

Romance genitives: agreement, definiteness, and phases

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In this paper, which discusses data from Gargano Apulian Italo-Romance, I propose that prepositional and non-prepositional genitives are fundamentally two different types of phrases, and that the interpretation of a non-prepositional noun as the possessor is not due to a silent preposition or head-modifier inversion, but rather to an agreement mechanism taking place between the modifier and its head. We propose that, just as a genitive can agree with its head for gender and number features so it can for definiteness, and that agreement for definiteness yields a genitival interpretation of the non-prepositional noun. I.e., definiteness can externalize the syntactic relation between head and modifier. We also propose that in this Apulian variety, non-prepositional genitives are syntactic phases (Chomsky 2001), and that the same holds for non-prepositional ‘qualitative’ predicative phrases in the same language. This would explain the impossibility of accessing the phrase through syntactic operations such as extraction.

Keywords: Apulian, genitive, definiteness agreement, phases

1. Introduction

The present work deals with a particular realization of genitival phrases found in the Italo-Romance variety of San Marco in Lamis, namely non-prepositional genitives. From the analysis of the data, we draw the following conclusions: no selection requirements for [+HUMAN] nouns take place; the head and its modifier are related through agreement for definiteness. Indefinites, by contrast, require the realization of a preposition. Post-nominal adjectival modification of the head is not allowed, and adjectives appear to the right of the modifier. Extraction and coordination are banned. We propose that such genitives constitute syntactic islands, in that they are phases. No syntactic operation can penetrate the phase, with phasehood being linked to definiteness (see Adger 2003, Radford 2004, and Jiménez-Fernández 2012). The paper is structured as follows: in §1 we present the data concerning non-prepositional possessors. In §2 we introduce other Romance non-prepositional genitives. We find that diachronic and diatopic variation mainly involves the modifier, particularly the possibility of its being article-less. In §3 we give an overview of a couple of proposals related to non-prepositional genitives. We suggest that agreement for definiteness takes place in Apulian non-prepositional genitives and we extend this idea to other types of Romance non-prepositional genitives. In §4 we discuss genitive agreement cross-linguistically, and add Romanian to the wider picture of genitives and definiteness in Romance, with the difference being that in Romanian, the denotation of heads extends to their modifiers even when they are indefinites (see Dobrovie-Sorin 2000). In §5 we give a first description of Apulian non-prepositional qualitative noun phrases and suggest that they can be treated on a par with non-prepositional genitives with respect to agreement for definiteness. In §6 we try to answer the question relative to the correlation of modification to D elements, and suggest that it has to do with a connection between D and Person. We treat definiteness like a proper agreement feature, such as gender and number features (which we refer to as ϕ). ϕ can externalize the syntactic

¹ I wish to thank Paolo Lorusso for feedback on a first draft of this paper, and Danny Bate for proofreading it.

40 relation between head and modifier, and so can definiteness. We propose that Apulian non-
 41 prepositional genitives are phases and that their phasehood is linked to definiteness (Adger 2003,
 42 Radford 2004, and Jiménez-Fernández 2012). From this derive their islandhood properties vis-à-vis
 43 the unavailability of syntactic operations such as extraction. Finally, §7 concludes.

44 2. *Apulian non-prepositional genitives*

45 As evident from their name, non-prepositional genitives are possessor phrases that do not realize
 46 P(reposition). We focus here on their occurrence in a caseless² language, the Apulian Italo-Romance
 47 of San Marco in Lamis (Gargano promontory). The language under analysis here realizes the
 48 prepositional element as *də* ('of') and can realize either a prepositional or a non-prepositional genitive
 49 ((1) represents a context in which the school owns books that can be borrowed).

- 50 (1) a. *l-i libbr-a l-a skəl-a*
 51 DEF-PL book-M.PL DEF-F.SG school-F.SG
 52 'the school's books'
 53 b. *l-i libbr-a dəll-a skəl-a*
 54 DEF-PL book-M.PL of.DEF-F.SG school-F.SG
 55 'the school's books'

56 The choice however between a prepositional and a non-prepositional genitive is not free;
 57 prepositional genitives are found with nouns headed by both definite and indefinite articles, while
 58 non-prepositional genitives only allow nouns headed by definite articles.

- 59 (2) a. **l-i libbr-a n-a skəl-a*
 60 DEF-PL book-M.PL INDEF-F.SG school-F.SG
 61 'a school's books'
 62 b. *l-i libbr-a də n-a skəl-a*
 63 DEF-PL book-M.PL of INDEF-F.SG school-F.SG
 64 'a school's books'

65 The construction can yield a proper possessive interpretation, but also a partitive or a locative one:

- 66 (3) a. *l-i skarp-ə l-u patrə*
 67 DEF-PL shoe-PL DEF-M.SG father
 68 'the father's shoes'
 69 b. *l utəm-a l-a list-a*
 70 DEF last-F.SG DEF-F.SG list-F.SG
 71 'the last of the list'
 72 c. *a ll-u kwuartə l-a skəl-a*
 73 to DEF-M.SG side DEF-F.SG school-F.SG
 74 'beside the school'

77 Non-prepositional genitives also occur with prominence in the creation of toponyms:

² Grammatical case is residual and is realized in the pronominal system (*ijə/me*; 'I/me').

78 (4) l-a vadda l-u 'mpernə
 79 DEF-F.SG valley DEF-M.SG hell
 80 'the valley of hell'
 81 (5) l-a notʃə l-u passə
 82 DEF-F.SG walnut.tree DEF-M.SG pass
 83 'the pass of the walnut tree'

84 In this Apulian variety, adjectival modification of non-prepositional genitives seems to be
 85 restricted to the sole genitival modifier (see the context in (6-7)). Except for a restricted class,
 86 adjectives appear post-nominally and consequently to the right of the genitival modifier. Adjectival
 87 modification of the head seems excluded in this construction (see §2).³

88 (6) l-i rət-ə l-a makən-a nɔv-a
 89 DEF-PL tire-pl DEF-F.SG car-F.SG new-F.SG
 90 'the tires of the new car'
 91 (7) l-i rət-ə nɔv-ə *(də.)l-a makən-a
 92 DEF-PL tires new-PL *(of.)DEF-F.SG car-F.SG
 93 'the new tires of the car'

94 We have mentioned that this construction never involves indefinites. We can now add a further
 95 element with regard to the role of definite articles. In this variety proper names are article-less, and
 96 so, regardless of whether we ascribe this to an N-to-D movement (Longobardi 2005) or to a non-
 97 realization of the D position, proper names do not occur with definite articles. We can take a look at
 98 (8-9) and see how the (non)realization of definite articles works out in a non-prepositional context.

99 (8) *l-u libbr-ə Mə'kelə
 100 DEF-M.SG book-M.SG Michael
 101 'Michael's book'
 102 (9) l-u 'libbrə *(də) Mə'kelə
 103 DEF-M.SG book of Michael
 104 'Michael's book'

105 This means that in this Apulian variety, a noun with no definite article can be a possessor only if it is
 106 prepositional. Even though proper names are definite elements, a non-prepositional possessor can
 107 only be definite and articulated, i.e. it requires that definiteness be grammaticalized through an overt
 108 definite article.

109 Although the construction generally occurs in the form of two consecutive articulated nouns, we found
 110 two instances in which the head noun can be article-less and these are: (10) head nouns as proper
 111 names; and (11) head nouns as vocatives, respectively.^{4 5}

³ Plural definite articles in this language inflect as *i* regardless of gender.

⁴ *Strettola* is the name of a street.

⁵ Vocatives as in (11) correlate with apocope on the rightmost element of the phrase, applying right after the stressed vowel, here going from *g'gjanka* ('white') to *g'gja*. If the vocative phrase is composed of the head only, apocope will

- 112 (10) Maria l-a strettəla
 113 Maria DEF-f.sg strettəla
 114 ‘Maria from the strettəla’ (lit. ‘Maria of the strettəla’)
 115 (11) figgjə l-a jaddin-a g'gja
 116 child DEF-f.sg chicken-f.sg white
 117 ‘silver spoon fed child’ (lit. ‘child of the white chicken’)

118 We move now to other syntactic properties exhibited by the construction, such as
 119 presence/absence of the preposition; co-ordinated possessors; isolation and clefting of the non-
 120 prepositional noun. Further on in this work, we will propose that these contexts show us that the head
 121 and its non-prepositional modifier form are contained within a phase.

122 Let us start with co-ordination. In this variety of Apulian the non-prepositional genitive cannot be
 123 coordinated:

- 124 (12) *l-a fu'nestr-a l-a kas-a e l-a skəl-a
 125 DEF-F.SG window.F-F.SG DEF-F.SG house-f.sg and DEF-F.SG school-F.SG
 126 ‘the window of the house and of the school’
 127 (13) l-i fu'nestr-ə l-a kas-a e *(də)ll-a skəl-a
 128 DEF-PL window.F-PL DEF-F.SG house-F.SG and of.DEF-F.SG school-F.SG
 129 ‘the windows of the house and of the school’

130 (13) shows that the phrase where the non-prepositional possessor is contained can function as the first
 131 conjunct, but that at the same time, there is no non-prepositional possessor functioning as second
 132 conjunct.

133 Fronting of the possessor is another test we can carry out. In (14) we can see that a fronted non-
 134 prepositional modifier is never an option. The consequence is that fronting is only allowed for
 135 prepositional possessors/modifiers:

- 136 (14) *l-a kart-a ne lett-ə dojə padʒ:ən-ə
 137 DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG part.have.1SG read-PL two.F page-PL
 138 ‘of the letter I have read two pages’
 139 (15) dəll-a kart-a ne lett-ə dojə padʒ:ən-ə
 140 of.DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG part.have.1SG read.PST-PL two.F page-PL
 141 ‘of the letter, I have read two pages’

142 Clefting of the non-prepositional possessor produces identical results, requiring that the clefted
 143 nominal be prepositional:

- 144 (16) *'ε l-a kart-a ke ne lettə l-a bbusta
 145 is DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG that part.have.1SG read.pst DEF-F.SG envelope
 146 ‘it is of the letter that I read (what’s on) the envelope’
 147 (17) 'ε dəll-a kart-a ke ne lettə l-a bbusta
 148 is of.DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG that part.have.1SG read.pst DEF-F.SG envelope

apply on the head itself. For truncation in the vocatives of the languages of Southern Italy, the reader is referred to D’Alessandro and van Oostendorp (2016).

149 ‘it is of the letter that I read the envelope’

150 We believe that the facts described suggest that non-prepositional modifiers are contained
151 within a phase with their head noun. In §6 we will propose that what’s at stake is D(efiniteness)-
152 agreement within the constituent; before proceeding, in the next section we offer an overview of non-
153 prepositional genitives within Romance languages and see that they occur in both Old Romance (Old
154 Italian, Old French, Old Sicilian) and in other Contemporary Italo-Romance varieties, such as
155 Calabrese. We will proceed diachronically, starting from Old Romance.

156 3. *Old and Contemporary Romance*

157 Non-prepositional genitives are often found in Old Romance. Jensen (1990) offers an outline of the
158 construction in Old French, showing that it was a construction mainly dedicated to definite and
159 specific referents. Summing up the data from Jensen (1990 :19, 20; (18e) from Diedhiou 2002: 3),
160 we offer the following (18):

- 161 (18) a. l-a curt l-e rei
162 DEF-F.SG court DEF-M.SG king
163 ‘the king’s court’
164 b. l-e cheval Kex
165 DEF-M.SG horse Kex
166 ‘Kex’s horse’
167 c. l-i filz Venus
168 DEF-M.SG son Venus
169 ‘Venus’s son’
170 d. l-a Dieu benivolance
171 DEF-F.SG God.m benevolence.F
172 ‘God’s benevolence’
173 e. un-e maison a un hermite trova
174 INDEF-F.SG house.F to INDEF.M.SG hermit found
175 ‘s/he came across the house of a hermit’
176 f. enondu!
177 In.name.God
178 ‘in the name of God!’

179 (18a) is the same configuration with two consecutive determiner phrases as we found in Apulian.
180 (18)b, however, shows a dissimilarity between Old Romance and Apulian in which, as we said, proper
181 names can be possessors only when prepositional. Here, instead, an article-less possessor can be non-
182 prepositional. (18d) shows that in Old French the position of head and modifier could be reversed
183 (minus the position of the definite article dominating the head, which remains phrase-initial), however
184 agreement morphology on the definite article specifies which one is the head. (18e) is an indication
185 of a common trait shared with Apulian non-prepositional genitives and namely the realization of a
186 preposition (here *a*) in the presence of indefinites.⁶ Lastly, (18f) indicates that non-prepositional

⁶ Syncretism between dative and genitive elements is not rare cross-linguistically, occurring regardless of whether this is externalized analytically or synthetically (like for case syncretism in Romanian, uniting genitive and dative in oblique morphology). For an overview of the dative-genitive syncretism in Indo-European, see Luraghi (1987); Manzini and

187 genitives could form a compound. This pattern is solid within Romance but applies to other instances
 188 of non-prepositional genitives crosslinguistically, such as the Hebrew one, with heads in the Construct
 189 State (see Borer 2008).⁷

190 Old Italian non-prepositional genitives align with Old French ones, allowing, as far as we can
 191 tell, the same types of configurations encountered in Old French. In (19) we present Old Italian data
 192 obtained from Delfitto and Paradisi (2009):

- 193 (19) a. l-a Iddio mercé
 194 DEF-F.SG God.m mercy.F
 195 ‘for God’s mercy’
 196 b. l-o padre Enea
 197 DEF-M.SG father Aeneas
 198 ‘Anchises, Aeneas’s father’
 199 c. a nome messer Eustagio
 200 to name sir Eustagio
 201 ‘in the name of Sir Eustagio’
 202 d. da le rede Bertino d’Aiuolo
 203 from DEF heir Bertino d’Aiuolo
 204 ‘from Bertino d’Aiuolo’s heir’
 205 e. li armi Diana
 206 DEF weapons Diana
 207 ‘Diana’s weapons’
 208 f. cocitura lo detto pane
 209 cooking DEF said bread
 210 ‘the cooking of said bread’

211 (19a) shows that also in Old Italian the position of the head and the modifier could be reversed,
 212 yielding the order modifier-head. The definite article of the head, again, remains however in place
 213 and gender features specify which of the two nominals is the head. (19b-e) contain article-less
 214 modifiers, with (19c) and (19f) containing an article-less head as well. The latter comprises a pre-
 215 nominal modifier of the genitival noun (*pane*) in the form of a past participle. This means that there
 216 is evidence that in Old Italian a non-prepositional genitive could be modified by a pre-nominal
 217 modifier, unlike what we have seen for Apulian⁸. This is different also from what we see in a type of
 218 non-prepositional genitive found in Contemporary Italian, with *casa* ‘house’ as its head ((20) adapted
 219 from Longobardi (2001: 572)):

- 220 (20) a. cas-a Rossi
 221 house-F.SG Rossi
 222 ‘the house of the Rossi’s’

Savoia (2011, 2014). What is interesting anyway is that it is a prepositional form (in this instance the *a*-type) which occurs with indefinite nominals.

⁷ Nouns in the Semitic construct state are notoriously characterized by an article-less head but might undergo other processes such as the realization of feminine inflection (on this topic with regard to Arabic see, for instance, Mohammad (1999), working on Palestinian Arabic).

⁸ As we anticipated in §2, only a handful of adjectives can be pre-nominal in this Apulian variety, among including *bell-*, *brutt-*, *bo/on-*, *brav-* (‘beautiful’, ‘ugly’, ‘good’, etc.). Note however that the adjectives in the data we present in this paper are strictly post-nominal (as *nov-*, ‘new’, *exx* (6-7)).

- 223 b. *cas-a nuov-a Rossi
 224 house-F.SG new-F.SG Rossi
 225 ‘the new house of the Rossi’s’
 226 c. cas-a Rossi nuov-a
 227 house-F.SG Rossi.PL new-F.SG
 228 ‘the new house of the Rossi’s’

229 There is also a difference between Italian in (20c) and Apulian in (6-7), in that in Apulian the adjective
 230 agrees with the possessor, while in Italian it agrees with the head, as evident from agreement
 231 morphology.

232 The Old French non-prepositional genitive seems limited to [+HUMAN] referents (see Jensen
 233 1990). This is however not true of Apulian and Old Italian, in which the non-prepositional modifier
 234 can also be a –human nominal (*pane*, ‘bread’ in (19f). Nonetheless, all the varieties presented so far
 235 (excluding Apulian) allow for articleless non-prepositional proper names as possessors, and this
 236 includes Old Sicilian as well ((21) from Delfitto and Paradisi 2009: 63):

- 237 (21) a. la morti Dyonisiu tyranpnu
 238 DEF death Dionysius tyrant
 239 ‘the death of the tyrant Dionysius’

240 As we anticipated, Calabrese is another contemporary Italo-Romance variety of Southern Italy
 241 allowing non-prepositional possessors. The construction in the Calabrese variety has been previously
 242 analyzed in Rohlfs (1969) and Silvestri (2012, 2016). The AIS map contains instances of Calabrese
 243 non-prepositional genitives, specifically from the variety of Mangone. Like Old Romance, the
 244 Calabrese variety of Mangone admits articleless non-prepositional possessors (AIS: 120)

- 245 (22) u pumu Adømu
 246 DEF knob Adam
 247 ‘laryngeal prominence’

248 Like in Apulian and Old Italian, Calabrese non-prepositional possessors are not restricted to
 249 [+HUMAN] referents. We can see this in (23), in Verbicaro Calabrese data from Silvestri (2012, 2016):

- 250 (23) a. a nučə u kvəddə
 251 DEF nut DEF neck
 252 ‘cervical vertebra’
 253 b. ʊ čiolə a vökka
 254 DEF sky DEF mouth
 255 ‘palate’
 256 c. a panza a gamma
 257 DEF belly DEF leg
 258 ‘calf’

259 The construction in Calabrese seems to admit post-nominal adjectival modifiers of the head (Silvestri
 260 2013: 142):

- 261 (24) a. a buttigghja gross-a u vinu (jank-u)
 262 DEF-F bottle.F big-F DEF-M wine.M (white-M)
 263 ‘the big bottle of white wine’
 264 b. a buttigghja lord-a u vinu
 265 DEF-F bottle.F dirty-F DEF-M wine
 266 ‘the dirty bottle of wine’

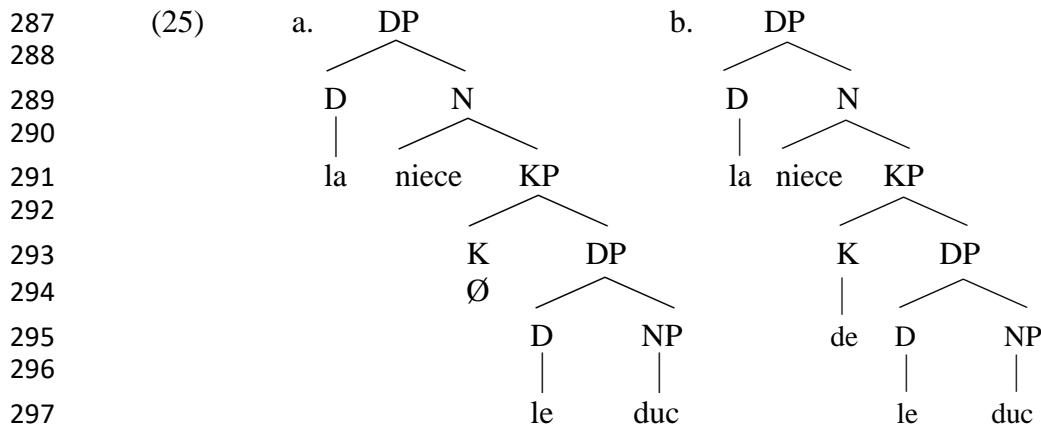
267 The puzzling thing about non-prepositional genitives inevitably involves a question about how
 268 a non-prepositional noun can be interpreted as a possessor in the absence of a preposition or case
 269 morphology specifying it as such. This is the topic of the next paragraph, where we will give an
 270 overview of proposals put forward in the literature. We will suggest that in the case of Apulian, this
 271 interpretation is made possible through the agreement of the two nouns for definiteness.

272 4. Interpretation with no P

273 The first account on non-prepositional genitives in the languages of Southern Italy goes back to
 274 Rohlf's (1969), who analyzed non-prepositional genitives of the Calabrese variety and proposed that
 275 the lack of a preposition is due to its absorption in an intervocalic context (vocalic word end for the
 276 head, and the vocalic definite article for the possessor). In contrast to other Romance varieties of Italy,
 277 whose articles retained the lateral from *ille*, the definite article of the Calabrese varieties discussed
 278 by Rohlf's underwent the loss of the lateral consonant, thus resulting in the articles *a* (F)/*u*, *o* (M).

279 The fact however that in several Romance varieties whose definite articles retained the lateral
 280 (such as the Apulian of San Marco in Lamis we deal with in this paper) non-prepositional genitives
 281 occur as well is the reason behind Silvestri's (2012) proposal that Rohlf's hypothesis might be
 282 incorrect, in that the lateral in the definite article assures that no inter-vocalic absorption takes place.

283 Within generative grammar, proposals for Romance non-prepositional genitives either involve a
 284 non-pronounced P, or head-modifier inversion. Working on Old French non-prepositional genitives,
 285 Simonenko (2010: 9) proposes a *KP* (Kase Phrase) which is only filled with prepositional genitives,
 286 otherwise remaining silent.



299 Head-modifier inversion is instead proposed in Delfitto and Paradisi (2009: 60), who approach
 300 the issue with an analysis à la Kayne, postulating head-modifier inversion.

- 301 (26) la [D/PP niece]_j [[AGR/K^o _k-D^o] [IP le duc [e_k [e]_j]]...

302 The AGR head receives the definiteness feature of the possessor via Spec-Head agreement. The
 303 incorporation of AGR in D is triggered by a [+HUMAN] feature which syntactically activates AGR/K°,
 304 taking into account the [+HUMAN] nature of Old French non-prepositional possessors. However, this
 305 cannot apply to all the varieties we examine here, in that several of them require no [+HUMAN] feature
 306 for the possessor, making the triggering of AGR into D via a [+HUMAN] feature untenable.

307 As for (26), in this paper we maintain that the prepositional and the non-prepositional construction
 308 do not share the same underlying structure and that the interpretation of a non-prepositional noun as
 309 possessor is not due to a silent preposition or **to** inversion, but rather to an agreement mechanism
 310 taking place between the modifier and its head. In the **following** section, we will propose that just as
 311 a genitive can agree with its head for gender and number, so can it for definiteness, and that agreement
 312 for definiteness yields a genitival interpretation of the non-prepositional noun, in that it can
 313 externalize the syntactic relation taking place between the head and its modifier.

314 5. *Genitive agreement cross-linguistically. A syntactic analysis*

315 In the previous section we suggested that in Apulian a non-prepositional noun is interpreted as a
 316 possessor iff:

- 317 (27) a) it always occurs with its head from which it cannot be separated neither via
 318 extraction nor because of interposing material (e.g. adjectives);
 319 b) **it is accompanied by an article**;
 320 c) it is definite, and so is the head.

321 (c) in particular is shared by all the Romance non-prepositional genitives we discussed in the paper.
 322 Let us say that (c) means that in these languages, a non-prepositional noun is interpreted as genitive
 323 only if it agrees for definiteness with its head.

324 Modifier-head agreement is a trait mostly associated with adjectival modifiers, but agreement
 325 between a genitival modifier and its head also exists. This can be achieved through (at least) two
 326 different strategies, namely one where agreement with the head is realized on the modifier itself, and
 327 a second type where this is externalized on free-standing elements. The first type is the one we find
 328 in Georgian wherein the possessor, in the oblique case, might agree with the head noun in number
 329 and case so that if the structural case of the head is nominative, the genitive will bear nominative
 330 morphology too (Bopp 1848, in Plank 1995: 4):

- 331 (28) çinamsrbol-n-i laşkar-ta-n-i
 332 vanguard-PL-NOM army-OBL.PL-PL-NOM
 333 ‘the vanguard of the armies’

334 In the second type, agreement appears on an element other than the possessor noun itself, **which**
 335 is generally known as *linker*. Albanian linkers, for instance, are elements that are identical to or
 336 allomorphs of definite inflections, agreeing with the head noun (Manzini and Savoia 2014: 84):

- 337 (29) libr-i i vëđa-it
 338 book-DEF.NOM.M. LKR.M brother-DEF.OBL.M
 339 ‘the book of the brother’

340 Let us return to Romance now, because Romanian has linkers too. There is a second reason why
 341 we include Romanian in this list, and this pertains to the ‘purely synthetic’ genitive that Romanian
 342 employs. Definiteness, as we will see, plays an important role in the realization of this type of
 343 genitive. The linker type, as evident from inflection morphology, is an agreeing element. Like the
 344 Albanian linker, the Romanian linker contains a D element (Latin *ille*)⁹, ((32)a from Dobrovie-Sorin
 345 2000, 2005):

- 346 (30) a. o casa a vecin-ului
 347 INDEF house.F LKR.F neighbor-DEF.OBL.M
 348 ‘a house of the neighbor’s’
 349 b. o câine al vecin-ului
 350 INDEF dog.M LKR.M neighbor-DEF.OBL.M
 351 ‘a dog of the neighbor’s’

352 The ‘purely synthetic’ type sees the possessor in the oblique case, with no linker appearing between
 353 head and modifier (Dobrovie-Sorin 2000):

- 354 (31) a. casa vecin-ului
 355 house neighbor-DEF.OBL.M
 356 ‘the neighbor’s house’
 357 b. o casa a vecin-ului
 358 INDEF house.F LKR.F neighbor-DEF.OBL.M
 359 ‘a house of the neighbor’s’

360 (31) shows that (in)definiteness is the feature leading to the realization of either a synthetic or a linker
 361 genitive. Romanian non-*al* genitives can also include modifiers headed by indefinite articles (*unui*,
 362 *unei*) and modifiers in the form of proper names, so that we have cases like the following:¹⁰

- 363 (32) a. [evalua-re-a [utilizabilita-ti-i [un-ui scenariu]]]
 364 evaluation-DEF usability-DEF INDEF-GEN scenario
 365 ‘evaluation of the usability of a scenario’
 366 b. casă Mari-ei
 367 house Mary-GEN
 368 ‘Mary’s house’

369 Indeed in the first case, *scenariu* is indefinite and no definiteness trait is present. For such instances,
 370 we might adopt the analysis proposed in Dobrovie-Sorin (2000: 216), “the denotation of the overall
 371 nominal projection is obtained by applying the denotation of the head N to the denotation of the DP
 372 in SpecDP” (SpecDP would be the position assigned to the genitive, in her work). In so doing, a
 373 definite interpretation is not derived compositionally, but rather extended from the head to the whole
 374 phrase. As for (32b), we have no overt determiner, although definite nouns such as *casa* are known,
 375 similarly to proper names, to show such a pattern (see Longobardi 2001).

376 Longobardi (1995) was the first to notice similarities between the Italian non-prepositional
 377 construction in (20) and the Semitic Construct State, which include an articleless head and resistance
 378 to post-nominal modification of the head. In Hebrew, genitival modification can be of two types. One

⁹ It is debated whether other elements (such as the Latin preposition *ad*) might have been present in the original make-up of the linker. An extended discussion on the matter is provided by Giurgea (2012).

¹⁰ I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

379 is prepositional (Hebrew has no grammatical case), and this relates to **head nouns accompanied by an**
 380 **article**, the possibility of a following adjectival modifier and that of an indefinite head and/or
 381 possessor. Alternatively, it is a non-prepositional genitive, and this correlates with modifier-head
 382 definiteness agreement and a phonologically reduced deaccented articleless head, with stress falling
 383 on the genitival noun ((34b), Borer 1988: 48):

- 384 (33) a. ha-caʕif šel ha-yalda/ šel yalda
 385 DEF-scarf of DEF-girl/ of girl
 386 ‘the scarf of the girl/of a girl’
 387 b. caʕif ha-yaldá
 388 scarf DEF-girl
 389 ‘the scarf of the girl’

390 In a similar vein to **Dobrovie-Sorin’s proposal** for Romanian, Borer (1988) and Hoyt (2008) propose
 391 that in Hebrew and Arabic¹¹, respectively, the (in)definiteness feature of modifiers spreads to the head
 392 (whereas for Romanian, the purported mechanism progresses from the head to the modifier).

393

394 5. *More Apulian non-prepositional constructions: qualitative noun phrases*

395 This **section** deals with another context where P might be absent, namely that of qualitative noun
 396 phrases. These constructions are usually characterized by the realization of two nouns, one of which
 397 is understood as the predicate. As such, they have been extensively studied with regard to predication
 398 (see Napoli 1989, Den Dikken 2006). By *predication*, it is intended that the head is the externalization
 399 of a property associated with the second noun. This is exemplified in the Italian example in (34) (from
 400 Napoli 1989: 247):

- 401 (34) la teoria della relatività
 402 ‘the theory of relativity’

403 What (34) says about *relativity* is that it is a *theory*. The head predicates that the property of being a
 404 theory is related to *relatività*. We focus here on a particular type of qualitative noun phrase found in
 405 Apulian, namely the *N of an N* type.

406 What we know about Italian is that this type of phrase sees its first member as generally dominated
 407 by a distal demonstrative, with the second member realized as an indefinite:

- 408 (35) quell’idiota di un dottore
 409 ‘that idiot of a doctor’

¹¹ Hoyt (2008: 5, 6) shows that it is the modifier which triggers an (in)definite interpretation, as in the following cases, with identical heads, but with modifiers realized differently.

- (i) a. kitāb-u bint-i-n
 book-NOM girl-GEN-NUN
 ‘a girl’s book’
 b. kitāb-u l-bint-i
 book-NOM DEF-girl-GEN
 ‘the girl’s book’

410 The predication being made about *dottore* is that of being an idiot. But in Italian we can also find two
 411 variants of the construction: a type with a distal demonstrative preceding the first member and a
 412 definite article preceding the second one (36a). The second type occurs with two definite-articled
 413 nouns (36b).

- 414 (36) a. quell'idiota del dottore
 415 'that idiot of the doctor'
 416 b. l'idiota del dottore
 417 'the idiot of the doctor'

418 In the Apulian variety we are dealing with here, binominal qualitative noun phrases occur in a fashion
 419 similar to (36b). Except that they can be non-prepositional.

- 420 (37) a. l-u 'femə l-u 'medəkə
 421 DEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor
 422 'the idiot of the doctor'
 423 b. l-a 'kaspəta l-a bul'letta
 424 DEF-F.SG freaking DEF-F.SG bill
 425 'that freaking thing of a bill'

426 The non-prepositional construction in (38) obeys the same constraints we found for Apulian non-
 427 prepositional genitives, and especially the most salient one, namely a ban on indefinites.

- 428 (38) a. l-u 'femə l-u 'medəkə
 429 DEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor
 430 'the idiot of the doctor'
 431 b. *n-u 'femə l-u 'medəkə
 432 INDEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor
 433 '*an idiot of the doctor'
 434 c. *l-u 'femə n-u 'medəkə
 435 DEF-M.SG idiot INDEF-M.SG doctor
 436 '*the idiot of a doctor'
 437 d. n-u 'femə də 'medəkə
 438 INDEF-M.SG idiot of doctor
 439 'an idiot of a doctor'
 440 e. *n-u 'femə n-u 'medəkə
 441 INDEF-M.SG idiot INDEF-M.SG doctor
 442 '*an idiot of a doctor'

443 Like in non-prepositional genitives, here the second element of the construction cannot undergo
 444 fronting. But this is often true of prepositional predicative noun phrases in Italian (see Napoli 1989)
 445 and Apulian as well.

- 446 (39) a. n-u 'femə də 'medəkə
 447 INDEF-M.SG idiot of doctor
 448 'an idiot of a doctor'
 449 b. *dəll-u 'medəkə e vistə l-u 'femə
 450 of.DEF-M.SG doctor have.1sg seen DEF-M.SG idiot

451 ‘*of the doctor I have seen the idiot
 452 c. *ε dəll-u ‘medəkə ke e vistə l-u ‘femə
 453 is of.DEF-M.SG doctor that have.1sg seen DEF-M.SG idiot
 454 ‘*it’s of the doctor that I have seen the idiot

455 It is possible for the whole phrase to be fronted, or to be a cleft, but not for one of the two DPs which
 456 constitute it.

457 (40) a. dəll-u ‘femə l-u ‘medəkə e vistə l-u kane
 458 of.DEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor have.1sg seen DEF-M.SG dog
 459 ‘of that idiot of the doctor I have seen the dog’
 460 b. ε dəll-u ‘femə l-u ‘medəkə ke e vistə l-u kane
 461 is of.DEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor that have.1sg seen DEF-M.SG dog
 462 ‘it’s of that idiot of the doctor that I have seen the dog’

463 Napoli (1989) proposes that a qualitative noun phrase sits in the terminal node of an NP; that is to
 464 say, it behaves like a noun. In generative frameworks, qualitative noun phrases have been derived
 465 either on a par with prepositional possessive phrases proper, or in a separate fashion. Kayne (1994:
 466 105-6), for instance, proposes a unitary derivation.

467 (41) a. that idiot of a doctor
 468 a’. that[D/PP[NP idiot_i] [of[IP a doctor I° [e]_j]...
 469 b. cet imbécile de Jean
 470 that idiot of Jean
 471 ‘that idiot of Jean’
 472 b’. cet[D/PP[NP imbécile_i] [de[IP Jean I° [e]_j]...
 473 c. la voiture de Jean
 474 c’. la[D/PP[NP voiture_i] [de[IP Jean [I° [e]_j]...

475 Den Dikken (2006) proposes a structure for qualitative noun phrases only, distinguishing them from
 476 possessive prepositional phrases proper. In any case both propose inversion,¹² having the common
 477 idea that the preposition *of* is a sort of nominal copula (*the doctor is an idiot*). Without advocating
 478 inversion, with regard to the Apulian data we suggest, like Kayne, that the two occurrences of *of* can
 479 be united if we take into account the nature of the preposition in such instances, and namely that of
 480 an element relating sets. P can relate head and modifier and therefore possessee and possessor. At the
 481 same time, it can relate a property to a noun. In our case, P is absent, but definiteness agreement
 482 relates the two nouns. One could argue that unlike qualitative noun phrases, possessors can undergo
 483 fronting and clefting and that the two constructions should not go under the same umbrella. For the
 484 time being, we will delay this discussion until §6.3, in which we return to the issue. To end this
 485 section, we can recapitulate what we have found from the analysis of the data at our disposal. We
 486 have seen that Apulian non-prepositional qualitative noun phrases are regulated by agreement for
 487 definiteness. In section 3-4, we have proposed that this is what expresses the syntactic relation
 488 between head and modifier in non-prepositional genitives. In the absence of P, we propose that the
 489 same happens in non-prepositional qualitative noun phrases, i.e. that the relation between the

¹² And so do Delfitto & Paradisi (2009).

490 predicate and the subject of the predication is externalized through definiteness agreement, rather
491 than the externalization of a preposition.

492 6. *Why D?D, definiteness, and definiteness effects.*

493 6.1 *Agreement*

494 This last section is dedicated to the question of why there seems to be a correlation between D
495 elements and modification in the nominal domain. This correlation seems to externalize (mostly) in
496 two ways. In one, elements stemming from allomorphs of determiners interposed between head and
497 genitival modifiers host number and gender features. They can be either the features of the genitival
498 noun, or those of the head. We have seen that these elements are usually called linkers. They seem to
499 form a constituent with the modifier rather than with the head noun as suggested by linker behaviour
500 in coordination (Philip 2012) and modifier iteration contexts (Manzini et al. 2014) (even though in
501 some cases they might appear as graphically attached to the head, as in Persian). In this case, these
502 elements belong with the modifier, and show agreement with the head via number and gender
503 features. We have seen this for Albanian and Romanian (29-31). Previously, we have seen that in
504 Romanian, oblique case morphology alone does not suffice for the noun to be interpreted as the
505 possessor, and that it is somewhat defective.

506 So we end up with (at least) two contexts in which D is pivotal for head-modifier agreement.
507 In one, D hosts gender and number features. In the other one, it is just the locus where definiteness is
508 grammaticalized and definiteness agreement with the head is externalized. Another instance in which
509 agreement for definiteness occurs in modification is that of relative clauses. Specifically, Modern
510 Standard Arabic relative clauses are headed by *llaði* when the noun they modify is definite (for
511 discussion, see Mohammad 1999). This element is not present with indefinite heads ((42) from Galal
512 2004: 46).

- 513 (42) a. raʔayt-u 1-walad-a ʔallaði zaaʔ-a al-yaum
514 saw-1.SG DEF-boy-ACC REL came-he DEF-day
515 ‘I saw the boy who came today’
516 b. *raʔayt-u walad-a-n ʔallaði zaaʔ-a al-yaum
517 saw-1.SG boy-ACC REL came-he DEF-day
518 ‘I saw a boy who came today’

519 By the same token (assuming *llaði* to be a D element), Apulian non-prepositional genitives, which
520 always modify a definite head, must be headed by an overt D.

521 What we would like to suggest with regard to the correlation of D(efiniteness) to modification
522 is that this has something to do with indexing. In previous literature, it has been suggested that there
523 is a correlation between D elements and person, gender and number features, and specifically with
524 Person. In Chomsky (1995), by instance, D elements can satisfy the EPP (Extended Projection
525 Principle), meaning the necessity for verbs to express a subject, either via a pronominal element,
526 verbal inflection, or an expletive. Lyons (1999) goes further and proposes that Person and
527 Definiteness can be unified under the same category, namely *Person-Definiteness*. When it comes to
528 nouns, Person reduces to 3rd person (see Baker (2003) and Ackema and Neeleman (2019a, 2019b)
529 on number features in R-expressions) and the rest is achieved by number and/or gender and case. If
530 number and gender and definiteness can be correlated, this means that just as Kartvelian genitives

531 can agree for number, gender, and case, so genitives in other languages can agree for definiteness. In
 532 this sense, definiteness is a proper feature, and as such can externalize the syntactic relation between
 533 a head and its modifier. The definiteness features of internal arguments can also influence the type of
 534 inflectional morphology present on a verb. This happens in Hungarian. Coppock and Wechsler (2012)
 535 show that this occurs in a number of contexts, including proper names, possessives, third person direct
 536 object pronouns,¹³ and definite internal arguments. Again, there is a strong correlation between person
 537 and definiteness. As they explain, definite inflections stem from pronoun incorporation, but given
 538 that they inflect according to mood and tense, Coppock and Wechsler argue that they amount to
 539 agreement morphology, rather than object clitics. They propose that through reanalysis, such
 540 pronouns lost ϕ -features,¹⁴ while retaining formal DEF properties, finally resulting in a ϕ -less form of
 541 agreement, which is what we find in Apulian non-prepositional genitives. Within Southern Italo-
 542 romance, yet another proof that (in)definiteness is pivotal in the choice of a particular configuration
 543 over another emerges. Ledgeway et al. (2020), for instance, show that Calabrese features a type of
 544 linker, which is found in indefinite contexts only.

- 545 (43) a. nu cumpagn-ə *(r-u) miə (Orsomarso, Cosenza. Ledgeway et al. 2020: 97)
 546 INDEF friend-m of-DEF my
 547 ‘a friend of mine’
 548 b. a cumpagna suə
 549 DEF friend his/her
 550 ‘his/her friend’

551 *ru* is undoubtedly a type of linker. Its morphological makeup is also analogous to the one found in
 552 Romanian and Aromanian (§5, footnote 8 of this paper, and reference contained therein). Ledgeway
 553 et al. also show that Italo-Greek varieties of Southern Italy prefer strong possessive forms over
 554 enclitic ones in indefinite configurations. This is also true of Southern Italo-Romance in general, as
 555 in the following example from Gargano Apulian.

- 556 (44) a. *nu fratə-mə
 557 INDEF brother-my
 558 b. nu fratə mja
 559 INDEF brother my
 560 ‘one of my brothers’
 561 c. fratə-mə
 562 brother(s)-my
 563 ‘my brother’ or ‘my brothers’¹⁵

565 6.2 Definiteness and phasehood

566 How can we explain the fact that non-prepositional genitives do not allow syntactic operations such
 567 as extraction? Here we would like to propose that this is because they are phases. A *phase* is a chunk

¹³ First and second person trigger instead the *subjective* inflection. See Coppock and Wechsler (2012) for discussion.

¹⁴ *Phi* features, or number and gender features.

¹⁵ Plural forms of the enclitic possessive only exist in the first person plural. Masculine, feminine plural and masculine singular morphology in nouns and possessives carries an invariable schwa. Agreement morphology in the clause disambiguates singular from plural forms.

568 of syntactic structure that once completed, is not accessible to further syntactic operations (Chomsky
 569 1998). Structure is built phase by phase, and once the phase is closed, no syntactic operation can take
 570 place, and **therefore island effects arise**.¹⁶

571 Chomsky (2001: 12) proposed that “phases are propositional: verbal phrases with full argument
 572 structure and CP with force indicators”. More recently, Adger (2003), Radford (2004), Jiménez-
 573 Fernández (2012), and Chomsky (2020) have argued that definite DPs can have phasehood status, as
 574 shown in (47), in which the banned syntactic operation is *wh*- extraction.

- 575 (45) a. *Which poem did you hear Homer’s recital of last night? (Adger 2003: 327)
 576 b. Which poem did you go to hear a recital of last night?

577 Since Higginbotham (1985), nominal phrases are thought to be endowed with argument structure too.
 578 So for example in a language with articles, determiners saturate one of the noun’s argumental slots.
 579 Yet so do genitival phrases (regardless of whether this is grammatical case or its analytical
 580 counterpart). Putting together the **proposal** that definite DPs are phases **with the idea that** genitives
 581 are phrases with full argument structure, we would like to propose that non-prepositional genitives of
 582 the Apulian kind are actually phases, and therefore subject to islandhood effects. A similar proposal
 583 with respect to genitives is put forward in Shormani (2016), who argues that Semitic Construct State
 584 genitives constitute phases.

585 One question left to answer is why we have cases in which both the head and the modifier are
 586 headed by definite articles, but the result is not a non-prepositional genitive. We have already seen
 587 that prepositional and non-prepositional genitives allow for different syntactic operations, **including**
 588 extraction. Diachronically, we have seen that non-prepositional genitives externalize specific
 589 referents. This is also the case in contemporary Apulian. Such genitives **are** typically associated head-
 590 modifier pairs (*court* and *king*; *wheel* and *car*, or toponyms). In some instances, just like in Italian, a
 591 definite article does not necessarily contain a [+DEF] feature, **and** is not an iota operator proper.

- 592 (46) mangio la torta *ambiguous between definite and generic*
 593 eat-1sg DEF cake
 594 ‘I eat (the) cake’

595 What we have in non-prepositional genitives, instead, is DPs with a specific reference, with definite
 596 articles functioning as fully-fledged iota operators. So we might have a genitival phrase wherein both
 597 the head and the modifier are headed by definite articles, but definite articles will not always yield a
 598 definite interpretation.

599 6.3 Qualitative noun phrases and phasehood

600 In §5 we have speculated that the role of prepositions in genitival noun phrases and in qualitative
 601 noun phrases is roughly the same: that of relating two nouns. In the case of non-prepositional phrases,
 602 this role is played by definiteness agreement. It remains to explain why a prepositional genitival noun
 603 phrase can undergo extraction, while qualitative noun phrases cannot, regardless of whether they are
 604 prepositional or non-prepositional. This can be explained if we take into account the predicative
 605 function of qualitative constructions, with an analogous case being adjectival modification. Simple

¹⁶ See Ross (1967), in which they were first introduced.

606 adjectival phrases, at least in the systems considered here, do not allow the extraction of the head
607 noun or its modifier. Hypothesizing a phasehood status for such cases would explain the impossibility
608 for extraction (see also Chomsky 2020: 51). We assume here that merging of N₁ with a prepositional
609 phrase (or through definiteness agreement) containing N₂ (*that genius_{N1} of a doctor_{N2}*) turns it into a
610 predicative element on a par with adjectival modifiers. Consider further, by instance, that a qualitative
611 noun phrase is analogous to saying “x is a doctor *and* an idiot”. Bošković (2020), following
612 Higginbotham (1985), treats adjunction (modification) as being analogous to coordination¹⁷, which
613 would explain similarities shared by the two regarding the impossibility of extraction.

614 To conclude, both non-prepositional genitives and non-prepositional qualitative noun phrases
615 constitute phases, but for different reasons. In the case of genitives, this is to do with definiteness. In
616 the case of qualitative noun phrases, this is to do with their predicative function.

617 7. Conclusions

618 In this paper, we introduced a peculiar type of non-prepositional genitive. We found that, in absence
619 of a prepositional element, head and modifier are related through definiteness agreement. In light of
620 the fact that a number of syntactic operations (such as extraction) cannot access these phrases, we
621 proposed that this is due to their being phases. In this case, following previous work, we argued that
622 their phasehood status is triggered by definiteness.

623 We also introduced another type of non-prepositional phrase, namely non-prepositional
624 qualitative constructions. We identified a number of mechanisms shared with non-prepositional
625 genitives; also in this case, we argued that the two nouns are related through definiteness agreement,
626 and we also found that qualitative noun-phrases resist extraction too. We have proposed that
627 qualitative noun phrases are predicative in nature, and that this derives from their phasehood (see also
628 Bošković 2020 and Chomsky 2020).

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¹⁷ A big butterfly=That is a butterfly, and it is big (for a butterfly) (see Higginbotham 1985: 563).

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