

Eliding the Noun in Close Apposition, or Greek Polydefinites Revisited

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Abstract

In this paper we propose a treatment of Greek polydefinites as an instance of close apposition, as in *Burns the poet*. We argue that like close appositives, Greek polydefinites consist of two DPs, the only difference being that one of them contains noun ellipsis. We propose that both polydefinites and close appositives involve a process of Referential-role identification, in the spirit of the proposal by Higginbotham (1985) for theta-role identification in cases of adjectival modification. We show that our proposal can shed light on the ordering freedom of polydefinites, their discourse properties, the kind of adjectives that can appear in the construction, as well as the lack of polyindefinites.

1 Introduction

This paper discusses Greek polydefinites, i.e. combinations of an adjective and a noun where each features its own determiner, as in (1).

- (1) a. to spiti to megalo
the house the big
b. to megalo to spiti
the big the house

Polydefinites co-exist in the language with monadics like (2), i.e. modification structures where only one determiner is present—although polydefinites have special semantic and pragmatic properties (see Kolliakou (2004); Campos and Stavrou (2004), and also section 4 of this paper).¹

