

Differential Object Marking in Old Sardinian

Michela Cennamo, Luigi Andriani, Francesco Ciconte

(University of Naples Federico II, University of Utrecht, University of Insubria)

This paper explores the differential marking of human O(bjects)/DOM in old Sardinian texts from two different areas, Logudoro and Arborea, investigating its constraints, whether *semantic* (reflecting the Individuation Hierarchy) (Silverstein 1976: 122), *syntactic* (determined by the syntactic position of the O argument in relation to the verb and in the clause) or *pragmatic* (deriving from and functioning as a marking device for topics) (Bossong 1998; Iemmolo 2010; Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2011: 18, among others).

A preliminary study reveals a change in progress, the fixing of Definiteness as the main parameter determining the occurrence of the preposition *a* (*ad* before vowels), interacting with V1 word order and the need to disambiguate the function of the clause nuclear arguments, A and O, when highly individuated (i.e., proper/human, kinship nouns) (Lombardi 2007).

Proper names, i.e., arguments highest on the Individuation Hierarchy, are already affected by the change in the early attestations of the phenomenon, although with areal differences, reflecting different diachronic stages. In both early vernaculars human Os are marked with the preposition *a(d)* if instantiated by proper names (1a), rarely lacking it (1b). Human common (2a) and kinship (2b) nouns instead less frequently take a dedicated marker, lacking *a(d)* even when [+ DEF], [+ GIVEN] (3a)-(3b) (Putzu 2008: 417):

- (1) a. *isse levait a Gavini* ... (CSPS 21.5)
 he took.3SG to Gavini
 ‘He took Gavini ...’
 b. ... *levait clesia Arzoco* (CSMB 100d)
 took.3SG church Arzoco
 ‘... the Church took Arzoco’
- (2) a. ... *vinkit priori Johanni ... assu previteru* (CSNT 300.2)
 won.3SG prior Johanni to.DOM-the priest
 ‘The prior Johanni won ... the priest’
 b. *parthibi a ffiios de Istefane* [+ DEF] (CSPS 24, 1-2)
 divided.1SG to.DOM sons of Istefane
 ‘I... shared Istefane de Nussas’s sons with ...’
- (3) a. ... *l’ockisit (V) su seruu uostru (O) su seruu meu (A)* (CSPS 110)
 him-killed.3SG the servant your the servant my
 ‘... my servant killed your servant’
 b. *Parthivi ffiios de Gavini* ... [+ DEF] (CSPS 296. 1-2)
 shared.1SG children of Gavin ...
 ‘I shared Gavinus Troccus’ children ...’

In old Arborense, *a(d)* is instead well attested with human common nouns, also if [- DEF], [±REF] in later texts (4):

- (4) *si alchuno homini hochirit at alcuno atteru homini* (CDLA 4.1)
 if some man killed.3SG to.DOM some other man
 ‘If a man killed another man’

Thus, old Sardinian reveals the role played by the notion of Individuation in the initial stages of the grammaticalization of the preposition *a(d)* as a DOM marker, progressively spreading from human proper names, to human, kinship and then common nouns, initially definite, subsequently indefinite. Already in 11th-13th century texts, *a(d)* does not appear to differentiate A from O arguments, but is a marker of high Individuation, its use being sensitive to the notions of definiteness and humanness.

Old Sardinian, therefore, brings interesting novel data on the rise of DOM and its possible diachronic paths, a phenomenon that will be analysed also in relation to word order changes in a V1 system (Wolfe 2015).

References

- Bosson, G. 1998. Le marquage différentiel de l'objet dans les langues d'Europe. In: Feuillet, J. (ed.), *Actance et valence dans les langues de l'Europe*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 193-258.
- Darlymple, M. & Nikolaeva, I. 2011. *Objects and information structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 2018. Grammaticalization and changes in argument linking: a case-study from old Logudorese Sardinian. In: Chini, M. & Cuzzolin, P. (eds), *Tipologia, acquisizione, grammaticalizzazione - Typology, acquisition, grammaticalization studies*. Milan: Franco Angeli, 96-117.
- Iemmolo, G. 2010. Topicality and DOM: evidence from Romance and beyond. *Studies in Language* 34: 239-272.
- Lombardi, A. 2007. Posizione dei clitici e ordine dei costituenti della lingua sarda medievale. In: Ledgeway, A. & Bentley, D. (eds), *Sui dialetti italo-romanzi: Saggi in onore di Nigel B. Vincent*. Norfolk: Biddles, 133-148.
- Meyer-Lübke W., 1902. *Zur Kenntniss der Altlogudoresischen*. Akademie der Wissenschaft, Band CXLV, Wien.
- Putzu, I. E. 2008. Per uno studio dell'accusativo preposizionale in sardo antico: Emergenze dallo spoglio dei *Condaghe di San Pietro di Silki*. In: Lazzeroni, R., Banfi, E., Bernini, G., Chini, M. & Marotta, G. (eds), *Diachronica et synchronica: Studi in onore di Anna Giacalone Ramat*. Pisa: Edizione ETS, 397-428.
- Silverstein, M. 1976. Hierarchy of Features and Ergativity. In R. M. W. Dixon (ed.), *Grammatical categories in Australian languages*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 112-171.
- Wolfe, S. 2015. The Old Sardinian Condaghes. A Syntactic Study. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 113.2: 177-205.

Sources:

- CDLA = Murgia, G. 2016. *Carta de Logu d'Arborea*. Rome: Franco Angeli.
- CSMB = Viridis, P. 2003 (ed.). *Il Condaghe di Santa Maria di Bonarcado*. Nuoro: Ilisso.
- CSNT = Merci, P. 1992 (ed.). *Il Condaghe di San Nicola di Trullas. Testo Logudorese inedito dei secoli XI-XIII*. Sassari: Delfino.
- CSPS = Soddu, A. & Strinna, G. 2013 (eds). *Il Condaghe di San Pietro di Silki*. Nuoro: Ilisso.