

# SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC PROPERTIES OF THE PREPOSITIONAL ACCUSATIVE IN BARESE\*

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## ABSTRACT

This article explores the semantic and syntactic properties of the prepositional accusative in the dialect of Bari. Through a comparison with the semantic and syntactic features identified by Torrego (1998) for the Spanish prepositional accusative, we show that Barese *a*-marked Direct Objects must be specified for [ $\neq$ human] and [ $\neq$ specific] for the prepositional accusative to be licensed. Its structural position is then tested with respect to the position of verb and adverbs, following the comparative analysis of Romance by Ledgeway & Lombardi (2005). These tests reveal that the Barese prepositional accusative occupies a *v*-VP-internal position, and that “specificity” is chiefly responsible for the *a*-marking on the Direct Object as a consequence of its raising to the external specifier of *v*P.

**Key words:** Differential Object Marking, prepositional accusative, Barese dialect, specificity

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The present article offers an empirical contribution to the comparative studies on the micro-parametric variation concerning the cross-linguistically attested phenomenon labelled Differential Object Marking (Bossong 1985; DOM henceforth). In particular, we focus on the realisation of this phenomenon in Barese, the upper-southern Italo-Romance variety spoken in Bari (Italy).

Typologically, DOM is present in many of the world’s languages (Turkish: Enç 1991; Swahili: Croft 1988; Hebrew: Danon 2002; Hindi: Mohanan 1994; cf. also Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2011). These languages adopt different syntactic or morphological devices/strategies to encode and mark subsets of D(irect) O(bjects) specified for a number of semantic features such as animacy, definiteness/referentiality or specificity, distinguishing these from bare, unmarked DOs. DOM is also consistently found among several Romance varieties, e.g. (1)–(10), being often referred to as the P(repositional) A(ccusative) in the specialised literature on Romance. Such label is due to the insertion of a prepositional marker (i.e. *a* ‘to’ in all Romance varieties which employ PA, except for Romanian *pe* ‘on’) to introduce the DO in question, provided that it complies with a number of necessary semantic conditions:

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- (1) Giuànnə acchiamèndə **\*(a)** Mmarijə<sub>DO</sub> (Barese)  
 John looks PA Mary  
 John looks at Mary'
- (2) Va truvanno **\*(a)** don Luigino<sub>DO</sub> (Neapolitan: Ledgeway 2009:831)  
 goes searching PA don Luigino  
 'He's looking for don Luigino'
- (3) Semə vistə **\*(a)** vu<sub>DO</sub> (Abruzzese: D'Alessandro 2012:5)  
 be seen PA you.PL  
 'We have seen you'
- (4) Vitti **\*(a)** Ggiovanni<sub>DO</sub> (Sicilian: Guardiano 2010:90)  
 saw PA John  
 'I saw John'
- (5) Vido **\*(a)** Juane<sub>DO</sub> (Sardinian: Jones 1993:65)  
 see PA John  
 'I see John'
- (6) La vaig veure **\*(a)** ella<sub>DO</sub> (Catalan: Badia i Margarit 1994:207)  
 her go see PA she  
 'I saw her'
- (7) Chamou **\*(a)-o** cñaado<sub>DO</sub> (Galician: López Martínez 1999:560)  
 called PA-the brother-in-law  
 'S/he called his/her brother-in-law'
- (8) Não ama mais **\*(a)** mim<sub>DO</sub> (Portuguese: Bick 2000:25)  
 not love more PA me  
 '(S)he doesn't love me any longer'
- (9) Veo **\*(a)** Pablo<sub>DO</sub> (Spanish)  
 see PA Paul  
 'I see Paul'
- (10) Îl caută **\*(pe)** Ion<sub>DO</sub> (Romanian: Pană Dindelegan 2013:129)  
 him search PA John  
 '(S)he is looking for John'

In (1) to (10), we provide an extensive list of Romance varieties that obligatorily mark personal pronouns, proper names or (in)definite D(eterminer)P(hrase)s with DO function with the PA. Among these, example (1) attests the obligatory presence in Barese of the *a*-marking, whose omission proves ungrammatical, in the abovementioned syntactic contexts. It is not trivial to note that, with the exception of Romanian, the marker *a* coincides with the dative marker for indirect objects.

The long-standing debate<sup>1</sup> on the diachronic origin of the PA in Romance has recently led scholars such as La Fauci (1997) and Ledgeway (2009 for Neapolitan; 2012 for Romance varieties) to argue that PA emerged as one of the many syntactic innovations due to a broader macro-parametric change of typological nature in the passage from Latin to Romance. In particular, the PA phenomenon comes about after a temporary oscillation (or, paradoxically, a ‘conservative innovation’, in La Fauci’s terms) between two typologically different systems to mark the thematic roles assigned by the verb. In a nutshell, the late(r) Latin (Nominative) Accusative system, in which any nominative subjects were marked differently than DOs, was abandoned by early Romance in favour of an Active-Stative system, whereby intransitive UNDERGOER subjects pattern with passive subjects and DOs. Eventually, later Romance varieties switched back to a purely Accusative system, in which (certain subsets of) DOs became marked with PA according to language-specific semantico-syntactic settings. In fact, the grammaticalisation process of the PA across Romance did not occur uniformly, therefore leading to a heterogeneous parametrisation of language-specific properties that trigger the PA across varieties.

The purpose of the present paper is, in fact, to explore the relevant semantic and syntactic properties of a particular subset of Barese DOs which receive the *a*-marking. This constitutes a welcome contribution in terms of both novel data on the PA-phenomenon and the study of the language-specific micro-variation encountered in Romance when dealing with the different semantico-syntactic triggers for the presence of the PA. Despite the focus on a single (understudied) Romance variety, this contribution seeks to enrich – albeit minimally – our general understanding of the PA in Romance, as well as in other unrelated varieties displaying DOM. In this respect, the analysis provided by Torrego (1998) for the Spanish PA shall be the main point of comparison to test which properties determine the presence of the PA in Barese. Once these semantic triggers are identified in §2, we shall examine the position of Barese verb and complement(s) with respect to Cinque’s (1999) adverb hierarchy, following the comparative work of Ledgeway & Lombardi (2005) on Romance. The tests in §3 will reveal the structural position of PA-marked DOs within the Barese clause, and the conclusive discussion in §4 will describe the processes involved in the licensing of the Barese PA.

## 2. THE SEMANTIC PROPERTIES OF THE BARESE PA

In the descriptive literature, the PA is generally associated with the inherent “animacy” feature of a D(eterminer)P(hrase) with DO function (D’Achille 2003:170; *inter alia*), i.e. the DP must have an animate referent for the PA to surface. However, this generalisation is not sufficient to account for the finer-grained set of semantico-syntactic constraints that bring about the PA across Romance.

In the particular case of Spanish, Torrego (1998) offers a list of tests revealing six main semantic properties for the licensing of the *a*-marking on DOs:

1. ability (not necessity) of the DOs to be doubled by resumptive clitics;
2. interpretation of the DOs as “specific”;
3. sensitivity of the aspectual classes of the V in presence of the PA;
4. link to the “agentivity” of the subject;

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<sup>1</sup> For other accounts of the origin of the PA, see Meyer-Lübke (1899); Niculescu (1959); Rohlf’s (1969:§632, 1971); Tekavčić (1972); López Martínez (1993); Pensado (1995); Sornicola (1997), *inter alia*.

5. “animacy” restriction that holds of DOs;
6. bearing of “affectedness” of the DOs;

The above constraints for the licensing of the PA can be formalised as semantic features of DOs, i.e. [ $\pm$ specific], [ $\pm$ animate], [ $\pm$ affected], of subjects, i.e. [ $\pm$ agentive], of selecting verbs, i.e. [ $\pm$ telic], as well as a language-specific structural requirement for the optional/obligatory doubling of the DO in question (i.e. realisation of an overt D-head) via resumptive clitics. In order for the PA to be licensed, these features will need checking on a relevant syntactic head, i.e.  $v$ , which is considered by Chomsky (1995) to have a D-feature which attracts certain DOs to raise to a  $v$ -related position. The present analysis considers the above criteria as the starting point to test the parametric variation between the Spanish and Barese PA: only a part of the properties listed above will be crucial in the licensing of the PA in Barese.

### 2.1. Clitic doubling

Torrego (1998) observes that (standard) Spanish  $a$ -marked DOs can be doubled by clitic pronouns, i.e. the realisation of a D-feature of  $v$  on an independent D-head: however, personal pronouns are doubled by the Accusative-Case clitic (11), whereas the dative one is employed for lexical items (12).

- (11) Lo ví \*(a) él (Torrego 1998:26)  
 him saw PA he  
 ‘I saw him’

- (12) Juan le visitó \*(a)-l chico  
 John to him visited PA the boy  
 ‘John visited the boy’

Unlike Spanish, Barese is able to double the  $a$ -marked DO, be it pronominal or lexical, exclusively with the Accusative clitic (13), disallowing any clitic-Case alternations as it is the case in Spanish, i.e. (11) vs. (12):

- (13) U/ \*nge vǝdibbǝ \*(a) jiddǝ/ \*(a) Ggiuǝnnǝ  
 him to.him saw.I PA he PA John  
 ‘I saw him/ John’

However, the co-occurrence of the PA and the obligatory doubling clitic in Spanish is determined by language-specific structural properties (cf. Jaeggli 1982), given that “the semantic properties which give rise to clitic-doubling form a subset of the semantic properties which give rise to the PA” (Bleam 1999:119): were the DO to surface in the non-PA form, the clitic doubling would not be grammatical.

By contrast, the doubling of  $a$ -marked DOs with an Accusative clitic in Barese (13) is solely determined by pragmatic, i.e. interpretative factors: the Accusative clitic can only ‘resume’ the PA in pragmatically marked constructions, i.e. Topicalised phrases, thus as a consequence of a (high or low) left-peripheral dislocation of the DO (cf. Rizzi’s (1997) split-CP). Evidence in favour of this claim comes from testing the presence of clitic-doubling in out-of-the-

blue contexts (i.e. elicited by the question ‘what (has) happened?’, cf. Krifka: 2007:23), which is pragmatically infelicitous in Barese (14a):

- (14) Cə ha stàtə?  
 what has been  
 ‘What happened?’
- a. #La so cchiamàtə a Marijə, però nonn ha ’rrəspənnùtə  
 her am called PA Mary but not has answered
- b. So cchiamàtə a Marijə, però nonn ha ’rrəspənnùtə  
 am called PA Mary but not has answered  
 ‘I’ve called Mary, but she didn’t answer’

In (14), we observe that (14b) is the only felicitous, viable answer to the out-of-the-blue question eliciting sentential focus (cf. Lambrecht 1994). On the contrary, the option in (14a) with the doubling clitic is an instance of right-dislocation, i.e. “Aboutness-shift” Topic Phrase (Reinhart 1981), where previously given/accessible information is provided by the *a*-marked DO in a sentence-focus context. Hence, Barese does not structurally require the PA to be doubled by a clitic in a pragmatically neutral context, unlike Spanish; nonetheless, the PA are able to be doubled by Accusative clitics, which can be thought of as overt realisations of a strong D-feature of *v* by means of a D-head.

## 2.2. Specificity effect

“Specificity” can be generally related to the notion of “referentiality” (Anderson 1985). Pragmatically, the concept of specificity entails the speaker’s intention to make manifest to the audience that a certain DP is employed to refer to a specific, individuated referent (Rouchota 1994). Formally, specificity implies that the interpretation of a given specific DP is not dependent on some other quantifier or intensional predicate in the sentence (Farkas 1994). In other words, a specific element is able to take scope over some other scope-taking element, even when the phonological shape of the latter is null and its semantics is only deducible from the context.

As far as animate definites are concerned, these elements, i.e. personal pronouns (15a), proper names (15b) and definite DPs (15c), are obligatorily marked with PA in both Spanish (Torrego 1998:§2.8.1) and Barese, inasmuch as they usually indicate a highly referential and uniquely identifiable, i.e. specific referent:

- (15) cə v’ acchiànnə?  
 who/what go finding  
 ‘Who/what are you looking for?’
- a. cərcəvə \*(a) ttè / jiddə / jèddə / nnù / vvù / llòrə  
 sought PA you-SG he she we you-PL they  
 ‘I was looking for you/ him/ her/ you (pl.)/ them’
- b. cərcəvə \*(a) Ccolinə  
 sought PA Nick  
 ‘I was looking for Nick’

- c. cərcàvə \*(a) lla səgnórə də sùsə  
 sought PA the lady of up  
 ‘I was looking for the upstairs neighbour’

On the contrary, the non-PA surfaces in Spanish with animates when the referent is a non-specific indefinite, producing alternation among indefinite DPs (16):

- (16) a. Busco a una secretaria  
 seek PA a secretary  
 ‘I am looking for a (specific) secretary’  
 b. Busco una secretaria  
 seek a secretary  
 ‘I am looking for a(ny) secretary’

In (16), the presence of the preposition *a* denotes that the secretary sought is a specific one (16), identified in the interlocutor’s mind, conversely to the case in which the *a* is omitted (16b), where the Accusative DP receives a kind-type of reading, as the referent is not specific/identifiable. In this respect, we shall now test (non-)specific animate indefinite DPs and bare quantifiers in order to understand how relevant specificity is in the selection of the PA in Barese.

### 2.2.1. Indefinite DPs

In the case of indefinite DPs, Diesing (1992) considers the specificity effect in quantificational terms: if the indefinite DO is specific, its reading will be quantificational, i.e. “a specific person who...”, e.g. (17a), whereas if the indefinite DO is non-specific, its reading will be cardinal, i.e. “any person who...”, e.g. (17b). In this respect, Farkas (2002) suggests that the value assigned to the referent of specific indefinites is an element of the set denoted by the description.

- (17) cə v’ acchiànnə?  
 who/what go finding  
 ‘Who/what are you looking for?’  
 a. (*specific*: DO with quantificational reading)  
 cərcàvə \*(a) nu crəstianə ca so ’ccanəsciùtə stamatinə  
 sought PA a person that am known this.morning  
 ‘I was looking for a (specific) person whom I’ve met this morning’  
 b. (*non-specific*: DO with cardinal reading)  
 cərcavə \*(a) nu crəstianə ca sàpə léscə u Bbarésə  
 sought PA a person who knows read the Barese  
 ‘I was looking for a(ny) person who can read Barese’

The examples show that only specific DOs (17a) will be marked by the PA, as opposed to non-specific DOs, e.g. (17b).

### 2.2.2. Animate bare quantifiers

When we consider the animate existential quantifier *quacchedùnə* ‘someone’, the presence of the

*a*-marking on the DO will alternate on the basis of the specificity of the referent:

- (18) a. (*specific*: DO with quantificational reading)  
 Jè bbùnə a 'ccanòscə \*(a) quacchedùnə còm' a ttè  
 is good to know PA someone like PA you  
 'It's good to know someone like you'
- b. (*non-specific*: DO with cardinal reading)  
 Jè bbùnə a 'ccanòscə \*(a) quacchedùnə assəduàtə  
 is good to know PA someone good-natured  
 'It's good to know someone who's good-natured'

Intuitively, the DO 'someone' can readily be substituted by *nu crəstianə* 'a person' with identical results: the specific reading would be *a*-marked, the non-specific would not, as observed in the alternation in (17).

The animate negative quantifier *nəssciùnə* 'no-one' adopts the same marking mechanism as the existential one observed above:

- (19) a. (*specific*: DO with quantificational reading)  
 non zo màə 'ccanəssciütə \*(a) nəssciùnə còm' a ttè  
 not am never known PA no-one like PA you  
 'I've never met anyone like you'
- b. (*non-specific*: DO with cardinal reading)  
 non zo vvistə de trasi \*(a) nəssciùnə jində a ccàssə-tə  
 not am seen of enter PA no-one in to house-your  
 'I haven't seen anyone entering your house'

On the contrary, the animate universal quantifier *tuttəquándə* 'everyone' does not show any type of alternation for its intrinsic semantic nature: the set of items/referents in question will always comprise the entirety of [+animate] elements, which belong to the "set of all sets", i.e. the universal set. Hence, nothing could take scope over the universal set itself.

- (20) Pàrə ca 'ccanòsscəchə \*(a) tuttəquándə ddo-nində  
 seems that I.know PA everyone here-inside  
 'It seems I know everyone in here'

As expected, the 'specificity' of the universal quantifier is systematically present: hence, the PA must surface obligatorily.

We conclude the present section by noting that the specificity of the referent (in combination with its animacy, cf. §2.5) is one of the most prominent and fundamental constraints on DOs for the licensing of PA. This result corroborates Diesing's "Mapping Hypothesis" (1992), in which she claims that PA is the reflex of overt movement of the DO out of its base-generated position, in order to be interpreted as specific. Conversely, DOs remaining *in situ*, i.e. in the V-complement position, will be interpreted as non-specific. Hence, PA can be seen as a side effect of DO-movement for the licensing of its specific interpretation.

### 2.3. Sensitivity to aspectual classes of verbs

Vendler's (1967) four categories of predicates, i.e. accomplishments ("to build"), achievements ("to find"), activities ("to walk") and states ("to know"), can be characterised on the basis of their aspectual semantics. Accomplishments and achievements describe events or actions with an end in time, i.e. [+telic], as opposed to activities and states, which are "atelic", i.e. [-telic].

Torrego (1998) argues that DO-raising in Spanish affects the aspectual interpretation of predicates: the use of PA with animate indefinite DOs alters the properties of stative verbs, e.g. *conocer* 'to know' (21), shifting their event aspectual class to the activity-type one (21). In turn, the use of marked accusatives on activity verbs turns them into accomplishments.

- (21) Conocen (a) un vecino (Torrego 1998:32)  
 know PA a neighbour  
 'They meet/are meeting a neighbour'

Consider now the same example adapted to Barese:

- (22) Accanòscəchə (a) nu sədətüre  
 know PA one neighbour  
 'I know a(ny/specific) neighbour'

In (22), we note that the presence of PA in Barese does not imply a shift in the aspectual class of the verb, which is instead conveyed by the use of the progressive periphrasis [STAND-*a*- indicative/infinitive]:

- (23) Stògg' a 'ccanòsscə a nu crəstianə  
 stand to know PA a person  
 'I'm getting to know a (specific) person'
- (24) (?)Stògg' a 'ccanòsscə nu crəstianə  
 stand to know a person  
 'I'm getting to know a(ny) person'

The alternation in the use of PA in Barese with state predicates is, by contrast, determined by the specificity (and animacy) feature, and does not affect the aspectual value of the verb as in Spanish. The same holds for Spanish *esconder* and Barese *ascònnə*, 'to hide', which in Spanish experiences the aspectual shift from activity to accomplishment (Torrego 1998:21), whereas it does not in Barese:

- (25) Laura escondió (a) un prisionero durante dos años (Torrego 1998:21)  
 Laura hid PA a prisoner during two years  
 'Laura was hiding/hid a prisoner for two years'
- (26) Ciccillə aschənni (a) nu latitandə ppə n' ànnə 'ndərə  
 Frankie hid PA a fugitive for a year whole  
 'Frankie hid a(ny/ specific) fugitive for one entire year'

Once again, the alternation in the *a*-marking in Barese determines the (non-)specific interpretation of the DO, without repercussions on the aspectual class of the verb that selects the PA.

#### 2.4. Agentivity constraint

Torrego (1998) claims that the agentivity of the subject turns out to be crucial for the PA to surface in Spanish, even though the DO is animate and specific, e.g. (28):

- (27) Ines conoce (a) un médico (Torrego 1998:31)  
 Ines knows PA a doctor  
 ‘Ines knows a(ny/ specific) doctor’
- (28) La opera conoce (\*a) muchos aficionados  
 the opera knows PA many fans  
 ‘Opera has many fans’

Only when such predicates take an agentive subject will the PA occur, otherwise the *a*-marking will be absent regardless of the semantic nature of the DO. This fact can be explained through Grimshaw’s (1990) gradient scale of thematic prominence of arguments: [agent [experiencer [goal [theme/patient]]]]. Thus, if maximal prominence is given to the external argument, i.e. agent/subject, the internal argument, i.e. DO, will receive less prominence. The same assumptions are true when tested on Barese data:

- (29) Məngüccə accədi \*(a) Ccolinə  
 Dominic killed PA Nick  
 ‘Dominic killed Nick’
- (30) La malatijə / nu Chiangónə accədi \*(a) Ccolinə  
 the disease a rock killed PA Nick  
 ‘The disease / a rock killed Nick’

In (30), both Barese subjects *malatijə* ‘disease’ and *chiangónə* ‘rock’ are specified for the [-agent] feature which blocks the presence of the PA. Hence, the agentivity of the subject is another fundamental requirement for the PA to be licensed in Barese, beside specificity and animacy. However, in the next section we shall see that the concept of animacy is not entirely appropriate in its semantic characterisation, thus requiring a finer-grained explanation.

#### 2.5. Animacy restriction

As mentioned in the introduction, animacy is claimed to be the fundamental property that contributes to the *a*-marking of DOs. However, one crucial difference between Spanish and Barese concerns the marking of certain [-animate] DO-referents, such as metals, which is systematically blocked in Barese (31), but (optionally) allowed in Spanish (32) (cf. Molho 1959):

- (31) U stagnàrə squàgghjə (\*a) u ffiərrə  
 the tinsmith melts PA the iron  
 ‘The tinsmith melts iron’

- (32) Los ácidos atacan (a) los metales (Molho 1959:214)  
 the acids attack PA the metals  
 ‘The acids attack the metals’

In other cases, [-animate] DOs can be anthropomorphized and still receive the *a*-marking on the basis of purely morphological factors. For instance, Torrego (1998:55) suggests that the referent of a proper noun with DO function could allegedly refer to a ‘boat’ or a ‘beer’, e.g. *esconde \*(a) Barbara!* ‘hide Barbara!’, yet be *a*-marked for the high level of definiteness and referentiality of the proper name. This same generalisation for Spanish also applies to Barese:

- (33) Ciccillə aschənni \*(a) Ggrazzièllə / (\*a) la bbəscəclèttə  
 Frankie hid PA Graziella PA the bicycle  
 ‘Frankie hid Graziella/the bicycle’

In (33), the proper name *Graziella* bearing the *a*-marking refers to a brand of bicycles, rather than to a person: its [-animate] counterpart *bbəscəclèttə* ‘bicycle’ cannot, in fact, be marked by the PA. Thus, the animacy feature appears to be relevant at a purely conceptual level in the licensing of the PA: the morphological form of the proper noun, along with the [+human] characterisation of the referent, are sufficient to encode the animacy level required for the *a*-marking, even though the referent itself is inanimate.

When we consider other [+animate] referents such as animals, the result would be identical to that of anthropomorphic [-animate] referents observed in (33). For instance, consider the contrast between (34), where both subject and DO are anthropomorphised animals, i.e. [+human], and a regular [-human], yet [+animate] DO in (35):

- (34) U vónə vədi [a + u =] ó ciuccə  
 the ox saw PA the PA=the donkey  
 ‘The ox saw the donkey’

- (35) So assùtə u / \*ó cànə  
 am exited the PA.the dog  
 ‘I’ve taken out the dog (for a walk)’

In (34), we are faced with a fictional context in which the referents, the agentive subject *vónə* ‘ox’ and the specific DO *ciuccə* ‘donkey’, are both considered as anthropomorphic, i.e. [+human], thus [+animate], meeting all the semantic conditions required for the *a*-marking.

We can conclude this section by observing that there is no straightforward mapping, i.e. one-to-one correspondence, between the [+animate] feature and *a*-marking, though “humanness” plays a key role – on an abstract level – in the licensing of the PA in Barese.

## 2.6. Affectedness

Torrego (1998) claims that “affectedness” contributes to the licensing of the Spanish PA. An entity is understood as “affected” whenever it changes its location, or whenever it undergoes a physical or psychological change. Torrego considers the verbs *ver* ‘to see’ and *golpear* ‘to hit’: the former shows free alternation as for the PA-marking on the DO, whereas the latter must necessarily bear the *a*-marker because of the affectedness of the DO:

- (36) El guardia vió (a) un prisionero (Torrego 1998:18)  
 the guard saw PA a prisoner  
 ‘The guard saw a prisoner’
- (37) El guardia golpeó \*(a) un prisionero  
 the guard hit PA a prisoner  
 ‘The guard hit a prisoner’

Below we can observe the behaviour of Barese correspondent predicates *vədə* ‘to see’ and *(am)məná* ‘to hit’:

- (38) La uàrdjə vədì (a) nu carcəràtə  
 The soldier saw PA a prisoner  
 ‘The soldier saw a(ny / specific) prisoner’
- (39) La uàrdjə ammənò (a) nu carcəràtə  
 The soldier hit PA a prisoner  
 ‘The soldier hit a(ny / specific) prisoner’

Both (38) and (39) show alternation in the use of the preposition: this depends on whether the DO *carcəràtə* ‘prisoner’ is specific, i.e. “a specific prisoner”, thus bearing the *a*-marking, or non-specific, i.e. “any prisoner”, surfacing in the bare Accusative. Once again, the specificity of the DO in Barese is crucial for the licensing of PA, unlike the [ $\pm$ affectedness] of the DO.

## 2.7 Semantic Properties of the PA in Barese: interim conclusions

We may now summarise the main semantic features at stake in the licensing of the Barese PA by means of an implicational scale:

$$S_{[+AGENT]} < DO_{[+HUMAN]} < DO_{[+SPECIFIC]}$$

The Barese PA will thus be licensed provided that the subject is agentive and the DO is “human”, i.e. also anthropomorphic (rather than simply animate), and specific, the latter being the ultimate discriminant factor determining the alternation in the *a*-marking of indefinite DOs and of the existential and the negative quantifiers. By contrast, clitic doubling, shift of aspectual classes of predicates and affectedness are not influential in the presence of the Barese PA, unlike the case of Spanish.

### 3. SYNTACTIC PROPERTIES OF THE BARESE PA

We have observed in §2 that DOs need to encode specific semantic properties in order to be *a*-marked, but also the subject has to be agentive in order for the PA to be licensed. This implies that the licensing of *a*-marked objects also depends on the thematic role of the subject, meaning that there must be some sort of syntactic interaction between the two within the *v*-VP. We will first ascertain the *v*-VP-internal position of the PA by testing adverb positioning (Cinque 1999; Ledgeway & Lombardi 2005) with respect to the position of verb and its complements.

#### 3.1. Barese syntax and the position of the PA

Ledgeway & Lombardi (2005) discuss verb movement and clitic positioning among a selection of Romance Languages, with particular focus on extreme southern Italian dialects (ESIDs):

TABLE 1

Verb and Clitic position in a selection of Romance (Ledgeway & Lombardi 2005:103)

<i>Variety</i>	<i>Verb Movement</i>	<i>Cliticization</i>
Cosentino (ESID)	low	high
Standard Italian	high	low
(Spanish)	low	low
(French)	high	high

Ledgeway & Lombardi's (2005) tests on both verb and clitic placement with respect to adverb positioning – *à la* Cinque (1999) – will be used to shed light on Barese syntax, which seems to behave more closely to the syntax of Spanish, rather than that of standard Italian or ESIDs.

Cinque (1999) treats adverbs as specifiers of functional projections (rather than mere free adjuncts), merged in fixed positions which apply cross-linguistically. Ledgeway & Lombardi (2005) distinguish further clause-internal domains on the basis of these hierarchically ordered adverb positions: Higher Adverb Space (HAS), clause-medial functional projection (YP) and Lower Adverb Space (LAS), where both verb and clitic move:

- (40) [<sub>HAS</sub> Gianni (\*non dorme) purtroppo] [<sub>LAS</sub> non dorme mica] [<sub>v-VP</sub> t<sub>dorme</sub> ]  
 Gianni not sleeps unfortunately not sleeps not  
 'But in any case Gianni unfortunately doesn't sleep' (Cinque 1999:152)

In (40) we observe that the adverb *purtroppo* 'unfortunately' occupies a high position in the sentence, occurring in the HAS and blocking the raising of V, but not of the subject. In the LAS, we find the V moved out of the *v*-VP, which has crossed over the low presuppositional negative adverb *mica*.

Following Ledgeway & Lombardi (2005), we shall now test the position of Barese verb with respect to Cinque's (1999) fixed adverbial hierarchy, comparing it to the verb movement of Cosentino, Italian and Spanish: this will reveal the exact PA position in the Barese clause. However, we will not deal with adverbs merged in the HAS, but only with those two adverbs delimiting the highest and lowest positions in the LAS, namely *ggià* 'already' (§3.2) and *bbinà* 'well' (§3.3) respectively. We will first introduce the highest of the low adverbs, 'already', which will

then be used in combination with the lowest adverb in the LAS to reveal the structural position of the Barese PA.

### 3.2. LAS-adverb “ggià”

The difference in verb and clitic positioning among Cosentino (41), Italian (42) and Spanish (43) becomes immediately visible when we test the highest of the low adverbs, merged at the left-most edge of the LAS:

- (41) a. Gianni [YP [LAS ggià mi canuscìa] [v-VP t<sub>canuscìa</sub> t<sub>mi</sub>]]  
 John already me knows  
 b. Gianni [YP mi [LAS ggià canuscìa] [v-VP t<sub>canuscìa</sub> t<sub>mi</sub>]]  
 John me already knows  
 c. #Gianni [YP mi canuscìa [LAS GGIÀ t<sub>mi</sub> canuscìa] [v-VP t<sub>canuscìa</sub> t<sub>mi</sub>]]  
 John me knows already  
 ‘John already knows me’ (Ledgeway & Lombardi 2005:97)

- (42) a. #Gianni [YP [LAS GIÀ mi conosce] [v-VP t<sub>conosce</sub> t<sub>mi</sub>]]  
 John already me knows  
 b. \*Gianni [YP mi [LAS già conosce] [v-VP t<sub>conosce</sub> t<sub>mi</sub>]]  
 John me already knows  
 c. Gianni [YP mi conosce [LAS già t<sub>mi</sub> conosce] [v-VP t<sub>conosce</sub> t<sub>mi</sub>]]  
 John me knows already  
 ‘John already knows me’ (Ledgeway & Lombardi 2005:97)

- (43) a. Juan [YP [LAS ya me conoce] [v-VP t<sub>conoce</sub> t<sub>me</sub> a mi]]  
 John already me knows PA me  
 b. \*Juan [YP me [LAS ya conoce] [v-VP t<sub>conoce</sub> t<sub>me</sub> a mi]]  
 John me already knows PA me  
 c. #Juan [YP me conoce [LAS YA t<sub>me</sub> conoce] [v-VP t<sub>conoce</sub> t<sub>me</sub> a mi]]  
 John me knows already PA me  
 ‘John already knows me’ (Ledgeway & Lombardi 2005:104)

Consider now Barese verb and clitic position with respect to the adverb *ggià*:

- (44) a. Giuánnə [YP [LAS ggià mə canòscə] [v-VP t<sub>canòscə</sub> t<sub>mə</sub> a mme]]  
 John already me knows PA me  
 b. \*Giuánnə [YP mə [LAS ggià canòscə] [v-VP t<sub>canòscə</sub> t<sub>mə</sub> a mme]]  
 John me already knows PA me  
 c. #G. [YP mə canòscə [LAS GGIÀ t<sub>mə</sub> canòscə] [v-VP t<sub>canòscə</sub> t<sub>mə</sub> a mme]]  
 John me knows already PA me  
 ‘John already knows me’

Unlike Cosentino (41), which allows adverbial interpolation between the clitic and the V (41b), and standard Italian (42), where the V raises higher than the LAS in pragmatically unmarked

contexts<sup>2</sup> (42c), both Barese (44) and Spanish (43) Vs do not raise to T (cf. Schifano 2015), however they are inclined to remain in a lower position, witness the V following the LAS adverb in unmarked contexts, e.g. (43a) and (44a). What needs to be maintained here is that Spanish and Barese share the same unmarked distribution of left-most LAS-adverb ‘already’, followed by the compact complex [V+clitic], unlike Italian and (partly) Cosentino.

### 3.3. LAS-adverb “*bbùnə*”

Bearing in mind that Barese V must follow *ggià* in unmarked contexts (on a par with Spanish *ya*), thus targeting a position in the LAS, we can now test the unmarked positions of the V and the PA in these two varieties with respect to both *ggià* and the adverb *bbùnə* ‘well’. The latter is claimed to occupy one of the lowest position in Cinque’s (1999:106) hierarchy, namely the SpecVoiceP (at the right-most edge of the LAS), located directly above the *v*-VP complex:

- (45) a. G. [<sub>YP</sub> [<sub>LAS</sub> *ggià* *mə* *canòscə* *bbùnə* [<sub>v-VP</sub> *t<sub>canòscə</sub>* *t<sub>mə</sub>* *a* *mme*]]  
 John *already* *me* *knows* *well* *PA* *me*
- b. \*G. [<sub>YP</sub> *mə* *canòscə* [<sub>LAS</sub> *ggià* *t<sub>mə</sub>* *canòscə* *bbùnə*] [<sub>v-VP</sub> *t<sub>canòscə</sub>* *t<sub>mə</sub>* *a* *mme*]]  
 John *me* *knows* *already* *well* *PA* *me*
- c. \*G. [<sub>YP</sub> [<sub>LAS</sub> *ggià* *mə* *canòscə* (\**a* *mme*) *bbùnə*] [<sub>v-VP</sub> *t<sub>canòscə</sub>* *t<sub>mə</sub>* *t<sub>a</sub>* *mme*]]  
 John *already* *me* *knows* *PA* *me* *well*  
 ‘John already knows me well’
- (46) a. Juan [<sub>YP</sub> [<sub>LAS</sub> *ya* *me* *conoce* *bien*] [<sub>v-VP</sub> *t<sub>conoce</sub>* *t<sub>me</sub>* *a* *mí*]]  
 John *already* *me* *knows* *well* *PA* *me*
- b. \*Juan [<sub>YP</sub> *me* *conoce* [<sub>LAS</sub> *ya* *bien*] [<sub>v-VP</sub> *t<sub>conoce</sub>* *t<sub>me</sub>* *a* *mí*]]  
 John *me* *knows* *already* *well* *PA* *me*
- c. \*J. [<sub>YP</sub> [<sub>LAS</sub> *ya* *me* *conoce* (\**a* *mí*) *bien*] [<sub>v-VP</sub> *t<sub>conoce</sub>* *t<sub>me</sub>* *t<sub>a</sub>* *mí*]]  
 John *already* *me* *knows* *PA* *me* *well*  
 ‘John already knows me well’

The adjacency between the two Barese low adverbs *ggià* and *bbùnə* is disallowed in pragmatically unmarked environments, as shown in (45b); however, focused *GGIÀ* could follow *bbùnə* in marked contexts, moving to a low left-peripheral position (cf. fn.2). This leaves the interpolation of V between these two LAS-adverbs as the only felicitous/grammatical option in Barese (45a), on a par with Spanish (46a). Moreover, (45c) reveal us that the PA is not allowed to raise past *bbùnə*. These facts lead us to two fundamental conclusions: the Barese PA does not raise higher than VoiceP, i.e. remains within the *v*-VP and, ultimately, Barese syntax, showing both low verb movement and low cliticisation, patterns more closely to the syntax of Spanish rather than that of Italian or ESID.

<sup>2</sup> We signal pragmatically marked occurrences of *ggià* with capital letters, i.e. *GGIÀ*. As an anonymous reviewer notes, *ggià* can occur in the higher left-periphery, i.e. within the CP; however, its pragmatically marked instance can also lexicalise a focus position in the lower left-periphery, as it is the case for Spanish (43c) and Italian (42a). For reason of space, these pragmatically marked instances will not be discussed in this paper, and only its unmarked position will be considered.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS ON THE PA IN BARESE

In the present work, the syntactico-semantic conditions (cf. §3) identified by Torrego (1998) for the licensing of the Spanish PA were compared and contrasted to those of the Barese PA. Among the six conditions identified for Spanish, the Barese PA only requires three of them to be present, namely [+“human”] and [+specific] DO and [+agentive] S, whereas the remaining three are only partly influential or entirely irrelevant for the licensing of PA. In particular, no aspectual shift in the predicate (a)telic interpretation obtains whenever the Barese PA surfaces, as opposed to Spanish. This may be motivated by the fact that Spanish PAs raise even higher than they do in Barese, possibly to a Aspect-related field in the inflectional domain. Moreover, the ‘affectedness’ of DOs does not play a role in the licensing of the Barese PA; this can be interpreted on the basis of language-specific parametric settings, whereby the ‘affectedness’ constraint on DOs in Barese needs not be checked on *v* to license the PA, whereas it does in Spanish.

By means of a number of syntactic tests involving a cross-linguistically fixed adverbial hierarchy (Cinque 1999), we have situated Barese in a wider typology of Romance verb and clitic positioning provided by Ledgeway & Lombardi (2005). Starting from their analysis, we have noted that verb and clitic movement in Barese can be comparable to that of Spanish, rather than that of Italian or Cosentino. In particular, we observed that the Barese *a*-marked DO will always follow the adverb *bbùnə* ‘well’, which is merged in the specifier of VoiceP, immediately above the *v*-VP shell, e.g. (47c). Hence, the PA never raises higher than VoiceP, i.e. it remains within the *v*-VP. However, the agentivity of Ss is a structural requirement for the licensing of both Barese and Spanish PA, which suggests that there must be interaction between the S and the *a*-marked DOs at some stage of the derivation.

At this point, a representation of the *v*-VP complex with multiple specifiers (cf. Ura 1994) is provided in (47):

- (47) [<sub>vP</sub> [<sub>Spec2-vP</sub> [<sub>Spec1-vP</sub> [<sub>v</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>V</sub> DP<sub>DO</sub>]]]]]]]

Chomsky (1995:§4.6) suggests that the agentive role (as well as the causative role) of subjects, which is crucial for the licensing of the PA in Barese, can be considered to be expressed by the configuration of the *v*-VP (cf. also Torrego 1998:15). Likewise, we linked the licensing of *a*-marked DOs to the agentivity of their Ss. The latter are first-merged in the internal specifier of the *v*P-shell, Spec1-*v*P, the thematic position for transitive subjects. In Romance, these are traditionally claimed to raise to the Infl(ectio)nal layer, i.e. outside of the *v*-VP, for Case-assignment purposes. However, before T/Infl is merged, [+agentive] Ss can establish a close relation via *v* with those DOs whose strong D-features (representative of the semantic features discussed in §2 and summarised in §3) needs checking on *v*. This causes these DOs to be attracted to the external specifier of *v*P, Spec2-*v*P, where they will receive the *a*-marking. Once this specific configuration of the *v*-VP is obtained, T/Infl can be merged so that both S and V can raise to T/Infl-related position, as generally assumed for Romance.

I argue for a movement analysis of the Barese *a*-marked DOs following Diesing’s ‘Mapping Hypothesis’ (1992): that [+specific] DOs undergo movement to a higher position within the (*v*-)VP. Most of the diagnostics used by Torrego (1998) to shed light on the Spanish PA, adapted, in turn, to the Barese PA, have indeed revealed that ‘specificity’ plays a crucial role in Barese as the ultimate semantic factor determining the oscillation in the *a*-marking, visible on indefinite DPs (cf. §3.2.1) and animate quantifiers (cf. §3.2.2). Diesing’s (1992) intuition on

[+specific] DOs finds welcome cross-linguistic parallels in the ideas of Chomsky (1995), Torrego (1998) for Spanish and Ledgeway (2000) for Neapolitan. However, the overt raising of *a*-marked DOs in both Spanish and Neapolitan is accounted for by these scholars on the basis of purely theory-internal assumptions. In fact, no direct syntactic evidence, i.e. intervening material, for Romance can be provided to account for the overt DO-raising, but the reasons for the raising and consequent *a*-marking are mainly due to semantic reasons, which is true also for Barese.

As regards the DO-raising, Chomsky (1995) posits that no movement is unmotivated in Minimalism: there only will be movement for feature-checking needs. In this respect, Chomsky (1995:352) points out that *v* may host a neutral nominal feature (also referred to as ‘D-feature’), which attracts the DO to raise to a *v*-associated position. This D, or variant of D, may be linked to referentiality, rather than just being a simple marker of a nominal category. More specifically, such a D on *v* is argued by Chomsky (1995:350) to be the locus where also ‘specificity’ is encoded, i.e. where only [+specific] DOs may be attracted. Along the same lines, Torrego (1998:14) suggests that the *v*-domain can be considered as the *locus* to which certain types of DOs may overtly raise, if certain semantic conditions are met: this is indeed the case for Spanish (Torrego 1998), Neapolitan (Ledgeway 2000) and Barese [+specific] DOs, which bear the *a*-marking. Thus, these [+specific] *a*-marked DOs raise to the external specifier position of the *v*P in order to check the specificity feature (as well as other nominal D-features, i.e. [+human]) against the head of that projection, i.e. *v*. Hence, it is the [+specific] feature, above all others, that ultimately determines the DO-raising to the external Spec-*v*P, where it can be interpreted as [+specific] and receive the *a*-marking; on the other hand, if specificity is not involved, the DO remains unmarked *in situ*, i.e. VP-complement position.

We can conclude this overview on the semantic and syntactic properties of Barese PA by formulating the following generalisation on DO-movement in Barese:

Provided that the subject is [+agentive] and the [+“human”] DO bears a [+specific] feature, the latter will raise to the external specifier of *v*P in order to check “specificity” (among others). This movement implies the (post-syntactic) insertion of a morphological marker in front of the DO, namely *a*, signalling the [+specific] feature and, consequently, interpretation of the DO.

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