On the rise of verbal agreement

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1. Introduction

It is a well-known observation that subject-verb agreement morphology develops from former (clitic) subject pronouns.[1] Often the diachronic relation between agreement morphemes and (subject) pronouns can be easily detected from a superficial inspection of the shape of pronouns and agreement morphemes in the present day language. This is illustrated with the following examples from Basque and Buryat (Mongolian):

(1) *Pronouns and absolutive/ergative agreement in Basque*

	Pronouns		absolutive agreement 'go'	ergative agreement 'have'
	absolutive	ergative		
1sg	ni	ni-k	**n**-u	d-itu-**t** '**I** have them'
2sg	su	su-k	**s**-us	d-itu-**su** '**you** have them'
1pl	gu	gu-k	**g**-us	d-itu-**gu** '**we** have them'
2pl	súe-k	súe-k	**s**-us-**e**	d-itu-**sue** '**you** have them'

(Arregi 2001)

(2) *Pronouns and subject/possessor agreement in Buryat*

	nominative pronouns	verb ending	genitive pronouns	noun ending
1sg	bi	-b	mińī	-m(ni), -ni
2sg	ši	-š	šińī	-š(ni)
1pl	bide	-bdi	manai	-(m)nai
2pl	ta	-t	tanai	-tnai

(Comrie 1980)

<u>Further indicator of the diachronic origin of agreement morphemes</u>: cross-linguistically, agreement morphemes mark a subset of the grammatical distinctions that are marked by subject pronouns (cf. Barlow 1992, Lehmann 1993, Corbett 1998, Ariel 2000).[2]

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[1] This idea was already present in the work of 19th century grammarians such as Grimm 1812, Bopp 1816, Brugmann & Delbrück 1911. Further relevant publications from the first part of the 20th century include most notably Meillet 1912. The topic has then been taken up again in the work of typologists such as Greenberg (1966), Comrie (1980, 1981), Lehmann (1987), Hopper & Traugott (1993). The perhaps most influential work of more recent origin is Givón (1971, 1976, 1979), to be discussed in detail below. See Bresnan & Mchombo (1987) for a very interesting elaboration of some of Givón's ideas in a LFG setting.

[2] Agreement features realized on the verb may include [person], [number], [gender] and [noun class] (the latter can be observed in Bantu languages such as Swahili or Chichewa, cf. Givón 1976, Bresnan & Mchombo 1987, Krifka 1995).

Current thinking about the diachronic process that leads to the reanalysis of pronouns as verbal agreement morphology is substantially influenced by the work of Talmy Givón, most notably Givón (1976), who claims that

- The reanalysis of resumptive pronouns in topic left dislocation structures provides the ***only*** diachronic path to subject-verb agreement.

This paper sets out to challenge this hypothesis by first pointing out that Givón's analysis is not compatible with the following two observations:

1. the cross-linguistic prominence of suffixal verbal agreement morphology (the so-called 'suffixing preference') (cf. Bybee et al. 1990)
2. the pioneering role of 1st and 2nd person in the development of person/number marking on verbs (cf. Mithun 1991, Haiman 1991, Ariel 2000)

I will then discuss a set of examples from Bavarian and Rhaeto-Romance dialects where the development of new verbal agreement markers crucially does not involve any form of topic left dislocation.

<u>Basic claim</u>: the reanalysis of second position clitics as AGR-morphemes may provide an alternative path to 'new' verbal agreement morphology in V2 languages.

Finally, I will add some conjectures on morphological aspects of the categorial reanalysis in question. Based on a realizational model of grammar (i.e. Distributed Morphology, Halle & Marantz 1993), it will be argued that this reinterpretation is constrained by some version of a 'Blocking Principle' (or 'Elsewhere Principle', cf. Kiparsky 1973, 1983, Anderson 1992; Halle's 1997 'Subset Principle') that favours the use of more specified forms over less specified forms.

2. The 'accepted view' – Givón (1976)

- <u>Basic claim</u>: the reanalysis of resumptive pronouns in topic left dislocation structures provides the ***only*** path towards subject-verb agreement
- Due to an over-use, the formerly marked construction loses its stylistic force and is reanalyzed as the 'neutral' syntax. As a result, the resumptive pronoun becomes a (prefixal) subject agreement marker on the verb, while the former topic is reinterpreted as the new subject:

(3) The wizard$_i$, he$_i$ lived in Africa $\rightarrow$ The wizard, he-lived in Africa
     TOPIC   PRON.   SUBJECT   AGR

- Furthermore, Givón claims that the resulting morpheme sequence reflects the word order of the historical stage where the reanalysis took place (cf. Givón 1971:413: "today's morphology is yesterday's syntax").

- A similar process is taken to be the source of object agreement morphology, with topicalized objects being reanalyzed as residing in their base position and resumptive clitics reanalyzed as markers of object agreement.[3] In this paper, however, I will focus on the development of subject-verb agreement.

2.1 Some Examples

Empirical evidence for Givón's hypothesis comes from non-standard varieties of English and French, English- and French-based Creole languages and various Bantu languages.

The following examples from Tok Pisin (an English-based creole spoken in Papua-New Guinea) illustrate the use of a former third person singular masculine pronoun as an invariant marker of subject agreement (for all persons and numbers). Furthermore, the word order is in accordance with Givón's predictions:

(4) a. ol **i** sindaun.
         all he sit-down
         'They sat down.'
     b. mipela   **i** go go go.
         me-fellow he go go go
         'I went for a long journey.'
         (Givón 1976:155)

Another well-known case in point is colloquial French, discussed in Lambrecht (1981), Haiman (1991) and Auger (1993, 1994).[4] Here, resumptive pronouns are obligatory in all contexts. Therefore, despite appearances, they are probably better analyzed as prefixal agreement markers on the verb, favoring a basic, non-dislocated interpretation such as (6a) instead of (6b) for the following sentence:

(5) Pierre il mange une pomme.
     Pierre he eats   an   apple

(6) a. 'Pierre eats an apple.'
     b. 'As for Pierre, he eats an apple.'

Further arguments against an analysis in terms of topic left dislocation (cf. Lambrecht 1981, Auger 1993, Haiman 1991):

(i)   In contrast to the pronominal clitics of standard French, cf. (7), the preverbal person/number markers of colloquial French fail to undergo subject-verb inversion in matrix questions, as can be seen in the example (8), taken from Lambrecht (1981)/Haiman (1991):

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[3] Note that this requires that object agreement (at least) in SVO languages develops on the basis of right dislocation structures where the object originally underwent A'-movement to a clause-final position.

[4] Similar developments can be observed in non-standard varieties of English (see Tyson 1974 and Dillard 1972).

(7) Qui   attends-tu?
who   wait-you
'Who are you waiting for?'

(8) Où   tu   vas?
where you go
'Where are you going?'

That is, the preverbal clitics of colloquial French fail to exhibit a typical property of Romance clitics, namely sensitivity to syntactic context. This can be taken to indicate that they are a fixed part of verbal morphology, namely agreement markers.

(ii)   In most languages, subject pronouns are elided in second conjuncts if they are coreferent with the subject of the first conjunct. No such ellipsis takes place in colloquial French (cf. Lambrecht 1981, Haiman 1991):

(9) a. Il mange et   boit   comme un   cochon. (standard)
       he eats   and drinks like   a   pig
    b. **I** mange et **i** boit comme un cochon.   (non-standard)

Again, this behavior is more compatible with an analysis as bound agreement markers, which are obligatory regardless of the syntactic context.

To sum up, it seems that colloquial French exemplifies very neatly the development of agreement markers as predicted by Givón: it is still quite obvious that the 'neutral' syntax of colloquial French originated in topic left dislocation structures which became 'de-marked', leading to the expected set of reanalyses.

3. Problems

3.1 The suffixing preference

- Givón's account does not provide an explanation for the well-known observation (cf. e.g. Bybee, Pagliuca, & Perkins 1990) that there is a strong tendency across the world's languages to realize verbal agreement morphology as suffixes (the so-called 'suffixing preference').[5] In particular, there are many SVO languages (e.g. many Indo-European languages such as English, the Scandinavian languages, Romance etc.) that show <u>suffixal</u> instead of <u>prefixal</u> verbal agreement markers.
- On the basis of a database including 71 languages, Bybee et al. (1990) show that cross-linguistically, suffixal person/number markers outnumber relevant prefixes:

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[5] Givón (1976) himself notes this problem as well.

(10) *Person/number markers in SOV languages*

	Nonbound	Bound	All
Preverbal	13% (10)	87% (80)	35% (90)
Postverbal	0	100% (171)	65% (171)

(11) *Person/number markers in SVO languages*

	Nonbound	Bound	All
Preverbal	21% (27)	79% (103)	47% (130)
Postverbal	6% (10)	94% (137)	53% (146)

- This is somewhat surprising, since Givón's theory predicts that all languages with (pronominal) subjects preceding the verb should develop prefixal agreement morphology, see above.
- Furthermore, the very existence of person/number suffixes is problematic, in light of the fact that unstressed pronouns, which are generally taken to be the source of agreement affixes, occur very rarely in post-verbal position (the Mongolian languages being an exception, cf. Comrie 1980). Rather, they tend to occur in a position to the left of their supposed base position.

3.2 The pioneering role of first and second person

- <u>Observation</u>: Across the world's languages, verbal agreement markers for 1st and 2nd person subjects are much more common than for 3rd person subjects.
- Bybee (1985): 54% of the languages (in her sample) which manifest agreement do not mark third person on the verb.
- Mithun (1991): relevant facts can be observed in the native languages of North America:

    "Perhaps the majority of North American indigenous languages exhibits only first and second person bound pronouns like those of the Yuman and Siouan families." (p. 86)

- For those languages that exhibit a full paradigm of person markers (such as e.g. the Algonquian languages), Mithun shows that first and second person forms became verbal affixes long before third persons were bound to the verb.

(12) *Sequence of the development of verbal person marking*
    First and second persons become bound before third persons.

- Similar facts can be observed in Turkish, many Semitic languages, and in the Bavarian data discussed in section 4.
- Importantly, these observations are hardly compatible with the claim that topic left dislocation provides the only context for the rise of verbal agreement morphology, given the fact that in most languages left dislocation of 1st and 2nd persons is extremely awkward, if grammatical at all, cf.

(13) *Ich, ich werde ein Buch lesen
      I   I   will   a book   read
      'As for me, I will read a book.'

3.3 Summary

- Topic left dislocation might provide a syntactic context for the development of agreement morphology in some languages such as colloquial French, see above.
- However, the strong claim that topic left dislocation provides the *only* syntactic context for the development of subject-verb agreement raises serious problems.
- Nevertheless, it seems to be fairly clear that (clitic) pronouns are a major (and perhaps ultimately the only) lexical source for verbal agreement morphology.[6]

In the following section, I will discuss more counterexamples to Givón's strong claim that suggest that there must be additional diachronic paths to agreement morphology.

4. From second position clitics to AGR

This section focuses on counterexamples to Givón's claims where clitics are attached to the C-system and develop into new markers of verbal agreement. Importantly, it will be shown that the relevant examples do not involve any form of topic-shifting.

4.1 Bavarian

- It is a well-known fact that Southern German dialects show enclitic subject pronouns that attach to C^0 (either filled by a complementizer or the finite verb):

(14) a. dass'**e**   gesdan   hoam ganga bin
         that-1SG yesterday home   gone   am
         'that I went home yesterday'
      b. dass'**sd**   gesdan   hoam ganga bisd
         that-2SG yesterday home   gone   are
         'that you went home yesterday'
         (Weiß 2002:7)

(15) Moang   bin'**e** wiada   gsund.
      tomorrow   am-I   again   healthy
      'Tomorrow, I will be healthy again.'
      (Weiß 2002:5)

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[6] Chafe (1977) shows that in the Iroquoian family, 3rd person agreement markers developed from inflectional affixes that were formerly used for some other function (e.g. number marking). In a similar vein, Haas (1977) argues for a development of verbal agreement markers from cliticized auxiliaries in the Muskogean languages.

- Special role of second person subject clitics: (i) obligatory in all contexts; (ii) can be doubled by full pronouns for emphatic reasons (cf. Weiß 2002); (iii) identical with the verbal agreement suffixes.

(16) a.*dass du   gesdan   hoam ganga bisd
         that you yesterday home gone are
         'that you went home yesterday'
      b. dass'**sd**   du   gesdan   hoam ganga bisd
         that-2SG you yesterday home gone are
         'that you went home yesterday'
         (Weiß 2002:7)

- Therefore, it is commonly assumed that the second person clitics developed into inflectional affixes that attach to C^0, giving rise to **complementizer agreement** (cf. Bayer 1984, Weiß 2002). Following Weiß (2002), I will call this property '**AGR-on-C**'.
- In some dialects, the 1st person plural subject clitic *-ma* underwent a similar development. In Lower Bavarian, *-ma* is obligatorily present on complementizers even when a full pronoun is present:

(17) a. wem-**ma**   aaf Minga   fon
          when-1PL   to   Munich drive
      b. wem-**ma**   mia aaf Minga   fon
          when-1PL we   to   Munich drive
      c. *wem   mia aaf Minga   fon
          when we   to   Munich drive
          'when we drive to Munich'
          (Weiß 2002:9)

(18) a. Mia fom-**ma**   hoam
          we   drive-1PL   home
          'We go home.'
          (Weiß 2002:9)
      b.*Mia fon   hoam
         we   drive home
         'We go home.'
         (Helmut Weiß, p.c.)

- Most interestingly, in some Lower Bavarian dialects (spoken in the Bavarian forest), *-ma* also developed into a new marker of verbal agreement. (19) shows that the relevant morphology spread to finite auxiliaries in clause final position as well, replacing the original verbal morphology for 1PL (*ha-m*).

(19) wa-**ma**   doch   zwou kei kod ha-**ma**
      because-1PL PARTICLE two   cows had have-1PL
      '...because we had two cows'
      (Weiß 2002:9)

- Note that the presence of C-agreement is obligatorily, similar to (17) above:

(20) *wa   mia doch   zwou kei   kod ha-**ma**
        because we PARTICLE two   cows had have-1PL
        '...because we had two cows'
        (Helmut Weiß, p.c.)

- In some dialects, where *-ma* has not yet been generalized to verbs in final position, we can observe the early beginnings of this grammaticalization process.
- The following examples show that the new inflection appears first on certain bisyllabic verbs <u>when they occupy the C-position in V2 contexts</u>. In these contexts *-ma* is in competition with the 'old' ending, cf. (21) (all examples from Weiß 2002:9):

(21) a. mia laff-***a***/laff-***ma***   hoam
          we   ran-1PL/ran-1PL home
      b. mia geng-***an***/gem-***ma***   hoam
          we   go-1PL/go-1PL   home

- In contrast, *-ma* cannot occur on verbs in clause-final position:

(22) wa-**ma**   hoam laff-**a**/*laff-**ma**
        because-1PL home go-1PL
        'because we go home'

- These data show two things:

    (i) in (21), *-ma* can replace the normal agreement ending; this can be taken to indicate that it is already part of the verbal morphology.
    (ii) the fact that *-ma* is still impossible on clause-final verbs suggests that the new verbal agreement ending developed first in C and spread later to other verbal positions as well.

- It is fairly clear that this development does not depend on topic left dislocation. Rather, it seems that the new agreement markers developed from enclitic subject pronouns that were reanalyzed as bound verbal agreement morphemes.
- The contrast between (21) and (22) and the fact that AGR-on-C is apparently very rare across the world's languages strongly suggests that its development has perhaps something to do with another marked property of the C-system in the languages that shows this phenomenon (West Flemish, Bavarian etc.), namely V2.

4.2 Analysis, part I: syntactic aspects

<u>Basic Idea</u>: new forms of agreement may arise as a result of a (stylistic) strategy where a full phrase/pronoun is added to reinforce a phonologically weak clitic, leading to clitic-doubling. In the course of time, the originally reinforcing element is reanalysed as the 'real' argument, whereas the former clitic is reinterpreted as an agreement marker.[7]
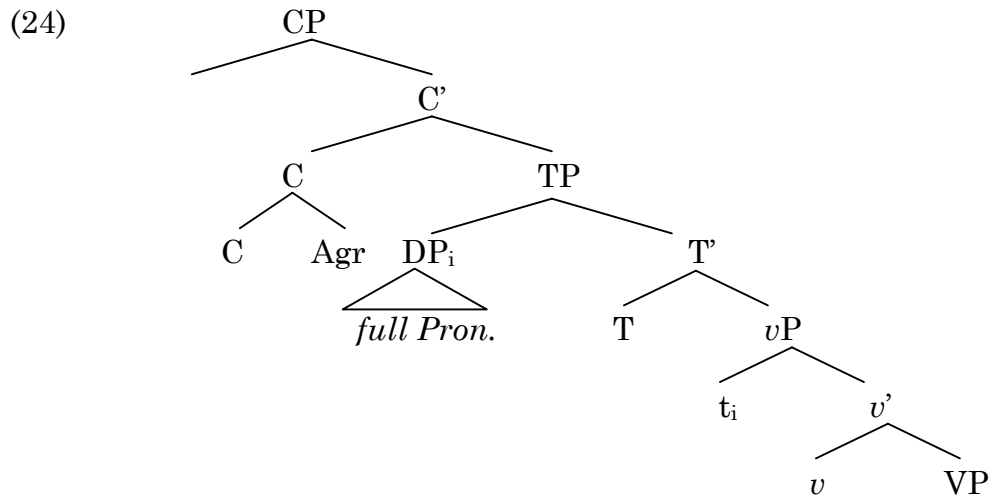
Assumptions

- <u>(subject) clitic</u>: head of a DP, which is base-generated in Spec*v*P and subsequently moves to SpecTP for case/EPP; from there, the clitic right-adjoins to the C-head (either at PF or in the syntax).
- <u>Clitic-doubling of full pronouns</u>: As noted above, full pronouns are normally added for reasons of emphasis, as a reinforcement for the clitic pronouns which cannot bear stress. This can be modeled by a structure where the clitic D-head selects a FocP which contains the full pronoun/DP. In its base position Spec*v*P, this 'big DP' receives the subject theta-role which can be assumed to percolate to both DPs contained in the big DP. Subsequently, the big DP moves to SpecTP for case/EPP, from where the clitic right-adjoins to C^0 (cf. Uriagereka 1995, Kayne 2000, 2001 for clitic-doubling and pronoun-antecedent relations, Grewendorf 2002 for an analysis of topic left dislocation in German). Note that the following structures abstract away from the question whether Bavarian is right- or left-headed:[8]

(23)
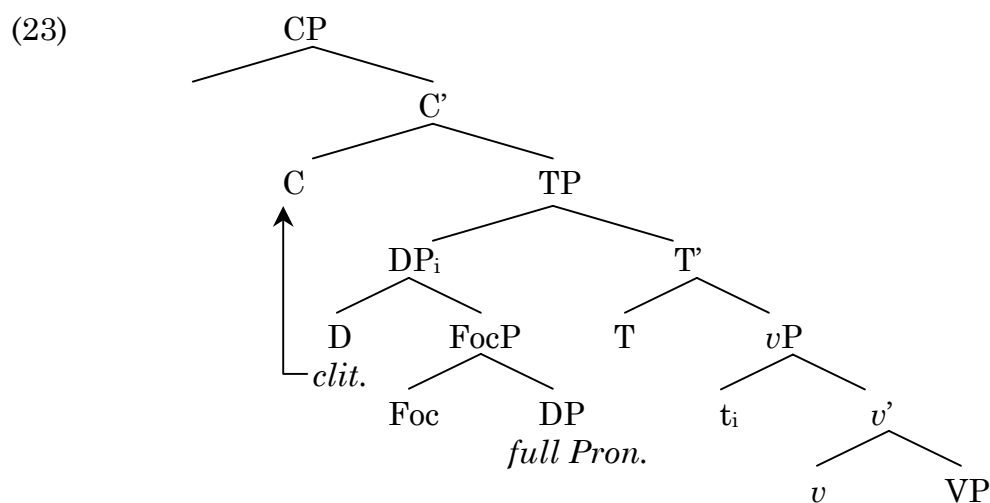
- Due to an over-use, this strategy might lose its stylistic force, which at some point might lead the learners to reanalyze the clitic as an AGR-morpheme on C, leading e.g. to the phenomenon of complementizer agreement:

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[7] This analysis is inspired by proposals developed by Simpson & Wu (2002, in particular fn. 20), who suggest that agreement develops following the initial selection of a Focus projection, which decays over time and is eventually reanalyzed as an AgrP. Note, however, that the theoretical implementation of this idea argued for in this paper differs considerably from the analysis developed by Simpson & Wu.

[8] It's perhaps possible to rephrase Givón's original proposal along similar lines. However, I won't go into the details of that possibility in this paper.

(24)

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                    CP
                   /  \
                      C'
                    /    \
                  C        TP
                /  \      /   \
              C    Agr  DPᵢ    T'
                        /\    /   \
                  full Pron.  T     vP
                                   /  \
                                  tᵢ   v'
                                      /  \
                                     v    VP
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- <u>The contribution of V2</u>
- First, let's assume that the presence of the finite Verb is a necessary precondition for a reanalysis that leads to the existence of (verbal) agreement features in a given functional head.[9] Intuitively, the presence of the finite verb can be said to signal that a certain functional head is capable of hosting AGR-features.
- Furthermore, the presence of the finite verb in C facilitates a further reanalysis where the AGR-morpheme on C is reinterpreted as part of the verbal inflection. This reanalysis proceeds in two steps:

    (i)   First, the learner identifies the former clitic as an AGR-morpheme that is optionally attached to C. [10] If AGR is present on C, movement of the verb to C leads to attachment of this AGR-morpheme to the verb (realized as the form *laff-ma*). If no AGR-morpheme is added to C, the 'old' form *laff-a* is realized. This is the source of the competition between 'old' and 'new' forms observed in (22).

    (ii)   The reanalysis is 'completed' when the learner reinterprets the AGR-morpheme on C as an integrated part of the verbal morphology (say, 'AGR-on-V' instead of 'AGR-on-C'). After that, the new inflection can occur in other verbal positions as well, which is the case with *-ma* in some Lower Bavarian dialects.

- The reanalysis as AGR-on-C and especially AGR-on-V is subject to a set of morphological restrictions which are discussed in the following subsection.

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[9] At least for heads such as C which are normally not endowed with AGR-features, cf. Weiß (2002).
[10] Following Halle & Marantz (1993), it is assumed that AGR-nodes are adjoined post-syntactically to the core functional categories C, T, and *v*.

4.3 Analysis, part II: morphological aspects

<u>Puzzling fact</u>: perhaps all Bavarian dialects show complementizer agreement and clitic-doubling for 2nd person subjects. However, it is not these forms that develop into new markers of verbal agreement, but rather the enclitic for 1PL *-ma*, which occurs only in a subset of these dialects in clitic-doubling and complementizer agreement.

<u>Basic idea</u>: the reinterpretation of clitics as verbal agreement morphology is constrained by some version of a 'Blocking Principle' (cf. Kiparsky 1973, 1983, Anderson 1992 for an 'Elsewhere Principle', Halle's 1997 'Subset Principle') that favours the use of more specified forms over less specified forms. In some sense, then, *-ma* must be more specified than the existing verbal agreement ending for 1PL.

- <u>Background assumption:</u> Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993).
  - (i) <u>Morphology operates after syntax</u>, mediating between the syntactic and the phonological components of grammar.
  - (ii) <u>Late Insertion</u>: the PF-features of syntactic categories are inserted post-syntactically. More specifically, in the output of syntax (at Spell-out), syntactic terminals (i.e. X^0 elements) contain only syntactico-semantic features that are realized by morpho-phonological exponents ('Vocabulary items') in a process called *Vocabulary Insertion*.

- Importantly for our purposes, the insertion of Vocabulary items is constrained by a 'Blocking' or 'Elsewhere' principle – if more than one Vocabulary item is compatible with the feature matrix of a given terminal node, the most specified Vocabulary item must be inserted (i.e. the item that realizes the greatest number of features), cf.

(25) *The Subset Principle* (Halle 1997)
The morphological exponent of a Vocabulary item is inserted into a morpheme in the terminal string if the item matches all of a subset of the grammatical features specified in the terminal morpheme. Insertion does not take place if the Vocabulary item contains features not present in the morpheme. <u>Where several Vocabulary items meet the conditions for insertion, the item matching the greatest number of features specified in the terminal morpheme must be chosen</u>. [my emphasis]

- Let's take a look at the relevant portion of Bavarian inflection, namely the (regular) verbal agreement endings and the feature bundles they realize (the content of a syntactic AGR-node)[11]. In the following table, these forms are compared with the relevant enclitics (the forms which are involved in clitic-doubling and complementizer agreement are printed in bold face):

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[11] Recall the assumption (Halle & Marantz 1993) that AGR-nodes are adjoined post-syntactically to the core functional categories.

(26)

	verb ending	enclitic
[1., sg]	-∅	-e/a
[2., sg]	**-sd**	**-sd**
[3., sg]	-d	-a (masc.), -s (fem.)
[1., pl]	**-n (= infinitive)**	**-ma**
[2., pl]	**-ds**	**-ds**
[3., pl]	-n (= infinitive)	-s

- The most economical representation of the verbal plural paradigm is one where /-n/ is simply the 'elsewhere' case, which is underspecified for [person]. Therefore, we can posit the following insertion rules for the relevant verbal agreement features:

(27) *Insertion rules / plural paradigm of standard Bavarian*
    [2., pl]   →   /-ds/
    [pl]   →   /-n/

- <u>Recall</u>: in the previous section, we assumed that in some dialects, the enclitics for 1PL and 2SG, 2PL developed into AGR-on-C, which can in principle give rise to a reanalysis as 'AGR-on-V'.
- Now, if we assume that some form of the Blocking Principle/Subset Principle works as a conditioning factor in language acquisition as well, two things follow:

  (i) The forms for 2nd person do not motivate a reanalysis, since the relevant enclitics and verbal endings are equally specified (i.e. they realize the same number of features). Furthermore, a reanalysis would not lead to any visible effect, since the forms are identical...

  (ii) In contrast, the 'new' form for 1PL (*-ma*) is more specified than the existing verbal ending, since it is in addition specified for [person], namely first person. By assumption, this state of affairs motivates a reanalysis, where the more specified ending replaces the 'old', less specified ending.

(28) *Insertion rules / plural paradigm of Lower Bavarian*
    [1., pl.]   →   /-ma/
    [2., pl]   →   /-ds/
    [pl]   →   /-n/

- <u>Speculation</u>: Is it possible to attribute the pioneering role of 1st and 2nd person in the development of agreement morphology (see section 3.2) to the workings of the 'Blocking Principle' as well?
- The special role of 1st and 2nd person in grammaticalization processes inspired numerous functionalist explanations, which mostly rely on the fact that speaker and hearer are the most salient participants in a speech event (cf. Mithun 1991), i.e. they exhibit a high degree of 'givenness', 'discourse accessibility' (Ariel 2000) etc.

- In contrast, a purely formal explanation is perhaps available if we assume that 3rd person is in fact no person at all, but should rather be analyzed as the absence of (positive values for) 1st and 2nd person (cf. Benveniste 1971, Halle 1997, Ariel 2000 for similar ideas, implemented in different frameworks).[12]
- It is therefore conceivable, that the 'Blocking Principle' is responsible for the fact that cross-linguistically, 3rd person agreement forms arise later (if at all) than forms for 1st and 2nd person, given the fact that the Blocking Principle requires new forms to be more specified than existing forms: due to the inherent weakness/underspecification of '3rd person' it is not easy for a new form to be more specified than already existing forms...[13]

4.4 Rhaeto-Romance

In many Rhaeto-Romance dialects, we can observe clitic doubling structures, the properties of which can be taken to indicate that the clitic elements in these contexts represent an early stage of a grammaticalization process leading to new verbal agreement markers.

Similar facts have been reported for quite a number of Northern Italian dialects, where clitic-doubling is often obligatory and therefore perhaps better analyzed as some form of verbal agreement (cf. Haiman 1991, Haiman & Benincà 1992, Poletto 1995, Poletto 2000).

Interestingly, it seems that the grammaticalization process in question exclusively affects subject clitics in inverted position – quite similar to the Bavarian data discussed above. This again suggests that the V2 property plays an important role in the reanalysis of second position clitics (cf. Haiman 1991 for a similar claim w.r.t. Northern Italian dialects).

- Linder (1987): various Rhaeto-Romance dialects (e.g. Surmeiran, Sutselvan, Puter, and Vallader) spoken in Graubünden (Switzerland) exhibit two series of pronouns, one set of full pronouns that may bear stress and a set of atonic reduced pronouns, that are either proclitic or enclitic to the verb (in most dialects, the enclitic forms differ somehow from the proclitic forms, cf. Linder 1987).

- With the exception of Surselvan,[14] these dialects show clitic-doubling in inverted contexts i.e., both enclitic C-oriented pronoun and full pronoun/DP subject follow the verb/C-position. This construction is possible in Puter and Vallader, occurs very frequently in Surmeiran and seems to be (almost) obligatory in Sutselvan (cf. Linder 1987:146).

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[12] Cf. Benveniste (1971:197-8): "[The third person] only presents the invariable inherent in every form of the conjugation [...] the 'third person' is not a 'person'; it is really the verbal form whose function is to express the *non-person.*"
[13] Note that this idea might perhaps also serve to remedy some shortcomings of Givón's analysis, since there are presumably general morphological restrictions that hold for all the different diachronic paths to agreement morphology that exist.
[14] Due to the fact that Surselvan shows no series of atonic enclitics, cf. Linder (1987:146).

- In contrast, apparently no such doubling is found (i) in embedded clauses, and (ii) if the full subject occurs in clause-initial position. Here, full pronouns/DPs and atonic pronouns (then realized as proclitics) are in complementary distribution.

(29)   *1st person singular*
    a. Da'ls spisantêr he-**ia**   **eau** grand dallett.
       them to feed   have-CLIT.1SG I   great pleasure
       'We have great pleasure in entertaining them to a meal.'
       (Puter; Linder 1987:147)
    b. Egn da quels lev-**i**   ear **jou**.
       one of those wanted-CLIT.1SG also I
       'I also wanted one of those.'
       (Sutselvan; Linder 1987:148)

(30)   *1st person plural*
    a. Lagns-**a**   **nous dus** betg eir dumang
       want-CLIT.1pl we   two go   tomorrow
       ainten en'otra vischnanca a messa?
       in   another village   to mass
       'Should we go to mass in another village tomorrow?'
       (Surmeiran; Linder 1987:149)
    b. Ascheia vain-**sa**   **nus** arviart igl mulegn ad [...]
       so   have-CLIT.1pl we unlocked the mill   and
       'So we have unlocked the mill and [...]'
       (Sutselvan, Linder 1987:149)

- Examples with 2nd person subjects are not attested, since there are no enclitic pronouns for 2nd person.
- With 3rd person subjects, clitic-doubling occurs more frequently with full DP subjects than with full tonic pronouns (cf. Linder 1987:151):

(31)   *3rd person singular masculine*
    a. Alura à-**l**   dit   **il figl**: [...]
       then has-CLIT.3SG said the son
       'Then, the son said: [...]'
       (Vallader; Linder 1987:151)
    b. Chel'idea veve-**l**   gia **igl uestg Ziegler** sez.
       this idea had-CLIT.3SG had the bishop Ziegler   himself
       'Bishop Ziegler himself had had this idea.'
       (Surmeiran; Linder 1987:152)
    c. Igl fetschi preaschas, â-**l**   **el** getg.
       it is urgent   has-CLIT.3SG he said
       'He said it's urgent.'
       (Sutselvan; Linder 1987:153)

(32)   *3ʳᵈ person plural feminine*
    a. Che effet   ha-**la**   gnü aint il pövel **la   nouva predgia**?
        which effect has-CLIT.3SG done in the people the   new   sermon
        'Which effect had the new sermon on the people?'
        (Vallader; Linder 1987:154)
    b. Par tema e-**lla**   **la femna** curoida ancheunter Zorten.
        for fear   is-CLIT.3SG the woman run   to   Zorten
        'Because she was frightened, the woman ran to Zorten.'
        (Surmeiran; Linder 1987:154)
    c. Cunquegl c'igl eara november, vev-**la**   **la scola**   antschiat.
        since   it   was November had-CLIT.3SG the school begun
        'Since it was November, the school had begun.'
        (Sutselvan; Linder 1987:155)

- Examples with 3ʳᵈ person neuter can only be found in Surmeiran:

(33)   Ma tge   è-**gl**   **chegl**?
       but what is-CLIT.3SG that
       'But what is that?'
       (Surmeiran; Linder 1987:156)

- With 3ʳᵈ person plural subjects, no gender distinctions are marked by the clitic.

(34)   *3ʳᵈ person plural*
    a. Dantant   èn-**igl**   rivos   **igls bernes e   turitges**.
        meanwhile are-CLIT.3PL arrived the Berners and Zurichers
        'Meanwhile, the people from Bern and Zurich arrived.'
        (Surmeiran; Linder 1987:159)
    b. Natiral   vev-**in**   **las matàns** radetg   sei mailenders.
        of course had-CLIT.3PL the girls   brought up Milans
        'Of course, the girls had brought up some Milans [pastries].'
        (Sutselvan; Linder 1987:161)

- In all dialects but Sutselvan, clitic-doubling is possible only with definite nominals. In Sutselvan, it has spread to non-definite nominals as well:

(35)   Mo igl lungatg da la   dunnetta   san-**i**   **nigns**.
       but the language of the little-woman knows-CLIT.3SG nobody
       'But nobody knows the language of the little woman.'
       (Sutselvan; Linder 1987:162)

Comparison with Bavarian

(i)   Most Bavarian dialects show clitic doubling only with 2ⁿᵈ person subjects (some Lower Bavarian dialects for 1PL as well). In contrast, the Swiss Rhaeto-Romance dialects exhibit the mirror image: a full paradigm of clitic doubling for all persons and genders, except for 2ⁿᵈ person subjects.

(ii)   Apparently, clitic-doubling is confined to inversion contexts in the Swiss Rhaeto-Romance dialects. No such restriction holds for Bavarian, which

exhibits the possbility of complementizer agreement/clitic doubling in embedded clauses.

4.5 Summary/open questions

- Again, it seems to be fairly clear that the development of clitic-doubling in Rhaeto-Romance did not involve topic left dislocation (cf. the fact that the full nominal has to follow the clitic).
- Obligatory clitic-doubling (in inversion contexts) in Sutselvan indicates that at least in this variety, clitics perhaps have been reanalyzed as some form of agreement marker (cf. Haiman 1991 and Haiman and Benincà 1992).
- Furthermore, the Rhaeto-Romance data suggests that clitic-doubling develops first in V2 contexts in the languages under investigation.
- Nevertheless, the question arises, why RR does not show clitic-doubling in embedded clauses (Linder does not discuss this possibility; Haiman & Benincà 1992:192 state explicitly that clitic-doubling is restricted to inversion contexts in the Swiss Rhato-Romance varieties).
- <u>Problem</u>: On the one hand clitic-doubling in RR seems to more elaborated than the Bavarian system (i.e. more person/number distinctions are possible). On the other hand, Bavarian seems to more advanced w.r.t the development of clitic-doubling in embedded clauses and 'new' forms of agreement.
- Apparently, RR represents an early stage of the grammaticalization process in question, where clitic-doubling is still confined to V2 contexts.
- <u>Speculation</u>: the development of new agreement markers is blocked by the fact that the RR dialects in question show a rich system of verbal agreement markers, which is much more elaborated than the paradigm found in Bavarian (cf. Haiman & Benincà 1992:92).

5. Conclusions

- Reanalysis of resumptive pronouns in topic left dislocation structures may be a diachronic path leading to verbal agreement, but crucially, contra Givón (1976), it's not the only path.
- Another possible source are enclitic pronouns that attach to C^0 in V2 languages. It was argued that the relevant diachronic development proceeds via an intermediate stage of clitic-doubling, where the clitic initially selects a FocP which contains an emphatic full pronoun. In the course of time, the clitic is further reduced and reanalyzed as an AGR-morpheme on C (complementizer agreement in Bavarian). Eventually, this AGR-morpheme is identified as part of the verbal inflection (instead of being part of C). As a consequence, it shows up in other verbal positions as well, as is the case with -*ma* in some Lower Bavarian dialects.
- Furthermore, this set of reanalyses was shown to be constrained by some version of the 'Blocking Principle', which ensures that 'new' verbal agreement morphology must be more specific than existing morphology. This explains why the new agreement ending developed for 1PL, but not for second persons. Moreover, the 'Blocking Principle' perhaps accounts for the pioneering role of

1st and 2nd person in the development of subject-verb agreement if we assume that 3rd person forms are in fact underspecified for [person].

- Finally, the discussion of Rhaeto-Romance showed that the Swiss dialects under investigation presumably present an early stage of the grammaticalization process in question, exhibting (obligatory) clitic-doubling only in inversion contexts.

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