The aspectual distribution of gerunds in Apulian varieties

Paolo Lorusso
Università degli studi di Udine

In this paper we will describe the distribution of gerunds in some Apulian varieties and in Italian: gerunds are cross linguistically found in embedded clauses where matrix verb determines the tense and controls exhaustively the embedded verb (*event* in Wurmbrand &Lohninger. 2019). Curiously gerunds in Apulian varieties are not found in progressive constructions, as In Italian or English, but embedded under the *go* auxiliary or in negative imperative constructions. The present description will confirm that although gerunds are a cross linguistic mechanism for clausal embedding, languages may vary on the marked aspectual values they assign to the gerunds forms.

Gerunds in Apulian (non Salentinian) varieties under *be* and *go* in negative imperative constructions (Rohlfs, 1969) which are analyzed as aspectual constructions by Manzini & Savoia, (2005) and Lorusso & Franco (2019). Across the Apulian varieties there is variation on the auxiliary used in the periphrases of the negative imperatives: we can find either *be* (1) or *go* (2).

(1) na   la   (si)   camannə   Minervino Murge
    Neg   her   be.2sg call.GER
    'don't call her'   (Manzini & Savoia 2005, 2:458)

(2) nn   ɔ: ʃə:tə   camannə   Taranto
    Neg   him   go.2pl call.GER
    'don't call him'   (Manzini & Savoia 2005, 2:458)

In Italian gerunds are found embedded in progressive constructions under *stay* while in Apulian varieties progressive is expressed through an aspectual periphrasis involving finite embedding under *stay* (3). In the same varieties the auxiliary *go* (4) can be found in similar construction involving finite embedding to express andative aspect.

(3) Stek   a   fattsə   u pɜn   Conversano (BA)
    Stay-1s to   make Pres , ind 1s   the bread
    'I am making the bread'   (Lorusso 2019:204)

(4) Vek   a   fattsə   u pɜn   Conversano (BA)
    Go-1s to   make Pres , ind 1s   the bread
    'I am going to make the bread'

If we focus on the auxiliary *stay* and *go* in these constructions, we find that while the finite embedded verbs in (6) can be substituted by a gerund under *go,* we never find a gerund embedded under *stay* in (5) contrary to what happens in Italian.

(5) *Stek   faʃennə   u pɜn   Conversano (BA)
    Stay-1s to   make Pres , ind 1s   the bread

(6) Vek   faʃennə   u pɜn   Conversano (BA)
    Go-1s to   make Pres , ind 1s   the bread
    'I am going to do the bread'

The gerunds encode an aspectual value which is incompatible with the progressive construction involving the *stay* auxiliary, but it is allowed with constructions involving the *go* auxiliary. Gerunds should be analyzed as a syntactic constituents merged as part of the syntactic projections associated with aspectual constructions (a sub-event). Gerunds, in fact, have been analyzed in Spanish or Italian or as a RhemePs, in Ranchand's (2008) terms, which imply the incorporation of some path (Fabregas & Jimenez Frenandez 2018) or as an instantiation of an inclusion (⊆) relation between the clausal auxiliary and the embedded subevent which includes it (Franco & Lorusso 2020). The analysis of the

distribution of the gerunds in Apulian will allow us to identify the aspectual/modal characteristics that gerunds can/might represent. Contrary to Italian, where is found in progressive constructions (stay + gerund V), the gerunds do not represent events that can be divided into stages or parts (Manzini et al. 2017, Landman 2002) to assure the progressive interpretation. The fact that the subevent can be selected by the verb *go* has aspectual implications linked surely to the *iterativity,* as confirmed by the fact that in Standard Italian the periphrasis *andare* + gerund expresses continuous/iterative aspect (Cinque 1999, Giacalone Ramat 2000) (7).

(7)   Le cose andarono veramente sempre peggiorando   Standard Italian
        'things were (lit. went) constantly getting worse.

Remind that in these Apulian varieties negative imperative constructions the aspectual auxiliary selected are *be* and *go*, but not *stay*: the aspectual value of the gerunds is recruited from the lexicon to encode the illocutionary force of a prohibition. (Negative) Imperative can be denoted as properties and these properties are added, through imperatives, to the *To-Do-List* (which is a set of property) of the addressee of a command/prohibition that has to be developed in the future (Portner, 2003). Extending this line of analysis, we might describe the periphrasis *go* + gerunds as an aspectual construction in which the embedded verb can be seen as a property/manner of the matrix *go,* determining an iterative/continuous reading.

        Furthermore, in these varieties, as in Italian, absolute forms of gerunds are found as temporal/causal subordinates: in these constructions (8) the gerunds is often reduplicated confirming a reiterative interpretation of a manner (or a property) of how the matrix predicate is achieved/developed.

(8)   mangennə   (mangennə),   so   arrvatə a kesə   Conversano (BA)
        Eating   eating   I am   arrived at home
        'I have arrived home eating'

In Spanish gerunds (9), in fact, can be used alone as imperatives showing that gerunds are compatible with modal interpretation linked to the imperative prohibition where a property have to be excluded/included in the *To-do-List* of the addressee. In English gerunds are also found in prohibitions but preceded by a negative (modal) element and no auxiliary (Iatridou 2018).

(9)   Andando!
        Going
        'Go!'
(10)   No smoking

The distribution of gerunds in clausal embedding in Apulian varieties allows us to make predictions on the aspectual values that the gerunds can encode: since gerunds are found mainly in the described marked aspectual/modal constructions, they are associated with an aspectual reading probably identifying a property that is selected by the matrix predicates (as in imperatives in the terms of Portner 2003). In Italian, on the contrary, gerunds refer to a divisible subevent (Manzini et al. 2017) allowing a progressive reading. The complementary distribution of finite and gerund embedding in progressive periphrases confirms that language vary in the morphosyntactic forms appearing in clausal embedding: different semantic relation are mapped into few syntactic configurations. Although gerunds are found embedded under 'high control' matrix verbs (Wurmbrand, Lohninger. 2019), language vary on which aspectual interpretation may be encoded through gerunds.

Selected Reference
Manzini, M. Rita, Lorusso, Paolo & Savoia, Leonardo M. 2017. A/bare finite complements in Southern Italian varieties: Monoclausal or bi-clausal syntax? Quaderni di Linguistica e Studi Orientali (QULSO) 3: 11–59. Florence: Florence University Press./ Portner, P. 2003.'The Semantics of Imperatives within a Theory of Clause Types Semantics and Linguistic Theory 14 Wurmbrand, S. & M. Lohninger. 2019. An implicational universal incomplementation—Theoretical insights and empirical progress. In Jutta M Hart-mann & Angelika Wöllstein (eds.), Propositional arguments in cross-linguistic research: Theoretical and empirical issues. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.