

Mixed paradigms in Italo-Romance. A case of morphologization of auxiliary selection?

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In this paper, I offer a morphological account of the mixed paradigms in Italo-Romance, i.e. the cases where there is, in compound tenses, auxiliary alternation between *ESSE* and *HABERE* (henceforth E/H) within one and the same (sub)paradigm. I intend to show that in such paradigms auxiliary selection traditionally following the split intransitivity criterion, becomes *morphologized*. Consequently, the *intraparadigmatic* auxiliary alternations attested in a wide range of Italo-Romance varieties (cf. Loporcaro 2001; 2007; 2014; Manzini & Savoia 2005, among others) can follow various morphological patterns, ranging from morphosyntactically coherent (motivated) to those which do not seem to form a natural class (i.e., those traditionally termed ‘morphomic’).

I take the intraparadigmatic auxiliary alternation as a phenomenon which *induces a split within periphrasis* (cf. Corbett 2013; 2015a; 2015b), assuming, at the same time, the perfective auxiliary constructions to be clear instances of *inflectional periphrasis* (along the lines of Ackerman & Stump 2004; Brown et al. 2012). Such an assumption leads to the question recently put forward by Vincent (2011: 434) - “*if periphrases can become part of a paradigm, can they exhibit the distributional behaviour associated with autonomous morphemes?* – and follows also some of the recent attempts to deal with the periphrasis in *morphomic* terms (cf. Cruschina 2013; Ledgeway forthcoming).

As is well known, in standard Romance languages, compound tenses can exhibit one generalized auxiliary or they can present auxiliary selection on the basis of the active/stative split. However, this clear-cut situation where, on the one hand, one perfective auxiliary is generalized, and, on the other hand, auxiliary selection follows the split intransitivity criterion, is far from being the only pattern of alternation attested in the Romance languages (Loporcaro 2007; 2014: 53; Ledgeway 2012: 321): in various Italo-Romance varieties the alternation follows mood distinctions, tense, or even person and/or number (cf., e.g., Ledgeway 2014; Ledgeway in press: Sect. 3.2).

The person-based systems (or *person-driven systems*, cf. D’Alessandro & Roberts 2010; Ledgeway, in press) have attracted, over the recent years, much attention, especially within the generative framework (see, e.g., Bentley & Eythórsson 2001; Cennamo 2010; Legendre 2010; Loporcaro 2001; 2007; 2014; Ledgeway 2012: 317–327; in press: Sect. 3.2.; Manzini & Savoia 2005, II/III: chap. 5). There are clearly *motivated* splits such as the pattern EEH-EEH which seems to be the most common (cf. Loporcaro 2001: 469; 2007: 182–183), and where the relevant distinction is that of (non-)discourse participants (the 1/2 pers. are opposed to the 3 pers.). However, there are other combinations, such as HEE-HHH, HHE-HHH, HEH-HHH (see Loporcaro 2007: 184; Legendre 2010), which may require a different account. Moreover, apart from the cases where one and the same pattern runs across all compound tenses, there are also patterns limited to just the present perfect or only to the counterfactual; and there are also cases of the so-called *free variation* where specific cells of the paradigm allow freely for either auxiliary (Loporcaro 2007 arrives thus at defining a third auxiliary selection type dubbing such systems *triple auxiliation*).

By way of example, the Abruzzi variety of Campli (province of Teramo), displays in the present perfect the common pattern EEH-EEH, but shows free variation E/H in the counterfactual. But – most importantly – the free variation involves only the 1st pers. sg. and the 3rd pers. pl. exhibiting thus **E/H.E.E.-E.E.E/H**. This pattern is remarkably similar to the typical U-distribution of the stem alternation defined by Maiden (2005; 2011: 223–241) and holding, for example, for the present indicative of *venire* (**vengo-vieni-viene-veniamo-venite-vengono**). Similarly, in the dialect of Viticuso (province of Frosinone, southern Lazio), discussed also by Ledgeway (2015: Sect. 3.2.1.), the counterfactual displays free variation in all the cells of singular and only in the 3rd plural, yielding theoretically **H.H.H.-E.E.H** (coming thus very close to Maiden’s N-pattern). This is not to claim that auxiliary selection and stem alternations are one and the same thing, but once it is recognized that auxiliary selection can become morphologized, it follows that it can display splits typical of a wide range of morphological phenomena such as, precisely, stem alternations.

The aim of the paper is thus to sketch such a morphological approach that describes the attested patterns on a scale ranging from the motivated splits to the strictly morphomic ones. Such an

approach is not entirely incompatible with the current syntactic accounts. Rather, it represents an implementation of an idea expressed also by Loporcaro (2007: 186): “(...) *we still have to specify where precisely (in which verb persons) the morphemes ‘have’ and ‘be’ occur. This is, however, a matter of morphology, not syntax.*”

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