

Sulla grammatica di *una volta*
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ABSTRACT

The Italian expression *una volta* ‘once’ (literally ‘one time’), can be used to introduce finite subordinate clauses as in (1), nonfinite predications as in (2), and non-verbal predications as in (3):

- (1) Una volta che è entrato a scuola, è andato a parlare col preside.
‘Once he entered school, he went to talk to the headmaster’
- (2) Una volta entrato, è andato a parlare col preside.
‘Once entered, he went to talk to the headmaster’
- (3) Una volta a scuola, è andato a parlare col preside.
‘Once at school, he went to talk to the headmaster.’

In this article, it is argued that *una volta* in (1)-(3), from the semantic viewpoint, is to be understood as a predicate operating on propositions. In particular, *una volta* requires the two propositions to be temporally contingent: The event expressed by the main clause is immediately contingent on the event expressed by the subordinate clause. Such a restriction has as its effect that the “main event” must be expressed by a perfective verb form (è *andato* in the examples (1)-(3)).

On the other hand, in the nonfinite subordinate, *una volta* comes with an aspectual restriction to the effect that the element under its scope must be interpreted as a state. The output of such an aspectual operation is a resulting state reading. As a consequence, *una volta* licenses predicative readings which intuitively arise from the change-of-state reading.

In addition, some consideration is given to a comparison with the partially similar element *appena*.