

Ways of delimiting events in morphology and syntax: reduplication in Mandarin and cognate object / light verb constructions in Italian

Chiara Melloni (University of Verona)*

In this talk, I deal with a class of phenomena in the verbal domain which share interpretive, structural and/or formal resemblance across typologically distant languages, i.e. Mandarin Chinese and Italian, and domains of grammar, i.e. morphology and syntax.

Specifically, I start with the phenomenon of verb reduplication in Mandarin Chinese, as e.g. 看(一)看 *kàn (yī) kàn* ‘have a look’ and 介绍介绍 *jièshào-jièshào* ‘introduce/present a little’ (e.g. Chao 1968, Li & Thompson 1981, Tsao 2004). While reduplication is usually understood as a morphological phenomenon, I will here provide a syntactic analysis of reduplicated verbs within the constructionist framework put forth by Ramchand (2008), which is based on a syntactic decomposition of the event structure (see Basciano, Arcodia & Melloni 2014). The reduplicant is analysed as the bounded (temporal) path of the base verb, which originates in a dedicated position in the complex structure of *vP* (complement of *procP*).

Furthermore, I discuss interpretive and structural commonalities between verb reduplication and other types of event-delimiting constructions:

- a. light verb constructions, i.e. the Italian ones with *-ata* nouns (e.g. *fare una nuotata* ‘take a swim’), which resemble reduplication in interpretive and structural properties (see Mirto 2011);
- b. cognate object constructions, e.g. It. *sorridere un sorriso triste* ‘smile a sad smile’, which are also formally close to reduplication due the corradical nature of verb and (cognate) noun (see Pereltsvaig 1999; Masini & Melloni, forthcoming; Hong 1999, who considers the *V-yi V* pattern of reduplication as an instance of a cognate object construction).

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