

Paradigmatic Word-Formation in a Decaying Language: The Case of *-etò* in Walser German

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Instead of an introduction...

- In 1998 I ended my PhD thesis with this table describing the action nouns in Italian (cf. Gaeta 2002: 227):

(3)	i.	$A_i = \emptyset; A_e = \emptyset$	es.: <i>sfruttare</i>
	ii.	$A_i = t_x; A_e = \emptyset$	es.: <i>dipendenza</i>
	iii.	$A_i = \emptyset; A_e = t_x$	es.: <i>sfruttamento</i>
	iv.	$A_i = t_x; A_e = t_y$	es.: <i>lavata</i>

- Basically, the verbs are differently selected by the nominalization strategies ranging from the nominalized infinitive in (3i) to two different suffixes, respectively in (3ii) and (3iii), and to the so-called feminine past participle of (3iv).
- The selection obeys different actional properties of the base verbs, namely [\pm dynamicity] in (3ii) and [\pm boundedness] in (3iii) and (3iv).

Instead of an introduction...

- 20 years later, I remodeled this picture adopting the notation suggested in Booij's (2010) *Construction Morphology*, basically reflecting the same conclusion (cf. Gaeta 2017: 230):

- (2) a. $[[\dots]_{Vi} -mento]_{Nj} \leftrightarrow [\text{the SitTyp involved by SEM}_i \dots]_j$
*conseguire*₁ → *conseguimento*
Il conseguimento del titolo di direttore fu ottenuto in due anni.
- b. $[[\dots <-dyn>]_{Vi} -(z)a]_{Nj} \leftrightarrow [\text{the SitTyp involved by SEM}_i \dots]_j$
*conseguire*₂ → *conseguenza*
**La conseguenza della sconfitta dal suo errore fu ottenuta in due anni.*
- c. $[[\dots]_{Vi} INF]_{Nj} \leftrightarrow [\text{the SitTyp } <-b>_j \text{ combined with SEM}_i \dots]_j$
*conseguire*₁ → *conseguire*
**Il conseguire il titolo di direttore fu ottenuto in due anni.*
- d. $[[\dots <+dyn, -b>]_{Vi} FPP]_{Nj} \leftrightarrow [\text{the SitTyp } <+b>_j \text{ combined with SEM}_i \dots]_j$
dormire, nuotare → *dormita, nuotata*
costruire, formare → **costruita, *formata*

A derivational paradigm for action nouns

- From the perspective of a paradigmatic approach to word-formation, [ACTION NOUN] can be considered as the horizontal manifestation of a derivational paradigm which "is constituted within a particular cognitive category as a binary relation sharing a common stem" (Štekauer 2014).
- ACTION NOUN
 - [V, + dyn]: *conseguire*₁ 'to attain' → *conseguimento* 'attainment', *insaponare* 'to soap' → *insaponamento* 'soaping'
 - [V, + dyn]: *accelerare* 'to speed' → *accelerazione*, *manifestare* 'to manifest' → *manifestazione* 'manifestation'
 - [V, +dyn, (+ prof)]: *spuntare* 'to trim' → *spuntatura* 'trimming', *stirare* 'to iron' → *stiratura* 'ironing'
 - [V, +dyn, (+techn)]: *dragare* 'to dredge' → *dragaggio* 'dredging', *montare* 'to assemble' → *montaggio* 'assembly'
 - [V, - dyn] *conseguire*₂ 'to follow' → *conseguenza* 'consequence', *discendere*₁ 'to descend' → *discendenza* 'lineage'
 - [V, +dyn, -bound]: *accelerare* → *accelerata*, *insaponare* → *insaponata*, *spuntare* → *spuntata*, *dragare* → *dragata*, *montare* → *montata*
 - Unaccusative verbs: *discendere*₂ 'to descend' → *discesa* 'descent', *cadere* 'to fall' → *caduta* 'fall'
 - Rule Blocking: *caduta* / **cadimento*, *discesa* / **discendimento*

A derivational paradigm for action nouns

- The horizontal manifestation is systematically interwoven with the "vertical dimension" which conceives the derivational paradigm as "a range of relations unified by a common stem" (Štekauer 2014).
- Accordingly, verbs can give rise to different action nouns displaying a partially different semantics, and more in general to different derivatives of the same derivational family:

	↗	<i>accelerazione</i>	ACTION NOUN
• <i>accelerare</i>	→	<i>accelerata</i>	SEMELFACTIVE ACTION NOUN
	↘	<i>accelerabile</i>	MODAL VERBAL ADJECTIVE
	↘	<i>accelerativo</i>	VERBAL ADJECTIVE
	↘	<i>acceleratore</i>	INSTRUMENT NOUN

The feminine past participle...

- The |SEMELFACTIVE ACTION NOUN| is particularly interesting because it represents a clear innovation wrt Latin and is provided with peculiar properties as it produces bounded action nouns.
 - Bounded action nouns can also be formed on the basis of nouns:
 - *occhio* 'eye' → *occhiata* 'glance', *gomito* 'elbow' → *gomitata* 'jab', etc.
 - In several cases, a semelfactive action noun can be analysed as deverbal as well as denominal, i.e. it receives a double motivation:
 - *martello* 'hammer' → *martellata* 'hammer blow' ← *martellare* 'to hammer'
 - *ospite* 'host' → *ospitata* 'appearance as host' ← *ospitare* 'to host'
 - The |SEMELFACTIVE ACTION NOUN| – also called *nomen vicis* / 'ism 'al-marrat – can be characterized in all Romance languages but Romanian as (cf. Gaeta 2015):
 - |single instantiation of an activity typically connected with $X_{V/N}$ |

A derivational paradigm for action nouns

- To what extent are derivational paradigms (cognitively) real?

- Bauer (1997), Štekauer (2014)

- Horizontal / Vertical dimension

- Inflectional categories (e.g. |PLURALITY|) vs. inflectional classes (e.g. *-s*, *-en*, $-\emptyset$, *-a*)

- "Morphomic" effects

- *mang_V-er_{FUT}-ebbe_{COND}* 'she would eat'

discendere / discesa ← *disceso*_{PASTPART}

- Semantic regularity

- Productive patterns

svapata, whatsappata

- Paradigmatic pressure

- Potential (productive) derivatives

berlusconizzare → *berlusconizzazione*

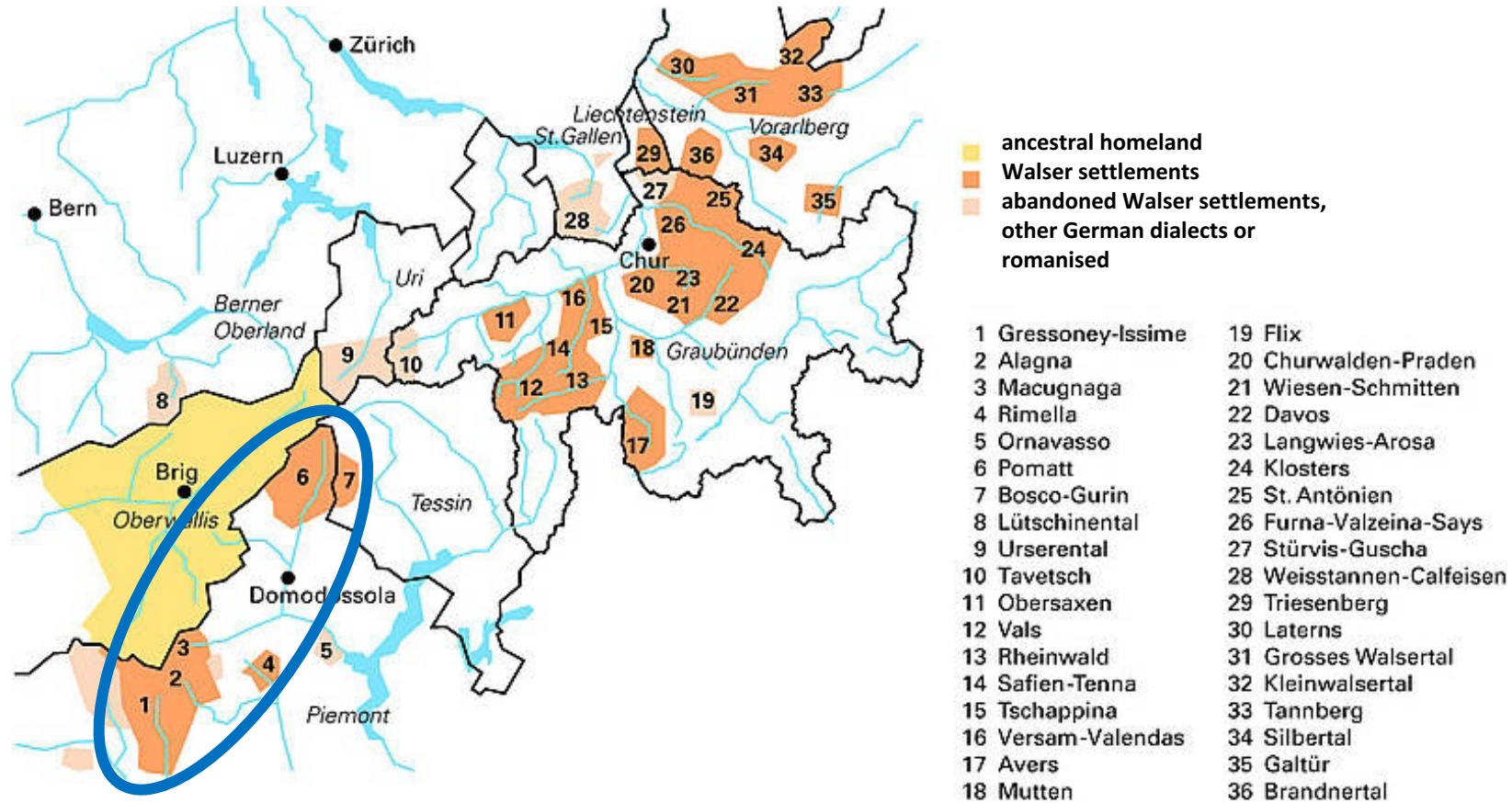
- Suppletion

- *ai* 'I have' / *avens* 'we have'

soleil 'sun' / *solaire* 'solar', *bere* 'to drink' / *sorso* 'sip'

- Language contact

The Walser area



The Walser communities

- Switzerland
 - Kanton Wallis (Upper Alemannic)
 - Tessin: Bosco Gurin
 - Graubünden
- Italy
 - Aosta Valley: Gressoney (**Titsch**), Issime (Töitschu)
 - Piedmont: Formazza, Macugnaga, Alagna, Rimella (Titschu)
- Liechtenstein
 - Triesenberg
- Austria
 - Vorarlberg
 - Tirol
- France
 - Haute-Savoie: Vallorcine (Bärental)

Walser in Aosta Valley

- Foundation: Second half of the XIII c.
- Constant trading with German-speaking areas (in particular XV-XIX c.)
- 1861-1914: firstly diminishing, then interrupted contacts
- 1922-1945: strong repression due to the Fascist policy
- 1946-: widespread trilingualism Ital/Piedm/Titsch, language decay

- Population:

	1901	2001	Do you speak dialect?	Do you know the dialect? (2003)
• Gressoney Saint Jean	949	789	54,3% (1977)	80,0%
• Gressoney La Trinité	167	297		68,3%
• Issime	776	403	63,4% (1992)	79,8%
• Rimella	1007	142		90,8%

DiWaC

- A **D**igital archive to safeguard the **W**alser **C**ultural and linguistic heritage:

- www.diwac.it

- Sponsored by



- Sources for Titsch

- Old sources (XIX c.)

- Elicited Conversations (Schott 1840), Poems, Documents (Catechisms etc.), Secondary literature (Schott 1840)

- Modern sources

- Novels, Poems, Documents (ethnological material, e.g. cookbooks etc.) Secondary literature (*Greschèneytitsch Wörterbuch*, Zürrer 1999)

- Interviews with speakers

- Fieldwork (with questionnaire), Elicited Conversations (Angster 2004-05)

The DiWaC Archive

- The DiWaC Archive consists of two components:
 - A lexicon which basically results from the digitalization of the *Greschòneytitsch Wörterbuch* (1998).
 - A corpus which is coindexed with the lexicon and is meant to enrich it with a large amount of fresh entries.
 - Moreover, also thanks to the extant lexicon, the corpus will be automatically tagged.
- To date, the lexicon contains about 10330 lexemes:
 - V = 2554
 - N = 5041
- The corpus is currently being uploaded into the archive:
 - <http://www.diwac.it/corpus-greschoney/>

Action nouns in Titsch

- Like any well-behaved Germanic language, the derivational paradigm of |ACTION NOUN| in Titsch consists of three different main patterns:
 - suffix *-òng* 112
 - *bessrò* 'to heal' → *bessròng* 'to healing', *fiere* 'to lead' → *fieròng* 'direction', *usstelle* 'to exhibit' → *usstellòng* 'exhibition'
 - conversion 72
 - *antwòrtò* 'to answer' → *antwòrt* 'answer', *loufe* 'to run' → *louf* 'run', *redò* 'to talk' → *red* 'talk'
 - apophonic alternation 93
 - *bisse* 'to bite' → *bés* 'bite', *goa* 'to go' → *gang* '(way of) walking', *sprenge* 'to jump' → *spròng* 'jump'
 - rest 36
 - *aienò* 'to serve' → *dientscht* 'service', *toufe* 'to baptize' → *toufé* 'baptism', *verliere* 'to lose' → *verlòscht* 'loss'
 - suffix *-etò* 56

Derivatives formed with *-etò*

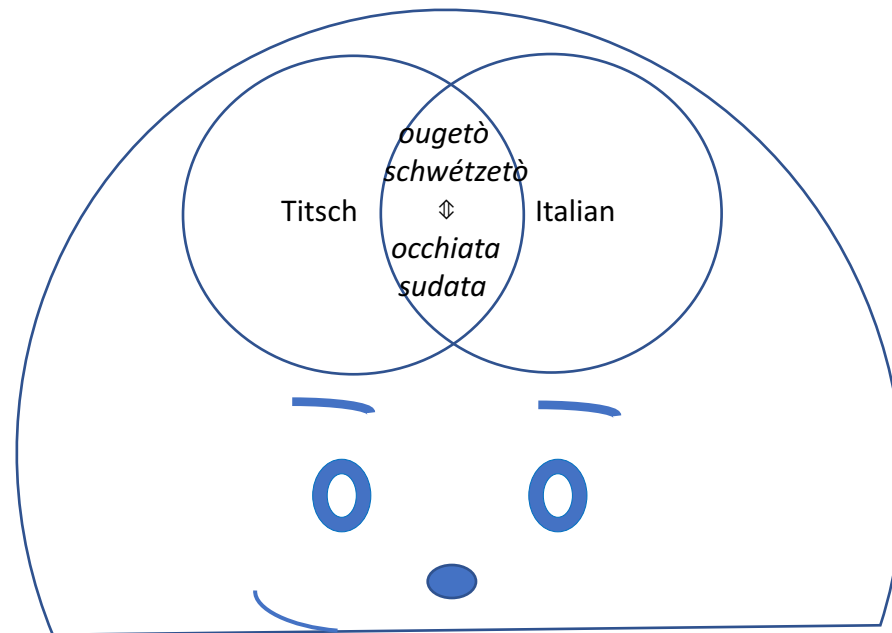
- These derivatives come from two lexical categories
 - verbs [+dyn, -bound]:
 - *chrétzò* 'to scratch, scribble' → *chrétzetò* 'scribble', *erschétte* 'to shake' → *erschéttretò* 'shake', *fépple* 'to tease' → *féppletò* 'joke', *frässò* 'to devour' → *fräsetò* 'feast', *katzò* 'to kick' → *katzetò* 'kick', *läckò* 'to lick' → *läcketò* 'lick', *lésmò* 'to knit' → *lésmetò* 'knitting', *nätschò* 'to scold' → *nätschetò* 'scolding', *ròtschò* 'to slip' → *ròtschetò* 'slip', *schnue* 'to snow' → *schnuetò* 'snowfall', *schwétze* 'to sweat' → *schwézzetò* 'sweat', *seikò* 'to pee' → *seiketò* 'pee', *sifzkò* 'to sigh' → *sifzkòtò* 'sigh', *spoue* 'to spit' → *spouetò* 'spit', *stéffò* 'to sting' → *stéffetò* 'jibe', *tichò* 'to caress' → *tichetò* 'caress', *ufrume* 'to clean up' → *ufrumetò* 'cleaning', *wénkò* 'to wink' → *wénketò* 'wink', *zelle* 'to chat' → *zelletò* 'chat', *zwenke* 'to pinch' → *zwenketò* 'pinch'
 - nouns:
 - *chorb* 'basket' → *chorbetò* 'basketful', *flammò* 'flame' → *flammòtò* 'blaze', *fuscht* 'fist' → *fuschetò* 'punch', *gabelò* 'fork' → *gabetò* 'pitschfork', *hòre* 'horn' → *hòrnetò* 'butt', *leffel* 'spoon' → *leffietò* 'spoonful', *oug* 'eye' → *ougetò* 'glance'
 - double motivation:
 - *blétzk / blétzkò* 'to flash' → *blétzketò* 'flashing', *fues* 'foot' / *fuessò* 'to kick' → *fuessetò* 'kick', *hoamer* 'hammer' / *hoamrò* 'to hammer' → *hoamretò* 'hammer blow', *näscht* 'nest' / *näschtò* 'to brood' → *näschtetò* 'brood', *peitschò* 'lash / to lash' → *peitschòtò* 'lash blow', *messer* 'knife' / *messrò* 'to knife' → *messretò* 'knife wound', *stäcke* 'stick' / *stäckò* 'to beat with a cane' → *stäcketò* 'blow with a stick', *tésch* 'table' / *téschò* 'to set the table' → *téschetò* 'tableful'

Derivatives formed with *-etò*

- These derivatives closely replicate the pattern of the Italian semelfactive action nouns:
 - They can be analysed as
 - |single instantiation of an activity typically connected with $X_{V/N}$ |
 - In the horizontal dimension of the derivational paradigm |ACTION NOUN| they are flanked by other patterns, while in the vertical dimension they enrich the derivational family of a verb:
 - ACTION NOUN
 - [V, +dyn]: *wénkò* 'to wink' → *wénk* 'wink'
 - [V, +dyn]: *bisse* 'to bite' → *bés* 'bite'
 - [V, +dyn]: *erschétte* 'to shake' → *erschétròng* 'shaking'
 - [V, +dyn, - bound]: *bisse* → *bissetò*, *erschétte* → *erschéttretò*, *wénkò* → *wénketò*
 - Derivational family:
 - *erschétte* → *erschétròng* |ACTION NOUN|
 - ↳ *erschéttretò* |SEMELFACTIVE ACTION NOUN|

Derivatives formed with *-etò*

- It is straightforward that they result from contact with Italian and other Romance varieties such as Piedmontese and Franco-Provençal: a case for contact-induced grammaticalization (Heine & Kuteva 2005).
- In this way, the derivational paradigm of |ACTION NOUN| in Titsch has acquired a new category which is unknown to the rest of the Germanic family



Where does this suffix really come from?

- The etymological substance of the suffix is however completely independent of the function displayed in Titsch.
- In fact, the suffix seems to come from the feminine form of the Romance diminutive suffix *-etta* / *-ette* as it appears in a number of loanwords:
 - FrProv. *brotsetta* > *brotschetò* 'faucet', Fr. *serviette* > *schärvietò* 'napkin', FrProv. *terretta* > *tärretò* 'tureen'
 - The feminine ending is normally adapted as *-ò* in Titsch which continues the old ending of the Germanic feminines reduced to Schwa in German:
 - *gara* > *garò* 'competition', *sigaretta* > *sigarettò* 'cigarette', etc.
 - *klockò* 'bell', *pfannò* 'pan', *seifò* 'soap' (cf. German *Glocke*, *Pfanne*, *Seife*)
- Probably, the road followed by this suffix was:
 - i. the extension to native nouns like *chorb*, *gabelò*, etc., and specifically to those cases where the derivative might have been interpreted as deverbal like *fuessetò*, *hoamretò*, etc.
 - ii. the acquisition – replicating the Italian model – of the semelfactive action value favored by the meaning extension |DIMINUTIVE| > |SINGULATIVE| (e.g. It. *zuccherino* 'small sugar > piece of sugar')

Conclusion

- Derivational paradigms are the expression of the cognitive categories activated in word-formation patterns.
- The case of the Titsch action nouns in *-etò* shows that in the presence of a long-lasting contact situation the derivational category |ACTION NOUN| has acquired a new pattern which is very salient in the trilinguals' mind.
- The urge towards the acquisition of the new pattern was so compelling that the etymological substance recruited for this purpose is quite far from its actual value.

Tank vé! mòal! Merci! Thanks!



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