Coordination strategies in Messapic

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Abstract

Messapic, like many ancient Indo-European languages, shows evidence for the existence of more than one coordinating conjunction. Alongside an inherited Indo-European clitic =ti, comparable to Lat. =que or Gk. =τε, Messapic has also grammaticalised an additional coordinator anda from a lexical source. Although the two conjunctions are found in some strikingly similar contexts, this paper argues that they also show noteworthy functional differences, which can plausibly be contextualised against a broader cross-linguistic understanding of how novel coordinators grammaticalise. In this way, the typological study of coordination has the potential to contribute further insights into this fascinating—and as yet insufficiently understood—epigraphic language.

Keywords

Messapic – Latin – ancient Italy – coordination – grammaticalisation

1 Coordination in Messapic and Indo-European

The history of coordinative conjunction in the Indo-European languages is widely characterised by the replacement of the old Proto-Indo-European enclitic conjunction *=kʷe by innovative forms that grammaticalised from lexical items (Goldstein 2019: 3). Classical Greek can serve as an example of this phenomenon. A new conjunction καί, ultimately deriving from a PIE adverbial element *kʷnt ‘along with, besides’ (Beekes 2010: 615), is in the process of replacing inherited =τε < *=kʷe in the documented history of the language. A clear diachronic trend can be observed in this regard, with καί being only about 2.3 times as frequent as =τε in Herodotus, but becoming an overwhelming 38.3
times as frequent in the New Testament. And even where =τε is used, it is frequently used in combination with καί (in the construction x τε καί y).

Although the evolution of new coordinating conjunctions happens independently in the various branches of Indo-European, we find these forms following remarkably similar grammaticalisation paths, with lexical source meanings such as ‘also’, ‘besides’, or ‘in addition’ regularly and recurrently becoming these incipient conjunctions. In the documented history of Classical Latin, for instance, an innovated et < *eti ‘also’ is in the course of supplanting inherited =que in much the same way as in Greek (Torrego 2009: 454; Dupraz 2014: 138). Similarly, in the Sabellic languages a cognate of Lat. enim, originally an adverbialised accusative pronoun meaning ‘in addition to this, besides’, has supplied the novel coordinator attested in Osc. iním, Pael. inim, Umb. enem and completely ousted any inherited clitic conjunction (Untermann 2000: 343–344). In this regard, therefore, the linguistically diverse landscape of ancient Italy reflects the general evolutionary trends of ancient Indo-European.

No exception is Messapic, a poorly attested Indo-European language once spoken in the heel of Italy. Today, this language presents the usual interpretative difficulties of a fragmentarily-attested epigraphic language. However, unmistakeable reflexes of *=kʷe can be identified in a clitic =ti or =ṣi, which occurs in a number of contexts where it serves to coordinate lists of names, objects, or circumstances (e.g., litanṣi notanṣi palanṣi in MLM 22 Ro). At the same time, a new coordinator anda(ti) has been grammaticalised for apparently very similar functions (e.g., [i] assetian andati atan in MLM 13 Ro) (Marchesini 2009: 153; Matzinger 2019: 98). Like its cousins in Greek, Latin, and Sabellic, this new form probably derived from a lexical source, perhaps from a particle *yno ‘towards, in addition’ (Dunkel 2014: 153; De Simone 1988: 360–362).

The examples given above for =ti and anda both show the coordination of accusative common nouns as direct objects. It is instructive to note, therefore, that these coordinators are used in active and ostensibly free variation, much like, for example, =que and et in early Latin, =τε and καί in Homeric Greek, or =ca and utá in Vedic Sanskrit. Given that the grammaticalisation of conjunctions in Indo-European languages follows a predictable path, it is tempting to use data from the history and usage of other Indo-European conjunctions to cast further light on Messapic. Which syntactic or semantic factors can explain the distribution of two competing coordinators in languages that are in the process of grammaticalising an innovative lexical conjunction? If Messapic

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1 The statistics were calculated using the PROIEL corpus (Eckhoff et al. 2018).
2 MLM = Monumenta linguae Messapicae (De Simone & Marchesini 2002).
is one such language, can our theoretical understanding of this process contribute to the interpretation of this as yet insufficiently understood corpus? And conversely, does the Messapic case have the potential to add to our store of typological knowledge on the means whereby languages grammaticalise new coordinators?

2 Methodology and data collection

To examine the evolution of coordination strategies in Messapic, it is useful first to aggregate all instances of coordination attested in the corpus. For this purpose, an initial dataset was created using the morphological information for Messapic in the Corpus of the Epigraphy of the Italian Peninsula in the 1st Millennium BCE (CEIPoM) database, which contains linguistic information on the epigraphic corpora of a range of languages spoken in ancient Italy (Pitts 2022), and then manually rechecked against the documentation of the published Messapic texts. Fortunately, the small size of the corpus which makes this quality check imperative at same time also makes it feasible, and CEIPoM did miss a small number of possible coordinators in obscure contexts. I believe the list given below to be exhaustive.

The inherited clitic \( =ti \) surfaces in various forms, including the orthographic variant \( =\delta i \) and also an assimilated variant \( =si \) after sibilants. The innovated \( anda \), on the other hand, also occurs as \( andati \) or \( andast\delta i \), where the conjunction is itself redundantly recharacterised with the clitic \( =ti \). This can be compared with Gaul. \( etic \), which shows the same pattern of a conjunction \( *=eti \) reinforced by \( *=k^w e \) (Matzinger 2019: 98; Dunkel 2014: 263). Despite the fact that such redundant coordination incorporates the inherited form, it nonetheless represents a ‘heavier’ and more lexicalised form of coordination and should therefore be counted as an instance of \( anda \), not of \( =ti \). A comparable case can be found in Lat. \( atque \), which also univerbates a lexical item with the inherited clitic, but shows the behaviour of a relatively weakly grammaticalised conjunction (Pinkster 2021: 628). This ties in with the well-established theoretical maxim that it is constructions, not individual morphemes, which grammaticalise (Bybee, Perkins, & Pagliuca 1994: 11). For the purposes of this paper, therefore, \( andati \) is considered a variant of \( anda \).

The following is a full list of potential instances of Messapic coordination that are relevant to the research question of this paper. The list strives to be maximalist, including a number of cases where the context or even the presence of the conjunction itself is unclear. The passages are provided with their reference in Monumenta linguae Messapicae and in the order in which
they occur in this corpus. The text of the relevant Messapic inscriptions is reproduced from the interpretative linguistic text ('Testo ii') in MLM, except that the conjunction under discussion is put in bold type. A linguistic interpretation is given based on the relevant literature (cf. Krahe 1955; Parlangéli 1960; Santoro 1982; De Simone 1988; Matzinger 2019; see further references below).

(1) MLM 1 Bas (3rd century BCE).
    klohi zis θotoria marta pido vastei basta veinan aran in daranšoa vasti ... 
    inši trigonošoa ... inši reššorišoa ... inši vastima ... inši ardannoa ...

The first line of this inscription, after the introductory formula klohi zis ‘hear, o Zeus’, is usually interpreted as ‘Totoria Marta gave (pido) her own field (acc. veinan aran) to the city of Vaste (dat. vastei basta).’ Followed by a list of coordinated adverbials indicating the circumstances of this gift, each with a head noun in the locative case. These may refer either to locations (e.g., ‘in the senate …’) or, perhaps more plausibly, functions (e.g., ‘in the senatorship …’) (Matzinger 2019: 139–145). In all cases except for the first coordinand, the coordinator =ti is enclitic to the preposition.

(2) MLM 1 Bas (3rd century BCE)
    ... in daranšoa vasti staboos šonedonas daštassi vaanetos ...

In this phrase, =ti coordinates two genitive proper nouns, functioning as attributes. The translation runs along the lines of ‘in the [function] in the city of Staboas Šoneda and Dazet Vanetas’. The function in question has sometimes been identified as ‘senate’ or ‘senatorship’ (cf. Hajnal 2004: 140), although the etymology remains problematic (Matzinger 2019: 142).

(3) MLM 1 Bas (3rd century BCE)
    ... inši reššorišoa kazareihi šonetiši otšeišiši dazohonnihi ...

This phrase has exactly the same syntactic structure as the preceding, with two coordinated genitive proper nouns. The meaning of reššorišoa is unknown.

(4) MLM 5 Bas (3rd century BCE)
    oššo[vas?] no hazav[a(s)]ši?]

This is a dubious occurrence of =ti, as the coordinator is not legible and its presence must be inferred. If correct, however, it may coordinate two genitive nouns
used as predicate nominals after the verbal particle *no*. A translation might run ‘I belong to Oššo and Hazava’.

(5) MLM 14 Bas (3rd century BCE)

*anda[

This could be an instance of *anda*, but all further context is unclear.

(6) MLM 1 Br (b) (3rd century BCE)

*... denə«ava»n v«a»sti anda dera«n»əoa ras.[?]o ...

This phrase is preceded by an introductory formula (*klaohi zis*), while what follows is obscure. Here *anda* seems to be coordinating two locative adverbials, ‘in the city and in the *deranəoa*’. The preceding *denə«ava»n* might be an accusative noun (De Simone & Marchesini 2002: ii 110) or a preterite verb in the third person plural (Parlangèli 1960: 301).

(7) MLM 1 Br (b) (3rd century BCE)

*... t..laihassi da.sinn.r[.?] dazimaihięi baliahiai«hi» andaęi vasmannati daştas ...

The assimilated =*si* < =*ti* at the beginning of this sentence seems to be appended to a nominative form *t..laihas*. Although the function of this form is unclear, it is plausible to assume that =*ti* is coordinating either an entire sentence, or its nominative subjects.

(8) MLM 1 Br (b) (3rd century BCE)

*... t..laihassi da.sinn.r[.?] dazimaihięi baliahiai«hi» andaęi vasmannati daştas ...

The clitic conjunction follows a genitive proper noun, which it is presumably coordinating as an attribute.

(9) MLM 1 Br (b) (3rd century BCE)

*... t..laihassi da.sinn.r[.?] dazimaihięi baliahiai«hi» andaęi vasmannati daştas ...

The coordinator is followed by a locative designation of a place or function, followed by a sequence of genitive proper nouns.
This is a sequence of genitive proper nouns, coordinated by =ti, and following a locative noun vasmannati. This part of the inscription has the syntactic function of an adverbial and can therefore be rendered ‘in the vasmannati of [these people].’

Although the sentence is incomplete, its syntax can plausibly be interpreted if berain is an optative verb (Gusmani 1976: 131; Marchesini 2009: 153) and ai [min] kos kraapati argorian preiṣr[---]nes nabtaïšis anda pela[---]hi berain vasti ...

Two genitive proper nouns are connected by =ti, without further context.

The two female subjects—apparently sisters—of the dedication to ana aprodita (‘Lady Aphrodite’) are here coordinated by =ti.

Note that the underscoring in MLM’s interpretative text indicates sequences of letters for which no divisio verborum is possible at present.
If the first two words read ‘they inscribed the enna’ (cf. Matzinger 2019: 75), then =ti might be coordinating two dative beneficiaries (‘for Tautor Dazinnes and the Tatotēs’).

(15) MLM 3 Car (c) (3rd century BCE)
šaal[...]na.azën maeoll[..]esnzenši borrahetis tаi ma kos ...

This immediately follows the preceding section, whereas tai ma kos clearly introduces a new sentence (see following occurrence). This leaves only an obscure section relevant to the interpretation of =ti, but it may be noted that the conjunction appears to follow an accusative ending -en, which also occurs earlier in the passage. It is possible, then, that two accusative objects are being joined.

(16) MLM 3 Car (c) (3rd century BCE)
tai ma kos teимнататанeeспаланыа ndai anda daranšoa dazetēs haštorrihi anda dazihi ...

The syntagm tai ma kos is elsewhere combined with a (possibly subjunctive) verb to express a prohibition (cf. Matzinger 2019: 100). After daranšoa, which is probably a locative adverbial, a lengthy sequence of proper nouns in the nominative and genitive follows.

(17) MLM 3 Car (c) (3rd century BCE)
dazetēs haštorrihi anda dazihi zatet[hi?] maddessi etti[ ...]

This continues the sequence of proper nouns, in this case with anda apparently coordinating two genitives.

(18) MLM 3 Car (c) (3rd century BCE)
zatet[hi?] maddessi etti[...] dazetis dazet hast[о]rres hamahiašte[s] ...

Here =ti is appended to a nominative proper noun maddes in continuation of the sequence described for the previous sections. The syntactic relationships between these coordinators remain obscure.

(19) MLM 1 Fr (3rd century BCE)
] [.и vinahи d[..?]иntaninkohи[..?]setasnailšи[..?]tailenas hip [,] vale[,] abis
Although a few possible instances of $=ti$ can be identified in this inscription, the poor condition of the stone makes interpretation difficult.

(20) MLM 1 Fr (3rd century BCE)
\begin{verbatim}
a[.]\text{i}koterassi dosahe\text{s}tan\text{\`a}\`i vinaihi
\end{verbatim}
A hopelessly obscure inscription.

(21) MLM 1 Fr (3rd century BCE)
\begin{verbatim}
a[.]\text{i}koterassi dosahe\text{s}tan\text{\`a}\`i vinaihi
\end{verbatim}
A hopelessly obscure inscription.

(22) MLM 1 Lup (3rd century BCE)
\begin{verbatim}
dokihi kohi hagaratitabanta kretaaihi\`i kor\`ihi bagis\text{mor}oai
\end{verbatim}
The coordinator is enclitic to a genitive proper noun (nom. Kretas Kor\`es), but the preceding context is unclear. It is not unlikely that hagarati is a verb, perhaps in a clause introduced by kohi, which looks like a genitive form (De Simone & Marchesini 2002: ii 209; cf. the endings -aihi, -ihi), possibly of the relative pronoun kos (Krahe 1955: 34). In this case, dokihi could represent the first element within the coordinated phrase, and a skeletal (albeit speculative) interpretation might be ‘of Dokes, whose ... he verb-s, and of Kretas Kor\`es, ...’:

(23) MLM 9 Me (second half 5th century BCE)
\begin{verbatim}
\text{[\text{varne[.]}na[.]}oiniteta anda menle
\end{verbatim}
This inscription is extremely obscure.

(24) MLM 1 Mo (3rd century BCE)
\begin{verbatim}
tai ma kos invinta valdan kos inin invitati\text{li\`s}dargahe\text{\`s}ita tooitainaihi di-\text{taissi nomai} \text{o\`nt\`o}lu\text{tusi\`s}inai
\end{verbatim}
The overall syntactic structure of this sentence can be plausibly reconstructed: nobody should invinta the valdan, and if someone does so anyway, some (obscure) consequence should result. The expression ditaissi nomais looks like an instrumental plural (Matzinger 2019: 38), but the context preceding and following does not make it possible to establish whether $=ti$ is coordinating two adverbials or two clauses.
(25) MLM 3 Ro (no date given)
θaotor akreθes θaotori taosi iasseti anda hezzan daos apistaθi

Comparison with 13 Ro suggests that iasseti anda is haplographised for iassetian anda (De Simone 1988: 380), a frequent phenomenon in epigraphic corpora (cf. Bakkum 2009: 169). In this case, the conjunction joins two accusative objects—iassetian and hezzan—of the verb apistaθi ‘dedicates’. As usual, little can be said about their semantics, but these are presumably common nouns.

(26) MLM 6 Ro (no date given)
rania vallana θeotori andiraho nai klatan intaθi vateihasθi niligaves

The verb (ni)ligaves is attested several times in the Messapic corpus (Matzinger 2019: 78). It is probable that intaθi is also a third person singular verb—rather than, for instance, some form with a clitic conjunction =ti—as this allows a straightforward syntactic interpretation of the preceding context, involving a subject rania vallana, an indirect object θeotori andiraho and a direct object klatan (De Simone 1988: 384; Poetto 1997: 788; Matzinger 2019: 68–69). If so, two clauses are coordinated here by =ti, and the conjunction is enclitic to the subject vateihas of the second sentence.

(27) MLM 7 Ro (no date given)
θeotori andiraho damai sketθes naias stihati dazoma[---]zes anda dazzes staboa

The forms following and preceding anda are nominatives in -es, suggesting that two subjects are being coordinated here (De Simone 1988: 395).

(28) MLM 10 Ro (no date given)
]azasθi niligaves

A nominative subject is here followed by a verb niligaves, with no further context. Since the verb is probably singular, =ti is more likely to be coordinating two clauses than two subjects.

(29) MLM 13 Ro (no date given)
θeotor damokes ⟨θet⟩ θeotori andiraho nai damai [i]assetian andati atan deos apistaθi
In this inscription *andati* coordinates two accusative objects—*i*{assetian} and *atan*—of the verb *apistaði* ‘dedicates’ (De Simone 1988: 381; Matzinger 2019: 63).

(30) MLM 22 Ro (no date given)

[*sterinnes litanði notanði palanði ti[...]št[...]ohomazzis*]

The structure of the first part of this inscription is relatively clear, with a subject *sterinnes*, probably a proper noun, in the nominative case, and a sequence of coordinated accusative common nouns *litan, notan, and palan* representing the direct object (De Simone 1988: 405). Nothing specific can be said about the meaning of these words, but it is worth noting that, unlike in 1 Bas, the conjunction =*ti* is here repeated on every coordinated element, including the first.

(31) MLM 17 Ur (3rd century BCE)

[*?zas [...]onas [...]abattos dozas [...]a?]ndàði [...]onn[i]hi [...]ekori[...]n*]

This inscription is obscure.

(32) MLM 19 Ur (3rd century BCE)

*hipaka bla[t]ðana blat[ði] dazihoni bil[ia] andetaði ap[r]odita apate[...]li*

A female name (*hipaka bla[t]ðana*) is here specified as referring to the ‘daughter of Blatðes Dazihonnes’ and coordinated with *anðeta*, which has been variously interpreted as ‘freedwoman’ (Haas 1962: 29; De Simone 1988: 391) or a proper noun (De Simone & Marchesini 2002: ii 15). The conjunction is, therefore, linking two proper nouns (perhaps as subjects) or two elements in apposition.

(33) MLM 32 Ur (3rd century BCE)

[*ti stahan aprodit[---]a [d]azimaihi melan[---]los in karmatðoa de[..]antuði*]

The word preceding =*ði* might be a proper noun with a nominative in -o (< *-o-n*), as attested for *oššo* or *poollo*. In this case, it could be one of the nominative subjects of *stahan aprodita* (‘they placed for Aphrodite’) earlier in the inscription (Santoro 1982: ii 65).
(34) MLM 10 Uz (3rd–2nd century BCE)
| hanin deranθoa [---]senaihθi korθeihi [---]saoketos andaθi [---]sseihi

Here =ti again coordinates genitive proper nouns, perhaps dependent on a nominative or locative deranθoa.

(35) MLM 10 Uz (3rd–2nd century BCE)
| hanin deranθoa [---]senaihθi korθeihi [---]saoketos andaθi [---]sseihi

It is difficult to establish what andaθi is coordinating here, as the text extends off the left side of the inscription. The noun preceding it is a genitive proper noun but it is unclear what follows.

(36) MLM 17 Ve (3rd century BCE)
| eritoos vallaidihi dazimaihiθi brinθel[---]

This appears to represent a sequence of genitive proper nouns, coordinated by =ti. The following occurrence may represent a superordinate coordinator, if the structure of the inscription is comparable to that of 1 Bas.

(37) MLM 17 Ve (3rd century BCE)
| andaθi vasti manniθova taraitos ka[  

This line follows on from the preceding, with a break of unknown length between them. The noun vasti that follows the coordinator is a locative ‘in the city’, indicating that andaθi could be coordinating adverbials.

(38) 1 CM (4th century BCE)
| hazzava anda ma[  | ]matroate[  

Although the context is deficient, hazzava may represent the name of a female subject in the nominative case (Matzinger 2019: 147).

Focusing on the referential meaning and syntactic function of the coordinands allows a number of patterns to be distilled from the Messapic data; the table below provides a synthesis. The most common function of coordination is to join lists of proper nouns, typically functioning as attributes in the genitive

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4 This inscription was discovered after the publication of MLM (Matzinger 2019: 147).
case. In second place by frequency stands the coordination of locative adverbials, which often specify the location or term of office in or during which the event described by the inscription took place. And finally, we find a not insignificant handful of cases where arguments or even entire clauses are coordinated. The table below shows the inscription reference for all potential cases of each of these functions, adding a bracketed question mark (‘?) for occurrences that are dubious or can be analysed differently. Note that the same occurrence may occur more than once in this table, where the analysis is in doubt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>function</th>
<th>=ti</th>
<th>anda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>genitive proper nouns</td>
<td>1 Bas <em>bis</em>, 1 Br <em>bis</em>, 4 Cae (‘?)</td>
<td>3 Car (‘?), 1 Lup, 10 Uz, 17 Ve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apposition</td>
<td>19 Ur (‘?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adverbials</td>
<td>1 Bas, 1 Mo (‘?)</td>
<td>1 Br <em>bis</em>, 3 Car (‘?), 17 Ve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predicate nominals</td>
<td>5 Bas (‘?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nominative subjects</td>
<td>1 Br (‘?), 22 Cae, 3 Car (‘?)</td>
<td>1 Br (‘?), 7 Ro, 1 CM (‘?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accusative objects</td>
<td>3 Car (‘?), 22 Ro</td>
<td>3 Ro, 13 Ro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dative beneficiaries</td>
<td>3 Car</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entire clauses or sentences</td>
<td>1 Br (‘?), 1 Mo (‘?), 6 Ro, 10 Ro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wholly unclear</td>
<td>1 Fr <em>ter</em></td>
<td>14 Bas, 9 Me, 17 Ur, 10 Uz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Discussion

The Messapic data presented in the previous section indicates that =ti and anda, to a considerable extent, occupy the same semantic space. They can both coordinate genitive proper nouns, locative circumstances, and arguments in the nominative and accusative. At the same time, their distribution does not appear to be susceptible to a diachronic or diatopic explanation: anda and =ti are found in inscriptions from the same time periods and with the same geographic provenance (e.g., the Grotta della Poesia), and not infrequently occur in the exact same inscription (1 Br, 3 Car, 10 Uz, 17 Ve). This suggests that—as in many other early Indo-European languages—these two conjunctions coexisted, and that the variation between them requires a functional explanation. Indeed, we do observe some patterns that, at least in the
absence of more detailed information, are interesting to take at face value. For example, =ti appears proportionately more common for the coordination of genitive proper nouns, and it is exclusively used in the clear cases of clausal coordination. Although the statistical resolution remains low, these are potential patterns which can be fruitfully be compared with cross-linguistic parallels.

As was noted in the first section of this paper, a number of other early Indo-European languages also provide evidence for a situation in which a more recently grammaticalised lexical item (analogous to anda) competes with an inherited clitic conjunction (=ti). Since grammaticalisation tends to follow typologically predictable pathways, the analysis of coordinative conjunction in these languages may exemplify some of the distinctions we might expect to observe in a comparable case such as Messapic, and thus help inform the interpretation of this more poorly attested epigraphic language.

Such distinctions can be identified both on a syntactic and on a semantic level. In the first place, more strongly grammaticalised elements tend to have narrower syntactic scope (Lehmann 2015: 152–157). For instance, =τε in Homeric Greek tends to join elements at the level of the word or phrase, while xai predominates for sentential coordination (Klein 1992: 12). A similar pattern holds for Lat. =que and et and becomes increasingly prominent in later Latin literature (Pinkster 2021: 625). On a semantic level, a more strongly grammaticalised conjunction should display bleaching towards more neutral coordination, and away from any potential adverbial source meanings such as also or besides. Again, we see this in Classical Latin, where et can still be used adverbially, while =que cannot (or very rarely; see Torrego 2009: 457), and also in the adverbial usage of lexical conjunctions in Greek (xai) and Vedic Sanskrit (utá) (Klein 1992: 19).

The semantic bleaching of a coordination may also be reflected in the conceptual similarity and symmetry of the coordinands. Thus, a conjunction may join unrelated elements, but it may also join elements which are in some way associated with each other in the real world, such as ‘husband and wife’ or ‘sun and moon’ (Haspelmath 2004: 13; Viti 2008: 46). In early Indo-European languages, this function is particularly associated with the inherited coordinator (Viti 2008: 47; Torrego 2009: 457; Pinkster 2021: 621). When the link between the coordinands is clear from our encyclopaedic knowledge of reality, the coordinator itself has little semantic work left to do, and it is not surprising that we find this function taken by a strongly grammaticalised coordinator with limited semantic content of its own. Similarly, a more strongly grammaticalised conjunction will tend to join elements symmetrically, in such a way that the order of elements is not linguistically relevant and has no implications in terms of
causality or focalisation. Viti (2008: 55) contrasts the sentence ‘John studied much and passed the exam’ (where causality is strongly implied) with the symmetric ‘John cooks pancakes and Mary prepares the coffee’, where the order of the coordinands can be inverted without significantly altering the meaning, and argues that this distinction is also reflected in the use of early Indo-European clitic conjunctions (including in Vedic Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin).

At a first examination, the Messapic data may seem to belie some of these expectations. Thus, all the clear and potential examples of coordinated clauses use =ti, not anda, which is contrary to the expectation that highly grammaticalised morphemes should have narrowed syntactic scope. Conversely, however, it does have parallels in early epigraphic Latin. For instance, the closing formula idemque probavit ‘the same person approved it’ is invariably joined to what precedes with =que. It is possible to hypothesise that this archaism reflects the semantic bleaching of the inherited conjunction before it acquired the arbitrary syntactic restrictions that would characterise it in its later and more moribund stages. Arguably, if =que was semantically empty, but otherwise free to coordinate clauses, we would expect it to occur in situations where asyndeton—the most semantically empty form of coordination par excellence—is an acceptable alternative. It is instructive to note that the Oscan equivalent of the idemque probavit formula, isidum prúfatted, is without exception appended asyndetically to what precedes.\(^5\) After all, the act of commissioning a project and approving it afterwards are conceptually inseparable. Coordination in this case has little semantic context and is adequately marked by the relatively empty coordinator =que.

In Messapic, the clearly analysable cases of clausal coordination involve the verb niligaves, and only one of them has sufficient context for the identification of the first element of the coordination. This appears to involve a dedicatory verb with a meaning closely related to that of niligaves itself (De Simone 1988: 392). The full sentence rania vallana șeotori andiraho nai klatan intaști vateihasști niligaves could be translated along the lines of ‘Rania Vallana dedicates the klatan to Tautor Andirahias indeed, and Vateihaš⃝ placed it’ (see discussion and references in previous section). In other words, although the precise denotational meaning of the two verbal acts is unclear, they clearly occur within the context of the same votive act and are consequently connected by =ti. Elsewhere, Messapic attests asyndeton in a comparable context. MLM 5 Ro, for

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\(^5\) The formula occurs 20 times in the Oscan corpus. Explicit coordination is found a few times in the structurally divergent schema x deded inim prufatted ‘somebody had this made and approved it’, where two coordinated predicates share the same subject (data from CEIPoM 1.2).
instance, connects three dedicatory verbs *apistaši ... topido ... niligaves* ‘dedicates ... gave ... placed’ without any explicit coordinator. So, although the use of =*ti* to coordinate clauses counterindicates a narrowing of its syntactic scope, its apparent functional equivalence with comparable asyndetic constructions is nonetheless in line with the theoretical expectation of semantic bleaching in a highly grammaticalised conjunction and has arguable parallels in archaic Latin.

This observation also ties in well with the Messapic tendency to join lists of proper nouns with =*ti*. In many cases, the epigraphic corpora of ancient Italy preferentially employ asyndetic coordination with proper nouns, and this is in accordance with the diagnostics of semantically empty coordination described above. Enumerations of proper nouns are highly symmetric lists of which the internal order is linguistically irrelevant. In fact, in many contexts, such internal structure could serve to create unwanted salience, and thus have implicational overtones that someone commissioning an inscription would wish to avoid. A case can be made that Messapic itself also attests asyndeton in a comparable context (cf. the possible enumeration of theonyms in formulae such as *klohi venas zis* in MLM 3 Car, 8 Ro, perhaps 5 Ro). Constituents involving common nouns, on the other hand, are free to be coordinated more explicitly, whether by the use of a lexical coordinator such as *anda(ti)*, or by the emphatic repetition of the clitic on the first coordinand, as in *litanši notanši palanši*. The tendency for =*ti* to occur in lists of proper nouns is, therefore, precisely in line with the theoretical expectations outlined previously, and once again is also reflected in its apparent functional equivalence with asyndeton.

4 Conclusion

In conclusion, therefore, the close functional similarities of =*ti* and *anda* notwithstanding, =*ti* preferentially occurs in contexts where we may reasonably assume that the semantic content of the coordinator is minimal: in the coordination of clauses representing two inseparable parts of a dedicatory act and in the enumeration of proper nouns. In this regard, Messapic shows interesting resemblances to other early Indo-European languages, perhaps particularly to

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6 For instance, in the syntactically annotated subset of the Latin corpus in CEIPoM 1.2., proper nouns are connected asyndetically 123 times (versus 22 times with a conjunction), and common nouns only 20 times (versus 40 times with a conjunction). A similar tendency holds in Oscan.
the situation for Latin at the same point in time. The semantic bleaching of the clitic conjunction is in evidence in both languages, whereas the syntactic restrictions of classical and later Latin are only in the process of emerging, with Lat. =que becoming increasingly rare for clausal coordination as one passes from Plautus through Cicero to Tacitus (Pinkster 2021: 625). By this point, Messapic was long extinct, but we can but speculate on the course =ti and anda would have taken over the subsequent centuries.

It is likely that the similarities between other early Indo-European languages and our fleeting glimpse into the history of Messapic can be ascribed to the predictable path that cross-linguistically common grammaticalisations tend to follow. This paper has attempted to show that, studied in the light of typologically informed grammaticalisation pathways, the Messapic corpus can yield useful insights and is rich and varied enough to be studied in its own right. Moreover, based on the data presented here, the case of Messapic can—at least tentatively—be added to the list of documented languages that show evidence for the common Indo-European grammaticalisation cycle of coordinators. In addition, the functional differences between =ti and anda have the potential to help with the interpretation of those parts of the Messapic corpus which as yet remain obscure, as well as with any new inscriptions that may be published in the future.

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