



**UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI BERGAMO**

School of Doctoral Studies

Doctoral Degree in Linguistic Sciences

XXXII Cycle

SSD: L-LIN/01

**The Comment Clause in Present-day Italian:  
Forms, functions, directionalities**

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Doctoral Thesis

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Academic year 2018/19

## Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I thank my supervisor, Piera Molinelli, who supervised my work from the very beginning with enthusiasm and dedication, providing interesting questions, suggestions, criticisms, hints, and corrections. She introduced me at the very heart of discourse markers studies giving me the possibility to meet several people working in different, converging methods within the *same* topic.

A special thought goes to Caterina Mauri, who supervised the thesis and encouraged me to discover the spoken mode and its emerging grammar. She also gave me the possibility to explore the KIParla Corpus during its implementation. I will always be indebted to her for all the support and inspiration, linguistically and otherwise. I would like to thank the other people that have supervised my thesis, Rita Franceschini, Michele Prandi, Andrea Sansò and Federica Venier, all of whom gave me different perspectives, raised questions, and hints at the topic of CCs, providing with complementary inputs ranging from the philosophy of language, to diachrony, grammaticalization, discourse studies and to the topic of grammar of spoken discourse. I thank Stefan Schneider, who talked me about parentheticals along the streets of Valencia in June 2016. I thank Kate Beeching for crucial discussions on the interpretation of some challenging CCs. I thank Margarita Borreguero Zuloaga who helped me with the tricky category of evidentiality in spoken data. I thank Miriam Voghera for the interest she has always shown towards my work.

I thank the whole School of Doctoral Studies and my colleagues, with a special thanks to the colleagues of the XXXII cycle, Laura, Matteo, Alessio, Marco and Vittorio. A special thanks goes to the Coordinator of the School, Pierluigi Cuzzolin.

This work owes much to my two research stays in Louvain-la-Neuve under the tutorship of Liesbeth Degand, who inspired many of the insights of this work, from the distinction between micro and macrosyntax to the annotation software, to the interpretation of some occurrences. I sincerely thank Liesbeth Degand for all the mornings and afternoons she spent in her office listening to my countless, annoying, subtle doubts and questions about Italian comment clauses.

In Louvain-la-Neuve I had the possibility to meet Anne-Catherine Simon, who very gently taught me how to define the incidentelness of my CCs, by explaining me step by step how to work with a prosogram.

Then, a special thanks to my officemate, who belongs to both the category of scientific advising and true friendship: Ludivine Crible. Along with making me feel home during my Belgian months, she helped me with the EXMARaLDA software and explained me everything I asked her with complete precision, cuteness and dedication.

I thank Chiara Ghezzi and Chiara Fedriani for insightful discussions on data, discourse markers, and for their strong and sincere support in these three years.

I am also particularly indebted to the network in Bologna: I thank Francesca Masini, Alessandra Barotto, and Ilaria Fiorentini. Many thanks to Giorgio Francesco Arcodia, Valentina Benigni, Federica Da Milano and Egle Mocciano, who supported me in these last years.

A thank Eugenio Goria and Silvia Ballarè for helping me with the KIParla Corpus data, audio, transcriptions and so forth.

I sincerely thank Luisa Brucale, who introduced me to linguistics. She has been supporting me in every step of all my life in the last nine years, especially in hard times.

I thank all my friends and the wonderful people I met in Louvain-la-Neuve and in Brussels.

I thank my mother for her uncountable strength, which inspired and supported me in these years. I thank my aunt, S. A. Lucia, who supported me from the very beginning. I thank my big family. I thank my father who now looks at me from Heaven.

Last but not least, to my loving partner, who has always believed in me, who loves me, who accepts the way I love my research, who encourages me, my most faithful and firmer supporter, Marco.

*The work is dedicated to my father, who left me three months ago, before the conclusion of this trip.*

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# Chapter 1. Theoretical premises: the category of comment clause in spoken discourse

## 1.1 Introduction

### 1.1.1 Overview: what are comment clauses and why are they of interest?

This work explores the functions of a set of parenthetical verbs we define as comment clauses (henceforth CCs), i.e. matrixclause-like clauses such as *penso* ('I think'), *mi sembra* ('it seems to me'), and *guarda* ('look'). These clauses are not syntactically integrated to the rest of the utterance and they may be placed almost everywhere, even interrupting head-modifier relations both on clausal and on phrasal level. CCs are not licensed by rules of sentence grammar. Nevertheless, in spite of their function as expletives (it is possible to remove them without affecting the grammaticality of their hosts - Cignetti 2001) they are crucial for the global interpretation (functional correlate) as they constitute a second level of information. Thus, CCs express various functions helping the interlocutor to integrate the meaning expressed by their hosts. As it will become clearer, CCs may have an effect on the propositional content, e.g. modifying or specifying parts of it, such as epistemic certainty. Generally, they indicate how content is to be interpreted or contextualised by the hearer or how it is conceptualised by the speaker (Haselow 2016: 82).

As it will be elaborated later in this work (Ch. 3 to Ch. 5), CCs play a threefold role contributing to three macro-domains. First, they contribute to make clear the discourse organization (textual coherence). Secondly, they provide information on the speaker/hearer interaction (intersubjective/interpersonal meanings). Thirdly, CCs are used with the aim of making the speaker's attitudes explicit in discourse (subjective stance). The last domain pertaining to the expression of the speaker's attitude is here defined as **speaker-oriented**: it includes relations between epistemic and speech-act events functions. More specifically, it comprises functions such as epistemic modality, evidentiality, exemplification, and emphasis. The **textual** domain includes functions pertaining to the structuring of discourse segments and to phrasing processes, such as opening boundary, topic-resuming, topic-shifting, and reformulation. Finally, the **interpersonal** (or intersubjective) domain refers to the interactive management of the speaker-hearer relationship, thus including attention-getting monitoring, negative face-saving functions, (dis)agreement and so forth. Some of the functions under examination are exemplified in 1.1) through 1.5):

- 1.1) AB\_BO002: [si' (.)] a me boccaccio non piace. [sara' che] (.) no. ma me l'hanno fatto odiare al liceo  
**mi sa** (KIParla, BOA3001)  
AB\_BO002: I don't like Boccaccio's plays. Maybe because of the way my professors introduced his works to me during High School **it seems to me**

- 1.2) VC\_BO033: mentre lo stage three magari analizza::  
 RP\_BO026: mh mh.  
 VC\_BO033: **non so.** cose piu' culturali, storiche italiane,  
 VC\_BO033: e::: e anche:: esercizi di grammatica o: questionari: o, (KIParla, BOA1005)  
 VC\_BO033: Stage n° 3 maybe analyses mh mh **I don't know** more cultural/historical Italian stuff and  
 eh and also grammar exercises, or questionnaires or
- 1.3) EG\_BO039: [...] abbiamo **diciamo** accordato un argomento [...] (KIParla, BOA1010)  
 EG\_BO039: We have **let's say** planned a topic
- 1.4) PT\_BO087: **senta** rossi, (.) poi lei mi porta il manuale.  
 PT\_BO087: [che manu]ale ha scelto? (KIParla, BOC1002)  
 PT\_BO087: **Listen/so** Rossi, then you bring me the handbook. Well, what kind of handbook did you choose?
- 1.5) NZ\_BO009: [io r]ispetto **guarda**,  
 NZ\_BO009: cioe' tu devi mettere da parte i tuoi problemi, (KIParla, BOA3002)  
 NZ\_BO009: I respect your choices **look/believe me**, I mean you have to put your problems aside.

In 1.1), the CC *mi sa* ('it seems to me') is employed to convey the speaker's epistemic stance with respect to the content expressed in the host clause. More specifically, the speaker is going to utter the reason he does not appreciate Boccaccio's work: during high school he did not study the author at stake in the right perspective. Along with modulating, the speaker is going to utter a possible cause (his High School professors did not explain Boccaccio in an appropriate way). Therefore, we may hypothesise that the modalization also conveys evidential meaning (see Chapter 3).

In 1.2), the CC *non so* ('I don't know') performs a function of exemplification through a construction stemming from the semifactive verb *sapere* ('to know') in the negative form. As we will plainly argue later in Ch.3, speakers may often express a commitment modulation in order to construe a context-based category, properly starting from concrete, context-based examples which are in the scope of the CC. The hypothetical status of the examples is thus declared as a fact of modalization. In language, such function may also be performed by other linguistic devices, such as subjunctive mood verbal forms, phrasal adverbials, lexical predicates such as *to suppose*, *to consider*, and so on.

In 1.3), the speaker performs a textual function contributing to the textual coherence. More specifically, the CC *diciamo* ('let's say') interrupts the Verbal Phrase (VP) constituents in order to express a function of semantic approximation, whereby signalling that the target lexeme *accordare* ('to grant') does not completely fit into what the speaker has in mind. A function like this may also be served by a placeholder or by a taxonomic noun (see Ch. 4).

Moreover, in 1.4), the CC performs an interactional function pertaining to the speaker/hearer interaction. Through the employment of the CC *senta* ('listen'), the speaker attracts the hearer's attention in order to proffer a specific request. Finally, in 1.5), the speaker recalls the hearer's

cognitive attention by expressing a function of emphasis to the truth value of the host, on the basis of the hearer's acceptation of the validity of the proposition (*p*). The same function may be performed by a modal, emphatic adverb such as *davvero* or *proprio* ('really') or by a verbal phrase such as *credimi* 'trust me, believe me', as we will plainly argue in Ch.5.

Summing up, in all the aforementioned examples, in order to play the functions we tackled, the speaker might have employed another device ranging from a specific mood (for instance, to express the function of epistemicity/evidentiality placed on the grammatical level) to a discourse particle, connective or adverb (see the adverb *davvero* 'really' used with the same function of *guarda* in example 1.5). All these devices share a common denominator. They are used to signal the speaker's attitude towards the content of the utterance or towards the interlocutor. As all the other mentioned devices, CCs are small sentences expressing the speaker's stance or point of view in discourse (Scheibman 2002). Indeed, the pervasive expression of the speaker's point of view (or stance) and the associated personalization of utterances gives rise to conventionalised structural patterns that may be seen in the distribution of grammatical and lexical elements (Scheibman 2002: 1).

Along with connectives, adverbs, grammatical moods, also CCs may be mobilised to express complex functions in discourse through a level which is syntactically detachable. It is the variety of these frequent structural strategies in interactive discourse - those that express the speaker's stance - that forms the basis for the analyses offered in this work and the interest for the de-verbal strategies mobilised to express these basic functions of the language. In one of the first definitions of CCs (Quirk et al. 1985), formal and functional properties were given equal defining/discriminating status; in fact, a CC was defined as a parenthetical clause loosely related to the rest of the clause it belongs to with the function of commenting on the content of the latter. CCs are actually parenthetical clauses.

However, over the years, the label *parenthetical* has been applied to a range of very different phenomena, ranging from phrasal to verbal structures, which have been associated properly on the basis of a functional criterion, namely the expression of speaker's textual and (inter)subjective stance. Instead of describing the variety of markers (or devices in general) used to encode the speaker's textual and (inter)subjective stance in language, we intend to focus on the identification of a specific set of **parenthetical, (de-)verbal** strategies which may be mobilised to express functions ranging from the proposition to the speech act level, despite being syntactically unintegrated.

What we notice in the literature is essentially a functional interest leading to a confusion in the identification of the category of PARENTHEICAL (Kaltenböck 2005), as we will see in sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. In fact, by defining our structures as (comment) clauses, we provide a discriminating parameter which is thought to give more internal homogeneity to the sample of markers classified under the head of CCs, not merely *parentheticals*. Therefore, given the potential confusion of what

has been defined as parenthetical, the starting point of this research is essentially formal. Hence, we will attempt to provide a relatively rigorous definition of CC based on formal criteria (see 1.2.4), properly because in the literature this label incorporates different markers which have been classified as discourse markers, parenthetical verbs, epistemic fragments, phatic markers and so on in different approaches.

After the first formal definition - thought to include clausal, finite forms - we will try to classify the functions and the behaviour of CCs in talk-in-interaction. We will then consider the level which refers to the aspects of language connected to its (meta)communicative function, like semantics and information structure (Mauri 2008: 2-3). We believe that defining strict, formal parameters will help study the different spectrum of CCs functions.

Some frameworks of linguistic analysis tend to focus on phenomena of language use and/or language knowledge such as sentence/clause and word structure, while backgrounding other phenomena that are considered as marginal for the linguistic theory (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 852). Our goal is to claim that some of these phenomena that have been previously discussed as being more peripheral play a crucial role in the organisation of linguistic discourse. This operates in at least two different domains, namely the level of sentence grammar and of thetical grammar. The latter grammar relates to the particulars of the situation in which the utterance is made, adding another conceptual ‘dimension’ by turning a one-venue utterance into a two-venue utterance. Furthermore, there is a distinct domain of thetical grammar in addition to sentence grammar and both are part of the so-called discourse grammar (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 853). The notion of thetical grammar in a way resonates with what Franceschini investigates in her work on meta-communication in Italian (*metacomunicazione*). She argues that the expression ‘metalanguage’ in psychology refers to the process aimed at providing the addressee with *cues* with the final aim of facilitating his interpretation (Franceschini 1994: 40).

Indeed, theticals have been described as elements which the speaker (or writer) proffers as separate from sentence grammar in order to indicate what Dik (1997: 396) called “higher level orientation function” (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 883).

They (the theticals) allow the speaker to “step out” of the confines of the linearity of communication to some extent by creating a kind of second plane of communication, not unlike “asides” on stage. This plane can be inserted spontaneously virtually anywhere and therefore lends itself particularly well to situation-specific, metacommunicative information. (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 883).

The activity of creating theticals seems therefore an elementary human activity which may always be performed potentially in any given context (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 883). We believe that a study of CCs as thetical grammar devices may be important because it can shed some light on the functioning of spoken discourse. Following Kaltenböck et al. (2011: 884) on the significant role played by theticals, we will argue that CCs (at least most of them) are used to give additional cues to comprehend the message and to insert it in an extra dimension, especially within the spoken discourse, which is characterised by on-line processing and time constraints.

In order to classify the behaviour of CCs, we will employ both distributional and syntactic parameters and we will take into account the internal information of the CC form in order to establish the domain it may be placed in, namely what the global intention behind the use of the CC is (Sweetser 1990). Additionally, we will adopt a constructional approach by including the structural context (or position) of the CC to establish which function it may perform (see Fischer 2015: 572). Our purpose is twofold: restricting a clausal class of markers in a more or less heterogenous way (notice that the term parenthetical was originally thought to define verbal predicates) and then discover the real impact of these structures from a global perspective, not focusing simply on a restricted set of markers for some reason.

As will be made clear in section 2.2, we will make not too many fine-grained functional distinctions; in fact, our aim is to study the speaker's intention behind the employment of a given CC interrupting what is being uttered to express a second-order level information, trying to maintain an average level of granularity (Crible 2018, Crible and Degand 2019).

Summing up, we aim to answer to the following questions: when, how and why do speakers meta-comment by using clausal parentheticals? We believe that spoken discourse is the **privileged setting** in which the CC as a meta-commenting device emerges, therefore we will focus on spoken Italian data. As highlighted in many studies on spoken discourse constants, spoken language is characterised by the occurrence of linguistic devices such as CCs, discourse markers (e.g. *so*, *well*, *you know*, *because*, *I mean*) and other so-called “disfluent” phenomena, which mirror the temporality and non-linearity of the cognitive mechanisms of linguistic production and of understanding - Crible 2018: 2).

Given that we analyse spoken data, in order to define the position of CC, we will make a distinction between micro and macrosyntax. On the one hand, microsyntax is responsible for the definition of the position of CC within well-formed sentences, namely sentences where the dependency and hierarchization relations are respected. On the other hand, macrosyntax is useful to take into account the definition of CC position in cases in which dependency relations are not respected; in this way, the interpretation of such occurrences recalls a notion of communicative acceptability (CCs occurring

in utterances where the syntactic relations are not respected and the interpretation is totally based on the informative power of syntactically unintegrated blocks or utterances - see Debaisieux 2016).

Then, we will classify the type of intention behind the CC host (interrogation, request, hypothesis, command, assertion and so on). Related to spoken discourse, we will annotate the co-occurrence between CCs and other functional devices or fluencemes (discourse markers, pauses, false starts and so on). By studying the internal properties of CCs, we will classify the domain they belong to and will define their semantic functions by abstracting a set of distributional, semantic and syntactic properties. After studying their discourse profile, we will try to place CCs on a *continuum* in order to establish whether and on which basis a CC may become a discourse marker (that is, linguistic devices such as *well*, *now*, *so*, *you know*, *I mean* - Schiffri 1987) and to what extent.

In pursuing this aim, this study constitutes the first survey on those clausal, syntactically unintegrated devices which are used in Italian to meta-comment on what is being said.

Brinton's work (2008) is the first comprehensive survey on CCs in English. Notwithstanding, given her research questions, she conducted a study on a restricted set of CCs; furthermore, the sample is internally very heterogeneous (*look*-forms, *as*-forms epistemic markers such as *as it were..*). Moreover, she explores written language.

Despite the focus on spoken, real data (of different Romance languages), Schneider's work *Reduced parenthetical clauses as mitigators* (2007a) is based on a specific set of CCs since he is interested in parenthetical clauses expressing the function of mitigation. Nonetheless, the work constitutes a solid basis for the present investigation. Similarly, Franceschini's (1994) work on metacommunicative sequences (SMEC), is a solid basis. SMEC are sequences which may serve the following functions among others: indication of the speaker's illocutionary intention, projection of an order, mention of a thematic element. Focused on epistemic parenthetical verbs, Venier's work (1991) investigates the semantic properties and the syntactic behaviour of a sample of parenthetical verbs in Italian. Yet, the study is essentially qualitative and totally based on introspection, while we are interested in CCs used in spoken, really-occurring data (see 1.2); Dehé and Kavalova *Parentheticals* is a collection of different works on parentheticals, therefore it provides with hints on different aspects of parentheticals (semantics, syntax, prosody and so on) rather than a comprehensive picture of verbal parentheticals in a given variety.

Beeching's work on discourse markers in British English (2017) sheds light on some CCs (*you see*, *I mean*) since her aim is properly centred on DMs rather than on CCs development and their sociolinguistic correlations. Therefore, we can rely on a lot of case studies - focusing both on Italian and on other languages - which constitute a robust theoretical background. These studies focus on different aspects such as the encoding of speaker's stance and subjectivity in discourse (Nuyts 2001;

Scheibman 2002, Englebretson 2007), the syntactic behaviour and/or the diachronic development of parentheticals (Thompson and Mulac 1991; Aijmer 1997; Scheibman 2002; Thompson 2002; Ziv 2002; Kaltenböck et al. 2011), the functions of parentheticals both on a semantic and on a pragmatic/discourse ground (Tsui 1991; Waltereit 2002; Grenoble 2004; Fedriani and Molinelli 2013, Molinelli 2014, 2015; Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a, b, 2015; Ahn and Yap 2015; Fiorentini and Sansò 2017), the semantic import of syntactically parenthetical markers (Rouchota 1998, Ifantidou 2001, 2015), the prosody of parentheticals (Kärkkäinen 2003, 2006; Auer 2005; Avanzi 2009, Kaltenböck 2007, Dehé 2009; Dehé and Wichman 2010a, b) the treatment of parentheticals as emergent constructions (Fischer 2010, 2015; Van Bogaert 2011, Maschler 2012; Enghels 2018). However, given their specific interest, many of these studies focus on a specific marker, by examining in the depth some of its features or functions.

We rather intend to draw a picture starting from the original interrupting position of CCs. In other words, we intend to apply the insights by Kaltenböck et al. (2011) on thetical grammar to Italian through the lens of what we define as CC. We chose a definition which is strict in a way and loose in another one; however, the final aim is to work on a relatively homogenous set of strategies which are frequent in discourse and flexible in terms of polyfunctionality.

### **1.1.2 A *formal* definition of comment clauses to explore the range of their *functions***

Even though the CCs belong to the macro-category of parentheticals, as will become clearer in section 1.2.3, the label “parenthetical” has been applied to a various set of phenomena related on a functional ground. Such classificatory criterion prevailed on the formal one, therefore every device being used parenthetically to describe the speaker textual and (inter)personal stance has been included within the same macro-category (appositions, appositive relative clauses, vocatives and so on).

Our aim is to focus on a reduced number of clausal markers within the wide category of parentheticals. We posit this restriction in order to make our sample more heterogenous - at least on a formal ground; still, the selection of finite forms allows us the to circumvent the analysis of on-line, analytical theticals, such as pseudo-conditionals or appositive relative clauses. We select exclusively those forms we think are more flexible, polyfunctional and frequent (even if analytical CCs indeed emerged). However, we will not restrict our survey to a specific set of markers on a functional level (such as epistemic or interactional markers). We pose some restrictions to verbal, finite clauses but we will study the whole range of functions they may play - ranging from epistemic stance to emphasis and topic-resumption functions. On the one hand, we do underline that our definition is more extended than some other definitions of CCs (see Kaltenböck 2005: 39 - who operates a strict distinction

between CCs and reporting clauses). On the other hand, our definition is more restricted than a vague definition of parenthetical, given the variety of forms to which the latter has been applied. (1.2.3).

### 1.1.3 Outline of the work

The thesis is organised as follows. In section 1.2 we will explain how what we define as CC has been usually discussed within different approaches under the labels ‘parenthetical’, ‘verbal phrase’, ‘epistemic phrase’, ‘discourse connective’, ‘discourse marker’ and so on, by virtue of the properties being considered (formal *vs* functional criteria). The section outlines a survey on different approaches to parentheticals and on CCs in order to distinguish the latter from other similar categories. The section is aimed at clarifying why we decided to analyse only verbal parentheticals instead of the whole range of parentheticals. Section 1.3 describes the language samples of spoken data we decided to analyse, and it hints at the software we used to annotate and to query our data.

In chapter 2 we will defend our choice to analyse spoken language and we will introduce the constraints and properties of spoken data (2.1). The second part of the chapter will be devoted to the specification of the Corpora and of the parameters we will employ (2.2).

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 summarise the results of our analysis by uncovering correlations and patterns between those forms and functions we identified in the Corpora. Each section of the chapter starts with the definition of the examined functions, describing the semantic subtypes identified on the basis of the parameters. Furthermore, in each chapter, a glance at the prosody of some CCs is given in order to provide some evidence for the possible prosodic integration of CCs despite their syntactic detachability.

In chapter 6, we will put forward our own view and argue why we believe that the evolution of CCs is better accounted for in terms of (constructional) grammaticalization, by analysing the main criteria of grammaticalization such as subjectification and pragmatic inferencing that CCs may undergo (6.2). Consistently with those approaches that defend the idea that grammar is constituted by expressions that, by linguistic convention, are ancillary and as such discursively secondary in relation to other expressions, we will treat grammaticalization as the change that leads to the development of these expressions. In 6.3 we will investigate the patterns of development of the most frequent and polyfunctional CCs. In the concluding section we will describe CCs not simply as theoretical, ancillary, ephemeral phenomena but as structures helping the speaker handling different, crucial communicative tasks in a theory of emergent, on-line grammar.

## 1.2 Comment clauses from analytical philosophy to discourse analysis: *around* the category of parentheticals and beyond

The focus of this section is to situate the CC among the wide category of parentheticals to finally provide the definition of comment clause as it will be pursued along the whole research.

First, we will describe how the CC has been identified within the literature. Since the CC belongs to the macro-category of clausal **parenthetical**, we will seek to elucidate the definition of clausal parentheticals in general; indeed, whereas the label *comment clause* has been applied to a restricted set of linguistic expressions, the expression *parenthetical* has been applied to a diverse set of phenomena sometimes only loosely connected to each other - at least on a syntactic ground - ranging from prepositional phrases to relative clauses and appositions; such formally heterogeneous phenomena are related on the functional ground, since they often express the speaker's (inter)subjective and textual stance. Notwithstanding, given that functional criteria prevailed in the literature pertaining to parentheticals, classes of various elements have been defined as such. The aim of this introduction is then to provide a sketch of all those syntactic elements that have been recognised in a loose sense as parentheticals. In the end, we will offer our definition of *comment clause* (1.2.4).

Before starting our discussion, we would like to hint at the number of tags which were produced to refer to parentheticals: in Italian we can find the terms *inciso* and *proposizione* or *frase incidentale* or *parentetica* (cfr. Mortara Garavelli 1956, Serianni 1991, Dardano and Trifone 1997, Borgato and Salvi 2001 inter al.). The label *parentesi* is rarely found. In a similar vein, in the Spanish linguistic literature we can find *inciso* (Lázaro Carreter 1968: 233 inter alia), *inciso oracional* (Alarcos Llorach 1994: 317), *oración incidental* (Lázaro Carreter 1968: 233), *incidental* (Fernández Fernández 1993), *oración parentética* (Lázaro Carreter 1968: 314), and *enunciado parentético* (Quilis 1999: 445 inter alia). In French linguistic tradition, the most frequent terms are: *incise*, (*élément*, *proposition*, *sous-phrase*)*incident(e)* and *incidence*. We can also find (though less frequently) *parenthèse* and *parenthétiques* (see Mounin 1974; Robert 1985; Delomier and Morel 1986 inter al.). Occasionally, one can also find *proposition intercalée* and *intercalation* (see Mounin 1974).

To have an idea of all those syntactic structures that have been considered as parentheticals (and termed in different ways as the previous paragraph outlined), let us start by introducing some examples:

- 1.6) You could **I suppose** commission some prints of you yourself (s1a-015-37 - Kaltenböck 2005: 21)
- 1.7) What I've done here **I hope you don't entirely disapprove** is try and limit the time taken on by this item by putting it in writing (s1b-075-180 - Kaltenböck 2005: 21)

1.8) Jake, **our boss**, told us to stay. (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 857)<sup>1</sup>

As the variety of constructions in 1.6) through 1.8) shows, the tag *parenthetical* is widely used in linguistics, often, however, without a clear definition and surprising variation pertaining to the number of expressions it incorporates, ranging from prepositional, verbal phrases (1.6), appositions (1.8) to interjection and to appositive relative clauses (among many others). The present section surveys this class of elements by highlighting its internal formal stratification, because if all CCs are parentheticals, not all parentheticals are CCs - even if the tags are often used rather interchangeably.

In the following sections, we will start by briefly survey the literature on CCs from their first definition as proposed by Quirk et al. (1972; 1985) to the definition provided by Brinton (2008) in her survey on CCs in English. What emerges is that the category of CC has often been defined on functional criteria - as the label itself shows. Conversely, our definition actually combines different syntactic and formal parameters as they have been identified in various approaches to the study of clausal parentheticals. In 1.2.1 we will offer several definition of comment clauses. In 1.2.2 we will survey the literature on parentheticals.

### 1.2.1 The comment clause: an outline

In what follows, we will provide some of the main definitions of CCs starting from the term comment clause which was introduced for the first time by Quirk et al. in 1972. We will draw some overview tables to make explicit which features are shared between the authors and which are not.

**Table 1. 1 Definition by Quirk et al. 1972**

Properties (Quirk et al. 1972: 778-780)	Examples
positional mobility	a) main clause ( <i>I believe</i> ),
prosodically: intonation pause	b) adverbial clause introduced by as ( <i>as you know</i> ),
syntactically: loosely linked to the host clause	c) nominal relative clause ( <i>What's more</i> ),
additional specification: they are conjuncts ( <i>moreover</i> ) or disjuncts ( <i>frankly</i> )	d) to-infinitive clause ( <i>to be honest</i> ), e) -ing clause ( <i>speaking as a layman</i> ).
+ (Leech and Startvick 1975: 216-217) semantic extraneity to the host content	f) -ed clauses

**Table 1. 2 Definition by Petola 1983**

Properties (Petola 1983: 103)	Examples
the reference of CCs is metacommunicative	types previously identified by Quirk et al and Petola included the additional following types:

<sup>1</sup> Our bold.

they are parenthetic in relation to the ‘head proposition’	inserted main clause, sentence apposition ( <i>But it won’t happen - worse luck</i> ), non-additive and-clause ( <i>and I am talking about a real table</i> ), non-alternative or-clause, non-conditional if-clause, elliptical predicative in front position ( <i>More interesting...</i> ), interjections, adverbs, prepositional phrases ( <i>for example</i> ).
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Table 1. 3 Definition by Quirk et al. 1985

Properties (Quirk et al. 1985: 1112-1118)	Examples
positional mobility	a) main clause ( <i>I believe</i> ),
prosodically: intonation pause	b) adverbial clause introduced by as ( <i>as you know</i> ),
syntactically: loosely linked to the host clause	c) nominal relative clause ( <i>What’s more</i> ), d) to-infinitive clause ( <i>to be honest</i> ), e) -ing clause ( <i>speaking as a layman</i> ).
more specification: they are conjuncts (moreover) or disjuncts (frankly)	
new specification: either <b>content</b> disjuncts that express the speakers’ comments on the content of the matrix clause, or <b>style</b> disjuncts conveying the speakers’ views on the way they are speaking”.	new classification of finite-forms a) those such as <b>I believe</b> which bear a resemblance to matrix clauses with a transitive verb or adjective otherwise requiring a that-clause complement; b) those such as <b>as you know</b> which resemble finite adverbial or relative clauses; and c) those such as <b>what is more important</b> which resemble nominal relative clauses.

Table 1. 4 Definition of parenthetical and comment clause by Biber et al. 2000

parenthetical	comment clause
an interpolated structure  a digressive structure inserted in the middle of another structure unintegrated in the sense that it could be omitted without affecting the rest of that structure or its meaning (op. cit. 1063)  typical of written language (op. cit. 137) or of “less conversational styles of speech” take the form of noun/numeral phrases, complete independent clauses (op. cit. 137-138), or dependent clauses (op. cit. 1068, 201).	loosely connected to the main clause,  normally lack an explicit link,  usually short and <b>can appear in a variety of positions</b> (op. cit. 197), i.e. initially, medially and finally. distinctive of spoken interaction  <b>typically occur in first- or second-person present tense</b> and “comment on a thought rather than the delivery or wording” (op. cit. 197 - e.g., <i>I think</i> ).  markers of “stance,” or the expression of personal feelings, value judgments, or assessments, denoting epistemic stance ( <i>I think, I guess</i> ), attitude ( <i>as you might guess</i> ), or style ( <i>if I may say so</i> ).

**Table 1. 5 Definition by Brinton 2008**

<b>Properties (Brinton 2008)</b>	<b>Examples</b>
positional mobility	
prosodically: they are somewhat less clearly parenthetical	
syntactically: do not form hierarchical syntactic relationship with their anchor	
semantically: non-truth-conditional meaning	
Functionally, they serve a “comment” function in expressing speaker attitude	
CCs are clausal DMs	

**Table 1. 6 Definition by Kaltenböck 2005, 2009**

<b>Properties (Kaltenböck 2005: 38, 39)</b>	<b>Examples</b>
positional mobility	
syntactically: it takes the form of a main clause, asyndetic, containing a gap	
typically including verbs of thinking	

As emerges, CCs belong - or are often compared - to the category of parentheticals, to the point that some authors employ the terms rather interchangeably. Yet, some authors do not explicitly work with the label comment clause although recalling the notion of (meta)comment. For instance, Bolinger (198: 190-191) deals with comment parentheticals, namely devices qualifying “in some way the intent or import of the frame sentence or some part of it” by referring to the truth value, pointing out incidentalness, making comparisons, expressing degree and so on. Even though she does not explicitly refer to CCs, in her work on ‘disjuncts’, Espinal (1991: 726 - 760) gathers parenthetical disjuncts together with those constituents that have no obvious syntactic relationship to the sentences in which they seem to be included (i.e., the host clause). The CC *I guess*, for example, is considered as a disjunct sentence serving as a “sort of metalinguistic COMMENT”. In a similar vein, Palacas (1989: 516) sees parentheticals as performing mainly subjective functions; they indeed refer to “a self, a first person, expressing reflections for the benefit of the implied second person listener/reader, thus drawing the latter into the communicative event”.

In Huddleston and Pullum’s work (2002), the label CC cannot be identified at all. The authors define parentheticals as “expressions which can be appended parenthetically to an anchor clause, but which also have a non-parenthetical use in which they take a declarative content clause as complement - expressions like “I think, don’t you think?” (op. cit. 895). Though they employ another term, parentheticals bear a resemblance to Biber et al.’s (1999) category of CC; nonetheless, they are more restricted by their explicit relationship to non-parenthetical uses. Conversely, they are also wider

given that they are not given a specific commenting function, and as such include also, for instance, some of Biber et al.'s category of reporting clauses, namely, those preceded by the reported speech (Kaltenböck 2005: 25). Notably, Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1350) identify a class of supplements which seems similar to Quirk et al.'s class of CCs. These refer to expressions which are either interpolated or appended and they are intonationally distinct or set off by punctuation. Moreover, they are semantically non-restrictive and include, among other structures, relative clauses, verbless clauses, non-finite clauses, and interjections (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1356).

All in all, without a doubt, the label *parenthetical* is older than the term *comment clause* given that scholars indeed began to recognise a category of parentheticals since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see, for example, Kruisinga 1932, Urmson 1952, Mortara Garavelli 1956) as will be made clearer in the following section, which will be explicitly devoted to the survey of the literature on parentheticals. The CC is without a doubt a parenthetical clause - at least syntactically speaking. However, not all the parentheticals are compatible with the category of CCs. The former label has been in fact applied to a wide range of loosely related phenomena, most of which will not be included in this work, since our focus is restricted to CLAUSAL STRATEGIES. Before presenting all those syntactic elements to which the tag has been applied, we will briefly survey some of the literature on parentheticals in order to underline the main **syntactic, prosodic and semantic features** that have been recognised within the literature to classify them.

### 1.2.2 Comment clauses within the category of parentheticals

As already, the broadest category to which CCs could be said to belong is that of parentheticals. Indeed, the first definition of the constructions under examination in this research classifies them as parentheticals. The individuation of syntactic parenthesis as formal criterion to classify a specific class of constructions precedes the functional classification, as the label *comment clauses* would seem to suggest. Parentheticals are generally characterised by the following properties:

- a) the **INTERRUPTIVE FORCE**: parentheticals generally interrupt the host clause (they occur with) and they are external to the syntax of the anchor (Kruisinga: 1932, II § 2413, Bloomfield 1950: 187, Urmson 1952: 491, Peterson 1998; Schneider 2007a, b)
- b) the so-called **COMMA INTONATION** (Bolinger 1989 *inter alia*) on a prosodic ground and
- c) the **SEMANTIC ‘EXTRANEITY’ TO THE HOST** (Brinton 2008 *inter alia*).

In the following sections, we will briefly describe how these features of parentheticals have been handled within different surveys on parenthetical expressions.

### a) PARENTHETICALS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SYNTAX

One of the first definitions of parentheticals is provided by Kruisinga (1932, II: 2413), who focused precisely on the interrupting force of parentheticals. He deals with “parenthetic **sentences**” in terms of simple or compound sentences which cut across another sentence, being used “to make a statement or an observation that may serve to make the situation [...] clearer, or to add a comment” (1932, II: 484).

Bloomfield (1950: 187) uses the label parenthesis in a loose sense, namely as “a variety of parataxis in which one form interrupts the other”, with the specification that “in English the parenthetic form is ordinarily preceded and followed by a pause-pitch”.

Parenthesis in a more restricted sense is discussed by the analytical philosopher Urmson (1952)<sup>2</sup>, who refers solely to *parenthetical verbs*, a label that was later adopted by numerous linguists. In his first ground-breaking investigation on parenthesis, he underlines that, contrarily to the generally held belief in philosophy, there is a class of **verbs** which does not report any goings on or even patterns of goings on at all. This group of verbs includes *suppose*, *know*, *believe*, *guess*, which in the first person present tense simple can be used parenthetically as in the following examples (taken from Urmson 1952: 481):

- 1.9) a. Your house is very old, **I suppose**.
- b. Your house is, **I suppose**, very old.
- c. Your house is very old, **I suppose**.

As shown in the examples, parenthetical verbs can occur in initial, medial, and final position in the clause and are used as signals to “orient the hearer aright towards the statement with which they are associated” (Urmson 1952: 491). They belong to those sets of devices that speakers use in order to prime the hearer to **see** the emotional significance, the logical relevance, and the reliability of their statements (Urmson 1952: 484). These “showing” devices may vary on a semantic ground:

- *Regret* and *rejoice* are two of the most typical examples of verbs which give **EMOTIONAL** positioning when used parenthetically.
- Another pool of these verbs is adopted to signal how the statement is to be taken as fitting **LOGICALLY** into the discussion (see *deduce*, *infer*, *presume*, *presuppose*, *confess*, *concede*, *Maintain* and *assume* - Urmson 1952: 485).
- Finally, another group is made up of verbs such as *know*, *believe*, *guess*, *suppose*, *suspect*, *estimate*, and, in a metaphorical sense, *feel*. Such a set is used to specify the **EVIDENTIAL** situation in

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<sup>2</sup> In her study on the incidental constructions, Mortara Garavelli (1956) observes that the strategy at stake may acquire an explicative value, giving rise to the glosses. Therefore, the frequent parenthetical sentence (*proposizione parentetica*) could be considered as a case of digression” (Mortara Garavelli 1956: 74).

which the speaker utters the statement (though not to describe that situation). Hence, the predicates at issue signal what degree of reliability is claimed for and should be given to the statement to which they are connected to (Urmson 1952: 485).

According to Urmson, parenthetical verbs are characterised by the following **syntactic features**:

- ✓ they select the present perfect, and not the continuous tense (Urmson 1952: 491);
- ✓ they are used differently in the first person present and in other person and tense values (Urmson 1952: 482; see also Benveniste (1971 [1966]));
- ✓ the verbs at issue, in the first person<sup>3</sup> present, may be followed, as in the example (1.10), by 'that' and an indicative clause. They can also be placed in medial and final position of the indicative sentence, thus behaving as a parenthetical structure (Urmson 1952: 481), as in the following examples in (1.11) and in (1.12):

1.10) I suppose that your house is very old.

1.11) Your house is, I suppose, very old.

1.12) Your house is very old, I suppose.

Within a different background and with different premises, also Hooper (1975) notices an “anomaly” regarding some predicates - especially when used in the first person - that head some complement clauses which are introduced by the connector *that* (see *think*, *believe*, *suppose*, *seem* and so on). Hooper indeed notices some specific predicates that admit being preceded by their complement thus acquiring a secondary, weaker status with respect to the preposed complement proposition. Such proposition, in this way, expresses the main assertion of the utterance (Venier 1991: 60-64). The predicates which are characterised by this mobility admitting the possibility to be postponed are defined by Hooper as *assertives* properly because their complement propositions are assertions. Indeed, also Hooper notices the interruptive force of such “special” predicates.

Interested in the topic of subjectivity in language, Benveniste (1971 [1966]) also notes that when parenthetical verbs such as *I believe* or *I suppose* are used in the first person of present tense, they function differently than when they are employed in other person values, in that they function as verbs denoting a thought operation (*verbi di disposizione* or *delle operazioni mentali*). He emphasises the different meanings of verbs such as *believe*, *suppose*, *presume*, and *conclude* in the first person, as contrasted with other person values and also with other verbs (such as *eat* or *sleep*). He observes that in the first person, these verbs do not indicate an “operation of thought”; they rather indicate the speaker’s “attitude”:

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<sup>3</sup> It has to be said that the asymmetry between the first person and the other persons is typical also of **performatives**.

By including I suppose and I presume in my discourse, I imply that I am taking a certain attitude with regard to the utterance that follows<sup>4</sup> (1971 [1966]: 318).

In other words, through the employment of such “personal verb form” the speaker converts an impersonal utterance into a subjective one. Furthermore, Benveniste (1971 [1966]: 317-318) argues that when these verbs are followed by *that* they denote the real operation of thought. Even if Benveniste’s starting point is different, the semantic and syntactic properties of these verbs play a crucial role in his rationale on first person, verbal parentheticals as markers expressing subjectivity.

The first systematic analysis of the features of parentheticals in Italian is provided by Venier (1991) in her work on assertive modalization. She notes that verbs such as *penso* (‘I think’) and *credo* (‘I believe’) may occur parenthetically exactly as modal adverbs (*presumibilmente* ‘presumably’) and that with the latter ones, the former are employed as signals of subscription (i.e. markers of neustic level, namely the act of subscription to the speech act that is going to be carried out, which expresses the speaker’s commitment to the notion of possibility, necessity etc. of propositional content, see Hare 1970). As Benveniste noticed some years before for French predicates such as *croire*, she noticed that parentheticals are special *signs* to express subjectivity in language. To a given extent, they are ‘more’ subjective than modal adverbs since the former point to speaker’s personal deixis, whereas the latter are neutral with respect to the process leading the speaker to assert a modalization towards a proposition p.

As this brief survey shows, there is complete consensus on the fact that **syntactically** parentheticals are “peripheral” to, “unintegrated” with, “independent” of, or “loosely linked” to their anchor utterance (Brinton 2008: 7). Arguably, in Italian tradition, Borgato and Salvi (2001) define parentheticals as lacking an explicit syntactic relation between them and the host sentence. The authors make a distinction between two kinds of the so called *frasi parentetiche*. Both may retain a scope over the whole host sentence or a part of it (i.e. a phrase or a word). The former kind is used to modalise the host (or part of it) with respect to the speaker’s commitment (such as *mi dicono*, ‘they say to me’), the evaluation or also the mode in which the speech act is performed. On the syntactic ground, such parenthetical clauses perform the same functions of sentence adverbs. Parentheticals belonging to the second type are considered similar to a subordinate clause. They convey causal, temporal, consecutive or other types of relations - not expressed by a conjunction - to the host utterance or part of it. On the syntactic ground, these parenthetical clauses correspond to circumstantial adjuncts or to the class of appositive relative clauses. More strictly, according to

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<sup>4</sup> My translation of: “Includendo nel mio discorso je suppose, je présume, implico che assume un certo atteggiamento nei confronti dell’enunciato che segue.” (Benveniste 1971 [1966]: 318).

Cignetti (2001: 121), the parenthetical proposition should be better defined as a specific slot, or position (*posizione parentetica*), which is syntactically and intonationally delimited, endowed with expletivity, that is the possibility to be deleted without affecting the grammaticality of the host.

Their relation is indeed a relation of linear adjacency, however, the parenthetical and anchor (or host) do not form a single grammatical construction, nor is the parenthetical a constituent of the anchor clause (Peterson 1998; Schelfhout et al. 2004, Brinton 2008: 7). Consequently, a parenthetical cannot be the focus of a cleft sentence, cannot be questioned, does not follow sequence of tense (see Espinal 1991: 730-733 *inter alia*); it takes no part in any of the syntactic processes of its anchor domain (Dehé and Kavalova 2006: 293); for instance, it is disregarded by VP deletion (McCawley 1982: 96). Furthermore, the parenthetical is not subcategorised by the verbs in the host (Espinal 1991: 735). Finally, in a verb-second language, the initial position of a parenthetical does not trigger inversion in the anchor (Schelfhout 2000; Schelfhout et al. 2004). A direct consequence of the syntactic independence of parentheticals is their **positional mobility**, as Urmson underlined among the syntactic features of parentheticals. They may be ordered before or after the main clause (i.e., they are juxtaposed). Alternatively, they may occur inside the host, being thus “interpolated” (Peterson 1998). Schelfhout et al. (2004: 331) call these structures “intercalations” (Brinton 2008: 7-8).

However, although the parenthetical is claimed to be free in position, according to some authors, there are syntactic constraints that pose some restrictions on its position. In fact, a parenthetical is claimed to not occur between a verb and its complement (Jackendoff 1972: 98) nor within the premodifier of an NP or between a P and its complement (Schelfhout 2000; Potts 2002: 645-646, Brinton 2008: 8). Conversely, Schneider (2007a, b) defines as parenthetical a verb that can occur medially, namely, interrupting at least a close relation such as the one between the verb and its argument. Moreover, Kaltenböck (2005: 42) suggests that there are certain “weak spots” which more readily admit the insertion of parentheticals than others. To such distributional constraints, there are discourse features as well: a parenthetical is claimed to not occur before nonfocused constituents (Peterson 1998: 24) and it seldom interrupts new information or major constituents (Schelfhout et al. 2004, Brinton 2008: 8).

Parentheticals display a borderline syntactic status, crossing, so to say, the margins of syntax. On the one hand, parentheticals indeed belong to syntax in terms of linear precedence in the sense that they intersect with other structures (their host) on the linear plane, sharing with the latter a terminal string. On the other hand, parentheticals lie outside the domain of syntax since this linear order is not controlled or headed by independently motivated principles which govern the linearisation of underlying structures (Kaltenböck 2005: 21). In other words, parentheticals have no syntagmatic (i.e. paratactic, hypotactic) link to their host clauses or utterances. They are connected to their hosts by

adjacency. Notwithstanding, they are not part of any larger syntactic unit, that is, they are not constituents of the host clause; as it has been said, they can be considered as disjuncts (Espinal 1991, Kaltenböck 2005: 21).

As argued by Kaltenböck (2005: 21-22), on the one hand, this fact led to proposals, which aim at extending the boundaries of grammar in order to include such “periphery” phenomena, by adding an extra level of representation (see Espinal’s 1991 three-dimensional approach) or specifying complex transformations (e.g. Ross’ 1973 Slifting transformation, Jackendoff’s 1972 sentential adverb source; Lakoff’s 1974 amalgamation rules). On the other hand, the “hybrid” identity of parentheticals has led to analyses which dismiss them from the domain of grammar altogether, considering them merely as utterance phenomena or disfluency facts (Burton Roberts 1999; Peterson 1999).

### **b) PROSODIC REALIZATION OF PARENTHETICALS**

According to some authors, such parenthetical’s independence from the anchor is also reflected **prosodically**. Parentheticals may be briefly defined as “syntactically unintegrated elements which are separated from the host clause by comma intonation” (Rouchota 1998: 97, 105), that is, pauses in speech, or actual commas in writing that physically separate it from its anchor (Cignetti 2001). Bolinger (1989: 186) identifies three prosodic properties of parentheticals:

- ✓ lower pitch (denoting their “incidentalness”),
- ✓ occurrence of pauses (denoting their “separation”), and
- ✓ rising terminal (defining their “link up” with the anchor).

However, he admits that all three of these features may be absent or reduced in any specific case. More categorically, Wichmann (2001) raises further doubts about the prosodic properties of parentheticals. She notes that while some parentheticals show the typical features of lowering pitch and lack of accent (what she defines as “compression”), other parentheticals show “expansion” or the raising of pitch, while still others show “integration,” or continuation of the pitch direction of the previous tone (thus not representing a prosodically separate entity - see also Kärkkäinen 2003 and Kaltenböck 2005: 28).

Similarly, Espinal (1991: 734) observes that “having an independent intonational unit is neither a sufficient nor a strictly necessary property to identify parentheticals”; two advocates of the same position are Reinhart (1983: 178-179) and Mittwoch (1979: 407). The variation of prosodic marking is also confirmed by corpus data, as underlined by Stenström (1995: 292) and Wichmann (2001: 186). While it may be recognised that prosodic realisation may be dependent on the definition of parentheticals on a syntactic ground (that is, the wider the range of allowed syntactic forms

subsumable under the head of parenthetical, the more heterogeneous their prosodic profile), it derives that there is no unvarying prosodic realisation of syntactically dissimilar structures. Therefore, this variability makes the criterion at stake unsuitable for a possible delimitation according to Kaltenböck (2005: 28, see also Brinton 2008).

### c) SEMANTIC ‘EXTRANEITY’ TO THE HOST

Moving now to the semantic features, according to the majority of authors, parentheticals exhibit semantic independence from their anchor as well. The parenthetical is a distinctly planned utterance (Palacas 1989: 514; Wichmann 2001: 181), which provides evidence that is “related to but not part of the main message” (Biber et al. 1999: 137, 138). The parenthetical offers second-order reflection, evaluation, or commentary upon the anchor utterance (Palacas 1989: 514) and is backgrounded semantically with respect to the anchor, which provides the main - or first order - information (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 896). Concerning the semantic function of parentheticals, Bolinger (1989: 190) recognises three types of parentheticals: comment, revision (for instance, *I mean, rather*), and decision (i.e., *well, let’s say*) parentheticals.

Comment parentheticals are the widest class. They provide additional information to the host utterance or afterthought. The class of revision parentheticals includes strategies providing self-corrections or metalinguistic repairs through which “the speaker makes a ceremony of correcting himself” (Bolinger 1989: 190-191). In the end, decision parentheticals refer to processes of word-finding. However, none of these operations is considered semantically crucial to the final interpretation of the host<sup>5</sup>. According to Biber et al. (1999: 1067), the independence of a parenthetical involves that it “could be omitted without affecting the rest of that structure or its meaning.” In a similar vein, Wichmann (2001: 181) suggests that were parentheticals removed, the (host) utterance would remain well-formed (see Hübler 1983: 114). With respect to the semantics, both definitions would point to the non-truth-conditionality of parentheticals; in other words, they are deemed as irrelevant to the conditions that must hold in any possible world in order to make the anchor sentence true. The position of non-truth-conditionality of parentheticals<sup>6</sup> is defended in speech act theory (see Rouchota 1998). However, it has been questioned by some other authors (Ifantidou 2001, Schneider 2007a, b).

The idea of a semantic impact of parentheticals is however not new in the literature. As already mentioned, according to Venier (1991), epistemic parenthetical verbs such as *credo* (‘I believe’) or *penso* (‘I think’) are used as markers of neustic level on a par with other more canonical means such as modal adverbs (see *presumably*, *allegedly*), which are claimed to have an impact on the

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<sup>5</sup> That is, crucial to the propositional content level.

<sup>6</sup> That is, the ability to act on the propositional content.

propositional level. In fact, as already mentioned, interested in a comparison between modal adverbs and parenthetical verbs, Venier (1991) analyses a class of parenthetical verbs starting from the philosophical literature on English and French showing that both the classes of elements are used to *subscribe* what is said (neustic level markers).

More recently, Schneider (2007a, b) indeed considers the property of semantic expletivity as a defining property of the parenthetical (Cignetti 2001 *inter alia*): were parentheticals removed, the (host) utterance would remain well-formed. Notwithstanding, semantic expletivity does not entail that parentheticals cannot have an impact on the propositional content of the host, since the former property refers to the grammaticality or well-formedness of the host rather than to its propositional content. Indeed, in his study on reduced parenthetical clauses (*penso* ‘I think’, *credo* ‘I believe’, *non so* ‘I do not know’), Schneider (2007a, b) shows that some parentheticals may definitely affect both the phrasic level (propositional content) and the neustic level (see *diciamo* ‘let us say’ in Italian or *je ne sais pas* in French which function as markers of exemplification).

In other words, in the literature, the semantic impact of parentheticals has been variously considered and reconsidered especially in the last decades. We will come back on this property of parentheticals as identified by Venier in the section devoted to the analysis of epistemic/evidential CCs such as *credo* (‘I think’), *presumo* (‘I presume’), or *mi sa* (‘it seems to me’). For the purposes of this section, we limit ourselves to underline that the semantic impact of parentheticals has always been relatively controversial, and it represents a weaker property than the syntactic and prosodic criteria as defining aspects of parentheticals.

All in all, as argued by Kaltenböck (2005: 22), since it shows a borderline status - which is placed on the boundary between syntax and performance processes - the term *parenthetical* has been used rather broadly in a variety of ways and lacks a clear-cut definition, which is often based on functional-pragmatic criteria; such criteria are indeed often less clear-cut than formal ones. In other words, even if *parenthetical* is a tag supposed to be applied to verbal structures (small sentences or predicates), in the last decades it has been overused and applied to various categories only vaguely related. To this extent, Kaltenböck (2005: 29) proposes to re-classify parentheticals based on a strict formal definition, which is based on the following parameters:

- ✓ lack of syntactic attachment,
- ✓ positional flexibility and
- ✓ syntactic form restricted exclusively to **clausal** category.

For the sake of exhaustivity, in the next section, we will sketch a brief distinction between non-clausal parentheticals and clausal parentheticals as they have been identified in the literature in order

to provide a (partial) window into the diversity of strategies identified as parentheticals. The variety that will emerge justifies the reason why we preferred to define our structures (and to limit our research to) comment clauses rather than merely parentheticals.

### **1.2.3 Kinds of parentheticals: non-clausal vs clausal parentheticals**

#### **1.2.3.1 Non-clausal parentheticals**

Kaltenböck (2005) observes a lack of consensus about the delimitation of the label parenthetical, listing seventeen different categories - ranging from main clauses to appositions and discourse markers - that have been included under the very same head of parentheticals.

To have an idea of all the structures subsumed under the head of ‘parenthetical’, in an early study, in addition to verbal parentheticals and non-restrictive relative clauses, Corum (1975: 135) considers also sentential adverbs, adverbial phrases, and rhetorical tag questions (e.g., *isn’t it?*, *doesn’t she?*) within a category that she calls *parenthetic adjuncts*. The components of this wide category share functional properties since they may all be employed for expressing speaker’s evaluation, softening, and what she terms a “sneaky” or misleading use, which is employed “to seduce the addressee into believing the content of the proposition”.

Furthermore, Espinal (1991: 726-729) provides a wide list of structures that may be used as **grammatical parentheticals**. These structures include sentences (e.g., *I guess*), appositive relatives (sentential, non-restrictive), adjectival phrases (e.g., *difficult to quantify*), adverbial clauses (e.g., *if that makes you feel any better*), adverbial phrases (e.g., *frankly*), noun phrases (e.g., *ladies and gentlemen*), prepositional phrases (e.g., *on the contrary*), and combined structures. Espinal (1991: 729) further classifies parentheticals as falling into three different classes based on the form:

- parentheticals containing a pronominal expression linking the parenthetical to the main clause (e.g., *which was a good thing*),
- those with a syntactic gap filled conceptually by the main clause (e.g., *I think*), and
- those which are self-contained; particularly, within this category, non-clausal disjunct – or parentheticals – are included (e.g., *frankly*).

Generally, the following syntactic categories have been recognised under the head of non-clausal parentheticals by Kaltenböck (2005: 25- 27)<sup>7</sup>:

#### **A. Adverbial phrase**

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<sup>7</sup> The scheme of non-clausal and clausal parentheticals is taken from Kaltenboeck (2005). We added few modifications, that is, Conte (1988) and Prandi (1996, 2006).

*Frankly, I don't know what to say about this*

(e.g. Conte 1988 category of ‘avverbi di enunciazione’, Espinal 1991: 726, Petola 1983: 108-110, Nosek 1973: 108-109, Skrebnev 1959: 60, Corum 1975, Wichmann 2001: 179, Asher 2000: 31)

## B. Adjective phrase

*The chairman, angry at the delay, demanded a full report*

(e.g. Espinal 1991: 726, Petola 1983: 107, Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 1359)

## C. Prepositional phrase

*In brief, the film has been a great success*

(e.g. Petola 1983: 107, Espinal 1991: 727)

## D. Noun phrase

### - Apposition:

*Annie Lennox, my favourite pop singer, has a new song out*

(e.g. Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 1359, Petola 1983: 104, Peterson 1999: 243-248, Quirk et al. 1985: 1304, Burton-Roberts 1994: 186, Hoffmann 1998: 309-311)

### - Vocative:

*Today's topic, ladies and gentlemen, is astrophysics*

(e.g. Espinal 1991: 727, Nosek 1973: 101, Ziv 1985: 191)

### - Interjection:

*Damn, we've missed the train*

(e.g. Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 1360-1361, Ziv 1985: 190, Petola 1983: 107-108)

## F. Discourse marker

*John, you know, is not going to come tonight*

(e.g. Biber et al 1999: 197, 140, 1075, Stenström 1995: 291, Quirk et al. 1985: 1113-5)

In the next paragraph we will present all those verbal structures which were considered parentheticals over the years.

### 1.2.3.2 Clausal parentheticals and their syntactic derivation

As anticipated, the tag *parenthetical* has been primarily applied to a clausal element characterised by the lack of any formal link with the host. The evidence presented so far indeed offers strong support for the claim that parentheticals are syntactically independent of their hosts. However, within the

class of clausal parentheticals a distinction may be made between syndetic (which actually show a formal link) and asyndetic (absence of a formal link) parentheticals.

Let us begin with the category of **asyndetic** parentheticals. Unlike syndetic parentheticals, whose form in some way shows that they are dependent utterances which need to be pragmatically correlated to a host, asyndetic parentheticals display no overt marker indicating such link. Based on the syntactic form, it is possible to differentiate three different subtypes, which also vary with respect to their relationship to the host (Kaltenböck 2005: 36). It is possible distinguish between *self-contained parentheticals*, *reduced parentheticals* and *right node raising*. Let us start with the first category.

- **Self-contained** parentheticals are main, independent and self-sufficient clauses, as exemplified below:

- 1.13) a. Mary – **I hate to tell you this** – is coming over to visit
- b. Mary – **is that her real name?** – is coming over to visit
- c. Mary – **don't forget** – is coming over to visit
- d. Mary – **is she persistent!** – is coming over to visit (Kaltenböck 2005: 37)

Since such clauses are independent, there are no constraints on the clause type of the parenthetical clause. The examples above display that the parenthetical clause may take the form of a declarative, an interrogative, an imperative, or an exclamative. The relationship between the parenthetical and the host is thus non-syntagmatic, and sometimes the link may be strengthened by a pronominal link (as in 1.13) a, b, d). The link between the host and the parenthetical clause is established by the interruption and hence structural incompleteness of the host clause. The incompleteness of the host somehow induces the listener towards the establishment of some PRAGMATIC CONNECTION between the two structures (Kaltenböck 2005: 38). A specific type of self-contained parenthetical clauses are semantic gap-filling clauses (Biber et al. 1999: 1066, Kaltenböck 2005: 38), as shown in (1.14).

- 1.14) a. Isn't it where all the last century upper middle classes used to drive around on Sundays in their uh  
**what are they called** (s1a-006-218)
- b. Well most most database packages if you're producing a package most most database manufacturers let you buy um **I can't recall the word for it** but they let you buy it so that is you buy it once for a bit more the runtime version of it basically (s1a-029-88 - Kaltenböck 2005: 38)

These parenthetical clauses occur in a position within their host where usually a simple word or a phrase would be expected (Kaltenböck 2005: 38).

The second class of asyndetic parentheticals is occupied by

- **reduced parenthetical clauses (RPC)** (Schneider 2007a, b), or gap-containing parentheticals. They are illustrated immediately below (the examples are taken from Kaltenböck 2005: 38):

- 1.15) a. You could **I suppose** commission some prints of you yourself (s1a-015-37)  
 b. Britons **he said** could compete and win (s2b-005-129)

These parentheticals are linked to the host since they comprise a syntactic gap (which is typically the complement of the verb). This gap is filled (or saturated) conceptually by the host clause - always without any explicit formal link. Such a gap-anterior relationship between the parentheticals and the host is contextually interpretable and, as claimed by Burton-Roberts (1999: 40) and by Peterson (1999: 237), it involves **semantic/pragmatic coreference** but not (**syntactic**) **coindexing** (Kaltenböck 2005: 38). The lack of syntactic dependence of the parentheticals is of interest given the existence of a non-parenthetical corresponding construction, illustrated in (1.16)a and (1.16)b, where the verb in question functions as matrix predicate heading a complement clause:

- 1.16) a. **I suppose that** you could commission some prints of you yourself  
 b. **He said that** Britons could compete and win

According to Kaltenböck (2005: 38), it is possible to distinguish two subtypes of reduced parenthetical clauses (henceforth RPCs) based on the semantic properties of the verb used: COMMENT RPCs and REPORTING RPCs<sup>8</sup>. The former usually involve transitive verbs (e.g. *I believe, I guess*) lacking the object. They may also be made up of an adjective which requires a *that*-clause object (e.g. *I'm afraid, I'm sorry to say*). They occur typically in the present rather than the past tense and frequently do not occur in the corresponding progressive form (Urmson 1952: 481). Unlike reporting RPCs, their subject is frequently in the first or second person, although impersonal third person subjects may be admitted (e.g. *it's true, there's no doubt, one would have thought* - Kaltenböck 2005: 39). Conversely, reporting RPCs are not limited to present tense; moreover, they typically take a third person subject, a fact connected to their reporting function. More specifically, their function consists in identifying the speaker's source of information (Schneider 1999). *Per se*, they convey a kind of 'evidential' meaning, in the narrow definition of evidentials in terms of "markers of the speaker's information source" as defined by Traugott (1989: 32). Moreover, reporting RPCs differ from commenting RPCs in allowing an amount of flexibility as their word order is concerned (Kaltenböck 2005: 39):

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<sup>8</sup> We will not make such a distinction; we will consider them under the same generic label 'comment clause'.

1.17) The flight will be delayed, **John says/says John**, by two hours.

In spite of the formal and semantic differences between the two categories, there are also consistent cases of overlapping. The cognition verbs typical of commenting RPCs, *think* and *suggest*, for example, may be used as reporting verbs (when used in the third person). Conversely, reporting verbs can also occur with a first-person subject, e.g. *I said, I wondered, I was told (by John)* (Kaltenböck 2005: 39).

The third type of asyndetic parentheticals are examples of

▪ amalgamation (Lakoff 1974), where one constituent is common to the host sentence and the inserted (i.e., parenthetical clause). Syntactic amalgams can also take syndetic form (with a coordinator), which is typically referred to as “interpolated coordination” (Quirk et al. 1985: 976-977), or “elliptical parenthetical clause” (Peterson 1999: 232), as in the example below:

- 1.18) a. And I uh used to get **maybe it was five** five pounds as a birthday present (s1a-07678)  
b. He is, **or at least he was**, a great actor

As with RPCs, the relation between the host and the parenthetical clause is defined by a conceptual ‘gap’. However, this gap is not filled by the whole host clause; it is rather filled by a constituent in the host clause. This link is possibly much stronger than with RPCs. This can be observed from the fact that the parenthetical clause does not display its position flexibility. It is rather tied to one specific position in the host clause. The inserted clause can also be questioned through a tag question (*He is, or at least he was, a great actor, wasn't he?*), a fact which is normally impossible with parenthetical clauses. According to Kaltenböck (2005: 41), cases of amalgamation are therefore excluded from the taxonomy of parentheticals. In the next section, we will briefly discuss the category of syndetic clauses (which will not be considered in this research, as we will underline in the following sections).

### Syndetic parenthetical clauses

Syndetic parenthetical clauses are introduced by an explicit marker. Such markers are what Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1354) term “indicators”, such as *namely*, *that is*, *that is to say*, *especially*. Though limited by Huddleston and Pullum to exactly those items, the category may be extended to include other elements, such as coordinators, subordinators and even relative elements (Kaltenböck 2005: 34, 35). In Italian tradition, Serianni (1991: 625) makes a distinction between *incidentali primarie* (with a conjunction) and *incidentali secondarie*, which display a coordinating or subordinating conjunction. In a similar vein, Dardano and Trifone (1997: 428) underline that

sometimes parenthetical clauses may contain a subordinating conjunction. Let us consider the following taxonomy outlined in (Kaltenböck 2005: 34, 35):

✓ **Indicator:**

- 1.19) Many clauses are asyndetic, **that is** they do not have an overt marker

✓ **Coordinator:**

- 1.20) For several years now – **and I don't mean to be cynical** – we have been trying without success to overcome these problems

✓ **Subordinator:**

- 1.21) a. The warning – **that prices should be lowered** – was ignored  
b. He is a real bastard – **if you don't mind the expression**

✓ **Relative element:**

- 1.22) Mary is away on business, **which is convenient** (Kaltenböck 2005: 35)

Even though all of these parentheticals show some formal link to the host clause, Kaltenböck (2005: 35) underlines that these ‘links’ do not mirror any syntactic value, since the parenthetical clauses are not constituents of the hosting clause. The coordinator **and** is not a *real* coordinator and neither are the subordinators real instances of subordinators (namely, they are not dominated by another node, S or NP, on a syntactic ground). The same holds for the relative element in 1.22). The labels coordinator, subordinator, relative element may therefore be confusing and are probably best included under the category of ‘indicator’.

Though all the formal syndetic relations are non-syntagmatic, they indicate a semantic-pragmatic link to the host clause, or what Kaltenböck (2005: 35) refers to as the *anchor*. In example 1.19), for instance, **that** specifies that the parenthetical clause offers an ‘explanation’ of its anchor. Moreover, the ‘coordinating indicator’ **and** indicates a function of ‘addition’ (Kaltenböck 2005: 35).

Concerning content clauses (or complement-like clauses) such as (1.21) Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1315) argue that, even though these clauses are not syntactically licensed by a head, they must be compatible with their anchor on the semantic ground, as shown in the examples below:

- 1.23) a. \*The question – **that prices should be lowered** – was ignored

- b. \* The warning – **whether prices should be lowered** – was ignored

For peripheral adverbial clauses (adverbial-like clauses) such as (1.21b) Haegeman (1991: 246-248) claims that, even though they behave as (syntactically) unattached orphans, they are semantically related to their host, in that the head of the parenthetical clause at stake (the subordinator, e.g. **if**) is coindexed with the host clause. The variable in the form of an index in the propositional form of the parenthetical clause imposes specific conceptual restrictions to the host sentence on the discourse level rather than on the level of syntax (Kaltenböck 2005: 36). Put differently, the host is only established on the level of utterance processing, which requires the correspondence between the index of the parenthetical clause and the index of the host clause. The complete interpretation of the parenthetical clause is thus accomplished only on the pragmatic ground in a certain context, when it comes to be integrated into the representation schemas related to other propositions, thus following the principles of interpretation, as elaborated in the paradigm of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1995, Kaltenböck 2005: 36).

Concerning non-restrictive relative clauses, such as 1.22), an analogous non-syntagmatic link has been recognised (Burton-Roberts 1999). Even if they differ in some details of their analyses, modern accounts of non-restrictive relative clauses take over a connection between relative pronoun and its antecedent purely on a semantic-pragmatic level. Burton-Roberts (1999: 38-40) argues that the pronoun-antecedent link between the non-restrictive relative clause and the host is only contextually interpretable. Hence, it does not imply any (syntactic) coindexing. It rather invokes semantic-pragmatic coreference. The syntactic independence at stake is exemplified by B's answer in the stretch below, where the link to the previous clause is a link of CONTEXTUAL COREFERENCE.

#### 1.24) A: Mary is away on business

B: Which is convenient (cf. That's convenient) (Kaltenböck 2005: 36)

To sum up, the pool of clausal parentheticals that have been considered as parentheticals includes the following structures (the taxonomy is taken from Kaltenböck 2005):

#### A. Main clause / parenthetical parataxis

*He called John – he is one of his best friends – to find out what had happened*

(e.g. Petola 1983: 103-104, Quirk et al. 1985: 977, Biber et al. 1999: 138)

#### B. Coordinated main clause (with and / or) / parenthetical coordination

*For several years now – and I don't mean to be cynical – we have been trying to overcome this problem*

(e.g. Petola 1983: 104-5, Aijmer 1980: 57, Quirk et al. 1985: 932, 977, Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 1361, Blakemore 2006)

### **C. Main clause-like ‘comment clause’**

*The solution, it seems /I believe, is an easy one*

(e.g. Quirk et al. 1985: 1112, Biber et al. 1999: 197, Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 895-897, Stenström 1995, Petola 1983: 110-111, Aijmer 1972, Urmson 1952, Venier 1991, Schneider 2007a)

### **D. Reporting clause**

*She was very happy, he said. In the near future, John announced, I will move to Paris*

(e.g. Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 1024, 1027, Schelfhout 2000, Wichmann 2001: 179)

### **E. Non-restrictive relative clause**

- ad-nominal: *John, who lives in London, is travelling to France*

- nominal: *What is more interesting, he finished his paper*

- sentential: *Mary went on holiday to Crete, which is probably what you'd like to do*

(e.g. Quirk et al. 1985: 1112, Bolinger 1989: 191, 198, Espinal 1991: 726, Ziv 1985: 191, Petola 1983: 106-107, Hoffmann 1998: 307-309, Peterson 1999: 245, Burton-Roberts 1999: 34-40, Haegeman 1991)

### **F. Content clause (appositive clause)**

*The excuse she gave – that there had been a traffic jam – was ridiculous*

(e.g. Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 1358)

### **G. Adverbial clause / clausal adjunct**

- finite:

*As you probably know, I won't be here next week*

*That's a Ming vase, if I'm not mistaken*

- non-finite:

*I'm a bit overwhelmed, to be honest*

I doubt, **speaking as a layman**, whether this will be the right solution  
Stated briefly, there is no quick solution to the problem

(e.g. Petola 1983: 105-6, 111-3, Quirk et al. 1985: 1112-1113, Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 666, 1360, Espinal 1991: 726, Biber et al. 1999: 1068, Haegeman 1991, Prandi 1996; 2004 on pseudo-purpose clauses)

### **H. Question tag**

*Mary is coming tomorrow, isn't she?*

(e.g. Ziv 1985: 189-190, Knowles 1980, Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 891-892, 896-897, Mittwoch 1979)

## I. Right node raising / interpolated coordination / shared constituent coordination

*He is, or at least he was, a great actor*

(e.g. Quirk et al. 1985: 976-977, Peterson 1999: 242-243)

## J. Amalgam(ation)

*He gave this I prefer not to know how awful paper*

(e.g. Lakoff 1974, Espinal 1991: 748, Plank 1981: 65-66, Aijmer 1997: 7)

## K. Verbless clause

*The visitors, most of them students, were rather surprised*

(e.g. Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 1359)

In the next section, we will briefly describe the main operations generating (some) clausal parentheticals. Moving now to the issue of syntactic derivation of clausal parentheticals, as reported in Kaltenböck (2005: 22), there are three ways in which the syntactic “dilemma” of parentheticals - the fact that, although they do not enter into any syntactic hierarchical relation with their host clause, they still intervene in the latter’s linear order - can be resolved: by inserting an extra level of syntactic structure, by including the elaboration of some transformations, or by excluding parentheticals from the grammar altogether (Brinton 2008: 10,11). The elaboration of transformations may include two different approaches (Schelfhout et al. 2004; Dehé and Kavalova 2006: 292).

In the former approach, which Schelfhout et al. (2004) term the *extraction* analysis, the parenthetical starts as a structure which is syntactically integrated with the host; then their syntactic link is broken, and it is then moved into the host clause position. This approach is often employed to account for parentheticals such as *I think* or *you know*. The parenthetical stems as a main clause heading its anchor, as in *I think that the world is flat*. The deletion of the complementiser *that* permits the movement of one of the constituents. Either *I think* is “lowered” into the position of a disjunct (see Thompson and Mulac 1991) or the clause *the world is flat* is “lifted” to a higher position and attached to *I think* in a process which is defined by Ross (1973) as “slifting”. Actually, several counterarguments have been proposed against these transformational approaches, generally based on the lack of complete interchangeability, according to some scholars, between *I think that the world is flat* and *the world is flat, I think*.

In the second approach, the *parenthetical* (cf. Schelfhout et al. 2004) or *double speech act analysis* (cf. Ifantidou 2001), the parenthetical starts as a syntactically independent utterance and is then placed in the anchor clause with which it has no syntactic relation at all. The first problem with generating the parenthetical autonomously is that it is often incomplete; in fact, it comprises a transitive verb, but it lacks its required direct object. Several different solutions, mainly semantic, have been proposed

in order to solve this problem. Jackendoff (1972: 99,100) treats the parenthetical as a speaker-oriented adverb. Generated on its own, it would be defective on the semantic and syntactic ground. However, generated as an adverb it is subject to the projection  $P_{\text{speaker}}$  which embeds the whole sentence as a unique argument to the adverb:

$P_{\text{speaker}}$  will therefore fill the missing argument of the parentheticals with the reading of the main clause, exactly the structure needed to provide semantic similarity to the complement constructions.

According to Espinal (1991), the syntactic gap would be filled conceptually by a process of hearer inference which makes use of the most readily available contextual information (1991: 746, 756):

The linguistic meaning of the host [...] is projected into the empty argument position of the verb of the parenthetical – following lexical specifications – in the final process of utterance interpretation (Espinal 1991: 748).

Schelfhout et al. (2004: 345) claim that clauses may be parenthetically attached through an operator: “this operator [...] somehow absorbs or takes on the direct object role”. Dehé and Kavalova (2006: 294) argue that the parenthetical is generated distinctly and that it is related to the anchor by a “discourse-governed process of linearization only”. However, there may be a unidirectional syntactic relationship, since the parenthetical “can introduce a property or syntactic feature which remains unsatisfied within its internal syntactic structure, but can be satisfied by elements in the host clause” (Dehé and Kavalova 2006: 295).

Focusing on “as parentheticals”, Potts (2002) points out that the parenthetical attaches directly to the linguistic material from which it gains its meaning; it adjoins as a normal, non-parenthetical adverbial. The gap in the parenthetical is interpreted by the so-called parenthetical’s sister, that is, the most local phrase of the appropriate type. He underlines that there is nothing extraordinary with respect to the syntax of *as-parentheticals*; he rather argues that their “otherness” is a so-called semantic effect (649-650). In opposition to Potts, Blakemore (2006) argues that the parentheticals cannot be placed on the syntax at the level of grammatical representation, because the interpretation of their gaps often entails a process of pragmatic enrichment. Hence, according to the author, they rather should be inserted at the level of pragmatic interpretation (Brinton 2008: 12).

However, these processes are likely to be suitable only for the derivation of a restricted class of parentheticals and there is no agreement on the three processes in themselves. We do not enter details since investigating the syntactic origin of parentheticals is not the focus of our work. In the following section, we outline our definition of CCs

#### 1.2.4 Towards an operational definition of comment clause

Following partially Quirk et al. (1972: 778-780, 1985: 1112-1118), Leech and Svartvik (1975: 216-217), Kaltenböck (2005), Schneider (2007a, b), in this work we define **COMMENT CLAUSE** as:

- a) a parenthetical clause which occurs initially, medially, or finally in a host utterance and that
- b) takes the form of a main clause (e.g. *credo, guarda*), therefore being
- c) an asyndetic clause (i.e. without formal link), which is linked to the host in that
- d) it contains a gap (typically the complement of the verb) which is filled conceptually by the host clause. (This criterion mirrors the restrictive definition of Quirk et al.'s (1985) class **I** comment clauses, Peterson's (1999) gap-containing parenthetical clause, and Schneider's (2007a, b) reduced parenthetical clauses)
- e) to be considered as such, the CC needs at least once separate the heads from its modifiers, both at the phrase or clause level (dependency model).

In what follows, we enlist some examples fitting into the defining parameters we have just set in a) through e).

- 1.25) I'hanno già detto in **mi sembra** una delle prime telefonate (Lip, FB14)  
they have already said this in **it seems to me** one of the first calls
- 1.26) si rende conto della poca eh combaciabilità **diciamo** delle due lingue (Lip, NA12)  
you could easily understand ehm the little similarity **let's say** between the two languages
- 1.27) forse dobbiamo fare obbligatoriamente **penso** una precisazione (Lip, RD8)  
maybe we need to be **I think** more specific
- 1.28) era il primo **mi sa** che aveva avuto questa intuizione (Lip, FC6)  
he was the first **it seems to me** having such an intuition

As the parameter in b) shows, we intend to consider exclusively those structures which resemble a matrix clause that can occur in its own (even if it lacks one argument which is pragmatically derived); in other words, the CC cannot “hide” any link to an underlying structure. This is the reason why we do not consider structures such as the purpose conditionals as *per essere sincero* ('to be honest') in the structure *per essere sincero, quella persona non mi piace* ('to be honest, I don't like that person'). These strategies would be included under the head of comment clauses in that they behave as the so-called *avverbi di enunciazione* ('utterance adverbs' - Prandi 1996: 80) expressing the speaker's stance through a proposition (i.e., clausal status). Nonetheless, through a reprise test

using the pro-predicate *dire* ('to say'), it appears that the potential CC *per essere onesto* is related - or better, subordinated - to a complex structure:

- 1.29) dico che quella persona non mi piace **per essere sincero** ("I say that I don't like that person to be honest"  
- Prandi 1996; 2006)<sup>9</sup>.

The purpose clause and the independent clause are simply two floating fragments of a submerged complex process including both. They are both **constituents of the speech act**, in which the relation between the two does indeed emerge (Prandi 2006: 339). In these structures, *dire* is in a **syntagmatic** relation, that is of potential constituent, with the source structure (Prandi 1996: 83). According to Prandi (2006), some complex sentences indeed contain subordinate clauses which, though sharing the characteristic form of a non-finite purpose clause and expressing a purposive content, do not serve to ideate the content of what is said; they rather directly motivate the performance of the speech act<sup>10</sup>. In doing so, they display some dependence that is speech act-based. Such dependence (or link) relation is one of the reasons leading us to exclude these structures from this examination. In a similar vein, we do not include subordinate clauses such as adverbial clauses or clauses that are introduced by what Kaltenböck (2005) defines as *indicators*. More generally, we do not consider any strategy exhibiting a link to another structure - either such link is claimed to be placed on the propositional level or on the speech act level.

Following parameter in e), we intend to consider only those structures which lack some element of the verbal valency, what Kaltenböck (2005) defines as comment and reporting clauses or what Schneider (2007a, b) defines as reduced parenthetical clauses. This is the reason why we do not include the category a) of parenthetical parataxis of Kaltenböck's list (2005), in that such clauses are self-sufficient and do not require a process of enrichment to understand the missing argument of the verb contained in the comment clause.

One last observation is worth making; we will consider under the head of *comment clause* also what has been considered as a reporting clause by authors such as Kaltenböck (*si dice* 'it is said'). Obviously, we will make fine-grained distinctions based on the functions of the markers. Notwithstanding, for the present, we prefer to include all of them under the same label of comment clauses recalling their general function of (meta-)comment. As anticipated, the same author also claimed that there is indeed some room for overlap between the classes under examination. Additionally, we will consider as CCs some structures that some scholars have (already) defined as discourse markers (*guarda* 'look', *senti* 'listen', *diciamo* 'let's say' – see Waltereit 2002; Bazzanella

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<sup>9</sup> In this way, comment clauses such as 'per dire' are excluded by our survey (see also the parameter in b).

<sup>10</sup> Even if such a relation is speech act-based, nonetheless it suggests a link between the presumed comment clause and a matrix structure.

1995; Voghera 2010, 2017; Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a,b among many others), as in the following examples:

- 1.30) A: ma sembra che la gente ci va con le valigie di libri cose pazzesche B: sì B: sì **guarda** io mi sono resa conto a me m'hanno chiesto quelle cose così difficili (Lip, RB2)  
A: but it seems that people go there with baggage full of books, crazy stuff B: yeah B: **look** I realized they asked me very difficult questions
- 1.31) sono allo stesso livello anch'io **guarda** (Lip, FB5)  
I have the same problem **look (trust me)**

We will consider all these structures as CCs starting from formal criteria, namely the fact that they are indeed **clausal** strategies (see also the other parameters in a-e); then, we will establish whether they are ascribable to such a class after the analysis and the study of their behaviour in the corpora (cf. Chapter 6). We prefer to define the structures as CCs since not all CCs may be defined as DMs. All the structures we identified signal an activity, that is, the activity of attaching a meta-comment to the host utterance; some of them may be described as CCs without acquiring the DMs status (see Ch.6), whereas some other turned out to be DMs (as already argued in some works). In other words, some strategies play the meta-comment, without undergoing the typical processes of DMs (grammaticalization). Therefore, we prefer to term them globally CCs rather than DMs.

### 1.3 The data: comment clauses in spoken discourse

#### 1.3.1 Why spoken discourse?

Spoken language exists in time, not space (Carter and McCarthy 2006: 193)

The quotation highlights the defining property of spoken discourse as opposed to writing and, to a lesser extent, sign language. Speakers and listeners can neither ‘rewind’ nor move forward. Rather, are ‘trapped’ (i.e., stuck) in the linear flux of speech. In this way, spoken discourse contrasts (i) with written texts, which are not characterised by the same time compression and (ii) with sign languages, which make possible some simultaneity, although it is restricted to a content which may be defined as non-contradictory and non-independent content (Levelt 1981, see also, more recently, Crible 2018: 2).

Conversely, speech is constrained by the linearity of the phonological channel and it is not given the same freedom of movement as graphical writing. Moreover, speech is still often defined against a sort of “written language bias” (Linell 1982), which points to an ideal, flat, continuous linguistic output. In this way, the prompt nature of on-line production is completely obscured. Put differently, the fluent speech should be in a way linear. The notion of linearity is associated to Levelt’s (1989) “linearization” and “blueprint” model of speech production, whereby speakers must handle at the

same time macroplanning (i.e. devising the communicative intention), microplanning (i.e. organising the utterance), and monitoring (i.e. evaluating the utterance against the intention and instructing adjustments if necessary) within their restricted cognitive abilities (Crible 2018: 11).

While linearization concerns thought and not speech (Levelt 1981), linearity is related to the modality. It emerges from the properties of the linear phonological channel, which cannot convey effectively the output of the speakers' complex mental processes. Connecting fluency with linearity does not mirror the cognitive processes of language production and perception. Moreover, it conveys a distorted view of spontaneous speech. In this work, we will try to argue that the linguistic expressions and the constructions which activate and/or mirror this non-linear processing are not always considered as problematic or extraordinary; rather they may offer solutions to bypass the linearization problem and to create coherent and efficient texts (see Crible 2018: 2 on French and English DMs).

Especially in recent approaches to discourse syntax (for instance, in the framework of the dialogic syntax outlined by Du Bois 2014), those structures such as the so-called disfluencies have been referred to as tactical and discourse-functional devices. Such approaches underline their role as productive, hearer-oriented uses of conversational grammar. Disfluencies such as CCs should be considered as resources, which allow speakers to re-establish a sort of spatial dimension within the temporality of speech. They may manifest the directionality and, above all, the non-linearity of specific discourse passages. Among the range of disfluency markers, this approach puts on the forefront those expressions that directly affect the structure of discourse, fulfilling operations such as marking boundaries or connecting utterances of different size. As often recognised, “Discourse markers” (see Schiffrin 1987), i.e. pragmatic expressions such as *but*, *well* or *I mean* (i.e., a CC), play the *structuring* role at issue.

Under the head of discourse markers, we can properly identify CCs (see *I mean*), which seem to play such structuring and contextualizing global function and that will be the focus of this research<sup>11</sup>, linking their numerous forms and functions to a non-linear view of (dis)fluency which is typical of spoken discourse (Crible 2017: 42; Crible 2018: 31). In other words, on a par with discourse markers, what we define as CC has been claimed to belong to those sets of devices helping the speaker to (re)establish a coherent dimension to the volatile and emergent essence of on-line, spoken discourse.

Furthermore, the analysis of spoken data highlights a polyfunctionality of some of the strategies we intend to study, some of which are classified as discourse markers, as recognised by Voghera (2010, 2017): along with connectives or adverbs such as the Italian *cioè* ([lit. that is] ‘I mean’), English *like*, Spanish *entonces* ([lit. then], ‘well’, ‘anyway’ - Bazzanella 1995; 2005, Fraser 1996;

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<sup>11</sup> We refer to the classification retrieved in the literature. We will come back to the issue in Chapter 6.

Cresti and Moneglia 2005), a new class of single or multiple lexemes emerges, which includes **verbal forms** (Italian *dai*, *senti* [lit. give, listen] ‘come on’); Spanish *sabes* [lit. understand, know] ‘listen’, ‘you know’; English *come on* - Voghera 2010: 93, 94.

Indeed, the analysis of spoken data emphasised a complex situation at both lexical and syntactic level, because not only a single marker can perform the role of conjunction or adverb, but some of them can adopt a totally different function as discourse markers with varying textual and pragmatic values in different co(n)texts (Voghera 2010: 93, Molinelli 2015). The constraints (or, simply, the properties) characterizing spoken discourse lead us to privilege this domain in which we hypothesise that the role of CCs as **contextualizing clues** may be crucial to improve communication. In conclusion, the aim of this work is to uncover the strategic uses of an apparent phenomenon of disfluency (or what has been identified as second-order syntax) concerning discourse structure - here conceived broadly as local and global management of discourse parts (see Crible 2018: 4 in relation to DMs) - through the specific lens of CCs.

### 1.3.2 A model for pragmatic annotation of spoken data

The annotation of our CCs was carried out under the EXMARaLDA annotation tool (Schmidt and Wörner 2009: 565; 2012), a system employed for the computer-assisted creation and analysis of corpora of spoken language. Under the annotation tool at stake a process of multi-layered annotation of spoken data enriched with metadata is made possible.

EXMARaLDA collects data formats and software tools for creating, analysing and distributing spoken language corpora. The EXMARaLDA (Extensible Markup Language for Discourse Annotation) system is designed to overcome some of the obstacles connected with technological aspects when analysing corpora of spoken data, like incompatibilities between formats, software tools and operating systems (Schmidt and Wörner 2009: 565, 566). The main objectives in EXMARaLDA’s development are:

- 1) to ease the exchange of spoken language corpora between researchers and between different technological environments,
- 2) “to optimally exploit the multimedia and hypertext capabilities of modern computers in the work with video or audio data and their transcriptions” (Schmidt and Wörner 2009: 565, 566),
- 3) to facilitate long term archiving and reuse of language resources (by ensuring the compatibility of corpora with existing or emerging standards for digital archiving - Schmidt and Wörner 2009: 565, 566).

The software components employed for the present analysis are the transcription editor (Partitur-Editor), the corpus management tool (Coma), and the KWIC concordance tool (EXAKT - Schmidt,

Wörner, Hedeland and Lehmberg 2011). The EXMARaLDA tool offers different profits. It includes the KWIC concordance EXAKT, whose generated output always comes in a multimodal format (written texts and corresponding audio segments).

First, in analysing our data, we used the EXMARaLDA Partitur-Editor, that is a resource “for inputting, editing and outputting transcriptions in musical score (German: *Partitur*) notation” (Schmidt and Wörner 2009: 69). Then, COMA (the corpus management tool) allows the user to bind all annotated files into one corpus or database. Finally, we used EXAKT (EXMARaLDA Analyse- und Konkordanztool), that is a tool for querying transcription corpora for transcribed or annotated phenomena and for carrying out qualitative or quantitative analyses based on such queries (Schmidt and Wörner 2009: 573). The EXMARaLDA suite comprises its own extraction and concordancer tool, EXAKT, which is used to query the corpus. However, first all the generated .exb files from the annotation interface must be converted into a .coma file which can be read by EXAKT. This conversion requires the COMA tool in order to bundle all the annotated files into one corpus. Finally, this .coma file can be queried (see Crible 2018: 70).

Our first step was the manual examination to identify all the CCs in the Lip and in the KIParla Corpus (word by word study of the Corpora to identify the structures subsumable under our definition of CC). Then we imported the texts of the Lip Corpus in .txt<sup>12</sup> format into the EXMARaLDA Partitur Editor tool, which allows to manually or semi-automatically encode annotations over many different layers (or tiers) applying to different cell sizes. Thus, we proceeded by annotating all the information we were interested in (see the parameters in detail in 2.1). For the KIParla data, we imported ELAN (Sloetjes and Wittenburg 2008) transcriptions into EXMARaLDA Partitur Editor tool adding in each tier different types of information.

### 1.3.3 Comment clauses in synchrony and in the short diachrony of spoken Italian

As anticipated in 1.1, our aim is twofold, considering that we intend to study a specific type of parenthetical, namely the CC and its behaviour in synchrony by individuating the function it plays in our corpora, with a glance at the emergence of some new functions starting from other, more referential functions.

We will show which range of functions may be adopted by each of our CCs: some of them will result formally more formulaic and highly polyfunctional (cf. *dico* ‘I say’, or *guarda* ‘look’), namely

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<sup>12</sup> The position was determined on the basis of the transcribed files; sound files were used in case of doubt. We did not consult all the data since for the Lip Corpus we cannot rely on a mapping between audio files and transcriptions.

they may perform functions which may be placed on all the three domains. To this point, we will place CCs on a *continuum* also on the basis of their behaviour and the properties they exhibit (form fixation, specialization for a periphery of utterance, semantic bleaching and so on).

The second aim of the work is to study patterns of changes (directionalities); some markers which developed originally within a specific domain may shift to another one (for instance, *guarda* is intrinsically interactional and may develop subjective functions expressing emphasis; on the contrary, *direi* ‘I would say’ may be used to boost instead of modalising). We will strive to show that the study of CCs may shed some light on the patterns of language shift and on the directionality of the latter.

Our research questions motivated our decision to study the spoken variety; we think that such “performance” or second-order phenomena are better to monitor in the spoken variety since the latter is indeed the ideal habitat of these intrinsically indexical and contextualizing markers.

## **Chapter 2. Methodological remarks: data, parameters, annotation model**

### **Introduction to the chapter**

The aim of this chapter is twofold. First, we will define and discuss the theoretical notions and frameworks related to the analysis of spoken data, starting with some core features of spoken mode, namely its textual (2.1.1.1), syntactic (2.1.1.2), and semantic (2.1.1.3) properties. The two corpora investigated for the research will be presented, and the annotation scheme will be outlined along with a discussion of some exemplificatory cases of the parameters used in this research (2.2). Specifically, we will address distributional (2.2.1), syntactic (2.2.2) and parameters internal to CCs such as mood and type of core meaning (2.2.3). We will introduce a distinction between domain and function, which is compatible with other annotations on DMs (see González 2005; Crible 2018). At the end of this chapter, we will outline the Annotation scheme through the EXMARaLDA tool (2.3).

### **2.1 Why spoken discourse? Comment clauses, (dis)fluency, on-line syntax in spoken discourse**

Spoken discourse is characterized by two main properties: multidimensionality and discontinuity. The former property refers to the fact that in speech speakers and listeners elaborate meanings through and from different sources, such as the context, which includes the concrete setting and the presuppositions, interactional conditions (interpersonal relationship, degree of free turn-taking alternation and so on), facial mimics, and gestures (Voghera 2010: 80). The employment of other sources of information is an essential resource in the construction of meaning. Thus, discontinuity arises from the interaction among various systems of signification (Voghera 2010: 80).

Spoken discourse is discontinuous at both the semiotic and verbal level. The former refers to the construction of meaning. The limited possibility of linguistic planning constrains the construction of the global sense. The meaning is unavoidably produced and interpreted in time (Psathas and Waksler 1973, Deppermann and Günthner 2015). In spoken discourse, both the thematic development and the meaning are the products of all the co-participants to the speech event. Hence, they display a structural and intrinsic indeterminacy (Voghera 2010: 80). Its cohesion and coherence are in a way “open”, in that they arise from a process of multiparty negotiation (Nencioni 1976). This condition implies a cooperative attitude towards semantic development and syntactic structures that span more than one turn (Albano Leoni 2009: 21, Voghera 2010: 80, Calaresu 2018: 509).

Verbal discontinuity refers to the form of linguistic structures. Indeed, spoken texts are made up of short chunks, or short utterances that better respond to the restrictions of the on-line production

and reception processes, which cannot rely on an external memory support. Interruptions, plan changes, speakers overlapping, and insertions of receiver are regular processes of spontaneous dialogues, rather than exceptions to it (Calaresu 2016).

Due to their discontinuity, natural spoken dialogues cannot be packed into a linear sequence of utterances (see Section 2.2.1); nonetheless, to manage the constraints of spoken discourse, speakers may rely on some devices inserting some kind of second-level information. Some of the strategies Voghera (2010, 2017) defines as discourse markers (henceforth DMs) playing a global punctuation and structuring function in spoken discourse may be reconducted to our definition of CCs, despite the quote refers to DMs, and CCs belong to DMs (even if not all of them are DMs):

Discourse markers contribute to the general construction of texts, along with conveying their social and pragmatic sense. They can indeed serve the purpose of structuring and help the interpretation of some portions of the texts or to signal the speaker's stance towards what is being said or towards the hearer. This latter fact makes them **particularly frequent in spoken texts**<sup>13</sup>, which by definition are in progress and they are on-line built. The person who speaks, in fact, rarely produces a coherent text from the beginning to the end. Rather, most frequently, the speaker is asked to re-motivate and give coherence to what is being said [...] sometimes DMs serve the purpose of punctuation and spacing as typical of the written variety, that is, they are used to delimit and segment the different portions of discourse which are textually and pragmatically significant and recognisable from the hearer, without creating breaks in the speech flow<sup>14</sup>.  
(Voghera 2017: 90-91)

Moreover, according to some scholars explicitly interested in the study of parenthetical clauses, a proper description of such (paren)thetical elements may only be achieved on the basis of authentic spoken data (Kaltenböck 2005; Schneider 2007a: 65), where the properties of semiotic and verbal discontinuity, fragmentation, and integration of different sources in the construction of sense are assumed to favour the occurrence of additional elements such as DMs and CCs. By inserting **another “dimension”**, as they claim, these elements turn a one-venue utterance into a two-venue utterance (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 853).

Although generally treated as peripheral phenomena, those kinds of parenthetical strategies will be shown to play an important role in the organization, integration and enrichment of spoken texts.

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<sup>13</sup> Emphasis added.

<sup>14</sup> My translation.

In the following Sections, we will describe the textual, syntactic and semantic properties of spoken discourse<sup>15</sup> in order to motivate our choice to analyse the spoken domain in this research.

### **2.1.1 The properties of spoken discourse**

#### **2.1.1.1 The textual properties of spoken discourse**

##### **2.1.1.1.1 Discontinuity and disfluency**

In dialogic conditions, spoken texts are the product of an ongoing process which cannot rely on the support of an external memory; as a result, discourse is characterized by textual fragmentation (Sornicola 1981, Voghera 2010; 2017: 69). This content discontinuity arises from the fact that nothing is predetermined, and the topics are intertwined in a non-predictable way, even if the content of discourse may be relatively or partially known. Rather, the topics of discourse on-line emerge, by systematically developing from a turn to the other one; in other words, the syntactic and semantic progression totally relies on their evolvement, whereby a single argument or topic is not always linearly presented; rather, it may be interrupted, reformulated, resumed and adjusted several times (Voghera 2017: 69).

This dynamicity is also due to the alternation between different speakers. This alternation is not problematic; rather, it represents the ideal setting/condition of real-time linguistic elaboration and production (Voghera 2017: 70). The turn constitutes a sort of checking mechanism, which is employed also to monitor (in real-time) the processes of production and comprehension; thus, the alternation between different turns allows the production and reception of adequate textual portions to support the working memory loadings.

Monologic speech - exception made for expert speakers - makes the equilibrium between planning and production more difficult (Voghera 2017: 70). The necessity to cope with speech planning and production results in - also in expert speakers - interruptions in the speech flow, which are called disfluencies, i.e. pauses which are necessary to monitor the discourse planning. The frequency of such pauses depends also on the length of the utterance: long utterances reach higher disfluency rates than short ones (Bortfeld et al. 2001).

There are different kinds of disfluency phenomena; we can distinguish between PHONETIC disfluency and TEXTUAL disfluency. Phonetic disfluencies interrupt or alter the realization of the phonic chain; however, they do not affect the verbal sequence. Instances of such disfluencies are

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<sup>15</sup> As shown, Voghera's work *Dal parlato alla grammatica. Costruzione e forma dei testi spontanei* (2017) has been of great relevance for the present chapter and for this thesis in general. The work is considered the most recent and comprehensive survey on the correlates of spoken Italian on textual, semantic and syntactic ground. This research owes much also to Haselow's (2017) comprehensive survey on the properties of spoken English.

silent pauses, nasalization, vowel or consonant lengthening, and fillers (Pettorino and Giannini 2005). On the contrary, textual disfluencies do not necessarily alter the phonic chain; they rather interrupt the verbal sequence, thus requiring a process of textual reconstruction by the receiver. False starts, self-correction, and self-repetition belong to this type of disfluency. These two kinds of disfluencies frequently co-occur in spoken texts (Voghera 2017: 73).

#### **2.1.1.1.2 Textual functions of prosody in spoken texts**

Within such discontinuous textual architecture, prosody may guarantee textual coherence by fulfilling two crucial functions: the former is devoted to the identification of the textual sections; the latter is aimed at signalling the relevant backgrounded and foregrounded information. More specifically, prosody allows the addressee to both individuate textual blocks and to connect asyndetic sequences (on the segmental plane) in order to establish a sort of hierarchy between the conveyed information (Voghera 2017: 73).

The demarcation function of prosody consists in signalling whether a text is open and closed. In the former case, the speaker signals that she has not completed her utterance through a non-descending tone - also co-occurring with a pause. In the latter case, the speaker employs a descending intonation to express that a portion of its production is complete. However, it is worth underlining that such distinction is not clear-cut in that speech presupposes a (target frequency) F0 curve, which is characterized by ongoing peaks and dips. The prosodic scansion allows to distinguish between different interpretations of the same verbal sequence, to focus on specific parts of the utterance, and to signal the relations between different portions of discourse.

On a study of spoken data, Voghera finds out that the speech rate may be employed to underline something, generally with speech delays, or to signal second order information, normally with accelerations of parts of text functioning as comments on other parts of text (Lepschy, Lepschy, Voghera 1997, Voghera 2017: 74-77). The role of prosody with respect to pragmatics has been deeply analysed in French tradition (see Degand and Simon 2009a, b *inter alia*).

In spontaneous language, the prosodic profile of utterances is not accidental; rather, it varies according to the meanings the speaker aims at transmitting. (Voghera 2017: 78). In conclusion, we must recognise that prosody has specific linguistic functions, which are not subsidiary to other domains (Albano Leoni 2009: 55).

#### **2.1.1.1.3 Redundancy and repetition(s)**

Provided that spoken texts are exposed to external noise, they are more redundant than written texts. The external noise may depend on varying factors, which are not necessarily connected to the

difficulty to master the channel of communication. A first potential source arises from the near-simultaneity between text production and reception (Voghera 2017: 79).

Redundancy may be observed on the textual level of thematic progression, which is rarely characterized by linearity. If we analyse a spoken text, we can notice a series of disfluencies and of *comments* (such as *non ricordo*, ‘I don’t remember’, *credo* ‘I believe’) helping the speaker to contextualise what is being said. More generally, if we compare a written and an oral production, we can notice that the spoken discourse is characterized by a series of devices that Voghera calls **elementi di contorno** (‘ornamental devices’), which are useful for the scene description, but redundant to the bare, informative resume of the target scene.

Thematic redundancy may produce varying textual structures, which are not automatically connected to the simple repetition or reduplication of linguistic items; rather, it manifests itself in the occurrence of different textual strategies, such as reformulation and paraphrases, namely, processes devoted to enriching the text through a constant reformulation process (Voghera 2017: 79-81).

Repetition is a basic mechanism employed in every level of linguistic encoding, ranging from the segmental level to syntax and pragmatics. In spoken language, repetition is essentially a mechanism to check discourse planning. It may be reconducted to two macro-categories: autorepetition and heterorepetition (Tannen 1989). The former poses no restrictions to the quantity and to the kind of the repeated items. The quantity of autorepetition seems to be proportional to the length of production, since it allows the speaker to gain time for planning and, implicitly, for elaboration. The repetition of parts uttered by other speakers has to be interpreted as a specific strategy used to guarantee the semantic-syntactic continuity, which might be compromised by the speaker’s interruption (Voghera 2017: 82, 83).

#### 2.1.1.4 The role of deixis

Spoken communication is deeply rooted in the speaker’s semiotic space. More than other modalities, it requires a more frequent usage of contextualising clues such as personal pronouns, possessive pronouns, and first/second-person markers (Lyons 1977; Vanelli and Renzi 1995). The employment of such deictic elements is deeply connected to the possibility (and need) to integrate verbal communication with explicit references to the context. To this end, it is not an accident that some deictic forms are employed with usages that apparently lack demonstratives or temporal adverbs (Berretta 1994). In these cases, ellipsis must be reconducted not necessarily to what is not *said*. Rather, it has to be reconducted to what it is given or active (at-issue) to the interlocutors (Voghera 2017: 85, Calaresu 2016).

In other words, the spoken variety allows to topicalise some elements that are contextually given and salient without the need to explicitly *nominate* them in conversation. In general, we can reconduct to deixis the aforementioned subjectification of reports exposition, where the speaker is considered the starting point (*origo*) of every enunciative development. We are faced with a typical textual configuration of oral culture, that we can also detect in spoken variety, whereby the speaker refers to a given event by the filter of her verbal and (inter)personal experience (Voghera 2017: 88).

### **2.1.1.2 The syntactic properties of spoken discourse: a real-time syntax**

#### **2.1.1.2.1 Incremental, additive, open and real-time syntax in spoken dialogue**

Syntax is the level where spoken discourse mostly reveals its peculiarities. If we try to compare a written and a spoken text, we immediately notice the occurrence of a macroscopic difference in the way speakers describe the very same situation (Voghera 2017: 95). In fact, from a syntactic level, we can notice that the whole structure is on-line construed, based on short portions that are not always logically interconnected through segmental devices such as conjunctions, prepositions or subordinating verbal moods. On the contrary, the written version englobes the whole information in a unique text, where sentences are disposed along different levels, which are hierarchically organized and overtly signalled (Voghera 2017: 96).

The syntactic organization of spoken texts is deeply linked to the simultaneity of on-line planning and production/reception and to the presence of both the speakers. The semiotic and verbal discontinuity stemming from this situation generates a dynamic syntactic structure, which develops in an **incremental** and **additive** way through the cooperation between all the participants to the speech event (cf. Thompson, Fox and Couper-Kuhlen 2015). This resulting serial structure allows both speaker and listener to progress step by step without overloading memory and reducing the potential loss of information. On the contrary, a hierarchical structure needs complex planning, and, above all, a long-term calculation that is not practical in speaking.

For example, also in a presumably objective and expository report, the speaker often relies on attenuative expressions or epistemic modality strategies foregrounding the subjective dimension (Voghera 2017: 88, 96) and inserting second-level information to adjust the content expressed through additive syntax (see thetical grammar devices). The result is far from a syntactically linear and hierarchically ordered text: what we notice is instead an emergent, in progress product. Such “open” syntax is the main feature of spoken texts allowing for a constant transformation, which may be achieved by different participants. As recognised by Hopper (2011: 26, 28) “a grammatical structure is always temporary and ephemeral... [...] [categories] are constantly being elaborated in and by communication itself”. According to Haselow, who shares this emergent view of speech,

‘grammar’ should be conceived as a process which emerges in the linear flow of time, based on moment-by moment speaker’s choices. Indeed, the speaker needs to cope with various cognitive tasks while construing a structural unit. Accordingly, grammar is conceived both as a system of knowledge comprising conventionalized units and the conditions of their use, and an activity. This activity manifests itself in the way a structural pattern is created by a process of incrementation, that is, by the addition of linguistic units to an already produced utterance part. Given such premises, under this framework, “grammatical description should be knowledge-based and activity-based rather than product-based” (Haselow 2017: 84; Haselow 2016: 79).

Under this ‘emergentist’ view in the sense of Hopper (1987, 1998, 2011), the structure which is produced in spontaneous speech is not regarded as a static configuration and a ready-made product available for linguistic analysis, based on *a priori* categories and structural patterns. Rather, it should be considered as a temporal phenomenon that is always open at the leading end (Haselow 2016: 79). Indeed, speakers create structure in a fragmentary manner in the flow of time and are able to renegotiate it in order to adapt this structure quickly to changing communicative needs (“local contingencies”) while producing a given unit of talk (Haselow 2016: 79).

Heavy temporal constraints imposed both on production and comprehension in spoken discourse lead speakers to manage planning and production in really compressed times; consequently, the resulting texts are not so long and internally structured on different dependency levels. Speakers are required to optimise the relation between linearity and syntactic relations, which may be discontinuous and may include information placed on different hierarchical levels, not overtly signalled. This aspect motivates the choice of brief constituents, which are additively juxtaposed; in this way, the hierarchical relations result to be based on contiguity, where the connection may be marked by segmental elements or, more frequently, by prosody (Voghera 2017: 96-97). To clarify it, let us consider the following sequence:

- 2.1) *Sono triste mangio*  
Lit. I am upset I eat

The two clauses *solo triste* (Engl. ‘I am upset’) and *mangio* (Engl. ‘I am eating’, ‘I will eat something’, ‘I usually eat’) will receive different interpretations, which are based on their prosodic contours. More specifically, they will be interpreted as distinct clauses if each of them constitutes a tonal unit and if it is characterized by a descending tonal movement. They may be interpreted as two coordinate sentences if each of them is coextensive of a tonal unit and if it is characterized by a slightly descending movement. Finally, they may be interpreted as forming a causal relation if each

of them behaves like a co-extensive tonal unit, but the former is characterised by a raising tonal movement and the latter by a descending one (Voghera 2017: 97).

Recently and as a result of approaches such as ‘on-line syntax’ (Auer 2009) and ‘emergent grammar’ (Hopper 1987, 1998), studies of language in interaction have begun to explore in depth linguistic structures as they emerge in real time (cf. Auer 2000; Goodwin 2002; Hopper 2011; Auer and Pfänder 2011, Deppermann and Günthner 2015: 2).

Therefore, some scholars decided to study the spoken variety of language by substituting the syntactic category of sentence with the one of utterance (*enunciato*), which may be made up of a speech act or of a portion of it and which, independently of its realization, is i) endowed with an intention and ii) is marked by prosodic boundaries (Cresti 2000). This position arises from the attempt to overcome a static consideration of syntax setting apart those phenomena functioning on the basis of the strength of pragmatic and informative relations. However, according to Voghera, the employment of *enunciato* carries the idea that spoken discourse is *outside* syntax; that is, it hides an implicit abandonment to analyse the syntax of spoken interaction. According to Voghera (2017: 97-99), there is no reason to postulate a choice between syntax and pragmatics. The fact that we notice syntactic structures that are pragmatically motivated does not exclude their intrinsic “syntactic essence”.

More generally, we adopt Ariel’s (2010) definition of grammar and pragmatics. According to Ariel (2010: 231-233), following Prince (1978, 1988), and Sperber and Wilson (1986), coding is considered as the most basic property of grammar. Grammar is in fact viewed as a system of codes, which associates forms with functions. The extent to which these functions are truth conditional or not is not a basic issue for the linguistic system. According to Ariel, a body of research has shown that “expecting grammar to provide all the necessary ingredients that go into building a conceptually complete interpretation of a given content is misguided” (232). As a system of communication, grammar is under-determined, because it is not devoted to express “complete truth-conditional meanings all by itself. [...] This is why the code/inference distinction is the more fundamental division of cognitive labour relevant to a grammar/pragmatics distinction”. Language use and interpretation is often the product of both codes and inferences. Indeed, many phenomena which may be considered pragmatic involve both encoded and inferred aspects. Ariel emphasises that any use/interpretation of linguistic phenomena encompasses grammatical aspects, governed by conventions that correlate specific linguistic expressions with specific meanings and/or conditions, and pragmatic aspects, ruled by processes of inferencing, which are applied to the given interpreted linguistic string in a given context (Ariel 2010: 233).

### **2.1.1.2.2 Syntactic constituents and tonal units**

As already underlined, prosody is the most powerful device connecting syntax to pragmatics (Savy 2001). In general, prosodic segmentation plays the function to isolate portions of text in order to mark their role on different levels: syntactic, discursive or informative (Voghera 2017: 106).

Prosody may perform a different syntactic role through different types of variations. We can notice the variation of both the melodic extension within tonal units and within specific forms of intonation profiles, which may be devoted to express different kinds of syntactic relations such as coordination, dependency or juxtaposition. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that in many languages the usage of accents and intonational boundaries is used to mark syntactic connection; generally, these forms present a raising intonational configuration; this configuration is associated with the syllable, which is tonic and internal to the tonal unit in cases of accents, and in the right side of tonal unit in cases of boundaries (Voghera 2017: 106).

Finally, the relation between the kind of sentence (mood, modality) and the intonational profile of a tonal unit has to be taken into account. Prosody is indeed linked to transmission of declarative, interrogative or imperative modality/mood.

The impact of such prosodic aspects on syntax has been differently considered over the years. The relevance of prosodic variations on syntactic *phrasing* is transparent and, consequently, easily recognised in that it pertains to the connection between prosody and constituents of syntactic structure or syntactic relations, i.e. elements that have been, undoubtedly, recognized as part of syntactic representations, regardless of the theoretical framework. The adequacy of the information-syntax and modality-syntax connections is not given and univocally recognized; however, recently, the connection between information structure and syntactic structure has been admitted also among the formal representation of generative syntax, to the point that some heads are recognized properly to project informative relevance between constituents of the sentence. Actually, there is no doubt that variation in modality implies, in many languages, syntactic consequences in the usage of verbal moods, specific particles, and in the order of constituents. In this way, according to Voghera (2017: 107), the expression of modality should be included among the prosodic phenomena which are relevant to the relations between syntax and prosody.

Prosody is thus not a secondary expedient the speaker employs when she misses the target words. Rather, it behaves like a systematic and basic resource, which is used to delimit the domain of syntactic planning (see Halliday 1985 among many others). Indeed, in the written domain, we find several cases where the boundary between major syntactic units is marked exclusively by a prosodic/interpunctive scansion. Conversely, this does not imply that each prosodic variation has syntactic value.

### 2.1.1.2.3 Kinds of clauses: from verbal to verbless clauses

Let us now move to the description of the most common kinds of clauses that may be identified in the syntax of spoken texts (Voghera 2017: 108):

- a) verbal clauses constituting a single tonal unit or distributed on different tonal units;
- b) verbless clauses, in which can be detected a predicative portion, and that constitute a tonal unit;
- c) verbless clauses, where we cannot recognise a predicative portion, and that constitute a single tonal unit (Voghera 2017: 108).

In general, spoken texts are made up of a higher percentage of verbal clauses. They are brief and, in Italian, they are generally made up of two phrases *per* clause, one of which is often a pronoun. Based on the specific enunciative conditions of spoken texts production, speakers prefer to distribute the informative flux on a higher number of clauses. Such clauses are generally syntactically independent. This behaviour mirrors the **additive characterization of spoken syntax**.

Connection between clauses relies on prosodic strategies or connectives and generally does not exceed three clauses; the latter are characterized by a form of vagueness allowing them to function both as syntactic devices and as DMs. Frequently, syntactic links are polyfunctional; in fact, they may modify constituents that are morphologically and functionally different (Voghera 2017: 111-112). The spoken variety manifests a tendency to limit the number and the variety of logical relations to a restricted set of markers covering a wide range of values and functions (*perché* ‘because’, *come* ‘like’ etc...).

A tendency towards iconicity is one of the driving forces of segmented syntax, where both the linear order and the structures are strongly governed by informative needs (Sornicola 1981, Voghera 2017: 115, Calaresu 2018: 509). These structures allow the speaker to underline the topic or the comment, by exploiting the linearity of the syntagmatic structures.

Let us now focus on verbless clauses; such clauses do not exhibit a reduced prosodic form, which is a clue regarding their homogeneity with respect to verbal clauses; in other words, they are not defective, and they do not exclusively occur in the spoken variety as examples of disfluency phenomena (Voghera 2017: 109, 117).

The typology of verbless clauses is rather various. In order to explain the use of these clauses the features of spoken language have been normally referred to, which, according to some scholars, is assumed to be the result of a low planning activity. Actually, the occurrence of verbless clauses should be attributed to the strong relation between texts and co(n)text. Consequently, this property leads to a “more subjective” syntax, deriving from a strong speaker’s involvement. The system of turns has a leading role in that it behaves like a rhythmic microstructure with the aim to “sort” and orient the flux

of communication, thus balancing the time that every speaker has at disposal (Voghera 2017: 117-118). In such conditions, brief syntax is properly a resource and an advantage.

In spoken varieties, speakers may rely on what Voghera (2017: 119) defines as *clausole senza verbo dirematiche*, that is, verbless clauses, where one can easily recognize a subject often expressed through an NP and a predication. The property holding the two blocks together is **predicativity**, namely:

the formulation of a sign aimed at establishing the connection of different elements of the sign [...] which the sign gives as different, since it bears the predication relation<sup>16</sup> (De Mauro and Thornton, 1985: 412).

This is a relational definition that allows us to make a distinction between the **predicativity** and the occurrence of specific parts of speech thus making it possible to identify as **predicative** varying structures as the following one, frequently used in spoken texts:

- 2.2) [in ritardo]<sub>PRED</sub> [la replica di Fini]<sub>SOG</sub> (Voghera 2017: 119)  
Lit. Late(l)y      Fini's response  
'Fini's response is late'

However, in spoken discourse, verbless clauses are more frequently made up of non-predicative and non-argumental expressions such as DMs (*sì* ‘yes’, *insomma* ‘more or less’), formulas (*mille grazie* ‘many thanks’), and interjections (*ecco!* ‘here we are!’). DMs may perform different roles which may convey either a semantic-discursive function or a textual / demarcation function. In the former case, they function as hedges thus specifying the scope of the preceding utterance; more specifically, they express specifications, corrections, attenuations or emphasis. In the latter case, the clause is devoted to organizing the structure of the text, for example by signalling the beginning of a new textual portion (Molinelli 2015; Voghera 2017: 121).

In a similar vein, interjections and formulas are related to pragmatic aspects of communication. According to Goffman (1981), interjections belong the category of **response cries**, namely, ritualized verbal acts which are used as response to external events. They may be either oriented towards others thus belonging to a communicative exchange or they may be used “only as simpler sign process whereby emissions from a source inform us about the state of the source-a case of exuded expressions, not intentionally sent messages” (Goffman 1981: 99). The distinction between the two classes is highly codified, therefore, not every interjection could play both functions.

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<sup>16</sup> My translation of the string: “la formulazione di un segno intesa a stabilire la connettibilità di elementi analizzabili nel segno [...] che il segno, in quanto portatore di predicazione, dà come diversi.”

The last kind of verbless clauses is made up of isolated phrases, mostly nominal phrases. We are referring to existential clauses, whose function is often opening or closing a boundary/topic, as in the following example:

- 2.3) **La vita in fabbrica** // a parte l'idea del posto fisso che <ee> in quegli anni era lì era fortissima nel nostro paese ancora (Voghera 2017: 122)  
Life at the factory // except for the ideal of the so-called permanent position that <ehm> in those years was so widespread in the country

In 2.3), the NP *la vita in fabbrica* signals the beginning of a new thematic development.

We can also identify generic elliptical clauses, namely those structures which Simone (1995) defines as *clausole replica*:

- 2.4) Quanti anni hai?

**Undici**

How old are you?

Eleven

The repetition of the first thematic portion of text would be redundant, therefore, the hearer simply utters the rhematic information.

In spoken variety it may also occur what Calaresu (2018: 508) defines *grammaticalizzazioni “cross-frasali” o sintattiche* (cf. ‘grammaticalizations across clauses or syntactic grammaticalizations’; see the category of *integration* in Heine and Kuteva 2007: 224-261). These constructions are the outcome of specific juxtapositions and combinations of utterances (‘enunciati’) (i.e., phrases and sentences), which show the on-line production/reality/uttering (*il farsi*) of varying sentential constructions, which may be defined as “segmented”. To this extent, we can notice, for instance, the combination in ECO + comment (E+C) giving rise to the so-called hanging topics and to left dislocations (2.5)-(2.6), or complex combinations giving rise to structures of the type Comment + ECO (C+E), in which it is possible to identify constructions with ‘polarity scission’ (*scissione della polarità*). In such cases, the comment coincides with the focalization of an assertive holophrastic operator (for instance, *sì* ‘yes’, no ‘no’, *certo* ‘of course’, etc...), which implies the development of the simple juxtaposition C+E to the subordination C+that+E (*C+che-E* - Calaresu 2018: 508-509).

- 2.5) P1: e la tesi !

P2: e la tesi (-) ci vorrà un annetto (Bazzanella 1994: 212)

P1: And the thesis?

Well the thesis, it will need one year

- 2.6) P3: però col [cibo\_così]

P4: [xxxx porta]

P2: acqua cibo frut

P3: con la carne

P2: con la carne ci va assolutamente il rosso (StUNIMO, 2004) (Calaresu 2018: 508)

P3: But with food

P4: xxxx Bring

P2: Water food fru-

P3: With meat

P2: With meat without any doubt red wine

More generally, the cases surveyed so far show the existence of paths of dialogic grammaticalization in spoken interaction, as is the case in polyphonic and vertical grammaticalization. These paths arise from the on-line, dialogic interaction between speakers proffering utterances in different turns, mostly consecutive, of the discourse being produced. To use a meaningful image employed by Couper-Kuhlen (2011), we are dealing with portions of different turns which *collapse* into a unique linear or horizontal structure, which may be - at least initially - polyphonically bipartited (Calaresu 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d). The existence of these discursive-textual dynamics and the existence of paths of polyphonic grammaticalization gathers additional evidence for the inherently dynamic and emergent (Hopper 1987, 2011; Auer 2009; Auer and Pfänder 2011), interactive and dialogic characterization of grammar (Du Bois 2014; Linell 2009; Günthner et al. 2014; Calaresu 2015d), whereby it manifests itself essentially and primarily as grammar of discourse and, only later on, as grammar of the sentence (Calaresu 2018: 508, 509).

### **2.1.1.3 The semantic properties of spoken discourse: low-cost signifying**

The features emerging from the properties we have enlisted so far are also mirrored with the semantic aspects of spoken texts. Redundancy, repetitions, the cumulative employment of discourse markers on a textual level, the cumulating syntax characterized by the sequence of additive portions are elements contributing to the so-called semantic low specification of texts (Voghera 2017: 163).

On a similar way to syntax, also the semantic form of spoken texts is construed step by step, since the speaker is not always wholly committed to the selection of the target words or expressions; rather, she builds the text on-line through the active participation of the interlocutor. A spoken text is always open to adjustments, modifications, changes of intention, and, obviously, open to the hearer's contributions. This does not mean that speaking automatically implies confusion and arbitrariness; on the contrary, speakers are able to reach a good balance between the quantity of information to be transmitted and the construction of a flexible text. Hence, speakers proceed in an incremental way without overloading local meanings, which may result underspecified. Despite such an underspecification, they become perfectly interpretable within the complete communicative event (Chafe 1980; Voghera 2017: 163).

The development of the text reveals how the cooperation between the interlocutors may be crucial since the speaker offers some possible, explicit indications (clues) to the hearer; however, at the same time, she implicitly asks to grasp the global meaning of what is communicated rather than focussing on the single portions. This operation produces a text characterized by low specification, namely a text made up of semantic choices which are approximations to what the speaker has in mind. In other words, we are faced with a process we may define as low-cost signifying (Voghera 2017: 164-165).

This dilution of the propositional content is compatible with the production of specific meanings; in fact, it does not lead to incomprehension. In other words, low cost signifying does not correspond to low or unintelligible content, as we will argue later with respect to the notion of ‘semiotic multimodality’. On the contrary, it corresponds to the strategy that is compatible with face-to-face communication, in that it allows the speaker both to proceed in an incremental way and to maintain a coherent text, despite the possible, external interventions of the receiver.

One of the strategies producing low semantic specification in spoken texts is the employment of words or expressions with a wide functional spectrum. Concerning the lexicon, speakers prefer to use polysemic words. Regarding constructions, speakers tend to employ the ones that can be used in multiple contexts. Such choices derive from the simultaneity between planning and speaking that in turn reduces time to search for words or structures (Voghera 2017: 166-168).

Another important low-cost semantic definition strategy is the usage of vague words or expressions. Vagueness refers to the possibility to formally limit the semantic boundaries of a linguistic expression (Wittgenstein 1953 among many others). Studies on vagueness have focused on the role and on the placement of vagueness as a systemic property of languages, which consists in extending and narrowing down the boundaries of signs. Therefore, studies on vagueness show that semantic boundaries are fuzzy rather than clear-cut (Voghera 2017: 173).

Rather than focusing on systemic vagueness, some other studies have focused on intentional vagueness, i.e., vagueness arising from the speaker’s individual choices (Voghera 2012), as in the following example:

- 2.7) Saranno *tipo* le 7 *così*  
It must be like 7

This utterance presents different degrees of vagueness; thus, the inferential future *saranno* ('it must be') signals that the speaker is simply supposing or inferring and not explicitly asserting with certainty; moreover, the occurrence of *tipo* ('like') indeed signals an approximation to the category '7', by meaning that it must be 7 or something (7:02, 6:53...). Another vagueness device is the usage of the approximation marker *così* ('kind of') at the end of the utterance, which is used to limit the

validity of the utterance (see Ghezzi 2012 for a comprehensive survey on vagueness markers in present-day Italian).

Vagueness arising from the lack of information may also occur at the metalinguistic level, namely, the level pertaining to the difficulty to find the target word or expression. This kind of vagueness may be expressed through different strategies, such as DMs: *se così si può dire, diciamo, per così dire* ('so to say'). They function as hedges signalling a semantic mismatch (Fraser 1996).

So far, we have considered some cases of INFORMATIVE VAGUENESS, that is vagueness referred to the level of propositional content. However, vagueness may be also reconducted to the expression of the speaker's stance or attitude; more specifically, the speaker may not want to overtly declare her commitment to what is said; indeed, she often prefers not to be the *origo* of the speech event in reference to the interlocutor. It may also happen that the speaker does not want to appear as the real author of the words she is uttering. In this way, we are faced with a kind of RELATIONAL VAGUENESS, placed at the pragmatic dimension of the utterance, which is often motivated by the difficulty to establish a given direct relation with what is being said or with the interlocutor (Voghera 2017: 180). The following utterance conveys vagueness in different ways:

- 2.8) [...] la Spagna sta avendo un momento di grandissimo fermento [...] e ho potuto conoscere quest'ambiente di grande voglia di fare eccetera cosa che a noi **forse un pochino** ci viene a mancare (Lip, FE8 -Voghera 2017: 180)  
Spain is going through a moment of great turmoil and I have been able to experience this positive mood like we can take over the world etcetera (a positive mood) we are lacking a bit

Relational vagueness can be directly mirrored with the usage of *forse* ('maybe') plus the diminutive *un pochino* ('a bit') acting as hedges mitigating an evaluative assessment, which could also threaten interlocutors' faces.

The third kind of vagueness which is identified by Voghera (2017: 181) among the main properties of spoken discourse is DISCURSIVE VAGUENESS, which is placed on the textual level. More specifically, it derives from the difficulty imposed by the on-line planning in spontaneous spoken texts. The simultaneity between real-time planning and speaking makes it necessary to produce words functioning as fillers to cover production times without interfering too much with the semantic and syntactic development of the text.

The three kinds of vagueness may co-occur in a given text; moreover, some markers originally expressing informative vagueness may be mobilised to express relational and discursive vagueness (see the taxonomic noun *tipo*). In other words, relational and discursive vagueness may be conveyed through re-functionalization of strategies originally devoted to the expression of informative vagueness (see Traugott 1982 *inter alia*, Voghera 2017: 183).

In addition to all these functions, vagueness may be used to perform social functions. It indeed allows speakers to mitigate the force of some speech acts in order to save hearer's face (Brown and Levinson 1987; Caffi 2007). To conclude, it may be claimed that spoken interaction is the ideal setting where vagueness arises on different levels since it is precisely in the spoken domain that the speaker has to manage the propositional and the social level of communication at the same time (Voghera 2017: 185-186).

### **2.1.2 Meta-comment(s) in spoken discourse: a resource or a performance error?**

When dealing with the properties of spoken mode, Voghera refers several times to the role played in spoken texts by what we define as CCs (see 1.2.4). Firstly, the syntactic organization of spoken text is highly constrained by the co-presence of interlocutors and by the simultaneity between planning and production. Such conditions produce verbal and semiotic discontinuity which, in turn, creates a dynamic syntactic structure, developed in an incremental and additive way through the contribution of all the participants.

In such conditions, for instance, even apparently objective informative texts reveal a subjective and interpersonal dimension, which is traceable in the occurrence of attenuating and epistemic expressions (*non ho idea* 'I have no idea', *penso* 'I think'). The presumably objective report is thus *filtered* by the speaker's perspective; this property mirrors the strong deictic characterization of spoken texts, that are deeply connected to the speaker's stance. Secondly, what we identify as CCs - or markers functionally analogous to CCs - have been claimed to signal different kinds of vagueness ranging from the propositional level to the relational one.

Moreover, the frequent occurrence of generic words seems to favour the emergence of functional elements behaving like comments whose aim is to declare some sort of mismatch or the inadequacy of some content with respect to the speaker's intention (semantic property).

Given such premises, we hypothesise that rather than manifesting themselves as performance errors or redundant fillers, CCs may play a crucial role in spoken discourse, which is properly linked to its textual, syntactic, and semantic properties. In fact, in spoken texts speakers are required to optimise the relation between linearity and syntactic strategies, which may be discontinuous (both on a textual and on a syntactic level) and may hide different hierarchical levels.

More specifically, the additive and discontinuous syntax seems to be the ideal context where CCs may occur given that they are syntactically-detachable fragments by definition, i.e., strategies that may occur ideally in different slots of their hosts. In fact, CCs are not licensed by any rule of syntactic derivation, what makes them functional elements by definition. In addition, as functional elements, CCs are likely to easily perform the function of discursive vagueness which is typical of on-line

productions. In this case, CCs could be used to fill time loadings, which are affected by the simultaneity between planning and performance. In this incremental process of text construction, where discourse relations are often signalled by prosody, we hypothesise that also CCs - along with some DMs identified in the literature - may be used to play a **macro-punctuation** function, which is devoted to signal textual transitions referring to the whole textual architecture of texts (textual correlation).

Finally, based on finite forms of verbs, such devices could be used to express what Voghera defines as one of the main semantic properties of spoken texts, that is, the social function of vagueness, which finds in spoken discourse the ideal context of occurrence. It is properly in spoken interaction that the speaker has to cope with both content at the propositional level and her relationship with the interlocutor (social relations).

### **2.1.3 The Lip Corpus and the KIParla Corpus of spoken Italian: data, registers, samples**

Our analysis is based on two Corpora of spoken Italian collecting data from the last decade (1990-1992) of the twentieth century to nowadays (precisely 2016 to 2019).

The Corpus of the *Lessico di frequenza dell'italiano parlato* (LIP Corpus) was collected in 1990-1992 by a group of linguists under the direction of Tullio De Mauro and was used to collect, in collaboration with IBM Italy, the first frequency dictionary of spoken Italian (De Mauro et al. 1993). It contains 469 texts, which amount to a total of approximately 490,000 words, recorded in four cities (Milan, Florence, Rome, and Naples) and pertaining to five macro-types and numerous subtypes of discourse. The following texts types are collected in the corpus:

**Type A:** bi-directional exchange, face to face, with free turn-taking:

- conversations at home;
- conversations at work;
- conversations at school or at the university;
- conversations during recreation or on means of transport.

**Type B:** bi-directional exchange, not face to face, with free turn-taking:

- normal telephone conversations;
- telephone conversations broadcasted on radio;
- messages recorded by telephone answering machines.

**Type C:** bi-directional exchange, face to face, with regulated turn-taking:

- legislative assemblies;
- cultural discussions;
- assemblies at school;
- labor union assemblies;
- meetings of workers;
- oral exams in the elementary school;
- oral exams in the secondary school;
- oral exams at the university;
- interrogations in the courtroom;
- interviews on radio or television.

**Type D:** unidirectional exchange, with the addressee being present:

- lessons in the elementary school;
- lessons in the secondary school;
- university lectures;
- speeches held during party conventions or labor union meetings;
- presentations at scientific meetings;
- speeches held during electoral campaigns;
- sermons;
- presentations at non-specialist meetings;
- court pleadings.

**Type E:** distanced unidirectional exchange:

- television programs;
- radio programs (De Mauro, Mancini, Vedovelli, Voghera 1993: 35).

The following symbols are retrieved in the transcriptions we comment over the work:

#### **Symbols and notations used in the original version**

- #, ##, ### = short, middle, and long pause
- <?>, <??>, <???> = one, two or more unintelligible words
- sta<te> = reconstructed word
- pe- = word that cannot be reconstructed
- ciao\_ = long final vowel
- [SILENZIO] = extralinguistic comment
- <F>, <f> = phonosymbol

N.B.: Overlapping sequences are aligned vertically. (De Mauro, Mancini, Vedovelli, Voghera 1993: 45-50)

#### **Symbols and notations used in the BADIP version**

- # = pause
- \$ = unintelligible word
- % = unintelligible words
- \* = anchor for a tag

In the Lip Corpus we extracted 2152 CCs spread over **306** texts.

The KIParla Corpus is built with the aim to create an open access resource for the study of present-day spoken Italian, interacting with already existing corpora. The data have been collected in two Italian cities: Bologna and Torino. They were chosen to be complementary with the cities represented in the LIP Corpus, which includes some of the biggest administrative centres in Italy. Torino and Bologna are also consistent with each other from a sociolinguistic perspective, especially for what concerns the relationship between local dialects, regional varieties of Italian and standard Italian. The Corpus collects several types of interaction recorded at university. This allows to define with considerable accuracy the most relevant features of the corpus (Goria and Mauri 2018, Mauri et al. 2019).

The KIParla Corpus involves only speakers of higher social status, such as undergraduate students, graduate students and academic professors. It can hence be characterised as a Corpus of educated

speakers. It contains recordings realised at the University of Torino and Bologna. Therefore, it is characterised by a high level of homogeneity with respect to the socio-demographic features of the speakers (which mirror the highest pole of diastratic variation). In this regard, the Lip Corpus is more diverse by comparison with the KIPParla Corpus. Other social variables are represented such as **age**, **gender** and **region<sup>17</sup>** of origin of the speakers. Concerning the types of interaction, a maximum of heterogeneity has been sought. Several parameters have been regarded as crucial, in particular: the level of formality between the speakers, the planned or unplanned nature of an interaction, the presence of a moderator or of any conventions regulating turn-taking<sup>18</sup>.

The size of the corpus is 70 hours approximately (69h: 23m: 41s), corresponding to 635.325 words. The following typologies of interaction have been considered for KIPParla, based on the already existing grid used for the LIP corpus:

Professor-student interaction during office hours (6h: 48m: 19s n° of texts 24).

Random conversations recorded by in-group members (students and professors) without direct involving of the researcher (16h: 23m: 33s, 31 texts).

Professor-student interaction in oral examinations (6h: 20m: 22s n° of texts: 16).

Academic lessons (6h: 20m: 22s, n° of texts: 17).

Semi-structured interviews collected by students within the peer-group and aimed at the elicitation of oral narratives (14h: 6m: 15s. n° of texts: 32)<sup>19</sup>.

The Corpus is made up of **120** texts. In the KIPParla Corpus we individuated 1971 CCs.

As it can be seen, the Lip Corpus is more varied with respect to the diastratic dimension and with respect to the text types, in that it includes phone calls and distanced unidirectional exchange, which are not included in the KIPParla. Generally, it includes more contexts (such as courtroom etc...). Nonetheless, we decided to analyse the data in a single sample, without distinguishing between their differences. We decided to do so because the two samples are relatively small, therefore we intend to

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<sup>17</sup> Information on the participant school region available here:

[http://151.236.39.174/bonito/run.cgi/wordlist?corpname=KIP;wlmaxitems=1000;wlattr=annotation.participant\\_school\\_region;wlminfreq=1;include\\_nonwords=1;wlsort=f;wlnums=docf](http://151.236.39.174/bonito/run.cgi/wordlist?corpname=KIP;wlmaxitems=1000;wlattr=annotation.participant_school_region;wlminfreq=1;include_nonwords=1;wlsort=f;wlnums=docf).

<sup>18</sup> Each identification code of the Corpus may be divided in three meaningful parts:

the first two letters refer to the place where the data have been collected, i.e., BO (Bologna) or TO (Torino).

The letter and the next number identify the type of interaction; the letters have been chosen based on the Lip model, and they indicate the type of interaction: A = bi-directional exchange, face to face, with free turn-taking; C = bi-directional exchange, face to face, with regulated turn-taking; D= unidirectional exchange, with the addressee being present. Finally, the numbers describe the different types of interaction with respect to the different types of interaction specifically for the KIPParla Corpus, i.e., A1 = office hours, A3 = random conversation; C1 = examinations; D1 = lessons; D2 = interviews. The last three numbers represent a rising value which is useful exclusively for the single recordings with similar features.

<sup>19</sup> More information on the Corpus available at:

[http://151.236.39.174/bonito/run.cgi/corp\\_info?corpname=KIP&struct\\_attr\\_stats=1&subcorpora=1](http://151.236.39.174/bonito/run.cgi/corp_info?corpname=KIP&struct_attr_stats=1&subcorpora=1)

make statistical analyses comparing them when the KIParla will be complemented by additional data. Moreover, the Corpora have been collected with about 25 years of difference and the data have been collected using similar categories.

In presenting the data retrieved in the KIParla Corpus, we will use the Jefferson transcription mode available in the Corpus KIParla on-line and displayed below (Mauri et al. 2019):

**Figure 2. 1 Signs used in the transcription based on Jefferson (2004)**

,	Raising intonation
.	Falling intonation
:	Prolonged sound (each : corresponds to ca. 20ms)
(.)	Short pause
> hello <	Bracketed speech is delivered more rapidly
<hello>	Bracketed speech is delivered more slowly
[hello]	Overlap between participants
(hello)	Hardly intelligible speech (transcriber's best guess)
xxx	Unintelligible speech
((laughs))	Non-verbal behavior
=	Prosodically attached units

## 2.2 The annotation scheme for spoken discourse

In the following Sections, we will explain the parameters used to classify the discourse profile of CCs, by discussing several examples. The translation of the meaning of CCs is not always literal; rather, sometimes CCs are translated with very distant devices in order to make clear the function they perform in context.

### 2.2.1 Distributional parameters

#### 2.2.1.1 Comment clause host mood

At least two facts support the classification of CCs' behaviour: its position within the host clause and the illocution expressed by the utterance hosting the CC. Rather than the illocutionary force expressed by the CCs' host, we decided to classify what we define as **host mood**, which is not always compatible with the notion of speech act. As shown in the previous section, CCs may be hosted by elliptical or verbless hosts, for which it is difficult to identify an illocution in classical terms (see Austin or Searle classifications of speech acts). Therefore, we decided to classify the *intention* behind the host, regardless of its syntactic realization. In other words, we decided to *ad hoc* classify the intention of CCs by employing some categories such as interrogation and evaluative assessment.

As often recognised in the literature on the properties of the spoken discourse, a rather high and non-predictable set of functions may correspond to just one type of sentence, that is, different types of utterances (*enunciato* - i.e. assertions, requests, questions, and so forth). In a similar vein, the very same linguistic action may be carried out by different types of sentences, which can receive different

interpretations based on a specific context. For instance, an assertion may be expressed in different ways, i.e., by a declarative assertion ("You are really boring") and - indirectly - by an interrogative sentence ("Don't you think you are kind of boring?"). Moreover, according to Albano Leoni (2009: 49, 50), in languages like Italian, the role of transmitting grammatical senses which are linked to the modality of an utterance is assigned to prosody, especially when the utterance is not marked by specific morphological means.

Given that the usages and their possible contextual interpretations are potentially countless, the level of precision and detail in labelling and describing the linguistic actions and functions may be more or less exhaustive and may be also creative and innovative (see Calaresu 2016).

Throughout this research, the classification of the host mood has been operationalized as follows:

ASSERTION: basic assertion without any positive or negative evaluation

- 2.9) EP\_BO119: ti trovi bene qua in tutto e per tutto **diciamo** (KIParla, BOD2017)  
EP\_BO119: You feel good here through and through **let's say**.

HYPOTHESIS: potential State of affairs, dependent on the realization of another State of affairs

- 2.10) GP\_BO014: se ci fossero piu' **non so** circoli culturali o cose un po' diverse magari si'.  
(KIParla BOD2001)  
GP\_BO014: If there were more **I don't know** cultural circles or other different things maybe yes, think I'd go.
- 2.11) **voglio dire** se anche prendi ventotto invece di trenta fai la seconda annualità e prendi trenta non è che capisci non è che tanto la seconda annualità poi la devi fare se vuoi fare la tesi in cinema (Lip, MC8)  
**I mean** if you even get twenty-eight instead of thirty, you can always do the second exam and take thirty; it is not you know, no matters what, you have to make the second exam if you want to defend the thesis in cinematography

EVALUATIVE ASSESSMENT: assertion filtered by the speaker's evaluation

- 2.12) FI\_TO039: ma perche' in realta' il problema gro:sso::, e' con=eh il formaggio crudo:: **Devo dire** con quello cotto::, [(.) fa] cagare le robe che [(metti) nel toast] (KIParla TOA3004)  
FI\_TO039: But actually the real problem is with the raw cheese **I must say** as for the baked one I don't like the stuff you put in the toast
- 2.13) RG\_BO053: la mia vita::: da studente non e':::  
RG\_BO053: **diciamo** non e' delle migliori, [...] (KIParla, BOD2008)  
RG\_BO053: My student life is not **let's say** is not that exciting
- 2.14) AB\_BO002: **guarda** e' molto carino lui (.) secondo me (KIParla, BOA3001)  
AB\_BO002: **Well, look** as for me he is very nice

INTERROGATION: question aimed at eliciting an answer

- 2.15) PT\_BO087: [no ris]petto a ma:rca, **dico** questo e' il titolo de[lla rivista (.) questo? (KIParla, BOC1002)

PT\_BO087: No, with respect to marker **I mean** is this the journal name?

- 2.16) EP\_BO119: e::: **ascolta** pensi:: di rimanere:: comunque qua anche dopo la laurea o pensi di cambiare citta'? (KIParla, BOD2017)  
EP\_BO119: Ehm **listen**, you think you will remain here also after getting your degree or do you plan to move on?

REQUEST: an indirect directive, not overtly signalled by imperative mood

- 2.17) CC\_BO104: va bene **senti** allora io:, direi che per questa parte ci possiamo: fermare. (KIParla, BOC1005)  
CC\_BO104OK **listen**, so I I'd say that we can stop now

DIRECTIVE: a request explicitly encoded by the imperative mood

- 2.18) MC\_TO026: intervenga un po' in questa direzione **direi**. no? (KIParla, TOA1001)  
MC\_TO026 Modify the chapter in the way we've just arranged **I'd say**, don't you?

### 2.2.1.2 Patterns of co-occurrence

We will try to classify another distributional aspect, namely the co-occurrence between CCs and other markers such as discourse markers, connectives, hesitation markers, false starts, repetitions. Some co-occurrences may shed light on the CCs functions and on the development of some possible patterns of DMs dyads. Additionally, the co-occurrence between CCs and disfluency phenomena may shed light on the functions of CCs as discursive vagueness markers. CCs may co-occur with<sup>20</sup>:

#### HESITATION MARKERS

- 2.19) NM\_BO121: questo centro sociale,  
NM\_BO121: di un paese vicino al mio e' stato:: **diciamo**  
NM\_BO121: aperto e creato da **e:::h** dei raga- da un collettivo di ragazzi (KIParla, BOD2017)  
NM\_BO121: This community club of this small town near my home has been **let's say mh** opened up and set up by **ehm** some gu- by a collective of some guys

#### FALSE STARTS

- 2.20) AC\_BO003: [cioe'] farei le sclerate [**mol- credo**]  
[...]  
AC\_BO003: [maga]ri non con lui perche' (.) io le faccio sempre: i- in privata sede  
AC\_BO003: pero' a casa ci starei male [da sola] (KIParla, BOA3001)  
AB\_BO003: I mean, I'd make a fuss **muc-** **I think** I mean maybe not to him because I usually make scenes pr- privately

#### DISCOURSE MARKERS

- 2.21) CC\_BO104: **allora senti** ti vorrei chiedere di, parlare di valutazione.. (KIParla, BOC1005)

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<sup>20</sup> Co-occurring devices are in italics.

CC\_BO104: **well, listen** I'd like to ask you to tell me something about evaluation parameters

- 2.22) AB\_BO021: no ma p-. piu' che altro **cioe' voglio dire**

AB\_BO021: tutti quanti oram-, cioe'

AB\_BO021: tutti i miei coinquilini da quattro anni a questa parte hanno imparato che io la mattina mi ascolto la mia sfaccinma di radio, AB\_BO021: che mi metto con le cuffiette e non sento niente di quello che mi succede intorno (KIParla, BOA3004)

AB\_BO021: No, but m- mostly, **that is, I mean** all - all of my flatmates have been realizing over the last four years that every morning I listen to my fucking radio, I wear my headphones and don't give a shit about the rest

## CONNECTIVES

- 2.23) GG\_BO095: **ma guarda** riuscissi a dormire un po' di piu' io sarei contenta (KIParla, BOA3012)

GG\_BO095: **But look/believe me** I'd be happy to sleep a bit more

### 2.2.1.3 Irrealis status of co(n)text (only for epistemic CCs)

Concerning intrinsically epistemic and evidential CCs, such as *penso* ('I think'), *credo* (I believe), *mi sa* ('it seems to me'), we identify another distributional feature, which is the *irrealis* status of CCs hosts. Our aim is to detect whether the CC is the only device devoted to the expression of epistemicity. The *irrealis* status of CCs hosts is studied by monitoring the occurrence of devices such as subjunctives, directives, futures, psychological predicates, and epistemic adverbs.

By looking at the position of the CC and the *irrealis* status of the context, we will try to evaluate the semantic detachability of CCs; such aspect pertains to the relationship between CCs and DMs. If a CC is the only strategy to express epistemicity, the CC will be more likely to function as a modal marker and, therefore, it will be more difficult to classify it as a semantically-dispensable DM. In the following examples, some *irrealis* devices found in our data are presented:

- 2.24) CC\_BO104: d'accordo noi ne **avremo penso** per una ventina di minuti (KIParla, BOC1005) → FUTURE

CC\_BO104: OK we will finish **I think** into about twenty minutes

- 2.25) GP\_BO014: se ci fossero piu' **non so** circoli culturali o cose un po' diverse magari si'. (KIParla BOD2001) → SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

GP\_BO014: If there were more **I don't know** cultural circles or other different things maybe yes, think I'd go.

- 2.26) VL\_BO046: **si saranno asciugati direi** (KIParla, BOA3004) → EPISTEMIC FUTURE

VL\_BO046: the jeans must be dry now **I'd say**

- 2.27) PP\_BO115: per il momento:: pero' **penso** mi prendero' una par- una pausa imparero' bene il tedesco. in germania. (KIParla, BOA3015) → FUTURE

PP\_BO115: But now **I think** I'll have a br- a break, I'll learn German in Germany

2.28) VC\_BO033: mentre lo stage three **magari** analizza::

[...]

VC\_BO033: **non so**. cose piu' culturali, storiche italiane,

VC\_BO033: e::: e anche:: esercizi di grammatica o: questionari: o, (KIParla BOA1005)

VC\_BO033: Whereas stage n° 3 maybe analyses **I don't know** more cultural/historical Italian stuff and also grammar exercises, or questionnaires *magari* (maybe) → LEXICAL MEANS

2.29) MC\_TO026: [si'.] ma **magari**, (.) e:::h tra i riferimenti che le avevo dato, c'e' anche quel volume (.) e:::h nel quale trova il saggio di fusco, un volume curato da: neuland **mi pare**, (KIParla, TOA1001) → magari: LEXICAL MEANS

MC\_TO026: Yes but maybe ehm among those references I gave to you there is also that volume ehm where you can find the essay by Fusco, that is a volume edited by Neuland, **it seems to me**

## 2.2.2 Syntactic parameters: establishing the position of comment clauses

This Section describes the syntactic parameters taken into account to classify the **position** of the CCs under examination. Firstly, we will present the model of classification of CCs occurring in microsyntax (2.2.2.1), namely, the component useful to establish the position of CCs hosted by sentences which follow the rules of syntactic dependency, without needing a notion of communicative acceptability. In fact, such acceptability is crucial to define the position of CCs hosted by utterances which show the peculiarities of spoken discourse syntax, thus residing on a notion of communicative acceptability (2.2.2.2).

### 2.2.2.1 Microsyntax and grammatical acceptability

The distribution of CCs in spoken discourse may follow the rules of microsyntax; in other words, the CC may definitely occur between verbal heads and their arguments or in the left / right periphery of “well-formed” sentences. There are sentences whose interpretation does not require the access to the more global macrosyntactic level, in that dependency relations between verbal heads and arguments, and prepositions subcategorization frames are respected (plainly saturated). Contrarily, microsyntax (compare to ‘microgrammar’ in Haselow’s 2017 terminology) is a serialisation principle that refers to the formal means employed by speakers to structure a unit of talk based on internal hierarchisation, embedding, constituency, and mutual dependency relations. The outcome is a syntactic unit in which all elements, which may be described as constituent types, form an integrated whole from a morphosyntactic perspective (Haselow 2016, 2017).

Morphosyntactic integration is based on dependency relations, which are always binary, that is, in microgrammar each constituent is always morphosyntactically related to at least one other constituent in a hierarchical relationship (Haselow 2016: 82). Rather, macrogrammar (in our terms macrosyntax) arises from the various cognitive tasks that the speaker must handle in specific points in time in the linear production of an utterance, such as getting the addressee’s attention, gaining planning time,

allocating a unit of talk in emerging discourse, or modifying various aspects of the content expressed in a microgrammatical unit, such as its epistemic value or illocutionary force. Linguistic structure is thus conceived as a temporal phenomenon (Auer, 2009; Hopper, 2011; Deppermann and Günthner, 2015), the flow of speech in time being a continuous transition from one task to another and thus structured on a principle of relevance (Haselow 2016: 82).

Under the parameter of microsyntax we will make a distinction between **medial (intersecting)** and **initial/final position**. We intend to distinguish between the case in which the CC occurs in medial position, namely within the domain of dependency and, on the other hand, the occurrence outside the dependency domain, both before the verbal head dependency (left periphery) and after it (right periphery). We will adopt Degand's (2014) model of periphery.

**Figure 2. 2** Degand's model of left and right periphery (2014)

Ex.	Turn initial	Utterance initial	Utterance medial			Utterance final	Turn-final		
			Clause initial	Clause medial					
1		alors	on	avait donné rendez-vous à un à un autre endroit		aux aux parents			
			we	had arranged to meet up somewhere else		with the parents			
2		donc	je	voyais encore		Cédric			
			so	I was still seeing		Cédric			
3		et donc	i/ on	avait un trou		entre euh / enfin tu vois midi et cinq heures			
			LP clause RP						

Degand (2014: 155)

For the purposes of our work, we will not differentiate strictly between turn-initial and utterance-initial positions as Degand does. Within the distribution of the CC in the host clause, we only distinguish between initial/final position on the one hand and medial, on the other hand. When the

CC interrupts the sentence outside the domain of clausal dependency<sup>21</sup>, we classify such behaviour as initial or final position.

Let us discuss some examples, which may be classified in terms of microsyntax.

In the following case, the CC occurs in initial position, namely in the left periphery, that is outside the verbal dependency domain and before its arguments<sup>22</sup>:

- 2.30) **mi sa** stasera non ci inviteranno a cena (Lip, RA4)  
It seems to me tonight they will not invite us for dinner

In the following example, on the contrary, the CC occurs after the dependency structure, namely in the right periphery (or, in final position) of the utterance:

- 2.31) ho scoperto gli anziani forse un tantino prima di arrivarc per eh ragioni naturali **direi** (Lip, MD17)  
I discovered the category of old people just a little bit before getting older for natural reasons I'd say

In the following examples, the CC occurs in **medial** position, often interrupting the verbal head and the arguments of dependency. Medial position may be subcategorized in various ways, in that it may be i) PHRASE-LIMITED, ii) DEPENDENCY ARGUMENTS-LIMITED or iii) INTERCLAUSAL RELATIONS-LIMITED. Let us start by considering phrasal relations interruptions:

- 2.32) CC\_BO104: quindi pensa ai test certificati:vi, che vengono::: **diciamo** somministrati in: (.) numerose migliaia, (KIParla, BOC1007)  
CC\_BO104: Therefore, think of tests which are done let's say in several thousands

- 2.33) LD\_TO022: quindi ogni determinata casta, deve raggiungere determinati: (.) **possiamo dire** obiettivi.  
(KIParla, TOC1006)  
LD\_TO022: So every caste needs to reach we might say certain aims

- 2.34) ne avevamo già parlato magari in momenti eh **diciamo così** meno formali (Lip, RE9)  
We had talked about that maybe in let's say less formal moments

- 2.35) SB\_TO017: e un caso direi, SB\_TO017: esemplare ce l'abbiamo davanti in questo momento. io. (KIParla, TOD1005)  
SB\_TO017: And this I'd say model sample is provided by me right now

- 2.36) SZ\_BO103: e perche' nella, e::hm::=nella:: nell'oroscopo, **credo**, cinese,  
SZ\_BO103: e::h la quinta casa, e' la casa dell'amore. (KIParla, BOD1010)  
SZ\_BO103: And because ehm in the- in the I think Chinese horoscope eh the fifth house is the love house

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<sup>21</sup> That is, after conjuncts, for example.

<sup>22</sup> It is considered as a case of micro-initial position also the case in which the comment clause precedes a (main) clause which is in turn followed by a subordinate or a coordinate clause.

- 2.37) MC\_BO086: io non non so se sono appassionata cosi' tanto, da rinunciare ad alcune (.) **non so** sicurezze, tranquillita'. (KIParla, BOA3015)  
 MC\_BO086: I don't know whether I am passionate to the point to give up **I don't know** some comfort zone

As the examples show, within the domain of medial position, we may trace a specific syntactic position of the CC, which we define as ‘**INTERRUPTING THE PHRASE POSITION**’. It seems a crucial parameter for the study of CCs, which may interrupt very close relations, such as the one occurring between the head and its modifiers in a phrase. For example, in (2.33), the CC phrasal scope is signalled by positioning the CC *possiamo dire* (‘we might say’) within the NP *determinati obiettivi* (‘certain aims’), namely between the modifier and its head; again, the CC occurs within the VP in example (2.32), where the CC interrupts the contiguity between the auxiliary and the main verb. In these cases, the CC interrupts the smallest unit of syntax, by separating the most elementary syntactic constituents to the point that no other segmentation may be made between such elements.

Let us now move on the study of some other values of the parameter of medial position, namely the classification of those cases in which the CC interrupts the dependency relations:

- 2.38) c'è **poni** lo scaffale di inglesi (Lip, MB4)  
 There is **just suppose**/for example the shelf of English literature books
- 2.39) può sorgere tra noi **diciamo** il problema delle eh delle stragi (Lip, RE9)  
 It may raise to between us **let us say** the problems of the eh of the massacres

In a similar vein, medial position includes the position of CC inserted between the items of a list (of phrases), as in the following cases:

- 2.40) tu ti sei mangiato la verdura la frutta e **che so** un piatto di legumi magari avresti voglia di qualcos'altro (Lip, RA2)  
 You ate the fruit the vegetables and **what do I know/for example** a plate of legumes maybe you'd like something else
- 2.41) questa battaglia [...] viene condotta [...] non su\_ # cose fumose o\_ # **diciamo** tatticismi di\_ di bassa lega (Lip, RE9)  
 This battle [...] is conducted [...] Not on \_ # smoky things or \_ # **let's say** the shoddiest kind of tactics

Medial position comprises cases in which the CC interrupts **interclausal** relations (Kaltenböck 2005):

- 2.42) arriveranno nuovi veicoli che **dicevo** andranno in aumento (Lip, FA12)  
 lit. Will arrive new vehicles which **I was saying** whose number will grow  
 New vehicles will arrive and **I was saying** their number will grow
- 2.43) Era il primo **mi sa** che aveva avuto questa intuizione (Lip, FC6)

lit. It was the first leader **it seems to me** who had had this intuition

- 2.44) hai fatto poi uno sforzo notevole che **vedrai** non è da buttare via (Lip, FC6)  
You made then a remarkable effort that **you'll see** is not useless

- 2.45) è questo che **diciamo** che vorrei evitare (Lip, FC6)  
That's what **let's say** what I'd like to avoid

- 2.46) sarà presente anche La Valle che **mi dici** ha parlato stamattina (Lip, MC9)  
Even La Valle will be attending who **you say to me** intervened this morning

- 2.47) Anche nella logica del tipo di intervento che eh **diciamo** il volontariato [...] può e deve mettere in moto (Lip, FD16)  
Even in the logic of the type of intervention that eh **let's say** the voluntary service [...] can and must guarantee

- 2.48) consentire il recupero delle necessarie provviste finanziarie per affrontare il problema che **ripeto** appare non particolarmente importante a coloro i quali non hanno bisogno [...] (Lip, ND6)  
(We need) to allow the recovery of the necessary financial provisions to address the problem which I **repeat** appears not particularly important to those who do not need [...]

In 2.42) through 2.48), the CC occurs on the level of clausal complementation. In fact, the CC is placed in between the noun and its subordinate relative clause, often after the relative element (Kaltenböck 2005: 69). Such position of the CC reveals a deep interrupting force, which may extend beyond the domain of internal verbal dependency slots.

Notwithstanding, it is not always simple to identify the position of the CCs **within the domain of microsyntax**, namely when the former is hosted by well-formed sentences. Consider the following examples:

- 2.49) sì dice però non è:: roba **diciamo** non te non è allarmante insomma (Lip, RB7)  
Yes, someone said however it is not stuff **let's say** don't be it is not worrying I mean

We classify these cases as instances of **interrupted position, left periphery and insertion of a false start** (*non è allarmante* is the host of *diciamo*, consider then that the sentence is re-uttered and it is perfectly grammatical). Let us consider now the following examples:

- 2.50) va bè che quello **me sà** quello una volta a settimana visita qua (Lip, RB7)  
Ok it does not matter (since) that one (the doctor) **it seems to me** that one once a week sees the patients here
- 2.51) fornendo eh una serie di servizi che fossero così una risposta anche a eh **non so** ecco una serie di attivita' che la le persone che lavorano non la possono sviluppare (Lip, RE8)  
By providing a range of services that can be a solution also to eh **for example** a series of activities that people who work cannot undertake

Whereas we will consider cases as the one in 2.49) as instances of left periphery (initial position in microsyntactic component), in 2.50) and in 2.51), the position is medial. In fact, whereas in 2.49) the speaker does not complete her first utterance, in the other two examples, the speaker concludes the sentence: this is a clue pointing to the interrupting force of the CCs under examination.

In the following section, we will exemplify the classification of CCs occurring in syntactically “defective” contexts, which are governed by rules of communicative acceptability rather than grammatical acceptability.

### 2.2.2.2 Syntactic parameters: macrosyntax and the notion of communicative acceptability

As anticipated, the syntax of spoken discourse does not always follow the principles of syntactic linearity and adjacency (see 2.1.1.2); in some cases, syntax may be elliptical and discontinuous. Thus, segmental markers which make logical relations explicit may be omitted or some portions of the texts may be missing. Hence, they have to be inferred from the immediate cotext<sup>23</sup>. Therefore, some structures require a reference to macrosyntax, i.e., a level of syntax encompassing a notion of communicative acceptability, rather than grammatical acceptability.

When studying the syntax of spoken discourse, we need to answer a question. What exactly is the relationship between syntactic frames and the units into which we can segment spoken discourse? We could consider discourse as a concatenation of utterances. This claim would imply that the building blocks of discourse, or in other words, the utterances, are necessarily formed by syntactic units, namely clauses, phrases, or single words (Debaisieux 2016: 86).

Let us start by the most intuitive unit of speech, namely the sentence. The key definition of sentence often relies on a concept of autonomy: the sentence is in fact claimed to be an “independent sequence” containing **at least a verbal predicate**. However, autonomy and predicate are not salient enough notions to analyse the syntactic structure of spoken interaction (Blanche-Benveniste 2003: 54-55). Linking the concept of sentence to a part of speech (the verb constituting the predicate) and to the notion of autonomy is difficult, as is shown by the existence of verbless sentences. Also, this definition seems problematic if one takes into consideration the apparent status of some subordinate clauses which may occur without a given host, as it will be seen in the following paragraphs. Even if the sentence has been defined through the principle of autonomy, it must be recognised that non-autonomous sentences do indeed exist (see Voghera 2017). The contradiction arises from the

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<sup>23</sup> This can be due to the fact that in spoken discourse, the previous co(n)text is both a restriction and a resource for building a next turn. It may justify specific choices of formulation in action formation. It provides presuppositions of previously accomplished meanings, linguistic and interactional structures, which can be exploited as common ground to build on (Deppermann and Günthner 2015: 3). Moreover, prior linguistic context supplies “structural latencies” (Auer 2015), which can be built upon for anaphora (cf. also Hopper 2015), or which can be re-indexed by anaphorical means, such as pronouns, substitution, repetition and reformulation (Deppermann and Günthner 2015: 4).

impossibility of identifying a grammatical part of speech - the verbal construction - with the autonomous or non-autonomous status that this construction acquires within a concrete utterance (Blanche-Benveniste 2003: 55). Therefore, it stands to reason that autonomy is not a grammatical property.

The actual units that speakers use to convey messages to their addressees go far well beyond a restricted amount of “well-formed”, autonomous sentences which have been identified in the literature. Listeners also accept messages that would appear devoid of syntactic units. Some of them remain phonetic segments, such as interjections or onomatopoeias. Other messages have no phonetic content and consist of what we may define as communicative behaviours, such as facial expressions and gestures. The last kind of units are made of discourse units with no symbolic form at all. They comprise pieces of meaning derived by inferences from what has been previously said by the speaker (Debaisieux 2016: 86).

Several utterances which seem to reveal some kind of speaker’s disfluency are in fact fully accepted (and processed) by the participants of an ordinary conversation (Debaisieux and Deulofeu 2001: 69, Voghera 2010, 2017). Spoken conversation is then characterized by a number of unfinished sentences, verbless utterances and “ill-formed” grammatical constructions (see the notion of verbal discontinuity).

Despite the frequent occurrence of such “ill-formed” expressions, spoken conversation works well. This apparent inconsistency may be explained by the fact that some linguists base their judgments of well-formedness of utterances on their **grammatical structure** (dependency relations between verbal heads and arguments, prepositions subcategorization frames), whereas in spontaneous conversation, speakers rely on **communicative** units, which are not necessarily made up of grammatically well-formed units.

Linguists may happen to project properties typical of the written domain on spoken language structure. More specifically, this happens because they assume that the basic speech units necessarily need to obey the structural requirement of grammatical well-formedness, as presupposed for formal and/or written styles; in this way, the utterances usually expressed in speech appear incomplete to them. However, as already underlined by Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations*, there is not only one way/means to obtain an efficient communication. Employing more specific signs does not necessarily guarantee more efficient communication (see Voghera 2017: 201). Linguistic elements appear underspecified on a metalinguistic criterion rather than on a linguistic one. Postulating a single model of sentence or proposition is an unnecessary grammatical constraint, since it contradicts the communicative reality (Wittgenstein 1953).

In order to classify some of the syntactic positions of CCs in speech we will exploit the notion of macrosyntax as pursued by Debaisieux (2013, 2016) for the analysis of spoken French.

The basic assumption of a macrosyntactic approach to the study of spoken texts is that the linguistic aspects of fluency include two distinct notions (or levels), which are generally not distinguished when taking into account the analysis of spoken data: a traditional notion of **GRAMMATICAL ACCEPTABILITY** of utterances<sup>24</sup> and a *new* notion that will be assumed in this work both on interactional and on structural grounds, namely **COMMUNICATIVE ACCEPTABILITY** (Debaisieux and Deulofeu 2001: 69).

As previously mentioned, many judgments of disfluency about utterances are in fact judgments on grammatical acceptability and not on communicative acceptability. Whereas the rules of **microsyntax** define the well-formedness conditions of grammatical constructions, strictly understood as the projections of lexical heads - whose interpretation is componential - the rules of **macrosyntax** define the well-formedness conditions of other types of units from which an utterance can be made up of, which are the **communicative units**.

Basically, communicative units are defined as the integration of verbal and mimogestual elements which are interpreted by non-componential semantic rules (Debaisieux and Deulofeu 2001: 70). Speakers not only rely on the elements of the communicative situation but exploit other communicative modalities such as facial mimics, gestures, and proxemics (Voghera 2010: 79; Debaisieux 2016: 86). Through these strategies, the speaker produces a sort of *comment* of the verbal sequence and adds meaning, which becomes part of the global sense (Voghera 2010: 78,79). Therefore, this allows communication to simultaneously act on multiple levels. All these factors are so relevant that face-to-face communication is usually defined as multimodal communication (see Calaresu 2016).

If we move from the sentence to the communicative unit as a basic syntactic structural unit, and if we consider that well-formed grammatical relations are one possible but not obligatory way in which communicative units can be realized, we can solve the problem of the study of syntax of spoken constructions that could sound ill-formed (or ungrammatical) to some extent: structurally well-formed communicative units can be indeed either complete or incomplete grammatical constructions (Debaisieux and Deulofeu 2001: 70).

Although spoken interaction may mirror the rules of syntax in the narrow sense (microsyntax), in other cases, it is necessary and possible to capture the combinatorial regularities of discourse units into a separate component of linguistic description (macrosyntax) and to articulate these regularities

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<sup>24</sup> According to Blanche-Benveniste (2003: 59), grammatical dependencies are characterised by three essential properties (the scope of verbal modality, the organization into paradigms, and the syntagmatic modulations).

with the rules of syntax in the narrow sense (microsyntax) in order to describe adequately the way in which messages are processed in ordinary face-to-face, spoken conversation (Debaisieux 2016: 86).

Let us consider the following example:

- 2.52) des cabines téléphoniques vous en avez là sur la place ou (Debaisieux & Deulofeu 2001: 69)  
(Phone boxes, you have got some here in the square?)

In this example, it is difficult to understand what kind of grammatical function could be fulfilled by the NP *des cabines téléphoniques* with respect to the following utterance and which kind of syntactic link may be traced out between the two units. Notwithstanding, communication works well. In other words, speakers “consider” as perfectly acceptable communicative acts (utterances) which are clearly grammatically ill-formed or missing some logical linking devices. To sum up, spoken interaction is characterized by examples of successful communication in spite of grammatical ill-formedness or irregularity. In the next Section, we will propose some parameters to study the position of the comment clause by applying the insights of macrosyntactic theory to the aims of our study.

#### 2.2.2.2.1 Informatively coherent and syntactically “ill-formed” utterances

Sometimes CCs occur in between some informative blocks that are not clearly interconnected through syntactic links. Notwithstanding, between them a semantic link may be obviously traced on a communicative level, as in the following examples:

- 2.53) A: vi viene in mente qualche evento particolare che si svolge tutti gli anni a Stoccolma \*  
B: Le Olimpiadi **mi sembra** a Stoccolma (Lip, FC5)  
A: Do you remember any event happening every year in Stockholm?  
B: The Olympic Games **it seems to me** in Stockholm
- 2.54) Geografia **mi sa** ancora niente (Lip, RD4)  
Geography **it seems to me** nothing (she has not done the exam)
- 2.55) come uomini **diciamo** dai fino ai trentott'anni quaranta (Lip, FE15)  
As men **let's say** from 38 to 40 years old
- 2.56) la maggioranza **direi** celibe # i separati i divorziati sono minoranze (Lip, FE15)  
Most **I would say** celibate # separated divorced men are minorities

Throughout these sentences, the CC occurs in between two communicative blocks which are simply juxtaposed; we may hypothesise that this category of cases resembles what Debaisieux and Deulofeu (2001: 71) term “Prefix-Nucleus structure”, the prefix is, generally, an NP interpreted as the entity about which the content of the nucleus is asserted. Prefix and nucleus are not syntactically linked: no verbal head is provided between them. The macrosyntactic component is completely

responsible of the syntactic “togetherness” (or *predicativity* in Voghera’s terms) between the prefix and the nucleus. Notwithstanding, the communication works well; they do not provoke any accident in the communicative flow. In fact, we cannot trace any reactions, such as clearing up requests or hesitation markers, showing difficulties in comprehension (Debaisieux and Deulofeu 2001: 70). We are faced with what Voghera (2017: 119) defines as *clausole senza verbo dirematiche* - where one can easily recognize a subject often expressed through an NP and a predication. The property holding the two blocks together is *predicativity*.

The close correlation between the informative function and (syntactic) structuring of the sentences we can see in the examples above (Ferrari 2012; Lambrecht 1994; Lombardi Vallauri 2002) is a widespread recognised fact in linguistics, both in functional and in formal approaches. The informative dimension as a dialogic mechanism of hypothesis (guesswork) of the speaker with respect to the shared knowledge with the interlocutor is, in fact, generally recalled or at least hinted at in the best and updated descriptive grammars with respect to the different types of marked sentence (Calaresu 2016).

In addition to the occurrence between prefix (or subject) and nucleus (or predicate), the CC may also precede an utterance containing the two blocks, namely prefix and nucleus, which are then expressed *after* the CC, as in the following example:

- 2.57) **senti** [ma le società specialistiche] [praticamente quasi nessuna ci ha dato ancora i relatori] (Lip, NA2)  
Listen though the specialized companies essentially almost none has provided us with the speakers’ names yet

We will classify such position as initial in macrosyntactic terms, since the CC host is an utterance (not specifically a sentence in syntactic terms) whose interpretation is based on rules of macrosyntax (namely, communicative efficiency). In the next paragraph, we will discuss in detail a frequent pattern linked to the syntax of spoken texts, namely the occurrence of the CC with syntactically “defective” structures.

#### **2.2.2.2 The distribution of comment clause: verbless hosts, insubordinate hosts and juxtaposed hosts**

In the previous Section, we have already observed an instance of macrosyntax, namely the case in which CC occurs in verbless sentences which Voghera terms as *dirematiche*, where the only linking device is based on the informativeness holding the two blocks together. In spoken interaction, another frequent structure is represented by one argument verbless hosts, namely hosts whose verbal head is not expressed thus making the resulting construction reside on a notion of *predicativity*, which is

placed on functional rather than on formal grounds. Even if they do not present a clear predication, quantitative analyses have shown that verbless utterances are frequent in conversation (see Voghera 2010, 2017: 116, 117). What we define as verbless hosts are structures which share the property of being perfectly interpretable and syntactically independent. In these cases, the CC only occurs with one argument<sup>25</sup> of the unexpressed verbal head; consider the following examples:

- 2.58) A: mamma vuoi sape' 'ndo dormiamo  
 B: **mi sembra** all'hotel Cento Stelle (Lip, FA1)  
 A: mommy, do you want to know where we will sleep?  
 A: **It seems to me** at the Cento Stelle Hotel
- 2.59) A: Ma cosa sono?  
 B: **Mi pare** i favolosi (Lip, FA1)  
 A: But what are they?  
 B: **It seems to me** i favolosi
- 2.60) B: ma tu non sai chi chi ci hai di fisica?  
 A: **pare** XYZ (Lip, RB3)  
 B. don't you know the name of your physics teacher?  
 A: **it seems** XYZ

Throughout these occurrences, the speaker omits the verbal head, probably because in spoken interaction some functional elements may be omitted without leading to misunderstandings (Blanche-Benveniste 2003). These structures correspond to what Simone (1995) terms *clausole replica* (reply clauses), i.e., structures that do not contain a verb and that can be considered as elliptical.

This process of *underspecification*<sup>26</sup> may also reveal itself in the omission of some functional words - such as prepositions or connectives - from the host, as in the following examples, where the relationship between the phrase and the omitted head must be recovered from the context as well:

- 2.61) sarebbe anche molto interessante per noi me **credo** per altri compagni (Lip, RC3)  
 It would be also very interesting for us me **I think** for other Members of the Party

In this occurrence, the connective *e* ‘and’ is omitted and the logical relation that is held between the two arguments of the list *me* (‘me’) and *compagni* (‘mates’) must be inferred or recovered from the immediate co(n)text.

The parameter is also employed to classify utterances as the following one:

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<sup>25</sup> Sometimes it may occur with an adjunct; however, we won't enter into the details of the distinction. We simply want to underline that the speaker leaves the thematic information implicit since it may be derived from the immediate context.

<sup>26</sup> According to Albano Leoni, it is not the case that speech is underspecified. It is rather written domain that is overspecified. See also Voghera (2017: 201-202).

2.62) Il movimento **penso** l'occupazione pone una domanda (Lip, RC3)

The community **I believe** the action in this case raises a question

In 2.62), one would be tempted to consider the position of the CC in between the two terms of a reformulation. Cases like the one under examination should be better considered as instances of verbless head in the left periphery (initial position in the annotation scheme), since in such cases the CC precedes the verbless host (*l'occupazione*). The speaker first utters a word and then she realizes that the latter does not fit into what she has in mind; therefore, she then utters another word without expressing the predicate which would have been a predicative construction (something like *the better word, a more precise word is/would be in this case*); consequently, we may hypothesise to classify such cases as instances of verbless host utterances as well (see Mortara Garavelli 1974). This rationale resonates with the claim that spoken dialogue is characterized by semiotic multimodality, which - to different degrees - characterizes each form of verbal communication (both written and spoken) and manifests itself in grammatical terms as a complete sentence. The semiotic multimodality helps us understand why cases of apparent sentential incompleteness - which are the norm in talk-in-interaction - are not anomalies or mistakes. Multimodality helps us to understand why, conversely, the excess of sentential explicitness is often seen as the marked option, whereby implying/triggering inferences and meanings not necessarily intended by the speaker (see also Albano Leoni 2009, Calaresu 2016).

This apparent sentential incompleteness may also manifest itself in the occurrence of **insubordinate** hosts. Under this parameter we will consider those cases in which the comment clause host behaves as a subordinate clause without an explicit subordinating link or without an independent clause easily retrievable in the immediate co-text; consider the following example:

2.63) ci vogliono alcune condizioni intanto che l'industria eh ad esempio **non so** il pesce pescato sul mare venga subito messo in celle frigorifere surgelate (Lip, MC11)

The development of the industry takes some conditions in order to ehm for example **I don't know/for example** the fish caught from the sea being put immediately in cold storage

It is impossible to identify the independent clause to which the subordinate clause introduced by the CC **non so** may be attached. The verb of the host is in the subjunctive mood (*venga*), thus revealing (in this context) the subordinate status of the clause. Nonetheless, it is impossible to find an independent matrix clause the latter is attached to. The excerpt exemplified in 2.63) shows a false start, which is a typical property of spoken texts. In the attempt to reformulate the sentence, the speaker employs a subjunctive verb in a second clause expressing an example of what she was about to say (conditions that are necessary to achieve x). Such exemplificatory sentences are not headed by any matrix predicate, even though showing a typical clue of subordination (the subjunctive mood).

The two blocks are thus related despite being non-canonically correlated. As previously anticipated, the success of the “incomplete/ill-formed” utterance is due to the fact that in spoken interaction, prior context may be accounted for as both a restriction and a resource for building an ensuing turn. “It accounts for choices of formulation in action formation” (Deppermann and Günthner 2015: 3). In other words, it provides presuppositions of previously accomplished meanings, linguistic and interactional structures, which can be exploited as common grounds on which to build the ensuing message (Deppermann and Günthner 2015: 3).

In 2.63), a canonical analysis of the syntactic context in which the CC occurs would reveal inconsistency and ungrammaticality (if one takes into consideration exclusively the microsyntactic level). Nonetheless, the communication works despite the grammatical ‘ill-formedness’ (or underspecification’). Once again, the macrosyntactic component is responsible for the comprehension of the CC host as a subordinate host headed by some matrix clause expressing a deontic meaning such as *occorre, è necessario* (‘it is necessary’). The unfinished clause *ci vogliono alcune condizioni* (‘some conditions are needed’) suffices to make the hearer understand that the meaning expressed by the CC host refers to some examples of *conditions* that are *needed*. Given its syntactic form, we may assert that the CC introduces (or, more generally, it is hosted by) an insubordinate clause.

Insubordinate clauses are headless subordinated clauses, whose head (i.e., whose independent, matrix clause) is not contextually expressed and may in some cases be retrieved from the context. Insubordination results in “the conventionalized main clause use of what, on *prima facie* grounds, appear to be formally subordinate clauses” (Evans 2008: 366).

Let us consider the following examples:

- 2.64) ma gli piacevo ma nel senso **sai** [quando uno vede il ragazzo più grande] (Lip, RB3)  
 But he liked me I mean **you know** when one is attracted to an older boy

- 2.65) **senti** Guido [se te la poi fare bene buona] (Lip, FB14)  
 Listen Guido, if you could fix it. [...]

In these occurrences, the CC is hosted by a(n apparent) subordinate clause. We would expect to find an independent sentence heading the subordinate clause such a host is attached to. Nonetheless, it is impossible to identify the matrix clause in the co-text. In other words, the adverbial subordinate clause hosting the comment clause *sai* (‘you know’) in 2.64) should canonically be linked to a matrix clause which in the context is not clearly expressed. Again, the reference to the macrosyntax is clearly crucial to define the syntactic position of the comment clauses in these cases.

Other types of utterances we may include under this head are the following ones:

- 2.66) lui se fa' forte de questo capito **penso** pè approfittarsene (Lip, RB7)

He speculates on this fact, you understand? I **think** to benefit from it

- 2.67) A: nessuno che fa la regia B: perché basta un niente **penso** (Lip, MA26)  
A: no one wants to direct it? B: because it is a piece of cake I **think**

In the former of the two occurrences, it seems that the first sentence (see the occurrence of *capito* ‘you understand?’ - which is a sort of anaphoric question tag referring to the whole preceding sentence) is concluded and the speaker expresses a sort of afterthought, which is introduced by the CC *penso*. Syntactically speaking, the CC host is a purpose subordinate clause. Despite being obviously linked, the relationship between the two blocks depends on rules of communicative efficiency rather than of syntactic efficiency (for the rules of grammatical acceptability it is quite odd to insert a subordinate clause after a complete utterance followed by a tag whose function is to recall the whole, concluded sentence). Once again, the necessity of planning and speaking contemporaneously does not allow to use much time to choose words (Voghera 2010: 87). This constraint encourages the process of on-line re-uttering of additional pieces of information, which are not always “correctly” linked to previous discourse.

The essence of insubordinate hosts is also quite clear in the latter example, in which the speaker utters a sentence introduced by the connective *perché* (*because*) as a reaction to another speaker’s turn; in this way, the independent clause to which *perché* (*because*) is attached is not contextually expressed. To sum up, in the examples under scrutiny, we could also hypothesize that the CC host represents a case of insubordination, since the only link we may recover with the presumed matrix clause is semantic (and often *in absentia*), not plainly syntactic.

As anticipated, the syntax of the spoken variety is characterized by addition, often lacking functional and logical links. Therefore, the texts may happen to be construed by juxtaposition rather than subordination. Under this parameter we will include all those cases in which the CC occurs in a host which is made up of more than one utterance (or sentence in macrosyntactic terms). The internal relations between such blocks are not governed by rules of canonical syntax. In other words, all over these cases, the CC is hosted by a complex text (such as an if-conditional) or by complex utterances whose internal relations have to be inferred.

Let us consider the following examples:

- 2.68) Se ci chiamano anche a noi siamo nei guai perché finchè # **diciamo** [[sono # eh le linee statali] # [non ci potranno dire nulla ma...]] (Lip, FA12)  
If they call us, we are in trouble because as long as **let's say** we talk about # eh the state lines they could not reproach us but...
- 2.69) questi veicoli turistici siamo sicuri che sono ben assistiti? oppure **diciamo** # perché son nuovi perché son sempre in giro e via di seguito un si fermano mai e non gli si fa le operazioni? (Lip, FA12)

These tourist buses I was wondering if they are well-serviced? Or rather **let's say** # given that they are new because they are always on the road and so on they never stop, and they are not repaired

We will also consider under this parameter the cases where the speaker employs a connective, but the link it expresses in a specific context is not compatible with the semantics of the former:

- 2.70) bisogna andare ai fatti perché **credo** quello è la cosa più importante (Lip, NE7)  
It needs to act because I think this is the most important thing

In 2.70), the speaker proffers a causal connective (*perché* ‘because’). Nonetheless, the relation between the connected events is vague in this context: it simply signals a loose link between two blocks (Degand and Fagard 2011).

The following example represents another case which can be classified in terms of macrosyntax; indeed, it is difficult to identify the relations between the parts of the text that host the comment clause *senti*:

- 2.71) A: qualcheduno per fargli fare ripetizioni di francese  
B: ah ah ah  
A: tu non conosci mica nessuno?  
B: ma **senti** [io a mia figlia che ha avuto bisogno l'anno scorso]  
[eh gli ho trovato] [li' c'è la ragazza di un tecnico di  
laboratorio eh che è francese e lei\_ loro abitano a Figline]  
[però viene\_ a Firenze praticamente tutti i giorni per  
fare queste lezioni\_ e lavori vari] (Lip, FB33)
- A: Someone to give him French private tuitions  
B: Ha ha ha  
A: You don't know anyone?  
B: But **listen** [to me, my daughter who needed last year...]  
[Eh I found] [There is the girlfriend of a Lab technician  
eh who is French and she they live in Figline]  
[But she comes to Florence nearly every day to do such lessons and various works]

In this example, the speaker simply **juxtaposes** different utterances<sup>27</sup> which are loosely connected to each other; notwithstanding, the conversation works as well.

The same happens in the following instance, where the comment clause introduces a complex text; in this context, it simply recalls the speaker’s attention to ensuing text, but it is difficult to say *where* exactly it occurs:

- 2.72) **vedete** se noi ci presentiamo al governo dicendo l'ATAM perde x la CTP perde y qua c'è un deficit complessivo di y e facciamo le sommette # <?> [...] c'e' uno spazio oggettivo # noi da quel tavolo se ci

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<sup>27</sup> We bracketed segments in order to facilitate the comprehension of different functional blocks.

dovessimo presentare senza una serieta' di come sindacato di dire vogliamo discutere la ristrutturazione # trovo che noi dobbiamo andare la' con na proposta seria (Lip, NC4)  
**Look/consider** if we attend a goverment's meeting saying the ATAM loses x the CTP loses y here there is an overall deficit of Y and we do the sums # <? > [...] There's an objective space # we from that table if we were to present without a serious behaviours like the one of a syndicate to say we want to discuss the restructuring I find that we have to go there with a serious proposal

To conclude, under this parameter we will include all those cases whose interpretation requires the reference to a pragmatic notion of communicative efficiency, which is responsible for the **togetherness** (or *predicativity*) of some blocks and to guarantee mutual comprehension in spite of grammatical ill-formedness and incoherence. The acknowledgement of such “defective” structures is, however, compatible with the typical features of on-line, emergent, additive syntax (Deppermann and Günthner 2015: 11).

### 2.2.3 Internal properties of comment clauses: person, mood, semantic sources

Our study was motivated by an interest in identifying when and why speakers meta-comment in on-line interaction. We aimed at uncovering which types of lexical source are mobilized to express the function of meta-comment. Therefore, in our annotation protocol, we tagged the lexical semantics of the CC, by making a distinction between the main following categories:

**VERBA DICENDI** (verbs of speaking): *dico* ('I say'), *voglio dire* (lit. 'I want to say', 'I mean'), *diciamo* ('let us say');

**PERCEPTUAL VERBS**: *senti* ('listen'), *guarda* ('look'), *vedete* ('you see') which may be more or less used metaphorically;

**NON-FACTIVE ASSERTIVE WEAK PREDICATES**: *penso* ('I think'), *credo* ('I believe'), *mi pare* ('it seems to me'), they express a simple commitment modulation with respect to the proposition P which is modalised<sup>28</sup>;

**NON-FACTIVE ASSERTIVE STRONG PREDICATES**: *deduco* ('I deduce'), *presumo* ('I presume'), along with conveying bare commitment modulation, CCs may arise from verbs lexically referring to the logical path leading the speaker to express her reserve and providing information on the proof validating her assertion that p. In line with Schneider (1999: 76, 79, 82, 111), we have included emotive attitude verbs under the head of strong predicates (see category of ‘reflected evidence’ in Plungian 2001);

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<sup>28</sup> We have included *suppongo* ('I suppose') and *immagino* ('I imagine') under the head of the strong assertive predicates by following Schneider's (1999: 76) classification. According to the author, the latter predicates belong to the category of *modalizzanti forti* ('strong modalisers'), which retain a proper meaning consisting of the specific description of the source of knowledge (such as *immagino*) or of the inference on which it is based (such as *suppongo*) or in appositive evaluation (*spero* 'I hope', *mi auguro* 'I wish').

**SEMIFACTIVE VERBS:** *mi sa*<sup>29</sup> ('it seems to me'), *non so* ('I do not know'), *mi rendo conto* ('I realise'), *ricordo* ('I remember' - Venier 1991: 64, 77-78). The double behaviour of semifactives may be observed in the fact that in occurrence with the negation semifactives may be followed by 'if' and 'that' as complementizers. The double possibility to use the verb at stake both with factive and non-factive meaning may be traceable in the interrogative sentences (have you known whether/that...?).

**OTHERS:** in a minority of cases, the lexical semantics of the CC source was difficult to identify therefore we decided to not classify it in one of the aforementioned main categories (see the case of the CC *figurati* 'just imagine').

Before concluding this brief sketch of the lexical semantics of the CC host, we do briefly point out that CC may occur in all the moods, speech act to use König and Siemund's 2007 taxonomy.

**ASSERTIVE** (or declarative): *penso, credo, deduco, spero, mi sa*

**INTERROGATIVE** (*che so?, dici?*)

**IMPERATIVE** (*guarda, pensa*).

### 2.2.3.1 Pragmatic domain

In order to differentiate the functions of CCs we will make a distinction between pragmatic domain and semantic function. The resulting model relies on two independent levels of annotation which, when combined, provide a flexible tool for the analysis of CCs. It is useful to relate the specific functions of CCs to more general, pragmatic functions of the spoken language (Crible and Degand 2019: 71). All functions in one domain are claimed to present the same degree of granularity, i.e. the only hierarchical distinction is between domains (generic) and functions (specific).

Another aspect concerns the nature of the top-level categories: the three domains correspond to the global speaker's intentions, depending on whether the speaker targets the commitment and the illocutionary force (subjective/speaker-oriented/rhetorical), the discourse structure (sequential/textual) or the intersubjective inferences (intersubjective/hearer-oriented - see Crible and Degand 2019: 75). CCs are used to express functions pertaining to the following domains: speaker-oriented (expressing the speaker's subjectivity and metadiscursive effects, indicated by the acronym RHE in the annotation protocol), sequential or textual (structuring local and global units of discourse, indicated by the acronym SEQ in the annotation protocol), and interpersonal (managing the speaker-hearer interaction indicated by the acronym INT in the annotation protocol).

In sum, domain-labels tend towards coherent categories in line with well-established representations of discourse (cf. Halliday 1970 *inter alia*) as opposed to semantic groupings with not well-defined boundaries. To establish the domain to which a CC belongs, we generally consider

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<sup>29</sup> We do underline that a CC like this head a subjective compleutive sentence.

information referring to person and semantics of the verb from which the CC stems, but also to its position, host mood and, above all, patterns of paraphrases.

Therefore, for example, a CC in the first person is generally considered as pertaining to the speaker-oriented domain. CCs in the second person are classified as playing interpersonal domain functions and so on. However, such relation is not automatic, since a CC like *direi* ('I would say') may be used to express negative politeness functions, pertaining to hearer's face. Given that the function is hearer-oriented, we will classify it as an instance of interpersonal domain CC, despite the occurrence of the first person, conditional form. As plainly argued later over the individual chapters, to identify the CC function we will take into account the context in which the CC occurs (construction grammar study, Fischer 2010).

### 2.2.3.2 Semantic function

Let us now move to the exemplification of the values of the CCs semantic functions. Under the definition of the **SPEAKER-ORIENTED** domain, we will consider all those functions pertaining to the expression of speaker's stance in a loose way, beyond simple epistemic or evidential stance. We will thus consider under the subjective domain the following functions – some of which have been considered as interpersonal in other frameworks<sup>30</sup>:

- ✓ **Epistemic modality/epistemicity:** the speaker expresses a neutral commitment modulation, namely without expressing the source of such uncertainty – typical of weak predicates such as *penso* and *mi sembra*. Such verbal sources express a generic modulation, without the reference to the logical path leading the speaker to assert *p* (see Venier 1991); more specifically, we classified the function of **epistemic rounding** through which the speaker does not commit herself to a given proposition expressing reference to quantities, in this way, she protects her face by releasing from total commitment;
- ✓ **evidential:** the speaker expresses a commitment modulation and *additional* information pertaining to the logical path leading her to assume such a reduced level of **confidence**, i.e. inference, deduction, reminiscence and so on. Under this domain we include also CCs making reference to the emotional attitude of the speaker, since it may be considered as a complex function expressing both a modulation of epistemic commitment and a reference to speaker's emotional stance as the source of modulation – see the case of *spero* ('I hope'), *mi auguro* ('I wish'); as anticipated, we intend to underline that we will study the impact of the co-text to assign a function: if in the immediate co-text we individuate that the speaker is going to remember or deduce a given *p*, we will classify as

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<sup>30</sup> See Fiorentini and Sansò (2017) *inter alia*

evidential also a CC deriving from a weak predicate such as *penso* (see also the discussion of epistemic function); in this way, our approach is globally constructional (see Fischer 2015);

✓ **emphasis:** the CC performs the same functions of adverbs such as *davvero* ‘really’ and *proprio* ‘indeed’. It is used to guarantee the factuality/truth of the assertion contained in the host clause; typical paraphrases include ‘I can assure/I guarantee’- and to confirm it (the factuality/truth); *ripeto* (‘I repeat/I insist’) is a typical CC that often performs such an emphatic function which emerges from the act of repeating<sup>31</sup> (‘if I repeat it’ *it means that* ‘I want to emphasise it’); we will also include the function of (dis)agreement among the function of emphasis. Although it has been classified as interactional, we believe that expressing emphasis may also be subjective meaning pertaining speaker’s argumentative position, even if, in some cases, it is placed on a pragmatic, interactional level;

✓ **mirativity:** it refers to the function of CCs marking sentences which report information which is new or surprising to the speaker (DeLancey 1997, Aikhenvald 2012, Vásko 2016 *inter alia*). Surprise and unexpectedness or newness may also be expressed by means of markers of mirativity (by some regarded as a subcategory of evidentiality, by others not – cf. Aikhenvald’s 2004 monograph *Evidentiality*). Typical markers of mirativity are *pensa (te)*, *pensate* (‘just think’) *guarda (te)* (lit. ‘just imagine/look what’);

✓ **exemplification:** the speaker declares a commitment modulation, given that she is not sure about the on-line selection of a given example to point to a category she has in mind and that is built through a context-based process (we will define it as epistemic exemplification);

✓ **hedging:** the speaker softens a previous segment of any length. We will consider hedging as a strategy aimed at preserving one’s own face (e.g. after acknowledgement of shortfalls or mistakes);

✓ **speech act justification:** the speaker provides the hearer with a “proof” of her previous claim of act such as a request or a question; it is not a case of bare reformulation - as in the case of textual reformulation within the textual domain;

As one can see, some functions refer to semantic notions such as EPISTEMIC STANCE, some other functions pertain to intrinsically INTERACTIONAL aspects (such as hedging – that is pragmatically and socially concerned). Notwithstanding, since all these distinct functions seem to refer to the construction of speaker’s **self** in general, we intend to include them under the same subjective domain. Obviously, some of these functions gravitate around the pole of intersubjectivity, as we will show in Chapter 5.

Within the TEXTUAL domain, we include all those functions that refer to how the text (or portions of it) is construed and how it has to be interpreted; in general, we refer to CCs playing metatextual

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<sup>31</sup> Obviously, sometimes *ripeto* fulfils a textual function of topic-resumption.

(or metadiscursive) work, such as the one commenting on the selection of words, or in reference to the introduction of new informative blocks (topic management functions). In brief, we will consider all those CCs referring to some clues on the work of text construction (textual cohesion and coherence – Molinelli 2015: 488), also on semiotic grounds (see notion of discursive vagueness - Voghera 2017).

Within the textual domain we include the following functions:

- ✓ **opening boundary**: the CC plays the function of introducing a new turn where a new segment will be introduced in the discourse, such as response-introducing, turn-taking;
- ✓ **topic-resuming**: the speaker resumes a topic that is not under attention anymore;
- ✓ **topic-shifting**: the speaker changes the topic of discourse to introduce a new segment;
- ✓ **new argument introduction**: the CC is used to introduce a new argument on a topic that is **active**; the logical relation the new argument introduces may vary ranging from generalization, adding or explanation (typical of argumentative functions of *guarda*);
- ✓ **reformulation**: the speaker clarifies the content of a previous segment or utterance;
- ✓ **complex reformulation**: in addition to the clarifying function, the speaker provides with additional aspects such as the negation of an expectation activated by a previous utterance or adds another aspect such as an evaluation of what has been previously uttered;
- ✓ **approximation**: under-specification in the work of linguistic tagging or selection of words, typical of CCs such as *diciamo* ('let's say') and *direi* ('I'd say'). When playing such functions, the CC host is often characterized by suspensive intonation and/or markers of hesitation or false start, showing that the speaker is searching for the target word. The CC is a clue which signals a semantic mismatch on purely textual grounds (see, for example, the possibility to trace in the context paraphrases which represent different attempts by the speaker to select the target word); it **does not** pertain to the categorization in conceptual terms, it rather refers to the **selection** of the linguistic tag; in order to classify a function as approximation we will also look at the semantics of the target expression in the scope of the CC. Moreover, sometimes, approximation markers are used to take time in order to cover planning and processing loadings: in this case, we will tag them as APPR2 (**time for planning**), namely approximation which is used to take time before uttering something (**discursive vagueness**).

Moving on the last pragmatic domain, namely the **INTERPERSONAL** domain, we will consider the following functions:

- ✓ **attention-getting**: the speaker recalls the hearer's attention, typical of CCs deriving from perceptive verbs; in this case, the host utterance is a directive or interrogative act (FTA); typical markers of attention-getting (such as *guarda* and *senti*) may be used in specific slots to play micro-functions related to the textual regulation of discourse or the interpersonal stance (i.e., emphasis).

These functions are related to attention-getting, nonetheless, we classified them in other domains targeting the discourse architecture or the emphatic stance. We held attention-getting only in occurrence with typical requestive acts (interrogations plus requests).

- ✓ **shared knowledge:** the speaker refers to (or **presupposes**) a shared knowledge, it is typical of expressions such as *capisci*, *capirai*, *sai* ('you know'); typical paraphrases are *come credo tu possa capire*, *come immagino tu sappia* (Engl. 'as I imagine you may understand');
- ✓ **insinuating:** the speaker invites the hearer to draw all the common knowledge or context-driven inferences connected to the previous statement, it presupposes shared knowledge;
- ✓ **monitoring (response-evoking):** the speaker leaves rooms for the hearer to give agreement, always turn-finally;
- ✓ **negative politeness (hedging):** the speaker softens a face-threatening act, which is hearer-addressed - in terms of negative politeness (tagged in the annotation protocol as NEGPOL);
- ✓ **emphasis:** the speaker appeals to the hearer in order to make the former see the validity of what she is asserting – something like 'you can also see what I mean' → it is true/valid. It is typical of comment clauses such as *guarda*, *sai* or *vedi*; we included this function in the interpersonal domain since it emphasises a given content through the hearer's validation;
- ✓ **checking:** turn-medially or finally, phatic function; the speaker recalls hearer's attention in order to hold the floor.;
- ✓ **mirativity:** the CC is used to invite the hearer to share the speaker's amazement.

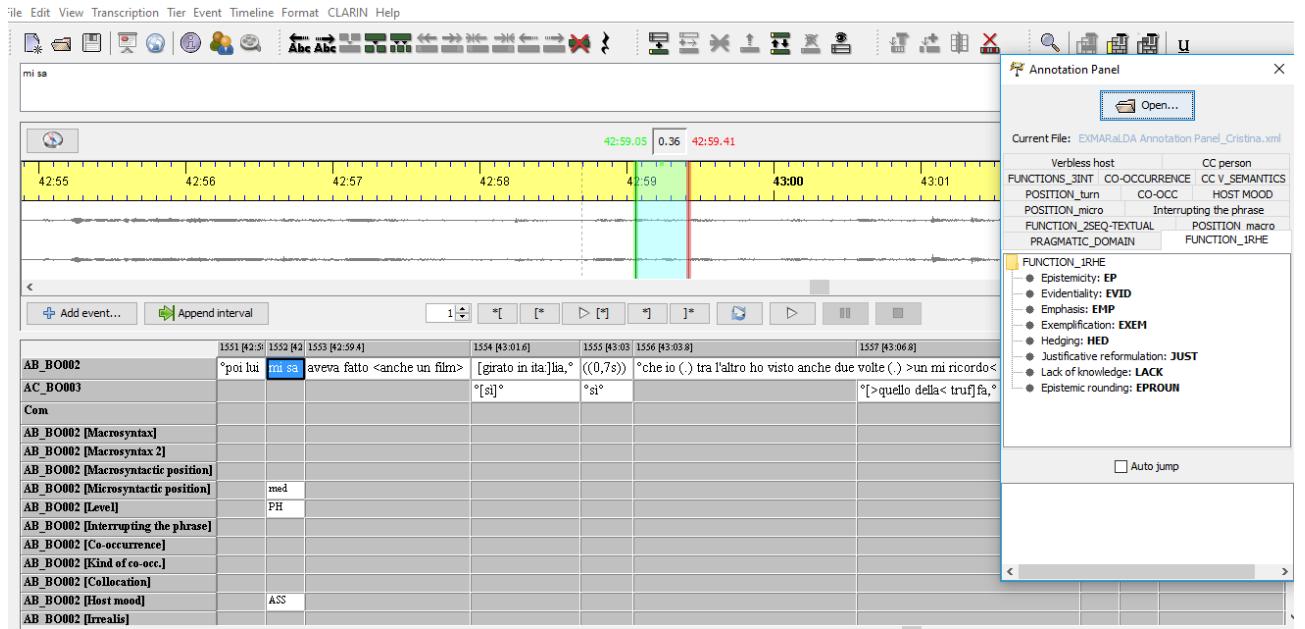
Some of the intersubjective functions refer to the hearer as the physical interlocutor (attention-getting function). Some other intersubjective functions refer to the hearer as a cognitive agent sharing some knowledge with the speaker (presupposed knowledge). In some other cases, the hearer is asked to validate speaker's assumption with her evidence.

## 2.3 The annotation scheme: the EXMARaLDA software for spoken discourse

### 2.3.1 Annotating data: the Partitur editor

As mentioned before, we annotated our CCs using the EXMARaLDA annotation tool (Schmidt and Wörner 2012), an open-source software package implemented for multi-layered annotation of spoken data with metadata. Its annotation interface Partitur Editor allows to manually or semi-automatically insert annotations on several different layers applying to diverse cell sizes, as observed in the following figure.

**Figure 2. 3 Partitur Editor annotation interface**



Each variable we presented above corresponds to one tier, with the automatic output of TreeTagger in the bottom line. On the right side of the screenshot, we can see the annotation panel (otherwise called controlled vocabulary), i.e., a list of all the values included in the protocol and manually encoded as an XML file. It is useful since it prevents spelling mistakes thus allowing the annotator to automatically assign a certain value to its cell by clicking on it. Furthermore, a brief definition of each value can be included at the bottom, thus facilitating the memorisation of the taxonomy and the other variables in the protocol. In importing the data of the Lip Corpus, we imported the .txt file and listened to the audio when needed. In the case of the KIParla Corpus, we imported the ELAN transcriptions with the corresponding audio, therefore we listened each of the CCs pertaining to such sample.

### 2.3.2 Extracting correlations: EXAKT

The EXMARaLDA suite disposes of its own extraction and concordancer tool, EXAKT, to query the Corpus directly. First, all .exb files from the annotation interface need to be converted into a .coma file which can be read by EXAKT. As anticipated this conversion necessitates the COMA tool, which fixes all the annotated files into one corpus. This .coma file can then be queried according to the user's needs (see Crible 2018).

Firstly, all CCs are queried with their distributional and functional variables appearing in separate columns, with context to the left and to the right of the item.

**Figure 2. 4 EXAKT annotation extraction interface at CC level**

RegEx (Annotations)	Annotation:	Pragmatic domain	Regex:	\$	Semantic f...	Pragmatic ...	Cc semantics	Types: 212	Tokens: 542	Selected: 542 (0)	Time:
	Speaker	Left Context	Match	Right Context							
SPK0		è rimasto impresso((0,1s))una storia un po' bella	diciamo (.)	che ti ricordi	APP.R	SEQ	DIC				
SPK0		no mai stata- è::: una traversa di via zamboni	mi pare?		RESP	INT	WEAK				
SPK0		xxx xx è proprio:((3,1s))problematico	diciamo		APP.R2	SEQ	DIC				
SPK0		ma guarda		riuscissi a dormire un po' di più io sarei content	EMP	INT	PERC				
SPK1		Ilor te lo finno perché non ci guadagnano((1,4s))	suppongo		EP	RHE	STRONG				
SPK1		nò: te le porti:((0,4s)) come bagaglio a mano	diciamo		APP.R	SEQ	DIC				
SPK1		so sempre lo zaino((1,7s))ai era anche ingrandito	diciamo		APP.R	SEQ	DIC				
SPK0		allora io non ho capito perché la sua mail è	diciamo (.)	tecnicamente un po' imprecisa,((0,7s))anzi molto.	NEOPOL	INT	DIC				
SPK0		e ha scritto a qualche altro cioè lei ha scritto	diciamo	in questa mail,((0,3s)) una serie usato una serie	APP.R	SEQ	DIC				
SPK0		quindi non abbiamo nessuna,((0,5s))ehm competenza	diciamo,	((0,4s))[(in materia]	APP.R	SEQ	DIC				
SPK0			guardi,	in tutta] sincerità,((0,3s)e:::((0,7s)) ((0,4s))	OPBOUN	SEQ	PERC				
SPK0		le hanno risposto, se lei aveva scritto una mail,	(.) diciamo,	sufficientemente dettagliata e chiara quindi non c	APP.R	SEQ	DIC				
SPK0		isto che ha scritto che anche nella mail è delusa	diciamo	dal corso di studio,	APP.R	SEQ	DIC				
SPK0		stoc::,	penso	era ultima anno del lice, ed ero venuta a trovare	EV	RHE	WEAK				
SPK0		[In ca- ((Inspira)) no]	guarda	((ride))c'è stato è stata una storia incredibile	EMP	INT	PERC				
SPK0		po forse la mia coquilletta se ne voleva andare,	non so	adesso guardi,( (ride)) ne abbiamo passate di tut	EP	RHE	SEMI				
SPK0		coquilletta se ne voleva andare, non so adesso	guard(a),	((ride)) ne abbiamo passate di tutti i colori in q	EMP	INT	PERC				
SPK0		[No io:] c'è più che altro è che	sai::	eh in doppia, cioè volevo stare in singola,((0,2s))	N1	INT	SEMI				
SPK0		Si sì. ) Si sì sì. E poi non so:::	non so	Bologna adesso comincia un po' a studarmi, non so	APP.R	SEQ	SEMI				
SPK0		Perché: ((0,3s))	non so	è una città cui un po': mi sono a trovaro me	EP	RHE	SEMI				
SPK0		Però:: mhh: ((0,5s))	non so	forsce un po' che(e) la cosa che mi; ((0,1s)) che (	EP	RHE	SEMI				
SPK0		. chi mi ha studiata di Bologna, un po' forse sono	sai.	((0,7s))E::h cioè non è che mi ha studiata di Bolog	N1	INT	SEMI				

In the end, all sequences are extracted, “showing as the queried item all the elements in the sequence” (Crible 2017: 117). All annotations are then exported as Excel tables, one per analytical level, and queried through some pivot tables.

**Table 2. 1 Annotation scheme**

CC host in macrosyntax	Topic – comment (Prefix-nucleus)
	Verbless host
	Insubordinate host
	texts by juxtaposition
macrosyntactic position (II)	initial, medial, final
CC host mi microsyntax	left periphery (initial) medial position (within dependency) right periphery (final) position for medial position: interrupting the phrase (yes/no)
(for epistemic markers): <i>Irrealis</i>	yes/no
co-occurrence (YES/NO)	Discourse markers (DM) connectives (CONN) Focus particles/modal adverbs Hesitation markers (HES) False starts (F-P)
Collocation	yes/no
Host mood	assertion (ASS), hypothesis (HYP), evaluative assessment (EVALASS), interrogation (INT), request (REQ), directive act (DIR)
Pragmatic domain	Speaker-oriented (RHE) Textual (SEQ) Interpersonal (INT)
Semantic function	RHE: epistemic stance (EP), evidential stance (EV), epistemic rounding (EPROUN), emphasis (EMP), hedging (HED), mirativity (MIR), justification (JUST), exemplification (EXEM)  SEQ:

	approximation (APPR), time for planning (APPR2), opening boundary (OPBOUN), topic-resumption (TOPREM), topic-shifting (TOPSH), reformulation (REF), complex reformulation (COREF), new argument introduction (NEWARG)
Cc semantics	INT: attention-getting (ATT), response-evoking (RESP), checking (CHECK), negative politeness (NEGPOL), shared knowledge (KNOW), mirativity (MIR), emphasis (EMP), insinuating (INS)
Cc person	1/2/3 singular vs plural
Cc mood	indicative/imperative/interrogative

## Chapter 3. The functions of speaker-oriented domain

### Introduction to the chapter

As stated in the introduction to this work, the aim of this research was to answer the following questions: when, where, how and why do speakers comment through a (paren)thetical, de-verbal strategy, that is a Comment Clause? (see 1.3.4). This chapter is focused on those CCs referring to the speaker-oriented domain, that is, on the CCs that function as signals that establish changes in the speaker's attitudes and beliefs. Hence, they facilitate the transmission of illocutionary force and intentions (González 2005: 53). They convey the speaker's attitude towards what she is saying, or some sort of general evaluation of the statement contained in the CC host. Moreover, they are employed to make some kind of statement about the source of the information, or to create connections with other statements or with the wider discourse context (Grenoble 2004: 1956). To put it otherwise, the CCs under scrutiny express the speaker's subjective stance, intended as "a public act by a social actor through overt communicative means" (Du Bois 2007: 163). In the next chapter, we will investigate CCs of the following types:

- 3.1) per quanto siamo stati educati tutti con **immagino** le relazioni utopiche con la disney, (KIParla, BOD1011)  
As far as we all have been raised with **I guess** the utopian relationships we experienced through Disney cartoons
- 3.2) se dovesse passare questa nostra idea che **ripeto** è un'idea ancora in fieri in discussione sarebbe un fatto rivoluzionario (Lip, NC2)  
If it were to pass this our idea which **I repeat** is still an idea in progress at issue it would be indeed a revolutionary fact
- 3.3) GP\_BO014: non sono cosi' insomma esigente, piu' che altro la zona mi piacerebbe una zona tranquilla [...] magari non andrei ad abitare **non so** in via zamboni, queste zone dove magari la sera non riesci a porprio a dormire (KIParla, BOD2001)  
GP\_BO014: I am not that fussy, I would prefer a quieter area maybe I would not go to live, **I do not know** in Zamboni Street, these areas where maybe in the evening you cannot sleep at all, (KIParla, BOD2001)
- 3.4) MC\_TO026: **diciamo cosi'**, richiedeva naturalmente che, eh=mh=diciamo che che si procurasse delle fonti piu' aggiornate (KIParla, TOA1001)  
MC\_TO026: **Let's say** it was obviously necessary that, eh mh let's say that that you get the most up to date sources even on this topic

Before discussing the attested constructions and their functions (3.2), in 3.1.1, we will provide a definition of the **speaker-oriented** domain after a brief review of the literature starting from the seminal works by Halliday (1970); Halliday and Hasan (1976); Redeker (1990, 1991), Sweetser

(1990), Erman (2001), to finally reach the more recent taxonomy referring to the functions of parentheticals as outlined by Kaltenböck et al. (2011). We will specifically motivate the choice of the label *speaker-oriented* with respect to other labels which have been used in various functional taxonomies such as *metalinguistic domain*, *rhetorical domain*, *(inter)subjective component* and so forth. In 3.1.2, we will briefly describe the revised taxonomy adopted in the study, thus providing the working definition of the speaker-oriented domain functions which will be pursued here.

Data supporting the outlined taxonomy of the functions pertaining to the speaker-oriented domain will be presented in Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, in which we will seek to trace a boundary between semantics and pragmatics. Some functions pertain to the propositional content (3.2.1), in that they make the speaker's epistemic and evidential stance explicit. Some other functions concern the speaker's illocutionary force on a scale of argumentative force. The functions related to the epistemic stance are discussed in Section 3.2.1. More specifically, the Sections 3.2.1.2.1 and 3.2.1.2.2 focus on the epistemic functions, Section 3.2.1.2.3 deals with the evidential functions. In Section 3.2.2, the discussion deals with the analysis of CCs encoding speaker's stance on the speech act level functions. The speaker's stance will then be discussed with respect to emphasis (3.2.2.1), hedging (3.2.2.2), mirativity (3.2.2.3), and speech act-motivation functions (3.2.2.4).

Each section starts with the definition of the function under examination, which is complemented by a brief survey on some quantitative data. In this way, we provide information about all the parameters examined (for instance, the *irrealis* status of epistemic/evidential functions or the co-occurrence with modal adverbs in the case of emphasis functions). The cases of evidential functions and emphatic functions will be outlined in different micro-sections according to their subfunctions.

The attested correlations will be analysed with respect to aspects such as the position and the scope of the CC, or highlighting the co-occurrence with other functionally similar strategies (see the co-occurrence between the emphasis CCs and modal adverbs or between the exemplifying CCs and other exemplifying markers). The parameters will point out some tendencies, but not a one-to-one mapping between the lexical semantics of the CC source and the function that the latter plays in a given specific context. Indeed, we will show that among the category of CCs, some sub-classifications are needed, independently of the lexical semantics of the CC source.

Crucially epistemic/evidential/exemplifying CCs will be claimed to have an impact on the propositional content, which is confirmed by the reduced percentage of *irrealis* status of the utterances hosting the CCs<sup>32</sup>. Such behaviour is also confirmed by the frequency of CCs occurring

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<sup>32</sup> As recognised by Haselow (2016: 82) for the same structures in English defined by the author as macrogrammatical elements, that is, not integrated, such elements may have an effect on propositional content, modifying or specifying parts of it, such as **epistemic certainty**.

in medial/interrupting position highlighting the interruptive force of the former and, consequently, their decisive role with respect to the process of interpretation.

Some other CCs, on the contrary, reflect speaker argumentative force, thus acting on the speech act level (see the emphatic or hedging functions).

However, CCs pertaining to all the levels show a deep interruptive force, therefore highlighting their crucial role as clues in structuring discourse and in diluting time pressure in spoken discourse, being placed in the major junctures of the syntactic structure. Such interruptive force of all CCs types will be validated further by some insights of the CCs prosodic profile, which will be argued to play a decisive role in defining the discourse profile of CCs, which are not always prosodically set off from their hosts (see Kaltenböck et al. 2011, Kärkkäinen 2003, Dehé and Wichmann 2010a, b). The study is based on the analysis of a sample of CCs whose audio was suitable to monitor their integration with respect to the host clause (80 in total). It is not a deep study on the prosody of CCs. Our aim is essentially to evaluate their prosodic integration or parenthesis by calculating the possible occurrences of pauses in between the CC. In doing so, we will quantify the possible occurrence of pauses between the CC and its host, without going into details<sup>33</sup>. In the following sections, we will provide the representation of some prosograms and textgrids, which have been selected for their suitability as exemplificatory cases<sup>34</sup>. We used the software Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2011).

### **3.1 Towards a taxonomy: defining a boundary within and outside the speaker-oriented domain**

#### **3.1.1 The speaker-oriented domain: what has been said**

A number of authors have designed functional taxonomies both for written language and for the analysis of pragmatic markers which are employed in real-time speech production (see González 2004, 2005; Maschler 2009, Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a among many others).

In this section, we will focus on the CCs of the speaker-oriented domain. Thus the focus will be on those CCs that frame the utterance with which they go with respect to the speaker's epistemic, evidential, and evaluative stance (Thompson 2002 and, later, Ariel 2010 on the issue of the co-existence of general and more specific sub-constructions such as *I think*, *I don't think*, *I remember*

<sup>33</sup> Our interest is not mainly prosodic. Rather, given that CCs are syntactically parenthetical, we would like to verify whether such syntactic parenthesis is prosodically mirrored. No deep prosodic study is carried out in the work. We only look at the CC's boundaries eventually calculating the length of possible pauses, fixing a threshold of 200 milliseconds. For prosodic studies see among many others: Kärkkäinen (2003), (Dehé and Wichmann 2010a, b).

<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, we underline that we did conduct any systematic, quantitative study. We selected the CCs occurrences with a good quality of audio (one speaker, no surrounding noise) and decided to report some graphic representations in the work selecting the clearer and less complex ones. Without any doubt, they are exemplificatory and we aim at providing a deep, quantitative study on prosody of CCs in future.

and so on in English to express the speaker's stance). We will seek to elucidate how we combined the reference to existing taxonomies with our research questions and our data. In the light of this, we will adopt the label *speaker-oriented domain*, by making explicit the functions which instantiate the two macro-components *speaker's attitude* and *source of knowledge* as conceptualised by Kaltenböck et al. (2011) in their taxonomy on the functions of (paren)theticals. We will highlight that this category of functions broadly corresponds to other classification theorized for the study of DMs functions and coherence relations and, consequently, at the end of the Section, we will shed some light on the reason for our terminological choice among many others.

Let us start by dealing with the functions of parentheticals as defined in the literature before discussing the main taxonomies on DMs relations.

Quite a number of generalizations have been proposed for the functions of (paren)theticals (for instance, Grenoble 2004; Blakemore 2006; Rouchota 1998; Huddleston and Pullum 2002). They have been described as serving to specify, exemplify, explicate, clarify, characterize, elaborate on, or demarcate a referential unit they introduce (Mazeland 2007; Dehé 2009 among many others). Moreover, it has been argued that they do not contribute to the assertive content (Potts 2002) or the truth-conditionality of an utterance (Urmson 1952), that they cannot be questioned in a standard way (Espinal 1991: 729), that they are impervious to negation (Espinal 1991: 757; Dixon 2005: 235, 236) or that they tend to have a positive import (Jackendoff 1972: 97), that their meaning necessarily relates to their host (Taglicht 1998), that they function as a comment or gloss on some meaning aspects of their hosts (Espinal 1991: 757; Rouchota 1998: 102), that they may perform mitigating functions (Fraser 1980; Schneider 2007a; 2007b), or that they play a crucial role in information structuring (Taglicht 1984: 22–25).

Such generalisations are helpful toward understanding salient functions of the strategies investigated in this work. Notwithstanding, they neither seem to apply to all of them (see, e.g. Ifantidou-Trouki 1993; Ifantidou 2001; Blakemore 2006; Dehé and Kavalova 2007), nor are they all more distinctive of parentheticals than of some other kinds of linguistic strategies. For instance, as it will be argued later, the property of lack of truth-conditionality does not apply generally to all the types of parentheticals. Evidential strategies, such as *I hear, you say* (on a par with the adverb *evidently*), are truth-conditional (Ifantidou 1994; Rouchota 1998: 113) since the speaker will be understood to be committed to the truth-value by employing them.

In spite of the lack of total consensus on the functions performed by parentheticals, it would seem possible to identify **a lower common pragmatic denominator**.

In her survey on parentheticals in Russian, Grenoble (2004: 1954) argues that parentheticals can be defined functionally but not structurally, in that “they do serve clear pragmatic functions, and are

united in operation on a distinct discourse plane". In her view, they express comments about their host, although she concedes that "the definition is vague, as these comments include subjective evaluation, addresses to the interlocutor, speaker point of view, and so on" (Grenoble 2004: 1954). In fact, the meaning of (paren)theticals has been described as metacommunicative or metatextual in nature (e.g., Petola 1983: 103; Traugott 1995: 6; Grenoble 2004: 1953). As often argued in this work, rather than being restricted to and determined by the syntax of the sentence, the meaning of (paren)theticals relates to the situation in which discourse takes place.

Starting from this very general assumption, we follow Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1350-62) in defining this meaning as "non-restrictive". This type of meaning may go beyond the scope of Sentence Grammar, being eventually shaped by the entire situation of discourse. The main features of the concept of situation of discourse can be described with reference to a network of the components proposed in the following list (see also Kaltenböck 2010: 263).

COMPONENTS DETERMINING THE SITUATION OF DISCOURSE (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 865):

- Text organization (TO)
- **Source of information (SI)**
- **Attitudes of the speaker (AS)**
- Speaker-hearer interaction (SHI)
- Discourse setting (DS)
- World knowledge (WK)

The functions of the CCs that we will address in this chapter refer exactly to the macro-components ATTITUDES OF THE SPEAKER and SOURCE OF INFORMATION of the global situation of discourse. More specifically, the former (AS) refers to the following operations among others: offering evaluations, providing modal assessments, opinions, etc. As recognised by Kaltenböck et al. (2011: 866), this modal function is a salient function of (paren)theticals. Indeed, another crucial function of (paren)theticals is to provide the speaker's source of information (SI) with respect to a given claim. It is most of all reporting clauses that manifest this component and quite a number of uses of this component concern evidential concepts. In other words, these two macro-components refer to the expression of the speaker's subjective stance, both on a propositional level and on a speech act-level.

The very same components are defined as belonging to the *metalinguistic domain* by Erman (2001). According to the author, markers such as *I think* and *you know* may be referred to as *metalinguistic monitors* performing modal functions. In fact, in uttering a modal marker, the speaker informs the hearer about her commitment to the truth of the proposition or about the judgement of the importance or value of what is being communicated. In other words, the constructions belonging

to this domain serve a function devoted to relieving the speaker from being completely committed to the truth value of a certain proposition. The markers belonging to the metalinguistic domain are clearly oriented towards the speaker's *attitude* to the content and value of the message.

The level we are going to investigate has also been defined as *rhetorical*. In the field of pragmatics, the expression *rhetorical domain* was first introduced by Redeker (1990: 369) in her seminal work on discourse coherence relations. Starting from the observation of Bühler (1934), language use always involves both the representation of propositional content and the expression of the speaker's attitudes and intentions. Rhetorical markers express a relation between the speaker's beliefs and intentions motivating them (Redeker 1990; 1991). In fact, only the ideational functions are shown to be insufficient for an adequate account of discourse coherence. Coherence is viewed as developing out from the semantic relationships between the ideas that are stated and the pragmatic relations among the actions performed in speaking/ writing. Empirical evidence for this view is provided by the employment of pragmatic and ideational structuring devices. Concerning the former, Redeker draws the distinction between the sequential and the *rhetorical* functions of pragmatic markers. Two discourse units are deemed to be rhetorically related if the strongest relation is between the utterances and the beliefs and intentions motivating them. Conversely, when two utterances do not show any ideational or rhetorical link, while still being considered as belonging to the very same discourse, their relation is defined as sequential (see paraphrase, aside, digression functions among others, Redeker 1990: 369).

Redeker's works (1990, 1991) are deeply related to the framework of the Rhetorical Structure Theory as developed by Mann and Thompson (1988), which elaborates a descriptive framework for text, identifying a hierachic structure in the latter. More specifically, the model describes the relations between parts of the text on a functional ground, by identifying both the transition point of a relation and the extent of the items which are related (Mann and Thompson 1988)<sup>35</sup>.

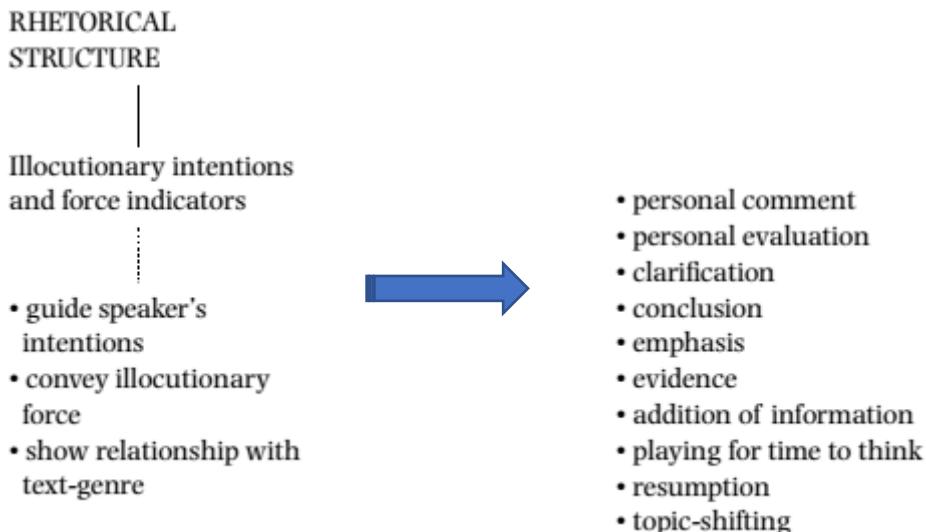
More recently, the slightly different label *rhetorical structure* has been employed by González (2005: 54) who, starting from Redeker's model, defined as rhetorical those markers aimed at signalling the speaker's intentions and goals and practically helping convey the speaker's

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<sup>35</sup> It is worth underlining that the employment of the term *rhetorical* does not seem casual. In fact, in 1966 Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca had published their *treatise* on the argumentation, where they investigate the underlying structure of the arguments. More specifically, in that work they study the operations or the thought mechanisms which characterise the argumentative process in its various forms (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 2011 [1966]: xiii). They talk about a new **rhetoric**, which takes into account practical usages of the intellect and which is deeply connected to the language (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 2001 [1966]: 7-10). A new interest for each structure of the argumentation thus emerges. In fact, the authors assert that the argumentative techniques may be retrieved at each level of formality, from private discourse to public oration. Then attention is especially devoted to language (discursive means), therefore the Treatise on the (new) Rhetoric is deeply connected to the linguistic level, with a general interest for the audience (intersubjective component - see also Venier 2012).

illocutionary force. Under the head of rhetorical structure, she includes the functions enlisted in the following figure.

**Figure 3. 1** Gonzalez's taxonomy of DMs Rhetorical domain functions



The very same domain is reshaped by Crible (2018: 98), who defines it as expressing relations between epistemic and speech-act events and metadiscursive functions. See Figure 3.2.

**Figure 3. 2** Crible's taxonomy of DMs domains and functions (with emphasis added)

Ideational	Rhetorical	Sequential	Interpersonal
cause	motivation	punctuation	monitoring
consequence	conclusion	opening boundary	face-saving
concession	opposition	closing boundary	disagreeing
contrast	specification	topic-resuming	agreeing
alternative	reformulation	topic-shifting	elliptical
condition	relevance	quoting	
temporal	emphasis	addition	
exception	comment	enumeration	
	approximation		

Although owing much to such taxonomies, in this work, we prefer to adopt the label *speaker-oriented* domain by recalling Bybee's classification on the different types of modality and applying the label to the two macro-components of the situation of discourse defined by Kaltenböck et al. (2011) in their classification of the macro-functions of parentheticals<sup>36</sup>, namely Speaker's attitudes

<sup>36</sup> The term “speaker-oriented” as used in this work pertains to what Finegan (1995) defines as subjective. He claims that subjectivity is the “[...] expression of self and the representation of a speaker’s (or, more generally, a locutionary agent’s) perspective or point of view in discourse [...] what has been called a speaker’s imprint.” (Finegan 1995: 1). However, we prefer the term speaker-oriented because it immediately targets a body of pragmatic research which addresses specifically the discourse relations expressed by pragmatic devices - such as CCs. We think that it

and Source of knowledge. Within these macro-*components*, we will include different micro-functions, thus obtaining a more fine-grained classification of the functions of those CCs which make explicit such speaker-oriented components in the speech event.

The reasons motivating our choice are several.

Firstly, the distinction in different *components* pertaining to the discourse situation is specifically thought for parentheticals, thus resulting more suitable for the analysis of our CCs, which - as often underlined - are a specific class of verbal parentheticals (see 1.3.4).

Secondly, the term *rhetorical* has been mainly thought for dealing with discourse coherence relations, therefore we believe that it is more appropriate for the analysis of textual/sequential markers (or at least relational DMs) and less for analysing verbal strategies expressing the speaker's stance. For instance, under the head of Crible's function of *comment* are subsumed different functions which are crucial in this work and that need to be distinguished (epistemic vs evidential vs exemplifying, for instance). Moreover, under the head of rhetorical structure, González enlists functions which may be ascribed to the textual domain (see the function of topic-shifting). In general, many textual functions are specifically listed under the head of rhetorical domain, whereas we believe that under the domain at issue only modal functions should be included.

Thirdly - deeply correlated to the second aspect - the expression *rhetorical domain*, being very detailed, includes several functions which are not suitable for the analysis of CCs, which, conversely require other crucial categories such as epistemicity and evidentiality. The impact of CCs in making the speaker's epistemic stance explicit leads us to choose the term *speaker-oriented* properly to evoke that body of research aimed at investigating the encoding of the speaker's modal attitude in discourse. Therefore, despite being functionally very similar to our definition of domain, we preferred to use neither the term rhetorical nor the term metatextual.

To conclude this section dealing with the choice of the most adequate label representing the functions at stake, we may assert that our definition of speaker-oriented is very similar to the notion of *subjective domain* in Degand's terms (2014) and of *personal stance* and *social cohesion/coherence* in Ghezzi and Molinelli (2014a, b) taxonomy on DMs functions. Furthermore, it is orthogonal to Sweetser (1990) epistemic and speech act level functions. In fact, we include under the same head all those CC expressing speaker's **self**, both in terms of epistemic stance (epistemic/evidential stance) and of illocutionary force (for instance, emphasis). For this very

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immediately recalls the notion of both epistemic and argumentative CC potential. However, we will come back to the issue later.

reason, our definition of speaker-oriented domain includes some of the interpersonal domain functions as defined by Halliday and Hasan (1976)<sup>37</sup>:

The **interpersonal** component is concerned with the social, expressive and conative functions of language, with expressing the speaker's 'angle': his **attitudes** and **judgements**, [...] We can summarize these by saying that the ideational component represents the speaker in his role as observer, while the interpersonal component represents the speaker in his role as **intruder**<sup>38</sup>. (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 26-27).

In the following paragraph, we will provide a working definition of the functions we included under the head of the speaker-oriented domain as just defined.

### 3.1.2 A working definition of the speaker-oriented domain

After a working definition of the domain, we will describe which types of functions it refers to in this work. As anticipated, differences in research questions and degree of granularity between the above-mentioned taxonomies and the investigated strategies called for an internal remodulation leading to the following system with the functions we will discuss in the next sections.

Broadly speaking, by means of these markers, the speaker conveys her epistemic stance and the required illocutionary force to the discourse unit to which the marker refers (González 2005: 76). As we will argue, stance is more properly viewed from an inter-subjective vantage point, rather than being regarded as exclusively a subjective dimension of language (Kärkkäinen 2006: 699). This aspect will be clearer when we will discuss some of the speech act-functions. The domain includes the following functions:

**Epistemic modality** - EP: firstly, it refers to the expression of speaker's stance. "Epistemic modality [...] specifies an attitude of the speaker towards the state of affairs in general. It is thus fully 'speaker-oriented'" (Nuys 2001). Possible paraphrases: "maybe". Moreover, we tagged the function **Epistemic rounding** - EPROUN, which is used to signal those specific cases where the CC expresses commitment modulation with respect to the utterance of unspecified quantities. Possible paraphrases: "more or less".

**Evidentiality** - EV: along with expressing her epistemic stance, the speaker may express her proof about a given claim. The category under scrutiny was already included in González's taxonomy under the label EVIDENCE. It refers to the speaker's commitment modulation, complemented by a glance at the proof she can provide. Possible paraphrases: "allegedly, presumably".

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<sup>37</sup> In taxonomies on DMs relations classification, speaker-oriented domain is either absent or grouped with interpersonal functions, as the classical Halliday and Hasan (1976) and in more recent work by Cuenca (2013).

<sup>38</sup> Emphasis added.

Moreover, a specific epistemic function is covered by

**Exemplification - EXEM:** the CC is used to signal the hypothetical and non-exhaustive status of the item(s) under its scope. The category as used in this work is very akin to **epistemicity** (Mauri 2017), as it refers to the construction of a context-based category and not merely to a reformulation process (or clarification) concerning the textual domain (see the function of reformulation in the sequential domain<sup>39</sup>). Possible paraphrases: “for instance, let us suppose”.

Furthermore, markers with a modal function are assumed to be directed towards the speaker’s subjective appreciation of the illocutionary force of the utterance (Erman 2001: 1341). With respect to existing taxonomies of DMs functions, we adapted and specified further the functions of speaker’s COMMENT and of PERSONAL EVALUATION, which have been adjusted in order to establish which type of evaluation or comment is conveyed. A specific type of comment is expressed through the function of:

**Mirativity - MIR:** the function is used to make explicit the attitude of unexpectedness or the speaker’s unprepared mind to a given piece of information. Mirative (in Plungian’s terminology *admirative*) value is modal, because it deals with a special kind of judgement, namely a judgement of the speaker’s status of expectations (Plungian 2001: 355). Paraphrase: “just figure out”.

**Emphasis - EMP:** it expresses the reinforcement of the speaker’s argumentative position (see Erman 2001). Possible paraphrases: “really, indeed”.

**Hedging - HED:** as the equivalent of face-threat mitigation (see González’s (2005) inferential component), the CC with hedging function is used to serve as a face-saving strategy aimed at preserving the speaker’s positive self-image (Erman 2001: 1347). Paraphrase: “I would think, my opinion is”. Finally, we included the function of

**Justification - JUST:** in spite of it being identified with an inferential domain function by González, we included the function of justification under the head of the speaker-oriented domain in that it helps identifying speaker’s intentions despite (see Redeker 1990: 369) being placed on the speech act-level (see Sweetser 1990). As will become clearer, it refers to a form of justification (motivation) for the performance of a given speech act, such as an interrogation. Paraphrase: “I mean, I say/I perform it because....”.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See function of ‘elliptical’ in Crible’s taxonomy on DMs functions in French and English (201: 98).

<sup>40</sup> To sum up, among the speaker-oriented domain we included what González (2005) refers to as the components used to “guide speaker’s intentions” and to “convey illocutionary force”. Therefore, we excluded or adjusted the value of the macro-component “showing relationship with text-genre” (addition of information, conclusion, topic-shifting, resumption, playing for time to think), which we included in the textual domain. With respect to Gonzalez’s taxonomy, we moved RESUMPTION and TOPIC-SHIFTING functions to the textual domain from the original rhetorical domain in González’s terms (see also Crible’s classification 2018).

In the next paragraphs, we will discuss in more detail the functions we have anticipated. Section 3.2.1 focuses on CCs functions which affect the propositional content (epistemic, evidential and exemplification functions), whereas in 3.2.2 we will address the speech act level functions, which make the speaker's stance explicit in terms of illocutionary force (emphasis, hedging, mirativity and speech act-motivation).

### **3.2 From semantics to pragmatics: the speaker-oriented domain functions**

Before discussing the attested correlations, we will briefly summarise some general considerations pertaining to samples, frequency of functions, variety of attested sources and so on.

**Table 3. 1** Percentage of speaker-oriented domain CCs

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall
	585/1222 (47,8%)	637/1222 (52,1%)	1222/4123 (29,6% <sup>41</sup> )

**Table 3. 2** Percentage of speaker-oriented domain functions

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Evidential</b>	189/585 (32,3%)	232/637 (36,4%)	421/1222 (34,4%)
<b>Epistemic</b>	131/585 (22,3%)	127/637 (19,9%)	258/1222 (21,1%)
<b>Emphasis</b>	119/585 (20,3%)	143/637 (22,4%)	262/1222 (21,4%)
<b>Exemplification</b>	102/585 (17,4%)	83/637 (13%)	185/1222 (15,1%)
<b>Hedging</b>	37/585 (6,3%)	26/637 (4%)	63/1222 (5,1%)
<b>Justification</b>	2/585 (0,3%)	11/637 (1,7%)	13/1222 (1%)
<b>Mirativity</b>	5/585 (0,8%)	15/637 (2,3%)	20/1222 (1,6%)

**Table 3. 3** Percentage of speaker-oriented domain CCs semantic sources

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall
V. <i>dicendi</i>	204/585 (34,8%)	251/637 (39,4%)	455/1222 (37,2%)
Semifactives	150/585 (25,6%)	94/637 (14,7%)	244/1222 (19,9%)
Weak assertives	121/585 (20,6%)	178/637 (27,9%)	299/1222 (24,4%)
Strong assertives	48/585 (8,2%)	52/637 (8,1%)	100/1222 (8,1%)
Perceptual v.	29/585 (4,9%)	57/637 (8,9%)	86/1222 (7%)
Performative v.	17/585 (2,9%)	2/637 (0,3%)	19/1222 (1,5%)
thers	16/585 (2,7%)	3/637 (0,4%)	19/1222 (1,5%)

<sup>41</sup> This is not the combination of the two samples. It is rather the frequency of speaker-oriented domain in relation to the whole frequency of CCs.

**Table 3. 4** Percentage of speaker-oriented CCs person

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall
1°p	445/585 (76%)	431/637 (67,6%)	876/1222 (71,6%)
2°p	55/585 (13%)	70/637 (10,9%)	125/1222 (10,2%)
3°p	85/585 (14,5%)	136/637 (21,3%)	221/1222 (18%)

As shown, the most frequent functions pertain to the expression of the speaker's epistemic stance (epistemic, evidential and exemplificative functions) and to the function of emphasis (see Thompson 2002 on the category of complement-taking predicates such as *think*, *know*, *be possible*). Therefore, propositional-level functions are more frequent than speech act-level functions. CCs select mostly the first-person value of *verba dicendi*, followed by weak assertive predicates and semifactive verbs. However not only first-person forms are retrieved. We can retrieve also second-person and third-person forms. Finally, in the following tables, we show the distribution of CCs in micro and in macrosyntax:

**Table 3. 5** Percentage of microsyntax and of macrosyntax (speaker-oriented domain)

Corpus/position	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Microsyntax</b>	428/585 (73,1%)	457/637 (71,7%)	885/1222 (72,4%)
<b>Macrosyntax</b>	157/585 (26,8%)	180/637 (28,2%)	337/1222 (27,5%)

**Table 3. 6** Percentage of microsyntax (speaker-oriented domain)

Corpus/(micro)position	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Initial</b>	132/428 (30,8%)	145/457 (31,7%)	277/885 (31,2%)
<b>Medial</b>	168/428 (39,2%)	227/457 (49,6%)	395/885 (44,6%)
<b>Final</b>	128/428 (29,9%)	85/457 (18,5%)	213/885 (24%)

**Table 3. 7** Percentage of macrosyntax (speaker-oriented domain)

Corpus/(macro)position	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Initial</b>	83/157 (52,8%)	108/180 (60%)	191/337 (56%)
<b>Medial</b>	26/157 (16,5%)	35/180 (19,4%)	61/337 (18,1%)
<b>Final</b>	48/157 (30,5%)	37/180 (20,5%)	85/337 (25,2%)

As observed, the preferred distribution is in microsyntax, in which CCs are especially distributed in medial position followed by initial position. In macrosyntax CCs are placed initially.

### 3.2.1 CCs and propositional content: epistemicity and evidentiality

Some of the speaker-oriented domain functions refer to the expression of the speaker's EPISTEMIC STANCE<sup>42</sup>.

Basically, the speaker may (meta)comment to

- ✓ **epistemically** express “the evaluation of the chances that a certain hypothetical state of affairs under consideration (of some aspect of it) will occur, is occurring or has occurred in a possible world” (Nuyts 2001: 21). Furthermore, the speaker may (meta)comment to
- ✓ express **evidentiality**, which is understood as “a semantic-functional domain having to do with the kinds of ‘proof’ speakers are able to adduce in order to underpin their statements” (Diewald and Smirnova 2010: 2).<sup>43</sup> Evidentiality implies an indication of the source of information or the kind of evidence the speaker has for a given SoA, e.g., that it is inferred from other information or that is compatible with the speaker's background knowledge (inference), or that it has been attained through others (hearsay - Nuyts 2009: 144).

Speakers frequently deliver judgments based on perceptual, reported, or inferred evidence they obtained. Therefore, the relationship between epistemicity and evidentiality is often very close and difficult to delineate (González et al. 2017: 68; Hennemann 2012). However, following de Haan (2006); Mushin (2001); Nuyts (2005), we will keep a distinction between the two functions. Whereas epistemic modality is concerned with the speaker's bare evaluation, judgment and degree of commitment with respect to the truth-value of a piece of information (neutral commitment modulation), evidentiality pertains to the speaker's assertion of the source and/or of the type of evidence she disposes of (see also Gosselin 2010, Pietrandrea 2018: 171, González et al. 2017: 68).

The use of evidential and epistemic marking as a speaker-oriented strategy has received little attention in the literature on discourse strategies, that is, on those markers which can express that function lexically, not only through inflection and derivation. In fact, both the semantic notions have been thoroughly dealt regarding morphosyntactic and grammatical marking (with the exclusion of some works on the semantics and on the syntactic behaviour of some predicates, see Hooper 1975, Borillo 1982 and, more recently, Venier 1991). However, relatively little has been explored with respect to discourse markers and particles playing such a role in pragmatic and textual terms in the spoken domain (González et al. 2017: 68)<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> See, among many others, Thompson and Mulac 1991; Venier 1991; Aijmer 1997, Tsui 2001 Stenström 1995; Simon-Vandenbergen 2000; Thompson 2002, Kärkkäinen 2003; Scheibman 2002, Schneider 1999, 2007a, 2007b, Grenoble 2004, Van Bogaert 2011, Brinton 2008, Dehé and Wichmann 2010a, b, Zhang 2014.

<sup>43</sup> According to some authors, such as van der Auwera and Plungian (1998: 86), modality (“epistemicity” in our terms) and evidentiality partially overlap.

<sup>44</sup> It is clear that we are not referring to a grammatical paradigm of evidentiality (see Plungian 2001).

In line with a body of research investigating the behaviour of pragmatic structures through a constructional perspective (see Fischer 2010; 2015; Hennemann 2012), we believe that in order to study such phenomena with respect to spoken discourse, it is crucial to take into account the role of co-text, not merely the lexical semantics of the CC source, as stated by some linguists working in analytical philosophy paradigms, interested in the semantic and syntactic behaviour of specific predicates (semantic distinction between weak *vs* strong assertive predicates and so on - starting from seminal paper by Urmson 1952 and reaching more recent investigations such as Borillo 1972 and Venier 1991 on parenthetical verbs and adverbs in French and in Italian) or by some authors such as Kaltenböck (2005) in his recent survey on CCs in English. We aim at complementing this robust body of research with an analysis of spoken data, in order to uncover how these predicates behave in spoken discourse and whether other markers<sup>45</sup> may be mobilised to express these functions in some specific co(n)texts (see Enghels 2018).

What we will try to make clear is that these epistemic functions are not always encoded in the lexical semantics of the CC source. Rather, sometimes crucial meaning aspects may be contributed by the co-text. In other words, even though they are not pure evidential markers, CCs may play a role in expressing the speaker's comment with respect to the epistemic status of knowledge (cf. Hennemann 2012 on modal adverbs and cognitive attitude predicates in Spanish).

It is worth recognising that investigating the epistemic/evidential functions of pragmatic markers and particles is traceable in the literature. In Coates' work (1987), epistemic modals are defined more broadly as linguistic elements expressing an attitude to the proposition and facilitating interaction (see Visconti 2013). According to the author, they have polypragmatic functions, not always clear-cut and so easy to identify if one takes into account exclusively the lexical semantics of the CC verbal source. Simon-Vanderbergen and Aijmer (2007: 3-5) with respect to the contiguous category of modal adverbs assert that:

[...] we need to bring into the picture modal adverbs as rhetorical strategies in order to bridge the gap between the epistemic or assertive meaning and the intended effects of the utterance. In this book we will propose an interactive approach to modal adverbs which takes into account the dialogical nature of all verbal communication. An account in terms of truth-value needs to be enriched by an account in terms of stance taking vis-à-vis other opinions. People express certainty for a myriad reasons which can only be understood if we examine the epistemically qualified utterances in the context of other utterances, real or imagined.

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<sup>45</sup> Others than the predicates identified in analytic philosophy paradigms.

By monitoring values of formal parameters internal to the CC (person and lexical semantics of the verbal form) and distributional parameters - syntactic aspects such as the position, type of host mood, pattern of co-occurrence (such as causal connectives), and *irrealis* status of the co-text, we tried to draw a discourse profile of epistemic and evidential CCs in spoken discourse.

In identifying the functions, a noteworthy parameter we employed is the paraphrase test (Degand 2014). What we will classify as evidential CCs may be paraphrased as *I conclude* (see Venier 1991: 50-53), *I infer*, *I deduce*, *I derive* or as an evidential adverb - even when the CC derives from a predicate (such as *penso* ‘I think’) which should be classified as *weak assertive* in terms of lexical semantics.

We will start by enlisting all the CCs which may be used to express epistemic stance. Then, we will classify them based on the lexical semantics of the sources used to express such operation and on their morpho-syntactic properties.

**Table 3. 8 Percentage of Epistemic and Evidential functions**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Epistemic</b>	127/258 (49,2%)	131/258 (50,7%)	258/1222 (21,1%)
<b>Evidential</b>	232/421(55,1%)	189/421 (44,8%)	421/1222 (34,4%)

A first observation concerns the frequency: the evidential function is more frequently<sup>46</sup> retrieved than the epistemic function, a fact which mirrors the variability of the markers employed with the former function, as observed in the Tables below:

**Table 3. 9 Epistemic and Evidential CCs**

Corpus	epistemic CCs	evidential CCs
<b>Lip</b>	(io) credo, diciamo (così), dico direi, (io) non so/credo, me sa, me sembra, mi pare/sa/ mi sembra, penso (io), ripeto, spero, supponiamo	abbiamo detto, alcuni (detrattori del codice) dicono, Arzilli mi diceva, ci auguriamo, credo (io), devo pensare, dice (Aristotele, il problema, il proverbio, la regia, l’evangelista Matteo), dicemmo, diceva l’Elisa, dicevamo una volta, dicevi, dicono, diremo subito, Esposito diceva, (m’)ha/detto (tu)/io/Anna/la XYZ, abbiamo/hai/hanno detto, ho l’impressione, ho visto, il Corriere della sera diceva, il quizze dice, immaginate, immaginavo, immagino, io avevo detto, io capisco, io confido, io dico (sempre),

<sup>46</sup> We are referring to the global sample. One can notice that in the KIParla Corpus the function is less frequent than the function of epistemic modality.

		io ho pensato, (io) mi auguro, io so, io vedo, me sa, mi dice il signor segretario, mi diceva, mi dici, mi dicono, mi pare/sa/sembra/sembrerebbe, non so, pare, pensava/o, premetto, presumo, quella di francese m'ha detto, ricordo, si dice, si pensa, si sa, si vede spero, suppongo, t'ho detto, tu dicevi, vede, (voi) vedete (ancora), vedo, vedrai, vedremo, Vincenzo diceva, voi dicevate,
<b>KIParla</b>	credo, (io) penso, immagino, mi pare, mi sembra, mi sa, non so, diciamo, direi, ricordo, suppongo	vedete, si vede, spero, m'hai/abbiamo detto, abbiamo visto, afferma il logografo ecateo, bolter e grusin ci dicono, cecchi dice, credo (io), dicevo anche alla sua collega prima, (lei) dice (Peters, Pirandello), dicevamo ieri, dici, diciamo, dico sempre io, dicono loro, (io) direi, immagino, (io) penso, (lei) (mi) ha detto, (mi) hai detto, mi ricordo, mi sa, non so, oggi noi sappiamo, poi vedremo, spero, suppongo, tu mi dici, vedi, vi ho detto, voi mi direte

Given it is always claimed that epistemic and evidential markers are especially first and second person forms of specific predicates (see Kaltenböck 2005), let us have a glance at their morpho-syntactic properties, i.e. person value and lexical semantics of the CC source.

**Table 3. 10** CCs source and morpho-syntactic properties (epistemicity and evidentiality)

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Epistemicity (source)</b>	weak: 98/127 (77,1%) strong: 2/127 (1,5%) dicendi: 13/127 (10,2%) semifactive: 14/127 (11%)	weak: 77/131 (58,7%) strong: 6/131 (4,5%) dicendi: 12/131 (9,1%) semifactive: 36/131 (27,4%)	weak: 175/258 (67,8%) strong: 8/258 (3%) semifactive: <b>50/258 (19,3%)</b> dicendi: 25/258 (9,6%)
<b>Evidentiality (source)</b>	dicendi: 69/232 (29,7%) weak: 69/232 (29,7%) strong: 35/232 (15%) semifactive: 13/232 (5,6%) perceptual: 46/232 (19,8%)	dicendi: 61/189 (32,2%) weak: 41/189 (21,6%) strong: 36/189 (19%) semifactive: 26/189 (13,7%) perceptual: 25/189 (13,2%)	dicendi: 130/421 (30,8%) perceptual: 71/421 (16,8%) semifactive: 39/421 (9,2%) strong: 71 /421 (16,8%) weak: <b>110/421 (26,1%)</b>
<b>Epistemicity (person)</b>	1p°: 73/127 (57,4%) 3p°: 53/127 (41,7%)	1p°: 89/131 (67,9%) 3p°: 41/131 (31,2%)	1p°: 162/258 (62,7%) 3p°: 94/258 (36,4%)
<b>Evidentiality (person)</b>	1p°: 111/232 (47,8%) 2p°: 49/232 (21,1%)	1p°: 108/189 (57,1%) 2p°: 42/189 (22,2%)	1p°: 219/421 (52%) 2p°: 91/421 (21,6%)

	3p°: 72/232 (31%)	3p°: 39/189 (20,6%)	3p°: 111/421 (26,3%)
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Let us quickly hint at some remarkable facts: whereas epistemicity is frequently expressed through weak predicates as expected, i.e. predicate expressing a bare commitment modulation, it may also occur to be expressed through strong assertive predicates and semifactive verbs. Therefore, in spite of the semantics' compatibility with a proof of speaker's assertion, in the co-text we cannot grasp any reference to the proof. This first result illuminates our constructional study which goes beyond the mere observation of the CC lexical semantics of its source to classify its function. Conversely, the function of evidentiality may be expressed canonically by strong assertive predicates, but also by weak predicates, which "receive" an evidential reading in the co(n)text. Moreover, the markers select not only first-person markers, but also third-person values thus demolishing the claim that 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person markers are only used with epistemic functions.

In what follows, we present the distribution of epistemic CCs in the two components of microsyntax and macrosyntax. It is shown that they are more frequently employed in microsyntax with a preference for both medial and initial position. In macrosyntax they occur more frequently initially.

**Table 3. 11** Percentage of microsyntactic position (epistemicity)

	Corpus (epistemicity)		
Position (micro)	Lip	KIParla	overall
<b>Initial</b>	13/83 (15,6%)	8/80 (10%)	21/163 (12,8%)
<b>Final</b>	32/83 (38,5%)	36/80 (45%)	68/163 (41,7%)
<b>Medial</b>	38/83 (45,7%)	36/80 (45%)	74/163 (45,3%)

**Table 3. 12** Percentage of macrosyntactic position (epistemicity)

	Corpus (epistemicity)		
Position (macro)	Lip	KIParla	overall
<b>Initial</b>	19/44 (43,1%)	21/51 (41,1%)	40/95 (42,1%)
<b>Final</b>	16/44 (36,3%)	21/51 (41,1%)	37/95 (38,9%)
<b>Mmedial</b>	9/44 (20,4%)	9/51 (17,6%)	18/95 (18,9%)

As for epistemicity is concerned, the preferred position is medial in microsyntax and to a lesser extent final. Macrosyntax is less frequent with a preference for initial position. In what follows, we present the same tables with respect to the function of evidentiality:

**Table 3. 13** Percentage of microsyntactic position (evidentiality)

	Corpus		
Position (micro)	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Initial</b>	56/165 (33,9%)	50/145 (34,4%)	106/310 (34,1%)
<b>Final</b>	29/165 (17,5%)	44/145 (30,3%)	73/310 (23,5%)
<b>Medial</b>	80/165 (48,4%)	51/145 (35,1%)	131/310 (42,2%)

**Table 3. 14** Percentage of macrosyntactic position (evidentiality)

	Corpus		
Position (macro)	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Initial</b>	44/67 (65,6%)	26/44 (59%)	70/111 (63%)
<b>Final</b>	14/67 (20,8%)	13/44 (29,5%)	27/111 (24,3%)
<b>Medial</b>	9/67 (13,4%)	5/44 (11,3%)	14/111 (12,6%)

Concerning evidentiality, there is a difference. In fact, in microsyntactic position, the preferred distribution is medial followed by initial. Macrosyntactically-speaking, also evidentiality is more frequently employed in initial position.

Summing up, we identified some main properties, which will be tackled along the next paragraphs. The first noteworthy consideration pertains to

the **VARIETY OF FORMS OF EVIDENTIAL CCs** and to the acknowledgement that not only first-person markers are used to convey such epistemic/evidential stance functions<sup>47</sup> (see Kaltenböck 2005 on the distinction between CCs and reported clauses based *exclusively* on the form).

**DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS AND VARIETY OF CCs HOSTING STRUCTURES:** CCs with epistemic functions are often placed in **medial** position in **microsyntax** component. Referring to macrosyntax, CCs are more often placed initially, as expected.

Evidential functions occur in medial position in 42,2% of the total amount of occurrences of microsyntax. 3.5) and 3.6) exemplify what we mean by medial position:

### 3.5) Noi partiremo il nove **mi sembra** agosto (Lip, NB33) → WITHIN PHRASAL NUCLEUS

<sup>47</sup> In dealing with the encoded construction meanings, Ariel (2010: 188) assumes the co-existence between general and more specific-sub constructions which had been in turn endorsed by Thompson (2002) with respect to complement-taking predicates (CTPs, like *think*, *know* and *be possible*). The function of these predicates is to frame the utterances they co-occur with, that is, they express epistemic, evidential or evaluative stance attached to their hosts. Thompson notices that some lexical items are used over and over (occurring as “unadorned matrices”). Other items are less formulaic, thus supporting Langacker’s point that speaker’s grammars are expected to store both highly abstract generalizations, and partially idiosyncratic collocations. Indeed, constructions, therefore, may be represented as (more specific) sub-constructions, with specified lexical material which is incorporated into the schema of the construction (Ariel 2010: 188; see also Van Bogaert 2011 on English networks of varying formulaic and non-formulaic constructions).

We will leave on 9<sup>th</sup> **it seems to me** (of) August

- 3.6) Non sanno più nemmeno cosa significa sovietica cioè che **mi sembra** anche in fondo un pochino pochi mesi fa aveva un significato (Lip, MA5) → WITHIN CLAUSAL NUCLEUS  
They don't even know what Soviet means which **it seems to me** actually a little bit a few months ago had a meaning

**(A)SYMMETRY BETWEEN CCs FUNCTIONS AND SOURCE:** the lexical semantics of the source and the function played in the context do not always overlap. For instance, in 3.7) we provide an example of asymmetry, i.e., lexically epistemic (or weak assertive in Venier 1991) source is used to perform evidential function in the context:

- 3.7) **credo** per quello che ho visto insomma in questi laboratori molti stanno nel bordello [nessuno si aspetta di arrivare nella torre di cristallo] (Lip, NA5)  
**I think** from what I have experienced in these laboratories, many (of them) are in hell no one expects to arrive in the Crystal Tower

Even though a weak predicate is employed, the speaker provides evidence for her claim, which refers to her personal experience in the field at issue. In fact, she utters a premise - supporting her into believing p - which confers a higher degree of confidence.

**IRREALIS:** In the Corpora only 15% of total occurrences of epistemic functions and of evidential functions occur in *irreal* contexts as in 3.8) and 3.9).

- 3.8) per le otto **penso** ce la faremo (Lip, NA2)  
by 8 **I think** we'll make it
- 3.9) può contare allora **presumo** su un'ottima conoscenza della lingua inglese (Lip, NA12)  
So you can rely **I presume** on an excellent proficiency of English

As can be seen, in these examples, the CC occurs in irreal contexts (see the epistemic form *faremo* ('we'll make') and the modal *può* ('you can') in 3.9). However, in most cases the CC is the *only* device which conveys *irrealis*. Therefore, we will make some hypotheses about its semantic impact and detachability.

In 3.2.1.1, we will address the issue of the distributional patterns, in that we traced down a great deal of variability with respect to structures hosting the CCs under examination, due to the features of spoken discourse (see Ch. 2). Special attention will be paid to medial position, which may be clausal, phrasal or intra-phrasal. This distributional pattern manifests the interruptive force of CCs both on a clausal and on a phrasal level (see Schneider 2007a, b on reduced parenthetical clauses in Romance languages).

We will argue that this distributional pattern is correlated with another fact, i.e., the type of CC host mood. Indeed, CCs may be hosted by elliptical assertions (verbless hosts). As we will see, in spoken discourse, CCs are not always hosted at the beginning of full, well-formed assertions following canonical principles of embedding and hierarchization as the analytic philosophical literature has always underlined (see Hooper (1975), who first defined weak and strong predicates based properly on the fact that the assertives are exactly those predicates which are hosted by assertions); moreover, most of the CCs are complement-taking predicates, whose canonical position is indeed initial. Rather, evidential and epistemic CCs may be hosted by verbless hosts or other structures, which can be explained in terms of macrosyntactic principles (2.2).

In 3.2.1.2, it will be argued that the lexical semantics of the source and the function contextually performed by the CC do not always correspond. For instance, (evidential) meaning nuances may be contributed by the co-text. More specifically, epistemic functions will be discussed in 3.2.1.2.1 and in 3.2.1.2.2, which will explicitly deal with the study of a specific epistemic function, that is exemplification. Section 3.2.1.2.3 will focus on the analysis of evidential CCs functions. An overview of the types of evidence will be provided by applying Plungian's (2001) taxonomy of evidential values highlighting that evidential functions may be also played by non-intrinsically epistemic CCs. In conclusion, Section 3.2.1.2.4 presents the issue of epistemic stance and *irrealis* status of the co-text (Mauri and Sansò 2016). As, we will argue, the occurrence of CCs in real or in irreal contexts seems crucial to define whether the former may be actually deleted or not (see Brinton's definition of clausal discourse markers). Since CCs have been defined as clausal, detachable DMs, we intend to investigate whether CCs are really detachable without affecting the truth-value (neustic component, see Venier 1991). As we will show, sometimes CCs are the only strategies employed to encode epistemicity. The discussion will be finally complemented by a quick glance at the prosodic profile of some CCs with the aim of evaluating whether they are prosodically set off (see Simon 2004 on parentheticals in spoken French).

### **3.2.1.1 Distributional patterns**

Let us start from a first significant finding which has emerged from our analysis:

- i) as anticipated, CCs are not always hosted by well-formed assertions as the definition of complement-taking predicates would suggest.
- ii) CCs often occur in medial position, both with respect to micro and macrosyntax.

Far from occurring exclusively in assertions reflecting principles of embedding and projections, in spoken discourse, CCs performing these intertwined functions may occur in different host types,

to the point that sometimes they may be hosted by what we defined as verbless hosts in Ch. 2, which correspond to what Haselow (2017) defines as unintegrated expressions.

According to the author, unintegrated expressions belong to the macro-category of lexical and structural units such as disjuncts, parentheticals, tags, interjections, insubordinate if-clauses, tags, hanging topics, syntactic fragments, vocatives, or discourse strategies, which are not, or not immediately, involved in clause-internal, morphosyntactic dependency relations. Thus, they fall “outside” the grammar of the clause, as argued in Ch. 2. CCs may be hosted by macrogrammatical fragments, which we defined as Verbless hosts (see Voghera’s definition of *clausole senza verbo* (‘verbless clauses’)). In such occurrences, the relations between the CC and the host is one of linearization without hierarchisation, which correspond to specific temporal phases in the production of a given unit of talk (Haselow 2017: 9, 82, 124).

In these types of occurrences, the CC can be conceived as the initial or the final field of an upcoming unit and thus precedes a structural unit without having a microsyntactic relation with it (Haselow 2017: 147). A crucial indicator of the lack of embeddedness is, along with the absence of a formal marker of binary, hierarchically organized relationship (see CCs operational definition), the fact that CCs may occur with units of any structural type, ranging from a single lexeme, phrase to a longer textual stretch of discourse. Speakers seem to favour the aggregation of segments that are not complements on a syntactic ground. Rather, such units appear as the combinations of evidential or epistemic “phrases” and an assertion associated by loose discourse-pragmatic relations (see Thompson 2002: 134, 143; Haselow 2016: 90; Haselow 2017: 147).

In the examples below, the CC is hosted by different structures of varying length:

- 3.10) AC\_BO003: poi in germania un freddo in piscina (.) **credo** (KIParla, BOA3001)  
AC\_BO003: And in Germany so cold in the swimming pool **I believe**
- 3.11) LC\_TO035: [una stan]za singola: [...] con le spese tipo due e settanta **mi sembra**, (KIParla, TOA3002)  
LC\_TO035: A single room including fees like 270 euros **It seems to me**
- 3.12) e quando ritornate? I: ma **penso** sabato sera o domenica (Lip, RB9)  
When are you supposed to come back? But **I think** on Saturday night or on Sunday
- 3.13) cioè **mi pare** io non io so' stato\_ in tanti condomini pero' eh la l'ascensore si chiammava 'na vota all'  
anne [incomprensibile] ascensore tuamm' chiammate\_ 'na decina tanto (Lip, NB14)  
That is, **it seems to me** I don't I've been in so many condos but eh the elevator was  
checked once a year, rather you fixed it like ten times!

As exemplified, the CC is hosted by macrosyntactic components of varying dimension, whose classification requires a reference to the macro-component of syntax, which extends well beyond principles of linearization and hierarchisation referring to the clausal level (Degand 2014).

In 3.11), for instance, the CC is hosted by a complex utterance, where the logical relations are not explicitly recognised. Rather they need to be inferred. In 3.12), the CC is hosted by a verbless host, that is, a single constituent devoid of its clausal nucleus. In 3.10), the CC is placed in the final position of a structure which is made up of two blocks that are simply juxtaposed (see Calaresu 2018: 508), as argued later. Therefore, as anticipated, to classify the position of a number of CCs playing such functions we need to rely to the component of macrosyntax.

Let us start from the following occurrences, where the CC is hosted by a verbless host (VLH), that is by a single constituent made up by an NP or a bare lexeme:

- 3.14) KG\_BO113: [...] pero' qualcuno gli aveva detto, che aveva letto su facebook, **mi sa** davi,  
 KG\_BO113: che u- aveva fatto tipo un post un po' un inno all'alcolismo (KIParla, BOD2014)  
 But someone had told him, who had read on Facebook, **it seems to me** davi, that a- he/she had made like a post which was like a hymn to alcoholism.
- 3.15) LB\_BO100: tutto chiaro?  
 LB\_BO100: filo denso pero' (.) **spero** (.) abbastanza chiaro. (KIParla, BOD1007)  
 LB\_BO100: Is everything clear? a little bit dense but **I hope** pretty clear.
- 3.16) RP\_BO026: tre in forma piu' estesa e due no (.) l'incontrario [**mi sembra**:] (KIParla, BOA1015)  
 RP\_BO026: Three in more extended form and the other two. (no, wait) the opposite **it seems to me**
- 3.17) detto questo direi che forse il problema in questi termini non va posto in termini ?>C:  
 [nell'accezione storica] **mi pare** (Lip, RE9)  
 That being said I'd say that maybe the problem should not be addressed in these terms in the historical sense **It seems to me**
- 3.18) e quando ritornate? I: ma **penso** [sabato sera o domenica (Lip, RB9)]  
 When will you come back? But **I think** on Saturday night or on Sunday

As Nuyts (2001) recognises, speakers may manifest their commitment modulation with respect to a single piece of information, rather than to the whole propositional content of a certain sentence. The examples in 3.14) through 3.18) gather some empirical evidence for such a claim. In fact, the CC is hosted by a single constituent, i.e., not a sentence on a microsyntactic ground - which is not headed by linearisation (Thompson 2002 - over 545 occurrences of VLHs, 66 of them host evidential functions and 48 epistemic functions, over 87 insubordinate VLHs, 10 host evidential functions, over 181 occurrences of Theme-Rheme hosts, 20 of them host evidential functions).

More specifically, in example 3.11), the CC is hosted by a verbless host, whose predicate may be retrieved in the immediate co-text (see notion of sequential embeddedness in Haselow 2017: 104). However, we need to recognise that the operation of modalization is referred to the single piece of information, namely *the sum of rent* in 3.11), the adjective *plain* in 3.15), the NP *sabato sera o Domenica* ('on Saturday night or on Sunday') in 3.18). The same happens in example 3.14),

where the speaker performs an operation of self-reformulation relying on the linearization principle (macrosyntactic component). She substitutes the item *qualcuno* ('someone') with the proper name *davi*, which is the target of the epistemic operation.

Such distribution of epistemic/evidential CCs is linked to the **emergent essence of spoken discourse**. The spoken domain reveals itself to be the ideal setting where one can study the scope of such CCs, which may be constituted by a piece of evidence that is syntactically expressed through a bare NP, i.e., a fragment which is not headed by any structure in spoken discourse through a principle of hierarchisation (Haselow 2017, Voghera 2017, Enghels 2018). In that case, establishing the scope of the CC is easy.

Whereas in the abovementioned examples, the CC host is a single constituent in macrosyntactic terms (VLH), in the following examples, the former is hosted by a similar hanging structure which is made up by two communicative blocks. They are simply juxtaposed without any formal link, despite their being semantically correlated (Duranti and Ochs 1979):

- 3.19) sì millenovecento settantadue **mi sembra** il più recente (Lip, NA13)  
Yeah 1972 **it seems to me** the most recent one

- 3.20) a Stoccolma **mi pare** le lo le eh le Olimpiadi (Lip, FC5)  
In Stockholm **it seems to me** the the eh the Olympics

In such occurrences, we are faced with those complex structures consisting of an initial referent (typically a NP) and a following structural unit in which the initial referent is not co-indexed. Hence, it is non-integrated into any type of hierarchical relation (Haselow 2017: 107). The CCs are placed in between isolated units, which are linearised without any form of hierarchisation linking the two units at issue (see Haselow 2017: 99 on his reasoning of macrogrammar). Even though they are not licensed by principles of hierarchisation, these expressions produce structural relations on the textual ground in emergent talk, that is, relations beyond those links holding between the respective linguistic forms (Haselow 2017: 101, Auer 2009). Therefore, along with a function of epistemic modalization, the CCs are used to organize the flux of discourse. In these occurrences, CCs are used to “produce” structure on the communicative level, they do not appear as simple fillers. Consequently, the classification of the syntactic position of CCs leads us to take into account the macro-principles underlying the organization of emergent structural units, which cannot be reduced to microgrammatical relations, i.e., the component where linearity interacts with hierarchisation (Haselow 2017: 102-103).

Macrogrammar (or macrosyntax) plays an important role in this sense, as it provides expressions which are crucial to mark relations between emergent microgrammatical segments, namely

**bridging junctures** or “caesuras” in spoken discourse deriving from repairs, syntactic reconfigurations, delays, or from topically inappropriate assertions (Haselow 2017: 103-107).

Given that the function of macrogrammar is to structure emergent speech in terms of cognitive, text-organizational and interpersonal aspects, it encompasses all aspects of structured linearization outside microgrammatical relations. Macrogrammar thus pertains to the creation of coherent (spoken or written) text in the widest sense, and it is based on the speaker’s judgments of the degree of fit of a structural unit to a particular sequential and communicative context in which it is embedded. (Haselow 2017: 107).

Examples of this are properly hanging topics followed by a predicative segment (see 2.2).

As just outlined, epistemic and evidential CCs may occur in between (that is, in **medial** position) two given blocks thus playing a macro-cohesive function. Such a **medial** / interrupting position may also reflect principles of microsyntax (Degand 2014). The reduced scope of epistemic and evidential CCs may be also mirrored with the occurrence of microsyntactic medial position, that is in the distribution of CCs in the medial position of phrasal elements of clausal dependency (see Ch. 2). Let us consider the following occurrences:

- 3.21) CC\_BO104: daccordo noi ne avremo **penso** per una ventina di minuti [perche' poi] l'esame e' diviso in due parti quindi:: (KIParla, BOC1005)  
CC\_BO104: We will still have it **I think** for at least 20 mins since the exam is made up of two sections
- 3.22) IS\_BO091: eh pero', (.) era:: riferito **mi sa** alle informazioni, (KIParla, BOC1004)  
IS\_BO091: Eh but it was referred **it seems to me** to the information
- 3.23) quindi sono **credo** ottanta prenotazioni e circa duecento e passa listini (Lip, NC5)  
So they are **I think** eighty reservations and about two hundred price lists
- 3.24) SZ\_BO103: e perche' nella, e::hm::=nella:: nell'oroscopo, **credo**, cinese,  
SZ\_BO103: e::h la quinta casa, e' la casa dell'amore. (KIParla, BOD1010)  
SZ\_BO103: And because in the ehm in the in the horoscope, **I believe**, Chinese, eh the fifth house, is the House of Love → ehm in the, **I believe**, Chinese horoscope
- 3.25) c’è una necessità **presumo** di omogeneizzazione (Lip, RA3)  
There is a necessity **I presume** of standardization

In these occurrences, the CC expresses the speaker’s epistemic or evidential stance towards a piece of claim which is expressed through a phrase belonging to the clausal dependency. In some examples, the CC occurs in the medial position of the clausal dependency constituents. Some of such elements may be used as the focus of a cleft sentence (Lambrecht 2001). Nevertheless, in some

other cases, the CC interrupts the phrasal nucleus by splitting the sub-elements of a constituent, which cannot be focalised anymore (such as a N(P) and its modifier).

Epistemic and evidential CCs may also interrupt clausal constituents, as in the following occurrence, thus exhibiting a deep interrupting force applied to all the grammatical elements, ranging from phrasal to clausal combinations:

- 3.26) PP\_BO115: e' dal, dal medioevo, **mi** [pare che spuntano fuori.] (KIParla, BOD2015)  
PP\_BO115: it was in the in the Middle Ages **it seems to me** that they emerged.

Medial position shows another behaviour, as emerged from the data. CCs do not occur only in assertions, as already noticed by Schneider (2007a, b) in his survey on reduced parenthetical clauses as mitigators. Medial position (both on macrosyntactic and in microsyntactic terms) may occur in questions:

- 3.27) EG\_000: parliamo un po' della casa dove:: hai vissuto,  
EG\_000: **penso** fino a quando eri ragazzo, (KIParla, TOD2006)  
EG\_000: Let's talk about the house where you've been living **I think** since you were a boy?
- 3.28) RP\_BO026: [il] quat[tordici **abbiamo detto** che] cos'e'? (KIParla, BOA1001)  
RP\_BO026: The 14<sup>th</sup> **we have said**, what's the day?

Questions cannot be modalized by definition<sup>48</sup>. Therefore, we may hypothesise that in these cases, the CC is the output of an on-line process through which the text is incrementally and additionally construed on the spot<sup>49</sup>. This could be the reason the CC is placed in an interrogation rather than in a declarative assertion (i.e., its typical context). In some cases, the occurrence in questions is motivated in the nature of the process the speaker has in mind. For example, exemplifications may occur in questions in order to facilitate the comprehension of the concept the speaker intends to communicate. Nevertheless, we will come back to such cases on the section devoted to the exemplifying CCs.

### 3.2.1.2 Epistemic and evidential functions

#### 3.2.1.2.1 CCs and epistemic stance

The aim of this section is to examine the function of epistemic stance expressions.

In all the above-mentioned examples, the lexical semantics of its source and the functions a given CC performs are not always symmetrical/corresponding; in fact, meaning nuances may be context-

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<sup>48</sup> However, we think that the epistemic or evidential CC retains its scope over the asserted content.

<sup>49</sup> At the beginning of the utterance, maybe the speaker was not aware of the final, interrogative output of her utterance.

dependant. One of the main findings of our corpus-driven study is indeed that an asymmetry can occur between the lexical semantics (weak *vs* strong assertives<sup>50</sup> and so on) and the function it performs in the context (see Hennemann 2012).

Let us start from the discussion of those cases in which the symmetry between the lexical semantics of the source and the function is preserved. More specifically, inherent epistemic markers stemming from weak predicates (Hooper 1975, Borillo 1972; Venier 1991, Schneider 1999; 2007a, b) may serve epistemic functions in expressing the speaker's attitude towards a given state of affairs, *without* adducing the proof of it (Hennemann 2012: 135), as in the following examples:

- 3.29) PP\_BO115: per il momento:: pero' **penso** mi prendero' una par- una pausa imparero' bene il tedesco. in germania. (KIParla, BOA3015)  
 PP\_BO115: For the moment but **I think** I will get a a p- a break and will learn German in Germany
- 3.30) adesso stanno facendo [...] sti racconti in tv A: chi? C: Del Buono A: ah sì dove su? C: **credo** rai uno non lo so (Lip, RA3)  
 Now they are broadcasting such tales? A: Who? C: Del Buono? A: Really? Where? C: **I think** Rai Uno I don't know

In 3.29) and 3.30), two weak assertive predicates CCs (*pensare* Engl. ‘think’ and *credere* ‘believe’) convey the speaker’s epistemic stance<sup>51</sup> (see Thompson 2002). In fact, no other clue referring to a kind of proof or justification is provided in the co-text. Therefore, we may classify the function as genuinely epistemic (Venier 1991). Such classification is fostered by two other co-occurring devices expressing bare commitment modulation: in 3.29), we can identify the simple future (see Squartini 2001) *mi prenderò*, which simply expresses a potential fact, i.e., the realization of which the speaker is not completely aware. In a similar vein, in 3.30) we can identify an explicit declaration of lack of knowledge through the clausal fragment *non lo so* (‘I don’t know’), which lexically expresses the speaker’s commitment removal with respect to a given claim. Once again, no reference is made to other types of proofs (Kaltenböck 2005).

We may conclude that such CCs could be classified as **weak** modalizing strategies expressing a bare modulation of the propositional content. Following Schneider<sup>52</sup> (1999: 76), it can be argued that in such occurrences the speaker expresses a generic modulation, which does not include information about the degree, the cause, and/or about the subjective relevance of the described state of affairs. Recalling Venier’s position (1991: 68-69), it may be claimed that such CCs express a

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<sup>50</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>51</sup> CCs could be considered as markers of “evaluative subjectivity”, which is argued to be realized by linguistic signs which encode the speaker’s emotional or epistemic evaluation concerning attitude, belief, knowledge (Smirnova 2009).

<sup>52</sup> It is worth underlining that the author considers strong modalizing predicates always within the domain of epistemicity and not evidentiality as we do here.

weak commitment towards the complement (see Hooper 1975: 101). Contrarily to the evidential ones, epistemic CCs do not reveal any justification about speaker's epistemic reserve. In other words, they do not reveal the speaker's inferential path leading to assert p. Between epistemic and evidential functions, it may be identified a difference in *confidence*.

Even if weak predicates are generally used to convey epistemic functions, also strong predicates may be mobilised to express the function at issue. Consider the following occurrences:

- 3.31) AG\_BO097: no cioe' (.) non so se loro te lo fanno perche' non ci guadagnano **suppongo** (KIParla, BOA3012)  
 AG\_BO097: No I mean, I don't know whether they will print the book because they do not earn anything from that **I suppose**

In Schneider's classification (1999: 76), *suppongo* ('I suppose') is classified as a strong modalizing predicate (see also Hennemann 2012: 174). In fact, it belongs to the class of the predicates that lexically reveal a more specific description of the source of knowledge in comparison to weak predicates. As far as *suppongo* is concerned, according to the author, such source of knowledge consists of an inference. However, in the co-text under examination we cannot notice other clues revealing such process of inference. Rather, the speaker is bluntly suspending any strong assertion thus modalizing without providing any further information.

Nevertheless, as it will be observed later in section 3.2.1.2.3, weak assertive predicates may also be used to express evidential functions (Aikhenvald 2004). In that function, the CC is employed not only to comment on the validity of the truth-value. Rather the co-text may provide evidence for the claim that the speaker is also offering a *proof* about a given p (Venier 1991), which may be more or less explicitly asserted (see Rossari 2012 on French parentheticals). This proof may be identified through the analysis of the co-text - independently of the lexical semantics of the verbal source. If we were to find out whether a certain weak or strong predicate is used evidentially or epistemically, then we could take into account not only the sentence level (Hennemann 2012: 133). We are then faced with a context-based phenomenon which is motivated in spontaneous, on-line interaction (see Simon-Vanderbergen and Aijmer 2007). We may say that, regardless of not being inherent in the lexical semantics of the CC verbal source, a weak predicate may be used in contexts in which evidence for the epistemic judgement is explicitly provided. Therefore, an inferential reading is possible from information contextually delivered (Hennemann 2012: 161), as in the following occurrences<sup>53</sup>:

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<sup>53</sup> Co-occurring evidential functions connectives in bold.

- 3.32) FB\_BO049: e quindi questo: >cioe'< la musica ti porta via:: gran parte del tuo tempo **immagino**:  
 (KIParla, BOD2006)  
 FB\_BO049: And therefore this I mean playing takes you away most of your time **I imagine**
- 3.33) NB\_TO047: non mi ricordo bene di che livello, pero' comunque era=una certificazione che si faceva alle medie, quindi **penso** livello base qualcosa del genere (KIParla, TOD2011)  
 NB\_TO047: I do not remember well what kind of level, however it was a certification that was required in primary school, therefore **I think** beginner level something like that
- 3.34) B: ma ce l'ha di mattina? A: no adesso # è sotto torchio in questo momento **immagino** (Lip RB3)  
 Is the exam in the morning? No, it is now. He is being put through the wringer at the moment **I imagine**
- 3.35) È anche più difficile mantenere un equilibrio D: io **me sa** io non ero capace ad andare a cavallo (Lip, RC8)  
 It is also more difficult to maintain a balance D: **I it seems to me** was not able to ride a horse
- 3.36) in questo momento [...] si sta a rende conto se passa o non passa **penso** (Lip RB3)  
 At the moment [...] he is going to realise whether he is going to pass the exam or not **I think**

In 3.32), the symmetry is preserved since a strong assertive predicate (Schneider 1999: 76) is employed to serve an evidential function (see also the occurrence of the causal connective *quindi* ‘so’, which can be considered as marker of deduction or inference - see Venier’s 1991 category of co-text verbs). In contrast, in examples such as 3.33), the speaker employs a weak predicate to express a function of evidentiality, in that she is able to utter the proof of p. Therefore, it does not express bare epistemic stance. Context-sensitiveness may be mirrored with the fact that the speaker in example 3.34) is the same uttering as in 3.36). In both the occurrences, she expresses exactly the same evidential function based on her reasoning (see types of evidence<sup>54</sup>), even though the lexical semantics of the CCs sources she employs is different (weak in a case and strong in the other one). As the examples show, this function is also triggered by the context and by some pattern of co-occurrences. In other words, the speaker is *on-line* evaluating the impact of a given premise and commenting on its consequence.

In some occurrences, the speaker explicitly expresses the reason justifying her in deducing p by uttering the most prototypical connective, namely a causal connective (*because* of q, then [I deduce] p). In other cases, the speaker may employ more transparent/analytical expressions such as in 3.7). Moreover, in some other cases, the consequence is implicit, as shown in example 3.35), where the

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<sup>54</sup> The speaker may express an inferential meaning when she observes [*a posteriori*] hints (or traces) of evidence without having direct access to the information at stake. In a similar vein, in the case of presumption, the speaker can draw a deduction from facts based on her line of reasoning without actually “observing” any trace (González et al. 2017: 76).

speaker derives that he is not able to ride starting from the premise that riding implies equilibrium (I get no balance → *therefore* I cannot ride).

We will come back to such considerations later when dealing specifically with the evidential functions.

Before concluding the session on epistemic stance, one last remark is noteworthy. As emerged from the tables above, not only assertive predicates (both weak and strong) are used to perform the functions of epistemic and evidential stance. In fact, in the following example, to express the very same function, the speaker employs the conditional first-person marker stemming from the *verbum dicendi* “dire”. Given the occurrence of the conditional form, we could classify the function as epistemic, even if *dire* (‘to say’) is not a weak predicate:

3.37) VL\_BO046: [ cazzo devo] ritirare i jeans che ho fuori da due giorni

VL\_BO046: si saranno asciugati **direi** (KIParla, BOA3004)

VL\_BO046: Crap. I need to put my jeans away. They have been hanging out to dry for two days.  
They must be dry **I'd say**

However, in 3.37), the CC *direi* does not express bare epistemicity. In fact, as we can see from the co-text, the speaker utters the proof of her assertion, rather than simply modulating her commitment towards its validity. Once again, the CC plays an evidential function (Aikhenvald 2004). In fact, in the co-text we may retrieve a proof validating the speaker’s supposition. First, we can notice the occurrence of the inferential future (Squartini 2001 *si saranno asciugati* ‘they must be dry’ which, far from marking a simple, potential SoAs, signals an inferential reasoning whose epistemic certainty is quite validated. Furthermore, we can identify the occurrence of the premise *che ho fuori da due giorni* ‘they have been hanging out to dry for two days’). The CC host is therefore the speaker’s resulting inference that after two days the trousers *must* be dry.

### 3.2.1.2.2 A special type of epistemic function: exemplification and modalization

One specific category of the epistemic functions performed by CCs refers specifically to the process of exemplification<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> We include exemplification under the head of the speaker-oriented domain, a category which is functionally very similar to the category of reformulation and specification of rhetorical domain as defined by Crible and Degand (2019). According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2001 [1966]) examples pertain to the arguments which form the structure of the reality, in the field of a concrete rhetoric which belongs to the *linguistic turn* (see also Venier 2012), therefore such facts reinforce our position to pose exemplification among those complex operations that refer to the speaker’s stance (or status of knowledge), not merely to textual operations (see Bazzanella 1995).

As anticipated in the introduction to this Chapter, we will provide (additional) evidence for the claim that exemplification may be accounted for as a fact of epistemic modalization (Mauri 2017; Lo Baido 2018), far from being treated as a mere reformulative function (Bazzanella 1995).

Departing from the assumption that exemplification may be addressed not only as a remodulation (or paraphrase) strategy *in praesentia* (i.e. in co-occurrence with a given category to be specified), it will be shown that sometimes the role of example(s) in categorization can also be crucial because the speaker does not provide any other clue to extract the contextually relevant category. Therefore, exemplifying CCs indicate the non-referential status of what is within their scope thus presupposing non-exhaustivity, that is, the existence of further alternatives, which are contextually associable<sup>56</sup> with the uttered exemplars (cf. Lo Baido 2018; Mauri and Sansò 2018 on a comprehensive survey on indexical categorization devices).

Put in these terms, exemplification may be referred to as the operation concerning the speaker's commitment modulation with respect to the selection of context-based examples pointing to a given reference. It is through the employment of the exemplifying CC that the speaker verbalises that the item in its scope should be considered a potential, hypothetical example, rather than as a factual item<sup>57</sup> (or a list of items, Manzotti 1998: 108, 120). In other words, the speaker reduces her commitment with the final aim of creating a category starting from contextually-active, **hypothetical** exemplars -which may be linguistically encoded as phrases or clauses - from which an operation of abstraction should be made in order to construe a category properly starting from the exemplars which are contextually retrieved and provided.<sup>58</sup>

Given that exemplification is a strategy of on-line, context-based categorization, through the CC the speaker signals the hypothetical, exemplificative reality/status of the item(s) in its scope. Therefore, exemplification is not far from (pure) epistemic modality function. More specifically, we are faced with an operation of modalization, which is aimed at the on-line, bottom-up categorization. The considerations we are going to argue refer to the following samples:

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<sup>56</sup> According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2001 [1966]: 373), it is properly with respect to a given rule that the items may be conceived as associative examples and therefore as interchangeable. More specifically, their enumeration allows to shed light on the point of view through which they are associated with one another (see the property of context-dependence associating the examples).

<sup>57</sup> According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2001 [1966]: 373) with respect to the use of the example in the argumentation, whatever the example is presented and whatever the field in which the argumentation is conducted is, to be considered as such the example must be considered a **provisional** fact.

<sup>58</sup> See also Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969: 354, 370).

**Table 3. 15 Percentage of exemplifying function**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
	83/185 (44,8%)	102/185 (55,1%)	185/1222 (15,1%)

**Table 3. 16 Exemplifying CCs**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla
	supponiamo, che so (io) (?), fo' pe' di, non so, mettiamo, poniamo, dico per dire, fai conto, immaginiamo, poni	non so (io), che so, mettiamo, diciamo, voglio dire, metti

CCs generally occur in medial position of microsyntax (overall 73,7% - 90/122), and in macrosyntax the preferred position is the initial one (77,7% - 49/63).

The CCs occur in *irrealis* contexts in the 44.8% of the total amount, a fact which shows a difference between epistemic/evidential markers and exemplifying functions. This will be discussed later as it seems to be connected to the inherent process of exemplification which aims at construing categories based on potential, non-exhaustive examples. In such process of on-line construing categories, another interesting fact is the occurrence of 36 CCs in VLHs (over the total of 63 occurrences of macrosyntax). This may partially clarify the on-line attempt to create reference on the spot, as it will be clearer later in the next sections.

Finally, to give a glance at the CCs lexical semantic source, 144/185 (77,8%) of the source arise from the semifactive verb *sapere* ('to know') and 17/185 (9%) from strong assertive predicates.

Let us explain how epistemic exemplification works. Consider the following example:

- 3.38) EG\_000: ok (.) e quindi: pe:r **non so** per uscire la sera, per fare cose che non siano studiare o andare a lavorare e' una zona comoda secondo te [o::] (KIParla, BOD2001)  
 EG\_000: Ok and so to **I don't know** go out, to do something which does not include studying or working is it a nice place for you?

Far from instantiating a well-formed, explicitly communicated category, the speaker who utters 3.38) indicates the non-exhaustivity of the list through the CC *non so*, which implies that the subsequent elements have to be considered as exemplars pointing to a larger set. In other words, the items in the scope of the CCs recall further, potential items belonging to the same set. No category label/general statement is given in the immediate co-text. Therefore, the hearer is compelled to abstract the expected larger set only from the explicitly mentioned exemplars (Mauri and Sansò 2018: 8).

To build a category, which comprises LEISURE ACTIVITIES TO DO IN BOLOGNA, it is required a process of association between different individual exemplars through the derivation of a property associating them in a given context. The resulting category is therefore context-based in that, in order to build it, the speaker selects examples that are active to the participants joining the speech event (Mauri 2017). The resulting set may be referentially-heterogeneous, given that the association between the members is based on a property which is contextually relevant for specific purposes<sup>59</sup>. In other words, the required association does not necessarily reside on the referential properties associating the items of the resulting set<sup>60</sup>. Rather, the speaker declares that what she selected as an example - and the linguistic form chosen to encode the target reference - has been selected for its at-issueness in the context, in that it shows some salient properties with respect to the process of association through abstraction which is required to construe the final category starting from the concrete example(s). Given that the examples are ad hoc associated on the basis of a property which is contextual, the set they constitute may be internally heterogeneous.

Therefore, the hearer is asked to i) consider the example as a possible item of a hypothetically wider list, ii) perform an operation of abstraction from the cited exemplars which can also be very heterogeneous - but contextually associative. As shown, the process is deeply rooted in the context of utterance and it is deeply influenced by the speaker's angles and choices.

Regarding strategies, exemplification is mainly played by the marker *non so* ('I don't know') - which stems from the negation of the semifactive verb *sapere* ('to know', see Molinelli 2014: 492), as in the following examples, where the CC may retain both clausal or phrasal scope:

- 3.39) RG\_BO053: capita che **non so** un cameriere:::eh [sta a ca]sa un giorno, c'ha la febbre, un giorno:::  
[...]

RG\_BO053: e:::hm cosi', mia sorella non puo', e io non lo so. e:::h quindi:::

RG\_BO053: (magari) devo sostituire lei, (KIParla, BOD2008)

RG\_BO053: it happens that I **do not know** a waiter eh he happens not to come to work one day, it may happen he has a fever, one day and mh so, my sister cannot come as well, and I do not know eh then maybe I have to replace her

- 3.40) NB\_TO047: e non invece come:: si impara ad esempio:: sui banchi di scuola, dove:: (.) si parla prima:: cioe' ti insegnano prima:: (.) **non so** a declinare i verbi, quali sono i ver[bi, x ad esempio:] le: minime:: le cose:: piu' fondamentali, (KIParla, TOD2011)  
NB\_TO047: And not instead as you learn for example through the experience at school, where we speak first I mean they teach you first I **do not know** how to decline verbs, what are the most frequent verbs for example I mean basic level things the most fundamental things

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<sup>59</sup> This is consistent with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2001 [1966]: 373) when they assert that examples exert a reciprocal influence on one another, given that the addition of a further example modifies the meaning and the role of a previously mentioned example or set of examples. Otherwise put, the addition of a new example allows to make clear the point of view through which one has to process the previous facts.

<sup>60</sup> As in cases of natural categories such as 'birds' or, at least, in cases of classes of elements.

In 3.39), the exemplificative CC interrupts the clausal nucleus *capita che* ('It may happen that..') from its complementation, thus retaining clausal scope. More specifically, the CC interrupts a hypothesis. Therefore, the inherently hypothetical status of the example is also mirrored with the *irrealis* status of the co-text (see Lo Baido 2018)<sup>61</sup>.

Rather, in the following example, the CC co-occurs with another means of *irrealis*, that is the adverb *magari* ('maybe'), used epistemically (Masini and Pietrandrea 2010: 15):

- 3.41) EP\_BO119: e::: comunque cioe' come::: (.) come vivete voi:: la casa, nel senso  
 EP\_BO119: **non so** magari quando siete tutti e tre in ca::sa state negli spazi comu::ni (KIParla, BOD2016)  
 EP\_BO119: Eh anyway, I mean how do you live in the house- I mean **I do not know** maybe when you all three are home in the communal areas

On the one hand, the association of exemplification with non-real contexts may be related to the referential status of examples, as discussed above. On the other hand, the occurrence of examples in potential environments, such as hypotheses and suppositions, contributes to their interpretation as potential members of a **wider** category<sup>62</sup>. If an example is presented in a hypothetical context, it is likely to receive a non-referential, potential (or hypothetical) and non-exhaustive interpretation in the context.

In line with its clarifying function, exemplifying CC may also occur in interrogative host moods (cf. Schneider who recognised that RPCs as mitigators may actually occur in interrogative speech acts). In performing a task aimed at eliciting an answer, the speaker may provide the hearer with an array of possible examples that might help them understand a *probable* answer to the speaker's question. In other words, examples of possible, workable answers are instantiated as examples with the aim of simplifying the hearer's processing load (Lo Baido 2018: 83). Most of the interrogations refer to epistemic situations which in fact exemplify potential scenarios. Starting from them the hearer is asked to process an answer which is similar to what the speaker has exemplified by means of her requests, as in the following example:

- 3.42) FB\_BO049: bene (.) e:hm hai mai:: passato del tempo in casa con degli amici:: solo voi **non so** anche in vacanza, affittando [ca:se] cose cosi' e come ti sei trova:to:: (KIParla, BOD2007)  
 FB\_BO049: Well ehm have you ever spent time home with friends only you **I do not know** even on holiday, renting a flat things like how were you getting on??

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<sup>61</sup> It is not surprising that exemplification as defined in this paradigm occurs in *irrealis* contexts (see especially the Lip Corpus) – at least more frequently than in the cases of “bare” epistemic functions, whose speaker’s aim is simply uttering commitment modulation to the realization of a SoAs. On the contrary, in these cases *irrealis* is motivated in the potential status of the example. More specifically, the speaker declares commitment modulation toward the bottom-up, context-based process of categorization her act of exemplification triggers.

<sup>62</sup> The occurrence of a higher percentage of *irreal* contexts is thus motivated in the intrinsic nature of the process consisting in construing context-based categories. It is not a simple operation of modalization as in the cases discussed in Section 3.2.1.2.1

In 3.42), the speaker exemplifies the category she has in mind by providing the example *in vacanza*, ('on holiday'), which interrupts the clausal dependency inside a question in order to facilitate the comprehension, properly providing with examples of possible examples of answers to the question.

The analysis of the exemplifying CCs hosts reveals another crucial aspect, namely their strong interrupting position, which we observed in the example above, and which may also be retrieved in the occurrence of CCs within the members of a list, as in the following example:

- 3.43) e ogni domenica c'è un mercato che si chiama sowa market che vendono sia cose: tipo vestiti, cose dell'usato, ((0,2s)) vestiti eleganti, di tutto, ma anche ((0,1s)) cibo, ((0,2s)) **non so** miele, e::: ((0,4s)) vino con il ginger, ((0,1s)) non so tante cose così.<sup>63</sup> (KIParla, TOD2008)  
And every Sunday there is a market called Sowa market selling selling the whole lot: things: like clothes, second-hand stuff, elegant clothes, everything, but also food, **I do not know** honey, and wine with ginger, I don't know a lot of things like that.

It is worth observing that - in introducing potential exemplars - the CC may precede lists of bare nouns referring themselves to classes. For instance, in 3.43), the speaker encodes the examples as bare, generic nouns (*miele* 'honey', *vino* 'wine') rather than specific, singular items. Such encoding facilitates the interpretation of them as potential triggers to a higher-level category. The same happens in the following example, where the CC introduces the bare phrase *circoli culturali* ('cultural clubs'):

- 3.44) GP\_BO014: se ci fossero piu' **non so** circoli culturali o cose un po' diverse magari si'. (KIParla, BOD2001)  
GP\_BO014: There were more **I do not know** cultural clubs or slightly different things maybe I'd attend them yes.

Indeed, bare nouns refer collectively to a generic class, rather than to a specific item (cf. Lyons 1977). In this way, the speaker warns the hearer against considering the uttered examples as exhaustive and referential members of the category she has in mind. Encoding examples as bare nouns implies that they have to be processed as pointers (or arrows) to a higher-level category. In fact, the speaker is not referring to any specific entity in the world. In 3.43), for instance, the speaker does not intend to refer to a specific type of honey or wine. Rather, she encodes the items at issue as bare examples to build the category of HOMEMADE PRODUCTS ONE CAN FIND IN AN ORGANIC MARKET. She is rather interested in referring to the general class that the example (in the form of a

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<sup>63</sup> This is our ExMARALDA transcription of TOD2008. In the online version at [http://151.236.39.174/bonito/conversation\\_files/TOD2008\\_jefferson.html](http://151.236.39.174/bonito/conversation_files/TOD2008_jefferson.html), the CC *non so* is not transcribed.

bare noun) denotes, given that some properties of the class must be relevant to some purposes (Lo Baido 2018: 78).

The interruptive force we traced in the previous examples may also be extended to the phrasal nucleus, that is in a special value of medial position which we defined as interrupting the phrase position (see Ch.2):

- 3.45) FB\_BO049: e::mh c'e' un particolarmente **non so** divertente, o interessante del cammino che::  
comm: episodio? (KIParla, BOD2010)  
FB\_BO049: Ehm is there a particularly **I don't know** funny or interesting episode (you remember from/) of the road to Santiago?

As observed in 3.45), the speaker may also employ the CC to *exemplify* a set of attributes of a hypothetical activity which should be exemplified through a concrete item.

To conclude this Section we may assert that, as observed in the abovementioned examples, the speaker-oriented reality of exemplification is corroborated by the selection of the lexical semantics of the source predicate (which is often the semifactive predicate ‘to know’) which is mobilized to express the speaker’s commitment modulation with respect to a bottom-up, context-based process of categorization<sup>64</sup> (which to this point Mauri 2017, Barotto and Mauri 2018 termed indexical categorization). Furthermore, the CC at issue is always employed in the negative form, a fact which could validate the classification of exemplification as an epistemic fact referring to the encoding of the speaker’s stance with respect to a *subjective* operation of categorization. Some crucial facts corroborate the epistemic reality of exemplification: i) the occurrence in medial position with a reduced scope with respect to the original predicate *sapere* (‘to know’) which canonically heads compleative sentences, ii) the average occurrence in *irrealis* contexts, and iii) the selection of bare nouns as scopes.

### 3.2.1.2.3 CCs and evidential stance: direct, mediated, indirect evidence

After a discussion of a specific type of epistemic function, let us now move on to the function of evidentiality. As anticipated in the Section 3.2.1.2.1, this paragraph is devoted to the analysis of the CCs performing evidential functions, independently of the lexical semantics of the CC verbal source.

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<sup>64</sup> According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969: 376, 377) the argumentation through the example is a fruitful case in which the sense and extension of the concepts are influenced by the dynamic aspects of their concrete usage by the speaker. In fact, this operation of adaptation, that is, this modification of the concepts appears as a natural fact, depending on the spur of moment needs.

We will argue that different types of evidence may be expressed. The underlying rationale is that the speakers convey meaning and commit themselves to pieces of information by offering the status and source of information with the ultimate goal of making a consistent and truthful contribution to the interaction in which they are engaged. Therefore, conveying evidential meaning is in fact a speaker-oriented strategy that may have a persuasive and rhetorical purpose well beyond the mere conveying of the propositional content (González et al. 2017: 70). Through these functions, the speaker illustrates a double deixis, in that they split up the former into the evaluator and into the source of information (evidence)<sup>65</sup>, contrarily to the corresponding adverbs, which lack the reference to the evaluator or speaker's deixis (Fedriani and Sansò 2017).

We will go one step further by studying which kind of proofs may be expressed in the co-text - whatever the source of the CC is (constructional study - see Fischer 2010; 2015). In doing so, we will adopt Plungian's classification of evidence types (2001), by distinguishing more specifically between direct, mediated (which in turn may be divided into results or reasoning - Dendale and Tasmovski 2001: 343), and reflected inference (see also Mithun 1986). Such a classification fits particularly well into our research questions, because it includes the speaker's considerations among the notion of proof, whereby taking into account the speaker's emotive stance, namely her affective dimension as source of evidence sustaining her in believing P (see Hennemann 2012: 157, Schneider's classification 1999, 2007a, 2007b).

Let P be a given described situation. Evidential values specify the source of information the speaker has for P. Generally, three main types of such sources may be distinguished (Plungian 2001: 351, 354-355):

- ✓ A: **DIRECT EVIDENCE** (including direct access to P)

Visual: 'P, and I see/saw P.'

Sensoric: 'P, and I perceive(d) P' [P may be heard, smelled, tasted, etc.].

Endophoric<sup>66</sup>: 'P, and I feel(felt) P' [P is the speaker's inner state, cf. I am hungry, I want to sleep, I know the answer, etc.]

- ✓ B. **REFLECTED EVIDENCE** (including direct access to some situation Q related to P)

**Synchronous inference:** 'P, because I can observe some signs of P' [P at T0]; cf. He must be hungry (because he shows signs of it, etc.)<sup>67</sup>

**Retrospective inference:** 'P, because I can observe some traces of P' [P before T0]; cf. He must have slept there (because we see his untidy bed, etc.)

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<sup>65</sup> See also concept of "communicative subjectivity" in Smirnova (2009).

<sup>66</sup> See Hennemann (2012: 157-159), affective stance – which in our data is often expressed through predicates such as *spero* ('I hope'), *mi auguro* ('I wish'), *temo* ('I fear').

<sup>67</sup> See Dendale's (2001: 343) category of inferring (results and reasoning).

**Reasoning:** 'P, because I know Q, and I know that Q entails P'; cf. Today there must be a fair in Salzburg (because I know the routines of this region, etc.)

- ✓ C. **MEDIATED EVIDENCE** (including neither direct nor reflected access to P) Quotative:  
'P, because I was told that P'; cf. They say he's leaving; He is said to have left, etc.  
(Plungian 2001: 354)

Let us start by studying some examples of **DIRECT EVIDENCE**:

Direct evidence may be sensoric or endophoric. It may refer to perceptual evidence experienced through the senses or it may be the outcome of speaker's emotive stance or inner state (Schneider 1999; Cappelli 2007). Examples of the former are the following:

- 3.46) BM\_BO093: e::hm pero' **vedete** l'elenco delle patologie a carico del sistema nervoso centrale e' molto ampio. (KIParla, BOD1004)  
BM\_BO093: Ehm but **you see** the list of pathologies borne by the central nervous system is very wide.
- 3.47) MG\_BO099: che **poi vedremo** (.) cresce via via eh non solo su questi personaggi ma l'umanita' intera. (KIParla, BOD1006)  
MG\_BO099: that then **we will see**, grows gradually not only in these characters but also on the whole mankind

In 3.46), a professor is showing an image to his students, thus appealing to the hearers' sensoric abilities to *support* what he is about to proffer. In other words, the direct access is shared with the interlocutors (based on their sensoric skills).

Evidentiality may also be referred to as in terms of affective dimension (Schneider 1999, 2007, Cappelli 2007: 176; Hennemann 2012: 157-159) or endophoric evidence (see Plungian 2001). In performing this function, the speaker signals that she is fairly committed to support her assertion with the strength of her subjective and affective commitment (Hennemann 2012: 157, Schneider 1999):

- 3.48) PO\_TO004: troppe voi vi troverete,  
PO\_TO004: **spero** non in questo corso di laurea di fronte a qualcuno che vi dice, questa e' la cosa giusta. (KIParla, TOD1002)  
PO\_TO004: Too often you will be faced **I hope** not in this course of study with someone saying "I know everything!"
- 3.49) visto che siamo al termine sicuramente ci sarà anche questa mattina **io mi auguro** un consiglio di erboristeria **come al solito** (Lip, ME6)  
Since we are at the end surely it will be also this morning, **I hope** a herbal remedy **as usual**
- 3.50) LQ\_BO013: vedete? queste, (.) queste descrizioni di rapporti sessuali cosi' cru::de  
LQ\_BO013: eh

LQ\_BO013: non e' che servano (.) a scatenare chissa' quali pulsioni erotiche in chi le legge. almeno, a me non le scatenano **spero** nemmeno a vo:i. eh? (KIParla, BOD1001)

LQ\_BO013: You see? These these descriptions of sexual intercourse so brutal eh is not that they serve to unleash who knows some erotic impulses in the reader. At least, I'm not excited **I hope** you are not either

In all these occurrences, the speaker is expressing her emotive attitude or affective stance, being strongly committed to what she is about to say, as the lexical semantics of the sources show (*sperare* ‘to hope’, *mi auguro* ‘I wish’). However, in support of this fact correlated to the lexical semantics of the source, observe that for instance, in 3.49), the speaker utters the adverbial expression *as usual* utterance-finally, thus showing that her strong commitment is fostered by a given certainty, which derives from usual conventions of the transmission the speaker works in.

Let us now focus on **REFLECTED EVIDENCE**.

As anticipated, the speaker may more or less overtly express an indirect proof which may be based on a form of **reasoning**, which in turn may rely on different kinds of information or on some kind of inference (Aikhenvald 2004: 3-5). Such inference can be more or less synchronic to the utterance of the proposition p. Moreover, it may refer to some kind of inference drawn from a premise, which is overtly uttered or not. Let us consider the following examples:

3.51) non mi ricordo bene di che livello, però comunque era=una certificazione che si faceva alle medie, **quindi penso** livello base qualcosa del genere, (KIParla, TOD2011)

I do not remember well what kind of level, however it was a certification that was required in primary school, **therefore I think** beginner level something like that

3.52) EG\_000: parliamo un po' della casa dove:: hai vissuto,

EG\_000: **penso** fino a quando eri ragazzo a (KIParla, TOD2006)

EG\_000: Let's talk about the house where you've been living **I think** since you were a boy?

3.53) Marco Scappelli è stato **credo** l'ultimo direttore della fotografia perché stava girando con lui quando morì Totò (Lip, RC11)

Marco Scappelli was **I believe** the last director of photography because he was shooting with the actor Totò when he passed away

In 3.51), the speaker expresses the outcome of a reasoning, or supposed conjecture deriving from a premise which is co-textually expressed (*it was a certification required in primary school*). Given that the experience at issue was referred to primary school period, it *derives* that the certification at issue must have been a *beginner level exam*. The speaker is on-line deriving such result, which is verbalized through the CC, which manifests such on-the-spot inferential epistemic process. Moreover, we can identify such function through the use of the connective *quindi* (Engl. ‘therefore’, Fr. ‘donc’), which clearly establishes a relation of consequence.

In 3.52), on the other side, the speaker derives her inference by a piece of evidence referring to common knowledge which is however not contextually expressed, i.e., the knowledge that guys *generally* live with their parents until a certain age - deriving from the fact that the interlocutor is a young guy (González et al. 2017). In both the cases, the speaker is supposing. However, it seems that external evidences may support her to strongly *guess/derive/infer* the proposition p.

Conversely, in 3.53), the speaker is on-line providing the proof supporting her into believing p, starting from a premise which is used as a piece of evidence in deriving p. This proof is introduced by the most prototypical proof-providing connective, that is *perché* ('because'), which introduces the cause justifying the speaker to believe p (Degand and Fagard 2011). More specifically, given that Marco Scarpelli was with the actor Totò when the latter died, it *derives* that it was the former was the last director the actor was supposed to work with. The CC may be paraphrased as *I derive, I conclude, I infer*, not simply *I think* (see Venier 1991: 52 on the category of 'verbi di cotoesto').

Let us now focus on the last type of inference: **MEDIATED INFERENCE**.

The CC may express a kind of proof which is mediated, that is not first-hand obtained, in that it is filtered by an external source/experiencer:

- 3.54) MC\_BO102: per cui (.) l'italia e l'europa finalmente **dice peters**, tornano ad essere quello che sono. niente. (KIParla, BOD1009)  
MC\_BO102: Therefore, Italy and Europe finally **Peters says** come back again to be what they have always been, that is nothing
- 3.55) \* mh senti eh a questo proposito si si è parlato di ermetismo nelle poesie di Ungaretti **tu dicevi** appunto la posizione delle parole da sole nel verso (Lip, NC9)  
Mh listen eh in this regard you have been talking about hermeticism in Ungaretti poems **you were just saying** the position of words standing alone in the verse

In 3.54) and 3.55), the speaker expresses external evidence to prove what she is about to uttering (see, responsibility removing devices in Schneider's 2007a classification on reduced parenthetical clauses as mitigators). The *origo* of the utterance is shifted towards an external speaker, who may be involved in the conversation (3.55) or not (3.54). Behind the employment of such CCs, the deictic centers lie outside the unmarked *ego, hic, nunc* center, whose purpose is shifting the burden of commitment away from the speaker (Schneider 2007a: 241).

After analysing the functions of epistemic and evidential stance, in the next paragraph, we will discuss the impact of CCs performing the functions at issue, by highlighting that very often they are the only strategies contextually provided to express epistemic modality and evidentiality.

### 3.2.1.2.4 *Irrealis* and semantic detachability?

As anticipated in the introduction to this Chapter, we aimed at analysing the occurrence of the CCs in *irrealis* contexts.

A proposition is said to be *irrealis* when “it implies that a SoA<sup>68</sup> belongs to the realm of the imagined or hypothetical, and as such it constitutes a potential or possible event but it is not an observable fact of reality” (Elliot 2000: 67). *Irrealis* include different sub-modes: “intention, ability, preference, permission and obligation are all future projecting, and [...] the future is by definition an *irrealis* epistemic mode. The epistemic aspect of *irrealis* is thus its common denominator, to which an evaluative-deontic aspect may be added” (Givón 2001: 308). In this work, we will refer to *irrealis* in terms of possibility and epistemicity. We will then evaluate whether the CC occurs in a real or imagined/hypothetical scenario.

Evaluating the *irrealis* status of CCs hosts was motivated in the investigation of the CC impact on the host truth-value. Given that epistemic and evidential CCs have often been analysed as detachable discourse markers expressing the speaker’s attitude (see Brinton 2008 among many others vs Rouchota 1995 and Ifantidou 2002), we believe that monitoring the *irrealis* status of the utterance hosting them may be a crucial parameter to establish whether they are *the* only epistemic strategies used in a given context or not. If they frequently occurred in an *irreal* context, they might be considered redundant. If the frequency of such contexts is not high, then it seems difficult to treat them as detachable DMs. Over 679 occurrences (epistemic and evidential modality), 108 occur in an already *irrealis* environment, therefore CCs are largely the only means of modalization. Consequently, as anticipated in the introduction to the Section, the CCs at issue are frequently the only means mobilized to express epistemicity<sup>69</sup>, as in the following occurrences, where the CC occurs in *real* contexts:

- 3.56) e quindi questo: >cioè la musica ti porta via:: gran parte del tuo tempo **immagino**: (KIParla, BOD2006)  
And therefore this I mean playing takes you away:: most of your time **I imagine**

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<sup>68</sup> ‘State of Affairs’.

<sup>69</sup> Note that, as recognised by Noonan (2007: 102) in his typological inventory of complement clauses, there are kinds of complement selecting predicates that interact with the modality of their complement. More specifically, there are languages with an indicative-subjunctive distinction that almost always use the subjunctive after predicates that mark as potential the proposition which follows. After propositional attitude predicates, the most widespread strategy is to employ the indicative after those that describe a positive attitude (such as *believe*), and the subjunctive after those that express a negative attitude (such as *doubt*). After the third type of predicates, commentative ones, most languages, such as for instance Russian and Persian, employ the indicative, even though there are a few, such as Spanish, that use the subjunctive (Noonan 2007: 109). This property is superficially not evaluable in parenthetical uses, since the CC by definition needs to be devoid of every link with the host, however, the fact that occurs in *realis* context may be motivated in its intrinsic crucial mood-indication (Nordström 2010). “Complement clauses of commentative predicates actually have non-factual features (evaluative and evidential” – Nördstrom 2010: 61).

3.57) quindi **direi** e' della casta piu' alta, quindi xxx xxx (KIParla, BOD1011)  
therefore I'd say he/she belongs to the upper class, so xxx xxx

3.58) MC\_BO102: con balshir al assad e' -n- e e' andato via **mi pare** (.) ha sbattuto anche la porta.  
(KIParla, BOD1009)  
MC\_BO102: Vladimir Putin with Balshir Al Assad he left the room **it seems to me** he slammed the door too.

If we try to detach the CC, the neustic level 1 (see Hare 1970), that is, the epistemic modalization is neutralized in that the co-text is transformed into a *factual* assertion. In other words, were the CC deleted, the epistemic/potential value would be lost.

Therefore, we may conclude that CCs - at least epistemic and evidential CCs - may affect the propositional content (Ifantidou 2002 on English evidential parentheticals). The *irrealis* status of their contexts may corroborate such a crucial feature of the construction under examination.

The impact of the epistemic and evidential CCs may be also reflected in their prosodic integration. Along with occurring in real contexts, epistemic and evidential CCs may be prosodically integrated. As anticipated in Chapter 1, in the literature, the prosodic incidentalness of parenthetical is widespread. In fact, it is argued that the parenthetical's independence from the anchor is also reflected prosodically. A parenthetical is marked by "comma intonation" (pauses in speech, or actual commas in writing) that separates it from its anchor. Bolinger (1989: 186) identifies three prosodic properties of parentheticals, relating them to specific syntactic and semantic qualities: lower pitch (meaning their "incidentalness"), set off by pauses (representing their "separation"), and rising terminal (representing their "link up" with the anchor).

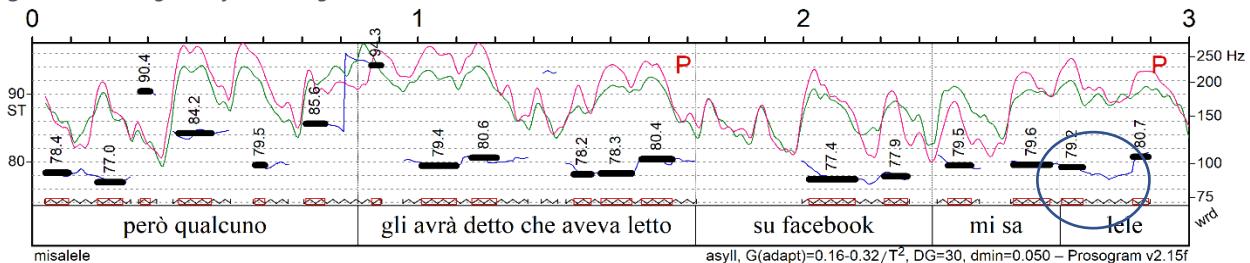
However, the same author notes that all three of these properties may be missing or reduced in any given case. More recently, Wichmann (2001) raises further doubts about the prosodic properties of parentheticals. She notices that while some parentheticals display the acknowledged features of lowering pitch and lack of accent (a behaviour that she calls "compression"), others display "expansion" or the pitch raising, while still others display "integration", i.e., continuation of the pitch direction of the preceding tone (therefore not representing a prosodically distinct entity - see also Kaltenböck 2005: 28).

Researches on the prosodic realization of CCs (Dehé, 2009; Dehé and Wichmann, 2010a, 2010b) have shown that different intonational phrasing patterns are possible with CCs. Such patterns allow both for prosodic separation - such that the CC is phrased in its own Intonational Phrase (IP)-, and **prosodic integration**. In this latter case, the CC is phrased in one IP with its surrounding material. The relationship between meaning in context (procedural, propositional) and prosodic realisation has been deeply investigated in several studies (Haselow 2016: 91). Interested in the distinction between different usages and identities of the constructions *I think (that)* and *I believe (that)* when

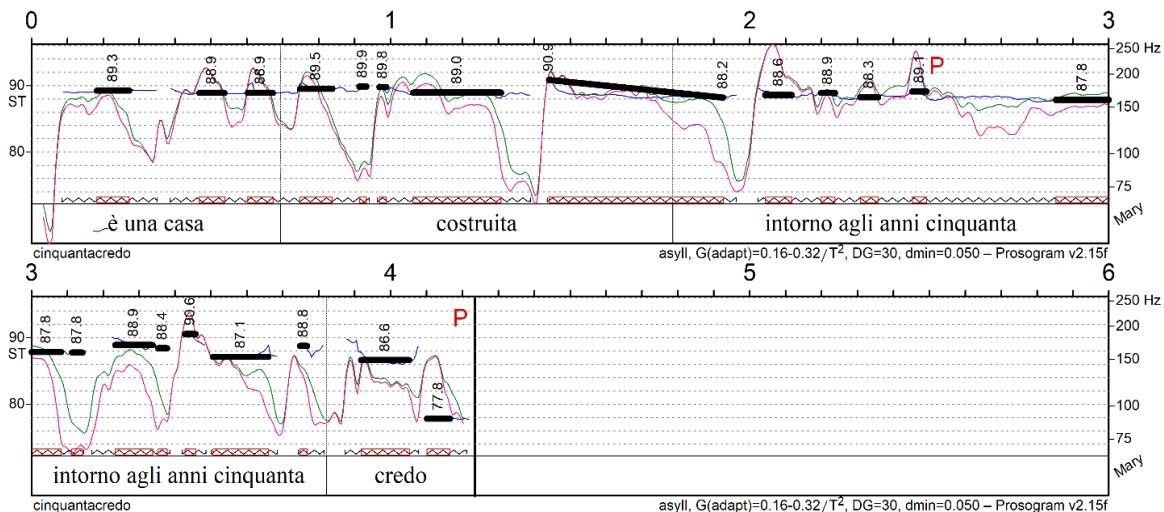
placed turn-initially, Dehé and Wichmann (2010a: 39) argue that indexes such as the occurrence of pauses or hesitant phases alone are not a reliable cue to disambiguate between the status of matrix clause or CC, even in medial or final position (Dehé and Wichmann 2010a: 39).

Despite not relying on prosody to make a distinction between CC and main clause status - given that we only select structures devoid of any syntactic link - starting from Dehé and Wichmann (2010a: 42) rationale on the possible prosodic integration of parentheticals/CCs, we will only try to observe whether the CC is prosodically integrated or not. This will be possible by spotting the possible occurrence of pauses in correspondence of its boundaries, using the simple category of silent pauses, defined by an interruption of the sound signal lasting more than 200 milliseconds (see Candéa 2000, Crible 2018: 141, 142, 169). We underline that we will not make a deep analysis of the prosodic behaviour of CCs. Rather, our current aim is solely providing evidence for the claim that CCs, i.e., parenthetical verbs, may be prosodically integrated despite being syntactically unintegrated. Therefore, in line with the body of research highlighting the possible prosodic integration of CCs as parentheticals, we may observe that in the following prosograms of the sentences which host the CCs *mi sa* ('it seems to me') and *credo* ('I believe') the latter are not followed or preceded by pauses (see Simon 2004 on parentheticals in spoken French):

**Figure 3. 3 Prosogram of the string 'mi sa lele'**

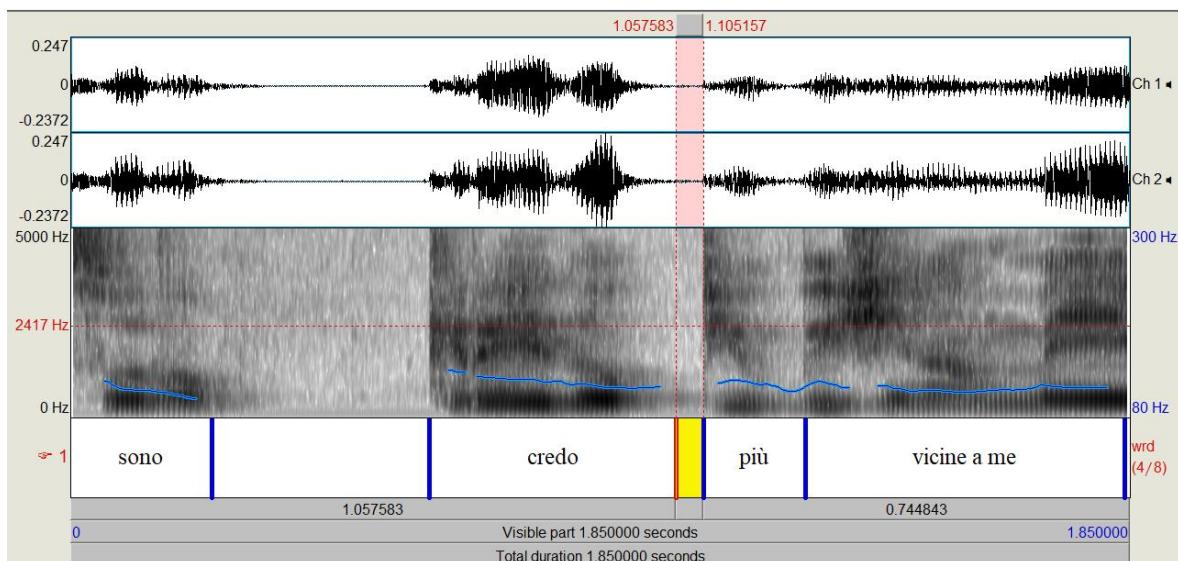


**Figure 3. 4** Prosogram of the string ‘intorno agli anni cinquanta credo’



More specifically, we may observe from the red squares (placed immediately above the annotation line) that between *mi sa* and *lele*, and between *cinquanta* and *credo* neither the vocal flux undergoes any interruption/fall nor is it preceded (or followed) by (micro)pauses<sup>70</sup>, as one could expect from a parenthetical expression as the CC (see Kaltenböck 2005, Kaltenböck et al. 2011). In a similar vein, no pauses can be spotted in the following TextGrid, where between the CC and the ensuing content no pauses of 200 milliseconds may be observed:

**Figure 3. 5** Textgrid of the strinh ‘sono credo più vicine a me’



A further two examples of complete integration are plotted in the following TextGrids:

<sup>70</sup> The analysis is based on a sample of 50 CCs.

Figure 3. 6 Textgrid of the string ‘ho Saputo credo di saper conciliare’

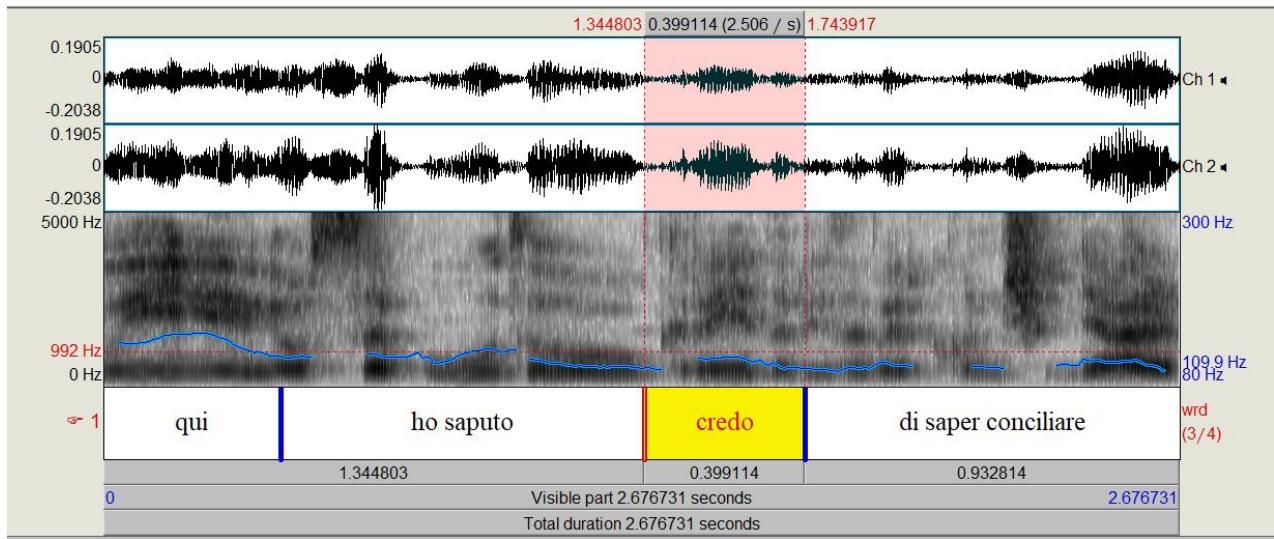
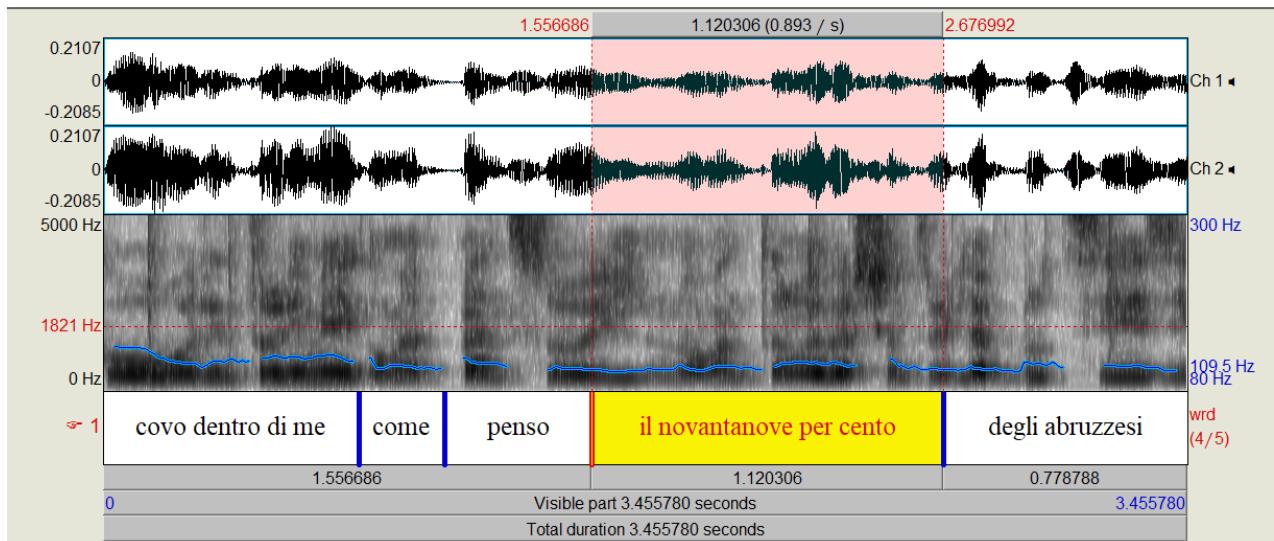


Figure 3. 7 Textgrid of the string ‘come penso il novantanove per cento degli abruzzesi’



As it can be observed, the CCs *credo* and *penso* are prosodically integrated, in that no pauses may be spotted before and after the CCs at issue.

Summing up, over the last sections, we analysed the discourse profile of the epistemic and evidential CCs, showing that i) they may be hosted by varying structures, ii) they may have local or global scope and, that iii) they may have a crucial impact on the propositional content, additionally being sometimes prosodically integrated in the host utterance.

In this way, we may provide evidence for the claim that on a *continuum* on the category of DMs, CCs with the above-mentioned functions behave as borderline strategies, in that they can have an impact on the propositional content, on a par with morpho-syntactic means or epistemic/evidential adverbs (see En. *maybe*, *presumably*, *evidently* - cf. Dehé and Wichmann 2010a). Epistemic/evidential CCs are mobile and syntactically unintegrated, which are typical features of

DMs. However, they show an impact on the truth-value (see Kaltenböck 2010 on the English CC *I think*). This fact implies that inside the category of DMs, some distinctions are needed in that the CCs under examination could be functionally classified as sentence adverbs concerning the speaker's commitment to the truth-value of the sentence (see *probably*, *allegedly*) following Ramat and Ricca's (1994: 306) classification.

### **3.2.2 CCs and illocutionary force: from the function of emphasis to mirativity**

#### **3.2.2.1 CCs and emphasis**

Whereas the CCs we analysed in the previous sections refer to the speaker's epistemic stance and thus to an operation of commitment modulation to the propositional level, conversely CCs may be used to strengthen, modulate or make explicit speaker's assertive force. In this way, the functions of CCs may be placed on the speech act level, whereby making the speaker's argumentative force and/or commitment explicit.

Let us start with the function of emphasis. On a par with modal adverbs such as English *really*, *indeed* or *absolutely*<sup>71</sup>, CCs may be employed to reinforce the speaker's illocutionary force.

Through such a function the “speaker emphasizes the truth feature of the sentence” (Bolinger 1972: 94) or of part of it. Since assumptions come with various degrees of strength, speakers have at their disposal expressions which specify such degrees of strength by indicating available evidence (König 1991: 181). As will become clearer, in this vein, CC is not adopted to utter the truth-value of the host clause. Rather, it serves the purpose of underlining that the host clause value *indeed* corresponds to a state of affairs, whose validity is in a way given or taken for granted.

More specifically, the speaker employs an emphatic CC to:

- i) **GUARANTEE** the factuality/truth of the assertion contained in the host clause – in this case, it may be paraphrased as ‘I can assure/I guarantee’<sup>72</sup>; and
- ii) **CONFIRM** it (the factuality/truth). In this latter case, it may be paraphrased as ‘I agree with you’, ‘it’s true’, ‘I also state it’ (see De Cesare 2000: 104 on the modal adverbs *proprio* and *davvero* ‘indeed’).

On a par with some modal adverbs used to convey such reinforcement function (see Engl. *indeed*, *in fact*, *really*), as we will argue, emphasis CCs can accompany units of various syntactic format (Haselow 2017: 139). Moreover, their semantic and pragmatic scope potential contributes to the difference between this type of adverbs and the adverbs in the sentence-grammatical sense. In fact, whereas adverbs have a scope over a constituent of a phrase or of a clause, such adverb-like CCs

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<sup>71</sup> Such structures are classified in different ways in the literature, such as *disjuncts* (Quirk et al. 1985), *stance adverbials* (Biber et al. 1999), *sentence adverbs* (Brinton and Traugott 2005) or *pragmatic markers* (Fraser 1996).

generally may have a wider scope, encompassing, for instance, illocutionary force, speaker's attitude, or even the speaker-hearer relation (Haselow 2017: 139). We may argue that some - as the illocutionary adverbs class - provide a higher-level explicature, namely "a conceptual representation in which the proposition is embedded under an illocutionary force" (Haselow 2017: 139, 143).

In the following paragraphs, we will argue that the very same function of emphasis may be performed by different CCs, with slightly different semantic nuances and aims, which may be either contextually activated or depend on the lexical semantics of the CC source too. Despite such (micro)differences, the core function of all the CCs under examination is reinforcing and emphasizing the speaker' assertive strength, both with respect to positive evaluations and to negative assessments (see Fiorentini and Sansò 2017: 69-71 on 'boosting' functions). The following sections are organised based on subparagraphs referring to three micro-functions we referred to under the same head of emphasis function.

More specifically, in 3.2.2.1.1, we will start by analysing the function of emphasis performed by the following CCs developed into intensifiers, that is structures used to confirm and to underline a given content: *giuro* ('I swear'), *direi* ('I'd say'), *devo dire* ('I must say'), *dico* ('I say'). The CCs show different properties. *Giuro* and *dico* stem from the first person of the indicative mood, *devo/bisogna dire* are preceded by a deontic auxiliary and *direi* retains the conditional form. As it will be argued, all these CCs share the functional property that they may be paraphrased as *trust me, indeed*. They convey a function of emphasis which refers to a reinforcement of the validity of the host content.

In the section 3.2.2.1.2, we will discuss the function of emphasis as arising from the conventionalization of an implicature. More specifically, emphasis arises from a process of repetition. In fact, the speaker re-utters a given content, thus enhancing its validity. The function is performed by CCs such as *ripeto* ('I repeat') and *ribadisco* ('I insist'), which semantically convey such function. The function may also be performed by less transparent strategies, such as *dico* ('I say'). In that case, the CC may be paraphrased as *I repeat, I insist, I'm telling you, I remind you*.

Section 3.2.2.1.3 is devoted to a specific emphatic function which conveys a nuance of disagreement and disapproval. The function at stake is performed by CCs as *dico* in specific configurations, where the CC is hosted by negative evaluations and reproves, whose critics value is underlined through the CC. In that case, the CC may be paraphrased as *(I) really (disagree)*.

As it can be observed, the sections are organised based on the CCs **functions/meanings**. In fact, the very same CC may be used with slightly different nuances. Our discussion is not organised on the basis of the form. Rather, the CCs are grouped based on the functions we identified and grouped together into three sub-classifications. Some of such micro-functions may be played by the very

same marker. In fact, the same CC may perform different micro-functions triggered by the co-text where it occurs. For example, *dico* (due to its basic, generic meaning) may be used to express a simple intensifying function (3.2.2.1.1), to repeat and thus emphasizing a piece of info (3.2.2.1.2), and, finally to express strong emphasis with a nuance of disagreement (3.2.2.1.3). Our results are the outcome of the analysis of the following CCs samples:

**Table 3. 17 Speaker-oriented domain emphasis CCs**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	143/262 (54,5%)	119/262 (45,4%)	262/1222 (21,4%)
CCs	devo dire, direi, ripeto, (ma io) dico (io), torno a ripetere, vi informo, voglio dire (brevemente), ribadisco, bisogna dire, credo fortemente, vorrei dire, io voglio ricordare, vi ricordate ancora, premetto, dicevamo prima	direi, potremmo dire, ribadisco (ancora), (ti) devo dire, dico ti ripeto, ti giuro, ho detto, voglio dire, vorrei dire	

We detected the following properties, at which we will hint during our discussion:

**POSITIONAL DISTRIBUTION:** The CCs at stake show a big deal of variability with respect to the distribution. They occur in medial microsyntactic position in 79/205<sup>73</sup> (38,5%), in initial microsyntactic position in 42,9% (88/205), and in final position (18%, 37/205). Concerning medial position, it may be clause-limited (3.59) or phase-limited (3.60):

- 3.59) voi l'avrete a disposizione due trecentocinquantamila lire a condizione però **ripeto** che siate in possesso Semeraro Class (Lip, MD7)

You will have at your disposal at the price of two hundred and fifty thousand euros, conditions apply; however, **I repeat** that you possess the Semeraro Class card

- 3.60) è un fatto estremamente **direi** significativo ed emblematico (Lip FD16)  
It is an extremely **I'd say** meaningful and emblematic fact

**KIND OF HOST MOOD:** CCs are frequently hosted by evaluative assessments (48.8% overall), as in the following example:

- 3.61) questo incontro ce ne dà l'occasione per segnalare l'esigenza di una revisione della retocco per alcuni aspetti direi anche urgente **direi** di alcuni istituti di alcune norme (Lip, NC3)  
This meeting gives us the opportunity to report the need for reviewing the retouching in some aspects **I would say** also urgent of some institutions

<sup>73</sup> Frequency of microsyntax.

**PATTERNS OF CO-OCCURRENCE:** we notice a co-occurrence between emphatic CCs and focus particles or modal adverbs such as *davvero/proprio* ('really'), *abbastanza/piuttosto* ('rather'/'really') in 41,7% of the overall. The CCs at stake may also co-occur with the connective *ma* ('but' - 3.63), which participates in the expression of a pragmatic, negative global meaning:

- 3.62) mi seccai **proprio ti dico** mi seccai (Lip, NB21)  
I am annoyed really **I tell you** I'm annoyed
- 3.63) ma **ma dico** io è una cosa pazzesca (Lip, MA14)  
but but **I say** it is crazy stuff

In these occurrences, the CC occurs with a modal marker expressing a function of emphasis in itself (3.62). In 3.63), the CC is preceded by the connective *ma* which, in a similar vein, fosters such disagreement function, as will be clearer later.

Therefore, the data show evidence for the claim that i) emphasis may occur turn-medially, thus underlining that its scope is limited to a constituent as typical of intensifiers (see Bolinger 1972); ii) it is often hosted by utterances expressing speaker's evaluation; iii): it may co-occur with other modal markers fostering the emphatic function.

Along with monitoring the discourse configuration of emphasis CCs, we used paraphrase tests, both with other CCs performing the same emphasis macro-function (*dico*, *giuro*) and with modal adverbs such as *davvero*, *proprio*, some of which co-occur in the co-texts, as previously anticipated. Consider the following instance:

- 3.64) FM\_BO019: cioe', lei, [la, (. si' xxxx] proprio, esposizione **direi** da trenta e lo[de.] (KIParla, BOA3003)  
FM\_BO019: I mean as for her the yes honestly **I'd say** her exam was really a First

The emphatic CC *direi* may be paraphrased either as the modal adverbs *davvero*, *proprio* or as the emphatic CCs *giuro* or *dico (proprio)* ('I really say'). Moreover, it may also be paraphrased as the most transparent form *credetemi* ('believe me' - Bolinger 1972: 93). Compare to the following examples, where we could use one of the most transparent emphatic CCs (the co-text is the same):

- 3.65) pensate ha un prezzaccio di centotrentamila lire signori **credetemi** [parliamo di una nullità vicino a un'immensità] (Lip, ND9)  
Think it costs only 130 Italian lire Ladies and Gentlemen **believe me** [we are talking about of a nothingness if we take into account the product]

In the following sections, we will analyse such considerations in more detail starting from CCs performing the functions of intensifiers.

### 3.2.2.1.1 CCs as intensifiers

Let us start by discussing the following examples, where the emphasis function is performed by various CCs, whose lexical semantics of the source may be more or less consistent (or transparent) with respect to the emphasis function conveyed in the context. In what follows, the CC may be paraphrased as ‘believe me, truly, indeed’. In doing so, the most transparent marker which is used to emphasize a given content is the first-person form of the performative predicate ‘giurare’, *giuro* (‘I swear’):

- 3.66) SB\_TO017: [...] se lo mettete in bocca lo potete masticare  
SB\_TO017: **giuro**. (KIParla, TOD1005bis)  
SB\_TO017: If you put it into your mouth, it is possible to chew it I **swear**
- 3.67) LC\_TO035: no **ti giuro**. mi aveva=m::h mi ha , mi ha **proprio** gasato la l'ultima volta.<sup>74</sup> (KIParla, TOA3002)  
LC\_TO035: No, I **swear/trust me** it made me mh it **really** pumped me up the last time
- 3.68) **Vi giuro** io non la conosco **davvero** (Lip, FE6)  
**I swear I really** don't know her
- 3.69) TM\_TO081: ma (.) **ti giuro** se vedessi mia mamma farebbe molto ridere perche' e' una,  
TM\_TO081: piccoletta magrissima tutta spaventata dal mondo. (KIParla, TOD2002)  
TM\_TO081But **I swear** if you saw my mother, it would be very funny because she is very short, thin and scared of everything

In 3.66) through 3.69), the CC (*ti*) *giuro* (lit. Engl. ‘I swear (to you)’, ‘trust me’, ‘believe me’, ‘really’) strengthens the core of the propositional unit by guaranteeing the truth-value of what is communicated in its host. In 3.66), for instance, it guarantees that *for sure* the substance may be masticated without any complication. In 3.68), the CC is used to convince further the interlocutor that the speaker does not know the person under discussion (see Ghezzi and Molinelli 2015: 32 on the emphatic functions of *guarda* ‘look’). Therefore, the CC provides the target host clause with a greater prominence than it would display if it were unmarked (see Taglicht 1984: 28).

Emphasis thus appears to be connected with the speaker’s need to guarantee the truth associated to a given p, which is presupposed to be true. This strengthening function may also be mirrored with the co-occurrence between the CC under examination and the modal adverb *proprio* (‘really’) and *davvero* in examples 3.67) and 3.68) respectively. The adverb *davvero* (‘really’) belongs to the category of AFFIRMATION OF TRUTH MODAL ADVERBS in Bolinger’s taxonomy (1972: 94), thereby

<sup>74</sup> I underline the modal adverbs playing the emphasis function.

playing an intensifying modal<sup>75</sup> function as well. In a similar vein, the CC does not affect the truth-value. It rather reinforces its validity by providing with additional speaker's *warranty*.

As anticipated in the introduction to this section, this kind of emphasis function may be performed by various CCs, namely CCs whose lexical semantics is not directly (or transparently) connected to a value of emphasis (i.e., *I swear* or *believe me* - Bolinger 1972). This happens in the following examples, where the same emphasis function is performed by the verb of speaking *dire* ('to say') introduced by a deontic auxiliary *devo* ('I must'):

- 3.70) AB\_BO021: no e li **devo dire** abbiamo avuto una conversazione abbastanza interessante e sono stata:: ben felice di stoppare la mia radio per parlare di vaucher con lei (KIParla, BOA3004)  
 AB\_BO021: no and on that occasion, **I must say** we had an extremely interesting conversation, I was so glad to switch my radio off to talk about vouchers with her
- 3.71) questo significa veramente un cioè un test **devo dire** importante devo dire molto importante di quantità di attenzione di sensibilità (Lip, RE9)  
 This really means a I mean a test **I must say** important I must say a very important sign of sensitiveness to the issue at work

In these examples, the speaker presents the statement as if it had been requested or called for (see the occurrence of the deontic form). Once again, two facts are relevant to the present discussion: a) the co-occurrence with the partial truth-adverb *abbastanza* ('fairly', 'quite') in 3.70) which modifies (and stresses) the positive adjective *interessante* (Engl. 'interesting') and b) the positive evaluation hosting the CCs in 3.71) - again, see the modal adverb *very*, which reinforces the warmth adjective *important/significant*).

Moving now to less transparent strategies - always conveying the same reinforcing function - (i.e., with no emphatic semantics such as the performative verb *I swear*), emphasis may be performed by the (basic) verb 'to say' when employed in the first-person singular form of the indicative or conditional mood (see Fiorentini and Sansò 2017 on the pragmatic marker *voglio dire* 'I mean'<sup>76</sup>). The former would appear as redundant as it simply verbalizes explicitly the act of uttering. Therefore, it does not apparently add anything with respect to speaker's stance or attitude:

- 3.72) A: andando avanti per cui **ti dico** XYZ secondo me è disperato [rinforzo] è disperato cioè **proprio** (Lip, MB40)  
 A: Keeping going on so **I say to you** XYZ as for me he is desperate. He is desperate I mean really

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<sup>75</sup> We employ "modal" in the sense of Bolinger (1972). No reference to epistemicity is done here.

<sup>76</sup> According to Brinton (2008: 115, 116) with respect to a similar function conveyed through the CC *I mean*, to the degree that *I mean* expresses contrast, it conveys the speaker's belief. Hence the strategy should be considered as subjective and metacommunicative. This claim gathers evidence for our choice to include this range of functions under the head of the speaker-oriented functions, although the marker is intrinsically reformulatory (textual domain).

- 3.73) ma eh veramente ma come mai? eppure **dico** so di un ascolto **piuttosto** decente nella in queste zone insomma eh un ascolto **abbastanza** eh buono (Lip, FE6)  
 Anyway, seriously I wonder how, actually **I say** the quality of the audio is rather good in those areas I mean they are quite good
- 3.74) VI\_TO040: eh no. quello **dico** sarebbe un problema. (KIParla, TOA3004)  
 VI\_TO040: Eh exactly, that **I say** would be a problem
- 3.75) sapete benissimo che uno Scatto come questo costa **dico** almeno due milioni e mezzo di lire (Lip, NE10)  
 You perfectly know that a shot like this costs **I say** at least two and a half million of Italian lire
- 3.76) non è che voglia fare una polemica ma conoscendo **dico certamente** meglio il territorio della provincia di Salerno io mi domando come è possibile ipotizzare estrapolare cinque comuni (Lip, NC1)  
 I don't want to criticise your work but given that I'm (familiar with) **I say** surely better (familiar with) the environment of the province of Salerno I wonder how it is possible to hypothesise to exclude five towns from the current administration

Seemingly, the occurrence of *dico* flouts Grice's (1975: 46) Maxim of Manner (M3: be brief [avoid unnecessary prolixity]), or what Levinson (2000: 38) terms as the "M-Heuristic" ("what's said in an abnormal way isn't normal"). Attaching *dico* to a statement or prefacing a question with a command to speak is a sort of unnecessary verbosity, inviting the inference that the speaker intends to intend more than what is plainly said, here either an emotional or emphatic overlay to the hosting clause propositional content (cf. Brinton 2008 with respect to the English CC *I say*). The CC *dico* is employed to strengthen the speaker's assertive force, in order to assert the veracity (or sincerity) of a given utterance (see Brinton 2008: 116 on the attitudinal meaning expressed through the CC *I mean* when making the speaker's attitude clear).

More specifically, *dico* does not directly affect the propositional content itself. Rather, it underlines the speaker's force, thereby strengthening her argumentative position (see Schwenter and Traugott 2000: 12 on *in fact*, which is used in a similar way in English to strengthen speaker's argumentative stance). Simply put, the speaker's aim is not commenting on the truth-value – which would be redundant (we can notice that the host meaning is always factual, real, rather, the CCs act on the **VALIDITY/WARRANTY/AFFIRMATION** of such truth-value, often also triggered by other modal markers (adverbs, warmth words, quantifiers)). Moreover, the CC is generally hosted by declarative sentences thus functioning as an emphatic marker of assertiveness (Pusch 2007: 97-98). In other words, we might argue that *dico* would be redundant, but it is properly from such a redundancy that the function of emphasis indeed does emerge, as we will argue later.

Finally, quite surprisingly - to the extent that in literature the marker *direi* has always been treated as a mitigation/hedging device - a CC apparently expressing epistemic or positive mitigation

(Bazzanella 1995, Caffi 2007, Fiorentini 2017 among many others) may be used to perform the function under examination. Let us consider the following examples:

- 3.77) VD\_TO82: [...] e quest(o) °e' capitata, °  
[...]  
VD\_TO82: **direi** molto bene. (KIParla, TOD2001)  
VD\_TO82: And she/he has just happened **I'd say** in a really nice place
- 3.78) questo **direi** è abbastanza intuitivo (Lip FD5)  
This fact **I'd say** is very intuitive
- 3.79) LB\_BO098: e: estremamente vivace **direi**. (KIParla, BOD2013)  
LB\_BO098: He is a (student) really brilliant **I'd say**
- 3.80) SB\_TO017: e: l'altro,  
SB\_TO017: testo **direi** piuttosto importa:nte del passato della lingua araba,  
SB\_TO017: corano, o: kay. (TOD1005bis)  
SB\_TO017: And the other **I'd say** rather important source of the history of Arabic? Koran, yes exactly
- 3.81) è un fatto **direi estremamente** significativo ed emblematico (Lip FD16)  
This is **I'd say** an extremely significant and crucial fact
- 3.82) è nato nel clima [...] **abbastanza** positivo **direi** in cui [...] si svolgevano analoghe iniziative da parte del ministero (Lip, FD16)  
It emerged in the rather positive context **I'd say** where similar actions were carried out by the Minister
- 3.83) FM\_BO019: cioe', lei, [la, (. ) si'xxxxx] proprio, esposizione **direi** da trenta e lo[de.] (KIParla, BOA3003)  
FM\_BO019: I mean as for her she honestly **I'd say** her exam was really a First
- 3.84) UL\_BO074: pero':: comunque una persona:: direi in salute  
UL\_BO074: soprattutto un ragazzo: [giova]ne (. ) anche senza allenamento::  
FB\_BO049: ["giovane"]  
UL\_BO074: lo riesce a fare **direi** abbastanza: tranquillamente, (KIParla BOD2010)  
UL\_BO074: But a person I'd say in good health conditions especially a guy also without any experience is able to do that **I'd say** quite easily
- 3.85) NG\_BO082: no no io **direi** assolutamente si'. (KIParla, BOA1016)  
NG\_BO082: no no **I'd say** absolutely yes

We may argue that the first interpretation of which we think is mitigation (or hedging), as the CC *direi* is the first person form the conditional mood (see Caffi 2007), which is a typical strategy mobilized to convey mitigation. However, a more accurate analysis of the co-textual features leads us to consider it as a(n opposite) case of strengthening (or boosting, Fiorentini and Sansò 2017: 55-57).

In each of these examples, in fact, the speaker expresses reinforcement of a positive evaluation, often in medial position and interrupting a given phrase. In 3.81) the CC interrupts the head *fatto* ('issue') from its modifiers *estremamente significativo* ('extremely significant'), thus preceding its scope. Similarly, in 3.82) the head *clima* ('environment') is interrupted from its modifier *abbastanza positivo* ('rather positive'). More generally, in these occurrences, the predicate is temporarily suspended to favour the expression of speaker's emphatic stance towards the property qualifying a given referent (see Haselow 2017: 166 on medial field markers).

The intensifying function is validated from another distributional pattern. In fact, we cannot notice any marker of approximation (no hesitation markers or disfluency phenomena or conditional moods etc...). Along with these distributional facts, the host mood generally expresses an evaluative assessment with a positive evaluation (we cannot notice any negative assertion which needs to be mitigated – as in a genuine case of mitigation). All over the occurrences, *direi* marks factual content which refers to the speaker's personal evaluation. In fact, once more, it co-occurs with modal markers and/or positive adjectives such as *interessante* ('interesting') fostering the function at issue (see also the modal expressions such as *proprio*, *davvero* 'really', *piuttosto* 'rather', *assolutamente sì* 'without any doubt, yes'). On the contrary, when it occurs with a face-threatening act expressing negative evaluation, it seems easier that it performs mitigation/hedging.

However, within the macro-function of emphasis, we may hypothesise that in some occurrences, the function is also compatible with a weak mitigation function, which is validated further from a distributional correlate. In occurrences such as the one in 3.82), the position of the CC following the evaluative adjective could also reveal a mitigating effect, which could induce to consider the marker as a mitigating afterthought. Conversely, when the CC prefaces the evaluation item, the function of emphasis seems clearer.

The reader would be tempted to draw the conclusion that associating two semantically distant markers such as *giuro* and *direi* under the same head of emphasis function is risky. Without any doubt, if we take into account the lexical semantics of the source forms without considering the whole discourse configurations, *direi* is less transparent than *giuro* with respect to the function at issue. On a semantic ground, the latter is stronger than the former in that it is more likely to convey strong commitment - as it lexically recalls a notion of warranty - generally towards a matter of fact assertion<sup>77</sup>. However, we may hypothesise that both the CCs convey the speaker's strong commitment to the validity of the propositional content, thereby performing a function of

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<sup>77</sup> *Giuro* seems to occur more frequently in assertions referring to an existing, real state of affairs, whose existence the speaker intends to convince the addressee. On the contrary, *direi* is often hosted by evaluative assessments. However, both the CCs are used to reinforce the host content

reinforcement in both the cases – which indeed are in some cases very similar (compare 3.62) to 3.65), or 3.68). In fact, both CCs may be paraphrased as *credimi, davvero* ('trust me', 'truly', 'indeed' – namely as strategies used to express an emphasis comment imposing a scale of force which is *ad hoc* based on speaker's assumptions, see De Cesare 2000 on modal adverbs).

We may argue that, despite their different semantic sources, all these CCs develop into **intensifiers** (see Bolinger 1972: 94). They function as emphasisers with "a reinforcing effect on the truth-value of the clause or part of the clause" to which they apply (Quirk et al. 1985: 583). Such CCs can be understood as expressing the strengthening of the argumentative position of the speaker, thus acting on a scale of rhetorical strength (Schwenter and Traugott 2000; Brinton 2008: 186-187).

As argued by Bolinger (1972: 93), the pattern of syntactic shifts - whereby new intensifiers are created - repeats itself with regularity. Generally, the elements that undergo the shift at stake are from 'outside' the *dictum*. Indeed, they are typically expressions that initially expressed some relationship between what is said and the declarativeness of uttering it, or the certainty/emphasis /truth attributed to it. The strongest example is that of the verb *to tell*<sup>78</sup> and the imperative counterpart *believe me*<sup>79</sup>, both of which have become potential intensifiers (Bolinger 1972: 93):

3.86) She's a looker, believe me!

Additional meaning of emphasis is attached "and *you* is the carrier for an extra measure of it":

3.87) She's a looker, beliéve yóu mé (Bolinger 1972: 93)

As anticipated earlier, the most productive external source is that of sentence adverbs (adjuncts). Undeniably, many of the functions of the CCs we analysed so far are often played by **sentence adverbs**<sup>80</sup> - to the point that they may co-occur in the contexts we analysed. Sentence adverbs are used basically to refer to a truth of a predication. Such adverbs (or, more specifically, modal adverbs) may comment on truth versus non-truth value (*really, honestly, truly, actually, indeed*). They may alternatively comment on full truth versus partial truth (i.e., *quite, fully, entirely*), on the affirmation of truth (namely, *certainly, surely, definitely, frankly*), or on the preference of a true alternative over a false one (*rather, more*).

As Bolinger (1972: 94) recognises:

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<sup>78</sup> On the speech acts classification of 'say' there is no agreement.

<sup>79</sup> See the CC *guarda* which performs the very same function in our data – despite it arises from the imperative mood thus recalling hearer's attention.

<sup>80</sup> I mean, the CC may be paraphrased as a modal adverb (paraphrase test).

In a sense some of these words [truly, really ...] are intensifiers simply by reason of their **redundancy**. It is assumed that when people make statements they intend them to be taken as true. Adding such a word as truly does not make them more true, but it does **emphasize the truth feature of the sentence**. [...] Emphasis on the truth of the whole *dictum* leads by an easy inductive leap to an emphasis on some part of it [...]<sup>81</sup>

Our data provide evidence for such scope restriction in that, by definition, the CCs need to occur at least once in medial position, therefore each of our emphasis CCs may occur medially, differently from sentence adverbs such as *frankly* – which retain a global scope being placed on the peripheries of the utterance. Conversely, some CCs may interrupt either the clausal dependency or the phrasal dependency, a syntactic correlate that corroborates Bolinger's intuition about the intensifiers scope's leap from the whole to a part of the *dictum*. If the definition of emphasis would seem to point to its scope reduction, the syntactic distribution of emphatic CCs seems to validate such a consideration, even though we think that also when they occur in the peripheries, their scope may happen to be limited.

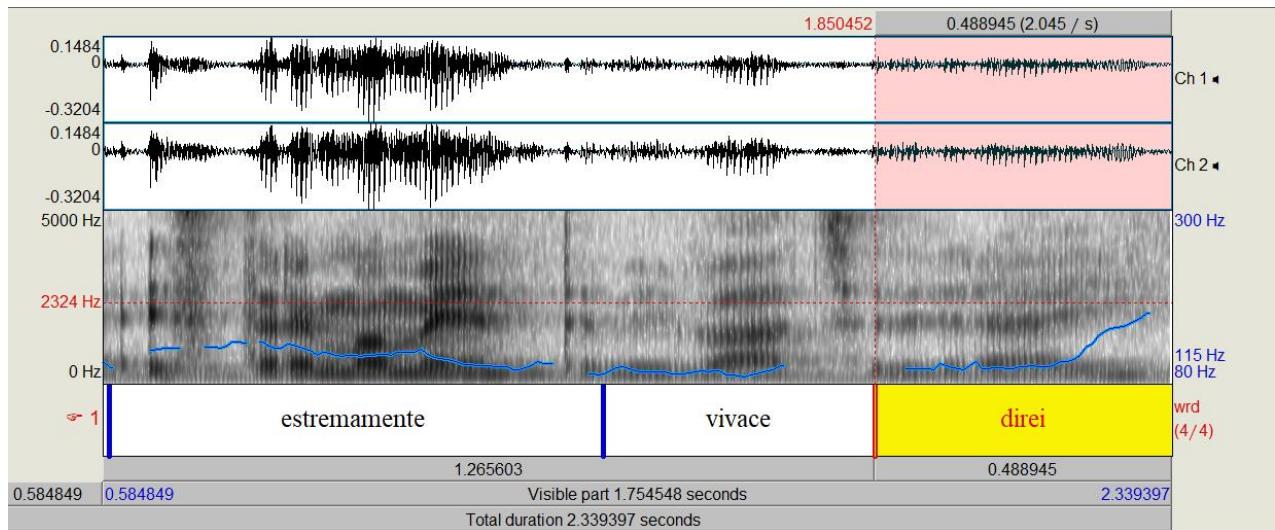
All the aforementioned CCs behave as those modal adverbs (*proprio* and *davvero*) which De Cesare (2000) defines as *avverbi modali* ('modal adverbs'), associated to a given truth content which was already estimated as true.

As anticipated earlier, the CC *dico* is at a first glance the most "redundant" of the CCs we enlisted so far in that it simply verbalises the action of saying/uttering, which is inherent in each act of *parole*. *Dico* is the most basic marker to express the declarativeness of saying something. It does not add any further nuance. It may be recruited to express such modal function by virtue of a pragmatic strengthening of some invited inferences: 'what is explicitly (re)said/repeated must be believed' - or at least considered as relevant'. If the speaker feels the necessity to verbalize the act itself of uttering, it means that she implicitly intends to emphasize what is in the scope of the CC, which the latter may happen to be prosodically integrated to, as shown in the following TextGrid.

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<sup>81</sup> Our bold.

Figure 3.8 Textgrid of the string ‘estremamente vivace direi’



As observed in the case of the epistemic CCs, also emphasis CCs may happen to be prosodically integrated. In what follows we will address another type of emphasis meaning conveyed through an operation of repetition or reiteration of a previously mentioned content.

### 3.2.2.1.2 Emphasis by repetition

Speakers may convey emphasis by **repeating** a piece of information which is contextually given. In that case, emphasis function does arise from an operation of reiteration.

Let us start with some examples of the CC *ripeto* stemming from the declarative *verbum dicendi ripetere* (Engl. ‘I repeat’) which is a variant of the lexeme *dire* specifying a way of saying, namely repetition:

- 3.88) [qui oggi assieme un eh una serie di iniziative volte a favore di chi si iscriverà a questa associazione # e che vedrà collegati da un anello di congiunzione non solo commerciale ma **sicuramente affettivo** e di conoscenza] [...] [non è solo un momento d'incontro **ripeto** commerciale e **sicuramente** di vantaggi per tutti noi ma anche soprattutto un momento di incontro affettivo] (Lip MD18)

[Here today together a eh a series of initiatives aimed at those who will join this association # aimed at connecting people joining it by a link not only commercial but definitely emotional and cultural] [...] [it is not only a meeting **I repeat** commercial and without any doubt helpful for all of us. It is indeed also a close meeting]

- 3.89) SL\_BO045: [molto piu' ]fluente soprattutto (.) la bambina.

SL\_BO045: soprat[tutto .]

[...]

SL\_BO045: [assolutame]nte si' perche' siamo partiti da (.) una fase in cui io s- sono arrivata e loro sapevano nemmeno dire io sono:

[..]

SL\_BO045: quindi, invece ora:

SL\_BO045: anche comunque delle frasi molto elaborate.

[...]

SL\_BO045: e soprattutto **ripeto**,

SL\_BO045: mh=c'e' questa specie di: sfida adesso a chi,  
[...]

SL\_BO045: [esatto] e lei poi e' molto piu' agguerrita quindi per ogni cosa subito alza la mano [...] (KIParla, BOA1015)

Much more fluent especially the girl especially her [...] absolutely yes because we started from very basic level. On the contrary now they produce very complex sentences and and **above all I repeat** mh there is such kind of challenge now ehm exactly and she is very involved, so she immediately intervenes to the lesson

- 3.90) NM\_BO121: perche' comunque si ripet- **ti ripeto** si romperanno di nuovo degli equilibri basati su NM\_BO121: su::: anni e anni di vita qui nello stesso modo (KIParla, BOD2017)

NM\_BO121: Because anyway repet- **I repeat** the balances based on on years and years of life will break again

- 3.91) **in realtà** la linea tre **ribadisco** è per quelli che chiamano da lontano per cui ecco mi raccomando lasciatela (Lip, FE6)

**Actually**, line n. 3 **I insist** is dedicated to people calling from places far from here, therefore please keep it there (for them)

- 3.92) un bel ragazzo **vi dico** era il bello della comitiva (Lip NB21)

A nice guy **I say to you** he was the most handsome of the group

- 3.93) pensate ha un fondo fai un primo piano di **ben** due **dico** due centimetri di spessore (Lip, NE10)  
just think the measure of the bottom of this pan is two **I mean** two inches

Once more, in these examples, the emphatic meaning is an effect of a conversational implicature: 'if I decide to say it twice/underline it, I estimate that it needs to be reiterated in order to (re-)confirm its truth and to focus on it'. In other words, the speaker perceives that the content of p - implied to be true, or at least given - should become part of speakers common ground, in that it is crucial to the speaker's argument. Even though it is less frequent than *ripeto* or *dico*, *ribadisco* ('I insist') is also used to emphasise the backgrounding of information (see Aijmer 2013 on *of course*). Speakers, often on an ad hoc basis, employ the CCs under examination to put a given content on the upper level of a scale for the purpose of strengthening their rhetorical stance at that point in the discourse.

In (3.88), *ripeto* forms a unit of its own that is not part of the network of hierarchical relations within the following microsyntactic clausal unit *it is not only a meeting I repeat commercial and without any doubt helpful for all of us*. It behaves like a text-organising device in the sense that the speaker foreshadows a reinforcement of the main argument she has previously uttered (see Haselow 2017). The meaning the CC conveys thus refers to the global situation of discourse. *Ripeto* is used in a slot in which the speaker has already uttered her stance (i.e., her opinion) and she is continuing amplifying it. Along with underlining the speaker's strong commitment towards what she is about to say, the marker fleshes out that the content at stake is highly subjectified (Haselow 2017: 140).

This is clearly illustrated also by the example in (3.89), in which the speakers are talking about the progress made by three brothers acquiring Italian and starting from the same level. The girl seems to be faster than the two brothers, not only because she is more predisposed to acquiring languages but also - and above all - because she is very resolute in general. In this context, the speaker uses *dico* to impose a scale that ranks the item ‘there is also this personal challenge’, and thereby strengthens the overall rhetorical argument in favour of speaker’s conviction that it is especially the girl who made a lot of progress in the process of acquisition. More specifically, taking into account her competitive behaviour should be considered as a crucial fact (see also the co-occurrence with the focus particle *soprattutto* ‘above all’) to evaluate the overall process of language acquisition by the three kids about whom they are talking. First, the speaker says that it was especially the girl who made more progress and then, to sustain this fact, she underlines that her competitive behaviour in general should be *without any doubt* taken into account.

Even though we classified it as a function of emphasis, this is a slightly different case in that the information is given (repeating implies that the content was previously active). Therefore, the speaker’s aim is mainly putting it at-issue for some purposes. It is not so referred directly to speaker’s reinforcement in terms of sincerity (as in the case of *giuro*). Rather, it seems that speaker’s aim is mainly stressing the prominence of some information in a given context in order to sustain her argumentative position. The speaker is not primarily concerned with foregrounding sincerity; rather the function aims at underlining some kind of information which is considered as crucial to sustain speaker’s argumentation. It may be paraphrased as ‘I insist, I would reiterate’. Before concluding, let us have a glance at the textgrids of two CCs conveying emphasis through repetition:

**Figure 3.9** Textgrid of the string ‘in parte ripeto sono elementi’

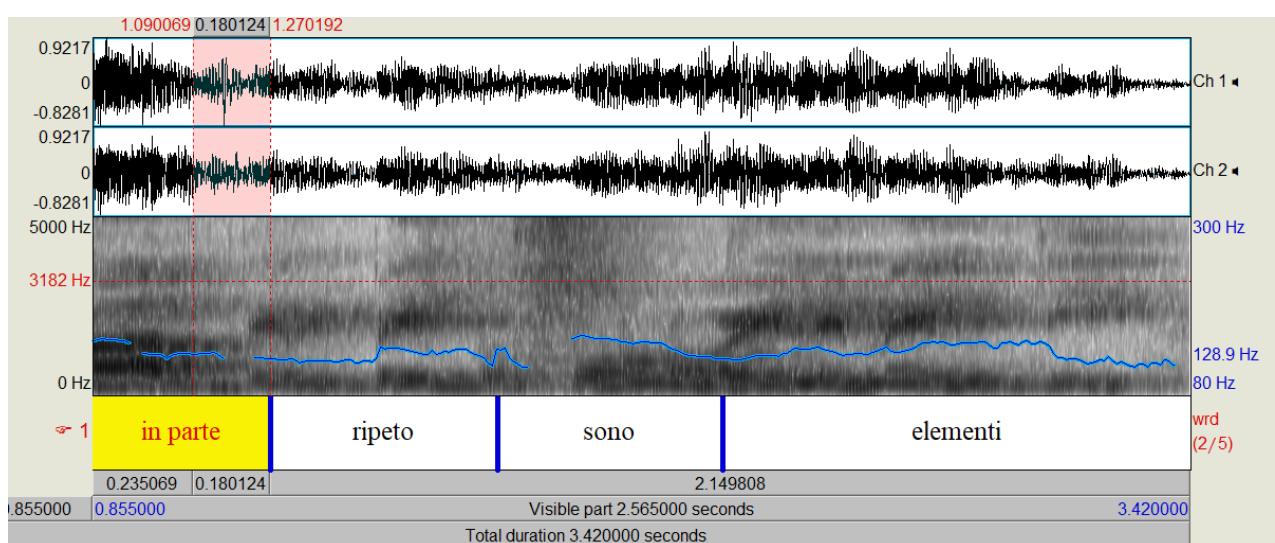
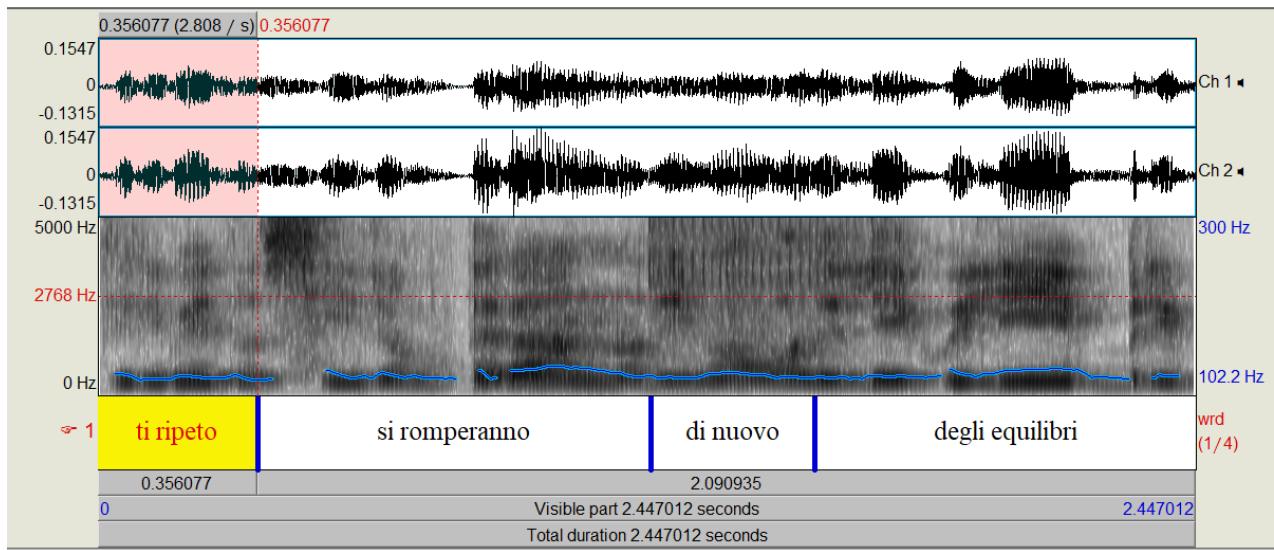


Figure 3. 10 Textgrid of the string ‘ti ripeto si romperanno di nuovo degli equilibri’



As observed above with respect to the functions of epistemic modality and emphasis through the CC *direi*, also the CCs at issue may happen to be integrated. In fact, no pauses occur in between the CC *ripeto* and its scope *sono elementi* ('they are elements') in the former. Furthermore, the utterance-initial CC *ti ripeto* is prosodically integrated to the ensuing content *si romperanno* ('will be broken').

### 3.2.2.1.3 CCs and emphasis: the case of disagreement and disapproval

As anticipated, our definition of emphasis includes different micro-functions, one of which is properly disagreement. Speakers may express a function of strong disapproval, regret, and/or disagreement, which we decided to include under the head of emphasis functions as it implies the strengthening of speaker's assertive force, even if the operation of endorsement is oriented towards a negative pole. If we try to detach the CC, the meaning of emphasis disappears, or it appears weakened - as in the other abovementioned cases. Therefore, among emphatic functions we included speaker's comment of **disapproval** and **disagreement**. This type of functions is defined as modal by Cuenca (2013: 197):

Modal meanings are inherently interactional in that they put forward the attitude, knowledge or stance of the speaker with respect to what it is been said or to the hearer. Pragmatic connectives and, especially, modal markers are typical vehicles of modal meanings such as agreement, disagreement or emphasis.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Although Cuenca (2013) considers such meanings as belonging to the interactional domain, we include them under the rhetorical one as they pertain to the construction of speaker stance in terms of argumentative force. Without any doubt, we do recognise that such functions may be placed on the intersection between speaker-oriented and interactional, at least more than epistemic positioning function. Nevertheless, given that speaker's stance is concerned

Let us consider the following examples:

- 3.94) secondo me loro volevano che li leggesse Massimo [...] poi **dico** veramente ma che stiamo a curare? (Lip, FB5)  
I think they wanted their documents reviewed by Massimo (and not me) come on **I say** really, what the hell are we talking about??
- 3.95) AB\_BO002: >cioe' lui< **mi dico** infatti ma poi (.) con quei capelli xxxx ((ride))  
AB\_BO002: guarda  
AB\_BO002: (ndo sei (.) via,) (KIParla, BOA3001)  
AB\_BO002: I mean that guy **I say** (to myself) but then with that kind of hair, look, what the hell?
- 3.96) D: capelli nel lavandino? **dico** ma come si fa? (Lip, RA4)  
D: Hair in the sink? **I say/I wonder** how is it possible...
- 3.97) ma **io dico** ma dirlo con me davanti con questo davanti significa che tu hai rispetto per me uguale zero (Lip, RA4)  
But **I say** but saying that mean things in front of me that means you are completely disrespectful
- 3.98) e fate anche magari vi arrabbiate anche se # ma **dico** lo sapete voi dove stanno i valori dove stanno le regole del vivere civile? guardate che non potete mica farle voi (Lip, MC7)  
And more, you get angry at it! But **I say/I wonder** do you know what social life values are? → **I say** your behaviour is not respectful at all

The distribution of *dico* recalls the distribution of the initial adverb *really* as analysed by Haselow (2017: 139). Often placed turn-initially in these contexts, *dico* also acts as a text-organising device since it *foreshadows* a strong disapproval. Again, the meaning refers to the situation of discourse. *Dico* is used in a sequential slot in which the speaker might have already expressed her opinion. For example, in 3.94), the speaker implicitly expresses her commitment of disapproval (*they wanted their documents reviewed by Massimo*), which is already considered as weird by the speaker. Furthermore, she keeps on underlining it more explicitly. Therefore, *dico* emphasises the speaker's strong commitment toward what she is about to say and that this content is subjectified (Haselow 2017: 140) with a negative nuance of disapproval.

Whereas sometimes such negative nuance is explicitly encoded through a negative assertion, in other occurrences, the CC is hosted by a rhetorical question<sup>83</sup>, which hides a shade of disapproval by implicature. For example, *ma che stiamo a curare?* (Lit. ‘what are we talking about?’) is an indirect way of uttering that the speaker is incredulous and angry at the topic of discussion. We

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(on speech act level – see Sweetser 1990), we decided to include it under the head of speaker-oriented domain (see 2.3).

<sup>83</sup> It is not a case that the emphatic CC is hosted by an interrogation that recalls a notion of intersubjectivity, in that it presupposes a set of shared assumptions that corroborates speaker's position.

classified such structures as evaluative assessments although this meaning is in a way implied and not overtly encoded through the declarative mood. It arises from the fact that we had classified in an ad hoc way CCs hosts in order to handle the properties of spoken dialogue (constructional, data-driven perspective). To be noticed in the occurrences is the CC that may be paraphrased as *mi chiedo/mi meraviglio* ('I wonder'), and that introduces questions whose content is hard to accept by the speaker. The negative sense of disapproval may also be detected in some occurrences through the co-occurrence between the CC and the adversative connective *ma* ('but') immediately preceding the CC.

### 3.2.2.3 CCs and hedging

The use of CCs also concerns the speaker's social image and social positioning. CCs may be employed to reach agreement between interlocutors on social, and interactional grounds. More specifically, CCs may be used as hedges, that is, linguistic devices signalling "a lack of commitment to either the full semantic membership of an expression or to the full commitment of the speech act being conveyed" (Fraser 2010: 22).

This section focuses on the discussion of those strategies of speech act hedging, which encompasses devices that attenuate the strength of the speech act and, more generally, the speaker's commitment towards the utterance (Fraser 1975; Brown and Levinson 1978, 1987, Molinelli 2014 on Italian DMs). We will focus on this latter type of speech act-motivated hedging function, in which CCs act as modifiers of the weightiness of the information given. In other words, a CC may be used as a discourse strategy that reduces the force of an utterance thus lessening the risk a speaker runs when uttering a strong assertion or other speech acts (Kaltenböck et al. 2010: 1).

As many other linguistic strategies, CCs may serve the purpose of offering room for negotiation. They allow that a proposition is rather recognised as an **opinion** instead of a verdictive affirmation (Vázquez and Giner 2008: 174-175; Caffi 2007: 259, 275).

One of the main perlocutive effects of hedging is politeness, which may be sub-classified either as positive or negative politeness. The latter is used to mitigate, reduce or to lessen potential causes of offence. Polite requests, for instance, are polite in a negative sense. In fact, they are employed to reduce the cause of the offence that would occur if a given speaker were to communicate "the imposition in its bluntest form" (Leech 2014: 11).

On the other hand, positive politeness assigns some positive value to the hearer. Positive politeness strategies represent a more technical notion, which is described as:

[R]edress directed to the addressee's positive face, his perennial desire that his wants (or the actions/acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable. Redress consists in partially satisfying that desire by communicating that one's own wants (or some of them) are in some respects similar to the addressee's wants. (Brown and Levinson 1987: 101).

Offers, invitations, congratulations, compliments, and apologies are examples of positive politeness. Moreover, a crucial category is constituted of the remedial strategies. It is through these strategies that "the speaker makes a positive gesture to cancel out an imbalance favoring the speaker or disfavouring the hearer" (Leech 2014: 12). In each conversation the subject bears a mask or face, i.e. "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman 1967: 6).

In this section, we will focus on such positive face goals performed by CCs. In all the following occurrences, the speaker's aim is gaining or enhancing face ("i.e., the heightening or maintaining of a person's self-esteem, as a result of the heightening or maintaining of that person's estimation in the eyes of others", Leech 2014: 25). As the table shows, CCs with hedging functions are not used so frequently:

**Table 3. 18 Hedging CCs**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	26/63 (41.2%)	37/63 (58,7%)	63/1222 (5,1%)
CCs	(io) direi, diciamo, mi sembra, non so, potremmo dire, mi pare	io direi, si può dire, diciamo (così)	

It is worth underlining that hedging CCs hosts are often a **negative** evaluative assessment, which *need* to be mitigated (61,9%). In order to protect her-self and/or the interlocutor self-image, the speaker utters some criticisms through mitigation by prefacing them through a CC. Let us consider the following examples:

- 3.99) MC\_TO026: e:::h risentono ancora di quei problemi: (.) e:h di cui ve- (.) di cui parlavamo la volta scorsa. cioe', (.) e::h le osservazioni sono spesso, **diciamo cosi'**, non piu' attuali no, perche' ha fatto riferimento (.) [in fondo quasi esclusivo a quel libro che e'] del novantadue. no, (KIParla, TOA1001)  
MC\_TO026: Eh still they show those problems eh of we were talking about last time. That is eh the considerations are often, **let's say** so, no longer up-to-date no, because you made a reference basically almost exclusively to that book published in 1992, no?
- 3.100) MC\_TO026: perche' altrimenti, (.) diventa **diciamo cosi'** un lavoro di tesi, scritto negli anni novanta. KIParla, TOA1001  
MC\_TO026: Because otherwise it becomes **let's say** like a thesis written in the 90s.
- 3.101) non era dipendente di nessuna ditta era praticamente un lavoratore in nero # e questo è un elemento raccapricciante **diciamo** (Lip, ME6)

He was not employed by any company, he was an undocumented worker # and this is a creepy element **let's say**

In 3.99) and 3.100), the same professor employs the CC *diciamo* to hedge his strong assertions representing his point of view. More specifically, such assertive-verdictive acts are attenuated by the CCs, which act as tempering mitigating devices, thus reducing the speaker's responsibility for her own statements or judgments (Caffi 2007: 259).

The speaker is implicitly criticising her student's work by underlining that the references the student cited are out-of-date. Other clues are provided in the co-text: in 3.99) the speaker employs the negation of the positive adjective (*update*) instead of the explicitly negative adjective *out-of-date* she has in mind. In this case, despite the CC *diciamo* is primarily an approximation function strategy (Caffi 2007: 275), it does not operate on the propositional / semantic level. Rather it operates at the illocutionary level, hedging the illocutionary force of the speech act being performed and the speaker's commitment towards the utterance. Therefore, it establishes a "fuzziness in the relationship between the propositional content and the speaker's stance" (Prince et al. 1982: 85).

The same happens in other occurrences in which the speaker softens her criticism by employing a negation of a positive item in order to avoid an excessively face-threatening effect and to keep her face uncompromised in uttering a negative judgement (see notion of *tempering mitigation* in Caffi's 2007 taxonomy on mitigation strategies). In co-occurrence with the evaluative assessments, the CC *diciamo* ('let us say') reduces the validity of the negative verdict, thus weakening the obligation imposed on the student by the professor with respect to the latter's work. It can also be argued that the CC contributes to politeness since it is more deferential. In fact, it conveys agreement with the addressee and then cancels some of the assumptions lying behind the agreement, rather than expressing plain disagreement (see Brinton 2008: 54 on the DM *only*).

The cases we presented could be classified as examples of a "Positive politeness strategy", hedging opinion (Brown and Levinson 1987: 145-172). For instance, a speaker may decide to be vague or less assertive with respect to an opinion in order not to directly express a criticism or her disagreement (see Ghezzi 2012: 5). Unless the speaker is certain of a hearer's opinion, a characteristic device in positive politeness is to make one's opinion safely vague (Beeching 2017: 157) in order to construct a positive self-image (Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a: 135).

Another CC which is used to perform hedging is the first-person form of the conditional mood *direi* ('I'd say') as in the following example:

3.102) guarda purtroppo c'è stata una superficialità eh **direi** quasi ingiustificata nei suoi confronti (Lip, ME6)

Look unfortunately he was judged shallow eh **I would say** almost in an unjustified way

- 3.103) questo incontro ce ne dà l'occasione per segnalare l'esigenza di una revisione della revisione del ritocco per alcuni aspetti **direi** anche urgente direi di alcuni istituti (Lip, NC3)  
 This meeting gives us the opportunity to report the need for in some respects **I would say** also urgent revision of some institutes

- 3.104) MP\_BO020: **io direi** potrebbe [dipendere,]

[...]

MP\_BO020: potrebbe: dipende da: dalla risposta che ricevo dalle altre scuole. (KIParla, BOA1001)

MP\_BO020: **I would say** it might depend it might depend on from from the feedback I get from the other schools.

In both 3.102) and 3.103), the speaker utters an evaluative assessment which is negatively-oriented. In both the occurrences the CC interrupts the NP conveying speaker's evaluation, i.e. the head *superficialità* ('shallowness') from its modifier *ingiustificata* ('groundless') and the head *ritocco* ('readjustment') from its modifier *urgente* ('necessary'). In 3.102) the mitigating effect is also obtained by the occurrence of the softener *quasi* ('let's say'), which contributes to preserving speaker's self-image in uttering a negative assessment. The result is reducing the distance between speaker and hearer. Similarly, in the other example, the focus particle *anche* ('also') is used to co-convey such a softening function based on the fact that the speaker puts the adjective *urgente* ('urgent') on a scale of equipollent alternatives, thus reducing its validity or relevance for pragmatic purposes.

Such CCs behave as expressive markers that indicate consideration, tact and respect. Therefore, they could be treated as positive politeness strategies (Caffi 2007: 125). *Direi* also expresses a range of speaker's attitudes, providing information about the speaker, the speaking situation, or about the levels of politeness (Fox Tree and Schrock 2002: 729). For instance, it may be used as a "softener" (Crystal and Davy 1975), as a "compromiser" (James 1983) tempering the assertive force, or as a mitigator of "the strength of an evaluative statement" (Erman 1986: 143; see also Brinton 2008: 113 on *I mean*) especially when the host is a verdictive/evaluative assessment conveying criticism (see Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a: 136).

On the other hand, in 3.104), the speaker is not softening any criticism. Rather, in order to save her face, she utters the mitigating CC *direi* co-occurring with a conditional form (*potrebbe dipendere*), which globally contributes to protect the speaker's positive self-image from possible future charges. In fact, whereas the speaker uses some mechanisms to attain de-responsibilization with a view to meeting the hearer's needs, his feelings, and thus his negativity, other strategies above all meet the speaker's positive face, that is, her personal needs (Ghezzi 2012: 48).

As can be observed, hedging CCs develop in general from markers of approximation, which are basically used to convey a semantic mismatch (see Mihatsch 2010, Fraser 2010). Therefore, we can

notice that the speaker uses a CC canonically employed to declare a semantic mismatch to operate a process of mitigation placed on the speech act level.

Before concluding this section devoted to the study of hedging CCs, we would like to underline a crucial fact, following Leech (2014: 25). Even though we classified the above-mentioned functions as pertaining to the speaker-oriented domain (i.e., reference to speaker's stance) and therefore having classified the face as a person's psychological construct, we need to highlight that positive face is part of the speakers' psychological make-up. The latter depends on and feeds back into our relationship with other speakers in the concrete, social environment. Once again, as highlighted in the case of emphasis functions, the CCs performing hedging play a sort of *interplay* function which is also referred to the interlocutor. It is different from the case of genuine epistemic or evidential functions pertaining exclusively to the speaker's status of knowledge. In fact, hedging has been often classified as an interactional function:

Among the **interpersonal** functions are subjective functions such as expressing responses, reactions, attitudes, understanding, tentativeness, or continued attention, as well as interactive functions such as expressing intimacy, cooperation, shared knowledge, deference, or **face-saving** (politeness). (Brinton 2008: 18)

We preferred to include this type of hedging functions under the head of the speaker-oriented domain because it pertains primarily to the interlocutor. Rather, we believe that the speaker's stance as social construct is concerned. This very consideration constitutes a reason to include such speech-act/assertiveness level function under the head of speaker-oriented domain. This does not exclude that such a function may have an impact of politeness aimed at preserving interlocutor's face as well. In fact, it is properly in social interactions that the function of hedging indeed emerges.

### **3.2.2.4 CCs and unexpectedness: the function of mirativity**

Along with conveying propositional attitudes such as epistemic positioning, CCs may be used to express the speaker's attitude of surprise. DeLancey (1997: 33, 2001) defined mirativity as the category used "to mark sentences which report Information which is new or surprising to the Speaker". A similar array of meanings was captured by the expression "admirative" (see Friedman 2003: 192-193, 213; 2010; 2012 for the history, and the meanings of the label at stake - Aikhenvald 2012: 435). Mirative meanings reflect "the status of the proposition with respect to the speaker's overall knowledge structure" (DeLancey 1997: 33), or, as Hyslop (2011: 625) calls it, "expectation of knowledge".

In those languages that do not encode the attitude of surprise by means of inflection (see, ‘mirative mood’) or grammatical means, like Italian, mirative expressions are often derived from verbs that encode concepts connected to imagination or reflection/thinking. In Hungarian, for instance, this is clearly exemplified by the expression of mirativity *képzeld* (‘imagine’, 2nd p.sg. imperative - Vaskó 2016: 126).

Our data show evidence for the claim that in Italian CCs may also be used to convey speaker’s surprise or unprepared mind. In this section we will address mirativity as a speaker-oriented propositional attitude. We will focus on hearer-oriented mirativity in chapter 6. As for the source cited for Hungarian, in Italian mirativity is expressed through CCs stemming from cognitive verbs (*pensa* ‘just think’, ‘mind you’, *figurati* ‘just figure out’, *immagina* ‘just imagine’).

**Table 3.19** Mirativity CCs

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall
%	5 (25%)	15 (75%)	20/1222 (1,6%)
CCs	pensa	figurati/figuriamoci, guarda (tu), (te/tu) pensa, vedi	

Once again, we do underline that the function is not widespread. Let us consider the following examples:

- 3.105) **pensa** che sentimento che avevate (Lip, RE7)  
just think what a wonderful feeling!

- 3.106) **pensa** che fico te stavi va be' co' Lucia e lei con tuo cugino# (Lip, RB1)  
just think how cool you were together with Lucia and she was with your cousin

In both the examples, the speaker expresses a reaction of surprise with respect to hearer’s assertion (see Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a, b, see Haselow 2011). The mirativity function is also mirrored with the kind of host, namely an **exclamative clause** (Bianchi, Bocci and Cruschina 2013). Both the sentences express the speaker’s evaluation of surprise, which – as propositional attitude – is expressed through the CC and, once again, contributed by the co-text, that is an evaluative assessment linguistically expressed through an exclamation. The role of co-text is very crucial in this type of functions, where the CC is wholly opaque with respect to the former. The speaker is not recalling the hearer’s attention nor asking him to imagine something. Rather, she is expressing her surprise by using such apparently intersubjective forms (Cristofaro 2016).

In these occurrences, the speaker’s reaction to an unexpected information is positive, in fact the host mood is an exclamative positive evaluation (*how cool*, *what a wonderful feeling*).

However, in other cases, speaker's unprepared mind manifests itself in terms of a negative reaction to hearer's utterance(s), as in the following examples:

- 3.107) B: questi qua non sanno cos'è Zorro C: **ma pensa** son cresciuti male questi bambini (Lip, MB1)  
B: These kids don't know Zorro C: but **just think** these children have been badly raised

- 3.108) son mica colori questo blu Filippo tu questo come lo metti nell'acqua basta A: son mica colori che tengono C: va tutto insieme # in acqua fredda ma stai scherzando? il rosso il blu **ma figurati** questi già scolorano comunque # rosso blu son terribili (Lip, MA2)  
This type of blue, Filippo, as you put it in the water it is not a problem A: they are not colours that keep C: It all goes together # in cold water but are you joking me? Red The blue but **just figure / imagine** these already fade anyway # red blue, they are terrible colours

In 3.107), Speaker B asserts that children raised in the '90s do not know the character Zorro, a fact which is quite odd for both the interlocutors, raised up in the '70s. To manifest such surprise, speaker C expresses an evaluative assessment with a negative disposition, which is nuanced also by the connective *ma* (counter-expectative meaning) which is immediately followed by the CC *pensa*. This CC is used to mark an overtone of surprise and amazement to the claim that young people do not know the famous character Zorro - as the people uttering it were obsessed with him when they were children. Again, *pensa* appears to be devoid of its imperative meaning. The strategy at issue serves as an expression of astonishment<sup>84</sup>.

In 3.108), the speaker reacts negatively to the hearer's assertion, whose content was not expected with respect to speaker's assumptions (mixing clothes of different colours in the same laundry). The speaker again expresses surprise - and an overtone of disapproval - through a second person CC, which has the purpose of making speaker's own stance explicit. In other words, the speaker expresses disagreement and incredulity with respect to the solutions that the hearer had proposed. To support such *negative surprise*, she additionally provides other evidence, which demolishes her interlocutor's position.

In other cases, the CC encodes a sort of counter-mirative meaning. Consider the following example, which may be paraphrased as "this does not surprise me in the least":

- 3.109) il Corriere della sera dice eh e adesso Bossi è nei pasticci **figurati** io quei pasticci lì li ho visti cinquantamila volte (Lip, MD12)  
The newspaper says eh and now Bossi is in a pickle **just figure it out / imagine** he was in trouble they mention I heard fifty thousand times

---

<sup>84</sup> We will come back later to this consideration.

The speaker expresses that she is not surprised at all. Implicitly, she does not share hearer's assumption. She downgrades its relevance by using the CC *figurati* ('imagine, let alone'), which underlines that the content should not be considered as remarkable (at all). The CC *figurati* is used to demolish the presumed validity of p (Bossi is in a pickle). Rather, from speaker's perspective, it is surprising that someone may think that such content is true. Even though the CC does not express surprise as in the abovementioned examples, we classified cases as these ones as instances of mirativity, basing on the assumption that mirativity may be referred to surprise, which may be interpreted either as positive or not.

As anticipated in the discussion of the data, a noteworthy consideration is that mirativity expressing the speaker's personal stance is performed from 2<sup>nd</sup> person CCs – which have obviously lost their referential meaning. We will return to this consideration in Chapter 6, where we address the issue of directionality of linguistic change as attested by CCs in Present-day Italian.

### 3.2.2.5 CCs and speech act-motivation

To conclude this section devoted to the description of speaker-oriented domain CCs functions, we will describe one last function, namely the justification for uttering a given speech act. We do underline that this function is very rare in our data. Therefore, we limit ourselves to succinctly discuss one example:

- 3.110) senti vuoi che compri i pop corn e la coca-cola \* ecco **dico** fa ambiente (Lip, RA4)  
Listen do you want me to buy some pop corns and coke? I mean **I say** it sets the environment

In 3.110), the speaker uses the CC *dico* ('I say') to introduce the *motivation* of her previous speech act, namely the interrogation *do you want me to buy a coke?*. Requests are FTA involving a burden of responsibility with respect to the hearer. In order to justify this act aimed at recalling hearer's attention, the speaker additionally provides her reason, or pragmatic motivation. The CC explicates the causal relation between the two speech acts, that is the question and the ensuing assertion, by supporting a kind of argumentative and justificative function (Bruti 1999 and, more recently, Fiorentini 2017: 150, 157, 159), which is placed on the interpersonal level. The CC correlates the illocutive meaning of a discourse unit with the locutive meaning of the other one, as happens with respect to justifications and motivations (Fagard and Degand 2010: 180-182). We might argue that this function is aimed at explaining the speaker's *action*.

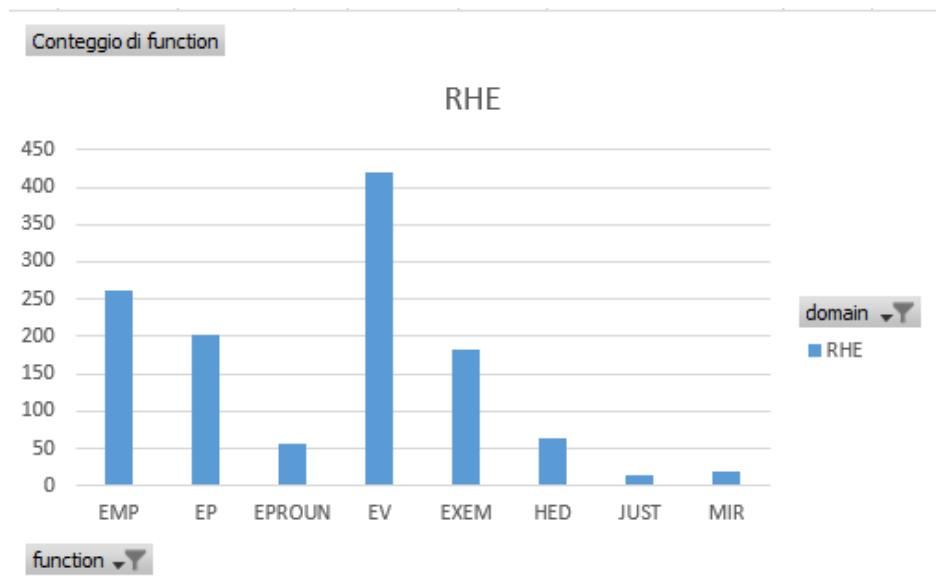
Once again, *dico* would seem a typical marker of reformulation (Fiorentini and Sansò 2017). However, in this co-text it may be used to introduce the pragmatic motivation leading the speaker

to utter P. It is a speech-act level motivation/justification justifying speaker's behaviour and speech act (pragmatic speech-level connection).

### 3.3 Speaker-oriented domain: main findings

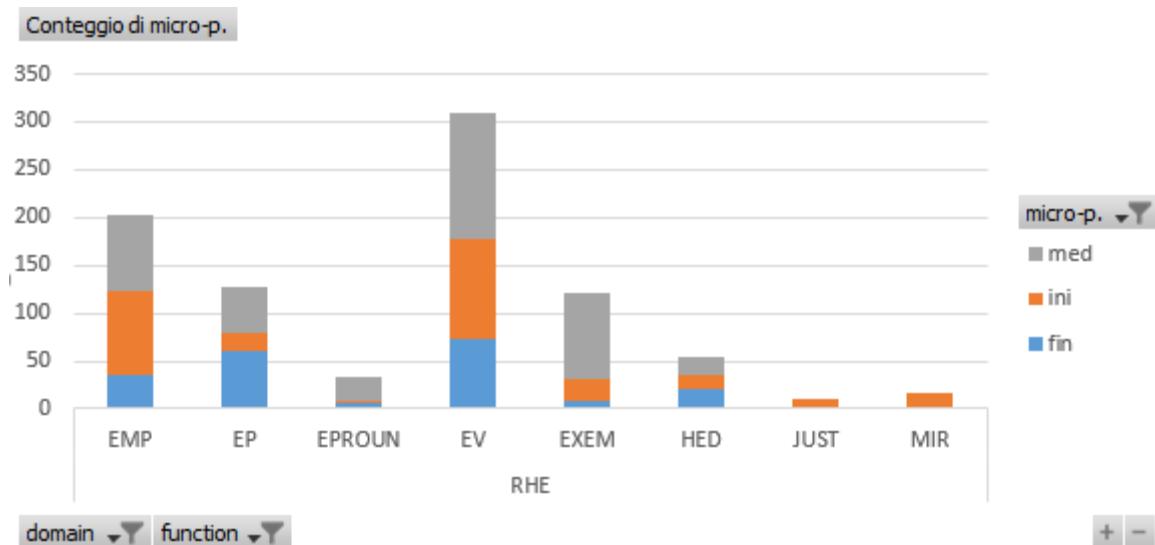
Summing up, first of all, what we have observed with respect to the speaker-oriented CCs is the variety of attested forms: from hapaxes to more grammaticalized/opaque strategies selecting first, second and, even third person. CCs do not select only the first form of present tense indicative (Urmson 1952 on parenthetical verbs). Specifically, in making the speaker's stance explicit, the most attested sources are *v. dicendi*, *semifactive* and *weak* predicates. We realised that defining the CCs and their functions on the basis of i) source (analytical philosophy body of research) and ii) person (Kaltenböck 2005; 2010) is not feasible. What we observe is rather the importance of invoking a constructional perspective (see Ch. 6), through which we can spot some *loci* of the meta-comment, played by different strategies, which convey a given function that may be triggered by the co(n)text (see especially the function of evidential stance). In what follows we provide a schematic picture of the speaker-oriented functions distributed along the domain (RHE):

**Figure 3. 11 Percentage of speaker-oriented domain**



The most frequent speaker-oriented functions are evidentiality (EV), emphasis (EMP), epistemicity (EP) and exemplification (EXEM), distributed in the following positions of microsyntax (which is more frequent than macrosyntax):

Figure 3.12 Percentage of position/microsyntax



The preferred position is globally the medial position (in grey in the graph) followed by initial position (in orange). More rarely the CCs at stake occur in final position even if it is not impossible. What we notice - excluding exemplification - is that emphasis and evidentiality may be placed in each position, a fact which can be explained with respect to the role of the i) lexical semantics of the CC source and to ii) the meaning induced by the context which triggers the two function at issue.

In macrosyntax, the preferred position is initial.

Globally, medial position, which can even interrupt the phrase (the percentage of interrupting the phrase position is  $9,1\% = 112/1222$ ), has been identified for most of the CCs ranging from epistemic/evidential to hedging/emphasis functions. This is a crucial aspect in that it gathers some evidence for the claim that, to a certain point in discourse, speakers interrupt what they are going to utter to provide a second level information referring to the speaker's stance. The medial position has been observed with respect to most of the CCs functions. What is crucial is that CCs may occur in nearly every potential slot, often also interrupting phrases. With respect to epistemic functions, it shows in the clearest way the specific scope of CC, which may be vague in cases of initial position. If we add that such interruptive force is connected to a limited number of *irrealis* context, with the possibility of the CC prosodic integration, we can seriously consider the epistemic CCs as modality markers on a par with more grammatical means (mood, auxiliaries).

The frequency of emphasis functions performing the opposite function with respect to epistemic stance (boosting the speaker's assertive force) shows that the most basic subjective operations referring to the speaker's stance are boosting vs attenuating the truth values vs force. On a par with epistemic functions, even emphasis functions show a variability in the position, despite the preferred position is initial (confirming the trend to express subjective - in this case modal - meanings

initially). Such positional mobility leads one to consider that CCs are nearer to the category of adverbs, i.e., modal adverbs.

## Chapter 4. The functions of textual domain

### Introduction to the chapter

In this Chapter we will focus on those CCs contributing to the **discourse organization** with the purpose of guaranteeing textual coherence and cohesion, both on a local and on a global discourse level (Fedriani and Molinelli 2013: 73, Ghezzi 2014, Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a, b, Molinelli 2015: 196, 197, Vincent 2005: 189, Erman 2001, Brinton 2006, Fischer 2006, Heine 2013, Degand 2014). The function under scrutiny is the most text-oriented one (Lenk 1998: 246). Textual CCs turn sometimes fragmented pieces of discourse into a coherently organised text (Erman 2001: 1339). In brief, the textual domain mirrors what Crible (2018: 64) terms as **sequential** domain in her taxonomy on DMs functions in spoken English and French. The sequential domain is linked to the “structuring of discourse segments; includes opening boundary, closing boundary, topic-resuming, topic-shifting [...]. “This means that local management of smaller units (hesitation breaks, other types of filled pauses) will be included in this domain, along with more structural functions such as turn-taking or topic-shifting.” (Crible 2017: 348).

In the next paragraphs, we will investigate CCs of the following types:

- 4.1) LQ\_BO013: questo e:h processo ha un valore **diciamo cosi'** formativo della della psicologia (KIParla, BOD1001)  
LQ\_BO013: this eh process has a formative **let's say** value of of psychology
- 4.2) MU\_TO019: e:h=mh=un altro diciamo manovra da verific- **diciamo** un altro un altro caso da verificare la temperatura corporea **diciamo** dei piccoli, (KIParla, TOC1004)  
MU\_TO019: Ehm another, **let's say** evaluation to monit- **let's say** another fact to check (it is) the body temperature **let's say** of the little ones
- 4.3) GD\_TO038: cioe' io sono vestito come un alpino in congedo generalmente. pero', **voglio dire** queste mode nuove mi (.) non riesco a capir[le.] (KIParla, TOA3004)  
GD\_TO038: I'm usually dressed as an alpine trooper on leave, but **I mean** these new fashions (.) I can't understand them
- 4.4) A: va bene proviamo un pochino via X: **senti** è il dentifricio (Lip, FB14)  
A: All right let's try a little bit, go! X: **look/now** it's the toothpaste
- 4.5) LA\_TO069: **dicevamo** insom- il rinascimento, comunque si caratterizza per questa riscoperta dell'antichita'. (KIParla, TOD1015)  
LA\_TO069: **we were saying** in shor- renaissance however is characterised by this rediscovery of antiquity.
- 4.6) PO\_TO004: >**vedete**< stiamo parlando di (.) capire i media.  
PO\_TO004: e stiamo parlando di capire il medium,  
PO\_TO004: b:ase della comunicazione umana, (KIParla TOD1002)  
PO\_TO004: **Look** we're talking about understanding the media and we're talking about understanding the basic medium of human communication

Before discussing the attested constructions and their functions (4.2, 4.3), in 4.1.2 we will provide a working definition of the textual domain. This will be done after undertaking a review of the literature starting from the seminal works on the topic and comparing different definitions as developed out from the existing taxonomies on DMs and on parentheticals functions (see, among others, Halliday and Hasan (1976), Redeker (1990), Erman (2001), González (2005) Kaltenböck et al. (2011), Crible (2018), Molinelli (2014, 2015) and Crible and Degand (2019)). In 4.2 functions which convey macro-coherence will be discussed (global structuring functions). Section 4.2.1 is devoted to the analysis of opening boundary functions in discourse. Section 4.2.2 deals with the discussion of the functions of topic-shifting and topic-resuming. In 4.2.3 we will discuss CCs which bracket segments, thus contributing to the progression of the texts and uncovering internal relations between the arguments being connected. Section 4.2.4 is devoted to the discussion of the argumentative potential of reformulation beyond simple rewording or repair. Consequence, contrast, negation of expectations relations made explicit by reformulation will be specifically elaborated. In Section 4.3 we will finally discuss those functions pertaining to micro-coherence, namely local reformulation, approximation, and time for planning. (i.e., those operations referring to phrasing).

Whereas the CCs taking scope over local, micro-coherence refer to the issue of wording and to the modification of the speaker's expressions (metalinguistic functions), the other functions included under the head of the textual domain refer to the macro-structuring of the texts, both with regard to the argumentative functions, and with respect to the internal structuring of the text in different sections/turns/exchanges.

The results will point out some tendencies, but not a one-to-one mapping between the lexical semantics of the CC source and the function the latter plays in a given context. In fact, some plainly textual functions are played by intrinsically textual markers, such as *verba dicendi* (i.e., verbs of speaking like *dicevo* 'I was saying', *diciamo* 'let us say', *voglio dire* 'I mean'), which lexically refer to the operation of text construction. However, the same textual functions (see, for instance, the function of opening boundaries in discourse) may happen to be played also by intrinsically interactional markers. For instance, allocutive forms of perceptual verbs (*guarda* 'look', *senti* 'listen', *vedi* 'see'), occurring in specific **positions**, are likely to play textual functions referring to the internal organization of the text, that is, with respect to the systems of turns or to the distribution of information over the discourse (cf. 4.2.1).

Along with discussing the variety of the lexical semantics of the sources of the textual CCs, we will discuss their frequent distribution in medial position (Kaltenböck et al. 2011). As mentioned above, some CCs of the textual domain express the speaker's meta-textual stance with respect to

the process of selection of words and are thus placed on the micro-textual level (micro-coherence), often in medial position<sup>85</sup> (56,4% of the overall microsyntax). Such interruptive, syntactic behaviour deeply connected to the phrasing-level functions will be elaborated further by some insights on the CCs prosodic profile, which will be argued to play a decisive role in defining the discourse profile of CCs. It will be argued that even textual CCs are not always prosodically set off from their hosts (see Kaltenböck et al. 2011, Kärkkäinen 2003, Mazeland 2007, as anticipated in Chapter 3).

Conversely, although being classified as textual markers as well, some other CCs reflect the speaker's argumentative stance, in that they are employed to meta-comment on the construction of the discourse as a coherent text, on a macro-component level. Such functional behaviour is mirrored on the distributional ground. The CCs performing such functions are generally placed on the peripheries of the utterance and, more specifically, in the initial position of the left periphery. In that case, the CCs serve as text-oriented structuring devices encompassing global coherence. Therefore, such markers are likely to retain a global scope on whole stretches of texts, whereby they are supposed to be prosodically set off and they are placed on the left periphery, given that they do not penetrate into local relations.

We will return to a discussion of a unifying description of the textual domain functions and their correlations in Sections 4.2 and 4.3.

#### **4.1 Towards a taxonomy: defining the functions of textual domain**

##### **4.1.1 The textual domain functions: what has been said**

In what follows we will explain how we combined the reference to existing taxonomies with our research questions. In doing so, we will highlight that such pool of functions broadly corresponds to other well-known classifications theorized for the study of DMs functions. Consequently, we will shed light on the reason motivating our terminology among many others.

Whereas the CCs analysed in Ch. 3 make the speaker's epistemic and rhetorical stance explicit, the CCs which will be addressed in this chapter refer to the following (bolded)

COMPONENTS DETERMINING THE SITUATION OF DISCOURSE defined for the study of parentheticals (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 865).

- **Text organization (TO)**
- **Source of information (SI)**

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<sup>85</sup> We are quite aware of the potential critics against our decision to include approximation among the textual domain. However, we preferred to treat as instances of rhetorical/speaker-oriented functions only those functions pertaining to the speaker's status of knowledge, thus including all the meta-comments on the text constructions in the textual domain. Given that the function of approximation pertains to the intrinsic formulation of the text, we decided to include it under the label sequential / textual.

- Attitudes of the speaker (AS)
- Speaker-hearer interaction (SHI)
- **Discourse setting (DS)**
- World knowledge (WK)

The former component relates in particular - but not exclusively - to what Blakemore (2006) calls grammatical parentheticals, which contribute to what is implicitly or explicitly communicated by the host utterance. Clarifying or modifying the meaning of the utterance by providing supplementary information for coherent interpretation is one of the main functions concerning this component. Other common functions are repairs, self-correction, and contrastive reformulations (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 865).

CCs that are associated with the latter component invoke the extralinguistic situation in which the discourse is uttered. This situation can include the co-participants, the manner of communication, the communicative act itself, or other events happening during the speech exchange (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 865).

Over the body of research on DMs functional taxonomies, the functions instantiating these components have been variously defined.

In her attempt to list the main defining features of DMs, as argued in Ch. 3, Redeker (1990: 369) asserts that two discourse units are rhetorically related if the strongest relation is between the beliefs and the intentions motivating the former. Examples of such functions are evidence, justification, conclusion, and so forth. Conversely, when two adjacent discourse units do not show any obvious ideational or rhetorical relation but belong to the same discourse - their relation is claimed to be sequential (broadly speaking, textual). Sequential relations may signal operations such as transitions to the next topic or to the next point. Furthermore, more locally, they may be concerned with functions introducing commentary, correction, aside, paraphrase, digression, or interruption segment (Redeker 1990: 369).

In a similar vein, according to Erman (2001: 1339), the component at stake is instantiated by the so-called **textual monitors**, that is, functional markers being mainly directed on the text. In fact, by employing them, the speaker turns probably fragmented pieces of discourse into a text endowed with internal coherence. The textual domain markers are used for the sake of **editing** and **structuring** the text. In fact, the domain includes markers mobilised in the encoding process (namely, referring to the speaker putting thoughts into words), and in the structuring process (that is, turning words and phrases into a text)<sup>86</sup> (Erman 2001: 1342). This function is commonly played

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<sup>86</sup> This is the reason why we included approximation among the textual domain CCs, in that the latter signal exactly what Erman defines in terms of *encoding* process.

by *discourse markers* (DMs). More specifically, the textual DMs indicate boundaries between topics, between modes of speech, between foregrounded and backgrounded information, and are employed as cohesive devices between sets of propositions (Erman 2001: 1342).

On Redeker's line of reasoning and in line with Erman's definition, González (2005: 54) defines sequential strategies as markers which delimit boundaries of segments and hold the discourse network, by facilitating the in-and-out move of segments connected to a given text. The category at issue more or less corresponds to the pool of metatextual or metadiscursive functions in other paradigms.

More recently, Molinelli (2015: 488) defines **discourse markers** (by distinguishing them from **pragmatic** markers) as devices enhancing textual/discursive coherence and cohesion. In her taxonomy, textual DMs are deeply connected to the processing and management of the discourse *as a text*. DMs enhance textual cohesion and coherence, involving among other things discourse planning (the ideational structure: ideas and propositions) and discourse managing (the exchange structure: turns), and the information state (management of knowledge and meta-knowledge - see also Fedriani and Molinelli 2013: 71, 74). In a similar vein, according to Ghezzi (2014: 14), textual cohesion and coherence functional markers index the discourse structure and the act of speaking (see also Redeker 2006: 340<sup>87</sup>). The markers target the relationship between the propositional content of utterances and texts, regarding the following planes of discourse: the ideational structure, the action structure, the exchange structure, and the information state.

Referring broadly to the same textual functions, Fiorentini (2017: 65) retains the label *metatestuale* (metatextual - see in turn the label metadiscursive in López Serena and Borreguero 2010: 351, Beeching 2017), in that it refers "to the act of using language in negotiating meaning through the explicit mention of the discourse being undertaken" (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 95).

Summing up, by using these markers, the speaker provides instructions on how to interpret the content, to segment and to make the relations between different parts of the text clear (such as thematic and argumentative relations - Maschler 2009: 22). The overall function of the markers at the textual level is to mark *moves* between arguments, states/events or modes in the text. When employed in the argumentative discourse, the marker will typically occur between, for instance, the speaker's stance and the backing up of it. A general function is to mark transitions between information or arguments in discourse (Erman 1987: 117; Stenström 1995: 294; Algeo 2006: 213; Brinton 2008: 135 on the functions played by the CC *you see*). All in all, from the definitions

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<sup>87</sup> Category of 'discourse operators'. According to Redeker (2006: 341), a discourse operator is any expression that is used with the primary function of bringing to the listener's attention a particular kind of relation between the discourse unit it introduces and the immediate environment.

surveyed so far it emerges that the textual domain markers serve a sort of **BRACKETING** function, as they foreshadow segments of varying length and provide instructions on how to interpret the former.

In this research, we will rely on the definitions surveyed so far<sup>88</sup> and we will specifically employ the label **TEXTUAL DOMAIN**, which broadly includes the functions that Crible (2018) defines with respect to the label *sequential domain*. The expression *textual domain* dates back to the functional-semantic components of language identified by Halliday (1979) with respect to those strategies employed to signal transitions of various kinds, between smaller or larger chunks of discourse, either in the thematic organisation at clause level or connecting larger stretches of discourse at the textual level (cf. Lenk 1998, Crible 2019).

Summing up, the CCs of the textual domain signal macro and micro-coherence relations. They are employed to provide instructions on how to integrate the information provided with the global situation of discourse with the final purpose of clarifying the textual articulation and specifying the speaker's modification of her expressions on a metalinguistic and metacommunicative level (Beeching 2017 on metalinguistic DMs in British English). As will be argued later:

- textual markers indicate relations between propositions or between propositions and non-linguistic context, thus making explicit the speaker's standpoint towards the way such propositions "should be understood to be connected" (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 10). Given that such main function is connecting elements of discourse, they could be claimed to serve connective-like functions (cf. Pons Bordería 2001; 2006). From this perspective **CCS REGULATE THE ARGUMENTATIVE DIMENSION**;
- textual markers may also signal the speaker's textual stance with special focus on the relation between the former and her discourse, thus including operations such as changes in the linguistic planning<sup>89</sup>, reformulations, repetitions, and so on - see Bazzanella and Borreguero Zuloaga 2011: 19, cf. Molinelli 2014, 2015). In this respect, CCs shed light on the operations of **PHRASING AND WORDING**; furthermore,
- textual CCs connect parts of discourse, making reference to the discourse itself in terms of linguistic construction which must be not only structured in its parts, but also explicit in its internal structure (López Serena and Borreguero Zuloaga 2010: 351, Fedriani and Molinelli 2013). Therefore, since the CC provides instructions on the macro-structure of discourse, it is used to relate the upcoming unit to the more global discourse context, working as a discourse structuring device - introducing a new topic, or resuming a previous one (see Aijmer 1988 on the function of 'organisational role' played by the *now*;

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<sup>88</sup> Especially Erman (2001) and Molinelli (2014, 2015).

<sup>89</sup> This is the very reason we included approximation under the head of the textual domain.

Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 76 on *alors*). With respect to these global functions, CCs serve the purpose of **SIGNALLING THE THEMATIC RELATIONS**.

After this brief review of the textual domain functions, we will briefly list the functions the domain will be claimed to include in this research.

#### 4.1.2 A working definition of textual domain

As pointed out in Ch. 3 with respect to the speaker-oriented domain function, also with regard to the textual domain, we made an internal remodulation of the other existing taxonomies<sup>90</sup>. However, we do underline that the revised taxonomy owes many of its conceptual foundations to previous research, especially to Crible's (2018) recent taxonomy on DMs functions. While this legacy has been presented and discussed in the previous section, some restrictions should already be mentioned in order to situate the scope of the present study in the background of the study of parentheticals<sup>91</sup> (Kaltenböck et al. 2011).

**Approximation** - APPR: it refers to a lack of precision. Through approximators the speaker gives the hearer/s “a rough but sufficiently exact idea about a certain state of affairs for the general purpose of the conversation” (Erman 2001, Fedriani and Molinelli 2013)<sup>92</sup>. Paraphrases: “about”, “not literally”, “not to be taken too accurately”, “broadly speaking”, “if I may put it thus”.

**Time for planning** - APPR2: it indicates the intention to hold the floor while planning the forthcoming speech (see Crible 2017: 98, 167, 245 function of ‘punctuation’). The function always co-occurs with hesitation markers such as *eh*, *mh*, false starts and/or or repetitions<sup>93</sup>. Paraphrases: “what was I about to say?”.

**Reformulation** - REF: it indicates an equivalence relation between two units. The reformulating item is marked by the speaker as more appropriate (correct, relevant) than the reformulated item,

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<sup>90</sup> Although the domain is clearly defined by Gonzalez (2005), in the sense that the definition is satisfying and clear, it covers only some of the functions we intend to include under this domain, because as anticipated in Ch. 3, some of the functions we included under the head of textual are subsumed under the rhetorical (speaker-oriented) domain in Gonzalez's taxonomy (see for example, time for planning and reformulation).

<sup>91</sup> Whereas some functions we can find in Crible (2018) are not suitable for the category of CCs, which are de-verbal parentheticals, some other functions hold specifically for the category of CCs, i.e. *verbal* parentheticals.

<sup>92</sup> Notice that in most taxonomies, the function of approximation has been included in what we classified as the speaker-oriented (or rhetorical) domain. Despite the process under scrutiny has often been considered as a rhetorical or metalinguistic strategy, we do include it under the head of textual domain functions in that we think it indexes the speaker and her attitude towards the content and the value of the message (Erman 2001).

<sup>93</sup> As in the case of approximation, this function has been considered as rhetorical in some paradigms (see González 2005 and Crible 2018). We include it under the textual (i.e. sequential) domain because it helps the speaker regulate the flux of information (regulation of text).

which may be either substituted or enriched. Workable paraphrases may be “in other words”, “I should rather say...”.

**Complex reformulation** - COREF: is a type of reformulation communicating not simply equivalence (i.e. analogy) between segments<sup>94</sup>. Rather it conveys complex operations such as explication, implication/consequence (pragmatic result), and negation of an expectation made by the speaker’s previous utterance. It may indicate the addition of a new *argument* with the ultimate purpose of demolishing a proposition activated by a previous statement. Paraphrases: “however, I mean”, “so, I mean”, “in contrast I meant”, “I would rather say”, “it implies”, “so, therefore”. The function often co-occurs with markers expressing consequence, cause, contrast (*quindi, allora* ‘so’).

**New argument introduction** - NEWARG: deeply connected to the previous function, it is the function which is generally played by additive connectives when they provide additional, new information, which is related to the situation described in the argument preceding them. It corresponds to a basic operation of addition within a topic or sequence<sup>95</sup>. It does not pertain to the process of wording or phrasing. Rather, it plays a role contributing to the clarification of the internal architecture of the text and it serves a cohesive function in linking discourse segments related to the same central topic (often from the speaker’s angle). The proposition in the scope of the CC may be a generalization, a justification or simply a new piece of information connected to what has been uttered before. Possible paraphrases: “additionally”, “actually”, “moreover”, “furthermore”.

**Opening boundary** - OPBOUN: often placed turn-initially, the CC introduces a new turn, indicating floor-taking, keeping, or gaining. It can also be used when a conflict between turns occurs and one speaker recalls the hearer’s attention to hold the floor (see Molinelli 2014: 491; Crible 2018: 245). The functional equivalents are “*dunque*” (‘so’), “*allora*” (‘well’), and “*ora*” (‘now’), which may be paraphrased as “look, something crucial is going to happen in the architecture of the discourse” (see Molinelli 2015: 202).

**Topic-shifting** - TOPSH: the CC signals a change of topic. A distant linking to previous context can still remain, with a change in focus. The new topic can be a subtopic of the previous one, but the latter should be definitely closed and not taken up in the forthcoming discourse (Crible 2018: 245). Paraphrase: “Let’s move on to...,”

**Topic-resuming** - TOPREM: the CC highlights the intention to link the forthcoming segment to the previous topic. Through the employment of the CC, the speaker comes back to the topic after a

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<sup>94</sup> In the paradigms we cited earlier, no distinction is made between simple and complex (argumentative) reformulation.

<sup>95</sup> We may say that the function is slightly more complex than the category ‘adding a sequence’ generally found in other taxonomies.

temporary digression. Similar strategies are anaphora or reference to a previous topic. Possible paraphrases may be: “back to our topic”, “I was saying”.

## 4.2 Macro-coherence: the textual functions

In the following sections, we will start from the discussion of global functions, i.e. functions i) bracketing large stretches of discourse (opening boundary, topic-resumption) and ii) signalling relations between propositions related to the same nucleus of argumentation<sup>96</sup>. Finally, we will concentrate on iii) those micro-level functions referring to wording and phrasing (see the functions of approximation and reformulation). This classification mirrors the distinction between local and global scope, which dates back to Lenk (1998: 208), who defines this variability of functional markers properly in terms of “local” vs. “global” scope. Discourse segments can be connected to other segments that are not closely adjacent, but that were mentioned previously in the discourse, or that a speaker aims at including later on. The author further argues that this difference in scope is a scalar, relative and not absolute notion: local markers probably represent one end of the continuum where the utterance relations are marked, whereas global markers represent the other end of the *continuum* where topic/thematic relations are marked (Lenk 1998: 211, Crible 2017: 65).

Before discussing the attested correlations, we will briefly summarise some general considerations pertaining to samples, frequency of functions, variety of attested sources and so forth:

**Table 4. 1** Percentage of textual domain CCs

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall
	1082/1878 (57,6%)	796/1878 (42,3%)	1878/4123 (45,5%)

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<sup>96</sup> See the function of ‘now’ in English as analysed by Schiffrin (1987: 237). “it displays that what is coming next in the discourse is but a subpart of a larger cumulative structure, and thus has to be interpreted as a subordinate unit in relation to a progression of such units. In short, *now* marks the speaker’s orderly progression in discourse time through a sequence of subparts.” (Schourup 2011: 2111). The marker “now marks a speaker’s progression through discourse by displaying upcoming attention to a new idea unit, speaker orientation and/or participation framework” (Schiffrin 1978: 261). Aijmer (1988: 16) offers a slightly different proposal: “The general function [...] of *now* is to establish and maintain textual coherence between parts in the discourse which seem at first sight to lack coherence or where coherence can only be established by means of presuppositions, thematic connections between elements in the text etc. [...] *Now* can be viewed as a signal to the hearer to reconstruct a discourse structure in which the coherence of the utterances connected by *now* becomes apparent.” (Schourup 2011: 2112). According to Aijmer, subsumed within this general function of *now* is even the use of the expression as “a strategy for presenting or organizing the parts of the argument (a narrative, a dialogue etc.)” (Aijmer 1988: 21). Functioning as a textual organizer imposing some organization on a given stretch of discourse, the marker *now* points to an upcoming argument, the main topic or a new development in the conversation flow (Aijmer 1988: 22; Schourup 2011: 2113).

**Table 4. 2** Percentage of textual domain functions

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall (1878)
<b>Approximation</b>	582/1082 (53,7%)	338/796 (42,4%)	920/1878 (48,9%)
<b>Reformulation</b>	104/1082 (9,6%)	94/796 (11,8%)	198/1878 (10,5%)
<b>Complex reformulation</b>	37/1082 (3,4%)	12/796 (1,5%)	49/1878 (2,6%)
<b>Opening boundary</b>	25/1082 (2,3%)	163/796 (20,4%)	188/1878 (10%)
<b>Topic-resumption</b>	36/1082 (3,3%)	84/796 (10,5%)	120/1878 (6,3%)
<b>Topic-shifting</b>	0/1082	17/796 (2,1%)	17/1878 (0,9%)
<b>New argument introduction</b>	35/1082 (3,2%)	57/796 (7,1%)	92/1878 (4,8%)
<b>Time for planning</b>	263/1082 (24,3%)	31/796 (3,8%) <sup>97</sup>	294/1878 (15,6%)

The most attested functions are approximation, time for planning, followed by reformulation and opening boundary. Whereas the first three functions are local, the latter one is aimed at defining how globally the text is going to be construed. Moreover, given that the domain is textual or sequential, we expected *verba dicendi* to play such functions. In what follows we provide the attested variety of forms which can be used within the domain at stake.

**Table 4. 3** Percentage of textual domain CCs semantic sources

Source	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>V. dicendi</b>	989/1082 (91,4%)	530/796 (66,5%)	1519/1878 (80%)
<b>Semifactive v.</b>	29/1082 (2,6%)	47/796 (5,9%)	76/1878 (4%)
<b>Perceptual v.</b>	39/1082 (3,6%)	213/796 (26,7%)	252/1878 (13,4%)
<b>Others</b>	25/1082 (2,3%)	6/796 (0,7%)	31/1878 (1,6%)

As observed, we can find perceptual verbs performing such functions. In the next tables, we show the frequency of textual CCs in micro and in macrosyntax. As it will be clear, not only the medial position is the preferred one but also the textual CCs may interrupt the phrase, as observed from the frequency of “interrupting the phrase position”.

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<sup>97</sup> The two samples show differences with respect to the functions of opening boundary and time for planning. The former is more frequent in the Lip Corpus and the latter is more frequent in the KIParla. As underlined, our main focus is not to evaluate and try to explain such difference. In this moment, we cannot rely on the control of the parameters playing a role in such distribution. For the moment we analyse the samples as a whole, analysing statistically the difference in future research, when the KIParla will be complemented by further data.

**Table 4. 4 Percentage of microsyntax and of macrosyntax (textual domain)**

Position	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Microsyntax</b>	887/1082 (81,9%) <sup>98</sup>	579/796 (72,7%)	1466/1878 (76,8%)
<b>Macrosyntax</b>	195/1082 (18%)	217/796 (27,2%)	412/1878 (21,9%)

**Table 4. 5 Percentage of microsyntax (textual domain)**

Micro-position	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Medial</b>	<b>558</b> /887 (62,9%)	270/579 (46,6%)	828/1466 (56,4%)
<b>Initial</b>	219/887 (24,6%)	253/579 (43,6%)	472/1466 (32,1%)
<b>Final</b>	110/887 (12,4%)	56/579 (9,6%)	166/1466 (11,3%)
<b>Interrupting the phrase position</b>	285/1082 (/overall) (26,3%) 285/558 (/medial pos.) (51%)	148/796 (18,5%) 148/270 (54,8%)	433/1878 (23%) 433/828 (52,2%)

**Table 4. 6 Percentage of macrosyntax (textual domain)**

Macro-position	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Initial</b>	95/195 (48,7%)	143/217 (65,8%)	238/412 (57,7%)
<b>Medial</b>	51/195 (26,1%)	44/217 (20,2%)	95/412 (23%)
<b>Final</b>	49/195 (25,1%)	30/217 (13%)	79/412 (19,1%)

Let us have a look at the main findings. The most frequent function is approximation followed by time for planning, reformulation and, to a lesser extent, topic-resumption. It emerges that local level functions are globally more frequent than global level functions (except made for the last function). The most frequent sources of the textual CCs are *verba dicendi*, followed by perceptual and, more rarely, from semifactive verbs. The CCs performing textual functions often occur in microsyntax, and very often in medial position to the point that the CC may interrupt close phrase-limited relations (highest percentage of interrupting position among the three functional domains), as observed in Table 4.4. macrosyntax is not so frequently retrieved and when it occurs, CCs are often placed initially.

#### 4.2.1 Opening boundaries in discourse

Let us start from the global level functions performed by the CCs under scrutiny. Some usages of the textual markers signal that the speaker aims at regulating the discourse organization and the

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<sup>98</sup> It is calculated on the frequency of each sample.

discourse flow (cf. Molinelli 2015: 197 on the function of *opening a new discursive sequence*<sup>99</sup>, Bolly and Degand 2009 on the function they define as *structuring*). The type of CCs addressed in this section is used to connect the upcoming sentence to the global discourse context, working as a **DISCOURSE STRUCTURING DEVICE** introducing new topics, resuming a topic, marking the introduction of a new boundary which is coherent with the previous discourse (see Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 76 on the global discourse structuring function being performed by *alors* in spoken French beyond its primary temporal connective meaning; Redeker 2006: 343 on similar functions performed by the DMs *so* and *well* in English).

Let us start from the first instance of the global discourse structuring functions performed by the CCs, namely the **opening boundary function**. CCs may be used to open a turn/introduce a segment, that is to communicate that something crucial is going to happen in the progression of the discourse as the result of negotiation and mutual engagement between the participants. We are referring to the operation of comment with respect to the construction of the discourse as a text which is internally organized and whose structure may be made explicit through contextualizing clues. CCs performing the function at issue generally “project<sup>100</sup> aspects of the current turn in progress and they display how the current turn may be linked to previous turns” (Pekarek Doehler 2016: 158). Indeed, turn-beginnings are “sequence-structurally important places in conversation” (Schegloff 1987: 71).

In what follows, we provide some data on samples, lexical semantics of the sources being mobilized, and position of the CCs.

**Table 4. 7** Opening boundary CCs

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	163/188 (86,7%)	25/188 (13,2%)	188/1878 (10,6%)
CCs	ascolta me, (io) direi, fai conto, guarda/i/guardate io penso, io pensavo, non so, sa/sai, senta/i/ senti 'n po', sentite, ti dico, ti dico, vede/i/vedete, voglio dire	guardi, guarda, guardate, non so, sai, senta, senti, ti dico	

**Table 4. 8** Percentage of CCs source (opening boundary)

Source	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Perceptual v.	146/163 (89,5%)	17/25 (68%)	163/188 (86,7%)

<sup>99</sup> “Apertura di una nuova sequenza discorsiva”.

<sup>100</sup> “By projection I mean the fact that an individual action or part of it foreshadows another. In order to understand what is projected, interactants need some kind of knowledge about how actions (or action components) are typically (i.e., qua types) sequenced, i.e. how they follow each other in time.” (Auer 2005: 8)

**Table 4. 9 Percentage of initial microsyntactic and macrosyntactic position (opening boundary)**

Position	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Microsyntactic initial</b>	102/105 <sup>101</sup> (97,1%)	20/22 (90%)	122/127 (96%)
<b>Macrosyntactic initial</b>	48/58 (82,7%)	* <sup>102</sup>	

The function is frequently performed in the left periphery of the utterance, which is indeed the main *juncture* of the message being articulated. The function of the CC is to communicate that something crucial is going to happen in the global structuring of the discourse being articulated. To serve such function perceptual verbs (we expected to find them in interpersonal domain, Ch.5) are often mobilized, like - to a certain extent - it happens with *verba dicendi*, i.e. the most typical sources for the function at stake. Let us now start by discussing some examples of the function at issue:

- 4.7) C: che numero ti posso dare tesoro? H: **senti** volevo un numero alto (Lip FE6)  
C: What number can I give you darling? H: **Listen/well** I wanted a big number
- 4.8) A: eh? si' e poi si vien li' B: a che ora? A: **fai conto\_** verso le cinque quattro e mezza cinque spero anche prima (Lip FB13)  
A: eh? yes and then you will come there B: what time?  
A: **just consider** at about four and a half five I hope even before
- 4.9) NG\_082: **[guardi, in tutta] sincerita'**,  
[...] NG\_082: [io] non so se si sia spiegata male lei,  
NG\_082: o se abbiano capito male loro. (KIParla BOA018)  
NG\_082: **look**, honestly, I don't know if you misspoke, or if they misunderstood
- 4.10) NM\_BO121: allora **ti dico** (.) nel senso mh:in questo momento particolare e' quasi un anno che non mi taglio i capelli (.) (KIParla BOD2017)  
NM\_BO121: then **I tell you** (.) I mean mh at this moment it's almost a year since I have not had my hair cut
- 4.11) cioe' quand'e' che un paziente puo'\_ sospettare\_di avere una [...] calcoli?  
C: ma **direi** a parte eh i sintomi legati al dolore che si presenta in manifestazioni o\_ dolore acuto la colica (Lip RC13)  
I mean, when can a patient suspect\_of having [...] lithiasis?  
C: well **I would say** apart from eh the symptoms related to the pain that occurs in manifestations or\_ acute pain colic

In all of the above-mentioned examples, the CC is placed turn-initially thus manifesting that a crucial move is going to be carried out, such as an answer to a question or generally a given conversational action, which may be (see 4.8), (4.10), for instance) or not (4.9) explicitly demanded.

<sup>101</sup> Calculated on the frequency of microsyntax and so on.

<sup>102</sup> Only three occurrences.

In the former case, the speaker does not need to recall the hearer's attention in that it was properly the former who delivered the question, thus giving the latter the floor. Indeed, in turn-initial position, the CCs at issue occur predominantly in responses to questions and are specifically implicated in the sequential organization of turns and actions. The CCs function is generally *projecting* a response (see Pekarek Doehler 2016 on the expression *je ne sais pas* to play the same range of sequential functions in spoken French, see also Schegloff and Sacks 1973). "Both the design and the meaning of an action are tied to its position in a temporally ordered sequential organization of actions." (Deppermann and Günthner 2015: 7)

Syntactically speaking, the function is often placed in the left periphery of the utterance, outside the domain of dependency. From a discursive standpoint, the latter is a crucial place to take into consideration, because it is the *locus* where the message - that doesn't yet exist - begins. It's also the place where a turn change can take place. In this was negotiation of the discourse **structure** is created (Degand 2014: 158). Crucially, it is the place where the discourse content has to be connected consistently to the previous contents<sup>103</sup> (Virtanen 2004: 80-81). Moreover, according to Ariel (2010: 180, 181), "initial position is suitable for laying the foundation for later, incoming information".

Given the properties of the left periphery, it follows that especially linguistic expressions with informational and/or argumentative functions are to be found in the leftmost position of the message: constructions of topicalization, of topic change, of framing (Fries 1995, Virtanen 2004), of detachment and focalization (Lambrecht 1994; De Cat 2007), but also connectives linking two argumentative propositional contents, and more generally, discourse organization expressions (Diessel 2005, Lenk 1998, Degand 2014: 158). Our work gathers some evidence for the variety of the markers serving such textual functions (precisely, the connectives-like functions signalling textual progression). If we take a look at the pool of markers used to convey such functions, we notice that not only *verba dicendi* are employed.

Consistently with this last rationale we can notice that *guarda* ('look') - a typical attention-getting marker stemming from a verb of perception (Waltebeit 2002, Company Company 2006, Fagard 2010, Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a,b; 2015, Molinelli 2015) - may be used to play the turn-taking function at issue (Waltebeit 2002, Detges and Waltebeit 2011). In the following example, Speaker B recalls the hearer's attention in order to communicate that she is going to answer the question

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<sup>103</sup> With respect to the status of initial adverbial clauses, according to Verstraete (2004: 821, 838), initial clauses typically have a discourse organizing function, for instance by linking back to a preceding stretch of discourse or serving as a frame for upcoming discourse, whereas final clauses typically have a local function, providing adverbial specification for the SoA described in the main clause.

Speaker C proffered. *Guarda* occurs in a transition-relevance place, after Speaker C uttered the question B is expected to answer:

- 4.12) C: quant' e' lungo Paolo otto battute \* [...] B: **guarda** dipende se un \$ \$ dipende dal tempo della Battuta (Lip, FA2)  
C: how long is Paolo? eight bars? B: **Look/well** it depends on whether it depends on the time of the Beat
- 4.13) ma **guarda** dipende (KIParla, BOD2017)  
but **look** it depends

The CC *guarda* can also be used mid-conversation to interrupt and gain a turn. In the following example, C interrupts A and B to provide a workable solution to the question which has been raised earlier (Beeching 2017). More specifically, *guarda* is used to signal that the speaker is going to take the floor. We may assume that the imperative form provides the speaker with a “justification for self-selection at turn-taking, even at non-transition-relevance places” (Waltereit 2002: 988), as in the following example of conflicting turns:

- 4.14) B: prendi una stecchetta di legno e la fai con la stecchetta di legno e con gli adesivi  
A: sì io con la stecchetta di legno cerco  
C: **guarda** è più semplice a colori quattro quattro \$ due chiodini e \$ basta # velocissimo rapido (Lip, MA2)  
B: Take a wooden stick and do it with the wooden stick and with the stickers  
A: yes I'll try with the wooden stick  
C: **Look** it's easier with colors four four plus two nails and just, just done

Actually, whereas in examples such as (4.7) the CC occurs after one of the speakers gave the floor, in other occurrences, the CC allows the speaker taking the floor, i.e. being the speaker not explicitly talked over, thus taking control of “the floor without having to wait for the next transition-relevance place” (Detges and Waltereit 2011: 166). For instance, in 4.14), Speaker C interrupts Speaker A in that the former has an idea as to how to fix the wall hanging. She then seems to assume that this idea is particularly important for the discussion in which the participants are engaged, which seems to justify a violation of turn-taking rules (Detges and Waltereit 2011: 167; Waltereit 2002: 998; Ghezzi and Molinelli 2015: 28). Therefore, the CC is used to comment on the speaker’s discourse in general (turn-taking device). In other words, this example documents the speakers’ use of the CC for projecting a non-fitted response, that is, a response which does not conform to the terms of the preceding question either because it provides a non-answer response (Stivers and Robinson 2006) or because it is not type-conforming (Pekarek Doehler 2016: 156). “This is an example of illegitimate use. Illegitimate use means that a speaker uses a form not because of its

coded meaning but because of an implicature attached to this content, at the risk of using the coded meaning not truthfully” (Detges and Waltereit 2011: 167).

In this type of occurrences, the marker is used to take floor. Nevertheless, the attention that is recalled is not perceptive<sup>104</sup> attention. In other words, the speaker’s aim is not recalling the hearer’s attention in order to make the latter perform a concrete action. Rather, it recalls a sort of *argumentative* and *textual attention* (Ghezzi and Molinelli 2015: 28).

Beside the intentional verb *guardare*, the unintentional perception verb *sentire* (‘to listen’) is used to convey such textual function. Let us discuss another example:

4.15) A: qualcheduno per fargli fare ripetizioni di francese

B: ah ah ah

A: tu non conosci mica nessuno?

B: ma **senti** io a mia figlia che ha avuto bisogno l’anno scorso eh gli ho trovato lì c’è la ragazza di un tecnico di laboratorio (Lip FB33)

A: Someone to give him French private tuitions?

B: ha ha ha

A: You don’t know anyone?

B: **But listen** me, my daughter who needed last year... Eh I found There is the girlfriend of a Lab technician

In 4.15), *senti* does not recall the speaker’s attention in that it occurs in a TRP. In other words, the floor was already given by the speaker’s action. Moreover, the CC under scrutiny is not hosted by face-threatening acts such as a request. The perception verb CC *senti* is employed with a textual function, by communicating that something crucial is going to happen in the discourse, namely that the speaker is going to utter the attended answer (see Pekarek Doehler 2016). The CC does not recall attention, strictly speaking. It recalls attention towards the **GLOBAL STRUCTURING OF DISCOURSE**. In specific environments within turn and sequence, some CCs contribute to the management of a further basic organizational principle of social interaction, i.e., the sequential organization of turns and actions (Pekarek Doehler 2016: 150). What is worth underlining is that CCs arising from different lexical sources may be employed to serve such functions (see Molinelli 2015: 195-196).

Indeed, the rationale resonates with studies on the grammaticalization of the imperative of verbs meaning “to look” or “to observe” into functional markers<sup>105</sup> employed to draw the hearer’s attention not on a certain object but on the discourse itself, and later on, into a turn-taking strategy (see Brinton 2001, Dostie 2004, Marín and Cuenca 2000, Marín Jordà 2005, Pons Bordería 1998, Rossari 2006, Fagard 2010 *inter alia*). According to this definition and to their common denomination as discourse entities, DMs arising from imperatives of perception verbs display a wide

<sup>104</sup> We will analysis typical markers of attention-getting in chapter 5.

<sup>105</sup> It is found in various languages: English *look*, Dutch *kijk*, Spanish, Galician and Catalan *mira*, Portuguese *olha* and Galician *olla*, Italian *guarda*, Romanian *uite*, Polish *patrz*, etc. (Fagard 2010).

range of discourse-related functions. In fact, they are used to structure the discourse, recall the addressee's attention, emphasise the thematic progression of discourse, and facilitate turn-taking mechanisms (Fagard 2010). In a similar vein, Brinton (2001: 180) assigns the same range of functions to the English *look*-CCs displaying some of these uses; she explains that *look*-forms have a global meaning of the type ““pay attention”, ‘heed me’, or ‘listen (up)’” (see Fagard 2010).

More specifically, in those uses - which we believe to be more or less direct developments of the lexical (or propositional) meaning of *look/listen* (a call for attention) - these items call the addressee's attention on the **topic** (topic-shifts, subtopics, topic continuity): in these uses, the DM/CC could be glossed as “dealing with A, pay attention to what I am going to say about B!”. Moreover, they can for the hearer's attention on the speaker's discourse (structuring) in general (turn-taking - see Fagard 2010).

However, not only *dicendi* (that is, verbs of speaking) and perceptual verbs are used to convey the functions at issue. With a view to looking at the same function played in similar contexts/discursive configurations (Fischer 2010), other verbs are used to communicating that the speaker is taking the floor, as in the example below:

- 4.16) A: [...] dimmi Andrea  
O: ma **io penso** le scarpe?  
A: le scarpe non sono purtroppo nemmeno le scarpe puoi riprovare ciao (Lip FB14)  
A: tell me Andrea  
O: But **I think** shoes?  
A: Shoes isn't the right answer unfortunately not even shoes you can try again bye

In 4.16), the epistemic CC *io penso* ('I think') is placed in the left periphery and in occurrence with the turn-taking marker *ma* 'but' (in the 38% of total occurrences, the CCs co-occur with other markers, whose 67,7% is made up of discourse connectives - *ma*, *dunque*, *allora* 'but', 'so', 'now'), thus indicating that the speaker is going to take the floor with the purpose of delivering the expected answer (Franceschini 1994: 223). While some residual epistemic trace is again present in this use of the CC (the speaker someway disengages from her immediately upcoming talk), the construction is clearly not aimed at claiming lack of knowledge (Pekarek Doehler 2016: 160 on the similar marker *je ne sais pas* 'I don't know' in French). By virtue of its being a turn-initial device in responses to questions, the CC also adopts as an opening boundary device (Pekarek Doehler 2016: 150).

If we try to substitute the CC function at issue with a plain textual connective (Berretta 1984), the textual function becomes clearer:

- 4.17) A: va bè ne parliamo domani rispondi <?> al quizze

P: dunque eh eh dice il?  
A: si consuma tutti i giorni  
P: mh io **dunque** avevo pensato alla bottiglia di vino (Lip, FB14)  
A: okay well let's talk about it tomorrow would you answer the quiz?  
P: so eh eh says the?  
A: It is consumed everyday  
P: mh **well** I had thought of a bottle of wine

The excerpt 4.17) belongs to the same text as the one previously discussed in examples 4.16) and 4.4). The same slot is occupied by two lexically different CCs and by a plainly textual connective (*dunque* ‘so, well’). More specifically, all the markers we identified in that specific syntactic position may be glossed as: *dunque, allora, ora*, ‘now’, ‘well’ i.e., as textual connectives (Molinelli 2015: 202 on the polyfunctionality between the CC *guarda/senti* and the connective *dunque* performing the function at issue). Therefore, what is crucial is the position the marker occupies and the type of discourse in which it occurs (Pekarek Doepler 2016). The role of position to express a given function is crucial<sup>106</sup> to the point that also epistemic markers may be used to convey this type of textual, discourse-organising function (see Verstraete 2004: 821; Degand 2014: 158). This resonates with the construction grammar approaches to functional markers (Fischer 2010, 2015).

Before concluding the section, we underline that under the same structuring function, we included the following examples, in which the function is performed turn-medially (rarely). In this case, the CC introduces the rhematic info, whereby serving a similar bracketing function (see Erman 2001 on *you know*) in the configuration nucleus-predication (Haselow 2017):

- 4.18) B: la XYZ sta in residence ma paga due milioni e quattro al mese  
A: si' si' no io *l'appartamento*  
B: \* cione'  
A: **guarda** io mi sono informato oggi m' hanno detto m' hanno dato dei prezzi veramente da sballo (Lip, MB30)  
B: XYZ is now in a residence but she pays two million and four hundred Italian Lire a month  
A: yes yes no me the apartment  
B: I mean  
A: **look** I got informed today they told me they gave me really high prices
- 4.19) dunque eh per quanto riguarda *il tuo giorno il tuo giorno di nascita* # eh eh **guarda** la cabalistica e l'astrologia danno del dei dei segnali proprio quanto mai sicuri (Lip, ME6)  
so eh as far as your day of birth is concerned, eh eh **look** the cabalistic and astrology give clear signals of success

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<sup>106</sup> With respect to conditional constructions, according to Ariel (2010: 180), the former present relevant options as for their interpretations, which become available based on the immediate context. In other words, although they contain quite similar pieces of information, conditional-initial constructions constitute a relevant framework for subsequent proposition. On the other hand, conditional-final constructions are likely to provide qualifications (Ariel 2010: 180, 181).

While in the previous occurrences the CC allows the speaker to hold the floor in the left periphery, in occurrences of this type the CC allows to dilute and structure the distribution of the content over the text by “sending a signal from the speaker to the listener that the different parts of the utterance are to be connected, or rather, that the discourse is moved forward, e.g. from one event, state or mode to the next” (Erman and Kotsinas 1993: 90, Fagard 2010). In other words, in these occurrences (4.18 and 4.19), *guarda* brackets<sup>107</sup> the segments of the speaker’s argumentation by introducing the rhematic information. It is placed turn-medially following the topic - or given information - and introducing the prominent, upcoming information. Therefore, it seems to serve as a metatextual, argumentative device. The constituents in italics are fronted with a view to marking them as topics, namely as starting points of the argumentation. The imperative *guarda!* does not directly encode what the speaker has to say, rather it only **announces** something important to come (see Waltereit 2002: 1001). Moreover, the co-occurrence with *eh eh* alerts hearer to something potentially unexpected.

In conclusion we may assert that we are not faced with referential, perceptive attention. Rather, the speaker recalls a type of **ARGUMENTATIVE/TEXTUAL ATTENTION**. As Fagard (2010) recognises, these items call the addressee’s attention to the topic, that is on the text regulation.

#### 4.2.2 Regulating the system of topics: topic-shifting, topic-resuming

Among the functions of global structuring, the CCs perform topic-shifting and topic-resuming functions. Let us start from the latter after providing some quantitative data:

**Table 4. 10** Topic-resumption functions and some properties (position, source)

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	84/120 (70%)	36 (30%)	120/1878 (6,3%)
CCs	abbiamo detto/visto, dicevamo, dicevo, dicevo (a te), dicevo prima, (io) dico, le_ dicevo, mi diceva, ripeto, senta, senti, si diceva prima, t’ho detto, ti volevo dire, tu dicevi, vi dicevo, vi ho detto, vi ricordo, voglio dire	(ti/vi) dicevo, stavo dicendo, dicevamo, dicevi, dicevo prima, ho detto, stavamo/stavo dicendo	
Microsyntax	64/84 (76,1%)	28/36 (77,7%)	92/120 (76,6%)

<sup>107</sup> See Bazzanella who defines some of these CCs as *connettivi di correzione* ('correction connectives'). See also Franceschini (1994: 212), who defines such expressions as SMEC (metacommunicative sequences), i.e. sequences which may serve the following functions among others: indication of the speaker’s illocutionary intention, projection of an order, mention of a thematic element. According to Franceschini (1994: 223) CCs such as *penso* ('I think') and *credo* ('I believe') may serve spoken dialogue structuring functions, beyond the issue of making the speaker’s epistemic stance explicit.

<b>Initial</b> microsyntactic position	41/64 (64%)	21/28 (75%)	62/92 (67,3%)
Lexical semantics of the source	<i>dicendi</i> : 72/84 (85,7%) perceptual v. 11/84 (13,4%)	34/36 (94,4%) 2/36 (5%)	106/120 (88,3%) 13/120 (10,8%)

The function under scrutiny is more often placed in the **initial position** of the microsyntactic component and it is frequently performed by CCs whose lexical semantic source stem from *verba dicendi*. To a certain extent, the function may be performed by CCs stemming from perceptual verbs.

Working on the global coherence functions acquired by *alors* in French, Degand and Fagard (2011: 36) labelled the function as metadiscursive, i.e., belonging to those functions accounting for all uses where the CC “does not establish a temporal [...] relation, [...] can be left out without changing the semantic content, [...] can be glossed by other topic shifters, such as *bon*, *well*, or transition markers, such as *et puis, and then*”. In this function, the CC introduces subtopics or topic-shifts; hence, it acts as a continuative or moving marker (Fagard 2010). Let us consider the following examples:

- 4.20) PO\_TO004: >e allora< **dice:vo**,  
 PO\_TO004: capire i media per esempio significa,  
 PO\_TO004: capire l'uso della parola come significa capire l'uso di facebook. (KIParla)  
 PO\_TO004: And so I **was saying** understanding the media for example means understanding the use of the word as it means to understand the way Facebook works.
- 4.21) PC\_TO058: **dicevo** quando: e::h  
 PC\_TO058: stavamo:: dentro quindi all'interno di questo,  
 PC\_TO058: casolare [in cui s]tavano tutti::: m::h  
 ES\_TO071: [mhmh].  
 PC\_TO058: i volonta:ri: era una casa,  
 PC\_TO058: molto tranquilla nel senso (KIParla TOD2013)  
 PC\_TO058: I **was saying** when eh  
 PC\_TO058: We were inside then inside this,  
 PC\_TO058: cottage where there were all mh  
 ES\_TO071: mhmh.  
 PC\_TO058: the volunteers: it was a house,  
 PC\_TO058: very quiet I mean
- 4.22) PC\_TO058: e::hm inoltre **dicevo** mio mh m::h la (.) nostra casa e' tutto (.) e': tutto un un,  
 PC\_TO058: cioe' tutto (.) questo piano (l') abbiamo anche divisa perche' non ci serviva tutto quello s[pazio] (KIParla TOD2013)  
 PC\_TO058: e::hm also I **was saying** my mh mh our house is all is all a, it is, all this apartment (the) we even divided it into different rooms because we didn't need all that space
- 4.23) A: ?> si facesse solo un terzo delle seghe mentali che mi faccio io B: infatti esattamente A: **senti allora** poi per stasera [...] allora tu hai puoi scegliere fra # una serata brutta a casa di amici di Stefano e Isabella [...] (Lip RA1)  
 A: He should not overthink much as I do B: in fact exactly A: **listen then** for tonight you can choose between a bad evening at Stefano and Isabella's friends' [...]

- 4.24) F: sto morendo perché dovevo andare\_ eh cioe' Paolo mi aveva chie cioe' mi aveva invitato in montagna B: Paolo Paolo\_? F: Paolo Paolo\_B: il secondo suppongo il primo no? e' stato radiato F: [RIDE] eh **senti** pero' niente mi sono fatta prendere un po' da\_ cosi' adesso va be' devo mettermi a far 'ste robe di libri\_poi devo studiare (Lip MB4)
- F: I'm really tired because I was supposed to go\_ eh I mean Paolo had ask- me I mean he had invited me skiing B: Paolo Paolo\_? F: Paolo Paolo\_B: the second one I suppose (because) the first was disbarred F: [she laughs] but **listen** I got a little bit carried away a little bit by\_ so now well okay I have to start doing this book stuff then I have to study
- 4.25) A: mi scusi non volevo va bene? B: **comunque dicevo a te** il Washington Post l'hai ma' letto?C: io si'  
B: l'Herald Tribune l'hai ma' letto? (Lip FB15)  
A: Excuse me I didn't mean to ok? B: **Anyway, I was telling you** the Washington Post, have you ever read it? C: yes B: have you read the Herald Tribune?
- 4.26) EG\_000: capito. pero' **dicevi** come e' fatta la casa (.) soggiorno, [due bagni,] (KIParla TOD2001)  
EG\_000: I see. but **you were saying** how the house is made? living room two bathrooms?

Whereas in examples like 4.20) the speaker restores the main topic after having temporarily lost the thread of her thinking, in 4.26), she starts a new conversational topic with *senti* ('listen').

More specifically, in example 4.24), the speakers are talking about sorting books and the like, then a brief parenthesis occurs (the two girls start talking about one of the speakers' ex-boyfriends) and then one of the speakers resumes the previous topic (sorting books and such). Notice that - as argued in the case of the opening boundary functions - also the structuring function under scrutiny may be performed by *senti*, a perception verb generally used to a call for attention. Crucially, these items call the hearer's attention on the topic (topic-shifts, subtopics, topic continuity). In these textual uses, the CC could be paraphrased as "dealing with A, listen to what I have to say about B!" (Fagard 2010, Ghezzi and Molinelli 2015: 34). Typical paraphrases of the function include: *to come back to what I said, recall that, by the way, talking about something else* (Degand 2014: 161).

The intention to come back again to the previous topic are also signalled by the co-occurrence between the CCs under scrutiny and plainly textual connectives defined as typical formulas used to open discourse, that is, to signal the beginning of a text of varying length<sup>108</sup> (Dal Negro 2005: 76 - with respect to connectives such as *ma*, *allora*, *dunque* 'well, so, now').

As introduced earlier, along with topic-resumption, the sequential functions extend to the **topic-shifting function**, which, as evidenced, is much less frequent than the function of topic-resumption.

**Table 4. 11 Topic-shifting CCs**

Corpus	LIP	KIParla	Overall
%	17/17 (100%)	not attested <sup>109</sup>	17/1878 (0,9%)
CCs	senta, senti qua, volevo dire		

<sup>108</sup> Tipiche formule di apertura che segnalano l'inizio di un testo di una certa lunghezza.

<sup>109</sup> The difference of such distribution may be due to the partial differences of the textual genres contained in the two samples (see Ch. 2).

The function allows introducing a topic “out of the blue” or linking it to a very general communicative situation from the speaker’s perspective, or to previously mentioned information. It broadly corresponds to what Bouacha (1991) defines as “attaque du discours” (‘discourse starter’).

- 4.27) lei ne ha fatti mi sembra sei # più due per gli handicappati C: ah D: quanto al tavolo C: **senti** scusa se t'interrompo gli ho comprato una crema per il corpo secondo me domani avra' l'avra' finita (Lip FA2)  
she made it seems to me six (bathrooms) plus two for disabled people C: ah D: as for the table C: **listen** sorry for interrupting I bought him a body cream I think tomorrow he will have it finished
- 4.28) B: no no e' l'architetto del SUNIA A: ah B: ho pagato centocinquantamila lire d' altra parte # **poi senti** qua cista il calcolo dei canoni (Lip FA10)  
B: no no it is the architect of SUNIA A: ah B: I paid a hundred and fifty thousand Italian lire after all - **then listen** here you can find the sum of the fees
- 4.29) io\_ \_ti ringrazio te faccio una bella giornata a te eh un saluto a Piero e un saluto a tutta radio Spazio Delta A: si' **senti comunque** Torquato per far comprendere meglio alle B: dimmi A: persone che ascoltano B: si'? A: dunque tu sei afflitto da asma bronchiale ormai da parecchi anni (Lip RE4)  
Thank you, you have a great day yourself, eh greetings to Piero and greetings to the entire Spazio Delta radio A: yes **listen anyway** Torquato to make better understanding to the B: tell me A: people who listen B: yes? A: So you've been affected by bronchial asthma for several years now

In the first of the examples, *senti* introduces an abrupt change in the topic of conversation, which in turn it is clearly expressed through the verbalization of the expression *scusa se ti interrompo* (‘sorry for interrupting’). More specifically, the speakers are talking about the renovation work made by a given person who is not joining the conversation. At a given point, the Speaker A interrupts B by introducing out of the blue another topic concerning a gift (the body lotion). We could argue that the core meaning in these cases is ‘pay attention’, with other radial meanings: ‘this is unexpected’, ‘I’m shifting the topic’, therefore the functions are also focused on the text.

Once again, we can notice some patterns of co-occurrence triggering such function, which is often performed turn-medially and clause-initially. In example 4.28), we can notice the co-occurrence between the CC and the textual connective *poi* (‘then’); in 4.29) we can notice the occurrence of the textual marker *comunque* (‘however’ - Dal Negro 2005), which contributes to introduce another segment which is fully out of the blue.

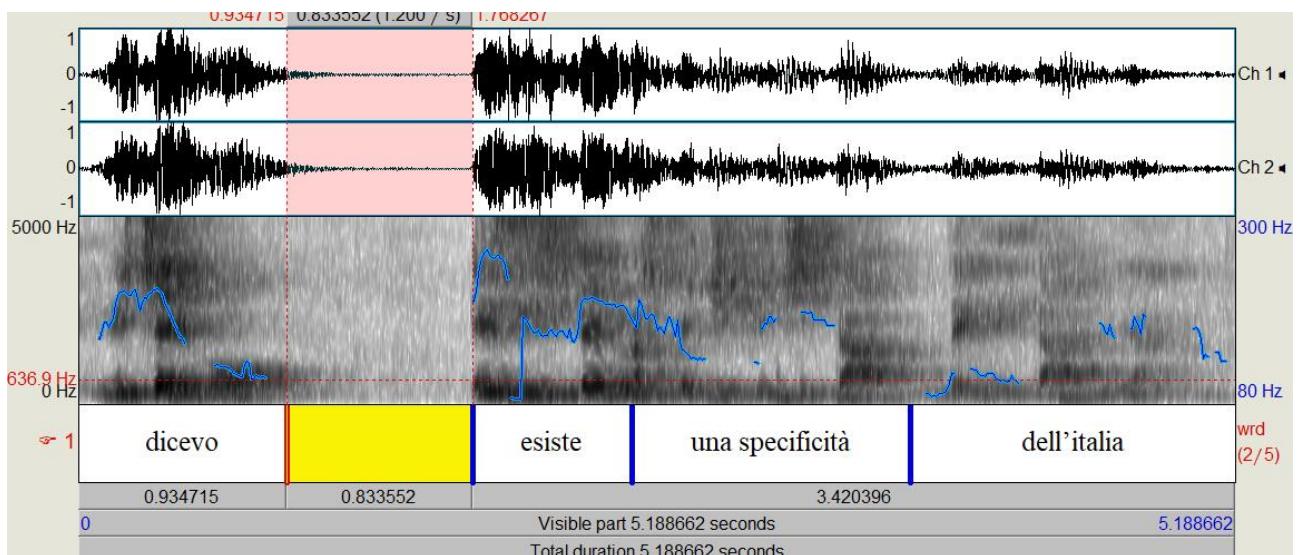
In this concluding paragraph a further generalization will be made. Even if the sample of data is rather limited, we may notice that beside *verba dicendi*, only *sentire* is mobilized in serving such textual function. Conversely, we will argue that only CCs arising from the lexical source *guardare* are used in metadiscursive argumentative functions<sup>110</sup>. Generally speaking, both the perception

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<sup>110</sup> As we will see in Ch. 5, *senti* more plainly than *guarda* may serve the function of recalling attention (Ghezzi and Molinelli 2015), whereas only *senti* may be used to change the topic. *Guarda* penetrates inside the argumentation,

lexical sources *sentire* and *guardare* are mobilized to play textual domain function. Nonetheless, whereas *senti* is used “externally” to regulate the thematic relations, *guarda* may be used, as we will see, to regulate the flux of argumentation, whereby introducing propositions related to a given argument, not generally a global relation as a change in the topic. Consistently with retaining global scope, prosodically the CC is set off from its host, as we can see in the following TextGrid:

**Figure 4. 1** TextGrid of the string ‘dicevo esiste una specificità’

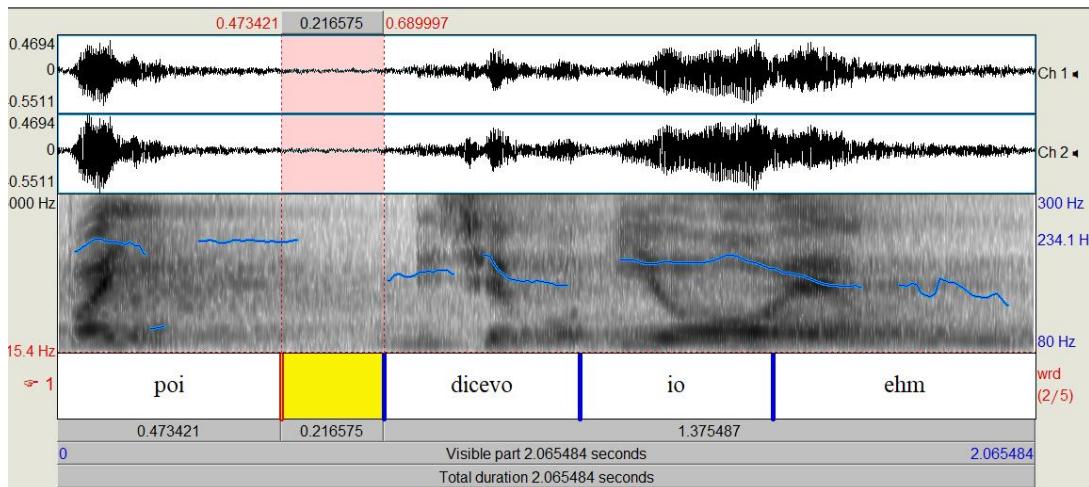


After the CC *dicevo*, employed with topic-resumption function, the speaker makes a pause, which signals a caesura between the CC and the host clause (see the square in yellow). Therefore, we may assert that in this occurrence, the CC syntactic parenthesis and its global scope are also mirrored prosodically, in that the CC is set off. The same happens in the following example, in which we can notice a pause (0.21) in between the word *poi* ‘moreover’ and the right-bounded CC *dicevo*:

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whereas *senti* remains more superficially and globally on the level of topics regulation. We will come back on the topic later.

**Figure 4. 2** TextGrid of the string ‘poi dicevo io mh’



#### 4.2.3 Bracketing arguments

Among the functions of global structuring aimed at signalling transitions such as topic-shifting, the CC may perform an argumentative function, whereby it may be used to signal relations between arguments (not merely transitions in the topic or introduction of a new, abrupt sequence). Indeed, CCs may introduce arguments which contribute to the progression of the discourse as a text, thus enhancing coherence and cohesion. They may bracket an argument which provides evidence for the speaker’s main claim, and may connect arguments which are in different relations, properly through the operation of reformulation. In that case, the CC introduces a justification, or a pragmatic consequence of a given prearranged segment. As anticipated, CCs with these functions play a crucial role contributing to the clarification of the internal architecture of the text, whereby performing a cohesive function aimed at linking discourse segments (or better, arguments) related to the same central topic (Markkanen 1985: 62; Erman 1987: 117; Biber et al. 1999: 1077, Brinton 2008: 135).

In what follows, we will start by analysing examples 4.30) though 4.34), in which we will provide cases of the relation of enrichment/specification. Then, in 4.35) through 4.38) we will address the relation of justification. In section 4.2.4 we will deal with the argumentative potential of reformulation, which will be claimed to convey meanings of pragmatic result or consequence, thus manifesting the speaker’s stance rather than merely substituting / clarifying a previous statement. Let us start by providing some quantitative data<sup>111</sup>.

<sup>111</sup> The values refer to both the two sub-functions. We only distinguished the functions for the discussion (see in fact the distinction between 4.2.3 and 4.2.4). In the former, we discuss a generic bracketing/connective-like function played by CCs which introduce arguments connected to what said before in order to reinforce the speaker’s stance and/or to provide additional evidence for the previous argument (enrichment function). The latter section is specifically referred to argumentative reformulation conveying justification and pragmatic result, beyond simple rewording.

**Table 4. 12** argumentative CCs

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	57/92 (61,9%)	35/92 (38%)	92/1878 (4,8%)
CCs	guarda/i/ate, io ti dico, pensavo, sa/sai, sai?, senta/senti (un po'), ti dico, vedi	dicevo, guarda, guardate, guardi, sai, sai?, tenete presente, ti dico, vedete, voi sapete	
Initial position (microsyntax)	33/43 (76,7%)	27/29 (93%)	60/72 (83,3%)

The function is often performed in the left-periphery of the utterance and it may be expressed through different lexical sources, especially perceptual predicates used with cognitive meaning.

CCs may be used to add new segments to a previously uttered topic, in this way, they pertain to the structuring of the discourse more than to the sequentiality of the information being expressed. In other words, CCs may be oriented more globally to give a structure to the portions constituting the text, i.e., to the argumentative texture of the discourse as an entity made up of different segments, which may be conceptually connected between them. Despite such differences in the type of relations connecting two different arguments, CCs accomplishing this bracketing purpose generally contribute to make the speaker's argumentative stance more explicit or, at least, to express the speaker's comment on the relation between different utterances connected to a nucleus of argumentation (see Berretta 1984 on textual connectives). We may say that in serving such functions, the speaker sends a *signal* to the listener that the different parts of the utterance are to be organically connected (see also Erman and Kotsinas 1993: 90<sup>112</sup>).

It is worth underlining that what is in the scope of the CC is a content which is **correlated** with what said before in some way (Molinelli 2014: 491 on the functions of markers such as *non so* 'I don't know', *sai* 'you know what?' when introducing new informative contents). It does not refer to the adding of a new, abruptly provided information which is not connected to what said before at all (see topic-shifting function). Rather, it is the insertion of an **ARGUMENT** linked to what was previously uttered, which **enriches** the latter (argumentative level).

Let us consider the following examples:

- 4.30) A: effettivamente eh e' durato un periodo che\_ eh i suoi interventi consistevano appunto in queste\_ esalazioni B: pe' passa' cinque minuti via A: certamente ma guai prendere troppo e sempre e totalmente la vita sul serio **guarda** io mi sento di avere pur non avendo la tua età però ancora sono\_ contento se riesco a fare un pochino il il grullino (Lip FB36)

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<sup>112</sup> "sending a signal from the speaker to the listener that the different parts of the utterance are to be connected, or rather, that the discourse is moved forward, e.g. from one event, state or mode to the next" (Erman and Kotsinas 1993: 90).

A: actually eh it has been a while since eh\_ his interventions have been consisting of these exhalations  
B: well, (it was) just to have fun A: of course, never take life too seriously **look** I feel like even though I am not your age I am glad I can still be cheeky

- 4.31) B: noi siamo la brutta copia del Corriere della sera senza Fiat senza inviati dell'Italia\_ e\_ e con un ??>di roba dall'estero pero' col Carlino che scrive una pagina sull'estero capisci cioe' fa la prima tutto sull'estero e dentro c'e' una pagina# cioe' capi mi capisci le follie\_ # questo e' proprio e'\_ un problema di analfabetismo mentale A: no poi soprattutto io\_ dico\_ ((schiariisce la voce)) **guarda** quando sono stato in Croazia\_ per esempio # io son andato a far una storia par specifica cioe' bambini\_ ammazzati eccetera B: certo A: e leggo e mi son letto la roba tornando (Lip, MB8)  
B: we are the knock-off version of Corriere della Sera without Fiat, without Italian envoys\_and with a ?? lot of stuff from abroad, but with the Carlino writing only one page about foreign policy I mean you understand they make the whole frontline on abroad and inside the newspaper there's only one page# I mean, you understand it's crazy stuff this is really this is an issue of mental illiteracy A: no, then I say (clears throat) **look** I have been to Croatia\_for instance I went to write a specific issue about children who were murdered B: sure A: and I read and I read when I came back
- 4.32) A: ora stamattina l'hanno fatto glielo faccio\_ glielo faccio sapere presto\_ prima di pasqua di sicuro\_ ma poi **guardi** c'ha dei risultati stranissimi certe volte le cose le fa proprio male e certe volte le fa benino (Lip, FA14)  
A: now, this morning they did it, I will\_I will let him know soon, before Easter for sure\_but then **look** he has really bad results, sometimes he does things really badly and sometimes it goes a bit better.
- 4.33) A: e ti telefono ti telefono G: mi fai uno squillo prima? A: si' si' G: senti quand'e' che ci posso contare? perche'\_ io A: in settimana **guarda** è capace anche domani (Lip RE4)  
A: and I'll call you I'll call you G: do you ring me first? A: yes yes G: look when can I count on it? because I A: by the end of this week, **look**, probably even tomorrow
- 4.34) MS\_TO077: allora **tenete presente** io prima ho dato un:::  
MS\_TO077: dei risultati elettorali che sono nazionali il trentadue per cento  
MS\_TO077: pero' ci furono citta'  
MS\_TO077: come torino=o milano in cui prende- presero piu' del cinquanta per cento di voti >cioe'< (KIParla TOD1017)  
MS\_TO077: then **just consider** first I gave a:::  
MS\_TO077: Thirty-two percent of the election results are national  
MS\_TO077: however, there were cities  
MS\_TO077: like Turin or Milan in which they tak- took more than fifty percent of the votes

Firstly, the speaker may introduce one piece of information which manifests itself as an **enrichment** of what has been introduced before, whereby also conveying her stance towards the content. For instance, in 4.31), one speaker utters her evaluative assessment with respect to the way of working of other journalists: *è un problema di analfabetismo mentale* ('it's a matter of ignorance'). In order to strengthen that position and manifest his alignment with the interlocutor's perspective, the hearer utters the CC *guarda* to introduce a new argument which refers to his personal experience with respect to what previously uttered. More specifically, to corroborate the lack of expertise regarding the way other journalists write newspaper articles without having direct experience of the events, the hearer opens a new sequence referring to his experience (*when I was*

*required to write an article on children killed in Croatia...I went there, I studied, I kept on studying when came back*). The latter sequence is clearly in open contrast with the behaviour under scrutiny which is criticised. The intrinsically textual function is also evidenced by the occurrence with the textual connective *poi* ('moreover') and the argumentative *per esempio* 'for instance', which signals the opening of a new exemplificative sequence.

In a similar vein, in 4.30) first the speaker utters the expression *never taking life so seriously!* and in order to strengthen such position, she provides evidence about her behaviour, which is a specific example of the evaluative, generic statement previously uttered.

Moreover, it is worth underlining that in most of the mentioned occurrences the speaker **opens up a new segment** in which she deals with her perspective concerning the topic just started before<sup>113</sup>. Therefore, the arguments listed may result to be highly modalized and filtered by the speaker's perspective. In such occurrences, *guarda* is used to introduce an illustration of a particular relevant point (Schourup 2011: 2113 on 'now'), thus suggesting the speaker's orderly progression from one point to another in the argument' (Aijmer 1988). The function at stake is similar to one of the pragmatic (inter)subjective functions of *I mean*, which, in some contexts, according to Brinton (2008: 116), conveys a subjective nuance, since the utterance preceding the CC may happen to express a personal opinion or view of the speaker.

Generally, we may say that the CCs in 4.30) through 4.34) connect segments which create cohesion and coherence on the global level, properly by adding a new piece of evidence which globally reinforces the speaker's stance and structures the architecture of the argumentation (see Schwenter and Traugott 2000), by bracketing the latter in different segments.

In other words, we underline that in this case the CC introduces an argument connected to what was said before thus enriching and/or strengthening it. Its value is in a way a borderline modal meaning. However, we classified it within textual and argumentative as primary meaning, as we think that it targets the internal **STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT**. Over these occurrences the CC *guarda* introduces a new adjacent segment, which is in rhetorical relation with preceding discourse<sup>114</sup>.

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<sup>113</sup> See Schourup (2001: 1043) on the functions of *well*, which indicates something akin to consideration, which prospects a continuation in the flux of the argument. "Well prospects that something will now follow. Quirk et al. (1985: 444) attempt to capture this property by classifying well as an 'initiator'. The same property is embodied in Wierzbicka's claim (1976: 360) that well includes in its semantic representation the proposition "something else has to be said". *Well* typically prefaces a host utterance. In that position announced **prospective consideration** is heard as 'leading up' to the formulation of the ensuing utterance." (Our bold - Schourup 2001: 1043). "Prefacing an utterance to which it is attached, well can be expected to contribute something worthwhile to the interpretation of the utterance." (Schourup 2001: 1052)

<sup>114</sup> Schiffrin (1987: 229) refers to *now* as marking discourse time, defined as "the order in which a speaker presents utterances in a discourse" and as marking "orderly progression in discourse time through a sequence of subparts" (Schourup 2011: 2114).

In this type of function, the CC *guarda* acts as a means of textual cohesion (Berretta 1984), connecting different sections belonging to the same topic, which may express different aspects of a main thematic nucleus. Otherwise from the cases of plainly attention-getting functions, in these occurrences, *guarda* does not recall perceptive attention, rather it recalls the hearer's attention on the construction of the text/argument (Fagard 2010, Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014 a, b; 2015). In fact, it does not co-occur with a directive speech act expressing some kind of action required to the interlocutor. As anticipated in the previous Section, these items are used to call for the addressee's attention on the topic (topic-shifts, subtopics, topic continuity). More specifically, in the case of the function at stake, the CC introduces a new sequence (or better, argument) within the same topic (see Crible 2018: 245 on the notion of 'opening boundary' - which corresponds to our definition of *argumentative*).

The function at issue recalls the type of argumentative functions played by the connective *alors* in French. Degand and Fagard (2011) distinguish three primary meanings the latter may express: temporal, causal (including conditional), and argumentative. Consistently with the argumentative functions of *alors* in French, the argumentative CCs at stake do not affect the propositional meaning, rather they give an organic structure to the system of argumentation (in a specific *locus*). In other words, they ease the interpretation of the structure of the text internally and coherently organised.

Among the argumentative functions, we included the cases in which the CC introduces a given pragmatic **justification** of a previous utterance. In some cases, the arguments in the scope of the CC might be considered as justifications of the arguments being put forward (see Beeching 2017: 186). This happens for example in the case of *guarda*, which may play an argumentative rather than an allocutive function, whereby serving as an instruction communicating that a crucial aspect is going to be inserted within the architecture of the argumentation. We are specifically dealing with those cases in which *guarda* occurs turn-medially, and clause-medially, often preceded by a causal connective (medial, clausal position in microsyntactic terms). Let us discuss the following examples:

- 4.35) A: \* pero' ascolta no fondamentalmente va bene insomma in italiano e latino in latino in italiano  
latino e inglese e' molto benino per il resto ci ha il suo sei ecco  
B: \* e va be'  
A: \* e va be' e **tanto su guarda** questi non regalano niente (Lip, FB12)  
A: but listen no basically it's fine in short in Arts and Latin in Latin in Arts Latin and English and it is  
really OK, in other subjects he has C  
B: And it's OK  
A: And well no matter what (because) **look** they (the teachers) do not give away anything

- 4.36) A: be' senti speriamo \$ per quando partiamo noi si rimetta il tempo **perche' guarda** sai che ho portato mio nipote XYZ (Lip, MB32)  
A: Well, we hope by our departure it will clear up because **look** you know I brought my grandson XYZ
- 4.37) B: io poi invece e' dalle quattro che so' sveglio  
A: poveraccio # se vuoi passare  
B: no ti ringrazio ma eh poi stavo oggi oggi pomeriggio **guarda** ora so' quattr' ore che so' partito da Follonica (Lip, NB13)  
B: I then it's been since 4 I have been up  
A: poor man if you want to drop in  
B: no thank you but eh then I was today today afternoon **look** now I know it's four hours since I left Follonica
- 4.38) ah ho capito poi non vi potete aumentare lo stipendio A: si' ci si puo' aumentare sulla carta si'  
**perché guarda** io avendo degli stipendi effettivamente sto dando degli aumenti incredibili (Lip FB35)  
ah I understand then you cannot increase your standard salary A: yes you can increase it on the paper yes because **look** having salaries I'm actually giving incredible increases

In such occurrences, the CC occurs in a specific *locus*, i.e. in between two utterances instantiating the following relation: CLAIM + JUSTIFICATION (Lewis 2006) – which is explicitly encoded in 4.35), 4.36) and in 4.38) by the causality markers *perché* ‘because/since’ and *tanto* ‘no matter what...’. It introduces an utterance and/or reinforces another connective (predominantly *because*) just as parentheticals or pragmatic connectives often do (Cuenca 2013: 202 on the Catalan marker *És clar* ‘it is clear’).

In example (4.35), the speaker is explaining why the results of her son (a C in each subject matters) should be considered as a positive result. After a first evaluative assertion expressing the hearer’s reluctance to consider as positive the guy’s grades, the speaker employs *guarda* to specify further and to expand the previous segment introducing an (additional) argument for the speaker’s assertion, that takes into account the hearer’s need for explanation (‘I am justified in saying that’) as well as signalling a contrast between the preceding and the following segments (cf. Fraser 1998)<sup>115</sup>. More specifically, the function of *guarda* seems to strengthen the scale of prior utterance (*it's OK* in ex. 4.35)) and to cancel any possible q-implicature: *C is not a good result*. The proposition introduced by *guarda* cancels the potential implicature from the proposition p by providing the justification to support the speaker in believing the proposition p (*it's OK*). *Guarda* invokes a notion of scalarity in general, signalling the speaker’s assessment on a scale of subjective value. In other words, it introduces a *qualified* cause (Cuenca 2013: 204). The scale invoked by *guarda* may be in fact accepted on the basis of the speaker’s own perspective (rhetorical force

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<sup>115</sup> In the Lip co-occurrence between CCs and connectives/textual DMs (30,6%).

scaling). Therefore, the speakers, often on an ad hoc basis, employ argumentative CCs to impose a scale for the purpose of strengthening their subjective, rhetorical stance at some point in the discourse between arguments pragmatically connected (Schwenter and Traugott 2000: 21).

In the first of the examples, the speaker's justification for believing p is that the professors are too much rigorous (lit. *they do not give away anything*). The speaker expresses the justification which supports her/his former utterance with a view to providing the hearer with a valid motivation (that is, whose validity is placed on a personal scale of relevance). Therefore, the function of *guarda* is to strengthen the argumentative position of the speaker, thus operating on a scale of rhetorical strength. Not only does the speaker emphasise a given utterance, but she provides additional evidence supporting her belief. The intrinsic argumentative behaviour of *guarda* made us consider it as an argumentative scalar CC in such occurrences/*loci/configurations* (Berretta 1984).

Markers like *guarda* in this function are a subset of a far larger set of pragmatic markers (see Fraser 1996) whose aim is bracketing segments of discourse and indicating “the type of sequential discourse relationship that holds between the current utterance [...] and the prior discourse” (Fraser 1988; see also Schiffрин 1987). In this way, such markers allow speakers to display their **rhetorical** strategies. In other words, they perform metatextual tasks (see Schwenter and Traugott 2000 on the connective ‘in fact’). This function is in fact a kind of metatextual subjective function (see Degand 2014: 167 on the category of metatextual subjective functions of DMs). Metatextual subjective functions pertain to local causal, conditional or conclusive meanings, thus reflecting the speaker’s perspective on the way the events are linked together in the universe of discourse (Degand 2014: 161; 164-167). Since the CC occurs in a causality context, we classified it as a case of argumentative scalar marker, i.e., a further argument is explicitly provided to support the speaker’s rhetorical stance. However, we decided to treat the function as sequential/textual in that it indexes the structure and the internal architecture of the text, that is as a structure made up of different arguments supporting or (simply) referring to a main claim. The same **structuring** function is also traceable in examples 4.39 and 4.40) below.

- 4.39) C: si' poi ci sara' eh la Franceschina che sul psicologico cioe' a questo punto dovevamo intervenire pero' bisognava pensarci prima  
B: no no **guarda** la cosa e' morta  
B: e' morta li' cioe' dopo che che Roberto ha detto ah si' si' io sono pronto a partire (Lip, ME1)  
C: yes then Franceschina will be down that is at this point we had to intervene but we had to think about it before  
B: no no **look** the thing died there  
B: it stopped there, that is, after Roberto said yes yes I'm ready to go

- 4.40) B: dici ah ma mi so' proprio rotta non ci ho piu' la mente per fa'

A: ma nessuno **guarda** # siamo diversi io devo scrive sto eh 'st' articolo \* (Lip, RB2)

B: you say that? ah but I'm really bothered I don't feel like doing it anymore A: but no one **look** we're different now I have to write eh this paper

Here the CC is used to provide a linear order and to re-establish the thread within the same argumentation. The speaker first utters the holophrastic negation expression *no*, thus negating the content of the hearer's utterance and then she re-establishes the thread of the argumentation, thus also responding to the hearer's need for clarification (Degand 2014). As noticed in other textual functions on the global level, we may assert that in this function, the CC acts as a continuative or moving marker, "sending a signal from the speaker to the listener that the different parts of the utterance are to be connected, or rather, that the discourse is moved forward, e.g. from one event, state or mode to the next" (Erman and Kotsinas 1993: 90). No connective is expressed, however the relation between the segments in the progression of discourse is clearly traceable.

We may conclude that the CCs under scrutiny are used to bracket the argumentative value of a given content. As noticed by Erman (2001: 1344), through a marker at the textual level it is possible to insert parenthetic comments containing/signalling/bracketing/indicating information that the speaker assumes the hearer needs to know in order to be able to follow. Similarly, it is possible to insert information which is not (already) shared by the hearer, and which contributes to regulate the arguments referring to the same nucleus. In the next section we will address another range of CCs which can be mobilized to give a structure to the level of argumentation through *reformulation*.

#### 4.2.4 Reformulation beyond rewording: consequence, contrast, negation of expectations

Another subfunction pertaining to such argumentative level is what we tagged as complex reformulation in our annotation protocol<sup>116</sup>. Generally, the speaker uses a reformulation marker to introduce a variation/change concerning the information content, frequently correcting or modifying her previous discourse. In this case, we are faced with a function of reformulation aimed at correcting what she has previously said or at cancelling a given implication activated by a prior utterance, that is beyond the simple carrying out of a repair. In the next section, we will argue how the function may be complex (paraphrastic vs non-paraphrastic reformulation etc) also in the case of rewording and re-phrasing (content-level reformulation, see Sweetser 1990).

As we will plainly argue later, reformulation is a discourse function through which the speaker re-elaborates an idea in order to be more precise and to "facilitate the hearer's understanding of the original" (Blakemore 1993: 107), or in order to extend the information previously arranged. It is

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<sup>116</sup> In Crible (2018) and Crible and Degand (2018) such sub-classification is not made.

based on an equivalence process whereby two utterances are shown as different ways to describe a given concept. However, in some other cases, the speaker reformulates the previous segment in order to meet the hearer's need for explanation, either denying a possible expectation or creating a contrast with the previous utterance (Fiorentini and Sansò 2017: 69 on the discursive reformulation functions of the markers *nel senso* and *voglio dire* 'I mean' in Italian<sup>117</sup>).

Such cases refer to a complex operation serving the purpose of clarifying a given segment by enriching it with rhetorically connected information on the argumentative level. Reformulation in these terms may be classified as a process of enrichment, aimed at clarifying not merely a previously uttered content, but also at fine-tuning a given implicature *activated* by a preceding utterance. In this way, the CC introduces an *argument* which enriches a previous argument and the speaker's stance. It is not intrinsically metatextual. It is rather metacommunicative (referring to the metacommunicative level (i.e., clarifying the speaker's intentions), not simply to wording level, Schiffrin 1987: 302, 317-318).

Several scholars consider reformulation as an equivalence operation at the metatextual level (cf. Bach 1996; Fuchs 1982; Fuentes 1993, Molinelli 2014: 494). Nonetheless, most of them insist that severe equivalence is hardly ever the case, because it is difficult to operationalize. Yet, "some kind of 'variation' is at least suggested" (Gülich and Kotschi 1995: 42). This rationale on the main properties of reformulation often implies that the latter goes well beyond a bare operation of paraphrase. In fact, as often recognised, reformulation can indicate complex values such as specification, clarification, generalization, implication, or summary (see Blakemore 1993: 2, Bach 1996, Gülich and Kotschi 1983, 1987, 1995, Fedriani and Molinelli 2013, Cuenca 2003: 1072, Fiorentini and Sansò 2017) well beyond the mere rewording (addressed in the following section). It is properly from the complex values of reformulation that we started to classify it as an argumentative operation. For example, in the example below (taken from Cuenca 2003: 1072) the second utterance in (4.41) is an **implication** of the first one rather than a strict paraphrase:

- 4.41) Pero son claras dos cosas: por una parte, que los niveles de lengua se interrelacionan en el uso de una determinada lengua; **es decir**, que el análisis en niveles es únicamente metodológico. (PRAG, 300)

But two things are clear: on the one hand, that the levels of language are interrelated in the use of a certain language; **es decir** ('that is'; lit.: 'is to say'), that the analysis into levels is purely methodological

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<sup>117</sup> According to Brinton (2008: 116), the corresponding function may be subsumed under the category of 'causal meaning', which she establishes for the English CC *I mean* when it is roughly translatable as 'because'.

As recognised by Cuenca (2003), in cases like (4.41), the reformulating connective *es decir* does not express equivalence. Rather, it *creates* the equivalence (Gülich and Kotschi 1995: 43). In fact, the equivalence holds from a pragmatic standpoint, but not automatically from a logical or propositional ground, since the two contents (A and B) are not perfectly overlapping.

We decided to include reformulation under the label of the argumentative functions in that in some cases, through the process under scrutiny, CCs assign a new interpretation to the segment preceding them, thus leading to the correct inference according to its pragmatic and semantic features (Cuenca 2003; Dal Negro and Fiorentini 2014: 96; Molinelli 2015: 196). In this way it facilitates the discursive progression as it helps reducing any existing communicative defects of a text or making explicit some implications activated by the preceding utterance (see Brinton 2008: 116 on the causal meanings conveyed through the CC *I mean*). Let us have a look at some quantitative data:

**Table 4. 13 Reformulation CCs**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	12/49 (24,4%)	37/49 (75,5%)	49/1878 (2,6%)
CCs	voglio dì/dire	diciamo, (io/ti) dico, fai conto, intendiamoci, voglio dire	

In what follows we will discuss examples of the following micro-functions always connected to the general function of conveying argumentative reformulation:

- Cancelling the **PRESUPPOSITION** activated by the speaker's previous utterance/explaining a contrast;
- introducing the **CONSEQUENCE** of what said before.

4.42) B: vorrei essere come lui lui se la gode tutto sommato lui è contento così

A: lui non si fa mai un problema

B: appunto

A: mai un problema

B: che ?> **voglio di'** beato lui (Lip RA1)

B: I would like to be like him he enjoys everything it all in all he is glad so

A: everything all in all he is happy this way

B: precisely

A: Never a problem

B: that **I mean** blessed him

4.43) EF\_TO070: sono quelle piu' generiche ecco all'interno ci sono ancora poi tutta una serie di  
EF\_TO070: di sfumature.

EF\_TO070: comunque insomma don ottavio (.) e' un tenore

EF\_TO070: eh?

EF\_TO070: ma anche qui nel tenore **voglio dire**

EF\_TO070: eh il tenore che canta mozart

EF\_TO070: non necessariamente canta bene verdi o canta bene il verismo  
EF\_TO070: perche' e':: un tipo di voce piu' delicata (KIParla TOD1016)  
EF\_TO070: they are the most generic ones here inside there are still a whole series of  
EF\_TO070: Of gradients.  
EF\_TO070: in short, Don Ottavio is a tenor  
EF\_TO070: eh?  
EF\_TO070: but also here in the tenor **I mean**  
EF\_TO070: eh the tenor singing Mozart  
EF\_TO070: not necessarily he cannot sing well neither Verdi nor the Verism  
EF\_TO070: because it's a more delicate type of voice

- 4.44) se no uno non viene a Napoli magari saranno interessati a fonetica italiana o cioe' che staranno qua **voglio dire** perche' chi viene qua o ci viene con una qualche forma di entusiasmo o non ci viene (Lip, NA5)  
otherwise one does not come to Naples maybe they will be interested in Italian phonetics or however they will stay here **I mean** because who comes here, they either come with some form of enthusiasm or they do not come to us at all

The reformulation CC in 4.42) describes the function at issue in the clearest way. Speaker B says that she would like to be another person, because the latter is kind of careless, takes life lightly, showing complacency and shallowness. In the event that her assertion would be misled by the hearer, she utters the reformulation marker *voglio dire* in occurrence with an evaluative assessment (*lucky him!*) thus demolishing a possible implication of what of what he had said before “I am envious or something, I am criticizing her behaviour”. Along with making her stance explicit, in this occurrence, the speaker cancels the pretentiousness of her previous utterance, thus protecting her face and cancelling any negative implication about her judgement. In other words, the reformulating *voglio dire* introduces a sort of explanation, which marks the denial of the expectation created by the previous utterance (*I am kind of resentful* - Fiorentini and Sansò 2017: 66). The same mechanism acts in the following example:

- 4.45) A: aveva una sua # **filosofia e teoria del disordine** eh C: chi ?> A: si' in effetti si' pero' continua mi sembra **voglio dire** ad un C: ????> A: certo momento il disordine diventa diventa sporcizia (Lip RA4)  
A: he seemed to regard science and had his theory of disorder eh C: who? A: yes yes, indeed, however if the mess persists it seems to me **I mean** at some C?? A: at some point mess becomes dirt

In 4.45), the chance of the disorder to have an order is immediately *cancelled* by the speaker’s subsequent reformulating segment (*at a given point the disorder develops into trash*). In other words, by uttering *voglio dire*, the speaker cancels what the previous utterance could have activated (something like ‘it may exist a theory or positive evaluation of disorder’ / ‘disorder may be kind of order’). The CC *voglio dire* announces the speaker’s clarification by targeting her personal standpoint with respect to the previous stance, thus performing a sort of function of distancing (see

Dal Negro and Fiorentini 2014), which is fully pragmatic, connected to the speaker's stance, not merely to re-wording<sup>118</sup>.

We believe that, in this case, reformulation is not to be addressed as a metalinguistic operation concerned with the process of wording. Rather, we believe that the speaker is performing a metacommunicative operation, commenting on the speech act and providing further clarification or justification of it (Beeching 2017: 188 on the similar function of the DM 'I mean').

Let us discuss the last complex example of reformulation denying something which is not explicitly communicated but inferable from the co-text (distancing function). The pragmatic character of reformulation may be clearly observed in the following occurrence:

- 4.46) GG\_TO044: e: son stra-generosi cioe' quando lei se n'e' andata via mi ha lasciato mez- meta' delle sue cose,  
GG\_TO044: tra cui anche 'sti soldi che **dico** boh io le ho dato un euro perche' pensavo fosse l'equivalente in euro io che cazzo ne s[o quanto] valgono,  
ML\_TO055: [mhmh,]  
GG\_TO044: e::h cinquemila yen. (KIParla, TOD2008)  
GG\_TO044: and: they are over-generous I mean when she left she left me hal- half of her things, including also this sum of money that **I say/I wonder** I dunno I gave her one euro because I thought it was the equivalent in euros I don't know how much that corresponds to,  
ML\_TO055: [mhmh,]  
GG\_TO044: e::h five thousand yen.

By uttering the reformulation marker *dico*, the speaker introduces a segment (out of 37 occurrences, 28 occur turn-initially in microsyntactic position, thus retaining a scope over a sentence/list of sentences, not simply a phrase) with the aim of cancelling a given implicature that the hearer would derive from the previous utterance, and to protect her face. It seems that she intends to underline that the behaviour of the person they are talking about (the fact that the Chinese flatmate delivered a lot of money as a gift to the speaker) has not been caused by the speaker's conduct at all and, at the same time, it communicates her attitude of surprise towards the content.

In some other occurrences, the reformulating function of *voglio dire* conveys other values, such as pragmatic **CONSEQUENCE / pragmatic result / implication** (see Günthner 2015: 240), as in the following excerpts:

- 4.47) LA\_TO069: ancora una volta, roma, ma insomma non solo  
LA\_TO069: diciamo le corti, i principi, si dotano di statue:: dell'antichita', statue romane, che cominciano a riemergere,  
LA\_TO069: e allora **diciamo** gli scultori potevano avere un modello,  
LA\_TO069: da andare a riguardare, cosi' com'era cicerone per la lingua, (KIParla TOD1015)  
LA\_TO069: once again, Rome, but in short not only

<sup>118</sup> Highly subjective component, which is the reason why we included it among argumentative functions, not merely re-wording.

LA\_TO069: let's say the courts, the princes, they have statues from antiquity, Roman statues, which begin to re-emerge,

LA\_TO069: and thus **let's say** sculptors could have had a model,

LA\_TO069: to go and look at, as Cicero was a model for language,

- 4.48) PC\_TO058: e poi: e' u- ha un'altra stanza dove c'e' il letto matrimoniale e un altro letto a castello quindi,

PC\_TO058: **diciamo** li:::

PC\_TO058: si sta in abbastanza poi in questo stanzone (KIParla TOD2013)

PC\_TO058: and then: it's a- has another room where there is a double bed and another bunk bed then,

PC\_TO058: **Let's say** there,

PC\_TO058: this big room can host several people

- 4.49) EF\_TO070: di sottolineare una parola ma qui, >sembra quasi che lui<

EF\_TO070: sia un torrente in piena che non si riesce piu' a fermare.

EF\_TO070: quindi **diciamo** queste ripetizioni sono funzionali

EF\_TO070: a descrivere (.) il carattere di

EF\_TO070: >di don giovanni. [...] (TOD1016)

EF\_TO070: to emphasise a word but here it almost looks like he is a flooded stream that can no longer be stopped. EF\_TO070: so **let's say** these repetitions are used EF\_TO070: to describe the behaviour of Don Giovanni

- 4.50) EF\_TO070: non e' neanche d'azione (.) e' lui che: dice agli altri che cosa debbano fare.

EF\_TO070: eh ma non c'e' assolutamente spazio per i sentimenti >quindi **diciamo**< don giovanni che fa girare la testa a tutte le donne

EF\_TO070: in realta' di suo (.) nell'opera di mozart non si ferma mai a esprimere un sentimento. (KIParla TOD1016)

EF\_TO070: it has nothing to do with action (.) it is him who tells others what to do.

EF\_TO070: eh but there is absolutely no room for feelings so **let's say** it is Don Giovanni who attracts every woman he meets

EF\_TO070: in fact in Mozart's opera he never stops to express feelings.

In examples above, the CC does not reformulate strictly speaking, rather it introduces a content whose interpretation is anticipated (or implied) by something else before (see Cuenca 2003). By using *voglio dire* and *diciamo* the speaker introduces the result of what uttered in the premise (given that p → it implies/derives that Q).

More specifically in 4.47), given that princes had bought statues and other handicrafts, *then* the sculptors could have had a role model to emulate. It may be claimed that the reformulating CC may be used to mark a transition, namely, to gather up the consequences of what the previous speaker has said and move on to a consequence of that remark (Beeching 2017 on the reformulation functions of *I mean* in English). This usage might be glossed 'in that case'.

Summing up, in line with existing studies underlining the complex values conveyed through reformulation, we underline that the operation at stake may extend to serve functions which are compatible with modal and argumentative meanings. Therefore, the data have gathered evidence of the intrinsic reality of reformulation, which can go well beyond the issue of rewording. Moreover,

notice that, syntactically speaking, the reformulating segment is in these examples never a phrase; crucially it may manifest itself as a list of sentences. We may follow Beeching's (2017) assumption asserting that the various functions of the forms *voglio dire/diciamo*, such as introducing repair, reformulation, explication or expression of the speaker's attitude, can be described as METALINGUISTIC (the speaker's modification of her linguistic expressions, as we will see in the next section) and METACOMMUNICATIVE/argumentative (the speaker's modification of her intentions) and that the boundary between metalinguistic and metacommunicative may be very fine. *Voglio dire* and *diciamo* are used to establish and to negotiate meaning with the hearer. The CCs serve, par excellence, as a way of making one's meaning and intentions in saying something plain, not only with respect to the operation of strict paraphrase (Fedriani and Molinelli 2013 on the multifunctionality of *ut ita dicam* in Latin, Beeching 2017 on the DM *I mean* in British English).

Whereas in this paragraph, we addressed reformulation in terms of argumentative operation making the speaker's stance clear, in the next paragraph we will deal with those functions assuring local-coherence pertaining to phrasing and wording (content-level reformulation, Sweetser 1990).

#### **4.3 Micro-coherence: local discourse structuring**

So far, we have elaborated the functions of CCs which globally regulate and specify the way arguments and sections are disposed in the discourse as text. In the following sections we address those CCs conveying micro-coherence on the local level. We will start from the meta-discursive usages of reformulation, eventually conveying context-based analogy. Then we will analyse the discourse profile of approximation to finally address the function of time for planning, a typical process of on-line productions, exploited to overcome the cognitive loading.

##### **4.3.1 Reformulation among adjacent pair units**

Along with enhancing global coherence, the textual CCs often convey micro-local coherence by indicating how to identify and to treat the string that the speaker utters, namely as a reformulation or as a specification. In this section, we will address reformulation as an operation of meaning clarification or repair, whereas we focused on complex reformulation guaranteeing global coherence above in section 4.2.4.

As anticipated, reformulation is a basic discourse function by which the speaker re-elaborates an idea in order to be more precise (see Blakemore 1993: 107), or in order to enrich the prearranged information. Reformulation is based on an equivalence process such that two utterances are shown as different ways to define a single idea or concept (i.e., the second utterance is presented as a paraphrase of the first one - see Rossari 1994 on French-Italian reformulation markers; Cuenca 2003

on English, Spanish and Catalan, Fiorentini and Sansò 2017 on Italian *voglio dire* and *nel senso*). With the final purpose of clarifying the meaning, the operation at issue has often been defined as a process of elaboration (Fraser 1999; Bazzanella 1995 among many others). Following Gülich and Kotschi's (1987, 1995) definition of the process, reformulation can be described as an operation by which the content in the first utterance (A) can be either expanded or reduced by the second utterance (B). Before entering into the details, let us have a look at some quantitative data:

**Table 4. 14 Reformulation CCs and frequency of initial position**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	94/198 (47,4%)	104/198 (52,5%)	198/1878 (10,5%)
CCs	diciamo (in parole povere/meglio), dico, (io) direi, fai conto, ho detto, intendiamoci, potremmo dire, ripeto, senti, voglio dì, volevo dire	diciamo (più o meno), voglio dire, dicevo, (io) dico (ovviamente), (noi) diremmo, intendo, possiamo dire, voglio dì, volevo dire	
initial microsyntactic position	30/45 (66,6%)	30/52 (57,6%)	60/97 (61,8%)
initial macrosyntactic position	37/49 (82,2%)	28/52 (53,8%)	65/101 (67%)

The function often occurs in initial position, both with respect to macro and to microsyntax. Examples of basic reformulation are given in the following examples:

- 4.51) GN\_TO065: ergo.

GN\_TO065: un suggerimento.

GN\_TO065: =una

GN\_TO065: **diciamo** un modo possibile per uscirne,

GN\_TO065: e' quello della citazione in chiave. (KIParla TOA1003)

GN\_TO065: so.

GN\_TO065: A suggestion.

GN\_TO065: one

GN\_TO065: **Let's say** a possible way out of it,

GN\_TO065: is the quote in key.

- 4.52) BM\_BO093: ora m:h abbiamo detto che l'effetto di queste proteine [...] di questi

BM\_BO093: e::hm accumuli ehm **diciamo** della presenza di queste neurofibrille,

BM\_BO093: e' principalmente una morte neuronale. (KIParla BOD1004)

BM\_BO093: now m:h we have said that the effect of these proteins of these

BM\_BO093: e::hm accumulations ehm **let's say** of the presence of these neuro-fibrils,

BM\_BO093: It's basically a neuronal death.

- 4.53) LA\_TO069: il rinascimento e' molto importante anche per aver dato il via, **diciamo** la premessa a quella che sara' poi la rivoluzione scientifica. (KIParla TOD1015)  
LA\_TO069: the renaissance is also very important for starting, **let's say** the premise to what will be later the scientific revolution
- 4.54) LA\_TO069: e:h proprio come attitudine alla filologia, come metodo di studio **diciamo**.  
(KIParla TOD1015)  
LA\_TO069: eh exactly as attitude to philology, as a method of study **let us say**.
- 4.55) eh i viaggi puo' fare Racconti italiani faccio per dire insomma **voglio dire** ognuno farà quello per cui si sente più (Lip, RA3)  
eh as for travels he can do Italian tales for instance in short **I mean** everyone will do what he feels like more

Concerning the sources which are mobilised, they are in general verbs of speaking, whose meaning is directly correlated with the metatextual nature of reformulation in terms of an alternative formulation of a certain preceding utterance (Cuenca 2003: 1077).

We shall now see how the function works in real occurrences. In 4.51) the speaker utters the same concept in two different ways: first, by means of the phrase *un suggerimento* ('a suggestion'); secondly, by means of the analytic phrase *un modo possibile per uscirne* ('a solution'). Therefore, the second phrase is a paraphrase of the former, whereby both can be considered as alternative formulations of a single idea. Syntactically speaking, in such cases, reformulation has scope over the left or right bounded utterances, which are often verbless hosts (VLH) made up of a phrase (see Auer 2009, Calaresu 2018 on polyphonic grammaticalization). Segments are therefore juxtaposed (79 occurrences of reformulation CCs are hosted by VLH hosts over 97 instances of macrosyntax), thus mirroring the **on-line construction of reference** through different attempts and approximations towards the target idea the speaker has in mind (on-line (re-)wording). What we identify is indeed a combination of utterances showing the on-line construction of discourse through segmented sentential constructions (Calaresu 2018: 508). Indeed, as argued in Ch.2, one superficial property of language production is the fact that speakers sometimes 'lose the thread' of/in complex constructions. It is indicative of an overload of short-term storage. Spoken language therefore copes with these correlations of oral mode "by having shorter basic units of processing and by avoiding types of construction that require processing against time" (Auer 2009: 2).

However, the reformulation may also have scope over an entire segment/clause. Let us consider the following examples:

- 4.56) LA\_TO069: dunque oggi iniziamo a entrare in medias res  
LA\_TO069: >**diciamo**< entriamo negli argomenti piu' specifici. (KIParla TOD1015)  
LA\_TO069: so today we start to enter in the middle of things **let's say** we get into the most specific topics.

- 4.57) LA\_TO069: e con questo fonda proprio l'analisi scientifica, della politica.  
 LA\_TO069: i politologi, **diciamo** quelli che analizzano la politica scientificamente,  
 LA\_TO069: hanno il loro, (.) antenato, in machiavelli. (KIParla, TOD1015)  
 LA\_TO069: and with this he founded the scientific analysis of politics. political scientists, **let's say** those who analyse politics scientifically, they find their ancestor in Machiavelli.
- 4.58) LA\_TO069: il latino si diffonde di nuovo sempre di piu' in europa, e diventa la lingua universale dei colti  
 LA\_TO069: con cui possono **diciamo** corrispondere i colti di tutta europa (KIParla TOD1015)  
 LA\_TO069: Latin spreads again and again in Europe, whereby it becomes the universal language of educated people with which they can **let's say** communicate with the other scholars of the rest of Europe
- 4.59) LA\_TO069: la gioconda non e' fra quelli.  
 LA\_TO069: nel senso che la gioconda, leonardo, gliel'ha venduta,  
 LA\_TO069: quindi **diciamo** e' loro (KIParla, TOD1015)  
 LA\_TO069: The Gioconda is not among those ones.  
 LA\_TO069: in the sense that La Gioconda, Leonardo, Leonardo sold it to them,  
 LA\_TO069: so **let's say** it literally belongs to them

In such occurrences, the CC has scope over more complex structures which aim at explicating what the speaker was going to utter<sup>119</sup>. In serving this function, reformulation may also occur turn-finally:

- 4.60) CB\_TO056: in quel quartiere ci si conosce tutti  
 CB\_TO056: e::h=m:h  
 CB\_TO056: [quindi per (u)na persona anzia:na]  
 ES\_TO071: [conosce i negozi, il fruttaro:]lo **diciamo**, (KIParla TOD2012)  
 CB\_TO056: In that neighbourhood everyone knows each other  
 CB\_TO056: e::h-m:h  
 CB\_TO056: so for an old person  
 ES\_TO071: she knows the shops, the owner of the fruit shop **let us say**
- 4.61) LA\_TO069: perche' in ogni citta' si trovano questi due umori diversi, queste due classi sociali **diciamo**, (KIParla TOD1015)  
 LA\_TO069: because in every city you find these two different moods, these two social classes **let us say**

In this way, the reformulation CC acts as an afterthought, more specifically, as what Bolinger (1989: 190-191) defines as **REVISION** parentheticals, i.e. parentheticals that provide self-corrections or metalinguistic repairs in which “the speaker makes a ceremony of correcting himself” (wording processes).

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<sup>119</sup> However, we do underline that, despite having scope over a sentence, the operation is referred to wording, it is not argumentative. This is the reason we included these cases under the head of local scope functions (metalinguistic level).

Moreover, reformulation may be consistent with a function of **specification** (Brinton 2008, Molinelli 2014: 494), not merely paraphrase. This is clear in the case of the example (4.62), in which the phrase-limited CC reformulates at the level of dependency, thus fine-tuning the meaning of its host:

- 4.62) ES\_TO071: quindi (.) organizzata bene [**diciamo**] internamente. (KIParla TOD2013)  
 ES\_TO071: then (it was) well-organised **let's say** internally

- 4.63) LA\_TO069: dante alighieri, e' l'autore italiano piu' studiato al mondo. su cui ci sono il maggior numero **diciamo** proprio migliaia, e migliaia di studi machiavelliani diciamo (KIParla TOD1015)  
 LA\_TO069: Dante Alighieri is the most extensively studied Italian author in the world about whom there are the largest numbers **let us say** just thousands, and thousands of Machiavellian studies  
**let's say**

In these occurrences, reformulation manifests itself in terms of specification, in that it is used to fine-tuning a given content, not simply to reformulating it. In some cases, the operation is clearly hearer-oriented<sup>120</sup> - being used in contexts of requests (4.64) - in order to ease the hearer's comprehension or it may be involved in the co-selection of the target expressions, as happens in the excerpt 4.65) (Ciabarri 2013, Calaresu 2018), in which the speaker reformulates the previous speaker's utterance:

- 4.64) mh: a: piedi **dico** te la sei mai fatta [a piedi da- dall'università]? (KIParla TOD2013)  
 mh on foot **I say** have you ever walked from the university?

- 4.65) ES\_TO071: [poi (.) ha anche le sue spese in[somma una casa al mare].  
 PC\_TO058: [esatto (**io voglio dire**) le spese sono piu' elevate di quanto poi in realta' la utiliz[zi tu].  
 (KIParla, TOD2013)  
 ES\_TO071 [then a Summer house has also its price  
 PC\_TO058: [exactly **I mean** the time you spend there is not worth the expenses

Finally, the reformulation may mark a recapitulating relation between S2 and a number of prior propositions (Degand 2014: 165):

- 4.66) Quando torna da lavorare deve rifa' la camera deve fa' da mangiare deve stirare dopo cena  
 praticamente lavora ma deve fa anche la casalinga **voglio dire** (Lip, FB17)  
 When she comes back from work, she has to make beds she must cook she has to iron after dinner  
 actually she is a career woman, but she also must be a housewife **I mean**

Throughout these occurrences, the CC plays a reformulating, clarifying functions which does not pertain to the system of argumentation, rather on the more local level of phrasing ad rewording (CONTENT-LEVEL, METALINGUISTIC REFORMULATION). The limited scope (VLH, initial in micro position: scope on local segments) gathers evidence of the necessity to divide up these two different

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<sup>120</sup> We did not quantify the information as we did not know how to operationalize it.

functions of the same basic reformulating process of (meaning) clarification. The operation at issue is focused on the text, i.e., on the wording (putting thought into words). In fact, in reformulating, the speaker provides referential information without adding anything on the evaluation and/or argumentative ground. The reformulation marker connects two segments and has scope over one of them, i.e. one expression indicating one possible, alternative way to identify the same, anticipated referent or concept. Rather, in the case of argumentative reformulation, the speaker aims at regulating the expression of her argumentative stance and the way arguments are correlated (i.e., explication on the argumentative ground, not merely clarification).

#### **4.3.1.1 Paraphrastic vs non-paraphrastic reformulation: the context-sensitiveness of reformulation**

As previously mentioned, several scholars consider reformulation as an operation of equivalence which may be placed on the metatextual level (cf. Bach 1996; Fuchs 1982; Fuentes 1993, Cuenca 2003: 1071). Nonetheless, several of them underline that strict equivalence relation is hardly ever the case, because it is difficult to operationalise (the notion of equivalence *per se* is a gradient concept, which may depend on the observer's angle). Therefore, under the head of reformulation "some kind of 'variation' is at least suggested" (Gülich and Kotschi 1995: 42) with respect to the relation holding between the two linked segments. It means that reformulation implies more than a strict paraphrase, considering that it may convey other types of information, such as the speaker's stance towards the first content, which is supposed to be reformulated. In fact, as anticipated in the case of reformulation on the argumentative level, reformulation can imply discourse values such as explanation, specification, simplification, generalization, gloss, implication, or summary (see Blakemore 1993: 2; Bach 1996; Gülich and Kotschi 1983, 1987, Cuenca 2003: 1072).

We have already noticed that the reformulation may indeed **create** the equivalence it is supposed to convey (Gülich and Kotschi 1995: 43). What is worthy of attention for the sake of our argument at stake is that the content which is supposed to clarify the former meaning may be really context-based. In other words, the equivalence may hold from a pragmatic point of view, but not necessarily from a logical or propositional ground.

In line with the complex functions of reformulation, some authors have distinguished two general types of reformulation: paraphrastic and non-paraphrastic (e.g. Rossari 1994). Paraphrastic reformulation connectives, such as i.e., *namely*, *in other words*, *that is* and others, indicate plain equivalence. Alternatively, non-paraphrastic reformulation connectives, such as *in fact*, *actually*, *as a matter of fact* and others, point to the contrastive nuance derived from presenting two contents as alternative formulations of the very same content. Non-paraphrastic reformulation, on the contrary,

always implies “une opération de changement de perspective énonciative émanant d’une rétrointerprétation du mouvement discursif antérieur” (Rossari 1994; see also Gülich and Kotschi 1995). Stated otherwise, the speaker, after producing a first discourse move, delivers a second one with the goal of putting the first move in the right perspective, as in the following example:

- 4.67) Il skie bien ce type, enfin il se débrouille pas trop mal (Rossari 1990: 350)

‘He skies well, that guy, *enfin* he’s not doing too badly’

The extent to which instances of reformulation can be classified as paraphrastic or non-paraphrastic is a matter of degree<sup>121</sup> and, as Gülich and Kotschi (1983, 1995) recognise, in both paraphrastic and non-paraphrastic reformulation “the speaker’s activity consists of retrospectively characterizing an expression produced earlier on [...] as insufficient and thus merely preliminary”. The very need for reformulating a given chunk of information always implies that some variation (specification, generalization, implication, etc.) is at least suggested: when speakers put things in other words, as Blakemore (1993) declines it in relevance-theoretic terms, they are always motivated in the search for relevance, either by restricting the interpretation of the original string or by assigning a variety of implicatures to the hearer in order to facilitate the latter’s comprehension (Fiorentini and Sansò 2017: 56). Let us consider the following examples:

- 4.68) A: puoi sempre poi fare una\_ conciliazione per meno voglio dire B: si' no ma per meno A: cioe' al limite B: no se la fo' la fo' per bene cioe' **voglio dire** gli si faccia lo sconto di cinquecentomila lire che e'? magari per ris se vuole risparmiare le spese di avvocato Lip FA10)  
A: you can you always make a conciliation for less I mean B: yes no but for less A: I mean if at all B: no if he does he'll have to do it well **I mean** just do the discount of five hundred thousand Italian lire that is? maybe for sa- if she wants to save the lawyer's fees

- 4.69) S\_TO071: [io diec]i anni fa consideravo i trentatreenni vecchi.

PC\_TO058: no: pero' nel se- esatto che (...) cosa che non e' pero' adesso **io dico**,  
PC\_TO058: (magari) parli con la tredicenne ti dice io sono grande [okay io] a tredici=anni, a tredici=anni, ero piccola gli altri possono essere [grandi io ero] piccola invece. (KIParla, TOD2013)  
S\_TO071: ten years ago I considered old the 33-year-old people.  
PC\_TO058: no: but in the sen- exactly that which is not, however, now **I say**,  
PC\_TO058: maybe (today) you talk to the 13-year-old telling you I'm adult [okay me] at thirteen, at thirth- I considered myself young, the others may be considered adult, however I felt young

In 4.68), for example, the clarification or reformulation process is referred to the evaluative expression *la fo per bene* (‘I’ll do it well/I’ll find a good solution’), whose value is intrinsically context-sensitive. In other words, the extent to which a solution may be a *good* solution may vary according to the context of utterance. What is considered as a reformulation of being a good solution

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<sup>121</sup> That is the reason why we did not quantify it.

is highly context sensitive. The same context-sensitiveness of the reformulation value may also be traceable in 4.69), where the speaker reformulates by uttering her position with respect to what she thinks of the expression: *cosa che non è però adesso* ('now the tables have turned'). Therefore, throughout such instances, the reformulation acts differently from cases such as the one discussed in 4.51), in which the two formulations are **exactly** two referential expressions to name the same concept, without any qualitative nuance or any context-sensitive value. More specifically, what is selected as a reformulation has often to do with exemplars which are assumed to be contextually accessible to the hearer.

We cannot say exactly where the boundary between paraphrastic and non-paraphrastic is. Though, without any doubt, we can argue that reformulation in spoken discourse often turns out to behave as a complex mechanism which may affect whole stretches of discourse, whose reformulating potential may be very context-sensitive, thus varying from a situation to the other.

In conclusion, we may assert that reformulation is not a simple discourse function implying the exact equivalence between two given segments. Rather, it should be considered as a complex function/process, which ranges from strict paraphrase to other values such as specification and context-based, pragmatically motivated, relative equivalence. Otherwise stated, what is assumed to reformulate a former content may be context-sensitive and not a paraphrase of a previous segment.

#### 4.2.3.2 Between repair and reformulation

As we observe, reformulation may be addressed as a retrospective process, which creates coherence between the speakers' current and past activities. It is crucial for exhibiting understanding and accomplishing intersubjectivity in interaction (Deppermann 2015: 59). Reformulation may be employed to expand prior context. However, the process equally includes operations of retraction (Auer 2009), which modify and substitute previous contents by repair (Schegloff et al. 1977) and various kinds of reformulation (specification, generalization, exemplification, etc.; see Gülich and Kotschi 1996; Deppermann and Günthner 2015: 4; Deppermann: 2015: 67). Concerning the meaning of repair, reformulation may help the speaker to utter what he is about to say, similarly to the operation of word-finding. Let us consider the following occurrences:

- 4.70) BT\_BO090: in (.) un (.) un (.) l'unico censi- (.) **diciamo** l'unico::: (.) calcolo approssimativo che venne fatto,  
BT\_BO090: fu (.) quello di falzone, (KIParla BOC1003)  
BT\_BO090: In an an the only cens- **let us say** the only approximate calculation which was made was the only one made by Falzone
- 4.71) MU\_TO019: eh questa diminuzione dell'alimentaz- **diciamo** della ratione viene effettuata per prevenire, (KIParla TOC1004)

MU\_TO019: Eh this decrease of the nourishm- **let us say** of the food is carried out to avoid (possible diseases)

- 4.72) MU\_TO019: e determina eh=minore assunzione di latte e quindi eh maggior eh espo- **diciamo** maggiore suscettibilita' alle malattie,  
MU\_TO019: eh e::h=[m:h] (KIParla TOC1004)  
MU\_TO019: and it determines eh=less milk intake, and then eh greater eh expo- **let's say** more susceptibility to disease,
- 4.73) GC\_BO094: >diciamo< vorrei un atti- **diciamo** ci sono due argomenti.  
GC\_BO094: di cu- che vorrei trattare oggi. (KIParla BOD1005)  
GC\_BO094: Let's say I'd like a litt- **let us say** there are two arguments with wh- which I would like to deal today of whi- which I would like to deal with today

This type of CC is often frequently used to self-correct, at word level but also at a syntactic level (Beeching 2017). In (4.70), the speaker corrects the truncated word *censi* ('census') to *calcolo approssimativo* ('rough calculation') using the CC *diciamo* to flag a hesitation about the use of the word *censimento* and the transition to the correction *calcolo approssimativo* (Beeching 2017). In a similar vein, in (4.71), a phrase is repaired from '*alimenta-*' ('nourishment') to *razione* ('portion'). The usefulness of the CC as a way of editing spontaneous speech as it unfolds linearly in time is evident throughout such examples (Beeching 2017: 185).

In the aforementioned occurrences, *voglio dire/diciamo* are used to repair "in syntactic reformulations where the speaker stops mid-flow and changes tack to reformulate a construction." (Beeching 2017: 102). Some patterns of co-occurrences may be retrieved: see the false starts we can notice in all the examples, or the hesitation markers.

As outlined for the diachrony of *o sea* in Spanish, our survey on reformulation CCs thus shows that they can develop organizational functions falling within the domain of discourse planning (formulative uses) as well as more interpersonal values having to do with the softening of the illocutionary force of the utterance, and values in which the reformulative CC seems to be employed similarly to a focusing device, reinforcing what has been just said on a scale of argumentative force. The path may be summarized as follows: paraphrastic reformulative > conclusive > non-paraphrastic reformulative > modal (Pons Bordería 2014: 110). The examples discussed in this section and in the previous two sections provide evidence for the complex, discourse-based value of the operation under scrutiny, which should be addressed a multifaceted function ranging from strict paraphrase to other values such as explanation, summary or denomination. As observed above, the operation may also convey non-paraphrastic meanings such as implication, conclusion, contrast, and context-based explication (Cuenca 2003: 1073, Cuenca and Bach 2007, Fedriani and Molinelli 2013).

### 4.3.2 Approximation: signalling a semantic mismatch between adjacent local segments

Among the textual functions, as anticipated in the introduction to this chapter, in both Corpora the most frequent content-level, local function is approximation. CCs with this function indicate looseness of meaning (Fraser 2010). We will address here the function of approximation in terms of rhetorical strategy being recruited to attenuate the full semantic value of a particular expression, as in the sentence *He's sort of nice* (Fraser 2010: 15, Fedriani and Molinelli 2013), in which the bolded construction signals that the adjective *nice* is not the most suitable expression to describe the concept the speaker has in mind. Approximation may be claimed to belong to the more comprehensive category of hedging - a rhetorical strategy - by which a speaker, using a linguistic device, can signal a lack of commitment to the full semantic membership of an expression (propositional hedging<sup>122</sup> - Fraser 2010: 22).

In the following table, we summarise the frequency of the function in the corpora, the syntactic positions in which it occurs, and some patterns of co-occurrence:

**Table 4. 15 Approximation CCs**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
	338/920 (36,7%)	582/920 (63,2%)	920/1878 (48,9%)
	che so, diciamo (così'/tra virgolette), direi, diremo così, mi pare, non so, possiamo dire, si dice, si potrebbe/può dire # voglio dire (tra virgolette)	diciamo, diciamo (così/un po'), noi diremmo, non so, possiamo dire, voglio dire	

**Table 4. 16 Percentage of medial microsyntactic position (approximation function)**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Microsyntax	276/338 (81,6%)	487/582 (83,6%)	763/920 (82,9%)
Medial position (/microsyntax)	208/276 (75,3%)	359/487 (73,7%)	567/763 (74,3%)
Interrupting the phrase position	126/338 (overall - 37,2%) 126/208 (medial - 60,5%)	280/582 (48,1%) 280/359 (77,9%)	406/920 (44,1%) 406/567 (71,6%)

**Table 4. 17 Percentage of medial macrosyntactic position (approximation function)**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Overall	62/338 (18,3%)	95/582 (16,3%)	157/920 (17%)
Medial macrosyntactic position	28/62 (45,1%)	33/95 (34,7%)	61/157 (38,8%)

<sup>122</sup> As often underlined, we consider as properly hedging only speech act-hedging, that is hedging affecting the force of the speech act. Therefore, we treat propositional hedging as approximation, thus reserving the term hedging only for speech act-level attenuation/mitigation, i.e. as a rhetorical/speaker-oriented strategy.

**Table 4. 18** Percentage of co-occurrence between CC and disfluency markers in the KIParla Corpus

Corpus	KIParla
<b>Overall</b>	224/582 (40%)
Hesitation markers	141/224 (62,9%)
False starts	38/224 (17%)
Repetition	28/224 (12,5%)

The frequency of **medial** position and interrupting the phrase position mirror the ability of the CCs under scrutiny of affecting the truth value. Contextually, the speaker's necessity to signal a process of approximation (semantic mismatch) is also signalled by the co-occurrence between the function at issue and disfluency markers, which show the process of on-line referring.

Let us start by analysing the following examples:

- 4.74) CG\_BO105: [...] (.) non tutti eh sono:

CG\_BO105: **diciamo** portati, o: (.) prediligono lo stesso tipo di test. (KIParla BOC1005)

CG\_BO105: not all eh are: **let's say** predisposed, or: (.) prefer the same type of test.

- 4.75) KG\_BO073: per **diciamo** un distacco meno traumatico hanno deciso vabbe facciamo vive' a papa' la' (KIParla BOD2005)

KG\_BO073: for **let's say** a less traumatic detachment they decided to have dad living there with them

- 4.76) RG\_BO053: si' e' stata un'esperie:nza carina pero' non troppo **diciamo** formativa ecco e' stato cosi' (KIParla BOD2008)

RG\_BO053: Yes it was a nice experience but not too much **let us say** formative yes that's the case

- 4.77) CC\_BO104: senti e invece, allora sempre per rimanere:: eh **diciamo** piu' legati all'esposizione di barney:: e::h. (KIParla BOC1005)

CC\_BO104: Listen and so to stay eh **let us say** tied up the Barney's exposition eh:

- 4.78) questa e' un po' la sintesi **diciamo** degli incontri che noi abbiamo svolto con queste due societa' (Lip, MC1)

this is the summary **let us say** of the meetings we made with these two societies

- 4.79) GM\_TO006: [...] a questo punto [lei, (.) senza problemi] (.) **diciamo**, (.) di, maggiore complessita', mi dica in che casi puo' revocarli. (KIParla TOC1002)

GM\_TO006: So, now please without problems **let us say** of more complexity, just tell me in which cases s/he can revoke them

In 4.74) through 4.79), the CCs attenuate the speaker's assertion, by signalling a semantic mismatch between the uttered expression and the target concept. In Schneider's taxonomy on reduced parenthetical clauses as mitigators (2007a: 243, 244, 245), the approximation markers are classified as phrasic level strategies (see Hare 1970) referring to the process of wording, i.e. putting

thoughts into words, and affecting on the propositional content, that is, the part of an utterance common to corresponding assertive, interrogative, and directive propositions. CCs function as bushes (Caffi 2007), acting on the propositional level, whereby retaining a semantic scope (cf. Franceschini 1994: 242 on the approximation markers *direi* and *diciamo*, see also Schneider 2007a, b later on the same markers).

The function of approximation, in fact, signals a semantic mismatch referred to a phrase or lexeme, in this way, the CC can be considered to be operating at the actional level (Waltereit 2002: 11-12; Schneider 2010), since they modify the realisation of certain acts, making them more or less approximate in terms of propositional content (Ghezzi 2012: 39). The approximating marker may be seen as a metalinguistic operator (Weinreich 1963), signalling – and softening – the selection of a given term that is considered as communicatively threatening because it is insufficient, or difficult to interpret (see Fedriani and Molinelli 2013: 77 on Latin *ut ita dicam*).

For instance, in 4.75) the approximating sense refers to the phrase *per un distacco meno traumatico* ('for a less upsetting separation'), whereby the function is signalled by putting the CC properly inside the PP, immediately after the head of the phrase. In 4.78) the speaker signals that the word *sintesi* ('summary') is not the most adequate lexeme to describe the target referent (see the interrupting the phrase-position of the CC at stake). In 4.76), the approximation refers to the adjective *formativa* ('formative'). The main function is thus giving instructions on how to interpret the string used by the speaker (see *editing* function in Erman 2001: 1344).

As outlined in the tables above, the function of approximation often occurs medially, phrase-limited or inside the dependency also on a clausal level. Whereas in most examples the CC occurs inside the dependency or inside the phrase in phrasal terms (first of the two examples), in other occurrences, the approximation has scope over a full sentence, interrupting the clausal dependency.

- 4.80) RG\_BO053: e' un ristorante di cucina tipica, quindi:: cucina tipica:: delle nostre parti, emilia:na  
 RG\_BO053: quindi:: buoni primi, e pero' comunque con anche::  
 RG\_BO053: con anche possibilita' di:: magari mangiare qualcosa di un po' piu' **diciamo** raffinato non so delle ca::rni,  
 RG\_BO053: gnocco e tigelle e' comunque:: un-un ristorante tipico:: . (.) non troppo rustico diciamo (KIParla BOD2008)  
 RG\_BO053: It's a restaurant with a specific kind of cuisine, so:: typical cuisine:: of our parts, Emilian cuisine  
 RG\_BO053: then::: good first courses, and anyway with also::  
 RG\_BO053: with also the possibility of:: eating something a little more **let us say** gourmet food I don't know from different kinds of meat,  
 RG\_BO053: dumpling and tigelle it is anyway:: a-a typical restaurant:: . (.) not too rustic **let's say**

- 4.81) CC\_BO104: [...]:: si' e' sempre bene:: **diciamo** contattare::  
 CC\_BO104: [anche via] mail i docenti per:: (KIParla BOC1005)  
 CC\_BO104: Yes it is always advised **let us say** to contact your professors by email

However, it must be underlined that over 545 occurrences of macrosyntax, specifically verbless hosts, 98 of them host approximation CCs, therefore, the markers do not only occur medially. The occurrence in VLHs mirrors the on-line construction of references through additional segments.

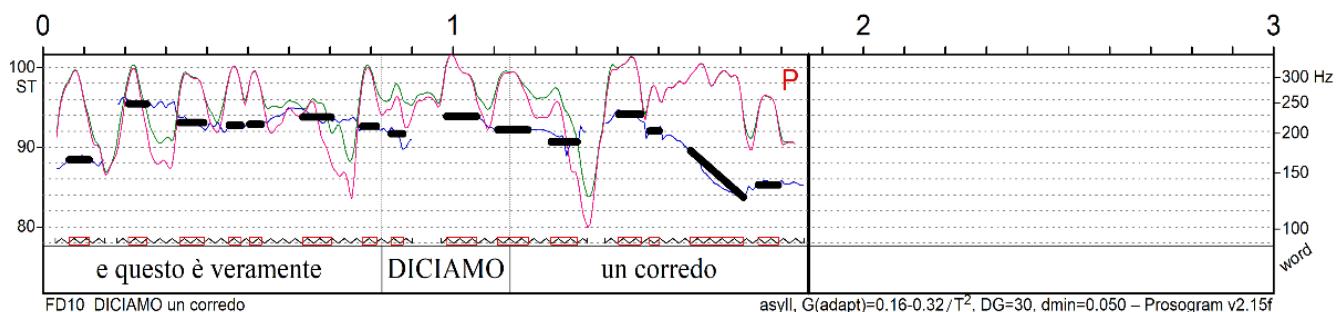
The function of approximating is also mirrored in the co-occurrence between the CC and other disfluency phenomena, such as hesitation markers or false starts, as in the following example:

- 4.82) ES\_TO071: quindi cioe' eh adesso in (.) questa struttura **diciamo** ci vivono i tuoi genitori e i tuoi nonni. (KIParla TOD2013)

ES\_TO071: So I mean eh now in this accommodation **let us say** live your parents and your grandparents

As anticipated in the introduction to this chapter, the interruptive force and the affectedness on the propositional content is mirrored prosodically:

**Figure 4. 3 Prosogram of the string 'e questo è veramente diciamo un corredo'**



We can observe in the Prosogram, the CC *diciamo* is prosodically integrated in the host utterance. More specifically, no pauses precede or follow the CC, which, syntactically interrupts the dependency and, more specifically, the phrase in the scope of the copula. The continuity of the red squares above the annotation tier shows that no fall in the vocal flux occurs, therefore no significant, prosodic event happens when uttering the CC. We may assert that syntactic parenthesis is not prosodically mirrored. This behaviour seems to mirror the integration and the affectedness on the truth-value of specific types of CCs (we will come back on this argument in Ch.6).

The prosodic integration of the CC may also be traceable in the following TextGrids, where it can be observed that no changes in Pitch may be detected with respect to the prosodic contour of the CC *diciamo*, which appears as perfectly integrated on a prosodic ground, while being syntactically interruptive (it occurs inside the arguments of the dependency).

Figure 4. 4 TextGrid of the string 'anche perché e abito diciamo in una periferia'

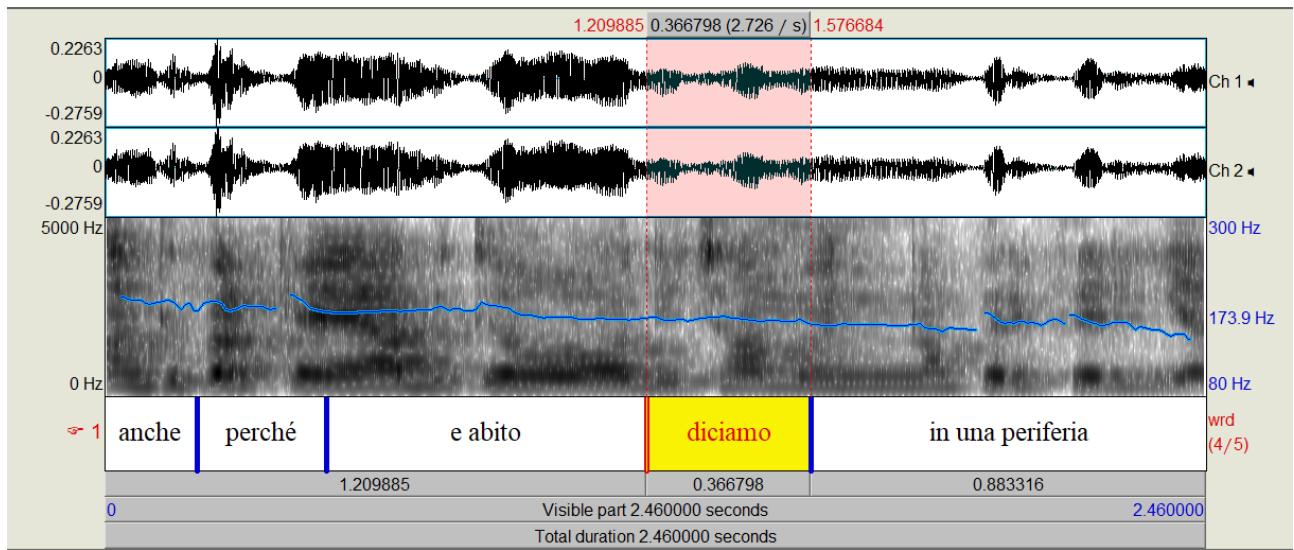


Figure 4. 5 TextGrid of the string 'per prevenire appunto diciamo eventuali metriti'

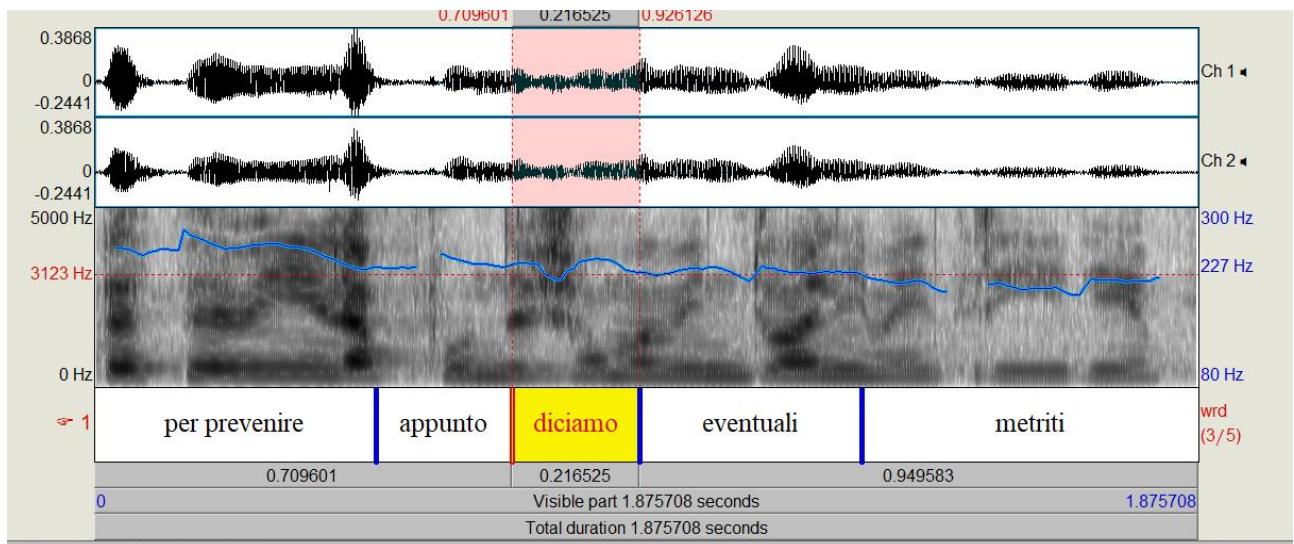
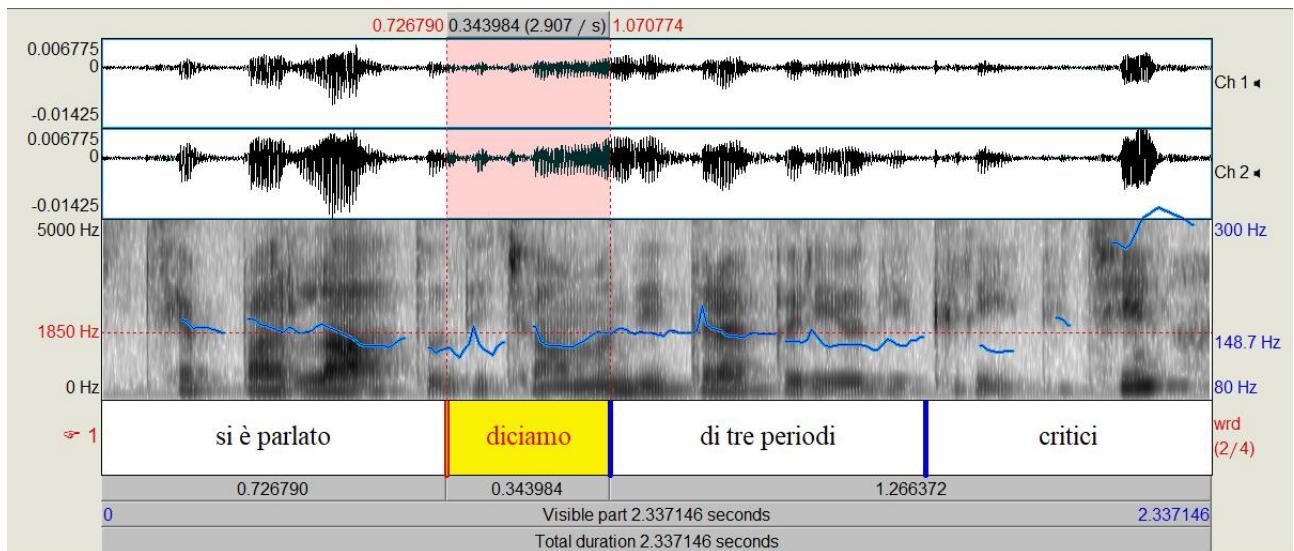


Figure 4. 6 TextGrid of the string 'si è parlato diciamo di tre periodi critici'



#### 4.3.3 Time for planning: uttering CCs to overcome the cognitive load

Due to the specific characteristics of talk-in-interaction, the speaker may also resort to CCs in order to take time for planning. By means of this strategy, “the speaker plays for time to think and delays or puts off the information that follows” (see the category of staller or delayer in González’s 2005: 64 taxonomy). As outlined by Bazzanella (1995: 235), markers used as fillers are employed not only when speakers are faced with problems regarding linguistic planning but also when they are required the task of searching for the most adequate lexical item (see Molinelli 2014: 495 with respect to the CC *non so* ‘I don’t know’).

The function under scrutiny is often mirrored the co-occurrence between the CCs at stake and markers of hesitation, long pauses, and/or false starts (see Section 2.2). Moreover, the function is often signalled prosodically by the lengthening of the one of the CC syllables. As shown in the Table, the function at hand is not equally distributed over the two Corpora:

**Table 4. 19** Time for planning CCs and position

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	31/294 (10,5%)	263/294 (89,4%)	294/1878 (15,6%)
CCs	diciamo (così), non so, voglio dire	diciamo, diciamo così, abbiamo detto, direi, noi diremmo, non so, sembra, vediamo (un po’), voglio dire	
Medial position in microsyntax	25/31 (80%)	154/213 (72%)	179/244 (73,3%)

**Table 4. 20** Percentage of co-occurrence between CCs and disfluency markers in the KIParla Corpus

Corpus	KIParla
% of co-occurrence (overall)	244/263 (92,7%)
Hesitation	120/244 (49,1%)
False starts	77/244 (31,5%)

The function is often express turn-medially, to the point that the markers under scrutiny may interrupt phrase-limited close relations. Moreover, it often co-occurs with hesitation phenomena typical of spoken interaction. These disfluency markers help the speaker cover the cognitive load which is typical of spoken interaction. Let us consider some examples:

- 4.83) RG\_BO053: ed e' una cosa che si sente per quanto io mi trovi bene,  
 RG\_BO053: e:: in famiglia e in casa pero':: ogni tanto senti un po' lo:: **diciamo** l'oppressione [...] (KIParla BOD2008)  
 RG\_BO053: and it's something I feel despite I get along well with my family at home but sometimes you feel a little bit the op- **let's say** the pressure
- 4.84) CC\_BO104: cioe', m:::h cambia il valor- la prova rimane:: **diciamo** la: si' la prova rimane la la stessa. i valutatori sono diversi, (KIParla BOC1005)  
 CC\_BO104: I mean mh it changes the val- the exam remains **let's say** the yes the exam remains the same. Only the reviewers are different
- 4.85) AN\_TO023: [si'] perche' il=e::h l- **diciamo** il common law eh=in precedenza era stato e:::h aveva preso piu' diciamo, e:::h  
 AN\_TO023: diciamo che m- era entrata in gioco la corte di equity, (KIParla TOC1007)  
 AN\_TO023: Yes because the eh th- **let us say** the common law eh previously had been eh had taken more **let's say** eh let's say that m- the Equity Court got into the game
- 4.86) EF\_TO070: tutte le note che ho a disposizione.  
 EF\_TO070: eh?  
 EF\_TO070: che pero':  
 EF\_TO070: n::el=e:::h=mh  
 EF\_TO070: **diciamo** vengono usate sette per volta. [...] (KIParla TOD1016)  
 EF\_TO070: All the musical notes I dispose of eh? That however in the eh mh **let us say** they are used seven at a time

The most frequent marker used with this function is *diciamo*, which is frequently placed in medial position along with other pause-fillers and stallers without any apparent (self-)repair or reformulation purpose (as happens in the cases of reformulation in terms of repair, see Section 4.2.3.2).

In these cases, the CC does not link a Segment1 (neither a false start nor truncation of the word) to a Segment2 as such (Beeching 2017: 185). In all the occurrences, the CC co-occurs with other disfluency markers: pauses, hesitation markers, false starts and mere repetitions. The value of the

CC is thus providing the speaker with time for planning. It seems that the process may help the speaker to overcome the cognitive load typical of spoken discourse production (Crible 2018).

For example, in (4.85), the CC *diciamo* is preceded by the false start *il* ‘the’ and the hesitation staller *eh*, which would encourage its interpretation as another hesitation or planning marker (see Crible 2018 for a comprehensive survey on disfluency markers across different registers in spoken French and English). The CC behaves like a marker that delays, puts off information, therefore helping the hearer to take time to think (see also category of ‘staller’ - Stenström 1994),

In example (4.86), there are three occurrences of disfluency phenomena, which are positioned utterance- or clause-initially. The CC *diciamo* is preceded by a long pause filled with *eh* and *mh*. Moreover, we can notice the false start *nel* (‘in the’), whose syllabic nucleus is rather lengthened. Therefore, the marker “could be argued to be purely another way of hesitating while planning what to say next.” (Beeching 2017: 186). In these cases, the speaker appeals to an understanding of the situation, or for help in the wording activity, which the hearer might be expected to supply (Beeching 2017: 98).

#### 4.4 Concluding remarks: local and global textual coherence in discourse

Summing up, the most attested textual functions (signalled through the acronym SEQ) are plotted below:

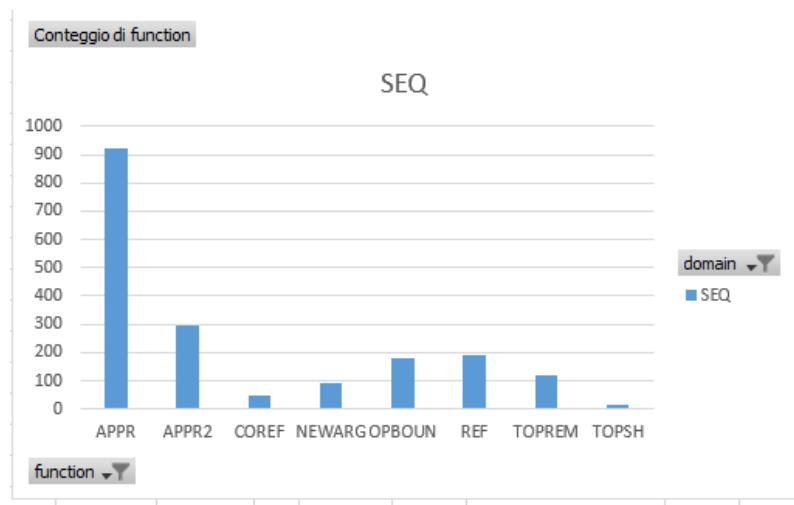
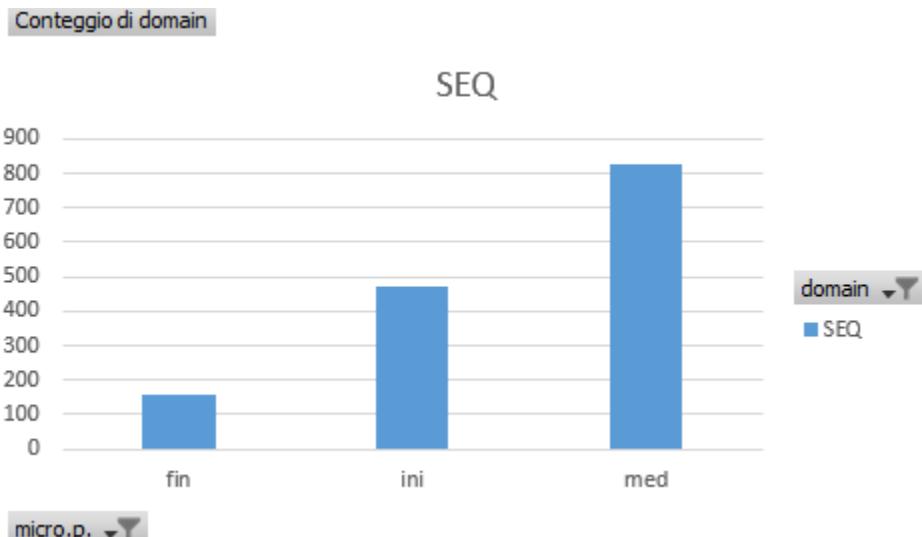


Figure 4. 7 Percentage of textual functions

The most frequent functions are approximation (APPR), time for planning (tagged as APPR2), followed by reformulation (REF) and opening boundary (OPBOUN). Approximation and reformulations are motivated in the need to on-line define and construe the contents the speaker has in mind in a coherent way. More globally, the function of opening boundary is connected to

signalling the discourse structuring of texts in a wider sense. Time for planning responds to the need to on-line planning. Therefore, it is the function best motivated in the contingency and prompt properties of speech production. An anticipated in Ch. 3), also the results discussed in this chapter show the necessity to invoke a constructional perspective. In fact, perceptual verbs - expected to play interpersonal functions - are recruited to play textual (sequential) functions, showing that they cannot be reduced to the role of attention-getters, or better, that attention-getting is a basic function in which one can identify different micro-functions. Such functions may be related to a notion of textual and argumentative attention. In this way, some of the textual functions are profoundly implicated in the sequential organization of turns and actions.

Moving now to distributional facts, textual CCs are the most frequently overall employed in **medial** position, as observed below:



**Figure 4. 8** Percentage of microsyntax (textual domain)

When performing the function of bushes being placed in medial position with the possibility to be prosodically integrated, they seem to be integrated on the propositional level: they behave as phrasic-level markers (see Hare 1970, later Schneider 2007a, b).

All in all, in this chapter, we attempted to analyse in depth the meaning of the label *meta-textual*: in fact, from macro-level functions structuring the text as a whole we arrived to analyse micro-functions acting on the process of wording. Broadly speaking, the textual dimension may be referred to words, arguments, exchanges, turns.



## Chapter 5. The functions of interpersonal domain

### Introduction to the chapter

In this chapter we will elaborate the discourse profile of those CCs that are used to convey interpersonal functions (Degand 2014: 151), that is, those functions referring to “the interactive management of the speaker-hearer relationship” (Crible 2018: 65). Let us consider the following quotation, which sheds light on the role of the interlocutor in each speech event:

in [...] self-expression in language there is no sharp distinction [...] between the self that is expressed and the expression of that self [...] there is no single unitary self, which is constant across all experience and, more especially, across all encounters with others, but rather a set of selves – not one persona, but a set of personae – each of which is the product of past encounters with others, including, crucially, past dialogic, interlocutionary and collocutionary (or conversational), encounters; [...] in short, [...] locutionary subjectivity is really interlocutionary subjectivity and in consequence, subjectivity, in so far as it is manifest in language [...] is really **intersubjectivity**<sup>123</sup>. (Lyons 1993: 14)

Notably, one of the main driving forces behind the speakers engaging in conversation is to socialise with one another and to share their stances and understandings of the phenomena surrounding them (Erman 2001: 1345). The domain addressed in this chapter refers to the text as the result of the joint enterprise with the interlocutor. In performing interpersonal functions, the hearer may be conceived as an active **participant** to the speech event contributing to the concrete elaboration and progression of the discourse, who performs functions such as attention-getting, monitoring/checking, or turn-giving (Brinton 2008), and as a **cognitive** agent with whom sharing / presupposing common ground, performing hedging, expressing (dis)agreement/(dis)alignment, insinuating (see category of ‘intersubjective inferences’ in Crible and Degand 2019; Brinton 2008: 17). Some examples of the CCs covering this pool of functions are listed below:

- 5.1) EG\_000: **senti** e quindi la tua casa ideale come sarebbe (KIParla, TOD2003)  
EG\_000: **Listen** so what would the house of your dream be like?
- 5.2) io pure penso questo **sai?** (Lip, RA5)  
I also think the same, **you know?**
- 5.3) ES\_TO071: perche' io **pensa** ho fatto l'iterz- ho fatto dialettologia e poi l'ho anche iterato, (KIParla, TOD2016)

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<sup>123</sup> Emphasis added.

ES\_TO071: Because I **think you** I had the ex- I had the exam of dialectology and then I had to take an additional exam on top of that one.

- 5.4) MS\_TO077: e: pero' **badate** anche in germania  
MS\_TO077: il di- il rapporto del nazionalsocialismo con l'esercito e' stato  
MS\_TO077: un rapporto molto complicato (KIParla, TOD1017)  
MS\_TO077: eh but **look out** even in Germany the d- the relationship of the National Socialism with the army has been a very complicated relationship
- 5.5) credo che bisognera' che io costringa ognuno a parlare un numero molto limitato di minuti se siete d'accordo **io direi** sei minuti (Lip, FD15)  
I think I'll have to have everyone talk for a very limited time if you agree, **I'd say** 6 mins.
- 5.6) a volte creano problemi anche agli altri **sa** li distraggono (Lip, RA9)  
Sometimes they also cause problems to others **you know** they distract them
- 5.7) questi utensili grazie a questa eh unita' di cottura portentose **pensate** li garantiamo a vita (Lip, NE10)  
These tools thanks to this portentous cooking unit **just figure it out** we guarantee them for life

As we will argue later, each of these CCs instructs the hearer to do specific “inferential computations” (cf. Grenoble 2004: 1956). For instance, in 5.1), the CC *senti* is used to recall the hearer’s attention. In 5.6), the CC *sa* is used to presuppose shared knowledge and alignment, in 5.3) and in 5.7) the CCs *pensa* and *pensate* (‘just figure out’) are employed to mark a given content as surprising to the interlocutor and so on (see Molinelli 2014: 202).

Before discussing the attested constructions and their functions (5.2), in 5.1.2 we will provide a working definition of the interpersonal domain after a brief review of the literature starting from the seminal works on the topic and comparing different definitions as developed out from the existing taxonomies on the function of DMs and on the functions of parentheticals.

Data supporting the outlined taxonomy will be discussed in Sections 5.2.1 through 5.2.3, in which we will make a distinction between those CCs referring to the hearer as a physical agent who joins the speech event (see the function of monitoring etc...), and those CCs referring to the hearer as a cognitive agent with whom the speaker shares knowledge and builds common ground.

The attested correlations will be analysed with respect to properties such as the CC position, the CC host mood, and the lexical semantics of its source. It will emerge that attention-getting is the most frequent function overall, followed by emphasis and checking. Syntactically speaking, the distribution of CCs often relies on the microsyntactic component, and the initial periphery is generally the preferred position, a fact which may be explained by the frequent occurrence of the attention-getting function. Indeed, other functions show more variety with respect to their distribution. However, we underline that also final position may be selected both on the micro and on the macrosyntactic component. Indeed, the analysis will point out that the intersubjective

functions such as emphasis are not only played in the right periphery as underlined in some works on DMs, in that the functions may also be *activated* on the basis of the type of the utterance hosting the CC (i.e., evaluative assessments, which activate a modal function - cf. 5.2.3.2.2). In serving interpersonal functions, the most frequent lexical predicates of CCs are perceptual verbs followed by semifactive verbs (see the functions of checking, shared knowledge but also emphasis as we will argue in 5.2.3.2.3). Moreover, the interpersonal domain may also be expressed through CCs stemming from assertive verbs, thus showing that no one-to-one mapping may be established between the lexical sources of the CC and the function it conveys in the context (cf. Chapter 6).

## 5.1 Towards a taxonomy: defining the functions of interpersonal domain

### 5.1.1 The interpersonal domain: what has been said

As anticipated in the introduction to this section, this chapter focuses on the domain that manifests the interactive management of the speaker-hearer relationship. We will seek to elucidate how we combined the reference to existing taxonomies with our research questions. In doing so, we will highlight that such pool of functions broadly corresponds to other well-known classifications theorized for the study of DMs functions.

Whereas the CCs analysed in Chapter 3) and in Chapter 4) are employed to make the speaker's subjective and textual stance explicit, the functions which will be addressed here refer to the following (bolded)

COMPONENT(S) DETERMINING THE SITUATION OF DISCOURSE defined for the study of parentheticals (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 865):

- Text organization (TO)
- Source of information (SI)
- Attitudes of the speaker (AS)
- **Speaker-hearer interaction (SHI)**
- Discourse setting (DS)
- World knowledge (WK)

The component SPEAKER-HEARER INTERACTION refers to the particulars of the speaker-hearer relations, a function which may be performed by parentheticals such as *if you don't mind me saying* or *I hate to tell you this*, but also by other expressions aiming at inducing the hearer to perform some action, as the parenthetical *don't forget!* (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 865)

The functions instantiating this component have been variously defined in the works on DMs functional taxonomies. In what follows, we will briefly survey the main taxonomies retrieved in the literature.

Starting from their seminal work on the components of language structure, according to Halliday and Hasan (1976: 26-27), the INTERPERSONAL COMPONENT is focused on the social, expressive and conative functions of language, i.e., the functions which convey the speaker's 'angle', her attitudes and judgements (or what Traugott 1982 calls "expressive"). Whereas the ideational component of language structure represents the speaker in his part as observer, the interpersonal component rather represents the speaker in his role as *intruder*. Therefore, the definition underlines the intersubjective reality of the interpersonal domain focused in this Chapter.

In a similar vein, interested in elaborating the DMs functions, Erman (2001: 1339) asserts that pragmatic markers target two main levels, that is, the textual/ideational level and the interpersonal level. Indeed, their basic functions are that of monitoring discourse and the activity of communicating (see Chapter 3 and 4), respectively - cf. Jakobson 1960; Halliday 1970; Brown and Yule 1983; Redeker 1990; Brinton 1996 *inter alia*). Erman recognises these two levels, or domains, as she prefers to define them, notably the discourse domain where markers function as textual monitors (see Chapter 4) and the social domain.

As SOCIAL MONITORS their core function is to negotiate the meaning and the management of the discourse and to guarantee that the channel is open between the interlocutors. The main function of the pragmatic markers functioning as social monitors is thus for the speaker to ascertain or elicit the addressee's involvement by calling for action on the hearer's part. Typical examples of social monitors are the tags (*wouldn't it, ok, right*). Tag questions with either rising or falling intonation, for example, bear assumptions about the certainty with which the speaker or the hearer is expected to have access to a given relevant piece of information (Jucker and Smith 1998: 171). CCs like the form *you know* in English have also been frequently subsumed under the head of social monitors.

Remarkably, another crucial function concerning the social/interpersonal domain is the speaker ensuring that the hearer reached an appropriate interpretation, or that the hearer agrees with the speaker's understanding of a given reference in the text. In this respect, the CC - as some of DMs identified by Erman (2001: 1340) - performs a comprehension-securing function (see Section 5.2.1.2). According to Erman (2001: 1345), markers in the social domain mainly involve the hearer.

"Can I butt into the conversation here?", 'You can go on speaking and I'm still listening', 'Could you listen to me, please', 'Excuse me could I say something', 'What do you think? You haven't said anything so far', 'Hang on I'm not finished yet', 'Can I get some response, please'. T. These are examples of what conversation management signals would look like if they were spelt out." (Erman 2001:1345)

However, this is rarely done directly. More often, in spoken discourse it is implicated or signalled in various indirect ways and/or through functional markers.

In González's taxonomy (2005: 58-59), the domain at stake partially refers to the category of INFERENTIAL COMPONENT, that is, the domain including those markers functioning as “inference facilitators and restrictors”. The component under scrutiny covers the functions of face-threat mitigation, presupposition, proximity, and monitoring. In other words, the inferential component markers are employed as interpretative cues. Indeed, they are recruited to link the text to the speaker and to the hearer's cognitive context and shared knowledge. Furthermore, these markers serve the purpose of helping the hearer constrain probable inferences and presuppositions to reach a better understanding of the content which is being conveyed.

More recently, in Molinelli's taxonomy on the difference between discourse and pragmatic markers (2014, 2015), the interpersonal domain includes her category of b) SOCIAL COHESION devices ('segnali di coesione sociale'), which regard i) the interaction between the participants, also taking into account ii) their social identity. Therefore, given that they are not primarily concerned with the textual architecture (see the category of *discourse* markers parallel to those CCs analysed in Chapter 4), they are specifically defined as pragmatic markers (as opposed to the category of 'discourse markers'). Furthermore, the domain at stake is likely to include markers referring to what Molinelli defines as markers of the (d) interactional context ('contesto interazionale'), which is aimed at making explicit the relationship between the speaker, the hearer and the context (contextual markers).

Similarly, Crible (2018: 65) and Crible and Degand (2019) define the domain as INTERPERSONAL (see the original definition of 'interpersonal component' elaborated by Halliday and Hasan) and subsume the following functions: monitoring, face-saving, agreeing, disagreeing, elliptical. The label 'interpersonal domain' is linked to the interactive management of the exchange. Indeed, interpersonal functions convey primarily a phatic function, in order to attract attention or to show understanding/agreement (Crible 2018: 248, cf. Brinton 2008).

As we will explain in the following paragraph, our work owes a considerable amount to the outlined functional taxonomies but adds new categories as required by the analysis of clausal parentheticals.

### **5.1.2 A working definition of the interpersonal domain**

As will become clearer, our definition of interpersonal domain owes much to Crible (2018), Crible and Degand (2019) taxonomy, from which we borrow 'checking' (which Crible 2018 terms 'monitoring'), 'negative politeness/attenuation' (see category of 'hedging'), and 'emphasis' (a

function similar to ‘agreeing’) functions. Additional functions are subsumed under our definition of interpersonal domain: attention-getting, shared knowledge, insinuation, and mirativity (see Brinton 2008: 18 on the interpersonal functions of CCs). Let us briefly explain the meaning of such functions, before analysing them in detail in the following paragraphs.

**Checking and response evoking** - CHECK / RESP checks for attention, in the form of an explicit appeal to the hearer. Concerning response evoking, the function is specifically placed turn-finally to recall a given answer. The former function, labelled as checking in our annotation protocol, conversely, may be performed turn-medially with the main (sometimes, exclusive) purpose of keeping the channel open and including the hearer in the speech production. Paraphrase: “You know what I mean? Isn’t it? don’t you?”

**Negative politeness/attenuation** - NEGPOL expresses deference, politeness in order to prevent face-threats. It is thus often retrieved in face-threatening contexts, such as in prefacing requests or questions (see category of ‘face-threat mitigation’ in González 2005). Paraphrase: “This is a sensitive topic, maybe, if you don’t mind/you could do p”.

**Emphasis** - EMP expresses a function of reinforcement of a given content, with the possible additional nuance of communicating alignment. Paraphrase: “really, without a doubt, trust me”.

**Attention-getting** - ATT is used to recall the speaker’s attention generally in occurrence with FTAs, that is requests or questions. These two acts call the hearer’s attention in order to get him to answer or to perform a given question or request. It does not manifest as a simple phatic function of monitoring aimed at checking that the channel is open. Rather, it introduces an act with the ultimate purpose of eliciting an answer or to make the hearer perform a given (concrete) task (see Stenström (1994: 39-40, 74) act of “Alert,”). Possible paraphrases: “listen to me, I have something important to ask you”.

**Sharing/presupposing knowledge** – KNOW is employed to indicate (presumed or actual) shared knowledge, which may be real or simply presupposed for secondary aims (such as politeness and deference). Possible paraphrases are: “as you (may) know, you may understand, so as you can understand/see”.

**Mirativity** - MIR it is the interpersonal counterpart of the speaker-oriented mirativity (see 3.2.2.4). It is used to mark a content as extraordinary. It does not convey newness of the information to the speaker (as the speaker-oriented function), but astonishment and unknown information, with the purpose of inviting the hearer to share the speaker’s amazement. The piece of information is in fact known to the speaker, and the focus is to get the hearer’s reaction of amazement. Possible paraphrase: “just imagine, that’s weird, that’s bizarre”.

## 5.2 From allocution to presupposing knowledge: defining the interpersonal domain

In the following sections, we will start from the discussion of the functions referring to the hearer as a **participant** to the speech event, who partakes to the text production and organisation, to finally address those functions referring to the hearer as a cognitive agent, who is endowed with knowledge which may be recalled, presupposed or merely evoked. The latter function specifically aims at making the speaker draw the expected inference(s) from the information contextually given by the speaker. This distinction mirrors the definition elaborated by Bazzanella in her attempt to capture all the functions of pragmatic markers as items “which are useful in locating the utterance in an **interpersonal**<sup>124</sup> and **interactive**<sup>125</sup> dimension, i.e., in connecting and structuring phrasal, inter-phrasal, and extra-phrasal elements in discourse, and in marking some on-going cognitive processes and attitudes<sup>126</sup>” (Bazzanella 2006: 456)

Before discussing the attested correlations, we will briefly summarise some general considerations pertaining to samples, frequency of functions, variety of attested sources and so forth.

**Table 5. 1 Percentage of interpersonal domain CCs**

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall
	304/1023 (29,7%)	719/1023 (70,2%)	1023/4123 (24,8%)

As shown in the following table, the most frequent functions are attention-getting, followed by emphasis and checking function<sup>127</sup>.

**Table 5. 2 Percentage of interpersonal domain functions**

Corpus	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Attention-getting</b>	85/304 (27,9%)	401/719 (55,7%)	486/1023 (47,5%)
<b>Checking/monitoring</b>	64/304 (21%)	80/719 (11,1%)	144/1023 (14%)
<b>Shared knowledge</b>	45/304 (14,8%)	51/719 (7%)	96/1023 (9,3%)
<b>Insinuating</b>	18/304 (5,9%)	6/719 (0,8%)	24/1023 (2,3%)
<b>Hedging</b>	20 /304 (6,5%)	19/719 (2,6%)	39/1023 (3,8%)
<b>Emphasis</b>	57/304 (18,5%)	128/719 (17,8%)	185/1023 (18%)
<b>Mirativity</b>	15/304 (4,9%)	34 /719 (4,7%)	49/1023 (4,7%)

<sup>124</sup> In the sense of cognitive agent (knowledge).

<sup>125</sup> In the sense of active participant physically speaking (action)

<sup>126</sup> My translation.

<sup>127</sup> As observed, there is a difference in the behaviour of the two samples with respect to the frequency of the interpersonal domain. However, we will not make statistical analysis for the moment. We will compare them when the sample of the KIParla Corpus will be extended.

In performing interpersonal functions, as expected, CCs stemming from perceptual sources are the most frequent ones. However, semifactive verbs are also employed with average frequency (see function of shared knowledge, for example or, to a certain extent, emphasis).

**Table 5. 3 Percentage of interpersonal domain CCs semantic sources**

Source	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Perceptual v.</b>	149/304 (49%)	516/719 (71,7%)	665/1023 (65%)
<b>Semifactive v.</b>	90/304 (29,6%)	134/719 (16,6%)	224/1023 (21,8%)
<b>V. dicendi</b>	46/304 (15,1%)	29/719 (4%)	75/1023 (7,3%)
<b>Assertive v.</b>	15/304 (4,9%)	38/719 (5,2%)	53/1023 (5,1%)
<b>Others</b>	4/304 (1,3%)	2/719 (0,2%)	6/1023 (0,5%)

The interpersonal functions are generally played on the level of microsyntactic component and, to a lesser extent, on the level of the macrosyntactic component:

**Table 5. 4 Percentage of microsyntax and of macrosyntax (interpersonal domain)**

Position	KIParla	Lip	Overall
Microsyntax	214/304 (70%)	521/719 (72,4%)	735/1023 (71,8%)
Macrosyntax	90/304 (29,6%)	198/719 (27,5%)	288/1023 (28,1%)

Regardless of the component being involved, the initial position is the preferred distribution of the CC under scrutiny, which, nonetheless, may also be placed on the right periphery (as typical of interpersonal functions – Beeching and Detges 2014):

**Table 5. 5 Percentage of microsyntax (interpersonal domain)**

Position (micro)	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Initial</b>	108/214 (50,4%)	337/521 (64,6%)	<b>445/735 (60,5%)<sup>128</sup></b>
<b>Medial</b>	33/214 (15,4%)	69/521 (13,2%)	102/735 (13,8)
<b>Final</b>	73/214 (34,1%)	115/521 (22%)	188/735 (25,5%)

**Table 5. 6 Percentage of macrosyntax (interpersonal domain)**

Position (macro)	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>Initial</b>	53/90 (58,8%)	127/198 (64,1%)	<b>180/288 (62,5%)</b>
<b>Final</b>	25/90 (27,7%)	46/198 (23,2%)	71/288 (24,6%)
<b>Medial</b>	12/90 (13,3%)	25/198 (12,6%)	37/288 (12,8%)

<sup>128</sup> Calculated on the overall of microsyntactic positions.

Given the inherently intersubjective behaviour of the CCs addressed in this chapter, as we expected, CCs are often placed on interrogations and other similar FTAs. However, along with often occurring in assertions, CCs are quite frequently placed in evaluative assessments, referring to the realm of speaker-hearer attitudes (see functions of mirativity, emphasis, attenuation).

**Table 5. 7 Frequency of CCs host mood**

CCs host mood	KIParla	Lip	Overall
<b>assertion</b>	156/304 (51,3%)	262/719 (36,4%)	418/1023 (40,8%)
<b>evaluative assessment / exclamation</b>	64/304 (21%)	161/719 (22,3%)	225/1023 (21,9%)
<b>imperative/question/request</b>	77/304 (25,3%)	261/719 (36,3%)	338/1023 (33%)
<b>other</b>	7/304 (2,3%)	35/719	42/1023 (4,1%)

### 5.2.1 Recalling and monitoring the hearer's attention

#### 5.2.1.1 Recalling the hearer's attention

As hearer-oriented markers, CCs may serve the purpose of making the relation with the interlocutor explicit by recalling his attention on some elements of the conversation. In the following table, we will provide some quantitative data on the frequency of the function, on the lexical semantics of the CCs source, and on the CCs host mood.

**Table 5. 8 Attention-getting CCs**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>%</b>	401/486 (82,5%)	85/486 (17,4%)	486 (47,4%)
<b>CCs</b>	ascolta/i/atemi/mi, ascolta, fai conto, guarda/te (un po'), guardate amici/qua/ un attimino/ un po'/ guardi ricordatevi, sa? Sai (?), senta (un po'), senti a me, senti un po', sentite, si ricordi (lei), vede, vede?, vedete, vedi, vedi?, voi guardate, voi pensate_	guarda/ate, guardi, senta, ascolta, fammi capì, notate, senta, senti, senti un po' sentiamo	

**Table 5. 9 Percentage of lexical semantics of the CC sources (attention-getting)**

Lexical semantics	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Perceptual v.</b>	391/401 (97,5%)	81/85 (95%)	472/486 (97,1%)
<b>Semifactive v.</b>	4/401 (0,9%)	3/85 (3,5%)	7/486 (1,4%)
<b>Others</b>	6/401 (1,5%)	1/85 (1,1%)	7/486 (1,4%)

**Table 5. 10 Percentage of CCs host moods (attention-getting)**

Host mood	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Assertion</b>	101/401 (25,1%)	35/85 (41,1%)	136/486 (27,4%)
<b>Evaluative assessment</b>	50/401 (12,4%)	3/85 (3,5%)	53/486 (10,9%)
<b>Question/imperative/request</b>	227/401 (56,6%)	45/85 (52,9%)	272/486 (55,9%)
<b>Other</b>	23/401 (5,7%)	2/85 (2,3%)	25/486 (5,1%)

**Table 5. 11 Percentage of initial position (attention-getting)**

Initial position	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Microsyntax</b>	264/286 (92,3%) <sup>129</sup>	56/62 (91,8%)	320/348 <sup>130</sup> (91,9%)
<b>Macrosyntax</b>	102/115 (88,6%)	23/23 (91,3)	125/138 (90,5%)

As shown in the tables above, the CCs conveying the function at issue often occur in initial microsyntactic position and are frequently hosted by FTAs, which may be interrogative speech acts or plain requests in the imperative or in the declarative mood. The preference for initial position mirrors the right-bounding of their function, that generally points to what follows (a request or an interrogation). Concerning the lexical semantics of the sources, the most frequent CCs conveying attention-getting functions are perceptual verbs (see Molinelli 2014, 2015, Ghezzi and Molinelli 2015, Fagard 2010 among many others), especially the CCs *guarda* and *senti*, as it can be seen in the following examples:

- 5.8) A: no papa' non c'e' che lo vuole? [...] A: ho capito **senta** può provare a chiamare in ufficio (Lip, RB9)  
A: No dad is not here. Do you want to talk to him? A: I see **listen** do you want to call him on the office phone?
- 5.9) CC\_BO104: va bene (.) **senti**, parliamo un attimo di valutazione. (KIParla, BOC1007)  
CC\_BO104: Well. **Listen** let's talk about evaluation
- 5.10) mette con un gileino senza problemi I: senza problemi **senti** abbiamo parlato di abbigliamento vogliamo eh riparlare e riconfermare di nuovo in questa occasione che questo negozio e' abbiamo detto eh la punta avanzata del Rifugio Sport (LIP, FD11)  
You can put this with a nice vest without problems I: without problems **listen** we talked about clothing we want to talk again and reconfirm again on this occasion that this store is the pioneer of the Rifugio Sport

The attention-getting meaning of the CC under scrutiny is strongly intersubjective. It typically occurs with the vocative in a specialised context (Brinton 2008), that is in the most leftward positional slot of the utterance, outside the dependency structure of the verb, and generally before a

<sup>129</sup> The value is calculated on the frequency of the attention-getting function.

<sup>130</sup> The denominator is the frequency of microsyntactic position.

specific request, which aims at directing the hearer's **ACTION**. In 5.9) and 5.10), the speaker prefacing the exhortation through the allocutive CC *senti*, which is proffered in order to recall the attention of the hearer to get the latter to perform a given task/action.

As underlined by Romero Trillo (1997: 207), speakers employ attention-getting markers when they perceive that they are not being heeded to or when they want to emphasise an important portion of a given utterance. Stenström (1994: 39-40, 74) classifies *look (now)* with the markers *heh* and *listen* as instances of the act of "Alert," that is, an act aimed at attracting the hearer's attention. Moreover, while not overtly dealing with *look*, Schiffrin (1987: 243) mentions *now look* as an instance of *now* in its function of focusing on the speaker's new action in contrast to the preceding content.

One of the most frequent markers with the function under scrutiny is the CC *guarda*. *Guarda* serves mainly an interpersonal function, meaning 'pay attention,' 'heed me,' or 'listen (up).' It appeals to the hearer to pay attention to, agree on the premise of ('believe me when I say...' as we will see in more detail below in 5.2.3.2), or to perform the action requested in the host utterance (see Brinton 2008: 186 for similar English *look*-forms). As observed, in performing the function under scrutiny, the CCs are often hosted by imperatives or imperative-like structures, which are used to get or to advise the hearer to do something, namely speech acts such as orders, suggestions, requests, prescriptions, appeals, etc. (see König and Siemund's 2007 taxonomy).

Notably, along with prefacing imperatives-like speech acts, the speaker may recall the hearer's attention in order to ask a **QUESTION** (Ghezzi and Molinelli 2015: 35). In fact, in some occurrences, the attention is recalled with the purpose of eliciting the audience involvement by calling for action on the part of the addressee (Erman 2001). In performing such a function, the CC often occurs with interrogatives. As recognised, interrogative sentences are typically employed for eliciting information, asking questions, introducing thoughts, etc. (König and Siemund 2007). Let us consider the examples below:

- 5.11) bene ho detto facciamo una chiamatina va A: mh mh **senti** il tuo fidanzato? (Lip, FE18)  
I said to myself, ok let's call him: OK let's call him A: mh mh **listen** and what about your boyfriend?
- 5.12) A: ecco va bene \* # mh va bene **senti** l'articolo? (Lip, FC6)  
OK well mh well **listen** what about the paper?

Although we tagged the functions at issue as instances of the attention-getting function prefacing interrogative utterances, it is worth underlining that when the CC host is an interrogation aimed at eliciting the speaker's knowledge (that is, not an action), the function is compatible with a textual/discursive dimension, specifically referring to the system of topics (see Molinelli 2014:

492). As it emerges in cases like the examples above in 5.12) and 5.13), the speaker abruptly interrupts her previous topic and recruits a marker typically used to recall the hearer's attention in order to introduce a topic-shift or resuming. Attention-getting is therefore **discursively** motivated, that is, it also concerns the architecture of the discourse in regulating the internal distribution of information in different parts (see the category of 'discourse regulators'). Nevertheless, given that in these cases the speaker's aim is eliciting an answer (devoted to change the trend of discourse), we decided to classify it as an interpersonal function, whose main goal is eliciting a shift in the focus of attention. Such compatibility with a textual function is clearer in the following example, in which the CC co-occurs with the typical textual marker *allora* 'so', marking a move in the textual architecture:

- 5.13) CP\_BO057: e **senti**, (.) allora:, (.) m:::h, (.) volevo chiederti,  
 CP\_BO057: hai sempre vissuto in quella casa, (.) oppure:  
 CP\_BO057: hai vis- (.) vivevi hai vissuto: in un'altra casa prima:: [di stare] qui? (KIParla, BOD2003)  
 CP\_BO057: And **listen** so mh I wanted to ask you have you always lived in that house or have you-did you live in another house before living here?

Although the function is inherently interactional, without taking into account the speaker's stance with respect to the truth value (see for example the approximation functions in which the CC functions like a bush<sup>131</sup>), the CCs performing the function at issue may happen to be prosodically integrated, as it can be observed in the following TextGrids, in which *senti* and *guarda* are shown to be prosodically integrated in the host utterances:

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<sup>131</sup> I.e., for which the prosodic integration could have been in a way justified by the semantic impact of the CC.

Figure 5. 1 Textgrid of the string 'senti e il parco della pellerina quanto dista?'

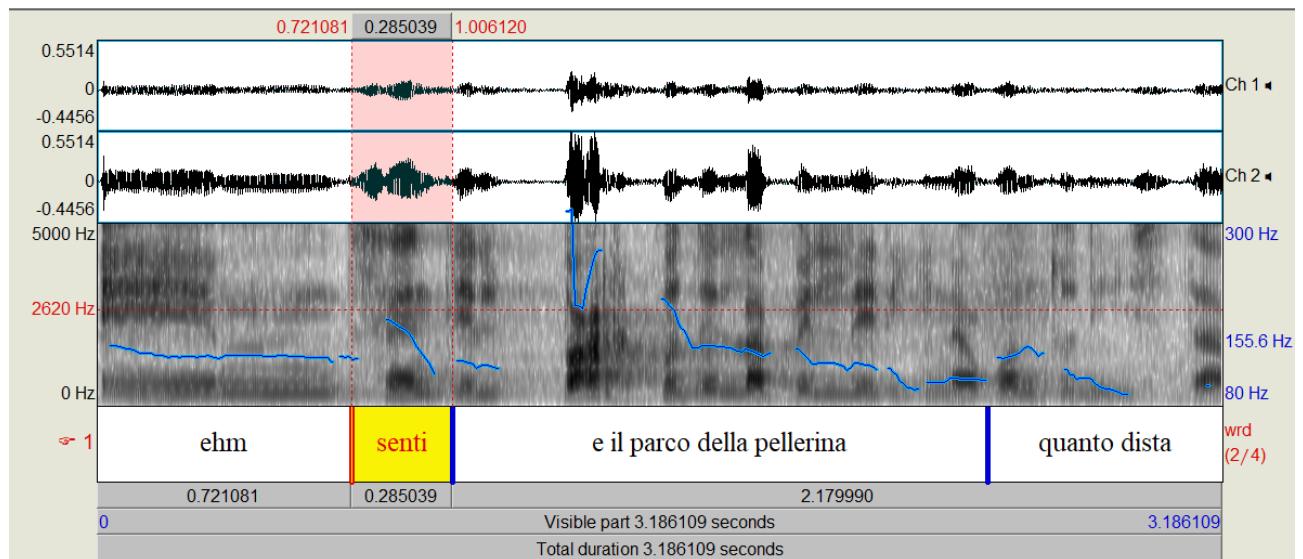
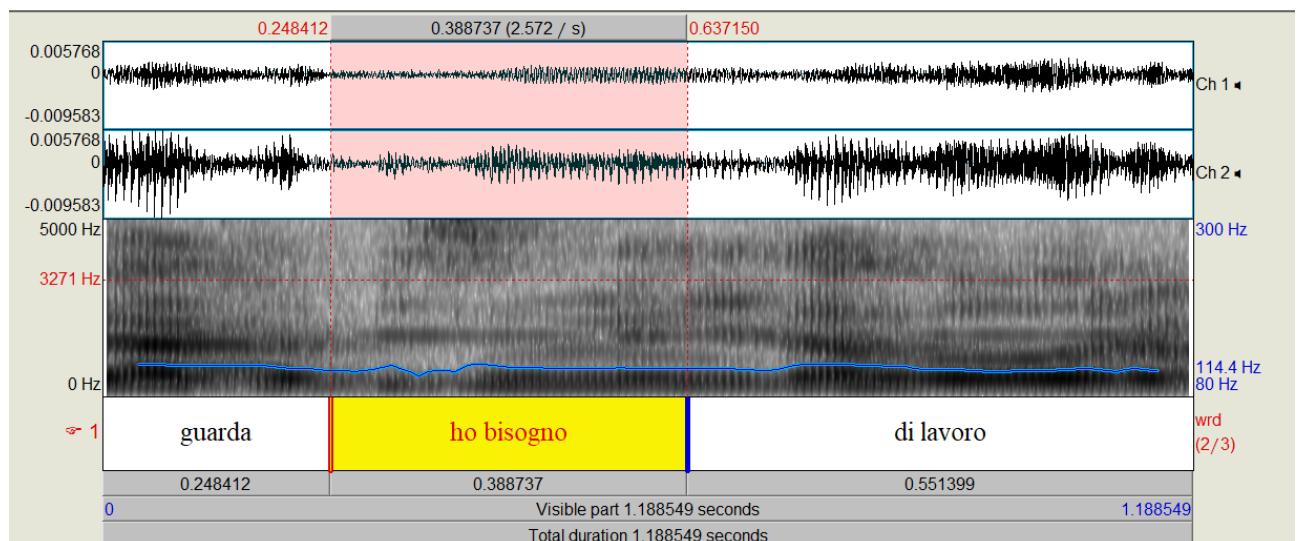


Figure 5. 2 Textgrid of the string 'guarda ho bisogno di lavoro'



We expected truth-value functions to be prosodically integrated in that they affect the propositional content (see Chapter 3). Notwithstanding, also those CCs acting on the global situation of discourse may happen to be prosodically integrated with respect to the host utterance.

### 5.2.1.2 Monitoring and eliciting a reply

The speaker may also recall the interlocutor's attention in order to serve a monitoring function aimed at checking the hearer's comprehension. In other words, a CC with a checking function is used to ascertain that the interlocutor comprehended the references made in the text (Molinelli 2014: 496 on such functions performed by the item *sai* 'you know').

More specifically, in this paragraph we elaborate i) the function of the CC when used to keep the channel open, that is to monitor the hearer's involvement to the speech event (**checking**), and ii) the function placed turn-finally (**response-evoking/monitoring**), which is used as a securing mechanism (Beeching 2017).

It is worth underlining that, despite being intertwined, the functions at issue are slightly variant. The CCs under scrutiny may express a genuine information- or confirmation-seeking request eliciting a response by the addressee. However, they may also serve other interactional functions. More specifically, as proper requests for information (or confirmation), they are employed to invite the hearer's response to the statement with which they co-occur. Typically, in these uses, they are uttered with rising intonation if the hearer is going to decide the truth of the proposition (genuine question). Therefore, the statement to which the tag is appended gains the character of an assumption (for which the speaker may nonetheless have strong evidence). The speaker elicits validation of a statement to which she is not fully committed. Hence, she attributes epistemic responsibility to the hearer (Haselow 2016: 94).

Nevertheless, the CCs under scrutiny are not always employed to elicit a response. Rather, they often merely imply the hearer's consent, marking a statement as already agreeing with the addressee's opinion, on the basis of assumed shared knowledge (Haselow 2016: 94). In these so-called "facilitative uses" (Holmes 1983; Tottie and Hoffmann 2009: 146), the speaker is committed to the truth of the proposition at stake and the marker only marks a particular expectation on the part of the hearer, namely that he is expected to agree. In other words, a response by hearer is not essential for negotiating the validity of a certain proposition. Those CCs performing such function facilitate interaction in that they offer the hearer to take part in ongoing interaction by eliciting a minimal affirmative feedback (e.g. *hmm, yeah*). In other words, they invite the hearer to scarcely contribute to the discourse (Haselow 2016: 94). Let us start by providing some data on the function at issue.

**Table 5. 12** Checking CCs

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	80/144 (55,5%)	64 (44,4%)	144 (14%)
CCs	avete capito?, capisci?, dicevi?, dici, dici?, diciamo, ha capito?, ha', capito? hai capi', hai capito (?), hai visto, immagino (?), io penso, lei dice?, mi capisci,	vi ricordate?, capisce?, capite?, dici, dici?, dite, dite?, ha capi-, ha(i) capi', immagino, lei dice (?), mi pare? Vedete (?)	

	mi pare?, mi sembra, non so, oseremmo dire?, pensiamo, sai (?), si ricorda?, suppongo?, ti ricordi? tu dici (?), vede?, vedete?, vedi?, vediamo un po'		
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Table 5. 13 Percentage of final position in microsyntax and in macrosyntax (checking function)

Final position	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Microsyntactic	56/67 <sup>132</sup> (83,5%)	41/48 (85,4%)	97/115 (84,3%)
Macrosyntactic	10/13 (76,9%)	8/16 (50%)	18/29 (62%)

Table 5. 14 Percentage of lexical semantics of the CCs sources (checking function)

Lexical semantics	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Semifactive v.	55/80 (68,5%)	31/64 (48,4%)	86/144 (59,7%)
Perceptual v.	9/80 (11,2%)	16/64 (25%)	25/144 (17,3%)

From the tables above, we can see that:

The most frequent lexical sources are semifactive verbs (mainly the semifactive, cognitive verb *capire* ‘to understand’), often placed turn-finally, that is the ideal locus to relinquish the message and to elect the hearer as potential actor of the ensuing discourse.

Let us start by analysing some examples:

- 5.14) B: sabato primo maggio non lavori **immagino** A: il due sì (Lip RB8)  
B: On Saturday the 1st of May you don't work **I guess**. A: On the 2nd of May yes, I work
- 5.15) A: giel'hai dato a quelli di seconda **suppongo** B: no (Lip, FA2)  
A: You gave it to your second-year students, **I suppose** B: no, I did not
- 5.16) GG\_BO095: pero' [non ci sono mai stata]- e'::: una traversa di via zamboni **mi pa[re?]** (KIParla, BOA3012)  
GG\_BO095: But I have never been there it is a side street of Zamboni Street **it seems to me?**

In the conversation management typical of spoken discourse, the CCs may be used with both a turn-taking and a **turn-yielding function** (Molinelli 2014: 491, 496 on the discourse and pragmatic function of the forms derived from *sapere* ‘to know’, this paragraph focussing on the latter). As we can see in the examples 5.14) through 5.16), CCs arising from different lexical semantic sources are recruited to fulfil the interpersonal function at issue, that is to relinquish the turn and to elect the

<sup>132</sup> The frequency is calculated on the total of microsyntactic positions in the Lip and so forth.

hearer as the carrier of the ensuing message (Beeching 2017: 211). Such examples clearly exemplify the constructional meaning of our study (cf. Fischer 2010). In fact, the syntactic position of the CC and its intonation imply the CC's interpersonal meaning aimed at recalling the hearer's answer, beyond or along with expressing an epistemic function of commitment modulation (cf. Degand 2014: 158 on the meaningfulness of the position of the functional markers).

More specifically, the CCs of the type here investigated communicate that the speaker's uncertainty should be dismissed by the hearer's answer. Their meaning can also be confirmed further through the occurrence of the hearer's response after the utterance of the CCs at stake. Therefore, we may notice that the hearer understands that an answer is implicitly demanded, beyond the bare interlocutor's epistemic supposing (see the employment of epistemic and cognitive predicates whose main function is expressing the speaker's epistemic and evidential stance, such as *pensare* 'to think', *sapere* 'to know'). The function of the CC is thus primarily interpersonal, but - as recognised by Molinelli (2014: 496) - also partially textual/discursive in that it indexes the text-construction and textual/regulation mechanisms. Generally speaking, when they express the request of agreement/feedback, the CC (as other DMs) is often placed at the end of the utterance, properly because it is used with the purpose of giving the turn to the hearer, thus inducing him to express his agreement or (as our data suggest) his feedback according to the speaker's expectations (Molinelli 2014: 496).

In a similar vein, in her survey on epistemic stance in American English, Kärkkäinen (2003) suggests that the epistemic item *I think* has undergone a process of grammaticalization to a discourse marker with discourse-organising function along with variable degrees of semantic transparency. In fact, some occurrences are prosodically stressed and are claimed to express the speaker's epistemic stance. Conversely, in other cases, an expression of stance is hardly present, and the discourse organising function turns out to be primary. She observes that these cases tend to be prosodically unstressed and phonetically reduced (see Dehé and Wichmann 2010a: 38).

Yet, as anticipated in the introduction to this chapter, according to Erman (2001: 1340), another main function pertaining to the social domain is the speaker's ascertain that the hearer has correctly understood the specific references the speaker made in the text. This function may be referred to as 'comprehension-securing' (cf. Erman 2001: 1346; Molinelli 2014: 496), a function we defined as **checking**.

In identifying the functions of the DM *you know*, Biber et al. (1999) note that the marker may happen to be used by the speaker's with the aim of monitoring of the hearer's attention to what she is saying, thus being semantically weak. In other words, in that case, the CC behaves as a sort of unanalysable chunk characterised by positional mobility, which, nonetheless, does not affect its

meaning (Fitzmaurice 2004: 437). In our data, this function is often performed by the CC *hai/avete capito* when used as an unanalysable whole, which is simply uttered to keep the channel open and, possible, to take time for planning, as in the following examples:

- 5.17) c'ho paura di potrei creare un pro problema **hai capito** facendo chiedere questo (Lip, NB7)  
I'm afraid I might create a pro- problem **you understand** by making people ask this

- 5.18) GC\_BO094: e' vero che l'esistenziale diventa universale ma non e' detto qui e' un quantificatore portato pri:ma del non.

GC\_BO094: **capite?**

GC\_BO094: o::h andiamo avanti (KIParla, BOD1005)

GC\_BO094: It is true that the existential quantifier becomes universal quantifier but it is not said here it is a quantifier (when) put before the 'not'

GC\_BO094: **Do you understand?**

GC\_BO094: o::h let's move on

Whereas in some examples the speaker really expects a reply by the hearer, in this function, throughout an interrogative CC is used - whose utterance seems to implicitly recall a response -, sometimes the speaker's aim is simply keeping the channel open, by monitoring the hearer's attentiveness (phatic function). As noticed by Haselow (2016: 94) with respect to the function of tags, some CCs are ambiguous between eliciting a genuine question, a mere invitation for validation, and a rhetorical device with the same speaker keeping on her turn in a specific move. In other words, the speaker does not produce evidence for giving space to the hearer (for example, producing a pause or concluding her turn), as happens in 5.17), a context in which the CC occurs in between the main and the subordinate clause. It therefore functions as a mere form of address inviting for a minimal contribution to ongoing talk, where the opportunity for the hearer to answer is very limited (Haselow 2016: 94). We are thus faced with a routine typical of conversational moves. The marker is more oriented towards the activity of communicating, making sure that the channel is open between the participants (Erman 2001: 1356), rather than really invoking the hearer's response.

In these cases, the speaker utters the CC in order to include the hearer into her discourse (see the notion of social cohesion in Molinelli 2014). He does not really expect a concrete feedback or answer. In her study on the DMs relative to agreement and reception, Fiorentini (2017: 54) notices that a similar marker frequently used in Italian is the DM *no?* (corresponding to the English question tag *isn't it?*), which is used both with request of agreement and confirmation "with the purpose of verifying the correct reception of the utterance from the hearer<sup>133</sup>" - Bazzanella 1994: 155), and with a phatic function aimed at recalling attention and request of understanding (Poggi 1995: 425). In

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<sup>133</sup> My translation.

this regard, as recognised by Fiorentini, the marker does not necessarily mark turn-yielding. Rather, it may occur parenthetically and turn-medially in order to ask for agreement.

According to Ghezzi (2013: 95), building on Diessel's remarks, these strategies carry intersubjective meanings, since they are employed by the speaker with the goal of negotiating the tracking of referents with the interlocutor in discourse. In turn, the operation is aimed at ensuring joint attentional focus (Breban 2010; Carlier & De Mulder 2010). Conversely, in examples (5.17) and (5.18), the CCs function perhaps exclusively to keep the interaction between the speakers on the go. They thus function as facilitators of interaction (Fitzmaurice 2004: 431), manifesting the intersubjective aspect of communication. The CCs are thus used as cues that assist the interlocutors in the on-line recognition of common ground and facilitate the incessant adaptation of their language to it (Jucker and Smith 1998: 171).

Whereas so far we have considered those functions pertaining to the hearer as a physical participant joining concretely the speech event (inherently interactive functions), in the following sections we will address those interactional functions referring to the hearer as a **cognitive agent** (interpersonal/intersubjective functions pertaining to the cognitive sphere) with whom the hearer may presuppose or evoke knowledge<sup>134</sup> for varying needs.

## 5.2.2 Towards the hearer's status of knowledge: presupposing, sharing, evoking knowledge

### 5.2.2.1 Presupposing/appealing to shared knowledge

In the production of discourse, the hearer may be recalled not only as a physical agent compelled to join the speech event. Rather, in the course of interaction, the speaker may refer to the hearer's knowledge by assuming that the latter possesses the information she refers to<sup>135</sup>. A given CC may be then employed to contribute to the speaker's argument by referring to the piece of shared information which has been established in the previous discourse or which belongs to the system of encyclopaedic knowledge the interlocutors share (see Aijmer 2013: 96 on the modal meaning of *of course*). The CCs that we will investigate here refer to assumed mutual understanding and express supposed plausibility (Haselow 2016: 80).

In what follows, we will discuss the function at issue, by distinguishing between minimal nuances. More specifically, in section 5.2.2.1.1 we will deal with the function of **sharing/presupposing** knowledge, that is knowledge which is assumed to be part of the speakers'

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<sup>134</sup> Less (concrete) perceptual and more cognitive dimension.

<sup>135</sup> Lambrecht (1994: 52) defines pragmatic presupposition as follows: "The set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered."

common ground, whereby being referred to in discourse as accessible. As we will see, the function under scrutiny may also be mobilised to perform an operation of co-construction of the reference through the hearer's involvement and specifically through the hearer's competence and knowledge (appeal to frames, shared information made active in the co-text or retrieved in the long-term memory, and so on). In section 5.2.2.1.2, we will analyse the function of **creating** common ground, which is used by the speaker to include the interlocutor, with a possible aim of attaining intimacy.

### 5.2.2.1.1 Appealing to shared knowledge

Let us start from the previous function, namely the function of appealing to shared knowledge. In what follows we provide some information on the CCs which are recruited with the function at issue, and with respect to their source and their position.

**Table 5. 15** *Sharing knowledge CCs*

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	51/96 (53,1%)	45/96 (46,8%)	96 /1023 (9,3%)
CCs	capirai ', dici?, hai capito, lei capisce, ricordate, ricordiamo un attimo_ anche per i non addetti ai lavori, sa, sai, sapete, sappiamo benissimo, vedi, vediamo, vi ricordate, vi ricordiamo, voi sapete	hai capito, sai, sapete benissimo, sappiamo, ti rendi conto, vedete, vi ricordate, voi capite, voi sapete	

**Table 5. 16** *Percentage of CCs deriving from semifactive verbs (sharing knowledge CCs)*

Lexical semantics	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Semifactive v.	40/51 (78,4%)	42/45 (93,3%)	82/96 (85,4%)

Typical instances of the function at stake are illustrated below. We will start by analysing examples of reference to shared knowledge, whose accessibility is signalled by some linguistic cues, such as definite articles (Prince 1981; Jucker 1992), use of proper names in diverse forms, pronouns, or the amount of elaboration of a given noun phrase, which all convey assumptions about the hearer's ability to identify the referent (or piece of information) the speaker refers to.

First, the CC may introduce expressions endowed with single reference such as proper nouns or definite expressions, which are accessible thanks to specific semantic properties of the referent they

point to (Andorno 2005: 42), as in the following examples, in which the speaker refers to as part of the common ground with the hearer some specific, single, inherently accessible referents:

- 5.19) sembrava **sai** scar quello di- del re leone, (KIParla, TOA3003)  
he looked like **you know** Scar, the character of- of the Lion King
- 5.20) B: ahah ma li' e' una cosa e' un ufficio su due piani un sacco di dipendenti A: e' anche giovane forse  
B: si' **sai** e' figlio di notaio non e' che non faccia A: si' si' lo so (Lip, FA10)  
B: ahah but there it is a huge deal it is an office on two floors (he has) a lot of employees A: he's also young maybe B: yeah **you know** he is son of notary he won't have problems A: yes I know

In such examples, the speaker makes explicit that she can count on the shared knowledge expressed in the CC host through the CC *sai* ('you know', *sabes* - Schneider 2007,a, b; Molinelli 2014: 496). In 5.19) the speaker refers to Scar, the famous character of the "The Lion King". The referent is inherently identifiable and as such it is part of the common ground. In 5.20), in a similar vein, B refers to a person whom both know, who is inherently identifiable. By using the CC *sai*, the speaker not only presupposes but asserts the hearer's knowledge/comprehension as shared between the interlocutors (Brinton 2008: 160 on the CC *you see*). These uses recall the English utterance-final *you know* with falling intonation, which implies that the proposition that it co-occurs with "is so self-evidently the case, that no argument can be raised against it". This employment of *you know* is a powerful rhetorical tool and can be defined as "impositional" (see Beeching 2017: 10; see also Sebba and Tate 1986). Referring to such utterance-final occurrences of *y'know* in English, Schiffri (1987: 275, 276), proposes to call them "markers of consensual truths", which often occur in the context of tautologies like 'A bastard's a bastard regardless *y'know*' (Beeching 2017: 103). Basically, the function at issue enjoins the hearer to share the speaker's opinions (Beeching 2017: 97). Amongst their many functions, the core meaning of the CCs at stake might be said to **create common ground between speakers**, thus reducing (or contributing to reduce) their social distance. All over such occurrences, the common ground is linguistically signalled through the communicated accessibility of the referents, which is made possible (also) by a pragmatic component, that is to the availability in the shared universe of the speakers of a series of piece of knowledge (cf. Levelt 1989).

In 5.20), what the speakers share is not merely the knowledge of the referent under examination, but also some general assumptions with regard to the shared knowledge of social implications - locally decodable social rules that are available to any member of a community (Vincent 2005: 201). Moreover, the point of the speaker's marking through the CC *sai* is to try more aggressively to get the hearer to accept not only the direct content of the message but also, as recognised by Jucker and Smith (1998: 195), its implications for the speaker's perspective: your father is a lawyer and you are a lawyer, then you will not have difficulties finding a job in that industry.

However, the speaker may also refer not specifically to a referent or experience the speakers both know (that is, to inherently identifiable referents), but to highly accessible knowledge, which can be explained through the reference to a given frame or to the hearer's long term knowledge (Chafe 1987):

- 5.21) CG\_TO059: e quindi lei e' rimasta traumatizzata da: m:::h un giorno:: (e il lo) il giorno della befana l'epifania,  
 CG\_TO059: no **sai** la befana scende dal cami: no tutte 'ste cose (KIParla TOD2014)  
 CG\_TO059: and then she was traumatized by mh a day and the- the on the day of the Epiphany,  
 CG\_TO059: no **you know** the Epiphany comes off the fireplace all these things
  
- 5.22) uno se ne va' proprio senza che stai a consegna' almeno non lasci le tracce A: no due ore la' cosi' B:  
 tanto gia' sarebbe tornato a casa da un pezzo quindi per lo meno senti una cosa A: magari **sai** la speranza di copiare all'ultimo (Lip, RB3)  
 (when one has not prepared for the exam) one leaves without delivering the paper at least they won't leave traces A: no two hours spent there without a reason B: he would have come home a long time so at least listen to me now A: maybe **you know** (he did not leave because he believed in) the hope of cheating off until the last

In these occurrences, we can notice that the speaker utters some definite forms to mark the information as shared (total or partial) knowledge or common ground (cf. Prince 1981; Jucker 1992). More specifically, the expressions in the scope of the CC are signalled by means of definiteness devices, which mark the accessibility of the information. This piece of information is given as such because the speaker nominates some referent whose utterance immediately activates a given frame, which contributes to identify the expression in the scope of the CC as accessible to the hearer and, from hence, as belonging to their common ground.

For instance, in 5.22), given that the participants are mates, the referent in the scope of the CC 'the hope of cheating off until the last (during an examination)' is encoded as definite. It may be argued that it is presented as inherently identifiable given that the interlocutors share the context of the classroom (Andorno 2005: 37). Furthermore, in 5.21) the utterance of the lexeme *epifania* ('Epiphany') activates a frame which makes the ensuing content in the scope of the CC as accessible and therefore as part of the common ground (a meaning also signalled by the utterance of the general extender *tutte ste cose* 'all this stuff', which alludes to a category presumed to be shared). The same happens in the following examples, in which the expression in the scope of the CC is marked as identifiable to the hearer by means of the modifiers *quelle, quei* 'those'.

- 5.23) CM\_TO029: [si', no ma io, si' esatto.] devo mettere robe. soltanto che avrei voluto magari leggere qualcosa per=eh (.) inserire::: **sai** quelle classiche citazioni,  
 CM\_TO029: ne per pe- [beh per dire che non mi sono inventa- (KIParla, TOA3002)  
 CM\_TO029: yes, no, but I, yes. I have to put that stuff. The fact is that I would have needed to maybe read something for eh adding **you know** those classic quotes,

CM\_TO029: to-to say that I have not invented I have not made anything up (in the thesis)

- 5.24) MM\_TO084: invece ho: paura::,

[...]

MM\_TO084: paura di avere: che ne so di rimanere da sola: (.) di sentire **sai** quei rumori , (KIParla, TOD2004)

MM\_TO084: rather I fear::, [...] fear of having what do I know about being alone: (.) to hear **you know** those noises,

The notion of frame is crucial also to understand the meaning of the following occurrences, in which the CC is hosted by a set of sentences, thus contributing to instantiate the frame or script of WRITING A THESIS (finding references, consulting different sources, writing the summary, etc...):

- 5.25) CM\_TO029: no, il contatto con le perso:[ne, e: com'e' na]ta l'idea della ricerca, eccetera. pero'. ho tipo un libro di metodologia, che e' un manuale. allora mi sono presa male che magari avrei dovuto scrivere: (.) qualcosa tipo **sai**

LC\_TO035: [si' si' si']

CM\_TO029: co[me:: come ha] fatto tal dei tali oppure:: in accordo col metodo di sticazzi.  
(KIParla, TOA3002)

CM\_TO029: no, I mean the contact with the people, and: how the idea of research emerged, etc. But I kind of have a book of methodology, which is a handbook so I felt bad that maybe I should have written: (.) something like **you know**

LC\_TO035: yes yes yes

CM\_TO029: as made by So and So or according to the method of what the hell.

Before concluding the section, we underline that the speaker may also presuppose shared knowledge, which is retrieved from the long-term memory (non-active in Chafe's 1987 terminology). It may be recalled by the speaker to invite the hearer to co-construe the reference. In this case, the hearer does not seem to precisely know the referent itself. Rather, the speaker appeals to the ability of the hearer to identify some properties the speaker is uttering to describe the target referent. Therefore, in such cases, the CC functions as a means of inviting the hearer to contribute his own knowledge to the argument being dealt with (Jucker and Smith 1998: 195, 196):

- 5.26) KG\_BO113: si toglie il casco, **sai**

KG\_BO113: capello lungo::, con la coda::, orecchino:, (.) un po': sulla trentacinque anni. una cosa del genere.. (KIParla, BOD2014)

KG\_BO113: He takes off his helmet, **you know** long hair, in a pony tail, earring, (.) roughly 35. something like that.

The speaker uttering 5.26) is construing the reference and describing a given person, who is surely not known by the hearer. Notwithstanding, she appeals to the hearer general knowledge to i) make him understand the type of person she is describing, properly ii) by appealing to the hearer's long-term knowledge. In fact, as recognised by Jucker and Smith (1998), in cases of presumed

common ground, the source of the inferences the hearer is asked to derive is not necessarily the same in all cases. It may come from previous text (see 5.21)-5.25)) or from presumed earlier experiences. Additionally, in these cases, the speaker recalls the hearer to participate in the reference construction, even if the referent they are talking about is not shared at all. The same happens in the following examples, in which what is presupposed is not the knowledge of the referent they are dealing with, but the property on which they are focussing in order to describe that given referent. Therefore, what is shared is the quality of the referent in a process of on-line co-construing of the meaning in interaction:

- 5.27) AB\_BO002: poi si doveva andare, (.) in piscina insie:me. [(.) con] la sofia e lui.

[...]

AB\_BO002: [che (.)] si' a una piscina [tipo sa]i comu[na:le] (KIParla, BOA3001)

AB\_BO002: Then we were supposed to go the swimming pool together with Sofia and him. Yeah to one of those pools like **you know** communal

- 5.28) MC\_BO086: cioe' non che dici, vabbe' era un po', **sai** in aria no? (KIParla, BOA3015)

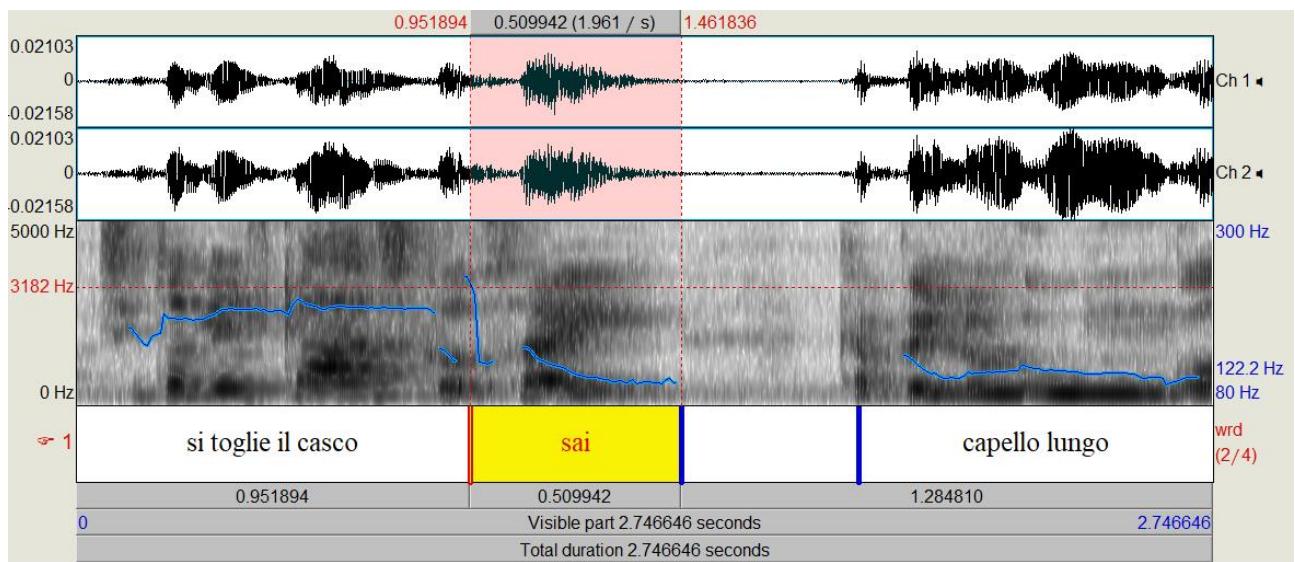
MC\_BO086: I mean it was not the case you can say OK he was kind of **you know** an airy-fairy person, you know?

In 5.27) the speaker is referring to a singular, un-specific referent (Andorno 2005: 31). What she gives as accessible - and therefore part of the common ground the CCs recalls - is the knowledge of the property ('communal'). Hence, implicitly the hearer is required to actively adding the property to the unknown referent to reach an optimal interpretation. In these cases, the CC behaves like an addressee-centered marker, which is mobilised to signal the speaker's assessment of how her information may be connected to the hearer's cognitive environment to reach an optimal interpretation (Jucker and Smith 1998: 172).

In these occurrences, it appears that the speaker believes the addressee can figure out the reference she is about to construe by directly appealing to her knowledge, both when the interlocutors actually share the referent(s) under scrutiny and when they share an intermediate piece of evidence, which is nevertheless crucial to co-construe such reference. The speaker is appealing to the addressee, not for patience, but for contribution in the construction of the argument at stake (Jucker and Smith 1998: 197). In this way, she invites and allows the partner to contribute his own knowledge and reasoning to the argument being made (strictly intersubjective function).

Before moving to the discussion of the function of sharing knowledge, let us have a look at a TextGrid plotting the behaviour of the CC *sai*.

Figure 5.3 Textgrid of the string 'sai capello lungo'



The CC *sai* is prosodically left-bounded. In fact, despite a pause occurs in between *sai* and the ensuing content (*capello lungo* ‘long hair’ and so on), no pause seems to occur in between the preceding discourse and the CC. In fact, the words *casco* (‘helmet’) and the CC *sai* (‘you know’) are produced without any interruption in the flow. Along with CCs whose prosody has been studied in depth (*I think* etc.), even interpersonal CCs may be integrated showing their important role also with respect to functions which are not placed on the truth-value level. They do not seem to constitute a disfluency problem. Rather, they function as facilitators, to adopt an interpersonal function mobilised to co-construe the given reference.

#### 5.2.2.1.2 Presupposing shared knowledge

The CCs at stake may be recruited to create fictive common ground. In fact, the speaker may happen to pretend shared knowledge with the purpose of gaining intimacy (Östman 1981, and later on, Beeching 2017: 98 on the English CC *you know*). In other words, the speaker does not suggest that she intends the hearer to accept the truth of her proposition. Rather, she wants the hearer to presuppose the tenability of what she is uttering. When employing *you know*, the speaker usually has an aim beyond the mere partaking in a conversation. Furthermore, *you know* presupposes, or implies that the propositional content already is a fact, and implicitly asks whether the hearer “is willing to collaborate on that basis” (Östman 1981: 18, 36).

As noticed with respect to the CC in English *y’know*, *sai sapete* as markers of ‘consensual truths’ occur not only with formulaic expressions and tautologies, but also with general descriptions (e.g. of situations, states, events). Arguably, speakers often use general descriptions to support their more

specific claims and to gain their hearers' endorsement of those claims (Beeching 2017: 103), as happens in the following utterance:

- 5.29) LA\_TO069: vai a confrontare e **ti rendi conto**, ci so' salti di righe, ci so::no:: paro:le: capite male, (KIParla, TOD1015)  
LA\_TO069: you go and compare and **you realise**, there are line jumps, there are misunderstood words
- 5.30) eh per cui anche qua insomma lei **hai capito** si permette di rifiutarsi di fare delle cose per cui io mi sono incavolata terribilmente (Lip, FB12)  
eh so even here she **you understand** allows herself to refuse to do things. Hence, I got angry

A literal interpretation of the use of *you realise*/*you understand* in the passages above would be taken to mean that the speaker was reminding that the hearer already knew the information being provided. However, in this case, as in many of our data, there is good reason to believe that the hearer did *not* already know that information and that the speaker and that the speaker did not necessarily believe that she did. The point of her marking seems rather to get the hearer to accept not only the direct content of the utterance but also its implications for her perspective (Jucker and Smith 1998: 195). Given that the speaker utters a qualitative statement through which she more or less conveys her stance towards it, she construes the meaning as it were presupposed with the hearer through the CC *ti rendi conto* ('you realise'), meaning 'you may conclude [from the previous discourse or from the context].

On a par with the functions conveyed in English through CCs like the English forms *you see*, *you know*, and *you say*, the CCs analysed in this section are markers of intersubjectivity, as they represent the "speaker's rhetorical construction of the *interlocutor's* perspective or attitude" (Fitzmaurice 2004: 429), a strategy by which she can also boost her stance towards the content (see Chapter 6). As for the CC *ti rendi conto* in (5.29), the CC attributes a particular perspective to the hearer (Fitzmaurice 2004: 431). It may also be employed when the speaker realizes that her utterance might provoke surprise or blame (i.e., being a face-threatening act). In other words, the use of the CC under scrutiny "enables the speaker to make a controversial statement in the guise of what is shared knowledge or self-evident" (Aijmer 2013: 101 on the similar function played by the modal adverb *of course*). In that case she may proffer an interpersonal CC to claim shared understanding thus avoiding the face threat (Brinton 2008: 159).

The function at issue follows Brown and Levinson's (1987 [1978]: 117) seventh strategy of negative politeness, i.e., that of presupposing, raising, or asserting common ground. A CC with the function under scrutiny conveys "a point-of-view "flip"" (Brinton 2008: 160) because the hearer may happen to not know the information expressed by the speaker and presented as taken for

granted. Rather, the strategy has the effect of involving the addressee into the discourse, thus inducing the latter to join its emotional trend, or simply prompt the hearer's memory as to the necessary details (Brown and Levinson's 1987 [1978]: 120; Brinton 2008: 160). The use of the CC may also show that the speaker and hearer are acting as co-operators (Brown and Levinson's 1987 [1978]: 125; Brinton 2008: 160; see also Bazzanella 2011 on the category of *fatismi*, i.e., phatic markers underlying the cohesive aspect of communication; Aijmer 2013: 97 on the cohesive function of *of course* to maintain rapport).

As Fitzmaurice (2004: 439) points out, the strategies enhancing social cohesion (such as *you see* in her paradigm) may be glossed as "I'm sure you understand that", exactly as the CC *capirai* ('as you will surely understand') in the following example:

- 5.31) ci son tanti scalini\_? B: no\_ c'e' la scala a scendere e basta\_ c'e' la scala che si scende no\_? A: ah si' ma sara'\_ **capirai** 'ste valigie che ci ho (Lip, MB96)  
Are there so many steps?? B: no\_ there's the ladder coming down and that's it\_ there's the ladder that you go down no\_? A: ah yes but it'll be\_ **you'll understand** 'these suitcases that I have to carry on
- 5.32) infatti B:eh infatti il solito\_ caos eccetera insomma e **sai** e allora abbiamo impiegato parecchio (Lip, RB7)  
in fact B: eh in fact the usual\_ chaos etcetera in short and **you know** and then it took us a long

The CC *capirai* appeals to the hearer's ability to comprehend why the speaker is tired, that is carrying luggage and stuff. Therefore, the CC is used to elicit agreement by appealing to presupposed mutual knowledge easily inferable from the immediate context (Holmes 1995: 87, Beeching 2017: 184). The CC expresses the (new) meaning "presupposing consent and sharing responsibility for the ensuing portion of discourse, thereby attenuating one's own communicative act" (Walterit 2006: 68; Beeching 2017: 2) properly through a process of presupposition. Referring to the corresponding English form *you know*, Vincent et al. (2002) remarkably found that in their corpus the pitch prominence on the item *know* was lower than that on *you* in all of the cases of discourse marking usages. They argue that a shift must occur from the representation of the hearer's presupposed state of knowledge, to the hope that such state of knowledge is indeed the case. A further shift implies a change leading to the "imposition" of a given state of knowledge on the hearer. Indeed, as recognised by the authors, these possibilities correspond to three frequent values of the DM *you know* (Schiffrin 1987: 267–318): the marker in fact conveys shared knowledge, appeal to the hearer's empathy, and focus on the new piece of information that the speaker intends to "impose" upon the hearer as unquestionable. The latter function can be easily retrievable in the following example:

5.33) in casa a me mi piace stare mi piace tutte le mi' cose mi piace tener pulito ho avuto due figli me li son tirati su da me -al- all'ora della merenda ero sempre qui all'ora sicche' **vedi** ho fatto veramente proprio la donna di casa (Lip, FB17)

I like staying home and enjoying all my things I like keeping clean I had two children I brought dragged all by myself -at the time of the afternoon break **you see** I was the lady of the house

5.34) devi domarla carota e bastone carota lei vuole solo le carote capito Nino vuole anche il bastone [...]

A: perche' lei **vedi** e' gentile in realta' poi (Lip, MA4)

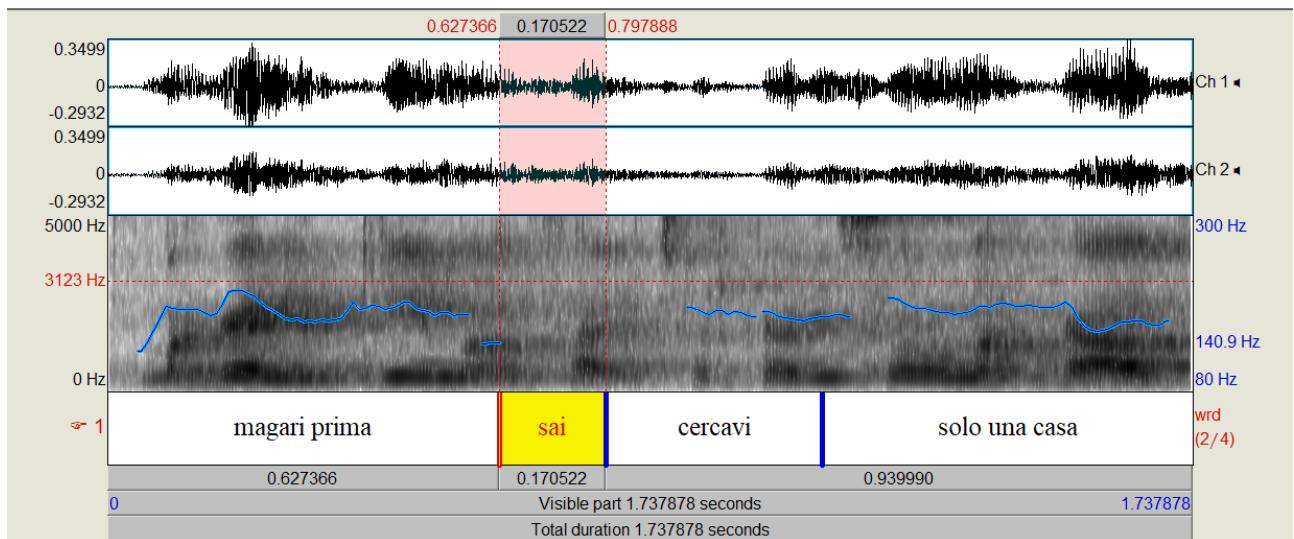
you have to tame you have to use the method 'the carrot and stick' she just wants the switch you understood Nino she also wants the stick A: because she **you see** is kind reality despite all

In example 5.33), the speaker says that along with being a businesswoman, she has always done the house work reaching the conclusion that she has always been a perfect housewife. Therefore, the CC functions as a rhetorical device used to directly **engage** her interlocutor into the main argument being made (Fitzmaurice 2004: 430), and to mark the speaker assessment *ho fatto la donna di casa* 'I was the lady of the house' (which is an evaluative assessment) as an uncontroversial state of affairs. The construction of the conveyed content as shared information has the function of making the assessment hosting the CC less abrupt (Aijmer 2013: 97). These strategies manage speech act responsibility in different ways, with different nuances and communicative effects. However, they all aim at the ultimate purpose of consensus-building, which is a crucial prerogative of social interaction. The CCs of the type under scrutiny are thus used as markers of solidarity (markers of consensus), and also to convey persuasion in order to include the hearer (see Aijmer 2013 on the discourse and modal functions of the adverb 'of course'). In doing so, the marker may be prosodically integrated. As shown below, the CC *sai* occurs in medial microsyntactic position, thus showing a deep interruptive position validated by its integration on the prosodic ground<sup>136</sup>:

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<sup>136</sup> Once more, an interpersonal CC manifests itself as being prosodically integrated, although we expected only speaker-oriented and (partially) textual functions to be integrated given their truth-value affectedness.

Figure 5. 4 Textgrid of the string 'magari prima sai cercavi'



### 5.2.2.2 Insinuating or the *act of evoking (shared) knowledge*

Deeply connected to the function of sharing knowledge or presupposing shared knowledge, it is the function of insinuation, through which the speaker alludes to supposed shared knowledge without explicitly verbalizing it. We will argue that it appears to be the presumptions that are put into focus by the CC rather than the information explicitly uttered (Jucker and Smith 1998: 173). Through the function at issue the hearer is expected to derive somewhat predictable new assumptions (Jucker and Smith 1998: 172-173).

Table 5. 17 Insinuating CCs

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	6/24 (25%)	18/24(75%)	24/1023 (2,3%)
CCs	capisci, dico, sai, voglio dire	figurati, figuriamoci, guarda, intendiamoci, pensa un po', pensate voglio dì, voglio dire	

Let us consider the following occurrences:

- 5.35) MC\_TO026: [ah verificare a:h si' pero' dice che non vi chiede nessun livello di competenza **voglio dire** (. ) e [quindi] (KIParla, TOA1002)  
MC\_TO026: Ah just checking but it is said it doesn't require any level of expertise I mean so
- 5.36) EF\_BO032: [>se (non)] riesco a verbalizzare io (. ) perderei la seconda rata che sono tipo mille[cinquecento euro q]uindi (**voglio di-**),<

EF\_BO032: If I can't verbalise (register the exam), I lose the second payment of the scholarship  
that's 1500 euros so **I mean**

- 5.37) ci vorra' un po' per arrivare a regime e andare a sostituire i cinque nostri eh? B: si' si' si' ma poi **dico**  
i cinque nostri eh? A: ah bene o male vanno sostituiti perche' son quattro ottantasei quattro  
ottantasette B: si' ma si possono o vendere oppure verniciare ?? (Lip FA12)  
It's going to take a while to fix our five vehicles eh? B: yes yes yes but then **I say** our five vehicles eh  
right? A: ah well or not they should be replaced because it is four eighty-six four eighty-seven B: yes  
but you can sell or varnish them??

As anticipated in Chapter 4) with respect to the reformulation functions, the CC *voglio dire* develops metalinguistic, explication uses, meta-communicative/subjective reformulatory usages and intersubjective uses, along with expressing meaning clarification. The metacommunicative functions specifically suggest that the reformulation markers may be recruited by the speaker in order to imply more than what she says (see Beeching 2017: 184).

The function at issue is served in the abovementioned examples by the reformulating CCs *voglio dire* and *dico*, generally when placed utterance or turn-finally. We are referring to the function that Fiorentini and Sansò (2017: 65-69) formulated with respect to the ‘insinuating’ usages of *voglio dire* in Italian. ‘Insinuation’ is a function by which the speaker induces the hearer to derive all the mutual knowledge or context-driven inferences related to a given statement. The CCs performing such a function encode a set of hints which allow the addressee to generate an implicit interpretation (Jucker and Smith 1998: 185; Fiorentini and Sansò 2017: 54).

Through insinuating, simply put, the speaker utters a proposition, but she communicates more than what she says. In the last example of the list, the speaker implies that the examination won’t be difficult because in order to do it no certification is required. The speaker of the extract given in 5.36) above implicitly communicates that he needs to record all the exams, because otherwise he needs to pay the fees for the following year, that are 1500 euros. Though the insinuating function she implicitly delivers the information that it would be a big deal.

The outlined usages are both subjective and interpersonal. Firstly, they are subjective since they hint at the speaker’s comment, therefore being considered as intrinsically metacommunicative (no rewording is implied). Furthermore, they generally communicate more than what it is plainly expressed on the implicit level, thus relying on a joint enterprise in drawing the content at stake.

### 5.2.2.3 Provoking surprise: the function of mirativity

So far, we’ve underlined that the speaker may appeal to the hearer’s system of knowledge by presupposing or invoking common ground. One last function concerned with the hearer’s knowledge refers to the need to induce an attitude of surprise and unexpectedness in the addressee.

As anticipated in Section 3.2.2.4 with respect to the speaker-oriented mirativity, the function of the markers under scrutiny is to mark contents which report a piece of information which is new or surprising to the speaker (DeLancey 1997: 33). The pool of mirative meanings may be expressed through a verbal affix, a pronoun, through a complex predicate (Aikhenvald 2012: 435) or also through DMs such as the English form *yeah*. According to Jucker and Smith (1998: 181), the speaker would use *yeah* inside a turn as a receiver marker, in order to acknowledge the reception of the unexpected information (Jucker and Smith 1998: 174, 181,182).

Although the category has been thought to express new and unexpected information to the speaker (as outlined in Chapter 3), our data gather some evidence for the claim that the category may embrace the functional domain of intersubjectivity, thus subsuming a function aimed at provoking in a way surprise to the hearer (note that, according to Molochieva and Nichols 2011: 2, Aikhenvald 2012: 457, the news may happen to be known to speaker, unknown to hearer, or known by the speaker to be remarkable to the hearer).

In other words, the information being conveyed is not new to the speaker. Rather, the speaker's aim is to encode it as new and surprising to the hearer, with the final purpose of provoking astonishment and surprise in the latter. A similar function may be served through the expression *hear you* in English (Brinton 2008: 200).

**Table 5. 18** Hearer-oriented mirativity CCs

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	34/49 (69,3%)	15/49 (30,6%)	49/1023 (4,7%)
	figurati, guardate voi_, immaginate, figurati pensa (un po'/un poco), pensate, pensi	fa conto, figurati, guar(d)a, immagina, pensa (un po' te), pensate (un po'), te pensa	

**Table 5. 19** Percentage of CCs host mood (hearer-oriented mirativity)

Host mood	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Evaluative assessment	17/34 (50%)	9/15 (60%)	26/49 (53%)
Assertion	13/34 (38,2%)	6/15 (40%)	19/49 (38,7%)
Others	4/34 (11,7%)		4/49 (8,1%)

**Table 5. 20** Percentage of the lexical semantics of the CC sources

Lexical semantics	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Weak assertive v.	21/34 (61,7%)	9/15 (60%)	30/49 (61,2%)
Perceptual v.	12/34 (35,2%)	3/15 (20%)	15/49 (30,6%)

<b>Strong assertive v.</b>	1/34 (2,9%)	3/15 (20%)	4/49 (8,1%)
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Although it is not so frequent, the function is often expressed through CCs stemming from cognitive verbs or from perceptual verbs used with cognitive meaning. Moreover, the CC is slightly more often hosted in evaluative assessments, which, by themselves express the speaker's stance.

Let us consider the following occurrences:

- 5.38) PO\_TO004: e' **addirittura** l'idea che ci permette di fare i selfie. **pensate un po'**. (KIParla TOD1002)  
 PO\_TO004: It is even the idea that allows us to take selfies, **just think/imagine**

- 5.39) cavoli pensa che potrei citare anche Orzowe Heidi **pensa** (Lip, MB1)  
 crap just think I could cite even Orzowe Heidi **can you believe?**

- 5.40) KG\_BO073: in quella casa non c'era niente.  
 KG\_BO073: neanche un mobile neanche cioe' xxx,  
 KG\_BO073: i sanitari.  
 KG\_BO073: **immagina** (KIParla, BOD2005)  
 KG\_BO073: In that flat there was nothing, not even a piece of furniture I mean not even the bathroom fixtures **just imagine**

Throughout these examples, the speaker intends to invite the hearer to share her amazement. More specifically, in 5.38) the speaker is sharing her amazement about a very special invention, which is so extraordinary to make people start to do selfies. In the second of the examples, the speaker intends to share the surprising opinion that one of the flats they visited was devoid of furniture, a fact which is weird when visiting a house to be rent. The extraordinariness of the information is in 5.38) also expressed through the co-occurrence between the CC and the focus particle *addirittura* ('even'), an evaluative scalar additive focus particle (Ricca 1999: 148). These focus particles are mobilised to express speaker's subjective assessments on a par with other expressions such as *perfino* and *persino* ('even'). The semantics of the focus particle conveys a subjective nuance. In fact, the speaker is expressing her degree of evaluation with respect to the relevance of the utterance including the focus particle *addirittura*, which in this case has scope over the phrase *l'idea che vi permette di fare i selfie* 'the invention that allows you to make selfies', a fact which is contextually extraordinary from the speaker's perspective and that as such is marked to the hearer (cf. Ricca 1999: 155). Therefore, the focus particle itself indexes an evaluative nuance.

The same mechanism is exploited in 5.40), in which the speaker uses the focus particle *neanche* ('neither, not even'), a scalar negative additive focus particle, which triggers inferences relative to the negation of the proposition on which it has scope (Ricca 1999: 157). More specifically, the focus particle has scope over the phrase *bathroom fixture*, to underline that in the house about which they are talking not even bathroom was included, a fact which is weird, because when one needs to rent

a flat, some facilities are necessary. In other words, the *most* important thing one should find in a house was not found in the house they are talking about. Even in this case, the CC occurs in a context which is already highly filtered by the speaker's perspective, therefore the intersubjective function of mirativity occurs in its ideal setting. However, the function may also be spotted in the following examples, that is, in which the focus particle is not expressed and the mirativity function is exclusively conveyed by the CC:

- 5.41) una batteria come questa **pensate** costa oltre il milione di lire (Lip, NE10)  
An array of pots like this one costs **just imagine** over a million of Italian lire
- 5.42) SM\_BO017: il problema era il maiu.hscolo.  
SM\_BO017: pen=cioe'. **pensa un po' te.** (KIParla, BOA3003)  
SM\_BO017: the problem was the capital just th I mean **you know what I mean?**
- 5.43) GB\_TO043: se potevan venire a dormire,  
GB\_TO043: e::h=mh sua sorella con il marito e i figli,  
GB\_TO043: i[n ca]sa nostra,  
ML\_TO055: [a beh.]  
GB\_TO043: e::h=che e' una casa piccolissima con **figurati** due stanze un bagno e una cucinetta,  
GB\_TO043: e:h noi eravamo gia' in quattro in piu' dovevamo avere altre quattro persone in casa,  
(KIParla, TOD2007)  
GB\_TO043: (he asked) whether his sister, his brother in law and their sons could come to sleep to us,  
GB\_TO043: at our place  
ML\_TO055: [oh well.]  
GB\_TO043: eh that is a very small house with **just imagine** two bedrooms a bathroom and a kitchen,  
GB\_TO043: eh we were already four people and we were supposed to have four more people staying over.

In 5.43), the speaker intends to emphasise the extraordinariness of a specific fact, namely that one of the flatmates intended to invite his family to their place. This fact is unbelievable because their flat is very small, including only two rooms, a bathroom and a small kitchen. The CC is placed in between the terms of the PP (*due* 'two' is the focused element, namely the trigger of the extraordinariness of the whole content) to persuade the hearer that the flatmate proposal was incredible.

The function under scrutiny is partially performed by the CC (*you*) *see* in English, a form recruited either to evaluate the hearer's comprehension, continued interest, or agreement or to express triumph (Brinton 2008: 139).

Whereas in the cases of speaker-oriented mirativity, the function was used to mark new information, in this case it is information new only to the interlocutor (see the example 5.43) in

which the speaker talks about her personal experience, which *per se* cannot be new to the speaker herself).

### **5.2.3 Speech act level functions: from attenuating to strengthening**

#### **5.2.3.1 The function of attenuation**

As anticipated in Chapter 3), the use of CCs has also to do with the speaker's social image and social positioning. CCs may be employed to reach agreement between interlocutors on social and interactional grounds (Molinelli 2014: 497). In doing so, they function as hedges, that is, linguistic devices signalling "a lack of commitment to either the full semantic membership of an expression or to the full commitment of the speech act being conveyed" (Fraser 2010: 22). In this section, we will focus on this latter type of speech act hedging. CCs with the function of attenuation act as modifiers of the weightiness of the information given. The CC acts then as a strategy which reduces the force of an utterance thus lessening the risk a speaker runs when proffering a strong assertion in its bluntest way or a face-threatening speech act such as a request (Kaltenböck et al. 2010: 1). When performing this task, CCs are recruited to protect the speaker's and hearer's face by softening the assertive force of a speech act, whether this is a declarative statement or a request (Beeching 2017: 22).

The function we investigate in this section has been variously defined as a strategy of politeness (Brown and Levinson 1978; House and Kasper 1981), or as a strategy aimed at attenuating the illocutionary force (Fraser 1980; Bazzanella, Caffi and Sbisà 1991), in order to negotiate the distance with the addressee (Caffi 2000), and finally to modulate the speaker's stance with respect to the other points of view (stances) present in the discourse (Prandi and Raschini 2009: 23).

In this chapter we will focus on one of the main perlocutive effects of attenuation, that is **politeness**, which may be sub-classified either as positive or negative politeness. The latter is used to mitigate, reduce or lessen possible causes of offence. Polite requests, for instance, are polite in this negative sense. In fact, they are aimed at reducing the cause of the offence that would occur if one speaker were to express the imposition in its bluntest form (Leech 2014: 11, more recently Molinelli 2014: 199). Politeness strategies are associated with Goffman's (1955) notion of face, which is on-line built into the course of interaction on the basis of the co-participants needs, which may be real or supposed. We are then dealing with the negative face, which refers to the want of every 'component adult member' that his actions be unconstrained by other members (Brown & Levinson 1989: 62, Ghezzi 2012: 4-5). The notion of politeness covers all those discourse routines and strategies through which speakers do face work in relation to their hearers, therefore making specific stylistic choices which convey social meaning on the interpersonal relations level

(Coupland 2007: 57). The function of the CCs is thus to make FTAs less direct and help to preserve the hearer's, as well as the speaker's social face. CCs can be considered truly politeness-motivated phenomena.

Whereas in Chapter 3 we analysed the class of CCs aimed at reducing the speaker's own commitment in occurrence with evaluative assertions, here we will address the function of hearer-oriented attenuation. Before discussing the data, one last terminological issue is worth making. We decided to use the term 'attenuation' for practical reasons, in order to distinguish it from speaker-directed 'hedging' elaborated in Chapter 3. The only difference between the two functions is the target of attenuation, which, in one case is the speaker and in the other one the hearer.

**Table 5. 21 Negative politeness CCs**

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	19/39 (48,7%)	20/49 (40,8%)	39/1023 (3,8%)
CCs	consentimi, credo, diciamo, (io) direi, io credo, io penso mi pare, non so, ti/vi volevo dire, voglio dire	diciamo, (io) direi, figurati, non so, pensavo	

**Table 5. 22 Percentage of CCs host moods (negative politeness)**

Host mood	Lip	KIParla	Overall
Question/imperative	13/19 (68,4%)	11/20 (55%)	24/39 (61,5%)
Assertion	6/19 (31,5%)	9/20 (45%)	15/39 (38,4%)

Let us consider some examples with which we can start:

- 5.44) CC\_BO104: [no] se puoi:: **diciamo** parlarmi in modo p- approfondito, di questi: [fattori interni, si' si'] (KIParla, BOC1005)  
 CC\_BO104: no if you could **let's say** talk to me about these internal factors in-depth yes yes
- 5.45) penso\_ che **mi pare** DOBBIAMO prendere atto di alcune novita' che sono\_ intervenute tra la\_ ultima riunione del consiglio comunale? (Lip, RC1)  
 I think **it seems to me** we must take note of some of the news that took place between the last meeting of the city council?
- 5.46) B: poi e' anche il momento che ci ho bisogno perche'\_ A: puoi sempre poi fare una\_ conciliazione per meno **voglio dire** (Lip, FA10)  
 B: then it's also the moment that I need because '\_A: you can always then make a\_ conciliation for less **I mean**

At the communicative level, the CCs at stake may be employed to reach the discourse effects of politeness and vagueness, with the purpose of accomplishing a successful and smooth conversation.

This effect may be reached by attenuating the illocutive force of a given request (FTA), as happens in all the afore-mentioned examples. As a result, the CCs serve a cohesive function on the social level (Brown and Levinson 1987; Ghezzi and Molinelli 2014a,b; Molinelli 2014: 200). In fact, by using them, the speaker softens the thrust of her request by adopting a more indirect strategy in order to express what actually she expects the hearer to perform.

More specifically, in 5.44), the speaker - a professor - asks her student to talk about a new topic, thereby invading the hearer's sphere of action in the typical context of an examination. By placing the CC in medial position in between the modal and the main verb, she downgrades the threatening import of her request.

In 5.45) another type of FTA occurs. In fact, the speaker refers to a proposal aimed at directing the interlocutors' actions. Attaching the CC, the speaker leaves option open. More precisely, the threatening import of the exhortation conveyed through the deontic *dobbiamo* ('we need') is mitigated by the CC *mi pare* ('is seems to me'), which is shifted from the truth value level (it is a typical marker of epistemic functions) to the speech act level (illocutionary force). Therefore, what we notice is a shift from propositional to speech act hedging.

The same happens in example 5.47), in which the CC - a typical means of propositional hedging - is recruited to serve such a function placed on the speech act level. In fact, the CC *diciamo*, a typical textual marker playing the function of a bush declaring a semantic mismatch, is in this respect intersubjective in that its approximator semantics is mobilised to the speaker's concern for the (negative) face of the hearer. Indeed, as pointed out by Beeching (2017: 22), hedging/attenuation expressions derive from families of lexemes associated with conceptual structures concerning to smallness, approximateness, demurral/correction, adversativeness/concession and interrogation. The examples gather evidence for the leap from the attenuation of the propositional content to the approximation of the speech act being performed to attenuate its force (see Chapter 6).

Along with occurring in requests, the CC may occur in questions with the purpose of protecting the negative face of the hearer, in that the speaker is aware of the need to preserve the addressee's emotive sphere (the issue of the thesis argument), as happens in the following examples, uttered in the context of examinations:

- 5.47) MC\_TO026: e:: come mai **diciamo** le interessava fare questo confronto tra (.) linguaggio giovanile in::, paesi diversi? (KIParla, TOA1001)  
MC\_TO026: and how **let us say** were you interested in making this comparison between (.) youth language in different countries?
- 5.48) RP\_BO026: [pensando alla]:: alla disciplina >didattica dell'italiano elle due< puo' essere i- **diciamo** interessante andare a vedere che cosa succede nelle scuole venete,, (KIParla, BOA1006)

RP\_BO026: thinking about the didactic teaching of Italian as second language can be i- let's say interesting to go and see what happens in the Venetian schools

Summing up, we may say that attenuation can aim at interactional effectiveness, thus facilitating the accomplishment of interactional goals, or at identity building, through the monitoring and preserving the right amount of distance between the speakers (Ghezzi 2012).

### 5.2.3.2 The function of emphasis and agreeing

Whereas in 5.2.3.1 we addressed the CCs aimed at reducing the threat of imposition of a given speech act, in this paragraph, we will focus on the CCs performing the opposite operation, namely a function of emphasis “on the truth feature of the sentence” (Bolinger 1972: 94). In 3.2.2.1, we analysed the discourse profile of those CCs performing a function of emphasis from the speaker’s viewpoint. Nonetheless, we will argue that the very same function may be performed by CCs that, interactionally, express the same meaning by appealing to the hearer’s validation of the p hosting the CC<sup>137</sup>. As will be argued later, it is not a comment on the truth value. Rather, it is a comment on the assertiveness of it (Ghezzi and Molinelli 2015: 24-28), which is generally carried out through the specific rhetorical strategy of the appeal to the hearer<sup>138</sup>. In this way, the hearer is thus compelled to validate what the speaker utters. Before discussing the attested correlations, we provide a first illuminating example, which expresses the function under scrutiny played by the CC *guarda*:

5.49) A: William Hurt e' bravissimo

B: mh William Hurt che fa il drogato che deve fare il Killer **guarda ti giuro** # io ogni volta che lo vedo\_ mi cre mi crepo questa (Lip, MB36)

A: William Hurt is very good

B: mh William Hurt the junkie who has to kill, **look I swear to you** - every time I see him I die

In this example, the function at issue is served both by the CC *guarda* and by the CC *ti giuro* ('I swear') to the point that they co-occur. The only difference between them is that, whereas *ti giuro* involves the speaker directly, through the CC *guarda* the speaker employs a second-person imperative form, thus appealing to the hearer with the ultimate goal of making him apply the same level of certainty. We will return to this issue later after the illustration of some quantitative data:

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<sup>137</sup> According to Venier, these markers perform emphasis through an operation of **convocazione del tu** (second-person convocation).

<sup>138</sup> According to Cuenca (2013: 197), modal meanings such as agreement and emphasis are inherently interpersonal.

**Table 5. 23** Emphasis CCs

Corpus	Lip	KIParla	Overall
%	128/185 (9,1%)	57/185 (30,8%)	185/1023 (18%)
CCs	badate bene, credetemi, figurati, guarda, guardate (bene), guardate voi, guardi, non dimentichiamoci, ricordate, sa, sa?, sai, sai?, senti, sentime a me, tenete conto, vedi, vedrai	badate, figurati, guarda, hai capito? intendiamoci (bene), ricordatevi, sai (?), senti, vedete, voglio dire	

As shown in the following Tables, the functions may also be expressed in the left periphery, despite modal, intersubjective functions are typically attracted by right periphery:

**Table 5. 24** Percentage of microsyntactic position (emphasis)

Position (micro)	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Final</b>	40/92 (43,4%)	21/45 (46,6%)	61/137 <sup>139</sup> (44,5%)
<b>Initial</b>	33/92 (35,8%)	22/45 (48,8%)	55/137 (40,1%)
<b>Medial</b>	19/92 (20,6%)	2/45 (4,4%)	21/137 (15,3%)

**Table 5. 25** Percentage of macrosyntactic position (emphasis)

Position (macro)	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Final</b>	22/36 (61,1%)	9/12 (90%)	31/48 (61,3%)
<b>Initial</b>	10/36 (27,7%)	3/12 (25%)	13/48 (29,5%)
<b>Medial</b>	4/36 (11,1%)		4/48 (9%)

The possibility to perform the same function independently of the periphery – as just argued – may be explained by the occurrence of the CCs in evaluative assessments:

**Table 5. 26** Percentage of CCs host moods (emphasis)

Host mood	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Assertive</b>	55/128 (42,9%)	20/57 (35%)	75/185 (40,5%)
<b>Evaluative assessment</b>	65/128 (50%)	28/57 (49,1%)	93/185 (50,2%)
<b>Others</b>	8/128 (6,2%)	9/57 (15,7%)	17/185 (9,1%)

<sup>139</sup> The denominator is the frequency of microsyntax and so forth.

### 5.2.3.2.1 The function of emphasis in the right periphery

Let us consider some examples with which we can start:

- 5.50) B: mh sono un po' affaticata e scocciata non ce la faccio piu' [...]  
A: sono allo stesso livello anch' io **guarda** (Lip, FB5)  
B: mh I'm a little tired and annoyed I can't do it anymore [...]  
A: I'm on the same level **look / trust me**
- 5.51) B: senti no volevo dirti che io sto malissimo c' ho un mal di testa **guarda** (Lip, FB11)  
B: Listen no I wanted to tell you that I'm not feeling good I have a terrible headache **look**
- 5.52) D: ciao siete grandi **guarda** (Lip, RE3)  
D: Hey there, you are great **look / believe me**
- 5.53) C: come va \* A: \* \* bene **guarda** (Lip, FB17)  
C: How have you been? A: Fine **you know**

Throughout the examples above, the CC strengthens the content expressed in the host clause, be it a well-formed utterance or a verbless host as in 5.53). For instance, in 5.50), the speaker reinforces the relational lexeme *stesso* ('same') in the phrase *allo stesso livello* ('on the same level') with the purpose of inducing the hearer to believe that between the level of the speaker and of the hearer no difference occurs *at all*. In 5.52) the speaker reinforces the evaluative statement *siete grandi* ('you are great') thus suggesting that the hearer must believe in the truth of the last statement and, above all, in the speaker's **sincerity** when uttering p. In a similar vein, in 5.53) the speaker's evaluation is linguistically expressed through the verbless item *bene* ('it's ok'), which is followed by the CC *guarda* to convince further the hearer of the validity of the evaluative statement.

The CC with that function, especially *guarda* (the vast majority of the function (60%) in the Lip Corpus is expressed by *guarda/ate*), appears as an incremental expansion of possibly complete utterances, that is, in the right periphery of the utterance. Such *locus* is the privileged context attracting modal functions (Beeching and Detges 2014: 11, Degand 2014: 158). The markers occurring in the right periphery are in fact assumed to perform an (inter)personal function, thus serving to confirm shared assumptions, to monitor or to convey understanding (Degand 2014: 158). According to Beeching and Detges (2014: 11), the right periphery offers the following usages of linguistic items: anticipation of upcoming discourse, response-appealing, modalising and intersubjective functions (see also Cuenca 2013: 200 on Catalan modal markers such as *és clar* 'it is clear'). Right periphery (in his terminology 'final field') is for Haselow a communicative space following a structural unit that has reached a possible point of completion in real-time production of utterance. This "space" is available for the production of unit types playing various metatextual and interactive functions, such as tag questions, CCs as the one investigated here, or vocatives. In

other words, the final field is a crucial “phase” in the production of a unit of talk as it allows speakers to perform various cognitive tasks before the potential turn change or continuation with a new topic (Haselow 2016: 77).

CCs here investigated resemble the category of final-field adverbs. These types of adverbs in the final field are not the kind of adverb we notice in the “end-position” of a sentence (Quirk et al. 1985: 490; Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 575; Biber et al. 1999: 772), which is defined as the part of a sentence following all obligatory elements, and which typically includes time, place and circumstance adverbs. The adverb-like items referred to in this section are not integrated into the morphosyntactic dependency relations of a certain sentence. Furthermore, they are peripheral to the content of the unit of talk to which they are referred. In other words, their removal would not imply a loss of semantic content; when they are produced within the structural unit they accompany, they acquire a different function. Adverbs in the final field are mainly employed in order to adjust epistemic stance, either designating certainty (for instance, *of course*, *yeah*) or uncertainty/imprecision (for instance, *probably*, *possibly*). The latter may also mitigate an authoritative attitude, whereas other items are used to **strengthen assertive force** (see, for instance, *really*, *absolutely*). In this sense, they adopt procedural rather than propositional meaning (Blakemore 1987), that is, they offer a cue to the interpreter the guiding the processing of a unit of talk rather than conveying lexical meaning (Haselow 2016: 88).

Although the categorizations of these forms partially differ, there is a consensus that in the right periphery of the utterance they can frequently adopt modal rather than attention-getting functions. In their comprehensive study on attention-getting markers in Italian, Ghezzi and Molinelli (2015: 31-35) deal with a secondary phatic function (‘funzione fática secondaria’), which is played by the DM *guarda* and other forms derived from perception verbs when the speaker calls for the hearer’s cognitive attention in order to express her attitude towards the content (see also Waltereit 2002: 987, cf. Fagard 2010). Whereas when occurring in the left periphery of the utterance *guarda* is employed with an attention-getting function, in the right periphery of the utterance the marker is generally claimed to serve an interpersonal, modal and expressive function, because it is shown to be used to express the speaker’s evaluation with respect to the preceding content (Molinelli 2014: 202).

It may be hypothesized that in Italian *guarda* may perform the same emphasising functions of modal adverbs such as *davvero* ‘really’<sup>140</sup> and *proprio* ‘indeed’ (cf. De Cesare 2000 on the modal

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<sup>140</sup> According to Haselow (2016: 88), utterance-final *really* is an instance for an adverb that strengthens the assertive force of a previous proposition. In other words, in the final field, it takes a broad scope over the unit to which it is attached.

functions of such adverbs when employed as intensifiers), to the point that as observed in the examples below, they can co-occur:

- 5.54) è **proprio** la giornata oggi dei dolori **guarda** (Lip, FE6)  
today it is just the day I ache the most **look**
- 5.55) B: poi magari si parla in treno insieme  
C: si' certo  
B: io spero che domani si faccia chiarezza **guarda** spero **proprio** (Lip, FB11)  
B: then maybe we can talk on the train together  
C: Yes, of course  
B: I hope that tomorrow the matter will be clarified **look** I hope **really**
- 5.56) A: no ma io non c' a facevo **proprio guarda** (Lip, NB21)  
A: no but I could not do it look

When it is used with falling intonation, placed in final position, after the message has been produced and completed, the CC tends to reinforce the previous message, communicating that the latter is portrayed as self-evident but, still, agreement is sought from the hearer<sup>141</sup> (Beeching 2017:103 with respect to the turn-final functions of *you know*, when used with similar emphatic functions in English, Haselow 2016: 88 with respect to final *really* as an adverb that retrospectively strengthens the assertive force of a proposition).

The interpretation of such uses of *guarda* is related to the speaker's stance towards the truth of the host (clause)<sup>142</sup>. This stance may be interpreted either as a comment on the assertive significance of the host utterance or as an emphasis of the declarativeness of uttering it. Given that assumptions come with varying degrees of strength, the speakers have at their disposal several expressions which indicate their degrees of strength by pointing toward available evidence (König 1991: 181). Indeed, what *guarda* performs is not to utter the truth value of the host clause. Rather, the CC is employed to assert that the host clause indeed corresponds to a state of affairs (De Cesare 2000: 104). In this regard, the speaker employs *guarda* to

- i) **guarantee** the factuality/truth of the assertion contained in the host clause – it may be paraphrased as ‘I can assure/I assure/I guarantee’- and

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<sup>141</sup> For Stenström, the similar acts of *Alerts* are higher in pitch than the surrounding material. They are louder and they act as interruptors (Stenström 1994:74). Schourup (2004: 554) explains the nuance of “harshness, urgency, or exasperation” conveyed through the CC by analogy with a range of exclamatory expressions (such as *dammit*, *watch it* and so forth - Brinton 2008: 186).

<sup>142</sup> We will consider clause in a loose way, namely by including also verbless hosts expressing a given intention.

ii) **confirm** it (the factuality/truth<sup>143</sup>); in the latter case, it may be paraphrased as ‘I agree with you’ (De Cesare 2000: 104). Let us study some instances of the former case (i). Consider the following examples:

5.57) B: \* l'hanno buttato giù

A: \* un omicidio

B: si' l'avranno ammazzato **guarda sicuramente** per l'eredita' lavranno fatto (Lip, MB9)

B: They've knocked him down

A: It's a murder

B: they must have killed him, **look**, I have no doubt they've done it for the inheritance

5.58) A: ti ringrazio e ti lascio Sergio grazie eh Sergio e' uno dei primissimi lui e' e' il e' f

B: ah **davvero guarda** (Lip, FB37)

A: I thank you and I leave you Sergio thank you eh Sergio is one of the very first him he is is the is

B: oh really **look**

In both examples<sup>144</sup>, the CC co-occurs with two intensifiers to **guarantee** the truth of the utterance. The two intensifiers express respectively a truth comment (*davvero*, ‘indeed’) and a comment on the confirmation of truth *sicuramente* ‘surely’ (cf. Bolinger 1972 for a detailed classification of the sentence adverbs at stake). In these occurrences, *guarda* highlights the truth of the host utterance. In 5.57), *guarda* conveys an adversative nuance: Speaker B does not seem to believe the natural death version. Therefore, she **insists** on a murder version (see Waltereit 2002: 990). An intrinsically interactional marker - typically used to recall the hearer’s attention - is therefore recruited to construct the speaker’s stance. Crucially, in performing such task, we may say that the speaker implicitly asks the hearer to assign the same level of neustic to what is implicitly asserted.

In other cases (ii), the speaker may employ *guarda* in utterance-final position in order to **confirm** the factuality-truth of the utterance, as in the following example:

5.59) ho deciso di prendermela un poco meno seriamente

B: ah si' fai bene

A: piu' sportivo no \*

B: ahah e' meglio **guarda**

A: si' e meglio (Lip, NB29)

I decided to take it less seriously

B: ah yes you do well

A: more sportsmanlike no

B: haha this is better **look**

A: Yes it is better

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<sup>143</sup> I would also say the sincerity.

<sup>144</sup> The discussion may also be applied to examples above.

In the example above, *guarda* is employed to manifest the agreement on the Speaker A's choice. Hence, it may be paraphrased as 'I agree with you' (see Cuenca 2013: 196). In both cases, the speaker emphasises the truth of the host clause. When playing such functions, *guarda* may be considered as a "secondary certainty marker", functioning exactly as a modal adverb following the definition provided by De Cesare (2000). The meaning of this type of markers consists in expressing a comment on the truth of an already asserted proposition. The CC *guarda* is no longer canonically placed clause-internally and can also appear in co-occurrence with other DMs. These uses are found for all Romance *look*-forms: among them, Italian *guarda* then conveys surprise, amazement (Manili 1989: 8, Waltereit 2002: 992) disapproval, or emphasis (cf. Fagard 2010).

### 5.2.3.2.2 The function of emphasis and the occurrence in evaluative assessments beyond the right periphery

Let us start from the following table:

**Table 5. 27 Percentage of the lexical semantics of the CCs sources (emphasis functions)**

Lexical semantics	Lip	KIParla	Overall
<b>Perceptual v.</b>	91/128 (71%)	38/57 (66,6%)	129/185 (69,7%)
<b>Semifactive v.</b>	34/128 (26,5%)	16/57 (28%)	50/185 (27%)
<b>Others</b>	3/128 (2,3%)	3/57 (5,2%)	6/185 (3,2%)

Even if the function is often conveyed in the right periphery of the utterance and through the CC *guarda* (see examples in Section 5.2.3.2.1), we point out that the function under scrutiny may also be performed through i) other CCs deriving from different lexical semantic sources and ii) in other positions of the utterance, as it can be observed in the following examples:

- 5.60) **guarda** siamo sulla stessa barca perché io sono identica (KIParla, BOA3013)  
**look** we're in the same situation because I'm the same
- 5.61) te presentavo un bel ragazzo **vedi** (Lip, RB3)  
I would have introduced a nice guy to you **look (see)**
- 5.62) della morale\_ bo' io non so niente **sai** (Lip, MB1)  
about ethics I don't know anything **you know?**
- 5.63) LG\_T0032: ma no dai **figurati** cioe': e' e' orrenda sembrano due xxxx che si baciano [...] (KIParla, TOA3005)  
LG\_T0032: but no come on **just imagine** it's it's awful they look like two people xxxx kissing
- 5.64) ML\_TO030: vabbe'. °**senti**° >chi se ne frega<, e' fatta. e' finita, e' andata, cosa vuoi che ti dica. (KIParla, TOA3006)  
ML\_TO030: **listen**. who cares it's over, it's gone, what do you want me to tell you

- 5.65) poi se ci sono dei problemi eh li andiamo a valutare F: ah perche' il problema e' che **guarda** proprio detto con il cuore in mano noi non siamo\_ un dipartimento ricco (Lip, NB5)  
 Then if there are problems eh we will go to evaluate them F: ah because the problem is that it **look** honestly we are not\_ a rich department

- 5.66) MS\_TO077: i confini tra i liberali, i conservatori e i nazionalisti  
 MS\_TO077: erano molto molto labili, cioe' era tutto un discreto casino **intendiamoci**. (KIParla, TOD1017)  
 MS\_TO077: the boundaries between liberals, conservatives and nationalists  
 MS\_TO077: they were very very labile, which was all a pretty messy mess **mind you**.

Not merely the position, but especially the CC host mood seems to play a crucial role in identifying the modal reality of the CC, which however seems to have acquired such modal functions when occurring mainly at the end of the utterance. Evaluative assessments and expressive utterances referring to speaker's angle, as observed above, contribute to interpret the CC as a modal marker serving emphasis. In 5.61), the allocutive CC *vedi* ('see/look') is placed utterance-finally to further convince the hearer that the guy they are talking about is *really* nice. It is thus not employed to recall the hearer's attention. In 5.65) for example the function is played turn-medially.

The CC at issue plays the role of a *confirmation word* (Bestätigungswörter - see De Cesare 2000: 104), in serving a metacommunicative 'I'm serious when I say' aimed at emphasising and evaluating the content of the host clause. Brinton (2008: 186, 187) notices that *look*-based forms in English perform a function of strengthening of the speaker's assertive force. When performing this function, the CCs can be understood as reinforcing the speaker's argumentative position, thus operating on a scale of rhetorical strength (see Schwenter and Traugott 2000: 12, 21 on the modal adverb *in fact*).

As claimed by Fagard with respect to the DM *guarda* and similar forms in Romance (see *vedi* 'you see/see'), the CCs under scrutiny are used to emphasize the speaker's point of view. They can convey several attitudes, from amazement to disapproval. Moreover, they may happen to simply put emphasis on what<sup>145</sup> the speaker is going to say. The function of these forms used as pragmatic markers thus seems to be interpersonal, meaning something like 'pay attention', 'heed me', or 'listen (up)'. They function as an appeal to the listener to **accept** a given premise ('believe me when I say ...'), rather than just recalling his attention (Brinton 2008: 186). In this way, besides performing an action of attention-getting, the CCs may be recruited to strengthen the speaker's argumentative position by acting both on a scale of epistemic commitment and on a scale of rhetorical strength,

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<sup>145</sup> Following Venier (2012), we argue that it is not a case that inherently allocutive forms are recruited to play functions which came to be used to make the speaker's stance explicit (intersubjective stance), since the imperative form is the most allocutive form and as such it may be used to express varying function such as the speaker's stance in the place of a declarative form.

through a strategy which is intrinsically interactional and allocutive (see Schwenter and Traugott 2000 on the marker *in fact*, Brinton 2001: 180).

### 5.2.3.2.3 *You know what?* The function of emphasis to demolish a previous claim

One last function we address in this section devoted to the discussion of emphasis is performed by the CC *sai*, especially with ascendant intonation (*sai?*). As noticed for the English form *you know* (?), there are cases in which the information marked with the CC under scrutiny directly or indirectly contradicts (or demolishes) previous claims by the hearer (Jucker and Smith 1998: 194). More specifically, *sai* (?) may co-occur with statements that have been contradicted explicitly or implicitly by earlier statements relinquished by the hearer. As it will emerge, this usage is not concerned with whether the piece of information was already known (see Section 5.2.2.1). Rather, Jucker and Smith (1998: 194) suggest that *you know* invites the hearer to recognise both the relevance and the implications connected to the utterance marked with the strategy under scrutiny. The same happens with other uses of *sai*, which for this reason we included under the head of emphasis functions. Let us consider some examples:

- 5.67) C: e guarda che mica me piaci tanto ahah  
B: io so' contenta di piacere a pochi **sai?** (Lip, RE7)  
C: And look, I don't like you so much haha  
B: I'm happy to please a few **you know?**
- 5.68) A: vorrei che tu capissi una co<sa> il discorso  
B: **ma** no XYZ<do> forse scusami **sai** in questo caso sei tu che non me voi capi' a me (Lip, RB25)  
A: I'd like you to understand one thing the fact  
B: **but** no XYZ maybe excuse me **you know** in this case it is you who do not understand me
- 5.69) che data? B: l'undici F: l'undici febbraio? B: ahah F: e cos'e' che devi fare? B: **mah sai** in realta' non e'  
eh questa\_mole immane (Lip, MB4)  
When is the test? B: 11 F: 11<sup>th</sup> of February? B: haha F: and what is it that you need to do? B: B: oh  
**you know** it's not that big of a deal

In a similar vein, in 5.67), the CC is used to contradict the possible common belief that speaker B is angry at being considered a bad person (see also the co-occurrence with *ma* 'but' contributing to convey disappointment). Similarly, in 5.68), A is angry because B (as for her) does not seem to understand. With an overtone of resentment, B asserts that it is properly her interlocutor who does not want to listen, by boosting such a claim through the CC *sai* which, once again, neither marks common ground nor introduces new information. The CC in fact occurs in a modal context, having to do with attitudes rather than with the mere conveying of information.

Nonetheless, in some cases, the possible counterclaim is not overtly expressed, a fact exemplified in the following example:

- 5.70) senta signorina pero' lei non arriva oltre il ventitre' **sai?** (Lip, RC10)

Miss, though in your exam you are not going to get more than 23, **you know?**

During an examination, the professor interrupts the student's performance in order to communicate that the latter can stop and that, on the basis of the sustained examination, the student did not get more than 23. The contradiction we noticed in other examples where the same CC was adopted is not expressed at all, it may be hypothesised that the professor intends to defeat a possible positive *expectation* from the student's part. The same mechanism works in example 5.71) below, in which we can only identify an implicit counterclaim which is demolished (the claim being identified on the basis of the speaker A's words about the questions she asks to B):

- 5.71) A: hai letto il soggetto? B: no A: poveretto ok contavo di farlo oggi B: anch'io A: se non domani mattina  
B: poi non ho scritto niente per la sceneggiatura **sai** proprio (Lip, MA15)  
A: Have you read the subject? B: no A: poor man ok I thought to do it today B: I too A: if not tomorrow morning B: so I didn't write anything for the script **you know** really

Speaker B demolishes the hearer's expectation that she had made something for the exam, thus uttering the CC *sai* after proffering the sentence *I haven't produced anything at all for the script*. However, no explicit contradiction is expressed. By proffering *sai* the speaker merely boosts her position, without any nuance of disagreement or claim-demolishing. To this point note the co-occurrence between the CC *sai* and the modal adverb with emphasis meaning *proprio*.

In some other cases, the contradiction is neither expressed nor possibly activated. In this case, the function at issue simply conveys emphasis, without any other contradicting nuance:

- 5.72) AB\_BO021: dovrei far firmare la liberatoria anche a loro?  
MC\_BO048: non credo **sai?** (KIParla BOA3004)  
AB\_BO021: Should I have them sign the release too? (MC\_BO048: I don't think **you know?**

Speaker ABBO021 is asking the question whether she needs to ask for the release to some speakers joining the talk. Speaker MC\_BO048 says that she does not believe so and adds turn-finally the CC *sai* in the interrogative form. Apart from a possible checking function, we likewise believe that the CC does not seem to accompany a counterargument demolishing a previous statement or simply an unexpected information activated from the previous discourse. Rather, in these cases, unless a negative nuance is expressed, the emphatic meaning is maintained, without any other

negative nuance<sup>146</sup>. Hence, the meaning may also be compatible with an attenuating effect towards the host content (when it is a negative answer). Before concluding, another noteworthy consideration is being made. Notice that in cases like the one in 5.68) the counterclaim is prefaced by the DM *ma* ('but') which contributes to convey the overall negative meaning in occurrence with evaluative assessment or generally having to do with the speaker's perspective on a given issue (possibly contrasting with another one). Conversely, *ma* is not expressed when no counterclaim is introduced the meaning being simply emphatic<sup>147</sup>.

Throughout these occurrences, the CC is generally hosted by an evaluative assessment, a clue of the intersubjective function concerning the speaker's attitude, that is, neither the conveying of new information nor the reference to shared ground. In these cases, the interrogative form is not referential, that is, the speaker neither aims at eliciting a response, nor at sharing knowledge with the hearer. The function is interpersonal, that is, it concerns the partners intersubjective attitudes.

#### 5.2.3.2.4 Intensification through the hearer's validation: the emergence of modal functions

As we have observed in the case of the speaker-oriented emphasis function, several of the CCs analysed so far seem to have acquired a modal function of intensification. The shift whereby new intensifiers are recruited repeats itself with a certain degree of regularity. Generally, as anticipated in Chapter 3, the strategies that undergo the shift are items from outside the *dictum*. They are terms that originally expressed some relationship between what is said and the declarativeness of saying it, or the certainty, emphasis or truth attached to the content. The strongest case is that of the performative<sup>148</sup> verb *to tell* and the counterpart imperative form *believe me*, both of which have become potential intensifiers (Bolinger 1972: 93):

5.73) She's a looker, believe me!

Through the employment of *believe me*, an emphatic meaning is added" and *you* is the carrier for an extra measure of it" (Bolinger 1972: 93):

5.74) She's a looker, beliéve yóu mé (Bolinger 1972: 93)

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<sup>146</sup> Another proof of the bare emphatic meaning – which may be glossed as *at all, trust me, absolutely* – is the fact that the possible counterclaim is a question, which cannot be demolished by definition, given that no truth value may be attached to it. Moreover, the reader could be tempted to classify the function as an instance of Textual domain and New information function. We underline that the latter behaviour is typical of CCs providing non-explicitly requested information, as, conversely happens in this case.

<sup>147</sup> This is a mere supposition; more quantitative data would be needed to confirm or dismiss such a hypothesis.

<sup>148</sup> As underlined in the Ch. 3, we reiterate that considering *to tell* as a performative is not uncontroversial. However, we won't enter into the details.

The most productive source is made up of **sentence adverbs**, which are used to refer to a truth of a predication. Specifically, they may comment on truth versus non-truth (*really, honestly, truly, actually, indeed*). Moreover, they may comment on the full truth versus partial truth (*quite, fully, entirely*), on the affirmation of truth (*certainly, surely, definitely, frankly*), or on the preference of an alternative over a false one (*rather, more*). According to Bolinger (1972: 94) some of these words [truly, really ...] are intensifiers because they are somewhat redundant. It is claimed that when people make statements, they intend them to be taken as true. Therefore, adding such strategies (like *believe me* observed above) does not make the statements *more* truthful, rather they are employed to emphasise the truth feature of the sentence.

Given that the function is more than often conveyed by *guarda*, our rationale is mainly focused on the latter. It may be hypothesised that *guarda* is recruited to express such modal function by virtue of a pragmatic strengthening of some invited inferences, on the basis of an intermediate metonymic change (Waltereit 2002, Detges and Waltereit 2011, Traugott 2018). The process could be summed up as follows: “if you can look at it, you must believe it” / “I presuppose you have the possibility to believe it given that you can look/conceive it (with your mind)” / “what is visible must be believed” (Brinton 2008: 243, see also Fagard 2010). We are faced with a process of pragmatic strengthening (Hopper and Traugott 1993:75–77): for the *look*-based forms, a conventionalization of the conversational implicature of attentiveness and care involved in looking (intently) occurs (Brinton 2001: 193).

Specifically, we believe that it is properly this **evidential nuance** (visual ability) that triggers the emphasis meaning. *Guarda* is very similar to the strategy ‘believe me’ exemplified in Bolinger’s argument. It only hides an invited inference as for the path ‘look → believe’, that is, ‘if you are in the conditions of looking at it, then you are able to believe it’. Furthermore, the greater frequency of the preference for *guarda* rather than *senti* ‘listen!’<sup>149</sup> (i.e., the auditory correspondent CC) in playing such a function suggests that verbs of visual capacity fulfil an important pragmatic role in the process of speaking and in the acquisition of modal meanings, beyond attention-getting functions. The reason could reside on the intuition that visual actions usually are better at securing attention and confidence (and, through inference, belief) than auditory activities, and that, therefore, one tends to appeal to the act of looking as emblematic of the close attention that a hearer would pay to a given object (see Fagard 2010). This would be the basis for the encoding of the complex function of emphasis.

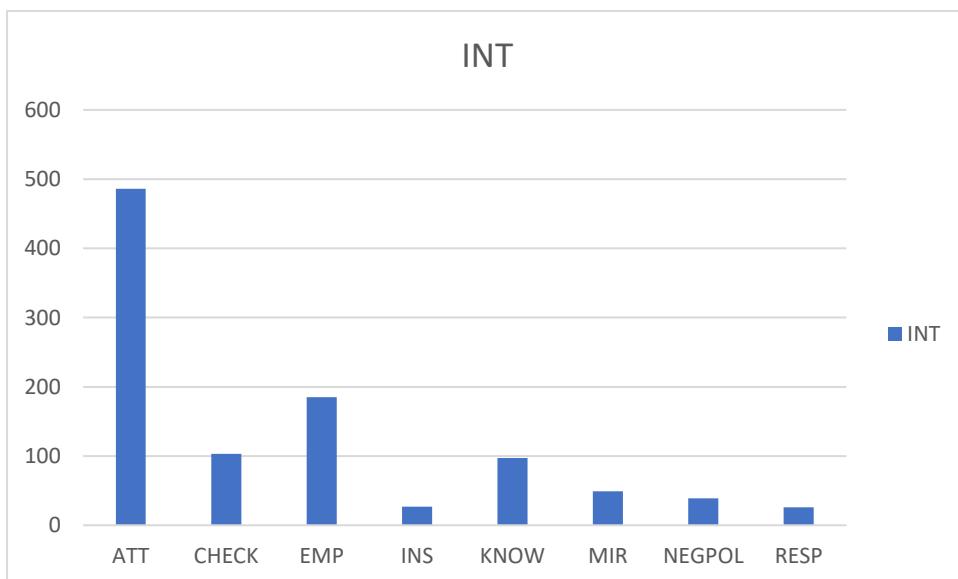
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<sup>149</sup> And, conversely, for the usage of the CC *senti*, which is mobilised to recall the attention in order to change the topic, a function which cannot be played by *guarda*.

An inherently interactional marker - typically used to recall the speaker's attention - is therefore recruited to construct the speaker's stance: this trend confirms the tendency of subjectification in the sense of a development from propositional (*via* textual) to attitudinal, (inter)subjective meanings (see Schwenter and Traugott 2000: 10). However, given that the function is also speaker-oriented in that it implies the speaker's judgement, we may say that an additional step could be included, namely the path from intersubjective to subjective. In other words, as we will see, in some cases *guarda* is not referential anymore, is not used to really consult the hearer, therefore it comes to be used to make the speaker's stance explicit through the routine of the confirmation-seeking operation. Along with a process of subjectification and conventionalisation of invited inferences, the role of position has been crucial to mark the emergence of modal rather than allocutive functions. The preference for final position after evaluative assessments has resulted in a conventional and constructional pattern as we will explain later in chapter 6.

### 5.3 Concluding remarks: interpersonal functions

Summing up, the most attested interpersonal functions (signalled through the acronym INT) are plotted below:



**Figure 5. 5 Percentage of interpersonal functions**

First of all, one consideration is worth making. The interpersonal domain is more heterogeneous with respect to the other two domains (speaker-oriented domain and textual domain). In fact, it displays an important difference between the frequency of the most frequent function overall (attention-getting) and the other functions (a fact we did not notice in these terms for the other two domains, in which functions are more equally represented within the domain). Secondly, the

interpersonal domain includes forms referring to the interactive management of conversation and, less, forms related to the speaker intersubjective stance (emphasis, hedging and insinuation). Moreover, we found out that in the KIParla sample, the interpersonal domain is much less frequent than in the Lip sample. The low frequency in the former sample and the variety of forms - which may also perform more than one function - do not allow to find out many patterns. However, we will try to shed light on some facts.

As shown in Figure 5.5 above, the most frequent function overall is attention-getting (ATT), which is followed by emphasis (EMP) function, by checking (CHECK) function, and appeal to shared knowledge (KNOW) function. Whereas the first function and the third functions are inherently interactive, recalling the phatic aspect of communication, the function of emphasis and appeal to shared knowledge may be defined as strictly intersubjective in that they target the interlocutors' system of knowledge. Specifically, with regards to the two functions which could be considered as the same on a continuum of gradience, speakers (at least from our samples) tend to emphasise rather than to hedge (39 occurrences vs 185 occurrences). The crucial fact is that emphasis is performed through markers generally used to recall the hearer's attention. Therefore, as plainly argued in the chapter, the pattern through which emphasizers are created should be analysed in depth and in comparison to other languages. We detected the existence of an emphasis function through a recall of validation to the interlocutor.

Concerning the core semantics of the CCs at issue, we expected to find perceptual verbs performing the functions at issue. Although perceptual verbs are the most frequent sources overall, we found out that also **semifactive** verbs may be retrieved. Furthermore, perceptual verbs do not only perform attention-getting functions. They may also perform hearer-oriented emphasis functions (intersubjective domain) and, to a lesser extent, mirativity. Semifactive verbs are also frequent and used in checking, sharing knowledge and, to a lesser extent, emphasis (see section on *sai*) function. Referring checking functions, they may happen to be performed by other sources (such as weak predicates), which, in specific positions may perform the function at issue (constructional study - Fischer 2015).

To give a glance at their distribution, we observed that the **initial** position is the preferred slot both for micro and for macrosyntax; with respect to the other two domains, the interpersonal domain is the domain with greatest frequency of initial position (60,5% of macrosyntax, whereas the same position reaches the 31.2% in the speaker-oriented and the 32.1% in the textual domain). The domain displays the lowest percentage of medial position in macrosyntax (13.8%) with respect to the other two domains (whereas for speaker-oriented domain the percentage of medial microsyntactic position reaches the 44.6% and 56.4% of the amount regarding the textual domain).

This distributional fact confirms the tendency of attention-getting (the most frequent function) to occur in initial position. As recognised by Haselow (2016: 82, 83) “in the initial phase, speakers need to deal with turn-taking issues and establish a new unit of talk as a meaningful contribution in ongoing talk, which involves getting the addressee’s attention (Deppermann, 2013)”. Although it is not as frequent as initial, final position hosts the functions of checking/monitoring (see Haselow 2016: 83 - facilitating addressee response category) and, to a lesser extent, insinuating, and emphasis. All these functions conform to studies on modal functions performed in the right periphery (Beeching an Detges 2014). The function of emphasis, although being interpersonal and expected to be found in final position, as happens (92 occurrences), can also occur in initial position; in that case, the function is triggered by the host mood (an evaluation, rather than an allocution). Along with occurring in assertions, in fact, the functions of the domain at stake may be performed in requestive acts (33%), such as interrogations and in evaluative assessments (21,9%), justified by the occurrences of emphasis functions.

Before concluding, it is worth underlining another fact. Some attention-getting markers (which are typical of this domain) may be recruited to play textual functions, therefore attention-getting should be considered as made up of a core meaning and other micro-functions, which can spread over the other domains. In fact, several perceptual sources expected to be found in the interpersonal domain were found to perform specific functions where the CC is used to define and clarify the discourse structure (see in Ch.4 the textual micro-functions where the CC *guarda* was retrieved). This has probably contributed to the “low” frequency of the interpersonal domain (cf. KIParla sample). As anticipated, we hold the typical attention-getting function in cases of true request. Therefore, one prospect of future research refers to the study of those borderline functions and of the diachronic path through which perceptual verbs develop into textual markers, or better, of how the function of attention-getting may give rise to ‘special’ micro-functions.

## **Chapter 6. CCs, DMs, *continua* and directionalities**

### **Introduction to the chapter**

In this final chapter, we will put forward our own view and argue why we believe that the evolution of most CCs can be better accounted for in terms of grammaticalization. We will start by resuming the main results of the study. We will argue that, globally, the most frequent functions are approximation, attention-getting, emphasis, and evidentiality followed by time for planning, epemicity, reformulation, and exemplification. Microsyntax (where initial and medial positions are the preferred slots) is more frequent than macrosyntax. Referring to microsyntax, we can see that the initial slot is occupied by attention-getting, emphasis, opening boundary and evidentiality. Medial microsyntactic position is occupied by approximation, time for planning and, less frequently, evidentiality and emphasis. In final microsyntactic position we can find approximation, emphasis, evidentiality and checking. Referring to macrosyntax, we can see that the initial position is the preferred one, and it is often identified for attention-getting, reformulation, evidentiality, emphasis, opening boundary, and exemplification. In the final position, we can identify approximation, and to a lesser extent, the functions of emphasis and epemicity. In the medial position, the most frequent function is approximation. Typically, to express these functions, speakers use *verba dicendi*, perceptual and semifactive verbs also in functions which are not consistent with the semantic core of the CC (section 6.3.1). The most frequent person values are first- and second-person singular. Crucially, 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms may express varying functions, not only connected with recalling the hearer's perceptual attention but also with conveying the speaker's stance and commenting on the process of text construction (textual coherence).

The functions performed by CCs lead to associate them close to the category of DMs. Specifically, we will argue that the development of most CCs may be largely accounted for as a case of grammaticalization, which leads them to acquire a DMs status. Typical processes will be outlined in 6.2.1-6.2.7. To describe the evolution of CCs we will invoke a notion of grammaticalization as a process expressing grammatical functions which are crucial for the structuring of spoken discourse (Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 64). In 6.3 we will draw some schematic representations of the most frequent and polyfunctional CCs with the goal of explaining at least some of the "anomalies" of the outlined patterns in 6.1. As we will argue, the latter can be accounted for as the result of a constructional study aligning itself with those approaches which invoke an ideal of metalinguistic meaning as arising from constructionalization of whole patterns and juxtaposed sequences - these given functions may result holistically rather than compositionally. In other words, through a combined perspective, we will draw some maps through which we will

try to argue how a given (presumably frequent) function seemed to have emerged through the conventionalization of invited inferences and / or subjectification along with a process of constructionalization.

### 6.1 When, why, how do speakers (meta-)comment? A brief outline of the relation between CCs and DMs

Before entering the details in the following sections, we will start by summarising the main results referring to the functions of CCs and their distribution in micro and in macrosyntactic position.

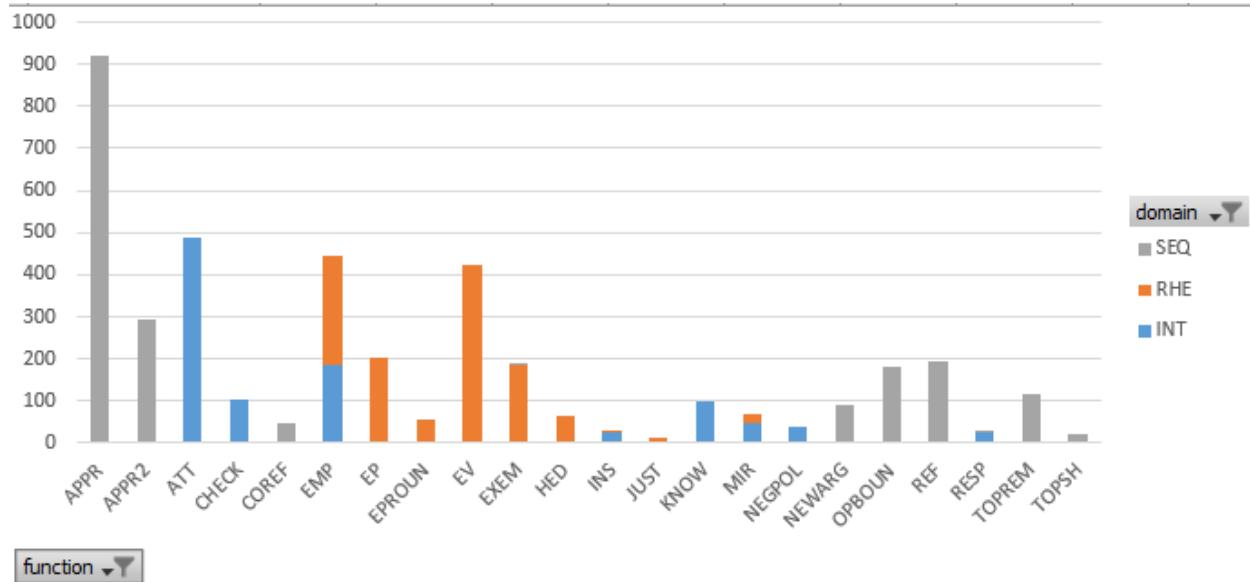
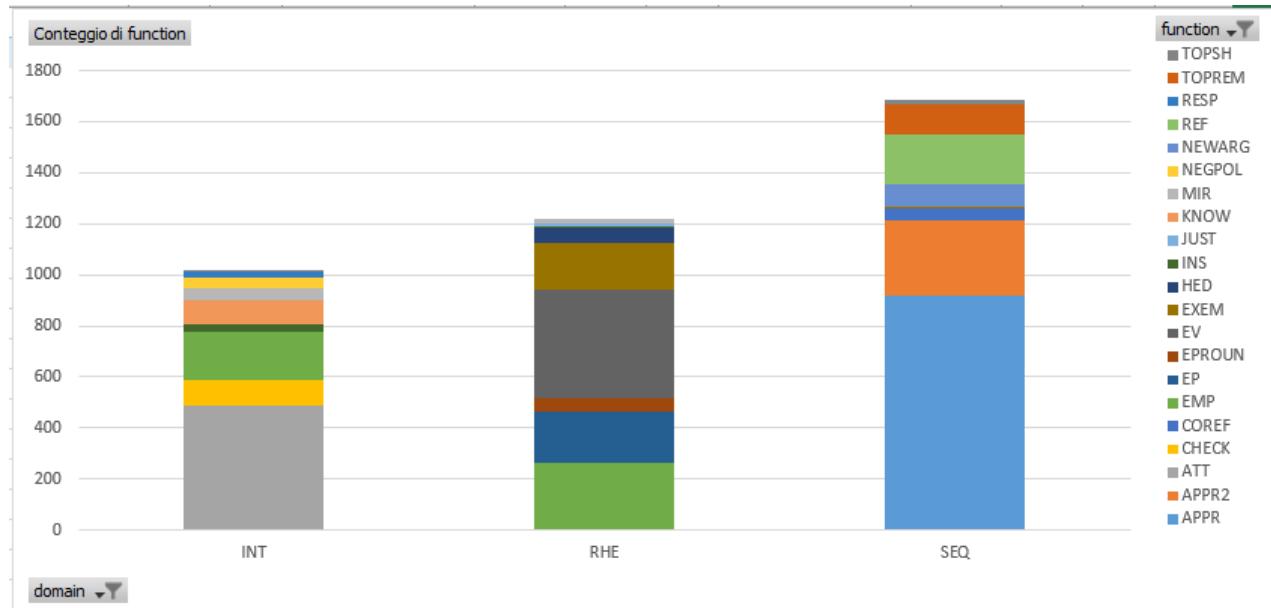


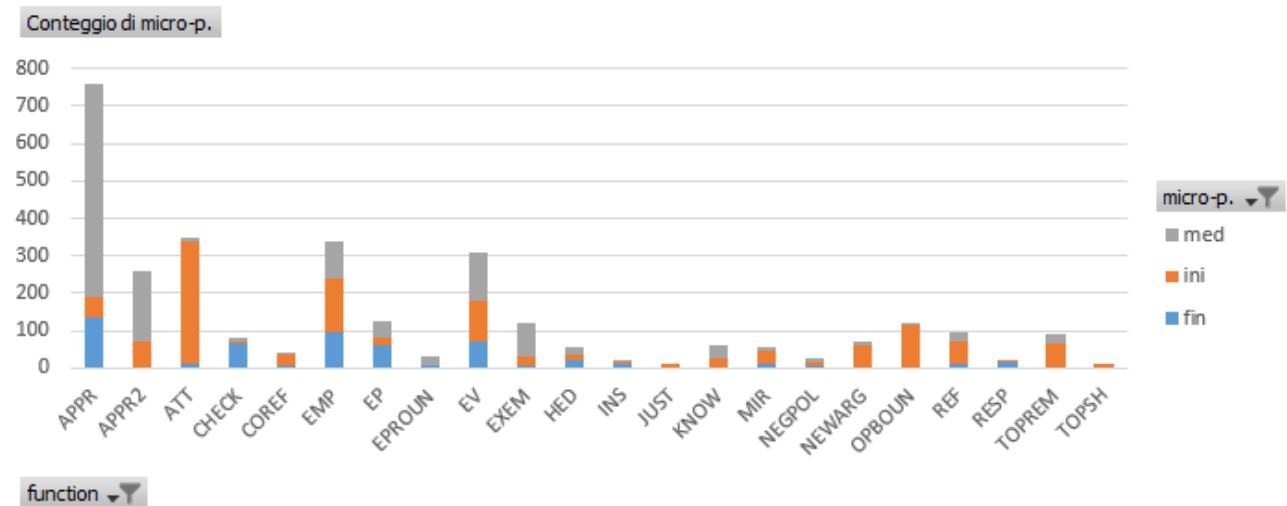
Figure 6. 1 Percentage of functions over the three domains: textual (SEQ), speaker-oriented (RHE), interpersonal (INT)

The graph depicts the answers the initial research question as to why speakers meta-comment. Globally, speakers meta-comment to express the following most frequent functions: **approximation** (APPR), **attention-getting** (ATT), **emphasis** (EMP) and **evidentiality** (EV). To these functions, which are the most frequent overall, the slightly less frequent functions follow: **time for planning** (APPR2), **epistemicity** (EP), **reformulation** (REF), and **exemplification** (EXEM). We may assert that generally the most frequent functions of CCs may be placed on a *continuum* based on a notion of gradualness: some approximate the content (acting as bushes - see Caffi 2007), some reinforce the speaker's stance, some others indicate the speaker's epistemic and evidential position (see Schneider 2007a, b). Furthermore, as the spoken variety was the one we focused on, the attention to the hearer as a participant in the speech event is corroborated from the frequent occurrence of the function of attention-getting. The domains with each function are plotted below:



**Figure 6. 2** functions per domains

The most frequent domain is the speaker-oriented domain, followed by the textual and, less, by the interpersonal one. Furthermore, by looking at the distribution of CCs with respect to their placement in micro and macro-syntactic position, the data provide the following picture:



**Figure 6. 3** Functions per microsyntax position

CCs are generally distributed in microsyntax. In this component, the most frequent functions (approximation, emphasis and evidentiality) may be performed in different positions, excluding approximation, which is nearly always placed in medial (med) position. However, we will return to this issue later. In the next graph, we will represent the distribution of the functions over the macrosyntactic level:

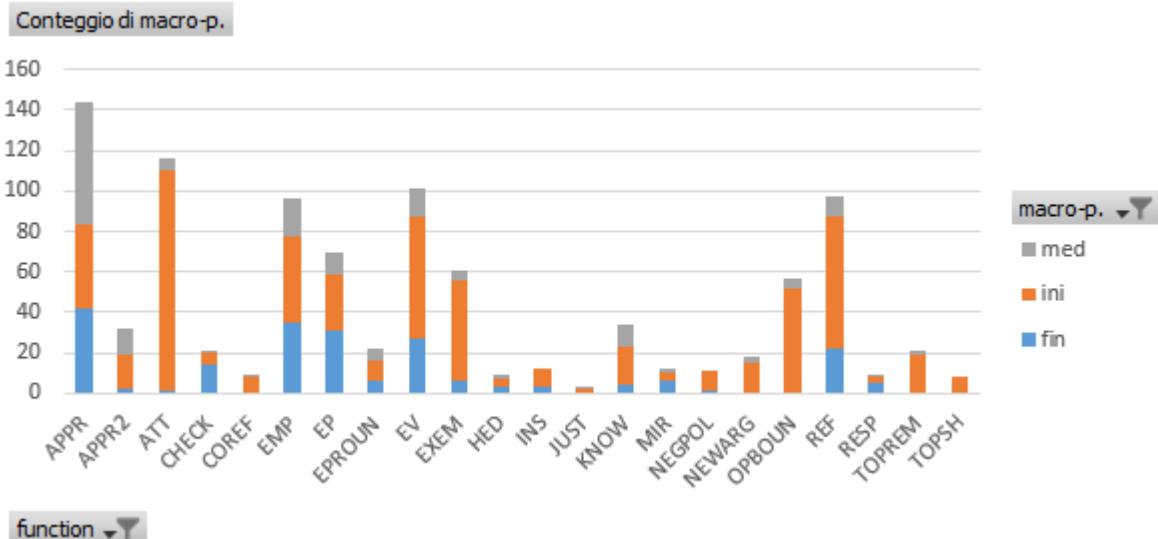


Figure 6. 4 Functions per macrosyntactic position

In accordance with the principles of macrosyntax, the preferred position is the initial slot, whereby the CC projects a given move in the beginning of the articulated utterance. Furthermore, as will be argued later, this resonates with the distribution of the most frequent functions, which are generally placed in predictable positions, in line with the fulfilment of some basic communicative tasks, plainly identified and corroborated with respect to the study of DMs.

As emerges, the functions played by CCs (especially the most frequent discourse functions) refer to the notion of textual coherence and contribute to make the speaker's (inter)subjective stance explicit thus responding to basic communicative tasks (approximating / reformulating, emphasising / attenuating both the truth value and the speaker's assertive force and recalling the hearer's attention). The very same functions have been claimed to be typically served by DMs. In line with this last rationale, CCs exhibit many of the features of DMs (or pragmatic markers) in that they serve these pragmatic or procedural functions, with variable scope, which in turn may extend over the entire clause or over the discourse (Brinton 2008). The same behaviour is generally taken by CCs, with some exceptions regarding the parameter of the truth-value affectedness (see the functions of approximation, evidentiality, epistemicity, and exemplification). Furthermore, what we classified as being in the speaker-oriented domain includes functions which often convey interpersonal/modal meanings on a scale of illocutive force, thus taking into account the hearer's involvement. Therefore, the reality of the constructions at stake is inherently intersubjective and indexical, as typical of the category of DMs. According to Brinton (2008: 241), in fact, what sets CCs apart from other parentheticals and DMs is exclusively their clausal origin, in that functionally they serve the same work. We do not believe that their clausal origin is a fact that sets them apart. Whereas many CCs

undergo the processes involved in grammaticalization, some other CCs do not undergo these processes, therefore cannot be ascribed completely to the category of DMs.

Nonetheless, despite the lack of complete identification between the two classes, additional arguments may be put forward that many CCs are DMs on a par with other more typical DMs, not only because they function as cues to ease the comprehension and to structure the discourse as a whole (functional correlate) but also because most of them result from processes subsumed under the head of grammaticalization and constructionalization. After a brief review of the main processes involved in grammaticalization, we will put forward our view arguing that we treat the process of development of most CCs as grammaticalization because we believe that the pragmatic function CCs fulfil answers to basic routines/tasks as required in on-line discourse production, along with more typical grammatical devices.

## 6.2 CCs and DMs: the grammaticalization of CCs

Together with conveying mostly discourse functions on a par with DMs, most of our CCs undergo the typical processes involved in grammaticalization and, in some cases, of constructionalization. By the latter we mean that CCs may happen to acquire some meanings as the result of a process of conventionalization of sequential contexts in which the CC becomes part of a whole construction as a structured sequence of language. In this construction, different formal and distributional aspects contribute to serve (or to trigger) a given function (Fischer 2015). Moreover, for some families of CCs, a process of constructionalization of a whole taxonomy of structures seems to occur, where the emergence and the occurrence of new tokens contribute to the entrenchment of the abstract construction they instantiate. As we will explain, the meaning of the CC is integrated and largely attracted from its distribution, patterns of co-occurrence and of substitutions (i.e., patterns of paraphrases).

Let us briefly survey the processes of grammaticalization before analysing the meaning of some frequent CCs in detail in 6.3. In these paragraphs, we will show the organization of discursive “networks” through the exemplification of five case studies (*guarda*, *sai* (?), *diciamo*, *dico*, *voglio dire*), with the attempt of explaining how specific CCs become specialized by acquiring a conventional role in spoken discourse (Vincent 2005: 188-189), even if such functions are not always “compatible” or predictable with respect to their semantic sources. The exemplification of these case studies will help illustrate how some dynamics mark the evolution of a given function from one domain to the other, i.e., its coming into being is the outcome of discursive pressures.

### 6.2.1 Decategorialization

Some CCs (or at least the most frequent and formulaic and partially constructional) such as *penso* ('I think'), *credo* ('I believe'), *guarda* ('look'), *sai* ('you know') exhibit decategorialization, or the loss of the morphological and syntactic characteristics of the original word class. Hence, they undergo a shift from a major (open) to a minor (closed) word class (see Hopper and Traugott 1993: 102-103). CCs change from their status of full complement-taking verb to an invariable particle-like form (cf. Brinton 2008: 159).

Following Haselow (2016), we point out that, concerning specifically CCs playing epistemic/evidential meanings, from a macrogrammatical perspective, the syntactic structure involving a CC like *mi sa/mi sembra* ('it seems to me'), or *credo* ('I believe') should be analysed as though it consisted of an independent (non-subordinate) assertion (in any type of syntactic format<sup>150</sup>) and a meta-textual unit in the form of a fixed construction (which may be defined as pragmatic tag - see Weinert (2012: 237) or as an epistemic parenthetical (see Thompson and Mulac 1991) that is integrated in the illocutionary force of the unit with which it co-occurs.

The development of the CCs is thus consistent with the observation that speakers favour combinations of clauses that are not complements syntactically-speaking. Rather, they behave like arrangements of evidential or epistemic "phrases" and declarative clauses related by loose discourse-pragmatic relations, rather than morpho-syntactic hierarchization (Thompson 2002: 137; Haselow 2016: 90, Haselow 2017: 147).

According to Thompson (2002: 125), what has been accounted for as an instance of complementation can be, in fact, better understood in terms of epistemic/evidential/evaluative formulaic fragments expressing the speaker's stance toward the content of the host clause. When occurring utterance-finally, the mental predicates involved in unintegrated CCs cannot be treated as complement taking predicates (CTP). Rather, they convey an epistemic-evidential evaluation concerning the previous message (Haselow 2016: 90). Hence, they function as adverbs. A semantic reading of these verbs cannot be obtained. The CC *credo* ('I believe') in the final position, for instance, does not designate the speaker's belief in the truth of the assertion it accompanies. It rather expresses an epistemic opinion to which the speaker is committed, but which is weakened for some reason (Haselow 2016: 90).

Moreover, we observed that CCs like the epistemic items may serve discoursal-organisational function, on a par with tags (turn-giving). This fact is corroborated by some correspondences in some other languages. Dehé and Wichmann (2010a: 37) argue that sequences such as *I think* and *I*

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<sup>150</sup> See, for instance, the CC host in terms of a VLH.

*believe* are often best analysed as epistemic adverbs conveying the speaker's attitude, as markers serving discursive, interactional and interpersonal purposes, or as markers of hesitation and mental planning (Dehé and Wichmann 2010a: 42). All in all, for most CCs, their “clausal status is reduced to something resembling adverbial status” (Brinton 2008: 237 on the grammaticalization of *I gather* and *I find*).

### 6.2.2 Desemanticization

The meaning of most CCs is transformed to express more abstract meanings, resulting from a process of bleaching. Firstly, epistemic CCs express the speaker's viewpoint, attitude, or evaluation attributing an abstract function like epistemic modality or an operation like the reinforcement of the speaker's assertive force - rather than denoting an act of thought. Their crucial role has been corroborated by the low frequency of occurrence in *irrealis* contexts (see Ch. 3), thus showing they function as the exclusive markers to convey epistemicity through a process of desemanticization beside decategorialization. Therefore, for example, as anticipated above, a CC like *penso* ('I think') does not describe the speaker in the act of thinking, rather it is used to express, less concretely, the speaker's epistemic stance. *Mi sa* (lit. 'it tastes of x to me', 'it seems to me') undergoes such bleaching in a clearer way which is worth analysing in depth: from the original meaning of 'having the taste of x' in occurrence with phrasal constituents, the source undergoes bleaching to meaning 'it is possible that p(roposition)' with a shift from perceptual taste to epistemic knowledge. Moreover, always with respect to epistemic markers like *mi sa*, they can perform hedging and face-saving functions placed on the interpersonal level, thereby shifting from the affectedness on the truth value on the speech act level (see Haselow 2016: 90 on the same path outlined for *I think*).

Perceptual verbs expressing textual meaning have a small residual of their perceptual meaning being mainly focused on suggesting that something “textually” is going to happen (from external/perceptual to textual attention and textual coherence - see 6.3.1.1).

Some other CCs are completely transformed in opaque constructions losing nearly every trace of their semantics, whereby being transformed into something like interjections (see Jucker and Smith 1998). Concerning *pensa* ('just think') performing mirative meanings, it seems that it becomes semantically opaque, having undergone semantic bleaching, though not figurative change (differently from *guarda* 'look' in the same function - see 6.3.1.1). This rationale resonates with the fact that several of the CCs that we have analysed are non-compositional/formulaic information units, whose shape is essentially invariable and, to a certain extent, not transparent with respect to the function they convey. In fact, they are usually short chunks, morpho-syntactically unanalysable.

Moreover, they tend to be flexible on the distributional ground, and to serve functions that are mostly procedural, whereby relating to the situation of discourse (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 874-875).

However, not all the CCs undergo this process. Neither *badate bene* ('be careful') nor analytic CCs like *diciamo per i non addetti ai lavori* ('Let's say, for the non-authorised personnel') do undergo any semantic shift or bleaching, therefore it is important to point out that within the domain of meta-comment, a distinction should be made between those CCs which are routinised (and that may be thus called DMs) and those which are spur of the moment structures. Kaltenböck et al. (2011: 875) propose to call them instantaneous theticals: they are fully compositional, therefore not undergoing desemanticization and being formed nearly anytime and anywhere, they can be inserted in most syntactic slots of a sentence, and quite a few of them are uttered only once and never again. They display few restrictions with respect to their internal and their external structure (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 875).

Finally, some structures are constructional. Constructional CCs are recurrent patterns or constructions of theticals, being compositional but displaying some schematic structure and function. These may be defined as constructional, namely structures like *dice Peters* ('Peters says'), which is a reporting clause that typically is made up of a human subject and a speech act verb (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 875). For example, with respect to epistemic CCs, it is argued that, rather than regarding them as pragmatalized or lexicalized as it has alternatively been suggested, epistemic CCs (defined as complement-taking mental predicates CTMP) should be approached from the usage-based perspective of **constructional grammaticalization**, which has to do with the grammaticalization of schematic constructions that belong to a wider taxonomy rather than being sequences in isolation devoid of any link to other similar structures (see Van Bogaert 2011: 295 on English CCs such as *I think*).

"This tendency in the grammaticalization of constructions goes a long way towards accounting for the lack of internal fixation" (Van Bogaert 2011: 319). A very frequent CTMP<sup>151</sup> such as *I think* permits the emergence of variant forms such as *I would think* since the schematic construction *I think* has become highly entrenched. The underlying schema has become productive, thus opening up to "deviations from the frozen form" (Van Bogaert 2011: 319). The so-called initially "novel structures" (Langacker 2000: 100), develop into entrenched constructions (Van Bogaert 2011: 319). The constructions exhibit a certain degree of generality; gradually, they tend to acquire more schematicity. As observed in Brinton (2008: 256) less grammaticalized forms (i.e., those displaying a given amount of variety with respect to their syntax) would start to inherit the more abstract features of the meso-construction and be driven into the wider set. Therefore, it is possible to account

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<sup>151</sup> Complement taking mental predicate.

for the later emergence of epistemic parentheticals such as *presume* ('I presume'), *deduco* ('I deduce'), *spero* ('I hope').

Therefore, as far as the grammaticalization of CTMPs in our data concerns, it is not only the concrete string simple present verb, e.g., *credo*, that is grammaticalizing, but rather, at a higher level of abstraction, the schema according to which *credo* is formed is becoming "increasingly entrenched and grammaticalized" (Van Bogaert 2011: 319), with respect to the representation [1° person mental/cognitive predicate]. Notably, CCs like *penso* ('I think'), *credo* ('I believe'), *immagino* ('I imagine'), *non so* ('I don't know') etc... seem to be part of the grammaticalization as a whole taxonomy of (macro and meso) construction to the point that semantically heavy predicates such as *presumo* ('I presume'), *deduco* ('I deduce'), *spero* ('I hope') may be used as epistemic markers, on a par with more transparent and weak predicates (*penso*, *mi sa*, *credo*<sup>152</sup>). Hence, rather than expressing the speaker's operation of thought with respect to operations like presumption, derivation, insinuation, they may express bare epistemic functions attaching an item of epistemicity.

### 6.2.3 Increase in pragmatic meaning

The process may involve a gradual shift from referential to nonreferential (or non-pragmatic to pragmatic) meaning (Traugott 1995a, b) with the possible existence of bridging contexts. As will be plainly argued later, the pool of the CCs based on the verb *guardare* ('to look') acquire interpersonal (expressive/rhetorical) meanings and textual functions which are neither connected with the truth value nor related to a referential reading of the perceptual verb at stake (Detges and Waltereit 2011, Traugott 2018). Actually, in this regard, *guarda* is used to communicate how the text is going to be constructed - acquiring a structuring function - or how the speaker comments on the validity of a given utterance - expressing a comment on its assertiveness.

*Pensa* conveying mirative meanings is totally devoid of referential meaning. It does not appeal (anymore) to the hearer, functioning like an interjection. Given that its only function is communicating an attitude of astonishment or surprise (from the speaker's angle), no real appeal to the hearer seems to be expressed, or at least if so, it is a matter of routine.

Furthermore, markers used to express epistemic commitment or approximation on the truth value are used to perform hedging functions, thus expressing pragmatic meaning<sup>153</sup> regarding attenuation (politeness markers) rather than truth-conditionality (see *diciamo*, *voglio dire*, *non so*).

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<sup>152</sup> Notice that already *penso* ('I think') and other weak predicates subdued bleaching.

<sup>153</sup> However, as anticipated earlier, we want to underline that epistemic and evidential CCs may express a function on the neustic level, functioning as modal adverbs. Therefore, they may act on the propositional level, being considered as atypical examples of DMs if one takes into account only the acquisition of exclusive pragmatic meaning. In a similar vein, those CCs functioning as bushes affect the truth value.

As will follow later in this chapter, for the CC *voglio dire* ('I mean'), pragmatic meanings of explicitness, speech act-motivation, and emphasis are all pragmatic in nature, and are likely to derive to different extents from the operation of appositional meaning (more referential and concrete).

Moreover, the functions of *vedi* (?) ('you see?') range from literal to non-literal, that is from the evidential meaning connected to its visual import to pragmatic meanings pertaining the speaker's stance of emphasis and aggression (see Chapter 5).

#### 6.2.4 Pragmatic strengthening

The above-mentioned functions often result in the conventionalization of invited inferences (Brinton 2001; Traugott 2018). Traugott and König (1991) argue that some changes are the outcomes of pragmatic implicatures arising in the syntagmatic flow of speech (*invited inferencing*). Drawing on Halliday and Hasan (1976), they distinguish, at the synchronic level, three functional and semantic components of language, namely the propositional, the textual, and the expressive domains. Items pertaining to the propositional component progressively develop polysemies in the other two domains at stake (Hopper and Traugott 1993: 75–77).

The basic mechanism of inferencing is of two types, metaphor and metonymy. The former is correlated with shifts from meanings placed in the external described situation to meanings situated in the internal, evaluative, cognitive situation and in the textual situation (Traugott 1983). The latter is largely correlated with changes to meanings situated in the subjective belief-state or attitude towards a given situation. Another way of putting this is that metaphor is correlated with solving the problem of representation, whereas metonymy is concerned with resolving the problem of being informative and relevant in communication (Traugott 1988: 414, 415).

For instance, the emphatic meaning of the CC *guarda* results from the conventionalization of the conversational implicature of attentiveness and care involved in looking. As Schwenter and Traugott (2000: 10) recognise "what is visible must be believed" (Brinton 2001, Waltereit 2002, Detges and Waltereit 2011, Traugott 2018). The function of emphasis may also arise from another path: what is repeated triggers an implicature. It conveys that the speaker is attaching emphasis on the content (see the CCs *ripeto*, 'I repeat', *dico* 'I say').

Moreover, the emphatic meaning of *sai?* ('you know?') emerges from the routine of the question which imposes the content as unknown to the hearer and, hence, as unquestionable. Similarly, *vedi* ('you see') develops the meaning of expressing the subjective stance connected with a notion of justification through the invited inference of the self-evident nuance through a process of metaphorization in the following path: 'as you can see (its logical relevance), I can say that and, thus, you must believe me'.

### **6.2.5 Subjectification**

Subjectification is a process of shift whereby a linguistic expression acquires meanings that convey the speaker's attitude or viewpoint (see Traugott 1995a, 2018; Schwenter and Traugott 2000). This is a pragmatic-semantic process which means that inherent as well as contextual meanings of the given expression are considered. The process at stake is connected to the process of pragmatic strengthening. Indeed, what emerges from conventionalizing invited inference is often used to express subjective meanings. For instance, *guarda* acquires metatextual functions, coming to express some of the features of the speech event of commanding, namely, the speaker's attitude of emphasis, which appears to be implied by the direct imperative form (Brinton 2001: 193) and by its evidential nuance. As will be argued later, we observe a shift from attention to the textual dimension and to interpersonal meanings.

Moreover, from the meaning of reformulation (appositional) *dico* ('I say') and *voglio dire* ('I mean') acquire meanings connected with the metacommunicative level (see 6.3.1.4 and 6.3.1.5); they accompany not words but intentions, thus acquiring values connected with a process of explication and justification on the speech act level and on the illocutive force (from metalinguistic to metacommunicative, see Beeching 2017).

However, despite such well-documented changes, our data gather some evidence for the claim that an inverse shift can occur from the interpersonal to the textual and to the personal domain, thus contradicting the classical trend of the directionality of change. In fact, markers of 2<sup>nd</sup> person expressing interpersonal (i.e. interactive) functions may be mobilised to synchronically serve either functions connected to interpersonal meanings (beyond the mere attention-getting or checking) or to convey speaker-oriented meanings, that is meanings relating to the speaker's attitude. See in this regard, the CCs *guarda*, *vedi*, *sai* which, in some occurrences, came to be used to convey the speaker's (inter)subjective stance or the CCs *pensa*, which is mobilised to express mirativity on the side of the speaker. However, we will return to the issue later.

### **6.2.6 Persistence and divergence**

When items are grammaticalized, some traces of the original lexical forms are retained. For the principle of persistence, "when a form undergoes grammaticalization from a lexical to a grammatical function, as long as it is grammatically viable some traces of its original lexical meanings tend to adhere to it, and details of its lexical history may be reflected in constraints on its grammatical distribution" (Hopper 1991: 22). In other words, the principle of persistence correlates the meaning and the function of a form to its history as a lexical item. This relationship is frequently

wholly opaque by the stage of univerbation. However, during intermediate stages of linguistic change, it can be likely that a given form will be polysemous, and that one or more of its meanings will mirror a given dominant earlier meaning (Hopper 1991: 28). Maybe the process is not available for completely opaque CCs such as *figurati* ('imagine!') and *pensa* with mirative meanings. However as exemplified in 6.3, it is available for many CCs. Furthermore, divergence, or the ability of grammaticalized forms to retain their original functions in certain contexts, is true to all the CCs studied in this text, all of which may be used as matrix clauses.

### 6.2.7 Coalescence

The strategies undergoing the above-discussed processes may undergo coalescence - a process also defined as phonetic erosion, phonological attrition/reduction - as a clue to their frequent use in discourse. It implies that a linguistic expression loses phonetic substance. For Heine (2003) once a lexeme is conventionalized as a grammatical marker, it tends to undergo erosion. Its phonological substance is likely to be reduced in some way and to become more dependent on surrounding phonetic material. Heine and Kuteva (2007) have described different kinds of phonetic erosion: loss of phonetic segments, including loss of full syllables, loss of suprasegmental properties, such as stress, tone, or intonation, loss of phonetic autonomy and adaptation to adjacent phonetic units, and phonetic simplification.

In our data *guarda* undergoes coalescence to a certain extent, or phonological attrition, tending to be reduced to ['gwara], ['gwa] or ['var(d)a] (see Crystal and Davy 1975: 97). First, in some occurrences, *guarda* appears as truncated: ['gwa]. In some other occurrences, what undergoes the shift in the manner of articulation, the occlusive consonant /g/ is transformed into a fricative consonant in the form ['varda]. Hence it may occur another reduction of the occlusive /d/, which leads to the zero form in the string ['va:ra].

In a similar vein, another shift concerns the CC *diciamo*, which is reduced in some cases to the form [i'tʃa:mo] and, in some varieties, to the form [(i)'ʃa:mo].

Another example of coalescence may be retrieved in the development of the CC *non so* (I don't know'), which starting from [non'so] may be reduced to the form [ntso], in which the fricative is transformed into an affricative including a reduction of the initial segment of the string. In some occurrences, the CC *voglio dire* [vɔʎʎo'di:re] is truncated to the form [vɔʎʎo'di].

However, we do underline that coalescence is not a necessary feature of grammaticalization of CCs. In fact, CCs frequently remain syntactically independent, and fully realised forms on the phonetic ground.

As observed from this brief survey, some CCs are more advanced in the process of linguistic change, hence they can be defined as plain DMs. Moreover, some of them play a crucial role to study patterns of shift from a domain to the other or, at least, to see how a domain may be correlated to another one. Even though the forms that function as CCs are constructions that belong to specific grammatical categories and with specific semantic properties connected to their lexical sources, a full comprehension of their usage cannot be accomplished without considering globally the textual and pragmatic roles (and the behaviour) they perform in concrete discourse (Vincent 2005: 192). Moreover, some CCs and some functions are inherently borderline between contiguous domains. Hence, we believe it is worth analysing their development in depth. We will try to investigate how certain meanings emerged with respect to some cases studies (6.3.1) after summing up how the development of CCs should be accounted for as an instance of grammaticalization.

### 6.2.8 CCs as results of grammaticalization

Most advanced CCs (such as *penso*, *guarda*, *pensa!* *dico*, *diciamo*, *voglio dire*, *mi sa*) may to this point be defined as DMs. In line with Degand and Evers-Vermeul (2015: 61, 74), who invoke grammaticalization to explain the evolution of DMs, we believe that the evolution of CCs may be accounted for in terms of grammaticalization. Although the new so-called process of pragmatalization has been identified to account for the emergence of DMs in some paradigms (Barth-Weingarten and Couper-Kuhlen 2002 *inter alia*), according to Traugott (1995b), a distinct concept of pragmatalization lacks justification given that typical grammatical forms, such as tense, can also perform pragmatic functions. To treat DMs as examples of something other than grammaticalization would be “to obscure its similarities with the more canonical clines” of the same process (Traugott 1995b: 15; Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 63).

The idea that a process distinct from grammaticalization is unnecessary to account for the evolution of DMs is advocated in several empirical studies in a variety of languages (Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 64, 75). A strong supporter of the view is Diewald (2006, 2011), who considers DMs to be grammatical items. She thus treats their diachronic evolution as the outcome of grammaticalization. She argues that pragmatic functions are grammatical functions which are crucial for the organization and the structuring of spoken discourse. On a par with DMs<sup>154</sup>, CCs are indexical elements operating in spoken communication, i.e., turn-taking signals, topic changers, markers of modality, etc... (Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 64).

Therefore, we believe that CCs play an inherently indexical function which is crucial to decode the discourse structure and the speaker’s stance attached to it, thus performing a macro-grammatical,

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<sup>154</sup> Even if not all of them subdued all the processes of grammaticalization.

structuring, organising function. Moreover, some CCs act on the truth value, functioning as bushes and as shields (see Schneider 2007a, b) expressing the speaker's modal stance, and therefore, functionally behaving as epistemic and evidential adverbs, i.e. plain grammatical functions.

Rosenkvist and Skärlund (2013) take a similar opinion. Analysing the evolution of the Swedish item *typ* ('type') from noun, to preposition, to adverb, to DM, the authors defend the idea that this path should be accounted for as a case of grammaticalization. Their position arises from the belief that both semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic aspects have to be considered when studying the process of grammaticalization. In other words, only a combined perspective can provide a global understanding of grammaticalization (Rosenkvist and Skärlund 2013: 331, see also Vincent 2005).

In line with Boye and Harder's (2012) usage-based theory of grammatical status and grammaticalization, we believe that a conceptualization of grammaticalization should be meant to accommodate both the "uncontroversial cases" and the types of phenomena that "some scholars are reluctant to include [...] under grammaticalization proper" (Boye and Harder 2012: 22). Grammar "is constituted by expressions that by linguistic convention are ancillary and as such discursively secondary in relation to other expressions and [...] grammaticalization consists in the diachronic change that leads to such expressions" (Boye and Harder 2012: 7), although they do not always undergo fixation and paradigmatization (see Van Bogaert 2011).

As argued by Degand and Evers-Vermeul (2015: 74), this position crucially resonates with the fact that no clear line can be drawn between pragmatics and grammar. In fact, traditional "grammatical" categories (such as tense, aspect and mood markers) may perform genuinely pragmatic functions (Traugott 1995b). Furthermore, discourse-related categories such as topic and focus may show a grammatical dimension (Brinton and Traugott 2005: 139; Prévost 2011: 408). Following Degand and Evers-Vermeul (2015: 74), we defend a view of grammar which is in accordance with usage-based approaches. Hence, these approaches tend to reject the ideal of a clear-cut separation between lexicon and grammar (see Goldberg's 1995 and Croft's 2001 approaches to Construction Grammar). Therefore, the process of grammaticalization should be revised in order to include a new view of grammar according to which the "grammar structures the communicative (including cognitive) aspects of language. Therefore, it encompasses not only phonology; morphosyntax and semantics but also inferences that arise out of linguistic form [...]" (Traugott 1995b: 7).

Following Degand and Evers-Vermeul (2015: 78), we consider grammaticalization as

the evolution of linguistic expressions from a more referential, lexically meaningful state to a more functional, elusive state, in which these expressions start to mark the clause, sentence or

wider context in which they occur. If proper attention is paid to the specific mechanisms involved, this broad view of grammar and grammaticalization allows us to generalize over a variety of linguistic phenomena, instead of having to introduce a new term ending in –ization for changes at each different level of the grammar.” (Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 78)

### 6.3 CCs along three pragmatic domains: representations, constructions and *continua*

#### 6.3.1 Drawing a graphic representation of the three domains

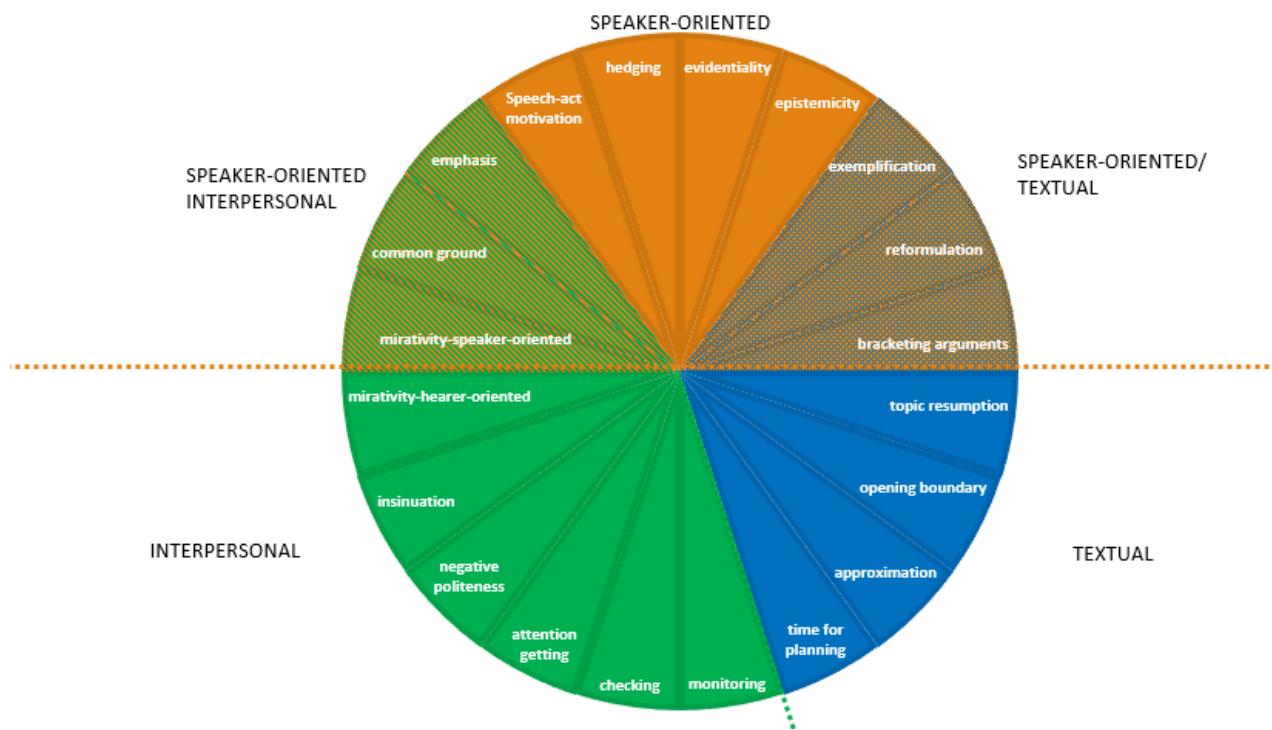


Figure 6. 5 CCs functions across the domain

In the figure, the orange area includes the typical speaker-oriented functions. The three dotted areas between blue and orange areas in blurred colours represent those speaker-oriented functions which are borderline in regard to the textual domain, since they serve the purpose of making the speaker's stance explicit and, at the same time, they index the construction and architecture of texts. The blue area includes typical textual functions. The green area charts typical interpersonal functions. Finally, the three dotted areas between green and orange areas in blurred colours (orange/green) represent borderline functions, i.e., functions which are used to refer to the speaker's stance which may originate in the hearer-oriented domain through conventionalization of invited inferences or increasing subjectification.

The graph below includes more granular information such as the scope of sets of functions (truth-value vs assertive force and so forth):

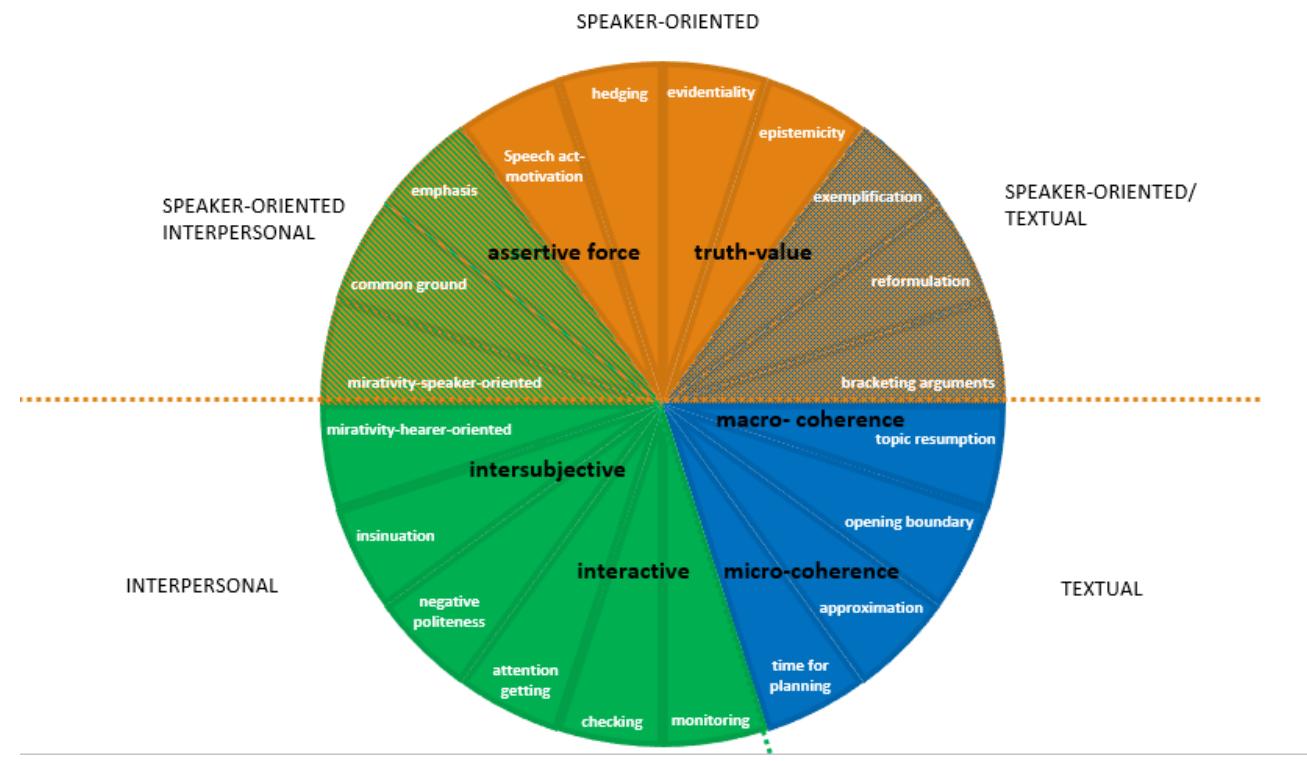


Figure 6. 6 CCs functions across the domain and scope

First of all, as anticipated earlier, the functions along the speaker-oriented domain show shifts with textual and with interpersonal, a fact which may be explained with respect to the observation that the functions at stake may concern either the truth value or the illocutive force value (they are placed in between).

As can be observed in the scheme, some functions have been set in “interconnected areas”. In fact, we believe that some functions are in a way *borderline*, although we tagged them as belonging to a given specific domain. It may be hypothesised that they emerge from specific paths justifying the “unpredictableness” of their occurrence and their double face (paths of shift).

For instance, we classified the function of emphasis performed by CCs like *guarda* ('look'), *vedi* ('see'), *sai* ('you know') as an instance of the interpersonal domain. In fact, *guarda* conveys emphasis by a confirmation-seeking process (the reason we included it in the interpersonal domain), which is clearly hearer-oriented. Nevertheless, given that the markers under scrutiny may come to be used to express even the speaker's stance - about which the hearer is not concerned anymore - they could also be classified as markers of speaker-oriented emphasis. In fulfilling this function, the appeal to the hearer came to be merely a fact of routinization (opacification). In some contexts, in fact, the speaker simply puts her view, without aiming at convincing the hearer through a process of appeal or confirmation-seeking. Therefore, even if the function conveyed is still emphasis, it changes the direction: from hearer to speaker.

In a similar vein, we observed that reformulation (see the CC *voglio dire* ‘I mean’) may be context-sensitive in that it happens to select active examples which make the operation contextually-bounded, far from being a plainly referential, appositional process of paraphrase. In this case, the function is similar to exemplification as outlined in this research, that is as a speaker-oriented operation, which construes categories based on context-relevant examples, which are active to the co-participants.

Furthermore, the function of mirativity has been treated as speaker and hearer-oriented on the basis of the target of newness of information. We point out that also in cases of hearer-oriented functions (*look at the extraordinariness of p*), the reference to the hearer may be only merely present and it represents more a routinization. Hence, the function seems borderline with the interpersonal component (similarly to the function of emphasis discussed above).

The function of bracketing arguments expresses an argumentative dimension which is speaker-oriented, in that it conveys an order in the sequentiality of information, which is highly filtered by the speaker-oriented angle. Even if it has been tagged as textual, it is highly meta-discursive and argumentative (subjective).

Still, the function of appeal to shared knowledge may be mobilised to express the speaker’s stance through *pretending* sharing knowledge. In general, what we notice is a sort of shift from the interpersonal to the speaker-oriented domain, i.e., inherently 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms came to be mobilised to express the speaker’s stance, a function expected for 1<sup>st</sup> person forms (see Kaltenböck 2005).

Given such premises, we want to investigate further the discourse profile of the CCs expressing at least the most frequent functions. By looking at the semantic source of the CC and on the value of its person, we can trace a sort of classification of the typicality of a given function in its specific domain. Let us consider a figure of the distribution of the semantic source of the CC:

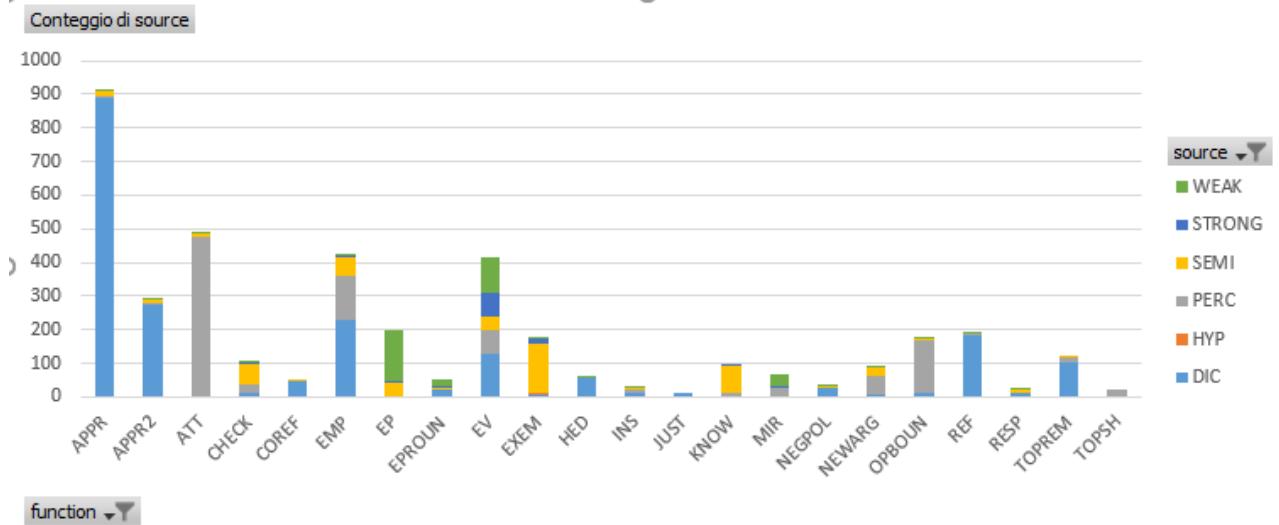


Figure 6.7 Percentage of source / function

From the graph, it emerges that some sources are retrieved in the expected domain, meaning that they express functions which seem consistent with their semantic source. Let us see in more detail.

*Verba dicendi* (see ‘verbs of speaking’) can play varying functions mainly concerned with the textual coherence. In the order: approximation (APPR), topic-resumption (TOPREM), reformulation (REF), emphasis (EMP) and evidentiality (EV), hedging (HED). Therefore, some of these functions are textual, consistently with their semantics. Some others are not (see evidentiality), even if in a minority.

Conversely, perceptual verbs are mobilised to fulfil not only attention-getting (ATT) functions (expected from their source) but also emphasis (EMP) functions (interpersonal), textual functions (opening boundary - OPBOUN and introduction of a new argument - NEWARG) and evidential functions (EV -speaker-oriented domain).

Even semifactive verbs are relatively free in the functions they can convey, namely exemplification (EXEM), shared knowledge (KNOW), checking (CHECK), emphasis (EMP)and, to a certain extent, introduction of a new argument (NEWARG).

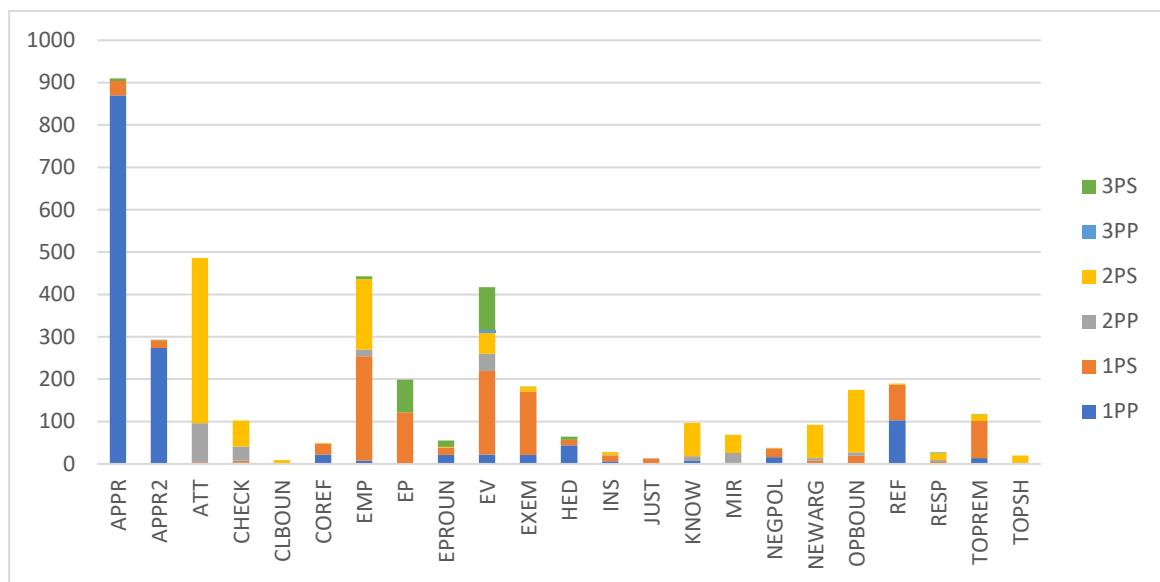
Weak assertive verbs may convey both epistemic (EP) and evidential stance (EV).

Strong assertive verbs are used, as expected, to convey evidentiality (EV) and, to a certain extent, exemplification (EXEM).

Conversely, from the angle of the markers expressing a given function, it emerges that the function of emphasis may be expressed by different lexical sources: *v. dicendi*, perceptual and semifactive verbs. Similarly, the function of evidentiality is expressed by *v. dicendi*, perceptual, weak and strong assertive predicates and, to a given extent, by semifactive verbs. Similarly, the textual function of opening boundaries and new argument introduction are performed by perceptual

verbs, a function we supposed to be fulfilled exclusively by verbs expressing the act of uttering (v. *dicendi*).

Next figure illustrates the distribution of the person values per function, in order to notice some other possible “incongruencies” and regularities:



**Figure 6. 8** Percentage of function per person

As anticipated earlier, we can notice that markers of 2<sup>nd</sup> person form are recruited not only to express interpersonal functions but also textual functions and speaker-oriented functions. Along with expressing a function of attention-getting or checking (as expected), 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms are used to appeal shared knowledge (KNOW), evidentiality but also emphasis and mirativity (MIR) functions ((inter)subjective meanings) and textual operations (opening boundary, new argument introduction, and topic-shifting). Therefore, we notice that even if there can be a sort of predictability/coherence/symmetry with regard to the properties of CCs (in this case the person) and their functions, some CCs (person and semantics) convey a function which is not compatible with their morpho-syntactic and semantic profile. Let us analyse a last finding just anticipated above: the distribution of the functions in micro and macro-syntax.

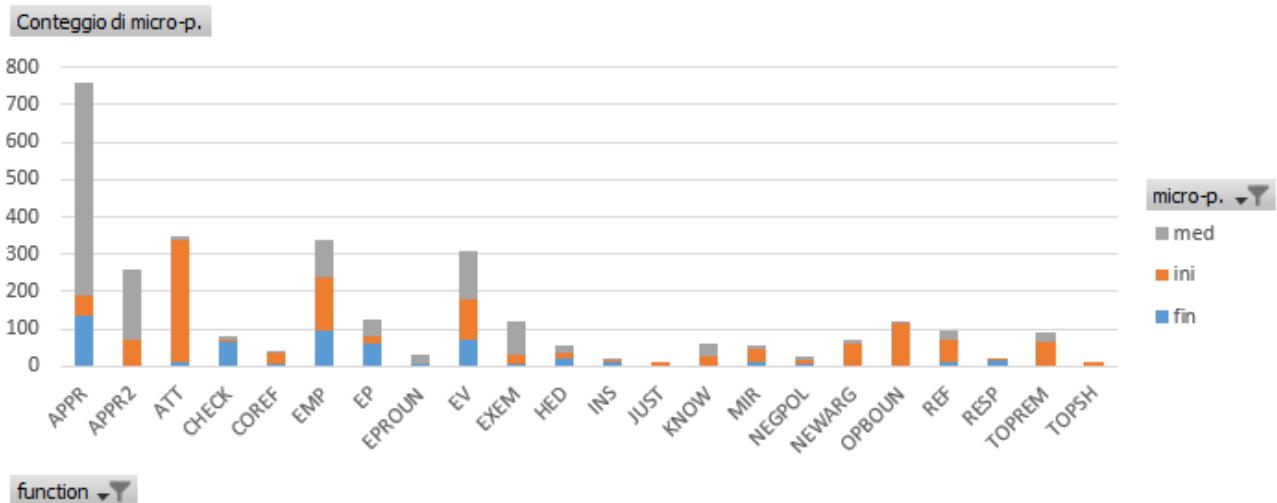


Figure 6.9 Percentage of functions per microsyntactic position

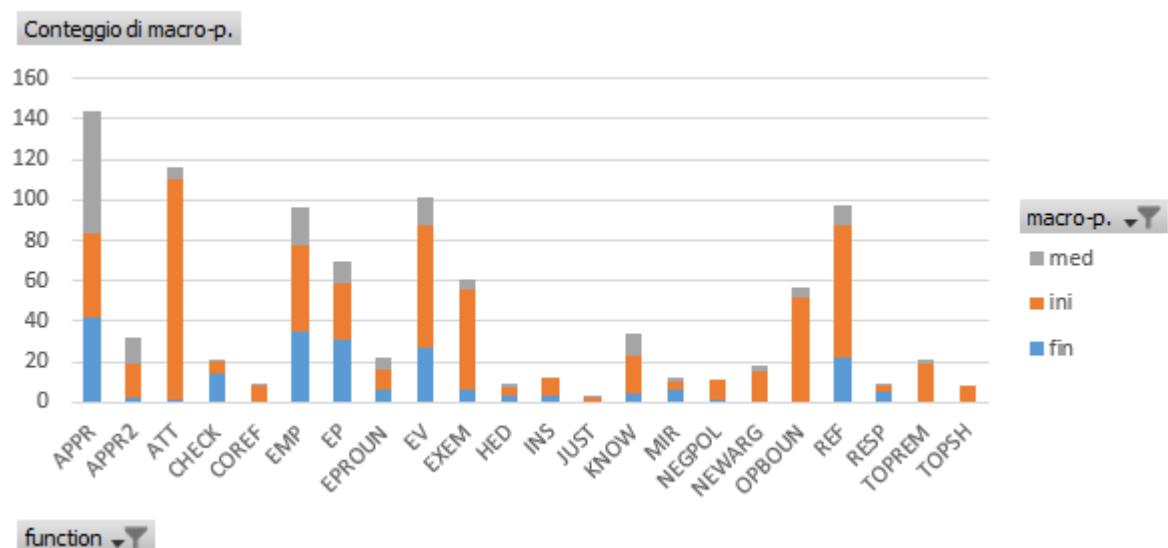
With a view to noticing whether the distribution of the functions is consistent with previous studies on DMs, we would like to argue that the hypothesis that left periphery attracts subjective meanings and right periphery intersubjective ones is mainly confirmed. For the left periphery and medial position, the distribution of the functions gives strong support to the working hypothesis, less so for the right periphery, which is less frequently selected by CCs, both on the micro and on the macrosyntactic level. However, a closer look at the data shows that many elements that do not contribute to sentence grammar do not occur randomly within the host utterance. Rather, they tend to be produced in particular slots in the construction of the discourse (Haselow 2016: 81). Apart from some functions (emphasis and evidentiality), which will be discussed separately, the observed tendencies are compatible with any DM, or maybe even any linguistic expression, occurring in these positions. Specifically, microsyntactically speaking, we can notice that:

- The initial position is occupied by attention-getting, emphasis, opening boundary and evidentiality function. Less frequently we find topic-resumption, and reformulation.
- The final position is occupied by approximation, emphasis, evidentiality, and checking.
- The medial position is occupied by approximation and time for planning and, more rarely, by evidentiality and, emphasis.

The latter function may occur in each slot, in line with what was asserted by Haselow (2016:83); modalizing and expressing intersubjective meanings are not restricted to the right periphery. Yet, the function may be expressed by different markers, therefore it may be hypothesised that it is relatively influenced by position and more by the host mood, which is generally an evaluative assessment or an exclamation. Moreover, the function is also speaker-oriented, therefore its distribution placed turn-initially is consistent with the distribution of subjective meanings in initial field. In the case of evidentiality, the role of host mood seems also crucial. Moreover, also pattern

of co-occurrence (adverbs, connectives) and, to a lesser extent, the role performed by the semantics of the markers used to express it may be crucial.

Generally speaking, such variability is in line with that asserted by Haselow (2016: 83). There is no deterministic/a priori evidence for many of the functions that are hypothesized to be characteristic of the left periphery or right periphery by Beeching and Detges (2014), such as “link to previous discourse” or expressing “subjective meanings”, which are not restricted to the left periphery, or “modalizing” and expressing “intersubjective meanings”, which are not restricted to the right periphery. What we notice is a tendency mainly confirmed with some exceptions which may be however clarified in isolation. Let us now move to the distribution in macrosyntactic position:

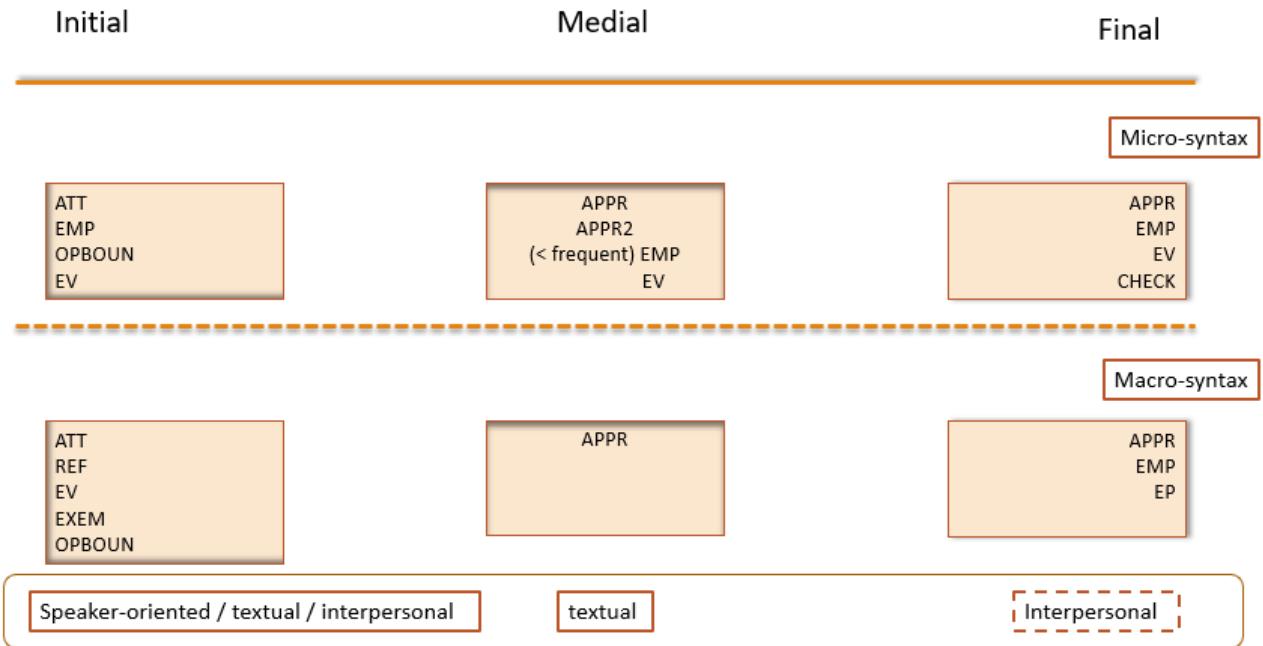


**Figure 6. 10 Percentage of function per macrosyntax**

In macrosyntax:

- The initial position is the preferred one, and it is often identified for attention getting, reformulation, evidentiality, emphasis, opening boundary, and exemplification.
- In the final position, we can identify approximation, and to a lesser extent, emphasis and epistemicity.
- In the medial position, the most frequent function is approximation.

In the following figure, we show how the most frequent functions of CCs are distributed along the micro and the macrosyntactic component. The graphics chart the distribution of the most frequent functions of CCs along the micro and the macrosyntactic component:



**Figure 6.11** functions / position

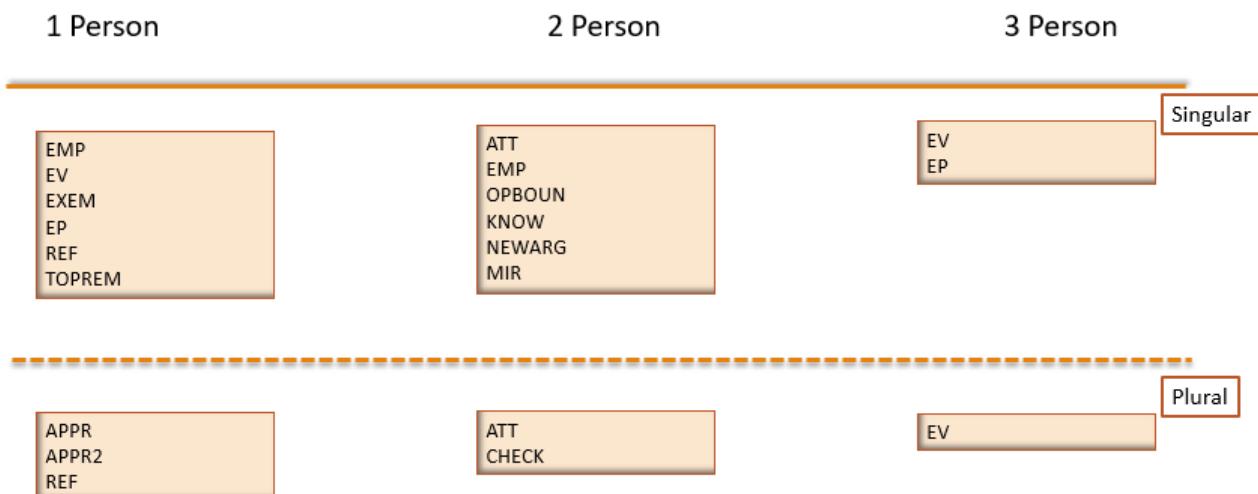
Generally, in **initial** position we find the function of evidentiality (EV), which is the most typical speaker-oriented function affecting the truth value. Then, expectedly, we find the function of attention-getting (ATT) which is right-projecting and it is basically found before the message has been delivered. In line with the tendency to find textual functions, we find the function of opening boundary (OPBOUN), a function signalling that a segment is going to be uttered in the economy of the text progression (see Beeching and Detges's 2014 category of link to previous discourse, placed, as expected, in the left periphery). Moreover, to a certain extent, in microsyntax we can find the function of topic-resumption (TOPREM). Hence, the two latter functions are expected to be found in initial position (given that both are right-projecting). In the initial field, we can also find the function of emphasis (EMP), a fact which could be weird. However, as anticipated, the function is borderline between the speaker-oriented and the interpersonal domain, therefore the distribution is consistent with its reality. Therefore, exception made for attention-getting, the functions are textual and speaker-oriented.

**Medially**, the most typical/frequent function is approximation (APPR), as expected, in that it is related to the on-line construction of spoken discourse. The function is followed by time for planning (APPR2), a function defined by Haselow (2016: 83) as “gaining planning time while keeping the turn” and, in a similar vein, placed in the middle field.

The **final** position is the less frequent one and its behaviour seems to partially confirm the tendency identified for other DMs. The checking function is plainly intersubjective, thus confirming the trend of occurrence of intersubjective meanings in final position. We observed that also

approximation (APPR) may occur finally, however, this happens much less rarely if we consider the function in isolation. Moreover, in turn final position we may find emphasis (EMP), a function which is really intersubjective / modal but which is more frequently employed in initial position, as anticipated. Moreover, we have underlined that emphasis is a borderline function which is both subjective and intersubjective given that specific allocutive markers can come to be used to express the speaker's stance without any real confirmation required to the hearer along with plainly speaker-oriented markers (however, the occurrence in final position confirms the tendency being even a function of "providing a last procedural cue" - see Haselow 2016: 83). The same variability noticed for emphasis may be identified in the case of the function of evidentiality. It may be hypothesised that this variability may be due to the semantic heaviness of the source expressing it<sup>155</sup> and to the crucial role of the host mood / patterns of co-occurrence triggering a given interpretation, as anticipated earlier.

After providing a scheme of the functions of CCs in the positions of utterance, we want to provide a scheme of the person values per functions:



**Figure 6. 12** functions along person value

The scheme shows that the most frequent person values are 1 and 2 person singular and that, 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms may express varying functions, not only connected with recalling the hearer's perceptual attention but also with expressing the speaker's stance and commenting on the process of text construction (textual coherence). Third person CCs are not so frequently employed. We may hypothesise that this behaviour mirrors the choice to analyse the dialogic variety. Nonetheless, in a number of cases, third-person CCs may be used to express the speaker's epistemic and evidential stance, thus shifting the *origo* of the source of information (see evidential forms like 'Peters says'

<sup>155</sup> We do underline that emphasis is most frequently employed utterance-initially.

or third-person forms used with speaker-oriented forms (such as *mi sa* ‘it seems to me’)). These facts, i.e., the lack of *a priori* correspondence between a function and its form, provide some evidence for the claim that our study manifests itself as a constructional study. In fact, we defend the idea that meaning can also be largely triggered by distributional and correlations aspects.

### 6.3.2 Towards a constructional perspective to the study of CCs

As anticipated in Chapter 2, our study is essentially constructional because, in order to attribute a given function to a given marker, we looked not merely at its semantics but also at the position of the CC. Moreover, we used patterns of paraphrases between strategies functionally compatible and we looked at patterns of co-occurrence. A crucial role was played by the CC host mood. Hence, our study is in accordance with those approaches that address DMs or particles with principles of constructionalization (Fischer 2010, 2015, Haselow 2016). This approach revealed itself in the above-mentioned results, except that we noticed some so-called incongruencies. However, on closer inspection, they are not really such, but reveal the inherently data-driven analysis leading us, for instance, to treat a perceptual CC as functionally similar to a textual connective, or to treat a given epistemic fragment as a turn-giving device, on a par with a tag question, or to treat a perceptual verb as a modal adverb or intensifier, and so on. For instance, our study provides evidence for the claim that although CCs like *dico*, *senti*, *guarda* or the connectives *dunque*, *allora* (‘so, well’) all have different origins, they have converged towards marking a given textual function like the one of introducing a segment in the discourse, i.e., a category we tagged as opening boundary (Vincent 2005: 190).

Both patterns of shift (see 6.1) and constructionalization (Fischer 2010, 2015) lead to some unpredictable and, therefore, illuminating, results. For instance, a typical interpersonal marker is the attention-getting *senti* (‘look’) which through an operation of *bleaching* came to be used to signal a kind of textual attention on a par with a plain textual CC like *dico* (‘I say’) coming to play an opening boundary function - where its perceptual nuance is hardly traceable - although the form develops from a second person form of a perceptual verb (see Ch. 5 and 4). The similar CC *guarda* goes further in the advancement, coming to serve an emphasis function. The same cannot be said for *senti*. In fact, the CCs at stake “specialise” in different sequential patterns, namely in different constructions (Fischer 2010, 2015). Therefore, in defining their function, the position of the CC has been crucial.

As stated in Ch. 5, Kärkkäinen (2003) treats the epistemic *think*-expressions with and without *that* as functionally equivalent. She suggests that *I think* has grammaticalized into a DM with discourse-organising function but with varying degrees of semantic transparency. Some occurrences

are prosodically stressed and are assumed to express an epistemic stance of certainty or uncertainty; in others, an expression of stance is barely present, and the discourse organising function is primary, despite the semantics of the CC. The same happens with respect to the emphatic meanings of *guarda*. In fact, the marker, when occurring with hosts other than FTAs, came to be used as an emphatic CC. We believe that this development is also triggered by a process of conventionalization of invited inferences along with the preference for evaluative assessments, preferably in final position (distributional correlation). Furthermore, to express the meaning of mirativity which is also speaker-oriented, a 2nd person form is selected; in fact, the CC is wholly opaque when it is hearer-oriented (or at least the result of conventionalization). We believe that the occurrence in evaluative and exclamative contexts favoured the identification of the function under scrutiny.

In accordance with our argument, according to Haselow with regard to final field markers, if we describe the final field as being unconnected to the morphosyntactic dependency relations of its previous structural unit and, hence, as an expansion of this unit, it seems quite natural that the final field does not only attract single-word units, but also more complex constructions, e.g. independent if-clauses (e.g. *if you don't mind me saying*), general extenders (e.g. *and stuff*), or CCs (e.g. *I think*, *I guess*). Such units display a reduced semantics. In fact, only in some instances some residual components of the source semantic content of the individual parts can be identifiable (Haselow 2016: 86). This is in line with the main argument put forward in this section.

Some functions are retrievable nearly exclusively in their context, which contributes to attract and make a given function clear, which in turn emerges from the whole construction. Such sequential patterns indeed form constructions (i.e. whole sequences are considered as constructions) in the sense of Construction Grammar (see Goldberg 1995), that is, conventionalized form-meaning pairings showing little or no internal compositionality and performing a range of metatextual and interpersonal functions. Moreover, they exhibit different degrees of specificity, i.e., they range from more schematic to fully specified. Such units - as constructions - can be conceived as complex signs made up of semantic, syntactic, pragmatic and functional modules, which cannot be broken down. In other words, since the form-meaning pairings exhibit some degree of arbitrariness, their meaning has to be conceived in a wider way, encompassing all the conventionalised aspects behind the use of a certain construction (Croft 2001: 19, Haselow 2016: 86).

The constructional nature can be related to a process of sedimentation. In fact, the respective units (in our case, the host and the CC) serve basic, routine tasks for which speakers, over time, develop specific habitualised ways of expression (Haselow 2016: 86). Concerning the types of strategies discussed here we may follow the usage-based statement that the sedimented patterns “encode best what speakers (need to) do most frequently” (Haselow 2016: 86) in discourse (Bybee

2006), given that many communicative tasks are frequent (see the function of opening boundaries in discourse, attaching evaluative items helping contextualizing the host meaning). Following this view, grammar can be claimed to emerge through practice as a result of frequent usage of specific constructions (or strategies) recruited for specific recurrent tasks in a given time slot (Haselow 2016: 86).

In line with what Haselow has claimed, from our analysis it emerges that rather than studying a CC starting exclusively from its semantics, it is important to consider its whole discourse profile and patterns of paraphrases. In this way, it emerged that starting from verbal constructions, the CCs came to develop adverbial-like, interjection-like, connective-like status in a not-always predictable way, where they can happen to receive a specific interpretation in the economy of a macro-construction. For instance, if we take the CC *guarda* in isolation, we cannot in any way derive the modal meaning “believe me”. It is rather in the context (construction) that the latter globally *emerges*.

Moreover, it emerged that patterns of paraphrases may be established also between different CCs, not only between CCs and other functional markers belonging to other linguistic levels. For instance if the function of opening boundary is more transparently expressed through a CC like *dico*, the very same function may be expressed through a 2<sup>nd</sup> form CC arising from a perceptual verb, which shares with the former strategy, position, patterns of co-occurrences (*dunque senti* ‘so listen’, *dunque io dico* ‘so I say’), and the same semantic import to the host utterance. The CCs at stake belong to those “different grammatical categories” that develop discourse functions, and which play a crucial role to study language change:

Discourse markers (DMs) are “ideal for observing variation and change: they originate in different grammatical categories, they often compete with many other forms, and they are sensitive to trends regarding language use” (Vincent 2005: 191).

To provide an argument of the above-mentioned quotation as supported by our data, let us comment on the following graphs, which provides for our CCs (some of) the forms with which they “compete” for each function. In doing so, we underline that the following graph is an exemplificatory and non-exhaustive interpretation of the markers or strategies that do the same “work” of CCs. It emerges from the preliminary results of our study, whereby it will be extended and enriched in future studies. In other words, in what follows, we will outline the first step, as resulted from our current survey:

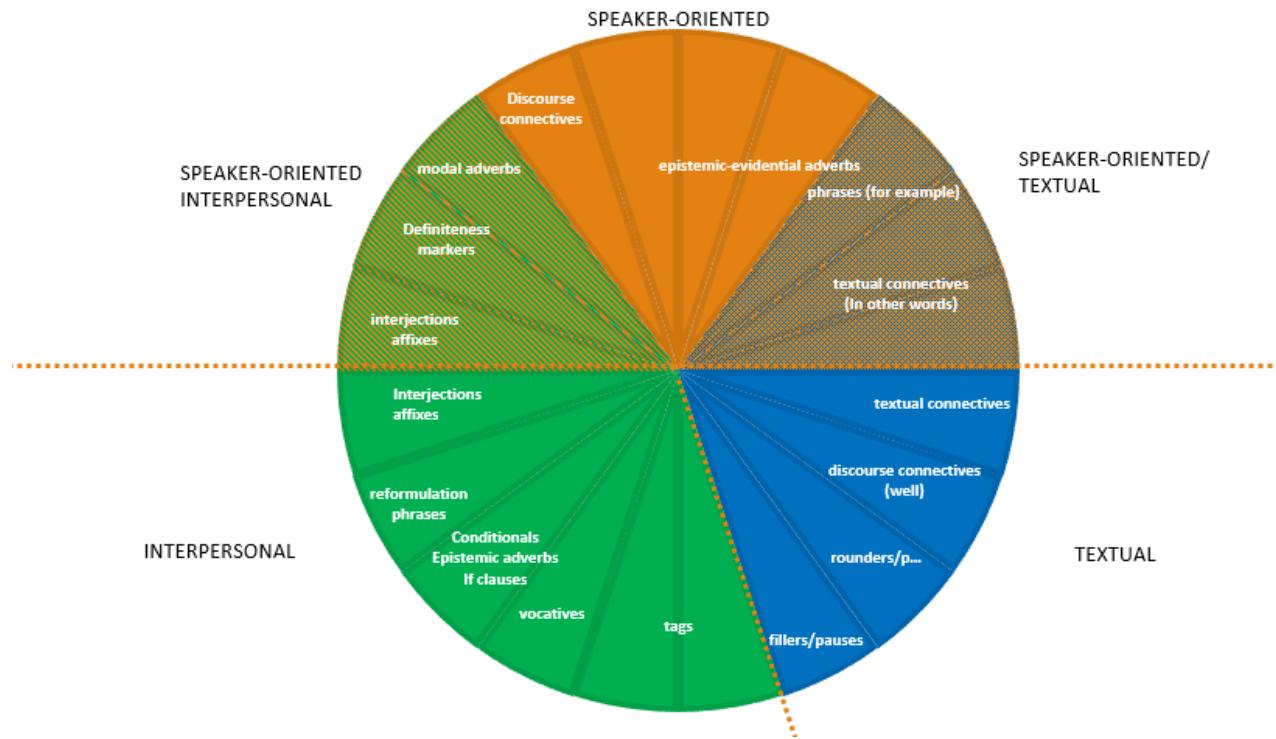


Figure 6. 13 CCs "competitors"

In order to define how a CC may be functionally similar to a given other linguistic strategy/construction, we used paraphrase tests, we monitored patterns of co-occurrence, and we compared the usages at hand with some usages identified in the literature. In other words, this graph answers the question as to why speakers meta-comment with respect to all the similar strategies we have identified in the literature. As anticipated, the representation and the ensuing explanation are far from being exhaustive. They provide some hints at the possible strategies the CCs may be compared to, as they have emerged from the literature surveyed in this study.

For instance, we classified the functions of mirativity as similar to the interjections based on the study of Jucker and Smith (1998) on *yeah*, *oh* and *really*, which seem to occur in the same contexts and convey the same meaning of *pensa* in some of our occurrences (the work also owes to DeLancey 1997). Moreover, *guarda*, as exemplified in Ch. 5, occurs exactly in the same contexts of modal adverbs, to the point that they may co-occur and, as exemplified, they can occur exactly in the same position and they can be uttered by the same speaker (the study was largely influenced by De Cesare 2000 and Haselow 2016, 2017).

Furthermore, discourse connectives may occur exactly in the same position of CCs like *senti* which we classified as an instance opening boundary function (see Ch. 4). In specific occurrences, they lose their perceptual nuance and signal the architecture of discourse playing a global discourse structuring function.

We observed that epistemic and evidential markers largely occur in *realis* context, therefore they play the same function of epistemic and evidential adverbs. Nonetheless, along with expressing epistemic reserve, they point to the speaker as the *origo* of such modalization, a fact which makes them more oriented to subjectivity than their adverbial counterparts (Venier 1991). Exemplification has often been addressed as a fact of reformulation (except for recent studies – see Mauri and Sansò 2018), a process expressed through adverbial expressions such as ‘for instance’, ‘for example’. Similarly, reformulation may be expressed through connectives or adverbial expressions like *cioè*, *tipo che* (‘that is’ – Dal Negro and Fiorentini 2014) or *nel senso* (lit. ‘in the sense’, ‘I mean’ – see Fiorentini and Sansò 2017). Our reformulating CCs occurring between two related items play the same function as the above-mentioned strategies. Approximation markers signal a semantic mismatch, as happens with respect to rounders and placeholders (Channell 1994, Overstreet 1999, Voghera 2010, Mihatsch 2010). Moreover, CCs classified as fillers show their nature by co-occurring with disfluency markers doing the same work (see Ch. 4).

To attenuate the threatening import of an utterance, therefore playing hedging/politeness functions, speakers have many strategies at their disposal, among them the grammatical mode of the conditional mood (Caffi 2007: 103), which serves the same purpose of some CCs.

Attention-getting markers typically occur in vocative (allocutive) contexts in which they recall the hearer’s attention. CCs performing checking and monitoring functions may be compared to tags. In this case we based on Haselow’s (2016) study on the range of strategies occurring in final position of the utterance. Related to those functions pertaining to the relation with the interlocutor, as we observed, the function of appealing to the common ground is often signalled in the context of occurrence of CCs, which are hosted by utterances containing clues of at-issueness and identifiability of the referents/SoAs the interlocutors are going to share or presuming or share.

All in all, speakers have various linguistic tools at their disposal to help them to articulate their ideas in a coherent manner. Traditionally, these types of functions are attributed to conjunctions and adverbs (see Vincent 2005: 189). CCs belong to the category of strategies speakers have at their disposal to convey the above-mentioned functions. In fact, they serve functions generally performed by adverbs, interjections, question tags, textual / discourse connectives. In other words, in this graph we answered in a different way the question as to why speakers meta-comment, by shedding some light on the variety of markers which may convey different functions responding to some basic and communicative tasks. The study of CCs gathers evidence for the claim that discourse particles and CCs - conveying such indexical functions - should be accounted for from a constructional perspective (Fischer 2010, 2015) considering their intonation, patterns of paraphrases, patterns of co-occurrence, and the CC host characteristics, its illocutionary force, and so forth.

Indeed, Construction Grammar adopts a very wide definition of meaning, ranging from literal (namely, propositional) meaning, argument structural meaning, conventional implicatures, pragmatic presuppositions, and **metalinguistic**<sup>156</sup> comments (Kay and Michaelis 2012, Fischer 2015: 564). This definition of metalinguistic comment fits well with the meaning of CCs. In this way, the structural contexts identified for a given CC can be presented, for example for *senti*-plus-assessment after informings, as form-meaning pairs (constructions in which the meaning results globally, there is in fact no reason to classify *senti* as a synonym of *dunque* ‘well’). The form component describes that a given CC occurs turn-initially before a TCU expressing a response. Moreover, many of the patterns identified may be associated with relatively particular prosodic features. The meaning component includes, then, a representation of the speech act performed in the turn preceding the CC, which refers to some kind of informing, and a representation of the meaning of the turn containing the CC *senti*, which points to the occurrence of the expected answer (Fischer 2015: 573). On a par with the classifications needed for the study of DMs, also CCs should be organised in different sub-classes, reflecting different sequences we can define as constructions.

### 6.3.3 CCs across domains: drawing a representation

As outlined in 6.1, some CCs are functionally more versatile than others, thus contributing to establish connections between different domains or, at least, to make possible an extension from a given functional domain to the other one in the performance of a given function. Furthermore, as we anticipated, they contribute to understand why some functions are borderline, and they may shed light on the so-called incongruencies at which we hinted in the previous sections. With a view to trying to explain how some CCs came to occupy some slots in some macro-constructions, we will draw some graphic representations paths of the most frequent and / or polyfunctional CCs. In this work we sketch a schematic representation to arrange all the functions of the most frequent CCs, trying to explain how given functions emerged in a process of change.

We will start from the most frequent CC *guarda*, which spans all over the three domains, thereby being the most advanced in the process of development. In what follows, this rationale may partially explain how patterns or constructions may occur, thus providing evidence for our constructional view through the lenses of shift from a function to the other one. The forms with which we have dealt in this study have acquired, through the process of subjectification, conventionalized (or grammaticalized) uses on the level of the organisation of text and the expression of viewpoints. More specifically, their development followed Traugott’s second and third tendencies of subjectification (see Vincent 2005: 192). We must concede that we have not the empirical evidence

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<sup>156</sup> Emphasis added.

we need to assert that one function ‘emerges’ after another function. Our hypotheses pointed out below about the evolution of *guarda*, *sai* (?), *diciamo*, *voglio dire*, and *dico* should be better tested against diachronic data. Our hypotheses stem from the core meaning of each CCs against the function performed in context.

### 6.3.3.1 Guarda

The CC *guarda* performs a basic function of attention-getting through which it recalls the hearer’s perceptual attention (physical attention). Corroborating the tendencies identified by Traugott (1995a, b, 1983), a shift can occur from this function to attention-getting in co-occurrence with interrogations/requests (tendency 1: external described situation > internal (evaluative/perceptual/cognitive) described situation). From this function, the marker presumably develops a function of request for textual attention (see bracketing arguments and also opening boundary - tendency 2), often in occurrence with causal connectives and introducing subtopics, arguments etc... (Waltereit 2002, Detges and Waltereit 2002, Traugott 2018). We may suppose that in this case, *guarda* recalls a sort of argumentative attention, focused at *looking at* the argumentative progression of the texts in internally hierarchised sections. Notice that in these occurrences, it neither precedes FTAs nor does it recall physical attention (distributional correlation).

Through a process of invited inferencing, the CC comes to express emphasis, thus contributing to express the speaker’s stance (tendency 3) through a process of request of the hearer’s validation, a fact that sometimes becomes a routine (if you look at it, you can believe it, therefore, believe me). The function is more frequently employed in final position. We believe that it is properly in this new syntactic slot that new meanings emerged (Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015), since the marker came to be used after a (modal) message has been delivered<sup>157</sup>. In specific contexts, *guarda* can convey mirativity, which may emerge as a development of the evidential nuance given by the allocutive form of the predicate at stake. Given that the allocutive form of *guardare* (‘looking’) has an evidential reading, the former may be employed in the context of a self-evidently extraordinary situation, through an appeal to the hearer in order to *see / conceive* such status. It therefore expresses an obvious confirmation with authority (‘look you, it is evident’). In other words, in conveying hearer-oriented mirativity, *guarda* is used as an appeal to see the self-evident extraordinariness of the content occurring with the CC, which is often (already) an extraordinary fact (exclamative context). It thus emerges from the bleaching of the meaning of looking (conceiving) in a specific distribution.

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<sup>157</sup> Notice that the function also occurs in other positions, therefore we believe that along with the role of position, also the role of the CC host mood is crucial (another part of the component of the form in the whole construction as a sequential process).

Concerning the speaker-oriented functions (expressing the speaker's attitude of surprise/newness of information in reaction to a given content), the same CC likewise emerges from the verb's cognitive nuance, through an appeal to an obvious confirmation of the surprising status of the speaker's reaction and an implicit appeal to *see* the same relevance. It may be hypothesised that also the emphasis function is involved, in terms of an appeal to see the sincerity of the speaker's reaction<sup>158</sup>. Technically, it is a sort of appeal to *participate* in the speaker's reaction.

In acquiring such functions, *guarda* undergoes a process of desemanticization and increase in pragmatic meaning through an additional process of invited inferencing. Notably, the concrete, perceptual meaning of *looking* is widened to a more abstract meaning (or bleached), involving a shift from referential to non-referential (or non-pragmatic to pragmatic) meaning. The forms thus acquire interpersonal (expressive) and textual meanings referred to the global discourse structuring. In playing such functions, a conventionalization of the invited inference of attentiveness and care involved in looking occurs (see Schwenter and Traugott 2000: 10 on the function of the modal adverb *in fact*). It is worth underlining that *guarda* is an intentional marker, therefore, the speaker may count on the appeal to the hearer's action of looking (not simply seeing), which presumably leads to the self-evidence of the content. In fact, the same advancement does not occur for *senti*, despite their similarities. What emerges in the most advanced functions is subjectification: *guarda* acquires metatextual intent, coming to encode aspects of the speech event (of commanding), and of interpersonal intent, that is, the speaker's attitude of impatience, exasperation, or even anger on a par with a final-field adverb (Brinton 2008: 201).

The main argument put forward in this section is that elements in the final field like *guarda* are "external" to a structural unit (e.g. a clause) from a "microgrammatical" perspective, which is based on morphosyntactic dependency relationships, but "internal" and thus an integral part of the unit they occur with from a "macrogrammatical" perspective. Hence, *guarda* is integrated into the illocutionary force of a wider unit of talk (Haselow 2016: 79). The process leads to a final development, the most advanced as far as we are concerned: *guarda* occurring with mirative functions, in the form of a routinization of invited inferences in the context of the attitude of surprise, presupposing the self-evidence of the content being looked at. The marker retains its original meaning in some contexts (divergence) and most of its perceptual traces are retained even if in a metaphorical way or as the result of conventionalization in a process of pragmatic inferencing (persistence). As observed above, because of its frequent use and versatility in fulfilling different communicative tasks, it may also undergo coalescence. Let us draw a possible map of its meanings:

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<sup>158</sup> In the Figure 6.14, we underlined that the function may be reached through two paths, as shown by the arrows.

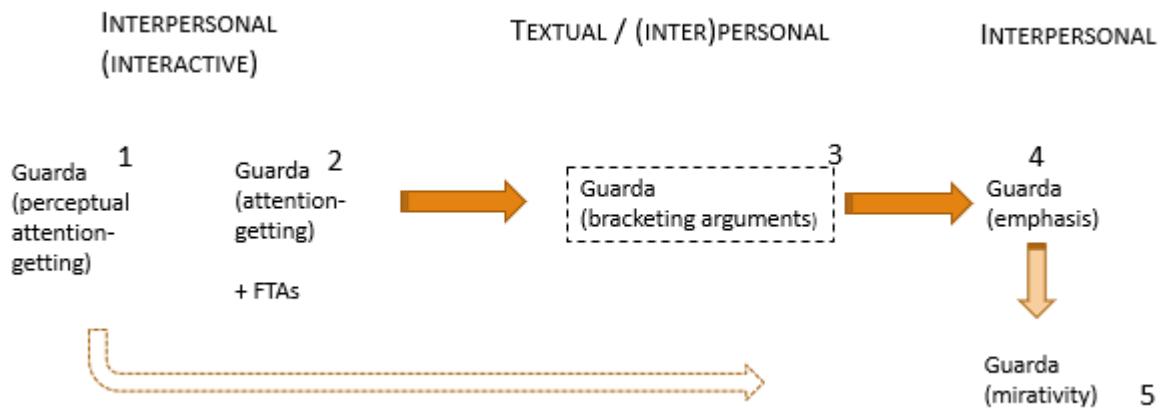


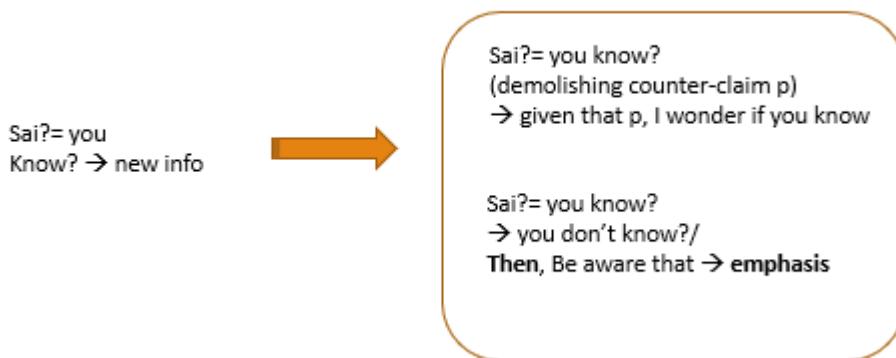
Figure 6. 14 guarda's path of development

### 6.3.3.2 Sai (?)

The CC *sai* (?) ('you know(?)') basically appeals to shared knowledge, a function which may be mobilised to construct the speaker's stance by presupposing shared experience, to bracket new information (not already known by the hearer), and to express a function of emphasis (with possible function of demolishing a counterclaim). Although the CC is mostly used to recall the hearer's knowledge and to presuppose it as given, in some cases the hearer does not *know*, whereby the strategy comes to be used as a rhetorical routine with the final purpose of reinforcing the speaker's own stance. In some specific cases, the marker not only serves to emphasise but also demolishes a previous claim with an overtone of resentment in contexts of competing attitudes/misalignments. In fact, the CC *sai?* ('you know?') is typically used to foreshadow new referential information, connected to what has been asserted in previous discourse. From that function, in the contexts of expression of different evaluations, rather than providing new referential information, it exploits a routine based on the fact that the hearer seems not to know a given *q*, given that he asserted *p*. As a result, the CC emphasises the meaning demolishing a counter-claim. This process is based on the routine that the information is encoded as unknown by hearer. Therefore, the speaker is in a way authorised to assert a given modal/evaluative claim. In other words, what is provided as possible new information (in line with the original, genuine function of new information providing) is exploited to mark an unknown and therefore undoubtable modal/evaluative information. It is worth underlining that, in some cases, no counterclaim is demolished, and the only residual function is that of emphasis.

Through a process of invited inferencing the CC comes to acquire a function of emphasis in which it contributes to express the speaker's stance, a fact that sometimes becomes a routine (you don't know it? → believe me, it is true). Contrarily to *guarda*, whose less concrete meanings emerge

from concrete/perceptual meanings, concerning *sai* in most advanced functions, it does not undergo a change in concreteness of meaning, since *sapere* is a cognitive, semifactive verb. What we notice is rather a conventionalization of the invited inference of the question to convey the emphasis meaning in occurrence with the cognitive verb. Moreover, what emerges in the most advanced functions is a process of subjectification: the forms at stake acquire interpersonal functions, that is, the encoding of the speaker's attitude of emphasis along with a function of construction of stance arising from the presupposition of common ground through which the speaker validates further what she is going to say. In line with the principle of divergence, the CCs all maintain their original (Brinton 2008: 201), referential meaning of providing new information in some uses. The developments are also in line with persistence because the cognitive nuance is common to all the functions. In what follows we provide a picture of the possible extension of a function to the other ones.



**Figure 6. 15** *sai(?)'s path of development*

Before discussing the functions of the CCs arising from the *verbum dicendi* *dire* ('to say') *dico*, *diciamo* and *voglio dire*, we underline that both *sai(?)* and *guarda* contribute to construe the speaker's stance through a 2<sup>nd</sup> person form (appeal to the hearer). Once again, we can notice a relation between the speaker-oriented domain and the interpersonal one, and a shift from the latter to the former.

### 6.3.3.3 Dico

The CC *dico* ('I say') is the most "redundant" marker used with the purpose of making explicit the declarativeness of uttering a given content. Apparently, it is the most redundant CC, because its meaning does not add anything to the global referential content of the host utterance. In fact, proffering the CC under scrutiny plainly flouts Grice's (1975: 46) Maxim of Manner (M3: be brief [avoid unnecessary prolixity]), or what Levinson (2000: 38) terms the "M-Heuristic" ("what's said in an abnormal way isn't normal"). Attaching *dico* to a statement or prefacing a question with a

command to speak is a redundant prolixity, inviting the inference that the speaker intends to convey more than what she says, in the case at stake, either an emotive or emphatic nuance attached to the propositional content (see Brinton 2008: 92).

Let us try to explain how the meanings emerge in more detail. The CC may be used referentially to repeat the content, serving a mere repetition process as typical of talk-in-interaction but also to change the thread of the previous discourse, in order to specify/reformulate the latter. Furthermore, one speaker may happen to not only repeat a given sequence or reformulating it, but also making explicit that she intends to resume the previous topic (these two functions are in a way more referential of others, but the latter is extended in scope). However, *in absentia* (that is, without having previously uttered what is in the scope of the CC) the speaker may attach *dico* in order to convey additional (non-referential) information for a given reason. By flouting the M-Heuristic, the function of emphasis may emerge, which in some occurrences may include a nuance of disagreement and exasperation. The function therefore arises from a process of invited inferencing: what gets repeated is repeated for a specific reason, therefore it should be carefully considered. In our Corpus, the emphatic use of *dico* occurs at the end of the utterance in most of the cases. In this position, the marker closes off the utterance or one of its constituents. This is noteworthy because it does not follow the phenomenon that generally occurs between two propositions correlated in an Arg1 *dico* Arg2 relationship of reformulation (Vincent 2005: 198 on the modal function acquired by *par example*).

Therefore, *dico* would also seem to have undertaken many of the processes identified with grammaticalization. In this construction, the verb is decategorialized and it is desemanticized, losing its full lexical meaning and acquiring less concrete meanings having to do with speech act justification (I say because) and meanings connected to the speaker's stance (I judge/I underline/you should understand what I say). As *dico* evolves from a complement-taking verb to a pragmatic marker, it becomes adverbialized in a number of discourse functions and as a consequence shifts from major to minor word class, specifically the class of modal adverbs. The construction is frozen in the first person singular and, in some cases, it presents the repetition of the pronoun *io* ('I') following the CC under scrutiny underlining the reference to the speaker's stance and nuancing the emphatic meaning. By a process of invited inferencing, *dico* acquires gradually non-referential (pragmatic or procedural) meanings such as mistake editing, clarification, reformulation, justification, topic-resumption and emphasis/disagreement. In this evolutionary process, its occurrence in evaluative assessments seems to play a crucial role (see constructional perspective). As discussed above, from strictly appositional, *dico* becomes (more) subjective and intersubjective in meaning. However, as is the case with DMs generally, *dico* does not lose syntactic scope (i.e.,

undergoing condensation); rather, it may undergo a process of scope widening. Hence, it can relate to phrasal or clausal complements thus functioning on a more global level (see Brinton 2008: 130-131 on the similar CC *I mean*).

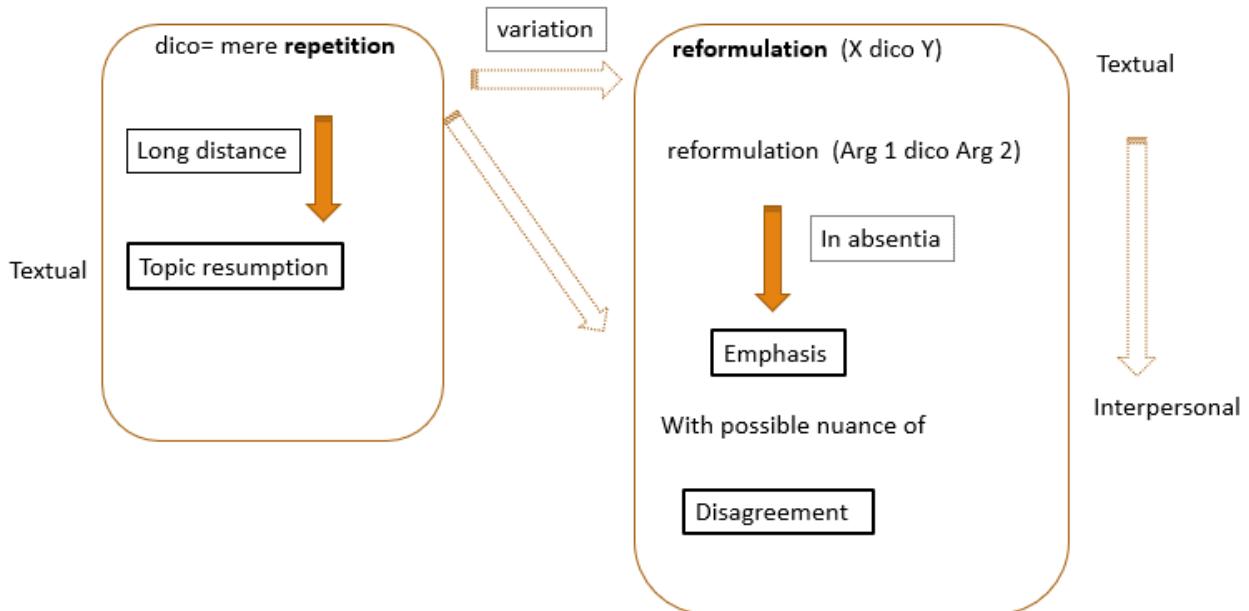


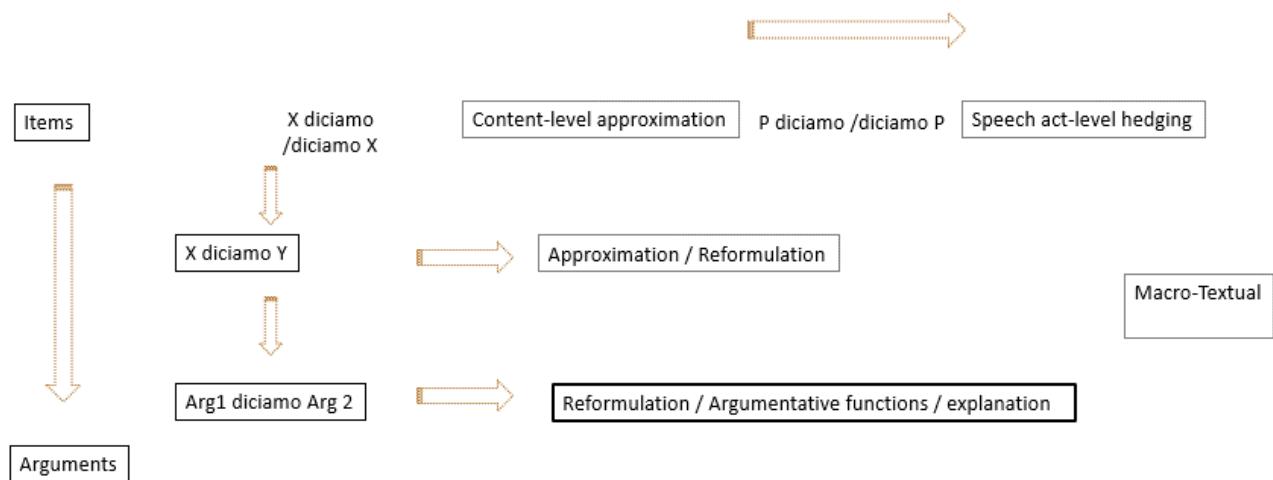
Figure 6. 16 *dico's path of development*

### 6.3.3.4 Diciamo

*Diciamo* ('let us say') is the most frequent CC occurring in our sample and it basically expresses a meaning of approximation signalling a semantic mismatch. When occurring in between two items in a semantic relation between the two, it comes to be used with a reformulating function (Waltereit 2006: 70), which, in occurrence with arguments instead of items, triggers an argumentative function, through which the marker introduces not only a reformulation (item) but an argument which is in relation with what precedes (such as an explanation, an enrichment see Ch. 4 - see notion of macro-coherence). Therefore, a new syntactic position (utterance-medially in between two arguments) gave rise to new meanings, requiring syntactic scope extension over the host clause (argument). On the other side, through an extension from the approximation meaning, the CC may express speech act hedging, through a shift from the content level to the speech act-level scope (see Beeching 2017).

*Diciamo* has undergone some of the changes typical of grammaticalization. In this construction, the verb *to say* is decategorialized, losing verbal characteristics, and it is desemanticized, losing its full lexical meaning and assuming less concrete meanings concerning the speech act (see hedging) and meanings more related to the structuring of the text (see Beeching 2017). *Diciamo* thus acquires functions compatible with the one performed by DMs. However, as is the case with DMs generally, *diciamo* does not lose syntactic scope (i.e., it does not undergo condensation). Rather, it undergoes

scope widening. Hence, it can retain scope ranging from phrasal to clausal complements (see Brinton 2008: 130-131 - on the similar CC *I mean*) also in occurrence with verbless clauses (bare fragments). *Diciamo* in fact may develop a meaning of reformulation when it occurs in between two items but also between arguments/acts, thereby expressing justification and contributing to the textual progression. We attest a shift from local to global level functions. A possible scheme of its functions is plotted below:



**Figure 6. 17** *diciamo's path pf development*

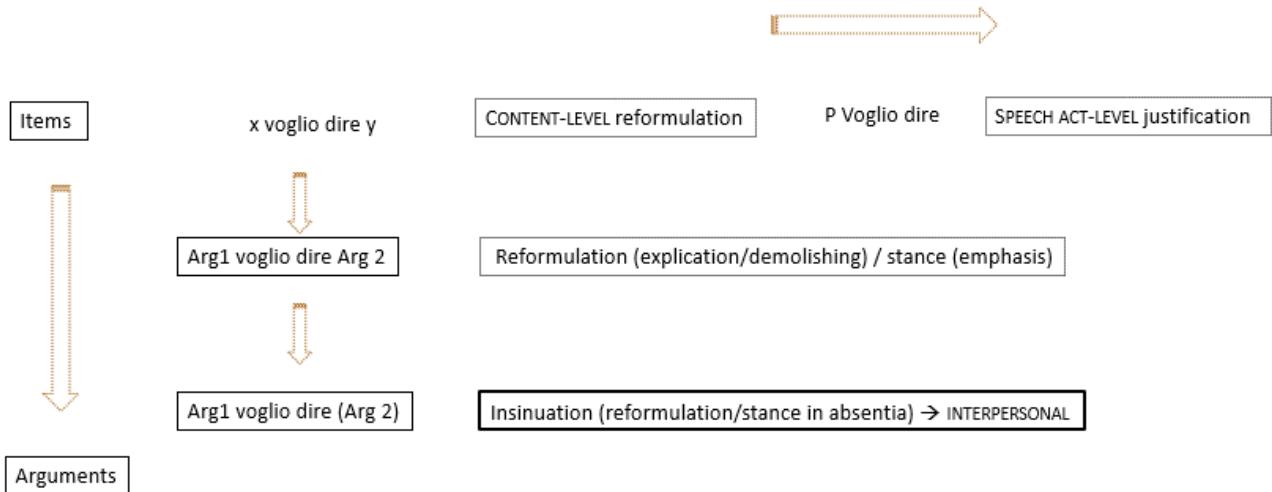
### **6.3.3.5 Voglio dire**

Literally meaning “I want to say”, the CC basically expresses an appositional meaning of reformulation, at which it is used to re-utter in order to specify and to fine-tune what the speaker previously said on the content level. On the one hand, through a shift, the content-level reformulation came to be used in the context of a speech act-level justification process in which the CC introduces the justification of a previous act. On the other hand, what is reformulated may happen to coincide with the speaker’s personal evaluation of a previous content. In this context, the process is compatible with the expression of the speaker’s stance, thus also conveying a meaning of emphasis or at least evaluation (see the contiguity between reformulation and explication / stance). The presence of *voglio dire* between related arguments rather than items, may induce the emergence of a function of emphasis, in which the reformulating effect is secondary or at least connected to the speaker’s need to explain her viewpoint. The function may also be served when the CC occurs turn-finally in a context of an evaluative assessment. What is expected to reformulate is instead the speaker’s thought on the metacommunicative rather than on the metatextual level (Fiorentini and Sansò 2017: 65). Moreover, when the reformulation is left implicit (i.e., not expressed), an

insinuating function arises. In other words, when the reformulation is covert, and *voglio dire* appears in utterance-final position, a processing instruction is given to the hearer, who is forewarned that the speaker, has decided not to add anything about a given topic - though having more to say about it - , because this content (or set of assumptions) is (assumed to be) part of mutual shared knowledge (Fiorentini and Sansò 2017: 65, 70). Therefore, in more advanced processes, *voglio dire* plays an insinuation function in which what should reformulate is left implicit thus recalling the shared knowledge with the hearer. The reformulating meaning is secondary, and the predominant function is the expression of the speaker's stance. In this way the CC is compatible with a common ground strategy.

As observed for other CCs, by losing its appositional value in reformulatory contexts, the marker gained an expressive dimension which manifests itself in the form of an expressive marker having to do with the speaker's stance or force (see Vincent 2005: 195 on the modal functions acquired by textual markers in Quebec French).

*Voglio dire* would also seem to have undergone some of the changes typical of grammaticalization. In this construction, the verb undergoes decategorialization, losing the ability to be modified by adverbial items. Furthermore, it is desemanticized, thus losing gradually its full lexical meaning and acquiring less concrete meanings (see Brinton 2008: 130) having to do with speech act justification (*I mean because*) and meanings more related to the speaker's stance (*I judge/I underline/you should understand what I mean*). As *voglio dire* evolves from a complement-taking verb to a pragmatic marker, it becomes "adverbialized" and, therefore, shifts to minor word class. The construction at stake is frozen in the first person, singular (in fact, we do not find the forms *vogliamo dire* 'we want to say, we mean', *vorremmo dire* 'we would like to say, we would mean'), present tense. Moreover, it displays some degree of fusion since, although *voglio dire* is still orthographically two words, adverbial elements (e.g., *davvero* 'truly', *solo* 'only') cannot occur between *voglio* and *dire*. By a process of invited inferencing, *voglio dire* acquires non-referential meanings such as justification, emphasis and insinuation. Therefore, as discussed above, from strictly appositional, *voglio dire* becomes (more) subjective and intersubjective in meaning. However, as is the case with DMs generally, *voglio dire* does not lose its syntactic scope; rather, it undergoes scope widening (see Brinton 2008 on the similar CC *I mean*). We in fact observed that it shifts from content level to speech act level.



**Figure 6.18** *voglio dire's path of development*

#### 6.4 Concluding remarks: CCs, constructions, DMs and *continua*

The goals of the present Chapter singled out in the introduction consisted in providing a conclusion concerning the phenomenon known as CC in Italian in talk-in-interaction with respect to the category of DMs. In drawing the main results, we tackled different issues connected to the emergence of the functions of the CCs, such as the need of invoking a constructional perspective and, hence, the awareness that the behaviour of CCs reveals patterns which may be distant from their original morphosyntactic and semantic profile. Hence, we drew the conclusion that the study of CCs is in line with the study of discourse particles expressing metacommunicative meaning through a constructional perspective (Enghels 2018, Fischer 2010, 2015, Haselow 2016). We tried to shed some light on the micro-diachrony of given functions leading to some correlations (macroconstructions) or routinised paths. A picture emerged in which through the CC the speaker expresses given indexical information through a process of arrangement of juxtaposed units (Haselow 2016, 2017) that, without entering in syntactic correlation, convey fragments of meaning largely influenced by the environment and patterns of co-occurrence, contributing to express those so-called ancillary functions, which contribute to develop a grammar of discourse (see 6.2.7)

In serving such functions, these constructions have been decategorized and have acquired a status similar to that of adverbs (Vincent and Martel 2002). From some of their original semantic values it is possible to see the trajectory they took towards markers of less referential meaning serving a macro-function of discourse structuring (Vincent 2005: 206). In fulfilling these functions, most CCs may be considered as DMs. On a par with DMs, CCs may be defined as indexical elements relating items of discourse to other items of discourse of varying form and length. Their functional domain is the expression of those types of connections and interrelations that are essential to and distinctive of spoken dialogic communication. In fact, they point to organizational and structural features, as

well as to chunks of the non-linguistic situation and environment. Moreover, they index the thematic structure, and they control the turn-taking system, and other aspects of on-line speech management (see Diewald 2013). CCs are largely DMs and as such they play an intrinsic indexical variety of sub-functions, some of which may also be placed on the level of the truth value.

On a par with what is recognised in the case of DMs, the variety of functions CCs may fulfil is, in our view, an important challenge for the attempt to define one overall category of CCs, and it calls for further sub-classification, e.g. response signals, segmentation signals, hesitation markers, discourse connectives, evidential markers, conversational management markers, etc. (Diewald 2013; Fraser 2006 with respect to DMs).

Furthermore, like the development of DMs, the emergence of the most frequent CCs follows principles of grammaticalization (conventionalization of invited inferences, subjectification, desemanticization,), which led to the acquisition of text-oriented and interpersonal meanings pertaining to the speakers' stance and to their social relations and social images.

However, CCs and DMs display some differences. In fact, it is often claimed that DMs are non-truth conditional. However, the average frequency of CCs performing approximation occurring in medial position with the possibility to interrupt clausal and phrasal relations (together with their prosodic integration) suggests that the latter may act on the truth value. This aspect thus suggests that the criterion of non-truth conditionality is not a good condition to define them. Moreover, it defeats the idea that they do not act on the truth value. The rationale is validated further by the average percentage of evidential/epistemic CCs acting on the propositional value given that they occur in *realis* contexts.

Their prosodic integration shows that they are not always prosodically set off, as recognised for DMs (see, among many others, Schiffрин 1987). Rather, along with being prosodically integrated, they interrupt strict relations thus reinforcing the issue of their impact on the global interpretation.

Another counterargument explaining the partial difference between CCs and DMs is correlated with the directionality of shift. Even if the trends of shift identified in the literature are generally respected, sometimes some functions contradict such developmental path, by mobilising interpersonal makers to construe the speaker's textual and rhetorical stance. Hence, we can notice the acquisition of mirative, emphatic meanings through conventionalization of invited inferences connected to the host constructions properly starting from perceptual verbs. Moreover, perceptual verbs playing interpersonal functions came to be used to serve textual functions.

Furthermore, whereas DMs are generally fixed in form, some CCs are spur of the moment structures. Some of them are fixed, but some others are constructional, with little compositionality. This is the main difference between CCs and DMs. Whereas some of them underwent

grammaticalization processes, some other CCs likewise signal an activity without having undergone the processes typical of grammaticalization transforming them in DMs.

We may conclude by arguing that some CCs are a subclass of DMs and share many properties with DMs (functional and evolutional aspects), but some restrictions are needed. In other words, the class of CCs cannot be automatically identified with the category of DMs. A CC is thus defined as a

de-verbal construction, occurring at least once in medial position (phrase/clause limited), playing indexical functions referring to the situation of discourse and to the speaker's stance and that can also act on the propositional content functioning as a modal marker. Its meaning is largely contextually induced. It occurs especially in initial (subjective/rhetorical function) and medial position (textual). It is not necessarily prosodically set off. It may affect the truth value. The category of CC includes plain DMs and less constructional and transparent strategies. Nonetheless, both of them signal an activity, that is, the activity of meta-commenting to contextualise the meaning expressed in their hosts, but not of them are (yet) DMs.

## Concluding remarks

In this final section, we will outline our main view on the analysis of CCs as a phenomenon revealing and contributing to explain the grammaticality of spoken texts. We showed that a lot of the strategies we retrieved are indeed DMs. For their development we invoked the notion of grammaticalization as development of grammatical functions useful for the structuring of spoken texts. CCs play a contextualising function, which is crucial to embed the meaning expressed in their host. Moreover, sometimes they can play epistemic functions, thus contributing to the reconsideration of their crucial role in the grammar of spoken discourse. More generally, we were interested in the creation of meta-comment strategies in spoken data. Our work gathers evidence for the massive usage of these devices. Some of them have subdued the typical mechanisms of grammaticalization leading to consider them as plain DMs. Some other strategies are ‘spur of the moment’ markers, therefore, they cannot be termed DMs. However, they likewise play a contextualising role, which led us to consider them as indexical cues helpful towards clarifying, specifying, modalising, focusing on the content of their hosts. This basic activity is carried out by speakers who, in nearly every slot of the utterance, may produce a given structure of varying length and internal fixation with the purpose of “meta-commenting” on the host utterance. In line with the syntactic structures typical of the spoken variety, the CCs’ hosts may vary from a lexeme to a complex period. In such conditions, CCs were found to have a function of ‘glue’, a fact mirrored by the frequency of occurrence in macrosyntax, where CCs help to clarify the speaker’s stance attached to given segments barely connected to the rest of the utterance. Moreover, the frequency of interrupting position is a clue to the incessant activity of creating meta-comment devices.

In pursuing this study on the activity of creating theticals (or meta-commenting devices), we could not rely on a past, comprehensive reference study, in that this is the first survey on the functions of CCs in spoken Italian with the aim of drawing their discourse profile in a variety of spoken language including so far unexplored data (see the KIParla Corpus - Mauri et al. 2019). We focused on CCs as strategies revealing an **activity**, namely the one of meta-comment, in spoken texts, without constituting a paradigm strictly speaking.

Our main starting point is Benveniste, who poses the issue of subjectivity in language by noticing the discrepancy between verbs like *croire* and *manger* when employed in the first-person present tense. Starting from the so-called epistemic parentheticals like *credo* ('I believe'), we extended our analysis to all the parenthetical structures uttered through a principle of linearization rather than hierarchisation, a fact which resonates with the essence of spoken mode, characterised by an

additive, incremental and juxtaposed syntax. Our work provides evidence for the claim that the study of subjectivity and intersubjectivity becomes crucial for the analysis of language, especially in spoken dialogic texts defined by their own grammaticality and by semiotic conditions like systemic vagueness. Therefore, spoken texts can rely on the employment of “ancillary” metacommentary devices in order to enrich, adjust, specify, and contextualise what is expressed on the content level (see Franceschini 1994 on metacommunication). Through such activity, the speaker’s *imprint* on what is being expressed is made explicit.

We focused on dialogic texts in that it is in the primordial modality of language, we believe, that subjectivity is revealed the most, due to specific semiotic and systemic properties. Indeed, according to Calaresu (2016) dialogicity is not only a property of linguistic usage but it is always at the very heart of a linguistic system. Dialogicity is referred to as a systemic fact and not merely as an accident of performance or at the periphery of grammar (Benveniste 1974 [1970]).

With the purpose of analysing the strategies of meta-comment in general (Franceschini 1994), we provided the results of our study in three central chapters, one for each the three domains we identified as outlined in the literature on DMs and on discourse particles.

In Chapter 3 we addressed the functions of those CCs making explicit the speaker’s stance with respect to both the truth value and to the illocutive force to finally include functions like mirativity and speech act-motivation. We thus elaborated all those constructions referring to the speaker’s attitude, without restricting the emphasis to first-person forms or to some specific semantic predicates. It emerged that, far from being treated as ephemeral phenomena or accidental errors, CCs may act as *irrealis* markers therefore playing a crucial role even on the truth value, a fact corroborated by their prosodic integration and by their frequent distribution in medial position. These two facts contribute to show the fundamental weight of CCs.

In Chapter 4 we focused on CCs enhancing local and global coherence thus expressing operations such as topic-resumption, reformulation, approximation, and taking time for thinking. The textual domain such CCs belong to is the most frequent overall. Moreover, the operations often occur turn-medially and were shown to be sometimes prosodically integrated therefore showing that CCs are very frequently employed to comment on the text construction, a process often prone to adjustments, restarts, reformulations and cross-clausal connections, as outlined later on.

In chapter 5 we finally dealt with those CCs managing the relationship with the interlocutor. We showed that the latter may be conceived as a cognitive agent and an interactive co-builder of the text being articulated.

In chapter 6 we addressed the issue of the relation between CCs and DMs by taking into account processes like grammaticalization and constructional grammaticalization. A picture emerged in

which CCs should be accounted for from a constructional perspective, taking into consideration not only their semantics, but whole configurations of discourse in which meanings may result globally through arrangements of fragments, rather than hierarchisation principles.

To analyse these functions, we relied on functional and distributional parameters. We showed that a crucial operation when dealing with spoken constructions resides in the patterns of paraphrases, a constructional, data-driven study emerged, in which we were able to sub-classify the functions of CCs grouping them in families based on patterns of paraphrases (tags, discourse connectives, modal markers). The position of the CC in the argument structure turned out to be crucial, and it emerged that in order to classify its distribution one needs to consider the syntactic properties of spoken texts, thus relying on a component we defined as macro-syntax in line with studies on the syntax of spoken French. We also considered patterns of co-occurrences and classified the CCs host mood. Once again, in doing so, we needed to *ad hoc* define a grid of values based on the properties of spoken discourse.

Generally speaking, beyond the study of a domain like the meta-comment and the fine-grained classifications it yields in the field of discourse and pragmatic studies, in this work we gave a contribution to a better comprehension of the ongoing, creative linguistic activity which speakers carry out in spoken language. In other words, we gathered some additional evidence for a grammar which *emerges* in the dialogic conditions, i.e. in its unmarked environment.

In this research we focused on a series of strategies and constructions that facilitate the work carried out by both the speaker and by the hearer. Indeed, the spoken variety is characterised by some properties which are connected to the conversational discontinuity. Moreover, the spoken mode is characterised by some features, which originate in the properties of the audio-visual channel and in the co-presence between the speakers. Notably, the leading factor that guides the spoken mode is the near contemporaneity between planning / production and reception / elaboration. This framework delimits the construction of spoken texts which, as a consequence, are characterised by the need to optimise such times of planning and production. In the attempt to make fluid and meaningful such *equilibrium*, CCs play a role as arrows (or pointers) in that, along with conveying specific, fine-grained functions, may also play the function of discourse *glue*, contributing to segment discourse boundaries which are in discursive relations rather than syntactic ones. CCs thus act as punctuation markers of spoken texts.

When analysing spoken data, it becomes immediately clear that the speaker and the hearer must collaborate not only to construe meaning but even to regulate their own relationship. Crucially, a clear-cut distinction between the plane of the propositional content and the relational aspect does not seem (always) discrete. Rather, in the spoken mode, the transmitted content bears the constant

signs of the speaker's imprint in her attempt to articulate the message and to enter into a relation with the addressee. The clear reference to the speaker's stance towards the text construction and towards the hearer is plainly performed by constructions like the CCs at stake. As we observed, CC are adopted to modify, specify and contextualise the meaning expressed in the utterance they occur with. Moreover, they may be used to include the hearer (interpersonal functions). The hearer is in fact included both as a participant and as a cognitive agent. In this way, the addressee and his set of shared assumptions become part of the meaning which is co-construed and negotiated (Voghera 2017: 191). Moreover, the interpersonal relation in the spoken dialogue is often the only and sole primary aim of the communicative exchange. Spoken communication has in fact an intrinsic social dimension and value. The constant interaction between different roles is crucial (intersubjectivity). This fact emerges on the linguistic level through different facts, ranging from the role of deixis, the presence of discourse markers, and the thematic and syntactic progression of texts. The synchrony and the continuity of the on-line processes of production and reception produce a discontinuity which reveals itself both on the thematic level and on the verbal level through phenomena of phonetic and textual disfluency and through the continual intervention of the interlocutors. In this regard, CCs function as linking devices both to cover the disfluencies and to help the speaker articulate the content in the overall process of meaning transmission.

In order to avoid this discontinuity being transformed into a lack of coherence and cohesion, the speaker utters texts which show flexible constructions, thus allowing the modifications, insertions, and the interruptions which are on-line produced to be absorbed (Voghera 2017: 191).

In face-to-face communication, the sources of information include the environment and the conditions of interaction between the interlocutors, among which we can include their relations, and the presuppositions on which the participants may rely on as members of a given community. In this regard, CCs - especially the ones we defined as belonging to the interpersonal domain - may recall, invoke or pretend such presuppositions which may be crucial to co-construe the meaning (Voghera 2017: 192).

Therefore, in the spoken variety the speaker shows a kind of elasticity, which is manifested in different texts which are versatile, and which may be utilised in different contexts. As a result, the variety of spoken texts manifests this flexibility preferring "stretchy" structures.

Syntactically speaking, the speaker manifests her elasticity in constructions with a high degree of combinability (notice the usage of brief clauses which allow changes in the planning and so forth). In other words, their structure therefore is made to facilitate the progression of information, thus avoiding heavy hierachised structures. In the on-line character of additive syntax, we found out that CCs may be hosted by single constituents or hanging topics, therefore, along with conveying

domain-specific values, they function as pointers to apply a proper interpretation to some strings, which are syntactically unintegrated (see Voghera 2017: 192).

The wide functional spectrum of the structures used in the spoken variety corresponds to low degrees of specification and definition on all levels. Nonetheless, this apparently negative property (low specification) does not limit either the communicative efficiency, or the comprehension between the speakers. Rather, low levels of specificity may be the most suitable strategy to meet the speaker's communicative needs. It seems more convenient to build text in an incremental way, through ongoing approximations, thus leaving space for both the interlocutors to construe a shared semiotic space (Voghera 2017: 193, 203). In this process, it is also crucial to rely on other sources of information deriving from different channels. As we showed, the efficiency and the success of communication does not necessarily depend on the adherence of the verbal sequence to a model of well-formedness (Voghera 2017: 193-194). Rather, a huge margin of tolerance must exist to variation with respect to the target, given that both the speakers do not require the presence of each particular to access the global meaning of the utterances being conveyed. This fact emerged when we needed to classify the distribution of the CCs, as underlined before.

In other cases, low specification is not translated into limited production. Rather, it is manifested in the preference for structures which are more diluted, as shown in the case of additive syntax, which implies a less heavy work than the one implied by hierarchisation (Haselow 2017). Both the strategies of economy and dilution, although appearing as opposite in nature, may work in the same direction in order to reach the equilibrium between all the components of the communicative process (Voghera 2017: 193).

Another strategy favouring the speaker's high flexibility manifested in spoken texts is the inherent indexicality of the spoken language. The dependency on the enunciative situation is ongoingly displayed in the ongoing hints by the speaker at the contingency and unfinishedness of her own discourse. As underlined by Voghera (2010, 2017), this context-anchored dimension is validated further by the frequent employment of DMs, whose function is to indicate the scope of the speaker's utterance both with respect to the propositional content and to the hearer.

The *hedges*, thanks to their ability to limit or extend the interpretation of a given expression, are an important clue to the flexibility of the expression in their scope, in that they can suggest a line of interpretation to the hearer. In this way, they represent a meta-text which comprises instructions as to how to interpret the meaning which is going to be articulated in the on-line production of spoken texts (Franceschini 1994; Voghera 2017: 195). As plainly shown in this research, not only hedges but also other types of CCs are crucial to serve an indexical and clarifying function, be it an operation of approximation or another function connected both to the speaker's personal or textual attitude.

CCs are inherently indexical constructions, revealing both the *source* and the *target* of the speaker's imprint in discourse.

Finally, in order to guarantee the flexibility of spoken texts, speakers use the strategy of "align the constituents" ("allinea i costituenti" - Voghera 2017: 195). Indeed, the interlocutors collaborate in order to step by step delimit the boundaries of the discourse being construed. In fact, it is possible to identify macro-schemes of turns on the basis of the acts realising them, which have an impact on the kind of expression being used (see the constructional study outlined in Ch. 6, Calaresu 2016). Our CCs are by definition aligned rather than hierarchised and, as shown in chapter 6, they often occur in macro-constructions triggering a given interpretation, thus suggesting the importance of a constructional study especially in the domain of dialogic speech.

The above-mentioned appeal to the hearer is not only made in dialogic texts, but also in monologic texts. Specific constructions indicate that the text is going to be construed and subject to adjustments (Voghera 207: 196). Hence, it is shown that rather than a final product, it has to be conceived as an open structure, in which the role of the hearer is seriously taken into consideration. All the textual CCs analysed in this work serving local coherence relations reflect the on-line making of spoken text.

All in all, the specific properties of spoken mode produce material and semiotic conditions which necessarily affect the spoken variety being used. Speakers seem to show "regular behaviours", especially characterised by frequent usages of indexical processes and alignment of constituents. The outcome is the construction of adaptable texts, which can withstand the ongoing movements and "shakes" of spontaneous communication.

More theoretically, spoken language is characterised by a set of properties which grammar needs to describe (descriptive aspect). However, more deeply, spoken language should be addressed as the source of the possibilities of encoding and signification. Therefore, the former sheds light on the architecture itself of grammar (explicative aspect). In the latter case, the analysis of the spoken variety is meant to improve the explicative adequateness of grammar (Voghera 2017: 199).

Spoken language is often underspecified. It is the semiotic multimodality that helps us understand why the cases of apparent clausal incompleteness or underspecification - which are the norm in spoken discourse - do not correspond to anomalies or errors. Moreover, it helps understand why, on the contrary, the excess of explicitness is the marked option, thus triggering more inferences and meanings possibly not intended by the speaker (Calaresu 2016).

This aspect is linked to vagueness, i.e., a basic semiotic property of language, which characterises the essence of language, not only what has been referred to as peripheral with respect to the core grammar. In other words, spoken language gives rise to systemic vagueness (De Mauro 1982), a

property which may be obscured in other modalities. Rather, the spoken modality, being the “native” modality, can exemplify how the systemic vagueness is the optimal condition of communication. Crucially, it is by virtue of this property that the latter can function in flexible and adaptable conditions (Voghera 2017: 203). It is not despite but because it is flexible and adaptable that the system works. In this process, underspecification is the normal, functional condition of usage of the code.

Rather than relying on prefabricated signs, speakers judge more relevant to estimate the weight of different variables considered context by context, by adapting their productions to spur of the moment needs. Thus, they encode / decode the verbal messages through a calculation of probability (Voghera 2017: 204). This mode of proceeding highlights the crucial role of cooperation in the construction of meaning, which is defined, construed and decoded on-line. In this process, CCs emerge as an on-line activity aligning itself with the on-line production of texts by approximations. In this context, they resolve the possible vagueness and trigger a given interpretation in line with the speaker’s aims, through a level which is discursive, syntactically detachable (see notion of thetical grammar), not morphological or, generally, paradigmatic.

As we observed through the lens of CCs, we detected that speakers are required to play a game of ongoing specification, adjustment, and shaping, as shown by the fact that even the construction of reference is an on-line, non-deterministic activity often carried out through an indexical categorization activity as shown by exemplification, analysed in Ch. 3. In other words, independently of the speakers’ awareness of it, the pragmatic dimension is not external to the code. It does not only pertain the periphery or a class of phenomena. No linguistic comprehension may be achieved without the concrete cooperation between speakers. When looking at real data, we realise that the pragmatic dimension is crucial for many categories and meanings: according to Voghera, DMs are an example of this fact. CCs, being syntactically detachable and playing an arrow-like, mainly discursive function on a par with many DMs, are one of the most concrete examples of the pragmatic dimension of language.

From spoken mode a grammar emerges characterised and constituted by pluri-determinable linguistic units, whose boundaries are gradient and variable. Hence, the necessary stability crucial to mutual comprehension must be searched neither in the well-formedness of signs nor in the elements of the contexts. Rather, it must be searched in the mutual accordance between the speakers. It is a fact of agreement. In fact, pluri-determinateness, gradience and the active role of participants are mutual constants. One of them assures the better equilibrium between the functioning of the others (Voghera 2017: 206).

More specifically, the reference to a dialogic grammar has been crucial to classify the behaviour of CCs (see 2.2), in that we needed some criteria explicitly created for the spoken variety (such as the category of CC host mood instead of speech act, or the reference to macrosyntax instead of clause *vs* proposition level). Similarly, serving as a meta-comment to define how the content (in each form it presents itself in discourse) needs to be integrated in an optimal interpretation in line with the speaker's aims on different degrees, CCs are a coherent part of the dialogic grammar of spoken discourse. In fact, they find their reason of being in its flexibility (of grammar) and conversely, they help resolve meaning problems arising from the so-called underspecification of spoken texts, as their function is to contextualize what is expressed in their hosts, be it a fact of epistemic modalization or an appeal to common ground.

The analysis of spoken discourse allowed us to observe the on-line process of emerging of grammar without imposing our *a priori* classifications based on principles of well-formedness. Above all, what we observed is the interdependence between the (multi)modal *apparatus* and the linguistic correlation of the former (Voghera 2017: 206). In line with the flexible and multifunctional structures employed in spoken grammar, CCs are elastic, multifunctional devices serving a macro-contextualising, indexical function, which finds its origin in the same systemic properties of the spoken, dialogic mode.

As we observed in Ch. 6, the development of CCs is congruent with the observation that speakers favour arrangements of clauses that are not complements syntactically-speaking. The preference for the arrangement shows that CCs are not subsidiary. Rather they function as grammatical devices in an “extended” way, playing both a global discourse structuring function and a function like epistemic modality, which acts on the truth value.

We maintain the view that the pragmatic functions played by CCs are genuinely grammatical functions which are indispensable for the organization and structuring of spoken discourse, playing indexical functions such as topic-shifting, turn-taking, emphasising meaning (Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 64, 74). We defend the idea that grammaticalization is the evolution of linguistic expressions from a more referential, lexically meaningful state to a more functional, elusive state, in which these expressions begin to mark the clause, the sentence or the wider context which they accompany (Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015: 78). In fact, as observed, our CCs occur with varying hosts and varying scope and most of them express functional, more elusive meaning. Their being “ancillary” should be thought of as being more evanescent, elusive and functional. Not for this reason, should they be considered as secondary in a grammar of spoken language. Instead of contentful (like their hosts), they express more functional and elusive meanings (or instructions).

For now, this survey constitutes a synchronic description of the use of CCs Italian, further diachronic research is needed, in order to highlight the various factors which may have led to the multifunctionality of the CCs outlined in Chapter 6. Furthermore, an analysis is needed on the distribution of CCs in registers in order to identify possible correlations with specific genres. Concerning the annotation, we need to conduct an intra-rate analysis on a random sample of at least 1000 CCs. Inter-rate agreement would be useful to verify the replicability of this study in other languages or concerning other markers.

Another important research is needed to study the difference between formulaic CCs and more analytical CCs with respect to a possible continuum of DM status. As anticipated in Ch.1, we decided not to use the term DMs since not all CCs are DMs. Some of them are structures occurring once and totally transparent. Before a distinction between CCs and DMs, we were interested in the activity revealed by meta-commenting devices. Moreover, using *a priori* the term DMs would have biased the whole research.

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