

Vittorio Ganfi
University of Molise

Light Verb Constructions in Italian: A Corpus-based Analysis of 15th-17th-century Texts

Abstract

This paper aims at analysing the structural and functional features of Light Verb Constructions in Italian. In particular, the investigation is devoted to the analysis of texts written between 1376 and 1691, extracted from the MIDIA corpus.

Light Verb Constructions are an extensive subgroup of complex lexemes in Romance, including both Contemporary and Old Italian. From the structural point of view, Light Verb Constructions are made up of a Light Verb, i.e., a predicate lacking full referentiality, and a noun carrying the predicative meaning of the construction. Thus, in these sequences, the verb has a light semantic characterization, restricted to the functional features of verbal class (such as Tense Aspect Modality, and person traits), while the noun designates the action or the event. In the following, some instances of Italian Light Verb Constructions are shown (i.e., *dare carico* and *dare forma* in A, and *avere bisogno* in B):

(A)

diede carico ad uomini eccellenti di darle forma
(he) ordered to men excellent to shape her

“he ordered (*lit.* gave charge) to excellent men to shape (*lit.* give_her shape) her” (1589, ESP₃_BOT_RAGI00)

(B)

Tutti abbian bisogno di poeti
All (they) needed of poets

“(they) all needed (*lit.* had need) poets” (mind-16th century, ESP₃_AMM_DEDA00)

This paper investigates a set of Light Verb Constructions in Italian texts of the 15th-17th centuries, which are extracted through the text mining tools included in the MIDIA corpus. As far as the structural analysis is concerned, Light Verb Constructions are classified according

to (a) the kind of Light Verb used, (b) nouns they occur with, and (c) the selected argument structures. As for the functional analysis, the semantic shift beyond constructional meanings characterizing Light Verb Constructions is reconstructed.

1. *Introduction*

A growing number of contributions devoted to the study of Light Verbs have shown the importance of this phenomenon both in terms of its crosslinguistic spread and its pervasiveness within Romance languages.¹

Light Verb Constructions (henceforth LVCs) are generally defined as complex verbal configurations composed of a verb and a nominal phrase² (or a prepositional syntagma, cf. Alonso Ramos 2004; Pompei 2017), in which the verbal element denotes grammatical functions, while the predicative content is generally conveyed by the noun (G. Gross 1996; De Miguel 2006; Sanromán Vilas 2014). However, several studies have shown the existence of a coselection relationship between the verbal and nominal elements, which can be motivated by the presence of a semantic coherence between the Light Verb and the noun (Bosque 2001; De Miguel 2008; Samvelian, Danlos and Sagot 2011; Pompei and Piunno 2023).

The syntagmatic link between Light Verbs and nouns can be traced back to the aspectual values or other semantic features of the noun (Pompei and Piunno 2023). Two different methods of analysis of LVCs have been identified in the literature (Marini 2013). (a) On the one hand, some approaches study the Light Verbs first, and then their relations with reference nouns in the different LVCs (among others, M. Gross 1982; 1986). (b) On the other

1 For the Italian, among others Elia, D'Agostino, and Martinelli 1985; La Fauci 1997; La Fauci and Mirto 2003, Cicalese 1999; Cantarini 2004; Ježek 2004; 2011; Mastrofini 2004; 2013; Pompei and Piunno 2023. For Spanish, Alonso Ramos 1991; 2004; Mendívil Giró 1999; Bosque 2001; 2004; Bustos Plaza 2005; De Miguel 2007; 2008; Martínez Blasco 2008; Sanromán Vilas 2009; 2011ab; 2014; Moncó Taracena 2011; Sidoti 2014. For French, M. Gross 1981; 1982; 1986; 1988; 1990; Vivès 1983; 1984; 1988; Giry-Schneider 1987; G. Gross 1989; 1993; 1996; 2004. For a general overview of Light Verbs see, among others, Wierzbicka 1982; Butt 2010; Gross and De Pontonx 2004.

2 For further discussion on predicative properties of nouns we refer to Simone 2003; 2008; Simone and Pompei 2007.

hand, other approaches classify the reference nouns of LVCs according to different semantic classes first (G. Gross 2012) and then they study the relations between Light Verbs and referential nouns.³ Scholars studying LVCs mostly focus on single languages (cf. Pompei, Mereu and Piunno 2023), having mainly a synchronic perspective, since they focus on contemporary varieties of the investigated languages.

This paper investigates LVCs in Italian 15th-17th-century texts, using the first approach. Firstly, Light Verbs are manually selected. Secondly, data are extracted through corpus analysis focusing on the period under investigation. Lastly, sequences are analysed to study functional and formal properties of LVCs.

2. Data

This paper investigates a set of LVCs in Italian texts belonging to the 15th-17th centuries extracted through the text mining tools included in MIDIA corpus.⁴ In particular, the Light Verbs selected were *fare* ‘to do / make’, *avere* ‘to have’, *prendere* ‘to take’ and *dare* ‘to give’. To extract a significant set of LVCs, the finite forms of the verbs above preceding bare nouns (i.e., without article and/or modifiers) were collected using functions included in the corpus web interface. This data extraction limits the types of the constructions considered, excluding both LVCs embedding nouns with articles or adjectives (e.g., *fare la pelle* ‘to kill’, lit. to make the skin),⁵ and LVCs characterized by other elements occurring between verbs and nouns (e.g., *fare sinceramente*

3 Among the different nominal semantic classes analysed in the literature we can mention: (a) eventual nouns (Sanromán Vilas 2009; Sidoti 2014; Moncó Taracena 2011; Pompei and Piunno 2023), (b) psychological state nouns (Sidoti 2014; Moncó Taracena 2011), (c) nouns denoting a sound (Moncó Taracena 2011; Pompei 2023), (d) emotional cause nouns (Sanromán Vilas 2011, 260), (e) communication nouns (Sanromán Vilas 2014) and (f) body part nouns (Ganfi and Piunno 2019).

4 MIDIA (Morphology of Italian in DIAcrony) corpus (D’Achille and Grossman 2017) is a corpus of Italian written texts, fully annotated through lemmatization tagging and part of speech tagging for each occurrence. The corpus, which spans a chronological period from the early 13th to the first half of the 20th century, is divided into five time periods and seven text types and includes about 7.8 million occurrences subdivided in 800 texts.

5 It is worth noticing that articles and modifiers may sometimes force the meaning of a noun to the construction (Ježek 2004).

pena ‘to be fully pitiful’, lit. to do honestly pity). Nevertheless, data filtering reveals to be useful for the current study, since it qualitatively and quantitatively refines the number of sequences investigated, highlighting those units that can be interpreted as LVCs.⁶ Furthermore, data selection is restricted to texts written between the 15th and 17th centuries. This data extraction process allows us to collect these sequences:

LVCs	No. of sequences
<i>fare</i> ‘to do / make’	2,096
<i>avere</i> ‘to have’	2,224
<i>prendere</i> ‘to take’	113
<i>dare</i> ‘to give’	997

Table I. Number of LVCs.

Relevant data are manually chosen for the corpus-based analysis described in the following paragraphs.

3. *Analysis*

This section is devoted to the structural and functional analysis of LVCs in 15th-17th-century texts. The inquiry of our textual sample will be driven distinguishing constructions according to:

- (a) Light Verbs: examples of the verbs *fare* ‘to do / make’, *avere* ‘to have’, *prendere* ‘to take’ and *dare* ‘to give’ are considered,
- (b) Nouns: the functional and constructional values of noun are considered,
- (c) Argument structures: the type and number of LVC’s arguments are considered.

The relationship with semantically analogous synthetic verbs is also discussed to highlight the significance of LVCs among the data investigated. As for the functional analysis, the semantic shift beyond constructional meanings

⁶ The data extraction excludes LVCs characterized by other syntactic schemata, such as LVCs with V + SP structure. For further information about these constructions, we refer to Pompei 2017.

characterizing LVCs is reconstructed.⁷ The analysis highlights the semantic features of constructions, distinguishing them according to a) the presence / absence of compositional meaning, b) the eventual metaphorical / metonymical reinterpretation, and c) the constructional values of the entire structure. Argument structure analysis accounts for a) the semantic features of the participants engaged in the action designated by the LVCs, investigating the relation between semantic roles of arguments and their syntactic realization and b) the comparison between semantic properties of internal and external participants of the LVCs.

3.1. Fare LVCs

The Light Verb *fare* is often used in LVCs in the sample of data investigated here, since 2,096 sequences containing *fare* occur in MIDIA corpus.

As it has been noticed in literature, in LVCs the nouns are constructional elements providing most of the predicative value of the sequence. Thus, the analysis of LVCs with *fare* confirms that nouns bear the semantic specificity of the sequences. As far as semantics is concerned, the corpus analysis highlights a frequent occurrence of abstract nouns. In the following example the Light Verb *fare* selects the abstract noun *paura*, referring to the feeling of fear:

- (1) *Mi fa paura la sua spada sfolgorante.* (ESP₃_ARE_ARTE₀₀)
'I fear (lit. to me it makes fear) his blazing blade'

The noun *paura* codifies a psychological state and the LVC is used to refer to the entity that provokes the fear (which is felt by the subject). It is worth noting that even if the Italian synthetic verb *temere* codifies the same meaning of feeling fear, the analytic construction with the Light Verb *fare* can be used in its place. It should be highlighted that the meaning of the LVC is also causative.⁸

7 During the analysis, we use the terms (a) 'source meaning' or 'nuclear meaning' to refer to literal values of the single elements out of construction, and (b) 'target meaning' or 'constructional meaning' to designate the values of the entire combinatorial sequence.

8 As suggested by one of the two anonymous reviewers, in this case the LVC *far paura* may differ from analytic verb *temere*, since it presents causative value (cf. Jezek 2004 and Mastrofini 2005).

A similar preference for the analytic forms over the synthetic ones can be viewed in LVCs selecting event nouns. For instance, in the following sentence the writer selects the LVC *far resistenza* to describe the action of resisting:

- (2) *il mal habito del peccare à cui non si vuol far resistenza* (ESP3_ANT_EDUC00)
'the bad habit of sinning to which people do not want to resist'
(lit. to do resistance)'

In this case the construction embeds the deverbal noun *resistenza* indicating the action of resisting. Nevertheless, the existence of the synthetic verb *resistere* does not prevent the use of the semantically equivalent analytic construction *fare resistenza*.

An analogous preference for the analytic structure can be viewed in the next example, documenting the LVC *fare naufragio*:

- (3) *ma si perde e fa naufragio in porto.* (ESP3_BOT_RAG100)
'but he gets lost and sinks (lit. does shipwreck) in harbor'

In this case as well the event noun *naufragio* has a verbal counterpart, i.e., *naufragare*, which shares the same meaning of the LVC. Thus, event nouns are commonly used in combination with *fare* to denote a dynamic event or an action. Therefore, the constructional analysis of *fare* LVCs confirms that when *fare* is used in the constructions its meaning appears to be quite general, while nouns codify referential traits meant by the constructions. It is worth noting that the analysis of the 15th-17th-century texts has highlighted a conspicuous use of analytical constructions even if the same meaning can be expressed by synthetic verbs. This feature deserves further analysis from a quantitative perspective, since it is not the purpose of this paper.

For the argument structure analysis, the distinction between *internal* and *external* arguments (i.e., between arguments of the Light Verbs and arguments of entire construction, cf. Ganfi and Piunno 2019) reveals to be relevant. LVCs involve transitive verbs as Light Verbs syntactically heading other constituents, and predicative nouns occupying object positions. Thus, the internal argument structure of Light Verbs is saturated by predicative nouns. However, there are many cases in which two or three participants, beyond internal ones, are required. In such cases, the external argument can occur within the construction, introduced by the Italian preposition *a*.

In the following example, the LVC requires two external participants i.e., the one offending and the other being offended. The first argument *io* is coded as the subject of the LVC and the second one *la grandezza vostra* is marked by the preposition *a*:

(4) *io faccio ingiuria a la grandezza vostra col partir mio* (PER₃_ARE_LETT₀₀)
'I offend (lit. I do an offense to) your greatness with my leaving'

Therefore, in (4) the argument structure of the LVC entails the presence of an agent, i.e., the offending participant, and a patient, i.e., the offended participant. Since the object position is saturated by the reference noun *ingiuria*, the patient is realized in the external argument structure as an indirect object (*a la grandezza vostra*).

3.2. *Avere* LVCs

In the MIDIA corpus *avere* LVCs appear to be the most frequent constructions among the ones investigated, since 2,224 tokens of these sequences were collected.

As viewed for *fare* LVCs, also the Light Verb *avere* can select abstract nouns to create predicative sequences. This is the case of the following example:

(5) *ho speranza che sarà gradita la volontà* (ESP₃_ACC_DISS₀₀)
'I hope (lit. I have hope) that the desire will be appreciated'

Also for *avere* LVCs, the existence of synthetic verbs does not inhibit the presence of analytic constructions, since in the Italian lexicon the verb *sperare* 'to hope' shares the same meaning of *avere speranza*.

The following sentence shows another case of selection of abstract nouns in *avere* LVCs:

(6) *ella ha riguardo alla felicità humana, considerata da i filosofi*, (ESP₃_ANT_EDUC₀₀)
'she takes care (lit. has care) of human happiness, considered by philosophers'

The meaning of the noun *riguardo* refers to the abstract content of care. By means of the Light Verb *avere* the writer can build verbal sequences provided

by all predicative features of the embedded noun. It is worth noting that similar values can be expressed by different LVCs selecting synonymous nouns, as can be seen comparing the previous example to the following one:

- (7) *Abbi cura a mantenere il fuoco* (TEA₃_LAS_GEL000)
'take care (lit. have care) of keeping the fire (lit.)'

Despite a noun variation in LVCs, the LVCs' meaning does not vary because of the semantic similarities of the nouns involved (i.e., *riguardo* and *cura*).

As pointed out in the case of *fare* LVC, the study of 15th-17th century texts shows that the meaning expressed by *avere* Light Verb is quite general. Corpus-based analysis reveals that *avere* Light Verb often occurs with nouns designating psychological states, experienced by subjects of the LVC.

Avere LVCs can be used in combination with event nouns indicating phases of action.⁹ In the following sentence, we report an instance of this function:

- (8) *questo avvenimento non poteva aver principio* (PER₃_GIR_LETT00)
'this event cannot happen (lit. have beginning)'

It is worth noticing that also for this value several synthetic verbs are available in Italian (e.g., *avvenire* 'to happen' or *verificarsi* 'to occur'). Nevertheless, the use of analytic LCVs appears to be quite common, as shown by the instances of complex predicates analyzed in this paper.¹⁰

As far as the semantic analysis is concerned, constructional elements are often characterized by a metaphorical reading. Thus, in *avere* LVCs metaphorical shifts apply to both verb and noun meanings, since (a) *avere* Light Verb does not show its concrete content of possession but refers to the general relation among its subject and the referential value of nouns, and (b) nouns denote abstract values, needing to be specified by the overall construction in which they occur. Constructional meaning always arises through the combination of the meaning of both syntagmatic elements of the LCV; this value is often modulated by the metaphorical reinterpretation.

9 These lexical entities are predicates denoting the fact an event is taking place (cfr. Levin and Rappaport 1995, 282).

10 In this paper quantitative data concerning the use of analytic or synthetic construction are not considered. Nevertheless, further studies using quantitative evidence can shade new light on the preferred type of construction (simple verb or LVC).

Indeed, the significance of metaphorical interpretation in *avere* LCVs is particularly evident when constructions embedding concrete nouns are considered, as can be seen in the next sentence:

- (9) *una grande sceleratezza può aver luogo nelle tragiche azioni* (ESP₃_CAR_DANT₀₀)
'A big devilry can happen (lit. have place) during tragic actions'

In this example the LVC denotes the fact that an event (i.e., the performing of devilry) is happening. Even if the core meaning of the embedded noun *luogo* has a concrete reference (i.e., a place in the spatial domain), the constructional value of the entire sequence does not retain any trait of designation of concrete referents, since the LVC describes the happening of an event. The noun is reinterpreted through a metaphorical process, obscuring the original spatial meaning, and leading to the abstract value of happening.

Nevertheless, the semantic analysis of *avere* LVC reveals that there may also be sequences characterized by a compositional reading, as shown by the following sentence:

- (10) *Ognuno habbia notitia delle vie dritte* (GIU₃_GRID_MIL₀₀)
'Everyone knew (lit. had news) the straight roads'

The meaning of the complex expression *habbia notitia*, denoting the action of knowing, can be gathered by the sum of the meanings of its components, since the semantics of knowing can be inferred by the act of having information. Thus, also in (10) the Light Verb has a compositional reading, since *avere* shows a value similar to receiving. Similar compositional readings can be viewed in the next sentence:

- (11) *abbiano potestà loro di eleggere li altri* (GIU₃_STAT_PAL₀₀)
'they can (lit. had power) choose the others'

Avere potestà LVC shows a meaning quite close to the value of the modal Italian verb *potere* (i.e., to can). This value can be derived by the act of having the power, which represents the content of all the constructional elements.

The argument structure analysis of *avere* LVCs shows that when the internal argument structure is saturated, extra arguments can be added using prepositional phrases, as in the following sentence:

- (12) *tutti abbian bisogno dei poeti* (ESP3_AMM_DEDA00)
'we all needed (lit. had need) poets'

Avere is a transitive verb, hence its argument structure is saturated by the object (in this case, the referential noun *bisogno*). Since another argument (the element needed) is required according to the general meaning of the construction (i.e., the act of needing), this argument is introduced through the prepositional phrase *dei poeti*. Therefore, the external argument structure requires a further argument to saturate the participants designated by the meaning of the constructional predicate.

It is worth noticing that the corpus analysis shows several instances of *avere* LVCs characterized by other argument patterns. Even if the argument structure of *avere* is saturated by a noun phrase, a complement sentence can occur within the verbal phrase, as shown in the following example:

- (13) *Egli ha sospetto il suo Debitore, che non se ne fugga* (GIU3_MERC_BOL00)
'He suspects (lit. has suspicion) his borrower could run away'

The internal argument structure of *avere* LVC appears to be saturated by the noun *sospetto*. Nevertheless, the external argument structure of the LVC can take another complement, holding the clause *non se ne fugga*, introduced by the complementizer *che*.

It is worth noticing that LCVs share the inter-clausal properties of analytic verbs which have analogous meanings. As shown by (13), the LVC *avere sospetto* can head an objective clause and the same subordinate clause could be embedded in the corresponding analytic verb *sospettare*.

3.3. Prendere LVCs

Among the constructions that have been considered, *prendere* LVC is the least common, since only 113 sequences are attested in the MIDIA corpus. Nevertheless, significant constructional features characterize this structure.

As far as the referential noun analysis is concerned, *prendere* LVCs can embed nouns denoting a concrete referent. This is the case of the following example:

- (14) *quelli che prendono moglie* (ESP3_ANT_EDUC00)
'those who get married (lit. take wife)'

The noun embedded in the construction denotes a human being (a wife), thus has a concrete reference which is physically identifiable in the real world. Furthermore, *prendere moglie* LVC shows a compositional reading, since the complex value of the sequence (i.e., getting married) can be derived from the sum of the meanings of the constitutive elements. A variation in meaning concerns a more general meaning established in the constructional value, since LVC denotes an unspecific act of getting married without any reference to a specific or individual wife. The equivalent meaning can be coded through the same structure embedding the noun *donna* ‘woman’, instead of *moglie* (i.e., *prendere donna*). An analogous situation can be identified in the following sentence:

- (15) *la sua donna abbia preso marito* (POE₃_TAS_RIME₀₀)
 ‘His woman got married (lit. had taken husband)’

The example shares the same compositional features of the previous sentence, except for the referential noun *marito*, which identifies a male human being engaged in the action of getting married. As highlighted for other LVCs in the previous paragraphs, the use of these constructions in our corpus coexists with the synthetic verb *sposarsi* ‘to get married’, sharing the same meaning and argument structure of analytic structures.

The corpus analysis reveals that *prendere* LVCs often also embed abstract nouns. The following example shows a construction selecting an abstract noun of feeling:

- (16) *Mario, sentendo tal cosa, ne prese piacere* (LET₃_FOR_GIOR₀₀)
 ‘Mario, hearing that, was gratified (lit. took pleasure)’

Prendere piacere denotes a psychological state experienced by the subject of the verb, i.e., Mario. Thus, in this construction the meaning of the verb does not maintain any trait of its concrete original value, but a metaphorical shift occurs: the concrete action of taking is reinterpreted as the abstract value of having a feeling. This semantic shift is similar to the reinterpretation process analyzed in *fare* LVCs (cf. § 3.1). The MIDIA corpus contains other analogous LVCs showing an opposite meaning and selecting an antonymic referential noun. A remarking example of these constructions is the following sentence:

- (17) *E di cotale errore ho preso piacere e dispiacere.* (PER₃_ARE_LETT₀₀)
'And since that mistake I was gratified and regretful (lit. has taken pleasure and displeasure)'

In example (17) two opposite values are coded by the same unit by means of a unique Light Verb, i.e., *prendere*, and two coordinated referential nouns (*piacere e dispiacere*). Since these nouns exhibit opposite meanings, the construction designates two opposite feelings, even if a single verb is explicitly expressed. This is allowed by the fact that both nouns require *prendere* as Light Verb. As far as the syntagmatic properties of LVCs are concerned, the example shows that these constructions can present a certain degree of syntagmatic variability. In literature (Ježek 2005; Simone 2007; 2017) combinatorial fixedness of multi-word elements has been put into relation with preclusion to the insertion and coordination of other syntactic elements within the structure. Therefore, the fact that LVCs admit syntagmatic insertion and coordination demonstrates the absence of a fully fixed combinatorial structure for these complex lexemes.

It is worth noticing that some examples of *prendere* LVCs show more complex constructional patterns. This is the case of the next sentence:

- (18) *prendono mezzi violenti per l'altrui ruina* (ESP₃_ACC_DISS₀₀)
'they chose to behave aggressively (lit. take violent instruments) to ruin others'

The LVC *prendere mezzi violenti* has a constructional pattern involving these constituents: verb-noun-adjective, instead of the verb-noun constructional pattern realized by the most common LVCs. In the sequence above, as observed in other LVCs, Light Verbs give grammatical traits, nouns provide referential information, and adjectives modify the nouns. The corpus analysis reveals other *prendere* LVCs, showing different constructional patterns, as the next sentence exemplifies:

- (19) *presi pratica e amicizia istrettissima con uno gentil giovanetto* (PER₃_CEL_VITA₀₀)
'I became a very close friend (lit. I took proximity and very close friendship) with a kind young boy'

The sequence *prendere pratica e amicizia istrettissima* shows a more articulated constructional schema since it realizes the verb-noun-conjunction-noun-adjective pattern. In this case, the meaning of the coordinated nouns is similar, be-

cause friendship entails moral or emotional proximity. Thus, the second noun does not add any new information to the sentence meaning but emphasizes the constructional value of becoming friends. Similarly, the adjective *istrettissima* reinforces the meaning of LVC.

Another interesting example concerns the sequence *prendersi briga*. Thus, as far as the lexical evolution of the embedded noun is concerned, the analysis reveals lexemes that in Contemporary Italian tend to occur only in combination with the verb *prendere*. This phenomenon is shown by the next sentence:

- (20) *voler prendersi briga di trovare il signor Garbeza* (PER₃_MAR_LETT₀₂)
'to want to take on the task (lit. take trouble) of finding Mr. Garbeza'

The LVC *prendersi (la) briga* is still present in contemporary Italian, maintaining the value shown in 15th-17th-century texts, even if the noun *briga* does not appear out of this LVC. In fact, an analysis of itTenTen20, a contemporary Italian reference corpus,¹¹ reveals only an occurrence of the noun *briga* out of LVCs.

As far as the argument structure is concerned, *prendere* LVCs generally follow the regular syntactic pattern of a verb phrase in which the Light Verb *prendere* takes as object the reference noun. Other arguments required by the external argument structure can be coded using prepositional phrases, as shown in the next sentence:

- (21) *prendi pietà de le mie gravi pene*, (POE₃_GUI_RIME₀₀)
'commiserate (lit. take pity) my great pains'

In this case, the LVC denotes the act of commiserating and, according to this meaning, another argument is required, i.e., who or what is commiserated. Since the argument cannot be codified as a direct object (this position is occupied by the reference noun *pietà*), it is introduced by the prepositional phrase *de le mie gravi pene*.

The corpus analysis reveals that *prendere* LVCs can embed subordinate clauses. In these cases, since the internal argument structure is saturated by the referential object, prepositions can be used as complementizers to in-

11 An all-purpose Italian corpus sizing 14,514,566,714 tokens and covering the largest possible variety of genres, topics, text types and web sources. Recommended for both general use as well as specialized language. The corpus is investigated through Sketch Engine platform.

roduce subordinated infinitive clauses. An example of this pattern can be viewed in (22):

- (22) *prendo ardimento di inviarle alcuni pochi frutti* (PER₃_MAR_LETT₀₂)
'I dare (lit. take daring) to send you few fruits'

The external argument structure of *prendere ardimento* LVC, denoting the action of daring, requires an extra argument, i.e., what is dared, which – according to the semantics of the LVC – is usually an action or an event.

Several examples show more complex structures characterized by multiple arguments taking part to the event coded by the LVC. This is the case of the following sentence:

- (23) *il padre [...] ha preso consiglio meco sopra tal fatto.* (TEA₃_ARE_IPOC₀₀)
'the father has consulted me (lit. has taken suggestion) about this affair'

The meaning of *prendere consiglio* refers to the event of consulting, which involves several actors participating in verbal action. Thus, in the external argument structure three arguments may be realized: (a) the consulter, usually codified as a subject; (b) the consulted, usually coded as an object; and (c) the matter of the consultation, usually coded by a prepositional phrase. Analyzing the case of *prendere consiglio*, since in the internal argument structure the object position is saturated by the reference noun, the consulted participant (b) is codified as a comitative and is introduced by the prepositional phrases *meco* 'with me'. The consulter and the matter of consultation are regularly codified as subject and as prepositional phrase headed by *sopra* 'about', respectively.

3.4. Dare LVCs

Dare LVCs are the last constructions analysed in this paper. The corpus investigation reveals 997 sequences that employ *dare* as a Light Verb. Similarly, to the constructions analysed so far, *dare* LVCs can embed concrete nouns showing metaphorical reinterpretation. Example (24) shows this phenomenon:

- (24) *volge le infiammate rote per dar luogo alla notte* (PER₃_MUZ_LETT₀₀)
'he turns around the flaming wheels to realize (lit. give place) the night'

The LVC *dare luogo* embeds a reference noun, whose core meaning designates a place in the spatial domain. Nevertheless, its meaning in the sequence does not entail any reference to spatial entities, because it denotes the action of producing some entities.

The corpus analysis reveals that *dare* LVCs can also embed event nouns, as shown in the sentence below:

- (25) *ottiene più trionfi che non dà assalti* (PER₃_MAR_LETT₀₁)
'he obtains more victories than he assaults (lit. gives assaults)'

In these cases, the meaning of the entire LVC corresponds to the event designated by the embedded noun *assalti*. It is worth noticing that the Italian synthetic verb *assaltare* 'to assault' can denote the same values expressed by the analytic construction and that, from a morphological point of view, the event noun *assalti* is overtly linked to the synthetic verb, since they share the same lexical root *assalt-*. In these constructions the Light Verb shows a vague meaning, indicating the predicative traits of the construction without adding other lexical information. There are other cases in which *dare* LVCs combine with event nouns carrying the verbal traits of constructions, as shown by the next sentence:

- (26) *se Dio gli darà vita* (PER₃_CEL_VITA₀₀)
'if God will give birth (lit. give life)'

In the example above, the action of giving birth is denoted metaphorically through the analytic sequence *dare vita*. In this construction the generation of a human being is conceptualized as a transfer of possession of life (i.e., the thing given) that moves from a participant (i.e., the giver) to another (i.e., the receiver).

The corpus analysis reveals that *dare* LVCs can embed nouns denoting psychological feeling, as the next example shows:

- (27) *so che vi ha dato fastidio* (PER₃_ARE_LETT₀₀)
'I know that it bothered you (lit. gave you bother)'

In the sentence above, the LVC, which indicates the action of bothering, embeds the noun *fastidio* referring to the psychological state or sensation of feeling annoyance. Also, in this example the constructional meaning is characterized by metaphorical reinterpretation: the evoking of an emotional state is

represented as an action of giving, that is, the passage of the psychological state from the giver, i.e., the participant evoking the feeling, to the receiver, i.e., the participant feeling the psychological state. Indeed, the target meaning of the entire construction is more abstract than the original values of giving.¹² It is worth noticing that, even if these instances of *dare* LVC are characterized by metaphorical reinterpretation, which often leads to more abstract value, the meaning of this construction is still quite compositional.

Nevertheless, data analysis shows several instances of *dare* LVCs without a compositional value, as the following passage exemplifies:

- (28) *parlare in quel tenore per dar animo a cardinali suoi* (LET₃_SAR_ISTO₀₀)
'to speak that way to comfort (lit. to give soul) his cardinals'

The LVC *dare animo* designates the action of comforting or consoling. Nevertheless, no semantic traits of the constructional meaning can be found in the nuclear values of its components out of the construction, since neither *dare* nor the noun *animo* refer to the action of comforting. Thus, in this case the metaphorical shift does not apply only to the Light Verb *dare*, as seen in example (27), but it also applies to the meaning of the embedded noun. The extension of metaphorical reinterpretation to nouns leads to the idiosyncratic reading of the whole construction. Similar cases of fully metaphorical LVCs can be found in constructions embedding body part nouns.¹³

- (29) *cominci [...] a dar orecchio ed assenso alla vera e buona filosofia* (SCI₃_GAL_LETT₀₀)
'he began to listen and approve (lit. to give ear and approval) real and good philosophy'

The LVC *dare orecchio* refers to the activity of listening. Even if a paradigmatic relationship between the target meaning of listening and the body part noun *orecchio* can be easily identified (the ear is the organ devoted to acoustic perception), the source meaning does not overtly refer to the listening activity. Thus, in this case the semantic reinterpretation leading to the constructional values regards both metaphorical and metonymical shifts. The metaphorical

12 A general overview on theoretical and methodological issues of metaphorical mapping can be seen in Lakoff and Johnson 1980.

13 For an overall account of LVCs embedding body part nouns in Old Italian we refer to Ganfi and Piunno 2019.

shift can be identified in the reinterpretation of concrete values, i.e., the action of giving as a change of possession, into more abstract ones, that is, an unspecific activity designated by *dare*. The metonymical shift concerns the coding of the target meaning, i.e., the activity of listening, paradigmatically linked to the source value, that is, the ears. From a structural point of view, it is worth noticing that the LVC embeds two coordinated reference nouns, *orecchio e assenso*, characterized by different semantic properties. In fact, *orecchio* refers to a concrete meaning, while *assenso* denotes a process. Nevertheless, the constructional values refer to two different processes, since in the case of *orecchio* the above analyzed reinterpretation has taken place.

Regarding the argument structure, the analysis of *dare* LVCs differs from the other ones studied in this paper, since *dare* as Light Verb presents a ditransitive argument structure, involving a giver, coded as subject, a given entity, coded as object, and the beneficiary, coded as indirect object, i.e., a prepositional phrase headed by *a*. Thus, in the case in which two arguments are engaged in the external argument structure, the second participant can be coded as the beneficiary, as shown in the next example:

- (30) *cominciò a dare opera alla musica* (PER₃_CEL_VITA₀₀)
 ‘he began practicing (lit. giving work) music’

The LVC *dare opera* refers to the action of practicing and entails (a) a first argument identifying the practicing participant, coded as subject, and (b) a second one coding the practiced thing, coded as indirect object. Of course, the second argument of the external argument structure *musica* cannot be coded as object since the noun *opera* fills the object syntactic position of the internal argument structure.

When further participants are engaged in situations characterized by *dare* LVCs, they are introduced by other prepositional phrases, as the following sentence shows:

- (31) *hanno dato cognizione di loro al mondo* (PER₃_CEL_VITA₀₀)
 ‘they popularized (lit. gave awareness) them to the world’

The action of popularizing, designated by *dare cognizione* LVC, involves three participants that have to be coded in the external argument structure: (a) the agent, that is, the popularizer, realized as the subject, (b) the patient, i.e., the

person/people who is/are popularized, introduced through a prepositional phrase headed by *di*, and (c) the experiencer of the popularizing, i.e., the person/people who know(s) the popularized participant, designated as indirect object. As highlighted above, the direct object position is saturated by the reference noun and hence cannot code participants involved in the external argument structure. It is worth noticing that in this sentence the LVC shows a causative function,¹⁴ since it introduces a further participant to the event of (acquiring) awareness, designated by the predicative noun. A comparison among *avere* and *dare* LVCs embedding the same reference noun *cognizione* reveals this causative function of *dare* Light Verb:

- (32) *senza aver cognizione della lingua greca e latina* (LET₃_SPE_DLIN₀₀)
'without knowing (lit. having awareness) Greek and Latin languages'

While in the example above *avere cognizione* LVC designates an action of knowing, the corresponding *dare cognizione* LVC in (31) maintains the same referential value, adding a participant who popularizes knowledge to the argument structure of the predicate.

It is worth noting that in LCVs' Italian system *dare* and *avere* can be used to represent the same predicative content according to different diathetic values. The following examples, in which the same reference noun *fede* combines with the two Light Verbs *avere* and *dare*, show similar situations represented in different diathetic perspectives:

- (33) *ciascune lettere di cambio s'intendano havere fede solamente un'anno* (GIU₃_MERC_BOL₀₀)
'all bills of exchange are considered to be valid (lit. having trust) only one year'
- (34) *si debba dar fede alli Libri* (GIU₃_BAN_GHET₀₀)
'they should trust (lit. give trust) to the books'

In (33) the LVC *avere fede* means that the subject can be considered trustworthy, while in (34) the LVC *dare fede* indicates the fact that the subject trusts another participant (i.e., *li Libri*). Thus, from a semantic perspective, the construction in (33) is similar to a passive equivalent of the sequence in (34).

14 We refer to Simone and Cerbasi 2001 for theoretical and functional remarks on causativity in Italian.

4. *Final Remarks*

Our inquiry of 1400s-1660s Italian texts has shown a significant use of *fare*, *avere*, *prendere*, and *dare* LVCs in the investigated data. It must be stressed that LVCs are often used, even if semantically equivalent synthetic verbs are attested in the Italian lexicon. LVCs' frequency may be linked to the stylistic choice of writers willing to increase the lexical and syntagmatic variability of texts. Even if LVCs are often viewed as features of contemporary Italian bureaucratic texts (Cortellazzo and Pellegrino 2003), the textual analysis conducted in this article on 15th-17th-century texts reveals that they are widespread even across different textual genres. Further quantitative analysis could highlight possible differences in the use of LVCs among several genres. This could show which genres are characterized by the prevalence of LVCs over synthetic verbs. Furthermore, a diachronic inquiry extended to other periods could highlight differences in preference of LVCs over synthetic verb forms among other historical phases.

As far as semantic analysis is concerned, LVCs can show both metaphorical and compositional readings. Thus, on the one hand, some LVCs embed concrete nouns that do not carry any traits of their original referential value, since they are characterized by a metaphorical shift, e.g., *avere luogo*. On the other hand, other LVCs show a compositional reading, since constructional meaning can be derived by the sum of its components, e.g., *avere potestà*. When a metaphorical shift applies to both the Light Verbs and the embedded nouns, the whole construction tends to lack compositional meaning, showing an idiosyncratic value. Different LVCs can present similar meanings when they select synonymous nouns: this phenomenon increases the polymorphism of the investigated constructions.

Furthermore, our study has emphasized the significance of opposition between internal and external argument structures to study syntactic schemata of LVCs. Thus, the internal argument structure of LVCs is often saturated by referential nouns, since Light Verbs are mainly transitive verbs or ditransitive, i.e., *dare*. Nevertheless, since LVCs, as complex units, have a constructional meaning, other arguments required by the external argument structures can be codified using other syntactic strategies. It is worth noting that the external argument structure of LVCs can entail the presence of embedded clauses, introduced by complementizers and headed by the Light Verb. Also in this respect, LVCs share inter-clausal properties of synthetic verbs.

Bibliography

- Alonso Ramos, Margarita. 1991. "Verbes supports et fonctions lexicales." *Linguisticae Investigationes* 15: 203-23.
- Alonso Ramos, Margarita. 2004. *Las construcciones con verbo de apoyo*. Madrid: Visor.
- Bosque, Ignacio. 2001. "On the Weight of Light Predicates." In *Features and Interfaces in Romance*, edited by Julia Herschenson, Enrique Mallén and Karen Zagona, 23-38. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Bosque, Ignacio. 2004. "Combinatoria y significación. Algunas reflexiones." In *REDES. Diccionario combinatorio del español contemporáneo*, lxxvii-clxxiv. Madrid: SM.
- Bustos Plaza, Alberto. 2005. *Combinaciones verbonominales institucionalizadas y lexicalizadas*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Butt, Miriam. 2010. "The Light Verb Jungle: Still Hacking Away." In *Complex Predicates: Cross-linguistic Perspectives on Event Structure*, edited by Mengistu Amberber, Brett Baker and Mark Harvey, 48-78. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cantarini, Sibilla. 2004. *Costrutti con verbo supporto*. Bologna: Pàtron.
- Cicalese, Anna. 1999. "Le estensioni di verbo supporto: uno studio introduttivo." *Studi italiani di linguistica teorica e applicata* 28, no. 3: 447-87.
- Cortellazzo, Michele and Pellegrino, Federica. 2003. *Guida alla scrittura istituzionale*. Roma and Bari: Laterza.
- D'Achille, Paolo and Grossmann, Maria. 2017. *Per la storia della formazione delle parole in italiano: un nuovo corpus in rete (MIDIA) e nuove prospettive di studio*. Firenze: Franco Cesati.
- De Miguel, Elena. 2006. "Tensión y equilibrio semántico entre nombres y verbos: el reparto de la tarea de predicar." In *Actas del XXXV Simposio de la Sociedad Española de Lingüística*, edited by Milka Villayandre Llamazares, 1289-313. León: Ediciones del Dpto. de Filología Hispánica y Clásica, Universidad de León.

De Miguel, Elena. 2007. "El peso relativo de los nombres y los verbos: cambios, ampliaciones, reducciones y pérdidas del significado verbal." In *Ex admiratione et amicitia. Homenaje a Ramón Santiago*, edited by Alicia Puigvert Ocal and Inmaculada Delgado Cobos, 295-326. Madrid: Ediciones del Orto.

De Miguel, Elena. 2008. "Construcciones con verbos de apoyo en español. De cómo entran los nombres en la órbita de los verbos." In *Actas del XXXVII simposio internacional de la Sociedad Española de Lingüística*, edited by Inés Olza Moreno, Manuel Casado Velarde and Ramón González Ruiz, 567-78. Pamplona: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Navarra.

Elia, Annibale, D'Agostino, Emilio and Martinelli, Maurizio. 1985. "Tre componenti della sintassi italiana: frasi semplici, frasi a verbo supporto e frasi idiomatiche." In *Sintassi e morfologia della lingua italiana d'uso. Teorie e applicazioni descrittive. Atti del XVII congresso internazionale della Società di Linguistica Italiana (Urbino. 11-13 settembre 1983)*, edited by Annalisa Franchi De Bellis and Leonardo Maria Savoia, 311-25. Roma: Bulzoni.

Ganfi, Vittorio and Piunno, Valentina. 2019. "Costruzioni a verbo supporto con nomi di parti del corpo in italiano antico e contemporaneo." In *Verbi supporto, fenomeni e teorie*, edited by Anna Pompei and Lunella Mereu, 187-222. Munich: LINCOM GmbH.

Giry-Schneider, Jacqueline. 1987. *Les prédicats nominaux en français: les phrases à verbe support*. Geneva: Droz.

Gross, Gaston. 1989. *Les constructions converses du français*. Geneva: Droz.

Gross, Gaston. 1993. "Trois applications de la notion de verbe support." *L'Information grammaticale* 59: 16-23.

Gross, Gaston. 1996. *Les expressions figées en français. Noms composés et autres locutions*. Paris: Ophrys.

Gross, Gaston. 2004. "Pour un Bescherelle des prédicats nominaux." *Linguisticae Investigationes* 27, no. 2: 343-58.

Gross, Gaston. 2012. *Manuel d'analyse linguistique. Approche sémantico-syntaxique du lexique*. Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion.

Gross, Gaston and de Pontonx, Sophie, eds. 2004. *Verbes supports. Nouvel état des lieux*. Special issue of *Linguisticae Investigationes* 27, no. 2.

Gross, Maurice. 1981. "Les bases empiriques de la notion de prédicat sémantique." *Langages* 63: 8-50.

Gross, Maurice. 1982. "Une classification des phrases figées du français." *Revue Québécoise de Linguistique* 11, no. 2: 151-85.

Gross, Maurice. 1986. "Lexicon-Grammar. The Representation of Compound Words." *COLING* 1: 1-6.

Gross, Maurice. 1988. "Sur les phrases figées complexes du français." *Langue française* 77: 47-70.

Gross, Maurice. 1990. *Grammaire transformationnelle du français*. Paris: AS-STRIL.

Ježek, Elisabetta. 2004. "Types et degrés de verbes supports en italien. *Verbes supports*." *Linguisticae Investigationes* 27, no. 2: 185-201.

Ježek, Elisabetta. 2005. *Lessico. Classi di parole, strutture, combinazioni*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Ježek, Elisabetta. 2011. "Verbes support et composition sémantique." *Cahiers de Lexicologie* 1: 29-44.

La Fauci, Nunzio. 1997. "Sulla struttura proposizionale delle costruzioni con nome predicativo e verbo supporto." In *Scribthair a ainm n-ogaim. Scritti in memoria di E. Campanile*, edited by Riccardo Ambrosini, Maria Patrizia Bologna, Filippo Motta and Chatia Orlandi, 467-90. Pisa: Pacini.

La Fauci, Nunzio and Mirto, Ignazio Mauro. 2003. *Fare. Elementi di sintassi*. Pisa: Edizioni ETS.

Lakoff, George and Johnson, Mark. 1980. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Levin, Beth and Rappaport, Hovav. 1995. *Unaccusativity and the Syntax-Lexical Interface*. Boston: MIT University Press.

Marini, Emanuela. 2013. "Deux démarches pour un lexique-grammaire des verbes supports latins." In *Acta XIV Colloquii Internationalis Linguisticae Latinae*, edited by Concepción Cabrillana and Christian Lehmann, 373-89. Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas.

Martinez-Blasco, Iván. 2008. "Verbos soporte y fijación léxica." In *Las construcciones verbo-nominales libres y fijadas. Aproximación contrastiva y traductológica*, edited by Pedro Mogorrón Huerta and Salah Mejri, 47-59. Alicante: Universidad de Alicante.

Mastrofini, Roberta. 2004. "Classi di costruzioni a verbo supporto in italiano: implicazioni semantico-sintattiche nel paradigma V + N." *Studi italiani di linguistica teorica e applicata* 33, no. 3: 371-98.

Mastrofini, Roberta. 2005. "On the Nature of Italian Light Verb Extensions." In *Proceedings of the Third International Workshop on Generative Approaches to the Lexicon, Geneva, 19-21 May 2005*, edited by Pierrette Bouillon and Kyoko Kanzaki, 149-58. Geneva: University of Geneva.

Mastrofini, Roberta. 2013. *Classi di verbi inglesi tra pesantezza e leggerezza*. Roma: Aracne.

Mendivil Giró, José Luis. 1999. *Las palabras disgregadas. Sintaxis de las expresiones idiomáticas y los predicados complejos*. Zaragoza: Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza.

Moncó Taracena, Sofia. 2011. "Étude contrastive des verbes *dar* (espagnol) et *faire* (français)." In *Méthodes et analyses comparatives en Sciences du langage. Actes de la 3eme édition des Journées d'Etudes Toulousaines*, 125-34.

Pompei, Anna. 2017. "Verbi con struttura [V + SP] e verbi supporto. Proprietà e test." *Studi e Saggi Linguistici* 55, no. 2: 109-36.

Pompei, Anna. 2023. "How Light Is 'Give' as a Light Verb? A Case Study on the Actionality of Latin Light Verb Constructions (With Some References to Romance Languages)." In *Light Verbs Construction as Complex Verbs: Features, Typology and Function*, edited by Anna Pompei, Lunetta Mereu and Valentina Piunno, 149-200. Berlin and New York: Mouton-De Gruyter.

Pompei, Anna and Piunno, Valentina. 2023. "Light Verb Constructions in Romance languages. An Attempt to Explain Systematic Irregularity." In *Light Verbs Construction as Complex Verbs: Features, Typology and Function*, edited by Anna Pompei, Lunetta Mereu and Valentina Piunno, 99-148. Berlin and New York: Mouton-De Gruyter.

Pompei, Anna, Mereu, Lunella and Piunno, Valentina. 2023. "Introduction." In *Light Verbs Construction as Complex Verbs: Features, Typology and Function*, edited by Anna Pompei, Lunetta Mereu and Valentina Piunno, 1-16. Berlin and New York: Mouton-De Gruyter.

Samvelian, Pollet Laurence Danlos and Sagot, Benoît. 2011. "On the Predictability of Light Verbs." In *Penser le Lexique-Grammaire, perspectives actuelles*, edited by Fryni Kakoyianni-Doa, 209-22. Paris: Éditions Honoré Champion.

Sanromán Vilas, Begoña. 2011. "The Unbearable Lightness of Light Verbs. Are they Semantically Empty Verbs?" In *Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Meaning-Text Theory*, edited by Igor Boguslavsky and Leo Wanner, 253-63. <http://olst.ling.umontreal.ca/pdf/proceedingsMTT2011.pdf> (accessed 5 November 2023).

Sanromán Vilas, Begoña. 2009. "Towards a Semantically Oriented Selection of the Values of Oper_i. The Case of *Golpe* 'Blow' in Spanish." In *Proceedings of MTT 2009*. Montreal: Université de Montréal, 327-37.

Sanromán Vilas, Begoña. 2014. "La alternancia *dar/hacer* en construcciones con verbo de apoyo y nombre de comunicación." *An International Journal of Hispanic linguistics* 3, no. 2: 185-222.

Sidoti, Rosanna. 2014. "Interferencias colocacionales en construcciones con verbo de apoyo + sustantivo entre lenguas fines." *Lingue e Linguaggi* 11: 215-24.

Simone, Raffaele. 2003. "Masdar, 'ismu-al-marrati et la frontière verbe/nom." In *Estudios ofrecidos al profesor José Jesús de Bustos Tovar*, edited by José Luis Girón Alconchel, Silvia Iglesias Recuero, Francisco Javier Herrero Ruiz de Loizaga, Antonio Narbona Jiménez and José Jesús de Bustos Tovar, 901-18. Madrid: Editorial Complutense.

Simone, Raffaele. 2007. "Constructions and Categories in Verbal and Signed Languages." In *Verbal and Signed Languages. Comparing Structures, Constructs, and Methodologies*, edited by Elena Pizzuto, Paola Pietrandrea and Raffaele Simone, 198-252. Berlin and New York: Mouton-De Gruyter.

Simone, Raffaele. 2008. "Coefficienti verbali nei nomi." In *Categorie del verbo. Diacronia, teoria, tipologia*, edited by Pier Marco Bertinetto, Valentina Bambini, Cristina Bertocin and Margherita Farina, 83-113. Roma: Il Calamo.

Simone, Raffaele. 2017. "Word as a Stratification of Formats." In *Di tutti i colori. Studi linguistici per Maria Grossmann*, edited by Roberta d' Alessandro, Gabriele Iannàccaro, Diana Passino and Anna M. Thornton, 335-47. Utrecht: Utrecht University Press.

Simone, Raffaele and Cerbasi, Donato. 2001. "Types and Diachronic Evolution of Causative Constructions in Romance Languages." *Romanische Forschungen* 113: 441-73.

Simone, Raffaele and Pompei, Anna. 2007. "Traits verbaux dans les noms et les formes nominalisées du verbe." *Faits de Langues* 30: 43-58.

Vivès, Robert. 1983. *Avoir, prendre, perdre: constructions à verbe support et extensions aspectuelles*. Unpublished PhD diss. Paris: LADL Université Paris 8.

Vivès, Robert. 1984. "L'Aspect dans les constructions nominales prédicatives: avoir, prendre, verbe support et extension aspectuelle." *Linguisticae Investigationes* 3, no. 1: 161-85.

Vivès, Robert. 1988. "Verbes supports et nominalisations." *Lexique* 6: 139-59.

Wierzbicka, Anna. 1982. "Why Can you *Have a Drink* When you Can't *Have an Eat*?" *Language* 58: 753-99.

List of Corpora

MIDIA corpus: <https://www.corpusmidia.unito.it/> (accessed 25 June 2023).

Sketch Engine: <https://app.sketchengine.eu> (accessed 25 June 2023).

Vittorio Ganfi is researcher in Glottology and Linguistics at the University of Molise. He taught Academic Writing (University of Roma Tre), General Linguistics (University of Bologna), Computational Linguistics and Modern Language Teaching (UNINT, Rome) and Glottology (University of Chieti Pescara). He held two research grants at the University of Roma Tre (2019-2020), and at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (2021-22). In 2015 he carried out a research period at the University of Santa Barbara (California), invited by Prof. Marianne Mithun. In 2022 he obtained the National Scientific Qualification (ASN) as Associate Professor. He has written a number of articles and book chapters and a monograph, focusing on the fields of linguistic typology, Romance diachronic and synchronic linguistics, sociolinguistics, dialectology and grammaticalization studies.