MICROVARIATION AND SYNTACTIC THEORY

WHAT DIALECTS CAN TELL US ABOUT LANGUAGE

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0. INTRODUCTION

• What is the locus of syntactic variation? Where is it encoded?

• Some Upper Southern Italian Dialects (USIDs) show non-(prototypically) Romance features. These features are more commonly found in ergative languages → USIDs can tell us something about the locus of syntactic variation.

• Are USIDs still “Italian” from a typological point of view, or are they completely different?

• Why work on microvariation?

ROMANCE LANGUAGES ARE SO WELL-STUDIED! WE DON’T NEED MORE DATA!

0.1. OVERVIEW

1. ON GENERALIZATIONS
2. THE DATA
3. HOW TO MAKE SENSE OF ALL OF THIS
4. EXTENDED DOMAIN VS SPLIT DOMAINS – THE COMPLEX PROBE
5. SPLIT DOM
6. VOICE THROUGH GEMINATION
7. MYSTERIES
8. CONCLUSIONS

1. ON GENERALIZATIONS

GENERALIZATIONS ABOUT ROMANCE LANGUAGES

❖ PARTICIPIAL AGREEMENT

“A crucial observation concerning the phenomenon of past participle agreement in Romance is that no variety allows the past participle to agree with the subject of intransitive/unergative and transitive verbs [. . .] Any treatment of the computation involved in past participle agreement must account for this fact.”[Belletti 2005, III: 509].
**AUXILIARY SELECTION**

In languages with auxiliary selection
Transitives and unergatives: HAVE
Unaccusatives and passives: BE

**LAÍSMO-LEÍSMO**

Gallego (2013: 11): DAT is more complex than ACC → if a dialect has *leísmo* THEN it can have *laísmo*. No *laísmo* without *leísmo*.

**ROMANCE TYPOLOGY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E. Port.</th>
<th>Galician</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Catalan</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Romanian</th>
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<td><strong>DOM</strong></td>
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<td><strong>OBLIQUE CL.</strong></td>
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<td>YES</td>
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<td><strong>CL. DOUBLING</strong></td>
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<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CAUSEE + INF</strong></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>POSS. “HAVE”</strong></td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Gallego 2013: 7]

**TYPOLOGICAL GENERALIZATIONS**

**PERSON SPLITS IN DOM CONSTRUCTIONS**

Coon (2012:19, Coon & Preminger 2012): None of the attested DOM patterns make reference to person features

**VOICE THROUGH GEMINATION**

Keenan (1985:251): reduplication and gemination are not possible morphological expressions of the passive voice.
**MYSTERIES**

Enclitic possessives

(1)  
\[ \begin{array}{ll}
\text{a. mamməmə} & \text{b. pitrəmə} \\
\text{mother-my} & \text{father-my} \\
\text{‘My mother’} & \text{‘My father’}
\end{array} \]  

[Abruzzese]

Why are possessives with kinship terms enclitic?

[Check an inalienable poss feature, N checks D(ef), …]

a-prepositional genitives

(2)  
\[ \begin{array}{ll}
\text{la casə li cumbignə} \\
\text{the house the friends} \\
\text{‘The friends’ house’}
\end{array} \]

**2. The data**

**Upper Southern Italian Dialects**
PARTICIPIAL AGREEMENT

“A crucial observation concerning the phenomenon of past participle agreement in Romance is that no variety allows the past participle to agree with the subject of intransitive/unergative and transitive verbs [. . .] Any treatment of the computation involved in past participle agreement must account for this fact.” [Belletti 2005, III: 509].

A. ‘Omnivorous’ participial agreement in NUMBER in Ariellese [Ic on the map]

(3)  a. Giuwannə a pittə nə murə [Ariellese]
    John-sg has-3rd.sg/pl painted-pp.sg a wall-sg
    ‘John has painted a wall’
    [sg SUBJ-sg OBJ]

    b. Giuwannə a pitttə ddu mʊrə
    John-sg has-3rd.sg painted-pp.pl two walls-pl
    ‘John has painted two walls’
    [sgSUBJ-pl OBJ]

    c. Giuwannə e Mmarijə a pittitə nə murə
    John and Mary-pl have-3rd.sg/pl painted-pp.pl a wall-sg
    ‘John and Mary have painted a wall’
    [pl SUBJ– sg OBJ]

    d. Giuwannə e Mmarijə a pittitə ddu mʊrə
    John and Mary-pl have-3rd.sg/pl painted-pp.pl two walls-pl
    ‘John and Mary have painted two walls’
    [D’Alessandro & Roberts (2010:45)]

B. Agreement mismatch in Ripano [Ia on the map]

(4)  a. So magnatə lu pani’
    am eaten-n the-m.sg breadroll-m.sg
    ‘I(fem) have eaten the breadroll’
    [Mancini 1993: 107]

    b. i’so risu (‘I have laughed-masc) c. ia so rise (‘I have laughed-fem)
    tu sci risu
    issu e risu
    noja semi risi
    voja seti risi
    tu si rise
    esse e rise
    noja sema risa
    voja seta risa

C. Topic-oriented agreement in Sanvalentinese [Ic on the map]

(5)  a. Aje cciosə li pellistrə [Sanvalentinese]
    have-1st.sg killed-sg.masc the-pl.masc chickens-pl.masc
    ‘I have being killing chickens’

    b. Ajə ccisə li pellistrə
    have-1st.sg killed-pl masc the-pl.masc chickens-pl.masc
    ‘I have killed the chickens’
- Belletti's generalization is WRONG.
- The verb "sees" both arguments and Agrees with both (B) or with the most prominent syntactically (A) or with the most prominent pragmatically (C).

**AUXILIARY SELECTION**

Transitives and unergatives: HAVE
Unaccusatives and passives: BE

(6) [Abruzzese]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. (ji)So magnata</th>
<th>BE</th>
<th>d. (nu) seme magnita</th>
<th>BE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) am eaten</td>
<td></td>
<td>we are eaten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'I have eaten'</td>
<td></td>
<td>'We have eaten'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b. (tu) si magnata</th>
<th>BE</th>
<th>e. vu sete magnita</th>
<th>BE</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>you are eaten</td>
<td></td>
<td>you.pl are eaten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'you have eaten'</td>
<td></td>
<td>'You have eaten'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>c.(essa) a magnata</th>
<th>HAVE</th>
<th>f. (jissa) a magnita</th>
<th>HAVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(s)he has eaten</td>
<td></td>
<td>they have eaten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'s)he has eaten'</td>
<td></td>
<td>'They have eaten'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IS THIS AN EXCEPTION?**

(7) [from Manzini & Savoia 2005, II:728] [A=HAVE; E=BE]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(79)</th>
<th>Distribuzione degli ausiliari al perfetto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1ps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poggio Imp.</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Castelpetroso</td>
<td>A/E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roccasecra</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capracotta</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallo Matese</td>
<td>A/E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monteroduni</td>
<td>A/E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miglionico</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vastogirardi</td>
<td>A/E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colledimacine</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torricella Peligna</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borgorose-Spedino</td>
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<td>Amandola</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td>Ortezzano</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tufo</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(viii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.Benedetto T.</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campoli, Bellante</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canosa Sannita</td>
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<td>Sonnino</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ix)</td>
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<td>A/E</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.Vitiore</td>
<td>A/E</td>
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<tr>
<td>(x)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Sassinoro</td>
<td>A/E</td>
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<td>(xi)</td>
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<td>Secinaro</td>
<td>A/E</td>
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<td>Guardiagregia</td>
<td>A/E</td>
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<tr>
<td>(C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(xii)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aghnone</td>
<td>A/E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biscaglia</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giovinazzo</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xiv)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruvò</td>
<td>A/E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bitetto</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xv)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popoli</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenerodomo</td>
<td>A/E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xvi)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padula</td>
<td>A/E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castelvecchio S.</td>
<td>A/E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xvii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molfetta</td>
<td>A/E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Catalan (Olotí, Olot)

(8) So/ ha bist/vingut
   I-am he-has seen come
   ‘I have/he has seen/come’          [Ledgeway 2012:324]

   \textit{LAÍSMO-LEÍSMO}

Gallego (2013: 11): DAT is more complex than ACC \(\rightarrow\) if a dialect has \textit{leísmo} THEN it can have \textit{laísmo}. No \textit{laísmo} without \textit{leísmo}.

Barese

(9) U/ ?'ngə hannə arrəbbatə a Giuwanne
    him-3.sg.m.acc him.loc/dat have robbed to John
    They robbed John’          [Andriani 2011:49]

(10) a. (*a) Colinə, u/ *'ngə so təfonatə ji
    to Nick him-3.sg.m.acc him.loc/dat am called I
    ‘Nick, I called him’

    b. U/ ?'ngə so təfonatə ji *(a) Colinə
    him.3.sg.m.acc loc/dat am called I to Nick
    ‘It was me calling Nick’          [Andriani 2011:52]

Neapolitan

(11) Nun ‘a facite mettere appaura!
    not her.acc make.2nd.pl put.inf fear
    ‘Don’t frighten her’          [Di Giacomo 1991:32 in Ledgeway 2000:46]

(12) ‘a scasso ‘a faccia!
    her.acc I-break the face
    ‘I’ll smash her face in!’          [Ledgeway 2000:47]
ROMANCE TYPOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WEST. ROMANCE</th>
<th>CENT. ROMANCE</th>
<th>EAST. ROMANCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Port.</td>
<td>Galician</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOM</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOS</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSO</td>
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<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOM-SE</td>
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<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>OBLIQUE CL.</td>
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<td>LAISMO</td>
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<td>PART. AGR.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>POSS. “HAVE”</td>
<td>NO</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PERSON SPLITS IN DOM CONSTRUCTIONS

Coon (2012:19): None of the attested DOM patterns make reference to person features

(13) So vistə a tte [Ariellese]
    am-1sg seen to you
    ‘I saw you’

(14) Semə vistə a vvu
    are-1pl seen to you
    ‘We saw you’

(15) *So vistə a Marija/ a jissə / a quillo
    am-1sg seen to Mary / to them / to them

VOICE THROUGH GEMINATION

Keenan (1985:251): reduplication and gemination are NOT possible morphological expressions of the passive voice.
3. HOW TO MAKE SENSE OF ALL OF THIS

- What is the locus of syntactic variation? Where is it encoded?

All parameters of variation are attributable to differences in the features of particular items (e.g., the functional heads) in the lexicon.

Is this so?

YES – SIDs feature an extra head (π) in the syntactic structure. In SIDs, this head is a probe, it hosts unvalued φ-features.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU MERGE A HEAD π?

A: π is valued
B: π is unvalued

Sub-options:

A1. π is valued and merged in the left periphery (between C and T; henceforth C-T)
A2. π is valued and merged in the v-field (between T and v; henceforth T-v)
A3. π is valued and merged in the V field (between v and V; henceforth v-V)

B1. π is unvalued (it is a probe) and merged in the left periphery (C-T)
B2. π is unvalued (it is a probe) and merged in the v-field (T-v)
B3. π is unvalued (it is a probe) and merged in the V field (v-V)

[other options: π is prepositional, π is defective (Gallego 2013)]

WHAT THIS GIVES US:
Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Φ FEATURES (Π)</th>
<th>1. C-T (LEFT PERIPHERY)</th>
<th>2. T-ν</th>
<th>3. ν-V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. valued</td>
<td>discourse clitics (A1)</td>
<td>split ergativity (A2)</td>
<td>DOM (A3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Italian dialects</td>
<td>Basque, Kutchi Guajarati</td>
<td>Spanish/Catalan (Upper) southern Italian dialects</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. unvalued (probe)</td>
<td>subject clitics (B1)</td>
<td>person-driven aux selection (B2) + agreement mismatch phenomena (B2)</td>
<td>person-driven DOM (B3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Italian dialects</td>
<td>Upper southern Italian dialects</td>
<td>(Upper) southern Italian dialects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1. AUXILIARY SELECTION AS SUBJECT DOUBLING [GROUP B2: Π IN T-ν]

The setup of auxiliaries: Italian vs Abruzzese

(18) a. Mattia ha mangiato  
M. has eaten

b. Mattia è cresciuto  
M. is grown

c. Mattia ha lavorato  
M. has worked

‘Mattia has eaten/grown/worked’

(19) a. Matte’ a magnate  
M. has eaten

b. Matte’ a crisciute  
M. has grown

c. Matte’ a fatijate  
M. has worked

‘Mattia has eaten/grown/worked’
MORPHOLOGY OF ITALIAN AUXILIARY

a. transitivity [have]; inergativity [have]; unaccusativity [be]
b. person and number of the subject of the transitive, unergative or unaccusative verb
c. present tense

MORPHOLOGY OF ABRUZZESE AUXILIARY

a. the subject is 1/2 person [be] vs the subject is 3rd person [have]
b. person and number of the subject of the transitive, unergative or unaccusative verb
c. perfectivity and non-irrealis (indicative mood)

If morphology means something:

(20)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. [pers]</th>
<th>[pers, nr]</th>
<th>b. root</th>
<th>[pers, nr]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So</td>
<td>s (be=1/2) + -o (1.sg)</td>
<td>facc = f ('do') + acce (1.sg)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>si</td>
<td>s (be=1/2) + -i (2.sg)</td>
<td>fi = f ('do') + -i (2.sg)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a (have=3) + a (3)</td>
<td>fa = f ('do') + -a (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semea</td>
<td>s (be=1/2) + -e (1.pl)</td>
<td>facem = fac ('do') + -em (1.pl)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seta</td>
<td>s (be=1/2) + -eta (2.pl)</td>
<td>faceta = fac ('do') + -eta (2.pl)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a (have=3) + a (3)</td>
<td>fa = f ('do') + -a (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BE = 1/2 person “clitic”

HAVE = no person (possibly no clitic)

The auxiliary forms be and have are also inflected for person through the paradigm → We have the information about person TWICE

2 times person: in v (or in the v field) and in T

Person-driven auxiliary is a clitic in the v field [D’Alessandro 2011a,b, 2012]

Subject clitics/ Northern Italian dialects.

(21) La Maria la magna
    the Mary SCL eats
    ‘Mary eats’

SCL: person features in the C-T field [Poletto 2000, Manzini & Savoia 2005, Roberts 2010]

Subject clitics and ‘split’ auxiliaries are the same thing: extra π probes
3.2. SUBJECT CLITICS IN NORTHERN ITALIAN DIALECTS VS AUXILIARY SELECTION IN USIDS

Tendency: 2nd person clitics are most common
If a language has only a SCL, it will be the 2 (2nd person) [Renzi & Vanelli 1983]

Manzini & Savoia (2005, I:118-119) show that this generalization is too strong. In particular there are dialects exhibiting a dedicated clitic for 3rd person (Stroppo/Macra/Pradleves, S. Pietro Val Grana, Acceglio, Vermiglio-Val di Sole, Livo –Val di Non, Tuenno –Val di Non, S. Maria M., Coimo)

Where P= 1/2 only

If a language has only one occurrence of be, will it be then 2nd person?
YES [Manzini & Savoia 2005: 728]

What happens in varieties that have both SCL and split aux selection? Complementary distribution? YES (so far, but more data needed) [Tersmette 2010, Torcolacci 2011]

→ Be is a person marker in SIDs.

(22) a. (i)  
sum       am-1st sg come
SCI       Ni
t       ε Ni
you-2SCI   are-2/3 sg come
l       ε Ni
(s)he-3SCI  is 2/3 sg come
(i)  
sum/      uma Ni
SCI   are-1st pl have-1st pl come
si/      j i Ni
are-2nd pl you-SCI have-2nd pl come
i      in Ni
SCI  are-3rd pl come
‘I/(s)he... have come’ [Manzini & Savoia 2005, III:10]

(23)  
sum/i O dru mi
am/ SCI have slept-sg
t       ε dru mi
(23) you-SCI are-2/3sg slept-sg
l       ε dru mi
(s)he-3SCI is-2/3sg slept-sg
(i)  
sum/ i uma dru mi
SCI   are-1st pl SCI have-1st pl slept-pl
si/      i i dru mi
are-2nd pl SCI are-2 nd sg slept-pl
i      in dru mi
SCI  are-3rd pl slept-pl [Manzini & Savoia 2005, III:10]

---

1 “For what concerns the paradigm of those forms that are specialized as P, we observe that if we have only one lexicalised form, that will be 2ps”
Cerano: the clitic is obligatory with HAVE and not with BE (because BE is a “clitic” itself).

4. **EXTENDED DOMAIN VS SPLIT DOMAINS – THE COMPLEX PROBE**

In Abruzzese the extra π enlarges the agreement space:

**Abruzzese agreement patterns:**

(24) a. Giuwanne a pittate nu mure [Ariellese]
    John-sg has-3rd.sg/pl painted-pp.sg a wall
    ‘John has painted a wall’
    [sg SUBJ-sg OBJ]

b. Giuwanne a pittite ddu mure
    John-sg has-3rd.sg painted-pp.pl two walls-pl
    ‘John has painted two walls’
    [sgSUBJ-pl OBJ]

c. Giuwanne e Mmarije a pittite nu mure
    John and Mary-pl have-3rd.sg/pl painted-pp.pl a wall
    ‘John and Mary have painted a wall’
    [pl SUBJ– sg OBJ]

d. Giuwanne e Mmarije a pittite ddu mure
    John and Mary-pl have-3rd.sg/pl painted-pp.pl two walls
    ‘John and Mary have painted two walls’
    [pl SUBJ-pl OBJ]

(25) a. A tilifunite Marije e Giuwanne
    have-3rd.sg/pl telephoned-pl.pp Mary and John
    ‘Mary and John have called’

b. Sete tilifunite vu
    are-2nd.pl telephoned-pl.pp you-pl.
    ‘You(pl) have called’

(26) a. Babbu dice le verità [Ripano]
    dad-m.sg says-3rd.sg.n the-f.sg truth-f.sg
    ‘Dad told the truth’
    [Mancini 1993: 107]

b. So magnate lu pani’
    am eaten-n the-m.sg breadroll-m.sg
    ‘I(fem) have eaten the breadroll’

San Valentino [PE]

(27) a. Aje cciose li pellistre [Sanvalentinese]
    have-1st.sg killed-sg.masc the-pl.masc chickens-pl.masc
    ‘I have killed the chickens’

---

2 Apologies for the gruesome examples, which were uttered spontaneously by a dialect speaker.
b. Ajẹ ccisọ li pellistrọ
   have-1st.sg killed-pl masc the-pl.masc chickens-pl.masc
   ‘I have killed the chickens’

In all these cases the participle “must see” both the subject and the object in order to agree with both/the most prominent

How does this agreement work?

4.1. THE COMPLEX PROBE

Pluperfect in Abruzzese [D’Alessandro & Ledgeway 2010]

(28) a. (ji) so ‘ve’ magnata/cagnata/fatijata
   (l) am-1.sg had-impf.pst eaten/changed/worked.sg
   ‘I had eaten/changed/worked’
   BE+ HAVE

b. (tu) si ‘ve magnata/cagnata/fatijata
   you are-2.sg-had-impf.pst eaten/changed/worked.sg
   ‘You had eaten/changed/worked’
   BE + HAVE

c. (essọ) ave’ magnata/cagnata/fatijata
   (s)he had-impf.pst eaten/changed/worked.sg
   ‘(S)he had eaten/changed/worked’
   HAVE

d. (nu) s’avavemọ / s’avemọ magnite/cagnite/fatijite
   we BE-1/2.had-impf.pst.1.pl/ BE-1/2.have-pres.1.pl
eaten/changed/worked.pl
   ‘We had worked’
   BE + HAVE

e. vu s’avavetọ / s’avetọ
   magnite/cagnite/fatijite
   you.pl BE-1/2.had-impf.pst.2.pl/ BE-1/2.have-pres.2.pl
eaten/changed/worked.pl
   ‘You had worked’
   BE + HAVE

f. (jissọ) ave’ magnite/cagnite/fatijite
   they had-impfsubj eaten/changed/worked.pl
   ‘They had worked’
   HAVE

- both auxiliaries show agreement with the EA
- the pp shows omnivorous number agreement [D’Alessandro & Roberts 2010],
  i.e. it agrees with whichever argument is plural [see also (22)]

(29) Nu s’ avavemọ magnite lọ maccarunọ
   we be-1/2 had-1st.pl.impf.pst eaten-pl the pasta-pl
   ‘We had eaten pasta’
π and ν form a **COMPLEX HEAD**:

(31) Given two heads F₁ and F₂, where F₁ immediately dominates F₂, F₁ and F₂ constitute a **COMPLEX HEAD** if they share their φ-features.

If the heads encode unvalued φ-features, we have a **COMPLEX PROBE**:

(32) **COMPLEX PROBE**: Given two heads F₁ and F₂, where F₁ immediately dominates F₂, F₁ and F₂ constitute a complex probe if they share their φ-features and these φ-features are unvalued.

(33) **SHARE** [adapted from Ouali 2008:169]

Transfer φ-features from X to Y and keep a copy
4.1.1. How it works

(34)  Semθ magnitθ lu panθ
      are eaten     the bread
      ‘We have eaten bread’

(35)  TP
      πP
      T_[p,n]  πP
      semθ
      [π[p,n]]
      vP
      v
      EA [p:1, n:pl]
      V [n]
      VP
      magnitθ
      IA [n:sg]
      lu panθ

- π probes the EA; so does T: they both get valued as [P:1, N:pl]
- υ probes the IA: it gets valued as [N:sg]
- π and υ form a complex Probe: they are Spelled Out with the following conflicting values: [P:1 (AND P:3); N:sg AND N:pl]
- Lexical insertion: Number is privative (following Nevins (2010)): the morphology of plural will be inserted
4.2. WHAT IS A COMPLEX PROBE?

What are the conditions under which the complex probe can be formed?
1. That’s a parameter—if you have an extra head, that head extends the agreement domain of the verb—
2. [D’Alessandro & Roberts 2010]: feature sharing. Your features are scattered on more than one head.

In principle, any two heads can form a complex probe. We see several instantiations of ‘collapsing’ heads.

Giorgi & Pianesi (1997): heads can be ‘scattered’ when the morphological inventory of the language is rich enough, or they can be collapsed into one.
Microvariation and syntactic theory

Robert D’Alessandro

PLUPERFECT IN ABRUZZESE:

\[ (38) \]

\[ a. \text{(essa)} \text{ ave’ magnate/cagnate/fatijate} \]
\[ (s)he \quad \text{had-impf.pst eaten/changed/worked.sg} \]
\[ ‘(S)he had eaten/changed/worked’ \quad \text{HAVE} \]

\[ b. \text{(nu) s’avavem/ s’avem magnit/cagnit/fatijit} \]
\[ \text{we} \quad \text{BE-1/2.had-impf.pst.1.pl/ BE-1/2.have-pres.1.pl} \]
\[ \text{eaten/changed/worked.pl} \]
\[ ‘We had worked’ \quad \text{BE + HAVE} \]

- In (44a): s’ and ‘avavem\(\theta\) are two distinct heads, both probing the external argument
- In (44b) there is only one head probing the external argument ‘ave’. [This head, however, still encodes the same information of the other heads for what concerns tense, aspect and person. Hence, we have a complex probe which is collapsed into one head, in the 3rd person.]

Cartography is built on more or less the same intuitions.

4.3. A NOTE ON TAM-BASED SPLIT ERGATIVITY

Tense-Aspect-Mood driven splits: perfective usually features an ergative/absolutive pattern; imperfective features a nominative/accusative pattern

usually perfective = ergative
imperfective = non ergative

- Scheme B

\[
\begin{array}{c|c}
\text{erg – abs} & \text{non erg} \\
\text{perfective >> imperfective >> progressive} & \\
\end{array}
\]

- Scheme A+Scheme B

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c}
5. **Split DOM**

A marking only appears on 1/2 objects

(39)  
so  viste a tte  
\[\text{Ariellese}\]  
am-1sg  seen to you  
“I have seen you”

(40)  
seme viste  a \text{vu}  
am-1pl  to you  
“We have seen you”

(41)  
*so  viste a Marije  
am-1sg  seen to Mary

Person split on both Subject and object of transitives in both perfective and imperfective → we are in group C3: π is in the v - π domain

Observe that split DOM *exists* (contra Coon 2012, Coon & Preminger 2012).

6. **Voice through gemination**

Keenan (1985:251): reduplication and gemination are not possible morphological expressions of the passive voice.

(42)  
a. So vista  \text{Si vista}  
am-1S seen  are-2S seen  
‘I have seen’ ‘You have seen’

b. So [v]vista  \text{Si [v]vista}  
am-1S seen  are-2S seen  
‘I am seen’ ‘You(s) are seen


Gemination takes place when the syntactic material is sent all together to PF, so that the chunks sent to PF can see each other (Biberauer & D’Alessandro 2006)(43)
Gemination marks the PIC – the PIC is not necessarily linked to Spell Out \(\rightarrow\) MODULAR PIC [D'Alessandro & Scheer 2012, 2013]
7. **Mysteries**

Enclitic possessives

(45) mamməmə
mother-my
‘My mother’

Why are possessives with kinship terms enclitic?

[Check an inalienable poss feature, N checks D[ef]], …]

aprepositional genitives

(46) la casə li cumbignə
the house the friends
‘The friends’ house’

(47) la casə jè lu me
the house is the my
‘the house is mine’

Old Italian: both constructions are very frequent

SIDs: BOTH constructions occur in the same varieties

They are the same construction! [A SC, D’Alessandro 2013, D’Alessandro & Migliori 2013]
8. CONCLUSIONS

- What is the locus of syntactic variation? Where is it encoded?
  It is encoded on functional heads, as stated in the Borer-Chomsky conjecture.

- USIDs can tell us a lot about the locus of syntactic variation and about Romance typology

- Why work on microvariation? 😊

REFERENCES


[Cocchi, G. 1997]. Ergativity in Romance Languages. Ms, Università di Firenze/OTS Utrecht.


APPENDIX

ANALYSES OF PERSON SPLITS

Recent analysis: Coon & Preminger (2012)/Torrego (2012) (based on Laka’s 2006 biclausal analysis for Basque *ari* sentences): in TAM-driven split ergativity there is an extra head (aspectual) which splits the *ν* domain; there is only one argument per cycle; that argument gets the only case in the cycle.

Person splits: an extra head (person licenser) splitting the domain

(48)

[Coon and Preminger 2012]

Coon & Preminger: 1/2 are marked with BE because the P/D head cannot incorporate into the aux head (forming have—Freeze 1992, Kayne 1993)

NB: for Coon & Preminger, the extra head is a participant head, licensing 1/2 pronouns in the clause (following Bejar & Rezac 2009).

[See also Cocchi 1995, 1997, 1999]: “the verb in Lummi appears in the passive form, which syntactically behaves as an unaccusative. Therefore the patient (1/2 pronoun) being THE SOLE REAL ARGUMENT of the sentence, moves to Spec[TP] and checks NOM Case, while the DP-agent, whose presence is no longer obligatory, eventually shows oblique case marking).[Cocchi 1999:114]

This does not work for Abruzzese.

1. Distribution of BE and HAVE

(49)  a.  so  ‘ve  fattè  /  so  ‘ve magnitè  1e  maccarunè  
      am-1stsg  had-impf  done-sg       am  had  eaten-pl  the  spaghetti
      ‘I had done’  ‘I had eaten spaghetti’

          b.  si  ‘ve  fattè  /  si  ‘ve magnitè  le  maccarunè
        are-2ndsg  had-impf  done  are  had  eaten-pl  the  spaghetti

          c.  a  ‘ve  fatte  /  a  ve  magnitè  le  maccarunè
        has  had  done  has  had  eaten-pl  the  spaghetti
Note that BE is higher than have (contra Kayne) [→ we will return to the analysis of this later]

But Coon & Preminger are not totally wrong!

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We are facing a parametric variation: the difference is in the “valuation status” of features [group A vs group B]

The difference is that π is a probe in Italian dialects, and it’s a valued φ-bundle (or an aspectual head) in split-ergative languages.

“Greedy” Probe?

There could be a ‘greedy’ Probe which does not stop probing even after all its unvalued features have been valued [Bobaljik & Branigan 2006].

(50) \[ \text{T}_{[\text{up, un, ug}] \ldots} \text{[EA}_{[p,n, g]} \text{V}_{[\ldots]IA_{[p,n, g]} } \]

two problems:

i. we might need a defective V (not the case in these varieties, with pp agreement with the IA)

ii. if we postulate a ‘delayed’ Agree, we wouldn’t be able to account for so-called absolute participles:

(51) liggìute li libbre, Marije se n’a jite [Abruzzese]
read-pl the-pl books-pl Mary self cl-has gone
‘After reading the books, Mary went away’

→ Greedy probe won’t work

Cyclic Agree?

Bejar & Rezac (2009):

(52) Step 0: VP constructed as \{V, \{V, IA\}\}; v becomes locus
Step 1: Merge (v, VP) \→ \{v\_I \{v, \{V, IA\}\}\}
Step 2: Agree (v\_I, IA)
Step 3: Merge (vP, EA) \→ \{v\_II, \{EA, \{v\_I, \{v\_V, \{V, IA\}\}\}\}\}
Step 4: Agree (v\_II, EA), if there is still a probe on v\_II

Let’s try this against Ripano data:

(53) I’m so magnat\_o le polende
I-m sg am eaten-n the- f sg polenta- f sg
‘I eat the polenta’
(54)

a. Merge (la pəlende; V)  
b. Merge (VP; v)  
c. Agree (v, la pəlende)

(55)

a. Merge (v_{I}, i')  
b. Merge (v_{II}, v_{I}P)  
c. Agree (v_{II}, i')

Main proble: **gender**: we’d need to assume that gender reprobes, or that there is an extrinsic hierarchy deciding whether gender is different or the same. 

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3 I indicate with v_{II} the reprojection of v after merging the external argument.