

**The syntax of silent prepositions in Greek**  
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**Overview:** In this talk, I discuss the analysis of silent prepositions in Greek, and make an empirical observation about their interpretation which has not, to my knowledge, figured in their analysis: silent locative prepositions are only possible when they express the temporary location of a moveable object, not the permanent location of a fixed object. The relevance of temporary versus permanent location can be seen in the *ser/estar* ‘to be (permanent)/to be (temporary)’ distinction with locative PPs in Portuguese (De Lemos 1987), as well as in properties of the pronominal copula in Hebrew (Botwinik 2008), which suggests that previous accounts of silent prepositions are incomplete. I review existing proposals for how to analyze silent prepositions, and argue that while none are perfect, Ioannidou & den Dikken’s (2009) is the best-equipped to incorporate the permanent/temporary distinction. I extend their analysis to account for the novel observation by incorporating Gallego & Uriagereka’s (2009) analysis of the Spanish copula *estar* ‘to be (temporary)’ as the spell-out of the copula *ser* ‘to be (permanent)’ with an incorporated preposition.

**The facts:** In Greek, the preposition *se* ‘at/to’, when it denotes static location or directed motion, can be optionally omitted. In the cases where it is omitted, the noun appears without an overt determiner. For example:

- (1) *Ime/ pao (sto) sxolio.*  
I am/I go *se*.the school  
‘I am/I go to school’

However, apart from some lexical restrictions on what the noun denoting location can be (Terzi 2010), there are two factors conditioning the presence of null prepositions: whether the PP is in adjunct or argument position and the temporary/permanent location distinction. Null prepositions are ungrammatical when the PP is in adjunct position, as can be seen by the contrast in (2)-(3), and when the location of an object is perceived as fixed, as can be seen by the contrast in (4)-(5):

- (1) *Pao (sto) gimnastirio.*  
I go *se*.the gym  
‘I go to the gym’
- (2) *Kano gimnastiki \*(sto) gimnastirio.*  
I do exercise *se*.the gym  
‘I exercise at the gym.’
- (3) *I Maria ine (stin) Agglia.*  
the Maria is *se*.the England.  
‘Maria is in England’
- (4) *To Londino ine \*(stin) Agglia.*  
the London is *se*.the England.  
‘London is in England’

**Proposal:** Ioannidou & den Dikken (2009) argue that there is a syntactically projected null P, which incorporates into V, and a full-fledged DP complement to the null P. They claim that, once P is incorporated, it can no longer assign Case to D, which triggers the movement of NP to SpecDP for N to check its Case features by being in a Spec-Head configuration with D. This movement prevents D from spelling out for independent reasons. This analysis accounts for the fact that the determiner has to be null and also for the fact that null prepositions cannot appear when the PP is in adjunct position. I will adopt Ioannidou & den Dikken’s (2009) analysis and will extend it to account for my novel observation by arguing that when the silent preposition is incorporated into the copula *ime* ‘to be’, a temporary reading is obtained. This follows from Gallego & Uriagereka’s (2009) analysis of the copula *estar* ‘to be (temporary)’, according to which the “temporary” meaning of *estar* is due to the fact that this copula is the spell-out of *ser* ‘to be (permanent)’ with an incorporated preposition.

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