Italian verb reduplication between syntax and the lexicon

Anna M. Thornton

This paper is a case-study of the development of several lexemes and abstract lexical constructions that have originated from a syntactic device of Italian, the use of imperative forms for descriptive functions. Two types of lexical constructions are investigated: the VV type (e.g., *fuggifuggi* 'stampede', lit. 'run_away.run_away'), and the V*e*V type (e.g., *mordi e fuggi* 'extremely quick', lit. 'bite and run away'). The first construction yields action nouns that denote actions performed by multiple agents; the second type yields nouns or adjectives used in a variety of semantic frames. Both types developed by generalizing a construction on the base of specific exemplars that had become entrenched as nominalizations of descriptive imperatives. The data are interpreted as evidence in favor of a usage-based means of establishing lexical constructions. The frequency distribution of the items in the different classes and the semantic relations between the verbs appearing in the most entrenched exemplar in each class and those appearing in the analogues formed on its base are parallel to the frequency distribution and the semantic relations found among the members of certain syntactic constructions (cf. Bybee 2006, Bybee & Eddington 2006). These findings support a non-modular view of the relationship between syntax and the lexicon: similar forces shape the coming into being of both syntactic and lexical constructions.

1. Introduction

This paper is a case-study of the development of several lexemes and abstract lexical constructions that have originated from a syntactic device of Italian, the use of singular imperative forms in functions which differ from the core function of imperatives, i.e., imparting orders.

According to Spitzer (1918; 1951-1952), two "metaphorical usages" of imperatives can be identified, which he calls "descriptive imperative" and "gerundial imperative".[1] Descriptive imperatives (sometimes also called "narrative" imperatives: cf. Pisani 1933:247, Migliorini 1957:82) are used in a function which is more typically performed by indicative forms, that of describing an event that takes place at a certain point in a narrative sequence, as in (1):

(1) la conversa fu aspettata in vano, una mattina, a' suoi ufizi consueti: si va a veder nella sua cella, e non si trova: è chiamata ad alta voce; non risponde: *cerca di qua, cerca di là, gira e rigira*, dalla cima al fondo; non c'è in nessun luogo. (Alessandro Manzoni, *I promessi sposi* 1840, 10.56)

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> [one morning, the lay sister was in vain expected at her usual employment; she was sought in her cell, but fruitlessly; she was called loudly by many voices, but there was no reply; she was hunted and sought for diligently, here and there, above, below, [lit. look for her here, look for her there, turn and turn around again] from the cellar to the roof; but she was nowhere to be found.]

In (1) the action of going around the convent looking for the missing lay sister, signalled by the imperative forms *cerca di qua, cerca di là, gira e rigira*, takes place after the actions of waiting for her, looking for her in her cell, and calling out for her loudly, which are described by means of indicative forms (*fu aspettata, si va a veder, è chiamata*). The indicative is resumed again in the acknowlegement of the fact that she is missing: *non c'è*. In this passage, imperatives are intermingled with indicatives to fulfill a descriptive-narrative function.

According to Spitzer, imperatives can be used also in a different function, which is adverbial in nature, and can be equated with the function normally performed, among verb forms, by gerunds. Spitzer therefore proposed calling this other "metaphorical usage" of imperatives "impératif gérondial". An example of this usage is given in (2):

(2) Verso Milano non vo di certo; dunque vo verso l'Adda. *Cammina*, *cammina*, o presto o tardi ci arriverò. (Alessandro Manzoni, *I promessi sposi* 1840, 17.1)
[I`m certainly not going towards Milan, so I must be going towards the Adda. Walk away, then [lit. walk, walk]; sooner or later, I shall get there.]

Here the imperatives *cammina, cammina* do not describe actual actions already performed by Renzo: rather, they have a hypothetical meaning: "if I walk, sooner or later I'll get there". In Italian, this instance of *cammina, cammina* could be replaced by a gerund: *camminando, o presto o tardi ci arriverò* "by walking, sooner or later I'll get there".

Most actual attestations of imperatives in "metaphorical usage" are less easily attributed to one or the other of the two types established by Spitzer. Several authors (Mencacci 1982, Thornton 2009) have observed that a clear-cut distinction between the two is in fact hard to maintain. Let us consider (3):

(3) il governatore designato vescovo cercò di fuggire verso Pavia ma per superlativo miracolo gli si voltò la strada davanti ai piedi e, *cammina cammina*, il domani all'alba si ritrovò di bel nuovo alle porte di Milano (*La Repubblica* corpus)

[the governor that had been made bishop tried to run away towards Pavia, but by a superlative miracle the street turned around in front of his feet and, walk walk, the next day at dawn he found himself again at the gates of Milan].

In this text, *cammina cammina* seems to have both a descriptive-narrative and a gerundial function: walking is an activity performed by the bishop, that takes place between the miracle of the street turning around and the arrival in Milan, but it is also the means by which Milan is reached. The activity could be described using indicative forms (*camminò camminò*), while the modal could be expressed by a gerund (*camminando*). In many cases, the ambiguity between the two possible values of the imperative is insoluble; besides, it can be shown that so called gerundial imperatives originate diachronically from a specialization of descriptive imperatives (Thornton 2009), so it seems advisable not to posit a clear-cut distinction between the two types, which represent at most two poles on a continuum of possible metaphorical usages of imperatives.[2]

It must be pointed out that in (1)-(3) imperatives are repeated (although with some variation, such as the different PPs *di qua* and *di là* that follow the two tokens of *cerca*, and the prefix *ri-* on the second token of *gira* in (1)); indicatives appearing in the same passages, on the contrary, are not repeated. Repetition, and specifically reduplication, seems to be a necessary feature of the metaphorical usages of imperatives. Spitzer observed the phenomenon, but did not judge it a necessary feature of the constructions he was describing; other authors, however, maintain that only repeated metaphorical imperatives can be found in modern and contemporary Italian texts, not single instances (Huber-Sauter 1951:76, Mencacci 1983:172).

Spitzer observed that, often, instances of descriptive imperative are commands or exhortations used to direct sailing or battlefield maneuvers: "l'action exécutée en fait est présentée sous forme de l'ordre qui aurait été nécessaire dans la situation" (Spitzer 1951-1952:22). Folena (1958) pointed to some of the first attestations of such descriptive imperatives, occurring as free direct speech[3] quotations in the Neapolitan prose writer of the 15th century Loise de Rosa. These passages are listed in (4):

(4) a. Como lo re fo a lo Capo, esseno ly catalane colle valestre / parate, *cala cala*, et foro pigliate tutty (66v.2)
[As the king arrived at the Cape, the Catalans come out with their crossbows ready, *lower lower*, and they were all caught]

b. Co//mo foro passate le bandere, et passavano ly fante, isso esse, dà sop/re ly fante et *amaccza amaccza* (70v.19-21)
[As soon as the flags had passed, and the soldiers passed, he comes out, attacks the soldiers and *kill kill*]

c. le gente che erano trasute e / ly napoletane stavano alle Co(r)ree: *piglia piglia, para para*, tutty foro prise (70v.23-24)
[the people who had come in and the Neapolitans were at the Corree: *catch catch, shield shield*, everybody was caught]
(Loise de Rosa, *Ricordi* (written between 1452 and 1471), ed. by Vittorio Formentin, Rome, Salerno editrice, 1998)

In another author of the same period, Masuccio Salernitano, we find an actual direct speech quotation of the two imperatives *para* and *piglia* which appear in free direct speech in (4c). The relevant passage is given in (5):

(5) La calca grande andava di continuo costoro seguendo con gridi, cifolare e urlare; e in ogne luoco gridandosi: "*Para! Piglia!*", e cui loro sassi traendo, e quali con bastoni lo stallone percoteano, e ciascuno da la impresa separarli se ingegnava…
[the big mob followed them crying, whistling and shouting; and everywhere the cry was "*Shield! Catch!*", and some threw stones at them, and some beat the horse with sticks, and each one tried to divide the two of them…]
(Masuccio Guardati [Masuccio Salernitano], *Il novellino* (written around 1450), ed. by Giorgio Petrocchi, Florence, Sansoni, 1957, I.47)

These relatively early passages show how the stylistic device of descriptive imperatives developed from regular imperatives used in narrative texts as direct speech quotations, through usages as free direct speech as in (4), to become a regular way of describing events, as in (1); finally, descriptive imperatives could develop into so-called gerundial imperatives, that do not describe actual events but can have causal, modal, hypothetical or even concessive meaning, as in (2) above or (6) below, where the verb *girare* has lost its concrete meaning ('go around, wander about') and the sequence *gira e rigira* has become specialized to express a generic concession:

(6) *gira e rigira* il problema è sempre quello
[turn around and turn around again, the problem is always the same]

So far, we have described phenomena which appear to belong completely to syntax: reduplicated imperative forms have developed metaphorical usages, which allow them to function in contexts in

which we would normally expect indicatives or gerunds, or even subordinate clauses (as in (6)). In the following sections, we will see how these metaphorical usages of reduplicated imperatives gave origin to lexical items, and, more important, to several lexeme formation patterns or lexical constructions.

2. Lexical items and lexical constructions from double imperatives

If a verb sequence used to describe events is lexicalized, the most obvious outcome is an action noun. This happened, for example, for *para* and *piglia*, attested first as actual imperatives uttered in the context of a fight in (5),[4] shortly thereafter as descriptive imperatives in (4), and subsequently as an action noun *parapiglia* (first attestation in 1601, cf. Cortelazzo & Cortelazzo (1999), s.v.).

A similar development probably lies behind the action noun *giravolta*. This noun is first attested, in the form *girvolta* (due to metric reasons), in Iacopone da Todi's *Lauda* 8, v. 41 (*le treze altrui componese non so con che girvolta* 'she arranges her braids with some sort of turn-around movement'), where it refers to the action performed by a woman in winding her braids around her head. Closer to the contexts of occurrence of *parapiglia* is the second earliest attestation, in a Tuscan version of Marco Polo's *Milione*, dated 1310 by OVI:

(7) Quando questi .xxx^{m}. vidono i lor nemici iscesi in terra e vidono che su le navi non era rimaso gente veruna per guardare, elli, sì come savi, quando li nemici andaro per piglialli, egli diero una *giravolta* tuttavia fuggendo, e vennero verso le navi e quini montaro tutti incontanente […]
[When these thirty thousand saw that their enemies had disembarked and that nobody had remained on guard aboard the ships, they, wisely, when the enemies went after them to catch them, turned around fleeing away and came towards the ships and they all boarded immediately]
(Anonymous, *Il Milione di Marco Polo* (written about 1310), ed. by Valeria Bertolucci Pizzorusso, Milan, Adelphi, 1975, chapter 156)

Shortly afterwards, it appears also in a vulgarization of Livy:

(8) egli comandò a' prefetti de' cavalieri che facessero una *giravolta*, e assalissero li nemici da traverso il più sforzatamente ch'elli unque potessero
[he ordered the officers in command of the cavalry to turn around, and attack the enemies from the side as fiercely as possibile]
(Anonymous, *Deca prima di Tito Livio volgarizzata* (written about 1350), ed. by Claudio Dalmazzo, Turin, Stamperia Reale, 1845-46, 10.29)

Both these texts describe battles; I have not been able to identify contexts in which the two imperatives *gira* and *volta* appear as direct speech quotations, uttered to order battlefield maneuvers, but it is very likely that such an order must have existed in the kinds of situations described in (7) and (8); in (8), there is an explicit reference to an order. It is likely, therefore, that the action noun *giravolta* 'turnaround' originates as the lexicalization of the two imperatives *gira* and *volta* (two near-synonyms, therefore akin to the repetition of a single verb), commonly used to order such a maneuver. It is interesting to note that the two texts in (7) and (8) are translations, (7) from *Le divisament dou monde*, written in a variety of French, and (8) from Latin. In the original texts, nothing like *giravolta* appears, as shown in (9) and (10):

(9) […] quant lor enemis venoient por elz prendre, *il se tornent de l'autre part* de l'isle […]
[when their enemies came to catch them, they turn[ed] to the other side of the island]
(Marco Polo, *Milione. Le divisament dou monde,* ed. by Gabriella Ronchi, Milan, Mondadori, 1982, CLX)

(10) Fabius […] praefectis equitum iussis *ad latus Samnitium circumducere alas*, ut signo dato in transversos quanto maximo possent impetu incurrerent (Liv. 10.29.8-9)
[Fabius ordered the officers in command of the cavalry to take their squadrons round to the side of the Samnite army, ready at a given signal to deliver as fierce a flank attack as possible]

Giravolta is clearly an Italo-Romance creation.[5] But it is an occasional lexicalization of a sequence of imperatives frequently occurring together in speech, not yet a product of a lexeme formation rule yielding action nouns based on two verbs. Note also that *giravolta* is feminine: apparently, it has been assigned gender following a phonological criterion, and has received feminine gender because it ends in *-a*, while when a lexeme formation rule yielding action nouns which formally appear as a sequence of imperatives establishes itself, its output is constituted by masculine nouns.

Another instance of a construction first attested as an utterance and soon afterwards as an action noun is *serra serra* 'crush'. An utterance *serra! serra!* is attested in Italian as early as 1534 (cf. (11)), and soon afterwards attestations of *serra serra* as an action noun are found, as shown in (12):

(11) *serra serra* as direct speech quotation
ecco che si leva un romore per la terra, e chi corre in qua e chi corre in là: e si udiva gridar "Serra! serra!" (Pietro Aretino, *Ragionamento della Nanna e della Antonia*, 1534, Giorn. 2.64)
[a noise is heard in the area, and people run here and there: and a cry "Close ranks! Close ranks!" is heard]

(12) *serra serra* as action noun
a. finalmente si risolvé di fare un gagliardo sforzo e con un serra serra cacciarne li Franzesi
[finally he decided to make a big effort and oust the French by closing ranks]
(Girolamo Roffia, 16th century, quoted in Battaglia (1961-2002), s.v.)
b. Miriamo la battaglia e il serra-serra
e il parapiglia e il popolo infinito
di combattenti tra mori e cristiani
che menan tutti due bene le mani
[Let's look at the battle and the crush [of people] / and the tussle and the innumerable people / fighting between Moors and Christians / who both are very good at lashing out]
(Niccolò Forteguerri, *Il Ricciardetto*, VIII.68.5-8, written between 1716 and 1735)
c. che un picchetto d'Inglesi soprarriva.
Montan le scale, gettan l'uscio a terra,
ed entrano facendo un serra serra.
[when a detachment of Englishmen comes by. / They climb up the stairs, they batter down the door, / and they enter in a crush]
(Vincenzo Monti's (1754-1828) translation of Voltaire's *La pucelle d'Orléans*, X.xxxiii.246-248)[6]

Between the end of the 14th century and the 18th century, a small number of action nouns arise that appear to be formed by two imperatives. They are listed in (13) in order of attestation:

(13) *battisoffia* (before 1400) 'palpitations' (lit. 'beat-blow')
bolli bolli (before 1565) 'tumult' (lit. 'boil-boil')
corri corri (before 1587) 'stampede' (lit. 'run-run')
stacciaburatta (before 1665) 'name of a game' (lit. 'sieve-sieve')
andirivieni (before 1742) 'comings and goings' (lit. 'go-come_back')
dormiveglia (before 1745) 'drowse' (lit. 'sleep-wake')
vinciperdi (before 1800) 'kind of game' (lit. 'win-lose')

Until the end of the 18th century, each of these forms has its own history (for *andirivieni* and its variants, this has been thoroughly reconstructed by Zamboni 1986).[7] By the 19th century, however, it

appears that two lexeme formation rules (in the metalanguage of Lexical Morphology, cf. Aronoff 1994) or abstract lexical constructions (in the metalanguage of construction-based approaches, cf. Masini 2007) have established themselves, that yield two kinds of action nouns formally appearing as a sequence of two imperatives. I propose that these constructions arose as the consequence of the entrenchment of a few at first isolated lexicalizations, which served as exemplars on the analogy of which other items were created. I believe that the data lend themselves well to being analyzed according to a usage-based model of language (Barlow & Kemmer 2000, Langacker 2000, Bybee 2006), such as the usage-based versions of Construction Grammar. In the present paper, however, for reasons of space I will describe them informally, leaving the task of formalizing the description within a specific construction-based framework for future research.

2.1. VV reduplicative action nouns

The first abstract lexical construction which has evolved out of the lexicalization of some double descriptive imperatives yields action nouns which formally appear as the reduplication of an imperative form.

I have been able to collect the list of reduplicative action nouns in (14), drawing data from the literature (particularly Tollemache 1945), dictionaries and the corpus which contains 16 years (1985-2000) of issues of the daily newspaper *la Repubblica*, comprising about 330 million tokens.[8]

(14)	tira tira 1827	lit. pull-pull
	pigia pigia 1865	lit. push-push
	fuggifuggi 1880	lit. run_away-run_away
	piglia piglia 1881	lit. take-take
	mangia mangia 1935	lit. eat-eat
	ruba ruba 1945	lit. steal-steal
	scappa scappa 1945	lit. run_away-run_away
	battibatti 1955	lit. beat-beat
	arraffa arraffa 1951	lit. snatch-snatch
	copia copia 1994	lit. copy-copy
	ciappa ciappa 1985-2000	lit. take-take
	compra compra 1985-2000	lit. buy-buy
	firma-firma 1985-2000	lit. sign-sign
	parla-parla 1985-2000	lit. talk-talk
	piangi piangi 1985-2000	lit. weep-weep
	sgozza-sgozza 1985-2000	lit. slit_the_throat- slit_the_throat

spara spara 1985-2000	lit. shoot-shoot
spendi spendi 1985-2000	lit. spend-spend
spingi spingi 1985-2000	lit. push-push
stringi stringi 1985-2000	lit. clutch-clutch
vendi vendi 1985-2000	lit. sell-sell

The construction that has yielded the data in (14), described in detail in Thornton (2008, forthcoming), has the following characteristics.

2.1.1. Phonology

The signifier is realized by reduplication of a base form which is homophonous with the imperative singular. Disyllabic bases are overwhelmingly preferred, to the point that it is almost possible to recognize a phonological restriction on the input. Disyllabic bases represent 95,7% of the bases of VV reduplicative action nouns, and the only exception (*arraffa*) is represented by a vowel-initial base, which can count as disyllabic by Plénat's (1994) principle of "extrametricality of initial vowels".[9] An alternative or complementary option is to recognize a phonological restriction on the output, which should be quadrisyllabic.

2.1.2. Orthography

As in the case of other contemporary Italian compounds, widespread alternations in spelling are observed (cf. Grossmann & Rainer this volume for AA compounds). Only the most frequent type, *fuggifuggi*, is sometimes (6/281 tokens[10]) written as a single word, but much more often it is written with the two verb bases separated by a hyphen (75/281) or by a blank space (200/281). In the other types the two verb bases are separated (or connected!) by hyphens or by blanks with almost equal frequency (cfr. Thornton 2008, forthcoming).

2.1.3. Morphology

The base verbs appear in a form which is always homophonous with the second person singular imperative. This is understandable, as the construction arose by generalizing a pattern which had first appeared as the result of the lexicalization (as action nouns) of utterances actually consisting of repeated imperative forms.

For many of the items instantiating the VV reduplicative action noun construction, utterances containing repeated imperatives of the base verb are attested earlier than the action noun.

However, it is not possible to identify, for each single VV reduplicative action noun in our corpus, a previous attestation of a corresponding utterance containing repeated imperatives of the same verb base. Therefore, I assume that not each instance of VV reduplicative action noun arises as a nominalization of an utterance. I hypothesize that at some point in the 19th century the reduplication of a verb form homophonous with the imperative singular was felt by speakers as a productive lexical construction that could be used to create action nouns.[11] Some of the action nouns in (14) are not direct nominalizations of utterances, but have been created as instantiations of this construction. In these cases at least, we should wonder what morphological object is the verb form that is reduplicated to create the action nouns. The hypothesis that this form is an actual imperative singular form encounters many problems, first and foremost the absence of an "imperative meaning" in the output, which is an action noun. One could contend that "imperative meaning" is absent also in the indisputably syntactic "metaphorical" usages of the imperatives described in section 1, and dismiss the objection. I think, however, that a different explanation is closer to the truth. It is well known that in Italian the singular imperative form is homophonous with a purely morphological object, the verb stem (in the sense of Aronoff 1994: a sound form devoid of any meaning besides the lexical meaning of the verb). Considerable evidence exists to show that this verb stem homophonous with the imperative is the form in which the verb appears in VN compounds (cf. Rainer 2001, Thornton 2005:157-160). I propose that when the lexical construction enabling the coinage of VV reduplicative action nouns established itself, the verb form appearing in the first existing VV reduplicative action nouns, which historically was an imperative form which had undergone nominalization, was reinterpreted as a verb stem, because a verb stem is more system-adequate as a constituent of a complex word than an inflected form. Consequently, one of the requirements of the construction yielding VV reduplicative action nouns became that the base to be reduplicated should be the verb stem.

2.1.4. Semantics

A semantic characterization of VV reduplicative action nouns cannot stop with the observation that they are, indeed, action nouns. These action nouns display semantic restrictions that differ from those of other nominalizations. In Thornton (2008, forthcoming) I have proposed that the semantic specificity of these nouns consists in the fact that they require that the action described be performed by a plurality of agents.

The presence of a plurality of agents, often in a situation of confusion and/or of fighting, is a feature of the contexts in which descriptive imperatives and their direct speech antecedents occur (cf. the passages in (1), (4), (5) and (11) above). The same sorts of contexts host the first attestations of the first action nouns resulting from the lexicalization of utterances, such as the ones in (7), (8) and (12) above. And even in the *Repubblica* 1985-2000 corpus, all the tokens of VV reduplicative action nouns occur in contexts in which a plurality of agents perform the actions, as shown in Thornton (2008, forthcoming). A few examples are given in (15):

(15) C'è il corri corri di tutti gli opportunisti
[There's a run-run of all the opportunists]

un pigia-pigia indescrivibile, di centinaia di persone
[an indescribable push-push, of hundreds of people]

il terremoto ha suscitato un fuggi fuggi di giudici, giurati, avvocati
[the earthquake caused a run_away-run_away of judges, jurors, lawyers]

il pogo, danza grunge, nata come un salto a destra ed uno a sinistra per urtare il vicino, diventa ben presto uno spingi-spingi generale, che impone indumenti e scarpe comode
[the pogo, a grunge dance, born as a jump towards the right and a jump towards the left to bump into your neighbour, soon becomes a general push-push, which requires comfortable clothes and shoes]

The semantic specialization of VV reduplicative action nouns to express actions performed by a plurality of agents correlates well with their formal make-up, as reduplication can be considered an iconic means of expressing nuances of the general notion of plurality (cf. Rubino 2005, Corbett 2000:148).

2.1.5. Summarizing VV reduplicative action nouns

The case study of VV reduplicative action nouns has shown how a productive abstract lexical construction has established itself, emerging in a usage-based way from contexts in which repeated imperatives were used as syntactic objects, first as direct speech quotations and later as so-called descriptive imperatives. It is important to observe that the syntactic devices of quoting repeated imperatives used in direct speech, or of using imperatives "metaphorically" in descriptive/narrative passages, do not disappear once the lexical construction arises. All these documented usages are still part of con-

temporary Italian grammatical possibilities. These data could be analyzed as occupying different spaces along the continuum from syntax to the lexicon, with imperatives used in direct speech to impart orders as the most syntactic objects, so-called "descriptive" imperatives as objects still syntactic in nature but more constrained, and VV reduplicative action nouns as lexical objects obeying even more constraints. In imperatives used as direct speech, even if a tendency towards the repetition of the same verb or towards the paired occurrence of two verbs of related meaning (*para* and *piglia*, *gira* and *volta*) is observed, repetition or other variants of doubling are by no means obligatory. Descriptive imperatives instead seem to require some kind of reduplication of the same verb, although with some space for variation (cf. *cerca di qua, cerca di là, gira e rigira* in (1) above). VV reduplicative action nouns are the most constrained construction: they require full reduplication of the verb base categorically, and are also subject to a phonological restriction requiring only disyllabic bases as input (such a restriction does not hold for descriptive imperatives, cf. *cammina cammina*, or *rigira* in *gira e rigira*); it is not possible to insert a conjunction between the two verbs, to adjoin PPs to them, or to prefix one of the verbs, as in descriptive imperatives. The restrictions which they obey are of a kind typical of lexeme formation, not syntax.

2.2. V e *V nouns and adjectives*

VV reduplicative action nouns do not exhaust the stock of lexical constructions which seem to comprise two singular imperative forms. Another kind of related construction, described in detail in Masini & Thornton (2008), exists. In this type, action nouns and/or adjectives, and a minority of concrete nouns, appear formed by two different verb forms, homophonous with the singular imperatives of the respective verbs, and conjoined by means of the conjunction *e* 'and'. The earliest instances of this type are listed in (16), with the date of their first attestation:

(16) tira e molla 'pull and let go' 1889
va e vieni 'go and come' 1891

These action nouns, like some of the action nouns not containing the conjunction *e* attested earlier, such as *parapiglia, dormiveglia, andirivieni*, are made up of two verbs of roughly opposite meaning. *Tira e molla* is certainly derived from imperatives used in speech, as *tira e molla* or variants are attested as a call used on ships to order a specific maneuver (Kahane 1938, Spitzer 1941). The only difference between these groups of nouns seems to be the presence of the

conjunction, a difference which does not seem to carry much importance from the semantic point of view, as several items are attested in variants with and without the conjunction (e.g., *tiramolla* and *tira e molla*; for a similar position cf. Zamboni (1986:335)). In the *Repubblica* corpus, more than a dozen items based on two verbs of opposite meaning are attested as action nouns denoting the repeated and alternating performance, by the same agent or by different agents, of the actions denoted by the two verbs. Examples are listed in (17) (cf. Masini & Thornton 2008 for a full list and frequency data):

(17) apri e chiudi, cuci e scuci, prendi e lascia, togli e metti
lit. open-and-close, sew-and-unsew, take-and-leave, take-and-put

More recently, a slightly different kind of construction has been developing, in which the two verbs conjoined by *e* are not semantic opposites, but entertain a different kind of relation: the second verb expresses an action taking place after the first one and in some, but not all, cases, as a consequence of the first one.

Two VV nouns of this kind have early attestations: *pappataci* and *tocca e sana*. *Pappataci*, lit. 'eat-keep quiet' is attested from 1525 onward as an agent noun denoting a 'happy cuckold', someone who accepts his wife's adultery in exchange for economic benefits. *Tocca e sana*, lit. 'touch-and-heal', is attested as an instrument noun meaning 'cure-all' since at least 1812,[12] and is nowadays current in the variant *toccasana*, written as one word and without the conjunction.

As these early attestations show, nouns based on two verbs that denote sequential actions are attested as nouns denoting concrete entities (persons, instruments). The number of lexemes based on two verbs denoting sequential actions is increasing in contemporary Italian, as we will show below. These items seem to be a feature of contemporary Italian: many were created during the last quarter of the 20th century, and the construction is still relatively productive.

At first sight, this type is less typically lexical in nature than VV reduplicative action nouns, because it contains a conjunction connecting the two verb forms, and conjunctions normally conjoin phrases or even sentences, not verb stems. However, other characteristics of the type point to its lexical rather than syntactic nature. As already observed, this construction can yield not only action nouns, but also adjectives and even concrete nouns.

The frequency distribution of the tokens of these lexical items in the *Repubblica* corpus shows that this construction is expanding its productivity in contemporary Italian according to an exemplar-based process of growth.

The first items have come into existence in different ways, often as calques from English, like the ones in (18):

(18) lava e indossa < wash and wear
bacia e racconta < kiss and tell
tassa e spendi < tax and spend
gratta e annusa, gratta e sniffa < scratch and sniff

Certain items have become very frequent, and have started to function as exemplars on the base of which other items, often occasional hapaxes, have been created.

Masini & Thornton (2008) have individuated three items of high token-frequency that have acted as exemplars on the basis of which three specific semantic classes within this construction have established themselves. I will describe one of them in detail, and will briefly summarize the data concerning the others.

Table 1 – The *mordi e fuggi* class in the *Repubblica* corpus (data from Masini & Thornton 2008, with further elaboration)

VeV lexical item	literal gloss	frequency by category	frequency by item
mordi e fuggi[13]	bite and run away	155 Naction 103 Adj 2 Nconcrete	261
mordi-fuggi	bite-run away	1 Naction	
prendi e fuggi	take and run away	4 Adj 2 Naction	6
tocca e fuggi	touch and run away	3 Naction 2 Adj	5
vedi e fuggi	look/watch and run away	2 Naction 1 Adj	3
compra e fuggi	buy and run away	1 Naction	1
compra e scappa	buy and run away	1 Adj	1
parla e fuggi	talk and run away	1 Naction	1
prega e fuggi	pray and run away	1 Adj	1
prendi e scappa	take and run away	1 Adj	1
scatta (nel senso di foto) e torna a casa	snap (in the sense of a snapshot) and come back home	1 Adj	1
tocca e scappa	touch and run away	1 Naction	1

2.2.1. Mordi e fuggi *and its analogues*

The class I will describe in detail is called Manner (MAN) by Masini & Thornton (2008), and its leader item is *mordi e fuggi*, lit. 'bite and run away'. A list of the items in this class, with their syntactic category and token frequency in the *Repubblica* corpus, is given in Table I.

From the frequency data, it appears clearly that *mordi e fuggi* is a highly entrenched item. It is used both as an action noun and as an adjective. When used as an adjective, it almost always modifies action or event nouns that belong to a few specific frames, mainly the frame of tourism and sightseeing. A list of the action/event nouns modified by *mordi e fuggi* in the *Repubblica* corpus concerning the tourism frame is given in (19):

(19) *arrembaggi turistici* 'touristic boarding', *assalto ai centri storici* 'assault on historic centres', *crociere* 'cruises', *ferie* 'vacation', *gita* 'day trip', *incursioni* 'incursions', *rapidi blitz* 'quick blitzes', *rendez-vouz* [sic] 'rendez-vous', *ritiri (spirituali)* '(spiritual) retreats', *soggiorno in fattoria* 'stay at a farm', *trasferta* 'trip', *turismo* 'tourism', *vacanza* 'vacation', *viaggi* 'trips', *visita* 'visit' (data from Masini & Thornton 2008: 172)

As an adjective, *mordi e fuggi* is also used to modify nouns that designate the agents of quick trips, such as *turisti* 'tourists', *visitatori* 'visitors', *vacanzieri* 'vacationers', and even *tedeschi* 'Germans' (apparently, Germans are considered prototypical tourists in Italian culture). As an action noun, it refers to a quick trip, a quick visit to some sight. More in general, *mordi e fuggi* as an action noun can be used to refer to any kind of action that is performed very quickly, and as an adjective it can modify action or event nouns to express the fact that they took place extremely quickly. It occurs often not only with reference to tourism, but also with reference to quick buying and selling in the stock exchange market (modifying nouns such as *acquisto* 'buying', *investimento* 'investment', *operazione di Borsa* 'stock exchange operation'), quick kidnappings and robberies, fast food meals, quick speech acts (*mordi e fuggi* as an adjective occurs with nouns such as *minirecensioni* 'mini-reviews', *interviste* 'interviews', *dichiarazione* 'statement', *battute* 'utterances') and more (cf. Masini & Thornton 2008: 172-174 for a detailed presentation of the corpus data).

As *mordi e fuggi* is obviously the exemplar that has functioned as the model on which the other items in Table I have been created, it is very important to ascertain the etymology of this fully specified lexical construction. The task is not easy, due to the fact that the item entered the Italian lexicon relatively recently, and, since it is written

as three words, tends not to be listed in dictionaries. In what follows, I will assemble a few facts.

Quarantotto's (1987) dictionary of neologisms lists *mordi e fuggi* with two seemingly unrelated meanings: 1) 'fast food restaurant, jocularly called so because of the quickness of the meals eaten there' 2) 'a technique in urban guerrilla warfare consisting in quick attacks followed by even quicker runaways'. For the first meaning, an attestation in 1986 is given, from *la Repubblica*.[14] For the second meaning, the reader is referred to a 1973 movie directed by Dino Risi, the title of which is *Mordi e fuggi*. This reference is very useful for dating the expression *mordi e fuggi* in Italian, but is not entirely correct in relating the movie to what is listed as sense 2) in Quarantotto's dictionary. In fact, the Dino Risi movie does not deal with guerrilla actions, but with a bank robbery: three criminals run away after robbing a bank, taking with them a hostage played by Marcello Mastroianni.[15]

This seems to be the first context in which *mordi e fuggi* was used in Italian. In this connection, the verb *mordere* 'to bite' is not used in its literal meaning; at most, one could hypothesize that *mordere* is selected in a metaphorical meaning 'attack, strike, hit', a sense that could have developed from the contexts in which one is bitten by a snake (a kind of aggression characterized, among other things, by extreme quickness, like the *mordi e fuggi* situations).

Some observations are in order concerning the meaning 'fast food restaurant' which *mordi e fuggi* seems to have at least from 1986 onwards. Very likely *mordi e fuggi* was adopted as a way of expressing the meaning 'fast food restaurant' with Italian words, in alternative to the loanword *fast food*, also attested in Italian since at least 1982 (De Mauro 2007[3], s.v.).[16] A possible concurrent model for the creation of this lexical item is the adverbial construction *alla scappa e fuggi*, lit. 'at the:F.SG run_away and run_away', i.e., 'extremely quickly'.[17] *Alla scappa e fuggi* carries a negative connotation shared by *mordi e fuggi*. Adopting *mordi e fuggi* to mean 'fast food restaurant' allowed a combination of the negative connotation of excessive speed in *alla scappa e fuggi* with an association with food and eating fostered by the literal meaning of *mordere* 'bite'. Actually, it could be hypothesized that *mordi e fuggi* was adopted in order to refer to these institutions in a way that expresses contempt, a connotation not originally carried by English *fast food,* but present in the model *alla scappa e fuggi*.[18] But the association with the model *scappa e fuggi* (which must have developed from descriptive imperatives) must have lingered behind, eventually taking over the main part of the meaning of *mordi e fuggi*, which, as shown above, in the *Repubblica* corpus is used for the most part

in contexts not connected to food at all (cf. Masini & Thornton 2008). In most contexts of usage of *mordi e fuggi*, *mordi* does not retain its literal meaning 'bite' and often doesn't seem appropriate even in any of its possible metaphorical meanings; the most important part of the complex item is *fuggi* 'run away', which helps to convey the idea that the activity referred to, be it a pleasure trip, a stock exchange operation, or anything else, is performed extremely quickly, as if one were to run away right after completing it. The data in Table I show that other items created on the model of *mordi e fuggi* have a fixed part, constituted by *fuggi* or its synonym *scappa* in second position, while the first verb is variable and can be chosen to convey some component of the action referred to. For example, *prendi* 'take' is used in *prendi e fuggi*, which refers in most cases to changes of possession, as in sales transactions or robberies. In some cases the first verb is very specific, as in *prega e fuggi*, which occurs in the context in (20):

(20) Quest'invettiva contro una classe di governo *prega e fuggi*, buona soltanto per le cerimonie funebri, dice che la Sicilia è ormai dominata da due paure. Una è quella dei fucilieri di Cosa Nostra. L'altra, più devastante, è che Roma non sostenga nella battaglia magistrati e corpi di polizia […]
[This invective [a speech given at the funeral of a Cosa Nostra victim] against a *pray-and-run_away* government, only good for funerals, tells us that Sicily is by now dominated by two different sources of fear. The first is the fear of the Cosa Nostra killers. The second, more devastating one, is the fear that Rome [i.e, the central Italian government] will not support magistrates and the police in their battle]

Mordi e fuggi seems to have been at the origin of a construction which can yield action nouns, or adjectives used mainly to modify action nouns, that refer to activities performed in haste; often the implication of qualifying something as *mordi e fuggi* is that the speaker judges negatively the asserted quickness, or rates the event as too quick.

2.2.2. Usa e getta *and its analogues*

The negative connotation connects *mordi e fuggi* with the leader of another cluster of V*e*V items, *usa e getta* 'disposable' (literally, 'use-and-throw_away'). This item occurs in (21) together with several items related to *mordi e fuggi*, in the frame of hasty and superficial tourism.

(21) Lui è il turista fast food, il turista usa e getta, il turista compra e scappa, il turista scatta (nel senso di foto) e torna a casa.
[He is the fast food tourist, the use-and-throw_away tourist, the buy-and-run_away tourist, the take-a-snapshot-and-come_back-home tourist.]

As (21) shows, *usa e getta* is typically used as an adjective. Some examples of the head nouns modified by *usa e getta* in the *Repubblica* corpus are listed in (22):

(22) a. Generic, superordinate nouns
articoli / *articolo* 'item(s)', *confezioni* 'package', *materiali* 'supplies', *oggetti in plastica* 'plastic objects', *prodotti* 'products', *strumenti* 'tools', *qualcosa* 'something'

b. Specific, basic level or subordinate nouns
abiti di carta 'paper clothes', *accendini* 'lighters', *aghi* 'needles', *biancheria* 'linen', *bicchiere di plastica* 'plastic cup', *bicchieri* 'cups', *bicchieri di carta* 'paper cups', *bottiglia* / *bottiglie* 'bottle(s)', *bottigliette in vetro* 'glass bottles:DIM', *cronometro* 'chronometer', *federe di carta* 'paper pillow-cases', *kodak* 'Kodak camera', *lamette* 'blades:DIM', *lenti a contatto* 'contact lenses', *giocattoli* 'toys', *missili* 'missiles', *pannolini* 'diapers', *penne a sfera e rasoi* 'ball-point pens and razors', *penna biro* 'ball-point pen', *portatile* 'notebook (computer)', *rasoi* 'razors', *stadio* 'stadium', *vestiti di piume* 'feather clothes', *volumi* 'volumes'
(Masini & Thornton 2008: 174-175)

Usa e getta is used also as an action noun, in contexts such as the ones in (23):

(23) un'intera struttura di consumo basata sull'usa e getta
[a whole structure of consumption based on use-and-throw-away]
società dell'usa e getta 'use-and-throw-away society'[19]
civiltà dell'usa e getta 'use-and-throw-away civilization'

According to Battaglia (1961-2002), *usa e getta* was first attested in 1985. Even if it is very likely that earlier attestations could be found, the item is clearly a relatively recent formation in Italian. On its base, a few more items have been created which contain the verb *getta* or its synonym *butta* in second position. The class of items built on the model of *usa e getta* occurring in the *Repubblica* corpus, called Aspectual (ASP) class by Masini & Thornton (2008), is shown in Table 2.

As the data in Table II show, only the leader exemplar is used as an action noun, while the other items are adjectives or concrete nouns. *Usa e getta* seems to have been at the origin of the development of a partially specified lexical construction of the form shown in (24):

Table 2 – The *usa e getta* class in the *Repubblica* corpus (data from Masini & Thornton 2008, with further elaboration)

VeV LEXICAL ITEM	LITERAL GLOSS	FREQUENCY BY CATEGORY	FREQUENCY BY ITEM
usa e getta[20]	use and throw away	390 Adj 56 Naction 16 Nconcrete	462
leggi e getta	read-and-throw away	4 Adj	6
leggi-e-getta	read and throw away	2 Nconcrete	
radi e getta	shave and throw away	4 Adj	4
vedi e getta	look/watch and throw away	1 Adj 2 Nconcrete	3
prendi e getta	take and throw away	2 Adj	2
consuma-e-getta	consume-and-throw away	1 Nconcrete	1
metti e butta	put on and throw away	1 Adj	1
sbatti-e-butta	fuck-and-throw away	1 Adj	1

(24) Form: V *e getta / butta*
Meaning: to be V-ed and disposed of immediately afterwards

The verbs occupying the first position in the constructions listed in Table II are in most cases highly descriptive verbs, referring to very specific actions to be performed on or by the objects modified by the adjectives or denoted by the concrete nouns of the form *V e getta / butta*: *leggi e getta* 'read and throw_away' refers to books, *radi e getta* 'shave and throw_away' refers to razors, and so on. Their relation to *usa* 'use' is one of synonymy (*consuma* 'use up'), or the verbs express a typical way of using specific objects, whose names often are the heads of NPs in which *V e getta* is the modifier. Verbs such as *leggi, radi, vedi, metti, sbatti* 'read, shave, watch [a movie], put, fuck' occur in *V e getta* adjectives modifying respectively *libri, romanzoni, tabloid* 'books, novels.AUG, tabloid newspapers', *rasoi* 'razors', *film* 'movies', *lenzuola* 'bed sheets', *signora* 'lady'.

2.2.3. Gratta e vinci *and its analogues*

The frequency data in Table II show a massive disproportion between the frequency of the leader item *usa e getta* and that of the items coined on its base. The same was observed for the *mordi e fuggi* class (cf. Table I above), and can be observed for the third

class of (con)sequential V*e*V constructions identified by Masini & Thornton (2008). This class, called Cause-effect class by Masini & Thornton (2008), is headed by *gratta e vinci*, lit. 'scratch and win', an item used originally as the name of an instant lottery in which participants buy tickets and can learn if they have won a prize immediately, by scratching a foil patch on the ticket to discover the amount of the prize, if any. The item was then also used as a concrete noun referring to the lottery tickets themselves, as an adjective modifying nouns referring to the lottery tickets, and occasionally also as an action noun. *Gratta e vinci*'s date of first attestation is 1993 according to De Mauro (2007[3]). It is not the first item containing the sequence *gratta e*, as *gratta e annusa* (probably a calque of English *scratch and sniff*) is attested from at least 1977 onwards according to my own memory. But *gratta e vinci* has reached such a high token frequency (194 tokens in the *Repubblica* corpus, cf. Masini & Thornton 2008) that it has become the exemplar on which a series of new items have been created, many of them occasionally. A list of these items is given in (25):

(25) gratta e perdi, gratta e stravinci, gioca & stravinci, tira e vinci, gratta e sosta
[lit. 'scratch and lose, scratch and win a lot, play & win a lot, kick and win, scratch and park']

(Masini & Thornton 2008)

The items in (25) are for the most part names of games or lotteries; only the last item, *gratta e sosta*, is the name of a kind of parking voucher that must be scratched on a specific spot to show at what time the car was parked.

A peculiar feature of the construction headed by *gratta e vinci* lies in the fact that both of its members seem to be variable: some of the items in (25) have been created by substituting the first verb, *gratta* 'scratch', with other verbs naming actions to be performed to play a game (*gioca, tira* 'play, kick'); others have been created by substituting *vinci* 'win' with semantically related verbs (the opposite *perdi* 'lose' and the evaluative derivative *stravinci* 'win a lot'); in the case of *gioca & stravinci* 'play & win a lot', both members of the construction have been substituted. Only *gratta e sosta* lies at the periphery of this cluster of constructions, by introducing a verb (*sosta* 'park') not semantically related to *vinci*.

*2.2.4. Comparison between V*e*V constructions and other usage-based constructions*

Both the semantic relations between the variable parts of each of the three V*e*V lexical constructions we have examined, and the frequency distribution of the tokens in each of the three classes are reminiscent of the properties displayed by the syntactic construcions involving Spanish verbs of becoming, studied by Bybee & Eddington (2006). These authors found that several constructions of the form "verb of becoming (*quedarse, ponerse, volverse*, *hacerse*) + Adjective" in Spanish usually cluster around a construction of high frequency (e.g., *quedarse solo* 'to become alone'), surrounded by several low frequency constructions displaying adjectives that are semantically related to the one occurring in the high frequency construction by means of synonymy or antonymy, or some other kind of semantic feature-sharing. For example, the adjectives following *quedarse* in constructions involving a human subject, in a 2-million token corpus of contemporary Spanish, have the frequency shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Adjectives related to *solo* used with *quedarse* (Spanish) (data from Bybee & Eddington 2006:332, with further elaboration)

ADJECTIVE	FREQUENCY
solo 'alone'	28
soltera 'single, unmarried'	3
aislado 'isolated'	2
a solas 'alone'	1
sin novia 'without a girlfriend'	1
emparejado 'paired with'	1

This distribution is very similar to the one encountered with the *V e fuggi* and the *V e getta* constructions in the *Repubblica* corpus (cfr. Tables I and II above). Bybee & Eddington explain this kind of distribution by arguing that low frequency constructions are formed on analogy with the high frequency construction, which is stored as an exemplar. Items filling the open slots in a given construction are related to the central high frequency exemplar in the same way in which peripheral members of natural categories are related to central members (Bybee & Eddington 2006:353).

3. Discussion and concluding remarks

The two case-studies above show that processes of lexeme formation originating in syntax have been active in Italian for centuries. Simple, item-by-item lexicalization of certain syntactic VV sequences ("descriptive imperatives") is attested as early as the 14th century; but only when a number of such lexicalizations has entered usage, a lexical construction is abstracted, and new items are productively formed, from the 19th century onwards. When such a construction becomes a lexeme formation device, it starts exhibiting properties typical of lexeme formation rules, and extraneous to syntactic phrases, such as the prosodic restriction demanding that the base verbs be disyllabic. A process of abstraction of lexical constructions from syntactic phrases is still active in contemporary Italian, where it has yielded V*e*V lexical items. At least two of the high-frequency items which have acted as leaders for the establishment of the V*e*V lexical construction, *mordi e fuggi* and *gratta e vinci*, were imperative sentences in their first usage, but soon became lexicalized as nouns or adjectives, and in time new nouns and adjectives were formed on their example.

The data I have presented lend themselves well to interpretation in a usage-based framework, such as the one advocated by Bybee (2006). Bybee (2006:711) maintains that "grammar is the cognitive organization of one's experience with language", and that "specific usage events affect representation". The first case-study presented above confirms such a claim. Specific usage events such as the contexts of occurrence of early attestations of descriptive imperatives involved the participation of numerous people in the event described. This was by no means a logical necessity: it was only a feature of several specific usage events, but eventually it became a restriction on the lexeme formation rule yielding VV reduplicative action nouns. Such a development can be explained assuming that the specific usage events that contained the first instances of reduplicated descriptive imperatives were not "decoded and then discarded" (Bybee 2006:716), but were stored in memory. According to Bybee (2006:716), "[c]onstructions emerge when phrases that bear some formal similarity as well as some semantic coherence are stored close to one another". This must have happened with Italian reduplicated imperatives, that in the course of about five centuries developed from a syntactic construction with certain stylistic effects (descriptive imperatives) into a lexical construction. The semantic restriction requiring that VV reduplicative action nouns have a subject referring to a plurality of individuals arose in a way that is reminiscent of how the syntactic construction TO

BE GOING TO + V acquired a meaning expressing purpose and intention, rather than just movement in space (Bybee 2006:719-721). Several instances of early usage of syntactic constructions of the form TO BE GOING TO + V occurred in contexts in which both intention and movement in space were part of the meaning of the utterance. Intention could be inferred, even if it was not explicitly stated. In a model which assumes that specific instances of usage affect the mental representation of grammar it is possible to explain how "inferences arising frequently with a construction can become part of the meaning of the construction (by the conventionalization of implicature […])" (Bybee 2006:720-721). In the same way, the participation of multiple agents in the events described by reduplicated imperatives, part of many of the usage events in which reduplicated descriptive imperatives were used at first, became a necessary part of the meaning of the VV reduplicative action noun, a new lexical construction that emerged from the syntactic construction of reduplicated descriptive imperatives.

The second case study has shown that semantic relations between variable members of constructions and the frequency distribution of specific constructions belonging to a given semantic class are the same for syntactic constructions, such as those involving Spanish verbs of becoming, and lexical constructions, such as the three Italian lexical constructions based on the high frequency exemplars *mordi e fuggi*, *usa e getta* and *gratta e vinci*. Such a finding militates in favour of a non-modular view of the relationship between syntax and the lexicon: similar forces shape the coming into being of both syntactic and lexical constructions.

Address of the Author:

Dipartimento di Culture comparate, Facoltà di Lettere e filosofia, 67100 L'Aquila, Italy <annamaria.thornton@cc.univaq.it>

Notes

[1] These usages are found in most Romance languages and in several languages of other families as well (Spitzer 1951-1952). The present paper will only be concerned with Italian data.

[2] Cf. Mencacci (1982: 170). I thank Pier Marco Bertinetto for discussion on this point.

[3] For the concept of free direct speech cf. Mortara Garavelli (1985).

[4] As well as in other texts, such as Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* (1483), II.5.42.6, and Pietro Aretino's *Cortigiana* (1534), II.22.14 and *Talanta* (1542), V.8.54.

[5] French *virevolte*, attested in 1549, is an alteration of *virevoust* influenced by Italian *giravolta* (cfr. TLF, s.v.).

[6] It is interesting to note that nothing in the French original forced Monti to adopt the solution of using a reduplicative action noun, as Voltaire's text did not contain anything similar: its vv. 247-248 are "que des Anglais arrive une cohorte. / On monte, on entre, on enfonce la porte".

[7] Some of these nouns have parallels in other Romance languages: for example, Sp. *ganapierde* is attested in the first half of the 16th century (CORDE), much earlier than It. *vinciperdi*, while Sp. *duermevela* is attested in 1825 (CORDE), later than the corresponding Italian formation *dormiveglia*. The study of the relation between parallel VV formations in different Romance languages must be left for further research.

[8] Baroni *et al.* (2004) present the *Repubblica* corpus as containing 380M tokens; however, this figure includes tokens of punctuation marks. A more reliable estimate of the number of word-tokens is 330M (Davide Ricca, p.c.).

[9] "[U]ne voyelle initiale *peut ne pas* entrer dans le décompte des syllabes d'une forme et *ne pas* compter comme l'extrémité gauche de cette même forme" (Plénat 1994:239).

[10] All token counts refer to the *Repubblica* 1985-2000 corpus.

[11] Before action nouns, double imperatives were often lexicalized in adverbial phrases introduced by the preposition *a*: for example, *a fuggi fuggi* as an adverbial phrase (meaning 'extremely quickly') is attested from the 17th century on, while *fuggifuggi* as an action noun is attested only in the 19th century (early attestations are found in the work of authors born around 1840, such as Luigi Capuana (1839-1915), Giovanni Verga (1840-1922), Ugo Pesci (1842-1908); cfr. Battaglia (1961-2002), s.vv.).

[12] *Tocca e sana* was first attested in the following verses from Rossini's *La pietra di paragone*, libretto by Luigi Romanelli, which premiered in 1812: *Per sua regola io conosco / una semplice tisana / che può dirsi il tocca e sana / d'ogni sesso e d'ogni età* 'For your information, I know / a simple herbal tea / that can be called the touch-and-heal / for all sexes and all ages'.

[13] *Mordi e fuggi* in a minority of cases appears written with hyphenation: *mordi-e-fuggi*. These hyphenated tokens have been counted among the tokens of the relevant syntactic category. All other items in this class appear in the form shown in Table I.

[14] This attestation is not found in the on-line corpus of *la Repubblica* 1985-2000, very likely because it belongs to an article published only in the Rome pages, and not in the national pages of the newspaper. As far as I can understand, the article from which the attestation is drawn was written during the hot debate which preceded the opening of the first McDonald's restaurant in Rome, near the Spanish Steps. The restaurant opened in 1987.

[15] In this connection, the 1969 movie directed by Woody Allen *Take the Money and Run* must also be brought into the picture. This movie also deals with crime and robberies. Its Italian title is *Prendi i soldi e scappa*, lit. 'take the money and run away'.

[16] In Italian, *fast food* means 'quick service restaurant', not 'fast food'. It has been observed (Vogel 1990) that Italian, in the process of borrowing English compound words, often reduces them to the first constituent (which is not the head constituent in English), but retains the whole meaning of the compound: so *fast food* (< *fast food restaurant*) is a kind of restaurant, not a kind of food, *night* (< *night club*) means 'night club' and not 'night', *scotch* means 'scotch tape', *beauty* is short for *beauty case*, and so on (cf. Vogel 1990 for more examples).

[17] *Alla scappa e fuggi* seems to be the only adverbial phrase based on two imperatives in use in the 20th century to express the meaning 'extremely quickly'. Previously, *a fuggi fuggi* and *a scappa scappa* were also attested (cf. also footnote 10 above), in the 17th and 19th centuries respectively, but these seem to have become obsolete by the 20th century, at least judging from the examples listed in Battaglia (1961-2002) for these items, and from the fact that only *a(lla) scappa e fuggi* is attested as an adverbial phrase in the *Repubblica* corpus.

[18] The Italian Wikipedia article "fast food" contains the following observation, absent from the article in English: "Nei paesi latini, tradizionalmente più legati a preparazioni laboriose ovvero a sapori e componenti più direttamente di origine rurale, il fast food è spesso considerato sinonimo di cattiva alimentazione, sia perché costituito da pasti consumati in fretta, anche in piedi o in auto, sia per l'insufficiente qualità e varietà degli ingredienti e per l'abbondanza di elementi fritti, grassi, salati e zuccherati" 'In Latin countries, where time-consuming food preparations and fresh products are traditional, fast food is often considered a synonym of unhealthy eating, both because it implies eating in a hurry, even while walking or driving, and because of insufficient quality standards and variety of ingredients, and foods that are fried or fatty, and contain excessive salt or sugar'.

[19] I thank Franz Rainer for pointing out that the expression *throw-away society* is well attested in English, and has been calqued in German as *Wegwerfgesellschaft*.

[20] Several items in this class (*leggi e getta, prendi e getta, radi e getta, usa e getta*) have some tokens occurring with hyphenation. These tokens have been counted among the tokens of the relevant syntactic category. Items appearing in Table II with hyphenation occur only in this form.

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