The contact-induced emergence of new constituents in Molisean Romani

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Summary

- **Background**
  - Southern Italian Romani
  - Southern Italy sociolinguistic situation

- **Theoretical framework**
  - Matras (2009) > Functional approach to language contact

- **Fusion** > emergence of new constituents
  - Object clitics
  - Indefinite article

- **Convergence** > re-ordering of phrase structure
  - Adjectives
  - Possessives
  - Co-occurrence of noun modifiers

- **Conclusion**
Southern Italian Romani

- “Highly innovative and yet strangely conservative in some traits” (Soravia 1977:84)
- “Early offshoots of the Balkan dialects” (Matras 2002: 10)
- Allophone colonies in Southern Italy
  - Croats, Albanians, Greeks
  - Arrival in the late 14th/early 15th century
- Soravia (1972, 1977) documents Abbruzzian Romani (pink on map)
- RMS samples IT-007 and IT-010 document Molisean Romani (brown on map)
Regional sociolinguistic profile

- **Diglossia until 1861**
  - Italian (modelled on Tuscan varieties) > literary language
    - Since the 15th century expanding into administrative and scientific domains at the expenses of Latin
  - Molisean > spoken-only language
  - Little to none mutual influence

- **Since 1861 (unification of Italy) transition to bilingualism**
  - Standard Italian becomes the national language
    - Early usages for oral communication: education, army, administration
    - Increased usage thanks to radio, cinema (1920s) and TV (1950s)
  - Molisean progressively retreating to rural context and informal domains
  - Emergence of Southern-Central Italian
    - Contact variety showing features of both Standard Italian and Molisean
    - Replacing Molisean as language of oral/informal interactions
Functional approach to contact induced change

Matras 2009: 5

- **Fusion**
  - “the wholesale, class-specific non-separation of two systems” (Matras 2000: 511)

- **Convergence**
  - “the adaptation of an internal element of the A-system [to] match the distribution scope and compositional structure of a B-system component” (Matras 2000: 510)
Clitics in Romani

- Post-posed 3rd person subject clitics
  - Early Romani legacy common in various dialects
  - *ekta-li* ‘there she is’, *ekta-lo* ‘there he is’ (Mitrovica Romani)

- Partial cliticisation of 1/2SG.OBL reduced forms
  - Recent development in some dialects only
  - *čindem ma čurasa* ‘I cut myself with a knife’, *žini tu maj špet!* ‘marry soon!’ (Mitrovica Romani)

- Soravia recorded full 1SG and 2PL object clitics
  - *dikke-mə* ‘s/he sees me’
  - *dikkente-və* ‘they see you’
Molisean Romani object clitics
(3rd persons)

He didn’t see me, I didn’t see him

[The bottle wasn’t on the table] when I went there to take it

Take all those five apples and give them to me

Molisean Romani

Italian varieties

bring.IMP-3SG.M.OBJ
here

St/SC Italian: Bring it here!

go.IMP
to
take.INF-3SG.F.OBJ

St/SC Italian: Go and take it

send.IMP-I.OBJ-3PL.M.OBJ₂
in
attachement

St/SC Italian: Send them to me as an attachment
### Molisean Romani

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Molisean Romani</th>
<th>Southern-central Italian (default)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>pijom</em>-mǝ</td>
<td><em>mi</em> mangio un panino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ni</em></td>
<td><em>mi</em> I.OBJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bikkjerǝ</em></td>
<td><em>Ieat</em> a sandwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>de</em></td>
<td><em>un</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>cafe</em></td>
<td><em>panino</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.drank-I.OBJ</td>
<td>I.OBJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a glass</td>
<td>Leat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of coffe</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I drunk a cup of coffee</td>
<td>sandwich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<td>*džǝ</td>
<td><em>mi</em> faccio un giro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kera-mmǝ</em></td>
<td><em>mi</em> I.OBJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ni</em></td>
<td><em>Ido</em> a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>džirǝ</em></td>
<td><em>around</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>da</em></td>
<td><em>un</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sulǝ</em></td>
<td><em>giro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.go</td>
<td>I.OBJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.do-I.OBJ</td>
<td>I.do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a round</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by alone</td>
<td>round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m going to take a walk by myself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<td>*jov</td>
<td><em>mmu</em> decettǝ a mme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>na</em></td>
<td><em>I.OBJ</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dikkijan-čǝ</td>
<td>he.told at I.OBL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amende</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He didn’t saw us</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<td>*kala</td>
<td><em>a</em> me mi piace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>butija</em></td>
<td><em>me</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>pinija-ttǝ</em></td>
<td><em>mi</em> I.OBJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ke</em></td>
<td><em>like.3SG</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tut</em></td>
<td><em>I.OBL</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this thing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>told.3SG-2SG.OBJ</td>
<td>at I.OBL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 2SG.OBJ</td>
<td>I.OBJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He told you this</td>
<td>like.3SG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Italian varieties

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He told me (De Giovanni 2003: 113)</td>
<td>I like it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Intensive and reduplicated pronouns**
Emergence of object clitics

- Molisean and Southern-central Italian unstressed word final vowels realized as /ǝ/
  - Object clitics: -mǝ, -tǝ, -lǝ, -cǝ, -vǝ, -lǝ (only with IMP and INF)
- Partial cliticisation of Romani 1/2SG reduced forms (ma, tu)
  - *3SG/PL undergo same process (les>le ‘him’; las>la ‘her’; len>le ‘them’)
- Contact with Molisean and then Southern-central Italian
  - ma > -mǝ, tu > -tǝ, le/la/le > -lǝ
- Fusion reaches completion
  - -čǝ and –vǝ replace Romani counterparts (l)ame ‘us’ and tume ‘you.PL’
- Process follows implicational hierarchical (Elšik & Matras 2006)
  - 1/2SG > 3SG/PL > 1/2PL
Indefinite article

- *jekh* ‘one’ no longer used as indefinite article
- Molisean indefinite articles: *nu, nə, na* (De Giovanni 2003)
- *jekh* replaced by *ni* in Molisean Romani

```
pijomme  ni  bikkierə  de  kafe
I.drunk.I.OBJ  a  glass.M  of  coffee
```

I drank a cup of coffee

```
dža  kerammə  ni  džirə  da  sulə
d.goes  I.do.I.OBJ  a  round.M  by  alone
```

I’m going to take a walk by myself

```
joj  si  ni  čauri  ladžani
she  is  a  boy.F.SG  shy.F.SG
```

She is a shy Romani girl
Re-ordering of phrase structure

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
  i & \text{mer} & da & \text{kerel} & \text{ta} \\
  \text{the.F} & \text{my.F} & \text{mother} & \text{does} & \text{COMP} \\
\end{array}
\]

\text{pabbarel} \quad \text{ma} \quad \text{i} \quad \text{iddr} \quad \text{pure}

\text{burn.3SG} \quad \text{me} \quad \text{the.PL} \quad \text{clothes} \quad \text{old.PL}

My mother makes me burn the old clothes

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
  ni & \text{lakli} & \text{tarni} & \text{vili} \\
  \text{a} & \text{boy.F} & \text{young.F} & \text{came.F.SG} \\
  \text{ta} & \text{kele} & \text{ke} & \text{manca} \\
\end{array}
\]

COMP \quad \text{dance.3SG} \quad \text{with.OBL} \quad \text{1SG.OBL.INSTR}

A young girl came to dance with me

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
  \text{kava} & \text{si} & \text{u} & \text{ker} & \text{mero} \\
  \text{this} & \text{is} & \text{the.M} & \text{house.M} & \text{my.M} \\
\end{array}
\]

This is my house

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
  i & \text{maestra} & \text{nane} & \text{d-u} & \text{kuartiere} & \text{mengre} \\
  \text{the.F} & \text{teacher.F} & \text{is.not} & \text{from-} & \text{district} & \text{our.PL} \\
\end{array}
\]

The teacher is not from our neighbourhood

**Molisean Romani**

Most common structures in Romani ART+ADJ+NOUN, POSS+ADJ+NOUN, !ART+POSS+NOUN, !NOUN+POSS

**Italian Varieties**

All varieties

- NOUN+ADJ as default

Standard Italian

- NOUN+POSS
- ART+POSS+NOUN
- !ART+NOUN+POSS

Molisean > SC Italian

- NOUN+POSS
- ART+NOUN+POSS

SC Italian:

- Pass me my book! (De Giovanni 2003: 59)

- If you want to visit my house (De Giovanni 2003: 59)
Conclusion

Contact profile
- Extensive influence of Molisean and Southern-central Italian
- No German or Northern Italian influences
- Retention of Balkan features also shared by Southern Italian varieties
- Minimal retention of Slavic lexicon

Confirms direct arrival from the Balkans

Indicative of
- Continuous presence in the area
- Early move from gravitating around other Balkan minorities to gravitating around ‘Italians’