

Aspectual constructions and Negative Imperatives in Italo-Romance.

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1. Introduction. We address the periphrases employed in different Italo-Romance varieties to express a negative imperative meaning. Northern varieties involve a *be/stay* + infinitive periphrasis (cf. Kayne 1992 for Paduan, Manzini & Savoia 2005 for a general survey), while Southern ones (mainly Apulian varieties) involve a *be* + gerundive strategy. We will try to show that these kinds of imperative periphrases are aspectual constructions which imply the negation of a non-punctual sub-event represented by the infinitive/gerundive embedded predicate selected by an aspectual auxiliary.

2. Background. Zanuttini (1994, 1997) assumes that imperative clauses are characterized by the presence of a somewhat reduced functional structure; so in the Romance languages that have a preverbal negation the negative marker and the 'true' imperative verb compete for the same structural position within the C field (this is not the case for suppletive imperatives involving ordinary tenses or subjunctives): the negation found in negative imperative lands to a position within the C field, where imperatives are found (cf. Zanuttini 1997, Zeijlstra 2004) and the C field triggers in fact a modal interpretation (cf. Poletto & Zanuttini 1998, Poletto 2000, Manzini & Savoia 2005). Furthermore, Zanuttini (1997) puts forward the idea that imperative forms lack the Tense projection, which is required by the preverbal negative marker, and therefore must be substituted through a form which projects it. In Paduan, for example, prohibition is expressed with the auxiliary verb *sta* followed by the infinitive. In the non-negative form, the presence of the auxiliary is impossible. Similar constructions are found in many other northern Italian varieties (cf. Manzini & Savoia 2005).

- (1) a. No stá parlare (Paduan, Kayne, 1992)
Neg aux to-talk.INF
'Don't talk!'
b. *Stá parlare!
Aux to-talk.INF
'Talk!'
- (2) a. Non parlare.INF (Standard Italian)
Neg to-talk
Don't talk!'
b. Parla
Talk.IMP.2SG
Talk

Based on the data in (1), Kayne (1992) concludes that the negative marker licenses an overt or a covert modal, which in turn licenses the infinitive. In standard Italian (2), the negative marker licenses an empty/covert modal, which in turn licenses the infinitive, while in Paduan, the negative marker licenses the auxiliary verb *sta*, which in turn licenses the infinitive.

3. Data from southern Italian varieties. For what concerns southern Italian varieties, particularly telling is the fact that in Apulian dialects we find a gerundive periphrasis for negative imperatives, of the type { neg + inflected aux + verb-*ing* }, as in (4).

- (3) Mandzə (Apulian: Bari South East)
Eat.IMP.2SG
'Eat!'
- (4) Non si man'gennə (Apulian: Bari South East)
Neg be.2SG eat.GER

In these Southern Italian varieties the gerundive is restricted to the periphrasis of the negative imperatives (while the gerundive periphrasis is unattested in the same variety for the expression of progressive aspect, *contra* Standard Italian). Curiously, in the same Southern varieties the progressive is rendered via a stative auxiliary and an embedded finite or infinite complement introduced by the preposition *a*, as in (5).

- (5) Stək a mandʒə/ mandʒε (Apulian: Bari South East)
 Stay.1SG to eat.1SG/ eat.INF

4. The Analysis. Manzini, Lorusso & Savoia (2017) account for the progressive structure in (5) in terms of a bi-clausal control finite structure that instantiates a inclusion/part whole relation, as originally proposed by Belvin (1996), Belvin & den Dikken (1997) for the (various instances of the) verb *have* (we notate it as \subseteq for ease of reference). The inclusion relation, in our case, is between the utterance time (the auxiliary) and the embedded event (following the Landman’s 1992 semantics for PROG), as roughly illustrated in (6) for (5). Here, the inclusion relation is instantiated by means of the adposition *a*.

- (6) [_{IP} [_{VP} stək [_{⊆P} a [_{IP} _{pro} mangia]]]]

We assume that both the progressive and negative imperatives select a point or a subevent (the part) within the event (or an event type) in its aspectual unfolding (in an eventive *part-whole relation*): but while the progressive links the selected subevent (an stage of the event) to the utterance time (through the auxiliary as proposed by Higginbotham 2004), the negative imperative links the subevent to the moment in which the speaker addresses the command/prohibition to the addressee, as the lack of tense in imperative constructions confirm (Zanuttini 1997). Both aspectual constructions share the presupposition that the action represented by both imperative and imperative is not already completed (see Portner 2004 for imperatives). As for negative imperatives in order to be negated the event has to be seen as non-punctual, so that it can be negated in every of its sub-eventive parts (except its final stage). The negation works as a modal operator which selects for a non-punctual event (as also proposed by Iatridou 2018 among others). A rough representation of (4) is given in (7) in which the gerund has a relational (i.e adpositional) value (as proposed by Gallego 2010 for Romance gerunds, cf. Franco 2015).

- (7) [_{IP} [_{NEG} non [_{VP} si [_{VP} _{pro} mangie] [_{⊆P} -nnə]]]]

We follow Fábregas & Jiménez-Fernández (2018) in arguing that gerundives like in (4) should be analyzed as a syntactic constituents merged as part of the syntactic projections associated with aspectual constructions (a sub-event). While Fábregas & Jiménez- Fernández (in press) - assuming Ramchand’s (2008) system - qualify them as RhemePs, we propose a bi-clausal modal structure in which the embedded gerundive is a tenseless VP (sub-event or part) selected by a tensed modal auxiliary (the whole).

5. Discussion. We conclude that in both Northern and Southern Italian varieties the negative imperative constructions imply an aspectual reading which is the one selected by the negative (modal) operator. For what concerns Apulian varieties we have a gerundive in the negative imperative, which in standard Italian introduce progressive aspects. The progressive and the negative imperative are in a sort of complementary distribution: while the former imply a point within the event to link to the utterance time (cf. Bach 1986, Landau, 1992, Filip 2003) the latter periphrasis is used to aspectually represent a point (or different point) if the event which has not reached its natural endpoint so that every point of it can be negated conveying an imperative meaning (it is infelicitous to use *don’t shut the door*, if the door is already closed) . We precisely assume that the imperative meaning arises with no temporal specification but only with the internal ‘time’ of the event structure of the embedded verb since is relevant since it is linked to the illocutionary force of a prohibition addressed by a speaker to an addressee.

Selected References. Belvin, R. & M. den Dikken. 1997. “There, happens, to, be, have.” *Lingua* 101:151–183. \ Fábregas, A. and Jiménez-Fernández, Á. L, in press. Extraction from gerunds and the internal nsyntax of verbs. *Linguistics*. / Manzini, M.R., P. Lorusso & L.M. Savoia, 2017 “a/bare finite complements in Southern Italian varieties: mono-clausal or bi-clausal syntax?” *QULSO*. \ Manzini, M.R. & L.M. Savoia, 2005. *I dialetti italiani e romanci. Morfosintassi generativa*. 3 vols. Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso. \ Zanuttini, R. 1997. *Negation and Clausal Structure: a Comparative Study of Romance Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.