Table of contents

Acknowledgements xi

List of abbreviations and symbols xiii

List of tables xvii

List of figures xix

Introduction 1

PART ONE
Past participle agreement in Romance languages: General properties and previous accounts 9

CHAPTER 1
General remarks on past participle agreement 13
1.1 Past participle agreement in French and Italian 13
1.1.1 Basic data 13
1.1.2 Descriptive generalizations 20
1.2 Previous accounts 23
1.2.1 Traditional approaches 23
1.2.2 Some sociolinguistic and stylistic considerations 25
1.2.3 Semantic/pragmatic approaches 25
1.2.4 Syntactic approaches: Position, Spec-Head relations and AgrO 27
1.2.5 More recent accounts from a minimalist perspective 34

CHAPTER 2
Optionality and language change: PPA as an interface phenomenon 39
2.1 Optionality: Competing grammars and interface effects 40
2.2 Interface effects on PPA 46
2.2.1 Information structure–syntax interface 46
2.2.2 Semantics/pragmatics–syntax interface 48

2.3 Object phenomena related to specificity 55
2.3.1 Object movement, CLD and DOM 55
2.3.2 PPA and object movement 59
2.3.3 PPA and DOM 60
2.3.4 PPA and CLD 61
2.4 Interim summary 65

CHAPTER 3
Past participle agreement in Catalan 67
3.1 Peculiarities of PPA in Catalan 68
3.2 PPA as a case of doubt: A digression on normative grammar and the realization of PPA 70
3.3 PPA in Catalan: A phenomenon at the interfaces? 76
3.3.1 The role of specificity in Catalan PPA 76
3.3.2 Correlations among object phenomena 79
3.3.3 Further evidence: Definiteness effects in absolute small clauses 81

CHAPTER 4
Standpoint and research outlines 85

PART TWO
Theoretical background: Universal grammar and language change 89

CHAPTER 5
On clausal structure and universal grammar 91
5.1 Universal grammar and the clausal spine 91
5.2 Parameters and variation 95
5.3 Formal features and Agree 97

CHAPTER 6
On grammaticalization and language change 103
6.1 Grammaticalization as a descriptive tool 104
6.2 Grammaticalization clines: From semantic to formal features 105
6.3 Some thoughts on the question of morphology 111
6.4 Economy and cyclicity 114
6.5 Summarizing 115

CHAPTER 7
Subject-verb agreement revisited 117
7.1 Preliminaries: Some problematic issues 117
7.2 Two diachronic stages in subject-verb agreement 119
7.3 On the role of case in grammaticalization and language change 126

PART THREE
Past participle agreement in Catalan: An empirical study 129

CHAPTER 8
Data collection 131
8.1 Old Catalan (11th–15th centuries) and *Decadença* Catalan (16th–19th centuries) 132
8.1.1 General methodological issues 132
8.1.2 Text selection 133
8.1.3 Coded features and coding criteria 135
8.2 Modern Catalan 144
8.2.1 Target constructions of the test 144
8.2.2 Structure of the questionnaire 146
8.2.3 Participants 147

CHAPTER 9
The PPA cycle 149
9.1 Old Catalan: Results of the corpus analysis 149
9.1.1 The verb 154
9.1.2 The object noun phrase (NP/DP) 158
9.1.3 The clause 165
9.2 Results of the questionnaire for Modern Catalan 170
9.2.1 Interpolation 170
9.2.2 Causatives 171
9.2.3 Partitive objects 172
9.2.4 Influence of dialect and language dominance 173
9.3 Interpreting the data: A PPA-cycle 174

CHAPTER 10
Diachronic analysis of past participle agreement in Catalan: A grammaticalization approach 179
10.1 Additional assumptions 180
10.2 Grammaticalizing formal features and avoiding redundancy 182
10.2.1 Stage 1: Obligatory agreement 182
10.2.2 Stage 2: PPA controlled by specificity? 184
10.2.3 Stage 3: Positional rules on agreement 187
10.2.4 Stage 4: Optional agreement 188
10.2.5 Stage 5: Loss of agreement 190
10.3 Outcomes, shortcomings, outlook 191
10.3.1 The division between narrow syntax and the interfaces 193
10.3.2 Consequences of grammaticalization for accusative case 195
10.3.3 Some remarks on unaccusativity 197
10.3.4 Open issues 198

Concluding remarks 201

References 207

APPENDIX I
List of texts used in the Old Catalan corpus 225

APPENDIX II
Acceptability judgment task for Modern Catalan 227

Index 233