

## Apulian Qualitative Binominal Noun Phrases

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We investigate the morphosyntax of qualitative binominal constructions (QBCs) in a Southern Italo-Romance language from the Apulian town of San Marco in Lamis. QBCs are complex noun phrases like ‘a jewel<sub>N<sub>1</sub></sub> of a village<sub>N<sub>2</sub></sub>’, appearing here prepositionally (with the preposition *da*, ‘of’, allowing definites, indefinites, and demonstratives) and non-prepositionally (only allowing definites with definite articles and not proper names). We propose that in the latter, a categorial match in the determiner layer, which we call ‘match D’, relates N<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>. N<sub>1</sub> is embedded as a noun, allowing for: 1) the recursive DP strategy of non-prepositional genitives, and 2) the extension of this mechanism to QBCs. This leads to the impossibility of syntactic extraction, which we connect to the concept of phase. With non-denominal N<sub>1</sub>s, N<sub>1</sub>’s article is treated as a head-agreeing adjectival linker, forming a constituent with the modifier but agreeing with the head. A phrase is interpreted as a QBC if N<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>2</sub> share the same number features and if the features of N<sub>1</sub> do not allow for it to be interpreted as the possessum of N<sub>2</sub>. We also discuss external agreement with the construction, presenting data supporting the relevance of the [+HUMAN] feature for agreement relations.

KEYWORDS: Apulian, Qualitative Binominal Noun Phrases, phases

### 1. Introduction

This paper investigates a type of predicative phrase consisting of two elements, in which the first element (a noun, adjective, or interjection) embeds the second element (understood as the subject of the predication) using prepositions such as ‘of’ (e.g., ‘a jewel of a village’). This type of phrase is characterized by a specific realization of the determiner layer. For instance, in English, the subject (N<sub>2</sub>) typically bears an indefinite article in its D position: ‘a jewel of [a doctor]’ (qualitative) versus ‘a jewel of [the doctor’s]’ (possessive). In the first case, the typical interpretation is that N<sub>1</sub> is a quality being attributed to N<sub>2</sub>, i.e., the fact that the doctor is a jewel. In the second case, the interpretation is instead that N<sub>1</sub> is owned by N<sub>2</sub>. This construction has been well-documented in Aarts (1998) and Den Dikken (2006) in relation to Germanic languages (such as Dutch and English). It has also been the focus of research in Standard Romance varieties (e.g., Catalan, French, Italian, Romanian, Spanish), including studies by Napoli

(1989), Kayne (1994), Vişan (2003), Villalba (2007), and Tănase-Dogaru (2012). Several syntactic analyses, such as those by Den Dikken and Kayne, focus on the role of the preposition in this construction. These analyses posit a predicate-subject inversion strategy<sup>1</sup> as the mechanism that leads to the presence of a preposition. However, in the Apulian variety under analysis in this paper, this type of construction also appears in a non-prepositional form. Therefore, the analysis that posits inversion as the source of the preposition is untenable in this case.

- (1) Apulian (San Marco in Lamis, Foggia)  
 l-a kaspəta l-a bul:et:a  
 DEF-F.SG freaking DEF-F.SG bill  
 ‘that freaking thing of a bill’

In this language, qualitative binominals are not the only construction that lacks a preposition; non-prepositional genitives also occur. Massaro (2020) proposes that in this language, caseless, non-prepositional genitives are interpreted as such even in the absence of a preposition due to a categorial match in the D layer of both nouns (which we refer to as match D here). This match is realized through matching the type of determiner (in this case, definite articles) in the D layer of both the head and modifier.

- (2) a. l-i rət-ə l-a makən-a /\*n-a makən-a  
 DEF-PL wheels(F)-PL DEF-F.SG car(F)-SG /INDEF-F.SG car(F)-SG  
 ‘the car’s wheels’  
 b. l-a kod-a l-u kan-ə /\*n-u kan-ə  
 DEF-F.SG tail(F)-SG DEF-M.SG dog(M)-SG /INDEF-M.SG dog(M)-SG  
 ‘the dog’s tail’  
 c. l-i rət-ə də n-a makən-a  
 DEF-PL wheels(F)-PL of INDEF-F.SG car(F)-SG  
 ‘the wheels of a car’  
 d. l-a kod-a də n-u kan-ə  
 DEF-F.SG tail(F)-SG of INDEF-M.SG dog(M)-SG  
 ‘the tail of a dog’

In contrast, indefinites require the presence of a preposition, resulting in forms such as *də na makəna* (2c) and *də nu kanə* (2d) rather than *na makəna* (2a). Rohlfs (1969: 6) proposed that the preposition is present and that it undergoes absorption in intervocalic contexts. The definite articles of the variety of Morano Calabro (Cosenza) considered by Rohlfs underwent the loss of the lateral, thus resulting in a(F)/u, u(M).<sup>2</sup> However, not

all Italo-Romance varieties lost the lateral in their definite articles, and non-prepositional genitives still occur in these varieties.<sup>3</sup> Because of this, Silvestri (2012) suggests that Rohlfs's proposal might be incorrect. Moreover, non-prepositional genitives are well attested in Old Romance (see Delfitto and Paradisi 2009 for Old Italian and Old Sicilian; Jensen 1990 for Old French). Therefore, we assume that the preposition-triggering inversion advocated by Den Dikken is not the mechanism generating non-prepositional qualitative binominals (or non-prepositional genitives) in this language.

There are several similarities between non-prepositional genitives and non-prepositional qualitative binominal constructions. Both seem to have similar requirements related to the D layer:  $N_1$  is definite and occurs with an article, and  $N_2$  is also definite and occurs with an article (although proper names, which are bare, trigger the presence of a preposition; see endnote X). Qualitative binominals containing indefinite nominals also require a preposition, just like non-prepositional genitives do. We will discuss this further in section 3.

The structure of this paper is as follows: In section 2, we provide an overview of qualitative binominals in Standard Romance languages, with a focus on the realization of the determiner layer of each noun. In section 3, we present data on Apulian non-prepositional qualitative binominals and discuss how they behave in some respects similar to non-prepositional genitives. Section 3.1 investigates the role of the preposition *də*, and that of syntactic operations such as extraction. In section 3.2, we examine the question of interpretation: how is a qualitative binominal interpreted as such even when superficially identical to a genitival phrase? Section 3.3 provides an analysis of agreement patterns with qualitative binominals in Apulian, including both internal and external agreement relations. We will examine how various factors, including the original category of the element embedded as  $N_1$ , the distance between agreeing elements (such as clitics and direct objects), and the presence of the [HUMAN] feature in the phrase, determine agreement patterns in internal and external morphological agreement. We will specifically analyze the article preceding  $N_1$  as an agreement element, similar to agreeing adjectival linkers (see Toosarvandani & Van Urk 2014). This serves to establish  $N_1$  as a modifier of  $N_2$ , particularly when  $N_1$  is originally deficient in terms of carrying gender and number features (as is the case with interjections like *kaspəta*, lit. 'freaking'). The article preceding  $N_1$ , by agreeing with  $N_2$ , endows  $N_1$  with an agreement relation with  $N_2$ , thereby turning it into a modifier whose  $N_2$  is the actual head. We will claim that while carrying an adjective-like predicative function, the first element is essentially embedded like a noun. This is relevant especially concerning the question as to why  $N_1$  should have an article at all even when it is already an adjective

(‘idiot’) and in principle already capable of modifying  $N_2$ . By embedding the predicate as a noun (which can then have its own determiner), the language can extend the iterated DPs (‘match D’) strategy found in genitival modification to modification in qualitative binominals. This also enables elements that are not normally modifiers to function as such. In this way, the construction also allows strictly post-nominal adjectival modifiers to be linearized before the noun, similarly to the alternate linearization of monadic and polydefinite adjectival modifiers in Greek (Campos & Stavrou 2004). Finally, section 4 provides our conclusions.

## 2. Qualitative Binominals in Romance

Romance languages generally realize qualitative binominal constructions in the following configurations: the demonstrative-definite article type (3), the indefinite article-bare noun type (4)<sup>4</sup> (which can also be realized with  $N_1$  headed by a definite article (5)), and a definite article-definite article configuration (6).<sup>5</sup> Lastly, as expected from languages where proper nouns rise to D, data containing proper names show article-less  $N_2$  ((3a) and (7)).

### (3) French

- a. *cet imbécile de Jean*  
 DEMidiot of Jean  
 ‘that idiot of Jean’

### Italian

- b. *quell’idiota del dottore*  
 DEMidiot of.DEF doctor  
 ‘that idiot of the doctor’
- c. *quello schifo di canzone*  
 DEM disgust of song  
 ‘that abomination of a song’

### (4) Romanian

- a. *o scârbă de om*  
 INDEF jerk of man  
 ‘a jerk of a man’

### Italian

- b. *uno schifo di uomo*  
 INDEF disgust of man  
 ‘an abomination of a man’

### (5) Old Romanian

- a. *amărât-ul de om*

wreck-DEF of man  
'a wreck of a man'

Italian

- b. *lo schifo di libro*  
DEF disgust of book  
'an abomination of a book'

(6) Italian

- a. *l'idiota del dottore*  
DEF idiot of.DEF doctor  
'the idiot of the doctor'

Spanish

- b. *el idiota del médico*  
DEF idiot of.DEF doctor  
'the idiot of the doctor'

(7) Catalan

- a. *el babau de Joan*  
DEF idiot of Joan  
'the idiot of Joan'

Italian

- b. *lo scemo di Michele*  
DEF idiot of Michele  
'the idiot of Michele'

We can see that in Romance, at least two types of qualitative binominals are found: those where  $N_2$  never occurs with an article (we exclude cases where  $N_2$  is a proper name, for the reason that in these languages proper names are article-less), and those in which  $N_2$  does. In some contexts,  $N_1$  can also be article-less. Such is the case of exclamatives and qualitative binominals embedded in complementizer phrases, as shown in the following examples from Italian.

- (8) a. *stupido di un dottore*  
idiot of INDEF doctor  
'Idiot of a doctor!'
- b. *che schifo di canzone*  
COMP disgust of song  
'What a terrible song'

In the Apulian variety under analysis here, qualitative binominals occur as either the type in (6) or the type in (4). The type in (8b) is also a possibility. We will describe

the Apulian data in the following paragraph, where we will also discuss non-prepositional genitives. As anticipated, non-prepositional genitives and non-prepositional qualitative binominals share several similarities, including the absence of a preposition, a categorial match in the D layer of both nouns, and the inability to undergo syntactic operations such as extraction.

### 3. *The Apulian data*

All of the Apulian data presented in this paragraph come from the Gargano Apulian Italo-Romance language of San Marco in Lamis (Foggia), unless stated otherwise. Since in this Apulian variety qualitative binominals behave in some respects like non-prepositional genitives, we will introduce them here. We have no data on the realization of non-prepositional qualitative phrases in other Apulian varieties. However, non-prepositional genitives are attested in at least one other Gargano Apulian variety (Mattinata, Silvestri 2012: 564). Although there is micro-variation as is normal, the presence of non-prepositional genitives in neighboring Gargano Apulian varieties suggests that non-prepositional qualitative phrases could also be possible.

We have mentioned that this language can have two types of genitive constructions. According to Massaro (2020, 2022), the difference between the two is that the non-prepositional type only allows definite nouns and is regulated by a categorial match in the D layer.

(9) San Marco in Lamis

- a. l-i    lib:r-a    l-a    nəpot-a  
DEF-PL book-M.PL   DEF-F.SG niece-F.SG  
‘his/her niece’s books’
- b. \*l-i    lib:r-a    n-a    nəpot-a  
DEF-PL book-M.PL   INDEF-F.SG niece-F.SG  
‘the books of a niece of his/hers’
- c. l-i    lib:r-a    də n-a    nəpot-a  
DEF-PL book-M.PL   of   INDEF-F.SG niece-F.SG  
‘the books of a niece of his/hers’

This construction is characterized by several syntactic properties, but for now we will focus on two of them, as they are also relevant for the discussion on qualitative binominal phrases that follows. One of these two syntactic properties is extraction. The question-answer example below illustrates that extraction out of a non-prepositional genitive is not possible, while it is for the prepositional variant.

- (10) a. kwanta n.a let:-ə də.l:-i pad̄z:ən-ə  
 l-a kart-a?  
 how.many PART.have.2.SG read.PTCP-PL of.DEF-PL page(F)-PL  
 DEF-F.SG letter(F)-SG  
 ‘how many pages of the letter have you read?’
- b. \*l-a kart-a n-e<sup>6</sup> let:-ə dojə pad̄z:ən-ə  
 DEF-F.SG letter(F)-SG PART.have.1.SG read.PTCP-PL two.F page(F)-PL  
 ‘of the letter, I have read two pages’
- a’. kwanta n.a let:-ə də.l:-i pad̄z:ən-ə  
 də.l:-a kart-a?  
 how.many PART.have.2.SG read.PTCP-PL of.DEF-PL page(F)-PL  
 of.DEF-F.SG letter(F)-SG  
 ‘how many pages of the letter have you read?’
- b’. də.l:-a kart-a n.e let:-ə dojə pad̄z:ən-ə  
 of.DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG PART.have.1.SG read.PTCP-PL two.F page(F)-PL  
 ‘of the letter, I have read two pages’

Another syntactic property concerns adjectival modification. Speakers seem hesitant to accept post-nominal modifiers of the head and tend to use a prepositional genitive instead when this occurs.

- (11) l-i rət-ə nɔv-ə \*(də.)l-a makən-a  
 DEF-PL tires new-PL \*(of.)DEF-F.SG car(F)-SG  
 ‘the new tires of the car’

A post-nominal adjective can only modify the head if the phrase is prepositional. In contrast, the genitive can be modified by a post-nominal adjective even in non-prepositional contexts.

- (12) l-i rət-ə l-a makən-a nɔv-a  
 DEF-PL tire-PL DEF-F.SG car(F)-SG new-F.SG  
 ‘the tires of the new car’

Instead, in section 4 we will see that non-prepositional binominal qualitatives allow degree modifiers to be interposed between  $N_1$  and  $N_2$ .

In qualitative binominal constructions in this Italo-Romance language, configurations with  $N_1$  headed by a demonstrative<sup>7</sup> require a preposition to relate it to

N<sub>2</sub> (13c, d). On the other hand, configurations in which both N<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>2</sub> are headed by a definite article do not (13a, b). Article-less N<sub>2</sub>s require instead a preposition (13e, f).<sup>89</sup>

- (13) a. l-u            ʃ:em-ə        l-u            medəkə  
 DEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘the idiot of the doctor’
- b. l-a            kaspəta    l-a            bul:et:a  
 DEF-F.SG    freaking    DEF-F.SG    bill  
 ‘that freaking thing of a bill’
- c. \*kwid:u       ʃ:em-ə       l-u            medəkə  
 DEM-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘\*that idiot of the doctor’
- d. kwid:-u       ʃ:em-ə       də.l:-u       medəkə  
 DEM-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    of.DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘that idiot of the doctor’
- e. \*l-u            ʃ:em-ə        medəkə  
 DEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘that idiot of the doctor’
- f. l-u            ʃ:em-ə        də.l:-u        medəkə  
 DEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    of.DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘that idiot of the doctor’

As mentioned, this construction obeys similar constraints to those found for non-prepositional genitives, including a ban on indefinites. This involves N<sub>1</sub>s (14b), but also N<sub>2</sub>s (14c). (14d) shows that indefinites require a preposition. (14e) shows instead that while it is possible to have a non-prepositional phrase when both N<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>2</sub> are definite, this option is ruled out when both N<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>2</sub> are indefinite.

- (14) a. l-u            ʃ:em-ə        l-u            medəkə  
 DEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘the idiot of the doctor’
- b. \*n-u            ʃ:em-ə        l-u            medəkə  
 INDEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘\*an idiot of the doctor’
- c. \*l-u            ʃ:em-ə        n-u            medəkə  
 DEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    INDEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘\*the idiot of a doctor’
- d. n-u            ʃ:em-ə        də            medəkə  
 INDEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    of            doctor  
 ‘an idiot of a doctor’



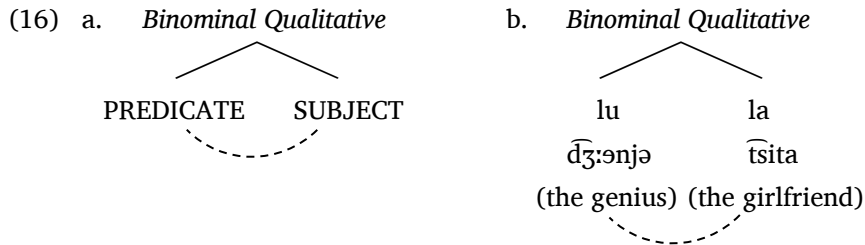
- e. \*n-u            ʃ:em-ə            n-u            medəkə  
 INDEF-M.SG idiot-M.SG INDEF-M.SG doctor  
 ‘\*an idiot of a doctor’

The absence of a preposition in these configurations shows that it is not feasible to suppose that the construction results from subject-predicate inversion, as suggested by Den Dikken (2006). If inversion produces a preposition, but in our case, a preposition is not present, then we are led to exclude that such a mechanism is feasible in this language. Examples with interjections (1) also show that it is not feasible to derive the construction from an inverted copula. This would imply starting the derivation from *\*la bulɛta ɛ kaspaɛta*, ‘the bill is freaking’, which is not a possible sentence, unlike what it would appear if we only used elements such as idiot to test the inversion hypothesis (‘that idiot of a doctor’ = ‘the doctor is an idiot’). Another claim made in Den Dikken’s work is that in Dutch, the article preceding N<sub>2</sub> is ‘spurious’. Den Dikken reaches this conclusion because, in Dutch, qualitative binominals show number agreement mismatches between N<sub>2</sub> and its article, as shown in (15) (Den Dikken 2006: 170).

- (15) Dutch
- a. *die idioten van een kerels*  
 those idiots of a guys  
 ‘those stupid guys’
- b. *die idioten van een doktoren*  
 those idiots of a doctors  
 ‘those stupid doctors’

According to Den Dikken, this ‘spurious’ article doesn’t belong with either member of the construction<sup>10</sup>, and it signals the fact that N<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>2</sub> are contained within a small clause. As discussed in length in Villalba (2007) the definite article preceding N<sub>2</sub> in Romance is a full-fledged determiner and does not allow for agreement mismatches. This is also what we find in Apulian. If agreement mismatches between N<sub>2</sub> and its article are what signals that the article is spurious, but such agreement mismatches do not exist in Romance, then it is a consequence to conclude, like Villalba does, that this analysis cannot be extended to Romance (see Giannakidou & Stavrou 1999 for similar remarks on definite articles in Greek binominal qualitatives). One of the interesting aspects of this construction is the behavior of determiners. In the case of Apulian, for instance, we maintain that articles in the construction realize a categorial match in the D layer (which only includes definite articles; see also Tănase-Dogaru 2012, who proposes that Romanian qualitative binominals show definiteness agreement), let us call it match D,

and that match D is what relates  $N_1$  and  $N_2$ . Matching of the type of determiner preceding  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  is what relates them, i.e., this categorial match is the relator.<sup>11</sup>



The fact that ‘match D’ occurs in both non-prepositional qualitative binominals and non-prepositional genitives can be explained by assuming that  $N_2$ , which is the individual-denoting member, has specific reference, similar to possessors in non-prepositional genitives.<sup>12</sup> In non-prepositional qualitative binominals  $N_2$  is in fact a topical element.<sup>13</sup> This is also what we find in other Romance languages, such as Spanish. Villalba (2007: 11) shows that in Spanish qualitative binominals,  $N_2$  is usually a topical element and is incompatible with positions where foci are found.

- (17) Spanish  
*\*No hablaste con el idiota de [qué médico]*  
 not talk.PST-2.SG with DEF idiot of which doctor  
 ‘\*you didn’t talk to the idiot of which doctor’

We can see that the same happens in this Apulian variety, regardless of whether the qualitative binominal is prepositional or non-prepositional.

- (18) a. \*non a parlat-ə ku.l:-u<sup>14</sup> ʃ:em-ə  
 [kwal:-u medəkə]  
 not have.2.SG talk.PTCP-M.SG with.DEF-M.SG idiot-M.SG  
 which-M.SG doctor  
 ‘\*you didn’t talk to the idiot of which doctor’
- b. \*non a parlat-ə ku.l:-u ʃ:em-ə də  
 [kwal:-u medəkə]  
 not have.2.SG talk.PTCP-M.SG with.DEF-M.SG idiot-M.SG of  
 which-M.SG doctor  
 ‘\*you didn’t talk to the idiot of which doctor’

### 3.1. Extraction, prepositions, or lack thereof

As mentioned previously in this paper, qualitative binominals are characterized by several morpho-syntactic properties, among which the impossibility to extract one of their members.

- (19) a. \*(də.)l-u      medəkə    e      vist-ə      l-u      ʃ:em-ə  
 (of.)DEF-M.SG doctor    have.1.SG see.PTCP-M.SG DEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG  
 ‘\*of the doctor I have seen the idiot’
- b. \*ε(də.)l-u      medəkə    ke    e      vist-ə      l-u  
 ʃ:em-ə  
 is (of.)DEF-M.SG doctor    that have.1SG see.PTCP-M.SG DEF-M.SG  
 idiot-M.SG  
 ‘\*it’s of the doctor that I have seen the idiot’

This was already observed in Napoli (1989) for Italian and Den Dikken (2006) for Dutch. Napoli described this behavior by linking it to a ‘wordlike’ property of the construction. According to Den Dikken, extraction is not permitted because the construction is derived from a predicative phrase.

Here, we would like to suggest something vaguely related to what Napoli had in mind, but which is also connected to the predicative properties of the construction. More precisely, we claim that the impossibility follows if we treat N1 in qualitative binominals as a modifier with an adjective-like function (see also Aarts 1998). As a first, superficial clue, the first member can be a noun or a nominalized adjective (*lu ʃemə*, ‘the idiot’). Unlike in genitive of-phrases, where the two members carry different referential indexes, in qualitative binominals  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  share the same index, which is what we find in adjectival modification.

- (20) Qualitative
- a. l-u<sub>i</sub>      d̄ʒ:ənj-ə<sub>i</sub>      l-a<sub>i</sub>      tsit-a<sub>i</sub>      towa<sub>i</sub>  
 DEF-M.SG    genius(M)-SG    DEF-F.SG girlfriend-F.SG    your  
 ‘that genius of your girlfriend’
- Non-prepositional genitive
- b. l-u<sub>i</sub>      d̄ʒ:ənj-ə<sub>i</sub>      l-a<sub>j</sub>      tsit-a<sub>j</sub>      towa<sub>j</sub>  
 DEF-M.SG    genius(M)-SG    DEF-F.SG girlfriend-F.SG    your  
 ‘your girlfriend’s genius’

In generative frameworks, and especially within the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995), phrases not allowing syntactic operations such as extraction are

referred to as phases. The peculiarity of phases is that they are syntactic chunks that once built cannot be accessed by further syntactic operations such as, in our case, extraction. More recently, Adger (2003), Radford (2004), Jiménez-Fernández (2012), and Chomsky (2020) have argued that definite DPs can have phasehood status, as shown in (21) (Adger 2003: 327), where the banned syntactic operation is *wh*- extraction.

- (21) a. \*Which poem did you hear [Homer’s recital] of last night?  
 b. Which poem did you go to hear [a recital] of last night?

Definiteness is related to topicality, and hence with what we have found for topics in (18). But also adjectival phrases constitute phases in that they do not permit extraction (‘the beautiful car’ → ‘\*of the car I have seen the beautiful’ / ‘\*of the beautiful I have seen the car’, cf. (19-20) and Bošković 2020). We claim here that merging  $N_1$  with a prepositional phrase (or through match D) containing  $N_2$  (‘that genius $N_1$  of a doctor $N_2$ ’) turns it into a predicative element with an adjective-like function. We will claim (§3.3) that this adjective-like function is realized by generalizing to qualitative binominal phrases the iterated DPs mechanism found in genitive modification.

In qualitative binominals,  $N_1$  is usually a property-denoting element. How  $N_1$  is interpreted as a property-denoting element and not as the head of a non-prepositional genitive seems to also depend on the semantics of  $N_2$ . Consider first what we saw in (20), which we repeat here as (22).

- (22) Qualitative  
 a. l-u<sub>i</sub>      d̄ʒ:ənj-ə<sub>i</sub>      l-a<sub>i</sub>      tsit-a<sub>i</sub>      towa<sub>i</sub>  
 DEF-M.SG    genius(M)-SG    DEF-F.SG girlfriend-F.SG your  
 ‘that genius of your girlfriend’  
 Non-prepositional genitive  
 b. l-u<sub>i</sub>      d̄ʒ:ənj-ə<sub>i</sub>      l-a<sub>j</sub>      tsit-a<sub>j</sub>      towa<sub>j</sub>  
 DEF-M.SG    genius(M)-SG    DEF-F.SG girlfriend-F.SG your  
 ‘your girlfriend’s genius’

As we mentioned, the two structures seem superficially identical. Now consider the example in (23).

- (23) l-u            sgar:ət:ən-ə l-a            makən-a towa  
 DEF-M.SG    wreck-M.SG DEF-F.SG car(F)-SG your  
 ‘that wreck of your car’

$N_1$ , *sgar̄at̄on̄a*, ‘wreck’, is usually said of cars, bikes, and barely working machines. So, in that position, it is either the head of a genitive whose modifier is [+HUMAN] (the person owning the car), with the meaning of ‘broken car owned by x’, or it is the first member of a qualitative binominal. The semantic traits of  $N_2$  are those upon which the interpretation of  $N_1$  is based. In the case of (23),  $N_2$  is [-HUMAN], so it is not a case of a car owning another (broken) car. Rather, it is a property-denoting element, which qualifies  $N_2$  in some respect. Here, the predication is that the car is a wreck. Match D (or the preposition *d̄a*, ‘of’) is just a generic relator that is underspecified with respect to the type of relationship that will take place between  $N_1$  and  $N_2$ , i.e., whether it will be that of a qualitative binominal or that of a genitive (see also Espinal and Cyrino 2021 on *de* as a phonological linker).

Syntactic analyses concerned with the role of the preposition in these two phrases can be divided according to whether they consider such a preposition as being generated in a shared manner, and whether the two instances of ‘of’ are to be accounted for as separated categories. Den Dikken (2006) proposes two different derivations, one for genitives and the other for qualitative binominals. Kayne (1994) suggests instead that the two instances of the preposition can be united within a single mechanism. Given what we have found about the preposition of previously in this paragraph, we maintain that such a preposition is underspecified, and that, like Kayne (1994) assumes, it is the same type of element regardless of whether the phrase is a qualitative binominal or a genitive.  $N_1$  is then a property-denoting element, like adjectives, and it is related to the noun it modifies through a preposition (or match D, in the case of Apulian). As such, there can be no syntactic operation such as extraction. Consider further, by instance, that a qualitative noun phrase is analogous to saying, “x is a doctor and an idiot”, which takes us to what Den Dikken had in mind in relation to qualitative binominals being predicative phrases. According to Bošković (2020), who follows Higginbotham (1985), adjunction (modification) is analogous to coordination,<sup>15</sup> which would explain similarities shared by coordination and modification concerning the impossibility of extraction.

### 3.2. Interpretation

Another clue into how  $N_1$  is interpreted as a predicative element and not as the head/possessum of a genitival phrase comes from number features. In genitival phrases, head and modifier can carry different number features. In Apulian qualitative binominals, however,  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  must share the same number features. Remember what we have said about (23), i.e., that  $N_1$  is interpreted as the predicate also because of the semantic traits carried by  $N_2$ . Now if  $N_1$  has different number features from  $N_2$ , the

phrase becomes agrammatical, and cannot be interpreted as a genitive or a qualitative binominal. It cannot be interpreted as a genitive because of the [-HUMAN] feature of  $N_1$ , and cannot be interpreted as a qualitative binominal because  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  do not have the same number features.

- (24) \*l-i sgar:ət:ən-ə l-a makən-a towa  
 DEF-PL wreck-M.PL DEF-F.SG car(F)-SG your  
 ‘\*those wrecks of your car’

Remember from (1), which we repeat below, that  $N_1$  can also be an element that is originally an interjection, like *kaspəta*.

- (25) l-a kaspəta l-a bul:et:a  
 DEF-F.SG freaking DEF-F.SG bill  
 ‘that freaking thing of a bill’

Contrary to *sgar:ət:ənə* (24), which is masculine, *kaspəta* contains no gender features. So, what happens is that the gender features of *kaspəta*’s definite article are retrieved from those of  $N_2$ .<sup>16</sup> We also assume, as in Baker (2003), that nouns are the only lexical category bearing a referential index.

- (26) a. l-u kaspəta l-u lib:r-ə  
 DEF-M.SG freaking DEF-M.SG book(M)-SG  
 ‘that freaking thing of a book’  
 b. l-i kaspəta l-i lib:r-a  
 DEF-PL freaking DEF-PL book(M)-M.PL  
 ‘the freaking books’

Based on this, we conclude that  $N_2$ , rather than  $N_1$ , is the head of such a phrase (see also Vişan 2013, Masini 2016, and Camacho and Serafim 2021, among others). Masini (2016: 109) describes nouns such as  $N_1$  in this construction as light nouns (see also Giannakidou & Stavrou 1999 on Greek). This, according to Masini, reflects the fact that despite being embedded as a noun,  $N_1$  might express a “lower referentiality with respect to  $N_2$ ”, if it expresses any referentiality at all.  $N_1$  might retain its gender features (as in ‘genius’), but this does not translate into a separate reference from that of the head, which is what we see in adjectives. The fact that these elements have hybrid properties in between nouns and adjectives is a consequence of the fact that they

underwent a shift (adjectives or interjections being embedded as nouns). We will see more of this in the following section.

### 3.3. Agreement patterns

Qualitative constructions of the type analyzed here, being binominal, provide a fertile ground for testing agreement patterns. This paragraph is intended to be a preliminary exploration of agreement patterns in qualitative binominal phrases in the Apulian variety under analysis here. We will investigate both external agreement (on participles, etc.), and agreement within the construction (on  $N_1$  and D elements). This will help to shed light on how this Apulian variety instantiates agreement in contexts where binominal phrases are found, on the sensibility to certain semantic features such as animacy, or the sensibility to distance between agreeing elements. We will see how agreement in the construction's D layer can reflect the construction's basic properties.

In general, when analyzing verbal agreement with complex nominals in Romance, person agreement on the auxiliary and the finite verb is used, as in the case of pseudo-partitives (see, for instance, Lorusso and Franco 2017). When it comes to qualitative binominals, however, the number and person features of  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  always match (i.e.,  $N_2$  has the same index as  $N_1$ , as in adjectives and head nouns), with third-person features being the rule. Other persons can be realized with additional syntactic material, such as complementizer phrases.

- (27) l-a        ʃ:em-a    l-a        pres:or-es:a    [ke    s:o    g:i]/t:u, etc.  
 DEF-F.SG idiot-F.SG DEF-F.SG professor-F.SG [COMP am I]/you, etc.  
 'the idiot of a professor that/I am/you are/etc.'

Qualitative binominals per se trigger third-person agreement. Ackema and Neeleman (2019) notice, for example, that R-expressions (regular nouns) do not generally include first or second person features. As in (27), other persons can be realized only by adding additional syntactic structure.

	$N_1$ & $N_2$
SHARING OF PERSON FEATURES (3d person features)	✓
SHARING OF NUMBER FEATURES	✓
SHARING OF GENDER FEATURES When $N_1$ is a noun	X
SHARING OF GENDER FEATURES When $N_1$ is deadjectival or from another category (interjections, <i>kaspata</i> )	✓

**Table 1.** Features in Apulian qualitative binominals.

Since both  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  will trigger third person agreement, gender features are a better option for testing which of the two nouns controls agreement.<sup>17</sup> Aside from person, since if  $N_2$  is plural  $N_1$  will be plural, number is excluded as well.

We will start with an analysis of agreement in resumptive clitics. We will find that when the complex nominal is the internal argument of a verbal phrase and undergoes resumption, the resumptive clitic might in principle agree with either noun; on the contrary adjectival modifiers of  $N_2$  must agree with it.

As we anticipated, the first nominal in qualitative binominals is not referential on its own, it is a predicate of the subject, like adjectives with head nouns, and as such co-indexed with it. Thus, the construction only contains one index. In non-prepositional genitives the resumptive clitic agrees with the head (i.e., the first nominal), as per usual. In qualitative binominals, however, while  $N_2$  is the actual antecedent of a resumption mechanism, not necessarily will the resumptive clitic agree with it: the clitic can agree with either noun. Corbett (1979: 204; 2006: 235) proposed an *Agreement Hierarchy*, “attributive > predicate > relative pronoun > personal pronoun”, in which elements further to the right are more likely to show semantic agreement. Clitics, pronouns external to the binominal phrase, fit this description.

- (28) kwed:-a pal:-a də lib:r-ə non tʃə l-a /l-u  
 ledʒ:-ə niʃun-ə  
 DEM-F.SG bore-F.SG of book(M)-SG NEG CL CL.OBJ-3.F.SG/CL.OBJ-3.MSG  
 read-3.SG nobody-M  
 ‘nobody reads that bore of a book’

Whenever a [+ HUMAN] noun is present, agreement with the [+ HUMAN] noun is preferred.

- (29) a kwed:-a pal:-a də jom-ə non l-u /\*l-a  
 kak-a niʃun-ə  
 DOM<sup>18</sup> DEM-F.SG bore-F.SG of man-SG NEG CL.OBJ-3.M.SG/CL.OBJ-F.SG  
 pay.attention-3.SG nobody-M  
 ‘nobody pays attention to that bore of a man’

Another Southern Italo-Romance language where this happens is Pantiscu (a Sicilian variety spoken on the island of Pantelleria), where predicative adjectives modifying qualitative binominals noun phrases agree with the [+ HUMAN] noun as well (Idone 2018: 8).



- (30) *ddhu ciuri di picciotta è propriu*  
*bbèddh-a/\*bbèddh-u*  
 DEM.DIST.M.SG flower(M).SG of girl(F).SG be.PRS.3.SG really  
 beautiful-F.SG/\*beautiful-M.SG  
 ‘That lovely girl is really beautiful’

We can also test agreement with post-verbal subjects and observe that, in this case as well, participles and adjectives agree with the [+ HUMAN] noun if it is present.

- (31) a. *ɛn:ə ar:əvat-a l-u d̥ʒ:ənj-ə l-a tsit-a*  
*towa/\*ar:əvat-ə*  
 is arrive.PTCP-F.SG DEF-M.SG genius(M)-SG DEF-F.SG girlfriend(F)-SG  
 your/arrive-PTCP-M.SG  
 ‘here came that genius of your girlfriend’
- b. *ɛn:ə ar:əvat-ə l-u sgar:ət:on-ə l-a makən-a də*  
*papa/ar:əvat-a*  
 is arrive.PTCP-M.SG DEF-M.SG wreck-M.SG DEF-F.SG car(F)-SG of  
 dad/arrived-F.SG  
 ‘that wreck of dad’s car has arrived’

Pre-verbal subjects yield the same pattern.

- (32) a. *l-u d̥ʒ:ənjə l-a tsit-a towa ɛn:ə*  
*ar:əv-at-a/\*ar:əvat-ə*  
 DEF-M.SG genius(M)-SG DEF-F.SG girlfriend-F.SG your is  
 arrive.PTCP-F.SG/\*-M.SG  
 ‘that genius of your girlfriend has arrived’
- b. *l-u sgar:ət:on-ə l-a makən-a də papa ɛn:ə*  
*ar:əvat-a/ar:əvat-ə*  
 DEF-M.SG wreck-M.SG DEF-F.SG car(F)-SG of dad is  
 arrive.PTCP-F.SG/\*-M.SG  
 ‘that wreck of dad’s car has arrived’

We have said that predicates ( $N_1$ ) have the role of a property-denoting element and that as such, they carry no real index on their own. However, these sorts of nominal predicates (*sgar:ət:onə*) are still nouns and while they do not have a referential index themselves they do preserve their gender features, as evident from their articles (remember instead that the number features of  $N_1$  depend on  $N_2$ ); participles and

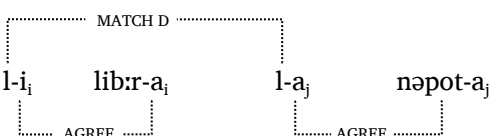
adjectives will still agree with them, with the exception in which they appear with a [+HUMAN] noun, a nominalized adjective, or elements originated from interjections (as in the case of *kaspəta* (26)). In that case, their morphology will bear the features of  $N_2$ . The fact that nominal predicates like  $N_1$  can still retain their gender features (that will be copied also on their articles) is a remnant of their nominal nature (as in Baker 2003). Despite this, the whole phrase contains only one referential index (unlike genitives), which is borne by  $N_2$ .

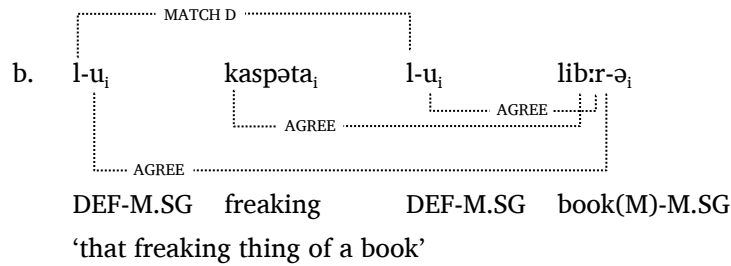
### 3.4. More on the D layer

In this Apulian variety, demonstratives may occur only once in the construction, unlike definite articles. They head the  $N_1$ - $N_2$  phrase, where they agree with  $N_2$ . The same happens in the Italian counterpart (33c).

- (33) a. (kwi)st-u    kaspəta    də    \*(kwi)st-u    medəkə  
 DEM(M)-M.SG    freaking    of    (DEM(M)-M.SG)    doctor  
 ‘this freaking doctor’
- b. (kwi)st-u    ʃ:em-ə    də    medəkə  
 DEM(M)-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    of    doctor  
 ‘this idiot of a doctor’
- c. *quest-o*    *caspita*    *di* (\**quest-o*)    *medico*  
 DEM-M.SG    freaking    of (DEM-M.SG)    doctor  
 ‘this freaking doctor’

As we have seen, definite articles appear instead twice, preceding each noun. The presence of a demonstrative correlates with the realization of a preposition (13c). This is true also for non-prepositional genitives in the same language (Massaro 2020, 2022). We can interpret this as follows. In non-prepositional genitives and qualitative binominal constructions, modification is realized through a categorial match in the D layer (definite articles only). As we mentioned, qualitative binominals (34b) also require that  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  share the same number and gender features. In (34b) we have an invariable element (the interjection), but inflecting elements usually show agreement morphology with  $N_2$ , so in (34b) we will show this agreement relation too.

- (34) a.   
 DEF-PL    book(M)-M.PL    DEF-F.SG    niece-F.SG  
 ‘his/her niece’s books’



On the other hand, when the D layer of both nouns shows no categorial matching, a modification relationship between the two nouns is realized with the preposition *də*.

- (35) a. (kwi)st-i    lib:r-a      dəl:-a      nəpət-a  
DEM(M)-PL book(M)-PL of.DEF-F.SG niece-F.SG  
‘these books of his/her niece’s’
- b. (kwi)st-u      kaspəta    dəlib:r-ə  
DEM(M)-M.SG freaking    of book(M)-SG  
‘this freaking thing of a book’

The relationship between  $N_1$  and  $N_2$ , in which the property denoted by  $N_1$  qualifies  $N_2$ , is then established in a twofold manner. In a case, a categorial match in the D layer is sufficient. That is when a preposition is not needed. A categorial match in the D layer is also found in adjectival modification in Modern Greek and Aromanian polydefinites<sup>19</sup> ((36a, c), Campos & Stavrou 2004: 137-138), and in Arabic adjectival phrases ((36d), Fassi Fehri 1999: 107). Like adjectival phrases, Greek qualitative binominal phrases also employ a polydefinite, recursive D strategy ((36b), Alexiadou 2014: 43). Note that also in Greek,  $N_1$ ’s article retains  $N_1$ ’s features if  $N_1$  is denominal: in (36b)  $N_1$  is a neuter noun, while  $N_2$  is feminine, and  $N_1$  is introduced by the neuter form of the definite article.

- (36) Modern Greek, adjectival (polydefinite)
- a. *i asimenj-a i pen-a*  
DEF.F.SG silver-F.SG DEF.F.SG pen(F)-SG  
‘the silver pen’
- Modern Greek, qualitative
- b. *to teras i adelfi mu irthe arga*  
DEF.N.SG monster[N.SG] DEF.F.SG sister mine came late  
‘that monster of my sister came late’
- Aromanian, adjectival (polydefinite)
- c. *stilo-lu lai-lu*

- pen-DEF black-DEF  
 ‘the black pen’  
 Arabic, adjectival
- d. *l-kitab-u*                      *l-ʔaxḍar-u*                      *ṣ-ṣaġiir-u*  
 DEF-book(M)-NOM.SG    DEF-green-NOM.M.SG    DEF-small-NOM.M.SG  
 ‘the small green book’

In this sense, Apulian non-prepositional genitives and qualitative binominals are similar to polydefinites, and, like Modern Greek polydefinites, occur in a variant where no categorial match in the D layer takes place, as we noted. In these cases, merging of  $N_1 + d\partial[N_2]$  realizes a relationship in which the properties of  $N_1$  are applied to  $N_2$ . The preposition *d\partial* then includes  $N_1$  amongst the properties of  $N_2$ .

If our claim is that  $N_1$  has an adjective-like function, then we should expect it to show at least some kind of adjectival behavior. If  $N_1$  has an adjective-like function, it may not be accidental that in this Apulian variety non-prepositional qualitative binominal phrases can be superficially indistinguishable from non-prepositional genitives (as in (22)) and that they can be realized through the same strategy (categorial matching in the D layer). Cross-linguistically genitival and adjectival modification may be realized with elements of the same category; examples include Contemporary Persian with its *ezafe* (37).

- (37) a. *ketv:b-e æ'li*  
 book-LKR Ali  
 ‘Ali’s book’
- b. *gonbæd-e v:bi*  
 dome-LKR blue  
 ‘the blue dome’

The Indo-Iranian linker, the *ezafe*, is etymologically a D element. For example, the Persian *ezafe* goes back to the Old Persian demonstrative ‘*hya*’ (Meillet 1931). While Persian lacks gender morphology, other Indo-Iranian languages do have inflecting linkers. The Zaza language, by instance, has adjectival linkers agreeing with the head N (Toosarvandani & Van Urk 2014: 3).

- (38) *kutik-o*                      *grs mu*                      *vinen-o*  
 dog.M-LKR.M.SG.NOM    big 1.SG.OBL see.PRS-3.SG.M  
 ‘the big dog sees me’

In Apulian, the article preceding  $N_1$  shows two things. The first is that the predicate ( $N_1$ ) is embedded in the same syntactic context as nouns.  $N_1$ 's article signals the fact that whatever its origin (from adjectives, interjections, etc.),  $N_1$  is now a nominalized element, i.e.,  $N_1$ 's article acts as a nominalizer (see also Giannakidou & Stavrou 1999). This allows the language to generalize the recursive DPs strategy found in non-prepositional genitives to adjective-like functions (see Widmer et. al 2017 for discussion on overlapping realizations of genitives and adjectival phrases; see Alexiadou 2014 for recursive DPs in Greek qualitative binominal phrases). A genitive/qualitative overlap also existed in Latin, where qualitative phrases were realized with  $N_2$  in the genitive case ('monstrum mulier-is', [monster woman-GEN], 'a monster of a woman', cf. Aarts 1998: 120). Then, with  $N_1$  such as *kaspəta*, the article preceding  $N_1$  has another function, that of an agreeing element. The inflecting article carries the gender and number features of the head, which is similar to what we saw with linkers in (38). The agreeing linker is generally thought to form a constituent with the modifier (despite being written as graphically attached to the head, as in Persian; see Philip 2012, Widmer et. al 2017), and so does the article preceding  $N_1$  in Apulian.

With no match D and agreement morphology with  $N_2$  in  $N_1$ 's D, the preposition *də* has the function of linking subject and predicate.

- (39) a. \*kaspəta l-a bul:et:a  
           freaking DEF-F.SG bill  
           'freaking thing of a bill'  
       b. kaspəta də bul:et:a  
           freaking of bill  
           'freaking thing of a bill'

Remember that the presence of a demonstrative requires a preposition, as in (35), which also shows that like articles, also in this case demonstratives agree with  $N_2$ . Demonstratives of  $N_1$  never occur with articles of  $N_1$ . They do occur in binominal phrases where  $N_2$  is a bare noun.

- (40) a. (kwi)st-u kaspəta də lib:r-ə  
           DEM(M)-M.SG freaking of book(M)-SG  
           'this freaking thing of a book'  
       b. (kwi)st-u kaspəta də.l:-u /n-u lib:r-ə  
           DEM(M)-M.SG freaking of.DEF-M.SG/INDEF-M.SG book(M)-SG  
           'this freaking thing of a book'  
       c. \*(kwi)st-u kaspəta lib:r-ə

DEM(M)-M.SG freaking book(M)-SG  
 ‘this freaking thing of a book’

The demonstrative in (40a) could be seen as belonging to N<sub>2</sub>. However, like N<sub>1</sub>’s definite article, here the demonstrative belongs with N<sub>1</sub> (see also Alexiadou 2014 on Greek binominal phrases). N<sub>2</sub>’s article is not spurious, but a regular article, which belongs with N<sub>2</sub> (see also Etxepare 2013). This is clear from (40b), where the D layer of N<sub>2</sub> is already filled with an article, since demonstratives and articles are never found together in pre-nominal position in this language. As the article, the demonstrative belongs syntactically with N<sub>1</sub> because, like the article, it signals the fact that whatever its origin (from adjectives, interjections, etc.), N<sub>1</sub> is now embedded as a noun.

It should be noted that this construction also allows for a pre-nominal realization of adjectives that are otherwise strictly post-nominal when adnominal, like *ʃem-* (see Andriani 2018 on the linearization of adjectives in Southern Italo-Romance, and precisely in Barese Apulian). The possibility of a different linearization for adjectives recalls the Modern Greek monadic/polydefinites alternation. Monadic phrases (41c) only allow pre-nominal modifiers. In polydefinites (41a, b) instead, adjectives can occur both pre-nominally and post-nominally (Campos & Stavrou 2004: 137-138).

- (41) a. *i asimenja i pena*  
 DEF silver DEF pen  
 ‘the silver pen’
- b. *i pena i asimenja*  
 DEF pen DEF silver  
 ‘the silver pen’
- c. *i asimenja pena*  
 DEF silver pen  
 ‘the silver pen’
- d. \**i pena asimenja*  
 DEF pen silver  
 ‘the silver pen’

Finally, if N<sub>1</sub> has an adjective-like function, we should expect it to be gradable. This is what we find, at least when a noun (‘genius’, (42b, d)) or an adjective (‘idiot’, (42a, c)) are involved. Not so much when the first member is instead an interjection (42e). We also note here that, unlike non-prepositional genitives, non-prepositional qualitative phrases allow for modifiers to be interposed between the two nouns.

- (42) a. l-u            ʃ:em-ə            totalə            l-u            medəkə  
 DEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    total            DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘that total idiot of a doctor’
- b. l-u            d̥ʒ:ənj-ə            totalə    l-u            medəkə  
 DEF-M.SG    genius(M)-SG    total    DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘that total idiot of a doctor’
- c. n-u            ʃ:em-ə            totalə    də    medəkə  
 INDEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    total    of    doctor  
 ‘a total idiot of a doctor’
- d. n-u            d̥ʒ:ənjə            totalə    də    medəkə  
 INDEF-M.SG    genius(M)-SG    total    of    doctor  
 ‘a total genius of a doctor’
- e. ?l-u            kaspəta            totalə    l-u            medəkə  
 DEF-M.SG    freaking    total    DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘that total idiot of a doctor’

Masini (2016: 104) also tests the idea that N1s should express gradable semantics with the following Italian example containing the noun *larghezza*, ‘width’, which is not possible (contrasts with *bellezza*, ‘beauty’, and *dolcezza*, ‘sweetness’), showing that not all gradable nouns are possible.

- (43) a. \**un-a larghezz-a di tavolo*  
 INDEF-F.SG    width(F)-SG    of table  
 ‘\*a large table’
- b. *un-a bellezz-a /dolcezz-a di ragazz-a*  
 INDEF-F.SG    beauty(F)-SG    /sweetness(F)-SG    of girl(F)-SG  
 ‘a beautiful girl’

### 3.5. Indefinites and bare nouns

During the course of this paper, we mostly focused on definite instances of this construction. This is due to the role that definite articles play in the non-prepositional phrase. Given this, the analysis we carried until now mostly involved readily identifiable referents (proper names included, despite them being article-less).

A logical representation of the semantic apport of definite articles is the iota operator (ι). Iota operators restrict a set of elements having a precise property (for example that of being a table) to a single element (singleton), for example, the table. A iota operator might also restrict pluralities within sets (the tables, see also Chierchia 1998); indefinites, represented with an ∃ operator, quantify over the whole set (elements

that are tables), picking any element as long as it belongs to the set (a table), or, in other words, as long as it belongs to that kind: at least one of the elements which belong to the kind table. The  $\forall/\exists$  dichotomy has profound ramifications in sentence structure and the availability of certain configurations (prepositional/non-prepositional alternations being an example here). Another thing worth noting here is that if  $N_1$ 's article is indefinite, then  $N_2$  is necessarily bare.

- (44) a. \*n-u            ʃ:em-ə        də n-u            medəkə  
 INDEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    of    INDEF-M.SG doctor  
 ‘an idiot of a doctor’
- b. \*n-u            ʃ:em-ə        də.l:-u            medəkə  
 INDEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    of.DEF-M.SG    doctor  
 ‘an idiot of a doctor’
- c. n-u            ʃ:em-ə        də medəkə  
 INDEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    of    doctor  
 ‘an idiot of a doctor’

This can be explained if we assume that in cases like (44c)  $N_2$  expresses a kind. To be a kind implies a “sufficiently regular behavior” (Chierchia 1998: 348), which limits the properties that characterize an element so that it can be included in that kind, e.g., ‘kind of profession’ = ‘doctor’. The set ‘doctor’ includes any element with the property ‘doctor’ (as having a degree in medicine, healing patients, etc.).

- (45) a. n-u            tipə də [medəkə<sub>KIND</sub>]  
 INDEF-M.SG    kind of    doctor  
 ‘a kind of doctor’
- b. n-u            ʃ:em-ə        də [medəkə<sub>KIND</sub>]  
 INDEF-M.SG    idiot-M.SG    of    doctor  
 ‘an idiot of a doctor’

(45b) says that this person is an idiot when compared to what is usually expected of doctors.

Now, the distribution of determiners in (45b) recalls Romance pseudopartitives ((46) from Espinal & Cyrino 2021: 5).

- (46) Spanish
- a. *un kilo de manzanas*  
 a kilogram of apples  
 ‘a kilogram of apples’



French

- b. *un verre de bière*  
a glass of beer  
'a glass of beer'

Italian

- c. *un bicchiere di birra*  
a glass of beer  
'a glass of beer'

Also in pseudopartitives  $N_2$  expresses a kind.  $N_1$  expresses an amount, while  $N_2$  expresses the fact that this amount can be quantified over any substance that belongs to the kind beer, for instance. In practice, this is what indefinites do. Partitives proper, instead, quantify over specific sets ( $N_2$ ) (Rutkowski 2007, Espinal & Cyrino 2021). What (44c) says is that we have a stupid instance of the kind doctor or that somebody is stupid for the kind 'doctor', or, as put in Den Dikken (2006: 170), 'in his capacity of being a doctor'.

- (47) n-u            pokə    ʃ:em-ə        pə    jɛs:ə    medəkə  
INDEF-M.SG    little    idiot-M.SG    for    be    doctor  
'a little stupid to be a doctor'

This difference is at the heart of Den Dikken's proposed difference between 'attributive' and 'comparative' qualitative binominal phrases. The first (attributive) says that a referent is an idiot for the kind doctor. In the second, a precise instance of the kind doctor is described as stupid. This is the case of the definite descriptions we analysed in the previous sections, where the iota operator restricts the set to a precise individual.

At the same time,  $N_2$  refers to a kind, but the construction refers to an entity that is an instance of this kind ('this disgust of a song' refers to a particular instance of the kind 'disgusting songs', for example). As we saw in (40a), a bare  $N_2$  can occur with an  $N_1$  headed by a definite article. In (44c) we saw that a demonstrative is possible as well. Here,  $N_1$ 's D layer plays another key role. In discussing cases such as 'that kind of animal'/'a kind of animal' Chierchia (1998: 363-364) proposed the 'Derived Kind Predication' which states that, "when an object-argument slot in a predicate is filled by a kind, the type of predicate is automatically adjusted by introducing a local existential quantification over instances of the kind". So, while  $N_2$  refers to a kind, the whole phrase is a predication of a particular instance of this kind, so that  $N_1$  can have a demonstrative as in (40a), but also an indefinite article, as in (44c). This means that the whole phrase

can be quantified over by definite or indefinite operators, because it represents an instance of the kind ‘doctor’, so that we can have ‘that idiot of a doctor’, ‘an idiot of a doctor’, etc. This is more or less what we see with adjectival modification, where the adjective modifies a definite/indefinite instance of its head, ‘a stupid doctor’, ‘this stupid doctor’, etc. Then, as we mentioned, the preposition *də* (or ‘match D’) links the predicate to the subject of the predication ( $N_2$ ).

#### 4. Conclusions

In this paper, we presented new data from the Gargano Apulian Italo-Romance language of San Marco in Lamis (Foggia) concerning the realization of qualitative binominals (the ‘N-of-an-N’ type). Our findings can be summarized as follows. In this language, qualitative binominals can be either prepositional, or non-prepositional. We found that the absence of the preposition depends on the make-up of the determiner layer of the two nouns. We have seen that both nouns must be preceded by a definite article for the construction to be non-prepositional: indefinites are in fact only allowed in the prepositional variant. This overlaps with the behavior of non-prepositional genitives in the same language. In this regard, we proposed that both in non-prepositional qualitative binominals and in non-prepositional genitives the two nouns are related by matching the type of determiner preceding each of them through a mechanism which we dubbed match D. As we said, definite articles are the type of determiner required by both phrases to be non-prepositional.

As observed in Napoli (1989) and Den Dikken (2006) qualitative binominals do not allow for the extraction of either of the two nouns. We connected this to the fact that  $N_1$  is a property-denoting element, like adjectives. Adjectival phrases do not allow the extraction of either nouns or adjectives; they are then what Chomsky (2001) called phases, i.e., phrases that once completed do not allow further syntactic operations (such as extraction) to occur.

We found that in some contexts, non-prepositional genitives and non-prepositional qualitative binominals appear superficially indistinguishable (22). We proposed that the interpretation of a phrase as a genitive or a qualitative binominal depends on the semantics of the two nouns and established that interpretation also depends on the number features of  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  (section 3.2). Just like in the case of agreeing adjectives, if  $N_2$  is plural,  $N_1$  will be plural, too. We based our conclusion that  $N_2$  is the head of the phrase on the fact that when  $N_1$  is a nominalized adjective (*ʃ:emə*) or an interjection (*kaspəta*), and thus per se void of gender and number features, the features of  $N_2$  will show up on  $N_1$  and on its article. In prepositional genitives, on the other hand, there is

no matching in number features between  $N_1$  and  $N_2$ . Qualitative binominals only trigger third person agreement (either singular or plural), just like R-expressions generally do (see Ackema and Neeleman 2019).

In section 3.3 we gave a first sketch of agreement patterns of adjectives and verbs with qualitative binominals. We found that agreement with qualitative binominals in the language conforms to the Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 2006) when it comes to agreeing clitics. Another condition imposed on agreement is the presence of a [+HUMAN] feature: while the clitic might generally agree with either member of the construction, this is not the case when a [+HUMAN] noun is present. In this instance, the clitic will necessarily agree with the [+HUMAN] noun.

In section 3.4 we focused on the determiner layer of the phrase and tried to answer two questions. 1) what is the behavior of  $N_1$ 's article, and 2) what can its behavior tell us about the nature of  $N_1$  and its role in the phrase. We claimed that the fact that the first element is embedded as a noun allows the language to generalize the recursive DP strategy of non-prepositional genitives to qualitative binominal noun phrases. 'Match D' (or the preposition 'of') links the two nouns, applying the property expressed by  $N_1$  to  $N_2$ . If  $N_1$  is not denominal (i.e., it is an adjective or an interjection like *kaspāta*)  $N_1$ 's article agrees with  $N_2$ , showing that it is a modifier of  $N_1$ .  $N_1$ 's article agrees with the head, but forms a constituent with the modifier. Because of this, we claim that  $N_1$ 's article has a parallel in head-agreeing adjectival linkers of the type found in Zaza, an Indo-Iranian language (Toosarvandani & Van Urk 2014).

#### *Abbreviations*

Abbreviations used: DEF, definite article; INDEF, indefinite article; LKR, linker; CL.OBJ, object clitic; DEM, demonstrative; NEG, negation; PART, partitive; PRS, present tense. PST, past tense; PTCP-, participle. Elements whose gender is signalled by both inflection and a metaphonetic process on the root have gender glossed twice, ex. *kwist-u*, DEM(M)-M.SG; *kwest-a*, DEM(F)-F.SG (both meaning 'this').

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<sup>1</sup> The mechanism takes a copular phrase such as the doctor is a jewel, and through inversion yields a jewel of a doctor. The preposition is the result of this inversion mechanism.

<sup>2</sup> These article forms are descendants of the Latin demonstrative ‘ille’ (M.SG), ‘illa’ (F.SG), ‘illud’ (N.SG), as is usually the case in Romance (two exceptions being Sardinian, Mensching 2005, and Balearic Islands Catalan, Gaspar 2013). Languages as Verbicaro Calabrese (Silvestri 2013: 136) did not retain the lateral in ‘ille’ (while Italian ‘il’(M.SG), ‘l-o’(M.SG), ‘l-a’(F.SG) and Apulian ‘l-u’(M.SG), ‘l-a’(F.SG) did).

(i) *a nučə u kvəddə*  
DEF.F.SG nut DEF.M.SG neck  
‘cervical vertebra’

<sup>3</sup> Amongst the Romance languages with non-prepositional genitives whose article retained the lateral we can include Old French (Jensen 1990: 19, 20), Old Italian, Old Sicilian, and Lombard (Delfitto & Paradisi 2009: 62, 63). Delfitto & Paradisi also list data from Castro dei Volsci (Frosinone province, Southern Latium), another variety with non-prepositional genitives where the lateral was retained. Rio Platense Spanish is another language with articles endowed with a lateral where non-prepositional genitives occur (Silvestri 2013: 90).

<sup>4</sup> Romanian, Old Romanian, and Catalan data from Vişan (2013) and sources quoted therein.

<sup>5</sup> Spanish data from Villalba (2007).

<sup>6</sup> *n-* (‘en’ in French, ‘ne’ in Italian, ‘nde’ in Sardinian) is a partitive clitic, roughly meaning ‘of it’, where ‘it’ is a proform for the direct object.

(ii) a. *h-o lett-o un libro* Italian  
have-1SG read.PTCP-M.SG INDEF-M.SG book  
‘I have read a book’  
b. *ne ho lett-a un-a pagin-a*  
PART have-1SG read.PTCP-F.SG INDEF-F.SG page(F)-SG  
‘I have read one page’

See Mensching (2020) on Sardinian; Cardinaletti and Giusti (1991) on Italian; Ihsane (2013) on French.

<sup>7</sup> The Apulian non-reinforced form of the distal demonstrative being *dd-u/-a* (Latin ‘ille’), the reinforced one being *kwidz-u/ kwedz-a* (Latin ‘\*(ec)cu(m) ille’). The Italian counterpart being *quell-o/-a*. Italian has a non-reinforced variant (Latin ‘iste’) for the proximal *quest-o/-a*, being *st-*

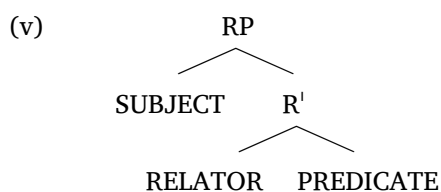
*o/st-a*, but lacks a non-reinforced variant of the distal demonstrative. Apulian proximal demonstratives are *kwist-u/kwest-a*, and *st-u/-a*, respectively.

<sup>8</sup> Cross-linguistically non-prepositional genitives and qualitative binominal phrases are reminiscent of Celtic genitives (see Widmer et. al 2017) and Semitic Construct State genitives for their juxtaposition strategy and for their definiteness requirements. Similarities with the Semitic Construct State genitive were noted in Longobardi (1995, 2001) for Italian, and Massaro (2020, 2022) for this Apulian variety.

<sup>9</sup> The same happens in non-prepositional genitives: article-less modifiers are not allowed, and definite articles need to be realized at all times, resulting otherwise in the prepositional variant. On the basis of this, agreement for definiteness via D was postulated (see Massaro 2020, Massaro 2022).

- (iii) \*l-u            lib:r-ə        Məkələ  
 DEF-M.SG    book(M)-SG   Michael  
 ‘Michael’s book’
- (iv) l-u            lib:r-ə        \*(də)        Məkələ  
 DEF-M.SG    book(M)-SG   of        Michael  
 ‘Michael’s book’

<sup>10</sup> In Den Dikken’s analysis, the article would be contained in the relator node, which also includes the preposition of. N<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>2</sub> are predicate and subject, respectively (tree of the Relator Phrase from Den Dikken 2006: 3).



<sup>11</sup> By which we mean an element establishing the modification mechanism between head and modifier.

<sup>12</sup> This is true of Romance non-prepositional genitives generally, and it is also confirmed by diachronic data, cf. Delfitto and Paradisi 2009 for Old French and Old Italian varieties; Jensen 2012 for Old French.

<sup>13</sup> The examples analyzed here contain N2s which are readily identifiable in the interlocutors’ shared knowledge, or Common Ground (see Krifka 2008). Here the definite article signals that the noun it precedes belongs to the Common Ground, and it is hence a topic or an accommodated topic (Epstein 2002 for other uses of definite articles).

<sup>14</sup> The doubling of the lateral in *ku.l-u* is due to syntactic doubling. In this variety in fact the preposition ‘with’ is always *ku*, never *kun* or *kum* (in which case it would be possible to speak of assimilation).

<sup>15</sup> ‘A big butterfly’ = ‘That is a butterfly, and it is big (for a butterfly)’, (Higginbotham 1985: 563).

<sup>16</sup> The same reasoning applies to nominalized adjectives in the construction, as in the case of *ʃemə* (‘idiot’).



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<sup>17</sup> Of course, this can only be done when  $N_1$  is a noun proper, as we have done in (28-32), because in the case of nominalized adjectives,  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  will have the same gender features, too.

<sup>18</sup> DOM (*Differential Object Marking*, Bossong 1991) describes a phenomenon in which only a subset of direct objects receives special markings. In Persian, *-râ* attaches to specific direct objects only (Lazard 1982, Samvelian 2018); In Romance, the preposition *a* is the usual differential object marker, except for Romanian, which has *pe* (Bossong 1991), and Gascon, which has *ena/enda* (Rohlf's 1970). Like Spanish, languages of Southern Italy employ the preposition *a*. In these languages, DOM usually marks [+animate] or specific objects (Ledgeway et al 2019).

<sup>19</sup> Polydefinites are adjectival phrases whereby both the head noun and the adjectival modifier are preceded by a definite article. They are opposed to monadic adjectival phrases, in which only one article is realized. In Greek, polydefinites also allow for post-nominal adjectives, contrary to monadics (see Campos & Stavrou 2004).