

The internal and external syntax of bare quantifiers in Old Italian

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1. The aim of this talk is to put to the test the idea that the internal structure of bare quantifiers can determine their position in the clause, and to investigate how this interacts with general sentence phenomena like V2. Our empirical domain are the Old Italian bare quantifiers *tutto* 'all, everything', *niente* 'nothing' and *molto* 'a lot/very', which can be shown to target different positions in the low IP area (Poletto 2014; Garzonio & Poletto 2017). Yet, when they appear before the tensed verb they all seem to occupy the same low CP projection. Thus, while low (vP) syntax is not uniform, high (CP) syntax is. How can we account for this asymmetry? More generally, to which extent is their external syntax driven by their internal make-up?

2. When in the low portion of the sentence, the above bare quantifiers show distributional differences indicating that they target different but dedicated projections in the low IP area. Furthermore, *molto* and *tutto* can be shown to never occur in the low vP thematic area, while *niente* can. These differences can be captured by assuming that while *niente* is ambiguous and can contain *-ente*, a lexical classifier-like n° category, *molto* never does. We surmise that when quantifiers are not paired with such n° items, they are free to move to the adverbial space in IP, and behave like adverbs.

3. *Molto*, *niente* and *tutto* can be shown to be located in the same low CP projection since they are never followed by enclisis on the finite verb, and are usually only separated from it either by clitics or by negative marker. (Benincà 2006; Poletto 2014; cfr. also Franco 2009 for fronted *molto* as a case of Stylistic Fronting).

4. The reason for this asymmetry is that in the low IP area QPs check for their quantificational features, as they still do in Modern Italian. When they raise to CP, they do so to satisfy a different pragmatic driven constraint, which is no longer active in the modern language. So, the first step of the movement to the low IP area is driven by the internal makeup of the QP, while the second to the CP area is not.

References: • Benincà, P. 2006. A detailed map of the left periphery of Medieval Romance. In R. Zanuttini, H. Campos & E. Herburger (eds.), *Crosslinguistic research in syntax and semantics: Negation, tense, and clausal architecture*, 53–86. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press. • Franco, I. 2009. *Verbs, subjects and stylistic fronting. A comparative analysis of the interaction of CP properties with verb movement and subject positions in Icelandic and Old Italian*. PhD thesis, University of Siena. • Poletto, C. 2014. *Word order in Old Italian*. Oxford: OUP. • Garzonio, J. & C. Poletto. 2017. How bare are bare quantifiers? Some notes from diachronic and synchronic variation in Italian. *Linguistic Variation* 17(1). 44–67.