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# *Ne*-cliticisation and split intransitivity[1]

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I consider a number of constructions with *ne*-cliticisation, which at first sight would seem to be problematic vis-à-vis the hypothesis that the Italian partitive clitic *ne* is a diagnostic of unaccusativity. Structures with *ne*-cliticisation can receive an existential interpretation in sentence focus. I argue that, in the putatively non-canonical domains, *ne* realises the argument of a stage-level existential predicate (see Carlson 1977; Diesing 1992; Pustejovsky 1995), which is not spelled out in syntax, but only figures in the semantic representation of the sentence. My findings highlight the role of focus structure in unaccusativity phenomena (see Van Valin 1993a; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995; Lambrecht 2000; among others), and support the analysis of split intransitivity in terms of non-deterministic correspondence between discourse, semantics and syntax.

## 1. Introduction

Since the formulation of the Unaccusative Hypothesis (see Perlmutter 1978) it has been noted that the Italian partitive clitic *ne* 'of it/them' realises the direct object of transitives as well as the argument of those intransitive verbs which select the perfective auxiliary 'be'. Accordingly, *ne*-cliticisation (*ne*-cl) has been claimed to be exclusively compatible with underlying objects, and hence to be a diagnostic of unaccusativity (see Belletti & Rizzi 1981; Burzio 1986; Perlmutter 1989). This paper is concerned with some uses of partitive *ne*, which may be thought to undermine the above view: a construction in which *ne* appears to realise the argument of 'have'-selecting intransitives (see Lonzi 1986), and the use of *ne* in sentences with adjectival predicates. The selection of the perfective auxiliary 'have' in Italian is normally associated with unergative syntax (see Perlmutter 1978, 1989; Burzio 1986). Thus, it is not clear why *ne*-cl should, under some circumstances, combine with 'have'-taking predicates, if *ne* is only compatible with underlying objects. The case of adjectival predicates is controversial, in that there is no agreement as to whether these should be analysed as structures with an external argument

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(see Burzio 1986; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1986; Baker 2003) or as unaccusative constructions (see La Fauci 2000). Cinque 1990 noted a split in the behaviour of adjectival predicates vis-à-vis *ne*-cl, and suggested that they are divided into an unaccusative and an unergative class, on a par with verbal predicates. In this paper, new data on *ne*-cl with adjectival predicates are brought to light. In a number of cases, *ne*-cl is ruled out in the present tense, but compatible with perfective aspect. This fact is unexpected under both of the views of adjectival predicates mentioned above.

I provide a unified account of *ne*-cl, and I assess the contribution of this phenomenon to the current understanding of split intransitivity. Structures with *ne*-cl can receive an existential interpretation in sentence focus and, marginally, in argument focus (see Lambrecht 2000). In the putatively non-canonical domains, *ne* realises the argument of a stage-level existential predicate (see Carlson 1977; Diesing 1992; Pustejovsky 1995). The existential predicate is not spelled out in syntax, but only figures in the semantic representation. Thus, the apparently problematic cases turn out to satisfy the following conditions on *ne*-cl: (i) there is a state in the semantic representation of the predicate (*ne* realises its second or only argument) and (ii) a quantifier contrasts with a coreferential topical NP (see Van Valin 1993a). Dialect evidence from Sardinian supports this hypothesis. My proposal is couched in the framework of Role and Reference Grammar (RRG), as expounded in Van Valin & LaPolla (1997). RRG simultaneously generates independent levels of representation, which are mapped according to linking rules. These levels need not be homogeneous, and hence there exists the possibility of mismatch between syntax and semantics.

My analysis of *ne*-cl is amenable to the semantic accounts of split intransitivity (see, among others, Perlmutter 1978; Van Valin 1990, 1993a; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995; Sorace 2000), and compatible with any theory of perfective auxiliary selection based on syntax-semantics mapping. In addition, my findings highlight the role of focus structure in unaccusativity phenomena, thus supporting claims by Lambrecht (1987, 1994, 2000), Van Valin (1993a) and Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995).

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The following abbreviations are used in the paper:

adj: adjective
ARG/arg: argument
CL/cl: clitic/cliticisation
F: feminine
FUT: future
INGR: INGRESSIVE (a symbol of punctual change)
lit.: literally
LS: Logical Structure (semantic representation)
M: masculine
*ne*-cl: *ne*-cliticisation
NUC: nucleus (syntactic locus of the predicate)
PL: plural
PoCS: Post-Core Slot
PRED/pred: predicate
PST: past
$Q_A$: agentive quale
QUANT: quantified
REFL: reflexive
RRG: Role and Reference Grammar
SG: singular
VV&LP: Van Valin & La Polla 1997



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The paper is structured as follows. The distribution of *ne*-cl in Italian is illustrated in section 2. In section 3 I introduce the theoretical framework of RRG. My analysis follows in sections 4–6. In section 7 I discuss *ne*-cl vis-à-vis the theory of split intransitivity. The conclusion follows in section 8.

## 2. *NE*-CL IN ITALIAN

The Italian partitive clitic *ne* 'of it/them' has received substantial attention since the formulation of the Unaccusative Hypothesis (see Perlmutter 1978). According to this hypothesis, intransitive verbs do not form a homogeneous class. Rather, they are split into two subclasses with distinct morphosyntax. These two subclasses are known as UNACCUSATIVE and UNERGATIVE. Unlike the subject of the latter type of verb, the subject of the former patterns with the direct object of transitives in a number of constructions. *Ne*-cl is precisely one such case. Sentences with *ne* typically exhibit a quantifier (1a, b),[2] which modifies the direct object of a transitive verb or the only argument of an intransitive. If the quantified noun is overt, it occurs as a separate but coreferent argument, as in (1b).

(1) (a) **Ne** ho visti **molti**.
NE have-1SG seen-M.PL QUANTIFIER-M.PL
'(Of them) I have seen many.'
(b) **(Di) studenti**, **ne** ho visti molti.
of students NE have.1SG seen-M.PL QUANTIFIER-M.PL
'Of students, (of them) I have seen many.'

In (1a) *ne* is anaphoric, whilst in (1b) it is a resumptive pronoun. In both cases, *ne*-cl is obligatory and the quantifier modifies the direct object of transitive *vedere* 'see'. *Ne* can also realise the only argument of one subset of intransitive verbs (unaccusatives), as in (2a, b), whereas it is normally ungrammatical if referred to the argument of verbs belonging to the other subset (unergatives), exemplified in (3a, b)

(2) (a) Ne **arrivano** molti.
NE arrive-3PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many arrive.'
(b) (Di) studenti, ne **arrivano** molti.
of students NE arrive.3PL many-M.PL
'Of students, (of them) many arrive.'

[2] The focus of this work is on the use of *ne* in the domain of quantification. This includes a construction with an understood quantifier, which is discussed in section 4.1. The homonymous cognates of *ne* with different functions and distribution will not be analysed. I note that Cresti (2003) has independently argued that the various kinds of *ne* are oblique forms of *ci* 'there', and that this connection is semantic as well as morphological. Although Cresti's analysis is conducted on a different set of data, and from a different theoretical perspective, her results are compatible with the principal claim of this paper.



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(3) (a) *Ne **studiano** molti.
NE study-3PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many study.'
(b) *Di studenti, ne **studiano** molti.
of students NE study-3PL many-M.PL
'Of students, (of them) many study.'

The subset of intransitives which are exemplified in (2a, b) select the perfective auxiliary 'be' (see (4a)), unlike those represented in (3a, b) (see (4b)):

(4) (a) Ne **sono/ *hanno** arrivati molti.
NE be-3PL have-3PL arrived-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many have arrived.'
(b) Molti **hanno/ *sono** studiato.
many-M.PL have-3PL be-3PL studied
'Many have studied.'

The quantifier tends to occur in direct object position (see Burzio 1986):

(5) (a) Ne saranno invitati **molti**.
NE will-be-3PL invited-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many will be invited.'
(b) *?**Molti** ne saranno invitati.
many NE will-be-3PL invited-M.PL
'(Of them) many will be invited.'

Within a syntactic view of the unaccusative vs. unergative split, the data in (1)–(5) have been claimed to indicate that the argument realised by *ne* is an underlying object (see Belletti & Rizzi 1981; Burzio 1986; Perlmutter 1989).

In apparent contrast with the traditional view of *ne*, Lonzi (1986) has brought to light data which would seem to suggest that there is no one-to-one correspondence between 'be'-selection and *ne*-cl. Although the latter can be ungrammatical with 'have'-taking intransitives (see (3)), there are nonetheless instances of *ne*-cl of the argument of such verbs. At this point, I only give a literal translation of the relevant examples:

(6) (a) Ne **attecchirono** pochi (di bulbi).
NE take-root-3PL-PST few of bulbs
Lit. 'Of them took root few (of bulbs).'
(b) Ne **funzionano** solo due (di orologi).
NE function-3PL only two of watches
Lit. 'Of them function only two (of watches).'
(c) Ne **oscillano** regolarmente solo tre (di metronomi).
NE swing-3PL regularly only three of metronomes
Lit. 'Of them swing regularly only three (of metronomes).'
(d) Non ne **trilla** forte nessuna (di sveglie).
not NE ring-3SG loud none of alarm-clocks
Lit. 'Of them ring loud none (of alarm clocks).'



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(e) Ne **telefonano** di tifosi la domenica!
NE phone-3PL of supporters on Sunday
Lit. 'Of them phone (many) of supporters on Sundays!'
(f) Ne **corsero** tanti, di giovani.
NE run-3PL-PST many of young-people
Lit. 'Of them ran many (of young people)'
(g) Ne **starnutiscono** tanti, di bambini, qui.
NE sneeze-3PL many of children here
Lit. 'Of them sneeze many, of children, here.'
(h) Ne **cammina** tanta, di gente, su quei marciapiedi.
NE walk-3SG much of people on those pavements
Lit. 'Of them walk a lot (of people), on those pavements.'
(Lonzi 1986: 112)

The uses of *ne* illustrated in (6) are unexpected under the traditional view of *ne*-cl, in that the verbs which figure in these examples take 'have' as their perfective auxiliary.[3] In the light of these data, Lonzi proposes that *ne*-cl is associated with a kind of information structure called EVENTIVE, which rules out the agentive reading of the predicate, and which has the informative value of change and novelty. The subject of these sentences is 'the object of a material movement' (1986: 106), and is realised syntactically as an internal argument to which nominative case is assigned. Lonzi further points out that *ne*-cl with unergatives should be favoured by typical associations between events and arguments (*oscillare* ~ *metronomi* 'swing ~ metronomes', *trillare* ~ *sveglie* 'ring ~ alarm-clocks'), since in such cases the emphasis is not on the participant (or doer), but rather on the event in itself. Observe that *ne* tends to be resumptive rather than anaphoric in the type in (6), regardless of the possible mutual predictability between predicate and argument.

In Lonzi's view, the perfective counterparts of the sentences in (6) are unacceptable. In fact, native-speaker judgements on these sentences vary considerably, a point to which I return in section 5.4:

(7) (a) *?Ne **hanno** **attecchito** pochi (di bulbi).
NE have-3PL taken-root few of bulbs
Lit. 'Of them have taken root few (of bulbs).'
(b) *?Ne **hanno** **funzionato** solo due (di orologi).
NE have-3PL functioned only two of watches
Lit. 'Of them have functioned only two (of watches).'
[…]

[3] An exception in this sense is *attecchire* 'take root' (see (6a)), which is also accepted with 'be' by some native speakers, although it is said to require 'have' (Sabatini & Coletti 1997: 208). The behaviour of *attecchire* can be explained in terms of Sorace's (2000) Auxiliary Selection Hierarchy, according to which the unaccusative vs. unergative split should be broken down into finer semantically-determined distinctions. In Sorace's terms, *attecchire* 'take root' is weakly unergative, in that it denotes a non-agentive process, and this explains its acceptability with 'be'. I return to this point below.



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(h) *?Ne **ha** **camminato** tanta, di gente, su quei marciapiedi.
NE have-3SG walked much of people on those pavements
Lit. 'Of them have walked a lot, of people, on those pavements.'

Other uses of *ne* which, at first sight, do not combine with the traditional view of split intransitivity have been brought to light by Cinque (1990). Cinque has argued that the argument of a subclass of adjectival predicates patterns with the object of transitives, as is indicated by *ne*-cl in (8a), whereas the argument of other adjectival predicates does not (see (8b)).

(8) (a) Ne sono **note** solo alcune (delle sue poesie).
NE be-3PL well-known-F.PL only some-F.PL of-the his poems-F.PL
'(Of them) only some are well-known (of his poems).'
(b) *Ne sono **buoni** pochi (dei suoi articoli).
NE be-3PL good-M.PL few-M.PL of-the his articles-M.PL
'(Of them) few are good (of his articles).'

(Cinque 1990: 7)

The contrast between the type in (8a) and the one in (8b) is hard to reconcile either with the assumption that adjectives require unergative syntax (see Burzio 1986: 31, 74; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1986) or with the opposite view that adjectives are consistently unaccusative (see La Fauci 2000). On the other hand, according to Cinque, adjectives related to passives do not test out as unaccusative themselves:[4]

(9) *?Ne sono **spezzati** due (di rami), purtroppo.
NE be-3PL broken-M.PL two of branches-M.PL unfortunately
Lit. 'Of them are broken two (of branches), unfortunately.'

This is unexpected under the assumption that related verbs, nouns and adjectives have unique theta-marking and selectional properties (see Chomsky's 1970 Lexicalist Hypothesis). On the basis of data like (8)–(9), Cinque argues for a split between unaccusative and unergative adjectives. *Ne*-cl of the argument of adjectives like *noto* 'well-known' (see (8a)) indicates that it is generated in the object position of the adjectival phrase. On the other hand, adjectives like *buono* 'good', which do not allow *ne*-cl (see (8b)),

[4] Although it has long been known that passive participles have adjectival properties, there is no agreement on the relation between adjectival and passive participles. For our present purposes, we can consider the passive participles which occur in attributive constructions (see (9)) to be bivalent stative predicates, comparable with a class of adjectival predicates (see section 6). It should be noted that RRG differentiates between word classes such as 'adjective' and 'verb' in terms of their morphosyntactic properties (for instance, how they are inflected). However, morphosyntactically-defined parts of speech are distinguished from semantically-defined categories such as 'predicate' and 'argument'. Thus, adjectives and past participles alike can be predicates in the semantic representation, and map to the locus of the predicate in syntax. The alignment of the mentioned morphosyntactically-defined and semantic categories is taken to be language specific, albeit subject to default tendencies (for instance, the morphosyntactic verb might align universally as predicate).



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are considered to be unergative. The incompatibility of *ne*-cl with adjectives related to passives is ascribed by Cinque to facets of the derivational process of the adjectival forms from a morphologically-derived verbal form (the past participle).

Other facts regarding *ne*-cl with adjectival predicates should be mentioned. To begin with, perfective aspect and punctual past tense favour *ne*-cl in the passive:[5]

(10) (a) Ne **sono** **stati** **spezzati** molti.
NE be-3PL been-M.PL broken-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many have been broken.'
(b) Ne **furono** **spezzati** molti.
NE be-3PL-PST broken-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many were broken.'
(c) *?Ne **sono** **spezzati** molti.
NE be-3PL broken-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many are broken.'

The adjective *buono* 'good', which is classified as unergative by Cinque, can denote an inherent property or a contingent state. In the present tense the former reading is conveyed by the copula *essere* 'be', the latter by *stare* 'stay' (see *stare buono* 'behave'). Perfective aspect disallows the former reading.[6] Notably, *ne*-cl is accepted in the perfect (11c), whilst it is very problematic in the present tense with *stare* (11b) and it is ruled out in the present with *essere* (11a).

(11) (a) *Ne **sono** buoni molti.
NE be-3PL good-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many are good.'
(b) *?Ne **stanno** buoni molti.
NE stay-3PL good-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many are being good (are behaving).'
(c) (?)Ne **sono** **stati** buoni molti.
NE be-3PL been-M.PL good-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many have been good.'

Admittedly, the data in (11a–c) are not assigned binary acceptability judgements by native speakers, but rather a range of gradient judgements. However, native informants agree on the scale of acceptability illustrated in (11a–c). Adjectives which behave like *buono* 'good' in the relevant respects are: *fermo* 'still', *tranquillo* 'tranquil', *calmo* 'calm', *attento* 'careful' (*stare attento* means 'pay attention'). The facts in (11a–c) are unexpected on the

[5] For brevity in the remainder of this work I focus on the perfect. The role of the punctual past in *ne*-cl is analogous to that of the perfect, thus contrasting with the imperfective past.

[6] Observe that *stato* (see (10a), (11c)) is the past participle of both *essere* and *stare*.



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hypothesis that adjectives like *buono* 'good' are unergative (see also the claim by Baker (2003: 65f.) that the argument of this class of adjectives is generated outside the adjectival phrase, in the specifier of PredP). As for the view that adjectives constitute unaccusative predicates, La Fauci (1988: 109, fn. 6) notes in passing that unaccusativity might be related to aspect, but does not provide a fully-fledged analysis of adjectival behaviour.

A second class of adjectives do not take the copula *stare* 'stay', and do not allow the contingent-state reading in the present tense. In the perfect, however, the only possible reading is the contingent-state one: *onesto* 'honest', *affettuoso* 'affectionate', *altruista* 'altruistic', *caro* 'affectionate'. *Ne*-cl is only acceptable in the perfect:

(12) (a) *Ne **sono** onesti molti.
NE be-3PL honest-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many are honest.'
(b) (?)Ne **sono** **stati** onesti molti.
NE be-3PL been-M.PL honest-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many have been honest.'

Finally, there are adjectives which do not allow a contingent-state reading and do not normally occur in the perfect. Some of these adjectives allow *ne*-cl in the present (and these constitute the class regarded by Cinque as unaccusative, e.g. *noto* 'well-known'), others do not (e.g. *bianco* 'white'):

(13) (a) Ne **sono** noti solo due.
NE be-3PL well-known-M.PL only two
(see *Sono stati noti.)
be-3PL been-M.PL well-known-M.PL
'(Of them) only two are well-known.'
(b) *Ne **sono** bianchi solo due.
NE be-3PL white-M.PL only two
(see *Sono stati bianchi.)
be-3PL been-M.PL white-M.PL
'(Of them) only two are white.'

The facts illustrated in (11)–(13) are outlined in table 1.

| class | *stare* + adj | *ne*-cl present | perfect | *ne*-cl perfect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (i) *noto* 'well-known' | – | + | – | N/A |
| (ii) *buono* 'good' | + | *?*stare* | + | + |
| (iii) *onesto* 'honest' | – | – | + | + |
| (iv) *bianco* 'white' | – | – | – | N/A |

*Table 1*
Classes of adjectives and *ne*-cl



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The contingent-state reading is not a decisive factor in *ne*-cl with adjectives, as is indicated by the behaviour of class (i), and by the fact that *ne*-cl with *stare* 'stay' is problematic in the present (see class (ii)). In the remainder of this paper, I account for the various facets of *ne*-cl in terms of the mapping between discourse, semantic representation, and syntax (see Van Valin & LaPolla 1997, henceforth VV&LP).

## 3. Role and Reference Grammar

In this section, I provide a brief introduction to the aspects of RRG which are relevant to the analysis carried out in the present paper. RRG is a non-derivational model of linguistic analysis. Instead of building grammatical representations serially via derivational steps, it simultaneously generates separate levels of representation – discourse, semantics, syntax, among others – which are mapped on the basis of linking rules. There is a universal condition on semantics-syntax mapping, the Completeness Constraint: all of the arguments explicitly specified in the semantic representation are realised syntactically in the sentence, and all of the referring expressions in the syntactic representation are linked to an argument position in semantic representation (see VV&LP: 325). The mapping is not deterministic, in that none of the levels mentioned is derived from the others. The only directionality assumed in RRG is from syntax to semantics, in language comprehension, and from semantics to syntax, in language production. Given that the various levels of representation are not generated transformationally, they need not be homogeneous, and hence RRG can easily capture cases of mismatch between syntax and semantics.[7] One such case will be discussed in this paper.

The building blocks of clause structure, or the Layered Structure of the Clause, are derived from the universal distinction between predicating and non-predicating elements. The syntactic locus of the predication is called the nucleus. Among non-predicating elements, those that are part of the semantic representation of the predicate (or Logical Structure, henceforth LS) are distinguished from those that are not (see VV&LP: 25). LS arguments and adpositions are in the syntactic core of the clause, whilst non-predicating elements that do not appear in the LS of the predicate are in the periphery. Other positions outside the core and the periphery are not universal, and consideration of language-specific questions of linear order is necessary to determine them. These positions can have discourse-related value. One such case is the PreCore Slot,

[7] See Bresnan's (2001: 90ff.) discussion of the possible reasons for and implications of the lack of homogeneity between constituent structure and functional structure, from the point of view of Lexical Functional Grammar.



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where *wh*-elements and left-dislocated arguments appear in Italian. Right-dislocated elements can appear in the POST-CORE SLOT. For each language, there is a set of syntactic templates, which represent the possible syntactic structures of that language and can be combined with each other to form more complex structures. The syntactic structure of the sentence is represented in the CONSTITUENT PROJECTION, whereas there is a separate projection, which mirrors the syntactic one, and indicates the scope of OPERATORS. These are grammatical categories that neither predicate nor refer, but rather modify the clause and its parts in a number of ways. Examples of operators are tense and aspect markers. The model of the structure of the clause is carried over to the structure of NPs, which will not be discussed here.

The RRG classification of predicates is based on Vendler's (1967) Aktionsart types: states, activities, achievements and accomplishments (see also Dowty 1979):

(14) (a) State: **predicate**′ (x) or (x, y)[8]
(b) Activity: **do**′ (x, [**predicate**′ (x) or (x, y)])
(c) Achievement: INGR **predicate**′ (x) or (x, y)
(d) Accomplishment: BECOME **predicate**′ (x) or (x, y)

Activities are all marked with the generalised activity marker **do**′ (x, y), which denotes membership in the class. If the **predicate**′ position is not filled by an activity predicate, then it is filled with Ø (see (15b) below). Achievements and accomplishments include resultant states. Examples are **exploded**′ in INGR **exploded**′ (x), which is the LS of the achievement 'explode', and **melted**′ in BECOME **melted**′ (x), which is the LS of the accomplishment 'melt'. INGR is a symbol of punctual change, whereas BECOME encodes change over a time span. The above LS types have causative counterparts, which exhibit the symbol CAUSE, linking two LSs:

(15) (a) The sun melted the snow.
(b) [**do**′ (sun, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **melted**′ (snow)]

The example in (15) is a causative accomplishment: an activity predicate is causally linked to a resultant state. The type of activity is left unspecified, and hence the symbol Ø. Predicates of directed motion and of creation or consumption are analysed as accomplishments derived from activities, that is, active accomplishments. Below are the LSs of 'run home' (16a), 'write a poem' (16b) and 'drink a beer' (16c).

[8] The following conventions apply to the semantic representation (LS) of sentences. Predicates are indicated in bold. In addition, only arguments are given in the language under investigation, whilst the rest of the representation is in English.



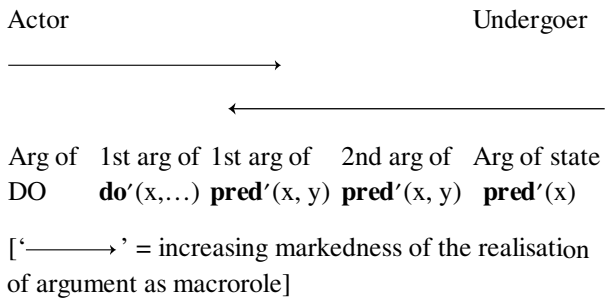
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(16) (a) **do**′ (x, [**run**′ (x)]) & BECOME **be-at**′ (home, x)
(b) **do**′ (x, [**write**′ (x, poem)]) & BECOME **exist**′ (poem)
(c) **do**′ (x, [**drink**′ (x, beer)]) & BECOME **consumed**′ (beer)

Each of the LSs in (16a–c) consists of an activity LS and a resultant state LS, and the link between the two LSs is not causal. Predicates are classified on the basis of distributional tests (see Dowty 1979: 60, VV&LP: 94). The following ones are relevant to our discussion. The temporal expressions 'for an hour' and 'in an hour' test whether a predicate is telic. Accordingly, they distinguish between accomplishments, which are [−punctual, +telic] and go with the latter temporal expression ('in an hour'), and activities, which lack an endpoint and go with the former. An alternative to 'for an hour' is 'spend an hour Xing'.

RRG postulates two tiers of thematic relations. Thematic relations of the first tier are a function of the class to which predicates belong. In particular, they are defined in terms of argument positions in LS (see Jackendoff 1976). To give but one example, locatives like 'the book is on the table' have two arguments, which can simply be referred to as 1st argument of pred′ (x, y) and 2nd argument of pred′ (x, y) (see (14a)). Thematic relations of the first tier are mapped onto a second tier, which consists of the MACROROLES ACTOR and UNDERGOER. This second tier is needed because groups of thematic relations (of the first tier) are treated alike in morphosyntactic terms. The ACTOR-UNDERGOER HIERARCHY captures the relation between the two tiers of thematic relations (see VV&LP: 146):

(17) Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy




The ordering of the thematic relations of the first tier (the lower one) shows the degree of likelihood of their realisation as actor or undergoer of the clause. The macrorole actor correlates with the highest-ranking thematic relation in the predicate of the clause, whilst undergoer correlates with the lowest one. In languages with accusative-nominative syntactic alignment (e.g. Italian and English), the only or highest-ranking macrorole, for instance the actor of transitives, is the default controller of verbal agreement. In



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the passive voice, the default agreement pattern is reversed: the undergoer controls agreement and maps to the syntactic core, whilst the actor figures optionally as a peripheral adjunct.

A further level of analysis concerns discourse. Below we will be concerned with FOCUS STRUCTURE (see Lambrecht 1994: 221–226), i.e. the organisation of old and new elements of information within the proposition. Focus structure is represented in a separate projection called SPEECH ACT or FOCUS-STRUCTURE PROJECTION.

To conclude, a brief note on the treatment of split intransitivity in RRG is in order. Van Valin (1990) claimed that there are two kinds of semantic criteria responsible for the crosslinguistic distinction between classes of intransitives. There are languages in which the decisive factor is agentivity (e.g. Acehnese) and languages where the split principally depends on Aktionsart (e.g. Italian). In this context we are primarily concerned with the latter case. The predicates which are normally referred to as unaccusatives are states, achievements and accomplishments. Thus, they all have a state in LS.

## 4. *NE*-CL WITH TRANSITIVES AND 'BE'-SELECTING INTRANSITIVES

### 4.1 *Focus structure*

I adopt Van Valin's (1993a) account of *ne*-cl as a working hypothesis. On Van Valin's analysis, there are two principal conditions on *ne*-cl. First, *ne* realises a topical noun with a focal quantifier. Secondly, *ne*-cl is only available for arguments of state predicates. Let us start with the first condition. This condition explains the contrast in (18).

(18) (a) (*Ne) sono arrivati **molti** **studenti**.
NE be-3PL arrived-M.PL many-M.PL students-M.PL
'Many students have arrived.'

(b) *(Ne) sono arrivati **molti,** **di** **studenti**.
NE be-3PL arrived-M.PL many-M.PL of students-M.PL
'(Of them), many have arrived, of students.'

In (18a) the quantified NP *molti studenti* 'many students' is focal; *ne*-cl is not licensed in this sentence. In (18b) the quantifier 'many' is the focus and the noun is topical;[9] here *ne*-cl is obligatory.

The first condition also captures the tendency for the quantifier to occur postverbally in sentences with *ne* (see Burzio 1986), since the postverbal position is the default position of core-internal focal arguments in Italian

[9] In particular, the noun is part of the PRESUPPOSITION. This is 'the set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence' (Lambrecht 1994: 52). Topical elements of information, which are part of the presupposition, contrast with focal ones, which are not.



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(see Benincà 1988; Van Valin 1993a). To be sure, the occurrence of a focal quantifier in initial position is not ungrammatical (see Lepschy 1989), in which case it occurs in the PreCore Slot:[10]

(19) (a) MOLTI ne ho visti, (non pochi).
many-M.PL NE have-1SG seen-M.PL not few-M.PL
'(Of them) I have seen many, (not few).'

(b) Mah, io penso che questi libri che spedisci quasi tutti
but I think that these books that send-2SG nearly all-M.PL
andranno persi. Ma no, vedrai che **MOLTI**
go-3PL-FUT lost-M.PL but no see-2 SG-FUT that many-M.PL
ne arriveranno.
NE arrive-3PL-FUT
'Well, I think that of these books which you send nearly all will be lost in the end … On the contrary, you will see that many (of them) will arrive.' (Lepschy 1989: 430)

The sentences in (19) involve contrastive focus: a focal quantifier is contrasted with another quantifier, which is part of the presupposition (see fn. 9), as well as with the coreferring noun. Contrastive focus is also possible with a postverbal quantifier (*Ne ho visti MOLTI, non pochi* '(Of them) I have seen many, not few').

Further analysis of the focus structure of sentences with *ne*-cl indicates that these normally represent NARROW FOCUS or SENTENCE FOCUS, but not PREDICATE FOCUS (see Lambrecht 1994, 2000):[11]

(20) (a) CHE FANNO molti/ gli studenti? *Ne arrivano molti.
what do-3PL many the students-M.PL NE arrive-3PL many-M.PL
'What do many/the students do? (Of them) many arrive.'

(b) QUANTI ne arrivano? Ne arrivano MOLTI.
how-many NE arrive-3PL NE arrive-3PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) how many arrive? (Of them) many arrive.'

(c) NE ARRIVANO MOLTI, DI STUDENTI, IN QUEST' AULA!
NE arrive-3PL many-M.PL of students-M.PL in this classroom
'Of students, many (of them) arrive in this classroom.'

[10] Furthermore, sentences with *ne*-cl can exhibit a focal argument other than the quantifier: *Ne ho letti molti di QUESTI, non di QUELLI* 'I read many of these, not of those' (Cardinaletti & Giusti 1992: 132). Here two pairs of arguments are contrasted in terms of their informational weight. On the one hand, the quantifier 'many' is contrasted with a topical argument (e.g. 'books'). On the other hand, two subparts of this argument are contrasted ('these' vs. 'those'). If the object and its quantifier did not contrast in terms of their informational weight, there would be no *ne*-cl (*Ho letto molti di QUESTI libri, ma non di QUELLI* 'I have read many of THESE books, but not of THOSE'). I indicate focal elements in small capitals.

[11] Narrow focus (VV&LP: 208f.) involves focus on one single constituent. In this paper, I only consider cases of narrow focus on the argument, comparable with Lambrecht's ARGUMENT FOCUS.



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The question in (20a) represents predicate focus, in that the topical individual denoted by the argument is contrasted with the predicate, which is the new element of information requested. *Ne*-cl is infelicitous in the predicate-focus reply to this question. Contrastingly, *ne*-cl is allowed in (20b), which constitutes an open proposition with a variable to be filled by the quantifier (narrow focus). *Ne*-cl is also licensed in (20c), where both the predicate and the quantifier contribute new information (sentence focus). The quantifier is focal both in narrow focus and in sentence focus. In the latter case, a new referent is introduced into discourse.

So far, it has been pointed out that *ne*-cl tends to occur in narrow focus and sentence focus, and that it involves a contrast between a focal quantifier and a coreferring topical noun. A possible problem for this view is the case of constructions with partitive *ne* which lack an overt quantifier. Examples are given in (21).

(21) (a) Paolo ne ha mangiate, di caramelle!
Paul NE have-3SG eaten-F.PL of sweets-F.PL
'(Of them) Paul has eaten a lot, of sweets!'
(b) Di soldati, ne muoiono in guerra!
of soldiers NE die-3PL in war
'Of soldiers, many (of them) die in battle!'
(c) Di libri, Maria ne compra.
of books Maria NE buy-3SG
'Of books, Maria buys some (of them).'

These sentences can be said to involve an understood quantifier. In (21a, b) there is rising intonation on the verb, and the understood quantifier is 'a lot, many'. The example in (21c) contrasts with the ones in (21a, b), in that it does not exhibit the rising intonation of exclamatory clauses. Here the understood quantifier is 'some' (not 'few', or 'many'). Evidence from passivisation supports this analysis of (21c):

(22) (a) Di libri, ne **vengono comprati** da Maria.
of books-M.PL NE come-3PL bought-M.PL by Mary
'Of books, some (of them) are bought by Mary.'
(b) **Alcuni libri** vengono comprati da Maria.
some-M.PL books-M.PL come-3PL bought-M.PL by Mary
'Some books are bought by Mary.'
(c) ***Libri** vengono comprati da Maria.
books-M.PL come-3PL bought-M.PL by Mary
'Books are bought by Mary.'

The inherent argument of activity predicates (e.g. *comprare libri* 'to buy books', *mangiare pasta* 'to eat pasta') cannot be passivised, as is shown in (22c). By contrast, quantified objects can be passivised (see (22b)).



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Passivisation in (22a) suggests that this structure corresponds to (22b) and not to (22c).

Whether the understood quantifier of structures such as (21a–c) can be said to be focal is a moot point. However, the above data indicate that the obligatoriness of *ne* hinges on the focus-structure contrast between a noun and a quantifier. I propose that *ne* realises a topical NP which contrasts with a coreferent quantifier that is either focal or implied. This proposal captures the cases in (21), as well as the structures with *ne* and an overt quantifier, and takes into account the findings of work by Cinque (1991) and Cardinaletti & Giusti (1992), which indicate that *ne* does not simply realise the head of an NP, but it can also realise its complements:

(23) Ho visto un programma di Piero Angela sui dinosauri
have-1SG seen a programme by Piero Angela on-the dinosaurs
e anche lei ne ha visto uno.
and also she NE have-3SG seen one
'I have seen a programme by Piero Angela on dinosaurs and she has seen one (of them), too (=a programme by Piero Angela on dinosaurs).'

## 4.2 *Logical Structure*

Let us now turn to Van Valin's second condition, according to which *ne*-cl is only available for arguments of state predicates. More precisely, the NP realised by *ne* is the lowest-ranking argument (in terms of the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy) of the state predicate in LS (see Van Valin 1993a: 95). *Ne* can thus realise the following kinds of argument: direct object of transitive states, achievements and accomplishments ((24a) is a transitive state, (24b) a transitive causative achievement, and (24c) a transitive active accomplishment); core argument of passives (24d); core argument of intransitive states (24e), achievements (24f), and accomplishments (24g); core argument of reflexives (24h); and, finally, core argument of existentials (24i):

(24) (a) Ne ho **visti** due.
NE have-1SG seen-M.PL two
'(Of them) I have seen two.'
(b) Ne ha **esplosi** due.
NE have-3SG exploded-M.PL two
'(Of them) s/he has blown up two.'
(c) Ne ho **mangiati** due.
NE have-1SG eaten-M.PL two
'(Of them) I have eaten two.'
(d) Ne sono **stati** **mangiati** due
NE be-3PL been-M.PL eaten-M.PL two
'(Of them) two have been eaten.'



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(e) Ne sono **esistiti** due.
NE be-3PL existed-M.PL two
'(Of them) two have existed.'

(f) Ne sono **esplosi** due.
NE be-3PL exploded-M.PL two
'(Of them) two have exploded.'

(g) Ne sono **morti** due.
NE be-3PL died-M.PL two
'(Of them) two have died.'

(h) **Se** ne sono **rotti** due.
REFL NE be-3PL broken-M.PL two
'(Of them) two broke.'

(i) **Ce** ne **sono** due.
CL NE be-3PL two
'(Of them) there are two.'

In the constructions shown in (24a–i) *ne*-cl affects the only argument or the lowest-ranking one of a state predicate. The predicates in (24a–c) are transitive. *Ne* realises the second argument of the state predicate **see**′ (x, y) of (24a), which is lower than the first one on the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy, and the only argument of the state predicates **exploded**′ (y) and **consumed**′ (y) which appear in the LSs of the causative achievement in (24b) ([**do**′ (x, Ø)] CAUSE [INGR **exploded**′ (y)]), and the active accomplishment in (24c) ([**do**′ (x, [**eat**′ (x, y)]) & BECOME **consumed**′ (y)]). The LS of (24d) corresponds to that of (24c). The fact that the syntactic role of the argument varies according to voice affects the LS-syntax mapping, but is irrelevant for our present purposes. The state predicate **exist**′ (x) of (24e) only has one argument. In (24f, g) *ne* realises the only argument of the state predicate of an intransitive achievement (INGR **exploded**′ (x)) and accomplishment (BECOME **dead**′ (x)), respectively. The argument which is realised by *ne* in the reflexive structure in (24h) is the only argument of the state predicate of a causative accomplishment ([**do**′ (Ø, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **broken**′ (y)]).[12] Lastly, the existential predicate in (24i) is a monovalent state, like the predicate of (24e).

[12] The symbol Ø appears twice in LS to indicate that both the effector and the manner of the action are not specified. For brevity I shall not provide a detailed discussion of reflexives. Observe that those reflexives which have a non-pronominal counterpart with coreferent actor and undergoer (see *Francesca si lava* vs. *Francesca lava se stessa* 'Frances washes herself') are hardly found in *ne*-cl. In RRG reflexive *si* is argued to mark the suppression of the highest-ranking argument. Thus, the only argument of pronominal reflexives is claimed to be an undergoer. At the same time, it has been noted that, since reflexives like *lavarsi* 'to wash oneself' require an animate argument, and formally differ from passives, a double interpretation of the available argument as actor and undergoer is triggered. This is the reflexive interpretation (VV&LP 411f.). The relative incompatibility of *ne*-cl with such reflexives might depend on this property. The same applies to reciprocals (see *abbracciarsi* 'to hug (each other)').



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Locative predicates are bivalent states (see (25a, b)), and thus we would expect *ne*-cl of their lowest-ranking argument to be grammatical. However, *ne*-cl of this argument is only grammatical if the sentence exhibits the clitic *ci*, or its allomorph *ce* (see (25c)):

(25) (a) I libri sono sul tavolo.
the books be-3PL on-the table
'The books are on the table.'
(b) **be-on**′ (tavolo, libri)
tavolo = 1st argument of pred′ (x, y)
libri = 2nd argument of pred′ (x, y)
(c) *(Ce) ne sono tanti sul tavolo.
CL NE be-3PL many on-the table
'(Of them) there are many on the table.'

This fact can be explained as follows. The locative structure illustrated in (25a) is a proposition about a topical entity (*i libri* 'the books'), and represents predicate focus. Note that (25a) replies to the question *DOVE sono i libri?* 'Where are the books?',[13] and that the prepositional phrase is in the default position of focal elements in Italian.[14] We saw above that *ne*-cl does not occur in predicate focus (see (20a)). The sentence- and narrow-focus counterparts of (25a) exhibit the clitic *ci* 'there', and the quantifier in the focal position. As well as (25c), consider *QUANTI* *(*ce*) *ne sono sul tavolo?* 'How many (of them) are there on the table?', with the argument in the focal position of *wh*-elements (the PreCore Slot). *Ci* is a marker of existentials in Italian, that is, stative predicates which introduce a new referent into discourse (see (24i)). It can thus be argued that, as a result of focus-structure constraints, the second argument of the locative LS must be embedded in an existential LS in order for *ne*-cl to take place. The resultant LS is: **exist**′ ([**be-on**′ (tavolo, tanti ne)]) ('There are many on the table').[15] An alternative reading of (25c) is an existential structure whereby the argument is modified by a relative clause. The LS of this structure would be represented as follows: **exist**′ ([**be**′ (tanti ne$_i$, [**be-on**′ (tavolo, tanti ne$_i$)])]) ('There are many which are on the table').

*Ne*-cl is ruled out with intransitive *si*-impersonals (e.g. *Si arriva* 'One arrives', *Si lavora* 'One works'). Since these are intransitive impersonals,

[13] The word order in (25a) is acceptable as a reply to the question *CHE COSA c'è sul tavolo?* 'WHAT is there on the table?', with stress on the NP *i libri* 'the books' and an intonational break following it: *I LIBRI,* (*ci*) *sono sul tavolo*, lit. 'The books, (there) are on the table'.

[14] In RRG the prepositional phrase of locative predicates is standardly taken to map onto the syntactic locus of the predicate, since it has predicative function (see fn. 4).

[15] The underlining indicates that *tanti ne*, rather than the entire embedded LS, is the argument of the existential predicate (VV&LP: 591).



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there is no argument to be topical or quantified. Accordingly, there is no *ne*-cl. Finally, activity predicates are not normally found with *ne*-cl:

(26) *Ne lavorano due.
NE work-3PL two
'(Of them) two work.'

Within the approach taken in this paper, the ungrammaticality of (26) follows from the lack of a state predicate in the activity LS (see (14b)).

So far we have seen that *ne*-cl is allowed with transitive and intransitive states, and achievements or accomplishments, and ruled out with activities, in agreement with Van Valin's (1993a) analysis. The intransitive structures with *ne* analysed so far require the perfective auxiliary 'be'. Let us now move on to an analysis of the data introduced in (6), which at first glance would appear to be problematic. In fact, the sentences in (6) exhibit activity predicates, and these do not have a state in LS (see (26)).

## 5. *NE*-CL WITH 'HAVE'-SELECTING PREDICATES: A RED HERRING

### 5.1 *Focus structure*

For ease of exposition, I repeat hereafter the sentences with *ne*-cl and 'have'-selecting intransitives:

(27) (a) Ne **attecchirono** pochi (di bulbi). (see (6a))
NE take-root-3PL-PST few of bulbs
Lit. 'Of them took root few (of bulbs).'
(b) Ne **funzionano** solo due (di orologi). (see (6b))
NE function-3PL only two of watches
Lit. 'Of them function only two (of watches).'
(c) Ne **oscillano** regolarmente solo tre (di metronomi). (see (6c))
NE swing-3PL regularly only three of metronomes
Lit. 'Of them swing regularly only three (of metronomes).'
(d) Non ne **trilla** forte nessuna (di sveglie). (see (6d))
not NE ring-3SG loud none of alarm-clocks
Lit. 'Of them ring loud none (of alarm clocks).'
(e) Ne **telefonano** di tifosi la domenica! (see (6e))
NE phone-3PL of supporters on Sunday
Lit. 'Of them phone (many) of supporters on Sundays!'
(f) Ne **corsero** tanti, di giovani. (see (6f))
NE run-3PL-PST many of young-people
Lit. 'Of them ran many (of young people).'
(g) Ne **starnutiscono** tanti, di bambini, qui. (see (6g))
NE sneeze-3PL many of children here
Lit. 'Of them sneeze many, of children, here.'



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(h) Ne **cammina** tanta, di gente, su quei marciapiedi. (see (6h))
NE walk-3SG much of people on those pavements
Lit. 'Of them walk a lot (of people), on those pavements.'
(Lonzi 1986: 112)

Recall that, on Lonzi's hypothesis, these sentences have the value of change and novelty. In Lambrecht's (2000) terms, they should, thus, represent sentence focus. This assumption is borne out by distributional evidence (for brevity I confine the analysis to (27e, h)):

(28) (a) CHE FANNO tanti tifosi?
what do-3PL many supporters
*Ne telefonano di tifosi la domenica!
NE phone-3PL of supporters on Sunday
'What do many supporters do?' 'Of them phone (many) of supporters on Sundays.'
(b) CHE FA tanta gente? *Ne cammina tanta di gente su …
what do-3SG much people NE walk-3SG much of people on …
'What do many people do?' 'Of them walk a lot (of people), on those pavements.'

The data in (28a, b) indicate that Lonzi's constructions are incompatible with the contrast between a presupposed argument and a focal predicate. Accordingly, predicate focus is ruled out. The sentences in (27) also appear to be infelicitous in narrow focus, for instance, in the interrogative structure in (29a) and the reply in (29b).

(29) (a) QUANTI (di loro)/(*ne) camminano?
how-many of them NE walk-3PL
'How many (of them) walk?'
(b) *Ne camminano tanti – Camminano TANTI DI LORO.
NE walk-3PL many – walk-3PL many of them
'Of them many walk.'

Partitivity can be marked overtly by *di loro* 'of them' in (29a, b), not by *ne*. This indicates that 'have'-selecting predicates are not easily combined with *ne*-cl in narrow focus. The tendency for the topical noun to be overt, and hence for *ne* to be resumptive, in (27) (section 2) is also an indication that sentence focus is preferred to narrow focus.

According to Lonzi (1986: 113), *ne*-cl with both 'be'- and 'have'-selecting intransitives is restricted to eventive discourse contexts, in our terms, sentence focus. This assumption, however, is not supported by the evidence. *Ne*-cl of the argument of 'be'-selecting intransitives is required in narrow



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focus, (30a, b), as well as sentence focus, when a noun or NP contrasts with a coreferent quantifier:

(30) (a) QUANTI *(ne) muoiono / nascono / arrivano?
how-many NE die-3PL be-born-3PL arrive-3PL?
'How many (of them) die/are born/arrive?'
(b) *(Ne) muoiono/nascono / arrivano TANTI.
NE die-3PL be-born-3PL arrive-3PL many
'(Of them) many die/are born/arrive.'

In addition, *ne* can equally be anaphoric or resumptive in sentences with 'be'-selecting predicates. These facts indicate that *ne*-cl of the argument of 'be'-selecting predicates occurs freely in sentence focus and narrow focus. By contrast, *ne*-cl of the argument of 'have'-selecting predicates can occur in sentence focus, but is problematic in narrow focus. It is precisely this kind of contrast that engendered the stream of research based on Burzio's (1986) and Perlmutter's (1989) well-known work.

### 5.2 *Logical Structure*

If we apply the standard Aktionsart tests (see section 3), the predicates of (27e–h) do not test out as activities (31), unlike other structures with the same verbs (32).[16] I shall begin with (27h):

(31) (a) *Ne **passa** **un'ora** tanta di gente **a** **camminare** su …!
NE spend-3SG an hour much of people to walk on
'Many people spend an hour walking on those pavements.'
(a′) *?Ne cammina tanta di gente **per un ora** su quei
NE walk-3SG much of people for an hour on those
marciapiedi!
pavements
'Many people walk for an hour on those pavements.'

[16] I return to (27b–d) below. As for (27a), *attecchire* 'take root' never tests out as an activity. The reason why this case is hard to reconcile with the traditional view of *ne*-cl is that *attecchire* is said to require perfective 'have' (see fn. 3). If anything is theoretically challenging, it is perfective auxiliary selection, not the fact that the argument of *attecchire* can be realised by *ne*. Interestingly, there is synchronic variation, with some speakers preferring 'be' to 'have' with this verb. It is well-known that, in the Romance languages, diachronic change has resulted in the shrinking of the class of intransitives selecting 'be'. This can be seen in the synchronic comparison of the domains of perfective 'be' in Italian, European French, and Canadian French (see Vincent 1982). The retrenchment of 'be' has affected certain classes of intransitives before others, as predicted by Sorace's (2000) Auxiliary Selection Hierarchy. Interestingly, there is a great deal of evidence suggesting that the phenomenon has occurred in a consistent way cross-linguistically (see Benzing 1931 for Old Spanish, Gougenheim 1951 for Old French, La Fauci 1992 and Cennamo 2001 for Italo-Romance). It might be the case that structures with *attecchire* required 'be' at a previous diachronic stage, although I know of no relevant evidence. Since *attecchire* is an accomplishment, *ne*-cl in (27a) is not exceptional, and I shall not discuss this case any further.



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(b) Ne cammina tanta di gente **in un'ora** su quei marciapiedi!
NE walk-3SG much of people in an hour on those pavements
Lit. 'Many people walk in an hour on those pavements.'

(32) (a) Tanta gente cammina **per un ora / passa un'ora**
much people walk-3SG for an hour spend-3SG an hour
**a camminare** su quei marciapiedi.
to walk on those pavements
'Many people walk for an hour/spend an hour walking on those pavements.'

(b) *Tanta gente cammina **in un'ora** su quei marciapiedi.
much people walk-3SG in an hour on those pavements
Lit. 'Many people walk in an hour on those pavements.'

*Camminare* 'walk' usually tests out as an activity predicate, as shown by its compatibility with 'for an hour' and 'spend an hour Xing' (see (32a)) and its incompatibility with 'in an hour' (see (32b)). However, (27h) yields contradictory results (see (31)), and is more acceptable with 'in an hour' than with 'for an hour'. A possible reason for the clear-cut contrast between (31) and (32) could be that the sentences in (31a, a′) violate the informational-lightness requirement on sentence focus. Sentence focus constructions involve presentational predicates or 'intransitive verbs expressing appearance or disappearance of some referent in the internal or external discourse setting' (Van Valin 1993a: 97, see Lambrecht 1987: 373). Accordingly, sentence focus constructions are informationally light (see Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995). Although this solution is plausible, there are reasons to believe that it is not exhaustive. In fact, it does not capture the contrast between (31a, a′) and (31b). In addition, a sentence-focus construction with 'be'-selecting *arrivare* 'arrive' takes the appropriate Aktionsart marker:

(33) Ne arriva tanta di gente **in un'ora**!
NE arrive-3SG much of people in an hour
'(Of them) many arrive, of people, in an hour.'

These facts suggest that the contrast in (31a–b) cannot be reduced purely to the informational-lightness requirement.

An interesting feature of (27g, h) is that the locational phrase is not optional (see **Ne cammina tanta, di gente* '(Of them) many walk, of people'). In addition, the sentence in (27e) would normally be construed with an implicit deictic argument ('Many customers phone HERE on Sundays'), in accordance with a property of a number of constructions with a postverbal subject in Italian (see Benincà 1988: 124f.). In this light, Saccon (1992) has proposed that *ne*-cl requires a locational argument, which need not be overt. This hypothesis is problematic for a number of reasons. First, it does not capture the contrast between the cases in (27g, h), where the locational



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phrase cannot be omitted, and those among Lonzi's sentences which exhibit no overt deictic (see (27e)) or need not be construed with a locational element (see (27b–d)). Saccon's hypothesis is also far-fetched vis-à-vis *ne*-cl with a number of state, achievement and accomplishment predicates (e.g. *esplodere* 'explode', *crescere* 'grow' and *partire* 'leave') which do not imply a locational argument.[17] Secondly, if one postulated a locative predicate instead of a covert locational argument, this would account for the infelicitous results with duration adverbials (see (31a, a′)). However, this analysis would not capture the grammaticality of such sentences with *in an hour*, since locatives are states, and states do not normally take this temporal expression.

I wish to put forward an alternative proposal. Lonzi's examples test out as sentence-focus constructions. Sentence focus has presentational function, and hence tends to exhibit predications which introduce a new referent into discourse. This is the case with existentials. Existentials are states and are normally ungrammatical with 'in an hour':

(34) Ce ne sono tanti (***in un'ora**).
CL NE be-3PL many in an hour
'(Of them) there are many (*in an hour).'

However, if the quantified argument of an existential predicate is modified by an activity, the predication can be construed as a finite series of events, and can be modified by 'in an hour':

(35) Ce ne sono tanti **che cantano in un'ora**.
CL NE be-3PL many who sing-3PL in an hour
'There are many, of them, who sing in an hour.'

The sentence in (35) denotes many singing events which take place in an hour (for example, in a show), and tests out as an accomplishment. It follows that if the quantified arguments of the sentences in (27) were part of an existential LS, and were further modified by an activity LS, we could expect both *ne*-cl and the compatibility with 'in an hour'. I argue that this is the correct analysis for the structures under scrutiny. I shall first explain the theoretical basis of this proposal, and then provide dialect evidence to support it.

In an influential paper of 1977, Carlson distinguished between INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL and STAGE-LEVEL predicates. The former predicate type denotes properties of individuals, as is the case with 'be intelligent', the latter denotes stages, as is the case with 'be sick'. Stage-level predicates are more related to

[17] See Benincà's (1988: 124f.) analysis of the grammaticality contrast between *arriva Mario* 'Mario arrives (here)' and ?*parte Mario* lit. 'leaves Mario', attributed to the presence vs. absence of a covert deictic element.



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events than they are to objects. Accordingly, 'dogs are running' (stage level) denotes a spatially- and temporally-bounded running event in which a particular set of individuals is involved. By contrast, 'dogs run' (individual level) denotes a property of a kind (dogs), and is not bounded in the sense mentioned. Pustejovsky (1995) has argued that the individual-level vs. stage-level opposition is related to the absence or presence of the mode of explanation which relates to the bringing about of objects, states or events, i.e. the agentive QUALE.[18] Stage-level predicates can thus receive an existential interpretation (see Carlson 1977: 446; Pustejovsky 1995: 226). The existential reading may be marked overtly by *there*, in *there*-existentials (see Milsark 1974; Diesing 1992: 16f.), or other markers of sentence focus. Alternatively, it can be conveyed by a prepositional adjunct, tense, or aspect.

The structures in (27) are sentence-focus presentational constructions which introduce into discourse quantified sets of entities, and predicate their behaviour. The events in question are bounded in a spatial sense (27e, g, h), or in a temporal sense (27e, f) (see below for (27b–d)). I propose that the predicates of these structures are stage-level existential predicates. In LS, the quantified NPs are arguments of a stative existential predicate, and are modified by an activity predicate, which is comparable with a relative clause. Below are appropriate translations:

(27) (b′) There are only two, of watches, that function.
(c′) There are only three, of metronomes, that swing regularly.
(d′) There are none, of alarm clocks, that ring loud.
(e′) There are many, of supporters, who phone on Sundays!
(f′) There are many, of young people, who ran.
(g′) There are many, of children, who sneeze here.
(h′) There are many, of people, who walk on those pavements.

In the case of spatially- and temporally-bounded stage-level predication (see (27e–h)), the predicate is construed as a finite series of events, comparable with an accomplishment (−punctual, +telic). Some activities are more easily construed in this way than others. This is the case with 'phone', which can be interpreted as an accomplishment ('make a phone call') and can have an intrinsic deictic value ('phone here'). By contrast, 'sneeze' and 'walk' turn out to be unacceptable in (27g, h), unless the eventive existential interpretation is conveyed by an overt locational phrase (for locational phrases in stage-level predication see Carlson 1977: 444f.). Finally, the stage-level existential reading is triggered by the past tense in (27f) (see **?Ne corrono*

[18] QUALIA structure represents four essential aspects of the meaning of a lexical item: the constituent parts of an object, its distinguishing features in a larger domain, purpose, and the factors involved in the origin of an object, a state, or an event. In RRG qualia structure is indicated in LS between {} (VV&LP: 184–186).



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*tanti, di giovani* '(Of them) many run, of young people'). I refer to Kratzer (1995: 155) for the role of the past tense in stage-level predication.

The structures in (27b–d) represent a slightly different case. They are not felicitous with the phrase 'in an hour', and this indicates that the predicate is not construed as a bounded series of events. However, on a par with the other sentences, they do not denote inherent properties of kinds, watches, metronomes and alarm clocks, but rather the behaviour of a particular set of such entities. Interestingly, *solo* 'only, alone' improves considerably the acceptability of (27b, c) (whilst it would obviously be ungrammatical in (27d), where the quantifier is 'none'). *Solo* is a FOCUSING SUBJUNCT, that is, an adverbial that draws attention to an element of the sentence and normally selects the new information provided by the utterance (see Quirk et al. 1985: 604; Wasow 2002: 65). In the sentences under scrutiny, *solo* selects a quantified set of entities which is being introduced in discourse. Since the sentences in (27b–d) introduce into discourse a bounded set of entities, and predicate their behaviour, it can be assumed that they receive a stage-level existential interpretation, and are appropriately translated as in (27b′–d′). This accounts for *ne*-cl.

The LSs of (27b–h) are similar, insofar as all of these structures predicate the existence of a quantified set, and the argument of the existential predicate is modified by an activity predicate. In addition, in (27e, g, h), the LS of the activity predicate is modified by a locational adjunct. As a result, the LS of (27e, g, h) (see (36b)) differs from the LS of (27b–d, f) (see (37b)), where there is no locational modifier:

(36) (a) Ne cammina tanta, di gente, su quei marciapiedi. (see (27h))
NE walk-3SG much of people on those pavements
'There are many, of people, who walk on those pavements.'
(b) **exist**′ ([**be**′ (tanta ne$_i$, [**be-on**′ (marciapiedi, [**do**′ (gente$_i$, [**walk**′ (gente$_i$)])])])]) $\{Q_A\}$

(37) (a) Ne corsero tanti, di giovani. (see (27f))
NE run-3PL-PST many of young-people
'There were many, of young people, who ran.'
(b) **exist**′ ([**be**′ (tanti ne$_i$, [**do**′ (giovani$_i$, [**run**′(giovani$_i$)])])]) $\{Q_A\}$

The only argument of the existential LS (**exist**′ (x)) is modified by an activity predicate, and is hence embedded in an attributive predication (**be**′ x, [**pred**′]). This is how the LS of relative clauses is standardly represented in RRG (see VV&LP: 591). *Ne* stands for the topical NP, and the quantifier is its operator (see VV&LP's (pp. 194f.) treatment of quantifiers as operators in the LS of NPs). Accordingly, the quantifier *tanta* 'many' shares the argument position of *ne*: *tanta ne* is the head of the embedded predication. The coreferent noun figures in a peripheral position in LS, that is, as the



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argument of the modifiers **walk**′ (36b) and **run**′ (37b).[19] The locational phrase of (27g, h) and the covert deictic element of (27e) are treated as the first argument of a locative LS (**be-on**′ (x, y) or **be-at**′ (x, y)), in accordance with the standard RRG treatment of adjunct prepositional phrases (see VV&LP: 159–163). The mapping of these LSs onto syntax is discussed in section 5.4.

Others have suggested that *ne*-cl has features of presentational constructions (see Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995). My analysis clarifies two points. First, activity predicates do not usually occur in sentence-focus structures, and the above account explains why they do so in (27b–h): in such cases, they are modifiers of the argument, not main predicates in LS. Secondly, we can advance a hypothesis on the information structure restrictions which apply to *ne*-cl of the argument of 'have'-taking intransitives but not to *ne*-cl of the argument of 'be'-taking ones. Narrow focus is not necessarily presentational, but rather has a wider range of functions. For instance, it can be part of constructions with a topic chain, where the topic need not be mentioned. We have seen that *ne* tends not to be anaphoric with 'have'-selecting predicates. In constructions which are not presentational, the existential reading may sometimes not arise, and this is the reason why *ne*-cl with 'have'-selecting predicates is problematic in such structures.[20]

It could be proposed that, in sentence focus, the existential reading arises regardless of the Aktionsart of the predicate. Supporting evidence for this hypothesis is provided by the tests for the determination of the LS of predicates. In particular, the phrase 'in an hour', which normally only

[19] The partitive *di* of the prepositional phrase *di gente* would be represented in the LS of the NP (VV&LP: 194). Incidentally, although *di* could be omitted, in which case the noun *gente* should be separated from the quantifier by an intonational pause, the sentences in (27) are definitely more acceptable if *di* is not omitted. This feature does not depend on the presence of 'have'-taking intransitives (see *Ne arriva tanta,* ?(*di*) *gente, la sera!* 'Many people arrive in the evening'). Rather, the sentences in question are only acceptable if it is clear that *gente* is not the head of *tanta*, hence the presence of *di* or an intonational pause. The core argument is *tanta ne*, while *gente*, which is coreferent with *ne*, is syntactically in a detached position.

[20] An anonymous *JL* referee has suggested that the arguments of (27b–h) might be INCREMENTAL THEMES (see Dowty 1991 and Tenny 1994) which measure out the whole event. On this hypothesis, telicity would not be derived as I proposed above, but rather it would be contributed by the argument. I believe this hypothesis to be problematic, since the relationship between events and arguments in (27b–h) is homomorphic (see Dowty 1991: 567) for trivial reasons. Dowty (1991: 570) argues that incremental themehood should be entailed by the meaning of the verb itself, not simply by the argument. Thus, reference to a set of individual events, which can be triggered by quantified arguments, is not decisive evidence for incremental themehood. In addition, the focus-structure restrictions discussed above strongly suggest that *ne*-cl with activity predicates is only acceptable in presentational focus, that is, in contexts where the existential interpretation can arise. Therefore, even if telicity were contributed by the argument, the existential analysis would still be valid.



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combines with accomplishments, can modify sentences with *ne*-cl of the argument of achievements:

(38) (a) La bomba esplose (***in un'ora**).
the bomb explode-3SG-PST in an hour
'The bomb exploded (*in an hour).'
(b) Ne esplosero tante, di bombe, **in un'ora**
NE explode-3PL-PST many of bombs in an hour
'There were many, of bombs, which exploded in an hour.'

The predicate of (38b) denotes many instances of 'exploding', and is hence construed as an accomplishment. The existential reading can thus arise in sentence focus, regardless of the Aktionsart of the predicate. This result supports Casadio's (1992) observation that *ne*-cl favours a stage-level reading of 'be'-selecting predicates.

### 5.3 *Dialect evidence*

Dialect evidence supports the analysis proposed above for (27b–h). In Sardinian Logudorese and Nuorese, there are intransitive constructions which share a number of features with existentials; in particular, (i) a locative clitic (*bi* 'there') and, when the argument is indefinite, (ii) the selection of auxiliary 'have' regardless of the Aktionsart properties of the predicate, and (iii) the lack of verbal agreement:

(39) (a) **B'at** balladu medas piseddas.
CL have-3SG danced many girls
Lit. 'There has danced many girls.'
(b) **B'at** bennid**u** medas piseddas a domo.
CL have-3SG come-SG many girls to home
Lit. 'There has come home many girls.'

The lack of agreement and the selection of 'have' in Sardinian existentials (40) have been claimed to depend on a well-formedness constraint on the encoding of information structure:[21]

(40) **B'at** medas piseddas.
CL have-3SG many girls
'There are many girls.'

*Ne*-cl is permitted both with existentials (41c), and with the intransitive constructions under scrutiny, regardless of the Aktionsart of the predicate (41a, b).

[21] Observe that identifiable referents, denoted by definite arguments, take 'be' and trigger agreement. In Bentley (2004) agreement and auxiliary selection in Sardinian presentationals have been compared to features of Chichewa locative inversion (see Bresnan & Mchombo 1987 and Bresnan & Kanerva 1989).



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(41) (a) B**inn**' at balladu medas.
CL-NE have-3SG danced many
Lit. '(Of them) there has danced many.'
(b) B**inn**' at bennidu medas.
CL-NE have-3SG come-SG many
Lit. '(Of them) there has come many.'
(c) B**inn**' at medas.
CL-NE have-3SG many
'(Of them) there are many.'

The selection of auxiliary 'have' is unexpected with state, achievement and accomplishment predicates (see (39b), (41b)), whereas *ne*-cl is unexpected with activity predicates (see (41a)), in that the domains of 'be'-selection and *ne*-cl are comparable in Sardinian and Italian.

In the light of (i) the properties shared by existentials (see (40), (41c)) and intransitive constructions such as (39a, b) and (41a, b), (ii) the non-canonical features mentioned, and, lastly, (iii) the results of the Aktionsart tests, the intransitive structures in (39a, b) and (41a, b) have been claimed to have an existential predicate in LS (see Bentley 2004). The argument of this predicate is modified by another predicate (see 'dance' in (39a) and (41a), and 'come' in (39b) and (41b)). The existential predicate is not spelled out in syntax. Appropriate translations for (39a, b) are 'There are many girls who have danced' and 'There are many girls who have come home', respectively. This analysis captures the unexpected properties. The selection of 'have' with states, achievements and accomplishments and the lack of agreement are due to a well-formedness constraint on the encoding of information structure in Sardinian existentials (see fn. 21). '*Ne*'-cl is allowed because the quantified argument is the argument of a (covert) state LS.

To return to the Italian structures in (27b–h), they are comparable to the Sardinian presentationals, insofar as the argument is in the core of an existential LS (and this captures '*ne*'-cl), but this LS is not spelled out in syntax. Unlike Italian, Sardinian marks the existential predicate overtly with obligatory *bi*, as well as auxiliary selection and lack of agreement (for the obligatoriness of *bi* in Sardinian existentials see La Fauci & Loporcaro 1997).[22]

[22] It appears that the occurrence of *ci*, the Italian counterpart of Sardinian *bi*, is restricted to constructions with a copula ('be' or 'have', see La Fauci & Loporcaro 1997; Moro 1997), and banned from other intransitive constructions. One such case is the sentence-focus counterpart of locatives (see (25)). Another relevant example is that of identificationals, which are incompatible with *ne*-cl. Their existential counterpart with *ci*-insertion and the quantifier in focal position allows *ne*-cl: **Ne sono studenti due* vs. *Ce ne sono due, studenti* '(Of them) there are two (who are) students'. Below I give a further relevant example with adjectival predicates.



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### 5.4 *LS-syntax mapping*

It was argued in section 5.2 that, in the structures under investigation, *ne* realises the argument of an existential predicate, and that this predicate is not spelled out in syntax. This analysis amounts to the claim that the semantic and syntactic levels of representation of these sentences are not homogeneous. In this section I illustrate how the proposed LS of (27b–h) maps onto syntax.

The mapping onto syntax of the LS of (36) (*Ne cammina tanta, di gente, su quei marciapiedi* 'There are many, of people, who walk on those pavements') is shown in figure 1 (see appendix). Since the main predicate is monovalent (**exist**′ (x)), the syntactic template selection principles select a core template with one argument slot in it. This slot is filled by *tanta ne*, the argument of **exist**′. The existential predicate, however, does not map onto the nucleus (NUC). This leaves **walk**′ to figure as the matrix predicate in the nucleus, in place of the existential predicate. To satisfy the Completeness Constraint, *gente* 'people' must be realised in the syntax and, given that the core slot is filled, it can only be realised in a detached position or extra-core slot. In particular, it can be assumed to be in the Post-Core Slot (PoCS). Finally, *su quei marciapiedi* 'on those pavements' maps to the periphery of the clause (see VV&LP: 163). The sentences in (27b–d, f) involve the same kind of LS-syntax mismatch. They only differ from (27e, g, h) in that there is no peripheral constituent. The Speech Act Projection indicates that the whole information is focal, that is, these are sentence-focus constructions.

A hypothesis on perfective auxiliary selection can now be advanced. Recall that, according to Lonzi, the perfective counterparts of (27b–h) are unacceptable (see (7)). In fact, native-speaker judgements on (7) are inconsistent. Some speakers do not consider the perfective counterparts with 'have' to be any more or less acceptable than the sentences in (27b–h). On the other hand, the fact that other speakers differentiate between the present and the perfective forms must be significant in some sense. Interestingly, native speakers agree that auxiliary *essere* 'be' and past participle agreement are unacceptable in the sentences under scrutiny:

(42) (a) *Ne **sono** **corsi** tanti, di giovani.
NE be-3PL run-M.PL many-M.PL of young-people-M.PL
'(Of them) there are many, of young people, who have run.'

(b) *Ne **è** **camminata** tanta, di gente, su quei
NE be-3SG walked-F.SG much-F.SG of people-F.SG on those
marciapiedi.
pavements
'(Of them) there are many, of people, who have walked on those pavements.'

It follows that these two points require an explanation: (i) why native-speaker judgements on sentences like *Ne ha camminato tanta, di gente, su quei*



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*marciapiedi* (lit. '(Of them) many, of people, have walked on those pavements') are inconsistent, and (ii) why this structure is consistently preferred to the one illustrated in (42b).

Perfective auxiliary selection in Italian has been accounted for in RRG terms by Centineo (1986). Unlike *ne*-cl, which concerns the only or lowest-ranking LS argument (and hence its grammaticality with transitives), perfective auxiliary selection is determined by the only or highest-ranking argument. If this argument is assigned the macrorole undergoer, then the perfective auxiliary is 'be'.[23] Otherwise, 'have' is selected (see figure 2 in the appendix). The analysis developed in this paper predicts that *camminare* and the other activity predicates in (27b–h) should take the perfective auxiliary 'have'. In fact, given that such predicates are activities (**do**′ (gente$_i$, [**walk**′ (gente$_i$)])), they take an actor (*gente* 'people'; see figures 1 and 2). This actor is the highest-ranking macrorole in (27b–h). This explains the native-speaker rejection of sentences such as (42a, b). The inconsistency in native-speaker judgements on sentences like *Ne ha camminato tanta, di gente, su quei marciapiedi* can be explained as follows. The constructions in (27b–h) exhibit two coreferent macroroles, which correspond to the arguments of the two LS predicates. Perfective auxiliary selection is determined by default, that is, by the highest-ranking argument (the actor). This macrorole, however, does not map to the core with its predicate, as would normally be the case (see figure 2). It is the macrorole of the other LS predicate that maps to the core (see figure 1). Hence these structures are, in one sense, deviant. The sentence in (7h) can – but need not – be deemed acceptable if interpreted as 'There are many people who have walked on those pavements', but it is unacceptable if interpreted as 'There have been many people [walking] on those pavements'. In the last analysis, the inconsistent judgements on the structures in (7) result from the failure of syntactic realisation of part of the semantic content.[24]

To conclude, I have argued that the data in (27b–h) do not constitute significant exceptions, but rather a mere red herring in *ne*-cl. These structures are sentence-focus constructions, and receive a stage-level existential interpretation. *Ne* realises a topical NP with a separate but coreferent quantifier. The quantified NP is the only argument of an existential predicate in LS. Therefore, (27b–h) combine with the analysis of *ne*-cl developed in this

[23] More precisely, 'be' is selected if the PRIVILEGED SYNTACTIC ARGUMENT (the controller of agreement) is either an undergoer or an affected actor. For the purposes of the current analysis, however, we do not need to go into the technical details of Centineo's (1986) proposal.

[24] Unlike Sardinian, Italian does not provide any evidence that 'have'-selection might be the result of well-formedness conditions on the encoding of information-structure. In fact, only 'be' occurs in Italian *ci*-existentials (*Ce ne sono*/**ha*/**hanno due* 'There are two (cl ne be-3pl/have-3sg/have-3pl two)'). In addition, in the Italian constructions with *ne*, 'have' is only selected with activity predicates, thus following the default pattern of auxiliary selection.



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article. This analysis correctly accounts for perfective auxiliary selection and for the focus-structure restrictions on *ne*-cl with 'have'-selecting predicates, and it has predictive power.

## 6. *Ne*-cl: adjectival predicates

It was shown in section 2 that constructions with adjectival predicates divide into four classes with respect to *ne*-cl. Class (i) allows *ne*-cl regardless of the aspectual restrictions to which it is subject. Classes (ii) and (iii) differ minimally from each other. Both denote contingent states – as opposed to inherent properties – in the perfect, where *ne*-cl is allowed. Class (ii) adjectives also denote contingent states in the present, if used with the copula *stare* 'stay', but here *ne*-cl is hardly acceptable. Class (iv) adjectives are virtually incompatible with perfective aspect, and do not allow *ne*-cl. I analyse first classes (i) and (iv) (section 6.1), and then classes (ii) and (iii) (section 6.2).

### 6.1 *Adjectival predicates: classes* (*i*) *and* (*iv*)

In a number of languages, attributive constructions (e.g. *Sally is young*) receive different morphosyntactic treatment from resultative constructions (e.g. *Sally is worn out*). An example is found in Tagalog, where adjectives and transitive states are marked with either *ma-* or Ø, depending on whether they denote a relatively transitory state or a more permanent state (see Foley & Van Valin 1984: 66). For instance, if predicated of the moon, *-bilog* means 'round', while *ma-bilog* means 'full'. Another such case is the alternation of Spanish *ser* and *estar*. The copula *ser* is used in attributives (e.g. *ser listo* 'to be intelligent'), whereas *estar* figures with adjectival predicates which denote results or contingent states (e.g. *estar listo* 'to be ready').

In the light of the different morphosyntactic treatment of attributives, on the one hand, and resultatives, on the other, Schwartz (1993) has argued for separate analyses of these two construction types. Schwartz's account is based on Jackendoff (1976, 1983). In 1976, Jackendoff proposed that the predicative element of attributives is a LOCATION, whilst the subject is a THEME. In later work, Jackendoff (1983: 188–207) noted that, in some languages, the primacy of these two thematic relations might be reversed (see English 'he is old' vis-à-vis 'old age overtook him'). On this analysis, the subject would have the thematic relation LOCATION, and the attribute the relation THEME. Drawing on Jackendoff (1983), Schwartz (1993) proposed that the thematic role of the subject of attributives is LOCATION, whilst the attribute is a THEME:

(43) Kim is intelligent.
LOCATION THEME

Since the THEME of attributives has a predicative function, rather than a referential one, in RRG it is assumed to constitute the nucleus of the clause



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(see Schwartz 1993, VV&LP: 103): **be′** (Kim, [**intelligent′**]).[25] No macrorole status is assigned to the predicative THEME, whereas the LOCATION is assigned the role Undergoer, following the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy shown in (17) above. (For a treatment of transitory states and resultatives see section 6.2.)

We saw that class (iv) adjectives are virtually incompatible with the perfect (see (13b)), unlike the members of classes (ii) and (iii). This suggests that class (iv) adjectives tend not to be construed in Italian as transitory or resultative states, but rather they denote inherent properties: they figure in attributive structures, in Schwartz's sense. Schwartz's proposal can thus capture the ungrammaticality of *ne*-cl with class (iv) (see **ne sono bianchi molti*, lit.'(of them) are white many'). Since the THEME has predicative function and maps to the nucleus, it is not available for *ne*-cl. The LOCATION is available, but it is not the lowest-ranking argument. Incidentally, the focus-structure restrictions on *ne*-cl are not normally satisfied in attributives, but we can disregard this point here, for simplicity (see below). Notably, when used with *ci* 'there' and the quantifier in focal position, class (iv) adjectives do allow *ne*-cl: *Ce ne sono molti bianchi* 'There are many of them (which are) white'. The latter is an existential structure, and licenses *ne*-cl of its only argument (see fn. 22).

The question that arises at this point is why the same situation does not apply to class (i). Among the members of this class, that is, the adjectives which Cinque (1990) claimed to be unaccusative, there is *prevedibile* 'foreseeable'. This is a member of a group of adjectives in *-bile*, *-vole*, which have been claimed to be passive (see Ambrosini 1982: 75–79) in the light of the following evidence. First, they are deverbal formations from a transitive verb: *comprensibile* 'comprehensible' (see *comprendere* 'comprehend'), *prevedibile* 'foreseeable' (see *prevedere* 'foresee'), *gradevole* 'pleasant' (see *gradire* 'like/welcome'), etc., and they express a modalised passive. For instance, *prevedibile* can be paraphrased as 'can be foreseen'. Secondly, the actor can figure as an adjunct with *da* 'by', as is normally the case in Italian passives, or *a*/*per*:[26]

(44) (a) Un comportamento prevedibile **da** tutti.
a behaviour foreseeable by everyone
'A behaviour that can be foreseen by everyone.'
(b) Un libro comprensibile **da/a** tutti.
a book comprehensible by to everyone
'A book that can be understood by everyone.'

[25] The same analysis applies to predicate NPs, which can be regarded as non-referential semantic arguments (Jackendoff 2002: 136). See Payne's (1997: 111–128) discussion of predicate adjectives, nominals and locative phrases in a crosslinguistic perspective.

[26] The counterpart of *per* marks the agent of passives in other Romance languages (French *par*, Spanish *por*).



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(c) Un film gradevole **a/per** tutti.
a film pleasant to for everyone
'A film that can be liked by everyone.'

Like the actor of passives, which is a peripheral adjunct, this argument cannot control verbal agreement (see **Tutti sono prevedibili del tuo comportamento*, lit. 'Everyone is foreseeable of your behaviour (all-m.pl be-3pl foreseeable-m.pl of your behaviour)'). The adjectives in question are thus modal stative predicates which are restricted to the passive voice. In RRG terms, this amounts to the restriction of control of agreement to the lowest-ranking argument.[27]

The above facts suggest that attributive constructions with these adjectival predicates differ in LS from attributives with class (iv) adjectives. In particular, it would seem that the former type of LS is analogous to LSs with the corresponding transitive verbs, that is, bivalent stative LSs: **predicate**′ (x, y) (see fn. 4). *Ne*-cl of the lowest-ranking argument should be grammatical. In fact, it is deemed to be more acceptable than with the available argument of class (iv), and hence Cinque's (1990) analysis:

(45) (?)Ne sono prevedibili molte, delle sue azioni.
NE be-3PL foreseeable-PL many of-the his actions
'(Of them) many are foreseeable, of his actions.'

The data in (46) are offered by Cinque as evidence that *noto* 'well-known' has both a transitive (46a) and an unaccusative counterpart (46b).

(46) (a) A tutti è noto questo libro.
to everybody be-3SG well-known this book
'This book is well-known to everybody.'
(b) Questo libro è noto.
this book be-3SG well-known
'This book is well-known.'

Significantly, only one argument of *noto* can control agreement (see **Tutti sono noti di questo libro*, lit. 'Everyone is well-known of this book (all-m.pl be-3pl well-known-m.pl of this book)'), whereas the other argument figures as an adjunct with *a*. This would seem to suggest that *noto* 'well-known' is another passive adjective, i.e. one with which the lowest-ranking argument is available for control, and is the only controller. *Noto* is related etymologically and semantically to the verb *conoscere* 'know'.[28] Unlike the

[27] The class identified by Ambrosini (1982; see also Maiden & Robustelli 2000) does not include the adjectives in *-bile* which lack a verbal counterpart, for instance, *tascabile* 'pocket(-size)', which is related to a noun *tasca* 'pocket', as opposed to a verb. Notably, these rule out *ne*-cl: **Ne sono tascabili molti*, lit. '(Of them) many are pocket(-size)'.

[28] Etymologically, the two forms derive from Latin *noscere* 'know' (<(*g*)*noscere*), with a prefix in the case of *conosciuto* (see Late Latin *co*(*g*)*noscere*).



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regular past participle of this verb, *conosciuto* 'known', which is used both in the active voice of the perfect with 'have' (e.g. *ho conosciuto* 'I have known') and in the passive (e.g. *sono conosciuto* 'I am known'), *noto* only figures with 'be', in constructions such as those illustrated above. The opposition between [+ active] *conosciuto* and [−active] *noto* has a parallel in a number of Italo-Romance dialects and Romance languages, which have developed a number of participial pairs. In his discussion of Neapolitan participial pairs (e.g. *apiertu*/*araputo* 'open(ed)', *chiuso*/*chiuduto* 'close(d)', *scrittu*/*scrivutu* 'written'), Ledgeway (2000: 228–233) points out that the irregular participles figure with the passive auxiliary, as well as with the resultative auxiliaries *tené* 'have/keep' and *stà* 'stand', which have no exact parallel in Italian. I suggest that *noto* is a bivalent state (**well-known**′ (x, y)), on a par with *conoscere* (**know**′ (x, y)), to which it is related. The lowest-ranking argument allows *ne*-cl (see (47a)), whereas predictably the highest-ranking one does not (see (47b)).

(47) (a) A noi sono note molte cose. /
to us be-3PL well-known many things
(?)(A noi) ne sono note molte.
to us NE be-3PL well-known many
'To us many things are well-known./(Of them) many are well-known (to us).'

(b) A molte persone è noto il fatto. /
to many people be-3SG well-known the fact
*Ne sono noti del fatto molti.
NE be-3PL well-known of-the fact many
'To many people the fact is well-known.'/Lit. 'Of them many are well-known of the fact.'

The adjectives *certo* 'certain', *sicuro* 'certain' (not 'sure'), *ovvio* 'obvious', *evidente* 'evident' and *chiaro* 'clear' (not 'pale' or 'bright') are also unaccusative according to Cinque. Unlike the passive adjectives analysed above, these lack a verbal counterpart. Rather, they form a class of epistemic states which can take an optional perceiver (48a) and allow *ne*-cl (48b).

(48) (a) Questi fatti sono ovvi **a tutti**.
these facts-M.PL be-3PL obvious-M.PL to everyone
'These facts are obvious to everyone.'

(b) Ne sono ovvi / chiari solo due, di questi fatti.
NE be-3PL obvious-M.PL clear-M.PL only two of these facts
'Only two of these facts are obvious/clear.'

The optional perceiver cannot control agreement (**Tutti sono ovvi di questo fatto*, lit. 'Everyone is obvious of this fact (all-m.pl be-3pl obvious-m.pl of this fact)'). In contrast, these adjectives allow a propositional argument as



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the controller:

(49) Che Bill perderà le elezioni è certo / ovvio.
that Bill lose-3SG-FUT the elections be-3SG certain obvious
'That Bill will lose the election is certain/obvious.'

In RRG **certain**′ (x) is treated as an intransitive raising predicate, that is, a raising predicate with one macrorole, an undergoer (see VV&LP: 564). Observe that **certain**′ differs from **seem**′, which does not allow a propositional argument to appear as the controller (**That Bill will lose the election seems*), and is hence atransitive (it has no macrorole). On this analysis, *ne*-cl of the only argument of *certo* 'certain' and *sicuro* 'certain' is predicted, given that **certain**′ is a state predicate with an argument available for *ne*-cl. I propose that the RRG analysis of **certain**′ should be extended to the other epistemic adjectives mentioned above. The optional perceiver taken by some of these adjectives is comparable to the optional perceiver which figures with other raising predicates (see *It seems* TO ME …).[29]

The proposed analysis of class (i) adjectives as bivalent states leaves unexplained the following facts. First, *ne*-cl can be problematic with these adjectives, as is the case with the present passive in (9) above. This is unexpected in view of the proposed LS. Secondly, there are adjectives other than the passive and raising adjectives analysed in this section which can be construed with two overt arguments (e.g. *essere buoni con tutti* 'to be good to everyone', *essere fieri di qualcosa* 'to be proud of something'), but behave differently with respect to *ne*-cl. In this section I address the former problem. I leave the latter to the next section.

It was pointed out that locatives, which are bivalent states, do not undergo *ne*-cl as such. Rather, the lowest-ranking argument of locatives must be embedded in an existential LS in order to undergo *ne*-cl (see (25)), and, on my hypothesis, this is due to the focus-structure restrictions on *ne*-cl. Like the locational phrase of locative constructions, the attribute of attributives is normally focal, as suggested by the data in (50).[30] Observe that it occupies the default position of focal elements in Italian:

(50) (a) COME SONO questi fatti? Questi fatti sono prevedibili.
how be-3PL these facts these facts be-3PL foreseeable
?Sono prevedibili questi fatti.
be-3PL foreseeable these facts
'How are these facts? These facts are foreseeable.'

[29] A raising analysis has been proposed for the predicates 'be possible', 'be essential', 'be forbidden', 'be sad', 'be fascinating' in Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 1980; see VV&LP: 562).

[30] The structure *QUESTI FATTI sono prevedibili* would be a felicitous reply in (50b), with stress on *questi fatti* 'these facts', and an intonational break following it, that is, with narrow focus on the argument. In turn, the sentence-initial predicate is acceptable in (50a), with narrow focus on the predicate, in which case the predicate is stressed and separated intonationally from the rest of the sentence.



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(b) CHE COSA è prevedibile? Sono prevedibili questi fatti.
what be-3SG foreseeable be-3PL foreseeable these facts
*?Questi fatti sono prevedibili.
these facts be-3PL foreseeable
'What is foreseeable? These facts are foreseeable.'

*Ne*-cl does not occur in predicate focus. Recall now that the acceptability of some of Lonzi's problematic cases improves considerably if the focusing subjunct *solo* 'only' modifies the quantifier. The same applies to *ne*-cl with class (i) adjectives (as suggested by Cinque's own example (8a)). *Solo* delimits the set of entities being quantified, and introduces new information (51a). Moreover, the acceptability of *ne*-cl with bivalent adjectives improves if *ne* is resumptive (see (8a) again) (51b). The explicit mention of spatio-temporal coordinates has the same effect (51c).

(51) (a) Ne sono comprensibili solo due.
NE be-3PL comprehensible-PL only two
'(Of them) only two are comprehensible.'
(b) Di questi fatti, ne sono comprensibili (solo) due.
of these facts-M.PL NE be-3PL comprehensible-PL only two
'Of these facts, (only) two are comprehensible.'
(c) Secondo me, dei fatti discussi in quell' articolo,
according me of-the facts-M.PL discussed-M.PL in that article
ne sono comprensibili (solo) due.
NE be-3PL comprehensible-PL only two
'In my view, of the facts discussed in that article, (only) two are comprehensible.'

The data in (51) reveal an interesting parallel between *ne*-cl with 'have'-selecting verbal predicates on the one hand and, on the other hand, class (i) adjectives. It appears that the *ne*-cl is unproblematic in sentence focus. I argue that here class (i) adjectives receive an existential reading. The quantified argument is the argument of an existential predicate, and is modified by the adjectival predicate:

(52) (a) There are only two, of them, which are comprehensible.
(b) **exist**′ ([**be**′ (solo due ne$_i$, [**comprehensible**′ (Ø, fatti$_i$)])])

The findings of this section support the idea that the LS constraints are necessary but not sufficient conditions on *ne*-cl. Focus-structure restrictions apply, as well, and can rule out *ne*-cl with bivalent states.[31]

[31] *Ne*-cl of the lowest-ranking argument of bivalent states such as 'love', 'see', etc. is not problematic because such states do not share the focus-structure properties of locatives and attributives.



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6.2 *Adjectival predicates: classes* (*ii*) *and* (*iii*)

Let us now turn to the adjectives that only allow *ne*-cl in the perfect. Adjectives which behave in this way are *buono* 'good', *fermo* 'still', *immobile* 'motionless', *attento* 'careful' (class (ii)), and *malato* 'ill', *affettuoso* 'caring', *onesto* 'honest', etc. (class (iii)):

(53) (a) *Ne sono buoni / onesti molti.
NE be-3PL good-M.PL honest-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many are good/honest.'

(b) (?)Ne sono stati buoni / onesti molti.
NE be-3PL been-M.PL good-M.PL honest-M.PL many-M.PL
'(Of them) many have behaved/been honest.'

To begin with, there is reason to believe that classes (ii) and (iii) differ in valence from class (i), even though some members of classes (ii) and (iii) take two overt arguments. I proposed that class (i) adjectives are either passive or raising predicates. The members of classes (ii) and (iii) are not epistemic, do not take a propositional argument as their controller, have no verbal counterparts, cannot be paraphrased with a passive periphrasis, and do not take an agent or perceiver with *a*/*da*/*per* (see, e.g. *buono* CON *tutti*, lit. 'good with everyone', *fiero* DI *qualcosa* 'proud of something'). This suggests that they are neither passive nor raising predicates.

The alternation of *essere* and *stare* with class (ii) is comparable with that of Spanish *ser* and *estar*. The copula *essere* is used in attributives, in Schwartz's (1993) sense (e.g. *essere buono* 'be good-natured'), whereas *stare* figures with adjectival predicates which denote contingent states (e.g. *stare buono* 'be good on a particular occasion, behave'). Following Schwartz (1993), such alternations could be dealt with by assigning different LSs to the attributive and the transitory counterparts of stative predicates, respectively. 'To be good-natured' would thus be represented by the LS **be**′ (x, [**good**′]), whereas 'to be well-behaved' would be represented as **good**′ (x). This analysis would predict that only the contingent-state reading allows *ne*-cl of the argument of *buono*, since, in this case, this would be the only argument of a stative predicate. The assumption of two independent readings for the majority of the adjectives of classes (ii) and (iii) would, however, be far-fetched. Furthermore, this analysis would not capture the role of tense and aspect. I therefore wish to propose an alternative analysis.

Pustejovsky's notion of agentive quale (see section 5.2) can account for the semantic contrast between the inherent-property and the contingent-state readings of the adjectives of classes (ii) and (iii). For example, 'behave' or 'be good on a particular occasion' (*stare buono*) can be considered to be an 'artifactual state' in Pustejovsky's (1995: 226) sense. Contrastingly, *essere buono* 'be good-natured' does not relate to the bringing about of a state. Similarly, *onesto* 'honest' denotes a quality, in the present tense, whereas it



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denotes behaviour on a particular occasion in the perfect. Instead of proposing two different LSs for the two readings of the adjectives in question, a unified analysis can thus be proposed: on the contingent-state reading of both classes, the agentive quale is selected for the adjective: **be**′ (x, [**pred**′]) $\{Q_A\}$.

The contingent-state reading is conveyed by *stare* (class (ii)) or the perfect. *Ne*-cl is hardly acceptable in the present with *stare*. This is predicted, on the proposed analysis, given that the lowest-ranking argument has predicative function and is realised as the nucleus. The incongruity between the behaviour of present-tense constructions with *stare* and perfective constructions suggests that the contingent-state reading does not in itself ensure that the structures in question are interpreted as existentials. The latter interpretation can arise in the perfect, which contributes an episodic (temporally-bounded) interpretation, (54a).[32] If the quantifier is modified by *solo* 'only', (54b), and if *ne* is resumptive, (54c), *ne*-cl is deemed more acceptable. Notably, even the present tense with *stare* marginally allows *ne*-cl in sentence focus with *solo*, (54d):[33]

(54) (a) (?)Ne sono stati buoni due.
NE be-3PL been-M.PL good-M.PL two
'(Of them) two have been good.'

(b) Ne sono stati buoni **solo** due.
NE be-3PL been-M.PL good-M.PL only two
'(Of them) only two have been good.'

(c) **Di bambini**, ne sono stati buoni (**solo**) due.
of children-M.PL NE be-3PL been-M.PL good-M.PL only two
'Of children, only two (of them) have have been good.'

(d) ?**Di questi bambini**, ne stanno buoni **solo** due.
of these children-M.PL NE stay-3PL good-M.PL only two
'Of these children, only two (of them) behave.'

We saw that the focusing subjunct *solo* 'only' in (54b), selects new information, and that the sentence-focus structure in (54c), where *ne* is resumptive,

[32] It could be thought that the acceptability of *ne*-cl in the perfect depends on the resultant state which is inherent in the meaning of the perfect. However, *ne*-cl is acceptable in the punctual past, as well as in the perfect, with class (ii) and class (iii) adjectives (e.g. *Di quegli avvocati ne furono onesti solo due* 'Of those lawyers, only two (of them) were honest (on that particular occasion)'). See Chierchia (1995: 112) for the episodic reading provided, for instance, by adverbs like *ieri* 'yesterday', and its role in stage-level predication. From the above analysis, it turns out that the perfect can both trigger the selection of the agentive qualia role and convey the existential reading, whilst present-tense *stare* only triggers the selection of the agentive qualia role.

[33] *Ne*-cl is also allowed if the adjective occurs with *rimanere* 'stay, remain', preferably in the perfect or punctual past, and if *ne* is resumptive (*Ne rimasero/sono rimasti fermi molti, di questi bambini*, lit. '(Of them) many stayed still, of these children'). These facts suggest that *ne*-cl with *rimanere* depends on the possibility of applying a stage-level existential reading, as is the case with *stare*.



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introduces a new referent into discourse. In both cases, the sentence can receive an existential interpretation. In agreement with the proposed analysis of Lonzi's data (section 5), and class (i) adjectival predicates (section 6.1), I suggest that, in the constructions illustrated in (54), the adjectival predicates are modifiers of the argument, which is embedded in an existential LS (e.g. 'There are only two, of them, who have behaved'). The resultant LS is thus **exist**′ ([**be**′ (solo due ne, [**good**′]) $\{Q_A\}$]). The quantified NP is the only argument of an existential predicate, and is hence a suitable candidate for *ne*-cl.

### 6.3 *Adjectival predicates: conclusion*

It was argued that *ne*-cl of the argument of adjectives is conditional on an existential reading, which is allowed in sentence focus.[34] The same kind of syntax-semantics mismatch which was observed in *ne*-cl with 'have'-selecting predicates obtains with adjectival predicates. In addition, as is the case with verbal predicates, adjectival predicates exhibit various degrees of compatibility with the existential reading. *Ne*-cl of class (i) adjectives is unproblematic in sentence focus. Classes (ii) and (iii) can only receive an existential reading if the agentive quale is selected. Accordingly, the fulfilment of the focus-structure conditions alone is insufficient for *ne*-cl to be licensed with these adjectives. Class (iv) adjectives are not open to a contingent-state reading and are incompatible with *ne*-cl, due allowance being made for their existential counterpart with *ci* 'there'.

By way of conclusion, let us return to 'be'-passives (see (9)). The past participle of 'be'-passives is comparable with the passive members of class (i): suffice it to mention *gradito* 'welcome', which is homonymous with the past participle of transitive *gradire* 'welcome', and is listed among Cinque's unaccusative adjectives (*Questa sorpresa è gradita da/a tutti* 'This surprise is liked by/welcome to everyone') (see fn. 4). Predictably, resumptive *ne* and the focusing adverbial *solo* favour *ne*-cl with such participles ((?)*Di questi rami, ne sono spezzati solo due* 'Of these branches, only two (of them) are broken'). This result is explained by the stage-level existential reading which can arise in sentence focus.

## 7. *Ne*-cl and split intransitivity

*Ne*-cl has been shown to be a reliable diagnostic in the study of split intransitivity, once all the relevant factors have been taken into account. The putatively problematic cases of *ne*-cl in sentences with 'have'-selecting predicates have turned out to be spurious. Drawing on Carlson's (1977)

[34] In narrow focus *ne*-cl can be problematic (e.g. *?*Quanti ne sono stati buoni?* 'How many of them have behaved?').



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distinctions between individual- and stage-level predicates, a unified analysis has been proposed for *ne*-cl with 'have'-selecting predicates, and, on the other hand, 'be'-selecting ones. Adopting the framework of Role and Reference Grammar (see VV&LP), such structures have been accounted for in terms of non-deterministic mapping between discourse, semantics and syntax. A question that arises is why there should be a mismatch in the mapping of the LS and the syntax of the constructions under scrutiny, that is, why the syntax of these sentences does not mirror their semantics. Bresnan (2001: 90f.) has suggested that the meaning vs. form mismatches may result from pressure towards economy of expression. In the case under scrutiny, the existential reading arises under the conditions which have been analysed in this work, even if the existential predicate is not spelled out syntactically. In addition, the LS-syntax mismatch may be favoured by the tendency for sentence-focus constructions to be informationally light.

The relative incompatibility of *ne*-cl with locatives and adjectival predicates supports the view that intransitives do not constitute a binary class, but rather a hierarchically organised class. Since Vincent's (1982) comparative historical account of Romance perfective auxiliaries, further synchronic and diachronic work has suggested that stative predicates constitute the periphery of the unaccusative class, whilst telic ones are core unaccusatives (see, among others, Sorace 1993a, b, 2000; Zaenen 1993). Given that locatives and adjectival predicates are states, it might seem unsurprising that they should yield mixed results in *ne*-cl. However, since locatives and contingent-stage adjectives (as well as the participles of 'be'-passives) are 'be'-selecting predicates, the discrepancy between 'be'-selection and *ne*-cl requires an explanation. Moreover, the analysis of unaccusativity phenomena other than perfective auxiliary selection has led others to claim that unaccusativity principally concerns verbs of existence (as well as appearance, see Van Valin 1993a: 97; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995). At first blush, this claim might seem to contrast with the view that states are peripheral unaccusatives, since verbs of existence are stative predicates.

The present paper provides a solution to the above puzzles, which can serve as a working hypothesis for future research. Both 'be'-selection and *ne*-cl are subject to the constraint that there must be a state in LS, be it the unique eventuality (states) or the resultant eventuality (achievements, accomplishments; due allowance being made for perfective auxiliary selection in *si*-impersonals and some reflexives, see fn. 23). The incongruent behaviour of locatives and adjectival predicates vis-à-vis 'be'-selection and *ne*-cl has turned out to depend on two constraints which apply to *ne*-cl, but not to 'be'-selection: (i) the requirement that *ne* cliticise the only or lowest-ranking argument of states, and (ii) the focus-structure restrictions. The former requirement can be satisfied by some states (locatives and class (i) adjectives, including passive past participles), though not others (adjectives of classes (ii), (iii) and (iv)). The focus-structure restrictions are



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fulfilled in sentence focus. Both kinds of constraint are satisfied in those sentence-focus constructions where the stative predicate receives a stage-level interpretation, and the *ne*-cliticised argument is the only argument of an existential predicate. My findings corroborate the idea that focus structure plays a significant role in split intransitivity.

## 8. Conclusion

A number of apparently problematic cases of *ne*-cl have been shown to be spurious. Structures with *ne*-cl can receive an existential interpretation in sentence focus, although the existential predicate is not spelled out in syntax. This interpretation holds for the problematic cases, which are thus not deviant. My findings indicate that focus structure plays a considerable role in split intransitivity, and support the analysis of split-intransitivity phenomena in terms of non-deterministic correspondence between discourse, semantics and syntax.



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## APPENDIX

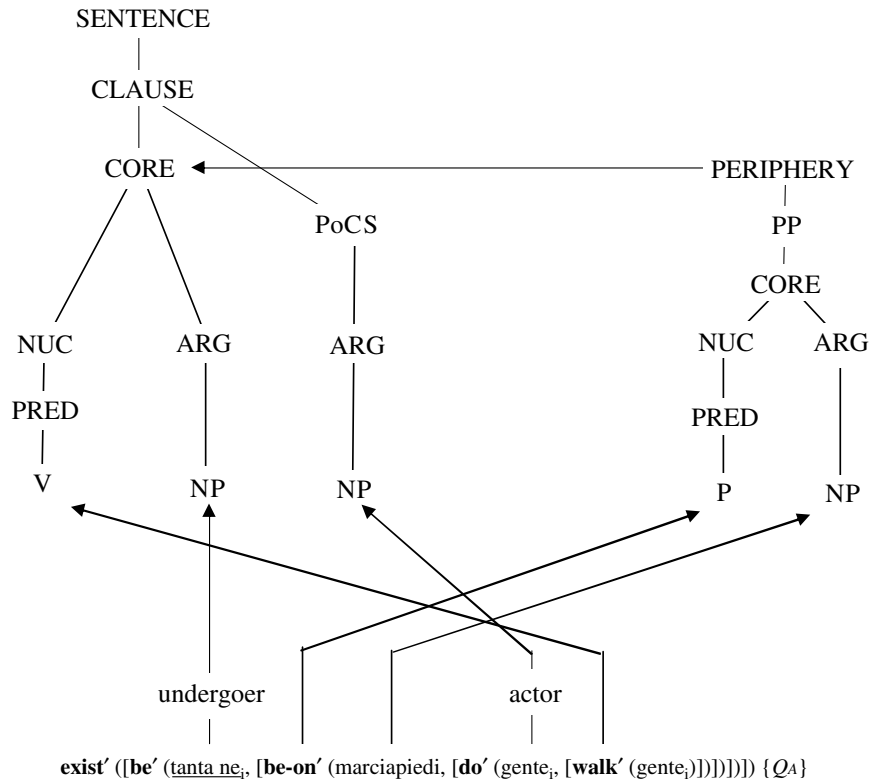



*Figure 1*
An example of syntax-semantics mismatch in *ne*-cl.



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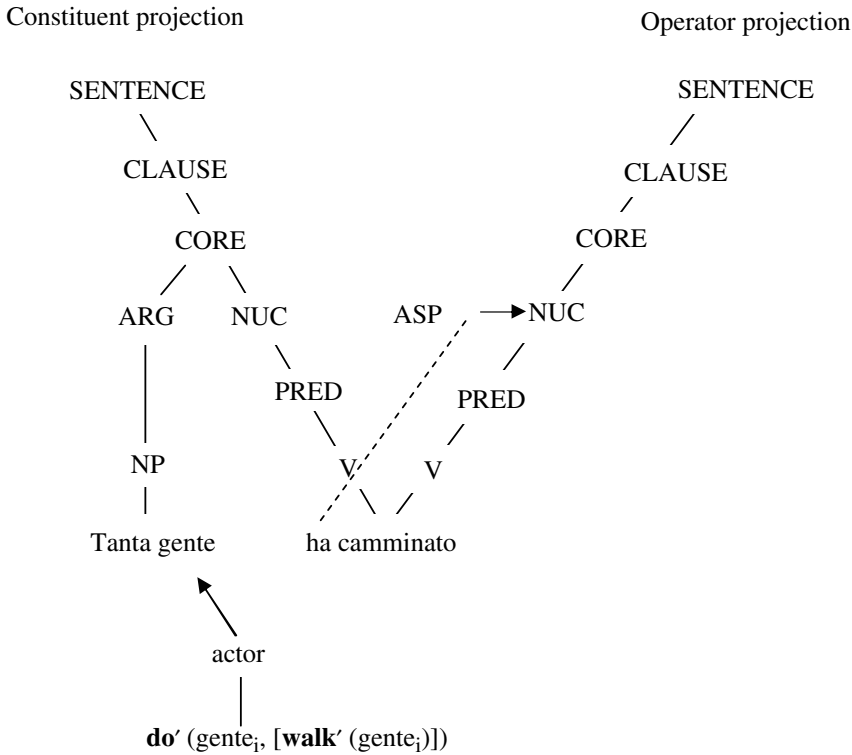



*Figure 2*
An example of default syntax-semantics mapping.

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