Prepositional accusative in contemporary Standard Italian

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Introduction

Language evolution is a subtle, long process, and changes are normally identified only when they have already taken place, with a diachronic comparison. Some variations develop but do not get a foothold in the language and may remain geographically limited to an area (regionalisms) or disappear. On the other hand, some changes become pervasive and native speakers start using them frequently, sometimes without even noticing their newness; when this happens, the variation is probably already part of the language. However, the new construct may also spread gradually both in the grammatical environments and geographical areas and we may be lucky enough to identify and study a language evolution in the making. Studying such innovations cannot give us definite answers because the evolution is not finished yet; nevertheless, it might be even more interesting since such a study is conducted on the living language. Moreover, these types of research allow scholars to consult native speakers on the grammaticality of the construct and to try to provide a clear picture on the current state of the language innovation under investigation.

A construction that is currently developing in Italian nowadays is the prepositional accusative, in which the preposition *a* is placed before the direct object. Sentences with a prepositional accusative are used abundantly by Italian native speakers and sound natural. However, this is true only for some types of prepositional accusatives while others turn out to be utterly unacceptable; consequently, prepositional accusative is neither totally acceptable nor totally unacceptable. Thus, we can study a grammatical feature *in fieri*, examining the limits of its acceptance and the reasons behind it.

The aim of this thesis is to study the status of prepositional accusative in the contemporary Standard Italian, analysing its spread and the characteristics that allow or restrict its usage. In order to do this, we will go through all the studies on this topic; a series of questionnaires containing sentences with different characteristics were created on the basis of the characteristics observed in the studies. The questionnaires were completed by Italian native speakers who decided
which of the sentences presented are acceptable and which ones are unacceptable. In the following discussion, some hypotheses will be presented in order to explain the significances. Moreover, the most acceptable combinations of characteristics will be identified.

This work is structured as follows. In chapter 1, a detailed explanation of prepositional accusative will be given and all the previous studies on prepositional accusative in Italian will be presented; moreover, we will see the usage of prepositional accusative in other Romance languages. In chapter 2, we will present the study developed in order to examine the acceptability of prepositional accusative in Italian on the basis of the characteristics found out in the previous studies. In chapter 3, the results of the questionnaires and the outcomes of the statistical analyses carried out on the data will be presented. Finally, in chapter 4, the results of the study will be summarised and compared to the studies presented in chapter 1; moreover, some hypotheses for the significances will be provided in order to explain the outcomes.

Given the complexity of the topic and the number of variables that could be verified, this work can only be a preliminary study on prepositional accusative diffusion in contemporary Standard Italian.
1. The prepositional accusative

In this chapter, we will give a detailed explanation of the characteristics of the grammatical construction named prepositional accusative. A review of all the studies about Italian prepositional accusative will follow as well as a description of this grammatical phenomenon in other Romance languages.

1.1 What is the prepositional accusative?

The prepositional accusative is a morpho-syntactic strategy used to mark the accusative case in order to avoid possible ambiguities caused by the lack of inflectional cases.

Predictably, prepositional accusative is formed by placing a preposition, which depends on the language, before the direct object.

The contexts of usage of the preposition are based on the grammatical environment. This phenomenon of differentiation in marking the direct object on the basis of the semantic, syntactic or pragmatic grammatical environment is called Differential Object Marking (DOM) (Aissen 2003). Consequently, the prepositional accusative is a phenomenon of differential object marking whose contexts of application vary from language to language. However, the usage always follows a scale of definiteness and humanness.

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Combined scale of definiteness and humanness (Lazard 1984)
No language prepositionally marks a class of direct objects unless it marks all the higher classes in the scale. Thus, a language uses prepositional accusative with definite objects only if it marks also 1st, 2nd and 3rd person pronouns and proper names.

Although the prepositional accusative is attested in many different languages in the world, it is typical of romance languages since these idioms lost the inflectional case system of Latin for the most part. The case system was replaced by the use of prepositions to mark cases, with the nominative and accusative cases left unmarked. In this system, marking the accusative may be useful to distinguish those two cases and avoid possible ambiguities between subject and object. It should be noted that the most ambiguous possibilities are given by direct objects higher in the scale of definiteness and humanness; that is to say, animate discourse participants (1st and 2nd person pronouns).

Traditionally, standard French, standard Italian, and northern Italian dialects are the sole Romance languages which are considered to lack the prepositional accusative. However, it will be shown that this grammatical construction is used also in the Italian spoken in Northern Italy and in Tuscany. Consequently, the prepositional accusative becomes a pan-Italian construction and thus part of standard Italian1. (Berretta 1989)

1.2 Previous studies on the use of the prepositional accusative in Italian

As previously noted, standard Italian is traditionally considered to lack this construct. On the contrary, its absence would be a distinctive trait of Italian and French. For this reason, there is a limited number of studies regarding the prepositional accusative in Italian. We will examine all these studies in order to identify the main characteristics of the prepositional accusative in Italian and to find a starting point for our work.

1 The term “standard” is used here without regard to register.
1.2.1 Rohlfs

In his *Grammatica storica della lingua italiana e dei suoi dialetti*, Rohlfs (1970) observes the presence of the prepositional accusative in the Italian spoken in Central and Southern Italy as well as in Sicily and Sardinia and in the dialects spoken in these areas. The northern limit of this construction is Umbria, The Marches and the Tuscan islands. The sole exception is represented by the dialect of Trieste, which is not reported to have any effect on the Italian spoken there. In all these varieties, prepositional accusative makes use of the preposition *a*.

Thus, Rohlfs excludes the possibility that the prepositional accusative might be present in Northern Italy. This might have been true since his work studies the Italian of the postwar period.

1.2.2 Nocentini

Nocentini (1985) points out the presence of this construct in the Italian spoken in Arezzo, Tuscany. The author indicates three syntactical conditions: the pronoun being both in topic position and in focus position (hence in the initial position) and the sequence subject pronoun-object pronoun, although this last condition is not mandatory. The examples given in (1-3) make use of 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} person singular object pronouns and of transitive verbs:

(1) *(Io)* a te non ti capisco.

*(I)* to you do not you understand

(2) *(Te)* a me non mi conosci.

*(You)* to me do not me know

(3) *(Io)* a lui non lo vedo mai.

*(I)* to him do not him see never

Therefore, the sole obligatory condition given by Nocentini is the preverbal focus/topic position.
1.2.3 Benincà

The presence of this construction is observed in both written and spoken Northern Italian in Benincà (1986). The author reckons that its use is subject to three obligatory conditions:

1. The use of transitive psychological verbs with accusative Experiencers (such as convincere, soddisfare, temere).
2. The left dislocation of the prepositional accusative, which has to be in a preverbal position.
3. The clitic doubling of the direct object.

In Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione (edited by Renzi, Salvi, Cardinaletti 1988), Benincà reports these same conclusions with regard to psych verbs. In addition, the author points out a marginal presence of the prepositional accusative also with non-psych verbs in the spoken language. In this case, the use satisfies three conditions:

1. The direct object may only be a 1st or 2nd person pronoun (singular or plural).
2. The direct object is left dislocated.
3. The direct object is reduplicated.

Prepositional accusative with 3rd person pronouns and animate DPs is reported as a characteristic of the Italian spoken in Central and Southern Italy and avoided in Northern Italy and Tuscany.²

To sum up, according to Benincà, the prepositional accusative in Northern Italy and Tuscany would appear only left dislocated, duplicated by a clitic pronoun and:

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² The most recent edition (2003) does not modify these conclusions.
a) With psych verbs, both in spoken and written Italian and both with personal pronouns and proper nouns.
b) With non-psych verbs, only in the spoken language and only with 1st and 2nd person pronouns.

1.2.4 Serianni
The prepositional accusative is testified also by Serianni in his *Grammatica italiana. Italiano comune e lingua letteraria* (1989). However, the author simply reports Rohlfs’ conclusions and describes the phenomenon as a characteristic of Southern Italian.

1.2.5 Berretta
The phenomenon is extensively studied by Berretta (1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1991), who identifies some interesting characteristics by examining oral and written corpora of Northern Italian. The author finds that the grammatical environments in which this construct is acceptable are much wider than those reported by the previous studies. We will sum up her conclusions and give some exemplifying sentences.

The prepositional accusative is reported to be used more often with singular personal pronouns, sometimes with plural personal pronouns and rarely with proper nouns. Proper nouns seem to be the limit of application in the scale of definiteness and humanness.

According to the author, the prepositional accusative is often in preverbal position but it is not necessarily dislocated; that is to say, a pause between the direct object and the verb is not mandatory. Moreover, in some preverbal prepositional accusatives the construct is necessary as the omission of a would make the sentence ungrammatical or less acceptable. The omission of the preposition would be possible in case of focalization.

(4) A me, colpì moltissimo. [caesura]
   To me, [it] struck a lot
Postverbal position is also possible. Once again, the presence of a caesura is not necessary; hence, the postverbal prepositional accusative may or may not be right-dislocated.

Regarding verbs, the prepositional accusative is certainly used more often and in wider grammatical environments with psych verbs. The Italian causative form with fare seems to have a similar behaviour in its use with the prepositional accusative. Clitic doubling is not obligatory and tends to appear less frequently in the written language and with psych verbs. The insertion of a clitic is always possible, although it makes the sentence more colloquial; on the contrary, clitic omission may result in an ungrammatical sentence. Moreover, clitics widen the acceptable grammatical environments only with non-psych verbs.
Berretta’s studies give us a picture of a marginal yet expanding grammatical construction. In Italian, prepositional accusative is in a *continuum* of acceptability, its uses vary from speaker to speaker. However, this construction is generally accepted in more contexts than reported in previous works, (Berretta 1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1991).

1.2.6 Belletti and Rizzi

Belletti and Rizzi (1988) do not discuss the prepositional accusative but their work about psych verbs is nevertheless extremely important from a theoretical point of view. The scholars divide Italian psych verbs into three categories, according to their θ-grid:

1. Transitive verbs with subject Experiencer and object Theme:
   
   (15) Gianni teme questo.
   
   *Gianni fears this*

2. Transitive verbs with subject Theme and object Experiencer:
   
   (16) Questo preoccupa Gianni.
   
   *This worries Gianni*

3. Intransitive verbs with subject Theme and dative Experiencer:
   
   (17) Questo piace a Gianni. / A Gianni piace questo.
   
   *This pleases to Gianni / To Gianni pleases this*

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3 All the examples (and their glosses) in this section are from Belletti and Rizzi (1988). Sentences (30-33) were changed to the feminine form (*lo* became *la*) to avoid a possible misinterpretation of (33) as a prepositional accusative.
Belletti and Rizzi reckon that surface subjects and objects of verbs of the 1st category are also deep subject and object; on the other hand, surface subjects and objects of verbs from the categories 2 and 3 are not, that is to say, they are derived. Thus, while the surface structure of the three categories diverges, their D-structure differs only minimally. We will examine in depth their explanation for the 2nd category since it is formed by psych verbs used with the prepositional accusative.

We will now see the contrast between the properties of deep subjects Experiencer (1st category) and derived subjects Theme (2nd category):

1. Anaphoric clitics: deep subjects can bind anaphoric clitics while derived subjects cannot:

(18) Gianni si teme.  
*Gianni himself fears*  

(19) *Gianni si preoccupa.*  
*Gianni himself worries*

(20) Gianni mi ha colpito con un bastone.  
*Gianni struck me with a stick*

(21) Gianni mi ha colpito per la sua prontezza.  
*Gianni struck me by virtue of his quickness*

(22) Gianni si è colpito con un bastone. [physical]  
*Gianni himself struck with a stick*

(23) *Gianni si è colpito per la sua prontezza. [psychological]  
*Gianni himself struck by virtue of his quickness*

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*4 The sense of this sentence is reflexive: “Gianni preoccupa Gianni”. It is not a use of the verb *preoccuparsi*.}
2. It cannot make use of arbitrary *pro*: an arbitrary interpretation of 3\textsuperscript{rd} person plural *pro* as an unidentified subject is available for deep subjects and unavailable for derived subjects:

(24) Evidentemente, in questo paese per anni *pro* hanno temuto il terremoto.

   *Evidently, in this country people feared the earthquake for years*

(25) *Evidentemente in questo paese per anni *pro* hanno preoccupato il governo.

   *Evidently, in this country people worried the government for years*

3. Causative construction: structures containing a derived subject cannot be embedded under the causative construction. (26-27) are the sources from which the causative constructions (28-29) are derived:

(26) Questo ha fatto sì che Mario la temesse ancora di più.

   *This caused that Mario her feared even more*

(27) Questo ha fatto sì che Mario la preoccupasse ancora di più.

   *This caused that Mario her worried even more*

(28) Questo la ha fatta temere ancora di più a Mario.

   *This made Mario fear her even more*

(29) *Questo la ha fatta preoccupare ancora di più a Mario.

   *This made Mario worry her even more*

4. Infinitival VPs with *fare*:

(30) Questo farà temere il presidente ancora di più.

   *This will make (one) fear the president even more*

(31) *Questo farà attirare il presidente ancora di più.*

   *This will make attract the president even more*

5. Passive:

(32) Gianni viene temuto da tutti.

   *Gianni comes feared by everyone*
(33) *Gianni viene preoccupato da tutti.\textsuperscript{5}

Gianni comes worried by everyone

With regard to the object Experiencer of the preoccupare category of psych verbs, evidence is given by the lack of transparency to extraction process in which we find a systematic contrast between the 1\textsuperscript{st} and the 2\textsuperscript{nd} category.

(34) La ragazza di cui Gianni teme il padre.

The girl of whom Gianni fears the father

(35) *La ragazza di cui Gianni preoccupa il padre.

The girl of whom Gianni worries the father

From this evidence, Belletti and Rizzi draw the conclusions that subjects and objects of psych verbs of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} category are derived\textsuperscript{6}, that is to say, all types of Italian psychological verbs have similar D-structure and thematic grid, although their surface structures are different. This will be important for the theoretical explanation of the prepositional accusative.

1.3 Theoretical explanation

Berretta’s theoretical interpretation of the prepositional accusative will be reported, since she is the only author to have explained this phenomenon in Italian. As briefly mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the prepositional accusative is a morpho-syntactic strategy used to avoid possible ambiguities caused by the loss of the inflectional case system. In other words, it is a differential object marking.

On the surface level, the prepositional accusatives are not datives but authentic accusatives. This is can be observed both in the form of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} person clitic pronoun (acc. lolla) and in the semantic relationship which does not change on the basis of

\textsuperscript{5} It should be noted that “Questo farà preoccupare il presidente ancora di più” and “Gianni è preoccupato da tutti” are well-formed. For details on exceptions and further explanation, we suggest to read the entire study.

\textsuperscript{6} The authors demonstrate the same for the piacere class of psych verbs.
the use of a prepositional accusative, an accusative tonic pronoun or an accusative clitic: (36), (37) and (38) are semantically identical.

(36) A me atrae il suo fascino.
    To me attracts his charm
(37) Il suo fascino atrae me.
    His charm attracts me
(38) Il suo fascino mi atrae.
    His charm me attracts

As for the deep structure, the prepositional accusatives of psychological verbs are always assigned the thematic role of Experiencer; that is to say, prepositional accusatives are the thematic subjects (human and definite) of psychological verbs whose Experiencer is expressed at surface structure as a direct object. As previously reported, Belletti and Rizzi (1988) demonstrated that in their thematic grid, all psych verbs have a subject Experiencer and an object Theme; however, some of these verbs express their arguments differently in the surface structure. According to Berretta, this contradiction is the driving force that causes a noncanonical order, as the constituents retain the order of the deep structure with the Experiencer in the initial position. Consequently, when the object Experiencer is in first position, there is a conflict between the syntactic function of the object and its position. This conflict appears to trigger the presence of an explicit case marker to identify the syntactic function of the initial constituent. This seems to happen more frequently when the object Experiencer contributes new or contrastive information. On the other hand, when the object Experiencer is salient, i.e. it is already present in the context, it is expressed through a clitic pronoun.
(39) - Io vado in macchina. [contrastive information]
    - Io no, a me spaventa la nebbia. - I’m going by car
    - I’m not, to me scares the fog

(40) - Perché non vai [tu] in macchina?
    - Perché mi spaventa la nebbia. [salient]
    - Why don’t go [you] by car?
    - Because me scares the fog

The topic position and the atypical nature of the objects – human and definite – seem to be the reason of the explicit marking also with ordinary transitive verbs (the non-psych verbs). Nevertheless, the “real” transitive nature of these verbs causes them to be less used and accepted with a prepositional accusative, in a continuum with the psych verbs we have already discussed. Moreover, the characteristics of Italian are ideal for the development of differential case markers as the Italian language uses case markers for all cases other than nominative and accusative. The case hierarchy (Blake 2001) shows that if one of these cases happened to develop a case marker, it would be the accusative. So, objects at the top of the scale of definiteness and humanness (1st and 2nd person singular pronouns) in topic – preverbal – position and verbs with object Experiencers (psych verbs and causative constructions) facilitate the use of prepositional accusatives; these characteristics appear to be codominant. The sentences in which both these elements are present are the most acceptable and in a sense “pave the way” for the appearance of other prepositional accusatives. (Berretta 1989, 1990a, 1990b 1991)

As for clitic doubling and postverbal position, Berretta does not give a theoretical explanation of the greater acceptability given by its presence. In case the outcome of this study gives results in this direction, a theoretical interpretation will be hypothesized.
Lastly, the severe restrictions on prepositional accusatives in Italian are coherent with the ones that regulate and regulated the use of differential case markers, especially in their initial diffusion.

1.4 Prepositional accusative in other Romance languages
We will now go through the context of use of the prepositional accusative in the most important Romance languages.

1.4.1 Spanish
The Romance language in which the contexts of use of the prepositional accusative are the most extended is Castilian Spanish. Consequently, it is also the most studied language with regard to prepositional accusative. (Zamboni 1993)

According to the Diccionario panhispánico de dudas written by linguists of the Real Academia Española, the preposition a before a direct object in Spanish may be mandatory, optional or forbidden. A is obligatory in the following cases:

a) With proper nouns (person or animal):
(41) Vi a Pedro en el cine.
[I] Saw to Pedro in the cinema

b) With known or definite collective common nouns (person):
(42) Dispersaron a la multitud.
[they] Routed to the crowd

c) With common nouns (person) referring to a specific individual:
(43) Vi a los hijos del vecino escalar la tapia.
[I] Saw to the sons of the neighbour climb the wall
d) With unknown or indefinite common nouns (person) that are direct object of verbs that imply a psychic or physical effect:

(44)  Acompañó a una anciana hasta su casa.  

[he] Acompained to an old woman to her house

e) With common nouns (person) preceded by an indefinite article that are direct objects of verbs of perception:

(45)  Observé a algunos niños que jugaban al fútbol.  

[I] Observed to some children that played to the football

f) With the tonic personal pronouns mí, ti, sí, él, ella, usted, nosotros/as, vosotros/as, ustedes, ellos/as:

(46)  No creo que a ustedes los escuchen.  

[I] Do not think that to you [they] to you listened

g) With demonstrative or possessive pronouns whose antecedent is a person:

(47)  Vi a ese hablando con tu jefe.  

[I] Saw to him speaking with your boss

h) With indefinite pronouns whose antecedent is a person, except when used with the verb haber:

(48)  No conozco a nadie.  

[I] Do not know to nobody

i) With the relative pronouns quien, el que, la que (and their plural forms) that are the direct object of the verb of the subordinate clause:

(49)  Ese es el hombre a quien golpearon.  

That is the man to whom [they] hit
j) With the interrogative pronouns quién and cuál referring to persons:

(50) ¿A cuál de los dos encontraste llorando?
   To which of the two [you] met crying?

k) With nouns referring to objects only when it is necessary in order to avoid ambiguity caused by a non-canonical word order:

(51) Venció la dificultad al optimismo.
   Overcame the difficulty to the optimism

l) With nouns referring to objects that are direct objects of verbs implying linear or hierarchical order:

(52) El otoño precede al invierno.
   The autumn precedes to the winter

m) With collective nouns (thing) that refers to group of people with verbs that can possibly refer only to persons:

(53) Multaron a la empresa por realizar vertidos tóxicos.
   [they] Fined to the firm because it produced spill toxic

We may notice that the preposition is obligatory when the direct object is definite/specific (41-43), animate/human (43-50, 53) or to avoid ambiguity in thematic roles or order (51, 52).

On the other hand, the preposition must not be used with:

a) Inanimate objects:

(54) Puso el libro en la mesa.
   [he/she] Put the book on the table

b) One plural common noun (referring to people) without a determiner:

(55) He encontrado camareros para mi nuevo bar.
   [I] Have found waiters for my new bar
c) Proper nouns of countries and towns:
(56) No conozco Francia.
[I] Do not know France

d) Proper nouns used as common nouns:
(57) Me compré el Picasso en una subasta.
[I] to myself bought the Picasso in an auction

e) The verb haber:
(58) Hay alguien en la puerta.
There is somebody at the door

f) The verb tener and an indefinite direct object (referring to a person)
without an adjective defining a transitory state:
(59) Tiene una tía actriz.
Has an aunt actress

Thus, when the direct object is indefinite/non-specific (55, 57-59) or inanimate (54, 56) the direct object is not marked with a preposition.
The preposition a may or may not be used (sometimes with differences in meaning) with:

a) Common nouns (person) that are direct object of verbs that imply search,
preference, necessity and perception:
(60) Busco (a) un camarero.
[I] Look for (to) a waiter

b) Unspecified common nouns (person) that are direct object of verbs that
imply selection:
(61) Aún no he encontrado al/el hombre con quien casarme.
Yet [I] do not have met (to) the man with whom marry
c) Common nouns (person) when another element in the sentence is preceded by the same preposition:

(62) Presentó (a) su novio a sus padres.

[he/she] Introduced (to) his/her boyfriend to his/her parents

d) Common nouns (animal and thing), depending on the grade of emotional attachment or personification:

(63) Suelta al/el caballo para que corra.

Release (to) the horse so that runs

e) Nouns or verbs that may have different meaning on the basis of its presence or absence; the presence normally implies a stronger degree of personification:

(64) En este país no se respet a nada (a) la justicia.

In this country [it] is not respected (to) the justice

(65) Admiro (a) la iglesia.

[I] Admire (to) the church

f) Common nouns (thing) that are direct objects of verbs normally used with nouns referring to persons as direct objects:

(66) El tabaco perjudica (a) la salud.

The tobacco harms (to) the health

With the exception of the sentences in which both possibilities are equal because the direct object is human but unspecific (61) or the presence of the preposition may cause ambiguity (62); the presence or absence of the preposition denotes a difference in specificity (60), humanness/personification (63, 66) or human/abstract meaning (64, 65).7

7 Specifically, the use of a means the speaker is referring to the institution formed by persons; its lack implies a reference to the object (the abstract virtue (57) or the building (58) in our examples).
We have seen that prepositional accusative in Spanish is used when the direct object is definite, specific, human (or personified) and sometimes the usage depends on the degree of specificity or humanness the speaker gives to the object. The grammatical environments in which prepositional accusative is used in Spanish follow Lazard’s scale.

Finally, we hypothesize that when *a* is used to disambiguate (51, 62), it simply carries out a pragmatic role and for this reason it is not bound to the characteristics of the direct object.

1.4.2 Romanian

Romanian uses the preposition *pe* to mark the direct object, although Cojocaru in her *Romanian Grammar* affirms that the rules of usage are numerous and insufficiently coded and based on the concepts of animacy, definiteness, and humanness.

The preposition is used with:

a) Proper nouns (person and animal):

(67) L-am văzut aseară pe Radu.

   *Him [I] have seen last night to Radu*

b) Common nouns designating an identified, definite person:

(68) Îl caut pe professor.

   *Him [I] look for to the professor*

c) Common nouns designating animals or inanimate objects in which:

   c.1) the noun implies a metaphor for a person:

(69) L-aie auzit pe măgarul ăla de George?

   *Him [you] have heard to donkey that of George?*
c.2) the noun is used in a comparison in which the first term is a person:

(70) A aruncat-o ca pe o mâsea stricată.

*Has discarded her like to a tooth broken*

c.3) subject and object are the same noun and they precede the verb:

(71) Cui pe cui se scoate.

*Nail to nail takes out*

c.4) there is emotional attachment:

(72) O iubești pe păpușă?

*Her [you] love to doll?*

d) A periphrastic nominal construction with possessive or demonstrative pronouns (person and thing):

(73) Prietenii de la Viena au venit, acum îi așteptăm pe cei de la Roma.

*Friends from Viena have come, now them [we] wait to those from Rome*

(74) Am băgat în casă scaunele din curte, hai să le bâgăm și pe cele de pe terasă.

*[I] have brought in house seats from courtyard, let us them bring also to those on the terrace*

*Pe* is not used with:

a) Proper nouns (thing):

(75) Iubesc Kenya.

*[I] love Kenya*

b) Common nouns designating unidentified persons, used as a generic term:

(76) Caut translator.

*[I] look for translator*
c) Common nouns designating animals or inanimate objects in all other cases:

(77) Am citit un articol.
     * [I] have read an article

d) Common nouns (person, animal, thing) in a construction with the possessive dative:

(78) Îi cunosc rudele.
     * His/Her [I] know relatives

Comparing the grammatical environments in which the preposition is present or absent, we can clearly see differences in animacy (67 and 75), definiteness (68 and 76) and humanness/personification (69, 70 and 72 versus 77). However, it seems that in some cases the grammatical environment overrides the rules regarding the semantics and forces the presence (or absence) of pe, regardless of the semantic features of the direct objects (71, 74, 78).

1.4.3 Portuguese

In Portuguese, prepositional accusative is a marginal construction; only when the direct object is an oblique personal pronoun is it obligatory preceded by the preposition *a*.

(79) Rubião viu em duas rosas vulgares uma festa imperial, e
     esqueceu a sala a mulher e a si.
     * Rubião saw in two roses vulgar a feast imperial, and [he]
     forgot the room the wife and to himself

However, the direct object is normally used with the preposition *a* also in the following cases:
a) With feeling verbs (psych verbs):
(80) Só não amava a Jorge como amava ao filho.

Only not [I/he/she] loved to Jorge as (=but also) loved to son

b) To avoid ambiguities:
(81) Sabeis, que ao Mestre vai matá-lo.

[you] know, that to Master [he/she] will kill-him

c) When it is left-dislocated:
(82) A homen pobre ninguém roube.

To man poor nobody steals

d) In the pleonastic repetition of the direct object:
(83) Encontrou-nos a nós.

[he] found-us to us

In these examples, drawn from Cunha and Lindley Cintra (2004), we can see that once again the prepositional accusative is only used with animate/human direct objects, although Portuguese shows a different pattern of usage in comparison to the previously seen Romance languages. The employment of prepositional accusative in Portuguese seems much more similar to its use in Italian: left-dislocation, repetition, psych verbs, and pronouns.

1.4.4 Catalan

In standard Catalan, the direct objects of transitive verbs are not generally introduced by a preposition. Prepositional accusative (with a) is necessary only with stressed personal pronouns:

---

8 Rules of usage for prepositional accusative in Catalan are taken from Wheeler, Yates and Dols (1999).
(84) Jo el corregiré a ell, i ell em corregirà a mi.
   I him will correct to him, and he me will correct to me

However, prepositional accusative is generally used also with:

a) Animate direct objects which immediately follows a grammatical subject:
85) Ens miràvem l’un a l’altra.
   Us [we] watched the one to the other

b) Animate direct objects in the case of ambiguity:
86) T’estima com a la seva mare.
   [he/she] you loves like to the his/her mother

c) Direct objects (denoting person) which are left-dislocated:
87) A Núria, no crec que la pugues convèncer.
   To Núria, [I] do not think that her (you) can convince

d) The pronouns tothom ("everyone"), tots ("them all") and ningú (no one):
88) Això no afecta a ningú.
   This does not affect to no one

In Catalan as well, the employment of the prepositional accusative is restricted to animate direct objects and the usage seems similar to the usage in Portuguese with left-dislocation and repetition. However, in Catalan the feature of animacy appears more important than in other languages: prepositional accusative cannot disambiguate inanimate direct objects (86) but can be used with animate yet indefinite direct objects (88).

1.4.5 Occitan (Languedocien)

Occitan is not a standardised language and different regional varieties coexist. (Schlieben-Lange 1993)
In his *Gramatica Occitana segon los parlars lengadocians*, fundamental attempt to achieve a standardisation of the Occitan language, Alibèrt (1976) affirms that in Occitan the preposition *a* is used to mark direct objects (denoting only animate beings) in the following cases:

a) When the direct object is emphasise with repetition:
   (89) Ela me paga a mi.
   *She me pays to me*

b) When there is opposition or reciprocity:
   (90) M’ajudan e mai ieu a elis.
   *[they] me help and more I to them*

c) With copulative verbs:
   (91) Remèrcia tot lo mond e sustot a Robèrt.
   *Remembers everybody and especially to Robèrt*

d) In the comparisons, in order to avoid ambiguity:
   (92) Lo seguissiá coma un gat a un rat.
   *[he/she] him followed like a cat to a rat.*

Once again, prepositional accusative is used only with animate direct objects and, among the other uses, in the repetition of the object and to avoid ambiguity.
2. My study

We will now see the characteristics of the study developed in order to examine the acceptability of Italian sentences containing a prepositional accusative. Aim, type of sentences, participants, materials and procedure will be presented in the next sections.

2.1 Aim

This study aims to examine the current status of the prepositional accusative in Northern Italy. The outcomes of this study will allow us both to comprehend whether this construction has also become part of the Italian spoken in Northern Italy (thus the prepositional accusative would be pan-Italian); and to understand the effects of the essential conditions we have identified in the previous chapter. Moreover, we will be able to verify the theoretical explanations given and to propose new hypotheses, if necessary.

2.2 Essential characteristics

The studies reported in chapter 1 have allowed us to identify four essential characteristics with regard to the acceptability of the prepositional accusative: type of verb, accusative position, clitic doubling, and person of the object. Some invented examples of “minimal pairs” are given (grammaticality judgements are of the author).

- Type of verb: psychological verb (93), causative fare (94) and non-psychological verb (ordinary transitive verb) (95).

(93) A me disturba.

To me bothers

(94) A me fa ridere.

To me makes laugh

(95) *A me guardano.

To me [they] look
- Prepositional accusative position: preverbal (96) and postverbal (97).

(96) A me preoccupa.

To me worries

(97) *Preoccupa a me.

Worries to me

- Clitic doubling: presence (98) and absence (99).

(98) A me non mi temono.

To me [they] do not me fear

(99) *A me non temono.

To me [they] do not fear

- Person of the direct object: 1st, 2nd, 3rd person pronouns (singular and plural) and proper nouns.

(100) A me non mi temono.

To me [they] do not me fear

(101) A te non ti temono.

To you [they] do not you fear

(102) *A lui/lei non lo/la temono.

To him/her [they] do not him/her fear

(103) *A Gianni/Gianna non lo/la temono.

To Gianni/Gianna [they] do not him/her fear

(104) A noi non ci temono.

To us [they] do not us fear

(105) A voi non vi temono.

To you [they] do not you fear

(106) *A loro non li temono.

To them [they] do not them fear

These examples are useful to highlight and summarise the tendencies of the characteristics that have been identified. It should be evident that each condition is
a combination of different characteristics. The results of this work will help us to understand which combinations are acceptable and which characteristics are more important in determining the overall acceptability of the sentence. There are 12 possible combinations of the characteristics given above for each person of the verb. An example for each typology, without grammaticality judgments, follows:  

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. A me non mi entusiasma neanche un po’.</td>
<td>[Psy, pre, cli]^{10}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. A me mi hanno fatto lavorare tutta l’estate.</td>
<td>[Cau, pre, cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. A me non mi fregate mica!</td>
<td>[Npsy, pre, cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. A me non entusiasma neanche un po’.</td>
<td>[Psy, pre, no cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. A me hanno fatto lavorare tutta l’estate.</td>
<td>[Cau, pre, no cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. A me non fregate mica!</td>
<td>[Npsy, pre, no cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Non mi entusiasma neanche un po’, a me.</td>
<td>[Psy, post, cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Mi hanno fatto lavorare tutta l’estate, a me.</td>
<td>[Cau, post, cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Non mi fregate mica, a me!</td>
<td>[Npsy, post, cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Non entusiasma neanche un po’, a me.</td>
<td>[Psy, post, no cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Hanno fatto lavorare tutta l’estate, a me.</td>
<td>[Cau, post, no cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Non fregate mica, a me!</td>
<td>[Npsy, post, no cli]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Participants  

Four groups of 50 subjects each were included in this study, which aimed to find out whether the prepositional accusative is used in Northern Italy and Tuscany (i.e. in the area lacking prepositional accusatives according to Rohlf's (1970)). For this reason, all the participants are native Italian speakers raised in the regions of Northern Italy or in Tuscany. The four groups were given four different questionnaires, although the subjects could complete more than one questionnaire and, thus, be part of more than one group.
The subjects were asked to provide information on their age, region of provenance, and, optionally, level of education. All this information is reported in Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age range</td>
<td>19-32</td>
<td>19-41</td>
<td>17-34</td>
<td>17-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age (SD)</td>
<td>21,9 (2,42)</td>
<td>25,88 (4,44)</td>
<td>22,78 (3,93)</td>
<td>22,74 (3,56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of education</td>
<td>University: 94% of which: 60% students 40% graduates Secondary: N/A Not mentioned: 6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University: 86% of which: 35% students 65% graduates Secondary: 14% of which: 14% students 86% graduates Not mentioned: N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University: 74% of which: 65% students 35% graduates Secondary: 24% of which: 92% students 8% graduates Not mentioned: 2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University: 90% of which: 71% students 29% graduates Secondary: 10% of which: 100% students Not mentioned: N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of provenance</td>
<td>Emilia-Romagna: 4% Friuli-Venezia Giulia: 4% Liguria: 2% Lombardia: N/A Piemonte: 6% Toscana: N/A Trentino-Alto Adige: 2% Valle d'Aosta: N/A Veneto: 82%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emilia-Romagna: 2% Friuli-Venezia Giulia: 6% Liguria: 4% Lombardia: 20% Piemonte: 6% Toscana: 2% Trentino-Alto Adige: N/A Valle d'Aosta: N/A Veneto: 60%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emilia-Romagna: 10% Friuli-Venezia Giulia: 12% Liguria: 4% Lombardia: 30% Piemonte: 12% Toscana: 4% Trentino-Alto Adige: N/A Valle d'Aosta: N/A Veneto: 28%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emilia-Romagna: 16% Friuli-Venezia Giulia: 4% Liguria: 4% Lombardia: 10% Piemonte: 14% Toscana: 4% Trentino-Alto Adige: N/A Valle d'Aosta: N/A Veneto:48%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Materials

All the characteristics identified in the previous studies on the prepositional accusative had to be considered in every possible combination. Thus, this study included the 12 types of sentences listed in §2.2. Six sentences for each person of the verb\(^{11}\) were included for typology. The items were 432 in total. The test was created specifically for this study. Sentences with the same type of verb were identical, with the obvious exceptions of the other characteristics and punctuation. This was done in order to achieve the closest possible matching of data for comparison. Here is an example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{A. Is.1} & \quad \text{A me non mi entusiasma neanche un po’}. \\
& \quad \text{To me does not me thrill not even a bit} \\
\text{J. Is.1} & \quad \text{Non entusiasma neanche un po’, a me}. \\
& \quad \text{Does not thrill not even a bit, to me}
\end{align*}
\]

The 36 sentences with a psych verb contain 18 different verbs. Each verb is used twice, once with a singular-object sentence and once with a plural-object sentence. Similarly, the 36 sentences with a causative construction employ 18 different verbs and twice each verb. The sentences with a non-psych verb employ 36 different verbs.

Given the large number of sentences, the items were divided into four questionnaires each containing 108 sentences. Each questionnaire comprehended all the items of three different typologies. The three typologies in each questionnaire always differed in the type of verb as well as in the combination of the other two variables (e.g. preverbal position could not appear in all the three typologies of a questionnaire). Consequently, the nearly-identical sentences never appeared in the same questionnaire.

\(^{11}\) In order not to further increase the amount of items, the six 3rd person singular sentences used three masculine proper names and three feminine proper names. 3rd person plural sentences did not contain gender distinctions (only masculine clitics were used when necessary).
In Appendix A, all 432 items, broken down by typology, are provided. It is also indicated to which questionnaire each typology belonged.

2.5 Procedure
The four questionnaires were published on Google form. All the questionnaires were divided into seven sections, the first section was the same and required information on age, region of provenance, and, optionally, level of education. Each of the other six sections consisted of 18 items, one per person of the verb for each of the three types of prepositional accusative. These 18 items were randomly ordered by the platform, this order differed for each questionnaire.

At the beginning of each section, the following instructions were provided:

Give an acceptability judgment in standard (non-regional) Italian to the following sentences. Do not take into account the register, it may be very low/informal.
Answer on the basis of your competence. Do not spend too much time analysing the construction. Do not change your previous answers.
Try to avoid choosing “I am not sure about the acceptability of this sentence”, if possible.12

The three possible answers were “acceptable”, “unacceptable” and “I am not sure about the acceptability of this sentence”. The instructions were added in order to elicit instinctive answers, so as to obviate the problem of investigating a mostly oral construction in a written form. It was asked not to change previous answers in order to try to avoid that the subjects changed their judgements on the basis of subsequent items. The subjects were discouraged from choosing the third option to prevent its abuse and restrict its use to real indecisions. On the other hand, this option was included to avoid having fake positive or negative acceptability judgments.

The data were collected over a period of three weeks.

12 We provide here the original directions in Italian: Dai un giudizio di accettabilità in italiano standard (non regionale) alle seguenti frasi ma senza considerare il registro, che può essere anche molto basso o informale.
Rispondi in base alla tua competenza, senza soffermarti troppo ad analizzare la costruzione né cambiare le risposte già date in precedenza.
Cerca di evitare, per quanto possibile, l'opzione "Ho dei dubbi sull'accettabilità".
3. Results

In this chapter, I present the results of the questionnaires. Percentages of items accepted\(^\text{13}\) for each characteristic and significant differences are given for the entire dataset and for each subset.

3.1 Entire dataset

Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 show the percentage of items considered acceptable in the different conditions previously identified.

Overall, the results follow the expected patterns, although apparently some data do contrast with the expected results.

As expected, psych verbs and causative verbs are more accepted than non-psych verbs, as the following table shows:

Table 3.1: % of acceptability for type of verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Psych</th>
<th>Causative</th>
<th>Non-psych</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41.90%</td>
<td>38.22%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The logistic regression shows a significant difference in acceptability both between psych and non-psych verbs (Wald Z=-4.595, p<0.001) and between causative and non-psych verbs (Wald Z=-3.563, p<0.001). The difference between causative and psych verbs was not found significant (p=0.288799).

Another expected result was the difference in the position of the prepositional accusative.

Table 3.2: % of acceptability for prepositional accusative position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Preverbal</th>
<th>Postverbal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53.54%</td>
<td>18.88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{13}\) Only the items that were judged as “acceptable” were considered.
Once again, the statistical analysis shows a significance in the difference of acceptability between postverbal and preverbal prepositional accusatives (Wald Z=20.24, p<0.001).

The following table shows the level of acceptability of the presence or absence of clitic doubling:

**Table 3.3: % of acceptability for clitic doubling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absence</th>
<th>Presence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>40.60%</td>
<td>31.81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The greater level of acceptability for sentences in which the clitic doubling was not present was unexpected as it has been seen that clitic doubling should enhance the degree of acceptability, at least for non-psych verbs, but should not diminish it. On the contrary, sentences without clitic doubling were significantly more accepted than sentences in which the clitic was present (Wald Z=-2.204, p = 0.0275).

The following table shows the level of acceptability on the basis of the persons of the direct object:

**Table 3.4: % of acceptability for person of the direct object**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37.36%</td>
<td>41.19%</td>
<td>31.08%</td>
<td>38.81%</td>
<td>38.39%</td>
<td>30.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the person of the direct object, III person objects were less accepted than I and II person objects, with small differences between singular and plural. The following significant differences were found:

- Between III s. and:
  - II s. (Wald Z=2.686, p=0.00723).
  - I p. (Wald Z=2.008, p=0.04467).
  - II p. (Wald Z=2.044, p=0.04097).
In summary, III person objects (singular and plural) are always significantly less acceptable than I and II person objects (singular and plural). The only exception is the lack of significant difference between I s. and III s.

3.2 Type of verb
We have seen that psychological and causative verbs are both significantly more acceptable than non-psych verbs when we consider all the data; we have also seen that the scale of acceptability is Psych > Causative > Non-Psych. However, in some subsets this is not the case.

With regard to accusative position, in preverbal position psych verbs are significantly more accepted than causative verbs (Wald Z = -2.403, p = 0.0162), in addition to the same significance of the entire dataset (Cau-Npsy: Wald Z = -3.981, p < 0.001; Psy-Npsy: Wald Z = -6.908, p < 0.001). The postverbal subset is the most surprising, not only is the only significant difference between causative and non-psych verbs (Wald Z = -1.972, p = 0.0486), but also psych verbs are the least accepted and the general level of acceptability is very low.

In sentences that lack clitic doubling, the situation is the same as that of the whole dataset (Cau-Npsy: Wald Z = -3.704, p < 0.001; Psy-Npsy: Wald Z = -4.604, p < 0.001). On the other hand, when we consider sentences with clitic doubling, there is no significant difference between the types of verbs; moreover, non-psych verbs are accepted as much as causative verbs.

Regarding the person of the direct object, all the subsets present the same scale of acceptability with the sole exception of II s., in which causative verbs are marginally more accepted than psych verbs. In addition, II s., I p. and II p. show no significant difference for the three types of verb. On the other hand, III s. and III p.
show the same significance of the whole data (III s.: Cau-Npsy: Wald Z=-2.167, p=0.03026; Psy-Npsy: Wald Z=-2.400, p=0.0164. III p.: Cau-Npsy: Wald Z=-2.460, p=0.01388; Psy-Npsy: Wald Z=-3.135, p=0.00172). Finally, in I s. subset only psych and non-psych verbs show a significant difference (Wald Z=-2.301, p=0.0214).

To sum up, the vast majority of subsets follow the scale of acceptability and the significance of the entire dataset. This is not the case of postverbal position and clitic doubling, the former appears to make all types of verb less acceptable but psych verbs in particular, the latter diminishes the degree of acceptability of psych and causative verbs while increasing that of non-psych verbs.

Table 3.5 shows the level of acceptability for each type of verb in each subset:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Psych</th>
<th>Causative</th>
<th>Non-Psych</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preverbal position</td>
<td>69.11%</td>
<td>52.25%</td>
<td>39.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postverbal position</td>
<td>14.69%</td>
<td>24.19%</td>
<td>17.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of clitic doubling</td>
<td>49.91%</td>
<td>46.22%</td>
<td>26.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of clitic doubling</td>
<td>34.39%</td>
<td>30.22%</td>
<td>30.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I s.</td>
<td>44.17%</td>
<td>39.42%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II s.</td>
<td>42.08%</td>
<td>43.08%</td>
<td>38.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III s.</td>
<td>40.25%</td>
<td>34.08%</td>
<td>18.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I p.</td>
<td>41.25%</td>
<td>38.67%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II p.</td>
<td>43.58%</td>
<td>40.33%</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III p.</td>
<td>40.08%</td>
<td>33.75%</td>
<td>17.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Prepositional accusative position

As already seen, an analysis on the whole dataset showed that preverbal position of the prepositional accusative is significantly more accepted than postverbal position. This is true for all the subsets considered.
Although in some cases the postverbal accusative becomes more accepted (e.g. causative verbs, presence of clitic doubling, II persons), it is never accepted as much as the preverbal accusative.

In all cases the difference is significant:

- Psych verbs (Wald Z=-12.13, p<0.001).
- Causative verbs (Wald Z=-5.726, p<0.001).
- Non-psych verb (Wald Z=-4.754, p<0.001).
- Absence of clitic doubling (Wald Z=-18.03, p<0.001).
- Presence of clitic doubling (Wald Z=-11.31, p<0.001).
- I s. (Wald Z=-7.963, p<0.001).
- II s. (Wald Z=-6.794, p<0.001).
- III s. (Wald Z=-8.217, p<0.001).
- I p. (Wald Z=-12.06, p<0.001).
- II p. (Wald Z=-7.031, p<0.001).
- III p. (Wald Z=-7.618, p<0.001).

Table 3.6 sums up the percentages of acceptability on the basis of prepositional accusative position:
Table 3.6: % of acceptability for prepositional accusative position in each subset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Preverbal</th>
<th>Postverbal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psych verbs</td>
<td>69.11%</td>
<td>14.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causative verbs</td>
<td>52.25%</td>
<td>24.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-psych verbs</td>
<td>39.25%</td>
<td>17.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of clitic doubling</td>
<td>64.69%</td>
<td>16.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of clitic doubling</td>
<td>42.39%</td>
<td>21.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I s.</td>
<td>55.61%</td>
<td>19.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II s.</td>
<td>56.83%</td>
<td>25.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III s.</td>
<td>48.39%</td>
<td>13.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I p.</td>
<td>59.33%</td>
<td>18.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II p.</td>
<td>54.11%</td>
<td>22.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III p.</td>
<td>46.94%</td>
<td>13.89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Clitic doubling

The analysis of the entire dataset showed a greater level of acceptability for sentences without clitic doubling and a significant difference with the sentences in which the clitic pronoun is duplicated. However, this seems to be the case in which the analyses of the subsets show the most surprising results.

In fact, these are the only subsets that show the above-mentioned trend:

- Psych verbs (Wald Z=-2.932, p=0.00337).
- Causative verbs (Wald Z=-3.527, p<0.001).
- Preverbal position (Wald Z=-5.396, p<0.001).
- I s. (Wald Z=-2.622, p=0.00875).

On the other hand, in non-psych verb and postverbal position subsets the sentences are more accepted when the clitic doubling is present; in the latter case, this difference is significant (Wald Z=2.001, p=0.0453).
Finally, sentences that lack clitic doubling are more accepted for all the persons of the direct object, but the difference is significant only for I s., as we have already seen. We can see this tendency in Table 3.7:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absence</th>
<th>Presence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psych verbs</strong></td>
<td>49.42%</td>
<td>34.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Causative verbs</strong></td>
<td>46.22%</td>
<td>30.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-psych verbs</strong></td>
<td>26.17%</td>
<td>30.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preverbal position</strong></td>
<td>64.69%</td>
<td>42.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Postverbal position</strong></td>
<td>16.52%</td>
<td>21.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I s.</strong></td>
<td>46.11%</td>
<td>28.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II s.</strong></td>
<td>47.11%</td>
<td>35.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III s.</strong></td>
<td>33.17%</td>
<td>29.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I p.</strong></td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>36.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II p.</strong></td>
<td>41.44%</td>
<td>35.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III p.</strong></td>
<td>34.28%</td>
<td>26.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 Person of the direct object

We have seen that in the entire dataset III person objects are significantly less acceptable than I and II person objects, with the exception of the lack of significant difference between I s. and III s. The scale of acceptability is II s.>I p.>II p.>I s.>III s.>III p.

If we consider the types of verbs, the scale of acceptability for psych and causative verbs is slightly different (Psy: Is>IIp>IIs>Ip>III s.III p.; Cau: II s.II p.Is>Ip>III s.III p), but what is surprising is the almost total absence of significant difference between the persons: the only significant difference is between I s. and III s. in psych verbs (Wald Z=-2.079, p=0.0376). Non-psych verbs show the same scale of acceptability of the entire dataset; the significances are summed up in Table 3.8.
Table 3.8: significances in non-psych verb subset for persons of the direct object

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I s.</td>
<td>Wald</td>
<td>Z=2.974</td>
<td>Wald Z=2.601</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Wald Z=-3.341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.009306</td>
<td>p=0.012992</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II s.</td>
<td>Wald Z=-5.561</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Wald Z=-2.013</td>
<td>Wald Z=-6.281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td>p=0.044160</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III s.</td>
<td>Wald Z=5.076</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td>Wald Z=3.572</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Wald Z=-4.305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I p.</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wald Z=-5.801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II p.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the prepositional accusative position, when the object is preverbal, the scale of acceptability is Ip>IIp>Is>IIs>IIIp and the following significances are found:

- Between III s. and:
  - I s. (Wald Z=1.985, p=0.0471).
  - II s. (Wald Z=2.080, p=0.0375).
  - I p. (Wald Z=2.552, p=0.0107).

- Between III p. and:
  - I s. (Wald Z=2.258, p=0.024).
  - II s. (Wald Z=2.354, p=0.0186).
  - I p. (Wald Z=2.827, p=0.0047).

On the other hand when the object is postverbal, the scale of acceptability is different (IIp>Is>Ip>IIIp>IIIs). Significant differences are the following:
- Between III s. and:
  I s. (Wald Z=2.145, p=0.0319).
  II p. (Wald Z=3.290, p=0.001).

- Between III p. and:
  I s. (Wald Z=2.187, p=0.0288).
  II p. (Wald Z=3.335, p<0.001).

- Between II s. and:
  I s. (Wald Z=2.026, p=0.0428).
  III s. (Wald Z=4.153, p<0.001).
  I p. (Wald Z=2.356, p=0.0185).
  III p. (Wald Z=4.197, p<0.001).

Finally, when sentences lack clitic doubling, the scale of acceptability is II s>Is>I p>II p>III p>III s but significant differences are found only between the third persons and I s. (I s.-III s.: Wald Z=-2.158, p=0.0309; I s.-III p.: Wald Z=-2.012, p=0.0442) and II s. (II s.-III s.: Wald Z=-2.221, p=0.0263; II s.-III p.: Wald Z=-2.076, p=0.0379).

On the other hand, when clitic doubling is present, the scale of acceptability is different once again (I p>II p>II s>III s>I s>III p). Significances are summed up in Table 3.9.
Table 3.9: significances in presence of clitic doubling for persons of the direct object

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I s.</td>
<td>Wald Z=2.014</td>
<td>Wald Z=2.159</td>
<td>Wald Z=2.010</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.0440</td>
<td>p=0.0309</td>
<td>p=0.0444</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II s.</td>
<td>Wald Z=-2.107</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wald Z=-2.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.03514</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.00536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III s.</td>
<td>Wald Z=2.249</td>
<td>Wald Z=2.101</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.0245</td>
<td>p=0.0356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I p.</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wald Z=-2.928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.00341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II p.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wald Z=-2.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.00543</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results can hardly be summarised since the subsets show very different outcomes. Generally speaking, third persons are almost always the least accepted, while, in most subsets, I s. and II s. are the most accepted persons of the direct object. Table 3.10 sums up all results.

Table 3.10: % of acceptability for person of the direct object in each subset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psych verbs</td>
<td>44.17%</td>
<td>42.08%</td>
<td>40.25%</td>
<td>41.25%</td>
<td>43.58%</td>
<td>40.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causative verbs</td>
<td>39.42%</td>
<td>43.08%</td>
<td>34.08%</td>
<td>38.67%</td>
<td>40.33%</td>
<td>33.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-psych verbs</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>38.42%</td>
<td>18.92%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
<td>17.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preverbal position</td>
<td>55.61%</td>
<td>56.83%</td>
<td>48.39%</td>
<td>59.33%</td>
<td>54.11%</td>
<td>46.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postverbal position</td>
<td>19.11%</td>
<td>25.56%</td>
<td>13.78%</td>
<td>18.28%</td>
<td>22.67%</td>
<td>13.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of clitic doubling</td>
<td>46.11%</td>
<td>47.11%</td>
<td>33.17%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>34.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of clitic doubling</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>35.27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>36.11%</td>
<td>35.33%</td>
<td>26.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Discussion

In general, the results give us the idea that the prepositional accusative use has widely spread in the last 50 years. Not only is this construction used in Northern Italy, but its range of acceptability is also much wider than reported by the previous studies.

The significant greater acceptability of psychological verbs and causative verbs and of the preverbal position was expected given the theoretical explanation. On the other hand, it may be surprising that the absence of clitic is more acceptable than its presence. Finally, the persons of the accusative have given mixed results.

Once again, we will go through all the characteristics and comment on the differences hypothesizing a theoretical explanation of the results or confirming previously given hypotheses and giving examples to clarify these explanations.

4.1 Type of verb

The results confirm that psychological verbs and causative verbs are the types of verbs with which the prepositional accusative in Italian is more used. The theoretical explanation given by Berretta (1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1991) seems to be confirmed: the contradiction between the deep structure and the surface structure causes a non-canonical order with the object Experiencer in first position in need of a case marker. This is valid only for the preverbal position of the prepositional accusative with psych and causative verbs.

In addition, we propose that the psych verbs identified by Belletti and Rizzi (1988) as part of the 3rd category (intransitive verbs with subject Theme and dative Experiencer such as *piacere*) may have facilitated the use of the same structure for psych verbs of the 2nd category (transitive verbs with subject Theme and object Experiencer such as *preoccupare*). This is possible only for the first and second persons, singular and plural, because in these cases the dative and accusative clitics are identical.
Our hypothesis may explain the non-significant difference in acceptability between psych verbs and causative verbs in the whole dataset. Moreover, when we consider only the preverbal position, the differences of acceptability are even more marked and significant. On the other hand, in postverbal position the acceptability of psychological verbs is even lower than the acceptability of non-psych verbs. This difference supports Beretta’s hypothesis: postverbal objects are not in a non-canonical order and do not need an explicit case marker.

(115) A me preoccupa. [non-canonical order]

To me worries

(116) *Preoccupa a me. [canonical order]

Worries to me
Berretta’s explanation does not account for the significant difference between psychological and causative verbs in preverbal environment; this difference may be explained by our hypothesis.

With regard to the person of the object, it is surprising that II s., I p. and II p. show no significant difference for type of verb. Percentages of acceptability for psych and causative verbs for these persons are consistent with the percentages of the whole dataset but percentages of acceptability for non-psych verbs are much higher. On the other hand, I s. shows percentages of acceptability in line with the ones of the whole dataset for all the types of verb, while third persons show lower percentages of acceptability for causative verbs and very low for non-psych verbs. It seems that prepositional accusative with II s., I p. and II p. is so accepted that the type of verb is not important and even non-psych verbs can be used. On the contrary, the use of prepositional accusative with third persons is more marginal and non-psych verbs are not yet accepted. However, the data are misleading. In fact, if we break down the data, we can see that the key is clitic doubling.

Table 4.1: % of acceptability for type of verb on the basis of the person of the verb in presence or absence of clitic doubling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Clitic</th>
<th>Psych</th>
<th>Causative</th>
<th>Non-psych</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I s.</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>25.33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>55.83%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entire dataset (mean)</td>
<td>44.17%</td>
<td>39.42%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II s.</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>33.67%</td>
<td>31.17%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>50.5%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>35.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entire dataset (mean)</td>
<td>42.08%</td>
<td>43.08%</td>
<td>38.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III s.</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>37.67%</td>
<td>14.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entire dataset (mean)</td>
<td>40.25%</td>
<td>34.08%</td>
<td>18.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I p.</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>32.67%</td>
<td>38.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>44.67%</td>
<td>34.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entire dataset (mean)</td>
<td>41.25%</td>
<td>38.67%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II p.</strong></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>50.17%</td>
<td>45.17%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entire dataset (mean)</td>
<td>43.58%</td>
<td>40.33%</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III p.</strong></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>33.17%</td>
<td>26.17%</td>
<td>20.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>41.33%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entire dataset (mean)</td>
<td>40.08%</td>
<td>33.75%</td>
<td>17.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see in Table 4.1, we can divide the six persons into three groups:

1. **II s., IIp. and I p.** in the entire dataset, non-psych verbs are accepted nearly as much as psych and causative verbs because clitic doubling both enhances the acceptability of non-psych verbs and diminishes the acceptability of the other two types.

2. **I s.** in this case clitic doubling reduces the acceptability of all types of verbs but only marginally of non-psych verbs.

3. **III s. and III p** although clitic doubling has the same effect it has on the first group, it is not as much strong as it is for the first group. Likewise, non-psych verbs are always the least accepted type of verb.

We will deal in greater detail with the role of clitic doubling on acceptability and put forth a hypothesis in § 4.3.

More about the differences among persons will be discussed in § 4.4.

**4.2 Prepositional accusative position**

Our results show that the preverbal position is unquestionably the more accepted position for prepositional accusative. Preverbal prepositional accusative is significantly more accepted than postverbal prepositional accusative in every single subset we considered.
We saw that the preverbal position is largely accepted; the subsets in which its acceptance is minor than 50% are: non-psych verbs (39.25%), presence of clitic (42.39%) and third persons (48.39% singular, 46.94% plural). On the other hand, the preverbal position is most accepted with psych verbs and in absence of clitic doubling (69.11% and 64.39%, respectively).

It is interesting to notice that the postverbal position is marginally more accepted with causative verbs (24.19%), presence of clitic (21.24%) and second persons (25.56% singular, 22.67% plural). The least acceptable grammatic environments are those characterised by the presence of psych verbs (14.69%) and third persons (13.78% singular, 13.89% plural).

Berretta’s hypothesis of conflicting deep and surface structures explains the high acceptance of psychological and causative verbs in preverbal position. Since this theory is valid for psych and causative verbs in preverbal position, the lack of these factors produces low acceptance percentages for psych and causative verbs in postverbal position and for non-psych verbs in general.

(117) A me preoccupa. [psych, preverbal]

To me worries

(118) A me fa arrabbiare. [causative, preverbal]

To me makes angry

(119) *A me pagano. [non-psych, preverbal]

To me [they] pay

(120) *Preoccupa a me. [psych, postverb.]

Worries to me

(121) *Fa arrabbiare a me. [causative, postverb.]

Makes angry to me

(122) *Pagano a me. [non-psych, postverb.]

[they] pay to me

The effect of clitic doubling on the acceptability of prepositional accusative positions is similar to the effect it has on the types of verb: the presence of clitic
enhances the acceptability of the postverbal position and diminishes the acceptability of preverbal prepositional accusatives.

Regarding the persons of the direct object, third persons (both in the plural and in the singular form) are always the least accepted persons. This outcome is not unexpected since new grammatical constructions spread following the scale of definiteness and humanness.

We can conclude that when prepositional accusative is used, it is almost always preverbal. Postverbal use is only marginally accepted in strict grammatical environments; its peak of acceptance – with causative verbs, presence of clitic doubling and second persons – is very low (32.17%).

4.3 Clitic doubling

According to Berretta clitic doubling is always possible, although it makes the sentence more colloquial and tends to appear less frequently in the written language and with psych verbs. In addition, the clitics widen the acceptable grammatical environments only with non-psych verbs. In summary, clitic doubling should enhance the acceptability for non-psych verbs and have no effect on the other subsets.

Our results for clitic doubling only partially follow the expected trend. Contrary to the assumption that clitic doubling is always possible, sentences that lack clitic doubling are significantly more accepted both in general and in some subsets (psych verbs, causative verbs, preverbal position, I s.). On the other hand, the presence of the clitic does enhance non-psych verbs acceptability but not significantly. A significant improvement of acceptability is given on sentences with postverbal prepositional accusatives. Finally, persons but I s. are non-significantly more accepted without clitic doubling.

Our hypothesis is that the presence of a clitic pronoun does not increase the acceptability of some conditions such as psych verbs, causative verbs and preverbal position because these conditions are acceptable per se, they do not need clitic doubling to be considered grammatical. In addition, while Italian students are often
wrongly taught that clitic doubling is an error, it is, in fact, a colloquial form\textsuperscript{14}. Consequently, acceptability does not increase because these sentences (123, 125) are already acceptable; on the contrary, acceptability diminishes because sentences with clitic doubling are considered wrong or too colloquial (124, 126). This is particularly evident with I s., since the norm proscription is stronger on the \textit{a me mi} sequence.

\begin{align*}
\text{(123) A me preoccupa.} & \quad \text{[psy., prev., no clitic]} \\
& \quad \text{To me worries} \\
\text{(124) A me mi preoccupa.} & \quad \text{[psy., prev., clitic]} \\
& \quad \text{To me me worries} \\
\text{(125) A me fa arrabbiare.} & \quad \text{[cau., prev., no clitic]} \\
& \quad \text{To me makes angry} \\
\text{(126) A me mi fa arrabbiare.} & \quad \text{[cau., prev., clitic]} \\
& \quad \text{To me me makes angry}
\end{align*}

On the other hand, sentences with non-psych verbs (127) and postverbal prepositional accusatives (128) are not acceptable per se. We hypothesise that, in these cases, clitic doubling may enhance acceptability under the assumption that clitic corresponds to preposition + tonic pronoun (129, 130); in fact, this would be the case if the verbs were intransitive (131). Since these verbs are transitive, the clitic pronoun should correspond to a tonic pronoun without preposition (132).

\begin{align*}
\text{(127) *A me pagano.} & \quad \text{[npsy., unacceptable]} \\
& \quad \text{To me [they] pay} \\
\text{(128) *Preoccupa, a me.} & \quad \text{[postv., unacceptable]} \\
& \quad \text{Worries, to me} \\
\text{(129) *A me mi pagano.} & \quad \text{[wrong assumption:]} \\
& \quad \text{To me [they] me pay} \\
& \quad \text{mi = a me}
\end{align*}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{14} Treccani.it, \textit{A me mi, a te ti}, \url{http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/a-me-mi-a-te-ti_%28La-grammatica-italiana%29} (accessed July 25, 2017).}
This should be valid particularly with postverbal prepositional accusative (130) since in this case, the clitic pronoun comes before prepositional accusative and thus the prepositional accusative may be seen as an equivalent of the clitic pronoun, namely a repetition; in fact, in the postverbal subset, sentences with clitic doubling are significantly more accepted than sentences without it.

Furthermore, the above mentioned normative proscription may affect also these sentences; that is to say, without this erroneous rule the effect of clitic doubling on non-psych verbs and postverbal prepositional accusative may have been stronger.

4.4 Person of the direct object

In general, third persons are significantly less accepted than the other persons; this outcome is expected since prepositional accusative is a grammatical construction in expansion and its spread follows the scale of definiteness and humanness.

When we consider specific types of verbs, third persons are always the least accepted persons but there is little significant difference between persons with psych and causative verbs. On the other hand, non-psych verbs show lower degree of acceptability for all persons and for third persons in particular.

As expected, preverbal prepositional accusative shows a high level of acceptability while the postverbal position shows a very low percentage of acceptability. In both cases, third persons are significantly less accepted than other persons.

In absence of clitic doubling, third persons show a significantly lower degree of acceptability in comparison to other persons. When the clitic is present, third
persons are once again significantly less accepted than other persons, along with I's in these cases; however, the difference in acceptability is less prominent. In all cases, the fact that third persons are significantly less accepted can be explained by the hypothesis that prepositional accusative is a grammatical construction in expansion that follows the scale of definiteness and humanness. However, it seems that prepositional accusative is so accepted with psych and causative verbs that the person is not an important factor and all persons are equally accepted with these types of verbs.

The low degree of acceptability for I's with clitic doubling may be once again explained by the erroneous strong norm proscription on a me mi.

However, in order to have a more precise idea of the effect of each characteristic, we will break down the data and analyse the result for each combination of characteristic.

Table 4.2: % of acceptability in the different variable combinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Clitic</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>I p</th>
<th>II p</th>
<th>III p</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>Preverbal</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.33%</td>
<td>46.67%</td>
<td>59.67%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>51.33%</td>
<td>51.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td></td>
<td>92.67%</td>
<td>88.67%</td>
<td>83.67%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>85.33%</td>
<td>86.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postverbal</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.67%</td>
<td>20.67%</td>
<td>6.33%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12.33%</td>
<td>11.33%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8.67%</td>
<td>12.33%</td>
<td>11.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causative</td>
<td>Preverbal</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>29.67%</td>
<td>40.67%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>39.33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td></td>
<td>80.33%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>66.33%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>60.67%</td>
<td>67.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postverbal</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td></td>
<td>18.67%</td>
<td>32.67%</td>
<td>20.33%</td>
<td>20.33%</td>
<td>31.67%</td>
<td>16.33%</td>
<td>23.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.67%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>15.33%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26.33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Psychological</td>
<td>Preverbal</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td></td>
<td>36.33%</td>
<td>48.67%</td>
<td>27.67%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>40.67%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>38.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>54.33%</td>
<td>18.67%</td>
<td>54.67%</td>
<td>42.67%</td>
<td>20.33%</td>
<td>39.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postverbal</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td></td>
<td>19.67%</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>19.33%</td>
<td>26.33%</td>
<td>26.33%</td>
<td>12.67%</td>
<td>22.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17.33%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15.33%</td>
<td>8.67%</td>
<td>12.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, we can see that third persons are always the least accepted persons with non-psych verbs, while this is not always the case with causative and psych verbs.
It seems to be confirmed that third persons are accepted to a good degree when the combination of variables allow the use of prepositional accusative (e.g. with preverbal prepositional accusative, psych or causative verbs, with or without clitic doubling). On the other hand, the low degree of acceptability for third persons with non-psych verbs may be due to the fact that prepositional accusative is at a more primitive state of expansion with these types of verbs and the effect of the scale of definiteness and humanness is stronger.

Moreover, we can notice that in preverbal condition, the absence of clitic doubling leads to a greater degree of acceptability for all types of verbs and all persons (with the exception of third persons with non-psych verbs but the difference has turned out to be non-significant); I s. always shows the greatest difference, up to 48%. On the other hand, in postverbal position clitics tend to enhance acceptability for the reasons we have already discussed.

These results mean that the proscription on clitic doubling is strong for all persons but this proscription is somehow bypassed when clitics become vital for the acceptability of the sentence. We cannot exclude that sentences including clitic doubling and postverbal prepositional accusative may have been more accepted if this normative prohibition were not present.

### 4.5 Final considerations

Table 4.2 helps us draw some conclusions on the acceptability of prepositional accusatives in general.

Preverbal prepositional accusative with psychological verbs in absence of clitic doubling is largely accepted and it is probably already part of Standard Italian. With regard to causative verbs, the construction is marginally accepted (more than 50%) with peaks of 80.33% and 73% for I s. and II s., which denote a degree of acceptability similar to psych verbs in the same conditions. The grade of acceptability for sentences with non-psych verbs is around 50% for first and second persons and around 20% for third persons. These results lead us to hypothesise that prepositional accusative with non-psych verbs may be an expanding grammatical construction in Italian; thus, it is currently marginally acceptable for I and II
(singular and plural) but still unacceptable for III (singular and plural), on the basis of the scale of definiteness and humanness, and may expand in the future. We have seen that the presence of the clitic diminishes the acceptability, but this may be caused by the necessity to judge a colloquial and spoken form in a written questionnaire; we hypothesise that the use of these sentences in real conversations is actually much wider and may match the acceptability of sentences lacking clitic doubling.

All cases of postverbal prepositional accusative are widely unacceptable and thus may not be considered part of Standard Italian. This result is expected since in postverbal position, the need for a differential object marking is lost. Further research on real-life sentences, distance between verbs and prepositional accusatives in the sentences and judgement based on listening are required in order to better understand whether some postverbal prepositional accusative may be considered acceptable.

From these results, we can conclude that prepositional accusative exists in Italian and its use has clearly expanded since the publication of the studies by Nocentini (1985), Benincà (1986) and Berretta (1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1991). Preverbal prepositional accusative with psych verbs and causative verbs is widely used in Standard Italian and due to its acceptability with these kind of verbs, it may also be expanding towards the acceptability of non-psych verbs. On the other hand, it seems improbable that postverbal prepositional accusative may become acceptable since sentences with postverbal accusative follow the canonical word order and thus do not need differential object marking.
Conclusion

By means of four questionnaires specifically developed for this study, we have examined the acceptability of Italian sentences containing a prepositional accusative. The questionnaires contained all the possible combinations of the characteristics identified as crucial in the previous studies on prepositional accusative in Italian. Thus, we have been able to gather data on the acceptability of each combination and carry out some statistical analysis in order to understand which possibilities are accepted nowadays in Standard Italian.

The results show how frequently some prepositional accusatives are used in the Italian spoken in Northern Italy. Since this construction is broadly attested in Southern Italy, we can conclude that prepositional accusative is now a pan-Italian grammatical construct and thus, it belongs to the Italian language.

As we have seen, the most acceptable types of prepositional accusative are preverbal prepositional accusatives with psychological verbs in sentences that lack clitic doubling. Sentences with causative verbs in the same condition are mostly accepted for I s. and II s. but their acceptability diminish with third or plural persons (or both); the same trend can be seen for non-psychological verbs, even if with lower percentages of acceptability. This leads us to think that the prepositional accusative is an expanding construct with causative and non-psychological verbs although at different stages of development.

With regards to clitic presence, we have examined the controversial role of clitic doubling in Italian and the reasons why clitics might reduce the degree of acceptability of the sentences in which clitics are present. It is impossible to determine whether this trend might be reversed in the future.

In regard to postverbal position, this feature is currently unacceptable for Italian prepositional accusative and it is unlikely that it will be accepted in the near future because the Italian prepositional accusative in postverbal position does not present the characteristics of an expanding construct.

The hypotheses for the development of this construct in Italian are both the need for a case marker for non-canonically positioned direct objects at the beginning of
the sentence and the similarity to the 3rd category of psychological verbs identified by Belletti and Rizzi (intransitive verbs with subject Theme and dative Experiencer). According to our hypotheses, the prepositional accusative developed initially with psych verbs and then underwent (and is still undergoing) a process of generalization to similar grammatical environments.

In general, we notice that the accepted environments of usage of the prepositional accusative in Italian have expanded since both the first description of this phenomenon in Italian by Rohlfs (1970), who excluded its presence in Northern Italy, and the works of Berretta (1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1991). Moreover, some similarities with the use of prepositional accusative in other Romance languages (such as the use with repetition, psych verbs, left dislocation) may give us an idea of the direction of further developments of this grammatical construction in Italian. In summary, we cannot exactly predict whether the acceptable grammatical environment of the prepositional accusative in Italian will continue to expand and to what extent; however, the current state of this construct in Italian leads us to the above-mentioned previsions.

Finally, this study was developed in order to have a general idea on the current status of the prepositional accusative in Italian. As a consequence, further research focused on more narrow aspects of Italian prepositional accusative would be useful, since it would have been impossible to thoroughly examine each aspect of this topic, given the extent of the subject.
Appendix A

Here are given all the items of the questionnaires divided by typology. It is also indicated in which questionnaire each typology was included.

Psychological verb, preverbal accusative, clitic doubling (Questionnaire 1)

A. Is.1 A me non mi entusiasma neanche un po’.
A. Is.2 A me l’idea della tesi magistrale mi spaventava un sacco.
A. Is.3 A me, quando fai così, mi innervosisce.
A. Is.4 A me saperlo solo ora mi irrita.
A. Is.5 A me tutti quei tornanti mi nauseano.
A. Is.6 A me la carriera universitaria mi attrae.
A. IIs.1 A te quel comico ti diverte parecchio, vero?
A. IIs.2 Se a te una sciocchezza del genere ti ha convinto, buon per te.
A. IIs.3 A te la sua parlantina ti ha davvero confuso.
A. IIs.4 A te la sola vista del sangue ti disgusta.
A. IIs.5 A te ti sorprende davvero il comportamento di Gianni?
A. IIs.6 A te non ti preoccupa la piega che hanno preso le cose?
A. IIIIs.1 A Giorgio la presenza della polizia lo tranquillizza.
A. IIIIs.2 A Marco lo stupisce anche solo un semplice trucco di carte.
A. IIIIs.3 A Luca i racconti di quel signore lo incuriosivano molto.
A. IIIIs.4 Sappi che a Paola un film troppo semplice non la soddisfa quasi mai.
A. IIIIs.5 A Francesca quelle canzonette difficilmente la colpiscono.
A. IIIIs.6 A Lili una giornata in montagna la annoia.
A. Ip.1 A noi con così poco non ci sorprendi di certo.
A. Ip.2 A noi il film ci entusiasma ogni volta che lo vediamo.
A. Ip.3 A noi il concerto di quel gruppo ci ha annoiato a morte.
A. Ip.4 A noi sapere di poter contare su di te ci tranquillizza.
A. Ip.5 A noi provare le montagne russe non ci attrae affatto.
A. Ip.6 È inutile, a noi non ci diverte.
A. IIp.1 Che ne dite, a voi vi ha convinto?
A. IIp.2 Perdonatemi, a voi vi irrita se fumo?
A. IIp.3 Non riesco a credere che a voi vi abbia colpito.
A. IIp.4 A voi l’esame di inglese vi preoccupa?
A. IIp.5 A voi provare cose nuove vi incuriosisce sempre.
A. IIp.6 A voi non vi hanno confuso tutti quei giri di parole?
A. IIIp.1 A loro il tuo comportamento li innervosisce e basta.
A. IIIp.2 A loro una risposta evasiva non li soddisfa.
A. IIIp.3 A loro non li stupisce affatto, mi dispiace.
A. IIIp.4 A loro la tua presenza li rassicura.
A. IIIp.5 Com’è che a loro non li disgusta tutto quel sangue?
A. IIIp.6 A loro la piega che hanno preso gli eventi li spaventa.
Causative construction, preverbal accusative, clitic doubling (Questionnaire 3)

B. Is.1  A me mi hanno fatto lavorare tutta l’estate.
B. Is.2  A me vedere quel documentario mi ha fatto pensare.
B. Is.3  A me, con la scusa dell’emergenza, mi hanno fatto venire di corsa.
B. Is.4  Tu ti riposi, e a me mi fanno sgobbare come un mulo?
B. Is.5  A me quando ti comporti così mi fai preoccupare.
B. Is.6  A me quella strategia mi ha fatto perdere due volte.
B. Ills.1  A te il sonnifero ti ha fatto dormire bene.
B. Ills.2  A te ti fa arrabbiare se qualcuno si comporta male?
B. Ills.3  Anche a te ti hanno fatto correre da un ufficio all’altro?
B. Ills.4  A te quel contrattempo ti ha fatto partire molto in ritardo, vero?
B. Ills.5  A te quella ragazzata ti ha quasi fatto annegare.
B. Ills.6  A te quel film ti ha fatto riflettere?
B. IllIs.1  A Gianni quel comico lo fa divertire da morire.
B. IllIs.2  A Paolo il ritardo dell’amico lo fece innervosire.
B. IllIs.3  A Riccardo l’hanno fatto arrivare due ore in anticipo.
B. IllIs.4  A Silvia la fanno uscire da scuola qualche minuto prima per poter prendere l’autobus.
B. IllIs.5  A Caterina l’hanno fatta studiare tutto il pomeriggio.
B. IllIs.6  A Giuseppina la barzelletta di Carlo l’ha fatta ridere a crepapelle.
B. Ip.1  A noi la professoressa di educazione fisica ci ha fatto correre per un’ora.
B. Ip.2  Mi dispiace, a noi non ci fai ridere.
B. Ip.3  A noi ci hanno fatto uscire appena è suonato l’allarme antincendio.
B. Ip.4  A noi ogni sera alle dieci ci fanno dormire.
B. Ip.5  A noi ci fai sgobbare mentre loro si divertono?
B. Ip.6  A noi la conferenza sulla crisi di un’escalation militare ci ha fatto pensare.
B. IIp.1  A voi vi ha fatto perdere Giacomo, ha giocato malissimo.
B. IIp.2  A voi quando vi hanno fatto arrivare?
B. IIp.3  Non ci credo che a voi vi faccia divertire tanto.
B. IIp.4  Anche a voi vi fa innervosire questa ingiustizia, vero?
B. IIp.5  A voi vi hanno fatto venire in anticipo perché sanno che siete dei ritardatari.
B. IIp.6  Se a voi neanche quel discorso non vi ha fatto desistere, non c’è speranza.
B. IIIp.1  A loro la visione del film li ha fatti riflettere sul comportamento che tengono in classe.
B. IIIp.2  Perché a loro non li fai lavorare?
B. IIIp.3  A loro li fanno studiare il doppio.
B. IIIp.4  A loro la tua testardaggine li fa arrabbiare.
B. IIIp.5  A loro, dato che sono lenti, li fanno partire con un po’ di vantaggio.
B. IIIp.6  Non capisci che a loro il tuo rifiuto non li fa preoccupare affatto?
Non-psychological verb preverbal accusative, clitic doubling (Questionnaire 4)

C. Is.1 A me non mi fregate mica!
C. Is.2 A me mi ha salutato il rettore in persona.
C. Is.3 A me quel maledetto cane mi ha rincorso per un chilometro!
C. Is.4 A me l’arbitro mi ha espulso senza motivo.
C. Is.5 A me mi ha picchiato nonostante non avessi fatto niente di male.
C. Is.6 A me dal brutto giro in cui mi ero messo mi ha salvato tuo padre.
C. IIs.1 A te chi ti ha accompagnato?
C. IIs.2 A te non ti hanno mai scambiato per un’altra persona?
C. IIs.3 Non è giusto, a te non ti pungono mai.
C. IIs.4 A te ti hanno battezzato?
C. IIs.5 Vedo che anche a te ti hanno trascinato qua.
C. IIs.6 A te la nonna ti bacia ogni volta che la vai a trovare.
C. IIIs.1 A Roberto i suoi genitori l’hanno chiuso in camera pur di farlo studiare.
C. IIIs.2 A Francesco l’hanno inquisito recentemente.
C. IIIs.3 A Giovanni l’hanno punito per non essersi comportato bene.
C. IIIs.4 A Mara la perquisiscono sempre, ha una faccia sospetta.
C. IIIs.5 A Beatrice ormai l’hanno etichettata come quella secchiona.
C. IIIs.6 Com’è che a Natalia non la interrogano mai?
C. Ip.1 A noi ci hanno incaricato di sorvegliare i bambini.
C. Ip.2 A noi ci ha abbracciati uno ad uno.
C. Ip.3 A noi ci hanno fotografato di nascosto e senza chiederci l’autorizzazione.
C. Ip.4 A noi il professore ci ha ammonito verbalmente, senza metterci una nota sul registro.
C. Ip.5 A noi non ci hanno neanche ringraziato, la prossima volta facciamo a meno di aiutarli.
C. Ip.6 A noi ci hanno portato in taxi, altro che autobus!
C. IIp.1 A voi vi hanno aiutato durante l’esame?
C. IIp.2 A voi, per i brillanti risultati conseguiti, vi hanno scelto come titolari.
C. IIp.3 A voi non vi hanno ancora chiamato a fare la foto?
C. IIp.4 A voi vi hanno attaccato per le vostre posizioni estremiste.
C. IIp.5 A voi chi vi ha iscritto?
C. IIp.6 Non lamentatevi, a voi vi hanno guidato fino alla destinazione.
C. IIIp.1 A loro li protegge qualcuno di influente, evidentemente.
C. IIIp.2 A loro chi li ha autorizzati ad essere qua?
C. IIIp.3 Poverini, a loro li hanno cresciuti nel degrado più totale.
C. IIIp.4 A loro in orario di lavoro li hanno visti a spasso per il centro.
C. IIIp.5 A loro li hanno minacciati per farli desistere.
C. IIIp.6 A loro invece li hanno accusati di riciclaggio e concussione.
Psychological verb, preverbal accusative, lack of clitic doubling
(Questionnaire 2)

D. Is.1 A me non entusiasma neanche un po’.
D. Is.2 A me spaventava un sacco l’idea della tesi magistrale.
D. Is.3 A me innervosisce quando fai così.
D. Is.4 A me irrita saperlo solo ora.
D. Is.5 A me nauseano tutti quei tornanti.
D. Is.6 A me attrae la carriera universitaria.
D. IIs.1 A te quel comico diverte parecchio, vero?
D. IIs.2 Se a te ha convinto una sciocchezza del genere, buon per te.
D. IIs.3 A te ha davvero confuso la sua parlantina.
D. IIs.4 A te disgusta la sola vista del sangue.
D. IIs.5 A te sorprende davvero il comportamento di Gianni?
D. IIs.6 A te non preoccupa la piega che hanno preso le cose?
D. IIIs.1 A Giorgio tranquillizza la presenza della polizia.
D. IIIs.2 A Marco stupisce anche solo un semplice trucco di carte.
D. IIIs.3 A Luca i racconti di quel signore incuriosivano molto.
D. IIIs.4 Sappi che a Paola non soddisfa quasi mai un film troppo semplice.
D. IIIs.5 A Francesca quelle canzonette difficilmente colpiscono.
D. IIIs.6 A Lili annoia una giornata in montagna.
D. Ip.1 A noi non sorprendi di certo con così poco.
D. Ip.2 A noi il film entusiasma ogni volta che lo vediamo.
D. Ip.3 A noi il concerto di quel gruppo ha annullato a morte.
D. Ip.4 A noi tranquillizza sapere di poter contare su di te.
D. Ip.5 A noi non attrae affatto provare le montagne russe.
D. Ip.6 È inutile, a noi non diverte.
D. IIp.1 Che ne dite, a voi ha convinto?
D. IIp.2 Perdonatemi, a voi irrita se fumo?
D. IIp.3 Non riesco a credere che a voi abbia colpito.
D. IIp.4 A voi preoccupa l’esame di inglese?
D. IIp.5 A voi incuriosisce sempre provare cose nuove.
D. IIp.6 A voi non hanno confuso tutti quei giri di parole?
D. IIIp.1 A loro innervosisce e basta il tuo comportamento.
D. IIIp.2 A loro una risposta evasiva non soddisfa.
D. IIIp.3 A loro non stupisce affatto, mi dispiace.
D. IIIp.4 A loro la tua presenza rassicura.
D. IIIp.5 Com’è che a loro non disgusta tutto quel sangue?
D. IIIp.6 A loro spaventa la piega che hanno preso gli eventi.
Causative construction, preverbal accusative, lack of clitic doubling
(Questionnaire 4)

E. Is.1 A me hanno fatto lavorare tutta l’estate.
E. Is.2 A me vedere quel documentario ha fatto pensare.
E. Is.3 A me hanno fatto venire di corsa, con la scusa dell’emergenza.
E. Is.4 Tu ti riposi, e a me fanno sgobbare come un mulo?
E. Is.5 A me fai preoccupare quando ti comporti così.
E. Is.6 A me quella strategia ha fatto perdere due volte.
E. IIIs.1 A te il sonnifero ha fatto dormire bene.
E. IIIs.2 A te fa arrabbiare se qualcuno si comporta male?
E. IIIs.3 Anche a te hanno fatto correre da un ufficio all’altro?
E. IIIs.4 A te ha fatto partire molto in ritardo quel contrattempo, vero?
E. IIIs.5 A te quella ragazzata ha quasi fatto annegare.
E. IIIs.6 Il film di ieri a te non ha fatto riflettere?
E. IIIs.1 A Gianni quel comico fa divertire.
E. IIIs.2 A Paolo fece innervosire il ritardo dell’amico.
E. IIIs.3 A Riccardo hanno fatto arrivare due ore in anticipo.
E. IIIs.4 A Silvia fanno uscire da scuola qualche minuto prima, per poter prendere l’autobus.
E. IIIs.5 A Caterina hanno fatto studiare tutto il pomeriggio.
E. IIIs.6 A Giuseppina ha fatto ridere a crepapelle la barzelletta di Carlo.
E. Ip.1 A noi la professoressa di educazione fisica ha fatto correre per un’ora.
E. Ip.2 Mi dispiace, a noi non hai ridere.
E. Ip.3 A noi hanno fatto uscire appena è suonato l’allarme antincendio.
E. Ip.4 A noi fanno dormire ogni sera alle dieci.
E. Ip.5 A noi fai sgobbare mentre loro si divertono?
E. Ip.6 A noi la conferenza sulla crisi di un’escalation militare ha fatto pensare.
E. Ip.1 A voi ha fatto perdere Giacomo, ha giocato malissimo.
E. Ip.2 A voi quando hanno fatto arrivare?
E. Ip.3 Non ci credo che a voi faccia divertire tanto.
E. Ip.4 Anche a voi fa innervosire questa ingiustizia, vero?
E. Ip.5 A voi hanno fatto venire in anticipo perché sanno che siete dei ritardatari.
E. Ip.6 Se a voi non ha fatto desistere neanche quel discorso, non c’è speranza.
E. IIIp.1 A loro la visione del film ha fatto riflettere sul comportamento che tengono in classe.
E. IIIp.2 Perché a loro non hai lavorare?
E. IIIp.3 A loro fanno studiare il doppio.
E. IIIp.4 A loro fa arrabbiare la tua testardaggine.
E. IIIp.5 A loro fanno partire con un po’ di vantaggio, dato che sono lenti.
E. IIIp.6 Non capisci che a loro non fa preoccupare affatto il tuo rifiuto?
Non-psychological verb, preverbal accusative, lack of clitic doubling (Questionnaire 1)

F. Is.1 A me non fregate mica!
F. Is.2 A me ha salutato il rettore in persona.
F. Is.3 A me ha rincorso per un chilometro, quel maledetto cane!
F. Is.4 A me l’arbitro ha espulso senza motivo.
F. Is.5 A me ha picchiato nonostante non avessi fatto niente di male.
F. Is.6 A me, dal brutto giro in cui mi ero messo, ha salvato tuo padre.
F. IIs.1 A te chi ha accompagnato?
F. IIs.2 A te non hanno mai scambiato per un’altra persona?
F. IIs.3 Non è giusto, a te non pungono mai.
F. IIs.4 A te hanno battezzato?
F. IIs.5 Vedo che anche a te hanno trascinato qua.
F. IIs.6 A te la nonna bacia ogni volta che la vai a trovare.
F. III Is.1 A Roberto, pur di farlo studiare, i suoi genitori hanno chiuso in camera.
F. III Is.2 A Francesco hanno inquisito recentemente.
F. III Is.3 A Giovanni hanno punito per non essersi comportato bene.
F. III Is.4 A Mara perquisiscono sempre, ha una faccia sospetta.
F. III Is.5 A Beatrice ormai hanno etichettato come quella secchiona.
F. III Is.6 Com’è che a Natalia non interrogano mai?
F. Ip.1 A noi hanno incaricato di sorvegliare i bambini.
F. Ip.2 A noi ha abbracciato uno ad uno.
F. Ip.3 A noi hanno fotografato di nascosto e senza chiederci l’autorizzazione.
F. Ip.4 A noi il professore ha ammonito verbalmente, senza metterci una nota sul registro.
F. Ip.5 A noi non hanno neanche ringraziato, la prossima volta facciamo a meno di aiutarli.
F. Ip.6 A noi hanno portato in taxi, altro che autobus!
F. IIp.1 A voi hanno aiutato durante l’esame?
F. IIp.2 A voi, per i brillanti risultati conseguiti, hanno scelto come titolari.
F. IIp.3 A voi non hanno ancora chiamato a fare la foto?
F. IIp.4 A voi hanno attaccato per le vostre posizioni estremiste.
F. IIp.5 A voi chi ha iscritto?
F. IIp.6 Non lamentatevi, a voi hanno guidato fino alla destinazione.
F. IIIp.1 A loro protegge qualcuno di influente, evidentemente.
F. IIIp.2 A loro chi ha autorizzato ad essere qua?
F. IIIp.3 Poverini, a loro hanno cresciuto nel degrado più totale.
F. IIIp.4 A loro hanno visto a spasso per il centro in orario di lavoro.
F. IIIp.5 A loro per farli desistere hanno minacciato.
F. IIIp.6 A loro invece hanno accusato di riciclaggio e concussione.
Psychological verb, postverbal accusative, clitic doubling (Questionnaire 3)

G. Is.1 Non mi entusiasma neanche un po’, a me.
G. Is.2 L’idea della tesi magistrale mi spaventava un sacco, a me.
G. Is.3 Quando fai così mi innervosisci, a me.
G. Is.4 Saperlo solo ora mi irrita, a me.
G. Is.5 Mi nauseano tutti quei tornanti, a me.
G. Is.6 La carriera universitaria mi attrae, a me.
G. IIs.1 Quel comico ti diverte parecchio a te, vero?
G. IIs.2 Se una sciocchezza del genere ti ha convinto a te, bene.
G. IIs.3 La sua parlantina ti ha davvero confuso, a te.
G. IIs.4 La sola vista del sangue ti disgusta, a te.
G. IIs.5 Ti sorprende davvero il comportamento di Gianni, a te?
G. IIs.6 Non ti preoccupa la piega che hanno preso le cose a te?
G. IIIs.1 La presenza della polizia lo tranquillizza a Giorgio.
G. IIIs.2 Lo stupisce anche solo un semplice trucco di carte a Marco.
G. IIIs.3 I racconti di quel signore lo incuriosivano molto a Luca.
G. IIIs.4 Sappi che un film troppo semplice non la soddisfa quasi mai a Paola.
G. IIIs.5 Quelle canzonette difficilmente la colpiscono a Francesca.
G. IIIs.6 Una giornata in montagna la annoia a Lili.
G. Ip.1 Non ci sorprendi di certo con così poco, a noi.
G. Ip.2 Il film ci entusiasma ogni volta che lo vediamo a noi.
G. Ip.3 Il concerto di quel gruppo ci ha annoiato a morte, a noi.
G. Ip.4 Sapere di poter contare su di te ci tranquillizza, a noi.
G. Ip.5 Provare le montagne russe non ci attre affatto, a noi.
G. Ip.6 È inutile, non ci diverte a noi.
G. Ip.1 Che ne dite, vi ha convinto a voi?
G. Ip.2 Perdonatemi, vi irrita a voi se fumo?
G. Ip.3 Non riesco a credere che vi abbia colpito, a voi.
G. Ip.4 L’esame di inglese vi preoccupa a voi?
G. Ip.5 Provare cose nuove vi incuriosisce sempre, a voi.
G. Ip.6 Non vi hanno confuso tutti quei giri di parole, a voi?
G. IIIp.1 Il tuo comportamento mi innervosisce e basta, a loro.
G. IIIp.2 Non ti soddisfa una risposta evasiva, a loro.
G. IIIp.3 Non li stupisce affatto a loro, mi dispiace.
G. IIIp.4 La tua presenza li rassicura a loro.
G. IIIp.5 Com’è che non li disgusta tutto quel sangue, a loro?
G. IIIp.6 La piega che hanno preso gli eventi li spaventa a loro.
Causative construction, postverbal accusative, clitic doubling (Questionnaire 1)

H. Is.1 Mi hanno fatto lavorare tutta l’estate, a me.
H. Is.2 Vedere quel documentario mi ha fatto pensare, a me.
H. Is.3 Con la scusa dell’emergenza mi hanno fatto venire di corsa, a me.
H. Is.4 Tu ti riposi, e mi fanno sgobbare come un mulo a me?
H. Is.5 Quando ti comporti così mi fai preoccupare, a me.
H. Is.6 Mi ha fatto perdere due volte a me quella strategia.
H. IIs.1 Il sonnifero ti ha fatto dormire bene, a te.
H. IIs.2 Ti fa arrabbiare a te se qualcuno si comporta male?
H. IIs.3 Ti hanno fatto correre da un ufficio all’altro anche a te?
H. IIs.4 Quel contrattempo ti ha fatto partire molto in ritardo a te, vero?
H. IIs.5 Quella ragazzata ti ha quasi fatto annegare, a te.
H. IIs.6 Il film di ieri non ti ha fatto riflettere a te?
H. IIIs.1 Il ritardo dell’amico lo fece innervosire, a Paolo.
H. IIIs.2 L’hanno fatto arrivare due ore in anticipo a Riccardo.
H. IIIs.3 Per poter prendere l’autobus la fanno uscire da scuola qualche minuto prima, a Silvia.
H. IIIs.4 L’hanno fatta studiare tutto il pomeriggiio, a Caterina.
H. IIIs.5 La barzelletta di Carlo l’ha fatta ridere a crepapelle, a Giuseppina.
H. Ip.1 La professoressa di educazione fisica ci ha fatto correre per un’ora, a noi.
H. Ip.2 Mi dispiace, non ci fai ridere a noi.
H. Ip.3 Ci hanno fatto uscire appena è suonato l’allarme antincendio, a noi.
H. Ip.4 Ci fanno dormire ogni sera alle dieci, a noi.
H. Ip.5 Ci fai sgobbare a noi mentre loro si divertono?
H. Ip.6 La conferenza sulla crisi di un’escalation militare ci ha fatto pensare, a noi.
H. Ip.1 Vi ha fatto perdere Giacomo a voi, ha giocato malissimo.
H. Ip.2 Quando vi hanno fatto arrivare, a voi?
H. Ip.3 Non ci credo che vi faccia divertire tanto, a voi.
H. Ip.4 Vi fa innervosire anche a voi questa ingiustizia, vero?
H. Ip.5 Vi hanno fatto venire in anticipo a voi perché sanno che siete dei ritardatari.
H. Ip.6 Se neanche quel discorso non vi ha fatto desistere, a voi, non c’è speranza.
H. IIIp.1 La visione del film li ha fatti riflettere sul comportamento che tengono in classe, a loro.
H. IIIp.2 Perché non li fai lavorare, a loro?
H. IIIp.3 Li fanno studiare il doppio a loro.
H. IIIp.4 La tua testardaggine li fa arrabbiare, a loro.
H. IIIp.5 Dato che sono lenti, li fanno partire con un po’ di vantaggio, a loro.
H. IIIp.6 Non capisci che il tuo rifiuto non li fa preoccupare affatto, a loro?
Non-psychological verb, postverbal accusative, clitic doubling (Questionnaire 2)

I. Is.1 Non mi fregate mica, a me!
I. Is.2 Mi ha salutato il rettore in persona, a me.
I. Is.3 Quel maledetto cane mi ha rincorso per un chilometro a me!
I. Is.4 L’arbitro mi ha espulso senza motivo, a me.
I. Is.5 Mi ha picchiato nonostante non avessi fatto niente di male, a me.
I. Is.6 Dal brutto giro in cui mi ero messo mi ha salvato tuo padre a me.
I. IIs.1 Chi ti ha accompagnato, a te?
I. IIs.2 Non ti hanno mai scambiato per un’altra persona a te?
I. IIs.3 Non è giusto, non ti pungono mai a te.
I. IIs.4 Ma ti hanno battezzato a te?
I. IIs.5 Vedo che ti hanno trascinato anche a te qua.
I. IIs.6 Ogni volta che la vai a trovare la nonna ti bacia a te.
I. IIIs.1 I suoi genitori l’hanno chiuso in camera pur di farlo studiare, a Roberto.
I. IIIs.2 L’hanno inquisito recentemente a Francesco.
I. IIIs.3 L’hanno punito per non essersi comportato bene, a Giovanni.
I. IIIs.4 La perquisiscono sempre, a Mara, ha una faccia sospetta.
I. IIIs.5 Ormai l’hanno etichettata come quella secchiona, a Beatrice.
I. IIIs.6 Com’è che non la interrogano mai a Natalia?
I. Ip.1 Ci hanno incaricato di sorvegliare i bambini, a noi.
I. Ip.2 Ci ha abbracciato uno ad uno, a noi.
I. Ip.3 Ci hanno fotografato di nascosto, a noi, e senza chiederci l’autorizzazione.
I. Ip.4 Il professore ci ha ammonito verbalmente, a noi, senza metterci una nota sul registro.
I. Ip.5 Non ci hanno neanche ringraziato, a noi, la prossima volta facciamo a meno di aiutarli.
I. Ip.6 Ci hanno portato in taxi a noi, altro che autobus!
I. IIp.1 Vi hanno aiutato durante l’esame a voi?
I. IIp.2 Per i brillanti risultati conseguiti vi hanno scelto come titolari, a voi.
I. IIp.3 Non vi hanno ancora chiamato a fare la foto a voi?
I. IIp.4 Vi hanno attaccato per le vostre posizioni estreme, a voi.
I. IIp.5 Chi vi ha iscritto a voi?
I. IIp.6 Non lamentatevi, vi hanno guidato fino alla destinazione a voi.
I. IIIp.1 Li protegge qualcuno di influente a loro, evidentemente.
I. IIIp.2 Chi li ha autorizzati ad essere qua a loro?
I. IIIp.3 Poverini, li hanno cresciuti nel degrado più totale, a loro.
I. IIIp.4 In orario di lavoro li hanno visti a spasso per il centro, a loro.
I. IIIp.5 Li hanno minacciati per farli desistere, a loro.
I. IIIp.6 Li hanno accusati di riciclaggio e concussione, a loro.
Psychological verb, postverbal accusative, lack of clitic doubling (Questionnaire 4)

J. Is.1 Non entusiasma neanche un po’, a me.
J. Is.2 L’idea della tesi magistrale spaventava un sacco, a me.
J. Is.3 Quando fai così innervosisci a me.
J. Is.4 Irrita a me saperlo solo ora.
J. Is.5 Tutti quei tornanti nauseano, a me.
J. Is.6 La carriera universitaria attrae, a me.
J. IIs.1 Quel comico diverte parecchio a te, vero?
J. IIs.2 Ha convinto a te una sciocchezza del genere? Bene.
J. IIs.3 Ha davvero confuso a te la sua parlatina.
J. IIs.4 La sola vista del sangue disgusta, a te.
J. IIs.5 Davvero il comportamento di Gianni sorprende, a te?
J. IIs.6 La piega che hanno preso le cose non preoccupa a te?
J. IIIs.1 Tranquillizza, a Giorgio, la presenza della polizia.
J. IIIs.2 Anche solo un semplice trucco di carte stupisce, a Marco.
J. IIIs.3 I racconti di quel signore incuriosivano molto a Luca.
J. IIIs.4 Sappi che un film troppo semplice non soddisfa quasi mai a Paola.
J. IIIs.5 Quelle canzonette difficilmente colpiscono a Francesca.
J. IIIs.6 Una giornata in montagna annoia, a Lili.
J. Ip.1 Con così poco di certo non sorprendi, a noi.
J. Ip.2 Ogni volta che lo vediamo il film entusiasma, a noi.
J. Ip.3 Il concerto di quel gruppo ha annoiato a morte, a noi.
J. Ip.4 Tranquillizza a noi sapere di poter contare su di te.
J. Ip.5 Provare le montagne russe non attrae affatto, a noi.
J. Ip.6 È inutile, non diverte a noi.
J. IIp.1 Che ne dite, ha convinto a voi?
J. IIp.2 Perdonatemi, se fumo irrita a voi?
J. IIp.3 Non riesco a credere che abbia colpito a voi.
J. IIp.4 L’esame di inglese preoccupa a voi?
J. IIp.5 Incuriosisce sempre a voi provare cose nuove.
J. IIp.6 Non hanno confuso, a voi, tutti quei giri di parole?
J. IIIp.1 Il tuo comportamento innervosisce e basta a loro.
J. IIIp.2 Una risposta evasiva non soddisfa a loro.
J. IIIp.3 Non stupisce affatto a loro, mi dispiace.
J. IIIp.4 La tua presenza rassicura, a loro.
J. IIIp.5 Com’è che tutto quel sangue non disgusta a loro?
J. IIIp.6 La piega che hanno preso gli eventi spaventa, a loro.
Causative construction, postverbal accusative, lack of clitic doubling (Questionnaire 2)

K. Is.1 Hanno fatto lavorare tutta l’estate, a me.
K. Is.2 Ha fatto pensare, a me, vedere quel documentario.
K. Is.3 Con la scusa dell’emergenza hanno fatto venire di corsa a me.
K. Is.4 Tu ti riposi, e fanno sgobbare a me come un mulo?
K. Is.5 Fai preoccupare, a me, quando ti comporti così.
K. Is.6 Ha fatto perdere due volte quella strategia, a me.
K. IIs.1 Ha fatto dormire bene a te il sonnifero.
K. IIs.2 Fa arrabbiare a te se qualcuno si comporta male?
K. IIs.3 Hanno fatto correre da un ufficio all’altro anche a te?
K. IIs.4 Quel contrattempo ha fatto partire molto in ritardo a te, vero?
K. IIs.5 Quella ragazzata ha quasi fatto annegare, a te.
K. IIs.6 Non ha fatto riflettere il film di ieri, a te?
K. IIIs.1 Quel comico fa divertire da morire, a Gianni.
K. IIIs.2 Il ritardo dell’amico fece innervosire, a Paolo.
K. IIIs.3 Hanno fatto arrivare due ore in anticipo, a Riccardo.
K. IIIs.4 Per poter prendere l’autobus fanno uscire da scuola qualche minuto prima, a Silvia.
K. IIIs.5 Hanno fatto studiare tutto il pomeriggio, a Caterina.
K. IIIs.6 La barzelletta di Carlo ha fatto ridere a crepapelle, a Giuseppina.
K. Ip.1 Ha fatto correre per un’ora a noi la professoressa di educazione fisica.
K. Ip.2 Mi dispiace, non fai ridere a noi.
K. Ip.3 Appena è suonato l’allarme antincendio hanno fatto uscire, a noi.
K. Ip.4 Fanno dormire ogni sera alle dieci, a noi.
K. Ip.5 Fai sgobbare a noi mentre loro si divertono?
K. Ip.6 La conferenza sulla crisi di un’escalation militare ha fatto pensare, a noi.
K. Ip.1 Ha fatto perdere Giacomo a voi, ha giocato malissimo.
K. Ip.2 Quando hanno fatto arrivare a voi?
K. Ip.3 Non ci credo che faccia divertire tanto, a voi.
K. Ip.4 Fa innervosire anche a voi questa ingiustizia, vero?
K. Ip.5 Hanno fatto venire in anticipo a voi perché sanno che siete dei ritardatari.
K. Ip.6 Se neanche quel discorso ha fatto desistere, a voi, non c’è speranza.
K. IIp.1 La visione del film ha fatto riflettere a loro sul comportamento che tengono in classe.
K. IIp.2 Perché non fai lavorare a loro?
K. IIp.3 Fanno studiare il doppio, a loro.
K. IIp.4 La tua testardaggine fa arrabbiare, a loro.
K. IIp.5 Dato che sono lenti, fanno partire con un po’ di vantaggio a loro.
K. IIp.6 Non capisci che il tuo rifiuto non fa preoccupare affatto a loro?
Non-psychological verb, postverbal accusative, lack of clitic doubling (Questionnaire 3)

L. Is.1 Non fregate mica, a me!
L. Is.2 Ha salutato il rettore in persona a me.
L. Is.3 Quel maledetto cane ha rincorso per un chilometro a me!
L. Is.4 L’arbitro ha espulso senza motivo, a me.
L. Is.5 Nonostante non avessi fatto niente di male, ha picchiato a me.
L. Is.6 Ha salvato tuo padre a me dal brutto giro in cui mi ero messo.
L. IIs.1 Chi ha accompagnato, a te?
L. IIs.2 Non hanno mai scambiato per un’altra persona, a te?
L. IIs.3 Non è giusto, non pungono mai a te.
L. IIs.4 Ma hanno battezzato a te?
L. IIs.5 Vedo che hanno trascinato anche a te qua.
L. IIs.6 Ogni volta che la vai a trovare la nonna bacia, a te.
L. IIIs.1 I suoi genitori hanno chiuso in camera a Roberto pur di farlo studiare.
L. IIIs.2 Hanno inquisito recentemente, a Francesco.
L. IIIs.3 Hanno punito per non essersi comportato bene, a Giovanni.
L. IIIs.4 Perquisiscono sempre a Mara, ha una faccia sospetta.
L. IIIs.5 Ormai hanno etichettato a Beatrice come quella secchiona.
L. IIIs.6 Com’è che non interrogano mai a Natalia?
L. Ip.1 Hanno incaricato a noi di sorvegliare i bambini.
L. Ip.2 Ha abbracciato a noi, uno ad uno.
L. Ip.3 Hanno fotografato di nascosto, a noi, e senza chiederci l’autorizzazione.
L. Ip.4 Il professore ha ammonito verbalmente, a noi, senza metterci una nota sul registro.
L. Ip.5 Non hanno neanche ringraziato, a noi, la prossima volta facciamo a meno di aiutarli.
L. Ip.6 Hanno portato in taxi a noi, altro che autobus!
L. IIp.1 Hanno aiutato durante l’esame, a voi?
L. IIp.2 Per i brillanti risultati conseguiti hanno scelto come titolari a voi.
L. IIp.3 Non hanno ancora chiamato a fare la foto, a voi?
L. IIp.4 Hanno attaccato a voi per le vostre posizioni estremiste.
L. IIp.5 Chi ha iscritto a voi?
L. IIp.6 Non lamentatevi, hanno guidato fino alla destinazione a voi.
L. IIIp.1 Protegge qualcuno di influente a loro, evidentemente.
L. IIIp.2 Chi ha autorizzato a loro ad essere qua?
L. IIIp.3 Poverini, hanno cresciuto nel degrado più totale, a loro.
L. IIIp.4 In orario di lavoro hanno visto a spasso per il centro a loro.
L. IIIp.5 Hanno minacciato per farli desistere, a loro.
L. IIIp.6 Hanno accusato di riciclaggio e concussione, a loro.
Appendix B

Here are given the percentage of items considered acceptable, unacceptable and doubts for each item. The items are identified by typology, person and number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Ac</th>
<th>Un</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Ac</th>
<th>Un</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Ac</th>
<th>Un</th>
<th>?</th>
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<tr>
<td>A. Is. 1</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>B. Is. 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>C. Is. 1</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td>A. Is. 2</td>
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<td>42%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>B. Is. 2</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>C. Is. 2</td>
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<td>46%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>C. Is. 3</td>
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<td>56%</td>
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<td>4%</td>
<td>B. Is. 4</td>
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<td>72%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>C. Is. 4</td>
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<td>66%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Is. 5</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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Bibliography and sitography


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