

### Deverbal nouns in Italian and the IP's structure of the grammar

Building on Alexioudou's (2001) work on derived nominals, in this talk, I propose a novel syntactic account of Italian de-verbal nouns. Looking at the semantic properties of each deverbal type and at the morphological properties of their verbal bases, I argue for the existence of three types of deverbal nouns, i.e., **TYPE (1)** deverbal nouns built on a VP; **TYPE (2)** deverbal nouns built on VoiceP and **TYPE (3)** deverbal nouns built on Aspect P. The data analysis will show that the derivation of Italian deverbal nouns takes place in IP-VP structure, more precisely in the section of the IP outlined in (1).

1. Aspect Durative > XP > Aspect Generic > Aspect Completive > >Voice P > Aspect Celerative(II) > Aspect Repetitive (II) > XP > VP (Cinque, 1999)

At the bottom of (1) one finds **TYPE (1)** nouns, e.g. *url-o* 'scream'. *accend-ino* 'lighter'. I argue that derivation of these nouns consists in the nominalization of an initial VP by the merger of the relevant derivational morphology, e.g., *-ino*, *-one*, *-eria* or by the merger of gender markers *-o*, *-a*. As the examples show, the verbal bases *url-* and *accend-* correspond to the verbal stems and are not semantically modified by the presence of Aspect or Voice markers.

**TYPE 2** nouns are masculine or feminine nominalizations of past participle bases, e.g., (i) *cucire* 'to sew' > *p.p.*: *cuc-ito/-ita* > *de-verbal noun*: *il cucito* 'lit. that which has been sewn, the art of sewing'; (ii) *bere* 'to drink' > *p.p.* *bev-uto/-uta* 'drunken' > *de-verbal noun*: *la bevuta* 'the act of V-ing'. I argue that the morphemes '*-at, -ut, -it*' are Voice heads merged with a VP yielding the [VoiceP [VP]] structure. Building on Cinque's (1999) analysis of past participle, I further argue that the semantic contrast between the passive meaning of masculine past participle nouns, e.g., *il pulito*, 'lit that which is clean, the cleanness', and the active meaning of feminine past participle nouns, e.g., *una pulita* 'the act of cleaning', can be explained syntactically. Active Past Participles, in fact, complete their derivation by moving from VoiceP to Aspect CompletiveP. Semantically, in fact, according to Gaeta (2000:156), the feminine past participle has the effect of bounding predicates imposing a closure on the action/event onto predicates. This explains, for instance, why unbound predicates such as 'nuotare' becomes bounded when used as Type 2 nouns, as in the following examples:

- 2a. Il nuoto rilassa i muscoli  
swimming relaxes the muscles
- 2b. \*La nuotata rilassa I muscoli (Gaeta, 2000:154)  
the act of swimming relaxes the muscles

In the derivation of Type2 nouns, the process of nominalization is triggered for masculine nouns by the merger of a non-referential null nominal head, N0, and by the merger of the feminine gender marker [a], whose derivational nature has been suggested in Scalise (1983) and demonstrated in Ferrari-Bridgers (2004), for feminine nouns

Relatively to **TYPE 3**, these nouns are divided in three sub-classes according to their different aspectual morphology.

Class (I) consists of de-verbal nouns built on Cinque's Aspect CelerativeP/Aspect RepetitiveP (II), e.g., *gocciol-ì-o* 'constant dripping; *tacchett-ì-o* 'rapid sounds of heels'. I argue that the morpheme 'ì' is an aspectual head that modifies the initial semantics of the predicate. Among other relevant factors, my assumption is based on Castelli's (1988:336) and by Gaeta's (2000:114-116) observation on the incompatibility of [ìo] with expressions of time that do not denote repetitiveness of the action/event as illustrated in (3).

- 3a. Il dondolio della culla e' durato a lungo  
the rocking of the cradle lasted long time
- 3b. \*il dondolio della culla e' stato improvviso  
The rocking of the cradles has been suddenly (Gaeta 2000:114)

Class II consists of nominalized infinitives that, following Cinque (1999), I argue being built on Continuative/Durative aspect projections. Semantically, according to Gaeta's (2000:121-122) nominalized infinitives refer to temporally unbound situations representing a process/event without focusing on its completion and they are incompatible with predicate or temporal expression indicating the completion of the action/event as indicated in (4).

- 4a. Il gocciolare del lavandino dura già da due ore (Gaeta, 2000:122)  
the dripping of the sink has been going on for the past two hours
- 4b. \*l'insegnare l'italiano e' stato completato in un semestre  
the teaching of Italian has been completed in a semester

Morphologically, infinitive verbal bases are marked by thematic vowels '-a,-e,-i', e.g., *nuot-a-re*, *accend-e-re*, *cuc-i-re*. I argue that thematic vowels are also aspectual morphemes that are exclusively found on infinitives. The merger of a null non-referential head with Continuative or Durative AspectP triggers the nominalization of infinitives.

Class III consists of derived nouns built on Generic Aspect via the merger of the relevant derivational morphemes, *-aggio -trice, -to(r)io, -tore*. e.g., *lav-a-toio* 'place where to wash', *lava-ggio*, 'vend-i-tore' 'seller' *cuc-i-trice*. I argue that the end vocalic segments [-a,-i,-i] on the verbal bases, e.g., *lav-a-ggio*, *vend-i-tore*, *cuc-i-trice* are Generic Aspect morphemes. Generic Aspect indicates an action habitually performed or is used to describe "the typical or characteristic properties of a kind." Dahl (1985:95-97). Class III deverbal nouns pass Carlson et al. (1995:7)'s genericity tests, i.e., they can be paraphrased into generic expressions with the construction 'is used to' or with the adverb 'usually'. For instance, (I) 'cuc-i-trice' paraphrases as 'machine that is used to sew'; (II) 'vend-i-tore' is a person whose typical characteristic is to sell' and (III) 'lava-toio is a place where one usually washes'. Finally, I will provide a separate account for deverbal nouns ending in *-mento, -zione/sione* and *-tura*. Although these nouns are morphologically built on a Generic Aspect base, their semantics suggests a more complex syntactic structure, i.e., [Generic Aspect P [Completive Aspect [VP]]]. As Gaeta's contrastive examples in (5) indicate, many of these de-verbal nouns describe a bound action/event.

- 5a. L'insegnamento del latino e' stato completato  
the teaching of Latin has been completed
- 5b. \*l'insegnare del latino e' stato completato  
the teaching of Latin has been completed

To conclude the analysis will interestingly reveals how the semantic and the morphological information of each derived nominal type are reflected on its syntactic derivation.