

# Southern Italian Vocative Morphology

At the interface between phonology and syntax

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# Vocative Morphology

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# Abruzzese Vocatives

- Vocatives optionally start with *A*, and contain the name up until and including the stressed vowel:
  - (A) Mariagiova'!  
Mariagiovanna (VOC)
  - (A) Robbe'!  
Roberta (VOC)
  - (A) Ma'!  
Marc (VOC)
- Coda consonants etc. after the vowel are truncated.

# Phrasal vocatives

- The basis of the vocative can be a DP:
  - Surelle de lu padre di Giuwa'  
Sister of Giovanni's father (VOC)
  - Lo zi'! The uncle (VOC)

## RF and IVV

- We see Raddoppiamento Fonosintattico and Intervocalic Voicing apply, indicating that we are dealing here with phonological phrases:
  - La [d:z]i'  
The aunt (VOC)
  - cf. *la* [ts]ije (NOM)

# Generalizations

- (in Southern Italian dialects) the vocative is a truncated form: everything from the first phonological segment up until and including the stressed vowel
- (more generally) vocatives tend to be truncated forms in many languages
- (even more generally) they have this property in common with imperatives

## Three observations

- vocative is a kind of Case, but the vocative phrase is not related to argument structure
- vocatives are full DPs (Moro 2001, D'Hulst et al. 2001).
- neither syntactic/direct nor inherent/indirect Case morphemes can appear as truncations

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# Background

- Vocatives share with imperatives the obligatory presence of an addressee
- This can be captured by assuming an [addressee] head for both (Portner 2004, Zanuttini 2004)
- This does not explain why there is truncation in this case and not in others

## Case as Person-licensing

- Sigurðsson (2001), Speas (2000), Bianchi (2003), D'Alessandro (2004) and others propose that person pronouns must be linked to Speech Act features in order for the sentence to be interpretable
- Person features must be valued the actual participants in the Speech Act.
- These authors propose that Nominative checking involves person checking

## Our extension

- Following these authors, we assume that deictic DPs do not need to be Case-licensed but rather person-licensed
- We hence propose that also vocatives are person-licensed, not Case-licensed
- Specifically, this licensing happens through Agree with the [addressee] head

## Exponence of the [addressee] head

- The licensed vocP is spelled out at PF as a minimal phonological phrase  $\phi$
- The exponent of [addressee] thus is a template of the form in (2):
  - [addressee]  $\iff \phi_{min, Prefix}$
- The specification as a Prefix implies that  $\phi$  must be aligned with the beginning of the phrase (Prince & Smolensky 2004),
- The minimality requirement ensures that we do not need more material than the stressed vowel on the right-hand side.

## Why the vocative is different

- The vocative in Southern Italian is the result of the mapping of a fully fledged sentence into a  $\phi$ ;
- other morphemes are not expected to conform to a  $\phi$ , because they will usually not be mapped to independent sentences.
- apart from the imperative, which is also linked to the addressee

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# Explanandum I

- vocative is a kind of Case but the vocative phrase is not really related to argument structure.
- This is in fact what we predict by saying that the vocP must not be Case-licensed but rather person-licensed.

## Explanandum II

- vocP is a full DP.
- According to our analysis, this is a necessary but not sufficient requirement for a vocP, given that only a full sentence can be mapped into a  $A\phi A$ , but not a 'smaller' XP (Nespor & Vogel 1986).

## Explanandum III

- 3. Neither syntactic/direct nor inherent/indirect case morphemes can appear in a truncated form.
- this follows from the assumption that a simple phrase cannot be mapped onto a  $\phi$ . Argumental XPs in fact do not constitute full  $\phi$ s.

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## Independent evidence: RF and IVV

- The fact that RF and IVV apply in these cases can be taken as evidence that indeed we are dealing with a phonological phrase in these cases.
  - La [d:z]i'  
The aunt (VOC)
  - cf. *la* [ts]ije (NOM)

## Independent evidence: Referentiality of TU

- In null subject languages, the silent 2nd person pronoun is usually interpreted as an impersonal, whereas the phonologically expressed form is interpreted deictically:
  - se vuoi farlo, devi essere ricco.  
“if one wants to do it, one needs to be rich”
  - se tu vuoi farlo, devi essere ricco.  
“if YOU want to do it, you need to be rich”
- see also Jaeggli’s Generalization

# Conclusions

- Vocatives are interesting from a number of points of view: e.g. they are 'cases' without connection to argument structure, and they are often expressed by truncation
- We argue that these two things are connected by assuming that they are linked to an [addressee] head, which is expressed by a minimal phonological phrase (like the imperative)
- Only constituents which fall outside of the overall thematic structure of the sentence can have this kind of phonological expression, because only they can be specified as  $\phi$

## Why not 2nd person singular?

- Second person singular subjects are also realized with a link to [addressee], as is the verb which is in an agreement relation with it
- Why aren't those verbs ever truncated?
- The answer is that these verbs are also linked to tense and other aspects of 'normal' phrase structure