

***Epistemic and “concessive” interpretation
of at least and at most: what superlative morphology can tell us***

Goal of the current talk is to investigate the relation between the epistemic and the concessive interpretation of the particles *at least* and *at most* and provide an analysis for the two readings. At first, I will present the syntactic, semantic and phonological properties of the epistemic and “concessive” *at least* and *at most* in English and Greek, pointing out the commonalities and differences between the two readings. Then, I will focus on Greek and -on the role of the superlative morphology in them. I will argue that superlative morphology is important to understand the scalar nature of the two particles. Despite their common superlative morphology, though, the internal structure and the type of superlative morphology shown by the two epistemic particles corresponding to English epistemic *at least*, namely *to lijotero* and *tulahiston*, differs; the evidence for this comes from applying Nouwen's (2010) theory to the two particles, which are also explored from the point of view of Bobaljik's (2012) generalizations concerning superlatives. Crucially, these differences are reflected on the element chosen to express concessive readings: this element is always the one that does not qualify as a “true superlative” in Nouwen's and Bobaljik's terms: *to lijotero* is the true superlative in their systems and it can only be employed for epistemic readings. On the other hand, *tulahiston* is the element employed for concessive interpretation in Greek, and *tulahiston* is not a well-behaved superlative in the above mentioned typologies. Based on these findings, I will argue that an analysis along the lines of Szabolcsi (2012) seems to be appropriate to express the differences between the two particles. Specifically, I will relate the *concessive* interpretation to the “relative” reading of the superlative, and the *epistemic* interpretation to the “absolute “one. The “absolute” interpretation is linked to a definiteness feature that in Greek is obligatorily expressed through the definite article, synchronically only on *to lijotero* not (anymore, or not necessarily) on *toulahiston*. I will discuss the implications for English *at least* and the analysis will be then extended to *at most*.