A Distributed Morphology View of Auxiliary Splits in Upper-Southern Italian
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1. Introduction. We propose that HAVE/BE auxiliary splits found in Upper-Southern Italian are derived by the same mechanisms as Basque auxiliary agreement (Arregi & Nevins 2012). Specifically, auxiliary selection depends on the privative featural structure of DPs (Harley & Ritter 2002) and verbs, and is driven by competition for merger to T between 1st/2nd person subject clitics, and a prepositional head (represented P_{have}) associated with the participle (Kayne 1993). Clitics create BE auxiliaries (§3), but as 3rd person subject clitics are unavailable, P_{have} reaches T in 3rd person forms creating a HAVE auxiliary (§4).

2. Ariellese (D’Alessandro 2012) displays the most common split: regardless of verb type, 1st & 2nd persons take a BE auxiliary while 3rd persons (neutralising number) take HAVE (underlined):

(1) so magnato sì magnato a magnato ‘1SG, 2SG, 3SG have eaten’
    seme magnito sete magnito a magnito ‘1PL, 2PL, 3PL … ’

3. BE auxiliaries are created by merger to T of Ariellese’s agreement morphemes, which, following D’Alessandro (2012), we identify as subject clitics. As in Basque, subject clitics double the subject’s person & number features, and originate in the specifier of a phrase providing phi-featural content in the subject’s Big-DP. In the case of Ariellese, they are merged in the specifier of a Participant Phrase (2).

The clitics’ spellouts in (3) can be seen adjoined to the verb in (4), though as final vowels reduce to [a] the distinction between singular forms is obscured (though note the vowels in (1) & the umlaut of the 2SG). We suggest the 3rd person suffix in (4) is a ‘default’ or elsewhere spellout [a] applied to unsuffixed forms.


(4) magnə magnə magnə ‘1SG, 2SG, 3SG eat’
    magnema magnema magnema ‘1PL, 2PL, 3PL … ’

Ariellese has no 3rd person subject clitic for similar reasons to Basque: the clitic originates in a Participant Phrase, but a DP contains a PartP only if it refers to discourse participants, i.e. 1 (author) or 2 (addressee). 3rd person subjects make no such reference, and so lack a PartP. Thus, in contrast to (2), a 3rd person DP would consist only of the embedded DP, and could not provide an initial point of merger for a clitic.

4. HAVE auxiliaries are the result of merger at T of a prepositional head P_{have}. P_{have}, whose spellout is /a/ (identical to the preposition a), is the head of a PP in the verbal structure. It is blocked from reaching T by the presence of a clitic, and thus only reaches T when a clitic is unavailable, i.e. when the subject is 3rd person. (6) schematises the competition, showing derivation of a 1st or 2nd person form with the clitic blocking P_{have} from reaching T. We propose specifying the competition between the subject clitic and P_{have} to reach T as the condition in (5), which holds in all Upper Southern Italian languages.

(5) Only one head may adjoin to T

5. Derivation. T appears as an auxiliary when V is a participle and does not raise. The auxiliaries in (1) are present tense, where T is null (the paradigm in (4) has no overt tense morphology). Merging the clitic or P_{have} to T thus results in the auxiliary appropriating that form. This leads to the initial [s] of 1st & 2nd person auxiliaries: we take it to be a support morpheme used to satisfy a non-initiality requirement on the clitic, again exactly as in Basque. (1) can now be derived. The BE auxiliaries of 1st & 2nd person forms are derived by raising the clitic to T, where it must be prefixed by /s/. HAVE auxiliaries are derived when the clitic is unavailable, allowing P_{have} (which does not have a non-initiality requirement) to reach T.
6. Periphrastic tenses. In compound tenses other than the present perfect, the split in Ariellese is lost - all persons take HAVE. Consider the pluperfect, which requires an imperfect auxiliary (accent marks stress):

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{avé} & \text{fatijato} & \text{aví} & \text{fatijato} & \text{avé} & \text{fatijato} \\
\text{avavémna} & \text{fatijita} & \text{avavéta} & \text{fatijito} & \text{avé} & \text{fatijito} \\
\end{array}
\]

An imperfect auxiliary requires an Aspect Phrase with a head valued imperfect to be present in the structure. The imperfect head spells out as [vë] or [vav] depending on the stress of the following clitic, creating vowel hiatus with the clitic, which is resolved in the final forms of (8)). Crucially, the Aspect head, not being subject to the condition in (5), provides structure that both a clitic & \( P_{\text{have}} \) can move to, creating a complex Asp head (9). Thus, the initial [a] of the above forms is in fact \( P_{\text{have}} \). To derive the auxiliary, the complex raises to T - our condition continues to hold as T will have only one sister node - effectively ‘smuggling’ \( P_{\text{have}} \) onto T, yielding a paradigm of all HAVE auxiliaries.

7. Vastogirardese (Manzini & Savoia 2005) has a more complex split. 3rd person plural takes BE, and is distinct from 3rd person singular, which now shows sensitivity to verb type. Additionally, HAVE appears in the 1st singular, obligatorily in transitive verbs, but optionally in unaccusatives.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{aja} & \text{camato} & \text{si} & \text{camato} & \text{a} & \text{camato} \\
\text{sema} & \text{camato} & \text{seto} & \text{camato} & \text{so} & \text{camato} \\
\text{aja/sianga} & \text{manuto} & \text{si} & \text{manuto} & \text{e} & \text{manuto} \\
\text{sema} & \text{manuto} & \text{seto} & \text{manuto} & \text{so} & \text{manuto} \\
\end{array}
\]

Vastogirardese has a 3rd person plural BE auxiliary because its subject DP’s syntax differs from Ariellese. The language does not neutralise number, so (compared to (2)) allows the Big-DP of a 3rd person plural subject to have a Number Phrase, thus providing a specifier where a clitic /o/, matching plural number unassociated with a participant, can be merged. We propose that the 3rd person singular BE auxiliary in unaccusatives is the default spellout surfacing when nothing reaches T. This is the result of a syntactic configuration where the subject DP, in object position low in the verbal structure, is unable to have its case checked as the Vastogirardese \( P_{\text{have}} \) acts as a defective intervener.

The 1st singular auxiliary is subject to post-syntactic (PF) conditions. Merging a 1st person clitic /o/ to T would create [sa], but this sequence is illicit - it seems to be avoided elsewhere, eg. the 3rd person reflexive is [sa]. Vastogirardese has two repair strategies. One is to violate condition (5), exceptionally moving \( P_{\text{have}} \) to T, creating a HAVE form which epenthesis to [aja]. Alternatively, a BE form may be created that resembles verbs with irregular stems, eg. [tianga] - ‘I hold’. The Optionality follows from paradigm effects: a HAVE form is preferred, but repairing to BE in (9b) derives a uniform paradigm of BE auxiliaries.

8. Discussion. Our findings align with a prediction of Arregi & Nevins’, 3rd person derivations are finalised in syntax, comparatively early. 1st/2nd persons, being finalised later, show more irregularity.