***Tough*-constructions in the dialects of Italy: A typology**

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1. *Tough*-constructions: A definition
Standard Italian (like other Romance languages) has more than one way of realising *tough*-constructions (TCs):

1) *Questi libri sono facili da leggere.*
2) *Certe idee sono difficili da sostenersi.*
3) *Queste luci sono belle a vedersi.*

In TCs, the surface subject of the matrix predicate (typically a copular structure) appears to function also as the object of the embedded infinitive.

2. Empirical investigation
I carried out a survey of around 25 dialects spoken in different areas of Italy to investigate syntactic variation in TCs, which -to my knowledge- have never received attention in previous dialectological literature. In particular, I focused on:

- What elements introduce the embedded clause of TCs and how much functional structure such clauses project, including the presence of a left periphery (Rizzi, 1997) and the acceptability of functional adverbs and restructuring verbs from Cinque's (1999) hierarchy;
- The availability and licensing of a resumptive object clitic or an object-promoting structure (*viz.* copular passive/*si*-construction).

The survey reveals that (i) TCs are found in the vast majority of the tested dialects, despite being generally less productive than in Italian; and (ii) there is significant variation compared to Italian and among the tested dialects.

3. Findings: two (main) types of *tough*-construction
The data collection identified systematic patterns of variation in how the embedded clauses of TCs are realised. These can be summarised in terms of 2 main types (the latter of which can be further decomposed on the basis of finiteness of the embedded verb), which are not mutually exclusive and interact with independent properties of the varieties investigated:

Type	Introductory element and verb mood	Extent of functional structure in the embedded clause	Object-promoting strategies	Resumption
1	*da/di/a* + infinitive	*left periphery ?/*negation *high restructuring verbs/functional adverbs ?/*causative OK low restructuring verbs/functional adverbs	*copular passive ?/*si-construction	*object clitic
2a	*a/per/(da)* + infinitive	(?)left periphery OK negation OK causative OK restructuring verbs/functional adverbs	obligatory copular passive or *si*-construction (unless an object clitic is present)	obligatory object clitic (unless an object-promoting strategy is employed)
2b	*cu/mi* + indicative /(subjunctive)	?/* left periphery OK negation OK causative OK restructuring verbs/functional adverbs		

For example, the Sicilian variety of Mussomeli exhibits Type 1 TCs introduced by *di*:

4) *Sti libbri so difficili di (?si) leggiri.*
    these books are tough DI SI to.read
5) **Ste quasette so facili A UNA CARUSA di regalare.*
    these socks are easy to a girl DI to.gift
6) *Sta petra jè difficili di truvar(*la).*

    this stone is tough DI to.find=it

Logudorese, on the other hand, has Type 2a TCs introduced by *a*:

7) *Custa pedra no el fazile a la ciapare.*
this stone NEG is easy A it= to.find

8) *Cust'arber no el fazile a no esser vidu.*
this=tree NEG is easy A NEG to.be seen

9) *Custu vasu el fazile, a Mario, a bilu dare.*
this vase is easy to Mario A to.him=it to.give

Instances of Type 2b are found in Calabrian (Melito)(10-12) and Salentino (Galatone)(13-15):

10) *Sti libri su difficili mi *(si) leggiunu.*
these books are tough MI SI they.read

11) *St'arburu è difficili non mi si vidi.*
this=tree is tough NEG MI SI it.sees

12) *?Sti libri su difficili mi si fannu leggiri a nnu figghiolu.*
these books are tough MI SI they.make to.read to a kid

13) *Sti libri su difficili cu *(lli) leggi.*
These books are tough CU them you.read

14) *St'alberu è difficile cu nnu llu iti.*
this=tree is tough CU NEG it you.see

15) *Sti libri su difficili cu lli pozza leggere nnu piccinnu.*
these books are tough CU them he.can.SUBJ to.read a kid

Many varieties allow for more than one type, mostly with distinct introductory elements. In a few cases, though, the same particle can be used as both Type 1 and Type 2: this happens with Neapolitan *a*, which only requires an object clitic/object-promoting construction when a richer functional structure is present.

16) *Sti luci song bell' a ('e) vedé*
these lights are beautiful A them to.see

17) *Sta cas' è 'mpussibbil' a *('a) puté accattà*
This house is impossible A it to.be-able to.buy

4. Syntactic analysis

I propose that, for Type 1, the introductory element is not a complementiser but heads a non-active VoiceP selected by certain adjectives: this accounts for the dependency between the infinitival object and the matrix subject positions (whether movement or control), despite the presence of an implicit subject which would otherwise create an intervening locality violation. Moreover, this also explains why the CP layer and (most of the) TP layer are absent in Type 1 TCs, and why copular passives and object clitics are disallowed (since they require different Voice heads). On the other hand, the elements introducing Types 2 are genuine complementisers with a much richer functional spine: in particular, they seem to realise Fin (see Rizzi 1997 for *a*, Ledgeway 2003 for *cu*) or a slightly lower head (Ledgeway 1998 for *mi*). Crucially, they do not involve Voice, since the underlying object in this case must either be promoted to the embedded subject position (Spec,TP) through an independent mechanism so that it can be controlled by the matrix subject, or be an object clitic obligatorily coindexed with the matrix subject: for each variety, which strategy is preferred and its specific syntax also depend on the peculiarities of the variety.

References: Cinque, G. (1999). *Adverbs and functional heads: A cross-linguistic perspective*. Oxford University Press. * Ledgeway, A. (1998). Variation in the Romance infinitive: The case of the southern Calabrian inflected infinitive. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, *96*(1), 1–61. * Ledgeway, A. (2003). Il sistema completivo dei dialetti meridionali: La doppia serie di complementatori. *Rivista Italiana Di Dialettologia*, *27*, 89–147. * Rizzi, L. (1997). The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery. In *Elements of Grammar* (pp. 281–337). Springer.