

Microvariation in the second form of the infinitive in Campania: the case of the Valle Caudina

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Received: 04-05-2023
Accepted: 23-12-2023
Published: 14-03-2024

How to cite: Groothuis, Kim A. & Mirella De Sisto. 2024. Microvariation in the second form of the infinitive in Campania: the case of the Valle Caudina. RLLT22, eds Anna Gavarró, Jaume Mateu, Jon Ander Mendià & Francesc Torres-Tamarit. Special Issue of *Isogloss. Open Journal of Romance Linguistics* 10(3)/6, 1-22.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/isogloss.340>

Abstract

Campanian dialects such as Neapolitan feature a so-called ‘second form of the infinitive’ (SFI), a form consisting of the bare verbal stem, which can be used after functional verbs. This paper addresses the microvariation concerning the construction by analysing novel data from the Valle Caudina, located to the northeast of Naples. The SFI is frequently found specifically with the imperative *va* ‘go!’. In Neapolitan, the form has been reanalysed as an imperatival form in this context, yielding an asyndetic imperative. At a first glance, the use of the SFI in Valle Caudina looks very similar to its Neapolitan counterpart, but unlike Neapolitan, the SFI in these varieties has remained non-finite and has not been reanalysed as an imperative. These dialects can thus be considered a previous stage of the development described for Neapolitan by Ledgeway (1997, 2007, 2009). This claim finds support in the absence of metathonetic forms - which have appeared in Neapolitan, as a consequence of the reanalysis - as well as the presence of clitic climbing. Finally, unlike Neapolitan, the SFI is becoming less productive in the varieties of the Valle Caudina.

Keywords: Campanian dialects, microvariation, second form infinitive, reanalysis, imperative.

1. Introduction

Neapolitan, like other varieties spoken in Southern Italy, features a so-called ‘second form of the infinitive’ (henceforth SFI, cf. Rohlfs 1966: para. 315; Ledgeway 1997; Ledgeway 2007; Ledgeway 2009: 555–558), a form consisting of the bare verbal stem¹, e.g. [‘kandə] ‘to sing’ (SFI), distinct from the canonical infinitive [kan’ta] ‘to sing’.

Historically, the SFI, when preceded by *a* ‘to’, could be used with the imperative of the motion verbs *veni* ‘to come’ and *jì* ‘to go’. This is still attested in other southern Italian varieties, such as the one of Grumo Appula (spoken in Puglia) (1):

(1) Grumo Appula, Colasuonno (1976: xxxiii)

Vin’	a	ssénde!
come-IMP.2SG	to	listen-SFI
‘Come listen!’		

In contexts like (1), the SFI was reanalysed as an imperative in Neapolitan, leading to the omission of the complementiser *a* ‘to’. The result is an asyndetic imperative construction, as in (2) (see Ledgeway (1997) for a detailed diachronic account):

(2) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 232)

Va	spànnē	’e	panne	nfuse!
go-IMP.2SG	hang-SFI/IMP.2SG	the	clothes	wet
‘Go and hang out the washing!’				

While the history and use of this form has been well described for Neapolitan, the microvariation in the SFI in the broader region of Campania has not yet received much attention in the literature. The present paper aims to address this gap by presenting and analysing novel data from the dialect spoken in Valle Caudina (located in the province of Benevento, to the northeast of Naples), where the SFI shows a much more restricted distribution. The paper is structured as follows: in §2 we will briefly discuss the data from Neapolitan as described by Ledgeway (1997; 2009: 555–558); in §3 we introduce the area of the Valle Caudina and explain how we have collected our data, which are presented in §4; §5 presents a preliminary analysis and §6 concludes the paper.

2. The SFI in imperative constructions in Neapolitan

The presence of an SFI is attested in an area ranging from Lazio through Campania as far as Lucania (Rohlfs 1966: §315). It must be a relatively recent innovation, as it can

¹ In fact, Ledgeway (2009: 555) prefers this term to SFI.

only have originated after the systematic apocope of the infinitival ending *-re* which occurred in the 19th century (cf. Ledgeway 2009: 548).

Ledgeway (1997) suggests that this form constitutes an instance of a phonological rule in Neapolitan, which allows clitics to cause stress shifts on their hosts for word-optimisation purposes; in this case it avoids oxytonic forms by retracting stress to the penultimate syllable. According to this claim, this rule would be comparable and somehow related to the stress shift which occurs when two enclitics are attached to an imperative, as in (3), in order to avoid a proparoxytonic form:

(3) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 251)
 Spiancèllo!
 ask-IMP.2SG=DAT.3SG=ACC.3SG
 ‘Ask him/her it!’

When an infinitive is used as a complement of functional verbs (e.g. *sapé* ‘to know how to’, *vulé* ‘to want’/future marker, *lassà* ‘to let’, *stà a* ‘to be -ing’), Ledgeway (1997: 238) argues that a similar stress shift can happen, i.e. the clitic form of the auxiliary (i.e. a monosyllabic form) causes a stress retraction on the infinitive (see (4)):

(4) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 238)
 Chi ppô mmàgna c"o tempo ca
 who can-3SG eat-SFI with=the weather that
 fà?
 do-3SG
 ‘Who can eat with weather like this?’

This stress shift has led to the appearance of an SFI.

The use of the SFI is never obligatory, it can always be replaced by the canonical form of the infinitive. Moreover, it is also restricted to the complement of functional verbs, as not every regular infinitive can be substituted by the SFI (cf. (5) vs (6)):

(5) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 237)
 Va te fa' ngrasse/ ngrassà!
 go you=do-INF fatten.up-SFI/ fatten.up-INF
 ‘Go and fatten up!’

(6) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 237)
 Te vulevamo purtà/*pùrta a tte nu rialo cchiù granne.
 to-you=want-IPFV.1SG bring-INF/bring-SFI to you a gift more big
 ‘We wanted to bring you a bigger present.’

The SFI is also attested as negative imperative:

(7) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 245)
 Nun 'o glio!t!
 NEG it=swallow-SFI
 ‘Don’t swallow it!’

This use is explained by assuming a null imperative head (Ledgeway 2009: 558; Zanuttini 1997: 105–154) which takes the SFI as its complement.

The SFI could – at least historically – also be used with the imperative of motion verbs *venì* ‘to come’ and *jì* ‘to go’, preceded by *a* ‘to’ (8). Given that for many verbs, the SFI is homophonous with the second singular imperative form, the SFI was reanalysed as imperative when occurring with *va* ‘go’.² Subsequently, the complementiser *a* ‘to’ was dropped, yielding an asyndetic imperative construction, as in (9):

(8) Grumo Appula, Colasuonno (1976: xxxii)

Vin’ a ssénde!
come-IMP.2SG to listen-SFI
'Come listen!'

(9) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 232)

Va spànn'e panne infuse!
go-IMP.2SG hang-SFI/IMP.2SG the clothes wet
'Go and hang out the washing!'

This reanalysis led to the appearance of metathetic imperative forms (cf. (10) and (11)). Metaphony is a phonological phenomenon whereby the quality of the stressed vowel changes (viz. it raises or diphthongises) because of the presence of a high vowel ([i] or [u]) in posttonic position (Rohlfs 1966; Maiden 1991; Ledgeway 2009). In Neapolitan, high-mid and low-mid vowels are typically subject to metaphony (Maiden 1991; Ledgeway 2009). Since second-person imperative forms of the second, third and fourth conjugation (underlyingly)³ end in *-i*, the imperative forms of those verbs feature the metathetic variant of the verbal stem, unlike the canonical or second form of the infinitive. The appearance of metathetic forms is thus evidence that the SFI has been reanalysed as an imperative. However, as Ledgeway (1997: 240) notes, these metathetic forms are not invariably grammatical, because metaphony has not completely morphologised in second person imperatives from the first conjugation (which end in *-a*, and thus historically did not undergo metaphony). Some verbs, e.g. *s'assetta* (‘to sit down’) allow metathetic imperatives (used also in asyndetic imperatives as in (11)), but others do not (e.g. (12)).

² An anonymous reviewer asks whether the opposite reanalysis could also have happened, i.e. an imperative was reanalysed as an alternative infinitival form. This scenario seems unlikely to us. If the original construction had been a paratactic one, we would expect traces of the coordinator in the form of initial doubling of the consonant (*raddoppiamento fonosintattico*) on the second verb, contrary to fact. It is also unclear why a form reanalysed as an alternative infinitive form should be limited to appearing only with monosyllabic functional verbs, as the SFI is.

³ Final vowels are generally neutralised to [ə] in these varieties (except /a/ which seems more resistant) (see, for instance, Sornicola (1997)).

(10) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 240)
 Va te viéste.
 go-IMP.2SG you=dress-IMP.2SG
 ‘go and get dressed’

(11) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 240)
 Viene t’assiétte.
 come-IMP.2SG you=sit.down-IMP.2SG
 ‘come and sit down’

(12) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (1997: 240)
 Va te cócca / *cucche⁴
 go-IMP.2SG you=lay.down-SFI lay.down-IMP.2SG
 ‘Go to bed!’

The diachronic process leading to the asyndetic imperative can be schematised as in (13) and is an interesting case of a non-finite form becoming more finite⁵ (Ledgeway 2007):

(13) Ledgeway (1997: 245)
 [va [a bbestìrete]]
 [vatte a bbestìre_i [t_i]] → [vatte a bbestì_i [t_i]]
 [vatte a bbèste_i [t_i]] → [va [te vèste]]
 [va] [te viéste]

In the first stage, the imperative *va* ‘go’ takes a canonical infinitive as a complement; this triggers restructuring (visible in the clitic climbing, *te* enclitises on *va*). In the second stage, the infinitival ending *-re* is lost, and the stress shifts to the root (yielding an SFI). This leads to third stage in which there has been the reanalysis of the SFI as an imperative and the omission of *a*. *Vèste* is a form which continues to exist (albeit marginally). It is a hybrid between an infinitive and an imperative: given the absence of metaphony, it cannot be analysed as an imperative, but unlike the canonical infinitive, the infinitival complementiser *a* is optional (though for some speakers it is still possible to have the complementiser, cf. Ledgeway (1997: 245)).

⁴ As an anonymous reviewer points out, the imperative *cócca* does not end in a high vowel and metaphony is therefore unexpected. However, metaphony has spread (but not systematically) also to verb forms which did not historically show it, such as 2sg imperatives of the first conjugation (Ledgeway 1997: 240-241, Ledgeway 2009: 59).

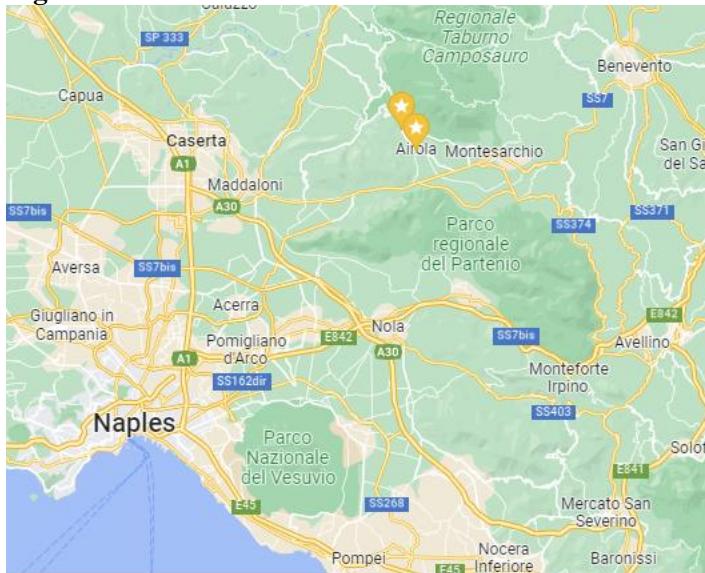
⁵ We follow Ledgeway (2007) here, but, as an anonymous reviewer points out, the status of imperatives as finite is far from clear, cf. e.g. Heine (2016) for discussion.

3. Data collection

3.1. The varieties of Valle Caudina

In this paper, we focus on the varieties spoken in the Valle Caudina, a valley located in the province of Benevento, to the northeast of Naples, between the cities of Caserta and Benevento. The two main locations of our fieldwork (Airola and Moiano) are indicated with stars on the map in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Valle Caudina



Source: Google Maps

The internal classification of the varieties spoken in Campania is a complex and highly debated issue (Radtke 1997; Avolio 2000; Del Puente & Fanciullo 2004; De Blasi 2006; Maturi 2023: 101–103). Historically we can distinguish at least three main dialectal areas in Campania: (i) the coastal area (comprising Naples, Salerno, and the Terra di Lavoro), (ii) Irpinia-Sannio (provinces of Avellino and Benevento respectively), and (iii) Cilento (which was historically part of Lucania).

The Valle Caudina (VC, henceforth) can be considered a transition area between Neapolitan and the dialects of the Sannio. Avolio (2000: 25) classifies the dialects of VC as *napoletano orientale* ('eastern Neapolitan'), but there are quite a few differences between the dialects of VC and Neapolitan. For instance, unlike Neapolitan, the gerund ending *-enno* has been generalised to all verb conjugations, e.g. VC *parlennə* vs. Neapolitan *parlannə* 'speaking' (cf. Maturi 2002: 215–216; Avolio 2000: 25). Another difference is that metaphony is still productive in VC dialects (De Sisto 2014: 14, 21–25), while it appears to be receding in the Neapolitan area (Vitolo 2005: 147). At the same time, the dialects spoken in the Valle Caudina differ from the Sannio varieties spoken in the northern and eastern part of the province of Benevento. Some features of VC which distinguish it from the dialects of the Sannio Beneventano (also called *alto Sannio*) include the lack of palatalisation of stressed [a] in VC, the different outcome of the cluster FL- in word-initial position and the perfective auxiliary system (De Blasi 2006: 57).

Also with respect to the use of the SFI used with imperatives of motion verbs, there are several differences which set the varieties of Valle Caudina apart from Neapolitan, as will become clear in §4.

3.2. Methodology

Fieldwork was carried out by the authors in two phases. The first phase, a pilot study, took place in July-August 2022. The sentences of interest for this paper were fillers for another study on the dialects of the VC. In total, six informants were interviewed. Five out of six were born in Moiano, one in Durazzano. The age of the speakers fell into three groups: 60-70 (n = 3), 50-60 (n = 2), 30-40 (n = 1). The speakers were first presented with a translation task (for which they had to translate a sentence from regional Italian into dialect within a given context) and a judgment task (where they were presented with sentences in a certain context).

The second phase of fieldwork was carried out in November 2022. Five informants were interviewed, from Moiano (1) and Airola (4). Four speakers were aged between 60-70, and one speaker between 30-40. As in the first phase, speakers did both a translation task (with context provided) and a judgment task. An example of the translation task is given in (14):

(14) Context: *Stai mangiando un panino/dei biscotti sul divano e tua madre vede che stai sporcando/lasciando briciole ovunque. Infastidita, ti dice di andare a mangiare in cucina.*

Translation: You are eating a sandwich/biscuits on the sofa and your mother sees that you are making a mess/leaving crumbs everywhere. Annoyed, she tells you to go eat in the kitchen.

Sentence to be translated: *Va a mangiare in cucina!*

Translation: Go eat in the kitchen!

In VC varieties, this sentence could in principle be translated either with an SFI (15) or the canonical infinitive (16):

(15) Valle Caudina

 Va màngia 'nda cucina!
 go-IMP.2SG eat-SFI in-the kitchen
 ‘Go eat in the kitchen!’

(16) Valle Caudina

 Va a mmangià 'nda cucina!
 go-IMP.2SG to eat-INF in-the kitchen
 ‘Go eat in the kitchen!’

The translation task consisted of 20 target sentences and 6 fillers. Sentences were controlled such that they displayed different verb types, direct objects, adjuncts, clitics, and cases of negation. In the judgement task following the translation, informants were

asked about the acceptability of alternative constructions; this was performed for both the target sentences and most of the fillers.

4. The SFI in Valle Caudina

Our fieldwork data indicates that, like in Neapolitan, VC varieties can use the SFI with motion verbs in imperatives:

(17) Valle Caudina

Vàttə	làvə!
go-IMP.2SG=you	wash-SFI
‘Go wash yourself!’	

Despite the apparent similarity with Neapolitan, however, there are a series of properties which distinguish the SFI in these varieties from its Neapolitan counterpart.

4.1. Morphological differences

Historically, both Neapolitan and the varieties of the VC present a ‘tripartite conjugational system with lexically arbitrary subdivisions in the II conjugation between proparoxytone and paroxytone infinitives’ (Ledgeway 1997: 235). This arbitrary subdivision within the second conjugation is the result of the merger between the Latin second and third conjugations, consisting of arhizotonic and rhizotonic verbs respectively. Already in Late Latin, verbs shifted from the Latin second to third conjugation, and vice versa, i.e. shifting stress from the infinitival ending to the root and viceversa (cf. Herman 2000: 70–71; Väänänen 1963: 135–136, among many others). In modern-day Neapolitan and VC varieties, the stress on the infinitive is the only remaining difference between verbs within this second conjugation (cf. Maturi 2002: 216). The infinitives in VC, however, take a slightly different form than in Neapolitan, as shown in the table 1:

Table 1: Infinitives in Neapolitan and VC

Latin conjugation	Neapolitan	Valle Caudina
1 st (< -ARE)	cantà/cantare	[kan'da]
2 nd (< -ÉRE)	vedé/vedere	[ve're]/[ve'de]
3 rd (< -ERE)	mètttere	['mettə]
4 th (< -IRE)	servì/servire	[ka'pi] ⁶

As shown in Table 1, the apocope of the *-re* infinitival ending has occurred across the board in VC. Unlike Neapolitan (19), the *-re* ending is not even recovered with clitics (which appear in proclisis, never in enclisis on infinitives, cf. Maturi (2002: 216–218)), see (19):

⁶ We have inserted [ka'pi] ‘to understand’ here as *servì* has shifted to the second conjugation (becoming ['servə]) in the varieties of Valle Caudina.

(18) Neapolitan, Ledgeway (2009: 548)

- a. pigliarme
take-INF=me-ACC
- b. vulerlo
want-INF=it-ACC
- c. metterse
put-INF=REFL.3SG
- d. servirve
serve-INF=you-PL.DAT

(19) Valle Caudina

- a. me piglià
me-ACC=take-INF
- b. 'o bbolé
it-ACC=want-INF
- c. se métte
REFL.3SG=put-INF
- d. ve sèrvə
you-PL.DAT=serve-INF

This means that morphologically, the VC SFI is only distinguishable from the canonical infinitive for arhizotonic verbs (20a,b); for rhizotonic verbs (20c), the infinitive takes the same form as the verbal stem:

(20) a. ['kandə] sing-SFI vs [kan'ta] sing-INF
b. ['arapə] open-SFI vs [ara'pi] open-INF
c. ['bevə] drink-INF/SFI

Finally, there seems to be a tendency for verbs to shift to the second conjugation.⁷ Next to [kur'ka] 'go to bed', we find ['korkə]. Similarly, alternative forms ['sèrvə] 'to be useful' and ['partə] 'to leave' are available for [ser'vi] and [par'ti], respectively. The rhizotonic forms seem to be preferred by younger generations. This means that the SFI is homophonous with the canonical infinitives for many verbs. These alternations (between e.g. ['partə] and [par'ti]) are not the same as the SFI - infinitive alternation (e.g. ['lavə] vs [la'va]) as discussed here, because these alternative infinitival forms have a much wider distribution than the SFI. As can be seen in (21)-(24), forms such as ['partə] can be used with modal verbs (21), (22), control verbs (23) or in temporal adjuncts (24), i.e. contexts in which the SFI is systematically excluded:

⁷ A similar shift has also been noted for Neapolitan, where specifically verbs from the Latin fourth conjugation seems to be absorbed by the third, as attested by oscillations such as *rurmi/ròrmere* < *dormire* 'to sleep' (Ledgeway 2009: 547).

(21) Valle Caudina

a. Vulímmə pàrtə rimànə.
want.1PL leave.INF tomorrow
‘We want to leave tomorrow.’

b. Vulímmə lavà /*làvə ’a màchinə rimànə.
want.1PL wash.INF wash.SFI the car tomorrow
‘We want to wash the car tomorrow.’

(22) Valle Caudina

a. Primm’e piglià ’na decisiònə accussì,
before of take-INF a decision like.that
agg’ a sèntə a Ppeppe.
have-1SG=to hear-INF DOM Peppe
‘Before taking a decision like that, I have to talk to Peppe.’

b. Primm’e fa’ ’a spesa, agg’ a lavà / *làvə
before of do-INF the shopping have-1SG=to wash.INF wash.SFI
i pannə.
the clothes
‘Before doing the shopping, I need to wash the clothes.’

(23) Valle Caudina

a. Agg decísə ’e pàrtə.
have-1SG decided of leave-inf
‘I have decided to leave.’

b. Agg decísə ’e me *làvə/lavà.
have-1SG decided of me=wash-SFI/wash-INF
‘I have decided to wash myself.’

(24) Valle Caudina

a. Primm’e pàrtə, agg’ a salutà a ssòrəmə.
before of leave-INF have-1SG=to say.bye-INF DOM sister=my
‘Before leaving, I have to say bye to my sister.’

b. Primm’e *làvə/lavà i pannə, agg’ a fa
before of wash-SFI/wash-INF the clothes have-1SG=to do-INF
ati ccòsə.
other things
‘Before washing the clothes, I have to do other things.’

Thus, based on data such as (21)-(24), we can conclude that, although they look very similar, a form like [partə] cannot be equated with the SFI but should instead be analysed as a regular infinitive.

The second morphological difference is that the metaphonetic forms are generally not attested with *va* in VC varieties, e.g. (25)-(26) (whereas they are accepted in Neapolitan, as in (10-11) above, cf. Ledgeway 1997):

(25) Va *bívə /bévə!
go-IMP.2SG drink-IMP.2SG/drink-SFI
‘Go drink!’

(26) Va *ruormə/ròrmə!
 go-IMP.2SG sleep-IMP.2SG/put-SFI
 ‘Go sleep!’

One potential exception to the absence of metaphonetic forms in VC varieties is given in (27), where we have the imperative of *jì* ‘to go’, *va* ‘go!’, and the imperative of *veré* ‘to see’, with the metaphonetic [i]:

(27) Va vírə chi a ssunàtə!
 go-IMP.2SG see-IMP.2SG/see-SFI who have.3SG ring.PTC
 ‘Go and see who has rung the doorbell!’

However, there seems to be a short pause between the two forms, which would imply that this is a juxtaposition of two imperatives, and not a case of *va* + SFI. This would have to be tested experimentally, an issue we leave for further research.

4.2. Syntactic differences

There are some syntactic differences between the use of the SFI in imperative constructions in VC varieties and its Neapolitan counterpart. Most notably, the SFI seems to be used almost exclusively with the second person singular imperative *va* ‘go’ (20), where it alternates with the canonical infinitive; only two out of six speakers accept the SFI with the second person plural imperative form *jatə* ‘go’ (28):

(28) Jatə %màngiə / a mmangià!
 go-IMP.2PL eat-SFI / to eat-INF
 ‘Go eat!’

Unlike Neapolitan, the VC SFI cannot occur as a complement to other functional verbs (29):

(29) Àdda / sàpə /po cantà / *càntə.
 must-3SG / know-3SG /can-3SG sing-INF / sing-SFI
 ‘He has to/knows how to/can sing.’

However, this was likely possible in an earlier stage of VC varieties, because some relics are found in a fixed curse expression (30) and a prayer (31):

(30) Puózzə iétt o sàng!
 may-SBJV.3SG throw-SFI the blood
 ‘May (s)he bleed to death!’

(31) Valle Caudina, Ciervo (2011)
 Madonna mia schiavona, vieneme arape
 Mary mine dark.skinned come-IMP2.SG=me.DAT open-SFI
 ‘sto portone.
 this door
 ‘Oh, my dark-skinned Mary, come open this door for me.’

In the case of (31), we can be sure that the form *arape* ‘open’ is an SFI for two reasons. Firstly, the infinitive would be *arapi*, and hence its final vowel would be stressed and not neutralised. There is thus no risk that there is an error in transcription. Second, the clitic has climbed to the main verb *viene* ‘come’. A reading of two juxtaposed imperatives seems to be excluded as *vieneme* is ungrammatical.

Another context where the SFI can be found in Neapolitan but where it is impossible in the VC, is in negative imperatives (32):

(32) Valle Caudina
 #Nun 'o màngiø/làvø.
 NEG it=eat-SFI/wash-SFI
 Intended: 'Don't eat/wash it!'

In this case, the SFI would be interpreted as a third person singular declarative, e.g. ‘he does not eat/wash it.’ This result is expected on the view that negative imperatives contain a null auxiliary/head which selects the infinitive as its complement (Ledgeway 2009: 558; Zanuttini 1997: 105–154)⁸, since in the varieties of the VC, the SFI no longer be used as a complement of functional verbs other than *jì* ‘go’ (anymore).

The microvariation picture is further complicated by another syntactic difference which regards constraints on the expression of the argument structure of the verb. For half of the speakers we interviewed,⁹ in an imperative clause with the SFI, a full DP direct object is ungrammatical (33), as is a clitic DP other than *te* (34-35):

It needs to be mentioned that those speakers who do not accept (33), can still use the SFI with transitive verbs. However, the impossibility of expressing a direct object imposes the restriction that the direct object be understandable or inferable from the (extralinguistic) context. Conversely, a null object is not allowed with the ‘regular’ infinitival construction, even if it is present in the immediate context (36):

⁸ As an anonymous reviewer rightly points out, this view (which goes back to Kayne (1992)) is not the only possible account of infinitives used as negative imperatives, cf. e.g. Rivero & Terzi (1995), Han (2001) and Zeijlstra (2006). We do not discuss this issue further here as the SFI is ungrammatical in negative imperatives in the VC varieties.

⁹ All these speakers happen to be from Airola; the same sentence (31) was judged grammatical by speakers from Moiano. Informal follow-up queries seem to confirm this microvariation between the two towns, but further research is needed in order to better support this hypothesis.

(36) a. Va pìgliə (%chella seggiə)!
go-IMP.2SG take-SFI that chair

b. Va a ppiiglià *(chella seggiə)!
go-IMP.2SG to take-INF that chair
'Go take that chair!'

For all speakers, only one clitic direct object can be present, namely the 2sg clitic *ta* (cf. (33) and (37)):

(37) Vattə làvə!
go-IMP.2SG=you wash-SFI
'Go wash yourself!'

This restriction is not phonetic in nature: adverbial (38) or locative PPs (39) can be realised in postverbal position:

(38) Vattə làvə a una viə!
go-IMP.2SG=you.ACC wash-SFI to one way
'Go wash yourself straight away!'

(39) %Va màngia 'nda cucinə!
go-IMP.2SG eat-SFI in.the kitchen
'Go eat in the kitchen!'

4.3. Sociolinguistic difference

Many speakers consider the use of the SFI after *va* more direct (and perhaps even rude) compared to the alternative construction of *va a* + canonical infinitive. It conveys an idea of annoyance and impatience. Therefore, the regular infinitive is preferred except in some lexicalised cases. In these cases, the SFI is often not interpreted literally, but seems to have a more metaphoric meaning: *vattə corchə*, literally 'go to sleep!', can also mean 'enough!', 'go away!' or 'shut up!'.

5. Towards an analysis

5.1. *Va + SFI: monoclausality*

The question arises as to whether the combination of *va* and the SFI forms a monoclausal or biclausal structure. There are various standard tests for monoclausality (Dragomirescu, Nicolae & Pană Dindelegan 2022): impossibility of negative expressions on both the higher and the lower verbs; clitic climbing; *se/si* passives adjoined to higher head and auxiliary switch in perfective tenses. Not all of them can be applied in our case; specifically, perfective auxiliaries cannot be used in imperatives, nor *se/si*-passives.

Negation cannot occur on the lower verb (40), which would suggest that the construction is monoclausal. Negating the higher verb is possible, but in this case, only the canonical infinitive can be used (41):

(40) a. *Vattə nun làvə!
 go-IMP.2SG=yourself NEG wash-SFI
 intended: 'Go not wash yourself!'

 b. *Vattə nun allamèntə!
 go-IMP.2SG=yourself NEG complain-SFI
 intended: 'Go and don't complain!'

 c. *Va nun t'abbìccia!
 go-IMP.2SG NEG yourself=burn-INF
 intended: 'Don't get burnt!'

(41) Nun te jì a llavà!
 NEG yourself=go.INF to wash-INF
 'Don't go wash yourself!'

In VC, clitics generally appear in proclisis on infinitives but in enclisis with imperatives. Since they occur between the imperative *va* and the SFI (e.g. (42)), in principle, both analyses are possible (enclisis on *va* and proclisis on the infinitive). It is not immediately clear which one is correct, since nothing can intervene between *va* and the SFI.

(42) Vattə làvə!
 go-IMP.2SG=you wash-SFI
 'Go wash yourself!'

We assume that in this specific case, clitics are in enclisis on the higher verb *va*, since the initial [t] is doubled. This doubling is not caused by *va* generally, because *raddoppiamento fonosintattico* (RF, the doubling of the initial consonant of the following word) is not found on the second verb in the absence of the clitic. For instance, in *va pòsə* 'go and put (it) down', the initial [p] is not doubled. If the clitic were in proclisis on the infinitive, and the doubling were simply caused by the preceding *va*, we would expect this doubling to apply across the board, i.e. also to infinitives without an intervening clitic, contrary to fact.

The enclisis tells us that the clitic has climbed to the higher verb, an operation which is only possible in monoclausal structures (Rizzi 1982; Cinque 2006). Monoclausality is also confirmed by the single event interpretation. Furthermore, another test for monoclausality is given by adverbs, which occur in dedicated positions in the clausal spine (Cinque 1999); hence, in a monoclausal structure, the same adverb cannot occur twice. If the same adverb can appear with the lower and the higher verb, the structure is biclausal (Cinque 2006). Since nothing can intervene between *va* and the SFI, most adverbs will go in postverbal position. However, we can apply the test with *mo* ('now'), and conclude that it cannot appear twice:

(43) *Mò vàttə córchə mò!
 now go-IMP.2SG lay.down-SFI now
 Intended: 'Go now to sleep now!'

A related question regards the nature of *va*: is this a grammaticalised use of the motion verb? *Va* does not show any semantic bleaching, as indicated by the fact that

the use of *va* plus SFI is odd when there is no movement involved. We suggest therefore that the use of *va* in this case is grammatical (i.e. functional), lexicalising andative aspect, but not grammaticalised, as in the Calabrian pseudo-coordination (cf. Ledgeway 2021).

5.2. The SFI: an infinitive?

Having showed evidence that *va* + SFI form a monoclausal structure, we now consider the question of the status of the second verb. Is the SFI a finite (imperative) form – as in Neapolitan – or an infinitive? As discussed in §5.1, metaphonetic forms are not attested in VC varieties. Unlike its Neapolitan counterpart, the SFI in VC was never fully reanalysed as an imperative form, which explains why metaphony is not attested. This means that the construction of *va* and SFI cannot be considered as a case of pseudo-coordination or an asyndetic imperative in the VC varieties. Indeed, the insertion of coordinator *e* would yield a completely different interpretation, indicating two separate events.

This also means that unlike in Neapolitan, in the diachrony¹⁰ of VC there has not been a shift in finiteness; in fact, the VC SFI seems to be a regular non-finite form. There is obligatory subject control: the subject of the SFI can only be understood as coreferential with the subject of *va*. Moreover, the two verbs have the same temporal interpretation (i.e. they refer to one single event) (44):

(44) Mò vattə làvə (*rimànə)!
now go=yourself wash-SFI tomorrow
Intended: ‘Go now to wash yourself tomorrow’

The SFI is thus fully dependent on the higher verb (imperative) for anchoring of Tense and Person and can be considered a fully non-finite form (cf. the continuum proposed in Groothuis 2020).

5.3. The SFI compared to pseudo-coordination in Italo-Romance

The construction discussed in the present article is reminiscent of the paratactic constructions of motion verbs discussed by Ascoli (1898; 1901), as noted also by Ledgeway (1997: 255-269). Andriani (2023) gives the following classification of the motion verbs in the imperatives (cf. also Nocentini’s (2010) discussion of what he calls the *vattelapesca* type, ‘go figure’):

(45) a. Va a (<AD) [kk]iamare
go.IMP.2SG to call.INF
b. Va, [k]iam
go.IMP.2SG call.IMP.2SG

¹⁰ Unfortunately, no historical texts from the area are available (to the best of our knowledge at least). This means that we have to rely on reconstruction for earlier stages of the dialects of this area.

- c. Va e [kk]jama
go.IMP.2SG and call.IMP.2SG
- d. Va a (< AC) [kk]jama
go.IMP.2SG and call.IMP.2SG
'Go call...!'

Type I (45a) involves a hypotactic structure consisting of an imperative with an infinitival complement headed by the complementiser *a* (< AD), as in modern Italian. (45b) involves the asyndetic juxtaposition of two imperatives, separated by a pause (here indicated by a comma). Types (45c) and (45d), the latter nowadays unacceptable in standard Italian but widespread in Italo-Romance (cf. e.g. Ascoli 1898; 1901; De Gregorio; Rohlfs 1969: §759; Sornicola 1976; Cardinaletti & Giusti 2003; Nocentini 2010; Di Caro 2018; Giusti, Di Caro & Ross 2022; Andriani forthcoming; Manzini, Lorusso & Savoia 2017; Cardullo 2023), involve pseudo-coordination structures. Pseudo-coordination can be described as the 'stacking of more than one verb displaying the same inflectional features for Tense, Aspect and Mood [...] in the presence of a linking element homophonous to a coordinating conjunction' (Giusti, Di Caro & Ross 2022: 1). The term *pseudo*-coordination is used because the construction does not display the syntactic and semantic properties of coordination (parataxis) but instead shows many similarities with a subordinate infinitive (i.e. hypotaxis). The first verb is often limited to a closed set of functional verbs (such as motion verbs), whereas there are generally no restrictions on the second verb. Pseudo-coordination is very often found in imperatives, but in southern varieties of Italy, it is more widespread, appearing also in indicatives and subjunctives, as in (46a) and (47a) (cf. Di Caro 2018; Giusti, Di Caro & Ross 2022; Andriani 2023; Manzini, Lorusso & Savoia 2017 a.o.). The coordinating particle in these pseudo-coordination structures in Italo-Romance is often ET (46a), but in some varieties (e.g. Sicilian, Apulian) can also be AC (or ATQUE in Latin, cf. Nocentini 2010: 24), cf. (46b). Oftentimes the coordinating particle can also be dropped, yielding an asyndetic structure (47).

(46) a. Calabrian, Rohlfs (1969: 164)

Vaju	e	trouvu	la vecchia zia
go.1SG	and	find.1SG	the old aunt
'I go to visit the/my old aunt.'			

b. Marsala, Cardinaletti & Giusti (2003)

Passa	a	piggia	u pani.
pass.IMP.2SG	and	fetch.IMP.2SG	the bread
'Pass by and fetch the bread.'			

(47) a. Maglie, Lecce, Manzini & Savoia (2005: 694)

Sta	ddòrme.
stay.3SG	sleep.3SG
'S/he's sleeping.'	

b. Cosentino, Ledgeway (1997: 258)

Vallu	chiamà.
go.IMP.2SG=him.ACC	call.IMP.2SG
'Go and call him'	

At a first glance, the imperatives with *va* and the SFI in VC (as in Naples) seem very similar to asyndetic pseudo-coordination constructions (types (45c,d) from the classification above, with omission of the coordinating particle). The retraction of the accent is reminiscent of cases like *vattelapesca* ‘go figure’. The particle *a* used in previous stages (cf. (1)), could indeed be the outcome of both AC ‘and’ or AD ‘to’. Both will trigger *raddoppiamento fonosintattico* (the doubling of the initial consonant of the following word), so the outcomes of these two etyma are homophonous. A < AD is however commonly used with infinitives of motion and seems to be the most straightforward interpretation also for our case, especially because the second verb in the VC examples, is clearly still infinitival. The absence of metaphony shows us that the second verb cannot be interpreted as an imperative, which excludes an analysis of these constructions as parataxis of two imperatives and hence as a case of pseudo-coordination (see also Ledgeway’s (1997: 255-269) discussion).

5.4. Origin and development of the SFI in VC: some considerations and hypotheses

When comparing the VC data with what has been proposed for Neapolitan by Ledgeway (1997) concerning the origin and development of the SFI, two observations can be made.

Firstly, regarding the phonological component motivating the process - namely the clitic causing stress retraction -, we can note that in VC the process does not seem to be triggered only by monosyllabic forms such as *va*, but by bisyllabic forms as well, e.g. *jate*. Besides being attested in the newly collected data, this is supported by the instance found in Ciervo (2010), namely *vieneme arape*; this goes against the possibility of it being an innovation of the interviewed speakers and supports the hypothesis that bisyllabic forms could be used with the SFI in earlier stages of the VC varieties. Although the use of the SFI as complement to bisyllabic imperatives as *jate* could *a priori* be an innovation, i.e. an analogical extension based on the singular *va*, the fact that we find it with *vieneme* in older texts leads us to suppose that it is instead a relic of an older stage in which the SFI was possible with bisyllabic forms. Consequently, given that the SFI appears to have been possible with bisyllabic forms such as *vieneme*, a purely phonological explanation based on clitics motivating the stress retraction becomes less plausible for the case of VC dialects.

Secondly, in terms of the development of the SFI and its diachronic phases outlined by Ledgeway (1997, 2007), the VC data correspond to an intermediate phase of the process, namely that in which *vatte a bbestí* and *vatte bbèste* coexist. The last phase, which allows metaphonic forms, does not seem to have been reached, hence, the reanalysis of the infinitive into a finite form did not occur. Consequently, the SFI in VC appears to be frozen at an intermediate stage, in contrast to its Neapolitan counterpart which has developed further. Since these constructions appear to be receding and are currently a relatively marginal phenomenon, we can assume that a full reanalysis of the infinitival form will not take place in VC varieties.

As discussed in §5, our data indicate that there are lexical restrictions on the second verb in the construction. There are a series of verbs that can be used, but not every verb is felicitous/grammatical. We have not been able to find out what determines this distribution; the possible verbs include both transitive and intransitive verbs, as well as verbs from different conjugations. It might be an indication that this

construction is becoming less and less productive. This hypothesis seems to find confirmation in the fact that we do find SFIs sporadically also in other contexts, such as the example in (31) cited above, from a prayer, or the crystallised curse in (30).

It remains an open question whether the VC SFI represents an innovation which spread from Neapolitan or whether it constitutes the same internal development which did not gain as much ground as in Neapolitan. In the case of the former hypothesis, we can observe that the hegemony of Naples is relatively recent (Sornicola 1997: 330), which might explain why it is not perceived as a more prestigious form. Some speakers support this hypothesis, and in general might connect this form with other varieties, most frequently Neapolitan. The partially different path taken by the VC construction might be evidence that it is the result of an internal process. What is clear and is indeed shared by all informants is that the SFI is not considered more prestigious than the canonical infinitive and that it is generally perceived as vulgar, very informal, and impolite. In this respect, it can be noted that, given the example found in Ciervo (2010), the rudeness and annoyance connotations must have developed at a later stage, when the use of this form became limited to few instances.

6. Conclusions and questions for further research

In this article we have discussed microvariation concerning SFI constructions in Campanian dialects. By introducing newly collected data, we have focused on the case of the dialects of Valle Caudina, which appear to have stopped at an earlier, intermediate stage of the process described by Ledgeway (1997, 2007, 2009) for Neapolitan. In Valle Caudina, there has been no reanalysis of the SFI as an imperative, hence, SFI forms cannot display metaphorony. In addition, the use of these forms is quite restricted, both lexically and syntactically. We were unable to detect what determines the current distribution; this may indicate that this construction stopped being productive and is in a recessive phase. The example of the VC SFI found in Ciervo (2010) suggests that this might be indeed the case, since the form attested there is not currently accepted, and lacks the rudeness/annoyance connotation of current forms. Nevertheless, further research is needed in order to verify this hypothesis; in particular, interviewing some older speakers and comparing their judgements with data from younger speakers might shed light on whether this form is gradually becoming less productive.

Another aspect that we would like to investigate in further research is microvariation in the SFI in other parts of Campania and southern Italy more generally. A wider picture on the geographical variation could shed more light on the diachrony of the SFI and its complex relationship with pseudo-coordination and related structures.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank our informants for their time, help, and insights. We also wish to thank Hannah Booth for her proofreading of the article. A previous version of this paper has been presented at Going Romance 2022 at the Universitat Autònoma de

Barcelona; we are grateful for the questions and feedback from the audience.

Any inaccuracies, of course, remain our own responsibility. Kim Groothuis gratefully acknowledges the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO) for funding (project number 12C0723N).

This article is the result of close collaboration between the two authors. For official academic purposes only, Kim Groothuis assumes responsibility for §1-2 and Mirella De Sisto for §3-4. The authors share joint responsibility for §5-6.

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