

Kind-defining relative clauses in the diachrony of Italian

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1. Introduction.

Within the larger class of relative clauses, we will isolate a specific subclass, first discussed in Benincà (2003, 2012a), that of relative clauses modifying a nominal predicate exemplified in (1) and (2):

- (1) Gianni è un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto
'Gianni is a man that never surrenders'
- (2) Mario è un ragazzo che puoi convincere facilmente
'Mario is a boy that you can easily convince'

We will show that the postcopular kind-defining relative clause belongs to a larger class of *kind-defining relatives*, in which other kind of verbs incorporate a stage level predicate. We will consider their properties in varieties of Italian and English, and their evolution in the history of Italian.

The copular structures whose predicate can be the antecedent of a kind-defining relative belong to the predicational (canonical, extensional) type, while the identificational (inverse, intensional) ones are excluded. The relatives that appear in this context, namely those modifying the nominal predicate of a copular sentence, display a number of special properties that set them apart from ordinary restrictive relative clauses and render them partly similar to non-restrictive relatives.

We will try to relate these special properties to the fact that such relatives concur to define a kind, and more specifically to the fact that (in opposition to restrictives) the relative clause content is not presupposed as true, and the DP in predicate position is not truly referential.

¹ Part of the matter discussed in this paper has been presented in Bristol in 2003 at the annual Incontro di Dialettologia Italiana, organised by Mair Parry; she found the proposal interesting, and soon after she used the new classification for her analysis of Ligurian and Piedmontese texts (Parry 2007). This is just an example of the attitude of Mair in her research: she is always open minded and ready to see with insightful intelligence which tools are more productive to explore the nature of every detailed linguistic phenomenon.

We dedicate this work to Mair, the best colleague and fellow-researcher, the most generous and lively friend.

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This class of relative clauses can be identified comparing old Florentine with modern Italian on the one hand, and with other medieval varieties, on the other. It will appear that the diachronic change is very limited; the distinctive features that set this class apart are present in all of these linguistic areas. What has changed is the stylistic or social level in which these features appear on the surface; what was found in Old Florentine and early Italian vernaculars is visible today only in dialects or in informal colloquial Italian. This aspect of grammatical change should also be taken into account and find its place in the reflection on diachronic phenomena.

1.1. Relative clauses in Italian

Modern Standard Italian has a system of relativization which uses lexical *wh*-pronouns or abstract *wh*-elements; *wh*-movement in restrictive relatives leaves a gap that cannot be bound by a clitic. In modern colloquial standard and regional Italian, as well as in dialects, headed relative clauses, when a DP is relativized, are introduced by a bare complementizer, *che*, co-occurring in some cases with a resumptive clitic expressing the grammatical function of the *wh*:²

(3) a Il ragazzo che **gli** ho dato il libro si chiama Mario.

The boy that **to.him** I have given the book is called Mario.

b Mario, che nessuno **lo** sopporta, non sarà invitato.

Mario, that nobody **him** can stand, will not be invited.

In particular, in relatives on a PP *wh*-complement, it appears that a strategy in fact resembling Modern English P-stranding (*modulo* the presence of clitic pronouns in Italian but not in English) is used, with a complementizer, and either a gap or a clitic pronoun in the body of the clause (perhaps with a silent P).

(4) a Hai conosciuto il bambino che **gli** hanno assegnato il premio?

² We abstract away here from the possibility that *che*, rather than a complementizer, is a (weak) relative pronoun as Sportiche (2008) and Kayne (2010) have argued for French *que* and English *that*, respectively. This proposal is irrelevant with respect to our issue.

Have you met the boy that **to.him** they assigned the prize TO?

b La ragazza che **ci** esce assieme da un anno si chiama Carla.

The girl that **there** he-goes out together WITH since last year is called Carla.

c Quello è il ristorante che abbiamo mangiato ieri.

That is the restaurant that we-ate IN yesterday

Studying headed relative clauses in old Florentine, as well as in other regional early languages of Italy, the *wh*-pronoun paradigm appears still well preserved; relative clauses show very clear evidence of *wh*-movement of a *wh*-pronoun, which is normally not accompanied by any clitic pronoun. In Old Florentine, the paradigm of relative pronouns is still preserved fairly well, and sentences of the kind in (3) are not expected (Benincà and Cinque 2010).

Nevertheless, some rare examples are found where a relative appears with a clitic corresponding to the grammatical function of the *wh*. Nordhoof (1937) and Fiorentino (1999), for Old Florentine, Parry (2007a,b), for Old North-Western vernaculars, in particular, have paid special attention to this kind of exceptions;³ their careful scrutiny reveals some cases of clitics copying the *wh* in relative clauses in the early texts. One can suppose that these cases show the emergence of a new grammar, competing with the old one, in which the properties of *wh* pronouns are weakened and on the way to disappear. This possibility does not prevent us from further enquiring whether cases of relatives with a clitic copy of the *wh*-pronoun are not random examples of the influence of a new emerging grammar, but, rather, share some particular characteristics that constitute a cluster of phenomena.⁴

We will see that in fact they correspond to what we find in modern Standard Italian, where these cases are strictly limited to the colloquial style, while in old Florentine they appear in all types of texts, even in very formal treatises.

³ It is interesting that the phenomenon is so unexpected to a modern reader that in many cases the editor has put an accent on the complementiser *che* 'that' to yield *ché* 'for', thereby transforming the relative clause into a causal clause, without argumental gaps nor *wh*-movement.

⁴ Noordhof (1937) puts together the cases of relatives with resumptive clitics in Old Florentine and compares them with modern Italian examples taken from novels written in colloquial style, such as the following from Collodi's *Pinocchio*:

(i) "un conto facilissimo, un conto che **lo** puoi fare sulla punta delle dita."

a very easy calculation, a calculation that you can do **it** on the fingers of your hand.

Even though some of the examples can have a causal or final interpretation, he maintains that nevertheless they are syntactically relative clauses, modifying a Noun head.

One subset of examples correspond in fact to modern colloquial cases: they are found in non-restrictive relatives; another subset, also corresponding to modern phenomena, are apparent restrictive relative clauses which display some peculiar semantic characteristics and behave in a consistent way. These apparently restrictive relatives, which we will call kind-defining, characteristically modify a postcopular DP. It is this second construction – which we have already examined in Benincà (2003), Benincà and Cinque (2010), Benincà (2012a) - that we will study in more detail here, with the aim of analysing in depth their syntactic and functional properties.

1.2. Relatives with resumptive clitics in modern colloquial Italian.

Modern relative clauses only have copies of the *wh* in certain cases, the more systematic of which is that of non-restrictive relatives. See (5a), which contrasts with (5b), containing a restrictive relative:

(5) a Mario, che non *lo* conosci ancora, verrà stasera
 Mario, that not him you.know yet, will come tonight

vs.

b Il ragazzo che non (**lo*) conosci ancora verrà stasera
 The boy that not (*him.)you.know yet will come tonight

In northern Italian dialects we can find examples of non-restrictive relatives on the subject with a clitic copy, which can be observed neither in standard nor in colloquial Italian (which lack subject clitics). See (6), from Paduan:

(6) a Mario, che el gaveva dedicà la vita ala scola, se gà ritirà. (*non-restrictive*)
 Mario, that he. had devoted his life to school, has retired

b Mario ze un professore ch *el* gà dedicà la so vita ala scola. (*kind-defining*)
 Mario is a teacher that he.has devoted his life to school

c Un professore che (**el*) gaveva dedicà la vita ala scola se gà ritirà. (*restrictive*)
 A teacher that had devoted his life to school has retired

1.3. Early Italian relatives with resumptive clitics.

In early Italian (Florentine) as well, the few examples of clitic pronouns resuming a relativized argument are in non-restrictive relatives, and furthermore in a kind of relatives clause that can be interpreted as including a kind-defining post-copular relative: sentences (7) are non-restrictives, sentences (8) are apparently restrictive, but have, as we will show, a different semantic interpretation and different syntactic properties:

- (7) a Quando i figliuoli del re Priamo ebbero rifatta Troia, che *l'*aveano i Greci disfatta...
(*Novellino*, 91)
when the sons of king Priam had rebuilt Troy, that *it*.had the Greeks destroyed...
- b ... cioè monsignore messer Lancialotto del Lac, che già no *l'* seppi tanto pregare d' amore ch'elli avesse di me mercede. (*Novellino*, 82).
...I mean mylord sir Lancelot du Lac, that not *him*.I-could enough pray for love that he had on me mercy
- (8) a acciocchè ... neuna cosa possa loro incontrare che non *l'*abbiano provata (Bono Giamboni, *Arte della guerra di Vegezio* 3, 2, p. 81)
in-order-that no thing can them.meet that they *it*.not.had experienced.
'in order that nothing can meet them which they had not experienced'
- b darà lo volgare dono non dimandato, che non *l'*averebbe dato lo latino (Dante Alighieri. *Convivio (II)* I, 9, p. 39)
will give the Vulgar gift not requested, that not *it*.would-have given the Latin
'Vulgar will give a not requested gift, which Latin would not have given'

These apparent restrictives do not have the function of narrowing down the reference of the head noun, which can remain undetermined, but that of giving the features which characterize the class they belong to.

Parry (2007a, b) in analyzing relative clauses from North-western medieval vernaculars-documents the contexts that characterize the presence of a clitic copying the grammatical function of the *wh*-pronoun, comparing the description of early Florentine of Benincà (2003); as in Florentine, the clitic copy is only found in non-restrictive and kind-defining relatives. We choose the following examples, all of Ligurian, 14thC (Parry 2007a, sect. 2.3.4). The first relative (9a) is non-restrictive, introduced by the *wh*-pronoun *lo qual* 'the which' (which is typical of non-restrictive relatives in modern and old Italian; see Benincà and Cinque 2010):

- (9) a messer Orcham (...), lo quar lo Segnor Dee **lo** mantegna in grande honor et possanza (14thC, Ligurian)
sir Orcham, the which the Lord God **him**.maintain in great honour
'Sir Orcham, whom may God keep in great honour!'

The second type of relative could be a kind-defining, but could also be a sort of reduced purpose clause:

- (9) b Noi sì te avemo menao questo homo mal fator e peccaor che tu lo debi zuigar e occir (14thC, Ligurian)
we so to-you.have led this man evil doer and sinner, that you him.must judge and kill
'we have brought you this evil-doer and sinner, so that you judge and kill him'

The third is a kind-defining relative, providing the features that mark a semantic class which the head belongs to:

- (9) c ché quele cose che tu non **ne** parli e manifesti sum a lo tuto ascose da lo nostro conoxemento
because those things that you not of-them talk and express are to the whole hidden from our understanding

The syntax of relative clauses in Ligurian medieval vernaculars, as illustrated in Parry (2007a, b), reflects then the syntax of medieval Florentine.

2. *Kind-defining relatives*

The relative clauses with a clitic copy which we have seen so far - non-restrictive and kind-defining relatives clauses - have in common the fact that they do not narrow down the reference of the head noun, differently from restrictive relative clauses with gaps. This happens for completely different semantic properties:⁵ While the Head of non-restrictive relatives is already identified (as in (10a)),

⁵ This class of relatives can be clearly identified in ancient Greek (see Monteil 1963; Perna 2013): they use the pronoun *hostis, hetis, hoti*, (corresponding to Latin *quisquis, quidquid*, an indefinite relative pronoun), which is never used in genuine restrictives; it appears in very few cases in non-restrictives, and - as Perna (2013) points out - in kind-defining

the antecedent of (post-copular) kind-defining relative clauses is indefinite and can remain so, because the aim of the relative is only that of defining it as a kind (as in (10b)); the restrictive relative clause, instead, univocally contributes, with the Head, to the identification of the referent of the DP (as in (10c)):

- (10) a Maria, che sa cucinare le lasagne
 Maria, who can cook the lasagna.....
- b una ragazza che sa(ppia) cucinare le lasagne....
 a girl who can/could cook the lasagna
- c la ragazza che sa cucinare le lasagne⁶
 the girl who can cook the lasagna

2.1. Kind-defining contact relatives in English

The kind-defining relative, exemplified so far from Italian and from old and modern Italian vernaculars, bears some resemblance to the so-called 'contact relative' on the subject of regional and local varieties of English, in particular as analysed in Hermann (2003) (see (11a, b)).⁷ In the county of Greater Manchester (England, see (11c), from Berizzi 2001) and in the Appalachian region (USA, (11d), from Tortora 2006, 2008), the structure appears also in the predicate of a locative copular sentence:

relative clauses (typical structures are existentials as "there is somebody that..."), generally with the subjunctive mood accompanied by the "irrealis" particle *an*.

⁶ The subjunctive mood induces the kind defining interpretation, which otherwise can remain ambiguous (in particular in those varieties of Italian where the subjunctive mood is less used):

- (i) a (Vorrei sposare) la ragazza che sa cucinare le lasagne. [+def, +spec] > restrictive
 (I would marry) the girl who can cook the lasagna
- b una ragazza che sa cucinare la lasagna ambiguous: [-def., +/- spec] > restrict / kind-def.
 a girl who can cook the lasagna
- c una ragazza che sappia cucinare la lasagna [-def., -spec] > kind defining
 a girl who can (subj.) cook the lasagna

⁷ For an early discussion of this type of relatives, see Harris and Vincent (1980).

- (11) a Leck is a young boy \emptyset was coming home from school
 b That's another place \emptyset is called after the Isle, (Ilminster, you see).
 c There's a train \emptyset goes without stopping (Great Manchester County)
 d There was a snake \emptyset come down the road (Appalachian County)

Other structures have to be interpreted as hidden locative predications, as the following (from Berizzi 2001; see also Hermann 2003):⁸

- (12) a We had this French girl \emptyset came to stay
 b My friend's got a brother \emptyset used to be in the school

Hermann (2003, pp. 35-36) records other relative structures (see (13)), which he interprets as containing a locative-existential predicate (*to know, to see* = [there in the mind / in the sight]) is [DP [relative clause]]⁹:

- (13) a I know two or three \emptyset went over. ("I know two or three persons that...")
 b I seen a chap at Broughton Moor \emptyset got his leg took off.

An apparently different kind of structures is exemplified by Hermann, who characterises them as having a "lexically empty" antecedent:

- (14) a anybody \emptyset used to come in our house on a weekend, they always thought there was a party.
 b Leonard up here would be the only person \emptyset goes to the bog

⁸ Arguments for interpreting *have* as corresponding to a *locative* (or, more abstractly, a *preposition*) + *be*, and evidence of the multiple functions of locatives to express predicates, see, among others, Freeze (1992) and Kayne (1993).

⁹ It is interesting to compare the interpretation of the verb \neq *know* as involving a locative in its semantic composition, with the fact that in some central and southern Italy dialects the verb \neq 'know' is a pronominal verb, always accompanied by a clitic cluster locative+object *ce lo so che...* "there.it.I-know that..."

As a reviewer observes, possibly in a few cases these sentences could be interpreted as cases of asyndetic coordination with an anaphoric null subject in the second clause; it seems to us (as, evidently, to Hermann, and to Harris and Vincent quoted above) that at least some cases are not open to this possible interpretation.

We have elicited interesting data on colloquial English from a Northern England speaker. She accepts the structures above as belonging to normal spoken northern English, and judges the following examples, which involve unequivocal restrictive relatives, as unacceptable:

- (15) a *I met the boy has arrived yesterday
b *I will read the book has arrived yesterday.
c *The man will arrive today is my brother.
d *The book will arrive today is interesting.

2.2. Kind-defining headless relatives in Italian

Headless relatives have severe restrictions in modern Italian: they can only be introduced by a bare *wh*- (subject or object of the relative clause); a prepositional *wh*-argument is not admitted¹⁰:

- (16) *Ho invitato [_{DP} Ø [_{PP} a chi avevi parlato]]

I have invited to whom you had spoken (cf. I have invited who you had spoken to)

The only systematic exception is that of infinitival relatives in the predicate of existential "be", "have", or "find":¹¹

¹⁰ Sentences like the following are grammatical because, despite the appearance of surface structure, the *wh* relative pronoun with an empty antecedent is not a PP but a bare *wh*:

- (i) aveva ballato [_{DP} con [_{DP} Ø chi aveva invitato]].

she had danced with whom she had invited,

The pronoun *chi* 'whom' is the direct object of the verb of the relative; the preposition *con* is selected by the main verb and governs the empty head of the headless relative clause.

The sentence in (i) can be compared with the following sentence, ungrammatical because the *wh* with empty antecedent is a PP selected by the verb of the relative clause:

- (ii) aveva invitato [_{DP} Ø [_{PP} con chi aveva ballato]]

- (17) a Ho [_{DP} ∅ [_{PP} con chi parlare]]
 I.have with whom to talk
- b Non c'è [_{DP} ∅ [_{PP} a chi chiedere informazioni]]
 there isn't to whom to ask for information
- c Non trovo [_{DP} ∅ [_{PP} a chi dare l'incarico]]
 I don't find to whom to give the appointment

In the following, we will however concentrate on those kind-defining relatives that modify a post-copular DP (as in (1), (2), (6b) and (11a,b)), taking them as the prototype of kind-defining relatives, even though these relatives are also found modifying a DP in the predicate position of existential sentences (cf. (11)), and in the apparent object position of a class of verbs ('have', 'meet', 'know', 'look for', etc.: cf. (12) and (13)), which may involve a hidden predicative structure (possibly *look (for)* [whether there is] DP, *know* [that there is] DP, etc.).

3. Properties of post copular kind-defining relatives

Properties differentiating post-copular kind-defining relative clauses from ordinary restrictive relative clauses that we discuss are:

1) *the use of presuppositional negative adverbs such as mica:*

The postverbal negative polarity element *mica*, which is possible in non-restrictives (see (18)), renders restrictive relatives ungrammatical, as in (19) (see Cinque 1976):

- (18) a Ti regalerò questi libri, che non ho *mica* ancora letto.
 I will give you these books, which I haven't yet NEG read.
- b Ho invitato Mario, che non conosci *mica*.
 I have invited Mario, whom you don't NEG know.

¹¹ In some contexts (like the complement position of verbs like 'find (out)') it may appear difficult to tell apart headless relatives from embedded interrogatives given that they utilize the same set of pronouns, but see Benincà (2012b) for diagnostics that clearly distinguish them.

- (19) a *Ti regalerò i libri che non ho *mica* letto.
 I will give you the books the I have not NEG read.
- b *Ho invitato il ragazzo che non conosci *mica*.
 I have invited the boy that you don't NEG know.

Interestingly, kind-defining relatives behave like non-restrictives (see (20)):

- (20) a Questi sono i libri che non ho *mica* ancora letto.
 These are the books that I haven't NEG yet read.
- b Mario è un uomo che non esita *mica* a rischiare.
 Mario is a man that doesn't NEG hesitate to risk

2) *the possibility of using a non-realis mood:*

The use of subjunctive is impossible in both genuine restrictives (21a) and non-restrictives (21b); it is instead possible in kind-defining relatives, both in early and modern Italian ((21c) and (21d), respectively):

- (21) a *Ho incontrato il ragazzo che abbia risolto il problema
 I have met the boy who has_{Pres. Subj.} solved the problem.
- b *Mario, che abbia risolto il problema, verrà domani.
 M., who has_{Pres. Subj.} solved the problem, will come tomorrow
- c Moises fu il primo uomo a cui Iddio desse la legge (*Tesoro volg.*, 1, 17)
 Moises was the first man to whom God gave_{ImpfSubj} the Law
- d Mario è l'unico che abbia risolto il problema
 M. is the only one who has_{PresSubj} the problem.

The subjunctive mood in (21a, b) forces the kind-defining interpretation, and is incompatible with the referentiality of the head, deriving in (21a) – a genuine restrictive - from the realis mood of the main clause and the definite article, and in (21b) - a non-restrictive - from the proper name antecedent (see above, fn. 7). The grammatical (21c, d) are not restrictive but kind-defining.

3) the possibility of using a modal in genuinely epistemic readings, which in Italian is admitted in non-restrictive but not in restrictive relatives:

(22) a Il ragazzo che deve partire presto la mattina arriva sempre stanco (*restrictive: deontic interpr. only*)

The boy that has to leave early in the morning always arrives tired.

b Un ragazzo che deve partire presto la mattina arriva sempre stanco. (*restrictive: deontic interpretation only*)

A boy that has to leave early in the morning always arrives tired.

c Mario, che deve partire presto la mattina, arriva sempre stanco (*non-restrictive: both epistemic and deontic interpretation*)

Mario, who has to leave early in the morning, always arrives tired.

In the restrictives (22a-b), independently of the definite or indefinite article, the epistemic interpretation of the modal *deve* 'must' is blocked; it is instead possible in the non-restrictive (22c). If we insert an apparent restrictive clause in a DP which is the predicate of a copular structure (as in 22d), the epistemic interpretation becomes possible (or, in other cases, obligatory, for semantic reasons, as in (22e)):

(22) d Mario è un uomo che deve alzarsi molto presto la mattina (*epistemic or deontic interpretation*)

Mario is a man that must get up very early in the morning

e Mario è un uomo che deve amare molto i suoi figli.

Mario is a man that must love his children very much (*only epistemic interpretation*)

4) the illocutionary independence of the relative clause (*only in colloquial style*):

(23a), a kind defining relative clause, and (23b), a non-restrictive, can both have the interrogative illocutionary force, which is not admitted in a genuine restrictive relative clause such as (23c):

(23) a E' un uomo al quale avresti mai pensato di doverti rivolgere un giorno?

He is a man to whom would you have expected to have to refer to one day?

b Lo puoi chiedere a Mario, al quale avresti mai pensato di doverti rivolgere un giorno?

He is a man whom would you have expected to have to refer to one day?

You can ask Mario, whom would you have expected to have to refer to one day?

- c *Oggi ha conosciuto l'uomo al quale avresti mai pensato di doverti rivolgere un giorno?

Today you met the man whom would you have expected to have to refer to one day?

5) *their occurring necessarily after ordinary restrictives and before ordinary non-restrictives*

The contrast (24a, b) shows that the kind-defining relative clause (in which we have inserted the negative polarity item *mica* to force the desired interpretation) is obligatorily ordered in the DP after a genuine restrictive:

- (24) a Quello è un ragazzo che conosco che non esita **mica** a rischiare

That is a young man that I know that does not hesitate at all to take risks

- b *Quello è un ragazzo che non esita **mica** a rischiare che conosco

That is a young man that does not hesitate at all to take risks that I know

The contrast (25a, b) shows that a kind-defining relative (with *mica*) is ordered before a non-restrictive relative clause:

- (25) a Quello è un ragazzo coraggioso che non esita **mica** a rischiare, le azioni del quale, tra parentesi, mi hanno sempre colpito

That is a brave young man that does not hesitate to take risks, whose actions incidentally always struck me.

- b *Quello è un ragazzo coraggioso, le azioni del quale, tra parentesi, mi hanno sempre colpito, che non esita **mica** a rischiare

That is a brave young man, whose actions incidentally always struck me, that does not hesitate to take risks

6) *the impossibility of stacking*

Stacking is the occurrence of two relative clauses, one nested in two the other, sharing a unique antecedent. It is possible to have stacking of two restrictive relative clauses, with the second one restricting the set of referents specified by the first one (for ex.: *i ragazzi padovani che conosco il cui nome comincia per z sono due* "Paduan boys that I know whose name begins with a z are two").

Non-restrictive relative clauses, as expected from their semantic characteristics, cannot be stacked (apparent examples are in fact cases of coordinations). With respect to the possibility of stacking, kind-defining relatives once again appear to pattern with non-restrictives rather than with restrictives. See (26):

- (26) a *Quello è un ragazzo che deve essere sempre stato coraggioso che non esita mica a rischiare
That is a young man that must have always been brave that does not hesitate to take risks
b *Quello è un ragazzo che deve essere sempre stato coraggioso che non deve spaventarsi mai
That is a young man that must have always been brave that must never get scared

7) *the use of resumptive pronouns* (see (27), and (6) above)

- (27) a E' una cosa che non si può facilmente farne a meno
This is something that we can't easily do without it
b Gianni è uno che non **gli** si può dire di no
Gianni is someone that you can't say no to him
c Questo è un problema che non **lo** risolti facilmente.
This is a problem that you don't solve it easily

This property distinguishes genuine restrictive from kind-defining relatives, which behave in this respect like non-restrictives.

8) *the possibility of retaining the internal Head*

As pointed out to us by Diego Pescarini, kind-defining relatives once again appear to pattern with non-restrictives and to differ from genuine restrictive in allowing the retention of the internal Head. See (28a, b) vs. (28c) (see Cinque 1978: 88f):

- (28) a Non hanno ancora trovato una **sostanza** [dalla quale **sostanza** ricavare un rimedio contro l'epilessia. (*kind-defining*)
They have not found a substance from which substance to obtain a remedy against epilepsy
b Se non parlano più di questa **sostanza**, dalla quale **sostanza** speravano di ricavare una cura per l'epilessia, una ragione c'è. (*non-restrictive*)

If they no longer talk about this substance, from which substance they had hoped to obtain a cure for epilepsy, there is a reason.

c *Non parlano più della **sostanza** dalla quale **sostanza** speravano di ricavare una cura per l'epilessia (*restrictive*)

They no longer talk about the substance from which substance they had hoped to obtain a cure for epilepsy

4. *Deriving the properties of kind-defining relatives*

We take the above properties characterizing kind-defining relatives to be dependent on two facts: 1) the fact that (as with non-restrictives, and differently from restrictives) the proposition expressed by the relative is not presupposed as true; 2) the fact that differently from restrictive and non-restrictives the Head of the relative is non-referential (as it is a predicate).

1) the use of presuppositional negative adverbs such as mica

The postverbal negative polarity element *mica* is ungrammatical in restrictive relatives, among other contexts (Cinque 1976). Its ungrammaticality appears to depend on the existence of conflicting presuppositions; restrictive relatives presuppose the truth of the proposition conveyed by the relative (such a proposition is presented as shared knowledge on the part of both the speaker and the addressee), while *mica* presupposes that the addressee believes the opposite. Non-restrictives and kind-defining relatives do not have such a presupposition (the proposition is asserted), and indeed both admit *mica*.

2) the possibility of using a non-realis mood

The possibility of using a non-realis mood (e.g. the subjunctive) may seem a characteristic of restrictive relatives, as in (29):

(29) Cercava una segretaria che conoscesse il cinese.

‘He was looking for a secretary who knew (subj.) Chinese’

In fact, this possibility is only open to apparent restrictives that modify, in modal contexts, indefinite objects of verbs like ‘look for’, ‘know’, etc. (see above the last paragraph of sect. 2.2), which - as noted - may involve a hidden predicative structure. This means that these are not genuine restrictives, but incorporate a kind-defining relative clause (as briefly pointed out above, text around ex. (10) and fn.).

Infinitival relatives – which also involve a type of non-realis mood - appear to occur in largely the same contexts as subjunctive relatives:

- (30) *Cercava/non trova/non c'è una segretaria a cui affidare il lavoro di traduzione*
‘He was looking for/he does not find/ there isn’t a secretary to whom to entrust the translation work’.

See Cinque (1988) for some discussion of the distribution of infinitival relatives.

- 3) *the possibility of using a modal in genuinely epistemic readings, which in Italian is allowed in non-restrictive but not in restrictive relatives.*

The fact that a modal verb can, in addition to root interpretations, have an epistemic interpretation in both non-restrictive and kind-defining relatives seems to show that the proposition expressed by these relatives (in opposition to that of restrictive relatives) is not presupposed as true. If it were, no epistemic interpretation should be possible as the epistemic modal introduces an element of non-commitment about the truth of the proposition.

- 4) *the illocutionary independence of the relative clause (only in colloquial style)*

The illocutionary independence which kind-defining relative clauses share with (discourse grammar) non-restrictives (see Cinque 2008a) is another property showing that the proposition expressed by these relatives is asserted rather than presupposed true. If it were, the mood would necessarily be declarative.

- 5) *their occurring necessarily after ordinary restrictives and before ordinary non-restrictives*

The fact that kind-defining relative clauses are ordered after ordinary restrictive and before non-restrictives also suggests that they form a separate kind of relative, which has a dedicated position of Merge within the extended projection of the nominal phrase, and cannot be plainly assimilated to ordinary restrictive relative clauses.

6) *the impossibility of stacking*

The impossibility of stacking may also be related, it seems, to the fact that kind-defining relative clauses are not genuinely restrictive, which is a prerequisite for admitting stacking. This depends, as noted, from the facts that the Head is not genuinely referential (it is a predicate), and that it is not presupposed true.

7) *the use of resumptive pronouns*

The possible presence of resumptive pronouns, which kind-defining relatives share with non-restrictive relatives, does in fact appear not to follow in any simple way from the properties of kind-defining relatives mentioned above (the non presupposed status of the relative clause and the non referential status of the predicate DP containing the kind-defining relative), nor in fact from the characteristics of non-restrictive relatives. We conclude that both non-restrictive and kind-defining relatives, for different reasons, can use a strategy without *wh*-movement; a clitic appears in the relative clause, which is connected (through a rule of predication (Chomsky 1977: 41)) to an argument in TopP.¹² We leave this as an unexplained property of both kinds of relatives.

8) *the possibility of retaining the internal Head*

Also this property opposing genuine restrictive relatives to both non-restrictive relatives and kind-defining relatives remains to be understood.

5. *Post- and pre-copular position (canonical and inverse predication)*

¹² Non-restrictive relatives are the typical context where the relative pronoun *il quale* is employed, which Cinque (1978) analysed as generated in most cases in TopP position, or moved there as a left dislocated argument, which has then to be linked to a clitic in the clause.

So far we have considered only post-copular kind-defining relatives which appear to instantiate a canonical predicative relation (see (31)a), but they can also occupy a pre-copular position (see (31b)), which instantiate an inverse (or specificational) predicative relation (Moro 1997):

- (31) a Gianni è un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto (canonical)
 Gianni is a man that never surrenders
 b Un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto è Gianni (inverse)
 A man that never surrenders is Gianni

Following Moro (1997) (cf. also den Dikken 2006) the two types of predication (the canonical and the inverse one) can be derived from a small clause embedded under a copula ((32)a) by either moving the subject of predication ((32)b), or the predicate ((31)c), before the copula.

Derivation (stages represented informally):

- (32)a. [è [[Gianni] [un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto]] = base structure
 b. [[Gianni]_i è [t_i [un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto]] = canonical predication
 b'. [un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto]_i è [[Gianni] t_i] = inverse predication¹³

That [Gianni] is the subject of predication and [un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto] the predicate can be seen from the contrast between (33a) and (33b), where the two orders are embedded under a small clause taking verb like *ritenere* ‘consider/believe’. As Moro (1997) shows, canonical, but not inverse, predications are possible in such environments in Italian (the same is true of English, where the inverse predication can be saved in that environment by the insertion of *be*):

- (33) a Ritenevamo [Gianni un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto]
 we.considered Gianni a man that never surrenders
 b *Ritenevamo [un uomo che non si dà mai per vinto Gianni]
 we.considered a man that never surrenders *(to be) Gianni

It is interesting to consider copular sentences with ambiguous interpretation, as the following, which can either be an intensional description (for ex., the answer to a question ‘Who is this John

¹³ Or ‘predicate inversion’ in den Dikken’s (2006) terminology.

you are talking about?', interpretation A), or an extensional description attributing John to a kind (interpretation B). With interpretation A, we have a restrictive post-copular relative; with interpretation B we have a kind-defining post-copular relative clause:

(34) Mario è un uomo che incontri la mattina presto al bar.

A: "Mario is (precisely) that man that you meet early in the morning at the pub (identificational > *restrictive*)

B: "Mario is the (kind of) man that you meet early in the morning at the pub (predicational > *kind-defining*)

If a clitic pronoun is inserted, doubling (or in place of) the *wh*-, the sentence ceases to be ambiguous and the relative has only a kind-defining interpretation¹⁴:

(35) Mario è un uomo che lo incontri la mattina presto al bar.

6. *Raising and matching derivations of kind-defining relatives*

To judge from the availability of sentences like those in (36) and (37), kind-defining relatives appear to allow, like restrictives (and unlike non-restrictives: see Bianchi 1999), both raising and matching derivations. (36a, b) involve the relativization of an idiom chunk, which requires a raising derivation (cf. Kayne 1994 and references cited there). The sentence in (37) on the other hand appears to require a matching derivation, as no reconstruction of the Head inside the relative clause is involved (reconstructing *unico fan di Mario* inside the relative clause in a position c-commanded by *lui* would cause a violation of Principle C of the Binding Theory, which prohibits a pronoun to be c-commanded by its antecedents) (cf. Sauerland 1999, 2003; Cinque 2008b).

(36) a Questi sono conti che non tornano mica

Lit. these are things that don't work out at all

b La parte che deve aver avuto è questa

the role that he must have had is this

¹⁴ Another interesting consequence is that in the kind-defining version of the relative, the interpretation of the subject of the 2nd sing verb cannot be a deictic 2nd sing but a generic impersonal. This is consistent, in some way with the modalities that can appear in this kind of sentences.

- (37) Giorgio è l'unico fan di Mario_i che lui_i deve ritenere degno dei suoi favori
Giorgio is the sole fan of Mario that he must consider worth of his favors

7. *Post-copular relatives and agreement.*

All of the properties we have seen so far are found to be possible with non-restrictive and post-copular kind-defining relative clauses, but are banned from ordinary restrictive relative clauses. With respect to these properties, modern standard Italian only differs from early Florentine and northern Italian dialects with respect to stylistic level: the clitic copy of the *wh*- is only possible in a colloquial style in modern Italian, and avoided in formal, written, language.¹⁵

Old Italian (early Florentine) post-copular kind-defining relatives had instead a further property that has been lost, namely, the fact that the relative clause verb agrees with the subject of the copular sentence rather than with the relative clause Head (Noordhof 1937). This can only be observed – for independent reasons - if the copula is in the 1st or 2nd person, as in the following examples:

- (38) a Or se' tu quel Virgilio e quella fonte che spandi di parlar sì largo fiume? (Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, 1, 79-80)
now are you that Virgil and that source that you-spread of speech such-a wide river?
b Io son colei che sì importuna e fera chiamata son da voi... (Petrarca, *Trionfi*, T. Mortis)
I am the one that so tiresome and fierce called I-am by you

The same is found in other Italian vernaculars (see (38a)) and in modern French, as pointed out to us by Adam Ledgeway (see (38b)):

- (39) a he' som quella che lo portay nove meysi e che lo norigay com lo me' layte..." (14thC, Ligurian, quoted in Parry 2007a: 26 fn. 16)
I am who I-bore him nine months and I-fed him with my milk
b C'est moi qui suis/*?est venu te chercher ce matin
It's me who am/is come to look for you this morning

¹⁵ As a reviewer observes, this is true of the other colloquial modern Romance languages, with the exception of Rumanian, where copying of the *wh* is part of the standard language, even in restrictive relative clauses; the exception of Rumanian is possibly only apparent, if the *wh*-pronoun *care* in certain contexts has in fact the status of a complementiser, as argued in Cinque (2008a: 126f).

In modern Italian, this characteristic is not totally unknown, but is strictly banned in formal style, both written or spoken; a residue of this pattern is perhaps to be observed in infinitival relatives (Cinque 1988, 2010), in which a reflexive pronoun can agree in person with the subject of the copular sentence:

- (40) a sono stato il solo ad accorgermi/accorgersi di questo.¹⁶
 I-was the only one to make aware.myself / himself of this.
 'I was the only one to realize this.'
 b *?Sono stato il solo che mi sono accorto di questo. (only possible in very colloquial style)
 I was the only one that I-realized this
 c Sono stato il solo che si è accorto di questo.
 I was the only one that he-realized this.

We have very little to say about this property, apart from the intuition that it can possibly be related to the lack of referential features in the endowment of the syntactic head of the relative clause.¹⁷

8. Conclusions and speculations

¹⁶ For some speakers this agreement scheme is the preferred one.

¹⁷The agreement scheme observed in the relative structures exemplified above is also found in another peculiar structure of early Florentine, which can support the idea that referentiality of the antecedent is relevant:

- (i) a tu, *si come colui che* le mi desti, atar mi déi da lei. (Frescobaldi, Dino. *Rime*, 22, p. 418)
 you, *so as the one that* you-gave them to me, help me you-must towards her "you, since you gave..."
 b ...tu vorresti che fuoco venisse da cielo ..., *si come colui che* se' così vago di noi come il can delle mazze.
 (Boccaccio, *Decameron* V, 10).
 you wanted that fire came from the sky ..., *so as the one that* you-are so longing for us as the dog for the cudgel.
 c ...poche orazioni ho per le mani, *si come colui che* mi vivo all'antica (Boccaccio, *Decameron* II, 2)
 few orations I-have in hand, *so as the one that* I-live old fashionedly

Ulleland (1961, 1963) develops a very penetrating interpretation, showing that the pronoun *colui* is not referential. This construction deserves further attention.

We have collected evidence identifying a new type of relative clause, which we have called kind-defining, and have shown that its grammar and the features that characterize it have not changed since the first medieval records to the present time. A kind-defining relative can use a strategy that probably does not involve *wh*-movement but a resumptive clitic; the verb of the kind-defining relative on the subject does not agree with the *wh*-subject of the relative but with the subject of the main clause. Only the register in which the surfacing of the distinctive features is permitted has changed: what was possible even in very formal texts in the 13th-14th centuries is only permitted in the colloquial register in present day Italian. Two grammars have coexisted in Italian with respect to this construction for centuries, changing only their stylistic collocation.

Other aspects of grammar have changed dramatically in Italian and in Romance, more generally.

V2 syntax, which was present in every language of the Romance area, has disappeared since the end of the 14th century, leaving traces in marginal areas such as Rhaeto-Romance and Portuguese ('lateral areas' in Bartoli's theory terms). This change affected the syntax of Verb movement, and a continuation of the same process can still be seen at work in modern Romance varieties of Northern Italy and French, where the inflected verb in the interrogatives of some varieties still moves to a low head in C, while in other varieties it no longer moves overtly but stays in Infl. Other, probably related, changes affected N movement in the DP (see Giusti 2006, Poletto 2006). These aspects can be classified in traditional terms as head movement: head movement seem to ~~get~~ progressively weakened through time.

Another part of grammar that has been affected by a similar change, even though in more limited areas than head movement, regards functional lexemes: in Benincà & Poletto (2005) changes ~~that~~ affecting *wh*-pronouns, personal pronouns, and negation; in Romance are analysed and described as a drift that allows speakers to avoid moving functional elements in the functional structure: negation disaggregates and, in the initial stage, only a subpart of the feature complex is moved (as, for example, in standard French *ne ... pas*); the high element weakens and finally disappears leaving only the postverbal element in a very low position (as, for example, in spoken French, where only *pas* appears); *wh* items and personal pronouns underwent a parallel evolution. Changes of this kind appear to reproduce the same scheme as the 'cycle' that Jespersen discovered in the history of negation¹⁸.

¹⁸ We refer to van Gelderen (2011) for the properties characterising the 'linguistic cycle', and to Parry (1996, 2007), for the reconstruction of the negation cycle in a specific, well-defined area, that of north-western Italy (see also Vai for the cycle in Milanese).

But other parts of syntax have remained the same from the Middle Ages. Since Romance languages developed clitic pronouns, they have come to realize Clitic Left Dislocation; from the High Middle Ages a preposed direct object with a clitic copy is unmistakably to be interpreted in Romance as a (Left Dislocated or Hanging) Topic (see Benincà 2006). Other constructions have only changed their stylistic collocation. Hanging Topic in particular is very similar in its evolution with kind-defining relatives: in Italian, for example, it is still as it was in the 14th C: a bare NP in the left periphery and an obligatory copy (direct or indirect object, depending on its grammatical function) in the sentential core; the only difference is that in the 14th C it was appropriate in any style, while today it is restricted to the very informal spoken language, as is the case of kind-defining relatives with a clitic copy.

Further reflections should be devoted to syntactic properties or constructions that do not change for centuries, and other properties that apparently are undergoing slow continuous modifications, often with a precise direction; we should characterise and classify these different grammatical aspects in order to get new insights on the theory of morpho-syntactic change.

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