

## On different types of postverbal subjects in Italian

Anna Cardinaletti

Università Ca' Foscari, Venezia, Italy <cardin@unive.it >

This paper discusses the properties of different types of subjects occurring in postverbal position in Italian: (i) *in situ* focused subjects, (ii) marginalized, topic subjects, (iii) heavy subjects. The data show that postverbal subjects convey different discourse-related values. We suggest that while left-peripheral positions syntactically encode different discourse-related features (see Rizzi's 1997 cartography of the left-periphery), the VP-internal thematic positions are compatible with different discourse-related properties. In the postverbal space, no one-to-one correlation between interpretation and syntactic structure appears to be needed. Our conclusion differs from previous work (most notably, Belletti 2001, 2004) which assumes an IP-internal articulation of discourse-related positions immediately above VP and is in line with previous analyses of some of the constructions analyzed here (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002; Brunetti 2004; Bocci 2013; Samek-Lodovici 2015). The paper also discusses new-information preverbal subjects in some varieties of Italian.

### 1. Introduction

This paper discusses the properties of different types of subjects occurring in the postverbal space in Italian.

Since Rizzi (1982), it is widely assumed in the literature that pro-drop languages like Italian 'freely' allow for postverbal subjects in any type of sentence, their occurrence being discourse-motivated (narrow informational focus, Belletti 2001, 2004). It is however less known that in Italian, postverbal subjects are not necessarily new information and that the two properties (syntactic distribution and discourse status) may indeed be dissociated. In specific constructions, postverbal subjects are not (narrow) informational foci, and conversely, in different Italian varieties, new-information subjects occur in preverbal position.

The analysis will take into account the properties of (i) *in situ* focused subjects (vs left-peripheral focused subjects), (ii) marginalized, topic subjects, (iii) postverbal heavy subjects. Bianchi's (2013) focus typology provides further evidence that both *in situ* focused subjects and marginalized subjects occur in their VP-internal thematic positions and are not left-peripheral, in line with previous analyses of some of the constructions analyzed here (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002; Brunetti 2004; Bocci 2013; Samek-Lodovici 2015). The same proposal is made here for post-

verbal heavy subjects in the Resumptive Preposing construction (Cinque 1990, Cardinaletti 2009).

The data show that postverbal subjects convey different discourse-related values. We suggest that while left-peripheral positions syntactically encode different discourse-related features (see Rizzi's 1997 cartography of the left-periphery; also see Cardinaletti 2015), the VP-internal thematic positions are compatible with different discourse-related properties, and no one-to-one correlation between interpretation and syntactic structure appears to be needed. Our conclusion differs from Belletti (2001, 2004), who assumes an IP-internal articulation of discourse-related positions immediately above VP to host informational focus and marginalized subjects in questions. As we will see in §4.2.6, our conclusion is compatible with the prosodic properties of the different types of postverbal subjects (see Bocci 2013, although his syntactic analysis of informational focus is different from ours).

The paper also shows that differently from (standard) Italian, some varieties of Italian allow for new-information subjects in preverbal position, similarly to what happens in non-pro-drop languages like English.

## 2. Postverbal new-information subjects in Italian

Italian displays so called 'free subject inversion' (Rizzi 1982). As is well-known, however, the syntax of subjects is not completely 'free', but ruled by two semantic factors: the discourse status of the subject (old vs new information) and the verb class ((in)transitive vs unaccusative) (Calabrese 1982; Pinto 1994; Belletti 2001, 2004; Cardinaletti 2004, 2011; Bocci 2013, among many others).

With all verb classes, old information subjects are preverbal (1), while new-information subjects are postverbal (2). In the following examples, the discourse status of the subject is established via the question-answer test, and the new-information constituent appears in square brackets:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a. *Cosa ha fatto Gianni?*                      *Gianni ha [rotto il vaso].*  
          what has done Gianni                      Gianni has broken the vase  
          'What did Gianni do?'                      'Gianni broke the vase.'
- b. *Cosa ha fatto Gianni ieri sera?*                      *Gianni ha [ballato].*  
          what has done Gianni yesterday evening                      Gianni has danced  
          'What did Gianni do last night?'                      'Gianni danced.'

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- c. *Quando è arrivato Gianni ieri sera?* *Gianni è arrivato [alle 10].*  
 when is arrived Gianni yesterday evening Gianni is arrived at-the 10  
 ‘When did Gianni arrive last night?’ ‘Gianni arrived at 10 p.m.’
- (2) a. *Chi ha rotto il vaso?* *L’ha rotto [Gianni].*  
 who has broken the vase it-has broken Gianni  
 ‘Who broke the vase?’ ‘Gianni broke it.’
- b. *Chi ha starnutito?* *Ha starnutito [Gianni].*  
 who has sneezed has sneezed Gianni  
 ‘Who sneezed?’ ‘Gianni sneezed.’
- c. *Chi è arrivato?* *È arrivato [Gianni].*  
 who is arrived is arrived Gianni  
 ‘Who arrived?’ ‘Gianni arrived.’

In (2), the subject represents a narrow informational focus and, as said above, can occur in postverbal position with all verb classes. Note that in Italian any type of subject (both DPs and strong pronouns) is allowed to occur in postverbal position.<sup>2</sup>

The position of a subject included in a broad focus sentence instead depends on the verb class: with (in)transitive verbs, the subject is preverbal (3a,b), with unaccusative verbs it occurs in postverbal position (3c):

- (3) a. *Che è successo?* *[Gianni ha rotto il vaso].*  
 what is happened Gianni has broken the vase  
 ‘What happened?’ ‘Gianni broke the vase.’
- b. *Che è successo?* *[Gianni ha starnutito].*  
 what is happened Gianni has sneezed  
 ‘What happened?’ ‘Gianni sneezed.’
- c. *Che è successo?* *[È arrivato Gianni].*  
 what is happened is arrived Gianni  
 ‘What happened?’ ‘Gianni arrived.’

The sentences in (2c) and (3c) display the same word order and the same intonation (sentential stress on *Gianni*), but different interpretive properties (narrow focus subject and broad focus sentence, respectively). Similarly, the sentences in (1a,b) and (3a,b) display the same word order and the same intonation (sentential stress on the sentence final constituent), but different interpretive properties (narrow focus VP / PP and broad focus sentence, respectively).

The subjects in (2c) and (3c) behave like the objects of transitive

verbs: compare (2c) with (4a), in which an object is the new information of the sentence, and (3c) with (4b) and (4c), in which an object is included in a broad focus, the VP and the whole sentence, respectively:

- (4) a. *Chi ha visitato Maria ieri?*                      *Maria ha visitato [mio fratello].*  
 whom has visited Maria yesterday              Maria has visited my brother  
 ‘Who did Maria visit yesterday?’              ‘Maria visited my brother.’
- b. *Cosa ha fatto Maria ieri?*                              *Maria ha [visitato mio fratello].*  
 what has done Maria yesterday                      Maria has visited my brother  
 ‘What did Maria do yesterday?’                      ‘Maria visited my brother.’
- c. *Che è successo?*    [*Maria ha visitato mio fratello.*]  
 what is happened?    Maria has visited my brother  
 ‘What happened?’    ‘Maria visited my brother.’

Following the unaccusative hypothesis (Burzio 1986), the asymmetry with regard to verb classes can be captured by assuming a different location of new-information postverbal subjects with different verb classes: the object position with unaccusative verbs (5a) vs the thematic position specVP with (in)transitive verbs (5b), with raising of the past participle to an aspectual head (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002, following Cinque 1999):

- (5) a. [<sub>TP</sub> è [<sub>AspectP</sub> *arrivato* [<sub>VP</sub> *arrivato* Gianni]]  
 is arrived                      Gianni
- b. [<sub>TP</sub> *l’ha* [<sub>AspectP</sub> *rotto* [<sub>VP</sub> Gianni *rotto-to*]]]  
 it-has                      broken Gianni

In the proposal of a low periphery above VP by Belletti (2001), (2004), new-information subjects are instead taken to occur in low spec-FocusP:

- (6) [<sub>TP</sub> *l’ha* [<sub>AspectP</sub> *rotto* [<sub>FocusP</sub> Gianni [<sub>VP</sub> Gianni *rotto-to*]]]]  
 it-has                      broken                      Gianni

Both proposals capture the fact that postverbal subjects are in the c-command domain of sentential negation (Cardinaletti 2001; Belletti 2004: 23):

- (7) Q: *Chi ha parlato, a Gianni?*  
 who has spoken to Gianni?  
 ‘Who spoke to Gianni?’

- A: *Non ha parlato nessuno, a Gianni.*  
 not has spoken anybody to Gianni  
 ‘Nobody spoke to Gianni.’

The decision between the two hypotheses cannot be made on the basis of focused subjects, but rather on the basis of focused objects (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002). If focused objects moved to the low-peripheral specFocusP, they should be followed by marginalized subjects (occurring in specVP or in the low-peripheral specTopicP suggested by Belletti; see §4.1). This is however not the case: What follows an informational focus object can only be a (clause-external) right-dislocated subject. We conclude that informational focus objects are *in situ* and do not move to low specFocusP. By analogy, informational focus subjects can be taken to occur in their VP-internal thematic position.

Subject placement in Italian differs from non-pro-drop languages like English, in which subjects are preverbal in all conditions, both when they are old information (8) and when they are new information (9) and (10).<sup>3</sup> The narrow informational focus interpretation is signalled by a special intonation, marked as upright in (9), which is different from contrastive stress in (9’), used to negate the relevant DPs in contexts like *The cat broke it / The cat sneezed / Mary came*:

- |   |                         |  |
|---|-------------------------|--|
| (8) a. <i>What did John do?</i>                 |                         | <i>John [broke the vase].</i>              |
| b. <i>What did John do yesterday night?</i>     |                         | <i>John [danced].</i>                      |
| c. <i>When did John arrive yesterday night?</i> |                         | <i>John arrived [at 10].</i>               |
| (9) a. <i>Who broke the vase?</i>               | [John] <i>broke it.</i> | (9’) a. <i>JOHN broke it, not the cat.</i> |
| b. <i>Who sneezed?</i>                          | [John] <i>sneezed.</i>  | b. <i>JOHN sneezed, not the cat.</i>       |
| c. <i>Who came?</i>                             | [John] <i>came.</i>     | c. <i>JOHN came, not Mary.</i>             |
| (10) a. <i>What happened?</i>                   |                         | [ <i>John broke the vase</i> ].            |
| b. <i>What happened?</i>                        |                         | [ <i>John sneezed</i> ].                   |
| c. <i>What happened?</i>                        |                         | [ <i>John came</i> ].                      |

Interestingly, the same difference among verb classes emerges as in Italian. With (in)transitive verbs, focused preverbal subjects are narrow foci (9a,b), while with unaccusative verbs, they can be included in a broad focus sentence (Diesing 1988; Selkirk 1995). Sentences (9c) and (10c) have the same intonation but a different interpretation, narrow focus subject and broad focus sentence, respectively.

Following Rizzi (1997), fronted (contrastive) foci as in (9’) occur in the specFocusP position of the CP layer. Preverbal new-information subjects as in (9) instead occur in the IP-internal preverbal subject position

(Belletti 2005a, 2009). Belletti also notes that the possibility found in (9) is peculiar of subjects and is not found with objects (11b). Preverbal objects can only be marked with contrastive focus intonation, which is appropriate in a different context, as in (12):

- (11) *What did you buy for Mary?*  
a. *I bought [a book].*  
b. \* *[A book] I bought.*
- (12) *I heard that you bought a CD for Mary.*  
*A BOOK, I bought, not a CD.*

The sentences in (9) show that being a narrow informational focus and being the subject of predication are not incompatible properties. This also suggests that informational foci do not need to be associated to specific positions in the clause. Rather, the position of narrow informational foci depends on the syntax of subjects in the language. In English, they occur in the canonical preverbal subject position; in Italian, they occur in their VP-internal thematic positions, as suggested above.

The typical occurrence of postverbal subjects in pro-drop languages (Rizzi 1982) can be correlated to the availability of (preverbal) referential *pro* duplicating the postverbal subject, as in Belletti's (2005b) extended doubling hypothesis.

### 3. Postverbal contrastive subjects

As said above, a new-information subject cannot appear preverbally in Italian: compare (2b) with (13), which is ungrammatical with both the intonation seen in (9) and sentential stress on the past participle.<sup>4</sup> A preverbal focused subject occurs in the left-peripheral specFocusP, which hosts contrastive foci (14a) (Rizzi 1997; Bocci 2004, 2013: Ch. 4), or, more precisely, corrective foci (see below). Focus movement to the left periphery is however not obligatory. A contrastively focused subject can stay in postverbal position (14b):

- (13) *Chi ha parlato al convegno?*                    \**[Gianni] ha parlato.*  
who has spoken at-the conference?            Gianni has spoken  
'Who spoke at the conference?'
- (14) A: *Maria ha parlato al convegno.*  
          Maria has spoken at-the conference  
          'Maria spoke at the conference.'

- B: a. *GIANNI, ha parlato, non Maria.*  
 Gianni has spoken, not Maria
- b. *Ha parlato GIANNI, non Maria.*  
 ‘Gianni spoke, not Maria.’

The question is whether contrastively focused postverbal subjects as in (14b) move to the left-peripheral specFocusP position, followed by movement of the rest of the sentence to a higher position, as proposed by Belletti (2004: 29), or occur *in situ* (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002; Brunetti 2004; Bocci 2013; Samek Lodovici 2015). The possibility of negative quantifiers in the scope of sentential negation suggests that contrastive subjects occur *in situ* (15), on a par with narrow informational foci (7):

- (15) a. *Maria ha parlato a Gianni.*  
 Maria has spoken to Gianni  
 ‘Maria spoke to Gianni.’
- b. *Non ha parlato NESSUNO, a Gianni, neanche Maria.*  
 not has spoken anybody to Gianni not even Maria  
 ‘Nobody spoke to Gianni, not even Maria.’

Further evidence for the *in situ* approach is provided by the analysis of the types of focus found in the two sentences in (14Ba,b).

Bianchi (2013) shows that “in a number of contexts, the two focus positions are not equally felicitous; in all cases, the fronted position turns out to be more constrained than the ‘low’ position” and that postverbal foci have a different information structure role from preverbal foci: The former are contrastive, but do not necessarily convey a correction of a previous assertion, while the latter are necessarily corrective foci. Bianchi’s data all involve focused objects. The data in this section show that her generalization also holds for focused subjects. As in Bianchi’s paper, judgments are provided for postverbal subjects with contrastive stress.

First, focus fronting is not felicitous in the answer to a yes/no question (16) and in contexts in which the focus is linked to the corrected portion of the previous assertion by an inferential relation; in (17), *Maria* is understood as ‘the secretary of the trust’:<sup>5</sup>

- (16) A: *Ha parlato Maria, al convegno?*  
 has spoken Maria at-the conference  
 ‘Did Maria speak at the conference?’

- B: a. *No, ha parlato GIANNI, non Maria.*  
no, has spoken Gianni, not Maria  
b. *#No, GIANNI, ha parlato, non Maria.*  
'No, Gianni spoke, not Maria.'
- (17) A: *Al convegno ha parlato Maria.*  
at-the conference has spoken Maria  
'Maria spoke at the conference.'
- B: a. *No, ha parlato LA PRESIDENTE DELLA FONDAZIONE, non la Segretaria.*  
no, has spoken the president of-the trust not thesecretary  
b. *#No, LA PRESIDENTE DELLA FONDAZIONE, ha parlato, non la Segretaria.*  
'No, the president of the trust spoke, not the secretary.'

Another difference pointed out by Bianchi is the possibility to add additional material in the case of *in situ* focus (18Ba), but not with left-peripheral focus (18Bb):

- (18) A: *Dei figli di Maria, chi studia al SOAS di Londra?*  
of-the children of Maria, who studies at SOAS of London  
'Which child of Maria's studies at SOAS in London?'
- B: *Ci studia Gianni.*  
there studies Gianni  
'Gianni studies there.'
- C: a. *No, ci studia (cinese) ALBERTO.*  
no, there studies Chinese Alberto  
'No, Alberto studies (Chinese) there.'
- b. *No, ALBERTO, ci studia (#cinese).*

A fourth property distinguishing the two types of foci is that only contrastive focus is in the scope of matrix clause negation (19Ba), while left-peripheral focus is not (19Bb):

- (19) A: *Il documento hai detto [che lo leggerà MARIA].*  
the document have.2SG said that it read.FUT Maria  
'You said that Maria will read the document.'
- B: a. *Non ho detto [che lo leggerà MARIA], ma Gianni.*  
not have.1SG said that it read.FUT Maria, but Gianni  
'I didn't say that Maria will read it, but Gianni.'
- b. *#Non ho detto [che MARIA, lo leggerà], ma Gianni.*

In conclusion, these four contrasts between postverbal and preverbal foci allow us to conclude, following Bianchi's (2013) analysis of focused objects, that contrastively focused postverbal subjects do not occur in the left-peripheral specFocusP position, but in a structurally

lower position. I take this position to be the VP-internal thematic position (see Cardinaletti 2001, 2002; Brunetti 2004; Bocci 2013; Samek Lodovici 2015). In this analysis, a marginalized object following the contrastively focused subject also occur in its merge position inside VP (see Cardinaletti's 2001, 2002 arguments based on the distribution of negative and quantified marginalized objects and on binding facts; for marginalized subjects, see §4.1).

#### 4. Postverbal subjects which are not (narrow) foci

In what follows, we discuss two situations in which a postverbal subject is not a narrow focus: cases in which it is a deaccented topic at the end of the sentence (Marginalization, §4.1), and cases in which it belongs to a broad focus sentence (Resumptive Preposing, §4.2).

##### 4.1. Marginalization of the subject

In constructions in which a constituent different from the subject is focused (i.e. *wh*-questions and focalizations), the familiar subject can be marginalized, namely deaccented at the end of the sentence (Antinucci & Cinque 1978; Cardinaletti 2001, 2002):<sup>6</sup>

- (20) a. *Cosa hanno fatto, i bambini?*  
what have done the children?  
'What did the children do?'
- b. *Il disegno l'hanno fatto IERI, quei bambini lì, non oggi.*  
the drawing it-have.3PL done yesterday those children there, not today  
'Those children did the drawing yesterday, not today.'

The marginalized subject in (20a) is c-commanded by sentential negation; we take it to occur in its VP-internal merge position (for other arguments for this analysis, see Cardinaletti 2001):

- (21) *Cosa non ha fatto, nessuno?*  
what not has done anybody  
'What did nobody do?'

The status of the element preceding the postverbal subject in (20b) suggests that it is marginalized. As noted in Cardinaletti (2001, 2002), what precedes a marginalized constituent is a contrastive focus (also see Avesani & Vayra 2005), not an informational focus. The data can be replicated with a contrastively focused manner adverb (22B):

- (22) A: *Gianni ha parlato bene?*  
Gianni has spoken well  
'Did Gianni speak well?'  
B: *No, ha parlato MALE, Gianni, non bene.*  
no, has spoken badly, Gianni, not well  
'No, Gianni spoke badly, not well.'

Based on the typology of foci discussed by Bianchi (2013) (see §3 above), it is possible to show that the contrastive focus in (22B) is not the left-peripheral corrective focus, but the low contrastive focus which occurs to the right of the verb. Bianchi's discussion involving objects can be reproduced with focused adverbs followed by marginalized subjects. The focus occurring in the answer to a yes-no question (23) and linked to the corrected portion by an inferential relation (24) ('Maria is an expert') can only occur in postverbal position and is not felicitous as a left-peripheral focus:<sup>7</sup>

- (23) A: *Ha parlato bene, Maria, al convegno?*  
has spoken well Maria, at-the conference  
'Did Maria speak well at the conference?'  
B: a. *No, ha parlato MALE, Maria, non bene.*  
no, has spoken badly, Maria, not well  
'No, she spoke badly, not well.'  
b. *#No, MALE, ha parlato, Maria, non bene.*
- (24) A: *Ha parlato bene, Maria, al convegno.*  
has spoken well, Maria, at-the conference  
'Maria spoke well at the conference.'  
B: a. *No, ha parlato come una PRINCIPIANTE, Maria, non come un'esperta.*  
no, has spoken like a beginner, Maria, not like an expert  
b. *#No, come una PRINCIPIANTE, ha parlato, Maria, non come un'esperta.*  
'No, she spoke like a beginner, not like an expert.'

Another difference pointed out by Bianchi is the possibility to add additional material to the sentence when the focus is *in situ*, but not with left-peripheral focus. This property can be replicated with focused adverbs and marginalized subjects:

- (25) A: *Al convegno ha presentato bene, Maria?*  
at-the conference has presented well, Maria  
'Did Maria present well at the conference?'  
B: a. *No, ha presentato (il poster) MALE (il poster), Maria.*  
no, has presented the poster badly, the poster, Maria  
'No, Maria presented (the poster) badly.'  
b. *No, MALE, ha presentato (#il poster), Maria.*

A fourth property distinguishing the two types of focus is that only contrastive, *in situ* focus is in the scope of matrix clause negation, while left-peripheral focus is not:

- (26) A: *Il documento hai detto [che Maria lo leggerà bene].*  
 the document have.2SG said that Maria it read.FUT well  
 ‘You said that Maria will read the document well.’  
 B: a. *Non ho detto [che lo leggerà BENE, Maria], ma male.*  
 not have.1SG said that it read.FUT well, Maria, but badly  
 ‘I did not say that Maria will read it well, but badly.’  
 b. *#Non ho detto [che BENE, lo leggerà, Maria], ma male.*

Following Bianchi’s generalization, the narrow focus adverbs in (23Ba)-(26Ba) do not occur in left-peripheral specFocusP, but in a lower position in the sentence. This position might well be their merge position in Cinque’s (1999) adverbial hierarchy.<sup>8</sup> The marginalized subject which follows the focused adverb necessarily occurs in an even lower position. Following previous work (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002; also see Bocci 2013 and Samek Lodovici 2015), I take the position of marginalized subjects to be the VP-internal thematic position.

Our analysis differs from Belletti (2004: 29), who takes the deaccented material following contrastive elements to occur in the left-peripheral specTopicP position below FocusP. Belletti (2004: 40) provides a different structural analysis for the marginalized subjects occurring in *wh*-questions, as in (20a): the low left-peripheral specTopicP position above VP. If no low periphery is assumed, one and the same structural analysis can be provided for the two cases in (20).

#### 4.2. Resumptive Preposing

In what follows, we discuss cases in which postverbal subjects are not narrow informational foci, but belong to a broad focus sentence.

In Resumptive Preposing (Cinque 1990; Cardinaletti 2009), where the preverbal position is occupied by a fronted object, the subject OBLIGATORILY occurs in postverbal position, as shown in (27a vs b) (examples from Cardinaletti 2009: 6, 9):

- (27) *Il ministro propose di votare il disegno di legge.*  
 the minister proposed to vote the draft of law  
 ‘The minister proposed to vote the bill.’  
 a. *La stessa proposta fece (poi) il partito di maggioranza.*  
 the same proposal made then the party of majority  
 ‘Then, the majority party made the same proposal.’  
 b. *\*La stessa proposta il partito di maggioranza fece il giorno successivo.*  
 the same proposal the party of majority made the day next

The subject in (27a) displays restrictions not otherwise displayed by postverbal subjects in Italian. These properties will be discussed in the following sections.

#### 4.2.1. Discourse properties

In RP, the postverbal occurrence of the subject is obligatory (cf. (27b)) and does not depend on information structure. The postverbal subject is not a narrow informational focus, as confirmed by the question-answer test. The postverbal subject in (28) cannot be the answer to a *wh*-question on the subject (cf. Cardinaletti 2009: 6-7). Nor can it be a contrastive focus (29):

- (28) *Chi fece la stessa proposta?*  
who made the same proposal?  
'Who made the same proposal?'  
\* *La stessa proposta fece [il partito di maggioranza].*  
the same proposal made the party of majority
- (29) A: *Il Presidente fece la stessa proposta.*  
the president made the same proposal  
'The President made the same proposal.'  
B: \**La stessa proposta fece IL PARTITO DI MAGGIORANZA, non il Presidente.*  
the same proposal made the party of majority, not the president

The RP construction is a new-information sentence with a Topic-Comment articulation, connected to the previous sentence via discourse anaphora (cf. *stessa* 'same' in (27a)). The sentence has a pretty identical discourse equivalent with the canonical SVO order, which is the unmarked order to express a broad focus sentence with transitive verbs (see (3a) above)) (example from Cardinaletti 2009: 8):

- (30) *Il ministro propose di votare il disegno di legge. Il partito di maggioranza fece poi la stessa proposta.*  
the minister proposed to vote the draft of law The party of majority made then the same proposal  
'The minister proposed to vote the bill. Then, the majority party made the same proposal.'

In conclusion, the postverbal subject in the RP construction is not a narrow focus but belongs to a broad focus sentence.

The analysis of RP provided by Cardinaletti (2009) is that subject movement to the preverbal position, which is obligatory in the case of broad focus sentences containing transitive verbs (cf. (3a) and (30)), is made unnecessary by the fronting of a constituent different

from the subject (i.e. the object). If subject movement to the preverbal position is required by the need to satisfy the Subject Criterion (Rizzi & Shlonsky 2006), this requirement is satisfied in RP by object fronting. Cardinaletti's (2009) analysis of RP is built on Rizzi & Shlonsky's (2006) proposal for English Locative Inversion:<sup>9</sup> Fin attracts the object to specFinP (the object further moves to the Aboutness-shift Topic position); the Fin head endowed with a nominal feature satisfies the Subject Criterion by being in a local head-head relation with Subj. It is thus not necessary to raise the subject to specSubjP.

In what follows, we discuss the other peculiar properties of postverbal subjects in the RP construction, which will also allow us to understand why in RP, the object rather than the subject is fronted.

#### 4.2.2. Heaviness

In RP, the postverbal subject is heavy (31a). It cannot be a simple DP, a proper name, or a strong pronoun (31b) (cf. Cardinaletti 2009: 32):

- (31) a. *La stessa proposta ripeté il rappresentante del Senato.*  
the same proposal repeated the representative-of-the Senate  
'The representative of the Senate repeated the same proposal.'
- b. \**La stessa proposta ripeté il Presidente / Gianni / lui.*  
the same proposal repeated the president / Gianni / he

Note that heavy subjects are not necessarily focused. First, they can occur in *wh*-questions and focalizations (examples (32a) and (32b), respectively, from Cardinaletti 2009: 33), which allow one focus per sentence (the *wh*- and the focused constituent, respectively; see Rizzi 1997; Bocci 2013: Ch. 3). Second, they can be marginalized after an *in situ* contrastive focus (32c) (see §4.1):<sup>10</sup>

- (32) a. *Con chi parlò [l'amico inglese di Gianni che vive in Italia da tanti anni]?*  
with whom spoke the-friend English of Gianni who lives in Italy since many years?  
years?  
'With whom did the English friend of Gianni who has been living in Italy for many years speak?'
- b. *Con MARIA, parlò [l'amico inglese di Gianni che vive in Italia da tanti anni], non con me.*  
with Maria spoke the-friend English of Gianni who lives in Italy since many years, not with me  
not with me  
'The English friend of Gianni who has been living in Italy for many years spoke with Maria, not with me.'

- c. Parlò BENE, [*l'amico inglese di Gianni che vive in Italia da tanti anni*],  
 spoke well the-friend English of Gianni who lives in Italy since many years,  
*non con accento straniero.*  
 not with foreign accent  
 'The English friend of Gianni who has been living in Italy for many years  
 spoke well, not with a foreign accent.'

Thus, it comes as no surprise that heavy subjects can occur in the RP construction. As we have shown in §4.2.1, the postverbal subject in RP is not a (narrow) focus, but belongs to a broad focus sentence.

The heaviness restriction makes it possible to understand why in RP, a constituent different from the subject is fronted to the left-periphery (see §4.2.1): a heavy subject tends not to raise to the preverbal subject position on a par with heavy constituents in general, which tend to stay in sentence-final position. Consider double object constructions. The unmarked order in Italian is 'accusative – dative', unless the accusative is heavy, in which case 'dative – accusative' is the most natural order:

- (33) a. *Ho consegnato il pacco a Maria.*  
 have.1SG delivered the packet to Maria  
 b. ? *Ho consegnato a Maria il pacco.*  
 have.1SG delivered to Maria the packet
- (34) a. ? *Ho consegnato l'ultimo pacco che mi era rimasto a Maria.*  
 have.1SG delivered the-last packet that to.me was remained to Maria  
 b. *Ho consegnato a Maria l'ultimo pacco che mi era rimasto.*  
 have.1SG delivered to Maria the-last packet that to.me was remained  
 'I delivered to Maria the last packet that was left.'

Heavy constituents are *in situ*, moved across by the material following them (cf. Larson 1988, 1990; Kayne 1994; Belletti & Shlonsky 1995 for double-object constructions). The same can be suggested for heavy postverbal subjects: They occur in the VP-internal thematic position and are moved across by the fronted material. Light subjects cannot stay *in situ* unless they are narrow foci (see note 2), something which makes them incompatible with RP (see §4.2.1 above).<sup>11</sup>

Note that in RP, the broad focus sentence can contain a null subject provided that the postverbal space contains a heavy constituent. This means that the Topic-Comment articulation (see §4.2.1) can be assured by other arguments of the verb:

- (35) *La stessa proposta pro ripeté non senza qualche esitazione.*  
 the same proposal repeated.PAST.3SG not without some hesitation  
 'He repeated the same proposal not without some hesitation.'

#### 4.2.3. Scope properties and binding

In order to establish the position of the heavy subject occurring in RP, consider scope properties.

First, negative quantifiers occurring inside heavy subjects can appear in RP:

- (36) a. *La stessa proposta non ripeté nessun rappresentante del Senato, neanche per far piacere al Presidente.*  
the same proposal not repeated any representative of-the Senate, not even to please to-the president  
'No representative of the Senate repeated the same proposal, not even to please the president.'
- b. *La stessa proposta non ripeté il rappresentante di nessun partito, neanche per far piacere al Presidente.*  
the same proposal not repeated the representative of any party, not even to please to-the president  
'No representative of any party repeated the same proposal, not even to please the president.'

The fact that in (36), sentential negation *non* is obligatory on a par with postverbal negative subjects (*Non l'ha ripetuto nessuno* [not it has repeated nobody] 'Nobody repeated it', see (7)) and differently from preverbal negative subjects (*Nessuno l'ha ripetuto* [nobody it has repeated] 'Nobody repeated it') shows that heavy subjects occur in the scope of sentential negation.

Second, consider negative polarity items (NPIs). A preverbal negative subject can license a postverbal NPI (37a); the postverbal heavy subject does not license a fronted object NPI (37b), which means that it does not c-command the fronted object; the fronted object licenses a postverbal NPI (37c), hence it c-commands the postverbal heavy subject:

- (37) a. *Nessun partecipante al convegno espresse alcuna / nessuna simile riserva.*  
no participant at-the conference expressed any / any similar reservation  
'No participant at the conference expressed any similar reservation.'
- b. *\*Alcuna similiriserva (non) espresse nessun partecipante al convegno.*  
no similar reservation not expressed any participant at-the conference
- c. *?Nessuna simile riserva espresse alcun / nessun partecipante al convegno.*  
no similar reservation expressed any / any participant at-the conference  
'No participant at the conference expressed any similar reservation.'

Similar data are found when checking the interpretation of pronouns bound by quantifiers. A preverbal quantified subject can bind a pronoun

inside the c-commanded object (38a); the postverbal quantified heavy subject cannot bind the pronoun inside the fronted object (38b); the preverbal fronted object can bind a pronoun inside the postverbal heavy subject:

- (38) a. *Nessun partecipante al convegno confutò pubblicamente la sua ipotesi.*  
 no participant at-the conference refuted publicly the his hypothesis  
 'No participant at the conference publicly refuted his proposal.'
- b. \**Questa sua ipotesi (non) confutò pubblicamente nessun partecipante al convegno.*  
 this his hypothesis not refuted publicly no participant at-the conference
- c. ?*Nessuna simile ipotesi confutò pubblicamente il suo proponente al convegno.*  
 no similar hypothesis refuted publicly the his proponent at-the conference  
 'No similar hypothesis was publicly refuted by its proponent at the conference.'

These data confirm that in RP, the postverbal heavy subject does not occur in some high position to the right, but is c-commanded by the fronted material. These data are compatible with the hypothesis that heavy subjects occur in the specVP thematic position.

#### 4.2.4. Wh-movement

In pro-drop languages, subjects move from the postverbal subject position (Rizzi 1982, 1990). Their movement is not blocked by *wh*-movement (39a) and Focus movement (39b) (from Cardinaletti 2009: 35):

- (39) a. *L'uomo che non so [che cosa abbia detto [<l'uomo> <che cosa>]] ...*  
 the-man that not know.1SG what has.SBJV said  
 'The man who I do not know what he said ...'
- b. *Chi credi [che QUESTA PROPOSTA abbia fatto [<chi> <questa proposta> all'ultimo congresso]] (non quella)?*  
 who think.2SG that this proposal has.SBJV made  
 at-the-last conference, not that one?  
 'Who do you think made this proposal at the last conference, not that one?'

Subject *wh*-movement seems however to be impossible in RP (from Cardinaletti 2009: 33):

- (40) \**Chi credi [che la stessa proposta abbia fatto [<chi> <la stessa proposta> all'ultimo congresso]]?*  
 who think.2SG that the same proposal has.SBJV made  
 at-the-last conference?

Cardinaletti (2009: 33-34) suggested that movement of heavy NP-shifted subjects is impossible because they do not occupy the thematic subject position. It is however also noted that in (40), “the *wh*-phrase is not heavy”. Using a heavy *wh*-phrase, subject movement however becomes possible:

- (41) *Quale rappresentante del Senato credi [che la stessa proposta abbia fatto [<quale rappresentante del Senato> <la stessa proposta> all'ultimo congresso]]?*  
 which representative of-the Senate think.2SG that the same proposal has.SBJV made at-the-last conference?  
 ‘Which representative of the Senate do you think made this proposal at the last conference?’

The grammaticality of (41) is expected in the hypothesis that in RP, the heavy subject occupies the VP-internal thematic position, out of which *wh*-movement is allowed (Rizzi 1982, 1990).

#### 4.2.5. Marginalization of the subject

In RP, the subject cannot be marginalized, i.e. deaccented at the end of the clause. To be sure that we are dealing with marginalized subjects (see note 6), consider the distribution of negative quantifiers, which cannot be right-dislocated (Calabrese 1992; Cardinaletti 2001, 2002). They can be marginalized in questions (42a) and focalizations (42b), but not in RP (42c,d). Marginalized negative quantifiers are ungrammatical in RP not only when they are light (42c) (from Cardinaletti 2009: 36), but also when they are heavy (42d) (compare (42d) with (36a), where the postverbal heavy subject is not marginalized):

- (42) a. *Dove non è andato, nessuno?*  
 where not is gone anybody  
 ‘Where did nobody go?’  
 b. *QUESTO, non ha fatto, nessuno.*  
 this not has done, anybody  
 ‘Nobody did this.’  
 c. \**La stessa proposta non ripeté, nessuno.*  
 the same proposal not repeated nobody  
 d. \**La stessa proposta non ripeté, nessun rappresentante del Senato.*  
 the same proposal not repeated no representative of-the Senate

The two constructions RP and Marginalization imply contradictory features on the postverbal subject: In RP, a new-information subject belongs to the comment of a broad focus sentence, in Marginalization, the subject is a (VP-internal) Topic.

#### 4.2.6. *Interim conclusion*

So far, we have discussed cases in which a postverbal subject is a narrow focus, a marginalized topic, or a constituent included inside a wider focus.

In all cases, we have taken the subject to occur in its VP-internal thematic position. This proposal implies that in the postverbal space, no one-to-one relation exists between the discourse status of a constituent and its distribution. Things are different for the left-periphery of the clause, where discourse-related features such as Topic and (Corrective) Focus are encoded in different functional projections and attract constituents endowed with those features (Rizzi 1997).

This syntactic proposal is compatible with the prosodic properties of postverbal subjects and with Bocci's (2013: 189) conclusion that "there is no direct isomorphism between discourse-related and intonational properties". Marginalized subjects, like any other postfocal material, gets deaccented (or better, associated with a L\* pitch accent, Bocci 2013: 143f for Tuscan Italian); this pitch accent is associated independently of the discourse-related status of the marginalized subject. In RP, the heavy subject gets sentential stress as any sentence-final constituent in a broad focus sentence. The same is true of postverbal subjects which are narrow informational foci or belong to a broad focus (cf. Avesani & Vayra 2003; Bocci 2013: 132ff). Like any constituent of the clause, contrastively focused subjects can be associated with a (contrastive) focus feature which, as we have seen, does not trigger movement to the left periphery and get associated with a L + H\* pitch accent (cf. Bocci 2013: 12, Ch. 6 for Tuscan Italian).

### 5. *On preverbal new-information subjects*

So far, we have discussed cases in which a postverbal subject is (i) a narrow focus, (ii) a marginalized topic, or (iii) a constituent included inside a wider focus. In what follows, we discuss the converse case. Some varieties of Italian differ from standard Italian in that new-information subjects do not occur postverbally but in preverbal position. Their distribution depends on the verb class and the type of focus. We discuss here data from the variety of Italian spoken in the Veneto region (§5.1) and from contact varieties of Italian (§5.2).

#### 5.1. *Preverbal new-information subjects in Veneto Italian*

As in Italian, in the regional variety of Italian spoken in Veneto the distribution of subjects is ruled by the verb class and the type of focus.

With (in)transitive verbs, speakers strongly prefer narrow informational focus subjects in preverbal position (43), while with unaccusative verbs, they tend to allow both positions for new information subjects (44). The new-information preverbal subject in (43) and (44a) gets a special intonation similar to the one seen in English (9), while the sentence-final postverbal subject in (44b) gets sentential stress:

- (43) a. *Chi ha rotto il vaso?* [Gianni] *l'ha rotto.*  
 who has broken the vase Gianni it-has broken  
 'Who broke the vase?' 'Gianni broke it.'
- b. *Chi ha starnutito?* [Gianni] *ha starnutito.*  
 who has sneezed Gianni has sneezed  
 'Who sneezed?' 'Gianni sneezed.'
- (44) *Chi è arrivato?* a. [Gianni] *è arrivato.*  
 who is arrived? Gianni is arrived  
 'Who arrived?' b. *È arrivato [Gianni].*  
 is arrived Gianni  
 'Gianni arrived.'

With unaccusatives, the preverbal position is for many speakers more natural with narrow focus, as in (44a), than with broad focus (45). Broad focus requires or prefers postverbal subjects as in standard Italian. This is signalled by more than one judgment in (45a):

- (45) *Che è successo?* a. *?/?? [Gianni è arrivato]*  
 what is happened Gianni is arrived  
 b. *[È arrivato Gianni].*  
 is arrived Gianni

As we have just seen, in Veneto speakers of Italian, new information subjects of (in)transitive verbs can occur in preverbal position, differently from Italian (compare (43) with (2a,b) above) and similarly to non-pro-drop languages like English and partial pro-drop languages like Brazilian Portuguese and Finnish (see §2 above and note 3).

This possibility may be due to language contact with the partial pro-drop dialects spoken in the same territory. Northern Italian dialects are not full-pro-drop languages (Cardinaletti & Repetti 2008, 2010a): They display (i) subject clitic pronouns in some persons of the verbal paradigm (typically 2nd person singular, 3rd person singular and plural) (46), (ii) expletive pronouns such as *gli* 'it' in (47a) (Brandi & Cordin 1981, 1989) and *el* 'it' in (48a) (Saccon 1993), and (iii) more restricted postverbal subjects than Italian, i.e. limited to unaccusative verbs and

intransitive verbs with a locative argument like *telefonare* ‘call’ (47)-(48a) vs (48b) (Brandi & Cordin 1981, 1989; Saccon 1993; Cardinaletti & Repetti 2010a: 131-134):<sup>12</sup>

- (46) a. Padua, Veneto (Benincà & Vanelli 1982)      b. Donceto (Piacenza), Emilia (Cardinaletti & Repetti 2008)
- |     |            |                |            |                            |
|-----|------------|----------------|------------|----------------------------|
| 1SG |            | <i>magno</i>   | (ə)-       | <sup>1</sup> <i>bev</i>    |
| 2SG | <i>te-</i> | <i>magni</i>   | <i>ət-</i> | <sup>1</sup> <i>bev</i>    |
| 3SG | <i>el-</i> | <i>magna</i>   | <i>əl-</i> | <sup>1</sup> <i>bevə</i>   |
| 1PL |            | <i>magnemo</i> | (ə)-       | <sup>1</sup> <i>bu'vum</i> |
| 2PL |            | <i>magné</i>   | (ə)-       | <sup>1</sup> <i>bu'vi</i>  |
| 3PL | <i>i-</i>  | <i>magna</i>   | <i>i-</i>  | <sup>1</sup> <i>bevən</i>  |
|     |            | ‘eat’          |            | ‘drink’                    |
- (47) a. *Gli è venuto / ha telefonato delle ragazze / la Maria.* (Fiorentino)  
it.EXPL is come has called some girls / the Maria  
‘Some girls / Maria came / called.’
- b. *È vegnù / Ha telefonà qualche putela / la Maria.* (Trentino)  
is come / has called some girl / the Maria  
‘Some girl / Maria came / called.’
- (48) a. *El è rivà la Maria.* (Conegliano, Veneto)  
it.EXPL is arrived the Maria  
‘Maria arrived.’
- b. *\*El a ridest la Maria, al cinema.*  
it.EXPL has laughed the Maria, at-the movie

Furthermore, Marginalization, which implies a deaccented subject in its merge position specVP (see §4.1 above), is impossible. In questions, the subject which occurs at the end of the sentence is not marginalized, but right-dislocated, as shown by the fact that subject-verb agreement is obligatory even in those dialects such as Fiorentino which allow lack of verb agreement with postverbal subjects in declarative sentences, see (49) vs (47a) (Brandi & Cordin 1981, 1989). In (47a), the expletive pronoun is masculine singular, and the auxiliary and the past participle agree with it, independently of the gender and number features of the postverbal argument (feminine singular or plural). The same expletive pronoun is impossible in questions (49a), where the agreeing form of the anticipatory subject clitic pronoun is required (49b). In (49c), the past participle is feminine singular, agreeing with the feminine singular subject clitic pronoun, which in turn agrees with the right-dislocated subject.<sup>13</sup>

- (49) a. \**Iché gl'ha portato, la Maria?* (Fiorentino)  
 what it.EXPL-has brought the Maria
- b. *Iché l'ha portato, la Maria?*  
 what she-has brought the Maria  
 'What did Maria bring?'
- c. *Quando l'è venuta, la Maria?*  
 when she-is come the Maria  
 'When did Maria come?'

Note that Veneto Italian speakers do not allow preverbal new-information objects, parallel to what happens in English (see (11b) above):

- (50) *Cos'ha mangiato, Gianni?* a. \*[Lecaramelle] *ha mangiato.*  
 what has eaten, Gianni the candies has eaten  
 'What did Gianni eat?' b. *Ha mangiato [le caramelle].*  
 has eaten the candies  
 'He ate the candies.'

This is evidence that preverbal new-information subjects as in (43) and (44a) occur in a position which is not available to objects. Following Belletti's (2005a), (2009) analysis of the English cases, we take this position to be the canonical subject position. If the canonical subject position is SpecSubjP (Cardinaletti 2004), which also hosts non-DP subjects such as fronted datives with the *piacere*-class of psych verbs (Belletti & Rizzi 1988), locatives and predicates (Cardinaletti 1997), we expect that Veneto Italian speakers allow preverbal new-information non-DP subjects. The prediction is borne out. The preverbal dative subject *a Gianni* in (51a) can be a narrow informational focus and contrasts in this respect with the object in (50a). The syntactic analysis is provided in (51b):<sup>14</sup>

- (51) a. *A chi piace questo disco?* [A Gianni] *piace.*  
 to whom pleases this CD? to Gianni pleases  
 'Who likes this CD?' 'Gianni likes it.'
- b. [<sub>SubjP</sub> *A Gianni* [<sub>TP</sub> *pro piace*]].

Belletti (2005a, 2007) observes that no formal grammatical principle is violated by the use of the SV (Subject-Verb) order in Italian. VS (Verb-Subject) is chosen over SV because it is a more economical option: it does not require the special intonation found with preverbal new information subjects in e.g. English (9) (and Veneto Italian (43), (44a) and (51)), which, in her analysis, is the hallmark of DP-internal focus.

However, VS implies the merge of a big DP composed of the postverbal DP and referential *pro* ending up in the preverbal subject position

(Belletti 2005b), presumably a non-economic option either. In contact situations such as the one found in the Veneto region, the use of SV is strongly reinforced by the speakers' L1, namely the partial pro-drop dialects which do not allow referential *pro* in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person (Cardinaletti & Repetti 2008, 2010a) and do not allow the merge of a big subject DP.

### 5.2. Preverbal new-information subjects in other varieties of Italian

Preverbal new-information subjects are reported in other varieties of Italian, e.g.:

- the variety spoken by quasi-native speakers of English, which is characterized by the phenomenon of L1 attrition (e.g., a partial modification of their native language under the influence of their L2 English, Sorace 2000),
- the Italian found in translations from English, which also provide a L1 attrition situation (Giusti 2004, Cardinaletti 2005),
- the L2 Italian of L1 German and French speakers (Belletti & Leonini 2004) and L1 English speakers (Belletti *et al.* 2007).

All these varieties show that the postverbal position of the subject is somehow 'vulnerable'. In these contact situations, the preverbal subject position is also preferred, as we have seen in §5.1.

As suggested by Belletti (2005b), (2007), VS is chosen over SV because it is a more economical option (see §5.1). In L2 acquisition, however, the use of SV is strongly reinforced by L1s which are not pro-drop (English, German, etc.). Similarly, in L1 attrition, the use of SV can be said to be strongly reinforced by the non-pro-drop L2.

## 6. Conclusions

In this paper, the properties of different types of postverbal subjects have been discussed: when they are narrow informational and contrastive foci, part of a wider focus, or marginalized topics. It has been suggested that in all conditions, the postverbal subject occurs in its VP-internal thematic position. The focus typology discussed by Bianchi (2013) has been particularly useful to decide among different potential analyses of postverbal contrastively focused subjects and conclude that they do not move to the left periphery.

Furthermore, some varieties of Italian are shown to display preverbal new-information subjects. I have argued that this possibility is due to contact, with either the partial pro-drop dialects spoken in the Veneto region or full pro-drop languages like English. The postverbal subject position is a vulnerable position which in contact situations, appears to be dispreferred with respect to the canonical preverbal subject position.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> The examples in (1) and (2) are neutral answers to the given questions. Other possible word orders are found. For instance, the question in (1a) can also be answered as in (i), where the subject is marginalized after the focused object, and the question in (2a) can also be answered as in (ii), where the subject is contrastively focused in the left periphery. These answers are not neutral, but are used to contrast implicit presuppositions. This is why they are not mentioned here, but discussed later in the paper, in §4.1 and §3, respectively:

- (i) *Ha rotto IL VASO, Gianni.*  
 has broken the vase, Gianni  
 ‘It is the vase which Gianni broke.’
- (ii) *GIANNI, l’ha rotto.*  
 Gianni it-has broken  
 ‘It is Gianni who broke it.’

In (i) and (ii) and throughout the paper, commas indicate a change in intonation, and small caps indicate contrastive stress. On the different prosodic properties of informational and contrastive focus in the Tuscan variety of Italian, see Bocci (2013: Ch. 6).

<sup>2</sup> Weak subject pronouns such as *egli* ‘he’ are disallowed in postverbal position due to independent properties of the deficient class of pronouns (Cardinaletti & Starke 1999). Narrow informational focus subjects can be both light and heavy (for a restriction on light subjects, see §4.2) in all constructions in which they can occur: when the familiar object is cliticized (ia) (cf. (2a)), clitic left dislocated (ib), or repeated together with the verb in the order VOS (ic) (where the object has raised out of its VP-internal thematic position, cf. Cardinaletti 2011: §3; Belletti 2004: 34f):

- (i) *Chi fece la stessa proposta?*  
 who made the same proposal?  
 ‘Who made the same proposal?’
- a. *La fece [Gianni] / [il partito di maggioranza].*  
 it made Gianni / the party of majority
- b. *La stessa proposta la fece [Gianni] / [il partito di maggioranza].*  
 the same proposal it made Gianni / the party of majority
- c. *Fece la stessa proposta [Gianni] / [il partito di maggioranza].*  
 made the same proposal Gianni / the party of majority  
 ‘Gianni / The majority party made it / the same proposal.’

<sup>3</sup> Partial pro-drop languages like Brazilian Portuguese and Finnish are similar to English in displaying preverbal new-information subjects (Guesser 2007; Dal Pozzo & Guesser 2011).

<sup>4</sup> For Italian varieties, see §5. As an answer to the question in (13), contrastive stress on the subject is also possible: *GIANNI, ha parlato*. This answer is however not neutral, but contrasts an implicit presupposition, e.g., that Maria has spoken at the conference (see note 1).

<sup>5</sup> Focus fronting is felicitous in the answer to a question which “presupposes the proposition which is the target of correction” (Bianchi 2013), e.g. a sentence containing a factive verb. Her piece of data with focused objects can be replicated with focused subjects:

- (i) A: *Ti sorprende che Maria abbia parlato al convegno?*  
 you surprises that Maria has spoken at-the conference  
 ‘Does it surprise you that Maria spoke at the conference?’
- B: a. *Ha parlato GIANNI, non Maria.*  
 has spoken Gianni, not Maria  
 ‘Gianni spoke, not Maria.’
- b. *GIANNI, ha parlato, non Maria.*

<sup>6</sup> In the case of objects, the absence of the anticipatory clitic pronoun clearly distinguishes Marginalization from Right Dislocation. In the case of subjects, given the pro-drop status of Italian, the difference between the two constructions is not always clear and can only be detected in some situations (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002). Sentences like (20b) or (22B) can also be analyzed as containing a right-dislocated subject.

<sup>7</sup> As we saw in note 5 with subjects, focus fronting is felicitous in the answer to a question which contains a factive verb:

(i) A: *Ti sorprende che Maria abbia parlato bene al convegno?*  
 yousurprises that Maria has spoken well at-the conference  
 'Does it surprise you that Maria spoke well at the conference?'

B: a. *Ha parlato male, Maria, non bene.*  
 has spoken badly, Maria, not well  
 'Maria spoke badly, not well.'

b. *MALE, ha parlato, non bene.*

<sup>8</sup> If they are merged above VP, it is expected that adverbs can precede both sentence-final subjects and objects, as shown in (ia) and (ib), respectively (for subjects, see Belletti 2001, Cardinaletti 2001):

(i) a. *Ha parlato bene Gianni.*  
 has spoken well Gianni  
 'Gianni spoke well.'

b. *Ha presentato bene il poster.*  
 has presented well the poster  
 'He presented the poster well.'

<sup>9</sup> In English Locative Inversion (cf. Culicover & Levine 2001; Rizzi & Shlonsky 2006), a locative is fronted, and the subject occurs in postverbal position.

<sup>10</sup> In (32c), the subject can be analysed as marginalized. As said in §4.1, the manner adverb *bene* occurs in a position above VP (Cinque 1999). Note that it can also precede a narrow informational focus heavy subject occurring in VP-internal position (also see note 8):

(i) A: *Chi parlò bene?*  
 who spoke well  
 'Who spoke well?'

B: *Parlò bene [l'amico inglese di Gianni che vive in Italia da tanti anni].*  
 spoke well the-friend English of Gianni who lives in Italy from many years  
 'Gianni's English friend who has been living in Italy for many years spoke well.'

<sup>11</sup> Two anonymous reviewers point out that the following RP sentences containing light subjects are grammatical for them:

(i) a. *La stessa proposta ripeté il Presidente / Gianni / lui davanti ai rappresentanti.*  
 the same proposal repeated thepresident /Gianni / he in-front to-the representatives  
 'The president / Gianni / He repeated the same proposal in front of the representatives.'

b. *La stessa proposta ripeté il Presidente / Gianni / lui il giorno successivo.*  
 thesame proposal repeatedthe president / Gianni / he the day following  
 'The president / Gianni / He repeated the same proposal the following day.'

The reviewers do not however provide the relevant intonation. I accept the sentences with two different types of intonation: the light subject has a parenthetical intonation, signalled by commas in (iia), or the light subject is prosodically phrased together with the fronted object and the verb:

(ii) a. *La stessa proposta ripeté, il Presidente / Gianni / lui, davanti ai rappresentanti.*  
 b. *[La stessa proposta ripeté il Presidente / Gianni / lui] davanti ai rappresentanti.*

The prosodic phrasing observed in e.g. (31a) and sketched in (iia) is not possible in the examples in (i), see (iiib):

(iii) a. *[La stessa proposta ripeté] [il rappresentante del Senato].*

b. *\*[La stessa proposta ripeté] [il Presidente / Gianni / lui davanti ai rappresentanti].*

The analysis of sentences like (i) is left to future work.

<sup>12</sup> The schwa in parenthesis in (46b) is not a subject clitic, but a different syntactic entity (Cardinaletti & Repetti 2004, 2010b, 2010c).

<sup>13</sup> Presumably linked to this, Veneto Italian prefers SVO instead of VSO when the subject is contrastively focused and the object is marginalized. This and other properties which differentiate postverbal subjects in Italian and Veneto Italian are discussed in Cardinaletti (2011).

Note that a direct correlation between lack of Marginalization and the right-dislocation status of postverbal subjects in *wh*-questions cannot be assumed. As pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, this does not seem to hold cross-linguistically. Marginalization is impossible in Spanish, but postverbal subject in *wh*-questions may stay *in situ* (see Leonetti *this issue*).

<sup>14</sup> Sentences (43), (44a) and (51) confirm that (i) being a narrow informational focus and being the subject of predication are not incompatible properties, and (ii) informational foci do not need to be associated to specific positions in the clause (see §2).

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