«Inversion» as focalization and related questions[*]

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Abstract

...res. The proposal is put forth that the postverbal subject is licensed in the specifier of a low Focus projection, internal to the functional clausal architecture. Focus is considered a morphosyntactic feature giving rise to its own projection and constituting a regular checking domain. Consequences of the hypothesis are investigated for other structures assumed to involve the same process of clause internal focalization such as: structures containing «emphatic» pronouns, structures undergoing complement reordering, unaccusative structures. Some speculative remarks are also made on the so called process of «marginalization» which is taken to constitute a case of clause internal «topicalization»; the process is also assumed to be involved in interrogative structures necessarily requiring a postverbal subject which displays behaviors different from the focalized postverbal subject of declarative sentences.

Key words: subject inversion, clause internal focalization, «emphatic» pronouns, complement reordering, unaccusative structures, «marginalization».

Resum. *«Inversió» com a focalització i qüestions relacionades*

La principal àrea empírica estudiada en aquest article té a veure amb les anomenades estructures d'«inversió» del subjecte. Es defensa la proposta que el subjecte postverbal es legitima a l'especificador d'una projecció de Focus incrustada, interna a l'estructura oracional funcional. El Focus es considera un tret morfosintàctic que dóna lloc a la seva pròpia projecció i que constitueix un domini de comprovació regular. S'investiguen les conseqüències de la hipòtesi per a altres estructures que es considera que impliquen el mateix procés de focalització interna a l'oració, com ara: estructures que contenen pronoms «emfàtics», estructures que pateixen reordenació dels

complements, estructures inacusatives. També es fan algunes remarques especulatives sobre l'anomenat procés de «marginalització» que es considera un cas de «topicalització» interna a l'oració; s'assumeix que el procés també intervé en les estructures interrogatives que requereixen necessàriament un subjecte postverbal que presenta comportaments diferents del subjecte postverbal focalitzat de les oracions declaratives.

Paraules clau: inversió del subjecte, focalització interna a l'oració, pronoms emfàtics, reordenació de complements, estructures inacusatives, «marginalització».

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The main empirical area studied in this work concerns inversion structures involving a subject which linearly follows the inflected verb, displaying the word order VS. Seemingly, unrelated structures involving reordering of complements (in the sense of Belletti & Shlonsky (1995); B&S, henceforth) will also be considered and will be assumed to involve the same derivational process at work in subject inversion. Both are argued to be instances of clause internal focalization[1]. The term «subject inversion» is thus a purely descriptive label referring to a subset, albeit an important one, of a more general clause internal process.

The descriptive term «inversion», with reference to subject inversion structures, implicitly capitalizes on the idea that the order VS reverses the canonical order SV(O). However, that subject inversion configurations cannot be derived through a lowering operation moving the preverbal «high» subject to some clause internal position has been assumed ever since Romance subject inversion phenomena have undergone serious examinations in GB terms. Lowering operations of the sort are not admitted in principle as they necessarily produce a violation of the proper binding requirement holding within chains. Without attempting at providing a faithful reconstruction of the details of the different analyses proposed in the literature during the eighties and the nineties, it appears that they all share the idea that the inverted subject is allowed to fill some position in the VP area and that a relation is established with an associate (overt or non-overt) expletive filling the preverbal «high» subject position. It is precisely by virtue of such a relation (sometimes called CHAIN) that the subject is allowed to be found in the low VP area[2]. The

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1. Thus preserving the spirit of B&S although various aspects of the implementation, some more crucial than others, differ in various ways as will be pointed in the course of the discussion.
2. Case is often considered the licensing feature held responsible for this distribution of the subject and it is made available through the established relation, with possible differences depending on whether the verb is a transitive/unergative or an unaccusative.

spirit of this traditional GB-style account[3] is essentially preserved in recent treatments of inversion type phenomena developed under minimalist assumptions, with the necessary changes due to the adoption of the VP-internal subject hypothesis (Koopman & Sportiche (1991), Kuroda (1988); cfr. the analysis of the so called T(ransitive)E(xpletive)C(onstruction) of Icelandic, Bobaljik & Jonas (1996), Chomsky (1995)). The account to be proposed below shares with traditional ones the idea that there is no literal inversion process moving the subject from the preverbal subject position to the right, past the inflected verb. However, the existence of a relation with an associate expletive in the preverbal subject position is not considered crucial in the licensing of the inverted/postverbal subject. Such a relation may well exist for independent reasons, and I will actually assume that it does, but the subject, as well as reordered complements in the intended sense, is licensed *in situ* in a position rather low in the clause functional structure. This position is identified with the specifier of the projection of a clause internal Focus feature.

Let us make the proposal precise starting by considering how low in the clause structure the postverbal subject appears to be. We will then move to the analysis of more complex VPs containing different kinds of complements. The topic of complement reordering will then be taken up and reconsidered within the system developed. Finally, the implications of the proposal will also be considered with respect to structures containing unaccusative verbs.

The data taken into account come from Italian. Some comparative reference will occasionally be made to other Romance languages. The following crucial «reading instruction» holds: unless otherwise specified, all the sentences under investigation here are evaluated with respect to a neutral non-interrupted intonation[4].

1. Position and licensing of inverted/postverbal subjects

1.1. How «low» in the clause structure is the inverted/postverbal subject?

Although the sentences in (1) are not perfect in status, with an interesting difference internal to the paradigm between (1)a,b on the one side and (1)c on the other, they certainly are definitely better than (2):

(1) a ?Capirà   completamente Maria
       will understand   completely   Maria

    b ?Capirà   bene   Maria
       will understand   well   Maria

    c Capirà   tutto   Maria
       will understand   everything   Maria

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3. The topic has been widely investigated, some representative items in the literature include Rizzi (1982), Burzio (1986), Belletti (1988), Safir (1984), Lasnik (1992, 1995), Pollock (1983)…
4. It is well known that intonation may «save» or simply change the status of various sentences in interesting ways, some of which will be considered in some detail when relevant to the presented analysis.

(2) a *Capirà   Maria completamente
        will understand Maria completely

   b *Capirà   Maria bene
        will understand Maria well

   c *Capirà   Maria tutto
        will understand Maria everything

   Both (1) and (2) are pronounced with normal, non interrupted intonation not implying any sort of «rescuing» strategy through intonation[5]. According to Cinque's (1998) typology, which I adopt without discussion as a point of departure, the adverbs and the quantifier present in (1) and (2) are those filling the Specs of the lowest different functional projections which build up clause structure. The contrast between (1) and (2) indicates a strong preference for the V Adv S order over the alternative V S Adv.

   The sentences in (1) show a kind of «interference» effect which can be held responsible for their slightly degraded status. The effect is interestingly absent in (1)c which indicates that what is at stake here is not just linear interference but some more structured notion. Something can «intervene» between the verb and the postverbal subject provided that certain structural conditions are met. Suppose that the relevant structural condition requires that a certain «distance» in the tree is present between the Adv/quantifier and the postverbal subject. We can speculate that the quantifier nature of *tutto* allows it to move to some higher (Spec) position than those occupied by the adverbs in (1)a,b thus becoming more «distant» from the subject in the relevant sense and consequently interfering «less»[6].

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5. Which should be considered an explicit sign of a change in the syntactic structure.
6. Note that *tutto* is higher than *bene* and lower than *completamente* in Cinque's clausal map. The quantifier should then be allowed to raise higher than the latter adverb if the proposed interpretation of the contrast is on the right track (See Rizzi (1996) for a similar conclusion). Movement of *tutto* should be assimilated to the visible syntactic movement of the equivalent French *tout* and negative *rien*.
    It is frequently suggested that an adjacency requirement operates to the effect that a verb and a postverbal subject should be adjacent to each other and that nothing should intervene between them (Rizzi (1996), Friedemann (1995), see also the observations below). Of course the relevant constraint, usually assimilated to Case adjacency, should be able to capture the subtle distinctions in (1) and to account for the total impossibility of (2) despite the apparent satisfaction of the requirement.
    Conceivably, as a reviewer suggests, the VP (or bigger constituent) containing V+Adv could be topicalized in the clause internal Topic Phrase to be discussed below or in the clause external one (Rizzi (1997)). If so, these data would not indicate the low location of the inverted (focalized) subject. Although a derivation of this kind could not be excluded in principle, it seems that nothing in the interpretation would force it (contrary to the data to be discussed in 1.4). Hence, a derivation not involving topicalization should also be admitted. As a consequence of that, the contrast between the orders in (1) and (2) can indeed be taken as an explicit indication of the clausal map, with the postverbal subject lower than the lowest adverbs. Note furthermore, that a derivation involving topicalization would not easily be able to draw the relevant distinction in the hierarchy of grammaticality judgments.

Assuming the VP internal subject hypothesis, and making abstraction from the gradation manifested by (1), the contrast between (1) and (2) allows us to conclude that in subject «inversion» structures either the subject remains in its original VP-internal position or it raises to a very low position in the clause structure, lower than the lowest Spec hosting an adverb.

1.2. «Inversion» as focalization

If the above conclusion is correct, the question arises as to how the subject is licensed in the low position. A frequently made observation in the literature (cfr. Antinucci & Cinque (1977) for some of the first structured observations in this connection; see also B&S, Zubizarreta (1998) among others for more recent analyses) is that a postverbal subject is focalized, i.e. with respect to the «old» vs «new» informational organization of the clause it carries the new information. Pairs like the following illustrate the point:

(3) a Chi è   partito / ha   parlato?
     who has left/   has spoken

   b E' partito / ha   parlato Gianni
      has left/   has spoken Gianni

   c #Gianni è   partito / ha   parlato
      Gianni has   left   /has spoken

The oddness of (3)c is due to the fact that the subject is not appropriately located: when it is located preverbally it is interpreted as the «old» («topic») information, and cannot function as the «new» («focus») information. But since the question (3)a precisely concerns the subject, (3)c is not an appropriate answer to it[7]. Sharp contrasts along similar lines are provided by the examples in (4):

(4) a (Pronto, chi   parla?)
     (hello,   who   speaks)

   b Parla   Gianni
      speaks   Gianni

   c *Gianni parla
      Gianni   speaks

   d (Chi   è?)
      (who   is (there))

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7. In the same vein, consider the further fact that (3)b can also be the appropriate answer to a question concerning the clause as a whole, as *cosa è successo?;* or can be pronounced in a so called «out of the blue» context, in both cases with no presupposition concerning the subject. (3)c would not be equally appropriate in similar contexts.

e   - Sono io
        am   I= it's me
    - Sono   Gianni
        am   Gianni = it's Gianni
    - E'   Gianni
        It's   Gianni

f   *Io /Gianni sono /è
      I   /Gianni am   /is

(4)b and (4)e illustrate the typical sentences utilized in answering (the often implicit question of) phone calls or a (possibly implicit) request of identification in typical situations, e.g. after knocking at somebody's door. The word order in this case is consistently and only VS. Having the subject in preverbal position gives a sharply ungrammatical result in these situations, as (4)c,f indicate[8]. In (4) exactly as in (3), the wellformed sentences have the subject as the new information focus. It then seems plausible to hypothesize that focalization plays the crucial role in the licensing of the (low) postverbal subject.

   We pointed out in 1.1 that the postverbal subject fills a very low position in the clause. A natural hypothesis would be to assume that it is as low as its original VP-internal position[9]. If this is the case the obvious question arises as to how it is licensed in such low position. It is currently assumed that Case is the (morpho)syntactic feature that is crucial in the licensing of overt noun phrases. Unless we allow nominative Case to be accessible to the VP internal subject position, possibly through the relation with an associate expletive, it is clear that Case is not available VP internally for the postverbal subject. If we want to try to maintain Case assignment/checking as local a process as possible, as seems desirable[10], we are in fact forced to conclude that no Case is available for the subject in its original VP internal position. As we have just determined that the postverbal subject fills a very low position in the clause structure we seem to be forced to conclude that this position cannot coincide with the VP internal original one as the subject could not be licensed through Case there. Furthermore, given current assumptions on the distribution of functional projections in the clausal architecture, in particular of those responsible for Case assignment/checking, it seems that no other (nominative) Case position is likely to be available for the subject in the very low area

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8. Possibly, the judgement is so sharp because these «answers» have become *figées* expressions. Furthermore, the impossibility of (4)f, is also due to the fact that a predicate is necessary in copular sentences. See Moro (1997) for a discussion of similar data where the good cases are assumed to be «inverse copular» sentences containing a low clause internal subject. An analysis interestingly convergent with the one to be developed here.
9. See Cardinaletti (1998) where data like those in (1), (2) are also presented and precisely this assumption is made.
10. Beside subject inversion structures, no other cases appear to require a similar kind of non-local assignment/realization. See Belletti (1988), Lasnik (1992, 1995). See also the discussion in footnote 16.

where it is found. The question of the licensing of the postverbal subject thus remains open.

Suppose that not Case but Focus plays the role of the licenser of the post-verbal subject. From the interpretive/informational point of view the hypothesis seems entirely justified. But what is the status of Focus under this view? To make the proposal technically more precise I will assume that Focus is a syntactic feature heading a functional projection in the clause structure, thus creating a regular checking configuration. Under this proposal, the syntactic feature in question has licensing abilities. In a broader perspective, we can assume that Case is not the only licenser of overt DPs in the clause. It is probably the most typical/widespread one, but others are available as well. Focus is one of them in this view.

The proposal that a Focus Phrase is present in the clause has been made various times in the recent literature on functional projections. Typically, the FocusP is located in the left periphery of the clause as in Rizzi (1997), Puskas (1996), Brody (1990). I assume that such a position exists. It is the one hosting «contrastive» focus in Italian:

(5) IL   LIBRO ho   letto, non il   giornale
    THE   BOOK I have read, not the newspaper

As in the analysis developed in B&S, I take the FocusP hosting postverbal subjects to be a different one, as is clear from the distribution, and to be clause internal. Differently from the left peripheral focus position, the clause internal one is not associated with any special contrastive intonation: no contrast is implied, as (3) and (4) show. Indeed, the pragmatics of the two focus positions is quite different. A left peripheral focus cannot function as an appropriate answer to a pure question of information. (5) cannot answer a question like (6)[11].

(6) Che cosa hai   letto?
    What   have you read?

Nor can (7)b answer a question like (3)a above, repeated in (7)a:

(7) a Chi   è   partito /ha parlato?
     Who has left   /has spoken?

   b (*) GIANNI è   partito /ha parlato
       GIANNI has left   /has spoken

Where (7)b is pronounced with the typical intonation associated with left peripheral focus in Italian, indicated with capital letters.

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11. For a distinction between peripheral (often contrastive) focus and new information focus see Kiss (1998), where only the first type is associated with a designated syntactic head.

Given the considerations prompted by the respective position of low adverbs and postverbal subjects, we are led to conclude that the clause internal FocusP is very low in the clause. Assume it is the first functional projection above VP[12].

(8)

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     FocusP
    /     \
         Foc'
        /    \
      Foc    VP
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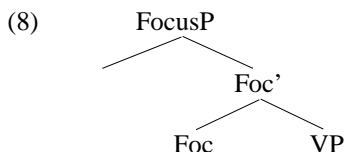
The subject moves to the specifier of FocusP and the Verb raises higher up producing the order VS[13]. Within this approach Focus has no special status: it is a feature which gives rise to a regular checking configuration. Its licensing property does not need to appeal to special external conventions. The only hypothesis needed is the one attributing to the Focus feature a licensing ability for overt DPs comparable to that of a Case feature and, as such, possibly alternative to it[14].

In standard Italian, in subject inversion sentences the verb agrees with the postverbal subject and the latter carries nominative Case. This is overtly visible in examples like (9):

(9) Sono   arrivata   io
    have   arrived   I

A fairly traditional interpretation of this kind of data[15] might consist in assuming that a relation between the postverbal subject and the preverbal subject position is established, possibly with a non overt expletive filling the latter position (the CHAIN relation referred to above), and that all pronounceable features in the chain are (by necessity) realized on the «overt» elements. They are then realized in the inflectional affixes and in the morphological Case of the postverbal subject. The chain relation would then be held responsible for both Case and agreement. As for the presence of nominative, however, an account of this kind appears to be insufficiently general and should be refined, in order to incorporate cases like (10):

12. A proposal to be refined below (cfr. 1.4).
13. Differently from B&S, I now assume that FocusP always displays a regular left branching Spec position. This eliminates one unsatisfactory aspect of that analysis which stipulated a parametrical difference between languages with respect to the direction of the location of the specifier of FocusP while keeping its fundamental leading intuition. I believe that the comparative insights of B&S's analysis can be preserved within the set of new assumptions developed here. I will not attempt a close examination of the comparative issue here.
14. Case and Focus are not necessarily alternative licensing features. They can combine with no clash being created: the clearest case is probably that of peripheral focus (under a movement analysis of focalization).
15. The «standard» view in GB, cfr. Rizzi (1982), Safir (1984), Burzio (1986). See Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (1998) for a recent different view which does not imply presence of a non-overt expletive in the preverbal subject position (of null subject languages).

(10)   Penso   di [- parlare io a   Gianni]
        (I) think   to   speak   I   to Gianni

    In (10) the relation should be established between the postverbal «io» and the embedded preverbal subject position of the infinitival clause. But no association with nominative Case is granted here through this relation as null Case is the only Case related to the infinitival subject position (Chomsky & Lasnik (1993)). Moreover, null Case is incompatible with overt elements. Suppose instead that the postverbal embedded subject «io» is licensed *in situ* within the clause internal Focus phrase[16]. Its realization as a first person singular can be attributed to the relation with the preverbal subject, PRO, controlled by the matrix subject[17]. Its realization as a nominative must be due to the independent necessity of choosing a morphological realization for a pronounceable overt element, if available. Under this view, nominative would count as a default realization. If an account along these lines is tenable, examples like (10) illustrate a situation where Case and Focus are dissociated. The same account could then naturally extend to examples like (9) where nominative on the postverbal pronoun should not necessarily be interpreted

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16. Its status as «new information» is confirmed by the following question-answer pairs:

  (i) A: Chi   pensa di parlare a   Gianni?
           Who thinks to speak   to Gianni?

     B: Penso   di parlare io a   Gianni (=(10))
         (I) think to speak   I   to Gianni

     B': Penso   di parlarci   io
        (I) think   to speak to him I

  «A Gianni» in B could fill the low Topic position to be introduced in 1.4 below.

    Note that no «long distance agreement» of the type advocated in Chomsky (1998) could be established in (10) between the matrix T and the postverbal pronoun in the embedded clause and held responsible for both Case on the pronoun and agreemen, given the control status of the infinitival clause. Cases like (10) are thus crucially different from raising cases like *There was a man in the room* or, possibly, *Sembrano essere arrivati molti ragazzi (there seem to have arrived many children)*, discussed in Chomsky (1998) and in previous literature on inversion (see references quoted in footnote 3). Thanks to E. Raposo and an anonymous reviewer for implicitly raising the issue of a comparison between the two types of structures. It should also be noted that structures like those in (10) do not necessarily involve agreement between the matrix subject and the embedded nominative pronoun as in cases like (ii) following, thus confirming the conclusion that «long distance agreement» is not the relevant notion here anyway:

  (i) Maria mi ha chiesto [di parlare io a   Gianni]
       Maria asked me   to speak   I   to Gianni

17. Under this analysis PRO is then an argumental subject, not an expletive PRO. A welcome conclusion, given the often observed lack of an expletive PRO in infinitival clauses which examples like the following illustrate:

  (i) *?E'   difficile rispondere senza   PRO sembrare impossibile
       It is difficult to answer   without seeming   impossibile

  (ii) * Maria è   partita senza   PRO essere certo   che fosse necessario
       Maria has left   without being   certain that it was necessary

as a consequence of the established relation with the preverbal subject position[18]. Examples like (11) following complete the paradigm with cases where both the preverbal subject and the postverbal pronominal subject are overt:

(11)   Gianni parlerà   lui   con Maria
        Gianni will speak he   with Maria

In these examples, the postverbal pronominal subject is usually interpreted as having a strengthening function, often called «emphatic». Note that if the post-verbal pronominal subject is licensed in FocusP, a direct explanation is provided as to why it must necessarily be realized as a strong pronoun. The weak pronoun version of the third person singular pronoun «egli» is totally excluded in these constructions:

(12)   *Gianni parlerà   egli con   Maria
         Gianni will speak he   with Maria

If weak pronouns are «deficient» in Cardinaletti & Starke's (1994) sense, it is natural that they are incompatible with a saliency feature like Focus. Note finally that the detectable anaphoric behavior of the emphatic postverbal subject pronoun in (11) could be analyzed along similar lines as those assumed for the «Floated quantifiers» (FQ) phenomenon in Sportiche (1988). It could be an indirect consequence of the movement of a portion of the noun phrase containing the lexical subject to some preverbal subject position, leaving the DP portion containing an explicit determiner behind. The latter being licensed through focus, it necessarily corresponds to the strong version of the pronoun, as discussed above[19].

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18. Which should be held responsible for verbal agreement only.
19. Contrary to emphatic pronouns, a FQ does not need licensing in Focus phrase. Whence the different status of FQ and emphatic pronouns with respect to focalization. An emphatic function is also asso-ciated with the overt embedded pronoun of (10). The same analysis should account for the (apparent) anaphoric behavior of the personal pronoun «io». Here the moved portion of the noun phrase should correspond to a non overt PRO. The fact that the emphatic pronoun can be realized as different per-sons and numbers suggests that it corresponds to various functional positions of the DP. Thus, the proposal hinted at in the text of simply calling it «D» must be viewed as a simplification.

  Note that for the proposed account to work, the noun phrase must be attributed a sufficiently rich internal structure in order to allow for more than one D type position. This is necessary in order to derive cases like (i):

(i) Il   responsabile   parlerà   *lui* della   situazione
    The responsible person will speak   he   of the   situation

where both the article and the strong emphatic pronoun are present.

  Under the analysis developed in the text, the emphatic constructions share crucial structural pro-perties with clitic doubling constructions (Belletti (forthcoming), Uriagereka (1995), Sportiche (1996)). This is also true from the point of view of the θ roles involved, as in both cases one single θ role is shared by the two related elements: the lexical noun phrase and the pronoun. The emphatic construction is, in a sense, the «mirror image» of clitic doubling. In clitic doubling the moved por-tion is the D portion, while it is the portion containing the lexical noun phrase in the emphatic construction. I leave these considerations for further development.

1.3. V S XP (V S O, V S PP, V S CP)

Once we assume that the postverbal subject is licensed in the specifier of the Focus phrase, the natural question which arises is what happens if a complement of V is also present in the VP. Let us consider three cases in turn: a) the complement is a direct object (O, henceforth); b) the complement is a prepositional object (PP); c) the complement is a clause (CP).

1.3.1. V S O (a) Once S moves to the specifier of FocusP and V moves to some inflectional head above it, a direct object O would still need to be licensed in some functional Spec position. The specifier of FocusP is filled by the subject, hence O could (only) be licensed through Case. In order to perform Case checking, it should move to the Spec of its Case checking projection, which is located above the Focus Phrase, this being the lowest functional projection of the clause by hypothesis. I assume that such crossing of the object over the subject is not allowed due to Relativized Minimality (RM). I also assume that in clauses with a preverbal subject the same problem does not arise since the subject continues its movement and in the final representation it ends up higher than the object. Indeed, the relevant constraint requires that the initial hierarchical order of constituents is preserved in the final structure[20].

Note that the excluded movement of the direct object to the specifier of its Case checking projection, would yield the word order: VOS. This order is not a felicitous one as is illustrated by examples like (13)[21]:

(13) a ??Capirà   il   problema Gianni
             will understand the   problem   Gianni

      b ??Ha spedito la   lettera Maria
            has sent   the letter   Maria

20. No similar problem arises if movement involves a QP rather than a direct object DP as facts involving the quantifier «tutto» like those in (1)c above indicate. The different categorial status should be at the source of this difference. See Watanabe (1992); Haegeman (1993) on the operation of the constraint, which appears to also be generally respected in «object shift» constructions (Vikner (1995)).

21. The two «??» in (13) refer to the sentence pronounced with normal, non interrupted intonation. The sentences have a reading where VO is taken as the given/presupposed information, related to a slightly different intonation with VO pronounced as a unit, which makes them acceptable. We will address this possible reading in the following discussion.

    If cliticization of O takes place, the output is straightforwardly wellformed:

    (i) Lo   capirà   Gianni
        It+will understand Gianni

    I propose that, if cliticization starts out as head movement of the clitic (D) from the object Case checking specifier position (Belletti (forthcoming)), (i) would not violate RM under the assumption that the clitic DP move to the object Case checking specifier from the specifier of a clause internal Topic phrase as in the analysis of VOS discussed in 1.4, thus not directly crossing over the subject. Movement of the object DP from the specifier of the Topic phrase should be assumed anyway as Case checking of the object should be performed in VOS.

    c ??Ha chiamato Maria Gianni
         has called   Maria Gianni

The VOS order has often been regarded as violating an adjacency constraint requiring that no material interrupt the V S sequence. The status of this adjacency requirement has been assimilated to Case adjacency (Rizzi (1996) and related works, among which B&S, Friedeman (1995)) assuming that the postverbal subject could be directly Case marked in the low/inverted position under government from a nominative Case assigner functional head, sometimes identified with T. However, under a more recent conception of clause structure with a richer and more articulated functional skeleton than the original analysis *à la* Pollock (1989), it does not seem very likely that the nominative Case assigner (assume it to be T) could really be the functional head closest to the low/inverted subject. Furthermore, the Case adjacency analysis does not make one expect that a VSO sequence should be judged as completely impossible in Italian, in fact much worse than VOS, as we are going to discuss at some length below[22]:

(14) a *Capirà   Gianni il   problema
         will understand Gianni the problem

      b *Ha spedito Maria la   lettera
         has sent   Maria the letter

As in all the cases throughout, the reported judgments refer to the sentences pronounced with continuous, non interrupted, normal intonation. It would seem that, all things being equal, if Case adjacency were the relevant notion, (14) should be more acceptable than (13), possibly totally acceptable (with the qualification of footnote 22), contrary to fact.

It is natural at this point to raise the following question: what does the proposed analysis have to say on the detected impossibility of the VSO order in Italian? In fact, within this analysis VSO cannot be generated altogether: with S licensed in the specifier of the Focus phrase, O is blocked within VP where no licenser is present. Hence the structure is eliminated. Thus, VOS and VSO are ruled out by essentially the same reason: impossibility of properly licensing both S and O in the low area of the clause. Note, for completeness, that if we wanted to license O in the specifier of the Focus phrase leaving the subject VP internal, yielding VOS once again, we would be left, this time, with S licensed neither through Case nor through Focus, hence unlicensed, expectedly an unacceptable outcome[23].

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22. Of course, under the assumption that O could be licensed in this structure. A matter to which we will return shortly.
23. RM would possibly be violated here as well. Although it might be suggested that if S does not move the violation of RM would not arise in the same way. See in this connection VOS in object shift, with S indefinite, hence, possibly, in its VP internal base position.

Speakers tend to attribute a slightly less marginal status to the VOS order than to order VSO in Italian, provided that a particular intonation is utilized (footnote 21) and certain pragmatic conditions are met. On the other hand, it is well known that there are languages, in particular languages of the Romance family, e.g. Spanish (Zubizarreta (1998), Ordóñez (1997)) and Romanian (Motapanyane (1995)), which appear to allow for the order VSO rather freely. I delay after discussion of points b) and c) some reflections on the possible reasons behind these contrasts.

1.3.2. V S PP (b) Let us now consider the case where the VP internal complement of V is a prepositional object. Suppose that S is licensed in the specifier of the Focus phrase and PP remains in the VP internal position. In combination with verb movement this yields the order VSPP. Recall that in the case of a direct object this order yields an impossible output in Italian since, as we have just seen, the direct object O cannot be licensed VP internally (nor can S with O in the specifier of FocusP). It appears that the situation is remarkably different in case the object is a PP. Consider the following quasi-minimal pairs in this respect:

(15) a (?) Ha telefonato Maria   al   giornale
              has phoned   Maria   to the newspaper
      b *Ha   comprato Maria   il   giornale
              has   bought   Maria   the   newspaper

      c (?) Ha parlato uno studente col   direttore
              has spoken a   student to the director
      d *Ha   corrotto uno studente il   direttore
              has   bribed   a   student the   director

      e (?) Ha sparato il   bandito al   carabiniere
              has shot   the gangster at the policeman
      f *Ha   colpito il   bandito il   carabiniere[24]
              has   hit   the gangster the   policeman

---

24. The variety of subjects utilized, definite, indefinite, proper name, is meant to indicate that the contrast is detectable independently from this variable.

    As pointed out in Kayne &Pollock (1978) and as is discussed in detail in Friedemann (1995), VSPP is also a possible order in French stylistic inversion constructions such as (i) (see Friedemann (1995) for the discussion of subtle gradations in acceptability judgements in these structures; see also Kampers-Manhe (1998) for restrictions on VSPP in subjunctive stylistic inversion contexts):

    (i) Qu'a   dit Jean au   jardinier?
         What has said Jean to the gardener

    While both VSO and VOS are excluded in the same constructions.

    Although the judgement is fairly subtle, VSPP tends to be more acceptable than VSO also in embedded control infinitival clauses containing an emphatic (non-contrastive) nominative pronoun of the kind discussed in (10):

    (ii) a (?)Quello studente/ - ha/ho deciso [di parlare lui/io col   direttore]
             that   student/ (I) decided   to talk   he/I to the director

Why should this difference exist? If the proposed interpretation of the reasons ruling out VSO is on the right track, the contrast between direct objects and prepositional objects naturally suggests the following interpretation. Assume that S fills the specifier of the Focus projection. Assume that, differently from DPs, PPs are autonomously licensed and do not need move to a VP external position. Rather, PPs are licensed *in situ*. If this is the case, the V S PP order is obtained by leaving the PP in its base VP internal position. The output is expected to be acceptable.

Why should PPs be licensed *in situ*? An obvious reason suggests itself. Note that, in fact, only DP arguments need licensing (usually performed through Case). Thus, a PP can be taken to contain the licenser of its DP complement internal to its own projection. Suppose that such licenser is recognized in the preposition itself. We could execute the idea by assuming that checking of the P feature is done through movement of the DP complement to the specifier of PP (or through movement of some relevant feature, (Chomsky (1995), or through the establishment of an agreement relation in Chomsky's (1998) sense). This line of analysis captures a fact often observed in both traditional accounts and more theoretically oriented ones according to which prepositions «play the role» of Case.

1.3.3. V S CP (c) In the generative literature, clauses have occasionally been assumed not to need Case[25]. In the terms adopted here, this should mean that they do not need to move to a Case checking position but can remain *in situ,* in the VP internal complement position. Assume that this is what happens. We then expect that the order V S CP should be a possible one, with S in the specifier of the Focus projection and the CP complement VP internal, much as in the case of V S PP. This is indeed what we find in various cases:

(16) a Ha detto la mamma che ha telefonato Gianni
          has said the mother that has telephoned Gianni

      b Ha detto la mamma di andare a letto
          has said the mother to go   to bed

It should be pointed out, however, that the order V S CP is not felicitous with all verbal choices, thus suggesting that other factors are involved in making the

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b ??Quello studente/ - ha/ho deciso [di corrompere lui/io il direttore]
      that   student /   (I) decided   to bribe   he/I   the director

The judgements refer to the sentences pronounced with continuous, neutral intonation (in particular, with no «marginalization» of the direct object in the sense of Antinucci & Cinque (1977), which would make both sentences perfectly acceptable).

25. A stronger requirement has been proposed by Stowell (1981), namely that clauses «resist» Case. Given the framework in which the proposal was framed where Case was taken to be assigned under government in the complement position, Stowell also assumed that clauses are necessarily extraposed. The analysis required supplementary assumptions to distinguish between complement clauses and adjunct clauses which display very different behaviors, most notably with respect to extraction. The fundamental intuition which distinguished between clauses and nominal arguments was on the right track, I believe.

order appropriate. Examples like those in (17) provide a sample of cases where the order V S CP, pronounced with the usual continuous intonation, is bizarre and essentially unacceptable:

(17) a *?Ha cominciato Gianni a non capire   più   niente
          has started   Gianni to not understand anything anymore

      b *?Ha pensato/pensa la mamma che Gianni non   capisca
          has though/thinks the mother that Gianni doesn't understand
          più   niente
          anything anymore

      c *?Crede   Maria che Gianni sia partito
          believes Maria that Gianni has left

      d *?Ha deciso Gianni di parlare con   Maria
          has decided Gianni to speak   with Maria

    I leave open here the development of an accurate hypothesis on the possible reasons of the deviance of sentences like (17)[26].

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26. To the extent that the sentences become acceptable with the alternative order V CP S, they could be amenable to the same analysis as the possible V O S orders to be discussed in 1.4 below:

    (i) a Ha cominciato a non capire   più niente   Gianni
          has started   to not understand anything anymore Gianni
       b Ha pensato/pensa che Gianni non   capisca   più niente   la   mamma
          has thought/thinks that Gianni doesn't understand anything anymore the mother
       c Crede   che Gianni sia partito Maria
          believes that Gianni has left   Maria
       d Ha deciso   di parlare con Maria Gianni
          has decided to speak   with Maria Gianni

    Note furthermore the following interesting contrast:

    (ii)*?Ha deciso   di parlare Gianni con   Mario
          has decided to speak   Gianni with Mario
    (iii) Gianni ha deciso   di parlare lui con   Mario
          Gianni has decided to speak   he with Mario

    Judgements refer to situations where no special (contrastive) intonation is associated to «Gianni» or «lui». (ii) should be analyzed in the way discussed in 1.2 in the text, with the pronoun licensed in the specifier of the embedded Focus phrase «doubling» the PRO raised to the subject position of the infinitival. A similar analysis could not be extended to (i) as PRO and «Gianni» would plausibly compete for the same position within the original DP. (ii) contrasts with (iv):

    (iii) [ha deciso   di PRO parlare t] GIANNI con Mario
          has decided to speak   GIANNI with Mario

    with the preposed portion of the clause topicalized in the clause peripheral position, «Gianni» contrastively focalized in the clause peripheral Focus phrase, and the PP «marginalized» in a clause internal Topic position (see section 4; in the simplified representation «t» stands for the original location of the PP).

Summarizing, I have proposed that the VS order is obtained through move-
ment of the subject into the specifier of a clause internal Focus functional projec-
tion with the verb filling some higher functional head. All other things being equal,
other arguments of the verb are allowed to linearly follow S only if they can remain
in their (original) VP internal complement position. This possibility is available to
PPs and CPs but not to direct object DPs. This rules out the VSO order, with O a
direct object DP. If O raises out of VP to its Case checking position it necessarily
crosses over the low subject in the specifier of the Focus phrase giving rise to an ille-
gitimate derivation, because of RM (and since the subject does not raise further
up). This rules out VOS. All the judgments refer to the sentences pronounced with
normal, non interrupted intonation.

1.4. More on VOS

We are now ready to take up the issue left open above as to why the speakers' intui-
tions give VOS as a word order slightly more acceptable than VSO. I have repro-
duced this intuition by attributing two «??» to the former order and a straight «*»
to the latter. Nevertheless, the analysis developed above rules out both VOS and
VSO with no attempt to express a difference. Indeed, I would like to suggest that
no real «grammatical» difference is at stake here; rather, interfering factors account
for the subtle differentiation made by speakers. I will now try to make these fac-
tors explicit within the terms of the general analysis proposed.

One context in which VOS appears to be a possible (although somewhat redun-
dant and slightly unnatural) word order is the one where it shows up as the answer
to a question where the whole «given» information is repeated, this being precisely
constituted by V and O. Consider in this respect the following question-answer
pairs:

(18) A: Chi   ha   capito   il   problema?
         Who has understood the problem?
      B: Ha   capito   il   problema Gianni
         Has understood the problem   Gianni

      C: Chi spedirà   la   lettera?
         Who will send the letter
      D: Spedirà   la   lettera Maria[27]
         Will send the letter   Maria

---

27. A similar judgement apply to sentences where the VP contains a PP complement displaying the
     order V PP S:

     (i) A: Chi   ha   parlato con Maria?
            Who has spoken with Maria?
         B: Ha   parlato con Maria Gianni
            Has spoken with Maria Gianni

Of course the most natural answers to questions (18)A, C would have O expressed in the form of a pronoun:

(19) B' L'ha   capito   Gianni
          It+has   understood   Gianni
      D' La   spedirà   Maria[28]
          It   will send Maria

More natural examples manifesting an acceptable VOS order are typically found in special contexts belonging to a particular register such as that of live radio/TV reports of, e.g., football matches[29]. Some examples are given in (20):

(20) a Mette la   palla sul   dischetto del rigore Ronaldo
         puts   the ball   on the   penalty point   Ronaldo

      b Protegge l'uscita di Marchegiani   Nesta
         protects Marchegiani's coming out Nesta

Note that sentences of this kind are only possible if the VO part of the clause immediately preceding S is interpretable as describing a member of a set of prototypical situations (predicates) in the context of a (football) match. As soon as VO is not interpretable in this way, VOS becomes once again (essentially) unacceptable (cfr. (21)):

(21) a ??Spinge l'arbitro   Ronaldo
            pushes the referee Ronaldo

      b ??Ferisce il   guardialinee Nesta
            hurts   the linesman   Nesta

We can conclude that what the acceptable sentences with the order VOS have in common is the fact of introducing a V O sequence which constitutes the «given» part of the information provided by the sentence.

Suppose that this only possible interpretation is associated with the following syntactic analysis: the «given» constituent containing V+O moves to the specifier position of a Topic projection. A position of this type is assumed in the analysis

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28. Given the appropriate set of presuppositions, the following would also be more natural answers to the questions in (18)A, C:

    (i) Ha capito   il   problema solo Gianni
        Has understood the problem   only Gianni

    (ii) Spedirà la   lettera proprio Maria
         Will send the letter   precisely Maria

    Where «solo» and «proprio» act as constituent-focalizers thus leaving as a «topic»/«given» information everything which precedes them.

29. Thanks to L.Rizzi for bringing these quite typical data to my attention in this connection.

of the left periphery of Rizzi (1997) where it is located immediately above the clause external Focus projection. Another Topic projection is located right under Focus which is thus surrounded by two Topic phrases. Let us make the proposal that, much as for the peripheral, clause external projections, also the clause internal ones involve not only a Focus Projection (above VP), but also a Topic projection right above it and one right under it[30]. We can assume that the moved constituent is the XP (VP?) containing the trace of the subject moved to the specifier of the Focus phrase[31]. As in the analysis proposed by Ordóñez (1997), this topicalization can be considered the analog of the process taking place in the Germanic languages and come to be known as «remnant topicalization», although I am assuming that the process taking place here is clause internal. I then suggest that the reason why the order VOS tends not to be totally excluded by speakers is because of interference with this possible topicalized construction[32].

In the proposed analysis I have assumed that the subject fills the clause internal specifier of the Focus projection. Notice that, so far, we have considered sentences like (18)B,D as pronounced with regular intonation not involving any particular stress on any constituent. It is clear to any speaker of Italian that a special stress on the postverbal subject makes the VOS order uncontroversially acceptable. This stress is contrastive stress:

(22) a Ha capito il problema GIANNI (non tutta la classe)
has understood the problem GIANNI (not the whole class)

b Ha spedito la lettera MARIA (non sua sorella)
has sent the letter MARIA (not her sister)

The remnant VP preceding S is still interpreted as the Topic; the Focus of the clause is the contrastively stressed subject. Note now that also a preverbal contrastively stressed subject count as Focus:

(23) a GIANNI ha capito il problema (non tutta la classe)
GIANNI has understood the problem (not the whole class)

b MARIA ha spedito la lettera (non sua sorella)
MARIA has sent the letter (not her sister)

30. The role of the latter is analyzed in section 4 in the context of the discussion of the so called process of «marginalization»(Antinucci & Cinque (1977)).

31. An analysis along similar lines is proposed in Ordóñez (1997) for similar data. However, contrary to Ordóñez, I assume that the process is clause internal. I leave the clause external Focus (and the related Topics) as the designated position for contrastive focus. See also the discussion below. For the idea of a clause internal Topic phrase position, see the recent analysis of Right dislocation proposed by Cecchetto (1998).

32. I must consequently assume that the violation of the Proper binding requirement (induced by the subject trace) is «rescued» in the same way as the same violation of «remnant topicalization» structures (through «reconstruction»).

It can furthermore be assumed that O can then move out of the Topic phrase to reach its Case checking specifier. See footnote 21 for related discussion. V could also move out to perform checking of its φ features.

A reasonable analysis of clauses like (23) locates the subject in the clause external specifier of the Focus phrase, the same position filled by the focalized constituents in (24)a,b, the same position which, according to Rizzi (1997), also hosts wh interrogative operators[33]((24)c):

(24) a IL   PROBLEMA Gianni ha   capito   (non l'equazione)
         THE   PROBLEM   Gianni has understood (not the equation)

      b LA   LETTERA Maria ha   spedito (non il   pacco)
         THE LETTER   Maria has sent   (not the parcel)

      c Che cosa ha   capito   Gianni?
         What   has understood Gianni?

The proposed analysis for the sentences in (23), thus assumes that the preverbal subject does not fill the preverbal clause internal subject position[34], but it is rather clause external in the specifier of the Focus phrase. If this analysis seems reasonable and coherent with current assumptions, I would suggest that one could extend exactly the same analysis to the sentences in (22). Hence, when contrastively stressed, the postverbal subject of these clauses should appear in the left peripheral specifier position of the Focus projection. The remnant VP would fill the specifier of the Topic projection above the clause external Focus phrase. I assume that this is the analysis of (23)[35].

1.5. What could allow for VSO in some Romance languages

Several studies on postverbal subjects in Spanish have repeatedly indicated that VSO is a possible word order in this language. See the discussions in Zubizarreta (1998), Ordóñez (1997), in particular. VSO is also a possible word order in Romanian as illustrated in Motapanyane (1995):

33. An updating and refinement of Chomsky's (1977) analysis of various «left peripheral» constructions in terms of the unifying process of wh-movement.
34. Rather «one» of the clause internal positions available to preverbal subjects, see Cardinaletti (1997) and related work in the same direction, according to which there are at least two, possibly more, positions available to preverbal subjects, each specialized for different interpretations and hosting different kinds of subjects.
35. Ordóñez' analysis is then adopted for these cases only.
     I leave open for now a close discussion of the question whether the clause external Focus projection is the only one designated for assignment of contrastive stress or whether, in some cases, also the clause internal one would qualify. What is important to underscore is that only the clause internal Focus projection is compatible with regular stress/intonation and it is the site of simple new information focus; the clause external one is compatible with contrastive stress. What remains to be seen is whether the clause internal Focus projection can also be compatible with constrastive stress and, if yes, in what circumstances. For the time being, I make the strongest assumption that only the clause external Focus projection is specialized for contrast, as in the discussion in the text.

(25) a Todos los días compra Juan el diario (Zubizarreta (1998))
Every day buys Juan the newspaper

    b Espero que te devuelva Juan el libro (Ordóñez (1997))
I hope that cl-you return Juan the book
(I hope that Juan returns the book to you)

    c O invita cam des Ion pe fata acesta
her invites quite often Ion 'pe' girl the-that
(Ion invites that girl quite often)

                                              (Montapanyane (1995))

It appears that, differently from the situation in Italian, a postverbal subject in VSO order is not (or not necessarily) the new information focus of the clause in languages like Spanish. Suppose that this could be interpreted as indicating that it fills a position different from the specifier of the clause internal Focus projection[36]. The question then arises as to what makes a further (higher) position available for a postverbal subject in Spanish but not in Italian. If Focus is not the licenser of the postverbal subject there must be another licenser. The only suggestion I can make here essentially adopts and rephrases the proposal made by Zubizarreta. Assume the lincenser to be Case. Languages like Spanish would dispose of an extra Case position, different from the preverbal one(s), where (nominative) Case can be assigned/checked. This position should be relatively high in the clause, higher than the VP external position where the direct object is licensed. Hence, both S and O would be licensed in Spanish and similar languages with VSO clauses through Case[37].

Why doesn't Italian have this extra Case position? Does this difference between the two kinds of languages correlate with some other difference? One could speculate that this is probably the case if another frequently pointed out difference between the two kinds of languages is considered, namely the fact that the finite verb seems to raise higher in Italian than in Spanish, taking the position of equivalent adverb classes to be revealing in this respect (see Motapanyane (1995) on Romanian). Consider the contrast between Spanish and Italian in (26):

(26) a La viejita apenas /siempre /nunca puede leer
the dear old lady barely /always /never can read
los periodicos (Suñer (1994))
the newspaper

    b *?La vecchietta appena /sempre /mai può leggere i giornali
the old lady barely /always /never can read the newspaper
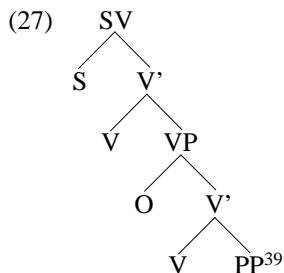
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36. Possibly, this latter position is accessible to the direct object.
37. The processes involved are assimilated to those at work in VSO languages in general (cfr. Semitic, Irish...).

Of course, what remains to be understood is how a lower Verb could activate a further Case position below it. I leave this question open and these remarks at this speculative stage here[38].

2. Multiple complements reordering and subject inversion

Let us assume a VP internal structure like the one in (27):

(27)

```
        SV
       /  \
      S    V'
          /  \
         V    VP
             /  \
            O    V'
                /  \
               V    PP[39]
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Consider now the following sentences, involving a verb like *dare* which takes both a direct and an indirect prepositional object: beside the «unmarked»/basic V O PP order, also the V PP O order is admitted, as discussed in detail in B&S:

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38. In the spirit of this line of account, the same DP position could be available and possibly host the subject in all languages. The difference should be whether the DP is allowed to remain in such a position, if it is licensed there or not. It would be licensed in Spanish and not on Italian. I speculate that agreement with the closest governing V could be the relevant factor.

    As pointed out in Picallo (1998) (see also Solà (1992)) VSO is excluded in Catalan (Picallo's diacritics):

    (i) (??)*Fullejava en Joan el   diari
        leafed   Joan   through the newspaper

    As Catalan displays an order of adverbs closer to Spanish than to Italian, this seems to suggest that a «shorter V-movement» should at most be considered a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the licensing of the extra «low» subject position anyway.

39. Contrary to B&S, I make the assumption that, as in the uniform base of Kayne (1994), the direction of the location of the Specs is uniformly on the left of the head projection. I have made the same change as for the location of the Specifier of the Focus projection. See also footnote 13.

    In B&S the hierarchy of the arguments has the PP in the Spec of the low VP and O in its complement position. If this is the case, the assumption must be made that RM is not violated by the crossing of O over the PP in its movement to the (Case) checking position. Plausibly, a PP would not interfere with respect to the movement of a DP. The constraint on the preservation of the hierarchy of arguments might be more problematic, though. This suggests that a more appropriate representation should have O in the Spec of the lower VP and PP in the complement position, as in the representation adopted in (27). The issue concerning RM does not arise nor the one concerning the preservation of the hierarchy of arguments. See Larson (1988), and the representation adopted in section 3 for unaccusatives. Nothing changes in the execution of the proposal to be discussed below with either assumption.

(28) a Ho   dato   un libro a Gianni
        (I) have given   a   book to Gianni

     b Ho   dato   a Gianni un libro
        (I) have given   to Gianni a   book

B&S provide a rich list of multiple complement verbs, all manifesting the same paradigm, with both orders of complements possible and the order V O PP normally considered the «unmarked»/basic one. Note now that both orders are perfectly acceptable when also a preverbal overt subject is present:

(29) a Gianni ha dato   un libro a Maria
        Gianni has given   a book   to Maria

     b Gianni ha dato   a Maria un libro
        Gianni has given   to Maria a   book

As observed in B&S, complement reordering interacts in interesting ways with subject inversion. The order V O PP S is (marginally) acceptable with the only interpretation having V O PP, the «remnant» VP, as the «given» information and the postverbal subject as the «new» one. Consider the sentences in (30) in this respect (cfr: B&S ex. (24)a, c):

(30) a Ha dato un libro a Maria Gianni
        has given a book to Maria Gianni

     b Ha messo il libro sul   tavolo Maria
        has put   the book on the table   Maria

These sentences can be attributed the same status as the possible subject inversion clauses displaying the order VOS discussed in 1.4 above (cfr. (18)B, D, for which I did not adopt any diacritic, as I do here for the sake of simplicity). Given this similarity and the observation that the whole VP has to be considered «given» information in order for the sentences to attain the level of (marginal) acceptability, it seems natural to attribute to them the same analysis as the one attributed to VOS clauses. The sentences in (30) should then be analyzed as involving a topicalized «remnant» VP and a focalized subject in the specifier of the Focus projection. (30) sharply contrasts with (31), where complement reordering has taken place in combination with subject inversion (B&S, (24)b, d):

(31) a *Ha dato   a Maria un libro Gianni
         has given to Maria a   book Gianni

     b *Ha messo sul   tavolo il   libro Maria
         has put   on the table   the book Maria

Why should there be such a sharp degradation? In order to answer this question, the appropriate analysis of the complement reordering phenomenon must be first spelled out.

As noted in B&S, complement reordering appears to be a further case of clause internal focalization. Consider the following question-answer pair, from B&S:

(32)   A   Che cosa   hai   restituito   a   Maria?
               What   have you   given back   to   Maria?

        B   Ho   restituito   a   Maria   le   chiavi[40]
               (I) have   given back   to   Maria   the   keys

        B' #Ho   restituito   le   chiavi   a   Maria
               (I) have   given back   the   keys   to   Maria

where B' is pronounced with normal non-interrupted intonation (cfr. footnote 42). If an overt lexical subject is also present in the question, it shows up as a preverbal subject in the answer:

(33)   A   Che cosa   ha   restituito   a   Maria   Gianni?
               What   has   given back   to   Maria   Gianni?

        B   Gianni   ha   restituito   a   Maria   le   chiavi
               Gianni   has   given back   to   Maria   the   keys

The direct object «le chiavi» constitutes the «new» information. Assume that it is then associated with the specifier of the Focus phrase in both (32)B and (33)B. I take the latter sentence containing a preverbal subject to be a clear indication that focalization is clause internal here. Recall that no special intonation is associated with these clauses. Suppose that sentences like (32)B and (33)B involve clause internal topicalization of the remnant VP overtly containing V and PP[41]; the direct object is focalized in the specifier of the Focus phrase, the preverbal subject is in the appropriate preverbal subject position. Schematically, the derivation in (34) (disregarding details)[42]:

40. The usual feeling of redundancy and slight unnaturalness is associated with (32)B, as in the case of (18)B, D. A more natural answer would not repeat the lexical PP, but would utilize a dative pronoun:

     (i) le ho restituito   le   chiavi
           (I) to-her+gave back   the   keys

     The crucial observation here does not concern this relatively subtle fact, but the sharp contrast between (32)B vs (32)B'.

41. The auxiliary should fill its regular position within the relevant inflectional head which normally hosts it. If checking of the past participle features needs to take place, we could assume that the relevant heads (Asp, at least) should immediately dominate the VP before the Topic-Focus phrases. Alternatively, movement to the checking head could start out from the Topic phrase, as already assumed for the direct object in VOS (cfr. footnotes 21, 31).

42. Note that an alternative answer to (32)A, could be:

(34)   [Gianni$_i$ … ha   …. [TopicP [k ei restituito ej a   Maria]
         Gianni   … has   ………..   given back   to Maria
        [FocusP [jle chiavi] [TopicP [VP ek]]]]….]
                    the keys

Consider now the possibility of a sentence like (35):

(35)   C'è   qualcosa   che [restituito   a   Maria] Gianni ancora non ha:
        There is something   that given back to Maria Gianni hasn't yet:
        le   chiavi
        the keys

For reasons which do not concern us here, this kind of preposing discussed in
Cinque (1990), requires presence of negation in the clause. A sentence like (35)
can be analyzed as involving further movement of the clause internal topic to the
clause external one, present in the periphery[43]. Note that here the preverbal sub-
ject and the auxiliary remain in the same clause internal positions as in (34). The
natural assumption is that the direct object too fills the same position as in (34),
i.e. the clause internal focus position:

(36)   …. [k ei restituito ej a Maria] …. [Gianni$_i$ ….. ancora non ha
        …   given back   to Maria …   Gianni …. hasn't yet   …
        …. [TopicP [k e] [FocusP   [jle   chiavi] [TopicP [VP ek]]]]….]
                                            the keys

In conclusion, we can make the hypothesis that complement reordering is an
instance of clause internal focalization of the object, combined with (usually clause
internal) topicalization of the remnant VP containing V and PP. We are now ready
to provide an interpretation of the reasons accounting for the sharply degraded
status of the sentences in (31) involving complement reordering combined with
subject inversion.

Intuitively, what rules out (31) should be the fact that both complement reor-
dering and subject inversion are instances of clause internal focalization. If we
admit, as in standard X' theory, that only one specifier position is available for X'
projection, it follows that either the object or the subject can be focalized, but not

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(i) Gianni ha   restituito   le   chiavi # a Maria
    Gianni has given back   the keys   # to Maria

with a clear interruption between the direct object and the following PP. (The pause can be
enriched with contrastive stress on the direct object, but contrast is not necessary here). (i) involves
Topicalization/marginalization of the PP. More on that in section 4. Given the organization of the
information structure of the clause, I assume the object to be in the specifier of the Focus phrase also
in this case.

43. As in Rizzi's articulated CP structure, the Topic phrase is found below the relative complementi-
zer which is the highest C level.

both. This is the same line of explanation developed by B&S[44]. Since we have assumed that Focus is a syntactic feature which licenses DPs, if multiple specifiers are admitted (Chomsky (1995, 1998)), the same effect is obtained under the natural assumption that the same syntactic feature (here Focus) cannot license more than one DP argument. Let us see how the computation works to rule out V PP O S. Indeed, in the system developed here this order is not derivable. It cannot be derived with (remnant) VP topicalization of V + PP, combined with movement into the specifier of the Focus phrase of both O and S since, as we just said, we assume that Focus can license at most one argument in its specifier(s). An alternative derivation would be one where O would move to the specifier of the Focus phrase and the subject would remain within the VP in its base position. But we already know that such derivation is not permitted.

An alternative order with respect to (31), where the subject would precede the direct object is also ruled out. As (37) shows, this order is equally impossible (B&S (24e)):

(37) *Ha dato a Maria Gianni un libro
         has given to Maria Gianni a book

A sentence like (37) is not derivable. It does not seem to be possible to topicalize V + PP leaving O VP internal and moving S into the specifier of the Focus phrase, as the linear order would require. Such a topicalization would necessarily pick up O as well[45]. Note that the linear order could be obtained if O is also topicalized into the lower Topic phrase surrounding the Focus phrase. In this case the object acquires the status of a «marginalized» constituent in Antinucci & Cinque's sense. This derivation correlates with an interruption right before the marginalized object and a downgrading intonation on it:

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44. More generally, every clause allows for just one constituent to be focalized (Calabrese (1992)). Thus, not only clause internal focalization can involve one constituent at most, but clause external focalization as well:

(ii) *IL LIBRO; A MARIA, Gianni non ha ancora dato
       THE BOOK, TO MARIA, Gianni hasn't given yet

Interestingly, clause internal and clause external focalization cannot combine either:

(iii) *IL LIBRO, le darà Gianni
        THE BOOK to-her+will give Gianni

where «Gianni» should be construed as new information focus and «il libro» as contrastive focus. This might suggest that at the interpretive level, clause internal and clause external focalization are indeed a unified phenomenon, despite the differences that they manifest in their distribution as well as their informational pragmatics. In the spirit of Chomsky's (1977), one could suggest that, at LF, all instances of focalization are reduced to one single process. I will not attempt to provide a formalization of the this idea here. See Rizzi (1997) for relevant discussion.
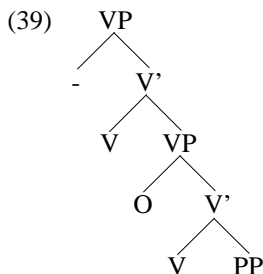
45. O cannot independently move to its (Case) checking position since this position is higher than both the Topic phrase and the Focus phrase, by assumption.

(38) Ha   dato   a Maria Gianni # un libro[46]
      Has   given to Maria Gianni # a   book

3. Remarks on «unaccusatives»

The unaccusative/ergative hypothesis as formulated in the eighties assumes that verbs of this class do not have an external argument but all arguments are VP internal. The surface preverbal subject of unaccusatives is in fact a deep object, and, even more importantly, the postverbal subject of unaccusatives is in fact not only a deep but also a surface object. This is, we may say, the core of the hypothesis. Note, however, that once the assumption is made that all subjects, which can appear as preverbal subjects, originate VP internally, independently of the class to which the verb belongs, the natural question arises as to where the difference between unaccusatives on the one side and transitives and unergatives on the other should be located.

I would like to address the question by considering unaccusatives which also select a prepositional argument beside the direct one. Note, incidentally, that this is the most common situation[47]. If a VP internal structure like the one in (27) is assumed for transitive verbs which select both a direct and an indirect argument, it would appear that the most direct updating of the unaccusative hypothesis should hypothesize a structure along the lines of (39):

(39)   VP
         /   \
        -      V'
             /   \
            V   VP
                /   \
               O   V'
                    /   \
                   V   PP

where no argument is associated with the non-thematic VP internal subject position. Adapting traditional accounts, I would assume that O needs licensing and that this can be done VP internally with unaccusatives (Belletti (1988)). Suppose that licensing is done through Case in the VP specifier filled by O in (40)[48]. Notice now

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46. The peack of the intonation is on S, here. For a closer discussion of marginalization in this connection see section 4.
47. Possibly, all unaccusatives do in fact select a prepositional argument, which can remain silent. See also the discussion in Moro (1997).
48. Maybe such a VP internal, as such inherent (partitive?) Case position, is systematically available for (certain) indefinite objects. This updates Belletti's (1988) analysis.
     According to Longobardi (1998), unmodified bare plural subjects in the existential interpretation are allowed to remain VP internal with both unaccusative and intransitive verbs. We could speculate that they should qualify for VP internal licensing through the VP internal Case, which severely limits the choice of possible DP's.

that, once V moves outside the VP into some functional head, this immediately yields the linear order: V O PP. The structure being unaccusative, we know that O is in fact S, namely the argument which can also appear as a preverbal (agreeing) subject. In 1.3.2 we observed that V S PP structures are fairly acceptable with S licensed in the specifier of the clause internal Focus projection and PP licensed *in situ*, VP internally, for V unergative intransitive. We are now phrasing the unaccusative hypothesis in such a way that the same V S PP linear sequence is attributed a different syntactic representation with all arguments licensed VP internally in the described way. Can we detect different behaviors of the two kinds of postverbal subjects?

As has been frequently pointed out in the literature, V S PP is a perfectly acceptable order with unaccusatives when S is indefinite. Within the terms of the analysis sketched out above, we can claim that there is an indefinite requirement for VP internally licensed subjects. Sentences like (40) are usually considered the most natural occurrences of unaccusative structures:

(40) a E'   arrivato uno studente al   giornale
         has arrived   a   student   at the newspaper

      b E'   entrato   un ladro dalla   finestra
         has come in   a   thief from the window

In 1.3.2 we attributed to the sentences in (15) a, c, e, a slightly marginal status, indicated as (?). The proposed analysis, however, did not make one expect any marginality. Let us now comment on this. Suppose that the slight marginality of sentences like (15)a,c repeated here:

(15) a (?) Ha telefonato Maria   al   giornale
             has phoned   Maria   to the newspaper

      c (?) Ha parlato uno studente col   direttore
             has spoken a   student   to the director

is due to the existence of a certain tendency whereby there is a preference in having the focussed constituent in the clause final position[49]. We can make the hypothesis that the marginality of (15) is due to the fact that this tendency is not respected. Since the structure does not violate any deep constraint it is ruled in but acquires a marginality flavor. Note now that no marginality whatsoever is associated with the sentences in (40).

_____

As a general approach, I assume that verbal agreement is obtained through the relation with the associate expletive in the preverbal subject position. See footnote 18 in this connection.

49. Note that the last constituent is often also the most embedded one, hence the one receiving Nuclear stress. This makes it the most prominent one. There seems to be a tendency/preference to have matching between Focus and prominence. See in this connection Cinque (1993), and the line of research in Zubizarreta (1998).

If the VP internal position for the unaccusative postverbal subject is reserved to indefinite noun phrases, a definite subject should fill a different position. Such position can be identified with the one filled by postverbal subjects of non-unaccusative verbs which we have identified with the specifier of the clause internal Focus phrase. If this assumption is correct, we expect that sentences containing a definite subject and an unaccusative verb should be attributed essentially the same level of marginality as the marginal sentences of (15). I think that this photographs the situation in a fairly accurate way[50].

(41) a ?E arrivato lo studente al giornale
            has arrived the student at the newspaper

   b ?E' entrato Mario dalla finestra
      has come in Mario from the window

No marginality is detectable anymore if no prepositional complement follows the postverbal subject, as no violation of the tendency to locate the focussed constituent in the last position is produced:

(42) a E' arrivato lo studente
         has arrived the student

   b E' entrato Mario
      has come in Mario

It is well known that *ne* cliticization gives a perfect output when it takes place from a postverbal unaccusative subject[51], but a marginal output when it takes place from an unergative one. (43) illustrates the contrast:

(43) a (?) Ha telefonato uno studente al giornale
              has phoned a student to the newspaper

   b ??Ne ha telefonato uno al giornale
         of-them +has telephoned one at the newspaper

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50. These data illustrate the so called «Definitness Effect» (DE) which has often been reported to give rise to a relatively subtle and often difficult violation where different factors come into play related to the interpretation, the informational organization of the clause, the intonation. This is at the source of a complex gradation in the grammaticality judgements associated to the relevant sentences. Note that the marginality of (42) is a bit stronger than that of (15). This could be related to the fact that the first/unmarked location for the postverbal subject of unaccusatives is the VP internal one. Since this position is only compatible with indefinite subjects, this requires that sentences like (42) be reanalyzed as involving not a VP internal, but a VP external, focussed subject.
51. Comparable to the status of the same cliticization process out of a direct object of a transitive verb (Burzio (1986), Belletti & Rizzi (1981)). At least for indefinite direct objects we can assume the same structural analysis as the one assumed for the postverbal subject of unaccusatives. See footnote 48.

  c E' arrivato uno studente al   giornale
   has arrived a   student at the newspaper

  d Ne   è   arrivato uno al   giornale
   of-them +has arrived one at the newspaper

  Updating Belletti (1988), I interpret the contrast between (44)b and d as due to the fact that (*ne*) extraction is possible from the VP internal (subject) position but does not work equally well from the VP external Focus position[52].

  The natural question to ask now is what is the status of clauses containing a reordering of the postverbal subject and the prepositional object of an unaccusative verb. We note first of all that such a reordering is possible:

(44) a E' arrivato al   giornale   uno studente
   has arrived at the newspaper a   student

  b E' entrato dalla   finestra un ladro
   has come in from the window a thief

  These sentences can be attributed the same status as the double complement sentences involving reordering. The null assumption is that they are attributed the same analysis with a topicalized (remnant) VP and a focalized subject[53]. Note that if this analysis is on the right track we expect *ne* cliticization to have the same status in both cases. This status should be a marginal one, since we saw that extraction from a noun phrase in the specifier of the Focus phrase gives rise to marginality. This is indeed what we find. (45)a, b containing an unaccusative verb and (45)c containing a double complement verb are all rather marginal. Their status compares with that of (43)b:

(45) a ??Ne   è   arrivato al   giornale   uno
   of-them +has arrived at the newspaper one

  b ??Ne   è entrato dalla   finestra uno
   of-them +has come in from the window one

  c ??Ne   ho   dato a Gianni uno
   (I) of-them +have given to Gianni one

52. It gives rise to a CED type effect (see the discussion in B&S). I assume that the specifier of the Focus phrase is an impossible extraction site since it is a derived not L-marked position. On the other hand, similarly to the preverbal subject position, it can be considered an A position (differently from the clause external Focus phrase). This is suggested both by the fact that DPs are licensed there according to the proposed analysis and by the empirical phenomenon of verbal agreement, which holds with a focalized inverted subject (through the relation with the associate expletive in the preverbal subject position; see footnotes 18, 48).

53. This is because we are systematically interpreting reordering as focalization in the specifier of the Focus phrase. This assumption excludes the possibility of leaving the indefinite subject in the VP internal position in this case.

4. Some remarks on «in situ» focalization and «marginalization»

4.1. «In situ» focalization

If (45)c above has a very marginal status, the marginality totally disappears if the «reordered» direct object is preceded by the adverb «solo»:

(46)   Ne   ho   dato   a   Gianni   solo   uno[54]
         (I) of-them   +have   given   to   Gianni   only   one

It is currently assumed that the adverb «solo» has a focalizing function. If this is the case it is natural to assume that if the adverb is present in some specifier position of the focalized phrase, there is no need for this phrase to move to a designated focus position in order to be focalized. We can then analyze focalization through «solo» as a case of *in situ* focalization not involving movement of the relevant phrase into the specifier of the Focus phrase[55]. If this is correct, sentences like (46) can be attributed a very different representation than those in (45), involving complement reordering. In particular, no (remnant) VP topicalization of V + PP and no focalization of the direct object in the specifier of the Focus phrase are involved here. (46) could be analyzed as involving a «scrambling» type of operation affecting the PP[56], leaving the object *in situ*.

An analysis along these lines, simultaneously accounts for the focalized status of the direct object and for the possibility of *ne* cliticization, with the latter characteristically taking place from a VP internal position.

54.   The adverb can also follow the quantifier:

(i)   ne ho dato   a   Gianni   uno   solo
       (I) of-them+have given   to   Gianni   one   only

to be probably analyzed as involving head movement of the quantifier into a higher head (of the same extended projection) past the adverb filling the Spec position of the QP projection. This movement triggers agreement on the adverb as shown by examples like the following:

(i)   Ne ho data   a   Gianni   sol*o*   un*a*
       (I) of-them+have given   to   Gianni   only   one(FS)

(ii)   Ne ho data   a   Gianni   un*a*   sol*a*
        (I) of-them+have given   to   Gianni   one(FS)   only(FS)

55.   «Solo» should thus share with the focus head the same licensing feature. The phrase whose specifier is filled by «solo» constitutes an appropriate checking domain (possibly through some version of «dynamic» agreement in the sense of Rizzi (1990)). This is what allows for the *in situ* process of focalization.

56.   The term «scrambling» is used here in purely descriptive terms. Possibly the process involves movement of the PP to the specifier of one of the clause internal Topic phrases. One should assume that this operation does not violate the constraint on the preservation of the hierarchy of arguments, nor RM.

4.2. On the process of «marginalization»

It turns out that a single clause cannot at the same time involve a focalized phrase in the specifier of the Focus projection and a phrase focalized *in situ* with «solo». If pronounced with regular non interrupted intonation a sentence like (47) is as impossible as VSO generally is:

(47) *Ha comprato Gianni solo un libro
         has bought   Gianni only a   book

We mentioned (cfr. footnote 44) that each clause does not contain more than one focalized constituent. Thus, a clause internal and a clause external focus cannot be both realized in the same clause. If this is so, the impossibility of (47) constitutes another manifestation of the same phenomenology.

Notice now that if a different intonation is associated with a clause displaying the same word order as (47), the sentence becomes acceptable. The relevant intonation requires an interruption and it is such that the raising peak is on the postverbal subject. The following direct object receives a falling, downgrading, intonation. This is the typical intonation associated with «marginalized» constituents in Antinucci & Cinque's terminology. It is conventionally illustrated by the symbol «#» in (48):

(48) a Ha comprato Gianni # solo un libro
          has bought   Gianni # only a   book

or, without «solo»:

       b Ha comprato Gianni # un libro
          has bought   Gianni # a   book

The natural assumption in the context of our general analysis is that the postverbal subject of (48) is the focalized constituent filling the specifier of the focus phrase[57]. The following question then arises: what is the status of the direct object in (48)? As for (48)a, clearly, «solo» cannot function as a focalizer here as is both shown by the contrast with (47) and, indirectly, by the marked downgrading intonation associated with the phrase introduced by it. This leads us to draw a first conclusion: «solo» can be an *in situ* focalizer, but it is not necessarily one. Suppose then that the direct object of (48)a,b, which happens to be introduced by «solo» in the first case, is in fact a structurally «marginalized» phrase, as is also suggested by the intonation. The following new question now arises: which is the structural position of the «marginalized» object of (48)?

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57. (48) also manifests the matching between focus and intonational prominence, which, we noticed, is an operative tendency.

In Antinucci & Cinque's original analysis, the proposal had been put forth that «marginalized» phrases are somehow outside the clause. The authors expressed this intuition by assuming that «marginalized» phrases worked like right dislocated phrases. The natural implementation of the idea was that «marginalized» phrases are right adjoined at the level of the clause. Although the basic intuition of this account appears to be correct, the letter is probably not. The reason is that «marginalized» phrases do not systematically display «adjunct type» behavior. The clearest indication to this effect comes from the observation that the «marginalized» phrase of (48) continues to be a possible extraction site, while, generally, adjunct phrases are not. Consider (49) in this respect, which shows that *ne* extraction is still possible from the «marginalized» direct object:

(49) Ne   ha   comprato Gianni # (solo) uno
       of-them +has   bought   Gianni # only   one

We proposed above that the clause internal Focus phrase can be assumed to be surrounded by Topic phrases giving rise to a configuration parallel to the one present in the left periphery according to Rizzi's analysis (cfr. (34), (36)). If this is the case, a natural proposal could consist in assuming that «marginalized» constituents move from the VP internal position to the specifer position of a Topic phrase, located below the Focus phrase as (50) sketchily illustrates:

(50) [.......ne_i .... [TopicP [[FocusP [Gianni] [TopicP [$_j$ (solo) uno
      ….of-them   ……   Gianni   only   one
      e_i] [VP e_j]]]]....]
      …..

Here the direct object is licensed in the specifier of the (low) Topic phrase, whence its «marginalized» status. I tentatively assume this proposal as a possible analysis of the process of «marginalization»[58].

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58. Note that, differently from what was observed in connection with (43)b, d and (45), if the analysis in (50) is on the right track it implies that no CED type effect is to be expected from the (low) Topic phrase. An asymmetry then appears to result between the (clause internal) Focus phrase and the (low) Topic phrase. I speculate that, possibly, the low Topic position can count as «non distinct» from the standard (VP internal) object position from which *ne* extraction is regularly allowed. Indeed, as indefinites can be licensed VP internally (cfr. footnote 48), the indefinite object of (49) could in fact just remain VP internal in this case. But, of course, also definites can be «marginalized»; next to (48), (49), (i) is possible as well:

(i) Ha   comprato Gianni # questo/il libro
     Has bought   Gianni # this/the book

In this case the object would necessarily fill the low Topic position of (50) where it is licensed.
Note, however, that extraction is not uniformly possible out of a marginalized constituent. It gives rise to a degraded output when it takes place out of a marginalized complement clause. See the discussion in Belletti (1988, p. 10-12).

5. Open questions

Among the various open questions which remain and which I will not address here, there is a crucial one which I would like to address.

Consider wh questions and the proposal that, given an articulated conception of the CP left periphery, the landing site for the wh phrase should be identified with the specifier of the peripheral Focus projection (Rizzi (1997)). The proposal is primarily motivated by the observation that clause external (hence contrastive) focalization cannot cooccur with wh question formation:

(51) a *Che cosa A   GIANNI hai   detto?
         What   TO GIANNI have you said?

      b *A   GIANNI che cosa hai   detto?
         TO GIANNI what   have you   said?

It is well known that wh questions in Italian require the subject to be postverbal. This is shown by clear minimal pairs as the one in (52):

(52) a Che cosa ha   detto Gianni?
         What   has   said Gianni?

      b *Che cosa Gianni ha   detto?
         What   Gianni has   said?

It is often assumed that the postverbal subject of (52)a occupies the «standard» position of inverted subjects (of a null subject language like Italian). Given the analysis developed here for postverbal subjects, this current assumption cannot be maintained. Since the postverbal subject position is the clause internal Focus projection, and since we have detected the impossibility of multiple foci in one single clause, the case of wh questions would remain as a most surprising single exception to this general property. Even more surprisingly, the clause internal focalization would sharply contrast with the clause external one in this respect. We conclude that the postverbal subject does not fill the Focus projection in interrogative wh clauses.

Where is the postverbal subject located then? The proposal, coherent with the overall analysis developed here, is that the postverbal subject of wh interrogatives is «marginalized» and fills one of the clause internal Topic positions[59]. Converging evidence to this effect is also provided by the observation that the most natural intonation associated with wh interrogatives like (52)a has a perceptible interruption right before the postverbal subject, which is associated with the typical intonational pattern of «marginalized»/topicalized phrases.

Interesting independent evidence that the postverbal subject of wh interrogatives does not fill the same position as the inverted subject of declarative clauses,

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59. I leave open here the exact determination of which one of the two assumed (clause internal) Topic positions.

but rather corresponds to an «marginalized» (topicalized/dislocated) subject, is provided by the northern Italian dialects described in Brandi & Cordin (1981)[60]. Clauses containing subject inversion display a particular subject clitic in Fiorentino and no subject clitic in Trentino (Brandi & Cordin (15)a, b):

(53) a Gl' è   venuto le su ' sorelle (F)
          it+ has come   his   sisters

      b E' vegnù le so ' sorele (T)
          has come   his   sisters

However, in wh interrogatives the subject clitic which appears is a different one in Fiorentino and there is a subject clitic in Trentino. In both cases, it is the agreeing subject clitic which shows up, the same appearing in (right) dislocated clauses. The examples in (54), (55) illustrate the point (Brandi & Cordin (74), (75)):

(54) a Quando l' è   venuta la Maria? (F)
          when   she +has come   the Maria?

      b Icché l 'ha portato la Maria?
          What she +has brought the Maria?

      c *Icché gl 'ha portato la Maria?
          What it +has brought the Maria?

(55) a Quando è   la   vegnuda la Maria? (T)
          When   has -she come   the Maria?

      b Cosa ha la   portà   la Maria?
          What has -she brought   the Maria?

      c *Cosa ha portà   la Maria?
          What has brought the Maria?

I take these data to overtly show the topicalized status of the postverbal subject of wh interrogatives, which the proposed analysis necessarily implies.

As a final empirical remark, let us consider the contrast between (56) and (57):

(56) *?Attualmente, in un suo_i appartamento vive $Gianni_i$
        At present,   in one his   apartment   lives Gianni

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60. Note that the interpretation informally suggested by Brandi & Cordin of the paradigms in (54), (55) is equivalent to the one adopted here: incompatibility between the necessarily focalized/new information status of the wh constituent, and a focalized postverbal subject. It was formulated in informal terms as the conception of clause structure was much too simple at the time and was not built upon a functional architecture.

(57)   Attualmente, in quale   suo$_i$ appartamento vive Gianni$_i$?
       At present,   in   which his   apartment   lives Gianni?

This contrast shows that the postverbal subject has not the same syntactic status in declarative and in wh interrogative clauses[61]. In the declarative (56) a sharp weak crossover effect is detectable. No such effect is perceived in the wh interrogative (57). Since Focus normally induces weak crossover, the presence of the effect in (56) can finally be taken as independent further evidence of the close relation between Focus and subject inversion. A relation which the analysis presented here makes fully explicit through the identification of the (specifier of the) clause internal Focus projection with the position filled by the postverbal subject of declarative clauses itself. Lack of the effect in (57) in turn confirms the non focalized status of the subject in wh interrogatives. Again a necessary conclusion for the analysis.

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61. See Guasti (1996) for possibly converging evidence.

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