to use sentences that I have reliable data for (see note 6 in this regard); I do not believe that this shift involves substituting significantly different structures that in any way affect the binding relations under consideration here.

⁶I do not want to get into a grammaticality-judgment "battle" with A&E (A after all is a native speaker of Greek and I am not) over the status of these sentences, but the many speakers of Greek that I have consulted over a nearly 25-year period concerning such data typically judge sentences like (3) as ungrammatical or at best as marginal, but certainly not straightforwardly grammatical.

⁷Greek has other reflexivization strategies, e.g. ones involving special non-active verb morphology on the verb; see, for instance, Joseph & Philippaki-Warburton (1987: 75-83) for details.

⁸Cho 2000 describes a similar semantics for reflexivity in Korean.

⁹ Why the first person possessive *mu* 'my' is ungrammatical in (9b) is not immediately clear; however, what is relevant here is that the third person *tu* is possible in (9a) but (with appropriate coreference) not in (9b).

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