

Maltese prepositions in coordinating constructions - A closer look at bound pronouns

Maike Vorholt

(University of Bremen)

Maltese (Afroasiatic, Semitic) shows variation in coordinating constructions (COCOs) involving identical prepositions. A preposition can either be used in front of each complement or just in front of the first one (EQUI-P-deletion, cf. Stolz and Ahrens 2017; Borg and Azzopardi-Alexander 1997: 87). Several factors influencing a preposition's behavior have been identified for other languages and for Maltese, among them grammaticalization of the preposition, fused articles or group complements (cf. Ximenes and Nunes 2004; Haspelmath 2007; Stolz and Ahrens 2017). In this talk, I take a closer look at only one of these factors: bound pronouns as complements. Stolz and Ahrens (2017: 132) suggest that when a bound pronoun is involved, a form of the preposition needs to be used in front of both complements like in (1).

(1) [Korpus Malti 3.0, literature11]

Ernest kien lesta l-mejda [ghalih u ghal ommu]_{COCO}
Ernest be ready DEF-table [for:3SG.M and for mother:3SG]
'Ernest had prepared the table [for him and (for) his mother].'

A closer look at the Korpus Malti 3.0 (Gatt and Čéplö 2013) reveals that for the most part this is true. However, some counter examples can be found. In (2) the preposition does not appear in front of the second complement.

(2) [Korpus Malti 3.0, news148940]

ħafna nies moħħhom mal-ewwel imur għall-pajjiži
a lot people brain:3PL with:DEF-first 3SG.IPFV:GO for:DEF-country:PL
tal-Mediterran [bħal-na u l-Italja]_{COCO}
of:DEF-Mediterranean [like-1PL and DEF-Italy]
'[...] many people's mind immediately goes to the Mediterranean countries [like us and Italy].'

Another compelling aspect of COCOs involving bound pronouns are combinations of two prepositions, which are conditioned by different factors in Maltese (cf. Stolz 2020). Here only the first preposition on the second complement can be deleted as in (3):

(3) [Korpus Malti 3.0, parl6214]

[apparti minn-i u mis-Sur Pullicino]_{COCO}
[apart from from-1SG and from:DEF-Mr. Pullicino]
'[...] [apart from me and Mr. Pullicino] [...].'

This talk provides a first glimpse at one specific aspect of COCOs in Maltese relying on corpus data. Maltese prepositions do not all show the same behavior in these constructions. I show that the case of bound pronouns as complements is not as straightforward as the literature suggests.

Abbreviations

1	first person	IPFV	imperfective
3	third person	M	masculine
COCO	coordinating construction	PL	plural
DEF	definite	SG	singular

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