

A reduplicated form in Venetan: An analysis at the semantics-pragmatics and syntax interface

Linda Badan,^a Andrea Padovan^b

^a Università di Padova, Italy <linda.badan@unipd.it>

^b Università di Verona, Italy <andrea.padovan@univr.it>

This paper investigates the syntax and semantics of the expression *e anca anca* – literally ‘and also also’ – attested in various Venetan dialects spoken in North-Eastern Italy. Treated as a fixed phrase, it consists of the conjunction *e* (‘and’) and a reduplicated form of the additive adverb *anca* (‘also’). Depending on the context, it conveys either an emphatic increase (‘and even more’) or decrease (‘and even less’). We argue that *e anca anca* expresses the speaker’s epistemic attitude and functions as an instance of *even-focus*, a type of scalar, focus-sensitive expression. Our proposal is that *e anca anca* has undergone grammaticalization and behaves as a discourse marker. By ‘grammaticalized’ we mean, for instance, that the conjunction *e* no longer functions as a canonical coordinator, and the reduplication of *anca* is not interpreted compositionally. Instead, the expression occupies a dedicated position in the left periphery, specifically associated with corrective focus.

KEYWORDS: reduplication, adverbs, Venetan, focus.

1. Introduction

In this paper we explore the syntax and semantics of the form *e anca anca*, lit. ‘and also also’, used in several Venetan varieties (spoken in North-Eastern Italy). *E anca anca* (henceforth EAA) is used as a fixed form composed by the conjunction *e* ‘and’ and the reduplication of the additive adverb *anca* ‘also’ and it is interpreted as either ‘(and) even more’ or ‘(and) even less’ depending on the context. (Note that we use deitalicized script for emphasis in the examples.)

- (1) *Par compràr chea casa el gà speso un miliòn de*
to buy that house he has spent a million of
euro... e anca anca...
euro and also also
‘To buy that house he spent one million euro... and (maybe / I think) even more...’

- (2) *A difarensa dai francesi che i mete l’acento*
at differencefrom.the French that CL put the accent
dapartuto into scritto, noialtri usemo soeo quei
everywhere in.the written we use only those
imparà a scoea... e anca anca...
learnt at school and also also
‘Differently from the French who put accents everywhere in the written language, we use only those we learnt at school... and (maybe / I think) even less’¹

We observe that the presence of EAA expresses the speaker's point of view and a correction with respect to the previous utterance, and requires a quantificational domain, that is the presence of a clear threshold or evaluable standard:

- (3) **Uncò ze tanto caldo e anca anca...*
today is very hot and also also
'Today it's very hot and (I think) even more...'
- (4) *Uncò ghe ga da èsare 40 gradi e anca anca...*
today there has to be 40 degrees and also also
'Today there must be 40 degrees and (I think/maybe) even more...'

We will show that the EAA represents an intriguing phenomenon occurring at the interface between semantics-pragmatics and syntax. In this paper, we build on our analysis of EAA as a discourse marker encoding the speaker's knowledge about a pragmatically relevant background (Badan & Padovan 2023). In particular, EAA is specialized in marking scalarity, expressing focus and a sort of contrast; we argue EAA is merged in a dedicated projection within the syntactic spine, reflecting relationships within the clause or between clauses. In this paper, we develop and refine Badan & Padovan's (2023) analysis by showing that EAA occurs in the SpeechAct layer of the syntactic spine, encoding a sort of corrective contrast at the same time.

The paper is organized as follows: After the introduction of the key properties of EAA (§1), we summarize Badan & Padovan's (2023) previous analysis (§2), highlighting the function of EAA as a discourse marker expressing the speaker's viewpoint (§2.1) and its scalar focus interpretation (§2.2). The study then refines the syntactic proposal, arguing that EAA occupies a dedicated position in the SpeechAct layer (§2.3) and encodes corrective contrast (§3.1). By comparing it with contrastive reduplication in other languages (§3.1.2), the paper develops a novel structural analysis (§3.2.1), explaining its syntactic, prosodic, and interpretive properties. The conclusions (§4) emphasize its significance for understanding the integration of discourse markers into syntax.

2. *Badan & Padovan (2023): main issues*

2.1 *The speaker's viewpoint*

To make sense of the role of EAA, we show that it is endowed with specific properties both at the sentence and at the discourse level: we contend that EAA expresses the speaker's epistemic attitude, as its inter-

pretation is not incompatible with other optional markers with the same modal content, e.g. the epistemic future *gavarà* ‘will have’ in (5) or an epistemic modal such as *ga* ‘has-to/must’ in (6):

- (5) *Par compràr chea casa el gavarà speso 500.000*
 to buy that house he have.FUT spent 500,000
euro e anca anca...²
 euro and also also
 ‘To buy that house he will have spent 500,000 euro and maybe even more...’
- (6) *Fora ghe ga da èsare 40 gradi e anca anca...*
 outside there has to be 40 degrees and also also
 ‘Outside there must be 40 degrees and maybe even more...’

However, it is not the case that all epistemic expressions can co-occur with EAA: e.g. *me digo* ‘I think/maybe’ is only acceptable with non-reduplicated forms like *anca de pì/de manco* ‘even more/less’ (7) and cannot directly precede EAA probably due to redundancy (8):

- (7) *Me fradeo gà pagà sento euro e me digo anca de pì*
 my brother has paid 100 euro and to.me I.say also of more
 ‘My brother has paid 100 euro and maybe even more’
- (8) **Me fradeo gà pagà sento euro e me digo anca anca...*
 my brother has paid 100 euro and to.me I.say also also
 ‘My brother has paid 100 euro and maybe even more’

It is reasonable to assume there is a difference between epistemic modals and adverbial expressions such as *me digo*: sentences in which the latter cooccurs with EAA are somehow degraded. EAA can only express the speaker’s point of view: (9) is infelicitous since the embedded speaker’s point of view clashes with the matrix subject’s point of view.

- (9) *?*El ze convinto che i gàbia speso 500.000 euro e anca anca...³*
 he is convinced that they have spent 500,000 euro and also also
 ‘He is convinced that they have spent 500,000 euro and (I think) even more...’

The sentence can be grammatical only if EAA refers to the matrix subject’s point of view.

2.2 Scalar focus

We show that EAA is arguably interpreted as *even-focus*, which is considered a type of scalar focus-sensitive expression. In the literature, (Horn 1969; Karttunen & Peters 1979; Rooth 1985, among others) *even*⁴ has been analysed as a focus adverb that opens a set of alternative⁵ propositions ordered on a scale. *Even* ranks its associated proposition or

element as high (or low, depending on the context) on a relevant scale and presupposes the truth of alternatives to the focused element.

- (10) *Even John solved the problem.*

Presupposition: John is the least likely person to solve the problem (on a scale of likelihood).

Assertion: John solved the problem.

Specifically, there are alternative propositions in the context that are less extreme on the relevant scale; The proposition containing the focused element is at the highest (or lowest) end of that scale. *Even* operates in conjunction with a focused element (as e.g. *John* in (10)), which determines the set of alternatives over which the scalar presupposition is calculated. The alternatives are drawn from replacing the focused element with other contextually relevant items.

- (11) *Even [John]_{focus} solved the problem.*

Alternatives: Mary solved the problem, Bill solved the problem, etc.

Scalar implication: John is the least expected among these alternatives.

The interpretation of *even* is contextually determined. Possible scales include (i) Likelihood: *Even John solved the problem* (John is least likely to solve it); (ii) Desirability: *Even John was invited to the party* (John is least desirable to invite). (iii) Effort: *Even John finished his homework* (John requires the biggest effort) (see Giannakidou 2007). *Even* strengthens the assertive component by emphasizing the extremity of the focused proposition within the contextually relevant scale. The multifaceted role of *even* makes it a scalar focus-sensitive expression that interacts with syntax, pragmatics, and semantics, often requiring detailed contextual analysis: this is reminiscent of EAA's import in our examples. To capture the semantic import of EAA we build on Zanuttini & Portner's (2003) work on exclamative clauses, which substantiates our view on EAA. In general, exclamatives are taken to share a meaningful domain with interrogative clauses: this domain is under the scope of the *wh*-element/quantifier and is said to be widened in the exclamatives. In fact, the interpretation of an exclamative clause implies the existence of a different domain containing more elements under the scope of the quantifier: this is dubbed widening effect. Although EAA clauses in themselves are not to be interpreted as exclamative clauses – there are no *wh*-items or operators introducing them – we argue that the widening effect is triggered by different means and is at stake in EAA's interpretation. To begin with, we assume that example (5) presupposes a specific domain (*DI*) which contains several amounts of money that can possibly be spent; the presence of EAA serves for widening the initial

domain to a new domain ($D2$) such that the difference between the two sets is non-empty:

$$(12) \llbracket S \rrbracket_{w,D2,<} - \llbracket S \rrbracket_{w,D1,<} \neq \emptyset$$

In (12), $\llbracket S \rrbracket_{w,D2,<}$ denotes the set of true propositions of the ‘my brother spent $n+x$ ’-type where x is drawn from the new domain $D2$ and $\llbracket S \rrbracket_{w,D1,<}$ denotes the corresponding set for the old domain $D1$ (‘my brother spent n ’).

In other words, saying that $\llbracket S \rrbracket_{w,D2,<} - \llbracket S \rrbracket_{w,D1,<}$ is non-empty is tantamount to requiring that the further sums that he spends be added to the domain, the precedence symbol ‘<’ standing for an ordering on a specific subset of the given domain. $D2$ represents a set of imprecise values, crucially exceeding the contextually relevant threshold of 500,000 euro; in fact, $D2$ exclusively contains values larger than those found in $D1$. We contend that the widening effect is to be ascribed to the presence of a focus-sensitive operator (Zanuttini & Portner 2003; Badan & Cheng 2015). Focusing on the denotation of (1),

$$(13) \llbracket S \rrbracket = \{ \text{‘el gavar\`a speso 500.000 euro’} \}$$

we observe that the domain denoted in $\llbracket S \rrbracket$ is vague due to the presence of the epistemic future *gavar\`a*: it suffices that the numbers implied are in the neighbourhood of the given value, {‘he spent 470,000 euro’} \vee {‘he spent 495,000 euro’} \vee {‘he spent 500,000 euro’}

Graphically, $D1$ could be conceived of as an open interval with the value ‘500,000’ in the midpoint ‘...’ ... 500,000 ... [...]. It is reasonable to assume that the interval is a segment made of pragmatically meaningful values very close to the limit. For instance, one million would be too far from the midpoint and would therefore be excluded.

$$(14) D1 = \dots \text{---}] \text{---} [\text{---} \dots$$

Now, the widening effect that EAA implies, gives rise to the existence of the second domain, $D2$, containing a larger amount of values (being higher than 500,000 euro) added to $D1$: In this case we have a left-open interval, whose infimum is the given value (500,000):

$$(15) \llbracket S \rrbracket = \{ \text{‘el gavar\`a speso 500,000 euro e anca anca’} \}$$

$$D2 = \dots \text{---} [\text{---} \dots$$

In this case, too, the higher values are pragmatically related to the given one: again, one million would be an infelicitous choice even if it is contained in the interval.

We put forward that EAA can also give rise to what could be dubbed ‘narrowing’ of an initial domain, i.e. the opposite of widening. This is what is displayed in (2): the number of the accents and diacritics learned in school ($D1$) is often used to a lesser extent than expected according to a meaningful standard. The new domain $D2$ contains fewer items and $D2$ must be subtracted from $D1$, i.e., $\llbracket S \rrbracket_{w,D1,<} - \llbracket S \rrbracket_{w,D2,<} \neq \emptyset$.

(16) $\llbracket S \rrbracket = \{\text{noialtri usemo soeo quei imparà a scoea e anca anca}\}$

In this case we can identify two sets,⁶ say, A containing all diacritics learned in school and B containing the smaller number of diacritics used in everyday life. Crucially, B is a proper subset of A and hence its cardinality is smaller. In both cases, EAA affects the interpretation of the numerical values (either of an interval or of a set) provided in the utterance, widening or narrowing the meaningful domains. We emphasize that the threshold is not necessarily a numerical value but it can also be represented by a definite value inside a partial order (a set of values and a binary relation \leq), as illustrated in the following example (notice the contrast between (17a) and (17b)):

- (17) a. *Te vedarè che i finirà i esami marti*
 you will.see that they will.finish the exams Tuesday
e anca anca
 and also also...
 ‘You’ll see that they will finish the exams on Tuesday, and even at a later time.’
- b. **Te vedarè che i finirà i esami tanto*
 you will.see that they will.finish the exams very
tardi, e anca anca...
 late and also also
 ‘You will see that they will finish the exams very late, and even at a later time.’

In general terms, weekdays are not numerical values *per se* but they belong to a partial order and can represent a viable threshold in our examples, whereas *tanto tardi* cannot, as it is a valued judgment determiner (see Keenan 1996: 53)⁷ unsuitable for EAA.

2.3 Discourse marker properties

In Badan & Padovan (2023) we propose that EAA is a grammaticalized form that behaves as a discourse marker. As it commonly happens for discourse markers, EAA takes on different meanings according to the context provided by the utterance that it modifies (i.e. it behaves like a downward/upward entailing operator), as shown in (1-2). As for the linear word order, EAA occupies a fixed position, which is always the end of the clause, the presence of the conjunction *e* ‘and’ being mandatory

(all other types of conjunctions are excluded) (18). Notice that *e* does not function as a canonical conjunction, it rather recalls the use of *e* in certain types of coordinated clauses that introduce a sort of correction with respect to what has been expressed in the given context. Inspired by the analysis of *ma* ‘but’ in counter-expectational questions (Giorgi 2018), we argue that EAA is not coordinated at a sentential level, but at a discourse level (see Badan & Padovan 2023 for further details).

- (18) (**e* anca anca) *par compràr chea casa el gà spesò*
 and also also to buy that house he has spent
 (**e* anca anca) *500.000 euro (...)* *e / (*ma) / (*o) anca anca...*
 and also also 500,000 euro and but or also also

Moreover, notice that even if EAA is not part of a distinct dialogical turn, it is not part of the SpeechAct of the previous context either: EAA may be followed by another clause such as the one in (19) (which is interpreted but can be silent)⁸ or can be uttered in isolation, referring to a previous proposition expressed by a different interlocutor (20):

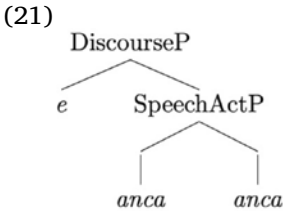
- (19) *Par compràr chea casa el gà spesò 500.000 euro*
 to buy that house he has spent 500,000 euro
e anca anca... el gavarà spesò 700.000 euro almanco
 and also also he have.FUT spent 700,000 euro at least
 ‘To buy that house he spent 500,000 euro... and maybe even more... 700,000 euro at least’

- (20) Speaker A: *Par compràr chea casa el gà spesò 500.000 euro*
 ‘To buy that house he spent 500,000 euro’
 Speaker B: *E anca anca.*

2.4 Discourse and SpeechAct

From a discourse-theoretical perspective in Badan & Padovan (2023) we proposed that EAA is a discourse marker that occupies a dedicated syntactic position. We build our analysis within the so-called syntacticization of discourse (Haegeman & Hill 2013 among others) which refers to the explicit encoding of discourse functions within the syntactic structure. This approach aligns with the cartographic tradition in generative grammar (Rizzi 1997; Cinque 1999), which postulates a finely articulated structure in the left periphery of the clause to accommodate discourse-related elements. Building on the split CP hypothesis (Rizzi 1997), the theory of syntacticization of discourse expands the clausal periphery to include positions for encoding discourse roles, defined as SpeechAct Projections which are realized in a dedicated layer for the syntactic representation of illocutionary force. The hierarchy typically

includes projections for speaker-oriented (encoding the speaker’s intention) and hearer-oriented (encoding the hearer’s role) functions. In a vast amount of literature (Speas & Tenny 2003; Hill 2007; Munaro & Poletto 2009; Coniglio & Zegrean 2010, 2012; Haegeman & Hill 2013; Haegeman 2014; Haegeman, Biberauer & van Kemenade 2014) it has been proposed that discourse markers are associated with specific positions within the SpeechActP domain. These markers function as interface elements, linking the syntactic representation of the utterance to its pragmatic representation. Within this framework, we argued (Badan & Padovan 2023) that EAA is merged as one lexical unit within a speaker-oriented layer encoding an epistemic value typical of speaker-oriented discourse markers in the SpeechAct domain of the clausal spine (Speas & Tenny 2003; Coniglio & Zegrean 2012; Haegeman & Hill 2011; Hinterhölzl & Munaro 2015, among others). The reduplicated structure is the one proposed for Contrastive Reduplication (henceforth CR) by Travis (2001): *anca anca* derives from base-generated head adjunction, where a copy of *anca* is a base-generated as adjunct to the head *anca*, forming a sort of modifier-modified structure. Again, the presence of *e* is mandatory and coordinates what follows at discourse level. Therefore, *e* should be located in the highest projection that, in line with Giorgi (2018) (capitalizing on Cinque 2008), we assume to be DiscourseP. Merging these proposals together, the (now provisional) resulting syntactic tree looks like (21):



While this solution looks appealing for EAA as a discourse marker expressing the speaker’s point of view encoded in SpeechAct, a deeper analysis reveals that the syntactic tree in (21) does not account for the the checking and interpreting the (scalar) focus features, the corrective contrast reading and the prosodic properties of EAA. We will discuss these issues and then refine our syntactic proposal in the remainder of the paper.

3. Refining the proposal

3.1 Contrast

In section 2.2, we examined the scalar focus value of EAA. Now we explore a further aspect of the interpretation conveyed by EAA, which is a form of contrast. More specifically, we propose that it encodes ‘corrective contrast’, which, however, must be distinguished from the contrast expressed by corrective focus.

Following Cruschina (2021), corrective focus is situated at the highest position in a continuum of contrastive distinctions, which reflect varying degrees of markedness (see De Cia 2019; Molnàr 2006):⁹ informational focus > exhaustive focus > mirative focus > corrective focus. Among these, corrective focus is regarded as expressing the highest degree of contrast. Crucially, the notion of a continuum underscores the difficulty of establishing clear-cut boundaries between these different levels of contrast. Within this framework, we suggest that our analysis of EAA contributes to a further specification of these gradations. As we will demonstrate, EAA encodes a type of correction that subtly diverges from prototypical corrective contrast as the one exemplified in (22):

- (22) Speaker A: *(Mi hanno detto che hai invitato Gianni alla festa).*
 ‘They told me that you invited Gianni to the party.’
 Speaker B: *No, MARIO ho invitato! (Non Gianni)*
 NEG Mario I.have invited NEG Gianni
 Lit. ‘No, MARIO I have invited! (Not Gianni)’

Cruschina assumes that the different types of contrast arise from the way the set of alternatives opened by the focus is pragmatically exploited (Krifka 1995, Cruschina 2012). Contrastive focus expresses contrast across different SpeechActs (that are often uttered in distinct dialogical turns) and the correction is on one or more alternatives that are explicitly mentioned in the previous context or deictically identified (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015, 2016; Bianchi & Bocci 2012). Take the example of a prototypical corrective focus in (22): the narrow focus on *Mario* yields a set of alternative propositions as {ho invitato *x*} where *x* is an entity. The negative tag implies that the alternative proposition {hai invitato Gianni} is overtly expressed (or deictically identified) in the discourse and it constitutes the explicit antecedent for contrast.

Slightly different from the canonical corrective focus, the use of EAA expresses the contrast yielding a set of plausibly possible alternatives ordered in a scale. The corrective effect involves the presence of an alternative that is contextually available yet incompatible with the prop-

osition introduced by the corrective move. The inconsistency between the antecedent and the correction triggers the retraction of the former, thereby producing the corrective effect. The contrast is thus established between two sets. For instance, in (5), the relevant set of possible values lies above the reference value (e.g. €501k, €502k, €503k, etc.), whereas in (2), the set includes values below that threshold (e.g. 3 accents, 2 accents, etc.). From this perspective, scalar widening must be computed first; only then can the contrast be established.¹⁰ Notice that, as illustrated in section 2.2, the interpretation of EAA encodes an epistemic reading ‘and possibly/maybe more’ or ‘and possibly/maybe less’. In an example like (1), the set of alternatives as {he spent x } where x is an amount of money, the explicit alternative which is put in contrast is {he spent five hundred euro}, and the alternatives proposed by EAA include the alternative that are contrasted with one another but add something more within a limited set of possibilities as {possibly/I think he spent seven hundred euro}, {possibly/I think he spent nine hundreds euro} etc.¹¹

In terms of interface between type of contrast and structure, Cruschina (2021: 17) (following Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015, 2016), argues that different types of focus are associated to conventional implicatures in the sense of Potts (2005, 2007): “grammaticalized association between a linguistic form and a special interpretive import”. In the case of corrective focus in Italian and Spanish, the interpretation of corrective contrast (the interpretive import) is grammatically associated with focus fronting (the linguistic form). Corrective focus is therefore expressed by a syntactically marked word order. On this line, we argue that with EAA the corrective contrast is associated with markedness operating at lexical level, that is it depends on the type of category that is involved in the focalization and the reduplicated structure. In the case of EAA we are dealing with a functional category that is a focalizer with its own semantic import and that when reduplicated modifies its meaning and broadens its scope. As observed in Badan & Padovan (2023), in fact, *anca anca* is substantially different from the non-reduplicated *anca* and the two elements are not interchangeable:

- (23) a. *Fa caldo anca/ (*anca anca) uncò.*
 makes hot also also also today
 ‘It’s hot today, too’
- b. *Ea gà invità tuto el paese al so matrimonio,*
 she has invited all the town at.the her wedding
*anca/ (*anca anca) el farmacista!*
 even also also the pharmacist
 ‘She invited the whole town to her wedding, even the pharmacist!’

c. *El pare anca/ (*anca anca) bón*
 he looks even also also good
 'He looks even good'

(24) **Par compràr chea casa el gà speso 500.000 euro... e anca*
 to buy that house he has spent 500,000 euro and also
 'To buy that house he spent 500,000 euro and (maybe / I think) even more...'

(25) **A difarensa dai francesi che i mete l' acento*
 at difference from.the French that CL put the accent
dapartuto inteo scrito, noialtri usemo soeo quei
 everywhere in.the written we use only those
imparà a scoea... e anca ...
 learnt at school and also
 'Differently from the French who put accents everywhere in the written language, we use only those we learnt at school... and (maybe / I think) even less'

In this section, we discussed the fact that corrective contrast encoded by EAA is quite different from the 'prototypical' corrective contrast expressed by corrective focus, and it is linked to the reduplication structure. In the literature, indeed, it has been shown that some forms of reduplication also express contrast of different types. In what follows, we will first revise the most influential analyses of CRs showing that they fail to explain the reduplicated form EAA, then we will refine our definition of contrast in EAA.

3.2 Contrast in reduplication

Reduplication is recognized as a linguistic mechanism used by natural languages to express a wide range of syntactic and semantic functions. These include, but are not limited to, conveying plurality, intensification, variation in reference, perfectivity, distributivity, and the formation of diminutive or augmentative meanings. In the literature, a wide array of reduplication types has been explored across languages (for Italian, see Wierzbicka 1991).¹² Among these, the type we consider most relevant to our analysis is CR (Ghomeshi *et al.* 2004; Bross & Fraser 2020). In the literature, this phenomenon involves the reduplication of a noun phrase (see (26) from Ghomeshi *et al.* 2004: 308,1), though it is not limited to nouns and can apply to various lexical categories.

(26) *I'll make the tuna salad, and you make the SALAD-salad*

As for the meaning, Ghomeshi *et al.* (2004: 308) state that "the semantic effect of this construction is to focus the denotation of the reduplicated element on a more sharply delimited, more specialized, range. For instance, SALAD-salad [...] denotes specifically green salad as

opposed to salads in general [...] we characterize this effect as denoting the prototypical instance of the reduplicated lexical expression” (see also Horn 1993; Dray 1987). Ghomeshi *et al.* (2004), and Travis (2001) (see also Horn 1993; Dray 1987) mention another type of reduplication that they define ‘intensive reduplication’ of adjectives (26a) or adverbs (26b) (examples from Ghomeshi *et al.* 2004: 309; see also Krivochen 2021):

- (27) a. *You are a sick, sick man*
b. *You are really really sick*

We argue that the effects of denoting a prototype or intensification do not adequately explain the interpretation of EAA. Instead, it appears to align more closely with what Horn (1993, 2006) characterizes as a type of reduplication (which he refers to as a ‘lexical clone’) that conveys a ‘value-added’ meaning. This suggests that the reduplicated form EAA serves to enrich or amplify the significance of the expression in a way that goes beyond simple intensification or prototypical reference.¹³ Horn (1993, 2006), discussing Dray’s (1987) proposal on lexical clone,¹⁴ describes the ‘value-added’ comparing the following minimal pair containing the same reduplication (from Horn 2006: 19, 26):

- (28) a. *Oh, we’re just LIVING TOGETHER living together.*
b. *Oh, we’re not LIVING TOGETHER living together.*

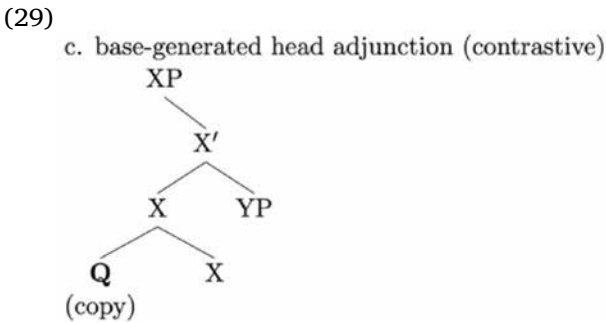
In the example (28a) the reduplication expresses the prototype interpretation illustrated above: “The couple introduces the prototype clone in [(28a)] to present themselves as just roommates, not romantically or sexually involved while the negated reduplication in [(28b)] must be interpreted in the opposite value-added sense” (Horn 2006: 19), that is the living together is interpreted pragmatically as living together and being “romantic and sexually involved”.¹⁵

The interpretation of *living-together* in (28) is very similar to EAA as a compositional operation: Specifically, ‘LIVING-TOGETHER-LIVING-TOGETHER’ corresponds to LIVE-TOGETHER(I, you) & LOVE-EACH-OTHER(I, you). What we assume in EAA is close to the pragmatic implication of LIVE-TOGETHER in (28), the only difference being the contribution of the possibility operator: The way we conceive of the pragmatic import of EAA in the example (1) implies that ‘my brother spent a given amount of money n and it is (epistemically) possible that he spent even more than n ’, namely $n + x$, where x belongs to a pragmatically meaningful set: SPEND(b , n) & \diamond (SPEND(b , $n + x$)). Therefore, to characterize the meaning of the contrastive reduplication in EAA, we proposed to define it as an ‘added-value contrastive reduplication’. This formulation

captures EAA’s function of emphasizing a corrective or enriched meaning beyond the base form.

3.2 The structure of reduplication: previous analyses

Also from a syntactic perspective, the existing analyses proposed for CR do not adequately account for EAA. Delving into the specifics of EAA reveals the need to revise the analysis proposed in Badan & Padovan (2023). In the present paper, we argue that the structure suggested for CR does not adequately account for the unique properties of EAA. This discrepancy suggests that the current framework needs to be modified to better align with the syntactic and semantic characteristics of EAA. In this section, we briefly illustrate previous analyses of CR and our critical review. In Badan & Padovan (2023) we outline a structure for EAA (in (21)) that aligns with the structure for CR proposed by Travis (2001)¹⁶ (in (29)), which is intended to encode the CR discussed by Ghomeshi *et al.* (2004) for (26) (in the following, for now we consider only *anca anca* leaving aside the conjunction *e* ‘and’ for later discussion):

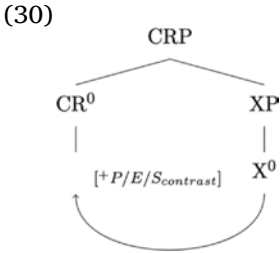


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This structure “is a modification structure as proposed for prenominal adjectives and preverbal adverbs in Travis (1988).” (Travis 2001: 456) “where the pre-head modifier slot in English is structurally represented by a modifier head (A or Adv) that does not project and that adjoins to the head being modified” (Travis 2001: 456). Similarly, in CR structures, the copy is positioned in a syntactically available slot. “In fact, all cases of reduplication are filling (by creating copies) positions that are independently available in the syntax.” (Travis 2001: 465). In other words, for Travis, the CR is a base-generated head adjunction in a configuration as a modifier-modified structure between adjectives/ adverbs and nouns. However, we argue that this structure that we

applied to EAA in Badan & Padovan (2023) needs a revision, for the following reasons: (i) In Travis’s framework, CR involves the reduplication of lexical items, whereas in EAA, we are dealing with functional items, specifically the focus-sensitive element *anca*. As a result, the modifier-modified configuration typical of Travis’s analysis does not apply here; (ii) This incompatibility is further evident in the interpretation. Travis’s CRs typically single out prototype category members or denote intensification, which differs significantly from the interpretation of EAA, as illustrated above. The latter does not align with these functions, highlighting the need for a distinct analytical approach to account for its unique syntactic and semantic properties.

Another structure proposed in the literature for CR is the one outlined by Ghomeshi *et al.* (2004) in a minimalist perspective.¹⁸ The core idea is that reduplication in CR arises from spelling out both copies of the chain formed by head movement to a CR projection. This projection can take any lexical phrase as its complement (effectively acting as a modifier of adjectives, adverbs). The CR morpheme is characterized by the features PROTOTYPICAL/EXTREME/SALIENT (P/E/S) and +contrast, which lack phonological content but are syntactically strong. As a result, these features must be associated with a lexically filled syntactic head, triggering head movement of the adjacent CR head (from Ghomeshi *et al.* 2004: 347, 78):



The CR is analysed as involving movement into a focus-like position with both the head and the tail spelled out.¹⁹ This movement-based account aligns with minimalist assumptions about syntactic operations and the role of feature-driven derivations.

However, while the idea of checking focus features plays a crucial role in our refined analysis (section 3.2.1), Ghomeshi *et al.*'s framework does not adequately account for EAA. First, Ghomeshi *et al.* need to

postulate an additional CR projection where the relevant P/E/S features and +contrast are checked. However, *anca*, as a focus item, requires checking of focus features in a FocusP without the necessity to postulate a new ad hoc projection. Second, in the cases analysed by Ghomeshi *et al.*, the prosodic prominence falls on the first occurrence of the reduplicated form (e.g. *SALAD salad*), a pattern also observed in Travis's work. In contrast, in EAA, the prosodic prominence is consistently placed on the second copy (*e anca ANCA*), which diverges from the pattern described by Ghomeshi *et al.* Furthermore, the P/E/S features checked in Ghomeshi *et al.*'s configuration do not align with the interpretation of EAA. As extensively discussed, EAA excludes a prototypical interpretation, and the extreme interpretation is also not applicable. Instead, EAA functions as a scalar focus-sensitive operator that operates on a set of alternatives ordered along a scale. However, it does not denote an extreme value but rather a portion of the scale, indicating a higher or lower quantity relative to the preceding context, always within certain limits. For example, in a sentence like (1), the interpretation suggests a higher quantity, which could be, say, 700,000 euro or one million euro, but it does not imply an excessively large amount (e.g. not three million euro). Finally, the features considered by Ghomeshi *et al.* do not include speaker-oriented features, such as the epistemic reading and its scope over the (possibly silent) utterance. This epistemic dimension, which is always implicitly interpreted in EAA, is a critical aspect that their framework fails to capture.

The involvement of focus position in reduplication has also been explored by Bross & Fraser (2020), who base their analysis on the following observations: (i) In CR, "one of the constituents receives intonational stress; the content of this item is then focalized"; (ii) Contrastive focus provides an exhaustive implication of a prototype, selecting a denotation from a contextually provided set of alternatives (Song & Lee 2011). For example, in (26), this set might include 'tuna salad' or 'green salad'; the former is excluded when contrastive focus is placed on *salad*; (iii) Notably, "it is not possible to modify a CR construction." For instance, this means that nominal CR does allow adjectival modification. This restriction might be explained by the fact that the first element in a nominal CR construction inherently carries an adjectival flavour, reminiscent of Travis's (2001) analysis of a modifier-modified structure. A plausible explanation for the blocking of adjectival modification in nominal CR is that the position where the AdjP would otherwise be located is already occupied. Bross & Fraser (2020) refine their analysis within the Cartographic framework, particularly by drawing on the articulated internal structure of the DP. This structure has been shown to consist of

a hierarchically ordered set of functional projections, each capable of hosting AdjPs from specific semantic categories (cf. Cinque 1994; Giusti 1996, 2006). When one of these adjectives is contrastively focalized, it is proposed to cyclically move to a DP-internal focus projection (e.g. Aboh 2004; Haegeman 2014; Szendrői 2012). Bross and Fraser argue that the XP (nominal, adjectival, or adverbial) in a CR construction moves cyclically through the specifiers of these projections, ultimately landing in SpecFocusP to check its focus features. In this process, a copy is left behind and spelled out, in line with the analysis proposed by Ghomeshi *et al.* (2004). This mechanism explains why nominal CR does not allow modification. “In each projection, the moved copy acts as a modifier, modifying the meaning of the respective projection. This leads to a prototypical meaning.” (Bross & Fraser 2020: 8).

Also, Bross and Fraser’s analysis is unsuitable for our purposes for several reasons: (i) in EAA, we are not dealing with a DP, which can be assumed to contain a FocusP within its internal structure, nor with adjectives or adverbs that are expected to move to a TP-internal FocusP. Instead, we are examining a functional item (*anca*), which is not assumed to have a split internal configuration. (ii) *Anca* (also when not reduplicated) cannot be modified in any way, as it is itself a focalizer. This inherent property further distinguishes it from the elements discussed in Bross & Fraser’s (2020) analysis. (iii) The focus features of *anca* must be checked in a FocusP (as suggested for *anche* ‘also’ in Old Italian by Franco *et al.* 2018), independently of the reduplication structure. It is important to note that *anca* is not exclusively a focus item; it can also function as a conjunction, occupying a very high position in the clause. For example, in conditional clauses such as *anca se* (‘even if’), *anca* behaves as a conjunction rather than a focus marker. We will return to this point later in Section 3.2.1; (iv) In Bross and Fraser’s analysis, CR is interpreted as prototypical or intensive contrast, which does not align with the meaning of EAA. The latter does not convey prototypicality or intensification but rather operates on a scalar set of alternatives, as discussed earlier; (v) In Bross and Fraser’s framework, the prosodic prominence falls on the highest copy of the reduplicated element. However, in our case, as mentioned above, the prominence is consistently placed on the lowest copy. This discrepancy in stress patterns further underscores the incompatibility of their analysis with EAA.

3.4 The structure of EAA: a new proposal

Having demonstrated that previous analyses of CR fail to adequately account for the properties of EAA, this section outlines our proposal,

which addresses the internal structure of reduplicated *anca*, its corrective focus interpretation, epistemic interpretation, scope, and prosodic contour. Central to our analysis is the mechanism of focus feature checking, as discussed by Bross & Fraser (2020) for reduplication phenomena. However, while Bross and Fraser propose that focus features are checked within a FocusP located in the TP domain, we argue that in the case of *anca anca*, the FocusP involved is that one in the CP domain, above TP (Rizzi 1997 and subsequent work). This higher positioning is crucial for capturing the interpretive and scope properties of reduplicated *anca*.

First, notice that the scope of (non-reduplicated) *anca* is sensitive to its syntactic position. For instance, when a subject is introduced, *anca* in a high position may scope only over the subject, as illustrated in the following example:

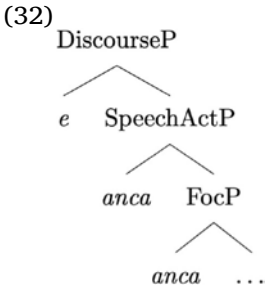
- (31) *Anca* *MARIO* *se* *'ndà* *al* *marcà* *stamatina*.
 even MARIO is gone to.the market this.morning
 'Even MARIO went to the market this morning.'

In (31), *anca* scopes over the subject *Mario*, indicating that even Mario, in addition to others, went to the market. However, in the reduplicated form EAA, the scope extends over the entire SpeechAct. This reflects the epistemic function of reduplicated *anca*, which conveys a meaning akin to 'and I think/maybe even more/less than that.' The following utterance can be spelled out or remain implicit, as shown in example (19).

In our analysis, we argue that first *anca* is externally merged in a Focus head position within the CP domain. It then undergoes internal merge (movement) to a higher position, specifically to a SpeechAct Phrase (SAP) broadening scope over the whole SpeechAct. The external merge from FocusP to SpeechActP creates a chain between the two copies. Building on the insights of Ghomeshi *et al.* (2004) and Nunes (2004), we adopt the copy theory of movement that allows for the overt realization of multiple copies due to interface reasons.²⁰ Crucially, in EAA both copies are overtly realized due to interface requirements: The lower copy in FocusP is responsible for checking the focus features, ensuring the value-added contrastive focus interpretation of *anca*. The higher copy in SAP checks the epistemic features, accounting for the epistemic interpretation of reduplicated *anca* as conveying 'and I think/maybe even more/less than that.' and the broader scope over the whole SpeechAct. This chain is then crucial for capturing the syntactic and semantic properties of the construction. Notice, moreover, that the two overtly spelled-out copies of *anca* form a chain that cannot be interrupted by any intervening elements, resulting in a grammaticalized fixed

expression. Even though we assume a derivational analysis (32) – i.e. EAA is a syntactic (apparently compositional) multi-word expression, as each *anca* is separately merged in a dedicated position, we argue that EAA is interpreted as a chunk at the pragmatic enrichment interface.

As for the conjunction *e*, we maintain the proposal advanced in Badan & Padovan (2023), it functions as a discourse-level conjunction and occupies a position within a DiscourseP (see Badan & Padovan for further details). Our final syntactic analysis is represented (32):



The prosodic prominence on the second *anca* may thus reflect its role in the syntactic and interpretive structure of the construction. However, we acknowledge an anonymous reviewer’s comment concerning the prosodic nature of the EAA: it is indeed plausible that the prominence on the second occurrence of *anca* does not, in itself, constitute compelling evidence of its focal status, as this position corresponds to the default location for main prominence assignment in Italian (cf. Gili Fivela *et al.* 2015). Nevertheless, a comprehensive prosodic experiment is required to fully elucidate the prosodic properties of EAA; we leave this matter open for future research.

4. Conclusions

The analysis of EAA has revealed its dual nature as both a discourse marker and a focus-expression.

By situating EAA at the intersection of syntax, pragmatics, and semantics, we have shown that its reduplication serves as a grammaticalized strategy for encoding epistemicity, contrast and scalar widening or narrowing. This dual function underscores the continuum of contrast

types, extending beyond traditional corrective focus to include ‘value-added contrast’.

Moreover, the syntactic and prosodic properties of EAA suggest that its structure involves a dedicated focus projection, a SpeechAct projection and a discourse-level position. The required presence of *e* ‘and’ further reinforces its connection to discourse structuring.

In sum, EAA exemplifies how discourse markers can be integrated into the syntactic spine while maintaining interpretive flexibility at the interface of multiple linguistic domains. Our approach not only explains the grammaticalized nature of the construction but also aligns with broader theoretical insights into the syntax-semantics/pragmatics interface and the role of discourse-level projections in shaping interpretation.

Abbreviations

CL = clitic; CR = Contrastive Reduplication; *D1* = old domain; *D2* = new domain; EAA = *e anca anca*; FUT = future; NEG = negation; SAP = SpeechAct Phrase.

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Notes

¹ A similar scenario is provided by the following sentence:

(i) *No ghe ze postegio in montagna, soeo in inverno quando che nevega e anca anca* not there is car.parking in mountain only in winter when that snows and also ‘Parking in the mountains is hard to come by, except in winter when it snows and, even then, not always’

In this case EAA picks specific point-like events (snowing events) in a restricted time frame (the winter), thus we can assume that EAA in (i) behaves like EAA in (2). We owe this example to Enrico Castro (personal communication).

² A reviewer suggests that a possible alternative response to (5) cannot be ‘exactly 500.000 euros’; therefore, the example proposed by the reviewer ((5’) *Ad ogni buon conto, non escludo che possano avercela fatta con 500.000* ‘At any rate, I don’t exclude that they might have made it with 500.000’) is incompatible with our sentence,

which is correct. However, we feel that the possible absence of contradiction does not depend on EAA: the articulated epistemic source (*non escludere* + *potere*(epist) + subjunctive mood) introduces a more complex inference independently of the domain of EAA.

³ As regards (9), a reviewer correctly observes that in his/her regional Italian a verb like *temere* ‘to fear’ selecting for an embedded clause with EAA would be equally deviant as it would create a clash between the subject’s and the speaker’s point of view:

(i) *Teme che dovrete pagare per la casa 500.000 e anche anche*

‘He fears that you will have to pay the house 500.000 and (I think) even more’

According to our intuitions as native speakers we confirm that the example in (i) is as infelicitous as (9) is.

⁴ For an analysis of the corresponding item in Italian *perfino* ‘even’ see Visconti *et al.* (2005), Badan & Del Gobbo (2015).

⁵ The following semantic analysis is based on the Alternative Semantics (Rooth 1985).

⁶ Being an array composed of isolated points, it is easier to visualize it as a set instead of a segment with different numerical values, the properties of EAA remaining the same.

⁷ We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this crucial refinement.

⁸ For a discussion about the fact that the silent clause cannot be analysed as an ellipsis, see Badan & Padovan (2023).

⁹ As De Cia (2019: 26-27) illustrates: “Molnár (2002, 2006) argues that contrast is best described as a gradual notion. She proposes a hierarchy of contrast made of a set of salient criteria that define contrastiveness as a continuum, capturing the different discourse-pragmatic shades that characterise a contrastive relationship and, hence, contrastiveness.

Hierarchy of Contrast (Molnár 2006: 211): Highlighting > Dominant contrast > Membership in a set > Limited set of candidates > Explicit mentioning of alternative”.

¹⁰ We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this valuable suggestion.

¹¹ As for the distinction between contrastive focus and Contrastive Reduplication (CR) see also Ghomeshi *et al.* (2004: 317): “The notion of a set of alternatives against which an expression is evaluated usually comes up in discussions of contrastive focus, and there is certainly some similarity between CR and contrastive focus. In many cases CR is explicitly paired with a non-reduplicated version of the same phrase nearby in the discourse. The copy has a focus accent just like that of a contrastively focused modifier: not a RED book, not a BOOK-book [...] Contrastive focus on a word signals that it is being contrasted with other words of the same type. CR, on the other hand, signals that one meaning of the word is being contrasted with other possible meanings.”

¹² Many of the characteristics Wierzbicka (1991) associates with Italian reduplication align closely with those observed in contrastive reduplication in English. Both processes extend beyond a single lexical category, applying to adjectives, adverbs, nouns, and others. Additionally, both operate on “words rather than on morphemes” (Wierzbicka 1991: 255), highlighting a shared structural and functional similarity between the two phenomena.

¹³ Horn (2006: 19) identifies three distinct functions of clone constructions in English:

- i. Singling out prototype category members (particularly with nouns);
- ii. Assigning a value-added or intensifying meaning (especially with adjectives);
- iii. Selecting a literal, as opposed to figurative, interpretation.

¹⁴ In Dray (1987) the lexical reduplications are also called ‘double constructions’.

¹⁵ Horn (1993: 50) points out that “Dray (1987) stresses the context-sensitive nature” of choice of reading for CR, noting that the focused occurrence of the first part is often accompanied by raised eyebrows. “The eyebrow-raising betokens a particular R-strengthened euphemistic reading which disambiguates the domain-narrowing intended by the use of the preceding Double” (Horn 1993: 50).

¹⁶ Travis (2001) identifies three types of reduplication, each generated by a different structure: phonological, syntactic, and contrastive reduplication.

¹⁷ “Reduplication is represented by a (quantity) feature on a head” (Travis 2001: 356), because as she states in footnote 1 she believes “that in many cases reduplication represents a quantity of some sort”.

¹⁸ Ghomeshi *et al.* (2004) propose two analytical approaches to CR. The first analysis is developed within the parallel architecture framework of Jackendoff (1997, 2002), where contrastive reduplication is treated as a lexical item with syntactic and semantic content, as well as reduplicative phonology.

¹⁹ The realization of both copies in a movement chain has been discussed within the framework of copy theory of movement (Chomsky 1995), which replaces traditional traces with copies. While typically only one copy is pronounced (usually the highest), there has been discussion on contexts where multiple copies may surface (Nunes 2004).

²⁰ Nunes (2004) proposes a theory of copy movement where multiple copies of a moved element can be spelled out under certain conditions. This is known as the “copy theory of movement”, which is a key component of the Minimalist Program. According to this theory, when an element moves, it leaves behind a copy (or trace) at its original position. Normally, only the highest copy is pronounced (spelled out), while the lower copies are deleted for phonological reasons. However, Nunes argues that under specific interface conditions, multiple copies can be spelled out. The ‘interface reasons’ refer to the requirements of the syntax-phonology interface and the syntax-semantics interface. These interfaces ensure that the syntactic structure is interpretable both phonologically (for pronunciation) and semantically (for meaning). These conditions include linearization constraints, morphological or phonological requirements, and semantic interpretability.

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