

How bare are bare quantifiers? Some notes from diachronic and synchronic variation in Italian\*

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**Abstract:** In this article we analyze the internal structure of bare universal and negative quantifiers in Italian varieties, taking into consideration both synchronic and diachronic variation. It is proposed that bare quantifiers are not standard QPs with a null DP restrictor, but deficient items where the Q-portion is paired with a classifier expressing the [+/- human]-feature, more specifically a special type of light noun. Items of this type are overtly realized in languages like English and in some Italian varieties. The overt realization of these items appears to be related to the surface position of the QP, as is crucially shown by some varieties that allow both variants. The paper also discusses some cases where these classifiers are still lexically ambiguous between a full noun and a light noun.

**Key Words:** Quantifier, Italian, Dialects, Morpho-Syntax, Classifier

### ***1. Introduction***

In this work, we focus on the internal syntax of bare quantifiers (like Italian *tutto* ‘everything’ or *niente* ‘nothing’) and show that, contrary to what is standardly assumed, their internal structure cannot be assimilated to that of complex quantified expressions. Up to now, it has been assumed that the only difference between bare quantifiers and quantified expressions is due to the fact that bare quantifiers are paired with a null pronoun, but, as we will show, the real status of the null category paired with the quantifier has not been investigated in detail. The starting point for our investigation

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is the observation that although standard Italian displays a bare quantificational form for universal quantifiers like *tutto-tutti* ‘all/everything-everyone’, and for the [–human] n-word *niente* ‘nothing’, several Italian varieties display a curious lexical parallel with English concerning the form of bare quantifiers. Like in English, the form of bare quantifiers is not necessarily bare at all, but the quantificational portion is merged with a noun similar to English *thing* or *one* marking the [+/–human] feature in a way similar to forms like *every/no/any/some-thing* versus *every/no/any/some-one*. Some of these non-standard Italian forms are represented in table 1 for universal quantifiers, table 2 for existential quantifiers and table 3 for n-words:

	<i>cosa</i> ‘thing’	<i>uno</i> ‘one’	<i>(u)omo</i> ‘man’
(Old) Tuscan and (Old) Italian		<i>ciascuno/ciascheduno/cadauno</i>  ‘each one’  <i>ognuno</i> ‘everybody’	
Milanese	<i>tuscoss</i> ‘everything’		
Old Lombard			<i>omiomo</i>  ‘everybody’
Old Genoese			<i>ognomo</i>  ‘everybody’
Old Emilian	<i>incosa</i> ‘everything’		<i>onomo</i> ‘everybody’

Table 1: Universal Qs

	<i>cosa</i> ‘thing’	<i>uno</i> ‘one’
(Old) Tuscan and (Old) Italian	<i>qualcosa</i> ‘something’	<i>qualcuno</i> ‘somebody’  <i>alcuno</i> ‘anybody’

Table 2: Existential Qs

	<i>cosa</i> ‘thing’	<i>uno</i> ‘one’	<i>(u)omo</i> ‘man’
(Old) Tuscan and (Old) Italian	<i>nulla cosa/neuna cosa</i> ‘nothing’	<i>nessuno/neuno</i> ‘nobody’	
Old Venetian			<i>nui om</i> ‘nobody’

Table 3: N-words

It is standardly assumed that full pronominal forms have an internal structure similar to the one of nominal expressions. This is explicitly argued for in Cardinaletti & Starke (1999) and has implicitly been assumed since Kayne’s (1975) discovery that Romance languages display clitic/deficient pronominal forms in addition to full ones. Our main claim will be that universal quantifiers and n-words, as well as existential quantifiers, are not paired with an entire DP, or even with a NP or some of the FPs contained in its extended functional layer, but with a much smaller structure, which only includes a classifier-like element and nothing else. According to Corver & van Riemsdijk (2001) classifiers are typically semi-lexical categories, which can be thought of as being “on the borderline of the functional/lexical dichotomy” (2001:7). Thus, there is no neat separation between functional and lexical categories, but a sort of “continuum of gradience”. In more precise structural terms, classifiers can be conceived of as light nouns similar to the ones proposed by Bayer & Brandner (2004) and Leu (2005), i.e. *ns*.<sup>1</sup> These are similar to functional elements because they have no thematic grid and are the nominal counterpart of the “v” category in the verbal domain. Hence, what we argue for is that bare quantifiers are structurally deficient as compared to quantified nominal expressions. However, this deficiency is modeled in a different way from what has been proposed for clitics and weak pronominal forms by e.g. Cardinaletti & Starke (1999).

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<sup>1</sup> Our analysis is similar to the one proposed by Leu (2005) in the sense that the category is the same. It is different because we propose that the classifier is directly inserted under ClassP, and not moved from an NP as Leu proposes.

In particular, we will argue against the representations in (1), according to which a bare quantifier (1a) is paired with a whole DP, like in complex QPs (1b), and the only difference between the two cases is that in the former the DP is not realized.

- (1) a. [QP Q [DP *pro*]]  
b. [QP Q [DP D [NP N]]]

A formal analysis of this type is assumed at least since Doetjes (1997). Baunaz (2011) devotes some discussion to previous analyses of quantificational expressions, and presents two main views on the syntax of split quantification in French. The first one, which she dubs “the adverbial approach”, sees QPs as adverbs located at the  $\nu$ P border, while the “adnominal approach” (see Sportiche 1988, Shlonsky 1991 a.o.) sees QPs as (part of) real object DPs. What is relevant for our topic is that Doetjes (1997) combines both approaches and proposes that adnominal quantifiers are extracted out of the argumental position and adjoined to the VP. This accounts for both the adverbial and the adnominal properties of quantifiers. According to Baunaz (2011:21) complex and bare quantifiers are instances of the same structure, modulo the phonological realization of the lexical restrictor.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of morphological evidence, we will argue that this is not the case and that bare quantifiers have the following structure:

- (2) [QP Q *tutto* [ClassP THING/PERSON]]

Here the quantifier is not paired with a *pro*, i.e. with a D category, but only with a special type of light noun with classifier-like interpretation, which has no further functional layers (like DP, PossessiveP, NumP or other FPs usually assumed to host adjectives in the cartographic approach). It also lacks a full-fledged lexical layer with a NP, which assigns thematic roles to its arguments. To

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<sup>2</sup> As already mentioned, this is the same implicit assumption made by other authors as well, though they do not spell it out in a structure the way she does.

empirically support our preliminary analysis, we investigate the domain of universal quantifiers and n-words, as well as existential quantifiers in Italian varieties synchronically and diachronically. Our point could, we believe, be extended to all pro-forms in general. This type of detailed investigation can only be carried out in a linguistic domain where very similar language varieties are compared, so that major syntactic properties remain stable (see Kayne 2005 for a thorough theoretical discussion of this empirical methodology which has been at the base of much recent work in dialectology). Furthermore, we will treat geographical and diachronic variation as two sides of the same coin, as is common among traditional dialectologists (see Bartoli 1945).

Our main focus is on varieties of Italian, but the analysis we propose could be extended to other linguistic domains. For instance in English lexical restrictors like *-thing/-body* expressing the [inanimate]- and the [human]-feature occur in combination with the quantifier morphemes *some-*, *every-*, *any-*, and *no-*. Considering these facts, the main question we wish to address in this work is whether a quantificational expression like *every apple* has the same internal structure as *everything*, as represented in (3a). If this is not the case, what kind of element is “*-thing*” in (3b)?

- (3) a. [QP *every* [DP [NP *apple*]]]                    [QP *every* [DP [NP *thing*]]]  
 b. [QP *every* [DP [NP *apple*]]]                    [QP *every* [XP *thing*]]

With the English case in mind, a second question concerns the relation between the overtly realized *-thing* in (3b) and the restrictor of bare quantifiers. In these cases, like in the case of Italian *tutto* ‘everything’ as opposed to *tutto il pane* ‘all the bread’, the two possible analyses rest upon the existence and possibly the nature of a null nominal companion:

- (4) a. [QP *tutto* [DP *il* [NP *pane*]]]                    [QP *tutto* [DP [*n*P [NP *RESTR*]]]  
 b. [QP *tutto* [DP *il* [NP *pane*]]]                    [QP *tutto* [ClassP *RESTR*]]

Crucially, we will provide a structural link between the presence of the light noun and the position of bare quantifiers in some Italian varieties, showing that (2) and (4b) represent the correct analysis.

In section 2, we discuss the syntax of bare universal quantifiers in several Italian varieties. In section 3, we propose an analysis that explains the observed distribution of bare and non-bare quantifiers in relation to their internal structure. In section 4, we take into account negative quantifiers. Section 5 contains some concluding remarks.

## ***2. On the special syntax of bare quantifiers***

In this section, we concentrate on a split in the syntax of bare and complex quantifiers in Italian dialects, considering both geographic and diachronic variation. We show that to the keen eye, there is much more to be said about the variation found across Romance than that the form of universal quantifiers is subject to lexical variation.

### *2.1 Modern Italian dialects (I): bare quantifiers are not bare*

If we adopt a structure like the one in (1a), where the Q is paired with a null pronoun, i.e. some type of expletive or arbitrary *pro*, the prediction is that pro-drop languages (i.e. languages that have *pro* as part of their lexical inventory) should never have an element corresponding to the *-thing* of English *something/anything/nothing* etc., but instead they should use *pro* in these cases. However, this prediction is clearly not borne out. Although Modern Southern Italian dialects are regular pro-drop languages, they generally display the same phenomenon found in English, i.e. they lexicalize the element corresponding to English *-thing*. In what follows we will refer to these items as ‘paired forms’. There are two important differences with respect to English: the plural marking and the origin of this item. While the form of the noun associated with the quantifier still corresponds to ‘thing’, as in English, it is actually plural ‘things’ in the relevant Italian dialects. Since Romance generally shows

DP-internal agreement, in some dialects (though not in all) the quantificational portion also agrees in number with the nominal one. For example, *tutti* agrees with *cosi* in (5):<sup>3</sup>

- (5) *I so frati s'addunanu di tutti-cosi* (Sicilian, Catania)  
 the his brothers REFL=are.aware of all-PL things-PL  
 ‘Her/his brothers discovered everything.’

The most widespread alternative is the one without the determiner but with agreement between the quantifier and the classifier as illustrated in (5) and (6). However, there are also cases where there is no agreement between the Q and the classifier, as in (7a), as well as cases where the classifier is preceded by a determiner, as in (7b).<sup>4</sup>

- (6) *Nun mi piacierru tutti-cosi.* (Sicilian, Acate)  
 not me=liked-PL all-PL things-PL  
 ‘I did not like everything.’

- (7) a. *Non mi piaciu tuttu còsi.* (Sicilian, Messina)  
 not me=liked-SG all-SG things-PL  
 ‘I did not like everything.’

- b. *Non mi piaceru tutti i còsi.* (Sicilian, Messina)  
 not me=liked-PL all-PL the-PL things-PL  
 ‘I did not like everything.’

Furthermore, the classifier associated with the quantifier need not necessarily correspond to ‘thing’ but can involve a second quantificational element corresponding to the *wh*-form meaning ‘how many’:

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<sup>3</sup> We do not assume that AgrPs inside the QP structure are the source of the agreement phenomenon. We believe that morphological agreement is rather the effect of a concord phenomenon active in the DP, as proposed by Rasom (2007) and Giusti (2008).

<sup>4</sup> The two examples in (7) are from two different informants.

- (8) *Mi li so      littə tuttə      quində* (Abruzzese, Arielli)<sup>5</sup>  
 me=them=am read all how.many  
 ‘I read them all.’
- (9) *L'esamə      u avonnə      superatə      tuttə quannə*(Pugliese, Bari)  
 the exam it=have-3PL passed all how.many  
 ‘Everyone passed the exam.’

Examples of this type are very frequent in the case of [human] quantifiers, which in many cases do not include a restrictor like ‘body’ or ‘person’. Such restrictors probably provide the set to which the quantifier applies, in a similar way to French *le monde* in *tout le monde*. Notice that in most cases these forms do not contain a definite article. This is already a first indication that the internal structure of bare Qs is different from the one of quantified nominal expressions, which always require an article in these contexts. In other words, in all Italian varieties forms like ‘all boys’ are ungrammatical, and the only possible variant is ‘all the boys’. At the same time, we find ‘all things’ instead of ‘all the things’ for ‘everything’.

## 2.2 Tutto ‘everything’ in Old Italian

Robust evidence for the distinction between quantified expressions and bare quantifiers comes from Old Italian, as discussed in Poletto (2014, chapter 5) and Garzonio & Poletto (2012; *to appear*). In what follows we briefly sum up the results presented there, and refer to the cited work for details regarding data and analysis. The main observation crucial to our problem here is that universal bare quantifiers corresponding to ‘everything’ and ‘everybody’ in Old Italian occupy a different position

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<sup>5</sup> Nominal agreement is not always visible, as there are dialects where the final vowel is subject to a process of centralization and is pronounced like /ə/ thereby obliterating all gender and number distinctions unless the original high vowel of the plural has produced metaphony in the tonic syllable. This varies from dialect to dialect, and we cannot provide an overview of all cases here; this problem lies outside the main goal of the present work.



than do quantified expressions. Quantified expressions generally behave as normal DPs, i.e. they occur in a VO order and can only in some cases be topicalized or focused in front of the past participle yielding the order AuxOVpart. On the other hand, bare quantifiers are always found in a AuxOVpart order, i.e. in front of the past participle and never after it. In early Old Italian<sup>6</sup> texts, an argument XP appears between the auxiliary and the past participle in a number of cases ranging from 14% to 49%, depending on the type of texts selected.<sup>7</sup> The two orders are illustrated in (10), which shows that there is variation even within a single text:

- (10) a. *Io ho tessuta una storia* VO  
 I have-1SG woven a story  
 ‘I have woven a story’ (*Pagani* 135)
- b. *i nimici avessero già il passo pigliato* OV  
 the enemies had-SBJV-3PL already the pass taken  
 ‘...the enemies had already occupied the pass.’ (*Pagani* 88)

Poletto (2014b) assumes that similar scrambling cases are the result of movement of internal arguments to the low Focus or low Topic positions in the left periphery of vP (cf. Belletti 2004). Sentences like (10b) can in this way be captured by assuming that pre-participial objects have access to this vP left periphery where they can be marked as either Focus or Topic.

- (11) [CP *che* [TP [SpecTP *i nimici*] [T° *avessero*]...[vP [FocusP [SpecFocus *il passo*]<sub>j</sub>]  
 [Focus° *pigliato*]<sub>i</sub>] [VP [V° *pigliato*]<sub>i</sub> [*il passo*]<sub>j</sub>]]]]]]

In the case of quantified objects with *tutto*, however, there is a clear split between the position of bare *tutto* and that of complex phrases containing it. The latter display the same distribution as non-

<sup>6</sup> In this work, we follow Renzi and Salvi’s (2010) Old Italian Grammar “Grammatica dell’Italiano antico”, where Old Italian is defined as the written Florentine variety between 1200 and 1350. We use the same editions of the texts as those provided in the OVI (*Opera del vocabolario italiano*) online database, which constitutes the empirical basis for the Old Italian grammar. The database and all editions can be looked up and searched at the following website: <http://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/ovi>.

<sup>7</sup> The sheer frequency of these cases shows that they cannot all be considered as resultative constructions. See Poletto (2014) for more examples.

quantified expressions.<sup>8</sup> However, when the direct, indirect or PP object is or contains bare *tutto*, it obligatorily appears before the verb (there are 23 relevant cases in the first 2000 occurrences of *tutto* in the OVI). In other words, the less common OV order is obligatory with argumental bare *tutto*. The examples in (12) and (13) illustrate these word order patterns:

- (12) a. *hannovi messo tutto loro ingegno e forza* VO  
 have=there put all their intelligence and force  
 ‘they put there all their intelligence and strength’ (*VeV* 24)
- b. *ch’egli ebbe tutto questo fatto* OV  
 that he had-3SG all this done  
 ‘that he had done all this...’ (*Tesoro* a286)
- (13) a. *e come l’à tutto perduto* OV  
 and how it=has all lost  
 ‘and how he lost it all’ (*FR* 75)
- b. *seguire Idio chi à tutto venduto* OV  
 follow-INF God who has everything sold  
 ‘(he can) follow God who sold all his possessions’ (*Fiore* 232)
- c. \*Aux – V – *tutto* (like *l’à perduto tutto*) \*VO
- d. *che sia per tutto detto* PP-V  
 that is for all said  
 ‘...that is said about everything’ (*Detto* 485)

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<sup>8</sup> Of the 34 relevant cases (clauses with a complex verbal form and no movement of the object to CP) among the first 2000 occurrences of the OVI database, 26 are VO cases, with the *tutto*-DP following the past participle, and 8 are OV cases, with the quantified expression to the left of the past participle. Almost in 25% of the cases, then, we find OV with a *tutto*-DP as object, a percentage similar to that of non-quantified objects.

A similar distribution is found also in other languages and varieties. A well-known case comes from French (Kayne 1975, §1.3), where bare quantifiers like *rien/tout/tous* are obligatorily found in a position before the past participle:

- (14) a. *Je n'ai rien/pas tout vu* OV  
 I not=have nothing/not everything seen  
 'I have not seen anything/everything'
- b. *\*Je n'ai aucun garçon/pas tout ça vu* \*OV  
 I not=have any boy/not all that seen
- c. *Je n'ai vu aucun garçon/pas vu tout ça* VO  
 I not=have seen any boy/not seen all that  
 'I have not seen any boy/all that'

However, the crucial distinction between Old Italian and French is that French does not tolerate any cases with prepositional *rien/tout* in front of the past participle, as already noted by Kayne (1975), while Old Italian does (see (13d) above). This shows that Old Italian fronted bare quantifiers cannot be treated as clitics, since clitics can never be combined with a preposition.

A comparable phenomenon that also points in the direction that bare quantifiers have a special syntax is found outside the Romance domain. The examples in (15) provide some parallel cases in Cimbrian (Grewendorf & Poletto 2005):

- (15) a. *I hon niamat gesek.* OV  
 I have no-one seen  
 'I have not seen anyone.'
- b. *\*I hon kummane sbemm gesek.* \*OV  
 I have no mushrooms seen
- c. *I hon gesek kummane sbemm.* VO

I have seen no mushrooms

‘I have not seen any mushroom.’

Bare *tutto* has kept a distinctive distribution also in Modern Italian. Even though cases like those in (13a–b) would be ungrammatical in Modern Italian, since the past participle must raise to a higher position (see Cinque 1999), there are cases where bare *tutto* appears in positions higher than other objects. First, *tutto* can precede low manner adverbs, like *bene* ‘well’ in unmarked sentences (Cinque 1999). Secondly, it can precede a post-verbal subject (Belletti 2004). The sentences in (16) and (17) exemplify this:

(16) a. *Ha fatto tutto bene.* VO-Adv

has done all well

‘S/He has done everything well.’

b. *%Ha fatto tutto il compito bene.* VO-Adv<sup>9</sup>

has done all the exercise well

c. *Ha fatto bene tutto il compito.* V-Adv-O

has done well all the exercise

‘S/He has done all the exercise well.’

(17) a. *??Capirà il problema Gianni.* VOS (Belletti 2004: ex.41a)

will.understand-3SG the problem John

‘John will understand the problem.’

b. *Capirà tutto Maria.* VOS (Belletti 2004: ex.45)

will.understand-3SG all Mary

‘Mary will understand everything.’

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<sup>9</sup> This sentence is grammatical only if *bene* is focused, while there is no special focus in (16a) or (16c).



section we show that the two observations are related, more specifically that there are dialects where the lexicalization of the nominal classifier depends on the position of the quantifier. Consider the following Sicilian examples:

(19) a. *Ha statu tuttu fattu bonu.* (Sicilian, Palermo)

has been all done well

b. *Hannu statu fattu bonu tutti-cosi.*

have-3PL been done well all-things

c. *\*Hannu statu tutti-cosi fattu bonu.*

have-3PL been all-things done well

‘Everything has been done well.’

(20) a. *N’a sta casa è tuttu pruntu.* (Sicilian, Palermo)

in this home is all ready

b. *N’a sta casa su pronti tutti-cuosi.*

in this home are ready all-things

c. *\*N’a sta casa su tutti pronti cuosi.*

in this home are all ready things

d. *\*N’a sta casa su tutti-cuosi pronti.*

in this home are all-things ready

‘In this house everything is ready.’

Palermitan Sicilian can have two forms: the ‘barest’ *tuttu* and the paired form *tutti-cosi* (with plural agreement and no determiner). However, the paired form can only be used if the quantifier remains in its argumental position after the past participle, while the barest form is used when the quantifier precedes the past participle. In other words, it seems that Palermitan Sicilian works like Old Italian, but can circumvent the obligatory movement of the bare quantifier by lexicalizing the classifier. Clear evidence that the two forms do not occupy the same syntactic position can be gathered using the by

now standard test which considers the relative position of the quantifier with respect to low adverbs (as in (19)) or predicates associated with a copular verb (as in (20)).

In (21), we provide further examples from a different Sicilian variety, where it is possible to observe the same split between *tuttu* and *tutti-cosi* in the relative order with the low IP adverb *bonu* ‘well’, which shows that *tuttu* occupies an adverbial position while *tutti cosi* does not.

- (21) a. *Sistimai tuttu bonu.* (Sicilian, Catania)  
solved-1SG all well
- b. *?Sistimai bonu tutti-cosi.*  
solved-1SG well all-things
- c. *\*Sistimai tutti-cosi bonu.*  
solved-1SG all-things well
- ‘I have solved everything well’

These data clearly show that the distinction between bare and paired forms determines the position of the quantifier. In the following, we will provide a syntactic analysis of these facts. In the next section, we explore an idea put forth by Kayne (2006) in order to explain the alternation between bare and paired forms.

### ***3. The internal structure of bare quantifiers and their position***

Up to now, we have seen that bare quantifiers (*tuttu*) can be distinguished from both complete quantified expressions and paired forms like *tutti-cosi* (or *everything*). More precisely, the distinction between bare quantifiers and paired forms can be made on the basis of two properties. The first has to do with the lexical alternation found in Southern Italian dialects. In varieties like Sicilian, bare quantifiers are sometimes as bare as an adverbial, since they lack any further morpheme and they occupy an adverbial position. At other times, however, they contain a visible nominal category inside

their extended projection. The presence of this nominal category correlates with the position of the quantifier: When it is in the adverbial position, no additional nominal category can be realized; when the quantifier is in the argumental position, then the classifier is spelled out. The second type of evidence that bare Qs and quantified expressions do not have the same internal layering is provided by the fact that the nominal category paired with bare quantifiers is not identical to the full DP of quantified expressions, as it does not display the whole functional structure of a DP (notably, in most cases there is no determiner, which should be obligatory in these varieties).<sup>10</sup> In order to account for these two facts, we put forth the following proposal: bare quantifiers are paired with a classifier-like N, i.e. a light noun (see Leu 2005), but never to a null DP-equivalent, i.e. a structure like (22c) with a *pro* does not exist:

- (22) a. [QP *tutto* [ClassP THING]]  
 b. [QP *tutto* [DP D° ...[NP N]]]  
 c. [QP *tutto* [DP *pro*]]

One can imagine the Classifier projection in (22a) as being a sort of light noun, a little ‘n’, similar to ‘v’, i.e. a very low semi-functional category, which only expresses the feature [+/-human] but has no real lexical content. The distinction between bare quantifiers (22a) and quantified expressions (22b) can thus be formalized as a structural weakness, as originally proposed by Cardinaletti & Starke (1999), but with the following difference. Bare quantifiers are not weak in the sense that they only lack the highest functional portion, which has been “pruned” from the internal syntactic structure of the *pro*-form, as proposed by Cardinaletti & Starke. In our view, what bare Qs lack is the whole functional spine of DP/PossP/NumP, and crucially also the real thematic part, NP, i.e. the lowest

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<sup>10</sup> The cases like *tutti i cosi*, with the determiner, show that for some speakers the classifier is not completely grammaticalized and still maintains some DP properties. These cases can be considered as instances of an intermediate stage in the grammaticalization process, where the quantifier is merged with a DP containing only the determiner and the classifier:

(i) [QP *tutti* [DP *i* [ClassP *cosi* ]]]

From this point of view, then, these cases are similar to the negative items we discuss in the next section.



lexical portion of their internal structure.<sup>11</sup> In a sense, bare Qs contain “imploded” nominals, which barely spell out the most basic features necessary to have an existential and nothing more.

To explain why the classifier is sometimes lexically present and sometimes not, and why its presence is related to the adverbial vs. argumental position of the quantifier, we propose an analysis in terms of Kayne (2006). He proposes that XPs are lexically null if they are located at the edge of a phase, while they have to be spelled out if they are not on a phase edge (2006:36). This allows us to explain why the same quantifier has two different forms depending on its position. If the bare quantifier remains in its argumental position, there is no deletion, as the quantifier is not inside a phase edge. This position is where bare quantifiers are always found in languages like English; in English, there is no movement of the bare quantifier outside the argumental position, and the classifier is always expressed. It is also the case in examples like (19b) and (20b) in Sicilian above, where the quantifier is in its argumental position, as shown by the post-participial position, and the classifier is spelled out.

Notice, however, that in the Romance languages, the completive aspectual projection (ComplAspP) singled out in Cinque (1999) can trigger movement of the universal bare quantifier, which carries the completive aspect feature, by means of the usual probe-goal mechanism. However, since ComplAspP is located in a higher phase with respect to the bare quantifier inside the  $\nu$ P, it cannot directly probe inside the  $\nu$ P, but only to its edge, as an effect of the Phase Impenetrability Condition. This means that the QP cannot raise directly to SpecComplAspP, but has to move first to the edge of the  $\nu$ P in order to be probed by ComplAsp. From the edge of  $\nu$ P, the bare quantifier can be probed by ComplAsp, which, however, looks for a completive feature, i.e. the feature of the quantifier portion of the QP, not of the classifier associated to it. ComplAsp will therefore crucially only attract the quantifier portion, leaving the classifier behind. Hence, only the quantifier moves to

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<sup>11</sup> Notice furthermore that several authors have proposed that *pro* does not exist and the null subjects are due to an incorporated pronoun into the verbal head. (see a.o. Manzini & Savoia 2005). If this is correct, a structure like (22c) becomes even less plausible.

the adverbial position in the low IP area. The classifier remains trapped in the edge of the  $\nu$ P and is therefore not spelled out (following Kayne 2006). The derivation proceeds as follows:

- (23) a. [ComplAsp... [ $\nu$ P [VP [QP *tutto* [ClassP THING ]]]]]  
→ movement of the whole QP with the classifier to the edge of  $\nu$ P
- b. [ComplAsp... [ $\nu$ P [QP *tutto* [ClassP THING ] ] [VP [QP ~~*tutto*~~ [ClassP ~~THING~~ ] ] ]]]  
→ movement of the QP to ComplAsp leaving the Classifier behind in the  $\nu$ P-edge
- c. [ComplAsp [QP *tutto*]... [ $\nu$ P [QP ~~*tutto*~~ [ClassP THING ] ] [VP [QP ~~*tutto*~~ [ClassP THING ] ] ]]]

This derivation correctly derives the empirical generalization noted above that the classifier is lexically spelled out only when it remains inside the  $\nu$ P, but is never spelled out when the quantifier moves to the aspectual space of the clause (which must crucially be located higher than the  $\nu$ P edge, as already proposed by Belletti 2004).

There are, however, two problems that arise if we assume a derivation like the one in (23). The first one is why only the quantifier portion and not the whole [Q+classifier] can move to SpecComplAspP. The explanation is that only the Q portion of the QP has the completive feature, not the classifier, which actually qualifies the bare Q as an argument, and as such cannot go up to an adverbial position. Hence, the nominal part of the quantifier must remain stranded in the  $\nu$ P edge.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Notice that when the QP corresponds to a PP, the preposition cannot be left stranded in the  $\nu$ P edge, but is pied-piped with the bare quantifier to SpecComplAspP. In other words, it is impossible to extract only the quantifier out of the complex. If we assume the analysis of universal quantifiers proposed by Giusti & Leko (2005), this follows straightforwardly. They propose that some quantifiers (like universal ones) are not located in a specifier of the functional extended projection of the DP, but are heads that select the DP as their complement. In our case the QP is not paired with a DP, but with a  $n$ P. If this is the case, the quantifier cannot be subextracted unless there is first movement of the classifier outside of the QP and then movement of the remnant, which must crucially contain the quantifier but also the preposition. The movement is represented in (i):

- (i) a. [XP [PP P [QP *tutto* [ClassP THING ]...]]  
→ movement of the classifier to SpecXP:  
b. [XP THING [PP P [QP *tutto* [ClassP THING ]...]]  
→ movement of the PP into the SpecCompl AspP:  
c. [ComplAsp [PP P+ *tutto*]... [ $\nu$ P [XP [ClassP THING ] [PP P+ ~~*tutto*~~ [VP [PP P+ ~~*tutto*~~ [ClassP THING ] ] ] ]]]

Given that THING is moved outside of the Q but is still inside the edge of the  $\nu$ P, it is not pronounced, leaving the remnant containing *tutto* and the preposition free to move to the adverbial position

The second problem is that the nominal classifier could in principle be stranded *in situ*, i.e. in the argumental position, in which case, we would obtain cases of non-canonical quantification similar to those of split-DP structures, a phenomenon that exists in Romance and has been first identified by Kayne (1975) and discussed more in detail by Obenauer (1994) and much subsequent work (see a.o. Mathieu 2002, Baunaz 2011). An example of split-quantification is provided in (24) for French:

- (24)            *Combien*    *as-tu*            *peint(\*es)*            *de*    *chaises?*  
                   how.many    have=you    painted(+FEM.PL)    of    chairs?  
                   ‘How many chairs have you painted?’

Several languages display constructions like these. The fact that they exist in French makes the problem even more cogent to our analysis, as (24) shows that Romance in principle also allows for split-DPs. Notice, however, that if we split the classifier from the QP, what we obtain is not a DP-split, as the category combined with the bare quantifier is not a DP, as already shown above on the basis of Sicilian. Recall that the absence of the determiner (and in some varieties also of agreement) shows that the projection headed by *cosi* cannot be a DP. This means that the remnant resulting from extraction of the quantifier could not be identified as a fully-fledged argument and cannot surface in an argument position. However, it can remain stranded in the  $\nu$ P edge, because that position is not an argumental position and does not require a fully-fledged DP.

Therefore, we assume that a split-DP cannot originate through movement of the quantifier because the remnant does not qualify as a full DP. On the other hand, the whole [quantifier + classifier] cannot be moved to the adverbial position, because adverbial positions do not contain internally merged complex DPs. The only option left in languages where ComplAsp probes into the edge of the lower  $\nu$ P phase is then the following: the classifier must be stranded in the  $\nu$ P edge, as it cannot be carried along to an adverbial position like SpecComplAsp with the Q but it cannot be left *in situ* as a real argument either.

This analysis is actually rather similar to the proposal by Bayer (2009). Bayer, too, argues that arguments and adverbial usages of bare quantifiers are related. He further claims that negative adverbs originate in the object position and then move to an adverbial position. We believe that he is correct in assuming a relation between the position of arguments and adverbial positions. However, in the case of Romance, this relation goes in the opposite direction. It is not the adverb that originates in an argumental position, it is the argument that moves to the adverbial position and by doing so, must be split from its light nominal companion. Furthermore, this analysis provides an insight into the problem, which has not been solved up to now, of why an argument can occupy the position of an adverb. In our view, it is only the quantifier portion that raises to ComplAspP, because it is the only element that carries the completive feature. Its light noun companion remains silent, because it is trapped in the edge of the  $vP$  phase.

#### ***4. The case of negative quantifiers in Old Italian***

In this section we add n-words to the picture, considering mainly Old Italian data. We will apply the same derivation seen above to negative Qs, and thereby show that the functional/operator layer of the internal structure of quantifiers can be complex. This means that there is a third functional layer inside bare Qs, not only the Q and the classifier. We concentrate here on the opposition between the two forms corresponding to ‘nothing’ *niente* (and its variants *neiente* and *neente*) and *neuna cosa*. The latter is formed by the adjectival form *neuna* ‘no,’ which agrees with the classifier *cosa*, literally ‘thing’. Following our analysis of universal quantifiers, the first hypothesis is that the alternation between *niente* and *neuna cosa* must depend on the position of the n-word.

Just like *tutto*, *niente* displays an adverbial usage, which is also clearly compatible with the presence of an object, as shown in (25b–c), while in (25a) it appears with a reflexive verb:

- (25) a *Elli non si spezzerebbe niente...*  
 it not REFL=would.break-3SG nothing  
 ‘It would not break at all’ (*Tesoro* 11)
- b *Molte cose disserodi che non mostrano niente la veritade...*  
 Many things said-3PLof which not show-3PL nothing the truth  
 ‘They said many things about which they did not show the truth at all’ (*Tesoro* b53)
- c. *Che no la pò om neiente fugire...*  
 that not=it=can-3SG man nothing flee  
 ‘that a man cannot avoid it at all’ (*C. Davanzati* XI, 45)

However, bare argumental *niente* does not seem to have the same position as bare *tutto*, as it does not have to precede the past participle. Contrary to *tutto*, it can display a VO pattern, as shown in (26), along with the expected OV pattern illustrated in (27).<sup>13</sup> The following examples illustrate the two possible orders:

- (26) a. *ch’io non t’ho tolto neente* VO  
 that I not you=have-1SGremoved nothing  
 ‘that I have taken nothing from you’ (*Nov.* LXXII, 294)
- b. *dell’ avere d’Atene fu trovato niente?* VO  
 of.the possessions of Athens was found nothing  
 ‘...was anything from the goods of Athens discovered?’ (*Merlino* 48)
- c. *...l’altre parti della diceria, delle quali non è detto neente...*

VO

<sup>13</sup> Notice that adverbial *niente* is higher than manner adverbs in the low IP:

(i) *Sì no lo potero niente bene schifare*  
 thus not it=could-3PL nothing well avoid.inf  
 ‘They couldn’t dodge it well at all’ (*Binduccio* 574)

the other parts of the message of the which not is said nothing

‘...the other parts of the message, about which nothing is said...’ (*Rettorica* 142)

(27) a. *Il mercatante non mi insegnò neente: no lli era  
neente tenuto OV*

the merchant not=me=taught nothing not=him was  
nothing obliged

‘The merchant taught me nothing, and nothing was due to him.’ (*Nov.* VII, 144)

b. *Non avea neente perduto OV*

not had-3SG nothing lost

‘He lost nothing’ (*Seneca* 17)

c. *Sì che non era nostra intenzione essere che ce ne sia neente  
renduto OV*

so that not was our intention be-INF that us=of.it=is nothing  
given.back

‘So that we did not want that anything of it would be given us back’ (*Giachino* 17)

These facts clearly show that *niente* can remain in the argumental position in the VP. In Garzonio & Poletto (*to appear*), we hypothesize that in Old Italian, *niente* is still ambiguous between an interpretation as a single morpheme and a composition of *ne* + *ente* (possibly meaning ‘thing’, from Latin *entem*).<sup>14</sup> In the latter case, it includes a lexical classifier, and it can therefore not move to the aspectual field. According to this proposal, then, there are two possible analyses for the internal

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<sup>14</sup> The etymology of *niente/neente/neiente* suggests that the element is complex, as it consists of a negative morpheme *ne(c)* plus an item that could derive from:

a) *ente(m)*, lit. ‘thing’;

b) *inde* ‘from there’;

c) *gente(m)* ‘people’.

We will not attempt to resolve this etymological problem here.

structure of the item *niente*, one which contains a lexical classifier, which is used for the argument, and one which does not contain it and is used for the adverb:

- (28) a. [NegP *ni* [ClassP *ente* ]]  
b. [NegP *niente* ]

As discussed above, the internal morphological makeup of the adverb can only be of the second type, as adverbs cannot be paired to any sort of nominal category, not even a functional one like the classifier *-ente* meaning ‘thing’. The difference between *tutto* and *niente* is thus clear: *tutto* alone can never be analyzed as containing a lexical classifier, hence it can only occur in the adverbial position yielding OV order.

Interestingly, Old Italian also displays the possibility to have *neuna cosa* instead of *niente* in cases where modern Italian would simply use *niente*. However, *neuna cosa* is not attested as an adverb, i.e. it does not occur in examples like (25). This confirms our hypothesis that the aspectual field in the IP layer can only attract bare quantifiers and not quantifiers that contain any nominal element like a classifier (or even a whole DP), as we have shown in (23).

In order to analyze the differences between *neuna cosa* and *niente/neente/neiente* we also have to take into consideration the preverbal space. The choice between *niente/neente* and *neuna cosa* is clearly related to their position in the clause. In general *niente/neente* is rarely found before the inflected verb (in pre-Aux position). If we restrict the search in the Old Italian corpus to the texts before 1300, there are only 11 cases of bare *neente* in preverbal position against 80 of *neente* in postverbal position. The form *niente* displays approximately the same rate: there are 11 cases of preverbal *niente* over 75 cases of *niente* in postverbal position. The preverbal cases of *niente* all seem to be cases where *niente* is focused, not cases where *niente* is in the preverbal subject position.<sup>15</sup>

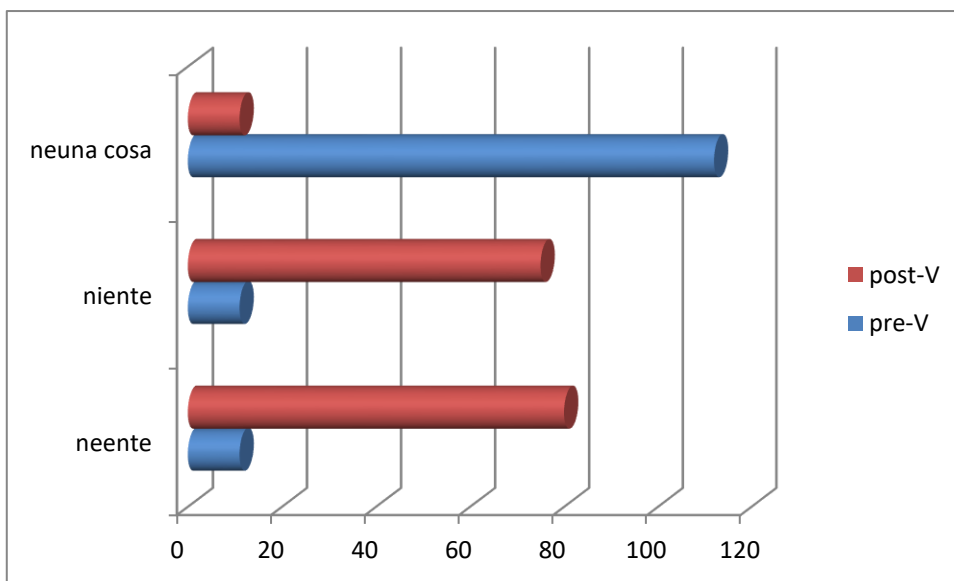
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<sup>15</sup> Old Italian was a V2-like language where FocusP had to be filled in all main clauses (see Benincà 2006, Poletto 2014).

- (29) a. ...*e niente poteva acquistare contro a quel popolo*  
 and nothing could-3SG gain.inf against to that people  
 ‘...and he could not gain anything against those people’ (*Nov. XXXVI, 210*)

On the other hand, *neuna cosa* is almost exclusively preverbal up to the beginning of the 13th century: In the corpus there are 64 cases of preverbal *neuna cosa* without negative concord and 48 cases of preverbal occurrences with negative concord, for a total of 112 cases. There are only 11 postverbal occurrences.

Figure 1. The position of negative quantifiers in Old Italian before the XIVc.



The exceptions to the rule of having *niente* in postverbal position and *neuna cosa* in preverbal positions can all be explained by the fact that Old Italian had two Focus positions. There was a high one in the CP layer and a low one at the edge of the  $\nu$ P layer. When an element normally found after the verb was focused (like a direct object), it could appear in the preverbal Focus position, while items normally found before the verb could surface in postverbal position, if located in Focus (see Poletto 2014 for a detailed discussion of this structure).



(30) [ ForceP [ TopicP [ FocusP *niente* [ FinP [ TP ... [ AspP ... [ vP [ TopicP [ FocusP *neuna cosa* [VP ]...]

The following case shows that postverbal *neuna cosa* is clearly related to Focus, since it is contrasted with *dodici vergati di guanto*:

(31) *Non si ricorda che gli facesse recare neuna cosa da*

*Sant’Omieri*

not refl=remembers that to.him=did-3SG bring.inf no thing from S.

O.

*se nno dodici vergati di Guanto...*

if not 12 vergati di Guanto

‘He does not remember that he had to bring anything from S.O. if not 12 *vergati* of

Ghent fabric’ (*C. de Cerchi Inghilterra* 597)

Thus, we can factor out cases of postverbal *neuna cosa* and preverbal *niente/neente* as involving movement to Focus positions. This leaves us with the generalization that *niente* cannot be used as the preverbal subject, whereas *neuna cosa* is predominantly used as the preverbal subject.

(32) *Niente* is never found in the preverbal subject position

We surmise that the explanation for this pattern is that in Old Italian, the preverbal subject position has topical properties, as proposed in Rizzi (2007) for Modern Italian. Therefore, it cannot contain a bare quantifier, which is only paired with a classifier, but must include a proper lexical restrictor, i.e. a real lexical noun with a fully-fledged functional structure. The presence of a DP projection is crucial, assuming that the DP-layer is the place where referentiality is encoded. A DP-layer is necessary for

the subject also under the view that the inflected verb has to carry D-features, which *bare* QPs do not have on our account. This means that Old Italian *neuna cosa* is not the counterpart of *tutticosi* in modern Southern Italian dialects, where the element *cosi* is a classifier. In Old Italian the element *cosa* can still be a real lexical restrictor on a par with any other lexical noun. So, just like *niente* is ambiguous between two readings, *neuna cosa* is also ambiguous, though not in the same way, but in the one illustrated below: *cosa* can either be a classifier or a real DP, i.e. (33b) is exactly the structure of a quantified nominal expression, not the one of a bare QP.

- (33) a. [NegP *neuna* [ClassP *cosa* ]]  
 b. [NegP *ne* [DP [D *una*] [N *cosa* ]...]

To sum up, *niente* and *neuna cosa* have a possible structural analysis in common, but *niente* can also be interpreted as the ‘barest’ case without the classifier (like an adverb), while *neuna cosa* can also be read as a complex QP which takes a normal DP as its complement. In the latter case, the D position is occupied by the indefinite article *una*. Therefore, *neuna cosa* can occur in subject position.

There are two arguments in favor of this ambiguity: the first is that the element *neuna cosa* is clearly not perceived as a single word in Old Italian, as there can be elements intervening between the two (while this is not the case in modern Italian dialects, or in English). In the following example we have *neuna altra cosa* meaning ‘nothing else’, but literally ‘no one other thing’:

- (34) *Per neuna altra cosa veggiamo che...*  
 for no other thing see-1PL that  
 ‘We see that (...) by no other thing’ (*Vegezio* 6)

The second argument is that it is possible to find *cosa* in cases of quantifier float, where *neuna* remains stranded with respect to the noun:

(35) *è cosa in questo mondo neuna ke tti piaccia?*<sup>16</sup>

is thing in this world not-one that you=likes

‘Is there anything in the world that you like?’ (*Disciplina clericalis*)

In section 2, we noted that quantifier float is never found with a light noun in the modern Italian dialects that have an overt classifier of the *tutticosi* type. We have proposed that this is due to the fact that the classifier paired with the quantifier is not a complete DP, hence not a fully-fledged argument and cannot be left in an argumental position. This means that cases like (35) must be examples of complex quantified expressions with a real lexical head noun *cosa*.

Notice furthermore that it is possible to have *cosa* in front of the quantifier, with *cosa* having presumably raised to the Spec of the Q.<sup>17</sup> In Old Italian this is a general option for all nouns, as (36b) shows:

(36) a. *se tra queste à cosa neuna che tti piaccia*

if among these has thing no-one that to.you=likes

‘...if there is anything you like among these things’ (*Disciplina clericalis*)

b. *e sanza fatica neuna li vines*

and without effort no-one them=won-3SG

‘...and won over them with no effort’ (*Pagani* 131)

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<sup>16</sup> Note that here we have the indefinite article which remains with the element *ne*, while we would expect it to be found with the N. The reason for this is probably that *ne* is a bound morpheme, which requires the raising of the determiner in a way similar to the one of functional prepositions in Old and Modern Italian to form a cluster.

<sup>17</sup> Or to some higher position in the internal structure of the QP, assuming a ban against moving a complement into the Specifier of its immediately dominating head.



it is not paired with a classifier. Our analysis of this state of affairs is based on three points. First, the internal structure of a bare quantifier is not identical to the one of a quantified DP without a lexical nominal expression. Secondly, bare quantifiers are paired only with a light noun that takes the form of a classifier element. They lack a D layer as well as NumP, PossP, etc. Thirdly, the quantifier portion can raise to CompletiveAsp by means of the usual probe/goal mechanism, but only if the classifier is stranded in the edge of the  $\nu$ P. A stranded classifier is lexically null, as are all elements stranded at the edge of a phase (see Kayne 2006). In this way, we can explain why an argument seems to occur in an adverbial position: Only the quantifier portion raises up to the Aspect positions, not the classifier.

Furthermore, we have shown on the basis of the distribution of Old Italian n-words that the lexical ambiguity of elements like *cosa*, which can either be a real N or a light *n*, can explain the peculiar distribution of n-words. Hence, the morphological makeup of a “bare” quantifier is always to be taken into account to determine its syntactic properties, because it represents a direct view into its syntax. Both forms *niente* and *neuna cosa* are lexically and structurally ambiguous: *niente* can be analyzed as bi-morphemic (*ni-ente*, ‘no-thing’), in which case it behaves like quantifiers which are paired with a lexical classifier and remains in its argumental position, or it can be mono-morphemic, in which case it raises to the adverbial position. The form *neuna cosa* is also ambiguous, as *cosa* can either be a classifier or a real lexical noun, and also in this case we see that the distribution is either the one of a bare quantifier paired with a classifier or the one of a real complex QP.

This view on bare quantifiers could in principle be extended to other pro-forms and it might be generally the case that all pronouns are not paired with a null DP/*pro* but with a much smaller category, i.e. a light noun. This would mean that the standard assumption that full pronouns have the equivalent structure of other types of nominal expressions has to be revised, and that even what we call “full pronouns” are deficient in a strict structural sense.

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All the examples in Old Italian are from: <http://www.ovi.cnr.it/index.php?page=banchedati>