

Strong adjectival resultative constructions in northern Calabrian

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This paper addresses the question of the typology of resultative constructions in Romance and provides new evidence of strong constructions with adjectival predicates in Italo-Romance varieties of northern Calabria.

It is commonly claimed that Romance languages, including Italian, lack adjectival resultative constructions of the type exemplified in (1) and (2) (Napoli 1992; Folli 2001; Broccias 2003, 2004; Folli & Harley 2004; Folli & Ramchand 2005; Morita 2009):

- (1) to hammer the metal flat
 (2) to paint the wall red

Various explanations have been provided from a syntactic (Folli 2001; Folli & Harley 2004; Folli & Ramchand 2005), cognitive (Broccias 2003, 2004) or constructionist (Mateu 2000; Boas 2003) perspective. The absence of adjectival resultatives in Romance has been related to the impossibility of producing strong constructions (Napoli 1992: 72ff.; Morita 2009, 46), in which «the meaning of the verb and the meaning of the adjective are completely independent of each other» (Washio 1997, 7; e.g., pound the metal flat), as opposed to weak constructions, in which the main predicate entails the representation of the end state of the event (e.g., slice the meat thin, Italian *macinare le mandorle finemente* ‘grind the almonds fine’; cf. Ledgeway 2011). However, the question of strong resultative constructions with adjectival predicates in Romance remains open (cf. Folli & Ramchand 2005, 97).

This paper reports the results of a study on southern Italian dialects and regional Italian spoken in the areas of Cosenza, Rende and Rogliano, in northern Calabria.

It has been shown that these varieties have a type of strong resultative construction in which the verb *portare* ‘carry’ combines with the past participle *finito* ‘finished’, which performs an adjectival function (Romagno 2020a, 2020b):

- (3) *Non dirlo a mamma, altrimenti mi porta finito*

‘Do not tell mum, otherwise she’ll drive me up the wall [literally: carries me finished]’

Here, we extend the analysis of the usage and distribution of *portare finito* in combination with either animate (cf. (3)) or inanimate (cf. (4)) objects, and explore the pattern of extension of the construction, in which the main predicate *portare* ‘carry’ combines with other types of secondary predicate, including both participial and non-participial adjectives (e.g., *ciuotu* ‘stupid’, *malato* ‘sick’, *cuottu* ‘cooked’ or ‘burned out, exhausted’, *stisu* ‘hanging out, laid out’, or ‘knocked out’: cf. (5), (6)):

- (4) [a ppur 'ta:t-i: 'pjatti fi'ni:ti nɔʎa nu mo'mentə] (Roglianesse)

ha portato i piatti finiti in un momento (regional Italian)

‘[she] finished washing [literally: has carried finished] the dishes in a moment’

- (5) [akkus'si mi porta 'tʃu:ɔtu 'subbit^u e 'ppuru ma'la:tu] (Cosentino)

‘in this way [she] will daze/overwhelm/numb me and make me sick too [literally: carries me stupid and sick] in a little while’

- (6) ['ta-a pur'ta:t-i 'sti:s-i: 'panni] (Roglianesse)

‘did you finish hanging out the laundry?’.

The results of this study provide evidence of the use of strong adjectival resultative constructions in Romance, by showing that: 1) northern Calabrian has a construction in which the verb *portare* ‘carry’ combines with either participial or non-participial adjectives. In this construction, the meaning of the verb does not entail the meaning of the adjective: the resulting state, in fact, is independently encoded in the secondary predicate; 2) *portare* ‘carry’ combines with various types of secondary predicates, including diverse semantic domains, which suggests that we are dealing with a particular type of construction and not with a lexical idiom;

this result is consistent with the observation that, unlike standard Italian but similarly to other sub-standard varieties (cf. Riccio 2018: 177), Calabrian licenses resultative constructions such as ['ta-a ku'su:ta 'ʃʃɾitta a 'gonna] 'you sewed it up tight, your skirt (literally)'; 3) notably, in the alternation between long and short participial adjectives, such as *stinnutu/stisu* 'laid out', *cucinatu/cuottu* 'cooked', the construction under investigation selects the short form, which has a stative resultative interpretation, as opposed to the dynamic interpretation of the long form; 4) object animacy plays a role in the usage and distribution of strong resultatives in northern Calabrian.

Further research is needed to better clarify the extension of resultative constructions in northern Calabrian and, in particular, to investigate the typology of the main predicates involved in strong adjectival resultative constructions. The results of the present study indicate that in northern Calabrian strong adjectival resultatives, which are traditionally claimed not to be a feature of Romance, are licensed.

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