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Integrated parentheticals in quotations and free indirect discourse

1. Introduction

In this work I consider the syntactic properties of a particular kind of parentheticals, those introducing Quotations – henceforth, QU – and Free Indirect Discourse – henceforth, FID. Consider the following examples:

- (1) I will leave tomorrow, *said John*
- (2) The new ration did not start till tomorrow and he had only four cigarettes left, *thought Winston* (adapted, from Orwell, 1984)

Example (1) is a QU structure and the parenthetical in question is *said John*. Example (2) is a FID construction and the parenthetical is *thought Winston*. As already well known, they have special properties from an interpretive, syntactic and phonological point of view. QU and FID parentheticals are alike under many points of view, even if the two constructions must be kept separate, especially with respect to the interpretation of pronouns and verbal forms. For the purposes of this work, I will in general consider them alike.

Observe now the following paradigm:

- (3) John said that Mary left
- (4) John said: “Mary left”
- (5) Maria, said John, left

It seems to me that the most important goal for a syntactic analysis is to provide a coherent analysis of the similarities and differences among the constructions in (3)-(4). At first sight, these structures seem very much alike, both from the point of view of their meaning and their syntax – to the extent that some scholars have proposed a direct syntactic derivation (Emonds, 1973; Ross, 1973), for instance of (5) starting from (3). I will show here that the situation is indeed much more complex than that. In particular, in this paper I show that example (5) is closer to (4) than to (3). The approach I will develop here is an integrated view of parentheticals, complying with Kayne's (1994) Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA).

This article is organized as follows: In section 2, I briefly illustrate the properties of parentheticals relevant for the present analysis. In section 3, I discuss the main hypothesis, i.e. the existence of prosody oriented heads. I argue that parentheticals are base generated in phrases projected by such heads. In section 4, I analyze some syntactic phenomena having to do with word order and the distribution of topic and focus. Finally, in section 5, I provide possible lines for further investigation.

I consider examples in the English language for the obvious cases and when they are taken from the literature. Otherwise, I rely on my native judgments about Italian and provide examples in that language.

2. Parentheticals: generalities

Parentheticals are expressions interpolated in another clause, the so-called *host* clause. In some cases they are connected to the host clause only because they appear in the same utterance, but are otherwise unrelated, such as in the following case:

- (6) The doctor, please take a seat (*uttered to somebody entering the room in that moment*), visited the patient three days ago.

Conversely, they might fulfill various functions, such as clarifying the host content, adding information, and, as in the cases I'm going to analyze here, introducing the host clause. I'm not going to illustrate here the characteristics of the various possible kinds; for this purpose, I refer the reader to important works on the topic, such as the collection edited by Dehé and Kovalova (2007). Suffice to say that parentheticals come in a variety of syntactic forms: single words such as *probably*, or *what*, short sentences – often called *comment clauses* – such as *I think*, *I hope*, *you know*, or longer clauses such as *as everybody knows*, or, *and everybody knows that*. Consider for instance the following examples:

- (7) John, *as everybody knows*, likes to go to parties
(8) John, *and everybody knows that*, likes to go to parties
(9) John, *probably*, likes to go to parties
(10) John, *you know*, likes to go to parties

Parentheticals have interesting features from the prosodic point of view in that they all share a

similar intonation. Selkirk (2005) points out that a [+comma] feature is responsible for the *comma intonation* in *as* parentheticals, as well in non-restrictive relatives and nominal appositives, also identified as *supplements* in Potts' (2002, 2005) work. According to Selkirk's theoretical proposal, Comma Phrases are then mapped into Intonational Phrases. For instance in example (7) above, *as everybody knows*, according to Selkirk's proposal, is a Comma Phrase, to be mapped into an Intonational Phrase.

In the literature, supplements have been analyzed as syntactic units that are structurally independent from the surrounding sentence. Two main accounts have been developed in the literature so far: (a) supplements are totally external to the syntactic structure of their host, giving rise to a sort of three-dimensional tree (cf. among the many others Espinal 1991, Haegeman 1991, Burton-Roberts 1999), or (b) supplements are adjoined to the host, for instance right-adjoined as in Potts (2002, 2005).

There are indeed arguments for claiming that supplements are largely independent from their host. For instance, they can have an independent illocutionary force, as in the following examples (examples quoted in Cinque 2008):

- (11) She may have her parents with her, in which case where am I going to sleep? (Huddleston and Pullum 2002)
- (12) My friend, who God forbid you should ever meet,...(Andrews 1975)

Moreover, as pointed out by Selkirk (2005), the supplement might be false, while the sentence remains true:

- (13) The Romans, who arrived before one hundred AD, found a land of wooded hills (Selkirk, 2005, ex. 5)
- (14) The Romans who arrived before one hundred AD found a land of wooded hills (Selkirk, 2005, ex. 6)

Example (13) clearly contrasts with (14) to this extent.

On the other hand, in spite of these observations, there is a sense in which the host clause, especially in the case of QU and FID, looks like the *complement* of the supplement and cannot be simply considered an independent unit. In a sentence such as (5) above, *Mary left*, is indeed what John said, much as in (3), and analogously in the FID example in (2) *the new ration did not start till*

tomorrow and he had only four cigarettes left is the content of Winston's thoughts.¹

Moreover, consider also that, even putting inversion aside for the moment, neither *John said* in the quotative examples above, nor *Winston thought*, in the FID one, are grammatical clauses. They are more properly fragments, in that they lack a complement and could not stand by themselves without the presence of the host clause.

From these considerations we are led therefore to a contradictory conclusion, in that on one hand parentheticals are largely independent from the host sentence, on the other however, the host must in some way satisfy the syntactic requirements of the missing object.

In the following section I argue in favor of a proposal aiming at reconciling this contradiction.

3. A syntactic proposal for QU and FID parentheticals

In this section I briefly illustrate the proposal in Giorgi (2014, to appear), where I argue that parentheticals are syntactically represented as a layer in the left periphery of the clause, headed by prosody oriented heads.² This proposal is quite general and might be taken to hold for many, if not all, kinds of parentheticals.

Recall that the first theories on this issue, most notably by Emonds (1973) and Ross (1973), aimed at capturing the similarities between the complement clauses introduced by *that* and the ones with the parenthetical by means of transformations, starting from the *that*-clause and ending with the parenthetical one. However, as amply discussed later by many scholars, a transformation, or movement, derivation is not tenable and theories based on non-derivational accounts must be proposed.³

The proposal according to which parentheticals are totally independent from the host clause, to the extent that they give rise to an independent syntactic tree, exhibits several weak points as well. The final tree in fact is supposed to be a three-dimensional one – where the host and the supplement trees are located on different planes and meet in only one point – giving rise to obvious problems

¹ We actually attribute to Winston, i.e. the character present in the narration – thoughts in the first person: "... and *I* have only four cigarette left". This is however a separate issue, much investigated in the literature on the topic, which I will not further consider here. See, for instance Banfield (1982), Guéron (2006, 2008), Sharvit (2004), Schlenker (2003, 2004).

² This proposal is quite general and might be taken to hold for several kinds of parentheticals, besides QU and FID one.

³ To this extent, see among the many others Banfield (1982), who criticized a movement derivation for FID parentheticals. For reasons of space, I do not reproduce the relevant evidence here, taking for granted the reasons already discussed in the literature.

concerning linearization.⁴

Finally, let's consider adjunction theories. This is the place to look for a possible alternative account. However, adjunction as well raises some important problems, in particular in the light of Kayne's (1994) Linear Correspondence Axiom, henceforth LCA.

Kayne's (1994) LCA – a linearization algorithm – is in fact a very important proposal, in that it provides a solution to some long-standing puzzles dealing with asymmetries in various areas of syntax in different languages. Many theoretical accounts are based on this principle, which I think is at present a basic tenet of syntactic theory.⁵

According to Kayne's (1994) LCA, linear precedence reflects asymmetric c-command. The LCA can be (roughly) formulated as follows:

(15) LCA: A precedes B iff A asymmetrically c-commands B

A structure not satisfying the LCA cannot be linearized and hence must be excluded. Adjunction, if not further qualified, violates the LCA, given that the adjoined phrase and the structure it adjoins to do not give rise to an asymmetric structure:

(16) [XP YP]

In this configuration, c-command between XP and YP is symmetric, in that XP c-commands YP and vice versa; hence, linearization cannot obtain. On the contrary, in the following configuration, where a head intervenes, an asymmetric relation obtains and the structure can be linearized:

(17) [XP [H YP]]_{HP}

The phrase is a projection of the head H and XP and YP are in an asymmetric relation.

Applying this proposal to parentheticals, a structure such as the one in (16) is ruled out, be the supplement either XP or YP, i.e. independently of right or left adjunction, whereas (17) is a possible

⁴ Even if a linearization algorithm for three-dimensional trees can indeed be hypothesized – see Moltmann (1992) – a theory encompassing such an algorithm would be extremely powerful and therefore to be disfavored on principled grounds.

⁵ The so-called cartographic approach, developed by Cinque (1999) and scholars, is based on such a principle. The present work is developed largely in the same framework.

structure.⁶

The relevant issue at this point is establishing the nature of the head H. In previous work (Giorgi 2014, to appear), capitalizing on Selkirk's (2005) idea, I proposed that this head is a *prosody oriented head*, corresponding to the *comma feature* hypothesized by Selkirk (2005, p.6, see also Dehé (2009) for a discussion):

(18) “Root sentences and supplements form a natural class, in that *they both are comma phrases*, and so [...] set off by Intonational Phrase edges from what surrounds them.” (from Selkirk 2005, p.6)

According to my proposal, *comma* is not just a feature, but a head, K, and projects a constituent. K, is then read off at the interface with prosody as the characteristic comma intonation of parentheticals. I.e. as far as the projection of the tree goes, K is a head as any other, projecting its own phrase containing the parenthetical, but as far as its content is concerned, it is not a lexical item, but a prosody oriented one, namely to be interpreted in the prosody.

Note also that as Selkirk points out – cf. (18) above – according to her hypothesis, there are two comma features: one associated to the root sentence and one associated to the parenthetical. Coherently, in the syntactic account I am proposing, in order to project the structure in question, two K heads are needed, one at the left and one at the right of the supplement.

Let's exemplify now the hypothesis. Consider quotations first:

(19) I will leave tomorrow, *said John*

According to the hypothesis above, the starting structure is the following:

(20) [_{KP} **K** [*said John* [_{KP} **K** [I will leave tomorrow]]]]

Selkirk's (2005) comma features are represented here as heads. I'll address the problem of the labeling of the parenthetical clause later in section 5.

Word order in (19) is however not the one immediately obtainable in (20). A possibility would be to

⁶ Coherently with these considerations, in the cartographic approach – cf. Cinque (1999) – adverbs appear as Specifier of a dedicated head, in a structure like (17).

say that topicalization of the host takes place, topicalizing it in the spec of KP:⁷

(21) [_{KP} [I will leave tomorrow] **K** [*said John* [_{KP} **K** [~~I will leave tomorrow~~]]]]

The derivation for FID parentheticals proceeds along the same line:

(22) The new ration did not start till tomorrow and he had only four cigarettes left, *thought Winston* (adapted, Orwell, 1984, ch. 5)

(23) [_{KP} **K** [*thought Winston* [_{KP} **K** [_{CP} The new ration..]]]]

With topicalization of CP in KP:

(24) [_{KP} [_{CP} The new ration...]_i **K** [*thought Winston* [_{KP} **K** ~~The new ration...~~]]]

This proposal has some advantages. Most notably, beside being compatible with the linearization algorithm proposed by Kayne (1994), in this representation the host sentence is syntactically the complement of the parenthetical, and therefore this proposal is able to account for the *gap effect* – i.e., the apparent violation of the lexical requirements concerning the presence of the object. The object of the saying verb is in fact present in the structure, though not realized as a sentential expression – i.e a CP – or a nominal one, as in *Gianni ha detto la verità* (Gianni said the truth), but as a KP. Importantly, however, there is no *subordination* relation, due to the nature of the head K, which is *not* a complementizer. I will discuss this point with more details in the next section.

However, in order to obtain the correct linear order, topicalization might not be the best option. Consider in fact the following examples:⁸

(25) John, said Mary, will leave tomorrow

(26) John will, said Mary, leave tomorrow

As far as sentence (25) is concerned, a topicalization analysis might still be tenable. The subject *John* could in fact topicalize in Spec, KP. The fragment *John will* is however not a constituent,

⁷ In this section I am ignoring the problems connected with subject inversion. I will briefly mention this issue below in section 5.

⁸ Here I discuss quotations, but the same reasoning holds for FID clauses. See also Matos (2013) for a discussion of topicalization in quotations.

hence the topicalization I proposed above would not work.

There are two possible ways out. According to the first, a more complex topicalization can be hypothesized: the VP *leave tomorrow* is moved in the left periphery of the host, for instance in the Specifier of a head F, and then remnant movement of the whole clause to Spec,KP takes place, as illustrated below:

(27) [_{KP} **K** [*said Mary* [_{KP} **K** [John will leave tomorrow]]]]

(28) [_{KP} **K** [*said Mary* [_{KP} **K** [[_{FP} leave tomorrow F [John will ~~leave tomorrow~~]]]]]

(29) [_{KP} John will **K** [*said Mary* [_{KP} **K** [[_{FP} leave tomorrow F [~~John will~~]]]]]

This derivation is possible under current theoretical assumptions, but faces an empirical problem. As shown by the data collected in corpora – besides my personal experience as native speaker – parentheticals exhibit the so-called *backtracking* phenomenon, in that the same fragment can be in some cases pronounced twice, once on the left and once on the right of the parenthetical. The following examples are taken from corpora and have been discussed in the literature:

(30) But a different role <,> uh because **when we get to the time of Ezra**, as with the more classical Wellhausen uh hypothesis, **when we get to the time of Ezra** we have the further narrowing of the office of priest (ICE-GB: s1b-001, #9) (from Dehé and Kavalova, 2007, 3)

(31) But **I believe that if** at this stage, and it isn't too late because it's only what six months since your brother died, **I believe that if** you can bear... (DCPSE: DL-D08, #135) (From Kavalova, 2007, 160).

In a topicalization analysis there is no possible account for backtracking phenomena, because the structure hypothesized for what appears on the right of the parenthetical is different from the structure hypothesized for what is on its left.

Ellipsis seems a better candidate for explaining this pattern:

(32) [_{KP} John will ~~leave tomorrow~~ **K** [*Mary said* [_{KP} **K** [~~John will~~ leave tomorrow]]]]

According to this proposal, in (32) there is a double ellipsis, deleting a fragment on the right and a

fragment on the left. The fact that the same structure is present in both positions can easily account for backtracking facts.⁹

Consider finally another important advantage with respect to adjunction theories, usually adjoining the parenthetical next to the constituent appearing on its left, or on its right. Independently from the position in which the parenthetical is linearized, being base-generated on the extreme left of the sentence insures that the parenthetical always has scope on the host.

Trivially, in the cases under scrutiny, the presence of the parenthetical permits the correct interpretation of the host as a QU or a FID structure, with respect for instance to the reference of indexicals. Consider in fact example (33):

(33) I, said John, will leave tomorrow

Both *I* and *tomorrow* are interpreted with respect to *John* and not the speaker, even if *I* precedes the parenthetical, being therefore outside its scope, and *tomorrow* follows it. As discussed in Giorgi (2010) in the syntax the speaker coordinates must be represented in the C-layer. Hence, according to the hypothesis I am arguing for here, the parenthetical is always base-generated in a higher position. On the contrary, under the adjunction hypothesis, the parenthetical would be hierarchically lower than the subject.¹⁰

Consider also the following case, having to do with the reciprocal scope of the epistemic adverb *probabilmente* (probably), in its parenthetical usage, and negation, discussed in Giorgi (to appear a):¹¹

⁹ For reasons of space, I will not provide here a full discussion of ellipsis in these cases. Further work is indeed required. Note also that, as often observed in ellipsis phenomena, the fragment on the right and the one on the left might be not hundred percent identical. This issue should be more carefully investigated especially by means of corpora of spoken language, where these phenomena are more likely to occur. Furthermore, from the analysis provided in the text, it also follows that the host sentence is always realized twice: once in the KP on the left of the parenthetical and once as the KP complement, on its right, even in those cases where no fragment appears on the right – as in *I will leave tomorrow, said John*. Actually, nothing so far seems to run against this conclusion, but, again, further study is required.

¹⁰ Note that the necessity of a coherent interpretation of *I* and *tomorrow*, might seem a trivial fact. It might be so from a semantic point of view, but it is far from being such from a syntactic one.

¹¹ Adverbs such as *probabilmente* (probably), *fortunatamente* (fortunately) and *francamente* (frankly), etc. also allow a non-parenthetical usage. For an analysis of their positions in the non-parenthetical case, see Cinque (1999); for a comparison between the parenthetical and non-parenthetical one, see Giorgi (to appear a).

(34) Probabilmente, Gianni non ha mangiato la torta
Probably, Gianni not has eaten the cake
'Probably, Gianni did not eat the cake'

(35) Gianni non ha, probabilmente, mangiato la torta
Gianni not has, probably eaten the cake
'Gianni did not, probably, eat the cake'

In both cases, parenthetical *probabilmente* (probably) has scope over negation. However, according to adjunction theories, in (35) the adjunction site would be lower than negation. Hence, these examples as well support the proposal sketched above.

4. More on the syntactic properties of quotations and free indirect discourse

In this section I illustrate some further syntactic properties of these constructions and I will then go back to the paradigm (3)-(5) given in section 1, to point out similarities and differences among the various constructions.

The most salient property of QU and FID parentheticals is that they cannot be embedded:

(36) *Luigi crede che Maria, disse Gianni, partirà domani
*Luigi believes that Maria, said Gianni, will leave tomorrow

This sentence contrasts with direct discourse, as shown in example (37):

(37) Luigi crede che Gianni abbia detto: "Maria partirà domani"
Luigi believes that Gianni said: "Maria will leave tomorrow"

Moreover, example (36) also contrasts with (38) and (39), where the parenthetical is constituted by the whole structure *Luigi crede che Gianni abbia detto* (Luigi believes that Gianni said), instead simply *Gianni disse* (Gianni said):¹²

(38) Maria partirà domani, Luigi crede che Gianni abbia detto

¹² In Italian *credere* (believe) selects the subjunctive in the subordinate clause, hence the form *abbia detto* (has-subj said). This fact however does not have any import on the argument considered here.

- Maria will leave tomorrow, Luigi believes that Gianni said
- (39) Maria, Luigi crede che Gianni abbia detto, partirà domani
Maria, Luigi believes that Gianni said, will leave tomorrow

This means that the ungrammaticality of example (37) is neither due to the impossibility of embedding a direct discourse, nor to the impossibility of having a complex parenthetical, where the saying verb is itself embedded. Analogously in the case of FID:

- (40) *Luigi ha detto che Gianni, pensò la ragazza, sarebbe partito domani
Luigi said that Gianni, thought the young woman, would leave tomorrow

An embedded FID parenthetical gives rise to ungrammaticality, contrasting with example (41):

- (41) Luigi, pensò la ragazza, ha detto che Gianni sarebbe partito domani
Luigi, thought the young woman, said that Gianni would leave tomorrow

These parentheticals are therefore a root phenomenon. From a syntactic point of view, let's consider the following explanation.

In Giorgi (2010) I proposed that the speaker's coordinates are represented in the leftmost position in the C-layer. In Italian this position is realized, simplifying somewhat, in indicative clauses, even when they appear as subordinates. In main clauses the representation of the speaker's coordinates is obligatory, whereas this is not the case in embedded ones, as for instance in Italian subjunctive clauses the speaker's coordinates are not present. Several data support this view as far as Italian is concerned: complementizer deletion phenomena, the distribution and interpretation of the subjunctive and the distribution of the Double Access Reading. I will not reproduce here the relevant discussion and refer the reader to the cited reference.

Capitalizing on this idea, I propose that FID and QU parentheticals modify the content of the projection dedicated to the speaker's coordinates in the C-layer. In fact, in both cases, the interpretation of the sentence is not to be related to the speaker's temporal and spatial location, but to the location of the subject of the parentheticals.¹³

¹³ As already mentioned above, Quotations and Free Indirect Discourse have different properties, even if they share the characteristics of substituting totally – in the case of QU – or partially – in the case of FID – the speaker's spatial and temporal coordinates. Many scholars considered this and related issues. Cf., among the many others, Doron (1991), Giorgi (to appear b), Guéron (2006; 2008), Sharvit (2004), Schlenker (2003, 2004).

According to the proposal above, this result can be easily achieved, given that the parenthetical takes as its immediate complement the main CP and the leftmost position in the C-layer appears in its immediate domain. At the interface with the semantics, the interpretive process shifts the coordinates from the speaker to the parenthetical subject.

If this is correct, therefore, QU and FID parentheticals can only appear at root level, because they are crucial in identifying the relevant coordinates. Such coordinates might, or might not, appear also in embedded clauses, according to Giorgi (2010), but must be identified in the main clause.¹⁴

Let's consider now the interactions with topic and focus. Here I will adopt a very loose definition of topic as given information, and will consider only contrastive focus, which in Italian appear in the left periphery of the clause (cf. Rizzi 1997).¹⁵

A topic can appear both on the left, and on the right of a QU parenthetical:

- (42) A Maria, disse Gianni, un libro, glielo regalerò
To Maria, said Gianni, a book, I to her it will give

Note that both topics are Clitic Left Dislocations. A Focus is allowed, but is interpreted as a literal citation of what Gianni said (contrastive focus in capital letters):

- (43) A MARIA (non a Paola), disse Gianni, Luigi non farà più regali
TO MARIA (non a Paola), said Gianni, Luigi will give no more presents

In other words, the focus appearing in (43) is itself topicalized, corresponding to sentence (44):

- (44) Gianni disse: "A MARIA (non a Paola) Luigi non farà più regali"
Gianni disse: "To MARIA (not to Paola) Luigi will give no more presents"

¹⁴ Note that in examples (38) and (39) above, the relevant argument is not the parenthetical main subject, but the subject of the *saying predicate*. The correct generalization therefore might be slightly more complex than the one provided in text. Note in fact, that in all the examples the relevant argument is the *closest* one to the leftmost position in C. the notion of *minimal distance* therefore is presumably relevant in this domain as well, as in many other cases in syntax.

¹⁵ Rizzi (1997) hypothesized for the left periphery the following structure:

- i. FORCE Topic* Focus Topic* FIN IP

Force is the complementizer for finite clauses, whereas FIN is the complementizer of non- finite clauses. Left-peripheral focus in Italian can only be a contrastive focus. Note that topics can appear either on the left or on right of contrastive focus; the star signals that more than one topic can appear on either side.

It is important to remark that it is impossible to interpret the focused phrase as a focus due to the utterer. This pattern is also found with FID parentheticals:

- (45) *A Gianni, pensò la ragazza, quel libro, gliel'avrebbe finalmente venduto*
To Gianni, thought the young woman, that book, to him it would eventually sell

A Gianni (to Gianni) and *quel libro* (that book) are topicalized phrases (clitic left dislocation). A Focus on the left of the introducing predicate is ungrammatical/very marginal:

- (46) *?*A MARIA, pensò la ragazza, Gianni non avrebbe fatto più regali*
To Maria, thought the young woman, Gianni would give no more presents

In this case it is more difficult – for me it is indeed impossible – to attribute the Focus to the young woman, given the different interpretive nature of FID with respect to Quotations. Since the focus cannot be attributed to the utterer, the sentence is ungrammatical.¹⁶

These observations – i.e. the contrast between topic and focus – can be accounted for considering the nature of the two constructions in conjunction with the hypothesis sketched above.

One of the most interesting theories explaining the properties of the topics like the ones appearing in the examples above – i.e. CLLD – is that these items are not moved in the position they occupy, but base generated there. In this respect, topic contrasts with focus, which on the contrary is always moved in the left peripheral position of the clause. Topics are therefore base-generated in Spec-KP.¹⁷

Consider also the following structures with multiple topics:¹⁸

- (47) *A Paolo, quel libro, disse Gianni, glielo darò domani*
To Paolo, that book, said Gianni, I to him it will give tomorrow
- (48) *Domani, disse Gianni, a Paolo, quel libro, glielo darò*

¹⁶ Note that for the speakers that can attribute the production of the focus to the subject of the parenthetical, the sentence is not totally ungrammatical.

¹⁷ Cf. for instance Cinque (1990), Frascarelli (2002), Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007), Benincà and Poletto (2004). For an important different analysis of focus constructions, in particular with respect to the hypothesis of movement to the left periphery, see Samek-Lodovici (2015). The issue deserves further inquiry, to properly reconcile contrasting empirical evidence.

¹⁸ Note that *domani* (tomorrow) is a topic as well, in pre-parenthetical position. On the necessity of a pre-parenthetical topic, see below in section 5.

Tomorrow, said Gianni, to Paolo, that book I to him it will give

Multiple topics can both precede and follow the parenthetical. Each topic is base-generated in the spec position of a head K, as can also be inferred from the peculiar prosody – i.e. the *comma intonation* – associated with each topicalized phrase. The structures are therefore the following ones:

(49) [_{KP} A Paolo **K** [_{KP} quel libro **K** [*disse Gianni* [_{KP} **K** [glielo darò domani]]]]]

To Paolo, that book, Gianni said, I to him it will give tomorrow

‘To Paolo, that book, said Gianni, I will give tomorrow’

(50) [_{KP} Domani **K** [*disse Gianni* [_{KP} **K** [_{KP} a Paolo **K** [_{KP} quel libro **K** [glielo darò]]]]]]

Tomorrow, said Gianni, to Paolo, that book, I to him it will give

‘Tomorrow, said Gianni, to Paolo, that book, I will give’

A (contrastively) focused phrase cannot appear in these positions because a KP is not a suitable landing site for movement. A focused item can appear in this position only if it is considered a topic, as shown in examples (43) and (44) above. This conclusion is indeed coherent with what is in general assumed about parentheticals.¹⁹

Concluding, a KP contains, besides the parenthetical, either base generated topics or ellipsis fragments, but not moved phrases. Consider finally, that QU and FID parentheticals must be preceded by an ellipsis fragment or a topic:

(51) **Said John*, I will leave tomorrow

(52) **Thought Winston*, the new ration did not start till tomorrow and he had only four cigarettes left.

This can easily be attributed to the fact that a head K must be realized in prosody and the only way to realize a comma intonation is in between lexical items.

Let us go back now to the problem addressed in section 1. Given the sentences (3)-(5), reproduced here for simplicity, how can we account for similarities and differences?

(53) John said that Mary left

¹⁹ See Dehé and Kavalova (2007), in particular, the discussion in De Vries’ chapter (pp. 203-235).

(54) John said: “Mary left”

(55) Maria, said John, left

Sentence (53) instantiates a subordination relation. As is well known, sentences (54) and (55) differ from (53) with respect to several parameters: the interpretation of indexicals, sequence of tense, the properties of the complementizer etc. The differences between (54) and (55) are more subtle, in that for instance the interpretation of indexicals is the same, as is the case with respect to sequence of tense, the absence of complementizer and many other properties. The main obvious difference between the two concerns the intonation, given that *John said* in (54) is not associated to a comma intonation, even if *said* is followed by something which could be – simplifying a complex debate (cf, Döring, 2007) – identified as a *pause*.

Consider also that a similar construction, where the introducing clause precedes the host, can also be found in FID structures, as for instance in the following case:

(56) *Lo ricordò dopo uno sforzo di memoria anzi di ragionamento*: [pro] doveva essere passata per quella via essendo giunta a quell'altra da casa mia.

She remembered it with a memory effort, or better to say of reasoning: (she) should have passed through that street reaching that other house from my home.

Note that the introducing clause -- *Lo ricordò dopo uno sforzo di memoria anzi di ragionamento* (She remembered **it** with a memory effort, or better to say of reasoning) – includes the clitic *lo* (it), which refers to the FID sentence that follows. This is totally impossible in FID sentences with a parenthetical:

(57) The new ration did not start till tomorrow and he had only four cigarettes left, *Winston thought *it/that* (adapted, from Orwell, 1984)

Analogously, in quotations the clitic is impossible with the parenthetical:

(58) Io, Gianni ***lo** disse, partirò domani

I, Gianni said it, will leave tomorrow

The clitic can appear in the structure without the parenthetical:

- (59) Gianni **lo** ha detto ieri: “Io partirò domani”
 Gianni said it yesterday: “I will leave tomorrow”

Therefore, the syntax of the sentences where the introducing clause precedes the host differs from the other case, in spite of the similarities. As a matter of fact, in these cases we do not have a parenthetical but a clause, possibly with a gap, but not obligatorily, preceding it.

I capitalize here on an intuition by Cinque (2008), who claims (p.59) that “Discourse fragments do not consist of just concatenations of CPs”. Cinque (2008) considers the following discourse fragments:

- (60) John is no longer here. He left at noon. (Cinque 2008, ex.59)
 (61) A pink shirt? I will never wear any such thing in my life! (Cinque 2008, ex.61)

He proposes the following trees for (60) and (61) respectively:

- (62) [_{HP} CP [H CP]] (Cinque 2008, ex.59)
 (63) [_{HP} DP [H CP]] (Cinque 2008, ex.61)

Where H is the *discourse* head, connecting two sentences, in the case of example (60), or a DP and a CP in example (61).

A possible explanation for the pattern observed above with respect to sentences such as *John said: “Mary left”* is that they instantiate the structure in (62), in the sense that they are discourses, where each clause, or phrase, is connected to the next one by means of a head. *John said* occupies the specifier position of H, whereas *Mary left*, occupies the complement one. In this case the head H is a prosody-oriented head, associated with a peculiar intonational pattern, devoid of lexical content.

The head H therefore resembles the head K. However, in *Maria, said John, left*, the KP containing the host sentence is the syntactic complement of *say*, whereas this is not the case with *John said: “Mary left”*. For this reason, an overt object pronoun can be inserted, as for instance in the Italian example above *Gianni lo ha detto ieri: “Io partirò domani”* (Gianni said it yesterday: “I will leave tomorrow”).²⁰

²⁰ In the discourse *John said: “Mary left”*, where no object pronoun appears, we can either hypothesize the presence of a null pronoun referring the following sentence, or, perhaps more plausibly, an ellipsis process, similar to the one taking place in question answering: *Who left? John left*, taking place in the specifier phrase:

i. [John said ~~that Mary left~~ [H [Mary left]]]

5. Further issues

In this section I briefly consider a couple of remaining issues, and highlight some ideas for further study.

Let's first consider subject inversion. Matos (2013) points out that subject inversion is obligatory in Spanish and European Portuguese, whereas it is optional in English. Italian patterns with Spanish and Portuguese.²¹ Matos' proposal is that the subject is inverted in Spanish and Portuguese, because in this construction the subject must be an informational focus and in Spanish and Portuguese, and Italian as well, informational focus only occurs post-verbally – the preverbal position being obligatorily contrastive. In English, on the contrary, preverbal focus can be an informational one as well, hence in this language both positions are admitted.

I endorse here Matos' (2013) proposal, even if further suggestions might be taken into account, due to the fact that the structure inside the KP is not necessarily a full clause, hence we might wonder if the requirements on the presence of a subject are the same as in non parenthetical clauses. In principle, in fact, it does not seem to be necessary to hypothesize a full clausal structure for the phrases projected inside a prosody oriented head. In particular, it is not clear in this case what the role might be for the left periphery of the clause. Recall also that, as amply discussed in the literature, these parentheticals are highly deficient. For instance, in English auxiliaries cannot appear, adverbs exhibits a peculiar distribution, pronominal subjects can be inverted only under special conditions, etc.²²

Alternatively, let me suggest that these parentheticals can either appear as full sentences, or as truncated structures – as is normally the case. The whole structure might be truncated at the level of the aspectual projections above the verbal ones. In this case, the subject would occupy a position lower than the preverbal one – along the lines of Collins and Branigan (1997) –and hence be able to appear on the right of the verbal form.

An argument in favor of this view is the – quite odd – presence of the simple past in Italian. The nature and the properties of the verbal forms occurring in these parentheticals is in fact another

²¹ According to my intuition, inversion is not really obligatory, especially when the parenthetical is “heavy”, i.e. containing other items beside the subject and the verb. Consider for instance the following example:

- i. L'azienda venderà la sua filiale a Parigi, il presidente comunicò alla commissione durante la riunione
The company will sell its brunch in Paris, the president told the committee during the meeting

It is not clear however whether this factor is relevant in Spanish and Portuguese as well.

²² For a discussion, see Collins (1997) and Collins and Branigan (1997).

interesting issue, not very much investigated so far.

In Italian, there are two past forms: a periphrastic present perfect – aux + past participle: *ho mangiato* (I have eaten) – and a synthetic simple past: *mangiai* (I ate). In central and Northern Italy, the periphrastic form is very strongly favored, whereas the opposite situation holds in Southern Italy, where the synthetic form is the one vastly adopted.²³

With FID and QU parentheticals, however, even Central and Northern Italian speakers normally accept, and use, the synthetic simple past, both in written and spoken sentences – as far as these kind of sentences occur in spoken language. A possible line of investigation entails a more refined analysis of the syntax of the simple past in contemporary Central and Northern Italian, the basic hypothesis being that in this language the simple past is a pure aorist, expressing only an aspectual value and not a temporal one. The verbal form therefore could be not higher than the relevant aspectual, not temporal, projection and the remaining part of the sentence might be dispensed with.²⁴

Therefore, the labeling to the intermediate node in example (27), repeated here for simplicity, is AspP:

(64) [_{KP} **K** [_{AspP} *said Mary* [_{KP} **K** [John will leave tomorrow]]]]

Alternatively, a full clause, i.e. a TP, can be projected, with a preverbal subject:

(65) [_{KP} **K** [_{TP} *Mary said* [_{KP} **K** [John will leave tomorrow]]]]

6. Concluding remarks

In this article I illustrated the syntactic properties of the parentheticals found in FID and QU contexts. I argued that these phrases are integrated in the structure of the host, being always generated at the left of the clause, in a layer headed by prosody oriented heads, which are the syntactic equivalent of the comma feature hypothesized in phonology. This proposal is compatible with Kayne's (1994) Linear Correspondence Axiom and can account for the various word orders, by means of ellipsis processes. This hypothesis, combined with the peculiar interpretive properties of QU and FID parentheticals, can also account for their root nature. Capitalizing in fact on the proposal by Giorgi (2010) – i.e. that the speaker's coordinates are syntactically realized in the

²³ See also Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) for a discussion.

²⁴ For an analysis of the past forms in Italian, see Bertinetto and Squartini (1996) and Squartini and Bertinetto (2000).

leftmost Complementizer position – I suggested that these parentheticals must appear on the left of the main C-layer, in order to have the relevant position in their minimal domain. When the introducing predicate is not realized parenthetically, as in example (2) above, the structure is the one of a discourse. A discourse shares with the parenthetical case the main properties of being headed by a prosody oriented head.

I also suggested that the internal syntactic structure of QU and FID parentheticals can be a truncated one, i.e. a structure smaller than a full clause.

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