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# Relative clauses in Cimbrian\*

Günther Grewendorf & Cecilia Poletto

This paper provides an analysis of the left periphery of relative clauses in the Cimbrian variety of Luserna and explores which of the two complementizer systems Cimbrian makes use of in restrictive and appositive relative clauses. Furthermore, the sentential particle *da* (lit. 'there'), which according to Bidese et al. (2012) is obligatory in restrictive relative clauses with a full DP subject, is shown to have a distribution and function different from its counterparts in Bavarian and Hessian. We argue that the Cimbrian *da* is neither a locative (as the form might suggest) nor a subject expletive located in SpecT similar to English 'there' (as suggested by Bayer & Suchsland 1997 for Bavarian), but the specifier of a projection located in the Wackernagel space marking the Ground context with respect to the head noun individuated by the relative clause.

**Keywords:** left clausal periphery; Cimbrian; relative clause; complementizer; sentence particle

## 1. Introduction

In this work we intend to provide an analysis of the left periphery of relative clauses in the Cimbrian variety of Luserna, a linguistic island located in the Trentino region of north-eastern Italy. Cimbrian has recently attracted attention in syntactic studies because, although it is a Bavarian variety, it generally displays VO word-order and at the same time has typical properties of an asymmetric V2 language. In Grewendorf & Poletto (2011) we analyzed the Cimbrian complementizer system reaching the conclusion that Cimbrian has two types of complementizers, one that blocks V to C (the *az*-type), while the other (the *ke*-type) does not. Since movement in relative clauses often targets a high position in the left periphery, as shown by Rizzi (1997), the question arises which of the two complementizer systems Cimbrian makes use of in restrictive

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\* It is our pleasure to dedicate this paper to Adriana, who has been a source of inspiration for her ability to tie subtle empirical facts to precise theoretical analyses and who has opened up new fields of inquiry in syntactic research while remaining open to share her intuitions with younger and elder colleagues.

and appositive relative clauses. Furthermore, the sentential particle *da*, which behaves in a way similar to clitics (i.e. it attaches to the right of the inflected verb in main and *ke*-type clauses but to the right of the complementizer in *az*-type clauses) has a rather peculiar distribution in relative clauses. Bidese et al. (2012) report that restrictive relative clauses are introduced by the *az*-type complementizer (etymologically related to Bavarian *wo* (lit. 'where') through a regular phonological process active in all German dialects spoken in the provinces of Bozen and Trento), followed by the particle *da*, while appositive relative clauses can either be introduced by *bo-da* or by the complementizer *ke* without *da*. While they analyze the distribution of the two possible complementizers in appositives (like (1b)), we will concentrate here on restrictive relative clauses introduced by *bo-da* (cf. (1a)):

- (1) a. Dar libar bo+da ze lesan herta (Cimbrian)  
 the book REL+PRT they read always  
 'the book that they always read'
- b. Dar Giani und dar Peter bo+da di Maria hot gerueaft  
 the Giani and the Peter REL+PRT the Mary has called  
 'Giani and Peter who Mary called'

We will show that *bo-da* in fact behaves like a complex complementizer, since it can neither be inflected nor can it be combined with a preposition, hence it obeys the tests originally proposed by Kayne (1975) to distinguish relative complementizers from relative pronouns. The complex form *bo da* introduces a non-V2 clause and behaves like complementizers of the *az*-type on the basis of the tests already proposed in Grewendorf & Poletto (2011). Given that the particle *da* is reported by Bidese et al. (2012) to be obligatory in restrictive relative clauses when the subject is a full DP but impossible when the subject is a pronoun, we will examine its distribution with respect to all pronoun types (clitic, tonic, and weak pronouns) in restrictive relative clauses and show that *da* is only incompatible with weak subject pronouns, but not with either tonic pronouns or clitics (either subject or object clitics). The fact that *da* is incompatible with weak pronouns while *bo* is not shows that the form *bo-da* is actually complex and does not occupy one single position in the CP, but two. We will concentrate on the analysis of the position and the function of *da*, showing that it is neither a locative (as the form identical to the locative pronoun meaning *there* might suggest) nor a subject expletive located in SpecT similar to English *there* (as suggested by Bayer & Suchsland 1997 for Bavarian), but the specifier of a projection located in the Wackernagel space marking the Ground context with respect to the head noun individuated by the relative clause.<sup>1</sup> As such, it is incompatible with weak pronouns, as it competes for the

1. For a syntactic and prosodic definition of Ground, see Bocci and Avesani (2006) and Bocci (2008).

same position, but compatible with subject DPs, which are located much lower in the structure, and with clitics, which attach to it as their host. We will then turn to the reason why the form *da* is identical to the locative and propose that this is not by chance: the element *da* is simply a deictic vector marking distance from a given point, and the distance is then interpreted in a locative or contextual sense depending on the position where the deictic marker is inserted.

The article is organized as follows: in Section 2 we provide a general picture of the double complementizer system of Cimbrian, a peculiarity which evidently influences all constructions involving the left periphery of the clause, like relative clauses.

In Section 3 we provide a brief overview of the distribution of the element *da* in Bavarian and Hessian and the way it has been analyzed in the literature. Section 4 is a detailed examination of the distribution of *da* in Cimbrian in declarative, interrogative and relative clauses. Our field of inquiry shows that Cimbrian *da* does not have the same distributional properties of Bavarian and Hessian *da* and cannot be analyzed as analogous to the English SpecTP expletive *there*, because it is clearly located in the left periphery of the clause and not in the TP domain. Section 5 provides an analysis of Cimbrian *da* as a Ground marker in CP, which accounts for the fact that it generally occurs with vP-internal subjects, and explains why it is incompatible with weak subject pronouns, while being compatible with DP subjects, tonic pronouns and subject clitics. Furthermore, the fact that *da* is homophonous with the locative is attributed to its semantics as a purely deictic pronoun.

## 2. State of the art on Cimbrian relatives and the complementizer system

As mentioned above, Cimbrian has a split complementizer system with a Romance and a Germanic type of complementizer. The first type (represented by *ke*) is located in a high position in the left periphery so that it has no influence onto the internal structure of the embedded clause, which thus behaves as a normal root clause with respect to all types of root phenomena as well as V to C. The second type (represented by *az*) is located in a low position of the left periphery, where it blocks movement of the inflected verb to the C-domain, as is generally the case in asymmetric V2 languages. Independent evidence for a split complementizer system comes from several empirical domains. We mention here only the three major ones and refer to Grewendorf & Poletto (2011) for a more detailed discussion:

- a. the fact that clitics are attached to the right of the verb in main clauses and *ke*-clauses while they are enclitic on complementizers of the *az*-type;
- b. the fact that the negative marker is preverbal in *az*-type clauses but postverbal in main and *ke*-type clauses;

- c. the fact that separable prefixes are always postverbal in main and *ke*-type clauses, but can be preverbal in *az*-type clauses.

In our view, all these data show that there is a clear asymmetry in verb movement in embedded clauses headed by *ke* or *az*: in *ke*-clauses, the verb moves to C while in *az*-clauses it remains rather low in the IP field, in a position lower than the negative marker and separable prefixes. In this section we show that *bo* (*da*) is a complementizer of the Germanic type, i.e. it blocks V to C, so that the inflected verb remains rather low in the structure of the clause. We provide evidence that this is so on the basis of the tests mentioned above:

Negation:

- (2) Di diarn bo+da net hat gegrüsst Mario is mai sbester  
 the girl REL+PRT not has greeted Mario is my sister  
 'the girl which has not greeted Mario is my sister'

Clitics:

- (3) Der mon bo+da+me hat gevüart humman, is soi pruadar  
 the man REL+PRT+me has taken home, is his brother  
 'the man who has taken me home is his brother'

Prefixes:

- (4) a. Dar man bo+da vort is gont  
 the man REL+PRT away is gone  
 'the man who went away'  
 b. Dar man bo+da offe hat getan di Ture  
 the man REL+PRT open has made the door  
 'the man who opened the door'

We conclude that *bo-da* is a complementizer of the German type, where V remains rather low in the clausal structure. The examples show that the complementizer in relative clauses is actually a complex element formed by *bo* and the pronoun *da*. The element *bo* is the *wh*-word corresponding to *where*, which is known to be used as a complementizer in several other German dialects like Bavarian, Alemannic etc. The element *da* is homophonous with the locative element meaning *there*, although in these cases it does not imply any locative meaning in relative clauses. We concentrate on the distribution of *da*, because we think it can provide us with an interesting insight into the way the CP layer of relative clauses is built.

### 3. The element *da* in Bavarian and Hessian

The element *da* can also be found in relative clauses of Bavarian and Hessian. In Bavarian it is generally combined with two further elements, a *d*-pronoun and the element *wo* (corresponding to Cimbrian *bo*), or with the element *wo* alone.

Bayer & Suchsland (1997) analyze Bavarian *da* as analogous to the English subject expletive *there*, i.e. an element occurring in SpecT when the subject remains inside the vP.

- (5) Der Mo der wo da ins Wirtshaus kemma is (Bavarian)  
 the man who<sub>NOM</sub> C PRT into-the pub come has  
 ‘the man who came into the pub’
- (6) Der Mo den wo da da Hans troffa hot  
 the man who<sub>ACC</sub> C PRT the Hans met has  
 ‘the man whom Hans met’
- (7) a. Der Mo dem wo da da Hans ghoifa hot  
 the man who<sub>DAT</sub> C PRT the Hans helped has  
 ‘the man whom Hans helped’  
 b. Der Mo dem wo da da Hans a Hoibe zoit hot  
 the man who<sub>DAT</sub> C PRT the Hans a beer paid has  
 ‘the man to whom Hans paid a beer’
- (8) ?Der Mo mit dem wo da da Hans gredt hot  
 the man with whom C PRT the Hans talked has  
 ‘the man with whom Hans talked’

The fact that in Bavarian, *da* is not located in the CP layer is shown quite clearly by the observation that when there is complementizer inflection, the element that is inflected is *wo* rather than *da*.

- (9) a. Der Mo den wo-st du da troffa host  
 the man who<sub>ACC</sub> C+2SG you PRT met have  
 ‘the man who you met’  
 b. \*Der Mo den wo da-st du troffa host

Bavarian also allows relative clauses where the d-pronoun and the *wo* element are followed by the standard declarative complementizer *dass*:

- (10) Der Mo der wo dass des gsogt hot  
 the man who C that this said has  
 ‘the man who said this’

Notice that in these cases the complementizer that is inflected is always the lower one, i.e. *dass*:

- (11) a. Der Mo den wo dass-st du troffa host  
 the man who<sub>ACC</sub> C that-2SG you met have  
 ‘the man who you have met’  
 b. \*Der Mo den wo-st dass du troffa host

Hence, if *da* were a complementizer, it should bear complementizer agreement, being lower than *wo*. If one tries to combine these structures with *da*, the result is not perfect, however there is a clear distinction between (12) and (13):

- (12) ?Der Mo der wo dass da des gsogt hot  
 the man who C that PRT this said has  
 ‘the man who said this’
- (13) \*Der Mo der wo da dass des gsogt hot

This indicates that *da* in Bavarian cannot be treated as a complementizer and is actually lower than the lowest complementizer, i.e. most probably at the IP border, as predicted by Bayer and Suchsland’s (1997) analysis.

Another rather precise indication of the position of *da* is the following: when there is a subject pronoun, *da* follows it (cf. also (9a)):

- (14) a. Der Mo den wo i da troffa hob  
 the man who<sub>ACC</sub> C I PRT met have  
 ‘the man who I have met’
- b. \*Der Mo den wo da i troffa hob  
 the man who<sub>ACC</sub> C PRT I met have
- (15) a. Der Mo den wo er da troffa hot  
 the man who<sub>ACC</sub> C he PRT met has  
 ‘the man who he has met’
- b. \*Der Mo den wo da er troffa hot  
 the man who<sub>ACC</sub> C PRT he met has

Furthermore, in Bavarian, *da* is ungrammatical when the head noun of the relative clause is an indefinite element:

- (16) \*Er hot a Frau gsucht die wo (\*da) vui Geld hot.  
 he has a wife sought who<sub>NOM</sub> C PRT much money has
- (17) \*Er hot a Frau gheirat die wo da vui Geld hot.  
 he has a wife married who<sub>NOM</sub> C PRT much money has

A similar distribution is found in Hessian; we present here the variety spoken in Frankfurt.<sup>2</sup> In Hessian, relative clauses have the same two elements found in Bavarian, i.e. a d-pronoun and the complementizer *wo*. They can be followed by *da*, which is however optional, as shown below:

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2. For a detailed analysis of the distribution of d-relatives and w-relatives in Hessian see Schmitt (2006).

- (18) Der Kerl, der wo (da) alsfort motze duut (Hessian)  
 the guy who C (PRT) always grumble does  
 'the guy who always grumbles'

The element *da* can only occur in restrictive relatives, not in appositive relatives, as the following contrast shows:<sup>3</sup>

- (19) a. Die Fraa, die wo da Owwerberjermaaster von Frangfort iss  
 the woman who C PRT mayor of Frankfurt is  
 'the woman who is the mayor of Frankfurt'
- b. ??Die Petra Roth, die wo da Owwerberjermaaster von  
 the Petra Roth who C PRT mayor of  
 Frangfort iss  
 Frankfurt is  
 'Petra Roth, who is the mayor of Frankfurt'

As in Bavarian, there is no adjacency requirement for *wo* and *da*. There are various elements that can intervene between the two: (i) the pronoun *sich*; (ii) subject and object clitics (iii) (somewhat marginally) sentential particles like *ja*:

- (20) a. Die Kerle, die wo *sich* da alsfort beschwern duun  
 the guys who C REFL PRT always complain do  
 'the guys who always complain'
- b. Die Kinner, die wo+*mer* da eigelade hawwe  
 the children who C+we PRT invited have  
 'the children who we invited'
- c. Die Bischer, die wo+*mer+m* da geliehe hawwe  
 the books which C+we+him PRT lend have  
 'the books which we lent him'
- d. ?Die Kerle, die wo *ja* da gewählt worn sinn  
 the guys who C PRT PRT elected be are  
 'the guys who have been elected'

3. The d-pronoun is obligatory in Hessian appositive relatives, but not in restrictive relatives as the following examples show:

- (i) Die Fraa, wo Owwerberjermaaster von Frangfort iss  
 the woman C mayor of Frankfurt is
- (ii) \*Die Petra Roth, wo Owwerberjermaaster von Frangfort iss  
 the Petra Roth C mayor of Frankfurt is
- (iii) Die Petra Roth, die wo Owwerberjermaaster von Frangfort iss  
 the Petra Roth who C mayor of Frankfurt is

In Hessian, *da* seems to occupy a position in the field of sentential/modal particles:

- (21) Die Kerle, die wo sich *da/bloß/nur* beschwere duun  
 the guys who C REFL PRT/PRT/PRT complain do  
 'the guys who just/only complain'

If *da* occurs in a lower position, its meaning changes to the one of a real locative.

- (22) Die Kerle, die wo sich *alsfort da* beschwere duun  
 the guys who C REFL always PRT complain do  
 'the guys who always complain'

Hessian, on a par with Bavarian, does not tolerate indefinite head nouns as the head of the relative clause with *da*.<sup>4</sup> If the intuition expressed by native speakers that *da* refers to an already known context is correct, then this incompatibility is probably due to the fact that there is a clash between the semantics of the indefinite and the fact that the proposition expressed by the relative clause is already known to the speech-participants.

- (23) a. Der Kerl, der wo *da* die Katrin geheirat hat  
 the guy who C PRT the Katrin married has  
 'the guy who married Katrin'  
 b. ??En Kerl, der wo *da* die Katrin geheirat hat  
 a guy who C PRT the Katrin married has

Summing up, we have presented the following arguments:

- a. *da* never takes complementizer inflection,
- b. it occurs after a subject pronoun,
- c. it does not occur with indefinite head nouns,
- d. there is no adjacency requirement between *wo* and *da*.

We conclude that the element *da* in Bavarian and Hessian is located inside the IP layer. This explains (1) why it can be split from the complementizer by various elements, (2) why it occurs after subject pronouns, (3) why it does not show complementizer inflection, (4) its semantic import, which requires a definite head noun.

As we will see, the function of *da* in Cimbrian seems to have evolved into a CP element unlike its Hessian and Bavarian counterpart.

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4. For a detailed investigation, see Schmitt (2006).

#### 4. *Da* in Cimbrian

The element *da* is found in Cimbrian in several contexts:

- a. in main and embedded declarative clauses after the complementizers *az*, *bal*, etc;
- b. in main and embedded interrogatives;
- c. in restrictive and appositive relative clauses but only with the complementizer *bo*, not with *ke*;
- d. in free relative clauses.

After a brief survey of these contexts, we concentrate on restrictive relative clauses and make a detailed description of the distribution of *da* in these contexts, which will be enlightening with respect to its function and position.

##### 4.1 Main interrogative clauses

In main interrogative clauses we can see that the element *da* is directly attached to the right of the inflected verb located in C, although it is not obligatory, as the following minimal pair shows.

- (24) Benn khint di nona? (Cimbrian)  
 when comes the granny?  
 ‘When does granny come?’
- (25) Benn khinta di nona?  
 when comes+PRT the granny?  
 ‘When does granny come?’

*Da* cannot co-occur with weak subject pronouns:

- (26) a. \*Benn khinta+ze di nona?  
 when comes+PRT+she the granny?
- b. Benn khint+ze di nona?  
 when comes+she the granny?

As shown by (26b) the ungrammaticality of (26a) cannot be due to doubling, which is grammatical if *da* is not present.

*Da* is also incompatible with a left dislocated subject:

- (27) \*Di nona benn khinta?  
 the granny when comes+PRT?

Furthermore, *da* is found with vP-internal subjects in the absence of weak pronouns:

- (28) Di momma bas hat+ze gekoaft?  
 the mummy what has+she bought?  
 ‘The mother, what has she bought?’

- (29) Bas hat+ze gekoaft di momma?  
 what has+she bought the mummy?
- (30) Bas hat+ta gekoaft di momma?  
 what has+PRT bought the mummy?<sup>5</sup>

Although the form is identical to the pronoun meaning *there*, *da* cannot be analyzed as a locative element in Cimbrian. This is shown by the fact that locative and relative *da* can co-occur:

- (31) Bas hat+ta getont a khin (da)?  
 what has+PRT done a child here?  
 ‘What has a child done here?’

As already noted by Bidese (2008) and Grewendorf & Poletto (2005), Cimbrian does not tolerate Germanic subject inversion (i.e. inversion between the auxiliary and the past participle) with full DPs, but only with subject clitics. In main interrogatives there seem to be two possibilities; either the sentence contains *da* and a postverbal subject, or the subject is doubled by a subject pronoun and *da* is left out. The structure with clitic doubling of the subject could be a case of right dislocation of the subject, while the one with *da* could be a real case of a postverbal subject. This would make the situation in Cimbrian completely parallel to the one of the Trentino and Veneto dialects spoken in the area. We leave this aside, as the main focus of this work is the syntax of *da*.

Summing up, we have seen that in main interrogatives:

- a. *da* occurs after the inflected verb,
- b. it is not compatible with weak pronouns,
- c. it is not compatible with left dislocated subjects.

#### 4.2 Embedded interrogative clauses

*Da* is also possible in embedded interrogatives, where it is found either on the right of the inflected verb or on the right of the *wh*-item. This clearly shows that *da* cannot be a clitic itself, as clitics always require a host, in general of the same category, while this is not the case for *da*:

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5. In this sentence we observe a Sandhi phenomenon of assimilation with respect to voicing between the finite verb and *da*. Sandhi phenomena with *da* are also found with complementizers (cf. *az-ta* instead of *az-da*) and with subject clitics, as we will see below (for Sandhi phenomena with *da* see also Kolmer 2005).

- (32) a. I boas benn khinta di nona.  
 I know when comes+PRT the granny  
 'I know when granny comes'
- b. I boas benn da khint di nona.  
 I know when PRT comes the granny

In embedded interrogatives *da* is also compatible with the high complementizer *zega*, which probably belongs to the class of high subordinators of the *ke* type and is located on top of the whole interrogative structure:

- (33) Dar Gianni hat mar gevorst zega ber da de hat o-gerieft.  
 the Gianni has me asked C who PRT you has PRT-phoned  
 'Gianni has asked me who phoned'
- (34) I han mir gevorst zega bem/bela Diarn da der Gianni  
 I have me asked C whom/which girl PRT the Gianni  
 hat gesek.  
 has seen  
 'I wondered whom/which girl Gianni saw'

Interestingly, in embedded interrogatives it is not possible to realize *da* after the subject as seen in Bavarian:

- (35) \*Sa hom+mar gevorst zega bo di Maria da is gont.  
 they have+me asked C where the Maria PRT is gone

A second indication that *da* is not similar to the corresponding element found in Bavarian and Hessian comes from the fact that the form *da* is compatible with a Focus, but in this case it must precede it:

- (36) a. \*I bil bissen, zega IN PUA bas ta der Gianni hat geben.  
 I want know C the boy what PRT the Gianni has given
- b. I bil bissen, zega bas ta IN PUA der Gianni hat geben.<sup>6</sup>  
 I want know C what PRT the boy the Gianni has given  
 'I want to know what Gianni has given to the boy'

The data above confirm that in V2 contexts *da* occurs on the right of the inflected verb. In embedded interrogatives, the position of *da* depends on whether the verb has moved to the C domain or not.

The test to verify this has to do with the phenomenon of the so-called *Vorfeld es*, which also exists in Cimbrian: the morpheme 'z is an element occupying the first position in V2 contexts. Since 'z can occur in embedded interrogatives after the

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6. Notice that nothing can intervene between *bas* and *da*, hence, not even a Focus or a Topic.

complementizer *zega*, which evidently belongs to the class of the high subordinator *ke* singled out in Grewendorf & Poletto (2011), this means that embedded interrogatives can indeed be V2 clauses. In these cases, as in main declaratives (see below), we see that *da* is on the right of the inflected verb.

- (37) a. I boaz nèt, biavl laüt 'z+han+da gekoaft diza.  
I know not how many people it+have+PRT bought this  
'I don't know how many people have bought this'
- b. Se han+mar gevorst zega biavl geld 'z+han+da  
they have+me asked C how much money it+have+PRT  
vorbrennt di belesan bonke.  
burned the Italian banks  
'They asked me how much money the Italian banks have burned'

*Da* is compatible with all *wh*-items, with both embedded V2 or not, but only if it occurs when the subject is in a postverbal position, as in declaratives:

- (38) Dar hat mar gevorst zega bo da soin gest die earsten casi  
he has me asked C where PRT are been the first cases  
vo AIDS.  
of AIDS  
'He asked me where the first cases of AIDS occurred'
- (39) a. Dar hat mar gevorst zega obromm die laüt soin traure.  
he has me asked C why the people are sad  
'He asked me why people are sad'
- b. Dar hat mar gevorst zega obromm z'soin-da traure die laüt.  
he has me asked C why it is-da sad the people  
'He asked me why people are sad'

Summing up:

- da* can occur in embedded interrogatives either after the *wh*-item or after the verb,
- it occurs with postverbal subjects,
- it precedes FocusP.

Hence, we conclude that the position of *da* always remains the same; it is the position of the verb that varies according to the type of complementizer that either blocks or does not block V-to-C movement. Furthermore, *da* is sensitive to the position of the subject, as it always appears when the subject is postverbal, and is compatible with the first-position element 'z, analogous to standard German 'Vorfeld *es*'.

### 4.3 Main declarative clauses

The fact that *da* is related to the subject position is also shown by main declarative clauses. As mentioned in the introduction, Cimbrian is a SVO language and tolerates

postverbal subjects after the past participle in a way similar to the Romance varieties it is in contact with:

- (40) a. 'Z+ista gerift dar nono.  
it+is+PRT called the grandfather  
'Grandfather called'
- b. 'Z+ist gerift dar nono.  
it+is called the grandfather  
'Grandfather called'

Cimbrian also tolerates a quantifier subject in front of the past participle, but this is due to an independent property of bare quantifiers (see Grewendorf & Poletto 2005).

- (41) a. 'Z hat+ta niamat telefonaart.  
it has+PRT nobody called  
'Nobody has called'
- b. 'Z hat+ta eparummas telefonaart.  
it has+PRT someone called  
'Someone has called'

#### 4.4 Embedded declarative clauses

*Da* can also occur in embedded declaratives, where it is located after the complementizer, if the latter is of the Germanic type (Panieri et al. 2006), as is the case with *bàl*. A complementizer like *benn* is actually ambiguous between the two types and the *da* can either occur after the complementizer or after the verb:

- (42) Bål+da rivan di khindar, spèrrbar di tür.  
as soon as+PRT arrive the children lock+we the door  
'As soon as the children have arrived, we lock the door'
- (43) Benn 'z+khemmen+da di khindar...  
when it+come+PRT the children  
'When the children come...'
- (44) Benn+da khemmen di khindar...  
when+PRT come the children  
'When the children come...'
- (45) Bal+da khemmen di khindar...  
as soon as+PRT come the children  
'As soon as the children have come...'

As expected, *da* occurs after the inflected verb in the presence of a *ke*-type complementizer, which always embeds a V2 construction.

- (46) Dar Mario hatt khött ke 'z+han+da geläüetet di klokkng  
 the Mario has heard that it+have+PRT ring the bells  
 alle sunta.  
 every sunday  
 'Mario heard that the bells ring every Sunday'

Also in declarative clauses, *da* occurs with postverbal subjects as in interrogative clauses.

#### 4.5 *Da* in relative clauses

The element *da* also massively occurs in relative clauses. Its distribution is different from the one described for Bavarian and Hessian, both in terms of position and of semantic value. First of all, our informants do not attribute any 'special' semantics to relative clauses with *da*. They say that the element introducing a relative clause is *boda* and tend to write it as a single word. The form *da* is present in appositive, restrictive and free relative clauses.

As for free relative clauses, *da* never occurs with *bo*, but is found directly after the *wh*-item, which shows that *da* is an independent element and that it is not a clitic, because it does not need a head as a host:

- (47) Ber+da votart vorimen is a stock.  
 who+PRT votes for him is a stupid  
 'Whoever votes for him is an idiot'
- (48) Ber+da bart tün dizza, barzanen pentieren.  
 who+PRT will do this, will of it regret  
 'Whoever does this will regret it'

The following examples show that *bo-da* also occurs in appositive relative clauses and that there is no restriction to a specific thematic role:

- (49) I hon geredet pitar Maria bo+da dar hat za gehatt  
 I have talked with the Maria REL+PRT he has her had  
 ogerüaft gestarn.  
 phoned yesterday  
 'I have talked to Maria who he had called yesterday'
- (50) Doine suen, bo+\*(da) (herta) stugiarn gian gearn  
 your children, REL+(PRT) always study, go with pleasure  
 ka sual.  
 to school  
 'Your children, who always study, like to go to school'

Bidese et al. (2012) notice that in appositive relative clauses, the complementizer *ke* is also possible, and that in this case there is obligatory doubling of a clitic (as it is the case in the neighboring Trentino and Veneto dialects). Our data confirm their findings. Clitic doubling is also possible with *bo da*, although in this case, clitic doubling of the direct object is not obligatory (see (49)). At present we do not know whether doubling of the dative is obligatory as it is in Trentino and Veneto:

- (51) Sou sun, ke+da hon+en geredet vo dir, is a guatar pua.  
his son, REL+PRT have+him spoken of you, is a good boy  
'His son, with whom we have spoken about you, is a good guy'
- (52) Da sell diarn, ke du hast+ze gesek du oo gestarn ala  
that one girl that you have+her seen you too yesterday at the  
festa, steat ka Slege.  
party, lives in Asiago  
'That very girl, who you have also seen yesterday at the party, lives in  
Asiago'
- (53) Die Maria, ke du kenst+ze du oo, is ka Tria.  
the Maria, that you know+her you too, is in Trento  
'Maria, who you also know, is in Trento'

Let us now turn our attention to restrictive relative clauses: here it is not possible to insert *ke*, and *bo-da* is the only form. The element *da* occurs obligatorily with all argumental roles:

- (54) Di diarnen bo+da hom gerede pit diar soin vo Tria.  
the girls REL+PRT have talked with you are from Trento  
'The girls who talked to you are from Trento'
- (55) I kenne a diarn bo+da lebet ka Tria.  
I know a girl REL+PRT lives in Trento  
'I know a girl who lives in Trento'
- (56) De mon bo+d'+ar+s+en hat get is moi pruadar.  
the man REL+PRT+he+it+him has given is my brother  
'The man to whom he gave it is my brother'
- (57) Dar post bo+\*(da)+r+s hat lugart is da.  
the place REL+PRT+he+it has put is there  
'The place where he put it is over there'

Given that *da* is obligatory in relative clauses, we now turn to a specific analysis of this element in restrictive relative clauses.

## 5. Cimbrian *da* as a Ground marker

In this section we put forth our analysis of *da* on the basis of the data discussed in the previous section.

### 5.1 Cimbrian *da* is not Bavarian *da*

Given the fact that *da* in declarative and interrogative clauses is related to postverbal subjects, one wonders why this does not seem to be the case in restrictive relatives. On the one hand, relative *da* cannot be analyzed in Cimbrian as a locative element, because the two *da* can co-occur:

- (58) Di kindar bo+da da soin geest soint geest mindar.  
 the children REL+PRT there are been are less numerous  
 ‘The children who have been there are less numerous’

On the other hand, *da* cannot be analyzed as an expletive similar to English *there* in the sense of Bayer & Suchsland (1997).<sup>7</sup> There are several arguments that show that Cimbrian *da* cannot be assimilated to Bavarian or Hessian *da*. First, in Cimbrian the element *da* is compatible with indefinite head nouns, contrary to Bavarian and Hessian (see above (16), (17) and (23)):

- (59) I böllat boi bo+da is gemacht dahuam.  
 I want wine REL+PRT is made at home  
 ‘I would like to have wine which is home-made’
- (60) I suach a segretargia bo+da kont gerecht däutsch.  
 I look for a secretary REL+PRT can well German  
 ‘I am looking for a secretary who can speak German’
- (61) Dar suacht arbatar bo+da kennen gerecht die arbat.  
 he looks for worker REL+PRT know well the job  
 ‘He is looking for workers who are good at their job’

Secondly, contrary to what Bayer & Suchsland (1997) report for Bavarian, *da* is compatible with individual level predicates (as well as with stage level predicates):

- (62) a. Lai di pompiern bo+da soin guat hom an arbat.  
 only the fire workers REL+PRT are good have a job  
 ‘Only those fire fighters who are good have a job’

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7. Kolmer (2005) analyzes the Cimbrian particle *da* in a way analogous to Bayer and Suchsland’s analysis of Bavarian *da* as a *marcatura* of the position of the clitic subject: “Qui la particella *da* ha la funzione di marcare la posizione enclitica del soggetto pronominale, ed è analoga a un soggetto espletivo all’interno della frase.” (Kolmer 2005:74).

- b. Lai di pompiern bo+da soin da hom an arbat.  
 only the fire workers REL+PRT are here have a job  
 ‘Only those fire fighters who are here have a job’

Notice that *da* is even compatible with quantifiers and in free relative clauses (see above), thus showing that it is different from Bavarian and Hessian.

- (63) I hon gelest als das sell bo+da+’z hat get di maistra.  
 I have read all that REL+PRT+it has given the teacher  
 ‘I have read everything that the teacher has given me’

Thirdly, unlike in Bavarian, it is not possible to split *bo* and *da* with arguments; there cannot be anything intervening, such as Focus or Topic:

- (64) a. Dar libar bo+da+r IN GIANNI hat get  
 the book REL+PRT+he THE GIANNI has given  
 ‘the book that Gianni has given me’  
 b. \*Dar libar bo IN GIANNI da+r hat get  
 the book REL THE GIANNI PRT+he has given  
 c. \*Das Buch bo in pua da der Gianni hat get  
 the book REL to a boy PRT the Gianni has given  
 d. Dar libar bo+da in Gianni za hom get  
 the book REL+PRT the Gianni they have given  
 ‘the book that they have given to Gianni’

This shows that *da* is higher in Cimbrian than in Bavarian and Hessian, as it precedes Topic and Focus. Hence, we cannot consider *da* either a real locative or an expletive subject located in SpecT. If this is so, then what is the role of Cimbrian *da* in restrictive relatives?

## 5.2 *Da* and subjects

Up to now we have excluded two possible hypotheses to interpret the element *da* in relative clauses. As mentioned above, the fact that *da* can co-occur with the homophonous locative element shows that the sentence initial particle *da* cannot be the locative itself. A second possibility, namely the one entertained by Bayer & Suchsland (1997) for Bavarian, which is probably applicable to Hessian as well, does not seem to fit the Cimbrian case either.

Hence, what is *da* and why is it obligatory in relative clauses?

As for its position, there is clear evidence that it is located in the left periphery of the clause. This is shown by the fact that *da* occurs in front of Topics and focussed XPs, as already illustrated above, and can also be seen from the fact that it occurs before preverbal subject DPs and tonic pronouns. Notice that contrary to other clause types,

*da* is obligatory with postverbal but also with preverbal DP subjects and subject tonic pronouns, as the following sentences show:

- (65) a. Dar Gianni und dar Piero bo+da di Maria hot gerueaft  
 the Gianni and the Piero REL+PRT the Maria has called  
 cioina, soin za vortgont.  
 for dinner, are already away gone  
 ‘Gianni and Piero, who Maria called up, have already left’
- b. Dar Gianni und dar Piero bo+da **biar** hom gerueaft  
 the Gianni and the Piero REL+PRT we have called  
 cioina, soin za vortgont.  
 for dinner, are already away gone  
 ‘Gianni and Piero, who we called for dinner, have already left’
- c. Dar libar bo+da erondre lesst herta  
 the book REL+PRT you read always  
 ‘the book that you always read’
- d. Di diarn bo+da du oo hast+ze gesek  
 the girl REL+PRT you too have+her seen  
 ‘the girl that you saw too’

Bidese et al. (2012:3) observe that preverbal subjects in relative clauses are generally focussed. They provide the following examples to illustrate their observation:

- (66) ’Z proat bo+da DAR NONO hat gekoaft (net  
 the bread REL+PRT THE GRANDFATHER has bought, (not  
 di nona)  
 the granny)  
 ‘the bread which grandfather bought (not grandmother)’
- (67) Di libar, bo+da DAR MARIO hat gelest net dar Gianni  
 the books REL+PRT THE MARIO has read, not the Gianni  
 ‘the book that Mario read, not Gianni’

Notice that this effect might be the same that we find in Italian, where the subject must be postverbal in relative clauses unless there is another element occupying the vP area:<sup>8</sup>

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8. The fact that so called *free inversion* is not free at all but corresponds to Focus when the subject is a real agent has been shown by Belletti (2004), to whom we refer the reader for a detailed analysis of the phenomenon.

- (68) a. <sup>??</sup>Il libro che Gianni legge... (Italian)  
           the book that Gianni reads  
       b. Il libro che legge Gianni...  
           the book that reads Gianni  
       c. Il libro che Gianni legge a colazione...  
           the book that Gianni reads at breakfast

Our informants do not report any Focus effect on the subject in sentences like (65) where the vP area is occupied by the element *cioina* ‘to dinner’.

Furthermore, our data show that contrary to what Bidese et al. claim, *da* is also compatible with subject pronouns, if they are either tonic or clitics, as seen above. In some cases, there are Sandhi phenomena that obscure the fact that the subject clitic is present: in the case of the first person singular, the form *da+i* gives *de* as a result, in the case of the second singular the cluster *da+du* becomes *do* (cf. Kolmer 2005).

- (69) a. Dar libar bo+de les herta  
           the book REL+PRT+I read always  
       b. Dar libar bo+do  
           the book REL+PRT+you

In both cases, it is possible to double the clitic with the tonic pronoun:

- (70) Dar pua bo+do du hast geredet is moi nevodo.  
       the boy REL+PRT+you you have spoken is my nephew  
       ‘The boy you spoke to is my nephew’

Furthermore, the fact that there exists a sequence like *bod'+ar+en* shows that the element *dar* is not the weak pronoun, to which no clitics can attach, but the cluster formed by *da+ar*:

- (71) Di Schua bo+d'+ar+en hat provart soin net guat.  
       the shoes REL+PRT+he+them has tried are not good  
       ‘The shoes which he tried on are not good’  
       (72) De mon bo+d'+ar+s+en hat get is moi prудар.  
           the man REL+PRT+he+it+him has given is my brother  
           ‘The man to whom he gave it is my brother’

The only type of subjects with which *da* is not compatible is weak subject pronouns, as the following cases attest (see Bidese 2008 for a classification of Cimbrian pronouns into three types). The weak pronouns *ze* (third person singular feminine), *za*

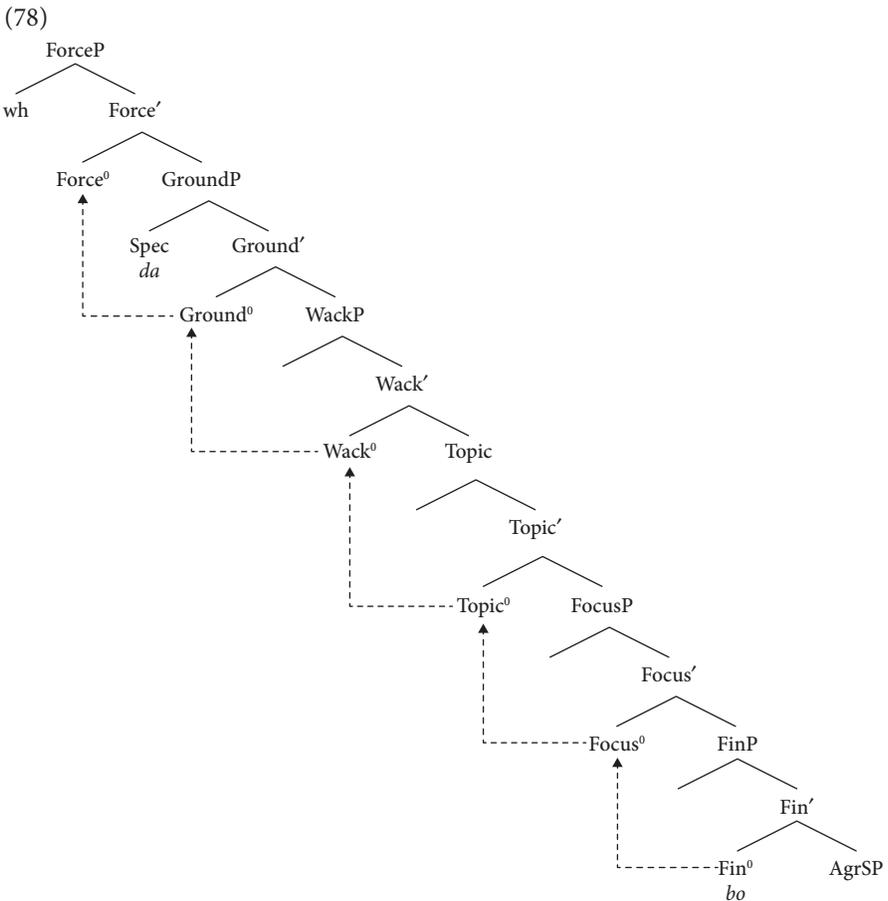
(third person plural), *bar* (first person plural), and *ma* (generic form) are all incompatible with *da*:

- (73) a. \*Dar libar bo+da za lesan herta  
the book REL+PRT they read always  
b. Dar libar bo za lesan herta  
the book REL they read always  
'the book they always read'
- (74) a. \*Di Diarn bo+da ze hat gesek zee  
the girl REL+PRT she has seen she  
b. Di Diarn bo ze hat gesek zee  
the girl REL she has seen she  
'the girl that she saw'
- (75) a. \*Di Diarn bo+da bar hom/hon gesek biar  
the girl REL+PRT we have seen we  
b. Di Diarn bo bar hom/hon gesek biar  
the girl REL we have seen we  
'the girl that we saw'
- (76) a. \*Dar libar bo+da ma herta lesst wor ma geat in pett  
the book REL+PRT one always reads when one goes to bed  
b. Dar libar bo ma herta lesst wor ma geat in pett  
the book REL one always reads when one goes to bed  
'the book that we read whenever we go to bed'

*Da* is also directly compatible with object clitics in the case of a subject relative clause: in this case, clitics attach to *da*.

- (77) Di Diarn bo+da dar hat get an libar  
the girl REL+PRT you<sub>DAT</sub> has given a book  
'the girl who gave you a book'

We believe that the incompatibility illustrated in (73)–(76) is an important clue to interpreting the semantic import of the element *da* to the clause. Generally, incompatibilities are treated in the syntax either in terms of two elements having the same function or occupying the same position, or both. Since we already know that *da* must be located in the CP layer and that weak pronouns are also located in the specifiers of the Wackernagel positions hosting clitic heads, we argue that the incompatibility between weak subject pronouns and *da* is due to the fact that they occupy the same specifier, since they have a similar function in expressing the type of Ground against which the head noun is individuated on the basis of the information contained in the relative clause. Therefore, we propose the following structure for the syntax of Cimbrian restrictive relative clauses:



At this point one might ask what the difference is between the *da* found in declarative and interrogative clauses and the *da* found in relatives. We think that these occurrences of *da* are actually the same in the following sense: since postverbal subjects generally represent a new information Focus in Cimbrian (like in Italian), it is necessary to define a Ground of already known information against which the new subject is set. The element *da* is a deictic element referring back to the context used as a Ground for the postverbal subject. One might hypothesize that exactly the same is true in relative clauses; they need a Ground against which the head noun is identified and, therefore, *da* is obligatory because the identification mechanism only works if there is a context in which the head noun is identified. However, as mentioned above, *da* is also found in appositive relative clauses, where the head noun is not identified by the relative clause.

Notice, however, that there is another sense in which all relative clauses, interrogatives and declaratives are similar, one which refers to a strictly syntactic property.

We noticed above that in declaratives and interrogatives *da* occurs only with postverbal subjects. This might suggest that also in relative clauses *da* occurs when the subject is either postverbal or *wh*-extracted directly from the postverbal position, as proposed by Rizzi (1982) for Italian and more generally for pro drop languages. There is no difference between relatives, interrogatives and declaratives: in all these cases *da* marks the Ground against which the postverbal subject is set. Since Belletti (2004) has shown that postverbal subjects in Italian are new information Focus, we propose that the same holds for Cimbrian, hence the need for a Ground against which the postverbal subject can be set.

Bidese et al. (2012) briefly discuss the issue of the meaning of *da* and provide an analysis of *da* only in terms of syntactic features. We think that there is also another aspect of the distribution of *da* that has to be taken into account if we want to explain why its presence is obligatory. This is the fact that *da* is homophonous with the sentential particle and the locative element with a distal value. We do not think that this is a coincidence, and we do not assume that there are three different items with the same form stored in the lexicon of Cimbrian speakers. We believe that *da* is simply a deictic element, a sort of arrow (a vector in Svenonius' 2010 terms) pointing towards a direction which leads away from the speaker, i.e. with a 'distal' value. Whether this vector is interpreted as a locative, an expletive subject, or a Ground element depends on the syntactic position it is merged in. In the argumental portion of the clause (the *vP*), *da* is interpreted as a locative. In the CP, it is a Ground which refers back to the context in the operation that interprets a postverbal subject as new information.<sup>9</sup>

## 6. Concluding remarks

In this work we have analyzed the distribution of the deictic element *da* in relative clauses in Cimbrian and have shown that it cannot be analyzed like the corresponding element found in Bavarian or Hessian. Cimbrian *da* is not an expletive subject located in SpecT as its Bavarian and Hessian counterparts are; it is a CP element directly merged within the CP layer in the specifier of GroundP. As such, it is not compatible with other specifiers located in the same GroundP, namely weak subject pronouns.

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9. There is not much work done on postverbal subjects in embedded clauses; if our idea is correct, postverbal subjects of transitive and real intransitive verbs should be new information Focus or alternatively, Topic, since the *vP* left periphery also contains Topic positions (see again Belletti 2004).

Furthermore, *da* is related to the subject in the sense that it occurs when the subject has been extracted directly out of the postverbal position (see Belletti 2004). This is shown by the fact that embedded interrogatives and declarative clauses display the same distribution. However, the existence of *da* is not simply due to a syntactic constraint like some version of EPP as generally assumed for expletive subjects like English *there*. We have argued that *da* actually has its own semantic import in signalling the Ground against which the new information contained in the relative clause is set.

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