

Epenthesis of **-/ə/** prosodically licensed?

Evidence from southern Italian dialects

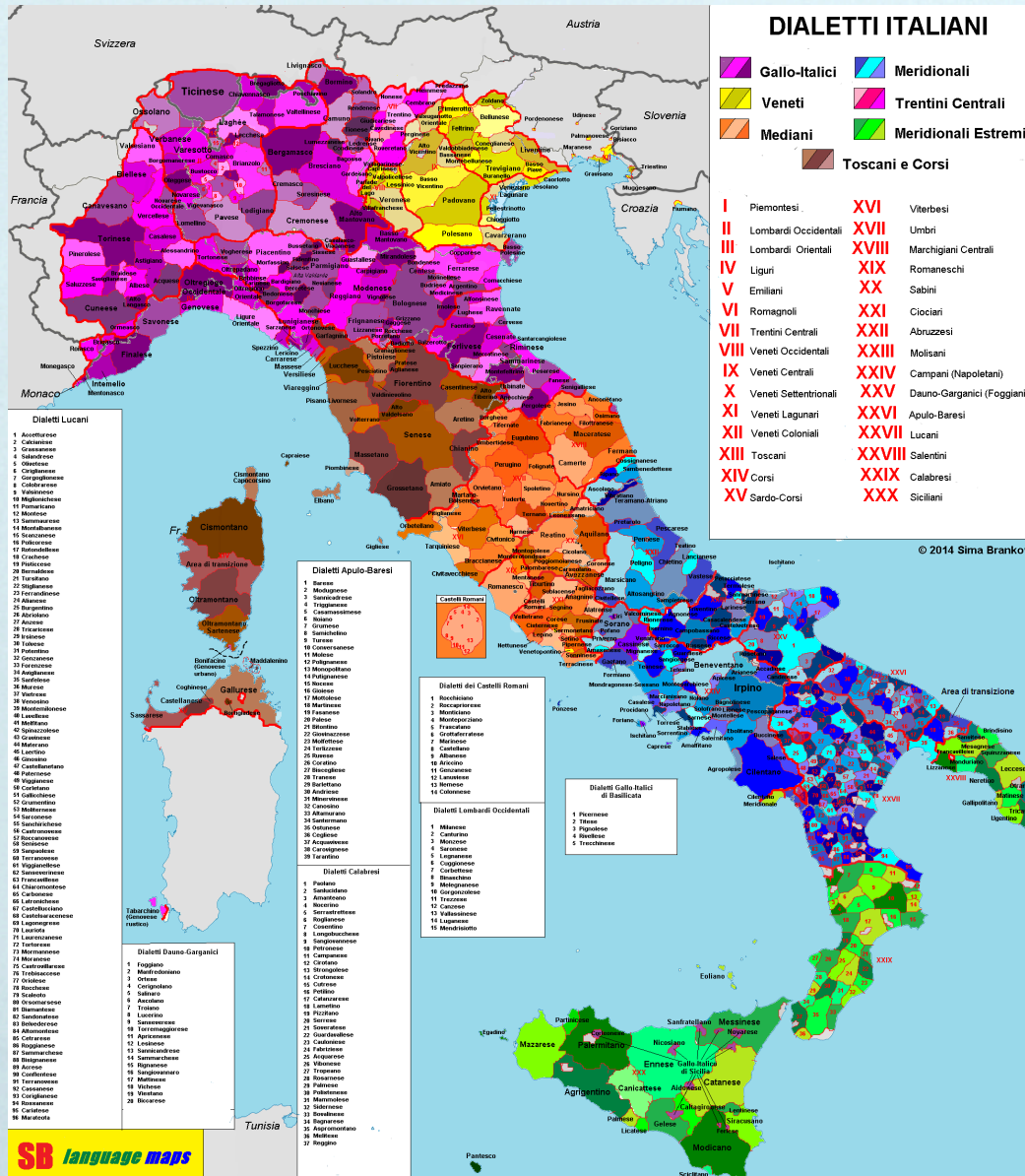
Giuseppina Silvestri
University of Cambridge
gs486@cam.ac.uk

ProVar workshop
Universidade de Lisboa
9.7.2015

Outline

- 1. Variation across Italo-Romance dialects**
- 2. Morphological relevance of $-/\text{ə}/$**
- 3. The dialects of the 'Lausberg Area'**
- 4. Interrogatives and Exclamatives**
- 5. A pilot experiment**
- 6. Interface and interfaces**

Southern Italian dialects (SIDs): a heterogeneous group



Upper southern
Italian dialects
(USIDs)

Extreme southern
Italian dialects
(ESIDs)

USIDs & ESIDs: a few features

- ❑ Common features
 - spots of vowel harmony
 - retention of long consonants (in common with CIDs)
 - weakening of postnasal consonants /nd/ > [nn], /mb/ > [mm]
 - palatalization of /pl/- > [kj]-

- ❑ Only **ESIDs** features
 - 'Sicilian' tonic vowel system /a ε i ɔ u/
 - atonic vowels /a i u/
 - metaphony mostly absent (but active in western Sicily)

- ❑ Only **USIDs** features
 - final atonic vowels: all merge as /ə/ (-/a/ may remain distinct)
 - lenition of intervocalic /p t k/ > [b̥ d̥ ɡ̥]

Atonic final vowels : USIDs and ESIDs

ESIDs

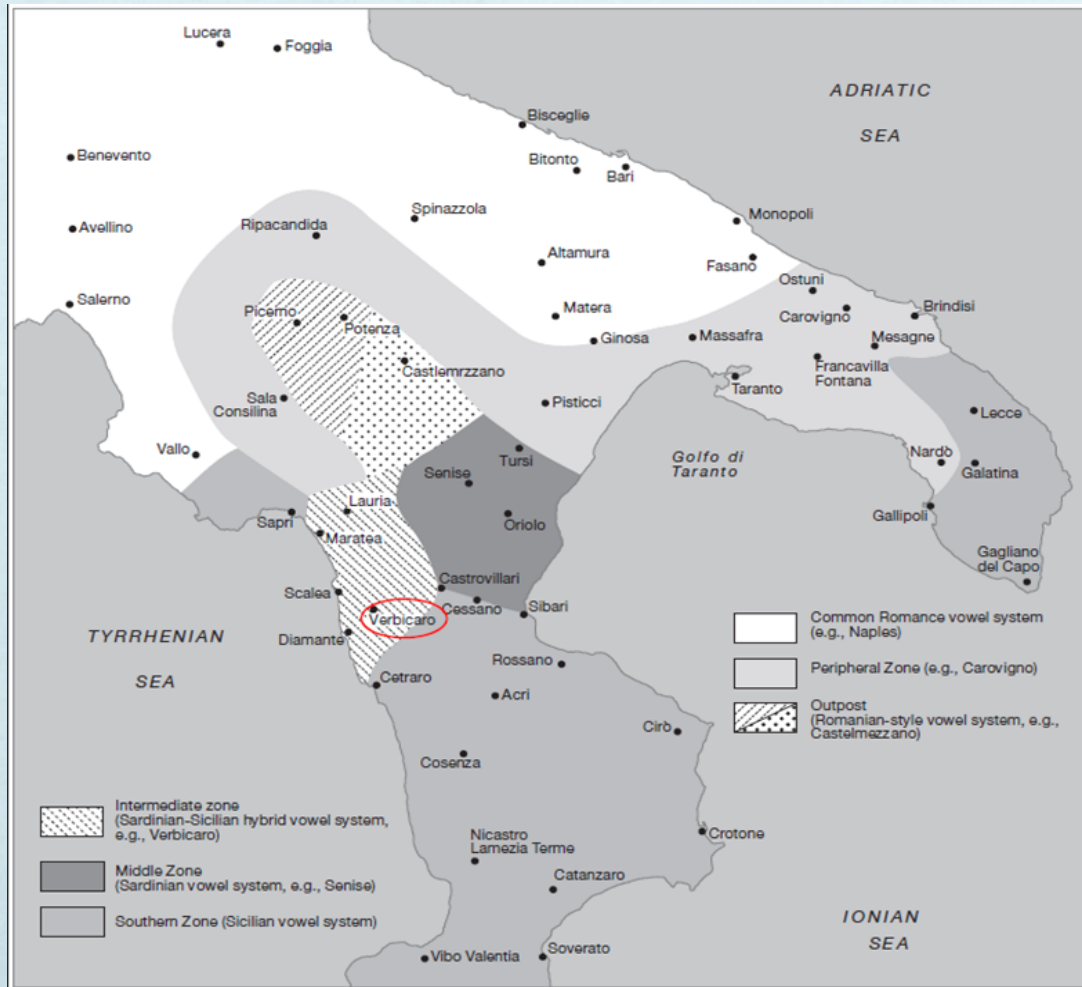
/e i/ > [i]		/a/ > [a]		/o u/ > [u]	
ITA	SIC	ITA	SIC	ITA	SIC
pensare	pinsari	casa	casa	figlio	figghju
brutte/i	brutti	mamma	mamma	penso	pensu

USIDs

/e i o u/ > [ə]		/a/ > [ə] / [^A]	
ITA	NEAP	ITA	NEAP
grandi/e	grannə	bella	bellə/ ^A
prato	pratə	mamma	mammə/ ^A

USIDs: the 'Lausberg area'

- H. Lausberg (1939)
- sub-zones = tonic vowel systems



Verbicaro within the 'Lausberg Area'.

From: Ledgeway, A., 2015. *The Language of Italy*. Ms. University of Cambridge.

Verbicarese: final /ə/ (I)

◆ Morphology: **nominal domain**

➤ /ə/ ~ /a/

	M			F		
SG	nu	kwa'tra:rə	a'davətə	na	kwa'tra:ra	a'davəta
	a	boy	tall	a	girl	tall
PL	'tʃertə kwa'tra:rə a'davətə					
	some	boys	tall			

	M	F	M	F	M	F
SG	'fatt-ə	'fatt-a	'rutt-ə	'rutt-a	'mɪ:s-ə	'mɪ:s-a
PL						

done

broken

put on

Verbicarese: final /ə/ (II)

➤ Morphology: **verb** paradigms

SG I	parl-[ə]	‘I talk’	SG I	parl-[^l ɛra] ^{-RF}	‘I’d talk’
II	parl-[əsə]		II	parl-[^l ɛrəsə]	
III	parl-[ədə] ^{-RF} /-[a] ^{+RF}		III	parl-[^l ɛrədə] ^{-RF} /-[ɛra] ^{+RF}	
PL I	parl-[^l amə]		PL I	parl-[^l ɛrəmə]	
II	parl-[^l atsə]		II	parl-[^l ɛrətsə]	
III	parl-[ənə]		III	parl-[^l ɛrənə]	

-/ə/ > ∅ : phonetic contexts

- Final syllable onset:
 - affricates: ts(ː) dz(ː) tʃ(ː) dʒ(ː)
 - plosives: p(ː) b(ː) t(ː) d(ː) c(ː) ʃ(ː) k(ː) g(ː)
- target words in final (pre-pausal) position
- target word in internal position:
 - high speech rate > deletion of -/ə/ (?)

- (1) a. a 'bbist a nnu 'tʃʊttʃ^h
b. a 'bbist a nnu 'tʃʊttʃə

(s/he) has seen to a donky

- (2) a. 'mamma 'grida 'ttrɔpp^h
b. 'mamma 'grida 'ttrɔppə

mom screams too much

- (3) a. m-'a 'ffatt^h 'dɔl ʊ 'jwidət^h
b. m-'a 'ffatt^h 'dɔl ʊ 'jwidətə

to.me has made suffer the finger

-/ə/ > ∅ : blocking contexts

- Target word in final-sentence position:
 - pragmatically ***marked*** **exclamatives**
 - pragmatically ***marked*** **interrogatives**
- Target word in non-final sentence position:
 - narrow focus / bears a F-feature
(Jackendoff 1972, Truckenbrodt 1995, 2012)
 - unmarked word order

-/ə/ > ∅ blocking contexts: narrow focus

- (4) a. vʊ'lwɛrə nʊ 'miəndz^h prə'sʊtt^h
b. vʊ'lwɛrə nʊ 'miəndzə prə'sʊtt^h
I'd want a half ham

➤ (4a) all-new sentence

- answer to Q: *how much of it do you want?*

➤ (4b) narrow focus on 'a half'

- answer to Q: *do you want a quarter of it?*

Insertion rule or blocking of a deletion rule?

❖ Blocking of deletion: evidence

○ Etymology:

- final atonic vowels $-/i\ u/ > -/ə/$

○ Phonetic contexts:

- deletion of $-/ə/$ only with plosives and affricates

❖ Insertion: evidence

○ Active with borrowings

(5) a. $kk-u\ 'klwikk\ fun'\delta j\un\delta\delta$

b. $kk-u\ 'klwikk\delta\ fun'\delta j\un\delta\delta$

with.the click (it) work.3SG

Unmarked (no wh-) exclamatives

- ❑ exclamatives = assertives
 - encode a propositional content assumed to be true
- ❑ assertive intention is **informative** ≠ exclamative one is **expressive**
(Delfitto-Fiorin 2014, Zanuttini-Portner 2003)

- ❖ systematic correlation between intonation and exclamation
- ❖ produced with considerably high pitch
- ❖ crosslinguistically, final falling contour and initial extra H pitch

- ☞ great variation for melodic contour! an intonation for exclamatives?
(Bolinger 1989, Delattre 1966 , O'Connor-Arnold 1961)

- **spoken Italian:**
 - intonation** ↔ **exclamative modality, illocutive force**
 - (D'Eugenio 1976; Grice et al. 2005; Sorianello 2010, 2011, 2012)

Unmarked (yes-no) interrogatives

□ Information-seeking utterances

❖ Italian: intonation crucially distinctive for questions (vs statements)

❖ query intonation (Carletta et al. 1997, a.o.)

❖ Barese Italian: same intonation for tentative checks/confirmation

❖ Primary cue: pitch accent in SIDs

L+H* (Bari), L*+H (Palermo and Naples), followed by **final fall**

☞ -variation for melodic contour among Italian varieties!

-same contour used for different purposes (Grice et al. 2005)

Marked no-wh exclamatives

- Pragmatically characterized:
further clarification, higher degree of assertiveness,
peremptoriness
- ❖ melodic contour \neq standard Italian

Marked yes-no questions

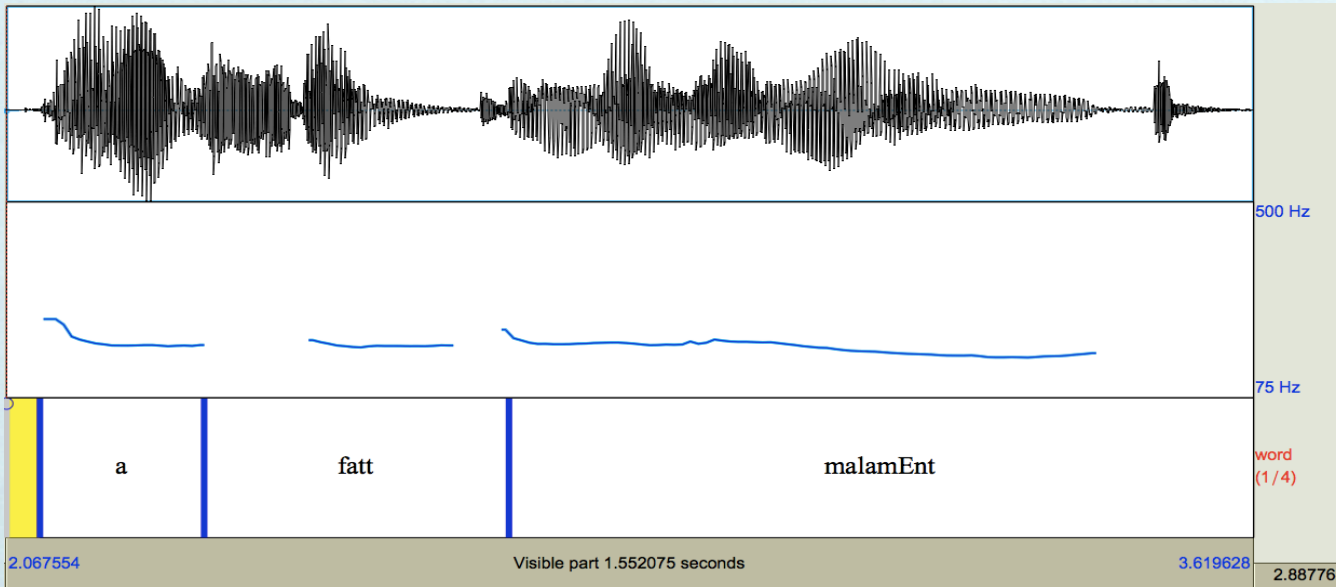
- pragmatically characterized:
incredulity, query of further confirmation, concern
- more content than counter-expectation Q
- ❖ melodic contour \neq standard Italian questions
(with same pragmatic purposes)

❖ **Target words = focus, new information**

A pilot experiment

- 6 informants: 3 M (22, 46, 68); 3 F (25, 51, 83)
- 5 sentences / informant
- same sentence with 5 different intonation patters:
assertive, unmarked and marked exclamative, unmarked and marked interrogative
- quiet room
- Recording device: *Pinnacle Podcast Factory*
- 44,1 kHz – 48 kHz
- PRAAT analysis: target utterances segmented and hand labelled
- SAMPA transcription

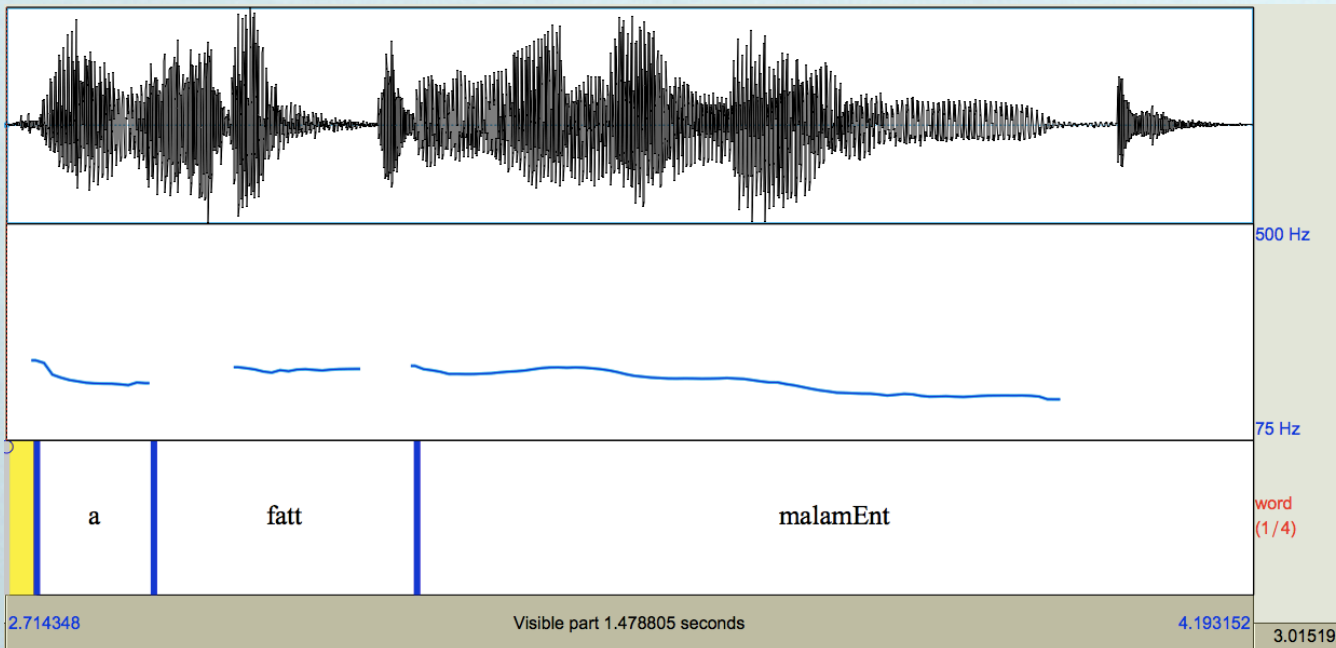
Prosodic features: statement vs unmarked no-wh exclamatives



(6) Assertive

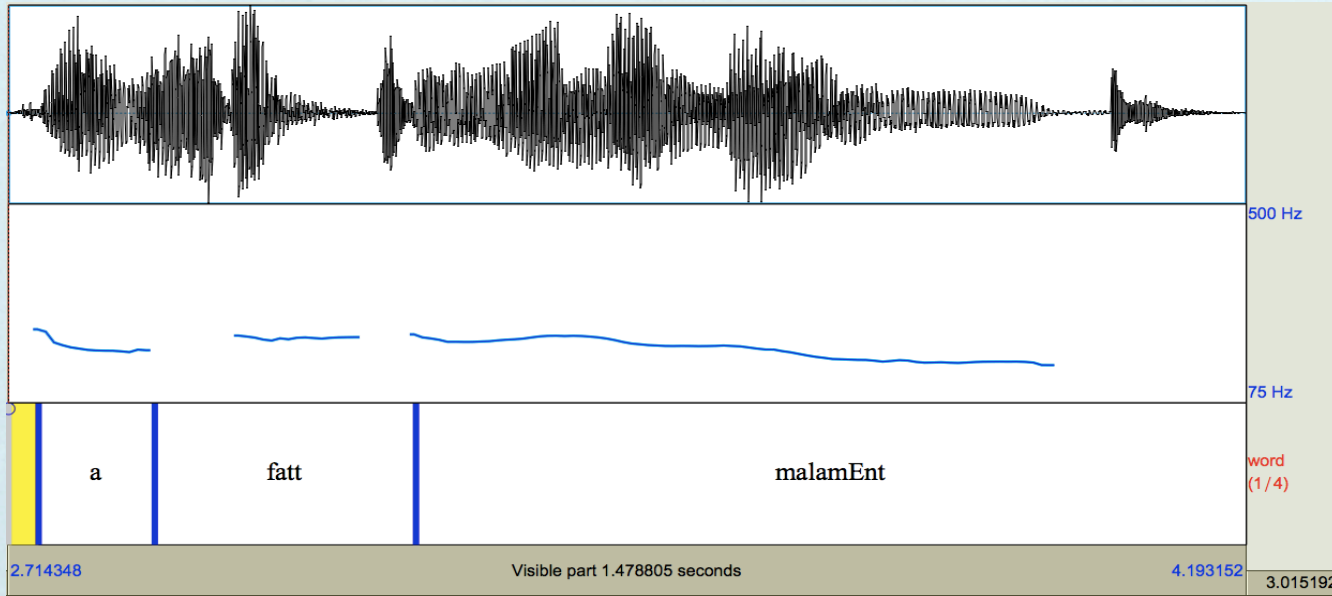
[a: fatt^h malamEnt]

's/he has done it
badly'

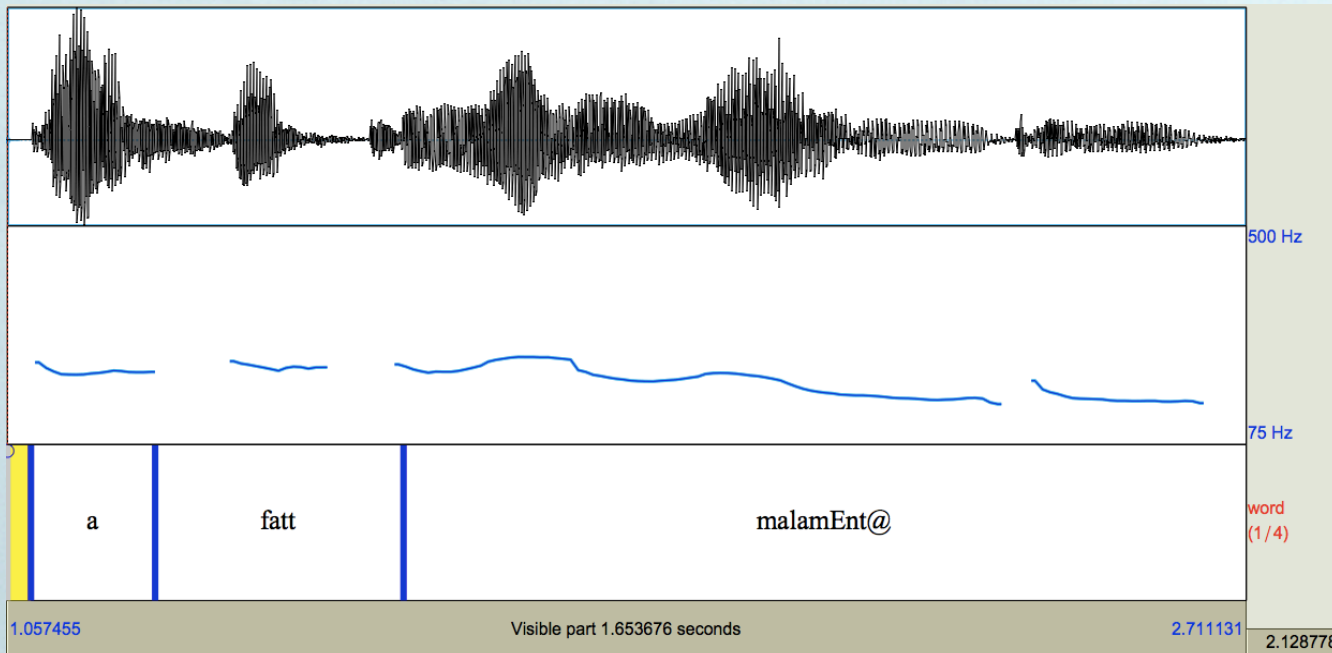


(7) Unmarked Excl

Prosodic features: unmarked vs marked no-wh exclamatives

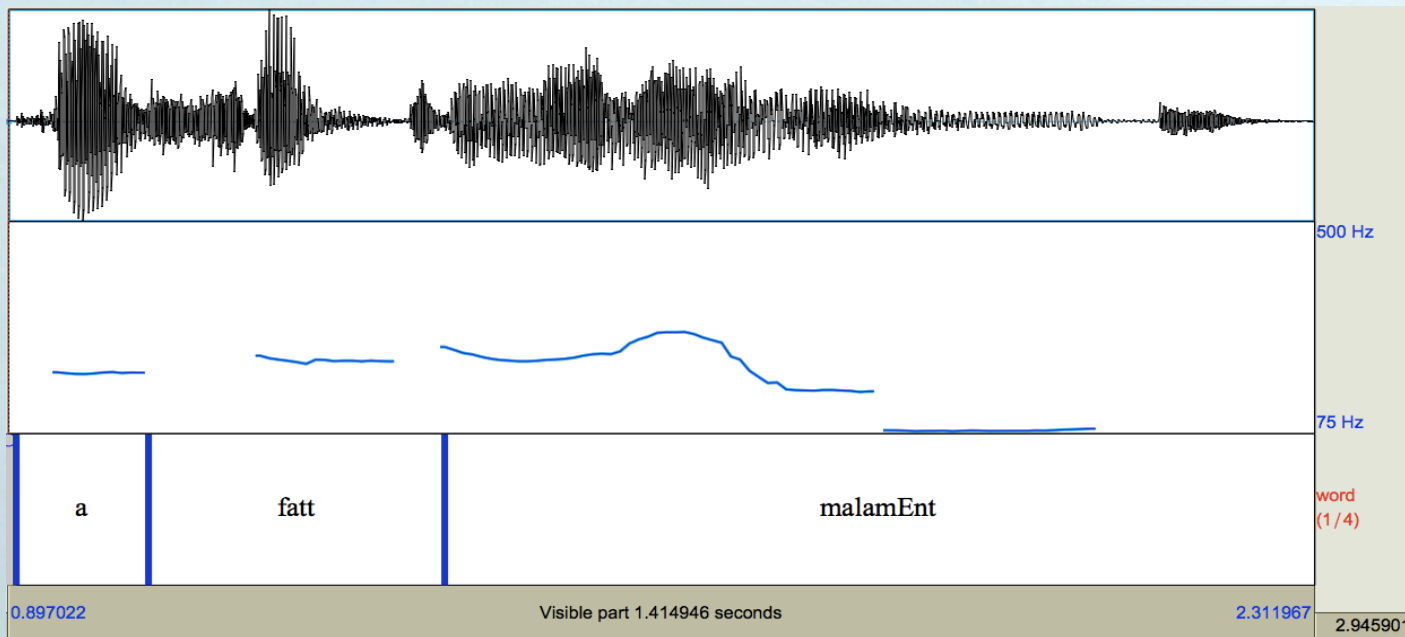
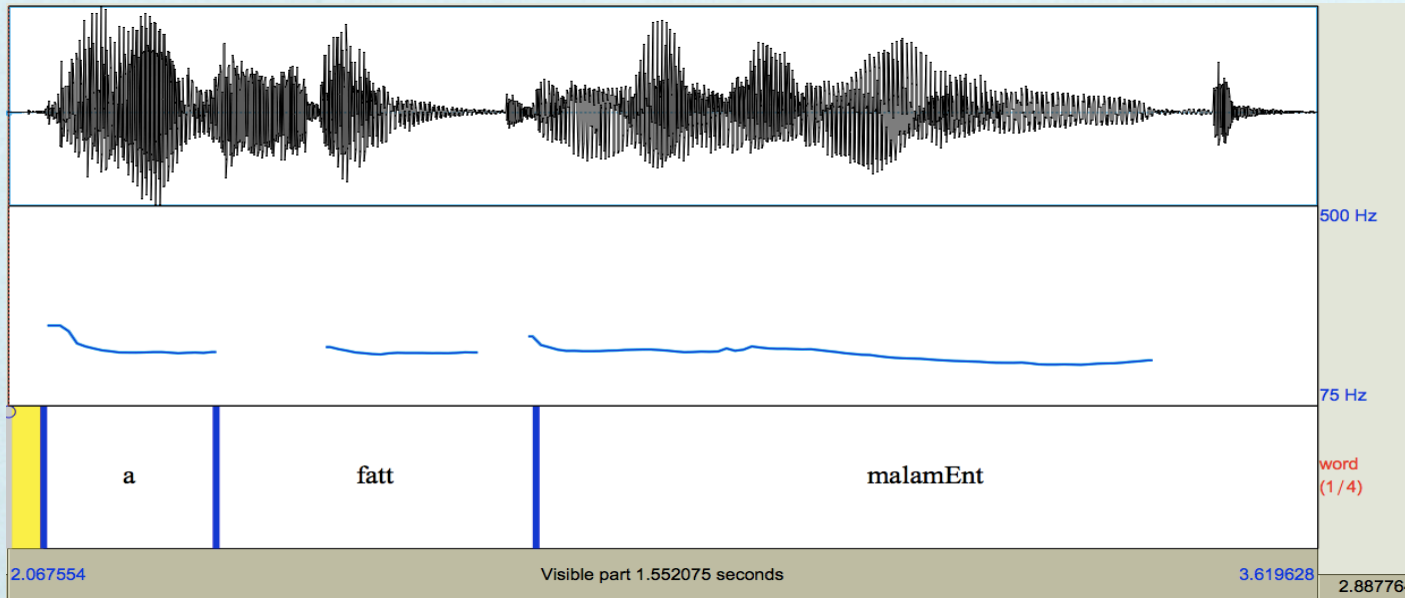


(7) Unmarked Excl

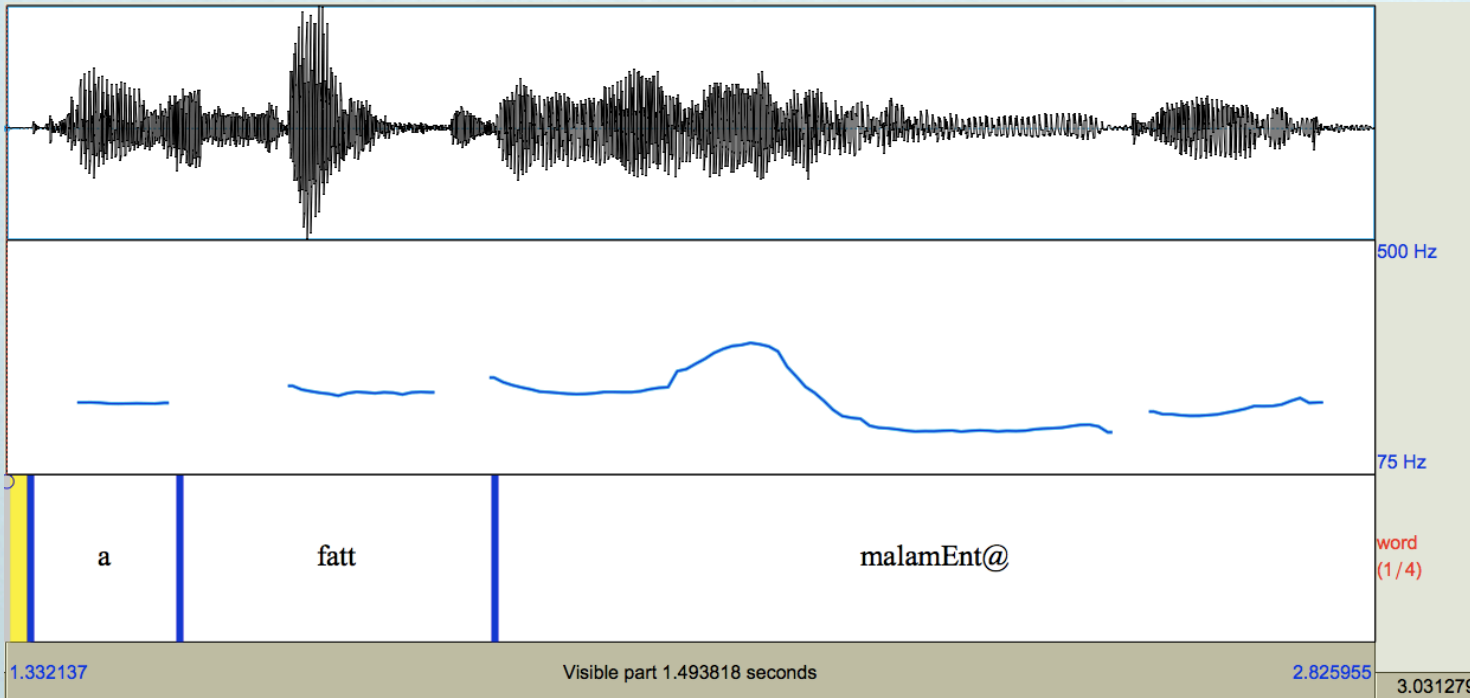
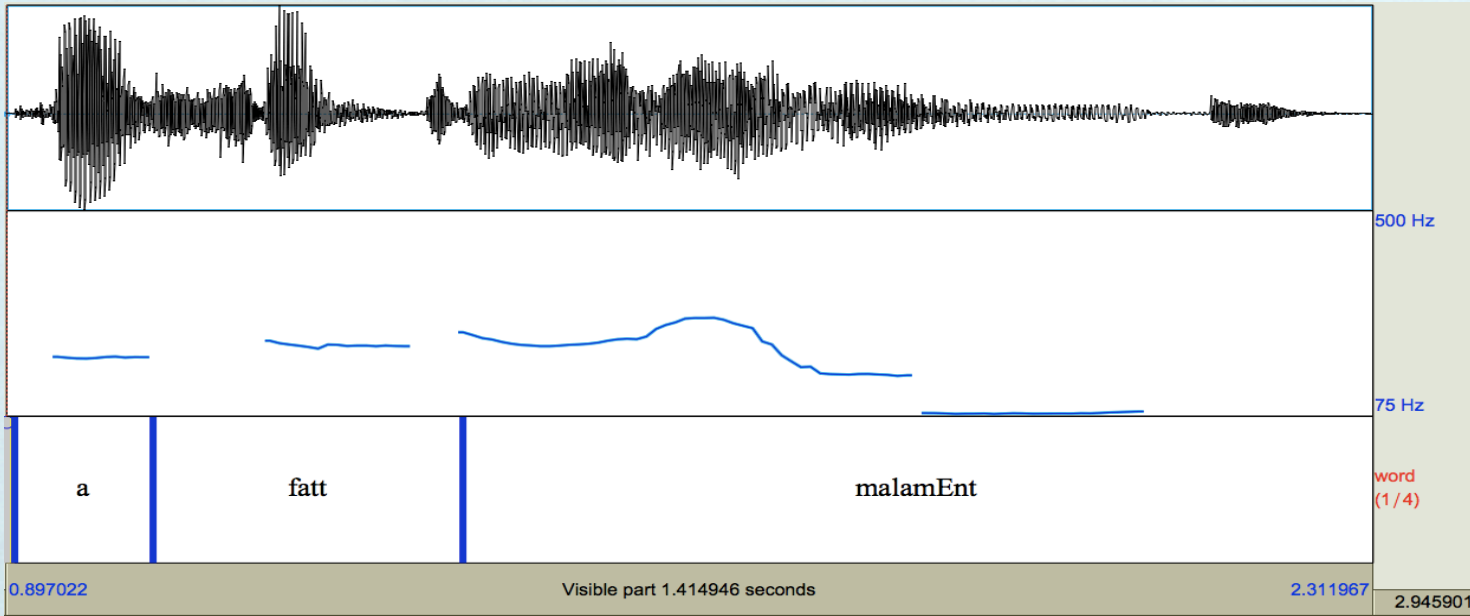


(8) Marked Excl

Prosodic features: statement vs unmarked yes-no questions



Prosodic features: unmarked vs marked yes-no questions



Preliminary observations

- Marked exclamations $H^* + L\%$
- Marked questions $L^* + H\%$

- Age and gender divides:

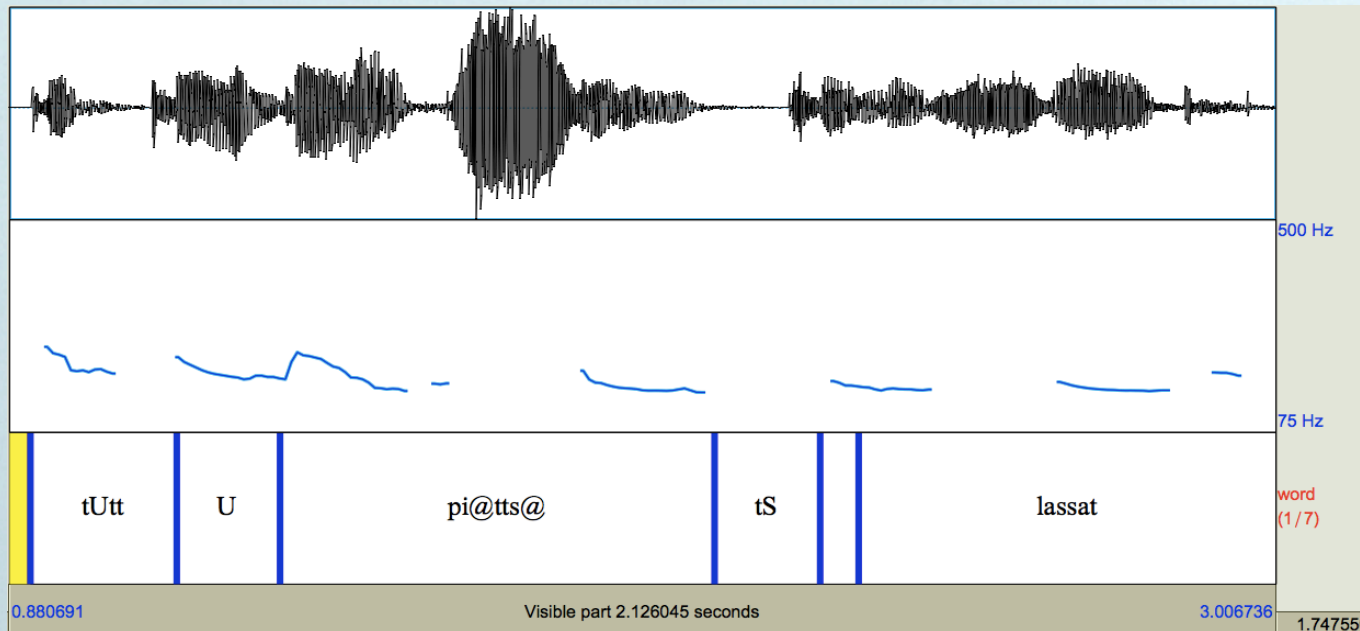
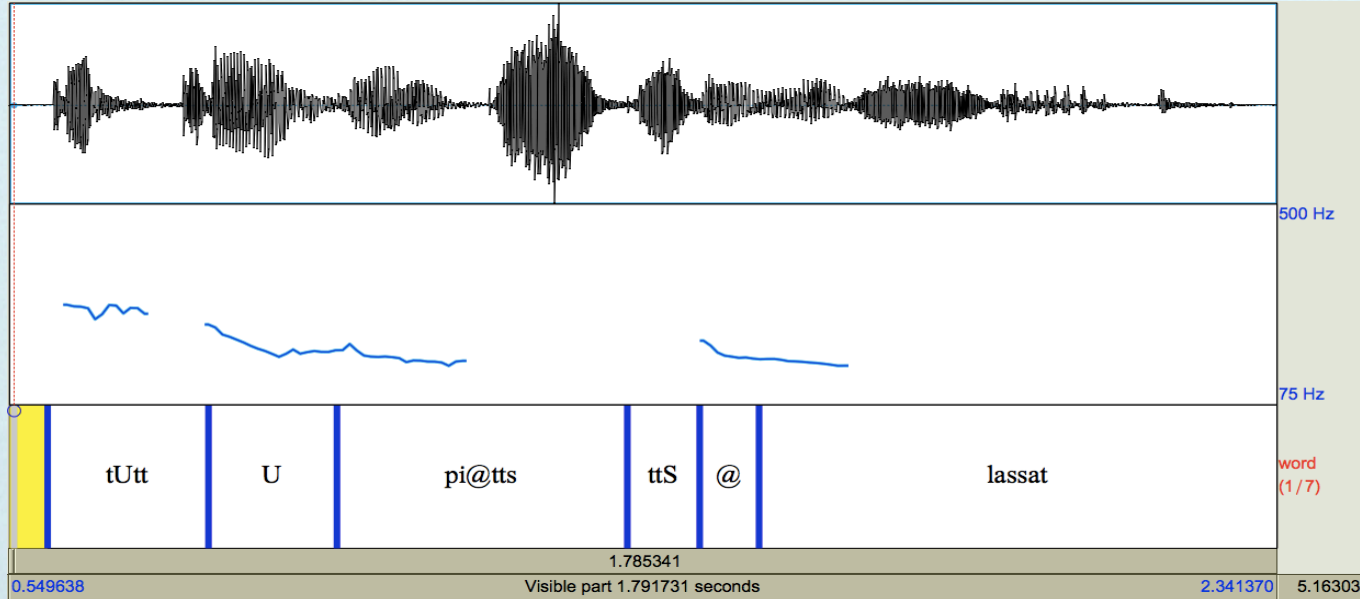
- marked questions
 - F > 65 allow $L^* + L\%$
 - M prefer $L^* + L\%$

- **Information structure**

- target word within the sentence
 - realization of /ə/ if narrow focus
(same tone as the word/sentence accent)

/ə/ and narrow/contrastive focus

[ˈtʊt ʊ ˈpiəts ˈtʃa lasˈsɑt] 's/he left the whole piece'



Recap

- USIDs: inter and intra **variation**
- unmarked questions and exclamations:
 - deletion of $-\text{/ə/}$ in target words
 - articulation of slight aspiration (?)
- **marked questions and exclamations:**
 - realization of $-\text{/ə/}$ in target words
 - re-syllabification:
coda > onset of /ə/ syllable
 - target words realized with $-\text{/ə/}$ = narrow focus
 - specific pragmatic interpretation

Phonology-syntax interface

- Different components of the grammar (phonology, syntax, semantics) do not operate in isolation
(cf. Chomsky 1981, 1995; Selkirk 1974, 2001, 2011)
- Interfaces (Hauser-Chomsky-Fitch 2002):
syntactic derivations mapped onto semantic and phonological representations
- **Phonology-syntax interface**: mutual interactions between syntax and phonology
(cf. Inkelas-Zec 1990, Reinhart 1995, Zubizarreta 1998, Samek-Lodovici 2005, Richards 2009)

-/ə/ within the interface: exclamatives

- target word = (narrow) focus
- focus in situ = argument or modifier surfacing rightwards
(e.g. V+DP; VP+Adv; N+Adj)
(Lambrecht 1994, Krifka 2007)
- Activation of the left periphery: complementizer 'ca'
- Expression of FORCE (Chomsky 1995, Rizzi 1997)

(13) [CP [Force **ca** [IP haa [VP/VP fatt malamentə]]]] [MARKED]

that (s/he) it.has done badly
's/he has done it (definitely) badly!'

(14) [CP ∅ [IP haa [VP/VP fatt malament∅]]] [UNMARKED]

(s/he) it.has done badly
's/he has done it (definitely) badly!'

Conclusive remarks

- ✓ Great variation standard Ita vs USIDs
 - ✓ Among USIDs
- ✓ Optionality only apparent
- ✓ deletion of $-/\text{ə}/$ blocked under definable conditions

- ✓ **marked Q**
 - phonology \Leftrightarrow prosody $>$ pragmatics
 - prosody \Leftrightarrow information structure

- ✓ **marked E**
 - phonology \Leftrightarrow prosody $>$ pragmatics
 - prosody \Leftrightarrow information structure
 - prosody \Leftrightarrow syntax (*ca*)

- ✓ **empirical evidence**
 - variation** in the tone quality \Leftrightarrow sociolinguistic parameters

Remaining questions & further investigation

- why F requires same mechanism of (re)insertion of /ə/ as marked Q and Excl?
(what about ESIDs?)
- a multi-level account by assuming interface principles?
- independent syntactic evidence fro marked Q?
- Extensive experiment (Tone Break Index analysis)
- Markedness in assertive/declarative clauses?
 - peculiar prosodic features > (re)insertion of /ə/
 - which pragmatic purposes?

Acknowledgements

Informants:

G. Frasca, R. Migala, M. Sarro

V. Casella, G. Russo, L. Tufo

References (i)

- Bolinger, D., 1989. *Intonation and its uses*. Palo Alto, Stanford University Press.
- Chomsky, N., 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. MIT Press.
- Delfitto, D., Fiorin, G., 2014. Exclamatives: Issues of syntax logical form and interpretation.
- Delattre, D., 1966. Les dix intonations de base du français. *French Review* 40, 1-14.
- D'Eugenio, A., 1976. The intonation system in Italian and English. *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata* 8, 57-85.
- Grice, M., D'Imperio, M.P., Savino, M., Avesani, C., 2005. Strategies for intonation labelling across varieties of Italian. In: J. Sun-Ah (ed), *Prosodic Typology: the phonology of intonation and phrasing*. New York: OUP, 362-89.
- Inkelas, S., Zec, D., 1990. Prosodically constrained syntax. In: S. Inkelas D. Zec (eds.), *The phonology-syntax connection*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hauser, M. D., Chomsky, N., Fitch, T., 2002. Faculty of Language: what is it, who has it, and how did it evolve? *Science* 298, 1569-79.
- Jackendoff, R.S., 1972. *Semantic interpretation in generative grammar*. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA.
- Krifka, M., 2007. Basic notions of information structure. In C. Féry, G. Fanselow & M. Krifka (eds.) *The notions of information structure*, 13-55. Postdam: Universitätsverlag.
- Lambrecht, K., 1994. *Information structure and sentence form: topic, focus and the mental representations of discourse referents*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Lausberg, H., 1939. *Die Mundarten Südlukaniens*. Halle: Max Niemeyer.
- O'Connor, J.D., Arnold, G.F., 1961. *Intonation of colloquial English*. London, Longmans.
- Pellegrini, G.B., 1977. *Carta dei dialetti d'Italia*. Pisa: Pacini.
- Richards, N., 2009. *Uttering Trees*. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press.

- Rizzi, L., 1997. The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery. In L. Haegeman (ed), *Elements of Grammar*. Kluwer: Dordrecht.
- Rohlf, G., 1969. *Grammatica storica della lingua italiana e dei suoi dialetti*. Torino: Einaudi.
- Samek-Lodovici, V., 2005. Prosody Syntax Interaction in the Expression of Focus. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 23, 687-755.
- Selkirk, E., 1984. *Phonology and Syntax: the relation between sound and structure*. MIT: Cambridge, MA.
- Selkirk, E., 2001. Sentence prosody: intonation, stress, and phrasing. In: J. A. Goldsmith (ed.) *The Handbook of Phonological Theory*, 550-69. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.
- Selkirk, E., 2011. The syntax-phonology interface. In J. Goldsmith, J. Riggle and A. Yu (eds), *The Handbook of Phonological Theory* (2nd edition). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sorianello, P., 2010. Il tipo esclamativo. Analisi e percezione delle risorse prosodiche. In F. Cutugno, P. Maturi, R. Savy, G. Abete, I. Alfano (eds), *Parlare con le persone, parlare con le macchine*, Atti del VI Convegno Nazionale dell' AISV. Torriana, EDK, 85-104.
- Sorianello, P., 2011. Aspetti pragmatici e prosodici dell'atto esclamativo. *Studi Linguistici e Filologici Online* 9, 287-332.
- Sorianello, P., 2012. A prosodic account of Italian exclamative sentences: a gating test.
- Truckenbrodt, H., 1995. *Phonological phrases: their relation to syntax, focus, and prominence*. Doctoral Thesis. MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Truckenbrodt, H., 2012. An analysis of prosodic F-effects in interrogatives: prosody, syntax and semantics. *Lingua* 124, 131-75.
- Zanuttini, R., Portner, P., 2003. Exclamative Clauses: At the Syntax-Semantics Interface. *Language* 79, 38-81.

Thank you!
Grazie molte!
Muito obrigada!
Obbligatissima! (Sicilian)

Giuseppina Silvestri
University of Cambridge
gs486@cam.ac.uk