

## The 1° person plural in the Italo-Romance dialects: how many morphological patterns?

Inflectional patterns for 1° person plural in Italo-Romance dialects are usually organized in two categories. In Liguria and in the Central and Southern dialects the Latin endings *-āmus*, *-ēmus*, *-īmus* are generally the direct sources of the current endings of the present tense (Rohlf's 1968, II, § 530), and the thematic vowels *-ā-*, *-ē-*, *-ī-* are often well preserved, especially in the dialects of Lazio, Marche and Umbria (e.g. cfr. in Assisi's dialect *lavámo* "we wash", *vedémo* "we see", *dormímo* "we sleep" < lat. *lavāmus*, *vidēmus*, *dormīmus*), elsewhere analogical reductions can be observed (cfr. Zoagli, province of Genova, *lavému* "we wash" and *vedému* "we see", with extension of *-emu* to verbs originally having *-a-* as thematic vowel). Finally in Toscana (and in standard Italian) we find a unique morpheme *-iámo* (from Latin present subjunctive ending *-eāmus*) for all thematic classes in the present tenses (indicative and subjunctive) and a stronger continuity of the Latin thematic vowels and of the old inflectional morphemes in other tenses and moods. In the Northern dialects (except for Liguria dialects) an innovative ending *-úm(a)* represents the most widespread morpheme for the content [1° person plural]; such a new morpheme has been traced back to the grammaticalization of lat. *homo* "human being, man" (Lurati 1973: *contra* Zörner 1996 who purposes an origin by analogy based on *ómo* "we have"). However these two patterns which involve endings of Latin continuity and the diffusion of the innovative morpheme *-úm(a)*, do not cover the whole landscape of the morphemes and morphological schemes attested in the Italo-Romance area for the 1° person plural. In many areas, usually of limited extent, and mostly dislocated in the Northern regions we find a morpheme *-n(V)*. If we exclude the Friulan area, where a phonological rule turns almost systematically *-m* in *-n*, in all other areas the morpheme *-n(V)* for the 1° person plural does not match the above mentioned patterns, because it can be traced back neither to Latin endings nor to the innovative morpheme *-úm(a)*. Endings related to *-n(V)* for the 1° person plural are well attested in Veneto, Trentino Alto-Adige, Emilia-Romagna, Toscana and Umbria, but such endings exist also in Puglia. In some very conservative areas of Emilia Romagna (e.g. Terruzzi, Province of Piacenza) we find *-nu*, in Veneto *-no* (Calvene, province of Treviso and Cittadella, province of Vicenza) and *-ne* (S. Zeno, province of Verona). The distribution of the inflectional morpheme *-n(V)* across tenses and moods can be very different as we can see in the figure:

Place Tense and mood	Bologna	Terruzzi (prov. Piacenza)	Pelugo (prov. Trento)	Pomonte (prov. Livorno)
1pl ind. pres. 2pl ind. pres.	truvèŋ truvè	parlúma parlè	parlòm parlé	trovámó trováté
1pl ind. impf. 2pl ind. impf.	truvèvaŋ truvèvi	parlánu parlávu	parlávan parlávaf	trovávámó trováváté
1pl subj. pres. 2pl subj. pres.	truvámaŋ truvèdi	parlúma parlè	parlóma parlégaf	trovámó trováté
1pl subj. impf. 2pl subj. impf.	truvèšaŋ truvèši	parlèsnu parlèsvu	parlèsani parlèsaf	trovássano trovássate
1pl condit. pres. 2pl condit. pres.	truvareŋ truvareši	parlèrísnu parlèrísvu	parlèríani parlèríaf	troverébbemo troveréste

Where the phonological rule that turns *-m* in *-n* does not operate, and probably has never operated, the alveolar (or sometime the secondary velar) final nasal *-n* in the 1° person plural suggests to postulate a third morphological pattern. The most reliable hypothesis is that *-n(V)* derives from the grammaticalization of a clitic pronominal form continuing Lat. *nos*, exactly as it happens in the 2° person plural, where the very widespread morpheme *-v/-f* is surely to trace back to the grammaticalization of Lat. *vos*. The grammaticalization of Lat. *nos* is usually considered the starting point for the 1° person plural also in many Romansh dialects (Stimm-Linder 1989, pp. 771-772). In the Italo-Romance Northern area we find many dialects in which *-um(a)*, which sometimes has spread to all tenses and moods, is limited to present tenses (indicative and subjunctive), i.e. to high-frequency tenses, while other tenses and moods preserve *-n(V)*. In such cases it is reasonable to think that the innovation *-um(a)* has replaced *-n(V)* thanks to the high prestige of some dialects (as for instance Milan and Turin dialects) and has been imported firstly in the tenses which occur most frequently. Tenses and moods which have a high frequency are indeed stronger social marker and tend to be replaced more easily with more prestigious forms (cfr. the cases of Terruzzi and Pelugo, much far one from the other). More peripheral tenses and moods often are less sensitive to co-territorial prestigious varieties and offer more resistance to such kind of innovation (morpheme replacement induced by contact with very similar, but not identical, prestigious varieties). The paper aims to illustrate the geo-linguistic distribution of the 1° person plural in *-n(V)* in the Italo-Romance area, to explain its origin and to discuss the different distribution of this morpheme across tenses and moods in some dialects.

## Bibliography

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