

### The third way: Prepositional adverbials in dialects of Italy (ex. *in secco*, *a secco*)

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Research has been mainly dedicated to variationist studies on the synchrony and diachrony of adjectival adverbs (e.g., *corrono veloce/i*) and derived adverbs in *-mente* (e.g., *velocemente*). By contrast, adverbials displaying the structure “preposition + adjective” – here termed *PA-adverbial* (e.g. Fr. *à la légère / en bref*, Sp. *a las claras / de ordinario*) –, have been neglected. This presentation is part of a project concerning the role of PA-adverbials in Romance. It is claimed that the structure “preposition + adjective” is a relevant “third way” in the adverbial system of the Romance languages. Being highly frequent until the modern language period, it has undergone normative marginalization in diachrony in the written language and the so called ‘standard’ language since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, while it is still widely used in varieties with prevailing oral tradition. Dialects are therefore, diachronic evidence aside, a major concern of the project, since they possibly show a continuation of the forms until today, where norm-concerns do not play a role. The PA-pattern itself consists of a cluster of secondary patterns according to the preposition used, the usage of the article, the role of inflection, and univertation: Fr. *d’ordinaire*, *en bref*, *à la dure*, *acertes*, it. *di sicuro*, *alla napoletana*, *addietro* etc.

In a study on the diachrony of adverbs in Spanish, Hummel (2014b: 695-703) observes the striking fact that in a diachronic corpus of 1 million words the PA-pattern systematically parallels adjectival adverbs, and, to a lesser degree, adverbs in *-mente*:

<i>continuo</i>	<i>continuamente</i>	<i>de continuo, a la continua</i>
<i>extremo</i>	<i>extremamente</i>	<i>en extremo</i>
<i>fijo</i>	<i>fijamente</i>	<i>de fijo, en fija, de fijo, a la fija, por fijo</i>
<i>ligero</i>	<i>ligeramente</i>	<i>de ligero, a la ligera</i>
<i>pronto</i>	<i>prontamente</i>	<i>de pronto, por lo pronto, al pronto</i>
<i>seco</i>	<i>secamente</i>	<i>a secas, en seco</i>

In total, 57 different adjectives are used in the corpus as PA-adverbials. The same adjectives tend to be used as adjectival adverb *and* as PA-adverbial, which is less the case for *mente*-adverbs, at least inasmuch as the list is much longer for the latter. Consequently, PA adverbials could have been a systematic *analytic alternative* to traditional adjectival adverbs.

For most of the 57 Spanish series, equivalence can be attested for Romance in general, e.g. (see whole list of Romance equivalents for the 57 units in Hummel, in print a,b):

Cat.	<i>en sec, a seques, a les seques</i>	Pt.	<i>em seco</i>
Fr.	<i>en sec, à sec</i>	Rom.	<i>în sec, pe sec</i>
Friul.	<i>a sec</i>	Sard.	<i>in siccu, a siccu</i>
It.	<i>in secco, a secco</i>	Sp.	<i>a secas, en seco</i>

First studies (Hummel in print a,b; Hummel et al.) have shown that:

- Being rare in Latin, PA adverbials display high frequency and productivity since the first documents of Romance. This suggests the hypothesis of an oral tradition surfacing as Latin approached spoken language to create Romance.
- PA patterns are significantly more in use in dialects all over Romance. They are also more frequent in the standard varieties of languages that better conserve the oral tradition (Roumanian, New World varieties).

- PA patterns have been ruled out by most standards since the 17th century, while they were abundantly used before. This is the reason why at present the remaining patterns are generally perceived as lexicalized locutions (*locuzioni avverbiali*).
- The hypothesis of PA patterns as a relevant third way in the diachrony of the adverbial system apparently is in line with the traditional hypothesis of analyticization from Latin to Romance. A closer look confirms more specifically the argumentation of Ledgeway (2012). In fact, PA patterns tend to convey configurational head-driven peripheral functions (circumstances, sentential functions), while the core function of verb modification is still realized by adjectival adverbs or adverbs in *–mente* (details in Hummel, in print b).

The PA-pattern is particularly found in Italian, if not productive (*da solo, d'improvviso, di solito, di continuo, a lungo, in secco, in sordina, alla larga, al più presto, sul serio, di nuovo, di recente, di sicuro, di molto, di nascosto, per prima, in grande, di certo* etc.). Nevertheless, they are almost inexistent in Salvi & Renzi (2010), (Renzi *et al.* 2001: 375-377), Pecoraro & Pisacane (1984).

One way to corroborate the oral tradition of PA adverbials is the study of dialects. According to Rohlfs (1969: 246) there are »moltissimi casi« in Italian varieties. Hence, the dialects of Italy show an interesting situation where the use of adjectival adverbs (without adverbial suffix) seems to naturally correlate with PA patterns, possibly as a consequence of the diachronic development from adjectival adverb to PA during the transition from Latin to Romance. The project therefore – to capture the final point in time in the diachronic investigation – aims at the investigation of two dialect samples from each major Romance language, in the case of Italian located in Southern Italy. There, the PA-pattern is supposedly more frequent compared to the *Settentrione*. The study will include Napolitan (Naples) as well as varieties of the Campanian rural areas (location tbd), most probably Sicilian dialects from Agrigento, and, as a contrast corpus, some rural dialects from the Veneto region. Our talk will (a) give an overview over the project the third way and the PA-pattern in Romance, and (b) concentrate on the particular synchronic situation in Italian, focusing on theoretical and methodological questions (field studies, selection of informants, elicitation etc.).

## References

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