# *ALREADY* IN ROMANCE: UNIVERSAL PROPERTIES, MINIMAL VARIATION, LANGUAGE CHANGE

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**Abstract.** This paper deals with some common properties of ALREADY-elements (AEs), as analysed for Romance (Italian *già*, French *déjà*) by Hansen and Strudsholm (2008) and for Latin *iam* by Kroon and Risselada (2002). Some additional data from other Romance languages, namely Spanish, Sardinian and Romanian, will be discussed. The development of the function of AE varies and does not always follow pre-established pathways as observed in grammaticalisation theory. Also relevant here are possible interpretations of an AE as a discourse marker, a kind of "paralinguistic" or even gesture-like element, as has been observed in the literature, which can be easily be borrowed from one language into another. Some case studies of the interpretations of AEs are discussed (Sardinian *ge*, Spanish *ya* in the Basque country, Romanian *deja*, Northern Italian *già*), where minimal variation and change play a role and where the different functions of AEs can be interpreted as the result of language contact.

**Keywords:** phasal adverbs, discourse marker, grammaticalization, language contact, polysemy, minimal variation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Elements that have a meaning corresponding to English 'already', such as French *déjà* (Old French *ja*), Italian *già*, Spanish *ya*, Portuguese *já*, Catalan *jà*, Romanian *deja*[2], German *schon*, Latin *iam* (henceforth ALREADY-elements; AEs), have been studied in many languages, often in the context of the other phasal adverbs (cf. van der Auwera 1998) that have a meaning systematically correlated to 'already', namely 'yet', 'not yet', 'still', and 'not … anymore'[3].

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[2] Romanian also has the clitic particle *mai*, which is worthy of its own study, cf. e.g. Reinheimer Rîpeanu (2004), Donazzan and Mardale (2007, 2010), Giurgea (2017).

[3] E.g. Doherty (1973), König (1977), Löbner (1989) for German, Hirtle (1977), Traugott and Waterhouse (1969) and König and Traugott (1982) for English, Abraham (1980) for German and English, Hoepelmann and Rohrer (1981) for German, Urdiales (1973), Koike (1996), Deloor (2011), Delbecque and Maldonado (2011) for Spanish, González (2000) for regional Spanish, Fedriani and Miola (2014) for French and (regional) Italian, Squartini (2013, 2014) for (regional) Italian, Hansen (2008, 2014) for (Old) French, Ingham (2006) for Old French, Buchi (2007) for French, Hansen and



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Personally, I became interested in the study of AEs when I noticed a particular use of Sardinian *ge* (and its variants, *zai, giai*, *za*, *ze*, *gie*, *je*, *dje*, *ja*, *già* etc., depending on the different varieties, all from Latin *iam*), where it seemed to have gained an additional discursive meaning, as in the following examples (from Blasco Ferrer 1998: Ch. 1, 2, 7)[4].

(1) *E insaras bolit nai ca apu a papai figu morisca,*
and thus wants say that I.have to eat prickly pear
*custa* ***giai*** *est barata!* (Srd.)
this AE is cheap
'So this means that I should eat prickly pears, these are cheap indeed!'

(2) ***Zai*** *l'ischis chi ses andande a inie pro cussu…* (Srd.)
AE it=you.know that you.are going to there for this
'You (surely) know that you are going there for this reason…'

(3) ***Gei*** *tenit arrexoni, ma seu preocupau poita …* (Srd.)
AE s/he.has right but I.am worried because…
'Of course, s/he is right but I'm worried because…'

In these examples, the AE *ge* is more an emphatic or affirmative marker, which can be translated by 'really' or 'of course' or modal particles like *ja*, *doch* or *schon* in German (which would give an appropriate translation for (2): 'Du weiß doch/ja/schon…', cf. Thurmair 1989). The original phasal or temporal-aspectual meaning is lost in these uses.

Van der Auwera (1998: 25–26) characterises phasal adverbs as follows:

> Phasal adverbials have been found interesting because they confront the linguist with a surprising degree of variety in both meaning and form, both within and across languages, and across different stages of languages.

This paper will examine the degree of variation of one of these phasal adverbs, namely the AE, based on universal properties and on the diachronic changes observed in their behaviour. The aim is to study the universal properties of AEs within a broader perspective, investigating the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of this adverb; to explore the variation and minimal change in meaning they show from a cross-linguistic perspective, based on data from Romance; and to take a closer look at some changes in behaviour, as found in Sardinian, where at least at some point language contact might have been a triggering factor.

The paper is structured as follows: In §2, I discuss the universal properties of AEs, situating them in the system of phasal adverbs. Then, in §3, I come to the Romance data, which show a degree of variation that I still call minimal: the variation in meaning and use of AEs can mostly be explained by the existence of one lexical but polysemous element, i.e. an element that has several semantic features, one or more of which may be foregrounded or, in the case of underspecificity, semantically specified. In this section, I

Strudsholm for Italian, French and English, Campos (1984), Lejeune (2008) for Portuguese, Reinheimer Rîpeanu (2009) and Costăchescu (2016) for Romanian, Kroon and Risselada (2002) for Latin and Bazzanella *et al.* (2005) for a comparative view on Romance; of course, this list is far from exhaustive.

[4] See also Calaresu (2015), also for regional Italian in Sardinia, and Remberger (2010b, 2011a,b, 2016).

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refer to two essential publications covering this topic, namely Hansen and Strudsholm (2008) (for Romance) and Kroon and Risselada (2002) (for Latin). In §4, the diachronic perspective shows that AEs seem to be particularly prone to being borrowed from one language into another, either partially (in the sense of some particular functions, e.g. in Sardinian, cf. the work quoted in n. 4) or totally (like *deja* in Romanian). A short conclusion and outlook follow in §5.

## 2. THE SYSTEM OF PHASAL ADVERBS

Van der Auwera (1998: 25) proposed that in the system of phasal adverbs there are two parameters involved, namely [change of state to P] (with P, a predicate) and [continuity of P] – the same applies to the negation of P, i.e. [change of state to ¬ P] and [continuity of ¬ P]. In English, this can be illustrated by the items exemplified in (4):

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (4) | a. | *John is **already** at home.* | [change of state to P] |
| | b. | *John is **still** at home*. | [continuity of P] |
| | c. | *John is **no longer** at home.* | [change of state to ¬ P] |
| | d. | *John is **not** at home **yet**.* | [continuity of ¬ P] |

Thus, *already* contrasts with *no longer* whereas *still* contrasts with *not ... yet*. The representation for German would be:

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (5) | a. | *Hans* | *schläft* | ***schon***. | | [change of state to P] |
| | | H. | sleeps | AE | | |
| | b. | *Hans* | *schläft* | ***noch***. | | [continuity of P] |
| | | H. | sleeps | STILL | | |
| | c. | *Hans* | *schläft* | ***nicht*** | ***mehr***. | [change of state to ¬ P] |
| | | H. | sleeps | NOT | MORE | |
| | d. | *Hans* | *schläft* | ***noch*** | ***nicht***. | [continuity of ¬ P] |
| | | H. | sleeps | YET | NOT | |
| (6) | *Hans* | *schläft* | ***schon*** | ***nicht***. | | [modal particle] |
| | Hans | sleeps | AE | NOT | | |

Here you can see that in the case of continuity *noch* contrasts with *noch nicht* whereas there is no such contrast with *schon* and *schon nicht*. In (6), *schon* is a discourse particle that indicates that the speaker intends to reassure the hearer that a situation s/he is worried about does not hold (cf. Thurmair 1989: 92, 151–152). In German, phasal *schon* (5a) instead contrasts with *nicht mehr* (5c).

In Spanish, the AE we are interested in is *ya* (cf. Sánchez López 1999: 2602–2603):

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (7) | a. | *Juán* | *vive* | ***ya*** | *en Barcelona.* | [change of state to P] |
| | | J. | lives | AE | in Barcelona | |
| | b. | *Juán* | *vive* | ***todavía*** | *en Barcelona.* | [continuity of P] |
| | | J. | lives | STILL | in Barcelona | |

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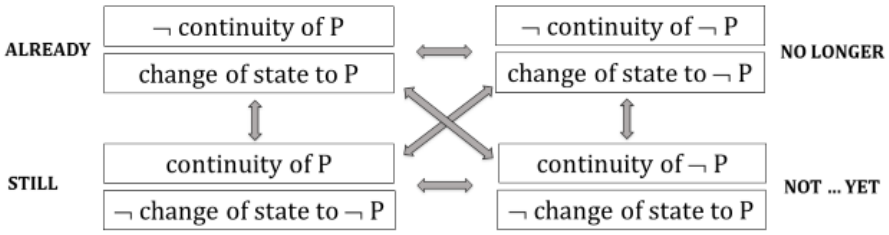
c. *Juán* ***ya*** ***no*** *vive en Barcelona.* [change of state to ¬ P]
J. AE NOT lives in Barcelona
d. *Juán* ***no*** *vive* ***todavía*** *en Barcelona.* [continuity of ¬ P]
J. NOT lives YET in Barcelona.

(8) *Juán* ***no*** *vive* ***ya*** *en Barcelona.* [¬ change of state to P]
J. NOT lives AE in Barcelona

In Spanish, *ya* contrasts with *ya no* as *todavía* contrasts with *no ... todavía*. However, *no ... ya* (8) encodes the same phasal meaning as *no ... todavía* (7d): note the semantic equivalence of [¬Change of state to P] and [Continuity of ¬P], but not of *ya no* ('no longer') (7c) and *no ... ya* ('not yet') (8), where the syntactic order of *ya* and the negation results in different scope effects.

The interplay of AE and negation is an interesting topic for the continuation and change of state properties, as we can see from the correspondences that result if we negate these properties: see the following representation of a square of oppositions:

(9) Square of oppositions for phasal adverbs:




The AEs discussed in this paper are thus characterised by at least two properties, the change of state property and the non-continuation of a state. We shall see in the next section that there is another relevant property, but first we will move away from the onomasiological perspective adopted so far (the semantic system) to a semasiological perspective and take one instance or form of AE in order to find out more about the meaning and usage of AEs in discourse: The derivatives from Latin *iam,* which – besides having the function of a phasal adverb – are also used as affirmative, discourse or illocutionary markers.

## 3. MINIMAL VARIATION IN LATIN AND ROMANCE

Kroon and Risselada (2002), who have carried out an exhaustive study on the meaning and use of Latin *iam*, and Hansen and Strudsholm (2008), who compare Italian *già* with French *déjà* and English *already*, are the works I refer to in this chapter. There is also a study on Romance AEs from a comparative perspective, namely Bazzanella et al. (2005), which is less systematic and to which I occasionally refer.

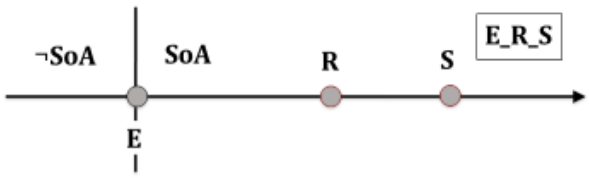
It emerged from the examples from English, German and Spanish above that the change of state property is not sufficient to properly characterise AEs. The following example illustrates this:

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(10) *Quando ci siamo incontrati, la lettera era **già** arrivata.* (It.)
When us we.are met the letter was AE arrived
'When we met, the letter had already arrived.'

The main clause in (10) is in the pluperfect, thus, in a Reichenbachian system (cf. Reichenbach 1947) the event time (E) is before the reference time (R), which is before the time of the speech act (S). The reference time is encoded by the temporal adverbial clause. The AE here means that the speaker refers to a reference time for which a state of affairs (SoA) is asserted ('the letter arrived'), but there was a change of state to this state of affairs, which did not hold previously ('the letter had not arrived yet'). An additional and quite important meaning conveyed by the AE is that this change of state has occurred subjectively "early" (a kind of unexpectedness effect); cf. the following timeline:

(11) *Quando ci siamo incontrati, la lettera era **già** arrivata.*



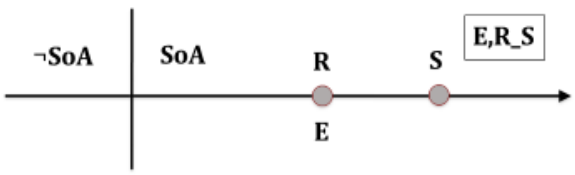

E: Change of State from ¬SoA to SoA ("early")

This does not only hold for resultant states but also for states and situations in general, as we can see in the next example from Sardinian:

(12) *Mi acostiei a sa mandra. Fit **già** iscuru.* (Srd.)
me approached to the flock it.was AE dark
'I got closer to the flock. It was already dark.' (Falconi 2003–2007: 88)

The relevant sentence is in the imperfect and for its reference time it holds that it is dark, but the change of state of not being dark to being dark is again subjectively felt or presented as early.

(13) *Fit **già** iscuru.*




E: Change of State from ¬SoA to SoA ("early")

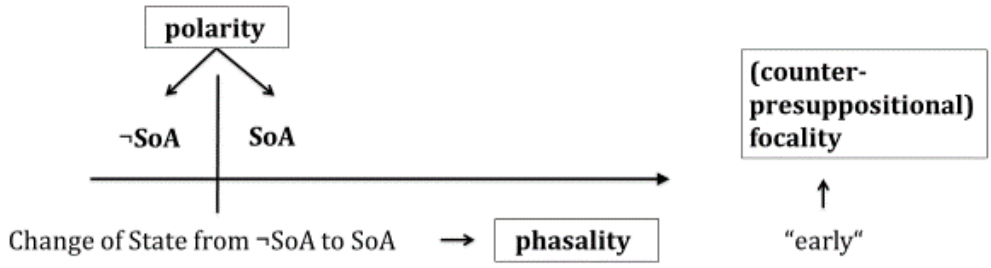
Kroon and Risselada posit three basic ingredients for AE (*iam* in Latin), namely:

(14) a. phasality b. polarity c. (counterpresuppositional) focality

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The first two features are semantic in nature, while the third is purely pragmatic. These features can be easily explained with the help of the prototypical (i.e. temporal or phasal) use of AE exemplified in (10)–(13) above: The change of state encoded in an AE includes two phases, one before and one after, hence phasality results; polarity can be derived from the negation vs. affirmation of the state of affairs connected to the two phases, and the idea of earliness places the focus on the change of state between the two phases, which might not have been expected that early or not expected at all, hence the counterpresuppositional focality.

(15) Integration of the features proposed by Kroon and Risselada (2002)




From the three ingredients of AE in (14) several secondary readings can be derived, as Kroon and Risselada (2002) show with the help of examples from Latin. They claim that Latin *iam* is polysemous, in the sense that its features can be present (or foregrounded) or not. They identify the following four readings for the AE *iam*:

(16) Interpretations of AE according to Kroon and Risselada (2002)
- a. the temporal (= phasal) reading: [+phasal, +polar, +focal]
- b. the scalar reading [+phasal, -polar, +focal]
- c. the polar reading [-phasal, +polar, +focal]
- d. the focal reading [-phasal, -polar, +focal]

This first systematic approach to the various interpretations of AEs leads us to the variation found in Romance AEs. Hansen and Strudsholm (2008) identified, in a "contrastive, panchronic method of semantic-pragmatic analysis" some further readings or sub-uses for AEs in French, Italian and English:

(17) Interpretations of AE according to Hansen and Strudsholm (2008)
- a. temporal-aspectual (= phasal) uses with the following sub-uses:
  => phasal, iterative, indefinite past, (quasi-)adjectival, focus particle;
- b. modal uses with the following sub-uses:
  => scalar, marginality, denial;
- c. connective uses with the following sub-uses:
  thematic, conjunctional, corrective;
- d. interactional uses with the following sub-uses:
  => interjectional, interrogative, imperative.

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Hansen and Strudsholm's account does not rely on features, but takes into account different levels of interpretation, namely the temporal aspectual level (17a), the domain of modality (17b), interclausal relations on the level of the text (17c), and interactional uses between utterances (where illocutionary force comes into play; 17d). Not all uses are possible in all languages. For reasons of space, I can only illustrate some of the sub-uses of AEs here. e.g. for the temporal aspectual (= phasal) use:

(18) *Tu as* ***déjà*** *mangé des calamars?* (Fr.)
you have AE eaten of.the squid
'Have you ever eaten squid?' (Hansen and Strudsholm 2008: 480)

(19) *A Firenze fu* ***già*** *un giovane chiamato Federico.* (It.)
in Florence was AE a young called F.
'In Florence, there was once a young man called Federico.'
(Hansen and Strudholm 2008: 482)

(20) *Il* ***già*** *ministro di grazia e giustizia…* (It.)
the AE minister of grace and justice
'The former minister of Justice…' (Hansen and Strudsholm 2008: 483)

(18) is an illustration of the iterative use, which appears in the context of a [+perfective/resultative] tense. This does not involve a continuity of the phase, but a possible number of occasions where P holds within a phase up to the reference time. Furthermore, there is the use of what Hansen and Strudsholm (2008) call the "indefinite past" reading, particular to Italian, see (19), which appears in the context of the *passato remoto* and is best translated with 'once (upon a time)'. In the quasi-adjectival use, also found in Italian (cf. 20), the AE appears within a noun phrase and modifies the temporal validity of the common noun, similar to the English adjective *former*.

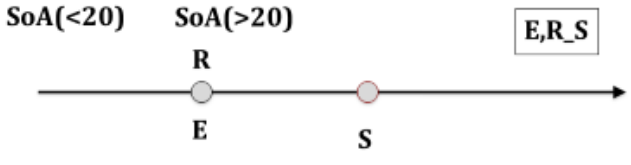
Scalar readings (which are subsumed under the modal uses in Hansen and Strudsholm 2008) developed out of the phasal reading, cf. the following example:

(21) *Aiada* ***già*** *vint' annos e non l'a bida mai*
she.had AE 20 years and not her=has seen ever
*niunu riende.* (Srd.)
nobody laughing
'She was already 20 years old and nobody has ever seen her laughing.'
(Archivi del Sud 1996–1998)

In (21), the time relations for the imperfective tense are E,R_S. The change of state is encoded for some time before the age of twenty, i.e. before the person is twenty, she is less than twenty etc. Here, the earliness of the change of state is not temporal, but scalar: Compared to not having been seen laughing at all the change of state from being less than twenty to being twenty occurred quite early. So in terms of Kroon and Risselada (2002) the feature of polarity (= holding or not for a certain change of state) is somehow backgrounded, i.e. there is no binary change of state observed; instead, the change is gradual or scalar (and this depends on the quantifiable complement in the scope of the AE, the age of twenty). This can be represented as follows:

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(22) *Aiada **già** vint'annos …*




E: Change of State from SoA(<20) to SoA(>20) ("early")

As for the modal uses of AEs, which for Hansen and Strudsholm (2008) also include the focal use identified by Kroon and Risselada (2002), we find the following, where the AE acts as a focus particle with constituent focus (the focused constituent is underlined):

(23) *id ita esse <u>vos</u> **iam** iudicare poteris* (Lat.)
this so be you AE to.judge you.will.be.able
'That this is the case will be up to YOU to decide.'
(Kroon and Risselada 2008: 72)

(24) ***Già** <u>la sua faccia</u> mi piace poco.* (It.)
AE the his face me pleases little
'His very face displeases me.' (Hansen and Strudholm 2008: 489)

(25) ***Já** <u>a Maria</u>, è outra história, preguiçosa como è!* (Prt.)
AE the M. is other story lazy how she.is
'Mary, in contrast, is another story, lazy as she is.' (Raposo 2013: 1653)

This interpretation is built on an ad hoc scale with no boundary (and the phasal and polar features identified by Kroon and Risselada 2002 are backgrounded). Mental scales are found in the following modal uses:

(26) *Menton, c' est **déjá** en France.* (Fr.)
Menton that is AE in France
'Menton is already in France.' (Hansen and Strudsholm 2008: 488)

(27) *Un catarro **ya** es una enfermedad.* (Sp.)
a cold AE is an illness
'A cold is already an illness.' (Deloor 2011: 41)

In (26) again we don't have a temporal-aspectual scale, but a geographical line of locations on which the location of Menton in France is reached unexpectedly early. In (27) the mental scale expresses some kind of marginality in comparison with a prototype (another transformation of the flavour of "earliness"), i.e. a cold is a marginal case of illness.

A further development is the polar reading of AEs, already identified for Latin by Kroon and Risselada (2002) and not present in Hansen and Strudsholm (2008) (probably because it is less relevant to the languages they analyse):

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(28) *nunc, si* ***iam*** *res placeat, agendi tamen viam non video* (Lat.)
now if AE thing pleases.SUBJ of.doing however way not I.see
'even if I were to approve of this, I see no way of putting it into action'
(Kroon and Risselada 2002: 72)

(29) *però* ***gié*** *ndi a fattu una 'e morti!* (Srd.)
but AE of.it has made one of death
'But he really had a good death!' (Archivi del Sud 1996–1998)

(30) ¡***Ya*** *me gustaría ayudarte!* (Sp.)
AE me would.please to.help=you
'I (really) wish I could help you!' (Batllori and Hernanz 2013: 12)

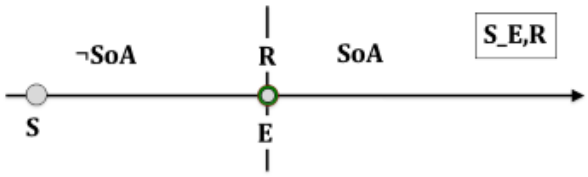
(31) *Lous chins* ***ja*** *soun au lheyt.* (Gasc.)
the children AE are in.the bed
'The children are well in bed. (I'm certain they are in bed.)' (Field 1985: 78)

The AE can be used as an affirmative marker, emphatically expressing polarity, not only in Latin (28), but also in Sardinian ((29), see also (1)–(3)), Spanish (30), and in Gascon (31), where it belongs to the system of the obligatory "enunciative particles" (cf. Bouzet 1951, Lafont 1967, Field 1985, Campos 1992, Pusch 2007). The polar or affirmative use of the AE can be derived, I propose, from the temporal-aspectual (= phasal) use, especially when the event time is in the future:[5]

(32) ***Gei*** *ap' a passare ananti 'e domu tua, nottesta…* (Srd.)
AE I.have to pass in.front of house your this.night
'I will (indeed) pass in front of your house this night…' (Lobina 2004: 238)

In 'I will pass in front of your house' additionally encoding that the state of affairs from not passing to passing will occur reasonably early produces a focus effect on the positive polarity of the proposition: 'I will INDEED pass this night.'[6]

(33) ***Gei*** *ap'a passare …*



Change of State from ¬SoA to SoA in a future time gives result to a focus efffect on positive polarity.

[5] Bazzanella *et al.* (2005: 56) only note this use in sentences in the anterior future, which is ideal for the phasal interpretation (cf. also Bazzanella *et al.* 2005: 76 for Romanian).

[6] Notice that AE in (31) is not temporal in the sense that it could refer to *nottesta* 'this night', since in this case it should be not in a sentence-initial position but before *nottesta*.

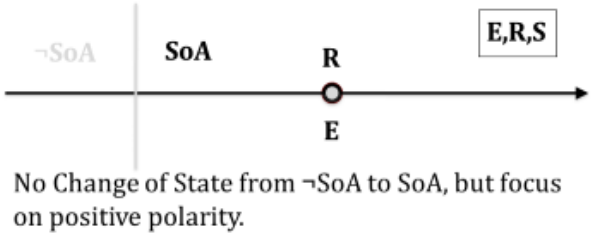
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However, the affirmative value, as demonstrated above, is found in all kinds of contexts, not only in the future tense. The AE is located in the left periphery, e.g. also after a (contrastive) topic:

(34) *Deu* ***ge*** *istau bene innoi.* (Srd.)
I AE stay well here
'I do indeed feel good here.' (Archivi del Sud 1996–1998)

In the examples in which the AE has an affirmative value, there is no longer a change of state, but an emphasis on the positive polarity of the state of affairs, hence the affirmative meaning:

(35) *Deu* ***ge*** *istau bene innoi.*




I will skip the connective uses of AEs, for which I refer the reader to Hansen and Strudholm (2008), since they are less relevant for the remaining part of this paper, but I will discuss more examples of the interactional use of AEs, which appears to be related to the affirmative use, as shown by the following examples from Italian and Spanish:

(36) *Renato non è ancora arrivato. – (Eh)* ***già.*** (It.)
R. not is still arrived eh AE
'Renato hasn't arrived yet. – Oh, well.' (Bernini 1995: 221)

(37) *Es que hay que respetar a los lectores. –* ***Ya***. (Sp.)
it.is that one.has to respect ACC the readers AE
'One has to respect the readers. – Oh, yes (I forgot).'
(Martín and Portolés 1999: 4192)

Here the AE can appear in isolation and can function as an affirmative interjection, acting as a pro-phrase; the affirmative particle also includes a modalisation of the positive answer, i.e. an additional meaning, that what was said is contrasted or restricted by something else or that it should not be new to the speaker (Bernini 1995); it functions as a modalised positive answer, which may also express irony, disbelief or indifference (Martín and Portolés 1999: 4192).

Another interactional use is connected to particular sentence types and is thus called interrogative or imperative by Hansen and Strudsholm (2008):

(38) *Quel est votre nom,* ***déjà?*** (Fr.)
which is your name AE
'What's your name, again?' (Hansen 2008: 213)

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(39) *¡Callate* ***ya!*** (Sp.)
shut-up AE
'So shut up (finally)!' (Hansen and Strudholm 2008: 498)

In (38) the AE is used as an interrogative clause with a back-checking function, a use particular to French (cf. also Buchi 2007); (39) instead illustrates the imperative use of AEs, with an additional flavour of impatience (which can be derived from the "earliness" property).

## 4. LANGUAGE CHANGE AND LANGUAGE CONTACT

While §3 presented the various uses and possible developments of AE elements, including their formal analysis, we will now explore four case studies in which language contact seems to play a role. I will briefly discuss Romanian *deja* (§4.1) then examine the affirmative use of Sardinian *ge* (§4.2), before coming to Spanish *ya* in the Basque country (§4.3) and the interactional use of *già* in regional Italian (§4.4).

### 4.1. Romanian *deja*

AEs usually seem to follow a path of development that starts from temporal-aspectual uses (relations between times) and then via modal uses (relations between worlds) and connective uses (relation between propositions), they can develop interactional uses (relations between utterances). Not all Romance languages have developed all kinds of uses: some sub-uses are particular to one variety only. For example, whereas Italian (including regional Italian) has developed many of the uses illustrated above, Romanian *deja* only seems to have the usual temporal-aspectual phasal and the scalar reading (cf. 41). This can be easily explained by the fact that Romanian *deja* is a loan from French and is first attested only in 1794 (cf. Reinheimer Rîpeanu 2009, DEX, DLR, s.v. *deja*):

(40) *ranele* ***degiia*** *înveninate* (Ro.)
wounds.the AE poisoned
'the wounds poisoned already' (DLR, Calendariu 1974)

(41) *Maria nu mai este o copilă*, *este* ***deja*** *femeie.* (Ro.)
M. not more is a girl she.is AE woman
'Mary is not a girl anymore, she already is a woman.' (Bazzanella *et al.* 2005: 74)

*Deja* seems to be used mainly by cultured speakers (although there is a regional use of *daja;* Bazzanella *et al.* 2005: 74, fn. 67). As a late loan it has not developed any further or even interactional uses. In fact, there are other more frequent phasal adverbs in Romanian, in particular *mai*, which in many contexts overlaps with *deja*. However, following on from Donazzan and Mardale (2007), there seem to be differences in minimal pairs like the following, where the AE has an iterative (phasal) reading:

(42) a. *Ion spune că a* ***mai*** *mâncat papaya.* (Ro.)
I. says that has AE eaten papaya
(Donazzan and Mardale 2007)

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b. *Ion spune că a mâncat **deja** papaya.* (Ro.)
I. says that has eaten AE papaya
'John says that he has already eaten papaya (once in the past).'

Besides the fact that *mai* is a clitic element that occurs only in the clitic context next to a verb, while *deja* is more flexible[7], according to Donazzan and Mardale (2007: 9)[8] there must be a current event of eating papaya in order to use *mai* in this context. However, phasal iterativity and continuity is not the only interpretational effect *mai* can have, since the function of *mai* also overlaps with other (phasal and additive) adverbs, like *încă* 'still' and *şi* 'also' (cf. Giurgea (2017)[9]).

### 4.2. The affirmative use of Sardinian *ge*

As observed in the introduction, the affirmative use of the AE *ge* (and variants) is highly frequent (cf. (1)–(3), (29), (32)–(35)). Furthermore, *ge* appears strikingly often in combination with certain expressions, especially when the verb 'to know' is involved (see also (2); cf. also Jones 1993, who confirms that in Sardinian the verb 'to know' is almost always introduced by the AE, in this case *ja*[10]):

(43) ***Già** l'ischis como est ...* (Srd.)
AE it=you.know how it.is
'You (surely) know how it is…' (Falconi 2002: 15)

(44) ***Gei** ddu scit ca deu a crésia no ddu andu ...* (Srd.)
AE it=know.3SG that I to church not there I.go
'You.POLITE (surely) know that I don't go to church... ' (Lobina 2004: 286)

[7] *Deja* can appear sentence initially or sentence finally, but usually appears after the verbal complex, as in (41) and (42b) (but before the passive participle):

(i) e **deja** seară, e seara **deja**, **deja** e seara
is AE evening is evening AE AE is evening
'it is already evening' (DEX, s.v. *deja*)

[8] "Crucially [42a] can be uttered only if John is facing an occurrence of eating papaya at his Utterance Time (while I'm eating papaya I say that I ate it (at least) once more in the past). If it is not the case, another adverbial (*deja*) has to be used instead." That there is a difference is also shown by the fact that both (AEs) can occur in one and the same utterance:

(i) *ai **mai** fost **deja** de trei ori acolo* (Ro.)
you.have AE been AE of three times there
'you have already been there three times by now'

[9] For reasons of space discussion of *mai* must be left aside for future research (cf. also n. 2).

[10] In fact, according to Jones (1993: 358–361) *ja* is also the appropriate affirmative particle in answers to polar questions introduced by the positive question particle *a* (cf. also Mensching and Remberger 2010, Remberger 2010) or a negative question introduced by *no* (cf. Casti 2012:149).

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The affirmative value of *ge* refers to a common ground accessible to both speaker and hearer. This is reminiscent of similar uses in Spanish, where the affirmative use of *ya* is also well-known (cf. e.g. Urdiales 1973:175[11]; also (30)):

(45) a. ***Ya*** *sabe usted...*
AE you.know you.POLITE
'You certainly know....'

b. ***Ya*** *lo sabes ...* (Sp.)
AE it=you.know
'You surely know this…'

It has been observed that discourse markers – and the affirmative use of AEs can be classified as such – show a high degree of pragmatic detachability in a situation of language contact (cf. e.g. Matras 1998, Stolz 2008: 23[12]). Sardinia was under Iberoromance dominance for many centuries, so this affirmative use of the Sardinian AE might very well be a functional loan from Spanish. Note that there is a difference in interpretation depending on the position of the AE:

(46) a. ***Già*** *l'isco ...*
AE it=I. know
'I know indeed/very well...'

b. *L'isco* ***già*** *... ...* (Srd./Logudorese)
it=I.know AE
'I already know …' (Calaresu 2015: 119)

Furthermore, in some Sardinian varieties, two different items have developed:[13]

(47) a. ***Gei*** *ddu sciu ...*
AE it=I. know
'I know indeed/very well...'

b. *Ddu sciu* ***giai*** *... ...* (Srd./Campidanese)
it=I.know AE
'I already know …' (Calaresu 2015: 119)

In (46a) and (47a) the AE is an affirmative discourse marker whereas in (46b) and (47b) it is a phasal adverb (= the temporal-aspectual use). In (47) in particular, where we find a new (and often phonologically reduced) form, the polysemous use of AE ends, since a new lexical item is born.

[11] "Con las formas verbales correspondientes a 'tú', 'usted', 'ustedes', 'vosotros' por una parte, y a 'yo' por otra, los verbos *ver, saber, poder, entender, comprender* [...] ofrecen en el Presente un uso muy frecuente en que esas formas aparecen precedidas de *ya*: *ya* tiene lo que podríamos llamar un valor coloquial, a veces mostrativo, equivalente a *mira* ..." [With the verbal forms that correspond to 'tú', 'usted', 'ustedes', 'vosotros' [i.e. reference to the addressee on the one hand and to 'yo' [i.e. the 1st person] on the other, the verbs 'to see', 'to know', 'to be able to', 'to understand' [...] offer in the present tense a very frequent usage where these forms appear preceded by *ya*: *ya* has what we could call a colloquial value, sometimes demonstrative, equivalent to *mira* ['look']...]

Cf. also Delbecque and Maldonado's (2011: 93) observation with respect to Spanish *ya (lo) se*: "The message conveyed can be paraphrased as follows: access to the piece of knowledge involved is not punctual, immanent, or isolated, but embedded in a larger knowledge base the conceptualizer takes part in."

[12] "Certain classes of function words are especially prone to being copied in language contact situations [...]. These function word classes are mainly discourse particles and conjunctions [...]."

[13] However, Calaresu (2015: 119, n.8) sees no lexical distinction in this case. But cf. also Jones (1993: 358) and the distinction between *ja* and *dza* for the dialect of Lula.

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### 4.3. Spanish *ya* in the Basque country

The use of *ya* as an affirmative marker in Spanish is, according to a study by González (2000), even more frequent in the regional Spanish of the Basque country (cf. also Pusch 2007). It has therefore been proposed that this frequency is due to language contact with Basque, where we find the affirmative morpheme *ba*:

(48) ***ba***-dakar (Bsq.)
AFF-3ABS-PRES-*ekarri*-3SE
**‘**ya lo trae; sì, lo trae’ ‘s/he brings it’
(González 2000: 310, following Bera and López Mendizábal 1916)

Bera and López Mendizábal (1916) is a Basque-Spanish dictionary where the Basque affirmative morpheme is indeed translated by the Spanish affirmative particle *ya*; see also the following example:

(49) A: *y en el pueblo ahora todavía se acuerda de / si tiene que hablar en euskera puede?*
B: *ah! Sì sì* ***ya*** *suelo hablar / con los niños también /* (Sp.)
‘And in the town, do you still remember… if you need to use Basque, do you remember?’ ‘Yes, yes, I often speak Basque. With the kids too, yes.’
(González 2000: 314–315)

In this very last example produced by a bilingual speaker the canonical affirmative particle in Spanish, *sí*, is repeated and then doubled by *ya*, a further means of encoding the affirmative value that the speaker of Basque feels necessary to express.

### 4.4. The interactional use of *già* in regional Italian

The interactional use of AEs is not found in all its sub-cases in Standard Italian. The overview given in Hansen and Strudsholm (2008: 472) only indicates interactional uses for cases like (36), where AE serves as a pro-phrase for an affirmative answer with additional context-dependent flavours. However, regional variation in the use of AEs has been observed by several authors, especially in the Northern Italian regional varieties (cf. Cerruti 2009, Squartini 2013, 2014, Fedriani and Miola 2014):

(50) *Dove vi siete sposati,* ***già****?* (N.-It.)
where you are married AE
‘Where did you get married, again?’ (Fedriani and Miola 2014: 181)
(60) *Quando dovevano cambiare,* ***già****, Windows?* (N.-It.)
when they.had.to change AE Windows
‘When were they meant to be changing Windows, again?’ (Cerruti 2009: 113)

This is exactly the interrogative use that is also found in French, see (38), where the AE serves as a marker to back-check on something probably already said, but no longer present for the speaker. And indeed, Squartini (2013, 2014) and Fedriani and Miola (2014)

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trace this use back to French influence on the Northern Italian dialects (especially Piemontese, Lombard and Swiss Italian dialects).

## 5. CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

Latin, Romance and AEs in general have been characterised by several properties: Semantically phasal adverbs were characterised by a system of interaction between [continuity], [change of state] and negation thereof, e.g. by van der Auwera (1998), and an additional – probably pragmatic – feature for "earliness"; Kroon and Risselada introduced the features [phasal, polar, focal] (the first two semantic, the third pragmatic) for AEs, where one or more features can be backgrounded depending on the different uses. Hansen and Strudsholm (2008) explained the variation in behaviour of AEs as a development along a grammaticalization path from temporal-aspectual (including phasal and scalar uses) to modal, connective, and interactional uses. I started by looking at AEs from an onomasiological perspective in order then to observe variation in Romance from a semasiological perspective, i.e. basically discussing data for AEs derived from Latin *iam*.

I tried to integrate the semantic and pragmatic properties proposed in the literature into a coherent picture, whereby I still claim that the different uses of AEs in Romance can be seen as the extensions of a polysemous element to several relational domains (times/phases, worlds, propositions, utterances). Only when an obvious split into two different morphophonological items is observed, as in some Sardinian varieties (cf. (47) and n. 13) polysemy must be abandoned, since the functional split is followed by a lexical split. In the last section, I presented four – very short – case studies which showed that not only language change, but also language contact, is an issue in the variation in use of AEs: In Romanian, Sardinian, Spanish in the Basque country, and in regional Italian, language contact has influenced the use of AEs. In Romanian, both form and function were copied from French in the 18$^{th}$ century in the use of *deja*, but in the other three cases it emerged that only certain AE functions were copied: In the Spanish spoken in the Basque country the affirmative use of the AE was reinforced by language contact with Basque, as it was in Sardinia by language contact with Spanish. In regional Northern Italian, however, it is the interactional interrogative use of the AE that has developed under the influence of language contact with French.

To come to an end of an ongoing story, we shall now take a (semasiological) look even deeper into diachrony. One question is: Where do the AE elements themselves develop from? The German AE *schon*, for example, etymologically stems from an adverbial use of *schön* i.e. 'beautiful, nice'; it derived from an elliptic use of an expression like 'nicely ready', where *ready* was deleted and only *schön*, in the form of *schon,* remained (cf. Kluge 1989: 651). English *already*, of course, had a similar meaning, namely 'all ready' or 'quite ready'. The Italian use of colloquial expressions like *bell'e fatto* 'already done' etc. also comes under the same category. Here again we find the element 'nice' *bell*' which has obtained the meaning of 'already': i.e. in Italian too, at least in some expressions, 'nice' became an AE. And last but not least: Latin *iam* developed from a deictic element **(h)i-* (also involved in the pronominal series *is, ea, id*), followed by an adverbialisation in **-ām* (acc.sg.f), meaning 'as far as, in respect of', then 'now' and finally becoming an AE (cf. De Vaan 2008: s.v. *iam*).

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