

# Le analisi morfologiche non finiscono mai...

## A DM account of the -isc- augment

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### Introduction & Background

#### Latin

- The highly productive derivational suffix -sc- is used to form "inchoative" (more precisely, transformative) verbs.
- SCO verbs belong to the III conjugation in -ERE (e.g., AMASCERE 'to fall in love', LUCESCERE 'to become bright', SENTISCERE 'to begin to feel').
- The suffix appears in the forms of the *Inflectum* (Present, Imperfect, Future).
- ESC- is the default suffix for the derivation of denominal and deadjectival verbs, as well as for *Caland Roots* (e.g., PIE \*h<sub>1</sub>rewd- 'red': RUBEŌ 'I am red', RUBOR 'redness' and RUBIDUS 'red').
- ASC- and -ISC- are used when the base verb presents the theme vowel (TV) -Ā- or -I-, or when a stative component is semantically conceivable, but not overtly realized through -E- (< PIE \*-eh<sub>2</sub>-) (cf. Bertocchi & Pinzin 2019).

#### Italian

- isc- characterizes (the majority of) third conjugation verbs with infinitives ending in -ire (e.g., finire 'to end').
- It is restricted to the Present Indicative and Subjunctive – except for the 1pl and the 2pl – as well as the 2sg imperative (e.g., Pres. Ind. finisco, finisci, finisce, finiamo, finite, finiscono).
- There are however some verbs with overabundant forms, e.g., mento vs. mentisco 'I lie' (cf. Thornton 2012).
- Function? "accentual stability" (Burzio & Di Fabio 1993), stress alignment (cf. Rohlf 1966), active semantic function (cf. Zamboni 1982), marker of *N-pattern* (cf. Maiden 2018)

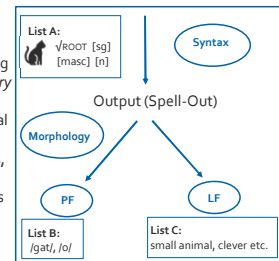
### Aims & Method

#### Main goal

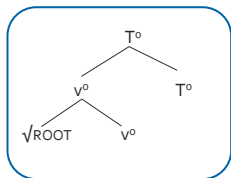
This poster proposes a new analysis of the Italian verbal augment -isc- within the framework of *Distributed Morphology* (DM). In line with recent studies, it is assumed that the element has a "purely morphological" (Aronoff 1994) function. It is argued that the augment is situated in the theme-position of the verbal structure.

#### Basic notions in DM

- No unified lexicon
- Late Insertion* refers to the hypothesis that the pieces manipulated by the syntax are abstract, lacking phonological content. The pairing of phonological features with the terminals of the syntax (*Vocabulary Insertion*) happens post-syntactically.
- Underspecification of Vocabulary Items* (VI) means that phonological expressions need not be fully specified for the syntactic positions where they can be inserted. VI are in many instances default signals, they are inserted where no more specific form is available.
- Syntactic Structure All The Way Down* entails that the terminal nodes into which VI are inserted are organized into hierarchical structures determined by the principles and operations of the syntax.

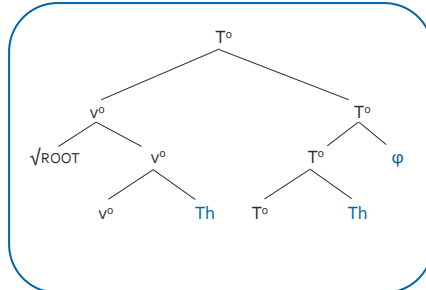


### Italian Verb Structure



Input (Syntax → Morphology)

- Th and  $\phi$  are added post-syntactically.
- Th is the realization of a morphological well-formedness requirement on a syntactic functional head.
- similar proposals for Catalan and Spanish (cf. Oltra-Massuet 1999; Pomino 2008)



Morphology: after well-formedness condition

### Theme (Vowel) Markedness

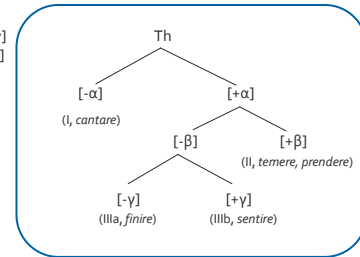
- Conjugational information is encoded in terms of primitive binary features (cf. Oltra-Massuet 1999).
- Roots have a Th-feature in their entry; they are minimally specified for these features.

#### (1) Theme Vowel Markedness

- Conjugation II (e.g., temere, prendere): [+ $\alpha$ , + $\beta$ ]
- Conjugation IIIb (e.g., sentire): [+ $\alpha$ , - $\beta$ , + $\gamma$ ]
- Conjugation IIIa (e.g., finire): [+ $\alpha$ , - $\beta$ , - $\gamma$ ]
- Conjugation I (e.g., cantare): [- $\alpha$ ]

#### (2) Redundancy Rules

- $\sqrt{\text{cantare}} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{cantare}}_{[-\alpha]}$  e.g.,  $\sqrt{\text{cantare}}_{[-\alpha]}$
- $\sqrt{\text{temere}} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{temere}}_{[+\alpha, +\beta]}$  e.g.,  $\sqrt{\text{temere}}_{[+\alpha, +\beta]}$
- $\sqrt{\text{sentire}} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{sentire}}_{[+\alpha, -\beta, +\gamma]}$  e.g.,  $\sqrt{\text{sentire}}_{[+\alpha, -\beta, +\gamma]}$
- $\sqrt{\text{finire}} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[+\alpha, -\beta, -\gamma]}$  e.g.,  $\sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[+\alpha, -\beta, -\gamma]}$

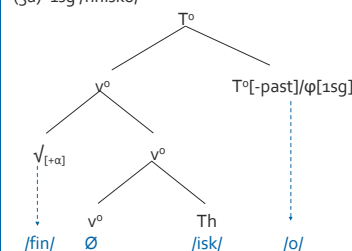


### Analysis: Present Indicative

#### Why does Theme Allomorphy occur in the first place?

The morphological operation Fusion combines two sister nodes into a single X<sup>0</sup> with the features of both input nodes. A fused node reduces the number of terminals, providing for but a single locus of Vocabulary Insertion. Vocabulary Insertion is driven by the *Subset Principle* (cf. Halle 1997). Phonological readjustment rules may apply in some cases (e.g., 2sg /fini/).

#### (3a) 1sg /finisko/



#### (3b) Vocabulary Items for Th:

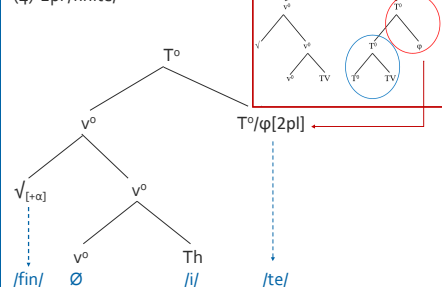
- /isk/  $\leftrightarrow \sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[+\alpha]}$  / T<sup>0</sup>[-past]
- /i/  $\leftrightarrow \sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[-\alpha]}$
- /ja/  $\leftrightarrow \text{T}^0[-\text{past}] / \phi[1\text{pl}]$

#### (3c) Vocabulary Items for $\phi$ :

- /mo/  $\leftrightarrow [1\text{pl}]$
- /te/  $\leftrightarrow [2\text{pl}]$
- /no/  $\leftrightarrow [3\text{pl}]$
- /o/  $\leftrightarrow [1] / \text{T}^0[-\text{past}, -\text{sbj}]$
- /i/  $\leftrightarrow [2] / \text{T}^0[-\text{past}, -\text{sbj}]$
- /ono/  $\leftrightarrow [3] / \sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[+\alpha]} / \text{T}^0[-\text{past}, -\text{sbj}]$
- /e/  $\leftrightarrow [3] / \sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[-\alpha]} / \text{T}^0[-\text{past}, -\text{sbj}]$

Open question: Is the process resulting in (4) Fusion at all?

#### (4) 2pl /finite/



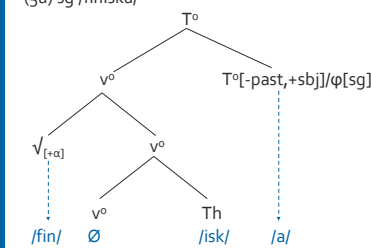
#### Conclusions

- Three VIs compete for insertion in the Th node: while /isk/ is specified for T<sup>0</sup>[-past], /i/ is the default exponent for  $\sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[+\alpha]}$  in all other contexts. /ja/, on the other hand, is not specified with respect to the root but regarding T and  $\phi$ .
- Fusion establishes adjacency between  $\phi$  and all elements in v<sup>0</sup>, thus triggering the insertion of the more specified VI /isk/ in the context of T<sup>0</sup>[-past]/ $\phi$ [sg/3pl].
- In the 1/2pl, "Fusion" is preceded by the Impoverishment of T<sup>0</sup>[-past], thus preventing the selection of /isk/ and triggering the insertion of /i/ instead.

### Analysis: Present Subjunctive

The singular forms of the Present Subjunctive can be derived in the same way as the Indicative forms, i.e., Fusion establishes the same reduced structure as encountered in (3a). There is however one main difference: the feature [+sbj] has a proper exponent, /a/, which seems to cause the neutralization of the singular endings.

#### (5a) sg /finisca/



#### (5b) Vocabulary Items for T<sup>0</sup>[-past, +sbj]:

/a/  $\leftrightarrow \sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[+\alpha]}$  (vs. /i/  $\leftrightarrow \sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[-\alpha]}$ ; cf. (2))

#### (5c) Vocabulary Items for Th:

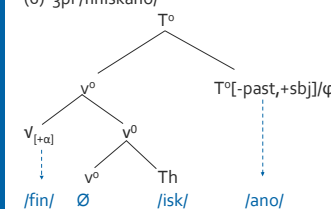
/isk/  $\leftrightarrow \sqrt{\text{finire}}_{[+\alpha]} / \text{T}^0[-\text{past}]$

/ja/  $\leftrightarrow \text{T}^0[+\text{sbj}] / \phi[1/2\text{pl}]$

#### (5d) Vocabulary Items for $\phi[1/2\text{pl}] = (3c)$

- The 1/2pl forms are obtained in the same way as the Indicative forms in (4), the only difference being the presence of an additional VI that wins the competition once the T[-past] node has been impoverished (cf. (5c); /ja/).
- But what about the 3pl? Fusion is blocked because we have exponents for both T and  $\phi$ . Why does /isk/ win the competition? One solution would be to assume /a/ is not a Mood exponent but part of the ending /ano/ which is a product of Fission (cf. Calabrese 2019).

#### (6) 3pl /finiscano/



#### Conclusions

- In the singular forms of the Subjunctive the presence of the Mood exponent /a/ neutralizes the endings, thus triggering Fusion and the insertion of /isk/ in Th.
- In the 1/2pl the Impoverishment of [-past] precedes Fusion. The presence of the feature [+sbj] in this context influences the choice of the VI for Th.
- The analysis of the 3pl (Indicative and Subjunctive) remains an issue for further research.

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