

Syntactic variation across Italian and Greek dialects: the case of demonstratives

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Goals. In this paper we investigate suspected contact phenomena in dialectal syntax, by studying apparent similarities in the syntax of demonstratives in a selection of Romance and Greek dialects of Southern Italy (cf. the Appendix). We show that DP-initial placement of demonstratives, widespread in all the dialects of Southern Italy, results from different diachronic processes, with the Italo-Greek dialects following paths independently attested in other dialectal groups, and therefore not necessarily driven (only) by contact.

Background: demonstratives crosslinguistically. Guardiano (2014a) analyzes demonstratives as *complex* lexical items, made of two components, *definiteness* and *location*, which materialize either as merged into one and the same item (i.e. English *this/that*) or as “split” into two separate lexical entities, one of which is often the definite article. When demonstratives are split, *definiteness* shows up in D. *Location* appears either to the left of D, at least sometimes (*+strong partial location*; cf. the Table in the Appendix), or consistently lower (*-strong partial location*). In the latter case, in some languages it exhibits the same syntactic properties as adjectives (*+adjectival location*), in others it does not (*-adjectival location*). In some languages, *location* occurs only in the pre-D position (*+strong location*). In others (*-strong location*), it can appear either to the left of D or lower, with the pre-D position correlating with stronger *deictic* force (Manolessou/Panagiotidis 1999). In languages where definiteness is grammaticalized (*+gramm. article*), DP-initial *location* can either check D, allowing for no article (*+D-checking location*), or not, obligatory co-occurring with the article (*-D-checking location*). Guardiano (2014a) also suggests that the merge position of demonstratives in the DP structure crosslinguistically is compatible with a “low definiteness” layer (Alexiadou et al 2007), lower than adjectives and higher than the low structural position of noun arguments (GenO, Longobardi et al, *in prep*): *D GenS Num Adjs Dem GenO N*.

Demonstratives in Romance. In Latin, demonstratives are not split, and occur in two alternative positions: *DP-initial* (*+strong partial location*), and lower (*-strong location*). In this latter position they display the same placement possibilities as adjectives (*+adjectival location*). No article exists: D can be empty when a demonstrative occurs in a DP (*0D-checking location*). This system developed into various patterns (Guardiano 2014a). In Italian and the Romance dialects of Southern Italy examined here (Guardiano 2014b), demonstratives are uniformly DP-initial (*+strong partial location, +strong location*), and *D-checking*. Spanish and Rumanian are like Latin (*+strong partial location, -strong location*); DP-initial demonstratives are *D-checking*, like Italian, and lower ones are *adjectival*, like Latin. In French, only one demonstrative (*ce*) exists; the distinction between *proximal* and *distal location* is possible only via the (non-obligatory) adverbial *ci/là* (Bernstein 1993). This peculiarity is captured by the (micro)parameter *gramm. distal location*.

Demonstratives in Greek. Greek is quite stable historically (Guardiano 2014b): the syntax of demonstratives hasn't changed from Classical (Guardiano 2003) to Modern Greek. The demonstrative is split: a DP containing a demonstrative must display both a definite article and a *location* item (*-D-checking location*), even when *location* appears DP-initially (*+partial strong location*). *Location* can also appear lower (*-strong location*), in two positions: if the DP contains a prenominal adjective, *location* immediately follows it, probably acting as a syntactic clitic (similar to possessive clitics exceptionally attaching to the right of adjectives); if the DP does not contain any adjective, *location* remains in its original position, crossed over by the noun. Thus, Grk would represent an instance of a language where the noun raises higher than Dem^0 but not over structured adjectives. In both Ancient and Modern Greek, demonstratives can also occur in a postnominal, post-genitive position, like postposed adjectives (*+adjectival Dem*). In Salento Greek, demonstratives always occur DP-initially (*+partial strong location, +strong location*) and never co-occur with a separate article (*+D-checking location*). Therefore, SaG differs from Grk in two respects: the absence of a syntactically split demonstrative and the rigid placement of *location* DP-initially. This pattern is superficially identical to Salentino Romance, and might lead to the hypothesis that SaG borrowed it, as a consequence of interference. In Calabria Greek, demonstratives appear DP-initially (*+partial strong location, +strong location*) and, especially in the accusative, alternate between a split form, where the definite article is separate from *location*, and one where the two are

fused into one and the same item. Speakers (CGB in Table 1) tend to prefer the non-split form; split ones are more frequent in written records (CGA). It seems therefore that older stages were more similar to Grk, while more recent developments reflect the same patterns as SaG. Cypriot Greek shows quite similar morphological patterns. Indeed, while *location* occurs both DP-initially and lower (+*partial strong location*, -*strong location*, like Grk), it systematically features contracted forms of pronominal demonstratives, when the definite article starts with /t/; when this phonological condition is not met, a separate definite article is obligatory. Therefore, it seems that, rather than a mere consequence of contact with Romance (i.e. direct borrowing of a Romance-like system), the system displayed by SaG results from a language-internal process, that ends up as superficially identical to Romance, but is in fact independently accessible, and thus not necessarily (only) triggered by contact. CyG demonstrates that the existence of non-split demonstratives is not a sufficient condition for acquiring [+*strong location*] and it can be shown that it is not necessary either. Cappadocian and Pontic also independently feature DP-initial placement of demonstratives, even though demonstratives have remained split there. In all Asia Minor varieties, unlike Grk (and like Classical Greek), genitives (in GenO) are pronominal, therefore *a fortiori* the noun never raises higher than the low Dem position. In fact, Phasiot, another Asia Minor variety, activates precisely that position and features post-adjectival pronominal demonstratives (*Adjs Dem N*). Such orders arguably represent the missing link between Grk and CaG/RPG. In RPG and CaG pronominal demonstratives have all been reanalyzed as occupying the pre-D position (+*strong location*). Crucially, in those varieties, the definite determiner is obligatorily spread to all [+N] elements (definiteness agreement), and thus both low and high demonstratives always precede a definite determiner, potentially giving rise to the cue for [+*strong location*]. Note that, despite their independently known movability to [Spec,DP] in Asia Minor Greek, APs never raise higher than Dem, which would derive **AP > pre-D-Dem > N*.

Conclusions. In Italiot Greek, [+*strong location*] arose as a result of the generalization of fused Loc+Def, i.e. of items necessarily D-checking, hence incompatible with low Dem. This is a process independently available/emergent outside Italy, with CyG, CGA, CGB and SaG representing the three successive steps of the change. Switch to [+*strong location*] can also arise from the reanalysis of low - yet pronominal- demonstratives, as in Asia Minor Grk, regardless of the amount of contact pressures (e.g. PhG and RPG/CaG were equally exposed to potential Turkish influence). Therefore, while [+*strong location*] is uniformly attested across Romance, the variation displayed by Greek is largely due to the internal dynamics of different dialect groups, and the rise of [+*strong location*] is at best facilitated but not categorically triggered by contact.

Appendix

		Lat	It Sal*	Sp, Rum	Fr	CIG**	NTG	Grk	SaG CGB	CGA	CyG	RPG CaG	PhG
TPL	strong partial <i>location</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
TSL	strong <i>location</i> +TSP	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-
TAD	adjectival <i>location</i> -TPL or -TSL	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	-	0	-
DGR	grammaticalized article	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
TSP	D-checking <i>location</i> +DGR	0	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
TDD	grammaticalized distal <i>location</i>	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

* Our sample of Southern Italian Romance varieties includes 2 Upper dialects, Campano (S. Maria Capua Vetere - CE) and Northern Calabrese (Verbicaro - CS), and 5 Extreme dialects: Salentino (Cellino San Marco - BR), Southern Calabrese (Reggio Calabria), and 3 dialects of Sicily (Mussomeli - CL, Ragusa, and the Gallo-Italic dialect of Aidone - EN)

** Abbreviations used for the Greek varieties: CIG = Classical; NTG = New Testament *koine*; SaG = Salento Greek; CGB = Calabria Greek (written sources); CGA = Calabria Greek (speakers); CyG = Cypriot; RPG = Romeyka Pontic; CaG = Cappadocian; Pha = Phasiot