

# Towards a syntactic understanding of connective particles: the *final pero* phenomenon in Bahiense Spanish\*

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## Abstract

The contrastive connector *pero* ‘but’ is rigidly sentence-initial in most Spanish varieties. However, at least three Spanish dialects allow locating it at the end of a sentence. This paper discusses the properties of *final pero* as attested in the dialect spoken in Bahía Blanca (Argentina), i.e., the so-called *pero bahiense*. First, I demonstrate that *pero bahiense* cannot be reduced to superficially similar phenomena in Spanish. Then, I offer a comparison between *pero bahiense* and its sentence-initial counterpart showing that they share a number of non-trivial characteristics but also differ in relevant regards. Based on these properties, I advance an account of the *pero bahiense* phenomenon according to which instances of *pero* that express concessivity may optionally attract the CP projection to their left. While the analysis does not cover all properties of *pero bahiense*, it highlights aspects of the syntax of connective particles that require further investigation.

**Keywords**— connective discourse particles, concessivity, vocatives, Spanish variation

## 1 Introduction: the landscape of *final pero*

The Spanish conjunction *pero* ‘but’ may function as an intersentential connector. When used this way, *pero* heads a sentence introducing a contrast with respect to a prior proposition. Canonical examples of the functioning of *pero* are offered in (1) and (2).

- (1) El intendente es un nabo. **Pero** ganó las elecciones.  
the mayor is a turnip but won the elections  
‘The mayor is an idiot. But he won the elections.’

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- (2) A: Cosmo es buen tipo.  
Cosmo is good dude  
'Cosmo is a good guy.'
- B: **Pero** es un poco amarrete.  
but is a little stingy  
'But he is a little stingy.'

The position of *pero* in these examples is crosslinguistically the most common for this type of connector. Its distribution can be roughly schematized as in (3), where it occupies a medial position between two propositions *p* and *q* which it connects. Since this type of *pero* forms a constituent with the second proposition *q* and appears “to its left”, it will receive the pre-theoretical label of *initial pero*.

- (3) *p pero q*

Some Spanish dialects allow for a syntactically distinct use of *pero*. In these varieties, *pero* can appear “to the right” of the second proposition *q*, as sketched in (4). Despite this positional change, the element maintains its connective role. For simplicity, I will refer to this phenomenon (also pre-theoretically) as *final pero*.<sup>1</sup>

- (4) *p q pero*

The pattern in (4) is attested in a group of dialects along Central (Laprade 1981, Lipski 1994) and Northern Andes (Toscano Mateus 1953, Estrella-Santos 2018). These include, at least, La Paz Spanish, Peruvian Sierra Spanish, and Quito Spanish; in this paper, I employ the shorthand *Andean Spanish* to refer to all of them. As the example in (5) shows, *pero* appears at the very end of the contrastive proposition.<sup>2</sup>

- (5) Me encanta el fútbol. No me gusta el tenis, **pero**.  
1SG.DAT love the soccer not 1SG.DAT like the tennis but  
'I love soccer, but I don't like tennis.'

Andean Spanish

Kany (1947: 203) introduces the idea that *final pero* in these varieties is a product of language contact, as he states that the pattern is “probably due to the postposition of particles, prepositions and other parts of speech in Aymara and Quechua”. This has become the default hypothesis to account for many right-peripheral elements in the Andean dialects, including *pero*. In this way, the *Nueva Gramática de la Lengua Española* (RAE 2009: 2458) attributes the emergence of *final pero* in Andean Spanish to the influence of the Quechuan family of languages. As Calvo Pérez (2000) discusses, the Quechuan languages do exhibit a number of characteristics that allow an account of *final pero* in terms of syntactic transfer. For instance, Cuzco-Collao Quechua has at least two suffixes that may be interpreted as contrastive connectors, *-taq* in (6) and *-ri* in (7); furthermore, the adversative conjunction *ichaqqa* ‘but’ does not have to appear to the left of its clause, e.g., (6), and may also occupy a final position, e.g., (8).

<sup>1</sup>The behaviour of connective *pero* is in this regard parallel to that of regular coordinators, which have been suggested to always combine with the second co-ordinand (Zwart 2009).

<sup>2</sup>Source: <https://forum.wordreference.com/threads/pero-al-final-de-una-frase.283937/>

- (6) Kunan-qa eskuyla-ta-n ripu-saq; paqarin-**taq** **ichaqa** tayta-y-**taq**  
 today-TOP school-DIR-FOC go-FUT tomorrow-CONT but dad-1SG-CONT  
 yanapa-saq.  
 help-FUT  
 ‘Today I have to go to school. But tomorrow I have to help my dad.’  
 Cuzco-Collao Quechua (Cusihuamán 2001: 240)
- (7) Pi-taq-**ri**  
 who-SEQ-but  
 ‘But who is it?’  
 Cuzco-Collao Quechua (Calvo Pérez 2000)
- (8) Ama qunqa-nki-chu **ichaqa**.  
 not forget-2-NEG but  
 ‘But do not forget.’  
 Cuzco-Collao Quechua (Calvo Pérez 2000)

Laprade (1981) posits that *final pero* in La Paz Spanish is a product of Aymara substratum. In his account, *final pero* corresponds to the Aymara objector suffix *-raki*.<sup>3</sup>

- (9) Aymar parl-xa-**rak**-ta-sä.  
 Aymara speak-COMPL-OBJ-2-CONT  
 ‘But you already speak Aymara!’  
 Northern Aymara (Stratford 1989: 205)

Laprade concedes that the *raki-pero* correspondence is rather tenuous, as the suffix *-raki* manifests a wide range of meanings. Hardman et al. (1988) basically analyse it as English ‘too’. However, the same can be said for *-taq*, *-ri* and *ichaqa* in Quechua, which can be used in contexts that do not resemble *final pero*. This is one of the reasons why Calvo Pérez (2000) concludes that *final pero* and similar right-peripheral elements in Andean Spanish are not the product of the influence of a single language, but must be taken to be the synergic outcome of typological properties shared by the Quechuan and Aymara families.

*Final pero* is not restricted to Andean dialects. Its use is also attested in certain Iberic varieties spoken in areas of Catalan-Spanish contact. The following example corresponds to the variety from Palma de Mallorca.

- (10) Siempre recibieron otros. No recibí yo, **pero**.  
 always received other not received I but  
 ‘Others always received (stuff). But I never received (anything).’  
 Mallorcan Spanish (Levas 2018)

Vann (2001) reports analogous data from the Spanish dialect spoken in the city of Barcelona.

- (11) Porque estamos en España, aunque no lo quiero aceptar, **pero**.  
 because are in Spain although not it want accept but

<sup>3</sup>Stratford (1989: 205) describes the interpretation of the objector *-raki* as “raising an objection to a statement or action which occurred previously”. This characterization suggests that *-raki* (and, in general, an objector) is a discourse marker.

‘Because we are in Spain, although I don’t want to accept it.’

Barcelona Spanish (Vann 2001: 121)

Levas (2018) suggests that the phenomenon in the Mallorcan variety is due to the influence of Catalan. The Catalan dialect spoken in the Balearic Islands makes extensive use of the conjunction *però* ‘but’ at the end of a sentence; this construction seems to be much less exploited in continental Catalan (Coromines 1995).

- (12) ... jo no us hi podria acompanyar, **però**.  
I not you there could accompany but  
‘... but I couldn’t accompany you there.’ Catalan (Levas 2018)

The *final pero* construction is also attested in the Spanish variety spoken in the Argentinian city of Bahía Blanca and surroundings. The phenomenon is popularly known as *pero bahiense* ‘Bahian but’. As shown in the examples in (13) and (14), *pero bahiense* signals a contrast between two propositions, just as initial *pero* does.<sup>4</sup>

- (13) El intendente es un nabo. Ganó las elecciones, **pero**.  
the mayor is a turnip won the elections but  
‘The mayor is an idiot. But he won the elections.’

- (14) A: Cosmo es buen tipo.  
Cosmo is good dude  
‘Cosmo is a good guy.’  
B: Es un poco amarrete, **pero**.  
is a little stingy but  
‘But he is a little stingy.’

The *pero bahiense* phenomenon has not been the object of a systematic grammatical study, so there are no theories explaining its origin and functioning. There is, however, a “folk” account of its genesis. According to many informants, the *final pero* construction appears in the Bahiense dialect due to contact with Italian immigrants during the first half of the twentieth century. Indeed, Bahía Blanca received a great number of immigrants from Italy in those years,<sup>5</sup> and Italian is precisely a language that exhibits a type of *final pero* construction.<sup>6</sup>

- (15) ... era la settimana scorsa, **però**.  
was the week last but

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<sup>4</sup>All data points from the Bahiense dialect discussed in this paper were obtained through electronic surveys. These consisted of a number of *forced-choice tasks* and *yes-no tasks* (Schutze 2014). The results were further verified by a selected group of informants.

<sup>5</sup>While there is no record of the immigrants that arrived in the port of Bahía Blanca, it is well documented that half of the population of Bahía Blanca by 1914 were immigrants; the most numerous group was the Italian contingent. The sociolinguistic impact of the Italian community in Bahía Blanca has been extensively studied, e.g., Fontanella de Weinberg (1979), Blanco et al. (1982), Rigatuso & Hipperdinger (1998), but its consequences for the morphosyntax of the local Spanish variety have not been analysed.

<sup>6</sup>In particular, the “folk hypothesis” relates *pero bahiense* to the speech of the Italian immigrants from the region of Marche. Presumably, the reason that Marchegians are made responsible for the phenomenon is that they represented the biggest group of Italians arrived in Bahía Blanca. For instance, around 40% of the people registered at the *Asociación Italiana de Socorros Mutuos* by 1920 proceeded from Marche; I am thankful to Ana Miravalles (p.c.) for this information.

The *final pero* phenomenon introduces a number of interesting questions from a grammatical point of view. First, one would like to know how is that this element functions at all, i.e., what are its phonological, syntactic and semantic properties. A second interesting issue is its relation with standard *initial pero* in General Spanish: can they be considered syntactic variants of a single lexical item? Or should they be taken to be distinct units? A third type of question involves language contact: assuming that these three instances of *final pero* are due to some sort of syntactic transfer, how is it that the influence of three languages with very different typological properties led to the emergence of a single convergent form in three distinct Spanish dialects? Finally, is it really the same construction in all these three dialects? Or are we dealing with three homophonous but distinct phenomena?

Answering these issues requires a detailed comparative study of *final pero*. However, the current literature on the construction is, at best, scarce and fragmentary. In this context, this paper aims to describe some salient properties of *pero bahiense*, the instance of *final pero* attested in the dialect of Bahía Blanca. While the main objective of the study is to offer a characterization of the phenomenon that might serve as a starting point for a subsequent comparative investigation, the article also offers a preliminary analysis of the construction that highlights some of its peculiar properties.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 discusses two grammatical phenomena that could be erroneously assimilated to *pero bahiense*. Section 3 offers a comparison between standard *initial pero* and *pero bahiense*; it is observed that while both types of *pero* have properties in common, there are also a number of formal and interpretative aspects that allows to distinguish them. Section 4 sketches an account of *pero bahiense* following proposals by Munaro & Poletto (2003, 2009) on the syntax of final particles. As will be discussed, the proposed analysis fails at capturing the distribution of *pero bahiense* with respect to vocatives; this is an aspect of the construction that seems to avoid proper treatment under current syntactic approaches to vocatives. Finally, Section 5 contains some concluding remarks.

## 2 What *pero bahiense* is not

Before discussing the properties of *pero bahiense*, it is necessary to distinguish the phenomenon from, at least, two other similar constructions involving non-initial uses of *pero*. The first one will be called here *suspended pero*. This is a case in which the conjunction *pero* appears at the very end of an utterance and is realized with a raising intonation. When this construction is employed, it is taken for granted that the hearer knows or is able to guess the content of a contrastive proposition complementing the conjunction.

- (16) Iba a comprarte un regalo, pero...  
 was to buy.you a gift but  
 ‘I was going to buy you a gift, but...’

A rather intuitive analysis for this construction involves proposing that *pero* does not truly occupy a final position in (16), but it introduces an unspoken proposition *q*. This is roughly schematized in (17), where it is shown that *suspended pero* is just an instance of *initial pero* in which the second proposition is implicit.

(17) *p* pero (*q*)

Evidence for this sketchy analysis is the fact that the hearer can ask about the content of the implicit proposition *q* in case it is not salient enough or is not entirely obvious.

- (18) A: Iba a comprarte un regalo, pero...  
was to buy.you a gift but  
'I was going to buy you a gift, but...'  
B: ¿Pero qué?  
but what  
'But what?'

In fact, situations like (18) are the source of multiple anecdotes among speakers of the Bahiense dialect, as it is common for speakers of other varieties to confuse *pero bahiense* with *suspended pero*. The following dialogue illustrates a too familiar exchange for people from Bahía Blanca; A is a speaker of the Bahiense dialect, while B is not.

- (19) A: El intendente es un nabo. Ganó las elecciones, **pero**.  
the mayor is a turnip won the elections but  
'The mayor is an idiot. But he won the elections.'  
B: ¿Pero qué?  
but what  
'But what?'  
A: Pero nada. Eso es todo.  
but nothing that is all  
'But nothing. That's it.'

The question in (19B) is infelicitous for the Bahiense speaker A, as she considers that *pero* connects both propositions *p* = *el intendente es un nabo* 'the mayor is an idiot' and *q* = *ganó las elecciones* 'he won the elections'. Speaker B, on the other hand, supposes that an occurrence of *pero* in final position introduces an implicit proposition and that, for some reason, she is not able to recover its content from the context. The reason this situation happens so often is because the *suspended pero* construction in (16) is far more extended in Spanish than the type of *final pero* being discussed in this paper. Notice that the mere fact that these confusions exist shows that *final pero* and *suspended pero* are distinct grammatical phenomena from different Spanish dialects.<sup>7</sup>

A second construction that should be distinguished from *pero bahiense* is what is usually called *adverbial pero*. This is a case in which *pero* appears in the middle of a

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<sup>7</sup>In fact, an analogous distinction can be made by appealing to English data. As known, employing the conjunction *but* at the end of an utterance to introduce an implicit proposition is fairly common in colloquial English.

- (i) My cat is officially a jerk, she keeps knocking over my stuff for cat reasons. And here I thought I was going to finally clean my room, but...

While as reported by Mulder & Thompson (2008), Australian English exhibits a *final but* construction that contrasts two overt propositions.

- (ii) Got a few mates who play jazz. Not my kind of music, **but**.

Just as the constructions in (i) and (ii) require to be distinguished, the *suspended pero* and *final pero* phenomena also need to be considered distinct.

sentence as a sort of parenthetical element; other connective elements in Spanish allow to be used in the same way, e.g., *sin embargo* ‘although’, *no obstante* ‘however’. The use of adverbial *pero* is strongly restricted to the elevated written register.

- (20) a. Esto requiere, pero, un tratamiento cuidadoso.  
This requieres but a treatment careful  
‘This requieres, however, a careful treatment.’
- b. Estas afirmaciones, pero, fueron criticadas por parte del ministro.  
These affirmaciones but were criticised by part of.the minister  
‘These assertions, however, were criticised by the minister.’

The *Nueva Gramática de la Lengua Española* (RAE 2009: 2458) explicitly subsumes the type of *final pero* attested in Andean varieties to *adverbial pero*; such an equiparation seems to be motivated only by the superficial resemblance between both phenomena, as there is no supporting evidence for a unifying analysis. Moreover, such an account does not explain the scarce distribution of *final pero* in Spanish, as it actually predicts that the construction should be available to any literate speaker able to employ *adverbial pero*.

The functioning of *pero bahiense* offers additional reasons to distinguish between *adverbial pero* and *final pero*. To begin with, most of my Bahiense informants judged as unacceptable sentences like those in (20); this shows that *pero bahiense* cannot be considered a mere positional variant of adverbial *pero*. Interestingly enough, the few speakers who accepted these sentences recognized them as part of the written register and observed that such a use of *pero* “does not sound Bahian at all”. Indeed, the *pero bahiense* phenomenon belongs to the informal register, and its users show clear intuitions about its colloquial nature. Such a clear-cut distinction is difficult to explain under the assumption that *pero bahiense* is a manifestation of adverbial *pero*; in fact, this strong contrast suggests that both forms of *pero* are separate grammatical phenomena that are employed in specific contexts.

Distinguishing between *pero bahiense* and seemingly similar phenomena is relevant for a number of reasons. At an analytical level, it is necessary to demonstrate that *pero bahiense* cannot be reduced to other non-canonical uses of *pero*, and that it certainly is a grammatical form that deserves a specific account. However, the main objective of differentiating the construction even before discussing its defining properties is to delineate in a concise way the phenomenon referred to as *pero bahiense*. As mentioned before, this term is merely a “folk” denomination; there is no a priori reason to assume that it actually refers to a concrete grammatical phenomenon. In fact, a (reduced) subset of my initial informants would take the term *pero bahiense* as standing for any form of non-initial *pero*.

The problems introduced by the lack of proper terminology are potentiated by sociolinguistic variables. Employing *final pero* is perceived as a trait of identity and belonging for the speakers of the Bahiense dialect.<sup>8</sup> While this makes it easier to find informants willing to provide acceptability judgements on *pero bahiense* (in contrast to what normally happens with normatively marked dialectal forms), it also leads to

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<sup>8</sup>While this observation is not based on rigorous criteria, it is not difficult to prove its veracity. For instance, there is a *Facebook* group called *Yo uso el pero bahiense* ‘I do use Bahian but’ that has almost six thousand members. The existence of such a community can only be explained by assuming that the *pero bahiense* construction is positively perceived by, at least, part of its users.

many non-users of *final pero* to want to report data based on their intuitions on, for instance, the *suspended pero* construction in (16). Thus, in what follows, the term *pero bahiense* will be taken to refer exclusively to the type of construction exemplified in (13) and (14), excluding the two non-initial *pero* phenomena sketched throughout this section.

### 3 Comparing *initial pero* and *pero bahiense*

The standard *initial pero* phenomenon attested in all Spanish varieties has some non-trivial properties in common with *pero bahiense*. Maybe the most salient of these characteristics is that both elements must appear in the periphery of the sentence. As its name indicates, *initial pero* must appear at the very left of the sentence it introduces; in general, other elements cannot precede it.

- (21) *Jorge is a good guy...*
- a. **pero** también es un poco amarrete.  
but too is a little stingy  
'but he is also a little stingy.'
  - b. \* también **pero** es un poco amarrete.  
too but is a little stingy

Similarly, *pero bahiense* is required to appear at the very end of its sentence; no other element can follow it.<sup>9</sup>

- (22) *Jorge is a good guy...*
- a. es un poco amarrete también, **pero**.  
is a little stingy too but  
'but he is also a little stingy.'
  - b. \* es un poco amarrete, **pero**, también.  
is a little stingy but too

Additionally, some speakers report as anomalous cases in which *pero bahiense* is not the last element in its utterance, despite of occupying the final position in its own sentence, e.g., (23). This suggests that the position of *pero bahiense* is related to a certain discourse function, and it is not just a formal property of a constituent within a sentential domain.

- (23) % El intendente es un nabo. Ganó las elecciones, **pero**. El otro  
the mayor is a turnip won the elections but the other  
candidato era peor.  
candidate was worse  
'The mayor is an idiot. But he won the election. The other candidate was even worse.'

Both *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* are root phenomena in the sense of Emonds (1970), i.e., their distribution is restricted to matrix clauses. To discuss this constraint, take the examples in (24). In both cases, *pero* contrasts the propositions  $p = \textit{está lloviendo mucho}$  'it is raining a lot' and  $q = \textit{el partido se juega}$  'the match will be played'.

<sup>9</sup>Notice that (22b) can be alternatively analyzed as involving right dislocation of *también* 'too', or a short movement of *pero* slightly to the left. Both patterns are equally unacceptable.



- (24) a. Está lloviendo mucho. **Pero** el partido se juega.  
 is raining much but the match SE plays  
 'It is raining a lot. But the match will be played.'
- b. Está lloviendo mucho. El partido se juega, **pero**.  
 is raining much the match SE plays but

Employing *pero* to connect these propositions becomes impossible if *q* is not expressed as a matrix clause. For instance, if *q* functions as the *protasis* of a conditional sentence, it cannot be accompanied by either *initial pero*, e.g., (25a), or *pero bahiense*, e.g., (25b).<sup>10</sup>

(25) *It is raining a lot...*

- a. \* [<sub>PROTASIS</sub> **pero** si el partido se juega], me voy a mojar.  
 but if the match SE plays 1SG.ACC go to wet  
*Intended:* 'if the match, however, is played, I'm going to get wet.'
- b. \* [<sub>PROTASIS</sub> si el partido se juega, **pero**], me voy a mojar.  
 if the match SE plays but 1SG.ACC go to wet

This behaviour contrasts sharply with the one exhibited by connectors like *sin embargo* 'although'. As shown in (26), this element does allow contrasting the propositions *p* and *q* if the latter is in an embedded domain.

- (26) Está lloviendo mucho. [<sub>PROTASIS</sub> Si el partido, sin embargo, se juega], me voy a mojar.  
 is raining much if the match without impediment SE plays 1SG.ACC go to wet  
 'It is raining. If the match, however, is played, I'm going to get wet.'

One might object that the unacceptability of *pero bahiense* in (25b) could be due to *pero* not appearing at the very end of the sentence. However, the acceptability of neither of the examples in (25) improves if the protasis is postposed, e.g., (27).

(27) *It is raining a lot...*

- a. \* me voy a mojar [<sub>PROTASIS</sub> **pero** si el partido se juega].  
 1SG.ACC go to wet but if the match SE plays  
*Intended:* 'I'm going to get wet if the match, however, is played.'
- b. \* me voy a mojar [<sub>PROTASIS</sub> si el partido se juega, **pero**].  
 1SG.ACC go to wet if the match SE plays but

The only way in which *pero* can be used in configurations seemingly resembling those in (25) and (27) is by (i) respecting the positional restrictions of each type of *pero* (i.e., *initial pero* must appear at the beginning of the sentence, *pero bahiense* at the very end), and (ii) interpreting *pero* as introducing a contrast with respect to the whole conditional sentence (not only its protasis). The relevant examples are those in (28); notice that the content of the apodoses in (28a) and (28b) is modified to allow a contrastive interpretation regarding the preceding proposition *it is raining a lot*.

<sup>10</sup>Due to the content of the apodosis, the examples in (25) can only have a contrastive interpretation with respect to the protasis of the conditional sentence. Thus, *pero* cannot be taken to have scope over the matrix clause in (25a), which would render the sentence acceptable. See (28a) below.

(28) *It is raining a lot...*

- a. **pero**, si el partido se juega, la gente va a venir.  
but if the match SE plays the people go to come  
'but, if the match is played, people will come.'
- b. si el partido se juega, la gente va a venir, **pero**.  
if the match SE plays the people go to come but

As further evidence that *pero bahiense* is restricted to matrix clauses, take the example in (29).

(29) Afuera está re nublado. El pronóstico dice que el día está lindo,  
outside is very cloudy the forecast says that the day is nice  
**pero**.  
but  
'It is very cloudy outside. But the forecast says that it is a nice day.'

If *pero bahiense* was able to take narrow scope over an embedded clause, the utterance in (29) should be ambiguous. That is, *pero* occupies a position that should allow it to introduce a contrast with respect to both the matrix clause, as sketched in (30a), or the embedded clause, as shown in (30b). As the English paraphrases show, both interpretations are, in principle, equally plausible.

(30) *It is very cloudy outside...*

- a. El pronóstico dice [<sub>CP</sub> que el día está lindo], **pero**.  
≈ *The forecast, however, says that it is a nice day.* *wide scope*
- b. El pronóstico dice [<sub>CP</sub> que el día está lindo, **pero**].  
≈ *The forecast says that it is, however, a nice day.* *narrow scope*

While the semantic judgement is rather subtle, Bahiense speakers seem to interpret utterances like (29) unambiguously as sketched in (30a), with *pero* taking wide scope over the whole sentence. Their paraphrases for these examples focus on the contrast introduced by the matrix predicate, e.g., they report regarding (29) that the forecast is mistaken, an inference that requires *pero* to mark a contrast with respect to the constituent containing the segment *el pronóstico dice* 'the forecast says' (e.g., as in *it is cloudy, but the forecast says the opposite*). Crucially, they seem to lack the interpretation that the day is considered nice despite of being cloudy, a reading that would emerge from *pero* marking a contrast with respect to the proposition in the embedded clause (e.g., as in *it is cloudy, but it is a nice day anyway*).

Another similarity between *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* is that both elements are insensitive to sentential mood. While all the previous examples involved declarative sentences, standard *initial pero* may also appear in interrogative (31) and imperative sentences (32).

- (31) A: No tengo ganas de salir.  
not have desire of go.out  
'I'm not in the mood to go out.'
- B: ¿**Pero** vas a ir a la fiesta?  
but go to go to the party  
'But are you going to the party?'

- (32) Ya se fueron todos. ¡**Pero** vos no te vayas!  
 already SE left all but you not SE go  
 Everyone left already. But don't you leave!

In the same way, *pero bahiense* can also be used in these contexts.

- (33) A: No tengo ganas de salir.  
 not have desire of go.out  
 'I'm not in the mood to go out.'  
 B: ¿Vas a ir a la fiesta, **pero**?  
 go to go to the party but  
 'But are you going to the party?'

- (34) Ya se fueron todos. ¡Vos no te vayas, **pero**!  
 already SE left all you not SE go but  
 Everyone left already. But don't you leave!

Besides ignoring mood, neither *initial pero* nor *pero bahiense* are able to alter the truth conditions of the proposition they introduce. Thus, the following three utterances are completely equivalent in terms of their truth values.

- (35) a. El intendente es un nabo y ganó las elecciones.  
 the mayor is a turnip and won the elections  
 'The mayor is an idiot and won the elections'.  
 b. El intendente es un nabo. **Pero** ganó las elecciones.  
 the mayor is a turnip but won the elections  
 'The mayor is an idiot. But he won the elections'.  
 c. El intendente es un nabo. Ganó las elecciones, **pero**.  
 the mayor is a turnip won the elections but  
 'The mayor is an idiot. But he won the elections'.

This does not entail that employing *pero* has no effect at all in the interpretation of an utterance. Take the following pair of examples, adapted from Portolés (2001: 7). As observed by this author, the order of the propositions connected by *pero* may lead to different inferences during the discourse; this contrast is not obtained by employing the conjunction *y* 'and'.

- (36) CONTEXT: someone is asked whether she is happy with her new job.  
 a. El sueldo es muy bueno. **Pero** siempre tardan en pagarme.  
 the salary is very good but always delay in pay.me  
 'The salary is very good. But there is always a delay with my payment.  
 INFERENCE: *she is not happy with the job.*  
 b. Siempre tardan en pagarme. **Pero** el sueldo es muy bueno.  
 always delay in pay.me but the salary is very good  
 'There is always a delay with my payment. But the salary is very good.'  
 INFERENCE: *she is happy with the job.*

As the examples in (37) show, the same effect is obtained by employing *pero bahiense*.

- (37) CONTEXT: someone is asked whether she is happy with her new job.

- a. El sueldo es muy bueno. Siempre tardan en pagarme, **pero**.  
the salary is very good always delay in pay.me but  
'The salary is very good. But there is always a delay with my payment.'  
INFERENCE: *she is not happy with the job.*
- b. Siempre tardan en pagarme. El sueldo es muy bueno, **pero**.  
always delay in pay.me the salary is very good but  
'There is always a delay with my payment. But the salary is very good.'  
INFERENCE: *she is happy with the job.*

All these shared characteristics suggest that the instances of *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* discussed so far pertain to the same class. Since the functioning of *initial pero* in prior examples has led to its analysis as a connective discourse particle (e.g., Portolés 2001), it follows that the same classification can be applied to *pero bahiense*. That is, I take that both types of *pero* are marginal elements in the structure of the sentence, that lack a syntactic function with respect to the predicate, and have the role of guiding the inferential processes taking place during the communicative act.

However, while the instances of *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* discussed so far can be classified as discourse particles, the issue remains whether they should be analysed as separate grammatical objects or as syntactic variants of a single lexical item. The data to be discussed from now on show that *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* differ in several respects.

Perhaps the most telling difference between both types of *pero* concerns their semantic interpretation: *pero bahiense* expresses only a proper subset of the meanings that sentence-initial *pero* may exhibit. To illustrate this distinction, it is first necessary to offer a more explicit characterization of the semantic import of *pero*.

Until this point, I simply pointed out that *pero* introduces a proposition *q* “in contrast” to a preceding proposition *p*. This loose use of the term “contrast” encompasses a number of similar but still different semantic relations that may hold between *p* and *q*. While more fine-grained distinctions have been advanced in recent literature (e.g., Izutsu 2008), I follow Lakoff (1971) and Rivarola (1976) in distinguishing *concessivity* (or *denial of expectation*) from *semantic opposition*. The former involves a presuppositional phenomenon: a concessive proposition *q* denies a presupposed expectation arising from a prior proposition *p* and “default” world knowledge. On the contrary, an utterance involving a semantic opposition is not presuppositional, as it simply contraposes some dimension of its meaning to a prior proposition; in the words of Blakemore (1987: 135), semantic opposition is the case when a speaker “is drawing attention to the difference, or differences, between just two things”.<sup>11</sup> Notice that none of these interpretations alters the truth value of the communicated proposition.

The distinction can be illustrated with English examples. Since good basketball players are usually tall, the proposition *p* = *John is short* in (38a) creates the expectation that he is not a good basketball player, an idea that is directly contradicted by the proposition *q* = *he is still good at basketball*; this is thus a concessive utterance. In (38b), the proposition *q* = *Bill is tall* introduces a literal opposition with respect to a property of the subject of the proposition *p* = *John is short*; thus, (38b) is an oppositive utterance.

- (38) a. John is short, *but* he is still good at basketball. *concessivity*

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<sup>11</sup>Blakemore (1987) employs the term *parallel contrast* to refer to semantic opposition.

- b. John is short, *but* Bill is tall. *semantic opposition*

Languages vary regarding how they lexicalize concessivity and semantic opposition. As seen in (38), English allows concessive and oppositive uses of the conjunction *but*. However, other languages express concessivity and semantic opposition through distinct lexical items, e.g., Russian employs the conjunctions *no* and *a*, respectively (Malchukov 2004).

- (39) a. Vanja prostudilsja, *no* poshel v shkolu.  
 Vanja caught.cold but went to school  
 ‘Vanja caught a cold, but went to school.’ *concessivity*
- b. Petja staratel’nyj, *a* Vanja lenivyk.  
 Petja diligent CONJ Vanja lazy  
 ‘Petja is diligent, but Vanja is lazy.’ *semantic opposition*

Similarly to English *but*, standard *initial pero* allows to express both types of meaning (Rivarola 1976).

- (40) a. El intendente es un nabo. **Pero** ganó las elecciones.  
 the mayor is a turnip but won the elections  
 ‘The mayor is an idiot. But he won the elections.’ *concessivity*
- b. Gerardo es alto, **pero** Jorge es petiso.  
 Gerardo is tall but Jorge is short  
 ‘Gerardo is tall, but Jorge is short.’ *semantic opposition*

However, *pero bahiense* seems to express concessivity only, as it is not able to function in prototypical contexts of semantic opposition.

- (41) a. El intendente es un nabo. Ganó las elecciones, **pero**.  
 the mayor is a turnip won the elections but  
 ‘The mayor is an idiot. But he won the elections.’ *concessivity*
- b. \*Gerardo es alto, Jorge es petiso, **pero**.  
 Gerardo is tall Jorge is short but  
 ‘Gerardo is tall, but Jorge is short.’ *semantic opposition*

This contrast is also attested in cases in which a second clause cancels or literally contradicts what has been expressed in the prior clause. Take the sentences in (42), in which the second proposition  $q = no\ lo\ vendí$  must be interpreted as cancelling the first proposition  $p = iba\ a\ vender\ el\ auto$ . Most Bahiense speakers only accept this type of utterance if connected through *initial pero*.

- (42) a. Iba a vender el auto. **Pero** no lo vendí (al final).  
 was to sell the car but not it sell to.the end  
 ‘I was going to sell the car. But I didn’t sell it (in the end).’
- b. \*Iba a vender el auto. No lo vendí (al final), **pero**.  
 was to sell the car not it sell to.the end but

For *pero bahiense* to be acceptable, the content of the clause modified by *pero* must not directly contradict the previous proposition; what must be contradicted is the expectation arising from it, just as predicted from the very definition of concessivity. If this condition is respected, as in (43), *pero bahiense* may be employed.

- (43) a. La semana pasada puse un clasificado por el auto. **Pero** no lo vendí.  
 the week past put a add for the car but not it sell  
 ‘Last week I published an add for the car. But I didn’t sell it.’
- b. La semana pasada puse un clasificado por el auto. No lo vendí,  
 the week past put a add for the car not it sell  
**pero.**  
 but

The observation that *pero bahiense* is restricted to concessive uses is further supported by speakers’ paraphrases of unambiguously concessive or oppositive utterances. Consider the fragment in (44), which contains a concessive clause headed by the expression *a pesar de* ‘despite of’.

- (44) Le comentás a un amigo que cuando salías de tu casa a la mañana pensaste en agarrar la campera, y que la tomaste incluso [*a pesar de* creer que no ibas a necesitarla].  
 ‘You tell a friend that when you left your place in the morning you thought about grabbing your coat, and that you took it with you [*despite of* believing you would not actually need it].’

When asked to pick a paraphrase for this fragment involving either *initial pero* or *pero bahiense*, Bahiense speakers do not seem to show a strong preference for any of these forms. That is, (44) can be equally paraphrased as in (45a) or (45b). In both cases, the clause modified by *pero* matches the concessive clause in (44), and has the function of contradicting an expectation arising from the first proposition (i.e., typically, if one chooses to carry a coat, it is because one assumes it is going to be needed).

- (45) a. A la mañana me acordé de traer la campera. **Pero** no  
 to the morning SE remembered of bring the coat but not  
 creí que hiciera falta.  
 believed that does need  
 ‘In the morning I remembered bringing my coat. But I didn’t believe it would be necessary.’
- b. A la mañana me acordé de traer la campera. No creí  
 to the morning SE remembered of bring the coat not believed  
 que hiciera falta, **pero.**  
 that does need but

However, a different result emerges if the fragment encodes an oppositive type of meaning, as in (46). In this case, the speaker thinks about doing  $\alpha$ , i.e., bringing the coat, but then decided to do not  $\alpha$ , i.e., not bringing the coat.

- (46) Le comentás a un amigo que cuando salías de tu casa a la mañana pensaste en [ $\alpha$  agarrar la campera]. Sin embargo, al final decidiste [ $-\alpha$  no llevarla con vos].  
 ‘You tell a friend that when you left your place in the morning you thought about grabbing your coat. However, in the end you decided not to take it with you.’

Bahiense speakers strongly prefer the option with *initial pero* in (45a) as a paraphrase for (46). Notice that in this case the clause modified by *pero* is also supposed to mean that the speaker did not grab the coat, which contradicts or cancels part of the first

proposition. The fact that speakers prefer to encode this meaning with *initial pero* is further evidence that *pero bahiense* conveys concessivity only.

As a rule of thumb, acceptable uses of *pero bahiense* can be paraphrased with the concessive conjunction *aunque* ‘although’. Thus, for instance, the concessive interpretation in (41a) is roughly equivalent to the one in (47).

- (47) a. Aunque el intendente es un nabo, ganó las elecciones.  
 although the mayor is a turnip won the elections  
 ‘Although the mayor is an idiot, he won the elections.’ ≈ (41a)

Besides this semantic asymmetry, *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* exhibit distinct distributional restrictions. As noticed by Hill (2007) and Haegeman (2014), vocatives may introduce constraints on the syntactic contexts in which certain discourse particles may appear, e.g., vocatives cannot intervene between some final particles and the rest of the sentence. A seemingly related restriction can be attested with *pero bahiense*. As the following dialogue shows, *initial pero* can co-appear with vocatives in any position.

- (48) TEACHER: ¡Juancito, estás castigado sin recreo!  
 Juancito are grounded without break  
 ‘Juancito, you are grounded!’  
 JUANCITO: **Pero** yo no hice nada, Señor.  
 but I not did nothing Miss  
 ‘But I didn’t do anything, Miss.’  
 JUANCITO’: **Pero** Señor, yo no hice nada.  
 but Miss I not did nothing  
 JUANCITO’’: Señor, **pero** yo no hice nada.  
 Miss but I not did nothing

On the contrary, *pero bahiense* rejects the presence of vocatives in the same sentence, no matter their position.<sup>12</sup>

- (49) TEACHER: ¡Juancito, estás castigado sin recreo!  
 Juancito are grounded without break  
 ‘Juancito, you are grounded!’  
 JUANCITO: \*Yo no hice nada, **pero**, Señor.  
 I not did nothing but Miss  
 ‘But I didn’t do anything, Miss.’  
 JUANCITO’: \*Yo no hice nada, Señor, **pero**.  
 I not did nothing Miss but  
 JUANCITO’’: ?? Señor, yo no hice nada, **pero**.  
 Miss I not did nothing but

The distribution of *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* differs with respect to other elements as well. As Portolés (2001: 51) points out, *initial pero* cannot be combined with similar

<sup>12</sup>My informants consider the answer by JUANCITO’’ in (49) to be slightly better than the other two alternatives; the example is taken as anomalous, however, as Bahiense speakers reported very consistently that the sentence would be totally acceptable without the vocative. This intuition was never reported regarding the sentences in (48), which were unanimously accepted. The slim contrast between the answers in (49) could be due to an additional restriction on the number of extraposed constituents to the right.

connectors, i.e., sequences like *pero y* ‘but and’ or *pero aunque* ‘but although’ cannot be formed, e.g., (50) and (51). According to him, this restriction can be accounted for in terms of redundancy avoidance: it would be redundant to have two separate conjunctions connecting the same two units at one time.

(50) *It rained the whole holiday week...*

- a. \* **pero** y lo pasamos lindo.  
but and it spent nice  
*Intended:* ‘but we had fun.’
- b. \* y **pero** lo pasamos lindo.  
but and it spent nice

(51) *I don't like it when you correct me...*

- a. \* **pero** aunque en este caso tenés razón.  
but although in this case have reason  
*Intended:* ‘but in this case you are right.’
- b. \* aunque **pero** en este caso tenés razón.  
although but in this case have reason

While *pero bahiense* behaves in the same way regarding *y* ‘and’, e.g., (52), it can be combined with the subordinating conjunction *aunque* ‘although’ and appear within a concessive adverbial clause, e.g., (53).

(52) *It rained the whole holiday week...*

- \* y lo pasamos lindo, **pero**.  
and it spent nice but  
*Intended:* ‘but we had fun.’

(53) *I don't like it when you correct me...*

- aunque en este caso tenés razón, **pero**.  
although in this case have reason, **pero**  
‘but in this case you are right.’

In principle, the example in (53) seems to falsify the claim that *pero bahiense* is restricted to main clauses. However, I contend that the acceptability of this sentence follows from concessive clauses being *peripheral adverbial clauses* (Haegeman 2002, 2004, Frey 2012, i.a.), i.e., embedded sentences that may display root phenomena. For instance, *aunque*-clauses and other embedded domains differ in the fact that only the former licenses the presence of epistemic modality adverbs such as *posiblemente* ‘possibly’.

- (54) a. Aunque posiblemente llueva, iremos al cine.  
although possibly rains.3SG go.1PL to.the cinema  
‘Although it will possibly rain, we will go to the cinema.’
- b. \* Cuando posiblemente llueva, iremos al cine.  
when possibly rains.3SG go.1PL to.the cinema  
‘When it will possibly rain, we will go to the cinema.’



In a similar way, *aunque*-clauses admit syntactic processes such as Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD), e.g., (55), which is arguably a root phenomenon in Spanish (Escobar 1997). CLLD is forbidden within other adverbials, e.g., (56).<sup>13</sup>

- (55) a. Aunque insultes a Cosmo, (él) te va a ayudar.  
 although insult.2SG DOM Cosmo he you go.3SG to help  
 ‘Although you insult Cosmo, he will help you.’  
 b. Aunque a Cosmo lo insultes, (él) te va a ayudar.  
 although DOM Cosmo he insult.2SG he you go.3SG to help
- (56) a. Cuando insultes a Cosmo, (él) se va a defender.  
 when insult.2SG DOM Cosmo he REFL go.3SG to defend  
 ‘When you insult Cosmo, he will defend himself.’  
 b. \*Cuando a Cosmo lo insultes, (él) se va a defender.  
 when DOM Cosmo he insult.2SG he REFL go.3SG to defend

I will come back to the fact that *final pero* can appear within (concessive) peripheral adverbial clauses later in section 4.

A further distributional asymmetry between *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* can be observed when these elements are combined with other discourse particles. The marker *bueno* ‘well’ expresses that the speaker admits what her interlocutor said (Martín Zorraqino & Portolés 1999: 4162). This element can co-appear with *initial pero*, e.g., (57), but its presence together with *pero bahiense* is unacceptable, e.g., (58).

- (57) A: El intendente es un nabo.  
 the mayor is a turnip  
 ‘The mayor is an idiot.’  
 B: Bueno, **pero** ganó las elecciones.  
 well but won the elections  
 ‘Well, but he won the elections.’
- (58) A: El intendente es un nabo.  
 the mayor is a turnip  
 ‘The mayor is an idiot.’  
 B: \*Bueno, ganó las elecciones, **pero**.  
 well won the elections, but  
 ‘Well, but he won the elections.’

This type of asymmetry does not hold for every discourse particle. For instance, *igual* ‘same’ is an element that functions roughly as English free choice *anyway* and may co-appear with both *initial* and *final pero*.

- (59) *The mayor is an idiot...*  
 a. **pero** ganó las elecciones igual.  
 but won the elections same  
 ‘But he won the elections anyway.’

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<sup>13</sup>CLLD behaves differently in other Romance languages. See Haegeman (2004) for discussion on this point.

- b. ganó las elecciones igual, **pero**.  
won the elections same but

A final noticeable characteristic of *pero bahiense* involves its prosodic contour. It resembles the intonation with which right dislocation phenomena are usually realized in Romance languages; Bahiense speakers typically translate this trait as a comma in writing, a convention that I have followed here. As figure 1 shows, the pitch accent in a *pero bahiense* sentence falls on the same constituent that would carry it if *pero* was not present, i.e., the direct object in an (S)VO structure; in particular, *pero* lacks any relevant degree of intonational prominence, and is separated from the rest of the clause by a small pause and what seems to be a boundary tone L%.

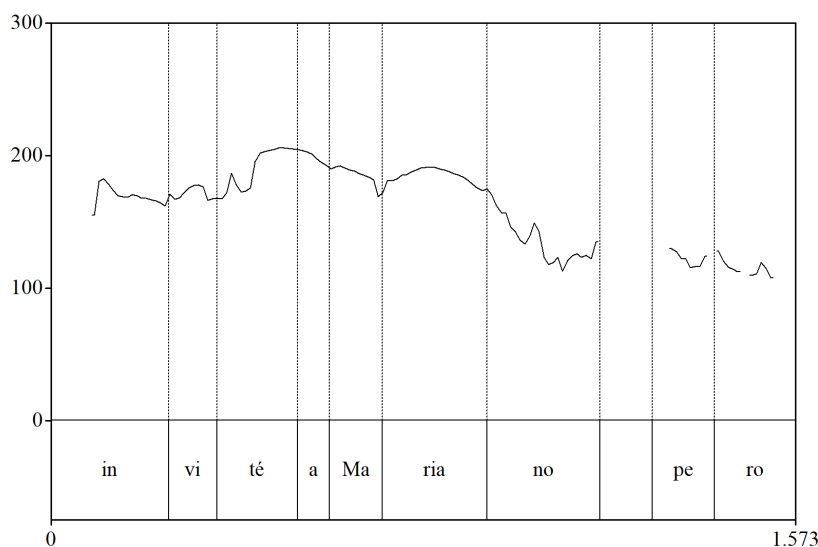


Figure 1: The sentence *invité a Mariano, pero* ‘but I invited Mariano’.

As mentioned, this contour is analogous to the one exhibited by right dislocated elements, for which it has been extensively proposed that conform independent intonational phrases (Zubizarreta 1998, Frascarelli 2000). Exploiting this similarity, it may be conjectured that *pero bahiense* also forms a separate prosodic domain. Thus, *initial pero* and *pero bahiense* would differ in the fact that only the former is integrated in a prosodic constituent together with the clause, as schematically illustrated in (60).<sup>14</sup>

- (60) a. (**Pero** ganó las elecciones)<sub>φ</sub>  
b. (Ganó las elecciones)<sub>φ</sub> (**pero**)<sub>φ</sub>

#### 4 Towards an understanding of the syntax of connective particles

While there has been growing interest in the syntax of discourse particles, most work has focused on so-called *modal particles*, i.e., elements that express the speaker’s atti-

<sup>14</sup>This analysis is not devoid of problems neither for *pero bahiense* or right dislocation. As Astruc (2004) discusses, there is a flagrant contradiction in analysing these elements as (i) independent prosodic units that, at the same time, (ii) do not receive accentuation. In fact, part of the literature on final particles (e.g., Haselow 2013) take elements similar to *pero bahiense* to be prosodically integrated to the rest of the sentence, arguably because they are systematically deaccented; notice that this possibility is still at odds with some characteristics attested in figure 1, e.g., the pause before *pero*.

tude towards the utterance (Munaro & Poletto 2003, 2009, Cardinaletti 2011, Haegeman 2014). Comparatively, connective elements such as Spanish *pero* have not received much attention and, as a consequence, syntactic approaches to discourse particles are not aimed to capture their properties. Given this scenario, my goal throughout this section is to evaluate some aspects of current analyses of discourse particles that could account for the behavior of *pero bahiense*.

The main property of *pero bahiense* in need for an explanation is its positioning: how is that the connector *pero* may appear in final position in a Spanish variety? In order to properly answer this question, two related issues need to be addressed. First, it is necessary to determine whether initial and final *pero* are instances of one and the same element. Second, the analysis needs to address whether they occupy the same structural position.

Cardinaletti (2011) advances an account of final particles in Northern Italian dialects that provides relevant background to address these points. According to her, final particles are generated within the clause, as specifiers of a projection YP within the IP/TP layer; their rightmost position is derived through movement of whatever follows the particle to a specifier position still within the IP/TP layer, e.g., (61). This movement is motivated by informational considerations, as Cardinaletti (2011: 521) assumes that “the features involved have to do with the presupposed status of the moved sentence”.

(61)  $[_{XP} TP [_X X [_{YP} PARTICLE [_Y Y \cancel{TP}]]]]$

As for sentence-initial particles, Cardinaletti claims that they are introduced at the CP level.

(62)  $[_{CP} PARTICLE [_C C \dots TP ]]$

According to Cardinaletti, these two structures predict that initial and final particles receive distinct interpretations. As the pair in (63) shows, this seems to be borne out, as both sentences are pragmatically distinct depending on the position of the discourse particle *ciò*.

(63) a. *cossa i vol, ciò?*  
           what they want *ciò*  
           ‘What do they want? (They shouldn’t require anything...)’  
       b. *ciò, cossa i vol?*  
           *ciò* what they want  
           ‘Well, what do they want?’                    Venice Marghera (Cardinaletti 2011: 519)

This line of analysis does not seem to fit the behaviour of *pero* in the Bahiense dialect. Under Cardinaletti’s assumptions, the structures in (61) and (62) predict a one to one correspondence between different interpretations and different surface positions of the particle. However, *pero bahiense* and *initial pero* display overlapping interpretations. As already discussed, both elements exhibit seemingly identical concessive readings, e.g., (64), which is at odds with the hypothesis that one of them is a clause-internal element while the other combines with the CP.<sup>15</sup>

(64) *I’m not hungry...*

<sup>15</sup>Notice that (64b) cannot be interpreted as conveying semantic opposition.

- a. voy a comer igual, **pero**.  
go.1SG to eat anyway but  
'but I'm gonna eat anyway.'
- b. **pero** voy a comer igual.  
but go.1SG to eat anyway

Moreover, Cardinaletti's alleged motivation for movement in (61) does not apply to *pero bahiense*. Informational considerations do not seem to factor in the positioning of *pero*, e.g., (64a) and (64b) are interchangeable in any (informal) context. In fact, both sentences in (64) have the same presuppositional status: both express a proposition that (i) is not part of the common ground, and (ii) denies a presupposed expectation. In other words, information structure is not a good predictor for the linear position of *pero*.

The line of analysis I will explore here takes as a starting point the observation that *pero bahiense* is restricted to concessive interpretations. As mentioned, semantic opposition cannot be expressed with *pero* in final position.

- (65) a. \*Gerardo es alto, Jorge es petiso, **pero**.  
Gerardo is tall, Jorge is short but  
'Gerardo is tall but Jorge is short.'
- b. Gerardo es alto, **pero** Jorge es petiso.  
Gerardo is tall, but Jorge is short

The pattern in (64) and (65) suggests that the relevant analytical distinction must be drawn in terms of the meaning of *pero* rather than on its surface position. Thus, in what follows I distinguish between (i) *pero<sub>conc</sub>*, which expresses concessivity, and (ii) *pero<sub>op</sub>*, which expresses semantic opposition. I assume that both *pero<sub>conc</sub>* and *pero<sub>op</sub>* are invariably sentence-initial in General Spanish. In Bahiense Spanish, *pero<sub>conc</sub>* may also appear at the end of the sentence. Under these considerations, the pre-theoretical term *initial pero* refers to two semantically distinct elements: *pero<sub>conc</sub>* in (64b) and *pero<sub>op</sub>* in (65b). Since the relevant alternation in Bahiense Spanish only involves concessive interpretations, e.g., (64a) and (64b), the analysis of the *pero bahiense* phenomenon must rely on whatever properties are attributed to *pero<sub>conc</sub>* in this dialect.

Given that there is no contrast in meaning between (64a) and (64b), I will assume that *pero<sub>conc</sub>* occupies the same position in the syntactic spine in both cases. I take that the surface order of *pero bahiense* obtains through movement of the remaining constituents in the sentence. Similar lines of analysis for discourse particles have been explored by Munaro & Poletto (2003, 2009), among others. Following the proposal by these authors, I take that *pero<sub>conc</sub>* heads a projection FP that selects the CP as complement, e.g., (66a); the *pero bahiense* pattern arises when the CP moves to [Spec,FP], e.g., (66b).<sup>16</sup>

- (66) a. [FP **pero<sub>conc</sub>** CP]
- b. [FP CP [F' **pero<sub>conc</sub>** ~~CP~~]]

The representations in (66) allow for a very simple treatment of the (micro)parametric variation between Bahiense and other Spanish dialects. Following the Chomsky-Borer

<sup>16</sup>Additional assumptions are required to ensure that the representation in (66) does not violate *Anti-locality* (Abels 2003), e.g., perhaps there is a null projection between FP and CP. For the sake of simplicity, I will ignore this issue.

conjecture (Baker 2008), the relevant property distinguishing Bahiense Spanish is that *pero<sub>conc</sub>* in this variety can optionally receive a formal *EPP*-like feature that attracts the CP projection to the left.<sup>17</sup> As a consequence, Bahiense Spanish displays the alternation in (66), while other varieties are restricted to the pattern in (66a). Moreover, since this parametric change affects *pero<sub>conc</sub>* but not *pero<sub>op</sub>*, it follows that the latter does not attract constituents to its specifier position. Thus, *pero<sub>op</sub>* is expected to be unable to surface in final position in Bahiense, and the unacceptability of sentences such as (65a) is accounted for.

A further difference between *pero<sub>conc</sub>* and *pero<sub>op</sub>* is relevant to fully address why the latter cannot appear in final position. In contrast to the structures in (66), *pero<sub>op</sub>* seems to display the traditional syntactic configuration of a coordinating conjunction, i.e., *pero<sub>op</sub>* seemingly functions as the head of a &P. The relevant structure is the one in (67), where *pero<sub>op</sub>* conjoins two clauses that occupy its specifier and complement positions. Since the specifier of *pero<sub>op</sub>* is already occupied, it follows that other elements, e.g., *CLAUSE<sub>2</sub>* in (67), cannot move into this position.

(67) [<sub>&P</sub> *CLAUSE<sub>1</sub>* [<sub>&</sub> *pero<sub>op</sub>* *CLAUSE<sub>2</sub>*]]

While the proposal in (67) is not a key component of the analysis of *pero bahiense*, it does allow to explain some non-trivial syntactic contrasts between *pero<sub>conc</sub>* and *pero<sub>op</sub>*. Consider the distribution of both types of *pero* regarding hanging topics. As can be seen in (68), a hanging topic like *en cuanto a la fiesta* ‘as for the party’ can appear between two sentences that are connected by *pero<sub>conc</sub>*. This is true no matter *pero<sub>conc</sub>* appears in initial or final position.

- (68) a. Estoy cansado. ***Pero<sub>conc</sub>***, en cuanto a la fiesta, voy a ir igual.  
 am.1SG tired but in regard to the party go.1SG to go anyway  
 ‘I am tired. But, as for the party, I will go anyway.’  
 b. Estoy cansado. En cuanto a la fiesta, voy a ir igual, ***pero<sub>conc</sub>***.  
 am.1SG tired in for to the party go.1SG to go anyway but

On the contrary, a hanging topic cannot intervene between two sentences connected by *pero<sub>op</sub>*. As the pair in (69) illustrates, the restriction applies no matter *pero<sub>op</sub>* appears before or after the hanging topic.

- (69) a. \*Gerardo es alto, *pero<sub>op</sub>*, en cuanto a Jorge, es petiso.  
 Gerardo is.3SG tall but in regard to Jorge is.3SG short  
 ‘Gerardo is tall, but, as for Jorge<sub>i</sub>, he<sub>i</sub> is short.’  
 b. \*Gerardo es alto, en cuanto a Jorge, *pero<sub>op</sub>* es petiso.  
 Gerardo is.3SG tall but in regard to Jorge is.3SG short

For a hanging topic to be able to appear in these examples, it must (i) precede the whole construction, and (ii) be a potential topic for both clauses *Gerardo es alto* ‘Gerardo is tall’ and *Jorge es petiso* ‘Jorge is short’, e.g., (70). This strongly suggests that these clauses form a single constituent to which the hanging topic attaches.

- (70) En cuanto a la estatura, Gerardo es alto *pero<sub>op</sub>* Jorge es petiso.  
 in regard to the height Gerardo is.3SG tall but Jorge is.3SG short  
 ‘As for heights, Gerardo is tall but Jorge is short.’

<sup>17</sup>See Biberauer (2010) for an implementation of this sort of optionality.

As is known, hanging topics in Romance are directly adjoined to the CP (e.g., Cinque 1977, Alexiadou 2006, López 2009). Under such analysis, the structures in (66) correctly capture that *pero<sub>conc</sub>* can co-appear with a hanging topic; this is illustrated in (71) and (72) for cases in which *pero<sub>conc</sub>* surfaces in initial or final positions, respectively. In contrast, if *pero<sub>op</sub>* is a conjunction connecting two clauses as depicted in (67), the expectation is that hanging topics can only be combined with the CP containing the whole coordinate structure; this is schematized in (73).

- (71) [FP **pero<sub>conc</sub>** [CP *hanging topic* [CP ... ]]] cf. (68a)  
 (72) [FP [CP *hanging topic* [CP ... ] ] [F' **pero<sub>conc</sub>** ... ] cf. (68b)  
 (73) [CP *hanging topic* [CP ... [&P CLAUSE<sub>1</sub> [&' *pero<sub>op</sub>* CLAUSE<sub>2</sub>]]]] cf. (70)

In short, the data in (68), (69) and (70) show that the distinction between *pero<sub>conc</sub>* and *pero<sub>op</sub>* is on the right track at least at the syntactic level, and support the analyses offered in (66) and (67). However, more specific research on the syntax of *pero<sub>op</sub>* is needed to further corroborate the proposal in (67).

The structures in (66) capture the general properties of *pero<sub>conc</sub>*, i.e., those that remain constant no matter whether it appears in initial or final position. That is, these representations explain why *pero<sub>conc</sub>* always occupies a peripheral position in the sentence. They also allow to account for the insensitivity of *pero<sub>conc</sub>* to sentence mood, under the hypothesis that mood is calculated within the clause (e.g., Cinque 1999). Moreover, these structures allow for a straightforward characterization of the semantic import of *pero<sub>conc</sub>*. First, at the assertion level, *pero<sub>conc</sub>* works as an identity function  $\langle t, t \rangle$ ; this derives its incapability to alter the truth values of its proposition. Second, at the presuppositional level, an expression of the form *pero<sub>conc</sub>*(*q*) in the context of a preceding proposition *p* triggers the presupposition that *if p, then normally*  $\neg q$ ; this concedes *pero<sub>conc</sub>* the type of meaning typically associated with concessivity (König 1988, 1994).<sup>18</sup>

Another property that is captured by the analyses in (66) is that *pero<sub>conc</sub>* is mostly restricted to root contexts, e.g., (25) to (30). Following proposals by Haegeman (2004, 2006), Carrilho (2005), Hernanz (2007), Cardinaletti (2009), among many others, I take that root phenomena recruit the highest functional projections of the sentence, which can be absent in some embedded domains. For the case at hand, the assumption is that *pero<sub>conc</sub>* always selects a full CP (74a), and is unable to combine with a sentence that has a “truncated” left periphery (74b). Since the latter type of structure corresponds to a number of embedded clauses, e.g., conditionals as those in (25) (Haegeman 2006), *pero<sub>conc</sub>* is expected not to appear in these contexts.

- (74) a. [FP **pero<sub>conc</sub>** [CP ... [XP ... [YP ... [ZP TP ... ]]]]]  
 b. \* [FP **pero<sub>conc</sub>** [YP ... [ZP TP ... ]]]

This also allows to explain why *pero bahiense* can appear in a particular embedded context: within concessive clauses headed by the conjunction *aunque*, e.g., (53). As discussed, concessive clauses are *peripheral adverbial clauses*. In terms of the analyses in (74), they are root-like in the sense that they project a full CP (Haegeman 2002,

<sup>18</sup>A property of *pero bahiense* that I do not attempt to capture at the moment is the distributional restriction that it manifests regarding the particle *bueno* ‘well’, e.g., (58). As mentioned, other particles can co-appear with *pero bahiense*, e.g., (59). This suggests that the relevant constraint must be captured either on a case-by-case basis or within a general theory of discourse particles.

2004). Thus, *pero<sub>conc</sub>* is predicted to be able to select a concessive clause as complement.

However, an account within these lines still requires to capture the contrast between (51) and (53), i.e., the fact that *aunque*-clauses can be combined with *pero<sub>conc</sub>* only if *pero<sub>conc</sub>* is clause-final. I take this to be due to the morphosyntactic structure of the conjunction *aunque*. I follow Bosque & Gutiérrez-Rexach (2009), among others, in assuming that *aunque* is formed by two contiguous elements: the concessive adverbial *aun* ‘even’ and the declarative complementizer *que*.

$$(75) \quad \textit{aunque} = [\text{AdvP } \textit{aun} [\text{CP } \textit{que} \dots]] \quad \text{Bosque \& Guti rrez-Rexach (2009: 734)}$$

I assume that, in order to form *aunque*, *aun* and *que* must be linearly adjacent in the surface representation, e.g., (76a). That is, if an overt constituent XP intervenes between them, *aunque* cannot be formed, and the sentence ends up being ungrammatical due to a violation of the *stranded affix filter* (Lasnik 1981), e.g., (76b).

$$(76) \quad \begin{array}{ll} \text{a. } [\text{AdvP } \textit{aun} \dots [\text{CP } \textit{que} \dots]] & \textit{aun} \wedge \textit{que} = \textit{aunque} \\ \text{b. } [\text{AdvP } \textit{aun} \dots \text{XP} \dots [\text{CP } \textit{que} \dots]] & \textit{aun} \wedge \text{XP} \wedge \textit{que} = * \textit{aun-XP-que} \end{array}$$

This is exactly what I propose happens when *pero<sub>conc</sub>* selects a concessive clause and remains in the initial position. Under the assumption that *pero<sub>conc</sub>* selects the CP before *aun* is introduced in the derivation, *pero<sub>conc</sub>* intervenes between *aun* and *que*, preventing the formation of *aunque*.

$$(77) \quad [\text{AdvP } \textit{aun} \dots [\text{FP } \textit{pero}_{\text{conc}} [\text{CP } \textit{que} \dots]]] \quad \textit{aun} \wedge \textit{pero} \wedge \textit{que} = * \textit{aun-pero-que}$$

These assumptions predict that *aunque* can appear together with *pero bahiense*. That is, if *pero<sub>conc</sub>* is to be clause-final, the CP needs to move to [Spec,FP], e.g., (78). Since *aun* and *que* are linearly adjacent in the resulting representation, *aunque* can be formed. Thus, under the proposed analysis, syntactic movement related to the positioning of a discourse particle is able to feed morphological processes.

$$(78) \quad [\text{AdvP } \textit{aun} \dots [\text{FP } [\text{CP } \textit{que} \dots] [\text{F}^* \textit{pero}_{\text{conc}} \textit{QPP}]]] \quad \textit{aun} \wedge \textit{que} = \textit{aunque}$$

Finally, an analysis of *pero bahiense* in the lines of (66b) also allows to account for the prosodic properties of the construction. Under the assumption that syntactic clauses (i.e., the complements of C<sup>0</sup>) match an intonation phrase  $\iota$  in the prosodic representation of the sentence (Selkirk 2011), the structure in (66b) predicts that the fronted CP and the stranded *pero<sub>conc</sub>* must be mapped into distinct prosodic domains.

$$(79) \quad [\text{FP } \underbrace{[\text{CP } \textit{CLAUSE}]}_{\iota} [\text{F}^* \textit{pero}_{\text{conc}} \textit{QPP}]]$$

Spanish is a language in which nuclear accent has a rather fixed position: it almost invariably falls on the rightmost lexical word within the intonation phrase (e.g., Sosa 1991, Zubizarreta 1998). Since *pero<sub>conc</sub>* is outside of the domain of stress-assignment, it follows that (i) the nuclear accent must fall to the right of the fronted CP, and that (ii) *pero<sub>conc</sub>* must undergo post-nuclear deaccentuation. The predicted scenario fits straightforwardly the contour in Figure 1.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Similar analyses have been advanced for the intonation of right dislocation in Romance (e.g., Vallduv  1992).

There is, however, a property of *pero bahiense* that finds no explanation within this approach: the distribution of vocative forms attested in (48) and (49). The relevant pattern is repeated for convenience in (80) and (81). As discussed, while *initial pero* does not introduce any restrictions on vocatives, *pero bahiense* cannot co-appear with them. Notice that the intended interpretation for all the sentences in (80) and (81) is concessive, i.e., they deny an expectation arising from the utterance ‘you are grounded’. Thus, all these examples involve *pero<sub>conc</sub>*.

- (80) a. **Pero** yo no hice nada.  
 but I not did nothing  
 ‘But I didn’t do anything.’
- b. **Pero** yo no hice nada, Señor.  
 but I not did nothing Miss  
 ‘But I didn’t do anything, Miss.’
- c. **Pero** Señor, yo no hice nada.  
 but Miss I not did nothing
- d. Señor, **pero** yo no hice nada.  
 Miss but I not did nothing
- (81) a. Yo no hice nada, **pero**.  
 I not did nothing but  
 ‘But I didn’t do anything.’
- b. \*Yo no hice nada, **pero**, Señor.  
 I not did nothing but Miss  
 ‘But I didn’t do anything, Miss.’
- c. \*Yo no hice nada, Señor, **pero**.  
 I not did nothing Miss but
- d. ?? Señor, yo no hice nada, **pero**.  
 Miss I not did nothing but

If, as argued, the difference between (80a) and (81a) reduces to CP-fronting, then the impossibility of introducing a vocative in (81b), (81c) and (81d) should be a by-product of moving the CP. A clear-cut way of capturing this intuition consists on assuming that vocatives are merged in [Spec,FP] as sketched in (82). If vocatives and CP-fronting compete for the same position, then it follows that they cannot pattern together.

- (82) [FP (VOCATIVE) [F' **pero<sub>conc</sub>** [CP ... ]]]

The hypothesis that vocatives occupy a designated position as specifiers of discourse particles follows previous analyses by Hill (2007) and Haegeman (2014), which constitute (to my knowledge) the only explicit account for the syntactic interaction of these elements. These proposals, however, do not deal with patterns of (full) complementary distribution like (81), and thus do not incorporate the idea that vocatives compete with other constituents for the same syntactic slot. Thus, while the representation in (82) is inspired on existing literature, its proposed functioning is meant to be slightly distinct.

This analysis faces three non-trivial problems. First, it requires a non-standard assumption to capture the data in (80) and (81): that specifiers can optionally be linearized to the right (*contra* Kayne 1994, i.a.). Consider the contrast between (80b) and (81b). If the reason for (81) to be unacceptable is that [Spec,FP] is filled with the vocative *Señor* ‘Miss’, then [Spec,FP] must be taken to be a rightward specifier, i.e., a specifier



that is preceded by the intermediate projection F' in the surface representation. The same analysis must apply for (80b): the vocative occupying [Spec,FP] must follow F'.

(83) [FP [F' **pero<sub>conc</sub>** [CP ... ]] VOCATIVE ] cf. (80b)

The second problem with the hypothesis in (82) is that it does not account for the acceptability of (80c). As this example shows, the vocative can appear between *pero<sub>conc</sub>* and the CP, a possibility that is not predicted by the structure in (82). To account for this, it seems necessary to assume that *pero<sub>conc</sub>* may optionally undergo head-movement to the next head in the syntactic spine. Thus, if the projection GP dominates FP, then the order *pero<sub>conc</sub>*-VOCATIVE-CP obtains by moving F<sup>0</sup> (i.e., *pero<sub>conc</sub>*) to G<sup>0</sup>; see Haegeman (2014) for similar suggestions that discourse particles undergo head-movement.

(84) [GP **pero<sub>conc</sub>** [FP VOCATIVE [F' ~~pero<sub>conc</sub>~~ [CP ... ]]]] cf. (80c)

The third and main reason to be suspicious about the structure in (82) is that vocatives are not restricted to [Spec,FP], but can also appear within the CP. For instance, in (85) the vocative *jefe* 'boss' follows the dislocated direct object *a ellos* 'them'.<sup>20</sup>

(85) A ellos, jefe, no los vi ayer.  
 DOM they boss not them saw yesterday  
 'I didn't see them yesterday, boss.'

Bahiense Spanish speakers accept without any problems sentences in which *initial pero* co-appears with a CP-internal vocative.

(86) **Pero** eso, Señor, jamás lo hice.  
 but that Miss never it did  
 'But that, Miss, I never did.'

However, they reject sentences combining *pero bahiense* and CP-internal vocatives, e.g., (87b). This shows that the incompatibility between *pero bahiense* and vocatives cannot be reduced to a competition for a specific syntactic position above the CP level.

(87) a. Eso jamás lo hice, **pero**.  
 that never it did but  
 'But that I never did.'  
 b. \*Eso, Señor, jamás lo hice, **pero**.  
 that Miss never it did but  
 'But that, Miss, I never did.'

Moreover, the whole pattern suggests that positing a single configurational relation between vocatives and discourse particles might not be enough to account for the interaction of these elements. This observation reaches the proposals by Hill (2007) and Haegeman (2014), who argue that vocatives and discourse particles stand in a Spec-Head relation within the *Speech Act Layer* (Speas & Tenny 2003). Under such analysis, (i) the presence of vocatives within the CP, and (ii) the fact that they are subject to the same restrictions as CP-external vocatives are unexpected. Thus, these proposals also seem ill-equipped to account for the pattern in (80) and (81).

<sup>20</sup>I am thankful to an anonymous reviewer for this observation.

Given that there are no other explicit proposals in the literature on how to deal with vocatives and discourse particles, I will leave the issue open. The conclusion for the moment is that there is certain specificity in the syntactic functioning of connective particles such as *pero<sub>conc</sub>* that is not immediately translatable to analyses focusing on other types of discourse particles. Thus, further research on the syntactic behaviour of these elements is needed. The preliminary analysis of *pero bahiense* sketched in (66) and the discussion that followed aim to be a contribution in this regard.

## 5 Concluding remarks

At least three Spanish varieties make use of the sentential connector *pero* ‘but’ at the end of the sentence. To fully understand the phenomenon, it is necessary to study the functioning of this element in each of the dialects that manifest it. In this sense, this paper aimed to describe the basic characteristics of *final pero* in the Bahiense dialect, i.e., the so called *pero bahiense*.

After demonstrating that *pero bahiense* must be distinguished from other non-initial uses of *pero*, the article contrasted *pero bahiense* and its sentence-initial counterpart, showing that both elements share a number of non-trivial properties: both are sentence-peripheral, restricted to matrix contexts, and generally exhibit the functioning of discourse particles. As for the differences, both types of *pero* establish distinct distributional restrictions regarding vocatives and other discourse particles. Moreover, they also differ in the meanings they can convey: while *pero bahiense* encodes concessivity only, sentence-initial *pero* may also express semantic opposition. Lastly, both types of *pero* also differ at the prosodic level: while *initial pero* is fully integrated to the main prosodic unit, *pero bahiense* seems to form a separate phonological phrase, just as right dislocated constituents do.

Finally, the paper offered a syntactic account of *pero bahiense*. While the general description of the construction was based on the linear position of the connective particle, the analytical proposal stems from a distinction based on its possible meanings. Thus, the *pero bahiense* phenomenon was argued to involve *pero<sub>conc</sub>*, an instance of *pero* that expresses concessivity. This element is a head that selects a full CP as complement. In general Spanish, *pero<sub>conc</sub>* precedes the CP. However, in the Bahiense dialect *pero<sub>conc</sub>* can optionally receive a formal feature that attracts the CP to the left. This analysis allows to account for the most salient properties of the construction, but fails at capturing the distributional restrictions holding between *pero bahiense* and vocatives. Further research on the syntax of connective particles is needed to solve the issue, as no current theories seem to be able to derive the relevant patterns.

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