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Wild words: The case of morphologically embedded general extenders

This is the final peer-reviewed author's accepted manuscript (postprint) of the following publication:

*Published Version:*
Masini, F., Mattiola, S. (2022). Wild words: The case of morphologically embedded general extenders. Amsterdam : John Benjamins Publishing Company [10.1075/slcs.223.10mas].

*Availability:*
This version is available at: https://hdl.handle.net/11585/878936 since: 2022-03-20

*Published:*

DOI: http://doi.org/10.1075/slcs.223.10mas

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07 September 2026

This is the final peer-reviewed accepted manuscript of:

Masini, F., & Mattiola, S. (2022). Wild words. The case of morphologically embedded general extenders. Extravagant Morphology: Studies in rule-bending, pattern-extending and theory-challenging morphology, 223, p. 233-254.

The final published version is available online at:

https://doi.org/10.1075/slcs.223.10mas

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# Wild words: the case of morphologically embedded general extenders

Francesca Masini (University of Bologna), Simone Mattiola (University of Insubria & University of Bologna)

**Abstract**

In this paper we analyse the formal and functional 'extravagance' of general extenders embedded within morphological schemas, either at the end of coordinate compounds, or as constituents of complex words, especially at the end of lists of complex words formed according to the same schema. After discussing two case studies from Italian (*eccetera* 'etcetera' and *tutto* 'everything/all'), we conclude that complex words containing general extenders are 'wild words', namely 'contextuals' (Clark & Clark 1979) that are created to meet specific communicative needs and are meant *not* to be stored. As such, they serve as a strategy to create 'ad hoc categories' (Mauri & Sansò 2018a). The relationship of 'wild words' with lists is also explored and deemed crucial both for their semantic interpretation and for explaining their collocation within morphological structures.

**Keywords**: ad hoc categories, contextuals, lists, general extenders, pragmatics, word formation.

## 1 Introduction[1]

This paper explores a special kind of 'extravagant morphology' that makes use of what we (extravagantly) call *morphologically embedded general extenders* (henceforth, MEGEs). General extenders are expressions like *and stuff like that*, *and what have you*, *etcetera*. Take the following example from English:[2]

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[1] This article is the result of close and continuous collaboration between the two authors. Exclusively for the purposes of Italian academia, Francesca Masini is responsible for Sections 1, 3.2 and 4, and Simone Mattiola is responsible for Sections 2, 3, 3.1, 3.3 and 5. We would like to thank the editors of the volume and an anonymous reviewer, whose comments considerably improved the original manuscript. The usual disclaimers apply. This research has been developed within the "LIST: Listing in Natural Language" project, coordinated by Francesca Masini and Caterina Mauri (http://www.lilec.it/list), and within the MIUR-SIR project "LEAdhoC: Linguistic expression of ad hoc categories", coordinated by Caterina Mauri (University of Bologna; grant n. RBSI14IIG0).

[2] Unless otherwise specified, all English examples in the paper are taken from the *enTenTen15* corpus and all Italian examples from the *itTenTen16* corpus, both accessed through the SketchEngine interface (Kilgarriff et al. 2014): https://www.sketchengine.eu/.

(1) They have to manage themselves. After all, we don't want to be bogged down with a baby and all that paraphernalia of feeding bottles, teats and pampers and napkins – **and what have you**! Of course, occasionally we don't mind helping out, but they have to look after their baby.

In this paper we show that general extenders, which are typically found in syntax and discourse, especially at the end of lists of items (like in 0), can also interact with morphological schemas, giving rise to highly context-dependent expressions. We exemplify this with naturally occurring data from Italian, extracted from a large web corpus. In particular, we focus on two items: (i) *eccetera* 'etcetera', also occurring as *eccetera eccetera* 'etcetera etcetera' or in the abbreviated forms *ecc*. / *etc.* (see also *ecc. ecc.* / *etc. etc.*); and (ii) *tutto* 'everything/all', which is used both alone (often preceded by the conjunction *e* 'and', although not necessarily) and as a base for more complex general extenders (e.g. *e tutto (quanto)* 'and everything', *e tutto il resto* 'and all the rest'). Their use as 'normal' general extenders is illustrated below:

(2) a. Non tutte le isole sono popolate di leoni, di tigri, di pantere, di giaguari, di leopardi **eccetera**.
'Not all islands are populated by lions, tigers, panthers, jaguars, leopards etcetera'

b. […] le operazioni di liberazione dei prigionieri possono comportare anche l'utilizzazione di spie, di infiltrati **eccetera eccetera**.
'[…] the operations for freeing prisoners may imply also the use of spies, infiltrators, etcetera, etcetera'

(3) a. Cantate una canzone e lui vi dirà titolo, album, autore, **tutto**!
'Sing a song and he will tell you title, album, author, everything!'

b. Mi basta che un sistema mi permetta di avere cento euro in tasca una volta pagato mutuo, bollette **e tutto quanto**.
'I just need a system that allows me to have one hundred euros in my pocket once I have paid for mortgage, bills and all the rest'

c. Gli eventi climatici estremi come esondazioni inondazioni siccità **e tutto il resto** stanno interessando anche l'emisfero settentrionale
'Extreme climatic events like overflowings floodings drought and all the rest are affecting also the Northern hemisphere'

Both *eccetera* and *tutto* are found embedded into word-formation schemas, typically at the end of a list of complex words formed according to the same

schema, like in 0-(5), or attached at the end of coordinate compounds, like in 0. The resemblance with the syntactic lists above is striking.

(4) […] in questo mondo velocizzato dalla tecnologia, dominato dalla fugacità dei messaggi visivi dei mass-media televisivi, in unepoca [sic] definita post-moderna, post-industriale, post-**tutto** dove il post per alcuni sta a indicare una crisi profonda dei valori umani, artistici, culturali, spirituali, economici, politici e religiosi […]
'[…] in a world accelerated by technology, dominated by the transience of visual messages from TV mass-media, in an era defined as post-modern, post-industrial, post-**everything** where post, according to some, indicates a deep crisis of human, artistic, cultural, spiritual, economic, political, religious values'

(5) io ho provato un po' di protezioni per la schiena, mi sa che prendo il paraschiena della dainese […] dite che è comodo e funzionale come protezione? ho provato anche quello che ha il paraspalle paragomiti e para**tutto**, ma mi sembra troppo grosso
'I tried various back protectors, I think I'll buy the one from Dainese […] do you think it's comfortable and functional as a back protector? I tried also the one that has the shoulder-

protector elbow-protector and **everything**-protector, but it seems too big'

(6) pregiudizi maschilisti-patriarcal-**eccetera**
'chauvinist-patriarchal-**etcetera** prejudices'

We show that MEGEs are 'extravagant' in more than one way. Formally speaking, they straddle the boundary between morphology and syntax, since general extenders are normally used in syntax and discourse. Functionally speaking, they straddle the boundary between semantics and pragmatics: the interpretation of words containing general extenders is strictly dependent on context, and it is contingent upon the speaker's needs.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 defines general extenders and describes their use within lists. Section 3 contains the analysis of the two aforementioned case studies: we describe how the general extenders *eccetera* and *tutto* are used within word formation schemas in Italian, offering a typology of relevant patterns and discussing their (non-trivial) interaction with lists. In Section 4 we discuss our results in constructionist terms, highlighting the 'extravagant' functional and formal aspects of MEGEs, as well as their relevance for morphological theory. Some concluding remarks follow in Section 5.

## 2 General extenders and lists

Before coming to the *morphologically embedded* part of the term *morphologically embedded general extenders*, it is necessary to better define what general extenders are and what kind of function they have.

General extenders (henceforth GEs) are expressions like *and stuff (like that)*, *and what have you*, *etcetera*, *and the like*, *and everything*, *(or) whatever*, and so forth. Other terms used synonymously in the literature are, for instance, 'set marking tags' (Dines 1980), 'vague category identifiers' (Channell 1994), 'extension particles' (Dubois 1992). According to Overstreet (1999: 11), a general extender is "a form that indicates additional members of a list, set, or category [and that combines] with a named exemplar (or exemplars)". In example 0 (from Overstreet 1999: 5) the expression *and everything* refers to everything related to a higher-level category that is inferred from the list of items preceding it (*name*, *address*), in this case something like '(any) useful contact information'.

(7) Make sure your bag has a tag with your name and address **and everything**

As Overstreet's definition suggests, GEs can be (and indeed are frequently) found at the end of lists (as examples 0-0 and (7) illustrate), which are very common in discourse, especially (but not exclusively) in spoken language

(cf., among others, Jefferson 1990, Blanche-Benveniste 1990, Selting 2007, Kahane & Pietrandrea 2012). However, GEs may also attach to one single exemplar, as in (8), where *everything* extends the reference to some implicit information, thus also acting as a vagueness marker.

(8) And they came to my home, two women and a man, with their cameras **and everything**, and they came upstairs.

In order to better illustrate the role of GEs within lists, we adopt the approach proposed by Masini et al. (2018: 50), who define lists as "the syntagmatic concatenation of two or more units of the same type (i.e. potentially paradigmatically connected) that are on a par with each other, thus filling one and the same slot within the larger construction they are part of". This loose definition captures structurally different kinds of lists, since it does not specify the nature of the conjuncts, which may be linguistic units of variable size and complexity that entertain a paradigmatic relation. In order to capture the variability of lists, Masini et al. (2018: 57) propose the abstract and flexible structure in Figure 1, which represents the 'skeleton' onto which the listing phenomena are mapped.

The minimal list is made up of two conjuncts (here represented, in bold, as $X_1$ and $X_{LAST}$), which are therefore obligatory, whereas further

conjuncts (Xs) and other components (like connectives or list completers) may or may not be expressed:[3]

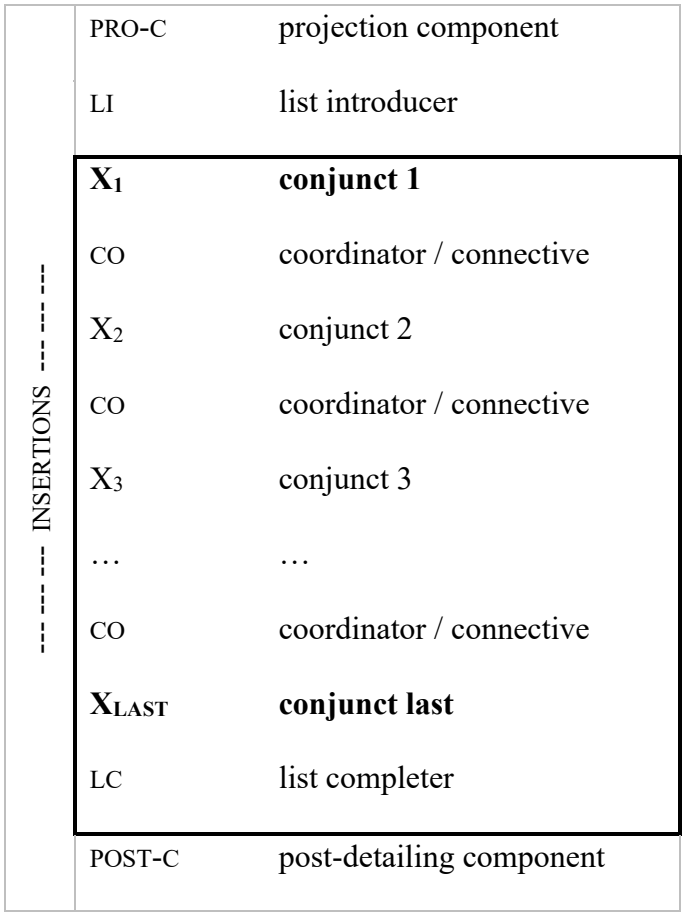
[3] Around the list, we may find other elements: a "projection component", i.e. a "more-to-come" element that is then detailed or expanded by the list (exemplified in 0 below); and a "post-detailing component", which completes "the structure around the list and at the same time tying the list back to the ongoing topic or activity" (Selting, 2007: 523), like *In one word, about violence* in the following example:

(i) For years now, any news about Iraq spread on media have been only talking about bombs, terrorism and war. **In one word, about violence**.

In addition, insertions (like discourse markers, hesitations, etc.) may interrupt the list, which is quite common in spoken interaction, but not only, as exemplified in (ii):

(ii) I would love to just go draw portraits in Times Square or, **you know**, go fishing, or have a garden.

Figure 1. List skeleton.




When present, a GE would occupy the 'list completer' position. Let us take the English example in 0, which maps onto the list structure in Figure 1 as illustrated in Figure 2.

(9) it's great to fill up on seasonal bounties that may include fresh peaches, melons, apples, pears, **and the like**

Figure 2. Example 0 mapped onto the list skeleton in Figure 1.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *it's great to fill up on* |
| --- --- --- INSERTIONS --- --- --- | PRO-C | projection component | *seasonal bounties* |
| | LI | list introducer | *that may include* |
| | **$X_1$** | **conjunct 1** | ***fresh peaches*** |
| | CO | coordinator / connective | - |
| | $X_2$ | conjunct 2 | ***melons*** |
| | CO | coordinator / connective | - |
| | $X_3$ | conjunct 3 | ***apples*** |
| | … | … | - |
| | CO | coordinator / connective | - |
| | **$X_{LAST}$** | **conjunct last** | ***pears*** |
| | LC | list completer | ***and the like*** |
| | POST-C | post-detailing component | - |

It is important to underline that the skeleton in Figure 1 is a pre-theoretical apparatus that does not define the nature of the conjuncts, nor the constraints and/or requirements a specific (kind of) list may be subject to. Indeed, lists may have not only variable size and complexity, but also different degrees of conventionalization. All the examples of lists given so far are ephemeral creations of the speaker in a given context, a product of syntax. However, some instances of (what we are calling here) lists are lexically fixed and

stored as a stable part of our grammar: take for instance irreversible binomials/trinomials (Malkiel 1959) like *bread and water* or *blood, sweat and tears*, endocentric coordinate compounds (Arcodia 2010) like *hunter-gatherer*, or so-called 'co-compounds', like Chuvash *sĕt-śu* 'dairy products (lit. milk-butter)' (Wälchli 2005: 138). Obviously, the latter expressions are subject to different restrictions and constraints than lists that are productively created in syntax. Despite this great variation, the attempt to keep all these phenomena together has the advantage of highlighting the similarities of form and function between different manifestations at a more abstract level, thus unveiling interesting (intra- and inter-linguistic) connections among phenomena normally pertaining to different levels of analysis (cf. Masini et al. 2018 and Masini & Arcodia 2018 for detailed discussion).

Most notably, lists may have a vast range of possible meanings, some of which are not strictly compositional and strongly depend on inferential reasoning. Take for instance 0: the GE *and the like* at the end of the list hints at other possible items belonging to the same set. These items are not explicitly mentioned, but just evoked; the overall meaning of the list depends on their identification, which in this case is made easier by the presence of *seasonal bounties*, that drives the interpretation towards this higher-level category (and not, for instance, towards 'fruit' in general, which could, in principle, be another possible reading). The reference to a

higher-level category (of which conjuncts are exemplars) is common in lists (Barotto & Mauri 2018; Goria & Masini forthcoming). These 'categorizing' lists typically correlate with some properties; one such property says that conjuncts should be co-hyponyms. Now, this property will hold for *all* categorizing lists, independently of their actual formal realization, i.e., irrespective of the different domain (syntax, lexicon, morphology) they belong to. Co-hyponymous conjuncts will therefore allow a categorizing interpretation both in the case of the syntactic, freely created examples in 0 and 0, and in the case of the above-mentioned example from Chuvash, which is instead stored, fixed and morphological in nature.

These (and other) correlations led some scholars (cf. Masini et al. 2018; Bonvino et al. 2018; Masini & Arcodia 2018; Mauri et al. 2019; Goria & Masini forthcoming) to analyse some list patterns as 'constructions' in the sense of Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995, 2006; Hoffmann & Trousdale 2013; Hilpert 2014) and Construction Morphology (Booij 2010). At this point we might ask: what is extravagant in GEs? They are indeed special in many ways, and have been analysed in abundant literature (cf. Dines 1980; Dubois 1992; Channell 1994; Overstreet 1999, 2005; Cheshire 2007; Mauri & Sansò 2018b; Fiorentini 2018; to name just a few), but are not a case of extravagant morphology *per se*. They do, however, become extravagant when we consider their role within morphological schemas (cf. 0-(6), Section 1), which are not their expected environment, not only because

we normally find GEs in syntax and discourse, as illustrated in this section, but also because functional words like these are not the 'typical' bases for word formation processes. In this context, they prove to be extravagant in more than one way.

## 3 Analysis

In this section we explore the interaction between GEs and word formation schemas, on the basis of naturally occurring data from Italian. As we will see, this interaction gives rise to highly context-dependent nonce-formations that raise more than one issue in terms of representation.

In order to collect data for the phenomenon under investigation, i.e., MEGEs, we used the *itTenTen16* (*Italian Web 2016*) corpus, available on the SketchEngine (cf. footnote 2). This choice was mainly driven by two considerations. The first is that MEGEs represent a marginal phenomenon, which is more likely to occur in informal speech. In this respect the *TenTen* corpora are ideal, being huge corpora automatically compiled from the web, where less controlled varieties of language are represented.[4] The second is that the corpus query system offered by SketchEngine is very powerful and

[4] Corpora of spoken language would also be suitable, but have the disadvantage – for our current purposes – of being very small in size.

allows for advanced searches, including regular expressions. We therefore took advantage of this tool in searching for instances of MEGEs.

We would like to emphasize that the analysis presented in this paper is a qualitative analysis with no pretence of exhaustivity. This is primarily due to the complexity of the patterns under scrutiny, and to the fact that what we are addressing is a marginal, 'extravagant' phenomenon that does not lend itself to quantitative considerations.

In the following, we present two case studies of GEs. *Eccetera* 'etcetera' is at the heart of Section 3.1 whereas *tutto* 'everything/all' at the heart of Section 3.2.

### 3.1 *Case study 1: eccetera 'etcetera'*

GEs are expressions which are very common in syntax and especially spoken discourse to create or evoke "some non-specific form of reference" (Overstreet 1999: 11). According to Fiorentini (2018), *eccetera* 'etcetera' is the most widespread GE in Italian and has four main functions which boil down to two mechanisms: (a) *completion*, when *eccetera* is used to cut off quotations or texts which are part of the speakers' shared knowledge; (b) *abstraction*, when *eccetera* serves as a trigger for abstractive processes, including indexical categorization (Barotto & Mauri 2018), which leads to

the identification of a higher-level category.[5] Completion is exemplified in 0 (adapted from Fiorentini 2018: 30).[6]

(10) […] la questione di Cossiga quando dice Cossiga dice mettiamo una pietra sopra **eccetera eccetera** […]
'the question of Cossiga saying Cossiga saying let bygones be bygones etcetera etcetera'

Abstraction can manifest in different ways (cf. Fiorentini 2018 for details), take for instance 0, (from Fiorentini 2018: 30):

(11) questa è l'ultima lezione all'ultima lezione possono partecipare anche i parenti amici **eccetera** che vogliono venire
'this is the last lesson [of a swimming course] at the last lesson, it's possible for relatives, friends, **etcetera** who want to come to participate'

---

5 The four main functions of *eccetera* according to Fiorentini (2018) are: completion, completion with abstraction, alternative and abstraction, and abstraction. For our current purposes, we decided to reduce these functions to the two mechanisms mentioned in the text.

6 Examples 0 and 0 are taken from the LIP corpus of spoken Italian (cf. De Mauro et al. 1993).

Here the sequence *relatives, friends, etcetera* stands for a rather ad hoc set including ‘close people that you care about and that you’d like to be there’.

How is *eccetera* used as a MEGE? We found *eccetera* mainly in two types of patterns:

(i) attached at the end of coordinate compounds (main pattern)

(ii) attached to suffixes or as second constituent in compounds (marginal occurrences)

Let us start with coordinate compounding, which is apparently the most common pattern in which we may find the embedded *eccetera.* This pattern is illustrated in (12) and (13):

(12) Grazie a Google Code Search è possibile cercare fra il codice **html-css-eccetera**, che compone la struttura stessa del Web per come lo conosciamo.
‘Thanks to Google Code Search you can search the **html-css-etcetera** code, which constitutes the structure of the Web as we know it’

(13) […] il Presidente del Consiglio **imprenditore-operaio-cantante-allenatore-soldato-eccetera** […]
'the **businessman-worker-singer-trainer-soldier-etcetera** Prime Minister'

In 0, the expression *html-css-etcetera code* refers to 'the set of codes the Web is made of', whereas in 0 *imprenditore-operaio-cantante-allenatore-soldato-eccetera* (lit. businessman-worker-singer-trainer-soldier-etcetera) is a humorous expression referring to former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who used to refer to himself first as *presidente-imprenditore* (lit. President-businessman), then as *presidente-operaio* (lit. President-worker), provoking quite some teasing among detractors.

How do we know this is coordinate compounding and not syntactic coordination? The divide is in fact uncertain in many cases. However, there are some clues pointing to the morphological nature of these expressions.

One clue comes from orthography. Differently from truly syntactic strings, these structures are often written with hyphens (like in 0-0) or even as one word, as illustrated below:

(14) […] grazie per l'affresco **caratterialgeograficoeccetera** (un po' de tuto [sic], via...) che ha avuto la gentilezza di dedicarmi

‘thanks for the **behavioralgeographicetcetera** (a bit of everything…) fresco that you were so kind to dedicate to me’

Another piece of evidence comes from the internal constituents, which in some cases appear in a phonological form typically used in compounding.[7]

---

[7] An anonymous reviewer suggests that shortened forms such as *ecc.* / *etc.* might be used only in syntactic lists and not in compounds, thus hinting at a possible further criterion to distinguish between the two. However, we did find examples with *ecc.* / *etc.* which look like compounds with the full form *eccetera*, for instance:

(i) *Devo dire che il live di trezzo è davvero un bel posto anche perchè* [sic] *dopo il concerto si è trasformato in una discoteca* ***punk-rock-alternative-ecc***

‘I must say that Trezzo’s Live [Music Club] is really a nice place also because after the concert it turned into a **punk-rock-alternative-etc** disco’

(ii) *“Bula! I'am* […] *the Captain!”...pensai “è il capitano di chissà quale nave che ci dà il benvenuto!”, invece era il* ***capitano-traghettatore-portavalige-ecc*** *di una specie di pulmino camuffato da barca (o l’inverso?) che però comodamente in mezz’ora ci portò nella nostra prima destinazione* […]

‘“Bula! I'am […] the Captain!”...I thought “here is the captain of some ship welcoming us!”, instead he was the **captain-ferryman-baggage carrier-etc** of a sort of minibus disguised as a boat (or the other way round?) who, however, comfortably carried us to our first destination in half an hour […]’

See for instance 0, where the adjective *patriarcale* appears as *patriarcal-*, with apocope of the final vowel, exactly like *caratterial-* in 0. Compare adjectival compounds like: *musical-letterario* 'musical-literary', from *musicale* 'musical' + *letterario* 'literary'; *radical-democratico* 'radical democrat(ic)', from *radicale* 'radical' + *democratico* 'democrat(ic)'; *nazional-popolare* 'national-popular', from *nazionale* 'national' + *popolare* 'popular'.

(15) […] scoprono che [la Bibbia] è un libro come tutti gli altri, pieno di "incrostazioni" come le lavatrici delle pubblicità dell'anti-calcare, pieno di pregiudizi **maschilisti-patriarcal-eccetera**
'[they] find out that [the Bible] is a book like all the others, full of deposits like the washing machines in descalers' advertisements, full of **chauvinist-patriarchal-etcetera** prejudices'

Another case is illustrated in 0, where an allomorphic stem (typically found in compounds) is used for the adjective *fascista* 'fascist', namely *fascio-*.

(16) Il complotto **fascio-qualunquista-plebiscitario-populista-eccetera** di Grillo contro i partiti trova ogni giorno nuovi alleati nei partiti medesimi
'Grillo's **fascist-'qualunquista'-plebiscitary-populist-etcetera** plot against the parties is making new allies every day in the parties themselves'[8]

*Eccetera* also participates in other patterns, which however appear to be more marginal. For instance, we found it attached to suffixes, as a base, like in the blog post in 0, where *ecceterismo* has hardly an independent meaning, but rather serves as a GE for the previous list of *-ismo* words (the whole list conveying something like 'communism, capitalism, fascism and what have you'); or as second constituent in (appositive/attributive) compounds, like in 0, where, again, *Ebreo-eccetera* evokes all other categories of Jews one may have in that given situation. This latter type is also found with phrasal lexemes (Masini 2009) as first constituent, like *motore di ricerca* 'search engine' in 0.

[8] The adjective *qualunquista* (from *qualunque* 'any, whatever, whichever' plus *-ista* '-ist'; cf. also *qualunquismo*) refers to an indifferent and sceptical attitude towards politics.

(17) Moderatore, urge l'approntamento di una sandbox, un recinto, un cortiletto per i pasdaran della discussione **comunismo – capitalismo – fascismo – ecceterismo**.
'Moderator, a sandbox, a stockyard, a little courtyard must be created urgently for the pasdarans of this discussion [about] **communism – capitalism – fascism – etceterism**.'

(18) Cucendo sopra, eventualmente, un altro triangolo […] si otteneva una stella a sei punte, che precisava: **Ebreo-Politico**, **Ebreo-Omosessuale**, **Ebreo-Asociale**, **Ebreo-eccetera**.
'If you sew on it another triangle […] you get a six-pointed star, which specified: **Political-Jew**, **Homosexual-Jew**, **Unsociable-Jew**, **Etcetera-Jew**.'

(19) […] ora non esiste più il motore di ricerca, ma il **motore di ricerca-mappa**, **motore di ricerca-immagini**, **motore di ricerca-gruppi**, **motore di ricerca-notizie**, **motore di ricerca-video**, **motore di ricerca-eccetera**, da scegliere di volta in volta per le nostre esigenze […]
'[…] nowadays we no longer have the 'search engine', but the **search engine-map**, **search engine-images**, **search engine-groups**, **search engine-news**, **search engine-video**, **search**

**engine-etcetera**, from which we can choose every time according to our needs'

These last examples show the use of *eccetera* at the end of a list of similarly formed complex words, namely *-ismo* '-ism' nouns and *Ebreo*-X 'Jewish-X' compounds. These patterns are very marginal with *eccetera*, compared to the first type identified above; however, they are very common with the second GE we investigate: *tutto*.

### 3.2 *Case study 2: tutto 'everything/all'*

*Tutto* is found embedded in word-formation schemas. Differently from syntactic lists, which commonly feature the larger 'versions' of this GE (*e tutto (quanto)* 'and everything', *e tutto il resto* 'and all the rest'; cf. Section 1), we find only the form *tutto* embedded into morphological schemas.[9]

---

[9] However, we found one (peculiar) example with *tutto il resto* (without *e* 'and'):

(i) *Una buona fetta di stampa siciliana si è fatta orientare dalle corporazioni **(confindustria e conf-tutto il resto)*** […]
'A large part of the Sicilian press has been influenced by corporations (**confindustria and conf-all the rest**) […]'

*Confindustria* is the short (blended) version of *Confederazione generale ell'industria italiana* 'General confederation of Italian industry'. The clipped form *conf*, which is used in other similar formations (e.g. *Confartigianato*, pertaining to

*Tutto* typically occurs at the end of lists of complex words formed according to the same schema. Take for instance 0, where a list of prefixed words with *post-* 'post-' culminates with a nonce-formation composed of *post-* and *tutto* (cf. also example 0 in Section 1).

(20) Fini, D'Alema, **post-fascisti**, **post-comunisti**, **post-tutto**
'Fini, D'Alema, **post-fascists**, **post-communists**, **post-everything**'

Similar cases are exemplified below, involving the prefixes *anti-* 'anti-' 0 and *sotto-* 'under-/vice-' 0.

(21) comprarsi quella costosissima crema **anti-rughe**, **anti-cellulite**, **anti-età e anti-tutto**.
'buy that super-expensive **anti-wrinkles**, **anti-cellulite**, **anti-everything** cream '

(22) Si preferiscono i viaggi di **sottosegretari**, **sottoministri**, **sottotutto**, che vanno, dicono e promettono, ignorando la realtà.

craftmanship), is here attached to *tutto il resto*, thus extending the set of potential corporations that had a role in influencing the Sicilian press.

‘They prefer the travels of **undersecretaries**, **underministers**, **undereverything**, who go, speak and promise, ignoring reality’

Another relevant pattern features *tutto* as second constituent in (subordinate) compounds. See for instance 0, where a list of VN compounds with the verb *salva(re)* ‘(to) save, preserve’ is followed by an item formed by *salva-* and *tutto* (cf. also example 0 in Section 1); or example 0, where the prototype (a fictitious dinghy) is qualified by a series of attributes, formed by the preposition *fuori* ‘out’ plus a noun (PN exocentric compounds), which climaxes with *fuoritutto* ‘out-everything’, thus stressing that the object in question is one of a kind.

(23) Infatti ora il governo federale degli Stati Uniti dovrà ordinare e non più suggerire di ridurre le emissioni, per cui si tratta di un puntello, anzi, un trave [sic], messo a sostegno del Climate Bill, il famoso progetto di legge **salva-clima**, **salva-ambiente**, **salva-tutto** che giace inerme al Senato.
‘Indeed now the federal government of the United States will have to order and not just suggest reducing the emissions, so this is a prop, or rather a beam, to sustain the Climate Bill, the famous **climate-saving**, **environment-saving**, **everything-saving** bill that lies, vulnerable, at the Senate.’

(24) […] abbiamo quindi proceduto al varo di questo prototipo che […] può veramente dirsi un **fuoriserie**, **fuorimisura**, **fuoritutto**.

'[…] we therefore proceeded to launch this prototype that […] can be considered **custom-built** [lit. out(of)-series/production], **oversized** [lit. out(of)-size], **out-everything**'

These examples illustrate the important role of analogy in the creation of MEGE expressions, and more in general of the whole list, which is obtained by the paradigmatic substitution of an element within the same morphological schema. This also has the effect of increasing the overall cohesiveness of the list itself.

Note that the X-*tutto* expressions seen above (*post-tutto*, *salva-tutto*, etc.) are not stored items with a conventionalized meaning. Rather, they acquire meaning by virtue of being inserted in a given context, a meaning that changes if the same item is embedded in a different environment. Compare for example 0 with 0:

(25) la casa di Emilia è tutta **post-grunge**, **post-alternative**, **post-tutto**.

‘Emilia’s home is all **post-grunge**, **post-alternative**, **post-everything**’

In 0 *post-tutto* refers to the frame of political systems, whereas in 0 it refers to non-mainstream styles/fashions.

We found one exception: *anti-tutto* (lit. ‘anti-everything’) seems to have undergone institutionalization, since it is registered into the Treccani online dictionary as a 2008 neologism meaning ‘(people) systematically opposing any choice/position they disagree with’.[10] Crucially, the institutionalization of *anti-tutto* with this meaning does not prevent the form *anti-tutto* to be used as a nonce-formation with context-dependent semantics, as exemplified in 0. Here the meaning of *anti-tutto* is not the one registered in the Treccani dictionary, but rather an ad hoc meaning which can be reconstructed only by resorting to the previous list of items, namely ‘anti-[everything concerning skin imperfections]’, where ‘everything concerning skin imperfections’ is a higher-level category which is inferred from the bases attached to previously occurring *anti-* words (*rughe* ‘wrinkles’, *cellulite* ‘cellulite’, *età* ‘age/ageing’). We will come back to this discussion in Section 4.

[10] URL: http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/anti-tutto_%28Neologismi%29/

### 3.3 *Summing up*

To sum up, we identified several patterns of MEGE in Italian, which are summarized in Table 1 below.

Considering that formations like *ecceterismo* or *Ebreo-eccetera* are quite marginal, we may conclude that *tutto* is mostly combined with prefixation schemas and subordinate/attributive compounding schemas, whereas *eccetera* is mostly found attached at the end of (multiple-item) coordinate compounds. Therefore, these two GEs, when morphologically embedded, basically occur as rightmost constituents in both derivation and compounding, quite coherently with their function and position in free syntax.

Table 1. Main Italian patterns with MEGE *tutto* and *eccetera*.

| | *Pattern* | *Example* |
|---|---|---|
| *Type 1*<br>*Base of a derived word* | [prefix-**GE**]<br>[**GE**-suffix] | *post**tutto***<br>***ecceter**ismo* |
| *Type 2*<br>*Second constituent of (subordinate or attributive) compound* | [word1-**GE**] | *salva-**tutto***<br>*Ebreo-**eccetera*** |
| *Type 3*<br>*Final constituent of coordinate compound* | [word1-…-wordX-**GE**] | *caratterialgeografico**eccetera*** |

## 4 Theoretical discussion

MEGEs, as described in Section 3, are 'extravagant' in both function and form, thus posing more than one challenge.

Functionally speaking, they challenge the divide between semantics and pragmatics. The interpretation of words containing GEs depends on the

other members of the list (if present) and/or on encyclopaedic knowledge. In this respect, nonce formations with MEGEs can be regarded as 'contextuals' in the sense of Clark & Clark (1979), namely expressions which "are neither purely denotational nor indexical, for they have a SHIFTING sense and denotation" (emphasis in the original). Indeed, MEGE expressions have potentially an indefinitely large number of senses, they strictly depend on the context, and they rely on the cooperation between speaker and listener. Moreover, words containing GEs are contingent upon the speaker's needs, i.e., they are created to meet a very specific communicative need and they do not serve to name a (possibly) stable concept. Hence, they are intended *not* to be stored (although some eventually are, but with a specific non-shifting meaning, like *anti-tutto*), unlike typical word formation outputs.[11] They rather serve as 'wild words', as sort of variables able to capture a virtually endless number of meanings. In this respect, nonce formations with MEGEs can also be regarded as a strategy to create what Barsalou (1983) calls "ad hoc categories" (cf. Mauri & Sansò 2017, 2018a for the linguistic expression of these categories). Interestingly, lists, too, are a means through which languages build (ad hoc) categories (Barotto & Mauri 2018; Goria &

[11] This does not amount to say that word formation processes do not create nonce expressions. They certainly do. However, whereas word formation processes are normally designed to create new (stable) lexemes of a language, MEGEs are meant *not* be stored.

Masini forthcoming), as we have seen. Indeed, the resemblance of MEGE examples with syntactic lists with GEs is quite striking, as already noted in Section 1. See for instance the following pair of examples, where the same words are used, in a syntactic exemplification list (cf. 0 and 0) and in a coordinate compound with the MEGE *eccetera* (cf. 0).

(26) e poi sicuramente, girellando "a casa" di altri, scoprirete un sacco di cose interessanti: **libri**, **fumetti**, **film eccetera**
'and for sure, wandering around other people's "houses", you'll find out a lot of interesting things: **books**, **comics**, **movies**, **etcetera**'

(27) […] quali **libri-film-fumetti-eccetera** vi vengono in mente che, in qualche modo, siano debitori della saga di John Carter di Marte?
'which **books-movies-comics-etcetera** can you think of that are somehow inspired by the John Carter di Marte saga?'

In 0, the coordinate compound *libri-film-fumetti-eccetera* stands for a larger category identifying '(any) work of art', whereas in 0 the list *libri*, *fumetti*, *film eccetera* exemplifies interesting things to be discovered by following a blog and reading other people's posts. Although the actual meaning they

acquire is obviously different, the function they perform (evoking a higher-level category) is quite similar, thus strengthening the idea that 'lists' as defined in Section 2 present the same 'core' properties despite their actual realization as syntactic or morphological objects. The crucial difference between the two objects lies in the fact that, in 0, the GE is not independent, but embedded into a compounding schema.

Indeed, formally speaking, MEGEs are puzzling because they are used within morphological structures when they are actually expected to be found in syntax/discourse, thus straddling the boundary between syntax and morphology. How do we explain the emergence of complex words with MEGEs? We probably need two separate explanations for what appear to be two different situations. The first is exemplified by the pattern with *eccetera* at the end of (typically multi-constituent) coordinate compounds, like in 0. The second is represented by structures where *tutto* (much more marginally *eccetera*) is a constituent in prefixed words or subordinate/attributive compounds (cf. e.g. 0).

(28) Per tradurre qualcosa davvero occorre […] conoscere […] l'autore e il contesto **storico-culturale-filosofico-spiritualeccetera** in cui scrive

‘To actually translate something you need to know the author and the **historical-cultural-philosophical-spiritualetcetera** context in which (s)he writes’

(29) **Porta-penne e porta-tutto** meravigliosi, saranno complementi unici del vostro design
‘Fantastic **pen-holders and whatever-holders** will be the unique accessories for your design’

The first case can be treated as an example of ‘lists’ produced as coordinate compounds, which are admittedly sometimes difficult to be distinguished from syntactic lists. As we have seen in Section 2, the concept of list is ‘flexible’: it can be instantiated at both the syntactic and the morphological level. What is ‘extravagant’ in these examples is the fact that the GE starts wandering outside of its comfort zone and attaching to other types of structures, viz. morphological structures. This ‘deviant’ behaviour is possibly facilitated by the fact that these morphological structures are actually closely linked to the corresponding structures in syntax and discourse, thus strengthening the idea of a concept ‘list’ operating across levels of analysis. The morphological embedding of GE is also consonant with the sense of ‘extravagance’ discussed in this volume: they are definitely a way for the speaker to be noticed (Haspelmath 1999); they are

the manifestation of linguistic creativity in the sense of Bauer (1983: 63), since the extended use of GEs to morphological schemas is an unpredictable innovation, which is however motivated (by the 'list' notion); and they are (in part) an instance of 'expressive morphology' as intended by Zwicky & Pullum (1987), since they are ad-hoc expressions with a specific pragmatic effect.

All this is also true of the second case, which however deserves a broader discussion. In the vast majority of cases *tutto* formations occur at the end of a list of complex words constructed according to the same schema. Let us take 0 as an example for the discussion.

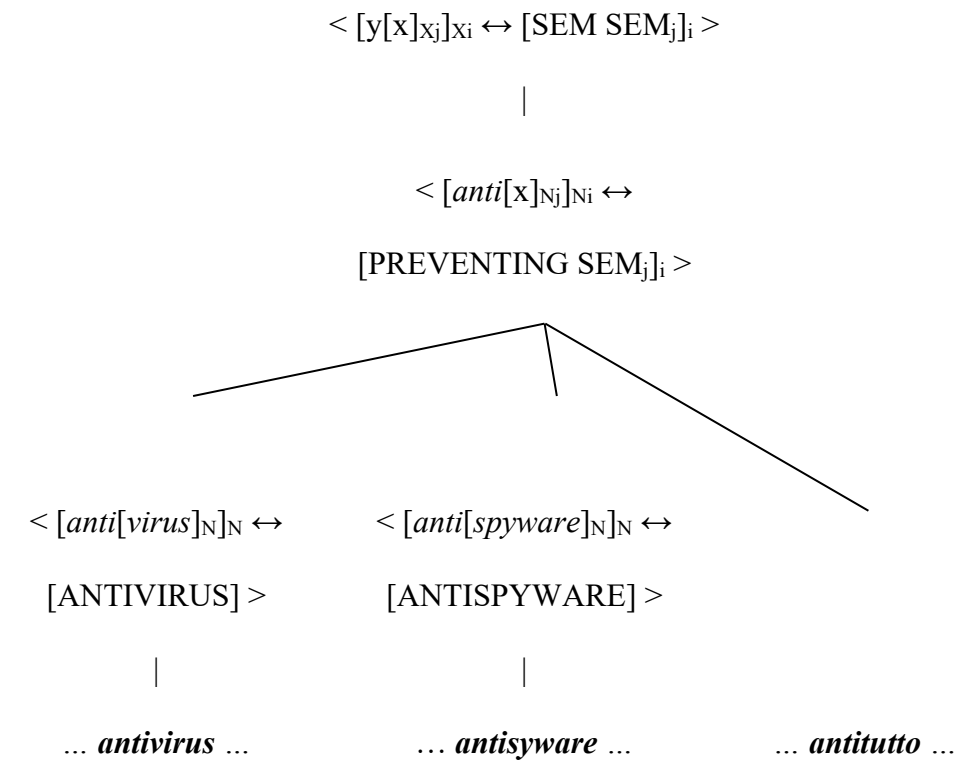
(30) Il più completo **antivirus**, **antispyware**, **antitutto**.
'The most complete **anti-virus**, **anti-spyware**, **anti-everything**'

This is a list where the conjuncts are all formed with the prefix *anti*-,[12] hence paradigmatically related from a formal point of view. However, the last conjunct (or better, the base to which *anti*- attaches) is not on a par with previous ones in terms of both representation and semantics.

[12] The *anti*- used here has the meaning of 'opposing/preventing' and displays category-changing properties in that it forms invariable adjectives from nouns (cf. Montermini 2008: 197-205).

In Construction Morphology terms (Booij 2010; Masini & Audring 2019), *antivirus* and *antispyware* would be complex words linked to more abstract constructions through instance inheritance links, as sketchily (and partially) illustrated by the hierarchy in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Inheritance hierarchy for *anti-* complex words.




Note that whereas *antivirus* and *antispyware* are represented as fully specified constructions (hence stored lexemes with a stable denotation), *antitutto* is a construct (i.e., an expression actually occurring in discourse) which is directly instantiated from the *anti-* schema. In other words, *antitutto* is a nonce formation, with no stable representation in the lexicon, whose meaning is

heavily anchored to the environment it appears in.[13] But how do we get the appropriate interpretation of *antitutto*?

All these *anti-* words occur in a categorizing list, which – according to some accounts (see Section 2) – may be regarded as a (very abstract and flexible) construction. Therefore, we may think that the example in 0 is a construct arising from the unification of the categorizing list construction (which often displays a GE) with the single *anti-* words illustrated above. However, a straightforward unification of this type would produce a list of *anti-* words possibly followed by a general extender (e.g., *antivirus antispyware e tutto il resto* 'anti-virus, anti-spyware, and all the rest'). Instead, what we get is 0, where the last conjunct (*antitutto*) has a special status: it is an *anti-* word (coherently with the rest of the list), but it is functionally equivalent to a GE, without being a proper GE. So, list and complex words here are interacting in a non-trivial way. We claim that the reason for this special interaction might be a matter of semantic scope.

We said that categorizing lists often create 'ad hoc' categories and that the interpretation of the appropriate category depends on context and especially on the previous elements in the list, from which the category can

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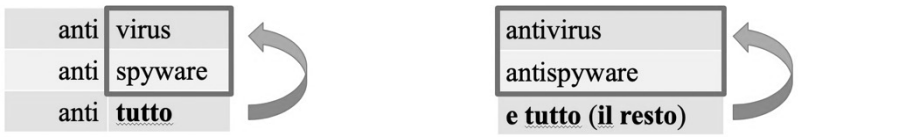
[13] Obviously, what we are discussing here is the representation of the 'wild word' *antitutto*, not of the institutionalized *antitutto* (registered in the Treccani dictionary; cf. Section 3.2), which is obviously a fully specified construction encoded in the constructicon, like *antivirus* and *antispyware*.

be inferred. Embedding the GE into the derivational schema narrows down this inferential process to the internal constituents rather than the entire complex word, thus making it more focused and precise, coherently with the 'contingent upon the speaker's needs' nature of these formations. So, in 0, the reading we obtain is actually not 'anti-virus, anti-spyware, and all the rest' (interpretation B), but rather 'anti-virus, anti-spyware and anti-[everything that can damage your computer/data]' (interpretation A), where 'everything that can damage your computer/data' is the higher-level category inferred from the listing of virus and spyware. See the schematization in Figure 4.

Figure 4. MEGEs and semantic scope.




A. anti-{virus | spyware | and all the rest}  B. {antivirus | antispyware | and all the rest}

Although this might not always be the case, in principle the interpretive process B leads to a slightly different concept than process A. In A, the inferential process has scope over the internal constituents (viz., the bases) of the previous complex words, not over the whole words. Therefore, a higher-level category like 'software in general' is compatible with the interpretive process B (given the right context) but not with A, which more

narrowly refers to ‘software that protects your computer/data from dangers’. The same interpretation A would result from the conjunction of the bases of the *anti-* words (something like *anti-*[*virus/spyware/eccetera*]), which is however a dispreferred solution, formally speaking, because of the cohesion required by complex words, whose internal constituents tend not to be interrupted, dislocated, omitted, coordinated, etc. (cf. Booij 2009 for an interpretation of the Lexical Integrity Hypothesis as a ‘formal universal’). MEGEs are therefore an optimal solution which saves both semantics (correct scope and interpretation) and form (wordhood). In addition, the fact of listing still another conjunct beginning with *anti-* adds to the general cohesion and unity of the list itself.

Obviously, the argumentation proposed here for prefixed *anti-* words, based on 0, holds in principle for other prefixes and for the other word-formation process involved, viz. subordinate/attributive compounds (see 0 above), provided that the internal constituents that take part in the inferential process are recognizable. We therefore expect MEGEs not to occur within complex words with a low degree of transparency. This last observation leads us to consider the consequences of our proposal for morphological theory. Indeed, for our analysis to work, complex words should be internally analysable since the bases need to be semantically identifiable. Therefore, we need a word-formation model that allows this, and Construction Morphology is one such model in our view: even though Construction

Morphology is a word-based model of morphology, where affixes are not independent lexical items, they may still be encoded within morphological schemas.

One last aspect we would like to discuss, very briefly, is: are MEGEs an Italian-specific phenomenon or are they attested in other languages too? In fact, we could retrieve the following example for English, from the BNC (searched through SketchEngine), where *everything* seems to have precisely the same function of *tutto* in Italian:

(31) You could be right, for many people have drifted from one job to another and finally ended up in public relations. […] Today, there are ex-advertising, ex-Army, ex-secretarial, ex-industry, ex-legal, **ex-everything** people in the public relations business. (BNC)

Perhaps more interestingly, MEGE-like patterns are also found beyond Indo-European languages. See the following examples from Meithei (a Sino-Tibetan language spoken in Manipur, India):

(32) Meithei (Chelliah 1997: 281)

a. *khoŋ-pan* *luk-pan*

canal-bank etc-bank

'drainage and such'

b. *sə́ŋ-khəy* *khəy-reŋ*

edifice-share share-etc

'buildings, etc.'

The examples in 0 illustrate juxtaposed compounds (hence, a minimal list) where the second is formed by an item which is also present in the first compound (*pan* in 0, *khəy* in 0b) and an item meaning 'etc', hence a GE or something close to it. The overall interpretation of these minimal lists is similar to the 'categorizing' meanings displayed by the Italian examples discussed in this paper. We believe a more thorough cross-linguistic investigation might lead to discover more MEGE patterns that would add to the initial typology documented in the present research.

## 5 Concluding remarks

In this paper we explored the occurrence of general extenders – usually found in syntax and discourse – within morphological schemas, especially at the end of lists of complex words formed by means of the same process. We focused on two specific general extenders, namely *eccetera* 'etcetera' and

*tutto* ‘everything/all’, which turned out to take part in partially different patterns: whereas the former is typically found as last constituent of coordinate compounds, the latter is mostly used as the base of derived (especially prefixed) words or as second constituent of subordinate or attributive compounds.

In view of their ‘extravagant’ behaviour – straddling the boundary between morphology and syntax on the one hand, and semantics and pragmatics on the other – complex words containing MEGEs were analysed as ‘wild words’, namely ‘contextuals’ (in the sense of Clark & Clark 1979) that are created to meet specific communicative needs and are meant *not* to be stored. Nonce-formations with MEGEs were also regarded as a strategy to create ‘ad hoc categories’ (Mauri & Sansò 2017, 2018a), which is even more evident when they occur within categorizing lists (and they often do). Lists are also relevant for the interpretation of these structures, whose semantics is not only context-dependent but relies on an abstractive process that, in the case of *tutto*, makes references to the list of previously uttered complex words, and in particular to their bases. This aspect is also crucial to explain why the general extender is embedded into the morphological schema instead of appearing independently at the end of the list: to mark that the inferential process that leads to the relevant higher-level category starts from the bases and not from the whole complex words. This

explanation has consequences for morphological theory because it entails that morphologically complex words should be internally analysable.

MEGEs are not a peculiar trait of Italian but are also attested in other (typologically and/or genetically) unrelated languages. Of course, those provided at the end of Section 4 are just a few examples: in order to assess the spread of the phenomenon a wider cross-linguistic investigation would be needed, which might also unveil interesting grammaticalization paths and new patterns that we did not consider here.

Finally, as a promising line of future research, we deem worth exploring how many and which types of 'wild words' can be found in languages, beyond the case of MEGEs discussed in this article, thus shedding light on the relevance and impact of indexicality and context-dependency within morphology.

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