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RESEARCH

Differential Object Marking and the properties of D in the dialects of the extreme south of Italy

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This paper discusses two case studies of microvariation in accusative marking in the Italo-Romance varieties of the extreme south of Italy. In particular, the diatopic variation displayed by the dialects of southern Calabria gives rise to peculiar patterns of alternation between presence or absence of the marker *a* 'to' in flagging the accusative. The realisation of accusative case is partially governed by semantic and referential features, i.e. specificity and animacy. In addition, the nature of the realisation of the D head results in a degree of competition between zero marking and analytic accusative marking with *a*. Given the century-long co-existence of Latin/Romance and Greek in southern Calabria, the relevant morphosyntactic patterns in Case-marking will also be examined from a language contact perspective. We will highlight how the relevant outcomes do not simply involve borrowing mechanisms or template copying from the lending variety but, rather, produce hybrid structures no longer ascribable to a purely Romance or Greek grammar.

Keywords: Case; DOM; DP; Italo-Greek; Italo-Romance; language contact

1 Differential Object Marking in Italo-Romance

Several languages of the world display differential marking whereby specific types of arguments are flagged by particular case and/or agreement strategies. One widely discussed example involves differential object marking (DOM; Bossong 1982: 580; 1985), namely the morphosyntactic phenomenon for which, given two subsets of direct objects in a language, one is marked differently from the other (Bárány 2018: 3). According to traditional accounts, as well as recent typological approaches (cf. Aissen 2003; Carnie 2005), DOM is triggered by certain local features or individual factors of the relevant nominals. In particular, the use of DOM is generally explained as an epiphenomenon of the activation of at least three sets of semantico-syntactic properties. DOM may be a reflex of: (i) animacy, i.e. an intrinsic property of nominals (Silverstein 1976; Dixon 1979; Lazard 1984; de Swart & de Hoop 2007: 606); (ii) definiteness, i.e. the structural codification of features related to referentiality (Lyons 1999; Aissen 2003); and (iii) other properties which are subject to discourse-related requirements, such as specificity and topicality (de Swart & de Hoop 2007; Leonetti 2008; see García-García 2005 and Iemmolo 2010 for the notion of *topicality*). It has been argued that DOM not only defines a subset of objects on the basis of specific semantico-syntactic nominal properties, but that it also co-occurs with a high degree of transitivity (Hopper & Thomson 1980; 1982; Torrego 1998; Cennamo 2003; Næss 2004; García-García 2005 a.o.). Given the wide range of triggering factors, languages which display DOM vary considerably depending on the nature of the single features involved and their interaction. Nevertheless, the relevant licensing factors for DOM do not define clear-cut subclasses of nominals, highlighting how the

distribution of a differential marking has to be assessed cross-linguistically and from a micro-variation perspective (cf. Ledgeway 2018).

In the Romance domain, the phenomenon of DOM is attested in Ibero-Romance (Campos 1999: 1529–1545; Escandell-Vidal 2009: 837ff a.o.), Romanian (Dragomirescu & Nicolae 2016: 920–923),¹ several African varieties of French (Roberge 1990: 105–107, 120–121) and Sardinian (Jones 1993: 65ff; 1995; La Fauci 1997: 51–53). In these varieties DOM is generally realised through the marker *a* (< Lat. AD ‘to’), with the exception of Romanian where it is marked by *pe* (< Lat. (SU)PER ‘on’).² DOM is also widespread across the dialects of Italy.³ The contrast in (1a–b) from Neapolitan is representative of DOM in Romance: the specific inanimate object in (1a) occurs in the unmarked form of the accusative, witness the doubling accusative clitic *’o* on the verb, whereas the specific animate object in (1b) occurs in the marked accusative introduced by *a* and once again doubled by the accusative clitic *’o*:

(1) *Neapolitan*

- a. *’o* *verette* *’o* *libbro*
3MSG.ACC = saw.1SG the.MSG book.MSG
‘I saw the book’
- b. *’o* *verette* *a* *Mario*
3MSG.ACC = saw.1SG to Mario
‘I saw Mario’

1.1 Differential Object Marking in southern Calabrian varieties

Recent fieldwork investigations⁴ confirm previous observations on the properties of DOM in southern Italian dialects, but also highlight some new patterns which crucially reveal significant correlations between the presence of the definite determiner and the accusative marker *a*. In the following section, we shall assess and discuss the patterns displayed by two subsets of dialects spoken in the extreme south of Calabria, in the province of Reggio Calabria.

1.1.1 Case Study 1: DOM in Calabrese₁

The system of accusative marking we describe below is attested in several southern Calabrian dialects spoken in an area roughly corresponding to the southern side of the Aspromonte,⁵ e.g. Bagaladi, Bova, Cardeto, Embrisi, Melito di Porto Salvo, San Lorenzo, San Pantaleone, San Roberto, Scido. We shall henceforth refer to this subset of varieties as “Calabrese₁”. Significantly the area encompassed by these localities hosts several Greek-speaking villages.⁶

¹ DOM is attested in standard Italian as well (Berruto 1985; Benincà 1988; Berretta 1989; Zamboni 1991; Lorenzetti 2002).

² In the Gallo-Romance dialects of Sicily DOM is signaled by *da* < DE + AB (Rohlf 1969: 8, 15; Manzini & Savoia 2005, II: 502); in the central Italian dialects by *ma/me* < IN MEDIO (AD) (Rohlf 1969: 15; Berizzi 2013). The markers *a*, *da*, *ma/me* also signal dative in these same varieties (Rohlf 1971: 333–335).

³ See, among others, Rohlf (1969: §632; 1971); Jones (1995); Sornicola (1997a; b; 2011); Ledgeway (2000: Chapter 2); Manzini & Savoia (2005, II: 515ff); Iemmolo (2010); Guardiano (2014); Andriani (2015).

⁴ The relevant data have been collected through interviews with native speakers of Italo-Romance varieties of the extreme south of Calabria from April to July 2016. The fieldwork investigations fall within the scope of the Research Project “Fading voices in southern Italy: investigating language contact in Magna Graecia”, carried out at the University of Cambridge. Additional information can be found on the project’s website: www.greekromanceproject.wordpress.com.

⁵ Thanks to the reference suggested by an anonymous reviewer, we also include the accusative marking system of Agnana Calabra as fully consistent with Calabrese₁ (Bentley et al. 2015: 141–142). Agnana Calabra is a village of the north-eastern side of the Aspromonte massif.

⁶ At the time of the investigations (April–July 2016), the Italo-Greek variety of Calabria was still spoken by a small number of predominantly elderly people in five villages: Bova (Marina), Chorío di Roghudi, Con-

In Calabrese₁ DOM surfaces on nominal expressions denoting humans. Typically, they correspond to highly referential nominals in definite and specific contexts (Abbott 2006), including DPs with overt definite determiners (2a), personal pronouns and proper names (2b), kinship terms modified by possessives (2c), DPs headed by universal and indefinite quantifiers (2d), bare demonstratives (2e) and bare quantifiers (2f) with human reference (cf. Ledgeway 2018).

(2) *Embrisi*

- a. Petru mazzau o previte i Messina.⁷
 Petru killed.3SG to.the.MSG priest.MSG of Messina
 ‘Petru killed the priest of Messina.’

Bagaladi

- b. Stamattina vitti a tia no a Petru.
 this.morning saw.1SG to you not to Petru
 ‘This morning I saw you, not Pietro.’
- c. Ste stati aji ncotrari a to nonna.
 this summer have.1SG meet.INF to your grandma
 ‘This summer I will meet your grandma.’
- d. Vitti a tutti i figghioli.
 saw.1SG to all.MPL the.MPL kids.MPL
 ‘I saw all the kids.’

Bagaladi

- e. Vidisti a chidu?
 saw.2SG to that.MSG
 ‘Have you seen that guy?’

Scido

- f. Iu no vitti a nudu / a calcheduno.
 I not saw.1SG to nobody to somebody.MSG
 ‘I did not see anybody.’

dofuri (Marina), Gallicianò, Roghudi (Nuovo). A variety of Italo-Greek is also spoken in Salento, in seven villages south of Lecce (for further details, see Schifano & Silvestri 2017).

⁷ Most varieties of the extreme south of Calabria display aphaeresized forms of the definite articles:

(i) *Embrisi*

- U previte, a cotrara e i monachi chiamaru ajeri.
 the.MSG priest the.FSG girl and the.FSG nuns called.3SG.PRT yesterday
 ‘Yesterday the priest/the girl/the nuns called up.’

Non-aphaeresized forms of the definite article are employed if the following word begins with a vowel:

(ii) *Embrisi*

- l' occhiu, l' acqua, l' ossa, l' atri
 the.MSG eye the.FSG water the.FPL bones the.MPL others
 ‘the eye, the water, the bones, the others’

When the marker *a* co-occurs with the aphaeresized forms of the definite determiners, vocalic coalescence obtains, namely [a] + [a] = [a:], [a] + [o] = [o], [a] + [i] = [e]. The lengthening of /a/ is often not detectable, so that the quantitative difference between the bare FSG definite determiner and the articulated form is blurred. In order to graphically disambiguate the FSG definite determiner and the articulated form from the marker *a*, we represent the FSG definite determiner as ‘a, the articulated form as *â* and the marker as *a*.

The marker *a* co-occurring with the non-aphaeresized forms of the definite determiners triggers the lengthening of the /l/:

(iii) *Embrisi*

- Vitti a- ll' atri ajeri.
 saw.1SG to the.MPL others yesterday
 ‘I saw the others yesterday.’

Table 1: Marked vs unmarked accusative in Calabrese₁.

personal pronouns > proper Ns > definite DPs > <i>specified</i> indefinite nominals	> generic DPs
+referential	-referential
marked accusative	unmarked accusative

The evidence in (2a–f) shows that Calabrese₁ DOM occurs whenever D° is lexicalised by a determiner, a pronominal determiner or a raised N.

Although DOM is generally not licensed with nominal expressions prototypically conveying indefiniteness, it does occur when the direct object refers to a *specific* individual (Diesing 1992; Abbott 2006). Thus, the two sentences in (3) are not interchangeable.

(3) *San Pantaleone*

- a. Petru mazzau du previti.
Petru killed.3SG two priests
'Petru killed two priests (= two non-specific priests).'
- b. Petru mazzau a du previti chi canuscia jeu.
Petru killed.3SG to two priests whom knew.1SG I
'Petru killed two priests (= two specific priests) whom I knew.'

While *du previti* in (3a) refers to a set of two non-specified priests, *a du previti* in (3b) denotes two referents which are identified and particularised in the speaker's mind (Leonetti 2012: 296ff; Gianollo & Silvestri in press). Therefore, in Calabrese₁ DOM is a syntactic reflex of the specific interpretation of DPs and it occurs with highly referential DPs, including definite DPs and indefinite DPs when they refer to human, concrete, singular and count individuals (Table 1).

In Calabrese₁ only specific animate direct objects are marked through DOM.

1.1.2 Case Study 2: DOM in Calabrese₂

A different pattern of accusative marking is exhibited by a group of dialects spoken in an area including the eastern coast of southern Calabria. The relevant evidence is represented here by the distribution of DOM in the dialect of Gioiosa Ionica and in the conservative variety of San Luca. Both dialects represent the subset Calabrese₂ which is characterised by the complementarity between marked accusative and the definite determiner. In particular, in Calabrese₂ DOM is excluded in the presence of an overt definite determiner, as the examples in (4) show:

(4) *San Luca*

- a. Mazzau u gattu neru.⁸
killed.3SG the.MSG cat.MSG black.MSG
'S/He killed the black cat.'

⁸ The dialects of Gioiosa Ionica and San Luca too exhibit the aphaeresized forms (see fn.5):

- (i) *Gioiosa Ionica*
U cani, a crapa e i gatti mi muzzicaru.
the.MSG dog the.FSG sheep and the.M/FPL cats me.OBJ = bite.3SG.PRT
'The dog, the sheep and the cats bit me.'

- b. Vitti sulu i omini 'nt-â chiazza.
saw.1SG only the.MPL men into-the.FSG square.FSG
'I only saw the men in the square.'
- c. *Gioiosa Ionica*
Ammazzau u frati i Maria.
killed.3SG the.MSG brother of Maria
'S/He killed Maria's brother.'

Direct objects introduced by a definite determiner do not bear a differential accusative marker even when they denote referents which are explicitly presupposed in the speech participants' knowledge:

(5) *San Luca*

Vitti i cotrari fimmini i Riggio chi canusci tu.
saw.1SG the.PL kids.PL female of Reggio that know.2SG you
'I saw the girls from Reggio whom you know.'

(ii) *San Luca*

U previti, a mastra e i cotrari mi salutaru.
the.MSG priest the.FSG seamstress and the kids me.OBJ = wave.3SG.PRT
'The priest, the seamstress and the kids have waved at me.'

Non-aphaeresized forms of the definite articles occur when the following word begins with a vowel:

(iii) *Gioiosa Ionica*

Mi cicasti l' occhiu.
me = blinded.2SG.PRT the.MSG eye
'You have blinded me (lit. = you have blinded my eye).'

(iv) *San Luca*

Vippi l' acqua fridda.
drank.1SG.PRT the.FSG water cold.FSG
'I have drunk some cold water.'

(v) *San Luca*

Vitti l' Armandu / la Ida / l' atri.
saw.1SG.PRT the.MSG Armando / the.FSG Ida / the.MPL others
'I saw Armando/Ida/the others.'

Also, non-aphaeresized forms of the definite article surface when the preposition *a* (<AD), in its locative function, precedes the definite DPs. In these cases, *a* triggers the lengthening of /l/ in Gioiosa Ionica (vi) whereas in San Luca /l/ undergoes also palatalisation (vii).

(vi) *Gioiosa Ionica*

Vaju a-lla casa i tata / a-llu mari.
go.1SG.PRS to-the.FSG house of dad / to-the.MSG sea
'I am going to my dad's/to the seaside.'

(vii) *San Luca*

Staiu jendu a-glia casa d'a Maria / a-gliu mari.
stand.1SG.PRS do.GER to-the.FSG house of.the.FSG Maria / to-the.MSG sea
'I am going to Maria's/to the seaside.'

Crucially, DOM in Calabrese₂ is found with some of the configurations that license DOM in Calabrese₁ (2 a–f), i.e. whenever the head D° is lexicalised by a pronoun or a raised N and whenever D° is empty:⁹

(6) *Gioiosa Ionica*

- a. Stamatina nt'â chiazza no vitti a nuju.
this.morning in.the.FSG square not saw.1SG.PRT to nobody
'This morning I saw nobody in the square.'
- b. Petru mazzau a iju.
Pietro killed.3SG.PRT to that.MSG
'Pietro killed that man.'

San Luca

- c. U vidisti a fratima?
him.OBJ saw.2SG.PRT to brother.my
'Have you seen my brother?'
- d. U santu vitti a Diu 'nto sonnu.
the saint saw.3SG.PRT to God in.the.MSG sleep
'The saint saw God in his sleep.'

Among Calabrese₂ dialects, the conservative variety of San Luca exhibits the requirement that proper names be preceded by an expletive determiner (Longobardi et al. 2013). Given such requirement, DPs with proper names fail to license DOM (cf. also De Angelis in press), witness the example (7a). On the contrary, in the Calabrese₂ dialect of Gioiosa Ionica, which does not license expletive articles, proper names occur with the marker *a* (7b):

(7) *S. Luca*

- a. Vitti u Petru e 'a Maria e i chiamai.¹⁰
saw.1SG the.MSG Petru and the.FSG Maria and them.ACC.MPL =
called.1SG
'I saw Petro and Maria and I called them.'

Gioiosa Ionica

- b. Vitti a Petru e a Maria e i chiamai.
saw.1SG to Petru and to Maria and them. ACC.MPL = called.1SG
'I saw Petro and Maria and I called them.'

To sum up, the two subsets of southern Calabrian varieties exhibit two different types of accusative marking: in Calabrese₁ DOM marks DPs denoting human individuals, which are highly referential (i.e. denoted by pronouns, proper names or definite DPs) or, if denoted by indefinite DPs, encode specific individuals; in Calabrese₂ DOM is licensed with the same set of DPs if and only if no definite determiner occurs. From a pragmatic

⁹ The evidence brought up by Calabrese₂ finds a striking parallel in patterns of DOM displayed in Sardinian (Jones 1993: 65–76; 1995) and Corsican (Neuburger & Stark 2014).

¹⁰ The phonetic changes triggered by /a/ (<AD), as described in fn.8, help prove that in San Luca an underlying AD as a mark of the direct object is ruled out:

- (i) *San Luca*
Vitti *a-glia Maria / *a-gliu Petru.
saw.1SG.PRT to-the.FSG Maria to-the.MSG Petru
'I saw Maria/Pietro.'

point of view, the DPs denoting highly referential and specific entities express a presupposition, i.e. a piece of information that the speaker implicitly assumes to be already known by all discourse participants (cf. Stalnaker 1974; Schwarz 1977: 247; Enç 1991; Diesing 1992; see also Jäger 1995; Raposo & Uriagereka 1995; Leonetti 2008; Gianollo & Silvestri in press). Specifically, we adopt a pragmatic notion of presupposition (Dryer 1996: 487; Schwenter 2005; see also Larrivé 2014: 116) whereby presupposition corresponds to activated and discourse-old information, i.e. information available to both the speaker and the hearer at a given point in discourse. We therefore assume that in the varieties of southern Calabria DOM is a reflex of the semantico-pragmatic entailment of presuppositionality.



The patterns of accusative realisation of Calabrese₂ exhibit peculiar properties which need to be accounted for. First of all, the direct object is never differentially marked if the definite determiner occurs (7a). Contrastingly, if the definite determiner is absent, the accusative is marked by *a* when conveying a presuppositional reading (8a vs 8b):

- (8) a. Petru vitti *(a) nu cotraru chi canusci tu. [+presuppositional]
 Petru saw.3SG to a.MSG boy that know.2SG you
 ‘Petru has seen a certain boy whom you know.’
- b. Petru vitti (*a) nu cotraru. [-presuppositional]
 Petru saw.3SG to a.MSG boy
 ‘Petru has seen a boy.’

In what follows a structural interpretation of the accusative configurations attested in both sub-sets of Calabrese varieties is provided.

2 Interpreting Calabrese₁

In Calabrese₁ DOM represents the analytic realisation of structural accusative Case (Vergnaud 2008 [1977]; Chomsky 1981). Accusative is licensed when *v* enters into an Agree relation with an accessible DP able to value its unvalued features (Chomsky 2000; 2001), giving rise to both long-distance feature-checking operations of Case valuation and agreement. By way of illustration, consider (9a), where the *v* head functions as a Probe and exhibits unvalued ϕ -features which need to be valued in the course of the derivation. DPs that display an unvalued Case feature (*uCase*) are accessible Goals for the Agree operation, which makes them active Goals. In (9a), *v* and the direct object fulfill these requirements and establish an Agree relation.

- (9) a. $[_{VP} v \ u\phi_{-} /CASE.ACC \ [VP \dots \ [DO \ DP \ \phi_{.3SG} /uCASE \ _]]$

- b. $[_{VP} v \ u\phi_{.3SG} /CASE.ACC \ [VP \dots \ [DO \ DP \ \phi_{.3SG} /uCASE.ACC \]]$


The feature valuation is bidirectional. The Probe’s unvalued ϕ -features are valued by the Goal and the Goal’s unvalued Case feature is valued by the Probe (9b). Agree results in the valuation of accusative on the direct object DP and valuation of person and number on *v*. This operation is essential in order for the derivation not to crash. In particular, the DP must enter into the Agree relation with the Case_{ACC}-valuing Probe, otherwise the Case Filter is violated (Vergnaud 2008 [1977]; Chomsky 1981).

We observed that in Calabrese₁ the marker *a* obligatorily occurs whenever a pronominal D or a raised N occupy D°. ¹¹ In southern Italian dialects personal pronouns are the syntactic expression of Person (Longobardi et al. 2013). In the varieties of southern Calabria accusative case in personal pronouns must bear the marker *a*:

(10) *San Luca*

- a. Vitti *(a) tia / *tu [ACC]
saw.1SG to you.ACC you.NOM
'I saw you'
- b. Arrivasti tu / *tia [NOM]
came.2SG you.NOM you.ACC
'You came'
- c. Stu pani esti pe tia / *tu [OBL]
this.MSG bread.MSG is for you.OBL you.NOM
'This bread is for you'

Person is, in turn, decomposable into further Person-related features, such as context-dependent indexicals: 'Participant' for second person and 'Participant' and 'Speaker' for first person (Harley & Ritter 2002). Both first and second persons are also intrinsically human. The accusative of the pronouns is realised both through the marker *a* and the selection of the morphological non-nominative form (11a). It follows that there is a close connection between the semantic feature of first/second person, i.e. humanness, the pragmatic entailment of presuppositionality (2.1.2) and the marked accusative. ¹² In Calabrese₁ demonstratives functioning as third person object pronouns behave like the first/second personal pronouns if denoting a human referent ¹³ (11a), whereas they do not exhibit DOM if referring to [-human] individual (11b):

- (11) a. Vitti *(a) idu / *(a) chidu / *(a) chistu [+ human]
saw.1SG to him to that.MSG to this.MSG
'I saw him/that man/this man'
- b. Vitti chistu / chidu / *idu [-human]
saw.1SG this.MSG that. MSG him
'I saw this (thing)/that (thing)'

Based on this evidence, two semantic and syntactic types of third person pronouns can be identified. Type A (Table 2) corresponds to human referents and, by implication, presuppositional third person pronouns (11a). We assume that Type A is endowed with a Person feature, which in our account includes humanness by default. ¹⁴ This assumption departs from Harley & Ritter's (2002) account whereby the third person pronoun is not a true personal form. Type B third person pronouns refer to non-human entities (11b), therefore failing to convey the default presuppositionality entailments shown by 1st and 2nd pronouns and lacking Person (see also Anagnostopoulou 2003: 267–272; Richards 2008).

¹¹ The same generalisation cannot be put forward for Calabrese₂ as a whole, as no N-to-D movement is attested in the dialects of San Luca and Gioiosa Ionica.

¹² Indexicals are prototypically presuppositional in that they determine a referent only in conjunction with elements of the utterance context, i.e. the speech act presupposes a speaker and an addressee (Abbott 2010: 180). For implicational relations between Person and animacy see Adger & Harbour (2007); for Person and definiteness/specificity see Richards (2004; 2008).

¹³ Some Sardinian varieties avail themselves of parallel DOM patterns (Jones 1995: 48–61). In (26) we record two different patterns of Sardinian.

¹⁴ However, in Ariellese (a variety of Abruzzese) the accusative of the animate third person pronouns is not marked with *a* (D'Alessandro 2012; see also §4.1).

Table 2: Pronouns.

person	humanness	presuppositionality entailments	Person
1	+	+	+
2	+	+	+
3 – Type A	+	+	+
3 – Type B	-	-	-

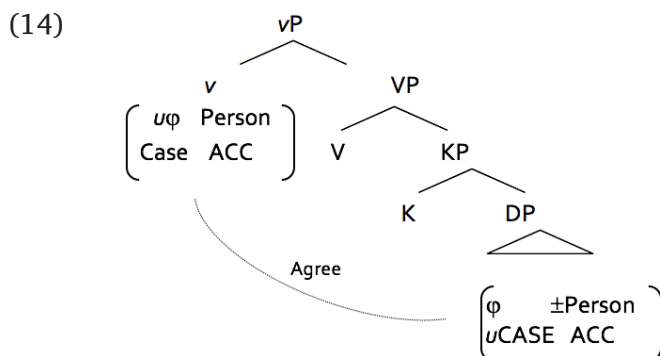
Proper names and singular kinship terms equally denote [+ human/+ definite] referents and are presupposed by the speech act participants. Therefore, they assimilate to third person DPs of the type A and are endowed with [+ Person].

When specified [+ human], in Calabrese₁ other third person nominals (e.g. definite DPs, indefinite pronouns, bare universal quantifiers and demonstratives) display the same behaviour as personal pronouns. In such cases, they semantically and syntactically cluster with the first/second personal pronouns, i.e. type 3A in Table 2, and display DOM. By contrast, third person nominals of type B are indefinite, non-human or inanimate and non-presuppositional on the basis of their inherent features, such that DOM consistently fails to obtain with them. Given these assumptions, a strong correlation holds for Calabrese₁ (12), i.e. if the direct object is [+ Person] (13a), accusative is realised with DOM; if the direct object is [-Person] (13b), DOM is not given.

- (12) + Person = + DOM
 - Person = - DOM

- (13) a. Mazzau *(a)u previte. [+ DOM, + Person]
 killed.3SG to.the.MSG priest
 ‘S/he killed the priest.’
- b. Vitti (*a)u gattu. [-DOM, -Person]
 saw.1SG.PRT to.the.MSG cat
 ‘I saw the cat.’
- c. Ruppiu (*a)u tavulu.
 broke.1SG to.the.MSG table.MSG
 ‘I broke the table.’

Theoretically, we therefore claim that, in order for Agree to occur, *v* is endowed with a strong unvalued D-feature, i.e. Person, semantically endowed with humanness. Direct object DPs with third person morphology can display two types of values, i.e. [\pm Person]. In order to derive (13a), the feature [+ Person] needs to be probed by *v* in the course of the accusative valuation.



As the direct object DP *u previte* ‘the priest’ is [+Person], it functions as a non-defective Goal for the head *v* to probe the Person feature. In order for the *uCase* feature to be valued through the D head on the [+Person] DP, the marker *a* must be inserted. Conversely, the Person specification is redundant for inanimate, generic, non-presuppositional DPs (Richards 2008: 14ff). We assume that they exhibit [–Person], i.e. the absence of the feature. Therefore, the DP acts as a defective Goal (cf. Roberts 2018: 118) and Person is left unvalued in the derivation. As a result, the absence of Person is spelt out as third person morphology, i.e. the default morphological exponence (cf. Benveniste 1966: 256), no marker is inserted and accusative is left unmarked. Nevertheless, if the DP lacks Person, it still behaves as a non-defective Goal for *v* to value Case. As a result, the DP’s Case is valued.

In sum, in Calabrese₁ the accusative of [+Person] DPs is always licensed through DOM.¹⁵ In particular, the accusative is valued through Agree: *v* values its D-feature on the animate DPs which are endowed with [+Person] and the resulting structure, which is spelled out with the accusative marker, is a scattered configuration due to the projection of KP (Giorgi & Pianesi 1997; see also Kremers 2009). Person is left unvalued as the non-human and generic DPs do not display a Person feature. This leads to default third person morphological exponence and no DOM.

3 Interpreting Calabrese₂

The patterns of accusative realisation of Calabrese₂ exhibit peculiar properties, as the direct object is never differentially marked if the definite determiner occurs (16a). Conversely, if the definite determiner is absent, the accusative is marked by *a* when conveying a presuppositional reading (16b vs 16c):

- (16) a. Petru mazzau (*a)u previte. [± presuppositional]
 Petru killed.3SG the.MSG priest
 ‘Petru killed the priest.’
- b. Petru mazzau *(a) nu previte chi canuscia eu. [+ presuppositional]
 Petru killed.3SG to a.MSG priest that knew.1SG I
 ‘Petru killed a certain priest whom I knew.’
- c. Petru mazzau (*a) nu previte. [–presuppositional]
 Petru killed.3SG to a.MSG priest
 ‘Petru killed a priest.’

Calabrese₂ shows, therefore, the following pattern:

- (17) + Person = ± DOM
 – Person = – DOM

¹⁵ In southern Italian dialects (Ledgeway 2000: 37; Manzini & Savoia 2005,II: 502ff), as well as in Spanish (Jaeggli 1982; Torrego 1998; Leonetti 2008) and in Romanian (Dobrovie-Sorin 1990), the specific interpretation of internal arguments often requires clitic doubling. This correlation, which is valid for the set of data discussed in this paper as well, proves stronger when the object is a tonic pronoun (e.g. Neapolitan; Sornicola 1997a; b; Ledgeway 2009: 831ff).

In Calabrese₂, as in Calabrese₁, generic and inanimate DPs do not require DOM, whereas DPs conveying a presuppositional entailment require *a* on condition that the D head is not lexicalised by a definite determiner. DOM is also obligatory with indefinite DPs if bearing a presuppositional interpretation.

The point of variation between the two systems is represented by the cases in which definite DPs are headed by the definite determiner and interpreted as presuppositional: this configuration leads to the realisation of the marker *a* in Calabrese₁ (18a) and to the sole presence of the definite determiner in Calabrese₂ (18b):

- (18) a. *Calabrese₁*
 Petru mazzau o previte chi canuscia eu.
 Petru killed.3sg to.the.MSG priest that knew.1SG I
 ‘Petru killed the priest whom I knew.’
- b. *Calabrese₂*
 Petru mazzau (*a)u previte chi canuscia eu.
 Petru killed.3SG to.the.MSG priest that knew.1SG I
 ‘Petru killed the priest whom I knew.’

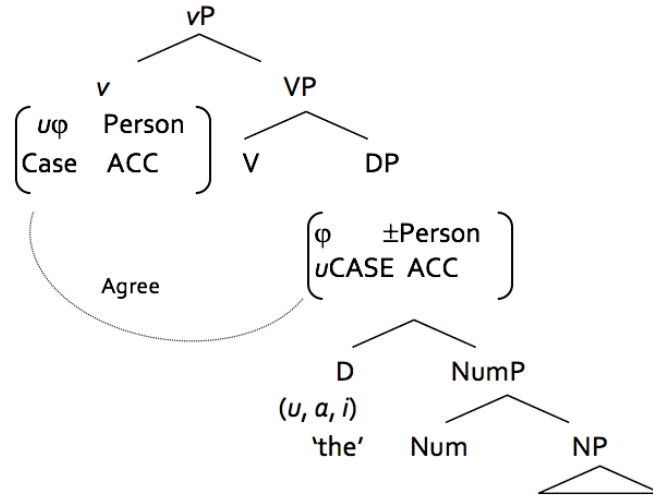
In Calabrese₂ the opposition between [\pm presuppositional] is morphologically blurred when the definite determiner is lexicalised. The accusative in Calabrese₂ is expressed through three different configurations of the direct object DP, which is either marked with *a* (<AD), is headed by the definite determiner (DET), or has no mark (\emptyset), as summarised in Table 3.

The accusative valuation on the DPs endowed with [+Person] can only result in two types of configurations, either one showing the definite determiner or the other requiring *a*. Therefore, the definite determiner and the marker *a* are in complementary distribution. In order to explain this micro-variation in accusative Case marking, we propose that accusative DPs in Calabrese₂ undergo the same licensing mechanism as in Calabrese₁, but with the crucial difference that, when Agree takes place in Calabrese₂, the lexicalisation of the D head through the definite determiner is the necessary and sufficient condition for ν to value the *uCase* feature on the [\pm Person] DP. Arguably, the Agree operation between ν and the DP in which the D-position is filled with the definite determiner is the default mechanism of accusative valuation. The Person feature is valued covertly in the case of [+Person] DPs and no differential marker is required (16a, 18b). The DP is able to mark the accusative with the sole presence of the definite determiner and the KP layer is not projected. Therefore, the definite determiner spells out the syncretic head of a syntactically definite accusative DP, as shown in (19):

Table 3: Distribution of DOM in in Calabrese₂.

DPs	DOM
personal pronouns	+
singular kinship terms	+
DPs headed by definite determiner	-
indefinite DPs	+

(19)



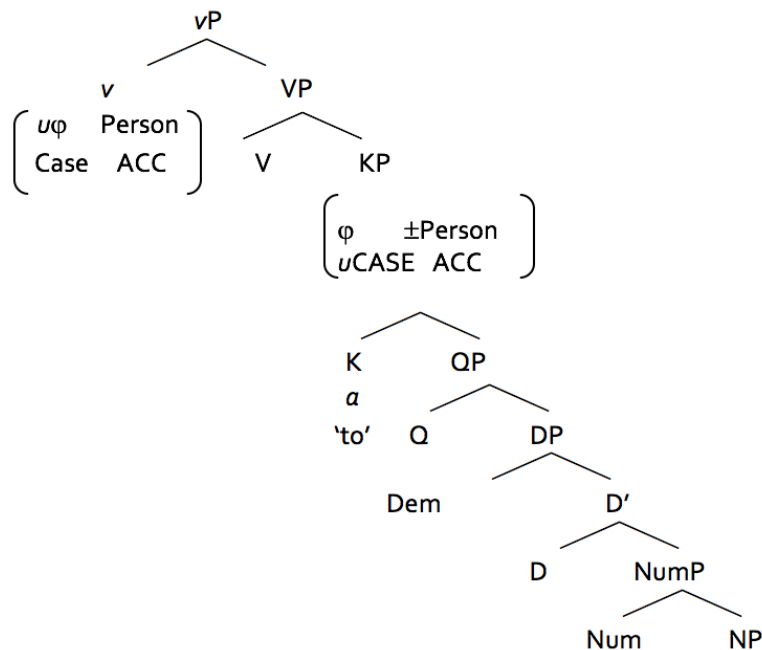
If in the [+Person] DPs the D⁰ position is not filled by the definite determiner but is occupied by a pronoun or a noun (20a) or D⁰ is empty (20b), accusative valuation and Person valuation result in the insertion of *a*.

(20) *Gioiosa Ionica*

- a. Stamatina vitti a mia / a figghita / a Maria
 this morning saw.3SG to me to son.your to Maria
 ‘This morning he saw you/your son/Maria’
- b. Vitti a du figghjoli
 saw.1SG to two kids
 ‘I saw a few kids’

The accusative is realised through a scattered DP structure where the marker *a* is merged in the head of KP (21). Finally, when the DP exhibits no Person, no marker *a* can be merged in the structure, resulting in the default third person morphology.

(21)



In Calabrese₂ the lexicalisation of the D head through the definite article is sufficient for Agree to check a bundle of features, including [+Person] and accusative Case. This property is related to the definite article's ability to head a DP that acts as a non-defective Goal for Case valuation. At the same time, the definite article is also the marker of [+Person]. Therefore, its presence makes the insertion of *a* redundant. This pattern of accusative licensing is available to other Romance varieties, i.e. Sardinian, Corsican and Catalan. However, it is significant that such a mechanism of accusative valuation is found in southern Calabria, an area of pervasive and long contact between Greek and Latin/Romance. In the same varieties, the lexicalisation of D^o also affects the realisation of dative. In order to mark dative, Calabrese₂ displays the Greek-style genitive marker *di* only when D is filled with the definite article.¹⁶ For a detailed description and a structural account of the complementary distribution of the dative Case realisation in southern Calabria we refer to Ledgeway et al. (2016; forthcoming; see also Chilà 2017). In the next section we discuss the possibility that language contact determined the complementary distribution between the definite article and DOM.

4 Case-marking and the Greek-Romance contact in southern Calabria

Some Romance dialects of southern Calabria display indisputable structural influences from the Italo-Greek varieties spoken in the same area.¹⁷ In the domain of morphosyntax, a property exhibited by Italo-Greek which has been transferred into some surrounding Romance varieties concerns the requirement that D^o be lexicalised with an expletive article in conjunction with proper names. Variation in the use of the article with proper names is the reflex of a deeper abstract property of nominals, namely *Strong Person* in Longobardi & Guardiano's (2009) terms. This property requires D to be visible in order to license a referential interpretation of its associated noun (Longobardi 1994; 2008). Southern Italian dialects display this property as proper names overtly raise to D. Yet, such movement is blocked in the variety of San Luca (22a), which belongs to the Calabrese₂ sub-set in our discussion, in the Romance dialects of Salento (22b), as well as in all Greek varieties of southern Italy (23), where the expletive definite article is used instead:

- (22) a. *San Luca*
 Vitti u Petru nt'a chiazza.
 saw.1SG.PRT the.MSG Pietro in.the.FSG square
 'I saw Pietro in the square.'
- b. *Calimera, Salento*
 Lu Pietru ntise la Maria.
 the.MSG Pietro heard.3SG the.FSG Maria
 'Pietro heard Maria.'

¹⁶

(i) *Gioiosa Ionica* (Ledgeway et al. forthcoming)
 Ajeri nci telefonau a nu previte.
 yesterday DAT.3= I.phoned to a.MSG priest
 'Yesterday I phoned a priest.'

(ii) (Nci) u dissi d-u previte...
 DAT.3= it= I.told of-the.MSG priest
 'I told the priest...'

¹⁷ Influence in the opposite direction is also detectable, especially among younger members of the speech community (Schifano & Silvestri 2017; Ledgeway et al. 2017; forthcoming).

- (23) a. *Corigliano, Salento*
I Maria ítela na vorasi na spiti.
 the Maria wanted.3SG SBJV buy.SBJV.3SG a.NSG house.NSG
 ‘Maria wanted to buy a house.’
- b. *Bova, Calabria*
O Petro tragudai calà.
 the.MSG Petro sings well
 ‘Petro sings well.’
- c. *Gallicianò, Calabria*
ecinde micceddhe tu Righíu
 those.FPL girls of.the.GEN.MSG Reggio.GEN
 ‘those girls from Reggio’

Such an evident contact feature between Greek and Romance has arguably played a crucial role in the patterns of case marking observed in Calabrese₂. Italo-Greek determiners display cumulative overt exponence of features, as not only are they able to express gender and number, but they also convey Case as part of a portmanteau realisation (Ledgeway et al. in prep.). We can suppose that the tripartite inflectional Case system of Calabrian Greek (“Case System I” in Table 4) was transferred into Romance. Within the syntax of the Italo-Romance dialects, two possible scenarios in the Case marking arose, “Case System II” and “Case System III” in Table 4.

“Case System II” occurs if nouns cannot move to the D area, as D° is filled with the definite determiner. The definite article lexicalises φ-features and Case at the same time, exactly as in Calabrian Greek. In this configuration, no further marker is needed to mark accusative. In “Case System III”, nominals lexicalise D° in order to satisfy referential requirements. In this configuration, no definite determiner can be lexicalised. Hence, accusative is marked by DOM.

Given this account of the case systems of Greek and Romance varieties of southern Calabria, the point of interference from contact becomes evident: in both Case System I and Case System II the mechanism of structural accusative valuation requires the merger of a DP whose head syncretically realises φ- and Case features. Given that Case System II is found in dialects spoken in the past by bilingual Romance/Greek speakers, we can suppose that it emerged as an innovative configuration, representing a hybrid structure in which the realisation of accusative and dative cases results from the combinations of (morpho)syntactic properties of Calabrian Greek, the competing language. The emergence of such forms is extremely revealing for the debate on the notion of *transfer* in the context of language contact and change. According to Aboh (2015), interfaces play the relevant role in the selection and recombination of linguistic features.

Table 4: Case markings in southern Calabria.

	Calabrian Greek	Calabrese	
	Case System I	Case System II	Case System III
	(m & f definite determiners)	nouns not raising to D	nouns raising to D
NOM	<i>o, i</i>	DEF DET	∅
ACC	<i>ton, tin</i>		<i>a</i>
DAT	<i>tu, tis</i>	di + DEF DET	
GEN			<i>di</i>

In particular, the syntax-discourse/semantics interface within the noun phrase represents a vulnerable area of the grammar for transfer to happen (Aboh 2015: 171ff). In the competing grammars of southern Calabria, features such as Definiteness, Person and Specificity/Presuppositionality, visible at the syntax-discourse/semantics interface, have determined two different mechanisms, which can be defined as pattern transmission¹⁸ (24) and feature transmission (25) (Aboh 2015: 172). In the varieties of southern Calabria pattern transmission is witnessed in Case System II. Such hybrid Case configurations are the result of selecting and retaining Person feature (F_x) as well as Definiteness features (F_x) from Greek (L_x), the historically competing language, and adopting their semantics and licensing properties:

- (24) Aboh (2015: 172)
 F_x [Function = L_x ; Syntax = L_x] -> Pattern transmission

The Romance Case System III may be interpreted as the result of feature transmission (25), in that some Italo-Romance dialects of southern Calabria selected Definiteness and Person on the basis of their function in Greek, while leaving their licensing mechanism to be determined by Romance syntax:

- (25) Aboh (2015: 172)
 F_x [Function = L_x ; Syntax = ...] -> Feature transmission

Bilingual speakers in the villages of southern Calabria were exposed to at least two grammars and can therefore be identified as the locus of linguistic change¹⁹ (cf. Roeper 1999; Lightfoot 2006). Nowadays, the Greek features are mostly kept in the language of the older generation. The relevant evidence is represented by the accusative marking of surnames and nicknames that have recently entered the lexical repertoire of these varieties. Younger speakers of the dialect of San Luca allow DOM to mark them as accusative (i.e. Case System III; 26a,b), whereas speakers of earlier generations use the definite determiner and exclude DOM (i.e. Case System II; 26c, d):

- (26) *San Luca*
- a. Mama jiu a' Merica e vitti a Trump
 mom went.3SG.PRT the.FSG America and saw.3SG.PRT to Trump
 'Mom went to the States and saw Trump.'
 - b. 'Nto programma minaru a Fedez.
 in.the.MSG show.MSG beat.up.3PL.PRT to Fedez
 'During the show they've beaten up Fedez.'
 - c. Mama jiu a' Merica e vitti u Trump.
 mom went.3SG.PRT the.FSG America and saw.3SG.PRT the.MSG Trump
 'Mom went to the States and saw Trump.'
 - d. 'Nto programma minaru u Fedez.
 in.the.MSG show.MSG beat.up.3PL.PRT the.MSG Fedez
 'During the show, they've beaten up Fedez.'

¹⁸ Cf. the mechanism of PAT(tern) transmission in Matras & Sakel (2004; 2007).

¹⁹ In the Aspromonte area (Bovesia), Greek was still spoken extensively alongside the Romance varieties at the end of the 18th century (Martino 1980: 311; Piromalli 1996: 419–420; see also Rohlf's 1972; Fanciullo 2005–2006). The same chronology cannot be maintained for the area where Calabrese, is spoken (Locride area). From the scarce sources available, one can speculate that there Greek ceased to be used by Greek-Romance bilingual speakers by the end of the 17th century (Alessandro De Angelis p.c.).

Such younger speakers act as the agents of the linguistic change in the Case system, as they received the inputs necessary to complete the pattern transmission (25) in their emerging grammar. Even though Greek later ceased to be spoken, the language transmission was successful and resulted in the observed configuration of accusative and dative.

4.1 A parameter hierarchy of accusative Case checking

The Case marking systems of southern Calabrian varieties display fine-grained morphosyntactic variation. To understand it, we adopt a theory that departs from the notion of Universal Grammar as a defined set of parametrised options (Borer 1984), but, rather, takes parameters to be mutually dependent: the ones which are highly local and related to the surface-oriented variation (microparameters) cluster together to form parameters of greater import (macroparameters). More specifically, macroparameters are composed of aggregates of microparameters acting in unison.²⁰

The hierarchy in (27) is conceived as a typological classification based on the valuation of a Case feature (ACC) and [+Person] ([+PER]). If the DP is not able to have [+PER] valued through the D head, the marker *a* must be inserted in K°. The relevant varieties of the hierarchy show different patterns of accusative marking depending on whether D° is lexicalised by a nominal element and what the nature of such an element is. The Person-licensing property of the DP is given even if D° is empty.²¹ Given the evidence discussed above, when *v* cannot value Person as the DP is [-PER] (i.e. generic or inanimate), the spelt-out structure expresses a default third person morphology. The classification in (27) does not cover this aspect of variation, as it only concerns [+PER] DPs.

In Calabrese₁ (28a,b), as well as in some other Romance varieties such as spoken Catalan (28c), all [+PER] DPs require the merger of the marker *a* in K°. Standard modern Greek (29a,b) and Italo-Greek (29c,d) never differentially mark the direct object, since [+PER] DPs have their D feature valued by *v*_{ACC} always through D°, whether it is lexicalised or empty. Some other Romance varieties (e.g. standard Italian, French) do not value the accusative of [+PER] DPs through a scattered configuration including the KP layer. Yet, in our classification they cannot cluster with standard Modern Greek and Italo-Greek, as in French and standard Italian N-to-D movement is a viable option

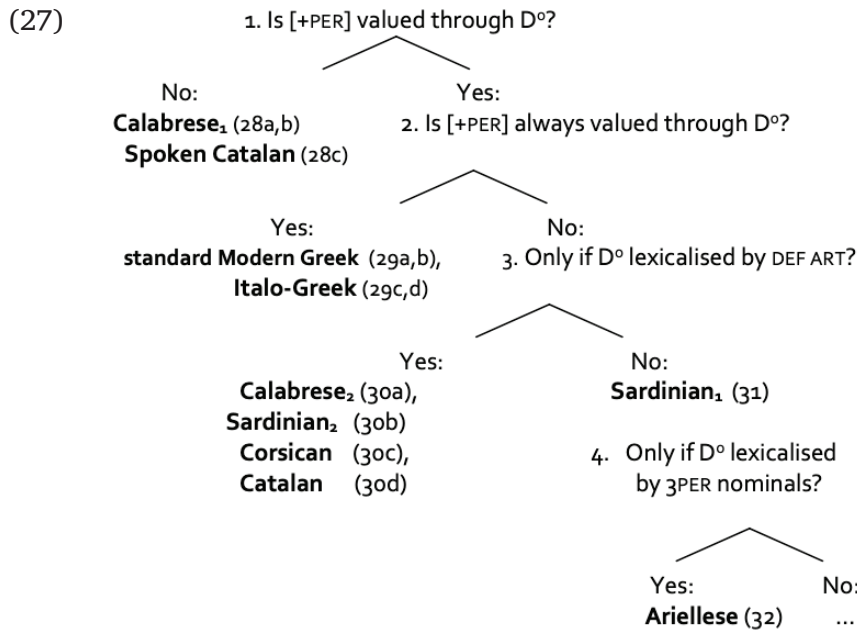
²⁰ See publications by “Rethinking Comparative Syntax” (ReCoS) research group based in Cambridge on the website: www.recos-dtal.mml.cam.ac.uk/Publications.

²¹ We assume that in the relevant varieties of the hierarchy, with the exception of standard Modern Greek, D° is empty also in DPs introduced by demonstratives (see 21) which occupy the SpecDP position (Brugè 1996; Giusti 1997; Guardiano 2009 a.o.). The empirical evidence we discuss here proves that, for the same given variety, DPs introduced by demonstratives show the same patterns of accusative realisation as the DPs introduced by definite articles:

- (i) *Scido*
Vitti *(a) chiru previte.
saw.1SG to that.MSG priest
'I saw that priest.'
- (ii) Vitti (*a) chiru cani.
saw.1SG to that.MSG dog
'I saw that dog.'
- (iii) Vitti (*a) chira machina.
saw.1SG to that.FSG car
'I saw that car.'

One can argue that the Spec-Head relation between the demonstrative and D° allows the demonstrative to inherit the Person-licensing property of D°.

so that D° is also lexicalised by proper names. Lexicalisation of D° through the definite article is the sufficient condition for Calabrese₂ (30a), Sardinian₂ (30b), Corsican (30c) and Catalan (30d) to value [+PER] on the accusative DP. Some varieties of Sardinian (Sardinian₁ (31)) insert the marker *a* in K° if D° is occupied by a definite article (31a), whereas if D° is empty (31b) [+PER] is valued without projecting the KP layer. In the Abruzzese dialect of Arielli ((32); see fn.14), the lexicalisation of the D head is able to value [+PER] only when it hosts third person nominals, i.e. proper names and pronouns.



(28) *Embrisi*

- a. Mazzau o previte.
killed.3SG to.the.MSG priest
'He killed the priest.'
- b. Vitti a du omini.
saw.1SG to two men
'I saw two men.'
- c. *Spoken Central Catalan*²² (Hualde 1992: 241)
Les monges no estimen a/ana les nenes.
the nuns not like.3PL to the girls
'The nuns do not like the girls.'

(29) *Standard Modern Greek*

- a. Ida ta pediá.
see.PST.PRF.1SG the.ACC.NPL kids
'I saw the kids.'
- b. Diávasa lighes grammés.
read.PST.PRF.1SG few.ACC.FPL lines. ACC.FPL
'I have read a few lines.'

²² We adopt this label following Escandell-Vidal (2009: 836) who refers to spoken Central Catalan.

- c. *Greco, Gallicianò*
 O Petro aggue tin Maria.
 the.MSG Petro hear.PST.PRF.3SG the.ACC.FSG Maria
 ‘Petro heard Maria.’
- d. *Greco, Bova Marina*
 Ivra dio magna sciddía.
 see.PST.PRF.1SG two beautiful.ACC.NPL dogs.ACC.NPL
 ‘I saw two beautiful dogs.’
- (30) a. *San Luca*
 Mazzau u previte i Messina.
 killed.3SG the.MSG priest of Messina
 ‘He killed the priest of Messina.’
- b. *Sardinian₂* (Jones 1995: 39)²³
 Appu vistu su mere / su dottore / su re.
 have.1SG seen the.MSG boss / the.MSG doctor / the.MSG king
 ‘I have seen the boss/ the doctor / the king.’
- c. *Corsican* (Neuburger & Stark 2014: 366)
 Cunnusciti (*à) U Scupatu?
 know.2PL to the.MSG Scupatu
 ‘Do you know the Scupatu?’
- d. *Catalan* (Escandell-Vidal 2009: 838)
 Només va invitar la Maria i *(a) ell.
 only AUX.PST.3SG invite the.FSG Maria and to him
 ‘S/he only invited Maria and him.’
- (31) *Sardinian₁* (Jones 1995: 38–39)
 Appu vistu a su dottore de Rosaria.
 have.1SG seen to the.MSG doctor of Rosaria
 ‘I saw Rosaria’s doctor.’
- (32) *Ariellese* (D’Alessandro 2012: 5)
- a. *so vistə a Marije / a jisse / a quille
 I.am seen to Marije / to them / to them
 ‘I saw Marije / them / them’
- b. so vistə a tte
 I.am seen to you
 ‘I saw you’

Other than a powerful descriptive tool, this hierarchy models a theoretical interpretation of the role of animacy and definiteness in differential case-marking. Thus, it takes into account more than just morphological exponence. The splits are based on the fine-grained structure of the DP and the mechanism of D-feature valuation. In this way, DOM is interpreted as an option of the syntactic phenomenon of Case licensing and is linked to the syntactic conditioning factors.

²³ The Sardinian varieties investigated by Jones (1993; 1995) are spoken in the Bitti-Lula area (Nuoro; Jones 1995: 37).

5 Conclusions

In the Romance dialects of southern Calabria, DOM is required to convey a presuppositional interpretation on the direct object which, in order to be marked as accusative, triggers the appearance of the marker *a*. This generalisation is not valid for a subgroup of varieties (Calabrese₂) which exhibit a complementary distribution between the marker *a* and the definite determiner. The lexicalisation of the latter rules out the realisation of DOM, irrespective of the presuppositional entailments. We have shown that this can be accounted for as a reflex of the valuation process of Case and Person features. More specifically, D bears a [+Person] feature to be valued by *v*, which in turn values an accusative Case feature on the DP. Once this feature bundle is checked through Agree, the accusative is licensed without the insertion of *a*. Independent evidence from Sardinian, Corsican and Catalan clearly suggests that this configuration is a parametric option available across Romance. As for the trigger of such a configuration in southern Calabria, the long-standing Romance-Greek contact has played a highly relevant role. The structural parallel with the properties of D exhibited by the surrounding Greek varieties is striking. The definite determiner in Calabrian Greek is the morphosyntactic outcome of a bundle of features, including Case, such that no accusative marker surfaces. The Romance dialects of southern Calabria have integrated this property of Italo-Greek syntax, filtering the grammar of accusative valuation through the Romance case licensing strategies. The result is therefore an accommodation of a Greek syntactic pattern within Romance syntax, ultimately leading to the emergence of hybrid patterns. In this respect, accusative marking follows a trend that the present-day Romance varieties of the extreme south of Italy exhibit through several morphosyntactic aspects: accusative is realised through differential marking in accordance with specific factors, among which we singled out the checking of a [+Person] feature. Finally, the variation in patterns of case marking in such a long-standing contact area contributes to the debate on the emergence and structural configurations of hybrid systems.

Abbreviations

1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, ACC = accusative, ART = article, AUX = auxiliary, COND = conditional, DAT = dative, DEF = definite, DEM = demonstrative, DET = determiner, F = feminine, GEN = genitive, GER = gerund, IND = indicative, INF = infinitive, M = masculine, N = neuter, NOM = nominative, OBJ = object, OBL = oblique, PER = person, PL = plural, PRF = perfect, PRS = present, PST = past, PTCP = participle, SBJV = subjunctive, SG = singular

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Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

Author Contributions

The entire article is the result of joint work of the three authors in all respects. For the administrative purposes of the Italian academia only, Norma Schifano takes responsibility for section 1, Giuseppina Silvestri for sections 2 and 3 and Adam Ledgeway for sections 4 and 5.

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