



Università  
Ca' Foscari  
Venezia

Master's Degree  
in Language Sciences  
Final Thesis

# **The Expression of Indefiniteness in Sardinian and the Regional Italian of Sardinia**

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Matriculation number

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**Academic Year**

2022 / 2023



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## **Abstract**

This work aims at investigating the expression of indefiniteness in bilingual Sardinian-Italian speakers. Previous studies conducted on Italo-Romance varieties and the informal Italian spoken in such areas revealed a great variation of forms, with four determiners (ZERO, ART, DI and DI+ART) being the most frequent ones; such studies investigated also syntactic, sentential, and semantic features that may influence the occurrence of one rather than another determiner, in order to determine whether they undergo true or apparent optionality. In the present study, two forms on the online software Qualtrics were created, one in Campidanese Sardinian and Italian and the other one in Logudorese Sardinian and Italian. A total of 132 participants took part in the experiment that consisted of a battery of sociolinguistic questions, a battery of questions adapted from the Bilingual language profile (BLP) to assess the language dominance of the participants and a Forced-Choice (FC) task consisting of 72 multiple choice items. In this last set of questions, the participants had to express acceptability judgments of the determiners' occurrence in different contexts. In absolute terms, the most selected determiners were unsurprisingly respectively ZERO and ART in the two Sardinian varieties and in Italian. No notable variation was found to be dependent on clause type, noun class or semantic specialization. However, interesting results were found in the resumptive clitics in a CLLD context: both ZERO and DI were accepted combined with a resumptive accusative clitic in Sardinian. This may lead to hypothesize a difference in the case marking of such clitics in Sardinian.

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

The Italian context provides a very interesting context for variational linguistics and sociolinguistics. Several transformations in the speakers' repertoire lead, in less than two centuries, to a bilingual context characterized by vertical bilingualism. A standard language, Italian and several local languages, the so-called Italian dialects or Italo-Romance varieties provide a rich and interesting set of diatopic variations, that characterize also the main topic of this study, namely the indefinite expressions.

Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018), based on data reported in three AIS maps, list the different forms of indefinite determiners that are found in Italo-Romance varieties spoken in the last century: the zero determiner (i.e. bare nouns, henceforth ZERO), the definite article with an indefinite interpretation (henceforth ART), the indefinite operator (henceforth DI), the partitive determiner (henceforth DI+ART). They argue for a unified syntactic analysis of such determiners, following Giusti (2002, 2015). According to this theory, such indefinite determiners are simple DPs that host the indefinite operator DI in the specifier, while the head D realizes Gender and Number concord features, as well as the distinction between accusative and partitive case in the form of ART. These forms may be overt or covert, a variation explained assuming different possible interactions between nano-parameters and micro-parameters (in Biberauer and Roberts's (2012) terms) within the structure of the DP. While the micro-parameter rules the realization of concord features on the head, the nano-parameter concerns the lexical realization of the indefinite determiner (i.e. as ZERO or DI) in SpecDP. The high degree of variability across the peninsula is explained by the fact that, as noted by Biberauer et al. (2014), micro-parameters and nano-parameters are unstable.

Furthermore, Cardinaletti and Giusti (2020) interpret the geographical distribution of these options in the different Italo-Romance varieties as a result of Bartoli's lateral area norm, with the innovative trait originated in the centre and the previous, diachronically older, trait surviving at the peripheries. This results in a very wide variation that does not only entail the local languages, but also Italian in its diatopic varieties. Indeed, according to the authors the dialectal substratum is responsible for the great availability of indefinite determiners displayed in Italian.

First, ZERO is mostly found in peripheral Central, Southern and Insular Italy, despite being present in some northern areas as well (cf (1a)). Second, ART is found across the whole Italy and interpreted as the innovative trait (cf (1b)). Third, DI is found in North-Western varieties and particularly productive in combination with partitive objects under negation (see also Garzonio and Poletto 2020), but ungrammatical in Italian in any context (cf. (1c)). Fourth, DI+ART is a typical feature of Gallo-Italic dialects of the Po valley, although also productive in Standard Italian (cf (1d)). This determiner seems to be the result of the encounter between the indefinite partitive construction of the Gallic area and the innovative definite determiner with indefinite interpretation of Central Italy. Finally, although not part of the unified syntactic structure we mentioned above and not found in the AIS maps, the determiner *certo/a/i/e* ('certain') is attested throughout the peninsula. However, in neo-standard Italian and in most dialects (except arguably for some southern varieties) it conveys a specialized meaning (i.e. 'with specific reference' or 'of a special type') (cf. (1e)):

- (1) a. Ho raccolto violette.  
 b. Ho raccolto le violette.  
 c. Ho raccolto di violette.  
 d. Ho raccolto delle violette.  
 e. #Ho raccolto certe violette.
- [I]have picked ZERO/ART/DI /DI+ART/certain violets  
 'I picked violets'

Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) note that in different syntactic, sentential, and semantic environments one form may be preferred over another, and some of them may even be ruled out. These traits are polarity, scope, clause type, aspect, and noun class (i.e. mass vs. plural count). In each context, which is defined by a certain combination of the above-mentioned traits together

with the syntactic position, different semantic specializations are found. The issue is therefore to establish to what extent variation serves semantic specialization or gives rise to true optionality.

	ZERO	ART	DI+ART	DI
Object position	+	+	+	0
Subject position	-	# <sup>3</sup>	+	0
Polarity	+	+	+	0
Wide scope	+	+	+	0
Narrow scope	-	#	+	0
Generic sentences				
i. present	+	+	-	0
ii. past	?	?	?	0
Episodic sentences				
i. present	+	+	+	0
ii. past	+	+	+	0
Mass nouns	+	+	+	0
Plural count nouns	+	+	+	0
Core indefiniteness	+	+	-	0
Specificity	-	-	+	0
Saliency	-	+	-	0
Small quantity	-	-	+	0

*Table 1: different feature interacting with the expression of indefiniteness in Italian, as noted by Giusti (2021), quoted by Procentese (2021).*

The present research focuses on the indefinite determiners available in Sardinian-Italian bilingual speakers. More precisely, our research questions are the following:

- How many indefinite determiners are available in Sardinian and in the regional Italian variety of Sardinia? What is their probability of acceptability in each of these varieties?
- How do they behave with respect to some of the traits individuated by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018), namely episodic sentences in the past vs. habitual sentences in the present and mass vs. plural count nouns?
- What is the nature of the great variation found? Is it the result of true optionality between the competing forms? Do they, instead, specialize for meaning?
- How do they behave in Clitic Left dislocation (CLLD) in different contexts? Which are their resumptive options?



- Can we advance some hypothesis regarding contact between the local language and Italian in the bilectal environment we are dealing with?

In order to answer these research questions, we created two online-based questionnaires (one for each macro-variety of Sardinian) through the web-based tool Qualtrics (2000). The questionnaire was divided in three sections that included a battery of socio-demographic questions, a battery of questions adapted from the Bilingual language profile (BLP) scale (Birdsong, Gertken, and Amengual 2012) to assess language dominance of our bilectal participants and a Forced-Choice (FC) task asking for acceptability judgments in Italian and Sardinian. The stimuli included in the FC task were, for each questionnaire, 192 experimental sentences and 96 filler sentences, reaching a total of 72 questions<sup>1</sup>. This last battery was administered twice, once in Italian and the other in Sardinian. It was recommended to complete the second task in a second moment, in order to reduce language interference. The order of completion between the two languages was randomized, as well as the internal order of appearance of the different stimuli.

Our results show that:

- In Sardinian the available indefinite determiners are ZERO and ART, while in the regional Italian of Sardinia these are ZERO, ART and DI+ART.
- A true optionality rather than a specialization of meaning seems to be the cause of variation, although in the regional Italian of Sardinia we may interpret ZERO and ART as freely core-indefinites while DI+ART conveys a small quantity interpretation.
- In Italian CLLDed sentences ZERO and DI are resumed by the quantitative clitic *ne* while ART and more marginally DI+ART are resumed by the accusative clitic. In Sardinian, DI and ZERO are mostly resumed by the quantitative clitic, but with a resumptive accusative ART along with ZERO and, less frequently, DI were judged acceptable.
- Subjects with Italian dominance display a higher acceptability of ART in Sardinian, which can be interpreted as contact with Italian, while the preference for ZERO in the regional Italian may be interpreted as contact of the local language over Italian.

This work is divided into five Chapters:

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<sup>1</sup> Following the findings of Cardinaletti and Giusti (2020), all the experimental sentences included negation and had the indefinite determiner in object position. These are the best contexts to test for optionality, although we selected only a few traits not to make the experiment too long.

- Chapter 2 is dedicated to briefly introducing the sociolinguistic, variational, and language contact context of the Italo-Romance varieties. By doing this, we can explain some interactions between the local language and Italian in Sardinia, as well as define some terminology such as that of regional Italian.
- Chapter 3 introduces the current studies on partitivity and indefiniteness. The aim is to identify the syntactic and semantic similarities and dissimilarities between indefiniteness and partitivity. This will help us narrow down the topic of our research.
- Chapter 4 focuses on previous studies on the expression of indefiniteness in Italian and the Italo-Romance varieties, as well as the creation of a Protocol methodology to better account for the many facets of this phenomenon.
- Chapter 5 introduces the Italo-Romance variety at stake, that is Sardinian. The linguistic and sociolinguistic contexts is overviewed. We also provide an analysis of traditional literature on the expression of indefiniteness in Sardinian in order to produce some expectations concerning our research.
- Chapter 6 provides a description of the experiment, shows its results and discusses them in order to draw conclusions.
- Chapter 7 briefly summarises the conclusions of our research.

## CHAPTER 2

### **The Italian sociolinguistic situation: variation and contact in a biletal environment**

The present study aims at investigating the variation found in the expression of indefiniteness in Sardinian and regional Italian of Sardinia. Previous related studies found contacts between the Italo-Romance varieties and the regional Italian of a given area. Hence, it appears crucial to investigate the sociolinguistic and variational context at issue, in order to better grasp the contact phenomena it may produce. Italy offers indeed a very interesting context as regards linguistic variation. Italians' linguistic repertoire<sup>2</sup> includes at least the national language and a dialect. However, both varieties can display themselves in a series of discrete and less discrete manifestations as if they were in a *continuum*<sup>3</sup>, favouring many contact instances. Besides, the term dialect is controversial, and it is worth trying to illustrate the differences with respect to a language. Consequently, we use the term variety to uncontroversially describe any linguistic manifestation in any of its variation directions<sup>4</sup>.

This chapter is organised as follows: §2.1 will be entirely dedicated to distinguishing between Italian and the local Italo-Romance varieties, trying to disambiguate terms such as language and dialect and illustrating a summary of the variational context. §2.2 will instead account for the relation these two varieties assume in the Italian bilingual context, what functions they cover and in §2.3 what contact phenomena they display. Finally, §2.4 will briefly introduce some methodological and theoretical issues regarding the assessment of bilingual dominance.

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<sup>2</sup> We refer to the notion of linguistic repertoire pioneered by John Gumperz in the early 1960s, initially defined as 'verbal repertoire' (Gumperz 1960, 1964). The notion of repertoire is linked to a particular speech community and 'contains all the accepted ways of formulating messages. It provides the weapons of everyday communication. Speakers choose among this arsenal in accordance with the meanings they wish to convey' (Gumperz 1964:138). For a full discussion on the 'linguistic repertoire' see Busch (2012).

<sup>3</sup> The term dialectal continuum accounts for the variation between varieties geographically adjacent. However, we use it like in Pellegrini (1960) and Berruto (1987a) in terms of a sociolinguistics continuum. It describes all the intermediary language occurrences that may be conceived as in a spectrum between two polarised varieties (in this case, Italian and the Italo-Romance variety) within a speech community.

<sup>4</sup> Sociolinguistic variation follows four relevant directions: basing on De Saussure's (1916) diachrony (development and evolution of a language through history), Coseriu (1971) coined the terms diastatia, which indicates variation according to societal factors, diaphasia which accounts for domain and functional variation (formal or informal registers, slangs and jargons) and diatopia, geographical variation displayed by a variety. Diamesia (variation according to the medium: spoken or written) was added later to the variational context (Mioni 1983).

## 2.1 Italian and Italian dialects

Internal linguistics alone is not sufficient to account for the difference between a dialect and a language: both varieties possess their own phonemic inventory, their own phonotactics, morphological and syntactic rules as well as their own lexicon. Nonetheless, the term dialect has often been used to negatively indicate a corrupted version of a language, even when dealing with varieties that Coseriu (1980) defines *primäre Dialekte*<sup>5</sup>. From a diachronic point of view, this is exactly the case of most Italian dialects.

The need to look also at external linguistic properties to grasp the difference between dialect and language is clear to Heinz Kloss (1967) and his framework that differentiates between *Abstandsprache*, *Ausbausprache* and *Dachsprache*. The first term, *Abstandsprache*, may be translated into 'language by distance' and indicates a cluster of varieties that is distinctly separate from any other language. The way this typological distance/difference is conceived is nonetheless ambiguous and includes mutual intelligibility and genealogical distance measures. Conversely, *Ausbausprache* may be translated into 'language by development'. This concept refers to the development of a standard variety from a dialectal *continuum* and is closely related to the standardisation process and notions of prestige and norm. *Dachsprache* translates into "roofing language" and describes the process of an *ausbau* language providing a roof over dependent varieties, namely the relation between a standardised variety and non-standardised ones. Crucially, the varieties covered by a *Dachsprache* are not necessarily part of the same dialectal *continuum* from which the standard is determined, nor do they need to be mutually intelligible or genealogically related to it. These varieties can indeed be full *Abstandsprachen* for typological reasons and lack of mutual intelligibility, although they did not develop into *Ausbausprache*;

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<sup>5</sup> Coseriu (1980) claims the impossibility to differentiate language and dialect by typological features and distinguishes between *primärer Dialekt* and *sekundärer Dialekt*. On the one hand, the former term refers to those varieties considered dialects even though they underwent a contemporary but independent evolution along with the variety that in a second moment began to be considered a language for external linguistic criteria. On the other hand, the latter term refers to a subsequent variation that a language displays in a given geographical area. Adapting the two terms to our sociolinguistic context, they reflect the Italo-Romance varieties and the regional informal Italian varieties that emerged after the Unification of the Kingdom of Italy (1861) and the consequent spread of Italian within it. Coseriu also accounts for the differentiations that a language undergoes with regard to other social and situational variables opposed to the fully developed linguistic norm of the standard. He defines a variety of this sort a *tertiäre Dialekte* (for further discussion on the topic see Regis (2017)). Other examples of *sekundäre Dialekte* are the different varieties of Spanish, English, French and Portuguese spoken in the former colonies of the respective empires.

they are defined near-dialectalised sister languages<sup>6</sup>: varieties subordinated to a typologically related but non mutually intelligible *Ausbausprache*

### 2.1.1 The Italo-Romance varieties

Romance varieties are the product of independent development of spoken Latin throughout history. Geolinguistics exploits geographical maps to show distribution of such varieties using as borders some essential linguistic features- known as isoglosses- that change over space.

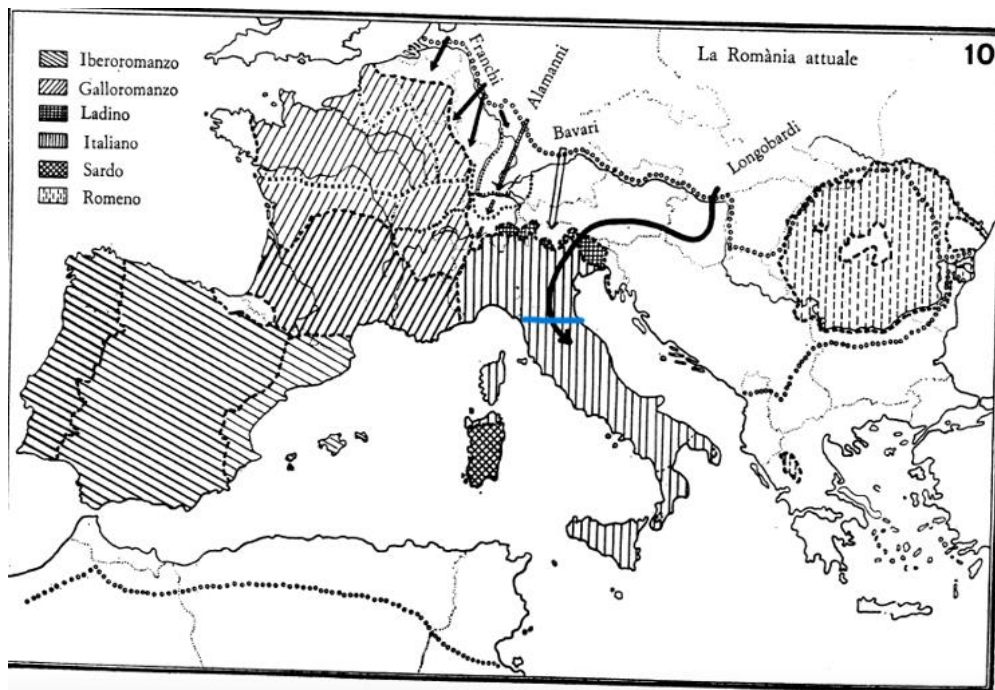


Figure 1: The Romania Continua. The signalled bundle of isoglosses that creates the La Spezia-Rimini line, determines the divide between Western and Centre-Eastern Romania (Von Wartburg 1950: Chart 10).

This area is called *Romania* in traditional Romance philology and can be conceived as a linguistic *continuum* (*Romania continua*) of such related varieties whose different traits create borders. *Figure 1* visualises a geolinguistic map of *Romania*: we can distinguish several macro-varieties according to the features they share, but most importantly we differentiate between Western *Romania* and Central-Eastern *Romania*. The bundle of isoglosses<sup>7</sup> tracking this border is known

<sup>6</sup> Kloss (1967) brings examples such as Low Saxon (roofed by Standard German), Occitan and Haitian Creole (roofed by French), and, crucially, Sardinian (roofed by Italian).

<sup>7</sup> The isoglosses of such a bundle include:

as La Spezia-Rimini<sup>8</sup> line. Western *Romania* varieties include Ibero-Romance, Gallo-Romance and Rhaeto-Romance<sup>9</sup>, while Central-Eastern *Romania* includes Romanian, and most varieties spoken in Italy. Sardinian cannot be categorised since it displays mixed traits (see §5.1). Crucially, the Italo-Romance varieties undergo very important divisions between the northern and the centre-southern ones. This explains the richness of variation they display.

Pellegrini (1977) offers a detailed atlas of the Italo-Romance varieties. Excluding the alloglot varieties mainly found at the northern borders or in isolated areas, we distinguish starting from the north: The northern dialects (divided into Venetan, Friulan and Ladin dialects at east and Gallo-Italic dialects in the centre-west), the Tuscan dialects<sup>10</sup> and the central-southern dialects (divided into median dialects, upper southern dialects, and the lower southern dialects). Pellegrini also includes Sardinian dialects and Friulan dialects among the Italo-Romance varieties<sup>11</sup>, differently from other authors (cf. De Mauro, 1976:25-26 and Rohlfs, 1968). This choice is motivated by Pellegrini (1977) for the common *Dachsprache* (Italian) with the other varieties, although it does not reflect the Italian legislation<sup>12</sup> that considers Friulan and Sardinian alloglot historical minority varieties. *Figure 2* offers a summary of the classification of Italo-Romance varieties.

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- (i) The conservation of final Latin -S at the north and west of that line, as compared to its loss at south and east of it.
  - (ii) Voicing, lenition, or loss of intervocalic occlusive consonants in Western varieties and conservation in the Central-Eastern varieties.
  - (iii) Preservation (for Western varieties) or simplification (Centre-Eastern varieties) of Latin geminate consonants.

<sup>8</sup> Pellegrini (1977) claims that this crucial isogloss bundle runs through Massa and Senigallia about 40 kms further to the south. Consequently, he calls it the *Massa–Senigallia* line instead of *La Spezia-Rimini* line (cf. Von Wartburg 1950).

<sup>9</sup> Rhaeto-Romance varieties are defined as ‘Ladin’ in *Figure 1*. This is due to Ascoli’s (1875) unitary proposal of such varieties under the umbrella term ‘Ladin’.

<sup>10</sup> The Tuscan varieties are closely related to Italian, since the latter derives from literary Florentine.

<sup>11</sup> Pellegrini (1977) also classifies Corsican as an Italo-Romance variety, since it’s related to Tuscan, although French serves as its *Dachsprache*.

<sup>12</sup> Based on Law 482/1999, see Marcató (2004) for a full discussion on this topic.



Figure 2: The Italo-Romance varieties and their classification into main macro-varieties (From Grassi et al. 1997: 82).

### 2.1.2 The varieties of Italian

Variation in Italy does not only include the local Italo-Romance varieties we discussed in the previous paragraph. Italian itself varies in its diatopic manifestation, producing the so-called regional Italians that corresponds to what Coseriu (1980) defined as *sekundäre Dialekte*. Furthermore, sociolinguistic variables are not just geographical dependent since they are also affected by diastratic, diaphasic and diamesic variation, all instances of Coseriu's (1980) *tertiäre Dialekte*.

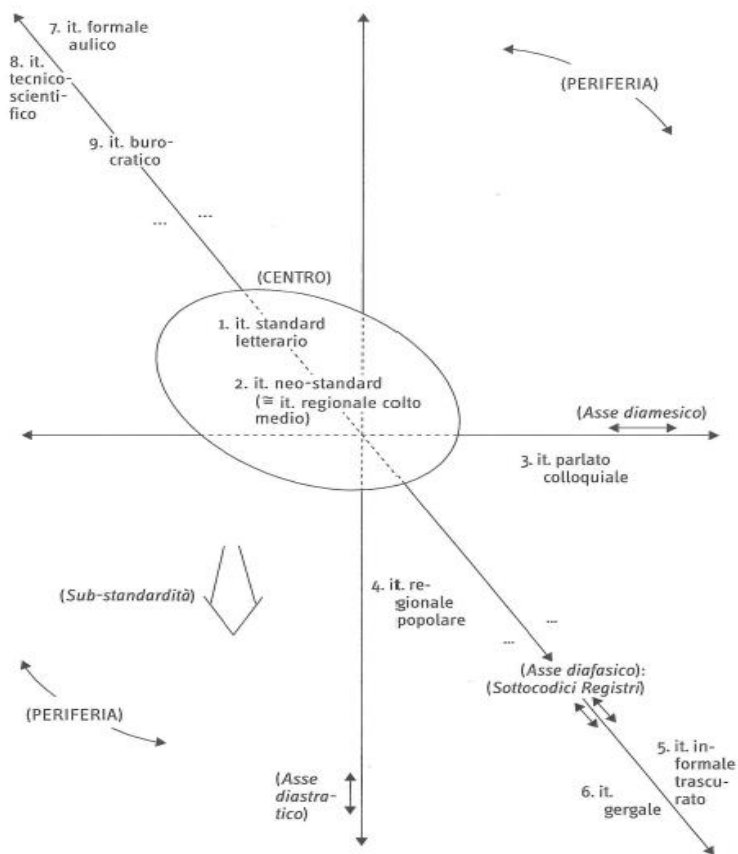


Figure 3: The architecture of contemporary Italian (from Berruto 1987a:).

Berruto (1987a) accounts for the variation found in Italian in his ‘architecture of contemporary Italian’, namely a bidimensional but multidirectional visualization of the Italian variation through three axes; i.e. a vertical diastratic axis (higher sociolects above and lower ones at the bottom), a horizontal diamesic axis (written-oriented at the left and spoken-oriented at the right) and finally a diagonal axis representing the diaphasic variation (higher registers at the top left periphery, lower ones at the bottom right periphery). This schema (visualised in *Figure 3*) does not include the diatopic variation, considered *a priori* since it is the main parameter of variation in the Italian context. Furthermore, it excludes the diachronic axis since it provides only a synchronic analysis.

The “periphery” visualised in the architecture includes features that somehow divert from the norm according to the axes of variation and consists of the sub-standard and non-standard varieties. The former ones are characterised as spoken (diamesic), popular (diastratic) and low registers or jargons (diaphasic), while the latter ones are more typically controlled and very specific as regards the register (including the so-called ‘languages for specific purposes’ such as



bureaucratic, technical, and scientific Italian). As regards diatopia, the sub-standard varieties are typically more diatopically marked while the non-standard varieties are less affected by such variational context.

The circle visualised on the cartesian axis represents its ‘centre’. It roughly corresponds to the standardised variety and includes the less marked contexts. However, we note two important aspects regarding this matter. First, this circle does not correspond to the geometrical centre, but it is rather displaced towards the written antipode of the diamesic axis; Berruto (1987a) explains that this depends on the history of Standard Italian, that was traditionally modelled upon the written literary Florentine. Second, two varieties are contained within the circle. On the one hand, ‘Italiano standard letterario’ (literary standard Italian) that identifies the standardised variety that took hold in the wake of the Unification of Italy and is described by traditional prescriptive grammars. On the other, ‘italiano neo-standard’ (neo-standard Italian), described as a less diatopically but more diatopically marked variety that roughly corresponds to a regional Italian of culture<sup>13</sup>.

Within the architecture of contemporary Italian, the area at the bottom right is of great interest for the present work, since it ranges from neo-standard Italian to the varieties even more regionally diverse and informal, like popular and colloquial Italian. That is indeed the area where we can find more diatopic markedness, hence instances of contact between the national language and the local Italo-Romance varieties.

## **2.2. Bilingualism and bilectalism, diglossia and dilalia**

It is crucial to recognise that the specific bilingual context we are dealing with includes minoritised non-standardised languages, i.e., the Italo-Romance varieties, that are typologically related to a standardised, majoritarian, and more prestigious variety, i.e., Italian. These features are from being just a matter of terminology, since the social status of the varieties highly influences the outcome of linguistic contact and the effects that we find in bilingualism (Garraffa et al. 2017). Moreover, non-standard varieties allow for greater grammatical fluidity (Leivada et al. 2017) and linguistic proximity across the different languages a child is exposed to is a key factor to account for bilingual development and cross-linguistic transfer (Grohmann 2014).

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<sup>13</sup> See Berruto (1987a), Sabatini (1985), De Mauro (1976) for a more detailed discussion on the emergence of a Neo-Standard Italian after the 1960s.

As a result, bilingualism of this sort has begun to be treated differently also in its terminology: the recent use of ‘bilectalism’ that Rowe and Grohmann (2013) employ to describe the societal bilingualism between local variety of Cypriot Greek and Standard Greek in Cyprus accounts for the asymmetry between the two varieties, namely a standard national language and a local variety, as well as typological similarities and genetic relatedness. This obviously determines differences as regards the dynamics of language use and contact, and consequences on the grammatical and cognitive systems in place. The term ‘bilectalism’ has been recently used to describe the Italo-Romance context both in studies related to the present one (Procentese 2021) and other studies concerning Italy (Sanfelici and Roch 2021). Interestingly, studies on bilectalism found similarities with bilingualism, namely negative effects on precocious aspects of language development (especially in vocabulary acquisition) and positive effects on domains of non-verbal cognitive functioning, especially for executive functions (Antonoioiu et al. 2016, Garraffa et al. 2017).

In order to better grasp the relation between the two varieties in this bilectal context and the contact phenomena we may expect, it is also necessary to have a look at the functions that they cover. Ferguson's (1959) concept of diglossia has been applied to the Italian sociolinguistic framework, at least until the first half of the 20th century. Diglossia describes the situation in which the two linguistic varieties of the speech community are marked as H (High) variety and L (Low) variety. On the one hand, H is a variety learnt by education, mostly used in formal contexts, especially in written form (hence, standardized) and enjoying a high prestige. On the other hand, L is a variety learnt spontaneously (since childhood), used as a means of everyday informal communication, mostly in the oral form (crucially, it does not need standardisation) and with a low prestige.

Berruto (1987b) considers this theory not fitting the Italian situation and coined the term *dilalia* to better account for it. In this context, the H variety starts eroding the domain of use that was typical of L: the former starts being used also in informal contexts, and it commences to be spontaneously acquired by younger speakers.

However, Tamburelli (2010) counter-argues Berruto's (1987b) proposal. He claims that the loss of the diglossic equilibrium brings to a crossroad whose two alternative paths have been described by Pohl (1965) as horizontal and vertical bilingualism. In particular, horizontal bilingualism maintains the L variety thanks to its inclusion into formal education and a cultural

promotion to grant an intergenerational acquisition. Conversely, vertical bilingualism, with no recognition and protection of the ‘minoritised variety’, results in a complete language shift, monolingualism and finally language death at the expense of L (Fishman 2020 [1967], 1996). This is confirmed by the data<sup>14</sup> of the Italian sociolinguistic situation since after World War II, that displays this instance of progressive language shift towards Italian.

### **2.3 Language contact in the Italo-Romance context: ‘italianisation of dialects’ and ‘dialectalisation of Italian’**

Language contact occurs when two or more varieties are part of the repertoire of an individual or (like in this case) of a community, creating the context for a very wide range of phenomena. The tendency to language shift towards Italian at the expense of the local Italo-Romance varieties does not affect the possibility of such phenomena, as demonstrated by the great number of studies on code-switching<sup>15</sup> and code-mixing<sup>16</sup> conducted in the Italo-Romance domain (see Alfonzetti 1992, Cerruti and Regis 2005, DePau 2010, Boer 2017 for some examples in Sicilian, Piedmontese, Sardinian and Venetan).

Contact-induced occurrences such as code-switching and code-mixing come often on a par with language convergence<sup>17</sup> between two varieties. Language attitudes<sup>18</sup> towards said varieties, like the prestige they may possess, distinguish between horizontal and vertical convergence (see Siebenhaar 2010 Roeyneland 2010). The former term refers to the contact between two varieties that are comparable by cultural and socio-economic variables, while the latter refers to the case in

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<sup>14</sup> According to ISTAT, the percentage of Italians that used predominantly dialect in the family environment, the one context in which we see a majority use, dropped from 32% in 1988 to 24% in 1995, 19% in 2000 and finally 16% and 14% respectively in 2006 and 2015.

<sup>15</sup> Gumperz (1982:59) defines conversational code-switching as ‘a juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems.’

<sup>16</sup> Getha (2010) claims that the difference of code-mixing, often used also to talk about code-switching, lies in the pragmatic context as well as the grammatical items involved. Code-mixing phenomena do not respect sentence boundaries in the switch of language and does not appear in any specific pragmatic and discursive contexts.

<sup>17</sup> According to Grant (2020:113) ‘language convergence is an important facet of Contact-Induced Linguistic Change’ and consists of ‘a language system that becomes in part more like another (usually more prestigious or powerful) language system’. The term, however, has been reported also with other use in the literature. Hickey (2020:19) reports that ‘the term “convergence” is found to refer to the coming together of community internal and external factors to produce the same output, but the term can also be used to mean that two languages become more similar in structure, usually by one language approximating to the other. This latter development can occur without any internal motivation, i.e., change in one language results entirely from contact with another’. Crucially, we are referring to the latter meaning of the concept that Hickey (2020) describes.

<sup>18</sup> Language attitudes are the evaluative reactions to different language varieties and include a cognitive, an affective and a conative sphere (Baker, 1992:12-13).

which one of the two varieties results dominant by these standards. Usually, we see instances of vertical convergence between a standardised language and a dialect, while horizontal convergence is mostly found in a dialect-dialect or language-language context. This is essential as it may affect the direction of the change determined by contact, whether it will be unidirectional (with a more dominant language affecting the less prestigious dialect) or bidirectional (with a mutual and balanced influence of the two languages). Unsurprisingly, it is easier for a feature to pass into one language from another if the two are typologically similar (Grant 2020).

Hence, even though we observe an ongoing (in some cases even concluded) language shift process in the Italo-Romance context, we still observe some contact induced changes. The nature of this kind of changes seems to be a bidirectional convergence that, according to Grassi (1993) is anyway affected by the verticality between the two varieties, since it occurs at the lowest diastratic occurrences of Italian (informal and colloquial) and the highest diastratic dialect occurrences (especially, the so called koinés<sup>19</sup>).

Berruto (1993) uses the expression ‘italianisation of dialects’ to describe some phonetic but also morphosyntactic changes in dialects attributable to a vertical convergence towards the *Dachsprache*, namely Italian, and recognises them as more typical of the koiné or urban dialect instances. At the same time, we see a process of ‘dialectalisation of Italian’ or ‘new dialectalisation’ (Telmon 1989), with the creation of diatopic variation of Italian.

Crucially, the features of the so-called regional Italian cannot be fully ascribed to the influence of local Italo-Romance varieties. According to Cerruti (2009) and Cerruti et al. (2017), we find a substratum influence of the Italo-Romance varieties on the regional Italian of a given area, though it differs according to the region at issue. At the same time, we also see some convergent pan-Italian features that join all these sekundäre Dialekte towards a new-standardisation process and are independent from the local Italo-Romance variety at stake.

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<sup>19</sup> Koinéization is the process that ‘involves the mixing of features of different dialects, and leads to a new, compromised dialect’ Siegel, (1985:365). In the Italo-Romance context we find several koinés, though not all dialects developed one. This concept is closely related to that of urban dialect, since in the Italo-Romance context it derives from very important cities whose dialect has been taken as a model in rural or more areal peripheral centres. This has happened in Veneto, with Venetian, Tuscan with Florence, Campania with Naples, Trentino with Trento and Piedmont with Turin (Grassi, Sobrero & Telmon 1997).

Telmon (1993) offers a schema (*Figure 4*) that accounts for the convergence between dialect and language. Such a schema describes the convergence directions according to specific language domains. For instance, regional Italian is mostly influenced by dialects in prosodic cues and phraseology, while we see a mutual directionality in lexicon and syntax.



*Figure 4: Convergence directions between Italian and dialects according to the different domain (From Telmon 1993:110).*

Furthermore, the interaction of this diatopic variety of Italian interacts also with other variation axes such as the diamesic and the diastratic one. This produces differences between the popular regional Italian, that according to Telmon (1993) represents a sort of fossilised interlanguage of the first monolingual dialectal speakers learning Italian, and a Standard regional Italian with more pan-Italian newly standardised features (Berruto 1987a).

Grassi, Sobrero & Telmon (1997) provide a list of regional Italians, that can be divided into macro-varieties and subvarieties according to their differences and similarities. They consist of:

- Northern regional Italian (subvarieties: Gallo-Italic and northeastern varieties such as Venetan and Friulian).
- Central regional Italian (Tuscan regional Italian as subvariety).
- Roman regional Italian (very important by a sociolinguistic point of view).
- Southern regional Italian (Campanian and Apulian regional Italian varieties).
- Lower southern regional Italian (Sicilian and Calabrese regional subvarieties).
- Sardinian regional Italian.

## **2.4 Assessment of bilingual profile, dominance, proficiency and the BLP scale**

Several self-report bilingual language dominance tools exist but based on its previous usage in bilingual environments<sup>20</sup>, and adaptation of it in studies related to this one (Molinari 2019, Procentese 2021, Arcamone 2022, Bellussi 2021), we opted for BLP (Birdsong, Gertken, and Amengual 2012) to assess this construct in our research (see §6.1.2 for a discussion on its adaptation).

Relative proficiency in reading, listening, writing, and speaking are often used to determine language dominance. However, Birdsong, Gertken, and Amengual (2012) claim that dominance and proficiency need to be distinguished: while dominance is linked to bilingualism and involves relationships between the two languages in one's mind, proficiency, does not require a bilingual context to be resorted to. Dominance assesses the balance between the bilingual's two language systems but does not depend upon the proficiency that the same subject can have in both languages: shortly, proficiency is part of dominance, but it does not define it alone. Indeed, as noted by Birdsong (2006:47) 'proficiency and dominance are overlapping and confusable constructs, as levels of proficiency and degrees of dominance tend to correlate. However, it is important to maintain logical and functional distinctions between L2 dominance and L2 proficiency. The former is defined in processing terms, whereas the latter is typically viewed in terms of attainment in areas of grammar, lexis, pronunciation, and so forth'. Dominance is instead linked to other factors which may be or not be linked to proficiency, and these include the age of acquisition and the frequency and historical profile of its use and exposure, that may influence psycholinguistic features such as automaticity and access time needed to use a language, but also language attitude psychosocial features like cultural identification or motivation which can be measured only through a self-report assessment.

BLP economizes in a short self-evaluating questionnaire these four dimensions of language dominance, namely language history, language use and exposure, language proficiency and language attitudes. By means of this assessment tool, we concretize the level of bilingual language dominance of each participant and are able to discuss their choices.

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<sup>20</sup> Grohmann and al. (2017) assessed bilingual language dominance through the BLP in research whose participants were Sardinian/Italian adult speakers and a group of monolingual Italians.

## CHAPTER 3

### Current studies on partitivity and indefiniteness

The main topic of this study, namely the expression of indefinites in Italo-Romance, makes it necessary to face broad concepts such as partitivity and indefiniteness. Before focusing on indefiniteness and more precisely uncontroversial indefiniteness, it is necessary to introduce the concept of partitivity: that is because partitivity is used as a cover term also including indefiniteness, and the so called partitivity elements (Ihsane and Stark 2020) are a means to introduce such broad concept that embrace syntactic characteristics as well as semantic and pragmatic ones. Indeed, the elements that in many languages introduce indefiniteness are the same that introduce partitivity, or better said, some partitive elements never introduce partitivity meant as a part-whole relation, but rather indefiniteness.

In §3.1 we analyze some partitive structures and their differences, while in §3.1.1 we briefly present partitive constructions throughout European languages. §3.2 will introduce the topic of indefiniteness and §3.2.1 will deal with the expression of indefiniteness in European languages, focusing on the differences between Germanic and Romance languages.

#### 3.1 The partitive elements and the different shades of partitivity

The term partitivity evokes a part-whole relation between two entities A and B, such that A is contained in B ( $A \subset B$ ). The number of different ways this relation can be expressed in natural languages determines a great number of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic consequences. Falco and Zamparelli (2019) and Seržant (2021) give an insight on this topic, treating both the great number of partitive constructions within a single language, and the great cross linguistic variability that we find in them. Interestingly, not even the simplest definition we just proposed can account for all the different constructions. Given the amount of variability and the ambiguity in the literature, we start from Ihsane and Stark (2020)'s Partitive elements (PEs) to present the three main different structures they can introduce.

'Partitive elements' (henceforth PEs) is an umbrella term that covers partitive articles, partitive pronouns, partitive case and any partitive marker. However, each of these elements can express a different degree of partitivity, meaning they can range from the so-called true partitivity

to what it is known in the literature as pseudo-partitivity and indefiniteness, the last being actually avoid of that part-whole relation that characterizes the previous two.

True partitives, also called in the literature ordinary partitives or real partitives (Selkirk 1977) are well-known for Jackendoff's (1977) Partitive Constraint that implies that the embedded NP within this construction is definite, i.e. must contain a definite article, a demonstrative, or a possessive. In (2) we can see examples of this construction taken from Selkirk (1977) (also cf. de Hoop, 2003:191):

- (2) a. a number of her cats.
- b. three glasses of the wine.
- c. four pounds of those apples.

(2b) offers a nice example of the part-whole inclusion relation ( $A \subset B$ ) we expressed above: through a quantified NP we outline a subset (three glasses) of a superset introduced by a PP (of the wine). We could say that the quantifier (QP) corresponds to the subset and the restrictor (PP) to the superset. The subset and the superset relate to each other as a part to its whole. Seržant (2021) gives a definition that fully captures the semantic aspects of this construction: “a true-partitive relation obtains when there is a subset-superset relationship between two sets of the same kind” (p. 885).

Compared to what we referred to as true partitives, pseudo-partitives lack the two sets (quantifier and restrictor) that we find in the former. They are sometimes referred to as quantitative partitives (e.g., Ihsane 2013) because as noted in Seržant (2021) they often establish a plain quantification such as amounts (a group of people), measures (a cup of tea) or quantities (a lot of people, a majority of people) of particular kinds (people, tea). We report herein examples taken from Selkirk (1977) (also cf. Hoop, 2003:191):

- (3) a. a number of cats.
- b. three glasses of wine.
- c. four pounds of apple.



The semantics of these constructions differs from the semantics of true partitives also because the embedded NP does not refer to a definite entity that has been introduced in the discourse, or better to a proportion of it, but rather to a part of a larger indefinite entity whose existence is shared knowledge. Accordingly, pseudo-partitives do not encode a relation between two referents as we found in the subset/quantifier and superset/restrictor contrast, they rather encode just one unspecified and newly introduced referent that is quantified or measured.

We could sum up these semantic differences of the two constructions in terms of specificity in terms of Ihsane and Stark (2020): we define true partitivity as “the indication of a part-whole relationship between an (un)specified subpart of a definite substance or set”, while conversely pseudo-partitivity refers to “an (un)specified subpart of an indefinite substance” (p. 607). In a nutshell, true partitivity denotes a measured amount of a specific entity while pseudo-partitivity denotes the measured amount of a non-specific entity.

As regards syntax, Stickney (2007) sheds light on the structural differences between the two constructions. She proposes that the partitive is a complex noun, namely a head-complement structure (cf. examples in (4) and their syntactic structures in *Figure 5*), while the pseudo-partitive consists in a single nominal projection. The great difference lies in the categorial status of “box”: while in the true partitive construction it is a NP, in the pseudo-partitive construction it is analyzed as a Measure Phrase (MP), namely a functional phrase within the left periphery of the NP. This different formal analysis of the two constructions can account for the quantificational/measure feature and the lack of coindexing between two DPs that we find in pseudo-partitives.

- (4) a. box of chocolates (Stickney, 2007:406)  
b. a box of those chocolates

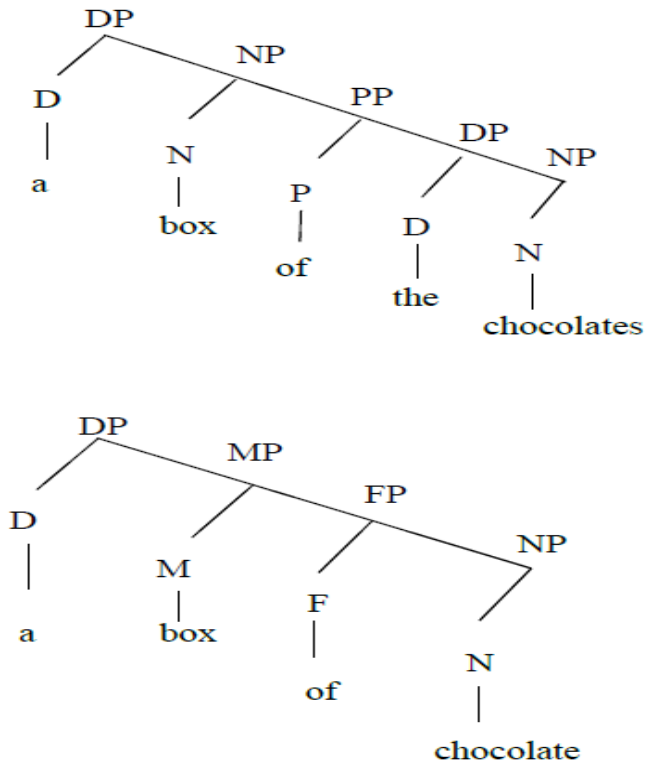


Figure 5: Syntactic differences between a partitive and pseudo-partitive construction according to Stickney (2007)

This structural difference in Dutch results in a very easy way to differentiate true and pseudo-partitives according to Hoeksema (1984): partitive *van* ‘of’ is obligatorily absent in pseudo-partitives and obligatorily present in ordinary partitives, as illustrated in (5) and (6).

- (5) a. een aantal \*(van) haar katten. (Hoop, 2003:191)  
 ‘a few of her cats.’  
 b. drie glazen \*(van) de wijn.  
 ‘three glasses of wine.’  
 c. vier pond \*(van) die appels  
 ‘four pound off he apples.’

- (6) a. een aantal (\*van) katten. (Hoop, 2003:192)  
 ‘a few cats’  
 b. drie glazen (\*van) wijn.  
 ‘three glasses of wine.’  
 c. vier pond (\*van) appels.  
 ‘four pounds of apples.’

Indefiniteness is the third feature that PEs can express according to Ihsane and Stark (2020). Interestingly, this concept has got different properties than the partitives we have seen before, as it simply refers to an unspecified quantity and implies no part-whole relation whatsoever. We will focus on indefiniteness and the different ways it can manifest itself in §3.2.

### 3.1.1 Partitivity in European languages

According to Ihsane and Stark (2020) the great crossroads in the expression of partitivity in European languages distinguishes morphological case and adpositional encoding; PEs include indeed also case markers.

An example of the former instance are Finnic and Balto-Slavic languages, Ancient Greek, Basque and Russian. In (7) we report examples in Finnish taken from Luraghi and Kittilä (2014) that account for the contrast in such language between on the one hand partitive/genitive case, used to express within the others true partitivity as well as pseudo-partitivity and indefiniteness, and on the other nominative/accusative/absolutive cases, which denote a definite referent.

- (7) a. Aino sö-i leipä-ä. (Luraghi and Kittilä 2014: 19)  
 Aino eat-PST.3SG bread-PART  
 ‘Aino ate some of the bread.’ (or: ‘Aino ate bread.’)  
 b. Aino sö-i leivä-n  
 Aino eat-ST.3SG bread-ACC  
 ‘Aino ate the (whole) bread.’

Conversely, most Romance and Germanic languages express partitivity, pseudo-partitivity and also indefiniteness through adpositional encoding. Here in (8) and (9) we see examples of such PEs in a Romance and a Germanic language (respectively Spanish and German).

- (8) a. Jaime comió mucho del pan (Ihsane and Stark, 2020:607)  
 Jaime eat.PST.3SG a.lot of.DET.DEF bread  
 ‘Jaime ate much of the bread.’
- (9) a. Marie aß drei Scheiben vom Brot (Ihsane and Stark, 2020:608)  
 Marie eat.PST.3SG three slices of.DET.DEF bread  
 ‘Marie ate three slices of the bread.’

### 3.2 Indefiniteness and its different shades

Defining partitivity is no easier task than defining indefiniteness. Both concepts regard wide and multy-sided issues involving syntax, semantics and pragmatics. We first briefly discuss some diachronic relations between partitivity and indefinites in §3.2.1. Then, we focus on the distinction between definites and indefinites in §3.2.2, in order to address afterwards some differences within indefinites. Finally, §3.2.3 offers a summary of the expression of indefiniteness across Germanic and Romance languages in a comparative perspective.

#### 3.2.1 Diachronic relation between partitivity and indefiniteness

The PEs introduced in the last section do not express only partitivity. Ihsane and Stark (2020) argue that each PE can usually express at least two of the degrees of partitivity we have treated above. As a result, they sometimes are truly or pseudo-partitive but often express indefiniteness and no partitivity *stricto sensu*.

Luraghi and Kittilä (2014) and Carlier and Lamiroy (2014) shed light on the diachronic relation between indefiniteness and partitivity. Preposition *de*, typical marker of a partitive construction, was originally used in Late Latin in combination with ablative case and stood for “away from”, to indicate the source of an event, like in example (10a).

- (10) a. Decido de lecto. (Carlier and Lamiroy, 2014:483)  
 fall.from:PRS.1SG from bed:ABL.SG(M)  
 ‘I fall from my bed.’  
 (Latin: Plautus, Casina 931)
- b. Et sic de pane illo edat.  
 and thus DI bread:ABL.SG(M) DEM.ABL.M.SG eat:SBJV.PRS.3SG  
 ‘And so let him eat of that bread.’  
 (Vulgata, I Corinthians 11, 28)

Towards the evolution of Proto-Romance, the preposition *de* was used both with genitive and ablative, the former being also the case used in partitive constructions for the association between the concepts of possessor and the part-whole relation, like in (10b). The fact that just a subpart of the referent, be it specific or nonspecific, is involved in the discourse leads to indefiniteness for its inherent semantic of ‘part of’ and partiality. This diachronic relation is essential to understand the synchronic overlap that we find.

This indefinite-oriented use of PEs is not just a prerogative of languages that encode partitivity through adposition such as Romance languages but is also found in languages that encode it through case, such as Finnish. In the Finnish example (7a), we see that by using the same case, namely partitive, also case markers can express both partitivity and indefiniteness, within many other semantic and pragmatic features (for an extensive discussion about this topic we refer to Luraghi and Kittilä (2014)).

### 3.2.2 Different indefinites

In the semantic tradition, both indefinites and definites have been considered to be a subtype of existential expressions and several features have been summoned to account for their distinction, including contrast between uniqueness and non-uniqueness (e.g. Russel 1905, 1919), familiarity and novelty (e.g. Bolinger 1977, Heim 1982), specificity and non-specificity (e.g. Partee 1972, Fodor and Sag 1982). The numerosity of theories accounting for their distinction shows the complexity of the topic. At first sight, it may seem a straightforward task to distinguish definite and indefinite DPs by the contrast of the D they are headed by. Focusing on Brasoveanu and Farkas’ (2016:238) examples, we see that the definite determiners of sentences in (11a) imply a

definite interpretation, hence we consider the DP to be definite. Conversely, the DP in examples (11b) headed by an indefinite D would be indefinite.

- (11) a. Maurice visited *a garden, some garden(s), some of the gardens, a certain garden*.  
b. Maurice visited *the/ this garden, these garden /the capital of Albania / the largest museum in the world*.  
c. We visited *this splendid garden in Suzhou* that was offered to a Chinese scholar by his disciples

Nevertheless, the next sentence could easily counter-argue this simplistic view: the DP in the sentence (11c) is interpreted as indefinite assuming that it is novel relative to the interlocutor, thus not uniquely identifiable in the context as a definite would be. Nonetheless, we witness a definite determiner *this*.

Given the unreliability of such a method, Brasoveanu and Farkas (2016) argue that the best way to define indefiniteness is through its counterpart, namely definiteness. While on the one hand a definite NPs refer to an entity that was already mentioned in the discourse, on the other hand an indefinite NPs can either introduce new referents or not have reference at all. Furthermore, in order to account for the differences displayed in indefinites, they individuate three categories mainly focusing on semantic features.

The first category is that of uncontroversial indefinites, also called unmarked indefinites (henceforth u-indefinites) because they do not need to obey any constraint of familiarity, novelty, uniqueness or specificity (cf. (12a)), contrary to definites and marked indefinites that have many sorts of constraints as regards their interpretation. The authors also distinguish the quantificational indefinites, like the example in (12b), introduced by a QP. Finally, they introduce the broad category of marked indefinites, whose name derives from the constraints they undergo in contrast to the very wide, free and versatile use of the unmarked ones. Within these indefinites, we find the ‘a certain’ indefinite (see example (12c)), that renders the nominal phrase of the indefinite expression [+specific] (also cf. Brasoveanu and Farkas 2016):

- (12) a. a garden.  
b. some garden.  
c. a certain garden.

In the present work, however, we will focus on the u-indefinites, hence it is not our intention to dwell on the many indefinites and the wide range of semantic differences that they display. Rather, we are interested in the variation that we already find in u-indefinites both within a single language and in a crosslinguistic fashion. In particular, we focus on the apparent or true optionality between competing forms that Italo-Romance varieties display as regards the means to convey this kind of indefiniteness. Before narrowing down to this specific linguistic area, it is worth having a look at how Germanic and Romance languages differ regarding the expression of indefiniteness and just subsequently will we further delve into the Italo- Romance varieties.

### **3.2.3 The expression of indefiniteness in Germanic vs Romance languages: a pan-Romance Perspective**

Giusti (2021) argues that in a pan-Romance perspective we can individuate some typical Romance features as opposed to Germanic features of indefinites. Furthermore, many of the divergences can be ascribed to general tendencies in the historical development of natural languages such as the norm of the lateral area of Bartoli, that tracks down variation according to the contrast between peripheral/central varieties in the reception of innovative features.

The first notable difference between Germanic and Romance regards bare nouns: they are possible in Germanic both in subject and object position<sup>21</sup>, as we see in the contrast between the examples (13)-(15) and (16)-(17). In (18) we see that French disallow bare nouns in both syntactic positions (also cf. Giusti 2021:264-265):

---

<sup>21</sup> This contrast had already been noticed limited to bare plurals in Delfito, D. & Schrotten, J. (1991).

- (13) a. Students have occupied the building. (English)  
 b. I have seen students in the building.
- (14) a. Studenten haben das Gebäude besetzt. (German)  
 b. Ich habe Studenten in dem Gebäude gesehen.
- (15) a. Studenten hebben het gebouw bezet. (Dutch)  
 b. Ik heb studenten in het gebouw gezien.
- (16) a. \*Estudiantes han ocupado el edificio. (Spanish)  
 b. He visto estudiantes en el edificio.
- (17) a. \*Studenti hanno occupato l'edificio (Italian)  
 b. Ho visto studenti nell'edificio
- (18) a. \*Étudiants ont occupé l'édifice. (French)  
 b. \*J'ai vu étudiants dans l'édifice.

In the Germanic languages exemplified here, we see a generalized use of the bare nominals, even though in some cases there could be a marginal competition with other forms; In English, for instance, the indefinite determiner *s'm*, a weak variant of *some* (see Milsark 1977) can appear in these same contexts, despite not ruling out the bare options.

Conversely, most Romance languages only accept bare nominals in object position<sup>22</sup> as the examples below, with both a singular mass noun (19) and a plural countable noun (20) show (also cf. Giusti, 2021: 266).

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<sup>22</sup> According to Dobrovie-Sorin and Laca (2003) In subject preverbal position, the only Romance language that seems to encounter no problem in having a bare noun is Portuguese.

- a. \*Niños jugaban en la calle.  
 b. ??Bambini giocavano per strada.  
 c. ??Copii se jucau pe strada.  
 d. \*Enfants jouaient dans la rue'  
 e. Crianças brincavam na rua



- (19) a. Bebi vinho. (Portuguese)  
 b. Bebí vino. (Spanish)  
 c. Vaig beure vi. (Catalan)  
 d. J'ai bu du vin. (French)  
 e. Ho bevuto (del/il) vino. (Italian)  
 f. Am băut (niște) vin. (Romanian)  
 drink.1sg.pst (det) wine  
 'I drank wine.'
- (20) a. Apanhei (umas) violetas. (Portuguese)  
 b. Cogí (unas) violetas. (Spanish)  
 c. Vaig collir (unes) violetes. (Catalan)  
 d. J'ai cueilli des violettes. (French)  
 e. Ho raccolto (delle/le) violette. (Italian)  
 f. Am cules (niște / unele) violete. (Romanian)  
 pick.1sg.pst (det) violets  
 'I picked violets.'

We must however note two very important aspects. First, the widespread contrast in the acceptance of bare nominals in subject and object position, does not include all languages: French disallows them in both syntactic positions (cf. (18)), no matter if a mass singular noun (19d) or a plural count noun is involved (20d). This results in an obligatory overt D in indefinite expressions in French. Second, the possibility of realization of the bare nominals in object position in Romance languages does not imply that it is the only possible syntactic realization of indefinite expressions in such languages: we see in brackets that some languages allow different determiners. For instance, Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan and Romanian display no determiner with mass nouns (cf. (19a), (19b), (19c), (19f)) and the plural form of the indefinite article 'one' with plural count nouns (cf. (20a), (20b), (20c), (20f)), while French and Italian display the 'partitive article' with both mass nouns and plural count nouns (cf. (19d-e) and (20d-e) respectively), with the difference that in French this is the only available form, while Italian accepts bare nouns too.

Another important tendency that we see in Romance languages is that the definite article may optionally appear in modified nominals with indefinite interpretation in all Romance languages except the most lateral ones, namely Portuguese and Romanian (cf. (21a) and (21f)), as represented in (21b-e) with a modified mass noun (here ‘bottled water’) in a generic sentence expressing a habit. This use of the definite article is less widespread with an unmodified count (plural) noun, like in the examples in (22). In this context, we see that only Italian and Catalan allow for it (cf. (22c) and (22e)). Crucially, the example with an unmodified singular mass noun in an episodic sentence (see (19)), shows that in this context only Italian allows for the definite determiner to be used with an indefinite interpretation. While being attested in other Romance varieties, depending on the context, we may easily claim that the indefinite use of the definite determiner is a distinctive feature of Italian and, as we will see, of many Italo-Romance varieties (also cf. Giusti, 2021: 266-267).

- |      |    |   |              |
|------|----|---|--------------|
| (21) | a. | Bebo água de garrafa.                         | (Portuguese) |
|      | b. | Bebo (el) agua embotellada.                   | (Spanish)    |
|      | c. | Bec (l’) aigua en ampolla.                    | (Catalan)    |
|      | d. | Je bois (de) l’eau en bouteille               | (French)     |
|      | e. | Bevo (l’)acqua in bottiglia.                  | (Italian)    |
|      | f. | Beau apă din sticlă.                          | (Romanian)   |
|      |    | drink.1sg.prs (det) water in bottle / bottled |              |
|      |    | ‘I drink bottled water.’                      |              |
|      |    |   |              |
| (22) | a. | Não como batata(s).                           | (Portuguese) |
|      | b. | No como patatas.                              | (Spanish)    |
|      | c. | No menjo (les) patates.                       | (Catalan)    |
|      | d. | Je ne mange pas de /??les patates.            | (French)     |
|      | e. | Non mangio (le) patate.                       | (Italian)    |
|      | f. | Nu mănânc cartofi.                            | (Romanian)   |
|      |    | neg eat.1sg.prs (det) potato.sg/pl            |              |
|      |    | ‘I don’t eat potatoes.’                       |              |

It is important to distinguish two uses of the definite article: the one relative to a kind-referring object from the one with an indefinite interpretation. Giusti (2021) offers a diagnostic not to confuse them. Observe the examples in (23) for a singular mass noun and (24) with a plural countable noun: the attitude predicates favour a kind-referring object and in this specific context all Romance languages need the definite article, except Portuguese that does not require it but accepts it (also cf. Giusti 2021:267):

- |      |    |   |              |
|------|----|---|--------------|
| (23) | a. | Evito (a) água de garrafa.                              | (Portuguese) |
|      | b. | Evito el agua embotellada.                              | (Spanish)    |
|      | c. | Evito l'aigua en ampulla.                               | (Catalan)    |
|      | d. | J'évite l'eau en bouteille.                             | (French)     |
|      | e. | Evito l'acqua in bottiglia.                             | (Italian)    |
|      |    | avoid.1sg.prs (det) water in bottle / bottled           |              |
|      | f. | Evit apa îmbuteliată.                                   | (Romanian)   |
|      |    | avoid.1sg.prs water.the bottled                         |              |
|      |    | 'I avoid bottled water.'                                |              |
| (24) | a. | Sou intolerante às batatas / a batata(s).               | (Portuguese) |
|      | b. | Soy intolerante a las patatas.                          | (Spanish)    |
|      | c. | Sóc intolerant a les patates.                           | (Catalan)    |
|      | d. | Je suis intolérant aux patates.                         | (French)     |
|      | e. | Sono intollerante alle patate.                          | (Italian)    |
|      |    | be.1sg.prs intolerant to.the potatoes / to potato.sg/pl |              |
|      | f. | Am intoleranță la cartofi.                              | (Romanian)   |
|      |    | have.1sg.prs intolerance to potatoes                    |              |
|      |    | 'I am intolerant to potatoes.'                          |              |

We can therefore conclude that most Romance languages accept the use of the definite determiner with an indefinite interpretation. The most lateral ones (Portuguese and Romanian) rule it out when a modified singular mass noun is involved in the context of a generic sentence expressing a habit (see (21)), while only Italian and Sardinian admit it with an unmodified

singular mass noun (see (22)). Such an interpretation must not be confused with a kind-referring object interpretation, that we find with attitude predicates such as those in (23) and (24). In this case, except the optionality for Portuguese as regards the modified singular mass nouns, all the Romance languages display a definite determiner.

However, in Italian the indefinite interpretation of the definite determiner appears to be one step further than the other Romance languages, given the acceptability of it in all the context (cf. (19)-(22)). Arguably, this feature can be found also in the Italo-Romance varieties.

## CHAPTER 4

### **The expression of indefiniteness in Italian and the Italo-Romance varieties**

Within the Romance languages, Italian features a greater availability of forms: it allows the definite determiner in many indefinite contexts in which it covaries with a bare noun, while admitting in some of those contexts also the so-called ‘partitive article’ both with a singular mass noun and a plural count noun. The only other Romance language that displays a three-way optionality is Romanian, although only in the context of plural count nouns.

In this Chapter, we will see that this wide availability of means to express indefiniteness and its variability according to the context is widely displayed in the whole Italo-Romance context, not only in Italian. Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018, 2020) and Giusti (2021) account for the multiple syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic features that interact with this variation and try to better understand the mechanism behind it, whether it is the result of true optionality or whether each form specializes for a different context. We will also provide a formal theory that can describe the main attested forms.

In §4.1, we list the possible indefinites, whose areal distribution is shown in §4.2 also providing maps by Giusti and Lebani (2022). In §4.3 we propose a unified syntactic of the four most attested forms, namely ART, DI, ZERO and DI+ART. In §4.4 we follow Giusti’s (2021) Protocol approach that represents the distribution of these forms in different semantic, syntactic and pragmatic contexts as a way to check the true nature of their variability. In this last section, we will also briefly summarize previous studies on this topic and the goal of this research. Finally, §4.5 is dedicated to offer an overview of Clitic Left Dislocation in Italian and its possible interactions with the indefinite determiners in Italo-Romance.

#### **4.1 Available indefinites in Italo-Romance**

In order to individuate the different attested available forms for the expression of indefinites in Italo-Romance varieties, Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) consult, along with descriptive grammars and previous studies on the topic, the charts of the AIS<sup>23</sup>. In particular, three maps were taken on

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<sup>23</sup> AIS, in Italian, stands for Linguistic and Ethnographic Atlas of Italy and Southern Switzerland. It is a dialect atlas directed by Karl Jaberg and Jakob Jud from 1928 to 1940, showing mainly lexical variation with an ethnographic aim. It offers, however, also a glimpse on some morphosyntactic relevant topics. A digital version of the charts called NavigAIS (Tisato 2009) has been consulted.

account. The first is map 637 ('[to go look for] violets') in which the noun 'violets' favours the small quantity interpretation, since they are small flowers that create small bundles. Map 1037 ('[if there was] water') offers instead a hypothetical existential sentence providing the less marked context of the three, with a non-specific core indefinite interpretation. Lastly, in map 1343 ('[to go to the cellar] to take wine') the lexical entry 'wine' is salient to the context of 'going to the cellar' but can also favor a small quantity interpretation.

We follow Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) in listing the available forms that are:

- Determiner *un(o)/una*.
- Zero determiner: ZERO.
- Definite article: ART.
- Bare *di*: DI.
- 'The partitive article': DI+ART.
- *Due*.
- *Certo/a, certi/e*.

The numeral quantifier "one" has grammaticalised into an indefinite determiner in many languages (cf. Givón, T. (1981)). In Italian and Italo-Romance varieties, this determiner is the only choice with singular count nouns (25a) and never competes with other forms, as the ungrammaticality of (25b-d) shows. The use of ART in the context of a plural countable noun (25e) forces instead a definite interpretation. It is noteworthy to remind that the morphology of *un(o)/una* does not display a plural form (cf. Pazas Loyo (2022)) unlike Iberian languages such as Spanish (*unos/unas*), Portuguese (*uns/umas*), Catalan (*uns/unes*) and Romanian<sup>24</sup>, varieties in which this form competes, in the occurrence of a plural count noun, with bare nouns. Apart from plural count nouns (26a), this determiner is ruled out in Italo-Romance also as regards mass nouns (26ab) (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2018: 136-137):

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<sup>24</sup> Romanian displays two forms in competition for plural count nouns: an uninflected indefinite accusative determiner *niște* that can occur only in direct case, but also a plural form of the singular indefinite determiner derived from Lat. UNOS, UNAS: for the NOM.ACC *unii/unele*, and for GEN.DAT. *unor*. (Pazas Loyo 2022).

- (25) a. Ho raccolto una violetta.  
 b. \*Ho raccolto della violetta.  
 c. \*Ho raccolto di violetta.  
 d. \*Ho raccolto violetta.  
 e. #Ho raccolto la violetta.
- (26) a. \*Ho raccolto un fieno.  
 b. \*Ho raccolto une violette.

In Italian and Italo-Romance varieties, with plural count nouns (27a) and singular mass nouns (27b), but never with plural count nouns that require the indefinite *un(o)/una* (cf. (25a) and (25d)), we find the so-called zero determiner (henceforth ZERO). This bare nominal structure is what we have seen as the most widespread way of expressing indefiniteness in Germanic languages, but as we discussed in the previous chapter it is also quite frequent in the expression of indefiniteness reported in the other Romance languages except for French (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2018: 136-137):

- (27) a. Ho raccolto violette.  
           ‘[I] picked violets’  
 b. Ho raccolto fieno.  
           ‘[I] have harvested hay’

We will see in §4.2 that the distribution of this determiner varies across the different Italian dialects, being attested moreover in the lateral areas of the domain.

We have shown that the definite determiner (ART) is used in most Romance languages except for the most lateral ones (Portuguese and Romanian) to express indefiniteness even when it does not convey a kind-referring semantic interpretation. While the use with singular count nouns is ruled out, since the interpretation in such a case would be [+DEFINITE] referring to an entity already introduced in the discourse or inherently unique, this form is admitted with singular mass nouns (28a) and plural count nouns (28b). For this reasons, when compared to other Roance languages, we can say that this interpretation of the definite determiner is a peculiar feature of

Italian. The context of sentences such as the one in (28b) determines ambiguity with the definite interpretation (cf. also Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2018: 138):

- (28) a. Ho raccolto il fieno.  
b. Ho raccolto le violette

Crucially, Giusti (2021) provides more diagnostics to disambiguate the indefinite interpretation from the better known kind-referring and definite interpretations. We see in examples (29a) and (30a) a typical context of kind-referring nominal introduced by the definite determiner. The relatives in (29c) and (30c) force a definite interpretation, while (29b) and (30b) are typical occurrences of the indefinite interpretation (also cf. Giusti, 2021: 274-275):

- (29) a. L'acqua abbonda in questa regione.  
the water abounds in this region  
'Water abounds in this region.'
- b. Ho versato l'acqua nel bicchiere.  
have. 1sg.pres poured the water in.the glass  
'I poured water in my glass.'
- c. L'acqua che ho preso dal frigorifero era troppo fredda.  
'The water that I took from the fridge was too cold.'
- (30) a. Le zanzare sono molto diffuse in questa regione.  
the mosquitos are very widespread in this region.  
'Mosquitos are very wide-spread in this region.'
- b. In questa stanza (non) ci sono le zanzare.  
in this room (neg) there are the mosquitos  
'In this room, there are (no) mosquitoes.'
- c. Le zanzare che mi hanno punto erano fastidiose.  
the mosquitoes that 1sg.acc have bit were annoying  
'The mosquitoes that bit me were annoying.'



As regards its distribution (see §4.2), this form is mainly attested in the central areas of the Italo-Romance domain than in the most lateral ones. That is because innovative traits, according to Bartoli's lateral area norm, are usually weaker at the periphery. More studies are needed to determine whether this innovative trait spread also to the periphery and this determiner can now be found also in the expression of indefiniteness in those areas.

The diachronic relation between partitivity and indefiniteness in Romance languages and the role played by the Latin preposition *de* in this process (§3.2.1), helps better understand the origin of DI as an indefinite determiner. As noted by Carlier and Lamiroy (2014), in Proto-Romance the preposition *de* started being used both as a marker of genitive (including partitive) and ablative<sup>25</sup>. With time, “*de* turned into a full-fledged indefinite article, thus changing its morpho-syntactic status as well as its meaning” (cf. Carlier and Lamiroy, 2014:477). However, DI is only superficially identical to the preposition DI in Italian, as we will discuss later.

This form is attested with singular mass nouns and plural count nouns. However, contrary to the other forms we list here, it is not attested in standard Italian. Giusti and Cardinaletti (2018) found occurrences of this form in Tuscany, provided that it appears with a noun modified by a prenominal adjective as in the examples (31) (also cf. Rohlfs and Franceschini (1968:117):

- (31) a. di bon vino.  
bare-DI good wine  
'Good wine'
- b. di belle patate.  
bare-DI nice potatoes  
'Nice potatoes'

More studies are nonetheless necessary to attest whether this form is productive in the regional colloquial Italian of the areas whose Italo-Romance variety include it in their morphosyntax. DI is indeed attested in some northwestern varieties such as Piedmontese, like in (32a) with a singular mass and (32b) with a plural count (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti):

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<sup>25</sup> Later on, Italian developed preposition *di* having genitive and partitive functions and a preposition *da* (from Latin *de ab*) indicating source (ablative case) (Carlier and Lamiroy (2014)).

- (32) a. sei fyse d'aqua  
 If there was DI water  
 'If there was water'
- b. anda sarkà d viulatt  
 to-go to-pick DI violets  
 'To go picking violets'
- c. A mangi mia ad turtlen.  
 [I] eat not DI tortellini  
 'I don't eat tortellini.'

As (32c) shows (also cf. Molinari, 2019: 45), DI has been individuated as the unmarked determiner for the expression of (non-)existential indefiniteness under the scope of the negation in Piacentino dialect by Molinari (2019). The last-mentioned study did not investigate the choice of indefinites in the local informal Italian nor its relation with the available choices in Piacentino, but brought the attention to the importance of investigating possible similarities and differences in other Gallo-Romance varieties that display this indefinite determiner, like French, Franco-Provençal and Occitan.

By looking at the distribution of this form in the relevant AIS maps (§4.2), we see some isolated occurrences of this form in areas other than the aforementioned ones. For the present work it is important to signal one occurrence in Sardinia that will be treated in §5.4.

DI+ART, also known in descriptive grammar as 'partitive article', can also be traced down to the development of the Latin preposition *de* as a genitive/partitive case marker. Carlier and Lamiroy (2014) notice that, diachronically, the occurrence of said preposition to introduce oblique complements of some verbs (cf. (33a)) did not just determine the gradual loss of its status of preposition, but also a combination of it with the definite determiner in its final stage (cf.(33b)) and the emergence of a new full-fledged indefinite determiner (also cf. Carlier and Lamiroy, 2014 :484-486):

- (33) a. Il                    approucha    de    la                    dicte                    fontaine.  
PRO.3SG approach:PST.3SG from DEF.ART.F.SG say:PTCP.PST.F.SG fountain  
‘He approached the fountain.’
- b. Pren                    des                    grains                    de poyvre.  
take:IMP.2SG DI+ART.PL grain:PL(M) of pepper:SG(M)  
‘Take some peppercorns.’

The partitive article is indeed a combination of DI and the definite article, with DI only being superficially (diachronically) equivalent to the preposition that we find in Italian. As noted by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2016) “the fact that diachronically, determiner *dei* may have derived from a partitive PP is not in itself support for the assumption that the original structure is preserved in the synchronic representation. On the contrary, theories of grammaticalization claim that language change is structural reanalysis” (Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2016:79). In fact, they propose a different structure for the two sentences in (34), counterarguing Chierchia’s (1998) but also Storto’s (2003) and Zamaparelli’s (2008) unified raising-analysis and demonstrating that *dei* is neither an articulated preposition nor a quantifier, but an indefinite determiner (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti 2016:58):

- (34) a. Ho visto dei ragazzi.  
[I] have seen of-the boys
- b. Ho visto alcuni dei ragazzi.  
[I] have seen some of-the boys

As regards its distribution, despite being attested in Italian<sup>26</sup>, it is geographically marked (as we will discuss later, for the Gallo Italic varieties, especially in Emilia)

According to Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018:140) also the numeral quantifier *due* (lit. “two”) can be reanalyzed as an indefinite determiner like in the examples in (35). In Cardinaletti and

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<sup>26</sup> This could probably be a characteristic of a neo-Standard Italian. I would argue that it can be treated as a form of Standard Italian, given that it is geographically marked for the northern and centre-northern Italian speakers. In the last decades, informal northern Italian has been conceived as the variety with more prestige and this could prompt a wider use of di+ART.

Giusti (2006, 2017) they give evidence for this through the impossibility of *ne*-extraction (36a) and co-occurrence with the partitive PP (36b), admissible with quantifiers but not with determiner:

(35) Mangiamo due spinaci  
'Let's eat two spinach'.

(36) a. \*Di spinaci, ne abbiamo mangiati due.  
of spinach, [we] NE have eaten two  
b. \*Mi dia due di quegli spinaci.  
'Let me have two of those spinach'.

One very peculiar case of indefiniteness is the one expressed by the determiner *certo/a* and its gender and number declension. According to Brasoveanu and Farkas (2016), indefinites headed by the adjective “a certain” (part of the marked indefinites) are not u-indefinite for a very marked semantic feature: the nominal expression introduced by such adjective possesses the [+SPECIFIC] trait, hence it cannot be unmarked as regards its semantic interpretation like the uncontroversial indefinites would require. However, when it comes to varieties of informal Italian spoken in some southern regions and the Italo-Romance varieties part of the repertoire of its people, this indefinite can be void of such restrictions and be simply considered a way to express u-indefiniteness:

(37) a. \*(un) certo ragazzo.  
'a certain boy'  
b. (\*della) certa roba.  
'certain stuff'  
c. (\*dei) certi ragazzi.  
'certain boys'

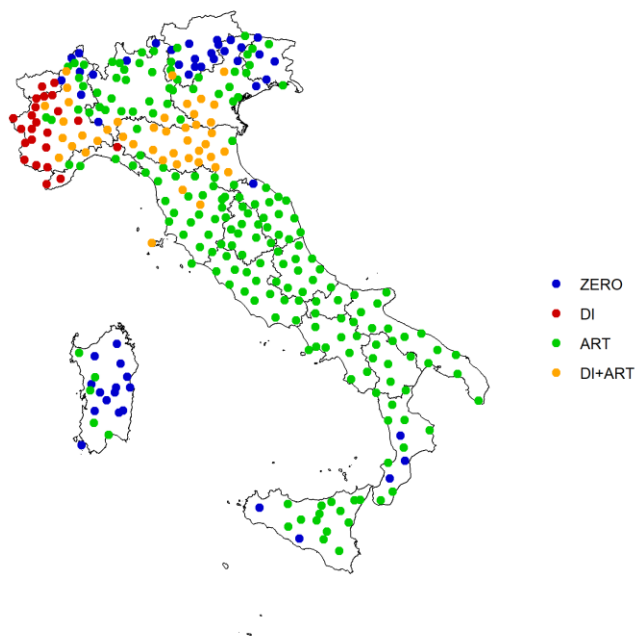
In (37), taken and readapted from Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018:139), we find examples of occurrences in Italian. Note that while occurrences of singular count nouns with the adjective a-certain require the D to be filled by the indefinite determiner *uno/una* (37a), plural count and mass nouns do not need such requisite, ruling out any other determiner(37b-c). Instead, in these last

contexts it seems that a-certain is in competition with other forms such as the partitive article that interestingly is the preferred form in the northern varieties of Italo-Romance and the regional Italians spoken in such regions.

A proposal for a grammaticalization of this adjective into a full-fledged unmarked indefinite determiner in some Southern varieties comes also from Ledgeway (2009). However, studies by Procentese (2019) and Arcamone (2022) did not find evidence for this. According to Procentese (2019) contact between Italian and the local variety may be the cause for the loss of this use of *certo/o*. “Nonetheless,” this item, compatible both with mass and plural nouns, introduces a [+INDEFINITE] [+SPECIFIC] NP, at least in the modern dialect’s variety spoken in the city” (p.19). Arcamone’s (2022) results agree with this, as she claims further that “in Italian *certo* occurs only with specialized interpretations. In Neapolitan, basing this statement on our data, we cannot exclude that in some dialect varieties *cierto/a/i* could be used with an indefinite generic interpretation, even if with a slightly low acceptability” (p.72). This could account for an “italianisation” of the local variety just in the urban areas, but more studies on different rural and peripheral areas need to be conducted.

## 4.2 Areal distribution of the indefinites in Italo-Romance

The three AIS maps taken on account by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018), display an interesting diatopic distribution of indefinite determiners in Italo-Romance varieties that has been graphically rendered in Lebani and Giusti (2022). The three chosen maps display singular mass (‘water’ and ‘wine’ in 1037 and 1343 respectively) or plural count nouns (‘violets’ in 637), since singular count nouns do not display competing forms apart from *uno/una* and are not an interesting context to look for variation. The four most attested forms are ZERO, ART, DI+ART and DI. Given the proposal for a unified syntactic analysis of them (§4.3) and the sparsity of other indefiniteness markers (either quantificational like *alcuni* or pseudo-partitive constructions such as *un po’ di*) we consider here only their distribution.



*Figure 6: Areal distribution of the indefinite determiners reported in the AIS map n. 1343. Giusti and Lebani (2022)*

*Figure 6* visualises the distribution of determiners found in map 1343 ‘[go to the cellar] to take wine’. Here, ‘wine’ is salient to the context of “going to the cellar” but can also favor small quantity. ART is the more widespread option: it covers the entire central and southern portion of the peninsula and it is also the preferred choice in the extreme south, Calabria and Sicily, despite a competition with ZERO. In Northern Italy, ART is the preferred form in Lombardy, it covers wide areas of Veneto (north-east) and we see some points in Piedmont and Liguria (north-west). DI is found at the borders with France from the Aosta Valley down to Liguria. DI+ART appears moreover in Northern Emilia but almost in big areas of Piedmont (the only region where we find all forms) and Veneto. It gets as south as the Elba Island (in Tuscany). ZERO is limited to the very northern peripheral areas, especially north-east (Trentino and Friuli). It appears very sparsely in Calabria and in Sicily, as we said, and it is the preferred form in Sardinia.

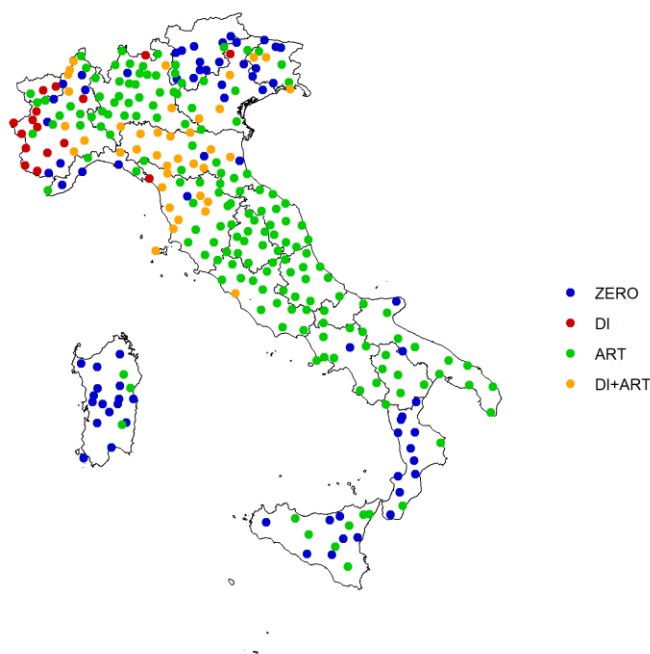


Figure 7: Areal distribution of the indefinite determiners reported in the AIS map n.637. Giusti and Lebani (2022).

Figure 7 visualises the distribution in map 637(‘[to go look for] violets’). A small-quantity interpretation is favoured by the noun ‘violets’, that can be collected in small bundles.

Even at first sight, the distribution of the indefinites appears to be more variegated than in the previous map. DI+ART increases its presence and pops up in areas where it is not present in the other two maps: Northern and Eastern Veneto, Friuli, Lombardy, Tuscany and even Lazio; In Emilia and Piedmont, it competes with DI as the preferred choice. In turn, DI is found also in three unexpected points: in the Marche, Southern Tuscany and Northern Apulia. ART is again the most frequent form throughout the central-southern portion of the peninsula, but occurs slightly less in Tuscany where we find an increasing use of DI+ART. Calabria and Sicily display a wider presence of ZERO compared to map 1343 in which they were more oriented to an ART dominance; particularly the former region has along with Sardinia a solid presence of ZERO.

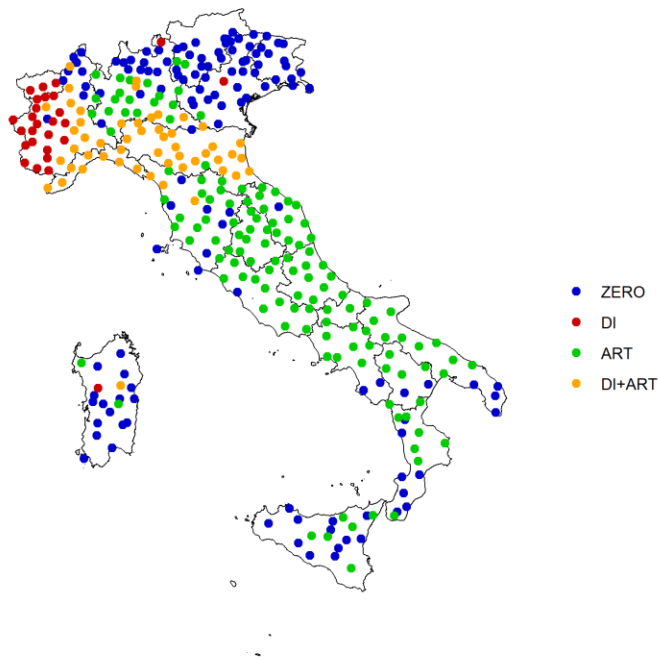


Figure 8: Areal distribution of the indefinite determiners reported in the AIS map n. 1037. Giusti and Lebani (2022).

The hypothetical existential sentence ‘[if there was] water’ in map 1037, visualised in *Figure 8*, represents the less marked context within the three maps; Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) define it core-indefiniteness to distinguish it from other nuanced expressions of indefiniteness.

The distribution is more homogenous with respect to the other two maps. ZERO is solidly attested in the north and displays a vast area in the whole north-east. It also surfaces sporadically in the centre and more frequently in the south, where it competes with ART in Sicily and is the first choice in Sardinia and Calabria. Interestingly, DI is the unmarked choice in western Piedmont and the Aosta Valley, which are at the borders of the ART isogloss. DI+ART is the unmarked choice in eastern Piedmont, Emilia and Romagna, which are at the crossroads of the DI and the ART isoglosses. ART is again the first choice in the whole Central-Southern Italy and in Lombardy and competes with more forms in other areas.



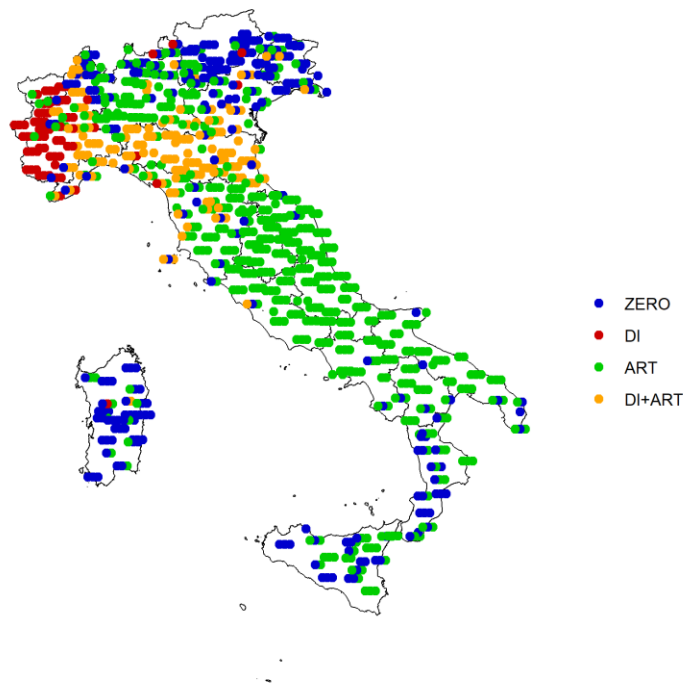


Figure 9: Occurrence of indefinite determiners in the three AIS maps: 1037, 637, 1343. Giusti and Lebani (2022)

Finally, *Figure 9* accounts for the available forms of indefinite expressions in the three maps altogether and offers a visualization of the distribution that characterizes both the nuanced interpretations of indefinites and the core one, giving us a hint of the available and preferred forms in different areas. Interestingly, we can distinguish some important tendencies in the distribution.

Let us now summarise some conclusions with respect to the indefinite determiners' distribution in the Italo-Romance context. ART, an innovative trait with respect to Latin, had its origin in Central Italy and spread in northward – southward direction. We can visualise an ART isogloss that characterizes Italo-Romance, whose core is in the centre-south of Italy (Marche, Umbria, Lazio, Abruzzi, Campania), where it is the only possibility and spreads throughout the Peninsula, with a lower distribution at the periphery.

At the periphery is particularly attested ZERO, sometimes still in coexistence with ART and its expansion from the centre. We visualise it particularly in the extreme northern border (in the Grigioni area in Switzerland, it is the only possible form) as well as the eastern and western parts of the North (Veneto and Piedmont / Liguria). As regards the south and the islands, Sardinian

dialects seem to have it as the first-choice form but also the extreme southern dialects, despite the co-existence of ART, tend to have it as the preferred determiner.

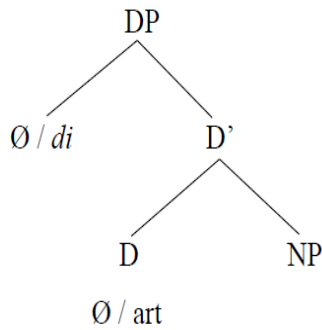
Other interesting phenomena happen in the north-western regions (Piedmont and Liguria), where we can find the isogloss of DI, a Gallic innovation due to contact with Occitan and Franco-Provençal (cf. Rohlfs, 1968:118), which spread from France across the border with Italy in an eastward direction. Hence, the DI isogloss is a typical trait of Gallo-Romance, and not just Gallo-Italic, but its core in the Italo-Romance context is in western Piedmont and the Aosta Valley; from there it spreads eastwards across the Po Valley to Emilia and Romagna.

DI is still quite productive in eastern Piedmont, in the Appenninic and in the westmost areas of Emilia-Romagna (cfr: Molinari 2019), but it covaries with DI+ART, product of the overlap between the ART-isogloss and the DI isogloss. This determiner is limited to the Po Valley, particularly it's the first choice in Emilian Po Valley where, according to Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) expresses core indefiniteness, although also sporadically found in as south as in Tuscany.

### 4.3 A unified syntactic proposal for the main attested forms

The four determiners whose distribution we accounted for in the previous section are the four most frequent forms as regards plural count nouns and singular mass nouns, and they share ungrammaticality in combination with a singular count noun (or at least a non-indefinite or non-kind interpretation, in the case of ART).

According to Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) these competing forms can be treated as different realizations of one and the same structure where either the specDP, the head D, both or neither of them realise. *Table 2*, taken from Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) offers an example of the different forms that this structure can take with a plural count noun *violette*. In (a) neither the head nor the spec is overt, hence we have a ZERO determiner. In (b) the head is realised, giving rise to the indefinite interpretation of the definite article, ART; Conversely, only the spec is overt in (c) and the plural count noun is headed by the so-called indefinite operator DI. Finally, we see the conjunct realization of head and spec that gives place to the 'partitive determiner' or DI+ART in (d). In *Figure 10* we visualise a unified tree structure that accounts for the four realizations we just presented; indefinite determiners are indeed taken to be simple DPs: they host the indefinite operator DI in the specifier, while the head D realizes Gender and Number features.



	Spec	Head		
a.	o	o	vino	violette
b.	o	il	il vino	le violette
c.	di	o	di vino	di violette
d.	di	il	del vino	delle violette

Figure 10: Syntactic tree structure that can account for the syntactic realizations of the indefinite determiners as discussed in Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018).

Table 2: Syntactic realizations of the indefinite determiner as proposed in Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018).

This proposal derives from previous studies conducted on the nature of nominal expression, the role of the DP and the formal account for each different determiner. In particular, the theory that the head D is a bare realisation of nominal concord features lacking any semantics but being a key element in the direct versus partitive case distinction is based on Giusti (2002). She argues for the functional status of determiners such as the article<sup>27</sup>, claiming they are functional heads in the extended projection of the noun phrase, following Grimshaw's (1991) in proposing a bottom-up fashion theory of extended functional projections. Given these premises, the definite article should comply with the properties of any other functional head<sup>28</sup>: it is realised either as a free dummy or as an inflectional morpheme, it is merged as a last resort, and it shares all the  $\phi$ -features of the extended chain.

A finer structure for nominal expression is found in Cardinaletti and Giusti (2015) that argues for tripartite structure for the nominal expression (cf. *Figure 11*), in parallel to that

<sup>27</sup> Evidence for this would be the phonological dependence of the morphologically free article in most of Romance languages and Germanic languages, as well as the morphological dependence of the enclitic definite articles shown in Romanian and Scandinavian (within Romance and Germanic languages) and other languages with this feature. More evidence includes the inseparability from the sister nominal projection displayed by the article and that this last element seems to be devoid of substantive content. We refer to Giusti (2002) for a full discussion and diagnosis on this topic.

<sup>28</sup> Giusti (2002) collects general characteristics of functional heads based on previous literature on the topic. We report the full list, and we refer to Giusti (2002) for further discussion.

- (A1) The realization of a functional head is a last resort procedure.
- (A2) If a functional head is realised, then it is either a dependent morpheme or a weak (free) morpheme.
- (A3) All the functional heads of an extended nominal projection share the same 4-features.
- (A4) The interpretation of a noun phrase at LF is done in its highest Specifier position (generally referred to as SpecDP, here referred to as SpecFP<sub>inax</sub>).

cartography approach that Rizzi (1997) had put forward to account for the clausal structure. Within the three layers of the nominal expression, each with different semantic requirements, the determiner would originate in the complementizer layer (DP) but be free to move in the structure when necessary.

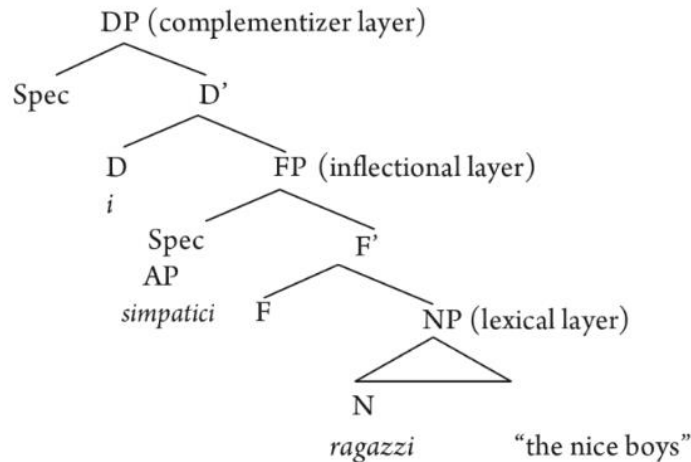


Figure 11: Tripartition of the NP as proposed by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2015) in the fashion of the cartography approach proposed by Rizzi (1997).

Feature-sharing throughout this extended projection of the nominal expression has been explained by means of three different procedures, namely Agreement, Concord, and Projection, each with its own role. Cardinaletti and Giusti (2015) focus on the last two processes. Agreement allows probe-goal relation triggering movement and case checking that typically involves person features (bundled with number and less often gender), in nominal expression mostly relevant for the possessor-N relation. Differently, Concord and Projection are accountable for the  $\phi$ -features (gender, number) and Case, when necessary, spreading throughout the chain.

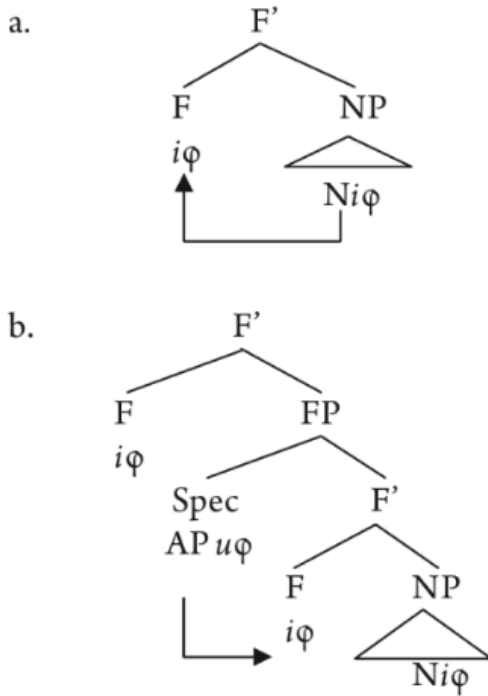


Figure 12: Syntactic procedures of Projection (a) and Concord (b) as described by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2015).

Let us focus on *Figure 12*. On the one hand, Projection (visualised in a.) is responsible for building the spine of the extended projection of a lexical item and consists of merging the bundle of features that we find in the head N to the functional heads in a bottom-up fashion; on the other, Concord accounts for the relations between a head and a specifier inside the nominal projection. In (b) we see an AP in the specifier of a functional phrase (SpecFP) that checks its uninterpretable features ( $u\phi$ ) via the interpretable features ( $i\phi$ ). As a matter of fact, those  $i\phi$  on the functional head F are a result of Projection of the lexical head N's ones.

Cardinaletti and Giusti (2015) argue that feature sharing in Concord does not require the overt realization of the shared features on both the head and the specifier, nor does it require for at least one of them to display overt feature realization. Indeed, Concord undergoes principles of Economy: thus, if some elements in the specifier position require a null head, a filter<sup>29</sup> will prevent its realization. On the contrary, if features are missing on the specifier, as a compensation they can

<sup>29</sup> The filter that Cardinaletti and Giusti (2015) propose to account for this null head and filled specifier position is parallel to the double-filled COMP filter within the clause (Sportiche 1992). This allows to complete the set of striking similarities between the clause, the verb and the nominal expressions' functional projections.

be realised on the head (procedure that takes the name of Compensatory Concord). Besides, this does not imply that either one of them must be realised nor does it prohibit a realization in both positions. As a result, we find the 4 different logical combinations of the indefinite determiner presented in *Table 2* and *Figure 10*. This means that when SpecDP is realised as DI, the head can be either covert, resulting in DI, or overtly realised nominal concord features, resulting in DI+ART. If SpecDP is realised as ZERO, when the head remains silent, we obtain ZERO, and when dummy  $\phi$ -features are realised through the definite article, we obtain ART.

The unified formal theory herein proposed accounts for the structure of these forms, however it does not justify the co-existence, competition and true or apparent optionality found in the Italo-Romance varieties. According to Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018), Biberauer and Roberts' (2012) theory on the interaction between nano-parameters and micro-parameters within the structure of the DP sheds light also on this process. Generative Grammar considers parameters as underspecified formal features being part of UG, as if they were subsets of universal principles that must be specified by the exposure of linguistic input. On these premises, Biberauer and Roberts (2012) propose the following taxonomy of parameters, reported from Biberauer et al. (2014: 11):

- (38) 'For a given value  $v_i$  of a parametrically variant feature F:
- a. Macroparameters: all functional heads of the relevant type share  $v_i$ ;
  - b. Mesoparameters: all functional heads of a given naturally definable class, e.g. [+V], share  $v_i$ ;
  - c. Microparameters: a small subclass of functional heads (e.g. modal auxiliaries, pronouns) shows  $v_i$ ;
  - d. Nanoparameters: one or more individual lexical items is/are specified for  $v_i$ .'

Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) claim that "the microparameter regards whether the head D must be realised or remain silent when combined with an indefinite determiner sitting in its specifier. The nano-parameter, instead, regards the lexical realization of the indefinite determiner as DI or ZERO." (p.142). Furthermore, Biberauer et al. (2014) state that in the hierarchy presented in (38), the microparameters are "somewhat unstable" and nanoparameters are "highly unstable". This

predicts the great variability in the forms of the indefinite determiners found throughout the peninsula.

#### 4.4 A Protocol for indefiniteness in Italo-Romance

Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) do not provide only an explanation of the distribution of core indefinites in Italo-Romance, they also disentangle some important aspects regarding the choice of the different forms of indefinite determiners. This is crucial as it starts questioning the nature of optionality that we find in these apparently competing forms: Is there a true optionality or do some other variables intervene in the choice of the list of available determiners that the variety displays?

The traits which have been found to be relevant in conditioning the choice of the indefinite determiners range from semantic to syntactic and sentential ones. We have already anticipated some of them in the previous chapters, like argument position (preverbal subject vs. direct object), and noun classes (mass singular vs. plural count), while others have been only mentioned such as the specialization of meaning (saliency, small quantity).

Given the plurality of traits that ought to be considered, Giusti (2021) proposes a “Protocol methodology” for their analysis. By Protocol methodology she intends a “shared procedure of data representation into something more reflected and structured”, which goes “one step further in the appropriate design of the table charts, presenting the features of the elements under investigation in a reflected way” (p.285). In this view, questionnaires like the one proposed in the present study aim at attributing the value [+] when a certain trait is present, whereas the value [-] is attributed if it is absent.

We will now show the different traits based on Giusti (2021), splitting them in three main categories (syntactic, sentential and semantic traits) and providing examples. The values that fill the tables we will show are based on Cardinaletti and Giusti’s (2020) questionnaire on informal Italian, along with speakers and authors’ grammatical judgements<sup>30</sup>. For this reason, they include all the determiners that we have shown in §4.1. We will not dwell on commenting *uno/a*, *due* and *certo* since they are not included in the present work, and we will marginally comment on the statistics of DI, since it is not attested in Italian.

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<sup>30</sup> Many of these judgments are subject to diatopic variation. Standard Italian, as we explained in Chapter 2, is not really easily isolated and local languages are pervasive with respect to how we conceive Italian.

### 4.4.1 Syntactic traits: argument position

In §3.2.3 we stressed on the subject/object asymmetry found in Romance languages opposed to Germanic languages as regards bare nominals: on the one hand, in Germanic languages, the occurrence of bare nominals in preverbal subject position is widely spread, on the other Romance languages mostly prohibit it<sup>31</sup>. *Table 3* visualises that in preverbal subject position, along with ZERO, also ART is ruled out. In preverbal subject position the indefinite interpretation of ART is indeed never possible as it would be interpreted as reference to kind (cf. (29a) and (30a) in §4.1). For this reason, it appears that the object position is the most reliable syntactic position to look at when willing to investigate the variation of indefinites in Italo-Romance: while both ZERO and ART are ruled out in subject position, in object position we find the true variation of the indefinite determiners.

Indefinite determiners across grammatical functions in Italian	ZERO	ART	bare <i>di</i>	<i>di</i> +art	<i>certo</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>due</i>
a. preverbal subject	-	-	0	+	+	+	+
b. direct object	+	+	0	+	+	+	+

*Table 3: Indefinite determiners across grammatical functions in Italina. From Giusti (2021)*

### 4.4.2 Sentential traits: clause type, polarity and aspect.

Several sentential traits have been found to influence the choice of the indefinite determiners in Italian. Within these traits we find mood and modality<sup>32</sup> but also polarity, aspect and clause type

<sup>31</sup> In some restricted cases, namely provided they are modified by postnominal or prenominal adjectives (or prepositional adjuncts), we find in Italian bare nominals in subject position with an indefinite interpretation, while bare nominals can never appear in the subject of predicates selecting for kind (cf. examples (29a) and (30a) in §4.1) unless it is coordinated (cf. (i) and (ii)) or appears in some eventive individual-level predicate modified by an adjective or other adjuncts (PP) (cf. (iii)) (cf. also Longobardi, 2001: 341-342 and Cohen 2007:513):

- (i) \**Elefanti di colore bianco sono estinti.*  
'White-colored elephants have become extinct.'
- (ii) *Elefanti e tigri di colore bianco sono estinti.* (Cohen, 2007:513)  
'White-colored elephants and tigers have become extinct'
- (iii) *Cani da guardia di grosse dimensioni sono più efficiente/ aggressivi.*  
'Watchdogs of large size are more efficient/aggressive.'

<sup>32</sup> Giusti (2021) argues that mood and modality can influence the selection of the indefinite determiner since they interact with the presupposition of existence of the referent of the indefinite complement. A predicate in a conditional clause does not state the existence of its internal argument, as both a strong interpretation or a weak one are possible



in the contrast between habitual/generic and episodic sentences<sup>33</sup>. We focus here on the latter two, although they are often intertwined and one sentence may be used as a diagnostic for different traits. For instance, aspect can be only tested for episodic sentences.

As regards clause type, Cardinaletti and Giusti (2020)'s questionnaire gives us a good quantitative measure of the distribution of the indefinite determiners in informal Italian in the context of two different clause types that interact with polarity, namely habitual sentences in the present (such as 'I don't drink wine') and episodic past sentences (such as 'Yesterday I didn't drink wine'). Results with respect to each indefinite determiner are summarized in *Table 4* and we focus here on the three relevant forms.

ART has been found to be widely used in habitual sentences in the present and less frequently in the episodic ones in the past. DI+ART is not possible in habitual sentences in the present, but it is found in episodic ones in the past. ZERO is possible in both contexts, though more frequent in the habitual sentences in the present.

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in (i). The same goes for the subjunctive mood used in the relative clause (ii) with predicates such as 'look for' or 'wish' that favour a weak interpretation of the object (also cf. Giusti 2021:283):

- (i) a. Mangerei (dei) biscotti  
'I would eat (some) biscuits.'
- b. Arriverebbero (delle) amiche.  
'There would arrive (some) friends.'
- (ii) a. Cerco (dei) biscotti che non facciano ingrassare.  
'I am looking for (some) biscuits that do not make you fat.'
- b. Desidero (delle) amiche che mi vogliano bene.  
'I wish [to have] (some) friends who love me.'

<sup>33</sup> Krifka (1995) and other authors consider the modal component of habitual sentences to be identical to the operator underlying generic sentences, since both clause types make generalisations over individuals, situations or events. As a result, habitual sentences are more easily (but not exclusively) compatible with a kind-referring, non-specific reading of the indefinite NP in object position, while episodic sentences, which refer to particular events, more easily allow for specific indefinites while not ruling out kind-referring interpretation.

Sentence types interacting with indefinite objects in Italian	ZERO	ART	bare <i>di</i>	<i>di+art</i>	<i>certo</i>	<i>uno</i>	<i>due</i>
a. generic sentences							
i. present	+	+	○	-	-	+	?
ii. past	?	?	○	?	?	?	?
b. episodic sentences							
i. present	+	+	○	+	+	+	+
ii. past	+	+	○	+	?	+	?
c. episodic sentences							
i. atelic	+	+	○	-	?	-	?
ii. telic	-	#	○	+	?	+	?

Table 4: Indefinite determiners in object position and their interaction with sentence types. From Giusti (2021)

As regards aspect, differences have been found in the context of telicity<sup>34</sup>. Diagnostics were carried out in Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) exploiting adverbial expressions such as “in an hour” and ‘for an hour’. Given that the first adverbial expression focuses on the time necessary to conclude an action, while the second points at the amount of time and the duration of it, they correlate respectively with telicity and atelicity. We will herein summarize the occurrence of the three determiners of interest that showed some interaction with respect to telicity (see *Table 4*) and show some examples.

DI+ART is compatible with the telic aspect (an event can have as a result the moving of a small quantity) but its use in an atelic context seems to be less acceptable, though not ruled out. This contrast can be seen in the examples in (39). ART is possible with both aspects (cf. (40)), but the telic aspect forces the definite interpretation of the definite determiner (cf. (40b)). ZERO correlates with atelic events (cf. (40a)) and it is ruled out in a telic context (cf. (40b)) (also cf. Giusti, 2021:282):

<sup>34</sup> A verb or verb phrase that presents an action with a specific endpoint is said to be telic; if the situation it describes is not heading for any particular endpoint, it is said to be atelic (Krifka 1989). Interestingly, in languages with overt case marking like Finnish, telicity is mandatorily marked on the object through the accusative while the partitive morphological case is used to express atelicity (Kiparsky 1998).

- (39) a. Maria ha raccolto (??delle) fragole per un'ora.  
 Maria has picked pa.f.pl strawberries for an hour  
 'Mary picked strawberries for an hour.'
- b. Maria ha raccolto delle fragole in un'ora.  
 Maria has picked pa.f.pl strawberries in an hour  
 'Maria picked strawberries in an hour.'
- (40) a. Maria ha raccolto (le) fragole per un'ora.  
 Maria has picked the strawberries for an hour  
 'Maria picked strawberries for an hour.'
- b. #Maria ha raccolto \*(le) fragole in un'ora.  
 Maria has picked the strawberries / a strawberry in an hour  
 'Maria picked the strawberries in an hour.'

#### 4.4.3 Semantic traits: noun classes and specialization of meaning

One of the first difference trigger that was noticed by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) with respect to the choice of indefinite determiner is that between countable and mass nouns<sup>35</sup>. Singular count nouns do not offer an interesting context to look at: they occur with a single indefinite determiner, namely *un(o)/un*, displaying no competition with other forms in the context of u-indefiniteness. *Table 5* visualises this tendency, showing the importance of looking at the more variegated context of singular mass nouns and plural count nouns. We provide here a discursive description.

Indefinite determiners in Italian	ZERO	ART	di	di+art	certo	un	due
a. mass nouns	+	+	-	+	+	#	-
b. plural count nouns	+	+	-	+	+	-	+
c. singular count nouns	-	#	-	-	-	+	-

*Table 5: Indefinite determiners in Italian and their interactions with different noun classes. From Giusti (2021)*

<sup>35</sup> On the one hand, countable nouns display a singular and a plural form depending on the quantity of entities, on the other mass nouns are uncountable and can appear just in the singular form. We will not however consider abstract singular nouns such as “courage” or “love” given their different behaviour with respect to both the aforementioned classes (cfr Tovina (2001) for an extensive discussion on abstract nouns and their affinity with singular count nouns rather than plural ones).

ART and ZERO occur with both singular mass nouns and plural count nouns, although ART bears an ambiguous definite/indefinite interpretation in contexts that allows for both. DI+ART is compatible with both mass and plural count nouns.

The semantic aspects interacting with the selection of indefinite expression does not just result in differences according to the noun class. For instance, contrary to the other determiners, DI+ART conveys an indefinite meaning with an added notion of small quantity. Indeed, among the semantic traits that can influence the selection of one indefinite determiner rather than another, semantic specialization of meaning<sup>36</sup> plays an important role. Though expected, it is challenging to establish what exactly these specializations are and how they correlate with the other interacting features.

Indefinite determiners in object position in Italian	ZERO	ART	bare <i>di</i>	<i>di+art</i>	<i>certo</i>	<i>uno</i>	<i>due</i>
a. core indefiniteness	+	+	○	-	-	+	+
b. saliency	-	+	○	-	-	+	?
c. small quantity	-	-	○	+	-	-	?
d. specificity	-	-	○	+	+	+	?
e. narrow scope	+	+	○	+	?	+	?
f. wide scope	-	#	○	+	+	+	?

Table 6 Indefinite determiners in Italian and their interaction with different semantic contexts.

We summarize the specialization that has been argued for each determiner and that is also visualised in Table 6. ART seems to convey an added meaning of saliency, while ZERO expresses core indefiniteness, void of any other semantic implicature. DI+ART- as already stated- is claimed to have a notion of small quantity.

Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) brought evidence for these theories through an analysis of the AIS maps. As a proof of the specialization of meaning, AIS map 1037 ‘[if there was] water’, hypothetical existential context that favours a core indefinite interpretation, displays a higher occurrence of bare nominals, contrary to the saliency of context found AIS map 1343 ‘[go to the

<sup>36</sup> In semantics, narrowing or specialization of meaning within competing forms is a well-established and studied phenomenon in the literature. Even the examples that we brought about the different epistemic properties of different indefinites in Brasoveanu and Farkas (2016) are based on this well-known evidence. Further literature about distinguishing “identifiability” of an indefinite referent in epistemic Logic is also abundant (cfr: Horn 2000; Jayez and Tovena 2002).

cellar] to take wine' that results in a higher occurrence of ART. The small-quantity interpretation that we find in AIS map 637 '[to look for] violets' favours instead the occurrence of DI+ART. Due to the time in which they were collected, the data of AIS maps may not be enough evidence to support specialization of meaning in Italo-Romance nowadays.

Nevertheless, the survey designed by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2020) only partially confirmed the hypothesis of a specialization of meaning at least in informal Italian. While DI+ART's specialized meaning for small quantity is confirmed also for unexpected areas where the determiner was expected to be unmarked (Emilia-Romagna), they found a high rate of optionality between ZERO and ART with a preference for ZERO at the peripheries.

Consequently, Cardinaletti and Giusti's (2018, 2020) proposal must be verified in different Italo-Romance varieties through large-scale questionnaires. For instance, contrary to what was supposed by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018), Molinari (2019) did not find any specialization of this determiner for the small quantity interpretation in Piacentino dialect, describing it as expression of unmarked core existential indefiniteness in positive contexts, just like ART.

As regards scope properties in a negative context, Italian indefinite determiners show some peculiarities. Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) notice that while all determiners allow for a narrow scope, they differ with respect to the wide scope interpretation. Determiner ZERO only takes narrow scope with respect to negation. The examples in (41) show this contrast: The narrow interpretation is ruled out as confirmed by the causative clause. While according to cf. Chierchia (1997), Cardinaletti and Giusti (2016) and Zamparelli (2008) plural count nouns headed by DI+ART may have narrow and wide scope interpretation (cf. (42)), Giusti and Cardinaletti (2018) notice that with mass nouns the wide scope interpretation of DI+ART is ruled out (cf. (43)). As for ART, wide scope reading forces its definite interpretation (cf. (44)), while the narrow interpretation may be acceptable (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2018: 145 and Giusti, 2021:279):

- (41) a. Non ho invitato ragazzi alla festa ma solo ragazze  $\neg\exists$   
 [I]did not invite boys at the party but only girls
- b. \*Non ho invitato ragazzi alla festa perchè erano antipatici  $*\exists\neg$   
 [I]did not invite boys at the party because [they]were obnoxious
- (42) a. Non ho invitato dei ragazzi alla festa ma solo (delle)ragazze  $\neg\exists$   
 [I]did not invite DI+ART boys at-the party but only (DI+ART) girls.
- b. Non ho invitato dei ragazzi alla festa perché erano antipatici  $\exists\neg$   
 [I]did not invite DI+ART boys at-the party because [they]were obnoxious.
- (43) Non ho bevuto del vino,  
 NEG have drunk DI+ART wine
- a. ho bevuto solo acqua  $\neg\exists$   
 [I]have drunk only water
- b. #perché era acido  $\#\exists\neg$   
 because it-was acid
- (44) a. Non ho invitato i ragazzi alla festa ma solo (delle/le) ragazze  $\neg\exists$   
 [I]did not invite the boys at the party but only (DI+ART/the) girls.
- b. #Non ho invitato i ragazzi alla festa perché erano antipatici  $\#\exists\neg$   
 [I]did not invite the boys at the party because [they]were obnoxious.

Crucially, we remind that according to this Protocol Methodology, if one of the indefinite determiners available in Standard Italian undergoes some restriction with respect to their occurrence in one of these contexts, it does not mean that the equivalent form in a variety of Italo-Romance will have the same properties and vice-versa. For instance, Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) show that DI+ART in Anconetano (a variety that rules out the partitive determiner in combination with singular mass noun) does not admit a narrow scope interpretation. As the examples in (45) show, in Anconetano the only way to express narrow scope and indefinites is through ART, despite the ambiguity with a definite interpretation (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2018: 147):

- (45) a. \*Nun ho ‘nvitato dei fioli ala festa, ma solo dele fiole \*¬∃  
 [I] did not invite DI-ART boys at the party, but only DI-ART girls.
- b. Nun ho ‘nvitato dei fioli ala festa perché erane ‘ntipatici ∃¬  
 [I] did not invite DI+ART boys at the part, because [they + were obnoxious.
- c. Nun ho ‘nvitato i fioli ala festa, ma solo le fiole ¬∃  
 [I] did not invite the boys at the party, but only the girls

The DI determiner, not found in standard Italian, can conversely be productive in other varieties: in Piacentino DI occurs only in the scope of negation, always interpreted as narrow scope (Molinari, 2019).

#### 4.4.4 Previous studies adopting the Protocol

The Protocol proposed by Giusti (2021) that was mainly fed by the questionnaire on Informal Italian (Cardinaletti and Giusti (2020)) aims at collecting similar data about local Italo-Romance varieties and the regional Italian spoken in such areas. Following a standardized procedure and a well-managed collection of data with specific goals, renders it easier to capture cross-linguistic variation in such a context. *Table 7* summarizes some of the results collected with respect to the availability of indefinite determiners in dialects of specific areas<sup>37</sup>. This already offers some very interesting insight and hypothesis tests: an example is that no dialect, not even the southern ones, there has been evidence of the use of *certo* with core indefinite interpretation. Molinari (2019), Procentese (2020), Arcamone (2022) offers a more detailed study adopting the Protocol, since they investigate some aspects in both the local variety and the local Informal Italian.

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<sup>37</sup> The *Table* is fed by results taken from: Campomolino (TV), Furlan (2018); southern Friulian (Castions di Strada, Pocenia and Gonars, UD), Perinot (2018); Piacenza, Molinari (2018); Altamura (BA), Vicenti (2019); the Neapolitan area (Casalnuovo, Casoria, Soccavo, Bagnoli, Pozzuoli, Santa Lucia, San Ferdinando, Vasto Napoli, Somma Vesuviana, Frattamaggiore), Procentese (2019); Galati (RC), Maesano (2019); Lecce, Antonaci (2018). The Ancona dialect is represented by Giuliana Giusti’s judgements but needs proper fieldwork.

Core indefinites in object position	ZERO	ART	bare <i>di</i>	<i>di+art</i>	<i>certo</i>	<i>un</i>
a. Campomolino (TV)	+	(+)	-	(+)	(+)	+
b. Southern Friulian (UD)	+	+	-	(+)	(+)	+
c. Piacenza	(+)	+	NEG > +	+	(+)	+
d. Ancona	-	+	-	(+)	(+)	+
e. Altamura (BA)	-	+	-	-	(+)	+
f. Neaples area	(+)	+	-	-	(+)	+
g. Galati (RC)	+	+	-	-	(+)	+
h. Lecce	+	(+)	-	-	(+)	+

Table 7: The indefinite determiners of different dialects found in previous studies. Giusti (2021).

Referring to the aforementioned studies, in the present work we will investigate some of the traits that are considered in the Protocol. The relevant ones have already been claimed in the research question; they are episodic sentences in the past vs habitual sentences in the present and mass vs plural count nouns. We offer here in *Table 8* a summary of the traits we checked for in our research and that we filled with our results.

	ZERO	ART	DI	DI+ART
Episodic sentences (past)				
Habitual sentences (present)				
Mass singular nouns				
Plural count nouns				

Table 8 Model for our Protocol of the indefinite determiners in Sardinian and regional Italian of Sardinia.

#### 4.5 Indefinite determiners' syntactic behaviour in CLLD context in Italian

The present study aims also at shedding light on the behaviour that the indefinite determiners display in the context of Clitic Left dislocation (CLLD). Particularly, we will focus on the resumptive clitics displayed by such determiners in this syntactic construction. In order to do so,



we need to introduce this specific topic and its theoretical background (§4.5.1 and §4.5.2). We will then propose a Protocol resembling Giusti's (2021) indefinite determiners' one but focused on the expectations of resumptive clitics in CLLD (§4.5.3).

#### 4.5.1 Definition and main properties of CLLD in Italian

CLLD is a typical syntactic construction shared by Romance languages<sup>38</sup> that consists in the dislocation of a constituent to the left periphery of the sentence. Such phenomenon triggers the reintroduction of the dislocated element in the sentence by a resumptive clitic that carries the same case of it.

Traditionally, this construction has been considered as a result of a wh-movement, until Cinque (1990) argued against this hypothesis in Italian CLLD based on Rizzi (1990)'s finding regarding the government-binding theory in syntax. As a result, in this context the expression “dislocated” does not entail that the constituent has been moved (for the complete diagnostic for lack of Wh-movement, see Cinque 1990).

We follow Cinque (1990) and the examples he proposes, in providing a list of the main features of CLLD in Italian.

i. Any maximal phrase can be found in “left-dislocated” position. In the (38) we can see several examples that account for this, a PP in (46a) an AP in (46b) but also a VP, a QP and a CP respectively in (46c), (46d) and (46e) (also cf. Cinque, 1990:57-58):

- (46) a. [PP Al mare], ci siamo già stati.  
to the seaside there-(we)-have already been
- b. [AP Bella], non lo è mai stata.  
beautiful non-it-(she) ever was
- c. [VP Messo da parte], non lo è mai stato.  
got out of the way not-it-(he) ever was
- d. [QP Tutti], non li ho visti ancora.  
all not-them-(I) have seen yet
- e. [CP Che bevi], lo dicono tutti.  
that (you) drink it says everybody

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<sup>38</sup> But also, Greek (Anagnostopoulou 1997) and Lebanese Arabic (Aoun and Benmamoun 1998).

ii. The “dislocated” phrase can be found at the left of any subordinate clause type, like the examples of a relative (47a) and a temporal clause (47b) here reported (also cf. Cinque, 1990:58):

- (47) a. L’unica persona che a Gianni, non gli ha mai fatto un favore.  
the only person which to Gianni not-to-him-has ever done a favor  
b. Da quando, al mercato, ci va lui, non mangiano più bene.  
since when to the market he goes there they don’t eat well anymore

iii. There is theoretically no limit for the number of fronted phrases, as shown in (48) where we find several fronted PPs and a DP (also cf. Cinque, 1990:58):

- (48) DI vestiti, a me, Gianni, in quel negozio, non mi ce ne ha mai comprati.  
clothes to me Gianni in that shop (he) not-to-me-there-of them ever bought

iv. When present, the resumptive element can be a clitic pronoun only. For this reason, (49a) is grammatical because the dislocated PP is restated by a clitic pronoun *ci*. The occurrence of a full adverb (49b) such as *là* would render the sentence agrammatical or unacceptable (also cf. Cinque, 1990:59):

- (49) a. In quella città, non ci sono mai stato.  
in that town not-there-(I)-have ever been  
b. \*In quella città, non sono mai stato là.  
in that town not (I) have ever been there

v. There is obligatory Connectivity between the “left-dislocated” phrase and the TPinternal position (e.g. sensitivity to binding theory) (cf. (50)). We see here the contrast between the indexing of the two dislocated elements (also cf. Cinque, 1990:59)

- (50) a. A lei/\*se stessa, Maria dice che non ci pensiamo mai.  
of her/herself Maria says that (we) not-there-think ever
- b. A \*?lei/se stessa, Maria non ci pensa.  
of her/herself Maria not-there-thinks

vi. The relation between the fronted element and the TP-internal position undergoes islands constraints, as in (51):

- (51) a. \*[PP A Carlo], ti parlerò solo del[NP le persone [CP che gli piacciono]].  
to Carlo I will talk to you only about the people that to him appeal
- b. \*[PP A casa], lo abbiamo incontrato [PP prima che ci andasse].  
home we met him before that he there went

vii. Only in the case of a “left-dislocated” element in argument position, the resumptive clitic is obligatory (cf (52a)). In all the other instances, it is optional (cf. (52b-e)). Only when the clitic counterpart of the fronted element does not exist, it is not required (cf. (52f-g)) (also cf. Cinque 1990:17, 68):

- (52) a. Gianni, \*(lo) vedrò domani.  
Gianni (him) (I) will see tomorrow
- b. A casa, non (ci) sono stato ancora.  
home not (there) have (I) been yet
- c. Di questa faccenda, non (ne) voglio più parlare.  
of this matter not (of-it) (I) want to speak anymore
- d. Bella, pare che non (lo) sia mai stata.  
beautiful it seems that not (it) (she) ever was
- e. Influenzato dalla pittura fiamminga, non (lo) è stato.  
influenced by Flemish painting not (it) ha was
- f. Da Gianni, non è stato salutato.  
by Gianni, he was not greeted
- g. Per Mario, non ho mai lavorato.  
For Mario, I never worked

### 4.5.2 Direct case clitics and oblique case clitics in Italian

Property (vii) states that elements in argument positions, when fronted and dislocated to the left periphery, force a mandatory realization of the clitic pronoun. This has been shown in the contrast between example (52a), in which an object is fronted and the resumptive clitic mandatorily realised, and example (52b) in which the fronted element is not in argument position and the resumptive clitic is optional.

In Italian, the only direct case clitic that could be realised is the accusative one, resuming a direct object<sup>39</sup>. Since resumptive clitics must display the same case but also Gender and Number features of the fronted elements, we find different morphological realizations for the Italian accusative clitic<sup>40</sup>. Furthermore, similarly to French and conversely to Spanish, in periphrastic tense constructions with past participle (e.g. *passato prossimo*), also this latter element agrees with the clitic, hence the fronted phrase, for Gender and Number (see examples in (53)). This is assumed to be a cause of the clitic movement through the specifier position of the past participle triggering agreement for Number and Gender features (Belletti 1999) (also cf. Molinari, 2019:38):

- (53) a. Gianni ha visto dei ragazzi.  
John have.3P.SG see.PST.PRT.SG.M of.the boys
- b. Maria ha visto dei ragazzi.  
Mary have.3P.SG see.PST.PRT.SG.M of.the boys  
'John/Mary saw some boys'
- c. Dei ragazzi, Gianni/Maria li ha visti.  
Of.the boys, John/Mary CL.ACC have.3P.SG see.PST.PRT.PL.M  
'Some boys, John/Mary saw them'

The oblique case clitic considered in this study is the quantitative clitic *ne*, that signals the presence of partitive case. In Italian, like in the case of accusative clitics, the quantitative clitic also agrees with the past participle (see (54)), providing evidence for the same kind of movement through the specifier position that direct object clitics undergo.

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<sup>39</sup> Italian lacks subject clitics, hence, when we front elements in subject position, we do not find any clitic.

<sup>40</sup> These are: *lo* (M.SG), *la* (F.SG), *li* (M.PL) and *le* (F.PL).

Interestingly, quantitative clitic *ne* in Italian CLLD constructions is also obligatorily realised, as observed by Cardinaletti and Giusti (1992, 2006). This derives from its DP status as a complement of Q, just like the accusative one (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2006:42):

- (54) a. Di ragazzi francesi, \*(ne) ho conosciuti molti.  
of boys French, [I] NE have met many  
b. I ragazzi francesi, \*(li) ho conosciuti.  
the boys French, [I] them have met

Cardinaletti and Giusti (1992, 2006) also notice that while accusative clitics are compatible only with universal quantifiers, quantitative clitic *ne* is compatible only with existential quantifiers. Accordingly, only accusative clitics can be extracted out of universal Qs (through SpecQP position), while the extraction from existential Qs is borne out, like in the contrast between (55a) and (55b) (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti 2016: 36):

- (55) a. Di ragazzi, ne ho visti molti / \*tutti.  
of boys, [I] ne have seen many / \*all  
‘I’ve seen many boys.’  
b. I panini, li / \*ne ho mangiati tutti.  
the sandwiches, CL.ACC / \*CL.QNT [I] have eaten all

Finally, the quantitative clitic is incompatible with distributive quantifiers (cf. (56a) and (56b)), since their specifier position is occupied by a null operator that triggers the distributive reading (also cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti 2016: 36):

- (56) a. \*Di ragazzi, ne ho visti/o ognuno  
Of boys NE have seen.M.PL/M.SG each-one  
b. \*Di ragazzi, ne ho visti entrambi  
Of boys NE have seen.M.PL/M.SG both

### 4.5.3 A Protocol for the indefinite determiners' resumptive clitics

Following the same structure of the Protocol seen in §4.4, we can create a similar approach to account for the resumptive clitics' use with respect to the different indefinite determiners. Procentese (2021) reports a summary of the options available to each determiner in Italian, summarised in *Table 9*. LI stands for the accusative clitic, while NE is the quantitative clitic. Her research, as well as Molinari (2019) and Arcamone (2022) based on this table to collect the findings in, respectively, Ferrarese, Piacentino and Napolitan.

Given the wide use of DI+ART in northern varieties, Molinari (2019) and Procentese (2021) were particularly interested in checking for the behaviour of resumptive clitics with respect to this form. In fact, when indefinite determiners introduce dislocated objects, the scope properties of each determiner condition the choice of the resumptive clitic in the main clause. The quantitative clitic *ne* is compatible only with those determiners that allow for the narrow scope reading when dislocated (Cardinaletti and Giusti 2018) and it was expected to appear just with complements introduced by DI or ZERO article. Instead, DI+ART, like ART, in dislocated sentences can be resumed in the main sentence exclusively by direct case clitics.

*Table 9: resumptive options of left dislocated objects introduced by indefinite determiners in Italian. (Procentese 2021)*

	ZERO	ART	DI+ART	DI
LI	-	+	+	-
NE	+	-	-	+

Interestingly, Procentese (2021) 'did not confirm that DPs introduced by DI+ART can be resumed exclusively by direct case clitics. In fact, they can be resumed by NE in both Italian and Ferrarese, even though with a significantly higher frequency in the latter.' (p. 151). Molinari (2019) confirms also that *DI+ART* displays both direct clitics and quantitative clitic as resumptive clitic: 'In Piacentino, instead, the ambiguity is maintained even when the DP appears in the left periphery, but this surfaces by means of the different clitic resumption: direct case clitic for wide scope or quantitative clitic for narrow scope reading' (p. 137)

## CHAPTER 5

### Sardinian

In this chapter, we introduce the Italo-Romance variety we focus on our research, namely Sardinian. §5.1 Provides a framework of Sardinian and the other bordering varieties, their typological characteristics, as well as origins and classification of the language at stake.

In §5.2 we provide some insight about the sociolinguistic context of the island, while contact phenomena of the two languages that create the bilingual environment, namely Sardinian and Italian are discussed in §5.3. Finally, CLLD constructions in Sardinian and their characteristics are presented in §5.4.

#### 5.1 Alloglot varieties and Sardinian: origins and classification

Since the Middle Ages, several varieties that did not originate from the colloquial Latin spoken on the island are attested in Sardinia; these were brought by colonists throughout the history and include Sassarese and Gallurese, spoken on the northern coasts, Catalan in Alghero (Argenter 2008), Tabarkin in the Archipelago of Sulcis (Sitzia 1998) and Venetan (Mura 1986), creating some different sized alloglot islands.

Sassarese and Gallurese are not considered part of the Sardinian diasystem<sup>41</sup> by several authors (Loporcaro 2009). Such varieties are indeed often referred to as Sardinian-Corsican varieties due to their Corsican origin but extensive Sardinian influence throughout the history that highly differentiated them from the varieties spoken nowadays on Corsica (Maxia 2010). *Figure 13*, taken from Bolognesi and Heeringa (2005), visualises a map that divides Sardinian varieties according to their phonetic differences: Sassarese and Gallurese (respectively in the Northwestern and Northeastern coastal area) are the two varieties that stand out the most.

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<sup>41</sup> We use the term diasystem following Weinreich's (1954). 'Diasystems can be constructed *ad hoc* out of any number of varieties for a given analytic purpose. Constructing a diasystem means placing discrete varieties in a kind of continuum determined by their partial similarities' (Weinreich 1954:395).

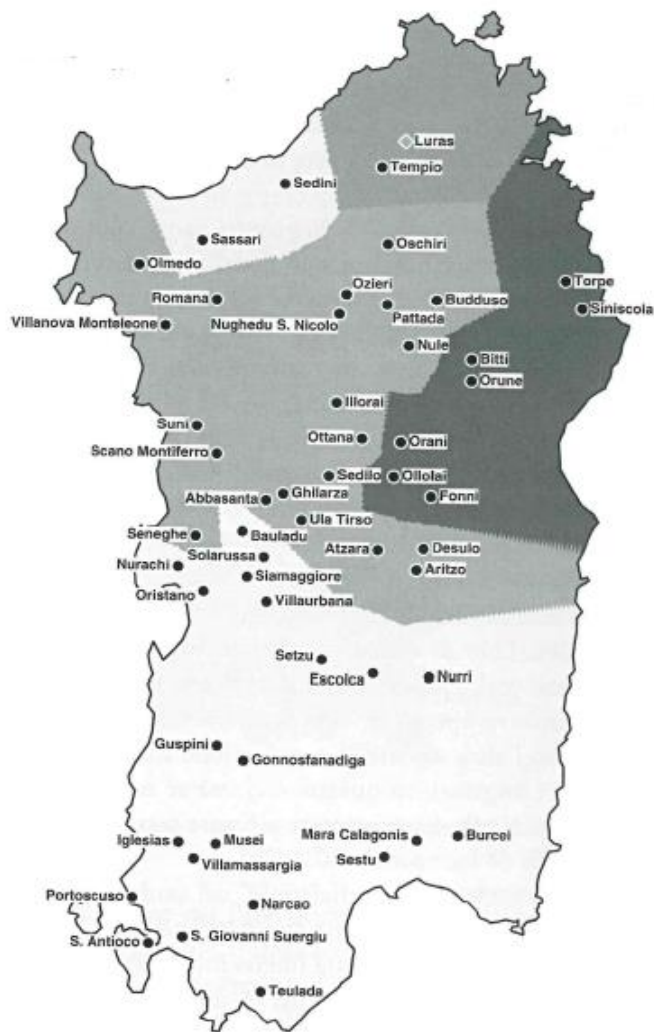


Figure 13: Sardinian varieties according to their phonetic differences. To a different variety corresponds a different colour. From Bolognesi (2014:119)

Figure 14 visualises the isophones individuated by Contini (1987) creating a bundle that determines a sharp boundary: this provides evidence for the traditional contrast between Gallurese and Sassarese on the one hand and a unitary Sardinian system on the other<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> While both Contini (1987) and Bolognesi and Heeringa (2005) provide phonetic cues to support the division between Sardinian on the one hand and Gallurese and Sassarese on the other, also morphosyntactic features distinguish these Sardinian-Corsican varieties. For instance, in both Gallurese and Sassarese the definite article is derived from *ILLUM, ILLAM* (masculine and feminine singular) and *ILLI ILLAE* (masculine and feminine plural) producing *lu, la* and *li, le* respectively. This contrasts with Sardinian which derived from *IPSUM/IPSAM* and *IPSOS/IPSAS* the definite articles. Also, the morphological marker for plural nouns is different, being derived from the accusative (like the Western Romance languages) in Sardinian and from the nominative in Gallurese and Sassarese, like Italian. For a full description of Gallurese and Sassarese and their features we refer to Maxia (2017) that also claims that “even though they [Gallurese and Sassarese] pertain to the Italo-Romance varieties for many morphological and phonetic features,



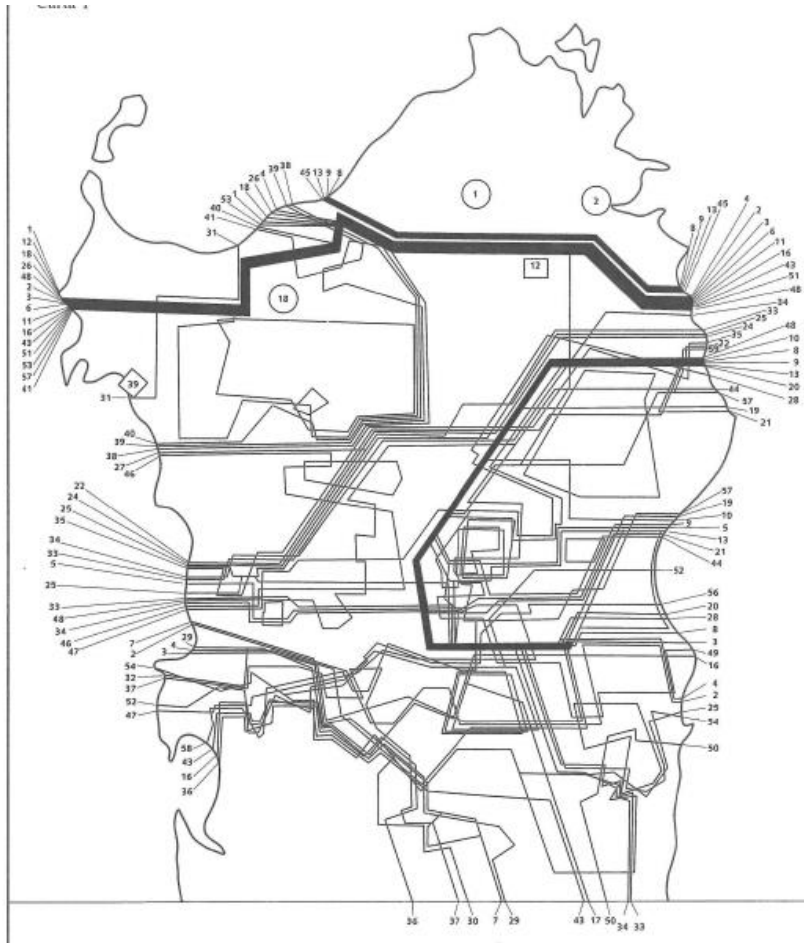


Figure 14: Division of the varieties of Sardinia according to the isophones individuated by Contini (1987. From Blasco Ferrer, E., & Contini, M. (1988:847):

Sardinian is indeed quite unitary as regards syntax (Jones 1993) and presents an acceptable homogeneity rate as regards its vocabulary.<sup>43</sup> Most of the differences are due to phonetic variance, affecting morphology, that also displays some degree of independent isomorphes. Within the Romance languages, as anticipated in §2.1.1 with Wartburg's (1950) classification of the *Romania continua*, Sardinian displays features that lead us to consider it sometimes part of one group, sometimes another<sup>44</sup>. Since Pellegrini (1977), Sardinian has been considered part of the Italo-

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they also share numerous phonetic and syntactic traits with Sardinian, along with a significant proportion of their vocabulary" (p. 432, personal translation)

<sup>43</sup> Virdis (1988) argues for a basal homogeneity of the Sardinian lexicon, although recognizing some contrasts that seem to differentiate Logudorese and Campidanese. As noted also by Loi Corvetto (1988), this differentiation is mostly imputable to a contrast between Spanish and Catalan superstrate, since Logudorese borrowed more lemmas from Castilian and Campidanese presents more terms of Catalan origin.

<sup>44</sup> We refer to Virdis (2011) for an overview of these features and a discussion on the classification of Sardinian within *Romania*.

Romance domain for its common *Dachsprache* with the other languages spoken in Italy, and we agree with this view for the present work.

To account for its internal variance, Sardinian has been traditionally divided into two macro varieties: Logudorese and Campidanese. According to Bolognesi (2014), this bipartition derives from a geographical and subsequently administrative division between Cagliari and Sassari from the XVIth century that does not correspond to a scientific linguistic division. The Italian naturalist Francesco Cetti (2000 [1774]) at the end of the XVIIIth century described indeed this geographical bipartition (*Cabu de Susu* for the North and *Cabu de Jossu* for the South) also to account for the differences in linguistic varieties. Comparison between *Figure 14* and *Figure 15* shows however how the imaginary straight border thought by Cetti between these two areas does not overlap, particularly in the eastern regions, with isoglosses of Sardinian varieties; rather, the isoglosses run towards different directions and create a very jagged situation<sup>45</sup>.

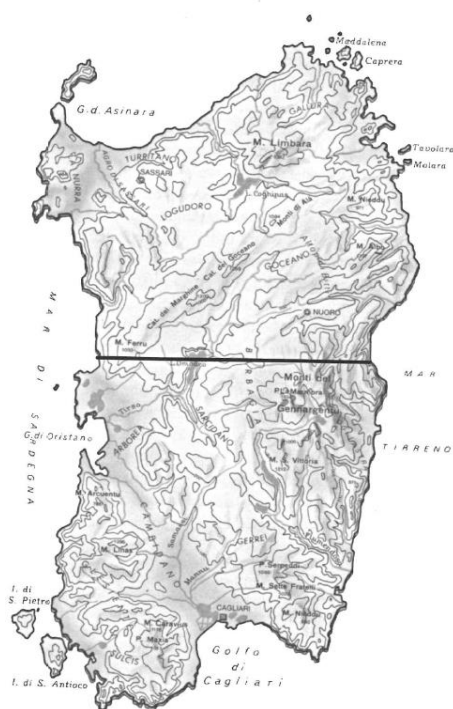


Figure 15: Francesco Cetti's (2000 [1774].) geographical bipartition of Sardinian between *Cabu de Susu* and *Cabu de Jossu*. From Bolognesi (2014:124).

<sup>45</sup> However, according to Bolognesi (2007) many of these isoglosses are dependent upon a unique phonetic contrast that produces different variable contexts: vowel reduction from mid to close at the end of the word. (e → i; o → u).

Figure 16 visualises, through intensity lines, the similarities between Sardinian varieties; these lines account for a bipartition between the two macro-varieties, although not through a discrete border like the traditional one, but they also show that the coherence within the so-called Logudorese varieties is not as strong as that within the Campidanese ones. Besides, a lower degree of coherence between the northern varieties was clear also in Figure 14, where we see clear bundles of isophones bordering the Nuorese area in the centre-east.

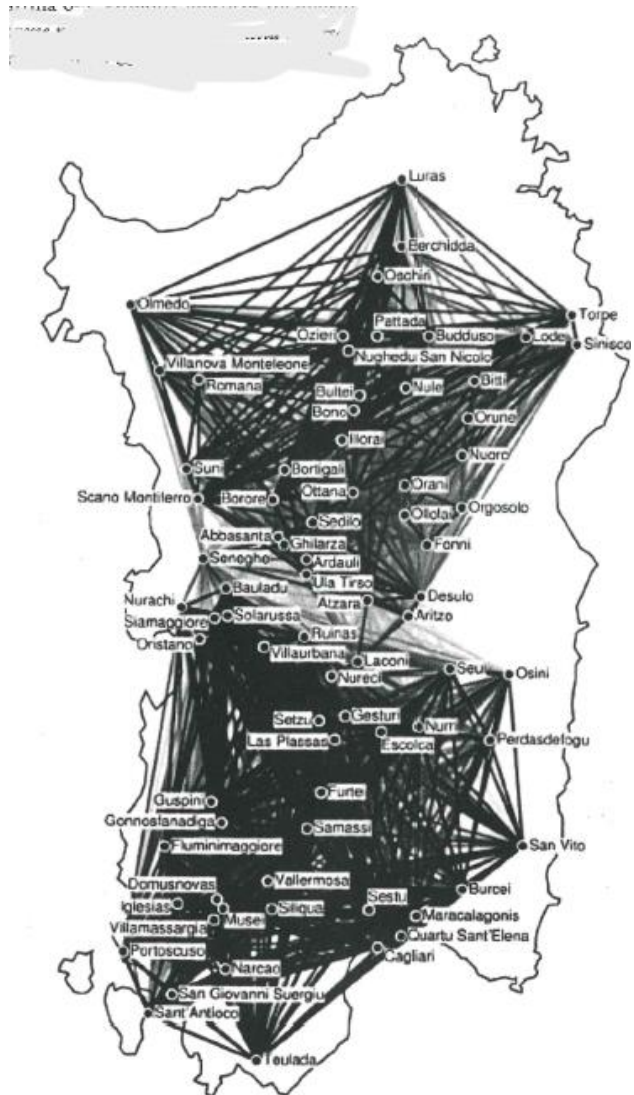


Figure 16 intensity lines showing the similarities between Sardinian varieties. From Bolognesi (2014:130).

These are reasons why, contrary to a traditional classification based on the bipartition Logudorese and Campidanese, other authors (see Molinu and Floricic 2017 for a full discussion on the topic

of previous classifications) propose instead a further partition of the Sardinia linguistic system. In the north, we find Logudorese, from which some authors further distinguish Nuorese (see Viridis 1978, 1988), for the dissimilarities we have observed in the discussion above. The widest southern portion of the island is dominated by Campidanese, while the area in between these two varieties (three, if we count Nuorese) is called *Anfizona* ('area in between')<sup>46</sup> and represents the central varieties through which most isoglosses pass and that provide a wide range of solutions and forms attributable in some cases to the Logudorese diasystem and in others attributable to the Campidanese one.

Despite its problematic account, the bipartition between these two varieties is not popular just in linguistics - as the studies above confirm- but these two varieties have also functioned as a standard for literature and codification, with the production of dictionaries and orthography in the past centuries; the work of Giovanni Spano (1840) for Logudorese and of Vincenzo Raimondo Porru (1811 and 1832) for Campidanese are evidence for this.

In the present work we follow a bipartition of Sardinian into the two more traditional varieties, namely Campidanese and Logudorese. While Contini (1987) and Bolognesi's (2005) analysis of the differentiation of Sardinian varieties focused on isophones, other analysis accounted also for morphosyntactic features. Blasco Ferrer (1988a) and Blasco Ferrer and Contini (1988) did so and found a much less jagged situation in the isoglosses' direction, confirmed also by Viridis (2014)<sup>47</sup>. First, our classificational choice is motivated by practical reasons for the research methodology we use: It would not be economical to translate a questionnaire in every existent subvariety, since the number of them can rise according to the used measurement. Second, the most relevant isoglosses to investigate the expression of indefiniteness and the CLLD consist of the morphosyntactic ones, particularly the definite article and the accusative clitics. Although acknowledging the complexity of the issue, also Oppo (2007) in her sociolinguistic research opted

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<sup>46</sup> Viridis (1988) distinguishes Nuorese, Campidanese and Logudorese; he defines the fourth variety of Sardinian the Arborense one, in the central-western portion on the island, though recognising that it constitutes only an area in which we see "a dense stratification of diatopic variables" (p. 904). However, the author claims also that other varieties in the centre-eastern part of the island (namely Ogliastra and southern Barbagia) present transitional features too. In a subsequent work, Viridis (2020) claims the existence of a "a transition area, located on the whole central Sardinia, running from east to west" (p. 36), and calls it *Anfizona*.

<sup>47</sup> The most relevant features that Viridis (2014:3) distinguishes are the neutralisation of gender in the plural definite article used in southern varieties (*is*) vs. the opposition (*sos* m. ~ *sas* f.) found in the northern ones. Also, accusative clitics derived from *ILLUM*/-A /-OS/-AS/ display differences: in the southern varieties they maintain the geminate consonant (developed into a retroflected *ɖɖ*) while they underwent degemination in the Logudorese resulting in *lu/a/-os/-as*. Also, verbal morphology displays variance in the two varieties and an interesting alternation of features in the transitional area (see Pisano 2012).

for a division between the two biggest macro-varieties. The transitional area, *Anfizona*, can indeed display very mixed traits (see *Figure 18*).

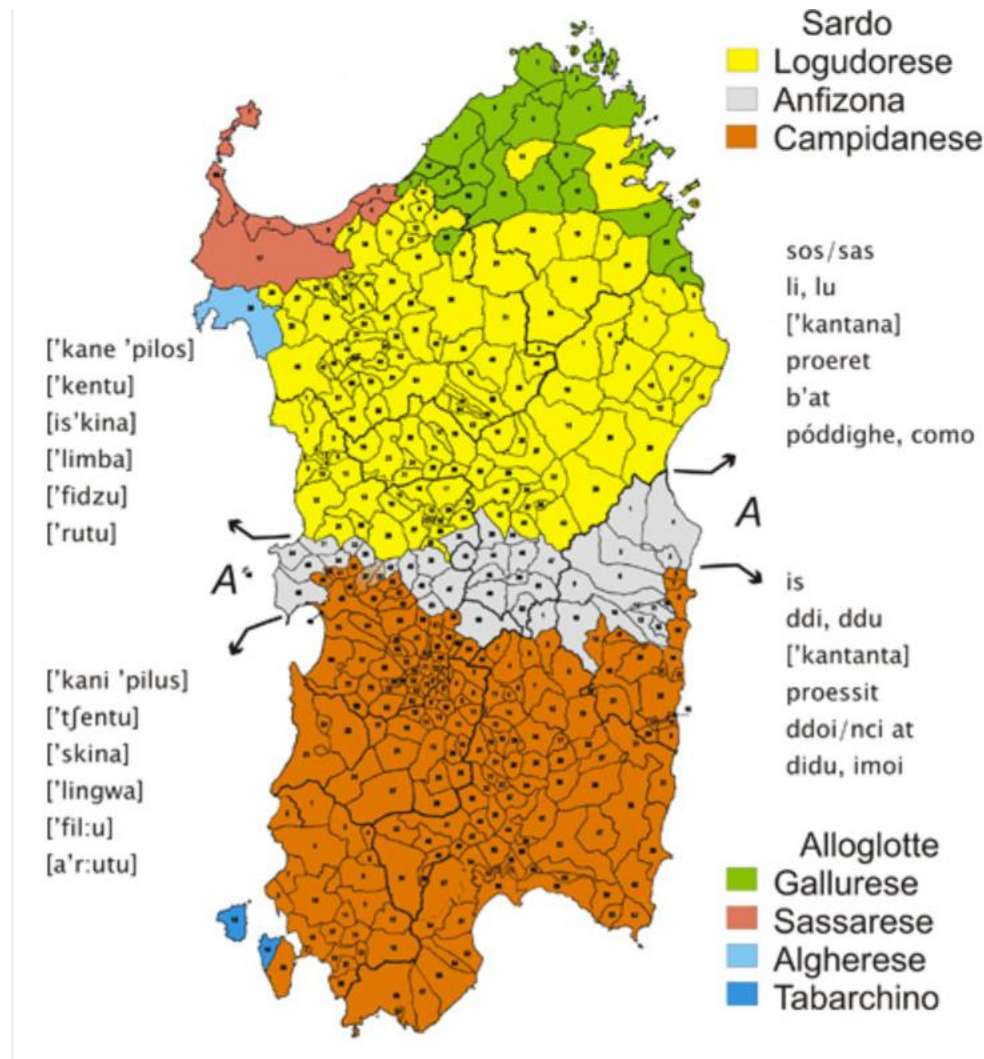


Figure 18: Different varieties in Sardinia and the Anfizona as a transition variety between Campidanese and Logudorese. From *presnaghe.wordpress.com*

The questionnaire used in this study has also been translated from Italian to Sardinian in two different versions: one following the Logudorese and the other following the Campidanese selection of relevant lemmas (provided by AIS maps), each focusing on the most widespread orthography system of the macro-variety (see §6.1.2) Along with the contrast found in the plural definite articles that Oppo (2007) found relevant, another isogloss was considered relevant in the present study: the contrast between two forms of the clitic accusative *ddu*, *dda*, *ddus*, *ddas* in

Campidanese and *lu, la, los, las* in Logudorese. These two morphological isoglosses, along with others, are reported in *Figure 18*. We see that, following the classification that we summarised here above, they distinguish between a northern area (Logudorese) and a southern one (Campidanese); the area in between corresponds to the one characterised by the different bundles of isoglosses that produce subtle differences and cooccurrences of these traits. In these areas it is very difficult to predict whether one variety will possess one typical trait of Campidanese or Logudorese, hence participants could choose the questionnaire based on their preference or personal judgement.

Moreover, Oppo (2007) reports that categories such as Campidanese and Logudorese are not part of the identity of most speakers, that would identify themselves according to the historical region or administrative province they inhabit, thus identifying with such terms also their variety of Sardinian. For this reason, they were geographically supported in the choice of the questionnaire if not targeted accordingly.

## 5.2 Sociolinguistic situation in Sardinia

1410 is considered by Bolognesi (2014) the year that Sardinian started a process of minorisation: that is indeed the year of the last Sardinian Kingdom's fall to the Crown of Aragon and the loss of Sardinian as official language on the island. After centuries of Catalan and Spanish as *Dachspache* that started in the XV century (Blasco Ferrer, 1988b), in 1760 and subsequently the Sabaud dominion, Italian was declared the official language in Sardinia. The diglossia equilibrium that the local languages, including Sardinian, maintained during this long-time span, started changing into a vertical bilingualism during the '60s and the '70s of the last century. This process had a different intensity and speed in rural vs. urban areas, but ultimately resulted in the current incursion of Italian also in the informal contexts (Loi Corvetto 1983). Upon this language shift phenomenon, Sardinian along with other Italo-Romance varieties in Italy progressively lost its status of native language since the interaction between parents and children started being exclusively in Italian (Loi Corvetto 1983).

The sociolinguistic situation described in the most recent and complete sociolinguistic research held in Sardinia by Oppo (2007), shows a continuation of this process. The study, based on a stratified sample of 2432 participants, reports that 68,4% of the subjects declares to speak a local language (including Sardinian and alloglot varieties reported in §5.1), while 29,0% declares

to possess a passive competence of Sardinian, opposed to a 2,7% claiming no competence whatsoever. Although this result seems to be a sign of the local languages' good shape, a closer analysis of the data confirms the ongoing process of vertical bilingualism and loss of diglossia (see 2.2) in Sardinia. *Table 10* shows the linguistic habits of bilinguals in familiar contexts; We see that the local language use is decreasing, particularly towards the new generations. In *Table 11* we see that within the extra familiar contexts, Italian is not prevalent only in friendly relationships, while *Table 11b* confirms this tendency according to the different settings and the relentless language shift towards Italian in all premises caused by the vertical bilingualism. *Table 12* reports instead the use of local language and Italian according to the communicative situations: we see that the more formal these situations get, the wider the preference for Italian is; conversely, more emotional and less controlled environments display a higher percentage of local language or alternation with Italian.

Furthermore, a further analysis of Oppo's (2007) data cross-checked with different social variables, displays "fractures in the use of the local language, with differences regarding age, gender, education, low and high education, rural and urban setting as well as social class<sup>48</sup>" (p. 18)

	Italian	Local language	Both	Total	Number
With parents	42,9	35,5	21,5	100,0	1072
With partner	54,8	28,5	16,8	100,0	1062
With sons	66,2	16,5	17,3	100,0	840
With daughters	66,2	15,6	18,2	100,0	808
With brothers	39,3	41,3	19,4	100,0	1280
With sisters	42,4	39,7	17,9	100,0	1238
With grandfathers	30,0	43,4	26,6	100,0	290
With grandmothers	29,7	43,7	26,6	100,0	357

*Table 10: Use of Sardinian and Italian in familiar contexts. From Oppo (2007).*

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<sup>48</sup> Oppo (2007) confirms that older participants declare a more frequent use of the local language, but this is true also for those with lower education, those part of typically more humble social classes and those living in rural settings. Interestingly, participants who identify as women display a lower rate of declared competence and use of the local language; this may be linked to the tendency towards the standard more prestigious variety that had already been noticed by Labov (1990) and Fasold (1990) as regards the pronunciation. This tendency in women's speech seem to be linked to the attempt to contrast with the lower social status that society impose them, as an attempt to attain a higher prestige (Gordon 1997).

	Italian	Local language	Both	Total	Number
With male friends	41,5	23,8	34,8	100,0	1650
With female friends	51,4	19,0	29,7	100,0	1641
With neighbours	54,9	25,2	19,9	100,0	1630
With acquaintances	52,3	14,7	32,9	100,0	1655
With co-workers (out of workplace)	57,8	16,8	25,4	100,0	792
With classmates (out of school)	50,4	12,8	36,8	100,0	125
With boyfriend/girlfriend	74,1	3,8	22,1	100,0	340
With fellow students at university	79,5	1,6	18,9	100,0	122
With strangers (Sardinians)	69,9	8,5	21,6	100,0	1655
With family doctor	81,6	9,0	9,4	100,0	1654
With priest	84,3	6,5	9,2	100,0	1343

Table 11: Use of Sardinian and Italian in nonfamiliar contexts. From Oppo (2007).

	Italian	Local language	Both	Total	Number
At work	65,0	12,5	22,5	100,0	841
At the municipal office	82,1	6,4	11,4	100,0	1645
At the store or market	66,3	11,8	21,9	100,0	1651
At a café/bar	62,1	15,0	22,9	100,0	1511
At school	82,6	3,8	13,6	100,0	236
At church	80,6	6,1	13,3	100,0	1379

Table 11b: Use of Sardinian and Italian in different settings. From Oppo (2007).



	Italian	Local language	Both	Total	Number
To pray	90,0	2,8	7,1	100,0	109
To greet	73,2	6,2	20,6	100,0	433
To make wishes /give condolences	75,5	6,1	18,4	100,0	2428
To talk about politics	73,5	7,0	19,5	100,0	104
To narrate stories and fairy tales	70,6	9,3	20,1	100,0	2304
Mental calculation	81,0	11,9	7,1	100,0	2399
To talk to yourself	66,4	18,2	15,4	100,0	2405
To express joy and enthusiasm	59,8	18,2	15,4	100,0	2405
To tell stories of everyday life	55,7	14,3	30,0	100,0	2422
To tell jokes/ humor	36,0	21,5	42,5	100,0	2292
To scold and threat	44,9	30,5	24,6	100,0	2325
To express anger	39,7	31,5	27,8	100,0	2373
To cuss/swear	40,7	31,5	27,8	100,0	1969
To talk at the phone	64,7	3,1	32,2	100,0	2432

Table 12 Use of Sardinian and Italian in different communicative situations. From Oppo (2007).

### 5.3 Contact phenomena between Italian and Sardinian: Italianised Sardinian and the regional Italian of Sardinia

As we illustrated in §2.3, the contact between local languages and Italian produced contact phenomena tending towards language convergence phenomena that can be summarised in two results: the ‘italianisation’ of dialects (Berruto 1993) and the ‘dialectalisation’ of Italian (Telmon 1989, 1993).

As regards the italianisation of Sardinian, Gaidolfi (2017) analyses a corpus of recorded conversation in Sardinian Nuorese, through which she tries to report convergence phenomena of Sardinian towards Italian, hence the italianisation of Sardinian. She concludes that contact phenomena of Italian are appreciable in both phonetics and morphosyntax; however, most of these instances are found in the lexicon (that had already been researched by Rindler Schjerve (2000)), with Italian words entering Sardinian along native ones rather than in place of them.

Bolognesi (2014) crucially notes that Oppo (2007) does not further shed light on the ‘Italian’ declared by participants of their inquiry. Like Loi Corvetto (1983) before, Oppo (2007) recognises however that when the participants to her sociolinguistic research declare to use Italian in certain contexts, no analysis regarding the nature of such Italian was implemented. Considering Berruto’s (1987a) proposal, we must however hypothesise that it represents a spectrum of

variations of Italian highly dependent on diatopic variation: namely, different occurrences of regional Italian, sometimes more unbalanced towards the Standard Italian and some others towards a Popular Italian, but uncontroversially characterised by geographical dependent features. Indeed, as claimed in §2.1.2 regional Italians do not possess only features that derive from the dialectal substratum, rather they display some important pan-Italian traits that tend towards a new Standard, more diatopically marked, and that may be influenced also by contiguous systems<sup>49</sup> Loi Corvetto (1983) offers a detailed analysis of the regional Italian of Sardinia, examining every aspect from phonetics to morphosyntax and lexicon. She distinguishes between negative and positive influences of Sardinian on Italian, without these terms constituting a value judgement to the concerned feature. A negative influence is found when a specific trait prevails because it is alien to Sardinian: this configures as a hypercorrection phenomenon that speakers adopt since they interpret Sardinian-like forms to be mistakenly derived from the local language. Conversely, a positive influence refers to those features really derived from the dialectal substratum.

Typical traits of regional Italian of Sardinia's phonetics found by Loi Corvetto (1983) are for instance metaphony and the very distinctive consonant length feature. Metaphony consists in low-mid vowels ([ɛ] and [ɔ]) raising to mid-high ([e] and [o]) when followed by a high vowel (/i/ or /u/). As regards the consonant length, Sardinian speakers are usually recognised for their pronunciation of geminate consonants. Bolognesi (1998) claims that this is a result of lenition processes in Sardinian, that derived Latin single voiceless occlusives consonants as voiced fricative, leaving the geminate ones unaltered (MACCUS > /'maku/ vs. PAUCUS > /'paɣu/). The absence of consonant length as a distinctive feature in the Sardinian phonological system, determined the unpredictability of it in the regional Italian phonetic system, resulting in a very wide occurrence of geminate consonants.

The lexicon of the regional Italian of Sardinia is mostly derived from Italian, although Loi Corvetto (1983) analyses also instances of Sardinian lemmas characterised by semantic generalisation, specialisation and transfer (cf: Paul 1880).

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<sup>49</sup> As regards the regional Italian spoken in Sardinia, an effect of influence by contiguous regional Italians system is found by Loi Crovetto (1983) in the diatopic variations of Italian spoken in Sassarese and Gallurese areas. Metaphony, for instance, is found in the regional Italian spoken by Logudorese and Campidanese speakers as a positive influence of Sardinian; although Sassarese and Gallurese do not display this phonetic feature, their Italian is characterised by metaphony as a result of the influence exerted by the contiguous regional Italian spoken in the rest of Sardinia.

As regards morphosyntax, Bolognesi (2014) compares the list of traits found by Jones (1993) in Sardinian, with the constructions the Loi Corvetto (1983) defined typical for the regional Italian of Sardinia. 27 out of 71 constructions were analogous, and we could consider them to be results of positive influence. Crucially, other traits are common to the neo-standard Italian and are part of those pan-Italian traits that characterize all the regional Italians.

#### 5.4 The expression of indefiniteness in Sardinian

Like in most Italo-Romance varieties, also in Sardinian many forms to express indefiniteness are available. As regards singular count nouns, Sardinian displays a determiner that originated from numeral ‘one’, namely *unu/una*, like many languages and crucially Italian and Italo-Romance varieties. Examples of its use are found in (57):

- (57) a.      Apo              papadu unu      figu morisca  
               Have1PSig    eaten a           prickly pear.  
               ‘I’ve eaten a prickly pear.’
- b.      Apo              bendiu            una cadira  
               Have1PSig    sold              a chair  
               ‘I’ve sold a chair’

Plural count nouns and mass singular nouns are the environment in which we find most forms, like we have seen for Italo-Romance in general. Sardinian does display a plural form of the indefinite determiner *unu/una*, although according to Jones (1997) its use is restricted in the context of numerals (see (58a)) and in the pseudo-partitive construction *unus/unas cantu (de)*<sup>50</sup> (see (58b)). Other pseudo-partitive constructions include *unu pagu de* (59a), while we also find some quantificational indefinites such as respectively Campidanese and Logudorese *carchi/ calchi* (see (59b)), which can appear only with count nouns and no mass noun (59c), and others such as *paritzos* (only found in Logudorese) and *argunos/ algunus* (Campidaense / Logudorese), *cali(n)cunu* (cf. also Jones; 1993:34,36):

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<sup>50</sup> Mensching (2005) provides a full discussion on Sardinian indefinites and its combination with specificity. He also reports the form *unos cantos/unas cantas* with concord in *cantu*.

- (58) a. Unas binti berbekes  
           ‘some twenty sheep’  
 b. Unas cantu de berbekes  
           ‘some sheep’
- (59) a. Unu pagu de binu  
           ‘A bit of wine.’  
 b. Carki ampulla de binu  
           ‘Some bottle of wine.’  
 c. \*Carki binu  
           ‘Some wine’

Sardinian displays the adjective *tzertu* (‘certain’) used alone in plural accompanied with plural count nouns (60a), and in combination with the indefinite determiner *unu/una* (*unu tzertu/ una tzerta*), only with singular mass nouns (see (60b) and (60c)); in both cases, it bears however an unambiguous [+SPECIFIC] interpretation and appears mostly with proper names or in fixed expressions such as *a unu tzertu puntu* (see (60d)) (also cf. Mensching, 2005:85):

- (60) a. Apo bidu tzertas cosas sceti in Frantza.  
           ‘I have seen certain things only in France.’  
 b. Tantas familias de unu tzertu rangu haian visitatu cussa creatura.  
           ‘So many families of a certain rank had visited this child.’  
 c. Chirca unu tzertu Manuele Procu chi est su prus riccu de su mandamentu.  
           ‘Search for a certain Manuele Procu who is the richest (man) in the district.’  
 d. A unu tzertu puntu Maria comintzat a prangher.  
           ‘At a certain moment, Maria begins to cry.’

We can hence exclude this expression of indefiniteness from the uncontroversial ones in Sardinian, contrary to what has been reported in some southern varieties of Italo-Romance by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018).

Focusing on uncontroversial indefinite determiners, Jones (1993) states that the most typical way of expressing it for non-count nouns, apart from pseudo-partitive and partitive constructions, is through “absence of an overt determiner” (Jones 1993:35), which is what we defined ZERO. The analysis of AIS maps (§4.2) seems to confirm this: the most widely spread form in Sardinia is ZERO. However, especially in Map 637 that provide a ‘small quantity’ context, we find a higher frequency of the determiner ART, although ZERO is still the first choice. In §3.2.2 we provided evidence that only in Italian the definite determiner can also appear in all the indefinite contexts, although most Romance languages admit it with some restrictions. The analysis of AIS maps and studies on the expression of indefiniteness in Italo-Romance show that these varieties possess this feature too. It is no surprise to find this indefinite determiner in Sardinian, although we also stressed that we expect to find this determiner more frequently in the central parts of Italy, as it is an innovative trait that we don’t find in lateral peripheral areas according to Bartoli’s lateral area norm.

Indeed, traditional Sardinian grammars provide an example of use of the definite article in an indefinite context. The singular definite determiner *su* as well as the feminine *sa* are used to introduce the so called ‘collective nouns’ in the traditional literature and first described by Wagner (2001 [1950]). The term collective refers to the fact that even though it appears as singular, the noun identifies a larger indefinite plural amount, especially when denoting fruit, vegetables, insects and small animals (Jones (1993:33). Crucially, the use is not (only) kind-referring, as Mesching (2005) proved. This form is found in Sardinian with kind-referring (61a) but also no kind reference, and pure indefinite amount meaning (61b) (also cf. Mensching 2005:108):

- (61) a. A t’agradat sa patata?  
           ‘Do you like potatoes?’  
       b. So ispidzolande sa patata.  
           ‘I am peeling (the) potato(es)’

This use may be compatible with nouns such as *violette* that identify small flowers that can be collected in bundles. Nonetheless, if we look at map 637 (‘[to go look for] violets’), only one informant of the Logudorese area (point 938, Bitti) reported such a construction, as we can see in *Figure 19*. As we already discussed in §4.2, the preferred form is still ZERO. Other instances of

ART in this map are found in 949 (Dorgali), in the plural form, while in 959 (Desulo) we find an interesting instance of ZERO in the singular form (*viola*).

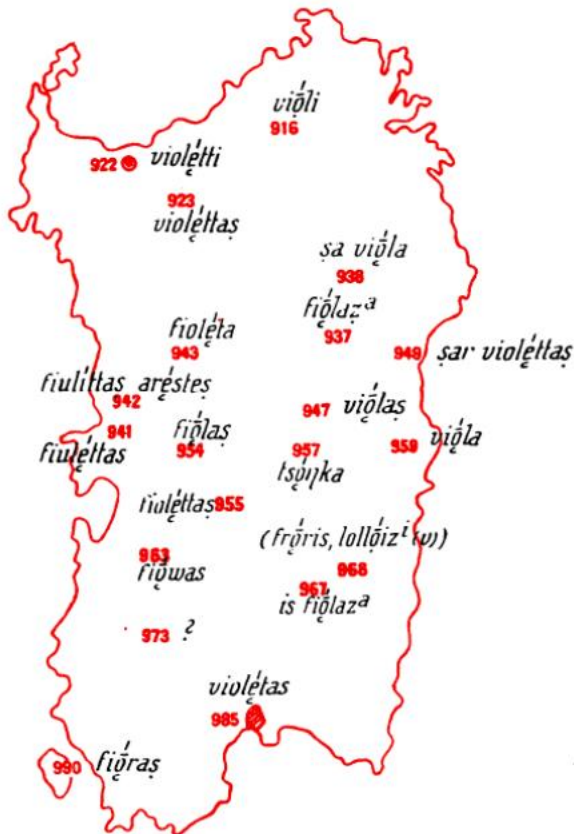


Figure 19: AIS Map 637, Sardinia.

Mensching (2005, 2008, 2020) explains the ‘collective nouns’ following Gillon’s (1992) distinction in English between object-mass nouns with individuals in their extensions, (e.g. furniture, hair, spaghetti, silverware, jewelry, clothing, traffic, infantry, and footwear) that cannot undergo pluralization, from the substance-mass nouns (like water or coffee) can have a plural. This contrast is exemplified in (62). In a similar way, in Sardinian, we have the singular form *patata* meaning either a single potato or an amount of potatoes, the latter being an object-mass reading. Consequently, the plural form *patatas* can only mean ‘individual potatoes’ but not ‘amounts of potatoes’.

- (62) a. Two waters.  
b. Two coffees.  
c. \*Two furnitures.

While this may be considered an instance of expression of indefiniteness in Sardinian, it does not rule out the use of the plural form of the definite determiner. The fact that we refer to indefinite individual entities rather than an indefinite amount of them is irrelevant. In order to confirm this intuition, we will try to notice whether comments of this sort were left by participants to the experiment, in which we included ART in the plural form also for those count nouns that may undergo this construction.

While ZERO and less frequently ART appear in the analysis of Sardinian AIS maps and are supported by traditional literature on the topic, we observe that the so called ‘partitive article’ or what we defined following §4.3, DI+ART appears only in one isolated instance<sup>51</sup>, although it is not mentioned in any descriptive grammar of Sardinian. Moreover, we find one occurrence of DI<sup>52</sup>, although this determiner has been reported as acceptable only in north-western Italo-Romance varieties, and it is even ruled out in Italian. Given the nature of such charts, it may be considered a transcription mistake. Nonetheless, Wagner (2001 [1950]:328), who conducted the field research, but also Blasco Ferrer (1984:84) claim the existence of a ‘partitive object’-construction in Sardinian introduced by DI, only in some very isolated varieties of Central Sardinian as well as the rural Campidanese dialects, and only with nouns designating water and food. The construction they describe may explain the occurrence of DI but not DI+ART (also cf. Mensching 2020:809-811, Wagner 2001 [1950]:328, Blasco Ferrer 1984:84):

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<sup>51</sup> Point 937 of AIS map 1037: “de ss’abba”.

<sup>52</sup> Point 943 of AIS map 1037: “de abba”.

- (63) a. e inúe s' aháttada de ábba vríska? (Urzulei)  
 b. e inúe s' agáttada de ábba vríska? (Samugheo)  
 and where REFL=finds DI water fresh  
 'and where can one find (some) fresh water?'  
 c. e inúi ind' ádi de ábba vríska? (Séulo)  
 d. e aũ'i nd' áda de ákwa vríska? (Cruccuris)  
 and where NE has DI water fresh  
 'and where is there (some) fresh water?'  
 e. ġammínde de bínu (Busachi)  
 give.me DI wine  
 'Give me (some) wine!'  
 f. non č' ind' áda de bane? (Barbagia)  
 not there NE has DI bread  
 'Is there no bread?'  
 g. bi nd' á de báne (Logudorese)  
 there NE has DI bread  
 'there is some bread'  
 h. [...] non bi nd' a' de omine (Logudorese)  
 not there NE has DI man  
 'there is no man/human being (in him)'

Both Wagner and Blasco Ferrer analyse this construction claiming that it is a 'partitive object' construction lacking the definite article, and that often shows the partitive clitic *nd'* derived from Latin *inde* (see (63g) and (63h)). Both the authors relate this construction to those seen for late Latin partitives and discussed by Carlier & Lamiroy (2014); similarly to their proposal, this would be the result of a diachronic grammaticalisation of the preposition into an indefinite partitive article. However, Wagner and Blasco Ferrer differ with regards to the origin of this construction in Sardinian, directly inherited from Latin according to Wagner, (2001 [1950]) or borrowed from Catalan according to Blasco Ferrer (1984)



Mensching (2005, 2008, 2020) counterargues their syntactic analysis of such structure, interpreting the presence of the partitive clitic *inde* as a proof for the construction being an instance of clitic right dislocation (CLRD), like shown in example (64).

- (64) e inúi ind'ádi , de ábba vríska?  
And where = NE has, of water fresh  
'and where is there fresh water?'

Mensching (2008:5) provides some diagnostics, which are the same proposed by Cardinaletti and Giusti (1992) for Italian. Namely:

➤ Extraction from QPs/NumPs singular:

- (65) Nde bufamus meda, de binu.  
NE drink-1SG much DI wine.  
'We drink lots of wine.'

➤ Extraction from QPs/NumPs plural:

- (66) a. Nd' at duas, de sorres.  
NE has two DI sisters.  
'He has two sisters.'
- b. De turistas, nde sun arribados chimbe.  
DI tourists NE are arrived five.  
'Five tourists have arrived.'
- c. De istudentes tuos, nd' apo connotu tres.  
DI students your NE have-1SG known three.  
'I have got to know two of your students.'

➤ Extraction from DP with adjective stranding:

- (67) a. Est beru chi nd' ais una minore, de domo.  
is true that NE have-2PL a small DI house  
'It is true that you have a small house.'
- b. De piras, Tziu Luisi nde tenet bellas.  
DI pears, Uncle L. NE has beautiful.  
'Uncle L. has beautiful pears.'

Despite not relying on any quantitative methodology, Mensching (2016) claims that no speaker of the areas reported in Wagner accepted such constructions. However, he offers no explanation of whether this was indeed a construction of such time now not reported. The present research may be an occasion to test whether constructions like this one are considered acceptable by the speakers.

We can therefore conclude that we expect a sure higher frequency of ZERO in our experiment. This is expected to be the core-indefinite determiner. We also expect to find a considerable frequency of ART. We must carefully check for the different semantic contexts in this instance (mass vs plural count nouns) and whether participants leave comments preferring a 'collective noun' structure with a singular referring to an 'indefinite amount'. We will also check whether DI appears in simple not CLLDed sentences, as it may be evidence for the 'partitive construction' discussed by Wagner (2001 [1950]) and Blasco Ferrer (1984). As regards the only occurrence of DI+ART in Sardinian, we will notice whether something interesting concerning this determiner comes up in the results of experiments, although we believe that it was a transcription mistake or a misunderstanding during the data collection.

## 5.5 CLLD in Sardinian

The literature on Sardinian CLLD constructions is scarce. According to Remberger (2010), CLLD in Sardinian works like in other Romance languages, and the examples are consistent with those provided by Cinque (1990) and reported in §4.5.1.

### 5.5.1 Direct case clitics and oblique case clitics in Sardinian

In Sardinian, the only direct case clitic that could be realised is the accusative one, resuming a direct object<sup>53</sup>. Since resumptive clitics must display the same case but also Gender and Number features of the fronted elements, we find different morphological realizations for the Sardinian accusative clitics that may also vary with respect to the selected macro-variety. Focusing on our area of interest which is the third person we find *ddu*, *dda*, *ddus*, *ddas*, respectively masculine and feminine singular and masculine and feminine plural for the Campidanese variety, and *lu*, *la*, *los*, *las* respectively masculine and feminine singular and masculine and feminine plural for the Logudorese variety.

Like Italian and French and differently from Spanish, in periphrastic tense constructions with past participle (e.g. *passato prossimo*), also this latter element agrees with the clitic, hence the fronted phrase, for Gender and Number (see 68). This is assumed to be a cause of the clitic movement through the specifier position of the past participle triggering agreement for Number and Gender features (Belletti 1999)

- (68) a.      Giuanni hat bidu a picciocus.  
          John have.3P.SG see .PST.PRT.SG.M ACCUS boys
- b.      Maria hat bidu a picciocus.  
          Mary have.3P.SG see.PST.PRT.SG.M ACCUS boys  
          ‘John/Mary saw some boys’.
- c.      A Picciocas, Giuanni/Maria ddas hat bidas.  
          ACCUS Girls, John/Mary CL.ACC have.3P.SG see.PST.PRT.PL.F  
          ‘Some girls, John/Mary saw them.’

As regards the oblique case clitic, we consider for this quantitative clitic parallel to the Italian *ne* and to French *en* that signals the presence of partitive case. Also, this clitic in Sardinian varies with respect to the selected macro-variety: *nde* for Logudorese and *ndi* for Campidanese. In Sardinian, contrary to Italian and to the case of accusative clitics, the quantitative clitic does not agree with the past participle (see (69))

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<sup>53</sup> Sardinian lacks subject clitics, hence when we front elements in subject position, we do not find any clitic.

Interestingly, quantitative clitic *ndi* in Sardinian CLLD constructions is also obligatorily realised, as observed by Cardinaletti and Giusti (1992, 2006) for Italian (see 69). This derives from its DP status as a complement of Q, just like the accusative one (translation from (Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2006:42):

- (69) a. (De) picciocus frantzesus, \*(ndi) apo connottu medas.  
of boys French, [I] NE have met many  
‘I have met many French boys’
- b. A is picciocus frantzesus, \*(ddus) apo connottus.  
ACCUS the boys French, [I] them have met  
‘I have met the French boys’

In Italian, Cardinaletti and Giusti (1992, 2006) noticed that while accusative clitics are compatible only with universal quantifiers, quantitative clitic is compatible only with existential quantifiers. The same happens in Sardinian and accordingly, only accusative clitics can be extracted out of universal Qs (through SpecQP position), while the extraction from existential Qs is borne out, like in the contrast between (70a) and (70b) (translation and adaptation from Cardinaletti and Giusti 2016: 36):

- (70) a. De piccioccus, ndi apo bidu medas/ \*tottus.  
of boys, [I] ne have seen many / \*all  
‘I’ve seen many boys.’
- b. Is curruxionis, ddus/ \*nd’ apo pappadus tottus.  
the raviolis, CL.ACC / \*CL.QNT [I] have eaten all

Finally, the quantitative clitic *ndi* is, in Italian like in Sardinian, incompatible with distributive quantifiers (see (71a) and (71b)), since their specifier position is occupied by a null operator that triggers the distributive reading (translation from Cardinaletti and Giusti 2016: 36):

- (71) a. \*De piccioccus, ndi apo bidus/bidu donzunu.  
Of boys NE have seen.M.PL/M.SG each-one
- b. \*De piccioccus, ndi apo bidu ambos  
Of boys NE have seen.M.PL/M.SG both.

## 5.6 Summary and expectation

Let us briefly summarise the findings of this Chapter in order to anticipate some expectations with respect to the results of our research.

ZERO is expected to be the core indefinite in Sardinian, according to its frequency in the AIS maps, and previous literature (Jones 1993). This is also what we expect to find in our research. Crucially, we also want to check whether this will be the first choice in the regional Italian of Sardinia as well. In that case, we could hypothesise a contact instance between the two varieties, that results in a substratum influence of Sardinian over Italian.

ART is the second most frequent determiner in the AIS maps we analysed. Given that this is a determiner typically found in Italo-Romance varieties to express indefiniteness, although it is expected to be less frequent at the periphery, this is no surprise. According to the literature, Sardinian displays a construction, the so-called ‘collective nouns’, characterised by a singular noun headed by a singular definite determiner that nonetheless identifies a larger indefinite plural amount. This is expected to happen with nouns denoting fruit, flowers, vegetables, insects and small animals. However, in map 637 we could find only one occurrence of this construction, while the other ARTs are in the plural form. Our research is a chance to investigate whether this construction is actually productive in Sardinian, or it is only considered so for its presence in the prescriptive grammar. Is it a possibility or is it the only possibility to find a definite determiner with an indefinite interpretation in Sardinian?

According to traditional literature, Sardinian also displays a ‘partitive object construction’ with DI. One occurrence of this determiner has also been reported in the AIS map 1037. According to Mensching (2005, 2008, 2020) this construction is only possible in the context of a CLRDed sentence. Our research is a chance to investigate the occurrence of this determiner in simple base sentences and in the CLLDed ones.

DI+ART is agrammatical in Sardinian. However, we find an occurrence of it in the ASI map 1037. The present research is once again a chance to confirm its ungrammaticality. Something

much more interesting for this research is nonetheless to check the availability of this determiner in the regional Italian of Sardinia. If, as we highly expect, this determiner is not acceptable in Sardinian, its frequency of occurrence in the regional Italian can be considered a measure for the influence of Italian over Sardinian. It is crucial to compare the BLP results of the participants and their likelihood to accept such a determiner in Italian.

## CHAPTER 6

### The research

Our research consisted in two online questionnaires with a set of items in Sardinian (one version in Campidanese the other in Logudorese, based on the discussion in §5.1) and another set of items in Italian. We created two different questionnaires in order to put at ease the participants whom we administered these forms: the only differences were indeed in the Sardinian part.

§6.1 is dedicated to the method we used to conduct it. We first focus on the participants' selection, sociolinguistic and bilingual profile, as well as possible correlations between the two through descriptive statistics tools. Subsequently we focus on the materials, the stimuli and the procedure through which the questionnaire was administered. Finally, the statistical analysis issues will be discussed.

The second section, §6.2, is dedicated to the presentation of our results. First, we report the distribution of the participants' judgments across the different contextual variables of interest. Then, we focus on specialization of meaning and optionality of determiner choice. Finally, we explore our results in detail, and we focus on our research questions in order to get to conclusions in §6.3.

### 6.1 Method

#### 6.1.1 Participants

Contrary to our hopes, we did not reach a great number of participants that completed both the questionnaire in Italian and in Sardinian. For this reason, we focused on the first runs. The total participants to the questionnaire were 132. Of them, 85 were administered the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire (42 participants completed the Italian part and the other 43 the Campidanese Sardinian one). The participants to the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire were 47 (23 completed the questionnaire in Italian while the other 24 completed the Logudorese Sardinian one). This is summarized in *Table 13*.

	Campidanese/Italian Questionnaire	Logudorese/Italian Questionnaire
N Participants to the Sardinian part	43	24
N Participants to the Italian part	42	23
N Total Participants	85	47

Table 13: Number of participants of each questionnaire split for the language they were administered.

### 6.1.1.1 Sociolinguistic profile

We now provide an overview of the geographical area of origin and/or residence as well as some comments on the descriptive statistics of the sociolinguistic profile of participants, namely gender, age, education.

As regards the geographical distribution of the participants, *Table 14* and *Table 15* display the declared area of origin/residency of the participants. Some of the participants only provided generic geographic information, such as “Southern Sardinia” or “Central Sardinia”. Most of the participants provided the historical Region of Sardinia (*Figure 20* represents the distribution of such Regions in the whole island) sometimes also with precise information according to the administrative provinces. More rarely, they provide the name of the village they live in, with the exclusion of Cagliari for the first questionnaire.



Table 14: Declared area of origin/residence of the participants to the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

Area	Number	Percent
Sud Sardegna	9	10,5%
Sulcis-Iglesiente	28	32,9%
Campidano di Cagliari	22	25,8%
Campidano	8	9,41%
Campidano di Oristano	13	15,29%
Marmilla	2	2,35%
Sarcidano	2	2,35%
Mandrolisai	1	1,17%
Total	85	100%

Table 15: Declared area of origin/residence of the participants to the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

Area	Number	Percent
Centro	6	12,76%
Nuorese	22	46,80%
Barbagia	5	10,6%
Guilcer	2	4,25%
Baronia	3	6,38%
Marghine/Goceano	3	6,38%
Monteacuto	2	4,25%
Barigadu	1	2,12%
Planargia	1	2,12%
Logudoro	2	4,25%
Total	47	100%



Figure 20: Historical Regions of Sardinia.  
 From [www.lamiasardegna.it](http://www.lamiasardegna.it)

First, as we can see from the barplots in Figure 21 and Figure 22, most of the participants to the questionnaire identify as women.

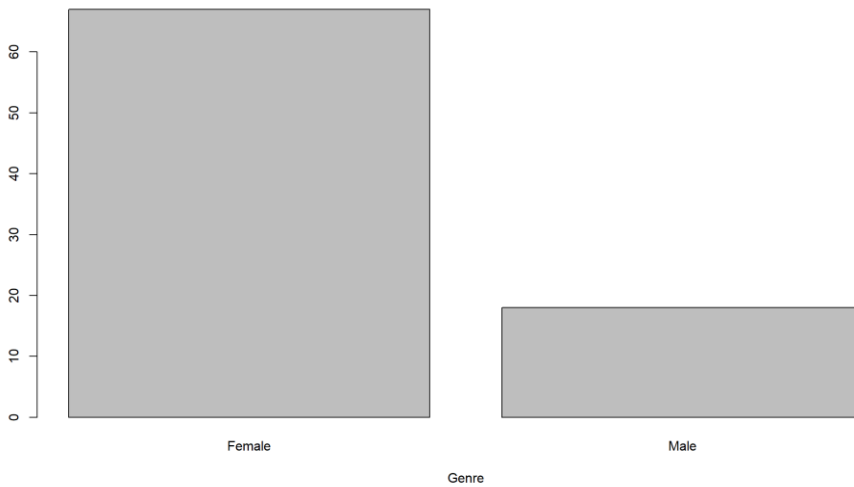


Figure 21. Barplot representing gender distribution of the participants (Campidanese/Italian).

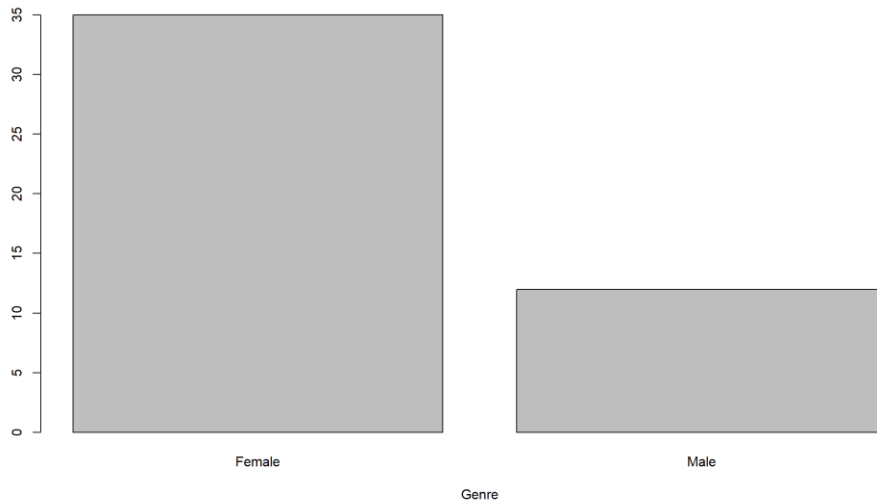


Figure 22 Barplot representing gender distribution of the participants (Logudorese/Italian).

It is in education and in age that we find some differences between the participants of the two questionnaires. *Figure 23* and *Figure 24* visualise respectively the age distribution of the Campidanese participants and the Logudorese ones.

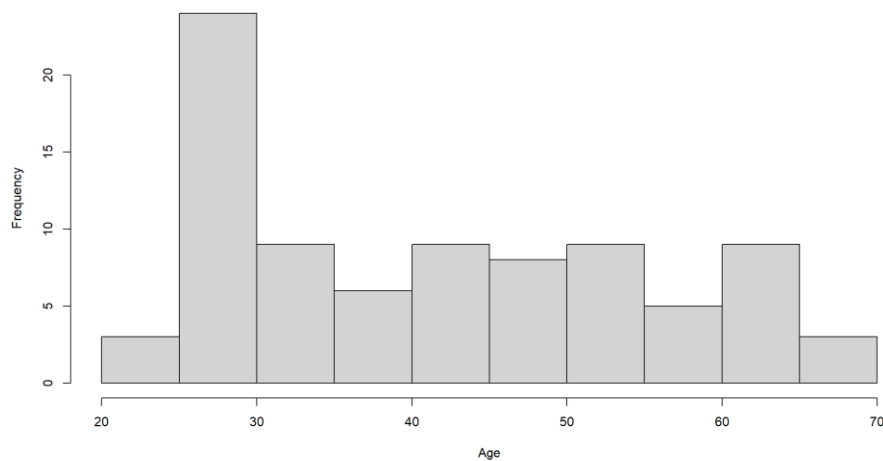


Figure 23 Barplot representing the age distribution of the Campidanese questionnaire's participants.

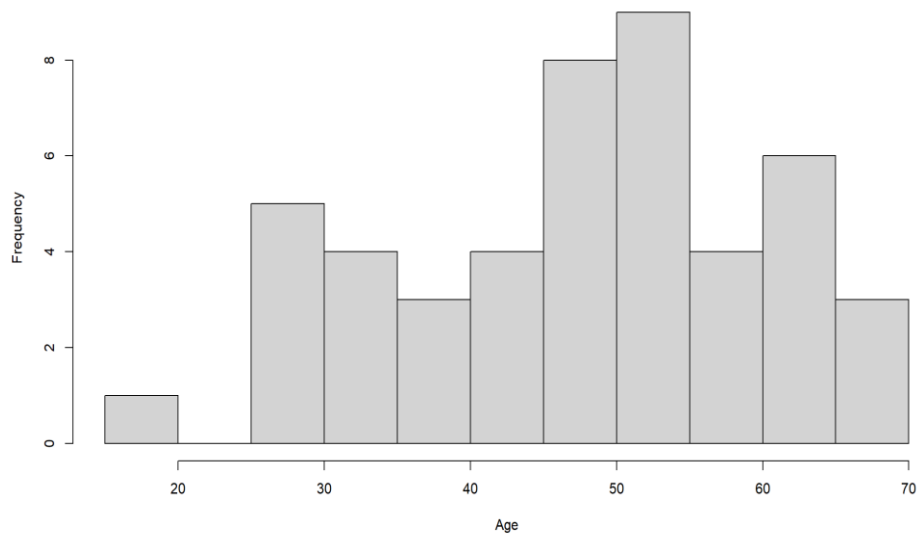


Figure 24 Barplot representing the age distribution of the Logudorese questionnaire's participants.

Let us have a look at the density plots. The distribution of the participants' age is slightly left-skewed as regards Logudorese (see *Figure 25*) and appears right-skewed for the Campidanese participants (see *Figure 26*). This means that the Campidanese participants tend to be younger, while the Logudorese ones are older.

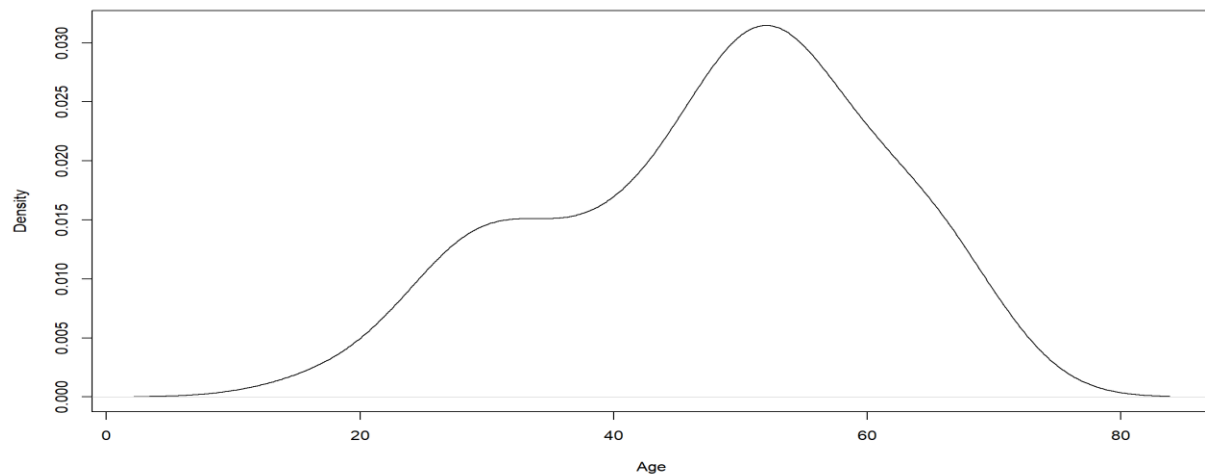


Figure 25: Density plot representing the age distribution of the Logudorese participants. It is left-skewed.

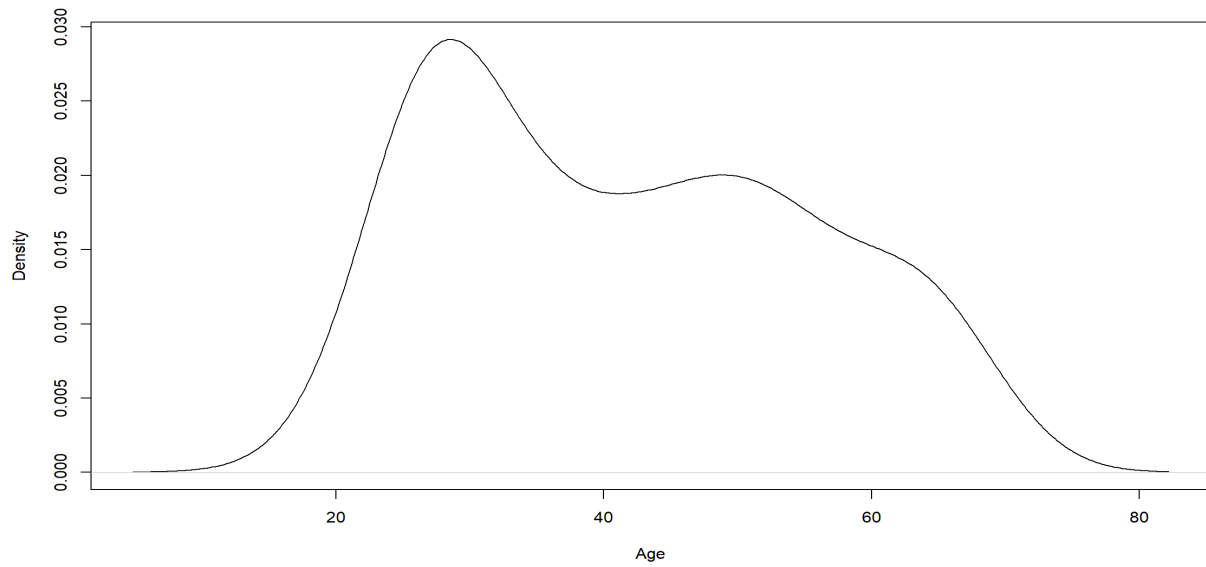


Figure 26: Density plot representing the age distribution of the Campidanese participants. It appears right-skewed.

Figure 27 provides a barplot of the age of total participants, and if we look at its density plot (Figure 28), we see indeed that it resembles a bimodal distribution.

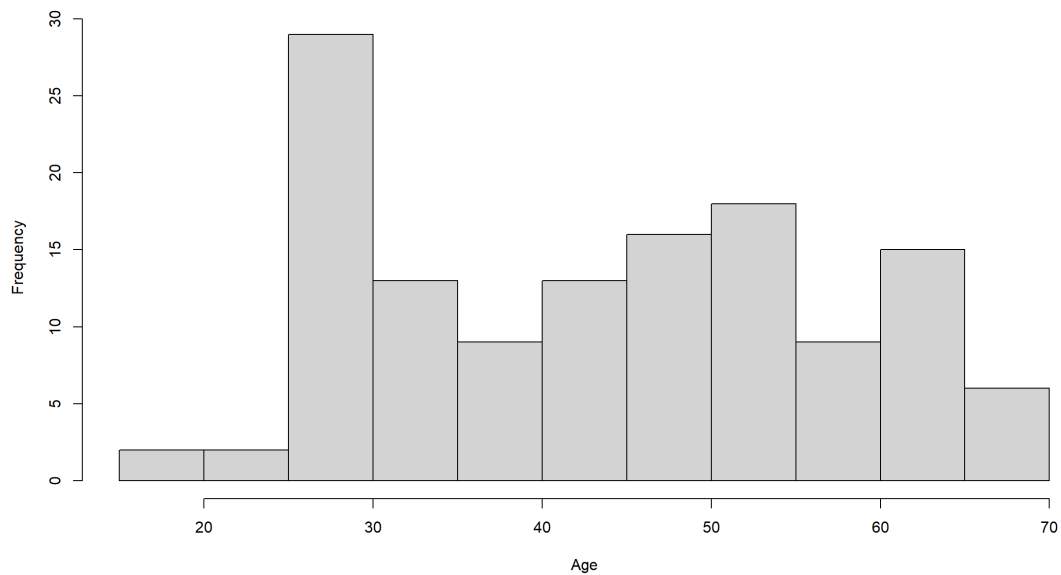


Figure 27: Barplot visualising the total participants' age distribution.

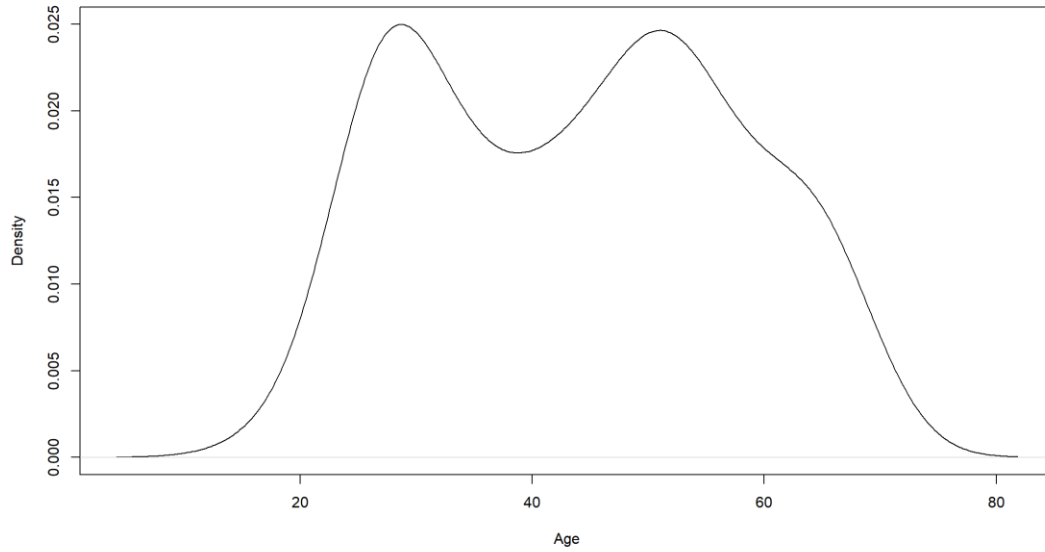


Figure 28: Density plot of the total participants' age distribution. It resembles a bimodal distribution.

The levels of education declared by participants of the two questionnaires also differ in their distribution. *Figure 29* visualises the education levels of the Campidanese participants, *Figure 30* visualises those of the Logudorese ones.

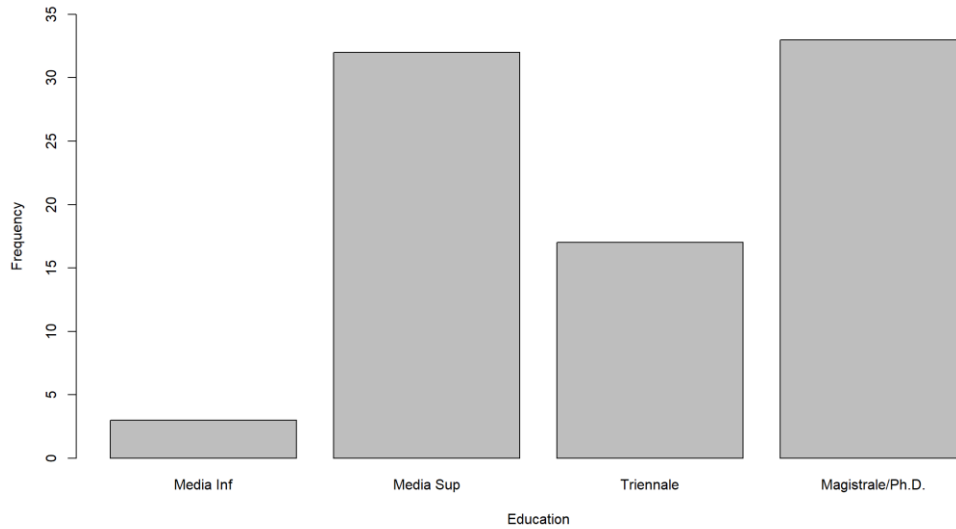
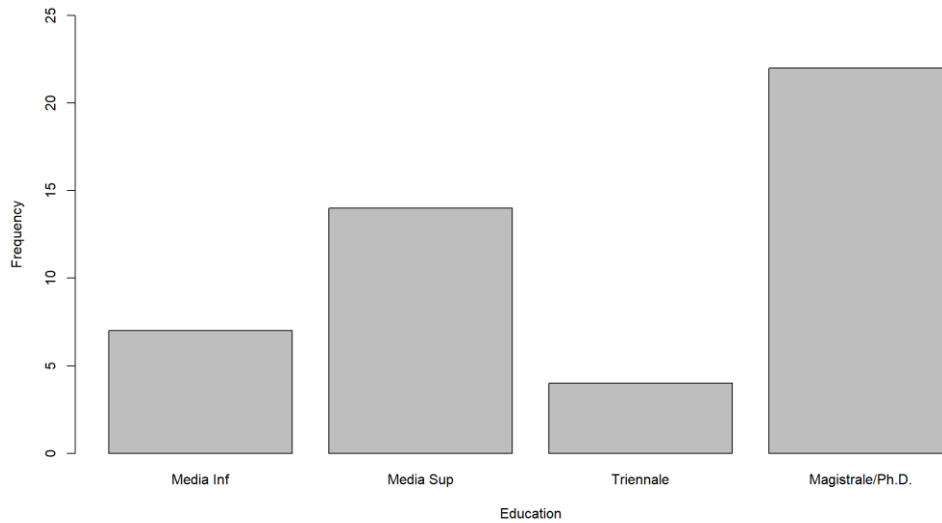


Figure 29: Barplot visualising the education level of the Campidanese questionnaire's participants.



*Figure 30: Barplot visualising the education levels of the Logudorese questionnaire's participants.*

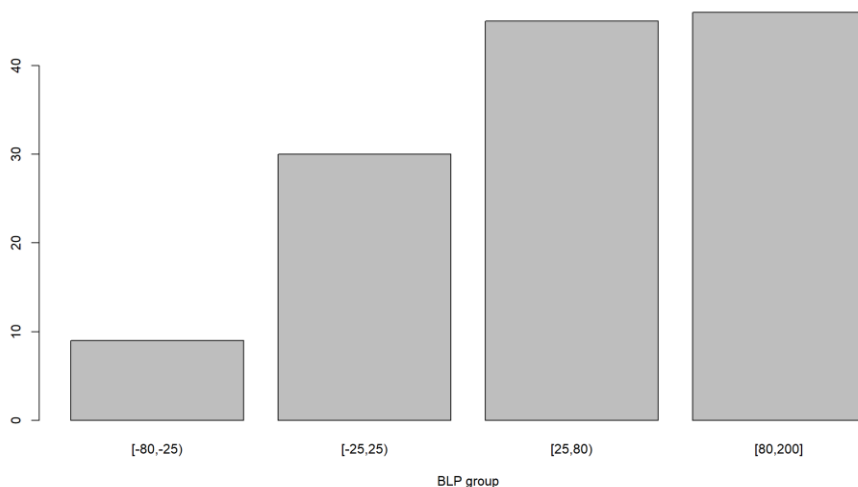
While the number of participants declaring a Master's degree or PhD is similar throughout the two questionnaires (33/85 in Campidanese and 22/47 in Logudorese), differences are found in the frequency of the other education levels. Particularly, we see that the number of participants declaring to possess a Bachelor 's degree sensibly decreases in the Logudorese questionnaire (4/47) compared to the Campidanese one (17/85), the number of participants that possess a High School degree is also lower in Logudorese (14/47) compared to Campidanese (32/85) and finally a few more frequent in Logudorese (7/47) compared to Campidanese (3/85) is the Middle School degree education level.

### 6.1.1.2 Bilingual profile

Based on previous research and on our results, we divided the participants into four groups according to these BLP values. Each score range represents a different dominance balance between Sardinian and Italian:

- Group 1 included subjects with a moderate Sardinian dominance, namely with a BLP score ranging from -80 to -25 excluded.
- Group 2 included subjects with no dominance, i.e. with a BLP score ranging from -25 to 25 excluded.
- Group 3 included informants with a moderate Italian dominance, namely with a BLP score ranging from 25 to 80 excluded.
- Group 4 included participants with a high Italian dominance, i.e. with a BLP score ranging from 80 to 200.

Let us have a look at *Figure 31* that represents a barplot of the distribution of the total participants in the four groups. We see that – as expected – the bilingual profile is unbalance towards Italian dominance. This is confirmed in the density plot in *Figure 32*.



*Figure 31: Barplot visualising the total participants' frequency of the four BLP groups.*



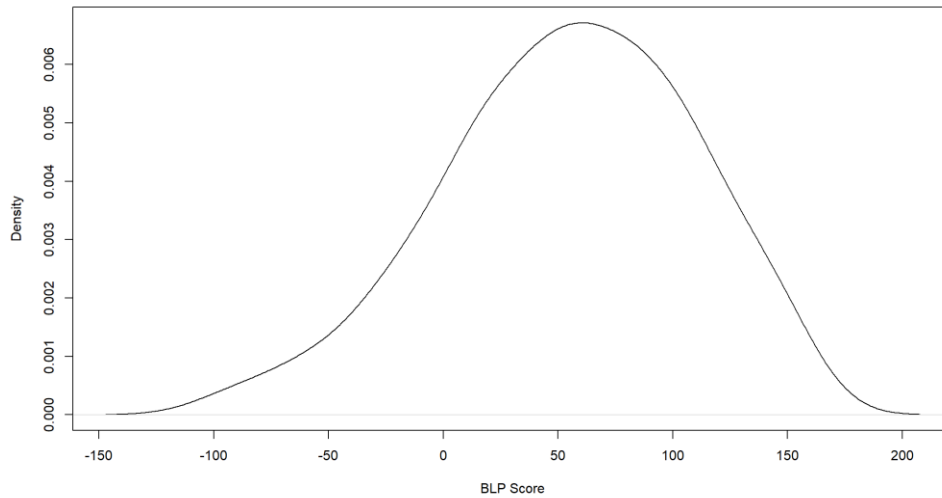


Figure 32 Density plot visualising the total participants' distribution of BLP scores.

However, if we consider participants of each questionnaire, we see some differences. While the Campidanese participants confirm the trend with a higher frequency of moderate to high Italian dominance (barplot in Figure 33 and density plot in Figure 34), the Logudorese participants display a higher frequency of no dominance or a moderate Italian dominance (barplot in Figure 35 and density plot in Figure 36).

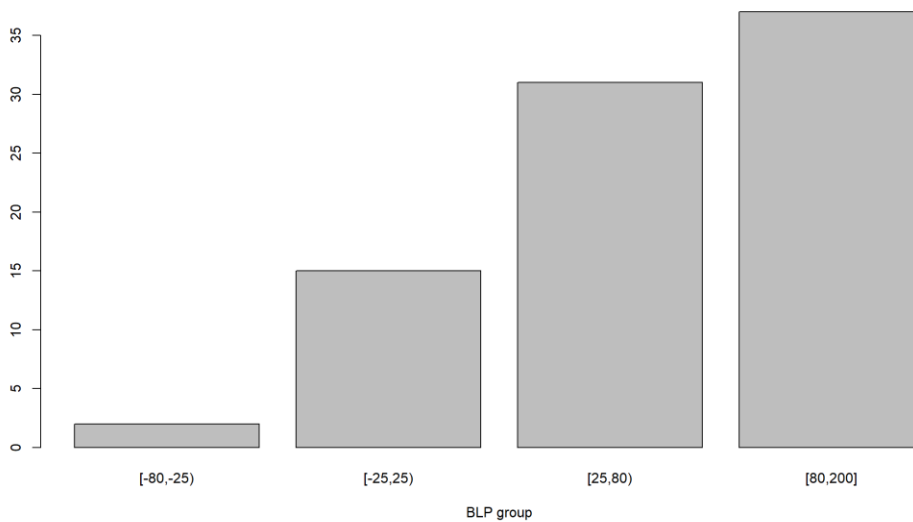


Figure 33 Barplot visualising the frequency of each BLP group for the Campidanese participants.

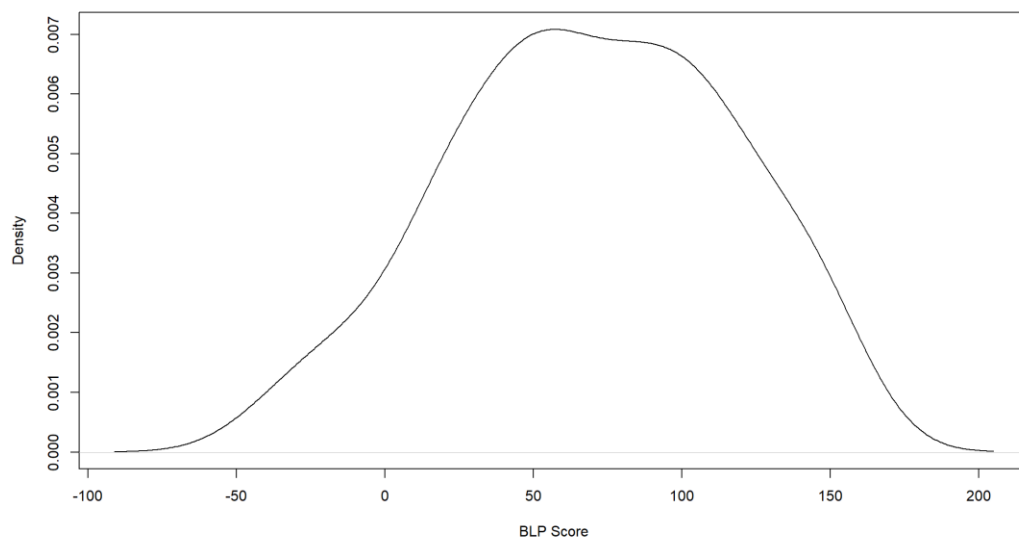


Figure 34 Density plot visualising the distribution of BLP score for the Campidanese participants.

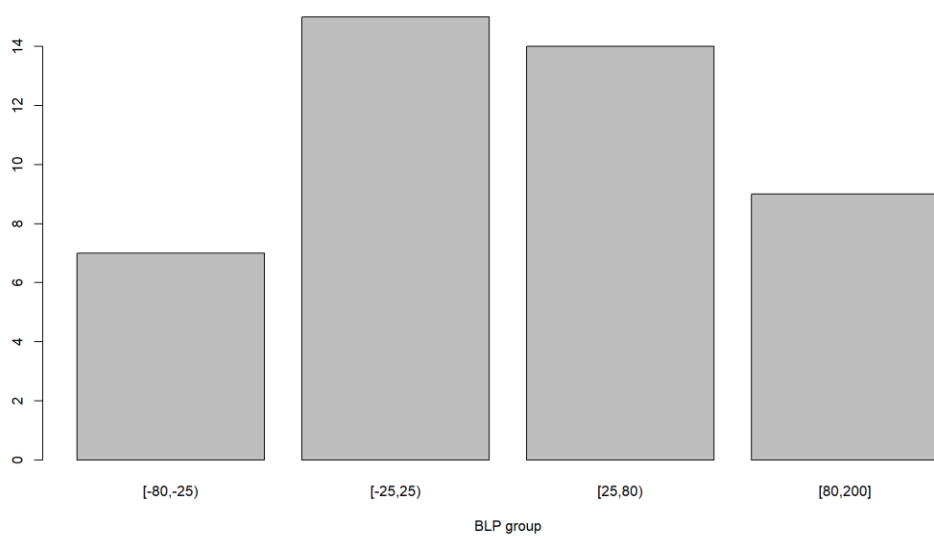


Figure 35 Barplot visualising the frequency of each BLP group for the Logudorese participants.

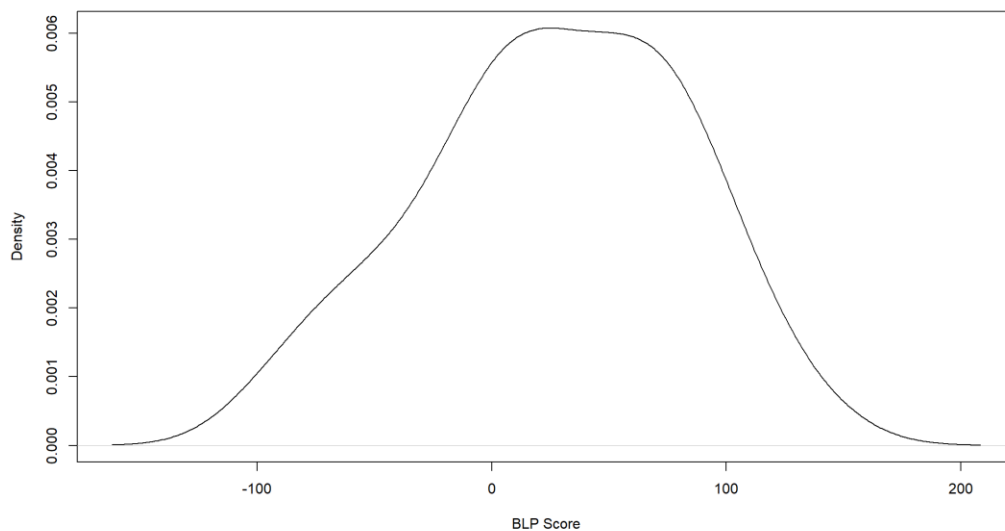


Figure 36 Density plot visualising the distribution of BLP score for the Logudorese participants.

For a better understanding of the scale that we are adopting, we may ask which of the sociolinguistic variables of our interest (age, education and gender) has a correlation with the BLP score. In order to answer this question, we first have a look at the distribution of the BLP across age groups, education groups, and gender groups.

As regards age and BLP, boxplots in Figure 37 and Figure 38 visualise the distribution of BLP scores in the two age-groups respectively for Campidanese and Logudorese.

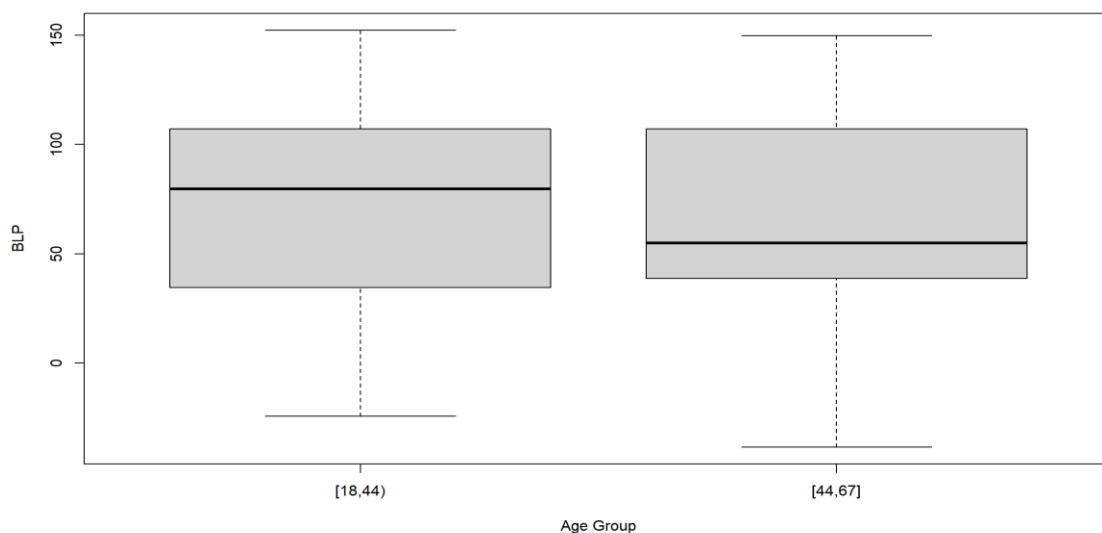
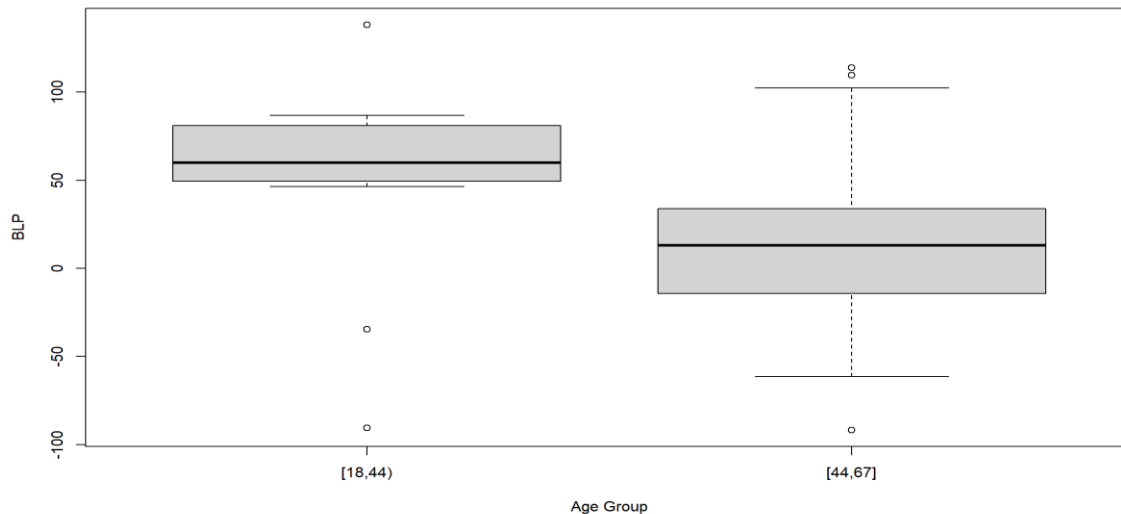


Figure 37 Boxplot representing the distribution of BLP scores in the two Campidanese participants' age groups.

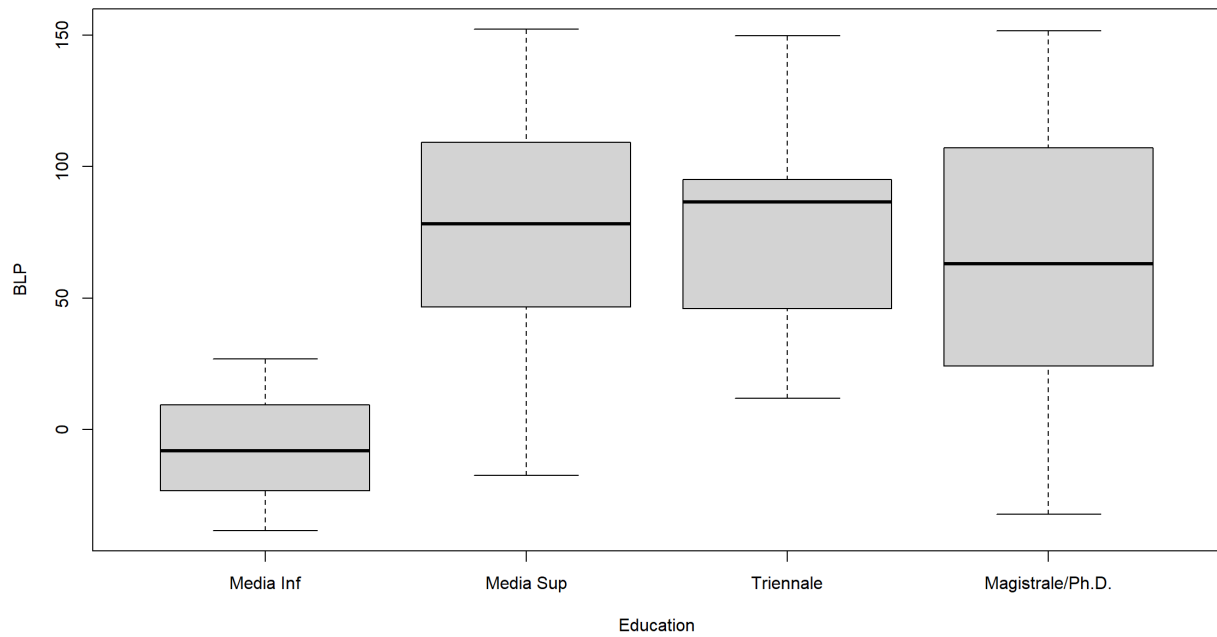
As regards Campidanese (see *Figure 39*), the medians for the two age groups ([18, 44) and [44, 67]) are slightly different, displaying a lower BLP value for older participants. Less difference is found in the maximum value and the third quartile, while the minimum value is slightly lower for older participants.



*Figure 38* Boxplot representing the distribution of BLP scores in the two Logudorese participants' age groups.

Differences emerge relating age and BLP scores of the Logudorese participants (see *Figure 38*). The medians for the two age groups ([18, 44) and [44, 67]) are considerably different, displaying a lower BLP value for older participants. Maximum and minimum value, as well as the third quartile, differ too. While younger participants display a more coherent distribution of the BLP scores, older participants' scores are more sparsely distributed.

As regards education levels and BLP scores, in Campidanese we notice (see *Figure 39*) that the median increases in higher education levels. An exception seems Bachelor's compared to the Master's/PhD degree: we see indeed both a higher median and a higher minimum value, resulting in a less sparse distribution. This may be related to the fact that the three-level system of higher education was introduced in most European countries with the so-called Bologna Process in 1999. Therefore, the "Bachelor's" group may include younger people, who generally tend to have an Italian-speaking profile (at least in our sample).



*Figure 39: Box plot representing the distribution of participants' BLP in the Campidanese questionnaire according to their declared education levels*

In Logudorese, participants do not display this effect and the median of the BLP scores appears to increase in higher education levels, as *Figure 40* shows.

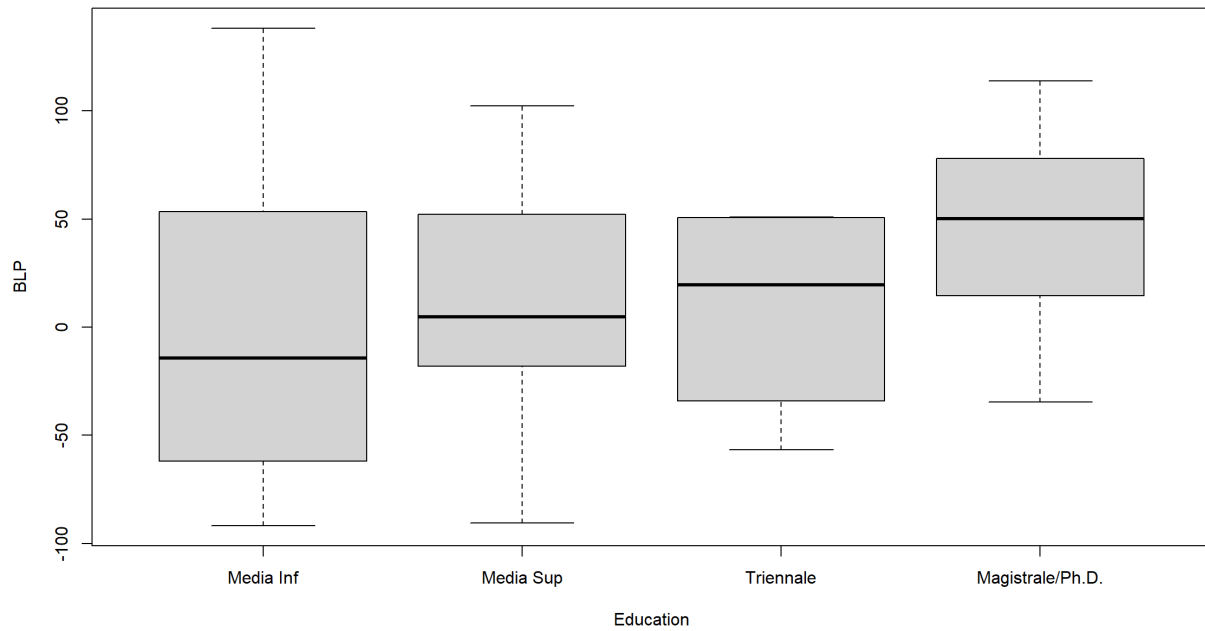


Figure 40 Box plot representing the distribution of participants' BLP in the Logudorese questionnaire according to their declared education levels.

## 6.1.2 Materials

Here we provide a description of the questionnaires, which are divided into a set of socio-demographic questions, a set to assess the BLP scale and finally the stimuli, which corresponds to the acceptability judgment questions about the use of the four selected indefinite determiners in different contexts.

### 6.1.2.1 Socio-demographic questions

This first battery was identical for both questionnaires and aimed at collecting data on our sociolinguistic variables of interest related to the participants. It included the following information:

- Anno di nascita ('Year of birth')
- Genere ('Gender')
  - o Uomo ('man')
  - o Donna ('female')
  - o Altro ('other')
- Titolo di studio ('Level of education')
  - o Licenza elementare ('Elementary school')
  - o Licenza media inferiore ('Middle school')
  - o Licenza media superiore (o equivalente) ('High school (or equivalent)')
  - o Laurea Triennale 'Bachelor's degree'
  - o Laurea Specialistica, Magistrale o di Vecchio ordinamento ('Master's degree')
  - o Diploma di Specializzazione o Dottorato di ricerca ('Postgraduate course or Ph.D')
- Ambito occupazionale ('Occupation field')
  - o Agricoltura ('agriculture')
  - o Artigianato ('craftsmanship')
  - o Arte (musica, teatro, pittura, letteratura) 'ART (music, theatre, painting, literature)'
  - o Commercio ('trade')
  - o Lavoro dipendente ('dependent employment')
  - o Imprenditoria ('business')
  - o Insegnamento ('teaching')
  - o Libera professione ('freelance')
  - o Ricerca ('research')
  - o Studio ('study')
  - o Altro (specificare) ('other (specify)')
- In che zona/e della Sardegna vive o ha vissuto? ('In which area/s of Sardinia do you live/have you lived?')

### 6.1.2.2 BLP: adaptation and scoring

In order to measure the bilingual profile of the participants, we administered an adaptation of the Bilingual Language Profile (BLP) scale (Birdsong, Gertken, and Amengual 2012) that we already introduced in § 2.4.

As we already stressed before, the BLP has already been used in bilectal environments also without any adaptation, like in Grohmann and al. (2017), with a group of Sardinian/Italian adult speakers and of a group of monolingual Italians. Nevertheless, in compliance with the intuition that in a bilectal environment the point of balance should not be the ZERO but rather unbalanced towards Italian, some changes were made, partially following what had already been in similar research by Procentese (2021).

The original BLP included 19 questions, but we decided to select only 16 of them, according to the relevance for our research purposes. Furthermore, we added one question for a total of 17 questions overall. In the language history section, we left out question 2 regarding the age participants started to feel comfortable with the language, and question 3 that asked about the schooling language, since in Italy the education system is merely in Italian. Nonetheless, we added a question asking how many years the participants spent in the company of friends where one or the other language was spoken. As for language use, we asked for the frequency of use (in terms of percentage of time) of each language in different contexts (family, work, with friends, with one's self), but we left out question 11 of the original BLP scale, asking how often the participants used to count in both languages. Finally, the sections reserved to language proficiency<sup>54</sup> and language attitudes was not subjected to changes.

The scoring process was subject to changes in order to adapt to the modified number of questions, since in the original version, the points obtained for each module were multiplied for a factor that allows all the sections to have the same weight in the final score. See *Table 16* for further detail.

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<sup>54</sup> Here, Procentese (2021) decided to leave out also questions 14 and 15 regarding reading and writing skills in the dialect. We decided to keep these questions in the questionnaire, as it involves also these skills.



<b>BLP</b>	<b>Bilingual profile Italian-Sardinian</b>
<p><b>Language history</b>  1 = max 20 pt.  2 = max 20 pt.  3 = max 20 pt.  4 = max 20 pt.  5 = max 20 pt.  6 = max 20 pt.</p> <p>Tot= 120 x 0,454 = 54,48pt</p>	<p><b>Language history</b>  1 = max 20 pt.  4 = max 20 pt.  5 = max 20 pt.  6 = max 20 pt.  # = question absent from the BLP, equal to 5 and 6 with the context “friends”. Max 20pt</p> <p>Tot= 100pt x 0,545 = 54,5pt</p>
<p><b>Language use</b>  7 = max 10 pt.  8 = max 10 pt.  9 = max 10 pt.  10 = max 10 pt.  11 = max 10 pt.</p> <p>Tot= 50 x 1,09 = 54,5pt</p>	<p><b>Language use</b>  7 = max 10 pt.  8 = max 10 pt.  9 = max 10 pt.  10 = max 10 pt.</p> <p>Tot = 40 x1,362 = 54,48pt</p>
<p><b>Language proficiency</b>  12 = max 6 pt.  13 = max 6 pt.  14 = max 6 pt.  15= max 6 pt.</p> <p>Tot = 24 x 2,27 = 54,48pt</p>	<p><b>Language proficiency</b>  12= max 6 pt.  13= max 6 pt.</p> <p>Tot = 12x 4,54 = 54,48pt</p>
<p><b>Language attitude</b>  16 = max 6 pt.  17 = max 6 pt.  18 = max 6 pt.  19 = max 6 pt.</p> <p>Tot = 24 x 2,27 = 54,48pt</p>	<p><b>Language attitude</b>  16 = max 6 pt.  17 = max 6 pt.  18 = max 6 pt.  19 = max 6 pt.</p> <p>Tot 24 x 2,27 = 54,48pt</p>
<p><b>Total max score in each language: 218</b></p> <p>Dominance index → <b>partial BLP score Italian – partial BLP score Sardinian = [-70,-20) moderate dialect dominance, [-20, 20) 0 dominance, [20, 70) moderate Italian dominance, [70,150] high Italian dominance.</b></p>	

Table 16: Differences in scoring between BLP and the adaptation used in the current study as in Procentese (2021).

### 6.1.2.3 Stimuli

The items of the questionnaires were first created in Italian by Anna Cardinaletti, Giuliana Giusti and Gianluca Leboni. I translated the whole questionnaire into Logudorese and Campidanese also with the help of various native informants<sup>55</sup>.

The test is structured to check different semantic and syntactic properties of the indefinite determiners<sup>56</sup> in affirmative and CLLDed clauses. The items were divided into three groups: target sentences, containing the structure that were relevant for the research, and two groups of fillers that could avoid the informants from creating automatic answering patterns for the repetitiveness of the experimental items. The first group of fillers (labelled FILLPOS) consisted in a series of sentences including possessive adjectives in different syntactic positions. The second (labelled FILLCL) included accusative and quantitative clitics with restructuring verbs (e.g. modal verbs).

In total, the full matrix contained: 192 target sentences, labelled as EXPERIMENTAL; 96 FILLER sentences. Each item was presented in both Italian and Ferrarese, thus obtaining the double amount of items (total = 384).

The sentences can be characterized along the following dimensions:

- The number labelling the competing sentences included in the same question. In total, the questions were 72.
- EXP (for experimental items) or FILL (for filler items). The filler sentences were also specified for the aspect they investigated (namely FILLPOS and FILLCL).
- Sentence type: base sentence (BASE), quantitative clitic (NE) and accusative clitic (LI) for the experimental items; prenominal position (PREN), ZERO adjective (ZERO) and postnominal position (PSTN) for FILLPOS; accusative singular (ACCSG), accusative plural (ACCSG) and partitive (PART) for FILLCL.
- Event type: habitual (HAB) or episodic sentences (EPIS) for the experimental items; modal (MOD) for filler items.

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<sup>55</sup> In Sardinian both the national and the regional legislation for the protection of language minorities (L. 482/99 and L.R. 22/2018) resulted in the institution of *Ufìtzius de Limba Sarda*, that provide linguistic aid to the citizens of the Autonomous Region. I was aided in the translation also by the expert operators of the *Ufìtzius de Limba Sarda de su Comunu de Carbònia*. <https://insardu.comune.carbonia.su.it/>

<sup>56</sup> We did not include all the traits listed in Giusti (2020) and here in §3.5.3 for a matter of duration of the questionnaire.

- Noun class: mass nouns (MASS) and plural count nouns (PL) for the experimental items; singular (SG) and plural (PL) for FILLPOS; human animate nouns (HUM) and inanimate nouns (INANIM) for FILLCL.
- Lexical entry: vino ‘wine’, carne ‘meat’, *pesce* ‘fish’, *frutta* ‘fruits’, *funghi* ‘mushrooms’, *giornali* ‘papers’, *zucchine* ‘courgettes’ and *biciclette* ‘bicycles’ for the experimental items; *fratello* ‘brother’, *sorella* ‘sister’ and *cugina* ‘cousin(f)’ for the experimental items; *macchina* ‘car’, *cellulare* ‘mobile’, *ombrello* ‘umbrella’, *scarpe* ‘shoes’, *pantaloni* ‘trousers’ and *guanti* ‘gloves for FILLPOS’; *posso* ‘(I)can’, *voglio* ‘(I)want’, *vado* ‘(I)go’ and *devo* ‘(I)must’ for FILLCL;
- Type determiner: ZERO, ART, DI, DI+ART for the experimental items (these were indefinite determiners); ART and ZERO for FILPOSS. Since FILLCL did not include indefinite determiners, we can substitute them with the position of the clitic pronoun: proclitic (PROCL), median (MEDANO), ZERO and enclitic (ENCL).

Each question included four possible answers. In the experimental sentences, each option displayed a different form for the indefinite determiner and multiple answers were allowed. However, an additional option labelled ‘other’ was added only in the Sardinian versions. Here, the informants could eventually signal further options or the unacceptability of all the options by adding text manually. If more than one option was considered acceptable, the informants were asked to say if there was any difference in meaning and asked to specify this difference by adding text in case of an affirmative answer. Only the answers were translated in Campidanese and Logudorese, whereas the questions and the first introduction to the questionnaire were kept in Italian.

Herein we provide one example for each category of items included in the test, in both Italian and in Campidanese and Logudorese Sardinian.

- The first series of experimental items presented habitual base negative sentences in the present tense, which were grouped in eight multiple-choice questions. Among them, four displayed singular mass nouns and the other four plural count nouns (cf. (72a, b, c), examples with a mass noun):

- (72) a. Nella sua varietà di italiano si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Italian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’

- o Sono astemio. Non bevo vino  
(I)am teetotaller. (I)not drink wine
  - o Sono astemio. Non bevo il vino  
(I)am teetotaller. (I)not drink ART wine
  - o Sono astemio. Non bevo di vino  
(I)am teetotaller. (I)not drink di wine
  - o Sono astemio. Non bevo del vino  
(I)am teetotaller. (I)not drink di+ART wine
- b. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
'In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)'
- o So astemiu. Non beo binu.  
I am teetotaller. I-not drink wine
  - o So astemiu. Non beo su binu.  
I am teetotaller. I not drink ART wine
  - o So astemiu. Non beo de binu.  
I am teetotaller. I not drink di wine
  - o So astemiu. Non beo de su binu.  
I am teetotaller. I not drink DI+ART wine
- c. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
'In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)'
- o Seu astemiu. Non buffu binu.  
I am teetotaller. I-not drink NEG wine
  - o Seu astemiu. Non buffu su binu.  
I am teetotaller. I not drink NEG ART wine
  - o Seu astemiu. Non buffu de binu.  
I am teetotaller. I not drink NEG DI wine
  - o Seu astemiu. Non buffu de su binu.  
I am teetotaller. I not drink NEG DI+ART wine

- 8 multiple choice questions displayed the same habitual sentences as the first series, but with CLLD and the quantitative clitic ne (cf. (73)):

- (73) a. Nella sua varietà di italiano si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple):  
 ‘In your variety of Italian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Sono astemia. Vino non ne bevo  
 (I)am teetotaller. Wine (I)not NE drink  
 o Sono astemia. ART vino non ne bevo  
 (I)am teetotaller. The wine (I)not NE drink  
 o Sono astemia. di vino non ne bevo  
 (I)am teetotaller. Of wine (I) not NE drink  
 o Sono astemia. del vino non ne bevo  
 (I)am teetotaller. DI+ART wine (I) not NE drink
- b. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o So astemia. Binu non nde beo.  
 I am teetotaller. Wine not NE drink  
 o So astemia. Su binu non nde beo.  
 I am teetotaller. ART wine not NE drink  
 o So astemia. De binu non nde beo.  
 I am teetotaller. DI wine not NE drink  
 o So astemia. De su binu non nde beo.  
 I am teetotaller. DI+ART wine not NE drink
- c. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Seu astemia. Binu non ndi buffu.  
 (I)am teetotaller. Wine not NE drink  
 o Seu astemia. Su binu non ndi buffu.  
 (I) am teetotaller. ART wine not NE drink  
 o Seu astemia. De binu non ndi buffu.  
 I am teetotaller. di wine not NE drink  
 o Seu astemia. De su binu non ndi buffu.  
 I am teetotaller. DI+ART wine not NE drink

- 8 multiple choice questions displayed the same habitual sentences as the first series, but with CLLD and the accusative clitic (cf. (74)):

- (74) a. Nella sua varietà di italiano si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Italian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Sono astemia. Vino non lo bevo  
 (I)am teetotaller. Wine (I)not CL.ACC.3SG drink  
 o Sono astemia. Il vino non lo bevo  
 (I)am teetotaller. ART wine (I)not CL.ACC.3SG drink  
 o Sono astemia. Di vino non lo bevo  
 (I)am teetotaller. DI wine (I)not CL.ACC.3SG drink  
 o Sono astemia. Del vino non lo bevo  
 (I)am teetotaller. DI+ART wine (I)not CL.ACC.3SG drink
- b. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o So astemiu. Binu non lu beo.  
 I am teetotaller. Wine not CL.ACC.3SG drink  
 o So astemiu. Su binu non lu beo  
 I am teetotaller. ART wine not CL.ACC.3SG drink  
 o. So astemiu. De binu non lu beo.  
 I am teetotaller. DI wine not CL.ACC.3SG drink  
 o So astemiu. De su binu non lu beo.  
 I am teetotaller. DI+ART wine not CL.ACC.3SG drink
- c. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Seu astemiu. Binu non ddu buffu.  
 I am teetotaller. Wine not CL.ACC.3SG drink  
 o Seu astemiu. Su binu non ddu buffu.  
 I am teetotaller. ART wine not CL.ACC.3SG drink  
 o Seu astemiu. De binu non ddu buffu.

I am teetotaller. DI wine not CL.ACC.3SG drink

o Seu astemiu. De su binu non ddu buffu.

I am teetotaller. DI+ART wine not CL.ACC.3SG drink

- The second series of items presented episodic negative sentences in the past tense, which were grouped into eight multiple-choice questions. Among them, four displayed singular mass nouns and the other four plural count nouns (cf. (75) example with the same mass noun):

- (75) a. Nella sua varietà di italiano si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
'In your variety of Italian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)'  
o Ieri non ho bevuto vino.  
Yesterday (I)not have drunk wine  
o Ieri non ho bevuto il vino.  
Yesterday (I)not have drunk ART wine  
o Ieri non ho bevuto di vino.  
Yesterday (I)not have drunk DI wine  
o Ieri non ho bevuto del vino.  
Yesterday (I)not have drunk DI+ART wine
- b. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
'In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)'  
o Eris non apo bidu binu.  
Yesterday (I) not have drunk wine  
o Eris non apo bidu su binu.  
Yesterday not have drunk ART wine  
o Eris non apo bidu de binu.  
Yesterday not have drunk DI wine  
o Eris non apo bidu de su binu.  
Yesterday not have drunk DI+ ART wine
- c. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
'In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)'  
o Ariseru non appu buffau binu.

Yesterday not have drunk wine  
 o Ariseru non appu buffau su binu.  
 Yesterday not have drunk ART wine  
 o Ariseru non appu buffau de binu.  
 Yesterday not have drunk DI wine  
 o Ariseru non appu buffau de su binu.  
 Yesterday not have drunk DI+ ART wine

- 8 multiple choice questions displayed the same episodic sentences as the second series, but with CLLD and the quantitative clitic ne (cf. (76)):

- (76) a. Nella sua varietà di italiano si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Italian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Ieri, vino non ne ho bevuto.  
 Yesterday wine not NE have drunk  
 o Ieri, il vino non ne ho bevuto.  
 Yesterday ART wine not NE have drunk  
 o Ieri, di vino non ne ho bevuto.  
 Yesterday DI wine not NE have drunk  
 o Ieri, del vino non ne ho bevuto.  
 Yesterday DI+ART wine not NE have drunk
- b. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Eris binu non nde apo bidu.  
 Yesterday wine not ne have drunk  
 o Eris su binu non nde apo bidu.  
 Yesterday ART wine not ne have drunk  
 o Eris de binu non nde apo bidu.  
 Yesterday di wine not ne have drunk  
 o Eris de su binu non nde apo bidu.  
 Yesterday DI+ART wine not ne have drunk



- c. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
 ‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Ariseru binu non ndi appu buffau.  
 Yesterday wine not ne have drunk  
 o Ariseru su binu non ndi appu buffau.  
 Yesterday ART wine not ne have drunk  
 o Ariseru de binu non ndi appu buffau.  
 Yesterday DI wine not ne have drunk  
 o Ariseru de su binu non ndi appu buffau.  
 Yesterday di+ART wine not ne have drunk

➤ 8 multiple choice questions displayed the same episodic sentences as the second series, but with CLLD and the accusative clitic (cf. 77)):

- (77) a. Nella sua varietà di italiano si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Italian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Ieri, vino non l'ho bevuto.  
 Yesterday wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk  
 o Ieri, il vino non l'ho bevuto.  
 Yesterday ART wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk  
 o Ieri di vino non l'ho bevuto.  
 Yesterday DI wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk  
 o Ieri, del vino non l'ho bevuto.  
 Yesterday DI+ART wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk
- b. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
 ‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Eris binu non lu apo bidu.  
 Yesterday wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk  
 o Eris su binu non lu apo bidu.  
 Yesterday the wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk  
 o Eris de binu non lu apo bidu.

Yesterday DI wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk

o Eris de su binu non lu apo bidu.

Yesterday DI+ART wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk

- c. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)

‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’

o Ariseru binu non ddu appu buffau.

Yesterday wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk

o Ariseru su binu non ddu appu buffau.

Yesterday the wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk

o Ariseru de binu non ddu appu buffau.

Yesterday DI wine CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk

o Ariseru de su binu non ddu appu buffau.

Yesterday DI+ART wine not CL.ACC.3M.SG have drunk

- FILPOS were grouped in 12 multiple-choice questions. Among the answers, each of the four options displayed one of the features that we have mentioned above (PREN, ZERO PSTN). In particular, there were two PREN (one with ART and one with ZERO) one ZERO and one POSTN (both with ART) (cf. (78)):

- (78) a. Nella sua varietà di italiano si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).

‘In your variety of Italian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’

o Questa è Giovanna. Conosci suo fratello?

This is Giovanna. (you)know her.M.SG brother

o Questa è Giovanna. Conosci il suo fratello?

This is Giovanna. (you)know the.M.SG her.M.SG brother

o Questa è Giovanna. Conosci il fratello?

This is Giovanna. (you)know the.M.SG brother

o Questa è Giovanna. Conosci il fratello suo?

This is Giovanna. (you)know the.M.SG brother her.M.SG

- b. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)

‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’

o Custa est Giuanna. Connosches a sou frade?  
 This is Giovanna. Know.2SG her. M.SG brother  
 o Custa est Giuanna. Connosches a su sou frade?  
 This is Giovanna. Know.2SG the.M.SG her.M.SG brother  
 o Custa est Giuanna. Connosches a su frade?  
 This is Giovanna. Know.2SG the.M.SG brother  
 o Custa est Giuanna. Connosches a su frade sou?  
 This is Giuàna. Know.2SG the.M.SG brother her.M.SG

- c. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
 ‘In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Custa est Giuanna. Connoscis a suu fradi?  
 This is Giovanna. Know.2SG her. M.SG brother?  
 o Custa est Giuanna. Connoscis a su suu fradi?  
 This is the Giovanna. Know.2SG the.M.SG her.M.SG brother.  
 o Custa est Giuanna. Connoscis a su fradi?  
 This is Giovanna. Know.2SG the.M.SG brother.  
 o Custa est Giuanna. Connoscis a su fradi suu?  
 This is Giuàna. Know,2SG the.M.SG brother her.M.SG

- FILCL were grouped in 12 multiple choice questions, of which 4 had ACCSG clitics, 4 ACCPL clitics and 4 PART. Among the answers, each of the four options displayed one of the features that we have mentioned above (PROCL, MEDIANO, ENCL AND ZERO). (cf. (79)):

- (79) a. Nella sua varietà di italiano si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple).  
 ‘In your variety of Italian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)’  
 o Carlo, lo posso accompagnare al cinema questa sera?  
 Charles,(I) CL.ACC.3M.SG can take to-the cinema this evening  
 o Carlo, posso lo accompagnare al cinema questa sera  
 Charles, (I)can CL.ACC.3M.SG take to-the cinema this evening  
 o Carlo, posso accompagnarlo al cinema questa sera  
 Charles, (I)can take-CL.ACC.3M.SG to-the cinema this evening

- o Carlo, posso accompagnare al cinema questa sera  
Charles, can take to-the cinema this evening
- b. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
'In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)'  
o A Carlo, lu poto acumpagnare a cinema custo sero.  
ACC Charles CL.ACC.3M.SG can take to cinema this evening  
o A Carlo, poto lu acumpagnare a cinema custo sero.  
ACC Charles can CL.ACC.3M.SG take to cinema this evening  
o A Carlo poto acumpagnar-lu a cinema custo sero.  
ACC Charles can take+CL.ACC.3M.SG to cinema this evening  
o A Carlo poto acumpagnare a cinema custo sero.  
ACC Charles can take to cinema this evening
- c. Nella sua varietà di sardo si può dire (sono ammesse scelte multiple)  
'In your variety of Sardinian, can you say (multiple choices are allowed)'  
o A Carlo, ddu potzu acumpangiai a cinema notesta.  
ACC Charles CL.ACC.3M.SG can take to cinema this-evening  
o A Carlo, potzu ddu acumpangiai a cinema notesta.  
ACC Charles can CL.ACC.3M.SG take to cinema this-evening  
o A Carlo, potzu acumpangiai-ddu cinema notesta.  
ACC Charles can take+CL.ACC.3M.SG to-the cinema this-evening  
o A Carlo, potzu acumpangiai a cinema notesta.  
ACC Charles can take to cinema this-evening

### 6.1.3 Procedure

The web-based tool Qualtrics (Qualtrics 2023) was used to create the questionnaires. Participants could read a brief written introduction that presented the questionnaires as well as the research project and its aim. The questionnaires were presented as multiple-choice ones, with the possibility of selecting more than one option. Although the specific phenomenon of interest was not declared in order to avoid any sort of bias, we did declare that it was not our intention to assess linguistic competence. Participants were rather invited to answer more spontaneously than they could to the different questions.

The approximate durations of the questionnaire were also provided, as well as some variational issues. Given that the selected macro-varieties of Sardinian could present in some cases local differences, we reported some of the more common ones to put the participants at ease.

After the introduction, socio-demographic questions, and the questions adapted from the BLP scale were administered. In order to proceed in the questionnaire, participants had to click on a blue arrow at the bottom right of the page. Only after these sections, participants began to be presented with the items, that consisted of questions about the acceptability of one determiner rather than the other in the different contexts. Questions were divided into two blocks, one in Italian and the other in Campidanese or Logudorese Sardinian (according to the selected questionnaire). The order of the two blocks as well as the order of questions within each block was randomized. For each item, participants had to select the sentence (or sentences, as more options were possible) that they considered acceptable according to the four indefinite determiner, but they could also formulate an alternative (see §6.1.2.3 for the description of the stimuli). If they chose more than one option, the informants were asked to declare whether they selected more sentences due to a difference in meaning, and to motivate and describe it if they noticed it: by doing so, we checked for possible specialization of meaning or, conversely, pure optionality.

At the completion of the first randomized block, the participants were provided the link (automatically generated by the software and contained the subject-id associated to that individual participant) to the second block in the other language. Already in the introduction, participants were recommended not to complete the two blocks in succession, but rather to save the second one for some days later in order not to create too much interference between the two languages. For these reasons, we added a message asking either to save the link or to write their e-mail address (immediately deleted by the software in order to safeguard their personal data) and receive the link.

As regards the duration, as we said above declared in the introduction, it was approximately:

- 40 minutes for the socio-demographic and BLP scale sets along with the first block of items in one of the two languages
- 30 minutes for the remaining block completed in a second moment.

Some duration variations could change this esteem, depending on the accuracy of the answers and their possible additional remarks regarding differences in meaning or further options.

The questionnaires were disseminated through several social network platforms. Given the choice motivated in §5.1 to create two distinct questionnaires according to the Sardinian macro-variety, we also decided to promote one questionnaire rather than another according to the possible target audience of one specific social network. For instance, in Facebook groups dedicated to one specific city or historical Region of Sardinia, only the questionnaire that could better identify their local dialect was proposed. This was also done because Sardinian speakers tend to identify their local dialect according to historical regions or city and are not aware of such macro-linguistic categories of variation. As a matter of fact, several participants reported some discrepancies with their local dialect, although this was obviously accounted for and declared in the introduction.

#### **6.1.4 Statistical analysis**

Our statistical analysis was conducted in R (v. 4.2.2; R Core Team, 2022) and was organised as follows. First, we ran some descriptive statistics in order to have some insights into how our data (i.e. the judgments of our participants) were distributed. In particular, we examined the acceptance rate of the indefinite determiners in the different contexts of our interest (i.e. in the two languages, across BLP groups, levels of education and age groups, in simple and CLLDed sentences with accusative and quantitative clitics, according to clause type and noun type). These descriptive statistics can already give us information about possible contact phenomena between the two languages in our sample. However, they do not make any prediction about the linguistic behavior of the population.

To conclude, we focused on the optionality of determiner choice and possible specialization of meaning. First, we looked at the proportion of participants that selected only one option or more than one option, as well as at the proportion of those that signaled or did not signal a semantic difference among the chosen determiners.

### **6.2 Results**

This section is dedicated to the presentation of the results of our research. First, in §6.2.1 we discuss the acceptance rates of the determiners, in Italian and in the selected variety of Sardinian. Such acceptance rates are also checked in the different semantic and clause type contexts, as well

as in the CLLDed clauses. §6.2.2 is instead dedicated to a more extensive discussion about whether it is optionality or specialization of meaning that determines variation. Furthermore, we analysis of the acceptance rates of the determiners along with a closer look through the multiple ratings of them are provided.

### 6.2.1. Judgments' distribution: the acceptance rates

In this section we provide the graphs representing the acceptance rates scored by the indefinite determiners throughout the two questionnaires. These are based on the Protocol and, more precisely, on the part of the Protocol we decided to check in the present study. While doing so, we must always remember that the exiguous number of participants may strongly influence the frequency of one variable rather than another and assumptions made here are impacted by this. Let us start by looking at some descriptive graphs showing the general distribution of our participants' judgments in both Italian and Sardinian.

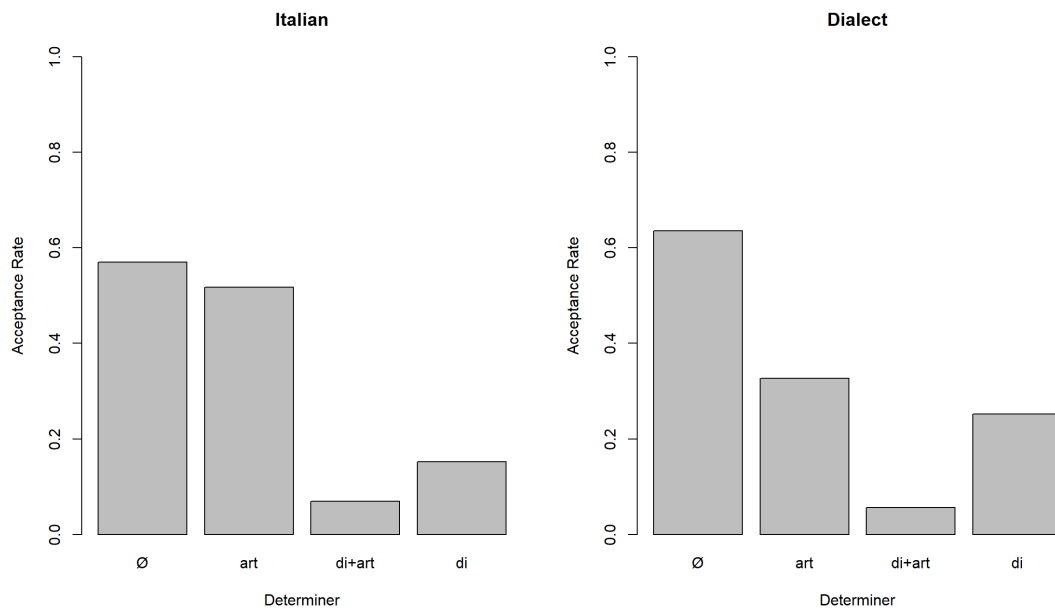


Figure 41: barplot showing the overall acceptance rates of indefinite determiners in Italian and Sardinian (Campidanese questionnaire)

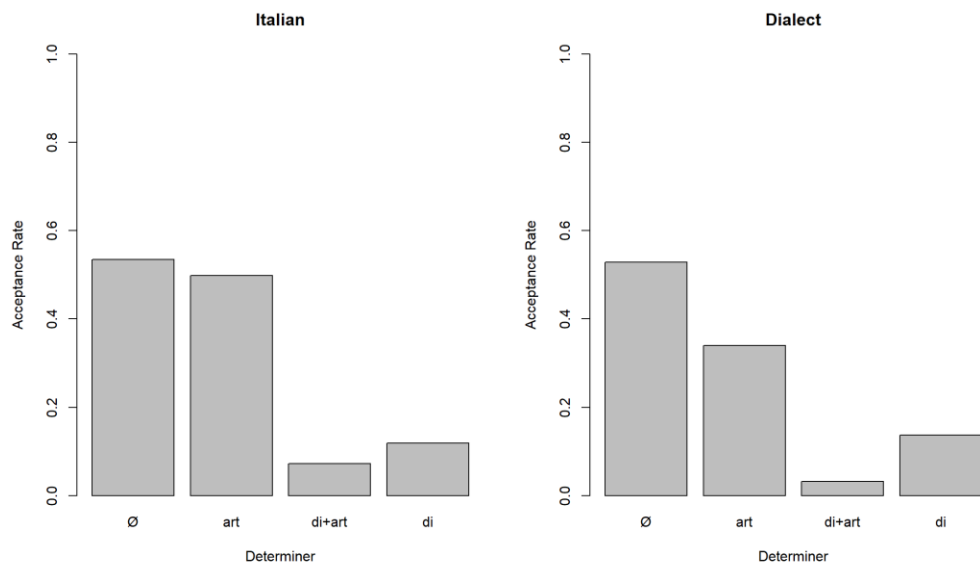


Figure 42: barplot showing the overall acceptance rates of indefinite determiners in Italian and Sardinian (Logudorese questionnaire).

ZERO and ART are respectively the first and the second choice registered in both the Campidanese and Logudorese questionnaires, both in Sardinian and in Italian (see *Figure 41* and *Figure 42*). If we compare, in both cases, Italian and dialect, we notice that the distance between the first two choices appears to be slightly wider in dialect with respect to Italian. If we compare the results in the two macro-varieties of Sardinian, the only notable difference is that in Logudorese we find a slightly inferior acceptance rate of ZERO and DI compared to Campidanese.

As regards the indefinite determiners' acceptance rates across the declared educational levels of the participants, the score of the BLP and the age group, given the exiguous size of the sample we may just draw some hypothetical assumptions. *Figure 43* and *Figure 44* show the acceptance rates of each indefinite determiner compared to the age-group individuated in the previous section.



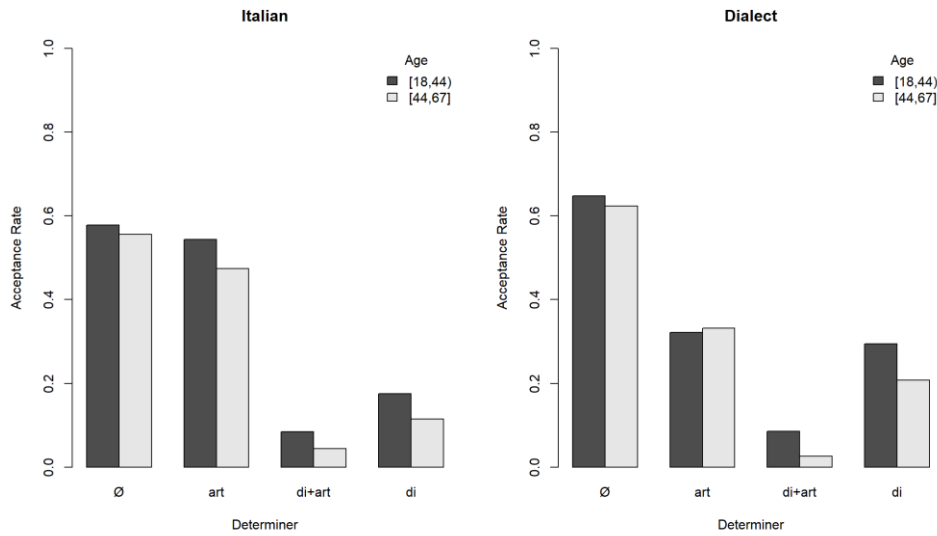


Figure 12: barplot showing the acceptance rate of indefinite determiners across age groups (Campidanese).

By having a look at the barplots, we do notice small differences. The higher acceptance rate of all the four choices reported for the age range [18, 44) compared to [44, 67) is indeed determined by the fact the former group more often chose one than more option. We may then deduce that more variation (whether true optionality or sensitivity to specialization will be discussed in §6.2.2) is found across younger participants.

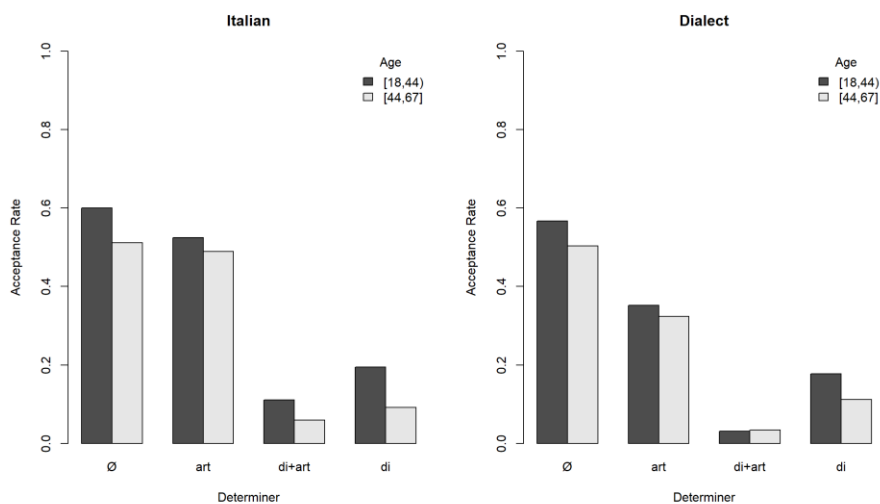


Figure 44: barplot showing the acceptance rate of indefinite determiners across age groups (Logudorese).

Figure 45 and Figure 46 show the distribution of the determiners' acceptance rates across the different levels of education declared by the participants.

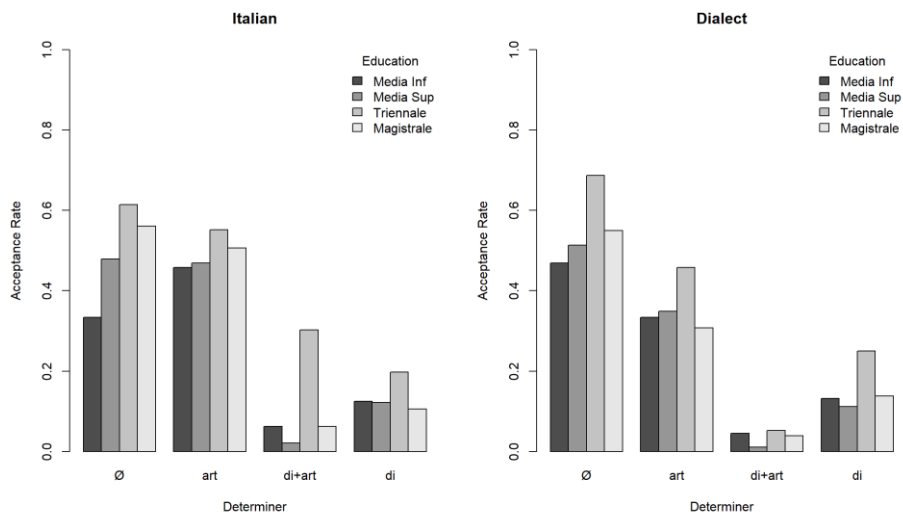


Figure 45: barplot showing the acceptance rate of indefinite determiners across levels of education (Campidanese questionnaire)

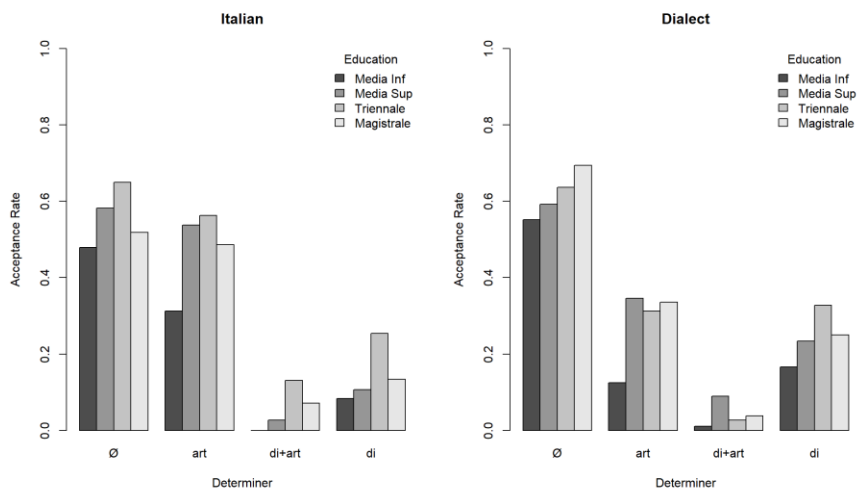
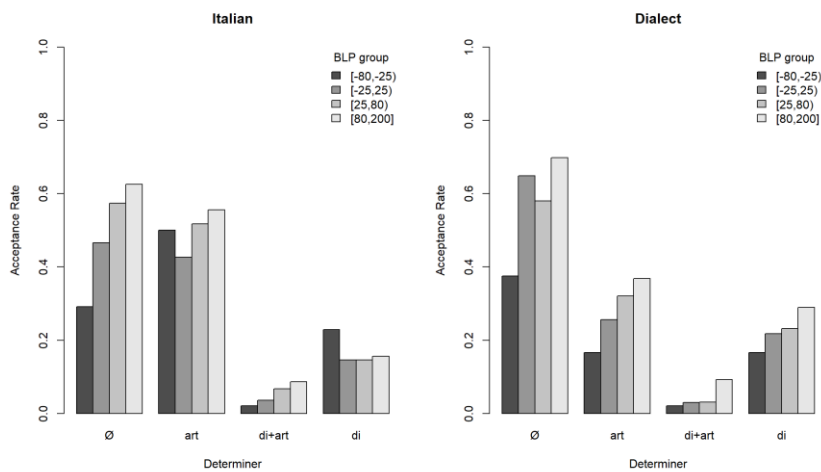


Figure 46: barplot showing the acceptance rate of indefinite determiners across levels of education (Logudorese questionnaire).

Although the small number of participants may influence a lot these scores, we can also notice some similarity between the results of the two questionnaires. For instance, in Italian, DI+ART scored the most across the participants with a Laurea Triennale, which is a bachelor's degree. We stressed in the previous chapter that Sardinian does not possess any determiner which can be structurally compared to the so called "partitive article" and that its appearance in the regional

Italian should be considered as an Italian feature. The fact that more educated participants may possess a higher BLP score and are probably more exposed to Italian can be a reason for this result, although it is more noticeable in the Campidanese questionnaire.

In Sardinian, interestingly, it appears that the one that we expect to be the uncontroversial indefinite determiner, ZERO, is mostly chosen by higher education levels and proportionally less chosen in lower levels, while the contrary is true for ART, a possible option in Sardinian although more attested in Italian. In *Figure 47* and *Figure 48*, the acceptability rates are compared to the BLP groups.



*Figure 48: barplot showing the acceptance rate of indefinite determiners across the BLP groups (Campidanese)*

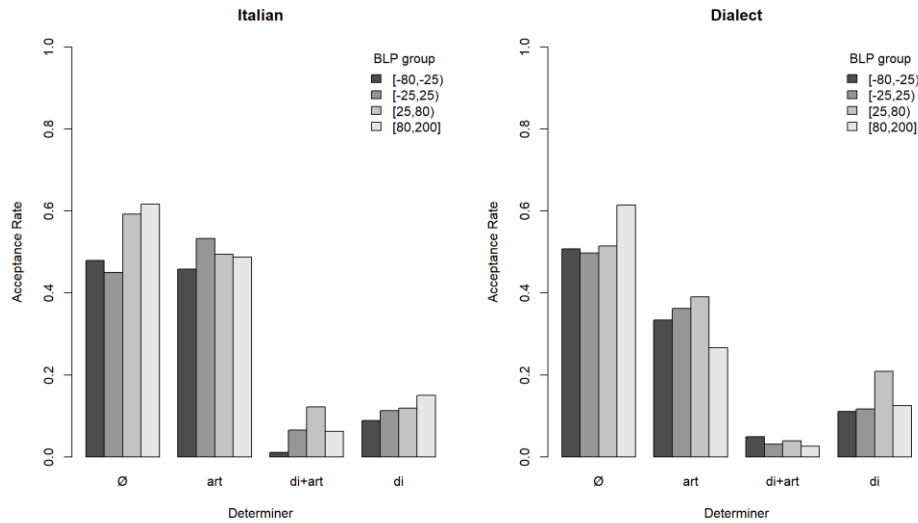


Figure 48: barplot showing the acceptance rate of indefinite determiners across the BLP groups (Logudorese).

These results are also highly dependent upon the small number of the participants and a single acceptability judgment can considerably change the distribution. We notice, however, that the tendency to judge ZERO more acceptable towards the higher levels of education seems to be confirmed in the BLP groups, fact that we can interpret an unexpected influence of Italian in the dialectal dominance group rather than the Italian one. Conversely, we find a progressively less acceptability of ART in the Italian dominance group.

One of the research questions wondered whether the choice of one of the available determiners was dependent on sentential features found in the contrast between a habitual sentence in the present and an episodic sentence in the past, but also semantic features such as the noun class of the direct object, realised in the contrast between singular mass nouns and plural count nouns. This is a context in which, as discussed in §4.4 some differences seem to arise in the literature. This issue will be also discussed in more detail §6.2.2, as we will analyze the different multiple ratings of determiners. The barplots in *Figure 49* and *Figure 50* provide an overview of the acceptance rates of the indefinite determiners splitting the sentences into episodic (EPIS) and habitual (HAB).

Results do not show relevant differences in the acceptability judgment in this specific context. We may however notice that while the results in Italian are overlapping across the two questionnaires, some small differences between the two dialectal macro-varieties are found. For instance, in Campidanese DI is slightly more favoured in the context of an episodic sentence, where in

Logudorese ZERO is slightly more preferred than in the habitual one. In Campidanese ART scored a higher acceptability rate, although minimally, in an episodic sentence rather than a habitual one.

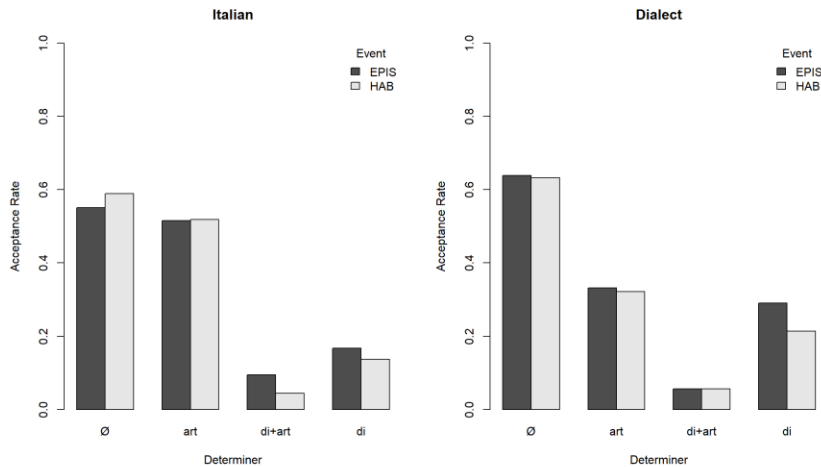


Figure 49: acceptance rate of indefinite determiners in Italian and Campidanese with habitual vs episodic event types.

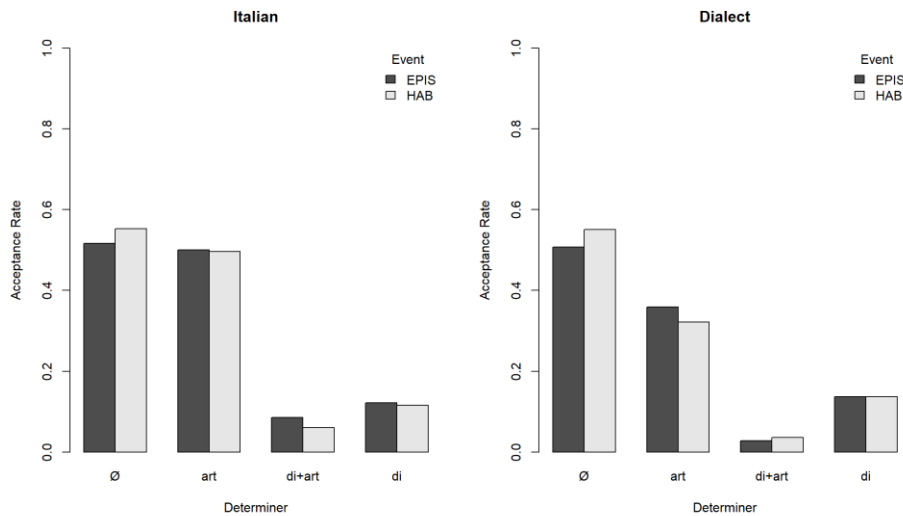


Figure 50: acceptance rate of indefinite determiners in Italian and Logudorese with habitual vs episodic event types.

As regards the contrast between the acceptability rates of the indefinite determiners in sentences containing a singular mass noun (MASS) or a plural count noun (PL), we show barplots in Figure 51 and Figure 52.

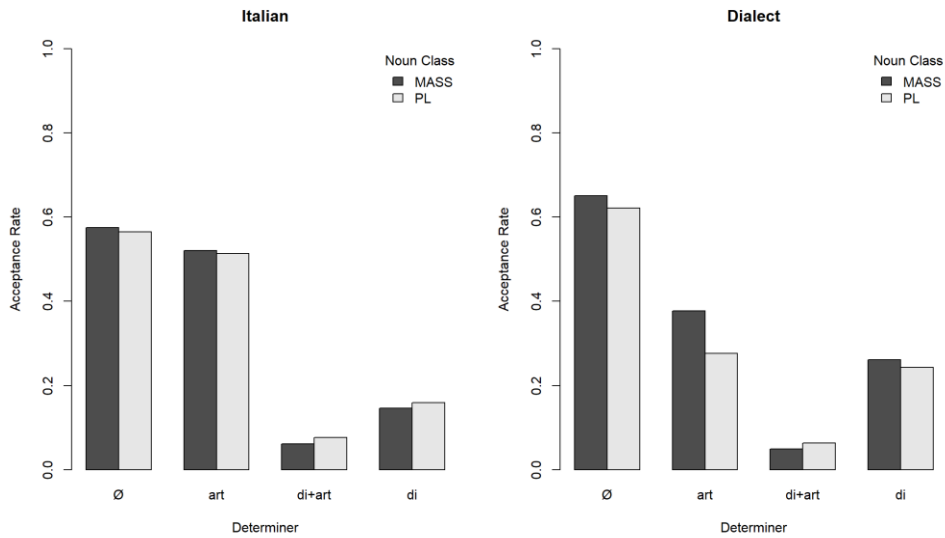


Figure 51 acceptance rate of indefinite determiners in Italian and Campidanese with different noun types (mass nouns vs plural count nouns).

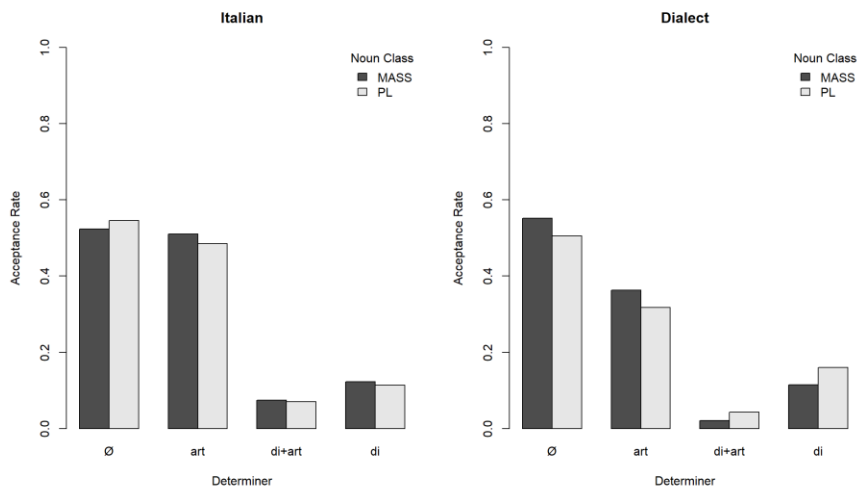


Figure 52: acceptance rate of indefinite determiners in Italian and Logudorese Sardinian with different noun types (mass nouns vs plural count nouns).

In this case, the differences in the acceptability rates expressed by the participants appear to be even smaller. Contrary to what is reported for the sentence types, here it is the Sardinian context, which is more coherent across the two questionnaires, with the exception of DI being slightly preferred in combination with MASS in Campidanese and with PL in Logudorese. In Italian the preference for DI seems to be inverted between the two contexts, while ZERO is slightly more accepted with a singular mass noun in Campidanese and, conversely, with a plural count noun in Logudorese.

Concerning the CLLDed clauses, *Figure 53* and *Figure 54* provide an overview of the acceptance rate of the four selected indefinite determiners in a regular sentence (BASE) and in CLLDed with an accusative clitic (LI) and with a quantitative clitic (NE).

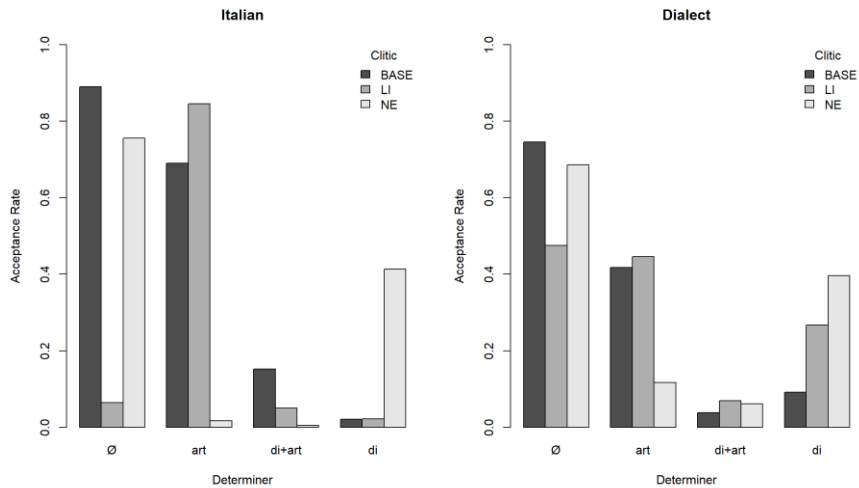


Figure 53: acceptance rate of indefinite determiners in Italian and Campidanese Sardinian in BASE, LI and NE sentences

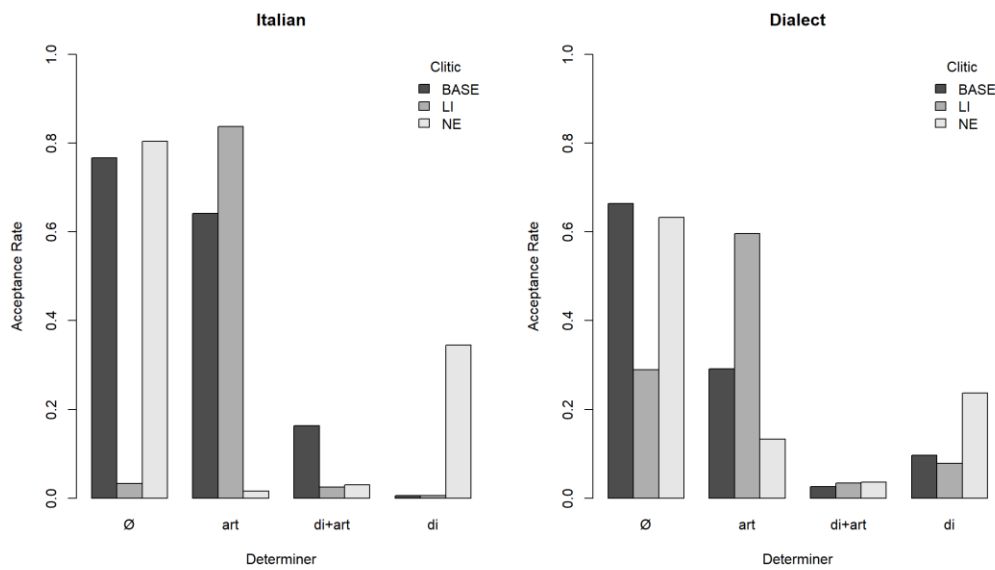


Figure 54: acceptance rate of indefinite determiners in Italian and Logudorese Sardinian in BASE, LI and NE sentences.

As regards the set of the questionnaires that was administered in Italian, BASE context displays respectively and ART as the most accepted choices, a marginal appearance of DI+ART and finally a null presence of DI. The only notable difference may be that it seems that Campidanese and Italian biletal speaker slightly tend to prefer ZERO over ART.

It is in the CLLD context that we find more interesting insight, and a quite different behaviour if we compare Italian and Sardinian. In the context of an accusative clitic (LI), this has mostly been



considered acceptable in combination with ART in both the questionnaires in Italian language. The Sardinian questionnaire shows both analogies and differences to this result. Both reflect indeed a more mixed distribution of acceptability. Italian and Logudorese biletal speakers still prefer the combination of the accusative clitic with ART, although they more consistently also accept ZERO and marginally DI. Nonetheless, Campidanese and Italian biletal speakers' first choice in this context was ZERO, although it slightly outnumbers the second choice, ART. Moreover, the acceptability of DI rises with respect to the questionnaire held in Logudorese.

As for NE, which indicates the context of a quantitative clitic, in Italian language the participants indicated respectively ZERO and DI as the first and second most acceptable determiners, although ZERO scored higher in Logudorese regional Italian and DI tends to be slightly more accepted in Campidanese regional Italian. Like we have registered above in LI, the results in Sardinian are sparser when compared to the ones reported for Italian. Nevertheless, data seem to be more coherent with the Italian choices: ZERO is the first choice and DI is the second both in Campidanese and Logudorese.

### 6.2.2 Optionality and semantic specialization

As described above, participants had the possibility to select more than one option. In case they accepted more than one sentence with a different determiner, they were asked whether there was any meaning difference. In most of the cases they did select only one option, and the frequency decreases progressively as the multiple rating increases: this means that two options is second in frequency, three valid options come third and finally just a small number of participants considered the four options acceptable.

Most of participants declared no significative difference in meaning when they accepted more than one option. This is shown in *Tables 17, 18, 19, 20* as well as *Figures 55, 56, 57, 58*.

Frequencies for judgement									
judgement		Frequency		Percent		Valid Percent		Cumulative Percent	
No		1298		78.193		78.193		78.193	
Si		362		21.807		21.807		100.000	

*Table 17: Frequency of “yes” and “no” answers to the question “is there any difference within the selected options?” in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.*

Frequencies for judgement								
Language of the item		'(...)difference?'	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent		
Dialect		No	447	81.718	81.718	81.718		
		Sì	100	18.282	18.282	100.000		
		Total	547	100.000				
Italian		No	851	76.460	76.460	76.460		
		Sì	262	23.540	23.540	100.000		
		Total	1113	100.000				

Table 18 : Frequency of “yes” and “no” answers to the question “is there any difference within the selected options?” in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire splitting the results across the two languages.

Frequencies for judgement								
'(...)difference?'		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent			
No		480	89.720	89.720	89.720			
Sì		55	10.280	10.280	100.000			
Total		535	100.000					

Table 19: Frequency of “yes” and “no” answers to the question “is there any difference within the selected options?” in the Logudorese /Italian questionnaire.

Frequencies for judgement								
Language of the item		'(...)difference?'	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent		
Dialect		No	66	81.481	81.481	81.481		
		Sì	15	18.519	18.519	100.000		
		Total	81	100.000				
Italian		No	414	91.189	91.189	91.189		
		Sì	40	8.811	8.811	100.000		
		Total	454	100.000				

Table 20: Frequency of “yes” and “no” answers to the question “is there any difference within the selected options?” in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire splitting the results across the two languages.

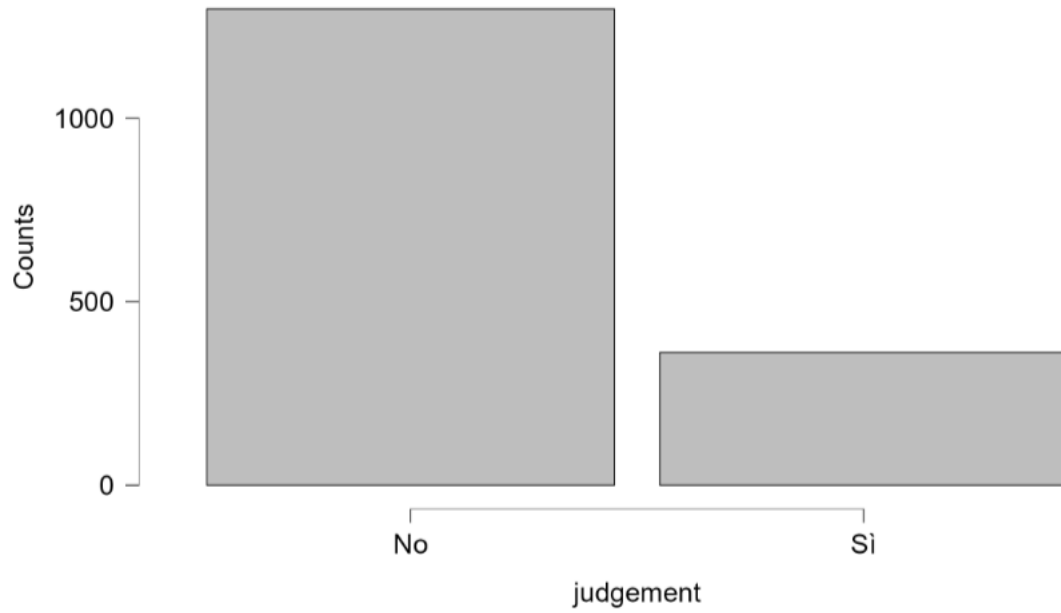


Figure 55: Barplot showing the frequency of “yes” and “no” answers to the question “is there any difference within the selected options?” in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

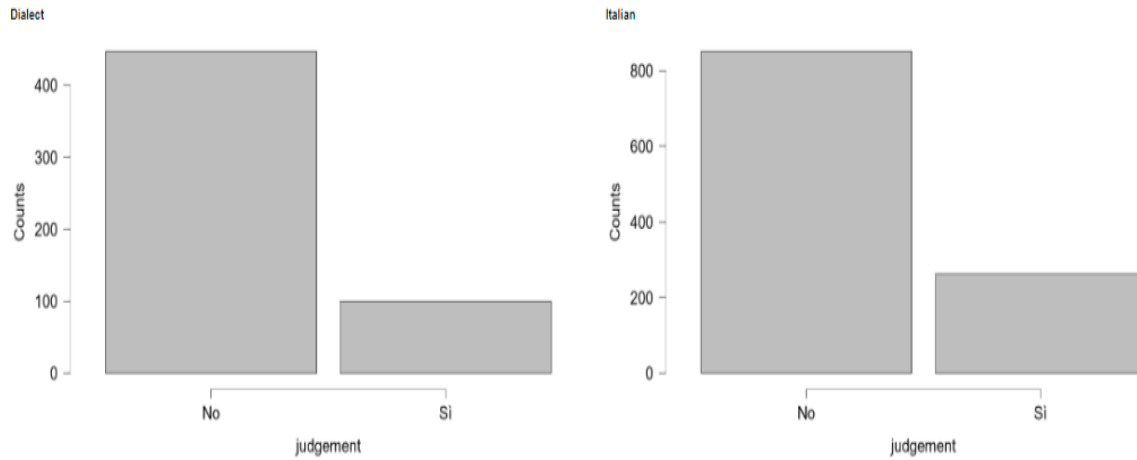


Figure 56: Barplot showing the frequency of “yes” and “no” answers to the question “is there any difference within the selected options?” in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire splitting the results across the two languages.

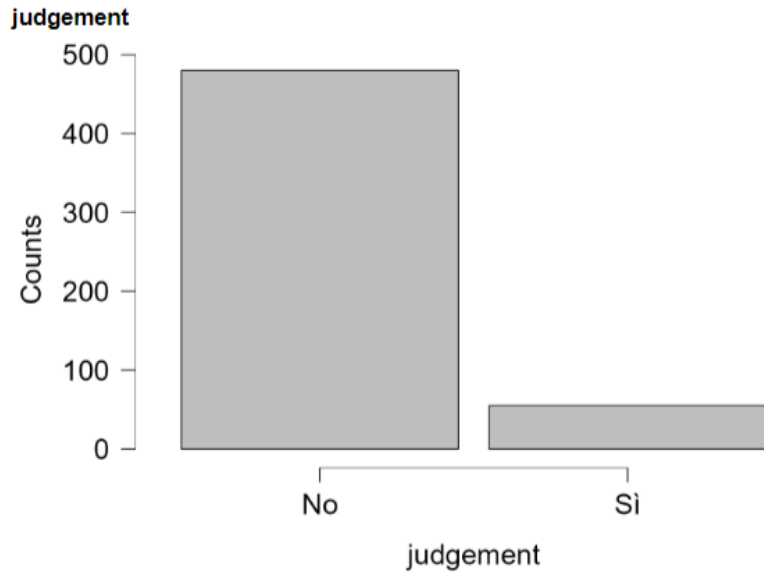


Figure 57: Barplot showing the frequency of “yes” and “no” answers to the question “is there any difference within the selected options?” in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

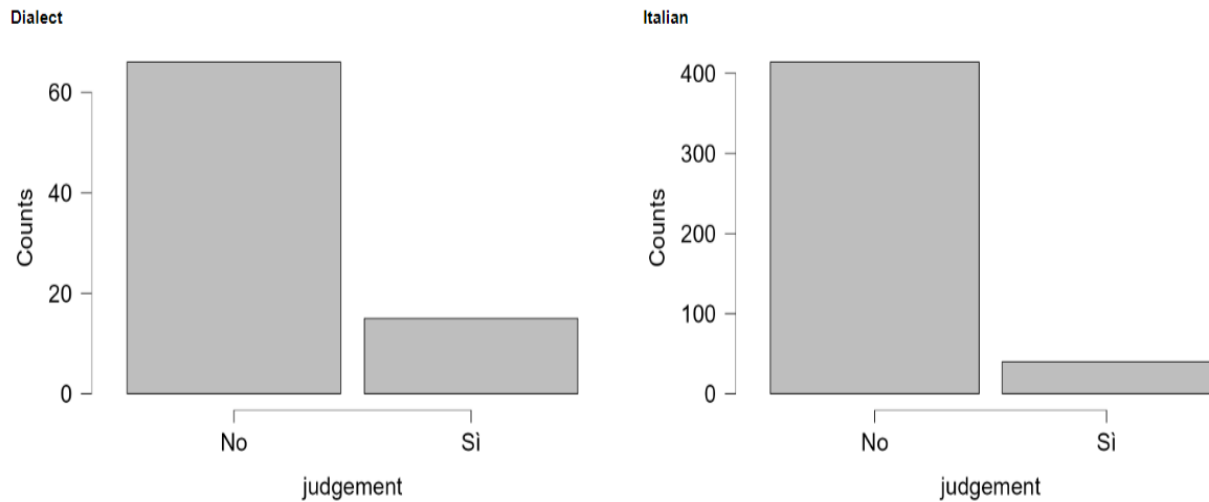


Figure 58: Barplot showing the frequency of “yes” and “no” answers to the question “is there any difference within the selected options?” in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire splitting the results across the two languages.

This is already useful data to understand whether any semantic specialization of the indefinite determiners exists. We also provide an overview of the multiple ratings that can account for the participants’ choice when more than one option was selected as acceptable.

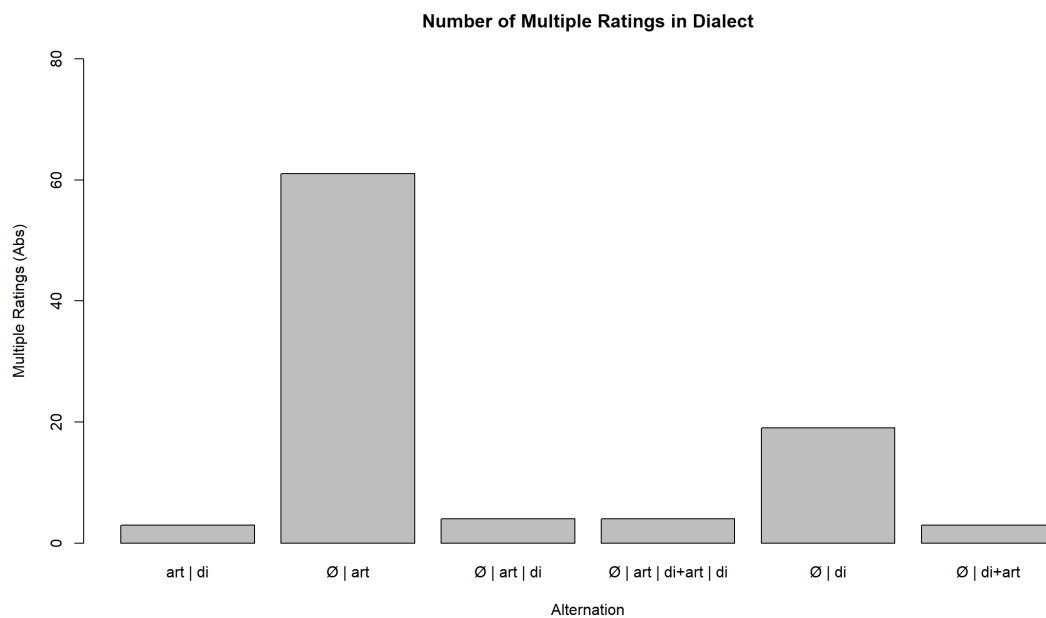


Figure 59: Frequency of multiple ratings, in dialect, in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire

With start with the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire. In the dialect, when two sentences were considered acceptable the most frequent combination is that of ZERO and ART. This was expected, as these are also the two determiners that scored the most in absolute numbers. Three times less frequent is the combination of DI and ZERO, while other double combinations such as ART and DI, any three-way combination and finally the selection of the four determiners are almost null (cf. *Figure 59*).

Let's now have a look at the different contexts. First, *Figure 60* provides a barplot of multiple ratings in the simple sentences with no dislocation (BASE), checking with the different clause traits (habitual sentences vs. episodic sentence) and the different semantic features (noun classes: mass singular nouns vs. plural count nouns).

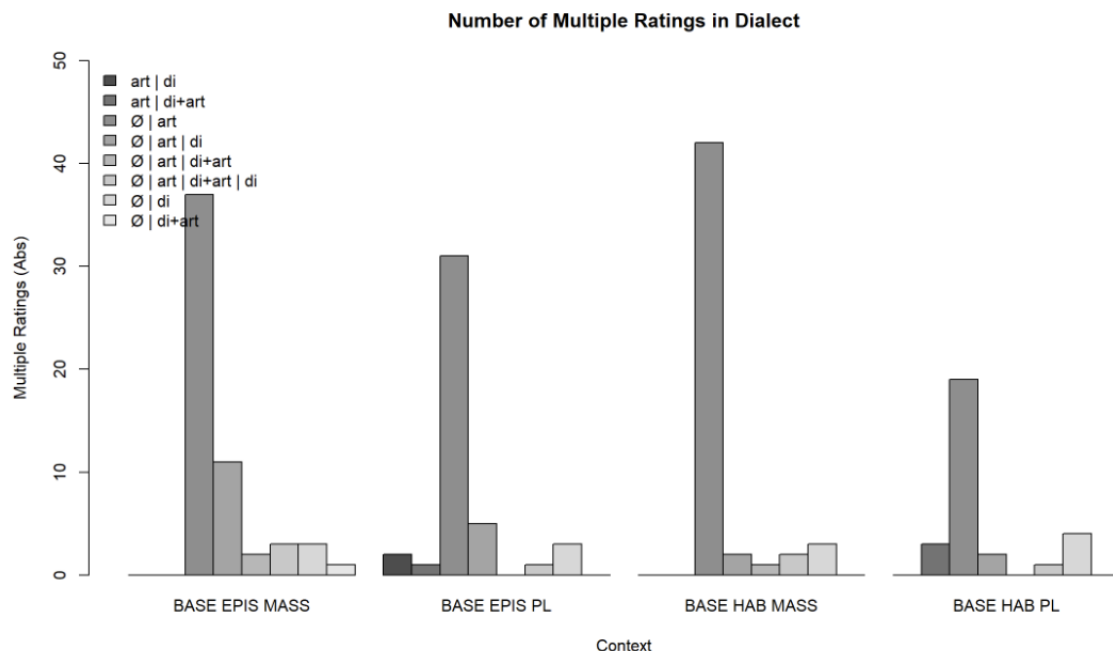


Figure 60: Frequency of multiple ratings in BASE sentences, in dialect, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

While in the four contexts, as expected, the preferred combination is that of ART and ZERO, we find fewer multiple ratings in the context of a simple habitual sentence with a plural count. Again, the second lowest context when it comes to frequency of multiple ratings is simple episodic sentences with a plural count noun. We may say that plural count nouns are less compatible with a multiple rating and display then less optionality, although we did not find in §6.2.1 a significant difference in the first choice: ART and ZERO were chosen almost with the same frequency.

Figure 61 and Figure 62 show the multiple ratings in dialect respectively in a CLLDed clause with an accusative clitic (LI) or a quantitative clitic (NE) and the different clause (habitual vs. episodic sentences) and semantic (singular mass nouns and plural count nouns) contexts.

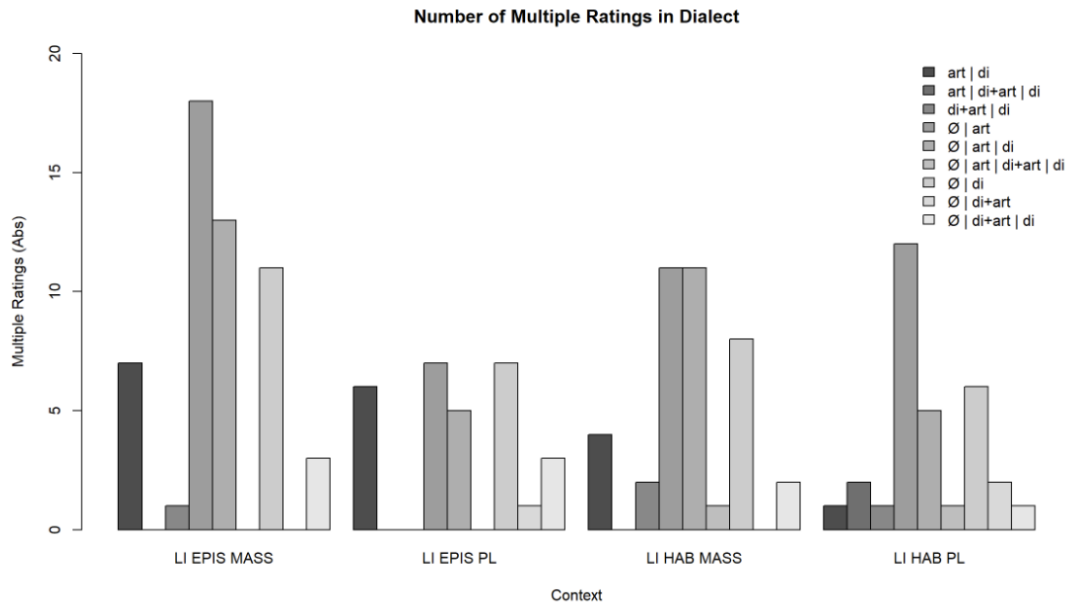


Figure 61: Frequency of multiple ratings in LI sentences, in dialect splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

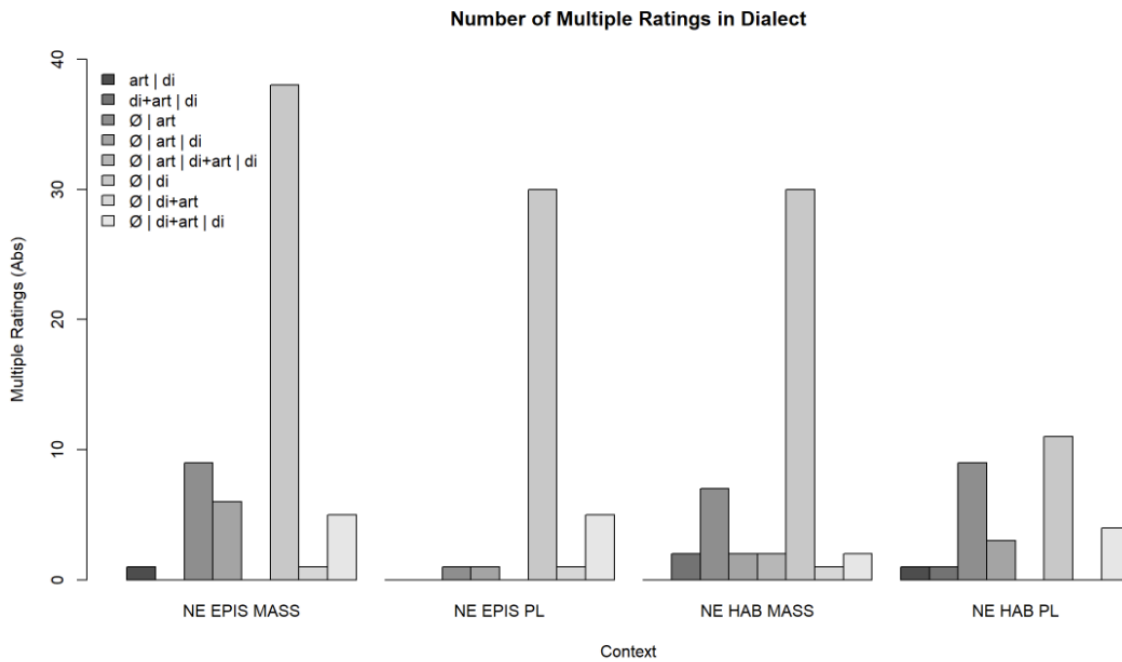


Figure 62: Frequency of multiple ratings in NE sentences, in dialect, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

The barplot in Figure 61 reflects the sparsity of the acceptability judgments we already discussed in §6.2.3 in the CLLDed sentences with the accusative clitic. Interestingly, we see that DI was mostly selected in a three-way combination with both ZERO and ART, although in some cases

also just with ART. In most cases, ART | ZERO was still the preferred combination. We do not find the same pattern we found in the BASE sentences were multiple ratings characterized mostly the sentences with a plural count noun: here it is the context of an episodic clause with mass nouns that scored the most multiple ratings overall, distancing the others. Nevertheless, no particular differences were found in the other contexts.

CLLDed sentences with a quantitative clitic (see *Figure 62*) provide a more stable and predictable context, as already seen in the acceptability judgments. In this case ZERO and DI are the preferred combination. Again, episodic clauses with a mass singular noun scored the most multiple ratings, same as the other CLLDed sentence we tested. Then, the choice of more than one option progressively decreases as we get to habitual sentences with mass nouns, episodic clauses with plural count nouns and finally habitual clauses with plural count nouns. The pattern here seems to be fewer multiple ratings with plural count nouns, the same we have seen in BASE sentences.

The Campidanese participants provided more multiple ratings in Italian than in Sardinian. This may be read as a greater freedom of selection across the different determiners in Italian with respect to Sardinian. Let us analyze each context to hypothesize a pure optionality or a specialization of some determiners.

By looking at the absolute frequency, visualised in the barplot of *Figure 63* we see that like in dialect the preferred combination is ZERO | ART, while ZERO | DI is second, with a considerably lower value. Differently from Sardinian, however, we see a rise in a three-way combination of



ZERO | ART | DI+ART, and lower but still more frequent than the others that are almost null, we also find ART | DI+ART and finally another three way of ZERO | ART | DI.

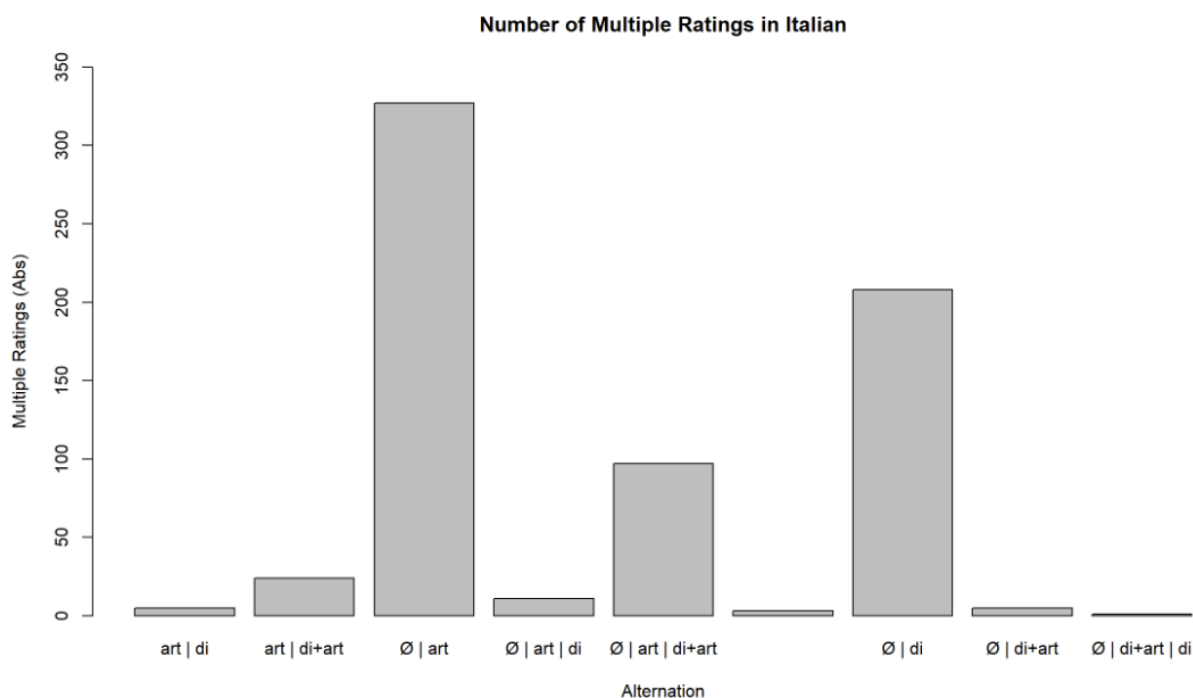


Figure 63: Frequency of multiple ratings, in Italian, in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

Let us check the different contexts rather than absolute frequencies. *Figure 64* visualises the frequency of each multiple rating in episodic clauses with mass singular on the one hand and plural count nouns on the other, but also habitual clauses with respectively mass nouns and plural count. It appears that episodic sentences provide a context, in Italian, for a wider selection of multiple choices. Particularly, the combination of ZERO | ART but also that ZERO | ART | DI+ART. While ZERO | ART is still widely chosen in the habitual sentences, ZERO | ART | DI+ART decreases significantly. Note that in absolute terms, these three determiners did not score significantly different in Italian in the single contexts.

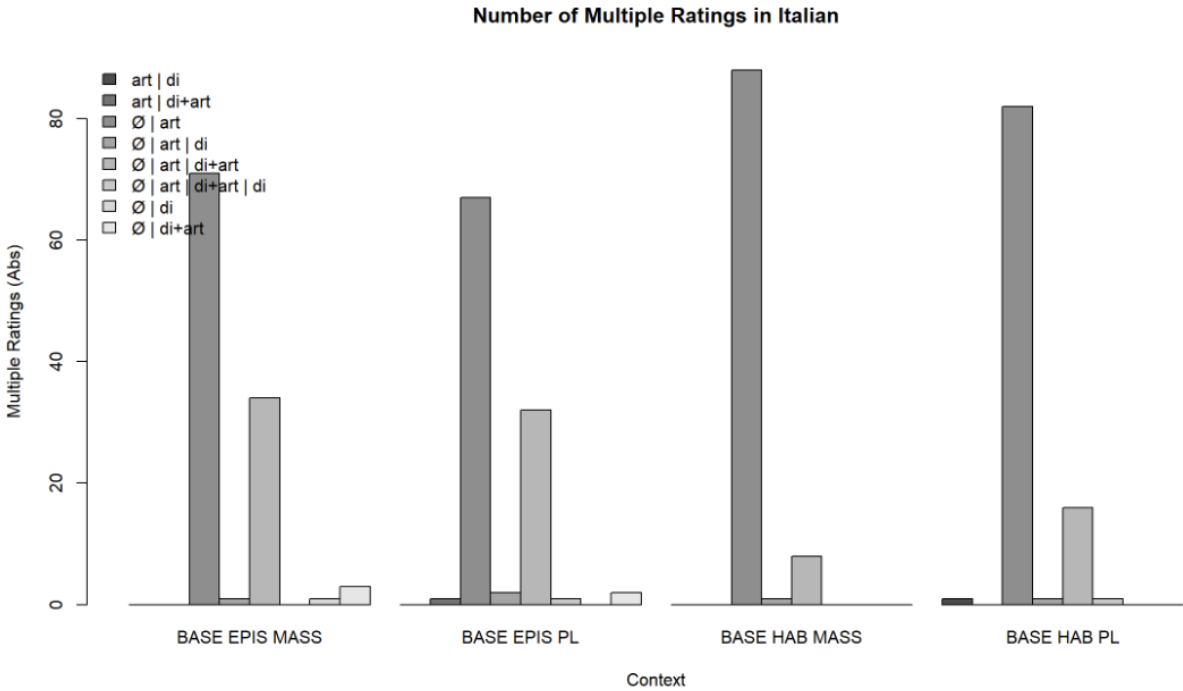


Figure 64 Frequency of multiple ratings in BASE sentences, in Italian, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

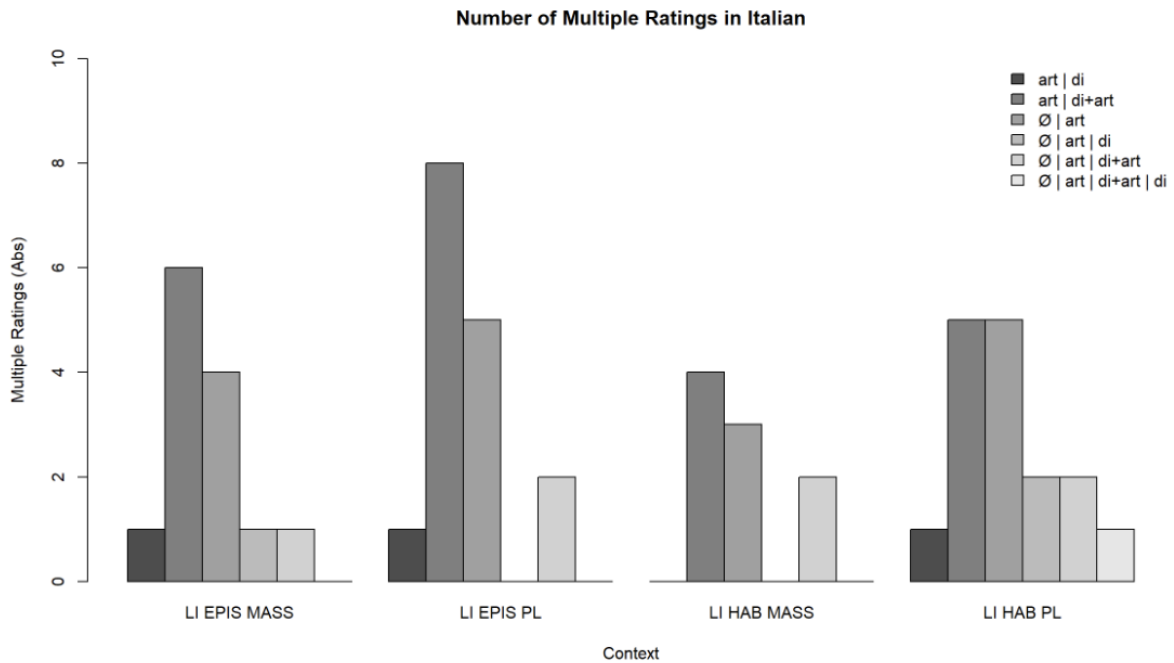


Figure 65 Frequency of multiple ratings in LI sentences, in Italian, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

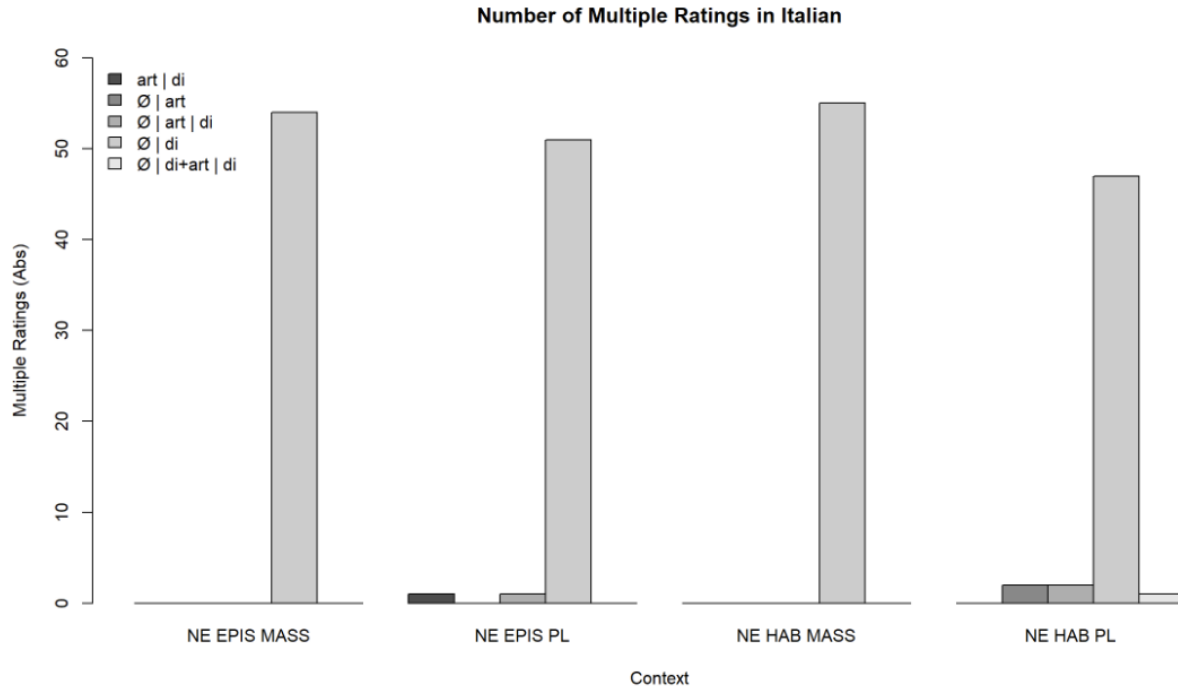


Figure 66 Frequency of multiple ratings in NE sentences, in Italian, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire.

In CLLDed sentences, we find again a first big difference with respect to the kind of clitic: in Figure 65 we see dislocated sentences with an accusative clitic (LI), that display undoubtedly much more sparse data, but also a quite significant lower frequency of multiple ratings with respect to the tidier and more frequent multiple ratings that we see for those with a quantitative clitic (NE) in Figure 66. As regards LI sentences, we notice a lower frequency of multiple ratings in the habitual clauses with mass nouns. Interestingly, ART | DI+ART appears to be the preferred multiple rating, confirming that DI+ART can appear in Italiana in such context. In NE sentences (see Figure 66), in the face of a higher frequency, we do not notice any difference related to clause or semantic context.

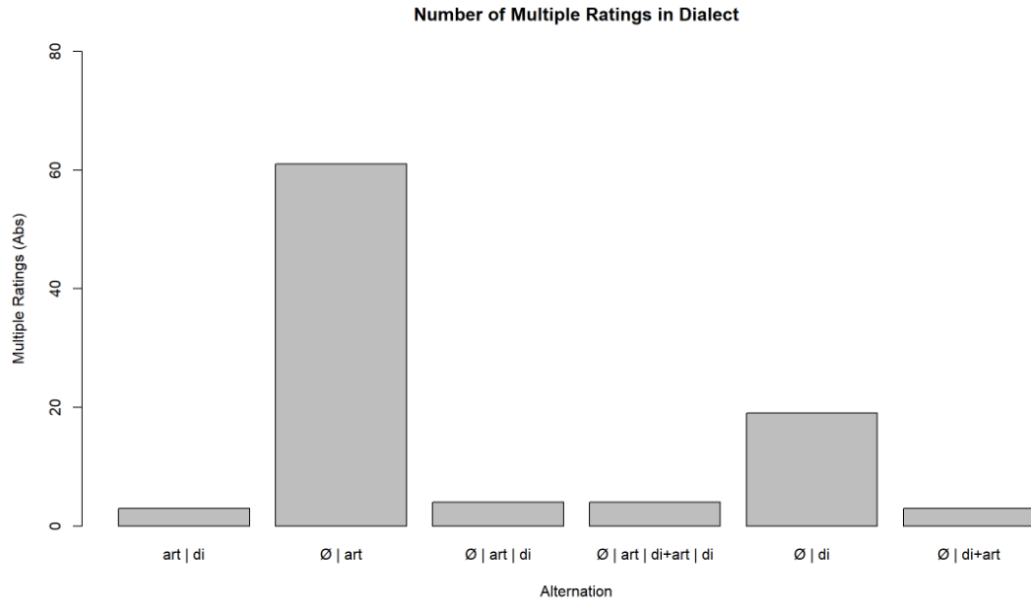


Figure 67 Frequency of multiple ratings, in dialect, in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

Given the smaller sample that took part to the Logudorese /Italian questionnaire, the overall frequency of multiple ratings in the battery of questions in dialect also decreases, as *Figure 67* shows. Interestingly, the two preferred combinations are coherent with those seen for Campidanese: ZERO | ART and ZERO | DI.

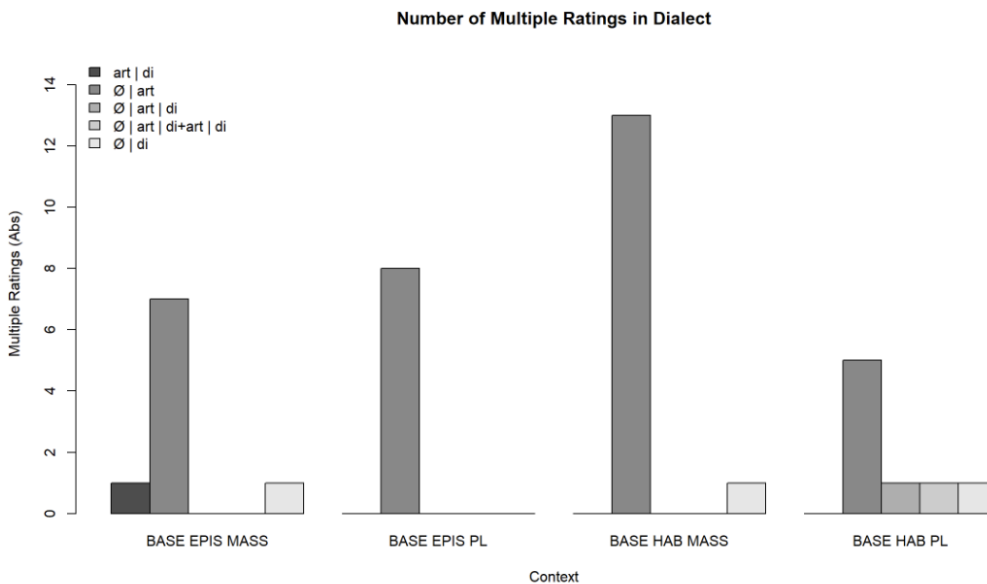
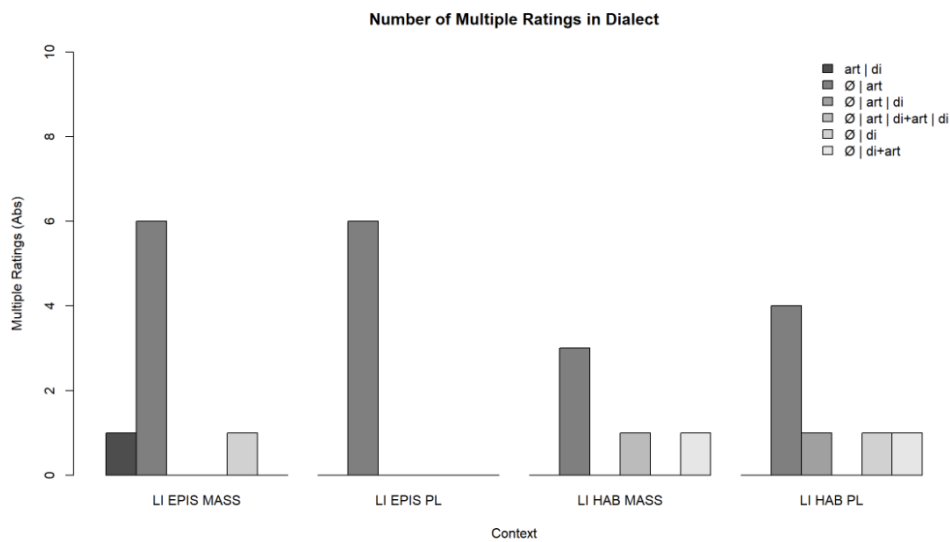


Figure 68 Frequency of multiple ratings in BASE sentences, in dialect, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

As shown in *Figure 68*, ZERO | ART is the preferred combination in BASE sentences overall, with no great difference according to the selected clause or semantic contexts (while looking at the barplot we must remember that with small numbers even one different observation may change the look of it).

In *Figures 69* and *70* we respectively see the multiple ratings for LI sentences (CLLDed with an accusative clitic) and NE sentences (CLLDed with a quantitative clitic) and the differences in semantic (noun class) and clause traits. These small numbers do not, however, allow us to discuss the results. The look of these distributions, nonetheless, seem to be opposed to those seen for Campidanese: here it is the context of NE which sees a “greater” variability.



*Figure 69: Frequency of multiple ratings in LI sentences, in dialect, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.*

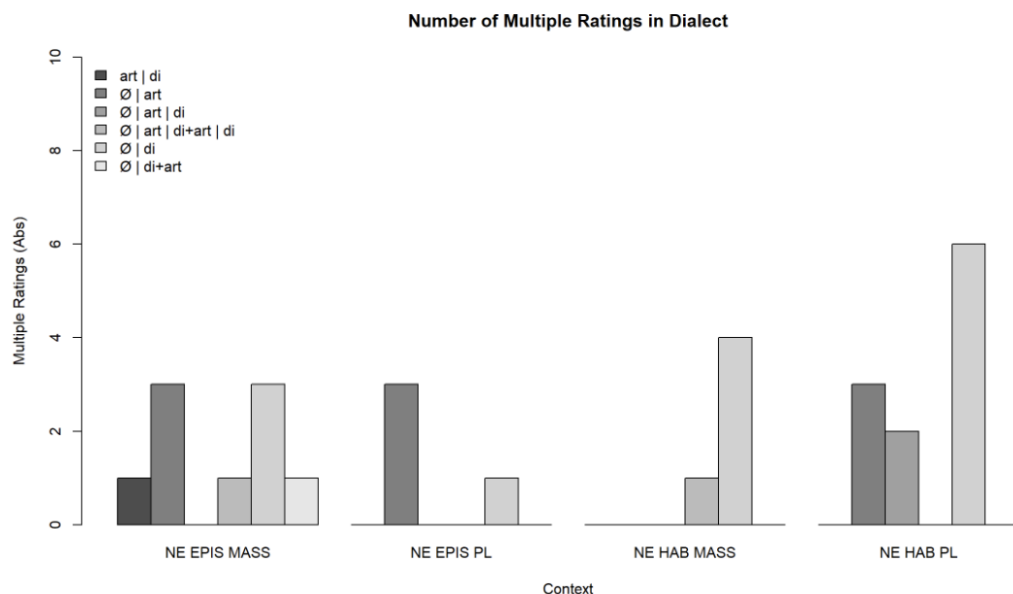


Figure 70: Frequency of multiple ratings in NE sentences, in dialect, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

Although the same number of participants took part to the two sets of questions, the overall frequency of multiple ratings in the battery of questions in Italian within the Logudorese /Italian questionnaire is considerably higher than in the dialect, as we see in *Figure. 71*. This mirrors what we have seen for the Campidanese/Italian questionnaire, that is a higher tendency towards variation in Italian rather than in Sardinian.

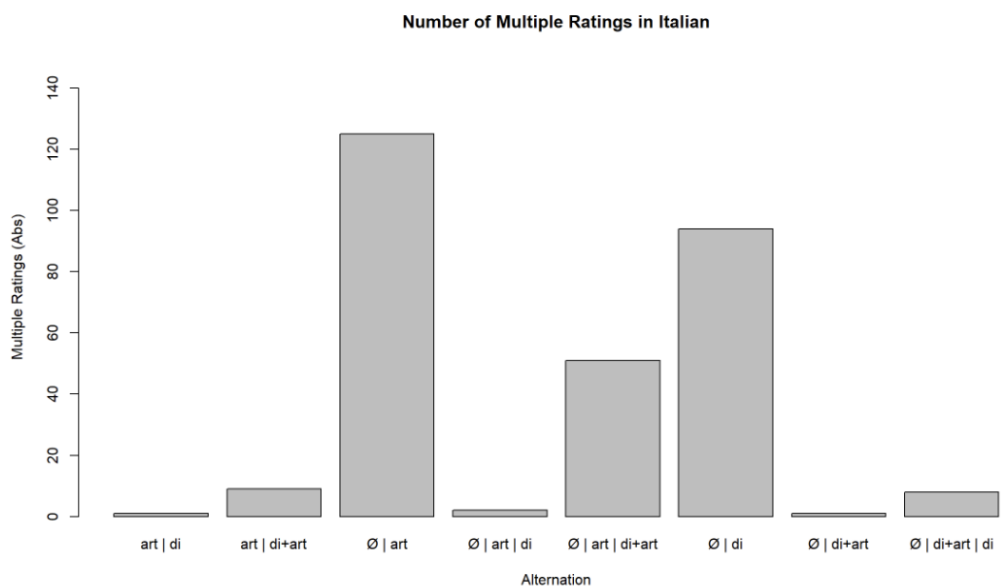


Figure 71: Frequency of multiple ratings, in Italian, in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

The distribution of these combinations of acceptability judgments also mirrors what we have seen in Italian in the other questionnaire. ZERO | ART is the preferred combination, followed by ZERO | DI. However, also speakers of the Logudorese regional Italian of Sardinia indicate ZERO | ART | DI+ART as the third choice, although the “partitive article” does not exist in Sardinian and although singularly, the determiner did not score a high frequency.

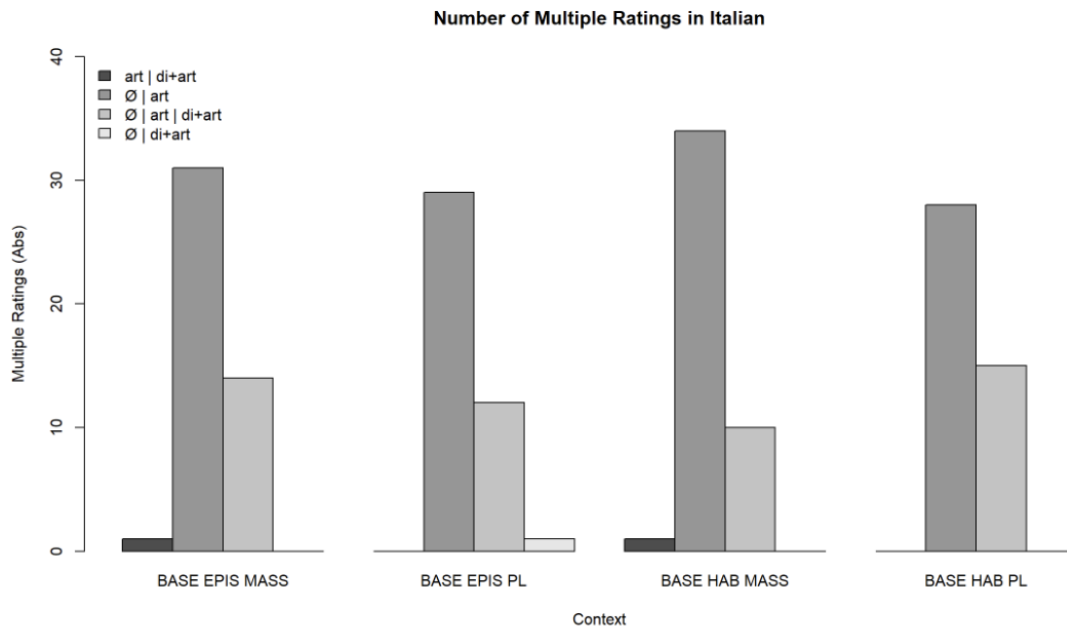


Figure 72: Frequency of multiple ratings in BASE sentences, in Italian, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

The distribution of the multiple ratings in the BASE sentences checking for the differences within habitual and episodic sentences or mass and plural nouns does not show any relevant aspect (see Figure 72). ZERO | ART and ZERO | ART | DI+ART are the preferred choices as expected.

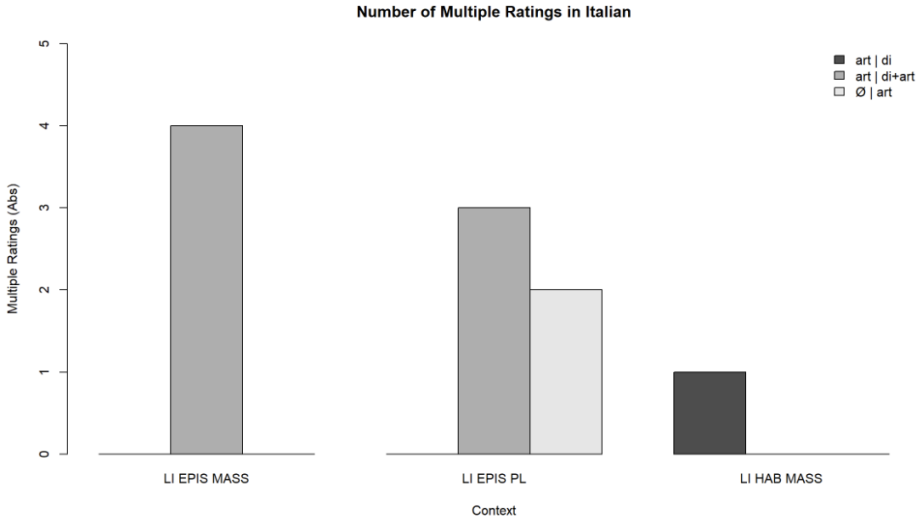


Figure 73: Frequency of multiple ratings in LI sentences, in Italian, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

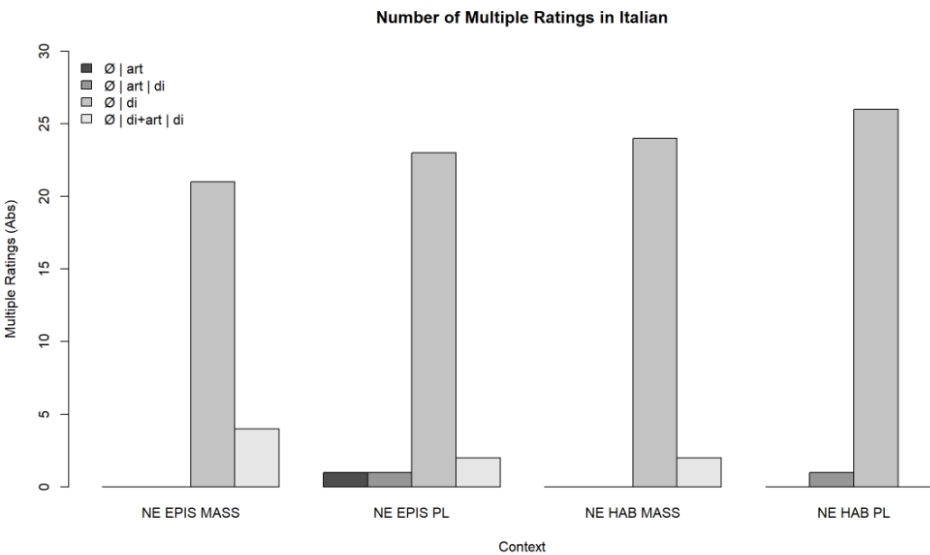


Figure 74: Frequency of multiple ratings in LI sentences, in Italian, splitting the results in the different semantic (MASS/PL) and clause features (HAB/EPIS) in the Logudorese/Italian questionnaire.

Less variability was detected in the LI CLLD context, like in the other questionnaire, and the small number does not allow generalizations. Mirroring again what was found for the Campidanese regional Italian, we find instead a greater variability in NE context (Figure 74), with the expected combination of DI and ZERO. It is interesting, however, that in the face of a lower occurrence of multiple ratings that make any generalization less effective, bilectal Italian Logudorese Sardinian speakers preferred ART | DI+ART as a combination. DI+ART can be resumed by LI in Italian (cf. Figure 73), provided that the object has a wide scope interpretation.



Let us now examine a few comments of our informants. These were written when they had to motivate a possible difference after a multiple selection of determiners, but also when they had to propose a further not listed option. Let's start with the comments in Sardinian:

- Informant 29494 (BLP 16,344) in EXP-LI-HAB-PL-ZUCCHINE” commented that ‘he would rather use the singular form of the article as a collective noun. ‘sa crocoriga...non dda bendu’.’”
- Informant 39595 (BLP 134,936) in EXP-NE-EPIS-PL-ZUCCHINE selected ART | ZERO and commented “In the first choice (ART) it is implied that I have not sold any crougette but I did not have any. In the second case (ZERO) it is more generic.
- Informant 36191 (BLP 11,804) in EXP-LI-HAB-MASS-CARNE alternatively proposed “Seu vegetariana.de peccia non dda pappu”. In EXP-NE-HAB-MASS-CARNE “Seu vegetariani. Peccia non di pappu” was proposed as an alternative.
- Informant 51534 (BLP -11,804) in EXP-NE-EPIS-MASS-VINO selected DI | ZERO | ART and declared as a difference that “‘Binu’ and ‘de binu’ sound more generic, while ‘su binu’ is specific”.
- Informant 68067 (BLP 149,823) in EXP-BASE-EPIS-MASS-CARNE selected ZERO | ART and declared as a difference that “ZERO is more generic, ART means it is something that was in the menu but I did not choose”.
- Informant 38584 (BLP 62,296) in EXP-LI-HAB-MASS-CARNE proposed as an alternative “Seu vetegariana. petza non ddi pappu”.
- Informant 52583 (BLP 92,441) in EXP-NE-EPIS-PL-BICICLE proposed as an alternative “Ariseru, biciclettas non d' appu arrangiu”.
- Informant 58759 (BLP 143,379) in LI-EPIS-MASS-FRUTTA proposed as an alternative “Ariseru de frutta non d'appu compara”
- Informant 52583 (BLP 92,441) in EXP-LI-EPIS-MASS-VINO selected ZERO and ART and declared that “ the second choice (ART) may imply that I do not drink that specific wine”.

As regards Italian, here are some interesting comments left by the participants.

- Informant 41087 (BLP 10,35) in EXP-BASE-EPIS-MASS-VINO selected ZERO and ART. He commented that “ART indicates a particular kind of wine about which the interlocutors are talking”.

- Informant 70458 (BLP 74,188) in EXP-BASE-EPIS-MASS-PESCE stated that “the sentence with the definite article (ART) refers to a fish in particular, maybe the fish that is in my fridge since days, while the other (ZERO) refers to a generic fish”.
- Informant 32329 (BLP 116,955) in EXP-BASE-EPIS-PL-FUNGHI selected ART | ZERO and stated that “ ART may refer certain mushrooms I was talking about before, while ZERO is more generic and makes me think of wild mushrooms”
- Informant 74010 (BLP 64,469) in EXP-BASE-HAB-MASS-FRUTTA selected DI+ART | ART and ZERO and wrote: “With DI+ART I refer only to some type of fruit, that is I buy some fruit but not any fruit. I avoid some type of fruit”. The same informant, in EXP-BASE-HAB-PL-GIORNALI, made the same choices and stated that “ With DI+ART I mean that I read some newspapers, but not them all”.
- Informant 75514 (BLP 94,443) in EXP-BASE-HAB-PL-ZUCCHINE considered ZERO, ART and DI+ART acceptable. He commented “ ZERO is generic, DI+ART is used when “some courgettes” is meant, while ART is used if I oppose it to other vegetables”. Non vendo zucchini è generico, delle zucchini si intende qualche zucchini, le zucchini si dice se opposto ad altri ortaggi
- Informant 95601 (BLP 151,738) in EXP-BASE-HAB-PL -ZUCCHINE selected also DI+ART and stated that “It specifies that only some of the courgettes do not get sold” and in EXP-LI—EPIS-PL-BICICLETTE that “DI+ART indicates that only some bikes have been fixed, others did not get fixed”. The same informant expressed similar comments about the use of DI+ART also in EXP-BASE-EPIS-PL-GIORNALI (“Only some newspapers have not been read”) and EXP-LI-HAB-PL-ZUCCHINE (“Only some of the courgettes were not sold”

## **6.3 Discussion**

### **6.3.1 Indefinite determiners in the regional Italian of Sardinian and Sardinian**

Respectively ZERO and ART are the first and second most acceptable indefinite determiners in the base sentences both in the regional Italian of Sardinia and in the two macro-varieties of Sardinian, that is Campidanese and Logudorese. This suggests that these two determiners express core indefiniteness in Sardinian but also in the regional Italian of Sardinia. However, while in

Italian, in both questionnaires, the acceptability of ZERO is slightly superior to that of ART, in Sardinian ZERO is far more chosen than ART. The higher frequency of ZERO also in the regional Italian of Sardinian suggests an influence of the local language over the regional Italian.

The predominancy of ZERO to express indefiniteness in Sardinian was expected considering the data of the AIS maps, as well as what is reported in traditional literature (Wagner 2001 [1950], Jones 1993). The difference of frequency displayed by the two determiners in the two languages can be explained along the lines of Cardinaletti and Giusti's (2015, 2016) proposal that the realization of different forms depends on different actualization of the Compensatory Concord that led to the unitary syntactic analysis we discussed in §4.3. Like Italian, in Sardinian the realization of the null determiner in the specifier may require Compensatory Concord, but this is not obligatory, resulting in a high acceptance rate of ZERO. In the regional Italian part of the repertoire of these very speakers, however, this Compensatory Concord may tend to be realised more often: Cardinaletti and Giusti (2018) stress that while both the grammar of local languages and Italian dispose of the same strategies, standard varieties manifest more grammatical options than local varieties.

Interestingly, in Campidanese, DI apparently almost reaches the frequency of ART. A closer look, however, shows that DI in BASE sentences (no CLLD) is marginal, almost null. The overall frequency appears higher just for the contexts of CLLD, mostly the NE ones but also LI ones (as we will discuss in §5.3.1.1.). We can therefore confirm Mensching's (2005, 2008, 2020) proposal and counterargue the idea of a 'partitive object' in Sardinian in the fashion of Wagner (2001 [1950]) or Blasco Ferrer's (1984) hypothesis. Furthermore, geographically, that construction is mostly located in areas where Logudorese is spoken.

In Italian, but not in Sardinian as confirmed by the traditional literature, DI+ART is an available option, and its frequency is higher in BASE sentences. As we will see below, it is mostly found in combination with an expected sentence feature.

Indeed, concerning the features that may influence the selection of one available determiner rather than another, in order to determine whether the variation is the result of a true optionality or a specialization of each determiner, we analysed different contexts. The initial descriptive statistics of the acceptability judgments found only slight differences in the frequency of ZERO rather than the ART in these contexts. Mostly in Sardinian, more slightly in Italian, ART is preferred with mass nouns than plural count. This result, along with very few comments of this sort left by the

informants, leads us to determine that the so called ‘collective nouns’ are not the only instance of indefinite interpretation of the definite determiner in Italian, and that their use is not as prescriptive as it may seem.

By looking at the multiple ratings, we have more insights. First, the fact that the acceptability of more than one option is more common in Italian than in Sardinian seems to confirm Cardinaletti and Giusti’s (2018) idea that standard languages allow for a greater variation, with more options available. This variation, however, seems to be mostly due to true optionality, rather than specialization of meaning, if we look at the results of our descriptive statistics. Nonetheless, an interesting and expected result arises for DI+ART in the regional Italian of Sardinia. Such an indefinite determiner is mostly compatible with an episodic clause rather than a habitual one, and the former is more compatible with a small quantity interpretation of the object. We can then argue that, although DI+ART would probably not be a first choice of Sardinian speakers in their variety of Italian, when it is used it conveys a small quantity interpretation of the noun. Also, the comments left by some informants<sup>57</sup> seem to confirm this interpretation of the so called ‘partitive determiner’ in this variety of informal Italian.

However, we must say that overall, the analysis tells us that ZERO and ART compete in both habitual sentences in the present and episodic sentences in the past, and they are both acceptable with both mass and plural count nouns. We only report some tendencies that do not rule out an optionality and do not prove a specialization of such determiners.

*Table 21* and *Table 22* below summarize, following Giusti’s (2021) Protocol, the proposal based on our observations respectively for Sardinian and the regional Italian of Sardinia.

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<sup>57</sup> See comments left by informants 74010 95601 75514 in §5.3.1.

	ZERO	ART	DI	DI+ART
Episodic sentences (past)	+	+	-	-
Habitual sentences (present)	+	+	-	-
Mass singular nouns	+	+	-	-
Plural count nouns	+	+	-	-

Table 21 Summary of the available indefinite determiners in Sardinian and their interaction with different features.

	ZERO	ART	DI	DI+ART
Episodic sentences (past)	+	+	-	+
Habitual sentences (present)	+	+	-	-
Mass singular nouns	+	+	-	+
Plural count nouns	+	+	-	+

Table 22 Summary of the available indefinite determiners in the regional Italian of Sardinia and their interaction with different features.

### 6.3.1.1 Clitic Left Dislocation

In Italian, dislocated ZERO and DI are resumed by the quantitative clitic *ne* (see §4.5.3 Table 9). This was confirmed in our data, with these two being clearly and undoubtedly the most frequent choices. In Sardinian, we also notice this same pattern: DI and ZERO are resumed by the quantitative clitic *nde/ndi* in a CLLD context.

As regards the CLLDed sentences with an accusative clitic, we must however notice some important differences between the Italian and the Sardinian data we possess. First, in Italian biletal speakers did not display an unexpected behavior. Indeed, the accusative clitic is the resumptive pronoun in a CLLDed sentence mostly for ART. The acceptability of DI+ART, expected to be possible in such constructions provided a wide scope interpretation, is as marginal as that of ZERO and DI. Nonetheless, if we look at the multiple ratings, we see that it is the first choice in combination with ART. For this reason, we can conclude that although its generalized

acceptability is marginal in regional Italian of Sardinia – and I would also add its use – mostly for the semantic implications and specializations that we discussed in §4.4.3, DI+ART’s resumptive clitic is the accusative one.

As regards Sardinian, the syntactic behavior is much sparser. If we look at other studies parallel to ours, conducted on different Italo-Romance areas, it seems that this is a general tendency also found by Procentese (2021), Arcamone (2022), Bellussi (2021). In our case, however, we see that the frequency of LI as the resumptive pronoun for ZERO is quite high, almost as high or even higher than ART. There may be a general preference of the articulated forms over the unarticled forms in CLLD, and ART would be a simple overt noun marker that fills what would be a null syntactic position. However, we do not have enough data to propose such a theory and in general Sardinian does not show any preference towards ART. Nonetheless, this may be an open issue for future research. Alternatively, and in our opinion most probably, we may think that this may be the result of a misunderstanding of the task during the experiment. The comments left by some participants<sup>58</sup> that proposed an alternative answer may also reflect this aspect. The fact that Sardinian is usually spoken rather than written, like any other local language in Italy, makes it hard to really grasp different syntactic structures. I think that the succession of negative marker and accusative clitic ‘*non dda*’, ‘*non ddu*’ may be confused, when read, with the morphology of the quantitative clitic ‘*ndi*’, creating a sort of external sandhi phenomenon. This hypothesis is also supported by the fact that ART and DI are very much more accepted in the CLLD with the accusative clitic in Campidanese.

DI+ART displays in the CLLDed sentences with a quantitative clitic even less occurrences than in the LI ones. No generalization about whether DI+ART can be resumed only by the accusative clitic in the regional Italian of Sardinia can be made, given the small difference between these frequencies.

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<sup>58</sup> Particularly, see the comments of informants 36191, 38584, 52583, 58759 in §5.2.2.

Table 22 and Table 23 provide a summary of the resumptive clitic of each determiner in CLLDed context, respectively in Italian and Sardinian.

	ZERO	ART	DI+ART	DI
LI	-	+	+	-
NE	+	-	-	+

Table 1: Resumptive clitics of the indefinite determiners in the regional Italian of Sardinia.

	ZERO	ART	DI+ART	DI
LI	?	+	-	?
NE	+	-	-	+

Table 2: Resumptive clitics of the indefinite determiners in Sardinian.

### 6.3.2 The effect of the BLP score and the sociolinguistic variables

Especially in Campidanese, but in Sardinian in general, we find that when the BLP score increases, so does the acceptability rate of ART. This may be evidence for a progressive influence of Italian over Sardinian as the dominance of the former language increases. Nonetheless, also the opposite phenomenon is found: especially in Campidanese but in Sardinian in general, we see a progressive increase of the acceptability of ZERO in Italian according to the judgments of the participants with a higher Italian dominance. In this case we cannot suppose an influence of Sardinian over Italian because such data would rather be registered in the subjects with dialectal dominance. Given that the subjects with an Italian dominance are higher in number, we may suppose that this is just a feature of the regional Italian of Sardinia, regardless of the dominance in one rather than the other language that compose the bilingual environment.

Finally, DI+ART in Italian is mostly accepted by participants with a higher BLP, hence with higher Italian dominance. We may argue that their variety of regional Italian is closer to the standard in the so-called architecture of contemporary Italian seen in §2.1.2. Indeed, the same effect can be seen in a more explicit way also in higher educational levels vs. lower ones. As regards DI, the acceptance rate is too low to comment on its distribution across the BLP.

### 6.3.4 Limitations and open questions

One of the great limitations of the results of this study is the size of the sample: we could not reach a big number of participants. Less observations obviously render generalizations weak, easily altering many of the differences in frequency of acceptable that we accordingly interpreted.

The exiguous number of participants mismatches with the great interest that the study could attract during the promotional phase of it: 712 interactions with the online questionnaires (422 for Campidanese and 289 for Logudorese) resulted in just a 25% completion rate as reported by the Qualtrics Software. Furthermore, only a few participants also decided to take part in the second part. This may be the result of not effective communication in the introduction to the questionnaire, although the link could easily be sent via e-mail. Most probably, this is the result of the duration and repetitiveness of the task expressed by many participants in the promotional channels or in person.

Furthermore, the analysis we gave of the CLLD data in §5.3.1.1, uninterpretable, may be the result of the experimental design of the task. This was supported by the evidence of some comments and may be explained through the lack of written form for dialect. Although they may possess a standardization (which is not the case of Sardinian and the most Italian local languages, at least if we intend a standardization which is shared and used by all speakers), dialects are very rarely written. The same structure has been understood as expected in Italian. This unexpected result with LI sentences was found also in other studies with a similar experimental design.



## CHAPTER 7

### Conclusions

In the present work, we studied the expression of indefiniteness in bilectal Sardinian-Italian speakers. The results tell us that, although Sardinian and the regional Italian variety of Sardinia present similarities in the paradigm of indefinite determiners, they do not overlap completely. The frequencies of acceptance of the determiners, with ZERO being more acceptable in Sardinian than Italian and ART much more accepted in the latter rather than the former variety, as well as the availability, although marginal and apparently specialized, of DI+ART in Italian, determines such differences.

As regards the nature of the variation displayed by the indefinite determiners in the whole Italo-Romance domain, and in Sardinian as well, the results support a true optionality rather than a specialisation of meaning. Crucially, this optionality appears unsurprisingly to be a prerogative of Italian rather than Sardinian. While ZERO and ART compete freely as core-indefinites, a specialization concerning DI+ART in the regional Italian of Sardinia may be proposed. Such a determiner shows a higher frequency in episodic clauses rather than habitual ones, and a small quantity pseudo-partitive interpretation according to the comments of the informants.

In CLLD, the resumptive pronouns are the expected ones as regards Italian, where we also find again more variation with respect to Sardinian. ZERO and DI are resumed by the quantitative clitic *ne* while ART and more marginally DI+ART are resumed by the accusative clitic. As regards Sardinian, expectations were partially met. As expected, DI and ZERO are mostly resumed by the quantitative clitic. Some inconsistencies with our expectations have been found in CLLDed clauses with a resumptive accusative clitic in Sardinian. Although ART scored the highest acceptance rate, also ZERO displayed a consistent preference and, occasionally, DI was selected as an option. We discussed however that this phenomenon may be caused by the experimental design rather than implying different syntactic properties.

As regards possible contact phenomena shown by the two varieties in the bilectal context, the analysis of interactions between BLP and the choice of determiners displayed controversial results. Participants with a higher Italian dominance over Sardinian considered ART to be more acceptable than the participants with a more balanced Italian/dialect dominance. One could interpret ART as an Italian feature that is more acceptable in Sardinian thanks to contact

phenomena. However, also ZERO, which is a typical indefinite determiner in Sardinian, displays higher acceptability rates with Italian dominant participants. We can nonetheless interpret the preference for ZERO, the core indefinite determiner in the regional Italian of Sardinia, as a result of the local language's substratum influence over Italian.

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