PASSIVES AND IMPERSONALS ON EVIDENCE FROM ROMANCE DIALECTS OF ITALY

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

2017

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**Word count: 52,404**
List of abbreviations

* ungrammatical form

# grammatical form which is not accepted in the given context

1/2/3 first person/second person/third person

Ø unspecified in the Logical Structure

AGX Agreement Index Node

AUX auxiliary

CL clitic

F feminine

IMP impersonal

INF infinitive

M masculine

OCL object clitic

PL plural

PSA Privileged Syntactic Argument

PTCP participle

PrCS pre-core slot

REFL reflexive

RRG Role and Reference Grammar

SCL subject clitic

SG singular
Abstract

This study investigates passive and impersonal constructions in three Romance dialects of Italy: Sicilian, Abruzzese and Tuscan. The aim of this investigation is twofold: on the one hand I aim to contribute to the documentation of the dialects of Italy, and on the other, I aim to build on existing theories on passive and impersonal constructions.

Whilst there is to date no detailed discussion of passive structures in Italo-Romance dialects, works such as Cennamo (1997), Ledgeway (2009) and Rohlfs (1969) suggest that passive structures are unpopular in the dialects of Italy. I explore the extent to which the passive is rejected in each dialect, and, where it is not used, which constructions are used in its place.

From the data I have collected on passive constructions in these three dialects, a pattern emerges: the acceptability of the passive directly relates to the transitivity of the verb. Whilst the acceptability of the passive varies from dialect to dialect, one consistent result is that passives are affected by the ranking of the verb on the Transitivity Hierarchy (Hopper and Thompson 1980) and its entailments.

This thesis presents interesting findings on si impersonals, uno, third person plural impersonals and the Abruzzese nome, which is of particular interest, and which I claim is an impersonal clitic, that holds a plural feature. Throughout my discussion of impersonals, I develop a hierarchy of impersonals, which is based on the semantic features (+/- referential, +/- definite, +/- irrealis) of each impersonal type. This hierarchy captures all of the impersonal types found in the three dialects, and allows for cross-dialectal analysis. I present novel findings relating to the Tuscan first person plural impersonal si and the split in its usage, which, to my knowledge has not yet been discussed in the relevant literature. The data show that Tuscan first person plural impersonal si can be used with transitive and unergative verbs but not with unaccusatives. I propose a reason for this split, which is based on what I term agreement features (person, number, gender). As well as providing a detailed analysis of each impersonal type, I attempt to refine existing definitions of impersonals and propose that all types of impersonal constructions can be defined by their deficiency in one of the three agreement features, in other words, they are ‘feature deficient constructions’.
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I am extremely grateful to my supervisor, Professor Delia Bentley, who has provided me with continuous support, encouragement and motivation, not only during my PhD course, but throughout the nine years I have been a student at the University of Manchester. I am exceptionally thankful to Delia for her dedication to this project, for the hours she has spent discussing ideas with me, and for inspiring me to pursue my research in this field.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my second supervisor, Professor John Payne, for his invaluable advice and guidance throughout this course. I am grateful to John for his approachability and for the time he has spent sharing his expertise with me and helping me to develop my ideas.

I am indebted to the translators and informants who so kindly agreed to share their knowledge with me and who spent so much of their time helping me with my fieldwork. I am particularly grateful to Robert and Monica Hastings, Elena D’Avenia, Cassandra Galletti and Irene Lorenzini for their patience, hospitality and kindness during my time in Italy.

I would like to thank my family, in particular my Dad, Stephen Stampone, and my husband, David Chapman, who have given me tremendous support and encouragement during the past four years and without whom I could not have completed this thesis.

Finally, I dedicate this work to the community of Fraine, in particular my grandfather, Vincenzo Stampone, who inadvertently sparked my passion for the dialects of Italy and led me to begin my studies in Italian.
Dialect map

= locations of dialects investigated

Line 1 = La Spezia-Rimini line
Line 2 = Rome-Ancona line
Chapter 1. Introduction: The Romance dialects of Italy.

This thesis investigates passive and impersonal constructions in three Romance dialects of Italy: Tuscan, Sicilian and Abruzzese, which belong to the sub-family of Romance called Italo-Romance. The Romance dialects of Italy provide a rich and fertile terrain for linguistic analysis. In both diachronic and synchronic terms, the phonology, morphology and vocabulary of the dialects have long been the focus of research, whereas variation in the domain of syntax has not yet received the same level of attention (Vincent 2014:1). In providing a detailed analysis of these constructions, I have a twofold aim: on the one hand, I aim to contribute to the field of Italian dialectology, documenting the dialects further, and, on the other, I aim to contribute to the existing literature on passives and impersonals. Throughout this thesis, I use both the term ‘Italo-Romance dialects’ and the term ‘the Romance dialects of Italy’ to refer to the Romance dialects spoken on the Italian peninsula. In this chapter, I will provide a background of the Italo-Romance dialects and my reasons for this terminology, before providing a brief comparison between the three dialects chosen for this study.

The term ‘Italian dialects’ often leads to the assumption that the dialects spoken within Italy are varieties or daughters of the Italian language when, in fact, Standard Italian stems from one of the varieties that developed from Latin in the Italy of the first millennium A.D.: the Florentine dialect (Migliorini 1966, Maiden 1995, Maiden and Parry 1997). From the 14th century, the Florentine language gained prestige and became known first as a language of culture (used in literature, science and government), since authors such as Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio wrote in Florentine (De Mauro 1963). It then developed more and more into a language used in more official and formal uses. After the unification of Italy in 1861, Florentine was chosen as the language of the newly formed nation, although this was a very controversial issue (debated in the so-called questione della lingua by prominent figures such as Graziadio Isaia Ascoli and the novelist Alessandro Manzoni). It took at least another 100 years for Italian, the Romance language derived from Florentine, to become a spoken language. The other Romance languages derived from Latin and spoken in Italy remained dialects, i.e., languages with no official recognition. According to a genealogical view of languages, what
unifies the dialects of Italy, as with all Romance languages, is that they are a result of the continuation of Latin and therefore have Latin as a common ancestor.

From the point of view of structure, there is no real difference between a dialect and a language (Maiden 1995:6). In Italian dialectology, the term ‘dialect’ usually refers to the speech of those who live in a particular town or region. In modern Europe, in places like England and France, the term ‘dialect’ may refer to what would be described in Italian as **italiano regionale** ‘regional Italian’, which is a secondary dialect and is the result of a combination of Standard Italian and the local dialect (Berruto 1993:8). Whilst regional varieties and the dialects are distinct from one another, regional varieties may contain various features of the dialect which is spoken locally. Secondary dialects are those which are developed through geographical differences, rather than from a common mother tongue (Auer, Hinksens, Kerswill 2005:82). The dialects investigated in this thesis are primary Romance dialects, meaning that they share the same origin as the standard language, but are considered inferior; they are used only as a spoken language and rarely in formal settings. Loporcaro (2009:3) defines the term ‘dialect’ as a linguistic variety which is non-standard, usually restricted to oral use and is excluded from formal use.

In the case of Italy, the term ‘dialect’ is used to refer to different daughters of Latin and therefore ‘sisters’ of Italian, and both the national language and dialects make up the linguistic repertoire of Italians. It is traditional in the study of Romance to recognise sub-groupings such as Gallo-Romance, Ibero-Romance, Daco-Romance and Italo-Romance (Harris and Vincent 1988, Ledgeway and Maiden 2016), which in some cases, though by no means all, roughly correspond to geopolitical areas like the Italian peninsula. More importantly, these sub-families can be identified in terms of their phonological and morphosyntactic structure, although it is virtually impossible to identify a cluster of traits that are exclusively of one subfamily though not the others. Even when modern dialectal structures are different from Latin, in the majority of cases the ingredients out of which those structures are composed are of Latin origin (Benincà, Ledgeway, Vincent 2014:138). Many of the dialects boast rich and long literary traditions and may still be the dominating spoken language in small villages, although their use is often discouraged in favour of Standard Italian. I will use the term ‘dialects of Italy’ to represent the dialects spoken on the Italian peninsula. As well as Romance and Italo-Romance dialects, there are also a number
of non-Romance (Germanic, Slavonic) and non-Italo-Romance (Sardinia, Friulian, Ladin, Catalan, Gallo-Romance) dialects spoken in Italy, but these will not be discussed in this thesis.

The concept of Italo-Romance is complicated by the fact that what are called dialects may sometimes display as wide a range of *diamitic* and *diastratic* variation as many standard languages.\(^1\) Similar ranges of variation are found in Italian, so much so that it is sometimes argued that Italians are not native speakers – or speakers, even - of a standard, but rather speakers of regional and diastratic varieties of Italian. Loporcaro (2009:10) shows that between some dialects and Italian there is as much linguistic distance as there is between different Romance languages. Loporcaro illustrates this with the Italian words *bue* ‘ox’, *uovo* ‘egg’, *occhio* ‘eye’, their corresponding terms in Torinese [bø], [øf], [øi] and in Sicilian [vɔi], [ɔ:vu], [ɔccu]. If we take the corresponding forms in French *bœf*, *œf*, *œj*, it appears that French and Torinese are more similar than Torinese and Sicilian. At the level of the region, we also find internal diversity of the dialects, although terms such as ‘the Abruzzese dialects’ or ‘the Tuscan dialects’ are conventionally used. There exists also the notion of a transitional dialect, which shows properties of more than one dialect, due to its geographical position. The dialect of Cairese (Parry 2005:74) is an example of this and shows properties of both Ligurian and Piedmontese, reflecting its geographical position and the fact that it is on a main communication route between the two provinces. As well as the geographical differences between the dialects, there are differences of register and type of usage, which are often explained in Italian linguistics using the terms diamesic, diastratic and diaphasic (Berruto 1993). As with the term ‘dialects’, these terms share the Greek prefix *dia-* ‘across’, since they involve comparing different types of linguistic material. Whilst social context may not have a great effect on a local dialect such as Cairese, the dialects of Milan, Naples and Venice exhibit a wide range of sociolinguistic variation and have long literary and non-literary written histories (Benincà, Ledgeway, Vincent 2014).

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\(^1\) Diamesic variation refers to variation based on the medium of language, particularly the difference between written and spoken. Diastratic variation refers to variation according to the social class, gender and age of the speaker (Berruto 1993:8).
The Italo-Romance dialects do not have any one specific feature in common only to them and unattested elsewhere in Romance, but we do find a certain degree of unity between different groupings of dialects. The dialects of Italy can be divided by isoglosses,\(^2\) which serve as boundaries for particular linguistic features. As discussed by Maiden (1995:233), linguistically abrupt boundaries are rare within Italo-Romance. The modern dialects form a linguistic continuum, since the speech varieties of geographically adjacent areas tend to differ only minimally and structural differences increase gradually with distance. Whilst there have been many attempts to classify the dialect groups, starting with the article *L’Italia dialettale* (Ascoli 1882-1885), the classification of the dialects used today is one proposed by Pellegrini in the *Carta dei dialetti d’Italia* (1977). Pellegrini divides the dialects into five main groups.

1) **Dialetti settentrionali** (Northern dialects)
   a. Dialetti gallo-italici (Gallo-Italic dialects)  
   b. Dialetti veneti (Venetian dialects)  
2) **Dialetti friuliani** (Friulian dialects)  
3) **Dialetti toscani** (Tuscan dialects)  
4) **Dialetti centro-meridionali** (Central-Southern dialects)
   a. Dialetti dell’area mediana (central dialects)  
   b. Dialetti alto-meridionali (Upper southern dialects)  
   c. Meridionali estremi (Extreme southern dialects)  
5) **Dialetti sardi** (Sardinian dialects)  

The northern bundle of isoglosses lies above the La Spezia-Rimini line, which marks the boundary of some features of the northern dialects (see map on page 9). The line runs along the Appenines from Carrara to Fano and separates the northern dialects from the rest. As explained by Maiden (1995), dialects to the south of this line display some linguistic similarities, which include the preservation of the long consonants of Latin. The dialects to the north of the line shorten these

\(^2\) An isogloss represents the geographical limit of linguistic features.
consonants. Whilst the three dialects chosen for this research (Sicilian, Tuscan and Abruzzese) are all located south (or on the border in the case of Tuscan) of the La Spezia-Rimini line, they each belong to a different dialect group and represent three dialects with typological differences. Within the dialect groupings determined by Pellegrini (see above), Tuscan belongs to the third group (dialetti toscani ‘Tuscan dialects’). Abruzzese belongs to group 4b (dialetti alto-meridionali ‘Upper southern dialects’) and Sicilian belongs to group 4c (dialetti meridionali estremi ‘Extreme southern dialects’). Collecting data from these three dialects will enable me to determine whether and to what extent the typological differences between these dialects are reflected in their passive and impersonal structures. In researching this topic I also aim to make a valuable and original contribution to Italian dialectology, building on the existing preliminary descriptions of passive and impersonal constructions in the dialects of Italy by Rohlfs (1969), Cennamo (1997) and Ledgeway (2009).

Whilst the Abruzzese and Sicilian dialects are safely part of the central-southern group of dialects, the traditional view is that most Tuscan dialects are neither northern nor southern, which derives from their status as a compromise between northern and southern dialects and as the source of Italian (Maiden and Parry 1997). The comparison made by Maiden and Parry between Tuscan and central-southern dialects reveals a lack of central-southern features in Tuscan. It appears, from a comparison between Tuscan and northern dialects, that Tuscan is the result of many northern influences. In particular, the use of subject clitic pronouns in Tuscan, which is a crucial element in our discussion of Tuscan in Chapter 5, reflects northern conditions, as does the apparent failure of agreement between verb and subject in structures where the verb precedes its subject.

Due to the development from Tuscan to Italian and the similarities that they share, it is often believed that Tuscan is not a dialect and that it is almost identical to Standard Italian. Maiden (1995:236) provides a list of features demonstrating the contrast between Standard Italian and Tuscan. The features that Standard Italian exhibits, and that Tuscan does not, are listed in the examples below:

(i) The absence of spirantization of intervocalic voiceless consonants
(ii) Presence of intervocalic [dʒ] and [tʃ], instead of the Tuscan [ʒ] and [ʃ]
(tʃena vs. fena ‘dinner’)

(iii) Presence of the diphthong [wɔ] in stressed open syllables

(iv) Use of first person plural forms in –iamo, as opposed to Tuscan first
person plural forms identical to third person singular reflexives: (noi) si
canta

(v) Absence of subject clitic pronouns

My findings confirm that there are key differences between the Tuscan
grammar and that of Standard Italian. I have adapted this list slightly to reflect the
results found within my data. In particular, I draw attention to the point in (iv),
which is misleading. This point implies that Tuscan dialects use only si impersonal
forms to express the first person plural. It is important to note that Tuscan maintains
both the first person plural –iamo form and the si impersonal with a first person
plural interpretation. I have re-worded this point below:

(i) The use of first person plural form –iamo only to express the first person
plural, unlike Tuscan which uses this form alongside si impersonals with
a first person plural interpretation ((noi) si canta).

In terms of the Sicilian dialects, some of the most salient features include the
merging of Latin long [e] and [o] respectively with [i] and [u] (1a-b). In example
(1a), the masculine singular participle, which would be ammazzato in Tuscan, ends
in u. This can also be seen in (1b), where we also find a merge from [e] to [i]. In
Tuscan, the third person singular remote past form of fare ‘to do’ would result in
fece. In Sicilian, the [e] sounds merge into [i] sounds, resulting in fici.

(1) Sicilian
a. Bill fu ammazzatu
     Bill be.PST.3SG kill.PTCP.MSG
‘Bill was killed’

b. U attu u fici scantari
   the cat.MSG OCL.MSG make.PST.3SG scare.INF
‘The cat scared him’
A major difference between Italian (together with Tuscan dialects) and other dialects of Italy concerns word-final unstressed vowels. Italian makes extensive use of such vowels in its system of inflectional morphology: the four final vowels [i] [e] [a] [o] all perform multiple grammatical functions in the adjective, noun and verb. In dialects where final unstressed vowels have been preserved, these continue to perform their associated morphological functions.

One feature of Abruzzese dialects which is particularly important to my analysis is the use of metaphony to display gender and number agreement on the past participle. Since the present tense 3SG and 3PL forms are usually syncretic (i.e. they share the same form), one way to determine whether or not an impersonal clitic or pronoun triggers verbal agreement is to test it in the perfect. In Abruzzese, the final vowel of a word has been lost, but its effect on the middle vowel has remained, resulting in past participle agreement with metaphony (see the contrast between the Tollese examples in (2a) and (2b)) (Hastings 1997, Cortelazzo 1979).

(2) Tollese
a. Si jukatə a pallonə
   be.2SG play.PTCP.SG at football
   ‘You played football’

b. Avetə jukitə a pallonə
   have.2PL play.PTCP.PL at football
   ‘You (PL) played football’

Unlike auxiliary selection in Tuscan, which is dependent on verb type, and in Sicilian, which is always aviri ‘to have’, auxiliary selection in Abruzzese is person-driven (Maiden and Parry 1997, D’Alessandro and Alexiadou 2006). In Tollese, 1SG,
2SG, 1PL and 2PL tend to take the auxiliary \textit{essere} (3a) and 3SG and 3PL forms tend to take \textit{avere} (3b) (Hastings 1997).

\begin{enumerate}
\item a. \textit{Tu si \textit{fatto} na torta}
\begin{itemize}
\item you be.2SG do.PTCP a cake
\end{itemize}
\textquoteleft You made a cake\textquoteright
\item b. \textit{Jisse a \textit{fatto} na torta}
\begin{itemize}
\item they have.3SG do.PTCP a cake
\end{itemize}
\textquoteleft They made a cake\textquoteright
\end{enumerate}

Some of the lexis and constructions found in my data do not represent true dialectal forms and are Italianised forms, due to the mutual pressure between Italian and the dialect. Berruto (2012:55) explains that the dialects are no longer what they once were, due to pressure from Italian. Berruto describes the linguistic situation of Italy, explaining that, due to the rapid expansion and diffusion of the national language, Standard Italian is now used in contexts which would have previously been reserved for the dialect. This process has resulted in Italy moving from a state of \textit{diglossia} to bilingualism, with a much higher percentage of speakers who do not speak their local dialect\textsuperscript{3}. In fact, Berruto claims that ‘i giovani non parlano più il vero dialetto’ ‘young people no longer speak the true dialect’ (ib.). Telmon (1993:100) uses the diagram below in (4) to represent this mutual pressure between Italian and the dialect. The dialectal output is not only context-dependent, but speaker-dependent also, hence there is variation in the data I have collected. The type of variation I encountered is the result of pressure from Italian and the

\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Diglossia} refers to the use of two languages (Italian and dialect) in different contexts within the same society (Ferguson 1959). For example, Standard Italian is reserved for formal and written contexts, whilst the dialect is the spoken and informal language. In present-day Italy, we have a situation of diglossia with bilingualism (Fishman 1967, Berruto 1993), which is rapidly progressing towards imbalanced bilingualism and monolingualism.
phenomena of language contact and language shifting. Since my study investigated
the dialects of Sicilian, Tuscan and Abruzzese, in my data analysis chapters (3-5), I
have highlighted any Italianised forms or forms which are influenced by the
Standard language.

(4)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{DIALETTO} & \quad \text{ITALIANO} \\
\text{intonazione} & \quad \text{fonetica} \\
\text{fonetica} & \quad \text{morfologia} \\
\text{DIALETTO} & \quad \text{ITALIANO} \\
\text{Sintassi} & \quad \text{lessico} \\
\text{lessico} & \quad \text{fraseologia}
\end{align*}
\]

(Telmon 1993:100)

The three dialects chosen for this study were selected based on their
characteristics. One of the key ideas of this thesis is to test whether impersonals have
different features in dialects with embedded subject clitics, such as Tuscan, and those
without them, such as Sicilian. Another key aim of this thesis is to test whether the
return to an accusative/nominative type of alignment in the Southern dialects, after
the typological shift to active alignment in late Latin and early Romance (La Faucci
1988, Zamboni 1998, Ledgeway 2012), is also manifested in the passive/active
diathesis. We return to the said typological shifts in section 2.3. Here we briefly note
that the idea is that the robust nominative/accusative alignment of Latin gave way to
patterns of active alignment in late Latin and early Romance. The alternation of two
perfect auxiliaries in accordance with verb class (and hence in accordance with the
syntactic-semantic status of the subject) is an example of active alignment. While
this alternation is maintained in Northern Romance (e.g., in the Northern dialects of
Italy), it is lost in Southern Romance (e.g., in Sicilian).
Chapter 2: Passives and impersonals

2.1 Passives and Impersonals in the literature

Whilst there is a mention of the passive in many, although by no means all, dialect grammars, and Cennamo (1997, 2016) has also provided an overview of passive structures found in Italo-Romance dialects, there is to date no comprehensive survey of such structures or of their actual use in the contemporary varieties of the said dialects. Treatments such as those in Rohlfs (1969) and, with specific respect to Neapolitan, Ledgeway (2009) suggest that the passive construction is not a frequently used construction in at least some of the dialects of Italy. Therefore, we may ask ourselves if this rejection of the passive, which is well attested in the early vernacular texts (ca. 9th to 15th century) makes space for one or several other constructions, what these are, and whether they have the same functions of the passive in discourse, semantics and syntax. I will begin this chapter (section 2.2) by explaining the sense in which the term passive is used in the essay, followed by a discussion of passives in the literature. This theoretical discussion of the passive will be followed by a discussion of a typological shift from Latin to Romance and how this relates to the passive in section 2.3. I will then discuss the passive forms which are found in the dialects of Italy (section 2.4), with data drawn from dialect grammars and texts written in dialect. In sections 2.5 and 2.6 I will explain the link between the passive and the Transitivity Hierarchy (Hopper and Thompson 1980) and how this is relevant to my findings, before introducing the Role and Reference Grammar framework and explaining how this can assist us in analysing passive structures. This is largely based on Van Valin and LaPolla (1997) (henceforth VVLP), who analyse the passive at the interface of semantics (semantic macroroles) and syntax (subject). In section 2.7 I will provide my definition of the term ‘impersonal’, along with brief descriptions of the different impersonal types found in my data which will serve as an introduction to the relevant terminology. In section 2.8, I will discuss impersonal constructions in Italo-Romance, before presenting my Hierarchy of Impersonals in section 2.9. Section 2.10 provides a discussion of impersonals within the Role and Reference Grammar framework and how this may be developed.
2.2 What is a passive structure?

Traditional grammars (Zingarelli 2010) define the passive as a voice construction whereby the direct object of an active sentence (*the cake* in 1a) becomes the subject of the passive construction (1b).

(1)

a. Mary ate the cake
b. The cake was eaten by Mary

In syntactic terms the passive can be defined as a voice construction whereby an underlying direct object surfaces as the subject. In this thesis, I will use the Role and Reference Grammar framework to analyse my findings, and I will draw upon VVLP (1997) for the notion of passive. For this reason, I look at the passive in terms of mapping from semantics to syntax (or vice versa): the passive involves non-default marking of the semantic role undergoer to the grammatical relation subject.\(^1\) This point will be discussed in more detail in section 2.6. In the passive structure, the actor\(^2\) may appear as the complement of the preposition ‘by’, although is it not necessary to overtly encode this, as seen in the Altamuran example in (2), where there is no *by*-phrase.

(2) Lu pwemɔ nam e staɬ tag:jeit

the bread not be.3SG be.PTCP cut. PTCP

‘The bread has not been cut’

(Loporcaro 1987:291)

Since the actor is either absent or demoted to an adjunct position (i.e., a complement of *by*) in the passive, this construction can be described as a syntactic

---

\(^1\) This mapping is marked or not default from the point of accusative alignment, which privileges the actor, and not the undergoer, as the subject (Van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 175)

\(^2\) In this thesis, I use the terms *actor* and *undergoer* in place of *agent* and *patient*. The RRG framework uses this terminology to account for the difference between thematic roles and macroroles, which subsume a number of thematic roles (see section 2.6).
valence-changing operation. If we define valence as the number of overt morphosyntactically coded core arguments a predicate has, it is evident that the passive reduces the valence of the predicate. A passive construction may be represented with a diagram such as that presented in VVLP (1997:174) and given in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1. Representation of a passive construction.**

![Diagram of a passive construction](image)

With regards to the discourse functions of the passive, I consider the passive to be a construction used to avoid the attribution of responsibility or to background this, giving more prominence to the event or to its undergoer. The active sentence in example (3a) assigns responsibility to the car, whereas the passive construction used in example (3b) avoids assigning responsibility, suggesting that the car was not the cause of the brother’s death, but rather, that there was another cause.

(3)

a. A car hit my brother
b. My brother got hit by a car (and he died from a blood clot in his leg)

(Cornelis, 1997:46)

---

3 Following Cornelis (1997:12), I use ‘discourse functions of the passive’ to what the passive does, rather than what it is, and in what contexts it is used by speakers.
Jespersen (1924:167-168) provides five main reasons for the choice of the passive in English:

- The active subject is unknown or cannot be easily stated
- The active subject is self-evident from the context
- There may be a special reason for not mentioning the active subject
- Even if the active subject is indicated, the passive turn is preferred if one takes naturally a greater interest in the passive than in the active subject
- The passive turn may facilitate the connection of one sentence with another

The passive can also be used to maintain the original topic in topic chains, as we see in the sequences in (4) (Givòn 1994:104). In example (4a) he is the topic. By choosing a passive structure to complete the topic chain, speakers provide a continuation of the chain and maintain the same topic. If however speakers choose to switch to an active construction (4b), the topic chain is broken and another element becomes the new topic (the car in (4b)). One question that I hope to answer during the course of this thesis is whether topic chains enhance the felicitousness of the passive in the dialects.

(4)

a. He got up, had a shower, had breakfast, left the house and was hit by a car
b. He got up, had a shower, had breakfast, left the house and a car hit him

Topic chains are a sequence of expressions that all have the same referent, or ‘topic’ and are referred to by Dik (1997:218) as ‘anaphorical chains’, since each clause refers back to the same referent. Asking informants to complete a topic chain may influence them to choose a passive rather than an active so as to maintain the original topic. The use of an active would mean that the topic that has been maintained up until that point will be replaced. This will be discussed in further detail in Chapters 4-6.
We may then describe the passive as a construction which is more suited to providing background information, and, as discussed in Cornelis (1997), the passive is used to express a certain degree of reduced transitivity and the defocusing of the actor, which makes it an ideal construction for narrative texts. Cornelis (1997:52) also suggests that the passive predicate is more stative than its active counterpart. The aim of this thesis is to determine whether the passives exist in the dialect, or if it is used at all, even in the discourse domains which would normally favour it. I presented the speakers with discourse contexts which would license or require the passive in Italian (e.g. topic chains) to investigate to what extent the passive is used in the dialect. This also applies to the data collected on impersonal constructions. As mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, I follow the hypothesis that accusative alignment is making headway in the dialects of Italy. I note that alignment is orthogonal to discourse; no matter whether the discourse structure is favourable, a language with predominantly accusative alignment may not use the passive.

One aspect of passivization that has caused debate amongst linguists is whether passivization is a process of promotion or demotion. Whilst Perlmutter and Postal (1977) argue that the passive is a promotion operation, where a direct object becomes the subject at a later stage, this analysis provides no mechanism for the removal of the active subject. Okutso (1983) and Givon (1979) argue along similar lines, focusing on the idea that passivization is the process of promoting a non-actor into the role of main topic of the sentence. Comrie (1977) disagrees with this approach and argues that certain constructions such as impersonal passives do not involve promotion of a direct object, so it would be impossible for promotion of the object to be the main function of the passive. Shibatani (1985) also claims that the main function of the passive is the defocusing of the actor, and supports this by saying that passives do not generally express actors overtly. It is true that some languages prohibit or avoid the overt expression of the actor and, in fact, agentless passives are far more numerous than those without actors. The example from Molisano in (5) shows that, in this particular dialect, the use of a by-phrase results in an ungrammatical construction.
(5) Molise:

\[\text{ru 'pworkə e fiata at'fise (*da ru pa'tronə)}\]

the pig be.3SG be.PTCP kill.PTCP by the owner

‘The pig was killed by its owner’

(Cennamo 1997: 147)

My data support Shibatani’s argument that the passive is a process of
demotion rather than promotion. Since speakers have a preference for actives rather
than passives, it follows that speakers have a preference for actor roles to occur in
subject position, rather than undergoer roles. Where the passive is used, overt
expression of the actor does not occur in nearly all cases and is often prohibited,
meaning that the passive has the discourse function of not only demoting the actor,
but completely suppressing it.

2.3 A typological change in the transition to Romance

It is at least conceivable that the gradual demise of passive structures in the Italo-
Romance dialects is a result of a typological change. We know from the discussion
in the previous section that, in a passive structure, the undergoer is mapped to subject.
According to VVLP (172-178, 242-309), undergoer is the marked choice for subject
in nominative/accusative alignment. Instead, actor is the default choice, as testified
by case marking (the actor is more likely to be zero marked (nominative) than the
undergoer (accusative)), verb agreement in transitive clauses (the verb agrees with
the actor and not with the undergoer), the control of omitted arguments in clausal
coordination (the missing argument is controlled by an actor), etc. Since the passive
is rejected in these dialects and the constructions used to replace it, for example,
topicalisation of the object, map actor to subject, this suggests that the actor is indeed
the preferred choice for subject.

Interestingly, Zamboni (2003) explains that the case system of Latin was
undoubtedly nominative/accusative, since all types of subject (S) are assigned
nominative case. By contrast, the grammatical object (O) of a transitive verb surfaces
in the accusative form. It follows then that the nominal system of Latin formally
contrasts subjects of transitives (A) and subjects of intransitives (U) with O (objects of transitives) to yield a canonical nominative/accusative system, which is insensitive to the semantic characterization (actor/undergoer) of the subject (Ledgeway 2012, Bentley 2016).

However, in the transition to Romance, there emerged patterns which followed a different type of alignment, called active/stative (Ledgeway 2012, among others). This type of alignment distinguishes actors from undergoers. Thus, two types of intransitive subjects are distinguished by the selection of the perfect auxiliary ESSE ‘be’ or HABERE ‘have’, the former marking undergoer subjects and the latter actor subjects (see Bentley 2006 for an in-depth account and some apparent deviations from this pattern). Similarly, partitive INDE ‘of it’ is a proform for undergoer but not actor subjects; the past participle agrees with undergoer subjects but not with actor subjects in the perfect, etc. The establishment of these features characterises early Romance. In Modern Romance, some languages have lost these traits of active/stative alignment and have returned to generalized nominative/accusative alignment. This is the case with many Southern Italo-Romance dialects, including Sicilian, which only has one generalized perfect auxiliary (HABERE ‘have’), has lost subject past participle agreement in the perfect, etc. In Central Southern Italo-Romance dialects, the above system of alternation of two perfect auxiliaries has been replaced by a nominative/accusative person driven auxiliary selection system (6a, 6b).

(6) Abruzzese

a. Ji so fatte’ na torre
I be.1SG make.PTCP a cake
‘I have made a cake’

b. Esse a fatte’ na torre
she have.3SG make.PTCP a cake
‘She has made a cake’

(D’Alessandro & Roberts 2010: 2)
Some scholars claim that these dialects have returned to generalized nominative/accusative alignment and this is called the North-vs.-South divide hypothesis because the languages and dialects which privilege nominative/accusative alignment are spoken in the South of the Romania, or south of the Rimini-La Spezia line (La Fauvi 1988, Zamboni 1998, Ledgeway 2012, among others).

To return to the passive, our dialect findings show that on the whole, the dialects of Italy prefer to align the subject with the actor role rather than with undergoer role (Pippinu in example (7)).

(7)

a. *Pippinu chiù a porta.

Joseph close.PST.3SG the door
‘Joseph closed the door.’

b. *A porta fu chiuiuta di Pippinu.

the door be.PST.3SG close.PTCP by Joseph
‘The door was closed by Joseph’

Since my data show that the dialects under investigation reject the passive and, in turn, only accept actor subjects, it seems that they are more rigid in subject choice and only accept the subject that is default in nominative/accusative alignment. Therefore, the tendency of the dialects to reject the passive possibly indicates a return to nominative/accusative alignment.

2.4. Passive structures in the Romance dialects of Italy

Maiden and Robustelli (2000: 280) state that in Standard Italian the most basic type of passive comprises an auxiliary verb + past participle: auxiliary verb *essere* + past participle (agreeing for gender and number with the subject) (+*da* + noun). Contrastingly, according to dialect grammars such as Rohlfs (1969), in many
dialects, the grammar allows not only the use of *essere* ‘be’, *venire* ‘come’ and *andare* ‘go’ as auxiliaries in passive constructions, but there is also evidence of other verbs such as *stare* ‘lit. stay’, and *avere* ‘have’

2.4.1 Passive and perfect auxiliary selection: avere vs. essere

As in other Romance languages, perfect auxiliary selection in Standard Italian is between either *avere* ‘have’ or *essere* ‘be’. In the passive one also finds auxiliaries *andare* ‘go’, *stare* ‘stay’ and *venire* ‘come’ (which has a similar effect to the ‘get’ passive in English), and these auxiliaries are often context driven. This thesis will place particular focus on auxiliaries *avere* and *essere*, both in the perfect and in the passive, with little mention of other auxiliaries. The reason for this is that the other auxiliaries have not been found at all in the passive in the dialects. The perfect auxiliary ‘have’ is usually restricted to transitive verbs (arrest, hit, scratch) and unergative verbs (work, eat), whilst the perfect auxiliary ‘be’ is usually restricted to unaccusative verbs (run, arrive, go). This division of intransitive verbs into two subclasses ‘unergative’ and ‘unaccusative’ was first noted in Perlmutter (1978), who proposed that the class of intransitive verbs is not homogenous but that it can be divided into two subclasses, based on the characteristics of the verb. This distinction has played a vital role in accounting for a wide variety of linguistic phenomena and is crucial to our analysis of the Tuscan data in Chapter 6, where we find a split in referential *si* constructions. What is of particular interest to my findings in Tuscan is split intransitivity, which is manifested in perfect auxiliary selection.

In Standard Italian, all types of verb, including those which normally take *avere*, take the auxiliary *essere* in passive constructions. According to Cennamo (1997) some dialects do allow the alternation of *essere* and *avere* as interchangeable passive auxiliaries. In some Italo-Romance dialects the use of auxiliary in the perfect is generalised and only *avere* or *essere* is used with all types of verbs, regardless of their transitivity status. In the Calabrese examples in (8) we see perfect constructions with the auxiliary ‘have’ with unaccusative verbs which would normally require the auxiliary *essere* in Standard Italian (Rohlfs, 1969).
Interestingly, in some dialects, we also see the extension of the verb *essere* as the auxiliary for transitive verbs; this is extremely prevalent in dialects such as Abruzzese as in the example *[so fatte na lettere]* ‘I wrote a letter’. In Abruzzese dialects, we find an alternation of *avere* and *essere* which is not based on verb type but rather is person-driven. The table below provides evidence of this with the verb *fare* ‘to do’. In the third person singular and third person plural, the verb takes the auxiliary *avere* ‘have’, whilst in all other cases the verb takes the auxiliary *essere* ‘be’. In Standard Italian, where past participle agreement occurs overtly, it is found on the final vowel of the past participle. In Abruzzese, since word final vowels have been lost and replaced by /ə/, past participle agreement is often displayed via metaphony and is found word internally within the past participle rather than word finally. This can be seen in the table below; in the 1PL, 2PL and 3PL forms, the past participle becomes *fitte*, which is a plural form, whilst in all other forms it is *fatte*, which is a singular form.
Table 1. Perfect auxiliary selection in Abruzzese.

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>Ji</td>
<td>so’</td>
<td>fattə</td>
<td>na tortə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>be.1SG</td>
<td>PTCP.SG</td>
<td>FSG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>fattə</td>
<td>na tortə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>be.2SG</td>
<td>PTCP.SG</td>
<td>FSG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>Esse</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>fattə</td>
<td>na tortə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it</td>
<td>have.3SG</td>
<td>PTCP.SG</td>
<td>FSG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>Nu</td>
<td>seme</td>
<td>fitto</td>
<td>na tortə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>We</td>
<td>are.1PL</td>
<td>PTCP.PL</td>
<td>FSG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>Vu</td>
<td>sete</td>
<td>fitto</td>
<td>na tortə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>be.2PL</td>
<td>PTCP.PL</td>
<td>FSG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>Jisse</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>fitto</td>
<td>na tortə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>They</td>
<td>have.3PL</td>
<td>PTCP.PL</td>
<td>FSG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further examples of the Abruzzese person-driven auxiliary alternation are shown in (9) below. In example (9a), perfect auxiliary avere is used in the passive in the third person singular, whilst in (9b) perfect essere figures in the second person singular. The passive auxiliary is here, consistently, essere.

(9)  
   a. A statə fattə da Mariə  
   have.3SG be.PTCP do.PTCP by Maria  
   ‘It was made by Maria’  
   b. Si fiatə kapata pi la garə di nota?  
   be.2SG be.PTCP choose.PTCP for the race of swimming  
   ‘Were you chosen for the swimming race?’
In Altamurano, both ESSE and HABERE are used in passive constructions (Loporcaro 1987). In this dialect the situation is even more complex and the passive with essere can be used only with the simple past and compound tenses, but not for the present and the imperfect, whereas avere does not have these limitations and can be used to form the passive in tempi semplici and tempi composti, apart from the trapassato prossimo where only essere can be used. The active structure with the auxiliary avere is often used to replace the passive whilst carrying a passive meaning such as l’ho avuto regalato da mia madre ‘I had it given to me by my mother’. A comparable structure is found in Sicilian and Calabrian, as is shown in the examples below.

(10)

a. Nun aju avutu regalatu
   NEG have.1SG have.PTCP give.PTCP
   Sicilian

   mancu nu sordu

   not-even a penny

   ‘I haven’t even been given a penny’

b. L’ avisti rittu
   OCL have.2SG say.PTCP
   Sicilian

   ‘It was said to you/You had it said to you’

   (Loporcaro 1987:292)

c. amu avutu aggiustat’ ‘a machina
   have.1PL have.PTCP repair. PTCP the car

   ‘Our car was repaired/We had the car repaired’

   (Ledgeway 2000:238)
There are however, some instances in which _avere_ cannot be accepted; this is often when the subject is an inanimate object.

### 2.4.2 Passive-like strategies in Italo-Romance

There is very little discussion of the passive in dialect grammars and, in fact, some do not even mention it at all. As explained in Ledgeway (2009), in modern Neopolitan, the passive in general is not a popular structure and, when it is used, it is mostly with inanimate actors rather than animate ones and where an animate actor occurs, an active construction is preferred. In the Altamuran dialect grammar Loporcaro (1988) states that, in this dialect as in many others, there are also other constructions which replace the passive construction. The passive construction is sometimes reserved for formal situations or is only used for stylistic reasons such as during story-telling. The following example in (11) is taken from a fairy-tale (Bentley, Cicente, Cruschina 2014)\(^4\). This example supports the argument that the passive belongs to higher and more formal registers such as the written language.

\[(11)\]  
Macerata  
\[\begin{align*}
a. \textit{Lu pesce fu pescatu e vinnutu} \\
\text{the fish be.3SG.PST catch.PTCP and sell.PTCP}
\end{align*}\]

‘The fish were caught and sold’

Based on the data collected in Tuscany, Abruzzo and Sicily, the preferred alternative to the passive is an active construction. Constructions with topicalization of the undergoer and left-dislocation are also an alternative to the passive in Italo-Romance dialects. The passive and left-dislocation constructions share the effect of foregrounding the undergoer and backgrounding or leaving out the actor. In left-dislocation constructions, the verb remains in the active voice, but the undergoer is topicaled (and resumed by a resumptive clitic). The examples below show left dislocation in three Italo-Romance dialects (12a-b).

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\(^4\) [http://existentials.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/](http://existentials.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/)
My findings support these claims, since my data show that, in all three dialects, topicalization is found with all verb classes, whilst the passive is generally only found with verbs which have highly agentive actors. The Tollese examples below show two passive constructions with actors which are not highly agentive (13b, 13d). These constructions were rejected as ungrammatical by informants and were replaced by some informants with constructions with topicalization (13a, 13c).

(13) Tollese

a. La risposta li sapevano tutti i molti studenti

the answer OCL know.3SG all many the students

‘The answer, all the students knew it’

b. *La risposta era saputa da tutti i molti studenti

the answer be.3SG know.PTCP by all many the students

‘The answer was known by all the students’
c. Ventisei chilometrə li ann corsə li džuvənə
twenty-six kilometres OCL have.3PL run.PTCP the young
‘Twenty-six kilometres, the young people ran them’

d. *Ventisei chilometrə ann statə corsə da li džuvənə
twenty-six kilometres have.3PL be.PTCP run.PTCP by the young
‘Twenty-six kilometres were run by the young people’

2.5 Passives and the Transitivity Hierarchy

Since passives are not regularly used in the Italo-Romance dialects, this thesis will investigate the contexts in which the passive is still used and which factors encourage the use or rejection of the passive. I will then compare these results cross-dialectally. Works such as Shibatani (1988) and Mattie De Viviès (2009) discuss the role that transitivity plays in the acceptability of passive constructions. De Mattie-Viviès argues that the notion of transfer from subject to object through the verb is what makes passivization possible. When the subject is not associated with the role of actor if the object is not affected, the transfer cannot occur and passivization is not possible. Verbs such as ‘resemble’, ‘cost’, ‘weigh’ and ‘contain’ fit into this category since they do not take an affected object but rather they attribute a property to the subject, meaning that they are usually ungrammatical when passivized.

Hopper and Thompson (1980) give evidence of semantic parameters which may influence the morpho-syntactic coding of verbs with two macrorole arguments, or transitives. These semantic parameters involve characteristics of the actor, such as volition and degree of agency, as well as those of the object, such as kinesis, aspect, mode, punctuality and affirmation. These entailments are scalar, where properties at the extreme ends correspond to high and low degrees of transitivity (Shibatani 1988:561). The Transitivity Hierarchy proposed by Hopper and Thompson (1980) ranks verbs on a transitivity scale based on their entailments. These entailments include, amongst others, the number of participants a verb takes, level of volitionality, telicity, punctuality and the affectedness of the object. Hence, a verb
such as ‘arrest’ would rank highly on the transitivity scale since it has two participants, the actor is high in volition and the undergoer is totally affected. The Transitivity Hierarchy is shown in the table below.

Table 2. The Transitivity Hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PARTICIPANTS</td>
<td>2 or more</td>
<td>One participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KINESIS</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASPECT</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUNCTUALITY</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOLITIONALITY</td>
<td>Volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFFIRMATION</td>
<td>Affirmative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODE</td>
<td>Realis</td>
<td>Irrealis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGENCY</td>
<td>A high in potency</td>
<td>A low in potency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFFECTEDNESS OF O</td>
<td>O totally affected</td>
<td>O not affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDIVIDUATION OF O</td>
<td>O highly individuated</td>
<td>O not individuated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have devised tests in order to determine whether a verb provides its argument with the entailments of Hopper and Thompson’s hierarchy and hence whether it is high or low on the transitivity hierarchy. The tests are listed below:

**Participants:** How many participants are involved? With a verb such as ‘kick’, there are two participants. With a verb such as ‘weigh’ (intransitive), there is only one.

**Action:** Actions can be transferred from one participant to another, yet states cannot, eg. ‘The cat scratched the dog’ (action) / ‘The dog hates the cat’ (non-action)

**Verbal** aspect: Does the action have an endpoint? Test the verb with a phrase such as ‘in an hour’.

**Punctuality:** Is the action inherently ongoing?

**Volitionality:** Is the actor acting purposefully? With verbs such as ‘cook’, ‘kill’, ‘arrest’, the actor acts purposefully. With verbs such as ‘like’, ‘hate’, ‘weigh’, the actor does not act deliberately.
**Affirmation:** Is the statement affirmative or negative? ‘The dog scratched the cat’ vs. ‘The dog did not scratch the cat.’

**Mode:** Is this action a statement of fact? ‘The dog scratched the cat’ vs. ‘The dog should scratch the cat.’

**Agency:** Can the construction be used with the word ‘deliberately’? With verbs such as ‘murder’, ‘cook’, ‘arrest’, ‘study’, this can occur. With verbs such as ‘weigh’, ‘like’, ‘hate’, it cannot.

**Affectedness:** This relates to the degree to which the undergoer is affected. Does the patient undergo a change of state? With verbs such as ‘kick’, ‘arrest’, ‘hit’, the patient does undergo a change of state. With verbs such as ‘weigh’, ‘like’, ‘dislike’, the patient does not undergo a change of state. With a verb such as ‘cook’, which is used in this discussion, the patient may be partially or totally affected. This will be discussed further in the next section.

**Individuation of O:** This refers to the degree of specificity of O: is O a unique individual that is established in discourse? Is it a subset of a set of individuals that are established in discourse? We will not refer to this transitivity parameter because we found that it did not affect our findings at all.

In my analysis of the passive in Sicilian, Abruzzese and Tuscan, I will show that the acceptability of the passive directly relates to the Transitivity Hierarchy. The table below (Table 3) provides a full list of the relevant verbs and their entailments. I should note that the verbs in Table 3 do not represent all of the verbs investigated in the questionnaire, but are selected to represent a scale of transitivity. Examples of other verbs investigated in the questionnaire will be provided throughout the discussion to illustrate relevant points, or to provide further examples of a particular verb type.
Table 3. Verb entailments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>Ammazzare ‘to kill’</th>
<th>Ammazzare per sbaglio ‘to kill by mistake’</th>
<th>Distruggere ‘to destroy’</th>
<th>Arrestare ‘to arrest’</th>
<th>Cucinare ‘to cook’</th>
<th>Sapere ‘to know something’</th>
<th>Conoscere ‘to know someone’</th>
<th>Correre ‘to run’</th>
<th>Piacere ‘to like’</th>
<th>Pesare ‘to weigh’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesis</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuality</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volitionality</td>
<td>Volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Volitional</td>
<td>Volitional</td>
<td>Not necessarily volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
</tr>
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<td>Realis</td>
<td>Realis</td>
<td>Realis</td>
<td>Realis</td>
<td>Realis</td>
<td>Realis</td>
<td>Realis</td>
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<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency</td>
<td>High in potency</td>
<td>Low in potency</td>
<td>Low in potency</td>
<td>Low in potency</td>
<td>Low in potency</td>
<td>Low in potency</td>
<td>Low in potency</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

36
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<tr>
<th>Affectedness of O</th>
<th>O totally affected</th>
<th>O totally affected</th>
<th>O totally affected</th>
<th>O partially or totally affected</th>
<th>O not affected</th>
<th>O not affected</th>
<th>O not affected</th>
<th>O does not exist</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Individuation of O</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.6 Passives in the Role and Reference Grammar framework

I have chosen to couch the analysis of passives and impersonals in Tuscan, Abruzzese and Sicilian in the Role and Reference Grammar framework (Foley and Van Valin 1984, Van Valin and LaPolla 1997, Van Valin 2007). Role and Reference Grammar (henceforth RRG) presents the ideal framework for studying syntax across languages, since its principal aim is to investigate cross-linguistic variation in the interplay of syntax, semantics and discourse. This interplay turns out to be crucial in the study of passives. RRG rejects the standard formats for representing clause structure, such as X-bar theory, and instead uses the *Layered Structure of the Clause* (*LSC*). The main layers in the LSC are the Nucleus, which is the locus of the predicate, the Core, which contains the Nucleus and the core arguments of the predicate\(^5\), and the Clause. Above the Clause is the Sentence. This is shown in the diagram below.

(14)

---

\(^{5}\) The core arguments are those that are selected by the predicate and hence figure in its lexical-semantic representation.

\(^{6}\) These nodes are labelled RP, since they are normally taken by referential expressions. However, they do not *always* contain referential expressions and can also contain non-referential indefinites, dummies, etc.
The construction in the diagram above also involves a peripheral constituent. There is a periphery for every layer of the clause: for example, the periphery of the core contains adjuncts and core-modifying adverbs. The syntactic arguments in the core are referred to in RRG as core arguments and can be either direct or oblique. Obliques are marked by adpositions or oblique cases (other than nominative-accusative or ergative-absolutive).

Some languages, like the dialects studied in this thesis, have what RRG calls a Pre-Core Slot and a Left-Detached Position, which figure prominently in information-structure related syntax. When this slot is filled, we find constructions like the left-dislocation examples in (15). This example demonstrates an Abruzzese construction with the left-detached position occupied.

(15) Abruzzese

\[
\text{La risposta, l} \odot \text{ s}a\text{pev} \odot \text{ tutti kwind} \odot \text{ li student} \odot \]

the answer it know.3SG all many the students

‘The answer, all of the students knew it’

\[
\text{La risposta} \text{ is in the left-detached position of the clause. The pre-core slot usually holds focal elements which immediately precede the core such as a WH-word in languages that do not have Wh- in situ, and contrastively focused constituents, like a pasta in the Sicilian example below (16).}
\]

(16) Sicilian

\[
A \text{ pasta Maria } fici
\]

the pasta Maria do.PST

‘Maria made the pasta [not something else]’
The fronted element *a pasta* is placed in the Pre Core Slot (PrCs), as seen in the example below (observe, however, that some varieties of Sicilian allow pre-verbal focus both in contrastive and in non-contrastive cases).

(17)

The RRG approach to lexical representation is a system of lexical decomposition based on Vendler’s 1967 Aktionsart classification of verbs into states, activities, accomplishments and achievements. The representations for each of these classes is provided below:

State \( \text{predicate}' (x) \) or \((x,y)\)

Activity \( \text{do}' (x, [\text{predicate}' (x) \text{ or } (x,y)]) \)

Achievement INGR \( \text{predicate}' (x) \) or \((y)\)

Accomplishment BECOME \( \text{do}' (x, \text{ predicate } (x) \text{ or } (x,y)) \)

The decompositional representation of a predicate is referred to as its logical structure.
John is a doctor \( \text{be'} (\text{John}, [\text{doctor'}]) \)

The dog barks \( \text{do'} (\text{dog}, [\text{bark'}(\text{dog})]) \)

One particularly unique aspect of RRG is its theory of semantic roles. Whilst it does reflect the traditional notion of agent, patient, experiencer, etc, it also has semantic macroroles, which subsume a number of thematic relations. RRG allows for five distinctions of thematic roles, which correspond to the five possible argument positions in the Logical Structure.

(18) **Thematic relations continuum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arg.of state</th>
<th>1\text{st} arg. of</th>
<th>1\text{st} arg. of</th>
<th>2\text{nd} arg. of</th>
<th>Arg. of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DO</td>
<td>\text{do'} (x,\ldots)</td>
<td>\text{pred'} (x, y)</td>
<td>\text{pred'} (x, y)</td>
<td>\text{pred'} (x)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>\text{AGENT}</td>
<td>\text{MOVER}</td>
<td>\text{L-MOVER}</td>
<td>\text{PERFORMER}</td>
</tr>
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<td>\text{S-EMITTER}</td>
<td>\text{CONSUMER}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>\text{PERCIEVER}</td>
<td>\text{COGNIZER}</td>
<td>\text{JUDGER}</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>\text{CONTENT}</td>
<td>\text{JUDGMENT}</td>
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<td></td>
<td>\text{VALUE}</td>
<td>\text{PERFORMANCE}</td>
<td>\text{CONSUMED}</td>
<td>\text{IMPLEMENT}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Van Valin 2005:58)

The two and only macroroles ‘actor’ and ‘undergoer’ play a crucial role in the investigation of passives and assist in the clear characterisation of passive
constructions. In RRG, the passive is considered to be a valence-changing process where the syntactic valence of a verb is reduced from two to one, where the undergoer becomes the privileged syntactic argument (subject), and the actor, if it occurs, is in an adjunct by-phrase in the periphery of the core. In these cases, the actor is not considered to be part of the syntactic valence of the passive verb, but still remains a semantic argument of the verb.

The notion of macroroles is based on Dowty’s (1991) concept of semantic protoroles. There are rules for the assignment of Actor and Undergoer, for which we refer to Van Valin (2005:61-67). The positions in the Actor-Undergoer hierarchy are the same Logical Structure arguments positions ranked in the hierarchy above. The most agent-like argument will be the actor and the most patient-like argument will be the undergoer. The relationship between macroroles and the arguments of verbs is captured by the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy, which is shown below.

(19) **The Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy**

![Diagram of Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy]

The leftmost argument of the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy is assigned the macrorole actor, whilst the rightmost one is assigned the macrorole undergoer. In an active construction the subject of the clause is the actor and the object is the undergoer. In a passive construction the undergoer is the subject by virtue of PSA modulation (la casa in (20b)). In the relationship between actives and passives, the
assignment of macroroles of the arguments involved remains the same, whilst the mapping of macroroles to grammatical relations changes. The passive can also involve argument modulation, i.e., the demotion of the actor (*il vento* in (20b)).

(20) Standard Italian

a. *Il vento ha distrutto la casa*

   the wind have.3SG destroy.PTCP the house

   ‘The wind has destroyed the house’

b. *La casa è stata distrutta dal vento*

   the house be.3SG be.PTCP destroy.PTCP by-the wind

   ‘The house was destroyed by the wind’

Undergoer and actor modulation need not occur together and indeed there are languages that exhibit evidence for only one of the two, but not the other. Based on the evidence provided by dialect grammars such as Loporcaro’s work on Altamuran (1988) and Giammarco’s work on Abruzzese (1979), we can hypothesise that this mapping is marked in the dialects of Italy, which seem consistently to select the actor (the highest ranking argument in Logical Structure) as the subject and to avoid the expression of the demoted actor in a *by*-phrase in the passive. The RRG perspective states that actor and undergoer modulation are independent, although they can both converge in the passive. PSA modulation is the occurrence of a privileged syntactic argument, which permits an argument other than the default to function as the PSA. Argument modulation is the omission of the actor or its appearance as an oblique. The choice or marked choice of PSA is captured in the Privileged Syntactic Argument hierarchy below (21).

(21) Privileged syntactic argument selection hierarchy:

   Arg. of DO > 1st arg of do’ > 1st arg. of pred’ (x,y) > 2nd arg. of pred’ (x,y) > arg. of pred’ (x)
In a transitive construction, the first core argument (usually the actor) will be the natural choice for PSA, according to accusative alignment, whilst the undergoer will be the marked choice. In an intransitive construction where there is only one core argument, that one will be the PSA. If we consider active and passive structures, the default linking is for the actor to be the Privileged Syntactic Argument and to occur in core initial position In SVO languages, the undergoer occurs by default immediately after the nucleus. If non-default linking is made (such as in the passive), the undergoer would become the PSA and would normally occupy the core-initial position, while the actor would optionally appear as an adjunct in the periphery in a PP headed with ‘by’. Whilst the syntactic representation would be different in the active and passive constructions, the semantic representation would remain the same in both. The active and passive linking from the Logical Structure is subject to a restriction called the Completeness Constraint, which states that every specified argument in the semantic representation must be realised in the syntax. The PSA modulation voice is the occurrence of a privileged syntactic argument, which permits an argument other than the default to function as the PSA. Argument modulation refers to the omission of the actor or its appearance as an oblique.

The tree in (22b) represents the semantic-syntactic mapping of the passive construction in (22a) in RRG. The syntactic template of this construction has a single argument position in the Core (i dolci). The actor (Paolo) optionally appears outside the Core. The abbreviation AGX refers to the Agreement Index node. Belloro (2004: 43) describes the Agreement Index node as a dependent of the nucleus, which receives the agreement specifications of all core argument positions present in the Logical Structure.

(22) Standard Italian
   a. I dolci vennero mangiati da Paolo

   ‘The cakes were eaten by Paolo’
b. **Semantic-syntax mapping of a passive construction**

![Diagram of syntactic structure]

**Syntactic inventory →**

- **SENTENCE**
- **CLAUSE**
- **CORE**
- **PERIPHERY**
- **NUCLEUS**
- **RP**
- **AUX**
- **AGX**
- **PRED**
- **PP**

- I dolci
- venne-
- ro
- mangiati
- da Paolo

**Passive: 3PL**

- **PSA:NOM**
- **OBL**

**Lexicon → do' (Paolo [eat Paolo dolci]) & BECOME consumed' (dolci)**

**RRG allows us to capture certain subtleties in the dialect data; if in a dialect only agentive arguments are involved in argument modulation or only patientive undergoers are involved in PSA modulation, this can be accounted for in terms of the hierarchy that underlies actor and undergoer assignment. More importantly, an account of the passive like the RRG one allows us to capture the aspects of passivization which are semantic and pragmatic, distinguishing them from those that are purely syntactic. This is not easily done with a purely syntactic account of the passive.**
2.7. What is an impersonal structure?

Impersonality is defined in a similar way by Blevins (2003), Siewierska & Malchukov (2011) and Gaast and van der Auwera (2013), who characterise it as the process of filling an argument position of a predicate with a variable ranging over sets of human participants without establishing a referential link to any entity from the universe of discourse. Whilst I eventually attempt to challenge this definition, there are a number of impersonal types found in Abruzzese, Sicilian and Tuscan that fit this definition squarely, the first of these being third person plural impersonal constructions, which are found in all three dialects (23).

(23)

a. L’ hanno ammazzato

OCL have.3PL murder.PTCP Tuscan
‘They have murdered him’

b. L’ ann attis

OCL have.3PL murder.PTCP Abruzzese
‘They have killed him’

c. L’ ammazzaru

OCL kill.PST.3PL Sicilian
‘They have killed him’

According to Siewierska, third person plural impersonal constructions have a non-referential third person plural pronominal subject, which is similar to English indefinite ‘they’. This type of construction is described by Ledgeway (2009) as the use of a null plural subject with indefinite or generic reference. This is also a regularly used structure in spoken Italian and is formed with the third person singular or plural form of the verb and no overt subject. An equivalent structure in English
would be the indefinite ‘they’ eg. ‘they say the house is fantastic.’ These third person constructions are considered to be impersonal due to the view of impersonality which considers the defocusing of the actor to be the prime function of impersonals. What differentiates third person plural impersonals from impersonals that overtly express a non-referential human subject such as those realised by impersonal pronouns such as German Man, French on, English one, is the exclusion of the speaker and addressee. As we saw in the previous chapter, third person plural impersonals are often used as an alternative to the passive. The examples in (24) demonstrate this in Standard Italian.

(24) Standard Italian
   a. L’ hanno ucciso
      OCL have.3PL kill.PTCP
      ‘They have killed him’
   b. Lui è stato ucciso
      3SG be.3SG be.PTCP kill.PTCP
      ‘He was killed’

This verb form may also occur in the plural or in the singular alongside a singular subject which has a semantically plural meaning, as in the Neopolitan example in (25):

(25) A dżẹntə ts ‘ajıtsə am’ bressə (Neopolitan)
    the people.FSG REFL get up.1PL early
    ‘People get up early’

    (Ledgeway 2007:678)

This type of construction with la gente ‘people’ was found in all three dialects.
Unlike third person plural impersonals, they cannot have the same type of referential indefinite reading. The result is more of a non-referential reading. This type of construction was used by Sicilian speakers as an alternative to impersonal *si* constructions which are not often used in the Sicilian dialect. The overt subject *la gente* was used regularly by the informants in contexts involving repeated events, as in the Tuscan example below.

(27) Tuscan

\[
\text{*Ogni venerdì la gente mangia pesce*}
\]

every Friday the people eat.3SG fish

‘Every Friday people eat fish’
Another construction involving an overt subject is one with indefinite *uno* ‘one’, which was used by speakers to express repeated events or hypothetical (irrealis) contexts. My analysis will show that impersonal *uno* has properties that contrast with the properties of impersonal *si*. I will thus consider *uno*, like third person plural impersonals, to be a proper subject in contrast with *si*, which is a clitic. One interesting point to note is that *si* must be repeated in both the main and the subordinate clause (28c), whilst *uno* need only occur in the main clause (28a), implying that *si* is a clitic hosted by the verb, whilst *uno* is not.

(28) Tuscan

a. *Quando uno sta male resta a casa*

   when *uno* be.3SG bad stay.3SG at home

   ‘When one is ill one stays at home’

b. *Quando si sta male resta a casa*

   when IMP be.3SG bad stay.3SG at home

   ‘When one is ill one stays at home’

c. *Quando si sta male si resta a casa*

   when IMP be.3SG bad IMP stay.3SG at home

   ‘When one is ill one stays at home’

One may also notice that, in constructions with *uno*, the verb is always in the third person singular form and past participles remain in the masculine singular form, which is the default, non-agreeing, form in the dialects under investigation. I propose that the clitic *si* allows more freedom with regards to agreement, whilst the impersonal forms which are independent from the verb force a choice of verb form. In the case of third person plural forms, the forced verb form is the third person plural, whilst with *uno* the forced verb form is the third person singular. We will see
later in this section that *si* constructions are not as limited in their choice of agreement.

Another impersonal type that is relevant to our discussion is *man*-impersonals. The term *man*-impersonal is used by Siewierska (2011) to denote an unidentified human subject expressed by a word etymologically related to ‘human’ or ‘man’, such as the French *on* and the German *Man*. The Abruzzese impersonal form *nome*, which will receive particular attention in Chapter 5, is derived from Latin *HOMO* meaning ‘man’. *Man*-pronouns are described by Siewierska as pronouns that are used to fill an argument position with a variable range over human referents and do not establish a referential link to an entity from the universe of discourse. Gaast and van der Auwera (2013:5) provide the German example in (29) to show that ‘man’ cannot introduce discourse referents which are then picked up anaphorically. In the example below *man* is not an antecedent of *he* and cannot be interpreted in that way. Gaast and van der Auwera label this as a defining property of impersonals.

(29) German

*Man hat geklopft. Er ist sehr verärget*

man have.3SG knock.PTCP He is.3SG very angry

‘Someone has knocked. He is very angry’

Gaast and van der Auwera (2013:9) claim that man-impersonals tend to develop along the following pathway:

1) Species – generic (eg Latin *HOMO*)
2) Human – non-referential, indefinite (non-veridical)\(^7\)
3) Human – referential, indefinite (veridical)
4) Human – referential, definite (eg 1PL)

\(^7\) The terms veridical and non-veridical, employed by Gaast and van der Auwera (2013:9), are used to capture the distinction between events that are assumed to be true and those which are not. In this thesis, I use the terms realis and irrealis in place of veridical and non-veridical respectively.
The Abruzzese form *nome*, which will receive particular attention in Chapter 5, is derived from the Latin *HOMO* and does follow this pathway to a certain extent, but has not yet reached stage 4 of the hierarchy, since it cannot be used as a referential definite first person plural.

### 2.8 Impersonal constructions in the Romance dialects of Italy.

Siewierska and Malchukov (2011:20) define impersonals as constructions which lack a referential subject. Malchukov & Ogawa (2011) also adopt the definition of impersonals as constructions lacking a referential subject. According to Givón (1984), a linguistic expression is only referential if the speaker presupposes the existence and identifiability of its referent. A linguistic expression is indefinite if it involves an unspecified human argument (Wehr 1985). It is possible that the description of impersonals as constructions which lack a referential subject is more suited to impersonals with verbs such as weather verbs, where the dummy subject (if it occurs) does not refer to any particular entity in the universe of discourse. For the treatment of the impersonal constructions found in my data, it may be better to assume that there are varying degrees of referentiality and that a further explanation is required to provide a definition of impersonals. Whilst it is true that impersonals can lack a referential subject, this definition does not apply to all of the impersonal constructions found in the dialects of Italy. Based on the data collected from Abruzzese, Sicilian and Tuscan, I propose that each impersonal type has a set of features, including +/- person, +/- number and +/- gender. The feature system for a non.impersonal form, such as the one in example (30) below, would have the features +person, +number and +gender. Number and gender features are manifested through past participle agreement, which can be either masculine or feminine and singular or plural, depending on the gender and number of the subject/s.

(30) Standard Italian

\[
\text{Siamo andati al mare}
\]

be.1PL go.PTCP.MPL to-the sea

‘We went to the sea’
In Tuscan, we find referential *si* constructions, which are *si* constructions that have acquired a first person plural interpretation. In Chapter 5 I will present data to show that there is a split in these constructions which is not found with other impersonal constructions in the three dialects studied. The Tuscan data show that in compound tenses, the referential *si* can be used with transitive and unergative verbs, but not with unaccusatives. As discussed earlier in this chapter, in Standard Italian, and indeed also in Tuscan, unaccusative verbs are those which would usually take the auxiliary *essere* in compound tenses and would require agreement on the past participle (31a, 31c). Transitive and unergative verbs usually take *avere* in compound tenses and do not require or even permit agreement on the past participle (31b, 31d). The examples below demonstrate this in both Standard Italian and Tuscan.

(31)

a. *Siamo stati al mare*
   
   `be.1PL be.PTCP.MPL to-the sea`  
   Standard Italian
   
   ‘We have been to the sea’

b. *Abbiamo mangiato gli spaghetti*
   
   `have.1PL eat.PTCP.MSG the.MPL spaghetti.MPL`  
   Standard Italian
   
   ‘We have eaten the spaghetti’

c. *Siamo andati a trovare un mio amico*
   
   `be.1PL go.PTCP.MPL to find.INF a my friend`  
   Tuscan
   
   ‘We went to visit one of my friends’

d. *Abbiamo scritto una lettera*
   
   `have.1PL write.PTCP.MSG a letter`  
   Tuscan
   
   ‘We wrote a letter’
This is also the case when these verbs occur in their impersonal form in compound tenses; verbs that usually take *essere* require overt agreement (32a), whilst those which normally take *avere* do not (32b).

(32) Standard Italian

\[ a. \text{Si è andati al mare} \]

IMP be.3SG go.PTCP.MPL to-the sea

‘One went to the sea’

\[ b. \text{Si è studiato} \]

IMP be.3SG study.PTCP.MSG

‘One studied’

In light of this, and the fact that the referential *si* cannot occur with unaccusative verbs in compound tenses, I propose that referential *si* does not have the full paradigm of features. I suggest that when *si* acquires 1PL meaning, and hence the feature ‘person’, it loses features number and gender, meaning that there cannot be number or gender. For this reason, referential *si* constructions are readily formed with verbs which usually take *avere* (transitives and unergatives), since they do not require number or gender agreement and these features are not required. With verbs that normally take *essere* (unaccusatives), the referential *si* construction is ungrammatical, since these constructions would usually require agreement in number and gender, yet agreement cannot be made since these features have been lost in place of the person feature. Since this type of construction is deficient in features, we continue to include it as an impersonal construction. In the last analysis, feature deficiency proves to be the defining property of impersonal constructions in the dialects of our sample.

It is important to note that the referential *si* can occur with all types of verbs (transitives, unergatives and unaccusatives) in non-compound tenses, hence example (33a) with the unaccusative verb *andare* ‘go’ is grammatical. In my analysis this is explained by the assumption that there cannot be number and gender agreement,
given that number and gender agreement does not take place in these tenses, since there is no participle and the main verb remains in its default third person singular form. The fact that the referential *si* cannot occur with unaccusatives only when agreement is required supports the claim that referential *si* is lacking in number and gender features, which causes this split. I term the type of impersonal in (33a) a personal referential definite construction. The contrast between definite and indefinite impersonals depends on the definiteness of the implied suppressed subject. I deem definiteness to refer to the identifiability or non-identifiability of the subject. In the case of the construction in (33a), the implied subject is the first person plural *noi*, meaning that the set of referents can be identified by both speaker and hearer.

(33)
\begin{align*}
a. (Noi) & \quad *si \quad va \quad al \quad mare \\
& \text{(SCL.1PL) IMP go.3SG to.the sea} \\
& \text{‘We go to the sea’}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
b. *(Noi) & \quad *si \quad è \quad andati \quad al \quad mare \\
& \text{(SCL.1PL) IMP be.3SG go.PTCP.MPL to.the sea} \\
& \text{‘We went to the sea’}
\end{align*}

In the examples in (34) from Tuscan, we find a referential indefinite construction. Referential indefinites do not have a definite subject, but can be both referential and non-referential. In the case of referential indefinite constructions, the set of referents is restricted to a particular group of people, in this case to a group of builders or workmen who are carrying out the work. Gast and van der Auwera (2013) describe the referentiality restriction here as ‘deduced’, since the implied subject can be presumed from the context. This type of impersonal has also been called ‘collective’ (Kleiber 1994) and ‘corporate’ (Pesetsky 1996).
(34) Tuscan:

a. Domani si svolgerà i lavori
   tomorrow IMP carry.out.3SG the.MPL work.MPL
   ‘Tomorrow they will carry out the building work’

b. Domani si svolgeranno i lavori
   tomorrow IMP carry.out.3PL the.MPL work.MPL
   ‘Tomorrow the building work will be carried out’

c. #Domani svolgeranno i lavori
   tomorrow carry.out.FUT.3PL the.MPL work.MPL
   ‘Tomorrow they will carry out the building work’

This contrasts with non-referential impersonals, which correspond to ‘people’ or ‘one’ (35a-b). The Tuscan examples below are also irrealis, since they describe a hypothetical event (‘if/when one is ill’, rather than ‘when one was ill’). These constructions are not considered to be referential, since the implied subject is ‘all people’, and we are unable to deduce a set of referents.

(35) Tuscan:

a. Quando si sta male si resta a casa.
   when IMP be.3SG bad IMP stay.3SG at home
   ‘When one is ill, one stays at home’

b. Se si sta male si resta a casa
   if IMP be.3SG bad IMP stay.3SG at home
   ‘If one is ill, one stays at home’

In (36) we find further examples of non-referential impersonals, but in this case they are realis and repeated events.
(36) Ogni primavera si scende a valle

Every spring IMP go.down.3SG to valley

‘Every spring one goes down to the valley’

Ledgeway (2009) gives evidence of other alternative constructions which are used instead of the passive and these include impersonal *si* constructions, as well as the *si passivante* construction, which is arguably an alternative passive strategy. Impersonal *si* constructions are formed with the auxiliary *essere* and a bivalent verb and involve suppression of the actor. The verb *essere* will always be in the third person masculine singular form, regardless of the gender and number of the undergoer, and the undergoer never controls agreement with the participle. In *si passivante* constructions, we often find agreement between the verb and the object. Most Northern dialects make a distinction between passives and impersonal *si* constructions. This can be seen in Cennamo’s discussion of passive and impersonal constructions (1997); when the surface subject is shifted to sentence-final position (right dislocation) the sentence is an impersonal one (example 37a). In the impersonal construction in example (37a) we can see that the verb does not agree with a subject and remains in the third person singular form whilst the passive phrase in example (37b) does show agreement with the subject.

One may note that in the following examples Cennamo uses the gloss REFL in both the impersonal and the passive constructions. In examples from my own data, where *si* constructions are impersonals, I will gloss *si* as IMP.

(37)

a. (impersonal):

*se ‘leze fasilm’ente i ‘libri* Genoese

REFL read.3SG easily the books

‘One reads the books easily’
b. (passive):

\[ i’ \text{ libri se } ‘\text{lezen fasil’mente} \quad \text{Genoese} \]

the books REFL read.3PL easily

‘The books read easily’

(Cennamo 1997:153)

This shift in word order also seems to occur in Standard Italian, and is demonstrated in (38) with two contrasting examples. The example in (38a) has a passive interpretation whilst the example in (38b) has an impersonal one.

(38) Standard Italian

a. \textit{La verità non si può sempre dire}

the truth NEG IMP be-able-to.3SG always say.INF

‘The truth cannot always be told’

b. \textit{Non si può sempre dire la verità}

NEG IMP be-able-to.3SG always say.INF the truth

‘One cannot always tell the truth’

(Lepschý&Lepschý 1988:225)

The \textit{se passivante indefinito} is a reflexive structure with passive value (the subject is demoted) and is used mainly when the theme is inanimate, although there is evidence of use with animate themes (Ledgeway, 2009). In contemporary Italian, the \textit{si} construction takes two main forms: the passive and the impersonal. In fact, Ramat and Sansò (2011:190) explain that these two constructions are the result of a process which has taken place over at least five centuries and by which an impersonal has developed out of an original passive. The study shows that in more
than 95% of cases in the Old Italian corpus used, the *si* construction behaves as a passive as in examples (39a) and (39b):

\[(39)\]

a. *In Italia* *si* *mangia* *sparaghetti*

in Italy REFL eat.3SG spaghetti.PL

‘In Italy, one eats spaghetti /In Italy spaghetti is eaten’

(Ramat & Sansò 2007:1)

b. *..ma il suo filguolo, il qual era allora co llui, * *si* *llo*

but the his son who was then with him in-this-way him

*inbalsimò e reco-llo infino a tTiro, e quiv si soppeilio*

enbalmed and took-him as.far.as T T. and here REFL. buried

‘But his son, who was with him at that time, embalmed him in this way and took him as far as Tyre, and he was buried there’

(Cronaca Fiorentina, p. 106; 13th century, cited in Ramat & Sansò (2007:6)

In this thesis, I will investigate not only *si* constructions but also other impersonal forms found in the data, including third person plural constructions with an impersonal interpretation, constructions with *uno* and the Abruzzese feature *nome*. In this section I have provided brief descriptions of these constructions in preparation for a more thorough analysis of these constructions in the chapters that follow. In the following section I will present the impersonality hierarchy, which captures all of the impersonal forms found in the dialects studied, based on their semantic features.

**2.9 Hierarchy of Impersonals**

Using impersonal features such as those defined in section 3.1 (non-referential irrealis, non-referential repeated, referential indefinite, referential definite, referential definite first person plural), I will provide a set of semantic feature systems for each
impersonal form found within the data. I use these features to create a hierarchy of impersonals, which allows us to capture the different types of impersonals found in the dialects and to make relevant predictions. The hierarchy below in (40) captures all of the impersonal types found in Abruzzese, Sicilian and Tuscan and provides a scale of acceptability for each construction.

(40) **Hierarchy of impersonals:**

i) Referential definite personal > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite > iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

The data were collected using a questionnaire that was constructed on the basis of the insights of the existing literature on impersonals. Based on the data from the three dialects, I hypothesise that if an impersonal form can occur in referential definite 1PL contexts, it can also occur in all of the other contexts listed in the hierarchy. It is important to note that this hypothesis relates to impersonal constructions only, i.e., constructions that are feature deficient. Once a form has become personal, this hypothesis no longer holds. Thus, when personal *si* becomes a fully-fledged first person plural subject clitic, I do not predict that it will have all of the lower values on the hierarchy. Impersonal forms can join the hierarchy at any point; if a form can occur in referential indefinite contexts, then it will also be possible in non-referential repeated and non-referential irrealis contexts. However, it is predicted that a construction cannot be accepted in both referential indefinite and non-referential irrealis contexts without also being accepted in non-referential repeated contexts. Eventually, it would be interesting to test this hierarchy with other Italo-Romance and Romance dialects as well as with data from non-cognate languages.

### 2.10 Impersonals in the Role and Reference Grammar framework

Both passive and impersonal constructions are marked in terms of their PSA assignment. Whilst passives take an undergoer as their PSA, impersonals do not have a PSA since they have no argument that takes subject position or controls finite verb agreement. These are principal diagnostics for subjecthood in Italian. A point
which is debated by Bentley (2006) is whether or not the suppressed argument of *si*-impersonals is assigned a macrorole. Since Van Valin (1990:257) describes *si* constructions as the suppression of the highest-ranking argument in the semantic representation of the clause, the marker of argument suppression (*si*) cannot have a PSA. There is however some evidence that the highest argument is present in some form in the semantic representation (Bentley 2006). One reason for this is that the highest argument must be human. In addition, another reason, which will be developed later in this thesis, is that in the Tuscan dialect the highest argument of *si* impersonals can be interpreted as a referential first person plural in Tuscan and can also trigger number agreement on the past participle. Since subject past participle agreement is based on macrorolehood (Bentley 2006), the presence of agreement suggests that the suppressed argument is nonetheless endowed with a macrorole. The examples below show the syntax to semantic mapping of both a referential and a non-referential impersonal. I have chosen to include features of the implied argument underneath the zero marker, such as (+/- irrealis), (+/- definite), (+/- referential).

(41)
a. 

![Diagram](image)

stay' (home, Ø)

(+irrealis)

(-ref)

(-definite)
The reason for describing the impersonal constructions discussed above as traditional impersonal constructions is to contrast them with those which are often called impersonal passives (42a) and (42b). Bentley (2006) argues that these constructions should not be referred to as impersonal passives but *si* passives. Whilst the *si* constructions in (42a-b) do not have a PSA, *si* passives do have a PSA, which is reflected in both the finite agreement and word-order. In example (42a), we see a pre-nuclear PSA, although this is not a compulsory element of *si* passives (42b).

(42)

a. *Le stelle  si   vedono*

the stars IMP see.3PL

‘The stars are seen’
The semantic representations of these constructions are shown below:

(43)

see' (Ø, stelle)

do' (Ø, [hire' (Ø, biciclette)])

Bentley (2006) provides evidence that the suppressed argument of impersonals, unlike that of reflexives, is assigned a macrorole, since the suppressed argument of impersonals has semantic content. My analysis supports this view, since the semantic feature systems discussed in section 3.2 provide evidence of the semantic content of each impersonal form. We also find evidence of this with psychological verbs such as piacere ‘like’ in Italian. The order of the reflexive si and impersonal si allow a speaker to differentiate between a construction such as the one in (44a) and the one in (44b). Two points for clarification are necessary in order to understand these data and their analysis. First, there is reason to believe that impersonal si follows reflexive si. This is because in constructions whereby a different clitic cluster precedes the verb, it is clear that the impersonal clitic is the one that comes last, immediately preceding the verb.

(44)

a. *Si  lo compra.
   IMP  it  buy.3SG
   ‘One buys it’

b. Lo  si     dice.
   it  IMP  say.3SG
   ‘One says it’
Second, there is independent evidence that the highest-ranking argument of *piacere* is not assigned a macrorole, which results in *piacere* not being transitive in Italian.

(45)

a. *Gli /a lui piace il gelato.*

OCL/ to him like.3SG the ice-cream

‘He likes ice cream’

b. *Lui piace il gelato.*

he like.3SG the ice-cream

‘He likes ice-cream’

If we assume that the impersonal argument suppression follows the reflexive one, the macrorole is assigned to the second suppressed argument, which is the theme (cf. 46a). This is compatible with the default pattern of macrorole assignment with *piacere*. Instead, (46b) is ungrammatical because impersonal *si* requires a macrorole, but cannot have it, since the experiencer of *piacere* cannot take a macrorole.

(46)

a. *Ci si piace*

RFL IMP like.3SG

‘One likes oneself’

b. *Si piace la musica*

IMP like.3SG the music

‘One likes music’

The first argument is suppressed and is an actor, however this argument is not necessarily co-referential with a specified argument. In this sense, Bentley (2006) notes that *si* passives do not behave like passives, even though they have a passive interpretation. In passive constructions, the actor appears (if at all) in a by-
phrase in the periphery, whilst in si passives the actor is suppressed and is realised as an Ø in the semantics.

One drawback of RRG in the investigation of impersonal constructions is that it does not by itself capture the different types of impersonals found in Tuscan, Abruzzese and Sicilian. I will develop a set of feature systems to represent each type of impersonal found in the dialects of my sample, which will allow patterns to emerge between impersonal constructions and will assist in the development of a hierarchy representing all of the impersonal types found in Sicilian, Tuscan and Abruzzese.
Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter, I discuss the questionnaire used to collect the first hand data required to complete this investigation and the reasons for its composition. Upon completing preliminary background research using dialect grammars, texts written in dialect, and my MA thesis, it became apparent that the level of tolerance of the passive varies among the Romance dialects of Italy. The aim of the questionnaire is to provide the basis for a conversation in dialect, and to provide contexts in which the informant is compelled to choose between a passive and an alternative construction. This is achieved through a number of different exercises, which will be outlined in this chapter.

Since this is not a sociolinguistic study, non-linguistic variables such as age, gender and level of education were not considered and speakers were not required to provide this information as part of the questionnaire. Informants were selected based on their level of fluency in their local dialect, and this fluency tends to occur amongst elderly speakers or speakers living in small villages rather than urban centres. Informants were of a variety of age groups, with differing levels of education and included both male and female speakers. The informants selected were not only dialect native speakers, but they had also spent their lives in a location in which the dialect was spoken. In most cases, informants were known to the translator (family members in some cases), which assisted in creating natural conversation and avoiding the Observer’s Paradox (Labov 1972). In some cases I provide data from a number of villages in the same region, but this is noted and explained within the text. Due to time constraints, this fieldwork was carried out in three regions only: Tuscany, Sicily and Abruzzo. As discussed in Chapter 2, these dialects were selected based on the fact that they each belong to a different dialect group. This selection also enables me to address the differences between northern and southern dialects (although Tuscan is not strictly a northern dialect, it contains features from both northern and southern dialects (see Chapter 1)).

One area of concern for this investigation was to elicit natural responses from informants and to ensure that informants did not feel influenced to choose the ‘correct’ or less response because of the format and recording of the interview. Whilst it is easy to avoid the Observer’s Paradox when making casual observations
of speakers, questionnaires may pose problems; participants may think that they have to answer in a certain way because they are assisting academic research, or they may start to see a certain pattern forming in the questionnaire. As stated by Labov (1972:209), ‘the aim of linguistic research in the community must be to find out how people talk when they are not being systematically observed; yet we can only obtain this data by systematic observation.’ To overcome this problem, the data was collected in loco, rather than from dialect speakers living in the UK. It was also crucial to conduct the interview in the dialect of the informant, rather than in Italian, to avoid unnecessary pressure from Standard Italian. Each questionnaire was translated into dialect prior to the interview and a native-speaker facilitator was present to read the questions aloud, and to create a dialogue with the informants. The participants responded orally to the questions and were told before beginning the questionnaire that it was not a grammar test and that there were no correct or incorrect answers. No written tasks were included in this research, to avoid participants feeling that they were taking a test and to ensure that speakers could hear their answers spoken aloud, and in context. Interviews took place in the informants’ family homes and, in some cases, speakers preferred to be interviewed in a group with their family members, which allowed for discussions in dialect regarding the answers to the questions which put speakers at ease and elicited more natural responses. Participants were asked to imagine that they are speaking to a group of friends or an elderly relative. In the case of Tuscan speakers, the dialect may not be used amongst friends but rather with grandparents and elderly relatives, who speak a dialect fluently and regularly.

Before beginning the questionnaire, each participant was required to provide oral or written confirmation to state that they understood what they would be required to do and that they agreed to their answers being used for this dissertation. All participants are anonymous and will be referred to only by their region or the name of their village.

The questionnaire used for this fieldwork can be found in Appendix 1 of this thesis. The first section of the questionnaire involves a set of multiple choice questions. Example (1) provides an example of one of these questions (before translation into dialect) and the responses.
(1) Standard Italian

*Cosa è successo a Paolo?* What happened to Paolo?

- *È stato ucciso* He was killed
- *L'hanno ucciso* They killed him

As seen in the example above, informants can choose between a passive construction and an active construction. In some cases, the translator added a further option (see example (2). In all cases, participants were asked if there was another option which seemed more natural to them.

(2) Abruzzese

*Ka sutfessɔ a Mario?* What happened to Mario?

- *L’ann atfisɔ* They killed him
- *A fiatɔ atfisɔ* He was killed
- *L’a nomɔ atfisɔ* They killed him

The aim of this investigation was to determine the variation in the acceptability of the passive both within and between dialects. In order to investigate this, the questionnaire tests the passive with a number of different verb types, including verbs which are high in transitivity (examples (1) and (2)) through to those which are low in transitivity (3), in no particular order.

(3)

*Il veterinario ha detto che...* The vet said that...

- *Il gatto pesa dieci chili* The cat weighs ten kilos
- *Dieci chili sono pesati dal gatto* Ten kilos are weighed by the cat

Following the multiple choice questions, informants were presented with three images and were asked what was happening to the subject in each of the images. In the image below, informants were asked ‘what has happened to the
chicken?’ The informant then chose to either continue to topicalize the actor (by using a passive) or to place focus on the undergoer (by using an active).

Exercises with pictures are useful in encouraging natural responses, since informants are provided only with a picture and are not influenced by suggested answers.

The next exercise used topic chains to elicit responses from the informants, who were asked to complete the topic chains (sentences which maintain the same topic over a number of consecutive clauses, e.g. Maria in (4)). Informants then chose to either maintain the same topic in the final clause by choosing a passive construction, or to change the topic by choosing an active. This exercise would determine to what extent the rejection of the passive exists in each dialect.

(4)

Marco si è alzata, ha fatto colazione, si è vestita, è uscita, e ______________________________(colpire, un fulmine)

Maria got up, had breakfast, got dressed, went out, and ____________________________(to hit, a lightening bolt)

Translation exercises were also used after the research had been carried out to further investigate certain aspects of the data. This is an appropriate task to give speakers of dialect as this is a society in which dialect speakers are bilingual in both their dialect and Italian. Despite the tendency towards the generalization of Italian to all contexts, in each of the areas investigated, the dialect happily co-exists with Italian.

The second section of the questionnaire focuses on impersonals. The aim of this section is not only to understand the acceptability of si impersonals, uno and
third person plural impersonals in a variety of contexts, but also to determine if there are other preferred impersonal constructions used in each dialect. In both Tuscan and Abruzzese, further questions were asked (see the questions in bold in Appendix 1 and nome questionnaire in Appendix 2) to investigate dialect specific impersonal constructions. Once again, the questions in this section were multiple choice and were used as a basis for a natural conversation between the translator and the informant. Whilst the context for each question is provided within the questionnaire, the translators often built on this to detract from the formality of the research.

In each region, the questionnaire was presented to between seven and nine informants. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes and two hours, depending on the additional information provided by the informant and all interviews were recorded, with the permission of the informants. Since there is a relatively small number of informants in each location, instead of displaying the data using percentages, I provide the exact number of informants that chose each response. With such a small group of informants, percentages would have very little significance. As discussed in Chapter 1, there is not only dialect variation between towns and villages, but also between speakers, meaning that I do not expect all informants to agree in all cases. In cases in which 3/9 informants have chosen a constructions, but 6/9 have not, I deem the construction to be grammatical in that variety, even though it may not be the preferred construction. The preferred construction is the one chosen by the majority of informants.

In the following chapters, I will present and analyse the results of this questionnaire.
Chapter 4. Passives and Impersonals in Sicilian

4.1 Analysis of passives in the Palermitan dialect

I have chosen to begin by discussing the data from Sicilian, since it is the most consistent set of data out of the three dialects investigated in this thesis, given that they are generally in line with my expectations and claims made in the literature on passives and impersonals. The situation in Abruzzese and Tuscan is more complex and presents a number of new findings, which require a more detailed analysis. I will begin this chapter by presenting the data on passive constructions in Sicilian, following the basic structure of the Transitivity Hierarchy, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 2. I will begin at the top of the hierarchy with verbs which are high in transitivity before moving down the hierarchy to verbs which are low in transitivity. Following this, I will discuss impersonal constructions in Sicilian, with a comparative analysis of *si* constructions, *uno* and third person plural forms. I will link each type of impersonal construction to the Hierarchy of Impersonals (presented in Chapter 2) based on the semantic features of each impersonal form. Unless otherwise specified, all examples in this chapter are from the Palermitan dialect.

As in many Italo-Romance dialects, brief discussions of the passive in dialect grammars of Sicilian (Bonner 2001:156) describe the passive as a rarely used construction which is regularly substituted by alternative constructions. Bonner (2001:156) explains that the passive is not favoured in Sicilian and other syntactic constructions are often used to avoid it. These constructions include the active voice and an impersonal *si* passive. Examples (1a-b) demonstrate an alternation between a passive and an impersonal *si* passive constructions. Constructions (1c-e) provide example of a passive construction (1c), a corresponding active construction (1d), and an active construction with left-dislocation (1e).

(1)

a. *U giurnali è liggiutu ogni iornu*

   the newspaper be.3SG read.PTCP.MSG each day

   ‘The newspaper is read every day’
b. *Si leggi u giornali ogni iornu*

IMP read.3SG the newspaper each day

‘People read the newspaper every day’

c. *L’ arvulu fu ittau n terra dò ventu forti*

the tree be.3SG throw.PTCP to-the ground by strong winds

‘The tree was thrown to the ground by strong winds’

d. *L’ arvulu û ittau n terra u ventu forti*

the tree OCL throw.3SG to-the ground the strong winds

‘The tree, the strong winds threw it to the ground’

e. *U ventu forti ittau l’ arvulu n terra*

the wind strong throw.3SG the tree to-the ground

‘The strong winds threw the tree to the ground’

(Bonner 2001:156)

Whilst the passive does not appear to be a regularly used construction in Sicilian, when it is used, it follows the model presented below in (2).

(2)

Patient + form of passive auxiliary *essiri* + (adjectival) past participle + *di* + actor

(Bonner 2001:155, revised by VC)

In the Sicilian dialects, the passive participle acts like an adjective in all cases, meaning that it must agree with its subject in gender and number.
Since dialect grammars and my own data show that the passive is not frequently used in Sicilian, my investigation into the passive will aim to establish to what extent passives are used or accepted as grammatical constructions and which types of constructions are used in its place. My research focusses on one particular dialect of Sicilian: Palermitan. After analysing the Sicilian data, I will be able to draw comparisons with the data from Abruzzese and Tuscan. This will enable me to determine whether or not the passive is acceptable or unacceptable to the same extent in each dialect. Whilst the data confirm the hypothesis that the passive is a rarely used construction in Sicilian, the principal finding of the Sicilian data is that passivization is possible with certain verb classes and not others. In section 2.5, I introduced the concept of the Transitivity Hierarchy (Hopper and Thompson 1980). This hierarchy ranks verbs on a scale of transitivity, based on a number of different entailments, including number of participants, action vs. non-action and level of volitionality. The data suggest that the Sicilian passive is sensitive to the Transitivity Hierarchy and verbs which are high in transitivity are more likely to be accepted when passivized than verbs which rank lower on the same hierarchy. Table 1 (below) shows the entailments of each of the Sicilian verbs discussed in this chapter.
Table 1. Entailments of verbs according to the Transitivity Hierarchy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Ammazzàri</th>
<th>Ammazzàri</th>
<th>Distruòdiri</th>
<th>Arrestàri</th>
<th>Còciri</th>
<th>Sapiri</th>
<th>Canùsciri</th>
<th>Cùrriri</th>
<th>Piaciri</th>
<th>Pisari</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i</td>
<td>pi sbàggghi</td>
<td>‘to destroy’</td>
<td>‘to arrest’</td>
<td>‘to cook’</td>
<td>‘to know’</td>
<td>‘to know’</td>
<td>‘to run’</td>
<td>‘to like’</td>
<td>‘to weigh’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of participants</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
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<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency</td>
<td>Low in potency</td>
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</table>

73
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Affect edness of O</th>
<th>O totally affected</th>
<th>O totally affected</th>
<th>O totally affected</th>
<th>O partially or totally affected</th>
<th>O not affected</th>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I will now present the data on Sicilian passives, beginning with verbs which are high in transitivity and working down the scale to those which are low in transitivity.

Examples (4a) and (4b) show both a passive and an active construction with the verb *kill*, which is high in transitivity. Whilst ‘kill’ may also be interpreted as a non-volitional action, it was explained to informants that this example with ‘kill’ is a volitional action, i.e., an action that is carried out deliberately. The entailments of agentivity and volitionality are lexically encoded here, since *ammazzare* is like the verb *to murder* in English, which contrasts with ‘to kill’. Non-volitional ‘kill’ will be discussed later in this chapter. The passive construction in (4a), whilst accepted as a grammatical construction by all informants was only chosen as a preferred construction by 1/7 informants, with 6/7 choosing an active construction with topicalization (4b) as their preferred construction. Informants noted that an active without topicalization would sound unnatural in this context. Whilst in Abruzzese and Tuscan examples, we find active constructions formed with the present perfect, a typical feature of the Sicilian dialects is the use of the simple past tense (Leone 1990, Ruffino 1997), hence the Sicilian questionnaire was translated using the simple past, to ensure that the questionnaire represented the true Sicilian dialect.¹

(4)

a. *Fu ammazzatu*

be.3SG  kill.PTCP

‘He was killed’

b. *L’ ammazzaru*

OCL  kill.3PL

‘They killed him’

¹ The perfect has an aspectual rather than temporal function in Sicilian, indicating completion and present relevance.
The examples in (5) are examples of a passive and an active construction with a verb which is unambiguously high in transitivity ‘arrest’. All informants accepted the passive in (5a) as a grammatical construction, which further demonstrates the acceptance of the passive with verbs which are high in transitivity. Whilst all informants considered (5a) to be a grammatical construction, only 2/7 chose it as their preferred construction. The remaining 5/7 informants chose the active in (5b). This is particularly interesting, since the active construction results in a change in topic, yet it is still the preferred structure.

(5)

a. *Un latru mi scippò a bburza e fu arrestatu*  
   a thief me steal.3SG the bag and be.3SG arrest.PTCP  
   *ri* carabbineri  
   by-the police  
   ‘A thief stole my bag and was arrested by the carabinieri’

b. *Un latru mi scippò a bburza e i carabbineri*  
   a thief me steal.3SG the bag and the police  
   *l’* arrestaru  
   OCL arrest.3PL  
   ‘A thief stole my bag and the police arrested him’

With the verb ‘destroy’, which is also high in transitivity, the active is once again the preferred structure. In spite of this, 3/7 informants chose the passive over the active. This is the highest number of informants to choose the passive over the active within the Sicilian data. Whilst this initially appears to be an unusually high number of speakers choosing the passive, there is a possible explanation for this. Even though the undergoer is totally affected (a quality of highly transitive verbs), the actor is not a true agent role since it is a natural force and therefore an effector (Van Valin and Wilkins 1996). Whilst ‘kill and ‘arrest’ were tested with animate
[+human] actors and undergoers, ‘destroy’ was tested with an inanimate [-human] actor and undergoer. This was not initially a crucial part of my investigation but provided interesting results. When this result is compared with the data from Abruzzese and Tuscan, it appears that the inanimacy of the actor and undergoer may enhance the felicitousness of the passive across all three dialects. The table below (table 2) provides evidence of this and shows the number of informants who chose the passive across all three dialects and how the [+human] and [-human] status of the actors and undergoers influences this.

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tuscan</th>
<th>Abruzzese</th>
<th>Sicilian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destroy [-human]</td>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>3/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kill [+human]</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>0/9</td>
<td>1/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrest [+human]</td>
<td>0/9</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>2/7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that, as well as verbs, transitivity also applies to the clause, meaning that issues such as valence (the number of core arguments) and the level of animacy of these arguments are also incorporated within transitivity. In future research, it would be interesting to test each verb type with both animate and inanimate actors and undergoers, to determine the acceptability of each verb type in the passive alongside a scale of animacy.

The example in (6a) is evidence of the acceptability of the passive with the verb ‘destroy’. Interestingly, the addition of a by-phrase in this case causes the construction to be deemed to be ungrammatical. Examples such as (6a) contribute to the interpretation of passives as a process of demotion, since the actor becomes redundant and cannot be expressed overtly. In the case of Italian passives in which the by-phrase is not preferred but is not ungrammatical, I suggest that the actor macrorole is available in the semantics, despite it not appearing in the syntax. The fact that the by-phrase can be added means that this does not violate the Completeness Constraint. In the case of the Sicilian example in (6a) in which the addition of the by-phrase results in an ungrammatical construction, I suggest that the valence of the verb is one and the actor role is not available in either the semantics or the syntax.
Whilst the verb ‘kill’ is high in transitivity, this action may be interpreted as purposeful or accidental, depending on the context. Since a purposeful interpretation would mean that the verb is high in volitionality, it is necessary to test this verb with a lack of volitionality to determine how sensitive the Sicilian passive is to the transitivity of the verb. In examples (7a-b) the phrase *pi sbàggiu* ‘by mistake’ was added to the construction, reducing the transitivity of the verb. The results of this test suggest that this reduction in transitivity has an impact on passive use; 7/7 informants chose the active as a preferred structure over the passive 0/7. This would seem to be an interesting result, since the lack of volition puts the verb at a slightly lower position on the transitivity hierarchy, which causes it to be ungrammatical when passivized. Despite this verb still retaining other qualities of a verb which is high in transitivity (it is an action, involves two participants, the object is totally affected), this reduction in volitionality results in a judgement of ungrammaticality.

(7)

a. *L’ ammazzaru pi sbàggiu*

OCL kill.3SG by accident

‘They killed him by accident’
b. *Fu ammazzatu pi sbàgghiu

be.3SG kill.PTCP by mistake

‘He was killed by mistake’

The verb ‘to visit’, which is lower again on the transitivity scale, produced similar results; 7/7 informants chose an active construction rather than a passive. In this case, the passive is still considered to be a grammatical construction, albeit odd, hence the symbol # rather than an asterisk. Whilst, in Tuscan and Abruzzese, the passive with ‘visit’ was chosen by a higher number of informants, due to the implication that this belongs to a formal setting in which a higher register may be required (a priest or tour guide communicating to a congregation or group of tourists), this was not the case in Sicilian.

(8)

a. Rumila pirsuni visitarunu a cattitrali st’annu

2000 people visit.PST.3PL the cathedral this year

‘2000 people visited the cathedral this year’

b. #A cattitrali fu visitata ri rumila pirsuni

the cathedral be.PST.3SG visit.PTCP by 2000 people

‘The cathedral was visited by 2000 people’

The verb ‘know’, which is a stative verb, is lower in transitivity than verbs such as ‘kill’ and ‘arrest’. The questionnaire explores the behaviour of this verb with the meanings of ‘to know someone’ and ‘to know a fact’, since these two different meanings would each require the use of a different verb in Sicilian, as is the case with Standard Italian. With both forms of ‘know’, the verb depicts a non-action, is atelic, non-volitional, low in potency and the undergoer is not affected. Both instances of the verb ‘know’ were deemed ungrammatical, when passivized, by 7/7
informants. The active constructions in (9b) and (9d) were chosen as alternative constructions.

(9)

a. *Picchi è canasciutu ri Mariu
   because be.3SG know.PTCP by Mario
   ‘Because Mario knows him’

b. Picchi Mariu u canusci
   because Mario OCL know.3SG
   ‘Mario knows him’

c. *A risposta era canasciuta / saputa ri tutti i studenti
   the answer be.3SG know.PTCP know.PTCP by all the students
   ‘The answer was known by all of the students’

d. Tutti i studenti sapianu a risposta
   all the students know.3PL the answer
   ‘All of the students knew the answer’

An activity verb ‘to run’, provided similar results, with 7/7 informants choosing an active construction rather than a passive. This may also be influenced by the fact that 26 chilometri is part of the predicate fari x chilometri, where fari is some sort of dummy do, and it is not an undergoer. Therefore, it cannot be promoted to subject position. Otherwise said, this predicate only has one participant (in RRG terms, this predicate only has one macrorole argument).

(10)

a. I currituri ficiru ventisei chilometri oggi
   the runners do.PST.3PL twenty-six kilometers today
   ‘The runners did twenty-six kilometers today’
b. *Ventisei chilometri furono fatti ri currituri

twenty-six kilometers be.PST.3PL do.PTCP by.the runners

‘Twenty-six kilometres were done by the runners’

A similar situation occurs with psychological verbs such as like and fear where, once again, 7/7 informants rejected the passive and considered it to be an ungrammatical construction. These verbs also depict non actions, are atelic, non-volitional, low in potency and the undergoer is not affected. As is the case with Italian piacere ‘like’ (see section 2.10), Sicilian piaciri would seem solely to have one macrorole (the experiencer is indirectly marked with a and not by direct, nominative, case). In turn, Sicilian does not have the transitive form of ‘to fear’ (11c), and is replaced by the intransitive form in (11d).

(11)

a. *È piaciutu ri tutti?

be.3SG like.PTCP by everyone

‘He is liked by everyone’

b. Piaci a tutti

like.3SG to everyone

‘Everyone likes him’

c. *È timutu ri tutti

be.3SG fear.PTCP by everyone

‘He is feared by everyone’

---

2 I should note that ri may have two meanings in Sicilian: ‘of’ and ‘by’. This depends on the context in which it occurs. In Standard Italian, we find the prepositions di for ‘of’ and da for ‘by’. This is generalised in Sicilian, where we find just one form for both meanings. I have therefore glossed ri according to its meaning within the context in which it is found.
Another experiencer predicate ‘love’, which, unlike piaciri ‘like’ is a subject-experiencer verb, was only chosen with a passive construction by 1/7 informants, which may initially appear unusual since it is also a verb which is low in transitivity, a feature which seems to result in the complete rejection of the passive in Sicilian. A possible reason for its acceptability here may be an analysis of amatu ‘lit. loved’ as an adjective (‘popular’), rather than the past participle of a verb. Another reason for this result may be style: amari is typical of the higher styles, whereas vuliri beni ‘lit. want well’ is used in every day language. In addition, the imperfect tense is typical of narratives and the context involves ‘the people adoring their king’. The one informant that chose the passive over an active construction explained that the passive is often found in narratives and storytelling to young children, and since this context may be applied here through the use of the imperfect tense, the passive is an appropriate choice.

(12)

a. U rre era amatu ri tuttu u so pòpulu
   the king be.3SG love.PTCP by all the his people
   ‘The king was adored by all of his people’

b. Tuttu u pòpulu amava u rre
   all the people love.IMPF.3SG the king
   ‘All of the people adored the king’

As expected, based on the pattern emerging between the transitivity of the verb and the grammaticality of the passive, Sicilian disallows passive constructions with measure verbs, such as ‘cost’ and ‘weigh’. These types of verbs rank the lowest
on the transitivity scale, since they do not necessarily involve two participants, they
do not denote actions, and the object remains unaffected. The passivization of
measure verbs results in an ungrammatical construction (13a) and 7/7 informants
chose an active construction (13b) to substitute the passive.

(13)

a. *Deci chili sunnu pisati ru attu

   ten kilos be.3PL weigh.PTCP by.the cat

   ‘Ten kilos are weighed by the cat’

b. U attu pisa deci chili

   the cat weigh.3SG ten kilos

   ‘The cat weighs ten kilos’

In the second section of the questionnaire, informants were asked to complete
a number of topic chains by conjugating a verb. An example of this type of question
is shown below in (14).

(14)

Paolo si susiu, si lavò, fici colaziuni

Paolo REFL get-up.3SG REFL wash.3SG make.3SG breakfast

si vistiu, nisciu e ____________ ( un ladro, scippare)

REFL dress.3SG, go-out.3SG and ____________ ( a thief, steal)

‘Paolo got up, got washed, made breakfast, got dressed, went out and ______

(a thief, steal)’

In both Tuscan and Abruzzese, questions involving the completion of topic
chains encouraged passive constructions where they would not otherwise be
expected. Topic chains may result in a slightly higher acceptance of the passive in
Sicilian, since the passive allows the speaker to maintain the continuity of the topic (15), whilst the active does not.

(15)

Paolo si susiu, si lavò, fici colazioni,

Paolo REFL get.up.3SG REFL wash.3SG make.3SG breakfast
si vistiu, nisciu, e fu scippatu ru latru

REFL dress.3SG go.out.3SG and be.3SG steal.PTCP from-a thief

‘Paolo got up, got washed, made breakfast, got dressed, went out and was robbed by a thief’

Despite the use of topic chains encouraging the acceptability of the passive, the number of informants choosing the passive in (15) was 1/7 informants and an active construction was still the preferred form. Although the active causes a change in topic, 6/7 informants chose the construction in (16). This example demonstrates a change in topic, since the subject of the topic chain changes from Paolo to u latru.

(16)

Paolo si susiu, si lavò, fici colazioni,

Paolo REFL get.up.3SG REFL wash.3SG make.3SG breakfast
si vistiu, nisciu e u latru u scippò

REFL dress.3SG go-out.3SG and a thief SCL rob.3SG

‘Paolo got up, got washed, made breakfast, got dressed, went out and a thief stole from him’

With the topic chain in (17), once again 1/7 informants chose the passive and 6/7 preferred an active construction. Informants choosing an active construction alternated between the example in (17a) and the example in (17b).
(17)

a. *Maria si susiu, si lavò, fici colazioni, si
Maria REFL get.up.3SG REFL wash.3SG make.3SG breakfast REFL 
vistiù, nisciu e u fulmine a culpiu
dress.3SG go.out.3SG and a lightning.bolt OCL hit.3SG
‘Maria got up, got washed, made breakfast, got dressed, went out and a 
lightning bolt hit her’

b. *Maria si susiu, si lavò, fici colazioni, si
Maria REFL get.up.3SG REFL wash.3SG make.3SG breakfast REFL 
vistiù, niscio e a culpiu u fulmine
dress.3SG go.out.3SG and OCL hit.3SG a lightning.bolt
‘Maria got up, got washed, made breakfast, got dressed, went out, and a 
lightning bolt hit her’

The questionnaire also tested the use of the passive with first person (18a-b) and second person (18c-d) undergoers. In both cases 7/7 informants chose the active (18b, 18d) rather than the passive (18a, 18c).

(18)

a. *Fuvi bocciatu all’ esami rà patienti
be.1SG fail.PTCP at-the exam of.the license
‘I was failed at my driving test’

b. M’ abbocciaru all’ esami rà patienti
OCL fail.PST.3PL at-the exam of.the license
‘They failed me at my driving test’
Along with the active constructions presented in the examples above, another alternative to the passive which was used in this dialect was fronting, which is extremely common in Sicilian dialects. As stated by Cruschina (2010:247), focus fronting is a focusing strategy of Sicilian and the regional variety of Italian spoken in Sicily, which is not available in the Northern Italian dialects. This means that, in some constructions, a focussed constituent figures in initial position or in a preverbal position.

(19)

a. *Fusti pigghiatu pà gara di nuotu?  
   be.2SG choose.PTCP for race of swimming  
   ‘Were you chosen for the swimming race?’

d. Ti pigghiaru pà gara di nuotu?  
   OCL choose.PST.3SG for race of swimming  
   ‘Did they choose you for the swimming race?’

An example of fronting was also employed in the previously mentioned topic chains exercise (example (20) below).

(19)

a. *Iddu picciliddu è  
   he little be.3SG  
   ‘He is a child’

b. A frevi aju  
   the fever have.1SG  
   ‘I have a fever’

(Cruschina 2010:247)
In the diachronic development of the Romance languages, word order has changed and verb final order peculiar to Latin has been lost in modern Romance (Ledgeway 2011), yet it is sometimes claimed that patterns such as the Sicilian ‘cunzumati siti’ (you are lost) are relics of Latin final position (Vincent 1988). However, this is not a direct pattern of Latin word order and does not correspond to basic Sicilian word order. It is the result of highlighting new information into a more prominent position at the start of the sentence. Cruschina (2011) discusses this particular word order found in Sicily and the regional variety of Italian spoken in Sicily. This word order differs from that found in Italian and other Romance languages resulting in a kind of OV order where the verb is preceded by the object and hence found frequently in clause final position. Despite being one of the most salient features of Sicilian, this feature is not yet well understood.

Focal fronting usually occurs as an answer to wh-questions, yes/no questions, with exclamatives and declaratives, and whenever new information conveyed by the focus has an additional discourse effect, such as mirative value. Mirative value relates to information which is surprising or unexpected (Cruschina 2016: 606) As a result of focal fronting to the left periphery, the verb often appears at the end of the construction, as in the example in (21), which is another example of fronting in the Palermitano dialect. Whilst a pasta is the topic, the context provided in questionnaire puts the focus on the actor Maria. The construction in (21) therefore has both a topical undergoer, and an actor which is fronted for focus. This construction reflects fronting with a mirative value, and is used to express surprise. Fronting is largely associated with focus and its primary function is to introduce new participants to the discourse. The Sicilian informants explained that this construction may be used in a context in which a speaker does not want to take the blame for a bad meal and wishes to pass the blame onto someone else (in this case, Maria). Whilst the passive defocuses the actor, the Sicilian construction involving fronting tends to use it as its
focus. This contributes towards evidence that Sicilian prefers actor macroroles as the Privileged Syntactic Argument.

(21)

\[ A \ pasta \ Maria \ a \ fici \]

the pasta Maria CL do.3SG

‘Maria made the pasta’

In Role and Reference Grammar, the topic is placed in the Left Detached Position (LDP), while the fronted element is placed in the Pre Core Slot (PrCs), as seen in example (22).

(22)

The diagrams in (23b, 23d) show the Role and Reference Grammar syntax to semantics linking of both a passive and an active construction in Sicilian, based on the constructions in examples (23a) and (23c). Despite the differences between active and passive constructions, the semantic representations of both remain the
same, and so does macrorole assignment. The crucial difference lies in PSA/subject assignment; in an active construction the PSA is the actor, whilst in a passive construction the PSA is the undergoer. In rejecting the passive, it appears that Sicilian prefers unmarked subjects (actors) to marked ones (undergoers). As discussed in section 2.3, my hypothesis is that the rejection of passive structures is part of the attested return to accusative alignment. The Sicilian data suggest that this is the case in this dialect and that Sicilian may have returned to a predominantly accusative alignment system, unlike the languages of the Northern Romania (La Fauci 1988, Zamboni 1998, Ledgeway 2012).

(23)

a. *U ventu distruggìu a casa*

the wind destroy.3SG the house

‘The wind destroyed the house’
c. A casa fu distrutta rû ventu

the house be.3SG destroy.PTCP by-the wind

‘The house was destroyed by the wind’
Based on the data collected, it is apparent that the acceptability of passive constructions relates directly to the Transitivity Hierarchy; the lower the verb is on the transitivity scale, the less likely it is to be accepted in examples with passivization. Overall, the passive construction is rarely used, with the passive being chosen only 16/168 times, which equates to just 9%. It appears that Sicilian speakers prefer not to promote the undergoer, and, when the passive is used, speakers rarely demote the actor to a by-phrase, when given the option. Rather, the actor usually remains unexpressed. In RRG terms, in a transitive construction, the highest-ranking
argument in Logical Structure (which is usually the actor) will be the natural choice for subject in accusative alignment, whilst the second argument will be the marked choice. In an intransitive construction where there is only one core argument, that one will be the PSA. If we consider active and passive structures, the default linking is for the actor to be the subject, while the undergoer occurs as the object immediately after the nucleus. If non-default linking is made (the passive), the undergoer is mapped to subject, while the actor would optionally appear as an adjunct in the periphery in a PP headed by ‘by’.

4.2 Analysis of impersonals in the Palermitan dialect

We now move to an analysis of impersonals in Sicilian. I will provide an analysis of the impersonal constructions found in the Palermitan dialect, before explaining how these constructions fit into the Hierarchy of Impersonals presented in Chapter 2. This chapter will focus particularly on the semantic features of each impersonal construction, based on the context in which the construction can occur. This will enable us to develop a set of feature systems for each impersonal type.

It is important to note that *si* impersonals, like passives, are constructions which are not regularly used in Sicilian and are considered by informants to be Italianised structures. In this case, I refer back to Chapter One, in which I discussed the mutual pressure between the dialect and the Italian language. Drawing upon Telmon (1993), who has developed a diagram to represent this, it is evident that in the case of syntax, both dialect and Standard Italian place pressure on one another, resulting in cases like this in which a particular construction is used due to pressure from Italian. Although *si* impersonals are rarely used in Palermitan, when they are accepted they display agreement between the verb and the post-verbal argument (24). This may be due to the fact that *si* impersonals are a feature of the Standard Italian (where they do show agreement) rather than of Sicilian; Palermitan informants agreed that *si* impersonals are not a true feature of the dialect, but rather Italianised forms.
Mi rispiaci, cca un si vinninu libbri usati.

me displease.3SG here NEG SI sell.3SG book.MPL used.MPL

‘I’m sorry but used books aren’t sold here’

Assuming as I do, following the RRG analysis (see 2.6), that si impersonals are characterised by the suppression of the highest-ranking argument in logical structure, the virtual absence of si impersonals from Sicilian further suggests that Sicilian tends to map the actor (the highest-ranking argument) to subject. In (24), the undergoer libbri ‘books’ controls verb agreement, thus partially patterning with a subject. This patterning is only partial since, in terms of position, it appears to stay in object position. The fact that this structure is deemed to be unnatural suggests that Sicilian does not tend to map the undergoer (the lowest-ranking argument) to subject.

The most popular alternative to the si impersonal construction, chosen by 4/7 of informants, was a non-impersonal construction with the first person plural form of the verb, which is shown below in example (25).

(25)

Mi rispiaci cca un vinnienu libbri usati

me displease.3SG here NEG sell.1PL book.MPL used.MPL

‘I’m sorry but we don’t sell used books here’

I will begin the analysis of impersonals at the lower end of the hierarchy of impersonals because the impersonal structures of all three dialects can all be used in both non-referential irrealis and non-referential repeated contexts. Some impersonal constructions do not go beyond this level of the hierarchy. The Hierarchy of Impersonals is repeated in (26) for convenience (see section 2.7 for explanations of each step of the hierarchy).
(26) **Hierarchy of impersonals:**

i) Referential definite personal > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite > iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

In referential indefinite constructions, the *si* impersonal also displays agreement with the postverbal argument (27a), hence (27b) is considered to be ungrammatical. An alternative to this construction, chosen by 3/7 informants was a non-impersonal alternative with the 3PL form of the verb (27c). Referential indefinite contexts match the ‘deduced’ or ‘collective’ type of impersonal discussed by van der Auwera where the ‘extension of entities referred to is restricted by the predicate of which they are an argument’ (2013: 6). With regards to the examples in (27), this means that the set of referents which can carry out the building work is restricted and, whilst this is still considered to be an indefinite subject, we have some idea of who the subject of this construction may refer to.

(27)

a. *Rumani pomerriggiu si farannu i travagghi*

tomorrow afternoon    SI do.FUT.3PL the.MPL work.MPL

‘Tomorrow afternoon they will carry out the work/it will be carried out’

b. *Rumani pomerriggiu si fà i travagghi*

tomorrow afternoon    SI do.FUT.3SG the.MPL work.MPL

‘Tomorrow afternoon one will carry out the work/the work will be carried out’

c. *Rumani pomerriggiu farannu i travagghi*

tomorrow afternoon    do.FUT.3PL the.MPL work.MPL

‘Tomorrow afternoon they will carry out the building work’
To the extent that they are accepted, *si* constructions in Sicilian also appear to extend to non-referential repeated events, as shown in example (28a) below. Whilst 3/7 informants chose this construction, the non-impersonal construction was the preferred construction, chosen by 4/7 informants (28b).

(28)

a. *Si scinni a valli ogni primavera*

SI go-down.3SG to valley every spring

‘One goes down to the valley every spring’

b. *Nuatri scinniemu a valli ogni primavera*

we go-down.1PL to valley every spring

‘We go down to the valley every spring’

Blevins (2003) and Wehr (1995) state that all impersonals have a [+human] interpretation; this [+human] feature of the unspecified argument is a common cross-linguistic constraint on impersonals, and appears to apply to the Sicilian data, as well. When referring to inanimate (eg. natural forces) or non-human actors, the *si* impersonal construction is ungrammatical in Sicilian and 7/7 informants chose a non-impersonal alternative. I should note the 3PL person in (29b) differs from the one in (29a), in that it agrees with *spirdi* in the previous clause, or with a null subject in the same clause.

(29)

a. *Nna sta casa cci su i spirdi:*

in this house there be.3PL the.MPL spirit.MPL

*ci* *si apprisenta a menzanotte*

IMP REFL present.3SG at midnight

‘In this house there are ghosts: one appears at midnight’
b. *Nna sta casa *cci su i spirdi:
  in this house there be.3PL the.MPL spirit.MPL:
  s’ apprisentanu a menzanotte
  REFL present.3PL at midnight
  ‘In this house there are ghosts: they appear at midnight’

c. *S’ abbaia tutta a notti
  IMP bark.3SG all the night
  ‘One barks all night long (dogs)’

d. Abbaianu tutta a notti
  bark.3PL all the night
  ‘They bark all night long (dogs)’

e. *Oggi cci su tanti stiiddi nnu cielu.
  today there be.3PL many stars in-the sky.
  si lucica ca è na maravigghia
  IMP shine.3SG that be.3SG a marvel
  ‘Today there are many stars in the sky. One (they) shines magnificently’

The Sicilian si impersonal structure was also rejected with the non-referential indefinite construction in example (30). The non-referential indefinite type of impersonal would have the English translation ‘people’.

(30)

a. *Si cci marita a ruminica
  IMP REFL marry.3SG at Sunday
  ‘One gets married on Sundays’
The alternatives to this construction are presented in (30b-c). The construction with uno ‘one’ (30c) was chosen by 4/7 informants whilst the construction in (30b) was chosen by 3/7 informants.

b. A gente si marita ri ruminica
   the people REFL marry.3SG on Sunday
   ‘People get married on Sundays’

   c. Uno si marita a ruminica
   one REFL marry.3SG on Sunday
   ‘One gets married on Sundays’

One of the main aims of the questionnaire was to investigate whether a by-phrase which introduces the actor is admitted with a si impersonal construction. Earlier in this chapter, we determined that by-phrases are usually not allowed in Palermitan with passive constructions and it appears that this is also the case with the si impersonal construction. The data show that this type of construction is ungrammatical, and in both cases 7/7 informants chose a si impersonal construction without a by-phrase (31a, 31b).

(31)
   a. Si leggiuno bboni libri (*ri studenti)
      SI read.3PL good.MPL book.MPL (by-the students)
      ‘Good books are read by the students’

   b. Si vittiru assai macchini (*ri spittaturi)
      SI see.3PL many.MPL car.MPL (by-the spectators)
      ‘Many cars were seen by the spectators’
The questionnaire also investigated to what extent *si* constructions can be referential definite in this dialect. In Tuscan, *si* constructions are commonly used with a first person plural meaning, referring to a definite set of referents. Whilst 0/7 informants chose a *si* construction with the verbs ‘go’ (32a) and ‘write’ (32b), 4/7 chose a *si* construction with the verb ‘decide’ (32c). Based on the data from Sicily, which tells us that *si* impersonals are uncommon, it seems unusual that they would extend to contexts with a definite set of referents. It is important to note, however, that the informants that chose the construction in (32c) explained that, rather than this construction taking the first person plural meaning ‘we have decided’, it would be more realistic to translate it as ‘it has been decided’, since we do not know exactly who made the decision to go to the cinema.

(32)

a. *Aieri si iù in palestra*

   yesterday IMP go.3SG in gym

   ‘Yesterday one (we) went to the gym’

b. *Un’amica mia si trasferìu all’ Inghilterra rui misi fa*

   a friend my REFL move.3SG to-the England two months ago

   ma si cci scrivi siempri

   but IMP REFL write.3SG always

   ‘My friend moved to England two months ago but one (we) always writes to each other’

c. *Si dicidìu ri iri ô cinema*

   IMP decide.3SG of go.INF to.the cinema

   sta sira vò vèniri?

   this evening want.2SG come.INF

   ‘One decided to go to the cinema this evening, do you want to come?’
In examples (33a) and (33b) we find the contexts provided to informants, which resulted in all informants rejecting a referential definite *si* impersonal with *to go* and most informants accepting a referential definite *si* impersonal with the verb 'to decide'. In (33b), the context implies a definite set of referents (*Giulia* and *un’amica*), meaning that the response to the context would be a referential definite personal construction and we know exactly who the implied argument of the construction is. Since the *si* construction, if used, would have to refer to a definite set of referents, this perhaps explains why the construction was rejected. In (33a), the context does not refer to a definite set of referents, but an indefinite group of friends (we do not know exactly who decided to go to the cinema that evening).

(33)

a. *Stasera vai a mangiare fuori con degli amici. Vuoi sapere se un altro tuo amico vuole venire con voi. Cosa diresti?* (Tonight you are going to eat out with some friends. You want to know if another one of your friends wants to come with you. What would you say?)

b. *La mamma di Giulia chiede a lei e ad un’amica cosa hanno fatto ieri. Giulia risponde:* (The mother of Giulia asks her and her friend what they did yesterday. Giulia replies:)

In the Sicilian example in (34b), informants only chose this construction with the meaning of ‘it has been decided’, without referring to a definite set of referents. Another important difference between the construction in (34b) and a Tuscan referential definite personal construction is the use of the first person plural pronoun. In Tuscan, the first person plural *si* impersonal can occur with or without the first person plural subject pronoun *noi* (34a), but this is not the case for Sicilian *si* impersonals (34b).
(34)

a. Noi si è deciso di andare al cinema stasera, vuoi venire?

‘We decided to go to the cinema this evening, do you want to come?’

b. (*Nui) si dicidìu ri iri ò cinema

(*1PL) IMP decide.3SG of go.INF to.the cinema

sta sira vò vèniri?

‘One decided to go to the cinema this evening, do you want to come?’

In the case of Sicilian, the type of construction in (34b) will be positioned on the second stage of the hierarchy, which refers to constructions that can be both referential and definite, but do not have person. This stage of the hierarchy enables us to differentiate between the construction in (34b) and Tuscan first person plural si impersonals.

To confirm that si cannot have person features in Palermitan, referential definite constructions were also tested with a second person plural referent (35). All informants considered this to be an ungrammatical construction.

(35) *(Vui) #si iocò ò palluni

(*2PL) IMP play.PST.3SG at.the football

‘(You) one played football’

Si impersonals were also rarely employed in irrealis contexts, where uno was the preferred choice. Whilst si occurs in irrealis contexts in both Abruzzese and Tuscan, this was rejected by all informants in Sicilian. In all of the questions involving irrealis contexts, given the choice was between a si construction and a
construction with uno, the highest number of informants to pick a si construction was 1/7. It appears that, in Palermitan, the impersonal si is not found in non-referential realis or irrealis contexts and is reserved for referential contexts. The data suggest that uno is the preferred impersonal form in non-referential repeated contexts (36a) and non-referential irrealis contexts (36e).

(36)

a. Quannu unu è arraggiatu (unu) rici chiddu ca piensa

when one be.3SG angry.MSG (one) say.3SG what that think.3SG

‘When one is angry he says what he thinks’

b. Quannu si è arraggiati si rici chiddu ca si piensa

when SI be.3SG angry.MPL SI say.3SG what that SI think.3SG

‘When one is angry one says what one thinks’

c. Roppu manciatu unu pisa chiossai

after eat.PTCP unu weigh.3SG more

‘After eating one weighs more’

d. Unu sta bbeni al nord

one stay.3SG well at.the north

‘One stays well in the north’

e. Si unu mància ri sìra ngrassa chiossai

if one eat.3SG of evening put-weight-on.3SG a-lot

‘If one eats in the evening, they put a lot of weight on’

It is interesting to note that, in impersonal constructions such as the one in (36a), it is not necessary to repeat uno, whilst in an impersonal construction such as (36b), si must be repeated. This is interesting, since si appears to have the behaviour of a subject clitic, even though it is clearly indefinite and non-personal in Palermitan. From the examples in (36a-b), we can see that constructions with or without the
repetition of *unu* in both clauses are grammatical in Sicilian. The examples in (37c-d) show that where *si* is not repeated in both clauses, the construction is ungrammatical.

(37)

a. *Si* *unu* *un* *mancia, un* *crisci*

if one NEG eat.3SG NEG grow.3SG

‘If one doesn’t eat, one doesn’t grow’

b. *Si* *unu* *un* *mancia, unu* *un* *crisci*

if one NEG eat.3SG one NEG grow.3SG

‘If one doesn’t eat, one doesn’t grow’

c. *Si* *un* *si* *mancia* *un* *crisci*

if NEG IMP eat.3SG NEG grow.3SG

‘If one doesn’t eat one doesn’t grow’

d. *Si* *un* *si* *mancia* *un* *si* *crisci*

if NEG IMP eat.3SG NEG IMP grow.3SG

‘If one doesn’t eat one doesn’t grow’

It can be concluded that the feature deficiency of the highest-ranking argument must obligatorily marked on the verb of every coordinated clause in referential contexts.

Whilst non-referential contexts appear to be reserved for constructions with *unu*, this type of construction does not pass to the higher stages of the hierarchy and cannot occur in referential indefinite, referential definite or personal referential definite contexts. Whilst *unu* was tested in all of these contexts, informants noted that they all imply either a non-referential meaning, once again without a link to or an implication of a definite referent, hence examples (38a) and (38b) are ungrammatical.
(38)

a. #Rumani pomeriggiu uno farà i travagghi

tomorrow afternoon uno do.3SG the.MPL work.MPL

‘Tomorrow afternoon one will do the work’

b. (*Nui) *uno dicidiu ri iri ò cinema sta sira

(*1PL) one decide.3SG of go.INF to.the cinema this evening

‘One decided to go to the cinema this evening, do you want to come?

Unlike Abruzzese and Tuscan, Sicilian does not exhibit a wide range of impersonal constructions. Abruzzese has si impersonal constructions, constructions with uno, third person plural pronouns and an impersonal clitic nome, which is unique to Abruzzese. Tuscan has third person plurals, si impersonals, uno, and si impersonals with a first person plural interpretation. These cross-dialectal comparisons will be analysed further in Chapter 7. The table below provides a summary of the impersonal forms of Sicilian, as well as their features. This table shows that out of the three impersonal types of Sicilian, unu is the type that is used fewest contexts. This table will expand as we discuss the data from the other dialects in the chapters that follow.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Referential definite 1PL</th>
<th>Referential definite</th>
<th>Referential indefinite</th>
<th>Non-referential repeated</th>
<th>Non-referential irrealis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Si</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unu</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person plural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that the bottom row of Table 3 has the pattern No Yes Yes No No is not problematic, since when it is personal it is a third person plural, rather than a first person plural.
The aim of this investigation is to compare impersonals in Sicilian, Tuscan and Abruzzese. Since it is clear that so far these impersonal features differ based on the contexts in which they may be used, in Chapter 7 I propose that each impersonal construction (si, uno, 3PL) has own set of semantic feature system which holds a set of characteristics (+/- referential, +/- definite, +/- irrealis). The sets of features systems allow for the cross-dialectal comparisons of the different types of impersonals and allow us to create the hierarchy of impersonals which captures all of the different types of impersonals found in Sicilian, Tuscan and Abruzzese. I begin this cross-analysis by highlighting on the Hierarchy of Impersonals which stages of the hierarchy are reached by each impersonal form. The first hierarchy refers to the Sicilian impersonal si, whilst the second refers to Sicilian uno. As previously mentioned, si impersonals are somewhat unnatural in Sicilian and this hierarchy reflects only the contexts that are available to si when it is employed.

**Hierarchy of impersonals: Sicilian si impersonals:**

i) Personal referential definite > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite

> vi) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

**Hierarchy of impersonals: Sicilian uno**

i) Personal referential definite > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite >

> iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

In the chapters that follow, I will use data from Abruzzese and Tuscan dialects to form similar hierarchies, enabling us to form a cross-linguistic analysis.
Chapter 5. Abruzzese

The Abruzzese data collection was carried out in the town of Tollo, in the province of Chieti. The first set of data was collected using the original questionnaire (see appendix 1), which was also used to conduct the interviews in Tuscany and Sicily. The results of this fieldwork highlighted the prevalence of the aforementioned feature nome, and hence the need for further research and a second round of data collection. The second round of fieldwork was also conducted in loco and required a new questionnaire (appendix 2), which focused entirely on the syntactic and semantic properties of nome. I will begin this chapter by presenting an analysis of passive constructions in Tollese. As in the previous chapter, this section will follow the structure of the transitivity hierarchy, starting with the verbs which are highest in transitivity. The new data on nome will be included alongside it, where relevant. Section 5.2 will investigate the use of impersonal constructions in Abruzzese and section 5.3 will provide a detailed analysis of the Abruzzese feature nome. Section 5.4 will look at the impersonality hierarchy and how the Abruzzese impersonal constructions fit into it. Unless otherwise specified, all of the examples in this chapter are from the Tollese dialect.

5.1 Analysis of passives in the Tollese dialect

Based on work by Hastings (1997) & Giammarco (1979), which state that the passive is a rarely used construction in Abruzzese, it was expected that there would be very little evidence of the existence of a passive construction in the Tollese dialect. Giammarco (1979:206) explains that the passive is largely replaced by active structures and therefore an Abruzzese speaker would find the active structures in example (1a) and (1c) more natural than the passive structures in (1b) and (1d).

(1) Abruzzese
   a. Lu spósə a vasatə la spósə
      the groom have.3SG kiss.PTCP the bride
      ‘The groom has kissed the bride’
The data elicited during the interviews supports the claim that the passive is not a construction which is regularly employed, but suggests that this is not true to the same extent as it is in Sicilian. The data follow a similar pattern to the Sicilian data regarding the link between passivization and the Transitivity Hierarchy (Hopper and Thompson 1980), where verbs which are high in transitivity are more likely to be accepted as grammatical constructions than those which are low in transitivity. Whilst this is true in Tollese, the extent to which the acceptability of verbs with the passive differs and only those which rank the lowest on the transitivity scale are completely rejected. Those which are only slightly lower than the verbs which rank the highest in transitivity such as ‘kill’ and ‘destroy’ are often accepted. Whilst there is evidence that the Sicilian passive appears to be extremely sensitive to any verbs which are lower down on the transitivity scale (see Chapter 4), the Abruzzese passive is not. Accordingly, the percentage of passive constructions accepted is slightly higher in Abruzzo that it is in Sicily. The table detailing the entailments of all of the verbs used in the questionnaire is repeated below for convenience.
### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>Accide ‘to murder’</th>
<th>Accide pi ‘to murder by mistake’</th>
<th>Distruje ‘to destroy’</th>
<th>Arrestà ‘to arrest’</th>
<th>Còce ‘to cook’</th>
<th>Sapè ‘to know’</th>
<th>Kinòffè ‘to know’</th>
<th>Corre ‘to run’</th>
<th>Piatfè ‘to like’</th>
<th>Pisà ‘to weigh’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinesis</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
<td>Non action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuality</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
<td>Non punctual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volitionality</td>
<td>Volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Volitional</td>
<td>Not necessarily volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
<td>Non volitional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

107
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affectedness of O</td>
<td>O totally affected</td>
<td>O totally affected</td>
<td>O totally affected</td>
<td>O partially or totally affected</td>
<td>O not affected</td>
<td>O not affected</td>
<td>O not affected</td>
<td>O not affected</td>
<td>O does not exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuation of O</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first set of Abruzzese data was collected from interviews with a total of 9 informants, using the questionnaire in appendix 1. As in the previous chapter, I will begin by discussing verbs which are high in transitivity, working down the hierarchy to those which are low in transitivity. Question 1 of the questionnaire asks informants to choose between an active and a passive construction with the verb ‘kill’, which is high in transitivity (it is high in volitionality, has two participants, and the object is totally affected). All 9 informants chose an active structure as their preferred structure (2a) over a passive (2b), although 6/9 informants agreed that a passive would still form a grammatical and acceptable construction. In Tollese, informants explained that the passive is often rejected for stylistic reasons, since it often creates stilted, unnaturally lengthy sentences, which belong to a high register. Upon further investigation during the second fieldwork trip to Tollo, it became evident that there is a third and preferred response, as shown in (2c). In this example, speakers use the impersonal form nome which has a similar function to the passive, since it is characterised by the defocusing of the actor. This defocusing indicates that the speaker does not know who carried out the act of killing and therefore it is not relevant information. In my analysis of nome in section 5.3, I will conclude that nome is an impersonal form, whose function is very similar to that of the impersonal si.

(2)

a. L’ ann atfis

OCL have.3PL kill.PTCP

‘They have killed him’

b. Paolo a fia tro atfis

Paolo have.3SG be.PTCP kill.PTCP

‘Paolo has been killed’

c. L’ a nomo atfis

OCL have.3SG nome kill.PTCP

‘They have killed him’
Question 2 of the questionnaire involves another verb which is high in transitivity, ‘arrest’. Once again, this verb is high in volitionality, has two participants and the object is totally affected. As the chosen construction, 8/9 informants chose an active structure and 1/9 informants chose a passive structure. A further 2/9 informants also mentioned the construction with nome as their preferred response over the active and the passive. In (3c) we see nome used in a referential indefinite context, where the actor is indefinite, in the sense that it is not individuated or unique, and yet it is restricted to a particular set of people, in this case li karabinirə ‘the police’.

(3)

a. Nu latrə mi a pijatə la bborṣə
   a thief me have.3SG steal.PTCP the bag
   e a fiatə arriʃtə
   and have.3SG be.PTCP arrest.PTCP
   ‘A thief stole my bag and he was arrested’

b. Nu latrə mi a pijatə la bborṣə
   a thief me have.3SG steal.PTCP the bag
   e li karabinirə l’ ann arriʃtə
   and the police him have.3SG arrest.PTCP
   ‘A thief stole my bag and the police arrested him’

c. Nu latrə mi a pijatə la bborṣə
   a thief me have.3SG take.PTCP the bag
   e l’ a nomə arriʃtə
   and him have.3SG nome arrest.PTCP
   ‘A thief stole my bag and they arrested him’
The next question involves the compatibility of the passive with the phrase ‘by mistake’, which reduces the verb’s transitivity, due to the implied lack of volition of the actor. This made a significant difference to the Sicilian data in that informants were more likely to passivize the verb ‘to kill’ than ‘to kill by mistake’. This did not affect the result to the same extent in Abruzzese, since 0/9 informants chose a passive with the verb ‘to kill’ (see example (2)) and only 1/9 informants chose a passive with the phrase ‘to kill by mistake’ (4b). As an alternative to the passive with ‘to kill by mistake’, 8/9 informants chose a construction with nome (4a).

(4)

a. l’ a nome attfisə pi zbeijjə

OCL have.3SG nome kill.PTCP by mistake
‘They have killed him by mistake’

b. a fiato attfisə pi zbeijjə.

have.3SG be.PTCP kill.PTCP by mistake
‘He has been killed by mistake’

With the verb ‘destroy’, which is also high in transitivity, the active is once again the preferred structure. In spite of this, 5/9 informants chose the passive over the active; the passive is marginally preferable. As identified in the previous chapter on Sicilian, it appears that in all three dialects, the animacy of the actor affects the acceptability of the passive. The data suggest that where there is an inanimate actor a passive construction is more likely to be accepted.

(5)

a. La kasə a fiato distrutto da lu vendə

the house have.3SG be.PTCP destroy.PTCP by the wind
‘The house was destroyed by the wind’
b. *Lu vend̀a a distrutt̀a la kas̀*  
the wind have.3SG destroy.PTCP the house  
‘The wind destroyed the house’

As was mentioned in previous chapters, the affectedness of the undergoer of the verb is relevant to its position on the transitivity hierarchy. In the case of the verb ‘cook’, it is possible that the cooked entity may not be totally affected by the act of cooking, since it may not be cooked properly. For example, it makes sense to say ‘The pasta cooked for five minutes, but it is not properly cooked.’ The change that results from cooking is gradient, in that it involves gradual completion (Bertinetto and Squartini 1995) whilst the results from killing are discrete. If we compare this with a verb such as ‘to kill’, which implies that the undergoer of the action has been totally affected and ‘to destroy’, in which the undergoer must be completely destroyed, we can determine the different levels of transitivity of the different verb types. In addition to the undergoer not being necessarily totally affected, the actor of ‘cook’ is slightly lower in potency and there may only be one participant. With this verb, the passive was chosen by only 1/9 informants. The preferred construction was one with left-dislocation, which was chosen by 4/9 informants. However, all informants agreed that the passive construction is grammatical.

(6)  
a. *Marìa a cott̀a la pàstä*  
Maria have.3SG cook.PTCP the pasta  
‘Maria cooked the pasta’

b. *La pàstä l’ a cott̀a Marìa*  
the pasta OCL have.3SG cook.PTCP Maria  
‘The pasta, Maria cooked it’

c. *La pàstä a fìàt tà cott̀a da Marìa*  
the pasta have.3SG be.PTCP cook.PTCP by Maria  
‘The pasta was cooked by Maria’
Whilst the verb ‘run’ is high in volition and potency, and it describes an action, it is lower in transitivity than verbs such as ‘kill’ and ‘destroy’ since it involves only one participant. Whilst the verb ‘run’ can be atelic, in the context provided to informants, ‘run’ is considered to be a telic verb. This is due to the addition of the complement ‘twenty-six kilometres’, providing the action with an end goal. Whilst ‘run’ is an intransitive verb, this verb was tested in the passive, with the complement ‘twenty-six kilometres’ as the promoted element. The passive was rejected by 9/9 informants here and was replaced with the active (7a) or with a construction with *nome* (7b). It was also noted that *nome* can only refer to indefinite third person plural actors and cannot be used with a referential definite 3PL or 1PL meaning, like the Tuscan *si* which will be discussed in the next chapter. It is then important to note that in example (7b), the informants omit the actor ‘the young people’ and use *nome*, which implies that the actor of (7b) is an indefinite group of people, hence (7c) is an ungrammatical construction.

(7)

a. Li ḏdžuṇwənə ṭuʃə ənuə κυɾσə vəntiʃə kɪlo mopətəɾə

the young yesterday have.3PL run.PTCP twenty-six kilometres

‘The young people ran 26 kilometres yesterday’

b. A *nome* κυɾσə vəntiʃə kɪlo mopətəɾə

have.3SG *nome* run.PTCP twenty-six kilometres

‘They have run twenty-six kilometres’

c. *Li ḏdžuṇwənə ṭuʃə a *nome* κυɾσə

the young yesterday have.3SG *nome* run.PTCP

vəntiʃə kɪlo mopətəɾə

twenty-six kilometres

‘The young people, *nome* ran twenty-six kilometres yesterday’

d. *Vəntiʃə kɪlo mopətəɾə ənuə ʃiʃə κυɾσə da li ḏdžuṇwənə*

twenty-six kilometres have.3PL be.PTCP run.PTCP by the young

‘Twenty-six kilometres have been run by the young people’
To elicit the results in example (8), informants were provided with the context of a tour guide providing tourists with some information about a church. The informants chose both the passive and active equally, explaining that the guide or priest would be likely to speak in a formal manner and not in dialect,\(^1\) so in this case it is possible that the choice of the passive may be influenced by Standard Italian and may not be a true feature of the dialect.

\[(8)\]
\[a. Ddutfendo \quad personə \quad annə \quad viʃə \quad la \quad kkjesa \quad ftaennə\]
\[\text{two-hundred people have.3PL visit.PTCP the church this.year}\]
\[\text{‘Two hundred people have visited the church this year’}\]
\[b. La \quad kkjesa \quad a \quad fiatə \quad viʃə \quad da\]
\[\text{the church have.3SG be.PTCP visit.PTCP by}\]
\[ddutfendo \quad personə \quad ftaennə\]
\[\text{two-hundred people this-year}\]
\[\text{‘The church has been visited by two hundred people this year’}\]

The question that follows involves the verb ‘to know’ which is lower on the transitivity scale than verbs such as ‘kill’ and ‘destroy’, since it is low in volitionality and potency, it is not an action and the lower argument is not affected. All informants preferred an active construction to a passive one, with two informants accepting the passive as a grammatical construction alongside the active. This is unlike the Sicilian data, where all informants chose an active construction with the verb ‘to know’ and labelled the passivization of this construction as ungrammatical.

\(^1\) These comments echoed the comments of the Sicilian informants.
(9)

a. *Mariə li kinəʃə

Maria OCL know.3SG

‘Maria knows him’

b. *ɤ e kkunufutə da Mariə

3SG be.3SG know.PTCP by Maria

‘He is known by Maria’

As in Standard Italian and Sicilian, Abruzzese differs between two different meanings of ‘know’. The examples in (9) have the meaning of ‘to know someone’, whilst the examples in (10) have the meaning of ‘to know a fact’. With this verb, 4/9 informants chose an active construction (10a) and 5/9 informants chose an active construction with left-dislocation (10b). All informants considered the passive in (10c) to be ungrammatical.

(10)

a. Tutti kwində li studentsə sapevə la risposta

all as.manys the students know.3PL the answer

‘All the students knew the answer’

b. La risposta li sapevə tuti kwində li studentsə

the answer them know.3PL all as.manys the students

‘The answer, all of the students knew it’

c. *La risposta e saputə da tutti kwində li studentsə

the answer be.3SG know.PTCP by all as.manys the students

‘The answer is known by all of the students’
The following question provides a further example of a psychological verb, which is low in transitivity. The verb *piacere* ‘to please’ is an example of this; it is low in volitionality and potency, it does not necessarily involve two participants and the lower argument is not totally affected. All informants chose the active (11b) over the passive (11c), explaining that the passive with ‘like’ is completely ungrammatical. With this type of construction, the arguments of the verb are not agent and patient, but experiencer and theme. Belletti and Rizzi (1988:291) describe the role of experiencer as the individual experiencing the mental state and the theme as the content or object of the mental state. As was mentioned in previous chapters Bentley (2006:112) claims that the experiencer is not assigned a macrorole and thus the structure is intransitive and does not lend itself to passivization. Indeed, unlike in the corresponding English construction (11a), the experiencer of the Tollese construction (11b) is marked with dative case, which indicates that it is not assigned the macrorole actor, and hence it cannot be promoted to subject. The construction is therefore treated as an intransitive one and cannot be passivized (11c).

\[(11)\]
\[
a. \text{Everyone likes him (English)}
\]
\[
b. Pjatʃ \ a \ tutti \ kwində
\]

\[
\text{like.3SG to every as.many}
\]

‘He is pleasing to everyone/ everyone likes him’

\[
c. *r \ e \ pjatʃuə \ da \ tutti \ kwində
\]

\[
3PL \ be.3SG \ like.PTCP \ by \ every \ as.many
\]

‘He is liked by everyone’

The three questions of the questionnaire that follow investigate the use of the passive with verbs which are low on the transitivity scale. This includes two psychological verbs ‘love’ and ‘scare’ and a measure verb ‘weigh’. In all cases, 9/9 informants chose the active over the passive, and informants explained that passive constructions sounded completely unnatural and ungrammatical in this case. The
passive was tested with the verb ‘to frighten’ which has both an experiencer argument and a causer argument. The Abruzzese informants labelled the construction in (12a) as ungrammatical and replaced the transitive verb ‘frighten’ with the intransitive construction in (12b).

(12)
a. *Lu cane a statə spaventədə la gaettə
the dog have.3SG be.PTCP scare.PTCP by the cat
‘The dog was scared by the cat’

b. Ts’ a mbaumıtədə la gaettə
REFL have.3SG fear.PTCP of the cat
‘He is afraid of the cat’

In Abruzzese, the transitive verb amare ‘to love’ is not regularly used in Abruzzese and is replaced with the intransitive structure volere bene (a qualcuno), which can be translated as ‘to be very fond of someone’. Since the theme of this construction is dative (ji), this construction cannot be passivized, as seen in (13c). The passive was replaced with the active construction in (13a), chosen by 3/9 informants, whilst the rest of the informants chose constructions with nome (13b) and (13c).

(13)
a. Tutti kwində ji vo bbenə
every one DAT want well
‘Everyone loves him’

b. Ji nomə vo bbenə
DAT nome want.3SG well
‘They (impersonal) love him’
c. *r e volutə bbene da tutti kwində

3SG be.3SG want.PTCP well by every one

‘He is loved by everyone’

In all three dialects the passive with measure verbs was not accepted (14a, 14b). The fact that passivization cannot occur with measure verbs suggests that the post-verbal noun phrase is not a macrorole argument, or an argument at all. A possible analysis of this noun phrase is that of a subject complement, although this line of analysis will not be developed here.

(14)
a. La gaettə pesə / fa dieci kili

the cat weigh.3SG / do.3SG ten kilos

‘The cat weighs 10 kilos’
b. *dieci kili so pesatə da la gaettə

ten kilos be.3PL weigh.PTCP by the cat

‘Ten kilos are weighed by the cat’

As well as the third person singular and plural, the passive was also tested with first and second person undergoers. Both questions resulted in almost equal choice between the active (15a) and the passive (15b), with three informants choosing each. A construction with nome (15c) was chosen by the other three informants, providing another example of nome in use in a referential indefinite context, since the implied subject of this construction is restricted to a particular set of referents, in this case swimming teachers.

(15)
a. T’ annə kapatə pi la gara di notə

OCL.2SG have.3PL choose.PTCP for the race of swimming

‘Have they chosen you for the swimming race?’
b. Si stata kapatə pi la gara di nota?
be.2SG be.PTCP choose.PTCP for the race of swimming
‘Have you been chosen for the swimming race?’

c. T' a nome kapatə pi la gara di nota?
OCL.2SG have.3SG name fail.PTCP for the race of swimming
‘Did they choose you for the swimming race?’

A similar situation arises with first person singular undergoers, where once again the actor role is restricted to a particular set of referents (this time to driving instructors). As with the second person plural subjects, both active (16a) and passive (16b) constructions were chosen by 3/9 informants each, with the other 3/9 informants choosing a construction with nome as their preferred construction (16c). Informants claimed that nome is a more authentic form and is a more accurate representation of the original dialect.

(16)

a. M' ann bocciatə all' esame di guida
OCL have.3PL fail.PTCP at.the exam of driving
‘They failed me at the driving exam’

b. So fiaʔ bocciatə all' esame di guida
be.AUX be.PTCP fail.PTCP at.the exam of driving
‘I was failed at the driving exam’

c. M’ a nome bocciatə all’ esame di guida
OCL have.3SG name fail.PTCP at.the exam of driving
‘They failed me at the driving exam’
As well as multiple choice questions, the questionnaire also includes an exercise asking informants to complete a topic chain. It is not specified that this construction must be completed with either an active or a passive. Informants were provided with a verb in Standard Italian in its infinitival form and asked to translate it into their dialect and conjugate it in order to complete the sentence, as in the example question taken from the questionnaire in (17) below.

(17)

\[\textit{Mario}s\,' \ a \ \textit{vestsata}, \ s\,' \ a \ \textit{lavata},\]

Mario REFL have.3SG get-up.PTCP REFL have.3SG wash.PTCP

\[s\,' \ a \ \textit{vestita}, \ a \ \textit{fito} \ \textit{ma} \ \underline{\textit{ma}}\]

REFL have.3SG dress.PTCP have.3SG go.out.PTCP but \underline{\textit{ma}}

*(colpire, un fulmine)*

(hit.INF, a lightening-bolt)

‘Mario got up, got washed, got dressed, went out, but \underline{\textit{ma}} (hit, lightening bolt)’

By choosing the passive construction in (18a), speakers continue the topic chain and maintain the same topic (\textit{Mario}). The active construction in (18b) breaks this topic chain and introduced a new topic (\textit{lu fulm\texteta}). This style of question encouraged more passive responses than previous questions did, with the first topic chain encouraging 6/9 informants to accept both an active and a passive equally, 2/9 choosing only a passive (18a) and 1/9 choosing an active with topicalization of the object (18b).

(18)

a. \textit{A} \ \textit{fito} \ \textit{culpita} \ \textit{da} \ \textit{nu} \ \textit{fulmen}\texteta

have.3SG be.PTCP hit.PTCP by a lightening.bolt

‘He was hit by a bolt of lightning’
b. \( L \ a \ \text{culpita} \ \text{lu} \ \text{fulmənə} \)

\[ \text{OCL have.3SG hit.PTCP the lightning.bolt} \]

‘A bolt of lightning hit him’

In the second question involving a topic chain, 2/9 informants chose a passive (19a), 5/9 chose to add a construction with \textit{nome} (19c), and 2/9 chose an alternative construction, such as the example of topicalization of the undergoer in (19b). Whilst the construction of \textit{nome} breaks the topic chain, it still has a similar function to the passive in that the actor is defocused or suppressed to some extent.

(19)

a. \( A \ \text{statə} \ \text{pijatə} \ a \ \text{zampate} \)

\[ \text{have.3SG be.PTCP take.PTCP at stamp} \]

‘He has been stamped on’

b. \( L’ \ a \ \text{tfakkatə} \ \text{la macchina} \)

\[ \text{OCL have.3SG squash.PTCP the car} \]

‘The car squashed him’

c. \( L’ \ a \ \text{nome} \ \text{atfakkit} \)

\[ \text{OCL have.3SG nome squash.PTCP} \]

‘They have squashed him’

In the final topic chain, 3/9 informants chose the passive structure (20a), 1/9 chose the active structure (20b) and 5/9 proposed a construction with \textit{nome} (20c). The active construction in (20b) is a third person plural impersonal, since the informant would not know specifically who carried out the action of overtaking. If this is the case, then all three constructions have the defocusing of the actor as a common function.
Based on the data collected, it is evident that the acceptability of passive constructions relates directly to the transitivity hierarchy; the lower the verb is on the transitivity scale, the less likely it is to be passivized. Whilst the passive may be replaced by constructions that map the actor role to subject (active constructions), other constructions used to replace the passive often have a similar function to the passive, which is that of defocusing the actor or suppressing it in some way (third person plurals, nome, left-dislocation). This result combines with my previous observation that the passive without a by-phrase is preferred to passives with an overt expression of the actor. In this analysis, we find a cluster of constructions that defocus or demote the actor, without necessarily mapping the undergoer to subject.

5.2 Analysis of impersonals in the Tollese dialect

In a number of Abruzzese dialects, including Tollese, it is difficult to detect unambiguous third person plural forms of verbs, since third person singular and third person plural forms are normally syncretic in this dialect (see 21a and 21b, where 21b is an infrequently used form in Abruzzese).
The example in (21a) shows that *fa*, which appears to be a singular form, is used for both singular and plural number. The two forms both appear identical and it is therefore difficult to determine whether or not these dialects display number agreement of the verb with the post-verbal noun phrase in *si* impersonal constructions. The example in (21c), which is unambiguously plural, provides further evidence that the two forms are syncretic. Giammarco (1979:156) discusses this, explaining that the Latin suffixes: *-ant, -ent* and *–unt* were generalised to *–ent* in some varieties of early Romance. In the Adriatic area, the Latin forms evolved and resulted in the loss of the *–ent* suffix, with */u/ and */ə/* taking its place. In the data collected from Tollese, 3PL forms of verbs in *si* impersonal constructions (agreeing with the post-verbal noun phrase) were rarely accepted; 9/9 informants chose a
sentence such as the one in (21d) over the one in (21e), which displays agreement. Both examples (21a) and (21b) provide evidence of Tollese *si* impersonals in referential indefinite contexts, since the implied subject can be deduced from the context and hence the set of referents is restricted to a particular (but indefinite) group of people.

In all cases, *si* impersonal constructions with a *by*-phrase were rejected by 9/9 informants.

(22)

\[
\text{Si leddʒə li libbəbb bonə (*da li studendeə)}
\]

IMP read.3SG the.PL book.PL good by the.PL students.PL

‘One reads good books by the students/good books are read by the students’

Whilst in Standard Italian agreement on the past participle is shown with a change in the final vowel, Abruzzese does not follow the same pattern, as a result of the merging of final vowels into schwa: past participles end in /ə/, regardless of the number and gender of the subject. Agreement on the past participle is usually displayed via metaphony in Tollese, as seen in the vowel change in the copular examples below. Metaphony is found in a number of Romance dialects and, in this case, involves a word-internal vowel change based on number agreement with the suppressed subject. (Maiden 2005, Hastings 1995, Giammarco 1979) In this context, informants considered the singular form (23d) to be ungrammatical, meaning that the suppressed argument is a plural one. The examples in (23) demonstrate the difference in participle agreement between Standard Italian (23a-b) and Abruzzese (23c-d).

(23)

a. \text{Lui ̲e ̲ arrabbiato}  

3SG be.3SG angry.MSG Standard Italian

‘He is angry’
b. *Quando si è arrabbiati
   when IMP be.3SG angry.MPL Standard Italian
   ‘When one is angry’

c. Quando si è arrabbiato
   when IMP be.3SG angry.PL Abruzzese
   ‘When one is angry’

d. *Quando si è arrabbiato
   when IMP be.3SG angry.SG Abruzzese
   ‘When one is angry’

The examples in (24a) and (24b) display further evidence of metaphony on the past participle in the present perfect (in bold), which agree in number with the subject. It appears that in Abruzzese, *si impersonals do not extend to second person plural referents, and this type of construction must remain in the non-impersonal form (24a) with plural agreement on the past participle, in accordance with the second person plural subject.

(24)

a. Avete juttiat a palloni
   have.2PL play.PTCP at football
   ‘You (PL) have played football’

b. *Ts’ a jukat a palloni
   IMP have.3SG play.PTCP.SG at football
   ‘One/You(PL) have played football’

c. *Ts’ a jukit a palloni
   IMP have.3SG play.PTCP.PL at football
   ‘One/You(PL) have played football’
The data collected in Tollo supports claims by Blevins (2003) and Wehr (1995) that the use of *si impersonals is restricted to [+human] subjects; the example in (25) confirm that *si impersonals with [-human] subjects are ungrammatical.

(25)

a. *S’ abbaia tutta la nottə
   IMP bark.3SG all the night
   ‘One barks all night’

b. Si vedə tantə ftallə. *Si luccicə ca e na maravʎʎə
   IMP see.3SG many stars. IMP shine.3SG that is a marvel
   ‘You can see lots of stars. One shines brilliantly’

In Standard Italian, both *si impersonals and reflexives are characterized by the suppression of the highest argument, which is flagged overtly by the clitic *si (Bentley 2006). An impersonal reflexive would therefore result in double argument suppression which is represented in Standard Italian, with the *ci *si structure, as in the example below (26).

(26) Standard Italian

Ci *si scrive
REFL IMP write.3SG
‘One writes to one another’

In Tollese, the verb ‘to die’ is a reflexive one. Informants explained that the *ci *si structure is too Italianized and a very literal translation from Italian to Abruzzese would result in the construction in (27a). Contrary to expectation,
impersonal reflexives are formed as in example (27b), with just one instance of the clitic *si* to spell out the suppressed arguments of both the reflexive and the impersonal construction. This example also serves as evidence of the *si* construction used in a non-referential repeated context in Tollese, due to the adverbial phrase ‘every day’.

(27)

a. *Si * si morə tuttə li jorne

REFL IMP die.3SG all the days

‘People die every day’

b. Si morə tuttə li jorne

IMP die.3SG all the days

‘People die every day’

As well as *si* constructions, another impersonal form tested was *uno* which, unlike in Sicilian, appears to be interchangeable with *si* in non-referential irrealis contexts in Tollese. Whilst both constructions in (28a) and (28b) are grammatical in Tollese and were accepted by all informants, they are not necessarily the most common constructions, and informants offered other, more natural alternatives, such as the non-impersonal second person plural form in (28c). I suggest that example (28c), like the examples in (28a) and (28b), is a non-referential irrealis construction and that the second person plural form of the verb has a similar meaning to the impersonal ‘you’ in English (e.g., After eating you are heavier). In all of the examples in (28), the constructions have the meaning of ‘when one has finished eating, one weighs more’

(28)

a. Dopo magnatə si pesa di cchiù

after eat.PTCP IMP weigh.3SG of more

‘After eating one weighs more’
b. *Dopo magnatə uno pesa di cchiù*

after eat.PTCP one weigh.3SG of more

‘After eating one weighs more’

c. *Dopo magnatə si cchiù pesante*

after eat.PTCP be.2SG more heavy

‘After eating, you are heavier’

The impersonal *si* in referential definite contexts with 1PL meaning, which is common in Tuscan, does not appear to exist in Tollese. Only 1/9 informants accepted referential 1PL *si* with the verb *ji* ‘to go’, as in (29a). The informant that accepted this construction explained that *si* in this case does not have a definite *noi* meaning, but a referential indefinite one, providing the context in (29b). It is interesting to note that the example in (29b) contains an impersonal and a non-impersonal form in the same sentence, confirming that this type of *si* construction does not have the same meaning as the 1PL form of the verb, as it does in Tuscan where it is interchangeable with the non-impersonal 1PL form.

(29)

a. (*Nu*) *Si è jit a lu mar*

(*we*) IMP be.3SG go.PTCP to the sea

‘One (we) went to the sea’

b. *Potevam ji a la montagna invece si è jit a lu mar*

can.IMPF go.INF to the mountain instead IMP be.3SG go.PTCP to the sea

‘We could’ve gone to the mountains but instead one went to the beach’

c. *Samə jit a lu marə*

be.1PL go.PTCP to the sea

‘We went to the sea’
Referential *si* was accepted by two informants with the verb *decide*, as in (30a), but was rejected by all informants with a reflexive verb, as in (30b). Based on the previously mentioned fact that Tollese does not use the Standard Italian *ci si* structure for impersonal reflexives (30b), this construction was attempted with just one *si* clitic (30c), which was also rejected as a referential impersonal. It is important to note that the Tuscan referential *si* construction can also occur with the 1PL pronoun *noi* ‘we’, whilst this this not possible in Tollese. Observe that Tollese alternates between *si* and *tsi*, depending on the auxiliary it precedes; when the auxiliary is *aver* ‘have’, *tsi* is required.

(30)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & (\text{*Nu}) \text{ } \text{ts} \text{ } a \text{ } \text{detfis} \text{ } \text{di} \text{ } \text{jì} \text{ } a \text{ } \text{lu} \text{ } \text{tfinema} \\
& \text{(*we) IMP have.3SG decide of go.INF to the cinema} \\
& \text{‘We (one) have decided to go to the cinema’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{tfì} \text{ } \text{si} \text{ } \text{scrive} \text{ } \text{sempre} \\
& \text{IMP REFL write.3SG always} \\
& \text{‘We (one) always write to each other’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{c. } & \text{*si} \text{ } \text{scrive} \text{ } \text{sempre} \\
& \text{IMP/REFL write.3SG always} \\
& \text{‘We (one) always write to each other’}
\end{align*}
\]

The *si* impersonal construction was also tested with a second person plural actor (31a), which was considered ungrammatical by all nine informants and was replaced with the non-impersonal construction in (31b).

(31)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{*Vu} \text{ } \text{si} \text{ } \text{è} \text{ } \text{jukit} \text{ } \text{a pallonò} \\
& \text{you.2PL IMP be.3SG play.PTCP at football} \\
& \text{‘One (you) played football’}
\end{align*}
\]
b. *Sietə jukit a pallonə*

be.2PL play.PTCP at football

‘You played football’

As in Sicilian, referential *si* is accepted with repeated events in Abruzzese; 7/9 informants agreed that a *si* construction and a different construction were both acceptable. The context provided is a farmer talking about the journey he makes with his sheep every spring, and so there is an implied 1PL subject here. However, it is still not possible to include an overt subject pronoun to this construction (32b).

(32)

a. ɣuɲɲi pprimavera si kal əbbellə

every spring IMP go.down.3SG to.valley

‘Every spring one/we go down to the valley’

b. ɣuɲɲi pprimavera (*nu) tsi kal əbbellə

every spring (1PL) IMP go.down.3SG to.valley

‘Every spring one/we go down to the valley’

In sum, it appears that in Abruzzese *si* constructions are accepted in non-referential irrealis, non-referential repeated and referential indefinite contexts, but cannot have a referential 1PL interpretation. The table below represents the results so far with regards to the contexts in which particular impersonal types are accepted.
If we compare the table above with Table 3 in Chapter 4 (on Sicilian), it appears that *si* takes on the same domains on the impersonal hierarchy in both Sicilian and Abruzzese. Whilst this is the case, it is important to note that one crucial difference between Sicilian *si* and its counterpart in Abruzzese is that *si* is unnatural in Sicilian. The data presented in this thesis on Sicilian impersonal *si* does not necessarily represent a feature of the dialect, but rather, Italianized forms.

In section 5.3 I will discuss *nome*, with the aim of determining whether or not the acceptability of this feature is the same as that of the impersonal clitic *si*.

### 5.3 Nome

In this section, I will present the data on *nome*. I will begin by providing a brief account of the development of this form, before discussing its syntactic position in relation to other constituents in the clause. Whilst *nome* is an authentic form of the Tollese dialect, and is found only within Abruzzese dialects, it is interesting to note that *nome* does not exist in other Abruzzese dialects, such as the dialect of Fraine, which is located around 50 miles from Tollo. It is interesting that two dialects from the same region should exhibit such cross-linguistic variation.

*Nome* developed from the Late Latin form *HOMO*, and has the counterparts *dome*, *ome* and *anne* in some, but not all, of the Abruzzese dialects. In Tollese, *anne* exists only as a 3PL auxiliary, whilst forms *ome* and *dome* are considered to be old-fashioned and are used by very few speakers. The Latin word *HOMO* meant ‘a human being’, as opposed to *vir*, which was the form for ‘man’.
The derivation from Latin HOMO to the forms *ome, dome* and *nome* is plausible, whilst there does not appear to be any particular explanation for the derivation to *anne*. The example below is based on the derivation by Giammarco (1979:59).

(33)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{[IL] LU HOMO} & \rightarrow \text{lomo} \rightarrow \text{domo} \rightarrow \text{dom} + \emptyset \\
\text{[IL] LU HOMO} & \rightarrow \text{lomo} \rightarrow \text{nomo} \rightarrow \text{nom} + \emptyset 
\end{align*}
\]

Since the Tollese informants considered *anne* to be ungrammatical with present tense verb forms and only provided examples of *anne* which are unambiguously to be construed as the third person plural form of the auxiliary ‘have’ in the perfect (34) it seems that *anne* is not as marker of impersonality in Tollese, although it could still act as a third person plural impersonal feature.

(34) *Anne fatte*

*anne do.PTCP*

‘They have done’

Informants specifically noted that forms such as (35a) which is a construction with *anne* in the perfect is slightly Italianized and sound more natural and authentic when constructed with *nome* in the Tollese dialect (35b).

(35)

a. *La torta l’ ann già magnit*

the cake SCL have.3SG already eat.PTCP

‘The cake, they’ve already eaten it’

b. *La torta l’ a nome già magnit*

the cake SCL have.3SG *nome* already eat.PTCP

‘The cake, they’ve already eaten it’
The derivation pathway in (33) also provides an explanation as to why the forms *dome* and *l’ome* appear to be virtually absent from modern Tollese, although very elderly speakers provided sporadic evidence of it, which can be seen in example (36). Both *dome* and *nome* can be used in the same context here. *Dome* is an older form, whilst *nome* is much more prevalent in the modern Tollese dialect.

(36)

a. \( M \quad a \quad \text{dome} \quad \text{butfita} \)

\( \text{OCL.1SG} \ \text{have.3SG} \ \text{dome} \ \text{fail.PTCP} \)

‘They have failed me’

b. \( M' \quad a \quad \text{nome} \quad \text{butfita} \)

\( \text{OCL.1SG} \ \text{have.3SG} \ \text{nome} \ \text{fail.PTCP} \)

‘They have failed me’

Old Italian *omo* was a noun phrase meaning ‘the human being’ and could be pronounced both as *uomo* and *omo*. This is another outcome of the Latin HOMO (D’Alessandro & Alexiadou 1996:195). In Egerland’s (2003) work on the syntax of *uomo* in Old Tuscan, the following pathway of diachronic development of HOMO-indefinites is suggested (37).

(37)

1. A lexical DP that is kind-denoting under the scope of a generic operator >
2. A nominal generic indefinite expression that is not kind-denoting >
3. A nominal existential indefinite expression that may appear in episodic contexts

(Egerland 2003)
Egerland (2003) questions to what extent the Old Italian *uomo* actually grammaticalised with respect to this pathway and states that *uomo/omo/uom/om/on* in 13\textsuperscript{th} and 14\textsuperscript{th} century only reached stage 2 of the pathway. Forms such as *omo* were not accepted in the Tollese dialect and are considered by speakers to be old fashioned.

5.3.1 The syntax of *nome*

The position of *nome* is particularly interesting. In simple tenses, *nome* must precede the main verb.

(38)

a. *Nome* arriva *dumen*

   *nome* arrive.3SG tomorrow

   ‘They will arrive tomorrow’

b. *Dumen* arriva *nome*

   tomorrow arrive.3SG *nome*

   ‘They will arrive tomorrow’

c. *Lo* *nome* fa

   OCL *nome* do.3SG

   ‘They do it/one does it’

d. *Lo* fa *nome*

   OCL do.3SG *nome*

   ‘They do it/one does it’

e. *Nome* lo fa

   *nome* OCL do.3SG

   ‘They do it/one does it’
Whilst in simple tenses, *nome* cannot be separated from the main verb, this is not the case in periphrastic tenses where it can be separated from the main verb, for example by an adverb.

(39)

a. *A nome* magnitœ

have.3SG nome eat.PTCP

‘They have eaten/One has eaten’

b. *L’ a nome* già magnitœ

OCL have.3SG nome already eat.PTCP

‘They have already eaten it/one has already eaten it’

c. *Nome fa sempre le stesse cose*

nome do always the same things

‘They always do the same things/One always does the same things’

d. *Nome sempre fa le stesse cose*

nome always do the same things

‘They always do the same things/One always does the same things’

Despite this, *nome* immediately follows the auxiliary in the perfect tense and cannot be separated from it (40).

(40)

a. *L’ a già nome magnitœ*

OCL have.3SG already nome eat.PTCP.PL

‘They have already eaten it/One has already eaten it’

b. *L’ a sempre nome dittœ*

OCL have.3SG always nome say.PTCP.PL

‘They have always said it/one has always said it’
c. L’a nome già magnità
   OCL have.3SG nome already eat.PTCP.PL
   ‘They have already eaten it/One has already eaten it’

d. L’a nome sempre dittò
   OCL have.3SG nome always say.PTCP.PL
   ‘They have always said it/one has always said it’

In Tollese, it is possible for nome to occur with negation (41a). Unlike tonic subject pronouns in Standard Italian (41b), nome rests between the auxiliary and the past participle, and does not precede the negator.

(41)
   a. Ne l’a nome atfis appošt
      NEG it have.3SG nome kill.PTCP on-purpose Tollese
      ‘They didn’t kill him on purpose’
   b. Lui non ha mai ucciso nessuno
      3SG NEG have.3SG never kill.PTCP no-one Standard Italian
      ‘He has never killed anyone’

In addition, nome cannot stand alone as a response to a question (42), suggesting that nome is a subject clitic, like impersonal si, rather than a tonic subject, such as Italian lui or Italian/Sicilian/Abruzzese uno/unu.

(42)
   a. Chi ha urlato ? *Nome / Nefun
      who have.3SG shout.PTCP ? *Nome/Noone Tollese
      ‘Who shouted? Nome/No one’
b. *Chi ha urlato? *Nome/Isso

who have.3SG shout ? *Nome/They did

‘Who shouted? They did’

In light of the above findings, I suggest that nome is a subject clitic, which must occur in the final position in the clitic cluster, preceding the lexical verb.

(43) Tollese
a. *Non nome comprò du

QNT nome buy two

‘They/one buys two of them’

b. *Si nome sposò di domenica

REFL nome marry of Sunday

‘One gets married on Sunday’

c. Ts’ a nome more

REFL have.3SG nome die.PTCP

‘People have died’

Interestingly, when nome is dative, it appears to require the addition of ji (in bold in example 44). This example is significant, as we can see the distribution of case, person and number features in the various clitics of the cluster.

(44) *Ji nome piafe ji a lu t'cinema

DAT nome like.3SG go.INF to the cinema

‘They/people like going to the cinema’
In copular constructions, *nome* occurs before the conjugated *essere* (45a) which appears strange since it follows the perfect auxiliary. This could however be because *essere* is treated like the main verb in this construction and therefore *nome* precedes it as it usually would with a main verb (45b).

(45)
\begin{itemize}
  \item a. *Nome è religiosa*
  \item b. *Nome fa sempre le stesse cose*
\end{itemize}

‘People are religious’

‘People always do the same things’

To conclude, *nome* is an impersonal clitic, which, in the presence of other preverbal clitics, occurs at the end of the clitic cluster, after the negation, object clitics, and the perfect auxiliary. *Nome* does not spell out non-nominative case, as suggested by the obligatory occurrence of dative *ji* in impersonal constructions with ‘like’ (cf. 44). As testified by the past participle (cf 40), number is always plural with *nome*; *nome* has number but not case. This discussion will be developed in Chapter 7.

5.3.2 *Nome* as a Man impersonal

Impersonal pronouns deriving from ‘man’ are widespread in the languages of Europe. According to Gast & van de Auwera (2013), the term ‘man-impersonals’ is used to refer to an impersonal construction which denotes an unidentified human subject expressed by a word etymologically related to human or man. They regard man pronouns, which includes French *on* and German *man* as pronouns that are used to fill an argument position with a variable ranging over human referents without establishing a referential link to an entity from the universe of discourse. Gast & van de Auwera (2013) claim that *man*-pronouns tend to develop along the following pathway:
1. Species – generic (eg Latin HOMO) > 
2. Human – non referential, indefinite (Non veridical) > 
3. Human – referential, indefinite (veridical) > 
4. Human – referential, definite (eg 1PL) >

(Gast & van de Auwer 2013:9)

An example of species generic is found in the Latin example (47) below.

(47) Non solo in pane vivit homo

not only in bread lives man Latin

‘Man does not live on bread alone’

(Ramat & Sanso 2007:100)

Human non-referential indefinite man impersonals are illustrated in the Old Italian and Tollese examples in (48a) and (48b) respectively. As explained by Gast & van der Auwera (2013:9), non-veridical refers to the fact that the existence of an individual to which the relevant predication applies is not implied.

(48)

a. Cuando uomo trova la donolla nella via

when man finds the weasel on the way Old Italian

‘When one finds a weasel on one’s way’

b. Kwandə nomə fia male, (nomə) fia a la kasa

when nome be ill, (nome) be to the house Tollese

‘When one is ill, one stays at home’
Human referential indefinite can also be spelled out by *nome* in Tollese, as can be seen in example (49) below. This is veridical, in that the existence of an individual is implied.

(49)  $L'$ a nome atfis

OCL have.3SG nome kill.PTCP

‘They have killed him (there is someone who has killed him)’

As we will see from the data discussed below, *nome* follows this pathway to a certain extent as it stems from the Latin HOMO, can be used in human non-referential indefinite contexts and also human referential indefinite contexts, but whilst *si* appears to have reached the referential definite state of the process in Abruzzese and Tuscany, *nome* has not and cannot take a first person plural meaning.

With regards to the second stage of the pathway, Tollese shows evidence of *nome* in human non-referential indefinite contexts, as in example (50a-b) below.

(50)

a. Nome magnə lu pefə

nome eat the fish

‘People eat fish’

b. In queʃtə paesə nome è religiosə

in this town nome be.3SG religious

‘In this town people are religious’

In Tollese, *nome* can also have a human referential indefinite meaning (stage 3 of the pathway in 46). In these instances, we are no longer looking at a non-referential reading which would translate as ‘people’, and we have some idea of what group or kind of people *nome* may refer to. In example (51a) below, we can assume
that *nome* refers to a group of runners, and in example (51b) we can assume that *nome* refers to the examiners of a test. This use of man-impersonals has also been referred to as ‘collective’ and ‘corporate’ (Gaast & van der Auwera 2013:12)

(51) Tollesse

a. *A nome kɔrs 26 km oggi*
   
   have.3SG *nome* run.PTCP 26km today
   
   ‘One/they have run 26 km today’

b. *M’ a nome butfitɔ*
   
   OCL have.3SG *nome* fail.PTCP
   
   ‘They have failed me (at an exam)’

Whilst D’Alessandro & Alexiadou (1996) state that *nome* is obligatory in sentences with an indefinite subject, Tollesse also uses *si* constructions for these types of constructions, as in example (52) below. Example (52c) is ungrammatical since agreement between the verb and the object is considered to be too Italianized.

(52)

a. *Si fa li lavɔrɔ*
   
   SI do.3SG the.PL work.PL
   
   ‘One does the work’

b. *Si ledʒə li librə bɔnɔ*
   
   SI read.3SG the.PL books good.PL
   
   ‘One reads good books’

c. *Si ledʒɔnɔ li librə bɔnɔ*
   
   SI read.3PL the.PL books good.PL
   
   ‘One reads good books’
With regards to stage 4 of the impersonal development pathway in (46), the data show that *nome* can be referential in Tollese, but only with a third person plural meaning, unlike the Tuscan referential *si*, which can take a first person plural meaning. Indeed, our findings clearly indicate that *nome* could not be used in Tollese with a referential meaning ‘we’, hence (53a) is ungrammatical, and was replaced with constructions such as the one in (53b).

(53)

a. *Nome a detfis di ji a lu tfinemə*

*nome* have.3SG decide.PTCP of go.INF to the cinema

‘One has decided to go to the cinema’ (intended meaning: ‘we’)

b. *Nu samə detfis di ji a lu tfinemə*

1PL be.1PL decide.PTCP of go.INF to the cinema

‘We have decided to go to the cinema’

Examples of *nome* with a referential third person plural meaning are provided below in (54a-b).

(54)

a. *A nome arrivə dumemə*

has.3SG *nome* arrive.3SG tomorrow

‘They will arrive tomorrow’

b. *Ji nome piaf ji a lu tfinema*

DAT *nome* like.3SG go.INF to the cinema

‘They like going to the cinema’ (intended meaning: ‘that group of people’)

As we can see if we compare (55) with (54b) above, regardless of whether *nome* refers to non-referential ‘people’ or a referential ‘they’, the construction does
not change, and the exact function of *nome* is determined by the context and an aforementioned discourse referent.

(55) *Ji nome piaʃ ji a lu tʃinema (quel gruppo lì)*

DAT *nome* like.3SG go.INF to the cinema (that group there)

‘People (non-referential) like going to the cinema’

As mentioned by Gast & van de Auwer (2013:5) one striking feature of *man*- impersonals is that they do not introduce new discourse referents. *Man* cannot be interpreted as ‘him’. Two instances of *man* co-occurring in a sentence are interpreted as instantiations of the same human argument variable (56).

(56) *Kwandə nome bia male nome bia a la kasə*

when *nome* stay.3SG ill , *nome* be to the house

‘When *one* is ill, *one* stays at home’

We can now extend Table 2 to reflect the data on *nome*:

**Table 3. Summary of impersonals in Abruzzese.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Referential definite 1PL</th>
<th>Referential definite</th>
<th>Referential indefinite</th>
<th>Non-referential repeated</th>
<th>Non-referential irrealis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Si</em></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Uno</em></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person plural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nome</em></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4 Impersonals in Tollese and the Hierarchy of Impersonals

As in the previous chapter on Sicilian, I will now present the hierarchy of impersonals, which are marked to represent the contexts available to each impersonal type identified in Abruzzese.

**Hierarchy of impersonals: Abruzzese si impersonals:**

i) Personal referential definite > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite > iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

**Hierarchy of impersonals: Abruzzese uno:**

i) Personal referential definite > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite > iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

**Hierarchy of impersonals: Abruzzese nome:**

i) Personal referential definite > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite > iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

This hierarchy enables us to recognise the similarity between the contexts in which Tollese employs both nome and impersonal si. Tollese and Sicilian si also appear to occur in the same contexts according to this hierarchy, as do Tollese and Sicilian uno/unu. In the chapter that follows, I will present the Tuscan data, before constructing a detailed cross-linguistic analysis between all three dialects.
Chapter 6. Passives and impersonals in Tuscan

This chapter is organised as follows. In section 6.1 I will provide an analysis of passive constructions in Tuscany, which show some similarities to the Sicilian and Abruzzese passive in terms of their distribution across verb and argument classes, relating to the Transitivity Hierarchy (Hopper & Thompson 1980), although not to the same extent. I will show that whilst the verbs which rank the highest on the transitivity scale are more likely to be passivized than those which rank lower on the transitivity scale, the Tuscan passive does not show as much sensitivity to transitivity as the Sicilian passive. As in the two previous chapters, the section on the Tuscan passive will follow the structure of the transitivity scale, working through verbs which are highest in transitivity down to those which rank the lowest.

In section 6.2 I will present an analysis of impersonals in Tuscan, with a subsection focusing on the referential *si* construction, which is unique of this dialect. This construction regularly figures in Tuscan instead of, and alongside, the non-impersonal first person plural construction. I will demonstrate that the Tuscan referential *si* construction in the perfect is grammatical only with transitive and unergative verbs but not with unaccusatives. This is an interesting and original finding which, to my knowledge, has not yet been presented in other work on the Tuscan dialects. In section (6.2.3), I propose an explanation for this split.

In section 6.3 I capture the Tuscan data in terms of the proposed hierarchy of impersonals, commenting on the microvariation of impersonal constructions documented in Tuscan, Sicilian and Abruzzese, based on a set of feature systems for each type of impersonal. By creating this hierarchy, I attempt to refine existing hierarchies of impersonality and of referentiality (Siewierska 2004:149), and to provide a more fine grained hierarchy on the basis of the observation of dialect microvariation. Unless otherwise specified, the data and examples presented in this essay are taken from data collected *in loco* in Tuscany.

6.1 Analysis of passives in Tuscan dialects

As I did previously, I begin this chapter by showing the table that lists the verbs analysed and their entailments that are relevant to transitivity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ammazzare</th>
<th>Ammazzare per sbaglio</th>
<th>Distruggere</th>
<th>Arrestare</th>
<th>Cucinare</th>
<th>Sapere</th>
<th>Conoscere</th>
<th>Piacere</th>
<th>Temere</th>
<th>Pesare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘to kill’</td>
<td>‘to kill by mistake’</td>
<td>‘to destroy’</td>
<td>‘to arrest’</td>
<td>‘to cook’</td>
<td>‘to know’</td>
<td>‘to know’</td>
<td>‘to like’</td>
<td>‘to fear’</td>
<td>‘to weigh’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinesis</th>
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<th>Action</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Non action</th>
<th>Non action</th>
<th>Non action</th>
<th>Non action</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
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<th>Telic</th>
<th>Telic</th>
<th>Telic</th>
<th>Atelic</th>
<th>Atelic</th>
<th>Atelic</th>
<th>Atelic</th>
<th>Atelic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Punctuality</th>
<th>Punctual</th>
<th>Punctual</th>
<th>Punctual</th>
<th>Punctual</th>
<th>Non punctual</th>
<th>Non punctual</th>
<th>Non punctual</th>
<th>Non punctual</th>
<th>Non punctual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volitionality</th>
<th>Volitional</th>
<th>Non volitional</th>
<th>Non volitional</th>
<th>Volitional</th>
<th>Not necessarily volitional</th>
<th>Non volitional</th>
<th>Non volitional</th>
<th>Non volitional</th>
<th>Non volitional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmation</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
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<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
<th>Realis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>High in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
<td>Low in potency (A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affectedness of O</td>
<td>O totally affected</td>
<td>O totally affected</td>
<td>O totally affected</td>
<td>O partially or totally affected</td>
<td>O not affected</td>
<td>O not affected</td>
<td>O not affected</td>
<td>O does not exist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuation of O</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 1 of the questionnaire asks informants to choose between active and a passive construction with the verb *ammazzare* ‘to kill’ which ranks at the top of the transitivity hierarchy, since the action is high in volition, it is telic, punctual and realis, and the object is totally affected. The active construction in (1a) was chosen by 8/9 informants, whilst the passive construction in (1b) was chosen by only 1/9 informants. Importantly, however, all informants deemed the passive structure to be a grammatical construction in their dialect.

(1)

a. *L’ hanno ammazzato*

OCL have.3PL kill.PTCP

‘They have killed him’

b. *È stato amazzato*

be.3SG be.PTCP kill.PTCP

‘He has been killed’

The verb ‘arrest’, which is another verb which is high in transitivity, provided similar results, with 9/9 informants choosing the active (2a) and 0/9 choosing the passive (2b), although all informants accepted (2b) as a grammatical construction.

(2)

a. *Un ladro mi ha strappato la borsa e i carabinieri l’ hanno arrestato*

a thief OCL have.3SG steal.PTCP the bag and the police

l’ have.3PL arrest.PTCP

‘A thief stole my bag and the police arrested him’
b. Un ladro mi ha strappato la borsa ed è stato arrestato dai carabinieri

‘A thief stole my bag and was arrested by the police’

The examples in (3a) and (3b) below show the syntax-semantics linking of an active and a passive construction respectively. As discussed in section 2.6, in the semantics-syntax linking of a passive, the assignment of the macroroles actor and undergoer remain the same, but the default choice of macrorole for subject is overridden and the undergoer is mapped to the grammatical subject. In preferring the active to the passive, speakers demonstrate a preference for the default subject choice in accusative alignment.
a. i carabinieri hanno arrestato il ladro
Il ladro è stato arrestato dai carabinieri

[do' (i carabinieri, [arrest' (i carabinieri, il ladro)]) & BECOME arrested' (il ladro)]

The verb ‘destroy’, which is also high in transitivity, was tested with a [-human] actor. Whilst the active was still preferred, 3/9 informants chose a passive. If we compare this with the examples in (1) and (2) which both involve verbs which are high in transitivity but with [+human] actor and undergoer, this result is interesting. When further comparing this result with the results from Abruzzese and Sicilian, it appears that animacy plays a role in the choice between active and passive voice. Since the informants from all three dialects were presented with the same questionnaire, the table below shows how many informants from each dialect chose
a passive with the verb destroy and [-human] actor and compares this with the number of informants choosing a passive with two other highly transitive verbs which have [+human] actor and undergoer. It appears that, when the actor is inanimate, this results in a higher tolerance of the passive in all three dialects. The fact that the passive is more readily admitted with inanimate actors suggests that the thematic role of the actor is relevant to its demotion and to the mapping of undergoer to subject. Inanimate actors are effectors (Van Valin and Wilkins 1996). This thematic role is lower than agent on a thematic hierarchy that has volitional agents at the highest end and patients at the lowest end. In the last analysis, the passive turns out to be acceptable when the actor is not volitional and agentive. This, in turn, is evidence in support of an analysis of the passive at the interface of semantics and syntax, as opposed to a purely syntactic analysis of voice.

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>Tuscan</th>
<th>Abruzzese</th>
<th>Sicilian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destroy [-human actor]</td>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>3/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kill [+human actor]</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>0/9</td>
<td>1/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrest [+human actor]</td>
<td>0/9</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>2/7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4)

a. *Il vento ha distrutto la casa*

′The wind has destroyed the house′

b. *La casa è stata distrutta dal vento*

′The house was destroyed by the wind′
The verb ‘cook’ ranks slightly lower on the transitivity hierarchy than ‘kill’, ‘arrest’ and ‘destroy’, since the actor is slightly lower in potency and the undergoer may be affected to various degrees (see discussion in 5.1). The active structure was chosen by 2/9 informants (5a), while a further 2/9 informants chose the passive structure (5b). The preferred construction was one with left-dislocation (5c), which was chosen by 5/9 informants. All informants agreed that the passive construction in (5b) is grammatical.

(5)

a. Maria ha cucinato la pasta
   Maria have.3SG cook.PTCP the pasta
   ‘Maria has cooked the pasta’

b. La pasta è stata cucinata da Maria
   the pasta be.3SG be.PTCP cook.PTCP by Maria
   ‘The pasta was cooked by Maria’

c. La pasta l’ ha cucinata Maria
   the pasta OCL have.3SG cook.PTCP Maria
   ‘Maria cooked the pasta’

We can also rank verbs as higher or lower on the transitivity scale by measuring the affectedness of the undergoer. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, with *cucinare* ‘to cook’, it is possible that the undergoer *la pasta* may not be totally affected by the act of cooking, as in example (6a) in which it is not cooked properly and is too hard. The verb *cucinare* can be compared with a verb such as *distruggere* ‘to destroy’ (see 6b), the undergoer of which must be totally affected. In
example (6b) the undergoer la casa cannot be both destroyed and safe. The tests in (6) confirm that the verb distruggere ranks higher on the transitivity scale than the verb cucinare.

(6)

a. *La pasta è stata cucinata da Maria, ma
the pasta be.3SG be.PTCP cook.PTCP by Maria but
è rimasta cruda
be.3SG remain.PTCP uncooked
‘The pasta was cooked by Maria but was uncooked’

b. *La casa è stata distrutta dal vento ma è
the house be.3SG be.PTCP destroy.PTCP by the wind but be.3SG
rimasta sana
remain.PTCP safe
‘*The house was destroyed by the wind but it was safe’

With the verb ‘visit’, 3/9 informants chose the passive structure (7a), 4/9 chose the active structure (7b) and 2/9 offered a construction with left dislocation as a suggested response (7c). The context for this question was that a priest was telling this information to a group of tourists, which may be the reason for this result, since the context is more formal and the language used would be closer to Standard Italian.

(7)

a. La chiesa è stata visitata da 200 persone quest’anno
the church be.3SG be.PTCP visit.PTCP by 200 people this year
‘The church was visited by 200 people this year’
b. 200 persone hanno visitato la chiesa quest’anno

200 people have.3PL visit.PTCP the church this year

‘200 people have visited the church this year’

c. La chiesa l’ hanno visitata 200 persone quest’anno

the church OCL have.3PL visit.PTCP 200 people this year

‘The church, 200 people visited it this year’

In Sicilian, the use of the passive follows the Transitivity Hierarchy to a greater extent than Tuscan, and is sensitive to any loss in transitivity of the verb. In Tuscan we do not see the same level of sensitivity among verbs which are high in transitivity. For example, in Sicilian there is a complete rejection of the passive when moving from ‘kill’ to ‘kill by mistake’. In Tuscan, per sbaglio ‘by mistake’ has no effect on passive and 3/9 informants chose the passive construction in (8b) over the active construction (8a). Interestingly, in Tuscan the verb ammazzare ‘to murder’ can combine with expressions indicating lack of volitionality (per sbaglio ‘by mistake’), whereas in the other dialects, as in Standard Italian, this verb encodes agentivity, implying that the actor intended to carry out the action.

(8)

a. L’ hanno ammazzato per sbaglio

OCL have.3PL kill.PTCP for error

‘They have killed him by mistake’

b. È stato ammazzato per sbaglio

be.3SG be.PTCP kill.PTCP for error

‘He was killed by mistake’
The verb *sapere* ‘to know something’ is lower again in transitivity, since it implies an atelic state in which the object is not at all affected. In this case, all informants chose an active construction (9a). Left-dislocation was also added to the list of suggested responses by one informant (9b). The passive, on the other hand, is considered to be ungrammatical (9c).

(9)

a. *Tutti gli studenti sapevano la risposta*
   
   all the students know.PST.3PL the answer
   
   ‘All the students knew the answer’

b. *La risposta la sapevano tutti gli studenti*
   
   the answer OCL know.PST.3PL all the students
   
   ‘The answer, all the students knew it’

c. *La risposta è stata saputa da tutti gli studenti*
   
   the answer be.3SG be.PTCP know.PTCP by all the students
   
   ‘The answer was known by all of the students’

With the verb *conoscere* ‘to know someone’, 9/9 informants chose the active (10a) whilst the passive was considered to be ungrammatical by all informants (10b).

(10)

a. *Mario lo conosce*
   
   Mario OCL know.3SG
   
   ‘Mario knows him’

b. *È conosciuto da Mario*
   
   be.3SG know.PTCP by Mario
   
   ‘He is known by Mario’
Interestingly, the passive was even chosen with *correre* ‘to run’, albeit by only 2/9 informants. This finding is particularly interesting, given that, as was pointed out in previous chapters, the complement of ‘run’ does not have the semantic properties of an undergoer: specifically, it is not affected. The mapping of 26 *chilometri* to subject in (11a) suggests that it is assigned the macrorole undergoer in this case.

(11)

a. 26 *chilometri* sono stati *corsi* oggi dai giovani

26 kilometres be.3PL be.PTCP run.PTCP today by.the young

‘26 kilometres were run today by the young people’

b. *I* giovani hanno *corso* 26 *chilometri* oggi

the young have.3PL run.PTCP 26 kilometres today

‘The young people ran 26 kilometres today’

With psychological verbs such as ‘like’, 9/9 informants chose the active (12a), and stated that the passive with the verb ‘like’ was ungrammatical (12b). This also reflects the results from Sicilian and Abruzzese, which showed that the passive with low transitivity, psychological verbs is ungrammatical. Of course, in the case of *piacere*-type psychological verbs, there is reason to believe that the experiencer is not assigned a macrorole and the theme is the only macrorole (the undergoer), which makes this an intransitive construction. The rejection of passivization thus indicates that the passive of intransitives is not accepted in Tuscan.

(12)

a. *Piace* a tutti

like.3SG to everyone

‘Everyone likes him’
b. *È piaciuto da tutti

be.3SG like.PTCP by everyone

‘He is liked by everyone’

The passive was also rejected with the psychological verb *fear* (13a), which is clearly transitive, i.e., it takes two macroroles (its subject is nominative and it takes the perfect auxiliary *HABERE* ‘have’). The alternatives provided by informants were an active construction (13b) and an intransitive alternative (13c).

(13)

a. *È temuto da tutti

be.3SG fear.PTCP by everyone

‘He is feared by everyone’

b. Tutti lo temono

everyone OCL fear.3PL

‘Everyone fears him’

c. Fa *paura a tutti*

do.3SG fear at everyone

‘He scares everyone’

With the measure verb ‘weigh’, all informants chose an active and the passive was rejected completely. As was explained previously, measure verbs such as ‘cost’ and ‘weigh’ rank the lowest on the transitivity hierarchy (14).

(14)

a. *Il gatto pesa dieci chili*

the cat weigh.3SG ten kilos

‘The cat weighs 10 kilos’
b. *Dieci chili sono pesati dal gatto

ten kilos be.3PL weigh.PTCP by.the cat

‘10 kilos are weighed by the cat’

As for the role of grammatical person, with a first person undergoer, 9/9 informants chose the active voice (15a), over the passive (15b), but, interestingly, 4/9 informants chose the passive voice with a second person singular undergoer (15c), with only 5/9 informants choosing the active counterpart (15d).

(15)

a. M’ an bocciato

OCL have.3PL fail.PTCP

‘They have failed me’ (at exam)

b. Sono stato bocciato

be.1SG be.PTCP fail.PTCP

‘I have been failed’ (at exam)

c. Sei stato scelto per la gara di nuoto?

be.2SG be.PTCP choose.PTCP for the race of swimming

‘Were you chosen for the swimming race?’

d. Ti hanno scelto per la gara di nuoto?

OCL have.3PL choose.PTCP for the race of swimming

‘Did they choose you for the swimming race?’

As in Sicilian and Abruzzese, topic chains (Givòn 1994) enhanced the felicitousness of the passive in Tuscan. Informants were provided with an incomplete sentence which they were asked to complete by conjugating the suggested verb. The example in (16) illustrates a topic chain question from the questionnaire. The
example in (16b) shows a topic chain in which the informant has used a passive to complete the chain, whilst (16c) has been completed with an active construction. By choosing an active construction, speakers break the topic chain, whilst a passive construction continues it by maintaining the same topic (Givòn 1994:104). In this case, 3/9 informants chose a passive, for the second 5/9 chose a passive, and one informant used a construction with topicalization.

(16)

(a) Maria si è alzata, ha fatto colazione, si

Maria REFL be.3SG get-up.PTCP have.3SG do.PTCP breakfast REFL
è vestita, è uscita e _______ (colpire, un fulmine)
be.3SG dress.PTCP be.3SG go.out.PTCP and _______ hit.INF

‘Maria got up, had breakfast, got dressed, went out, and (hit, a lightening bolt)’

(b) Paolo si è alzato, ha fatto colazione,

Paolo REFL be.3SG get-up.PTCP have.3SG do.PTCP breakfast
è uscito ed è stato derubato da un ladro
be.3SG go-out.PTCP and be.3SG be.PTCP rob.PTCP by a thief

‘Paolo got up, had breakfast, went out, and was robbed by a thief’
c. Paolo si è alzato, si è lavato, ha fatto colazione, è uscito, e un ladro l’ha scippato

‘Paolo got up, got washed, had breakfast, went out and a thief robbed him’

From the data presented in this Chapter, it appears, as in Sicilian and Abruzzese, that the acceptability of the Tuscan passive reflects the verb’s position in the Transitivity Hierarchy; the lower a verb is on the Transitivity Hierarchy, the less likely it is to be accepted as grammatical when passivized. Despite the fact that the passive is deemed to be grammatical with verbs which are high in transitivity, Tuscan speakers have a clear preference for active constructions and for topicalization of the undergoer.

The table below provides a summary of the percentages of passives chosen in each of the three dialects, to enable cross dialectal comparison. Whilst all three dialects are sensitive to the Transitivity Hierarchy, the results of the table show that passives are less sensitive to the hierarchy in Tuscan than in Abruzzese and Sicilian. Sicilian is the dialect that accepts the passive the least.
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ammazzare</th>
<th>Ammazzare per sbaglio</th>
<th>Distruggere</th>
<th>Arrestare</th>
<th>Cucinare</th>
<th>Sapere</th>
<th>Conoscere</th>
<th>Correre</th>
<th>Piacere</th>
<th>Pesare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sicilian</td>
<td>1/7 (14.3%)</td>
<td>0/7 (0%)</td>
<td>3/7 (42.9%)</td>
<td>2/7 (28.6%)</td>
<td>0/7 (0%)</td>
<td>0/7 (0%)</td>
<td>0/7 (0%)</td>
<td>0/7 (0%)</td>
<td>0/7 (0%)</td>
<td>0/7 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzese</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>1/9 (11.1%)</td>
<td>5/9 (55.5%)</td>
<td>1/9 (11.1%)</td>
<td>1/9 (11.1%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscan</td>
<td>1/9 (11.1%)</td>
<td>3/9 (33.3%)</td>
<td>3/9 (33.3%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>2/9 (22.2%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>2/9 (22.2%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
<td>0/9 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall percentage of passives spontaneously chosen by speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sicilian</td>
<td>8.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzese</td>
<td>8.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscan</td>
<td>12.22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above demonstrates the overall percentages of passives chosen across all three dialects. Whilst percentages have little significance in the analysis of the data from each dialect, they are useful in this case to make a cross-linguistic comparison across all three dialects, particularly since there were slightly different numbers of informants in each dialect. It is evident from this data summary that the verb that encouraged the highest level acceptability of passivization is *distruggere*. As previously discussed, it appears that this is due to the inanimacy of the actor role. Overall the table shows that passives are chosen slightly more in Tuscan than in Sicilian and Abruzzese, with Sicilian being the dialect which is least likely to accept passive structures.

6.2 Analysis of impersonals in Tuscan dialects

Unlike Abruzzese and Sicilian, Tuscan exhibits *si* impersonal constructions which do not show person and number agreement with the post-verbal argument. In Abruzzese, we normally only see agreement on the past participle, via metaphony. The type of construction found in (17b) differs from the *si impersonale* and is sometimes referred to as a *si passivante* (passive *si* construction). Unlike the *si impersonale*, these constructions can be formed with either a singular or plural verb, agreeing in person and number with the post-verbal noun phrase (*libri usati* in (17b)). In section 5.1, we have seen that the subject of the analytic passive can be realised in a *by*-phrase. In *si*-passives, this is not the case: the actor is suppressed, i.e., it remains an unspecified human variable in semantics and cannot occur as an
overt noun phrase in the syntax. The constructions in (17a) and (17b) are both acceptable in Tuscan.

(17)  
   a. _Mi dispiace, qui non si vende libri usati_  
       DAT displease.3SG here NEG IMP sell.3SG book.MPL used.MPL  
       ‘I’m sorry, we don’t sell used books here’  
   b. _Mi dispiace, qui non si vendono libri usati_  
       DAT displease.3SG here NEG IMP sell.3PL books.MPL used.MPL  
       ‘I’m sorry, used books aren’t sold here’

The example in (18a) was chosen by 4/9 informants, as was the example in (18b) where the verb exhibits finite (person and number) agreement with the post-verbal noun phrase. Whilst adding a _by_-phrase to the construction in (18b) was ungrammatical to all informants, 1/9 informants added another construction to the list of those suggested (18c), which is an impersonal construction with a _by_-phrase, with the verb remaining in its third person singular form. In fairness, further research that took place after the initial set of interviews suggested that this structure was not accepted by all speakers. Accordingly, further research is necessary on this point.

(18)  
   a. _Si legge dei libri buoni_  
       IMP read.3SG of.the book.MPL good.MPL  
       ‘One reads good books’  
   b. _Si leggono dei libri buoni (*dagli studenti)_  
       IMP read.3PL of.the book.MPL good.MPL (*by.the students)  
       ‘Good books are read (*by the students)’
c. *Si legge dei buoni libri dagli studenti*

IMP read.3SG of.the good.MPL books.MPL by.the student.MPL

‘One reads good books by the students’

In constructions with a non-referential impersonal such as those found in (19a-c), 3/9 informants chose a *si* impersonal construction (19a) and 6/9 chose a construction with *la gente* ‘people’ (19b). The third person plural form with an impersonal meaning was rejected by all informants in this context, but was not considered to be ungrammatical (19c).

(19)

a. *La domenica non si lavora*

the Sunday NEG IMP work.3SG

‘On Sunday people don’t work’

b. *La domenica la gente non lavora*

the Sunday the people NEG work.3SG

‘On Sunday people don’t work’

c. #*La domenica non lavorano*

the Sunday NEG work.3PL

‘On Sunday they don’t work’

(# = rejected but not ungrammatical)

In constructions with a referential indefinite impersonal, the set of referents is indefinite yet restricted to a certain group of people. Thus, in (20a) and (20b), we can deduce from the context that the implied argument of these constructions is a group of construction workers or builders. The informants chose *si* constructions with and
without agreement equally. The third person plural form with a referential indefinite meaning was rejected by all informants (20c).

(20)  
a. *Domani si svolgerà i lavori*  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tomorrow} & \quad \text{IMP carry.out.3SG the.MPL work.MPL} \\
\text{‘Tomorrow they will carry out the building work’}
\end{align*}
\]
b. *Domani si svolgeranno i lavori*  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tomorrow} & \quad \text{IMP carry.out.3PL the.MPL work.MPL} \\
\text{‘Tomorrow the building work will be carried out’}
\end{align*}
\]
c. *Domani svolgeranno i lavori*  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tomorrow} & \quad \text{FUT.3PL carry.out the.MPL work.MPL} \\
\text{‘Tomorrow they will carry out the building work’}
\end{align*}
\]

*Si* impersonal constructions were also deemed to be acceptable to describe repeated events, as in (21) below. This type of construction can be used with a referential first person plural reading (‘we go’), or with a non-referential reading (‘people go’). As was explained earlier, I take the term ‘referential’ to mean that there is an existing set of referents and definite refers to the specificity or identifiability of these referents. This set of referents can be definite or indefinite.

(21) *Ogni primavera si scende a valle*  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{each spring} & \quad \text{IMP go.down.3SG to valley} \\
\text{‘Every spring one goes down to the valley’}
\end{align*}
\]

*Si* is interchangeable with *uno* in irrealis contexts in Tuscan. One main difference between the two, which was also noted in Sicilian and Abruzzese is that,
where *si* impersonal constructions are used, the *si* must occur in both the main and subordinate clause (22a). This is not the case with constructions with *uno*, and it is not required to repeat it in the subordinate clause (22b).

(22)

a. Se *si* mangia di sera *si* ingrassa di più

if IMP eat.3SG of evening IMP put.on.weight.3SG of more

‘If one eats in the evening one puts more weight on’
b. Se *uno* mangia di sera ingrassa di più

if *uno* eat.3SG of evening put.on.weight.3SG of more

‘If one eats in the evening, he puts on more weight’

An alternative to the *si* construction (23a) and constructions with *uno* (23b) is the second person singular form of the verb, which speakers consider to be more direct than impersonal forms (23c).

(23)

a. È *difficile* trovare lavoro in Inghilterra se *non* *si* conosce

be.3SG difficult find.INF work in England if NEG IMP know.3SG

l’ inglese

the English

‘It is difficult to find work in England if one doesn’t speak English’
b. È *difficile* trovare lavoro in Inghilterra se *uno* *non* conosce

be.3SG difficult find.INF work in England if *uno* NEG know.3SG

l’ inglese

the English

‘It is difficult to find work in England if one doesn’t know English’
c. È difficile trovare lavoro in Inghilterra se non conosci l’inglese

‘It is difficult to find work in England if you don’t know English’

As in Sicilian and Abruzzese, si impersonals in Tuscan do not extend to non-human implied arguments and the constructions in (24a) were rejected by 9/9 informants. 8/9 informants stated that these constructions were completely ungrammatical, whilst one informant explained that in some small villages of Tuscany, these constructions may be acceptable. This requires further research. ¹

(24)

a. *Si luccica a meraviglia

IMP shine.3SG at wonderful

‘One shines beautifully’

b. Luccicano a meraviglia

shine.3PL at wonderful

‘They shine beautifully’

c. *In questa zona ci sono tanti cani, s’abbaia tutta la notte

in this town CL be.3PL many dogs IMP bark.3SG all the night

‘In this town there are many dogs, one barks all night’

d. In questa zona ci sono tanti cani, abbaiano tutta la notte

in this town CL be.3PL many dogs bark.3PL all the night

‘In this town there are many dogs, they bark all night’

¹ This observation requires further investigation. If it is the case that, in a dialect of Tuscany, the si construction can have a non-human or inanimate subject, this would suggest that in that dialect si has become a third person subject clitic in non-impersonal constructions.
6.2.1 Referential *si*

A property of Tuscan *si* which is of particular interest is the referential *si* impersonal with a first person plural meaning. The possibility of a first person plural interpretation is a common finding in impersonal constructions; the French *on* may be used instead of *nous* and the Portuguese *a gente* may be used instead of *nos*. In Tuscan, the first person plural is interchangeable with the *si* impersonal construction with a first person plural interpretation. As discussed in Lepschy and Lepschy (1977), the impersonal construction with *si* may be used with the value of the first person plural, which is a usage that has a ‘Tuscan flavour’. This type of *si* construction would at first seem to be structurally indistinguishable from impersonal *si* constructions. However, in-depth investigation indicates that referential *si* can be preceded by the personal pronoun *noi* ‘we’. This is clear evidence that in Tuscan *si* is a subject clitic, although it is a clitic with a +human restriction. These *si* constructions are referential since, unlike the *si* impersonal mentioned above which have a referential indefinite subject, they refer to a definite set of referents which can be identified in the universe of discourse and have an implied first person plural subject. The clitic *si* can then be tested in terms of its compatibility with the pronoun *noi*; the first person plural *si* is compatible with *noi* while non-referential *si* is not. According to Ramat and Sansò (2011), in texts from the 14th and 15th century, the *si* construction alternates with a 1PL pronoun and a 1PL verb form, both with the interpretation ‘we’. Ramat & Sansò use this early occurrence of inclusive *si* constructions as an argument in favour of their hypothesis that the reinterpretation of *si* as a marker of generic human agency occurs at an earlier point in time than assumed by Salvi (2008), since the impersonal/generic reading is the precondition for an inclusive interpretation. The development of the impersonal *si* into a first person plural may be due to the fact that both interpretations refer to groups of people which vary in size and composition according to the context, and this semantic overlap is the reason why languages often use impersonal structures for 1PL referentiality. It appears that this type of construction is not restricted to Italo-Romance dialects; when discussing the Innu language, which is part of the Algic language family, Siewerska (2011) explains that speakers often draw on unspecified actor constructions to leave a logical ‘we’ subject as topical while focusing on the
event under construction. Whilst in *si* impersonal constructions it is possible for the verb to agree in number with the post-verbal noun phrase, in referential *si* constructions, the verb remains in the default 3SG form and does not display any agreement. In Tuscan, referential *si* constructions can occur with or without the pronoun *noi* ‘we’. The example below shows a Tuscan referential *si* construction with the overt first person plural pronoun *noi* (25a), contrasted with a non-impersonal first person plural form. Where *si* occurs in a referential first person plural construction rather than an impersonal one, I have chosen to gloss it as SI rather than IMP, since it is no longer impersonal. It is possible that first person plural referential *si* is a subject clitic, since the co-occurrence with a tonic subject pronoun is a property of subject clitics in the Northern Italian dialects (Benincà 1983, Rizzi 1986). In addition, it could be argued that *si* no longer has the well-known features of impersonality, i.e., the reference to a human variable. However, we will see below that Tuscan referential *si* can still be argued to be impersonal in terms of feature deficiency.

(25)

a. *(Noi) si va al cinema*  
   1PL SI go.3SG to-the cinema  
   ‘We go to the cinema’

b. *Noi andiamo al cinema*  
   1PL go.1PL to-the cinema  
   ‘We go to the cinema’

### 6.2.2 Referential *si* and the Unaccusativity Hypothesis

The data collected in Tuscany show that in simple tenses the 1PL referential *si* impersonal can be used with all classes of verbs, whilst in the perfect there is a split, in that it can only occur with transitive and unergative verbs, but not with unaccusatives (i.e. verbs which would usually take *essere* and would exhibit past
participle agreement in gender and number with the subject). To the best of my knowledge, this has not been analysed/presented before and none of the descriptive grammars of Tuscan appear to mention this.

Perlmutter (1978) proposed that the class of intransitive verbs is not homogenous but rather that it can be divided into two subclasses: unaccusatives and unergatives. This distinction has played a crucial role in accounting for a wide variety of linguistic phenomena. Perlmutter (1978) suggests that the category of unergatives include predicates describing willed or volitional acts (speak, kill, cry, dance) and certain involuntary bodily processes (cough, sneeze, hiccough, breathe). In the case of unergative verbs, the subject of the verb is an agent or an effector, and it is assigned the macrorole actor. The category of unaccusative verbs includes predicates expressed by adjectives such as colours, shapes and weights, predicates whose subject is semantically a patient (fall, dry, boil), predicates of existing and happening, involuntary emission of stimuli that affects the senses (glow, sparkle, clink), aspectual predicates (start, stop, continue) and duratives (last, remain, survive). In the case of unaccusative verbs, the subject is an experiencer, theme or patient and it is assigned the macrorole undergoer. Many have debated the semantic or syntactic nature of the split. The description of the split given above by Perlmutter (1978) is a semantic distinction, which is based on the different semantic roles of the subjects. However, the framework used by Perlmutter is a syntactic one (Relational Grammar) and the main claim is that, while the subjects of unergatives are subjects in underlying and surface structures, those of unaccusatives are underlying objects.

In Relational Grammar, subjects of unergatives are analysed as subjects from the start whilst those of unaccusatives are analysed as originally being objects and later advancing to subject position (Kuno & Takami 2004:18). In Government and Binding Theory, it is assumed that the subjects of unergatives take the specifier position of IP at D- and S- structure (26a), while those of unaccusative verbs take the direct object position at D- structure and move to the specifier position of IP at S-structure (26b).
Most of the original research on unaccusativity surrounded the syntactic aspects of unaccusativity. The paper by Perlmutter in (1978) was the first fully-fledged account of unaccusativity, and the paper in which the Unaccusativity Hypothesis was formulated. It was the first attempt at determining a set of semantically defined verb classes that are expected to show unergative or unaccusative behaviour. A very thorough attempt at developing a semantically
motivated approach to the Unaccusativity Hypothesis is found in Van Valin (1990). Van Valin (1990) defends a semantic rationale of Unaccusativity Hypothesis by observing that each language is parameterized in terms of whether unaccusatives are sensitive to agency or to lexical-aspectual properties inherent to the verb. For example, in Italian the semantic basis for the split in intransitivity is the inherent lexical aspect of verbs (Aktionsart) whilst in Achenese it is agentivity or volitionality.

Whilst most of the work on split intransitivity has focused on either the syntactic or semantic nature of the split, The Unaccusative Hypothesis has also been challenged, showing inconsistencies in the alignment between the unaccusative diagnostics of split intransitivity, known as unaccusativity mismatches (Levin and Rappaport-Hovav 1995). This argument against the Unaccusativity Hypothesis is supported by the fact that some verbs with similar semantics have different syntactic behaviours across languages. Sorace (2000) gives the example of the verb blush which is unaccusative in Italian yet unergative in Dutch. These mismatches suggest that the explanation must be placed at the syntax-semantics interface and that split intransitivity is syntactically encoded and semantically determined (Levin and Rappaport-Hovav 1995).

In Standard Italian, there are two auxiliaries in the perfect: essere (from Latin ESSE ‘be’) and avere (from Latin HABERE ‘have’). The choice between the two auxiliaries can be attributed in part to the transitivity of the main verb; those which are transitive take avere and those which are intransitive can take essere. In si impersonal constructions, essere is used as the auxiliary with all types of verbs.

Bentley (2006) provides an RRG account of perfect auxiliary selection, which does not refer to the notion of transitivity. Bentley explains that the auxiliary be occurs only with subjects that are marked from the point of view of accusative alignment. Marked subjects include undergoer subjects and marked actors (actors which do not come from the highest ranking position in the Logical Structure).

In Standard Italian, with those verbs which normally take essere in simple tenses, the past participle exhibits subject agreement (27a) with a mismatch between the past participle and the auxiliary, whilst those which take avere in the perfect do not display agreement and remain in the default masculine singular form (27b).
As explained in the introduction to this section, there is a split in the Tuscan referential *si* construction, since, in the perfect, it can be used with transitive and unergative verbs, but it is ungrammatical with unaccusatives. Below, I provide an example of an impersonal construction (28a) and a non-impersonal construction (28b) with the verb *partire* ‘to leave’, which is an unaccusative verb. All informants chose the non-impersonal 1PL construction; the *si* construction was considered to be ungrammatical. Since *si* impersonals exhibit the alternation of singular and plural morphology on the past participle, examples with verbs which take *essere* in the perfect were tested with and without agreement of the past participle with the subject.

(28)

a. *(Noi) si è partito/e/i*  
   (PRO) SI be.3SG leave.PTCP.MSG/FPL/MPL  
   ‘One/we left’

b. *Noi siamo partiti*  
   PRO be.1PL leave.MPL  
   ‘We have left’
This was also the case with *andare* ‘to go’ and *cadere* ‘to fall’, where 9/9 informants chose the non-impersonal forms in both cases (29b, 29d), expressing that the impersonal forms were ungrammatical (29a, 29c). When the *si* construction takes on a first person plural meaning, the presence or absence of *noi* does not have any effect on the grammaticality of the construction. In examples (29a) and (29c), the constructions are ungrammatical both with and without the first person plural pronoun *noi*.

(29)

a. *(Noi) si è andato/i*  
   (1PL) SI be.3SG go.PTCP.MSG/MPL  
   ‘One/we went’

b. *Noi siamo andati*  
   1PL be.1PL go.PTCP.MPL  
   ‘We went’

c. *(Noi) si è caduti*  
   1PL SI be.3SG fall.PTCP.MPL  
   ‘One/we fell’

d. *Noi siamo caduti*  
   1PL be.1PL fall.PTCP.MPL  
   ‘We fell’

In (30a) we see an impersonal copula construction of Tuscan, which shows MPL agreement on the adjective. When changing the implied argument of the copula from an impersonal subject to a first person plural subject, the construction becomes ungrammatical, as seen in example (30b) below. This was also the case with *intelligenti* (30c) which is a permanent/inherent property, unlike *arrabbiati*.

(30)

a. *Quando si è arrabbiati*  
   when IMP be.3SG angry.MPL  
   ‘When one is angry’
b. (*Noi) si è arrabbiati

(1PL) SI be.3SG angry.MPL

‘We/one is angry’

c. (*Noi) si è intelligenti

(1PL) SI be.3SG intelligent

‘We/one is intelligent’

d. * Io e Giulia si è intelligenti

1SG and Giulia SI be.3SG intelligent

‘Giulia and I are intelligent’

The referential si construction was accepted with transitive and unergative verbs, as seen in the examples in (31) below. With the verb decide, the referential si construction was chosen by 7/9 informants and only 2/9 chose the non-impersonal form.

(31)

a. (Noi) si è deciso di andare al cinema

(we) IMP be.3SG decide.PTCP of go.INF to-the cinema

‘We/one has decided to go to the cinema’

b. Abbiamo deciso di andare al cinema

have.1PL decide.PTCP of go.INF to-the cinema

‘We have decided to go to the cinema’
With the verb *studiare* ‘to study’, the referential *si* construction was accepted, with 6/9 choosing a *si* construction (32a) and 3/9 choosing a non-impersonal form (32b).

(32)

a. (Noi) si è studiato

(we) SI be.3SG study.PTCP

‘We/one studied’

b. Noi abbiamo studiato

we have.1PL study.PTCP

‘We have studied’

The referential *si* was also accepted with a reflexive, unlike in Abruzzese and Sicilian, where we see some evidence of referential *si* constructions, although not to the same extent as those used in Tuscan. With the reflexive examples below, 7/9 informants chose the referential *si* construction (33a) and 2/9 chose the non-impersonal form in (33b). This was also tested in the perfect; the example in (33d) with agreement on the past participle is ungrammatical in referential definite first person plural contexts in Tuscan, despite being grammatical as an impersonal construction only. The preferred structure in the perfect is the one that does not display plural agreement, despite referring to an implied first person plural subject (33c).

(33)

a. (Noi) ci si scrive sempre

(we) REFL SI write.3SG always

‘We always write to one another’
b. *Ci scriviamo sempre

REFL write.1PL always

‘We always write to each other’

c. (Noi) ci si è scritto sempre

(we) REFL SI be.3SG write.PTCP.MSG always

‘We always wrote to one another’

d. *(Noi) ci si è scritti sempre

(PRO) REFL SI be.3SG write.MPL always

‘We always wrote to one another’

My suggestion for the intransitivity split attested in Tuscan 1PL *si impersonals is inspired by Burzio’s (1986:59) analysis of *si impersonals and his explanation for a mismatch between lack of person and number agreement on the finite verb and presence of number and gender agreement on the past participle in copular constructions with the impersonal *si (34a is an example of this). Burzio claims that the impersonal *si bears only gender and number features but lacks the feature person, as suggested in the name ‘impersonal *si’. Past participle agreement will then be able to operate correctly with plural inflection, but verb agreement will fail if we suppose that such agreement always requires both person and number features. This verb will remain in its neutral third person singular form. Based on this analysis with particular focus on the features of *si, I start by assuming that the impersonal clitic *si contains only gender and number features but does not have a feature for person. In the case of Tuscan referential *si constructions, I propose that *si acquires the feature ‘person’, more specifically ‘1PL’, which appears to have an effect on its acceptability with certain types of verbs in the perfect. I propose that, when *si is impersonal, it contains the features ‘number’ and ‘gender’, hence the construction in (34a) is acceptable, in which the predicative adjective displays gender and number agreement. This means that agreement cannot take place, hence the construction in (34b) is unacceptable. However, when *si is referential and
acquires the feature person, it loses its number and gender features. A si construction must be deficient in features unless si has simply become a subject clitic. My findings suggest that si is not yet a proper subject clitic.

(34)

a. Quando si è arrabbiati
   when IMP be.3SG angry.MPL
   ‘When one is angry’

b. *Noi si è intelligenti
   we SI be.3SG intelligent.MPL
   ‘We are intelligent’

If the referential si contains the single feature ‘person’ and cannot trigger agreement, this would explain why the referential si is accepted with transitive and unergative verbs but not with unaccusatives. Transitive and unergative verbs usually take avere as their auxiliary in compound tenses and do not require or even permit agreement on the past participle. Since gender and number agreement is not required with these verb classes, they are permitted in referential 1PL si. However, since unaccusative verbs do require past participle agreement in number and gender, they can occur with the impersonal si, but not the referential one in the perfect. Due to the fact that number and gender agreement is not required in simple tenses, referential si is grammatical in the present with all types of verbs, including unaccusatives.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of impersonal si</th>
<th>Features of referential si</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Person (1PL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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It is also conceivable that the gender and number features are spelt out by the subject clitic, which stops them from being spelt out on the past participle. However, a major counterargument to this hypothesis is that, if the gender and number features were carried by *si*, then the perfect would still be grammatical with a non-agreeing past participle. I found, however, that personal referential *si* constructions with unaccusative verbs are ruled out altogether in the perfect. I conclude that the proposal expounded above is stronger.

Further tests were carried out to confirm this hypothesis. These were in the form of yes/no response questions. Informants were asked to listen to the sentences and state whether or not they were grammatical sentences that they would use in their speech. These examples provide further evidence that the referential *si* construction cannot be used with unaccusative verbs in the perfect, hence examples (35c) and (35d) are ungrammatical.

(35)

a. *(Noi) si è fatto un picnic
   (PRO) SI be.3SG do.PTCP a picnic
   ‘We had a picnic’

b. *(Noi) si è mangiato bene
   (PRO) SI be.3SG eat.PTCP well
   ‘We ate well’

c. *(Noi) si è stati al mare
   (PRO) SI be.3SG be.PTCP to.the sea
   ‘We have been to the sea’

d. *(Noi) si è caduti
   (PRO) SI be.3SG fall.PTCP
   ‘We fell’
In Tuscan, the referential *si* construction does not extend to second person plural subjects; 9/9 informants rejected the *si* construction (36a) and chose a non-impersonal form (36b).

(36)

a. *Voi *si è giocato a calcio

You.PL SI be.3SG play.PTCP at football

‘You (PL) played football’

b. Avete giocato a calcio

have.2PL play.PTCP at football

‘You have played football’

In a 1PL referential reflexive with an object clitic, 5/9 informants chose the non-impersonal construction in (37a), 2/9 informants chose the impersonal with both an impersonal and reflexive clitic (37b) and 2 informants added the construction in (37c) to the list of suggested responses. This response was confirmed by other informants post-interview as a Tuscan construction. In reflexive impersonals in Standard Italian, we find a construction such as the one in (37d), where the reflexive *si* surfaces as *ci*, followed by the impersonal clitic *si*. In the example in (37c), we see one clitic *si* in place of both the reflexive and impersonal clitics, as well as the object clitic.

(37)

a. Ce la siamo comprata

REFL OCL be.1PL buy.PTCP.FSG

‘We bought it for ourselves’

b. Ci se l’ è comprata

REFL IMP OCL be.3SG buy.PTCP.FSG

‘We (one) bought it for ourselves’

c. S’ è comprata

IMP be.3SG buy.PTCP.FSG

‘We (one) bought it for ourselves’
d. Ce la si è comprata
REFL OCL IMP be.3SG buy.PTCP
‘We (one) bought it for ourselves’

6.3 Hierarchy of impersonals

As in the previous chapters, I now present the hierarchy of impersonals, with markings to represent the contexts available to each impersonal form in the Tuscan dialects studied.

Hierarchy of impersonals: Tuscan *si*

i) Personal referential definite > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite >
iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

Hierarchy of impersonals: Tuscan *uno*

i) Personal referential definite > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite >
iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

My working hypothesis is that if an impersonal form can occur in a personal referential definite context, then it should also be able to occur in referential definite contexts, referential indefinite contexts, as a non-referential repeated event and in non-referential irrealis contexts. An impersonal feature may enter the hierarchy at any point; the Abruzzese *si* enters the hierarchy at stage 2 (referential indefinite) and can also occur in non-referential repeated events and in non-referential irrealis contexts. This hierarchy applies to all of the impersonal features identified in Sicilian, Tuscan and Abruzzese. The Tuscan *si* gives the widest range of possibilities and covers the whole hierarchy, whilst *uno* in all three dialects provides the smallest range of possibilities and can only enter the hierarchy at stage 3 (non-referential repeated event). Eventually I aim to test this hierarchy with other Italo-Romance dialects. Table 3 below provides a summary of impersonal constructions in all three dialects, using [+] and [−] to represent whether or not a construction was acceptable in each particular dialect.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Referential definite 1PL</th>
<th>Referential definite</th>
<th>Referential indefinite</th>
<th>Non-referential repeated</th>
<th>Non-referential irrealis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuscan <em>si</em></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Noi si va</em></td>
<td><em>In questa scuola si legge libri buoni</em></td>
<td><em>Domani si svolgerà i lavori</em></td>
<td><em>Quando si sta male</em></td>
<td><em>Se si sta male</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscan <em>uno</em></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Quando uno sta male</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzese <em>si</em></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ts’a decisi di ji a lu cinema</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dumenǝ si fa li lavorǝ</em></td>
<td><em>Kwando si fta male</em></td>
<td><em>Se si maŋǝ la sarǝ ts’ingrassa di cchiù</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzese <em>uno</em></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Kwando unǝ fta male</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzese <em>nome</em></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ji nome piace ji a lu cinema</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ji nome piace ji a lu cinema</em></td>
<td><em>Kwando nome fta male</em></td>
<td><em>Se nomǝ maŋǝ la sarǝ...</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This hierarchy patterns with the pathway of the development of ‘man’-nouns presented by Ramat and Sansò (2007) and Malchukov & Siewierska (2011), which is provided below.

(38)
(a) Species-generic >
(b) Human non-referential indefinite >
(c) Human referential indefinite >
(d) Human referential definite

(Ramat & Sansò 2007)

Whilst the Abruzzese nome has only reached the third stage of the pathway and uno in all three dialects has only reached the second stage, the Tuscan si covers the most and has reached the final stage in both the impersonal hierarchy and the hierarchy representing the development of ‘man’-nouns.

Following the discussion in section 2.4 regarding the assignment of macroroles in si-constructions, I suggest that only referential si received a macrorole.
The Completeness Constraint states that every specified argument in the semantic representation must be realised in the syntax. Since, in the set of semantic feature systems we see that the Tuscan *si* can be either [+ referential] or [-referential], in cases where the feature [+referential] does not occur, I assume that there is no argument in the semantic representation, and therefore nothing to be realised in the syntax. However, since I have identified a set of semantic features for each impersonal construction, as well as determining each impersonal as having a +human referent, I do not represent impersonals with a zero marker (contrary to Bentley 2006). The diagrams in (39a) and (39b) show the syntax-semantics mapping of a non-referential *si* construction and a referential *si* construction respectively.

(39)

a.

\[
\text{SENTENCE}\]

\[
\text{CLAUSE}\]

\[
\text{CORE}\]

\[
\text{NUCLEUS}\]

\[
\text{PRED}\]

\[
V\quad \text{ADJ}\]

\[
\text{si} \quad \text{è} \quad \text{malati}\]

\[
\text{ACTOR}\]

\[
\text{be'} (\emptyset, \text{[ill']})\]

\[
\text{[+irrealis]\quad [-ref]}\]
6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed how passive constructions in Tuscan relate to the Transitivity Hierarchy, which uses a verb’s entailments to rank it as low or high in terms of its transitivity. It appears that verbs which are high in transitivity are more likely to provide a grammatical construction when passivized than those which are lower in transitivity. The data also show that the animacy of the actor has an effect on the acceptability of the passive in Tuscan. I have also analysed impersonal constructions in Tuscan, with particular focus given to first person plural referential *si* constructions, which, in the perfect, can be used with unergative and transitive verbs, but not unaccusative verbs. This is an interesting finding and I have proposed a reason for this split in intransitivity, which is based on Burzio’s (1986) work on
impersonals. I have related these results to the Role and Reference Grammar framework and its syntax-semantics mapping, proposing that, due to the Completeness Constraint, the clitic *si* in referential constructions receives a macrorole, whilst non-referential *si* does not.
Chapter 7. Further analysis.

7.1 Summary of passive data

In Chapters 4-6, I investigated passive constructions in three Italo-Romance dialects and provided a cross-linguistic analysis of these structures. I now return to the discussion of the Role and Reference Grammar framework and argue that RRG is an ideal framework for the analysis of passive structures. As discussed in Chapter 2, an account of the passive like the RRG one is ideal for passive analysis, since it allows us to capture the aspects of passivization which are semantic and pragmatic, distinguishing them from those that are purely syntactic. In particular, the use of semantic macroroles is useful in capturing the semantic underpinnings of passivization, since, whilst the mapping of macroroles to grammatical relations change, the assignment of macroroles to the arguments remains the same. The passive is a structure that allows a language with predominant accusative alignment to make the marked selection for subject (the undergoer). In my analysis, I show that it is important to combine this analysis with a more fine-grained understanding of the notion of undergoer; agentive undergoers can be passivized, whilst less agentive ones are more unlikely to passivize. My data show that there are also other semantic criteria which are relevant to passivization, for example animacy. The animacy of the actor and undergoer appears to affect the acceptability of the passive in all three dialects. Unless the semantic entailments of the arguments are taken into account, we cannot fully capture the passive in my dialects. For this reason, the RRG approach to the analysis of the passive is particularly useful when combined with the Transitivity Hierarchy, since this also highlights the semantic underpinnings of the passive.

I return now to the discussion of the North – vs – South divide, discussed in Chapter 2. As discussed previously, in a passive structure, the undergoer is mapped to subject. This choice for subject is marked in nominative/accusative alignment, in which the actor is the default choice. Since the data show that passives, in the most part, are rejected, this means that the actor is the preferred choice for subject, indicating a return to nominative/accusative alignment. As we have observed, the rejection of the passive is more severe in Sicilian than in Abruzzese and Tuscan. Whilst in Tuscan, active constructions are the preferred construction overall, there is
a more significant level of acceptance of the passive. This highlights the relevance of the aforementioned North-vs-South divide (La Fauci 1988, Zamboni 1998, Ledgeway 2012), which indicates that the languages spoken south of the La Spezia – Rimini line privilege nominative/accusative alignment. Both Sicilian and Abruzzese are located south of this line; Sicilian is the furthest south and exhibits the strongest preference for the alignment of the subject with the actor role and, therefore, the return to nominative/accusative alignment. Tuscan, which is the furthest north, does not reject the passive to the same extent as Sicilian and Abruzzese. This, again, is in accordance with the North-South divide.

My findings on *si* impersonals further support the idea that the dialects of the south fully return to nominative/accusative alignment. *Si* impersonals involve the suppression, or feature deficiency, of the highest ranking argument (the actor). As we have observed, this type of construction is not regularly used in Sicilian, whilst constructions with *uno* are still in use.

7.2 Analysis of the Hierarchy of Impersonals

In this section, I provide further analysis of each of the most significant findings introduced previously. I will begin by discussing the Hierarchy of Impersonals that was introduced in Chapter 2, along with the semantic feature systems of impersonals and how they relate to this hierarchy. This will be followed by a discussion of what I call the *agreement features* of impersonals, which correspond to the Chomskyan phi-features. Whilst the semantic features of an impersonal determine which contexts it can occur in, I use the term agreement features to refer to the features of an impersonal that govern verbal agreement, as well as the acceptability of different verb types in an impersonal construction. Following this, I will consider how the impersonal features found in Sicilian, Abruzzese and Tuscan can be combined with the Role and Reference Grammar syntax-semantics linking algorithm (Van Valin 2005: 129). Finally, I will provide an analysis of *nome* and how it fits into the Hierarchy of Impersonals, building on the discussion in section 2.9.

In the previous chapters I proposed a hierarchy of impersonals which enables us to capture all of the impersonal types that exist in the three dialects studied. The different positions on the hierarchy are defined on the basis of a set of semantic
features. The features that are available to each impersonal type are: [+/-referential], [+/-definite], and [+/-realis]. The table in Chapter 2 (repeated below for convenience) shows a summary of impersonal constructions in the three dialects, with a + or - symbol to represent whether or not a construction was acceptable in a dialect. In placing the impersonal features on a hierarchy, we can capture impersonals across all three dialects, as well as forming a hierarchy within each individual dialect. As well as enabling us to systematise the data, this hierarchy also contributes to the current understanding of impersonality and assists in refining existing theories.

The examples below represent all of the impersonal types documented in Sicilian, Abruzzese and Tuscan. These examples are then entered into the table (Table 1) according to their semantic features.

**Hierarchy of impersonals:**

i) Personal referential definite > ii) Referential definite > iii) Referential indefinite > iv) Non-referential repeated > v) Non-referential irrealis

(1) Tuscan:

a. **Noi si va al mare**
   
   We CL.1PL go.3SG to.the sea
   
   ‘We go to the sea’

b. **In questa scuola si legge libri buoni**
   
   in this school IMP read.3SG book.MPL good.MPL
   
   ‘In this school one reads good books’

c. **Domani si svolgerà i lavori**
   
   tomorrow IMP carry.out.3SG the.MPL work.MPL
   
   ‘Tomorrow they will carry out the work’

d. **Quando / se si sta male**
   
   when / if IMP stay.3SG badly
   
   ‘When/if one is ill’

e. **Quando / se uno sta male**
   
   when / if uno stay.3SG badly
   
   ‘When/if one is ill’
(2) Abruzzese:

a. *Ts’ a detfis di ji a lu tʃinema*
   
   IMP have.3SG decide.PCTP of go.INF to the cinema
   
   ‘We (one) have decided to go to the cinema’

b. *Dumen si fa li lavorɔ*
   
   tomorrow IMP do.3SG the work
   
   ‘Tomorrow they will do the work’

c. *Kwandɔ si ʃa male...*
   
   when IMP stay.3SG bad
   
   ‘When one is ill’

d. *Se si maŋɔ la sarɔ ts ’ingrassa di cchiù*
   
   if IMP eat.3SG the evening IMP gain-weight.3SG of more
   
   If one eats in the evening, one puts on more weight

e. *Kwandɔ ʃa male*
   
   when one IMP stay.3SG bad
   
   ‘When one is ill’

f. *Se unɔ ʃa male*
   
   if one IMP stay.3SG bad
   
   ‘If one is ill’

g. *Ji nomɔ piace ji a lu cinema*
   
   DAT nome like.3SG go.INF to the cinema
   
   ‘One/they (indefinite) like going to the cinema’

h. *Kwandɔ nomɔ ʃa male*
   
   when nome IMP stay.3SG bad
   
   ‘When one isn’t well...’

i. *Se nomɔ maŋɔ la sarɔ...*
   
   if nome IMP eat.3SG the evening
   
   ‘If one eats in the evening...’
(3) Sicilian:
   a. Si dicidìu ri iri ô cinema sta sira
      IMP decide.3SG.PST to go.INF to.the cinema this evening
      vò vèniri
      want.2SG come.INF
      ‘One has decided to go to the cinema this evening, do you want to come?’
   b. Rumani pomerìggiu si farannu i travagghi
      tomorrow afternoon IMP do.3PL the.MPL work.MPL
      ‘Tomorrow afternoon they will begin the work’
   c. Quannu si / unu è arraggìati/u, si rìci cììdu
      when IMP/one be.3SG angry.MPL/SG IMP say.3SG that
      ca si piensa
      that IMP think.3SG
      ‘When one is angry, one says what one thinks’
   d. Si si mància ri sìra si ngrassa chiòddu
      if IMP eat.3SG of evening IMP gain-weight.3SG a-lot
      ‘If one eats in the evening, one puts on a lot of weight’
   e. Quannu si ha pitittu si pò annigghiliari
      when IMP have.3SG hunger IMP can.3SG faint.INF
      ‘When one is hungry, one can faint’

Table 1. Semantic features of impersonals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Personal referential definite</th>
<th>Referential definite</th>
<th>Referential indefinite</th>
<th>Non-referential repeated</th>
<th>Non-referential irreals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuscan si</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noi si va al mare</td>
<td>In questa scuola si legge libri buoni</td>
<td>Domani si svolgerà i lavori</td>
<td>Quando si sta male</td>
<td>Se si sta male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscan uno</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ Quando uno sta male</td>
<td>+ Se uno sta male...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzese si</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ Ts’a decisi di ji a lu cinema</td>
<td>+ Dumen si fa li lavor</td>
<td>+ Kwando si fta male</td>
<td>+ Se si maf e la sar ts’ingrassa di cchiù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzese uno</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ Kwando fta male</td>
<td>+ Se unu sta male...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzese nome</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ Ji nome piace ji a lu cinema</td>
<td>+ Ji nome piace ji a lu cinema</td>
<td>+ Kwando nome fta male</td>
<td>+ Se nom maf e la sar...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicilian si</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ Si dici du ri iri o cinema sta sira vò vèniri?</td>
<td>+ Rumani pomeriggiu si farannu i travagghi</td>
<td>+ Quannu si è arraggiati, si rici chiḍdu ca si piensa</td>
<td>+ Si si mància ri sira si ngrassa chiossai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicilian uno</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ Quannu unu è arraggiatu rici chiḍdu ca piensa</td>
<td>+ Quannu si ha pitittu si pò annigghiliari</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the basis of the findings illustrated in this table, we can determine a feature system for each type of impersonal in each dialect, allowing for cross-dialectal and cross-linguistic comparisons. The feature systems below represent the semantic features for each impersonal type found in each dialect. They are grouped by impersonal type rather than by dialect to allow for comparisons.

**Semantic feature systems by impersonal structure:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuscan <em>si</em></th>
<th>Abruzzese <em>si</em></th>
<th>Sicilian <em>si</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+/- ref</td>
<td>+/- ref</td>
<td>+/- ref</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/- def</td>
<td>+/- def</td>
<td>+/- def</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/- realis</td>
<td>+/- realis</td>
<td>+/- realis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuscan <em>uno</em></th>
<th>Abruzzese <em>uno</em></th>
<th>Sicilian <em>unu</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- ref</td>
<td>- ref</td>
<td>-ref</td>
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<tr>
<td>- def</td>
<td>- def</td>
<td>- def</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- realis</td>
<td>- realis</td>
<td>- realis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abruzzese *nome***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>+/- ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+/- def</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/- realis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One conclusion that we can draw from the results presented above is that *uno* impersonals differ from other impersonal types in that they can only be referential in that they cannot take a referent, whether definite or indefinite. The feature systems above also highlight the similarities between *nome* and other impersonal types, since there is no direct equivalent of *nome* in Sicilian and Tuscan. *Nome* has the same features as the Abruzzese and Sicilian impersonal *si*, and yet it differs from Tuscan *si*, in that *nome* cannot take a personal referent (further discussion of this point will
be provided in due course). It is interesting that nome holds the same semantic features as si, which is another impersonal clitic, which brings to light a contrast between impersonal pronouns such as uno and clitics like si and nome. We can conclude from the information in the hierarchies that the features that are common to all impersonal types in the dialects are [-referential], [-realis] since all impersonal types (si, uno, nome) reach at least the second stage of the hierarchy. It is from the second position onwards in the hierarchy that the different impersonal forms begin to vary. As demonstrated by the data, uno is the feature which reaches only the second position of the hierarchy, whilst the others have a wider range of features.

It is possible that this relates to the diachronic development of impersonal features. Ramat & Sansò (2011), in their discussion of the process of impersonals, deriving from passives in Italian, state that the original function of impersonal markers that derived from passive markers was simply to signal that the actor is generic and human. Ramat and Sansò (2006) present a similar hierarchy for the development of man-impersonals, where man-nouns tend to acquire first a quasi-pronominal function in species-generic contexts, before developing to non-referential indefinite, referential indefinite and definite contexts. The development pathway is shown below:

(4)
(a) Species-generic
   \[ (b) \text{human non referential indefinite} \]
   \[ (c) \text{human referential indefinite} \]
   \[ (d) \text{human referential definite} \]

(Ramat & Sansò 2006:100)

Unlike the Hierarchy of Impersonals, the development pathway above makes no reference to impersonals in realis and irrealis contexts. The +realis feature is included in my feature system to account for the range of use of impersonal forms such as uno. This pathway also makes use of the term ‘species-generic’ to refer to
constructions which have ‘mankind’ as the implied subject and refers to nouns like the Latin *homo* (5).

(5)

*Non solo in pane vivit homo*

not only in bread lives man

‘Man does not live on bread alone’

None of the impersonals found in my data have a species-generic function that is truly identical to the one expressed in the above example. In my hierarchy, I use the feature –referential to refer to all impersonal types which do not refer to a particular entity – or set of entities or individuals - in the universe of discourse. I suggest that there is a scale of referentiality, which can be modified using the terms ‘definite’, ‘indefinite’ and, in the case of Tuscan, 1PL. A feature that is –referential can be either +definite or –definite. A construction which is both –referential and – definite corresponds to a generic (which I term ‘non-referential’) meaning, with the implied subject ‘people’. I do not include the term species-generic in my hierarchy, since this meaning is reserved for forms like *uomo* ‘man’ and cannot be achieved by any of the impersonal constructions analysed in this thesis.

Leaving aside the ‘mankind’ type of impersonal, which is not exemplified in our dialect findings, the feature systems patently show that *uno* is not as developed as the clitic impersonals with *si* and *nome*, since it only realizes a non-referential indefinite impersonal, while the clitic forms can be referential.

Among these, Tuscan *si* is the only impersonal feature to have reached the final stage on the hierarchy (referential and personal). Although it is of course conceivable that Sicilian and Abruzzese *si* could eventually also develop further and reach this stage, this development of Tuscan *si* is likely to be related to the development of a system of subject clitics in this dialect, where *si* comes to take the place of the first person plural subject clitic. However, I have also shown that *si* differs from canonical subject clitics in that it is feature deficient (see §§6.2.2, 7.2).
This is a novel finding that, to the best of my knowledge, has never been reported in the literature. The sets of features for each impersonal type can be involved in the syntax-semantics linking.

Alongside a set of semantic features, I suggest that each impersonal type also has what I call a set of agreement features. In section 7.3, I provide evidence of the existence of agreement features with examples from the data.

7.3 Agreement features

Burzio (1986:59) addresses the apparent paradox of the fact that *si* may appear plural in terms of past participle agreement but singular for verbal agreement, resulting in a mismatch of agreement, as in the example below in (6):

(6) *Si è stati accusati*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMP</th>
<th>be.3SG</th>
<th>be.PTCP.MPL</th>
<th>accuse.PTCP.MPL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

‘One has been accused’

As an explanation, Burzio suggests that *si* bears only gender and number features, but lacks the feature ‘person’, as expected from the definition of impersonal *si*. Due to the existence of features ‘number’ and ‘gender’, the past participle agreement shows plural inflection. In (6), the past participle agrees with the unexpressed argument (a plural indefinite referent). Finite-verbal agreement will, instead, fail if we suppose that such agreement requires both person and number features and the verb will therefore remain in its default third person singular form.

Whilst I do not place particular focus on the mismatch of agreement in my discussion of impersonals, my findings indicate that the agreement features of impersonal *si* do have an effect on verbal agreement and may provide an explanation for the apparent split intransitivity effect found in Tuscan. In Chapter 6.2.1, I presented novel data relating to the acceptability of the Tuscan 1PL referential *si* with different verb classes. The data collected in Tuscany show that in simple tenses the 1PL referential *si* impersonal can be used with all classes of verbs, whilst in the perfect there is a split whereby *si* can only occur with transitive and unergative
verbs, but not with unaccusatives (i.e. verbs which would usually take *essere* and would exhibit past participle agreement in gender and number with the subject). The indexical features available to each impersonal type are: person, number and gender. In the case of Tuscan referential *si* constructions, I propose that *si* acquires the feature ‘person’, more specifically ‘1PL’, which seems to have an effect on its acceptability with certain types of verbs in the perfect. I propose that, when *si* is impersonal, it contains the features ‘number’ and ‘gender’, hence the construction in (7a) is acceptable, in which the predicative adjective displays gender and number agreement. Constructions such as the one in (7a) display masculine plural agreement due to the implied indefinite subject. However, when *si* becomes referential and acquires the feature ‘person’, this is accompanied by the loss of its number and gender features. This means that agreement cannot take place; hence the construction in (7b) is unacceptable.

\[(7) \text{ Tuscan}\]
\[
a. \text{Quando } si \quad \text{è} \quad \text{arrabbiati/*e} \\
\quad \text{when } \text{IMP be.3SG angry.MPL} \\
\quad \text{‘When one is angry’}
\]
\[
b. \quad \text{*Noi } si \quad \text{è} \quad \text{intelligenti/e} \\
\quad \text{we SI be.3SG intelligent.MPL} \\
\quad \text{‘We are intelligent’}
\]

If the 1PL referential *si* contains the single feature ‘person’ and cannot trigger agreement, this would explain why the referential *si* is accepted with transitive and unergative verbs but not with unaccusatives. Transitive and unergative verbs usually take *avere* as their auxiliary in compound tenses and do not require or even permit agreement on the past participle. Since there is no gender and number agreement with these types of verbs, they are permitted alongside the referential *si*. However, since unaccusative verbs do usually require past participle agreement in number and gender, they can occur with the impersonal *si*, but not the referential one. Due to the
fact that number and gender agreement is not required in simple tenses, referential *si* is grammatical in the present with all types of verbs, including unaccusatives. Table 2 presents the agreement features of the impersonal *si* and the Tuscan referential *si*. Other combinations of features are in theory possible, although they are not attested in Tuscan. Crucially, an impersonal structure must be deficient in some agreement feature.

**Table 2. Agreement features of *si***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of impersonal <em>si</em></th>
<th>Features of referential <em>si</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Person (1PL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the basis of my results, I claim that there are two types of impersonal *si* in Tuscan: 1PL and *si* impersonal, which differ in terms of their features. Tuscan *si* is the only impersonal form out of those mentioned that varies in its number, person and gender agreement features depending on its position on the hierarchy. The 1PL referential *si* becomes incompatible with certain verb types as a result of deficiency in gender and number features. An impersonal form that develops into a form with a 1PL meaning would normally be assumed to have lost its impersonal status. My investigation has enabled me to revisit this assumption and refine the notion of impersonal as a construction which lacks some features. Tuscan *si* appears to have gained the 1PL person feature, but it lacks gender and number. Admittedly, since the other forms do not yet reach the referential definite 1PL stage of the hierarchy it cannot be tested if they too would undergo this change, although this is indeed the prediction made by my proposal.

In sum, *si* is a clitic that can cover a range of interpretations, but also has two different functions within the dialects of Italy. The first of these functions is as an impersonal clitic which is deficient in the feature ‘person’. This type of *si* can occur in referential indefinite and non-referential irrealis constructions, but cannot refer to a particular entity in the universe of discourse. The Tuscan referential *si* is also feature deficient but is deficient in features ‘gender’ and ‘number’ and gains the feature ‘person’. Although the Tuscan 1PL referential *si* acquires the feature
‘person’, I still label constructions such as (8) below as impersonals, since *si* is still feature deficient (it is deficient in features ‘number’ and ‘gender’). The example in (8b) shows that neither masculine plural, feminine singular nor feminine plural agreement may be triggered on the past participle. The third person singular is in fact default here.

(8)

a. *Noi* *si è fatto un picnic*

we  CL.1PL  be.3SG  do.PTCP  a  picnic

‘We had a picnic’

b. *Noi* *si è fatta/i/e un picnic*

we  CL.1PL  be.3SG  do.PTCP.FSG/MPL/FPL  a  picnic

‘We had a picnic’

I therefore propose that in the case of impersonals, the rules for grammatical features are:

- Impersonals are deficient in one or more of the following grammatical features: *person, number, gender*
- When an impersonal gains the feature *person*, it must lack the features *gender* and/or *number*.

Observe that whilst 1PL *si* can only be singular (9a), non 1PL *si* can trigger both singular or plural number agreement (9b-d), once again reflecting its number feature. Like 1PL *si*, non 1PL *si* is deficient in the gender feature.

(9) Tuscan

a. (Noi) *si è andato al mare*

(we) SI  be.3SG  go.PTCP.MSG  to.the  sea

‘We went to the sea’

b. *Si è andati al mare*

IMP  be.3SG  go.PTCP.MPL  to-the  sea

‘One went to the sea’
c. Quando si è arrabbiati
   when IMP be.3SG angry.MPL
   ‘When one is angry’

d. Quando si è arrabbiate
   when IMP be.3SG angry.FPL
   ‘When one is angry’

Indefinite *uno* does not share this number feature and instead has a default number, which is manifested as singular number, as in the example in (10a, 10c). Agreement other than the default masculine singular agreement results in an ungrammatical structure (10b, 10d)

(10) Tuscan

a. Uno è arrabbiato
   *uno* be.3SG angry.PCTP.MSG
   ‘One is angry’

b. *Uno è arrabbiati/e/a
   *uno* be.3SG angry.MPL/FPL/FSG
   ‘One is angry’

c. Quando uno è stanco
   when *uno* be.3SG tired.MSG
   ‘When one is tired’

d. *Quando uno è stanchi/e/a
   *uno* be.3SG tired.MPL/FPL/FSG
   ‘When one is tired’

The same applies for 3PL impersonals, which, as expected, can only take a 3PL default form and do not have a gender feature (11a, 11b).
a. **Domani cominciano i lavori**

tomorrow begin.3PL the.MPL work.MPL Tuscan

‘Tomorrow they begin the work’

b. **Rumani pomeriggìu farannu i travagghi**

tomorrow afternoon do.3PL the.MPL work.MPL Sicilian

‘Tomorrow afternoon they will do the work’

In my view, the main difference between Tuscan (and Sicilian, Abruzzese and Standard Italian) non-1PL *si* and Tuscan 1PL *si*, is that the former does not have the feature ‘person’, which results in past participle agreement on the verb in the dialects which independently require this past participle agreement.\(^1\) I thus define impersonals as constructions that are deficient in one or more of these agreement features.

I can now provide a feature matrix for each impersonal type, incorporating both semantic and agreement features. The agreement features are in italics. As mentioned in the discussion of agreement features, in the dialects studied, when an impersonal acquires the feature ‘person’, it loses the features ‘gender’ and ‘number’. If an impersonal is labelled as −person then it still has the features +number and +gender.

**Feature matrices:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuscan <em>si</em></th>
<th>Abruzzese <em>si</em></th>
<th>Sicilian <em>si</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+/-ref</td>
<td>+/- ref</td>
<td>+/- ref</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/-person</td>
<td>-person</td>
<td>-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/- def</td>
<td>+/- def</td>
<td>+/- def</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/- realis</td>
<td>+/- realis</td>
<td>+/- realis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Sicilian dialects do not require or permit subject agreement on the past participle in the perfect, whilst Abruzzese has metaphonic agreement.
The table below provides a summary of all of the semantic features and argument features related to each position of the hierarchy.

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal referential</th>
<th>Referential definite</th>
<th>Referential indefinite</th>
<th>Non-referential repeated</th>
<th>Non-referential irrealis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+referential</td>
<td>+referential</td>
<td>+referential</td>
<td>-referential</td>
<td>-referential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+person</td>
<td>-person</td>
<td>-person</td>
<td>-person</td>
<td>-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+definite</td>
<td>+definite</td>
<td>-definite</td>
<td>-definite</td>
<td>-definite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+realis</td>
<td>+realis</td>
<td>+realis</td>
<td>+realis</td>
<td>-realis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can then form a set of entailments based on the feature systems.

**Entailments:**

+person > +referential, +definite, +realis

+ definite > +referential, +realis

+referential > +realis
These entailments predict that, if an impersonal has the feature +person, then it must be also referential, definite and realis. If an impersonal has the feature definite, then it must be also referential and realis. If an impersonal is referential then it must also be realis. For this reason, only the features which can be +referential are labelled with + or – person. For all other features we assume that they are deficient in person.

### 7.4 Feature systems and Role and Reference Grammar

The syntax-semantics linking algorithm is based on Van Valin (2005). The Completeness Constraint states that ‘all of the arguments explicitly specified in the semantic representation of a sentence must be realised syntactically in the sentence, and all of the referring expressions in the syntactic representation of a sentence must be linked to an argument position in a logical structure in the semantic representation of the sentence’ (Van Valin 2005:233). With all of the impersonals found in this study, restrictions apply, in that the referents must be [+human], even when referring to an indefinite number of people. This implies that the impersonal variable that is not filled by an argument value does have some content in the semantics. For this reason I also choose to assign each of these impersonal variables a macrorole. Further tests may confirm this (Bentley 2006), in which macrorolehood in impersonals is explained through past participle agreement and experiencer predicates. As discussed in Chapter 5, Bentley (2006:94-119) highlights three different classes of experience predicates: (i) those which have an experiencer subject (love, fear), (ii) those which have a causer PSA (worry, scare), (iii) those which have a theme subject (like, suffice). In order to provide evidence that impersonal *si* receives a macrorole, we will focus on type (iii) experiencer predicates, in particular the verb *piacere* ‘like’. We must first address the question of the order of reflexive and impersonal argument suppression, which is discussed in detail by Bentley (2006). The verb *piacere* ‘to like’ in Italian exhibits a dative experiencer (pleasing to someone). In Standard Italian, the combination of reflexive and impersonal argument suppression, which are both usually represented by the particle *si*, results in a structure with *ci si*, as shown in the example below (5a). Following Bentley (2006) I assume that the reflexive argument suppression precedes the impersonal one. This is much more
easily determined in a construction with the Abruzzese impersonal clitic *nome*, since it has a different form to the reflexive particle (12b).

(12)

a. *Ci si arrabbia*

REFL IMP angry.3SG Standard Italian

‘One becomes angry’

b. *Ts’ a nome mort*

REFL have.3SG nome die Abruzzese

‘One has died (reflexive)’

The examples below with *piacere* support the idea that the second argument of type (iii) experiencer verbs (the theme) can be suppressed in *si*-impersonal constructions, whilst the highest argument of these verbs (the experiencer) cannot. If we assume that the impersonal suppressed argument follows the reflexive one, a macrorole is assigned to the second suppressed argument in the semantics of *ci si piace*. Since example (13b) and (13c) are ungrammatical it is apparent that the experiencer of this type of verb does not receive a macrorole, whilst the theme does.

(13) Standard Italian

a. *Quando si è giovani si piace (agli altri)*

when IMP be.3SG young.PL IMP like.3SG (to-the others)

‘When one is young one is liked by others’

b. *Si piace i giovani*

IMP like.3SG the.PL young.PL

‘One likes the young’

(Bentley 2006:164)
In Italian, the control of agreement on the past participle is restricted to macrorole arguments (Bentley 2006). The agreement of the perfect past participle can be controlled only by an undergoer or by a marked actor. In non-referential *si* constructions in all three dialects, we find past participle agreement in constructions such as the following examples in (14).

(14)
a. *Quando* *si* è *arrabbiati*

When IMP be.3SG angry.MPL Standard Italian

‘When one is angry’

b. *Quando nome* sta *arrajit*

When *nome* stay.3SG angry.MPL Abruzzese

‘When one is angry’

This past participle agreement provides evidence that the impersonal feature (*nome, si*) is the controller in these instances, since the past participle agrees with the implied referent. Further evidence of this can be seen in the example below (15), in which the object (*la torta*) takes feminine singular in gender and number, yet the past participle displays masculine plural agreement. This implies that the impersonal clitic *nome*, whilst it does not have the gender feature, must have a plural number feature, with which the past participle agrees. The linking algorithm below in Figure 1 is based on the construction in (15), in which *nome* has a referential indefinite referent. For this reason, I have assigned the macrorole actor to the impersonal argument with *nome*.

(15) Abruzzese

*Nome* *magnə* lu *peʃə*

*Nome* eat.3SG the fish

‘They eat fish’
Figure 1: Semantics-to-syntax linking algorithm

1. Logical structure
   \[
   \text{do'}(x, [\text{eat}'(x,y)]) \land \text{BECOME consumed}'(y)
   \]

2. Macrorole assignment
   - Actor: \textit{nome} \ [+referential \ –\ definite]\]
   - Undergoer: \textit{lu peʃə}

3. Past participle agreement
   - \textit{Name} is the controller

   \[
   \text{Lexicon: do'}(x, [\text{eat}'(\text{nome}, \text{peʃə}))] \land \text{BECOME consumed}'(\text{peʃə})
   \]
   \[
   [-\text{ref}]\]
   \[
   [+\text{definite}]\]
   \[
   [-\text{realis}]\]
As can be seen in Figure 1, I propose one further step of the linking algorithm, which involves attaching the impersonal features to *nome* in the Logical Structure. In the example below, I repeat this process with the Tuscan *si*, based on the example in (16).

(16) (Noi) *si* è *fatto* *un picnic*

(1PL) CL.1PL be.3SG make.PTCP a picnic

‘We had a picnic’

**Figure 2: Semantics –to-syntax linking algorithm**

1. Logical structure
   
   [do' (x, [have' (si ,picnic)])]

2. Macrorole assignment
   
   Actor: *si* [+ref 1PL +definite]
   
   Undergoer: *un picnic*

3. Control of finite agreement.
   
   *Si* is the controller
7.5 Analysis of Nome

In Chapter 5 (on Abruzzese), I claimed that *nome* is a clitic, largely due to the fact that it cannot stand alone as a response to a question; it also needs a host and is hosted by the main verb, from which it cannot be separated. *Nome* also has the
feature PL, which is reflected in the plural agreement on the past participle via metaphor.

(17) L’ a nome magnit

OCL have.3SG nome eat.PTCP.PL

‘They/one ate it’

One observation we can make in constructions with nome in the perfect tense is that agreement is not also shown on the auxiliary ‘have’. It is unusual that we should find agreement on the past participle but not on the auxiliary. One would expect to find a situation similar to that of la gente, where agreement is matched between the auxiliary and the past participle (18a). A mismatch of agreement is not possible with la gente (18b).

(18)

a. La gente è andata

the people.FSG be.3SG go.PTCP.FSG

‘People went’

b. *La gente è andati

the people.FSG be.3SG go.PTCP.MPL

‘People went’

One suggestion for the reason behind this mismatch in agreement is that the auxiliary a, when combined with nome, becomes a clitic and forms part of the clitic cluster. When nome is not present, on the other hand, a must spell out number. Whilst the third person singular and third person plural forms of the verbs can be syncretic in Abruzzese, we know from the data collected that the verb avere has both a 3SG and a 3PL form, both of which are in use in this dialect. The 3PL (impersonal or non-impersonal form) is shown below in (19):
It is therefore interesting that the 3PL form should not be used alongside a plural past participle. I propose that nome has the indexical features -person, +number, -gender; within the clitic cluster, the number feature is expressed on nome and not on the verb. The auxiliary then loses its role of carrying the feature ‘number’ and plurality is no longer reflected on the auxiliary. In the present simple tense, it is difficult to determine whether or not nome triggers agreement on the verb. As discussed in Chapter 5, in the present simple tense in Abruzzese, the third person singular and third person plural forms coincide and are syncretic, meaning that it is usually impossible to tell the 3SG and 3PL forms apart (D’Alessandro & Alexiadou 2006:189-218). However, in some cases Abruzzese informants agreed to the alternation of fa and fannə (3SG and 3PL forms of the verb fare ‘to do’), depending on whether the subject is a 3SG or a 3PL one. When tested with nome, speakers considered the 3PL form of this verb to be ungrammatical in all cases. Nome carries the feature plural and, since it is a clitic hosted by the verb, this feature is spelled out on nome and not on the verb. This is further evidence in support of the proposal that nome spells out plural.

(20)

a. Nomə fa sempre le stesse cose

nome do.3SG always the.FPL same.FPL things.FPL

‘One always does the same things’
b. *Nomə fannə sempre le stesse cose

nome do.3PL always the.FPL same.FPL things.FPL

‘One always does the same things’

Nome and the clitic a cannot be separated from one another, which provides further evidence that both elements form part of the clitic cluster. When other clitics are added to the cluster, they are placed before a. Interestingly, with impersonal clitic si, when a clitic such as ne is added to the cluster, this occurs between si and the auxiliary.

(21)

a. Se ne compro du

IMP QNT buy.3SG two

‘One buys two of them’

b. Ne nome compro du

QNT nome buy.3SG two

‘One buys two of them’

c. Ne a nome magnitə du

QNT have.3SG nome eat.PTCP.MPL two

‘They ate two of them’

When adverbs occur, they are placed between nome and the past participle.

(22) L’a nome già magnit

OCL have.3SG nome already eat.PTCP.MPL

‘They have already eaten it’
D’Alessandro suggests the following word order for Abruzzese:

(23) Full subject – Neg – CL – Aux – nome – PP

However, I am inclined to suggest the following when nome is present:

(24) Full subject – Neg – CL(REFL) – AuxCL (Tense) – nome – PP

D’Alessandro and Alexiadou (2003) also claim that a has a special clitic status, and provide the examples in (25) to support this. In (25a) we see that a cannot occur on its own, unlike essere in (25b) which can appear in isolation. This contrast may also relate to the status of the given verb; in (25a), avere functions as an auxiliary, whilst in (25b), essere functions as the main verb.

(25)

a. *A state Jesse, a!
   have.3SG/PL been he.3SG have
   ‘It was HIM!’

b. Si ttu, si!
   are.2SG you be.2SG
   ‘It is YOU!’

(D’Alessandro & Alexiadou 2003:180)

D’Alessandro suggests that nome is beginning to lose its function as an impersonal and is gaining the function of ‘plural marker’. Whilst I agree that nome is plural in features, I do not consider it to be a plural marker as it does not occur in any non-impersonal constructions with a plural function. I suggest that, as with the other impersonals mentioned in this thesis, nome has the agreement feature +number (PL), and is deficient in the features - gender, - person, retaining its impersonal function.
In the dialects studied by D’Alessandro, there is the existence of impersonal form *anne*, which is a variant of *nome*. D’Alessandro claims that these two forms are in competition for the arbitrary meaning, providing the examples below.

(26)
   a. *Nome* dice ca dumane piove
   
   *nome* say.3SG/PL that tomorrow rains
   
   ‘They say that it will rain tomorrow’
   
   b. *Anne* dice ca dumane piove
   
   PL say.3SG/PL that tomorrow rains.3SG
   
   ‘They say that it will rain tomorrow’

   (D’Alessandro & Alexiadou 2003:189)

D’Alessandro suggests that in examples (26a-b), *nome* and *anne* have exactly the same meaning, but cannot occur together, suggesting that they are in competition as there is no reason why they should not be able to co-occur. This not the case in Tollese, where *anne* functions as a 3PL auxiliary only and not as an impersonal arbitrary pronoun. Whilst, like other 3PL forms, *anne* may have a 3PL impersonal interpretation, it cannot be used as an impersonal marker in the same way as *nome* can. Whilst Tollese does not normally differentiate between 3SG and 3PL forms of the verb, informants used *anne* to differentiate between 3SG and 3PL auxiliary.

(27)
   a. *Anne* magnə
   
   *anne* eat.3SG
   
   ‘One eats’
   
   b. *Anne* magnit
   
   have.3PL eat.PTCP.PL
   
   ‘They have eaten’
I conclude that, in Tollese, *anne* is not comparable to *nome*, but rather is it the 3PL of ‘have’, which can of course be generic, as is the case with the 3PL in Italian or English.
8. Conclusion

In this thesis, I have provided an analysis of passive and impersonal constructions in three dialects: Sicilian, Abruzzese and Tuscan. This work contributes to the field of Italian dialectology, providing a fine-grained analysis of the passive, a construction which has not yet been subject to a detailed analysis in these dialects. In doing so, I have determined that passive constructions in all three dialects are sensitive to verb type and directly relate to the Transitivity Hierarchy (Hopper and Thompson:1980). The data show that verbs which rank highly on the Transitivity Hierarchy (kill, arrest) are more likely to be passivized than verbs which rank lower on the Transitivity Hierarchy (cost, visit). Whilst all of the dialects have this sensitivity in common, the extent to which this affects the acceptability of passives varies in each dialects. The data suggest that passive constructions are used to a greater extent in Tuscan than in Sicilian and Abruzzese, and Sicilian is the dialect which employs the passive the least. With these results in mind, I have suggested that the Italo-Romance dialects studied have a strong preference for actor as subject and that, due to a low acceptability of by-phrases after passivization, the prime function of the passive is demotion. This study also touches upon animacy and its effect on the acceptability of the passive. It appears that the felicitousness of the passive is increased when the actor and undergoer are inanimate, although this requires further research.

The data also contribute to the hypothesis of the North-South divide, confirming that there is indeed a retrenchment of active/stative alignment, which is supported by (amongst other things) the lack of the passive in Tuscan, Abruzzese and Sicilian, and a preference for actor subjects rather than undergoer subjects. This retrenchment takes place predominantly in Sicilian, lesser so in Abruzzese and even less in Tuscan. This highlights differences between northern and southern dialects, and suggests that nominative/accusative alignment is more prevalent in southern dialects than northern dialects.

My analysis of impersonal constructions has provided a number of interesting and novel results, namely the discovery of the split intransitivity of the Tuscan referential si impersonal construction. In this thesis, I explain the acceptability of this construction with transitivies and unergatives, and the ungrammaticality of this construction with unaccusatives, as a result of the
agreement features carried by this impersonal type. I have contributed to existing definitions of impersonals, suggesting that each impersonal type has a set of semantic features and agreement features, which makes cross-linguistic and cross-dialectal analyses possible. I define impersonal constructions as those which are deficient in at least one agreement feature (person, number or gender). This definition appears to apply to all of the impersonal types studied in this thesis (nome, third person plurals, si, uno, etc.). A final element worth noting is the analysis of nome, which I have labelled as an impersonal clitic, which shares similarities with the impersonal si, due to their common semantic and agreement features. I have used the data collected in Tollo to develop existing work on nome, discussing the Abruzzese clitic cluster and how nome fits in to the Hierarchy of Impersonals which has been developed throughout this thesis. I also suggest that, when nome occurs, the auxiliary a becomes a clitic, although this is not the case when nome is not present.

The Hierarchy of Impersonals has been developed to capture all of the impersonal types found in Tuscan, Abruzzese and Sicilian. The different positions on the hierarchy are defined on the basis of a set of semantic features, and the features that are available to each impersonal type are: [+/-referential], [+/-definite], and [+/-realis]. This hierarchy enables us not only to make comparisons between dialects, but also to develop hierarchies for individual dialects and constructions. The Tuscan first person plural si covers all of the stages of the hierarchy, whilst uno in all three dialects covers the least, since it can only occur in non-referential repeated and non-referential irrealis contexts. It would be interesting to see whether the Hierarchy of Impersonals and the sets of semantic and agreement features which apply to the Italo-Romance dialects, apply to other Romance languages and dialects. This leaves room for further study and investigation. One of the main limitations of this study is the number of informants and the time available to conduct interviews. In future research, I would like to conduct this study with a more detailed questionnaire and present this to a larger number of informants across a number of different dialects.
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Appendix 1 - Questionnaire

* Segni la risposta o le risposte che le suonano meglio. Tenga presente che non ci interessa una risposta ‘corretta’, ma solo quella più naturale nella sua varietà linguistica.

* Segni la risposta o le risposte che non le sembrano del tutto inusuali o strane nel tuo dialetto.

* Non selezioni alcuna risposta se nessuna di esse suona naturale nel suo dialetto. In questo caso, aggiunga la risposta che le viene spontanea nel contesto dato.

**Passive constructions**

1) Cosa è successo a Paolo?
   - È stato ucciso
   - L’hanno ucciso

2) Cosa è successo oggi al mercato?
   - Un ladro mi ha strappato la borsa ed è stato arrestato dai carabinieri
   - Un ladro mi ha strappato la borsa e i carabinieri l’hanno arrestato

3) Perché il cane si nasconde dietro il divano?
   - È stato spaventato dal gatto
   - Il gatto l’ha spaventato

4) Come mai nessuno parla con Alberto?
   - È temuto da tutti
   - Tutti lo temono
   - È temuto

5) Il veterinario ha detto che…
   - 10 chili sono pesati dal gatto
   - Il gatto pesa 10 chili

6) Un gruppo di giovani sta facendo una corsa di beneficenza. Come descriverebbe al meglio i risultati?
   - 26 km sono stati corsi oggi dai giovani
   - I giovani hanno corso 26 km oggi
7) **Lei è in vacanza e sta visitando una cattedrale. La guida spiega che…**
- 2000 persone hanno visitato la cattedrale quest’anno.

8) **Concluda la frase. Paolo è un buon uomo…**
- È piaciuto da tutti
- Piace a tutti

9) **Come è morto Gianni?**
- L’hanno ucciso per errore
- È stato ucciso per errore

10) **Guardi la foto e scelga una delle seguenti opzioni…**
- La scatola contiene 6 bottiglie di vino
- 6 bottiglie di vino sono contenute dalla scatola
- 6 bottiglie di vino sono contenute in quella scatola

11) **Perché hanno invitato Alberto alla festa di Mario?**
- È conosciuto da Mario
- Mario lo conosce
12) Maria si trova alla stazione e vuole comprare dei libri da leggere durante il viaggio. Il negozio è chiuso. Come descriverebbe la situazione?

- Dei libri non sono stati comprati perché il negozio era chiuso
- Non ha comprato dei libri perché il negozio era chiuso

13) Il professore ha fatto una domanda e…

- La risposta è stata saputa da tutti gli studenti
- Tutti gli studenti sapevano la risposta

14) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio

- Il re era adorato da tutto il suo popolo
- Tutto il popolo adorava il re

15) Scelga la frase che le suona meglio

- La scuola fu fondata da tre professori
- Tre professori fondarono la scuola

16) Cosa è successo alla casa?

- È stata distrutta
- Il vento ha distrutto la casa
- È stata distrutta dal vento

17) Finisca la frase. Mario ha chiesto ad Anna di sposarlo, ma…

- È stata sposata da Paolo
- Anna e Paolo si sono sposati
- L’ha sposata Paolo

18) Chi ha cucinato la pasta?

- La pasta l’ha cucinata Maria
- La pasta è stata cucinata da Maria
- Maria ha cucinato la pasta

19) Scelga la frase che le suona meglio

- Sono stato bocciato all’esame di guida
- Mi hanno bocciato all’esame di guida
20) Scelga la frase che le suona meglio

- Sei stato selezionato per la gara di nuoto?
- Ti hanno selezionato per la gara di nuoto?

**Coniughi i verbi in parentesi e concluda la frase (Topic chains)**

21) Maria si è alzata, ha fatto colazione, si è vestita, è uscita, e ___________________(colpire, un fulmine)

22) Paolo si è alzato, si è lavato, ha fatto colazione, è uscito, e ________________ (scippare/derubare, un ladro)

23) che cosa è successo alla macchina rossa?

24) Che cosa è successo a questo papero?
Impersonals

25) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - La domenica non si lavora in questo paese
   - La domenica non lavorano in questo paese
   - La domenica la gente non lavora in questo paese

26) La mamma di Giulia e Teresa chiede loro perché sono arrivate in ritardo per la festa. Loro rispondono:
   - Si è partite alle 5 ma c’era molto traffico
   - Siamo partite alle 5 ma c’era molto traffico
   - Si è partito alle 5 ma c’era molto traffico

27) Lei sta cercando di comprare alcuno libri usati a basso prezzo. Chiede aiuto alla commessa/al commesso. Lei/lui risponde:
   - Mi dispiace, qui non si vendono libri usati
   - Mi dispiace, qui non si vendono libri usati
   - Mi dispiace, qui non vendiamo libri usati

28) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - Domani pomeriggio si svolgerà i lavori
   - Domani pomeriggio si svolgeranno i lavori
   - Domani pomeriggio svolgeranno i lavori

29) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - Quando si è arrabbiati si dice quello che si pensa
   - Quando uno è arrabbiato dice quello che pensa

30) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - Quando si ha fame si può svenire
   - Quando uno ha fame uno sviene

31) Finisca la frase. In questa scuola…
   - Si leggono dei buoni libri
   - Si legge dei buoni libri
   - Si leggono dei buoni libri dagli studenti

32) Finisca la frase. Oggi alla gara…
   - Si sono viste molte macchine
- Si sono viste molte macchine dagli spettatori della corsa

33) Cosa ha fatto ieri con gli amici?
- Ieri si è andati al mare
- Ieri si è andato al mare
- Ieri siamo andati al mare

34) Sta parlando di una sua amica che si è trasferita all’estero
- Una mia amica si è trasferita in Inghilterra due mesi fa ma ci scriviamo spesso
- Una mia amica si è trasferita in Inghilterra due mesi fa ma noi ci si scrive spesso

35) Stasera va a mangiare fuori con degli amici. Vuole sapere se un altro suo amico vuole venire con voi. Cosa direbbe?
- Abbiamo deciso di andare al cinema, vuoi venire?
- Sì è deciso di andare al cinema stasera, vuoi venire?
- Noi si è deciso di andare al cinema stasera, vuoi venire?

36) Il pastore sta illustrando il percorso che fa con le sue pecore all’arrivo della primavera
- Si scende a valle ogni primavera
- Noi scendiamo a valle ogni primavera

37) Stiamo parlando di voi. Ieri alla fiera…
- Voi si è giocato a calcio
- Si è giocato a calcio
- Avete giocato a calcio

38) Sceglia la risposta che le suona meglio.
- In questa casa ci sono fantasmi: si appare a mezzanotte.
- In questa casa ci sono fantasmi: appaiono a mezzanotte.

39) In questa zona ci sono tanti cani…
- Si abbaia tutta la notte.
- Abbaiano tutta la notte.
40) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio…
- In guerra si muore ogni giorno
- In guerra tante persone muoiono ogni giorno

41) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio…
- C’è stato un temporale: si è tuonato tutta la notte
- C’è stato un temporale: è tuonato tutta la notte

42) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio…
- Si è fatto tardi
- Ha fatto tardi
- È diventato tardi

43) Sta cercando un ristorante per cenare fuori stasera. Ne trova uno che è stato consigliato da Paolo e Mario.
- Paolo e Mario hanno raccontato che si era mangiato bene in quel ristorante
- Paolo e Mario hanno raccontato che avevano mangiato bene in quel ristorante

44) Scelga la frase che le suona meglio.
- Oggi ci sono tante stelle in cielo. Luccicano a meraviglia.
- Oggi ci sono tante stelle in cielo. Si luccica a meraviglia.

45) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio.
- È difficile trovare lavoro in Inghilterra se non si conosce l’inglese
- È difficile trovare lavoro in Inghilterra se uno non conosce l’inglese

46) Cosa è successo ieri in centro?
- Non si sa
- Non lo sa nessuno
- Uno non lo sa

47) La mamma di Giulia e Teresa chiede loro cosa hanno fatto ieri. Loro rispondono:
- Ieri si è studiato fino a tardi
- Ieri si è studiate fino a tardi
- Ieri abbiamo studiato fino a tardi
- Ieri si è studiato fino a tardi

48) In questo paese..
- Ci si sposa di domenica
- Le persone si sposano di domenica
- Uno si sposa di domenica

49) Secondo alcune ricerche…
- Se si mangia di sera si ingrassa di più
- Se uno mangia di sera ingrassa di più

50) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio.
- Quando si sta male si resta a casa
- Quando uno sta male resta a casa

51) Questa campagna è bellissima…
- Appena si scoglie la neve si fiorisce
- Appena si scoglie la neve fioriscono i fiori

52) Quando arriva l’estate…
- Si sta bene al nord
- Uno sta bene al nord

53) Durante una presentazione, per riferirsi a un aspetto già trattato, quale delle seguenti formule userebbe:
- Come si è già detto…
- Come è già stato detto…
- Come ho già detto…

54) Scelga la frase che le suona meglio
- Dopo mangiato si pesa di più
- Dopo mangiato uno pesa di più

Tuscan only:

55) Laura e Paolo hanno comprato una casa. Spiegano: (Scelga la frase che le suona meglio)
- La settimana scorsa ci siamo comprati una casa
- La settimana scorsa ci si è comprati una casa
- La settimana scorsa ci si è comprato una casa
- La settimana scorsa ci si è comprata una casa
56) Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio.
- Ce la siamo comprata
- Ci se l’è comprata
- Ce la si è comprata

57) Nel suo dialetto, si potrebbe dire:
- Noi si è mangiato?
- Noi si è fatto un picnic?
- Noi si è stati al mare?
- Noi si è caduti?
Appendix 2 – Nome questionnaire (Abruzzo only)

* Segni la risposta o le risposte che le suonano meglio. Tenga presente che non ci interessa una risposta ‘corretta’, ma solo quella più naturale nella sua varietà linguistica.

* Segni la risposta o le risposte che non le sembrano del tutto inusuali o strane nel tuo dialetto.

* Non selezioni alcuna risposta se nessuna di esse suona naturale nel suo dialetto. In questo caso, aggiunga la risposta che le viene spontanea nel contesto dato.

1. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio

   - Gliel’a nome detto
   - Gliel’a dome detto
   - Gliel’ann detto

2. Finisca la frase. Un gruppo di giovani stanno facendo una corsa di beneficenza.

   - A nome kɔrs 26 km oggi
   - A dome kɔrs 26 km oggi
   - Anne kɔrs 26 km oggi

3. Finisca la frase. Hai fatto l’esame oggi?

   - Si, m’a dome bocciato
   - Si, m’a nome bocciato
   - Si, m’ann bocciato

4. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio

   - La domenica nome mangia pesce
   - La domenica l’ome mangia pesce
   - La domenica dome mangia pesce
   - La domenica anne mangia pesce

5. Scelga la risposta che ti suona meglio

   - Nome fa sempre le stesse cose
   - Nome sempre fa le stesse cose
- Dome fa sempre le stesse cose
- Dome sempre fa le stesse cose
- Anne fa sempre le stesse cose
- Anne sempre fa le stesse cose

6. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio. La cena era sulla tavola ma…
- L’a nome già mangiata
- L’a già nome mangiato
- L’a già dome mangiato
- L’ann già mangiato
- L’a già anne mangiato

7. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
- Quanto nome sta male, (nome) resta a casa
- Quando l’ome sta male, resta a casa
- Quando dome sta male, resta a casa
- Quando anne sta male, resta a casa

8. Stiamo parlando dei bambini….
- Se nome dormisse bene sarebbe più contento
- Se dome dormisse bene sarebbe più contento
- Se anne dormisse bene sarebbe più contento
- Se l’ome dormisse bene sarebbe più contento

9. Chi ha urlato?
- Nome (per dire ‘loro’)
- Nome (per dire ‘nessuno’)
- Dome
- Anne

10. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
- Nome non l’a atfis apposta
- Non nome l’a atfis apposta

11. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
- L’a nome forse licenziato per quello che ha fatto
- L’a dome forse licenziato per quello che ha fatto
- L’a forse nome licenziato per quello che ha fatto
- L’a forse dome licenziato per quello che ha fatto
- L’anne forse licenziato per quello che ha fatto
- L’a forse anne licenziato per quello che ha fatto

12. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - Nome magnø
   - Anne magnø
   - Dome magnø

13. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - Nome arriva domani
   - Domani arriva nome
   - Dome arriva domani
   - Domani arriva dome
   - Anne arriva domani
   - Domani arriva anne

14. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - Se l’ome sposa di domenica
   - Le persone si sposano di domenica

15. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - Ne nome compra due
   - Nome ne compra due

16. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - A nome piace andare al cinema
   - A dome piace andare al cinema
   - A loro piace andare al cinema

17. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
   - In guerra nome muore tutti i giorni
   - In guerra l’ome muore tutti i giorni
- In guerra dome muore tutti i giorni
- In guerra si muore tutti i giorni

18. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
- A nome temuto per la salute di Giovanni
- A dome temuto per la salute di Giovanni
- Anne temuto per la salute di Giovanni

19. Scelga la risposta che le suona meglio
- Nome mangiò
- Dome mangiò