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Restrictive focus adverbs in contemporary varieties of Italian and European Spanish: A contrastive, corpus-based study

This paper investigates the uses of Italian and Spanish restrictive focus adverbs, concentrating on the three cognates solo, solamente *and* soltanto / tan solo. *Our aim is to highlight the discourse similarities and differences between these cognates in contemporary varieties of Italian and European Spanish through a contrastive corpus-based analysis. A further aim is to shed light on the factors that explain the differences from both an intra- and a cross-linguistic perspective. Our data is drawn from existing monolingual Italian and Spanish corpora as well as a self-assembled comparable corpus of academic texts written in Italian and Spanish.*

Questo contributo indaga l'uso degli avverbi focalizzanti restrittivi in italiano e spagnolo, concentrandosi sulle forme solo, solamente *e* soltanto / tan solo. *Il nostro obiettivo è quello di evidenziare le similitudini e le differenze nella distribuzione di questi avverbi nelle principali varietà contemporanee dell'italiano e dello spagnolo europeo attraverso un'analisi contrastiva, basata su corpora. Un ulteriore obiettivo consiste nel far luce sui fattori che spiegano le differenze riscontrate sia da un punto di vista intra- sia interlinguistico. I nostri dati sono tratti da corpora monolingui d'italiano e spagnolo già esistenti e da un corpus personale (costruito ad hoc) di testi accademici redatti in italiano e spagnolo.*

1. *Introduction*

This contribution investigates the uses of Italian (It.) and Spanish (Sp.) restrictive (or exclusive) focus adverbs (henceforth RFA), starting from the prototypical adverb of the class: It. and Sp. *solo*.[1] Cross-linguistically,

[1] In line with the current orthographic norm, we use the graphically non-accented form *solo* (also in *tan solo*) in the invented examples provided in this contribution. The reader should bear in mind that the graphically accented form (*sólo / tan sólo*) is also possible. Before 1959, the accented form (*sólo*) was used systematically to distinguish the adverb from the adjective *solo*, but since then, the orthographic norm has restricted the use of the accented form to contexts of ambiguity. Currently, new orthographic norms (RAE / ASALE 2010: 322) recommend the use of *solo* (without the accent) regardless of context ambiguities, which are assumed to be rare.

this Italian and Spanish adverb shares basic properties. As shown, in accordance with examples (1) and (2),[2] in both Romance languages *solo* is a simple adverb appearing in front of the syntactic constituent it modifies (in ex. 1, the subject), and it conveys the same meaning.

> (1) It. **Solo** Pietro lo sapeva.
> (2) Sp. **Solo** Pedro lo sabía.
> 'Only Paul knew it.'

It. and Sp. *solo* have two close equivalents, namely It. *solamente* and *soltanto* (Andorno 1999, 2000; Ricca 1999) and Sp. *solamente* and *tan solo* (Fuentes Rodríguez 2002; RAE / ASALE 2009: § 40.9). Italian and Spanish thus share a small set of similar adverbs to express restriction: *solo, solamente* (cross-linguistically equivalent both in form and meaning) and *soltanto / tan solo* (cross-linguistically similar in form and equivalent in meaning). As a consequence, given their similar morphological make-up and shared meaning component, considerable overlap is to be expected in the uses of It. and Sp. *solo*, It. and Sp. *solamente,* as well as It. and Sp. *soltanto / tan solo.* However, the Spanish translations of examples (3) and (4), provided in Alloa et al. (2008: 180), cast some doubt on this expectation, as we find that only in the first case is It*. solo* translated into Spanish as its closest equivalent form.

> (3) It. […] aspettiamo che gli altri ci trovino, perché **solo** loro possono trovarci in tutto l'universo.
> Sp. transl. […] esperamos que los otros nos encuentren, porque **sólo** ellos pueden encontrarnos en todo el universo.
> '[…] we will wait for the others to find us, because only they in the whole universe can find us.'
>
> (4) It. Noi ci siamo **soltanto** baciati.
> Sp. transl. Nosostros **sólo** nos besamos.
> 'We only kissed each other.'

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[2] Two remarks should be made in relation to how we present our examples. First, for the sake of clarity, we always highlight in bold the RFA or linguistic expression in which we are interested. However, this does not mean that the item in bold is necessarily interpreted as carrying prosodic and information emphasis. Second, we generally provide a working translation of the original Italian/Spanish example. For longer stretches of text, we used deepl.com software in the first step of the translation.

Italian and Spanish RFAs have never been the object of an in-depth contrastive study, neither intra- nor cross-linguistically.[3] Consequently, it is not currently known what (if any) parameters regulate the use of *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* in Italian and Spanish. Our aim in this study is to uncover the similarities and differences between these items. We believe that gaining knowledge about these issues is relevant in different domains of applied linguistics, including bilingual lexicography, language teaching and acquisition (Italian/Spanish as L2), as well as translation studies. To shed light on these questions we investigate the following discourse-related features: the distribution of *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* in different language varieties, their discourse frequency, as well as their occurrence in specific collocations.

Our study is semasiological in approach, our starting point being the three linguistic cognates expressing restriction, and our goal being to understand their uses and functions. It is also based on a non-oriented contrastive analysis of Italian and Spanish, meaning that the description of each language is equally important and serves to illuminate the properties of the other (for details on this approach, see Tekin 2012: 134-141). As far as the data is concerned, we rely on empirical evidence drawn from several corpora representing contemporary varieties of Italian and European Spanish.

Our contribution is organized as follows: in the first step (Section 2) we present the main properties of the class of RFAs, paying special attention to the semantic features of It./Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo*, and point to some differences between these items as acknowledged in monolingual dictionaries. Second (Section 3), we describe the distribution of these adverbs in different language varieties (written vs. spoken) based on the results found in the main monolingual corpora available for Italian and Spanish. Because the available corpora are not directly comparable, in step three (Section 4) we present the outcome of an analysis based on

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[3] RFAs have been described almost exclusively from a monolingual perspective, and considering only one adverb, generally *solo*. In relation to Italian, see Geerts 1977 on *solo* and La Forgia / Carreras i Goicoechea 2008 on the complex expression *anche solo*. In relation to Spanish, see Fuentes Rodríguez 2002 on *solamente* and Medina Gómez / Alarcón Neve 2017 as well as Medina Gómez / Fernández García 2018 on *solo* and *solamente*. Mention should also be made of contrastive studies devoted to one of the Romance languages in which we are interested (see Nicklaus 2015 on German, Italian and French restrictive expressions in literary texts).

a self-created comparable corpus of Italian and Spanish (PACOR_IS), comprising academic texts. Specifically, we provide insights into the discourse distribution of It./Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* and analyze two collocation patterns. In discussing these RFAs, we also consider the role played by near-synonyms such as It. *unicamente, esclusivamente* and Sp. *únicamente*, *exclusivamente* 'only, exclusively'. In the conclusion (Section 5), we summarize our main findings and suggest some steps that could be taken in the future to further enhance understanding of the uses of RFAs across Italian and Spanish.

2. *Italian and Spanish restrictive focus adverbs: an overview*

2.1. *The meaning of restrictive focus adverbs*

It. and Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* are restrictive focus adverbs (RFAs) and belong to a class including, *inter alia*, It. *esclusivamente* and Sp. *exclusivamente* 'exclusively'.[4] Their main semantic contribution to the sentence in which they occur is based on the cognitive operation of 'restriction',[5] and can be described starting from examples (5) and (6).

> (5)   It. Lo sapeva **solo/solamente/soltanto** Pietro. (nessun altro)
> (6)   Sp. Lo sabía **solo/solamente/tan solo** Pedro. (nadie más)
>   'Only Paul knew it. (nobody else)'

RFAs such as It. and Sp. *solo*, *solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* quantify over a set of alternative values to the one expressed by the element on which they operate, called *domain of association*, in short DA (in examples 5 and 6, the DA is *Pietro / Pedro*). Specifically, they restrict the validity of the proposition in which they enter to the value of their

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[4] For details on the class of RFAs, see Ricca (1999) and Andorno (1999, 2000) on Italian; Kovacci (1999), RAE / ASALE (2009: § 40.9) and García Pérez (2013) on Spanish; König (1991) for a broad typological perspective and De Cesare (2015) for a micro-typological view (based on French, Italian, English and German).

[5] Some studies describe the main semantic feature of the class in terms of *exclusion* and, consequently, label the items in which we are interested *exclusive focus adverbs* or *quantifiers* (see König 1981 and 1991, as well as Manzotti 1984: 52-54 for Italian and Sánchez López 1999, Ferrari et al. 2011 and Montoro del Arco 2011, 2012 for Spanish).

DA, such that 'no value other than the one expressed by their DA' yields to a proposition that is true. Consequently, in the same discourse context as (5) and (6), a proposition such as It. *Lo sapeva Maria /* Sp. *Lo sabía María* 'Maria knew it' can only be false.

All in all, there are two major conditions regulating the use of RFAs. First, the DA must coincide with a subset of a larger set of alternative values. This subset may include one value, as in (5) and (6), or more than one value, as in (7) and (8). Second, all the values (of the larger set) that are not part of the subset of values denoted by the adverb's DA are to be excluded as possible DA candidates.

(7) It. Pensavo di averlo detto a Maria, Paola e Pietro, ma lo sapevano **solo/solamente/soltanto** Maria e Pietro.

(8) Sp. Pensé habérselo dicho a María, Paula y Pedro, pero lo sabían **solo/solamente/tan solo** María y Pedro.
'I thought I told Maria, Paola and Pietro, but only Mary and Pietro knew about it.'

Apart from their quantificational meaning component, which is an inherent feature of all RFAs, adverbs such as It. / Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* are also compatible with a scalar reading, licensed by lexical items occurring in the same sentence (such as a quantitative expression) and/or the discourse context. The adverbs in examples (9) and (10) restrict the validity of the proposition to their DA (*un genio* 'a genius'), which is also the highest value ranked on a scale of intelligence. In this case, the adverbs exclude all the alternative values ranked below their DA ('a genius').

(9) It. **Solo/Solamente/Soltanto** un genio lo poteva sapere!

(10) Sp. ¡**Solo/Solamente/Tan solo** un genio podía saberlo!
'Only a genius could know it.'

There are contexts in which *solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo* could optionally be interpreted as scalar, in which case their DA is to be interpreted as denoting a high (or low) point on an ordered scale. Sentences such as (11) and (12) could be used to communicate either that no one else attended the meeting (in this case they are purely restrictive) or that no one with a higher rank did (the example is from RAE / ASALE

2009, § 40.9f). The set of alternatives excluded in both cases does not overlap: only in the first reading is the body of students excluded from the group of people who participated in the meeting.

> (11) It. A questa importante riunione ha partecipato **solo** il decano.
> (12) Sp. A esa importante reunión **solo** asistió el decano.
>   'Only the dean attended this important meeting'.

Although *solo* etc. are compatible with a scalar interpretation, other RFAs are not. This can be observed in (13) and (14), including It. [...] *esclusivamente* and Sp. *exclusivamente*, respectively.

> (13) It. ***Esclusivamente** un genio lo poteva sapere!
> (14) Sp. *¡**Exclusivamente** un genio lo podía saber!
>   Lit. Exclusively a genius could know it.
>   'Such knowledge is exclusive to geniuses.'

Mention should also be made to It. *unicamente* and Sp. *únicamente*. Although the former is claimed in the literature to be incompatible with a scalar reading (see Andorno 2000: 87), the authentic example in (15), found in a newspaper article, seems to indicate that it is in fact allowed in a context in which the value encoded by the adverb's DA is positioned on an ordered scale. Thus, with all due caution, we could suggest that It. *unicamente* is compatible with a scalar reading at least in some cases.

> (15) It. […] Egli [Bramante], ancora oggi, sa dunque riunire le persone, ciò è in grado di fare, molto tempo dopo la sua morte, **unicamente** un genio. [https://pesaronotizie.com/2014/08/02]
>   'He [Bramante], still today, therefore, knows how to bring people together, which only a genius is able to do long after his death.'

Sp. *únicamente* is also compatible with a scalar reading, as examples (16) and (17) show. In (16), the adverb excludes other options than *un experto* 'an expert', a value occupying the highest rank of the ordered scale. As pointed out for the three adverbs under scrutiny (RAE / ASALE 2009: § 40.9e), a hierarchy is easier to perceive when the adverb's DA is a quantitative expression, as in (17).

(16) Sp. Liberto Pech nunca se ha preguntado cuánto podría sacar en la calle por la *padparadscha*. **Únicamente** un experto apreciaría su valor. [CORPES XXI: Merino, Olga, (2004): *Espuelas de papel*. Madrid: Alfaguara]

'Liberto Pech never asked himself how much he could get in the street for the *padparadscha*. Only an expert would appreciate its value.'

(17) Sp. En enero de aquel mismo año la Junta Superior de Cataluña protestaba por haber recibido **únicamente**, en todo el curso de la guerra, 43 ó 44 millones de reales, cuando las necesidades mensuales del ejército eran de 11 millones de reales. [CORPES XXI: Canales Gili, Esteban. *Hispania Nova*. Madrid: hispanianova.rediris.com, 2003-01-01]

'In January of that same year the Higher Board of Catalonia complained about having received only 43 or 44 million reales in the course of the entire war, even though the army's monthly needs were 11 million reales.'

Given the semantic properties of Italian and Spanish RFAs discussed so far, namely restrictive quantification and scalarity, we propose a classification of these adverbs along the lines of Table 1. Both languages possess additional RFAs, such as It. *meramente, semplicemente* and *puramente* (on the last two forms, see Andorno 2000: 86-88) and Sp. *puramente, simplemente* and *sencillamente* (cf. Alloa et al. 2008: 180),[6] as well as *nada más (que)* and *exclusive*. These forms are not considered in this study.

	Italian	**Spanish**
scalar compatible	solo/soltanto/solamente unicamente	solo/tan solo/solamente únicamente
not scalar compatible	esclusivamente	exclusivamente

Tab. 1. A semantic classification of restrictive focus adverbs in Italian and Spanish

[6] Kovacci (1999: 773) refers to Sp. *puramente*, *simplemente* and *sencillamente* as exclusive focalizers ("focalizadores exclusivos"), whereas RAE / ASALE (2009: § 40.9) include these adverbs in the group of particularising adverbs ("adverbios particularizadores"), together with *precisamente*, *exactamente*, etc.

2.2. *It. / Sp.* solo*,* solamente*,* soltanto */* tan solo*: intra-linguistic variation*

As shown in § 2.1, It./Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* are semantically equivalent, as all adverbs are inherently restrictive and compatible with a scalar interpretation. In this section, we highlight further similarities and some differences between these items in Italian (§ 2.2.1) and Spanish (§ 2.2.2), primarily relying on the descriptions provided in monolingual dictionaries.

2.2.1. It. solo, solamente *and* soltanto

The semantic equivalence between It. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto* is clearly reflected in monolingual dictionaries of Italian. The three dictionaries we consulted (*DISC*, *NVDB*, TRECCANI), resort to synonyms to describe the adverbial meaning of *solo*, first and foremost *solamente* (*NVDB*) and *soltanto* (*DISC*), while using the same circular defining procedure − *mutatis mutandis* − for *solamente* and *soltanto*.

These dictionaries provide general information on the morphological properties of the three adverbs: *solo* is presented as a simple adverb (based on a single lexical morpheme, going back to the Latin *sōlu(m)*), *solamente* as a derived adverb (formed with the adjective *solo* to which the -*mente* suffix is attached), and *soltanto* as a compound adverb (based on the grammatical and orthographic conjunction of the morphemes *solo* and *tanto*). From a historical perspective, both *solo* and *solamente* were attested as RFAs as early as in the 13th century (*NVDB*). *Soltanto* seems to have arisen somewhat later, but no clear date is provided (*NVDB* just indicates 'before 1375').

It is not clear from the dictionaries we consulted whether there are differences in usage with reference to *solo, solamente* and *soltanto*, be it in terms of register, discourse distribution or collocations. Not only is the information on these aspects rather scarce, it is also partly contradictory and based on different choices in describing variation. According to one view, *solo, soltanto* and *solamente* belong to the *vocabolario fondamentale* 'basic vocabulary', in other words to the 2,000 most frequently used words in contemporary Italian (see *NVDB*), whereas according to another, *solo* is more familiar than both *solamente* and *soltanto* (TRECCANI).

As is evident from this succinct presentation, the information provided in monolingual dictionaries does not allow the highlighting of

any clear differences in the use of It. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto*. We are thus left to wonder how we can account for the polymorphism of Italian RFAs.

2.2.2. *Sp.* solo, solamente *and* tan solo

As acknowledged in § 2.1, Sp. *solo*, *solamente* and *tan solo* are semantically equivalent. Most of the Spanish monolingual dictionaries we consulted treat *solo* and *solamente* as absolute synonyms, using one of the adverbs within the definition of the other (see *LEMA*, *CLAVE*, *DUE* and *DLE*). In specialized lexicographical works, such as *DCOE* and *DP*, we also read that *solo* has the same values as *solamente*. In relation to their frequency, Davies's (2006) list of the 5,000 most commonly used words in Spanish ranks *solo* at 102 and *solamente* at 336.

Lexicographically, *tan solo* is not described in the same way as *solo* and *solamente*. None of the dictionaries we consulted have an independent entry for *tan solo*, which is mentioned in the entry of *solo* (see *DEA*, *DSLE* and *DUE*). *DEA* describes *tan solo* as an emphatic form of *solo* and *tan solamente* of *solamente*. In contradiction with this, *DSLE* claims that, unlike *solo*, *solamente* does not normally take the intensifier adverb *tan*. Finally, *DUE* equates *tan solo* with *solamente*, whereas *solamente* is circularly defined through *solo*.

From a morphological perspective, Sp. *solo* is described as a simple adverb, originating from the homophone adjective, and *solamente* as a -*mente* derived adverb. The item *tan solo* is considered here as a compound adverb on the grounds that it has a single meaning and is pronounced with a single accent.[7]

This short presentation of Sp. *solo*, *solamente* and *tan solo* as described in monolingual dictionaries reveals that there are several questions to clarify. One of these concerns the status of *tan solo* as a full-fledged adverb, as it is not recognized as such in any of the dictionaries (and studies) we consulted. More importantly, given that these dictionaries do not tackle any of these issues, we still lack a clear picture on the differences between the three Spanish RFAs.

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[7] This is one of the factors distinguishing the adverbial expression *tan solo* 'only', pronounced with a single accent [tan'solo], from the adjectival phrase *tan solo* 'so lonely', where the adverb *tan* is used to intensify the adjective *solo* and has two accents ['tan'solo].

3. *It. / Sp.* solo*, solamente*, soltanto */ tan solo across contemporary language varieties: a contrastive analysis based on monolingual corpora*

To clarify the uses of It. / Sp. *solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo*, we report the results of a contrastive, corpus-based analysis. The corpora we consulted (presented in § 3.1) give some idea of the distribution of the three RFAs in different varieties of Italian and Spanish. However, as we emphasize throughout this section (in particular in § 3.2), these results are not fully comparable because the main available corpora of contemporary Italian and European Spanish differ somewhat in design.[8] Given that the corpora representing written and spoken Italian and Spanish are therefore not directly comparable, we add data from another corpus, DB-IPIC, which represents informal spoken communication (§ 3.3).

3.1. *Available corpora for comparing Italian and Spanish*
Table 2 shows the major monolingual corpora representing contemporary Italian and Spanish. As we point out below, these corpora are not fully comparable.

	Written	Spoken
Italian	**CORIS** (150 million words)	**BADIP** (490,000 words)
Spanish	**CORPES XXI** 90% written; 10% spoken (≈ 286 million words)	

Tab. 2. Monolingual Italian and Spanish corpora

One of the most important corpora representing Italian is CORIS, which includes commonly occurring written texts totaling 150 million words. Most of these texts were published in Italy in the 1980s and 1990s. The corpus comprises five subcorpora featuring five language varieties / genres, including journalistic texts (daily newspapers, periodicals and supplements), administrative-legal texts and academic texts. One of the

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[8] Mention should be made to the existence of a fully comparable multilingual corpus, named CONTRAST-IT (for a detailed description, see De Cesare 2019), which includes a subcorpus of Italian and Spanish written journalistic texts. The results based on CONTRAST-IT are not included in the present study because we did not find sufficient occurrences of some of the RFAs in which we were interested.

most commonly used corpora representing spoken Italian, in turn, is BADIP (based on De Mauro et al.'s LIP, 1993). This corpus, which includes 490,000 words, represents different communicative situations (both formal and informal) and four regional varieties of Italian (the data was collected in Milan, Rome, Naples, and Florence).

The main reference corpus for Spanish is CORPES XXI, which is pan-Hispanic and includes European and American varieties of Spanish covering the period 2001-2016. The data representing European Spanish is less extensive than that representing American Spanish: of the total 286 million words, 86 million are from European Spanish (30%), the rest (70%) represent non-European (mostly American) written and spoken varieties. The CORPES XXI website points out that 90% of the total 286 million words (including European and American Spanish) represent the written language, featuring different genres (journalistic, academic, legal), thus only 10% represents spoken language. Unfortunately, there is no indication whether this proportion (90% written and 10% spoken texts) is the same for every diatopic variety of Spanish represented in the corpus. If we assume that this proportion also holds for European Spanish, that is for the language variety we are analyzing in this study, then 90% of the 86 million words represent the written language (roughly 77 million words) and 10% represent the spoken language (roughly 8 million words). We should point out that we are not certain about these figures. In fact, as our results indicate, the data obtained for spoken Spanish casts some serious doubts on this assumption. Another point worth making about the data on spoken European Spanish in CORPES XXI is that it is biased towards formal registers.

In light of their corpus design, we can highlight several differences between the Italian and Spanish corpora indicating that the sets of data they represent are not fully comparable. Crucially, these corpora (and subcorpora) are not comparable in terms of size. Given that the size of a corpus plays an important role in assessing the distribution of *solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo* in different contemporary varieties of Italian and Spanish, in Table 3 we specify relevant information on the data used in § 3.2 to compare the three RFAs cross-linguistically.[9]

[9] As we show below (§ 3.2), CORPES XXI also suffers from a series of technical shortcomings, which are pointed out, e.g., in Corpas Pastor (2017: 33-34): "[T]he CORPES in-built corpus system is rather unstable and slow in terms of processing, data downloading is not possible and access to the data is not flexible enough."

	Written	Spoken
Italian	**CORIS** (150 million words)	**BADIP** (490,000 words)
European Spanish	**CORPES XXI** (77 million words)	**CORPES XXI** (8 million words, mainly from formal registers)

Tab. 3. Monolingual corpora used to compare Italian and Spanish

3.2. *It. / Sp.* solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo *across written and spoken language varieties*

Table 4 reports the normalized frequency (per 100,000 words) of It. / Sp. *solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo* in data representing written and spoken language varieties, respectively.

		Written	Spoken
Italian	*solo*	110	118
	soltanto	26	43
	solamente	2	11
	TOT.	138	172
Spanish	*solo*	119	1.8
	tan solo	6.6	0.8
	solamente	4.1	0.06
	TOTAL	129.7	2.66

Tab. 4. The frequency of restrictive focus adverbs in written
and spoken Italian and Spanish
(normalized frequency: N. occurrence/100,000 words)

First, we look at Table 4 vertically, considering the distribution of the three adverbs intra-linguistically. *Solo* is by far the most frequent item in both language varieties of Italian and Spanish (*viz.* written and spoken), with a similar frequency in the data representing spoken Italian as was calculated for written texts (118 vs. 110). This result is, of course, largely expected given that *solo* belongs to basic vocabulary, meaning that it is among the 2,000 most frequently used words in present-day Italian (see § 2.2.1). The second most commonly used form in Italian, irrespective of the language variety, is *soltanto* (which turns out to be more frequent in the spoken than in the written language: 43 vs. 26), and the least is *solamente* (again, clearly more common in spoken than in written Italian: 11 vs. 2)*.* We observed a similar pattern in Spanish. Again, regardless of the language variety, the second most commonly used form is *tan solo* and the third is *solamente* (6.6 vs. 4 in written Spanish and 0.8 vs. 0.06 in spoken Spanish). With regard to spoken Spanish, the exceptionally low figures obtained in CORPES XXI for all three restrictive adverbs should be considered more critically. These figures, in particular the one related to *solo*, lead us to believe that the subcorpus representing spoken European Spanish is probably smaller than we assumed (i.e. it does not include 8 million words and cover 10% of the data, as mentioned in § 3.1).

Let us now turn to the cross-linguistic frequency of each cognate pair. As far as It. and Sp. *solo* are concerned, we observe a similar distribution in written texts (110 vs. 119); for the reason mentioned above, we do not make a comparison between them in oral communication. With regard to It. and Sp. *solamente*, the adverb is rarely used, but its distribution seems to differ in the two languages: it is twice as frequent in Spanish as in Italian (4 vs. 2 occ.). The extremely low figure for spoken Spanish does not allow for sound conclusions: it is improbable that the gap between It. and Sp. *solamente* is so wide. Finally, in the case of *soltanto / tan solo* we observe the reverse pattern. The adverb is more frequent in written Italian than in written Spanish (the gap is quite wide here: 26 vs. 6.6 occ.), whereas the low data in the CORPES XXI inflates the cross-linguistic differences such that the result is unrealistic.

All in all, it turns out that the distribution of It. and Sp. *solo* is similar. It is the most frequently used adverb in both languages and appears to have a similar frequency (we do not take the figure related to spoken Spanish into account). Conversely, there are both similarities and differences between the adverbs belonging to the other two pairs. In order

of preference, It. *soltanto* and Sp. *tan solo* are the second most commonly used adverbs, followed by *solamente*. However, It. *soltanto* is more frequent than Sp. *tan solo,* and the reverse is true for *solamente*.

3.3. *It. / Sp.* solo, solamente, soltanto */* tan solo *in informal spoken language (DB-IPIC)*

To better understand how sensitive these adverbs are to register variation (i.e. to the degree of formality of the discourses in which they occur), let us now consider additional data, taken from the DB-IPIC corpus. This is a small comparable corpus representing informal spoken language. The figures for each restrictive adverb are reported in Table 5. Note that we normalized the frequency of each adverb to 10,000 words (whereas Table 4 includes normalized frequencies to 100,000 words).

	DB-IPIC_It (32,500 words)		DB-IPIC_Sp (40,500 words)
solo	6.5 (21)	*solo/sólo*	5.2 (21: 18/3)
soltanto	2.2 (7)	*tan solo*	0
solamente	3.4 (11)	*solamente*	2 (8)
TOTAL	11	TOTAL	7

Tab. 5. The frequencies of restrictive focus adverbs in informal spoken Italian and Spanish (normalized frequencies: N. occurrence/10,000 words; absolute frequency in parentheses)

The order of preference of the three RFAs is again similar in informal spoken Italian and Spanish. Unsurprisingly, the most frequent adverb is *solo*, followed by *solamente* and It. *soltanto* / Sp. *tan solo* (the latter form does not appear at all). Table 5 reveals other cross-linguistic similarities. The frequencies of It. and Sp. *solo* (6.5 vs. 5.2), and of It. and Sp. *solamente* to a lesser extent (3.4 vs. 2), are quite close. Interestingly, *solamente* is preferred over *soltanto / tan solo* in informal spoken Italian and Spanish, which is in clear contrast with the results described in § 3.2.

We also observe from Table 5 that, although *solo* is the most frequently used adverb cross-linguistically, the difference between this and the other two restrictive expressions is not as marked as in written Italian and Spanish (we do not consider spoken language). Even if Italian *solo* (6.5)

is twice as frequent as *solamente* (3.4), which in turn is almost twice as frequent as *soltanto* (2.2), the differences between *solo* and the other two adverbs are not as large in informal spoken Italian as in written texts (adapting the data to match a relative frequency of 10,000 words, we arrive at 11 vs. 0.2 and 2.6). The same is true for Spanish: *solo* (5.2) is twice as frequent as *solamente* (2), but the difference in frequency between both forms is not as large as in written texts (12 vs. 0.4).

3.4. *It. / Sp.* solo, solamente, soltanto */* tan solo *across contemporary language varieties: a discussion of the corpus-based results*

The results presented in §§ 3.2 and 3.3 shed some light on the polymorphism of Italian and Spanish RFAs, in particular on some general distributional properties of It. and Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo*. The picture that arises is, understandably, much more nuanced than the one based on lexicographical sources (§ 2.2). The three RFAs show strong similarities and differences in usage across the language varieties.

The adverb *solo* is by far the most frequently used form in Italian and Spanish in all language varieties. Its frequency is relatively stable across the written and spoken language (confirmation for spoken Spanish is needed here). The stable distribution is, of course, expected because this adverb belongs to basic contemporary Italian and Spanish, and it is known that the basic vocabulary of a language tends not to vary across varieties and genres (Chiari / De Mauro 2012: 23). Therefore, the lower frequency rate of It. and Sp. *solo* in informal spoken communication, with only half of the occurrences, is rather puzzling. This finding seems to imply that *solo* is sensitive to extreme register variation and leads us to hypothesize that there might be other factors explaining its distribution in informal language. The lower frequency in the data representing informal spoken Italian could be related to the somewhat high frequency of *solamente* (65 and 34 occ. / 100,000 words).[10]

The distribution of the other two pairs of adverbs is more complex and subject to variation. It turns out that *soltanto / tan solo* is the second most preferred option in both written and spoken Italian and Spanish, and that *solamente* is the adverb that is used the least. Two points are worthy of note in relation to these pairs of adverbs. The first is that *soltanto / tan*

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[10] Another parameter that could play a role in explaining the data, at least in relation to Italian, is the strong bias of the DB-IPIC towards Florentine (a diatopic variety of Italian).

solo differ a great deal in their frequency: in Italian, the adverb *soltanto* is a vital form in all three language varieties investigated (i.e. written, spoken and informal spoken), whereas in Spanish, *tan solo* is rather rare. The second point is the higher frequency of *solamente* with respect to *soltanto / tan solo* in informal spoken Italian and Spanish. This finding is surprising given that *-mente*-derived adverbs are considered typical of written and formal language varieties (although Hummel 2013: 26 points out that *solamente* has popular origins). In fact, we observed the exact opposite in our data: the adverb *solamente* is much more frequent in informal spoken than in written Italian and Spanish. In the case of Italian, there is a steady increase in the frequency of *solamente* across the three language varieties: written Italian, spoken Italian and informal spoken Italian (2, 11, and 34 occurrences / 100,000 words, respectively). The same pattern occurs in two varieties of the Spanish data (again, due to problems with the data, we cannot say anything about spoken Spanish): compared to its frequency in written texts, *solamente* is five times more frequent in informal spoken Spanish (4 vs. 20 occ. / 100,000 words).

4. It. / Sp. *solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo* in contemporary academic texts: a contrastive analysis based on the comparable corpus PACOR_IS

In the last section of this contribution, we investigate the discourse distribution of It. / Sp. *solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo* in more depth, considering their frequency, function and use in a single text type representing academic writing. First, we describe the empirical data used, which is drawn from a self-assembled comparable corpus called PACOR_IS (§ 4.1), then we report the discourse distribution of these forms in the data (§ 4.2), specifically with regard to their frequency and text dispersion. Finally, we describe the uses and function of the three adverbs in specific collocational patterns (§ 4.3).

4.1. *PACOR_IS: a self-assembled comparable corpus of Italian and Spanish*
PACOR_IS (an acronym standing for *Parallel Academic CORpus_ Italian_Spanish*) is a corpus including two subcorpora of comparable academic texts written in Italian and Spanish.[11] The comparability of the two

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[11] This (privately owned) corpus was created in 2018-2019 in joint collaboration between the two authors of this paper.

subcorpora can be observed at different levels of their design. First, both parts comprise academic articles belonging to the same fields of study: Italian Linguistics, Spanish Linguistics and, more generally, Romance Philology. Second, they both include the same number of texts, namely 100 articles, all of which were published in the same timeframe, from the year 2000 onwards. To ensure stylistic variation and to avoid analyzing idiosyncratic uses of *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* in Italian and Spanish, we selected articles written by different authors. Moreover, to ensure that the texts represented written European Spanish, we restricted the selection to articles written by authors affiliated to a European University.[12]

Table 6 lists the journals used to create the two subcorpora of PACOR_IS and specifies the number of articles selected in each journal.

PACOR_ITALIAN (100 articles)	PACOR_SPANISH (100 articles)
Italiano LinguaDue (25) *Studi Linguistici e Filologici Online* (21) *Linguistica e Filologia* (20) *Cuadernos de filología italiana* (10) *E-JournALL. EuroAmerican Journal of Applied Linguistics and Languages* (9) *Romanische Forschungen* (4) *Revue Romane (open access until 2003)* (3) *Estudios Románicos* (3) *Chimera. Romance Corpora and Linguistic Studies* (1) *Lettere italiane* (1) *Revue de linguistique romane électronique* (2) *Linguistik online* (1)	*Revista de Filología Románica* (31) *Revista Electrónica de Didáctica del Español como Lengua Extranjera* (21) *Cuadernos de filología italiana* (9) *Revista de Filología Española* (8) *Estudios Románicos* (7) *E-JournALL. EuroAmerican Journal of Applied Linguistics and Languages* (5) *Linguistik online* (5) *Revue Romane (open access until 2003)* (4) *Romanische Forschungen* (4) *Chimera. Romance Corpora and Linguistic Studies* (3) *Revue de linguistique romane électronique* (2) *Revista Electrónica del Lenguaje* (1)

Tab. 6. Sources of PACOR_IS (Journals and numbers of articles selected)

All the articles have been uploaded on the Sketch Engine platform (for details on this electronic resource, see Kilgarriff et al. 2014), compiled by

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[12] This, of course, is not a sufficient criterion to exclude non-European Spanish authors working in Europe. However, as we know most of the authors personally, we can claim that the Spanish texts are − to the best of our knowledge − written by Spanish authors and represent written academic European Spanish.

the software available for Italian and Spanish, respectively. Table 7 shows the resulting properties of the compiled PACOR_IS corpus: although both subparts include the same number of articles (100), the Italian part (i.e. PACOR_I) is slightly larger in terms of the numbers of words. In order to compare the data drawn from the two sections of PACOR_IS (as well as the other corpora considered in this study), we will present our results in the form of normalized frequencies (in the form: N. of occurrences / 100,000 words).

	PACOR_I	PACOR_S
Words	1,060,320	883,937
Sentences	41,591	52,002
Articles	100	100

Tab. 7. PACOR_IS corpus design (based on Sketch Engine counts)

4.2. *It. / Sp.* solo, solamente, soltanto */ tan solo: frequency and dispersion*

In this paragraph we describe two distributional features of It. / Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* in the PACOR_IS corpus: general frequency (§ 4.2.1) and text dispersion (§ 4.2.2).

4.2.1. *Corpus frequency*

Table 8 reports the frequency of It. / Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* in PACOR_IS. According to the Pearson's Chi-squared test, the difference in the distribution of these adverbs in the Italian and Spanish data is statistically significant (Chi = 95.54, df = 2, p-value < 2.2e-16 [p < .0001]).

	PACOR_I		PACOR_S
solo	120 (1209)	*solo/sólo*	83 (736)
soltanto	20 (205)	*tan solo*	3 (25)
solamente	5 / 3* (49 / 32*)	*solamente*	8 / 7* (73 / 68*)
TOTAL	143	TOTAL	93

Tab. 8. Normalized (and absolute) frequency of restrictive focus adverbs in academic Italian and Spanish; the figure followed by an asterisk is the data analyzed[13]

[13] The data related to It. and Sp. *solamente* has been cleaned: we excluded all instances in which the adverb does not occur in the text written by the author of the article, but is found in stretches of texts quoted from other authors, in examples belonging to other language varieties (such as oral

In line with the main results obtained from the other corpora we consulted (see Table 4 in § 3.2), the most frequently occurring form is It. *solo* and Sp. *solo/sólo*, followed by *soltanto* and *solamente* in Italian and *solamente* and *tan solo* in Spanish. The order of preference of the three RFAs mirrors the one found earlier in relation to written Italian, but not for written Spanish, in which *tan solo* occurs slightly more often than *solamente*. In contrast, *solamente* is roughly three times more frequent than *tan solo* in PACOR_S. Moreover, It. *solo* is also more frequent in PACOR_I than the equivalent form in Spanish (120 vs. 83 occ. / 100,000 words). As far as the two other restrictive adverbs are concerned, It. *soltanto* is much more frequent than Sp. *tan solo*, which occurs only marginally in the data (20 vs. 3). In turn, and in line with what we previously observed in relation to written texts, Sp. *solamente* is twice as frequent as its equivalent form in Italian (7 vs. 3)[14].

A comparison of the frequency of the three RFAs in the Italian and Spanish data in the form of a Cohen-Friendly association plot (Figure A[15]) allows to confirm some of the claims made on the basis of Table 8. This plot shows very clearly that *soltanto* and *solamente* are overrepresented in the Italian and Spanish data, respectively. By contrast, *solamente* in Italian and *tan solo* in Spanish are underrepresented in the data. The most significative results (shown by the size of the boxes and the shade of their color) are the ones obtained, in order of importance, for Sp. *tan solo*, It. *soltanto* and Sp. *solamente*. Interestingly, the figures associated to It. *solo* and Sp. *solo/sólo* (see the small grey boxes) are not very important in explaining the overall result of the test (the values of the residuals for each adverb are close to 0; for details, see the bar to the right).

speech), or in texts belonging to other historical periods of Italian and Spanish. Given the large number of occurrences, we did not follow this procedure for *solo* and *soltanto*. Consequently, the data for these two forms is not as 'clean'.

[14] These results are based on a thorough check of the corpus and the correction of a series of shortcomings in the Sketch Engine POS-tagging. Some adverbial uses of It. / Sp. *solo* (without an accent) end up being POS-tagged as 'adjective': whereas there are only two cases (out of 79 occ. of *solo* as ADJ) in PACOR_I, there are as many as 213 in PACOR_S (out of a total of 347 occ. of *solo* tagged as ADJ). The high margin of error may be related to the lack of accent on Sp. *solo* (see Fn 1). Conversely, some adjectival uses of *solo* are wrongly labeled 'adverb' in the corpus: there are 24 cases (out of 1,209 occ. of *solo* as ADV) in PACOR_I and only four (out of 522) in PACOR_S.

[15] Based on the assumption that the variables analyzed are statistically independent, a Cohen-Friendly association plot (based on Pearsons's residuals) allows us to visually display the deviations between the expected frequency and the actual frequency observed in the data. Specifically, it helps us understand the contribution of each cell to the overall result of the test. When observed frequencies
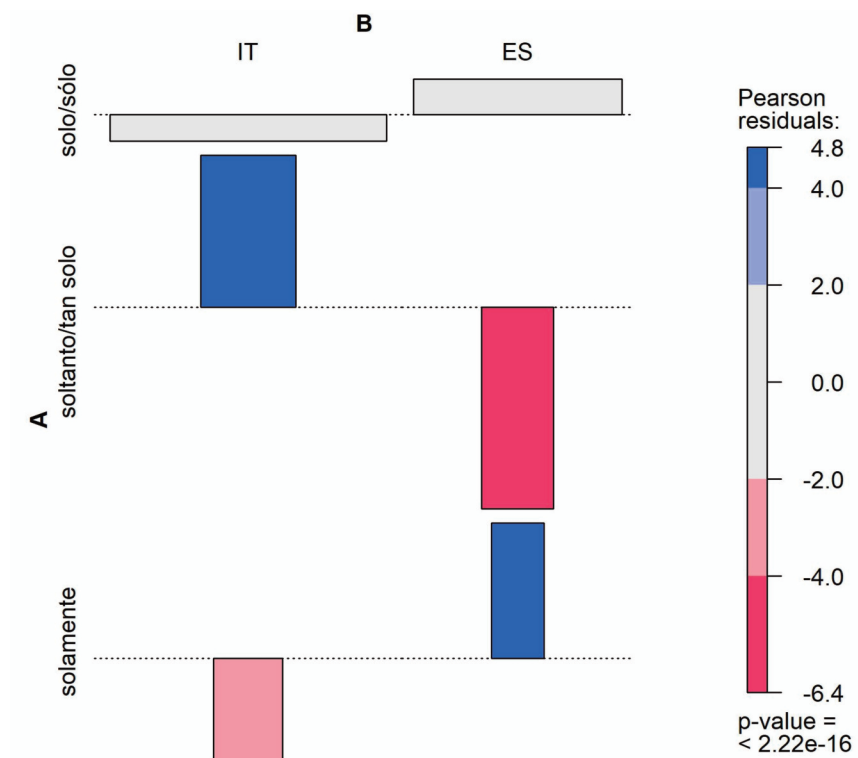
Fig. A. Comparing the distribution of restrictive focus adverbs
in academic Italian and Spanish (Cohen-Friendly association plot)

In relation to the figures in the last row of Table 8, we observe another substantial difference between the two Romance languages: overall, Italian uses the three restrictive adverbs more often than Spanish (143 vs. 93). This result is primarily attributable to the large discrepancy in the frequency of It. and Sp. *solo*, which is somewhat puzzling in that it does not mirror what we found in corpora representing written Italian and

are greater than expected (i.e., when residuals are positive), the boxes rise above the baseline. Conversely, when observed frequencies are smaller than expected (in case of negative residuals), the boxes go below the baseline. The size of the box provides clues on the importance of the deviation of each result (or cell) and the shading on the level of significance.

Spanish (§ 3.2.), namely that the frequency of *solo* was very close (110 vs. 119). Explaining the different results (in Table 8) is not, of course, an easy task. Is restriction expressed in Spanish academic texts by drawing on other linguistic means, in particular other adverbials or lexical expressions (such as verbs)?[16] To throw some light on this issue, in Table 9 below we report the frequency of two other RFAs in the PACOR_IS corpus, namely It. *unicamente* and *esclusivamente* and Sp. *únicamente* and *exclusivamente* (the results of the Pearson's Chi-squared test show that the difference in the distribution of these adverbs in the Italian and Spanish data is statistically significant: $Chi = 81.203$, $df = 1$, $p\text{-value} < 2.2e\text{-}16$ [$< .0001$]).

	PACOR_I		PACOR_S
unicamente	1.8 (19)	*únicamente*	10 (89)
esclusivamente	12 (126)	*exclusivamente*	5 (45)
TOTAL	13.8 (145)	TOTAL	15 (134)

Tab. 9. Normalized (and absolute) frequency of restrictive focus adverbs in academic Italian and Spanish

The numbers in Table 9 do not throw much light on the discrepancy between It. and Sp. *solo* in PACOR_IS, as the overall frequency of It. *unicamente* and *esclusivamente* on the one hand and Sp. *únicamente* and *exclusivamente* on the other is fairly close (13.8 for Italian and 15 for Spanish). What is interesting, however, is the cross-linguistic preference for a different adverb: Italian clearly favors *esclusivamente* over *unicamente* (the former is six times more frequent than the latter), whereas Spanish prefers *únicamente* over *exclusivamente* (the former is twice as frequent as the latter). Cross-linguistically, we observe that Sp. *únicamente* is roughly five times more frequent than It. *unicamente,* and that It. *esclusivamente* is almost three times more frequent than Sp. *exclusivamente.*

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[16] Syntactic constructions encoding restriction, in particular cleft sentences, seem less likely to play a role. We know from other contrastive corpus-based studies (see, in particular, De Cesare *et al.* 2016: 217-261) that Spanish uses cleft sentences, i.e. a group of syntactic structures associated with an exhaustiveness component (as in *Es Stella quien se ha comido la tarta* 'It's Stella who ate the cake'), less often than Italian (*È Stella che mangia la torta*). We found twice as many cleft sentences in Italian in a comparable corpus of news drawn from online daily newspapers (De Cesare *et al.* 2016: 228). There are, respectively, 45 and 21 Italian and Spanish clefts in 100,000 words.

A comparison of the frequency of the two RFAs in the Italian and Spanish data in the form of a Cohen-Friendly association plot (Figure B) allows to confirm the preferences highlighted on the basis of Table 9 across the two Romance languages. This plot shows very clearly that the use of *esclusivamente* and *unicamente* is overrepresented in the Italian and Spanish data, respectively. Conversely, we observe that the use of *unicamente* in Italian and *esclusivamente* in Spanish is underrepresented in the data.
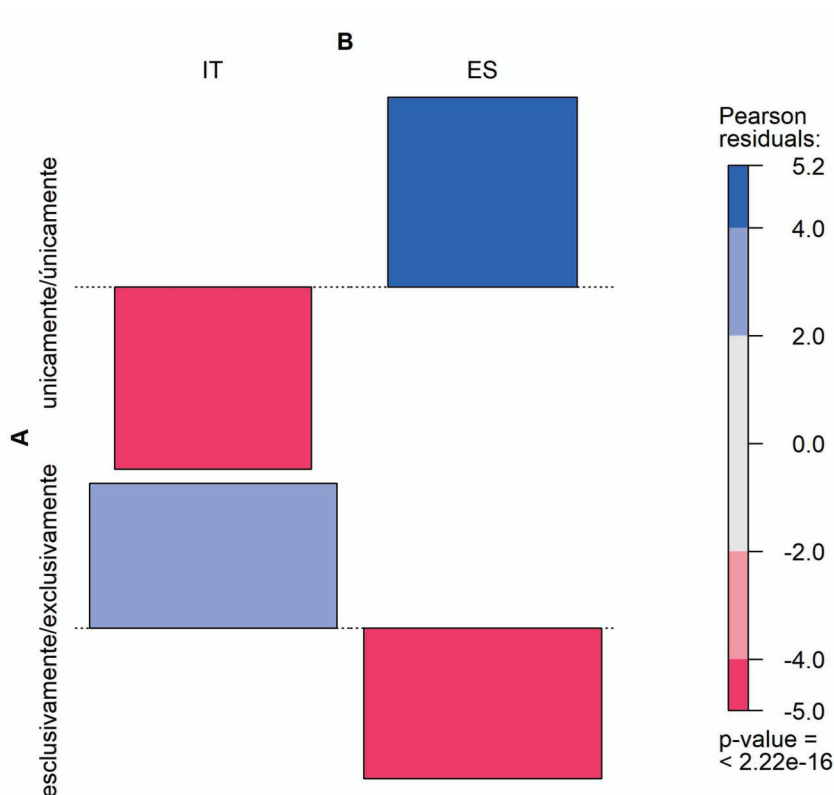

Fig. B. Comparing the distribution of restrictive focus adverbs in academic Italian and Spanish (Cohen-Friendly association plot)

4.2.2. It. / Sp. solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo: dispersion

To shed more light on the distribution of It. / Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* in the PACOR_IS corpus, let us consider their dispersion, i.e. their distribution across the corpus parts (see the data in Table 10).[17]

		n. of occ.	n. of documents	Average occurrences per document
PACOR_I	*solo*	1209	98	12
	soltanto	205	53	3.9
	solamente	32	18	1.8
PACOR_S	*solo*	736	92	8
	tan solo	25	10	2.5
	solamente	68	29	2.4

Tab. 10. The dispersion of three restrictive focus adverbs in academic Italian and Spanish (PACOR_IS)

It. and Sp. *solo* are found in almost every document in the PACOR_IS corpus (it is missing in only two documents in PACOR_I and eight in PACOR_S). However, the frequency per document of It. *solo* is, on average, higher than that of its Spanish counterpart (12 vs. 8), a result that is directly related to the higher frequency of *solo* in Italian (see Table 8). Turning to the other two restrictive adverbs, we observe that It. *soltanto* is present in 50% of the documents and *tan solo* in only 10%, whereas It. *solamente* occurs in 20% of them and Sp. *solamente* in 30%. The differences in distribution between *soltanto* and *tan solo* are reflected in part in the average number of occurrences of the two adverbs per document (3.9 vs. 2.5).

These results support the idea that It. and Sp. *solo* is the most basic, or unmarked restrictive focus adverb. They also confirm that It. *soltanto* is a rather common form, being used less frequently than *solo* but more often

[17] These results should be interpreted with caution, as PACOR_I is larger than PACOR_S and the texts included in each subcorpus are not of the same length.

than *solamente*, that Sp. *solamente* is the second most commonly used form, and that the use of *tan solo* is rather restricted.

The difference between It. *soltanto* and *solamente* on the one hand, and Sp. *tan solo* and *solamente* on the other is further illustrated in the data presented in Table 11. (The data in this table reads as follows: It. *soltanto* occurs once in 14 documents, twice in six documents, three times in 12 documents, and so on).

	n. occ. / document	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	20
		Documents (N)									
PACOR_I	*soltanto*	14	6	12	5	6	4	2	2	1	1
	solamente	9	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
PACOR_S	*tan solo*	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	solamente	16	4	4	3	1	1	1	0	1	0

Tab. 11. The dispersion of two restrictive focus adverbs in academic
Italian and Spanish

As the results for PACOR_I show, It. *soltanto* occurs up to 20 times in a single article; It. *solamente* occurs a maximum of four times in the same document, but only once in most of the documents in which it does appear. We thus observe again that *solamente* is much more restricted in use than *soltanto*. The reverse pattern is evident in PACOR_S: *solamente* occurs up to nine times in the same document, and *tan solo* only twice. The index of dispersion confirms the cross-linguistic difference between It. and Sp. *solamente*: 0.55 for Italian and 0.88 for Spanish.

4.3. *It. / Sp.* solo, solamente, soltanto */ tan solo: two semantic operations*
Having considered the discourse frequency of It. / Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* in the PACOR_IS, we now turn to their uses and function in academic texts. We describe two syntactic patterns related to two different semantic operations in more detail: negating (§ 4.3.1) and reinforcing (§ 4.3.2) the restrictive meaning component. We show that It. / Sp. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto / tan solo* do not

accomplish these operations in the same way across the two Romance languages, which points to the divergent restrictions imposed on the discourse context.

4.3.1. Negating restrictive focus adverbs

A frequent pattern in PACOR_IS is the occurrence of RFAs after negation, namely It. *non* and Sp. *no*. Table 12 shows the frequency of the collocational pattern 'Neg. + RFA', in which the adverb directly follows the negation.[18] The data reads as follows (taking the first line as example): It. *non solo* occurs 261 times in the corpus (absolute frequency); it is a pattern that occurs in 22% of all instances of *solo* found in the corpus; and in relation to the data on all three patterns (i.e. *non solo*, *non soltanto* and *non solamente*, right-hand column), it covers 85% of the cases. The results of the Pearson's Chi-squared test show that the difference in the distribution of these adverbs in the Italian and Spanish data is statistically significant (Chi = 50.521, df = 2, p-value = 1.07e-11 [p < .0001]).

	Collocations	n. of occ. (and %)	Total relative frequency (in %)
PACOR_I	*non solo*	261 (22)	85
	non soltanto	45 (22)	15
	non solamente	0	0
PACOR_S	*no solo*	192 (26)	94
	no solamente	13 (19)	6
	no tan solo	0	0

Tab. 12. 'Negation + restrictive focus adverbs in Italian and Spanish (PACOR_IS)

The It. negation *non* is a stable lexical item before two RFAs, namely *solo* and *soltanto* (in both cases, the pattern 'Neg. + RFA' covers as much as a fifth of the occurrences), but it never occurs immediately before

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18 The analysis does not include cases in which the negation is not adjacent to the RFA (e.g., *non è solo x* lit. 'not is only x').

solamente. The T-score[19] associated with the first element before the adverb confirms this finding and allows us to claim that the chance of finding *non* before *solo* is greater than before *soltanto* (T-score: *non solo* = 15.49/*Non solo* = 2.69; *non soltanto* = 6.57).

The Sp. negation *no* is also a stable lexical item before two RFAs (T-score: *no solo* = 6.82/*no sólo* = 7.98; *no solamente* = 3.51), in this case *solo* and *solamente* (occurring with roughly the same frequency in relation to each other and to Italian). However, it was not found at all before *tan solo*. Cross-linguistically, these results highlight a strong similarity in the use of It. and Sp. *solo*. They also reinforce the claim that It. *soltanto* is closer to Sp. *solamente* than to *tan solo*, once more revealing the discrepant behavior of cross-linguistic cognates: It. *soltanto* and Sp. *tan solo* on the one hand, and It. / Sp. *solamente*, on the other.

A comparison of the frequency of the pattern 'Neg. + RFA' in the Italian and Spanish data in the form of a Cohen-Friendly association plot (Figure C; see next page) allows to show that *non soltanto* and, to a lesser extent, *no solamente* are overrepresented in the Italian and Spanish data, respectively. These results thus confirm that It. *soltanto* is close to Sp. *solamente*. Conversely, we observe that *non solamente* in Italian and, even more clearly, of *no tan solo* in Spanish are underrepresented in the data. The most significative results (shown again by the size of the boxes and the shade of their color) are the ones obtained, in order of importance, for Sp. *no tan solo*, It. *non soltanto* and Sp. *no solamente*. Interestingly, exactly as we observed in Figure A, the results associated to It. and Sp. *solo* (see the small grey boxes) are not very important in explaining the overall result of the test.

Let us now turn to the formal and functional properties of the collocation 'Neg. + RFA' in the PACOR_IS data. There are stable features in the discourse context in which we find this collocational pattern, in both Romance languages. Formally, the pattern typically occurs in a correlative construction (see examples 18 to 21 below). Specifically, the collocation 'Neg. + RFA' introduces the first member of the correlative

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[19] The definition of T-score provided by Sketch Engine is as follows: "T-score expresses the certainty with which we can argue that there is an association between the words, i.e. their co-occurrence is not random".
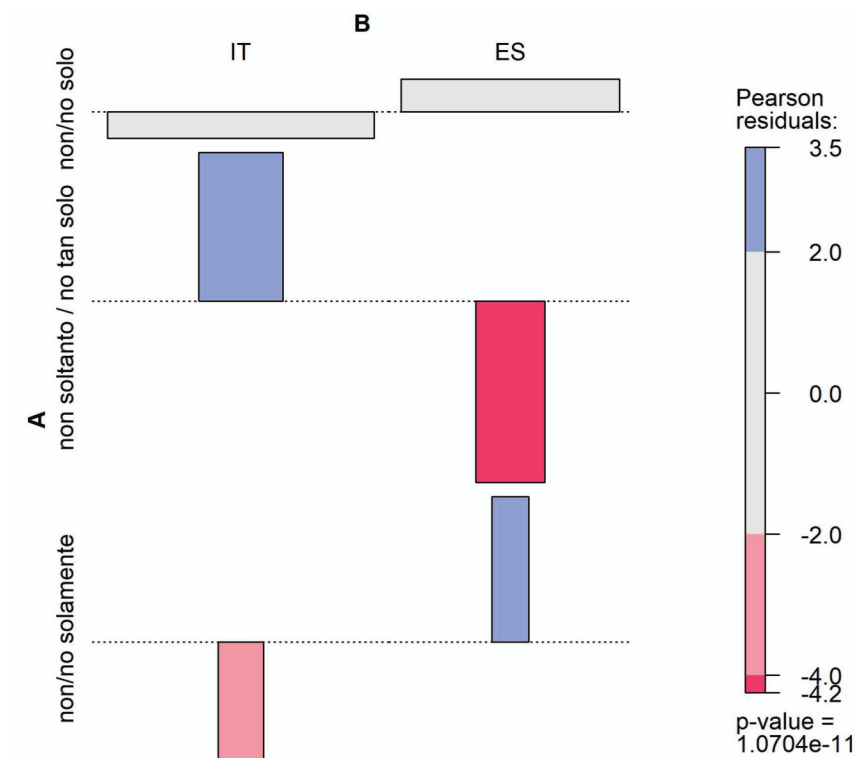
Fig. C. Comparing the distribution of restrictive focus adverbs
in academic Italian and Spanish (Cohen-Friendly association plot)

construction and projects a second member, opened by an adversative conjunction (It. *ma*, Sp. *sino*) optionally followed by an additive and/or scalar focus adverb (It. *anche* 'also' / *anche e soprattutto* 'also and foremost'; Sp. *también* 'also' / *además* 'furthermore'). In most of the cases found in PACOR_IS, the collocation 'Neg. + RFA' is followed by the DA of the adverb, whereas one (or more) alternative of the DA is explicitly expressed in the second part of the correlative construction. The following examples also show that the entire correlative construction is generally realized in a single utterance.

33

(18) It. Queste scritture hanno andamento narrativo; sono precisati per esempio **non solo** l'arrivo al Lazzaretto di navi ed equipaggio e il tempo di permanenza nell'isola, **ma** il luogo di provenienza della nave, le cause della morte degli uomini dell'equipaggio […] [PACOR_I, doc. 6]

'These writings are narrative-like; they specify, for instance, not only the arrival of boats and crew in Lazzaretto as well as the extent of their stay on the island, but also the boat's place of origin, the cause of the death among members of the crew […].'

(19) It. ne risulterebbe un testo **non soltanto** monotono, **ma anche** inconsueto [PACOR_I, doc. 8]

'it would lead to a text that is not only more monotonous, but also more unusual.'

(20) Sp. […] y este dato es sumamente significativo **no sólo** por la cantidad, **sino** por la calidad y la fortuna de los términos. [PACOR_S, doc. 19]

'and this information is highly relevant in terms not only of the quantity, but also of the quality and appropriateness of the terms.'

(21) Sp. Sólo teniendo en cuenta todos estos criterios cualquier diccionario podrá usarse **no solamente** como descodificador, **sino también** como codificador. [PACOR_S, doc. 74]

'Only if all these criteria are considered could a dictionary be used as both a decodifying and a codifying tool.'

The above-mentioned examples also allow us to clarify the main discourse function of the collocation 'Neg. + RFA + DA', which enters in a binary discourse movement presenting a climax (see Andorno / De Cesare 2017: 191-193 for a description of the form and function of the second part of the structure). From the perspective of information structure and argumentation, it introduces the most expected piece of information – coinciding with the content of the adverb's DA – whereas the second part of the correlative construction, introduced by the adversative conjunction, expresses the least expected (possibly also more controversial) piece of information (coinciding with the alternative to the adverb's DA).

There are some instances in the PACOR_IS corpus in which the collocation 'Neg. + *solo*' deviates from the prototypical formal and functional patterns described above. These patterns are interesting insofar as they present major intra- and minor cross-linguistic differences. First, Italian *non solo* can occur with an elliptical DA, as in (22), but this construction is not possible with Sp. *no solo*. It is also excluded with It. *non soltanto* and Sp. *no solamente*. This difference points to the fact that It. *soltanto* as well as Sp. *solo* and *solamente* strongly favor the canonical format illustrated in (19), (20) and (21), respectively.

> (22) It. L'italiano è una forte lingua di cultura (e **non solo**) che gode ottima salute. [PACOR_I, doc. 22]
>
> 'Italian is a strong cultural language (and not only) that enjoys excellent health.'

The collocation '*no/non solo* + DA' also occurs as an autonomous piece of discourse, without the second part of the projected construction being expressed. In cases such as (23) and (24), the second part of the correlative construction must be reconstructed in the mind of the reader (e.g. in 23: "proponendo a scuola letture alternative e motivanti non solo di stampo letterario ma anche di stampo non letterario" 'proposing alternative and motivating school readings not only of literary texts but also of non-literary texts'). Given that it is missing, we perceive that the alternative to the adverb's DA ("letture alternative e motivanti di stampo non letterario" 'alternative and motivating school readings of non-literary texts') is no longer the most relevant piece of information: it is secondary and, as such, relegated to the discourse background.

> (23) It. Già a partire dai dati COMPLINESS era emerso il problema di programmare un intervento didattico specifico sul lessico, calibrato in modo appetibile per i ragazzi, proponendo a scuola letture alternative e motivanti **non solo** di stampo letterario, come ha raccomandato ripetutamente Luca Serianni. [PACOR_I, doc. 31]
>
> 'A problem had already emerged from the COMPLINESS data concerning the programming of a specific didactic intervention on vocabulary, calibrated in an attractive way for children, and proposing alternative and motivating school readings that are not exclusively literary in nature, as Luca Serianni has repeatedly recommended.'

(24) Sp. […] es evidente que debemos atender a todas las posibles evoluciones, **no sólo** a las más representativas, pero ello sólo será posible… [PACOR_S, doc. 15]

'[…] it is clear that we must pay attention to all possible developments, not just the most representative ones, but this will only be possible...'

Again, it seems from the data at hand that the other RFAs tend to occur in the canonical discourse format. *No solamente* always occurs in a correlative construction in PACOR_S, as illustrated in (21). In PACOR_I, a strong tendency for *non soltanto* to occur in correlative constructions, as in (19), is also observable. There are only two cases in which *non soltanto* + DA is not followed by the second part of the correlative construction, which has to be reconstructed.

4.3.2. *The coordination of restrictive focus adverbs*

In addition to the frequent collocational pattern discussed in § 4.3.1, we identified less frequent patterns that should nonetheless be considered in that they reveal other cross-linguistic differences between It. and Sp. RFAs. One example is the coordination of two RFAs (in the pattern 'RFA e/y RFA'). As is known from the literature, a RFA cannot be modified by an intensifier such as It. *molto* / Sp. *muy* 'very' or It. *estremamente* / Sp. *extremadamente* 'extremely' (It. **vogliamo classificare molto/estremamente solo i segnali discorsivi* / Sp. **queremos clasificar muy/extremadamente solo los marcadores discursivos* 'we want to classify very/extremely only the discourse markers'). The reinforcing of the restrictive feature of a RFA occurs through the coordination of two RFAs.

In the PACOR_I data, It. *solo* occurs in a coordinative construction in which the second coordinate is *esclusivamente* (two occurrences in the same document) or *soltanto* (one occurrence):

(25) It. Visto che l'attività consiste nell'identificare e nel classificare **solo ed esclusivamente** i SD l'insegnante, chiede ulteriori chiarimenti (turno 19). [PACOR_I, doc. 30]

'Since the activity consists in identifying and classifying only the SD the teacher asks for further clarification (turn 19)'

(26) It. Come possiamo noi affermare a priori che un profilo tratti **solo e soltanto** di attualità giornalistica, o di politica, o di questioni aziendali e non presenti espressioni "diaristiche"? [PACOR_I, doc. 13]

'How can we claim a priori that a profile deals solely and exclusively with journalistic current affairs, or with politics, or with corporate matters and does not present "diaristic" expressions?'

In configurations such as (25) and (26), the meaning of the RFA *solo* is reinforced by the presence of the second restrictive adverb: the second RFA does not add any new semantic content to the one conveyed by *solo*, nor does it cancel a scalar interpretation (which *solo* may license, as seen in Section 2), because the discourse context of both examples does not give rise to such an interpretation. The second RFA in examples such as these merely repeats the restrictive meaning component conveyed by *solo*, thereby reinforcing the restrictive value conveyed by the first adverb. We did not find similar patterns with It. *solamente* and *soltanto* in PACOR_I.

Neither did we find any instances with Sp. *solo, solamente* or *tan solo* in PACOR_S. In fact, in Spanish a coordinative construction in which *solo* is reinforced by another RFA seems difficult to accept (*solo y *solamente/*tan solo*) or marginal (*solo y únicamente/exclusivamente*). *Única y exclusivamente* (see example 27, which occurs three times in the corpus) is the only coordinative construction with a reinforcing restrictive function found in PACOR_S. Note that in Spanish is it possible to shorten the first *mente*-derived adverb of the construction by expressing the adverb-suffix marker only once (on this possibility, see Detges 2015).

(27) Sp. Esto es así porque el foco se proyecta **única y exclusivamente** sobre la alternativa presupuesta, un fondo referencialmente impreciso. [PACOR_S, doc. 5]

'This is because the focus is solely and exclusively projected onto the presupposed alternative, a referentially imprecise background'

In order to better assess the difference between Italian and Spanish *solo*, let us consider data in larger corpora. Table 13 includes the occurrences based on CORIS and the written part of CORPES XXI.

Collocations	Occurrences	
CORIS (150 million words)	*solo ed/e esclusivamente*	151
	solo e soltanto	61
	solo e solamente	4
CORPES XXI (77 million words)	*solo y exclusivamente*	25
	solo y tan solo	0
	solo y solamente	0

Tab. 13. Coordination among restrictive focus adverbs
in Italian and Spanish

Bearing in mind that CORPES XXI is half the size of CORIS, we note substantial differences in the distribution of these three coordinative constructions in written Italian and Spanish. The most frequent pattern in Italian is *solo ed esclusivamente*, formally corresponding to Sp. *solo y exclusivamente*, which is nevertheless much less prevalent in CORPES XXI (150 vs. 50 occ.; note that the data has been adjusted to facilitate comparison). It. *solo e soltanto* is also quite frequent; by contrast, Sp. *solo y tan solo* is not documented in CORPES XXI.

The most common construction in Spanish is *única y exclusivamente* (113 occurrences), again including the RFA *exclusivamente* as a second coordinate. This construction does not have a direct equivalent in Italian. The construction *unicamente ed esclusivamente* is not documented at all in CORIS (note that *unica ed esclusivamente is not grammatically correct because Italian does not allow omitting the morpheme *-mente*). The only instances we found with *unicamente* appearing as the first coordinate was *unicamente e solamente* (only two occurrences). The marginality of Italian coordinative constructions with two *mente*-derived adverbs is clearly related to language style. Constructions such as *unicamente ed esclusivamente* and *unicamente e solamente* are highly redundant and are hence perceived as inelegant.

It turns out from the data at hand that the two Romance languages clearly differ in the coordination patterns used: Italian favors the pattern

solo ed esclusivamente, whereas Spanish prefers *única y exclusivamente*. The absence of *solo* in the first part of the coordination could reflect the fact that *solo* in Spanish is also used as an adjective.

5. *Conclusion*

Contemporary Italian and Spanish show a high degree of polymorphism in the class of adverbs expressing restriction: there are three close cognates in both languages, namely It. *solo, solamente* and *soltanto* and Sp. *solo, solamente* and *tan solo*. Although these RFAs are equivalent on the semantic level, and morphologically similar, we wanted to know if they differed in usage. No study thus far has given a description of their cross-linguistic similarities and differences in relation to parameters such as their distribution in different language varieties, their discourse frequency, and their occurrence in specific collocations. Our study, which was based on empirical data drawn from various corpora, revealed some interesting cross-linguistic similarities and differences in relation to these parameters.

Amongst the major outcomes of our study we highlight the following findings: (i) there is one main (*solo*) and two marginal (*soltanto/tan solo* and *solamente*) RFAs in both Italian and Spanish; (ii) one of the two marginal forms is clearly more prevalent than the other: *soltanto* in Italian and *solamente* in Spanish. Conversely, It. *solamente* and Sp. *tan solo* are very restricted in their use. A closer look at the distribution of RFAs in written vs. spoken language also shows that the frequency of *solo* is relatively stable across these two language varieties (but more data on spoken Spanish is needed). On the other hand, the frequency of It. *soltanto* and Sp. *solamente* is more dependent upon the language variety. On the basis of these findings we observe that *solo* belongs to the basic vocabulary of Italian and Spanish, whereas the other two RFAs are more specialized lexical items.

In Section 4 of our contribution we described the uses of It. / Sp. *solo, solamente, soltanto / tan solo* in academic texts, based on a self-assembled comparable corpus (PACOR_IS). Our analysis shows that there are both relevant similarities and differences between It. and Sp. *solo* in this genre. As far as their similarities are concerned, in both languages the RFA shows up surprisingly often in the collocation 'Neg. + RFA', which generally enters a larger textual movement, involved in the construction of a binary structure expressing a climax. As for the differences, we discovered three

notable facts. First, It. *solo* is more frequent than its Spanish equivalent. Second, the sequence 'Neg. + RFA' may occur with an elliptical DA in Italian, but not in Spanish. Third, with regard to the coordination pattern 'RFA e/y RFA', allowing reinforcement of the restrictive meaning component of the first RFA, we observe that It. *solo* enters two different patterns (*solo ed esclusivamente* and *solo e soltanto*, the first one being more common), whereas Sp. *solo* enters only one (*solo y exclusivamente*), which is much more marginal than in Italian. The operation consisting of reinforcing the restrictive feature of a RFA in Spanish is achieved by resorting to an entirely different pair of adverbs (*única y exclusivamente*). These results show that It. and Sp. *solo* are far from overlapping when their usage is considered in more detail and in authentic discourses. These results can be extended to the pairs of RFAs endind in -*mente*: Italian favors the use of *esclusivamente* over *unicamente*, while Spanish favors the use of *únicamente* over *exclusivamente*.

In order to further explain some of the results found in this study, such as the cross-linguistic gap between It. / Sp. *solo* in academic texts, we should add an additional step to the research design and analyze data drawn from an Italian-Spanish translation corpus. If we examined the translation equivalents of the most common Italian and Spanish RFAs, we would be able to compile an inventory of restrictive expressions in both Romance languages and determine their relationship.[20] More specifically, on the basis of the measure proposed in Johansson (2007), we would be able to calculate the degree of mutual correspondence between It. and Sp. *solo,* and evaluate with greater precision how close these two cognates really are (for a similar study applied to It. *anche* and Fr. *aussi*, see Andorno / De Cesare 2017).

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[20] See Nicklaus (2015), for a study following a similar procedure, in which the Italian and French translations of the German RFAs *nur* and *allein* 'only' occurring in literary texts are investigated.

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