



Università
Ca'Foscari
Venezia

PROJECT ACRONYM AND TITLE: The acquisition of Chinese resultative verbal complexes by L1 Italian learners: Combining learner corpus and experimental data

FUNDING PROGRAMME: PRIN 2020

HOST DEPARTMENT: Department of Asian and North African Studies

SCIENTIFIC RESPONSIBLE: Bianca Basciano

FINANCIAL DATA:

Project total costs	Overall funding assigned to UNIVE
€322.783,00	€ 138.396,00

ABSTRACT:

This project aims at investigating the acquisition of Chinese resultative verb complexes (RVCs, i.e. resultative compounds, phase resultative compounds and directional complex verbs) by L1 Italian learners.

RVCs pose a challenge for L1 Italian learners of Chinese due to their complexity (both from the morpho-syntactic and from the semantic point of view) and to the typological distance between Italian and Chinese in expressing this kind of events. For Italian learners of L2/FL Chinese, acquiring structures which are either absent or very distant from those in their L1, as Chinese RVCs, is especially challenging.

The present project aims at answering the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of lexical development of RVCs by L1 Italian learners of Chinese?
2. What are the main sources of difficulty in their acquisition?
3. What are the stages of acquisition of RVCs?
4. What differences may be observed in the acquisition of different RVCs?
5. What is the role of typological distance and what kind of L1 transfer can be observed in the acquisition of RVCs?

6. Is there a correlation between proficiency level and mastery of different RVCs? We will adopt a mixed-method, triangulated approach, consisting in the combination and analysis of both corpus data (to analyze learner performance) and experimental data (to investigate learner competence), in order to provide different insights into the phenomenon under study and to obtain data as authentic as possible, thus strengthening the validity of the results and the conclusions drawn from research findings.

After a thorough review of the literature on the topic and a preliminary analysis of the treatment of RVCs in teaching materials, we will collect data of L1 Italian learners of Chinese, divided by proficiency levels, at both institutions involved in the project. In addition, we will also collect data from L1 Chinese speakers, acting as control group, for comparative purposes. One of the main results of the project will be the compilation of a learner corpus collecting both written and oral data of L1 Italian learners of Chinese, which will be freely accessible online and will prove to be a valuable resource for anyone who needs a sample of data to investigate the acquisition of Chinese by L1 Italian speakers, which is still an understudied field. After the compilation of the corpus, both corpus and experimental data will be analyzed and interpreted: we will identify the acquisitional path of different RVCs followed by L1 Italian learners of Chinese and formulate generalizations, both at the descriptive and at the theoretical level. The study has significant pedagogical implications, as it lays the basis for the development of pedagogical tools and methods that more accurately target the needs of Italian learners of Chinese.

PARTNERSHIP:

1	Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia	Venezia (IT)	Coordinator
2	Università degli Studi ROMA TRE	Roma (IT)	Partner