
Genericity in Greek: an experimental investigation

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Despite the abundance of semantic literature on genericity (Krifka et al. 1995), the cross-linguistic aspect of genericity has rarely been tackled systematically (see though Dahl, 1985; Behrens, 2000, Dayal, 2004). Moreover, there is very little experimental research on the topic in Greek. The aim of the present study is to collect native speakers' judgments against the claims in the theoretical literature by extending Ionin et al.'s (2011) experimental approach to Greek. We present results of an online study with 40 adult native Greek speakers, who participated in an Acceptability Judgment Task with contexts testing canonical definiteness, as well as two distinct sources of genericity: (a) NP-level genericity with kind-level predicates like *be extinct*, as in (1), and (b) sentence-level genericity, as in (2). Our results largely confirm the predictions and support Dayal's (2004) theoretical account of genericity: definite singulars were rated higher with NP-level genericity than with sentence-level genericity, definite plurals were rated equally high with both types of genericity, and indefinite singulars were rated higher with sentence-level than with NP-level genericity. The results will be further discussed in light of recent theories of genericity (Leslie 2008).

- (1) Ta pulia dodo ehun pleon afanisti
the birds dodo have already disappeared
'Dodo birds are extinct'
- (2) I prasines lambes ine poli halarotikes
the green lamps are very relaxing
'Green lamps are very relaxing'

Selected References: • Dayal, V. 2004. Number marking and (in)definiteness in kind terms. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 27, 393-450. • Ionin, T., Montrul, S., and Santos, H. 2011. An experimental investigation of the expression of genericity in English, Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese. *Lingua* 121, 963-985. • Leslie, S. J. 2008. Generics: Cognition and acquisition. *The Philosophical Review*, 117(1), 1-49.