

**Opacity and the definiteness effect:  
A contrastive analysis in languages with and without articles.**

Dissertation  
zur Erlangung des Grades der Doktorin der Philosophie  
bei der Fakultät für Geisteswissenschaften  
Fachbereiche Sprache, Literatur,  
Medien & Europäische Sprachen und Literaturen  
der Universität Hamburg

vorgelegt von

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Hamburg, im März 2015





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Tag der mündlichen Prüfung: 10. Juli 2015

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Maria Goldbach for giving me the opportunity to work at the University of Würzburg and Hamburg. I thank her for giving me the chance and time to dedicate myself to this work.

I am extremely grateful to Susann Fischer, who decisively guided me in the right direction in order to define the topic of this thesis. Her vast knowledge and pragmatic spirit helped me out in many situations and she has always taken the time to patiently answer the countless questions I had. I thank her heartily for giving me the confidence that I can achieve this task.

I am particularly indebted to Silvio Cruschina for being such a great mentor to me. As the reader will notice, most of this research is due to his illuminating advices and to the fruitful conversations we had. I am so grateful for having him generously dedicating to the discussion so much of his time. I also greatly appreciated the fine sense of humor on “life as a linguist” that cheered me up when I needed it.

I decided to pursue the interest in linguistics years ago in Siena and for that I heartily thank Adriana Belletti, my first professor of Linguistics, whose lectures fascinated me because she showed us the perfection of language.

A special person I would like to thank is Sandra Ellena. Her precious advice helped me taking big decisions many times right from the beginning of my education in Germany. Many thanks also go to all my friends and colleagues at the University of Hamburg and Würzburg.

I also wish to acknowledge the theater group “La bottega del sorriso” in Cittanova and all the people who helped me with the acquisition of the texts for the corpus, especially Bruno Salvatore Lucisano for his readiness to provide his work to me. Special thanks go to all informants of Southern Calabrian and Dari, who patiently took part in the elicitation tests and answered my many questions.

Finally, the deepest thanks go to my sister Carmela and my parents Giovanna and Cesare, who unconditionally supported and encouraged me every time I thought it impossible to bring my work to an end, helping me in all possible ways. I am very lucky to have you. Most of all, I am grateful to Yama Huzurudin, whose different perspective on the things of the world has always motivated me in a decisive way. I cannot believe how fortunate I have been to hit the jackpot in meeting him. To them my thesis is dedicated.



*To my family and Yama*



## ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the morphosyntactic and semantic properties of the DP and to account for a definiteness-related phenomenon known as the Definiteness Effect (DE) in existential sentences. To this purpose, the study focuses on crosslinguistic comparison and analyses empirical data from two less studied Indo-European languages, a language with articles, such as Southern Calabrian, and one without articles, such as Dari (Afghan Persian).

The DE is a constraint in existential sentences to display an indefinite DP in the postverbal position, as (1) illustrates compared to (2). The occurrence of the definiteness restriction has been related to the definiteness value of the noun phrase.

- (1) \*There is the problem/ \*there are the cats in the garden/ \*there is John  
(2) There is a problem/ there are some cats in the garden/ there is a man

The puzzling issues concerning the determination of the triggering factors for the DE lie on the one hand in the opacity deriving from the grammaticalisation of a definite article in many western European languages and on the other hand in the difficulty of differentiating between genuine and pseudo existential constructions.

I will argue that the DE is not triggered by the semantic contribution of a definite article introducing the pivot of existential sentences. Indeed, the DE also occurs in languages that do not morphologically grammaticalise definiteness. Therefore, the reasons for its occurrence must be sought in other components of grammar or better in a combination thereof.

My analysis of the data shows that in Southern Calabrian two different existential constructions co-occur: *nc'è/nci su* and *ndavi*. They respectively select the *be* and *have* auxiliary, pointing at a predicative and possessive source of origin. Furthermore, they both display a synchronically grammaticalised clitic proform, whose locative reading has bleached and that provides the abstract locative contribution for the construction to be existential. The *nci*-sentences take over different roles: they can be either genuine existential – where the DE applies – or inverted locative sentences, or eventually presentational sentences.

The *ndavi*-sentences consistently display the DE. However, a particular property of these sentences is the occurrence of the Differential Object Marking with definite/specific pivots. I claim that these last constructions are not genuine existentials and that the presence of DOM morphologically confirms the assumption of different structural positions for the pivots. In other words, the only possibility for a definite/specific pivot to be inserted in a *ndavi*-construction is to be marked by DOM, but at the same time the marking shows that the DP has been raised, yielding for instance an availability construction (i.e. satisfying a different pragmatic use). In genuine *ndavi*-existential, on the contrary, the pivot is indefinite/nonspecific since it remains *in situ* within existential closure.

In Dari, the existentials select the copula *be* and have no proform. Crucially, when a location is explicitly expressed, these sentences present a peculiar word order in which the location precedes the pivot. Moreover, semantically definite/specific elements such as personal pronouns or proper nouns are excluded in this position. Since the pivot DPs occur without any morphological marker, their interpretation is explained structurally. I assume that pivots in Dari existentials are indeed predicates and originate within a small clause in the lowest part of the structure, the existential closure, where they are compelled to remain. The location, either explicit or implicit, occupies the subject position in the small clause, from where it is allowed to be raised further. Due to the lack of a morphological marker for the semantic interpretation, in Dari the definiteness effect surfaces in the word order, reflecting the underlying structure.

For these reasons, the definiteness effect is not to be traced back to the semantic import of a lexical determiner introducing the NP. In existentials of Southern Calabrian the DE manifests itself in the form of bare or indefinite DPs, because these are the expressions of nonspecificity/existentiality in languages with definite/indefinite articles. In a language without definite articles such as Dari, the DE becomes evident in the word order and the corresponding nonspecific reading of pivots, which reflects a syntactic structure where the location is the subject and the pivot the predicate of the existential.

Therefore, the definiteness effect can be explained only if the specific syntactic structure of a genuine existential sentence is identified. This can be achieved when the semantics and pragmatics of the construction is carefully taken into account, as well as the word order and the language specific properties. Existential sentences are synchronically to be considered a proper type of sentence. The pivot DP inside the construction does not have a clear semantic/thematic status and is not the subject, as it could seem at first sight, since the locative topic is the subject of the predication. From a pragmatic point of view, the existential sentence fulfils the task of introducing the existence of a hearer-new entity in a determined location.

The qualitative analysis carried out in this thesis shows a decisive tendency for the definiteness restriction to occur in existentials of all languages, irrespective of whether a language has definite articles or not. The opacity deriving from the presence or absence of a definite article does not influence the occurrence of the definiteness restriction. Indeed, the DPs in these constructions always receive a nonspecific reading. This fact can be syntactically accounted for within the hypothesis for the pivot to be in the lowest structural position inside the complement of a generalized *vP*.

## ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Ziel dieser Dissertation ist es, die morphosyntaktischen und semantischen Eigenschaften der DP zu untersuchen und eine Erklärung für das Vorkommen einer Erscheinung in Existenzialsätzen anzubieten, die mit der Definitheit der DP in Verbindung gebracht wird und deshalb als Definitheitseffekt (DE) geläufig ist. Die Studie legt den Schwerpunkt auf den sprachübergreifenden Vergleich und untersucht empirische Daten aus zwei weniger erforschten indoeuropäischen Sprachen bzw. Varietäten, nämlich dem Südkalabresischen und dem Dari (Afghanisches Persisch). Die Daten umfassen jeweils DP mit und ohne Artikel.

Der DE ist eine Restriktion, die hauptsächlich in Existentialsätzen wirksam ist und besteht darin, eine indefinite DP in postverbaler Position zu verlangen, wie das Beispiel (1) im Vergleich zum Beispiel (2) veranschaulicht:

- (1) \*There is the problem/ \*there are the cats in the garden/ \*there is John
- (2) There is a problem/ there are some cats in the garden/ there is a man

Das Auftreten des Definitheitseffekts wurde traditionell mit dem semantischen Definitheitswert der Nominalphrase in Verbindung gebracht. Diese Erscheinung stellt ein Rätsel dar, denn die Schwierigkeiten bei der Ermittlung der Faktoren, die den DE auslösen, liegen zum einen in den Opazitätseffekten, die ihren Ursprung in der Grammatikalisierung eines definiten Artikels in den westeuropäischen Sprachen haben, und zum anderen in der problematischen Abgrenzung zwischen echten und Pseudo-Existenzialsätzen.

Ich argumentiere gegen den Schluss, dass der DE durch den semantischen Inhalt eines das Pivot einleitenden definiten Artikels in Existentialsätzen verursacht wird. In der Tat kommt der DE auch in Sprachen vor, die Definitheit nicht in Form eines morphologischen Artikels grammatikalisieren. Aus diesem Grund sollten die Auslöser des DEs in dem Zusammenspiel der verschiedenen Grammatikkomponenten gesucht werden.

Die Analyse der empirischen Daten aus dem Südkalabresischen zeigt, dass zwei verschiedene Existenzialkonstruktionen vorhanden sind, nämlich *nc'è/nci su* und *ndavi*. Sie selektieren jeweils das Auxiliarverb *sein* bzw. *haben*, das auf die jeweilige ursprüngliche Lokativ- bzw. Possessivprädikation zurückweist. Darüber hinaus verfügen beide Konstruktionen synchron über eine grammatikalisierte klitische „proform“, deren lokativer Gehalt semantisch verblasst ist. Das Klitikon stellt ein abstraktes lokatives Element dar, das zur Implementierung der Existenzialität beiträgt. Die *nci*-Sätze übernehmen verschiedene Funktionen: Sie können entweder echte Existenzialsätze, wobei sie den DE aufweisen, oder invertierte Lokativsätze oder aber auch sogenannte „presentational sentences“ sein.

Die *ndavi*-Sätze zeigen ein konsequentes Vorkommen des Definitheitseffekts. Dennoch besteht eine Besonderheit der *ndavi*-Sätze darin, das Vorkommen des Differential Object Marking mit definiten/spezifischen Pivots aufzuweisen. Ich schlage vor, dass diese Konstruktionen keine echten

Existenzialsätze sind. Das Auftreten der DOM auf morphologischer Ebene bestätigt die Annahme, dass diese Pivots eine höhere strukturelle Position besetzen als die Pivots in Existenzialsätzen. Mit anderen Worten, die einzige Möglichkeit für definite/spezifische Pivots in einem *ndavi*-Satz vorzukommen, besteht darin, mit DOM markiert zu werden. Gleichzeitig signalisiert die Markierung, dass die DP angehoben wurde. Dies hat zur Folge, dass man nicht mehr mit einem Existenzialsatz konfrontiert wird, sondern beispielsweise mit einem „availability sentence“, der eine ganz andere pragmatische Funktion ausdrückt. In echten *ndavi*-Existenzialsätzen ist das Pivot indefinit/nicht-spezifisch, weil es *in situ* verbleibt, nämlich innerhalb der „existential closure“.

Im Dari selegiert die Existenzialkonstruktion die Kopula *sein* und weist keine klitische „proform“ auf. Entscheidend ist hier, dass der Satz eine spezifische Wortfolge besitzt, bei der die Lokation dem Pivot vorangeht. Darüber hinaus sind semantisch definite/spezifische Pivots wie Personalpronomen oder Eigennamen in dieser Position ungrammatisch. Da die Pivot-DPn ohne morphologische Markierungen vorkommen, muss ihre Interpretation strukturell erklärt werden. Ich nehme an, dass Pivots in Existenzialsätzen des Dari Prädikate sind und keine Subjekte, und dass sie in einer Small Clause im untersten Teil der Phrasenstruktur generiert werden, nämlich in der „existential closure“, wo sie auch verbleiben müssen. Die entweder explizite oder implizite Lokativkonstituente besetzt die Subjektposition in der Small Clause und darf aus diesem Grund im Laufe der Derivation weiter angehoben werden. Da keine morphologische Markierung vorhanden ist, wird der Definitheitseffekt im Dari in der speziellen Wortfolge und durch die entsprechende semantische Interpretation der Pivots sichtbar.

Aus den oben genannten Gründen soll der DE nicht auf den semantischen Beitrag des lexikalischen definiten Artikels zurückgeführt werden. In Existenzialkonstruktionen des Südkalabresischen zeigt sich der DE, indem nackte oder indefinite DPn realisiert werden, weil diese Formen der DP die Nicht-Spezifizität bzw. die Existenzialität in Sprachen mit definiten/indefiniten Artikeln zum Ausdruck bringen. In einer Sprache ohne definite Artikel wie dem Dari wird der DE in der Wortfolge und in der daraus resultierenden nicht-spezifischen Interpretation des Pivots sichtbar. In beiden Fällen erscheint der DE in einer syntaktischen Struktur, in der die Lokation (oder eine abstrakte Lokation im Falle einer grammatikalisierten klitischen „proform“) das Subjekt und das Pivot das Prädikat des Existenzialsatzes darstellen. Demzufolge muss zuerst die spezifische Struktur der echten Existenzialsätze ermittelt werden. Dies kann erreicht werden, indem die semantischen und pragmatischen Eigenschaften der Konstruktion unter Berücksichtigung der sprachspezifischen Besonderheiten analysiert werden.

Die Existenzialsätze sind synchron als eine eigenständige Konstruktion anzusehen. Die Pivot-DP, die in der Konstruktion vorhanden ist, hat keinen deutlichen semantischen/thematischen Status und ist nicht, wie es möglicherweise auf den ersten Blick scheint, das Subjekt der Prädikation; dieses besteht vielmehr in der lokativen Topik. Aus einer pragmatischen Perspektive dient der Existenzialsatz

dazu, die Existenz einer „hearer-new“-Entität in einem bestimmten Ort und zu einer bestimmten Zeit – wenn auch abstrakt – einzuführen.

Die qualitative Untersuchung, die in dieser Dissertation durchgeführt wurde, zeigt eine signifikante Tendenz für den Definitheitseffekt in den Existenzialsätzen aller Sprachen vorzukommen, unabhängig vom Vorhanden- oder Nicht-Vorhandensein des definiten Artikels. Die DP in diesen Konstruktionen erhält immer eine nicht-spezifische Lesart. Diese Tatsache kann erklärt werden, wenn man annimmt, dass – aufgrund der spezifischen Eigenschaften der Existenzialkonstruktion – das Pivot in der untersten Position als Komplement einer generalisierten vP verbleibt.



## ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS <sup>1</sup>

1	first person	NOM	Nominative Case
2	second person	NP	Noun Phrase
3	third person	NSL	Null-Subject Language
A	Adjective	NNSL	Non Null-Subject-Language
ACC	Accusative	OBJ	Object
ADV	Adverb(ial)	OM	Object Marker
AGR	Agreement	P	Preposition
ARG	Argumental	PA	Prepositional Accusative
AP	Adjectival Phrase	PART	Partitive
ART	Article	PFV	Perfective
ASP	Aspect	PF	(existential or locative) proform
AUX	Auxiliary	PL	Plural
CL	Clitic	POSS	Possessive
CLASS	Classifier	PP	Prepositional Phrase
C/COMP	Complementizer	PPT	Principles-and-Parameters Theory
COND	Conditional	PRED	Predicative
CP <sub>r</sub>	Complex Predicate	Pr(ed)P	Predicate Phrase
DAT	Dative	<i>pro</i>	small <i>pro</i>
D/DET	Determiner	PRO	big PRO
DE	Definiteness Effect	PRS	Present Tense
Def	Definiteness/Definite	PST	Past Tense
DefP	Definiteness Phrase	PTCP	Participle
DEM	Demonstrative	QP	Quantifier Phrase
DO	Direct Object	QR	Quantifier Raising
DOM	Differential Object Marking	REFL	Reflexive
DP	Determiner Phrase	SC	Small Clause
DUR	Durative	SCal	Southern Calabrian
EPP	Extended Projection Principle	SD	Structural dative
EPP <sub>s</sub>	EPP syntactic	SG	Singular
EPP <sub>g</sub>	EPP grammatical	Spec	Specifier
ES	Existential Sentence(s)	SpecP	Specificity Phrase
EXT	Existential	SS	Surface Structure
EZ	Ezāfe	T/TNS	Tense
FOC	Focus	thr	pleonastic <i>there</i>
FP	Functional Phrase	there	deictic locative adverb <i>there</i>
FUT	Future	TOP	Topic
HAF	Head Attraction Feature	TP	Tense Phrase
I/INFL	Inflection	UA	Unmarked Accusative
IP	Inflectional Phrase	UG	Universal Grammar
IO	Indirect Object	<i>v</i>	light verb
IPF	Imperfective	<i>v</i> P	light verb Phrase
KP	Case Phrase	V	Verb
LF	Logical Form	VP	Verb Phrase
LOC	Locative	*	ungrammatical
MC	Mauritian Creole	??	more ungrammatical than grammatical
MP	Minimalist Program	?	more grammatical than ungrammatical
NEG	Negation		
N	Noun		

<sup>1</sup> I referred for the standard abbreviations to the Leipzig Glossing Rules (<https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/pdf/LGR08.02.05.pdf>) with some additions. Notice that some variation can occur when the glosses are reported from the original literature. I used tense and person abbreviations when ambiguous.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the following study is twofold. On the one hand, it approaches the major question of what makes a noun phrase definite. On the other hand, it attempts to account for a phenomenon known as the Definiteness Effect, focusing on crosslinguistic comparison and analysing new data from a language with articles, i.e. Southern Calabrian, and without articles, i.e. Dari (Afghan Persian).<sup>1</sup>

The Definiteness Effect (DE) describes the strong preference in existential sentences (ES) to require an indefinite NP in the postverbal position (Milsark 1974, Lyons 1999, Leonetti 2008a among many others), as illustrated in (1) compared to (2). The occurrence of the definiteness restriction has been related to the definiteness value of the noun phrase.

- (1) \*There is the problem/ \*there are the cats in the garden/ \*there is John  
(2) There is a problem/ there are some cats in the garden/ there is a man

Interestingly, the DE is a constraint assumed to be at work not only in many European languages with a binary definite/indefinite article system, but also in languages in which arguments are bare nouns or that morphologically mark features other than definiteness. For this reason – as it has proven to be very useful in syntactic research – the following work adopts a comparative approach, in order to look for possible variation and universal properties among different language types.

The common thread that runs through the two major topics of this thesis is the issue of why only some noun phrases are excluded from ES. It is assumed that ES are incompatible with definite DPs, i.e. definite DPs cannot be computed in such constructions and are prevented from occurring there. Definite DPs are traditionally described as those noun phrases that are introduced by a definite article. Now, the research on the structure and meaning of the functional projection of nouns, the DP, has shown, however, that the presence of a definite article is not a guarantee for the encoding of semantic definiteness. DPs introduced by a definite article have various possible interpretations, one being definiteness, but they can also convey (non)specificity, referentiality, identifiability, genericity and deixis. Therefore, the label definiteness restriction has been applied to this phenomenon based on an assumption that can no longer be maintained. So the question that needs to be answered is: what exactly is excluded from ES, especially since definite nouns encode several semantic properties?

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<sup>1</sup> All errors and imprecisions of this thesis remain my own.

The Definiteness Effect has attracted the attention of many linguists, especially since the seminal work of Milsark (1974). Although different analyses have been put forward in the last decades in order to shed some light on the DE, the phenomenon is still of great interest. It has always been the goal of the investigations to find an explanation for the property of existential constructions to block the occurrence of a definite article or of a semantic definite noun phrase. Therefore, the pivotal questions handled in this thesis are the following:

- a) How can the definiteness restriction be characterized? Is the clash between definite DPs and existentials due to the semantic import of the determiner? But if this is the case, how can we account for the DE in languages that cannot ban definite DPs because they have no articles at all? In other words, is it really definiteness that is excluded from existential sentences and is D the locus of definiteness?
- b) What are the properties of existential constructions? To what extent do specific syntactic factors contribute to the occurrence of the DE? What pragmatic use do they express? Are all existential sentences of a language genuine existentials or does a particular language have constructions that apparently look alike but convey different pragmatic functions? What do existentials have in common with similar locative or possessive sentences?

Basically, I will argue that, since there is a manifestation of the definiteness effect also in languages that do not grammaticalise definiteness, the DE cannot be traced back to the import of a lexical definite article. At the same time, the presence of a definite determiner in languages with the definite/indefinite opposition is not a sufficient condition for the expression of definiteness in every DP displaying a definite article. Therefore, the reasons for the occurrence of the definiteness restriction must be sought in some other components of grammar or better in a combination thereof.

A promising theoretical approach comes from the assumption that logical representations are mapped onto syntactic structure, demonstrating that the hierarchical dependencies also play a role in the semantic interpretation of nouns (Diesing 1994) – a fact that will be crucial in the explanation of the DE. In fact, I will present new data to support the claim that pivots in ES are located in the lower part of the existential structure, where they receive an existential interpretation. These DPs are compatible with ES because of their structural position, which remains the same crosslinguistically. Pivots of ES are computed with a nonspecific/existential reading, but while in languages without articles this is evident only in the interpretation and the superficial word order, languages with definite/indefinite determiners clearly select the DP-form that expresses the nonspecific/existential reading, namely using indefinites or bare nouns. Nevertheless, definite expressions can also occur in the context of ES within languages of the last group, but only when they are semantically existential.

In other words, I will show that it is not the semantic import of the definite determiners that causes the DE, but that it is rather a universal phenomenon whose particular features are at first difficult to identify due to the interaction with language-specific properties and the superficial morphosyntactic similarity with other constructions. Putting it differently, the difficulties arise from (i) the polysemantics of NPs introduced by the definite article in languages that have one, (ii) the realization of different semantic/pragmatic functions by constructions that superficially look like ES and finally (iii) the possibility to have different lexical choices for the ES not only among different languages but also within the internal grammar of one speaker when he masters several languages.

The common properties of pure ES are therefore only revealed by a careful contrastive analysis. The language that will provide evidence to these claims in particular is Southern Calabrian. SCal is a less studied Italo-Romance language, which will be compared to the most recent accounts of the DE in other Romance and Germanic languages. Crucially, the findings of my analysis and the syntactic structure taken to underlie existentials will be then compared to data from a language without definite articles, namely Dari. It will be shown that the DE applies crosslinguistically in this particular type of constructions, although it is not accurate to attribute it to morphological/semantic definiteness.

Chapter 2 introduces the first of the two central parts of the thesis. In order to explain what the definiteness restriction amounts to – as it is assumed to constrain the realization of definite DPs – I start with the exploration of the properties of the DP from a syntactic-semantic point of view. First, I will sketch some accounts given for the semantics of the article, addressing the notions of definiteness and specificity, and briefly discuss the DP-hypothesis. The relevant question is whether the overt element of D really expresses definiteness or whether this interpretational property is to be ascribed to the DP category as a whole or even to syntactic factors.

In particular, I will discuss the form and properties of noun phrases in languages that do not grammaticalise definite articles, mainly focusing on the case of Dari.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the description of the nominal domain of Southern Calabrian. The opacity effects in the interpretation of nouns that are or are not introduced by articles are acknowledged because they will support the necessity for an analysis of the DE that takes into account properties depending on the specific existential structure.

Having set the scene with the description of the interpretive and formal properties of the DPs in the two languages in focus, chapter 4 addresses the second main issue: the manifestations of the DE in general. In recent research on the definiteness restriction, particular importance has been given to the individuation of different types of existential sentences in order to account for the various exceptions to DE found within the same language. This approach tries to tackle the problem considering semantic and pragmatic, as well as syntactic factors at the same time (Leonetti 2008a, Remberger 2009, Bentley

2013, Bentley & Cruschina to appear, Fischer to appear, Belletti & Bianchi to appear among others). In such spirit, chapter 4 is devoted to some of the well-known accounts given on the definiteness effects for English and for some Romance languages, in particular Italian and Italo-Romance varieties.

Chapter 5 analyses the DE exhibited in existential sentences in Southern Calabrian. On the basis of a corpus of ES, I address the core issues relevant to the identification of pure existential structures and their peculiar properties. It will be shown that SCal has two types of genuine existentials, the *nci*-constructions, selecting the auxiliary *be*, and the *ndi*-constructions, selecting *have*. A strong restriction on specific postverbal nouns seems to be at stake only with *ndi*-existentials. *Nci*-sentences, on the other hand, behave like Italian in so far as the same construction takes over different pragmatic functions – not only the existential one – which correspond in turn to different underlying structures. Significantly, *ndi*-sentences with specific nouns display a particular feature not available in ES of other Romance languages, namely the occurrence of a specificity marker, the Differential Object Marking. Its presence will be decisive to the syntactic account of noun phrases within pure existentials subjected to the definiteness restriction. In fact, DOM-marked pivots are specific and whenever they occur, the construction is no longer existential, but instead expresses, for instance, an availability reading. At an underlying level, this hints at the raising of the specific noun, thus escaping existential closure. Genuine existential constructions, however, are specialized constructions in which specific postverbal pivots are crosslinguistically not grammatical.

Chapter 6 is intended to support the basic assumptions of this approach, namely that superficial crosslinguistic variation can be unified to universal properties and parametric choices if the formulation of the constraint in question is sufficiently refined. To this purpose, new data from Afghan Persian, another Indo-European language lacking definite articles, is discussed. In fact, even if some the languages of the world do not possess a morpheme comparable to the definite article in Romance or Germanic, the interpretation of bare nouns can still be either definite or not (or, as we will see, specific or nonspecific). It will be shown that Dari is also subject to the definiteness restriction in existential sentences and that these constructions have specific structural properties that differentiate them from canonical locative predications. The syntactic account proposed will prove to be compatible with that put forth for genuine existentials in Romance concerning the position of pivots and it will demonstrate the common syntactic ground of the definiteness restriction, although the properties of each language obviously influence the different superficial realization of the ES.

Finally, in chapter 7, I will sum up the findings of the present thesis and its contribution to the research domains of the syntax of DPs and the definiteness effects in existential sentences crosslinguistically.

## 2. THE DETERMINER PHRASE

### 2.1. Introduction

The analysis of determiners as functional elements goes back to the intuition of Chomsky (1965) that bare nominals contain a null determiner or quantifier. Successively, the remarks he made (1970) about the parallelism between the argument grid determined by the verb and the arguments of the noun led to a great amount of studies that explored the similarities between the two domains. Finally, it is with the systematization of English data in Abney's (1987) seminal dissertation and the works of Szabolcsi (1987), Stowell (1989), Longobardi (1994, 1996, 2001) and Bernstein (1994, 2001) – to cite only the most well-known – that the hypothesis of a DP layer dominating the noun phrase has been established in the linguistic theory and has continuously attracted more and more the interest of the researchers because its assumption is tied to a number of other grammatical phenomena.

In this chapter, I will discuss a set of key issues that are related to the analysis of noun phrases and the definiteness effects occurring in the existential constructions. In particular, I will focus on the following issues: (i) the reasons for the assumption of a DP projection and the motivation for considering it a universal property, (ii) the discussion of the functions and semantic content expressed by determiners cross-linguistically, (iii) a description of the DP in Southern Calabrian and (iv) the characteristics of DPs in existential constructions that need to be taken into account when examining the DE.

I would like to state beforehand that this brief survey of the DP will by no means be able to give an exhaustive account of the many findings presented in the vast literature on the topic. Rather, the purpose of this section is to hint at some structural and semantic properties that are assumed to be linked to the existence of a functional DP category and investigate in how far they can be of importance when detecting the factors that trigger the definiteness restrictions.

There is much variation across languages concerning the form of the noun phrase. On the one hand, many languages display a determiner system of morphological definite/indefinite articles, which are assumed to express the semantic category of definiteness, e.g. the Romance ones. On the other hand, there are languages that have articles but do not encode (in)definiteness and, finally, languages that have no articles at all, although they do have demonstratives. The typology of languages based on the number of definiteness markers (i.e. definite and indefinite, only definite, only indefinite) goes back to Krámský's (1972) approach, which takes into account the morphological shape of the definiteness markers and divides the languages in seven major groups (Himmelmann 2001, Alexiadou et al. 2007).

However, the high degree of crosslinguistic differences leads to the conclusion that the overt marking of definiteness is not universal and that languages marking it through articles may indeed be

only a minority, being the distinction between definite/indefinite not indispensable to the interpretation of noun phrases (Lyons 1999).

In Indo-European, articles were not attested and they developed in further stages of different daughter languages at different times. Latin, for instance, had no articles, whereas Greek did display them. Moreover, all neo-Latin, i.e. Romance, languages developed a binary article system with definite and indefinite articles, although there is variation with regard to the occurrence before argument nouns within the individual languages and varieties.

It is still an open matter why a language which gets along very well without markers of (in)definiteness needs to develop them. The issue of the emergence of determiners in Romance languages, for instance, has also been a point of interest in several works prior to those of the generative school. In Rohlfs' (1969) history of development from Vulgar Latin to Old French, he argues for the so-called grammaticalisation account, according to which articles are a result of the weakening of demonstratives. For Romance, it is assumed to be the old demonstrative pronoun *ille* that got grammaticalised in a new use as article. Evidence for this comes from the diachronic analysis of texts from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards; its new use was already evident in the translation of the Bible. Rohlfs links the weakening of the demonstrative pronoun *ille* as definite article to the notion of deixis: he states that already in Classical Latin, *ille* was used to refer to someone just mentioned in the previous discourse (he illustrates an example from Apuleius, where *illi latrones* corresponds to “the just mentioned robbers”) and that with time this function generalized to introduce all referential nouns. In particular, translations from Greek texts – a language with articles – are seen as a trigger for the generalization of the use of demonstrative pronouns in Late and Vulgar Latin. Thus, in his view, pragmatic and semantic factors, but language contact as well are the triggers for the generalization of the use of demonstrative pronouns as articles.

Indeed, although definiteness is a notion of crucial importance when establishing a typology of articles, it is only one of the numerous semantic properties that can be conveyed by a morphological article. Furthermore, even languages that do not display any morphological article are interpreted according to the same readings that can be assigned to noun phrases with articles. This necessarily means that there are universal semantic properties that are computed in all languages but then expressed in different ways: some languages do so by means of independent words or clitics, others with affixes, others through suprasegmental phenomena such as stress, or through word order, or agreement with the verb, or, finally, through a combination thereof.

## 2.2. Motivating “DP”: The DP-hypothesis

It is a well-consolidated assumption in generative literature that the verb constitutes the lexical head of the VP; it assigns theta-roles to its arguments and it further projects a functional structure. In the same vein, Abney (1987) claimed that the lexical noun projects a maximal functional category, the DP. Determiners such as definite articles and also pronouns are instantiated in D.

Indeed, there are many reasons to believe that there is a parallel between the VP and its extended projection and the NP and its extended projection, as the comparison of the two domains in (1) and (2) illustrates.<sup>2</sup>

- (1) [IP [I' I [VP [V' V]]]]  
(2) [DP [D' D [NP [N' N]]]]

Moreover, morphological evidence for the parallel between the nominal and clausal domain has been put forward based on Hungarian data (Szabolcsi 1987), where nominal and clausal agreement align.<sup>3</sup> But without looking further, a first simple piece of evidence of the existence of a functional category dominating the NP comes from the coordination test, which yields grammaticality only if homogeneous constituents are involved. For instance, the following examples in (3) from Giorgi & Longobardi (1991) illustrate, on the basis of Italian, the possibility of coordinating the two nominal expressions: (3a) hints at a node common to the rest of the structure and situated above the entire NP. (3b) shows that there is a smaller constituent excluding the possessive, but including the adjectives; in (3c) the semantic difference, compared to (3b), indicates the necessity for a specific configuration of the adjectives in order to render the two different meanings. Finally, (3d) illustrates the coordination of the head nouns only.

- (3a) la [mia nuova efficiente segretaria] e [tua ottima collaboratrice]  
the my new efficient secretary and your excellent collaborator  
lit. ‘the my new efficient secretary and your very good collaborator.’

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<sup>2</sup> In Abney’s (1987) work the DP domain was compared to IP, the CP projection being hypothesized in later generative work. Moreover, with time further evidence has been presented to support the hypothesis of a splitting of the extended projection of VP, for instance in AgrPs and TP, located under CP. In the same fashion, also the functional structure of the NP seems to comprise different functional heads.

<sup>3</sup> Case is achieved on the possessor of genitive constructions and the head noun agrees with the possessor in person and number. The same pattern is found in the clausal domain, where the sentential subject is marked for Case and the verb agrees with the subject in person and number. For examples and further discussion compare Szabolcsi (1987), Abney (1987), Bernstein (2001, 2008).

- b. la mia [nuova efficiente segretaria] e [ottima collaboratrice]
- c. la mia nuova [efficiente segretaria] e [ottima collaboratrice]
- d. la mia nuova efficiente [segretaria] e [collaboratrice]

Based on the evidence just presented, Giorgi & Longobardi propose the structure in (4), corresponding to the underlying structure in (5), which is indeed assumed to be valid crosslinguistically.

(4) [la [mia [nuova [efficiente [segretaria]]]]]

(5) [DP D [N<sub>max</sub> ... N ...]]

Since the languages of the world display variation concerning the morphological realization of D, Longobardi (1994, 2001) further refines this analysis and provides evidence for the assumption of a universal functional category above the head noun.

Longobardi (1994, 1996, 2001a, 2001b) developed the universal-DP hypothesis, according to which in languages with or without articles all argument NPs project as full DPs. His theory relies on the assumption that the semantic import of a functional category such as D is not dependent on its actual phonetic realization. Furthermore, another crucial assumption in the formulation of the hypothesis is the existence of syntactic representations for empty categories.

Longobardi strives for a uniform account of NPs with and without determiners across languages. According to the interpretive properties and the restrictions on the occurrence of bare singular nouns, Longobardi differentiates five types of languages. He starts the range of the classification with French, which does not allow bare argument nouns at all.<sup>4</sup> Then follow languages with stricter bare nouns, like Spanish and Italian and those with freer bare nouns of the English-type. Another group includes languages such as Icelandic, Welsh, Irish, Hungarian, Hebrew and Arabic among others, in which singular bare nouns receive an existential or generic indefinite reading, parallel to the interpretation of the same nouns in Germanic or Romance when introduced by an indefinite article (Longobardi 2001: 583). The languages belonging to this last group display overt morphemes to convey the interpretation attributed in Romance and Germanic to the definite article, while there is no morphological realization for the indefinite article. Following Crisma (1997), it is probable to assume that if a determiner is morphologically available in a language to convey a certain meaning (which we assume for now to be (in)definiteness on the basis of the Romance and Germanic

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<sup>4</sup> With regard to French as the most restrictive language allowing only NPs introduced by determiners, Longobardi argues for the analysis proposed by Delfitto and Schrotten (1991) and Delfitto (1993), which considers the poor number morphology typical of French nouns to be the reason for their steady occurrence with determiners, as opposed to the other Romance languages. Thus, in French, the source of variation would be a morphological parameter.

languages) it must be used for the expression of said meaning, excepting a synonymous construction without the determiner.

The least morphologically restrictive languages are those languages which allow nouns in all argument positions without needing them to be introduced by a determiner. The bare singular and plural noun phrases receive either a definite or an indefinite reading when translated into languages with definite/indefinite articles. To this group belong Latin, Czech and most Slavic languages and to a certain extent Persian,<sup>5</sup> to name only a few.

Yet, departing from the contrast between bare nouns in Romance and Germanic languages, the syntactic difference underlying languages can be explained if it is analyzed as an instance of overt/covert N-to-D movement. Longobardi illustrates this reasoning in the following way.

Bare plurals and mass nouns can surface in such languages without any determiner, though they differ in two aspects, namely the syntactic distribution and the semantic interpretation. Bare nouns in Romance occupy complement positions and do not occur in preverbal positions. In English, however, they can be found in every argument position. The semantic difference between the two groups of languages consists in the (obligatory) indefinite interpretation ascribed to bare nouns in Romance – which can be existential or generic, depending on the nature of the sentence – and the possibility for the English-type bare nouns to also function as kind-referring names, that is, to be definite generics “in argument positions of kind-level [...] and of *particular* or *episodic* sentences” (Longobardi 2001a: 583). In fact, even in cognate languages in which an article system specified for the definite/indefinite distinction is available, like the Romance languages, variation is found with respect to the appearance of bare nouns in argument position. We just saw that French shows the strongest restriction on the omission of determiners.<sup>6</sup> In Spanish and Rumanian, on the contrary, bare plurals and mass nouns are free to occur as complements of many verbs and can also be subjects when situated postverbally (Dobrovie-Sorin et al. 2006).

Bare noun phrases, though, can be assumed to be dominated by the functional projection DP, whose properties are instantiated by movement of N to D. The D projection is signaled by an overt determiner, by a null determiner or, ultimately, by N-to-D movement and serves to map the NP onto an argument position. Notice that bare nouns in Italian are only licensed if they are in object position and only if they are mass or plural nouns. Singular count nouns are not grammatical even in lexically

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<sup>5</sup> Longobardi (2001: 585), building on Crisma (1997), claims that it is improbable to find languages that only have a morphological marker of indefiniteness and no lexical article for definite nouns. A plausible analysis for such languages (among them varieties of Turkish, Persian, Indo-Aryan) is that arguments select the unmarked value, namely the indefinite interpretation, whereas definiteness is achieved by pragmatic processes (extragrammaticality of definiteness).

<sup>6</sup> In Modern French, nouns with the function of predicates, vocatives, exclamations, idioms and complement of some prepositions are not introduced by a determiner; it is needed, however, if the noun is an argument.

governed positions, such as the postverbal object position. Moreover, grammatical bare nouns are very closely interpreted as indefinite existentially quantified NPs.

After providing an account of the properties of bare common nouns,<sup>7</sup> Longobardi considers bare proper nouns in argument position. The restrictions on proper names without determiners are less strict compared to those holding for bare common nouns. Moreover, such constraints on determinerless proper names typologically display greater differences: many languages allow them – especially a subset of proper nouns, including place names and names of months and days – to function as arguments even if a determiner does not appear.<sup>8</sup>

With respect to Romance languages, Longobardi (1994, 1996) affirms that the structural position of determinerless proper names is not the same as the one assumed for argument common nouns. In fact, observing the interaction of proper names with adjectives, he assumes N-to-D movement for them, whereas bare common nouns are assumed to be located lower in the structure.

The generalization drawn by Longobardi (2001) for Romance is that “if N overtly moves to a phonetically empty D then it will be object-referring” (Longobardi 2001a: 589), provided that the lexical semantics of a proper noun also allows a common reading. Proper names are taken as example for N-to-D movement: in standard Italian, they are not introduced by the definite article, whereas in some non-standard varieties, as well as in many other languages, they are. Now, proper names are rigid designators (in the sense of Grimshaw 1990, i.e. inherently referential) and cannot be interpreted existentially, contrary to the claim just made above for bare common nouns. Moreover, they can freely occur in non-lexically-governed positions. Therefore, Longobardi assumes that the movement of N (the position where nouns are interpreted as kinds) to D has taken place in order to render the interpretation non-existential. Otherwise, when the D position is not empty because an overt definite article co-occurs with the proper name, the article has to be considered an expletive. Their function is a purely syntactic one, namely that of filling the D-position, and they are considered as expletive articles because of their impoverished semantic content. Placing the analysis in the Minimalist framework, crosslinguistic variation concerning proper nouns can be explained with the presence of an uninterpretable  $\delta$  (‘delta’, it stands for designation/denotation) feature in D or, in other words, with a referential feature [+Ref] which, if strong, attracts N in order to be checked (6a). On the contrary, if the  $\delta$  feature is weak, as in the Germanic languages, raising of N to D only occurs at LF (6b).

- (6)a. Roma antica/ \*Antica Roma (fu distrutta dai barbari).  
b. \*Rome ancient/ Ancient Rome (was destroyed by the barbarians).

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<sup>7</sup> Common nouns are nouns that semantically refer to kinds, while proper nouns intrinsically refer to individual objects (Longobardi 2001a: 589).

<sup>8</sup> Longobardi (2001) cites Greek and Albanian or European Portuguese as examples of languages where proper nouns appear with the definite article. In these languages, a morphological item is necessary in order to satisfy the strong features of D without resorting to N-to-D raising (see later in the discussion).



- (9)a.           Noi ricchi/ \*Ricchi noi/ \*I ricchi noi ...  
 b.             We reach/ \*Reach we/ \*The reach we ...

As the examples from Italian and English show, in both types of languages pronouns (9) cannot co-occur with expletive definite articles, suggesting that the pronouns already occupy D and they are not subject to the same parametric movement which is at work with proper nouns.

Longobardi's account refers to syntax. Chierchia (1998), on the contrary, offers a semantic account for the argumenthood of nominal phrases crosslinguistically. His theory is known as the Nominal Mapping Parameter and implies that in some languages NPs are basically arguments, i.e. of type  $\langle e \rangle$ , and therefore do not need determiners to function as arguments, whereas other languages are predicative in nature, i.e. of type  $\langle e, t \rangle$ . In the latter, NPs can only be inserted in an argument position when a DP layer is projected. The first group of languages includes, for instance, Mandarin Chinese, to the second group belong the Romance languages. English and German are mixed languages in so far as they have both predicative as well as argumental NPs. Thus, assuming the two binary features  $[\pm\text{pred}]$  and  $[\pm\text{arg}]$ , the combination of their values determines the way in which the syntactic category is interpreted. Of course, there are only three types of combinations, namely  $[-\text{arg}, +\text{pred}]$  for languages in which nouns are predicates and need a DP for argumenthood (e.g. Romance languages),  $[\text{+arg}, +\text{pred}]$  for languages with both inherent arguments and predicates (e.g. Germanic languages) and finally  $[\text{+arg}, -\text{pred}]$  for languages in which nominals are kind-denoting<sup>10</sup> (e.g. Chinese or Japanese). Obviously,  $[-\text{arg}, -\text{pred}]$  is not a possible combination, as in this case there would be no noun at all.

Chierchia further remarks that a certain language shows a tendency to one type or another, rather than exhibiting a rigid distinction. Notice that according to this account, the argumenthood of the nominal is not dependent on the D projection. When a language has only predicative nominals, bare NPs are taken to be embedded under a DP as well, although headed by a null determiner.

Italian, for instance, belongs to the type of languages whose nominals tend to be predicates, i.e. it is categorized as a  $[-\text{arg}, +\text{pred}]$  language and it has in fact the count/mass distinction, where count nouns display plural markings. A DP must, therefore, dominate the nominals in order for them to function as arguments.

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<sup>10</sup> Members of the category N denote kinds when the expression refers to all members of the same kind, whether they are natural (e.g. the cat-kind), artifacts (e.g. chairs or cars) or complex things (e.g. spots of ink) (Alexiadou et al. 2007: 175 building on Chierchia 1998).

### 2.3. The role(s) of the article

After having illustrated some of the accounts supporting the existence of a DP layer, in this section, I will discuss a number of hypotheses put forward concerning the role(s) assumed to be conveyed by the article.

Basically, the function of an article introducing a noun phrase has been explained with its property of converting a predicate into an argument, i.e. to make it referential. If this can be considered the syntactic role of the article, it is not clear whether the article also contributes a semantic import, especially concerning the notion of definiteness. Moreover, the current approaches to the DP consider the morphological article to be the natural filler of the D head, but it is difficult to state whether the syntactic and semantic properties are to be associated with the article itself or rather to the category D in general (Alexiadou et al. 2007).

Giusti (1993, 1997, 2002), for instance, claims that the definite article is devoid of any semantic content. Instead, it bears a purely grammatical function, namely that of assigning Case to its complement NP. Articles are therefore considered functional heads, which are not inserted principally on semantic grounds, as an analysis based only on the concept of referentiality/definiteness would initially suggest. Furthermore, she argues for distinguishing among articles, demonstratives and quantifiers, because their different syntactic behaviour does not justify their grouping in a homogeneous class. Traditionally, determiners comprise five classes of grammatical items (demonstratives, articles, cardinal numerals, possessives and quantifiers). They are grouped together on the basis of their distribution, since they are used among languages to introduce a noun and often are in complementary distribution. At a structural level, they have been assigned the head position of the functional DP projected by N. One of the recurring pieces of evidence for this claim is the complementary distribution of such elements in languages like English (compare \*the/\*these many students). A brief look at other European languages suffices to find counterevidence to this claim. A few examples from Romanian, Italian, German and even English show the concomitant appearance of articles, determiners and quantifiers, excluding therefore the hypothesis of assigning them the same D° position.

- (i) a. băiatul acesta frumos (Romanian)  
boy-the this nice  
'This nice boy.'
- b. Die vielen (\*diese/\*die) Mädchen (German)  
the many (\*these/\*the) girls  
'The many girls.'

c. (\*Questi/\*i) tutti questi/i ragazzi (Italian)  
 (\*these/\*the) all these/the boys  
 all these/the boys

d. (These/the) several (\*these/\*the) boys

In the light of these observations, Giusti claims that pronominal elements should be seen as belonging to distinct categories. Quantifiers and demonstratives are taken to be lexical elements. Giusti locates the demonstratives not in the head of an extended projection of the NP, but in a specifier position of an Agr node. The evidence is again drawn from Romanian, which has the structure in (ii):

(ii) Baiatul acesta frumos (Romanian)

[<sub>D</sub> baiat-ul [<sub>SpecAgrP</sub> acesta [<sub>Agr°</sub> t' <sub>i</sub> [<sub>SpecAgrP</sub> frumos [<sub>Agr</sub> t' <sub>i</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> ]]]]]]]

Demonstratives and determiners do not compete for the same structural position and cannot be treated as belonging to the same category. Quantifiers, eventually, are taken to be lexical heads of proper quantifier phrases, above the DP projection. If quantifiers are preceded by an article, they behave on the contrary as modifiers of the noun and are to be analyzed as quantitative adjectives, which occupy the Spec of an AgrP.

Giusti's claims rely on evidence mainly from languages like Italian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Albanian and Greek. She bases her analysis on some observations on the properties that characterize the articles: (i) articles are phonologically and morphologically dependent on the noun or on other nominal elements, (ii) articles are strictly inseparable from their complements, (iii) articles are extended nominal heads and (iv) articles have no semantic value. This last claim, in particular, has had a great impact on the analysis of articles, as they are usually considered to convey the semantic values of (in)definiteness, at least within the analyses of Romance and Germanic languages.

The first two points are supported by the fact that articles do not bear stress and phonologically cliticize on nouns starting with vowels (e.g. in Italian) or are selected by the corresponding class of nouns, for instance in Bulgarian, Romanian and Albanian, where the different morphological occurrences of the article are bound to the morpho-phonological properties of the stem N, leading to the conclusion that "it is in fact part of the inflectional morphology of the head noun, and not an independent lexical element" (Giusti 2002: 102). Significantly, by analyzing data from Romanian,



(12)a. Scometto che non troverai mai **la** segretaria **di un onorevole**  
I bet.1SG that NEG find.FUT.2SG never the secretary of a deputy

che **sia** disposta a testimoniare contro di lui.  
who is.SUBJ willing to witness.INF against of him

‘I bet you’ll never find the secretary of a deputy who is-SUBJ willing to  
witness against him.’

b. Scometto che non troverai mai **questa** segretaria **di un onorevole**  
I bet.1SG that NEG find.FUT.2SG never this secretary of a deputy  
che **è** disposta a testimoniare contro di lui.  
who is willing to witness.INF against of him

Cinque (2002: 64-65)

In (12a) the indefinite genitive triggers a nonspecific interpretation of the DP *la segretaria di un onorevole*, although it is introduced by the definite article *la*, and the sentence subsequently requires the subjunctive mood for the verb. On the other hand, an extended projection of the NP headed by a demonstrative (12b) or a demonstrative in the embedded genitive would render the noun phrase definite and prevent the use of the subjunctive mode. A nonspecific interpretation in (12b) is not possible.

### 2.3.1. Definiteness and Specificity: D across languages

Semantic definiteness and specificity must be distinguished from morphological definiteness or specificity because – as we saw in the previous sections – a noun phrase introduced by a lexical article can express more than one single interpretive property. These are not unambiguously related to the realization of a single lexical element, but have been assumed to depend either on the existence of a DP-layer as a functional category or on the position occupied by the NP in the syntactic structure.

Linguists have provided different accounts in order to define “definiteness”. Generally, the explanation of definiteness relies on the semantic/logical notions of (i) uniqueness (Russell 1905), (ii) familiarity and identifiability (Christophersen 1939), (iii) inclusiveness (Hawkins 1978) and (iv) reference (Heim 1982, Kamp 1984). Without going into depth about the data and logical considerations that motivate each of the definitions just mentioned and building on Lyons (1999), I will summarise in very simplified terms what the descriptions of definiteness amount to.

The uniqueness condition goes back to the logical-semantic analysis of Russell (1905) and expects definiteness to apply when the referent is the only entity that satisfies the requirements of the

description used. The uniqueness condition has not to be absolute, but is dependent on the context in which the description is uttered (Lyons 1999). The term inclusiveness is a specification of the uniqueness condition and refers to plural and mass nouns: a description is adequately definite when it involves the totality of the objects or mass referred to in a certain context. For nouns in singular, the concept of inclusiveness is on par with that of uniqueness, because the totality of the entities referred to is exactly one. To put it in Lyons' words (1999: 261), "with definites the reference is the only entity or all the entities in the shared set satisfying the description used".

The familiarity hypothesis relies on the concept of shared familiarity of the referent between the speaker and the hearer. A noun phrase is therefore definite – and in English, for instance, this is signaled by the insertion of the article *the* – when both speaker and hearer share the knowledge of the entity or experience to which the NP refers. This familiarity can either be due to the physical situation in which both discourse participants are located that renders the referent immediately retrievable, or to the general knowledge of the world they share. Moreover, the familiarity can derive from the anaphoric use of the articles, i.e. from the discourse link to a previously mentioned referent. The association with an antecedent can also be due to general knowledge and not exclusively because of the explicit mention in the previous context. New referents in the discourse, on the other hand, are introduced in a language like English by the indefinite article because they are unfamiliar to the hearer. Finally, the context for familiarity of the referent can be provided by the cataphoric information, i.e. the information following the noun phrase, for instance in form of a relative clause.

Defining definiteness as identifiability is to say that through the insertion of a definite article the speaker is signaling to the hearer that "he is in a position to identify it" (Lyons 1999: 6), thereby including the concept of familiar reference described above.

Eventually, the notion of reference has been adopted by Heim (1982) to avoid the problems arising from the traditional understanding of definiteness as familiarity whenever definite and indefinite noun phrases are non-referential. Building on Karttunen's concept of "discourse-referent", Heim claims that definiteness is at stake whenever there is a referent set up in the discourse, even if the noun phrase has no referent in the real world. Whenever a new referent is introduced into the discourse it requires an appropriate article, namely an indefinite, whereas familiar referents that occurred in the discourse are introduced by definites. The link to the referents in the real world, represented by the discourse referents, must nevertheless be accurate, so that the description matches the actual referent, otherwise the truth condition of the information in the discourse will not be satisfied (Lyons 1999: 269).

Finally, Lyons (1999) suggests drawing a line between the semantic/pragmatic concept of definiteness, grammatical definiteness and the phenomenon of the grammaticalisation of

definiteness.<sup>12</sup> Grammatical definiteness, as it has just been defined, is therefore not present in all languages, but only in those that have overt marking of definiteness such as definite articles. Syntactically, definiteness is represented in the functional category DP, which is therefore the definiteness phrase and not the determiner phrase, in order to account for the different nature of other determiners. The DP is further dominated by a functional KP (Case Phrase) and this last category is also to be found in languages which lack a definiteness phrase. In languages where articles are clitics, i.e. bound forms, they are realized as heads in  $D^{\circ}$ , whereas free article morphemes are located in [Spec, DP] and the head is lexically empty: they signalize that the category DP is projected. In other words, if a language has definiteness markings, then it has a DP structure (Lyons 1999: 321).

These considerations on the semantic meaning expressed by NPs introduced by a definite article will be of particular interest within the following topic of the thesis concerning definiteness effects, because the assumed definiteness closely relates to the notion of specificity and, ultimately, to the way of organizing the information that guides the hearer through the discourse. In fact, I will put forward the claim that the definiteness effect is not to be traced back to the semantic import of the lexical determiner introducing the NP, but rather to the interaction of discourse and syntactic factors that yield the realization of indefinite articles in languages that distinguish between definites and indefinites and the non-specific interpretation in those that have no lexical expressions for the definite/indefinite opposition.

English has often been considered a suitable example for a language with clearly identifiable definite and indefinite lexical articles, whose principal roles are thus to indicate the semantic (in)definiteness of the noun phrase (Lyons 1999). Nevertheless, what is particularly relevant for the present thesis is the fact that languages are not always completely transparent with regard to the lexical instantiation of one of these two semantic properties. Let us, therefore, first consider what specificity amounts to.

The notion of specificity, in fact, will be particularly relevant for the analysis of the definiteness restriction in the next part of the thesis and I would like to recall some of the definitions given based on the interpretation of noun phrases in different languages. The following remarks begin with the explanation presented in the seminal work of Enç (1991) on Turkish. She relies on morpho-semantic observations to explain specificity, whereas Diesing (1994) attempts to systematize these remarks in a syntactic account. A syntactic explanation for specificity is also provided by Ihsane & Puskás (2001), based on the polysemantics of the definite article and its several roles. Evidence for the syntactic correlation of specificity comes from creolization in Mauritian Creole, where the definite article of

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<sup>12</sup> Grammaticalisation refers to the diachronic change that lexical items can undergo, which usually implies morphological reduction and loss of meaning, thus resulting in the development of a new grammatical item. The original semantic content may continue to be the most relevant value expressed by the grammatical form, but the new grammatical category is not limited to the expression of that particular value anymore.

French has incorporated into the noun, yielding bare nouns, and a new specificity marker has developed (Guillemin 2009). Finally, also language acquisition studies such as the one by Ionin, Ko & Wexler (2004) show specificity to be instantiated as a universal category of meaning and definiteness not to be the only semantic content of the definite article.

More specifically, Enç (1991) systematically compares English and Turkish, drawing the following generalizations: the notions of definiteness and specificity are linked to discourse conditions. In her work she departs from the Familiarity condition and the Novelty condition of Kamp (1981) and Heim (1982), which state that definite NPs must be familiar, i.e. introducing referents already presented in the previous discourse, whereas indefinite NPs must be novel, i.e. the referents they introduce cannot have antecedents in the discourse (Enç 1991: 7). Enç then draws a general parallel between definite and specific NPs on one side, as she claims that both necessarily have referents in the previously established discourse, whereas indefinite and nonspecific NPs must not be related to referents in a previously given context. Nevertheless, there is a difference between definite and specific NPs and Enç individuates it in the different nature of the link between the NPs and their antecedents. Definite NPs have strong antecedents, because they involve an identity relation. Specific NPs, on the contrary, have weak antecedents, because they are not coreferential: they only involve an inclusion relation. This assumption leads to the conjecture that all definites are consequently specific, as identity of referents implies inclusion. To explain this point, Enç comments on the example in (13).

(13) Five children arrived. They had missed their bus. (Enç 1991: 9)

The pronoun *they* in (13) is definite and specific at the same time. On the one hand, the pronoun is coreferential with the NP *five children*, which is therefore its strong antecedent, providing thus the conditions for the definite relation. On the other hand, the NP *five children* also represents a weak antecedent because “the inclusion relation holds whenever the identity or the proper inclusion relation holds” (Enç 1991: 9). Enç’s approach has the consequence of ruling out nonspecific definite NPs. She supports her claims with evidence from Turkish, which has an indefinite article (*bir*) and cardinals. Unlike English, which does not have any morphological marker for specificity, the alternation between specific and nonspecific object NPs is morphologically evident in Turkish, as only specific NPs are marked by the accusative suffix *-(y)i*.<sup>13</sup> There is in fact a significant difference between (14) and (15):

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<sup>13</sup> The form varies according to the rules of vowel harmony, whereby “vowels within a word harmonize along two dimensions: back/front and rounded/unrounded [...]. Typically, vowels in suffixes adjust to the properties of vowels in the root” (Pereltsvaig 2012: 89).

(14) Ali bir pyiano-yu kiralamak istiyor (Turkish)  
 Ali one piano-ACC to-rent want  
 ‘Ali wants to rent a [+specific] piano.’ (Enç 1991: 5, slightly modified)

(15) Ali bir pyiano kiralamak istiyor  
 Ali one piano to-rent want  
 ‘Ali wants to rent a [-specific] piano.’  
 (Enç 1991: 5, slightly modified)

Only in sentence (14) the object NP is marked by accusative case. At the same time, the suffix conveys specificity, so that the NP can only be interpreted as Ali wanting to rent a certain piano, a specific one. In (15), on the contrary, Ali has no specific piano in mind that he intends to rent; he only expresses his wish to rent some piano or other. Moreover, the fact that the role of the establishing context is decisive in order to explain the occurrence of the accusative marker on some direct objects and not on others is illustrated in (17a) and (17b), whose context information is provided in (16) (Enç 1991: 5-6). (17a) and (17b) represent two possible sentences following the background utterance. In (17a) the object NP is marked for accusative case, whereas in (17b) the same NP occurs bare.

(16) Odam-a birkaç çocuk girdi (Turkish)  
 my-room-Dat several child entered  
 ‘Several children entered my room.’

(17)a. İki kız-ı tanıyordum  
 two girl-ACC I-knew  
 ‘I knew two girls.’

b. ??İki kız tanıyordum  
 two girl I-knew  
 ‘I knew two girls.’

(Enç 1991: 6, slightly modified)

If we take a look at (17a), the object NP is interpreted as adding information about something previously said, namely about “two girls who are included in the set of children [...] that entered the room” (Enç 1991: 6). A sentence without accusative/specificity marker would actually be considered rather infelicitous in the same context, because it would have to be interpreted as saying something about two girls not belonging to the set of individuals introduced before. Enç labels such marked

object NPs as partitive specific, referring to the semantic interpretation just explained, namely that of NPs picking up referents out of a set established in the previous context. The indefinite specific will have a covert partitive reading, as the referent is recovered from a previously given set (Enç 1991: 6).

Consequently, specificity has to be compatible with indefiniteness, as indefinite NPs can be specific or not, for example in indefinite expressions like *two books*. In Enç's view, partitives are always specific, because they constitute a subset of the referent of the NP which is part of the partitive expression.

The condition to be satisfied for an NP to be specific is to have an antecedent in the discourse to which it is related, but which is distinct from it. Significantly, also names as well as pronouns, definite description and demonstrative NPs – all “definite” expressions – must carry an accusative marker in order to be grammatical in object position. Compare the examples in (18) with an accusative suffix on the DO with the ungrammatical counterparts in (19) without specificity marker.

(18) Zeynep Ali-yi/ on-u/ adam-ı/ o masa-yı gördü (Turkish)  
 Zeynep Ali-ACC/ he-ACC/ the man-ACC/ that table-ACC saw  
 ‘Zeynep saw Ali/him/the man/ that table.’

(19) Zeynep \*Ali/\*on/\*adam/\*o masa gördü.

(Enç 1991: 9)

More importantly, bare nouns in object position are not categorically ruled out: they can appear if they are incorporated into the verb, in which case they will have a nonspecific reading. The example in (19) containing for instance the NP *adam* (Engl. *man*) is thus grammatical if it is intended as an instance of incorporation, building a complex predicate whose meaning could be rendered as “man-seeing”.

In her study, Enç concludes with the claim that semantic principles determine in natural languages whether and how NPs are linked to previously established referents. In this regard, specificity differs from definiteness, since the latter involves a strong link between the NP and its referent, for it requires identity, whereas specificity implies a weaker link, since the reference consists either of the NP being a subset of the familiar referent or to stay in some recoverable relation to it (Enç 1991: 24).

Although I do not agree with Enç's assumptions concerning the obligatory specificity of definite expressions, her description of the Turkish specificity marker is very important to my study, for a similar morphological and interpretational behaviour applies to another language without (definite) articles, namely Dari (see section 2.3.3). The interpretive properties of bare nouns or those marked with accusative Case will be considered with respect to the definiteness restriction in chapter 6.

Diesing (1994) proposes a syntactic account to provide an explanation for the notion of semantic specificity put forward by Enç (1991). In her analysis of indefinite NPs, she develops the so-called Mapping Hypothesis, based on the sentence partition in restrictive clause/nuclear scope put forth within formal semantics by Kamp (1981) and Heim (1982). This partition has a syntactic equivalent in the tree splitting algorithm. Thus, a semantic concept based on the quantificational force of operators that can (or cannot) bind NPs finds a syntactic counterpart in Diesing's tree splitting theory. Logical representations are mapped into syntactic structure, demonstrating that the hierarchical dependencies also play a role in the semantic interpretation, a fact that will be crucial in the explanation of the definiteness restriction.

Diesing departs from the observation that for bare direct objects in Turkish the specific reading is not available. According to Enç (1991), the specific reading is dependent on the discourse context in which the NP is embedded. Diesing claims that the specific semantic contribution of such object NPs is in fact presupposition. The specific reading of a NP corresponds to the presupposition of a set of entities introduced in the previous discourse. The accusative marker, thus, distinguishes presuppositional from cardinal (existential) NPs, as they could otherwise be ambiguous. Now, at a syntactic level, presupposition implies the location of the NP in a restrictive clause. In the bipartite division advanced within the tree splitting theory, the information encoded in the restrictive clause includes material mapped in the IP, while the VP part of the sentence represents the nuclear scope and NPs mapped there have an existential reading, as this represents the existential closure of the sentence. The two domains represent the locus of two different kinds of quantification. Strong indefinite expressions, comparable to the strong determiners of Milsark's (1974) analysis, are raised to IP by a rule of quantifier raising. An NP has quantificational force only if it is able to form a restrictive clause where a determiner binds the variable contained in that part of the structure.

As the specific object NP in Turkish is taken to get marked for accusative inside the VP, i.e. inside the domain of existential closure, Diesing proposes two possible accounts in order to get around such difficulty: either the NP moves out of the VP to a higher specifier position of a functional projection, for example to [Spec, AgrO], where it receives case. This would imply that the presence of the case suffix {-yî} signals the marking of the noun outside the VP domain, i.e. in the restrictive clause as predicted by the Mapping Hypothesis. Otherwise, another explanation could be that the accusative case marker triggers movement at LF, for instance QR (quantifier raising). Unmarked object NPs receive existential closure interpretation.

Another recent study on semantic specificity and its dependence on syntactic structure is that of Ishane & Puskás (2001). They also argue in favour of a distinction between definiteness and specificity but, contrary to Enç's (1991) remarks on the absence of nonspecific definites for Turkish, they claim that NPs introduced by a definite determiner are not necessarily specific. They support this with evidence from French and English; consider (20):

- (20) J'ai pris le train (French)  
 I have taken the train  
 'I have taken the train.' (Ihsane & Puskás 2001: 40)

The DP occurring in sentence (20) in French, as well as that of the respective English gloss, is introduced by definite determiners and is thus taken to be definite. Nevertheless, it is ambiguous with regard to specificity. For instance, in sentence (20), if the DP is interpreted as nonspecific, the train does not refer to a particular one, but it just stands for one means of transport, compared to others. The DP could also, however, be interpreted as specific if the referent was mentioned previously or specified as having properties such as a particular colour, or being due at a particular time. The contrast with a specific definite DP can be exemplified in a sentence like (21):

- (21) I took the twelve o'clock train.

Thus, as morphological definite NPs are not necessarily specific, Ihsane & Puskás put forward a syntactic explanation to account for this fact. They claim that there must be a projection in the left periphery of the nominal phrase, additional to the commonly assumed DP, which is responsible for encoding specificity. Since the projection carrying the specificity feature is always linked to the discourse condition (Enç 1991, Diesing 1994), the relevant projection could be a Topic Phrase, in the spirit of Rizzi's (1997) split analysis of the CP domain.<sup>14</sup> A Def(initeness) Phrase for the definite feature is instead located lower. Therefore, in Ihsane & Puskás's syntactic view, specificity is not necessarily correlated with definiteness (Ihsane & Puskás 2001: 39).

A remark on diachronic change affecting the role of the article and the functional structures above the NP comes from a Creole language. Guillemin (2009) describes the DP in contemporary Mauritian Creole (MC) and puts forward that it has changed over time because of language contact. According to her analysis, the incorporation of the definite article – an independent element in French, the language of the conquerors – gave rise to bare argument nouns and to the emergence of a new determiner system. Therefore, a change in noun denotation took place, which can be explained, in the spirit of Chierchia (1986), by a change of the semantic value from [-arg] to [+arg] for the nominal

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<sup>14</sup> Another example is given by Aboh (2004), who also departs from Rizzi's analysis of a split left periphery of the clausal domain. He presents evidence from Gungbe – a language belonging to the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo languages – for a Topic and Focus projection located between D and Num, which are in turn compared to Force and Fin of Rizzi's (1997) analysis. In Gungbe, there is a specificity marker that is assumed to be located in the head of a TopP. Specific NPs are raised to the specifier of TopP in order to check the specific features in a Spec-Head agreement.

domain. The postnominal marker *la* occurring in modern MC is not a definite article anymore (Guillemin 2009: 63), but it represents instead a specificity marker. This marker appears as a “last resort” device in the Specifier of a Spec(ificity) Phrase, which occupies the upmost position in the MC noun phrase structure and thus licenses the empty definite article in the Spec of a Def(inteness)P through c-command. In particular, the work supports the universality of semantic features such as definiteness, specificity, number and deixis, despite the realization of an article system that lexicalizes only one of these properties.

Concerning MC, Guillemin (2009) agrees with Diesing in so far as she says that specific indefinites are located higher in the syntactic structure than nonspecific ones, but in her opinion it is not because of their position in the structure that they get a [+specific] feature. The reason, in Guillemin’s view, is that specific indefinite NPs are quantified NPs and they are thus able to undergo QR (Guillemin 2009: 72). From a general semantic point of view, it is claimed that nonspecific NPs denote, whereas specific NPs refer. She explains that the meaning of nonspecific NPs is invariant, because it is anchored in the language system and does not depend on the particular discourse situation. The function of specific NPs, on the other hand, is to refer, because they depend on the occasion in which they are uttered. In other words, using a description given by Lyons (1995: 79) “the word ‘dog’ always denotes the same class of animals (or, alternatively, the defining property of the class), whereas the phrases ‘the dog’, or ‘my dog’ or ‘the dog that bit the postman’ will refer to different members of the class on different occasions of utterance”. Moreover, she adds that the use of the term denotation is adopted both extensionally, i.e. for the class of entities a word denotes, and intensionally, i.e. for the defining property that entitles an element to be a member of the class it denotes (Guillemin 2009: 83-84). Such an explanation is crucial to Guillemin’s analysis, in order to support her claim that NPs in Mauritian Creole are stored in the mental lexicon as kinds, in the sense of Chierchia (1998).

Finally, also language acquisition can provide evidence for the reality of the semantic category of the specificity and definiteness categories. Ionin, Ko & Wexler (2004), for instance, tested the acquisition of definite/indefinite articles in L1-Russian and L1-Korean (both languages without articles) speakers learning English as L2. They wanted to investigate the role of specificity in the acquisition of the definite article and set as theoretical basis the notion of *speaker intent to refer* and *noteworthiness*. In informal terms, definiteness and specificity are defined as follows (Ionin, Ko & Wexler 2004: 5): “if a Determiner Phrase (DP) of the form [D NP] is . . .

- a. [+definite], then the speaker and hearer presuppose the existence of a unique individual in the set denoted by the NP.

b. [+specific], then the speaker intends to refer to a unique individual in the set denoted by the NP and considers this individual to possess some noteworthy property.”

Simplifying a lot, they showed that the overuse of the English definite article *the* with indefinites was systematic and is eventually tied to the (optional) association of the definite article with the feature [+specific].<sup>15</sup> This is of course not attributable to L1 transfer and this, in turn, is taken as a piece of evidence that supports the existence of a universal semantic distinction between definiteness and specificity.

Summing up, it may well be probable that the notion of specificity, as well as that of definiteness, represent two universal categories of meaning (Lyons 1999), which manifest themselves in different morphosyntactic phenomena across languages. As Karimi (1990: 142) puts it, they could be two faces of the same coin:

“The fact that every language has either a definite or a specific marker, but not both (e.g. Persian, Turkish, Albanian, etc., have a specific marker, while English, French, German, etc., have a definite article) suggests that universal grammar has a single category of specific/definite (=presumed known) whose interpretation can differ from language to language, but which may play a role in every language.”

In the next section I would like to complete the outline of the roles covered by articles and make some observations on languages that have morphological markers not of definiteness, but of specificity. One of them, Afghan Persian, will be of particular interest when investigating the definiteness restriction in existential constructions because – thanks to its noun properties – it will provide more evidence for the existence of this constraint independently of the presence of a definite article.

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<sup>15</sup> I am citing their study in order to support the claims that the notions of definiteness and specificity play a role in language computations even if they are not morphologically realized. Naturally, this summary of the results cannot do justice to the study, so I refer the interested reader to Ionin’s et al. (2003, 2004, 2006) works.

### 2.3.2. Languages with morphological expression of specificity

Although definiteness is one of the most salient semantic properties grammaticalised in the articles of West European languages, there are however languages in which the attested article system expresses specificity rather than definiteness. Specific articles are, for instance, attested in Niger-Congo and Austronesian languages (Himmelmann 2001: 834). Some of the languages of this last group are Tagalog and Samoan, whose article systems provide evidence for the existence of the specificity value (Mosel & Hovdhaugen 1992, Himmelman 2001, Ionin 2003, 2004, Rijkhoff 2004). Articles, in fact, occur according to the specificity of the NP, not according to its definiteness.

Thus, in Samoan, for instance, there is a system with two articles and these lexical elements are considered to encode specificity: *le* is the [+specific] article, whereas *se* is the [-specific] one. Only plural NPs with nonspecific reference lack a noun phrase-marker altogether. The different lexical properties of the article, therefore, must be the result of a different parametric choice that selects the [ $\pm$ specific] feature, rather than the [ $\pm$ definite]. Compare the following sentences:<sup>16</sup>

(22)a. **[-definite, +specific]**

‘O le ulugāli’i, fānau I=a lā tama ‘o le  
 PRES ART couple gave birth ART=POSS3Sg.DUR. child PRES ART  
 teine ‘o Sina.  
 girl PRES Sina

‘There was a couple who had a child, a girl called Sina.’

b. **[+definite, +specific]**

Māsani ‘o le tamāloa e usua’i=ina lava ia....  
 used PRES ART man GENR get up early=ES EMPH 3sg  
 ’ae nonofo ‘o le fafine ma I=a=na tama i  
 but.stay(pl.) PRES ART woman and ART=POSS=3sg child LD  
 le fale.  
 ART house

‘It was the man’s practice to get up early and... while the woman stayed at home with her child.’

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<sup>16</sup> All data on Samoan are from Ionin et al. (2004: 10-12), originally in Mosel & Hovdhaugen (1992).

Sentence (22a) is the incipit of a story that is going to be told. The speaker introduces a new referent that is unknown to the hearer but, crucially, it has some noteworthy property. In fact, the referent will be relevant as soon as the story proceeds. In the second sentence (22b), the characters are still noteworthy in the discourse and since they have already been mentioned, the uniqueness/identifiability condition is also satisfied and the NP is at the same time [+definite]. Therefore, the specific article still introduces the noun phrase. Significantly, Samoan is no exception to the claim that languages morphologically realize either one or the other property but do not display lexical specific and definite articles at the same time.

Sentence (23) below gives an example of a nonspecific NP, being at the same time indefinite because not unique/identifiable.

(23) [-definite, -specific]

‘Au=mai se niu!  
Take=DIR ART(nsp.sg.) coconut!

‘Bring me a coconut [no matter which one]!’

In the case of a sentence like (23), the English gloss requires the indefinite article. The features of the DP are indeed [-definite, -specific]: the coconut to which the speaker is referring is not a unique one, the knowledge of which is shared by the speaker and the hearer at the same time, neither does it have some noteworthy property that makes the speaker refer to that specific coconut.

Eventually, an example in which the nonspecific article is used even though the context is able to satisfy the conditions for the DP to be definite is illustrated in (24), where a possessive is realized. The nonspecific article *se* is selected.

(24) [+definite, -specific]

Alu i se tou aiga e moe. Pe se  
go LD ART(nsp.sg.) 2.pl. family GENR sleep. Q ART(nsp.sg)  
tama a ai!  
boy POSS who

‘Go to your family— whoever that may be— and sleep! [I wonder] whose boy you might be!’[said to a boy who is selling necklaces at night in front of a hotel]

In sentence (24) the expression “your family” is definite in English because of the possessive. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the NP is nonspecific, i.e. not noteworthy in the context, and it is thus rendered by the parenthetic clause *whoever that may be* in the gloss.

Languages with a binary (non)specific article system, thus, seem to not signalize that the speaker assumes the intended referent to be identifiable for the hearer, but rather to highlight the relevance of the intended referent in the discourse.

Summing up and basing on the claims of languages in which the crucial property for the realization of a lexical article is either definiteness or specificity, Ionin et al. (2004: 13) draw the following table.

**Table 1. Article Grouping Cross-Linguistically: Two-Article Languages**

Article grouping by Definiteness			Article Grouping by Specificity		
	+definite	-definite		+definite	-definite
+specific			+specific		
-specific			-specific		

At this point I would like to introduce another language which does not have the lexical definite/indefinite opposition: Dari.<sup>17</sup> As I will illustrate in the next section, Afghan Persian does not have definite articles; it has an indefinite article and additionally displays a marker of accusative Case only on specific direct objects. Bare nouns can be interpreted as either specific or nonspecific.

Thus, if any definiteness restriction can be detected in Dari, where no definite article is available to give a determined semantic import, this is to be considered a strong support for the existence of a phenomenon which has been labeled as “definiteness effect” but that actually does not rely on definiteness as we defined it. This issue will be dealt with in chapter 6, whereas here I will provide a brief description of the morphological and semantic properties of noun phrases in Dari. Most of the data has been collected by elicitation judgements with native speakers.

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<sup>17</sup> In particular, all data presented in this section are from the colloquial variety of Afghan Persian spoken in Kabul, known as Kāboli. The data has been collected by elicitation tests (see chapter 6). Notice that the official designation of Afghan Persian is Dari, so I am referring to the very same language when using the two terms.



rather be a marker of specificity (Browne 1970, Karimi 1990, 1999, 2003, Taghvaipour 2005) and that it is therefore translated into English using the definite article *the* in most of the cases. Compare the sentences (27) and (28):

(27)           ba ma paisa-rā     nadād  
                   to me money-OM NEG-gave.3SG  
                   ‘(S/he) did not give me (the) money.’

(28)           ba ma paisa     nadād  
                   to me money NEG-gave.3SG  
                   ‘(S/he) didn’t give me (any) money.’

In (28) *paisa* (money) has a generic, nonspecific meaning, i.e. the speaker is not referring to any particular entity, whereas in (27) the direct object postposition *rā* is used if the speaker is talking about the specific money someone owes to someone (him or her, as pronouns do not have gender distinction). The morphological marker *rā* is not a definite article, even if specific direct objects are mostly rendered by definite articles in a language with a morphological binary definite/indefinite article system like the one of English.

One of the reasons for arguing against the analysis of *rā* as a marker of definite objects is that *rā* is indeed compatible with the cardinal article *yak* and in traditional written Dari, it occurs with the indefinite suffix *e*, meaning that they are not in complementary distribution as is the case with the definite and indefinite articles *the* and *a* in English.

While the use of the indefinite suffix *e* is still very common in Iranian Farsi, in Kāboli it has virtually disappeared, and is now only to be found in the written language (29).

(29)           šotor-e-ra     dīd  
                   camel-a-OM saw.3SG  
                   ‘(S/he) saw a [+spec.] camel.’

Farhādī (1955: 48)

Sentence (29) displays the suffix *e* – which corresponds to unstressed *i* in Iranian Persian (pronounced like a short [e]) – and its function is that of an indefinite article (Windfuhr & Perry 2009: 432). In contemporary spoken Dari the suffix is replaced by *yak* as in (30).

(30)           yak šotor-a dīd  
                   ‘(he/she) saw a [+spec.] camel.’

More evidence is provided by the data in (31) and (32):

(31) ketāb-a āword  
book-OM brought.3SG  
'(S/he) brought (the) book.'<sup>22</sup>

(32) yak ketāb-a āword  
one book-OM brought.3SG  
'(S/he) brought a [+spec.] book'

Both NPs in (31) and (32) display the object marker and are grammatical, but *\*ketāb āward* would be infelicitous as a counterpart to *she brought the/a [+spec.] book*, because a bare NP would be incorporated and interpreted as the activity of book-buying. At the same time, it should be noted that the presence of *ra* on the direct object<sup>23</sup> is not obligatory when the cardinal *yak* precedes the noun phrase. Compare, in this regard, sentence (33), which has been elicited as an answer to the task of giving a translation of *Ali bought a horse*.

(33) Ali yak asp xarid  
Ali one horse bought.3SG  
'Ali bought a/one horse.'

In (33) the object noun *horse* is nonspecific but denotes the existence of an item/individual (Karimi 2005: 27). The choice to put the two possibilities *a/one* in the gloss is related to the issue of the nature of *yak*, a morphological element of Kāboli that we will argue to be a cardinal article (see later in this section).

Nevertheless, *rā* does not exclusively appear when the direct object is definite, i.e. the informants did not react to the insertion of *rā* co-occurring with an indefinite by rejecting the sentence as ungrammatical. On the contrary, they spontaneously added it in the sentences when they intended to mark specific objects.

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<sup>22</sup> Due to the occurrence of *rā* we added a definite article in the English translation. While it is only “one book” that is bought, i.e. singularity is encoded, the relevant property of the book is to be a specific one, but this last interpretation would not be achieved if we had used the indefinite *a*, which the English language provides.

<sup>23</sup> Karimi (1990) argues the same for Iranian Persian.

Yet, the *rā* suffix alone cannot account for a consistent use of the definite article, see (34) and (35):

(34)           gul-a           ba tu metom  
 flower-OM to you DUR.give.1SG  
 ‘I give you (the) flower.’

(35)           yak gul-a           ba tu metom  
 one flower-OM to you DUR.give.1SG  
 ‘I give you a/one [+spec.] flower.’<sup>24</sup>

Sentence (35) displays the numeral *yak* co-occurring with the direct object marker *a*. The translation shows both *one* or *a* because on the one hand singularity is conveyed by *yak*, on the other hand the presence of *rā* makes the flower a specific one, and this is not morphologically evident in English, neither with *a*, or with *one*.

The informants’ feedback was that the grammaticality judgment was motivated by the intuition that by using *rā* some specification of the noun *flower* is going to follow or, at least, some specific flower is implicit to the speaker. Thus, the postpositioned *rā* cannot be treated as a pure marker of definiteness. I agree on treating *rā* as conveying specificity, or “referential prominence”, as Lyons (1999) citing Comrie (1981) defines it.

On that account, it is interesting to note that referential prominence can also become evident in the cataphoric information, given, for instance, by a relative clause as in (36). The presence of *rā* acts therefore as a kind of signal that the object is going to recur in the discourse or that it is of some referential importance to the speaker.<sup>25</sup>

(36)           Yak zan-a           gereft ke (u zan)<sup>26</sup> bad rang bud  
 One woman-OM took that (that woman) ugly be.PST.3SG  
 ‘He married a woman that was ugly.’

Indeed, the semantic property of specificity seems to be a decisive trigger at the basis of many morphosyntactic phenomena concerning NPs crosslinguistically. One of the extensively discussed

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<sup>24</sup> Also in this case, the occurrence of both *a* and *one* concerns the question on the nature of *yak*, which we will argue to be a cardinal article, as has been explained in section 2.2.

<sup>25</sup> Notice that a conversational background is always present in real-life situations and the conversation participants constantly need to update the information.

<sup>26</sup> The object of the main clause, which is the subject of the relative clause, can be realized or remain implicit.

examples in Italo-Romance is the Differential Object Marking (see chapter 5), which is particularly sensitive to specificity, among other properties.

In particular, we saw that the occurrence of the particle *rā* is bound to the possibility of individuating the referent, either because it was already mentioned in the discourse (anaphora, textual deixis), mentioned in another discourse (logophoricity) or because the referent is going to be described with more detailed information, as in (37). Therefore, different labels have been given to the semantic property triggering the accusative markers: they range from specificity as in Karimi (1999, 2003, 2005), to presupposition (Diesing 1994), referential prominence (Comrie 1981, Lyons 1999), topicality (Leonetti 2008) or individuation and recoverability, but they all refer to the characteristic just mentioned (Guardiano 2010 and references therein on Ibero-Romance literature).

Briefly turning the attention to the nominal morphology that lead to Persian being categorized among languages that only have indefinite articles (Krámsky 1972, Comrie 1981), we saw that Dari does have an indefinite article, *yak*, and it does not co-occur with *e*, which, moreover, is synchronically absent in Kāboli.<sup>27</sup>

Some considerations on the nature of *yak* are in order: not surprisingly, it has its origin in the numeral “one”, consequently it is not easy to make a clear distinction between the indefinite article and the singular numeral, due to the morphological identity. This issue, however, is to be accounted for in many languages which display a cardinal article equivalent to the numeral (Lyons 1999, Himmelmann 2001). *Yak* does for sure encode singularity, yet it can also introduce nonspecific arguments, if we mean by that, that the noun phrase can be interpreted as a nonspecified singular item/individual in such contexts. As for that, I will consider *yak* in Dari as having the function of a cardinal article comparable to some extent to the English *a*.<sup>28</sup> Notice that *yak* did not bear stress in the data collected, one of the criteria used for distinguishing an indefinite article from a numeral.<sup>29</sup>

Another reason for considering *yak* as a cardinal article in a specifier position of an assumed CardP/NumP projection is that it cannot co-occur with demonstratives. Thus, *this one car* would be ungrammatical in Dari, compare *\*in yak motar*. As Lyons (1999) suggests, the presence of a determiner probably prevents the insertion of an indefinite article because it may suffice in this language to license the noun. Thus, *yak* can be treated as an indefinite article, along with its homonymous numeral counterpart.

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<sup>27</sup> In Iranian Persian these are the numeral *yek* and the indefinite enclitic marker *i* and they can co-occur on the same NP.

<sup>28</sup> If, with the use of *yak*, the speaker intended to mark the contrast with another number or amount in the elicited tests, it received tonic prominence.

<sup>29</sup> Although Himmelmann (2001: 838) considers this a rather weak criterion to apply, as numerals in most languages do not have to be stressed.



responsible for the interpretation, as a nonspecific reading is not excluded. Nevertheless, the informants stated immediately after the judgment that they imagined a situation where a discussion about some men had taken place before, who are now expected to arrive. Again, if *yagān*<sup>34</sup> introduces the plural subject NP as in (37), the NP *men* gets an indefinite reading with regard to the quantity, bearing the feature [-SG]:

(38) mard-hā āmadan  
'(The) men arrived'

(39) mard-hā āmadan  
'Men [-spec] arrived.'

Finally, I will mention a brief explanation of function and properties of another element which has been associated with definiteness by some scholars, namely the union *-e-* or *ezāfe*, and I will say why I argue against its treatment as a definite article and consider it a linking element without semantic content of its own.

The *ezāfe* or *ezāfat e* (which can be translated as “union/adjunction/addition *-e-*”) <sup>35</sup> is an element that has the function of connecting nouns to other nouns, to adjectives (40-42) or relative clauses<sup>36</sup> and to build genitives (43).<sup>37</sup> The *ezāfe* is usually not present in writing, but is pronounced by the speakers in their utterances.

(i) ketab-hā-ye jāleb (Persian)  
Book-Pl-EZ interesting  
'The interesting books.'

(ii) \*ketab-e jāleb-hā

<sup>34</sup> In Iranian Persian the numeral *yek* is also used with plural noun phrases, either together with the indefinite suffix *-i* or pronominally without it (Lyons 1999: 91), but there is no form of *yek* displaying plural agreement as *yagān* in Dari, thus *\*yak mard-hā* is not acceptable in spoken Dari.

<sup>35</sup> After vowels other than *i* the *ezāfe* is phonologically realized as *ye*, cf. (Ghomeshi 1996: 26).

<sup>36</sup> Notice that the *ezāfe* links NPs modified by a relative clause and, if the NP has an AP or a noun-complement, the *ezāfe* attaches to the whole structure. Therefore, Taghvaipour (2005) proposes for the *ezāfe* to be located in a N' position, sister to CP. Notice, moreover, that the *ezāfe* links nouns to relative clauses, but it does not appear on PPs, compare (i) from Taghvaipour (2005: 31) or clauses as in (ii) from above.

(i) mærd-i œz kerman ke dœr jostejuye kar bud (Iranian Persian)  
man-RES from Kerman COMP in search work be.PST.3SG  
'the man from Kerman who was looking for job'

(ii) yak zan-a gereft Ø ke bad rang bud (Kāboli)  
One woman-OM took that ugly be.PST.3SG  
'He married a woman that was ugly.'

Notice, moreover, that RES in (i) is the abbreviation of Taghvaipour (2005) for restrictive *i*, as he particularly analyses restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses and labels the *ezāfe* consequently.

- (40)            ālu-ye-torš  
                  plum-EZ-sour  
                  ‘Sour plum.’
- (41)            jay-e-kalān  
                  space-EZ-big  
                  ‘Big space.’
- (42)            pāy-e-čap  
                  Foot-EZ-left  
                  ‘Left foot.’
- (43)            šer-e-Hāfez<sup>38</sup>  
                  poem-EZ-Hafiz  
                  ‘Hafiz’s poem’

Examples (40-41) are neutral with regard to definiteness and are interpreted according to the reading required by a given context, i.e. either specific or nonspecific. Nouns modified by an adjective can occupy two different syntactic positions, as will be shown in chapter 6 concerning specific and nonspecific subject/object NPs. In (42) the definite interpretation follows from the semantic of “left foot”, which is unique if considered as the left foot of a human being. Obviously, attributive adjectives linked to the noun by the *ezāfe* limit the set of discourse referents denoted by the modified nouns, as it is the case with nouns and restrictive relative clauses, and are therefore often introduced in English with a definite article. Notice that if there are no direct objects, even if specific, they do not receive any morphological marker. Again, the context and the intention of the speaker can provide various grades of identifiability, compare sentence (44).

- (44)    mard-e ke        dirōs        telefon    karda bud, da boğ    as  
           man-EZ COMP<sup>39</sup> yesterday telephone did    was, in garden is

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<sup>37</sup> There are also some prepositions that obligatory take the *ezāfe*, cf. Ghomeshi (1996).

<sup>38</sup> In (44) “poem” is ambiguous, as it can be understood as the poem by Hafiz or as his lifework.

<sup>39</sup> Relative clauses modify the head noun and are typically introduced in Persian by the invariant particle *ke*. *Ke* is the generalized complementizer and can to a certain extent be compared to the English *that* (Windfuhr & Perry 2009: 502). Karimi (2001) proposes to distinguish four functions of *ke*, which are the complementizer, the relativizer, the emphatic and the topicalizer functions. Taghvaipour (2005) argues for *ke* to always be treated as a COMP in relative clauses because of its invariance, i.e. no agreement with the head noun, and because of the ban on pied-piping of the preposition from a *wh*-question (cf. Taghvaipour (2005) for a detailed argumentation and examples).

‘(The/a) man who called yesterday is in (the) garden.’

Sentence (44) can indeed have three different readings,<sup>40</sup> i.e. even if the relative clause is restrictive, the modified noun can be interpreted as either definite (in the sense of *u mard-e ke...*, Engl. *that man who...*), specific (as *yak mard-e ke...*, Engl. *a certain man who...*) or nonspecific as *a (any one) man who...*).

Notice that it would yield ungrammaticality if the noun phrase were not connected to the relative clause through the *ezāfe* (45).<sup>41</sup>

(45) \*nafar Ø ke dirôs telefon karda bud, da bog as  
 person Ø COMP yesterday telephone did was, in garden is

Finally, sentence (46) illustrates the genitive construction, which is built by means of the *ezāfe* and can be compared to English genitives (e.g. *John’s book*). At an interpretative level, it always receives a specific/definite reading. Thus, if the noun additionally bears the accusative Case as in (46), the particle *rā* must be attached to the whole construction (Karimi 1999: 135).

(46) ketāb-e Homaira-ra da sar-e-mez mānd-om  
 Book-EZ H -OM on head-EZ-table let.1SG  
 ‘I put Homaira’s book on the table.’

In all cases, the *ezāfe* cannot be regarded as a morphological definite article but rather as a linking element, while the definite (or better specific) reading is actually achieved through specification derived from the description of the referring relative clause and, ultimately, from the context.

A last remark on the *ezāfe* as definite article requires drawing the attention to colloquial Iranian Persian. Samiian (1983) and Ghomeshi (1996) point to the existence of a suffix *e* (which becomes *a* in

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<sup>40</sup> Example from Taghvaipour (2005: 26). The sentence, though, had been elicited in Kāboli by the informants during the tests.

<sup>41</sup> Taghvaipour calls the element that links the noun to the relative clause „restrictive -i“ (Iranian Persian) and remarks that in early stages of Persian it was complementary to demonstratives with nouns followed by a relative clause, cf. (iii) in Classic Persian and (iv) in contemporary Iranian Persian (Taghvaipour 2005: 18-19).

(iii)a. an mærd Ø ke amæd (classic Persian)  
 b. Ø mærd-i ke amæd  
 ‘That/the man that came.’

(iv)a. \* an mærd Ø ke amæd (contemporary Iranian Persian)  
 b. an mærd-i ke amæd

a non-word-final position), presented exclusively in informal speech style, and assume it to be a definiteness marker. Compare the following examples (47a), (47b) given in Ghomeshi (1996: 125)<sup>42</sup> and which could not be proved for Afghan Persian/Kāboli since they do not display such a marker.

- (47)a. doxtar-e âmad-Ø (colloquial Iranian Persian)  
 girl+def came+3SG  
 'The girl came.'
- b. doxtar-a-ro did-am  
 girl+def+râ saw+1SG  
 'I saw the girl.'

I conclude this section with some remarks on demonstratives, since these elements are often considered the predecessors of articles.

In written Dari, the demonstratives are the proximal *in* (this) and the distal *ān* (that), the first being commonly substituted in the spoken Kāboli by *i* and the second by *u*.<sup>43</sup> *U* is used only if the referent is singular, whereas *i* is used with singular as well as with plural nouns. They are always realized pre-nominally. The plural forms are *yā* (*i+ā*) and *wā* (*u+ā*), which correspond to *in-hā* and *ān-hā* in the written variety, but both of the latter forms can only be used when the nouns they refer to are lacking, i.e. as pronouns (Farhādī 1955: 55).

**Table 2. Demonstratives in Dari**

	written Dari	Kāboli	English
proximal singular	in	i	this
distal singular	ān	u	that
proximal plural	in-hā	yā	these
distal plural	ān-hā	wā	those

The use of demonstratives (*i* and *u* replacing *in* and *ān* of the literary/written language) is consistently present in contexts where a language with definite articles, such as English, would use the definite. The analysis of some newspaper articles drawn from the Afghan online newspaper written in

<sup>42</sup> Examples drawn from other works are cited using the conventional transcription adopted there.

<sup>43</sup> The demonstrative *u* is syncretic with the third person singular pronoun, i.e. *he/she* (recall that there is no grammatical gender on pronouns).

Dari and with an English translation for each article<sup>44</sup> support the claims that the occurrence of demonstratives is much more frequently compared to a language with definite articles like English.

Some of the sentences from the article “Human rights watch: children back to Kabul face serious risks”<sup>45</sup> will be presented here as an example in order to show the consistent use of the demonstrative *in*.

- (49) Didebān-e-huquq-e-bašar āxiran gozarāš-e ra ba nošer rasānida ast  
 watchmanPL-EZ-law-EZ-human recent report-EZ OM to publication brought is  
 ke nešān mi-dehad kudakān-e ke az šānzda to avda sāl dārand  
 COMP sign.PL DUR-give.3SG child.PL-EZ COMP from 16 to 17 year have.3PL  
 suy-e-pulis-e-marzi-e-Britānyā dobara ba Kābul ferestāda mi-šavand.  
 from-EZ-police-EZ-borderADJ-EZ-Britain again to Kabul sent DUR-become.3PL

‘The Human right watch has recently published a report that shows that children aged between 16-17 years are being deported back to Kabul by UK border officials...’

- (50) **In** kudakān na-mi-tavānand xānvadahā-ye-šan ra peydā konand  
 These child.PL not-DUR-can.3PL familyPL-EZ-their OM found do.3PL

‘...[continuing from (49) above] *where* they cannot find their families ...’<sup>46</sup>

Sentence (49) is a relevant example for two reasons: for one thing, no demonstrative occurs, even though it could be used for instance with the noun phrase *didebān-e-huquq-e-bašar* (Engl. *the Human Right Watch*) as it introduces an identifiable/unique referent. For another, there is also no

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<sup>44</sup> The text has been transcribed morpho-phonemically and was compared with the English version given on the web-site, in order to observe, among other things, the use and distribution of demonstratives.

<sup>45</sup> From [www.tolonews.com](http://www.tolonews.com), last retrieved 28-03-2011.

<sup>46</sup> The italicized words in the glosses have been inserted into the English translation by the author of the English version of the newspaper article, though they are not formally present in the Dari text.

demonstrative with *gozarāš* (Engl. *report*), although the marker of referential prominence appears (and signals a case of [-definite, +specific] NP). Instead, whenever the demonstrative occurs as in (50), it still has an anaphoric/textual deictic function, which is indeed characteristic of real demonstratives and not of grammaticalised elements such as a definite article.

Further examples for this last claim are sentences (50), (51) and (52) below. Notice, in particular, that the English glosses resort to the definite article in many of the cases in which the demonstrative occurs, but the function of the demonstrative in Dari is typically recognitional and anaphoric.

(50) šomāry-e-ziyad-e az **in** kudakān yā kešvar-e-asli-yešān  
 quantity-EZ-high-EZ from these child.PL either country-EZ-main-EZ-their

wa yā ba yak kešvar-e-sewomi ke az ānhā āmade ast ferestāda mi-šavand  
 and or to one country-EZ-thirdADJ that from those came is sent become

‘Most of the children were either deported to their country of origin or to a third country.’

(51) Dar **in** gozāraš āmada ast ke kudakān zirsən qanuni...  
 in this report came is COMP child.PL under-age legal...

‘Children *including Afghans* who often travel to Europe...’

lit. ‘In this report came up that teenagers ... (for the purpose of going to European countries...)<sup>47</sup>

(52) **In** gozāraš mi-āfzayad ke Britānyā  
 this report DUR-add.3SG COMP Britain

‘**The** report suggests that Britain...’

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<sup>47</sup>A more literal translation is provided in order to compare the original text to the English sentence structure chosen by the article’s author.

As (48)-(52) show, *in* is the demonstrative used with singular as well as with plural nouns in the written language. Demonstratives are undoubtedly used more extensively in the Dari text than would be the case in English and this tendency is typical of languages lacking definite articles.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, the high frequency of use of the demonstrative does not correspond to a substantial difference in the semantics and pragmatics of the demonstrative to the extent of a definite article, therefore demonstratives in Dari are not grammaticalised

On the basis of the previous remarks, we can say that Dari has no definite articles, but displays a morphological expression of specificity on direct object nouns. The specificity marker can moreover co-occur with the indefinite article. Bare subject and object nouns receive nonetheless a (non)specific reading and I will assume that this depends on the syntactic position they occupy. This issue will be the topic of section 6.3. The morphological and semantic properties of nouns in Dari, in fact, will be crucial when analyzing the definiteness restriction in ES.

Summing up the previous discussion, the fact that languages grammaticalise for instance on the basis of the definiteness or the specificity value is ultimately a proof that the crucial factor is “relevance”. Speakers have to process information and thus relevance can be seen as a property to which the human cognition is sensitive. Therefore, each language develops its own strategies in order to compute relevant information in utterances in the way that requires the least effort according to the specific grammar of the language at issue.

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<sup>48</sup> Indeed, demonstratives are used more extensively in languages without grammatical definite articles, for example in Mandarin, Cantonese and Lango (see Lyons 1999: 232-236).



### 3. THE DP IN SOUTHERN CALABRIAN

In this section I will provide a sketch of the DP in Southern Calabrian. I will describe the use and form of the article system in order to set the ground for the analysis of the definiteness effects occurring in the existential constructions of SCal (see chapter 5).

#### 3.1. Introduction

Calabria is the most southern region of the Italian peninsula. It borders the region of Basilicata to the north, is bounded by the Tyrrhenian Sea to the west, by the Ionian Sea to the east and is separated from Sicily by the Strait of Messina, where a strong whirlpool is created where these two seas come into contact in the north and has thus been named after Scylla and Charybdis, the two monsters of the Greek mythology.

The official language is Italian, but there is a widespread situation of bilingualism with diglossia (Sobrero 1997), where most of the population still uses the local dialect.

The partition of the different languages spoken in Calabria is undertaken based on isoglosses; and the varieties spoken in the south of the region are grouped together. I refer to the varieties analysed in the present work as Southern Calabrian (SCal). I would like to stress the fact that I am adopting an internalist approach to the study of the language. This means that the aim of the research is to analyse some aspects of the competence of the native speakers of SCal, namely their knowledge about nominal expressions and a phenomenon presumably related to their form and function, such as the definiteness restriction, thereby contributing to the theory on shared properties of languages while, at the same time, accounting for variation. Therefore, I will compare this Italo-Romance language not only to standard Italian, but also to other languages of the same family and even unrelated ones, in the spirit of the framework of generative grammar, according to which universal properties become visible when a contrastive analysis is carried out.

With respect to the traditional taxonomy of Calabrian dialects, I will briefly review the partition put forward by Rohlfs (1969, 1972) and Falcone (1976) and then present some parameters assumed by Trumper (1997), Ledgeway (1998) and Loporcaro (2009) to account for different groups of dialects in Calabria.

Rohlfs' longmaintained opinion was to draw a line between "two Calabrias", that is to distinguish between the dialects of northern Calabria (approximately from Lamezia on the Tyrrhenian coast up to Catanzaro and Crotona on the Ionian (Trumper 1997: 355)), where a Latin substratum is notably distinct from a Greek Calabria in the south, whose dialects display elements ascribable to the language of the Greek populations residing there before the Romans. Nevertheless, this bipartition does not really hold according to many scholars after Rohlfs, as they put forward various

counterarguments to show that Greek elements can also be found in north Calabria, which never belonged to Magna Graecia, whereas many of the Greek features of SCal should actually be traced back to the Byzantine period.<sup>49</sup> Falcone's (1976) tripartition relies on phonological properties of the varieties. SCal is individuated on the basis of what is defined as "Sicilian vocalism" and the area of its occurrence stretches from the extreme southern border of the peninsula up to the isogloss called "Punta Stilo - Vibo Valentia" (which can be roughly compared to the line named as the Filadelfia-Caulonia-Soverato line in Trumper 1997).

Finally, Trumper (1997) and Loporcaro (2009) argue for a partition into four groups based on common syntactic properties, for instance the reduced use of the verbal category infinitive, which never follows the modal verb but instead displays agreement and is introduced by the particle *mu* (or its allomorphs), whereas in Italian the modal verb must be followed by an infinitive.<sup>50</sup> This property mostly concerns the dialects spoken below the Nicastro-Catanzaro-Crotone line (Ledgeway 1998). The two varieties that are the main objects of interest in this thesis are the dialects of Cittanova and Brancaleone, which I will refer to as Southern Calabrian and belong to the Nicastro-Catanzaro-Crotone-dialects.

(Southern) Calabrian is not an official language and it does not have a standard grammar or orthography. Children are officially taught in Italian at school and official talks are held in standard Italian. Italian is perceived as more prestigious compared to the vernacular. In recent years, though, more importance has been given to the preservation and reappraisal of the local folklore in all its aspects. This kind of renaissance includes the increase in reprinting of collections of poetry and the performance of plays held in the local variety, as well as the rediscovery of the traditional handicrafts, of the traditional dance "Tarantella"<sup>51</sup> and of the ballads composed in the vernacular, in order to celebrate the long-shadowed history of this region. More importantly, all this reflects the desire to spotlight a regional culture long considered as inferior and to showcase the variety and facets of this part of Italy, which is also one of the purposes pursued in this work. Concerning written sources other than poetry, to the best of my knowledge there is at the present time no local press written in vernacular and local television is also in standard Italian. There are, though, some entertainment TV programs broadcasted in dialect.<sup>52</sup>

Since information on SCal is scattered in articles and works written over a long time span and handling specific aspects of the Calabrian languages according to very different theoretical

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<sup>49</sup> I will not pursue in detail the diatribe on the bipartition proposed by Rohlfs and the counterarguments to that division, as it goes beyond the scope of this work. The interested reader, though, can consult Trumper (1997) and references therein.

<sup>50</sup> Interesting syntactic analyses concerning the lack of infinitive in SCal are provided in Ledgeway (1998) and Damonte (2010).

<sup>51</sup> It is said that people must dance it as if they had been "bitten by a tarantula".

<sup>52</sup> One of the most well-known television programs in Southern Calabrian is "Chisti simu" (Engl. *These we are*), where the two comedians make use of dialect of Reggio Calabria ([www.chistisimu.tv](http://www.chistisimu.tv)).

frameworks, I find it necessary to introduce a description of the nominal domain first and later turn to existential sentences based on new data from contemporary SCal.

The study of Southern Calabrian is conducted nevertheless from an internal perspective and is an investigation of the implicit knowledge that the speaker has in their mind/brain of the grammar they possess of their native language(s) (Manzini & Savoia 2005).

### 3.2. Definite and indefinite DPs

The form of the definite articles in Southern Calabrian displays aphaeresis of the alveolar lateral [l] and therefore yields the outcome illustrated in table 3.

**Table 3. The definite articles in Southern Calabrian**

	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Masculine/Feminine Plural
<b>before consonants</b>	lu > ‘u	la > ‘a	li > ‘i
<b>before vowels</b>	l’	l’	l’

In (1)-(3) are some examples to illustrate the occurrence of the different allomorph of the definite articles in varying surroundings.

(1)a. ‘u puticaru  
the shopkeeper

b. l’omu  
the man

(2)a. ‘a pacenzia  
the patience

b. l’accia  
the celery

(3)a. ‘i cati (MASC)/ ‘i misati (FEM)  
the buckets/ the salaries

- b. l'olivari  
the olive groves

As the sentences in (3) show, there is no morphological difference between masculine and feminine gender features in the plural form of the article. Therefore, SCal has a system of three definite articles with a non-aphaeretic allomorph that is used only before vowels and which is homophonous for all nouns, independently of their gender  $\phi$ -features.

The full form of the definite articles (i.e. *lu*, *la*, *li*) is little used and mostly occurs in specific contexts, for instance when the speaker intends to emphasize the noun (4), when two nouns are coordinated (5) or when the noun phrase is focused (6) (but in all cases the aphaeresized form is also common).

- (4) Va 'ccatta (l)u pani.  
go.IMP.2SG buy.2SG the bread  
'Go and buy some bread.'

- (5) 'u patri e (l)u figghiu.  
the father and the son

- (6) Esti (l)u to figghiu chi chiama.  
is the your son who call.2SG  
'It is your son who is calling.'

Southern Calabrian does not display any enclitic form of the definite article, other than is the case in other Romance languages such as Romanian (e.g. *pui*, Engl. *chick* and *puiul*, Engl. *the chick*).

Sometimes, when the definite article precedes a noun whose initial sound is a vowel, it gets incorporated into the noun itself (7).

- (7) api > l'api > lapa > 'a lapa  
bee > the bee > the+bee > the (the+bee)

The indefinite articles are systematized in table 4 below and respective examples are provided in sentences (8)-(9).

**Table 4. The indefinite articles in Southern Calabrian**

	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Plural ( <i>some</i> )
<b>before consonants</b>	nu	na	carchi
<b>before vowels</b>	n'	n'	carchi

(8)a. nu hiàuru  
a scent

b. n'angilu  
an angel

(9)a. na cannata  
a jug

b. n'abbruvera  
a (white) heather

(10)a. carchi simana  
some week.SG

Singular count noun phrases in argument position are always introduced by an article in SCal. It shares this property with standard Italian, as well as other Romance languages such as French, Spanish or Romanian.

### 3.3. Bare nouns

In languages that have articles, bare nouns are usually found only in specific circumstances. In Italian, for instance, bare nouns can occur whenever the noun is abstract (11) or mass-denoting and in singular (12a) (Stark 2005). A “zero” determiner – to align with Longobards’s syntactic analysis of the structure of bare nouns (1994, 2010) – is additionally found in plural noun phrases (15a). In Southern Calabrian, abstract singular nouns are bare, too (11b). Although singular mass nouns can also be bare (12b), especially when they express a contrastive reading, a stronger restriction seems to be discernible

for them in SCal: in many of the cases in which they tend to occur bare or are introduced by the partitive in Italian (13a)/(14a), SCal does not allow them to appear bare and they must consequently be introduced by the definite article (13b)/(14b). Plural NPs may be bare and are present in both Italian and SCal. They are postverbal (15).

- (11)a. Dimostrò (\*della/la) pazienza in questa situazione. (Italian)  
 display.PST.3SG (\*PART.ART) patience in this situation (Stark 2005: 124)
- b. Ndeppi (\*'a) pacenzia ntra 'sta situazioni. (SCal)  
 have.PST.3SG (\*ART) patience in this situation  
 'He showed patience in this situation.'
- (12)a. Non ne bevi vino? (Italian)  
 NEG CL drink.2SG wine
- b. Vinu non ndi mbivi? (SCal)  
 wine NEG CL drink.2SG  
 'Don't you drink wine?'
- (13)a. Mi occorre (dell') acqua. (Italian)  
 CL.DAT need.3SG (PART.ART) water (Stark 2005: 124)
- b. Mi servi \*(l') acqua. (SCal)  
 CL.DAT need \*(ART) water  
 'I need some water.'
- (14)a. Compro (del) pane (Italian)  
 buy.1SG (PART.ART) bread (Stark 2005: 123)
- b. Accattu \*(u) pani (SCal)  
 buy.1SG \*(ART) bread  
 'I buy some bread.'

(15)a. Vedo (degli) studenti nell'edificio. (Italian)  
see.1SG (PART.ART) students in-the building  
'I see (some) students in the building.'

(Stark 2005: 124)

b. ??? Viu alunni ntr'a scola. (SCal)

c. Viu a l'alunni ntr'a scola  
see.1SG PA the students in-the school  
'I see the students in the school.'

d. Ndavi alunni ntr'a scola.  
CL.has students in-the school  
'There are students in the school.'

In (15) the argument is an articleless plural noun. The lack of the article yields an indefinite (nonspecific) interpretation of the NP, i.e. the noun is interpreted existentially (Lyons 1999, Diesing 1994, Alexiadou et al. 2007). In SCal the semantic interpretation assigned to the bare plural noun becomes particularly visible in so far as a literal counterpart to the Italian sentence (15a) is not a well-formed sentence, compare (15b). Indeed, even the verb *see* is rejected in favour of the existential verb *ndavi*, as in (15d), if the same reading as for sentence (15a) must be achieved.<sup>53</sup> If the existential interpretation of the bare plural is due to an existential operator (Carlson 1978), this fact suggests that the operator influences the meaning of the sentence as a whole, not only of the bare plural. Bare plural nouns can also be interpreted generically/universally in some languages (e.g. English). In SCal, though, generic nouns can be either singular or plural, but they are usually accompanied by a definite article. The indefinite article is not used with singular generic nouns.

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<sup>53</sup> In fact, the alternative (15c) cannot get a nonspecific reading, but only a specific one, which is not the intention of the Italian sentence (15a).

### 3.4. Pronouns

The subject personal pronouns of Southern Calabrese are summed up below.<sup>54</sup>

I	II	III	I	II	III
<i>jeu</i>	<i>tu</i>	<i>idu, ida</i>	<i>nui</i>	<i>vui</i>	<i>idi</i>

Southern Calabrian has clitic pronouns that are used to refer to direct and indirect objects. In SCal the clitic direct object pronouns (accusative pronouns) are:

I	II	III	I	II	III
<i>mi</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>(l)u, (l)a</i>	<i>ndi</i>	<i>vi</i>	<i>(l)i</i>

The clitic pronouns functioning as indirect object (dative pronouns) are:

I	II	III	I	II	III
<i>mi</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>nci</i>	<i>ndi</i>	<i>vi</i>	<i>nci</i>

In addition to the weak (clitic) pronouns, SCal has strong free forms for both types of object pronouns. These are:

I	II	III	I	II	III
<i>mia</i>	<i>tia</i>	<i>idu/ida</i>	<i>nui</i>	<i>vui</i>	<i>idi</i>

The occurrence of the strong object pronouns will be of central importance when looking at the structure of the existential constructions displaying the auxiliary *have*. In fact, their occurrence provides information on the syntactic status of these constituents, which are obligatorily marked with the prepositional accusative. Moreover, also the occurrence of weak object pronouns will hint at the

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<sup>54</sup> In other dialects of the Southern Calabrian area, pronouns can display little phonological variation (e.g., *eu* instead of *jeu* or *iju* instead of *idu* in the dialect spoken in Taurianova, Roccella Jonica, Reggio Calabria etc.), but this fact does in no way affect the analysis of the constructions we are going to present in the second part of the thesis. In particular, *nci* and *ndi* always occur unvaried.

specific properties of the existential cluster, as only in this construction the object clitic does not cause deletion of the clitic of locative origin *ndi* (see chapter 5).

The clitic pronoun *ndi* is at the same time the form used for the partitive and for the locative pronoun and corresponds in these cases to the clitic pronoun *ne* of standard Italian. Also, the clitic pronoun *nci* is to be found in SCal in contexts where it conveys a locative meaning, but its use is very restricted, namely within what we will consider for now existential sentences as in the *nc'è/nci su-* constructions. It will indeed be argued that this is the result of the influence of the Italian language, whose existential sentences are built with the *c'è/ci sono*-form, whereas the proper Southern Calabrian existential construction displays the cluster *ndavi*.

Examples for the last two functions of the *nci* and *ndi* forms will be presented in section 5.6. There, I will in particular examine the two clitics, homophonous with the object clitic pronouns, and I will deal with their occurrence in existential sentences.

### 3.5. Possessives

Possessive pronouns have the following form:

	I	II	III	I	II	III
SINGULAR	<i>meu/mea</i>	<i>toi</i>	<i>soi</i>	<i>nostru/a</i>	<i>vostru/a</i>	<i>loru/d'idi</i>
PLURAL	<i>mei</i>	<i>toi</i>	<i>soi</i>	<i>nostri</i>	<i>vostri</i>	<i>loru/d'idi</i>

Possessive adjectives are:

I	II	III	I	II	III
<i>me</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>so</i>	<i>nostru/a/i</i>	<i>vostru/a/i</i>	<i>loru/d'idi</i>

When the possessive adjectives follow the NP they display the same form as the possessive pronouns. Notice that SCal requires the obligatory realization of the definite article whenever a possessive adjective is inserted in the DP as in (16) or (17a). Standard Italian, on the contrary, allows the omission of the definite article when the possessive occurs with singular kinship nouns (17b), whereas

all other nouns display the article together with the possessive. Another peculiarity of SCal is that most kinship nouns can also realize the possessive enclitically (18).

(16) ‘A me casa (SCal)  
the my house

(17)a. ‘U me frati  
the my brother

b. Ø Mio fratello (standard Italian)  
‘My brother.’

(18) Fratima. (SCal)  
brother-my

The enclitic forms of the possessive adjectives are available only for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular and are listed below:

I	II	III
{-ma}	{-ta}	{-sa}

From a syntactic point of view, this phenomenon is very interesting. In fact, I have discussed in section 2.2 Longobardi’s hypothesis of an underlying syntactic structure for DPs that can account for the variation of word order between the NP and its modifiers across languages and the occurrence or lack of an article at a superficial level. The elements in D, supposedly articles, are functional categories. The data from SC can be used to support this account. Within the MP, in fact, functional categories in general are considered to bear interpretable features that give instructions to the PF and LF interfaces. They are therefore the locus in which feature checking takes place. D being a functional category, it encodes interpretable features such as definiteness, referentiality and animacy of the nominal complement. If we take D to carry a strong feature in the language at hand, then it has to trigger overt movement of the noun in order for it to check this feature. In SCal this is evident when we compare the occurrence of certain kinship nouns (19a), (19b) which overtly raise to D and would therefore yield the structure in (20a), (20b) according to Longobardi’s hypothesis of N-to-D movement (Ledgeway 2000: 11). The definite article is not overt when the possessive adjective is realized enclitically, but appears when it occurs as a full morpheme preceding (21a) or following the kinship noun (21b).

(19)a.        sorita  
              sister-your  
              ‘your sister’

              b.        patrima  
                      father-my  
                      my father

(20)a.        [D sister<sub>i</sub>-your [N t<sub>i</sub>]]

              b.        [D father<sub>i</sub>-my [N t<sub>i</sub>]]

(21)a.        ‘A so soru si ndi jiu a Milanu.  
              The her/his sister CL.REFL CL.LOC go.PST.3SG to Milan  
              ‘Her/his sister went to Milan.’

              b.        ‘U canatu toi mi dissi mu fazzu cosi.  
              The brother-in-law your CL.DAT tell.PST.3SG *mu* make.PRS.1SG so  
              ‘Your brother-in-law told me to do that way.’

Recall that this happens only with a specific class of nouns, namely with kinship terms, while all other classes are excluded, see (22a)-(22c). This means that the F[N] is weak in the possessive constructions, where A precedes the noun and, therefore, that N-to-D movement of the noun takes place covertly.

(22)a.        ‘a me machina  
              the my car  
              ‘My car.’

              b.        ‘u to caffè  
                      the your coffee  
                      ‘Your coffee.’

              c.        ‘a nostra strata  
                      the our street  
                      ‘Our street.’

Notice that SCal aligns with other southern vernaculars such as Neapolitan, where the noun can raise to a higher intermediate position, yielding the order D-N-Poss. As (22b) shows, for instance, SCal also allows for the noun to cross the possessive and therefore to check the features overtly as in (23).

- (23)a. 'a machina toja (Neapolitan)  
the car your  
'Your car.'
- b. [D the [NP car [A your]]]

Italian is indeed also a language that allows raising of the noun to an intermediate position, see the data in (24b) compared to (24a). Again, in SCal it is possible to have the noun preceding the possessive adjective, but quite often the speakers switch to regional Italian and therefore prefer using the Italian form of the possessive, see (25b).

- (24)a. La mia macchina. (standard Italian)  
b. La macchina mia.
- (25)a. ? 'A machina mea. (SCal)  
b. 'A machina mia.

The reading of (25b) can be compared to (24b) in Italian. In fact, in Italian, if the noun is located before the possessive adjective *mia*, the sentence has a different meaning: there is a change from the neutral word order *la mia macchina* to *la macchina MIA*, where the possessive adjective *mia* is focused.<sup>55</sup> In SCal too, whenever the possessive follows the noun, the interpretation is with a focus on the possessive adjective, though this element does not necessarily have to be pronounced with marked intonation. In contrast to that, DPs with kinship nouns and the possessive enclitic on them are neutral with respect to their reading, i.e. the possessive adjective is not focused.

Finally, notice in (26) that possessives in Italian must be introduced by a determiner (few exceptions are singular kinship nouns), which is otherwise not possible in the Romance languages

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<sup>55</sup> Similarly to what happens in the verbal domain, where the postverbal position is typical of focused subjects, in the nominal domain a postposed possessive receives a focused reading. I will not go into depth concerning this issue, which would lead us too far astray from the original aim of the text. I refer the reader to the works of Giorgi & Longobardi (1991), Longobardi (1994, 2010) among others.

French and Spanish and neither in English or German. Southern Calabrian always uses the definite article when the possessive is pronominal with no exceptions on singular kinship nouns.

- |      |                             |             |                      |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| (26) | Il / un / ogni / questo     | mio amico   | (Italian)            |
|      | * (Lu) / *(nu) / chistu     | amicu meu   | (Southern Calabrian) |
|      | * The /a / every / this     | my friend   | (English)            |
|      | * Der /ein / jeder / dieser | mein Freund | (German)             |
|      | * Le / un / chaque / ce     | mon ami     | (French)             |
|      | * El / un / cada / este     | mi amigo    | (Spanish)            |

The possibility to introduce the NP containing the possessive with a definite or an indefinite article leads, in Italian, to the recovery of the semantic definite/indefinite content of the NP, whereas in the other languages where no articles occur before possessives, the definite/indefinite contrast requires a different construction, compare for instance (27) in Italian and its counterparts in the respective English glosses.

- |      |                           |           |
|------|---------------------------|-----------|
| (27) | Un mio amico [-def]       | (Italian) |
|      | a my friend               |           |
|      | ‘My friend’ [+def.]       |           |
|      | ‘A friend of mine’ [-def] |           |

The observations on the behaviour of nouns and possessive adjectives regarding the switching from SCal to Italian provide evidence for the co-existence of two grammatical systems in the mind of the speakers and this hypothesis will be put forward also for the presence of two different forms of existential verbs, the SCal proper existential cluster *ndavi*, an outcome of possessive constructions, and the *nci*-ES with the copula ESSE that originally depart from a locative form and display the same properties of standard Italian.



group, along with Spanish and Romanian, whereas Italian patterns with the second group, along with French.

Despite the fact that the data on SCal at first seem to support this claim, it must also be remarked that it does not really hold crosslinguistically. Diachronic data from Old Catalan, for instance, show that the use of the partitive article can be attested at the same time as the occurrence of DOM (31) (p.c. Fischer and Vega Vilanova).<sup>57</sup>

(31) Vida activa és, si algú dubte en alguna cosa,  
life active is if someone doubts in some thing

que ha haüda tal temptació e demane de consell,  
that has had such temptation and asks some advice

e hom lo li done: allò és vida activa.  
and one it.ACC he.DAT gives that is life active

(CICA, C-03, Sermons de Sant Vicent Ferrer)

"An active life is when someone doubts on something...who was vacillating because he had had a temptation and asks for advice and one gives them to him: this is active life'

Therefore, the alleged complementary distribution of DOM and partitive articles cannot really be maintained, as there are languages that display both at a synchronic stage.

Concerning Catalan, in the Modern language there is no partitive article anymore. In Modern Catalan the occurrence of DOM has been ruled out by the grammar reform in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, although speakers still mark the accusative personal pronouns, as well as coordinated nouns and reciprocals.

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individualized referents in direct object position" (Stark 2005: 123). Italian and French, more restrictive in the occurrence of bare nouns, use the partitive article in order to indicate substance (thus uncountable mass and abstract nouns) and the indefinite article is used for contoured single objects (thus countable nouns), but they display no DOM. The origin of DOM can therefore be considered as a device for nominal classification due to the diachronic loss of the Latin nominal inflection.

<sup>57</sup> In Old Catalan (15<sup>th</sup> century) DOM occurred especially on personal pronouns, although it was not widespread. At the same time the presence of the partitive article is attested. In Modern Catalan *a* is used with personal pronouns, following the normative reform, although in the spoken language of some speakers *a* is more widespread (Vega Villanova p.c., Aissen 2003). The partitive article is not present.

The example (31) is from CICA, Text C-03, Sermons de Sant Vicent Ferrer, original pages 1410-15. Data translated into code by Jorge Vega Vilanova and Svenja Gottschick.

### 3.7. Prepositional accusative

This section briefly addresses the PP domain, in which the DP is embedded. The reason why I am dedicating a section to the prepositions of Southern Calabrian is the availability of the so-called prepositional accusative (PA). This element will be of great relevance in the analysis of the definiteness restriction, because its insertion is the necessary requirement for definite nouns (or, better, specific) to occur in existential sentences of SCal.

In order to introduce the properties of the prepositional accusative, have a look at the simple prepositions available in SCal reported in table 5.

**Table 5. Prepositions in Southern Calabrian**

Southern Calabrian	Italian	English	comments
<b>a</b>	a	at	
<b>a</b>	–	–	prepositional accusative
<b>i</b>	di, da	of	aphaeretic form
<b>n-</b>	in	in	aphaeretic clitic form
<b>(i)ntra</b>	in	in	
<b>cu</b>	con	with	
<b>pe</b>	per	for	
<b>tra/fra</b>	tra/fra	between/among/in...	

Table 5 shows that the prepositional system of SCal differs from the Italian one because of the additional presence of the accusative prepositional marker, which does not occur in Italian despite its homophony with the corresponding full preposition. The prepositional accusative is used to mark direct objects that have specific semantic properties and occur as complements of specific classes of verbs.

Concerning the morphology and phonology of the prepositional accusative, it can also combine with articles, yielding as an outcome the same forms illustrated right below.

Notice, in this regard, that SCal has contracted prepositions. As we saw, the definite articles of SCal are the aphaeresized forms of the full articles *lu/la/li*. When the articles are combined with the preposition *a*, for instance, they yield as outcome the following forms (32):

- (32)a.            a + ‘u = o                            *prep + masculine singular definite article*
- b.            a + ‘a = a                            *prep + feminine singular definite article*
- c.            a + ‘i = e                            *prep + plural definite article*

The fact that the outcome of the PA for the masculine singular and for the plural form differs from the respective simple articles will be very relevant in section 5.4 where I show that specific pivots in *ndavi*-sentences are marked by the PA, despite the fact that this seems evident when it precedes the feminine singular nouns. In fact, morphologically, only the contracted preposition in feminine singular is homophonous with the feminine singular definite article and with the simple preposition at the same time.

At a phonological level, though, all contracted prepositions are pronounced as long vowels and are therefore often written with a diacritic circumflex accent (*ô/â/ê*) in order to signalize the high and then falling pitch of their pronunciation (Falcone 1976, Ursino 2007). As there is no uniform orthography and in the linguistic literature the transcription of the phonetic properties of SCal adopts different conventions, I will omit the use of circumflexes. Articles are graphically differentiated from the contracted preposition consisting of the prepositional accusative plus the article by the presence of the inverted comma, indicating the aphaeresis of *l*, as section 3.2 illustrates. Of course, all elements of the object language are glossed.

The preposition *a* occurs also with the full prepositional function as in (33), or in order to mark indirect objects (34). When *a* in SCal is used as prepositional accusative marker, it is found before personal pronouns (35a), proper nouns (35b), or common animate/human nouns (35c).<sup>58</sup> A more in-depth analysis of the conditions for its occurrence will be taken up in section 5.4, as these initial considerations do not suffice to adequately explain its presence in SCal.

- (33)            Quandu canta ‘u merlu    simu a    fini du    ‘mbernu.  
                   when    sing.3SG the blackbird be.1PL at-the end    of-the    winter  
                   ‘When the blackbird sings, the winter has come to an end.’

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<sup>58</sup> Examples (87)-(89) are originally taken from Ursino (2007), translated into Italian and then presented to the informants of Cittanovese to be elicited in SC.

- (34) Si mali nci voi a l'atri, u toi è vicinu.  
 if evil CL.DAT want.2SG P the others, the your is near  
 'If you wish the others evil, yours is to come.'
- (35)a. Ncurparu a ida.  
 accuse.PST.3PL DOM CL.PRN.ACC  
 'They accused her.' (Italian: *l'hanno incolpata* or *hanno incolpato lei*)
- b. Si maritau a Maculata.  
 REFL marry.PST.3SG DOM Immacolata  
 'He married Immacolata.' (Italian: *ha sposato Immacolata*)
- c. Chiamai o ziu, ma non rispundiu.  
 call.PST.1SG DOM-the uncle, but NEG answer.PST.2SG  
 'I called uncle (John),<sup>59</sup> but he did not answer.' (Italian: *ho chiamato lo zio, ma non ha risposto*)

After presenting this general descriptive overview concerning the form assumed by the DP in Southern Calabrian, I am going to recall some considerations of the semantic content of nouns introduced by definite articles and expand them to include the semantics of DPs in SCal. This will be the topic of the next section.

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<sup>59</sup> No specification is necessary in SCal, whereas the definite article introduces the kinship noun.

### 3.8. Opacity effects concerning the semantics of definite articles

Articles can crosslinguistically encode different semantic features. It became evident from the discussion up to now that the core property of the filler of D is not easy to define. On the one hand, one of the decisive roles of the definite article has been defined as that of a subordinator that converts a predicate into an argument. On the other hand, it turned out that concerning the semantics of the definite article “no single interpretive property represents the fundamental nature of D(P)” (Bernstein 2008).

Assuming that a language like Italian needs to embed its noun phrases in a DP whenever they function as arguments (either with the realization of a lexical determiner or with overt movement of N-to-D as proposed in Longobardi’s approach), due to the fact that Italian NPs are [-arg, +pred], requiring thus a DP (under Chierchia’s approach), it still has to be determined how the definite article in D semantically contributes to the reading of the noun phrase. Traditionally, the noun phrase is definite when a definite article is present. I showed in the previous discussion that this view is not shared by all scholars (compare, for instance, Giusti’s account in 2.3) and that indeed, even if definiteness is surely one of the most intuitive semantic properties of the definite article, it is not the only one conveyed or not the most relevant one at all times. Other linguists associate other semantic properties with the realization of a lexical element in D, such as specificity, referentiality, identifiability and deixis.<sup>60</sup>

As has been shown, there can be a high degree of ambiguity in the interpretation of the noun even when a definite article is present. Some examples of these opacity effects are illustrated by Ihsane & Puskás (2001), who suggest the existence of a Spec(ificity)P in the left periphery of the noun phrase (see chapter 2). Sentences (36a)-(36g) all display the morphological definite article in different languages. Despite the fact that each of these languages have a clear-cut binary system with definite and indefinite articles, the semantic reading of the DP they introduce can vary from (non)specificity, to possession and inalienable possession to genericity and of course definiteness.<sup>61</sup>

- (36)a. Did you go to *the beach* when you visited Croatia? *nonspecific*
- b. I protected my eyes from *the sun*. *unique*

<sup>60</sup> In section 2.3.1, I reported a brief summary of each of these notions.

<sup>61</sup> Also example (i) below is drawn from Bernstein (2008: 1254), originally presented in Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002). Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002: 430) put forward a DP structure of the type in (i)a for arguments with definite interpretation, whereas generic nouns have an intermediate status and are located inside a  $\phi$ P as in (i)b.

(i)a.  $[_D [_\phi le [_{NP} vin]]]$  *definite*  
 b.  $[_\phi le [_{NP} vin]]$  *generic*

- c. *The lion* is a dangerous animal. *generic*
- d. I picked up *the car* from the mechanic. *possessive*
- e. Je me suis cassé *le bras*. (French) *inalienable possession*  
 I CL.REFL have broken the arm  
 ‘I broke my arm.’
- f. Salí con *la mama*. (Spanish) *possessive*  
 go.PST.1SG with the mother  
 ‘I went out with my mother.’
- g. Jean aime *le vin*. (French) *generic*  
 Jean loves the wine  
 ‘Jean likes (the) wine.’

(Bernstein 2008: 1253)

The crosslinguistic variation thus lies in whether definiteness or specificity features receive morphological expression.

These remarks also concern the semantic interpretation of DPs in ES. One of the claims of the present thesis is, in fact, that the morphological realization of definite articles is not a guarantee for definiteness to be the only semantic property brought to expression and that it may not be the decisive one for the occurrence of the definiteness restriction.

Compare the examples of DPs in existential constructions in (37) provided by Cruschina (2012: 16) and mine in (38a), (38b). The DP *videoproiettore* in (37) is introduced by a lexical definite article, as Italian requires it for singular count argument nouns. The crucial point is that this DP is semantically not definite and indeed grammatical in such constructions. Indeed, in the English glosses the DE applies and the noun phrases are introduced by the indefinite article.

- (37) In quale aula c'è il videoproiettore? (Italian)  
 In which classroom CL-is the video-projector  
 ‘In which classroom is there a video-projector?’ (Cruschina 2012: 16)
- (38)a. C'è il forno a microonde negli appartamenti?  
 CL-is the oven of microwaves in-the apartments  
 ‘Is there a microwave oven in the apartments?’

- b. C'è la doccia o la vasca da bagno nel bagno?  
 CL-is the shower or the bathtub in-the bathroom  
 'Is there a shower or a bathtub in the bathroom?'

Without going into depth by explaining the role of all constituents in this existential clause,<sup>62</sup> what is relevant here is to notice that the DP is only morphologically definite, but it is semantically perceived as nonspecific/non-referential. Surely, among other peculiarities of the constructions (37) and (38), this fact contributes to the acceptability of the DP in ES.

Notice that the same remarks can be made for definite clitics: Leonetti (2012) observes that they are always morphologically definite, but they are not always semantically definite. Although pronouns in general are considered to occupy the highest positions in the definiteness scale, they can have an indefinite reading, for instance when they refer to nonspecific referents (39) and (40).

- (39)a. Dischi di jazz, **li**/ne trovi alla FNAC. (Italian)  
 records of jazz, CL.OBJ/CL.PART find.2SG at-the FNAC  
 'Jazz records, you can find at FNAC.'

- b. Un libro, l'ho letto.  
 a book, CL.OBJ-have.1SG read.PTCP  
 'I have read one book indeed!'

- (40)a. Libros de textos, (**los**) pueden encontrar en el segundo piso. (Spanish)  
 textbooks CL.OBJ can.3PL find in the second floor  
 'Textbooks, you can find at the second floor.'

- b. ¿Selvas vírgenes? **Las** hay en Brasil.  
 forests vergin CL.OBJ has.EXT in Brazil  
 'Rain forests? You can find them in Brazil.'

The last example (40b) displays the grammatical occurrence of definite clitics even in existential constructions of Spanish, while we will see in chapter 4 that this language consistently shows the definiteness restriction. The reason for their occurrence may be specifically due to the fact

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<sup>62</sup> In other words, I will not consider here issues such as whether the locative coda is topic or focus and which constructional properties intervene in the computation, relevant for the interpretation of the noun phrase but which will be handled in chapter 5.



In SCal there is no lexical article available for the expression of the specificity value. Moreover, as in other languages seen above, a definite article can introduce a nonspecific argument (43).

- (43) jistivu o mari stamatina?  
go.PST.2PL to-the sea this morning  
'Did you go to the beach this morning?'

However, SCal does have a marker of specificity with direct object nouns, namely the prepositional accusative marker *a*. Although specificity is not the only property the marker is sensitive to and factors such as animacy and transitivity of the verb also influence its occurrence (see 5.4), the prepositional accusative is a morphological device inserted in SCal according to values other than definiteness.

Compared to the Germanic languages, we have seen that the determination system of Italian, as well as that of central modern Romance languages in general, is very restrictive in so far as it requires determination for almost all arguments. Peripheral Romance languages such as Spanish and Romanian, on the other hand, are more flexible concerning the determination on arguments (Stark 2005).

In general, it must be taken into account that once definiteness becomes grammaticalised in a language it can acquire other functions (Lyons 1999: 340). To this group of languages, illustrated in the examples above, belongs Southern Calabrian, where the definite article has expanded its original function and also expresses genericity and specificity.

It is indeed a probable tendency in diachronic change that the loss of the original function and the acquisition of many other functions leads to reanalysis and renders the element grammatically and semantically empty. This would even hint at the possibility for complete loss of the category of definiteness (Lyons 1999, Leiss 2000).

Summing up, the opacity of the semantic content of definite articles leads to the conjecture that definite articles have actually no single semantic/pragmatic feature of their own (or, at least, not anymore, probably because of a process of overgeneralization) and therefore, that the definiteness restriction must be due to something other than the presence of the semantic import of the strong quantifier.

I will extensively discuss the topic of the semantic properties of nouns in existential sentences in chapter 5. There, I will show that their semantics strongly depend on the syntactic position they occupy in the structure and that this is, in turn, determined by the special properties of pure existential sentences.





Therefore, in the next part I will discuss the recent research on the occurrence of the DE and support the claim that the restriction is not bound to the presence of a definite determiner per se. In my opinion, the exclusion of strong quantified expressions is more a consequence than a cause of the DE. This explanation clearly does not suffice and – as it always happens in linguistics issues – different components of the grammar are involved and interact with each other giving rise to a phenomenon that superficially manifests itself as a constraint on definite DPs. It is in fact a combination of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic factors that triggers the DE in ES.

Some technical terms common in discussions of existential sentences must be explained at this point, as they will recur throughout the text. A pivot is the nominal occurring in an existential construction, whereas with coda is meant the mostly locative XP to the left or right of the cluster consisting of the existential verb plus the nominal. The pivot is called in this way because it is the only element that suffices for existentiality, i.e. the existential verb or the location must not be necessarily realized. A proform is a clitic of locative origin which can occur in the existential sentences of some languages and is expression of locative features necessary to existentiality (Freeze 1992 among others).

Existential constructions differ crosslinguistically with respect to the auxiliary selected, the word order of their constituents and – due to the general properties of their determiner system – with respect to the morphology of the pivots. They also differ concerning the presence or absence of a locative preform, whereby when realized it always has a locative origin.

In the following introduction, therefore, I will briefly present some of the numerous accounts for the DE in ES given in the generative literature. Some of them focus more on syntactic properties, others on the semantics of the construction and their pivots. In particular, Milsark's semantic account of English, which attributes the occurrences of the DE to a semantic clash between the quantificational force of the determiner introducing the noun phrase and the quantification force of the existential construction itself and which will be the starting point for the present analysis, is presented in section 4.3. English has been in fact one of the most intensively studied languages concerning the DE. Nevertheless, a contrastive analysis with other languages has been necessary in order to individuate the factors that can influence variation. The comparison in different languages can give us hints to understand the universals at the basis of what are called existential constructions. In particular, on the basis of the most recent literature, I will support the claim that the definiteness restriction is also at work in languages such as Italian that have been considered exceptions to it. Indeed, the apparent lack of DE has to be ascribed to the superficial identity between different syntactic structures that fulfil different discourse functions.

Linguistic phenomena are interrelated and the study of the DE leads to a cluster of issues that will be addressed in each of the following subsections. One of the first questions coming up during the corpus analysis of SCal is the presence of two different existential constructions that respectively

select the ESSE and HABERE auxiliary. Furthermore, a clitic pronominal occurs with both of them but it is not the same: ESSE chooses *nci*, whereas HABERE selects *ndi*. Both clitics have a locative origin but behave differently in a synchronic perspective. Indeed, an in-depth comparison with the homophonous clitics present in SCal will show that, despite having the same form, their functions greatly differ and point at the locative contribution necessary to the construction in order to be existential.

Another peculiarity of SCal that requires an explanation is the availability of the Differential Object Marking with certain pivots in ES with *ndavi*. Although DOM is a widespread phenomenon, it usually does not appear with verbs of low transitivity such as the existential verb, neither are specific/definite nouns expected to appear in pure ES exactly because of the definiteness restriction. These observations make SCal a source of interesting data and their interpretation will help to cast some light on the central questions on the DE.

The last piece of evidence for the claim that DE is a result of different components of grammar interacting with each other is the investigation of the definiteness restriction in languages that do not have a definite/indefinite determiner system. Recall that the DE was at first defined as a generalized constraint on the occurrence of strong (i.e. definite) determined noun phrases in existential and presentational constructions. It is nevertheless clear that this constraint is at stake not only when a definite determiner is realized, but it also obtains concerning the semantic interpretation of the noun even if no article is available at all in the language considered.

Indeed, the question of whether the DE is present in languages without articles is a crucial one, as the restriction is considered to apply to the definiteness of the noun. In languages with a definite/indefinite determiner system this is achieved by excluding DPs introduced by elements high in the definiteness/referentiality scale (Aissen 2003). In languages without articles it is the semantic interpretation of the noun that is nonspecific/indefinite.

Therefore, detecting the DE will prove that this phenomenon is not dependent on the morphological item filling the D position. The presence of the DE in articleless languages strongly suggests that the reasons for its manifestation are related to the particular structure in which the noun phrase occurs. At the same time, the analogies between the syntactic analyses adopted for Dari and languages with articles, as the Romance ones, help us to better understand what apparent different realizations of existential structures share.

One of the central issues therefore concerns the interpretive properties of ES, in particular the definiteness of the noun phrase, and it represents the common thread departing from the remarks made in the first part of the thesis.

In fact, we have seen that definiteness is a semantic notion and concerns the interpretation of the nouns. More precisely, it has been shown that the morphological instantiation of articles and the semantic properties conveyed by the noun phrase are not in a one-to-one correspondence.

Consequently, as the definiteness effect has been indeed considered a diagnostic for definiteness, the question arises of which semantic status the DPs dis/allowed in ES have. The presence of the definite article does not categorically imply that the noun phrase be definite. At the same time, the notions of in/definiteness are not the only semantic properties that characterize nouns, as NPs can convey a bundle of interpretive effects, ranging from definiteness to specificity, reference, animacy, deixis and so further. Languages do not lexicalize each one of these semantic properties through specialized morphological elements and this is why it is difficult to tear them apart and individuate exactly which property is relevant to other, say syntactic or pragmatic, phenomena.

Languages without articles will be claimed to resort to other strategies, for instance word order, in order to account for the same interpretation of the pivots in ES. Due to the complexity of the triggering factors, the phenomenon named as definiteness effect is still a challenging issue and I will deal with it in the next chapters by looking for regularities and account for the differences drawing from new data in languages with articles (chapter 4 and 5) and without articles (chapter 6).

In the light of these considerations, it is important to ask if it is actually definiteness that is excluded from ES.

## 4.2. Syntactic and semantic explanatory accounts

Crosslinguistically the existential constructions show different superficial realizations and thus lead to hypothesize different analyses for them. In principle, the indispensable constituent in order to have an existential is the pivot nominal that denotes “the entity or the individual about which the existential proposition expresses existence or presence in a context” (Bentley & Cruschina to appear).

Additional elements such as the verb and a locative element, often a clitic in European languages, can be present. Indeed, the variation concerns the presence of an expletive subject, which is required for instance in English (*there*) or French (*il*) but not in Spanish, Catalan or Italian. The copula can be *be* in English, *essere* in Italian or *avoir* in French, *haber* in Spanish and *haver* in Catalan; it can also be *geben* (Engl. *give*) as in German or it can lack altogether as in Russian present tense sentences (otherwise it is *jest*) (Lyons 1999, Fischer 2013).

An important observation concerns the similarity of the ES to other constructions, particularly to locative sentences. Compare the existential in example (3) and a locative sentence in (4).

- |     |                               |                    |
|-----|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| (3) | There is a dog in the garden. | <i>existential</i> |
| (4) | The dog is in the garden.     | <i>locative</i>    |

It is beyond all doubts that the existential constructions share many properties with locative sentences and – as will be discussed later – with possessive constructions too. One of these properties is the presence of a locative element that can occur either as an expletive (*there* in English, although not intended as full locative form but as a pleonastic), or as a free or incorporated clitic (Italian *ci*, French *y*, Catalan *hi* or Spanish *y* in *hay* and SCal *ndi* in *ndavi*). In Spanish or Southern Calabrian, for instance, the selection of the auxiliary *have* clearly hints at a connection to the original possessive construction.

The studies on these three types of sentences – existentials, locatives and possessives – have led to three lines of thought: some of the linguists support the claim that all the three constructions derive from the same underlying structure through the application of transformation rules (cf. the “universal locative paradigm” in Freeze 1992 or the “inverted copular sentences”-approach of Moro 1997), whereas others argue in favour of the independence of the relevant linguistic constructions (La Fauci & Loporcaro 1997). Others regard the existential construction as having a common origin in the locative sentences, but to be synchronically an independent type of sentence (Cruschina 2012, Bentley & Cruschina to appear).

Due to the high degree of similarity between them, the comparison of ES with locative sentences and with constructions selecting the verb *have* will be one of the departing points in order to shed light on the properties characterizing ES and the DP they select.

In the following, I will briefly review some of the most well-known studies on definiteness effects crosslinguistically, which are relevant in order to set the background for the further analysis of SCal and Dari. They are presented according to the predominant approach adopted in the explanation of the DE. Some of them, in fact, prevalently rely on semantic and pragmatic observations to explain the definiteness effects (Milsark 1974; Higginbotham 1987; Lumsden 1988; Enç 1991; McNally 1997; Abbott 1993/2010) and others motivate the behaviour of DPs in ES more on syntactic grounds (Safir 1987; Belletti 1988; Freeze 1992; Moro 1997) as well as combining insights from the different components of grammar (Leonetti 2008a, McNally 2011, Bentley, Ciconte & Cruschina 2013, Fischer 2013 among others).

Though only a small selection of the many studies on definiteness effects in existential and presentational constructions in general are summarized here, the relevant insights deriving from the single studies will be of course acknowledged throughout the discussion, as well as providing further proposals to account for the shortcomings that any theoretical approach inevitably bears with it.

One of the most well-known syntactic accounts is provided by Safir (1987), who – by analyzing the DE in English *there*-sentences – individuates the reason for the restriction in the unbalanced  $\theta$ -chain resulting from the association of the postverbal noun phrase with the expletive subject *there*. Since they are to be considered as a constituent (they get a single  $\theta$ -role), but it is the expletive that c-commands the full noun phrase, this constitutes a violation of the Principle C because the NP is

compelled in this configuration to be interpreted as “referentially dependent on the (semantic empty) pleonastic” (Lyons 1999: 243). Additionally, Safir suggests that only indefinite expressions are acceptable because they are predicative rather than argumental and thus satisfy the “Predication Principle”, according to which “a potential referring expression is a predicate or else free” (ibid.).

Belletti (1988) observes that the DE occurs with all unaccusative verbs in Italian under particular conditions. She shows that definite DPs are acceptable only when the coda is dislocated or marginalized and the DP gets a narrow focus reading. The postverbal nominal constituent is taken to be located inside the VP, where it must receive partitive case and is realized as indefinite. Only when the DP is in a VP-external position, i.e. higher or adjoined to it, it is not subject to the restriction.

Support for an account of DE based on the syntactic position occupied by the DP comes from Diesing’s (1994) Mapping Hypothesis, whose analysis of indefinite noun phrases in general predicts that an existential (i.e. nonspecific/non-presuppositional) semantic interpretation of the noun phrase is due to the low syntactic position it occupies, being located within the nuclear scope, and is therefore interpreted with a weak reading.

Fischer (2009, 2013), building on Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (1998) and basing on a diachronic analysis of unaccusative constructions in some Romance and Germanic languages, argues that the DE is related to the availability of the [Spec, TP]-position and to the way the EPP is checked, namely as Move/Merge XP (i.e. through a (pro)nominal element) or Move/Merge X° (i.e. through V-raising due to verbal agreement morphology that includes a nominal element). In other words, from the pro-drop and the presence/absence of a [Spec, TP] position<sup>63</sup> derives a whole cluster of properties, among which the manifestation of the definiteness restriction in unaccusative constructions. Those languages such as Modern English or Modern French that do not have [Spec, TP] but check EPP in AgrSP by Move/Merge XP display the definiteness restrictions in unaccusative constructions. Modern Spanish and Modern Catalan, which also do not have [Spec, TP] but, contrary to English or French, check EPP by Move/Merge X° show no definiteness effects with unaccusatives. This means that in null-subject-languages the postverbal subject can be outside the VP, to the left of the finite verb (and therefore outside the existential closure) because it is the verb that checks the EPP.

Moreover, Fischer shows that the crosslinguistic behaviour of the DE in unaccusative constructions is homogeneous: pro-drop languages have no DE in unaccusatives, whereas non-pro-drop languages consistently display it. According to this approach, the definiteness restriction in unaccusatives is of syntactic nature because it is indeed a consequence of the availability of a certain syntactic position activated by the semantic interpretation constrained by the discourse. A pure

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<sup>63</sup> The availability of [Spec, TP] is signaled by properties such as object shift, subject inverted orders for transitive predicates and adverbs and PPs following the postverbal subject (see Fischer 2009).

syntactic DE, therefore, only applies in unaccusative constructions. The definiteness restriction that takes place in existential sentences, on the contrary, is the result of syntactic properties interacting with semantic and pragmatic factors that give rise to an apparent great degree of variability concerning its occurrence crosslinguistically. In particular, the syntactic devices available for the organization of the information (resulting in the language-specific word order) and properties such as animacy play a decisive role in the understanding of the DE in existentials. Therefore, the DE in unaccusative constructions and in ES shall not be analyzed as being triggered by the same factors.

One of the most relevant accounts focusing on the nature of the DP correlating with the semantics of the existential structure is that of Milsark (1974). Because he based his explanation of the DE on the semantic import given by the kind of determiner that introduces the NP interacting with the semantic of the existential construction itself, I will dedicate the next section to the claims presented in his approach. In fact, departing from the semantic interpretation of the NP in ES and the presence or absence of strong/weak determiners proposed in Milsark, I will show on the basis of new data that the definiteness restriction is more to be ascribed to the syntactic position occupied by the pivots than to the realization of determiners, which can lack altogether in some languages (e.g. Dari) or be ambiguous in respect to semantic definiteness (e.g. Italian, Southern Calabrian) and yet still give rise to determined interpretive restrictions.

Finally, another well-known semantic account is that of Abbott (1993, 1997, 2010). She observes that one of the pragmatic functions of an existential construction is to introduce a referent into the discourse that must be hearer-new. The notion of “hearer-newness” is intended in the sense of Prince 1981, according to which entities are hearer-new when the speaker assumes them to be completely unknown to the addressee. According to Prince, moreover, morphological definite DPs mainly correspond to hearer-old entities. As long as the construction satisfies this discourse requirement, it is to be considered an existential. Nevertheless, she claims, it is not straightforward to derive the DE from the introduction of a new referent or situation into the discourse. In fact, ES can have other functions such as “making the addressee aware of the existence (or absence) of entities, introducing them into the discourse, drawing the addressee’s attention to their presence (or absence), or even simply acknowledging the existence of certain entities” (Abbott 1997: 107). List reading contexts (see also next section), in which definite DPs are grammatical, exactly support the necessity of distinguishing different uses of existential constructions.

Anaphoric definites and proper names occur in what Abbot defines “contextualized existentials”: they have a reminding function. Non-contextualized existentials, on the contrary, mostly appear with a locational or predicative phrase following the indefinite NP, which indeed requires a specification of the location or of the relevant relation to the discourse (Abbott 1993: 44).



### 4.3. The weak/strong distinction of determiners in ES

Milsark's (1974) seminal work provides an extensive analysis of the existential sentences in English. In his study he addresses all constructions of English in which an unstressed, non-deictic and existential *there* appears together with the verb *be*. A striking property of such sentences is, in fact, that they display the so-called definiteness restriction: definite NPs are excluded. Compare the following examples in (5) from Milsark (1974: 18).

- (5)a. There will be a duck roasted on Arbor Day.
- b. \*There will be the/John's duck roasted on Arbor Day.
- c. There's a duck on my desk.
- d. \*There's the/John's duck on my desk.
- c. There are two books on the table

What is puzzling about this phenomenon, though, is that the definiteness restriction does not obligatorily show up in all existential sentences. As Milsark (1974: 18) points out in examples (6) the NPs are marked by the definite article, whereas counterparts with indefinite NPs would be ungrammatical, see (7).

- (6)a. There's the same plaster duck in the garden that there was ten years ago.
- b. There hasn't been the usual reaction.
- c. There wasn't the slightest protest.

- (7)a. \*There's a same plaster duck in the garden that there was ten years ago.
- b. \*There hasn't been a usual reaction.
- c. \*There wasn't a slightest protest.

Moreover, there are examples attested in which the NP in the ES designates a unique entity but is still marked by an indefinite article, as in (8):

- (8)a. There is a Santa Claus.
- b. There'll always be an England.
- c. There is a best theory.

The first observation concerns the nature of the non-deictic *there*, which Milsark considers as a marker of existential quantification, thus functioning as the existential quantifier in the predicate logic (Heim & Kratzer 1998, Chierchia 2007). Thus, existential sentences express existence in a particular





What the definite article and demonstratives as well as possessive constructions and universally quantified expressions share is to function as a quantificational operator and this property clashes with the cardinality requirements that existential sentences imply.

According to Milsark, there are three types of determiners and two possible interpretations for the DPs they introduce, namely either quantificational or cardinal. This two-way distinction, according to the interpretation of generalized quantifiers, corresponds to the classification in strong and weak in the following literature (Barwise & Cooper 1980). Determiners are considered to be unambiguously quantificational, unambiguously cardinal or prone to accept one or the other interpretation.

The explanation of the definiteness restriction proposed by Milsark in terms of a ban on quantificational determiners in existential sentences that only require an expression of cardinality seems to offer a valuable approach to shed light on the phenomenon.

However, some of the exceptions in which the NP is introduced by a definite article, as in the sentences in (6) above, are not exactly clear. Milsark refers to cases where the definite NP is allowed in ES because it introduces an item of a list of elements – thus, the NP would represent a member of a set predicated by the exist-C reading yielded by *there be*. This so called “list reading” is exemplified in (19).

(19) Is there anything worth seeing around here? Well, there’s the Necco factory.

Sentence (19) conveys a list reading in the sense that among the set of things that are worth seeing, the Necco factory represents one of them. This reading seems obtainable if the necessary context is provided. A salient context is in fact necessary for this kind of sentence (see also Abbott 1997). Compare also (20), for which a suitable context is provided. Without any background information, it would be difficult to perceive a list reading but the sentence “there’s the same plaster duck in the garden that there was ten years ago” would nevertheless remain acceptable. In fact, I see no difficulty in imagining this sentence uttered out of the blue, for instance when two friends go in the garden and one notices the duck and makes a remark on it.

(20) Well, what is all that in the garden?  
There’s the same plaster duck in the garden that there was ten years ago.

Moreover, we shall have a look at sentences like (6b), reported in (21a) for convenience, or at the following examples (21b)-(21c) and (22), which display a further peculiarity that must be taken into consideration.

- (21)a. There hasn't been the usual reaction.  
 b. There hasn't been any reaction.  
 c. \*There hasn't been the reaction.
- (22)a. There wasn't a sound.  
 b. \*There wasn't the sound.  
 c. \*There wasn't a slightest sound.  
 d. There wasn't the slightest sound.

In a way, the specific reading of the NP seems to enable its insertion in the ES. This semantic phenomenon calls for more attention. Belletti (1988) regards the list-reading as the result of a definite NP marked with partitive Case, a fact that would explain why the NP is interpreted as if it were the only mentioned item of a list. Furthermore, a particular case of the list-reading is the uniqueness interpretation, where the NP is intended as the unique member of list. Sentence (22d) could be considered an example thereof.

Leonetti (2008a), who bases his analysis of ES on semantic, syntactic as well as properties deriving from the information structure, comments on the exceptions to DE in English in the list-reading-sentences. Building on Lumsden (1990) and Abbott (1993) among others, Leonetti remarks that there is a difference between ES sentences like (23) with an indefinite DP and (24) with a definite DP and the so-called list reading (Leonetti 2008a: 141)

- (23) There is a unicorn in the garden.  
 (24) There is the unicorn in the garden.

The decisive factor in allowing sentence (24) is that the locative coda *in the garden* is syntactically a modifier of the noun and not a real locative coda, which would otherwise have the status of adjunct to VP.

Going back to example (19), if this analysis is on the right track, the locative constituent is implicit in the answer in (19) as if the complete sentence were contextualized in *there is the Necco factory around here*. The relevance of the locative PP constituent in ES becomes pivotal in explaining where the list reading exactly comes from. Leonetti's analysis is finer grained which I will discuss it in detail in section 4.5.

Additionally, the question about the definite/indefinite nature of the NPs occurring in existential sentences is complicated by the interaction of the NP with the material intervening to the right of it,

i.e. any other constituent that can appear there.<sup>64</sup> In fact, there are some AP predications which are also subject to a strong restriction (25), whereas other adjectives are acceptable in the scope of the predication (26). Milsark defines these kinds of occurrences as examples of the predicate restriction.

- (25)a. \*There is a man tall.  
b. \*There are many people intelligent.

- (26)a. There is a man drunk.  
b. There were many people sick.

Now, Milsark points out that the adjectives occurring in the predicate of ES can actually be divided in two groups according to their semantics. He claims that adjectives such as *hungry*, *sick*, *clothed* and so on describe temporary states, whereas those such as *tall*, *intelligent*, *crazy* refer to permanent states (and in Carlson's 1978 terms we can call these two classes stage-level and individual-level adjectives respectively). How to account for the predicate restriction within the theory of quantification put forward for the NPs in the ES seen above? Example (25a) shows the incompatibility of individual-level adjectives, i.e. expressing a property, to be predicates of unquantified NPs; the same holds for (25b) because *many* is to be read as a cardinal determiner (recall that *many* belonged to the group of ambiguous determiners, see above). On the contrary, the NPs in (26) are acceptable because stage-level adjectives are compatible with cardinal expressions and only these are allowed in ES. It follows, therefore, that *many* in (26b) has a cardinality reading and not a quantificational one.

To sum up, permanent-state adjective can be predicates only of quantificational expressions, and temporary-state adjectives of cardinal expressions. As only these last are accepted in ES, the predicate restriction comes to coincide with the more general quantificational restriction assumed by Milsark for existential sentences.

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<sup>64</sup> Milsark defines all material occurring to the right of the verb *be* in existential sentences as coda, i.e. the coda comprises in his terms the NP and further adjectival/prepositional/verb phrases. Leonetti (2008a) uses the designation coda for the material intervening to the right of the NP and I will also adopt Leonetti's classification.

Table 6, drawn from Ladusaw (1994: 220) building on Milsark (1974), summarizes the conclusions drawn from the comparison of pivots in English sentences.

**Table 6. Quantificational/cardinal determiners**

weak = unambiguously cardinal	Cardinal or quantificational	strong = unambiguously quantificational
<i>a dog, sm men, this guy</i> ( <i>nondemonstrative</i> )	<i>three, etc.</i> <i>several, many, bare plurals</i>	<i>the, this/that, neither, both</i> <i>every, each, all, most</i>

All these remarks on existential constructions within the same language have contributed to generate much interest on the issue of how many syntactic or semantic-pragmatic factors contribute to the definiteness restriction.

In particular, they put the stress on the category of determiners, which is not homogeneous and comprises elements that differ from each other with regard to their semantic properties and syntactic behaviour. Linguists have thus proposed different categorizations of determiners to account for such differences in the course of the years, providing crosslinguistic evidence for their remarks. From time to time, the taxonomies proposed overlap themselves in some points.

Milsark (1974) suggests a categorization of determiners in quantificational and cardinal, which is based on the interpretations of the NPs introduced by the two classes of elements and finds syntactic evidence in the definiteness restriction. He argues that only weak determiners are allowed to introduce argument NPs in the existential *there is/there are*-constructions of English, whereas strong determiners are excluded from them. This phenomenon has been therefore called “definiteness effect” because such constraint, which is at work in many languages in existential and other constructions (for example with unaccusative or presentational verbs), should represent a diagnostic for definiteness: only determiners which are definite (i.e. strong in Milsark’s taxonomy) are excluded and, consequently, they must bear the feature [+definite], as in (27):

- (27)a. There is/are a/some/a few/many/three fly/flies in my soup.
- b. \*There is/are the/every/all/most fly/flies in my soup. (Diesing 1994: 59)

The determiners in (27b) are all ungrammatical in the existential sentence and are thus considered strong. On the contrary, the determiners like *a*, *some*, *a few*, *many* and *three* (as well as numerals in general) are perfectly acceptable because they are weak. We saw that Milsark explains the definiteness effect with a clash between those strong NPs, which have their own quantificational force, and the existential quantification of the *there is/there are*-constructions.

Enç (1991: 12) argues in this respect that the property of quantification cannot apply from a semantic point of view to the whole class of strong NPs, as names and pronouns do not pattern with quantifiers. In semantic terms, the distinction rests in her view upon the notion of presupposition. What Milsark calls strong determiners presuppose the existence of the entity they refer to, whereas weak determiners “merely assert the existence of whatever entities they are applied to” (Diesing 1994: 59). Some determiners can convey different grades of “semantic strength” and can thus be ambiguous. Diesing (1994: 59), building on Milsark, gives an example of how *some* can bear different interpretations (28):

- (28)a.            There are some ghosts in my house.  
b.                SOME ghosts are in the pantry; the others are in the attic.

(28a) is an example of ES and *some* has a cardinal (i.e. non-presuppositional) reading that asserts the existence of ghosts in the house. The truth-value of the sentence relies on the existence of ghosts; if ghosts do not exist the sentence is false. Notice that here *some* is pronounced unstressed. In (28b) the existence of ghosts is not an indispensable condition for the sentence to be true, as their non-existence would only render the interpretation undefined. The presupposition of existence corresponds to a partitive interpretation (for instance as if “three of the ghosts” were meant, see Diesing 1994: 60).

Strong determiners like *every* or *most*, on the contrary, only permit a presuppositional reading without any ambiguity. In both sentences in (29) the presupposition that the ghosts exist is the necessary condition for the sentence to be true.

- (29)a.            Every ghost roasted marshmallows.  
b.                Most ghosts sleep late.

Diesing (1994) points therefore to a contrast between cardinal and presuppositional indefinites. This division does not exactly correspond to the partition in quantificational (strong) and cardinal (weak) determiners advanced by Milsark (1974), as strong NPs in the sense of Milsark are always taken to be presuppositional in Diesing’s analysis, whereas weak NPs can be of the cardinal or of the presuppositional kind. Diesing explains that strong determiners (e.g., *the*, *every*, *each*, *most* and *all*) all have quantificational force and function thus as operators binding the variable(s) they introduce. Therefore, they are subjected to the rule of QR and raise to the IP level, which is the upper part of the

syntactic structure called restrictive clause according to the tree-splitting hypothesis. Because of this syntactic property, strong determiners can only receive a presuppositional reading. Weak determiners (e.g., *some*, *many*, *several*, *few* and numerals), on the contrary, can have either a cardinal or a presuppositional reading. If they are presuppositional in meaning, their syntactic behaviour is the same as strong determiners, that is, they undergo QR. Otherwise, if they have a cardinal reading they cannot raise to the restrictive clause, but are mapped in the lower part of the syntactic structure, the nuclear scope. There, in the VP, they are bound by existential closure and since they have no quantificational force, they function as cardinality predicates (Diesing 1994: 94). The presuppositional or cardinal reading of a NP is associated with a syntactic rule of QR and is thus influenced by it.

Concerning indefinite generics (for example, bare plurals) Diesing suggests that they are subject to QR, i.e., they undergo movement to the restrictive clause, but they do not have any quantificational force. Now, only presuppositional NPs with quantificational force are assumed to undergo QR. To account for this possible contradiction, as generics seem not to convey presupposition, Diesing proposes a semantic refinement. According to Kratzer (1981) in generic sentences there is an implicit modal operator prefixed to it, which acts as a restrictor of the generic NP and expresses presupposition of the NP for the statement to be true, without implying existence, compare (30).<sup>65</sup>

(30)           All trespassers on this land will be prosecuted.

The quantifier *all* in (30) is a kind of restrictor taken by the modal operator prefixed to the whole sentence and it yields presupposition. Only if there are trespassers presupposed it is true for them to be prosecuted on this land, but they do not necessarily need to exist at a given time, “since the presupposition is interpreted as a restriction for the modal operator” (Diesing 1994: 96). This is also true according to Kratzer (1981) and Diesing (1994) for generic bare plurals.

Barwise & Cooper (1987) characterize the difference between strong and weak determiners on semantic grounds. They claim that there are positive strong determiners, recognizable when a tautology test applies, i.e. *Det N is an N* (e.g. *every book is a book*), whereas negative strong determiners yields a contradiction (e.g. *neither book is a book*). The definiteness effect arises in their view from the fact that strong determiners would yield either a tautology or a contradiction when embedded in existential sentences.

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<sup>65</sup> The example is cited following Diesing (1994: 96), who explains Kratzer’s (1981) semantic analysis based on examples by Strawson (1952).

All the accounts on the partition of determiners presented in this section make clear that there is a distinction among the semantic interpretation of the noun phrases they introduce and that some of them prevalently occur in ES, whereas others show an ambiguous behaviour concerning the insertion therein. I will retain from this brief discussion that the different determiners are expression of a determined semantic import, but I will support that this is due to the peculiarity of the existential structure in which they occur. It is because of the ES in which they occur that they convey either one or the other meaning. This naturally finds expression in a group of determiners and not in other in languages that have the definite/indefinite distinction.

In order to go in depth concerning this claim, we first need to examine what renders existential constructions so particular and this will be exactly the topic of the next section.

#### 4.4. Definiteness Effects in Romance languages: French, Spanish and Catalan

This chapter is now devoted to the study of the existential structures in Romance languages, always maintaining a crosslinguistic comparative perspective first of all with English, because of its central role occupied in the study of the DE, and further with languages without articles, in order to achieve important insights on the status of the nominals occurring in ES.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, in fact, definiteness effects are detectable also in languages without articles, pointing at properties that must be conveyed by the noun phrase itself possibly because computed in determined syntactic positions within the ES, and not due to the occurrence of a determiner.

The study of existential constructions in Romance, moreover, will lead us to address crucial issues in order to offer a description of the definiteness effects phenomena, namely of:

- the syntactic structure underlying pure ES and the individuation of different types of existentials
- the selection of different auxiliaries – often the outcome of ESSE or HABERE – sometimes available within the same language
- the origin and synchronic role of the clitic proforms present in the ES of many languages (e.g. *ci* in Italian, *nci* and *ndi* in Southern Calabrian)
- the occurrence of morphological markers (for instance DOM in SCal)
- the agreement patterns between the pivot and the copula
- the semantic and discourse interface

It will be shown that the selection of a DP as the pivot of the existential construction is due to a combination of semantic, syntactic and discourse-pragmatic requirements of a language and that even apparently very different languages share some core properties that allow the nonspecific interpretation of the pivot DPs in pure existential constructions.

It is widely acknowledged in much of the literature about ES that sentences of this kind should actually be divided into different categories. In other words, not all existential sentences are considered to have the same underlying structure and therefore to be proper ES, while it is more precise to say that there are different kinds of them. Milsark (1974: 154-155) distinguishes among ontological (31), locative (32) and periphrastic (33) existential sentences, all of them sharing the quantification restriction (see 4.3). He also points at the occurrence of such constraint also in *there*-constructions with a verb other than *be*, such as unaccusative (34) or unergative constructions (35).

- (31) There are no ghosts. [S there - AUX - be - NP]
- (32) There is a fly in the mustard. [S there - AUX - be - NP - LOC]
- (33) There were many people sick. [S there - AUX - be - NP - [PRED AP]]
- (34) There arose many trivial objections during the meeting.  
[S there - AUX - V - NP - X]
- (35) There walked into the room a fierce looking man.  
[S there - AUX - V - X - NP]

Many scholars share the view that ES are types of sentences independent from locatives or other constructions, i.e. they are not a counterpart to locative predications achieved through transformational rules. The following sections will provide empirical evidence from Romance languages for this claim.

In particular, I depart from Leonetti's (2008a) account of Romance languages such as French to Spanish, Catalan and Italian, and build on further literature on ES in Italian and Italo-Romance varieties (Moro 1997, Remberger 2009, Cruschina 2012, Bentley, Ciconte & Cruschina 2013, Cruschina to appear only to cite a few) in order to support the claim of a different typology of existential sentences and to regard as pure ES only those instances of *there be*-constructions in which the DE manifests itself.

Existential sentences of French have the form represented in (36). They are construed with an expletive *il*, the clitic *y* and the verb *avoir* (Engl. *have*). The DP is introduced by an indefinite article, whereas definite DPs yield ungrammaticality.

- (36) il y a + DP + (XP)

The definiteness constraint in French is very productive. However, not all ES display it and some data points at a categorization of the exceptions to DE following the hypothesis that we are faced with different underlying constructions, only some of them being real existentials. Those constructions where definite DPs are allowed and the coda is always obligatory as in (37) are considered by Leonetti (2008a) as eventive existentials: they introduce a new event in the discourse and the syntactic structure underlying these sentences is that of a small clause with a predicate that must be stage-level.

- (37)a. Il y a le téléphone qui sonne.  
CL CL has the telephone that rings
- b. Il y a le chat qui meurt de froid dehors.  
CL CL has the cat that dies of cold outside

- c. \*Il y a le téléphone.  
\*Il y a le chat.

Eventually, according to Leonetti (2008) and Beyssade & Dobrovie-Sorin (2004) there is a third type of existential, namely the so-called enumerative existential, which corresponds to the list reading existential of Milsark (1974): there, no DE obtains (39). The coda is not new information, i.e. it is not in focus and it is mostly implicit.

- (39) Je crois qu'on a appelé tout le monde. Non, il y a encore Marie et Jean.

This account is compatible with what Leonetti individuates as “coda constraint”, that is the necessity for the locative XP constituent to be dislocated or topicalized or implicit (Leonetti 2008a: 144). The crucial role played by the coda will also be one of diagnostic for pure existential construction.

Spanish is also a language in which the DE consistently applies in ES, which are built using *hay*, a form originally deriving from the verb *haber* (Engl. *have*) and the clitic of locative origin *y* from the Latin adverb *ibi* synchronically bleached and incorporated in the third person singular of the verb (Fischer 2013). There is little exception to DE and when it occurs, it concerns certain kinds of definites, namely heavy DPs (40)-(41), which can be traced back to the list-reading and the uniqueness condition mentioned in Belletti (1988).

- (40) No hay el menor indicio de culpabilidad  
not has-y the slightest sign of guilt  
'There wasn't the slightest sign of guilt.'
- (41) Había el problema de los recursos hidrológicos.  
had the problem of the resources hydrological  
'There was the problem of the hydrological resources.'

(Leonetti 2008a: 144-145)

Notice, moreover, that in Spanish there are two distinct verbs that take over the proper existential function and the so-called eventive and enumerative reading, namely *haber* and *estar* respectively. In fact, Spanish displays the verb *estar* whenever the definite DPs are allowed; compare in (43) the examples to their English counterparts. Hence, an alternative with *estar* will be preferred when the subject is definite, whereas *haber* strictly limits the insertion of definites.

- (42)a. \*There is John.  
 b. (Aquí) está Juan.

- (43)a. There is John at the telephone.  
 b. Está Juan al teléfono.

Finally, another interesting case concerning the DE is that of Catalan. In fact, Catalan does not seem to display the DE at first (44a), contrary to the strong appearance of this constraint in English and Spanish.

- (44)a. Al pati hi ha el noi i la noia. (Catalan)  
 in the courtyard CL has the boy and the girl  
 b. \*There are the boy and the girl in the courtyard. (English)  
 c. \*En el patio hay el chico y la chica. (Spanish)  
 (Leonetti 2008a: 137)

However, what seems to be categorically ruled out from *haver-hi* constructions are pronouns. Sentences like (45) are ungrammatical, but replacing the pronoun with a DP renders them acceptable again (46).

- (45) \*Hi ha ell al pati.  
 CL has he in the courtyard

- (46) Hi ha un noi al pati.  
 CL has a boy in the courtyard

Leonetti (2008a: 137) briefly points at the fact that pronouns are the most definite elements and thus most subject to be excluded from ES (but recall what he says about the exceptions on exclusively morphologically definite object pronouns in ES in 3.8). Therefore, definiteness is claimed for now to be the reason for the non-acceptability of pronouns.

Significantly, also Catalan has another possibility to express sentences apparently very similar to existential, which consists in selecting the verb *essere* (Engl. *be*) together with the clitic of locative origin *hi*. The use of *esser-hi* is restricted to the locative predication and is not available to build existential sentences, whose proper lexical choice is *haver-hi*.

Another property of the *haver-hi* constructions is, according to Leonetti, the incompatibility with a locative coda. He compares data of Catalan to Italian illustrated by examples (47) and (48):

- (47)a. Hi havia el degà, a la reunió. (Catalan)  
 b. ??Hi havia el degà a la reunió.  
 ‘There was the dean (,) at the meeting.’
- (48)a. C’è la statua di Michelangelo, in Piazza della Signoria. (Italian)  
 b. ??C’è la statua di Michelangelo in Piazza della Signoria.  
 ‘There is the statue by Michelangelo (,) in Piazza della Signoria.’

Both in Catalan and Italian, which are apparently free from DE in ES, the presence of the coda inside the VP causes the sentence to be considered more ungrammatical than grammatical, whereas if the locative constituent is dislocated, the sentences become acceptable. The difference between the two constructions is perceptible in the different intonation patterns: uttering (47b) or (48b) with a neutral intonation implies ungrammaticality, an intuition widely shared at least by the native speakers of Italian. Instead, sentences (47a) and (48a) are acceptable with the accent on the pivot DP and the coda receiving a falling intonation. Therefore, the intonation contour is worth notice and more importantly, the difference of intonation between the two examples is now thought to occur systematically (Leonetti 2008a: 7), hinting at two different syntactic structures underlying the two sentences. This analysis is surely tenable for Italian and sentences like (48a) will be argued in 4.5 to be instances of inverted locative constructions, this being the reason why the coda must be dislocated. The importance of Leonetti’s analysis relies in taking into account the decisive role of the locative XP, which is a big clue for the identification of the pure existential construction. He formulates the so-called Coda Constraint, which predicts “the locative coda inside the VP blocks the insertion of definite DPs [and] these are excluded unless the locative coda is itself (right /left) dislocated (or removed)” (Leonetti 2008a: 141).

Fischer (2009, 2013) provides a further explanation for the apparent lack of DE in existentials of Catalan. She examined the definiteness restrictions in ES and unaccusative constructions of Modern Catalan, comparing them to a corpus from Old Catalan. Fischer agrees on the fact that without a coda the unaccusative sentences of Catalan do not pose any restriction on the definiteness of the nominal constituent, but she notices that sentences in Modern Catalan built following Leonetti’s data as in (47) were judged grammatical by the native speakers (all from Barcelona) even without the prosodic break signalling the dislocation of the coda.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Italian native speakers, on the contrary, had no doubts on the ungrammaticality of sentences with focused coda presented in this section.

Crucially, Fischer argues that existential and unaccusative constructions of Modern Catalan do not present the definiteness restrictions. A sentence like *Hi ha la noia al pati* does not necessitate the dislocation of the locative coda and native speakers do not perceive its ungrammaticality. This fact points to a difference between Catalan and Italian, the first language being less restrictive concerning the acceptance of definite DP without dislocated coda in ES. From the examination of Old Catalan, it resulted that the word order of this language has undergone change during the centuries from all possible word orders including VSO to VOS in Modern Catalan.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, no definite DP could be found in ES of Old Catalan, which consequently displays DE on all DPs.

Fischer concludes that the lack of DE in ES of Modern Catalan is to be sought into the particular properties of this language has nowadays. Therefore, she puts forward the idea that the lack of DE is due to the fact that definite pivots in ES do not immediately follow the verb, but they are located outside the VP, as the canonical word order VOS of Modern Catalan indicates. For this reason, the definite DP is able to escape the weak existential interpretation (Fischer 2013).

Decisively, the accounts presented consider different components of grammar in order to individuate the ES, from the semantic and discourse-pragmatic to the syntactic one, providing a promising approach to the study of ES. Let us examine in more detail the case of Italian in the next section.

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<sup>67</sup> Modern Catalan also allows SVO, but never VSO. Compare Fischer (2013) and Vallduví (2002).

#### 4.5. Definiteness Effects in Italian

Italian seems at first to represent a counterexample to the widespread definiteness restriction in many European languages, such as English or French and Spanish. In fact, if we have a look at existential constructions in Italian, no apparent constraint on the definiteness requirement of NPs seems to be at work. Examples in (49) are well-formed and as Leonetti (2008a) remarks, definite DPs as well as proper names can appear in postverbal position.<sup>68</sup> Existential sentences in Italian are made up of the verb *esserci* (Engl. *there be*), whose composition will particularly be the object of deep analysis.

- (49) C'è un cane / il cane / Gianni. (Italian)  
CL-is a dog/ the dog/ John  
'There is a dog/ the dog/ John.'  
(Leonetti 2008a: 135)

The important difference to languages such as English, namely the fact of being a pro-drop language and allowing post-verbal subjects, led Moro (1997) to assume that the reason for DE is to be found exclusively in the syntactic structure and does not depend on the semantics of the noun.

ES are consequently analysed as inverted copular constructions with a locative predication (Moro 1997: 133).<sup>69</sup> Although enlightening on many points, Leonetti (2008a) remarks that this account does not consider the fact that even in English many ES allow for definite DPs for instance, when enough context information provides the so-called list reading. If this is true, the question arises as to whether the definiteness constraint is yielded under different conditions in ES or whether we are faced with different kinds of ES, some of which cannot actually be considered as proper existential sentences and thus no DE is expected there. Put it in other words, the decisive step is to ascertain whether the construction is a real existential or rather an eventive or enumerative constructions, where there are no conditions for the definiteness restriction to apply.

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<sup>68</sup> Indeed, this is also the only position that such DPs can occupy, otherwise they could only get the reading as focused elements.

<sup>69</sup> Moro takes as a starting point of his analysis a typical ES of English involving a proper noun, such as *\*There is John* and compares it to the Italian counterpart *C'è Gianni*, which is on the contrary perfectly acceptable. Since Italian is a Null-Subject language and it allows postverbal subjects – which are thus not anymore located in the VP-internal position, the one generally associated with DE – the definiteness restriction does not appear.

In order to answer this question we first need to examine more in detail the ES and other constructions of Italian in which the definiteness restriction is assumed to be at stake and compare them to other languages.

According to Moro's analysis (1997), where ES in Italian are inverted locative sentences, definite DPs are allowed in such constructions because the subject is not in the pivotal position of the ES (i.e. VP-internal) and being post-verbal "escapes" in this way the constraint.

Leonetti (2008a: 136) makes a couple of considerations that hint at rejecting the assumption for all ES in Italian to be actual locative predications. He notices in fact that:

- Italian ES superficially have the same structure as existentials in other languages (e.g. in English *there be*) and they have a presentational reading.
- If we look at the counterparts of Italian ES in two other Romance languages, namely Catalan and Spanish, we are faced with a corresponding existential pattern, and not with a locative predication, compare the following data (50)-(51).

(50)a.	C'è Gianni	<i>Italian ES</i>
b.	Hi ha en Joan.	<i>Catalan ES</i>
c.	En Joan hi es LOC	<i>Catalan locative predication</i>

(51)a.	* Hay Juan.	<i>Spanish ES</i>
b.	Juan está LOC	<i>Spanish locative predication</i>

- As is typical of ES in general, the DP is in focus, i.e. it represents new information.
- The verb to which Italian resorts for locative predications is *essere* (52b), and not *esserci* (52a).

(52)a.	C'è Gianni	<i>Italian ES</i>
b.	Gianni è in giardino 'John is in the garden.'	<i>Italian locative predication</i>

However, Leonetti also remarks that the analysis as locative structure of sentences such as *C'è Gianni* has not to be entirely discarded. In fact, the confusion has its origin in a particular property of such constructions in Italian, namely the ambiguous reading of the *esserci*-sentences. To explain this point, Leonetti provides the following example: sentence (53) can have two different readings in Italian, as the two English counterparts in the glosses show.

(53)	Non c'erano molte ragazze
	Not CL-were many girls

- 1<sup>st</sup> reading:     There weren't many girls.  
 2<sup>nd</sup> reading:     Many girls weren't there.

If sentence (53) gets the first reading we are faced with a real existential, where the indefinite noun *molte ragazze* has narrow scope over the negation. This is, in fact, the only reading available in English, as Milsark (1974) points out. If we consider (53) as yielding the second reading it becomes evident that the indefinite noun has a wide scope and is not an existential, but a locative sentence. Thus, this piece of evidence shows that Italian behaves differently from English, where ES are clearly separated from locative predications. In this sense, *c'è Gianni* is considered as a locative sentence and using the definition given by Zamparelli (2000) it can be regarded as an instance of “pseudo-existential locative construction”.

Zamparelli's analysis relies on the behaviour of the *esserci*-constructions of Italian, which appear not to be subject to the DE. He claims that they correspond to two different structures: either locative predications or ES. The locative predication does not yield any definiteness restriction on the noun and is better labeled “pseudo-existential locative” predication.

If this explanatory approach is on the right track, we need to admit the possibility for sentences such as *C'è Gianni* as not being proper existentials, in which case no DE appears. For other languages, though, it has been put forward that exceptions to DE could be due to the behaviour of the definite noun, which in cases would be “not prototypical” (Leonetti 2008a: 137). DPs of this kind have been defined as “weak definite”, “new mention definite” or “kind reading” and it should be clear at this point following the first part of the thesis that what D exactly entails is not uniquely definiteness, supporting Leonetti's claims.

On the other hand, if we admit the hypothesis of pseudo-existential constructions in Italian, it still needs to be ascertained if there are pure existential sentences at all, in which the DE consistently applies, and what they have in common with other constructions, such as the ones with unaccusative verbs (Belletti 1988), where the constraint is at work too.

Italian displays the property of allowing postverbal subjects. Now, it has been long observed that definite postverbal subjects in unaccusative and passive sentences are often ruled out (Belletti 1988, Belletti & Bianchi to appear). Compare the examples (54) to (56).

- (54)a.           È entrato un ladro dalla           finestra.  
                   is entered a thief through+the window  
                   ‘A thief has entered through the window.’
- b.               ?È entrato il ladro dalla           finestra.  
                   is entered the thief through the window

- (55)a. È affondata una nave alle cinque.  
 is sunk a ship at five  
 ‘A ship has sunk at five.’
- b. ?È affondata la nave alle cinque.  
 is sunk the ship at five
- (56)a. È stato messo un libro sul tavolo.  
 is been put a book on the table  
 ‘There was put a book on the table.’
- b. ?È stato messo il libro sul tavolo.  
 is been put the book on the table
- c. Il libro è stato messo sul tavolo  
 ‘The book has been put on the table’

(Leonetti 2008a: 146 drawn from Belletti 1988)

The b sentences in all examples above – the first two with unaccusatives and the third with a passive form – are judged quite unnatural by Italian native speakers. The question to ask is obviously under which conditions the insertion of a definite or indefinite DP subject is allowed in such sentences. It becomes suddenly evident that the coda must be a factor that influences the choice of the determiner, because as soon as the XP constituent is erased no restriction applies; see (57a), (57b).

- (57)a. È entrato il ladro.  
 b. È affondata la nave.

Hence, the strong preference for a definite DP with unaccusative and passive constructions with postverbal subjects in Italian disappears provided that the XP constituent is dislocated and distressed or, ultimately, not realized at all as in (57). In other words, this is a syntactic approach for explaining why a definite DP is not permitted in presentational structures. In the analysis put forward by Leonetti for existential constructions (2008a), this kind of evidence from unaccusative and passive constructions provides support for the Coda Constraint.

I will assume that the syntactic structure plays a decisive role in determining which kind of DP is available to insertion and that word order can serve as a hint to understand what happens on the underlying level, especially within comparative analysis. This is nevertheless only a piece of the

puzzle, as it still has to be explained to what extent the semantic value of the DP has to bear a particular value in a determined syntactic position.

- (58)a. È entrato il ladro, dalla finestra./ Dalla finestra, è entrato il ladro.  
b. È affondata la nave, alle cinque./ Alle cinque, è affondata la nave.  
c. È stato messo il libro, sul tavolo./ Sul tavolo, è stato messo il libro.

Belletti (1988) provides a syntactic explanation that involves the notion of Case, which is the trigger for a semantic incompatibility of the DP in unaccusative constructions. In fact, according to her analysis, unaccusative verbs can assign partitive Case to their internal argument, i.e. the NP in the object position, and for this reason the DP cannot be definite, otherwise this would give rise to a clash between the semantic value of the partitive Case that is structurally assigned and the definite semantic value of a DP introduced by a definite article.

If the coda is dislocated or removed, though, the definite DP is permitted because it is now located outside the VP, in a VP-adjoined position, and the Case assigned to it is nominative and not partitive anymore – which is, contrary to nominative, incompatible with definiteness. Leonetti (2008a) notes that such an account cannot explain the facts for Spanish, where unaccusative constructions allow for definite subjects but existentials do not. However, the remarks on the behaviour of definite DPs and the coda in unaccusative constructions in Italian, which are in fact presentational constructions, can be included according to Leonetti in a theory that takes the information structure into account.

His conclusions can be summed up as follows. Italian is a language that permits a VOS/VXS word order, provided that the sentence is interpreted with Narrow Focus on the subject. A VSO/VSX word pattern is allowed again only if the subject receives Narrow Focus and for that the XP constituent needs to be syntactically dislocated, a condition predicted by the Coda Constraint. Catalan and French present a similar behaviour concerning the allowance of VXS or VSX orders, but Spanish seems not to pose any restriction in the choice of one or the other word order.

Under this view the difference between the two types of languages could thus lie in the devices available for Focus assignment: in Italian and Catalan a syntactic extraposition/dislocation of the constituent that is not in Focus takes place, so that the sentence is made up of the verb and the focal constituent with a number of dislocated, not focused XPs to the right or left of it. Now, this general property of Italian and Catalan is evident in existential constructions too and gives a hint at why definite DPs shall not be allowed in such constructions. In fact, if we recall the examples (48b) and (5467b) of Italian, or those of Catalan, where the definiteness restriction becomes visible if the sentence receives a proper analysis, Leonetti observes that the DE appears exactly when the sentence receives Broad Focus or when the Narrow Focus is on the XP constituent that follows the subject.

- (48b) ?C'è la statua di Michelangelo in Piazza della Signoria. (Italian)  
 (54b) ?È entrato il ladro dalla finestra.

It becomes clear why sentence (48b) is judged odd when the whole sentence is Focus (Broad Focus). If on the contrary the coda *in Piazza della Signoria* is dislocated/marginalized, the definite subject DP gets a Narrow Focus reading and the sentence is acceptable.

In order to answer the question of why just definites are excluded from Broad Focus reading, Leonetti proposes that their definite value clashes with the lexical requirement of the existential verb and the appropriatethetic interpretation. In fact, he assumes that ES are interpreted as Broad Focus, a property that makes them a separate class from other structurally similar constructions. Now, if the whole sentence is Broad Focus, the postverbal DP and the coda are integrated into each other and all the material receives Broad Focus. Definites, though, cannot be part of such focussed constituent “when their reference obtains from contextual information outside the construction” (Leonetti 2008a: 151). In other words, a possibility to explain the definiteness effect is to assume that existential constructions do not allow presupposition for the subject – that is, for the DP to be previously established – whereas a definite DP already has a referent in the context.

Therefore, languages such as Italian or Catalan ES (which require Broad Focus) do not permit a definite subject DP unless it is the only focussed constituent. If a coda occurs, it must be syntactically dislocated. An explanation in terms of Topic/Focus structure of ES and the interaction with a coda implies, though, that every language poses different restrictions on the DP. In fact, in Spanish the coda is easily integrated in Broad Focus (Leonetti 2008a: 152). The reason for that could lie in the different devices for the partition of Topic/Focus, which is syntactically different from language to language.

Parallel to the study on the language-specific devices for the partition of the information encoded by the sentence, there is also the individuation of proper existentials to bear in mind when looking for DE. According to the crosslinguistic analysis seen up to now, Leonetti (2008a: 153) individuates at least three different types of existentials:

- Proper existentials. They do not display a thema/rhema structure. Generally, a locative adjunct occurs, even if this is not obligatory. Significantly, the referent of the internal DP is not previously established, e.g. its interpretation must not be derived from the context outside the construction itself. For this reason, indefinite expressions are allowed, as they only give information about quantities or by definites when the information they convey does not rely on the outer context. On the contrary, if the definite DP recovers its reference from the context, being so anaphoric or “strong”, as it is the case for pronouns, they are not allowed in existential sentences.

- Another typology of constructions comprises eventive existentials. They differ from pure existentials to the extent that the postverbal material actually has an underlying small clause structure, with a stage-level adjective (that is, state- and not property-denoting) and with an independent Topic/Focus structure of its own, where the subject DP is a topic and can thus be definite. What differs crosslinguistically is the possibility for the verb of the eventive existential construction to select a small clause as argument, as was the case in Italian and Catalan, whereas it cannot in other languages such as Spanish.
- Eventually, enumerative existentials are those constructions with the so-called list reading. Since the coda is implicit or absent altogether, there is no restriction on the definite DPs.

This third type of existential had been already observed in English, where it gave rise to many questions and has long been considered as an exception to the definiteness constraint. However, Leonetti (2008a: 154) observes along the lines of the pragmatic approach of Lumsden (1990) and Abbot (1993) that the inference of a background providing a list reading of the existential is a kind of “last resort” device to save an otherwise ill-formed construction of English such as *there is John*. This is indeed the case, as in English there is no other lexical form available to take over the enumerative reading.

Therefore, a reinterpretation of the existential takes place and results in a marked use of the construction, which apparently seems to violate the constraint on definites in ES, but in fact expresses another type of existential, where –more importantly– no coda occurs and thus there is no obligatory Broad Focus reading.

The remarks on reinterpretation processes apply, for instance, to French, where no lexical competitors for other readings are available. Compare the examples in (59) from French, which display apparent existentials that are in reality expression of the eventive pragmatic function.

- (59)a. Il y a le téléphone qui sonne. (French)  
 CL CL has the telephone that rings
- b. Il y a le chat qui meurt de froid dehors.  
 CL CL has the cat that dies of cold outside
- c. \*Il y a le téléphone.
- d. \*Il y a le chat.

Sentences (59a) and (59b) are indeed eventive existentials, i.e. they introduce a new event into the discourse. Moreover, here the coda must be explicit otherwise they become ungrammatical as in

(59c). The DP plus the coda – typically a predicative relative phrase – is a small clause displaying a stage-level predicate. Individual-level predicates would give rise to ungrammaticality (60).

(60) \*Il y a le chat rouge. (French)

On the contrary, pure existential constructions of French are not exempt from the DE. This prediction is borne out if we look at examples in (61) where the DE shows up again.

(61)a. Il y a un questionnaire que je n'ai pas. (French)  
CL CL has a questionnaire that I don't have

b. \*Il y a le questionnaire que je n'ai pas.  
CL CL has the questionnaire that I don't have

The ambiguity of *there be*-constructions in English and of *il y a*-constructions in French leads to misunderstanding the possibility of inserting definite DPs as an exception, while the first step, in order to understand the occurrence of a definite DP, is in fact to individuate with which subtype of existential we are dealing.

Spanish, on the contrary, never allows for sentences like \**Hay Juan* simply because there is another lexical item that takes over the enumerative existential function, namely the verb *estar*. Therefore, the speaker switches to the other lexical verb when the pragmatic function is not existential anymore.

In Catalan there are two forms for existentials, *esser-hi* that takes the real locative function and *haver-hi* that covers the existential use as well as reinterpretations of it, similar to English when a definite DP with contextualized referent occurs.

Finally, in Italian, locative predications are expressed by the verb *essere*, whereas *esserci* remains the alternative available for all other uses. In other words, *esserci* is the lexical items selected for existential constructions, where the DE manifests itself as soon as a definite internal DP appears with a coda and Broad (sentence) Focus but not only for them. In fact, Italian also makes use of *esserci* for the so-called quasi-locative constructions (also called pseudo-existential locative sentences, following Zamparelli 2000) as it happens for instance in a sentence like *C'è Gianni*, which cannot therefore be considered as purely existential.

The accounts presented in this section base thus on several factors that interact with each other and ultimately give rise to the definiteness restriction and will be examined in my investigation:

- At a syntactic level, identifying the structure underlying the partition of information and the realization of a coda constituent that interacts with the copula and the pivot.
- At a lexical level, as different lexical items can be available for the different existential readings (proper, eventive and enumerative existentials) and the selective properties of the verb, for instance if it can take a small clause as complement or not.
- At a semantic and pragmatic level, considering the fact that it is a phenomenon observed in many different languages, even in those that do not grammaticalise articles, and concerns the interpretation of the internal noun phrase in combination with the presentational/existential verb and the coda.

In particular, as is evident that Italian constitutes a challenge to the DE unless the different structures underlying the same superficial existential construction is properly ascertained, I will devote the next section to the tests and contrastive consideration necessary to describe the ES.

### 4.5.1. Pure existentials and look-alike existentials

The introduction to the ES in Romance languages showed that the exceptions to the definiteness restriction could be explained within the assumption that ES do not all belong to the same class. There are different types with proper syntactic characteristics determined by the semantic/pragmatic requirements of the discourse. Furthermore, the syntactic position occupied by the single elements at the end of the derivation is achieved according to the targets available in the structure of the relevant language and to different strategies of discourse partition.

In Italian, in particular, an apparent lack of definiteness effects is primarily to be ascribed to the superficially similar behaviour of the verb *esserci* with its predicate DP in existential as well as in locative sentences.

Concerning this matter, Cruschina's approach (2012, 2013, 2014, to appear) to the issue of the DE in Italian provides interesting insights that develop the relevant aspects of Leonetti's account presented in the previous section. He agrees with the claim that Italian ES should be analysed as belonging to different types and that the major confusion arises exactly from the fact that they display the same morphosyntactic form. For this reason the *esserci*-constructions at first sight seem to allow indefinite as well as definite DPs. In his typological differentiation, Cruschina (to appear) ultimately individuates four types of constructions in Italian, all sharing the presence of a clitic element *ci* and the copula *essere*: (i) proper existential, (ii) inverse locative sentences, (iii) deictic locative sentences and (iv) presentational sentences. The hypothesis of a differentiation among apparent ES is motivated on the basis of contrastive analyses within Romance and Italo-Romance languages and takes into account syntactic as well as semantic and pragmatic properties of all elements involved in sentences of this kind: the pronominal clitic, the copula, the pivot DP and the optional or obligatory locative coda. For these reasons, I will discuss the claims put forward by Cruschina (2012, to appear), Bentley & Cruschina (to appear) and Bentley, Ciconte & Cruschina (2013) within their research project on existential constructions and make use of the comparison methods adopted there in order to provide a description of SC.

Let us start by comparing examples (62) to (65), all drawn from Cruschina (2012, to appear), and displaying *esserci*. Of all of them, only sentence (62) is analysed as a proper ES, whereas (63) and (64) are instances of inverse locative constructions and sentence (65) is an eventive/presentational.

(62) Ci sono bambini allo stadio. *indefinite DP + coda*

CL are children at the stadium

'There are children in the stadium.'

- (63) C'è tua sorella in cucina. *definite DP + coda*  
*ci-is your sister in the kitchen*  
 'Your sister is in the kitchen.'
- (64) C'è tua sorella. *definite DP - no coda*  
*ci-is your sister*  
 'Your sister is here.'
- (65) Ci sono gli U2 a Milano. *definite DP + coda*  
*ci-are the U2 in Milan*  
 'The U2 are in Milan.'

Consequently, the question to ask is what differentiates the examples cited above from each other, as they look otherwise alike, and what kind of evidence can be adduced to support the hypothesis of independent constructions.

A first hint comes from the subtle difference between semantics and pragmatics of the pure ES. While their semantic function is that of asserting the existence (or the absence) of some entity, from a pragmatic point of view the entity in question in an ES is hearer-new and introduced into the discourse by asserting its presence in a location (Cruschina building on Lambrecht 1994 and McNally 2011). Hence, from a pragmatic perspective, the focal status of the DP becomes a relevant property of ES (McNally 1997, Abbott 1993, 1997, Zucchi 1995).

Holding onto the assumption that the DP of ES is focal, a way for distinguishing the Italian *ci*-sentences in either pure (62) or pseudo-existentials (63)-(65) is therefore suggested by the way this language encodes the discourse information, syntactically focalizing some elements and requiring the dislocation of topicalized ones. Other languages, on the contrary, make use of different devices in order to structure the information: they rely for example on stress and intonation. These general facts will be proven to be relevant to the occurrence of definite DPs in Italian *ci*-sentences in contrast to the strong constraint on definites in English: Italian ES with definite DPs are in fact cases of pseudo-existentials.

The following considerations add more detail to the description provided in the precedent introduction on Italian ES and further explain why the Coda Constraint (Leonetti 2008a) is at work. In

Cruschina's view, the role of the pronominal clitic *ci* is assumed to differ according to the construction in which it appears, functioning at times as a pro-argument or as a pro-predicate, although it surely has a locative origin from a diachronic point of view (Ciconte 2009).

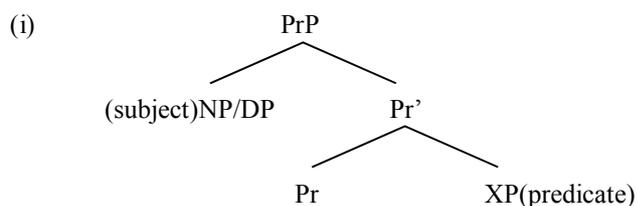
Building on these ingredients, Cruschina claims that only sentences like (62) are proper existentials. The analysis he provides for different ES-types foresees different underlying syntactic positions for the elements of the small clause<sup>70</sup> in each type. Recall that a small clause (Stowell 1987, Moro 1997) or predication phrase (Hazout 2004, Remeberger 2009) structure is adopted in most of the literature on the syntax of subject-predicated relations, following the proposals of Bowers (1993).<sup>71</sup> In line with these studies, I will also assume a predication phrase or small clause as the structure that underlies the elements of the predication in existentials and locatives displaying the copula *be*. Therefore, the small clause/predication phrase analyses are taken in the present work to be equivalent.

Now, in sentence (62) *ci sono bambini allo stadio* the clitic *ci* and the indefinite DP *bambini* both originate within the small clause. Crucially, *ci* is merged in the subject position of the small clause (66) and moves then to T (or Infl in previous generative accounts) due to its morphological property of being a clitic.

If this analysis is on the right track, the same can be assumed for English: the pleonastic *there* is originated in the subject position of the small clause and then moves to [Spec, TP] to satisfy the EPP requirements of T.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, the function of *ci* in Italian is not locative: it is in fact assumed to

<sup>70</sup> A small clause is “a clause like constituent comprising subject and predicate, but with no tense element. It is usually taken to have the category of the predicate, so that if the predicate is a PP (for instance, *a dog on the lawn*) the whole small clause is a PP” (Lyons 1999: 238, fn. 6).

<sup>71</sup> Bower's proposal (1993) entails the claim that predications in main clauses as well as in small clauses are syntactically located in a structure like (i), where the functional head is *Pr(edication)* (sometimes also abbreviated with *Pred*).



The [Spec, Pr] position is assumed to be occupied by an element because it bears an EPP-feature that needs to be checked. The XP is a maximal projection for a lexical category (V, A, N and P). Examples of small clauses and main clause predications are illustrated in (ii)a and b respectively (from Bowers 1993, see also Hazout 2004: 404).

- (ii)a. [IP They consider [PrP John [Pr e] [AP crazy]]]  
 b. [IP e [I' Will [PrP John [Pr e] [VP laugh]]]]?

<sup>72</sup> According to the universal locative hypothesis of Freeze (1992), the expletive *there* in English is on the contrary locative and constitutes an exception to the pleonastic pronouns of other Germanic languages (for example *es* in German). In fact, English *there* is co-indexed with the locative argument by predication, cf. (i) (Freeze 1992: 575, notice that PL means *pleonastic*). In my analysis though, in line with Cruschina (2012,



Cruschina considers then the second type of *ci*-constructions, which he analyses as inverse locative structures. First of all, a sentence like (63) from above does have an equivalent locative predication counterpart, as (68) shows.

(63) C'è tua sorella in cucina.

(68) Tua sorella è in cucina.

Indeed, the two constructions in (63) and (68) correspond to slightly different pragmatic uses: sentence (63) could be an answer to a question like “Who is in the kitchen?”, whereas (68) would be a better alternative in the context of a question as “Where is your sister?”. However, the two alternatives are equal in their function except for the constituent in focus: the DP *tua sorella* in (63) and the predication *in cucina* in (68). Notice that in English an adequate answer to both the context-giving questions formulated for (63) and (68) would be the same, namely a locative predication “Your sister is in the kitchen”.

Contrary to ES, in inverse locatives the DP is the subject of the small clause and it can thus be raised in the structure, yielding so the canonical locative subject-predication as in (68). Furthermore, the core property of Italian inverse locative sentences of the *ci*-type lies in fact at a syntactic level, namely in the focalization strategies available there. Italian is a language in which the postverbal position is the typical position dedicated to focal subjects.<sup>75</sup> This implies the assumption that in Italian there is a FocP projection inside the *v*P, i.e. inside the low area of the clause (Belletti 2009).<sup>76</sup>

Therefore, syntactic movement of the elements base-generated within the small clause represented in (69) can take place: the definite DP *tua sorella* targets the [Spec, FocP] position – which is active in Italian – while the pronominal element *ci* raises to T because of its clitic properties as in (70). Decisively, the small clause analysis assumed for inverse locatives is exactly specular to the one put forward for pure existential sentences.

The locative pronoun *ci* is merged in the predicate position within the small clause, whereas the DP is in the subject position; compare again (66) from above with (69). In addition, the locative phrase *in cucina* is then dislocated for reasons of incompatibility with *ci* that will be analysed in more detail in section 4.5.2.

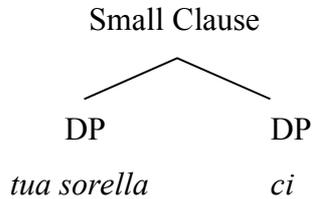
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<sup>75</sup> There are some cases where the focus constituent is located in a preverbal position, but this is mainly possible when it has a contrastive interpretation (Rizzi 1997, Cruschina 2012).

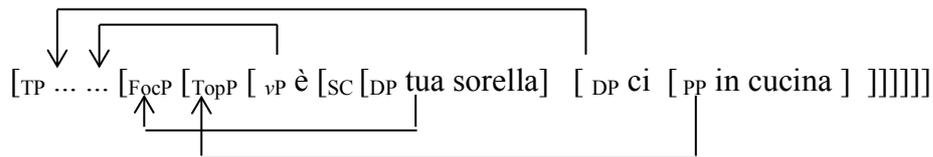
<sup>76</sup> According to the cartographic approach, the existence of two left peripheries at the edge of the phase heads C and *v* are assumed and they host a number of functional categories available for structuring the discourse-information.

(63) C'è tua sorella in cucina.

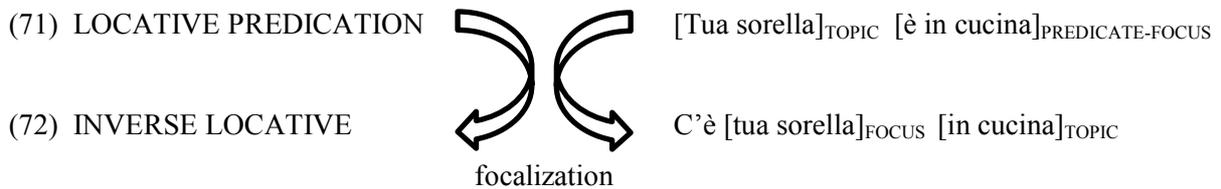
(69) TYPE II: Small Clause in Inverted Locative Sentences



(70) Syntactic movements in inverted locative sentences



The function of the inverse locative is indeed to permit the subject DP to be in focus, whereas in prototypical locative predications with the verb *essere* it is the locative PP that receives focus, as in the locative predication in (71) illustrates compared to the inverse locative structure with *esserci* in (72).<sup>77</sup>



Hence, the focalization process transforms a locative predication into a structure with an argument-DP that is in focus. This is possible in Italian because of the availability of FocP inside the low area of the clause (Belletti 2009), but it is not an option in English: this would syntactically explain the lack of inverse locative sentences there and the consequent stronger occurrence of DE (Cruschina 2014, to appear), whereas only the reading *John is there* is available.

It is interesting to notice that an analysis of this kind is provided for pseudo-existential sentences that display definite DPs and is based on the intuition of a correspondence between the *ci-*

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<sup>77</sup> Cruschina (2012: 88, to appear).

sentence and its locative counterpart (Moro 1997). The same observations, in fact, seem not to hold for *ci*-sentences occurring with an indefinite DP, compare (73a) to (73b).<sup>78</sup>

- (73)a. C'è un gatto in giardino.  
*ci*-is a cat in garden  
'There is a cat in the garden.'
- b. ? Un gatto è in giardino.  
a cat is in garden  
? 'A cat is in the garden.' (Cruschina to appear)

The subject in (73a) is embedded in a particular construction, a proper ES, and we saw that these sentences get Broad Focus. Therefore, the DP occupies a non-canonical position, which would otherwise require a Subject-Predication order in Italian. Its insertion in the ES is grammatical, as I will further motivate in the next sections. On the contrary, the same indefinite DP occupies indeed the canonical position in a Subject-Predicate construction in (73b), but there is another reason for this element to give rise to ungrammaticality or at least strong perceived oddness. In fact, the indefinite DP contrasts to the general tendency of languages for topics to be definite/specific (Lyons 1999). In this sense, the indefiniteness/nonspecificity conveyed by the article in the DP makes it an infelicitous choice in a topic position and renders the sentence odd (Bentley 2010, 2013).

Therefore, considering the remarks on the equivalent semantics of sentences of the kind *C'è tua sorella in cucina* and *Tua sorella è in cucina*, and taking into account the information structure underlying the two constructions which are motivated by the different pragmatic contexts in which they occur, it can be safely assumed that they both are locative sentences. Hence, the *ci*-sentences with definite DPs are actually instances of inverse locatives, where the subject is in focus and the locative coda is dislocated. In standard locative predications, on the contrary, it is the PP predicate to be in focus and the subject is a topic. To the inverse locative kind of *ci*-sentences belong also those with definite DPs and no explicit locative coda, such as the example in (64).

Notice in addition to the considerations on inverted locatives that the *ci*-sentences with indefinite DPs in Italian are on the contrary assumed to belong in another class of this investigation on their typology. They are in fact genuine existential sentences.

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<sup>78</sup> I would judge sentence (73b) as more ungrammatical than grammatical, adding therefore two question marks to the gloss. I consider the sentence highly improbable to be uttered in a neutral context. Of course, a contrastive reading could save the sentence, but this would imply a different syntactic structure with the DP moved to a dedicated contrastive focus position outside the vP.

Concerning the nature of the locative phrase that can occur dislocated in inverted locative sentences, it can be easily noted that it does not represent aboutness-topic, as we have stated, for instance, in existentials such as (67) above. In fact, if we compare it to (74) it immediately becomes evident that this sentence cannot be uttered in a context where a new topic is necessary or exactly in the opposite situation, that is, when a given topic is required but it is not already mentioned in the discourse. It is the focalization strategy at work in (74) that renders an aboutness-topic ungrammatical since its function is at the same time that of introducing new topics. Yet, the locative PP is allowed when it introduces old information, i.e. when it is referential-topic as in (75). In this case, it is possible from a pragmatic point of view to have a coda in the inverse locative and it can be optionally right or left dislocated or be completely omitted, as the PP in brackets show (76).

(74) Nel sistema solare, c'è Venere.  
 in-the system solar *ci*-is Venus  
 'Venus is in the solar system.'

(75)a. Quali sono i pianeti del sistema solare oltre alla terra?  
 'Which are the planets of the solar system other than the Earth?'  
 b. Non li ricordo tutti. Sicuramente, nel sistema solare c'è Venere.  
 'I don't remember them all. Surely, Venus is in the solar system.'

(76) (Nel sistema solare) c'è Venere (nel sistema solare).  
 (Cruschina to appear)

These pragmatic remarks support the analysis of *ci*-sentences with definite DPs as inverted locative sentences and give clues for the analysis of the dislocated locative coda that can occur. Still, it has to be explained why a locative coda cannot be syntactically inside the inverted locative. This issue will be explored in the next section.

Finally, there is a fourth type of apparent ES that can be described within the explanatory account adopted up to this point. Presentational sentences also display in Italian the *ci*-form and belong to the group of ES that Leonetti (2008a) defines eventives. The peculiarity of the sentences of this kind lies in the general lack of restrictions on the definiteness of the noun, a property that is determined by its particular structure that differentiate them from pure existentials as well as from locatives. I report in (77) and (78) some examples provided by Leonetti (2008a), as well as further data in (79)-(81) from Cruschina (to appear).

- (77) C'è Chomsky al MIT.  
'Chomsky is at MIT.'
- (78)a. C'è Gianni al telefono  
'Gianni is at the phone.'  
b. C'è Gianni che aspetta.  
'Gianni is waiting.' (Leonetti 2008a: 142)
- (79)a. C'è Gianni ammalato  
*ci-is Gianni ill*  
'Gianni is ill.'  
b. C'è Gianni che sta male  
*ci-is Gianni who stays badly*  
'Gianni feels sick.'
- (80)a. C'è Gianni infuriato  
'John is furious'  
b. C'è Gianni nei guai.  
'John is in trouble.'
- (81) C'è Maria che canta in un teatro di Berlino.  
*ci-is Mary who sings in a theatre of Berlin*  
'Mary sings in a theatre in Berlin.' (Cruschina to appear)

These sentences introduce a new event, that is, a new proposition into the discourse. According to Cruschina (to appear), the sentence can be analyzed in a two-step computation. Firstly, the DP is introduced as being part of a sentence of type I or II, namely either pure existentials or inverted locatives. In other words, in (81) for instance *c'è Maria* is first introduced and it has an existential or an inverted locative analysis.<sup>79</sup> In both cases the DP would be in focus. At the same time, the pivot DP constitutes the topic for a further predication consisting of the DP and an adjectival predicate as in (79a) and (80a)/(80b), or a pseudo-relative clause as in (81). All of these examples can be transformed in a classical Topic-Comment predication without a location to directly interact in the structure, as the English glosses and the Italian counterparts (*Gianni è ammalato/ è al telefono/ è nei guai/ Maria canta (in un teatro di Berlino)*) also demonstrate. Notice that only sentence (77) can also be read as inverse

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<sup>79</sup> Notice that Cruschina does not completely exclude the possibility for definite DPs to occur in pure ES.

locative if the locative PP *al MIT* is dislocated, otherwise it is acceptable with an eventive/presentational reading.

The difference between presentational (type IV) and existential (type I) *ci*-sentences lies in the possibility for type IV to lack any locative anchoring, whereas in pure ES the location is always presupposed and it is in fact the subject of the predication (compare the role as pro-argument of the clitic *ci* that will be discussed in 4.5.2). Moreover, at a pragmatic level the introduction of the DP in presentational sentences is not to predicate a property of the locative argument, but to make the DP available as a topic for the following predication (Cruschina to appear, Lambrecht 1994).

A major problem is that presentational sentences can at first sight be easily confused with existential or inverse locatives. Let us consider (82) below:

- (82)            *Ci sono*    *molti ragazzi malati.*  
                 *ci* are.3PL many guys ill  
                 ‘There are a lot of guys ill/ A lot of guys are ill.’

A clear interpretation of (82) is not straightforward, but if the reading of the constituent *molti ragazzi* is specific the reading attributed to the sentence is presentational (Cruschina to appear). Indeed, the reading of (82) will be as that rendered in (83): many guys (as opposed to others) are ill.

- (83)            *Ci sono*    *molti dei ragazzi di questa classe malati*  
                 *ci* are.3PL many of-the guys of this    classroom ill

Concerning the similarities with inverted locatives, definite DPs have been claimed to occur at the majority of cases in inverted locative *ci*-sentences and therefore a certain degree of ambiguity can result when we are faced with presentational sentences, which also display definite DPs and where a locative phrase can be present. Compare examples (84) and (85).

- (84)            *C'è il Signor Ponza che chiede di essere ricevuto.*  
                 *ci*-is the mister Ponza who asks to be    received  
                 ‘Mr Ponza here asks to be received.’

- (85)            *C'è il Signor Ponza, in salotto, che chiede*  
                 *ci*-is the mister Ponza in living-room, who asks  
                 di essere ricevuto.  
                 to be    received.  
                 ‘Mr. Ponza is in the living-room, asking to be received.

(Cruschina to appear)

Sentence (84) is a presentational sentence, whereas (85) is an inverse locative. Why this claim? Even for a native speaker careful introspection is necessary in order to distinguish them from each other. First of all, sentence (84) is uttered as a single unit, while in (85) a pause is perceivable – here signaled by the comma – and as already observed for inverted locative this can be interpreted as a clue of the dislocated nature of the locative phrase. Secondly, the relative clause in (85) is a real relative clause, whereas in presentational sentences we find pseudo-relative clauses.<sup>80</sup> A pseudo-relative clause is a secondary predication that syntactically is a small clause in which the head is the complementizer *che* and its subject is co-indexed with a nominal element within the matrix clause, differently from what happens with an ordinary relative clause (Casalicchio 2013: 42). Pseudo-relatives often occur with perception verbs (e.g. *vedere, sentire, ascoltare*), with presentative verbs (*esserci* or also with possessive *avere* as in *ha la figlia che studia all'estero* from Casalicchio 2013: 24) and with locative verbs (*essere qui/li, rimanere*) (cf. Casalicchio 2013 for further discussion).

Eventually, sentences like (86a) or (86b) where the predicate is an adjective of the stage-level type<sup>81</sup> or a PP that is not a real location are clearly presentational respectively.

(86)a. C'è Gianni infuriato/arrabbiato.

'John is furious/ill'

b. C'è Gianni nei guai.

'John is in trouble.'

Notice that presentational sentences are typical of the colloquial register and in fact they pragmatically introduce a new proposition as relevant to the following discourse (Cruschina to appear). Moreover, presentational sentences cannot be negated. This peculiarity hints at a probable reanalysis of the clitic *ci*, which has become lexicalized with the copula. Compare the negated genuine ES in (87) and inverted locative in (88) to the presentational constructions in (89).

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<sup>80</sup> Although they word strings are superficially identical, ordinary relative clauses and pseudo-relative clauses have different syntactic structures and the clauses attach in the structure at different levels. Compare the analysis given below by Grillo et al. (2008).

(i)a. The son of the doctor [<sub>RC</sub> that ran]

b. The [<sub>SC</sub> son of the doctor that ran]

<sup>81</sup> Recall that Milsark speaks of a predicate restriction according to which only stage-level predicates are allowed in ES.

(87) Non ci sono orsi bianchi al Polo Sud  
NEG *ci* are.3SG bears white at-the Pole South  
'There are no polar bears in the South Pole.'

(88) Non c'è Gianni in giardino.  
NEG *ci*-is John in garden  
'John is not in the garden.'

(89)a. \*Non c'è Gianni infuriato.  
b. \*Non c'è Gianni nei guai.

(Cruschina to appear)

In both sentences in (89) it is not possible to negate the presentational *ci*+copula cluster, as the result would not make any sense. The following Topic-Comment predication introduced by the presentational construction can otherwise be negated and would yield the canonical sentence *Gianni non è infuriato / Gianni non è nei guai*, but the presentational construction as a whole cannot.

Summing up, the findings of this section demonstrate that a careful analysis of apparent ES in Italian is necessary and results in the individuation of four major types of sentences, distinguished from each other with respect to the pragmatic context of use and their underlying syntactic structure.

The next section is now dedicated to the study of the clitic element *ci* occurring in all these sentences and the exact role it plays in each of the constructions.



a location is always implicit and *ci* gets a default reading that can be rendered as “here and now”. If a location occurs in form of a PP, the presence of the clitic *ci* causes the dislocation of the coda, as predicted by the Coda Constraint. Cruschina (to appear) provides an interesting syntactic explanation for the incompatibility of *ci* and the coda within the same clause. As we have seen in the previous section, the Coda Constraint applies in inverted locative constructions with an explicit coda.

The discussion in section 4.5.1 demonstrates that in locative predication, as well as in inverse locatives, the DP is a subject. In sentences of this kind the locative phrase is therefore a predicate.

Why is there incompatibility of the locative coda inside the locative sentence structure? The answer offered by Cruschina (to appear) foresees the hypothesis of *ci* and the locative PP to be part of a clitic-dislocation structure. In this sense, *ci* functions as a resumptive clitic and is in fact co-indexed with the locative PP. This is dislocated, as the intonation contour suggests (Leonetti 2008a), according to the Coda Constraint.

To prove this assumption, Cruschina provides a series of empirical tests. The first cluster of evidence comes from the data in (93a)-(93c): the clitic *ci* can act as a pro-predicate<sup>82</sup> in so far, as it can substitute for a locative PP mentioned in the precedent locative predication (93a). This is also possible by using the adverb *là* (Engl. *there*) as in the equivalent alternative in (93c) or by obligatorily reporting the whole locative phrase (93b).

- (93)a.            Gli asciugamani sono    nel    cassetto?  
                   the towels            are.3PL in-the drawer?  
                   ‘Are the towels in the drawer?’
- b.            Sì, sono    \*(nel cassetto).  
                   yes, are.3PL in-the drawer  
                   ‘Yes, they are in the drawer.’
- c.            Sì, ci sono / sono là.  
                   yes ci are.3PL /are.3PL there  
                   ‘Yes, they are there.’
- d.            \*Sì, ci sono là / ci sono nel cassetto.

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<sup>82</sup> The term pro-predicate refers to the ability of the clitic *ci* to substitute the locative PP, which is commonly regarded as the predication in all types of locative sentences.

Ungrammaticality arises as soon as *ci* co-occurs with the locative adverb *là* or with the locative PP *nel cassetto* in the inverted locative, as in (93d). Notice first that the PP *nel cassetto* as well as the adverb *là* are not dislocated in (93d), as shows the lack of the comma in the orthography. In other words, the coda in (93d) is part of the focus, but this is impossible in Italian inverted locatives because of the constraint on clitic doubling. In Italian, in fact, resumptive clitics can only be topics (Rizzi 1997) and indeed we considered *ci* to be a resumptive clitic co-indexed with the locative phrase. In addition to that, the dislocated locative phrase in inverse locatives is a referential topic (cf. below) and this information is therefore available to be retrieved by the clitic in an inverted locative sentence. If the locative coda would be in focus, though, this would yield ungrammaticality because of the presence of the locative clitic and the definite DP. I quote in (94) the illustration of the constraint (Cruschina 2012: 90).

(94) Constraint on the information structure of inverted locative *ci*-sentences

- a. [ci + copula] [definite DP]<sub>FOCUS</sub> [coda]<sub>TOPIC</sub>
- b. \*([coda]<sub>FOCUS</sub>) [ci + copula] [definite DP] \*([coda]<sub>FOCUS</sub>)

To the ungrammatical representation in (94b) belong the examples in (93d) above: they would be acceptable and match the representation scheme in (94a) if the locative PP or the locative adverb would be dislocated. In other words, as the DP is already in focus in inverted locative sentences there cannot be any other element focalized, for Italian only allows one focus per sentence (Rizzi 1997, Moro 1997, Cruschina<sup>83</sup> to appear).

This claim is further supported by three types of sentences where the locative coda must be the focus of the clause, namely “(i) when it corresponds to the wh-phrase, (ii) when it bears contrastive focus, and (iii) when it is the focus of an answer to a wh-question” (Cruschina to appear).

- (95) Dove (\*ci) sei tu?  
 Where *ci* are.2SG you  
 ‘Where are you?’

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<sup>83</sup> Cruschina (to appear) observes that the second condition, i.e. the status of focalized element for the DP, is secondary to the coda constraint. A DP can also be topic in inverse locatives, while the focus is on *ci* with the copula, as in (i a). In (ib), though, the focalized coda is a much more strong violation and does not allow grammaticality of the sentence.

- (i)a. [Gianni]<sub>TOP</sub> [c'è]<sub>FOC</sub>, [in giardino]<sub>TOP</sub>
- b. \*[Gianni]<sub>TOP</sub> [c'è in giardino]<sub>FOC</sub>

(96) Dove (\*ci) sono i fiori bianchi?  
where *ci* are.3PL the flowers white  
'Where are the white flowers?'

(97) In quale stanza (??c') è tua sorella?<sup>84</sup>  
in which room *ci* is your sister  
'In which room is your sister?'

(Cruschina to appear)

In sentences (95)-(97), for instance, the locative predication is a wh-phrase (i.e. *dove*, Engl. *where* or *in quale stanza*, Engl. *in which room*). Significantly, the same sentences would be completely acceptable when hosting indefinite DPs, pointing at the different nature of the constructions. The acceptability of the focalized locative wh-phrase hints at a switch in the structure. Indeed, in (98)-(99) we are faced with genuine existentials and not with inverted locative sentences anymore.

(98) Dove ci sono fiori bianchi?  
where *ci* are.3PL flowers white  
'Where are there white flowers?'

(99) In quale parco ci sono cedri?  
in which park *ci* are.3PL cedars  
'In which park are there cedar trees?'

These observations on the real nature of the clitic *ci* were made possible by the occurrence of a locative coda. Relying first on intonation patterns, which led among others to the formulation of the Coda Constraint, and then on the syntactic properties of Italian concerning its information structure and the behaviour of clitics, it was possible to put forth the claim that *ci* is a pro-predicate (Moro 1997, Zamparelli 2000, Cruschina to appear).

At the same time, these considerations raise the question of what happens when the locative coda is not expressed, an option available in inverted locatives as well as in existentials. To this purpose, I repeat the example (64) and the prototypical example in (50), both argued to be an instance of inverted locative exactly as the same sentences with a locative coda expressed.

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<sup>84</sup> Cruschina points out that the sentence shall not be regarded as an echo-question. A D-linking reading shall not be given to the wh-phrase because that would render the example more or completely acceptable for some speakers.

- (64) C'è tua sorella. *definite DP - no coda* (Italian)  
 CI-is your sister  
 \*There is your sister  
 'Your sister is here,'
- (50) C'è Gianni.  
 'Gianni is here.'
- (100) C'è l'aereo, finalmente!  
 'The airplane is here, eventually.'
- (Cruschina to appear)

Sentences like (64), (50) and (100) can have two interpretations: either the location is implicit and can be retrieved from the context, or, if they are uttered in isolation, the clitic *ci* is obligatorily interpreted deictically. In other words, when no locative coordinates are provided by the previous discourse *ci* has the default interpretation of “here and now” (Cruschina to appear). The DP is specific and referential because the speaker identifies it in the physical space proximal to himself. As in other types of inverted locatives, the DP is in focus and therefore moves to the FocP position inside the *v*P. Again, being a type of inverted locative, English has no syntactic construction correspondent to the Italian one, but makes use of a canonical locative characterised by intonation pitch on the DP and the presence of the locative adverb *here* (Cruschina 2012). In this sense, the deictic reading *ci* makes these particular *ci*-sentences a subtype of the general inverted locatives.

After having claimed the pro-predicative nature of *ci* in inverted locatives, the next step is to test role of *ci* in genuine ES. Is their homophony a sufficient proof in order to state that *ci* in ES is also a locative clitic? The examples illustrated in (98)-(99), where the locative wh-phrase was not excluded from the ES, suggest that the answer to this question must be negative. Already Burzio (1986) claims that *ci* can have for instance a subject function, namely as subject clitic related to an *ec* [empty category]. He says that “there are two pronominals [*si/ci*] related to the subject position” (Burzio 1986: 130) and his analysis of Italian *ci* is supported by various observations, among which the fact that not all *ci*-sentences have a predicative counterpart with rightward movement of the pivot and that the pleonastic element must be overt in many cases, thus leading to the hypothesis that *ci* can be inserted directly onto the matrix verb at D-structure.<sup>85</sup> But there are other reasons to believe that the

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<sup>85</sup> For a detailed analysis of clitic *ci* in Italian compared to *ye* in Piedmontese, *y* in French and *there* in English compare Burzio (1986).

clitic *ci* in genuine ES has a different function and reading as its homophonous form in inverted locatives.

First of all, we need to recall what has been said about the structure of the small clause in ES. There, the subject has been assumed to be *ci*, while the DP occupies the complement position.

This claim is in line with the hypothesis found in many studies according to which the subject of existentials is the location, whereas the nominal DP constitutes the predicate (Zamparelli 2000, Leonetti 2008a, Remberger 2009, Cruschina to appear). Analyses of existential and locative sentences such as those of Freeze (1992) and Moro (1997) consider the two constructions to be equivalent. The locative element is regarded by Freeze as the spell-out of a [LOC] feature in Infl, whereas Moro considers it a pro-predicate. Indeed, evidence for the strong correlation of locatives and existentials also comes from languages without definite articles and to this purpose the case of Dari will be examined in detail in chapter 6. There, the alternation between locatives and existentials manifests itself superficially in the different word order of the NP and the locative phrase (Freeze 1992).

The analysis put forward by Cruschina (2012, to appear), Cruschina & Bentley (to appear) and Bentley, Ciconte & Cruschina (2013) for Italian argues indeed for a separation of the two structures. In order to support the synchronic split between locatives and existentials in modern languages, Ciconte (2009) conducted a diachronic study of early Italo-Romance vernaculars and provided evidence for the emergence and use of the proform in existentials. He noticed that in Early Tuscan texts (13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries) the proform *ci* was systematically in complementary distribution with the locative phrase; compare (101) to (102).<sup>86</sup>

(101) Era una guasca in Cipri (Early Tuscan)  
 was.3Sg a Guascon.FEM.SG in Cyprus  
 ‘(There) was a woman from Gascony in Cyprus.’  
 [Copula + Noun phrase + **Locative phrase**] [– proform]

(102) V’ è questo costume.  
 proform is this habit  
 ‘There is this habit.’  
 [**proform** + Copula + Noun phrase] [– Locative phrase] (Ciconte 2009: 184)

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<sup>86</sup> Early Italo-Romance examples are from Ciconte (2009).

In Sicilian, on the contrary, the proform was already attested in texts from the 14<sup>th</sup> century (103) and so it was in other southern vernaculars, such as Campanian and Romanian, also display the co-occurrence of proform and locative PP, although to a less frequent rate than Sicilian.

- (103) Chi fu in Sicilia grandi fami. (Early Sicilian)  
*chi* be.PST.3SG in Sicily great hunger  
 ‘There was in Sicily great hunger.’  
 [**proform** + Copula + **Locative phrase** + Noun phrase]  
 (Ciconte 2009: 187)

The northern vernaculars examined in the study, namely Venetian, Venetan and Lombard seem to align with Tuscan concerning the complementary distribution. Gradually, though, the sources showed the co-presence of *ci* and the locative phrase in Tuscan as well as in the other Northern vernaculars.

Significantly, this happened predominantly with definite DPs. Moreover, in early Italo-Romance there was a strong tendency for the locative phrase in ES to occur in a sentence initial or at least preverbal position. This fact complies with the observations made above on languages that differentiate between locatives and existentials by means of word order (Freeze 1992, Sorrenti to appear). Indeed, recall that the proform is not necessarily overt to instantiate existentiality. Among other languages, also ES of Latin do not transparently differentiate from locatives and assume the form copula + noun phrase + locative phrase, for instance *est puellā in viā*, where the order of the constituent can vary. No existential proform is available. The emergence of a proform, thus, was an innovation feature that first took place in early Romance.

The diachronic change can explain why the two forms – pro-predicate and pro-argument *ci* – are homophonous: originally *ci* had a locative function and reading. Its etymology shows that it is a form derived from Latin HECCE/HIC. Furthermore, it is not only in Italian that this similarity can be observed. In fact, in all languages if there is a preform in existentials it matches an original locative element (cf. English *there*, Spanish *y*, Catalan *hi* etc.), a fact that surely supports the claim of the strong correlation with locative predication from a diachronic point of view.

In the history of Italo-Romances, the locative proform gradually starts to occur together with the locative phrase and this happens predominantly in sentences with definite DPs. Hence, the proform is assumed to have undergone change and become grammaticalised as a marker of existentiality (Ciconte 2009: 186). This change took place first in the southern vernaculars, which displayed in early stages a similar behaviour to Modern Italian. The northern Italo-Romance, instead, preserved the typical Latin pattern without any proform.

In standard Italian the locative reading of *ci* in pure existential sentences is synchronically lost and the clitic has grammaticalised. *Ci* in ES is not a locative clitic that points at an actual location anymore, but it is more a “relict” that has been reanalyzed. It is something similar to a location, but as an implicit contextual domain, independently of the occurrence of a locative phrase (Cruschina to appear building on Francez 2007). Therefore, *ci* has become “an abstract argument expressing the spatial and temporal coordinates of the existential proposition” (Cruschina to appear; Cruschina & Bentley to appear). In the sense that it represents a form that signalizes an abstract locative argument, which is the subject in ES, *ci* in Italian pure ES is a pro-argument.

The difference between *ci* as pro-predicate in inverse locative sentences and *ci* as pro-argument among different languages is synthesized in table 7.

**Table 7. Elements in locatives and existentials crosslinguistically**

	<b>Inverted locatives</b>	<b>Existentials</b>
<b>pivot DP</b>	subject (argument)	predicate
<b>Locative Phrase</b>	predicate	originally subject (cf. early Italo-Romance vernaculars, Russian, Hindi, Persian) (argument)
<i>ci</i>	pro-predicate	pro-argument

Since *ci* is morphologically and etymologically locative, this proform still takes over different roles in Italian, as table 7 shows. This view is tenable because it unifies the accounts according to which it is the location to be the subject of the predication in existential constructions. This location, though, must not be specific and it suffices for it to be abstract enough in order to allow the existential sense (Zamparelli 2000: 198).

In Italian the clitic *ci* is not an actual location anymore: the subject of the existential predication and its argument role has been taken over by the reanalyzed clitic *ci* – indeed not accidentally of locative origin – which now stands for the argument. Hence, *ci* in ES is a proform for the argument. The existential DP denotes the property. In other words, the DP is the predicate of *there* in the sense that *there* stands for “a certain (abstract) location and the pivot noun its predicate. Thus, an ES such as

*there is a man in the garden* has the meaning that can be paraphrased as “a certain location which is in the garden is a man” (Zamparelli 2000: 199).

Finally, there is a fourth type of apparent ES in which the clitic *ci* occurs together with the copula *be* and therefore claims for an explanation. Sentences of type IV are presentational *ci*-constructions that usually display an adjectival or pseudo-relative clause predication.

In sentences like (80a), (80b) from above, in which the predicate is not a location but indeed an adjective of the stage-level<sup>87</sup> type, there is no locative inverse reading available and *ci* can therefore not be a resumptive clitic for a location. Compare the respective Topic-Comment predications in (104) and (105), where no location can be formulated and demonstrate in fact to be no locative counterparts to (80a) and (80b) respectively. Neither the default reading *here and now*, nor an explicit location to which *ci* could be co-indexed are possible.

(80)a            C'è Gianni infuriato  
                  'John is furious'

b.                C'è Gianni nei guai.  
                  'John is in trouble.'

(104)            \*Gianni è infuriato qui e ora / \*Gianni è infuriato in giardino.  
                  \*John is furious here and now / John is furious in the garden.

(105)            \*Gianni è nei guai qui e ora / \*Gianni è nei guai in giardino.  
                  \*John is in trouble here and now/ \*John is in trouble in the garden.

Moreover, due to the similarity of structure between the pseudo-relative clauses in presentational *ci*-sentences to the pseudo-relative clauses of perception verbs, Cruschina (to appear) claims that the clitic *ci* in this case cannot be an element originated inside the small clause, as it has been assumed for existentials and inverted locatives.<sup>88</sup> Therefore, *ci* has no pro-argument or pro-predicate role in the structure of presentational *ci*-sentences and hence does not undergo any syntactic movement: it is an element lexicalized on the copula verb in order to signalize the presentational construction (Cruschina to appear).

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<sup>87</sup> Recall that Milsark speaks of a predicate restriction according to which only stage-level predicates are allowed in ES.

<sup>88</sup> Recall the respective SC-structures, repeated in (i) and (ii) below:

(i)            [SC [DP *ci*] [ DP bambini]]            *existential*  
(ii)           [SC [DP tua sorella] [ DP *ci*]]            *inverse locative*

To sum up, according to the analysis of Italian data presented in 4.5.1, I agree with Bentley, Ciconte & Cruschina (2013), Cruschina (to appear) and Bentley & Cruschina (to appear) in treating the clitic *ci* together with the copula ESSE as having different functions and readings according to the type of construction in which it appears.

There are, of course, other possible accounts for the occurrence of the clitic *ci*. For instance, Russi (2008) considers *ci* to be a grammaticalised element that, together with the copula ESSE, always functions as the indicator of existential/presentational constructions. Another account is that of Freeze (1992), who considers the proform – when overt – as the spell-out of a [LOC] feature of Infl. Within the hypotheses adopted in this work, though, the claim of different roles taken over by *ci* is consistent with a different treatment of *ci*-sentences and the fact that the DE only manifests itself with some of them and interacts with the presence of the coda. The different treatment of *ci* unifies analysis brought about by Zucchi (1995), Moro (1997), Zamparelli (2000) and Leonetti (2008a) just to name a few who intensively discussed the apparent lack of DE phenomenon in Italian ES and whose studies provided the basis for many claims made here.

Although the clitic *ci* originates from the Latin locative adverb, a locative reading is only maintained in inverse locative sentences (type II and III), namely in its function as pro-predicate in Italian. Its locative value is the reason that makes a locative coda incompatible and forces the dislocation of such constituent. In pure ES (type I), *ci* is not co-indexed with an actual location. The locative content has bleached but it is still expression of a link with a null locative argument, which is the subject of the small clause. Finally, in presentational sentences (type IV), no locative meaning is conveyed at all and the clitic is part of the verb and marks in this way the presentational construction.

In the light of these considerations, we can state that the distinction between locative structures and proper existentials in Italian is to be found in the focus structure of both and ultimately relies on different underlying structures.

### 4.5.3. Summary of the different types of ES in Italian

In this section I briefly sum up the evidence for assuming different types of *ci*-constructions in Italian. Although they seem not to differ from each other and hence the occurrence of definite DPs is initially thought as an exception to the definiteness constraint maintained for ES crosslinguistically, it has been shown that *ci*-sentences belong indeed to different types. Leonetti mentions three types of *ci*-sentences, namely pure existential, enumerative existential and eventive existentials (see 4.5).

Cruschina (2012, 2014, to appear) and Cruschina & Bentley (to appear) argue for a differentiation in four types. Their claims are supported by syntactic and morphological evidence as well as the information structure of Italian discussed in the previous sections. I will adopt their extensive background to test the different ES of Southern Calabrian in the next section.

I draw table 8 from Cruschina (2012, 2014) that summarizes the different types of *esserci*-constructions in Italian in a clear way, as well as the relative focus structure, the role carried by the clitic *ci* and that of the pivot DP.

**Table 8. Main characteristics of different types of existentials in Italian**

TYPE	STRUCTURE	FOCUS	<i>ci</i>	DP
<b>I</b>	existential	sentence/predicate	pro-argument	predicate [-def]
<b>II</b>	inverse locative	argument	pro-predicate	argument [+def]
<b>III</b>	deictic locative	argument	pro-predicate	argument [+def]
<b>IV</b>	presentational	sentence	lexicalized	argument [+spec]

The inverted locative sentences belong to type II. They are characterized by the availability of a locative counterpart. The *ci*-element is a resumptive clitic for a location that must be appropriately dislocated because of the Coda Constraint and the impossibility in Italian to have more than one focus in the same domain (recall that inverse locatives have the function of focusing the nominal constituent and not the location, as it usually occurs for locative predications). Type II comprises inverted locatives with an explicit locative coda as well as those where the coda is not realized but still retrievable from the context. This observation, perceivable in the intonation pattern, supports the claim that the topic coda constituent is referential topic, i.e. old information. Type III indicates the deictic inverted locatives. The difference between these constructions and sentences of type II with no explicit coda consists in the lack of discourse salience in order to establish the location. Therefore, *ci*

automatically assumes the default reading “here and now”, i.e. “the identification of the referent in the speaker’s proximal physical space” (Cruschina to appear).

Type IV comprises presentational sentences that introduce a new event into the discourse. For this reason they display a two-step computation in which the DP is in focus and then serves as the topic of the secondary predication, available in form of a stage-level adjective or a pseudo relative clause. Presentational sentences lack any locative constituent and furthermore the clitic *ci* cannot be negated, indicating that it probably underwent reanalysis and became lexicalized together with the copula.

Finally, the properties of pure existentials in Italian are illustrated in type I. It becomes evident that these sentences are of a particular kind, first of all because of their pragmatic function, for which they get broad focus. Pure ES of Italian select the copula *be*. For this reason, a small clause structure is assumed, where the clitic *ci* is crucially merged in the subject position and can therefore move to T due to its morphological property. Indeed, the function of *ci* is not synchronically locative: it is a grammaticalised element co-indexed with a null locative topic or subject of the predication, identifying an argument for spatio-temporal location. For this reason, *ci* in ES is a pro-argument. Eventually, the (mostly morphologically) indefinite DP originates as complement, as internal argument of the small clause, and is not raised higher in the structure. If a coda is realized, it can also part of the focus structure.

A brief concluding remark concerns the semantics of pivots in pure ES. One of the pivotal claims of the present thesis is in fact that the morphological realization of definite articles is not a guarantee that definiteness is the relevant semantic property for the definiteness restriction to obtain.

Compare the examples (37) and (38) provided in section 3.8 and repeated below with the same numeration. The definite article introducing the DPs *forno a microonde* and *videoproiettore* is realized as Italian requires it for singular count argument nouns, but the noun phrase is not semantically definite.

(37) In quale aula c'è il videoproiettore?  
In which classroom *ci*-is the video-projector  
'In which classroom is there a video-projector?'

(38) C'è il forno a microonde negli appartamenti?  
*ci*-is the oven of microwaves in-the apartments  
'Is there a microwave oven in the apartments?'

Sentence (37) is an example for the occurrence of *ci* with a *wh*-phrase that is D-linked.<sup>89</sup> Here, *ci* is not perceived as ungrammatical and this probably due to two conditions: on one side, the D-linked *wh*-phrase is assumed to bear a [topic] feature<sup>90</sup> and, crucially, the DP is only morphologically definite, but its semantic value is nonspecific/non-referential, therefore acceptable in an ES (Cruschina to appear).

On the basis of examples of this type, I support the view that it is not lexical definiteness that is decisive for the insertion of the pivot in ES. The analysis I am going to propose for pivots in ES foresees that they convey existential reading because of the location in the existential closure, the lowest part of the structure. Usually, the existential/non-presuppositional reading is morphologically realized with indefinite pivots or bare nouns in languages with definite/indefinite articles. However, as we just saw, definite DPs can be semantically nonspecific. In this case, they are able to occur in pure ES.

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<sup>89</sup> D(iscourse)-linked elements are linked to the previous discourse.

<sup>90</sup> For this reason they are not only interpreted as topics, but they also behave like topics concerning extraction (Rizzi 2001) and Cruschina (to appear). Recall also that in 4.5.1 we said the coda can be aboutness-topic or referential topic if dislocated in existentials.

#### 4.6. DP and existential sentences in Sardinian

A last important section concerns the form of existential and locative sentences in Sardinian. The case of Sardinian is very interesting from a comparative point of view. There, we find a clear-cut distinction between the two types of constructions in so far as they each exhibit a different copula.

I pointed out in the previous sections the importance of the lexical item chosen for the instantiation of existentials or other apparently similar constructions. Indeed, there are several Romance languages in which there are switches of auxiliaries when different functions are expressed, for instance in Catalan with *esser-hi* and *haver-hi*, Spanish with *estar* and *hay* and of course Sardinian with *b'est / bi sunt* and *b'at*. Also in Southern Calabrian there are two auxiliaries available for the *there*-sentences, although the existential use can be ascribed to both constructions (see next chapter).

In Sardinian, however, the correlation between the occurrence of the definiteness restriction and the selection of the copula in ES is strong.

In particular, the peculiarity of Sardinian consists in the use of the copula BE with definite DPs, whereas the copula HABERE only occurs with indefinite pivots. It is exactly these last constructions displaying the copula HABERE that are considered to be genuine existentials (Remberger 2009). On the contrary, sentences with definite postcopular DPs receive a strong locative interpretation and are not genuine existentials. The auxiliary selection is strongly linked to the referential properties of the pivot, in particular specificity.

- (106) B'at            tres pitzinnas  
PF have.3SG three girls  
'There are three girls.'

(Remberger 2009: 253)

- (107) Bi sun        sas pitzinnas.  
PF be.3PL the girls  
'The girls are there.'

(Remberger 2009: 256)

Notice that the proform – the clitic *bi* – remains the same in both type of constructions. A significant hint of the sensitivity of Sardinian for the specificity properties of the DP in *there*-sentences comes from the lack of agreement between pivot and copula. Postcopular noun phrases in *there*-sentences fail to control agreement when the auxiliary HABERE is used (108), whereas with ESSE agreement takes place (109)

- (108) Cantos        alunnos b'at?  
how many pupils PF-have.3SG

(Bonese)

‘How many pupils are there?’

- (109) Cales alunnos bi sun?  
which pupils PF be.3PL  
‘Which of the pupils are there?’

(Bentley 2013: 688)

According to the judgments of the native speakers, the utterance in (108) is referring to a nonspecific group of pupils, whereas in (109) the pupils are a subset of an established set, known to the addressee (Bentley 2013). The specificity value of the pivot in (109) derives from inclusiveness, in the sense of Enç (1991). Significantly, the specificity of the DP – including indefinite noun phrases – is a relevant property for it to be a controller in Sardinian.

On a structural level, it can be assumed that a different computation underlies the pivots of the *bi*-sentences in Sardinian. Indefinite (nonspecific) DPs are existentially quantified within a PrP, the lowest part of the structure (Diesing 1994), where the originally locative element *bi* is necessary in order to yield existential quantification. They display HABERE as copula. The presence or lack of agreement alternates according to copula and this is an overt syntactic reflex for the structural position of definite and indefinites. These last elements, when nonspecific, do not need to be raised and are available to T in order to be interpreted and remain in situ (Remberger 2009). The sensitivity of the copula and consequent agreement analysed in terms of specificity is also supported by Bentley (2013) in the following examples (110) and (111).

- (110) B'est un'isveglia chi funtzionat in custa domo: sa mia  
PF be.3SG one alarm.clock which function.PRS.3SG in this house: the mine  
‘There is one alarm clock that works in this house: mine.’

- (111) Non b'at un'isveglia chi funzionet!  
NEG PF-have.3SG a alarm.clock which function.SUBJV.3SG  
‘There is no single alarm clock that works well!’

(Bentley 2013: 682).

In sentence (111) the presence of the subjunctive in the relative clause that is subordinated to the NP *un'isveglia* indicates the nonspecificity of the noun (Lambrecht 1994, Bentley 2013) and requires the non-agreeing copula *have*. Its semantic/pragmatic function is to negate the existence of a referent for the pivot. On the contrary, the specificity of the NP has as a consequence the selection of the *be*-copula and the indicative verb in the relative clause. In this case the reading of the pivot allows the individuation of “the only alarm clock that works among the alarm clocks in the given context”

(Bentley 2013: 688). Different pragmatic readings result from the selection of different copulas and correlate with the reading of the postcopular pivot (semantics) as well with the availability of agreement (syntactic).

Finally, a last remark concerns the proform *bi* in sentences with the HABERE or ESSE copula. The comparison between (112) and (113) shows that a *wh*-phrase (a locative phrase) can be present in an existential sentence (112) but not in a locative construction (113). In fact, in (113) the clitic *bi* has a real locative value and is therefore incompatible with the *wh*-phrase, because of the impossibility for the resumptive clitic to occur with foci (Cruschina to appear). On the contrary, only (112) – a pure ES – allows the presence of a focal *wh*-phrase in the sentence, as the proform *bi* is not resumpting a locative phrase, but functions as an existential quantifier binding the indefinite DPs (notice the lack of a definite article in (112)) (Remberger 2009).

(112) Inue b'at duos sindigos? (Logudorese of Buddusò)  
 where *bi*-has two mayors  
 'Where are there two mayors?'

(113) Inue (\*bi) son sos duos sindigos?  
 where *bi* are.3PL the two mayors  
 'Where are the two mayors?' Cruschina (to appear)

Summing up, Sardinian is a good example for the occurrence of the DE, a constraint that takes place in specific constructions from pragmatic, semantic and syntactic points of view. These are the existential sentences, a type of utterance that asserts the existence (or absence) of an entity in a context (Francez 2007, MacNally 2011, Bentley 2013). Whenever the locative or the availability reading cannot be attributed to the *there*-sentences, they are considered existentials and specific pivot DPs are therein ungrammatical.

These claims are of big relevance to the structural analysis of the definiteness restriction and I will compare them to the behaviour of ES in SCal in the next chapter. Indeed, in Southern Calabrian the presence of a morphological element only on specific objects of ES – a unique case within the Romance languages – seems to confirm the assumption of different positions for objects and therefore of a switch in the construction at use.



## 5. DEFINITENESS EFFECTS IN SOUTHERN CALABRIAN

### 5.1. Introduction

The in-depth analysis of Italian *ci*-constructions and the choice to differentiate among different types, from genuine ES to inverse or deictic locatives and eventually to presentational sentences, was motivated by several observations concerning the information structure, the argument or predicate role of the pivot and the clitic *ci*, as well as the role of the coda. The conclusions obtained will be used to test the data of the ES in the Italo-Romance sister language spoken in the extreme South of Italy and to see how this data can contribute to a better understanding of why the indefiniteness of pivots seems to be a crosslinguistic constraint in such constructions.

In Southern Calabrian there are two kinds of constructions that are used to realize ES. One of them employs the verb *aviri* (Engl. *have*) conjugated in the third person singular. There is no agreement with the pivot, a point to which I will come back later. Significantly, though, it steadily occurs accompanied by the clitic *ndi*, so that it is realized as *ndavi*, see (1a) and (1b). The clitic *ndi* stems from the Latin form INDE, which was a locative adverb.<sup>91</sup>

(1)a.            *ndavi nu libbru sup'o tavulu*<sup>92</sup>  
                  *ndi*-has a book on-the table  
                  ‘There is a book on the table.’

b.                *ndavi libbra sup'o tavulu.*  
                  *ndi*-has books on-the table  
                  ‘There are books on the table.’

The other lexical choice available is a counterpart to the Italian existential *esserci*, namely *nc'è /nci su* for singular and plural DPs respectively, compare (2a) and (2b). In Cittanovese one can also find a more archaic form of the third person singular and plural, namely *nc'esti/nci sunnu*.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> For now, I will gloss the form *ndavi* simply as “*ndi*-has” and not as “CL.LOC-has”. I will explain in 5.7 why I do not believe that this clitic has a real locative meaning anymore.

<sup>92</sup> A morpho-phonological remark: *o* in *sup'o tavulu* derives from the monophthongization of the preposition *a* plus the definite article *u*.

<sup>93</sup> This second lexical option for ES displays more proximity to the original forms in the Latin verb ESSE, namely *ĒST* and *SŪNT*, but it does not have influence on the analysis of the constructions.



- c. haiu a frèvi  
 have.1SG the fever  
 ‘(I) am feverish’

(Fanciullo 1996: 97)

- (4)a. ndavi i spadi larghi  
 b. ndaju sonnu  
 c. ndaju a frevi

(Southern Calabrian)

It seems thus that the conjugated forms are always realized together with the clitic *ndi*. The existential cluster *ndavi* appears to be the result of a reanalysis of the Latin possessive verb HABERE that took over the existential function, together with the grammaticalisation of the clitic *ndi* that changed from a real locative element still represented by its originating word INDE to a marker of existentiality indivisible from the copula. This fact will be of great importance when testing the function of the clitic *ndi*. Does the clitic really not have a locative meaning in ES and neither in possessive constructions? As the answer requires an in-depth analysis, I will dedicate sections 5.5 and 5.6 to it.

A first observation to keep in mind is that the verb *aviri* has at least three possible uses: (i) the existential function as *ndavi* (always 3<sup>rd</sup> pers. sing., no agreement with the pivot), (ii) the possessive meaning with *ndi* on all persons, as well as for the expression of feelings (iii) the auxiliary meaning.<sup>95</sup> I will use the term existential, but it will become necessary in the course of the discussion to establish if *ndavi* is only employed in ES or if it also takes over other roles as we saw for *esserci* (Engl. existential *there is/there are* or locative *to be there/somewhere*) in Italian.

Particular focus will thus be put on what makes *ndavi* available to express existence and not only possession, feelings or with the auxiliary function, although superficially the cluster *ndavi* can take over also these functions. In other words, the first peculiarity of SCal is that *ndavi* is one of the lexical choices available in SCal in order to build existential constructions. The other competitor form is parallel to the Italian *esserci*, namely *nc'è / nci su*.

The verb used in existential sentences in the standard language is *esserci* and not *essere*, the latter being the one selected for locative predications (Leonetti 2008a). The use of two different copulas, e.g. in Catalan, Sardinian or Spanish, is the strategy adopted in order to achieve the existential/locative distinction.

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<sup>95</sup> Notice that as SCal lacks some compounded tenses: no present perfect is available. The simple past as well as the present perfect is expressed with a syntactic form deriving from the Latin perfect tense. For instance, while in Italian one would say *io ho mangiato* (present perfect) or *io mangiai* (simple past), in SCal this would be for both tenses *Jeu mangiai*, deriving from Latin perfect *manducavi*.

Therefore, one of the first steps to take in order to provide a theory of the definiteness restriction is to have a look at the distribution of the different existential forms within the same language and see which one realizes genuine existential sentences. In SCal, the two forms with *have* and *be* co-exist and are not in complementary distribution. I will show that they nevertheless have different roles and that pure ES constitute two parallel systems in the diglossia situation for speakers in southern Calabria. Accordingly, it seems to be worth asking whether the form *nc'è /nci su* is a case of lexical borrowing, due to the influence of Italian on the dialect. Consider first (5)-(7) in SCal:

- (5) \*Ndavi idu ntr'o giardinu.  
*ndi*-has he in-the garden
- (6) \*Ndavi 'u cotraru ntr'o giardinu.  
*ndi*-has the boy in-the garden
- (7) Ndavi nu cotraru ntr'o giardinu.  
*ndi*-has a boy in-the garden  
 'There is a boy in the garden.'

Existential sentences like (5) and (6) do not allow definite DPs, while indefinite DPs are perfectly acceptable in the same type of construction (7). Definite DPs, on the contrary, are grammatical if they are inserted in *nci*-sentences, as the counterparts of (5) and (6) in (8) and (9) demonstrate.

- (8) Nc'è idu ntr'o giardinu.  
*nci*-is he in-the garden  
 'He is in the garden.'
- (9) Nc'è u cotraru ntr'o giardinu.  
*nci*-is the boy in-the garden  
 'The boy is in the garden.'

For this reason, it would at first seem natural to assume that the speaker resorts to *nci*-constructions in order to avoid the restrictions on definite DPs to occur in ES with *ndavi*. This hypothesis, though, needs to be refined. In fact, exactly as we have already seen for Italian, being a *nci*-sentence does not imply being exclusively an existential construction. I claim that in Southern Calabrian, *nci*-sentences can belong to different types which must be individuated on the basis of the kind of information they convey, the role of the proform and the occurrence of the coda in different

positions (within the sentence focus or dislocated), exactly as we previously saw for Italian. The last point becomes immediately evident when carefully looking at sentences (10) and (11). Here, an intonation pause is perceivable as well between the constituent *nc'è idu / nc'è 'u cotraru* and the locative phrase *ntr'o giardino*. In fact, for these sentences to be grammatical, the coda must be dislocated as in (10b) and (11b).

(10)a. \*Nc'è idu ntr'o giardinu.  
*nci-is he in-the garden*

b. Nc'è idu, ntr'o giardinu.  
*nci-is he, in-the garden*  
 'HE is in the garden.'

(11)a. \*Nc'è 'u cotraru ntr'o giardinu.

b. Nc'è 'u cotraru, ntr'o giardinu.  
*nci-is the boy, in-the garden*  
 'THE BOY is in the garden.'

Furthermore, if the DP is indefinite the sentences are grammatical in a *nci*-construction such as (12), as well as in a construction with *ndavi* (13), hinting at the fact that they are indeed both available for the pure existential use.

(12) *nci su nu cotraru e na cotrara, ntr'o giardinu.*  
*nci are.3PL a boy and a girl in-the garden*

(13) *ndavi nu cotraru e na cotrara ntr'o giardinu.*  
*ndi-has a boy and a girl in-the garden*

'There are a boy and a girl in the garden.'

Italian has *essere* for the unmarked locative predications with Topic-Comment information, while *esserci* takes over (i) the existential role, (ii-iii) the (deictic) inverse locative function with the argument is in focus and (iv) the presentational role. Very likely, the *nci*-sentences of SCal will also demonstrate to have a different nature, as the introducing remarks in this section already hint at. *Ndavi*, on the contrary, behaves straightforwardly as an existential cluster, but I do not exclude the possibility for this element to take over other functions.

I will take into account the following factors while analyzing the definiteness effects in Southern Calabrian:

- i. The individuation of different types of existential constructions. Pure existentials display properties that differentiate them from other kind of (pseudo)existential sentences, though their morphosyntax appears to be superficially alike.
- ii. The availability of different lexical items for pure or apparent existential constructions and the requirements of the lexical item selected.
- iii. The interaction of a locative XP constituent – realized or implicit – inside the different types of *nci*- and *ndavi*-sentences.
- iv. The nature of the clitic *nci* and *ndi* and the different role they assume within SCal and compared to the correspondent elements in Italian
- v. The occurrence of particular morphological markers in *ndavi*-ES

A last comment underpins the importance of looking for a careful distinction between genuine and pseudo-existential constructions, as the first point indicates. Since for many speakers in Italy the lingua franca in different situations is the local variety, it is plausible to assume that some forms compete with structures of standard Italian, a process that in fact leads to the Italianization of the dialects. Many archaic terms of the vernacular disappear in favour of Italianized or Italian ones and syntactic competitive forms can replace the local form. The existential constructions available in SCal clearly present a picture of two forms, *ndavi* and *nc'è/nci su*, that could be competing.

I assume *ndavi* to be the typical existential construction of SCal, whereas *nc'è/nci su* functions in the same fashion as the corresponding Italian construction (i.e. Ital. *c'è/ci sono*). This claim will be particularly substantiated by analysing in depth the function of the locative element *nci* as occurring in SCal only in this particular type of sentences, as well as with the various pragmatic roles they take over, which correspond to different syntactic structures.

## 5.2. The data

The data presented in this work come from Southern Calabrian, in particular from the variant spoken in Cittanova and Brancaleone, in the province of Reggio Calabria. Other SCal varieties spoken as well in towns located in the province of Reggio Calabria are otherwise explicitly stated. Obviously, among the dialects gathered under Southern Calabrian there can be a certain degree of phonetic, lexical or morphological variation. However, concerning the semantics and structure of the DP and the syntax of existential constructions, which will be the main points of interest in this thesis, there is high homogeneity which has been ascertained through the comparison with specific data from different varieties of SCal.

### 5.2.1. Methods

The present analysis of the DP and of the DE in ES is based on a corpus consisting for the major part of ten comedies. The choice to draw a consistent part of the data presented in this thesis from comedies is due to two reasons. On the one hand, I needed to access an extended sample of data in order to look for the available types of existential sentences in SCal and for their context of use. This was necessary to ascertain whether the constructions were existential or not. Collecting data exclusively from an elicitation test could have influenced the results, as the native speakers could show a tendency to use the Italianized form *nc'è/nci su* only. Additionally, basing the analysis only on spontaneous utterances entails the problem of the unpredictable frequency of use of the existential constructions.

On the other hand, the comedies are a reliable reflection of the colloquial language spoken nowadays in the dialects of Southern Calabrian. The plays have been performed in the last few years in many towns all over southern Calabria. They are all written or adapted in the SCal dialect and although unpublished I kindly got the comedy plots used by the actors. For this reason, following references are scarce.

- *I morti non paganu i tassi*, adapted by the theater group “La bottega del sorriso” in Cittanova.
- *Matrimoni e vescovati*, written by Giovanni Formisano and adapted in Southern Calabrian by Santo Saffioti
- *L'eredità dello zio Buonanima*, written by Antonio Russo Giusti and adapted in Southern Calabrian by Mimmo Nucera
- *L'eredità dello zio canonico*, written by Antonio Russo Giusti and adapted in Southern Calabrian by Totò Occhiato (Nuova Compagnia Teatro Popolare di Rosarno, theatrical season 2009)
- *Mogli e buoi dei paesi tuoi* (author unknown)

- *U paraninfu*, written by Luigi Capuana in Sicilian and adapted in SCal (editor unknown)
- *S'arrinesci semu ricchi*, written by Rocco Chinnici in Sicilian and adapted in SCal (editor unknown)

Additionally, I analysed data from the dialect of Brancaleone found in three of plays and in poetry collections, all written by the Calabrian author Bruno Salvatore Lucisano.<sup>96</sup>

Plays:

- *Pipiromania*
- *U Batteru*
- *Peppa a molla*

Poetry:

- *Maru cu mori* (2014)
- *A preghera di morti* (2014)
- *Jjanda mara* (2011)
- *U paradisu?* (2010)
- *A di vinu cummeddia* (2009)
- *A purga I Toriu. Nu bruttu sonnu* (2005)

Examples concerning the form of the DP seen in chapter 3 and existential constructions used in the corpus are also drawn from a series of lyrics, among which the collection edited by Gambino (1977), as well as from data present in other linguistic literature on Southern Calabrian from Ursino (2007), Falcone (1976) and Longo (1937), who put down in writing the transcription of some brief stories told them by native speakers in different vernaculars. Other works used to prepare the corpus are the lyrics collections *Vampi* written by Salvatore Giovinazzo, *Zirida e Roccu Ciampana* written by P. Barbatano and the poem *L'urtimu rispiru* of Giovanni Alessio, all writers from Cittanova, as well as the short play *Una farsa di Carnevale a Nicotera* by Antonino Basile.<sup>97</sup>

It was also taken into account that data from lyrics does not compromise the analysis, as these works are written, as well, in spoken Southern Calabrian. In other words, they are also a genuine expression of the colloquial language and the constructions I found do not display any difference concerning the form of the existential constructions and the DPs with the data from the comedies.

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<sup>96</sup> The poetry collections written by Bruno Salvatore Lucisano have been published. See bibliography for full references.

<sup>97</sup> Further references for the published works are listed in the bibliography. Those without any further references have not been published.

Additionally to that, I could ask a group of native speakers for grammatical and lexical judgments on the data collected from plays and lyrics (in addition to being a native speaker myself). This process was necessary in order to confirm that all texts presented data from Southern Calabrian, also the comedies adapted from Sicilian.

The informants group also provided further data by answering elicitation questions. The elicited data has been collected taking into account the variety spoken and the feedback about the judgments given. The explicit elicitation tasks consisted in the production of sentences in vernacular which the informants heard in Italian. Otherwise, the informants had to judge sentences in their variety and give an interpretation of them. The group of informants for the Cittanovese variant of SCal consisted of 13 native speakers, whereas for the variant of Brancaleone I could rely on the judgments of 6 informants. The informants' age is between 32 and 62 year-olds.

The data was not collected in a single session by filling in a single questionnaire. I could get back to the informants group at different times of the research, asking for spontaneous elicitation and putting them down in writing. I did not collect them in an official context because I was interested in the genuine dialectal choice of the existential construction they would make under a natural setting.

I wanted to let the informants as much freedom as possible concerning the constructions used. In fact, the influence of different linguistic systems in general becomes evident at different levels of the language, from phonology to morphology and syntax. This is most obviously perceivable in the field of lexical borrowings, which are often adapted by the speakers to the phonetic properties of their own language. Concerning code switching – intersentential, within the same utterance, or intrasentential, with mixed utterances between Italian and dialect – Berruto (1997) observes that it is a very common feature of the contemporary Italian. In his words “many Italians (approximately two-thirds [...]) are in a sense bilingual and exhibit the same bilingual mode of spoken communication one finds in many bilingual communities” (Berruto 1997: 395).

Finally, some of the examples reported in the study come directly from spontaneous utterances from the informants used in every-day language, of which I took note while the speakers interacted with each other. I considered this data also a significant source and mentioned them because they are realized in a complete natural environment. However, the spontaneous and elicited data have not been included in the statistic results in 5.2 but they served to substantiate the theoretical remarks whenever more data was necessary than that available in the corpus.

Notice that, as the present study is principally concerned with syntactic issues, the data have been transcribed in standard Italian orthography in order to render the dialect understandable to the unused reader, without reproducing the phonetic properties of the single vernacular in detail. Whenever necessary to the explanation of syntactic processes, the relevant phonological-phonetic characteristics have been briefly explained. For help in order to reproduce the exact pronunciation I refer to the transcriptions of sounds of Southern Calabrian found in Manzini & Savoia (2005) and for

Cittanovese in particular see Longo (1937), who both described the phonetic peculiarities of this language.<sup>98</sup>

### 5.2.2. An overview of the attested constructions

In my written corpus consisting of a total of 27,831 sentences, I found 345 occurrences of existential sentences in all. Out of the total amount, 85% of the ES are constructions displaying the copula ESSERE with the clitic *nci*, whereas only 15% of them display *ndavi*.

Constructions consisting of *nci*+ESSERE do not show at first sight a homogeneous behaviour concerning the restrictions on the DP selected. In fact, they superficially seem to readily accept any kind of DP, as it is the case for Italian *ci*-sentences. I found examples with definite DPs and verb agreement of the copula as in (14) and (15).<sup>99</sup>

- (14) Nc'è 'a luci, 'u patruni i casa e 'u gassi.  
*nci*-is the light, the master of house and the gas  
 'There [deictic locative] is the [+def, ±spec] light, the [+def, ±spec] landlord and the [+def, ±spec] gas.'  
 (SCal Corpus: 2)

- (15) Non c'eranu i satelliti!  
 NEG *nci*-be.PST.3PL the satellites  
 'There were no satellites [+def, -spec].'  
 (SCal Corpus: 107)

Also proper nouns or pronouns are perfectly acceptable in *nci*-constructions, as illustrated by (16), (17) and (18).

- (16) Vicinu a mia nc'era Micu l'orbu.  
 next to me *nci*-be.PST.3SG Micu the blind  
 'Next to me was Micu [+def, +spec], the one-eyed.'  
 (SCal Corpus: 41)

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<sup>98</sup> Due to the time lapse among the two studies to which the reader is referred, differences in the phonetic transcriptions have to be taken into account. Manzini & Savoia (2005) adopted the IPA transcription.

<sup>99</sup> Notice that when citing data from the corpus I used a continuous enumeration following the examples of the chapter. For each sentence, moreover, the number assigned to it during the collection of data, i.e. from 1 to 345, is also reported in parentheses (see Appendix). Furthermore, I let *nci* and *ndi* in the glosses of the data, and not use the abbreviation CL, in order to make the different clitics more evident.

(17) Si non c'eramu nui.  
 if NEG *nci*-be.PST.1PL we  
 'If we [+def, +spec] weren't here.' (SCal Corpus: 108)

(18) Ca docu nci si tu.  
 because there *nci* are.2SG you  
 'Because you [+def, +spec] are there' (SCal Corpus: 29)

At the same time, there were many occurrences of *nci*-sentences with indefinite nouns, either introduced by an indefinite articles as in examples (19) and (20), or bare as in (21) and (22).

(19) I latu i mia nc'era na signura.  
 to-the side of me *nci*-be.PST.3SG a lady  
 'At my side there was a [-def, -spec] lady.' (SCal Corpus: 36)

(20) Lontanu nc'era n'omu cu na longa barba.  
 far away *nci*-be.PST.3SG a man with a long beard  
 'Far away there was a [-def, -spec] man with a long beard.' (SCal Corpus: 48)

(21) Non c'eranu né servi né baruni.  
 NEG *nci*-be.PST.3PL neither servants nor barons  
 'There were neither servants [-def, -spec], nor barons [-def, -spec].'  
 (SCal Corpus: 46)

(22) Aundi nci su strati longhi, putixi, marciapedi, rughi randi, chiazzi.  
 where *nci* are.3PL streets long, stores, pavements, roads big, places  
 'Where there are long streets, stores, pavements, big roads, market places.'  
 [-def, -spec] (SCal Corpus: 139)

Finally, a last type of pivots in *nci*-constructions contains interrogative pronouns as in (23) and (24).

(23) Chi (n)c'è?  
 what *nci*-is?  
 'What happened?' (SCal Corpus: 118)

(24) Chi mali nc'è?  
 what evil *nci*-is  
 'What is wrong with that?' (SCal Corpus: 281)

Table 10 lists examples of all kind of DPs individuated with the *nci*-constructions.<sup>100</sup> I categorized the DPs according to the morphological occurrence of determiners ([+definite] = definite determiners and quantifiers / [-definite] = indefinite article / [±bare]), as well as observed what kind of semantic properties they convey that could be relevant for the description of the semantics of nouns in ES of SCal (e.g. animacy, specificity).

**Table 10. Semantic/morphological features of *nci*-sentences from the corpus**

	Common features of the noun	Examples
<i>nc'è/nci su</i> Copula: ESSE Number agreement with the pivot	[+ definite; – bare; – mass; ±animate; ± singular]	2. Nc'è 'a luci, 'u patruni i casa e 'u gassi. 107. Non c'eranu i satelliti! 218. Ccà nc'è Mariu, l'autru cuginu. 22. Fora nci su li guardi. 221. Nc'è marituma.
	[+ definite; – bare; – mass; + animate; ±singular]/ Personal pronouns	30. (N)c'era puru Greta Garbu. 41. Vicinu a mia nc'era Micu l'orbu. 78. Non nc'era vicinu a mmia cchiù Barbagianni. 108. Si non c'eramu nui.
	[– definite; – bare; – mass; + animate; ±singular]	32. Nc'era nu tenenti. 36. I latu i mia nc'era na signura. 48. Lontanu nc'era n'omu cu na longa barba.
	[+ wh-phrase; ± animate; ± singular]	67. Chi postu nc'è pe cu non fici beni? 118. Chi (n)c'è? 281. Chi mali nc'è?
	[– definite; + bare; – specific; ± animate; – singular]	46. Non c'eranu né servi né baruni 54. Ccà non ci sunnu raccomandazioni 139. Aundi nci su strati longhi, putixi, marciapedi, rughi randi, chiazzi.

<sup>100</sup> For reasons of space the sentences in the table are not glossed. For the glosses consult the appendix.

According to the sample data illustrated in table 10, there is no particular morphological/semantic property that stands out in the DPs listed above. In fact, *nci*-constructions of SCal seem to match Italian *ci*-sentences to the extent that they both apparently do not show any definiteness effect. In other words, any kind of DP is allowed in existential sentences.

As I deeply discussed in the previous sections, though, this first consideration is not sufficient and it is necessary to make a distinction among different types of *nci*-sentences in order to separate pure existentials from other similar constructions and demonstrate whether the DE is at work or not. This will be one of the aims of this and the next section, but before turning to this issue, let us first keep a close eye on the other small percentage of data collected, namely those constructions with the verb *ndavi*.

The data shows that the occurrence of the DPs in *ndavi*-sentences underlies some strong restrictions concerning their form. The majority of the sentences in the corpus contain bare mass nouns (25), (26) or generics (27), (28).

- (25) Cafè non ndavi!  
 coffee NEG *ndi*-has  
 ‘There is no coffee [-def, -spec]!’ (SCal Corpus: 5)
- (26) Nta stu postu non ndavi rispettu.  
 in this place NEG *ndi*-has respect  
 ‘There is no respect [-def, -spec] in this place.’ (SCal Corpus: 73)
- (27) Ndavi puru ndranghitisti.  
*ndi*-has also ndrangheta-members  
 ‘There are also members of the ndrangheta [-def, -spec].’ (SCal Corpus: 92)
- (28) O cimiteru ndavi malati, ricchi e poveretti, omini, fimmini, randi  
 at-the cemetery *ndi*-has ill, rich and poor, men, women, grown-ups  
 e figghioli.  
 and children  
 ‘At the cemetery there are sick people, riches and poors, men, women, grown-ups and children [-def, -spec].’ (SCal Corpus: 136)

Another class of pivots found in *ndavi*-sentences is that of the *wh*-phrases, as in (29) and (30).

(29) Quanti indiani *ndavi* in giru?  
 how many Indians *ndi*-has in round  
 ‘How many Indians are around?’ (SCal Corpus: 121)

(30) Chi *ndavi* ntra sta pentula?  
 what *ndi*-has in this saucepan  
 ‘What is inside this saucepan?’ (SCal Corpus: 287)

Definite nouns and proper nouns were not typical pivots of *ndavi*-constructions and only four examples could be detected in the corpus. Sentences (31) and (32) display pivots introduced by definite articles, whereas (33) and (34) were the only examples found with proper nouns. These four exceptions require a more detailed investigation, which will be provided in the following sections.

(31) *Ndavi tutti i cassetti perti.*  
*ndi*-has all the drawers open  
 ‘All the [+def, -spec] drawers are open.’ (SCal Corpus: 113)

(32) *Ccà ndavi i pipì.*  
 here *ndi*-has the peppers  
 ‘Here are the [+def, +spec] peppers.’ (SCal Corpus: 126)

(33) *Dà ndavi a bonanima i Danti.*  
 there *ndi*-has DOM late lamented of Dante  
 ‘There (deictic locative) is Dante [+def, +spec], God rest his soul.’ (SCal Corpus: 127)

(34) *Vicinu o mercatu ndavia a cummari Cuncetta.*  
 near to-the market *ndi*-had.3SG DOM mistress Cuncetta  
 ‘Next to the market was Mrs Cuncetta [+def, +spec].’ (SCal Corpus: 128)

In (31) the definite DP is introduced by the strong quantifier *tutti*, which would violate the definiteness restriction according to Milsark (1974). However, even if this is true, I do not think that this sentence fulfils the existential pragmatic function and I will therefore examine it more carefully in 5.10. Sentence (32) displays a definite article introducing the nominal and it illustrates a case of aforementioned specificity, which shall also not be compatible with the constraint and requires therefore an explanation. In the glosses of (33) and (34) I referred to the accusative preposition *a* as

Differential Objekt Marking (see 3.7), as it is more common in the recent discussion on the topic. Notice that this is not evident from the written data, as the lack of a uniform orthography does not have a separate sign for it. A reader unfamiliar with SCal could assume at first that *a* is the feminine article. For this reason, the relevant sentences have been double-checked by the informants, in order to confirm the presence of DOM. This is also necessary when DOM merges with a feminine article, whereas with a masculine singular article the outcome is morphologically different from both prepositional accusative and from the article in isolation, confirming that the DOM introduces the DP. A categorization of the DP appearing in sentences of this kind is provided in table 11. The sentences will be later commented during the relative discussion and glosses will be provided.

**Table 11. Semantic/morphological features of *ndavi*-sentences from the corpus**

	Common features of the noun	Examples
<p><i>ndavi</i> Copula: HABERE No number agreement</p>	<p>[– definite; + bare; + mass; – specific; ± animate; ± singular]</p>	<p>5. Cafè non ndavi! 63. Nta sta vita non ndavi guadagni. 73. Nta stu postu non ndavi rispettu.</p>
	<p>[– definite; – bare; – mass; – specific; – animate; +singular]</p>	<p>35. Ndavia davanti na porta chiusa. 37. I latu ndavia nu sarvagenti. 101. Ndavia nu rumuri fastidiusu nta machina</p>
	<p>[– definite; + bare; – specific; + animate; ±singular]</p>	<p>43. Non ndavia cchiù scorta. 92. Ndavi puru ndranghitisti. 136. O cimiteru ndavi malati, ricchi e poveretti, omini, fimmini, randi e figghioli.</p>
	<p>[+ wh-phrase; ± animate; ± singular]</p>	<p>121. Quanti indiani ndavi in giru? 287. Chi ndavi ntra sta pentula?</p>
	<p>[+ definite; – bare; – mass; – animate; – singular]</p>	<p>113. Ndavi tutti i cassetti perti. 126. Ccà ndavi i pipi.</p>
	<p>[+ definite; – bare; + specific; + animate; +singular]</p>	<p>127. Dà ndavi a bonanima i Danti. 128. Vicinu o mercatu ndavja a cummari Cuncetta.</p>

In accordance with the constraint on definiteness expected in genuine existential constructions, the great majority of DPs in *ndavi*-sentences are indefinite or bare. Recall that this aligns with the individuation in strong and weak determiners put forward by Milsark (1974), although the explanation he gives relies on the quantificational force and the interaction with the existential quantifier proper of *there be* sentences.

However, while a quick look at the DPs in table 10, which summarizes the different DPs in *nci*-sentences, suffices to assess that there is no apparent correspondence with the strong/weak categorization and every kind of DP is present there, among the pivots displayed with *ndavi* the major part of the data seems not to contradict the claim that strong DPs are not allowed in ES. In (35) is a list some examples of *ndavi*-sentences that seem to match the typology put forward by Milsark.

- (35)a. Cafè non ndavi!  
 coffee NEG *ndi*-has  
 ‘There is no coffee [-def, -spec]!’ (SCal Corpus: 5)
- b. I latu ndavia nu sarvagenti.  
 PREP side *ndi*-have.PST a life belt  
 ‘Next to me there was a life belt [-def, -spec].’ (SCal Corpus: 37)
- c. O cimiteru ndavi malati, ricchi e poveretti, omini, fimmini,  
 at-the cemetery *ndi*-has sick, rich and poor, men, women,  
 randi e figghioli.  
 grown-ups and children  
 ‘At the cemetery there are sick people, rich and poor people, men, women, grown-ups and children [-def, -spec].’ (SCal Corpus: 136)

Most of the examples of the data involved (i) inanimate mass and nonspecific nouns (*cafè*, Engl. *coffee*; *sordi*, Engl. *money*; *guadagni*, Engl. *earnings*; *cosi*, Engl. *things*; *rispettu*, Engl. *respect*; *guerra e alluvioni*, Engl. *war and floods* etc.), (ii) inanimate singular nouns introduced by an indefinite article (*na porta*, Engl. *a door*; *nu sarvagenti*, Engl. *a life belt*; *nu rumuri*, Engl. *a noise*; *nu barri*, Engl. *a pub*; *na filarata i machine*, Engl. *a queue*; *na corda*, Engl. *a rope*) or (iii) animate plural nouns with generic reading (*scorta*, Engl. *escort*; *ndranghitisti*, Engl. *members of the ndrangheta*; *malati, ricchi e poveretti...* Engl. *sick, rich and poor people*; *principi, baruni, padruni*, Engl. *princes, barons, masters*) as well as some sentence with wh-phrases (*chi*, Engl. *what*; *quanti indiani*, Engl. *how many Indians*; *quantu beddizzi*, Engl. *how many nice things*).

Summarizing on the basis of their form, they thus occur as (i) indefinite DPs (clearly cardinal), (ii) bare singulars (iii) or bare plurals (ambiguous, but cardinal when intended as a number/quantity

and not as some opposed to others). Semantically, they are therefore all allowed in ES according to the quantificational restriction provided by Milsark.

Interestingly, there is a cluster of data that steps out of the line and could maybe give some hints in order to consider other properties evidently involved in a theory of the definiteness constraint. In fact, out of the whole *ndavi*-data there are four sentences with definite articles, which are listed in the last two boxes of table 11. This means that examples (31) and (32), as well as (33) and (34) are not representative samples, but are indeed the pieces of evidence found in the corpus that seem to contradict the general definiteness constraint. After observing which relevant semantic properties are shared by the DPs banned in ES with *ndavi*, the next step will involve the analysis of the place occupied by these kinds of pivots in the syntactic structure (see section 5.10).

Although they seem to constitute a small exception to the general claim on the definiteness restriction, these particular cases require appropriate explanation, exactly because they can tell us more on the DE. Two similar examples are repeated in (36) and (37), while for (38) and (39), also seen above, a different explanation will be provided.

- (36)           Dà ndavi a bonanima i Danti.  
           there *ndi*-has DOM late-lamented of Dante  
           ‘Dante [+def, +spec] is there, God rest his soul.’
- (37)           Vicinu o mercatu ndavja a cummari Cuncetta.  
           near at-the market *ndi*-had.3SG DOM mistress Cuncetta  
           ‘Near the market was Mrs Concetta [+def, +spec].’
- (38)           Ndavi tutti i cassetti perti.  
           *ndi*-has all the drawers open  
           ‘All the [+def, -spec] drawers are open.’
- (39)           Ccà ndavi i pipi.  
           here *ndi*-has the peppers  
           ‘Here are the [+def, +spec] peppers.’

Before going into depth with respect to the peculiarity of this data, notice that in sentences (36) and (37) a striking common feature that immediately leaps out is the presence of Differential Object Marking (DOM) on the pivot DPs by means of the preposition *a*. The property of Calabrian dialects to display DOM in existential constructions has also been pointed out in Bentley & Cruschina (to appear), whereof they provide some examples, for instance sentence (40) in SCal of Reggio Calabria.

- (40) Ndavi a to soru nt'a cucina. (Reggio Calabria)  
*ndi*-has DOM your sister in-the kitchen  
 'Your sister is in the kitchen.'

For now, it suffices to say that the pivots of *ndavi*-ES seem to be able to escape the definiteness restriction despite their definite value by getting prepositionally marked. I will argue that the actual relevant semantic properties for these nouns in order to be object marked are specificity and animacy (von Heusinger & Kaiser 2003, Leonetti 2004) and that they thus occupy a higher position in the structure, escaping the definiteness constraint.<sup>101</sup>

At the same time, it must be explained how it happens that they are to be found in “existential sentences”. In other words, parallel to the explanation of whether these pivots occupy the same syntactic position of weak DPs in ES or not, it is important to ascertain if *ndavi* exclusively has the existential function.

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<sup>101</sup> Salentino is also cited as it displays clitic resumption, i.e. the object is resumed by an object clitic when it is dislocated or implicit in the sentence, see (i). In this sense, Salentino also provides an example for the object properties of the pivot in existentials with copula *have*.

- (i) Ave stranieri intra stu paese? Sì, l'ave (Soletto, Salento, Puglia)  
 has foreigners in this village? Yes them have.  
 'Are there foreigners in this village? Yes, there are.'

### 5.3. Two copulas for existential sentences in Southern Calabrian: HABERE and ESSE

Languages vary regarding the verb selected in ES, choosing mostly between *be* and *have*. In Romance, the variation concerning the selection of the copula is one of the factors that clearly influences the type of pivot found in ES because it often signals different types of sentences, as this section will describe. Particularly, in SCal the copula HABERE seems to necessarily require indefinite objects, while ESSE permits also definite pivots.

Generally, even if in Latin the existential and locative copula was ESSE, modern Romance languages display four different copulas deriving from ESSE, HABERE, STARE and TENERE.

The ESSE copula is selected by a great number of Romance and Italo-Romance languages, among which Italian, Rumanian, Corsican, Friulan, Romansh, Ladin, most Campidanese Sardinian varieties as well as northern, central and southern Italo-Romance dialects. Southern Calabrian belongs together with Sicilian to the last group, but it is also listed under the languages displaying HABERE. Catalan, for instance, selects ESSE only with personal pronouns, as well as Nuorese and Logudorese Sardinian dialects do only with definite DPs.

The HABERE copula is realized in Spanish, Asturian, Galician, European Portuguese, French and Catalan although not with personal pronouns, Logudorese and Nuorese Sardinian and finally Southern Calabrian. SCal HABERE copula appears to accept definite pivots, although to a small extent when they are marked with the prepositional accusative as the data showed, but I argue that a more fine-grained difference must be made with respect to this kind of sentences.

A third type of ES displays the copula STARE, like central and upper southern Italo-Romance dialects (e.g. Neapolitan). Finally, TENERE appears in languages like Brazilian Portuguese (Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming).

Of course, the list of copula serves to show the great variety presented by modern Romance languages with regard to the outcome of the copula in comparison to the common ancestor language Latin, but at the same time it is decisive in every single language to ascertain which constructions are really existentials and which are not. We have considered up to now, with special regard French, Catalan, Spanish and of course Italian and supported the hypothesis, that ES synchronically differ from locative, presentational and possessive sentences, because they share a particular predicative structure that interacts with the semantics of pivots in a special way.

From a structural point of view, existentials only need to display the pivot, which denotes “the entity or the individual about which the existential proposition expresses existence or presence in a context” (Bentley & Cruschina, forthcoming). The clitic, on the contrary, is not necessary to the existential predicate and can be absent in many languages (cf. Latin, Persian, Hindi, Russian, Finnish and many others, see Freeze 1992) and even the copula can lack altogether.

In Southern Calabrian, at first sight, there appears not to be a clear-cut picture on existential constructions as in the case of Sardinian (see 4.5.4). On the one side, the behaviour of *nci*-sentences seems to be much the same as the *ci*-constructions of Italian and is surely influenced by it. There is not a clear separation, as found in Sardinian for example, where the HAVE copula is exclusively used in genuine existential sentences, while ESSE takes over the locative function. However, I claim that *ndavi*-sentences in SCal are true existentials, yet are also available to take over other functions such as the presentative one, whereas the *nci*-sentences functions, as in Italian, are not exclusively existential, but cover the four different types illustrated in 4.5.3. I will motivate this claim in the course of the discussion and put forth a syntactic explanation for it.

Surely, the presence of the two copulas ESSE and HABERE with the respective locative element *nci* and *ndi* raises the question as to whether the two clusters can be compared to Italian *esserci* and *averci*.

In my opinion, *ndavi* is not comparable with *averci* of standard Italian, as is the case with *esserci* and *nc'è/nci su*. In fact, in standard Italian the cluster *averci* does not have a proper meaning, as is argued for the existential *ndavi* in SCal. Italian *averci* consists of *ci* + the auxiliary *avere*, where the clitic has the function of a direct or indirect object pronoun of first person plural. Compare (41), where the indirect object proclitic is on *avere* in its auxiliary function and (42), where *ci* is the direct object enclitic on the infinitive.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, *ci* with auxiliary-*have* can also have a locative function, for instance with the intransitive *pensare* (Engl. *think*) as this verb requires “a complement that indicates the place, actual or metaphoric, to which the thought is directed”.<sup>103</sup> In this case, it means “about that, concerning that” (43).

(41) Ci hanno detto di venire. (IO) (standard Italian)  
 CL.DAT have.3PL tell.PTCP to come  
 ‘They told us to come.’

(42) Grazie di averci avvisati. (DO)  
 thanks to have.INF-CL.ACC inform.PTCP  
 ‘Thanks to have informed us.’

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<sup>102</sup> *Ci* is a proclitic with finite verbs, but it occurs enclitically with nonfinite forms.

<sup>103</sup> Setti, Raffaella (2003): <http://www.accademiadellacrusca.it/it/lingua-italiana/consulenza-linguistica/domande-risposte/verbo-pensare-pronomi-atonici> and Serianni (2008) for more examples.

- (43) Non ci ho pensato.  
 NEG that have.1SG think.PTCP  
 ‘I did not think about that.’

More interesting appears to be colloquial Italian, because here the clitic *ci* is also found with finite forms of *avere*. It is clearly not bearing the auxiliary role, but neither conveying the possessive meaning, as the glosses of examples (44)-(47) from Raffaelli (2008)<sup>104</sup> show. The verb *have* in these cases is seen to convey the meaning of feeling something or of expressing a state.<sup>105</sup> In these cases *avere* can be considered as a psychological verb, which brings about an expression of “quirk” (cf. German examples such as *mich friert*, Engl. *I am cold*, or *mich hungert*, Engl. *I am hungry*, displaying quirky subjects and the relative discussion in Fischer 2010).

- (44) ci ho caldo. (colloquial Italian)  
*ci* have.1SG warm  
 ‘I feel hot.’
- (45) ci ho fretta.  
*ci* have.1SG hurry  
 ‘I am in a hurry.’
- (46) ci ho piacere.  
*ci* have.1SG pleasure  
 ‘I am pleased’
- (47) ci ho da fare  
*ci* have.1SG to do  
 ‘I am busy.’

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<sup>104</sup> Being a phenomenon typical of the spoken language there is no unanimity on the spelling. I adopted one the spellings that Raffaelli (2008) ascribes to the elevated language. Independently of the convention adopted (many would write *c’ho*), it is important to remark that <c> maintains its palatal affricate sound [tʃ] and it is not pronounced as a velar plosive, which is usually the rule in front of rear vowels.

<sup>105</sup> Other meanings expressed by *avere*, apart from non/material possession or expression of a state, are *to obtain*, *to hold*, or duty in the sense of *must do something*.

However, the clitic *ci* in colloquial language can also occur with *have* carrying possessive meaning, as in sentence (48).<sup>106</sup>

- (48) I miei vicini c'hanno una casa grande. (colloquial Italian)  
The my neighbours *ci*-have.3PL a house big  
'My neighbours have a big house.'

Sabatini (1985: 160) claims "the particle *ci* (or *ce*, if joined to other atonic particles), originally bore the value of the locative adverb *qui* (lat. *ecce hic*) and now has a widespread use together with the verbs *essere* and *avere* (not auxiliaries) as well as with other verbs. It has lost, to a big extent, its original meaning: its function is that of semantic and phonetic support of the verbal form."<sup>107</sup>

Therefore, the locative adverb is regarded as being devoid of its original locative semantics and to have assumed a new function: in combination with the verb *have* it intensifies the verbal form from a semantic and phonological point of view. Hence, the meaning of the resulting clitic *ci* + HAVE form is that of an emotional "as to me, under these circumstances" and its phonetic reinforcement highlights the new semantics of possessive *have* (Raffaelli 2008).

The properties of the clitic *ci* on *averci* are very interesting and will be relevant again when I will address the issue of nature of *nci* and *ndi* in section 5.6 and 5.7. The relevant point is that *ndavi* is obviously a particular construction proper of SCal that does not share the existential meaning with *averci* in Italian. On the contrary, *nc'è/ nci su* behave exactly the same way as *esserci* in Italian and I claim that it is indeed possible for it to have the existential function along with the inverse locative and presentational functions seen for its Italian counterpart.

The existential cluster *ndavi* underwent reanalysis from the originally possessive verb in Latin, together with the grammaticalization of the clitic *ndi*. It took over the existential function.

However, this is not the only interesting property of *ndavi*, as the most decisive one for the syntactic analysis I am going to present is the possibility to mark only a determined class of noun with the prepositional accusative. In fact, I will ultimately consider it as morphological evidence for different positions of the objects in the existential structure and thus for different functions of *ndavi*. The discussion of the prepositional accusative with *ndavi* will be the topic of the next section.

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<sup>106</sup> Example pointed out to me by Silvio Cruschina (p.c.).

<sup>107</sup> My translation.

#### 5.4. DOM in *ndavi*-sentences

In the previous chapter I have assessed that the source of the existential verb *ndavi* is HABERE and, thus, originally a possessive. We will see in this section that *ndavi*-ES have indeed several features in common with possessive constructions but that, synchronically, existentials are independent from the original source.

Examples of *ndavi* with definite DPs in the corpus only concern the occurrence of proper names (or better, common names for roles followed by the proper name, compare table 11). Crucially, it seems that a possibility for a common noun to be inserted in an existential *ndavi*-construction is the requirement for the pivot DP to be [+animate]. Moreover, in the cases at issue, the pivots are always introduced by the (apparent) preposition *a*, compare examples (49a)-(52a) to their ungrammatical counterpart without prepositional accusative in (49b)-(52b). Sentences (49)-(51) are drawn from the written corpus, whereas sentences (52a) and (52b) have been elicited by the informants in order to have some examples of the behaviour of *ndavi* with a proper noun.

- (49)a. Ndavi a to soru nt'a cucina. (Reggio Calabria)  
 ndi-has ACC your sister in the kitchen (Bentley & Cruschina to appear)<sup>108</sup>  
 b. \*Ndavi to soru nt'a cucina.
- (50)a. Dà ndavi a bonanima i Danti.  
 there ndi-has DOM late-lamented of Dante  
 'Dante is there, God rest his soul.'  
 b. \*Dà ndavi bonanima i Danti.
- (51)a. Vicinu o mercatu ndavja a cummari Cuncetta.  
 near at-the market ndi-had.3SG DOM mistress Cuncetta  
 'Near the market was Mrs Concetta.'  
 b. \*Vicinu o mercatu ndavja cummari Cuncetta.
- (52)a. Ndavi a Giuanni  
 ndi-has DOM Giuanni  
 'There is John.'  
 b. \*Ndavi Giuanni.

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<sup>108</sup> The authors gloss the prepositional accusative introducing the nominal with the abbreviation ACC. I will mostly use DOM, except when commenting/presenting examples from Ledgeway (2000), who uses PA.

Now, the property of a determined group of object nouns to be introduced by a marker with certain verbs is not a new fact among Romance languages.<sup>109</sup> For instance in Spanish, as in Southern Calabrese, the marker *a* – homophone to the preposition *a* – is the element that typically introduces animate objects DPs. This phenomenon is known as Differential Object Marking (DOM) and correlates with a series of semantic and syntactic properties of both direct objects and verbs. It is therefore also known as “prepositional accusative”.

Many authors (von Heusinger & Kaiser 2003, Leonetti 2004 among others) point particularly at the sensitivity of the prepositional accusative to the interaction of animacy and specificity – a cluster of properties that will prove decisive also in the description of the DE in Southern Calabrese *ndavi*-ES.

Differential Object Marking can in fact be explained by resorting to the evident semantic properties shared by the object arguments displaying it. Evidently, DOM occurrences strongly depend on the place the objects occupy in the reference (intended as a broader term for what has been defined by terms such as specificity/semantic definiteness/individuation) and animacy scales, these two properties being decisive in order to have prepositional accusative. I report them in (53) and (54) respectively.<sup>110</sup>

(53) Referentiality Scale (extended version of Aissen 2003: 437; “Definiteness Scale”):

personal pronoun > proper noun > definite NP > indefinite specific NP > indefinite non specific NP > non-argumental

Pro >	PN >	Def >	Spec >	– Spec >	– Arg
argument-status (e-type)					<e,t>-type

(54) Animacy Scale:

human > animate > inanimate

human	animate	inanimate
+ human	– human	

<sup>109</sup> Indeed, Bossong (1985) cites in his work that at least 300 languages all over the world display the phenomenon involving the prepositional marking of the direct objects (von Heusinger & Kaiser 2007: 85).

<sup>110</sup> Drawn from von Heusinger & Kaiser (2007: 87). The two scales relate to the semantic and grammatic properties of objects displaying DOM. They are elaborated on the basis of such properties of objects tested at different verbs, not only existentials. The last step in the referentiality scale (-Arg) concerns the possibility for the object not to be an argument anymore, but to be even subject to incorporation with the verb.

Indeed, also in SCal *ndavi*-sentences animacy is the most evident property of the definite nouns accompanied by the preposition *a* found in the corpus, but it still is not a sufficient condition for DPs in order to be marked by the preposition. The other relevant semantic property must be something related to the individuation of the referent, namely specificity. That both properties are necessary for DPs occurring in *ndavi*-sentences in order to get the prepositional marker is clearly demonstrated by the data from the corpus repeated in (55), (56) and (57).

(55) Non ndavia<sup>111</sup> cchiù scorta.  
 NEG *ndi*-have.PST.3SG anymore escort  
 ‘There was no more police escort [-def, -spec].’ (SCal Corpus: 43)

(56) Ndavi puru ndranghitisti.  
*ndi*-has also ndrangheta-members  
 ‘There are also members of the ndrangheta [-def, -spec].’ (SCal Corpus: 92)

(57) O cimiteru ndavi malati, ricchi e poveretti, omini, fimmini,  
 at-the cemetery *ndi*-has sick, rich and poor, men, women,  
 randi e figghioli.  
 grown-ups and children  
 ‘At the cemetery there are sick people, rich and poor people, men, women,  
 adults and children [-def, -spec].’ (SCal Corpus: 136)

All DPs occurring in sentences (55)-(57) are [+animate] and are not marked by *a*. Indeed, for the pivot in *ndavi*-ES is not sufficient to be animate: it must obligatorily be specific at the same time. In fact, examples (55)-(57) demonstrate that as soon as the noun is generic, i.e. not specific anymore, it occurs unmarked.

Of course, nonspecific nouns are allowed in pure-ES. Indeed they constitute the “perfect” pivot for this kind of constructions. Furthermore, as far as the quantificational constraint in Milsark’s hypothesis is concerned, they do not violate it, as they occur as bare nouns in the examples just mentioned. Particularly, in my corpus from SCal the nonspecific nouns are either plurals or mass nouns.

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<sup>111</sup> I report the original spelling. Some tend to write the past form of *ndavi* with <j> to get back the half-vowel sound, others use a vowel <i> in the writing. As I explained above, there is no official orthography to follow, so the two forms *ndavi* or *ndavja* are to be considered equivalent.

The questions arising from the *a*-marked data like (49)-(52) compared to the unmarked (55)-(57) can be qualified in the following way: (i) does the fact that the definite/specific DPs are only allowed when Case-marked for accusative hint at some particular syntactic property of ES with HABERE? In other words, why are definite/specific DPs allowed in pure *ndavi*-existentials only if Case-marked? (ii) why does this only happen with [+animate] nouns?

Verbs such as *tener* or *hay* in Spanish are considered to be located low in the affectedness scale and tend therefore not to take *a*-marked objects (Bossong 1985, von Heusinger & Kaiser 2007: 96). The first impression is that existential sentences with HABERE in SCal are indeed sensitive to the intrinsic semantic property of animacy and to specificity at the same time. Furthermore, their particular status as direct objects is in line with the remarks made by Suñer (1982), concerning Spanish. According to her, DPs in impersonal constructions are direct objects, but the impersonal construction of Spanish with *hay* does not mark its object with prepositional accusative. Nevertheless, she puts forth for the apparent subject of such constructions to be actually an object. I agree with this claim on the basis of SCal *a*-marked pivots and on the particular role played by the grammaticalised locative element.

Moreover, that the property of animate/specific nouns of being direct objects suggests a strong correlation with possessive sentences has been already noted by Freeze (1992). In his “universal locative hypothesis”, the *have*-constructions are accounted for as having the same structure that underlies existential as well as locative sentences. In Freeze’s approach, furthermore, the *have*-sentences are characterized by the requirement of an [+animate] NP theme.

In SCal, significantly, we have seen that there is a strong morphosyntactic similarity with real possessive sentences. Interestingly, from the feedback received by the informants after elicitation tests, they are also quite unaware of the fact that *ndavi* also expresses existentiality, although they consistently use it in their utterances. This means that it is the possessive meaning that is primarily considered the major function of *ndavi*. In this respect, SCal differs from other vernaculars such as some Salentino dialects or some Ibero-Romance, where existential constructions exclusively use the copula HABERE (58a) and (58b), whereas possessive sentences are built using TENERE (59a) (59b) and are thus a counter-example to the claim of the synchronic identity of existential and possessive sentences (Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming).

(58)a. Ave doi cristiani alla porta (Soletto, Salento, Puglia)  
have.3SG two people at-the door

b. Hay dos personas en la puerta. (Spanish)  
have.3SG.PF two people at the door

‘There are two people at the door.’

(59)a. Tenene na machina russa. (Soletto, Salento, Puglia)  
have.3PL a car red

b. Tienen un coche rojo. (Spanish)  
have.3PL a car red

‘They have a red car.’

The comparison of SCal with other Romance languages is surely relevant to the issue of the emergence of the HABERE-existential sentences. In particular, though, in this section we need to describe the DOM-phenomena in SCal *ndavi*-ES with definite/specific nouns and accommodate them in a theory that explains why they look like an exception to the DE and whether they are in fact exceptions at all. Are *ndavi*-ES with DO-marked pivots genuine existentials or should they be considered another type of constructions?

In order to answer this question we shall analyse the issue of DOM in more detail. It had been noticed long ago (Rohlf 1968: 632) that in southern Italian dialects the [+animate] direct objects occurring with different verbs – i.e., not only existential – are marked with a preposition, the most common of them being *a*. This property is shared among Romance by southern and some central dialects of Sardinian, by Corsican, Ibero-Romance languages, Romanian and – even if with some exceptions – by Northern Italian dialects (Trumper 2003: 229). The general observation is that the direct object is marked by a preposition, which can be different for each language mentioned above, but is always homophonous to a real preposition (i.e., to one assigning inherent Case). For example, Rohlf (1968) mentions besides *a*, *per* (Romanian: *am văzut pe tine*) or *da* (Gallo-Sicilian) and he also provides examples from Genoan and Triest dialect, for instance: *no stème lassar fora a mi* and *mi te go pregà a ti de farme sto piassèr* respectively. This last example corresponds moreover to the constructions in neo-Venetian dialects and some Friulan ones (Trumper 2003: 229 and fn.2 therein). Prepositional direct objects prevalently manifest themselves in non-standard Romance languages and varieties, but despite the fact that DOM is a widespread phenomenon its occurrence is not homogeneous as for the time of emergence or the space continuity (Guardiano 2010).

Independently of the choice made among the available prepositions in different languages, one of the most important features for the object to be marked is in fact to be [+animate]. Diachronic analyses of the development of DOM in Spanish showed, for instance, that the prepositional object marker started to appear on (animate) personal pronouns, probably as a marker of topicality, and then went on to include (inanimate) personal pronouns, proper nouns and further definite/specific human/animate NPs up to specific indefinites. Crucially, though, the development was also dependent

on the lexical class of verbs in which it occurred (von Heusinger & Kaiser 2007 for the correlation with verb properties, Guardiano 2010).

The objects marked by *a* in modern SCal include pronouns, proper names but also kinship terms, place names (most probably because interpreted as personified) and professions or roles (Trumper (2003: 229). Notice that with role nouns I refer to “roles which can be acted or taken up by human beings” (Zamparelli 2008: 112). This last group of nouns is represented in the two examples (50) and (51) that stand out from my corpus of *ndavi*-ES. Therefore, they will constitute the starting point for the semantic and formal remarks concerning the pivots in *ndavi*-ES.

I first consider some remarks on DOM with other classes of verbs necessary. In fact, the occurrence of DOM in an existential construction is a phenomenon specific of Southern Calabrian, as no other Romance language displays it. The circumstances under which DOM occurs are therefore of great relevance in order to explain why it is allowed to appear in ES. In fact, I will claim that the syntactic analysis of object marked objects with other verbs also applies to objects in *ndavi*-ES. However, the occurrence of DOM implies an additional analysis for this type of construction that is undertaken throughout chapter 5.

Let us start considering sentences (60)-(63) from Cittanovese, displaying DOM with a transitive verb. Both provide examples of the generalized markedness of [+animate] objects with *a*.<sup>112</sup>

- |      |   |                          |
|------|---|--------------------------|
| (60) | Vitteru *(a) to figghia ntr'a cresia.<br>saw.3PL DOM your daughter in-the church<br>'They saw your daughter [+def, +spec] in the church.' | DO + <i>a</i> -marking   |
| (61) | Vitti ???(a) Giuanni<br>saw.1SG DOM Giuanni   | DO + <i>a</i> -marking   |
| (62) | Vitti (*a) nu libru sup'o tavulu.<br>saw.1SG DOM a book on-the table<br>'I saw a [-def, -spec] book on the table.'                        | (DO) - <i>a</i> -marking |
| (63) | Nci telefonai *(a) Giuanni.<br>CL.DAT called.1SG DOM John<br>'I called John [+def, +spec].'   | (IO) + <i>a</i> -marking |

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<sup>112</sup> In SCal, there is no difference between direct and indirect object marker, as the preposition used is always *a*. Notice that in standard Spanish this is also the case and in fact, when DO and IO co-occur, the marker of [+animate] direct objects is given up in order to let only the indirect object to be marked.

What straightforwardly leaps out is a great degree of ambiguity between the direct and indirect objects – DO and IO respectively – as they are both marked by the same preposition <*a*>, compare (60), (61) and (62) where the marker is obligatory. This preposition is the outcome of Latin AD (Engl. *to*) and marks the direct and indirect objects in SCal and other southern vernaculars.

In order to explain the issue of DOM in general, two main approaches have gained attention in the linguistic literature. The first is known as the Ambiguity Thesis and the second as the Transitivity Thesis (see von Heusinger & Kaiser 2007: 85 for references). The Ambiguity Thesis predicts that a marker originating from a real preposition takes over the function of disambiguating direct objects from very similar typical subjects. The occurrence of the extra marker is explained as being based on the semantic properties named above, namely animacy and specificity/topicality/definiteness. The second hypothesis is known as the Transitivity Thesis, according to which the marker of the object depends on the transitivity of the verb and how strong the object properties interact with the lexical semantics of the verb. That is to say, “languages prefer to mark categories with high transitivity values morphologically, rather than lower values” (von Heusinger & Kaiser 2007: 90). A desirable approach, such as that of von Heusinger & Kaiser (2007) for Spanish takes into account both the semantics of the verb and of the object, as well the disambiguation processes among superficially similar arguments.

Sentences (60)–(62) above display the transitive SCal lexical verb *vidiri* (Engl. *see*) that requires a direct object as its complement. This latter is marked in the accusative Case, whereas in standard Italian no marker occurs. In sentence (63) we are faced, on the contrary, with an indirect object as the preposition *a* assigns the dative Case. As (62) shows, the proper noun strongly requires the marker *a* in SCal, but it is actually not obligatory, for example a sentence with a second predication such as (64) would be acceptable also without marker. However I do not exclude that the acceptability could also be influenced by language contact. In fact, the informants’ judgement strongly preferred the marker also in this case. Notice, significantly, that a variant without marker is the choice of standard Italian and would represent thus an example of regional Italian.

- (64) Vitti      Giuanni chi trasia      ntr’a      cresia.  
 saw.1SG John      who entered.3SG into-the church.  
 ‘I saw John entering the church.’

Furthermore, even if a verb such as *vidiri* requires a direct object, inanimate objects occurs bare, whereas the animate always displays the preposition <*a*>. Another important factor seems to be the properties of the verb. In Spanish, for instance, the verb *ver* (Engl. *see*) is considered to belong to a group of verbs – together with *encontrar* (Engl. *find*), *buscar* (Engl. *look for*) or *esconder* (Engl. *hide*) – that allows optional *a*-marker with animate objects. Others, on the contrary, obligatorily take the

prepositional accusative. These are for instance *saludar* (Engl. *greet*), *odiar* (Engl. *hate*), *insultar* (Engl. *insult*), *castigar* (Engl. *punish*), *sobornar* (Engl. *bribe*) or *atacar* (Engl. *attack*) (Leonetti 2004).

Verbs of the first group, with optional DOM, are considered to assert a semantic difference whether they realize the *a*-marker or not. If the marker is available, direct causation of the subject is perceivable, whereas the omission of the marker yields indirect causation (for examples with the verb *matar* and discussion see Torrego 1999 and von Heusinger & Kaiser 2007). This semantic contrast is assumed to be lexicalized with the verb belonging to the second group, whereas the verbs with optional *a*-marker still yield the semantic difference. The occurrence of DOM, therefore, should also be considered in view of the verb properties. In particular, transitivity and affectedness decisively influence it.

Sentences (38)-(42) have been elicited for SCal, taking into account the affectedness<sup>113</sup> of the verb, which foresees a strong tendency to display an accusative marker for the verbs with a high affectedness value, contrary to those with low affectedness. The same is true for verbs with high transitivity, which preferably mark their direct objects when a language has DOM. This has been done in order to prove if the claims made on the basis of the observation of DOM in Spanish also apply to SCal, namely that “all high transitive values contribute to the discourse salience of the event described by the verb and its argument”, i.e. direct objects marked by *a* are high in individuation and the same marker occurs with telic events or verbs with high affectedness value (von Heusinger & Kaiser 2007: 90).

The relevant properties of DOM in a well-studied language like Spanish can be summed up with the words of Stark (2005: 134): “[Spanish] marks almost exclusively animate, more precisely non-abstract or non-mass-like referents in definite and/or specific (but not exclusively) and topical direct objects. Moreover, the higher a verb’s transitivity [...], the more DOM becomes grammaticalized. In addition, whenever its use is optional, DOM marks single, individualized and autonomous referents with stable referentiality, i.e. referents that have to be considered at least as contoured, shaped entities”. These observations are decisive for SCal too.

In Southern Calabrian, the DOM occurs in the cases illustrated by the following data. Sentence (65) features the verb *salutari* (Engl. *greet*). While the standard Italian counterpart *salutare* get a direct object as complement without any marker, SCal patterns with Spanish and obligatorily requires the prepositional accusative.

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<sup>113</sup> Affectedness is a term that sums up a cluster of properties and is therefore not easy to give an exact definition of it. Affectedness can be stated by taking into account different requirements of the verb on the “animacy of the object, the agency of the subject, the involvement of the object, and the aspect or aktionsart of the verb.” Although all this sub-properties are difficult to detect and interact with other properties of the verb such as transitivity, affectedness can be considered as “the specification of the verb to its object with respect to animacy” (both quotations from von Heusinger & Kaiser 2007: 92).

- (65)a. \*(A) cu salutasti?  
 DOM who greet.PST.2SG  
 ‘Who did you greet?’
- b. Salutai \*(o) (=a+u) soceru i Giuanni.  
 greet.PST.1SG DOM father-in-law of John  
 ‘I greeted John’s father.’

The same holds for the verb *minari* (Engl. *beat*) in sentence (66) and for *incontrari* (Engl. *meet*) in (67), both verbs that like *salutare* are high on the affectedness scale. Notice, moreover, that sentence (66) also displays clitic doubling in the form of the clitic pronoun *nci*, a phenomenon often concomitant to DOM.

- (66) Nci minaru \*(a) nu cotraru aieri.  
 CL.ACC beat.PST.3PL DOM a boy yesterday  
 ‘They beat a boy yesterday.’
- (67)a. Ncontrai \*(a) figghia i Teresa.  
 meet.PST.1SG DOM-the daughter of Teresa  
 ‘I met Teresa’s daughter.’
- b. Ncontraru \*(a) Giuanni.  
 meet.PST.1PL DOM John  
 ‘They met John.’

Eventually, sentences (68) and (69) exhibit the verb *trovari* (Engl. *find*) and *cercari* (Engl. *seek*), which do not only require animate objects, but also often occur with inanimate ones and therefore occupy a medium position on the affectedness scale. Nevertheless, with human/animate objects the *a*-marker is mostly used. An alternative without *a*-marker would not be ungrammatical (see the b examples), provided that regional Italian is being spoken, whereas it is still very improper when speaking SCal. In (68a) clitic doubling occurs, this time in form of the accusative clitic pronoun ‘*u* (ital. *lo*). Notice that, on the contrary, inanimate objects – even definites – do not take any prepositional accusative.

- (68)a. ‘U trovasti ???(o) figghiu di Giuanni?  
 CL.ACC found.2SG DOM-the son of John  
 ‘Did you find John’s son?’

b. Trovasti ‘u figghiu i Giuanni?

(69)a. Cercavu            ???(a)    don Mimmu, nc’è?  
sought.1SG            DOM don Mimmu, *nci*-is?  
‘I was looking for don Mimmu, is he here?’

b. Cercavu don Mimmu, nc’è?

Ledgeway (2000) claims that the objects in (60)-(69) are structurally Case-marked DPs and that the variation concerning the marking of the objects is indeed sensitive to their semantic properties. In fact, not every type of direct object can be marked by *a*: only animate and specific objects display the morphological marker, whereas inanimate and/or nonspecific do not. Following Ledgeway (2000), I will therefore consider *a* as a Prepositional Accusative (PA), also known as DOM, and a bare direct object as an Unmarked Accusative (UA).<sup>114</sup>

When faced with marked DPs, the morphological marker *a* is assumed to be part of the DP and to receive Case from its structural position. Therefore, <*a*> must be distinguished by the homophonous real preposition <*a*> that occurs in many other contexts within Romance languages and is the head of a PP, conferring inherent dative Case to its complement DP.<sup>115</sup>

Besides the marking of direct objects, that even indirect objects, such as those in (66) (*nci telefonai a Giuanni*) are structurally case marked is displayed by other southern vernaculars, for instance Neapolitan, the indirect object 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitic, *nce*, can also be substituted by the accusative clitic ‘*o*, pointing at the possibility of formal equality between PA-marked structural accusative and structural dative objects. Significantly, Ledgeway (2000: 26) concludes that “an accusative clitic is permitted in conjunction with objects in structural dative (SD) since, irrespective of the accusative/dative distinction, the clitic always references a structurally Case-marked DP, a requirement which cannot be met [when] the clitic references a prepositional complement marked with inherent dative case”.

Therefore, an important point to highlight in the present discussion is that marked objects, for example those in (60) and (63) share the semantic property of being animate. Ledgeway suggests that this “reflects a tendency to generalize the Case marker <*a*> to all structural Case-marked animate objects, irrespective of their accusative or dative status’ (Ledgeway 2000: 22).

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<sup>114</sup> Since this section is based on the analysis of Ledgeway (2000) proved on the data in SCal, I will sometimes use here some terminology adapted from his analysis: *vP*, *Vb* (Verbal complex) and finally PA (Prepositional Accusative) for the more recent abbreviation DOM.

<sup>115</sup> For extensive discussion on the morphological and syntactic evidence that support the analysis of direct objects marked by PA as DPs see Ledgeway (2000: Ch. 2) and references therein concerning the same claim for marked Spanish objects.

In particular, the particular syntactic property of objects marked by PA is to be located higher in the structure, whereas unmarked objects that stay in their base-generated position do not display the marker or clitic doubling. These remarks are relevant for the following discussion on the properties of the pivot DPs in *ndavi*-existentials in SCal.

Following these claims, the fact that two exceptions of definite pivots occurred within the *ndavi* existential data is maybe not such an unexplainable case, as it may seem at first. There is a bundle of properties to which the differentially marked objects are sensitive: semantic features such as animacy, specificity and definiteness, and morphosyntactic properties, such as clitic doubling seen right now (Ledgeway 2000: 37), as well as the transitivity/affectedness of the verb. Animacy is a property inherent to the noun and cannot be influenced by the syntactic structure, whereas definiteness/specificity are meant here as semantic properties related to the whole information structure because they involve discourse prominence/recoverability (Guardiano 2010).

At a structural level, building on the analysis of Ledgeway (2000), I also assume that the position occupied by specific animate objects, which must be differentially marked by the prepositional accusative *a*, is higher than that of inanimate non/specific objects. Compare the structure of sentence (60) to (62), both displaying the monotransitive verb *vidiri* (Engl. *see*). The reasons for this difference must be sought in the properties of the DPs and the features carried by determined functional categories.

In (60) and (62) the DPs *a to figghia* and *nu libbru* are merged with the lexical verb *vitti/vitteru* in V. The presence of the light verb *v*, which carries a strong [V] feature and is moreover phonetically null in SCal,<sup>116</sup> requires V to adjoin to it and to form in that way a verbal complex Vb. Vb corresponds thus to [<sub>v</sub> V v]. In a further step, the complex Vb is raised to T, leaving behind a trace in *v*.

What eventually distinguishes (60) from (62) is the overt or covert checking by the objects with respect to *v* together with V raised from its base-position. In fact, the functional category light *v* carries an uninterpretable feature [D] that can be specified as [ $\pm$ strong]. Should the feature be strong, some element must be available in order to check and eliminate it. This is exactly what happens in (60), where the specific, animate DP *a to figghia* overtly raises to [Spec, *v*P] and enters, thus, a Spec-head relation with *v*.

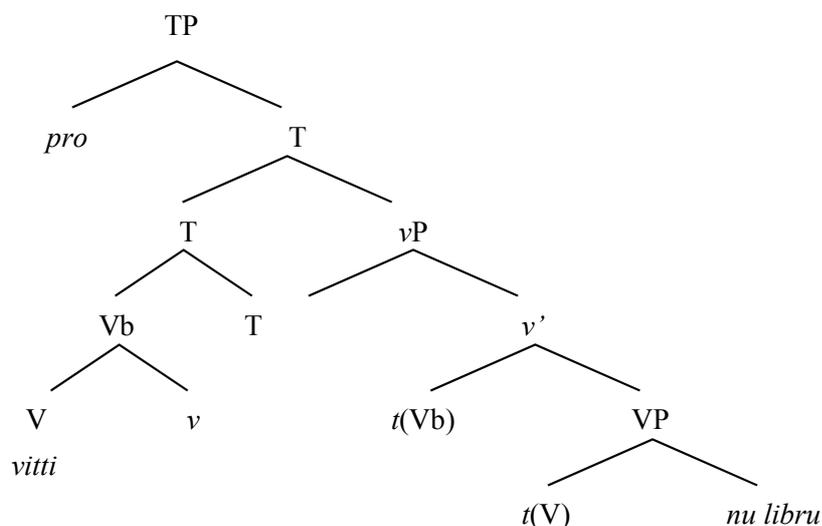
In (62), on the contrary, *v* is selected from the lexicon with a weak F[D] and therefore the object *nu libbru* only checks the feature covertly after Spell-Out, without raising to [Spec,*v*]. In other words, an EPPs is assumed in [Spec, *v*] – parallel to the EPPg in T – and this can be overtly checked by

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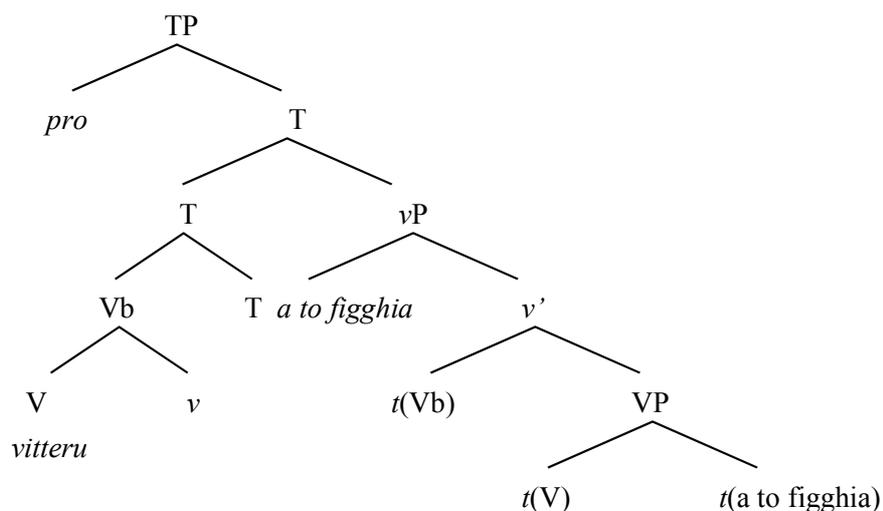
<sup>116</sup> Compare chapter 6, where an analysis of Persian provides evidence for the overt realization of light *v* in some languages.

specific/animate objects, or covertly by nonspecific/inanimate ones. Finally, [Spec, T] is in both sentences occupied by *pro*.

(62)



(60)



The functional category light  $\nu$  carries a [+strong] [D]-feature that needs to be checked in order to render it interpretable at LF. Accordingly, the specific/definite animate object has to be raised to [Spec,  $\nu$ ] where it gets marked for PA. UA objects behave differently. They stay *in situ*. Hence, it is the strong D-feature of  $\nu$  that determines an overt raising of the specific/animate object. This hypothesis aligns with the claims made in Diesing (1994), whose Mapping Hypothesis tries to put together semantic properties of the nouns, making them follow from syntactic positions.

Summarized in table 12 are the semantic properties of the object in a monotransitive verb such as *vidiri* and which morphosyntactic consequences it entails. The decisive semantic features for the raising of the objects are animacy and specificity: is the object [+animate] and [+specific] then it must

receive the prepositional marker <a> and it is raised higher in the structure to at least [Spec, vP], where it is visible for further derivation. On the contrary, when the object is [-animate] and/or [-specific] there is no prepositional accusative marker and it stays low inside the VP (Ledgeway 2000).

**Table 12. Semantic, morphological and syntactic properties of objects in monotransitive verbs of SCal**

animacy	specificity	Prepositional Accusative	raising to [Spec, vP]
+	+	+	+
±	–	–	–

Comparing these remarks to the behaviour of the existential cluster *ndavi*, it is evident that it marks its pivot with the accusative Case, as confirmed by the morphology of specific/animate nouns that obligatorily occur together with the prepositional accusative <a> proper of direct objects. This option is, though, not available to inanimate and unspecific pivots and in fact, due to their different semantic value, they are argued to behave differently on the morphosyntax level. Indeed, they bear the accusative Case, but are realized unmarked, contrary to their animate counterparts that are allowed in *ndavi*-sentences exclusively when prepositionally marked.

The pivots are structurally case-marked DPs, but the different way they check the strong feature in *v* – overtly and with prepositional accusative or covertly and with unmarked accusative – depends on semantic factors and correlates in fact with the different syntactic positions that they are allowed to occupy. As a remaining trace of the source possessive construction, *ndavi* can mark the object as accusative in two different ways, either through the prepositional accusative marker or by letting the object bare. Which of the two possibilities is chosen depends on the semantics of the object matching the strength of the features in *v*: animate and specific objects display PA, whereas UA occurs with inanimate and/or nonspecific objects.

In table 13, the semantic properties of objects in *ndavi*-ES are listed to comparison. According to the data, the decisive semantic features for the occurrence of the morphological prepositional accusative are again animacy and specificity: if *ndavi* displays a [+animate] [+specific] pivot, then it must receive the marker *a* and is raised higher in the structure to at least [Spec, vP], where it is visible for further derivation. On the contrary, the object can be [±animate] and [-specific], in which cases there is no prepositional accusative marker and the DP stays low inside the VP.

**Table 13. Semantic, morphological and syntactic properties of objects in *ndavi*-sentences of SCal**

animacy	specificity	Prepositional Accusative	raising to [Spec, <i>v</i> P]
+	+	+	+
±	–	–	–

In both cases, the property defined as specificity is decisively at stake in determining the behavior of the objects. This is particularly relevant, as the aim of the present analysis of the DE is to capture the link between the semantics and morphosyntax of the nouns occurring in particular constructions such as the existential sentences. The facts observed up to now tallies with Diesing's (1994) theory, which puts forward a syntactic account for the semantic interpretation of nouns. Within the Mapping Hypothesis only DPs occurring in a VP-external specifier position are specific/definite (or presuppositional, as she defines them). This insight is highly desirable because it relates the interpretation of the DPs, i.e. their semantic meaning, to the syntactic position they occupy and finds evidence in the structure of *ndavi*-ES provided in section 5.10. Indefinite nouns, as well as generics and mass nouns (morphologically bare plurals and singulars respectively), which are unspecific, display the UA form and are located inside the VP in the complement position of a verbal complex Vb. Specific and animate objects are PA-marked and are raised to a [Spec, *v*P] position. In Ledgeway's account the raising takes place because of the strong D-feature of *v*, assuming that D is the locus of semantic values such as specificity and definiteness. Indeed, this assumption does not contradict Diesing's, claim as the presuppositional reading is achieved because of the checking of strong features of *v*, but at the same time it is only possible if the noun has been raised to a higher position. The correlation between syntactic position and semantic interpretation of the nouns will be of great importance also when we will have a look at languages that do not show definite articles, in chapter 6. Despite the fact of being bare, the semantic interpretation and the syntactic position of the nouns align with the general claims made right now and which I argue to be valid also for SCal, as the data demonstrate. In Southern Calabrian, thus, the DOM-effects are a signal that can help determine which Case the pivot in ES bears and draw some conclusions with respect to the syntactic behavior of different types of objects.

There are some other languages, however, in which the auxiliary selected in existential sentences is also *have*, but they display no DOM, hence there is no morphological evident clue for establishing the Case of the pivot. This is the case of Sardinian, for instance, which presents many parallels with the ES of SCal with regard to the auxiliary selection and the lack of agreement, but where the pivot is not marked for nominative or accusative case, leading to the assumption that it probably bears partitive Case or, as Jones (1993) claims, that it is an internal argument in the object position. In Sardinian, as well as in Italian, it cannot clearly be ascertained which case the internal

argument has, as an overt case distinction between nominative, accusative or another case is evident only with personal pronouns (Belletti 1988, Remberger 2009).

This issue of which Case objects have is also handled in Suñer (1982) for Spanish, who puts forward the claim that pivots in impersonal *hay*-constructions are objects but which have no direct evidence. In Spanish, *hay* does not allow objects marked by the PA *a*. Indeed only a subset of objects can occur with *hay*, but no animate/specific objects. In SCal, on the contrary, the presence of the prepositional accusative <*a*> on specific animate nouns unambiguously demonstrates that pivots in *ndavi*-ES are objects and hints thus at the diachronic link to the original possessive structure.

Remberger assumes that in languages where the auxiliary selection is sensitive to the argument structure, like Sardinian, the auxiliary merges in PrP,<sup>117</sup> whereas in languages with no auxiliary distinction, such as Italian, the auxiliary is inserted under TP (Remberger 2009: 249).

I agree with this claim, although in SCal an important difference with respect to Sardinian has to be made. In fact, as we have seen above in 4.6, Sardinian has two copulas: HABERE for existentials and ESSE for locatives. In SCal, on the contrary, I suggest that the copula HABERE is used for existentials whereas ESSE, occurring in *nci*-sentences is not exclusively locative, but can also be existential, as it is the case for *ci*-sentences in Italian. Thus, two parallel systems co-exist in SCal, where *ndavi* is existential and the auxiliary is merged under a PrP, while *nci*+ESSE can be either existential or locative and in both cases the auxiliary is merged under TP. Therefore, contrary to Sardinian *bi*+ESSE, in SCal *nci*+ESSE is not a choice to *ndavi* where the first cluster is consistently locative and the second consistently existential, but the two constructions are more the outcome and co-presence of two types of existentials, one deriving from locative and one from possessive sentences.

Finally, I would like to mention that there is a further possibility for DOM-nouns to occur with the existential *ndavi*, but they differ from the genuine ES-type, insofar as another reading is required. Compare sentence (70b) to (71) below. Example (70b) has a particular reading that slightly differentiates it from the two sentences stemming from the corpus. The interpretation of (70b) can be paraphrased as “availability of a referent for a specific purpose”, as the necessary background question (70a) illustrates. The individual or specific entity is made available for a purpose that is set by the context discourse. Abbott 1993 discusses this kind of interpretation available in English too (cf. *There is John*) and claims that such sentences are exceptions to the DE. Indeed, I do not consider (70b) being

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<sup>117</sup> Remberger (2009) adopts a PrP (Predication Phrase) analysis in the wake of Bowers (1993). The PrP is intended as a generalized little vP.

an existential at all, as the animate specific object must be differentially marked in S<sub>Cal</sub> and thus located higher in the structure, not within the existential closure.

(70)a. Cu è libaru mu nd'aiuta?  
 who is free to CL.ACC.1PL-help.3SG  
 'Who is available to help us?'

b. Ndavi a Giuanni  
*ndi*-has PA John  
 'There is John.'

(71) \*Ndavi Giuanni.

The sentence in (70b) has namely a particular reading that differentiates it slightly from the two *ndavi*-sentences from the corpus (recall from table 11: (127) *dà ndavi a bonanima i Danti* and (128) *vicinu o mercatu ndavja a cummari Cuncetta*).

Moreover, notice that personal pronouns can appear in *ndavi* sentences only if DO-marked and only because they convey the availability reading just discussed. In fact, personal pronouns are definite/specific and as such do not occur in pure existentials. Nevertheless they constitute an important piece of evidence for the case properties of these kinds of pivots, because they switch from the nominative (e.g., *jeu, tu, idu* etc. see 3.4) to the tonic accusative form, i.e. they are objects. Compare to this regard (72).

(72) Ndavi a mia/ ndavi a tia/ ndavi a idu/ ndavi a nui/  
 ndavi a vui/ndavi a idi.  
 'There is DOM me/ DOM you/ DOM him/ DOM us/ DOM you/ DOM them.'  
*(all object pronouns)*

Not all S<sub>Cal</sub> varieties accept the examples in the examples (33) and (34) (i.e. (127) and (128) from the written corpus) or (70b) and (72) with *ndavi* – the last two carrying the availability reading – to the same extent. Notice that the informant speakers from Cittanova definitely preferred a *nci*-construction, while those from Brancaleone and Reggio Calabria accepted them more readily.

## 5.5. The properties of the HABERE copula

The selection of the copula HABERE in pure existentials is a feature of many Italo-Romance vernaculars, among others Southern Calabrian or Sardinian, or of the dialects spoken in the province of Lecce, in the so-called Grecia Salentina, but also of some Occitan dialects spoken in Piedmonte (Cruschina 2013). The marking of the object in existential constructions, though, differs among the vernaculars and it seems to be a feature that varies concerning the extent of its realization.

Table 14, for instance, sums up data collected by Cruschina (2013) and shows a big difference between two Southern dialects: while Salentino is very restrictive and only marks the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> personal pronouns, Southern Calabrian displays DOM also on 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns, as well as on proper nouns and definite DPs. Differential object marking is also available with specific indefinite DPs, although it is subject to some degree of optionality. Common to Salentino is the ban against indefinite nonspecific DPs, a fact that supports the claim that these objects in existential constructions occupy a low VP-internal position and get an existential reading.

**Table 14. Definiteness Scale and Differential Object Marking in HABERE existentials of Calabrese compared to Salentino<sup>118</sup>**

-	DOM with 'a' in HABERE existentials	
	CALABRIA	SALENTO
Definiteness Scale		
Personal Pronouns [1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> ]	+	+
Personal Pronouns [3 <sup>rd</sup> ]	+	-
Proper Nouns	+	-
Definite DPs	+	-
Indefinite Specific DPs	(+)	-
Indefinite Nonspecific DPs	-	-

That Calabrese and Salentino do not coincide with respect to the choice of which elements display DOM is not a surprising fact. DOM in general is not exhaustively explained even recurring to the definiteness/referentiality scale mentioned in the previous section and which constitutes the criteria adopted in table 14. Despite the variation, though, even crosslinguistically two kinds of objects seem

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<sup>118</sup> Table 14 was kindly provided to me by Silvio Cruschina (2013).

to behave homogeneously: those located at the top (such as 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> personal pronouns) or at the bottom (such as indefinite nonspecific DPs) in both animacy and referentiality scales combined together. Indeed, they are considered prototypical: if a language has DOM, then these objects are marked in the first case and not marked in the second. Objects that occupy intermediate degrees of such scales can display DOM or not in different languages, as it also happens with the object DPs of existential sentences with HABERE.

In particular, as we saw that the verb nature plays an important role, it is interesting to analyse whether DOM is restricted to the existential *ndavi* in SCal, or whether it also occurs with *ndavi* in its possessive meaning. This will be the aim of this section.

In order to prove DOM on animate objects located at various degrees of the reference scale with existential *ndavi*, compare again the examples individuated up to now in table 10. Recall that with all personal pronouns the marker *a* is obligatory in SCal. We also saw that proper nouns and definite DPs necessitate the DOM in order to be able to appear in *ndavi*-ES. Nonspecific animate indefinites are also represented in my corpus without the DOM, supporting the claims of table 14. Example (136) drawn from the corpus of *ndavi*-ES in table 10 is repeated in (73) for the sake of illustration.

- (73) O cimiteru ndavi malati, ricchi e poveretti, omini, fimmini,  
 at-the cemetery *ndavi* sick rich and poor men women  
 randi e figghioli.  
 grown-ups and children  
 ‘At the cemetery there are sick people, rich and poor people, men, women, grown-ups  
 and children.’ (SCal Corpus: 136)

A last remark concerning animate nonspecific indefinites with existential *ndavi*: if we look at sentence (74) elicited in SCal (Cittanovese) we see that the indefinite nonspecific pronoun *carcunu* (Engl. *someone*) cannot be marked with the prepositional accusative. If the informants were compelled to use the nonspecific pronoun *carcuno* with DOM this would be judged impossible and they switched to the *nci*-construction. This demonstrates that DOM in SCal is very sensitive to the specificity of the objects: non-specifics must stay unmarked in existential *ndavi*. At the same time, as *carcunu* can also have a specific reading, the informants computed the DOM requirement as a marker of specificity and selected the *nci*-construction (74b). I do not exclude that in other southern Calabrian vernaculars (for instance in the dialect of Reggio Calabria) the indefinite specific *carcunu* existential *ndavi* can be more readily accepted with DOM, but the analysis of the construction in this case shall be refined and could possibly be compared to the use of *ndavi* in sentences such as *ndavi a to soru* (see 3.6.9). Notice, moreover, that in Cittanovese a sentence such as (75) with the marker is interpreted by the

informants with possessive reading, excluding ambiguity with the homophonous existential verb because in this last case they choose *nci*+ESSE.

- (74)a. \**ndavi a carcunu* [+spec]. *existential ndavi*  
 b. *nc'è carcunu.*  
*nci-is someone*  
 'Someone [-spec] is here.'
- (75) *ndavi a carcunu.* *possessive ndavi*  
*ndi-has DOM someone*  
 lit. 'S/he has someone [+spec]' (meant: a lover).

Concerning the value given for the occurrence of DOM with indefinite specific nouns in table 14, namely its optional character, I could not detect in my written corpus any example that satisfied this requirement. Specificity is indeed a referential property that is very much discourse related. Further examples that serve to make clear the specific interpretation of the indefinite pronoun *carcunu* as in sentence (76) have been elicited by the informants in order to test the optionality of the DOM. Specific *carcunu* can optionally be differentially marked as being indefinite specific (76a). As noted right above, the informants preferred also in this case the *nci*-construction (76b) and this is evident by the question mark added when the DOM is realized in (76b).

Example (77), with the nonspecific pronoun and the optional DOM, moreover, shows that the *ndavi*-construction is at the same time more sensitive to specificity when assigning DOM than it is with other verbs. In fact, the pronoun *carcunu* with nonspecific reading takes the DOM with a verb such as *cercari* (Engl. *seek*) as in (77)<sup>119</sup>, but this would not be possible with the existential *ndavi*. The properties of the verb play therefore a decisive role concerning the marking of their direct object.

- (76)a. *ndavi (?a) carcunu chi staci sonandu.*  
*ndi-has DOM someone who is playing*
- b. *Nc'è carcunu chi staci sonando*  
 'Someone is playing here/out there.'

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<sup>119</sup> Sentence elicited by taking as example Spanish data drawn from von Heusinger & Kaiser (2007: 88).

- (77) Staci cercandu (a) carcuno  
 stays looking DOM someone  
 ‘(S/he) is looking for someone.’

After supporting the claims of table 14 concerning the occurrence of DOM with animate objects collocated at different stages of the definiteness (or, more generally, referentiality) scale, I further question whether DOM also appears on direct objects with the possessive HABERE in accordance to same referentiality scale established in table 14. Interestingly, the elicited data showed a difference in the behaviour of DOM; compare (78) to (85).

- (78)a. Ndaju puru a ttia i vidiri. *2<sup>nd</sup> PRN*  
*ndi-have.1SG also DOM PRN.ACC.2SG to see.INF*  
 ‘I also have you/him to take care of.’
- b. \*Ndaju puru ttia i vidiri.
- (79) Ndaju puru (a) idu i vidiri. *3<sup>rd</sup> PRN*  
*ndi-have.1SG also DOM PRN.ACC.3SG to see.INF*
- (80)a. Ndavimu (a) Giuanni malatu. *proper noun*  
*ndi-have.1PL DOM John ill*  
 ‘John is sick.’
- (81) Ndavimu u figghiolu / o [= a+u] malatu. *definite/specific*  
 ‘Our little John is ill.’
- (82)a. Non pozzu veniri, ndaju a me socera malata.  
 NEG can.1SG come.INF, *ndi-have.1SG DOM-the my mother-in-law- ill*  
 ‘I cannot come because my mother-in-law is ill.’
- b. ?? Non pozzu veniri, ndaju me socera malata.
- (83)a. Ndaju ddu soru. *indefinite/specific*  
*ndi-have.1SG two sisters*  
 ‘I have two sisters.’
- b. Ndaju (?a) ddu soru.

- (84) Ndaju (?a) na mughieri! *indefinite/specific*  
*ndi-have.1SG DOM a wife.*  
 ‘I have a wife!’
- (85)a. Quanti gatta ndavi chida fimmana?  
 How many cats CL-has that woman  
 ‘How many cats does that woman have?’
- b. Ndavi (\*a) tri gatti *indefinite/nonspecific*  
*ndi-has DOM tree cats*  
 ‘She has three cats.’

When *ndavi* is not existential in SCal, DOM is obligatory only with the direct object pronouns of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person (maximally specific, see Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming), whereas in all other cases the marking is optional (see the following comments on sentence (82)), though preferred, except for the indefinite non-specific animate nouns, which do not allow it altogether.

Example (78a) shows an obligatory accusative marking on the object pronoun of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person and the alternative without DOM as in (78b) would be ungrammatical. Nevertheless, if the pronoun is of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, then the DOM becomes optional. Notice that *ndavi* is possessive, but at the same time sentences (78)-(82) differ from existential *ndavi* in a decisive way: they feature secondary predication. In other words, the object of *have* in (78) and (79) is also the object of the non-finite predicate (*i vidiri*, Engl. *to see*), and in (80)-(81) the object is at the same time the subject of the following small clause (for instance [<sub>SC</sub> *a me socera malata*], Engl. *my mother-in-law ill*). Whenever the specific/referential prominent and animate object in possessive *ndaviri*-sentences also functions as the subject/object of a secondary predication, then it can be DOM-marked and indeed it mostly is. Less preferred is the DOM when the object is a specific/animate indefinite, in which case it also does not have to qualify as the subject/object of a secondary predication, compare (83) and (84).

An apparent contrasting example is (82b), where the presence of the DOM seems necessary and not just optional. There, the object is a kinship noun preceded by a possessive determiner. Now, according to the scale of objects that are allowed access to prepositional accusative elaborated in Guardiano (2010: 90) for Sicilian, nouns of this kind are less marked than proper nouns and of course of personal object pronouns. In SCal, contrary to the optionality of the *a*-marker on the objects of the last two classes, the absence of the DOM in (82) seems to be more ungrammatical than grammatical. Indeed, I suggest that the uncertainty of the informants in the judgement of the sentence can be due to a less mysterious reason than it could seem at first, namely to the homophony between the aphaeretic definite article *a*, which is obligatorily realized in SCal before possessives, and the prepositional



called the verb HABERE in table 15 (pseudo)existential. The possessive HABERE, on the contrary, permits optionality with all elements from the 3<sup>rd</sup> object pronoun up to specific indefinites. Even taking into account this evident difference concerning the optionality of the DOM, there is a common cut at a particular point across the scale where the DOM is not allowed with indefinite and nonspecific objects, despite their [+animate] value. This is illustrated in table 15.

**Table 15. Definiteness Scale and Differential Object Marking in possessive HABERE of Southern Calabrian compared to (pseudo)existential HABERE**

<b>Human Definiteness Scale</b>	<b>DOM in HABERE possessive</b>	<b>DOM in HABERE (pseudo)existential</b>
Personal Pronouns [1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> ]	+	+
Personal Pronouns [3 <sup>rd</sup> ]	(+)	+
Proper Nouns	(+)	+
Definite DPs	(+)	+
Indefinite Specific DPs	(+)	(+)
Indefinite Non-specific DPs	–	–

The fact that object DPs occurring with the possessive *have* also allow the presence of DOM to point at the status of DPs in *ndavi*-sentences as real direct objects. Guardiano (2010) also discusses the hypotheses explaining why the DOM *a* occurs with direct objects in some Romance languages. According to some scholars (Brugè 2000, Lamontagne & Travis 1986) the marker *a* is the head of a KP (or a FP in general) which takes a DP as its complement. This functional category has [±ACC] [±animate] features that are specified as strong or weak. Depending on the properties of both the verb and the nominal head, when they match the features of the functional head, they enter in a checking relation with it. If both of them are strong, then the head *a* is morphologically visible. As Guardiano (2010: 95) suggests, the shortcomings of this analysis surfaces when explaining (i) why the co-occurrence in the same sentence of both prepositional marked direct object and an indirect object is ungrammatical, (ii) why the DOM can also show up on inanimate objects (although this could be related to the nature of the verb or the personification object) or not occur on animate objects (maybe *kind* reading incompatible with the animacy requirement) and (iii) the possibility to have the DOM also on bare objects that are modified, coordinated or focalized.

According to Ledgeway (2000), whose hypothesis I am adopting, the realization of *a* is due to a strong D-feature in *v*, to which specificity-definiteness and animacy are associated. Objects that satisfy these requirements check therefore the strong features moving to [Spec, *v*P] and so receive structural case, whereas non-DOM objects stay inside the VP and check their features only at LF. Notice that according to Kayne’s generalization (1994), the lexical argument DP, receives the Case from the dummy preposition. This would explain why in examples as *ndavi a mia/ a tia* etc. the pronouns all bear accusative Case, evident in their morphology. Moreover, if clitic doubling occurs in the same sentences, the clitic will carry the same Case that is assigned by the verb to its complement (Belletti 2009: 139), for instance accusative or dative in sentences (88a) and (88b) respectively.<sup>122</sup>

(88)a. ‘U vittimu a idu  
 CL.ACC saw.1PL DOM PRN.ACC  
 ‘We saw him.’

b. Gianni nci regalau n’anedu a so mughieri.  
 John CL.DAT gave.3SG a ring SD his wife [DAT]  
 ‘John gave his wife a ring.’

The verb *vidiri* (Engl. *see*) requires a direct object as its complement, as the accusative clitic ‘*u*’ shows. Therefore, the preposition *a* in (88a) is a dummy preposition and the functional phrase it heads makes the DP receive structural Case, namely accusative. In (88b) the verb selects an indirect object, i.e. an object marked with dative Case. The element *a* (Engl. *to*) is here a real preposition – recall that dative is always introduced by a preposition in Romance – and the dative Case that the DP carries is an example of structural dative Case (hence, SD) (for a detailed argumentation of structural/inherent dative see Ledgeway 2000).<sup>123</sup> In both sentences the Cases of the co-referential clitics are the same as that carried by the respective lexical objects. Notice, moreover, that the study of the Marchigiano dialect (spoken in the Marche, a region in central Italy) conducted by Peverini-Benson (2004: 37) and cited in Guardiano (2010: 96) also comes to similar conclusions: “in Marchigiano the Def and Spec features are also encoded on *v*, not in an independent manner, but rather as a composite phi-feature, namely *+Presupp(ositional)*, encoded on D and which must be checked on *v*”.

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<sup>122</sup> The sentences have been elicited in Cittanovese using the examples provided in Belletti (2009: 139) from Jaeggli (1982).

<sup>123</sup> In Neapolitan, Ledgeway (2000: Ch. 2) notices that the indirect object clitic can also surface as direct object (i.e., as ‘*o*’ instead of *nce*) when the lexical referent is animate. Thus, a semantic property influences the structure and therefore the choice of the clitic chosen. This kind of variation in Case-marking, nevertheless, is not possible in SCal, where the clitic always carries dative case in these sentences.

Up to now, I examined the properties of existential *ndavi* with focus on the exceptional occurrence of DOM and compared them to non-existential *ndavi*, as well as to verbs that display DOM, in order to better understand the nature and syntactic behaviour of the pivot. The next step will be to consider the morphological element necessarily present in existential *ndavi*, namely the clitic *ndi*.

Before moving forth, I shall briefly sum up the considerations made in this first part of the *ndavi* analysis. I started by taking into consideration the examples of *ndavi*-ES in the corpus that seem to contradict the claims made in Milsark concerning the ban of strong nouns from ES in general. In SC, whenever strong NPs occur in *ndavi*-ES they display DOM (i.e., they are marked by the element *a*). The central questions that I tried to answer concerned which class of NPs shows DOM and where is it obligatory; what is the semantic contribution of the object marker and where is a marked DP located in the syntactic structure? The examination of these issues lead to the definition of the properties of DOM-marked objects with other verbs apart existential *ndavi*, particularly with possessive *ndavi*, and therefore suggested us something more on the nature of the existential pivot.

I described the correlation of DOM with properties such as animacy and specificity/definiteness/presupposition tied to the nominal domain and required by a strong feature by the verb. The animacy value of the pivots seems to be a very relevant factor: almost all pivots occurring in *ndavi*-ES belong to the group of weak expressions being bare or indefinite nouns. Interestingly, they strongly tend to be inanimate referents. Definite referents are only allowed to occur if they display DOM.

Comparing these findings with the observations made in Fischer (2013, building on Zielke 2012)<sup>124</sup>, SCal seems at first to contradict the claims made on the necessity of a tripartite distinction concerning the expressions triggering the DE. From Zielke's study of the grammaticality judgements of Latin American Spanish (LAS) speakers compared to those of European Spanish speakers, it resulted that there is not a clear cut between weak and strong expressions, but instead a gradual difference should be made taking into account the animacy of the pivot: strong expressions with definite and animate pivots are uniformly excluded from ES, whereas definite pivots with an inanimate referent are acceptable for LAS speakers, but not for European Spanish speakers. Indeed, the apparent counterexamples in SCal can be explained if we assume that the animate definite expressions find an escape hatch in so far as they are obligatorily moved out of the existential domain inside the VP, where they are generated, to a higher position. The DOM is the morphological evidence for the different position occupied by these pivots. Additionally, the data coming from the elicited utterances of the SCal speakers consistently displayed the switch to the *nci*-constructions with animate/definite pivots.

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<sup>124</sup> For data see also Fischer (2013, section 5.1).

## 5.6. The clitics *nci* and *ndi*

In both existential forms present in SCal there appears a clitic element, *nci* with the ESSE and *ndi* with the HABERE copula respectively, and its origin is obviously locative. The purpose of this and the following section is to compare these clitics with the other roles they have within the grammar of SCal, in order to better define their particular contribution when generating an existential cluster together with their copulas.

The clitic elements *nci* and *ndi* have various uses in SCal. Interestingly there is also a lot of variation between the functions of *nci* and *ndi* in SCal and the corresponding clitic forms of Italian. This fact is relevant because the comparison to Italian can also support the claim of the occurrence of different existential constructions in SCal.

Let us first consider the clitic *nci* (which can also occur as *cci* or *si* in other southern Calabrian dialects, see Trumper (2003: 232)). One of its functions is that of an indirect object (dative pronoun) for the third person singular and the third person plural. Concerning its position, it always occurs proclitically with finite verbs, whereas it is enclitic with nonfinite verbs.

Notice that contrary to the Italian clitic pronoun *ci*, *nci* cannot have the function of indirect object for the first person plural, which is otherwise realized in SCal with the form *ndi*. On the other hand, Italian has *gli/le* and *gli/loro* as indirect object pronouns of the third person singular and plural respectively.<sup>125</sup> *Nci* is neutral in respect to gender. Otherwise, *nci* with locative meaning as a counterpart to Italian *ci* is found exclusively in inverse locative and pure existential constructions with the copula ESSE, but apart from that it cannot be used as a locative pronoun, as the Italian *ci* does (see also later in this section). The common functions or differences between Italian *ci* and SCal *nci* are summed up in table 16.

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<sup>125</sup> Recall that the clitic object pronouns (accusative pronouns) in standard Italian are:

I	II	III	I	II	III
<i>mi</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>lo,la</i>	<i>ci</i>	<i>vi</i>	<i>li,le</i>

The clitic pronouns functioning as indirect object (dative pronouns) are:

I	II	III	I	II	III
<i>mi</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>gli,le</i>	<i>ci</i>	<i>vi</i>	<i>gli,loro</i>

(Renzi et al. 2001: 551)

**Table 16. The functions of the clitic pronouns *ci* (standard Italian) and *nci* (Southern Calabrian) in comparison**

	accusative clitic, 1 <sup>st</sup> PL	dative clitic, 1 <sup>st</sup> PL	dative clitic, 3 <sup>rd</sup> SG/3 <sup>rd</sup> PL	reflexive pronoun 1 <sup>st</sup> PL	locative clitic pronoun	clitic in sentences with ESSE
<i>ci</i>	✓	✓	–	✓	✓	✓
<i>nci</i>	–	–	✓	–	–	✓

Examples are provided in (89)-(96) for each of the cases listed in table 16. The a-examples display the clitic *ci* in standard Italian, the b-examples are the correspondent sentences in SCal and the c-examples are the correct counterparts whenever the b-examples with *nci* are ungrammatical.<sup>126</sup>

Sentence (89a) illustrates the use of *ci* in standard Italian as an accusative clitic pronoun for the first person plural. In SCal, on the contrary, *nci* cannot be used in the same function, or it would render the sentence ungrammatical (89b). A correct counterpart to Italian (89a) foresees the insertion of the clitic pronoun *ndi* in SCal.

- accusative clitic, 1<sup>st</sup> PL*
- (89)a. Mario *ci* conosce bene. (Italian)  
 Mario CL.ACC knows well  
 ‘Mario knows us well.’
- b. \*Mariu **nci** canusci bonu. (SCal)
- c. Mariu *ndi* canusci bonu. (SCal)  
 Mario CL.ACC knows well  
 ‘Mario knows us well.’

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<sup>126</sup> The data from SCal come from elicitation questions. The informants of the Cittanovese variant had to read the Italian sentences and provide their counterparts in SCal. The task was to see if the clitic *nci* in SCal takes over the same role of *ci* in Italian.

In the same way, *ci* can also receive the dative Case for the first person plural in Italian (90a), whereas its phonological accommodation *nci* in SCal cannot (90b). Also in this case, the correct pronoun in SCal would be *ndi* (90c).

- dative clitic, 1<sup>st</sup> PL*
- (90)a. Mario *ci* ha dato un libro. (Italian)  
 Mario CL.DAT has given a book  
 ‘Mario gave us a book.’
- b. \*Mariu *nci* dezzi nu libbru. (SCal)
- c. Mariu *ndi* dezzi nu libbru. (SCal)  
 Mario CL.DAT gave.3SG a book  
 ‘Mario gave us a book.’

A different situation occurs when *nci* is used as a dative clitic pronoun for the third person singular (91b) and plural (92b). In this case, it is *ci* in Italian that is not acceptable, as Italian displays *gli* and *loro* as pronouns for the dative clitic of third person singular (90a) and plural (92a) respectively.

- dative clitic, 3<sup>rd</sup> SG*
- (91)a. \*Mario *ci* ha dato un libro. (Italian)  
 (correct: ‘Mario gli ha dato un libro’)
- b. Mariu *nci* dezzi nu libbru. (SCal)  
 Mariu CL.DAT.3SG gave.3SG a book  
 ‘Mario gave him a book)
- dative clitic, 3<sup>rd</sup> PL*
- (92)a. \*Mario *ci* ha dato un libro. (Italian)  
 (correct: ‘Mario ha dato loro un libro’)
- b. Mariu *nci* dezzi nu libbru. (SCal)  
 Mario CL.DAT gave.3SG a book  
 ‘Mario gave them a book.’



- (95)a. Ci sono i carri di carnevale, in strada (Italian)  
 CL are.2PL the wagons of carnival in street  
 ‘Along the street is the carnival parade’
- b. Nci su ‘i carri i carnalivali (SCal)  
 CL are.3PL the wagons of carnival  
 ‘Along the street is the carnival parade.’

- (96)a. Ci sono bambini in strada. (Italian)  
 CL are.3PL children in street  
 ‘There are children in the street.’
- b. Nci su cotraredi ntr’a strata. (SCal)  
 CL are.3SG children in-the street  
 ‘There are children in the street.’

The data presented up to now shows that the functions of *nci* differ considerably from those of the Italian clitic *ci*. Nevertheless, *nci* etymologically derives as *ci* from the Latin locative adverb *hinc* > old Italian *inci* > Southern Calabrese *nci* (Ursino 2007) and although *nci* does not have the role of a locative pronoun, which remains otherwise unexpressed in SCal, it is to be found in apparent (i.e. inverse locatives) and pure existential constructions, as is the case for standard Italian. For both of these last two constructions it has been claimed that the clitic form occurring on the copula ESSE has a real locative meaning (inverted locatives) or that it is the pro-argument of locative origin in ES insofar that it expresses the spatial and temporal coordinates of the existential proposition and the pivot represents its predication (Moro 1997, Zamparelli 2000, Cruschina 2012 forthcoming among others).

For this reason, I consider the finding concerning the lack of *nci* as locative pronoun in SCal to be of a fairly big interest in my analysis of existential sentences. In fact, I assume that the genuine existential form proper of SCal is the one selecting *ndavi*, namely the cluster of *ndi* plus the copula HABERE. Probably, the impossibility of *nci* to function in SCal as locative clitic is exactly related to this fact. In other words, if *nci* has not taken over the function of locative clitic, it can also not be available for existentials, which presuppose a location. The strong locative features implied in existential constructions must thus be realized by another locative element.

The element *ndi*, from Latin INDE, was instead an element which carried the locative function and could be selected as a proper candidate – and indeed as the only option available – in order to express the locative feature in existentials. Since *ndi* cliticized on the copula HABERE, the existential construction in Southern Calabrian derives from a transitive possessive construction and has therefore an object DP.

The assumption is therefore that the availability of *nci* plus ESSE and their use as inverse locative, as well as existential according to the same rules underlying these constructions in Italian, is due to the influence of the Italian language (at some point of its evolution from Latin, when existential constructions developed from locatives) on the local vernacular.

It is not easy to state when exactly the influence of the Italian language occurred, i.e. in which stage of the language development it started to exist besides the *ndavi*-existential. Even in the oldest texts of my corpus (the oldest examples of existentials I could find belong to poetry of the 18<sup>th</sup> century) the *nci*+ESSE existential constructions co-occur with the *ndavi*-sentences (even in the same sentence!).

Notice that, if it is true that Latin was the language brought by the Roman colonizers and the grammatical change it underwent affected the language spoken in Calabria, then the very south of the region is also known for the strong influence of another language, namely Greek. Therefore, it could also be taken into consideration the hypothesis that *have* as an existential form could date back to a substrate different from the Latin one, which developed, on the contrary, into *ci*+ESSE. Cruschina (p.c.) pointed out to me that the existential construction with the copula *have* is also present in the Greek language of Calabria, a factor that may have probably played a role in the choice of the auxiliary *have* for ES of SCal. The vernaculars examined in this thesis are indeed spoken in southern Calabria, which is the area that was more subject to Greek influence (Rohlf's 1967, 1969, Fanciullo 1996, Loporcaro 2009, Ursino 2007 among others). Moreover, not much is known about the Greek language under Roman rule (Rohlf's 1967: Vol. I).





- (101)a. Nci minaru o (=a+u) cotraru. (SCal)  
 CL.DAT hit.PST.3PL SD-the boy  
 ‘They hit the boy.’
- b. \*Ci hanno picchiato al ragazzo.
- (102)a. Nci/u minaru.  
 CL.DAT/CL.ACC hit.PST.3PL  
 ‘They hit him.’
- b. (\*Ci) hanno picchiato. (standard Italian)
- (103) Gli hanno picchiato a Mauro. (regional Italian)  
 CL.DAT have.3PL hit.PTCP to Mauro
- (104)a. Hanno picchiato Mauro. (standard Italian)
- b. Lo hanno picchiato (, Mauro).  
 CL.ACC have.3PL hit.PTCP Mauro

SCal marks the animate object occurring as complement of the verb *minari* (Ital. *picchiare*, Engl. *hit*). The object therefore receives a structural Case and can be resumed either by the structural dative clitic *nci* or by the accusative clitic *u* (102). Now, Italian does not have DOM altogether. Nevertheless, the non-proficient speaker of SCal tends to mark the object using the preposition *a* as in (103). At the same time, in order to make up for the lack of a correspondent doubling pronoun for the prepositional object in standard Italian (compare 101b, where *ci* is not an adequate candidate), the speaker chooses the most similar option available in Italian, namely the dative clitic pronoun *gli*, which is otherwise the counterpart of *nci* in most of its occurrences. Notice that the correct counterparts in standard Italian would be (104a) and (104b), either without the *a*-marker on the object or with the accusative clitic pronoun and the dislocated object respectively.

Let us at this point turn to the occurrence and use of the other clitic form of locative origin, *ndi*. In table 17 are summarized the different roles taken over by the standard Italian clitic *ne* and the SCal *ndi*.

**Table 17. The functions of the clitic pronouns *ne* (standard Italian) and *ndi* (Southern Calabrian) in comparison**

	accusative clitic, 1 <sup>st</sup> PL	dative clitic, 1 <sup>st</sup> PL	reflexive pronoun 1 <sup>st</sup> PL	partitive/locative clitic pronoun	clitic in ES sentences with HABERE
<i>ne</i>	–	–	–	✓	–
<i>ndi</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

As we have seen above by comparing Italian *ci* to SCal *nci*, the functions of the accusative (105a) and dative (106a) clitic pronoun for the first person plural respectively are expressed by the form *ndi*. The same is true of the reflexive clitic pronoun for the first person plural (107a). The b-examples show how there is not a correspondent form to *ndi* in Italian while the c-examples provide the correct alternative: in all three cases Italian requires *ci*.

*accusative clitic, 1<sup>st</sup> PL*

(105)a. Mariu *ndi* canusci bonu. (SCal)  
 Mario CL.ACC.1PL knows well  
 ‘Mario knows us well.’

b. \*Mario *ne* conosce bene. (Italian)

c. Mario *ci* conosce bene. (Italian)  
 Mario CL.ACC.1PL knows well  
 ‘Mario knows us well.’

*dative clitic, 1<sup>st</sup> PL*

(106)a. Mariu *ndi* dezzi nu libbru. (SCal)  
 Mario CL.DAT.1PL gave.2SG a book  
 ‘Mario gave us a book.’

b. \*Mario *ne* ha dato un libro. (Italian)

c. Mario *ci* ha dato un libro. (Italian)  
 Mario CL.DAT.1PL has given a book  
 ‘Mario gave us a book.’

*reflexive pronoun, 3<sup>rd</sup> PL*

- (107)a. Ndi vestimmu viatu. (SCal)  
REFL dressed.1PL quickly  
'We dressed quickly.'
- b. \*Ne siamo vestiti velocemente. (Italian)
- c. Ci siamo vestiti velocemente. (Italian)  
REFL are.1PL dress.PTCP quickly  
'We dressed quickly.'

Additionally, *ndi* is the clitic partitive form in SCal, as the examples in (108a) and (108b) show. This matches the function of the partitive clitic *ne* in Italian (108c). Recall that SCal does not have a partitive article (see section 3.6), but it has *ndi* as partitive pronoun.

*partitive clitic pronoun*

- (108)a. Quant'ova accattasti? (SCal)  
How many eggs bought.2SG  
'How many eggs did you buy?'
- b. Nd'accattai ottu. (SCal)  
PART.PRN-bought.1SG eight.  
'I bought eight eggs.'
- c. Ne ho comprate otto. (Italian)  
PART.PRN have.1SG buy.PTCP eight  
'I bought eight eggs.'

Therefore, in only one case is *ndi* the actual counterpart of the Italian clitic *ne*, namely when it functions as a pronoun, in order to substitute a PP introduced by the preposition *di/da* (SCal *i*, see section 3.6). Of course, when it occurs with verbs of movement, the clitic *ne/ndi* has a locative meaning, either because it substitutes the PP headed by the preposition *da* present in the previous discourse or because it expresses the default locative phrase *da li/da questo posto* (Engl. *from there/this place*).

- (109)a. Venitindi cu mmia. (SCal)  
 go.IMP-REFL-CL.LOC with me  
 ‘Come with me’
- b. Vienitene con me. (Italian)<sup>131</sup>  
 go.IMP-REFL-CL.LOC with me  
 ‘Come with me.’
- (110)a. Racheli veni i l’America e ndi senti ‘a mancanza. (SCal)  
 Rachel comes from the America and CL.LOC feels the absence  
 ‘Rachel comes from America and misses it.’
- b. Rachele viene dall’ America e ne sente la mancanza. (Italian)  
 Rachel comes from-the America and CL.LOC feels the absence  
 ‘Rachel comes from America and misses it.’

It can be argued, for example in (109), that the particle *ndi* in movement verbs such as *arrivari* (Engl. *arrive*) or *veniri* (Engl. *come*) does not really stand for a location anymore, but is lexicalized. Still, the adverbial locative function is perceivable in (109), as well as (110). I will test below if locative *ndi* prevents the doubling of the lexicalized clitic *ndi* in general and with *have*.

A final occurrence of the clitic *ndi* is found in combination with *aviri* always conjugated in the third person singular: *ndavi* is the existential cluster of SCal (111a) and Italian does not display anything comparable with the clitic *ne* (111b).

- (111)a. Cafè ndavi? *existential* (SCal)  
 coffe *ndi*-has  
 ‘Is there (any) coffe?’
- b. \*Ne ha caffè (*with existential meaning*) (Italian)
- c. C’è caffè? (Italian)  
*nci*-is coffee  
 ‘Is there (any) coffee?’

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<sup>131</sup> *Vienitene* is not really a perfectly accepted form according to the normative grammar of Standard Italian and is surely influenced by Regional Italian. However, its frequency of use is high and speakers would still judge it a possible form.



- b. Ce ne siamo andati quando aveva fatto buio. (Italian)  
 REFL CL.LOC are.1PL gone when had.3SG made dark  
 ‘‘It had grown dark when we went away.’

*DAT PRN + partitive clitic pronoun*

- (115)a. Ndi ndezzeru tri. (SCal)  
 CL.DAT PART-gave.3PL three  
 ‘They gave us three of them.’

- b. Ce ne hanno dati tre. (Italian)  
 CL.DAT PART have.3PL given three  
 ‘They gave us three of them.’

*DAT PRN + partitive PRN + deontic ‘have’*

- (116)a. Ndi ndannu levari tri. SCal  
 CL.DAT *ndi*-have.3PL bring.INF three  
 ‘They have to bring us three of them.’

- b. Ce ne devono portare tre. (Italian)  
 CL.DAT PART must.3PL bring.INF three  
 ‘They have to bring us three of them.’

A phonological explanation is surely not sufficient to account for the constraint on the doubling, as with all other verbs seen for instance in (114)-(116), it is possible to have duplication of *ndi*. These cases involve the combination either of the locative clitic pronoun *ndi* following the reflexive *ndi* (e.g. in (114a) *ndi ndi jimmu c’avia scuratu*), or the partitive clitic pronoun *ndi* following the dative clitic pronoun *ndi* (e.g. (115a) *ndi ndezzeru tri*). Crucially, the incompatibility seems to arise when either a possessive or existential *have* occurs. Notice that doubling with the deontic *have* (e.g. (116a) *ndi ndannu levari tri*) is not blocked, as the sentence should otherwise be “*ndi* (CL.DAT) *ndi* (partitive CL) *ndannu levari tri*”. On the contrary In Italian, there are no restrictions of this kind in any of the same cases, as the counterparts in (109)-(116) show.

Moreover, with respect to the SCal sentences involving the verb *have* and the clitic *ndi*, some further remarks are in order as to provide an account for the restrictions on the doubling of *ndi*. There are, in fact, other cases in which the clitic *ndi* does not occur together with the verb *have*. This happens

not only whenever the verb form is preceded by the partitive *ndi*, but also with all object clitic pronouns. Compare, in this regard, (117a) to the ungrammatical sentence (117b), where neither the full nor the aphaeretic form of the object pronoun – i.e. *lu* and ‘*u* respectively – are allowed.<sup>132</sup>

- (117)a. L’avi idu (Cittanovese)  
 PRN-has he  
 ‘He has it.’
- b. \*Lu/‘U ndavi idu.

For this reason, I suggest that the clitic *ndi* in sentences like (113b) (*ova frischi, ndaviti?*) is to be considered as a real partitive pronoun cliticized on *have*, whereas the *ndi* of *ndaviri* as it otherwise occurs when no clitic pronoun precedes it, necessitates another explanation.

More importantly, recall from the discussion presented here that ungrammaticality with a repeated *ndi* element with the verb *have* always obtains when we are faced with the existential construction *ndavi*. There, no occurrence of the partitive pronoun *ndi* is allowed. The *ndi*-morpheme together with the copula *have* resulting in the existential cluster is indeed argued to have a proper meaning, which in fact decisively contributes to the instantiation of existentiality.

From the data and the discussion presented up to now, it becomes obvious that there is a situation of homophony between *nci* and *ndi* as clitics bearing different functions (accusative,

<sup>132</sup> Ursino cites some examples from the SCal dialect of Roccella Jonica, namely *u ndavi idu* and *u ndavi a canusciri* (2007: 106 and 107 respectively). Nevertheless, even in his work and the collection of poems and stories (which are not only in the dialect of Roccella Jonica) the prevalent form that I could find was without {*nd-*} on the copula *have*. He actually also points out that “*aviri* si coniuga come *ndaviri* e si usa per lo più quando va posto dopo una parola che si può apostrofare” (Ursino 2007: 106). Under “parola che non si può apostrofare” (“words that can be apostrophized”) are meant of course all object clitic pronouns. I could find some further examples of the co-occurrence of clitics and *ndaviri* in the data provided to me by Cruschina (2013). Sentence (ia) is again from the vernacular spoken in Roccella Jonica and involves a direct object clitic, whereas (ib) is from the dialect of Agnana Calabria and involves an indirect object clitic. In both cases, though, *have* is an auxiliary. In Cittanovese both sentences would not display *ndi* (see (ii))

- (i)a. Si u ndavía sapútu, venía. (Roccella Jonica)  
 if CL.ACC CL-had.1SG know.PTCP come.IMPF.1SG  
 ‘If I had known, I would have come.’
- b. Mi ndavivi diciutu ka c’eri puru tu. (Agnana Calabria)  
 CL.DAT CL-had.2SG say.PTCP that CL-were.2SG also you  
 ‘You had told me that you’d be there too.’
- (ii)a. Si l’avia saputu, venia. (Cittanova)  
 b. M’avivi diciutu ca nc’eri puru tu.

I conclude therefore that there must be a small amount of variation, i.e free variation, between the single dialects spoken in Southern Calabria, but the predominant pattern avoids the realization on *ndi* when an object clitic pronoun is present and in fact in my corpus I could not find any exception to that.

partitive, reflexive function) and *nci* and *ndi* carrying the original locative meaning either occurring in genuine existentials or in locative and presentational sentences. Table 18 provides an overview of both clitic elements *nci* and *ndi* in SCal compared to each other.

**Table 18. Functions of the clitics *nci* and *ndi***

	Functions	Examples in SC and counterparts in ITA
<i>nci</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clitic pronoun 3<sup>rd</sup> Singular, Dative Case (Italian <i>gli/le</i>).</li> <li>• Clitic pronoun 3<sup>rd</sup> Plural, Dative Case (Italian (<i>a</i>) <i>loro</i>).</li> <li>• Pro-predicate of locative origin in inverse locative sentences (Type II) (Italian <i>ci</i>).</li> <li>• Accusative clitic in clitic doubling constructions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Nc'ezzi u to numaro i telefonu.</i> '<b>Gli/Le</b> ho dato il tuo numero.' 'I gave <b>him/her</b> your telephone number'</li> <li>• <i>Nci disseru ca non era veru</i> 'Dissero <b>loro</b> che non era vero.' 'They told <b>them</b> that it was not true.'</li> <li>• <i>Vui nci fustivu?</i> 'Voi <b>c</b>'eravate?' 'Were you <b>there</b>?'</li> <li>• <i>Nci minaru o cotraru.</i> 'Lo hanno picchiato, il ragazzo.' 'They beat the boy.'</li> </ul>

<i>ndi</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clitic pronoun 1<sup>st</sup> Plural, Accusativ or Dative Case (Italian <i>ci</i>).</li> <li>• Reflexive pronoun 1<sup>st</sup> Plural (Italian <i>ci</i>).</li> <li>• Partitive pronoun (Italian <i>ne</i>).</li> <li>• Genitive pronoun (Italian <i>ne</i>).</li> <li>• Locative clitic pronoun (Italian <i>ne</i>)</li> <li>• Element of locative origin in existentials with copula HAVE (Italian <i>ci</i> + ESSE).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dassandi in paci!</i> 'Lasci<b>aci</b> in pace.' 'Let <b>us</b> in peace!'</li> <li>• <i>Ndi mandaru ddu funghi.</i> '<b>Ci</b> hanno mandato dei funghi.' 'They gave <b>us</b> some mushrooms.'</li> <li>• <i>Nd'assittammu fora.</i> '<b>Ci</b> siamo seduti fuori.' 'We sat outside.'</li> <li>• <i>Nd'accattai ddu pacchi.</i> 'I bought two parcels (<b>of something</b>).'</li> <li>• <i>Ndi parlammu l'atra sira.</i> '<b>Ne</b> parlammo l'altra sera.' 'We talked about it (<b>of-it</b>) the other evening.'</li> <li>• <i>Venitindi cu mmia.</i> 'Vienit<b>ene</b> con me.' 'Come with me'</li> <li>• <i>Pieru si ndi jiu</i> 'Piero se <b>n</b>'è andato.' 'Piero left.'</li> <li>• <i>Ndavi tri omani.</i> '<b>Ci</b> sono tre uomini.' 'There are three men.'</li> </ul>
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In table 18, it becomes evident that *nci* is not available as locative clitic pronoun in Southern Calabrian. In fact, despite the phonological accommodation of Italian *ci* into *nci* for SCal, they do not share all the possible functions<sup>133</sup> and it is significant that in SCal *nci* is not used as a locative, as for

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<sup>133</sup> Notice, yet, that if we take as example a particular verb such as *pensarci*, where *ci* is not an indirect object pronoun as it may seem at first sight but a locative pronoun, *nci* is indeed the counterpart of the locative *ci*, see SCal (ia) and Italian (ib).

(i)a.            Nci        staju    penzandu a stu momentu.  
                 CL.LOC    PROG    thinking    at this moment

the Italian *ci*, except within existential sentences with ESSE. In fact, as a general rule *nci* cannot take over the role of the locative pronoun with movement verbs. Compare to this regard the SCal examples in (118b)-(120b) as grammatical counterparts of (118a)-(120a) in standard Italian, where *ci* is a locative clitic pronoun resuming a locative phrase (dislocated or mentioned in the previous discourse) or it expresses the default locative meaning “here/there, in this place.” The c-examples with *nci* as locative clitic pronoun in SCal are – as expected – ungrammatical.

- (118)a. Gianni ci si è messo dietro. (*alla porta*)  
 John CL.LOC REFL is put.PTCP behind (at-the door)  
 ‘John placed himself behind it.’ (the door)
- b. Giuanni Ø si misi arretu. (*a porta*)  
 John REFL put.PST.3SG behind (at-the door)
- c. \*Giuanni nci si misi arretu.
- d. Giuanni si misi doc’arretu.<sup>134</sup>  
 John REFL put.PST.3SG there-behind

- 
- b. Ci sto pensando in questo momento.  
 ‘I am thinking about it right now.’

This example and all other verbs displaying a lexicalized locative *ci* such as *starci* etc. or presentative *ci* such as in *volerci*, where the clitic cannot be omitted, are to be considered separately from the present discussion, as *nci* must also obligatory occur in SCal. I suggest that they are examples of regional Italian, i.e. phonologically adapted forms entered in the lexicon of SCal. Compare the following example (ii) and the idiomatic (iii): in both it is perceivable that they are adapted from Italian.

- (ii)a. La valigia non ci sta.  
 the suitcase NEG LOC stay  
 ‘There is no more room for the suitcase.’
- b. A valicia non nci staci (*more natural in SCal: a valicia non capi*)
- (iii)a. Ce l’ha messa tutta.  
 b. Nc’a misi tutta.  
 ‘S/he gave her/his best; S/he tried hard.’

<sup>134</sup> *Docu* is the full locative adverb in SCal and it means *there* and an alternative displaying it would be of course grammatical.

- (119)a. Ci vado tutti i giorni. (*a Roma*)  
 PRN go.1SG all the days (to Rome)  
 ‘I go every day’ (to Rome).
- b. Vaju Ø tutti i jorna. (*a Roma*)  
 go.1SG all the days
- c. \*Nci vaju tutti i jorna.

- (120)a. Vacci subito!  
 go.IMP-there immediately  
 ‘Go there immediately.’
- b. Va Ø subitu!
- c. \*Vanci subitu!

The last part of this section finally concerns some remarks coming from the comparison between Italian *ci* and its occurrence with the possessive *have*, taking up the issue of the occurrence of the SCal locative clitic *ndi* with *have* discussed above. In Italian, it is obligatory in some cases to realize the clitic *ci* before the verb *avere* together with an object clitic pronoun.<sup>135</sup> The lexical object that is resumed by the clitic can be either dislocated, or it occurred previously in the discourse. Compare (121a) to (121b), where the omission of *ci* is very unusual or ungrammatical at all.<sup>136</sup>

- (121)a. Una casa in Germania, non ce l’ho. (standard Italian)  
 a house in Germany, NEG CL PRN.ACC-have.1SG  
 ‘I do not have a house in Germany.’
- b. ??/\*Una casa in Germania, non l’ho.

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<sup>135</sup> Notice that *ci* changes into *ce* because of a phonological adjustment when it is combined with pronouns whose onset is a nasal (e.g. *ne*) or a lateral (e.g. *lo*, *la* etc.).

<sup>136</sup> With verbs others than *have* the locative pronoun can also be omitted when the PP is left dislocated, compare (ia) and (ib) from Renzi et al. (2001: Vol I, 574).

- (i)a. In questa città, (ci) sono stato spesso. (standard Italian)  
 in this city, am being often  
 ‘I have often been in this city.’
- b. In questa casa, ho vissuto tre anni.  
 in this house, have.1SG lived three years  
 ‘I have been living in this house for three years.’

In SCal, on the contrary, the example in (121a) would be grammatical only without the clitic *ndi* on *aviri*, which otherwise appears with the verb of possession, and I proposed above that the cliticization of *ndi* is blocked by the presence the object pronoun (122).

- (122)a. Na casa a Germania, non l'aju. (SCal)  
 a house at-the Germany, NEG CL.ACC-have.1SG
- b. \*Na casa a Germania, non la ndaju.

Concerning Italian, Moro (1998) already remarks that the use of *ci* with *avere* as a full verb is quite widespread and that even if the clitic *ci* is better omitted in the high register, it must be present when the object of *avere* is cliticized, as illustrated in (121) above. In some Italo-Romance dialects, as Paduan or Calabrian, the clitic also mostly occurs on *have*.

He therefore suggests drawing a parallel between *esserci* and *averci* and to see if different properties can help to better understand their structure. The first difference between *esserci* and *averci* is the impossibility of having an external argument with the first verb (123), whereas the second allows for an external lexical DP (124). Assumedly, with *esserci* there is an expletive *pro* in [Spec, VP], see (123a).

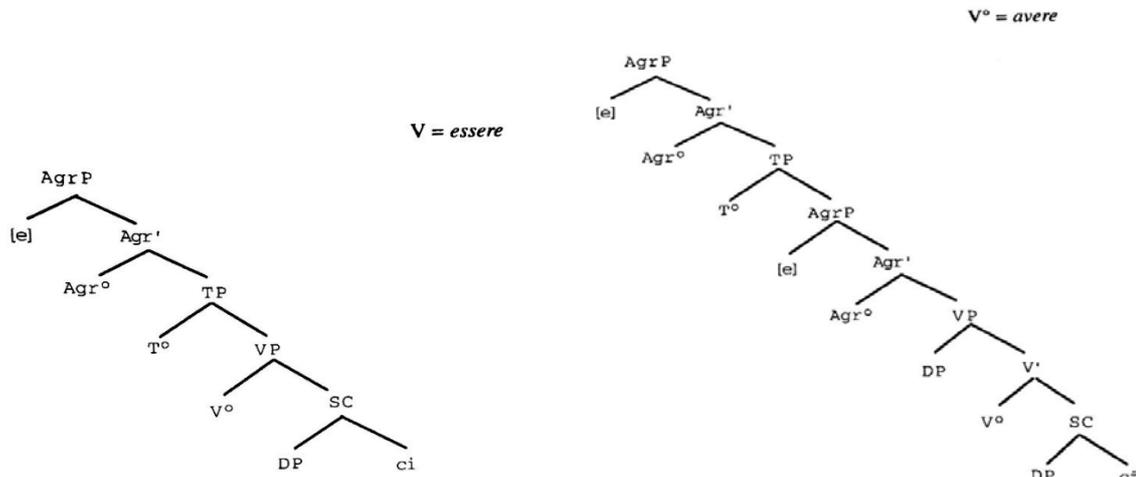
- (123)a. **pro** [<sub>ci</sub> sono] [<sub>SC</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> molti libri] t<sub>i</sub>]  
*pro* CL are.3PL many books
- b. \***i ragazzi** [<sub>ci</sub> sono] [<sub>SC</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> molti libri] t<sub>i</sub>]  
 the boys CL are.3PL many books
- (124)a. **I professori** [(c<sub>i</sub>?) hanno] [<sub>SC</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> molti libri] t<sub>i</sub>]  
 the professors CL have.3PL many books  
 'Professors have many books.'
- b. **I professori** ??(ce) li<sub>i</sub> hanno t<sub>i</sub>

(Adapted from Moro 1998: 157-158)

In line with his analysis of inverted locatives (1997), Moro claims that *ci* occurs in an underlying structure as the predicate element within a small clause, which is the complement selected by both verbs *essere* and *avere*, and is then raised to the preverbal position because of its clitic nature. The (internal) subject is the other element generated in the small clause. Building on the Case-Theory (Chomsky 1986, 1993), which foresees the assignment of Case to a DP when it enters a Spec-Head

relation with an Agr head, Moro says that the realization of the copula *essere* or *avere* depends on the number of the agreement heads available. In fact, in a predication with *essere* only one AgrP is available, namely AgrSP, whereas *avere* necessarily requires two target positions: one for the subject that initially is in the small clause and one for the subject, base-generated in the specifier of VP (the external argument) (Moro 1998: 163). Moro (1998: 165) proposes therefore the following structures in (125) for *esserci* and *averci*. In both structures we can see that the small clause is the complement of VP and that *ci* is the clitic element that functions as a pro-predicate when raised to V. *Essere* has only one AgrP above TP, namely AgrSP, whose specifier position is targeted by the subject. On the contrary, *avere* has both an AgrOP under TP available for Case assignment to the external argument (and to the object clitic) as well as an AgrSP above TP.

(125) Structures of *esserci* and *averci* according to Moro (1998)



Evidence for this claim comes from the agreement properties of the past participle in Italian with the object clitics.<sup>137</sup> In fact, copular sentences with *essere* always manifest agreement between the subject and the past participle, whereas in sentences with *avere* agreement only takes place when a clitic object precedes the auxiliary.<sup>138</sup> In copular sentences, the DP raised higher in the structure activates all available agreement positions and object clitics are incompatible there, because there is no AgrOP where they can check Case. Cliticization is, on the contrary, possible with *averci*, because there is an AgrOP (Moro 1998: 163).

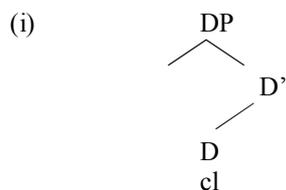
Basically, the approach of Moro (1993, 1998) is relevant to the question addressed above – namely why in Italian we have the locative clitic *ci* occurring together with *avere* and an object clitic – because it departs from the premise that *esserci* and *averci* are actually similar in so far that both *essere* and *avere* select their complement a small clause with *ci* as predicate. *Ci* is then moved on the verbal head because of its clitic nature. What differs between the two constructions is that *avere* has two agreement heads that can be activated by its two arguments, namely AgrS and AgrO, whereas *essere* only has one Agr. Therefore, constructions such as (126a) are possible – and indeed necessary when the object is cliticized as in (126b). It follows from the property of *essere* of allowing only one argument that the AgrO projection needs not be activated and hence sentences such as (127b), with a clitic object, are ungrammatical.

(126)a. C’ha un gatto.  
 CL-has a cat  
 ‘He has a cat.’

b. Ce l’ha.  
 CL CL.OBJ-has  
 ‘He has it.’

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<sup>137</sup> Belletti (2009: Ch. 5) offers an analysis of Italian clitics and claims that clitics have an impoverished structure (i) that allow them to first move as a maximal projection in order to check agreement in the dedicated position through a Spec-Head relation. In a second step they move as a head in order to incorporate into the finite verb.



The structure of (i) represents a third person accusative romance clitic, whereas for locative and genitive/partitive the clitic would be the head of a PP and KP respectively and not a straight DP (Belletti 2009: fn.7, 310).

<sup>138</sup> I am only presenting the relevant facts for the analysis of *esserci/averci*. For a more detailed discussion on past participle agreement in Italian with *have/be* and on clitics see Belletti (2009) and references therein.

(127)a. C'è un gatto.  
 CL-is a cat  
 'There is a cat.'

b. \*Ce l'è.

Additionally to Italian, Moro (1993, 1998) cites Paduan (128) or Milanese (129), as further evidence for the co-occurrence of the clitic *ghe* (Ital. *ci*) on *have*, independently of the cliticization of the object.

(128) I profesur a \*(gh') i<sub>i</sub> han t<sub>i</sub> (Paduan)  
 The professors CL.SUBJ CL CL.OBJ have.3PL  
 'The professors, they have got them.' (meant: *the books*)  
 (Moro 1998: 158)

(129) El \*(gh') ha un tirabüfün (Milanese)  
 he CL has a corkscrew  
 'He has got a corkscrew.'  
 (Moro 1998: 127)

Moro nevertheless remarks that there is also a small percentage of cases in which *ghe* do not occur with the possessive *have*. To explain the variation, he puts forwards that we are probably faced with a variant that implies the incorporation of an abstract clitic, much as it happens in Italian with the verb *arrivare* compared to *arrivarci*, where the locative clitic is optionally expressed overtly, but always implied in the computation (Moro 1998: fn. 5 and 1993).<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> The verb *arrivare* is considered to be similar to *esserci* because it also takes a small clause as its complement, whose predicate (i.e. LOC) is a clitic and incorporates on the verbal head *Arrivare* should therefore be analysed as it follows:

- (i)a. [V° *arrivare\**] [SC [DP molte ragazze] [LOC] ]  
 b. [V° LOC<sub>i</sub>-*arrivare\**] [SC [DP molte ragazze] t<sub>i</sub> ]

Moro (1993: 122).

In SCal, the situation differs to a certain extent from Italian *averci*. I claimed that the possessive verb *ndaviri* is always realized together with *ndi* if finite, except when a clitic object intervenes.<sup>140</sup> In this case, contrary to Italian or to the northern Italo-Romance dialects mentioned above, the occurrence of *ndi* is always disallowed and we have no exact counterpart to (126b) (*ce l'ha*) as no clitic *ndi* can be realized (therefore, *\*non lu ndavi* is ungrammatical). This gives an interesting hint at how the process of cliticization takes place. The blocking of the clitic *ndi* on *aviri* when an object is cliticized can be explained in different ways. It could be assumed that *ndi* is not – or not completely – a lexicalized element on possessive *aviri*, because *ndi* disappears when another argumental clitic occurs, pointing thus at the analysis as a still independent clitic. However, notice that while in Italian the clitic *ci* precedes the object clitic (130a), in SCal a linear order of this kind is not possible (130b).

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<sup>140</sup> Recall that *aviri* has no clitic *ndi* also when it functions as auxiliary verb in my corpus and also when a clitic object occurs, compare (i) where both cases are at stake.

- (i) Peppinu, chi t'avia dittu jeu?  
 Peppinu, what you.DAT-have.1SG said I  
 'Peppinu, what did I say to you?'

In Ursino (2007) there is only one piece of evidence from the dialect of Roccella Jonica, where the object clitic and *ndi* on *have* co-occur, but in the data I collected and actually in every other example of Ursino's descriptive grammar no other example is to be found. Other cases with finite forms of *have* and no clitic *ndi* are illustrated in (i)-(iii).

- (i) Avi ddu uri chi t'aspettu.  
 has two hours that you.ACC-wait.1SG  
 'I am waiting for you since two hours'
- (ii) Avi di quandu mi maritai...  
 has from when REF marry.PST.1SG  
 'Since I got married...'
- (iii) Se lu tambutu v'aviti accattari.  
 If the coffin you-have.2PL buy.INF  
 'If you have to buy the coffin.'

In sentences (i)-(ii) the verb *have* is used with the function of the adverb of time. In Italian, one can select the *be*-predicate or introduce the adverb of time with the preposition *da*, compare the respective Italian counterparts to (i), *sono due ore che ti sto aspettando/ Ti sto aspettando da due ore*. Notice that in SCal the option with the preposition is not available. Sentence (iii) is an instance of *have* conveying the deontic meaning, i.e. obligation or necessity (cf. *aviri* + verb = Engl. *to have to do something*).

On the other hand, it is reasonable to think that the reason for these exceptions could only be apparent. Compare for instance sentence (iv)<sup>140</sup> from the SCal variant of Brancaleone.

- (iv) ndavi vint'anni chi mangiati terra. (Brancaleone)  
*ndi*-has twenty years that eat.2PL earth  
 'You have been dead since twenty years now.'

Concerning this issue, though, it is very probable that we can consider the exceptions of *aviri* without the clitic *ndi* as variants with a null clitic (see the following discussion in the main text).

Indeed, also when *ndi* optionally appears on the infinitive, it is proclitic and not enclitic as Italian *averci*. This would support the partly completed incorporation of *ndi* in the verb.

- (130)a. C'ho la macchina. (standard Italian)  
 CL-have.1SG the car
- b. Ndaju 'a machina. (SCal)  
 CL-have.1SG the car
- (131)a. Non \*(ce) l'ha. (standard Italian)  
 NEG ci CL.ACC-has
- b. Non \*(ndi) l'avi. (SCal)  
 NEG ndi CL.ACC-has
- (132)a. Non ndaviri chi fari. (but more usual without *ndi*: *non aviri chi fari*)  
 NEG CL-have.INF what do.INF  
 'To have nothing to do.'
- b. \*Non avirindi chi fari.

We can also adopt the hypothesis put forth by Moro for the Paduan cases in which *ghe* is not realized, namely by considering the lack of the clitic as only apparent and the form without *ndi* to only be a variant with an abstract/silent clitic (as assumed for *arrivare*, see Moro 1998).

Thus, the following issues have been considered for SCal: (i) why the presence of an object clitic bans the realization of *ndi* on possessive *have*, which otherwise occurs with all its finite forms and consequently (ii) what is the contribution of *ndi* in *ndaviri* when it does not generate the existential reading. *Ndaviri* seems at first not directly comparable to standard Italian *averci* because *ci* and *ndi* do not display the same superficial distribution, but they may correspond concerning their functions, if a deeper insight in the syntactic structure underlying the two forms is given (see also next section).

Another point that helps motivating the function of *nci* or *ndi* on *avere* concerns the semantics of these verbs. In standard Italian, for instance, the fact that the semantic contribution of *ci* in *esserci* is existential is assumed to be due to the computation of the DP (Moro 1993 and 1998: 167 and recall the discussion in section 4.5 on Italian existentials). In *averci*, thus, the general possessive relation expressed by the verb and its object may also not be due to the lexical content of the auxiliary, but again to the computational process at stake. The same proves true for *ndi* expressing possession in *ndavi*, whereas the homophone *ndavi* is clearly existential in meaning (in which case *ndi* is never omitted, see next section for more discussion). Again, the semantics provide evidence for the strong

link between the verbs *be* and *have*, not only with respect to existential constructions, as assumed by Freeze (1992). In fact, possession is expressed in many languages with a copular sentence and the two arguments are distinguished only by Case, for example in Latin *mihi domus est*, where possession is achieved using the copula *be* (Moro 1993: 127). Thus, the differences between *be* and *have* are probably more superficial than it seems at first sight (Benveniste 1966, Moro 1993 among others).

Double left adjunction of both clitics *ndi* and the direct object is, nevertheless, not possible with both instances of *have* in the variant of SCal examined, with the crucial difference that in existential-*ndavi* the object clitic is excluded and *ndi* can never be omitted, whereas in possessive constructions *ndi* is unexpressed and the object clitic is realized.

For this reason, the observation that the clitic *ndi* never disappears when the verb *have* takes over the existential function is of great importance and I will assume it to be grammaticalised as a cluster together with the verb and to be indeed necessary in order to express existentiality. The particular behaviour of the clitics *ndi* and *nci* in existential sentences will be the topic of the next section.

To sum up, we have seen that Italian and Southern Calabrian have different clitic pronoun systems. Especially with respect to the clitic *nci*, whose origin is very common with standard Italian *ci* and it seems to be a phonological adaptation of it; we could see that it in fact takes over completely different uses from its Italian counterpart. Decisively, it only shares the property of occurring in existential constructions with the copula ESSE and even more significantly, it cannot be a locative clitic in SCal. These observations support the hypothesis that the availability of *nci*+ESSE to express existentiality could be a reflex of the Italian influence. Moreover, the lack of a locative clitic in general and the availability of *ndi* as the only element still expressing locative features, but which selects *have* as its copula, could have been a factor triggering the emergence of *ndavi* as existential cluster proper of SCal.

### 5.7. *Nci* and *ndi* in existential and locative sentences

In the previous section we saw that the clitics *nci* and *ndi* function as pronouns, but also occur in ES. *Nci* in SCal is locative only in ES, contrary to *ci* in Italian, whereas *ndi* in SCal takes over more functions than the Italian *ne* and significantly occurs in combination with *have* in order to achieve existentiality. These are relevant facts that will be analysed in this section. In fact, we need to provide evidence in order to ascertain whether *nci* and *ndi* have a real locative meaning or are lexicalized morphs in the constructions in which they occur.

Starting with the *nci*-sentences, I will adopt the tests used in Cruschina (forthcoming) in order to determine first of all whether *nci* is a locative resumptive clitic, as is the case for Italian *ci* in inverted locative sentences. Let us first consider the elicited sentences (133a)-(133d) in SCal of Cittanova.

- (133)a. I tovagghi su ntra ‘u tiraturi? (SCal)  
 the towels are.3PL in the drawer  
 ‘Are the towels in the drawer?’
- b. Sì, su \*(ntra u tiraturi).  
 c. Sì, nci su /su dà.  
 d. \*Sì, nci su dà/ nci su ntra ‘u tiraturi.

As was the case for the Italian clitic *ci*, the clitic *nci* also displays incompatibility with a locative adverb or a locative phrase (133d), pointing at its locative meaning and thus at its function as resumptive clitic of a location, that must be dislocated if realized in a locative phrase.

Does the same remark hold for the clitic *ndi*? The elicited counterparts in (134a)-(134d) with *ndavi* serve as background for an answer to this question.

- (134)a. Ndavi tovagghi ntra ‘u tiraturi? (SCal)  
*ndavi* towels in the drawer  
 ‘Are there towels in the drawer?’
- b. Sì, ndavi (ntra u tiraturi).  
 c. Sì, ndavi/ \*avi dà.  
 d. Sì, ndavi dà/ ndavi ntra ‘u tiraturi.

Looking at the cluster of data in (134), we see that there is a difference in the behaviour of the clitic *ndi*. Only in sentence (134c) *sì, ndavi*, i.e. where no locative coda is available, the *ndi*-clitic seems to comply with the behaviour of *nci*, which in turn matches that of the Italian locative clitic *ci*. If we concentrate on the differences, we notice first of all that *ndi* can never be omitted and therefore

we cannot have a predicative counterpart (indeed (134c) *avi dā* or *avi ntra u tiraturi* are ungrammatical). In fact, provided that *ndi* occurs, in (134b) the locative PP *ntra u tiraturi* is not at all indispensable for the grammaticality of the sentence: the brackets signalize its optionality. It follows that the first alternative in (134c) *si, ndavi* is grammatical and that in the second example the adverb *dā* functions exactly as the locative phrase in (134b) and could be left aside. Thus, both alternatives in (134d) are acceptable and do not give rise to ungrammaticality.

These examples support the analysis of *ndavi*-sentences as pure existentials. The locative coda in genuine existentials is part of the focus. In the inverted locative sentences (133d), the ungrammaticality derives exactly from their locative status and the resulting incompatibility of the locative resumptive clitic *ci/nci* with the coda, if this is not dislocated as (133d) shows (see also section 4.5 for Italian *c'è/ci sono* inverted locatives).

A further piece of evidence for the claim that *nci*-sentences can also be inverted locatives comes from the properties of wh-phrases: as already observed in Italian, locative PPs are focal when they correspond to wh-phrase. Indeed, in SCal, (135) is deviant probably because of the same reason, namely because of the disallowance of the clitic doubling structure due to the co-occurrence of the locative clitic *nci* and the locative phrase.

(135) Ntra quali stanza (\*nc') è sorita?  
 in which room \*nci is sister-your  
 'Which room is your sister in?'

(136) Ntra quali stanza esti sorita?  
 in which room is sister-your  
 'Which room is your sister in?'

SCal *ndavi*-sentences are not locative predications and this kind of incompatibility with the coda does not arise. Exactly as in Sardinian, no deviance is perceived when an indefinite DP occurs with the existential copula *ndavi*, even if a focal locative wh-phrase is present. Compare, to this regard, the SCal counterparts to Sardinian in (137) and (138).

(137) Aundi ndavi du sindaci? (SCal)  
 where ndavi two mayors

(138) Aundi (\*nci) su i du sindaci?  
 where \*nci are.3PL the two mayors

There follows that the clitic *ndi* does not seem to share the same full locative property that characterizes *nci* in sentences with definite DPs that are inverted locatives. The remarks on *nci* with definite DPs raise two questions. First of all, what exactly the clitic *ndi* on the existential copula *ndavi* is, as the data does not support the hypothesis of a locative content. Secondly, whether there is the same differentiation among the *nci*-sentences put forward in Italian. In other words, are there pure existential sentences with *nci* and do they co-exist with *ndavi*-ES?

A central question, to which I will hint at now, but discuss later, concerns again *ndavi*: are all sentences with *ndavi* pure existentials or should different kinds be distinguished too, as in the case of *ci*- or *nci*-constructions?

Let us first make some observations in order to provide an answer to the first two questions. Diachronically, the particle *ndi* derives from Latin INDE. According to the Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine *inde* is an “adverbe de lieu, du groupe de *is*, corrélatif de *unde*, marquant l’origine, le point de départ dans l’espace ou dans le temps « à partir de là, ou de ce moment » ”. It thus indicates the point from which a topographical feature, space etc., extends: from that point, from there (Glare & Souter: 880).

The pivotal question concerning *ndi* is the following: is it a real clitic or is it synchronically part of the verb, inseparable from it and that has thus lost its original meaning? Benincà (2007) offers an enlightening analysis of originally locative clitics and their evolution in Italo-Romance. Her discussion is particularly based on data from Venetan dialects, which had been presented before concerning the presence of a clitic with *have*, as it happens in SCal. She argues that the clitic form *ghe* (and its allomorphs *gh/ge/g’*) on the verb *avere* has grammaticalised and therefore has not a locative role anymore. In fact, it seems to have assumed other functions: either it has a phonological role in order to provide an onset for the syllable *a-* of the verb *avere*, as in (139), or it has an argumental function, i.e. it expresses the dative Case, see (140). Notice that the verb *avere* can have possessive, deontic or auxiliary use.

(139) Gh’ à cantà (Venetan)  
 CL has.3SG sing.PAST.PARTICIPLE  
 ‘S/he has sung.’

(140) Ghe lo gh’ò dà  
 DAT it.OBJ CL have.1SG given  
 ‘I gave it to him.’

(Benincà 2007: 28-29)

The only restriction on the clitic *ghe* is that it can only appear on all finite forms of *have*. If we consider the occurrence of the locative clitic from a diachronic perspective, we see that the locative clitic has been in complementary distribution with a locative phrase for a long time (recall 4.5.2). Within the northern early Italo-Romance vernaculars there were, though, a few exceptions where a locative phrase also exhibited the proform. Bentley (2006) claims that *ghe* in ES of northern vernaculars behaves like an existential proform that joins with the copula in order to spell out an existential predicate, for instance in the following examples with the copula *be* (141)-(143).

(141) Un altro arboro g' era. (Early Lombard)  
 a other tree CL was-3SG  
 'There was another tree.'

(142) Roxella no ghè alcuna. (Early Mantuan)  
 Roxella NEG CL-is any  
 'There is no Roxella.'

(143) Et autro no ge fo. (Early Venetian)  
 and other NEG CL was.3SG  
 'There was not another.'

(Ciconte 2009: 194)

In SCal there is some evidence that can be explained by making use of the insights of Benincà's and Bentley's analysis. As it happens with *ghe*, *ndi* is also a clitic that leans on *have* when it expresses possession, as well as when it has a deontic and existential function.

The fact that the occurrence of *ghe* in northern Italo-Romance dialects is limited only to the finite forms – as in SCal, where even the auxiliary *have* does not display the clitic – suggests that it must convey some meaning, some semantic features. Benincà assumes for Venetan that *ghe* “is connected to a sort of localization, but of the temporal kind, i.e. a localization of the event that must be therefore expressed with a finite form. This feature must not necessarily be overtly realized [...], the presence of [...] a clitic suffices in order to render it interpretable, allowing it to remain covert” (Benincà 2007: 30).<sup>141</sup>

Significantly, the clitic form *ndi* neither occurs with non-finite forms of *have* (145), while it is realized on the finite form (146).

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<sup>141</sup> The translation is mine.

(145) Ndepperu (\*nd)aviri problemi.  
*ndi*-have.PST.3PL \**ndi*-have.INF problems  
 ‘They must have had some problems.’

(146) Ndepperu aviri problemi.  
*ndi*-have.PST.3PL have.INF problems  
 ‘They must have had some problems.’

Looking at the existential form *ndavi*, the *ndi* clitic cannot equally be considered as carrying a locative meaning in the original sense. As is the case for the pro-argument *ci* in ES of Italian (see 4.5.2), the tests carried out on *ndi* at the beginning of this section showed that it does not interact with the locative phrase and thus does not trigger its dislocation. Furthermore, *ndi* does not have a deictic value either, which is also a property of the argumental proform in existential sentences that distinguishes it from the pro-predicate nature of *nci* in locatives.

Eventually, when I discussed the deictic locative sentences of Italian (type III), I reported the examples given in Cruschina (to appear) repeated below in (147a)-(147c), in which the clitic proform has the default interpretation of “here and now” and the pivot must be specific and referential. Compare them to the ungrammaticality of the counterparts (148a)-(148c) in SCal *ndavi*-ES.

(147) a. C’è Gianni. (Italian)  
*ci*-is John  
 ‘John is here.’

b. Guarda: c’è tua sorella!  
 look *ci*-is your sister  
 ‘Look: your sister is here!’

c. C’è l’aereo, finalmente.  
*ci*-is the-airplane eventually  
 ‘The airplane is here, eventually.’

(148)a. \**ndavi* Gianni  
 b. \**guarda: ndavi* sorita!  
 c. \**ndavi a’ machina, finarmenti.*  
 (meant: \* ‘*there is the car*’; not possessive as ‘*he has the car, eventually*’)

Notice that sentences (148a) and (148b), even if they displayed DOM and thus resulted in the grammatically acceptable *ndavi a Gianni / ndavi a sorita*, the reading would still be a different one: they would convey the availability/locative reading (see next section for the semantic interpretation and the syntactic position of definite pivots in *ndavi*-sentences), while the proform *ndi* cliticized on the verb would still not have any deictic meaning. That *ndi* does not have a deictic “here and now“-meaning is also true for (148c), even if this is secondary to the fact that specific referents are not compatible in SCal *ndavi* existentials. The pure *ndavi*-ES of SCal is Broad Focus and the pivot is indefinite, with the few exceptions of the prepositional accusative marked nouns that occupy a different underlying position. Still, there is some kind of meaning conveyed by the clitic *ndi* in existential *ndavi*. I suggest that the clitic of *ndavi*-ES has the function of a temporal localization of the event, namely the function of a pro-argument as *ci* in genuine ES of Italian.

While in other Italo-Romance languages the proform occurring in existentials (either with *be* or *have*) has the same form as the clitic occurring in locative or possessive construction (i.e. *ghe* in northern vernaculars (149a) or Sardinian *bi* (149b), as well as *ci* in colloquial Italian (149c) as discussed), in SCal, on the contrary, the proform lexicalized with the possessive or existential HABERE (150)-(151) is different from that occurring with ESSE (152)-(153). On the other hand, it is relevant that the same clitic form *ndi* is shared by existential sentences with *ndavi* and the copula *have* when it expresses possession, pointing at a common origin.

(149)a. I gh’annu l so da fá. (Mendrisiotto, Ticino)  
 SUBJ.CL CL have.3PL the POSS to do  
 ‘They have their things to do.’

b. Non b’amus mákkina. (Nuorese)  
 NEG CL have.1PL car  
 ‘We have no car.’

c. C’ho tre figli (colloquial Italian)  
 CL-have.1SG three children  
 ‘I have three children.’

(Bentley & Cruschina, to appear)

(150)a. Ndavi tri figghi. possessive-have (SCal)  
 CL-has three children  
 ‘S/he has three children.’

- b. **Ndaju** vint'anni. *possessive-have*  
 CL-have.1SG twenty-years  
 'I am twenty years old.'
- (151) Nta stu postu non **ndavi** rispettu. *ES*  
 in this place NEG **ndi**-has respect  
 'There is no respect here.'
- (152) **Nc'**è festa ntr' o paisi *ES*  
*nci*-is party in-the village  
 'The village is celebrating.'
- (153) Sutta **nc'**è lu camion *locative*  
 downstairs *nci*-is the lorry  
 'The lorry is downstairs.'

This seems to me an important piece of evidence. The clitic form that has grammaticalised on the possessive *have*-copula is the same as the clitic form on the existential *have*-copula and, as we saw, it originates from the Latin locative INDE. This fact supports the analysis of *ndavi*-ES as a type proper of SCal that co-exists in this variant alongside the *nci*-constructions. In fact, while native speakers master both types of constructions, *nci* is only cliticized on ESSE locative or existential, but not on HABERE so that we do not find outcomes such as *\*nc'avi*. *Ndavi*-ES in SCal demonstrate that they are not an adjustment of Italian ES, but a feature proper of a sister language.

Moreover, the evident similarity between the possessive and the existential constructions does not constitute a drawback in the analysis presented here, but on the contrary it supports the hypothesis of a common origin (Freeze 1992) that has nevertheless undergone diachronic change. Possibly, possessive sentences have been reanalyzed over time and gave rise to two different types of sentences, existentials and possessives. This can also have been the case for originally locative sentences featuring the copula ESSE, which – according to the occurrence and reanalysis of the proform – took over the existential role. Thus, ‘the partial overlap and the apparent analogies should be regarded as the natural reflexes of a persistent historical continuity with respect to the source construction or, in other cases, as the result of incomplete grammaticalisation’ (Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming).

Additionally, in both types of sentences a connection between the proform and its original locative value is still recognizable. In ES it constitutes a marker of existentiality as it sets the spatio-temporal coordinates and functions thus as the argument of the existential predication, namely as a pro-argument. Notice that the pro-argument lexicalizes on the 3<sup>rd</sup> person of the verb *have*, without agreement with the pivot (see also 5.9). In possessive constructions the clitic occurs with all persons

and it also represents an abstract argument which locates the possessive predication in space and time following Benincà (2007), therefore having a reading defined “attualizzante” (Sabatini 1985), that is, it intensifies the verbal form and renders it more adequate to enhancement the communicative situation in a precise space and time.

The shared properties of *ndavi*-existentials with the original possessive constructions are not only evident in the proform realized on both, but also become evident when animate/specific pivots occur. In *ndavi*-ES pivots of this kind obligatorily show Differential Object Marking and provide evidence for them to be direct objects, as is the case for the internal argument possessive constructions (Suñer 1982, Manzini & Savoia 2005, Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming).

## 5.8. The semantics and Case properties of nouns occurring in ES of Southern Calabrian

Starting from section 5.3 I faced the issue of explaining the small percentage of cases from the corpus in which *ndavi*-ES present a specific pivot, mostly a role noun followed by a proper noun. The DP can be a proper name (154) – in which case there is no definite article, as Southern Calabrian does not morphologically express it, cf. chapter 3 – it can also be introduced by possessive pronouns as in (155), or by a role noun preceded by the definite article (156). This last case is evident because the outcome of the assimilation process between the prepositional accusative marker *a* and the definite article ‘*u* is *o*. Had the pivot been unmarked, then it would have to be introduced by the simple definite article ‘*u*. At the same time, the noun differentially marked by *o* and not simply *a* indicates that it is also introduced by a definite article.<sup>142</sup>

- (154) Ndavi a Micu ntr’a strata. (SCal)  
*ndavi* DOM Micu in-the street  
 ‘Micu is in the street.’
- (155) Ndavi a to soru ntr’a cucina.  
*ndavi* DOM your sister in-the kitchen  
 ‘Your sister is in the kitchen.’
- (156) Ndavi o scarparu ntr’a strata.  
*ndavi* DOM-the cobbler in-the street  
 ‘The cobbler is in the street.’

In 5.4 we ascertained that the decisive properties for the pivot to be differentially marked and consequently raised to a higher position in the structure are specificity and animacy. All other pivots in the data are indefinite generics or mass noun and – independent of their animacy value – they are not marked with the accusative and stay lower in the structure. Nevertheless, exactly the possibility of DOM for specific nouns hints at the fact that pivots in existential HABERE-sentences are objects and not subjects and this property is surely a vestige of the source of *ndavi*-ES in possessive constructions.

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<sup>142</sup> In SCal, thus, structural accusative in unmarked and marked direct objects is formally different. In Neapolitan, for instance, this does not obtain as the assimilation process between the prepositional accusative marker <*a*> and the definite article ‘*o* yields the outcome *o* and there is thus no formal difference with the unmarked accusative objects headed by the definite article. Indeed, in SCal definite masculine nouns display the article ‘*u*, which is to see in unmarked direct objects.

At the same time, if specific pivots are allowed in *ndavi*-ES this could be at first sight considered as a violation of the DE. I argue that the definiteness effect consists of the obligatory constraint for indefinite/nonspecific DPs to remain in the lowest complement position, namely in the VP, whereas definite/specific pivots have to be raised to a higher position in the structure (identified in [Spec, *v*P]), which excludes existentiality. Since raised pivots are not indefinite/nonspecific anymore, a strong determiner is morphologically realized in languages that provide its insertion.

For sure, it must be asked whether the nominal in pure existential sentences, which is constrained into the existential closure, is a real DP or whether it lacks a DP layer and it must be analysed for instance as dominated by a NumP as its maximal projection (see Belletti & Bianchi to appear for a very interesting account on nominals in existentials).

In other words, the semantic value of the pivot correlates with its position in the structure and, particularly, formal definiteness is not decisive for the insertion of the noun in a determined position, but its specificity/referential feature. This claim builds much on the work of Enç (1987) and Diesing (1994), just to cite the first systematic works on this topic. I am supporting these claims with new data from SCal as well as from Dari, as we will see in 6.3. The comparison with this last language is particularly relevant because it brings out the question of whether the DE can be at stake even in languages without morphological realization of definiteness and how the pivots syntactically behave there.

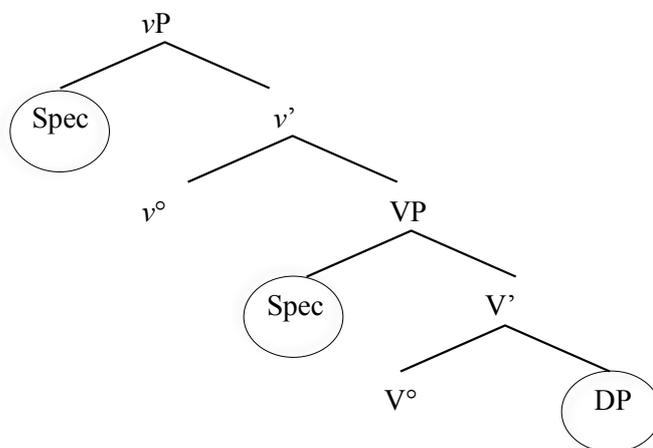
In the spirit of Diesing (1994) I intend to propose an analysis of ES in SCal that explains the interpretation of the DPs according to the position they assume in the syntactic structure and in the light of the fact that *ndavi*-ES derive from possessive sentences and the pivot originates therefore as complement inside the VP.

Following the recent research, I adopt a Minimalist framework for the derivation of the clause in which the core functional categories assumed are a Complementiser Phrase (CP), a Tense Phrase (TP) and a generalised light Verb Phrase (*v*P) (Hale & Keyser 1993, Chomsky 1995 among others). Furthermore, the syntactic analysis of the pivots in ES builds particularly on Ledgeway (2000) and Remberger (2009). While Ledgeway adopts a *v*P shell structure, Remberger following Bowers (1993) names it Predication Phrase (PrP), still maintaining that the *v*P and the PrP analyses are to be considered equivalent as the last functional projection in the lexical phase, intending with PrP a generalized *v*P. Moreover, in the Minimalist spirit the PrP or *v*P is a phase, i.e. it is the syntactic probing domain that is handed over to the Spell-Out before a new phase can be introduced in the derivation (Chomsky 2000, Ledgeway 2000, Remberger 2009). To this regard recall that the *v*P (or PrP), which is headed by a Case-assigning head, is a phase that, once assembled and judged convergent, has only the elements in the head and the specifier visible to further derivation. In other words, only the head and its edge are accessible to further syntactic processed in order for the derivation to continue (Phase Impenetrability Condition), while the complement of the head, for

instance the VP in a  $\nu$ P, cannot be further involved in the computation when a phase is concluded (Hornstein et al. 2005).

If we consider at first the  $\nu$ P, there are three possible positions that can be occupied by arguments, namely the specifier of the  $\nu$ P, the specifier of the lexical phrase and the complement position of the lexical phrase. These considerations are illustrated in (157) (adapted from Remberger 2009: 246). Notice that instead of any lexical category (verb, noun, adjective, preposition or adverb) that can replace the variable X in a XP complement of  $\nu$ P, I assume for *ndavi*-ES a VP because of its possessive source. VP can, therefore, replace the variable XP in the *ndavi*-analysis and the complement YP of XP by a DP.

(157) **Argument positions within the  $\nu$ P for *ndavi*.**



I assume that the syntactic reason for the definiteness constraint relies from the lack of a strong D feature instantiated in  $\nu$ , which requires a potential category to check it.<sup>143</sup> The only category that could satisfy this requirement is the internal object in complement position, provided that it is specific. If this is the case, it raises to [Spec,  $\nu$ P] where it checks the strong feature and occurs differentially marked by *a*. However, if this occurs, we cannot consider it an existential sentence, exactly because the nominal is not anymore in the existential closure. Notice that the raising of the object does not violate economy because it occurs inside the minimal domain of  $\nu$ . An indefinite DP, on the contrary, does not have to move to [Spec,  $\nu$ P] and indeed it has to remain in situ in the complement position.

The DPs in a structure like that illustrated in (157) would thus occupy the complement position when indefinite/nonspecific or overtly move to [Spec,  $\nu$ P] when definite/specific and animate. In the

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<sup>143</sup> Compare the approach presented in 5.4 for objects in SCal.

table 19 are summarized the relevant properties of the two types of DPs – specific and not – occurring in *ndavi*-sentences.

**Table 19. Main properties of the *ndavi*-sentences**

	[Spec, vP]	[v DP]
<b>Base Position</b>	postverbal	postverbal
<b>Definiteness</b>	± def	– def
<b>Specificity</b>	+ spec	– spec
<b>Animacy</b>	+ animate	± animate
<b>Agreement</b>	– agr	– agr
<b>Case</b>	accusative	accusative
<b><i>Ndi</i>-clitic</b>	obligatory	obligatory

Indeed, looking at table 19, there arises the question of whether sentences with pivots raised at least to [Spec, vP] are still genuine existential constructions or not. Before handling this issue in detail in the next sections, let us consider from a syntactic-semantic perspective the behaviour of Sardinian and Italian again, whose existential and locative sentences properties can give some hints when compared to SCal.

Sardinian has a clearer way of distinguishing locative from existential constructions: the raising of a specific DP to [Spec, vP] entails the selection of the ESSE-copula and verbal agreement, thus rendering the clause locative and not existential anymore (Remberger 2009). In ES the auxiliary selected is HABERE, which lacks agreement with the pivot that cannot raise higher because of its nonspecific value.<sup>144</sup>

Contrary to Sardinian, Italian always displays the copula ESSE with locative as well as with existential sentences. Nevertheless, Remberger (2009) building on Leonetti (2008a) shows that the different syntactic positions occupied by the pivots become evident at the semantic level also in Italian. Consider sentence (158), seen in 4.5, and its two possible interpretations.

(158) Non c'erano molte ragazze (Italian)  
Not CL-were many girls

<sup>144</sup> Though Remberger's account foresees for nonspecific nouns to be located in the [Spec, XP] (see (157)), a position also available to arguments (hence, an A-position), I maintain for objects of *ndavi*-ES in SCal to be generated in the complement of VP. Both positions do not violate economy conditions when movement takes place.



agreement the pivot. In Italian, the different position occupied by a specific indefinite becomes visible only by means of further movement to [Spec, TP] and consequent preverbal position.

In the light of such considerations, I agree with the frequently shared view that the definiteness effect seems to be more a specificity effect (Enç 1987, Remberger 2009, Sorrenti to appear among many others). In Bentley's (2004) terms, the DPs in existential sentences are "brand-new" and must obligatory stay inside the VP.

The traditional definiteness restriction acquires thus a semantic dimension based on specificity, which has a direct link in the syntax. A formulation of the DE based on the present observations is to be found in Remberger (2009) and I report it summarized and adapted to analysis presented above in (160).

(160)           Definiteness Effect

Definite DPs are obligatory raised to at least a [Spec, vP] position. If this occurs, the construction is not existential anymore. Indefinite and nonspecific DPs remain inside the XP complement of a generalized vP and are therefore existential. If they raise they get specific reading.

Significantly, Remberger (2009: 248) claims that as soon as the indefinite DP is raised and acquires thus a specific reading, the sentence becomes locative and is not existential anymore. This remark is particularly relevant concerning the definite pivots occurring in *ndavi*-ES, their position in the structure and hence the issue of their belonging to the pure existential and locative type. The account given by Remberger on the basis of Sardinian data matches the behaviour of pivot DPs in ES of SCal and I will therefore describe the structure of *ndavi*-ES according to it.

At any rate, if the hypotheses based on the specificity of the pivot DP are on the right track, this would also support the behaviour of pivots in languages without (definite) articles and particularly the interpretation they receive and the word order they superficially display when the construction is locative or existential.

It is not morphological definiteness that actually plays a role with respect to the so-called definiteness restriction, but the semantic specificity of the noun. Obviously, in languages such as Italian, SCal or many others in which the article system morphologically distinguishes the definite/indefinite value without clearly expressing the specificity also located in D, this is not straightforwardly evident. It follows that a definite article mostly accompanies specific nouns and an indefinite one the nonspecific nouns. However, because of the only partial match between definiteness and specificity even definite nouns can occur in pure existential (see discussion in section 3.8 and examples therein), although indefinite nouns, because of their low ranking in the specificity scale (see von Heusinger & Kaiser 2003) and their consequent tendency to be more appropriately focus, are conspicuously found in ES crosslinguistically.

In the [Spec, DP] of indefinite/nonspecific noun is present a [-referential] feature and it hints at the status of this kind of nouns before they are merged with the existential constructions. In other words, indefinite DPs are still [-referential] (in the sense of La Fauci & Loporcaro 1997) but they become arguments as soon as they are inserted in the existential domain: there, the existential cluster *ndavi* renders the [-referential] DP a referential constituent, namely an argument (Remberger 2009).

The structures in (162) and (163) below illustrate in two steps the phases in which the object noun of the existential *ndavi*-sentence is generated in the object position and where it remains because of its nonspecific nature. Examples (164) and (165) describe the movement of the definite/specific pivot from *vP* to T and of specific objects to [Spec, *vP*].

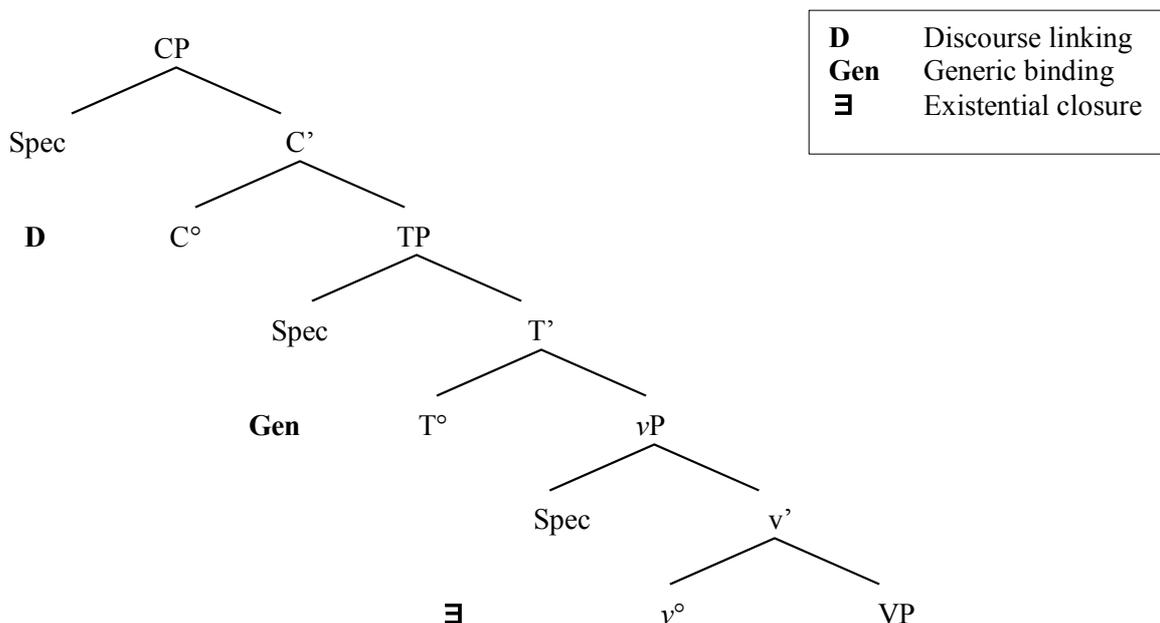
In the wake of Chomsky (1995) and following the analysis of Ledgeway (2000) on southern Italo-Romance languages, I assume that the functional head light *v* – or Pr in Remberger’s analysis – carries a [D] feature in non-existentials that requires, according to its strength, overt or covert movement of the object from its complement position inside the VP to an outer specifier position, namely [Spec, *vP*].<sup>146</sup> According to the analyses supported here, the interpretive semantic features related to [D] in *vP* that the pivots need to match in S<sub>Cal</sub> are specificity and animacy.

Before presenting the two types of syntactic structures underlying the constructions with non/specific pivots and *ndavi*, notice that his description matches the theoretical approach of Diesing (1994) to the extent that the *vP* can be assumed to be the domain of existential closure, where the DPs are located. Further raising of the DP to TP yields a generic reading. Diesing’s analysis takes place within a pre-minimalist framework and I report in (161) the adaptation of Remberger (2009: 249) to which the Mapping Hypothesis is applied taken into account the MP claims.

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<sup>146</sup> Ledgeway (2000: 18) remarks that the objects remaining in situ inside the complement of VP and thus covertly checking the weak F[D], display a variety of Case alternations.

(161) **Existential/ generic closure of arguments.**



According to the structure in (161), the domain of VP (XP in a general analysis) constitutes the predicate level, where the argument is inserted and receives existential interpretation. The existential closure domain reaches to vP, the level of predication. Elements in the T-level receive the default generic interpretation, where definite expressions can raise to C, where the D-linking<sup>147</sup> takes place (Remberger 2009).

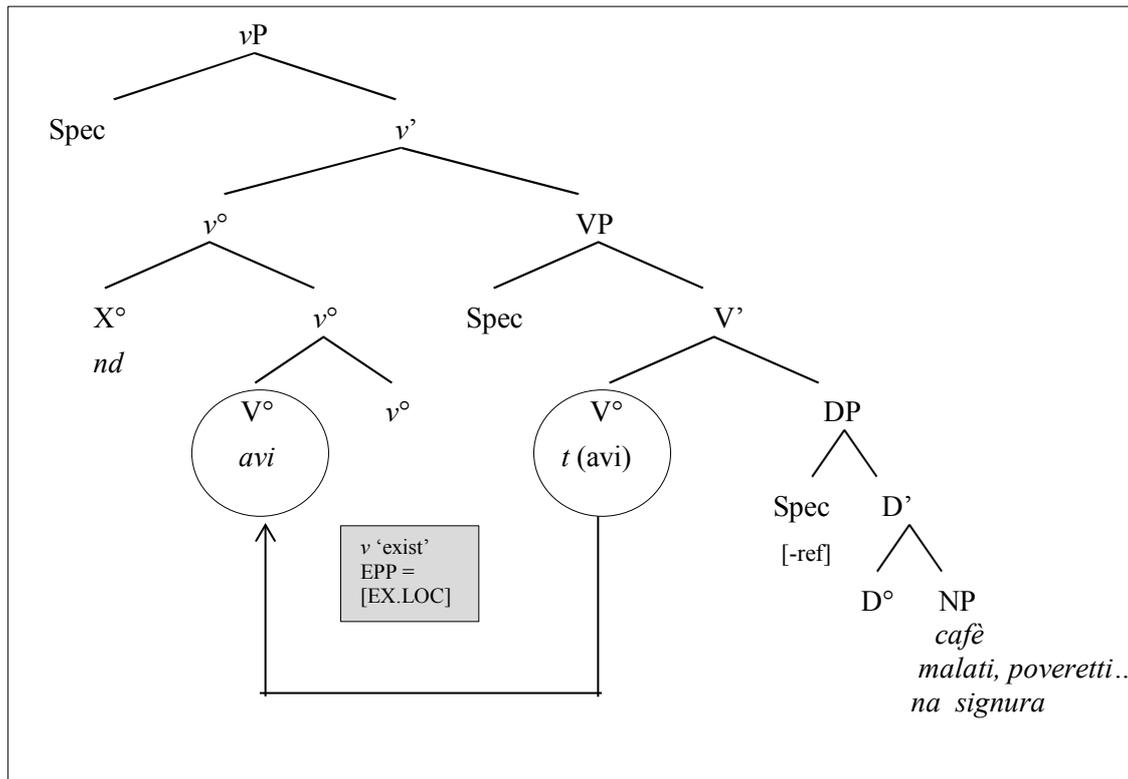
The structure (162) below represents the first phase in the emergence of an existential construction with *ndavi*. The existential V head *avi* is merged with the DP, which is originally non-referential and serves as a predicate. Further, the head is attracted to *v*, where it attaches to the existential marker *ndi* that yields in fact existential quantification. The *v*-head hosts thus the verbal complex made up of the verbal head raised from V and a phonetically null *v*-head and it is incorporated with the existential quantifier *ndi*. The verb is raised to *v* because the null *v*-head has a strong [V] feature, or in Remberger's terms, it carries a Head Attraction Feature (HAF) that requires the presence of a verb. The complex *v*-head assigns accusative case to its complement so that the DP becomes an argument. Additionally, I assume that the predicational head has an EPP feature, namely a [D] feature, that if strong requires the raising of the specific/animate object (165), whereas the nonspecific covertly checks the weak feature at LF but remains in situ (163).

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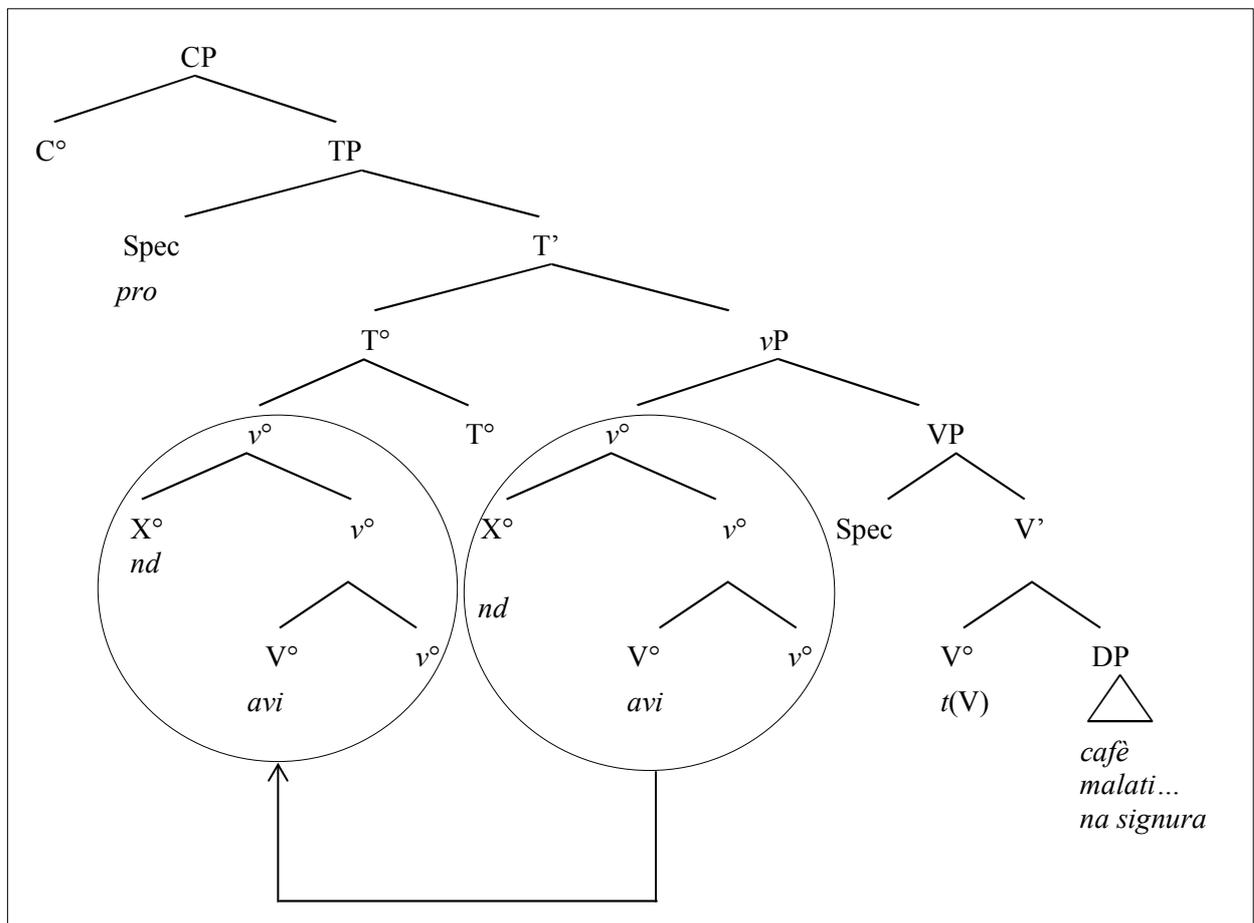
<sup>147</sup> D-linking means discourse linking.

Moreover, the complex *v*-head as well as its specifier are still available for further derivation. In fact, the complex *v*-head moves in the second phase (compare (164) and (165)) to the finite T in order to satisfy the tense feature. In a *ndavi* construction, finally, as T assigns nominative Case the probe cannot take the goal in [Spec, *v*P] because – even if specific and still visible to the numeration – it already carries accusative Case and the derivation would thus crash. Hence, the probe finds nothing. Consequently, in [Spec, TP] there is an empty expletive *pro* that is necessary to fulfil the EPPg of T and at the same time it serves as pro-argument for the original location INDE, subject of the ES, synchronically realized as a marker of quantification *ndi* incorporated with the complex *v*-head within the existential domain.

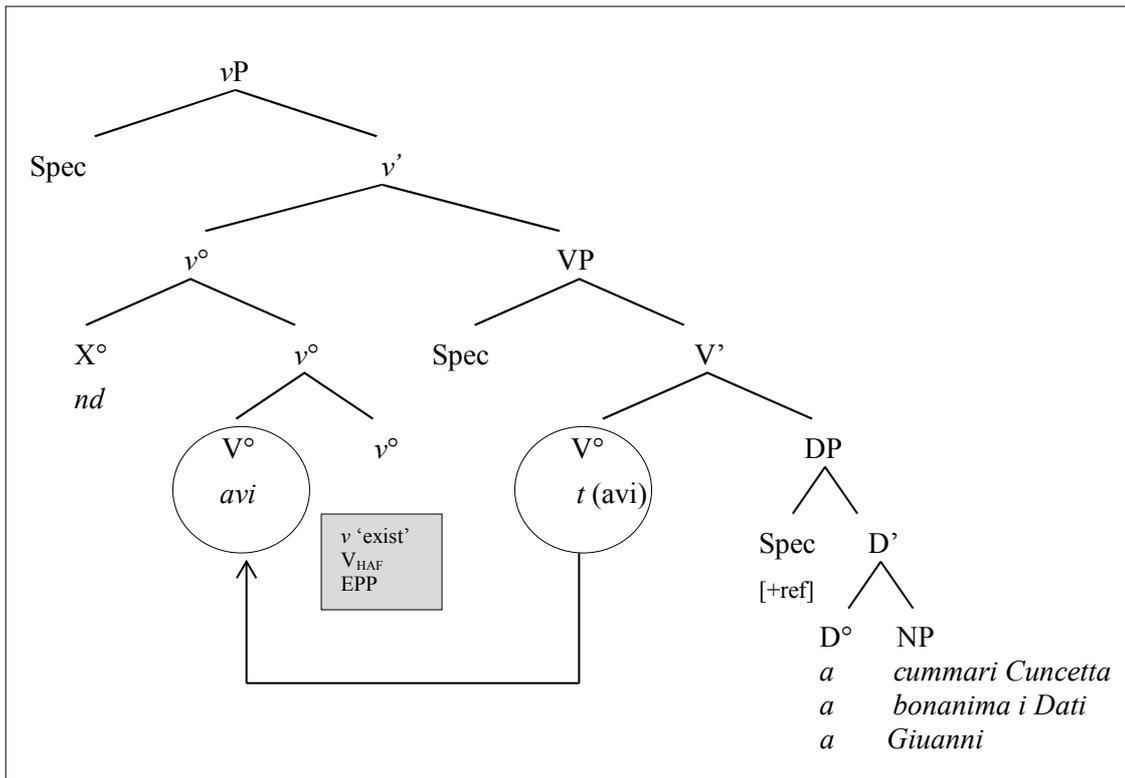
(162) *Ndavi*-existential constructions with nonspecific pivots: first phase.



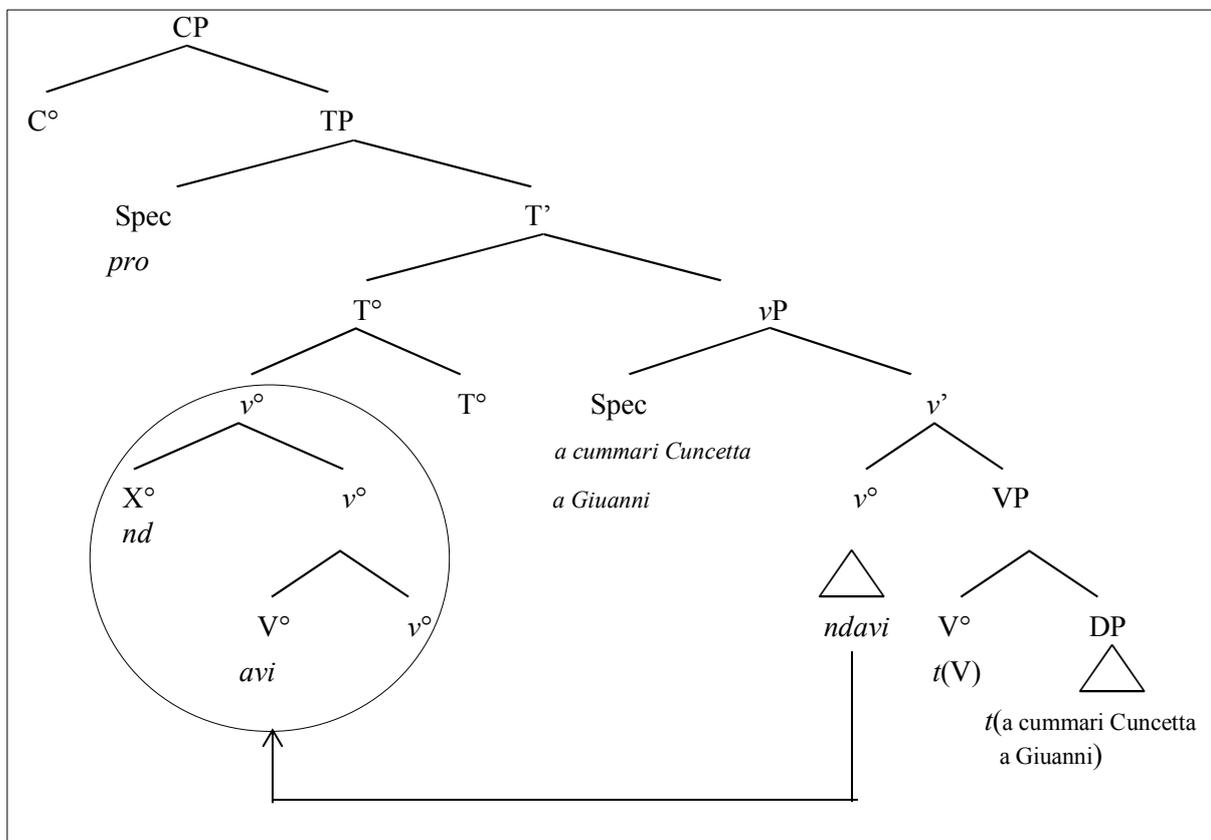
(163) *Ndavi*-existential constructions with non-specific pivots: second phase.



(164) *Ndavi*-constructions with specific pivots: first phase.



(165) *Ndavi*-constructions with specific pivots: second phase.





According to that, the grammatical property of the pivots in *ndavi*-ES to be direct objects (or bad-subjects in the sense of Bentley 2013) is the remnant of the structural continuity with a source possessive construction. A last simple example to illustrate these claims takes is provided in (169)-(171) that display an inverse locative in Italian and SCal of Cittanova and the ungrammatical counterpart with *ndavi*.

(169) C'è il sole. (Italian)  
*ci-is* the sun  
 'The sun shines.'

(170) Nc'è 'u suli (Cittanovese)  
*nci-is* the sun

(171) \*Ndavi 'u suli

A speaker uttering sentence (169) or (170) does not intend to express the concept of the existence of a sun. The reading conveyed by sentences of this kind is that today is a sunny day, that the sun is shining in the sky. Consequently, as the existential meaning is not available, the form with *ndavi* is not allowed. In SCal, thus, the switching from the *ndavi* to the *nci*-construction is due to the raising of the pivot outside the existential closure. This implies the loss of the existential interpretation for the construction in (170).

A last piece of evidence for a low structural position in genuine existential sentences comes from the data of the corpus displaying an adverb. Adverbs are taken to occur in rigid positions within the syntactic structure (Cinque 1999) and superficial realization of the verb or noun to their left/right is a hint of syntactic movement. Interestingly, nonspecific pivots of pure *ndavi*-sentences of SCal always occur to the right of the adverb, compare the examples (172) and (173) ((4) and (253) from the corpus), supporting the fact that in existentials they are licensed in situ within the domain of the existential closure.

(172) Ndavia ancora menza landa  
*ndi-have.PST.3SG* still half can  
 'There was still half a can.' (SCal Corpus: 4)

(173) Na strata aundi non ndavi mancu nu numaru  
 a street where NEG *ndi*-has not even a number  
 'A street in which there was not even a number.' (SCal Corpus: 253)

Summing up, I presented in this section a syntactic structure of *ndavi*-sentences of SCal. Building on the presence of DOM for definite/specific and animate pivots and its lack with all indefinite/nonspecific pivots. I suggested that the first type of pivots must undergo movement from their base-generated position as complements of the VP (the lexical phrase inside the *vP*) to [Spec, *vP*], where they can also further move higher, for instance to a focus position. Indefinite/nonspecific pivots remain inside the existential closure because they do not have a strong [+ referential] feature and, moreover, the typical feature in *v* that needs to be checked is a [LOC] feature. Only in this case we are faced with a real existential construction. The semantic interpretation of the pivot depends on the position it occupies in the structure. If the definite/specific pivot raises, the construction is not existential anymore. Some languages, such as Sardinian, clearly display it in the selection of the ESSE-auxiliary from existential HABERE. In Italian this becomes evident only on an interpretative level, but not superficially. Southern Calabrian displays a strong tendency to switch from HABERE to ESSE, and therefore from *ndavi* to a *nci*-construction, although non-existential *ndavi* are also possible if DOM occurs. In *ndavi* sentences the pivot is an object and receives accusative Case as internal object. The *ndi* clitic is lexicalized and represents a relict for the spatio-temporal coordinates of the location, whose original full locative content has gone lost.

In existential *nci*-sentences, which select the copula ESSE and co-exist alongside the *ndavi*-ES proper of SCal, the pivot is instead a predicate and does not receive the accusative Case because it is the predicate and is base-generated as a complement in the small clause that cannot therefore be raised higher. All *nci*- and *ndavi*-sentences in which definite/specific nouns are raised higher than the existential closure are not to be analysed as existential sentences. I will come back on this topic in the summarizing conclusions in 5.10.

Firstly, though, we need to consider in the next section a last piece of the puzzle that concerns the presence or lack of agreement in the different constructions.

## 5.9. Number Agreement with the pivot in *ndavi*- and *nci*-sentences

If languages vary according to the lexical copula that is selected in ES and to the presence or absence of a proform, they also display differences concerning the agreement in number between the copula and pivot in existential sentences.

Indeed, an aspect that becomes immediately evident when looking at SCal *ndavi* and *nci*-sentences is the lack of number agreement in *ndavi*-ES, as sentence (175) or (176) from the corpus illustrate, while in *nci*+ESSE the copula agrees with the number of the pivot as in (177) and (178). The difference with respect to agreement finds a reason in the interaction of the semantic and the discourse-pragmatic properties of the pivots with the morphosyntax of ES discussed in the previous section.

- |       |   |                   |
|-------|---|-------------------|
| (175) | quant'acqua <i>ndavi</i> a mari.<br>how much water <i>ndi</i> -has at sea<br>'How much water there is in the sea.'                                      | +SG, - Agreement  |
| (176) | Nta sta Calabria <i>ndavi</i> cosi strani.<br>in this Calabria <i>ndi</i> -has things strange<br>lit. 'In Calabria there are strange things.'           | + PL, - Agreement |
| (177) | luntanu nc'era        n'omu cu na barba longa.<br>far away <i>nci</i> was.3SG a man with a beard long<br>'Far away, there was a man with a long beard.' | +SG, +Agreement   |
| (178) | Nc'eranu    nimici.<br><i>nci</i> were.3PL enemies<br>'There were enemies.'   | +PL, +Agreement   |

Significantly, SCal displays two patterns of agreement within all possible copulas for ES: consistent agreement in *nci*-sentences and invariant lack of agreement in *ndavi*-sentences. In this respect, *nci*-sentences align with Italian and many central and southern Italo-Romance vernaculars (179a)-(179c) that display agreement with the pivot, whereas *ndavi*-sentences behave, for instance, like ES of French, Brazilian Portuguese or Apulian (Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming) in so far as no agreement with the pivot takes place (180a)-(180c).

- (179)a. Ci sono molti semi in questa frutta. (Italian)  
 ci are.3PL many seeds in this fruit  
 ‘There are many seeds in this fruit.’
- b. Ce sta n’omme fore a porta. (Neapolitan)  
 ci stays a man out the door  
 ‘There is a man out of the door.’
- c. Ci sunnu napuacu di carusi ca jocanu nt’a chiazza ranni (Sicilian)  
 ci are.3PL some of children who play.3PL in the place big  
 ‘There are children playing in the main square.’
- (180)a. Il y a plusieurs pépins dans ce fruit. (French)  
 SBJ.CL PF have.3SG many seeds in this fruit
- b. Tem duas soluções para esse problema (Brazilian Portuguese)  
 has two solutions for this problem  
 ‘There are two solutions for this problem.’
- c. Intru a sta frutta ave tanti sementi (Soletto, Salento, Puglia)  
 in at this fruit have.3SG many seeds  
 ‘There are many seeds in this fruit.’
- (Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming)

In particular, Bentley & Cruschina remark that the semantic specificity of the pivot is the decisive property to which number agreement correlates. In fact, they claim “in any given language, non-specific (indefinite) pivots only control agreement if specific (definite) pivots are also agreement controllers” (Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming). In SCal for instance, personal pronouns – the most definite/specific elements – obligatorily require the use of *nci*+ESSE and consequent agreement (181), but also specific elements (i.e. mostly introduced by the definite article in SCal) select the *nci*-construction and do not occur with the copula HABERE (182).<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> The informants of Cittanovese have elicited the examples and I used as template the original examples (6a), (6b) from Bentley & Cruschina (to appear).

- (181) Maria non esti sula. Nci su jeu, nci si tu,  
 Maria NEG is alone. *nci* am I, *nci* are.2SG you  
*nci* simu nui, *nci* sunnu idi.  
*nci* are.1PL we, *nci* are.3PL they
- (182) Non ndi potimu dassari: nci sunnu i figghioledi.  
 NEG REF can.PRS.1PL divorce: *nci* are.3PL the children  
 ‘We cannot divorce: there are the children.’

Hence, it is evident that all personal pronouns require the realization of a construction with the copula ESSE and achieve agreement. To this regard, Bentley & Cruschina (forthcoming) show evidence from the Nuorese Sardinian dialect of Orgosolo that is even more sensitive to the specificity value of the pronouns and displays agreement on the ESSE-copula with pronouns of the first and second person, which are considered maximally specific, whereas third person pronouns occur with the HABERE-copula and therefore without agreement. On the contrary, in SCal all personal pronouns independent of their number require agreement.

The Tuscan dialects represent another pattern of variation as the copula ESSE does not agree with the pivot DP even if it is definite/specific, compare the examples (183) and (184).<sup>149</sup> On the other hand, agreement must take place if there are pronominal pivots. The same claims hold for Catalan (see Bentley & Cruschina forthcoming and references thereof).

- (183) C’è le pantofole sotto il letto (Tuscan, Grosseto)  
 CL-is the slippers under the bed  
 ‘The slippers are under the bed.’
- (184) C’è Chomsky e Moro a Roma  
 CL-is Chomsky and Moro in Rome  
 ‘Chomsky and Moro are in Rome.’

In SCal, though, there is a special case in which personal pronouns do not categorically select the ESSE construction and can occur in *ndavi*-ES, namely if they are marked by the preposition *a* and bear therefore the Accusative case. Nevertheless, the reading of *ndavi* is slightly different from the existential one and moreover I argued in the previous section for the definite/specific pronouns to

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<sup>149</sup> I thank Giulia Bellucci for the examples (p.c.).

occupy a position in the structure different from pivots that are not marked by *a*. Therefore, this type of *ndavi*-sentences is not to be considered in my opinion as a pure existential construction.

The lack of agreement between the pivot DP and *ndavi* points at a particular status of the existential cluster. In fact, this is the only case in which agreement does not obtain when the copula HABERE is selected. In all other cases, namely when the verb *have* is used as auxiliary (185) or when it is possessive (186) or with other meanings such as obligation (187), agreement between the subject and the verb obligatory takes place.

(185)a. Avia passatu ai cincu ma non c'eri. *Aux – SG Agr*  
 have.PST.1SG pass.PTCP at-the five but NEG *ci* were.2SG  
 ‘I dropped by at five but you were not there.’

b. M'avianu dittu ca ti potia chiamari. *Aux – PL Agr*  
 PRN-have.PAST.3PL told that PRN could.1SG call.INF  
 They told me that I could call you.’

(186)a. Fratima ndavi na machina nova. *possessive – SG Agr*  
 brother-my CL-has a car new  
 ‘My brother has a new car.’

b. I me frati ndannu na machina nova. *possessive – PL Agr*  
 the my brothers CL-have.PRS.3PL a car new  
 ‘My brothers have a new car.’

(187)a. Avarristi u ti controllu  
 have.COND.2SG to CL.OBJ check.PRS.2SG  
 ‘You should go and check yourself.’

b. ‘U misi prossimu avarrianu arrivari l’arretrati.  
 the month next have.COND.3PL come.INF the salary arrears.  
 ‘The salary arrears should be due next month.’

As the data in (185)-(187) supports, agreement is present with all persons when *have* is used in all meanings except the existential one. Notice that this also maintains for occurrences of the possessive *have*, which always displays the clitic *ndi* in S<sub>Cal</sub>, pointing at the difference from a synchronic point of view of the two constructions, although they diachronically are related. Significantly, only when *ndi* on *have* functions as an existential cluster, agreement does not take place.

A hypothesis that could explain the lack of agreement with existential *ndavi* needs to take into consideration the syntactic account provided in the previous section. If we maintain that movement of the object is a necessary step in order to trigger agreement (Belletti 2009), in pure existential this cannot apply as the VP internal object remain in situ in the lower part of the structure, the existential closure. However, not even definite/specific objects are able to trigger agreement (recall that also raising of definite/specific objects does not imply agreement, although the sentence is not existential anymore). Probably, the pivot DP is not suitable candidate in order to trigger agreement and the verb assumes the existential default 3<sup>rd</sup> person number marking, probably as a vestige of the original agreement with a location that must have had the subject role in a precedent stadium. The EPPg is synchronically satisfied by *pro*, which has indeed the role of a pro-argument for the original locative subject.

## 5.10. Conclusions

In this conclusive section I will draw some of the main lines of the discussion presented up to now by analyzing SCal and compare it with other Romance and Italo-Romance languages.

Based on the evidence collected in a written corpus consisting of 27,831 sentences, I could individuate a total of 345 existentials. I claim that in Southern Calabrian there are two different constructions for the existential use co-existing in the internal grammar of the native speakers: one type of ES makes use of the copula HABERE and occurs in form of the cluster *ndavi*, which displays the synchronically incorporated clitic *ndi*. It has no agreement with the pivot DP and, instead, always occurs conjugated for the third person singular. The other type of ES is conveyed by *nci*-sentences, which select the copula ESSE that agrees in number and person with the pivot. The *ndavi* existential form is to be found in the corpus to a lesser extent (only 15% of the total amount), whereas *nci*-sentences occur with a percentage of 85% highly recurrent. I suggest that the second type reflects the Italian strategy in order to express existentiality and is a form phonologically adapted to the rules of the dialect in question. In fact, I ascertained that the *ci*-sentences of Italian are not only proper existentials, but can also be inverted locatives or presentational sentences, despite their superficial isomorphism. The same applies to the *nci*-constructions of SCal. Therefore, it is not surprising to find in the corpus many more instances them.

Concerning the grammatical properties of the *nci*-sentences, I showed that in SCal the clitic *nci* is available with a sort of locative value in the same fashion of *ci* in Italian ES exclusively when in combination with the copula ESSE and therefore in order to achieve pure existential, inverse locative and presentational uses. For the existential construction, a reanalysis of the element *ci/nci* has taken place and led to its reinterpretation as a pro-argument. In fact, when *nci* is an existential marker it has a pro-argument function. I assumed that in ES the location is analysed as the subject, whereas the DP as its predication, although the locative content is not recognizable anymore, i.e. *nci* has bleached, as well as its Italian counterpart. The clitic is a reanalysed form and represents synchronically an abstract argument for the original spatio-temporal coordinates, yielding together with the copula the existential proposition. At the same time, the superficially same construction *nci*+ESSE takes over the other uses seen for Italian too, representing instances of inverse locatives or presentational sentences. When the sentence is in reality an inverse locative, the role of *nci* is indeed a locative and this implies the dislocation of a locative phrase, which is reflected in speech in the change of the intonation contour. From a pragmatic point of view, inverse locatives serve to put the pivot DP in focus, which is indeed raised at a syntactic level to a postverbal [Spec, FocP] position available in Italian, as well as in SCal. In canonical predications, on the contrary, it is the locative phrase that receives focus. The clitic *nci* is therefore a resumptive clitic that substitutes thus the locative PP to which it refers to and triggers the dislocation of a realized locative PP. However, the *nci* clitic in inverse locatives does not necessarily

need to be co-indexed with a location (either dislocated or present in the previous discourse), but can also have the default meaning content of “here and now”, being classified in this case as a deictic inverse locative. Finally, a further type of *nci*+ESSE constructions serves as presentational sentences, whose pragmatic function is to introduce a DP that will be the topic of the subsequent predication. In these sentences a first computation takes place in which the DP is inserted as the pivot of an existential or of an inverted locative, whereas in the second step the DP builds a small clause mostly with a stage-level adjective.

This variety of pragmatic uses that correspond to different syntactic structures and different roles of the *nci*-clitic nicely explains why the informants of SCal spontaneously selected a *nci*-construction whenever the pivot of sentences with *ndavi* was definite/specific, not allowing therefore the pure existential reading.

From a diachronic perspective, the question arising is whether the presence of *nci* in existential constructions is to be ascribed to the influence of Italian. I can only make some conjectures, as my data did not provide a clear evidence for it. To this regard, recall that Ciconte (2009) proved the role of Tuscan for the existential *ci*-sentences of Italian to have not been as decisive as it has otherwise considered for the development of Modern Italian. In other words, with respect to the emergence of the existential *ci*-constructions in Italian, Tuscan has not played a decisive role. On the contrary, it was exactly in the southern vernaculars that the existential proform appeared in connection to the emergence of a dedicated existential pattern. In modern SCal, there is a situation of co-existence between different systems: *nci*-sentences can belong to the four different types seen above, from pure existentials to inverted or deictic locatives, up to presentational sentences. *Ndavi*-sentences, which display the incorporated clitic *ndi* but select HABERE, take over the existential function but also can be used with other functions, as we will see in a moment. Auxiliary selection is therefore an option available in SCal and the choice seems to have to a certain extent the same implications that it has for Sardinian, where existentials are consistently built with the HABERE-copula and locatives exclusively with ESSE. In other words, whenever uses other than the existential one are required, the speakers can resort to the *nci*-construction. At the same time, as the *nci*-forms also takes over the existential use, speakers can optionally choose between the two alternatives as a consequence of the presence of the two structures in their internal grammar.

Concerning the parallel existence of two different existential forms, I took into account in my research documents starting from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>150</sup> The oldest texts are all examples of lyrics, as this is the only genre in which I could find some sources, as there are, to my knowledge, no or a very small

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<sup>150</sup> There were also lyrics of previous periods in my corpus, but I could not find any example of existentials there.

amount of written prose texts available in Southern Calabrian. However, I could not find any evidence that contrasts with the claims made up to now concerning the synchronic data collected. In fact, both *nc'è/nci su* and *ndavi*-constructions are available and they all show the same restrictions that characterize the existential constructions with the copula ESSE or HABERE in modern Southern Calabrian.

From a synchronic perspective, although a sociological study of the different constructions for existential sentences available in SCal is beyond the scope of this work, it would surely be interesting to conduct a follow-up study that takes into account sociological variables and investigates whether the choice of the existential structure between *ndavi* and *nci*+ESSE is due to diatopic factors or whether it is more related to the different age of the groups interviewed, i.e. the *ndavi*-constructions is linked to a specific age-group, for instance elderly people who better master the dialect (recall the comments on the language situation of SCal in 5.1).

Let us now sum up the remarks concerning the *ndavi*-sentences. I provided an in-depth analysis of the form and function of the elements occurring in this type of construction, namely the clitic *ndi* and its occurrence on the verb *have*, as well as the form and semantics of the pivot DP. From the analysis of these central elements arose many questions that led to investigate specific issues of SCal such as the functions of the clitic *ndi* and of the whole cluster *ndavi* compared to homomorphic elements, and to compare them further to the standard Italian counterparts. Decisively, the comparative approach served in order to seek for an account of the exceptions to the assumed definiteness restriction.

I consider *ndavi* to be a form consisting of an originally locative clitic *ndi* that has synchronically been incorporated with the auxiliary HABERE and is now a cluster expressing existentiality. The fact that *nci* is not an element available in SCal with any locative content, apart when it combines with ESSE in the functions just seen above after the pattern of Italian, strongly supports this claim. The pragmatic use of *ndavi* matches the requirements of ES insofar as they introduce the existence or the presence of some hearer-new entity in a location. No interference takes place when a locative phrase is expressed, as the clitic *ndi* is not a real (resumptive) locative clitic anymore.

On a syntactic level, I suggest for the pivot DP to be an object base-generated in the complement position of the lexical phrase within a functional *vP* which constitutes the domain of existential closure, following Diesing's (1994) approach, and where the DP remains, as its weak referential feature does not suffice for it to raise to a higher position. The semantics of the existential pivot is nonspecific and this property correlates in Romance with the occurrence of morphologically indefinite nouns, mass nouns and bare plurals.



(190)       dà, ndavi a bonanima i Danti (, dà)  
 there *ndi*-has DOM late-lamented of Dante  
 ‘Dante is there, God rest his soul.’

(191)       vicinu o mercatu , ndavja a cummari Cuncetta (, vicinu o mercatu)  
 near at-the market *ndi*-have.PST.3SG DOM mistress Cuncetta  
 ‘Near the market was Mrs Concetta.’

Finally, remark that these exceptions (including example (192), see below) constitute only a small percentage, namely below 1%, of the total amount of sentences in the corpus and almost 6% when considering only *ndavi*-sentences (recall: 52 sentences in total in the corpus). Significantly, all these exceptions were found in comedies written in the dialect of Brancalone. The speakers of the SCal variant of Cittanova, on the contrary, when confronted with these constructions automatically elicited *nci*-sentences, thus selecting the presentational construction which nicely accommodates the presence of definite/specific pivots and the pragmatic function of focusing it.

To the same analysis belongs example (192), which displays the definite/specific common noun *i pipi* (Engl. *the peppers*) and a dislocated coda.

(192)       ccà, ndavi i pipi.  
 here *ndi*-has the peppers  
 ‘Here are the peppers.’

Finally, sentence (193) represented in the corpus the last exception to the general constraint on definites in ES found in the corpus. According to Milsark’s strong/weak distinction, the DP *all the drawers* is undoubtedly introduced by a strong quantifier and it therefore should be banned from an ES. However, I just supported the fact that *ndavi*-sentences are not only pure existentials. How is this discrepancy to be explained then? The presence of the stage-level adjective *perti* (Engl. *open*) offers the clue for an answer to this question; compare (193) to (194) and to the correspondent grammatical *nci*-counterpart in (195).

(193)       ndavi tutti i cassetti perti.  
*ndi*-has all the drawers open  
 ‘All the drawers are open.’

(194)a.       \*ndavi tutti i cassetti.

- b. nci su tutti i cassetti.  
*nci* are.3PL all the drawers  
 ‘All the drawers are here.’

- (195) nci su tutti i cassetti perti.  
*nci* are.3PL all the drawers open

I suggest that (193) is an instance of presentational sentences with *ndavi*. In other words, *ndavi* takes over the presentational role of Italian *ci*-sentences of type IV, where there is a two-step computation with an inverse locative or an existential, whose pivot serves as the topic of the following predication which features the stage-level adjective.

Compare also further elicited evidence for the possibility of the presentational reading for *ndavi*-sentences. In (196a) a definite/specific DP is ungrammatical without any location, so as to express existentiality while the sentence becomes acceptable when the pivot is a bare plural (196b). Moreover, with a secondary predication as in (197) of which the pivot is the topic, the sentence is grammatical because it satisfies the predicational function.

- (196)a. \**ndavi* i surici.  
*ndi*-has the mice [+spec]

- b. *ndavi* Ø surici.  
 ‘There are mice [-spec].’

- (197) *ndavi* i surici chi ti mangianu.  
*ndi*-has the mice who you eat.PRS.3PL  
 ‘There are the mice [+spec] who will eat you.’

In presentational constructions the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular *ndavi* is the default form used in order to introduce an event. In the English gloss of (197) *there* is intended with deictic meaning and points at a first computation of *ndavi i surici* not as existential, but as presentational (with an implicit/previously mentioned location). Notice that the postverbal subject can further be raised to a contrastively focalized position and yields the word order of (198), with intonation pitch on the DP.

- (198) I SURICI *ndavi* chi ti mangianu.  
 ‘THE MICE are there who will eat you (not the cats).’



proform, the semantics of the argument structure as well as the pragmatic uses of the different constructions.

If the claims made up to now are on the right track, the situation described in table 20 can be observed in Southern Calabrian. I modified the table in 8 from Cruschina (to appear) in order to illustrate the situation of the Southern Calabrian *nci*- and *ndavi*-sentences system, according to the relevant properties. I individuated therefore four types, whereas sentences in type I are both existentials and point at their co-existence in SCal.

**Table 20. Main characteristics of the different types of existentials in Southern Calabrian**

TYPE	STRUCTURE	FOCUS	pro-element	DP
<b>I</b>	existential	sentence/predicate pivot	<i>nci</i> : pro-argument	predicate [-def]
	existential	sentence/predicate pivot	<i>ndi</i> :pro-argument	predicate [-def]
<b>II</b>	inverse locative	argument pivot	<i>nci</i> : pro-predicate	argument [+def]
<b>III</b>	deictic locative	argument	<i>nci</i> : pro-predicate	argument [+def]
<b>IV</b>	presentational	sentence	<i>nci</i> : lexicalized <i>ndi</i> : lexicalized	argument [+spec]

The typology of table 20 shows a quite varied situation, with the preservation of the HABERE form for the original existential use and the co-existence with different types of *nci*-constructions that reflect the diversity discussed in detail also for standard Italian. Notice that in SCal the use of type IV with *ndavi* is very limited, but is nevertheless present in the data and must be accounted for. Semantic, morphological and syntactic evidence, as well their pragmatic use, demonstrate that there is a difference among *ndavi*-constructions.

This apparently less economic situation is due to the fact that Southern Calabrian, as the other Italo-Romance languages, is not actually a variety of a Romance language, but indeed a sister language to it. I make this claim because I am adopting an internalist and not a sociological definition

of language. The case of ES clearly shows that native speakers of SCal have a grammar competence that differs from the “rules” of Italian. Undoubtedly, the influence of the more prestigious variety implies the co-existence of different strategies for the expression of information context. The high frequency of the *nci*-sentences compared to the *ndavi*-sentences is also a signal of this tendency.

Summing up, chapter 5 dealt with the systematization of the data on existential sentences and related constructions of the Italo-Romance language Southern Calabrian, offering new insights. The SCal data provided support for the claims that even apparently similar constructions can be expression of different constructions and this has been demonstrated by taking into account different properties that involve morphosyntactic, as well as the semantics/syntax interface and the pragmatic use of the construction in discourse. In particular, the issue that triggered the entire discussion was the behaviour of definite/indefinite DPs within ES, which has been explained as a reflection of different syntactic position and the accommodation in actually different constructions.

In the following chapter I will now consider in more detail the behaviour of Dari, because in this Indo-European language definiteness is not even morphologically expressed. It can therefore reveal itself very useful to the study of the definiteness restriction and support the claim that the structure plays a decisive role in the indefinite interpretation of the pivots in existentials. In fact, if no determiners occur, but the same or similar constraints on the interpretation of the pivot in ES become evident, then there must be something very true at work in languages when existentiality is at stake and this cannot be the influence of a strong determiner, as initially hypothesized.



## 6. FURTHER OPACITY EFFECTS: DE IN LANGUAGES WITHOUT ARTICLES

### 6.1. Introduction

The previous chapters provided an in-depth description of the interaction of semantic, morphosyntactic and pragmatic factors that give rise to the definiteness effect in existential sentences.

From the picture of the phenomenon made on the basis of data from English, Italian and Italo-Romance languages, in particular Southern Calabrian, it becomes clear that the occurrence of the DE is a complicated matter for several reasons. First of all, because it must be shown in which cases we are faced with genuine existential constructions, i.e. why these are peculiar with respect to other kinds of constructions. A strong relation to locative and possessive constructions is crosslinguistically evident and, therefore, one of the tasks was to find evidence in order to support that existentials have particular properties that distinguish them from the other similar sentences. Italian, for instance, provided evidence for the independence of the ES as proper constructions and for the fact that they are indeed subject to the DE, although they may seem at first exempt from it. Southern Calabrian, additionally, allowed through the unique case of DOM on pivots to ascertain that nominals can occupy two different positions in sentences that superficially look like existentials and, therefore, to categorize as ES only those sentences with nonspecific pivots located a low VP-internal position.

The analysis of Dari (Afghan Persian) discussed in this chapter shows that the same conditions individuated above for the DE to apply can be assumed there. In particular, this becomes evident in the word order and through the reading assigned to the pivot. The DE applies despite the fact that this language does not have any definiteness marker that could be the triggering factor for it.

The hypothesis supported in the previous chapters says that the definiteness restriction is not to be ascribed to the definiteness of the DP but that this is indeed an interpretive – and in languages with (in)definite articles also morphological – consequence of the syntactic position of the pivots in a specific construction from a pragmatic point of view that brings about existentiality. This claim will be further underpinned by providing an analysis of the DE in languages without articles.

To this purpose, I will provide an overlook in 6.3.2 of the nominal domain in Dari and the semantic properties of DP concerning the (lack of) morphological markers occurring there, in order to see which properties could interact with the existential constructions in this specific language. Since the core questions about the definiteness restriction are at first bound to some general remarks on the determiner phrase, in section 2.3.3 I also discussed the nominal domain and the opacity concerning the interpretation of nouns, which can be assumed to get disambiguated in syntax.

We will see that the definiteness restriction in ES accounts to a specific semantic value on the NP incompatible with this type of constructions, which are once more recognizable from their word order and the role of the locative phrase.

The last part of the present work is therefore dedicated to languages that lack articles altogether, providing first a general introduction of some languages without articles for which the DE has already been assumed such as Mandarin Chinese, or that only have the indefinite article such as Turkish and Dari. I will look at these three languages separately, presenting the considerations made in the literature on the DE for Turkish and Chinese as useful background for the subsequent analysis, whereas the remarks on Afghan Persian are mostly based on new data from Sorrenti (to appear).

## 6.2. Turkish and Mandarin Chinese

The definiteness restriction has received its name in accordance with the fact that this constraint on the insertion of nouns introduced by a definite article has been initially remarked in languages with a system of definite and indefinite articles. However, the questions about the exact nature of this phenomenon, i.e. about its semantic, syntactic or pragmatic nature, have shifted the attention to languages which cannot account for a morphological division of articles based on the definiteness/indefiniteness value or which do not display articles at all.

Significantly, some definiteness effects seem to be at work in languages without (definite) articles. In Zulu (Lyons 1999 citing Ziervogel, Louw & Taljaard 1967), for instance, a language with articles, but none of them serving to mark the definiteness opposition, the argument DP following an unaccusative verb must be interpreted as indefinite. Concerning Mandarin Chinese, Huang (1987) observes that definite NPs<sup>151</sup> cannot occur in existential constructions as complement argument (1), while bare noun phrases in the same position obligatorily get an indefinite and non-generic reading (2). Example (2) displays an unaccusative verb.

- (1)            \*you Lisi/ta/meige ren/daduoshu-de ren zai wuzi-li            (Mandarin)  
               have Lisi/he/every man/ most                    man at room-in  
               \*‘There is/are Lisi/him/everybody/ most people in the room.’

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<sup>151</sup> Huang (1987) intends for definite nouns in language all “proper names, pronouns, NPs with a definite article or a demonstrative, bare NPs interpreted as generic or definite, universally quantified NPs and NPs with quantifiers like *most*. Indefinites, on the other hand, include NPs with existential quantifiers and bare NPs interpreted as ‘non-generics.’”



optionality for direct objects in Turkish to be marked by the accusative suffix concerns many indefinite NPs, namely those introduced by numerals (*bir, iki, yedi, otuz...*, Engl. *one, two, seven, thirty* and so on) and by quantifiers such as *birkaç* (Engl. *several, a few*), *birçok* (Engl. *many*) and *az* (Engl. *few*). On the contrary, NPs introduced by the universal quantifier *her* (Engl. *every*), by demonstratives such as *o* (Engl. *that*) and *bu* (Engl. *this*), as well as nouns and pronouns obligatorily require accusative morphology and are semantically interpreted as specific (Enç 1991: 11). Enç compares the Turkish NPs according to the possibility of their being specific or not, i.e. marked for accusative/specificity or not, to the classes of nouns introduced by weak or strong determiners put forth by Milsark (1974).

Existential sentences in Turkish consist of the single participant plus the verb *var*, which means *be* and implies existence. Enç observes an interesting behaviour among DPs introduced by *some* – a determiner which had been considered ambiguous between strong and weak in Milsark’s analysis – in existential constructions of Turkish, compare (4) to (5).

(4) \*Bahçe-de bazı çocuk-lar var (Turkish)  
 garden-Loc some child-Pl exist  
 ‘There are some of the children in the garden.’

(5) Bahçe-de birkaç çocuk var  
 garden-Loc some child exist  
 ‘There are some of the children in the garden.’

(Enç 1991: 15)

She notices that subjects introduced by *bazı* are ungrammatical in existential sentences (4), whereas the same constructions with *birkaç* are perfectly acceptable (5). It should be noticed at this point, that in Turkish there are two determiners which equate the word *some* of English, namely *birkaç* and *bazı*. Now, even if they contribute to the same extent to the truth condition of the sentence, they differ from each other concerning their specific/nonspecific value. Again, this becomes morphologically evident from the necessity of marking the NP for the accusative Case when occurring with *bazı* – where the lack of the accusative suffix would result in ungrammaticality –, while direct objects with *birkaç* can be optionally marked or not, cf. (6) to (7). Therefore, Enç concludes that some of the weak determiners are stored in the lexicon together with the specification to form specific noun phrases.

(6) Ali Zeyneb-e birkaç kitab/kitab-ı postaladı (Turkish)  
 Ali Zeyneb-Dat some book/book-Acc mailed  
 ‘Ali mailed some/some of the books to Zeyneb.’

- (7) Ali Zeyneb-e bazı \*kitab-lar/kitab-lar-ı postaladı  
 Ali Zeyneb-Dat some book-Pl/book-Pl-Acc mailed  
 ‘Ali mailed some of the books to Zeyneb.’

(Enç 1991: 15)

Although Enç acknowledges the theoretical contribution of Milsark’s work concerning the division of the DPs in a strong and weak class (quantificational and cardinal, in Milsark’s terms), she disagrees with the account given to the DE. In fact, Enç claims that the quantificational clash cannot take place with names and pronouns, which cannot be bound by a quantifier. Supported by the analysis of Turkish *some* proposed above, she also rejects analyses such as those based on the semantics of the determiners as having only one possible interpretation (Barwise & Cooper 1981; Keenan 1987).

The explanation proposed by Enç to account for the DE is eventually of semantic nature in so far as she states that specific NPs presuppose existence, while existential sentences assert existence. The two conditions cannot co-exist in the same sentence and, thus, specific NPs are not allowed in ES. At the same time, she provides empirical evidence that the semantic content of the DP cannot only depend on the semantics of the determiner itself, but is also provided by the context in which it is embedded (for examples see Enç 1991: 17). In fact, list reading existentials (see 4.3) as (8) (Enç 1991: 14) are considered grammatical because the definite DP contains the adjective *following*, which makes clear that there is no antecedent to the noun, thus not implying presupposition, whereas the element to which the noun is linked is the set of counterexamples which will occur later in the utterance.

- (8) There are the following counterexamples to Streck’s theory...

On the contrary, a sentence like *\*there are the above counterexamples* would be ruled out because of the clash between presupposition and existence (Enç 1991: 14).

Further evidence is that NPs introduced by the negative determiner *hiçbir*, which is taken to be specific – contrary to its English counterpart *any* – because it necessarily requires the noun to be marked by accusative Case. Again, DPs with the specific determiner *hiçbir* are excluded from existential sentences (9).

- (9) \*Bahçe-de hiçbir çocuk yok (Turkish)  
 Garden-Loc any child exist-not  
 ‘There aren’t any of the children in the garden.’

(Enç 1991: 15)



### 6.3. Dari

It could at first seem weird to take into account the analysis of a language as different from Southern Calabrian, as Dari appears to be. However, exactly the different properties of the language in focus in this chapter will serve in order to support the claims on the strong relationship between sentence structure and logical interpretation of nouns within the existential constructions made above. The analysis of empirical data on colloquial Dari<sup>153</sup> can help to shed some light on the central issues about the DE, namely those concerning the exact nature of such phenomenon – semantic? syntactic? – and whether it can actually be considered a diagnostic for (the semantic concept of) definiteness.

Typological studies on ES such as that of Freeze (1992) have tried to systematize the universal properties shared by unrelated languages. This approach follows from one of the basic assumptions of the generative theory, namely that there are properties common to all natural languages and that their variation is due to language specific parameters settings. The core properties are expressed in all languages and can surface in different ways according to interaction with the language-specific properties.

Therefore, the interest in handling also Dari stems from similar assumptions. Being a language without definite articles, it would be relevant evidence to ascertain any DE there. Since it cannot depend on morphological definiteness, if any DE is to be found it must concern the interpretation of the noun phrase. Consequently, if its interpretation varies between existential sentences and other constructions, this must be determined by other properties, for instance syntactic ones.

Based on new data, I intend to support the claim that the constraint rather concerns specificity and is bound to the realization of specific syntactic structure that meets a specific pragmatic requirement, namely the expression of existence.

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<sup>153</sup> Recall that I use Dari and Afghan Persian as equivalent terms. Dari is the official designation of the language (see 6.3.1), whereas Afghan Persian is often used on the literature on Persian in general.

### 6.3.1. The data: methods and overview of the attested constructions

Dari (Darī) is the official designation for the Persian language spoken in Afghanistan and is in fact one of the major sister languages of modern Iranian Persian, the latter being normally referred to as Farsi (Fārsī). The two languages are mutually intelligible.<sup>154</sup> Both Afghan and Iranian Persian belong to the western branch of the Indo-Iranian languages, which itself split from the Indo-European language family. The other co-official language of Afghanistan is Pashto, which is spoken principally in the south of the country and belongs to the group of the East Iranian languages (Robson & Tegey 2009: 721). Afghan Persian exhibits moreover a great number of dialects.

The observations presented in this thesis are made by taking under examination empirical data from the colloquial Dari variety of educated speakers of Kabul, called Kāboli. According to Windfuhr & Perry (2009: 417), Kāboli is the language which is becoming more and more the standard Afghan vernacular. Therefore, the data reports the form proper of the spoken Dari of Kabul. On the contrary, the Dari written language is oriented to a long literary tradition and is “mostly close to literary Persian”(Windfuhr & Perry 2009: 417), presenting therefore some differences from the colloquial language, especially concerning aspects like vocabulary and grammar.

Dari is a verb-final and a null-subject language; all phrasal categories but the VP are head-initial so that we find for instance noun-adjective and noun-genitive orders; it does not have grammatical gender distinction on words or pronouns. The unmarked word order is SOV with the subject often unrealized because of the [+Null Subject] property,<sup>155</sup> but the spoken language allows for much more variation on the arrangement of phrases, that is, apart from the verb-final position Dari has relatively free word order.<sup>156</sup> It is a fusional language. Despite the fact that definite articles are not available, Dari interestingly has some “definiteness effects” in existential and unaccusative sentences comparable to those observed up to now. The reason for studying it is, thus, to support through a unified syntactic analysis the claim that the definiteness restrictions is indeed at work in all languages, but at the same time it has not much to do with grammatical definiteness.

The data from Afghan Persian presented in this research was mostly collected through elicitation with six native speakers of Kāboli, educated in Dari and who left their country at an age comprised between 14 and 16 years old. All the informants live in Germany and the interviews were conducted in German.

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<sup>154</sup> I will refer in the text to Persian in general – and not explicitly to Dari or its colloquial variant Kāboli – when the properties discussed are commonly shared by both varieties.

<sup>155</sup> Examples for these claims are to be found in the following discussion.

<sup>156</sup> There are also some exceptions to the verb in the final position due, though, to pragmatic purposes.

The sentences were collected at two different times. The method used was answering elicitation questions. The first task consisted in the production of sentences which the informants heard in German. The informants were asked to provide the correspondent sentences in their native language, using the colloquial language they would use in a non-formal environment. After each utterance they were asked to put it down in writing using the Latin alphabet instead of the Perso-Arabic script. Each informant was asked separately. Each informant received as input a set of 40 sentences, which included ten existential constructions, ten sentences with complex predicates (unaccusative and unergative verbs) and 20 simple predication (e.g. including canonical locative predications or sentences with (in)transitive verbs). The informants were asked at the end of the interviews for feedback on the sentences elicited.

The second part of the elicitation experiment was conducted at a second time, after a first analysis of the data, and consisted in grammaticality judgements of locative and existential sentences. The sentences were constructed following the pattern of the sentences elicited in the first test and were in total ten: six of them were repeated from the first set of sentences and four were new. In particular, it was of great importance during the second part of the test to ascertain the exact reading given to sentences that differed from each other only concerning the word order of the pivot and the locative constituent. Follow-up conversations with the informants were also necessary in order to gain insights in the correlation between the word order and the semantic interpretation of the constructions and its constituents, since Dari is not the mother tongue of the present author.

The native speakers were additionally asked for grammatical and lexical judgments on the data collected from the literature. This process was necessary in order to double-check that all examples provided in chapters 2 and 6 reflect the current every-day spoken language, especially considering that some examples on Kāboli stem from relatively old work (e.g. Fāhrādi 1955). In the end, I had in total 300 suitable sentences (of which 36 occurred double, once elicited in the first test and grammatically judged in the second test), which included 60 existential sentences, 120 simple predications and 60 constructions with complex predicates. Of course, the total number refers to the same mixed set of 40 plus ten sentences handed out to each speaker and not to exclusively existential sentences different from each other, as in the case of the corpus for Southern Calabrian. The NPs used for the description of the nominal domain in 2.3.3 were asked separately and I could collect examples of DPs in subject and object position (also in function of head of a relative clause, see 2.3.3), in isolation and in isolation but modified by an adjective and therefore displaying the ezāfe.

Further data was drawn from the linguistic literature on Afghan Persian, especially from Farhādī (1955), who wrote the only – to my knowledge – available grammar of Kāboli. When data had been drawn from the literature, this is explicitly cited.

Since the studies on Dari in general in the western literature are scarce, it is difficult to get access to a big amount of data. Much research is available on Iranian Persian, but much lesser is to be found on Dari and its spoken varieties. A further obstacle consists in the fact that other sources of languages, for instance tales, lyrics or theatre plays in original language are written in the Perso-Arabic script.<sup>157</sup>

There is therefore surely a quantitative difference between the existential data in the two main languages of this thesis, e.g. Southern Calabrian and Dari. I wish to remark at this point that the analysis conducted here is of qualitative and not of quantitative nature. The comparison with Dari serves to show whether a common tendency in the occurrences of the definiteness restriction in languages with and without articles can be ascertained.

### 6.3.2. Morpho-syntax of (bare) noun phrases

This section is thought as to provide some information on how NPs are interpreted in Dari. As ES select the copula *be*, pivots in these constructions are no objects and they always occur bare. Therefore, I will illustrate on the basis of empirical data, how and which reading is assigned to them and which theoretical assumptions can motivate it.

Dari does not accomplish the definite/indefinite distinction on NPs since no morphological definite articles are available. However, it displays a morphological marker on direct object noun phrases. This postposition has been treated in the classical grammars mostly as expressing what western European languages express by using the definite article, but I showed on the basis of new data (see 2.3.2) that this claim is not consistent and agree to the position supported by many linguists (Browne 1970, Karimi 1990, 1999, 2003, Lyons 1999, Taghvaipour 2005 among others) that the postposition *rā* should rather be treated as a Case marker of specificity/referential prominence for the object, i.e. it carries the features [+accusative] and [+specific]. Notice at this point that the notion of specificity relates to that of presupposition and it is relevant to the logical interpretation of the sentences, which is in turn determined by the syntactic structure, as I will claim in the following discussion.

Nondirect object NPs occur otherwise without markers in Dari and are introduced by a preposition. Indeed, in many languages – probably in the majority of the languages of the world – nouns can appear bare, even when occupying an argument position. While specific direct objects are morphologically marked by the postposition *rā*, nonspecific objects, on the contrary, do not display

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<sup>157</sup> An attempt was made by examining a newspaper article from the online newspaper [www.tolonews.com](http://www.tolonews.com), as described in 2.3.3. The aim was to look for the occurrence of the demonstrative *in* for the purposes of demonstrating that this is not a definite article.

any marker. The difference in interpretation is a consequence of the different position they occupy in the syntactic structure (Karimi 2005: 4).

Dari has moreover an indefinite article, *yak* (Engl. *one*), with a plural form realized as *yagān*. The specificity marker can co-occur with a noun phrase introduced by *yak*, signaling the referential prominence as well as marking accusative Case. With nonspecific objects both *rā* and *yak* can be omitted without the sentence to become ungrammatical. Sentences (11) and (12) display count nouns, whereas sentences (13)-(14) are examples with mass nouns.

(11) ketāb xondan  
book read.INF  
'To read books/a book.'

(12) mēwa xordam  
fruit ate.1SG  
'(I) ate fruits/a fruit.'

(13) berenj xaridam<sup>158</sup>  
rice bought.1SG  
'I bought rice.'

(14) Ali zamin xarid  
Ali land bought.3SG  
'Ali bought land.'

Now, an exact translation of the NPs into English is not straightforwardly achieved. In (11), for instance, the object is nonspecific and it is part of the description of the predicate (Karimi 2005: 105). The CPR resulting from the object plus the verb is intended to express the activity of book-reading. In (13)-(14) *sm*<sup>159</sup> can possibly be added to the translation, in order to render the nonspecific reading. Compare to this respect the data in (15) and (16). In (16) the presence of the postposition implies referring to a specific tea that has been for example mentioned in the previous discourse, clearly needing a definite article in a language like English.

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<sup>158</sup> Notice that Dari makes use of the singular form of nouns for generics too, while in English we need a plural form for generics (cf. 2.3.3).

<sup>159</sup> *Sm* is here meant in the sense of Lyons (1999), who uses this conventional abbreviation in order to express cardinality/indefinite quantity, contrary to stressed *some* as opposed to others

(15)           čay xordam  
           tea ate.1SG  
           ‘I drank tea.’; lit. ‘I ate tea.’

(16)           čay-a       xordam  
           tea-OM<sup>160</sup> ate.1SG  
           ‘I drank (the) [+spec] tea.’

On the basis of similar data from Iranian Persian, Karimi (2005) assumes two different syntactic positions for specific and nonspecific objects, the last ones being located lower in the structure and subject to incorporation. Thus, the word order in presence of a prepositional phrase – which makes the different occupied positions evident – is illustrated in (17a) together with a specific object, whereas (17b) illustrates the word order when nonspecific objects occur.

(17)a.	S	O <sub>specific</sub>	(PP)	V
b.	S	(PP)	O <sub>nonspecific</sub>	V

(Folli, Harley & Karimi 2005: 6)

The claim is that the syntax influences the semantic interpretation of the object nouns. A morphological consequence of the different position assumed in the structure is the presence or absence of the accusative/specificity marker. One of the conditions for the appearance of *rā* is in fact the specificity value of the noun. According to Diesing (1996: 80) “the semantic contribution of specificity is in fact presuppositionality” and is determined by the discourse context. As has been shown in chapter 5, the theoretical implications of the Mapping Hypothesis are that there is a direct link between the interpretation of nouns and their syntactic configuration. The accusative/specificity marker on specific objects corresponds to a signal of their location in a higher part of the sentence, called restrictive clause, where strong presuppositional information is mapped (Diesing 1994, Karimi 2005). Nonspecific objects are instead located lower inside the existential closure and are not marked for specificity. Specificity is thus morphologically and syntactically marked on direct object nouns in languages like Persian, Dari or Turkish (Enç 1991, Lyons 1999). Fischer (2010) makes similar observations concerning the strong correlation between word order and the association of a specific interpretation for Romance languages such as Old Catalan, Old Spanish and Old French and the occurrence of the definite article in sentence initial position.

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<sup>160</sup> OM means Object Marker. It is the abbreviation used in the literature about Iranian language family to gloss the marker of accusativity and specificity.

At this point, it needs to be established if these considerations can help determining how subject NPs, which always occur bare, are interpreted. The NPs in examples (18), (19) and (20) can in principle be interpreted as specific or nonspecific, thus both English alternatives *the* and *a* are given in the glosses. Interestingly, within the analysis put forth by Karimi (2005) specific subjects in Persian move out of the PredP (which is in meant in her analysis as the complement of a generalized vP) and are raised higher to the information unit in order to be interpreted as specific, whereas nonspecific subjects remain *in-situ* inside the PredP.<sup>161</sup> Thus, as we have seen for the specific/nonspecific objects, a different syntactic structure underlies the same superficial word order, if no other phrase intervenes to render it evident. The only difference is that there is no morphological marker on subjects to make this property “visible”.<sup>162</sup>

- (18) wazir āzer bud  
 minister present was.3SG  
 ‘(The/a) minister was present.’

Farhādī (1955: 138)

- (19) asp me-dawa  
 horse DUR-run.3SG  
 ‘(The/a) horse is running.’

- (20) šā-zāda totā-ra me-pōlid  
 prince parrot-OM DUR-look.3SG  
 ‘(The) prince is looking for (the) parrot.’

Farhādī (1955: 137)

The informants judged ambiguous sentences (18) and (19): both specific and nonspecific readings were available according to them and more context information was required in order to assign one of the interpretations. Example (21) gives some more detailed evidence for a nonspecific subject NP to be inside the PredP: Agreement between verb and subject is not obligatory here and

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<sup>161</sup> Karimi (2005: 70-73) claims that for Persian, but her analysis can be assumed for Dari as well: specific subjects are raised out from PredP, where they can further move to higher positions, for example to topic or focus positions.

<sup>162</sup> Indeed, this is not a mere coincidence. In fact, crosslinguistically the necessity for morphological specification is typical with element in object position, i.e. the rhematic elements, whereas topics are usually not ambiguous.

there are reasons to believe that the subject lacks Nom Case,<sup>163</sup> analogous to nonspecific objects, which – recall – are not marked by accusative *rā*.<sup>164</sup>

- (21)            se    tā<sup>165</sup>            wazir    āzer    budand  
                   three CLASS minister present were.3PL  
                   ‘Three ministers were present.’

A specific interpretation is prevalently attributed to the subject NP of (20), probably also because of the contribution of general knowledge. In all sentences, indeed, a definite translation was initially preferred. When subjects are intended with a specific reading, they must syntactically occupy a different position from indefinite/nonspecific counterparts, namely at least the Spec of *vP*, outside the PredP.

Notice, moreover, that sentence (19) can also have a generic reading<sup>166</sup> as the gloss in (22) shows. In fact, generics in Dari are expressed by using the singular form of the noun:

- (22)            asp    me-dawa  
                   horse DUR-run.3SG  
                   ‘Horses run.’

For generic nouns, i.e. referring to a whole class, Dari makes use of bare singulars. No plural is possible; on the contrary, it would be ungrammatical. The *ezāfe* (union *e*, see section 2.3.3) is not inserted, otherwise the generic meaning would be lost and the noun phrase should be interpreted with specific meaning, as “the bee – a specific one – is industrious”.<sup>167</sup>

- (23)            zanbur korigar    as  
                   bee    industrious is  
                   ‘Bees are industrious.’; lit. ‘Bee is industrious.’

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<sup>163</sup> The underlying assumption to this claim is that the nonspecific subject is located in the PredP, where existential closure obtains (Diesing 1994), and where it could be neutral to case assignment, which is a property of T and is thus checked by this element (Karimi 2005).

<sup>164</sup> The sentence has been elicited for Dari using the example given in Karimi (2005: 95).

<sup>165</sup> *Tā* is the general classifier, semantically unmarked. Literally, it means *unit/item* (Windfuhr & Perry 2009: 478).

<sup>166</sup> Ghomeshi (2003: 57) claims that “putting aside generic noun phrases, [...] bare nouns in subject position are construed as definite”. Definite/specific reading was indeed strongly preferred by the informants for bare nouns in subject positions, that is they accompanied the noun with a definite article. A nonspecific reading, though, was not excluded.

<sup>167</sup> In other words, this amounts to the distinction between ‘kind referring’ for the generic interpretation without *ezāfe* and ‘individual referring’ for the NPs with *ezāfe* (following Carlson 1978). Nevertheless, this does not suffice to consider the *ezāfe* as a definite article and I agree with treating it as a linking element.

(24)           zanbur-e-korigar   as  
               bee-EZ-industrious is  
               ‘(the) bee [+spec] is industrious.’

(25)           \*zanbur-hā korigar   astand  
               \*Bees           industrious are.3PL

(26)           sag wafādār as  
               dog loyal    is  
               ‘Dogs are loyal.’

Thus, a first analysis of bare nouns in Dari shows that they can be interpreted either as specific or nonspecific and the different interpretation can be assumed to be ultimately tied to the different syntactic positions they occupy in the structure. This preliminary observation will be crucial in the analysis of pivots in ES that will be conducted in the next section.

Another remark before moving on to the existential constructions shall be made concerning the roles of the demonstrative *in* (or its colloquial form *i* in Kāboli). We ascertained in section 2.3.3 that this demonstrative is not to be considered the definite article. Yet, another claim relevant to the analysis of DE has also been put forth by some scholars, namely that *in* could correspond to an expletive. If this is true, this would change the status of this language as expletive-less pro-drop language. The reasons adduced for this proposal are the optional occurrence of *in* in extraposition constructions (28)-(29) compared to the unmarked order in (27), apparently patterning to those constructions of English,<sup>168</sup> and even in cleft constructions such as in (28) and (29).<sup>169</sup>

(27) (i) bar hamagi vazeh as [CPke       Homaira doxtar-e xub as]  
       (this) to all       obvious is COMP H       girl-EZ good is  
       ‘It is obvious to everyone that Homaira is a good girl’

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<sup>168</sup> For instance in a sentence as “*It* is obvious we were tricked into this war” (Karimi 2005: 89).

<sup>169</sup> The brackets in which *in* is enclosed represent here optionality. Sentences (55) to (61) were elicited following the examples given in Iranian Persian by Karimi (2005: 91-93) and used in the elicitation tests. Thus, the sentences (55) to (61) are in Kāboli and display the colloquial reduced form *i* for the demonstrative.

(28) (i) šoma-hā bud-en ke i košvar-a ba i rūz andāxt-en  
 this you.PL was.2PL COMP this country-OM to this day brought.2PL  
 ‘It was you who brought the country to this state.’

(29) (i) Homaira bud ke tunest bā u be-šaz-e  
 This H was.3SG COMP was able with him/her subj-put up.3SG  
 ‘It was Homaira who was able to put up with him/her.’

However, Karimi (2005) argues against this claim and puts forward three kinds of evidence in order to support her claim:

- If the postverbal clause of (27) appears in the matrix clause, it must follow *in*, which is obligatory, cf. (30) where *in* attaches to *ke*.
- The use of the demonstrative in cleft constructions is indeed seldom. In many cases it is ungrammatical, cf. (31).
- *In* is a demonstrative, as it can replace a whole DP, for example in (33). From this claim follows why in sentences like (31) and (32) *in* is ungrammatical: the PP in (31) and the adverbial in (32) cannot be associated with *in* (in spoken Dari *i*).

(30) in [<sub>CP</sub>ke Homaira doxtar-e xub as] bar hamagi vazeh as (Kāboli)  
 this COMP H girl-EZ good is to all obvious is

(31) (\*i) ba Homaira bud ke man ketāb-ā dād-am  
 this to H was.3SG COMP I book-OM gave.1SG  
 ‘It was to Homaira that I gave the book.’

(32) (\*i) rūz-e šanbe bud ke man u-rā did-om  
 this day-EZ Saturday was.3SG COMP I he/she-OM saw.1SG  
 ‘It was Saturday when I saw him/her.’

(33) i či me-kon-a inja?  
 this what DUR-do.3SG here?  
 ‘What is this (person/thing) doing here?’

These remarks are made by Karimi (2005) concerning Persian, but are also valid for Dari as the examples (27)-(33) elicited in Kāboli also show. They support that *in* is indeed a demonstrative and

furthermore that it cannot be considered an overt expletive. Thus, Persian, in general, lacks overt expletives, a property typical of null-subject languages. This consideration will be of importance in the next section while considering ES and the DE in Dari compared to English and to other languages in which overt expletives are present.

Summing up, in this section I briefly recalled the observations made in 2.3.3 on the morphological elements present on nominals in spoken and written Dari, in order to detect eventual markers of definiteness that could convey a definite reading of NPs in ES and therefore be banned from those constructions. I concluded that definiteness is not expressed morphologically in Dari and that the demonstrative *in* (or *i* in colloquial speech) can be considered neither a definite article nor an expletive pronoun.

Moreover, the relevant semantic property to which Dari seems sensitive in the mapping of the DPs is specificity: specific objects are marked by the accusative marker *rā* and occupy a higher position in the structure as the nonspecific ones. Decisively, bare subject nouns can have both specific/nonspecific interpretations and if they have a specific reading, also for them it is argued to be located upper in the structure as their nonspecific counterparts.

### 6.3.3. Existential and locative sentences: possible definiteness effects?

The core question of this section can therefore be formulated in the following way: under which form do the definiteness restriction occur in languages in which definiteness is not grammatically realized?

Existential constructions are very common in Dari, but they show a different pattern compared to European languages. Concerning the auxiliary choice and their structure, ES consist of a locative coda (explicit or implicit), the single participant NP and the copula *be*. In Iranian Persian, ES display the verb *hastan*, which is described in grammars as the existential counterpart of the verb *budan*, though they both mean *be* (Mahootian 1997). While *hastan* is conjugated using the stem *hast* plus the personal endings for the present tense, *budan* is in present tense only conjugated as clitics inflected for person and number and it can only be used in a copulative/predicational sense.<sup>170</sup> In Persian, moreover, there is a third form of the verb *to be*, namely *baš*, which is used principally in literary contexts and in subjunctive and imperative constructions (Mahootian 1997: 228-231). It will therefore not be taken into account in the analysis of ES.

Karimi (2005) provides the two examples (34) and (35) in Iranian Persian in order to compare the existential reading of *hastan* to the predicative reading conveyed by the sentence with the clitic form of *be*. Mahootian (1997: 229) claims explicitly that the “clitic forms [...] cannot be used existentially”. Existential constructions as (35) do not need an overt expletive, as there is in fact none in Persian, but the use of *hastan* instead of the clitics deriving from the stem *budan* suffices to confer an existential interpretation. As the verb *be* is moreover partially defective, in the past tense there are not two different stems and only the stem of *budan* tensed is used (Windfuhr & Perry 2009: 450), see (36a), (36b).

- |      |   |                             |                   |
|------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| (34) | mive tu yaxchâl-e<br>fruit in fridge-be.3SG<br>'The fruit is in the fridge.'      | <i>locative predication</i> | (Iranian Persian) |
| (35) | mive tu yaxchâl hast<br>fruit in fridge be.3SG<br>'There is fruit in the fridge.' | <i>existential</i>          | (Iranian Persian) |
|      |   |                             | (Karimi 2005: 93) |

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<sup>170</sup> It is of course a difficult issue to precisely define a clitic. In the case of the verb *budan* I used the term “clitic” as it usually employed in Persian grammars (see Mahootian 228-229). Windfuhr & Perry (2012), for instance, use the term “enclitic copula”.

- (36)a. dar in otāq do panjere bud *existential* (Iranian Persian)  
 b. da i otāq do kelkin bud (Kāboli)  
 in this room two window was.3SG  
 ‘There were two windows in this room’

Significantly, in Kāboli the verb *be* in the present tense is realized using only the stem *astan*<sup>171</sup> plus the present form endings, i.e. in the spoken language of Kabul there is no enclitic copula, contrary to Iranian Persian.<sup>172</sup> For this reason there is no lexical competition between the two forms anymore and the *astan*-form has taken over the predicative and the existential use. The indicative present tense of *astan* in Kāboli is reported in table 21.

**Table 21. The verb *astan* in present indicative in Kāboli**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> SG</b>	astom	<b>1<sup>st</sup> PL</b>	astēm
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> SG</b>	asti	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> PL</b>	astên
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> SG</b>	as(t) <sup>173</sup>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> PL</b>	astan(d)

At this point, it is important to make us acquainted with the adverbs of location in Kāboli, illustrated in table 22, since they will occur in the following data on ES and locative constructions.

**Table 22. Adverbs of location in Kāboli**

<b>Kāboli</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>ija=inja</b>	here
<b>uja=onja</b>	there

<sup>171</sup> The transcription adopted for the verb *astand* (Engl. *to be*) is the one given by Farhādī (1955: 80) in his grammar of Kāboli, where an initial silent *h* is not reported in the graphemic translation.

<sup>172</sup> The enclitic copula from the stem *budan* in Iranian Persian for the present simple is conjugated as follows (Mahootian 1997: 229, Windfuhr & Perry 2012: 450):

1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL	2PL	3PL
-am	-i	-ast	-im	-id	-and

<sup>173</sup> The brackets represent here a phonetic consideration: in colloquial speech the final [t] of the third person singular is mostly dropped.

Sentence (37) offers an example of a locative sentence. The vowel of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular *as* is dropped and there is contraction, i.e. *uja as* becomes *ujas*.

- (37) ketāb ujas  
book there-is  
'There is (the/a) book.'

Sentence (38) is an ES in Kāboli and is directly compared to (39), showing the use of singular bare noun as pivot and the unspecific reading attributed to it whenever the sentence is intended as existential. Notice that the pivot is in singular in Dari, whereas in English an indefinite DP or a bare plural would be necessary as the respective glosses display.

- (38) seb as?  
apple is  
'Are there apples?/ Is there (any) apple?'

- (39) da sabad seb as.  
in basket apple is  
'(There) are apples in (the) basket/ In (the) basket are apples.'

- (40) \* seb-hā astand?  
\* apples are.3PL

The pivot of the existential clause can also be realized as a nominal group, consisting of a head and its modifiers linked together by the ezāfe and of the copula *astan* (41). The location is not necessarily realized.

- (41) Aw-e-mewa as?  
water-EZ-fruit is  
'Is there (any) fruit juice?'

Locative predications must display a prepositional phrase or a deictic adverb, i.e. *here/there* in their function as adverbs carrying full locative meaning (Engl. *here/there* correspond to colloquial Dari to *ija/uja*). No expletive *there* is available (recall also the previous remarks in section 6.3.2 about the demonstrative *in*). Sentences like (42) can in principle convey both values on the pivot, although in the locative sentence (42) a specific reading is definitely preferred to a nonspecific one.

- (42)           bačča injas.  
                   boy   here-is  
                   Reading 1: ‘(The) boy is here.’  
                   Reading 2: ‘(A[+spec.]) boy is here.’

As far as we have seen, there is an important feature that becomes evident when looking at existential constructions of colloquial Dari: their morphosyntax is apparently the same as that of locative predications, as far as the locative PP does not occur because it remains implicit. This fact has as a consequence a high degree of ambiguity. Is there any kind of the definiteness effect at work in Dari at all? Let us consider the elicited examples (43) and (44), the second one displaying the verb *astan* used in its existential function:

- (43)           sag da boğ   as.  
                   dog in garden is  
                   ‘There is (the) dog in (the) garden.’ or ‘The dog is in the garden.’

- (44)           da boğ   sag as.  
                   in garden dog is  
                   ‘There is (a) dog in (the) garden/ There are dogs in (the) garden.’

In both sentences the noun phrase *dog* occurs bare. The difference between sentence (43) and sentence (44) concerns the word order and the consequent indefinite/nonspecific interpretation of the DP in (44). While the locative PP follows the pivot in (43), in (44) the coda constituent occupies the sentence initial position, even if it is not stressed. Concerning these sentences, the task carried out by the informants was to elicitate the equivalent of *There is (the) dog in (the) garden* and then judge the grammaticality of (43) and (44). The feedback concerning the word order presented in (44) was that the sentence did not actually sound perfectly natural and the variation was perceived as semantically marked. Furthermore, sentence (43) was considered, at the same time, as the counterpart of a classical locative predication, namely of *A dog is in the garden*. Notice that both sentences (43) and (44) were pronounced without any marked intonation contour. In (44) though, the attention is stressed on the location, i.e. on the PP *da boğ*. The constituent *sag* is therefore semantically interpreted as a “(nonspecific) dog”, despite of its realization as bare noun. An alternative with the cardinal article *yak* (e.g. *da boğ yak sag as*) would be acceptable if the speaker wishes to remark the cardinal reading, adding singularity to the nonspecific reading.

Crucially, the presence of a personal pronoun<sup>174</sup> as a pivot in the same type of sentence seems to be incompatible with the word order just analysed, namely when the pivot follows the locative PP (45). This position is typically dedicated to noun phrases that receive an indefinite/nonspecific interpretation and a personal pronoun is not accepted there. On the contrary, a grammatical version of (45) is provided by the informants in (46), where the pronoun occurs in sentence initial position where it yields the canonical locative reading.

(45) \*da boğ u as.  
in garden s/he is  
\*‘There is him/her in (the) garden.’

(46) u da boğ as.  
S/he in garden is  
‘S/he is in the garden.’

A first cluster of observations arises. First of all, Dari does not display any proform of locative origin (as it is the case for European languages such as French, Spanish, Italian or Southern Calabrian among others).<sup>175</sup> Secondly, there is no difference in the choice of the auxiliary between locative predications or existential constructions: in both cases the verb *be* is selected. In principle, sentences like (42) or (46) could be intended either as locatives or as existentials.

Nevertheless, there is a clue that some semantic property of the noun is not compatible (or perhaps, less preferred) with an existential reading of the construction and this becomes evident when the interaction of a coda and therefore the word order is taken into account.

Hence, we can ask whether we are faced with a definiteness effect in sentences (44) and (45). If this is the case, in (44) it cannot be regarded as involving grammatical definiteness, as there is no morphological element like a definite article that is excluded from the existential clause or that can cause a semantic/quantificational clash. The sentence word order sounds marked to the native speakers; still, the sentence is not discarded as ungrammatical. The bare noun phrase *dog* occurring after the locative coda can be assumed to be structurally lower, nearer to the verb, where it receives a nonspecific interpretation.

We can therefore speak of a sort of semantically perceivable definiteness effect: it is the semantic interpretation of the pivot that is indefinite/nonspecific. This could be assumed to correlate

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<sup>174</sup> Recall that pronouns are usually not realized in Persian as it is a [+ Null-Subject] language.

<sup>175</sup> Although, as we have seen, in all these languages the proforms *y/ci/ndi* in existential constructions are semantically bleached and synchronically grammaticalised.



- b. kamree-mēč aadmii hai.  
 room-in man COP.Sg.MASC.PRES  
 ‘There is a man in the room.’

- (49)a. gorbe-hā dar dig hastand. (Iranian Persian)  
 cat.PL in pot COP  
 ‘The cats are in the pot.’

- b. dar dānešgā do dānešju ye irāni hast.  
 in university two student EZ Iran COP  
 ‘There are two Iranian students at university.’

(Examples (47)-(49) from Freeze 1992)

Freeze assumes a general underlying structure with two arguments, a theme (T) and a location (L), and the difference between a locative and an existential predication consists in the different order of the constituents after transformational processes. In the existentials of Russian, Hindi or Persian among others, the locative argument is raised to the subject position, whereas in locative predications the theme is the subject. Therefore, only the b sentences in (47)-(49) are existentials. The alternation of theme and location in locative and existentials is evident in all languages analyzed by Freeze, as the order of these constituents is common despite the general word order properties of every single language. A comparison adapted from Freeze (1992: 557) by including Persian/Dari is reported in table 23.<sup>177</sup>

**Table 23. Complementary distribution of predicate locatives and existentials**

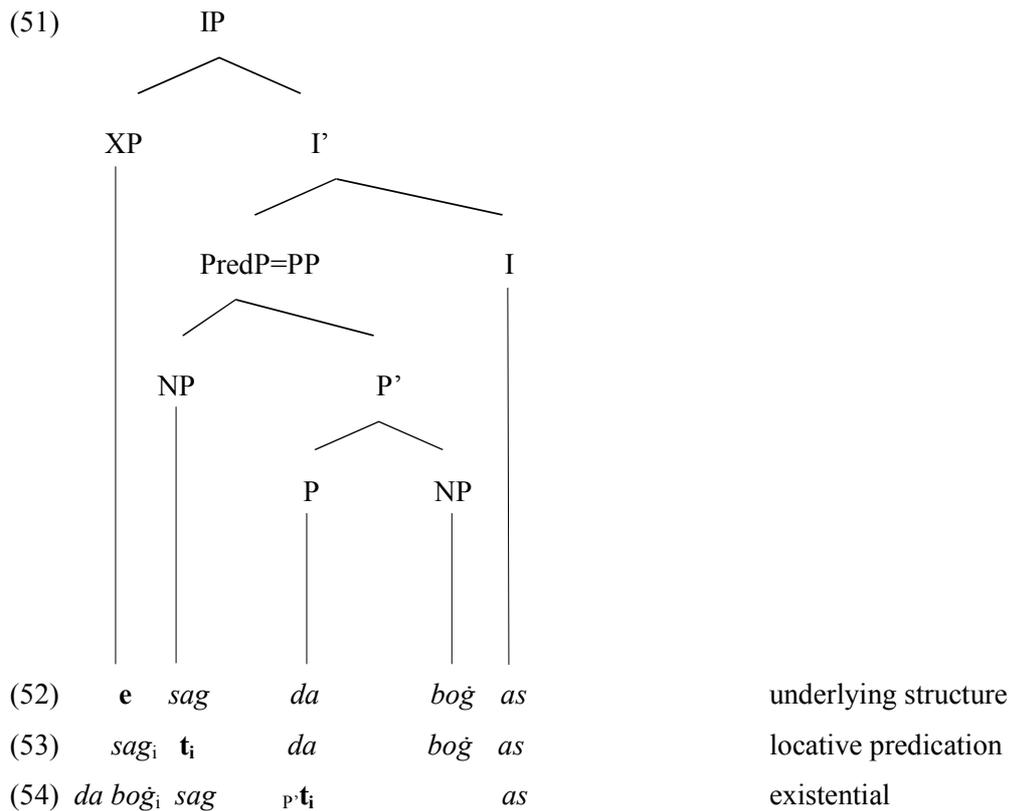
BASIC ORDER	EXAMPLE	PREDICATE			EXISTENTIAL		
		LOCATIVE					
SVO	Russian		T	COP L		L	COP T
VOS	Chamorro	COP L	T		COP T	L	
VSO	Tagalog	COP L	T		COP T	L	
SOV	Hindi		T	L COP		L	T COP
SOV	Persian/Dari		T	L COP		L	T COP

<sup>177</sup> The abbreviations in table 24 are those used in Freeze (1992): T= Theme, L= Location and COP= Copula.

In other words, in the structure underlying a locative as well as an existential predication, the pivot – or theme in Freeze’s words – is in the [Spec, PP] position. A PredP is assumed in his analysis as the complement of IP. The PredP coincide in the case of locatives and existential a prepositional phrase (PP). The preposition, thus, is the head of the PP and its complement is an NP, whereas the specifier position is occupied by the theme. The specifier of the higher phrase, namely [Spec, IP], is empty. Now, either the theme moves to the empty [Spec, IP] position yielding a locative predication, or the P’ constituent raises to [Spec, IP] yielding an existential sentence.

At first sight, the data we collected could be thus easily accommodated in Freeze’s framework. Compare to this purpose the underlying structure (52) of sentence (50) and the locative and existential derivations in (53) and (54) respectively.

- (50)a. sag da boğ as. *locative predication*  
 b. da boğ sag as. *existential*

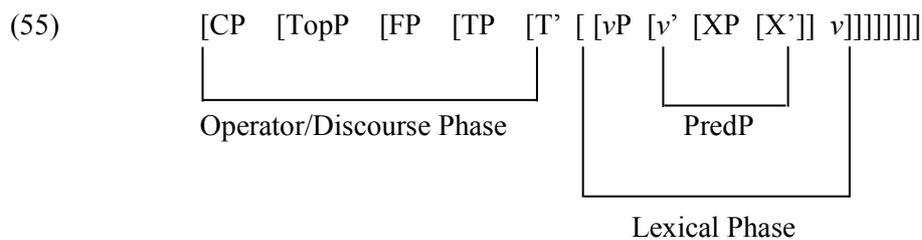


Concerning the presence or absence of the expletive, Freeze claims that this proform is actually to be considered as the spell-out of the locative feature [LOC] carried by the head I° and that some languages overtly realized it, i.e. they lexicalize it at PF, whereas in others it remains implicit. The evaluation of data collected on colloquial Dari clearly supports that word order and the presence of a locative coda play a decisive role in the individuation of the structure at stake, but I will propose a

slightly different structure to that given in Freeze (1992) in order to account for the specific/nonspecific interpretation of the nouns.

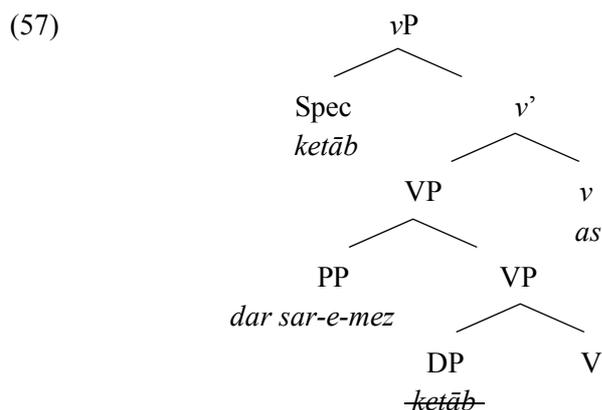
In fact, what in Persian looks like an interaction of the coda together with the pivot can be explained in terms of syntactic-semantic properties of the DP. As I mentioned in section 6.3.2, Karimi (2005) suggests that specific/nonspecific subjects and objects differ from each other with respect to the syntactic position they occupy in the structure. Thus, in order to receive interpretation, specific DPs are assumed to move out of the PredP – which is the domain of existential closure – while nonspecific ones remain in situ. In Diesing’s (1994) proposal of the Mapping Hypothesis, the term “existential closure” refers to the lowest part of the syntactic structure, namely to the material mapped in what she defines the VP. There, an existential operator  $\exists$  binds the NP and its interpretation results in an existential reading. In Heim’s (1982) terminology, this is the part of the sentence called “nuclear scope”, where the partition is based on the semantic grounds concerning the quantificational variability of indefinites and thus opposing the existentially quantified ones in the nuclear scope and the restricted indefinites in the higher restricted clause. Karimi (2005) analysis is made on the wake of Diesing’s approach. However, she adapts this analysis to the more fine grained minimalist requirements on the sentence structure. For Persian she adopts a shell structure where the  $vP$  is the lexical phase and CP the functional phase, instead of assuming only a VP and IP. Moreover, the Predicate Phrase (PredP) is intended as the XP complement of the light verb  $v$ , where the internal arguments are located and which represents the domain of existential closure.

The syntactic structure underlying Persian clauses is given in (55) (Karimi 2005: 25). The analysis is made in the spirit of the cartographic approach of Rizzi (1997), who claims that discourse conditions are visible to the computation and thus call for functional projections above the  $vP$  domain.



In a sentence like (56) the subject DP is specific and has moved out the complement of the PredP – the lowest projection domain as represented in (55) above – to get interpretation in Spec of vP (Karimi 2005: 73).<sup>178</sup>

- (56) ketāb da sar-e-mez as (Kāboli)  
 book in head-EZ-table is  
 ‘(The) book is on (the) table.’



Thus, this explains in turn why the informants could not judge the following sentence (58) pronounced without emphasis on a particular constituent as completely acceptable as existential and as translation for *there is the book* (with *there* intended as full deictic locative adverb meaning “in that place”) and proposed (59) as a proper counterpart to it. Alternatively, they added *yak* to adjust the sentence proposed, since in (60) the subject is read as nonspecific.

- (58) ?uja ketāb as.  
 ?there book is  
 ?‘There is (the) book.’

- (59) ketāb ujas.  
 book there-is  
 ‘(The) book is there.’

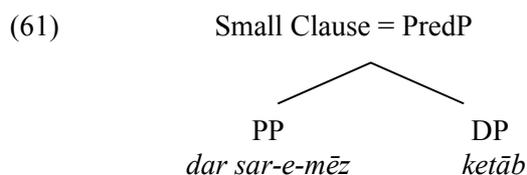
- (60) uja yak ketāb as.  
 there one book is  
 ‘There is a book.’

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<sup>178</sup> Notice that the vP in the Persian language is head-final, but the TP is head-initial (Karimi 2005).

The syntactic analysis proposed for the existential data presented up to now differs from that illustrated in (51) in the spirit of Freeze’s work because it takes into account some theoretical developments. Building on the insights of Karimi (2005), I adopt a TP analysis for Persian/Dari which is assumed to be head-initial and not head-final.<sup>179</sup> Furthermore, the PredP is intended as the generalized XP complement of *v*.

Now, there are two possible ways of analyzing ES in Dari. Either we assume along the lines of some scholars (Leonetti 2008a) that the locative coda is an adjunct and therefore we would have a structure like that presented in (57). In this case, the nonspecific pivot remains in situ inside the VP, while it is raised at least to [Spec, *v*P] if it is specific and the presence of a locative coda signalizes the different position occupied structurally. It is the feature-checking that brings about movement. Which features are strong in existential and locative predications will be discussed on the basis of the structures in (62) and (63) below. Or, if we follow the analysis presented in chapter 4 for existential with the copula *be*, we can assume a small clause analysis with the PP as subject and the DP as complement in existential construction, as (61) displays:




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<sup>179</sup> To this concern notice that T is assumed to precede its complement because sentential arguments follows the verb and do not precede it. Compare the example (i) from Dari, where a complement clause introduced by the complementizer *ke* follows the verb and it does not occur at the very end of the sentences, as it should if T were head-final.

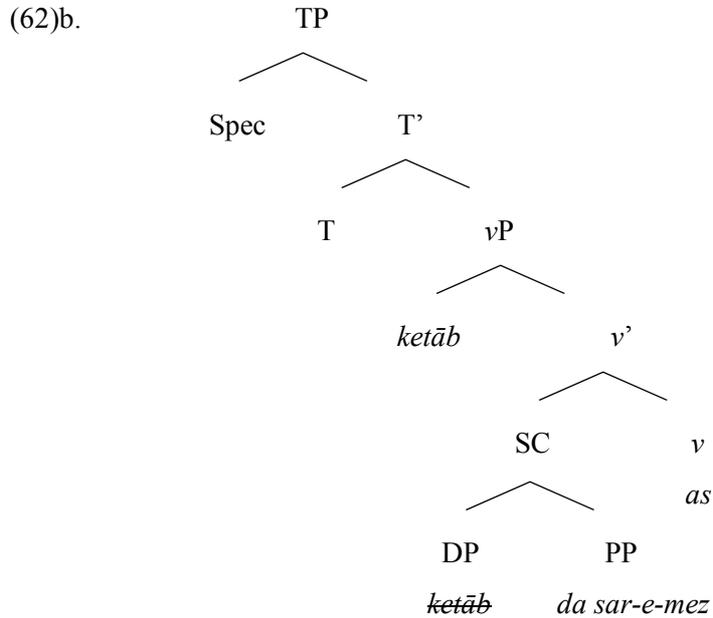
- (i)    Didebān-e-huquq-e-bašar      āxiran gozarāš-e ra    ba nošer    rasānida ast  
 watchmanPL-EZ-law-EZ-human recent    report-EZ OM    to publication brought is
- [**ke**    nešān mi-dehad      kudakān-e] [**ke**    az    šānzda    to avda    sāl dārand  
**COMP** signPl    DUR-give.3SG    child.PL-EZ *COMP* from 16      to 17    year have.3PL

‘The Human right watch has recently published a report that shows that children aged between 16-17 years...’

The verb *rasānida ast* cannot occur at the very end, suggesting that the clause arguments are located in a post-verbal position. Moreover, extraction is allowed from such CPs (for further explanation and examples from Iranian Persian see Karimi 2005).

Let us take a look at this second explanatory account undertaken in (61) and further adapted to a locative-sentence type, as exemplified in (62).

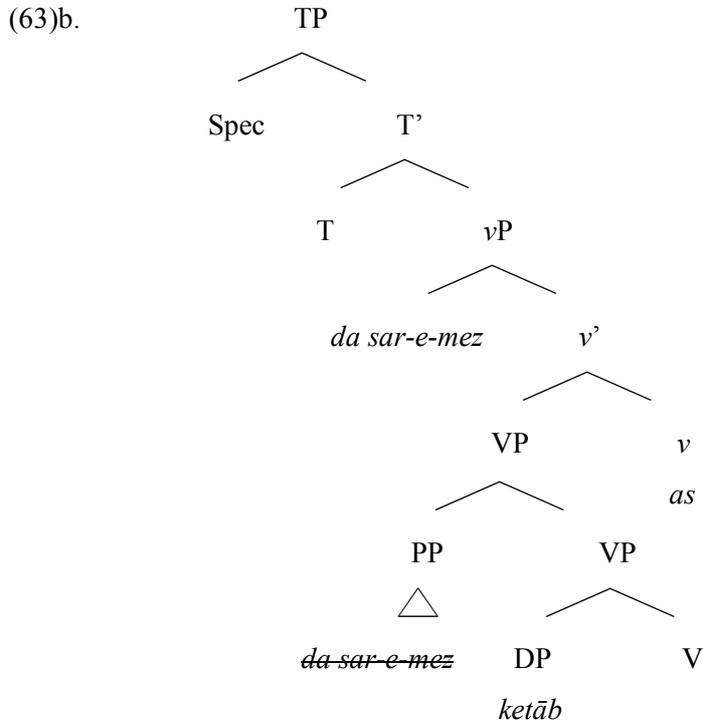
(62)a. ketāb da sar-e-mez as. *locative sentence – specific reading of the NP*



In (62) is represented a locative sentence. The DP originates low in the predication and moves then to at least [Spec, vP]. Assumedly, this could be the consequence of a strong [D] feature associated to the head  $v$ , which has to look for a goal in order to check it. If the DP *ketāb* is specific, it satisfies the requirements of the feature [D] in  $v$ . This feature is defined as D, because this is the functional category assumed to convey features like definiteness and specificity (or referentiality/presupposition). For this reason, the specific DP raises to [Spec, vP] in order to delete the uninterpretable feature in a Spec-Head relation. As soon as the raising of the specific pivot out of the existential closure takes place, we are faced with a locative sentence and not with an existential.

Sentence (63a) displays on the contrary an existential construction and its structure is given in (63b), first according to the account that considers the locative PP an adjunct to the VP projection.

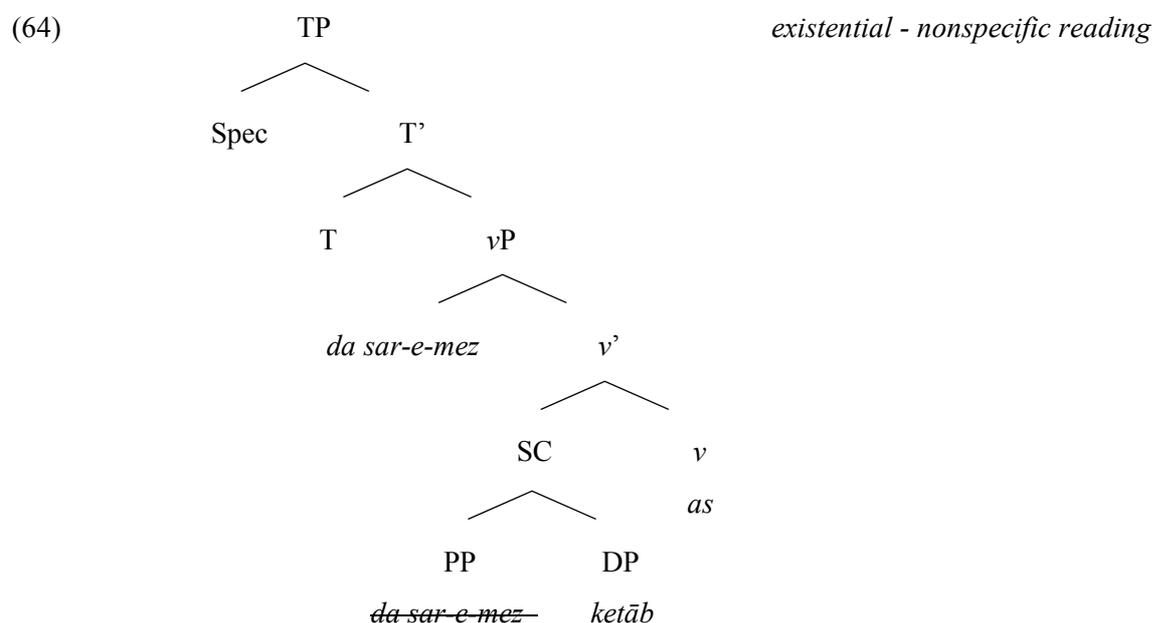
(63)a.           da sar-e-mez ketāb as.                           *existential- nonspecific reading*



The difference between the locative (57) and the existential (63) is that in this last construction the DP stays in the position in which it is base-generated and is interpreted as nonspecific. In an ES it is the location that serves as the subject of the existential predication. The existential head  $v$  looks for a specific/presuppositional constituent, namely the location, and finds it in the [Spec, VP]. Possibly, the fact of being an existential implies the presence of a [LOC] feature in the head as proposed by Freeze, which is satisfied in Persian/Dari by an actual locative PP and not by a proform. Hence, the PP can serve as goal, as it satisfies the specific locative requirements of the head and it thus is raised to [Spec, vP] to check this feature. As a consequence, the pivot DP is interpreted as nonspecific because it must remain in situ, i.e. it cannot be raised outside the domain of existential closure. Moreover, according to Karimi (2005) NPs in the PredP are part of the predicate and therefore they are neutral with respect to Case. In other words, the DP does not receive Case inside the VP. On the contrary, the structural Nominative or Accusative Case is assigned by the head  $v$  in an Agree relation. A last remark on the copula: according to Karimi (2005), who follows Chomsky (1995), the verb is base generated with all

its inflectional affixes. In Persian the grammatical EPP<sup>180</sup> is satisfied by the rich agreement morphology and no covert expletive is needed (following Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 1998). The [Spec, TP] is occupied by elements that have a [+topic] feature. Thus, if the whole existential clause is in focus there is no need for V to move to T or for the other constituents to move to [Spec, TP].<sup>181</sup>

An analysis that foresees the location in an argument position is motivated by the crosslinguistic observation of both the role of the proform and of the pivot in existentials. In fact, the pivot in ES seems not to have the role of a subject crosslinguistically. On the contrary, the location is assumed to be the real subject of an existential construction. In other words, the pivot is what is existentially predicated to be of a determined location. This is consistent with Freeze's intuitions presented above. In the minimalist analysis provided in (62) and (64), the DP movement is accounted for by the semantic interpretation that it receives according to its position and this is what can be claimed to be a definiteness (or better, specificity) effect in Dari: in the existential construction the pivot is interpreted as nonspecific because it remains in situ, inside the existential closure, whereas the locative PP raises of to (at least) [Spec, vP]. In (64) I illustrated the structure of the existential assuming a small clause as complement of the generalized vP, due to the selection of the *be*-copula, according to the second type of analysis.



<sup>180</sup> Grammatical EPP (EPPg) is the term used in Karimi (2005: 99) and is intended as the requirement for every sentence to have a subject (Chomsky 1982) as opposed to the syntactic EPP (EPPs) which is the feature that allows for syntactic movement of phrasal categories (Chomsky 2000).

<sup>181</sup> But of course constituents can be raised to T if they bear a [+topic] feature.



However, the central claim of the analysis presented here is that the interpretation of NPs not introduced by strong determiner varies within a specific kind of constructions, namely existentials and presentational sentences compared for instance to locatives. In other languages, where an existential proform is present, there is a strong constraint to avoid definite subjects inside the VP domain of existential sentences. Therefore, if we mean by Definiteness Effect the restriction for definite subjects to appear in constructions with an overt expletives, there is no such a comparable phenomenon in Persian, as such language lacks expletives altogether and definite subjects are allowed in the *vP*.

Yet, a manifestation of the DE seems to be at work at least in Dari too, as the data collected show: specific subjects are not allowed within the lowest projection of the verb, namely the complement of *vP*, and must escape the existential closure by raising up to a higher position, which is in the first place [Spec, *vP*]. There, they are visible to further derivation and can be for instance topicalized. Thus, a sentence like (45) *\*da boğ u as* is judged as ungrammatical because the definite/specific pronoun must be raised to [Spec, *vP*] and cannot be a well-formed ES. It seems that the position that can be assigned to the bare nominal in the syntactic structure correlates with its semantic properties, i.e. the specificity as identifiability of the referent (which can be regarded as definiteness in a broader semantic/pragmatic sense) and is constrained by the existential structure. An important role in existential constructions is played by the location, which in Dari is realized as a full locative PP and not as a proform. In an ES, it is this constituent that raises to [Spec, *vP*] because of the locative feature [LOC] of the existential construction. As a consequence, the bare noun inside the PredP is interpreted as nonspecific/indefinite. On the contrary, strong items like pronouns, proper names or specific bare subjects are not allowed to stay in that position and must undergo subject shift. If this happens, we are faced with locative predication and not with existential anymore.

Summing up, I described the restrictions on the interpretation of bare nouns in colloquial ES of Dari and try to unify their analysis with that of other languages with definite articles such as the Romance languages examined in chapter 4 and 5.

I put forth two possible explanations for the manifestations of the specificity restriction on pivots of ES. In one account, it could be assumed that the locative phrase is a VP adjunct, whose occurrence can reveal at superficial level the position occupied by the pivot, from which its reading derives. Subject shift is obligatory for specific DPs, which must escape existential closure, whereas nonspecific pivots cannot. Of course, this does not always become evident and therefore sentences with superficial word order pivot-location-copula could be ambiguous between locative and existential, whereby the context helps to assign the correct reading to the utterance.

Another approach – in line with the claims on ES made in chapter 4 and 5 – is to regard the location as the subject of the existential predication and the pivot DP as its predicate. This implies to posit a small clause analysis in which location and pivot are respectively the subject and the complement of the predication. Only the location can be raised higher in the structure, attracted by a

LOC-feature proper of the existential predication, whereas the pivot remains low, getting therefore a nonspecific reading.

If this analysis is on the right track, the DE in the interpretation of the DP follows from the raising of the locative PP to [Spec,  $\nu$ P] and the consequent nonspecific interpretation of the pivot that must obligatorily remain inside the existential closure. Strong DPs cannot stay in this position and are ungrammatical there, as the presence of the strong referential pronoun suggested. The whole existential clause is in focus. If the pivot DP raises to [Spec,  $\nu$ P], then it yields the traditional locative predication. This last account is in line with the hypotheses proposed in Freeze (1992: 556) for languages whose existentials do not have a proform, the location being an argument and the actual subject of the existential predication.

Independently of the syntactic account chosen, which are in any case very similar to each other insofar as they depart from the same premises, namely the relevance of the locative contribution in an existential construction, Dari shows that different word-orders yield different interpretations. The structure underlying the word order proper of the existential constructions causes the definiteness restriction to occur.

#### **6.3.4. Definiteness effects with unaccusative verbs and passive constructions**

So far, I concentrated on the DE in ES by examining new data from the colloquial Dari of Kabul and I identified the constrain in the nonspecific interpretation of noun phrases when they occur in constructions that display a coda+pivot+existential *be*-copula order, assuming therefore the locative coda to be the subject and the pivot to be the predicate of the existential clause.

At this point, I would like to turn to another kind of presentational verbs, namely unaccusatives and passives. The reason to devote them this last section is due to the fact that both of them present in Dari the same structure, namely they are analysed as instances of complex predicates. Complex predicates consist of a non-verbal element, which can belong to different phrasal categories, and of a lexical light verb located in  $\nu$ , which is head-final in Persian.<sup>184</sup> As we saw when starting the discussion on DE in Romance languages in chapter 4, some hints for the existence of the definiteness restriction in languages such as Italian came exactly from the behaviour of DPs in unaccusative and presentational constructions, where the occurrence of a coda first displayed some constraint to be at work (recall the data 4.5). I will therefore briefly present some data from Dari and make some

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<sup>184</sup> The process of forming new verbs through complex predicates, instead of using a simple form, has more and more prevailed in Persian since the thirteenth century and therefore many instances of complex predicates can be found in the language. The complex predicate structure is nowadays the only productive process for verb formation (Folli et al. 2005: 8).



The examples (67)-(69) display the unaccusative verb *āmadan* (Engl. *arrive/ come*). In (67) the bare grammatical subject has an ambiguous interpretation. In fact, *mard* usually gets a definite/specific reading if enough context information is provided to identify the referent in the discourse. The option to assign it an indefinite/nonspecific reading, i.e. as *a man* or *men arrived* is nevertheless also available.

Sentence (68) displays an explicit coda, in this case a locative PP. The subject *xaridor* follows the PP in (68) and is interpreted as nonspecific. Notice that the sentence is pronounced neutrally, without emphasizing the constituent *da dokān*. Finally, in (69) the proper name *Homaira* occurs in sentence initial position, as the SOV word order of Dari requires. An alternative order such as in *???da dokān Homaira āmad* in a neutral context was not accepted by the informants. Thus, this data seems to be compatible with the analysis presented in section 6.3.2: nonspecific subjects remain inside the PredP, whereas specific subjects are raised higher. Compare also (70)<sup>185</sup> which displays a nonspecific and (71) a specific pivot, both with an adverb and a unergative verb.<sup>186</sup>

(70)           ziadtare waqt yak sag-e- kalon beše darwāza me-šīna  
                  much time one dog-EZ big front door DUR-sit.3SG  
                  ‘A big dog often sits in front of the door.’

(71)           Sag-e- kalon-e- Homaira ziadtare waqt beše darwāza me-šīna  
                  Dog-EZ-big-EZ-Homaira much time front door DUR-sit.3SG  
                  ‘Homaira’s big dog often sits in front of (the) door.’

The nonspecific subject can only move to the sentence initial position under the same condition seen for nonspecific subjects in general (recall that they underlie restricted scrambling possibilities), namely when it bears heavy stress and is thus contrastively/emphatically highlighted (72). Thus, these syntactic conditions on the subject interpretation could seem to apply not only to unaccusatives, but actually to all verb classes. The habitual adverbial *ziadtare waqt* (Engl. *often*), which is located in a vP adjoined position, follows here the nonspecific subject and provides evidence for the stressed constituent YAK SAG-E KALON to be in a [Spec, FocP] position.

(72)           YAK SAG-E- KALON ziadtare waqt beše darwāza me-šīna  
                  ONE DOG-EZ BIG much time front door DUR-sit.3SG  
                  ‘A BIG DOG often sits in front of the door.’

<sup>185</sup> Example (70) was taken from Karimi (2005: 73) and then used in the elicitation test.

<sup>186</sup> The unergative verb “to sit” is listed by Lyons (1999) among the presentational verbs that display instances of the definiteness restriction. In Dari it is realized as a CP.



The following examples elicited by the informants in Kāboli display the presentational verb *to enter*, i.e. an unaccusative verb in English, which is yet expressed in Persian by the complex predicate *doxel šodan*, consisting of the non-verbal element *doxel* (Engl. *inside*) and the “passive” light verb *šodan*.

(76)           yak mard doxel me-ša  
                   one man   inside DUR-become.3SG  
                   ‘A man enters/comes in.’

(77)           ? mard doxel me-ša  
                   ? man   inside DUR-become.3SG  
                   ?’(A) man enters/comes in.’

Since the sentence given in the elicitation test was ‘a [-spec.] man arrived’, sentence (77) did not sound completely unambiguous to the informants and conform to the reading required in the judgement test. Moreover, the variant with *yak* as in (76) was preferred instead of leaving the noun bare. On the contrary, the sentence intended as ‘the [+spec.] man arrived’ did not provoke any negative judgment when presented as *mard doxel meša*.

Notice that a demonstrative can be inserted only within a specific discourse context, namely if the speaker is “pointing” to the person he is referring to. The demonstrative has a full deictic meaning and is not an article (78).

(78)           u/i        mard doxel me-ša  
                   that/this man   inside DUR-become.3SG  
                   ‘That/this man comes in.’

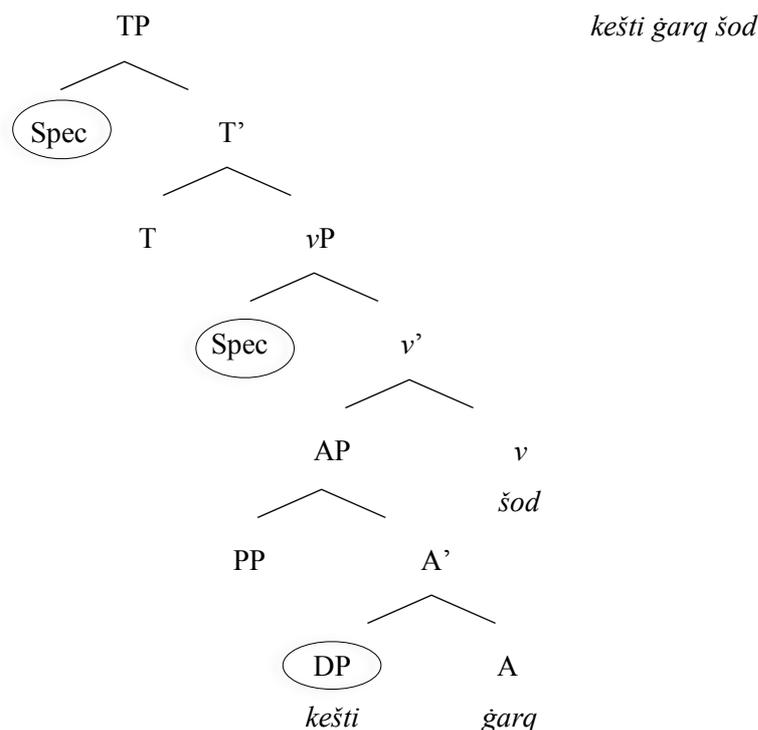
Compare also the elicited sentence (79) *kešti ġarq šod* (Engl. *ship sank*), which is the counterpart to the English sentence displaying the unaccusative verb *sink*. Both English unaccusative verbs *enter* and *sink* correspond in Dari to two so-called passive constructions, which we have seen to be actually analysed as instances of complex predicates. The past participle *ġarq* has adjectival properties and can be analysed as the head of an AP in which the noun is its complement (Karimi 2005: 74-75). The reading is ambiguous and a specific interpretation of the DP is preferred. The pivot DP *kešti* (Engl. *ship*) in (79) oscillates between a specific/nonspecific reading, while the latter is better conveyed in Dari by the insertion of *yak*, as in (80).

(79) kešti ġarq šod  
 ship sunk became.3SG  
 ‘(The/a) ship sank.’

(80) yak kešti ġarq šod  
 one ship sunk became.3SG  
 ‘A ship sank.’

If we take under examination (77) and (79), in both cases we find the same difference in meaning for the subject DPs that we have already seen in section 6.3.2 concerning non/specificity, and which has been in turn assumed to correlate with different underlying syntactic positions. The positions available for the pivot DP in an unaccusative or passive construction (here illustrated on the basis of a complex predicate but also valid for a heavy verb) are presented in (81).

**(81) Three available argument position and relative semantic interpretation.**



From (81) it is evident that nonspecific subjects in so-called passive constructions behave very similarly to nonspecific subjects of unaccusatives, namely they stay inside the PredP, i.e. in this case inside the AP in figure (81). Specific subjects, on the contrary, escape the domain of existential closure and occupy at least [Spec, vP]. If a locative constituent is present, for instance as (68) *da dokān xaridor āmad* with a heavy unaccusative verb shows, this is raised to [Spec, vP], yielding the obligatory nonspecific reading for the DP that remains inside the existential closure. Finally, a constituent marked [+ Topic] can raise from [Spec, vP] to [Spec, TP]. Unaccusative and “passive”

verbs seem to display the same kind of DE with respect to their DPs as those individuated concerning the pivots of ES.

Many unaccusative verbs in Persian are moreover instances of complex predicates, with the noun phrase as complement of the XP inside the  $vP$ . Significantly, the location that is implied in an unaccusative construction could be considered as the subject of the predication. If the accusative complex also have a [LOC] feature, it is plausible to assume that the locative PP is raised outside the existential closure.

The same is also true of pivots in apparent passive constructions. In fact, passive constructions in Persian always are instances of complex predicates with the overt light verb in  $v$  realized by *šodan* and the past participle in the position of the non-verbal element. Again, if the verbal cluster entails a locative feature, this is realized in form of a locative phrase. In this case the locative PP is the constituent raised to [Spec,  $vP$ ] and the pivot DP gets a nonspecific reading because it stays in the VP.

However, when a location is not explicit the DP yields an ambiguous interpretation and a tendency to be read as specific. If the context provides the presuppositional background the DP has raised to [Spec,  $vP$ ] and if it is a “old subject” and bears thus a [+ topic] feature, the DP has been object of further derivation and has moved for instance to [Spec, TP]. This could be the reason why different readings are available in a sentence like (67) *mard āmad*, despite the superficial identity. As assumed in the analysis of the ES, [Spec,  $vP$ ] is the locus where the nominative or accusative Case are checked within the Agree relation between the specific noun phrase and the head  $v$ .

A last remark concerns the information structure. The informants got the task of eliciting sentence (79) by adding this time a manner adverb (82) and a temporal adjunct in form of a prepositional phrase (83) respectively.

(82)            *āhesta kešti ġarq šod*  
                 slowly ship sunk became.3SG  
                 ‘(The/a) [ $\pm$ spec.] ship sank slowly.’

(83)            *sā’at-e panč kešti ġarq šod*  
                 hour -EZ five ship sunk became.3SG  
                 ‘(The/a) [ $\pm$ spec.] ship sank at five.’

As a result, two possible interpretations for the pivot were possible. A kind of definiteness effect becomes perceivable only when a location is realized. The presence of the adverbials signalizes the possibility for the whole clause to be in focus. A specific interpretation of the bare pivot is allowed, but this implies for the DP to be in [Spec,  $vP$ ].

## 6.4. Conclusions

In this part of the thesis I sought for some generalizations in order to explain the restrictions on the interpretation of bare nouns within existential constructions in colloquial Dari. In this way, I contributed to the issue of whether the DE is bound to morphological definiteness, as in Dari this is not available. Crucially, existential constructions seem to posit restrictions on the specific/presuppositional interpretation of the noun phrase in a widespread fashion all through different languages with and without articles. Consequently, the relevant issue was how to define the DE in a language that lacks overt definite articles, but instead has different strategies to express specificity on noun phrases.

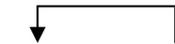
Using new empirical data from colloquial Dari, I attempted to describe whether and under which form the DE occurs in ES and in accusative or passive constructions. I observed that when a locative coda intervenes a sort of restriction surfaces. It seems possible to assume the relevance of a [LOC] feature determining the constraint.

ES in Dari choose the copula *astan* (Engl. *be*) and they have no existential proform. Bare nouns in ES get a nonspecific reading when a coda occurs and precedes the pivot. Furthermore, personal pronouns are ungrammatical if realized in the same position. This is illustrated in (84): when a pronoun follows the locative PP in an ES the sentence becomes ungrammatical.

(84) \*PP PRN V<sub>EXISTENTIAL</sub>

As the DE in ES becomes evident in the linear word order, different underlying structures were assumed in order to explain the specific/nonspecific interpretation of pivots. The role of the coda is decisive for detecting the constraint. The account that matches the findings supported up to now in this thesis considers the PP as base generated within a small clause where it occupies the subject position, whereas the pivot DP is its complement. If we are faced with an existential construction, bearing thus a [LOC] feature, it is the PP that is raised to [Spec, vP] and eventually further. Consequently, the DP must remain in situ inside the existential closure and there it receives a nonspecific interpretation.

In other words, the DE observed in Dari manifests itself in the exclusion of strong referring elements such as pronouns from the domain of existential closure or the nonspecific interpretation of bare nouns located there. This seems to be rather a specificity effect, in the sense that bare DPs are interpreted nonspecifically (85) and on the other side specific DPs do not occur inside the PredP, but are higher in the structure (86). If a DP is raised, we are faced with a locative predication and not an existential construction anymore.

(85)  [Spec, vP [v [SC PP DP]]] = existential predication – nonspecific pivot DP

(86) 
$$\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \text{[Spec, vP [v [SC DP PP]]]} = \text{locative predication – specific pivot DP} \end{array}$$

The same remarks on the reasons for the (non)specific interpretation maintain for bare nouns in unaccusative and passive constructions when a locative is realized and it satisfies a locative requirement. Otherwise, the DP can get a specific or nonspecific reading, but this is not evident as the superficial morphosyntax of the two constructions is equal. Significantly, semantic features seem to be mapped in different position in the syntax. In other words, the syntactic structure is decisive to read off the semantics of the bare noun phrases.

In all constructions examined in this last chapter an interaction between a semantic phenomenon and how the noun phrase is syntactically structured takes place. In other words, the syntactic position assigned to the noun determines the available reading for the DPs. It seems therefore that the DE observed in Dari is a phenomenon involving the syntax/semantic interface, without any influence due to the interpretational content of a determiner.

The relevant semantic notion to the restriction named definiteness effect seems thus to be specificity, intended in broad terms as presuppositionality or referential prominence. Enç comments for Turkish that “nonspecific NPs are required to be adjacent to the verb” (Enç 1991: 7) and argues that we shall more appropriately talk – at least in languages without definite articles – of specificity effects, a claim to which I agree. These are however preliminary observations, which await further development, especially considering the sparse data in linguistic research on Dari and its colloquial varieties.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

The aim of this thesis was to analyse new data that can support the existence of the definiteness restriction. I claim that this is not triggered by the semantic contribution of a definite article introducing the pivot of existential sentences. The opacity effects deriving from the grammaticalisation of a definite article in many West European languages led to this apparent conclusion. Indeed, the definiteness restriction is at stake in languages with and without articles and this thesis is an attempt to demonstrate this.

For these reasons I decided to investigate two domains of research. I dedicated the first part of the thesis to the discussion on the role of the definite article, in order to show that definiteness is not the only semantic property that can be ascribed to it and that even its morphological realization is not a sufficient condition for the NP dominated by it to be definite, as many languages with a definite/indefinite article system show. In other words, it is not correct to assume that the realization of a definite article is to be considered as proof of the semantic definiteness of the DP. Among other languages, Southern Calabrian clearly displays the overgeneralized use of the definite article, even when no semantic definiteness is encoded.

Moreover, there is crosslinguistic variation whether definiteness or specificity features are morphologically realized, and languages without articles may make use of specificity markers and other devices in order to express the referentiality content of the noun. Therefore, based on new data, I provided a description of the form and functions of morphological markers classified as articles in a language with definite articles, such as Southern Calabrian, and a language without definite articles, such as Dari, in order to discuss how the noun phrases are interpreted respectively. The goal is to make the reader acquainted with the interpretational devices for nouns in both languages and consequently ascertain whether there is any definiteness restriction involved in existential sentences, despite the fact that their article systems greatly differ from each other.

The descriptions of the definite and specific markers available in the two languages directly concern the semantic interpretation of DPs in existential sentences. Consequently, the second part initially deals with the outline of the phenomenon known as the definiteness effect in existential sentences.

One of the claims of the present thesis is that since definiteness is not the only semantic property brought to expression, it maybe is not the relevant one for the occurrence of the definiteness restriction. For this reason, I referred to pivots in the constructions analyzed as being definite/specific or indefinite/specific: the morphologically definite/indefinite articles are the grammaticalised forms of West European languages, but I argue that the relevant property for the insertion of the pivot in the existential predication is specificity.

The first problem to be solved was to clearly identify which properties existential sentences have that distinguish them from other constructions. Although they originated from constructions selecting different auxiliaries, mostly *be* and *have*, I support the claim that ES have a particular structure and are synchronically to be considered a proper type of sentences (Bentley, Cruschina to appear). In fact, despite the fact that, in many languages, they superficially appear to be identical to locative predications or possessive sentences, syntactically they are not. The pivot DP inside the construction does not have a clear semantic/thematic status and is not the subject, even though it could seem so at first sight: it is the locative topic that is the subject of the predication. From a pragmatic point of view, the existential sentence fulfils the task of introducing the existence of a hearer-new entity in a determined location. Semantic definites, thus, cannot be part of such focussed constituent when the reference of the DP is previously established in the context (Leonetti 2008a).

Additionally, building on Diesing (1994), I support the claim that structurally the pivot of pure ES needs to be nonspecific because it must stay inside the domain of existential closure and it is not allowed to take its reference from outside the existential construction.

The contribution given by this thesis to this issue consists therefore first of all in the introduction of new data from two less studied languages such as Southern Calabrian and Dari. They serve to empirically support the claims mentioned above. The data from both languages displayed the consistent occurrence of nonspecific nouns in ES, confirmed morphologically by the lack of DOM in Southern Calabrian and the indefinite/bare form of the DP, and by the lack of the specificity marker as well as word order and consequent nonspecific interpretation of the noun in Dari.

From a theoretical point of view, thus, I could find common properties related to the occurrence of the DE, despite the fact that the two main languages examined here are not closely related and realize the existential construction in two different ways. This analysis supports the claim that there is something universal about the restriction on nouns in existential sentences.

Summing up, I put forward the idea that the definiteness effect is not to be traced back to the semantic import of the lexical determiner introducing the NP, but rather to the interaction of discourse conditions and consequent syntactic choices that yields the realization of indefinite articles in languages that distinguish between definites and indefinites and the nonspecific interpretation in those that have no lexical expressions for the definite/indefinite opposition. This implies that discourse and pragmatics decide which of the structures is selected, whether it is a real existential or not (pragmatic function), and consequently a determined syntactic structure is used (syntactic function). In existentials, thus, pivots can only occupy the existential position and are therefore interpreted as indefinite or nonspecific. Morphologically, they display the bare/indefinite form because these are the expressions of nonspecificity/existentiality in languages with definite/indefinite articles as Southern Calabrian. In a language without definite articles, such as Dari, they occur bare, but the syntactic order

is also reflected superficially, as this is one of the language-specific devices available for noun interpretation.

The description and explanatory accounts put forward for the DE in ES of different languages with and without articles provide the theoretical and empirical background for the examination of the definiteness restrictions first in Southern Calabrian and then in Dari.

Of course, since the linguistic phenomena are interrelated, the study of the DE leads to a cluster of issues that have been addressed in each of the subsections within the second part of the thesis. In chapter 5 the questions arising during the corpus analysis of SCal concerning the presence of two different existential constructions that select respectively the ESSE and HABERE auxiliary were of particular importance, indicating a predicative and possessive source of origin respectively. Furthermore, a clitic proform occurs on both of them, but it is not the same: ESSE selects *nci*, whereas HABERE chooses *ndi*. Both clitics have a locative origin, but behave differently when regarded from a synchronic perspective. Indeed, an in-depth comparison with the homophonous clitics present in SCal showed that, despite having the same form, their functions differ greatly. This indicates that the grammaticalised locative contribution is necessary in order for the construction to be existential.

The relevant peculiarity of SCal is the availability of the Differential Object Marker with certain pivots in ES with *ndavi*. Although DOM is a widespread phenomenon, particularly in non-standard Romance languages and the semantic properties of the DPs in which it occurs align with the general requirements for the occurrence of the marker, DOM is usually not expected to appear with verbs of low transitivity, such as the existential verb. Neither are specific/definite nouns expected to appear in pure ES exactly because of the definiteness restriction. These observations make Southern Calabrian a source of interesting data and a unique case for supporting the position of the pivot DP in the low part of the structure defined as the existential closure.

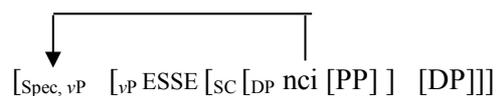
I suggest, in fact, that in Southern Calabrian two existential constructions co-occur within the same internal grammar of the speakers: the *nci*-sentences reflecting the properties of *ci*-sentences of Italian and the proper existential cluster *ndavi*, which originates by selecting the possessive auxiliary *have*. Now, the crucial contribution of SCal to the issue of the DE is to display DOM on definite/specific pivots occurring with *ndavi*. I claim that these latter constructions are not genuine existentials and the presence of DOM morphologically confirms the assumption of different structural positions of the pivots. In other words, the only possibility for a definite/specific pivot to be inserted in a *ndavi*-construction is to be marked by DOM, but at the same time the prepositional accusative marker shows that the object pivot has been raised, yielding for instance a presentational construction.

Thus, the analysis I am going to propose for pivots in ES foresees that they convey the existential reading because of their position in the existential closure, the lowest part of the structure inside the *vP*, within its complement. I claimed that, usually, the existential/non-presuppositional reading is morphologically realized with indefinite pivots or bare nouns in languages with

definite/indefinite articles. However, I showed in the first part of the thesis that even definite DPs can be semantically nonspecific. In this case, they are able to occur in pure ES. In ES of Southern Calabrian with ESSE, the DPs are predicates and cannot be raised from the small clause structure, in ES with HABERE, their low position is signaled by the lack of DOM, which would be present if they were specific and thus not existential anymore.

Finally, I argued that the proform of locative origin present in the two pure existential forms of SCal, namely *nci* and *ndi*, is the actual original subject and is raised higher in the structure together with the verb because of its clitic nature, whereas the [Spec,TP] position is filled by *pro*. Synchronically, though, the clitic has incorporated with the auxiliary, providing the spatio-temporal-coordinates necessary for the predication to be existential (Hazout 2004, Francez 2007, Cruschina 2012, Bentley & Cruschina to appear). The existential constructions are therefore a proper type of sentences which satisfies precise pragmatic and syntactic requirements and they differ from the locative predications or possessive constructions from which they may have originated. The clitic is not an actual location anymore and, although abstract, it suffices to yield the existential sense: it is the subject of the existential predication and its argument role has been taken over by the reanalyzed clitic. Hence, the clitic of locative origin – *nci*, *ndi* or *ci* – in ES is a proform of the argument. In (1)-(2) and (3)-(4), respectively, the structures of existential and inverse locative forms with *nci*+ESSE and *ndi*+HABERE of Southern Calabrian are represented. The structures show which elements are allowed to move out of the domain of existential closure thanks to their base-generated position and how two different types of sentences are consequently yielded.<sup>187</sup>

(1) Existential with ESSE and clitic *nci*. Nonspecific pivot DP



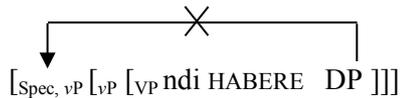
(2) Inverted locative with ESSE and clitic *nci*. Specific pivot DP



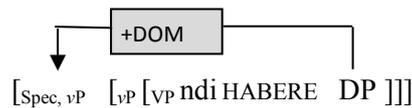

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<sup>187</sup>Here, I only illustrate the derivation occurring in the lowest part of the structure, which is decisive to the differentiation of pure existentials from other constructions. Of course, there is further structure projected above, where Agr takes place and the EPPg is satisfied.

(3) Existential with HABERE and clitic *ndi*. Nonspecific pivot DP



(4) Inverted locative with HABERE and clitic *ndi*. Specific pivot DP



Finally, the analysis of a language without articles, such as Dari, aims at supporting the existence of a common definiteness restriction at work independently of the semantic import of a determiner.

ES of Dari select the copula *be* and have no proform. Crucially, when a location is explicitly expressed these sentences present a word order in which the location precedes the pivot. Strong specific elements such as personal pronouns are excluded from this position.

Now, as the pivot DP occurs without any morphological marker, its interpretation must be explained structurally. I assume that pivots in Dari existentials are indeed predicates and originate within a small clause in the lowest part of the structure, the existential closure, where they are compelled to remain. The location, either explicit or implicit, originally occupies the subject position in the small clause, from where it is allowed to be raised further. Due to the lack of morphological markers for the semantic interpretation, the definiteness effect surfaces in the word order, reflecting the underlying structure, and in the consequent interpretation of the pivot.

(5)  $[_{\text{Spec, vP}} [_{\text{v}} [_{\text{SC}} [\text{PP}] [\text{DP}]] ] ] =$  existential predication – nonspecific pivot DP

(6)  $[_{\text{Spec, vP}} [_{\text{v}} [_{\text{SC}} [\text{DP}] [\text{PP}]] ] ] =$  locative predication – specific pivot DP

Crucially, this analysis matches the intuitions on pivots in genuine *ci/nci*-existentials of Italian and Southern Calabrian, respectively, that also select the copula *be*. Moreover, I further supported the claim of existential pivots to be in the existential closure with evidence from the other existential construction available in SCal, i.e. *ndavi*, where the different syntactic position of the pivots in real existentials compared to presentational sentences is even morphologically evident because of the lack of DOM in the first case and its occurrence in the second.

To sum up, I support the claim that there exists a constraint on the interpretation of nouns that is at work in existential sentences of all languages. This constraint is known as the definiteness effect, although I suggest that this term can be misleading and should therefore be refined. In fact, I showed that the definiteness effect is not dependent on the morphological definiteness of the noun phrase, but that it can rather be primarily explained syntactically. The identification of this phenomenon implies, yet, the careful analysis of the construction in question and of the language specific properties.

As any empirical study, the goal of this thesis was to attempt to find a systematic explanation for a variety of new data. This being a qualitative and not a quantitative study, the results only show a tendency in different languages, although a very strong one. Surely, the investigative work carried out here has not yet come to an end, because every research is the departing point for further questions. This thesis is, of course, no exception to this claim and I hope that the data presented, as well as the provisory conclusions drawn here, will constitute an incitement to soon be further analysed.

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## APPENDIX

In the following appendix you will find all *nci*- and *ndavi*-sentences of the written corpus in Southern Calabrian. Of course, the sentences are sometimes existential and sometimes pseudo-existential. Therefore, the English glosses try to maintain the “there is”-translation whenever possible (for instance with proper nouns as in sentence (30) *Nc’era puru Greta Garbu*, where the locative but also the availability reading are available, i.e. “Greta Garbo was also there” and “There was also Greta Garbo” respectively). For major details on the possibility of the *nci*- or *ndavi*-sentences to cover more functions that must be necessarily rendered with a canonical locative translation in English compare the discussion in the thesis.

In the first part of the appendix the sentences are provided with their glosses, whereas in the second part the same sentences are listed by maintaining the (negated) existential verb as the central constituent, while the pivot and the (mostly locative) XP precede or follow it.

Source: *I morti non paganu i tassi*

1. C’è tanta genti chi di nu momentu a natru resta sicca.  
*ci-is* many people who from one moment to another stays dead  
‘There are many people who die suddenly.’
2. Nc’è ‘a luci, ‘u patruni i casa e ‘u gassi.  
*nci-is* the light, the master of house and the gas  
‘There is the light, the master of the house and the gas.’
3. Cafè non ndavi. (ntra la cucina)  
coffee NEG *ndi-has* (in the kitchen)  
‘There is no coffee in the kitchen.’
4. Ndavia ancora menza landa.  
*ndi-have.PST.3SG* still half can  
‘There was still half a can.’
5. Non ndavi cchiù.  
NEG *ndi-has* more  
‘There isn’t anymore.’
6. Sordi non ndavi.  
money NEG *ndi-has*  
‘Money, there isn’t.’
7. Nc’è nu scrittu ca ‘u jennaru avi mu nci manteni a sociara ‘u vizziu.  
*nci-is* a writing that the son-in-law has to CL.DAT.3SG maintain to-the mother-in-law the vice  
‘There is a writing where the son-in-law has to provide for the bad habits of the mother-in-law.’
8. Vi ca nc’è ‘u portinaju.  
look.2SG that *nci-is* the janitor  
‘Look, there is the janitor.’
9. E chi nc’è.  
and what *nci-is*  
‘And what happens.’
10. Nc’è atru?  
*nci-is* other  
‘Is there anything else?’

11. Pe mò atru non ndavi.  
for now other NEG *ndi*-has  
'There is nothing else for now.'
12. Se nc'è. (na tazza i cafè)  
whether *nci*-is (a cup of coffee)  
'Whether there is (a cup of coffee).'
13. Certu ca nc'è. (cafè)  
sure that *nci*-is (coffee)  
'For sure there is (coffee).'
14. Ccà intra non nci siti.  
here inside NEG *nci* are.2PL  
'Here you are not.'
15. Jeu non ci su.  
I NEG *ci* am  
'I am not here.'
16. Pe mmia non nc'è paci.  
for me NEG *nci*-is rest  
'There is no rest for me.'
17. Chi nc'è di megghiu i na tazza i cafè a matina.  
what *nci*-is of better of a cup of coffee at morning  
'What is better than a cup of coffee in the morning.'
18. Non c'è fretta.  
NEG *ci*-is hurry  
'There is no hurry.'
19. Non c'è tempu i perdi.  
NEG *ci*-is time to loose  
'There is no time to loose.'
20. Chidu disgraziatu non c'è cchiù.  
that rascal NEG *ci*-is more  
'That rascal, he is not there anymore.'
21. Sutta nc'è lu camion.  
downstairs *nci*-is the lorry  
'Downstairs is the lorry.'
22. Fora nci su li guardi.  
Outside *nci* are.3PL the guards  
'Outside are the guards.'
23. Nc'è festa ntro paisi.  
*nci*-is party in-the village  
'There is party in the village.'
24. Chi nc'è cchiù sutta?  
what *nci*-is more down  
'What is below?'

25. Nci su            deci anni i    carciaru.  
*nci* are.3PL ten years of jail  
 ‘There are ten years of jail.’
26. C’è ‘a luna    a stu paisi.  
*ci*-is the moon at this village  
 ‘There is the moon in this village.’
27. La bestia chi    nc’è    in me.  
 the beast that *nci*-is in me  
 ‘The beast in me.’
28. Chi    nc’è.  
 what *nci*-is  
 ‘What happened?’
29. Ca docu *nci* si            tu.  
 that there *nci* are.2SG you  
 ‘Because there are you.’
30. C’era            puru Greta Garbu.  
*ci*-be.PST.3SG also Greta Garbo  
 ‘There was also Greta Garbo.’
31. Nci fu            carcosa    tra vu dui.  
*nci* be.PST.3SG something between you two  
 ‘There was something between you two.’

Source: *A di vinu cummeddia*

32. Cu    ijja    nc’era            nu tenenti.  
 with her *nci*-be.PST.3SG a lieutenant  
 ‘There was a lieutenant with her.’
33. Nc’è genti    chi non sapi    lu rilogiu.  
*nci*-is people who NEG knows the clock  
 ‘There are people who are late.’
34. Ndavia armenu ottu    litri    di vinu.  
*ndi*-has at least eight liters of wine  
 ‘There were at least eight liters of wine.’
35. Ndavia            davanti na porta chiusa.  
*ndi*-have.PST.3SG in front a door closed  
 ‘There was a closed door in front.’
36. I            latu    i mia nc’era            na signura.  
 PREP side of me *nci*-be.PST.3SG a lady  
 ‘Next to me there was a lady.’
37. I            latu            ndavia            nu sarvagenti.  
 PREP side *ndi*-have.PST.3SG a life belt  
 ‘To one side there was a life belt.’

38. Si nc'era carcunu chi mi futti.  
 whether *nci*-be.PST.3SG someone who me fools  
 'Whether there was anyone who would fool me.'
39. Non c'era nuda ngajja pammi sputu.  
 NEG *ci*-be.PST.3SG no cage for-to spit  
 'There was no cage to spit in.'
40. Ndavia nu postu i bloccu.  
*ndi*-have.PST.3SG a checkpoint  
 'There was a checkpoint.'
41. Vicinu a mia nc'era Micu l'orbu.  
 next to me *nci*-be.PST.3SG Micu the blind  
 'Next to me was Micu the blind.'
42. Po patru ni nc'esti a serva.  
 for-the master *nci*-is the servant  
 'There is a servant for the master.' meant "A master has a servant.'
43. Non ndavia cchiù scorta.  
 NEG *ndi*-have.PST.3SG anymore police escort  
 'There was no police escort anymore.'
44. Nto menzu nc'esti na banana.  
 in-the middle *nci*-is a banana'  
 'In the middle there is a banana.'
45. Non nc'era nudu ntra chiazza.  
 NEG *nci*-be.PSt.3SG noone in-the place  
 'Noone was on the market place.'
46. Non nc'eranu né servi né baruni.  
 NEG *nci*-be.PST.3PL neither servants no barons  
 'There were neither servants no barons.'
47. Non nc'era mancu Peppa, 'a carcarazza.  
 NEG *nci*-be.PST.3SG not even Peppa, the raven  
 'There was not even Peppa, the blabbermouth.'
48. Luntanu nc'era n'omu cu na longa barba.  
 far away *nci*-be.PST.3SG a man with a long beard  
 'In the distance was a man with a long beard.'
49. Non nc'è nudu cchiù chi teni bancu.  
 NEG *nci*-is noone anymore who holds stand  
 'There is noone anymore who entertains.'
50. Non c'era bisognu.  
 NEG *ci*-be.PST.3SG need  
 'There was no need.'

Source: *U paradisu*

51. Nc'è nu postu chiamatu paradisu.  
*nci*-is a place called paradise  
'There is a place called paradise.'
52. Undi guardi nc'è sempi nu sorrisu.  
where look.2SG *nci*-is always a smile  
'Wherever you look there is always a smile.'
53. Nc'era na fila.  
*nci*-be.PST.3SG a queue  
'There was such a queue.'
54. Ccà non ci sunnu raccomandazioni.  
here NEG *ci* be.3PL recommendations  
'Here there are no backings.'
55. Nc'eranu nimici.  
*nci* be.PST.3PL enemies  
'There were enemies.'
56. Nc'eranu tutti i Santi i Candelariu.  
*nci* be.PST.3PL all the saints of calendar  
'There were all the saints of the calendar.'
57. Nto cielu non c'ennu cchiu nimali i panza.  
in-the heaven NEG *ci*-be.3PL anymore animals of belly  
'In the heaven there are no bad people anymore.'
58. Quant'acqua ndavi a mari.  
how much water *ndi*-has at sea  
'How much water there is in the sea.'
59. Quantu c'è nta gebbi e nta gajjuni.  
how much *ci*-is inside wells and inside big cages  
'How much there is inside wells and big cages.'
60. Non c'è postu pa storti.  
NEG *ci*-is place for-the fools  
'There is no place for the fools.'
61. Non ndavi nudu postu pemmu mbivu.  
NEG *ndi*-is no place for-to drink.1SG  
'There is no place where I can drink.'
62. Non c'è versu pemmu trova paci.  
NEG *ci*-is way for-to find.3SG rest  
'There is no way for him to find rest.'
63. Nta sta vita non ndavi guadagni.  
in this life NEG *ndi*-is earnings  
'In this life there are no earnings.'

64. Non nc'esti burdellu.  
NEG nci-is fuss  
'There is no fuss.'
65. Si ndavi genti chi mi voli beni.  
whether *ndi*-has people who me wants well  
'Whether there are people who is fond of me.'
- Source: *U purga i toriu*
66. Nc'esti 'nfernu e paradisu.  
*nci*-is hell and heaven  
'There is hell and heaven.'
67. Chi postu nc'è pe cu non fici beni?  
which place *nci*-is for whom NEG do.PST.3SG well  
'Which place is there for whom did not do good deeds?'
68. Chi postu nc'è pe cu non fici mali?  
which place *nci*-is for whom NEG do.PST.3SG bad  
'Which place is there for whom did not do bad deeds?'
69. Chi postu nc'è quandu 'a morti veni?  
which place *nci*-is when the death comes  
'Which place is there when death comes?'
70. Chi postu nc'è pe na testa senza sali?  
which place *nci*-is for a head without salt  
'Which place is there for an imbecile?'
71. C'è na stanza randi.  
*ci*-is a room big  
'There is a big room.'
72. C'è l'infermeria.  
*ci*-is the infirmary  
'There is an infirmary.' lit. 'There is the infirmary.'
73. Nta stu postu non ndavi rispettu.  
in this place NEG *ndi*-has respect  
'There is no respect in this place.'
74. Nc'esti prima 'u lampu e doppu 'u tronu.  
*nci*-is first the lighting and then the thunder  
'First comes the lighting and then the thunder.'
75. Ccà no, ncennu né diavuli né santi.  
here no *nci*-be.3PL neither devils nor saints  
'Here no, there are neither devils nor saints.'
76. Ndavi cosi storti e sulu danni.  
*ndi*-has things crooked and only damages  
'There are only wrong things and damages.'

77. Ntornu nc'era propria nenti.  
around *nci*-be.PST.3SG at all nothing  
'There was nothing at all about.'
78. Non c'era vicinu a mia cchiù Barbagianni.  
NEG *ci*-be.PST.3SG next to me anymore Barbagianni  
'Barbagianni was not next to me anymore.'
79. Non c'era mancu cchiù Donna Conzata.  
NEG *ci*-be.PST.3SG not even anymore Mrs Conzata  
'Not even Mrs Conzata was there anymore.'

Source: *Jjanda Mara*

80. Nta sta Calabria ndavi cosi strani.  
in this Calabria *ndi*-has things stange  
'In this Calabria there are strange things.'
81. Di chisti ntendituri ndavi assai.  
of these connoisseurs *ndi*-has many  
'There are many of these connoisseurs.'
82. Nta sta Calabria non nc'è cchiù riparu.  
in this Calabria NEG *nci*-is anymore remedy  
'In this Calabria there is no remedy anymore.'
83. L'unicu movimentu nta sti chiazzi c'è quandu canta Mimmu Cavallaru.  
the only movements in these places *ci*-is when sings Mimmo Cavallaro  
'The only sings of life on these market places are when Mimmo Cavallaro sings.'
84. Nc'è nu gruppu chi sona novi brani.  
*nci*-is a band who plays nine tracks  
'There is a band who performs nine tracks.'
85. Ndavi daveru tanti cosi storti.  
*ndi*-has really many things crooked  
'There are many wrong things for real.'
86. L'amicizia, se nc'esti ntra stu mundu.  
the friendship whether *ci*-is in this world  
'Friendship, whether there is in this world.'
87. Non c'esti baraunda.  
NEG *ci*-is uproar  
'There is no uproar.'
88. Ccà baraunda non c'esti.  
here uproar NEG *ci*-is  
'Here there is no uproar.'
89. Nc'esti paci.  
*nci*-is peace  
'There is peace.'

90. Nto me paisi ndavi nu barri.  
in-the my village *ndi*-has a bar  
'In my village there is a bar.'
91. Pe strati nc'è nu grandi movimentu.  
along-the streets *nci*-is a big movement  
'Along the streets there is a lot of bustle.'
92. Ndavi puru ndranghitisti.  
*ndi*-has also ndrangheta-memebers  
'There are also members of the ndrangheta.'
93. Ndavi guerra e alluvioni.  
*ndi*-has war and floods  
'There are also wars and floods.'
94. Ntra stu cori ndavia nu disiu.  
in this heart *ndi*-have.PST.3SG a desire  
'There was a desire in this heart.'

Source: *U batteru*

95. Chi nc'è supa o tavulu.  
what *nci*-is on the table  
'What is on the table?'
96. Nc'è giru ancora nu batteru.  
*nci*-is around still a bacterium  
'There is still a bacterium around.'
97. C'è ancora unu in giru pe a casa.  
*ci*-is still one around for the house  
'There is still one around the house.'
98. Ndavia na filarata i machini.  
*ndi*-has a row of cars  
'There was a row of cars.'
99. Ntra a machina c'era natra. (cuntravvinzioni)  
in the car *ci*-be.PST.3SG another (fine)  
'In the car there was another one.' (fine)
100. Ntra 'a mia c'era chida chi ndera mintutu jeu.  
in the mine *ci*-be.PST.3SG that one that *ndi*-be-PST.3SG wear.PTCP I  
'The one that I had worn was in mine.'
101. Ndavia nu rumuri fastidiusu nta machina.  
*ndi*-have.PST.3SG a noise fastidious in the car  
'There was a fastidious noise in the car.'
102. A me casa c'è puru cogghi biscottinu?  
at-the my house *ci*-is also pick biscuit  
'Is also "Biscuit picker" at my house?'

103. A Montecitorio c'è na commissione chi pari mai  
at Montecitorio *ci-is* a committee that seems never  
'At Montecitorio there is a committee that... good heavens!'
104. Si non c'eranu i latrì...  
if NEG *ci-be.PST.3PL* the thieves  
'If there were no thieves...'
105. Si non c'eranu i delinquenti...  
if NEG *ci-be.PST.3PL* the criminals  
'If there were no criminals...'
106. Non c'eranu carabinieri, puliziotti, finanzieri, i guardi, i carceri,  
NEG *ci-be.PST.3PL* carabinieri, policemen, tax officers, the guards, the prisons,  
tutti chidi chi lavuranu nte carceri, l'avvocati, i giudici e poi ancora, i lucchetti,  
all those that work.3PL in-the prisons, the lawyers, the judges and still more, the padlocks  
i porti blindati, i reti, i cassiforti, i protezioni, i pistoli, i fucili, i satelliti!  
the doors armoured, the nets, the safes, the protections, the guns, the rifles, the satellites
- 'There were no carabinieri, policemen, tax officers, the guards, the prisons, all those that work in  
prisons, the lawyers, the judges and still more the padlocks, the armoured doors, the nets, the safes, the  
protections, the guns, the rifles, the satellites!'
107. Non c'eranu i satelliti!  
NEG *ci-be.PST.3PL* the satellites  
'There were no satellites!'
108. Si non c'eramu nui...  
if NEG *ci-be.PST.3PL* we  
'If we weren't here...'

Source: *Peppa a molla*

109. Non c'è fretta.  
NEG *ci-is* hurry  
'There is no hurry.'
110. Vinu c'è?  
wine *ci-is*  
'Is there any wine?'
111. Non c'ennu. (Apollu e Anna Camilla)  
NEG *ci-are.3PL*  
'(Apollo and Camilla) They are not here.'
112. Ndavi na corda calata da finestra.  
*ndi-has* a rope lowered from-the window  
'There is a rope lowered from the window.'
113. Ndavi tutti i cassetti perti.  
*ndi-has* all the drawers open  
'All the drawers are open.'
114. A tuttu c'è riparu.  
to all *ci-is* repair  
'There is a way-out to everything.'

115. A tuttu c'è rimedi.  
to all *ci*-is remedy  
'There is a cure to everything.'

Source: *Pipiromania*

116. Ndavi quaranta gradi.  
*ndi*-has forty degrees  
'There are forty degrees.'

117. Nci fu na rapina.  
*nci* be-PST.3SG a robbery  
'There was a robbery.'

118. Chi c'è.  
what *ci*-is  
'What is up?'

119. Non ci fu versu u m'addormentu.  
NEG *ci* be.PST.3SG way to CL.REFL.1SG-fall.1SG asleep  
'There was no way for me to fall asleep.'

120. Non c'è petroliu.  
NEG *ci*-is oil  
'There is no oil.'

121. Quanti indiani ndavi in giru?  
how many indians *ndi*-has around  
'How many Indians are there around?'

122. Ndavi cosi ntra stu mundu.  
*ndi*-has things in this world  
'There are things in this world.'

123. I leggi non c'ennu pe sti parti.  
the laws NEG *ci*-be.3PL for these places  
'There are no laws here around.'

124. Si nc'è bisognu.  
if *nci*-is need  
'If there is any need.'

125. C'è puru 'u corpu scuru.  
*ci*-is even a body black  
'There is also a last firework.'

126. Ccà ndavi i pipi.  
here *ndi*-has the peppers  
'Here are the peppers.'

127. Dà ndavi a bonanima i Danti.  
there *ndi*-has DOM late lamented of Dante  
'There (deictic locative) is Dante, God rest his soul.'

128. Vicinu o mercatu ndavja a cummari Cuncetta.  
near to-the market *ndi*-have.PST.3SG DOM mistress Cuncetta  
'Next to the market was Mrs Cuncetta.'
129. Ccà davanti c'era 'u previti.  
here in front *ci*-be.PST.3SG the priest  
'The priest was here in front of it.'
130. 'U paradisu nc'è.  
the heaven *nci*-is  
'There is heaven.'
131. 'U paradisu non c'è.  
the heaven NEG *ci*-is  
'There is no heaven.'
132. C'è 'u paradisu?  
*ci*-is the heaven  
'Is there a heaven?'
133. Nc'è na malatia chi si chiama meningiti.  
*nci*-is an illness that CL.REFL.3SG calls meningitis  
'There is an illness called meningitis.'
134. Ndavi tanti luni.  
*ndi*-has many moons  
'There are many moons.'
135. Ndavi tanti luni, tanti luni.  
*ndi*-has many moons, many moons  
'There are many moons, many moons.'

Source: *A preghera di morti*

136. O cimiteru ndavi malati, ricchi e poveretti, omini, fimmini, randi  
at-the cemetery *ndi*-has ill, rich and poor, men, women, grown-ups  
e figghioli.  
and children  
'At the cemetery there are sick people, riches and poors, men, women, grown-ups and children.'
137. Cu tanti jorna chi ndavi ntra n'annu.  
with many days that *ndi*-has in a year  
'With so many days that are in a year.'

Source: *Zirida e Roccu*

138. Aundi nc'esti chida grandiusa Villa.  
where *nci*-is that splendid Villa  
'Where is that splendid Villa?'

139. Aundi nci su strati longhi, putichi, marciapiedi.  
 where *nci* are.3PL streets long, shops, pavements  
 ‘Where there are long streets, shops, pavements.’
140. Rughi randi, chiazzi non nci su pe strata porci, crapi,  
 streets big, market places, NEG *nci* are.3PL along street pigs, goats,  
 pecuri, massari cu i vacchi.  
 sheeps, shepherds with the cows  
 ‘Big streets, market places, there are no pigs, goats, sheeps and shepherds with the cows along the streets.’
141. Ntro menzu nc’esti na gebbia.  
 in-the middle *nci*-is a well  
 ‘In the middle there is a well.’

Source: *Vampi*

142. Ntornu a lu fiuri nc’è luci.  
 around at the flower *nci*-is light  
 ‘Around the flower there is light.’
143. Nc’esti na lingua di mari.  
*nci*-is a tounge of sea  
 ‘There is a strip of sea.’
144. Na vampa nc’è di speranza.  
 a blaze *nci*-is of hope  
 ‘There is a blaze of hope.’
145. Non nc’esti cchiù nud’atra cosa.  
 NEG *nci*-is anymore no other thing  
 ‘There is nothing else anymore.’
146. Non c’è chi fari.  
 NEG *ci*-is what do  
 ‘There is nothing to do.’

Source: *Breve storia e proverbi di Gioia Tauro*

147. Non c’è cchiù di sparagnari.  
 NEG *ci*-is anymore to spare  
 ‘There is nothing to spare for anymore.’

Source: *Una farsa di Carnevale a Nicotera*

148. Non c’è nenti i fari cchiù pe ttia  
 NEG *ci*-is nothing to do anymore for you  
 ‘There is nothing to do anymore for you.’

Source: *I canti popolari di San Martino*

149. Non ci su i me frati.  
 NEG *ci* are.3PL the my brothers  
 ‘My brothers are not here.’

150. Pe la marina non c'era genti assai  
along the seashore NEG *ci-be.PST.3SG* people much  
'There were not so much people along the seashore.'

151. Nc'era na giuvaneda janca e fina.  
*nci-be.PST.3SG* a young girl white and delicate  
'There was a delicate white young girl.'

152. Nda chista ruga nc'è na bella rosa.  
in this street *nci-is* a beautiful rosa  
'In this street there is a beautiful rose.'

Source: *Fiuri a l'umbra e Fiuri sangiorgisi*

153. A San Giorgiu nci su li megghiu fiuri.  
at San Giorgiu *nci are.3PL* the best flowers  
'In San Giorgiu there are the best flowers.'

154. quantu bedizzi lu nostru paisi ndavi ntra li vinedi.  
how many beauties the our village *ndi-has* in the small streets  
'How many beautiful women there are in the small streets of our village.'

155. (A San Giorgiu) nci su certi casati.  
(at San Giorgiu) *nci are.3PL* such families  
'In San Giorgiu there are such families.'

156. Da nc'esti lu trisoru di bellizzi.  
there *nci-is* the treasure of beauties  
'There is the treasure of beauties.'

157. Li ceravedi nci sunnu appostu.  
the brains *nci are.3PL* for that  
'The brains are there for that (reason).'

158. Ncesti cu faci li profumi "Norgi".  
*nci-is* who makes the perfume "Norgi"  
'There is who makes the perfume "Norgi".'

159. Nc'è lu fiuri.  
*nci-is* the flower  
'Here is the flower.'

160. Nci fu nu tempu.  
*nci be.PST.3SG* a time  
'There was a time.'

161. La speranza nc'esti puru mpundu a lu mari.  
the hope *nci-is* even at the bottom at the sea  
'There is hope even at the bottom of the sea.'

162. Non nci su paroli.  
NEG *nci are.3PL* words  
'There are no words.'

Source: *L'eredità dello zio canonico*

163. Ccà nci su tappetu e tavulinu.  
here *nci* are.3PL carpet and small table  
'Here are the carpet and small table.'
164. C'è il segreto professionale.  
*ci*-is the secrecy professional  
'There is professional secrecy.'
165. Ccà nc'è tantu di testamentu publicu.  
here *nci*-is much of will solemn  
'Here is so much of a solemn will.'
166. Sta crisi chi nc'è.  
this crisis that *nci*-is  
'That crisis, that is (taking place).'
167. Non c'è l'eredità.  
NEG *ci*-is the inheritance  
'There is no inheritance.'
168. Nc'è umidità.  
*nci*-is moisture  
'There is moisture.'
169. Non c'era nessun u canu chi mi guardava.  
NEG *ci*-be.PST.3SG noone not even a dog that CL.ACC.1SG look.PST.3SG  
'Noone was there looking at me, not even a dog.'
170. Nc'è nu testamentu.  
*nci*-is a will  
'There is a will.'
171. Nto testamentu nc'è preferenza pe ttia.  
in-the will *nci*-is preference for you  
'There is a preference for you in the will.'
172. C'era 'u vicariu Chiarenza.  
*ci*-be.PST.3SG the vicar Chiarenza  
'The vicar Chiarenza was there.'
173. C'è anche il notaio.  
*ci*-is also the notary  
'The notary is also here.'
174. Non c'è 'u notaru.  
NEG *ci*-is the notary  
'The notary is not here.'
175. C'è qualche altro pretendente?  
*ci*-is some other suitor  
'Is there any other suitor?'

176. Ccà nci fu ngannu.  
here *nci* be.PST.3SG cheat  
'Here there was a cheat.'
177. Il vicario purtroppo non c'è.  
the vicar unfortunately NEG *ci*-is  
'The vicar is unfortunately not here.'
178. Carchi atru lustrinu chi nc'è cca intra.  
some other sequin that *nci*-is here inside  
'Some other useless ornament that is here inside.'
179. ndavi ancora. (frasi)  
*ndi*-has more. (sentences)  
'There are more.' (sentences)
180. A casa non nc'è nenti.  
at home NEG *nci*-is nothing  
'At home there is nothing.'
181. Aundi nci su tanti mangiatari.  
where *nci* are.3PL many scroungers  
'Where there are many scroungers.'
182. Ci sono tanti gradini in questo vostro palazzo.  
*ci* are.3PL many steps in this your mansion  
'There are many steps in your mansion.'
183. Ccà nc'è l'atru cuginu.  
here *nci*-is the other cousin  
'Here is the other cousin.'
184. Ci sono due crocifissi d'avorio.  
*ci* are.3PL two crucifixes of ivory  
'There are two ivory crucifixes.'
185. Nc'era nu dottori.  
*nci*-be.PST.3SG a doctor  
'There was a doctor.'
186. Non c'era nessuna complicazioni.  
NEG *ci*-be.PST.3SG no complication  
'There was no complications.'
187. Non ci su.  
NEG *ci*-am  
'I am not here.'

Source: *Moglie e buoi dei paesi tuoi*.

188. Nc'è unu chi dici ...  
*nci*-is one who says  
'There is a person who asks...'

189. ... se nc'esti so patri.  
 whether *nci*-is his father  
 '...whether his father is here.'
190. C'è permessu?  
*ci*-is permission  
 lit. 'Is there permission?', intended 'May I?'
191. Nci su sti dui figghicedi mei.  
*nci* are.3PL these two sons my  
 'There are these two sons of mine.'
192. N'era unu chi pemmu faci zita a me figghia volia 'a parcella.  
*nci* be.PST.3SG one who to make engaged DOM my daughter want.PST.3SG the fee  
 'There was a person who wanted to be paid to engage my daughter.'
193. Nc'esti n'amicu meu chi vinni d'America.  
*nci*-is a friend my who come.PST.3SG from America  
 'There is a friend of mine who came from America.'
194. Don Totò nc'è?  
 Don Totò *nci*-is  
 'Is Don Totò here?'
195. Sì, nc'è.  
 yes, *nci*-is  
 'Yes, he is here.'
196. ndavi medicini pe sta malattia?  
*ndi*-has medicines for this illness  
 'Is there any medicine for this illness?'
197. Sì, ndavi.  
 yes, *ndi*-has  
 'Yes, there is.'
198. (Chida bella ragazza) non nc'era.  
 that beautiful girl NEG *nci*-be.PST.3SG  
 '(That beautiful girl) wasn't there.'

Source: *L'eredità dello zio buonanima* (Mimmo Nucera)

199. 'U tappetu non c'è?  
 the carpet NEG *ci*-is  
 'Is the carpet not here?'
200. Nc'è puru 'u tavulinu.  
*nci*-is also the small table  
 'There is also the small table.'
201. Nc'era bisognu?  
*nci* be.PST.3SG need  
 'Was there any need?'

202. Nci sunnu quattru piani.  
*nci* are.3PL four floors  
 ‘There are four floors.’
203. Nci su puru tri vaschi di bagnu.  
*nci* are.3PL also three bathtubs  
 ‘There are also three bathtubs.’
204. Nc’è sulu ‘u negoziu d’i cappedi.  
*nci*-is only the shop of the hats  
 ‘There is only the hat shop.’
205. Chi nc’è i mali se...  
 what *nci*-is of wrong if  
 ‘What is wrong if...’
206. ‘A mamma nc’è!  
 the mother *nci*-is  
 ‘The mother is here!’
207. Non c’era nu cani chi mi guardava.  
 NEG *ci* be.PST.3SG a dog who CL.ACC.1SG see.PST.3SG  
 ‘There was no one looking at me.’
208. Ccà nc’è nu testamentu.  
 here *nci*-is a will  
 ‘Here is a will.’
209. Nc’eri tu.  
*nci* be.PST.2SG you  
 ‘You were (there).’
210. Tu non c’eri.  
 you NEG *ci* be.PST.2SG  
 ‘You weren’t (there).’
211. Nc’è ‘u notaru.  
*nci*-is the notary  
 ‘The notary is here.’
212. Stu periculu non c’è propriu.  
 this danger NEG *ci*-is at all  
 ‘This danger does not exist.’
213. Ndavi cchiù povari i mia?  
*ndi*-has more poors of me  
 ‘Is there anyone poorer as I am?’
214. C’è Diu chi *nci* pensa!<sup>1</sup>  
*ci*-is God who *nci* thinks  
 ‘There is God who takes care of it.’

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter 5 of the thesis for discussion on *pensarci*.

215. C'è l'affare della casa.  
*ci*-is the business of-the house  
 'There is the house business.'
216. Nc'eranu i parenti toi.  
*nci* be.PST.3PL the relatives your  
 'Your relatives were there.'
217. Ci sono molti scalini in questo vostro palazzo.  
*ci* are.3PL many steps in this your palace  
 'There are many steps in your palace.'
218. Ccà nc'è Mariu, l'altu cuginu.  
 here *nci*-is Mariu, the other cousin  
 'Here is Mariu, the other cousin.'
219. Nc'è sta situazioni.  
*nci*-is this situation  
 'There is such situation.'
220. Non nc'è bisognu.  
 NEG *nci*-is need  
 'There is no need.'
221. Nc'è marituma chi vi po' dari cuntu.  
*nci*-is husband-my who CL.DAT.2PL can give count  
 'There is my husband who can tell you.'
222. Ccà nc'era 'u quatu i Don Marianu.  
 here *ci* be.PST.3SG the picture of Don Marianu  
 'Here was the picture of Don Marianu.'
223. Nc'è paura chi ti sciarrasti?  
*nci*-is fear that CL.REFL argue.PST.2SG  
 'Is there any danger that you argued?'
224. Nc'è na confusioni davanti a banca!  
*nci*-is a confusion in front of at-the bank  
 'There is such confusion in front of the bank!'
225. Pe mmia riposu non ndavi cchiù.  
 for me rest NEG *ndi*-has anymore  
 'There is no rest for me anymore.'
226. Ci sono fuori due uomini.  
*ci* are.3PL outside two men  
 'There are two men outside.'

Source: *U paraninfu*

227. C'è Don Angiulu Vajana.  
*ci*-is Don Angiulu Vajana  
 'Don Angiulu Vajana is here.'

228. Nt'o mundu nci su tri fimmani.  
in-the world *nci* are.3PL three women  
'There are three women in the world.'
229. C'è 'a vigna.  
*ci*-is the vineyard  
'There is the vineyard.'
230. Ntra sta stanza nc'era na scurza di miluni.  
in this room *nci*-be.PST.3SG a rind of melon  
'In this room was a melon rind.'
231. Non nc'è nudu?  
NEG *nci*-is noone  
'Is there anyone?'
232. Chi nc'è?  
what *nci*-is  
'What happens?'
233. E mai nc'è? ('u patruni)  
and never *nci*-is? (the master)  
'Is (the master) never here?'
234. Ntra stu mundu non c'è cchiù leggi di Diu.  
in this world NEG *ci*-is anymore law of God  
'In this world there is no God law anymore.'
235. Si nc'era jeu...  
if *nci*-be.PST.3SG I  
'If I wasn't there...'
236. Nci su sordi.  
*nci* are.3PL money  
'There is money.'
237. Non nci importa se ndavi genti.  
NEG *nci* matters whether *ndi*-has people  
'It doesn't matter whether there are people.'
238. Danni non nci ndi furu.  
damages NEG *nci* IND.PRN be.PST.3PL  
'Damages, there were none.'
239. Si nci furu danni.  
whether *nci* be.PST.3PL damages  
'Whether there were damages.'
240. Non nci fu nenti.  
NEG *nci* be.PST.3SG nothing  
'There was nothing.'
241. Ci su du furesteri.  
*ci* are.3PL two foreigners  
'There are two foreigners.'

242. Danni nci ndi furu.  
damages *nci* CL.DAT be.PST.3PL  
'There were damages.'
243. Non nc'è prescia.  
NEG *nci*-is hurry  
'There is no hurry.'
244. Nci su i mali. (omini)  
*nci* are.3PL the evil. (men)  
'There are the evil (men).'
245. Nci su i boni. (omini)  
*nci* are.3PL the good. (men)  
'There are the good (men).'
246. Nci su chidi ca 'u portanu stu stemma...  
*nci* are.3PL those that CL.ACC.3SG bear.3PL this armorial bearings.SG  
'There are those men who wear these armorial bearings...'
247. Cu nc'è da intra?  
who *nci*-is there inside  
'Who is there?'
248. L'autri cosi nci su ntra a stanza?  
the other things *nci* are.3PL in the room  
'Are the other things in the room?'
249. Nc'è nu cristianu chi volarria 3000 liri.  
*nci*-is a soul who want.COND.3SG 3000 lira  
'There is a soul who would like 3000 lira.'
250. Nci su n'atri du sordi.  
*nci* are.3PL another two coins  
'There are another two coins.'
251. 'U patruni non nc'è.  
the master NEG *nci*-is  
'The master is not here.'

Source: *S'arrinnesci semu ricchi*

252. Nci su tanti cosi.  
*nci* are.3PL many things  
'There are many things.'
253. Na strata aundi non ndavi mancu nu numaru.  
in-the street where NEG *ndi*-has not even a number  
'In the street where there is not even a number.'
254. Na strata unni non nc'è mancu un nummaru?  
in-the street where NEG *ndi*-has not even a number  
'In the street where there is not even a number?'

255. Avogghia i robbi chi nci su da.  
you bet of dresses that nci are.3PL there  
'There are so many dresses there.'
256. Chiddu ca non c'è.  
that one here NEG *ci*-is  
'That one is not here.'
257. Lu duluri non c'è  
the pain NEG *ci*-is  
'There is no pain.'
258. Lu duluri non ndavi propriu.  
the pain NEG *ndi*-has at all  
'There is no pain at all.'
259. 'U zi' Cicciu nc'è.  
the uncle Cicciu *nci*-is  
'Uncle Cicciu is (here).'
260. 'U zi' Cicciu non nc'è.  
the uncle Cicciu NEG *nci*-is  
'Uncle Cicciu is not here.'
261. Non ndavi n'atra marca?  
NEG *ndi*-has another brand  
'Is there no other brand?'
262. 'U varveri non nc'é.  
the barber NEG *ci*-is  
'The barber isn't here.'
263. 'U ziu da Merica non nc'è.  
the uncle from-the America NEG *ci*-is  
'The uncle from America is not here.'
264. Ah, nc'è puru 'a commedia!  
ah, *nci*-is also the comedy  
'Ah, there is also the comedy!'
265. Chi sparlari chi nc'è ntra lu paisi.  
what gossiping that *nci*-is in the village  
'What gossiping goes on in the village.'
266. St'atru parrinu chi nc'è ntra 'u paisi.  
this other priest that *nci*-is in the village  
'This other priest that is in the village.'

Source: *Matrimoni e vescovati*

267. Nc'esti 'a riunioni.  
*nci*-is the meeting  
'There is the meeting.'

268. Nci su nu pocu i crumiri.  
*nci* are a little of scabs  
 ‘There are some scabs.’
269. Chi nc’è ntra lu cori i nu patri.  
 what *nci*-is in the heart of a father  
 ‘What is in a father’s heart.’
270. Chi nc’è ‘u colera versu ccà?  
 what *nci*-is the colera towards here  
 ‘What is here, the colera?’
271. Ccà nc’è ‘u sardaturi.  
 here *nci*-is the welder solderer  
 ‘Here is the welder solderer.’
272. Nc’è sciopiru?  
*nci*-is strike  
 ‘Is there any strike?’
273. Ccà nc’è ‘a casserola.  
 here *nci*-is the saucepan  
 ‘Here is the saucepan.’
274. Ddà nc’è ‘u maestru.  
 there *nci*-is the teacher  
 ‘There is the teacher.’
275. Ccà nci sunnu ottu sordi e tanti grazii!  
 here *nci* are.3PL eight deaf people and many thanks  
 ‘Here are eight deaf people and many thanks.’
276. Chi nci fu, morti di omini?  
 what *nci* be.PST.3SG, death of men  
 ‘What happened, men died?’
277. Ccà nc’è l’acitu.  
 here *nci*-is the vinegar  
 ‘Here is the vinegar.’
278. Ccà ndavi acitu.  
 here *ndi*-has vinegar  
 ‘There is vinegar here.’
279. Nenti nc’è!  
 nothing *nci*-is  
 ‘There is nothing!’
280. Ccà boni notizi nci su!  
 here good news *nci* are.3PL  
 ‘There is good news here!’
281. Chi mali nc’è?  
 what evil *nci*-is  
 ‘What is bad in that?’

282. Chi nc'è ccà?  
what *nci*-is here  
'What is there?'
283. Nc'è don Placidu?  
*nci*-is don Placidu  
'Is Don Placidu here?'
284. Ntro me cori non nc'è nenti cuntra d'ïdu!  
in-the my heart NEG *ci*-is nothing against of him  
'In my hearth there is nothing against him!'
285. Ccà nc'è lu purgatoriu!  
here *nci*-is the purgatory  
'Here is the purgatory!'
286. Ntro me cumpari nc'è lu 'mpernu.  
in-the my godfather *nci*-is the hell  
'The hell is in my godfather.'
287. Chi ndavi ntra sta pentula?  
what *ndi*-has in this pan  
'What is in this pan?'
288. Ccà nci su ddu cosi.  
here *nci* are.3PL two things  
'There are two things here.'

Source: *Antologia della poesia dialettale*

289. Chi nc'è ccà?  
what *nci*-is here  
'What is here?'
290. Vui non nci siti.  
you NEG *nci* are.2PL  
'You are not here.'
291. Nc'è l'uva.  
*nci*-is the grapes  
'The grapes are here.'
292. Festa non nc'era mai.  
festivity NEG *nci*-be.PST.3SG never  
'There was never a festivity.'
293. Di sta furbaria nc'era bisognu.  
of that trick *nci*-be.PST.3SG need  
'There was no need to trick.'
294. Rimediù non ndavi pe sti tassi mpami.  
cure NEG *ndi*-has for these taxes awful  
'There is no cure for these awful taxes.'

295. Non nc'è riparu.  
NEG *nci*-is remedy  
'There is no cure.'
296. Nci sunnu forzi boni.  
*nci* are.3PL forces good  
'There are good forces.'
297. Basta mu nc'è vinu.  
enough to *nci*-is wine  
'It is enough if there is wine.'
298. Tandu non nc'era luna.  
then NEG *nci*-be.PST.3SG moon  
'At that time there was no moon.'
299. Non nc'era modu pemmu riggettu.  
NEG *nci*-be.PST.3SG way for-to rest.1SG  
'There was no way to rest.'
300. Ccà nc'è na mbasciata.  
here *nci*-is a message  
'Here is a message.'
301. Nc'è nu ligatu.  
*nci*-is a legacy  
'There is a legacy.'
302. Non ndavi cchiù ristuccia a la campagna.  
NEG *ndi*-has anymore straw at the countryside  
'There is no straw anymore in the countryside.'
303. Nci su li fogghi di la serra.  
*nci* are.3PL the leaves of the greenhouse  
'There are the leaves of the greenhouse.'
304. Non ndavi lettu megghiu di la terra.  
NEG *ndi*-has bed better than the earth  
'There is no better bed than the earth.'
305. Non nc'è suffittu megghiu di lu celu.  
NEG *nci*-is ceiling better than the sky  
'There is no better ceiling than the sky.'
306. Riparu non nc'è.  
remedy NEG *nci*-is  
'There is no way-out.'
307. Supa 'a chiazza randi du paisi ndavi ancora cu parla e cu passia.  
on the place big of-the village *ndi*-has still who speaks and who walks  
'On the big market place of the village there is still who talks and who takes a walk.'
308. Na cosa eccezzionali nc'era a stu paisi meu.  
a thing exceptional *nci*-be.PST.3SG at this village my  
'There was an exceptional thing in my village.'

309. C'eranu i currituri.  
*ci-be.PST.3PL the runners*  
 'There were the runners.'
310. Nc'eranu chiddi chi...  
*nci-be.PST.3PL those who*  
 'There were those who...'
311. Supa 'a ntampiata nc'è na guttera.  
 on the wooden ceiling *nci-is a water leak*  
 'On the wooden ceiling is a water leak.'
312. Supa a nu cippu nigru strudutu nc'è mugghierima.  
 on at a stump black used up *nci-is wife-my*  
 'On a black old stump is my wife.'
313. Pe l'atri cosi nc'è Diu chi penza.  
 for the other things *nci-is God who thinks*  
 'There is God who takes care of the other things.'
314. Sta notti nci fu n'alluvioni.  
 this night *nci be.PST.3SG a flood*  
 'There was a flood during the night.'
315. Io c'era presenti al fattu.  
 I *ci-be.PST.3SG present at-the fact*  
 'I was there.'
316. Affacciata nc'è sempri Ppirina.  
 at the window *nci-is always Ppirina*  
 'Ppirina is always at the window.'
317. Ntr'o quatrato nc'è na figura.  
 in-the square *nci-is a shape*  
 'There is a shape in the square.'
318. Non nci ndi fu pietà di mamma e soru.  
 NEG *nci IND.PRN be.PST.3SG pity of mother and sister*  
 'There was no pity on mother and sister.'
319. A li mi tempi non ndavia misati, providenzi sociali e arretrati.  
 at the my times NEG *ndi-have.PST.3SG wages, benefits social and salary arrears*  
 'When I was young there were no wages, social benefits or salary arrears.'
320. Nc'è na cosa chi vorria mu sacciu.  
*nci-is a thing that want.COND.1SG to know.1SG*  
 'There is a thing I would like to know.'
321. Nc'è nu latrociniu generali.  
*nci-is a stealing general*  
 'There is a general stealing.'
322. Nc'è la libertà di la parola.  
*nci-is the freedom of the word*  
 'There is freedom of speech.'

323. Lu lavuru nc'è pe tutti quanti.  
the work *nci*-is for everyone  
'There is work for everyone.'
324. Principi non ndavia, mancu baruni, non patruni, non ddò e non principali.  
princes NEG *ndi*-have.PST.3SG not even barons, NEG masters, NEG don and NEG principals  
'There were no princes, not even barons, no masters, no dons and no principals.'
325. Vu non ci siti.  
you.2PL NEG *nci* are.2PL  
'You aren't here.'
326. Non nc'è riparu.  
NEG *nci*-is remedy  
'There is no way-out.'
327. Nci su li cozzi, surici.  
*nci* are.3PL the mussels, mice  
'There are mussels and mice.'
328. Cchiù scuru nc'è (cchiù veni 'a luci).  
more dark *nci*-is (more comes the light)  
'The darker it gets, the more comes the light.'
329. Ccà nc'esti la santa gnuranza.  
here *nci*-is the holy ignorance  
'Here is holy ignorance.'
330. nc'è nto mundu cu di chisti cosi non senti cchiù parlari.  
*nci*-is in-the world who of these things NEG hears anymore speak  
'In the world are people who do not hear anymore of those things.'
331. Nc'è na leggi.  
*nci*-is a law  
'There is a law.'
332. Dà nc'è na leggi.  
there *nci*-is a law  
'There is a law there.'
333. Nc'esti 'a galera.  
*nci*-is the prison  
'There is the prison.'
334. Non nc'esti i mangiari.  
NEG *nci*-is to eat  
'There is nothing to eat.'
335. Nc'eranu orchi e fati.  
*nci*-be.PST.3PL ogres and fairies  
'There were ogres and fairies.'
336. Non nc'è speranza mu tu poi cacciari.  
NEG *nci*-is hope for you-CL.ACC.3SG can.2SG chase away  
'There is no hope for you to chase him away.'

337. Non nc'è santu chi ti fa passari.  
 NEG *nci*-is saint who CL.ACC.2SG lets pass  
 'There is no saint who lets you pass.'
338. Io non nc'era.  
 I NEG *nci*-be.PST.3SG  
 'I wasn't here.'
339. Nc'era jeu.  
*nci*-be.PST.3SG I  
 'I was here.'
340. Tu non nc'eri.  
 you NEG *nci*-be.PST.2SG  
 'You weren't here.'
341. Non nc'è casa chi tutti o mparti nci porria pagari.  
 NEG *nci*-is house that completely or partially CL.DAT.3SG can.COND pay  
 'There is no house that I could pay to him completely or partly.'
342. Non nci su cchiù staddhi pi` riparu.  
 NEG *nci* are.3PL anymore stables for shelter  
 'There are no stables anymore for shelter.'
343. Nc'è carchi ciaramedda.  
*nci*-is some reed flute  
 'There is some reed flute.'
344. Ntra 'a vinella non nc'è nullu pe la manu!  
 in the small street NEG *nci*-is nothing for the hand  
 'In the small street there is nothing to seize!'
345. Nc'è na cosa chhiù bella du suffriri.  
*nci*-is a thing more beautiful then-the suffering  
 'There is a thing more beautiful than suffering.'



Source: *I morti non paganu i tassi*

	<b>XP</b>	<b>DP</b>	<b>Ex.verb</b>	<b>DP</b>	<b>XP</b>
1.			C'è	tanta genti	chi di nu momentu a natru resta sicca.
2.			Nc'è	'a luci, 'u patruni i casa e 'u gassi.	
3.		Cafè	non ndavi.		(ntra la cucina)
4.			Ndd'avia ancora menza landa.		
5.			Non nddavi cchiù.		
6.		Sordi	non nddavi.		
7.			Nc'è	nu scrittu	ca 'u jennaru avi mu nci manteni a sociara 'u vizziu.
8.	Vi ca		nc'è	'u portinaju.	
9.		E chi	nc'è.		
10.			Nc'è	atru?	
11.		Pe mò atru	non ndavi.		
12.			Se nc'è.	(na tazza i cafè)	
13.			Certu ca nc'è.	(cafè)	
14.	Ccà intra		non nci siti.		
15.		Jeu	non ci su.		
16.		Pe mmia non	nc'è paci.		
17.		Chi	nc'è di megghiu i na tazza i café a matina.		
18.			Non c'è	fretta.	
19.			Non c'è	tempu	i perdiri.
20.		Chidu disgraziatu	non c'è cchiù.		
21.	Sutta		nc'è	lu camion.	
22.	Fora		nci su	li guardi.	
23.			Nc'è	festa	ntro paisi.
24.		Chi	nc'è		cchiù sutta?
25.			Nci su	deci anni i carciaru.	
26.			C'è	'a luna	a stu paisi.
27.		La bestia chi	nc'è		in me.
28.		Chi	nc'è.		
29.	Ca docu		nci si	tu.	
30.			C'era puru	Greta Garbu.	
31.			Nci fu	carcosa tra vu dui.	

Source: *A di vinu cummeddia*

32.	Cu ijja		nc'era	nu tenenti.	
33.			Nc'è	genti	chi non sapi lu rilogiu.
34.			Ndavia armenu	ottu litri di vinu.	
35.			Ndavia davanti	na porta chiusa.	
36.	I latu i mia		nc'era	na signura.	
37.	I latu		ndavia	nu sarvagenti.	
38.			Si nc'era	carcunu	chi mi futti.
39.			Non c'era	nuda ngajja	pammi sputu.
40.			Ndavia	nu postu i bloccu.	
41.	Vicinu a mia		nc'era	Micu l'orbu.	
42.	Po patruni		nc'esti	a serva.	
43.			Non ndavia	cchiù scorta.	
44.	Nto menzu		nc'esti	na banana.	
45.			Non nc'era	nudu	ntra chiazza.
46.			Non nc'eranu	né servi né baruni.	
47.			Non nc'era mancu Peppa,	'a carcarazza.	

48. Luntanu		nc'era	n'omu	cu na longa barba.
49.		Non nc'è	nudu cchiù	chi teni bancu.
50.		Non c'era	bisognu.	

Source: *U paradisu*

51.		Nc'è	nu postu	chiamatu paradisu.
52. Undi guardi		nc'è sempi	nu sorrisu.	
53.		Nc'era	na fila.	
54. Ccà		non ci sunnu	raccomandazioni.	
55.		Nc'eranu	nimici.	
56.		Nc'eranu	tutti i Santi i Candelariu.	
57. Nto cielu		non c'ennu cchiu	nimali i panza.	
58.	Quant'acqua	ndavi		a mari.
59.	Quantu	c'è		nta gebbi e nta gajjuni.
60.		Non c'è	postu	pa storti.
61.		Non ndavi	nudu postu	pemmu mbivu.
62.		Non c'è	versu	pemmu trova paci.
63. Nta sta vita		non ndavi	guadagni.	
64.		Non nc'esti	burdellu.	
65.	Si	ndavi	genti	chi mi voli beni.

Source: *U purga i toriu*

66.		Nc'esti	'nfernu e paradisu.	
67.	Chi postu	nc'è		pe cu non fici beni?
68.	Chi postu	nc'è		pe cu non fici mali?
69.	Chi postu	nc'è		quandu 'a morti veni?
70.	Chi postu	nc'è		pe na testa senza sali?
71.		C'è	na stanza randi.	
72.		C'è	l'infermeria.	
73. Nta stu postu		non ndavi	rispettu.	
74.		Nc'esti prima	'u lampu e doppu 'u tronu.	
75. Ccà no,		ncennu	né diavuli né santi.	
76.		Ndavi	cosi storti e sulu danni.	
77. Ntornu		nc'era	propria nenti.	
78.		Non c'era	vicinu a mia cchiù Barbagianni.	
79.		Non c'era	mancu cchiù Donna Conzata.	

Source: *Jjanda Mara*

80. Nta sta Calabria		ndavi	cosi strani.	
81.	Di chisti ntendituri	ndavi	assai.	
82. Nta sta Calabria		non nc'è cchiù	riparu.	
83.	L'unicu movimentu nta sti chiazzu c'è			quandu canta Mimmu Cavallaru.
84.		Nc'è	nu gruppu	chi sona novi brani.
85.		Ndavi daveru	tanti cosi storti.	
86.	L'amicizia,	se nc'esti		ntra stu mundu.
87.		Non c'esti	baraunda.	
88. Ccà	baraunda	non c'esti.		
89.		Nc'esti	paci.	
90. Nto me paisi		ndavi	nu barri.	
91. Pe strati		nc'è	nu grandi movimentu.	
92.		Ndavi puru	ndranghitisti.	
93.		Ndavi	guerra e alluvioni.	

94. Ntra stu cori ndavia nu disiu.

Source: *U batteru*

95. Chi nc'è supa o tavulu.  
96. Nc'è giru ancora nu batteru.  
97. C'è ancora unu in giru pe a casa.  
98. Ndavia na filarata i machini.  
99. Ntra a machina c'era natra. (cuntravvinzioni)  
100. Ntra 'a mia c'era chida chi ndera mintutu jeu.  
101. Ndavia nu rumuri fastidiusu nta machina.  
102. A me casa c'è puru cogghi biscottinu?  
103. A Montecitorio c'è na commissioni chi pari mai  
104. Si non c'eranu i latri...  
105. Si non c'eranu i delinquenti...  
106. Non c'eranu carabinieri, puliziotti, finanzieri, i guardi, i  
carceri, tutti chidi chi lavuranu nte carciri,  
l'avvocati, i giudici e poi ancora, i lucchetti, i  
porti blindati, i reti, i cassiforti, i protezioni, i  
pistoli, i fucili, i satelliti!  
107. Non c'eranu i satelliti!  
108. Si non c'eramu nui...

Source: *Peppa a molla*

109. Non c'è fretta.  
110. Vinu c'è?  
111. Non c'ennu. (Apollu e Anna Camilla)  
112. Ndavi na corda calata da finestra.  
113. Ndavi tutti i cassetti perti.  
114. A tutto c'è riparu.  
115. A tutto c'è rimediù.

Source: *Pipiromania*

116. Ndavi quaranta gradi.  
117. Nci fu na rapina.  
118. Chi c'è.  
119. Non ci fu versu u m'addormentu.  
120. Non c'è petroliu.  
121. Quanti indiani ndavi in giru?  
122. Ndavi cosi ntra stu mundu.  
123. I leggi non c'ennu pe sti parti.  
124. Sinc'è bisognu.  
125. C'è puru 'u corpu scuru.  
126. Ccà ndavi i pipi.  
127. Dà ndavi a bonanima i Danti.  
128. Vicinu o mercatu ndavja a cummari Cuncetta.  
129. Ccà davanti c'era 'u previti.  
130. 'U paradisu nc'è.  
131. 'U paradisu non c'è.  
132. C'è 'u paradisu?  
133. Nc'è na malatia chi si chiama meningiti.  
134. Ndavi tanti luni.  
135. Ndavi tanti luni, tanti luni.

Source: *A preghera di morti*

136. O cimiteru ndavi malati, ricchi e poveretti, omini, fimmini, randi  
e figghioli.  
137. Cu tanti jorna chi ndavi ntra n'annu.

Source: *Zirida e Roccu*

138. Aundi nc'esti chida grandiusa Villa.  
139. Aundi nci su strati longhi, putichi, marciapiedi.  
140. Rughi randi, chiazzu non nci su pe strata porci, crapi, pecuri, massari  
cu i vacchi.  
141. Ntro menzu nc'esti na gebbia.

Source: *Salvatore Giovanni Vampi*

142. Ntornu a lu fiuri nc'è luci.  
143. Nc'esti na lingua di mari.  
144. Na vampa nc'è di speranza.  
145. Non nc'esti cchiù nud'atra cosa.  
146. Non c'è chi fari.

Source: *Breve storia e proverbi di Gioia Tauro*

147. Non c'è cchiù di sparagnari.

Source: *Una farsa di Carnevale a Nicotera*

148. Non c'è nenti i fari cchiù pe ttia

Source: *I canti popolari di San Martino*

149. Non ci su i me frati.  
150. Pe la marina non c'era genti assai  
151. Nc'era na giuvaneda janca e fina.  
152. Nda chista ruga nc'è na bella rosa.

Source: *Fiuri a l'umbra e Fiuri sangiorgisi*

153. A San Giorgiu nci su li megghiu fiuri.  
154. quantu bedizzi lu nostru paisi ndavi ntra li vinedi.  
155. (A San Giorgiu) nci su certi casati.  
156. Da nc'esti lu trisoru di bellizzi.  
157. Li ceravedi nci sunnu appostu.  
158. Ncesti cu faci li profumi "Norgi".  
159. Nc'è lu fiuri.  
160. Nci fu nu tempu.  
161. La speranza nc'esti puru mpundu a lu mari.  
162. Non nci su paroli.

Source: *L'eredità dello zio canonico*

163. Ccà nci su tappetu e tavulinu.  
164. C'è il segreto professionale.  
165. Ccà nc'è tantu di testamentu publicu.

166.		Sta crisi	chi	nc'è.	
167.				Non c'è	l'eredità.
168.				Nc'è	umidità.
169.				Non c'era	nessunu mancu nu cani chi mi guardava.
170.				Nc'è	nu testamentu.
171.	Nto testamentu			nc'è	preferenza pe ttia.
172.				C'era	'u vicariu Chiarenza.
173.				C'è anche	il notaio.
174.				Non c'è	'u notaru.
175.				C'è	qualche altro pretendente?
176.	Ccà			nci fu	ngannu.
177.		Il vicario purtroppo		non c'è.	
178.		Carchi atru lustrinu chi		nc'è	cca intra.
179.				ndavi ancora.	(frasi)
180.	A casa			non nc'è	nenti.
181.	Aundi			nci su	tanti mangiatari.
182.				Ci sono	tanti gradini in questo vostro palazzo.
183.	Ccà			nc'è	l'atru cuginu.
184.				Ci sono	due crocifissi d'avorio.
185.				Nc'era	nu dottori.
186.				Non c'era	nessuna complicazioni.
187.				Non ci su.	

Source: *Moglie e buoi dei paesi tuoi*.

188.				Nc'è	unu	chi dici ...
189.			... se	nc'esti	so patri.	
190.				C'è	permessu?	
191.				Nci su	sti dui figghicedi mei.	
192.				N'era	unu	chi pemmu faci zita a me
					figghia volia 'a parcella.	
193.				Nc'esti	n'amicu meu	chi vinni d'America.
194.		Don Totò		nc'è?		
195.			Sì,	nc'é.		
196.				ndavi	medicini	pe sta malattia?
197.			Sì,	ndavi.		
198.		(Chida bella ragazza)		non nc'era.		

Source: *L'eredità dello zio buonanima* (Mimmo Nucera)

199.		'U tappetu		non c'è?		
200.				Nc'è	puru 'u tavulinu.	
201.				Nc'era	bisognu?	
202.				Nci sunnu	quattru piani.	
203.				Nci su puru	tri vaschi di bagnu.	
204.				Nc'è sulu	'u negoziu d'i cappedi.	
205.			Chi	nc'é i mali se...		
206.		'A mamma		nc'è!		
207.				Non c'era	nu cani	chi mi guardava.
208.	Ccà			nc'è	nu testamentu.	
209.				Nc'eri	tu.	
210.		Tu		non c'eri.		
211.				Nc'è	'u notaru.	
212.		Stu periculu		non c'è propriu.		
213.				Ndavi	cchiù povari i mia?	
214.				C'è	Diu	chi nci pensa!

215.		C'è	l'affare della casa.
216.		Nc'eranu	i parenti toi.
217.		Ci sono	molti scalini in questo vostro palazzo.
218.	Ccà	nc'è	Mariu, l'autru cuginu.
219.		Nc'è	sta situazioni.
220.		Non nc'è	bisognu.
221.		Nc'è	marituma chi vi po' dari cuntù.
222.	Ccà	nc'era	'u quattru i Don Marianu.
223.		Nc'è	paura chi ti sciarrasti?
224.		Nc'è	na confusioni davanti a banca!
225.	Pe mmia	riposu	non ndavi cchiù.
226.		Ci sono	fuori due uomini.

Source: *U paraninfu*

227.		C'è	Don Angiulu Vajana.
228.	Nt'o mundu	nci su	tri fimmani.
229.		C'è	'a vigna.
230.	Ntra sta stanza	nc'era	na scurza di miluni.
231.		non nc'è	nudu?
232.	Chi	nc'è?	
233.	E mai	nc'è?	(u patruni)
234.	Ntra stu mundu	non c'è cchiù	leggi di Diu.
235.	Si	nc'era	jeu...
236.		Nci su	sordi.
237.	Non nci importa se	ndavi genti.	
238.	Danni	non nci ndi furu.	
239.		Si nci furu	danni.
240.		Non nci fu	menti.
241.		Ci su	du furesteri.
242.	Danni	nci ndi furu.	
243.		Non nc'è	prescia.
244.		Nci su	i mali. (omini)
245.		Nci su	i boni. (omini)
246.		Nci su	chidi ca 'u portanu stu stemma...
247.	Cu	nc'è	da intra?
248.	L'autri cosi	nci su	ntra a stanza?
249.		Nc'è	nu cristianu chi volarria 3000 liri.
250.		Nci su	n'atri du sordi.
251.	'U patruni	non nc'è.	

Source: *S'arrinnesci semu ricchi*

252.		Nci su	tanti cosi.
253.	Na strata aundi	non ndavi	mancu nu numaru.
254.	Na strata unni	non nc'è	mancu un nummaru?
255.	Avogghia i robbi	chi nci su	da.
256.	Chiddu	ca non c'è.	
257.	Lu duluri	non c'è	
258.	Lu duluri	non ndavi propriu.	
259.	'U zi' Cicciu	nc'è.	
260.	'U zi' Cicciu	non nc'è.	
261.		Non ndavi	n'atra marca?
262.	'U varveri	non nc'è.	
263.	'U ziu da Merica	non nc'è.	
264.		Ah, nc'è puru	'a commedia!

265.	Chi sparlarì chi	nc'è	ntra lu paisi.
266.	St'atru parrinu chi	nc'è	ntra 'u paisi.

Source: *Matrimoni e vescovati*

267.		Nc'esti	'a riunioni.
268.		Nci su	nu pocu i crumiri
269.	Chi	nc'è	ntra lu cori i nu patri.
270.	Chi	nc'è	'u colera versu ccà?
271. Ccà		nc'è	'u sardaturi.
272.		Nc'è	sciopiru?
273. Ccà		nc'è	'a casserola.
274. Ddà		nc'è	'u maestru.
275. Ccà		nci sunnu	ottu sordi e tanti grazii!
276.	Chi	nci fu,	morti di omini?
277. Ccà		nc'è	l'acitu.
278. Ccà		ndavi	acitu.
279.	Nenti	nc'è!	
280. Ccà	boni notizi	nci su!	
281.	Chi mali	nc'è?	
282.	Chi	nc'è	ccà?
283.		Nc'è	don Placidu?
284. Ntro me cori		non nc'è	nenti cuntra d'idu!
285. Ccà		nc'è	lu purgatoriu!
286. Ntro me cumpari		nc'è	lu 'mpernu.
287.	Chi	ndavi	ntra sta pentula?
288. Ccà		nci su	ddu cosi.

Source: *Antologia della poesia dialettale*

289.	Chi	nc'è	ccà?
290.	Vui	non nci siti.	
291.		Nc'è	l'uva.
292.	Festa	non nc'era mai.	
293. Di sta furbaria		nc'era	bisognu.
294.	Rimediù	non ndavi	pe sti tassi mpami.
295.		Non nc'è	riparu.
296.		Nci sunnu	forzi boni.
297. Basta mu		nc'è	vinu.
298. Tandù		non nc'era	luna.
299.		Non nc'era	modu pemmu riggettu.
300. Ccà		nc'è	na mbasciata.
301.		Nc'è	nu ligatu.
302.		Non ndavi cchiù	ristuccia a la campagna.
303.		Nci su	li foggghi di la serra.
304.		Non ndavi	lettu megghiu di la terra.
305.		Non nc'è	suffittu megghiu di lu celu.
306.	Riparu	non nc'è.	
307. Supa 'a chiazza randi du paisi		ndavi ancora	cu parla e cu passia.
308.	Na cosa eccezziunali	nc'era	a stu paisi meu.
309.		C'eranu	i currituri.
310.		Nc'eranu	chiddi chi...
311. Supa 'a ntampiatà		nc'è	na guttera.
312. Supa a nu cippu nigru strudutu		nc'è	mugghierima.
313. Pe l'atri cosi		nc'è	Diu chi penza.
314. Sta notti		nci fu	n'alluvioni.

315.		Io	c'era presenti	al fattu.
316.	Affacciata		nc'è	semprì Pìpirina.
317.	Ntr'o quatrato		nc'è	na fìgura.
318.			non nci ndi fu	pietà di mamma e soru.
319.	A li mi tempi		non ndavia	misati, providenzi sociali e arretrati.
320.			Nc'è	na cosa chi vorria mu sacciu.
321.			Nc'è	nu latrociniu generali.
322.			Nc'è	la libertà di la parola.
323.		Lu lavuru	nc'è	pe tutti quanti.
324.		Principi	non ndavia,	mancu baruni, non patruni. non ddò e non
	principali.			
325.		Vu	non ci siti.	
326.			Non nc'è	riparu.
327.			Nci su	li cozzi, surici.
328.		Cchiù scuru	nc'è	(cchiù veni a luci).
329.	Ccà		nc'esti	la santa gnuranza.
330.			nc'è nto mundu cu di chisti cosi	non senti cchiù parlari.
331.			Nc'è	na leggi.
332.	Dà		nc'è	na leggi.
333.			Nc'esti	'a galera.
334.			Non nc'esti	i mangiari.
335.			Nc'eranu	orchi e fati.
336.			Non nc'è	speranza mu tu poi cacciari.
337.			Non nc'è	santu chi ti fa passari.
338.		Io	non nc'era.	
339.			Nc'era	jeu.
340.		Tu	non nc'eri.	
341.			Non nc'è	casa chi tutti o mparti nci
	porria pagari.			
342.			Non nci su cchiù staddhi	pi` riparu.
343.			Nc'è	carchi ciamedda.
344.	Ntra 'a vinella		non nc'è	nullu pe la manu!
345.			Nc'è	na cosa cchiù bella du suffriri.