Application of Arabic BP and SGV-COL opposition to loanwords in Maltese

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Maltese is a language both linguistically and geographically just outside the Arabic dialect continuum. It is considered the sole descendant of the short-lived Siculo-Arabic that emerged in the 9th century from Maghrebi Arabic. Since its appearance in the 15th century, Malta, hitherto under Normans for two centuries, has been under the constant influence of the European powers, i.e. the French and the British, and their languages. By far the strongest influence on Maltese and its ancestor, however, was induced by the local languages, Sicilian & Italian, which according to Brincat (2005) form slightly over half the entire Maltese vocabulary. Foreign lexical elements then form another about 16% with plentiful rather recent loans from English constituting about 6%.

The proposed poster presentation is about the incorporation of the loaned lexemes taken in majority from Bugeja (2017) and Camilleri (2013) in terms of their interaction with (at least in the region) Semitic-specific features of broken plural and singulative-collective opposition, categories which Maltese as a descendant of Arabic is no stranger to. The former is a way of pluralization utilizing schematic patterns and its assignment to loans that often fail to match usual SG patterns (e.g. *furketta > frieket*, *skwerra > skwerer*, *pizza > pizez*, *blokka > blokok*) seems in the presence of rifer suffixal sound plural rather unwarranted, even more in Maltralian (Bovingdon 2001) where it seems quite frequent in English loans. The latter is a grammatical number denoting multiple items in its unmarked form, with the singulative being marked by the suffix *-a*, and to which the basis for assignment of words seems to be strictly semantic, e.g. smaller animals, plants, small objects, and mass nouns (e.g. *alwett* "lark", *fażola* "bean", *brijoxx* "brioche", *perżut* "ham"). However, the borders of semantic fields to be perceived as collective are not clearly cut.

The two main aims of this study are 1) to provide a schematic classification of BPs of loans and assess their position in relation to classifications of BPs of the Semitic base (Borg & Azzopardi-Alexander 1997 and Mayer, Spagnol & Schönhuber 2011), achieved via careful comparison of singular and plural forms of such words and 2) to establish clearer boundaries of COL assignment's semantic scope via categorization of affected lexemes. The expected results for the first question are to find newly emerged patterns, for the second one then at least a slight widening of the scope in reference to Arabic.

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