

*Partitive in negative contexts: a
microvariationist analysis*

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Aim of the talk

- We concentrate on a particular type of partitive structures, those that in French do not display the article and provide an overview of the possible systems we found across Northern Italy
- This can help us to trace back how the path of PAs (partitive articles) in general has developed historically.

(1) a. Je bois *(du)vin.

I drink of-the wine

(2) a. Bevo vino

drink wine

b. Bevo del vino (Italian)

drink of-the wine

Battye (1991)

Battye (1991) claims that partitive articles in Northern Italian varieties can also be used when the mass noun is non-specific.

Staseja gɛ du manzu

Genova

Tonight there.is of-the beef

However, it is not possible to have a partitive in cases like „he eats meat“ meaning he is no vegetarian.

Northern Italian dialects display a distribution which is at first similar to the one of (Northern) standard Italian and therefore more restricted than French:

Je mange *(du) pain French

Mangio (del) pane Standard Italian

Magno (del) pan Venetian

Investigating NIDs might help us to see how the partitive article spreads in a language according to different semantic and syntactic types.

Di is not a P

The partitive article can also occur after a preposition:

i bandii sparavan **da di** barkoin
the outlaws shoot from of.the boats

i surdatti dormivan in e de brande
The soldiers slept in of.the cots

→ Since prepositions like da 'from' and in 'in' usually do not select for a P, the following form cannot be interpreted as a normal preposition.

Partitives as non-specific

The partitive cannot be used for a specific nominal expression, it is incompatible with a restrictive relative but compatible with a kind-defining relative (see Benincà & Cinque (2013))

*Magno del pan che go comprà ieri

*Magno dele patate che go cusinà ieri

Magno solo che del pan che sia fresco e bon

Magno solo che dele patate che sia bone e frite ben

Other dialects (Emilian) behave differently.

Property denoting and partitives

In Venetian the distinction is rather property denoting:

Magno pan

I generally eat bread (i.e. I am a bread-eater)

Magno del pan

I am eating some bread

Magno patate (i.e. I am a potato-eater)

Magno delle patate

I eat some potatoes

- The relation between the semantic values of PAs and real partitives still remains under debate.
- Syntactically, it is clear that the two constructions are not identical (see Cardinaletti and Giusti 2016)
- We now concentrate on negative contexts.

Negative contexts

Negative contexts behave differently in French:

(3) Il n'y a pas de/*du vin dans cette bouteille.

it not=there=have not of/*of-the wine in
this bottle

'There is no wine in this bottle.'

Here the type of PA is different, since there is no article, we call it PQ (partitive occurring in quantificational structures).

Research question

- Cardinaletti and Giusti propose that in Italian plural PAs like *dei* are the plural indefinite determiner.
- Starting from this analysis of the positive cases above:
- *What is the structure of PQs in negative contexts?*
- *How can we describe the variation found across varieties?*

Modern Italian

- Standard Italian does not display this phenomenon at all in negative contexts (either with postverbal *mica* or not).
- (4) a. *Non c'è di vino in questa bottiglia
Not there is of wine in this bottle
- b. *Non c'è mica di vino in questa bottiglia
Not there is not of wine in this bottle

- Then the property that allows for PQs in negative contexts is not a direct function of the presence of a minimizer negation as one might think.
- What is the property of the negative markers that allow for PQs?

Old Milanese

(5) On sté de scisceri e **miga de vin** d'intrà.
one measure of chickpeas and MIGA of
wine of income (Lancino Curti 6-14)

'One measure (20 l) of chickpeas and a little of
wine as income...'

(6) Là no se sente **miga de male**.
there NEG REFL feels MIGA of pain
(Barsegapé 2430)

'There one does not feel any pain.'

Old Florentine

(7) che non ebbono se non poco pane né **punto**
that NEG had but NEG little bread and-NEG PUNTO
di vino.

of wine (G. Villani – Nuova Cronica 13.66)
'... that they had not but a little of bread and
had no wine.'

French-like negative partitives

In Ligurian and Piedmontese dialects we find negation partitives (see Manzini and Savoia (2011):

al beu ren de vin

He drinks not of wine

Manzini and Savoia use these data to argue that so called negative adverbs are quantifiers of the object:

al beu [Q ren] [de vin]

Modern NIDs

Nə caman **mia** d əu te frial.

NEG-SCL call NEG of the your brother

‘They do not call your brother.’

(Quarna Sotto, from Manzini-Savoia 2005)

Notice that here the genitive has a definite article with a kinship N.

So, even in negative contexts PAs are allowed.

A first survey shows that there are areas where the partitive surfaces in contexts where it is not possible in standard Italian (even the Northern variant) and which are similar to French like:

- A) Quantifiers like (*how*) *much/many* in central Rhaetoromance varieties
- B) In Ligurian and Piedmontese some Alpine Lombard and Emilian varieties in negative contexts in a leopard spots distribution

We concentrate on these cases in this talk

Partitives in the ASIt

1.7 Avendo mangiato troppa torta, Gianni si e` sentito male

1.12 Ne ho viste poche, di case cosi' belle

1.43 Per aver mangiato troppe fragole, oggi stai male

2 .37 Dei libri che avevi ordinato ne arriveranno solo tre

2.40 Non mangia mai frutta, quella ragazza

2.49 Non comprano mai frutta, le mie sorelle

2.61 Non compri mai mele

2.68 Non mangiamo mai frutta

2.77 Non leggete mai dei libri

4.2 Non mangio la carne

4.4 No mangiamo mai pesce

4. 13 Di persone così ce ne sono molte.

4. 24 Vende solo caffè.

4.55 Quanti ne hai visti?

4.60 Paolo ha meno caramelle di Mario.

4.70 Gianni ha più caramelle di Mario.

5.22 Quanti studenti provano l'esame stavolta!

5.27 Sapessi di quanti argomenti ha parlato!

5.31 Quanta confusione avete fatto!

5.35 Quante mele marce ho trovato!

5.56 Quanti articoli ha scritto!

5 65 Sapessi quanti ci sono cascati!

7. 3 Carlo non mangia la frutta

7.4 Carlo non ha mangiato la frutta

Central Rhaetoromance

In Central Rhaetoromance the *wh*-word meaning *how much/many* takes a partitive object in a way similar to *combien* in French:

Tan **de** libri aste pa lit?

How.many of books have-you particle read?

Tan **de** smalz meteste pa tla turte?

How.mich of butter put-you particle in.the cake?

→ No difference is observed between plurals and mass nouns.

Central Rhaetormance

PQs are allowed with Quantifiers like
“much/many” if “tan” is used, but not with “trec”:

I à trec libri te tascia/ I à tan **de** libri te tascia

I have many books in-the bag

I à lit tan **de** libri /trec libri

I have read many of books/many books

→ This means that the partitive depends on the properties of the Q used, not on general properties of the language.

Central Rhaetoromance

Although Central Rhaetoromance has Qs which require a partitive, it does not display split quantification:

*Tan meteste pa de smalz tla turte?

How.much put.you of butter in.the cake?

*I à tan lit de libri

I have many read of books

→ The partitive is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for split quantification.

- Rhaetoromance allows us to make a distinction between different quantifiers, i.e. only those that in Giusti's terms are non-adjectival allow for PAs.
- So, in negative contexts, the structure required is:
- [_{QP} **Tan** [_{PA/DP} de [NP libri]]]
- Problem: *tan* is an adjective just like *trec*.

- Since Rhaetoromance does not allow us to make any distinction between different types of complements of the Q , we now turn to other varieties where the difference is more visible.

A detailed survey could tell us which quantifiers take a partitive more often and hence give us an insight into the internal structure of these elements. In other words, it could be that there exists an implicational scale in the types of Qs related to partitives.

Negation + Partitive object (plur.)



Mass nouns in Ligurian

She never eat fruit, that girl

A n'mangia mai **dra fruta** sa matotta Carcare

Quelle figgie e nu mangie mei **de fruta** Casarza

A nu mangia moi **fruta**, cuella suena FinaleLigure

→ With mass nouns we observe the following variation across the domain:

de+D, de+∅, ∅

→ This variation might be related to other properties of the D system of each dialect.

Plural Nouns

You never buy apples

Ten catti moi **i mei** Cairo Montenotte

Nu ta cati mai **de pumu** Arzeno

T'en cati mai **der meire** Pontivrea

Nu ti catti mai **pomme** Borghetto Vara

De meie ti nun acati mai Arenzano

→ Variation across the domain:

D, de+D, de +∅, ∅, left dislocation

- Cardinaletti and Giusti note that in positive clauses there is a difference between plural countable nouns and mass nouns.
- We find the same in negative contexts, there are dialects that distinguish between the two.

Varieties with generalized bare nouns

Cirvoi (BL)

- a. Le me sorele no le compra mai \emptyset fruta.
The my sisters not they buy never fruit
- b. No te cio mai \emptyset pon.
Not you buy never apples
- c. No magnon mai \emptyset fruta.
Not eat.we never fruit
- d. No ledè mai \emptyset libri.
Not read.you never books

These are dialects which are irrelevant for PAs and probably still have one of the OI possibilities

Varieties with generalized P plus the determiner: *Di* + Art

Riva di Chieri (TO)

a. A catu mai **dla** fruta, ar me sore.

SCL buy never of.the fruit, the my sisters

b. Et cate mai **di** pum.

You buy never of.the apples

c. Mangiuma mai **dla** fruta.

Eat.we never of.the fruit

d. Lese mai **di** libre.

Read never of.the books

No variation, P+D is always present

For these dialects we can say that they use the exact counterpart of positive PAs also in negative clauses.

Varieties with generalized P +0

Savona

a. I nu catan mai **de** fruta, e me so.

They not buy never of fruit, the my sisters

b. Nu ti cati mai **de** meie.

Not you buy never of apples

c. Nu mangemu mai **de** fruta.

Not eat.we never of fruit

d. I nu lesei mai **de** libri.

They not read never of books

These are dialects with the same structure as French.

Distribution of PQs

a. A nu mangia mai **de** früta, chela garzuna.

She not eat never of fruit, that girl

b. Nu te cati mai **de** mee.

Not you buy never of apples

c. I nu lezei mai **di** libri.

They not read never of.the books

d. Nu te ti mangi **de** mea?

Not you you eat of apple?

→ PQs are also possible with singular countable nouns like in French, which shows that the structure is really of the same type as French.

Varieties with P +0/D

- a. I ne cato mai **de** fruta, e me soele. -D
They not buy never of fruit, the my sister
- b. Te ne te cati mai **di** pomi. +D
You not you buy never of.the apples
- c. A ne mangemo mai **de** fruta. -D
We not eat never of fruit
- d. A ne lezé mai **di** libri. +D
You not read never of.the books
- There exist varieties with P+D in the plural but not with the mass noun.

Varieties with P +0/D

Ti te n'catti mai **d'meji**

Carcare

You buy never of apples

A n'mangia mai **dra fruta** sa matotta Carcare

She not eats never of.the fruit that girl

But the opposite is also attested: there exist varieties with P+D with mass nouns but with P+ \emptyset with plurals.

General occurrences of prepositions in negative contexts

	Preposition	No Preposition
mass	(89) 45,64%	(106) 53,81%
plural	(96) 79,34%	(25) 20,66%
sing. count	(5) 6,25%	(75) 93,75%
total	(190) 47,98%	(206) 52,02%

- In general, PQs are more frequent with plural Ns than with mass Ns.
- The table however does not distinguish whether the article is also present or not, so some of those PQs could actually be normal PAs like those in positive contexts.

Occurrence of P + definite article in negative contexts

	Definite article	∅
mass	(26) 29,21%	(63) 70,79%
plural	(58) 60,42%	(38) 39,58%
singular	0,00%	(5) 100,00%
total	(84) 44,21%	(190) 55,79%

- While plurals are more frequent with P+D, mass nouns are more frequent with P+∅
- The same asymmetry between plural and mass nouns found by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2016) represents itself in negative contexts. We can assume that cases of P+D are identical to positive PAs and should be analyzed in a parallel way.
- In those dialects which have the structure P+D, negation is irrelevant for the computation of the object.

Rowlett's analysis

As Manzini and Savoia note, the idea is rather old, Meyer-Lübke already (1899:§693-694) proposes that *pas* originate in a partitive construction.

Rowlett proposes that French **pas** is actually a Quantifier which forms a constituent with the partitive and is then extracted out of the nominal expression.

→ He treats *pas* in the same way as *combien* or *beaucoup* because they are all subject to split quantification.

Rowlett's fundamental idea is that *pas* behaves like other Qs modifying the object DP, and as such is merged in the object position and then raised to Neg.

This goes hand in hand with Manzini and Savoia's idea that negative adverbs are nothing other than nouns.

In Rowlett's analysis the case of intransitive verbs, *pas* is attached directly to the VP.

This distinction can be avoided if Bayer's (2011) analysis is assumed: adverbial 'nichts' is possible only with intransitive verbs and therefore is merged in the object position and then raised.

Hence, at least some negative markers could be hypothesized to be merged in the direct object position.

Hirschbühler and Labelle (1992)

counterarguments

H&L bring some arguments against the idea that *pas* is merged with the partitive: first of all *ne* and *pas* form a constituent

Pour ne pas qu'elle souffre, il la laisse pressentir la vérité

In a cartographic framework this is not a problem, since we might say that the whole NegP is not in the clausal spine, but merges in the vP and moves to the CP as a whole. The only problem here is for the analysis of *ne* as a clitic.

There are distinctions between quantifiers and *pas*:

Je n'ai pas l'intention d'acheter de livres

*J'ai beaucoup l'intention d'acheter de livres

They can be expressed in term of the fact that *pas* is a nominal element while *beaucoup* is the modifier of an empty nominal AMOUNT/NUMBER.

Also these differences can be explained in the same way: *pas* is a nominal element, *aucun* is like *beaucoup* a modifier.

a. Je ne crois pas qu'il ait acheté de livres

b. *Je ne crois qu'il ait acheté aucun livre

- This means that in negative contexts, just like in quantificational ones, there is indeed a quantifier inside the argument.
- So the difference between negative markers (either preverbal or postverbal) that require $P+\emptyset$ and those that require normal PAs like in positive clauses is related to the first merge position of the negative marker.

We believe that Rowlett's original idea is correct of combined with Battye (1991:38), who assumes that the partitive structure results from the presence of a null element (*namely AMOUNT/NUMBER*) which subcategorises for a PP headed by *de*.

However, *pas* and *trop/beaucoup/peu* etc. are categorially distinct

Kayne (2002) and ff. has proposed that there exist several empty functional nouns which are syntactically active. He proposes that empty functional nouns can be THING, PLACE, WAY, TIME, REASON, and crucially for us, NUMBER and AMOUNT. Kayne (2005:260) proposes “In all languages, modifiers with the interpretation of *many* or *few* necessarily modify NUMBER (or *number*)”

The hypothesis

Postverbal negative markers of the minimizer type are always generated in the vP, with transitive and intransitive verbs.

The difference between quantifiers and negation is that the negative marker is itself a quantity noun located lower than the functional one, while quantifiers are (higher) modifiers of an empty quantity noun (see also Zamparelli 2002)

$[_{QP} AMOUNT/NUMBER [_{classNP} pas [_{PP} de]$

$[_{QP} [_{AdjP} beaucoup] [AMOUNT/NUMBER [_{PP} de [_{NP}]]]$

- This means that even elements like *tan* in Rhaetoromance are adjectival in nature, they can display a P+∅ complement, since they can be associated to a null AMOUNT/NUMBER quantifier.
- Therefore, the presence of P+∅ is not related to the form and the category of the visible quantifier that requires it.

I argument

A. It accounts for the etymological origin of the negative markers of the minimizer type.

The NIDs display a wealth of minimizers as negative markers *mia*, *brisa*, *bucca/ca* etc. which can only be explained if the negative marker must at some point have been able to move to an adverbial position starting from the object one.

On the other hand, it also accounts for those cases where the Q looks like an adjective and still $P+\emptyset$ is found.

II Argument

It also explains why there is a determinerless partitive in these cases: this is usually the case with quantified expression of a certain type.

While universal Qs are generally associated to definite DPs with a definite determiner, other Qs are associated to nominal expressions without an overt determiner.

III argument

In Occitan (Ramats, Chiomonte Piedmont) *pa* is split from the postverbal subject or direct object:

L'ei pâ arrivá gî

It is neg arrived people 'Nobody came'

La m'a pâ vî gî

It me has neg seen people 'Nobody saw me'

However, when it is in preverbal position, it occurs with the functional noun:

Pagî o minjá la soupo

Neg+people has eaten the soup 'nobody ate the soup'

Pagî ou'm capî

Nobody understands me.

To explain this pattern, we claim that pa....gi is a case of split quantification where the Q portion raises to an adverbial position but must leave the N portion below.

In the preverbal position the whole complex raises to get case and split quantification is not possible, otherwise the functional noun would c-command the Q and not otherwise.

Up to now we have seen that

- a) The presence of the article with negation is sensitive to the distinction between mass/plural (see Ligurian)
- b) Plural Ns are more frequently paired to complements with the D, but this is only a tendency to be better investigated in terms of co-occurring factors

The presence of a partitive after the negative marker or a quantifier can be attributed to the presence of a functional quantity noun. The Q is the modifier or an empty AMOUNT/NUMBER, while *pas/mia* is itself the quantity noun.

This has consequences on the general view on sentential negation as originating in the object position.

- This hypothesis allows us to explain why the $P+\emptyset$ construction is not only found with nominal quantifiers but also with adjectival ones, since they are the adjective of a null Q.
- It also allows us to explain why pas is different, being a classifier-like minimizer.

Summing up

The Northern Italian dialects can be the testing ground to see how an “intermediate” system of partitive articles develops from the core cases to become a system of the French type.

Furthermore, they can be used to test specific cases of partitives induced by negation or a type of Qs.

Thank you for your
attention