

## Strategies of marking the unmarked

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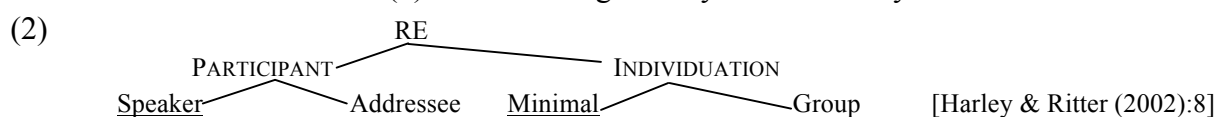
**0. The data.** This study focuses on a particular strategy of person marking applying in some upper and extreme southern Italian dialects. Specifically, we will focus on periphrastic perfect forms (present perfect), obtained by combining an auxiliary with a past participle. Differently from finite verb inflection, that shows very few cases of syncretism, inflection on perfective auxiliaries seems to exhibit heavy syncretism in a large number of dialects spoken in Campania, Apulia, Basilicata and Calabria, particularly between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> forms. In these dialects, HAVE is the only auxiliary attested. This situation is exemplified in (1).

(1) Mola di Bari (Apulo-Barese)

a. aīī« /	a /	am« /	a"v«t« /	an«	"fatt«/d«r"m <sup>-w</sup> t«/par"t <sup>-w</sup> t«
HAVE.1sg / HAVE.2sg / HAVE.1pl / HAVE.2pl / HAVE.3pl					done.pp/slept.pp/left.pp
b. (")a					f"fatt«/dd«r"m <sup>-w</sup> t«/ppar"t <sup>-w</sup> t«
HAVE.3sg					done.pp/slept.pp/left.pp

Despite 2<sup>nd</sup> sg HAVE is homophonous with 3<sup>rd</sup> sg HAVE, a special mechanism seems to apply in (1) in order to express the different information encoded on both auxiliaries. In the case of 3<sup>rd</sup> sg HAVE, the first consonant of the participle geminates. In the presence of bare 2<sup>nd</sup> sg HAVE, conversely, this mechanism is not at work. The gemination of a consonant in external sandhi, also known as *Raddoppiamento Fonosintattico* (RF), is usually determined by the presence of an oxytone or by a strong monosyllable (cf. Saltarelli (1970, 1983), Vogel (1978, 1982), Chierchia (1983-1986), Sluyters (1990), a.o.). This analysis, in the presence of a monosyllable, is untenable, as it is not possible to distinguish phonetically between a 2<sup>nd</sup> and a 3<sup>rd</sup> sg auxiliary. Moreover, some Campanian dialects indicate that monosyllabic auxiliaries are not RF-licensors (Santa Maria a Vico: ad"dZu cam"mat« ‘HAVE.1sg called.pp *versus* a ccam"mat« ‘HAVE.3sg called.pp). I propose to consider RF triggered by 3<sup>rd</sup> sg HAVE as the expression of the morphological marking of a default morphosyntactic node instead.

**2. Analysis.** I adopt the feature geometry of morphosyntactic nodes proposed by Harley & Ritter (2002). In this geometry, a Referring Expression (RE) indicating a pronoun or an agreement marker corresponds to the mother node of two branching nodes: Participant and Individuation. Participant branches into Speaker, bearing 1<sup>st</sup> sg information, and Addressee, expressing 2<sup>nd</sup> sg reference. Individuation, on the other hand, is the node which is purely endowed with number properties. This node has two dependents: Minimal, expressing 3<sup>rd</sup> person sg, and Group, bearing plural properties. Among all these terminal nodes, only two are used with a default interpretation: Speaker and Minimal. Conversely, Addressee and Group are considered to be marked. (2) sketches the geometry under scrutiny here.



Based on some works about acquisition of pronouns, Harley & Ritter (2002) show that the first nominals acquired by children are usually 1<sup>st</sup> person sg or 3<sup>rd</sup> person sg inanimates.

Crucially, both 2<sup>nd</sup> person and plural are learnt in a successive cycle. From this observation the notion of default is given: pronouns which are learnt first during the acquisition path are claimed to bear a default interpretation (cf. Harley & Ritter (2002)). This complies with the idea that prototypical properties of human's experiential or interpretation of the world (cf. Langedoneck (1987), Mayerthaler (1988) & Calabrese (2011)) must be learnt before others.

**3. Back to southern Italian dialects.** Differently from a massive number of languages, which exhibit overt realization of morphological marking in correspondence with marked morphosyntactic node, southern Italian dialects seem to opt for a strategy whereby default nodes need to be marked by means of a dedicated morpheme. In the system of subject clitics of the northern Italian type, for instance, the only subject clitic which seems to occur obligatorily in the paradigm is the one bearing 2<sup>nd</sup> sg information. Presence of a 3<sup>rd</sup> sg subject clitic is claimed to be less attested cross-linguistically whereas a subject clitic expressing 1<sup>st</sup> sg information is rare (Renzi & Vanelli (1983)). The situation is outlined in (3).

(3) Sarre (Franco-Provencal)

a. "drymmo / tP        "drymm« /        "drymm«        [Manzini & Savoia (2005), I:116]  
      sleep.1sg   SC.2sg   sleep.2sg        sleep.3sg

The dialect of Sarre clearly shows that a verb bearing 2<sup>nd</sup> sg properties needs to be specified by means of a subject clitic. This mechanism is not at work in the case of verbs valued for 1<sup>st</sup> sg and 3<sup>rd</sup> sg information. In the southern Italian dialect in (1), instead, a different strategy applies. In the case of 1<sup>st</sup> sg HAVE, the bare form /a/ must be followed by a phoneme of the fricative type in order to express the Speaker. Similarly, when HAVE bears 3<sup>rd</sup> sg information, RF applies. RF can be thought of as the phonological process resulting from the projection of a mora triggered by a 3<sup>rd</sup> sg auxiliary in order to express Minimal. Crucially, in the case of 2<sup>nd</sup> sg HAVE, neither phonetic realization of a dedicated morpheme nor projection of an extra mora able to trigger RF applies.

(3) a. a + /ʔ/	/a/ + Speaker	'1 <sup>st</sup> sg HAVE'
b. a + □	/a/ + Minimal	'3 <sup>rd</sup> sg HAVE'
c. a + Ø	/a/ + Ø	'2 <sup>nd</sup> sg HAVE'

(3) indicates that 3<sup>rd</sup> sg HAVE, differently from 2<sup>nd</sup> sg HAVE, is endowed with two moras. 2<sup>nd</sup> sg HAVE, instead, is composed of just one mora. From this observation, a claim can be put forward: 2<sup>nd</sup> sg and 3<sup>rd</sup> sg forms are not purely syncretic. In this case, 3<sup>rd</sup> sg HAVE expresses its □-information by means of a moraic unit whereas 2<sup>nd</sup> sg HAVE does not do the same job. In the presence of 2<sup>nd</sup> sg HAVE, deletion of the Addressee feature, also called Impoverishment, operates and insertion of bare HAVE occurs. A similar mechanism showing that unmarked morphosyntactic nodes are marked by means of a morphological marker is attested in (4).

(4) Monteguiduccio (Northern Marchigiano)

a. "vagg / vE /        "va-l  
      go.1sg   go.2sg   go.3sg-SC.3sgm

In (4), the only occurrence of a subject clitic is attested in correspondence with a verb endowed with Minimal feature. 1<sup>st</sup> sg verbs, also, express their reference to the Speaker by means of the morpheme /g/. The bare form /vE/ is restricted to the one case in which the verb bears 2<sup>nd</sup> sg properties.

**4. Selected references:** -Harley, H. & E. Ritter (2002), 'Person and Number in Pronouns: A Feature-Geometric analysis', *Language* 78.3. 482-526. –Manzini. M. R. & L. Savoia (2005). *I dialetti italiani e romance: Morfosintassi generativa*, Alessandria, Edizioni dell'Orso.