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The reduction of the Arbëresh lexicon and its effects on syntax

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Abstract:
The aim of this paper is to show how the loss of a great number of lexical items in Arbëresh (a minority language genealogically and typologically related to Albanian and spoken in Southern Italy) has led to lack of the corresponding syntactic structures they project. This is the case, for examples, of the conditional complementizer particles *po*, *në*, *nëse*, *sikur*, all corresponding to the English 'if'. They are used in standard Albanian to introduce conditional subordinate sentences, some of which show the regular Subject-Verb-Object word order; others, instead, displaying V-second effects, caused by the movement of the verb to a position preceding the subject. These lexical items have completely ceased to be used in the Arbëresh dialects. Therefore, the syntactic structures typical of standard Albanian do not have their counterparts in the Arbëresh dialects, which only have a structure like that of Italian, i.e. they have only a single conditional conjunction (corresponding to the Italian *se* 'if') projecting an unmarked embedded SVO sentence. Based on the distribution of topics in relation to these particles, I will argue that all these complementizers occupy an intermediate position in the left periphery of the clause. In particular, I will assume that they are associated with the CP domain, which is splitted into various positions in the sense of Rizzi (1997).

Keywords: Arbëresh; Albanian; Italian; contact; conditional complementizers

1. Introduction

Arbëresh is a minority and endangered language genealogically and typologically related to Albanian. It is spoken in Southern Italy, where it represents a language island, having no contact with its linguistic ancestor. Albanian migration flows to Italy began in the second half of the 15th century and continued until the 18th century. Arbëresh dialects are

currently spoken in a large geographical area in Southern Italy numbering roughly 50 settlements spread out among ten provinces (Palermo, Catanzaro, Crotone, Cosenza, Potenza, Taranto, Avellino, Foggia, Campobasso, Pescara) located in seven regions ranging from the southernmost Sicily to the northernmost Abruzzo, including Calabria, Puglia, Basilicata, Campania, and Molise. Albanian-speaking communities represent one of the largest linguistic minorities in Italy numbering about 50.000 people.

Arbëresh has been spoken in an area where almost all the speakers are bilingual in Italian, the dominant/official language. Arbëresh and Italian/Romance varieties have been in close contact for almost 600 years, in a situation of diglossia: Arbëresh represents the daily language, spoken at home, used in informal, interpersonal communication and it is unwritten. Italian, instead, represents the high variety, used for written and formal education, used in literature, newspapers, church, TV, and other social institutions. In this situation of bilingualism, characterized by intense language contact, Arbëresh has been heavily influenced by Italian/Romance varieties. The contact-induced language change involves massive unidirectional lexical borrowing, code-switching and code-mixing between the two languages, transfer of grammatical categories or syntactic constructions from Italian to Arbëresh. What we can observe today is a quantitative impoverishment, a loss of lexical and syntactic richness and diversity. The aim of this paper is to show how the loss of a great number of lexical items in the Arbëresh varieties has led to lack of the corresponding syntactic structures they project.

In order to show this impoverishment, I will focus on the complementizers *po*, *në*, *nëse*, *sikur*, (all corresponding to the English 'if') that are used in standard Albanian to introduce conditional subordinate sentences[1]. I will show that these lexical items have completely ceased to be used in the Arbëresh dialects which realize an overt complementizer in conditional clauses that is different from those of standard Albanian. As a consequence, all the syntactic structures typical of standard Albanian do not have their counterparts in the Arbëresh dialects, which only have a structure similar to that of Italian. Like Italian, they have only a single conditional complementizer projecting an embedded unmarked SVO sentence.

This comparison between standard Albanian and Arbëresh shows a series of syntactic differences which are strictly related to the interconnection between the lexicon and the syntax. Specifically, the data that I will use here show how the absence of certain lexical elements in the Arbëresh varieties has a direct impact on the syntax, causing its impoverishment.

The paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, I provide an overview of the distribution of Albanian conditional complementizers, and I present the internal structure of the clauses in which they appear. In section 3, the structure of Arbëresh conditional clauses is outlined.

2. Distributional properties of Albanian conditional complementizers

One characteristic property of standard Albanian is the presence of four different complementizer particles, *po*, *sikur, në*, *nëse*, whose function is to introduce conditional clauses. These four different forms in use in standard Albanian are all associated with the sentential properties related to the C domain, i.e. they have a clause-typing function in the sense of Rizzi (1997).

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[1] In addition to these four complementizers, Albanian also has different conditional phrases such as *në qoftë se, në është se, në rast se, po qe se, po të jetë se, po të jetë që*, all corresponding to 'whether'.

Despite their similar function in the clause structure, these elements exhibit a number of distinct properties related, on one hand, to the complement selection: the choice of the different conditional complementizers is closely related to verbal mood/tense distinctions, and, on the other hand, to the internal organization of the syntactic structures that they project.

As for the first point, we will see that *nëse* only selects indicative clauses and excludes any other verbal mood. *Sikur* only introduces subjunctive moods. These two complementizers are in complementary distribution. *Po* allows subjunctive clauses and sentences with indicative past tense forms. *Në* allows indicative clauses and sentences containing optative present tenses[2]. So, *po* and *sikur* overlap in the selection of subjunctive clauses, whereas *në* and *nëse* overlap in the selection of indicative sentences.

As for the second point, these complementizers behave differently since they yield different word orders inside the clause structure: some conditional clauses show the regular Subject-Verb-Object word order; others, instead, display V-second effects, caused by the movement of the verb to a position preceding the subject. The result is a VOS word order.

Each of these elements will be described in the next subsections.

2.1. The distribution of po

Let's start with the element *po* that introduces clauses whose condition is possible or desirable. It can combine only with verbs in the subjunctive mood (1a) or with the indicative past simple tense (1b). No other combination is allowed, so (1c) with the verb in present indicative is ungrammatical as are (1d) with the verb in the imperfect tense and (1e) where the verb is in the future:

(1) a. *Po të punosh*[3], *fiton*
         PO SBJV work.2SG, earn.IND.2SG
         'If you work, you earn'
     b. *Po punove, fiton*!
         PO work.AOR.2SG, earn.IND.2SG
         'If you work, you earn'
     c. **Po punon, fiton*
     d. **Po punonte, fiton*
     e. **Po do të punosh*[4]*, fiton*

Also the combinations with other verbal moods are ungrammatical. This is shown in (2a) containing the optative and (2b) containing the conditional mood:

(2) a. **Po punofshe, fiton*
     b. **Po do të punonte*[5]*, fiton*

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[2] The optative mood is used to express wish or curse.
[3] Albanian subjunctive mood has a periphrastical form including the invariable prepositive marker *të,* that precedes a verbal form inflected for person, number, and tense.
[4] In Albanian, the future is expressed analytically by the elements *do* + present subjunctive.
[5] The conditional is built up by means of the particle *do* + imperfect subjunctive.

A part this restriction in the complement selection, another characteristic of *po* is that it must be in a position of structural adjacency with the verb, therefore the syntactic structure projected by this complementizer also shows a restriction in the order of the elements: The subject never occupies its canonical position[6]. It appears after the verb, in a position which can precede (3) or follow the direct object (4):

(3) a. *Po të   blejë   Beni   makinë, edhe unë e   blej*
        PO SBJV buy.3SG Ben.NOM   car.ACC also I.NOM it.CL buy.1SG
        'If Ben buys a car, I buy it too'
    b. *Po bleu   Beni   makinë, edhe unë e   blej*
        PO buy.AOR.3SG Ben.NOM   car.ACC also   I.NOM it.CL buy.1SG
        'If Ben buys a car, I buy it too'

(4) a. *Po të blejë makinë Beni, edhe unë e blej*
    b. *Po bleu makinë Beni, edhe unë e blej*

The clauses in (3) and (4) display respectively VSO and VOS word order. The version with the preverbal realization of the subject is ungrammatical, as shown in (5):

(5) a. **Po Beni të blejë makinë, edhe unë e blej*
    b. **Po Beni bleu makinë, edhe unë e blej*

This is likely to be related to the properties of the complementizer *po* since with the declarative complementizers *që* and *se* (both corresponding to 'that')[7], the subject can occupy the canonical preverbal position:

(6) a. *Meri   dëshiron që Beni   të   blejë   makinë*
        Mary.NOM   want.3SG that Ben.NOM SBJV buy.3SG car.ACC
        'Mary wants Ben to buy a car'
    b. *Meri   tha   se Beni   bleu   makinë*
        Mary.NOM   say.AOR.3SG that Ben.NOM buy.AOR.3SG   car.ACC
        'Mery said that Ben bought a car'

Both sentences with SVO word order are grammatical.
    Similarly to the subject, no other constituent can interrupt the adjacency between *po* and the verb. In particular, topicalized DPs (7) and adverbials (8) cannot show up in this position[8]:

(7) a. **Po makinën   të   blejë,   shkojmë   në Itali*
        PO car.ACC.DEF   SBJV buy.3SG go.1PL in Italy
        'The car, if he buys it, we go to Italy'
    b. **Po makinën   bleu,   shkojmë në Itali*
        PO car.ACC.DEF buy.AOR.3SG go.1PL   in Italy

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[6] Albanian is a Subject-Verb-Object language.
[7] *Që* is the complementizer heading embedded subjunctive clauses. *Se* introduces indicative sentences.
[8] Sentences in (7) are ungrammatical also with a resumptive pronoun that usually is inserted in topicalized sentences (Grimshaw, 1993).

'The car, if he buys it, we go to Italy'

(8) a. *Po **sot** të   punosh,   fiton
         PO   today   SBJV work.2SG earn.2SG
         'If today you work, you earn'
     b. *Po **sot** punove,   fiton
         PO   today   work.AOR.2SG earn.2SG
         'If today you work, you earn'

Adverbials considered to be adjoined to VP are grammatical in post-verbal position since the verb has raised to IP/TP. Albanian has an extensive system of verbal inflection including distinctions for person, number, tense, mood and voice. Therefore, the verb is subject to movement to Tense/Inflection in order for feature checking to take place. Given that verbal features are strong, V raises overtly to T/I. On the other hand, adverbs do not move inside the structure of a sentence, so when they appear in postverbal position it indicates that the verb has moved around them. This is illustrated in (9) where the verb has raised to I/T, skipping the projection containing the adverb *shumë:*

(9) a. *Po të punosh **shumë**, fiton*
     b. *Po punove **shumë**, fiton*

Clitics are the only elements that can surface between *po* and the verb. Actually, in subjunctive clauses (10a), clitics occur between the modal particle *të* and the inflected verb. In indicative clauses, clitics appear on the left of the lexical verb (10b):

(10)   a. *Po të **na**   ftojë   Xhoni, shkojmë* [9]
             PO SBJV us.CL invite.3SG John.NOM go.1PL
             'If John invites us, we will go'
         b. *Po **na**   ftoi   Gjoni, shkojmë*!
             PO us.CL invite.AOR.3SG John.NOM go.1PL
             'If John invites us, we will go'

Clitics are admitted to occur in this position because they are assumed to adjoin to the functional head Infl (Kayne, 1975, 1989) or Tense (Matushansky, 2006)[10]. The result of such an adjunction is merging of the clitic with the verb in a single constituent. This means that the clitic *na* in (10) occupies the same structural position of the verb, which thus continues to remain adjacent to *po*.

A final point regarding *po* is that it cannot introduce embedded indirect questions. It behaves differently form the English complementizer 'if'. See the contrast between the grammatical sentence in (11) and the ungrammatical ones in (12):

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[9] In subjunctive clauses, clitics occur between the particle *të* and the inflected verb.

[10] My proposal about cliticization is closely related to that of Matushanski (2006), who assumes that cliticization results from the interaction of two operations: a) internal merge, which is a syntactic operation that moves the clitic from its argument position and adjoins it to the edge of T after the verb has moved to T; and b) M-merger, which is a morphological operation that applies to heads and creates complex nodes (Clitic + Verb) that are syntactically atomic (Turano, 2012, 2017). According to this view, clitics are DPs moved from argument positions and adjoined to the verb after it has moved to and M-merged with T°.

(11)   I don't know **if** she will come or not

(12)   a. *Unë   nuk   di   **po** të   vijë   ajo apo jo
              I.NOM   not know.1SG PO SBJV come.3SG she or   not
              'I don't know if she will come or not'
         b. *Unë   nuk   di   **po** erdhi   ajo apo jo
              I.NOM   not know.1SG PO   come.AOR.3SG she or   not
              'I don't know if she will come or not'

As for the obligatory adjacency of *po* with the verb, we can assume that it is determined by the movement of the verb to a position preceding the subject, i.e. the verb raises higher than IP/TP. What is the position the verb raises to? According to Rizzi (1996, 1997), in clauses displaying V-second effects, the verb moves from I-to-C in order to satisfy some kind of criterion. In *Wh*-questions, for example, the verb moves from I-to-C in order to carry the [+Wh] feature generated under I to C. This movement is forced by the *Wh-Criterion* which requires a Spec-head configuration between a Specifier hosting the *Wh*-element and the head endowed with the [+Wh] feature.

Judging from the linear order in *po*-sentences, we can affirm that verb-raising involves the C domain. However, the V-second effects cannot be attributed to the movement of the verb to the same C position hosting *po* since this is not a case of left-adjunction or incorporation. Therefore, the verb must target a different position, adjacent to that hosting the complementizer. Being both, the particle *po* and the verb, head elements both appearing in the C field, we need to split the head C in more than one position. The proposal that the CP structure can contain more than one position is not new. It has been put forward by Rizzi in 1997. According to Rizzi (1997), the left periphery of the sentence can host a series of hierarchically projected positions of which the highest is Force and the lowest is Finiteness (Fin). Force expresses the kind of information relative to the clause-type. It marks the sentence as declarative, relative, exclamative, or interrogative. Fin, instead, expresses the finite or non-finite character of the sentence. Between Force and Fin, discourse-related functional heads such as topic and focus occur, yelding the following structure (Rizzi and Bocci, 2017):

(13)   Force >   Top   >   Int >   Top   >   Q/Foc   >   Fin   >   IP

The categories in (13) are all part of the expanded CP. An articulated structure of the CP system permits to *po* and the verb to have different landing sites inside the same domain.

Given the representation in (13), what is the syntactic position of the complementizer *po*? At first sight, it seems that Albanian *po,* heading the conditional clauses, occupies the Force head in the CP domain since Force is the locus where information about clausal type and illocutionary force are codified. But, if we test the position of *po* in relation to topics, we see that it is in a lower position. The data in (14) and (15) show that *po* can be preceded by topicalized phrases:

(14)   a. ***Makinën**   po ta   blejë   Beni,   edhe unë   e   blej*
              car.ACC.DEF PO SBJV+it   buy.3SG Ben.NOM   also I.NOM it.CL buy.1SG
              'The car, if Ben buys it, I buy it too'
         b. ***Makinën**   po   e   bleu   Beni,   edhe unë   e   blej*
              car.ACC.DEF PO   it.CL buy.AOR.3SG Ben.NOM   also I.NOM it.CL buy.1SG

'The car, if Ben buys it, I buy it too'

(15) a. ***Nesër   po të blejë makinën Beni, edhe unë e blej***
             tomorrow PO SBJV buy.3SG car.ACC.DEF Ben also I.NOM it.CL buy.1SG
             'If Ben will buy the car tomorrow, I will buy it to'
      b. ***Nesër   po bleu   makinën Beni, edhe unë e   blej***
             tomorrow PO buy.AOR.3SG car.ACC.DEF Ben also I.NOM it.CL buy.1SG
             'If Ben will buy the car tomorrow, I will buy it to'

The above examples show that *po* cannot be the highest functional head in the clause. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that it occupies the intermediate Int position, which also corresponds to the position where the Italian conditional complementizer *se* 'if' is merged (Rizzi and Bocci, 2017).

    Let us now consider which position the verb occupies in the left periphery of *po*-clauses. As we saw, the complementizer *po* combines with the subjunctive verb or with the indicative past simple. The subjunctive is formed by an inflected verb preceded by the modal particle *të.* This mood marker occupies a position above the IP domain. This is supported by the fact that, even if it is an integral part of the lexical verb, it is invariable. In addition to that, the modal particle precedes the clitics associated with the subjunctive verb. As we saw in (10a), in subjunctive clauses, clitics appear between the subjunctive particle and the inflected verb. If clitics adjoin to Infl or Tense, the position of *na* in (10a) can be taken as evidence that the mood marker *të* is higher than IP/TP. Thus, it is natural to assume that also *të* is situated in the CP domain[11]. In particular, I assume that the subjunctive particle *të* is merged in the Fin position. I also assume that the mood particle forms a complex head with Infl/Tense. So, the head hosting the particle *të* also hosts the entire subjunctive verb[12]. This is supported by the fact that, in subjunctive clauses, the subject cannot appear between the mood marker *të* and the inflected verb (16a), i.e. a preverbal subject is incompatible with the specifier of IP/TP:

(16) a. **Meri dëshiron që të *Beni*   niset   nesër**
             Mary want.3SG that SBJV Ben.NOM leave.3SG tomorrow
             'Mary wants Ben to leave tomorrow
      b. *Meri dëshiron   që **Beni**   të   niset   nesër*
             Mary want.3SG   that Ben.NOM SBJV leave.3SG tomorrow
             'Mary wants Ben to leave tomorrow'

The marker *të* behaves as a morphological affix, preventing the realization of the subject inside the IP/TP domain. As shown in (16a), the subject cannot surface inside the inflectional string. When the subject appears in a preverbal position, it is realized between the complementizer *që* 'that' and the subjunctive marker *të,* both located inside the C domain. This clearly indicates that there is no position available within the IP/TP domain for the subject or that a strict adjacency between the verbal elements is obligatorily required. The position of this constituent in (16b) corresponds to a topic

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[11] That the mood marker introducing Balkan subjunctive moods is a C element is assumed by Agouraki (1991), Roussou (2000), Hill (2002), Manzini and Savoia (2007, 2018a, 2018b), Turano (2017).

[12] Notice that the sequence *të*+clitic+verb cannot be separated by any constituent. The idea that the locus of the subjunctive particle hosts the entire verbal form is also assumed by Hill (2002) in her treatment of Romanian subjunctive particle *së*.

position, even if the DP *Beni* in that position is interpreted as unmarked with respect to the information structure of the sentence: it occupies the clause-initial position without bearing a special pragmatic function.

Coming back to the conditional clauses headed by *po*, we can conclude that the linear order in (1) indicates the presence of different C-heads in the structure, reflecting the positions identified by Rizzi (1997). Inside the CP domain, the head Int hosts the complementizer *po*, whereas the head Fin hosts the entire verbal form when a subjunctive verb is selected, or it hosts the aorist when the indicative mood is selected. This ensures the required adjacency between *po* and the verb. When clitics are present, they move along with the verb to the Fin position. Therefore, sentential complements in conditional *po*-clauses are IntPs with the hierarchy in (17):

(17)   [ForceP   [TopP   [IntP *po*   [FinP *të*+V   [IP/TP Subj V̶ [VP V̶]]]]

Hence, (17) indicates the presence of three C-heads in the structure: the lowest Fin hosting the verb, the intermediate Int hosting the complementizer, the highest Force marking the clause as a subordinate sentence.

A characteristic of *po* is that it does not activate a Topic field between Int and Fin, so topics cannot be realized in that position. This probably is due to the fact that a topic head could intervene between *po* and the verb blocking the movement of the verb to a position adjacent to that of *po*. What induces verb movement to C remains an open question.

2.2. The distribution of sikur

Sikur is a conditional complementizer introducing sentences whose content is unrealizable: What is assumed in the conditional clause is contrary to the reality. *Sikur* takes only subjunctive complements. This is illustrated in (18), whereas (19) shows that other subcategorizations are disallowed. In particular, (19a) illustrates the ungrammaticality due to the presence of an indicative present tense; (19b) illustrates the case of the indicative past tense; and (19c) is ruled out because it contains an optative mood:

(18)   *Sikur **të**   **gjeja**   ngushëllim   për dhembjen time*
         SIKUR SBJV   find.1SG consolation   for pain   my
         'If I could find consolation for my pain'

(19)   a.   **Sikur **gjej** ngushëllim për dhembjen time*
         b.   **Sikur **gjejta** ngushëllim për dhembjen time*
         c.   **Sikur **gjetsha** ngushëllim për dhembjen time*

The above examples show that the distribution of *sikur* is limited to a specific mood inflection: that expressing the *irrealis* modality. This exclusive possibility of selection distinguishes it from *po,* which, as we saw, in addition to subjunctive clauses, can also select sentences containing the indicative past tense.

What *sikur* shares with *po* is the impossibility to be used in indirect questions:

(20)   **Mendoja **sikur** të   shkoj   apo jo*

think.1SG SIKUR SBJV go.1SG or not
'I was thinking whether I should go or not'

This ungrammaticality parallels the situation illustrated in (12).

Although *sikur* and *po* look partially similar in that both select subjunctive clauses and both are excluded in indirect questions, a deeper approach reveals significant differences between the behavior of these two elements: in *sikur*-clauses the subject can be preverbal, i.e. the subject can appear in a position preceding the subjunctive verb:

(21) *Sikur **kjo grua** të ishte martuar, tani nuk do të ishte vetëm*
SIKUR this woman SBJV be.3SG married, now not be.COND.3SG alone
'If this woman had gotten married' now she would not be alone'

The example in (21) shows that *sikur* does not require strict adjacency with the verb. *Sikur*-clauses do not display verb second effects which characterize *po*-clauses.

Another point of difference between *sikur* and *po* is the position of topics: they are allowed on either side of *sikur*: topics can precede (22) or follow (23) it:

(22) a. ***Benin** sikur ta kishte takuar Meri, e kishte ftuar*
Ben.ACC SIKUR SBJV+him have.3SG met, Mary.NOM him have.3SG invited
'Ben, if she had met him, she would have invited him'
  b. ***Sot** sikur të kishte ardhur Meri, do të kishte takuar Benin*
today SIKUR SBJV have.3SG come Mary.NOM have.COND.3SG. met ben.ACC
'If he had come today, he would have met Ben'

(23) a. *Sikur **Benin** ta kishte takuar Meri, e kishte ftuar*
  b. *Sikur **sot** të kishte ardhur Meri, do të kishte takuar Benin*

Both word orders in (22a) and (23a), which result from NP-raising of the direct object from VP to the clause initial position, are grammatical. The fact that *sikur* can be preceded by topics indicates that, like *po*, it occupies a position lower than Force. I assume that it is merged in the same position of *po,* in the Int head but, differently from *po*, in presence of *sikur* a topic domain between Int and Fin is projected hosting the subject of the clause or other topicalized constituents. Thus, the structure it projects is as in (24):

(24) [ForceP [TopP Top [IntP *sikur* [TopP Top/Subj [FinP *të*+V [IP/TP ~~Subj~~ ~~V~~ [VP ~~V~~]]]]]]]

Thus, one aspect opposes this configuration to that proposed for *po*: the presence of two different positions for the realization of topicalized constituents.

2.3. The distribution of nëse

The conditional complementizer *nëse,* that has a more limited use, introduces clauses whose condition is possible or desirable. It selects only complements containing an indicative verbal form. This is shown in (25a), where the clause has a present tense, in (25b) where the sentence has an imperfect tense, and in (25c) that contains a past tense:

(25)   a.   *Nëse **punon**, fiton!*
             NËSE work.2SG earn.2SG
             'If you work, you earn'
       b.   *Nëse ndokush **kapej**   pa   pasaport futej   në burg*
             NËSE someone catch.3SG without passport, put.3SG in prison
             'If someone was caught without a passport, he was put in prison'
       c.   *Nëse **vendosi**   ashtu, kishte   të drejt*
             NËSE decide.AOR.3SG so   have.3SG right
             'If he decided so, he was right'

In the context of other complements, it is not allowed. Thus, (26a), where the verb is in subjunctive mood and (26b) where the verb is in the optative mood are ungrammatical:

(26)   a.   **Nëse **të punosh**, fiton*
       b.   **Nëse **punofshe**, fiton*

Unlike other conditional complementizers, *nëse* can also be found in indirect *yes/no* interrogatives:

(27)   *Nuk di   **nëse**   punon   apo jo*
        not know.1SG NËSE   work.3SG or not
        'I don't know if he works or not'

Both in root and embedded clauses, the unmarked word order inside the conditional clause is Subject-Verb-Object which is the canonical word order of Albanian clauses:

(28)   a.   *Nëse **Lindita   takon   Mirën**, më   thuaj!*
             NËSE Lindita.NOM meet.3SG Mira.ACC me.CL tell.2SG
             'If Lindita meets Mira, tell me'
       b.   *Nuk di   nëse   **Lindita   takon   Mirën***
             not   know.1SG NËSE   Lindita.NOM meet.3SG Mira.ACC
             'I don't know if Lindita meets Mira'

This linear order can be taken as evidence for saying that the verb raises and stops to I/T where it combines with the verbal inflection, whereas the subject occupies the canonical position of the specifier of IT/TP.
    Topic phrases can either precede (29) or follow (30) the complementizer:

(29)   a.   **Mirën**   nëse   e   takon   Beni,   më   thuaj!*
             Mira.ACC NËSE   her.CL meet.3SG Ben.NOM me.CL tell.2SG
             'If Ben meets Mira, tell me'
       b.   **Sot**   nëse takon   Mirën,   më thuaj!*
             today NËSE meet.3SG Mira.ACC me.CL tell.2SG
             'If he meets Mira today, tell me'

(30)   a.   *Nëse **Mirën** e takon Beni, më thuaj!*
       b.   *Nëse **sot** takon Mirën, më thuaj!*

Examples in (30) show that *nëse* does not require to be adjacent to the verb. A topicalized element can interrupt the sequence formed by *sikur* and the verb.

The distribution of *nëse* in relation to topic phrases suggests that it occupies the intermediate position, Int, in the left periphery of the clause. Therefore, a *sikur*-clause has the hierarchical structure in (31):

(31)   [ForceP [TopicP Top [IntP *nëse* [TopicP Top   [FinP   [IP/TP Subj V [VP V̶]]]]]]]

This hierarchy ensures two landing sites where to accommodate topics inside the C-domain that also hosts the complementizer.

2.4. The distribution of në

The complementizer *në* introduces clauses whose condition is possible or desirable. It can select indicative (32a) or optative (32b) clauses:

(32)   a.   *Në **fiton**   garën,   do të marrësh kupën*
             NË win.2SG   race.ACC.DEF take.FUT.2SG cup.ACC.DEF
             'If you win the race, you will take the cup'
        b.   *Në **fitofsh**   garën,   do të marrësh kupën*
             NË win.OPT.2SG race.ACC.DEF take.FUT.2SG cup.ACC.DEF
             'If you win the race, you will take the cup'

Other combinations are ungrammatical. This is shown in (33) containing a subjunctive verb:

(33)   **Në **të fitosh** garën, do të marrësh kupën*

Like *po*, also *në* must be strictly adjacent to the verb. This triggers a restriction on the word order: the subject is not allowed in the canonical preverbal position. The post-verbal position is the only possibility:

(34)   a.   *Në doni   **ju**,   mund të   vini nesër*
             NË want.2PL you.2PL can   SBJV come.2PL tomorrow
             'If you want, you can come tomorrow'
        b.   **Në **ju** doni, mund të vini nesër*

(35)   a.   *Në fitoftë   **Mira**   garën,   do të marrë kupën*
             NË win.OPT.3SG. Mira.NOM race.ACC.DEF take.FUT.3SG cup.ACC.DEF
             'If Mira wins the race, she will take the cup'
        b.   **Në **Mira** fitoftë garën, do të marrë kupën*

This adjacency requirement blocks the realization of any type of topic between the conditional complementizer and the inflected verb. Thus, neither DPs (36) nor adverbials (37) can intervene in this position:

(36)   a.   *_Në **garën**   e   fiton   Mira,   do të marrë   kupën_
            NË race.ACC.DEF it.CL win.3SG Mira.NOM take.FUT.3SG cup.ACC.DEF

          b.   *_Në **garën**   e   fitoftë   Mira,   do të marrë   kupën_
            NË race.ACC.DEF   it.CL   win.OPT.3SG Mira.NOM take.FUT.3SG cup.ACC.DEF

(37)   a.   *_Në **sot** fiton   Mira,   do të marrë   kupën_
            NË today win.3SG   Mira.NOM take.FUT.3SG cup.ACC.DEF
            'If today Mira wins, she will take the cup'

          b.   *_Në **sot** fitoftë   Mira,   do të marrë   kupën_
            NË today win.OPT.3SG Mira.NOM take.FUT.3SG cup.ACC.DEF
            'If today Mira wins, she will take the cup'

Topics can precede the complementizer:

(38)   a.   **Garën** _në e fiton Mira, do të marrë kupën_
          b.   **Garën** _në e fitoftë Mira, do të marrë kupën_

(39)   a.   **Sot** _në fiton Mira, do të marrë kupën_
          b.   **Sot** _në fitoftë Mira, do të marrë kupën_

Like _po_, _në_ triggers verb-raising to C giving a surface order where the verb precedes the subject. In this case, too, the complementizer and the verb cannot be realized in the same C-head. _Në_ and the verb must stay in two adjacent C-heads. Based on these data and the position of _në_ in relation to topics, we propose the following structural representation for _në_-clauses:

(40)   [_ForceP_ [_TopP_ Top [_IntP_   _në_   [_FinP_ V [_IP/TP_ ~~Subj V~~ [_vP_ ~~V~~]]]]]]

In conclusion, although Albanian has four different complementizers for conditional clauses, it has a common landing site for all of them: the head Int. However, the characteristics of these complementizers, their occurrence and combination with certain verbal moods and tenses and the strict adjacency to the verb that two of them necessarily require, indicate that they have distinct properties even if this is not reflected at the level of syntactic representation. These four complementizers generate in standard Albanian a series of very particular structures, that, as we will see, are completely absent in the Arbëresh varieties investigated here which do not register any of these elements in their lexicon.

3. Arbëresh data

As in all situations of intense language contact, also in the case of Arbëresh the language component that has been more sensitive to the influence of Italian and Romance varieties has been the lexicon. Lexical borrowing is widespread in the languages of the world (Bloomfield, 1933; Haugen, 1950). Weinreich (1953: 56) claims that the vocabulary of a language is the domain of borrowing _par excellence_.

    In the Arbëresh communities, where speakers use two different languages, borrowing occurs along with code-switching and code-mixing. What we can observe in the Arbëresh

dialects is the phenomenon that Bloomfield (1933) calls *intimate borrowing*: material that is transferred from a dominant language (Italian) to a less prestigious language (Arbëresh).

Arbëresh contains Italian/Romance loanwords of different categories. These reflect in some way the borrowing scale formulated by various scholars (Whitney, 1881; Haugen, 1950; Mysken, 1981; Thomason and Kaufman, 1988) based on the following hierarchy:

(41) Nouns – adjectives – verbs – coordinating and subordinating conjunctions - prepositions

All the Italian/Romance loanwords show full linguistic integration in the Arbëresh grammar. This can be shown by using the classes of nouns and verbs. As for nouns, Arbëresh has a three-class gender system (masculine, feminine, and neuter) and a five-Case system (nominative, accusative, dative, genitive, ablative). Loanwords borrowed from Italian/Romance when enter the Arbëresh grammar maintain the original gender. So Italian/Romance feminine words are assigned to feminine gender, whereas masculine words are assigned to masculine gender. Examples of feminine words are given in (42):

(42)   *finestr* 'window' > Italian *finestra*
         fest 'party'   > Italian *festa*
         tend 'curtain'   > Italian *tenda*

Examples of masculine words are given in (43):

(43)   *vitr* 'glass'   > Italian *vetro*
         mur 'wall'   > Italian *muro*
         servitur 'servant' > Italian *servitore*

Following the rules of Arbëresh grammar, Italian/Romance words incorporate the definite article[13] and inflect for Case. In (44), examples are given of a definite feminine noun which is, respectively, marked with nominative, accusative, and genitive Case:

(44)   a. ***Finestra***   *osht   hapur*
            window.NOM.DEF be.3SG open.PRT
            'The window opened'
        b. *Hapi*   ***finestrin***
            open.1SG   window.ACC.DEF
            'I open the window'
        c. *Tenda*   *e* ***finestres***[14]
            curtain.NOM.DEF ART window.GEN.DEF
            'The curtain of the window'

In (45), I give examples of a definite masculine noun:

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[13] In Albanian/Arbëresh the definite article is incorporated with the noun:
(i) *mal* 'mountain'
(ii) *mali* 'the mountain'
[14] Albanian genitive nouns are preceded by an article agreeing with the head noun.

(45)   a.   ***Vitri***   *osht*   *çar*
               glass.NOM.DEF   be.3SG broken.PRT
               'The glass broke'
      b.   *Çai*   ***vitrin***
               break.1SG   glass.ACC.DEF
               'I break the glass'
      c.   *Kughuri*   *i*   ***vitrit***
               color.NOM.DEF ART   glass.GEN.DEF
               'The color of the glass'

Likewise, loan verbs borrowed from Italian/Romance enter the Arbëresh grammar in the infinitive form and take the Arbëresh suffixes during conjugation. So, a verb like *partiri* 'leave' (> Italian *partire*) has the paradigm illustrated in (46a) for the indicative present. The suffixes are the same of an original Albanian verb like *qeshi* 'laugh' (46b):

(46)   a.   *partir-**i**,*   *partir-**in**, partir-**in**,   *partir-**mi**,*   *partir-**ni**, partir-**njin***
               leave.1SG / leave.2SG / leave.3SG / leave.1PL / leave.2PL / leave.3PL
      b.   *qesh-**i**,*   *qesh-**in**,*   *qesh-**in**,*   *qesh-**mi**,*   *qesh-**ni**,*   *qesh-**njin***
               laugh.1SG /laugh.2SG / laugh.3SG / laugh.1PL / laugh.2PL / laugh.3PL

But lexicon is not the only domain affected by Italian/Romance influence. The impact of the language contact is also observed in the syntax. There are syntactic structures in Arbëresh that are built up as in Italian rather than as in Albanian and this is a clear contact-induced change. One example is represented by causative clauses. In Arbëresh dialects, the causative verb *boj/bëj/bënj* 'make' takes clausal subjunctive complements, whose thematic subject is marked with dative Case, when the subjunctive verb is transitive (47a) or with accusative Case when the verb is intransitive (47b). The subject of the subjunctive clause, which appears at the end of the sentence, shows agreement with the subjunctive verb:

(47)   a.   *Na*   *i*   *bomi*   *të dobarnj*   *makinin*   *Xhanit*[15]
               we.NOM him.CL make.1PL   SBJV repair.3SG   car.ACC.DEF John.DAT
               'We make John repair the car'
      b.   *Na*   *bomi*   *të shurbenj*   *Xhanin*
               we.NOM make.1PL   SBJV work.3SG John.ACC
               'We make John work'

These constructions exhibit syntactic characteristics typical of Italian causative clauses, where Case assignment on the arguments depends on the process of *restructuring* (Rizzi 1976, 1982), a syntactic operation of structural simplification which reduces a biclausal structure into a monoclausal one, forming a complex predicate. The consequence of this process is that the embedded verb does not longer form a constituent with its own arguments. This turns the subject of the embedded clause into an internal argument of the new complex verb. The result is that the embedded subject gets dative Case (48a) when

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[15] In standard Albanian and in all Albanian dialects, all dative NPs or pronouns in argument position must be doubled by the corresponding dative clitic.

the embedded verb is transitive (in this case, accusative Case is assigned to the direct object), whereas it has accusative Case (48b) when the verb is intransitive:

(48)   a.   *Noi facciamo riparare l'auto **a Gianni***
            we make.1PL repair.INF the car to John
            'We make John repair the car'
        b.   *Noi facciamo lavorare **Gianni***
            we make.1PL work.INF John.ACC
            'We make John work'

Restructuring, in Italian, depends on the non-finite character of the embedded verb. This process takes place when the embedded clause is an infinitival complement. In this case, the uninflected embedded verb is unable to assign an external theta role and a nominative Case to its subject. Examples in (47) show that Arbëresh, while retaining features of Albanian grammar (use of the subjunctive in substitution of the infinitive and agreement between the embedded verb and its subject in person and number), it has undergone changes under the influence of the surrounding Italo-Romance varieties. The verb *boj*, like Italian *fare,* behaves as a restructuring verb with monoclausal properties despite the fact that the Arbëresh causative verb selects a finite clausal complement whose verb inflects with its logical subject. Evidence for the monoclausal nature of Arbëresh causatives is provided by the position of the dative clitic in (47a). It refers to the embedded dative subject but it is obligatorily realized to the left of the matrix verb. This is an unequivocal indication that we are in presence of a monoclausal structure.

3.1. Arbëresh conditional sentences

In this subsection, I will focus on Arbëresh conditional clauses. From a comparison between Albanian and Arbëresh lexicon, on the one hand, and Arbëresh and Italian lexicon, on the other hand, it emerges that one of the categories most subject to phenomena of weakening is that of subordinating conjunctions, which have been greatly reduced compared to their original state. In particular, the use of conditional conjunctions is drastically reduced in the Arbëresh varieties, leading to their total loss.
    Since subordinating conjunctions are delegated to introduce certain types of sentences (declarative, interrogative, relative, exclamative, conditional), in their absence, two strategies are activated in Arbëresh: a) a lexical transfer from Italian to Arbëresh as in the example in (49a) where the element *mentre* 'while' is an Italian borrowing that substitutes the standard Albanian word *ndërsa* (49b):

(49)   a.   ***Mentre*** *han,*   *vren*   *televizionin*
            while eat.3SG   watch.3SG TV.ACC.DEF
            'While eating, he watches TV'
        b.   ***Ndërsa*** *ha,*   *shikon*   *televizorin*
            while   eat.3SG watch.3SG TV.ACC.DEF
            'While eating, he watches TV'

b) a second, more radical strategy can be activated, which consists in the simplification of the syntactic system since conjunctions that disappear are not replaced; consequently, all

the structures that they project are missing. This is what happened in Arbëresh with conditional complementizers. The four elements introducing conditional sentences in standard Albanian have disappeared. They have been substituted with elements that come from Albanian but in this language they have other functions. In this subsection, I will show the variation across Arbëresh dialects. I have chosen dialects from four different Italian regions (Sicily, Calabria, Basilicata, Molise) and different provinces (Palermo, Cosenza, Potenza, Campobasso) as well as dialects spoken in the same area (Crotone, Calabria), but in different communities. I will start from the southernmost dialect to go up to the northernmost one.

The first dialect I will consider is that of Piana degli Albanesi (province of Palermo, Sicily). In this dialect, conditional clauses can be headed both by the element *nga*, which in standard Albanian corresponds to the preposition 'from' (50), or by the element *sidu*, which is the combination of the Sicilian complementizer *si* < Italian *se* 'if' + Sicilian *iddu* 'it' (51). *Nga* is the form preferred by adults, while *sidu* is used by young people:

(50)   *Vi   **nga** kisha*
        come.1SG NGA church
        'I'm coming from the church'

(51)   ***Nga/sidu** Marieja ble a makina, e ghuzar anki u*
        NGA/SIDU Mary.NOM buy.AOR.3SG the car, it use.1SG. too I.NOM
        'If Mary buys the car, I will use it too'

In the province of Crotone (Median Calabria), there are three Arbëresh-speaking communities: S. Nicola dell'Alto, Carfizzi, and Pallagorio. Although the three communities are geographically very close, the complementizers they use are different.

In Nicola dell'Alto, conditional clauses are headed by the element *dhe* (52a), which in standard Albanian corresponds to the coordinating conjunction 'and' (52b)[16]:

(52)   a. ***Dhe** vjen   Maria,   vinj puru u*
            DHE come.3SG Mary.NOM come.1SG too I.NOM
            'If Mary comes, I'm coming too'
        b. *Ai punon   **dhe** studion*
            he.NOM work.3sg dhe study.3SG
            'He works and studies'

Dhe is the only element this dialect has for building conditional sentences.

In Carfizzi, which is 5 kilometres away from S. Nicola dell'Alto, conditional clauses are introduced by the elements *ngaç* (53a). It presumably comes from the Albanian *ngaqë* 'since' (53b).

(53)   a. ***Ngaç** vjen   Maria,   vinj   puru u*
            NGAÇ come.3SG Mary.NOM come.1SG too   I.NOM
            'If Mary comes, I'm coming too'
        b. *Iku   nga   shtëpia **ngaqë** nuk kishte   para*

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[16] In this dialect, the coordinating conjunction has been substituted with the Italian conjunction *e*:
(i)   *Ai han **e** pin*
        'He eats and drinks'

run.AOR.3SG from house   NGAQË not have.3SG money
'He ran away from home since he had no money'

In Pallagorio, which is about 12 kilometres away from S. Nicola dell'Alto and from Carfizzi, conditional clauses are headed by the element *si* (54a) that corresponds to Albanian/Arbëresh 'how' (54b).

(54)   a.   ***Si* vjen   Maria,   vinja puru u**
              SI come.3SG Mary.NOM come.1SG too I.NOM
              'If Mary comes, I'm coming too'
        b.   ***Si* fjet ai?**
              SI speak.3SG he.NOM
              'How does he speak?'

Arbëresh dialects spoken in the provinces of Cosenza (Northern Calabria), Potenza (Basilicata) and Molise (the northernmost of the regions considered here) are similar in that they all use the element *ndë* which probably is the combination of the preposition *në* 'in' with *të*, with subsequent voicing of the consonant *t*: *n+të > ndë*[17]. The example in (55a) is from Falconara Albanese (Cosenza), (55b) is from S. Costantino Albanese (Potenza, Basilicata), (55c) is from Portocannone (Campobasso, Molise):

(55)   a.   ***Ndë* bën   këtë, nuk je   njeri**
              NDË do.2SG this not   be.2SG man
              'If you do this, you are not a gentleman'
        b.   ***Ndë* bën këtë, nuk je njiri**
              NDË do.2SG this not   be.2SG man
              'If you do this, you are not a gentleman'
        c.   ***Ndë* ti urdhënon   popujt jot të vere,   ai bën   rëvulucjunën**
              NDË you order.2SG   people your SBJV leave.3SG he make.3SG revolution
              'If you order your people to go, they make a revolution'

Thus, Arbëresh varieties differ from standard Albanian in that they have a single complementizer for conditional clauses, and this does not match any of standard Albanian. This gives rise to paradigms that mirror in their syntactic behavior the characteristics of Italian conditional sentences. Specifically, we find conditional sentences that show similarities with Italian conditional clauses in many respects. First, as Italian can have a pre- or a post-verbal subject (56), so does Arbëresh (57)-(61):

(56)   a.   *Se **Maria** viene, avvisami!*   Italian
              SE Mary come.3SG tell+me
              'If Mary comes, tell me!'
        b.   *Se viene **Maria**, avvisami!*

(57)   a.   *Nga/sidu **Marieja**   vjen,   vinj   anki u*   Piana degli Albanesi
              NGA/SIDU Mary.NOM come.3SG come.1SG. too I.NOM
              'If Mary comes, I will come too'

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[17] According to Demiraj (1985) *ndë* is the ancient form of the contemporary preposition *në* 'in'.

b. *Nga/sidu vjen **Marieja**, vinj anki u*

(58) a. *Dhe **Maria** vjen, avizarm!*   S. Nicola dell'Alto
DHE Mary come.3SG tell+me
'If Mary comes, tell me!'
b. *Dhe vjen **Maria**, avizarm!*

(59) a. *Ngaç **Maria** vjen, avizarm!*   Carfizzi
NGAÇ Mary come.3SG tell+me
'If Mary comes, tell me!'
b. *Ngaç vjen **Maria**, avizarm!*

(60) a. *Si **Maria** vjen, vizarm!*   Pallagorio
SI Mary come.3SG tell+me
'If Mary comes, tell me!'
b. *Si vjen **Maria**, vizarm!*

The same happens with the Northern dialects, exemplified by the Arbëresh of S. Costantino Albanese:

(61) a. *Ndë **Maria**   vjen,   vinj   dhe u*
NDË Mary.NOM come.3SG come.1SG. too I.NOM
'If Mary comes, I will come too'
b. *Ndë vjen **Maria**, vinj dhe u*

Thus, empirical data show that the position of the subject can alternate. At the same time, the above paradigms show that the specific property of two Albanian complementizers (*po* and *në*) requiring the strict adjacency to the verb is not present in Arbëresh, whose conditional sentences show the same linear order with the equivalent sentences in Italian. Notice that the word order is irrelevant for the interpretation of the clause: the pairs of sentences in the examples from (56) to (61) are synonymous.

Secondly, Italian and Arbëresh show similarities in the application of topicalization. In Italian, a topic element may appear between the complementizer occupying the first position of the sentence and the subject occupying the specifier of IP/TP (62a), or it can appear in a position preceding the complementizer (62b)

(62) a. *Se **l'auto** la compra Maria, la uso pure io*
SE the car it buy.3SG Mary it use.1SG too I.NOM
'The car, if Mary buys it, I will use it too'
b. ***L'auto** se la compra Maria, la uso pure io*

In Arbëresh, too, topicalization can involve the lower CP domain where topicalized elements follow the complementizer (a-examples) or the higher one, where they precede it (b-examples).

Piana degli Albanesi
(63) a. *Nga/sidu   **a makina** e   ble   Marieja,   e ghuzar anki u*
NGA/SIDU the car   it   buy.3SG Mary.NOM it use.1SG   too I.NOM

'The car, if Mary buys it, I will use it too'

    b.   *A **makina**, nga/sidu e ble Marieja, e ghuzar anki u*

S. Nicola dell'Alto

(64)   a.   *Dhe **makinin**   e   bjen   Maria,   e uzari   puru u*
            DHE car.ACC.DEF it   buy.3SG Mary.NOM it use.1SG too   I.NOM
            'The car, if Mary buys it, I will use it too'
    b.   ***Makinin**, dhe e bjen Maria, e uzari puru u*

Carfizzi:

(65)   a.   *Ngaç **mokinin**   e   bjen   Maria,   e uzari   puru u*
            NGAÇ car.ACC.DEF it   buy.3SG Mary.NOM it use.1SG too   I.NOM
            'The car, if Mary buys it, I will use it too'
    b.   ***Mokinin**, ngaç e bjen Maria, e uzari puru u*

Pallagorio:

(66)   a.   *Si **makinin**   e   bjen   Maria,   e   uzarnja   puru u*
            SI car.ACC.DEF it   buy.3SG Mary.NOM it use.1SG   too   I.NOM
            'The car, if Mary buys it, I will use it too'
    b.   ***Makinin**, si e bjen Maria, e uzarnja puru u*

Northern dialects are exemplified with data from *S. Costantino Albanese*:

(67)   a.   *Ndë **makinin**   e blen   Maria,   e uzarnja   dhe u*
            NDË car.ACC.DEF it buy.3SG Mary.NOM it use.1SG   too   I.NOM
            'The car, if Mary buys it, I will use it too'
    b.   ***Makinin**, ndë e blen Maria, e uzari dhe u*

Therefore, topicalization applies equally in Italian and Arbëresh.
    In addition to that, Arbëresh conditional clauses share with Italian the possibility to insert adverbial material between the complementizer and the verb. The Italian example is given in (68).

(68)   *Se **oggi**   tu   compri l'auto,   la uso   anche io*
            SE today you.2SG buy.2SG the car, it use.1SG too   I.NOM
            'If today you buy the car, I will use it too'

From (69) to (73), I present the Arbëresh data:

Piana degli Albanesi

(69)   *Nga/sidu **sot**   blen   a makina, e ghuzar   anki u*
            NGA/SIDU today buy.2SG the car, it use.1SG too   I.NOM
            'If today you buy the car, I will use it too'

S. Nicola dell'Alto:

(70)   *Dhe **sot**   bjen   makinin,   e uzari   puru u*
            DHE today buy.2SG car.ACC.DEF it use.1SG too   I.NOM
            'If today you buy the car, I will use it too'

Carfizzi:
(71)   *Ngaç **sot**   bjen   mokinin,   e uzari   puru u*
        NGAÇ today buy.2SG car.ACC.DEF it use.1SG too   I.NOM
        'If today you buy the car, I will use it too'

Pallagorio:
(72)   *Si **sot**   bjen   makinin,   e uzarnja   puru u*
        SI today buy.2SG car.ACC.DEF   it use.1SG   too   I.NOM
        'If today you buy the car, I will use it too'

Northern dialects are exemplified with data from *S. Costantino Albanese:*

(73)   *Ndë **sot**   blen   makinin,   e uzarnja   dhe u*
        NDË today buy.2SG car.ACC.DEF   it use.1SG   too I.NOM
        'If today you buy the car, I will use it too'

Finally, Italian (74) and Arbëresh (75) show similarities in that their conditional complementizers can be used in indirect *yes/no* interrogatives:

(74)   *Non so   **se** vjene   Maria*
        not know.1SG SE come.3SG Mary
        'I don't know if Mary comes'

(75)   a.   *Ng di   **nga/sidu** vjen Marieja*   Piana degli Albanesi
            not know.1SG NGA/SIDU come.3SG Mary
            'I don't know if Mary comes'
        b.   *Ng di   **dhe** vjen   Maria*   S. Nicola dell'Alto
            not know.1SG DHE come.3SG Mary
            'I don't know if Mary comes'
        c.   *Ng di   **ngaç** vjen Maria*   Carfizzi
            not know.1SG NGAÇ come.3SG Mary
            'I don't know if Mary comes'
        d.   *Ng di   **si** vjen Maria*   Pallagorio
            not know.1SG SI come.3SG Mary
            'I don't know if Mary comes'
        e.   *Ng di   **ndë** vjen Maria*   S. Costantino Albanese
            not know.1SG NDË come.3SG Mary
            'I don't know if Mary comes'

All these sentences parallel the Italian version in (74).
    Summing up, although the complementizers these dialects use is not a lexical borrowing from Italian, the structure they project is similar to that of Italian. In particular, the position of topics presents important evidence for a multi-layered CP domain similar to that of Italian where conditional complementizers realize an intermediate Int head position between the higher Force head and the lower Fin.

The data presented in this subsection show that there is no substantial difference between the syntax of Arbëresh and Italian conditional clauses. Therefore, for Arbëresh conditional clauses, I propose a syntactic structure like that in (76):

(76)   [$_{ForceP}$ [$_{TopP}$ Top [$_{IntP}$ *nga/sidu/dhe/ngaç/si/ndë*   [$_{TopP}$ Top [$_{FinP}$ [$_{IP/TP}$ ....]]]]]]

Thus, at the level of clausal structure, Arbëresh behaves fundamentally in the same way as Italian.

4.   Conclusions

In this paper, I have accounted for the main distributional characteristics of conditional complementizers in standard Albanian, Italian and Arbëresh. I assumed a syntactic derivation for the internal structure of the clause that these elements project according to which conditional complementizers are head elements generated in an intermediate position between Force and Fin in a split Complementizer Phrase in the sense of Rizzi (1997). Evidence for a multi-layer C-domain comes from topicalization and other phenomena such as verb-second effect. I have shown how Arbëresh dialects differ from standard Albanian in having just one single conditional complementizer, in contrast to Albanian that has four different elements. In this point, Arbëresh is similar to Italian which has only a single conditional complementizer projecting an embedded unmarked SVO sentence. I have shown that a lexicon impoverishment of the Arbëresh dialects has important implications since it directly affects the syntax, causing its impoverishment. Because of the loss of Albanian conditional complementizers, Arbëresh dialects have lost the syntactic structures that these elements project.

The comparison between standard Albanian and Arbëresh has shown a series of syntactic differences which are strictly related to the interconnection between the lexicon and the syntax.

Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	first, second, third person
ACC	accusative
AOR	aorist
C/CP	complementizer/Complementizer Phrase
COND	conditional
DAT	DATIVE
DEF	definite
DP	Determiner Phrase
FIN	finiteness
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
IMPF	imperfect
IND	indicative
INF	infinitive
I/INFL	inflection

IP	Inflectional Phrase
NOM	nominative
NP	Noun Phrase
OPT	optative
PL	plural
PRS	present
PRT	participle
SBJV	subjunctive
SG	singular
SUBJ	subject
SVO	subject, verb, object
T/TP	tense/tense phrase
VOS	verb, object, subject
V/VP	verb/Verbal Phrase

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