

AGREE in the derivation of root subjunctives in Corfioto

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This talk investigates the nature of syntactic relations between subjects and the left periphery of the clause. I analyze the effects and the restrictions that the presence of a speaker, an addressee, and a covert modal operator in the upper left periphery (Zanuttini 2008; Giorgi 2012; Oikonomou 2016) can have on the subject. I claim that the analysis of the morphosyntactic restrictions in the derivation of root subjunctives in Corfioto, the endangered Italo-Romance variety of the Corfiot Jews (Mücke 2019; Vardakis 2021, 2023) can be instrumental in perceiving the nature of AGREE (Deal 2022; Milway 2023) between syntactic elements pertaining to the speech act, mood, and the kernel predicate.

Subjects in Corfioto are characterized by an asymmetrically marked division of the ϕ -features [SPEAKER] and [ADDRESSEE] (Poletto 2000; Harley & Ritter 2002; Béjar 2003), across verb inflection, clitic subjects and subject pronouns in the 1SG, 2SG and 3SG. Inflectional morphology of 2SG and the 3SG verb forms is syncretic for person and number across all tense and mood paradigms of all inflectional classes, whereas the 2SG is marked via a single subject clitic (2SCL) *ti* which is underspecified for the feature [+/-ADDRESSEE] rendering its reading ambiguous with respect to referentiality. In addition to the 3SG *se*-impersonal form and the 1PL and 3PL verb forms, generic subject interpretation is permitted with the use of the 2SCL. Hence, in declarative contexts, a generic vs referential distinction (see Sifaki 2022) in the interpretation of the 2SG in Corfioto results from the synergy between the valuation of a feature [+/-ADDRESSEE] marking the strong subject pronoun *ti*, the 2SCL *ti* and the +/-imperfective aspect of the tensed verb forms.

While the absence of the strong topic subject pronoun *ti* and the imperfective marking of the verb trigger an ambiguous reading of the 2SCL, either generic or referential, which can be retrieved at the discourse level (1), the perfective marking of the verb blocks the generic interpretation of the 2SCL, as in (2):

- (1) *Kuándo ti yená asái óboli, ti víve asái ben.*
when 2SG have-2/3SG much money 2SCL live very well.
'When one has lots of money, one lives very well/When you have lots of money, you live very well.'
- (2) *Ti a méso l'ajo dópo ti a méso le tsevól-e.*
2SG AUX.2/3SG put.PTCP DEF=garlic.SG then 2SCL AUX.2/3SG put.PTCP DEF.F.PL onion-PL.F
'You put the garlic, then you put the onions.'

On the contrary, the presence of the 2SG subject pronoun *ti*, merging directly in a peripheral topic position (Belletti 2004) blocks a generic reading of the 2SG, rendering the interpretation of the subject strictly referential, regardless of the aspectual marking of the verb (3).

- (3) *Ti ti iéra el fradé-l.*
PRO.2SG 2SCL be.PST DEF.F.SG brother-M.SG
'You were the brother.'

Unlike assertive contexts, the presence of the 2SCL in (in subordinate) root subjunctive constructions headed by the modal particle *ke*, results in the referential reading of the 2SG as in (4). Root subjunctives in Corfioto are headed by the modal particle/subordinator *ke*, introducing a finite indicative or non-indicative (subjunctive) inflected verb form, depending on the inflectional class of the verb.

- (4) *La mia berahá ke ti yábi-a.*
DEF POSS.1SG blessing PRT 2SCL have.SUBJ.2/3SG
'May you have my blessing.'

Similar to other languages in South-Eastern Europe (Van der Auwera & Amman 2004; Friedman & Joseph 2023), Corfioto features root subjunctive constructions introduced by a complementizer/particle, denoting optative, exhortative or jussive mood. Unlike Western Romance, in general where an optative expression of the subjunctive is restricted to the 3SG and the 3PL (Schlenker 2005), as well as cases where exhortative

root-subjunctives in the 2SG co-exists with imperative, as in Venetan (5), verbs in root subjunctives in Corfioto can inflect for all persons, as in (6):

(5) *Che ti gab-i fortun-a!*
PRT 2SCL have-2SG luck-F.SG
'May you be lucky!'

(6) *Ke fěmo páts-e!*
PRT do.1PL peace-SG
'Let's make peace!'

Interestingly, the particle *ke* and the finite verb form create a clitic-verb cluster, allowing only subject and object clitics, and the negation marker to interpolate between them. This is clearly illustrated in the 2SG, where only the 2SCL is licensed between the particle *ke* and the verb form, rendering the intervention of the strong subject pronoun *ti* in the preverbal position ungrammatical, as in (7).

(7) *(Ti) ke *(ti) ti véni-a, ti sént-e?*
PRO.2SG PRT PRO.2SG 2SCL come.SUBJ-2/3SG 2SCL hear-2/3SG
'Please come back, do you hear me?'

I suggest that root subjunctives in Corfioto are syntactically derived via an operation of AGREE implying the valuation of the features [MOOD_[+SUBJ]] and [+ADDRESSEE] which mark distinct syntactic heads extending from the *v*-domain to the extreme left periphery. Considering that the particle *ke* in root subjunctives merges in a head Mood_[+SUBJ] of a MoodP projection within the IP (Oikonomou 2016), common to the syntactic derivation of Balkan-type subjunctives (Rivero 1994), I claim that it is the [+ADDRESSEE] feature marking a covert SpechaActP projection in the left periphery which interacts with and satisfies the [+ADDRESSEE] value of the 2SCL *ti* in *v* via AGREE, as illustrated in the structure given in (8).

(8) *Ke ti vénia!*
PRT 2SCL come.SUBJ-2/3SG
'Do come!'

[CP [saP_[+ADDR]] [ModOp [IP MoodP_[+SUBJ]] *ke* [CIP *ti* [vP *t*_[+ADDR]] *vénia* [VP_{VP} *vien-/ven-*]]]]]]]]

Bringing new empirical evidence of the endangered variety Corfioto, this presentation aims to reassess and expand previous descriptive and functional (Van der Auwera & Amman 2004; Friedman & Joseph 2023) as well as formal syntactic and semantic analyses (Oikonomou 2016) of root subjunctives in Eastern European languages.

Selected Bibliography

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