

# DEMONSTRATIVE UNAGREEMENT

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**Unagreement** There is a proper subset of null subject languages (NSLs) in which a definite plural subject and certain quantified phrases can be combined with all three (plural) person forms of the verb. This phenomenon, sometimes referred to as unagreement (Hurtado 1985; Ackema & Neeleman 2013), is attested, e.g., in Spanish, Greek and Bulgarian, cf. (1), while other NSLs, such as Italian and European Portuguese, only allow third person agreement in the corresponding cases, cf. (2).

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| <p>(1) Oi mathites      doulev-oume/-ete/-oun.<br/>             the pupil.NOM.PL work-1/2/3PL<br/>             ‘We/you/the pupils work.’ (<i>Greek</i>)</p> | <p>(2) Gli      studenti lavor-<i>*iamo</i>/<i>-*ate</i>/<i>-ano</i>.<br/>             DET.PL students work.1/2/3PL<br/>             ‘<i>only</i>: ‘The students work.’ (<i>Italian</i>)</p> |
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Normally, demonstrative-marked noun phrases are not compatible with unagreement, cf. (3), suggesting that Greek demonstratives are specified for third person. However, when heading relative clauses (4), for at least some speakers the plural demonstrative seems to be able to control non-third person agreement in the main clause after all.

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| <p>(3) Aftoi (oi podilates) *kratiomaste/ *kratieste/ kratiountai se forma.<br/>             DEM.PL DET.PL cyclists stay.1PL stay.2PL stay.3PL in form<br/>             ‘These (cyclists) keep fit.’</p> <p>(4) Aftoi pou kanoume podilato kratiomaste se forma.<br/>             DEM.PL REL do.1PL bicycle stay.1PL in form<br/>             ‘We who ride the bicycle keep fit.’</p> | <p><i>Modern Greek</i></p> |
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Initially, this might seem like a problem for accounts of unagreement assuming that demonstratives are third person. However, this phenomenon is not restricted to languages with unagreement. While not allowing unagreement (5a), colloquial German displays the “demonstrative unagreement” construction in (5b) parallel to the Greek example.

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| <p>(5) a. *Die      Fahrradfahrer haltet      euch      fit.<br/>             DET.PL cyclists      keep.2PL you.PL.ACC fit</p> <p>    b. Die,      die      ihr      regelmäßig Fahrrad fahrt,      haltet      euch      fit.<br/>             DEM.PL REL.PL you.PL regularly bicycle ride.2PL keep.2PL REFL.2PL fit<br/>             ‘You who ride the bicycle regularly keep yourselves fit.’</p> | <p><i>German</i></p> |
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I propose that these constructions do not involve an actual failure of syntactic agreement, but that they result from a postsyntactic impoverishment operation that leads to the realisation of a default demonstrative instead of the expected pronoun.

**Proposal in a nutshell** The analysis is set in the framework of Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993; Embick 2010). I suggest that **demonstratives and (at least adnominal) personal pronouns realise the same head** and that further the sentence in (5) parallels (6) in that the demonstrative/pronoun in both clauses carries the syntactic person features which are visible in the agreement patterns (first person here).

- (6) Emeis pou kanoume podilato kratiomaste se forma.  
     we      REL do.1PL bicycle stay.1PL in form  
     ‘We who ride the bicycle keep fit.’

Structurally, I assume that the same head encodes person and demonstrativity in both Greek and German, although I take the relevant head to be the D head in German (Rauh 2003) and a distinct higher Pers head in Greek (Höhn 2016).



An (optional) post-syntactic operation of impoverishment as in (9) deletes the person features on a plural personal/demonstrative head if linearly followed by a relative clause relativising an argument with the same person specification – potentially a form of haplogy. This leads to the insertion of the demonstrative *aftos* ‘this, that’ (or its inflected forms) as a default in 4.

- (9)  $[\alpha\text{auth}, \beta\text{part}] \rightarrow \emptyset / [ \_ , \text{pl} ] \frown [_{\text{RC}} [\alpha\text{auth}, \beta\text{part}]$

The necessity of the person identity requirement is illustrated in (10).

- (10) a. \*Aftoi pou kanoun podilato kratiomaste se forma. Greek  
 DEM.PL REL do.3PL bicycle stay.1PL in form  
 b. \*Aftoi pou kanoume podilato kratiountai se forma.  
 DEM.PL REL do.1PL bicycle stay.3PL in form

**Default demonstratives** While I focus on Greek in this abstract, my talk will extend the discussion to German. I propose an organisation of Vocabulary Items (VIs) along the lines of (11), giving only the nominative plural (masculine where relevant) forms.

- (11) [+dem, +auth, +part, pl, nom] ⇔ *emeis*  
 [+dem, -auth, +part, pl, nom] ⇔ *eseis*  
 [+dem, +distal, +Y, (-auth, -part), pl, masc, nom] ⇔ *ekeinoi*  
 [+dem, pl, masc, nom] ⇔ *aftoi*

Considering that the Greek demonstrative *aftos* “may be used [...] as an all-purpose demonstrative without distinguishing between proximity and distance” (Holton et al. 2012:401), it is plausible to assume that the VI *aftos* (and its inflectional variants) is underspecified for [±distal]. I additionally assume that the VI is not specified for person, accounting for its “default” character. The VIs for *ekeinoi* etc., realising the distal demonstrative, are specified as [+distal] accordingly. I also assume a feature [+Y] differentiating it from distal uses of *aftoi*. I remain agnostic as to whether the VIs for *ekeinoi* etc. are specified for third person.

After the application of the impoverishment rule 9, the Pers node is left without person features. Assuming that a Pers node generated for a personal pronoun would not contain a [±distal] feature, the (default) VI for *aftoi* is going to be the only applicable exponent, deriving the realisation in 4. Crucially, this does not mean that the *aftoi* (etc.) can only realise person-less nodes. In other contexts, it can also realise [-auth, -part] nodes that do not carry additional features requiring the insertion of more specific *ekeinoi*. This accounts for the cases where the node realised by *aftoi* is syntactically third person as shown in 3.

These assumptions also correctly rule out the realisation of the impoverished Pers head by *ekeinoi* as in (12). Pers would not contain a [+distal] (nor a [+Y]) feature so that the VI is too specific to be considered for insertion.

- (12) \*Ekeinoi pou kanoume podilato kratiomaste se forma.  
 DEM.DIST.PL REL do.1PL bicycle stay.1PL in form

The claim that there is a linear component to the impoverishment rule as suggested in 9 is supported by the data in (13), showing that intervention of further nominal material between the demonstrative and the relative seems to block the application of the rule. Therefore, the demonstrative *aftoi* has to realise a Pers node with third person features as in 3 above. Consequently, the first person marking on the main verb cannot be derived and turns out ungrammatical.

- (13) \*Aftoi oi foitites pou kanoume podilato kratiomaste se forma.  
 DEM.PL DET.PL students REL do.1PL bicycle stay.1PL in form  
 intended: ‘We who ride bicycle keep in form.’

**Conclusion** The crucial difference between the demonstratives in 3 and 4 is that only the former is syntactically 3rd person, while the latter is syntactically first person and receives the same realisation only as result of morphological impoverishment.

## References

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