Marking the default : auxiliary selection in Southern Italian dialects
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Chapter 1

Introduction

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1. Introduction

Upper Southern Italian dialects (henceforth USIDs) are a subset of Southern Italian dialects (henceforth SIDs) spoken in a region that stretches approximately from the southern Marche and southern Lazio at the northern side end, down to northern Salento (Taranto-Grottaglie-Ostuni line) and northern Calabria (Diamante-Cirò Marina line) in the south. This area is shown in the map in (1).
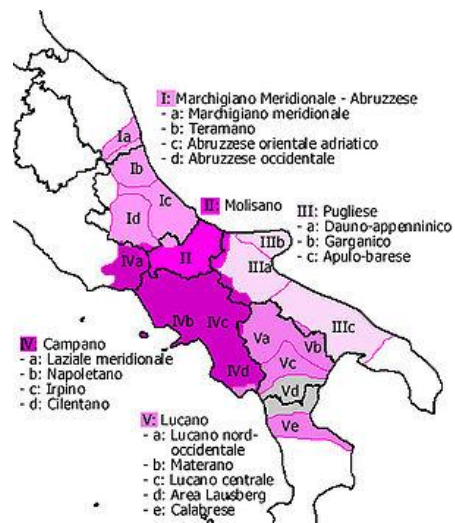
(1)
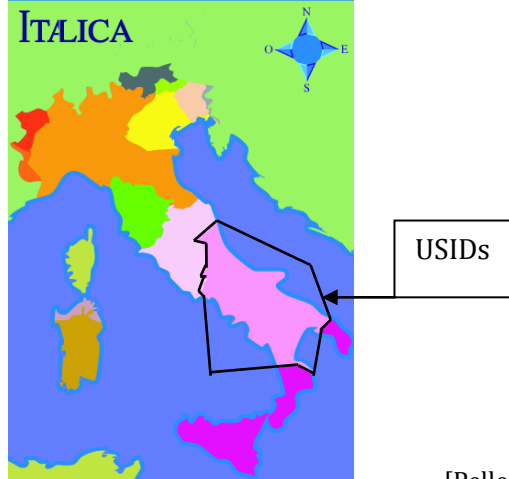
[Pellegrini (1977)]

In this dissertation, we will make use of the term 'dialect' to refer to the local varieties spoken in Italy. The use of the term 'dialect' is purely conventional: the existing literature lacks a proper term to refer to these

languages. Dialects spoken in Italy, in fact, are fully-fledged languages (cf. Berruto, 1995; Marcato, 2002; Tortora, 2003; a.o.), which stem from Latin, in the same way as Standard Italian.

USIDs are split into small subgroups, illustrated in the map in (2).

(2)

I: Marchigiano Meridionale - Abruzzese
- a: Marchigiano meridionale
- b: Teramano
- c: Abruzzese orientale adriatico
- d: Abruzzese occidentale

II: Molisano

III: Pugliese
- a: Dauno-appenninico
- b: Garganico
- c: Apulo-barese

IV: Campano
- a: Laziale meridionale
- b: Napoletano
- c: Irpino
- d: Cilentano

V: Lucano
- a: Lucano nord-occidentale
- b: Materano
- c: Lucano centrale
- d: Area Lausberg
- e: Calabrese

[Pellegrini (1977)]

Despite this subclassification, USIDs seem to share a number of syntactic, morphologic and phonological properties. From a morphosyntactic point of view, most USIDs, unlike other Italo-Romance dialects, display person-driven auxiliary selection, whereby the selection of BE/HAVE auxiliaries in the present perfect is sensitive to the person feature specification of the sentential subject. Generally, when the subject is 1st and 2nd person, both in the singular and the plural, the auxiliary selected is BE, whereas if the subject is 3rd person, singular or plural, the auxiliary chosen is HAVE (cf. Cocchi, 1995; Ledgeway, 2000; Manzini & Savoia, 2005; D'Alessandro & Roberts, 2010; Legendre, 2010; Loporcaro, 2010; a.o.). The paradigm in (3) illustrates these facts.

(3) Amandola (Southern Marchigiano)

so	cca'mato/ppar'lato	BE.pr.1sg called/spoken
si	cca'mato/ppar'lato	BE.pr.2sg called/spoken
a	ca'mato/par'lato	HAVE.pr.3 called/spoken
simo	ca'mato/par'lato	BE.pr.1pl called/spoken
sete	ca'mato/par'lato	BE.pr.2pl called/spoken

[Manzini & Savoia (2005), II: 684]

The BE/HAVE alternation outlined in (3) is not found in all USIDs. Some USIDs, in fact, choose BE only in the 1st and 2nd singular, leaving HAVE for the rest of the paradigm. Other dialects, instead, choose either BE or HAVE for the entire paradigm.

Another morphosyntactic phenomenon found in most USIDs is the three-way gender system for definite determiners and demonstratives. Apart from masculine and feminine, a large number of USIDs express neuter gender on definite determiners and demonstratives that precede (a subset of) mass nouns (cf. Rohlfs, 1966, 1968; Leonard, 1978; Andalò, 1991; Maiden, 1991, 1997; Penny, 1994; Ledgeway, 2009; a.o.). These facts are represented in (4), which shows periphrastic constructions composed of a definite determiner followed by a noun.

(4) Bitonto (Apulo-Barese)

rə p'pjɔn	the.neut.sg bread
u 'pre:vət	the.masc.sg. priest
la 'pɔrt	the.fem.sg. door

1st and 2nd singular BE in (3), as well as the neuter determiner in (4), are followed by a word featuring a double consonant in initial position. In the traditional literature, double consonants in word-initial position are considered as instances of *Raddoppiamento Fonosintattico* (henceforth RF), whereby geminate consonants are generated via external sandhi[1]. Traditionally, RF is taken to be a relic of the phonological process of

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[1] External sandhi is a phonological phenomenon that refers to a series of sound changes that occur at word-boundaries.

consonantal assimilation applying at external sandhi sites that took place in the period of transition from Vulgar Latin to southern Italo-Romance.

RF is not found only in USIDs, but is also attested in Standard Italian, Central Italian dialects (henceforth CIDs) and Extreme Southern Italian dialects (henceforth ESIDs). Northern Italian dialects (henceforth NIDs), on the other hand, do not feature RF.

Given the distribution of RF in (3) and (4), this dissertation will investigate why RF can be found only after a subset of auxiliaries and definite determiners and demonstratives within a paradigm. We will propose that RF that operates after a subset of present perfect auxiliaries and definite determiners and demonstratives in USIDs is a means of overtly expressing a specific morphosyntactic feature encoded on these elements. Hence, we will consider RF to be a phonological phenomenon that derives from purely morphosyntactic properties. A large amount of data from USIDs will be analyzed in order to shed light on the morphosyntactic nature of RF.

In addition to examining the nature of RF, this dissertation will consider whether the phenomenon of person-driven auxiliary selection (cf. (3)) and the three-way gender system of definite determiners and demonstratives (cf. (4)) are independent of each other or, conversely, if they are intertwined. We will propose that both phenomena are strictly related to each other. More precisely, we will argue that the BE/HAVE division in (3) and the three-way gender system of definite determiner and demonstratives in (4) derive from the application of a markedness principle. This markedness principle states that morphosyntactic φ features encoded on present perfect auxiliaries, definite determiners and demonstratives get marked at PF according to their degree of markedness. The same idea will be exploited for the overt marking of φ features on pluperfect auxiliaries.

2. The structure of this dissertation

This dissertation is divided into two parts. Part one (cf. chapter 2) provides a typological survey of RF as attested after present perfect auxiliaries in USIDs. The same chapter also provides a discussion of the existing literature on RF, and an analysis of the typology of auxiliary selection in USIDs.

Part two (cf. chapters 3, 4 and 5) focuses on the nature of RF. In this part, we will treat RF as not a purely phonological phenomenon, but rather as a phonological mechanism triggered by morphosyntactic requirements. More explicitly, we will claim that a given set of morphosyntactic features encoded on present perfective auxiliaries in USIDs needs to be overtly marked by means of RF. The same idea will be proposed for RF found after definite determiners and demonstratives.

2.1 Part one – Chapter 2

Chapter 2 analyzes the phonological phenomenon of RF and the system of auxiliary selection in USIDs. We begin with an overview of RF, followed by a presentation of the typology of auxiliary selection in USIDs. Finally, we will consider the interplay between RF and the phenomenon of auxiliary selection in USIDs. This part will address the following research questions:

   i.   Why is RF attested only with a subset of present perfect auxiliaries in USIDs?
   ii.   Is RF found after a subset of present perfect auxiliaries in USIDs a purely phonological phenomenon?
   iii. Are the diachronic accounts of RF sufficient to explain its 'free' distribution after present perfect auxiliaries in USIDs?

It will be proposed that USIDs are split into two macro-areas. One macro-area corresponds to what will be called Northern Southern Italian dialects (henceforth NSIDs). This area includes Southern Marchigiano, Southern Laziale, Abruzzese, Molisano and Northern Campanian. The other macro-area corresponds to Central Southern Italian dialects (CSIDs), and comprises Apulian, Central and Southern Campanian, Lucanian and Northern Calabrian. The division between NSIDs and CSIDs is based on the different pattern of auxiliary selection displayed by these two groups of dialects. It will be shown, however, that the distribution of RF after present perfect auxiliaries in NSIDs and CSIDs is not uniform.

2.2 Part two – Chapters 3, 4 & 5

In this part, it will be proposed that RF found after present perfect auxiliaries in USIDs is a means of overtly expressing a dedicated set of φ features encoded on these elements. This analysis will be presented in chapter 3.

Chapter 4 will consider the overt marking of φ in CSIDs including an examination of the system of φ marking with present perfect and pluperfect auxiliaries. It will be shown that the overt marking of φ on present perfect and pluperfect auxiliaries depends on the application of a post-syntactic operation called *Default Marking*. It will be argued that *Default Marking* is also at play in the case of definite determiners and demonstratives in CSIDs. This investigation will be carried out in chapter 5. From a comparative point of view, we will also consider the system of φ marking with modals and lexical verbs in a small group of CSIDs.

3. The data

This dissertation will investigate (i) periphrases composed of perfective auxiliaries followed by past participles; (ii) nominal constructions composed of definite determiners or demonstratives followed by a noun; (iii) paradigms of lexical verbs in the present indicative. A large amount of data from different USIDs will be used to adequately examine all these structures. Most of the dialects analyzed in this dissertation have been directly documented by the author through a period of data collection, or fieldwork, in southern Italy in spring 2012. Other dialect data are taken from different sources, referenced after each example. The map in (5) shows the geographic location of the dialects documented by the author for the purposes of this dissertation.

(5)

Dialects:

1- Pontelandolfo, 2- Airola, 3- Cerignola, 4- Bisceglie, 5- Ruvo di Puglia,
6- Bitonto, 7- Bari Vecchia, 8- Rutigliano, 9- Conversano, 10- Mola di Bari,
11- Locorotondo.

Most of the dialects in (5) are spoken in the south-eastern USID region, corresponding to the Apulo-Barese dialect area. The map in (5) also includes two Campanian dialects.

The fieldwork in Southern Italy was carried out as follows: the fieldworker, with the help of a written questionnaire, asked native speakers of the dialects under investigation to orally translate a number of paradigms and constructions into their dialects. All the interviews were recorded by the fieldworker using an audio device and transcribed later using IPA. Speakers were chosen according to their age and their degree of education. At the time of the interview, all the selected speakers possessed an undergraduate diploma, had a native competence of Standard Italian and of the dialect

spoken in their town, and were around 50/60 years of age[2]. For some dialects, younger speakers were also interviewed. The age restriction was selected because dialects in Southern Italy, as well as elsewhere in Italy, have been severely endangered by the daily use of Standard Italian in all contexts of communication in the last few decades (in the family, at school and with friends (cf. Manzini & Savoia (2005), I). In fact, the over-50 population in Southern Italy tends to use dialect more frequently than the younger population. Moreover, the data collection carried out for the purposes of this dissertation has revealed that the grammar of the dialects spoken by the over-50 population differs significantly from those spoken by the younger generation. The grammar of the dialect of younger speakers seems to be closer to that of Standard Italian. This appears, however, to be a tendency rather than an absolute, since many younger speakers of some SIDs opt for the same grammatical choices as the older generation.

Finally, it is important to note that the geolinguistic area in (5) was selected intentionally: dialects spoken in central Apulia are included in that transitional area sandwiched between USIDs and ESIDs. Morphosyntactic phenomena typical of USIDs behave differently in this area compared to what is observed in USIDs spoken further north. The same can be argued for those Campanian and Lucanian dialects spoken not far from the isogloss that separates USIDs from ESIDs.

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