On implicit arguments and logophoricity: Accounting for exempt anaphora cross-linguistically*

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1. Introduction

As is well-known, there are certain occurrences of reflexive pronouns in English that do not appear to obey Principle A of the binding theory (Chomsky 1986), as illustrated in (1). Here, the reflexives, *herself* in (1a) and *himself* in (1b), are licensed despite the absence of a local antecedent, (see Charnavel 2019, Charnavel and Sportiche 2016, Clements 1975, Pollard and Sag 1992, Reinhart and Reuland 1993, Sundaresan 2013, 2018 i.a.).

(1) a. Catherine$_i$ boasted that the queen invited Andrew and herself$_i$ for tea.
b. Tom$_i$ believes that there is a picture of himself$_i$ hanging in the post office.

These occurrences are called exempt reflexives (Charnavel and Sportiche 2016). Nevertheless, while English exempt reflexives are subject to certain constraints (Charnavel and Bryant 2023), they are still less restricted compared to exempt reflexives in other languages. This paper seeks to shed light on the licensing conditions of exempt reflexives by exploring a case exemplified by the Greek reflexive *o eaftos mu* 'lit. the self mine.' This reflexive requires a local c-commanding antecedent, as per Principle A (Anagnostopoulou and Everaert 1999, Angelopoulos and Sportiche 2023, Iatridou 1988, Spathas 2010). It presents an interesting contrast when it has concrete reference. Specifically, as shown in (2a), it cannot be used as exempt when it occurs as a verb's argument. On the other hand, like its English counterpart, it can have an exempt usage when embedded under a noun, (2b), i.e. in a DP.

(2) a. *I Katerina$_i$ perifaneftike oti i vasilisa kalese ton Adrea
the Katerina.NOM boasted that the queen.NOM invited the Adrea.ACC
ce ton eafto tis$_i$ ja tsai.
and the self.ACC her.GEN for tea

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'Katerina boasted that the queen invited Adrea and herself for tea.'

b. O Tasos$_i$ pistevi oti iparhi mia fotografia tu eaftu tu$_i$
the Tasos.NOM believes that there.is a picture.NOM the self.GEN his.GEN
kremasmeni s-to ghrafio.
hanging in-the office
'Tasos believes that there is a picture of himself hanging in the office.'

Why does one language allow exempt anaphora more liberally (English) while another only permits it to a limited extent (Greek)? To address this question, we introduce novel data that reveal a striking correlation between the distribution of exempt anaphora and implicit arguments in Greek and English.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 provides background on the Greek reflexive and presents questionnaire results verifying the contrast in (2). Section 3 introduces foundational assumptions on logophoricity. Section 4 discusses the assumed typology of implicit pronouns and proposes that the logophoric pronoun licensing exempt anaphors has the featural make-up of a definite or generic pronoun. Sections 5 and 6 provide an account for the distribution of logophoric *o eaftos mu* within vPs and DPs, respectively. Alternative analyses are discussed in Section 7, and some remarks on a different anaphoric element, which can also have an exempt use are provided in Section 8. Section 9 concludes.

2. The Greek reflexive

As previously noted, the Greek reflexive *o eaftos mu* is a plain anaphor subject to Condition A, just like its English counterpart (see Angelopoulos and Sportiche 2023). Given this, *o eaftos mu* cannot be licensed in the absence of a c-commanding antecedent:[1]

(3) *O pateras tis Marias$_i$ aghapai ton eafto tis$_i$.
the father.NOM the Maria.GEN loves the self.ACC her.GEN
'Maria's father loves herself.'

We document a vP-DP asymmetry in the licensing of the Greek reflexive as an exempt anaphor with concrete reference. Specifically, as summarized in (2):

(4) **The vP-DP asymmetry:** Exempt *o eaftos mu* is prohibited when functioning as a verb's argument, (2a), yet it is permissible as an exempt anaphor when embedded under a noun phrase, (2b).

This asymmetry was confirmed via a questionnaire with 27 native speakers who rated sentences on a 1-6 scale, with 6 indicating the highest acceptability and 1 the lowest. As shown in the table below, (2a) is accepted whereas (2b) is not.

[1] All instances of *o eaftos mu* here have been tested applying the diagnostics in Angelopoulos and Sportiche (2023) to avoid the so-called reified usage.

	(2a)	(2b)
Survey Results	Average=1.57, SD=0.64	Average=5.3, SD=0.45

3. Logophoric *o eaftos mu* and logophoricity

We show that when embedded under a noun, as in (2b), *o eaftos mu* can be a logophor thus, it parallels the English reflexive which demonstrates the same behavior in this environment (Charnavel and Bryant 2023). Two key observations support this claim. First, in contrast to plain anaphors, *o eaftos mu* can take split-antecedents inside picture-NPs, (5a) vs (5b), (Helke 1970, Lebeaux 1984, Pollard and Sag 1992 i.a.). Second, when *o eaftos mu* occurs inside picture-NPs and has a non-local antecedent, it must express the first-person perspective of its antecedent. The context in (6), borrowed from Charnavel and Bryant (2023:(46)), is set to preclude a *de se* interpretation. As shown, the reflexive cannot be licensed in it.

(5) a. *O Janis$_j$ ipe s-ti Maria$_{ii}$ ja ton eafto tus$_{j+i}$.
the John.NOM told to-the Maria.ACC about the self.ACC their.GEN
'John told Maria about themselves.'

b. O Janis$_j$ ipe oti i Eleni$_i$ ithele na dhiksi tis kaliteres
the John.NOM said that the Eleni.NOM wanted na show the best
fotografies tu eaftu tus$_{j+i}$ s-ton Kosta.
pictures the self.GEN their.GEN to-the Kosta.ACC
'John said that Eleni wanted to show the best pictures of themselves to Kosta.'

(6) *Context: As a joke, John ran for a local election. Unexpectedly and unbeknownst to him, he got elected. What he knows is that the picture of the elected candidate, which he thinks is one of the other (serious) candidates, hangs in the post office.*

#O Janis$_i$ pistevi oti iparhi mia fotografia tu eaftu tu$_i$ s-to
the John.NOM believes that there.is a photo.NOM the self.GEN his.GEN in-the
ghrafio.
office

'John believes that there is a picture of him(self) hanging in the post office.'

Following Charnavel (2019), we assume that exempt anaphors do not realize a different lexical entry. Instead, they are plain anaphors licensed locally by a covert logophoric pronoun. The logophoric pronoun is merged in the specifier position of a logophoric operator heading a projection LogP. This projection is available in each phasal/Spell-out domain, e.g. v, D or C. Thus, in (1a), *herself* is licensed locally by silent pronoun merged in the v-area.

(7) Catherine$_i$ boasted that [$_{TP}$ the queen$_k$ [$_{vP}$ t$_k$...[$_{LogP}$ pro$_i$ [$_{Log'}$ Log [... invited Andrew and herself$_i$ for tea]]]]]

4. Implicit arguments in Greek and English

We now turn to the assumed typology of implicit pronouns. Following Collins (2024), we posit three types of covert pronouns, pro_{Def}, pro_{Gen}, and pro_{Exi}, which can be used as external arguments of the English and Greek passives. Nevertheless, while the English verbal passive allows all of them, Greek verbal passives only permit pro_{Gen} and pro_{Exi}. We discuss why pro_{Def} is not allowed in the Greek verbal passive (see Angelopoulos et al. 2024 for the rest). To start with, the lack of pro_{Def} in the Greek verbal passive explains the contrast illustrated below in the licensing of the reflexive.

(8) a. *Context: Mike Tyson bought over 200 cars throughout his career, totaling at 4,5 million.*
Many were bought for himself and others as gifts for his friends. (Collins 2024:(47))

b. * Pola aghorastikan ja ton eafto tu ce ala san dhora ja tus filus tu.
many were.bought for the self his and others as gifts for the friends his
'Many were bought for himself and others as gifts for his friends.'

Assuming the context above, (8a) shows that the English passive allows for an implicit external argument. In particular, this implicit argument is a pro_{Def}, referring to Mike Tyson, as it is evident that the buyer implied in this context is Mike Tyson himself, making pro_{Def} the appropriate binder for the reflexive, *himself*.[2] On the other hand, since the Greek passive lacks pro_{Def}, the reflexive cannot be licensed in the same context. Following Angelopoulos et al. (2024), we assume that this difference between Greek and English verbal passives with respect to pro_{Def}'s availability stems from an independent difference between the two languages. In English, pro_{Def}, pro_{Gen}, and pro_{Exi} uniformly lack case. Greek is a null subject language, and because of this, its pro_{Def} has case, which allows it to be used in case positions, such as the subject position when null. Given this, pro_{Def} cannot appear in Spec,vP of the passive since it would compete with the internal argument for Case assignment by T. Turning to Greek nominals, Angelopoulos et al. (2024) note that they allow an implicit external argument, which can be pro_{Def}. This explains the fact that reflexives are licensed within nominals, (9). Here, the implicit argument licensing the reflexive is the subject of the nominal, and it must be pro_{Def}, as it can refer to a specific individual from the discourse. Furthermore, the reflexive here is not a logophor, as the subject of *promotion* is not an attitude holder. This is also evidenced by the fact that the reflexive can be licensed by other nominals—not shown due to space reasons—which are not attitudinal.

(9) I sinehis proothisi tu eaftu tu.
the constant promotion.NOM the self.GEN his.GEN
'The constant promotion of himself.'

[2] In (8a), the reflexive cannot be a logophor since the subject of *buy* is not an attitude holder. Moreover, comparable instances in English, featuring inanimate anaphors, suggesting the use of a pro_{Def} implicit external argument, are allowed (see Collins 2024).

In nominals, pro_{Def}'s [uCase] is checked by D, whereas the reflexive's [uCase] is checked by the noun:

(10) $[_{DP}\ D\ [_{nP}\ pro_{uCase}\ [_{n'}\ n\ [_{NP}\ N\ ...\ reflexive_{uCase}]]]]$

5. Analysis: Exempt anaphora in vPs

Putting together our background assumptions from the two previous sections, we propose that the logophoric operator has the feature make-up of pro_{Def} or pro_{Gen}:

(11) Both in Greek and English, pro in Spec,LogP must have the same featural make-up as the implicit argument pro_{Def} or pro_{Gen}.

In light of (11), a question that arises is what blocks pro from realizing the featural make-up of pro_{Exi}. To address this question, we must introduce another condition, the Pronominal Agreement Condition (see Angelopoulos et al. 2024 and references therein), which plays a role in the licensing of a reflexive in addition to Condition A:

(12) The Pronominal Agreement Condition: An anaphor agrees in phi-features with its antecedent.

Since pro in Spec,LogP can license reflexive binding, it follows under the Pronominal Agreement Condition that it must possess phi-features. It follows in turn that this pro cannot be pro_{Exi} which, admittedly, lacks phi-features (see Collins 2024 i.a.). We can now return to the vP-DP asymmetry in (13), repeated below:

(13) **The vP-DP asymmetry:** Exempt *o eaftos mu* is prohibited when functioning as a verb's argument, (2a), yet it is permissible as an exempt anaphor when embedded under a noun phrase, (2b).

We begin with the first part of the asymmetry having to do with verbs. In Greek, when pro has the featural make-up of pro_{Def}, it carries a [uCase] feature, as shown in (14). In contrast to English, it cannot be licensed in the v-domain because it competes for case licensing by T with the external argument in Spec,vP, which also has a [uCase] feature. Since pro cannot be licensed in Spec,LogP as pro_{Def}, logophoric *o eaftos mu* cannot have concrete reference, and be licensed as a verb's argument, as suggested by the asymmetry above.

(14) $*[_{vP}\ DP_{uCase}\ [v'\ [_{LogP}\ pro_{Def,uCase}\ [_{Log'}\ Log\ [_{VP}\ ...\ reflexive]]]]]$

In contrast to pro_{Def}, Angelopoulos et al. (2024) argue that pro_{Gen} lacks a Case feature. As a result, it is allowed in the Greek passive because it does not block case assignment of the verb's internal argument. In turn, this predicts that the logophoric operator should be licensed in the v-area with the featural make-up of pro_{Gen} because, it does not compete for case with the external argument, as illustrated in the structure below:

(15) $[_{vP}\ DP_{uCase}\ [v'\ [_{LogP}\ pro_{Gen}\ [_{Log'}\ Log\ [_{VP}\ ...\ reflexive]]]]]$

This prediction is borne out. As shown in (16, modified from Paparounas 2023), logophoric *o eaftos mu* can be licensed as a verb's argument when it has generic reference. Here, the external argument of the passive verb is the *by*-phrase (Angelopoulos et al. 2020), and the reflexive is hosted inside a PP that serves as the verb's argument. The reflexive has a generic reference, as shown by the fact that it can be paraphrased by *oneself*. It differs from cases in which *o eaftos mu* is used as a plain anaphor because it does not have an overt antecedent. This is accounted for under the proposed analysis; the logophoric pronoun has the featural make-up of a generic pronoun like *one*, albeit silent, i.e. pro_{Gen}. It is projected in Spec,LogP in the v-area, as in (15), licensing *o eaftos mu* in (16) locally.[3]

(16) Otan aftes i therapies efarmozode apo to iatriko prosopiko s-ton eafto
when these the therapies are.applied by the medical personnel to-the self.ACC
su, niothi kanis pio aneta.
yours.GEN, feel one more confortably
'intended: When these therapies are applied to oneself by the medical personnel, one can feel more comfortable. '

6. Analysis: Exempt anaphora in DPs

In Section 4, we showed that an implicit argument pro_{Def} can be projected inside nominals. Here we add an additional assumption. Nominals realize a DP, and the DP constitutes a phasal domain, as in Charnavel and Bryant (2023). Since pro_{Def} is allowed in this domain, so is the logophoric pronoun, as per (11). This explains the availability of logophoric *o eaftos mu* inside nominals, as in (2b), repeated below.

(17) O $Tasos_i$ pistevi oti iparhi mia fotografia tu eaftu tu_i
the Tasos.NOM believes that there.is a picture.NOM the self.GEN his.GEN
kremasmeni s-to ghrafio.
hanging in-the office
'Tasos believes that there is a picture of himself hanging in the office.'

Note that in this example, the antecedent of the reflexive does not have to be the person who took the picture; it can be someone else. This rules out the alternative that the reflexive is locally bound by a pronoun hosted in the external argument position of *picture* (cf. Chomsky 1986). Since the external argument is not syntactically present, pro's [uCase] in Spec,LogP can be checked by D, and the reflexive in turn can have its case feature checked by the noun.

[3]Reflexives with generic reference, used logophorically without an overt antecedent (e.g., 16), are found not only in Greek but also French (e.g., *soi*) and English (*oneself*)(Charnavel 2018). Unlike English or French, Greek lacks a dedicated generic reflexive form.

(18) $[_{DP}$ D $[_{LogP}$ pro_{uCase} $[_{Log'}$ Log $[_{NP}$ N ... $reflexive_{uCase}]]]]$

In this structure, the noun's external argument and pro in Spec,LogP should be mutually exclusive due to case reasons; D can only check the feature of one of the two. This predicts that a reflexive cannot be licensed as a logophor inside a DP in the presence of an external argument. Indeed, this prediction is borne out, as suggested by the ungrammaticality of the following example:

(19) *O Tasos$_i$ pistevi oti iparhi mia fotoghrafia tis Marias me ton
the Tasos.NOM believes that there.is a photo.NOM the Maria.GEN with the
eafto tu$_i$ kremasmeni s-to ghrafio.
self.ACC his.GEN hanging in-the office
'intended: Tasos believes that there is a picture that Maria took with himself, hanging in the office.'

(19) might sound grammatical for some speakers. We argue that this is due to the fact that the genitive in Greek, *tis Marias* 'Maria's' in (19), can have an array of non-agentive interpretations. Controlling, however, for the context in such a way so that *Maria* is the external argument of *fotoghrafia* 'photo', in which case Maria has taken the picture renders the example ungrammatical.[4] This said, we would like to note that as in the verbal domain, logophoric usages of *o eaftos mu* are also licensed inside picture-NPs with generic reference, (20). This suggests that just like in the v-area, pro in Spec,LogP of the D-area may as well be pro_{Gen},

(20) Otan tetjes fotografies tu eaftu su dimosievode s-ta periodhika,
when such photos.NOM the self.GEN yours.GEN are.published in-the magazines
bori na se kanun na njosis avola.
can na you.ACC make na feel awkward
'intended: When such photos of yourself/onself are published in the magazine, you/one can feel awkard.'

7. Alternative analyses

A different approach to analyzing the distribution of exempt *o eaftos mu* could involve a different element, *o idhjos* 'the same.' We focus on the use of this element as a non-subject. In this case, some of its basic properties are that it can only be bound long-distance, as shown in the contrast in (21a)-(21b) (Iatridou 1986). Furthermore, as shown in (21c), it requires a sentence-internal antecedent (Varlokosta and Hornstein 1993, Anagnostopoulou and Everaert 2013).

[4]Greek does not allow double genitives, akin to *John's destruction of the city* in English. Given this, the closest example we could construct to illustrate the effect of the external argument's presence is as in (19), where the reflexive is hosted in a PP.

(21) a. *O Janis$_i$ voithai ton idhjo$_i$.
the John.NOM helps the same.MASC.ACC
'intended: John helps himself.'
b. O Janis$_i$ theli o Costas$_j$ na voithisi ton idhjo$_{i/*j}$.
the John.NOM want the Costas.NOM na help the same.MASC.ACC
'intended: John wants Costas to help him.'
c. *O Janis theli o Vasilis na milisi me tin idhja.
the John.NOM wants the Vasilis.NOM na talk with the same.FEM.ACC
'intended: John wants Vasilis to talk with her.' Anagnostopoulou and Everaert (2013:(49))

The alternative analysis is that *o eaftos mu* with concrete reference is ruled out in vPs due to competition with *o idhjos*, which, as shown below, is allowed in the same context.

(22) I Katerina$_i$ perifaneftike oti i vasilisa kalese ton Adrea ce
the Katerina.NOM boasted that the queen.NOM invited the Adrea.ACC and
tin idhja/* ton eafto tis$_i$ ja tsai.
the same.ACC.FEM the self.ACC her.GEN for tea
'K boasted that the queen invited Adrea and herself for tea.'

Nevertheless, the competition account faces challenges. First, considering *o eaftos mu* can also function as a logophor, especially evident in picture-NPs, as previously demonstrated, it is unclear on what grounds *o idhjos* is preferred over *o eaftos mu* in (22). Second, contrary to predictions from a competition account, *o eaftos mu* and *o idhjos* are not mutually exclusive. For instance, they are interchangeable in (2b), repeated below, as well as in other contexts, (23b)-(23c).

(23) a. O Tasos$_i$ pistevi oti iparhi mia fotografia tu eaftu tu$_i$/
the Tasos.NOM believes that there.is a picture.NOM the self.GEN his.GEN
tu idhju$_i$ kremasmeni s-to ghrafio.
the same.GEN.MASC hanging in-the office
'intended: Tasos believes that there is a picture of himself hanging in the office.'
b. O vuleftis$_i$ shimatise kivernisi horis ton eafto tu$_i$/ ton
the MP.NOM formed government without the self.ACC her.GEN the
idhjo$_i$ mesa
same.ACC.MASC inside
'intended: The MP formed a government without himself in it.'
c. I Maria$_i$ parigile mia bira ja ton Kosta kai mia ja ton eafto
the Maria.NOM ordered a beer for the Kostas and one for the self.ACC
tis$_i$/ ti idhja$_i$.
her.GEN the same.ACC.FEM
'intended: Maria ordered a beer for Kostas and one for herself.'

Moreover, a competition account fails to explain why the distinction between *o eaftos mu* with generic or concrete reference plays a role in its licensing as an exempt anaphor in vPs, (2) and (16). Lastly, it overlooks the correlation between the distribution of exempt *o eaftos mu* and implicit arguments within both the vP and the DP.

8. A few remarks on *o idhjos*

(23a) shows an important difference between *o eaftos mu* and *o idhjos*: While the former cannot be licensed as a verb's argument under a logophoric use, the latter can. Samiotis (2022) shows that non-subject *o idhjos* must always be a logophor (see also Anagnostopoulou and Everaert 2013). Furthermore, it always has concrete reference. Given this, it follows under our proposed analysis that it should be licensed by a pro in Spec,LogP with the featural makeup of pro_{Def}. However, the challenge arises from the fact that, as demonstrated, pro cannot be projected as pro_{Def} in the v-area. This raises the question: when *o idhjos* occupies a position inside the vP, how is it then licensed as a logophor? We propose that non-subject *o idhjos* is a logophoric pronoun. Being a pronoun, (a) it does not require a c-commanding antecedent (Samiotis 2022), (b) it allows split-antecedents, as noted in Angelopoulos and Sportiche (2023) (Samiotis 2022), (c) it allows strict readings (Anagnostopoulou and Everaert 2013). It also follows that (21c) is ungrammatical because the sentence lacks a logophoric center by which *o idhjos* can be bound. Given the pronominal status of *o idhjos* (Varlokosta and Hornstein 1993), its use as a verb's argument precludes local binding by a pro in Spec,LogP within the v-area, due to Condition B. Nevertheless, it is bound by a pro, as required by Charnavel's (2019) analysis, but one projected in the C-area. The [uCase] feature of this pronoun is licensed similarly to other plain DPs in such a high position; it operates as a Hanging Topic, which resorts to default nominative case.

9. Conclusion

In this paper, we examined the distribution of *o eaftos mu*, focusing on its exempt uses. We revealed a new asymmetry: when it has concrete reference, exempt *o eaftos mu* is prohibited as a verb's argument but permitted within DPs. We argue that this follows assuming the logophoric operator licensing concrete *o eaftos mu* has the features of pro_{Def} of Collins's typology. This pronoun is disallowed in the v-area of Greek but permissible in the D-area, mirroring the distribution of exempt *o eaftos mu*. Conversely, generic *o eaftos mu* is allowed in the v- and D-areas as it is licensed by a pro_{Gen}, which has a broader distribution. Competitive analyses were dismissed, and a new explanation for *o idhjos* was provided.

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