Meaning both ‘also’ and ‘only’? The intriguing polysemy of Old Italian pur(e)

This is the author’s manuscript

Original Citation:
Meaning both ‘also’ and ‘only’? The intriguing polysemy of Old Italian pur(e) / Ricca, Davide. - 278(2017), pp. 45-76.

Availability:
This version is available http://hdl.handle.net/2318/1647577 since 2017-09-13T17:06:29Z

Publisher:
John Benjamins

Published version:
DOI:10.1075/pbns.278.02ric

Terms of use:
Open Access
Anyone can freely access the full text of works made available as "Open Access". Works made available under a Creative Commons license can be used according to the terms and conditions of said license. Use of all other works requires consent of the right holder (author or publisher) if not exempted from copyright protection by the applicable law.

(Article begins on next page)
Meaning both ‘also’ and ‘only’? The intriguing polysemy of Old Italian pur(e)

Davide Ricca
Università di Torino

- Non vorrei darvi male nuove; la moglie è vostra pure.
- Che vuol dir pure?
- Che so io?
Pietro Aretino, Il Marescalco – Act IV, Sc. 2 [1533]

Italian pur(e) seems to be quite peculiar among focus markers, since diachronically it displays the whole span of functions, from non-scalar exclusive to non-scalar additive. It is still an open question as to whether or not at some stage of its history pure enjoyed such an extended (nearly self-contradictory) polysemy synchronically too (while it is surely not the case for the contemporary language). The present investigation, based on the large corpus of the Opera del Vocabolario Italiano, casts some doubts on this possibility for Old Italian (approximately until the end of 14th century). Moreover, it surveys the very wide polysemy of pure beyond the functions of focus marker proper, and proposes several different evolutionary paths, among which some involve also non-focus marker uses as intermediate steps.

Keywords: Old Italian, focus markers, additive, exclusive, scalarity, concessive, diachronic corpus linguistics, bridging contexts, polysemy.

1. Introduction

At least since the fundamental work by König (1991), a basic distinction has always been drawn between additive and exclusive focus markers (hereafter FM)\(^1\), prototypically identified by items like English also (additive) and only (exclusive).

In this respect, the position and the history of Italian pure is undoubtedly very interesting. Leaving aside for a moment the many non-FM uses of this item throughout the history of the language, in contemporary Italian pure as a FM is additive only\(^2\). On the other hand, its

\(^1\) Admittedly, the term focus marker (adverb, modifier, operator, particle etc.) can be misleading, since the items in question do not properly induce focus, although they are focus-sensitive (cf. De Cesare 2010: 113-114). However, although the term “focus” can be avoided when referring to the single subclasses as in scalar, additive, exclusive markers/operators (cf. e.g. Gast & van der Auwera 2011), I am not aware of any really convincing hyperonym for the whole class. Therefore, I will keep the label focus marker in this article, faute de mieux.

\(^2\) To be a little more precise, in contemporary spoken Italian, pure as non-scalar additive FM is the unmarked choice in the Southern varieties only: impressionistically, in Northern Italy and Tuscany pure is used mainly in some non-FM functions and possibly in some scalar additive contexts, while the unmarked additive FM is undoubtedly anche. But given the present state of increasingly mixing populations within Italy, and the pervasiveness of broadcast
etymology clearly points to a diachronic priority of the exclusive meaning: Latin *pūrē* means ‘purely’ in literal sense, and started to develop quite limited uses as an exclusive FM only in Late and Medieval Latin (*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* s.v., Stotz 2000: 130, and now D’Achille and Proietti 2016). The exclusive meaning of *pure* is very much alive in Old Italian (i.e. Tuscan of the 13th-14th centuries): indeed, it represents the most frequent use of this item as a FM.

That a single item could cover the two main types of FMs, which are generally felt to be incompatible, as they are associated with opposite inferences concerning the set of alternatives (cf. e.g. König 1991: 32-33), is certainly puzzling. From a diachronic perspective, however, it is not so strange that etymologically connected items could evolve into such opposite FMs. König himself (1991: 169) gives the instance of Serbian/Croatian *samo* ‘only’ compared to Sorbian *samo* ‘even’ from the common source of an emphatic reflexive marker still present as such in other Slavic languages, and also mentions Italian *pure* in that context. The problematic side of the question thus resides in assessing the possible coexistence of the two meanings/uses at the very same stage of the language, particularly the Old Italian phase.

In this article we will try to put this state of affairs in a broader perspective, looking at the very wide overall polysemy of *pur(e)* in Old Italian and tracing its possible paths of development from exclusive to additive meaning. Notice that in this stage of the language there is no functional difference between the full form *pure* and the truncated one *pur*, which does not hold true in later periods.

The empirical basis of the investigation will rely upon the very large OVI corpus (*Opera del Vocabolario italiano*), presently (June 2016) totalling 18,588,718 tokens of Tuscan texts from 13th and 14th centuries (in addition to about 4,5 million tokens in other Italo-Romance varieties, not considered here) and available on line at gattoweb.ovi.cnr.it (for a description, see e.g. Beltrami and Boccellari 2006). The OVI corpus does not have a literary bias; it aims to include all available and reliably edited Italian texts. This still does not mean a balanced representation of the language, for obvious reasons. Together with literature proper, the legal texts are particularly well represented by the *Statuti* of the cities as are merchant notebooks, homilies and devotional literature, philosophical/theological treatises, chronicles, and *volgarizzamenti* (translations from Latin sources, both Roman and medieval). For simplicity, the examples from the OVI corpus will not bear detailed indications of chapter, page etc., since these are easily retrievable from the corpus itself. Author, full title and date will of course always be indicated. In a couple of instances, the texts are quoted from very recent editions not included in the OVI corpus. The translations (to be taken only as rough glosses) are always mine.

For some instances of Italian examples from later periods, the LIZ corpus (*Letteratura Italiana Zanichelli*, version 4.0) has been used.

2. The wide polyfunctionality of Old Italian *pur(e)* as a focus marker

2.1. General remarks

media, it is difficult to evaluate whether these borders are still clearly traceable. See now also De Cesare (2017) for some corpus data which point to a different distribution of uses in Swiss Italian.

3 In particular, in contemporary language *pure* is the only possible choice in the additive reading, and when postposed to imperatives with permission/mitigation function (*entra pure! ‘you may enter’*); conversely, *pur* is the nearly obligatory choice for introducing the gerund with factual concessive meaning (*pur perdendo, si sono qualificati ‘although they lost, they qualified’*), and is strictly obligatory in the final subordinator *pur di ‘just to’* (on this construction, see D’Achille and Proietti 2016). The three latter uses will not be dealt with at all in this article, since they arose after the period covered here.
The meaning contrast which Old Italian *pure* displays as a FM marker is shown rather dramatically by comparing (1) and (2) below:

(1) Un giorno avenne che uno ch’avea *pure* uno piede venne alla porta [Novellino, after 1315].

‘One day it happened that someone having *only* one foot came to the door’.

(2) E in quello medesimo tempo della guerra di Giugurta, Lucio Cassio, console [...] per tradimento fue morto. Lucio Pisone, già console stato, ambasciadore di Cassio console, egli *pure* fue morto [B. Giamboni, *Storie contra i Pagani di Paolo Orosio volgarizzate*, before 1292].

‘And at that same time of Jugurtha’s war, Lucius Cassius, consul, [...] was murdered treacherously. Lucius Piso, who had been consul in the past, ambassador of consul Cassius, was murdered too’.

In (1) *pure* acts clearly as an exclusive marker (‘*only*’), while in (2) it is equally clearly employed as an additive marker (‘*also*’). In both cases there are no scalar inferences added to the additive/exclusive meaning. However, the simultaneous presence of (1) and (2) in Old Italian requires some specifications which will be the main object of the following pages. In particular,

(i) the two uses have by no means comparable frequency in texts, with instances of exclusive meaning as in (1) overwhelmingly outnumbering the additive ones as in (2), which, moreover, are mostly open to other interpretations;

(ii) the prototypically exclusive and additive uses of *pure* in (1) and (2) are the extreme poles of a very wide polysemic network, comprising both other FM uses, and very frequent uses outside the FM function, in the domain of connectives and modal/aspectual particles.

We did not try to make quantitative estimates of the different functions of *pure* in the OVI corpus, for several reasons. First, as said above, the corpus is not balanced at all. Secondly, the occurrences are too numerous to be all scrutinized individually. Thirdly, and more importantly, as usually happens in corpus-based investigations, many occurrences can hardly be assigned to a single given function, without imposing the researcher’s judgement too heavily on a context which is open to more than one interpretation. This is particularly the case with a highly polysemous item like *pur(e)*. As a single illustration, consider (3):

(3) Quando Naian e sua gente vide ch’egli non potea sofferire più, si misoro a fugire, ma non valse nulla, ché *pure* Naian fu preso, e tutti suoi baroni e la sua gente si rendéo al Grande Kane [Marco Polo, *Il Milione*, around 1300].

---

4 Given the fact, which will be discussed throughout the article, that convincing occurrences of *pure* ‘*also*’ are extremely rare in Old Italian, it is important to state that the additive interpretation of *pure* in (2) seems to be beyond any doubt. Not only does the context give little room to alternative readings, even looking among the many possible uses of *pure* outside FM proper, as a connective or a vaguely reinforcing item: more importantly, the passage is a faithful translation of the 5th century Latin original, in which *quoque* ‘*also*’ occurs. Cf. Orosius, *Historiae adversum paganos* 5, 15, 23-24 (ed. by M.P. Arnaud-Lindet, Paris, Les Belles Lettres 1991): “Isdem praeterea Iugurthini belli temporibus, L. Cassius consul [in Gallia Tigurinos usque ad Oceanum persecutus rursusque ab isdem] insidiis circumuentus occisus est. Lucius *quoque* Piso uir consularis, legatus Cassii consulis, interfectus”.

5 The OVI corpus presently (June 2016) includes 2967 occurrences of *pure* and 8194 of *pur*. These totals refer to the whole corpus, so they should be reduced by around 20% (to exclude the non-Tuscan texts, taking the frequencies to be very roughly comparable), and still significantly reduced by eliminating the comparatively few instances of the f. pl. and the truncated m. sg. of the adjective *puro* ‘*pure*’. Nevertheless, it is still a very large number, of the same order of *solamente* ‘*only*’ (6060) or *anche* ‘*also, moreover, still*’ (8296). The relative frequency of the combined *pure/pur* is 481 tokens per million.
‘When Naian and his people saw that he could not stand the fight any more, they tried to escape, but it did not help, because Naian was taken too?/anyway?, and all his barons and his people surrendered to the Great Khan’.

Limiting oneself to the subset of FM functions, one could be tempted to assign to pure in (3) an additive meaning similar to the one in (2), which indeed is perfectly compatible with the context, differently from the exclusive one. However, this is not the only possibility. A very viable alternative is found if we look outside FM functions, and read pure in (3) as an adversative connective (‘anyway’, ‘nevertheless’).

Given that the adversative reading is arguably among the most frequent uses in Old Italian texts (see Section 4), contrary to the extremely rare additive reading, the second alternative is indeed much more probable than the first one, but the choice would be inevitably arbitrary. Therefore, it seems methodologically safer to rely only on unquestionable occurrences and/or discuss the ambiguous ones as significant bridging contexts, giving up quantitative evaluations.6

Occasionally, it can even happen that two contrasting interpretations of pure as an exclusive or additive marker are equally compatible with the text, not due to some general semantic/textual feature (as for the bridging contexts discussed below), but simply because the specific context is accidentally ambiguous. An example of this kind is the following:

(4) No· lgli dar latte di capra, se puoi,/ e meno assai di chuccia, e men di troia,/ e an’ la vacca lassa;/ Dal· gli del tuo; [...] ver è che pure, alla bisongnia,/ quel della pecora più ti concièdo./ [Francesco da Barberino, Reggimento e costumi di donna, 1318-20].

‘Do not give him goat’s milk, if you can, much less so of ass or sow, and leave out the cow as well: give him your own; [...] it’s true that, if necessary, I concede you just/also ewe’s milk’.

The ambiguity in (4) depends on the fact that two potential sets of alternatives are given in the preceding text: all kinds of animal milk on one side, and breast milk on the other. If the first set of alternatives is taken as the relevant one, pure has to be interpreted as exclusive; if the second, pure is additive. Moreover, it could be neither of them, because a plain adversative interpretation is also available, as in (3).

2.2. Exclusive and additive pur(e) in Old Italian

For the sake of argument, we can split the polysemic pattern between FM and non-FM uses, although, as already said, several instances like (3) do not allow for an unambiguous choice.

Within FM uses, the connection between uses (1) and (2) above may be tentatively described as a five-step fragment of a semantic map, as in (5). The distinction between “weak” and “strong” alternative in focus in (5) will be made clear in § 2.3.

6 However, in my opinion the absence of precise quantitative estimates (say, “around 30% of occurrences are of type A”) does not imply that broader statements, especially concerning the extreme poles of very high/low frequency, become meaningless. After intensive work on a big corpus, the researcher is definitely able to identify which uses he/she has met very rarely, and which ones are absolutely commonplace throughout his/her data. Such statements (like “the use A is common/extremely rare/much less frequent than the use B” et sim.) are indeed occasionally found in this article.
From a cross-linguistic perspective, the diachronic mobility along this polysemic chain should probably be allowed in both directions for all the steps involved, although reliable diachronic data are not so often available in the literature (see Gast and Van der Auwera 2011: 30-35). Moreover, the entry points from meanings outside FM surely are not limited to both ends of the chain in (5). Entries at stage 4 are common, cf. It. *persino/addirittura* (Visconti 2005). See Gast and Van der Auwera (2011: 30-35) for possible entries at stage 3, e.g. Serbian/Croatian *makar*.

We cannot develop these points here. As for Italian *pure*, the diachronically oriented arrows must go from left to right, given the etymology of *pure* < ‘purely’, a very widespread source for exclusive markers cross-linguistically (König 1991: 166-167).

In Old Italian, if both extremes of the chain are attested (with the reservations given above), we should expect that all intermediate stages occur too, which seems indeed to be the case.

Scalar exclusive contexts – i.e. stage 2 in (5) – are those in which the FM does not really exclude all possible alternatives, but only those on one side of the scale suggested by the context (cf. König 1991: 99-107). Usually, the focused item has to be ranked low on the given scale, which means that most of the alternatives are excluded anyway. In an instance like (6), the focused item *la minima opera* ‘the slightest good work’ is even at the lowest end of the relevant scale (being expressed by a superlative), so that in fact all the alternatives are excluded; and quite a few are explicitly mentioned in (6).

(6) Non ti pongo leggere libri o molti salmi, no, né ire a Roma o la lunga, no, ma *pur* la minima opera [Giordano da Pisa, *Quaresimale fiorentino*, 1306].
   ‘[to reach salvation] I do not request you to read books or many psalms, no, neither to go to Rome or take a lot of time, no, but *just* the slightest good work’.

The different inference associated with the scalar vs. the non-scalar exclusive interpretation is perhaps clearer, for instance, when the focused SN contains a low numeral, but not ‘one’, as in (7):

(7) Ed essendo Ilarione a Afroditon dipo le predette cose, ritenendosi seco *pur* due frati, entròe ad abitare in quello eremo, che è ivi presso [D. Cavalca, *Vite di eremiti - Vita di Ilarione*, 1321-30].
   ‘And being Ilarione in Afroditon after what has been said above, he established himself in that hermitage which lies nearby, keeping *just* two friars with him’.

In (7), the even lower alternative ‘just one friar’ is obviously not excluded; on the contrary, it is entailed by the context.

When the context expresses a sufficient condition, scalar exclusive FMs may display the phenomenon of scale inversion, exemplified for English by (8), quoted from König (1991: 101):

(8) Only a miracle can save us.
It is unclear whether Old Italian pur(e) can be found in examples parallel to (8); I was not able to find any. But occurrences like (6) are not particularly rare: exclusive pur(e) can be freely used in scalar contexts, which is to be expected, given that most exclusive FMs are compatible with scalar contexts interlinguistically. Nevertheless, this extension is already significant, if we consider that among the exceptions in some familiar languages one probably finds an item which shares the same etymology exactly, i.e. English purely (according to König 1991: 106)\(^7\).

The picture is rather different on the additive side. Similarly to the non-scalar cases like (2), it is extremely difficult to find indisputable cases for scalar ones as well, corresponding to stage 4 in (5). Perhaps one of the most convincing examples is the following:

(9) Essendo il detto Carlino di fuori, fece a’ suoi fedeli dare l’entrata del castello, onde molti vi furono morti e presi, pure de’ migliori usciti di Firenze [G. Villani, Nuova Cronica, before 1348].

While the abovementioned Carlino was outside [the castle], he ordered his men to let [the Florentine enemy] enter into the castle, so that many were killed and taken as prisoners, even among the best/noblest exiled from Florence’.

The preceding context of the text in (9) states that many among the best Florentine political exiled had found refuge in the castle, both among nobles and the people. Thus, the additive interpretation of pure is probably the most plausible one. Still, an interpretation as an identifier (‘precisely’, ‘of all people’, modern Italian proprio) would not be impossible, especially given the fact that this meaning of pure is very common in the texts (see Section 3). In the course of the article, we will discuss some further instances in which pure could be reasonably interpreted as an additive FM, but which leave room for other plausible interpretations.

It is also significant that there is no trace of pur(e) in such a widespread context for additive meaning as the construction ‘not only X, but also/even Y’ (where the choice among ‘also’ and ‘even’ in the English gloss reflects non scalar vs. scalar contexts: both may be covered by anche – and pure as well – in modern Italian).

This construction occurs in many variants in the documentation, all widely represented, both in scalar and non-scalar contexts. The main ones are:

(10) a. non solo/solamente X, ma anche/ancora Y  
    b. non pur(e) X, ma anche/ancora Y  
    c. non solo/solamente X, ma eziandio Y   
    d. non che X, ma eziandio Y   
    e. non pur(e) X, ma eziandio Y.  

Some examples are:

(11) non solo quello ch’è ben parlante, ma anche il muto è degno di ricevere merito del suo servigio [De Amore di Andrea Cappellano volgarizzato (ed. Ruffini), around 1300].  

‘not only one who speaks well, but even a dumb person deserves to receive praise for his service’.

\(^7\) König (1991: 106) adds to the list of non-scalar exclusive FMs Engl. exclusively and Ger. ausschliesslich, but not Ger. einzig and allein. Italian (lexical) equivalents of all five (puramente, esclusivamente and unicamente) do not seem to me to be thoroughly excluded from scalar contexts, although they can be awkward in some of the examples found in the literature as illustrations of scalarity. I suspect some variations in judgements in this domain.
(12) *non pur* nella nostra citta, *ma ancora* in Grecia e in Asia [volgarizzamento B del libro II di Valerio Massimo, before 1326].

‘not only in our town, *but also* in Greece and Asia’.


‘And not only does God love us, *but He also* gives us all the goods’.

(14) *Il mare* [...] in tanta tempesta si rivolgea, che *non che* la nave, *ma eziandio* tutto l’universo gli parea che dovesse sommergere [G. Boccaccio, *Filocolo*, 1336-38].

‘The sea turned into such a great storm that it seemed to him that it should submerge *not only* the ship, *but the whole universe too*’.

(15) Dove s’intende che *non pur* a migliorare lo bene è fatta, *ma eziandio* a fare della mala cosa buona cosa [Dante, *Convivio*, 1304-7].

‘Where it is meant that [the woman’s beauty] is created *not only* to improve what is good, *but also* to turn evil into good’.

In other words, in this very common construction in which some elements of the set of alternatives are made explicit, and preceded by a negated occurrence of an exclusive FM, *pur(e)* is often met in the exclusive slot, but never in the additive one, where both *anche/ancora* and the long since obsolete *eziandio* (and orthographic variants) are quite common. If *pur(e)* had been a full-fledged additive marker at that time, we would expect it to occur in addition to *anche/ancora* (and *eziandio*) in this kind of construction, as is indeed the case with contemporary Italian *pure*.8

However, a totally different picture emerges when the FMs are in the scope of negation. In this case *pur* may also appear in the (*negated*) additive slot, as in:

(16) L’uomo vede pochissime cose, *non che* gli altrui, *ma non pur* i suoi fatti [Giordano da Pisa, *Quaresimale fiorentino*, 1306].

‘The human being sees very few things, *not (lit. ‘not only’) the facts regarding others, nor even (lit. ‘but not even’) his own’.

The contrast in meaning with *non pur* as occurring in (12) or (15) above is rather striking: indeed both are the precise equivalents of *non che* in (16). This use is found also outside the contrastive pattern in (10), as early as in the following 13th century instance:

(17) I Goti, [...] *non pur* l’arme, acciò che più securamente stessero, diedero a’ Romani [B. Giamboni, *Storie contra i Pagani di Paolo Orosio volgarizzate*, before 1292].

‘The Goths did not give even their weapons to the Romans, so that they could live in better security’.

The Latin original (*Orosius* 7, 33, 10) has *ne ... quidem* ‘not even’, as expected. Interestingly, modern Italian must use the “negative additive” FMs (Ricca 1999: 157-159) in this context: one of the three synonymous alternatives *neanche, neppure* and *nemmeno*. The first two are transparent univerbations of the negative coordinator *né* with *anche* and *pure* respectively, which

8 Notice, however, that looking for occurrences of *non solo X, ma pure Y* in the later history of Italian, the corpus of LIZ 4.0 gives unexpectedly scanty results (compared with the unproblematic abundance of the structure on the Internet). Some instances are found, but only as late as in the 19th century, e.g.: “abdicava *non solo* a Teta, *ma agli altri pure*” ‘She gave way not only to Teta, but to others as well’ [G. C. Chelli, *L’eredità Ferramonti*, 1883, Ch. 18].
suggests an early overlap of meaning of the two FMs in this particular context (cf. D’Achille and Proietti 2016: 37). But the same syntactic structure, again outside the pattern in (10), is obviously compatible with the original exclusive meaning, as in:

(18) Guardati da le picciole cose, e non pur da le grandi [Trattato della Dilezione di Albertano da Brescia volgarizzato, 1275].
‘Beware of little things and not only of big ones’.

Therefore, it seems that in the context under negation there is really competition between the two nearly contradictory meanings in the same syntactic environment.9

2.3. A good bridging context within FM meanings

Apart from the context under negation, there is another kind of occurrences of pur(e) which share some features with the additive contexts proper: the instances where pur(e) occurs as a scalar FM focusing the lowest end of a scale, and expressing a sufficient condition. Examples are given below.

(19) L’uomo va III giornate che l’uomo [sic] non trova acqua, se non verde come erba, salsa e amara; e chi ne bevesse pure una gocciola, lo farebbe andare bene X volte a sella [Marco Polo, Il Milione, around 1300].
‘One goes three days without finding any water, if not green as grass, salty and bitter, and anyone who drank only/even/so much as a drop of it, it would send him to evacuate ten times’.

(20) Gli uomini quando visitano gli infermi, se pur un poco a essi servono, e fanno compagnia, pare a essi aver fatto assai [D. Cavalca, Specchio di croce, before 1333].
‘When the men visit the sick, if they help them just/even a little and stay with them, they think they have done a great deal’.

The difference with the examples (6)-(7) above lies in the fact that here we are dealing with non-factual (especially hypothetical) contexts: they are instances of stage 3 in the semantic map (5). As discussed quite extensively e.g. in König (1991: 80-85, 170), in these contexts we are often faced with a neutralization between additive and exclusive FMs, if one considers the overall meaning of the sentence. The English translations show exactly this interchangeability. Similarly, modern Italian could have either anche or solo (both alone) instead of pur(e) in (19)-(20), while in (6)-(7) only solo; the explicitly scalar exclusives appena, giusto would also fit in (6)-(7), but not anche. However, some languages have also dedicated items for the contexts like (19)-(20), as German auch nur, and its formally exact equivalent anche solo in modern Italian: both, interestingly, iconically reflect the somehow intermediate status of this context, as they result from the combination of the canonical additive and exclusive FMs. König (1991) stresses that the puzzling possibility of juxtaposing an additive and exclusive particle in a context like (19)-(20) does not imply any identity of meaning of the two items, but can be explained in terms of different scope. The English example given by König (1991: 84), which is semantically nearly identical to (19), is reported here as (21a-b):

The sentence (21a) displays the expected syntactic position of *even* having scope on the whole conditional clause. The possibility of (21b) is explained by König with the “tendency to bring a focus particle as close to the focus as possible”. The variants (21c) and (21d) – not given explicitly by König – show that in that context both the scalar exclusive *just* and the scalar additive *even* may do roughly the same job alone. From a different, lexically oriented perspective, (21c) demonstrates the possibility for an item like Eng. *even* to extend beyond the typical contexts for scalar additive FMs (those covered by items like German *sogar* or Italian *persino*) to those covered by German *auch nur* or Italian *anche solo*. In the cross-linguistic study by Gast and Van der Auwera (2011: 18-19), this latter type is termed “beneath-scalar additive operator (SAO)”, since it has a “pragmatically weak proposition” in its focus (e.g., drinking a drop instead of a whole glass or more in (19)). Conversely, items like *sogar* and *persino*, which require a “pragmatically strong proposition” in their focus, are labelled “beyond-SAOs”; and an item like English *even*, which covers both contexts, is considered an “universal SAO”.

Therefore, (19)-(20) provide a suitable bridging context for the diachronic evolution from “beyond-SAOs” to “universal SAO”, which seems to have occurred to English *even* (cf. Gast and van der Auwera 2011: 43). At the same time, if we consider the role of *just*, they may equally well provide a bridging context for the reverse process: namely, a scalar exclusive FM (with narrow scope, and oriented towards weak propositions, as seen above), occurring juxtaposed to an additive FM in sequences of the *auch nur* type as in (21b), may come to be reanalysed, via the interchangeability of (21c) and (21d), as a beneath-SAO, and later to an all-purpose (scalar) additive FM. This may be precisely the path followed by *pur(e)*, which is already well attested in Old Italian as a beneath-SAO, as in (19)-(20), but only very sparsely and problematically in other additive functions.

The first step in this hypothetical path is supported by the existence, in contexts similar to (19)-(20), of sequences of the *auch nur* type, where *pur(e)* plays the exclusive role (the one expected from its etymology).  

More precisely, these authors, on the basis of data from Traugott (2006: 346-351), identify a three-step process for *even*: from identifier ‘exactly’ (still the basic FM meaning of its German cognate *eben*), to beyond-SAO, and later extending to beneath-contexts, thus resulting into a universal SAO. We’ll see in Section 3 that the identifier meaning ‘exactly, precisely’ is likely to play a role in the diachrony of *pur(e)* as well.

Curiously enough, in the OVI corpus there is no instance at all of the combination *anche solo* in the modern Italian sense. Moreover, in the rather extended LIZ 4.0 corpus of literary Italian, the first two such occurrences are recorded as late as 1641 (Ferrante Pulvivacino), with several more a few years later (Daniello Bartoli, 1659).
say a year, but just a day?’

Example (22) is particularly telling, because it mentions an alternative much higher on the scale, preceded by non solamente (another exclusive), which seems to contradict the following exclusive pure. However, as discussed already by König (1991: 104-105), it is simply a matter of scope. The first exclusive solamente has scope on the whole coordinate clause it introduces: ‘not only \([p \text{ is dangerous}]\)’; the same for the additive eziandio: ‘also \([q \text{ is dangerous}]\)’. The other scalar exclusive pur has just narrow scope on the condition \(q\), precisely with the function of marking it as low. But as in such a context the additive may well be omitted – as is indeed the case in the example (23) with the second occurrence of pur – there is room for the reanalysis of the narrow scope scalar exclusive as a wide scope scalar additive.

It is interesting, and perhaps unexpected, that the same meaning of beneath-SAO may be realized by sequences of the type pur solo, which suggests that the reanalysis of pur as an additive marker has been completed in this particular context, even if not extended to the patterns in (10).

(24) Se non m’aiuti, sai ben ch’io mor[r]ag[g]io. / Amor, merzé di me pur solo um poco [Monte Andrea, Rime, before 1300].

‘If you do not help me, you know well that I’ll die. O Love, pity me only just a little’.

This is certainly possible, but given that pur is also well attested in its identifier/intensifier function (like modern Italian proprio, see § 3.1) and that a simple exclusive is possible in beneath-SAO contexts, the sequence pur solo could also be no more than a reinforcing strategy. There is probably no way to know.

3. Adding further connections: pur(e) beyond the contrast exclusive vs. additive

As anticipated in Section 2, the uses of pur(e) in Old Italian cannot surely be subsumed under the dichotomy exclusive vs. additive. There are many other uses, some still within the domain of FMs and some – probably the most common of all – decidedly outside it.

3.1. Old Italian pur(e) as identifier

A frequent use which may still be included among FMs has been named “emphatic assertion of identity” by König (1991: 125). This is typical of items like German eben, gerade, English precisely, exactly or modern Italian proprio: herein, we will refer to this class as “identifiers”. Identifiers do not coincide with exclusive particles, because their primary function is not to exclude alternatives, but rather to underline the fact that the focused entity satisfies a proposition \(p\), while it is pragmatically irrelevant that other entities also satisfy \(p\) or not. These FMs have often an anaphoric component, as they are related to some other proposition concerning the focused entity, be it expressed in the preceding discourse or presupposed by shared knowledge. Items like German eben or Italian proprio may also develop a strong adversative component, in that the focused item may be a particularly unexpected choice to satisfy the given proposition \(p\) (and precisely for that reason it is pragmatically relevant to stress the truth of \(p\)). In this perspective, we could consider the adversative identifier as acquiring scalar properties. Not all identifiers are compatible with a scalar context/interpretation: for instance, in modern Italian, proprio displays such compatibility, while appunto does not (cf. e.g. Ricca 1999: 156; De Cesare
In modern Italian, the basic exclusive FM *solo* and the basic identifier *proprio* are definitely not interchangeable in a neutral context like (25 a-b):

(25)  
   a.  *Solo* Mario è venuto alla festa  
       ‘Mario came to the party and no one else (among a given/mentioned group)’.
   b.  *Proprio* Mario è venuto alla festa  
       b1. ‘Precisely that Mario we just spoke about came’
       b2. ‘Mario came of all people (the least expected guest I could think of)’.

On the contrary, Old Italian *pur(e)* may clearly cover both roles independently. Instances like the following – as many others, cf. also ex. (1) above – cannot be paraphrased by ‘precisely’ or sim.:

(26)  
     Non può ciascuna persona beatamente vivere che guarda *pur* a sé, et che converte tutte le cosa ad sua volontà e utilità [Andrea da Grosseto, *Trattati morali di Albertano da Brescia volgarizzati*, 1268].
     ‘No one who looks only at himself, and forces everything to his own will and profit, can live happily’.

(27)  
     E però chi dalla ragione si parte e usa *pure* la parte sensitiva, non vive uomo ma vive bestia [Dante, *Convivio*, 1304-7].
     ‘And therefore who departs from reason and makes use only of his senses, does not live as a human being but as a beast’.

On the other hand, a clear context when *pur* is an identifier without relevant exclusive overtones is the sequence *pur come*, ‘exactly like’, as an introducer of poetical similitudes, a pattern already mentioned in Ambrosini (1970: 743: there are 11 such occurrences just in Dante’s *Commedia*). Some occurrences of the sequence *pur così* (but not all of them) are very similar, as in (29):

(28)  
     sbadigliava / *pur* come sonno o febbre l’assalisse [Dante, *Commedia*, *Inferno* 25, 89-90, before 1321].
     ‘He yawned exactly as if he were caught by sleep or fever’.

(29)  
     Io veggo che Dio vole che *pur* così vada: sic ciò che ctu vuoli, e ffarò ciò che m’à decto [Leggenda di messer Gianni di Procida, 1282-99; text from the edition by Barbato (2012: 124), not in the OVI corpus].
     ‘I see that God wants that things go exactly so: be it as you want, and I’ll do what you told me’.

In the following case, the sequence *pur me* points to a prevalently identifier function, but differently from (28) above, an exclusive component is not ruled out and even contributes cooperatively to emphatic identification.

(30)  
     e vidi un che mirava / *pur* me, come conoscerc mi volesse [Dante, *Commedia*, *Purgatorio* 8, 47-48, before 1321].
     ‘and I saw someone who stared just at me, as if he wanted to recognize me’.

Instances like (30) above may already illustrate the contiguity and even the vagueness between an exclusive and an identifier interpretation when dealing with authentic contexts.
However, in (30) the exclusive component is essentially provided by world knowledge rather than asserted by the FM: as a confirmation, replacing pur in (30) with modern Italian solo would be very awkward if even possible, while proprio would be perfectly adequate. A different situation, in which identifier and (scalar) exclusive meanings overlap inextricably, is found when the focused item is an adverbial of time:

(31) Mi smarri’ in una valle, / [...] / Pur ier mattina le volsi le spalle [Dante, *Commedia, Inferno* 15, 50-52, before 1321].

‘I got lost in a valley [...] I turned my back to it *just* yesterday morning’.

(32) Immaginatevi d’averre incominciato *pur* oggi a fare penitenzia [D. Cavalca, *Vite di eremiti - Vita di Antonio*, 1321-30].

‘Imagine you began to do penance *just* today’.

In such contexts, as remarked by Ambrosini (1970: 743) with other examples, “the meaning of pure oscillates between soltanto and proprio” (translation mine); and indeed both solo/soltanto (in scalar use, i.e. German erst) and proprio would be perfectly appropriate, and nearly equivalent semantically, in modern Italian renderings of (31) and (32). This is well matched by the English translation *just*, which like Old Italian *pur* covers both the scalar exclusive and the identifier functions. This kind of bridging context, if we judge from their etymologies, probably worked in opposite directions for English *just* (from ‘exactly’ to ‘only’) and Italian pure (from ‘purely, only’ to ‘exactly’).

3.2. From identifier to additive focus marker

More relevantly for our purposes, the identifier meaning of pur(e) – so clearly established in Italian since the beginning of the documentation – could provide an intermediate point for the transition from exclusive towards additive FM (the modern sense of *pure*). The further evolution from identifier to scalar additive is fully plausible on semantic grounds: the bridge is provided here by the adversative, i.e. “scalar”, uses of the identifier, which already incorporate the notion of counter-expectation and are essentially neutral with respect to additivity. The path is further validated by its demonstrable parallel concerning English *even*, which is now definitely a scalar additive FM and used to be an identifier semantically very close to its modern German cognate eben (König 1991: 135-136, Traugott 2006: 345-351). In (33), the context gives really few clues if one is to give preference to any of the three stages of development suggested for pure (although the meaning would be different in each case).


‘And so they kill the horses, and *only/precisely/even* the best ones, so that the master could have them in the other world’.

The following instance, judging from the context, even seems to require an additive interpretation of pur (‘even’ rather than ‘also’, because the focused constituent is the least expected of the conceivable set of alternatives): surely also other citizens, not only the most arrogant ones, changed their behaviour.
E ciò si vide in quel giorno che i Bianchi vennero alla terra, che molti cittadini mutarono lingua, abito e modi. **Pur** quelli che più superbamente soleano parlare contro agli usciti, mutarono il parlare, dicendo [...] che degna cosa era che tornassono nelle loro case. [D. Compagni, Cronica, 1310-12].

‘And that could be seen the day when the Whites came back into town, that many citizens changed language, attitude, and behaviour. **Even of all people**, those who used to speak most arrogantly against the exiled, changed their way of speaking, saying that it was right that they came back to their places’.

However, we cannot really tell, since – as observed above – also a scalar identifier is compatible with additive inferences: modern Italian **proprio** certainly is. Unfortunately, examples from authentic texts cannot normally help to distinguish between items which require another alternative to satisfy the proposition (as an additive FM does) and those which simply are compatible with such a state of affairs.

Summing up, the change from exclusive to additive **pur(e)** in the diachrony of Italian could well have exploited two distinct, but possibly conspiring paths: a first one which takes as a bridging context the expression of a sufficient condition in non-veridical contexts, and a second one mediated by the identifier function (‘particularizer’ in Traugott’s 2006 terms). Incidentally, with the later demise of the exclusive meaning, also the identifier use of **pur(e)** essentially disappeared from the language: in all the examples (28)-(32) quoted above, **pur** is impossible in contemporary Italian, even in its literary varieties. A partial survival of the identifier meaning can only be reflected in a further semantic evolution, from identifier to reinforcer/intensifier (compare English **very** < ‘truly’, and modern Italian **proprio**, see, e. g., De Cesare 2002: 176-184).

This value, normally occurring when **pur(e)** modifies non-nominal phrases, is already attested in the older phases of the language, as in (35)-(36), but survives much later than those previously mentioned, at least in the truncated form **pur**. For instance, it is common in the 18th century comedies by Goldoni: an instance is given in (37).

(35) Adunque è egli **pur** vero ch’egli è morta la mia speranza e ’l mio diletto? [Tavola ritonda, first half 14th century].
   ‘So is it really true that my hope and my pleasure is dead?’.

(36) Non ti nasconder più: tu se’ **pur** vèglio [F. Petrarca, Canzoniere, before 1374].
   ‘Don’t fool yourself any more: you are definitely old’.

(37) Ma son **pur** pazzo io a perdere il mio tempo dietro a questa ragazza scipita! [C. Goldoni, Il padre di famiglia, III, 5, 1750].
   ‘But I am quite a fool wasting my time with this dull girl!’.

This reinforcer use (another modern Italian equivalent, besides **proprio**, would be **ben**) may be found, especially in frozen expressions, even in modern literary language:

(38) Ma perché era **pur** vero ch’egli s’era promesso a me, là [L. Pirandello, Vestire gli ignudi, II, 1922]
   ‘But because it was quite true that he had betrothed himself to me, there’.

In the following we will see that still other paths may have conspired to realize the transition from exclusive to additive **pur(e)**. To discuss them, it is necessary to put into the picture further facets of the polysemy of Old Italian **pur(e)**, outside the domain of FMs proper.
4. Another possible source for additivity outside the focus marker domain

4.1. Old Italian pur(e) as adversative connective

It is now widely accepted that “higher” discourse-level functions generally arise from items originally expressing more concrete/objective meanings, under a tendentially unidirectional pattern of progressive “subjectification”, and then “intersubjectification” (see, e.g., Traugott and Dasher 2002, Davidse, Vandelanotte and Cuyckens 2010, among many others). From this perspective, FMs can be situated at a certain intermediate stage in the process. On the one hand, they obviously interact with information structure, and they normally come from non-subjective lexical concepts like ‘smooth’, ‘pure’, ‘one’, ‘right’, ‘good’ etc. (Traugott 2006: 343); on the other hand, textual connectors, dealing with the speaker’s organization of discourse, are normally seen as higher in the scale of subjectivity, and discourse markers add intersubjectivity to the picture, since they are crucially involved in the negotiation strategies of interpersonal communication. Both kind of items also tend to have wider scope, linking and organizing utterance chains rather than acting on local syntactic constituents as FMs do, at least in their prototypical uses. Therefore, we usually expect that if an item functions both as a connector/discourse marker and as a FM (as is often the case), it is the former use which derives from the latter and not vice-versa.

Old Italian pur(e) is a case in point, since one of its main non-FM uses is an adversative connective ‘however, anyway’, as in:

(39) Dicie la bella: Non churo di dote; io pur non ci rimarrò di dietro [Francesco da Barberino, Reggimento e costumi di donna, 1318-20].
‘The beautiful (sister) says: I do not care about the dowry; but I will not stay (unmarried) behind her’.

(40) E aveano poco, ed erano grande famiglia: pure s’ingegnò di sostenerla il meglio che poté [D. Velluti, Cronica domestica, 1367-70].
‘And they had few goods, and were a big family. However, he committed himself to support them as best as he could’.

Differently from the two instances above, pur(e) often co-occurs with the more grammaticalized adversative conjunction ma.\(^\text{12}\) However, in a case like (41), as in many others, the somewhat redundant occurrence of the two is still not a real obstacle to assigning adversative function to pure, just as it would not be for the suggested translation nevertheless: moreover, it probably contributes by placing stress on the counter-expectational component of the adversative (cf. Molinelli 2010: 261, quoting the same example). There are really no competing alternatives to the adversative reading in (41).

(41) Hector uccidea li Greci e sostenea i Troiani e scampavali da morte. Ma pur, alla perfine, fu morto Hector, e i Troiani perdero ogni difensa [Novellino, after 1315].

\(^{12}\) There are more than 400 occurrences of the sequence ma pure and more than 600 of ma pur in the OVI corpus. Although many instances are not relevant here, because they display the exclusive or the identifier FM, there is no doubt that the adversative pur(e) after ma is a very widespread construction in Old Italian.
‘Hector killed the Greeks and supported the Trojans and protected them from death. But nevertheless, Hector was killed at last and the Trojans lost every defense’.

The preferred syntax of adversative *pur(e)* is not at the beginning of the sentence, but rather in second position after the subject (compare Lat. *autem*), or preceded by a basic coordinating conjunction *ma, e, o*. However, instances at the beginning of the sentence do occur, as (40) above. A particularly common instance of clause-initial *pure* is found when it introduces the asserted part of a concessive or concessive conditional construction. This use is very stable in the diachrony of Italian, and survives until today, even if with some literary flavour:

(42) Con tutto che’ baroni e’ cavalieri franceschi e provenzali non fossono usi di battaglia di mare, *pure* erano valenti e virtuosì in arme [G. Villani, *Nuova Cronica*, before 1348].
‘Although French and Provençal barons and knights were not accustomed to sea battles, nevertheless they were strong and courageous fighters’.

The development of *pur(e)* as an adversative connective is straightforward if we take as a starting point the exclusive meaning ‘only’. The pattern is attested many times interlinguistically (cf. German *allein*, Dutch *maar* etc.), and may be easily understood as an extension of the exclusive FM to focus on an entire utterance, generalizing and grammaticalizing uses like the constructed example (43), quoted in König (1991: 110):

(43) I would like to come. Only I haven’t got the time.

The bridging structure may be represented as ‘It should be *p*. Only *q*’, where one asserts that the truth of *q* is the unique reason which prevents the (expected) proposition *p* to be fulfilled. For English *only*, the transition has been studied in detail by Brinton (1998). In the case of *pur(e)*, this development cannot be followed in detail in texts because the adversative function (without exclusive implicatures anymore) is already present from the beginning of the documentation; but it gives further confirmation of the diachronic priority of the exclusive meaning over the additive.

4.2. *From adversative connective to additive focus marker*

It is quite possible that the adversative connective later plays a role in the evolution of *pure* into an *additive* FM, a hypothesis already put forward cursorily by Rohlfs (1966-1969: § 963).

One plausible bridging context may come from the occurrences of *pure* after the disjunctive coordinator: *o pure*. Given the relative weakness of the adversative component of *pure* (often reinforced by *ma*, as we saw above), in some contexts it may become irrelevant, while the disjunction inherently introduces the following clause as an alternative to some preceding proposition. In an instance like (44), the two alternatives are still basically incompatible (hence the adversative), but both are ways to comfort the speaker, so that the additive reading is allowed by the context.

(44) Essa, o per piacermi, o *pure* secondo il suo parere il vero rispondendomi, non poco mi consolava

---

13 The same suggestion, with different examples, has now been made in D’Achille and Proietti (2016). I am grateful to the authors for letting me read their paper in advance.

14 In this example and in some others which follow, a possible reanalysis process is marked by the sign >>.
In (45), the adversative component of *pure* has essentially faded out, leaving two still disjunct but not really contrasting options (the pope’s vs. the bishop’s permission). Both are embedded in a conditional clause, establishing two independent sufficient conditions. Therefore, a small shift in scope easily licenses the additive interpretation.

(45) E se la persona si volesse confessare da’ frati Predicatori o Minori, o altri religiosi ch’avevano privilegio dal papa o dalla Chiesa, *o pure* licenzia dal vescovo nel suo vescovado, non è bisogno che la persona chiegga altra licenzia [J. Passavanti, *Specchio della vera penitenza*, c. 1355; text from the edition by Auzzas (2014), not in the OVI corpus].

‘And if the person would like to be confessed by Friars Preachers or Minor, or by other religious who obtained this privilege from the pope or the Church, *or instead* (>> ‘or also’) a permission from the bishop in his bishopric, the person need not to ask for other permission’.

Of course, the sequence *ma pur(e)* could provide bridging contexts as well, due to the fact that in that construction the adversative meaning is already carried unambiguously by *ma*. Given that a coordinate clause introduced by ‘but’ would often contain NPs linked anaphorically to (or contrasted with) other NPs in the preceding clause, these different NPs may be taken as alternatives, and there is room for an additive reanalysis of *pur(e)* at the NP level.

The mechanism is better illustrated by an example. In (46) it is quite probable that the writer intended to use *pur* in its adversative meaning. However, two objects are mentioned and compared in the preceding sentence: a kingdom and a pear. Both are obviously limited in space, although in the following (parahypotactic) adversative clause *ma pur egli ha misura, egli* refers to the kingdom only. Since the proposition is valid also for the previously mentioned alternative (the pear), the (scalar) additive reading of *pur* is perfectly adequate to the context, provided that *pur* is now taken to have narrow focus on the pronoun *egli*.

(46) E però a dare e vendere una cosa spirituale con una temporale, è maggior follia che chi desse il reame, per una pera,; maggiore è, impero che, avegna che il reame, sia maggiore, *ma pur* egli, ha misura, e terminata [Giordano da Pisa, *Quaresimale fiorentino*, 1306].

‘And for that reason, selling a spiritual thing for a temporal one is greater insanity than selling the kingdom, for a pear,. It is greater insanity because, even if the kingdom, is bigger, it, *still* has finite limits (>> it has finite limits too)*.  

Although these kinds of contexts seem very plausible to me as providing frequent opportunities to reanalyse an adversative connective marker into an additive FM, there is a theoretical point which could be perplexing here. Differently from the preceding cases in § 2.3 and § 3.2, which concerned semantic evolution *within focus markers* (from a “beneath-SAO”, or from an identifier, to a full-fledged additive FM), the pattern proposed here suggests an

15 Admittedly, the two readings may have differed intonationally. However, intonational contrasts are not usually taken as insurmountable obstacles to processes of syntactic reanalysis; moreover, they can often be neutralized in real interaction, although they can always be recovered when communicatively necessary. This is the case, for instance, for contemporary Italian *pure* in a sentence like: *la proposta, che pure il Presidente aveva appoggiato, è stata respinta*. It may, but need not, be uttered with different intonation according to the two meanings: ‘The proposal, that *eventual* the President had supported, has been rejected’ (with intonational peak on *Presidente*), and: ‘The proposal, *although* supported by the President, has been rejected’ (with intonational peak on *pure*).
evolution into a FM starting from a higher, more subjective element. Moreover, there is a clear reduction of scope from a textual connective which acts on whole utterances to a marker narrowly linked (at least syntactically) to the NP it modifies.

Ultimately, the suggested diachronic path starts from a FM to reach another FM, but while the transition ‘only’ >> ‘however’ conforms to the general pattern of semantic change in increasing scope and subjectivity of the item involved, the reverse holds for the second hypothesized step, from ‘however’ to ‘even’, ‘also’. In any case, if this hypothesis is valid, there would be no chance of describing the overall process in terms of unidirectionality.

4.3. From adversative to concessive conditional

A somewhat different kind of context of adversative pure which also can provide opportunity for a reanalysis as additive FM is given by the conditional sequences of the type se... pure. The sequence (which need not be continuous) may have very different interpretations in Old Italian. Of course, there are – relatively infrequent – cases in which pure is simply the exclusive FM with a narrow focus, inserted in a conditional clause, as in:

(47) Sicché se pure a Dio volete servire, tutte le cose mondane lasciare si conviene [De Amore di Andrea Cappellano volgarizzato (ed. Battaglia), before 1372].
‘Therefore if you want to serve only God, it is necessary to leave all worldly things’.

In other instances, pure has focus on the whole conditional clause, but retains its low-oriented scalar meaning (‘just’), so that the clause is valued as a minimal condition, yielding an overall meaning which is exactly the opposite of concession:

(48) E Balaam disse; peccai; e, se pure lo mio andare t’è contrario, io retornerò indreto [Guido da Pisa, Fiore di Italia, before 1337].
‘And Balaam said. I have sinned; and if only my going on is against your will, I’ll go back’.

However, in the many instances in which pure following se has adversative (instead of exclusive) value, the context often licenses, and even favours, a concessive conditional interpretation. Example (49) gives a good illustration of the mechanism involved:

(49) Tu puoi sicuramente usare il mio amore per la dimestichezza del parentado; non disdicendosi il tuo palese venire. E se pure avvenisse che almeno ci vedesse abbracciare o baciare, non saremo biasimati; mostrando che ciò sia per grande teneranza d’amare il mio figliastro a guisa di figliuolo. [F. Ceffi, Epistole eroiche (from Ovid) - Fedra, 1320-30].
‘You can surely profit of my love thanks to the familiarity we enjoy as relatives, because your coming publicly to see me will not be improper. And if, however, (>>< ‘and even if’) it happened that someone sees us embracing or kissing each other, we will not be blamed; it will appear that the reason is my great loving tenderness towards my stepson, like a son of mine.’

In contexts like (49) the adversative value of pure is textually quite relevant, because it introduces the following condition as “an extreme candidate for the propositional schema ‘if x then q’” (in the words of König 1991: 83): ‘There is no problem if they see us. But if they see us kissing each other (extreme, most unlikely hypothesis), we will not be blamed either’. Of course, this is exactly the pragmatic background for concessive conditionals. Examples like (49) are by no means uncommon in Old Italian: the concessive conditional use of se pure appears to be very
well established. Consales (2005: 345-348) also discusses the process leading to the concessive reading, more or less along the same lines sketched above. Notice that, in this way, *pure* acquires a sort of dual behaviour in concessive (conditional) constructions (cf. Mazzoleni 2010: 1071). On the one hand, it may introduce the main clause, stressing its counter-expectational content, as in (42) above; on the other hand, it can occur in the protasis, which also usually contrasts with the preceding context *outside* the concessive construction, as discussed here. Many further examples could be provided, but we will just add the following one, which shows two chained instances of the same construction, with a *crescendo* of unlikelihood:

(50) [...] lo quale Antonio trovando [...] diceva e pensava infra se stesso: “Onde è questo desco nel diserto, lo quale non è via che gente ci passi? e *se pure* alcuno ci fosse passato, e il desco fosse caduto della soma, sì è grande che sarebbe stato sentito, e *se pure* non fusse stato sentito, quegli che l’avessero perduto, [...] sarebbe tornato a dietro ed averebbelo trovato, perocché nullo ci passa”. [D. Cavalca, *Vite di eremiti - Vita di Antonio*, 1321-30].

[context: the devil had put a silver dish in Antonius’ way, to tempt him] ‘Antonius having found it, thought to himself: From where did this dish come into the desert, which is not a travelled road? And *even if* someone did pass, and the dish fell from the load, it is big enough that they would have heard it; and *even if* they did not, he who lost it would have come back and found it, because nobody passes by’.

Once a concessive (conditional) interpretation of the sequence *se pur(e)* ‘*even if*’ is established in the language, this construction itself contributes a further context suitable for the reanalysis of *pur(e)* as a full-fledged scalar additive FM. The final step in the process, namely equating *pur(e)* to the additive *even*, would seem to require a syntactic change, given the opposite linear order. But a change in scope is not really required here, because the adversative *pur(e)* may occur also in first position, and instances of *pur se* with concessive (conditional) reading are also attested, even if probably less often, as in (51). See Consales (2005: 352) for another example.

(51) E se alcun di loro tiene castità, avegna che generalmente siano nemici de la castità, ma *pur se* alcuno se n’è trovato, si ’l fa per potersene poi più sfamare [Giordano da Pisa, *Quaresimale fiorentino*, 1306].

‘And if someone of them (Saracens) observes chastity, although generally they are against it, but *even if* someone has been found chaste, he does so in order to get more satisfaction later’.

Moreover, the reanalysis *pur(e) >> ‘even’* starting from concessive conditional contexts could profit from the analogical model of a parallel construction involving a “true” scalar additive, namely *eziandio se*. This sequence (about 100 occurrences in the OVI corpus) is rather frequently employed with concessive conditional meaning, *pace* Consales (2005: 343). One of the many instances is:

(52) Come facea Giobbe, il quale dicea: *Eziandio se* mi uccidesse, spero in lui [D. Cavalca, *Esposizione del Simbolo degli Apostoli*, before 1342].

‘As Giobbe did, who said: *even if* he [God] were to kill me, I have faith in Him’.

On the contrary – and rather surprisingly – the more common additive FM *anche* is practically never found in this function in Old Italian. Although in the OVI corpus the sequence *anche se* is as frequent as the previous one *eziandio se*, all occurrences are to be interpreted by means of the connective meaning of *anche*, ‘moreover’ or the like (with scope on the whole
sentence and not just the subordinate clause), plus a simple conditional, without scalar inferences at all, let alone concessive readings: see Consales (2005: 343) and especially Mazzoleni (2010: 1066-1067).  

5. **Pur(e) as an aspectual marker of continuity**

A very different non-FM value for Old Italian pur(e) has to do with aspect or rather Aktionsart. In this case, pur(e) marks the continuity or possibly the iterativity of the predication (‘continuously’, ‘all the time’, ‘keep on V-ing’):

(53) Ser Ciappelletto pur piagnea e nol dicea, e il frate pure il confortava a dire [G. Boccaccio, Decameron, around 1370].

‘Ser Ciappelletto was keeping on weeping and did not say it, and the friar repeatedly encouraged him to tell’.

Not differently from the adversative meaning seen above in Section 4, the aspectual meaning can be easily derived from the exclusive semantics of pur(e) as FM, when the marker takes a durative predication as focus. The grammaticalization to an aspectual marker proper displays the simple path in (54):

(54) he only cries > he does not make anything else but crying > he cries all the time /keeps on crying.

There are many semantic parallels. Even in Italian, the periphrasis non fa (altro) che V, lit. ‘he does not do (any other thing) than V’ is another example of a (weakly) grammaticalized continuative periphrasis originating from an exclusive construction (Bertinetto 1991: 147; for a wider discussion see e.g. Manzotti 1984: 75).

Since this meaning can emerge only when the marker is linked to a VP, we may expect to find little room for a reanalysis towards an additive marker proper, with NPs as a typical focus. However, predicate nominals may provide a syntactic bridge; and semantically the notion of continuity (and iterativity still more so) is inherently additive. Example (55) below is a case in point. It is already mentioned in Ambrosini (1970: 743) and correctly glossed “it means equally, still” (translation mine), which combines an additive expression and a phasal adverb.

(55) Ché se lo figlio del villano è pur villano, e lo figlio fia pur figlio di villano e così fia anche villano, e anche suo figlio, e così sempre, [e] mai non s’avrà [a] trovare là dove nobilitade per processo di tempo si cominci [Dante, Convivio, 1304-7].

‘Because if the peasant’s son is still/also a peasant, his son will be a peasant’s son again/as well, and therefore he will be a peasant as well, and his son too, and so on all the time, and one will never find where in the course of time nobility may begin’.

In this example pur and anche appear completely interchangeable: the status of pur depends ultimately on the syntactic analysis we prefer. If we consider pur as a modifier of the nominal predicate, it could be still considered a sort of continuity marker; if we link it narrowly to the NP

---

16 As for the opposite order se anche (very uncommon overall: just 14 occurrences in the OVI corpus), I have found a couple of instances with concessive conditional reading, e.g. e se anche volessi [sic] sapere tutte le cose create [Teologia Mistica attribuita a San Bonaventura volgarizzata, 1356/67] ‘and even if (the intellectual spirit) would like to know all created things’.
villano, we cannot help treating it as an additive FM. In my opinion, there are no cogent reasons leading us to prefer one analysis over the other.

It is true that the kind of additivity displayed in (55) is not the one usually found with modern Italian anche, but rather with ancora ‘still’. As discussed by Andorno (2000: 90–93), in (56) both anche and ancora can be considered additive FMs, but the set of alternatives in (56a) consists of referents of different types (wine, whisky etc.), while in (56b) it is limited to different referents of the same type (other beers).

(56)  
a. Gianni ha preso anche una birra.
   ‘Gianni took also a beer’.

b. Gianni ha preso ancora una birra.
   ‘Gianni took a beer again’.

However, the contrast does not hold in all contexts: in (55), both anche and ancora could be used, and in Old Italian the distinction between the two was very much blurred (see, e.g., Ricca 2010: 723; 742-744), which is to be expected because anche/anco is etymologically simply a variant of ancora, although the etymological details are not fully clear (cf. Rohlfs 1966-69: § 931, Dardano 2002). Incidentally, this means that the prototypical additive FM of (modern) Italian equally originates from a phasal adverbial. This strengthens the hypothesis of identifying the path above as a further source of additive pure.

6. Later stages of Italian: some directions for future research

If, as it seems from the data given above, the process by which pure ended by acquiring the full properties of an additive FM is not yet settled in the Old Italian phase, the issue of identifying the further and final steps of the process must shift to the examination of subsequent stages of the language. The same holds for the more complex question about assessing if a full-fledged polysemy between the two extremes of ‘only’ and ‘also’ really existed in a given phase of Italian with a minimum of stability, and especially to what extent the nearly-contradictory meanings were ever available to the speakers in the same contexts.

Clearly this would require at least a full-scale article on its own, if not more. In the few lines that follow, we would just hint at some directions which could be the object of future research.

It is very likely that the most relevant period to scrutinize should be the two centuries immediately following the Old Italian period, because in the Italian comedies of 16th century some – not very many – indisputable instances of additive pure do occur, such as:

(57) Valerio - Ed è divenuta [la corte] favola del popolo, bontà de le tue novelle.
Flamminio – De’ suoi meriti pure [P. Aretino, La cortigiana, Act 3, Sc.7, 1534].
   ‘V. – And the court has become the laughingstock of the people thanks to your tales. F. – Thanks to its merits too’.

Following the demise of pure as an exclusive FM in detail would be more difficult. In 16th century theatre, some instances may still be interpreted as such, but perhaps they are limited to contextual and/or stylistic niches where no communicative ambiguity could arise. This obviously requires a thorough investigation. One residual context for exclusive pur which appears to be still common at this date is its scalar use before time adverbials, as in
(58) Costui che vien qua, deve essere pur ora smontato di nave [L. Ariosto, Cassaria, Act 3, Sc.3, 1530].
‘This guy coming here must have got off the ship just now’.

However, as seen in § 3.1, in this context exclusive and identifier pur fully overlap, so (58) could be relevant to date the demise of the latter, not of the exclusive FM proper. Working on later centuries is also much more complex due to the fact that, differently from medieval Tuscan, for many later writers (practically all those from regions other than Tuscany) Italian is essentially a non-native language which had to be learnt from written sources, and therefore is heavily influenced by the universally admired 14th century literary models, with the consequences of keeping artificially alive in written use many frozen structures of the past. However, a bit surprisingly, even the Vocabolario della Crusca (first edition 1612; available on line at http://www.lessicografia.it/) gives some useful information s.v. pure. First of all, no mention at all is given of the additive value: no glosses like anche, altresì or eziando are found. Secondly, most of the space is dedicated to non-FM uses. Of the four distinct senses reported, with several examples each, the first refers to the identifier/intensifier, the second to the adversative connective, and the third to the concessive sequence se pure. The exclusive meaning is only the fourth and last to be mentioned, but, curiously enough, the first two editions (1612, 1623) add the following comment:

(59) Per solamente, ma pare, che, in questo senso, abbia sempre avanti la negativa.
‘For solamente, but it seems that in this meaning it is always preceded by the negation’.

The blunder was corrected only in the 1691 edition, with several examples from Dante, Boccaccio and others. (59) obviously does not hold for the great authors of the 14th century which constitute Crusca’s main canon, but may possibly reflect – involuntarily – the literary use of Crusca’s times. As a matter of fact, the sequence non pur(e) ‘not only’ (normally correlated with a following ma, which avoids risks of ambiguity) is still common in 15th -17th centuries, and may be found in literary works even until the 20th century, e.g. in Pirandello’s short stories:

(60) Già da un pezzo, non pur l’amore, ma ogni stima le era caduta per quell’uomo [L. Pirandello, Novelle per un anno, 1920].
‘For a long time not only love, but any respect for that man had disappeared from her mind’.

Perhaps significantly, its survival in plays does not appear to be equally solid: not only is it missing from Pirandello’s plays, even Goldoni’s plays (18th century) already do not have it at all.

7. Conclusions

The article has hopefully shown how widely polysemic pur(e) is in Old Italian. However, it probably did not manage to give a definitive answer about the most intriguing polysemy of all. To what extent can we say that pure really means both ‘also’ and ‘only’ in Old Italian? It certainly means ‘only’, and it probably had begun to mean ‘also’/’even’, but the asymmetry between the two values is still very much there. Despite its great overall frequency, the instances of pur(e) with unmistakable additive interpretation are exceedingly rare if present at all. In a quite exceptional instance (of very early date), however, the additive interpretation seems to be granted not only by the context, but also by the original Latin text. In other cases, still very much
a minority, one is faced with contexts which are perfectly compatible with an additive reading, but almost equally compatible with (at least) one of the many different meanings which had already developed – before the documented period – from the “original” value of ‘only’ (itself not particularly old, as it is barely attested in Late Latin). In this situation, which is commonplace in diachronic corpus research, I would hesitate to state that in Old Italian pure is already a full-fledged additive FM. However, it surely covers without limitations the somehow intermediate function of the so-called (by Gast and Van der Auvera 2011) “beneath-scalar additive operator” (modern Italian anche solo, German auch nur) which in other languages falls in the domain of prototypical scalar additive markers, like English even; and after negation it displays a clear contrasting polysemy, with the double value of (not) even and (not) only in quite similar syntactic contexts, without semantic neutralization.

Probably the most interesting result of this survey is the multiplicity of possible paths leading ultimately to additive pure (even if its existence may be questioned for Old Italian, it is a given fact for later stages). Basically four of them have been proposed, each one supported by plausible bridging contexts, which are definitely not meant as reciprocally exclusive, but rather cooperating towards the known result. They can be summarized in the scheme in (61):

(61)

Overall, the paths proposed raise interesting issues concerning the applicability of unidirectional tendencies of semantic change (especially the parameter of increasing (inter)subjectivity) to the diachrony of focus markers. While the two “middle” paths in (61) are not problematic in this perspective, both the “higher” and the “lower” ones are, for complementary reasons. They both depict a sort of arch-shaped pattern, which modifies the subjectivity level and the scope of the item involved, only to come back at the original level of these two parameters (ultimately from focus marker to focus marker). These pathways should not be permitted by any kind of unidirectionality hypothesis.

As said in § 4.1, the transition from ‘only’ to ‘however’ (well documented cross-linguistically) seems to conform to the tendency towards increasing subjectivity, but then the following comeback from ‘however’ to ‘also’ obviously does not. Conversely, it is the first stage of the “lower” path, from FM to aspectual continuity marker, which appears to run counter the overall tendencies of semantic change, since an aspectual notion is undoubtedly related to the eventive dimension of the utterance, while focus markers are related to the arguably more subjective level of information structure.

It is possible that the very nature of FMs makes the generalizations about directional tendencies in semantic evolution less applicable to their case. First, it is unclear where they should be placed on a subjectivity scale, because they are often narrowly linked with local constituents at NP level, but on the other hand they interact with the overall information structure of the text. Moreover, the functioning and the interpretation of these items crucially depend on
their scope, rendering scope reanalysis very relevant in their evolutionary changes; but precisely this parameter is very much disputed concerning its correlation with grammaticalization/pragmaticalization phenomena (see, e.g., Tabor and Traugott 1998, Brinton 2006: 308). The “structural scope” of Lehmann’s (1995) approach should tend to reduce with increasing grammaticalization, while a more pragmatically oriented notion of scope is generally seen as extending in parallel with the increasing (inter)subjectivity of the items involved. Unfortunately, the two facets of the notion of scope are not always easy to separate at the operational level, because similar syntactic and structural tests may be applied to identify both.

References


Gast, Volker and Johan van der Auwera. 2011. “Scalar additive operators in the languages of Europe”. *Language* 87,1, 2-54.


