

A plural indefinite article in Heritage Greek: the role of register

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Properties of the determiner “*kati*”

- It combines with plural nouns only-compatible with nouns in all genders and cases
- It is a positive polarity item (**den ida kati klidia*/ I didn't see any keys) and cannot be preceded by another determiner (Tsoulas 2019)
- It doesn't necessarily signal anti-specificity and ignorance (Tsoulas 2019) unlike Spanish plural indefinites (Bruyn & Pozas-Loyo 2014)
- We propose that it is a feature of informal registers: a marker of vague language (VL) (McCarthy 1998; Brown and Yule 1998)

Evidence: *Kati* in informal registers; Data from the corpus of Oral Speech in the Institute of Modern Greek Studies in AUTH.

Instances from everyday conversations

- [...] as pume oti ehi *kati* magazakia
let's say that he has some stores
- [...]thimame ihame gnorisi *kati*
Olandus

I remember that we have met some Dutch people

- [...]ke mu elege *kati* istories
and he was telling me some stories

Participants

	Germany		USA		Greece	
Age group	Adults	Adolescents	Adults	Adolescents	Adults	Adolescents
N	27	21	32	32	32	32
N Females	17	7	18	16	16	16
Mean Age	28;4	16;5	30;2	16;2	27;4	15;3
Mean Age of Onset	2;3 (Range: 0-8)	1;4 (Range: 0-4)	1;8 (Range: 0-6)	1;1 (Range: 0-5)	-	-

	Berlin- Germany		Chicago & NY- USA	
Generation	Adults	Adolescents	Adults	Adolescents
2 nd	N=18	N=7	N=21	N=11
Mixed (2 nd and 3 rd)	N=2	N=2	N=8	N=11
Mixed (from 1 st or 2 nd gen. and one foreign parent)	N=7	N=10	-	N=4
3 rd	-	-	N=1	N=4
Total	N=27	N=21	N=32	N=32

Method: Language Situations (Wiese 2017) Narration task of a fictional event in formal (to the police) and informal register (to a friend) in two modalities (oral and written). Number of tokens collected 71.000. 2 elicitors for the different registers, 16 randomised elicitation orders.

To which extent do spoken and written registers vary among monolingual and Heritage speakers (HS) with respect to the determiner *kati*?

Do HS deviate from monolinguals and if so in which way?



Examples found in our data

HSs-Germany in formal spoken register

Sti sakula ihe **kati** mila
In the bag she had **some** apples

Monolingual in formal spoken register

Ihe [...] mia sakula me mila
She had [...] a bag with apples
Article omission

HSs-US in formal spoken register

pu evale **kati** pragmata mesa sto
aftokinito tis
that was loading some groceries in her car

Monolingual in formal spoken register

fortune **ta** psonia tu
supermarket mesa st' amaksi
was loading **the**DEF groceries from the supermarket in the car

Monolingual in formal spoken

epesan **tria** fruta tis kirias ke
ena bukali nero
fell **three**NUM fruits from a woman and a bottle of water

Monolingual in informal written

mia kiriula pu ihe **kati** fruta ke
ola efigan sto dromo
a woman who had **some** fruits and everything fell on the street

Results

A strong 2 tailed Kendall's tau-b correlation coefficient with register ($\tau_b = 0.992$) and modality ($\tau_b = 0.989$) $p = 0.000$ is reported.

2 weak 2 tailed Kendall's tau-b correlations with some features of participants' personality were observed, i.e. conventional ($\tau_b = 0.178$) and carelles ($\tau_b = 0.153$) and one weak negative correlation, i.e. self-discipline ($\tau_b = -0.149$).

		Use of <i>kati</i>					
Register	Mode	HS USA		HS Germany		Monolinguals	
		Adult	Adolescent	Adult	Adolescent	Adults	Adolescents
formal	written	0	0	1	0	0	0
formal	spoken	2	0	2	1	0	0
informal	written	0	1	2	0	1	2
informal	spoken	4	1	2	1	3	4
SUM:		6	2	7	2	4	6

Conclusions

- HS use informal markers across communicative situations (register levelling)
- Our findings confirm the use of VL in informal registers
- interference from German indefinites *irgendein/irgendwelche/ein paar* found in informal registers (Sauerland 2020)

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