There is this guy who is obsessed with specificity

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1 Introduction

English and German have non-canonical uses of demonstratives (Lyons 1999, Ionin 2006, von Heusinger 2011, Deichsel 2015 and references therein), shown in (1) and (2) respectively.

- (1) There is this man who lives upstairs from me who is driving me mad because he jumps rope at 2 a.m. every night. (Maclaran 1982: 85)
- (2) Und da war dieser Bauer aus Ostermiething, der schluckte alle Pillen, die er bekommen und die er von anderen einhandeln konnte.
 'And there was this farmer from Ostermiething, who swallowed every pill he could get and he could catch from other people.' (Deichsel 2015: 2)

Ionin argues (2006) that the demonstrative in (1) behaves similarly to an indefinite noun phrase, whereby it has a specific reference. According to Lyons (1999), the referential use of the demonstrative is not very common cross-linguistically, see also Ionin (2006).

A further non-canonical use of the distal demonstrative is the so-called *recognitional* or *anamnestic* use (Himmelmann 1996, 1997). Von Heusinger, Chiriacescu & Deichsel (2010) and von Heusinger (2011) argue that the recognitional use of the German demonstrative *dies*-should be distinguished from its indefinite one: the recognitional demonstrative alternates with the definite article but not the indefinite one, (3), as the referent is known to the hearer although not prementioned and not present at the current discourse. By contrast, the indefinite demonstrative alternates with the indefinite article, (4), as the referent is not only not prementioned and physically absent, but also new to the hearer.

(3) Was ist eigentlich mit diesem/ dem/ *einem Telefon passiert, das immer in deinem Zimmer war?

'What has actually happened to this/ the/ *a phone which used to be in your room?'
(4) Gestern kam ich in eine Bar und da war dieser/ *der Fremde/ ein Fremder, der mich die ganze Zeit anstarrte.
'Vesterday L walked inte a bar and there was this/ a/ *the stranger who stared at m

'Yesterday I walked into a bar and there was this/ a/ *the stranger who stared at me all the time.'

(von Heusinger et al. 2010, ex. (10) and (13))

Recognitional demonstratives point to shared knowledge between the hearer and the speaker (Himmelmann 1996). In this sense, they are unlike specific indefinites, which are known to the speaker but are new to the hearer. According to Himmelmann (1997), the recognitional use of the demonstrative includes an emotive component, which, as Wolter (2006) signals, cannot be used if the referent is not salient and familiar in the context. As Wolter further points out, semantically unique descriptions seem to be acceptable only with this emotive reading, e.g. *That John Smith is a great guy*!

As far as I know, such usages have not been discussed for Greek, to which I turn in section 2.

2 Greek demonstratives

In Greek, unlike in English, demonstratives embed DPs. In other words, noun phrases introduced by *this* are formally definite:

(5) afto to vivlio this the book

This being the case, perhaps one would not expect to find indefinite uses of the Greek demonstrative, since it co-occurs with a definite noun phrase. Matters are different with respect to the recognitional use though, which should be possible. Indeed, this is possible in Hungarian, another language in which demonstratives embed DPs. This is discussed at length in Molnár (2010), where the example in (6) comes from:

(6) te itt kínlódsz ezzel a pár garas*od*dal, [...] you here torment.2SG these.com the couple pennies.POSS2SG.COM 'You torment yourself about your couple of pennies.'

Molnár further notes that the recognitional use is often strengthened by the presence of attributes.

Contexts rendering the recognitional and emotive use of the demonstrative can be constructed for Greek as well:

(7) Aftos o Janis ine poli kalo pedi *emotive* This the John is very good child 'This John is a great guy.'

As in English, (7) cannot be uttered if there is no emotional solidarity among the discourse participants (Lakoff 1974).

Moreover, like its recognitional counterparts in English, German and Hungarian, the demonstrative cannot alternate with an indefinite noun phrase:

(8) Ti epathe afto to tilefono/to tilefono/*ena tilefono pu itan sto domatio su? what happened this the phone/the phone/a phone that was in room yours 'What happened to this phone that was in your room?'

In (9), while the demonstrative may be used, it does not have the same interpretation as the indefinite noun phrase; note that the definite noun phrase can also be used if further information is supplied, and the demonstrative sounds better if the modifier relative clause is included:

(9) eki pu kathomun irthe enas tipos/aftos o tipos/o tipos pu su elega there that sitting came a guy/this the guy/the guy that you telling about 'There where I was sitting came a guy/this guy/the guy I was telling you about.'

In case the indefinite is used, there was no previous mentioning of the person who came. However, when the demonstrative is used, where somehow both the speaker and the hearer are aware of the referent, he/she has already been introduced in the discourse.

We can thus conclude that Greek allows recognitional uses of the demonstrative, which are related to familiarity. This does not come as a surprise. As mentioned, in Greek demonstratives embed definite DPs. The Dem + DP combination is a doubling structure, according to

Grohmann & Panagiotidis (2015). As has been argued in detail, in Greek doubling constellations in both the verbal and the nominal domain are subject to familiarity. In the former case, we have clitic doubling of a definite argument. In the latter case, we have doubling of the definite determiner in the presence of an adjective, and Dem + DP is a sub-case thereof.

As detailed in Anagnostopoulou (1994), Greek does not permit doubling of specific indefinites, e.g., **tin ida mia gineka pu kathotan sto parko* 'I saw her, a woman sitting in the park', leading us to conclude that indefinite uses of the demonstrative should be excluded. As Anagnostopoulou (1994) shows, a doubled DP in Greek clitic doubling is unambiguously familiar and necessarily denotes old information: doubling suppresses novel readings of definites. A similar observation has been made for doubling of definite articles in the context of modification in the DP by Tsakali (2008) and Alexiadou (2014), building on Tsakali (2008): determiner doubling behaves like clitic doubling in the verbal domain in that it suppresses novel readings of indefinites, as shown in the contrast in (10a–b):

- (10) a. O Janis diavase ena vivlio gia ton Arthur Miller enthusiatsike ke thelise na gnorisi ton diasimo sigrafea apo konta
 'John read [a book about Arthur Miller_i]_j, he got enthousiastic, and he wanted to get to know the famous author_k.'
 the famous author: (i) Arthur Miller himself (k=i) (ii) the author of the book (k related to j)
 b. O Janis diavase ena vivlio gia ton Arthur Miller enthusiatsike ke thelise na gnorisi
 - b. O Janis diavase ena vivilo gia ton Arthur Miller enthusiatsike ke thelise na gnorisi to diasimo to sigrafea apo konta
 'John read [a book about Arthur Milleri], he got enthousiastic, and he wanted to get to know the famous author.'
 the famous author: necessarily the already established the already established member of discourse

Thus, as Greek employs a doubling structure for demonstratives signaling familiarity, recognitional/emotive uses of the demonstrative are possible.

If Greek does not permit doubling of specific indefinites, are indefinite uses of the demonstrative really excluded? Interestingly, hearer-new uses of the demonstrative emerge if it combines with the conjunction particle ke 'and'. Thus, (11b) can be uttered out of the blue, where clearly the information about the pain is hearer-new (courtesy of Despina Oikonomou):

| (11) a. | Ti kanis | b. | poli dulia. eho ki afto to pono sti plati. |
|---------|----------------------|----|---|
| | what do.2sG | | much work. have.1SG and this the pain on my back. |
| | 'How are you doing?' | | 'Lots of work. I have this pain on my back.' |

This instance of the *ke* is what Tsiplakou (2005) labels an 'out-of-the-blue' use, whose function, as she argues, is to add a new assumption/premise to the context. According to Tsiplakou (2005: 300), in all its instances '*ke* is necessarily focalizing and 'presuppositional' in that the constituent(s) over which it takes scope must be interpreted as information which is additional to information that is known or presupposed. Crucially, however, this need not be information that is linguistically encoded or mentioned in the discourse but may be adduced as a contextual assumption necessary for adequate, i.e., optimally relevant, pragmatic interpretation.' It seems that by using *ke* the speaker is adding the referent of Dem + DP to the shared knowledge, i.e., *ke* functions as a means of suggesting mutual knowledge, thus the Dem + DP string is interpreted as familiar. This is perhaps not unlike the function of recognitional demonstratives, discussed in Consten & Averintseva-Klisch (2012). The exact ways in which *ke* allows what seem to be indefinite uses of Dem + DP in Greek await further investigation.

Author note

For Klaus; thank you for your friendship and for always asking questions about Greek specific indefinites!

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