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EXPLETIVE VS. NON-EXPLETIVE USES OF THE DEFINITE ARTICLE IN L2 GREEK

The Greek definite article has been suggested to be a cluster of agreement and case features, which are uninterpretable at LF (unlike the indefinite article which carries the interpretable feature of definiteness) (Tsimpli & Mastropavou 2008). The present study examines the expletive status of the Greek definite article in syntactic contexts where no definiteness is conveyed (e.g. with proper names, generics, nominalized clauses and demonstratives) as well as in contexts of specific use, through L2 oral data produced by 72 L1 Georgian (no determiners), L1 English (no expletive determiners) and L1 Albanian (determiners and expletive determiners) adults. All participants were post-pubertal learners of L2 Greek at two proficiency levels, intermediate and advanced/very advanced according to an independent Greek oral proficiency test. Results from two types of oral tasks, oral production and sentence repetition, indicate no correlation between correct performance at the definite article and expletiveness, and, thus, seem to be in agreement with theorists arguing for an inherently expletive and semantically deficient Greek definite article (Alexiadou et al. 2007; Giusti 2002; Lekakou & Szendroi 2012).

Keywords: adult L2 Greek, definite article, expletive definite article, feature interpretability

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This study explores the semantic status of the Greek definite article through testing its adult acquisition by second language (L2) learners within the Universal Grammar (UG) framework of the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995). In this framework lexical items in the language faculty bear abstract features, such as number, case, gender and animacy, among others. Features that have semantic

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content are interpretable at the Logical Form (LF), while those lacking semantic import serve purely syntactic operations and are uninterpretable at LF. One such example is the feature number, interpretable on nouns as it bears the semantic information ‘more than one’, but uninterpretable on determiners and adjectives, where it is essential for the syntactic operation of Agreement without contributing to meaning.

According to the *Interpretability Hypothesis* (Tsimplici & Dimitrakopoulou 2007; Tsimplici & Mastropavlou 2008) (hereafter IH), post-childhood L2 learners have access to the principles and operations of UG, and to LF-interpretable features, yet have difficulty in accessing LF-uninterpretable features absent from their L1. Other hypotheses within the UG framework, however, suggest that, given input adequacy, adult learners can fully acquire both interpretable and uninterpretable features (Lardiere 1998; Prévost & White 2000; Robertson 2000; Slabakova 2013).

It has been argued that the Greek definite and indefinite article differ in terms of feature specification: while the definite article can be a cluster of case and phi-features only, the indefinite is intrinsically specified as [-definite] (Karanassios 1992; Stavrou 1996; Tsimplici & Stavrakaki 1999). This view has been supported by the expletive use of the definite article, i.e. its participation in syntactic contexts where no definiteness is conveyed, such as with proper names, generics, nominalised clauses, demonstratives and in polydefinites. Expletive definite articles have been defined as semantically empty place holders with a purely syntactic function (Alexiadou et al. 2007; Giusti 2002; Lekakou & Szendroi 2012; Longobardi 1994; Penner 1993; Penner & Weissenborn 1996; Vergnaud & Zubizarreta 1992) (cf. Kyriakaki 2014). For this reason they are claimed to be uninterpretable at LF. According to Giusti, referentiality and definiteness are not properties of the article but of the abstract category D.

Along these lines, the status of the Greek definite article could be further investigated through testing the acquisition of its different uses, expletive and non-expletive, in order to check if the latter are semantically enriched compared to the former. If the evidence supports distinct acquisition patterns for the two types of the definite determiner, it could be argued that the Greek definite determiner is not inherently expletive. In the rest of the paper, Section 2 describes the Determiner Phrase (DP) in Greek and the first languages (L1) of the participants of the study, Section 3 overviews previous research on L2 Greek articles, and Section 4 outlines our research questions and predictions. In Section 5, I report the results, and in 6, I attempt to interpret them, as well as discuss their theoretical implications.

2. DEFINITENESS AND THE DP

Definite expressions presuppose that an entity involves both speaker and hearer knowledge, while indefinite expressions exclude hearer knowledge and may presuppose speaker knowledge (Hawkins 1991; Heim 1982; Ionin 2003; Ionin et al. 2004). Semantic-pragmatic definiteness is a universal concept (Lyons 1999), yet its grammaticalisation is language-specific (Felix 1988). Hence, there are languages which use bound morphemes (case marking in Albanian), free morphemes (definite and indefinite articles in English and Greek) or word order (Russian), while others do not grammaticalise definiteness at all (Georgian).

2.1. The DP in Modern Greek

Modern Greek has a morphologically rich D-system with a definite and an indefinite article preceding the noun and agreeing with it in case, number and gender, as shown in (1) and (2).

- (1) To nearo koritsi xamojelase.
the.NEU.NOM.SG young.NEU.NOM.SG girl.NEU.NOM.SG smiled.3SG
'The young girl smiled.'
- (2) Xθes ayorasa mia kitrini fusta.
yesterday bought.1SG a.FEM.ACC.SG yellow.FEM.ACC.SG skirt.FEM.ACC.SG
'Yesterday I bought a yellow skirt.'

The Greek definite article can be used expletively with proper names (3), generics (4), complement phrases (5), demonstratives (6), and in forming polydefinites (7).

- (3) *(I) Maria irθe.
the.FEM.NOM.SG Maria.FEM.NOM.SG came
'Maria came.'
- (4) *(I) elefantes ine θilastika.
the.MAS.NOM.PL elephants.MAS.NOM.PL are mammals
'Elephants are mammals'
- (5) ine kalo * (to) na yimnazese.
is good the.NEU.NOM.SG na.PRT.SUBJ exercise.2PS.SG is a very good habit
'Exercising is a very good habit'
- (6) Afto * (to) vivlio ine enθiaferon.
this.NEU.NOM.SG the.NEU.NOM.SG book.NEU.NOM.SG is interesting.
NEU.NOM.SG
'This book is interesting'

- (7) to oreo (to) vivlio / to vivlio *(to) oreo
 the.NEU.NOM/ACC.SG nice the.NEU.NOM/ACC.SG book / the book the
 nice
 ‘the nice book’

In example (3) the definite article does not convey definiteness or referentiality, as proper names are inherently referential (Lyons 1999), ‘rigid designators’ (Kripke 1972) directly denoting exclusive individuals. Example (4) refers to the whole species by its name, the noun serving as the proper name of the whole class (Carlson 1977). In (5) the article solely assigns case to the CP to convert it into an NP. Similarly, in example (6) both definiteness and referentiality are borne by the demonstrative, while the polydefinite in (7) is not semantically polydefinite as both definites refer to the same entity.

2.2. The DP in Albanian, English and Georgian

Unlike Greek, Albanian determiners are postposed. The article suffix encodes syntactic features of gender, number and case (Lyons 1999; Ρεβυθιάδου & Σπυρόπουλος 2013). Examples (8) through (10) illustrate the definite and indefinite article of a masculine, a feminine and a neuter noun respectively.

- (8) hotel / hoteli / hotel
 hotel / hotel.DEF.MAS.NOM.SG / hotel. INDEF.MAS.NOM.SG
 ‘hotel’ / ‘the hotel’ / ‘a hotel’
- (9) gjyshe / gjyshja / gjyshe
 grandmother / grandmother.DEF.FEM.NOM.SG / grandmother.INDEF.
 FEM.NOM.SG
 ‘grandmother’ / ‘the grandmother’ / ‘a grandmother’
- (10) të folur / të folurit / të folur
 voice / voice.DEF.NEU.NOM.SG / voice.INDEF.NEU.NOM.SG
 ‘voice’ / ‘the voice’ / ‘a voice’

Similarly to Greek, Albanian also makes use of expletive definite articles with demonstratives, proper names, generic reference and in determiner spreading as it is illustrated in examples (11) – (14). Enclitic definite articles have been claimed to be expletive since they cannot function as independent bearers of referentiality, only carrying ϕ -features (Alexiadou et al. 2007; Giusti 2002).

- (11) këto vajzat e Agimit
these daughters.DEF PRT Agim.GEN
'these daughters of Agim's'
- (12) Agimi e pa Dritën
Agim.DEF PRT saw Dritë.DEF
'Agim saw Drita'
- (13) Elefantët janë gjitarë
elephants.DEF are mammals.DEF
'elephants are mammals'
- (14) djali imire / imir idjalë
boy.DEF DEF.good / DEF.good DEF.boy
'the good boy'

In English there is a definite article *the* and two indefinite articles *a/an* for nouns starting with a consonant /vowel respectively. Both are free morphemes placed preminally and do not inflect for gender, number or case. The indefinite article entails singularity. Definite articles encode that the noun phrase is familiar and identifiable by both speaker and hearer (15).

- (15) I bought a dress and a t-shirt the other day. The dress is for a formal occasion.

There are only exceptional expletive uses of the definite article in English, including inherently unique individuals, e.g. *the sun*, geographical proper names, e.g. *the Thames*, *the UK*, family names denoting the whole family as a group, e.g. *the Smiths*, nationalities, e.g. *the Greek* and with generic 'substantivised' adjectives, e.g. *the rich*. However, in all cases mentioned there is the potential of a common noun addition that will license the article - *the Thames river*, *the Greek people*, *the Smiths family* and *the rich members of society*².

Georgian does not have an article system and nouns themselves do not encode grammatical gender. Modern Georgian altogether lacks a definiteness marker (Ortmann & Kiguradze 2008; Stolz et al. 2008). If one wishes to stress that only one entity is involved, it is possible to use the cardinal *erti*, which means

² Another case of expletive use of the definite article is with singular generics, e.g. The lion has four legs. In that latter case the presence of the article is required in order to differentiate generic reference from mass noun use, as for example in the sentence *We had lion for supper*, which requires a mass noun reading (Longobardi 1994).

‘one’, with the relevant noun. In example (16) the noun may have a definite or an indefinite reading, depending on the rest of the context:

- (16) *c’igni*
 book
 ‘a book’ / ‘the book’

3. PREVIOUS STUDIES ON L2 ACQUISITION OF THE GREEK DEFINITE ARTICLE

Most relevant research has shown that the L2A of the indefinite article is less problematic for learners compared to that of the definite article (Βερβίτης et al. 2012; Tsimpli 2003), with problems persisting through advanced stages of development (Αστόρα 2010; Karpava 2015; Νεστοράτου 2015; Mavridou 2012) especially for learners of [-articles] L1s. Tsimpli and Mastropavlou (2008) found a child/adult asymmetry in L2A of the definite article; while at lower proficiency levels both study groups did better at the indefinite article than at the definite, there was improvement on both articles with increased proficiency for children acquirers, whereas the adults’ problems remained (cf. Chondrogianni 2008 who found faster learning rates for L1 Turkish children, yet, ultimately similar degree of DP production for adults). Also, Dimitrakopoulou et al. (2004) found adult learners’ age of first exposure to be a significant factor of attainment in the case of the definite article (cf. Karpava 2015).

More recently, Danavassi (2020) and Danavassi and Agathopoulou (2021) investigated the acquisition of adult L2 Greek determiners with postpubertal learners from both [\pm articles] L1s at two levels of proficiency. Despite the very high suppliance rates attested for both articles, significant L1 as well as developmental effects were found in the case of the definite determiner favouring the advanced participants from [+articles] L1s. Also, only for the definite article, there were significant performance differences between the L2 participants and the NS controls even at advanced levels of proficiency, denoting a much more demanding pattern of acquisition for the definite compared to the indefinite article. Moreover, Danavassi (2020) found that seemingly target-like performance on the definite article for adult learners from [-articles] L1s might in fact be aided by the interpretable feature [kinship] and input misanalysis.

A reversed pattern of accuracy was observed by Agathopoulou et al. (2012) with their adult learners faring better at the definite article than at the indefinite, suggesting learnability problems with interpretable features (see also Μεσηνιώτη et al. 2017). Yet, they also found L1 effects as participants from Slavic [-articles] L1s were less accurate than the English and the Romance groups at the definite article lending partial support to the IH. Also, definite DPs with demonstratives

and complementizers triggered greater difficulty. Mesinioti et al. (Μεσινιώτη et al. 2017) found persistent difficulties with interpretable features at the syntactic-semantic interface, as non-expletive uses of the definite article posed more problems to their beginner–intermediate mixed L1 group than expletive uses.

In sum, while some findings seem to support a more complex route of acquisition for the definite article, especially as regards learners from [-uninterpretable features] L1s, other studies posit that interpretable features might also cause learnability issues. Nonetheless, there seems to be a gap in the existing literature with regard to a contrastive analysis between the L2 acquisition patterns of expletive and non-expletive uses of the definite article with adult learners from [\pm articles] L1s. The present study aims to complement this gap by investigating the semantic status of the Greek definite article through relevant L2 data.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND PREDICTIONS

In view of relevant previous research findings, the main research questions (RQ) of this study are:

- RQ1: Can adult acquisition of the Greek definite article reach native-like levels?
- RQ2: Will there be an effect of expletiveness manifested by diverse acquisition patterns for the expletive and non-expletive uses of the Greek definite article?
- RQ3: Will there be any L1 and/or developmental effects between [\pm articles] and [\pm expletive definite article] L1s?

If all participants at advanced stages of L2 development have acquired the Greek definite article at native-like level, then access to uninterpretable features can be claimed to remain unimpeded despite the latter being absent from the L1. Moreover, if the Greek definite article is inherently expletive, the acquisition of its non-expletive uses is expected to involve the same degree of difficulty as that of its expletive uses. Reversely, if non-expletive uses of the Greek definite article are semantically enriched compared to its expletive uses, an asymmetrical learning pattern is expected, with the former uses proving less problematic than the latter.

5. THE PRESENT STUDY

In this section, I first describe the participants, then the tasks, and finally the results.

5.1. The participants

A total number of 65 L2 Greek participants were selected upon fulfillment of the following criteria: a) first exposure to the L2 after puberty, b) naturalistic exposure to the L2, c) length of residence (LoR) > 8 years. Participants formed two proficiency groups based on results from an oral proficiency test marked according to 4 categories of band descriptors (fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical accuracy, and pronunciation) adapted from the CEFR (2001) and IELTS oral exam. Band scores for each category of descriptor ranged from 0 to 9 (0: no communication possible, 9: full proficiency). Global scores 4-6 corresponded to intermediate level and 7-9 to advanced. A group of 12 Greek NS controls matched for age and education level were also included in the study. Participants’ details are summarised in Table 1.

L1 GROUP	N	L2 PROFICIENCY	AGE AT TEST	AGE OF ONSET
Albanian ADV	13	7.69 (SD: .78)	45.00 (SD: 8.13)	23.38 (SD: 5.81)
Albanian INT	12	5.13 (SD: .71)	44.08 (SD: 7.48)	25.08 (SD: 6.89)
English ADV	10	7.60 (SD: .66)	48.20 (SD: 7.58)	23.50 (SD: 4.50)
English INT	9	5.50 (SD: .79)	47.44 (SD: 10.96)	28.11 (SD: 4.70)
Georgian ADV	10	7.65 (SD: .85)	42.10 (SD: 8.17)	22.30 (SD: 5.91)
Georgian INT	9	5.44 (SD: .53)	48.33 (SD: 8.92)	28.78 (SD: 6.44)
Greek NS	12	—	43.58 (SD: 10.79)	—

Table 1. The participants’ means of proficiency, age at test, AoO and LoR (SDs in parentheses)

5.2. The tasks

Data were elicited from an oral production task-set (OP) and a sentence repetition task (SRT). The OP entailed a natural semi-structured interview on topics of general interest, story-telling (ST) and giving instructions (GI). In the ST the participants saw three sets of pictures illustrating stories to describe and narrate. In the GI the participants were given 9 flashcards depicting ingredients and were asked to describe making a sandwich. The OP aimed at testing correct suppliance of articles, yet in the present article the focus is solely on the definite article³. Example (17a) shows correct suppliance in an obligatory context (OC) while (17b) shows an instance of omission.

³ The OP task-set was designed with a broader investigation scope to monitor for suppliance of indefinite articles, clitics, and agreement in the DP.

- (17) a. tora i mitera exi $\delta\upsilon\lambda\iota\alpha$
 now the.FEM.NOM.SG mother.FEM.NOM.SG has work
 ‘now the mother is working’
- b. * tora mitera exi $\delta\upsilon\lambda\iota\alpha$
 now mother.FEM.NOM.SG has work

The SRT was especially aimed at testing expletiveness through evaluating implicit knowledge and underlying processing ability of the participants (Erlam 2006). The rationale behind using the SRT was to test both comprehension and production of the target structures. To this end, sentences were carefully constructed in terms of length and grammatical complexity to avoid floor and ceiling effects (Jessop et al. 2007). The SRT included 30 sentences, half grammatical and half ungrammatical, all investigating expletiveness across 5 conditions: DP + (generic reference, proper names, demonstratives, complementiser, specific reference). Participants listened to each sentence once and had to repeat it a) verbatim if it was grammatical and b) corrected if it was ungrammatical. Each correct repetition was awarded one point, while incorrect renditions received a zero points. Examples of grammatical and ungrammatical sentences are presented in (18a-e) and (19a-b) respectively.

(18) SRT sentences with expletive DPs

I. for generic reference

- a. mu ipan oti ta liontaria $\delta\epsilon\eta$ ine epikin $\delta\iota\alpha$
 me told that the.NEU.NOM.PL lions.NEU.NOM.PL not are
 dangerous
 ‘They told me lions are not dangerous’
- b. * $\delta\iota\alpha$ vasa oti aloya zun os ke ikosi xronia
 read. that horses live up to and twenty years
 ‘I read horses live up to twenty years’

II. with proper names

- a. akusa oti o Panos pali pire $\delta\iota\alpha\zeta\iota\upsilon\iota\omicron$
 heard that the.MAS.NOM.SG Panos.MAS.NOM.SG again got divorce
 ‘I heard that Panos got a divorce again’

- b. * *emaθa oti Meri pantreftike tetarti fora*
found out that Meri married fourth time
'I found out that Mary married for the fourth time'

III. with demonstratives

- a. *ekinos o pinakas ine poli akrivos*
that.MAS.NOM.SG the.MAS.NOM.SG painting is very expensive
'That painting is very expensive'
- b. * *afto pukamiso su pai*
this.NEU.NOM.SG shirt you.GEN go
'This shirt suits you'

IV. with a complementiser

- a. *ine kalo to na yimnazese*
is good the.NEU.NOM.SG to exercise
'Exercising is good'
- b. * *den kani tipote alo apo na skeftete*
not do nothing else than to think
'He does nothing else but think'

(19) SRT sentences with non-expletive DPs (specific reference)

- a. *mu arese to pukamiso pu mu eðikses*
me liked the.NEU.NOM.SG shirt.NEU.NOM.SG that me.GEN showed
'I liked the shirt that you showed me'
- b. * *den ðiavasa kanena apo vivlia pu ayorasa persi*
not read none of books that bought last year
'I didn't read any of the books that I bought last year'

5.3. Results from the OP task-set

Results from the OP task-set presented in Table 2 show very high rates of correct suppliance for all groups, ranging from 77.2% in the Georgian group to 99.2% in the Albanian group. Evidently, OCs for non-expletive uses exceed those for expletive uses.

L1/ Proficiency	Definite article		Expletive		Non-expletive	
	SUPPLIED	OMITTED	SUPPLIED	OMITTED	SUPPLIED	OMITTED
Albanian ADV	1174	9	115	2	1060	8
	99.2%	0.8%	98.3%	1.7%	99.3%	0.7%
Albanian INT	655	17	44	1	611	17
	97.5%	2.5%	97.8%	2.2%	97.3%	2.7%
English ADV	744	10	41	4	706	6
	98.7%	1.3%	91.1%	8.9%	99.2%	0.8%
English INT	629	35	56	5	574	30
	94.7%	5.3%	91.8%	8.2%	95%	5%
Georgian ADV	644	93	95	13	550	81
	87.4%	12.6%	88%	12%	87.2%	12.8%
Georgian INT	370	109	50	10	331	99
	77.2%	22.8%	83.3%	16.7%	77%	23%
Greek NS	593	0	9	0	584	0
	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%

Table 2. Suppliance of expletive/ non-expletive definite DPs across L1/proficiency subgroups

The data were analysed by means of chi-square tests of independence. Results revealed a developmental effect for all groups in their performance at the definite determiner with all advanced L1 groups performing better than their intermediate counterparts. (χ^2 (1, N = 1855) = 9.704, p = .002, η^2 = .072 for the Albanian, χ^2 (1, N = 1418) = 17.881, p < .001, η^2 = .112 for the English, and, χ^2 (1, N = 1216) = 21.536, p < .001, η^2 = .133 for the Georgian). It was also shown that all groups scored significantly lower compared to the Greek NS control group in the suppliance of the definite determiner in OCs (Albanian advanced χ^2 (1, N = 1776) = 4.534, p = .033, η^2 = .051 and intermediate χ^2 (1, N = 1265) = 15.206, p < .001, η^2 = .110, English advanced χ^2 (1, N = 1347) = 7.924, p = .005, η^2 = .077 and intermediate χ^2 (1, N = 1257) = 32.153, p < .001, η^2 = .160, Georgian advanced χ^2 (1, N = 1330) = 80.455, p < .001, η^2 = .246 and intermediate χ^2 (1, N = 1072) = 150.215, p < .001, η^2 = .374). There were also significant L1 differences between the groups. The Albanian group performed better than the English at the intermediate level (χ^2 (1, N = 1336) = 6.710, p = .010, η^2 = .071), yet there was no difference between them at the advanced level. The Albanian groups' performance was significantly better than that of the Georgian groups' at both advanced (χ^2 (1, N = 1920) = 126.934, p < .001, η^2 = .257) and intermediate (χ^2 (1, N = 1151) = 117.356, p < .001, η^2 = .319) level. Also, the English groups performed better than the Georgian groups at both

advanced ($\chi^2 (1, N = 1491) = 73.904, p < .001, \eta^2 = .223$) and intermediate ($\chi^2 (1, N = 1143) = 77.257, p < .001, \eta^2 = .260$) level. These findings point towards more persisting difficulties for that the Georgian groups at the definite article.

Another chi-square test of independence was performed for all groups in order to test for a possible effect of expletiveness on correct suppliance of the definite article. Yet, no association of significance was found. Following that, separate chi-square tests of independence were conducted for each L1/proficiency subgroup, and results revealed that the English advanced made significantly fewer article omissions in the non-expletive condition ($\chi^2 (1, N = 757) = 21.021, p < .001, \eta^2 = .167$).

5.4. Results from the SRT

As it is illustrated in Table 3, most groups’ performance was better at grammatical than ungrammatical sentences in both expletiveness conditions.

EXPLETIVENESS	L1/PROFICIENCY						
	GREEK	ALBANIAN		ENGLISH		GEORGIAN	
	NS	Adv.	Int.	Adv.	Int.	Adv.	Int.
Expletive							
Grammatical	0.93 (0.10)	0.87 (0.09)	0.64 (0.14)	0.81 (0.14)	0.63 (0.22)	0.81 (0.23)	0.60 (0.16)
Ungrammatical	0.93 (0.08)	0.78 (0.16)	0.54 (0.17)	0.79 (0.10)	0.65 (0.17)	0.65 (0.23)	0.45 (0.16)
Non-expletive							
Grammatical	1.0 (0)	1.0 (0)	0.97 (0.07)	1.0 (0)	1.0 (0)	0.77 (0.24)	0.25 (0.33)
Ungrammatical	0.89 (0.19)	0.71 (0.37)	0.33 (0.34)	0.82 (0.33)	0.52 (0.41)	0.52 (0.46)	0.25 (0.26)

Table 3. Correct performance at the two expletiveness conditions in the SR task (SDs in parentheses)

A 2x2 repeated measures ANOVA was conducted with Expletiveness (two levels: expletive vs. non-expletive) and Grammaticality (two levels: grammatical vs. ungrammatical) as within-subjects variables, and L1 (Albanian, English, Georgian, Greek) and Proficiency (advanced, intermediate, native) as between-subjects variables, in order to test for main effects and interactions. The analyses showed that the main effect of Grammaticality ($F(1, 70) = 35.399, p < .001, \eta^2 = .336$) was significant, but that of Expletiveness was not. Overall, participants were better at the grammatical than the ungrammatical condition.

Regarding between-subject factors, the analysis indicated significant L1 ($F(2, 70) = 16.697, p < .001, \eta^2 = .323$) and Proficiency effects ($F(1, 70) = 40.918, p < .001, \eta^2 = .369$). Bonferroni post-hoc tests revealed that the Greek NS were significantly better than the Albanian ($p = .001$), the English ($p = .014$) and the Georgian ($p < .001$). There was no difference between the performance of the Albanian and the English, while the Georgian performed significantly lower than both ($p < .001$). Further Bonferroni post-hoc tests showed better performance for advanced than intermediate groups ($p < .001$), both of which were outperformed by the NS controls ($p = .011$ and $p < .001$ respectively).

A second repeated measures ANOVA for every L1 and Proficiency subgroup was conducted in order to further examine main effects and interactions of Expletiveness and Grammaticality (within-subjects factors). A significant effect of Expletiveness was found only in the Georgian intermediate subgroup ($F(1, 9) = 12.675, p = .006, \eta^2 = .585$) whose performance at the expletive sentences was better than at the non-expletive.

Table 4 presents results for each different expletive use of the definite article.

EXPLETIVE TYPE	L1/PROFICIENCY						
	GREEK	ALBANIAN		ENGLISH		GEORGIAN	
D + CP	NS	Adv.	Int.	Adv.	Int.	Adv.	Int.
Grammatical	0.97 (0.09)	0.61 (0.35)	0.08 (0.20)	0.61 (0.33)	0.16 (0.23)	0.56 (0.49)	0.20 (0.23)
Ungrammatical	0.91 (0.15)	0.43 (0.39)	0 (0)	0.43 (0.38)	0.10 (0.22)	0.33 (0.41)	0 (0)
Demonstrative + D							
Grammatical	0.77 (0.35)	0.87 (0.28)	0.63 (0.26)	0.73 (0.26)	0.60 (0.34)	0.93 (0.21)	0.73 (0.34)
Ungrammatical	0.83 (0.26)	0.84 (0.22)	0.63 (0.36)	0.76 (0.22)	0.71 (0.35)	0.86 (0.17)	0.53 (0.35)
D + Generic							
Grammatical	1 (0)	1 (0)	0.97 (0.09)	1 (0)	0.90 (0.22)	0.90 (0.22)	0.73 (0.21)
Ungrammatical	1 (0)	0.97 (0.09)	0.80 (0.22)	0.96 (0.10)	0.86 (0.23)	0.70 (0.39)	0.70 (0.29)
D + Proper							
Grammatical	1 (0)	1 (0)	0.87 (0.31)	0.90 (0.21)	0.87 (0.31)	0.85 (0.33)	0.75 (0.35)
Ungrammatical	1 (0)	0.88 (0.29)	0.72 (0.39)	1 (0)	0.92 (0.12)	0.70 (0.32)	0.57 (0.42)

Table 4. Correct performance/Expletive Type of the definite article in the SR task (SDs in parentheses)

A 4x2 repeated measures ANOVA with Expletive Type (four levels: D+proper name vs. D+generic vs. demonstrative + D vs. D+CP) and Grammaticality (two levels: grammatical vs. ungrammatical) as within-subjects variables and L1 (Albanian, English, Georgian, Greek) and Proficiency (advanced, intermediate, native) as between-subjects variables uncovered significant main effects of Expletive Type ($F(3, 210) = 77.728, p < .001, \eta^2 = .526$), Grammaticality ($F(1, 70) = 8.164, p = .006, \eta^2 = .104$) and Proficiency ($F(1, 70) = 35.096, p < .001, \eta^2 = .334$). Bonferroni post-hoc tests showed that D+CP was significantly the most problematic structure ($p < .001$ for all structures), followed by Demonstrative+D, at which performance was significantly lower than it was at both D+Generic ($p < .001$) and D+proper ($p = .013$).

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this section I revisit my research questions and the relevant expectations (see Section 4).

Overall results from the OP task-set showed very high suppliance rates of the definite article in OCs for all L1 groups. After massive exposure to L2 input containing the target structure in abundance, that is unsurprising. However, results point out significant developmental and L1 effects; a) all the advanced groups performed better than their intermediate counterparts and all groups had lower performance compared to the NS, and b) participants from [+articles] L1s significantly outperformed those from [-articles] L1s even at advanced proficiency level. Therefore, it seems that despite the very high performance rates and for all input salience, the acquisition of the definite article is not straightforward (compared to that of the indefinite, see Danavassi and Agathopoulou 2021), some deviation from native-like standards seems to remain even at advanced stages of development together with a clear advantage when there is grammaticalization of uninterpretable features in the L1. These findings were also reflected in the SRT results and seem to lend support to the IH answering RQ1 and RQ3.

In the OP task-set, no association of significance was revealed between expletive and non-expletive uses of the definite article within any of the groups but the L1 English advanced, who made significantly fewer determiner omissions in the non-expletive condition. Taking into account the lack of expletive definite articles in English, this could possibly be interpreted as evidence for an interpretability asymmetry between the two uses of the definite determiner. Yet, such an interpretation could not justify the performance of the English intermediate group, who did not differentiate between the two conditions of expletiveness. We could accept that the English intermediate group have misanalysed the input and treat the expletive definite DPs as formulaic at this stage of L2 development,

assuming that article and proper name/kinship term cluster together, as the participants of this group mainly use expletive determiners in these contexts. However, a different explanation seems more fitting with the data in question; there can be no learnability association between expletive and non-expletive uses of the definite determiner if the latter is uninterpretable in all its occurrences. The higher number of omissions of the English advanced group in the expletive condition may be accidental and connected to the very limited number of OCs of expletive compared to non-expletive definite DPs in the OP task-set, which might have affected the analyses.

Indeed, results from the SRT come to confirm this second analysis. First, performance at grammatical sentences was better than it was at ungrammatical ones, in agreement with other studies that used similar elicited imitation tasks (Agathopoulou et al. 2012, Danavassi 2020, Erlam 2006). As regards the expletive categories, the structures D+CP and Demonstrative+D triggered the most inaccurate responses across L1 groups. This could be justified by the fact that D+CP is less frequent in the input, and also constitutes higher language use. The structures D+proper name and D+generic reference were less problematic, possibly due to their more frequent occurrence in the input. Crucially, there was no effect of expletiveness attested, which confirms the previous explanation on the lower performance of the English advanced group at the expletive condition in the OP task-set. The fact that there was no advantage of the Albanian group over the English demonstrates that the Albanian expletive DP was of no more aid to the L1 Albanian group than the English definite article was to the L1 English group. Interestingly, only the performance of the intermediate L1 Georgian group was significantly better at expletive sentences. Given the fact that they were the lowest achieving group in the study, their performance should be taken to be the most indicative of learning difficulties to do with the definite determiner. Such data cannot corroborate a supposed greater learning challenge due to expletiveness, which provides a response to RQ2. All the above appear to serve as evidence for an inherently expletive and semantically inert Greek definite article.

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Τέρψη Δαναβάση
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ΠΛΕΟΝΑΣΤΙΚΗ ΚΑΙ ΜΗ-ΠΛΕΟΝΑΣΤΙΚΗ ΧΡΗΣΗ ΤΟΥ ΟΡΙΣΤΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΘΡΟΥ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ Γ2

Περίληψη

Το ελληνικό οριστικό άρθρο θεωρείται σύμπλεγμα χαρακτηριστικών συμφωνίας και πτώσης μη ερμηνεύσιμων στη Λογική Δομή, σε αντίθεση με το αόριστο άρθρο που φέρει το ερμηνεύσιμο χαρακτηριστικό της οριστικότητας (Tsimpli & Mastropavlou 2008). Η παρούσα μελέτη εξετάζει το ελληνικό πλεοναστικό οριστικό άρθρο σε συντακτικά περιβάλλοντα στα οποία δεν επιτελεί τη σημασιολογική λειτουργία της οριστικότητας (π.χ. με κύριο όνομα, γενικευτική αναφορά, δεικτική αντωνυμία και φράση συμπληρωματικού δείκτη) καθώς και σε περιβάλλοντα όπου γίνεται αναφορά σε συγκεκριμένη οντότητα. Τα δεδομένα προφορικού λόγου προήλθαν από 72 ενήλικους μη φυσικούς ομιλητές ελληνικών ως Γ2 με μητρικές γλώσσες τα Γεωργιανά (-άρθρα), τα Αγγλικά (-πλεοναστικό οριστικό άρθρο) και τα Αλβανικά (+άρθρα, πλεοναστικό οριστικό άρθρο). Οι συμμετέχοντες/ουσες που εκτέθηκαν στη Γ2 μετά την εφηβεία χωρίστηκαν σε δύο επίπεδα γλωσσικής επάρκειας, μεσαίο και προχωρημένο/πολύ προχωρημένο, βάσει αποτελεσμάτων ενός ανεξάρτητου προφορικού τεστ. Τα αποτελέσματα από δύο τύπους προφορικών δοκιμασιών - προφορική παραγωγή και επανάληψη προτάσεων – δείχνουν ότι η απόδοση των συμμετεχόντων στο οριστικό άρθρο δεν επηρεάζεται από την πλεοναστικότητα ή μη της χρήσης του. Ως εκ τούτου, τα ευρήματα φαίνεται να συμφωνούν με τους θεωρητικούς που υποστηρίζουν ότι το οριστικό άρθρο είναι εγγενώς πλεοναστικό και στερείται σημασιολογικού περιεχομένου (Αλεξιάδου et al. 2007, Giusti 2002, Lekakou & Szendroi 2012).

Λέξεις-κλειδιά: ενήλικοι μαθητές, ελληνικά Γ2, ερμηνευσιμότητα των χαρακτηριστικών, (πλεοναστικό) οριστικό άρθρο