OV and VO ordering in Sauris German

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The present talk will focus on OV/VO alternation in Sauris German (henceforth, SG), a South Bavarian variety spoken in Sauris, a 400-inhabitant community in the Alps in Friuli Venezia Giulia (northeastern Italy). SG is basically a VO language (see (1) – notice that SG is a reduced V2 language, cfr. Costantini 2019a, b), yet OV appears to be attested (see (2); cfr. Bidese 2019, Madaro, Bidese in press), although restrictions on the choice of OV or VO orderings appear to be elusive, with both orderings being available apparently with no semantic or pragmatic difference.

The goal of the talk is assessing whether factors can be singled out which affect the relative ordering of object and verb or whether the alternation is due to the coexistence of competing grammars as emerging from bilingualism SG/Italian (and for some speakers, Friulian) characterizing the individual repertoire of all SG speakers. Following the first hypothesis, at least some of the restrictions singled out in the literature on OV/VO alternation (see Pintzuk 1999, Svenonius 2000, Grewendorf, Poletto 2005, Hinterhölzl 2009, Taylor, Pintzuk 2012, Cognola 2013, Hinterhölzl, Petrova 2018, Fuß 2018, Poletto, Tomaselli 2019, Haider 2020, a.m.o.) are expected to turn up, which seems to be the case in view of the fact that speakers unequivocally prefer the OV ordering when a bare quantifier object occurs (see (3)) and when the object is quantified or negative (see (4), (5)).

Beside data collected through interviews to 18 native speakers ranging from age 34-93, data related to the OV/VO alternance will be discussed with respect to the oldest texts in SG, dating back to the first half of 19th century, in order to compare today's state of affairs with past phases of the language.

Examples

(1) *I   on   {*a puech} gelesn {a book}.*
       I   have {*a book}   read   {a book}.
(2) *I   on   {s-do   puech} gelesn {s-do   puech}.*
       I   have {this   book} read   {this   book}.
(3) *I   on   {ois} gesn {$^{??}$ois}.*
       I   have {all} eaten {$^{??}$all}
(4) *I   on   {khana   milich} gekhafet {$^{?}$khana   milich}.*
       I   have {no   milk}   bought   {$^{?}$no   milk}
(5) *I   on   {oln   in   milich} getrunkhn {$^{?}$oln in   milich}.*
       I   have {all the milk}   drunk   {$^{?}$all the milk}

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