Particle split in Cimbrian: a genuine Germanic property reshaped in a VO-environment

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Cimbrian is a German(ic) VO heritage language nowadays still spoken in Lusérn, a small enclave in the mountains of Trentino (Northern Italy). Not surprisingly, Cimbrian reveals extensive lexical borrowing from the surrounding Romance dialects, a process that traces back to the Late Middle Ages (cf. Gamillscheg 1912). As for the syntax, Cimbrian displays very idiosyncratic phenomena that turn out to be unique among German dialects and are, rather, comparable with similar phenomena in other German(ic) varieties in Italy (cf. Cognola 2013, for Mòcheno).

One phenomenon in which aspects of typologically different patterns seem to coexist, are particle verb constructions. Whereas the other Germanic varieties show a clear-cut typological contrast, Cimbrian allows for variation, in a way that combines properties of both systems. The basic generalizations are the following (Haider 1997, Vikner 2001, Dehé 2015): In the Germanic OV-languages (e.g. German, Dutch, Frisian) the particle is left-adjacent to the stem in its base position, cf. (1a) vs. (1b). In the Germanic VO-languages (e.g. English, Danish, Icelandic), it appears always to the right – either adjacent or distant, cf. (2).

(1) a. dat hij het tapijt niet **weg wierp**   (Dutch; constructed after Haider 1997: 9)
   b. *dat hij **wierp weg** het tapijt niet
     "that he didn't throw out the carpet"

(2) a. at han **kastet** matten *ut*   (Norwegian; Haider 1997: 9)
   b. at han **kastet** *ut* matten
     "that he threw out the carpet"

Of course, there are various degrees of variation as to how these basic differences are exploited. Indeed, not all VO-languages allow for both the distant and adjacent pattern displayed in (2). In Danish and Swedish, for instance, only one of the two serializations is possible (Haider 1997: 8–9). Conversely, Dutch and some German varieties can also show 'particle split' phenomena, i.e. the realization of the particle in a position that is left-distant from the stem, cf. (3)–(4); nevertheless, the relative order between the particle and the lexical stem remains unchanged (see Schallert and Schwalm 2015 for an overview).

(3) a. dat Jan het meisje wil *op***bellen**   (Dutch; Neeleman and Weerman 1993: 435)
   b. dat Jan het meisje *op* wil **bellen**
    that Jan the girl PART:up wants PART.up.ring
    "that Jan wants to ring the girl up"

(4) na hett ses *auf* sölt **sach**   (Hessian; Pfeufer 1938: 13)
   then have she=it PART should recited
   "then she should have recited it"

In Cimbrian, however, we get a serialization which is typical for OV-languages, alongside the one known for the VO-type, i.e. the particle can either precede (5a) or follow (5b) the lexical stem.

(5) a. I hån *au***gehöart** di arbat ka Tria (Cimbrian; Grewendorf and Poletto 2012: 220)
   b. I hån **gehöart** *au* di arbat ka Tria
    I have {PART}stopped {PART} the job in T.
    "I quit my job in Trento"

Additionally, particle split like in Dutch or German dialects can be observed, as reported by Tyroller (2003: 204) and Grewendorf and Poletto (2012: 231) and exemplified in (6).

(6) I sperar, azta di arbatar {*au*}**håm** {*au*}**gemacht** {*au*} di maur von gart
  "I hope, that the workers PART have PART built PART the wall in the garden"

In this perspective, Cimbrian proves to be the only German(ic) VO-variety that allows particle split. According to the analysis proposed by Grewendorf & Poletto (2012), this phenomenon in Cimbrian can be identified as a relic of an ancient OV order. Furthermore, they suggest that "prefixes are generated in those domains of phrase structure that encode aspectual distinctions" (Grewendorf & Poletto 2012: 219).

The aim of our talk is twofold. On the empirical level, we present new data that display both the similarities and the differences between particle split in the German dialects and in Cimbrian, working out the peculiarities of the construction in the latter variety. Secondly, we want to propose a more lexicalist account of the empirical facts. While we agree with Grewendorf and Poletto (2012) in understanding the particle distribution in Cimbrian as a relic of the 'older' OV-stratum, we assume the semantic contribution of the particle to be directly encoded in the lexicon; the same applies to syntactic properties like separability (see Stiebels and Wunderlich 1994). The gist of our analysis is the following: We take the general structure of the VP in Cimbrian to embody the typical vP/VP-division, whereas the verbal complex involves a head adjunction structure not unfamiliar from verbal complexes in Germanic or clitic clusters in Romance. Starting from the left-branching base structure (7a), which we take to reflect an OV-residual on Cimbrian, the different patterns illustrated in (6) are derived by right cliticization (7b) and/or "flipping" of the respective sister nodes (Haider 2003, Williams 2003), as shown in (7c). This analysis is supported by the fact that all the serializations schematized in (6) remain strictly compact, i.e. they do not allow any nonverbal interveners, e.g. adverbials. Such a behavior is well-known from verbal complexes in (Continental) West Germanic, yet rather unexpected for a Germanic VO-language. The only exception are cases like (8) where the finite auxiliary can be separated from the verbal complex. In these cases, however, the particle cannot appear before (or after) the auxiliary and before the adverbial *sa* 'already'; in our view this provides evidence that the auxiliary belongs to a separate syntactic domain, namely at least to the head position of the higher VP/vP, and, by successive cyclic movement, to T^0 (8b). Potential alternative analyses like e.g. incorporation or, for that matter, its reversal (Baker 1988, Roberts 1991) have been shown to make the wrong predictions in semantic terms since particles can interact with the argument structure of the base verb, e.g. *lächeln* 'smile' vs. *anlächeln* 'smile at sb.' (see Lüdeling 2001 for discussion).

(7) a. [$_V$ au ← gemacht] ← håm]
  b. [$_V$ au e_i [håm + gemacht$_i$]]   (Cliticization)
  c. [$_V$ [håm → gemacht] → au]   (Flipping)

(8) a. I sperar, azta di arbatar *{au}håm sa {au}gemacht {au} di maur von gart
  "I hope that the workers PART have already PART built PART the wall in the garden"
  b. … [$_{TP}$ … håm$_i$ [$_{vP}$ … e_i [$_{VP}$ sa [$_{VP}$ … [$_{V°}$ {au} e_i gemacht {au}] die maur von gart]]]

To conclude, particle split in Cimbrian mimics the behavior of the particle verbs in the Germanic OV languages, but is crucially embedded in a VO-environment giving rise to patterns that are unique among the Germanic languages.

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