

Syntactic doubling and the encoding of voice in Abruzzese

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Central and Southern varieties of Italian and Italian dialects are famously subject to so-called *Raddoppiamento fonosintattico* (RF), or syntactic doubling, which lengthens the first consonant of a word when it immediately follows another word that either features final stress or consists of a strong monosyllable – cf. (1).

- (1) a. *Tre ccase*
three houses-RF
'three houses'
- b. *Città ccara*
city expensive-RF
'expensive city'

Syntax is often said to play a conditioning role in this phenomenon as there are various cases where doubling fails to apply despite the fact that the appropriate phonological conditioning requirements are met (cf. Nespor & Vogel 1986, Loporcaro 1997, and see 2-3). However, though RF may sometimes carry gender and number information, it is believed not to be able to carry other kinds of syntactic information. In this paper, we focus on a peculiar doubling phenomenon in Eastern Abruzzese (EA), a southern Italian dialect, where RF functions specifically to express voice information. Moreover, we argue that RF in EA offers a transparent window on the nature of the syntactic factors that trigger doubling. RF in fact differentiates between active (2, no RF) and passive (3, RF) constructions, which would not otherwise be distinguishable by means of auxiliary selection (which is person- and not verb class-driven in EA) or any alternative means.

- (2) *So' viste*
am seen-past participle
'I have seen' (active)
- (3) *So' vviste*
am seen-past participle
'I am seen' (passive)

Given the right phonological environment, passive in EA therefore triggers RF, while active does not. One possible analysis of the alternation shown in (2-3) would be to adopt a perspective in terms of which the difference between them follows straightforwardly from a lexically encoded difference between active and passive participles in EA. That this analysis cannot, however, be correct is clearly shown by (5), which registers two important points: (i) participles which receive a passive interpretation do not obligatorily exhibit RF and (ii) RF obligatorily applies to whichever element surfaces in the position adjacent to the passive auxiliary (Aux).

- (4) a. *So' semble viste*
am always seen
'I have always seen' (active)
- b. *So' ssemble viste*
am always-RF seen
'I am always seen' (passive)
- (5) *Ggià so' (*ggià) vviste da tutti quinde*
already am already seen by everyone
'I am already seen by everyone'

(4-5) thus show that RF in EA is conditioned by adjacency in a specific syntactic context, namely passive structures. Taking this into account, we therefore propose an alternative phase-based syntax-PF mapping analysis of RF in EA; more specifically, we propose that RF results whenever the stressed Aux is sent to Spellout at the same time as the element which exhibits doubling, with the result that these two elements are assigned to the same phonological phrase (ϕ : cf. Selkirk 1995, Truckenbrodt 1995); correspondingly, RF fails to appear whenever these conditions do not apply.

A crucial piece of evidence in favour of our analysis is that the active auxiliary occupies a position higher than the passive one. Assuming that adverbs occupy a fixed and hierarchically ordered position in the clause (Cinque 1999), the distribution of *ggià* relative to *so'* in (5-6) suggests that the active auxiliary is located higher than the passive one.

- (6) *Ggià li so' (ggià) viste cullù*
 already him am already seen him
 'I have already seen him'

This proposal is further substantiated by the behaviour of EA compound auxiliaries, where the lower auxiliary clearly encodes lexical-aspectual information and is thus merged in *v*, whereas the higher auxiliary, which encodes person, number, and tense information, is merged higher –cf. (7). Significantly, compound auxiliaries may not appear in passive constructions – cf. (8). We take (8) to indicate that the passive auxiliary and the aspectual auxiliary in compound auxiliary constructions compete for the same position, namely *v*.

- (7) *Li so' 've viste*
 it am-1st sg had-imperfective seen-pp
 'I had seen that'

- (8) **Ji so' 've state viste*
 I am had been seen
 'I had been seen'

With the positional distinction between active and passive auxiliaries in place, the EA RF patterns readily follow, on a phase-based analysis. We assume the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) of Chomsky (2000) and additionally follow Chomsky (*ibid.*) in identifying active *vP*, but not passive *vP* as a phase. Active structures will thus involve spellout of VP as soon as *vP* is completed. As active Aux is only merged after completion of the *vP* phase, Aux and the active participle can never be sent to Spellout together and consequently they also cannot be part of the same ϕ . This derivational fact clearly rules out the possibility of RF in active contexts. In passives, by contrast, Aux is merged in passive (i.e. non-phase head) *v*; consequently, Aux and adjacent material are sent to Spellout together after CP is completed, and the phonological environment for RF to apply is thereby created.

If our analysis is correct, the prediction will be that RF will always obtain wherever a phonologically appropriate Aux is located in the domain of a non-phasal *vP*, as Aux and the adjacent element will always be spelled out together. This prediction is in fact borne out: RF always applies in predicative constructions, which we analyse as *vP*-internal small clauses, following Moro (2000), Costa & Pereira (2002) – cf. (9).

- (9) *Esse jè ssembateche*
 she-he is nice-RF
 '(S)he is nice'

The EA doubling data presented here provide important insights into the role that syntax plays in the conditioning of RF phenomena. They also supply an important piece of evidence for the claim that passive and active auxiliaries can occupy different positions in the clause. Finally, these data show that the first version of Chomsky's PIC is to be preferred over the most recent one (Chomsky 2001 *et seq.*), which would not allow us to derive our syntactic facts correctly.

