# Roman Reduplication

Dara Sebastian Jokilehto, University of Geneva
41st Incontro di Grammatica Generativa, Università per Stranieri di Perugia,
February 26 – 28, 2015

## Description of phenomenon

Roman Reduplication is a phenomenon found in Roman and other Central Italian varieties of Italian, where a verbal projection is at least partially reduplicated at the end of the sentence.

**Roman**
(1) a. M'       hanno    fregato  'r motorino, m'       hanno    fregato!
       CL.1SG.DAT have.3PL steal.PP the scooter CL.1SG.DAT have.3PL stolen
       'They stole my scooter!'

**Standard Italian**
   b. M'       hanno    fregato il motorino (*m'       hanno    fregato)!
      CL.1SG.DAT have.3PL steal.PP the scooter CL.1SG.DAT have.3PL stolen
      'They stole my scooter!'

These structures do not affect the semantic properties of the verb. Instead, they express surprise, anger, chagrin or disappointment. Typically, the material sandwiched between the new information, often the complement of the verb (1), though it may also be the subject (2a), an adverb (2b). Adjacency of the two identical strings is ungrammatical, even if the IP's would have been grammatical on their own (2c).

(2) a. Te       cercava     Gianni, te       cercava.
       CL.2SG.ACC seek.IMPERF.3SG John CL.2SG.ACC sought.IMPERF.3SG
       'John was looking for you.'

   b. Hai     fatto bene, hai     fatto.
      have.2SG done well have.2SG done
      'You did well.'

   c. To       'o         dico * (domani) to       'o.          dico
      CL.2SG.DAT CL.3SG.ACC.M say.1SG tomorrow CL.2SG.DAT CL.3SG.ACC.M say.1SG
      'I'll tell you tomorrow.'

There are restrictions to what may be reduplicated, however. The reduplicated structure must start with the highest verbal project, with clitics and it must reduplicate a contiguous string.

(3) **Top-Down Restriction.**
   a. È     arrivato   Gianni *(è)   arrivato.
      is.3SG arrive.PP  JOHN   is.3SG arrive.PP
      'John arrived.'

   **Contiguity Restriction**
   b. S' è          voluto   compra' tutto 'r  negozio s' è      (voluto)    compra'
      si be.3SG     want.PP  buy.INF all   the shop    si be.3SG want.PP    buy.INF
      'He wanted to buy himself the whole shop.'

   c. To       'o         dico * (domani) to       'o.          dico
      CL.2SG.DAT CL.3SG.ACC.M say.1SG tomorrow CL.2SG.DAT CL.3SG.ACC.M say.1SG
      'I'll tell you tomorrow.'

The type of verb does not affect the availability of Roman Reduplication.

**Unergative**
(4) a. Ha parlato l'  esperto, ha parlato.
       has talked the expert has talked
       'The expert has spoken.'

   **Unaccusative**
   b. È arrivato Gianni, è arrivato
      is arrived John    is arrived
      'John's here!'

   **Transitive**
   c. Ha comprato tutto 'r negozio, ha comprato!
      has bought  all   the shop    has bought
      'He's bought the whole shop!'

   **Ditransitive**
   d. Te do' 'na pizza te 'do!
      CL.2SG.DAT give.1SG a smack CL.2SG.DAT give.1SG
      'I'll smack you!'

Copular *ave'* ('be') is also grammatical in these structures, as is possessive *ave'* + *ce* ('have', *ce* is a locative clitic, also used in existential sentences).

**Copular verb**
(5) a. Sei proprio bravo, sei!
       be.2SG truly good be.2SG
       'You're really good!'

   **Possessive**
   b. Ciò 'a schiena a pezzi, ciò.
      CL.LOC-HAVE.1SG the back at pieces CL.LOC-HAVE.1SG
      'My back's in pieces.'

RR is restricted to root contexts (6), but the reduplicated phrase can cross clausal boundaries when the complement of the verb is an untensed clause or in causative constructions.

**Tensed embedded clause**
(6) a. *Vedo [ch' è   arrivato   Gianni è   arrivato]!
        see.1SG that be.3SG arrive.PP.M John be.3SG arrive.PP.M
        'I see that John's arrived!'

   **Causative construction**
(7) a. Ta       'a        faccio   [fa'  tutta a piedi,
       cl.2SG.DAT CL.3SG.ACC.F make.1SG make.INF all.F on foot
       ta       'a        faccio   [fa']]!
       cl.2SG.DAT cl.3SG.ACC.F make.1SG make.INF
       'I'll make you walk the whole way!'

   **Tensed embedded clause**
   d. *Vedo [ch' è   arrivato   Gianni] vedo [ch'
       see.1SG that be.3SG arrive.PP.M John    see.1SG that
       è     arrivato]!
       be.3SG arrive.PP.M
       'I see that John's arrived!'

**Untensed embedded clause**
   b. *Ho      paura [d' arriva' troppo tardi, arriva']!
      be.1sg afraid of arrive too  late  arrive
      'I fear I'll arrive too late!'

   **Restructuring control verb**
   b. To 'o volevo compra' io, to 'o volevo compra'!
      to-you if wanted buy I to-you it wanted buy
      '–I- wanted to buy it for you!'

   **Untensed embedded clause**
   d. Ho      paura [d' arriva'  troppo tardi,] ho      paura d'
      have.1SG fear of arrive.INF too    late   have.1SG fear  of
      arriva']!
      arrive.INF
      'I fear I'll arrive too late!'

---

The same structure can be used to form echo/reprise question. Neutral questions with a fronted Wh-element are ungrammatical. RR may also appear in Yes/No questions, increasing its "forcefulness".

(8) A: a. John said [he's leaving].

   B: b. John said what?!

      c. Gianni  ha detto (che) cosa ha detto?!
         John    has said what thing has said
         'John said what!?'

      d. *(*Che) cosa ha detto Gianni, ha  detto?
         what thing has said John    has said

(9)  Vòi      'na machina tua,   vòi?
     want.2SG a car        your.F want.2SG
     'You want a car of your own?'

The Left Periphery is available for fronting operations: both contrastive foci (6a) and contrastive topics (6b) are possible. NB: with contrastive foci, the fulcrum is no longer focal material. Clitic Right Dislocation is also possible (6c)

(9) a. 'A machina m'       hanno    fregato, m'       hanno!
       the car    CL.1SG.DAT have.3PL stolen  CL.1SG.DAT have.3PL
       'The car, they stole from me.'

   b. Quer giubbotto lì  me       l'          aveva      comprato  mi nonno,    me
      that coat there     CL.1SG.DAT CL.3SG.ACC.M have.IMPERF.3SG bought    my grandfather CL.1SG.DAT
      l'          aveva      comprato!
      CL.3SG.ACC.M have.IMPERF.3SG bought
      'That coat there, my grandfather bought me.'

   c. Me       l'          CL.3SG.ACC.M hanno    fregato in due, me       l'          hanno    fregato, er motorino!
      CL.1SG.DAT CL.3SG.ACC.M have.3PL steal.PP.M in two CL.1SG.DAT CL.3SG.ACC.M have.3PL steal.PP.M the scooter
      'It was two people who stole my scooter!'

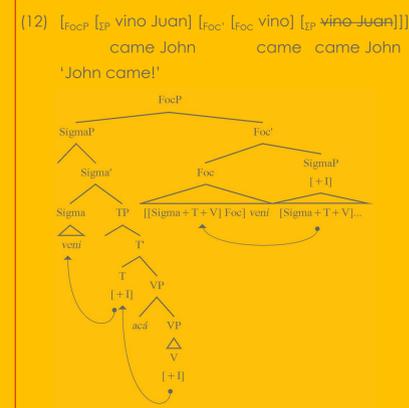## Reduplication and doubling in other languages

Similar reduplication phenomena have been found also in European Portuguese (Martins 2007) and River Plate Spanish (Saab 2009). Both of these differ from RR.
In European Portuguese, Verbal Reduplication is used in affirmative declarative statements to emphatically contradict an assertion or to emphatically contradict negative polarity non-neutral Yes/No questions. Besides the difference in usage, these structures allow the verbs to be adjacent and only reduplicate the finite verb (without clitics). Furthermore, there are restrictions on moods (ban on future and conditional) and on morphological complexity.
The phenomenon found in River Plate Spanish, on the other hand, is used in a very similar context. The most striking difference is that, unlike RR, however, only the finite verb can be reduplicated. In fact, Saab relies on head movement of the finite verb to create a copy escaping ellipsis.

(10) A: a. Ele não pode sair     de casa.
        he not  can  leave.INF of house
        'He can't go out.'
    B: b. Ele pode sair     de casa, pode.
        he can  leave.INF of house of house can
        'Of course he can go out.'
    c. *Ele pode sair    de casa, pode sair.
        he can  leave of house  can  leave

(11) A: a. O   João não comprou o carro, pois não?
        the J.  not bought  the car, POIS NEG
        'John didn't buy the car, did he?'
    B: b. Comprou, comprou.
        bought   bought
        'Yes, he DID.'

(12) $[_{FocP} [_{TP} \text{vino Juan}] [_{Foc'} [_{Foc} \text{vino}] [_{TP} \text{vino Juan}]]]$
     came John      came  came John
     'John came!'



Saab (2011) employs head copy to vacate the "reduplication" V head, after which he makes use of a theory of elision which relies on adjacency and "immediate" locality (context for v- or I- lowering, for example) to assign an *identity* ([+I]) feature to copies, which are then targeted by a Non-Insertion Rule (the approach follows DM in adopting *Late Insertion*, Halle & Marantz 1993). Saab also shows that no material may follow the reduplicated verb; it is not stated whether Right Dislocation, if at all possible in River Plate Spanish, is also disallowed.

(12) **Morphological I-Assignment (Head Ellipsis):** Given a Morphosyntactic Word (MWd) $X^0$, assign a [+I] feature to $X^0$ if and only if there is a node $Y^0$ identical to $X^0$ contained in a MWd *adjacent* or *immediately local* to $X^0$. (where 'containment is a reflexive notion)
     Saab (2011:314)
(13) **Non-Insertion:** No Lexical Insertion Rule, IR, applies in the domain of $X^0$, $X^0$ a MWd, if $X^0$, or some projection of $X^0$, is specified with a [+I] feature.
     **Associated definitions:**
     The domain of $X^0$, $X^0$ a MWd, is the set of terminal nodes reflexively contained in $X^0$.
     *Morphosyntactic word*: At the input to Morphology, a node $X^0$ is (by definition) a *morphosyntactic word* (MWd) if $X^0$ is the highest segment of $X^0$ not contained in another $X^0$.
     *Subword*: A node $X^0$ is a *subword* (SWd) if $X^0$ is a terminal node and not a MWd.
     ((ii) and (iii) from Embick & Noyer 2001:574).
     Saab (2011:314-5)
(14) **Sub-Word Deletion Corollary:** No SWd can be subject to non-insertion if the MWd that contains it is not *I*-assigned.
     Saab (2011:315)

## Register

The distribution of this syntact structure is also severely limited by the "low" register in which it is typically used. This is aggravated by normative pressure in schools, all the more felt due to the proximity of the Roman variety to Standard Italian. Because of this, the statements must be carefully constructed so as to be plausibly used in this register.

## Discussion

Roman Reduplication may be a case of microvariation with respect to the very similar construction in River Plate Spanish.

- ***Head Movement won't save the reduplicant:*** The approach in Saab (2011) relies on head movement to save a copy of the verbal head from ellipsis. The survival non-heads in RR makes such a solution ineffective for Roman Italian.

- ***One Focus Projection may not suffice:*** If we wish to retain the spirit of Saab (2011)'s approach, it may be necessary to create more functional projections to provide landing sites for the phrase to be moved. This may require a reanalysis of the ellipsis mechanism used in that approach.

- The possibility of having material dislocated to the right in RR may mean that not all approaches to Clitic Right Dislocation may be compatible with accounts of elision which would target the sister of Foc⁰.

- Some, quite different forms of reduplication and doubling have not been discussed here. Most of these seem affect the interpretation of the reduplicated term itself, which is not the case here, e.g., contrastive focus reduplication (Ghomeshi et al 2004); reduplication giving rise to plural interpretations, such as in German Sign Language (Pfau and Steinbach 2006:146) or Indonesian (Haspelmath 2002:274).
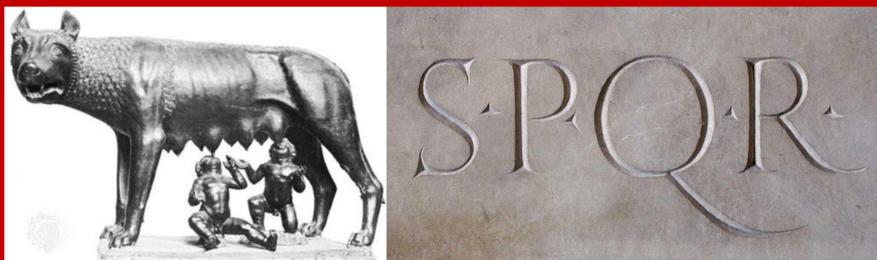
## References

Aboh, E. O., 2004. *The Morphosyntax of Complement-Head Sequences: Clause Structure and Word Order Patterns in Kwa.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Belletti, A., 2004. *Structures and Beyond. The Cartography of Syntactic Structures. Volume 3.* New York: Oxford University Press.
Cinque, G., 2002. *Functional structure in DP and IP. The Cartography of Syntactic Structures. Volume 1.* New York: Oxford University Press.
Ghomeshi, J., Jackendoff, R., Rosen, N. & Russell, K., 2004. Contrastive focus reduplication in English (the salad-salad paper). *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory,* Volume 22, pp. 307-357.
Halle, M., and Marantz, A., 1993. Distributed Morphology and the Pieces of Inflection. In K. Hale and S.J. Keyser, eds. *The View from Building 20.* Cambridge: MIT Press, pp. 111-176.
Haspelmath, M., 2002. *Understanding Morphology.* New York: Oxford University Press.
Marantz, A., 1982. Re reduplication. *Linguistic Inquiry,* Volume 13, pp. 435-482.
Martins, A. M., 2007. Double realization of verbal copies in European Portuguese emphatic affirmation.
Rizzi, L., 2004. *The Structure of IP and CP. The Cartography of Syntactic Structures. Volume 2.* New York: Oxford University Press.
Saab, A., 2011. On verbal duplication in River Plate Spanish: Anti-adjacency and head copy deletion. In J. Berns, H. Jacobs and T. Scheer, eds. *Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 2009: Selected papers from 'Going Romance' Nice 2009.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., pp. 305-322.
Travis, L. d., 2003. *Reduplication feeds Syntax.* Montréal, Université de Québec.