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FOCALIZATION MATTERS.

On focus typology, feature
checking, and the position(s) of
focus

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*A papà,
il mio esempio di forza.*

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Abstract

Questa tesi analizza una costruzione sintattica particolarmente usata in ogni lingua: la focalizzazione. Questa si è definibile come l'espressione della parte più importante e informativa della frase, in quanto può contenere l'informazione nuova (nel caso del *focus informativo*), ma anche contrastare e correggere un'informazione precedentemente espressa (*focus contrastivo*).

Gli studi sulla focalizzazione sono numerosi e si concentrano su diversi aspetti. Il focus, infatti, può essere realizzato attraverso vari componenti della grammatica: prosodia, morfologia, semantica, pragmatica e sintassi possono tutte venir influenzate, in maniera diversa a seconda della lingua presa in considerazione.

Questo studio riguarda gli aspetti della focalizzazione in italiano, dove sia la prosodia che la sintassi sono coinvolte, in quanto una diversa intonazione, come lo spostamento del costituente focalizzato, possono segnalare tale fenomeno. Ciononostante, la relazione tra prosodia e sintassi è ancora una questione molto dibattuta, e parte della sua importanza risiede anche nella possibilità di comprendere maggiormente come funzionino le interfacce tra la forma logica (FL) e la forma fonologica (FF) (Chomsky, 1995).

Il focus italiano, inoltre, è un argomento molto studiato per le sue proprietà di distribuzione: è risaputo, infatti, che un costituente focalizzato può trovarsi in diverse posizioni nella frase: all'inizio, alla fine, o all'interno della frase. Per questo motivo, il problema della sua posizione nella struttura sintattica è una questione ancora molto dibattuta, specialmente per il fatto che tale distribuzione sembra essere opzionale.

In questa tesi vengono analizzate tre categorie di problemi, individuate confrontando gli studi esistenti riguardanti il focus: in primo luogo, le differenze tra focus informativo e focus contrastivo. Poiché queste influenzano ogni aspetto della grammatica coinvolgendo pragmatica, prosodia, e sintassi, viene qui confutato un approccio unificante dei due (Brunetti, 2004).

La questione risulta essere ancora più ampia, in quanto, secondo studi più recenti, sembra che distinguere tra due soli tipi di focalizzazione sia limitante: possiamo parlare di una tipologia di focus non solo dal punto di vista pragmatico o semantico (Krifka, 2008), ma anche da quello prosodico (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a, 2015b, Bocci 2013) e sintattico (Bianchi 2013, Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a, 2015b). Di

conseguenza la discussione procederà con la presentazione di focus *correttivo*, focus *mirativo*, e focus *esaustivo*, prendendo in considerazione prevalentemente dati dell'italiano, dell'ungherese, così come di alcuni dialetti italiani (siciliano e sardo). Ogni analisi che non tenga conto delle differenze esistenti tra questi focus, risulterà impoverita, poiché non potrà spiegare per quale motivo solo alcuni di essi possano essere spostati all'inizio della frase (ovvero il focus correttivo, mirativo ed esaustivo), mentre per altri tale movimento non sembra essere possibile (nel caso di focus informativo e contrastivo).

In secondo luogo, analizziamo le possibili cause del movimento. Vengono quindi analizzate e spiegate varie teorie precedenti, con particolare riferimento a Rizzi (1997) per quanto riguarda un'analisi di tipo sintattico, e a Szendrői (2001, 2003) e Samek-Lodovici (2006, 2015), per l'importanza data alla prosodia, ritenuta in tali casi ciò che determina, o inibisce, lo spostamento dei costituenti focalizzati. Entrambe le teorie risultano, a mio parere, insufficienti poiché, oltre ai numerosi problemi che entrambe devono affrontare, nessuna delle due riesce a spiegare del tutto la varietà dei fenomeni osservati.

Viene quindi preferito un altro tipo di analisi, secondo cui la posizione del focus è determinata dalle sue interpretazioni. Vedremo per esempio che, secondo alcune teorie (Frey 2010, Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a, 2015b), certi tipi di focus possono venir considerati *conventional implicatures* (seguendo Potts, 2007).

Per quanto riguarda la posizione del focus nella struttura sintattica, verranno comparate analisi precedenti, mettendo in luce sia la loro capacità produttiva che gli aspetti più problematici. Si inizia dall'analisi dell'ipotesi del focus a sinistra in Rizzi (1997) e Brunetti (2004), per passare poi a quella del focus in situ di Samek-Lodovici (2005, 2006, 2015), privo di una proiezione dedicata. Infine si considera l'ipotesi di una doppia proiezione sviluppata da Beninca' & Poletto (2004) e da Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004), dove è anche valutata la possibilità di una seconda periferia sinistra all'interno della frase, speculare al CP.

L'ultima ipotesi che viene analizzata è quella di Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b), secondo cui il focus può sia rimanere in basso nella struttura, che muoversi nella periferia sinistra. Il secondo caso è però ristretto solo a quei tipi di focus considerati *conventional implicatures*, che devono quindi verificare dei tratti e per questo hanno la possibilità di spostarsi in posizione iniziale di frase. Le *conventional implicatures* ricevono una loro proiezione funzionale nella periferia sinistra, la cui testa

risulta rimanere vuota. In realtà, dati dell'Hausa (Hartmann & Zimmermann, 2007), una lingua afroasiatica, sembrano dimostrare che in alcune lingue ci possono essere degli elementi (in questo caso la particella *nee/cee*) che realizzano la testa di questa proiezione.

L'opzionalità del movimento è spiegata con la cancellazione di una delle due copie del costituente focalizzato: entrambe sono presenti nella struttura, ma solo una delle due viene pronunciata (Alboiu, 2004).

Questa teoria viene quindi confrontata con le ipotesi precedenti, considerando gli aspetti problematici individuati da Samek-Lodovici (2015), vale a dire i rapporti di c-comando con espressioni negative e con i gap parassitici, e la possibilità di co-occorrenza di costituenti interrogativi e focalizzati.

INTRODUCTION

In several languages, word order can be affected by some phenomena, which can change the unmarked order of constituents. One of these phenomena is focus, namely the most salient and informative part of a sentence. In the present dissertation I will deal with some of the major problems affecting its analysis, aiming at obtaining a clearer picture of the existing studies and proposing new solutions.

I chose focus as the topic of my dissertation because of its extremely intermingled properties: the fact that every module of grammar is affected by such a phenomenon is fascinating (but sometimes, discouraging). Moreover, focus offers the possibility of investigating how language and grammar works in our minds, because of its connections with interfaces.

Focus is a complex phenomenon, which has been studied for many years but it still represents a debated question in several aspects. Its complexity is due to the fact that it affects every module of grammar: prosody, morphology, semantics, syntax and pragmatics are all involved in focalization.

Several hypotheses have been proposed in the literature on focus, especially as far as Italian is concerned: Italian, in fact, is one of the languages in which focalization seems to be connected to more than one projection within the syntactic structure, given that it can appear in a fronted position, as well as in a lower one. This property raised an important problem, namely the apparent optionality of movement.

In order to have a better grasp of the several peculiarities of this topic, other issues must be considered: first of all, the relation between prosody and syntax, which is crucial considering its connections with the interfaces discussed in the T-model (Chomsky, 1995). Focus, in fact, can give us crucial insights regarding the architecture of grammar. I have analyzed data mainly taken from Italian, but since cross-linguistic evidence is important, other languages are taken into account, as well as Italian varieties and dialects.

Chapter 1 constitutes a general introduction, in which some crucial concepts regarding Information Structure are explained, as well as a definition of focus and its pragmatic and semantic uses. The second part of the chapter is devoted to previous analyses of Italian focalization, in which I briefly mention the syntactic aspects of the hypotheses developed between Rizzi (1997) and Samek-Lodovici (2015). This first analysis allowed me to individuate some general problems, which are introduced here.

Chapter 2 analyzes in details the first of these problems, namely the difference between information focus and contrastive focus in pragmatics, prosody and syntax. Considering the prosodic evidence of some varieties of Central Italian, and syntactic asymmetries of fronted foci in Sicilian and Sardinian, I claim that a unified approach (Brunetti, 2004) is not correct.

Chapter 3 deals with focus typology, presenting the different kinds of focus detected among languages, with a particular reference to the differences between contrastive, corrective, mirative (in Italian) and exhaustive foci (in Hungarian). The claim here is that focus fronting is allowed only for some of these interpretations, and, since their prosodic realizations are systematically different, that these cannot simply be considered distinct pragmatic imports.

Chapter 4 explores the triggers of focus movement, analyzing previous accounts: starting from feature driven hypotheses, and in particular the Criterial model (Rizzi, 1997), and moving on to the prosody based ones (Reinhart 1995, 2006, Szendrői 2001, 2003, Samek-Lodovici 2015), I explain their problematic aspects. Alternative analyses are finally taken into account, considering the properties of exhaustivity (Horvath 2000, 2007, 2010) and contrast (Mólnar 2002, Vallduví & Vilkuna 1998, Zimmermann 2007, Hartmann 2008). Finally, the notion of conventional implicatures (Potts, 2007), and its connection with focus interpretation (Frey 2010, Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a, 2015b) are presented.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to one of the major issues in the analysis of focus: its position in the syntactic structure. Previous analyses are here explained in details: focus in a left peripheral position (Rizzi 1997, Brunetti 2004), focus in situ (Samek-Lodovici 2005, 2006, 2015), and focus occupying a double projection (Beninca' & Poletto 2004, Belletti 1999, 2001, 2004, Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a, 2015b). I then applied the hypothesis by Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a) to sentences with negative words, parasitic gaps and wh- elements co-occurring with focus, in order to understand whether these could be accounted for. A brief mention of one of the properties of focalization of Hausa, a Chadic language, is considered.

The dissertation closes with a brief discussion of the syntactic status of postfocal constituents, and their prosodic properties.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Languages have two types of word order: the unmarked order and the marked one. The former is the one that can be found in an “out of the blue context”, where context and a particular intonation are not necessary in order to consider felicitous that sentence. In Italian the unmarked order is SVO, but constituents can change their places, and generate therefore different orders. In such a case, the sentence is marked: the order of the constituents deviates from the canonical one. A sentence can be marked in several different ways: we can talk about markedness from a pragmatic, a syntactic or a phonological point of view, where only in the first two cases word order is affected. In fact, when a sentence is phonologically marked, it means that it is connected to a special prosody and a different intonation is assigned to some of its constituents. A sentence is pragmatically marked when it contains information referring to the linguistic/extralinguistic context, or when a context is necessary to actually understand and interpret the sentence. Finally, if a sentence is syntactically marked, constituents are moved in order to obtain a particular meaning adding some ‘flavour’ to the sentence, according to what the speaker is trying to communicate to the hearer.

As far as syntax is concerned, often it is not simply a matter of moving constituents to other positions in the sentence, but something else can be involved: context and prosody. Frequently their role is crucial, in that they can justify orders which could not be possible in a natural sentence; thanks to intonation and context we are able to distinguish constituents and disambiguate sentences¹. Italian generally allows for a linear order of the SVO type, but when context and prosody allow it, it is also possible to find an OSV order, as seen in (1b), or an SOV order, as in (1c).

¹ We have to remember that a sentence can be marked by one of these elements only: prosody or context on their own can be enough. For example, Italian yes-no questions are signaled only with a different intonation.

(1) a. Gianni mangia una mela.

Gianni eats an apple

b. UNA MELA, mangia Gianni (non un panino)².

An apple, eats Gianni (not a sandwich)

c. Gianni la mela la mangia.

Gianni the apple it eats

Sentence (1b) is perfectly grammatical, but in order to be considered fine it needs a connection to context and to prosody. In this case, the movement of the constituent is signaled by a particular intonation. Through the use of several mechanisms such as emphatic stress and movement of constituents, we obtain different interpretations for the same sentence, even if we do not change the functional relationships between verbs and arguments.

We will see that the phenomenon represented in (1b) is one of the most productive ways of producing a marked sentence. This phenomenon is called focalization, and in the next chapters we will explore its properties.

1.1 The concept of given, new information and common ground

In order to fully understand what focus is, a connection to Information Structure (IS) and some other concepts is needed. Since Chafe (1976), IS has been defined as a phenomenon of information packaging which takes into account the immediate communicative needs of interlocutors. This means that IS is dedicated to temporary states of the addressee's mind and not to her/his long-term knowledge³. Some of the packaging phenomena described by Chafe are givenness and contrastiveness, which are deeply connected to the notion of *Common Ground* (CG).

CG is a set of propositions accepted by all the participants of the conversational community⁴. Simply, the CG is the mutual knowledge shared by hearer and speaker, which is continuously modified by accommodation of presupposition: facts are endlessly added to the CG, either in an explicit or an implicit way. Keeping its

² I will use capital letters to indicate focus.

³ As Krifka (2008) noted, it is not so simple: the message itself can be affected; therefore, it cannot be purely a phenomenon of information packaging, as was instead claimed by Chafe (1976).

⁴ See Stalnaker (1978).

changeable nature in mind, a distinction must be made between presupposition and proffered content. The former can be defined as the propositions which are taken to be true and constitute part of the background of the conversation, required for the input of the CG. But we could also say that the propositions are the set of possible worlds which the speaker recognizes as relevant to the conversation and compatible with the shared information, also defined as *Context Set* (CS). Proffered content constitutes the (proposed) change of the output of CG. When a speaker asserts a sentence, she/he is also proposing to the hearers to add such proposition to the CG, which is the result if nobody rejects such a statement. When information is added to the CG, context becomes more and more reduced because all the worlds in which that proposition is not true are discarded. In the course of the conversation, CG gets bigger and it determines the CS, namely the set of worlds where all presupposed propositions are true.

In a conversation, context changes constantly because of the role of assertion, which is an update of the CG and whose content can alter the context itself. CG, though, is not only a set of propositions mutually accepted, but it is also made of discourse referents, namely the set of entities that have been introduced into the CG.

As we have already seen, context may be the key in the correct interpretation of a sentence, and moreover it can determine its grammaticality status. Context can be either defined in linguistic terms, namely as what has been previously pronounced, or in non-linguistic ones: beliefs and intentions of the speakers, and again the time and setting in which the assertion takes place. It is therefore connected to the knowledge shared by the interlocutors, by what they share in perception. Context tells us what “can be taken for granted in making the next speech act” (Karttunen, 1974:190).

When an expression is present in the immediate CG content, it is called *given*: “that knowledge which the speaker assumes to be in the consciousness of the addressee at the time of the utterance” (Chafe, 1976:30). We may also adopt (2) as a definition of givenness:

- (2) A feature X of an expression α is a Givenness feature iff X indicates whether the denotation of α is present in the CG or not, and/or indicates the degree to which it is present in the immediate CG. (Krifka, 2008:262)

When a proposition is given, it is usually conveyed in a weaker and attenuated manner than new information, which can be obtained with anaphoric expressions, namely using

elements that have a givenness feature as part of their lexical specification (see personal pronouns, clitics, demonstratives, personal inflection, definite articles, and, in some cases, even indefinites). Prosody and syntax can be useful as well: deaccentuation and deletion for the former, but also a different word order, may signal the given nature of the constituent. The concept of given is, then, established by the speaker itself, as well as the possibility of recovering a piece of information from a previous discourse.

On the other hand, new information is what, according to the speaker, is not present in the mind of the hearer. It is generally expressed with focus, and again several modules of grammar can be used in order to signal that we are dealing with unfamiliar information. Once again the use of prosody is relevant: new information is connected with a more prominent stress, and is not reduced in any way.

1.2 A definition of ‘Focus’

Focus is strictly connected to the IS of a sentence (Zimmermann & Onea 2011, Cruschina 2012). In particular, it has to do with the CG management in the sense of Krifka (2008), namely with the ways in which information is integrated in the CG. When focus is present, a sentence is partitioned into a background part containing given information, and a part containing new information. In such a view a general definition of focus is “the information in the sentence that is assumed by the speaker not to be shared by him and the hearer” (Jackendoff, 1972:16). Focus is the non proffered part of the sentence, and it is therefore the opposite of presupposition.

The one by Jackendoff is not the only definition of focus: starting from Rooth (1985, 1992), semanticists have been connecting it to the property of evoking a set of alternatives relevant for the interpretation of a given linguistic expression⁵. Even though this definition can explain the role of focus, it does not provide other information regarding how it is signaled, and, moreover, the several interpretations and subtypes we can find within this category. A good definition of focus, in fact, must include all the different modules of grammar, since we are dealing with a complex phenomenon which involves not only pragmatics and phonology, but also syntax.

⁵ Even though we have to remember an important difference between Rooth (1985, 1992) and Krifka (2008): according to the definition by Rooth, focus is always contrastive, but, as we will see, this is not true. Krifka (2008) assumes instead that focalization has a contrastive role only when a contrast with an alternative that is part of the CG is involved.

As far as pragmatics is concerned, we can state that one of the most frequent functions of focus is introducing new information in the discourse, which is what happens especially with *wh*- questions. In such a case the definition by Rooth can easily explain this usage: a *wh*- question usually introduces and identifies a set of alternatives in the discourse, and the answer chooses one of these as the correct one. In this case, the constituent which is connected to the *wh*- operator is focused, as opposed to the rest of the answer, which is part of the background.

(3) a. Chi ha incontrato Maria?

who has met Maria

b. Maria ha incontrato la sua amica Anna.

Maria has met the her friend Anna

In (3b), the known information is the first part of the sentence “Maria ha incontrato”, which actually corresponds to what was previously said in the question, whereas “la sua amica Anna” is the focused constituent that gives us the information we were looking for.

Especially as far as contrastive focus is involved, other modules of grammar participate, and several devices are used to mark its constituents, which tend to be separated from the rest of the sentence. Prosody is one of them: a focused item can be connected with a different stress. Focus is usually associated with sentence main stress, and therefore it is strictly linked to the tonal contour of that sentence, so much so that the relation between focus and prosodic prominence is often believed to be universal following some cross-linguistic evidence. As stated by Selkirk (1984), the phonological reflex of focus is a pitch accent.

Morphology can be involved, too. Inflectional morphemes and particles are often used to mark focused constituents: focus particles, which are purely functional elements associated with focus with any lexical content, can be found in many languages (see Gungbe, Somali, but also Quechua and Mongolian, among others⁶). Inflectional morphology is used as well, affecting either the focused constituent or the verb (but also both at the same time). This is what happens in Chinese (Drubig, 2001).

Last but not least, syntax has its part in focus marking: a different word order can be expected - even though it is not mandatory. This is what happens with the so-

⁶ See Drubig (2001) for a general overview of the languages taken into account here.

called focus configurational languages (such as Kashmiri, Hungarian, Turkish and Armenian). Through the displacement of constituents, focus may appear in various positions, according to the language taken into account. It may appear in initial position, as well as in final position, and in preverbal or postverbal ones (Drubig, 2001).

As far as Italian is concerned, we will see that both prosody and syntax are involved in order to signal a focused constituent, especially with contrastive focalization. Often there is a special emphatic tone dedicated to the salient part of the sentence, and it is always connected to sentence main stress. Word order can be affected as well: focused constituents may appear in several parts of the clause: from its in situ position to the left periphery.

1.3 Different kinds of focus

Keeping in mind that focus is the assertive and non-presupposed part of a sentence, we know that it is not of a unique type, but it can be divided into subtypes according to its role and interpretations, as well as the way it is marked. What is common to all types of foci is that focus corresponds to the most informative part of a sentence, and for this reason it has a certain prosodic prominence. In such a view, we do not encounter the phonological, syntactic and pragmatic differences which let us distinguish among focus types.

One of the basic distinctions is the one between information focus (or presentational) and contrastive focus which has been noted by É. Kiss (1998), among others. She thought that given the huge difference between these two types of the same phenomenon, we can actually think that there are two distinct foci, with their own rules, stress, properties and word order, so much so that they are even connected to two different syntactic structures. As we will see in the next chapter, many authors do not agree with É. Kiss, and actually prefer a unified approach (Brunetti 2004).

A much deeper analysis will follow, but the basic distinction is that information focus is used in answers to wh- questions and is said to be always in a low position of the clause, as in (4b). On the other hand, contrastive focus is used when an assertion previously uttered needs a correction (it denotes a constituent that identifies a subset within a set of contextually given alternatives), it is connected to a special stress and, unlike information focus, it can appear anywhere in the clause (following some general rules),

as in (5b) and (5c).

(4) a. Con chi gioca Alice?

with who plays Alice

b. Alice gioca [con Sara]_{IF}.

Alice plays with Sara

(5) a. Hai parlato con Elena questa mattina?

Have (you) talked to Elena this morning

b. No, ho parlato [con GIULIA]_{CF}.

No, (I) talked with Giulia

c. No, [con GIULIA]_{CF} ho parlato.

No, with Giulia I talked

According to some scholars (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a), contrastive focus can be further divided into two subtypes, depending on whether it has merely contrastive import or corrective import. The former is said to express a contrast between a focused element and a parallel one, but this contrast is utterance-internal, as in (6b). The latter is instead a contrast across utterances, as in the case of (5b) and (5c).

(6) a. Io vi saluto, devo rientrare a casa.

I you greet, must to-go back home

‘I’m off, I have to go back home’

b. Ti conviene prendere [il taxi]_{CF}, non [la metro]...

(you) should take the taxi, not the underground

(Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a:4, ex 4a,b)

A third type of focus is identified in Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b): mirative focus, as in (7).

(7) Pensa te! [Col direttore]_{MF} voleva parlare!

think you with the manager (she) wanted to-speak

‘Guess what! She wanted to speak with the manager!’

(Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a:3, ex 3)

According to their view, this kind of focus is connected to an unexpected or surprising element which is not yet part of the system of beliefs of the speakers (Cruschina 2012).

It is different from contrastive focus and it does not need a background.

We will analyze later the specific properties of information and contrastive focus (as well as corrective and mirative focus), with a particular attention to whether they have to be considered adopting a unified approach, as in Brunetti (2004), or as two completely different phenomena (Belletti, 1999, 2001, 2004).

However, as far as pragmatics and semantics are concerned, Krifka (2008) points out the existence of several other kinds of focus. A pragmatic use is related to the common communicative goals of the interlocutors, and the main uses are listed down below:

- Identification of wh- questions (constituent questions): as stated above, new information can be introduced through the answer to a wh- question; it is related to the preceding context and it follows the information-packaging theory;
- Correct information: it is used to deny and correct what has been previously stated in the discourse, and a new focused constituent is connected to another alternative;
- Parallels in interpretations: focus creates alternatives (and therefore a contrastive component) within expressions that are otherwise parallel, as in (8).
(8) Anna likes books, and her brother likes videogames.
- Delimitation: focus is needed to make the addressee aware of a delimitation of the utterance to the constituent in focus, as in (9).
(9) In my opinion, Mary is not so smart.

There are also semantic uses of focus, which are connected to factual information and can affect the truth-conditional content which is generally associated with focus-sensitive particles, such as *only*, *even*, and *also*. Interestingly, these particles have to take scope over their focus. Depending on which of these particles is involved, we can obtain different values of focus, which can be summed up as follows:

- Exhaustive interpretation: it indicates that the focused constituent is the only one that leads to a true assertion (or that it is the strongest option to do so). The only particle which can act in such a way is *only*.⁷

⁷ For some languages it seems possible to express exhaustivity even without any particles. The claim made by É. Kiss (1998) is that focus movement is the trigger of this meaning in Hungarian. English cleft sentences seem to express exhaustive focus as well, namely a sentence like (i) state that nobody else but Susan and Logan stole the money.

- Additive interpretation: it expresses that the assertion is valid for other alternatives as well; *also* is the particle involved in this use.
- Scalar/emphatic: a set of alternatives are listed and ordered, and the use of particles like *even* states that the denotation of focus is extreme when compared to other alternatives.

For each of these types of focus, we can find different behaviors and properties, but we should be aware that this distinction has often to do only with some modules of the grammar (namely semantics and pragmatics), but it does not affect syntax that much. It is for this reason that they are simply presented here: we will not need a better distinction for the topic that will be treated from now on, since my attention will be devoted mainly to the syntactic side. Yet, it is important to remember that, at least for some aspects, talking of different foci is more appropriate.

1.4 Previous analyses of focus

Many hypotheses were developed through the years in order to explain focalization, with particular attention to the connection with prosody and with syntax. Especially as far as Italian focus is taken into account, the relationship between syntax and prosody is not yet completely clear, as well as the syntactic behavior of focus. I will now present some of the most relevant accounts proposed for Italian focus and its encoding in syntax, starting from Rizzi (1997). One of the general ideas developed is that there is a fixed position in the left periphery dedicated to focus, a FocP, whose specifier is occupied by the focused constituent⁸.

1.4.1 Rizzi (1997)

Rizzi's hypothesis is extremely important: he explores the left periphery expanding it in several, different projections. After his analysis we do not consider the CP as a single, unique projection, but more as a rich and articulated structure, a hierarchically organized layer which contains several projections. In this new analysis

(i) It's Susan and Logan that stole the money.

⁸ This theory was developed because of the fixed focus position of some languages: Hungarian and Albanian, among others, tend to have focus always in the left periphery (Brody, 1990).

of the CP we find, at least, a projection dedicated to the illocutionary force of the clause (Force), and another one which expresses the finiteness of the verb (Fin); moreover, it can be enriched by a Focus position and a (possibly recursive) Topic projection, when the sentence requires them. The order is given in (10), and it is obtained from an analysis of the relative position of the different projections:

(10) [ForceP [TopP* [FocP [TopP* [FinP [IP ...]]]]]]⁹

As can be seen in (10), the focus position can be found in between force and finiteness (which are mandatory), and, if topics are present, they can either precede the focus, follow it, or both.

An important distinction must be considered at this point: the one that separates topic and focus. Even though they can both be moved constituents, often found in the left periphery, these two phenomena are very different, as can be seen in sentences (11) and (12):

(11) Il tuo libro, lo devi dare ad Anna.

your book, (you) it should give to Anna

(12) IL TUO LIBRO devi dare ad Anna, non il mio.

your book (you) should give to Anna, not mine

In both (11) and (12), the constituents are moved to a higher position in the left periphery of the sentence, but they clearly have different behaviors and rules, which are listed down below.

- Role: the topicalized constituent refers to an entity, or an information, that is already known or inferable from the context. Focus, instead, contains the new information of the sentence.
- Intonation: the intonation connected to these constituents is different, in that topic is linked to the so called “comma intonation”, which signals a pause between the topicalized constituent and the rest of the sentence, and tends therefore to form a separate prosodic phrase. Focalization is connected with a special focal stress (but we can find different intonations according to the kind of focus we are dealing with).

⁹ Asterisks signal that it is a recursive level.

- Resumptive clitic: the topicalized constituent can be resumed by a resumptive clitic, which is mandatory only when the topicalized constituent is the direct object (as in the case of (11), with *lo*). With topicalization there is no gap, thanks to the presence of the resumptive clitic. Focus cannot appear with a resumptive clitic, otherwise we would obtain an ungrammatical sentence, as in (13):

(13) * IL TUO LIBRO lo ho letto, non il suo.

your book (I) it have read, not his

- Weak Cross-Over: with topics we do not have WCO effects¹⁰, which are instead visible with focus, as can be seen in (14). It is important to remember that WCO effect is a diagnostic test for movement. This suggests that topics are not in a left peripheral position because of movement, but they should rather be base-generated.

(14) ?? GIANNI_i, sua_i madre ha sempre apprezzato (non Piero).

Gianni, his mother has always appreciated (not Piero)

- Bare quantificational elements: quantificational elements such as *nessuno* and *tutti*, which are not connected to a lexical restriction within the DP, can be focused (15), but not topicalized (16).

(15) NESSUNO ho visto.

noone (I) saw

(16) * Nessuno, lo ho visto.

noone, him (I) saw

- Uniqueness: on the one side, a sentence can contain more than one topicalized constituent, which can be iterated for an unspecified number of times (“as many topics as are consistent with its topicalized arguments and adjuncts” (Rizzi, 1997:190)), on the other, there is a unique focus position for each sentence¹¹.

(17) Il libro, a Gianni, domani, glielo darò senz’altro.

The book, to Gianni, tomorrow, it-to-him (I) will-give for sure

¹⁰ Where WCO is “a phenomenon that blocks co-reference between a pronoun and its antecedent if the antecedent is a quantified expression binding a variable, and the variable follows the pronoun” (Brunetti, 2004:42). According to Rizzi (1997), the WCO effects tells us that it is a quantificational element A’ binding a variable.

¹¹ Apparently, this is due to the interpretive problem that arises when a sentence contains more than one focus. This is so because the complement of FocusP is presupposition, and if two foci could combine, the second one would represent the new and the given information at the same time. It is not the same with topics, whose complement is comment.

(18) * A GIANNI IL LIBRO darò (non a Piero, l'articolo).

To Gianni the book (I) will-give (not to Piero, the article)

- Compatibility with wh: focus cannot appear with a wh- operator, see (19). Basically, the wh-operator and the focalized constituent are in complementary distribution, and therefore they can be taken to compete for the same position.¹² The same constraint is not valid for topic.

(19) a. * A GIANNI che cosa hai detto (, non a Piero)?

to Gianni what did (you) tell (, not to Piero)

b. * Che cosa A GIANNI hai detto (, non a Piero)?

What to Gianni did (you) tell (, not to Piero)¹³

But why does focus have to move? According to Rizzi (1997), the trigger of focus movement is feature-checking. The Focus Criterion in fact states that whenever a constituent has a focus feature, it must be in a specifier-head relation with focus, resembling the Neg-Criterion and the Wh-Criterion (Rizzi 1996).

(20) Focus Criterion

- a. A focused phrase must be in a spec-head configuration with an $X^0_{[+FOCUS]}$;
- b. An $X^0_{[+FOCUS]}$ must be in a spec-head configuration with a focused phrase.

Therefore, focalization involves movement of a constituent from its base position to a higher one, in the left periphery.

As for the cases in which Focus is low, Rizzi does not analyze in details the possible options, but he simply admits that in Italian a lower focalization is possible: "Italian seems to possess a lower focalization, involving focal stress on an element in situ" (Rizzi, 1997:287). Even in this case focus has to move to the left periphery in order to satisfy the Focus Criterion, and the rest of the sentence moves in a higher position so that the correct linear order is respected.

¹² Samek-Lodovici (2006, 2015) claims instead that the two are not in complementary distribution and can be found within the same sentence.

¹³ All the examples in (14)-(19) are taken from Rizzi (1997:290-291).

1.4.2 Frascarelli (2000)

As well as Rizzi (1997), Frascarelli assumes that, when focus is present, there must be feature-checking. What changes in her account is the fact that the verb gets a crucial role, since it is taken to be the lexical category which checks the [+ Focus] feature, and in fact has to move to the Foc head.

Her claim is supported by the fact that in many languages there seems to be a strict relation between the focused constituent and the verb, namely they are usually adjacent. Be it in situ or in an initial position, the focused part of the sentence is near the verb. This constraint can be found in other languages such as English and Standard Arabic, but only in some languages adjacency is an obligatory condition, Italian not being among these, as the partially ungrammatical status of (21b) shows (Frascarelli, 2000):

(21) a. Elisa ho visto al parco, non Sara.

Elisa (I) have seen at the park, not Sara.

‘I saw ELISA at the park, not Sara.’

b. ^{*/?} ELISA al parco ho visto, non Sara.

Elisa at the park (I) have seen, not Sara.

Feature-checking is realized by the movement of the verb, whereas movement of the focused constituent is not actually mandatory and it is subject to parametric variation. In her view, when focus is in the left periphery, it moves to SpecFocP (whose head is occupied by the verb), whereas focus in situ does not show such movement: the focused constituent stays in its position, and feature-checking is allowed through a head-complement relation with the verb.

The strict relation between focus and verb is proved also by prosody: focus and verb are always part of a unique prosodic phrase and no intonational breaks can be found between the two.

1.4.3 Beninca' & Poletto (2004)

The analysis of Rizzi (1997) has been challenged by Beninca' & Poletto (2004). One of the most important differences is the status of the topic projection below Foc in (10), here repeated as (22):

(22) [ForceP [TopP* [FocP [TopP* [FinP [IP...]]]]]]

According to them, free recursion of topics is not an option: there cannot be an infinite set of totally identical topics, they must be different at least from a semantic point of view. Moreover, the topic appearing at the right of a focalized constituent cannot be considered as such. They analyze it as a focus, because it behaves as an operator and has therefore the typical behavior of foci. Their main arguments are that a constituent in this position cannot be clitic doubled (23)¹⁴, and moreover it shows WCO effects, as can be seen in (24) (Beninca' & Poletto, 2004):

(23) * A GIANNI, un libro di poesie, lo regalerete.

to Gianni, a book of poetry, (you) it will give

'You will give a book of poetry to JOHN.'

(Beninca' & Poletto, 2004:54, ex 3a)

(24) * A MARIA_i, Giorgio, sua_i madre presenterà.

to Maria, Giorgio, his mother will-introduce

'Giorgio will introduce his mother to Maria.'

(Beninca' & Poletto, 2004:57, ex 11a)

The constituent following the focus is interpreted as a moved constituent which has WCO effects. This leads to a distinction between different fields in the CP layer: a topic field, which is higher and connected with non-operator elements, and a focus field, which has the reverse properties. Therefore, we have to be careful in the analysis of topics and foci, since neither adverbials, nor dative clitics are appropriate tests for left dislocation¹⁵. Moreover, we cannot use intonation in order to determine the position of a constituent and distinguish between focalized and left dislocated elements: "an intonationally focalized element can syntactically be an LD" (Beninca' and Poletto, 2004:56), as seen in (25):

¹⁴ The obligatory lack of clitic doubling is not correct: Beninca' herself realized that in some cases, namely when the focused phrase is an indirect object, there can be clitic doubling (optional) as in (i); however, there are also some cases in which the clitic is not only an option, but a forced choice (ii):

(i) A MARIO, (gli) ho parlato.

To Mario, (I) (to-him) have spoken

(ii) GLI UOMINI, li ho licenziati tutti, (non le donne).

The men, (I) them have fired all, (not the women)

Examples are taken from Beninca' (2001:7).

¹⁵ Adverbials like *tomorrow* are said to be "structurally ambiguous between a topic and a post-subject position" (Beninca' and Poletto, 2004:55).

(25) a. Mi ha detto che il tappeto, lo compra l'anno prossimo.
(he) to me has told that the carpet (he) it will-buy next year

b. No, ti sbagli, IL DIVANO lo compra l'anno prossimo.
No, you are wrong, the sofa it (he) will-buy next year

(Beninca' & Poletto, 2004:56, ex 8a,b)

In their opinion, IL DIVANO in (25b) is a topic, even though it is intonationally stressed (which also means that we can find focalized elements which are not intonationally marked). The intonational level is separated from the syntactic one.

Furthermore, for Beninca' & Poletto (2004) focus is not a single projection, but a field of the CP including contiguous projections. They make a distinction between contrastive focus and information focus, which has to be preceded by the former and is apparently assigned inside the VP. Contrastive focus is activated and signaled by a special intonation and it creates a border within the left periphery, where the domain of syntax is restricted. On the left of the focus position we can find constituents which are not moved because of syntactic constraints, but because of phonological properties. In their proposal we have therefore to differentiate between a higher part of the CP (the topic field) and a lower one, the focus field. The two have the typical properties attributed to topicalization and focalization: on the one hand the former contains part of the shared knowledge, and depends on the context expressed previously; moreover, it is considered to be base generated, since it does not show WCO effects. On the other hand, the focus field contains instead new information, and its constituents are subject to movement (as proved by the sensibility to the WCO effect). The direction of the information in a sentence goes from given to new, following a semantic path.

1.4.4 Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004)

The proposal of Belletti regards the possibility of a clause internal periphery similar to the one that we find on the left. She proposes that the area above vP can have the same properties and contain the same projections of the CP, which means that it also has a focus projection. The proposed structural sequence is given in (26):

(26) [TopicP* [FocP_{NewF} [TopicP* [VP]]]]

Her hypothesis is that we can have two focus positions in every sentence, one in the left

periphery dedicated to contrastive focus, and the other, in a lower position above ν P, to information focus. Her proposal is supported by the fact that the two foci are actually very different from one another, either from a prosodic point of view (information foci are not connected with contrastive intonation), or a pragmatic one (since their role changes according to the position in which they appear).

One of the arguments supporting such a hypothesis is free subject inversion (basically, the existence of postverbal subjects in Italian). These elements are really low in the structure, as can be seen in sentences containing low IP adverbs or negation¹⁶, and according to Belletti, the position of the subject is licensed by focus. Considering its extremely low position, though, it cannot be the focus projection of the left periphery, but rather a clause internal one.

To account for a VS order, Belletti states that the focalized subject moves from its VP internal position to SpecFocP below TP; this movement is then followed by the movement of the verb, which reaches a higher projection preceding the subject. Focus has not a special status, and it has its typical feature-checking configuration.

If the postverbal subject is contrastively focalized, though, it has to go to the left periphery of the sentence, whereas the verb undergoes remnant movement and targets SpecTopicP.

1.4.5 Brunetti (2004)

The hypothesis developed by Brunetti (2004) is that, contrary to what É. Kiss (1998) stated, there are no differences between contrastive and information foci, and moreover, contra Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004), that there are not two positions for focus, but only one.

Brunetti therefore follows a unified analysis of focus, from several points of view: prosody, semantics and syntax. This means that we do not need to postulate the existence of two different focus heads. Brunetti proves that all the arguments provided by É. Kiss (1998), who describes the semantic and prosodic differences between the two kinds of foci, are not valid for Italian (in fact these were based on English and Hungarian). For example, in Italian focus does not have the property of exhaustive identification (namely identify a unique referent from the context). Rather, it has a unique interpretation: it always expresses new information, and is not always connected

¹⁶ See Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004) for a more detailed analysis.

to contrast, as previously stated by Rochemont (1976). Contrast can be present, but it depends on context: it is not an inherent property of focus.

As far as syntax is concerned, it is a little bit more difficult to prove the similarities of information and contrastive foci. The proposal of Brunetti is that movement always occurs, but in certain sentences we cannot see it because of the intervention of ellipsis. Basically her idea is that a sentence like (27b) is actually the result of movement and elision of a part of its constituents.

(27) a. Che cosa ha vinto Anna?

what did Anna win?

b. Un libro.

a book

The analysis is the following: first of all, movement of the focused element has to occur: “la maglietta” goes from its base position to the left periphery, and after this movement, ellipsis of the rest of the sentence can apply (since it is part of the common knowledge shared by hearer and speaker).

(28) $[_{DP} \text{La maglietta}]_i \{[_{IP} \text{ha} [_{VP} \text{vinto} [_{DP} \text{Gianni}] t_i]]$

Not only contrastive focus moves, but also information one. In the latter case, we are not aware of its left peripheral position since we can see only the focused constituent. To explain the fact that a short answer is preferable than a full one with preverbal focus, Brunetti formulates the following generalization:

(29) Ellipsis of background material in a sentence applies if the elided material has an antecedent which is also background material. (Brunetti, 2004:105).

Ellipsis is not allowed, instead, when there is not an antecedent of the elided material. In the case of a wh- question, the antecedent actually corresponds to the question itself. According to Brunetti (2004:107), “the difference between a wh-QA context and a contrastive context is in the fact that the former always favors ellipsis, while the latter can either favor ellipsis or not”.

A crucial part of Brunetti’s proposal, is that the tonal contour of a focused constituent is a morpheme present in the lexicon as an independent lexical entry. Identifying focus with an intonational morpheme solves some problems, such as the

focus feature: in this case, it is inherently possessed by the intonational morpheme, and we do not need feature-checking. We do not need to postulate a specialized focus head either, since this morpheme would project its own position in the syntactic tree.

1.4.6 *Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina*

Bianchi and Bocci (2012) state that a unified analysis of focus cannot explain the differences within such a category, in particular those involving the syntactic distribution. According to Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b) this variation cannot be reduced to information versus contrastive focus, because there seems to exist several distinct foci, with different pragmatic and prosodic properties, as well as syntactic realizations. Focus fronting is apparently limited only to some of these focus types, and therefore they claim that its movement is not triggered by contrast or by givenness (Samek-Lodovici, 2015), but by conventional implicatures.

Focus can be merely contrastive, corrective or mirative. Merely contrastive focus involves the presence of a salient alternative inside the same utterance and it is restricted in movement: it was proved that focus fronting is not accepted in this case, as seen in (30c) (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a).

(30) a. Io vi saluto, devo rientrare a casa.

I you greet, must to-go back home

‘I’m off, I have to go back home’

b. Ti conviene prendere [il taxi]_{CF}, non [la metro]...

(you) should take the taxi, not the underground

c. * [Il taxi]_{CF} ti conviene prendere, non la metro...

the taxi you should take, not the underground

(Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a:4, ex 4a,b,b’)

Corrective focus can be considered a specific kind of contrastive focus, but with a different pragmatic import, which involves the denial of something that has been previously uttered. In this case, background is crucial and focus fronting is allowed. This is also true for mirative focus, which is not contrastive but can anyway be moved in the left periphery.

Their claim is that focus fronting is triggered by a functional head, which they

call FAI (focus-associated implicatures). This head, as well as the head of the focus projection, is always active, and the optionality of focus fronting depends on the fact that copy deletion may affect either the lower copy or the higher one: in the first case the result would be focus in situ, whereas in the second one we would have focus fronting and a marked prosodic structure. The proposed derivation is reported in (31).

(31) [_{FP} Force [_{FaiP} FAI⁰ [_{mir}]/[_{corr}] [_{FocP} YP_{i[+ foc]} [_{TP} <YP_i>]]]]

1.4.7 Samek-Lodovici (2015)

The hypothesis developed by Samek-Lodovici brings a great deal of innovation in the analysis of focus: starting from the fact that a unique and fixed projection cannot explain in an adequate manner all the properties of focalization, he shows how the traditional visions of focus are not able to account for the grammaticality status of several sentences. In particular, he is convinced that focus does not move: it is (almost) always in situ, while the rest of the clause moves. Often, in sentences where the focused constituent appears in the left periphery, we have the impression of movement, but actually we are dealing with the right dislocation of the constituents that precede it.

Such a hypothesis manages to explain the distribution of contrastive focus even in sentences which created difficulties to the other proposals. It is the case of negative constituents in a postverbal position: as will be explained later, Italian negative items occurring after the verb need licensing, namely they must be c-commanded by a suitable licenser (usually, the sentential negative marker *non*). This is not necessary when the negative word occurs before the verb.

(32) a. Non abbiamo visto NESSUNO

Not (we) have seen nobody

‘We did not see ANYBODY.’

b. NESSUNO, abbiamo visto.

nobody (we) have seen

‘We saw NOBODY.’

If in (32a) we adopt a movement analysis of focus, the licensing relation between the sentential negative marker and the negative object should fail, in that *non* does not actually c-command the object (keeping in mind that in negation c-command works at

surface, not under reconstruction). Moreover, following the traditional analyses, we fail to explain the different positions of the two focalized constituents, since it seems that they share the same one. In situ focalization can instead explain both sentences in (32).

In situ focalization is also able to account for the fact that wh- operator and focus are not in a complementary distribution, as was claimed by Rizzi (1997). According to Samek-Lodovici, these elements can actually co-occur, due to the fact that they do not compete for the same position: focus is in situ, whereas the wh-operator has to move to the left periphery.

(33) Tutti conoscevano la vittima. Ma chi conosceva L'ASSASSINO?

all knew the victim. But who knew the murderer?

'Everybody knew the victim. But who knew the murderer?'

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:225, ex 149)

It also explains the asymmetry between fronted focus and focus in a postverbal position, as far as parasitic gaps are concerned: if they are possible with the former, the latter does not allow them. In fact, if focus is in situ, it is structurally too low, and therefore cannot c-command the parasitic gap.

(34) a. Questo fantastico BAROLO, hanno rimandato indietro senza assaggiare!

this fantastic Barolo, (they) have sent back without to-taste

'This fantastic BAROLO, they sent back without tasting!'

b. * Hanno rimandato indietro questo fantastico BAROLO, senza assaggiare!

(they) have sent back this fantastic Barolo, without to-taste

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:218, ex 137a,b)

As said before, constituents following focus can give us the impression that it has moved leftward as in (35), whereas inversion is actually due to right dislocation.

(35) Arresterà i LADRI, la polizia.

will-arrest the thieves, the police

'The police will arrest the THIEVES.'

Right dislocated elements can interfere with the position of focus, and therefore we need to use elements that resist right dislocation, namely negative phrases. This is a crucial clue that may help us distinguishing between marginalization and right dislocation. As we will see, these discourse-given constituents must be kept separated in

order to get to a satisfactory analysis of focus. Sentences involving the distribution of focused and marginalized/right dislocated constituents show that focus is *in situ*.

There is, however, a case in which a focused constituent moves: when focus is contained in a right dislocated constituent, it can evacuate and move to the first available position preceding the right dislocated element. This happens because there is a contrast between focus, which needs stress (and carries the main sentence stress) and right dislocation, which cannot carry main stress. In order to avoid such a problem, focus moves to a higher projection. Its final position can vary according to which constituent undergoes right dislocation. In the examples below (Samek-Lodovici, 2015) we can see that right dislocation affects different constituents (first PP in (36b), then the VP (36c) and finally the TP (36c)).

(36) a. Siamo andati via [da MILANO], (non da Firenze).

(we) are gone away from Milan, (not from Florence)

b. Siamo andati [da MILANO] , [via]_R

(we) are gone from Milan, away

c. Siamo [da MILANO], [andati via]_R

(we) are from Milan, gone away

d. [Da MILANO], [siamo andati via]_R

from Milan, we are gone away

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:15, ex 29a,b,c,d)

When right dislocation is not present, though, focus movement is not possible, as shown in (37) (Samek-Lodovici, 2015:52), where the focused object cannot raise above the subject.

(37) Context: Nessuno ha invitato i veneziani.

nobody has invited the Venetians

‘Nobody invited the Venetians.’

a. No. Non ha invitato nessuno i MILANESI_F

no. Not has invited anybody the Milanese

‘No. Nobody invited the MILANESE.’

b. * No. Non ha invitato i MILANESI_F nessuno.

no. not has invited the Milanese anybody

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:52, ex 19a,b)

In order to prove that *in situ* focalization and focus evacuation are correct, we get further evidence showing that post-focal phrases have the typical properties of right dislocated phrases, such as the fact that they are discourse-given, and cannot omit preposition or express contrastivity.

Samek-Lodovici's analysis of focus is deeply influenced by prosody, and in particular by the fact that focalization in Italian has to occur rightmost (see Zubizarreta 1998)¹⁷. This would then be the main reason why focus is *in situ*, this position being the rightmost available. If instead focus has to move, this also means that stress is away from its natural position, and stress alignment decreases. Movement in these terms is conceivable only when it improves stress alignment with the right edge of the clause.

1.5 Some problems

The analyses described in the previous sections have to deal with several problems, involving the syntactic properties, the syntax-prosody interface phenomena, and the data taken into account.

1.5.1 Problems with data

Data regarding Italian focalization can often be misleading: first of all, the prosody which we assign to a focused constituent is extremely important because it can determine the degree of grammaticality of a sentence. Therefore, a correct intonation is essential: if we assign the wrong one, we may be convinced that a sentence is not grammatical. With data presented only in a written form this is not a simple problem. The same is true for context: sentences which contain a focalized constituent must be presented with an appropriate context. If this does not happen, we can again be wrongly convinced of the ungrammaticality of a sentence, whereas this is only poorly introduced. Some properties seem to be licensed only when context is mentioned. This is the case, for instance, of marginalization (and in particular marginalized negative phrases, as said by Samek-Lodovici, 2015): it is only through context that we can understand which are the focused constituents and the marginalized ones.

Data containing marginalized constituents are actually ungrammatical when the

¹⁷ Although not everyone agrees with this point: see Bocci (2013).

background is not taken into account; in fact the discourse-given status of marginalized phrases cannot be inferred from prosody or from their position. “ignoring the context corresponds to making an assessment under a clause-wide presentational focus where neither marginalization nor contrastive focus are licensed” (Samek-Lodovici, 2015: 26). As noted by Samek-Lodovici (2015:209), this has often been the mistake of several authors. For example, clitic doubling in a post focal phrase was considered not to be completely grammatical by Beninca’ & Poletto (2004), as in the case of (38). When context is provided, though, the sentence is completely fine, as can be seen in (39).

(38) ?? A MARIA, i fiori, li abbiamo dati.

to Maria, the flowers, (we) them have given

‘We gave the flowers to Maria.’

(39) Context: Ma a chi li avete DATI, i fiori? A Marco?

But to whom (you) them have given the flowers? To Marco?

‘Who did you gave the flowers to? To Marco?’

No. A MARIA, i fiori, li abbiamo dati. Non a Marco!

no. to Maria, the flowers, (we) them have given. Not to Marco

‘No. We gave the flowers to MARIA. Not to Marco!’

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:209, ex 113)

In order to obtain reliable grammaticality assessments by native speakers, therefore, the position of stress and context must be provided.

It is not simply a matter of providing a background: we have also to pay attention to the focus interaction with constituents preceding or following it (prefocal or postfocal phrases, in Samek-Lodovici’s terms). In particular, marginalization and right dislocation must be considered, in order to fully understand the position of focus. I will briefly present here the differences between them, but for a complete analysis I refer the reader to Samek-Lodovici (2015).

Marginalization and right dislocation are similar in some aspects: they both follow the item carrying main stress, but can never carry main stress themselves. Moreover, they are licensed under similar pragmatic conditions, have the same pragmatic import and can affect discourse-given constituents. But they have several differences as well¹⁸: marginalization is discourse-given, it occurs in situ (as proved by some evidence such

¹⁸ Following Antinucci & Cinque (1977) and Calabrese (1982, 1992) and Cardinaletti (2001, 2002).

as the order of negative phrases, anaphoric and quantifier binding and the obligatory base-order of multiple marginalized elements, among others) and clitic doubling is never allowed.

Right dislocation is introduced by an intonational break and it can be clitic doubled (in this case, the clitic agrees in person, number, gender and case with the dislocated elements), but it is not mandatory. A sentence can contain more than one right dislocated element, independently of its category or grammatical function. Right dislocation occurs clause externally (as proved by the presence of clitic-doubling and by impossibility of licensing negative phrases, among others) and is therefore located above TP.

One of the main differences between marginalized phrases and right dislocated ones is that the latter can occur in any order, and do not have to follow their base-generated order. This is one of the aspects which can help us distinguishing the two, together with the licensing of n-words: postverbal negative phrases can be marginalized, but not right dislocated. Finally, the presence of clitic doubling is helpful as well, since this is possible only with right dislocated phrases.

Only once the constituents surrounding focus are distinguished, it becomes possible to determine its syntactic position.

1.5.2 More problems

Several problems can be found in every account of focus. I will here briefly present some of them, and a complete discussion will follow in the next chapters.

The first problem I will take into account regards focus types: generally two kinds of foci are recognized in the literature: information (or presentational) focus and contrastive focus. Their differences have been pointed out by several scholars, with respect to prosody, pragmatics, semantics and syntax. If this is true, how can we capture their different properties? Are they connected to different projections? Are they assigned different features? Or do we have to follow Brunetti's (2004) unified analysis?

Moreover, is there a [+Focus] feature? Can we think of it as an inherent property of focus? If there is no feature-checking, how can we explain focus movement? Should we consider focus as a syntactic phenomenon, or do we have to account for its connection to prosody? There are several problems either with prosody-based approaches to focus or with syntactic-based ones.

There is a bigger problem: the representation of focus in syntax. Several hypotheses have been developed through the years, but no one of them seems to represent a good solution to this issue. It is not clear where focus has to be represented: does it stay in situ? Is it subject to movement? Is there an optional movement that focused constituents can undergo, so that the correct word order is obtained?

In some languages - such as Italian - focus seems to have (at least) two positions, in that it can appear either in situ or in a left peripheral position. How can we explain such different data?

Moreover, how many positions of focus are there in a sentence? Are they fixed or do they appear in a free order? Where are these positions? Several hypotheses were proposed: there is a unique and fixed position according to Rizzi (1997), Frascarelli (2000) and Brunetti (2004), whereas two fixed positions can be found in the analyses of Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004), Beninca' & Poletto (2004), Bianchi & Bocci (2012), Bocci (2013) and Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a), (2015b). In Samek-Lodovici's (2015) view there is more than one focus position in each sentence, and moreover these are not fixed: they can appear in a relatively free order.

2. INFORMATION FOCUS AND CONTRASTIVE FOCUS

An exact determination of the existing types of focus is still an open question, and it is not a simple one, despite appearance. First of all, what we have to deal with is the relationship between information focus and contrastive focus: are they the same phenomenon or do we have to talk about two distinct types of foci? Which are their differences and their similarities? This is a fundamental question because it can help us understand whether we need to consider focus as a unique phenomenon or we have to consider different types of focus. As we will see, stating whether the syntactic properties of information focus are different from the ones of contrastive focus is a difficult task, and the consequences of such a statement could be drastic: if information focus (from now on, IF) is syntactically different from contrastive focus (CF), do we have to postulate two different focus positions? Or should one be enough anyway?

On the other hand, if we unify IF and CF (as in Brunetti, 2004) how can we capture in an appropriate way the differences that seem to differentiate the two? The distinction basically regards every module of grammar: prosody, pragmatics and syntax. But can we be sure that these are not simply different manifestations of the same phenomenon?

2.1 Properties of information focus and contrastive focus

As previously stated, there are several differences between IF and CF, but also some similarities. We will first see in more detail the properties connected to IF and CF, in order to understand whether they can be different instantiations of the same phenomenon or not.

2.1.1 Information focus

New information focus, which is also called presentational or neutral focus, is used especially in answering *wh*- questions. Therefore, it refers to a constituent interpreted either as new or context-incrementing information. It is connected to sentence main stress, and it is said to appear always in a low position in the clause (see 1b). In fact, a general property of IF is that “there is a tendency to move ‘new’ and ‘persistent’ participants to a sentence-final or ‘later than usual’ position.” (Drubig, 2001:1082).

- (1) a. Con chi gioca Alice?
with who plays Alice?
b. Alice gioca con Sara.
Alice plays with Sara

IF can have different sizes, depending on the *wh*- constituent it refers to: it may affect an entire sentence, as well as a single constituent, or part of it, as can be seen in the sentences below.

- (2) a. Anna ha giocato a tennis nel cortile.
Anna has played tennis in the backyard
b. Dove ha giocato Anna?
where has played Anna?
c. Che cosa ha fatto Anna?
what has done Anna?
d. Che cosa è successo?
what has happened?
e. Con cosa ha giocato Anna nel cortile?
with what has played Anna in the backyard?

(2a) could be the reply to different questions, and according to which question the answer is referred to, we can establish focus extension. In the case of (2b), the focus is only on the last constituent “nel cortile”. But if we take into account sentence (2c), the entire VP is focused, and the only given information is that “Anna” did something. In (2d) the entire answer is focused. Finally, (2a) would not be a correct answer to (2e), because in that case the focused constituent “a tennis” is not in a correct position. In

order to make the sentence grammatical, we should have to move the new element out of the given part of the sentence, either at the end or at the beginning. In this case “a tennis” should be the only pronounced constituent, because, as we have seen, it is not possible to have focus fronting with IF when the rest of the sentence is pronounced. This is a typical constraint of IF: new information has to be in sentence final position, as far as Italian is concerned¹⁹.

2.1.2 Contrastive focus

Contrastive, or identificational, focus is said to denote a constituent that identifies a subset within a set of contextually given alternatives (Drubig, 2001:1079). As stated above, CF is signaled through various devices, such as prosodic prominence (CF typically bears a special stress which is signaled by a higher peak), but also a different word order: often, focused constituents tend to be prosodically isolated from the rest of the clause. This is not mandatory, though: unlike IF, CF can appear anywhere in the clause, following some general rules. In fact, CF doesn't need to be in a low position, as in (3b), but it can appear also in the left periphery of the sentence, as in (3c).

(3) a. Hai parlato con Elena questa mattina?

have (you) talked with Elena this morning?

b. No, ho parlato con GIULIA.

no, (I) have talked with Giulia.

c. No, con GIULIA ho parlato.

no, with Giulia (I) have talked.

The general properties described above have already pointed out some of the most obvious differences between IF and CF. But are these enough for hypothesizing different syntactic positions? Such a distinction was stated by several syntacticians (see É. Kiss 1998, Belletti 1999, 2001, 2004, Beninca' & Poletto 2004), who argued in favor of the existence of two different dedicated projections.

Their proposal is actually supported by pragmatic and prosodic data (Nespor & Guasti 2002, Donati & Nespor 2003, Avesani & Vayra 2004, Bocci 2013), as we will see. If

¹⁹ As stated by Cruschina (2012), this is true for Standard Italian, but there are some dialects permitting focus fronting even when the focused constituent expresses new information. This is the case of Sicilian (Cruschina, 2012), but also of Sardinian (Jones 1993, Mensching & Remberger 2010).

this is correct, we could conclude that the distinction between IF and CF is syntactically encoded.

In the next chapter I will present and discuss the similarities and differences between IF and CF taking into account every module of grammar.

2.2 Pragmatics and semantics of IF and CF

As stated in the first chapter, the pragmatic role of focus consists in the introduction of new information in the discourse. This definition is vague, though: not only because it does not capture the importance that focus has in other aspects of grammar, but also because it cannot explain the difference between IF and CF. Moreover, we cannot be satisfied only with a pragmatic definition of focus, because, as we have already seen, we are dealing with a complex phenomenon in which every module of grammar participates. For this reason, it cannot be reduced to pragmatics only: as was already noted by Reinhart (1981), the interpretation and expression of focus cannot be thought of only with regard to general principles governing human interaction or to some pragmatic abilities considered independent from language.

As far as pragmatics is concerned, the differences between IF and CF are pretty much clear: IF conveys new information especially through the use of a *wh*-question. In this case, focus has to be interpreted as the innovative and most informative part of the sentence, since IF brings new and relevant information to the universe of discourse (Calabrese, 1982). The interpretive notion of IF is also called relational (see Gundel 1999 and Gundel & Fretheim 2004), since it concerns the information predicated about the topic. In this view the sentence is partitioned in two: X, namely “what the sentence is about” and Y, what is said about X (which is the given part of the sentence).

On the other side, CF expresses a contrast with what was said in the previous utterance, or it presents (at least) two salient alternatives in the discourse (Krifka 2008); therefore, a contrastively focalized assertion corresponds to denying or correcting a previous assertion or presupposition that the speaker does not share. Its interpretive notion is said to be referential (Gundel, 1999): something that the speaker is saying requires the attention of the addressee, and contrast is evoked by means of a particular intonation.

The function of IF is different from that of CF, and they are independent from one another. We have new information on the one side, and contrast on the other. It is

true that CF usually expresses new information as well, but this is not obligatory: CF does not need to be referentially new (Gundel, 1999). One of the main examples which proves that the two are not necessarily connected is the fact that a given element may be contrastively focalized, as in the case of pronouns: these cannot be considered referentially new, since, by definition, they are presupposed and discourse old elements. Nonetheless, they can convey contrast.

Rochemont (1986) claimed in fact that a unified account of focus cannot explain a sentence like (4), where two pronouns are present (and they both refer to individuals already mentioned in the discourse) and focused.

(4) John hit Mary, and then SHE hit HIM

The same is true of IF: even though according to some definitions every focus expresses contrast (see Rooth 1985, 1992), this is not always true (see Rochemont 1986 and Krifka 2008). IF does not convey contrast, and its primary role is expressing new information, which is not necessarily connected to contrast.

We also have to take into account another important difference, i.e. the fact that IF is present in every sentence, but the reverse is not true: not all sentences express a contrastive focalization. Or, in other words: all sentences contain information focus (Gundel 1999), because “this requirement follows from a necessary articulation of the sentence that is imposed by the grammar for information processing reasons” (Cruschina, 2012:12). The same does not hold for contrast: this depends on the intention of the speaker, whose aim is to affect the content of communication with specific pragmatic and discourse effects, so that the attention of the hearer changes.

From the differences listed so far, we can say that IF and CF are not equally appropriate in the same contexts. In fact, the presupposition of a sentence containing new information is completely different from the presupposition of a sentence containing a contrast, and therefore between the two there is a certain incompatibility. This is why a sentence cannot contain IF and CF at the same time (Calabrese, 1982).

2.2.1 Interpretive differences

A major difference between IF and CF is that the former refers to an open set of alternatives, whereas the latter to a closed one. This means that CF requires a semantic antecedent in the discourse in order to express contrast and correction, whereas the same is not true for IF.

É. Kiss (1998) individuates some of the major interpretive differences between IF and CF, basing on data from Hungarian and English. In particular these differences depend on the so-called exhaustive interpretation, which affects not only pragmatics, but also semantics (and it is also claimed to be connected to different syntactic positions).

In Hungarian, focus has the possibility of being connected to such an interpretation, namely it can identify a unique referent in the context. We met an asymmetry at this point: apparently only CF can have an exhaustive interpretation, while IF cannot.

(5) Tegnep este MARINAK mutattam be Pétert.

last night Mary.dat (I) introduced Peter.acc

‘It was TO MARY that I introduced Peter last night.’ (É. Kiss, 1998:247 ex.5)

Sentence (5) presents a CF, which also expresses exhaustive interpretation: out of a set of individuals present in the domain of discourse, Mary was the only one that was introduced to Peter. IF cannot express exhaustivity, because it marks only the non-presupposed nature of the information it carries. The function of CF is expressed in (6):

(6) An identificational focus represents a subset of the set of contextually or situationally given elements for which the predicate phrase can potentially hold: it is identified as the exhaustive subset of this set for which the predicate phrase actually hold. (É Kiss, 1998:249)

Such an option seems to be open to preverbal focus only (the position used for CF in Hungarian), whereas postverbal focus cannot express exhaustive identification.

The main piece of evidence showing that preverbal focus expresses exhaustivity is the dialogue in (7), where (7b) is appropriate only when (7a) conveys an exhaustive identification, because of the intervention of negation:

(7) a. Mari EGY KALAPOT nézett ki magának.

Mary a hat-acc picked out herself-acc

‘It was A HAT that Mary picked for herself.’

b. Nem, egy kabátot is ki nézett.

no, a coat too out picked

‘No, she picked a coat, too’. (É. Kiss, 1998:249 ex.8a,b)

According to É Kiss, there is cross-linguistic evidence supporting data on exhaustivity. Cleft sentences are apparently the only way to express exhaustive identification in English:

(8) a. It was A HAT that Mary picked for herself.

b. Mary picked herself A HAT.

(8a) means that the only thing that Mary chose from several pieces of clothing was a hat and nothing else, whereas in (8b) this interpretation is not available: in this case the hat is simply one of the possible things that Mary could have brought, but there is nothing that tells us that a hat was the only thing.

Moreover, É. Kiss states that preverbal focus in Hungarian, as well as cleft sentences in English, are not grammatical if expressed with universal quantifiers, *also*-phrases, *even*-phrases and *some*-phrases. Probably this has to do with the fact that their respective meanings are not compatible with each other. This lexical restriction is not found with IF, which is perfectly fine even with such elements.

But what about Italian? Is there any way to express exhaustive identification? As already noted by Brunetti (2004), apparently not: no matter which position focus is inserted in, this won't change focus interpretation: it will always express new information or contrast, but no exhaustivity. The Italian examples corresponding to (8) in fact do not show a particular interpretation:

(9) a. UN CAPPELLO ha comprato Maria.

a hat has bought Mary

‘Mary bought A HAT.’

b. Maria ha comprato UN CAPPELLO

Mary bought a hat

Neither (9a) nor (9b) can express exhaustive identification: in both sentences we simply

know that Mary brought a hat, but there are no clues telling us that the hat was the only thing she chose, either with a preverbal or a postverbal focus. Moreover, the dialogue in (7) does not work in Italian, as seen in (10).

- (10) a. UN CAPPELLO ha comprato Maria
a hat has bought Maria
'It is a hat that Maria bought.'
- b. # No, ha comprato anche un cappotto
no (she) has bought too a coat
'No, she bought a coat too.'

(10b) cannot be accepted as an answer to (10a), a sentence containing a CF.

Italian does not show the lexical constraint: universal quantifiers, *also*-phrases, *even*-phrases and *some*-phrases can be found in a preverbal or postverbal position (and both with IF and CF) to show once again that such an interpretation is not active in Italian. What about Italian cleft sentences? Is it possible that exhaustiveness is expressed by these structures as in the case of English? Following Brunetti (2004), it is not. In fact even in this case a dialogue like (10) is not possible: the answer is always considered incorrect. Not only that, but once again there are no lexical restrictions, as in the case of (11)²⁰:

- (11) a. Stai aspettando l'autobus?
are (you) waiting the bus
'Are you waiting for the bus?'
- b. No, è QUALCUNO che sto aspettando.
no, it is someone that (I) am waiting
'No, it is SOMEONE that I am waiting for.' (Brunetti, 2004:71, ex.33a,b)

Therefore this distinction between IF and CF is not valid, as far as Italian is concerned. Italian, and many other languages, cannot express exhaustivity through the

²⁰ There seems to be a problematic case where the coexistence of a cleft sentence with a CF and an *also*-phrase, or *even*-phrase is not completely grammatical. It is the case of (i) (Brunetti, 2004:72):

(i) *? È anche / persino il CAPPELLO che ha comprato Maria.

(it) is also even the hat that has bought Maria

'It was also the HAT that Mary bought.'

In this case, in fact, the sentence is a lot worse than the others and cannot be accepted. How can we explain its different status, if we cannot attribute it to the exhaustive interpretation of CF contained in cleft sentences?

use of some particular syntactic structure, but has to use particles in order to obtain this effect: it is by adding a particle like *solo* that we can identify a unique referent from the context.

If we cannot talk of such a difference in interpretation, how can we then express the different interpretive imports that are conveyed by IF and CF? Some scholars (Vallduví & Vilkuna, 1998 among others), claim that this is due to the notion of contrast, which can contribute to assign different interpretations to focused constituents. We will analyze this feature later.

Following Rooth (1992), there is no semantic difference between IF and CF: their truth conditions are the same, since they both express contrast, either explicitly (in the case of CF) or implicitly (in IF). In fact, in this view there is nothing that makes us distinguish between (12b) and (13b).

(12) a. Cos'ha mangiato ieri Sara?

what has eaten yesterday Sara

'What did Sara eat yesterday?'

b. Ha mangiato [un panino]_{IF}.

(she) has eaten a sandwich

'She ate a sandwich.'

(13) a. Ieri Sara ha mangiato una torta.

yesterday Sara has eaten a cake

'Yesterday Sara ate a cake.'

b. No, Sara ha mangiato un PANINO

no, Sara has eaten a sandwich

'No, Sara ate a SANDWICH.'

The truth conditions are the same because the presupposition and the assertion are identical: Sara ate something (presupposition) and she ate a sandwich (assertion).

If we can state that the truth conditions are identical, we cannot do the same with the contexts in which they can be considered appropriate: (12b) is adequate only as an answer, but not in a context of repair, which is instead the one necessary for (13b). If we change their contexts, (12b) and (13b) cannot be considered correct. Pragmatic contexts do distinguish between IF and CF.

2.3 Prosodic differences

Once again, we do not have a unified analysis, not even in the prosodic domain: not everyone agrees on the differences between IF and CF. This is valid not only for Italian, but also for other languages. Whether it is possible to distinguish phonologically between IF and CF or not has been (and still is) a relevant question for many languages. According to some scholars (Bolinger, 1989), there is no such difference; but for others it is only thanks to intonation that we can assign a contrastive interpretation to some constituents.

Note that this is a very important point, because if a difference in prosody is proved, we are forced to state that IF and CF are not the same phenomenon. Prosodic analyses are often recent, and there is still much work to be done: in fact these are often restricted to some varieties of Italian (see Avesani & Vayra 2004 for Florentine Tuscan Italian, D'Imperio 2001 for Neapolitan, Gili Favela 2002 for Pisa Italian, inter alia) and moreover usually a limited number of informants is used. In this way we are not completely sure of the relation between stress and focus, whereas using a bigger number of speakers would increase statistical relevance.

2.3.1 Basic notions of phonology

Mentioning some notions regarding the phonology of intonation can be helpful, even though this will be only a brief explanation not meant to be complete.

The pitch contour of an utterance is considered the “phonetic realization of a sequence of discrete tonal events” (Bocci, 2013:111). Tonal events are associated with boundaries and heads of the prosodic structure (considered specific points of the prosodic structure). The effects of phonetic implementation rules can intervene and define either the height of pitch accents (PA) or the alignment with the segmental string.

Tonal events can be defined as high (H) or low (L); they can be associated with boundaries of an intonational phrase (and therefore be considered boundary tones indicated with %), but also with the boundary of an intermediate phrase boundary (and in this case phrase accent is signaled as T-). The role of boundary tones is to delimit prosodic edges.

The events associated with metrical heads are called Pitch Accents (PA); they give prominence to the material they are associated to and they can be formed by a

unique tonal event or by two tonal events. In the first case we have a monotonal PA, whereas in the second one a bitonal PA. When we are dealing with a bitonal PA the most prominent tone is marked with a star (*), and the other as a plus (+). When a PA is said to be nuclear we are referring to the PA followed only by a phrase accent or a boundary tone.

As far as focus is concerned, the focused constituent contains the phonologically most prominent lexical item. Prominence, then, is what determines the *focus set* (what can be interpreted as new information) of a sentence. The focus set of a sentence must include the word carrying main prominence, and all the constituents connected to it on the basis of its syntactic structure²¹. According to some scholars (Nespor & Guasti 2002, Donati & Nespor 2003), prominence can be emphatic or nonemphatic, and the two are connected to distinct kinds of foci.

2.3.2 Italian evidence

In Italian there are several recent studies taking into account the prosodic realization of IF and CF, but there are some scholars who do not agree on these differences. Brunetti (2004), for example, refused this distinction stating that the studies did not regard the differences between IF and CF, but the ones between CF and broad focus. It is (also) for this reason that I will not take into account the studies dedicated to this argument, and I will instead focus only on those concerning IF and CF. According to some scholars (Donati & Nespor, 2003: 1131), the phonetic difference of IF and CF is “audibly different across languages”.

A clear distinction between narrow focus²² and CF is that in the former there is no one-to-one correspondence between the focused constituent and phonological prominence, whereas in the latter this correspondence is maintained (Nespor & Guasti, 2002). This means that in the first case several constituents can be interpreted as focus, but the emphatic stress connected to CF does not permit the same: only the constituent which carries emphatic stress is interpreted as focus. CF “cannot project beyond the word that bears main stress” (Nespor & Guasti, 2002:82).

According to Nespor & Guasti (2002), a phonological piece of evidence

²¹ See Reinhart (1995) and Neeleman & Reinhart (1998).

²² For Nespor & Guasti (2002), narrow focus is actually the corresponding of IF: “narrow focus refers to cases in which a constituent of the sentence is informationally new and the rest of the sentence is presupposed” (Nespor & Guasti 2002:80).

concerning the distinction of IF and CF is the occurrence of restructuring processes, which do not take place with narrow focus. The prosodic tree of CF can change depending on restructuring processes that may intervene in their prosodic phrasing. In fact, when contrast is on a weak node, the phonological phrase that contains it tends to be included in the preceding phonological phrase (as in the cases of *Raddoppiamento Sintattico* and Iambic Reversal). On the other side, when contrast is on a strong node, we have the insertion of an intonational phrase boundary to the right of the CF constituent (this is what happens with *Gorgia Toscana*).

However, as noted by Avesani & Vayra (2004), this kind of evidence cannot be used when the focused constituent is in sentence final position. In this case, the focused constituent corresponds to the last constituent of the sentence, and therefore this will naturally be followed by an intonational break.

Another distinction (Nespor & Guasti 2002, Donati & Nespor 2003) is that IF can have a domain as small as a word, and as large as a sentence, whereas CF is different: its minimum domain is a morpheme and its maximum domain a word.

(14) a. Leo è Amorable (non IMmorale).

Leo is amoral (not immoral)

b. Non ho visto Marino, ho visto Marina.

not have (I) seen Marino, (I) have seen Marina

‘I didn’t saw Marino, I saw Marina.’

(Nespor & Guasti, 2002:88, 18,19)

This means that the domain of CF is just the element that receives main prominence, whereas the one of IF is larger and can be attributed to a range of constituents.

However, their proposal is not without problems: some of these claims are not valid for Italian. First of all, the fact that CF cannot project (as was already claimed by É. Kiss, 1998), nor that it be larger than a word. Of course stress falls on a syllable only, but focus interpretation is not limited to a syllable since it involves the whole part that expresses new information²³. Sentences in (15) and (16) show that CF can actually be larger than a word and affect an entire constituent, be it in situ (15b) or in the left periphery (15c).

²³ We can talk about ‘focus projection’ (Chomsky, 1971): focus can involve a larger constituent than the one which contains main stress.

(15) a. Maria ha incontrato il professor Rossi.

Maria has met the professor Rossi

‘Maria met professor Rossi.’

b. No, ha incontrato [DPIL MAESTRO [PPDELLA FIGLIA [PPDI PIETRO]]].

no, (she) has met the teacher of the daughter of Pietro

‘No, she met PETER’s daughter’s teacher.’

c. No, [DPIL MAESTRO [PPDELLA FIGLIA [PPDI PIETRO]]] ha incontrato.

no, the teacher of the daughter of Peter (she) has met

(Brunetti, 2004:77, ex 45a,b and 47b)

(16) a. Hanno bussato alla porta?

(they) have knocked the door

‘Did someone knock the door?’

b. No, [STANNO [PIANTANDO [UN CHIODO]]].

no, (they) are driving a nail

‘No, they are driving a nail.’

(Brunetti, 2004:77, ex 48a,b)

It is not correct to say that IF cannot be smaller than a word, either. In fact, once an appropriate context is furnished, this is actually a possible option. According to Brunetti (2004), such a restriction is more linked to pragmatic factors than to the kind of focus involved. We can find a single focused morpheme only in highly marked contexts: an echo question where the background part is pronounced and the missing one is the one that should be focused in the answer. This is what happens in (17). Since we are dealing with a very specific question, it is an extremely rare situation.

(17) a. Hai visto un ‘cosa’-pardo?

have (you) seen a what pard

b. Ho visto un **leopardo**.

(I) have seen a leopard

(Brunetti, 2004:79, ex 51a,b)

Avesani & Vayra (2004) tried to investigate the prosodic properties of IF and CF with a test in which short dialogues were read by Italian speakers. These dialogues had IF and CF in sentence final position, so that if a difference was noted, this could only be attributed to the kind of intonation used and not to connection between focus and its position in the sentence (which was the problem in Nespor & Guasti 2002). The

dialogues presented were read aloud for five times by Florentine Tuscan speakers. The results are often different according to the speaker, or to the intonation used.

With CF it was noted that the nuclear syllable was pronounced with high or raising tones with a difference in the leading tone, the pitch accents used were always L+H* (realized in 56% of the cases) and H+H* (31%).

IF was instead produced as H+L* (75%) or as H* (25%). Therefore, IF and CF are (almost) always associated to different accents and are signaled in different ways: their phonological realization is different.

The most frequently used alternative accent was H*, which is also the most commonly used accent in a prenuclear position. This supports the hypothesis that it corresponds to an unmarked accent used to signal new information and saliency.

The results regarding CF were in line with preceding cross-linguistic analyses of this phenomenon stating that there is a specific accent connected to CF (see Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg 1990 and Selkirk 2002 for English, Frota 2000 for Portuguese and Face 2001 for Spanish).

The data regarding CF are confirmed in Bocci & Avesani (2006), who claim that there is a strict connection between interpretive properties of CF and phonological ones: in their study a corpus with CF realized on the left, broad focus and CLLD was read aloud by a Sienese speaker. CF triggers a special intonation: L+H*. From this study we can note that the intonation assigned to CF is always the same, both when this is realized in situ and when it is fronted.

We have also evidence from Bocci (2013) with two different experiments with Sienese speakers who had to read aloud some dialogues. Intonational properties of CF (either in final and non final position), IF, RD constituents and also CLLD were analyzed. The results showed once again that CF associates with L+H*, whereas IF with H+L* (and in some cases even L+H* and H*).

The second experiment showed the same outcome: the pitch contour of CF is described as L+H*, a rise-fall movement with a low target and a peak, followed by another low target- which is actually claimed not to be part of the metrical prominence (namely it is not anchored to the stressed syllable or to the peak)²⁴. CF is systematically associated with L+H*, either in the case it occurs in situ or when it is fronted.

²⁴ Apparently, this is the main difference with a similar experiment conducted on Pisa Italian by Gili Favela (2002): in this case the second low target is considered a part of CF, and is therefore analyzed as a structural appendix of the PA.

An interesting part of Bocci's (2013) research concerns the prosodic contour of the negative tag of CF: the pitch accent associated to it is L+H*, namely it reproduces the same pitch accent of the CF which precedes it²⁵. As noted also by Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015b), negative tags are always realized as independent intonational phrases, which are also separated from the utterance containing CF by a prosodic boundary, if not by an actual silent pause. We can assume that the negative tag does not affect the prosodic properties of the preceding clause.

According to these studies, therefore, CF and IF are systematically realized in different ways. This distinction, however, is signaled only by different pitch accents, but no other prosodic properties seem to be involved (Bocci, 2013). We thus have to be careful because a pitch accent of the L+H* type is not used only for CF, but it can signal other elements not associated with focus. Moreover, since pitch accents do not always express the semantics and pragmatics of the constituents they mark, their value must be identified with reference to the prosodic structure in which they occur.

Interestingly, an important result in Bocci (2013) is the fact that focus is not always followed by an intonational phrase boundary. As a consequence, Bocci states that when focus is in a non-final position, we can have an intonational phrase whose metrical heads are not associated with the rightmost element. As we will see later on, such a claim is extremely important to understand focus position.

Therefore, the difference between IF and CF is not only signaled by the context, but also by the way they are phonologically realized. "It is the different phonological and pragmatic behavior (in the sense of appropriate context of use) of NF and CF that motivates the need for introducing two different focus features. The difference [...] is thus not semantic in nature [...]. It is instead both pragmatic and phonological" (Nespor & Guasti, 2002:88).

²⁵ Bocci (2013) also mentions the fact that the accent in the negative tag is associated with the negation *non*; this is a peculiar aspect given the clitic status of this element, which in other cases cannot bear high prominence. See Bocci (2013:140) for more details.

2.4 Syntactic differences

We can find some differences on the syntactic side as well, but even in this case it is difficult to propose a unified analysis. The main difference is that CF can undergo movement (since we can find it both in its base position and at the beginning of the sentence), but IF cannot, apparently.

I will not take into account the syntactic differences between IF and CF which É. Kiss (1998) pointed out, namely that CF can only be an entire XP whereas IF can be smaller or larger, and the fact that IF can project while CF can iterate. That CF can project as well was already shown in 2.2 with evidence from Brunetti (2004). Focus iteration is instead a controversial subject, because ever since Calabrese (1982) and Rizzi (1997) the claim that there can be only one focus per sentence has been accepted. I will not consider now whether or not this is true, but according to Brunetti (2004), for both IF and CF iteration may be an option.

Several authors have considered the difference between IF and CF so important that two different positions were postulated. According to É. Kiss (1998), only CF moves to the left periphery. In Italian the same property was noted as well: Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004) claimed that the interpretive differences between IF and CF have to be syntactically encoded in some way, and therefore they need different structural positions. In her proposal, in fact, we have two different focus projections: one in the left periphery for CF and the other one, dedicated to IF, in the area above ν P. In Belletti's proposal, CF always moves, even in the cases in which it seems to stay in situ; this is so because it has to reach its dedicated projection in the CP.

Benincà & Poletto (2004) proposed the existence of two distinct projections as well. In this case, though, the two are adjacent: in the higher CP layer are located the positions dedicated to topics, and two focus positions follow them.

Italian data support the hypothesis that IF is never found in the left periphery: if new information is at the beginning of an answer to a *wh*-question, its position is not correct and ungrammaticality depends on this²⁶.

Not everyone agrees on this point: Brunetti (2004) once again wants to show that the correct interpretation of focus is a unified approach, and therefore not only there are no semantic and prosodic differences, but not even syntactic ones. I have already

²⁶ According to some authors this is not completely true. See Cruschina (2012), who claims that in Sicilian IF can occur in the left periphery as well. A sentence with IF at the beginning seems to be perfectly fine in this dialect of Italy.

explained in 1.4.5 Brunetti's proposal for focus movement, but I will repeat here her analysis.

She states that movement is present either for IF and CF, but only in the second case we can see it. In fact IF not only displays movement, but such a movement is hidden by ellipsis: we cannot see it because the rest of the sentence is elided.

Her analysis starts with the claim that (18b) is not ungrammatical, and not even pragmatically incorrect, but rather redundant.

(18) a. Che cosa ha vinto Anna?

what did Anna win?

b. ?? UN LIBRO ha vinto Anna

a book has won Anna

Apparently this is due to the fact that, with IF, the focused constituent moves out from its base position, to a position higher than IP, and then the rest of the clause (namely the background part) is elided, as in (19) and (20):

(19) [DP Un libro]_i [IP ha [VP vinto [DP Anna] t_i]]

(20) [DP Un libro]_i [~~IP ha [VP vinto [DP Anna] t_i]]~~

Similar proposals have already been made for other languages as well, in particular for negative fragment answers for Greek (Giannakidou, 2000) and Spanish (Alonso-Ovalle & Guerzoni, 2004). According to these hypotheses, ellipsis is present when an answer is formed only by a negative word: we are actually dealing with a whole NP, but with ellipsis. According to Brunetti this is true for Italian as well, but with the difference that ellipsis is always present, not only with negative words.

(21) Ellipsis of background material in a sentence applies if the elided material has an antecedent which is also background material. (Brunetti, 2004:105)

Brunetti's generalization is said to explain why a short answer is preferable than a full one when focus is preverbal, as in (18b): the background of the answer can be elided since it has an antecedent in the previous question. The same generalization is valid for CF as well: the background can be elided only when contrastive focus has an antecedent in the preceding sentence. This, thus, explains why focus always moves to the left, even if the movement is not always overtly visible because of the intervention

of ellipsis. “The difference between a wh-QA context and a contrastive context is then in the fact that the former always favors ellipsis, while the latter can either favor ellipsis or not” (Brunetti, 2004:107).

But still, we have to consider the fact that ellipsis does not always occur. In fact quite often we do find a full sentence in an answer to a wh-question. Why cannot ellipsis apply when IF is in situ? According to Brunetti (2004), this is due to the fact that when the focused constituent stays in situ, we should apply ellipsis to a chunk of constituent, but this is not possible. Therefore “the impossibility of having ellipsis makes the material preceding focus tolerable”.

However, such an explanation is not satisfactory: ellipsis is not always the preferred option, either with CF or with IF. This means that we often find focus in situ with both IF and CF. How can this be explained? It cannot depend only on the absence of an antecedent, as shown in the sentences below.

(22) a. Cosa ha mangiato Gianni?

what has eaten Gianni

b. Gianni ha mangiato una fetta di torta.

Gianni has eaten a piece of cake

(23) a. Maria ha visto Lucia a scuola.

Maria has seen Lucia at school

b. No, Maria ha visto LUCA.

no, Maria has seen Luca

(22) and (23) both have antecedents in the discourse, but ellipsis has not applied anyway, neither with IF in (22b), nor with CF (23c).

Once again, we are actually dealing with optionality of movement, and moreover with optionality of ellipsis. In fact, it seems that ellipsis can be reduced to an optional phenomenon, which can be applied to a sentence or not, depending on several aspects, and not only on the presence of an antecedent: this does not explain all the cases in which background is present and ellipsis (and movement) does not apply.

2.4.1 *The case of Sicilian*

Sicilian is an interesting case: Cruschina (2012) states in fact that not only CF, but also IF can be in the left periphery, thanks to the ‘relevance’ feature. Basically, this pragmatic feature allows for focus fronting in either CF (the one that we are used to, expressing alternatives and creating contrast), and also in IF. In this case it is connected to an emphatic reading, but no contrast is involved.

(24) a. Chi scrivisti?

what (you) wrote

‘What did you write?’

b. **N’articulu** scrissi.

an article (I) wrote

‘I wrote an article.’

(Cruschina, 2012:58, ex. 33a,b)

According to Cruschina, example (24b) can be considered pragmatically appropriate when the focused constituent is relevant for the communicative interaction between interlocutors, as in the case of an answer to a wh- question. Thus, focus fronting in Sicilian is not connected to a specific sentence type, but it can occur with every kind of sentence, and moreover it can involve constituents of every category. Focus fronting has a functional and interpretive role, namely it is used to give emphasis on the moved constituent, and for this reason it is associated to relevance.

Even though it may seem that Sicilian data offer support to a unified analysis of focus, since the properties of IF and CF are similar and movement is used for both, we will see that this is not true, and instead they offer more evidence for a distinction of the two.

Focus fronting of IF is found not only in Sicilian, but also in other dialects of Italian, such as Sardinian (Jones, 1993 and Mensching & Remberger, 2010). According to Jones (1993), fronted constituents always have a focus interpretation and once again, even though a constituent is fronted, it can convey new information and does not involve contrast.

(25) a. **Comporatu** l’as?

(you) bought it have

‘Did you buy it?’

b. Emmo, **comporatu** l'appo.

yes, (I) bought it have

'Yes, I bought it.'

(Jones, 1993:355, ex 131a,b)

These data are crucial, in that they permit us to compare the syntactic behavior of IF and CF once they are both fronted in first position. There are several differences between the two that lead us to the conclusion that IF and CF are different also from a syntactic point of view.

First of all, both in Sicilian and in Sardinian IF requires to be adjacent to the verb²⁷, even when IF is fronted in the left periphery. Any sentence deviating from this constraint will be considered ungrammatical. The same does not happen with CF, which can be separated from the verb, as in (26).

(26) A SALVO i chiavi i detti, no a Pinu.

to Salvo the keys them (I) gave, not to Pinu

'I gave the keys to Salvo, not to Pinu.'

(Cruschina, 2012:151, ex 32)

With IF, moreover, partial movement is not accepted: fronting from embedded clauses has to be in the left periphery and it cannot stop in the intermediate periphery, otherwise the sentence is considered ungrammatical, as in (27c). The same is not true for CF, which can land in the left periphery of the embedded clause (28).

(27)**Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.** a. Chi voli ca ci accattu au mercatu?

what (he) want that to-him (I) buy at-the market

'What does he want me to buy him at the market?'

b. **I mennuli** voli ca ci accatti.

the almonds (he) want that to-him (you) buy

'He wants you to buy (some) almonds.'

c. * Voli ca **i mennuli** ci accatti

(he) want that the almonds to-him (you) buy

(Cruschina, 2012:152, ex 34a,b,c)

(28) Voli ca I MENNULI ci accatti (, no i fastuchi).

(he) wants that the almonds to-him (you) buy (, not the pistachios)

'He wants you to buy him ALMONDS (, not pistachios).'

(Cruschina, 2012:153, ex 35)

²⁷ As noted by Frascarelli (2000) this constraint is typical of many languages.

Finally, CF is not sensitive to weak islands, contrary to IF; this means that while CF can be extracted from a wh-island as in (30), IF cannot (29).

(29) * **A Pina** un sacciu quannu annu a operari.

to-Pina (I) not know when (they) have to operate

‘I don’t know when they will operate on Pina.’

(30) **Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.** A PINA un sacciu quannu annu a operari, quannu annu a operari a Salvo u sacciu.

to Pina (I) not know when (they) have to operate, when (they have to operate Salvo it (I) know

‘I don’t know when they will operate on Pina, (but) I do know when they will operate on Salvo.’

(Cruschina, 2012:155, ex 43, 44)

Therefore, we can conclude that the data of Sicilian and Sardinian show that we must distinguish IF and CF even from a syntactic point of view. Cruschina in his analysis hypothesises that CF and IF are connected to two different projections in the left periphery, and that their movement is triggered by two different features connected to each type of focus (see chapter 3 for a discussion).

2.5 Conclusions

We have seen that there are several differences between IF and CF, and that a unified analysis is not appropriate.

Pragmatically IF and CF cannot possibly be reduced to the same phenomenon since their function is different: IF expresses new information, but no contrast is implied (see Rochemont 1986), whereas CF evokes an alternative, a contrast which is not always connected to new information (at least from a referential point of view), as illustrated by the distribution of focused pronouns (see Rochemont 1986, Gundel 1999 and Gundel & Fretheim 2004). Moreover, the contexts where IF is accepted are different from the ones where CF is required: their presuppositions are different.

Even though it seems that from a semantic point of view IF and CF cannot be distinguished, in the sense that they display the same truth-value, as stated by Brunetti (2004) contra É. Kiss (1998), it is not so simple to get to such a conclusion, since there

is a deep connection with the notion of contrast versus new information.

Syntactically, they seem to occupy two different positions, but this might be a false conclusion. The proposal of ellipsis-and-movement by Brunetti (2004) is an interesting one, but it still has some problems and unsolved questions which are difficult to deal with.

The position of focus is still a debated question, as well as its movement. The behavior of IF and CF in different varieties of Italian gives us some hints: Cruschina (2012) noted that in Sicilian and Sardinian IF and CF are systematically connected to different properties. These differences let us state that even from a syntactic point of view, the two foci differ. It would then be interesting to check whether this difference can be found in other dialects of Italian as well.

The prosodic contour connected to IF and CF is extremely helpful as well in showing that the PAs systematically connected to CF and IF are not identical.

What remains to be considered is the status of IF: is it really a focus? According to several authors it is not (see Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015). It has often been argued that the structure of IF (and the contexts in which it occurs) is actually parallel to an out-of-the-blue sentence: its syntactic properties are identical to those of a normal sentence, and apparently it is not connected to a particular intonation.

The question is important, and more studies are necessary in order to understand the status of IF. First of all, cross-linguistic analyses are needed, both considering other languages and other Italian dialects. The differences between a sentence with IF and an out-of-the-blue one should be taken into account: it would be interesting to understand whether in the latter case the fronting of a constituent is still possible as in the case of Sicilian and Sardinian IF described by Cruschina (2012). Moreover, a prosodic analysis could reveal if these structures are realized in different ways, and thus they would help us in determining the status of new information focus.

3. FOCUS TYPOLOGY

Is the distinction between IF and CF enough in order to talk about focus typology? If we consider IF as focus, probably it is. But it is also true that apparently focus types are more than two (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a, 2015b). As noted also by Cruschina (2012), IF and CF are not enough to explain focus fronting, because we have other instances which show that other kinds of focus can be found in the left periphery. In fact, not only do we have contrastive focus, but may also find *corrective* focus (which is considered a subtype of CF), and *mirative* focus, at least in Italian. Moreover, in other languages an *exhaustive* focus has been hypothesized. So, how many foci are there?

In the next sections I will present the different properties of the foci individuated.

Cross-linguistic data can be helpful in stating whether such a difference is a general property of language, or it has to be connected only to the properties of Italian focalization.

An analysis of focus is not complete without considering this more general issue: as said in 1.5 above, determining the types of focus/foci is an additional clue to get to a solution for the problems discussed. It is therefore necessary to consider this point with attention.

3.1 Asymmetries in focus fronting

Bianchi (2013) noted that there are some asymmetries regarding the possibility of focus fronting: apparently this is not always possible, even when we are dealing with CF.

The first asymmetry concerns the possibility of focus fronting in the answer to a *wh*- question, where only a low focus seems to be accepted. Note that this is not the case when correction is already entailed in the common ground. In fact, focus fronting is possible when the proposition that needs correction has been introduced in the common ground, otherwise it is not, as in (1c).

(1) a. Lisa è andata a Madrid?

Lisa is gone to Madrid

‘Did Lisa go to Madrid?’

b. No, è andata a LISBONA (non a Madrid).

no (she) is gone to Lisbon (not to Madrid)

‘No, she went to LISBON (not to Madrid).’

c. # No, a LISBONA è andata (non a Madrid).

no, to Lisbon (she) is gone (not to Madrid)

Second, focus fronting is not appropriate when the denied sentence does not coincide with part of the focus in the corrected sentence, as in (2c).

(2) **Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.** a. Gianni adora il sushi

Gianni loves the sushi

b. No, (lui) adora la cucina ciNEse, non quella giapponese.

no, (he) loves the coking Chinese, not the-one Japanese

‘No, he loves CHINESE cooking, not Japanese cooking.’

c. # (No,) la cucina ciNEse adora, non quella giapponese.

(no,) the coking Chinese (he) loves, not the-one Japanese

(Bianchi, 2013:198, ex 10a,b,c)

The third asymmetry is that the background of fronted focus cannot contain more material than the background of the corrected assertion, as can be seen in (3c) as opposed to (3d).

(3) **Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.** a. Dove studia Gianni ora?

where (he) study Gianni now

‘Where does Gianni study now?’

b. Studia all’SOAS di Londra.

(he) study at the SOAS of London

‘He studies at the SOAS of London.’

c. No, studia (danza classica) alla Royal Ballet SCHOOL.

no, (he) study classical dance at the Royal Ballet School

‘No, he studies (classical dance) at the Royal Ballet School.’

d. No, alla Royal Ballet SCHOOL studia (#danza classica).

no, at-the Royal Ballet School (he) study (dance classical)

(Bianchi, 2013:199, ex 12a,b,c)

Finally, if the fronted focus is embedded, it cannot be in the scope of a matrix clause negation, as can be seen in (4c).

(4) a. Il vocabolario, hai detto che lo darai a Gianni.

the dictionary, (you) have said that (you) it will-give to Gianni

‘You said that you will give the dictionary to John.’

b. Non ho detto che lo darò a GiANNi (ma a Lucia)!

(I) not have said that (I) i twill-give to Gianni (but to Lucia)!

‘I have not said that I will give it to GIANNI (but to Lucia).’

c. ^{??/*} Non ho detto che a GiANNi lo darò (ma a Lucia)!

(I) not have said that to Gianni (I) it will-give (but to Lucia)

(Bianchi, 2013:199, ex 13a,b,c)

These asymmetries show us that the in situ position is more constrained than the fronted one, and moreover that a distinction between IF and CF is not enough: if we consider only such an analysis, we would not be able to account for these differences. According to Bianchi (2013), this has to be attributed to the difference of contrastive and corrective focus.

(5) Maria era molto elegante l’altra sera a teatro.

Maria was really elegant the other night at (the) theater

(6) L’altra sera a teatro, Maria si era messa uno straccetto di H&M.

the other night at (the) theater Maria wore a cheap-dress from H&M

(7) Si era messa un ArMAAni, non uno straccetto di H&M

(she) wore an Armani (dress), not a cheap dress from H&M

(Bianchi & Bocci, 2012:2,ex 2, 3,4)

The difference between merely contrastive focus and corrective focus can be seen in sentences above. In fact, if (7) follows (5), the sentence has a contrastive import since the focused direct object contrasts with the alternative of the negative tag. If, instead, (7) follows (6), it has to be considered a corrective focus, because part of the preceding assertion has been corrected. Only in the latter case is focus fronting possible.

3.2 Merely contrastive focalization

The definition of contrastive focalization is that CF involves reference to (at least) two alternatives: one is asserted in the antecedent proposition, and the other in the corrective claim. However, contrastive focus can occur even without the corrective import, as in the case of (8), where two alternatives are present, but no correction is involved. In this case, CF simply contrasts a constituent with an alternative: it conveys that there is a salient alternative in the context, but no presupposition is associated to it. Moreover, we can note that the alternatives are inside the same utterance. Utterance-internal contrast seems to be a crucial property that distinguishes merely contrastive focalization from corrective one.

In a merely contrastive focalization the non-focal material does not need to be given.

(8) Context: A and B prepare to lift a fragile object

Bisogna sollevarlo pIAno, non con forza.

(it) needs lift gently, not violently

‘One must lift it gently, not violently.’

(Bianchi, 2013:204, ex 17)

According to Bianchi (2013), a sentence like (8) is not felicitous with a fronted focus. Such a hypothesis was in fact proved with an experiment: sentences with contrastive focus in situ were preferred over their alternatives with fronted focus in the 98.1% of the utterances (Bianchi & Bocci (2012)).

3.3 Corrective focus

As seen above, corrective focus and contrastive focus have to be distinguished in order to be able to explain their different behaviors. They are not completely different, though, in that corrective focus involves the presence of (at least) two alternatives as well: one is expressed in the previous utterance and is incompatible from the other one, which we find in the corrective claim. Therefore, we can say that corrective focus is a subtype of CF (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a).

An important difference is that the corrective move has the alternatives expressed in two different utterances, and not in the same speech act as in the case of CF. Moreover, corrective focus carries an incompatibility presupposition: first of all, it implies a correction of the preceding proposition. For this reason it must have a background: the target of the correction will always be something that has been previously uttered.

There are some constraints that need to be satisfied in a corrective import (van Leusen, 2004):

- Consistency: the input and the output contexts have to be both logically consistent;
- Informativity: the semantic content of the update is not entailed in the input context²⁸;
- Antecedent: there has to be an antecedent proposition (which is also the target of the corrective move). The background of the corrective claim must be shared by the antecedent, and they must concern the same topic situation.
- Incompatibility condition: the updated context must entail the denial of the antecedent proposition, even though an explicit mark of denial is not needed. However, only the focus part needs to be incompatible with the antecedent proposition, and not the entire sentence: the background still needs to be parallel to the preceding proposition.
- Locality condition: the propositional content of a discourse move is interpreted in reference to a contextually given spatio-temporal-modal setting.

²⁸ These two properties are not strictly related to the corrective import, but are rather general felicity conditions affecting any update.

- (9) *Corrective import*: there is only one alternative proposition, already introduced in the context, which is incompatible with the proposition expressed in the corrective reply. (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a:9)

We can define correction as a complex move, which updates the common ground through the denial of a preceding proposition and the assertion of a new one, which involves contrast across utterances. As noted by Bianchi (2013), correction is only partial, and in fact the proposition is divided into an incompatible part (represented by the focus) and a validating one (which is the rest of the sentence, parallel to what was previously said). The background of the fronted focus repeats the background of the corrected assertion and cannot contain additional material, and therefore the non-focal part must be given.

3.4 Mirative focalization

In a mirative context, the focused constituent is unexpected or surprising, and mirativity itself is considered a “grammatical category whose primary meaning is speaker’s unprepared mind, unexpected new information and concomitant surprise” (Aikhenvald, 2004:209). It may be the case that when this is used, the speaker signals in some way that her/his utterance has been acquired only recently, and therefore is not integrated in her/his system of beliefs yet.

Focus fronting and the particular intonation associated to mirative focus give an exclamative flavor to the sentence, and therefore the distinction between a declarative and an exclamative may be difficult to see in case of focus fronting, as noted by Cruschina (2012).

The non-focal material is not necessarily given, and in fact mirative focus can also be uttered in “out of the blue” contexts. Moreover, it cannot be considered a CF, because it does not entail two alternatives in the context since the focus alternatives seem to be based on expectations (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a).

With mirative focus, fronting is allowed.

- (10) **Un anello di diamanti** le ha regalato!

a ring of diamonds (he) to-her has given

‘He gave her a diamond ring!’

(Bianchi, 2015:62, ex 4)

The focused constituent in (10) implies that such information is unexpected or surprising. Zimmermann (2007) considers it as a focus even though such a sentence could also be uttered out of the blue. The reason for such an analysis is that apparently we can still generate the alternatives needed in order to interpret it as mirative import. In fact, mirative import “conveys that the asserted proposition is unexpected as compared to some distinct focus alternative(s)²⁹” (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a:5), as expressed in (11)

(11) *Mirative import*: there is at least one focus alternative proposition which is more likely than the asserted proposition with respect to a contextually relevant modal base and a stereotypical ordering source.

(Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a:9)

With mirative focus we don't need the presence of a salient proposition in the discourse, since other alternatives more likely than the ones expressed by the clause can be inferred from general background knowledge, if not from context. The mirative import conveys that the proposition is unexpected when compared with at least one distinct focus alternative.

Following (11), we can explain (10) by saying that there is at least one member of the set of alternative propositions that is more likely than the one expressed, namely that Gianni gave Mary a diamond ring. The interlocutors have to agree on the fact that there is at least one more likely alternative proposition, but no agreement on a specific one is needed.

As noted by Bianchi (2015) the mirative import involves an evaluative component, because it is not only based on the shared information, but also on a shared evaluative perspective.

3.5 Mirative vs. corrective focus

To state whether mirative and corrective focus are different syntactic phenomena or simply two different uses of the same structure with the fronting of its constituent, Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a) tested prosodic properties connected to them. A

²⁹ Where unexpectedness involves a comparison between two different states of affairs. See Kratzer (2012) and Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b) for more details concerning the mirative move.

production experiment with three speakers of Tuscan Italian was carried out; speakers had to read aloud sentences containing merely contrastive focus, corrective and mirative.

The results proved once again that corrective focus is realized with the typical pitch accent L+H* in the 89% of the utterances when fronted, and in the 83% when realized in situ.

Mirative focus shows a different pattern (and less regularity in its production): focus in situ is realized as H* (58%), but we find also two other patterns: H+L* and L+H* (in the minority of cases). Mirative fronted focus shows basically the same results, with the H+L* pattern occurring more often than the H* one. What we can notice is that, in most cases, the stressed syllable is associated with a H* phrase accent. Hence, the prosodic contour of mirative focus is made of a high pitch, and additionally a fall on its right edge occasionally.

Merely contrastive focus was considered only in its in situ realization, since focus fronting was already proved to be ungrammatical. However, its contour is most of the times H+L* (52%), but there are occurrences of L+H* (30%) and H* (19%) as well.

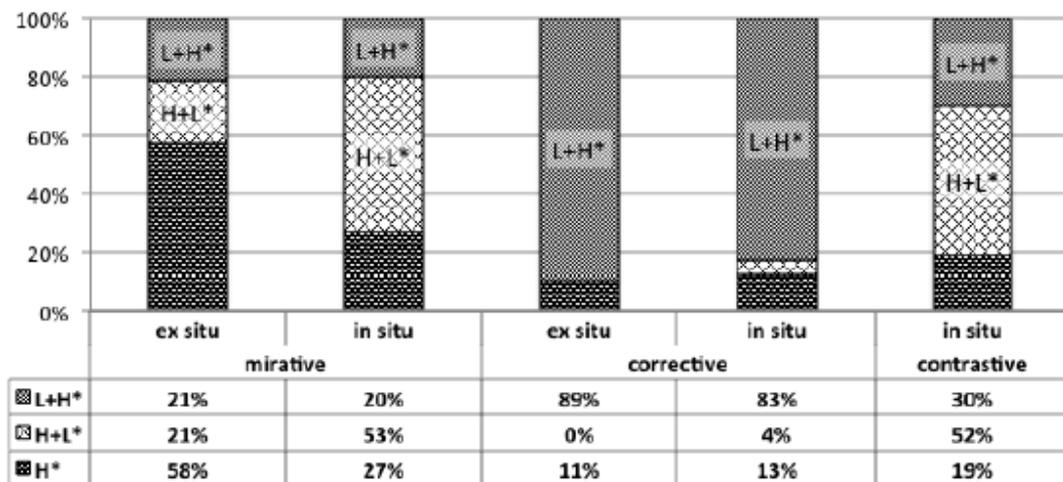


Figure 1³⁰

The most important part of this study is the distinct realization of mirative and corrective focus, either when focus is in situ or in a fronted position. The conclusion of Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a) is that their differences are grammatically encoded and we can consider them as two distinct types of foci, even though they may seem superficially identical.

³⁰ Figure 1 is taken from Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a:7).

These results were supported by a similar experiment: Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015b) proved that in a sentence with focus fronting, the fronted constituent is always realized with nuclear pitch accent, whereas the rest of the clause has a low and flat prosodic contour.

Once again, the difference between mirative and corrective focus is present: in the mirative condition the fronted constituent is realized as steadily high from the very beginning, and in a second moment it goes down to reach the low target.

The corrective condition is different, first of all because of the pitch contour of the fronted constituent: it is not high from its beginning (as is instead the case of mirative focus), but it has to rise until it reaches the peak associated with the stressed vowel and then it falls and reach the low target. Such a difference was observed for all the items.

Moreover, the pitch contour associated with corrective focus is L+H* (describing a rise-fall movement), which was systematically observed in the 96% of the utterances of the entire corpus. The mirative focalization is realized as H* (in the 61% of the utterances), and as H+L* (in the 19.4%)³¹.

The difference between corrective and mirative focus is not only signaled through the selection of the kind of nuclear pitch accent, but also in the occurrence of a %H boundary tone.

The different intonational properties allow us to state that it is not possible to reduce them to the same phenomenon with a different pragmatic import.

3.6 Exhaustive focus

If we consider focus following Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b), we are stating the existence of focus typology, and therefore we have to take into account the presence of (at least) one other kind of focus: the exhaustive one.

There are languages which can express exhaustivity, namely the possibility of identifying a unique referent from the context, through some mechanisms, such as focus fronting for Hungarian or cleft sentences, as far as English is concerned (É. Kiss, 1998). In these languages there is no need for particles expressing exhaustivity, since this can

³¹ It was also noted that in the remaining 19.4% of the utterances the production was L+H* (the typical pitch accent associated to corrective focus). According to Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015b) this is due to a noise effect, because the speakers failed to identify correctly the intended interpretation.

be reached thanks to the position of the focused constituent.

In Hungarian the difference between a preverbal and a postverbal focus is clear: in the latter case focus expresses new information, whereas in the former there is a connection to exhaustive identification, which is allowed only in that position (É. Kiss, 1998, Horvath, 2000).

Apparently, when focus is fronted, the focused constituent exhaustively identifies the entity for which the predicate holds; such an effect is usually obtained by means of items like *only*, or expressions like *and nobody else*. The same is not possible with postverbal focus: in that case the entity denoted by the focus is an example among other entities for which the predicated holds.

In Italian the exhaustive interpretation can be obtained only by means of the use of particles (see *solo*), but according to Cruschina (2012) this effect is possible in Sicilian, but only in contexts which are highly specific and marked, such as answers to a question involving focus fronting. Moreover, it is also a typical reply to sentences expressing suspicion or doubt that something happened, which the speaker does not admit, as in sentences below.

(12) Context: police interrogation

a. Come on! Tell the truth! Who did you see yesterday in the park?

b. Ia a **Maria** vitti!

I to Maria saw

‘It is Maria that I saw.’

(Cruschina, 2012:78, ex 112a,b)

(13) Context: jealous husband talking to his wife

a. What happened between you and Salvo?

b. Salvo **na vasata** mi detti!

Salvo a kiss to-me gave

‘Salvo only gave me a kiss!’

(Cruschina, 2012:78, ex 113a,b)

The fact that exhaustivity can be present in an Italian dialect, but only under some precise and marked conditions, proves us that it should not be considered an inherent property of focus fronting. According to some scholars (see Cruschina, 2012), it can be reduced to an interpretive effect which can be obtained in some cases according to the language taken into account.

3.7 Conclusions

Apparently, we have to account for a focus typology: we do not only have contrastive and new information focus, but other types as well. As far as Italian is concerned, there are corrective foci (which are taken to be a subgroup of contrastive focalization) and mirative ones. The interesting fact is that focus fronting is permitted only with these two kinds of focus, but not with merely contrastive ones. We can say that focus fronting is associated with special effects on interpretation yielding out strengthening, unexpectedness, surprise, correction and exhaustivity, depending on the language considered.

Languages, in fact, have different ways to mark these interpretations: we have seen that Hungarian preverbal focus expresses exhaustive identification, whereas in Italian this interpretation can be obtained only by means of some particles. It seems to be true, though, that in Sicilian exhaustivity can be obtained when focus is in a preverbal position, but only under some specific and marked conditions.

Corrective and mirative foci instead don't need the use of particles: they can occur either in situ or fronted, and are obtained thanks to the use of intonation and context. Moreover, it has been proved that the two are different not only when we consider their distribution and their pragmatic imports, but also their prosodic realization (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a, 2015b).

Therefore, it is not enough to talk about many possible pragmatically uses of focus fronting structures and of inherent properties of focus. In such a case, we could not account for their different realizations.

Some questions remain unsolved: why is it that only corrective and mirative focus can trigger focus movement? Why can corrective and mirative focus either be in situ or in a left peripheral position, whereas IF and CF have to be in situ and exhaustive focus has to be on the left? How can we capture the different properties of foci? Are they connected to different projections or do we have to take into account the assignment of some features that have to be checked?

4. THE PRESENCE OF FEATURE(S)

The idea of a focus feature goes back to Chomsky (1971) and Jackendoff (1972), but even nowadays there still is no agreement regarding its existence. The computational system should help us identifying the focused constituent, and therefore the main question is how this information is coded: does it depend on prosody, semantics or syntax?

Focus was considered a semantic feature connected to a phonological realization, and hence defined on PF structures (Chomsky 1971, Jackendoff 1972)³². Basically, sentence stress is claimed to be assigned independently, thanks to phonological rules, whereas the interface systems use this stress in order to signal the focus structure of a constituent. Stress-based analyses are the development of this line of thought (see Reinhart 1995, 2006, Szendrői 2001, 2003 and Samek-Lodovici 2005, 2006, 2015), where the prosody of an utterance determines the focus of a sentence and its connection to main stress.

According to other scholars, though, a syntax-based approach has to be stipulated: focus has a corresponding active feature in syntax (see Brody 1990, Rizzi 1997, 2004 *inter alia*). Movement is here explained because of the need of feature-checking. Focus is coded at LF, either with covert movement of the focused constituent or with the attachment of the focus feature both to the focused phrase and to its corresponding syntactic projection in the left periphery.

Languages behave differently as far as the connection between prosody and syntax is concerned: those which have a rigid word order, like English (Bolinger, 1972), seem to prove that the two are basically independent and that discourse-related properties are connected to intonation, rather than to word order. In other languages, word order is used as much as intonation: specific syntactic positions are connected to

³² This claim was based on the correspondence between the location of focus and sentence stress in English, which are both placed at the end of the utterance. Chomsky's proposal was therefore that the position of focus depends on the prosodic rules that assign main stress to the sentence.

special kinds of focalization (see the case of Hungarian and Finnish). Languages using both prosody and syntax in order to signal a focused phrase are possible as well (as Italian). If we take into account these data, it becomes difficult to state a full independence between prosody and syntax.

4.1 Basic notions of minimalism

Before moving on with the analysis, a brief mention of some of the hypotheses developed within a minimalist perspective is necessary.

Since Chomsky (1995), we consider language (L) as a generative procedure constructing pairs, π and λ . A linguistic expression is interpreted at two levels: on the one side we have instructions for the articulatory-perceptual system (A-P), and on the other those for the conceptual-intentional (C-I) one.

π and λ determine phenomena of sound and meaning; the former has a Phonological Form (PF) representation, whereas the latter a Logical Form (LF) one. Even if the two of them must be compatible, namely based on the same lexical choices, they are differently constituted: elements interpretable at the A-P interface are not interpretable at the C-I interface.

The lexicon system (i.e. all the properties of a lexical item, from a phonological, syntactic and semantic point of view) enters the computational system, which is connected to overt syntax. A structure is formed by the operations of the computational system, which, after Spell-Out³³, splits into two interface levels³⁴: PF and LF. The former is dedicated to the phonological part, whereas the latter to the semantic one.

There are no interactions or converging points between PF and LF (namely, the syntax prosody-interface is independent); this means that every important piece of information must be present before Spell-Out, and in fact lexical items enter the computation fully inflected. Spell-Out applies to a structure already formed, and features that are no longer relevant for the computation are eliminated. Interface levels can only be composed of legitimate objects (namely interpretable to the interfaces), because if the structure does not obtain interpretation at this point, the computation

³³ Spell-Out is the point in which phonology receives representation from syntax.

³⁴ An interface level is a point of contact between the formal system and the system of use: a real access to structural computation, consisting “of nothing more than arrangements of lexical feature” (Chomsky, 1995:225).

crashes. In order to be correct, a derivation must converge at the interfaces: “a derivation *converges* at one of the interface levels if it yields a representation satisfying FI (Full Interpretation) at this level, and *converges* if it converges at both interface levels, PF and LF; otherwise it *crashes*.” (Chomsky, 1995:219).

The derivation has to be “optimal” and follow some economy conditions, so that computation complexity is avoided. The Economy Principles that govern a derivation can be summed in:

- Shortest Move: each displacement should be the shortest possible (Minimal Link Condition);
- Procrastination: covert movement is less costly than the overt one;
- Last Resort: an element can be inserted into the computational system at any point of the derivation in order to make a sentence grammatical;
- Greed: all operations are considered ‘self-serving’, so there has to be movement only in the case in which morphological properties would not be satisfied in the derivation.

Lexical entries are made of features, which can be phonological, semantic or formal; at some point they all have to be checked in order to be interpreted. Phonological features are available only to the phonological component, whereas formal features are preserved by Spell-Out and can be accessed by the covert computation at LF.

Overt operations cannot detect phonological features after Spell-Out: “the phonological component cannot select from the numeration any items with semantic features, and the covert component cannot select any item with phonological feature, [...] otherwise the sound-meaning relation would collapse” (Chomsky, 1995:231).

Features may be weak or strong, and this distinction in strength determines what enters morphology: the former are neither visible, nor legitimate PF entities and do not trigger any overt movement. Strong features instead provide instructions for both PF and LF, cannot be included within a legitimate derivation and must therefore be checked (and deleted) before Spell-Out, which is the reason why overt operations are triggered. “If α has a strong feature F, it triggers an operation that checks F before the formation of a larger category that is not a projection of α . The operation may be Merge or Move.” (Chomsky, 1995:235).

Merge combines lexical items together to form a syntactic object, whereas Move is a device that ensures convergence at PF and LF, and satisfies certain interface requirements (for instance the need to form morphologically well-formed words). Movement is what allows duality of interpretation, since a linguistic expression can receive both interpretations moving from a position dedicated to argumental properties (in an external merge position), to another one dedicated to semantic properties (in an internal merge position).

Movement, though, is a costly operation, and therefore it is considered a last resort option: it is licensed only when there are no cost-free available operations for feature-checking.

A third operation other than Merge and Move was proposed by Chomsky (2000, 2001): Agree, namely a long distance relationship between a syntactic object and a feature. Features might be interpretable or uninterpretable. Interpretable features are readable to the external systems at the interface and fully specified in the lexicon, whereas uninterpretable features are discourse-related properties, acquiring their values in the course of the derivation. Uninterpretable features must be eliminated at LF, but only after they have been checked, otherwise the derivation crashes³⁵. Once a feature is checked, it becomes invisible at LF.

In the relation Agree α has interpretable inflectional features, and β has instead uninterpretable features; when the two match, feature-checking is respected.

Agree assigns values to unvalued features and delete the [-interpretable] feature; the checking can be made at a distance and it is based on c-commanding relation between probe and goal.

The uninterpretability of feature, though, is in some cases hard to prove and accept, especially as far as A' movements are concerned. Wh- movement is recognized as the easiest type of A' movement, but “in other cases postulation of features is much more stipulative; and throughout, questions arise about intermediate stages of successive cyclic A' movement and island conditions” (Chomsky, 2001:6).

According to this view, discourse-related phenomena are visible only at interfaces, and not at the syntactic computation. Focus (as well as topic) is then considered a semantic feature.

³⁵ Whereas interpretable features have to remain accessible to the computation and visible at LF even after being checked.

4.2 Feature driven approaches

Feature driven approaches take into account the importance of syntax in a focalized structure and are often based on a feature-checking relation between a head and its specifier. Brody (1990), Rizzi (1991) and Haegeman (1995) were the first who assumed this kind of relation for focus, wh- elements and negation, respectively. These are A' features, or discourse-related, associated with dedicated functional projections commonly placed in the left periphery of the sentence. They are regulated by a criterion that states the necessity of a specifier-head relation between the feature that needs to be checked and a head carrying the same feature. Basically, the latter works as a probe and attracts constituents with the same feature into its specifier, triggering its overt movement. This operation is called feature-checking.

Feature-driven approaches presuppose a one-to-one matching relation between the syntactic structure and interpretation: interpretive effects are linked to specific positions of the tree, and each of them is associated with one interpretive effect only.

4.2.1 The Criterial model

Brody (1990) was one of the first who claimed that this kind of criterion could easily apply to focus as well: “there is a feature +f, that indicates “identificational” interpretation, i.e. focushood” (Brody, 1990:101). In fact in both Chomsky (1995) and Rizzi (1997), [+Focus] is a formal feature, inherently possessed by the focused item, which requires feature-checking with a head endowed with the same feature.

The Criterial model states that features determine the interpretation of the category which bears them and “functions as scope markers for phrases with the relevant quantificational force in local configuration, so that their role cannot simply be to trigger movement and disappear from representations” (Rizzi, 1997:282).

In such a proposal, a functional head that has discourse-related properties acts as a probe and attracts in its specifier elements bearing the same feature. The general format of Criteria is described as (1) in Rizzi (2004:4), whereas the case of Focus can be formulated as in (2):

(1) XP_F and Z_F must be in a spec-head configuration, for $F=Q, Top, Foc, R$, and so on...

(2) *Focus Criterion*

- a. A focused phrase must be in a spec-head configuration with an $X^{\circ}_{[+ \text{FOCUS}]}$;
- b. An $X^{\circ}_{[+ \text{FOCUS}]}$ must be in a spec-head configuration with a focused phrase.

Intermediate positions cannot function as final positions, and for this reason constituents have to move to the left periphery and cannot stop in an intermediate landing site. Since movement has to be local, criterial positions can be reached in successive steps, so that locality conditions are respected.

Therefore, a focused constituent according to Rizzi (1997, 2004) has to move in SpecFocP in order to check its formal feature [+ focus]. In several languages, such as Italian, the functional head Foc^0 is not realized and remains empty, but there are also languages which realize it overtly. For instance, languages that use particles to mark focused phrases, Gungbe being one of them. In this language, focus particles are hosted by the head of the projection dedicated to focus (Aboh 2004).

Rizzi (2004:11) proposes the Criterial Freezing principle, which states that once a phrase is in a position in which it satisfies the relation in (1), it is frozen in place and further movement is unavailable. This is an additional Economy Principle which helps minimizing movement. From (3), it follows that discourse-related properties can be picked up from one position only.

(3) *Criterial Freezing:*

A phrase meeting a Criterion is frozen in place.

4.2.2 *Alternative proposals*

Frascarelli (2000) hypothesizes that focus can be checked both in situ and in the left periphery, in order to account for instances of a focused constituent in its base position as well as in a fronted one. In her view, the verb has the role of checking the focus feature, either in a spec-head relation (when focus moves to the left), or in a head-complement relation (when focus stays in situ). The verb always moves in the head of Foc, and it is precisely this movement which is responsible for feature-checking.

According to this hypothesis focus fronting cannot be explained, though. Due to economy conditions, movement should occur only when some features have to be checked; if feature-checking is possible in situ we cannot explain why movement

should be necessary. Hence, such an account would wrongly predict that focus is always in situ.

Moreover, in this proposal focus movement occurs after Spell-Out and therefore feature-checking is not enough in order to make focus interpretable at LF. Covert movement has to be assumed, but how can it apply at LF anyway? There is “no difference – apart from PF visibility, that is, phonetic realization - between operations applying before and those applying after Spell-Out. Thus, movement at LF is nothing more but movement of features without their lexical burden” (Brunetti, 2004:51).

Focus movement can be explained not only with the Criterial model according to Rizzi (1997, 2004), who states that movement is obligatory. In fact, adopting Agree, feature-checking can occur even at a distance (Chomsky 2000, 2001). In this case movement is not needed, and the focus feature is checked anyway. Apparently, though, the same problem remains: it is not possible to explain focus movement. If a feature can be checked with no movement - since Agree is preferred over Move, which is a costly operation - how can we account for the occurrences of focus in the left periphery?

4.2.3 Problems within the feature-driven approach

Considering focus as syntactic-based can easily explain why it has to move to the left periphery, but it is more difficult to explain instances of focus in situ. The proposal of Rizzi is that when focus is in situ, the criterion is satisfied at LF, which means that movement is not visible, and is realized covertly. Such a proposal creates several problems with respect to the T-model: as noted by Frascarelli (2000), if focus is interpreted only at LF, we cannot explain the connections to prosody. Namely, how can PF intervene on the structure and assign main prominence? If the [+ focus] feature is checked after Spell-Out, then it is not visible at the PF interface, since the two have no converging points.

Moreover, movement is not obligatory: in most cases focus in situ is preferred over its fronted counterpart (Bianchi & Bocci, 2012). Taking into account this possibility we can actually consider focus movement as superfluous, since the derivation apparently converges anyway.

As noted by Zubizarreta (1998) and Szendrői (2001), a feature-based approach presents some problems regarding the Inclusiveness Condition (Chomsky, 1995:225), which states that “the interface levels consist of nothing more than arrangements of

lexical features”, and therefore “any structure formed by the computation [...] is constituted of elements already present in the lexical items selected for N; no new objects are added in the course of the computation apart from rearrangements of lexical properties”.

The [+Focus] feature should then be a property of one item of the lexicon, but according to Zubizarreta this is an intrinsically non-lexical notion defined on a structure which does not exist in the lexicon. The focus feature cannot be a lexical property of an element entering the numeration, and it is rather considered as a diacritic introduced into the computation in order to account for something that is not directly related to the lexical item with [+ focus].

Moreover, if we consider that the focus feature should be inserted on the lexical node bearing the main stress, an additional problem arises: focus can actually involve a whole constituent, and therefore it can mark a wider projection than the one of sentence main stress. This means that the feature must extend to more than one lexical item: if one item only can bear the focus feature, the rest of the phrase has to receive it through the so-called ‘percolation’. Since focus can often involve something either bigger or smaller than a single word, the Inclusiveness Condition is violated³⁶.

A syntax-based account for focus cannot adequately explain the different positions of focused constituents, and moreover it cannot account for the interpretations which may be assigned to focus, according to the position occupied: a [+focus] feature is not able to explain why a merely contrastive focus cannot occur in the left periphery, whereas mirative and corrective foci can. This cannot be accounted for with the existence of a unique focus feature, which is not able to explain why movement can, or cannot, occur in the first place.

According to Brunetti (2004), this is a further piece of evidence favoring a unified analysis of the focus phenomenon. However, we have already seen that such a proposal cannot account for the systematic differences in prosody, pragmatics and syntax that are found within focus typology.

³⁶ Apparently the only way to solve this problem is weakening the Inclusiveness Principle, as in (i) (Zubizarreta, 1998:33):

(i) *Inclusiveness Principle (revised)*

The interface levels consist of nothing more than arrangements of lexical features and interpretations of the arrangement of categories within the phrase marker in terms of the focus/nonfocus distinction and in terms of relative prosodic prominence

4.3 Non-feature driven approaches

Many hypotheses were developed in order to demonstrate that a feature-checking analysis cannot explain focus movement. According to these proposals, there is a crucial link between focus and prosody, and the latter is (often) considered the major responsible for focus behavior; discourse-related properties do not affect syntactic processes. Since Cinque (1993) and his Nuclear Stress Rule, many authors have been claiming that in order to explain the focus phenomenon, we have to look at prosody, and not at syntax (see Reinhart 1995, 2006, Zubizarreta 1998, Szendrői 2001, 2003 *inter alia*).

Prosodic explanations are not the only ones taken into account as triggers of focus movement, and different analyses were proposed, as in Horvath (2007, 2010) where other features are responsible for the movement of a focused constituent.

4.3.1 Prosodic-based accounts

Cinque (1993) goes back to the original proposal by Chomsky (1971) and Jackendoff (1972): focus is an independent phenomenon restricted by PF stress rules, and its position depends on the prosodic rules which assign main stress to the sentence. Cinque formulates the Nuclear Stress Rule (NSR), the rule that assigns main stress to the sentence³⁷.

(4) *Nuclear Stress Rule*

Locate the heads of line N constituents on line N+1.

In this theory words are grouped into constituents, to which the NSR cyclically applies. To each new cycle a new line is added, and the NSR selects one of the word stresses placing it in the following line, as in (5), following the rule in (4).

(5) I read the **book**

[I [read [the book]]]

a) line 1: [* [* [*]]]

b) line 2: [[*]]

c) line 3: [*]

³⁷ The NSR was first formulated by Halle & Vergnaud (1987).

According to this analysis, stress is always assigned to the most embedded constituent. In case of sister nodes, the most embedded one is that occurring on the recursive side of the tree, which is considered the major path of embedding; non-recursive side is instead a minor path of embedding. Only the latter is visible in stress assignment.

Zubizarreta (1994, 1998) follows Cinque's proposal, stating the Focus Prominence Rule (Zubizarreta, 1998:88) in (6):

(6) *Focus Prominence Rule*

Given two sister categories, one focused and the other non-focused, the former must be more prominent than the latter.

In her account though, the distinction between minor and major path of embedding is not correct (since it fails to account for German data). The distinction is rather based on the depth of embedding of the constituent, namely, if the phrase is an adjunct or an argument.

There is another crucial distinction among languages in the application of the NSR: some have only metrically visible elements (see Italian and Spanish), but according to other scholars, elements like defocalized or anaphoric constituents and functional categories are metrically invisible, and hence skipped by the rule. Her proposal can account for the amount of destressing typical of English and its absence in Italian, where a destressed phrase is instead realized as cliticization or dislocation.

She postulates the role of prosodically-motivated movement (or p-movement), which is triggered by prosodic needs: the non-focused part of the clause has to be removed from its base position, so that the focused one can occupy the position connected with main stress.

However, as noted by Brunetti (2004), the main problem of Cinque's theory and the following approaches is that these cannot predict which phrase bears main prominence, nor why (and how) focus is related to stress: the NSR has no role in focus interpretation.

Reinhart (1995, 2006) states that in the case of focus identification, information is coded at PF. She proposes the Focus set in (7) (Reinhart, 2006:139), unifying the NSR of Cinque (1993) and the neutral focus of Zubizarreta (1998):

(7) *Focus set*

The focus set of a derivation D includes all and only the constituents that contain the main stress of D.

According to (7), main stress is assigned at PF, so that a sentence can be used in several contexts permitting a set of possible foci, from which the appropriate one can be selected. In her view, therefore, in a given context there is a set of constituents that can be used as the focus of the sentence. The focus set is determined by the computational system, where discourse conditions are responsible for such an operation, and not syntax.

Since the Focus set often cannot explain the focusing of certain constituents³⁸, she distinguishes an unmarked rule, as in (7), and a marked one (8), which relocates main stress on the focused constituent (Reinhart, 1995:32).

(8) *Marked rule*: Relocate the main stress.

(8) can be used as a repair mechanism for the contexts in which the unmarked rule in (7) does not work. Being the marked option and a costly and uneconomical operation, it should be avoided whenever possible, and be used only when a language does not provide any device to place focus in the position where it receives stress by the NSR. Stress shift involves two additional operations (Neeleman & Reinhart, 1998): *destressing* of a stressed element and *stress strengthening* of an element that has no main stress. The latter is used to create a focus not already present in the focus set and is determined by pragmatic needs, whereas the former is a property typical of D-linked elements³⁹.

However, Reinhart's proposal cannot explain Italian data, as noted by Brunetti (2004:22), who claims that there are several cases in which the marked rule should not be allowed, given the possibility of realizing the unmarked counterpart. This is the case of sentences where focus can be realized in situ, as in (9). It follows that a sentence like (10) should not be allowed "because the marked option *only* occurs when the unmarked one is not available".

³⁸ As in the case where focus is the preverbal subject (Reinhart, 1995).

³⁹ In the sense of Pesetsky (1987), indicating a discourse-given element already entailed in the context set (as in the case of pronouns or anaphoric material, but also of definite DPs).

(9) L'esame, l'ha passato LUCIA
the exam, it has passed Lucia

(10) LUCIA ha passato l'esame
Lucia has passed the exam

4.3.2 *Syntax-Prosody Mapping*

Contrary to the feature-driven analyses of focalization, which state that there is a one-to-one relation between structure and interpretation, some scholars claim that there is no such connection. Rather, there are mapping rules relating certain structural configurations with aspects of information structure. The main difference between the two analyses is that in the first case an interpretive effect is linked to a fixed position of the tree. A system including mapping rules is more flexible: they are not connected to a unique position, but can appear in various positions in the tree. In this case, there is a double dissociation between structure and interpretation.

In this vein, Szendrői (2001, 2003) considers prosody and syntax as two single representations, not connected by derivation but through mapping rules. Prosody is subject to independent principles and can be available at the Conceptual-Intentional interface, which is directly linked both to PF and LF. The existence of features needs not to be postulated: “Stress is normally assumed to be a notion defined over the prosodic structure on the way to PF. No [+ stress] lexical feature is generally assumed. If this is indeed the case, then it is even more natural to get rid of the semantic-pragmatic counterpart: the [+ focus]-feature” (Szendrői, 2003:39). Rather, focus is a discourse notion, and the syntactic and prosodic information is available in the interface between grammar and the conceptual system.

In her system, stress is assigned to the syntactic structure, where it is computed at each pair of nodes. Basically, when two sister nodes are present one of them is assigned a Strong label, whereas the other one gets a Weak label, so that the former is prosodically more prominent than the latter. Labels are assigned according to (11).

(11) *Generalized Stress Rule (metrical-tree version)*

Assign a Strong label to the node that is syntactically more embedded at every level of the metrical tree. Assign Weak to its sister node.⁴⁰

According to Szendrői, this system solves some of the problems of a feature-driven approach, and in particular the possibility of overt movement even if the focus feature is interpreted at LF. In fact, if focus is considered a property of PF only, it follows that covert movement has no effect on the focus of a sentence.

Moreover, the movement of the focused constituent to the left periphery does not depend on the need of feature-checking, but on stress requirements: focused elements need to be aligned with the main prominent item of a sentence. Given that stress is assigned to the leftmost element, movement of focus is unsurprising⁴¹.

However, if we try to account for Italian data following such a proposal, this explanation is not sufficient: since in Italian stress is assigned rightmost, movement of focused constituents to the left lacks a trigger and mapping rules are not helpful.

Neeleman and van de Koot (2008) consider movement as an adjunction operation, which cannot be triggered by a structural or morphological operation, but by mapping rules at the interfaces. This movement affects the constituent to which the moved phrase is adjoined to, and not the moved category. According to their view, movement of a focused constituent marks its background (the same way as the movement of topic marks its comment), as stated in (12) (Neeleman & van de Koot, 2008: 7).

(12) *Background Mapping Rule*

If XP is interpreted as a focus, then interpret N^0 as background.

Focus has no properties associated with functional projections of the left periphery, but is projected in any syntactic position and its main effect is marking its complement as background.

⁴⁰ Note that such a statement follows directly from the NSR of Cinque (1993). In fact the Strong label corresponds to the major path of embedding, whereas the Weak label to the minor one.

⁴¹ For a much more detailed description of the benefits of this system for other properties of Hungarian focalization see Szendrői (2001, 2003).

4.3.3 Samek-Lodovici

The claim made by Samek-Lodovici (2005, 2006, 2015) is similar to the proposal by Szendrői: movement in Italian focalization ensures a better alignment of stress with the position of prosodic prominence in Italian, namely the right edge of the clause (Zubizarreta, 1998). Once again, the properties of focalization depend entirely on prosody, and cannot be explained by means of feature-checking hypotheses.

This is why in his account focus is (almost) always in situ: the base position is the best available one where rules of Italian stress assignment are respected, the closest possible to the right edge of the clause. The same is not possible with a leftward movement, which instead increases the distance between stress and the right edge. See (13):

(13) **The distribution of contrastive focus when right dislocation is absent**

Contrastive foci occur as far right in the clause as possible, depending on which constraints apply to the focused constituent and their ranking relative to the constraint governing stress Hd-ip⁴². (Samek-Lodovici, 2015:254)

The movement of focused constituents to the left is only apparent: what moves is instead post-focal phrases, which are right dislocated. In such a way, displacement can be explained by means of prosodic constraints of Italian stress assignment: the constituent intervening between the stress on the focused element and the right edge of the clause is no longer there, and violation of prosodic prominence decreases. Any movement increasing the number of intervening constituents is therefore considered ungrammatical for this reason.

The only occurrence of movement of focus is what he calls ‘focus evacuation’, and the trigger is givenness: focus can move only when it is contained in a right dislocated constituent. This is due to the fact that in that position it could not receive main stress, and hence a different position has to be reached.

⁴² Where Hd-ip stands for Head-intonational-phrase, one of the prosodic constraints of Optimality Theory. It states that the right boundary of every intonational phrase is to be aligned with its head. For a complete description of prosodic constraints, see Samek-Lodovici (2015).

4.3.4 Problems within prosodic accounts

The main problem regarding a prosody-based approach to focus has to do with the T-model of Chomsky (1995). First of all, if syntactic operations are triggered by prosodic needs, it means that prosody has the role of determining the syntactic structure, rather than the contrary.

Both Reinhart (1995, 2006), Szendrői (2001, 2003) and Samek-Lodovici (2015) propose hypotheses in which the T-model has to be radically changed: Szendrői states explicitly what in Reinhart remains implicit, namely that there has to be a connection between PF and LF. In prosody-based accounts stress (namely a property of PF) is the operation responsible for the focus interpretation of a constituent at LF. Basically, the claim is that PF and LF are visible even after Spell-Out and a direct link between the two interfaces has to be established.

As we have already seen, in the minimalist view this is not possible: after Spell-Out the two interfaces are separated and cannot communicate. It is the computational system which connects them. If this does not happen, “the very basic idea of generative grammar would be denied, namely that a specific language faculty exists in the mind/brain” (Brunetti, 2004:30).

Such radical changes in the theory of grammar have to be supported by strong empirical evidence, but each of the proposals seen above present (at least) one problem, as the fact that the position of focus does not always coincide with the most embedded position of the clause.

Moreover, uniqueness of focus (namely the fact that only one focus per sentence is allowed) can be explained by means of a feature-driven approach and attributed to morphosyntactic properties. Prosody-based explanations fail to account for such a requirement⁴³.

Bocci (2013) also shows that CF prosody cannot be assigned by phonology despite the syntactic representation, especially as far as preverbal subjects that are focused in situ are concerned. Rather, focus has to correlate with morphosyntactic properties, as proved by the test Bocci used for standard Italian and Rural Florentine⁴⁴. The conclusion is that contrastively focalized subjects obligatorily have to move to the left periphery following the criterial model constraint, and in general that “CF prosody

⁴³ See Bocci (2013) for a detailed analysis on this point.

⁴⁴ These tests involved agreement pattern, *ne* cliticization, WCO and Principle C effects. See Bocci (2013) for a complete discussion.

is always the result of a syntactically encoded feature” (Bocci, 2013:89).

4.3.5 Non-prosody based approach

Horvath (2000, 2007, 2010) proposes an alternative trigger of focus movement: not prosodic means, but rather quantificational operators. Her data are based on preverbal focalization in Hungarian and its connection to an exhaustive identification.

Horvath distinguishes two types of focus movement: the *focus-accommodating movement* expresses a word order favoring the matching between focus and stress, and therefore compatible with prosody-based approaches. Movement removes constituents from the domain of stress-assignment and creates therefore a focus effect on some other elements. It is the case of object scrambling (following the proposal by Reinhart) and of p-movement. (Zubizarreta, 1998).

The second movement is much more problematic: it cannot be explained by means of a prosody-based approach and it is not compatible with the NSR. Such a movement is typical of Romance languages, such as Italian: a focused constituent moves to a designated structural focus position. According to the NSR, the movement of a focused constituent to the left has no reasons to exist. In (14) the object is focused and placed in the left periphery. Considering its base-position, it would have obtained sentence main stress anyway, being the most embedded constituent. Therefore, we cannot explain why movement occurs anyway.

(14) IL PANINO ha mangiato Gianni

the sandwich has eaten Gianni

In (14) the focused constituent is removed from a position bearing stress and moved to another one, and the trigger cannot be imputed to a prosodic need. How can this be explained?

According to Horvath the feature-based approach cannot account for some of the Hungarian data, and she pursues another explanation⁴⁵.

She proposes that “focus movement takes place irrespective of the structural position of the [focus]-carrying element, that is, irrespective of the position occupied by the

⁴⁵ The bases of her assumption being the discrepancies in the use of pied-piping by focused elements versus wh- questions and negations (namely the other elements which are assumed to be in a feature-checking relation): in the first case it is much more constrained.

semantic and prosodic focus within the moved phrase” (Horvath, 2007:12). The formulation of the Strong Modularity Hypothesis (Horvath, 2010:1349) limits the kinds of formal features needing feature evaluation.

(15) *The Strong Modularity Hypothesis for Discourse Features*

No information structure notions – i.e., purely discourse-related notions – can be encoded in the grammar as formal features; hence no “discourse-related features” are present in the syntactic derivation. They are available only outside the computational system.

Therefore, according to (15), discourse-related notions such as focus and topic are relevant only in information structure. The movement cannot be explained in terms of feature-checking, at least not if the feature that needs checking is [+ focus]. This is not what enters the Agree relation.

Rather, what has to be checked is exhaustivity. Horvath (2007) claims that given the possibility of realizing this feature only in a preverbal focus position, and its systematic connection to a CF rather than an IF, this feature triggers focus movement to the left position.

Therefore, in her analysis it is only CF that needs to check the [+ exhaustivity] feature and consequently has to move, whereas IF can remain syntactically unencoded and with no formal feature connected to it. In her view, IF and CF are a unique phenomenon, the only difference being the presence or absence of the [+ exhaustive] feature. When such a feature is not present, focus will be interpreted as informational: the notion of focus is not encoded syntactically and therefore not active at the computational system.

Exhaustivity is considered a quantificational operator, EI-Op, triggering focus movement; therefore, it is active in the syntactic derivation. EI-Op acts as a probe and it has a dedicated functional projection in the syntactic structure, whose head bears an uninterpretable [EI] operator feature.

The derivation goes as follow: given the presence of an EI-Op and a clausal functional head EI^0 with an uninterpretable EI-Op feature, the feature enters into an Agree relation with a focus in its c-command domain. This head has the EPP feature, and therefore it attracts the moved phrase and overt movement applies so that the matching EI-Op phrase is attracted by the EI^0 feature to SpecEIP.

This hypothesis is not supported by Italian data on focalization: it is true that IF is in situ, whereas CF can be in the left periphery. However, CF can be in situ as well, and, as shown in Brunetti (2004), this position is not connected to exhaustivity, since the only way to obtain such an interpretation in Italian is by means of particles. Focus movement in languages that do not have an exhaustivity interpretation remains unexplained. This weakens the proposal of the EI-Op, because there is no correspondence between the truth-conditional interpretation (namely the exhaustive one) and focus movement⁴⁶.

4.4 The notion of contrast

If the notion of exhaustivity is not enough in order to account for focus displacement, we have to consider other features triggering such a movement. One of these is *contrast*.

On the basis of the difference between IF and CF discussed in section 2.5, *contrast* can indeed be considered the trigger of focus movement: only CF can move to the left periphery, whereas IF has to remain in situ⁴⁷.

Before moving on, I will briefly report the main theories concerning contrast and its role in focalization. Some of the most debated questions are the following: is contrast indicated through formal marking and signaled with prosodic, morphological or syntactic cues? Is it independent from focus? Does it constitute an information-structural category of its own?

Contrast is standardly considered a notion of information structure, which can be marked through several devices, according to the language taken into account. In particular, a different intonation and/or a syntactic order are commonly used.

The properties of contrast, namely the presence of (implicit or explicit) alternatives and a highlighted realization, are also the typical properties of focalization. For this reason the two have often been considered connected phenomena, to the extent that, according to some scholars, contrast is a notion entirely dependent on focus. However, the fact

⁴⁶ According to Horvath (2010,) the difference between Hungarian and Italian data is to be attributed to a property of Italian focalization, namely the fact that when a contrastive focus is in a preposed position, the context has to explicitly specify the members of the set involved in the contrast. This ‘contextual anchoring’ is not required in Hungarian.

⁴⁷ At least in Standard Italian, but in some dialects, such as Sicilian, IF is possible even in a fronted position (Cruschina, 2012), but in this case it has a functional and interpretive role.

that contrast can appear not only with focused constituent but also with topicalized ones, constitutes strong evidence against such a proposal and favors the claims that contrast cannot be considered an inherent property of focus.

4.4.1 *Hierarchy of contrast*

The definition of contrast is often different according to the analysis taken into account: “the distinction itself is rather blurred, so that in many cases it is difficult to assign one label rather than the other” (Cruschina, 2012:89). It is for this reason that Mólmar (2002:101) adopted a scalar approach to contrastiveness and claimed the existence of a hierarchy of contrast (15). The way we consider contrast is crucial in order to understand whether it has to be considered an optional or an obligatory property of focalization.

- (15) *Hierarchy of contrast:*
- i. Highlighting
 - ii. Dominant contrast
 - iii. Membership in a set
 - iv. Limited set of candidates
 - v. Explicit mentioning of alternatives

Each of the criteria in (15) was claimed to be a sufficient condition of contrast, starting from the basic prerequisite of the presence of highlighting. Many authors do not agree on this point, claiming that, in order to talk about contrast, something more than highlighting has to be involved. Rochemont (1986) thinks that it depends rather on the existence of dominant contrast, which partitions the sentence into two parts, namely background and focus. Jackendoff (1972), Rooth (1985, 1992) and Vallduví & Vilkuna (1998) consider instead the membership in an open set as a necessary element, whereas in more extreme views such a requirement is narrowed down to a closed set of candidates. This can either be limited and contextually given, or explicitly mentioned in the discourse.

What distinguishes IF from CF is the presence of alternatives in a *closed* set. Therefore, many authors (and Mólmar herself) take this point as the basic requirement for contrast. The first three points of Mólmar’s hierarchy can hence be referred to IF, whereas the latter two are restricted to CF, and require a grammatical reflex of some

kind, namely prosodic, morphological or syntactic. Cross-linguistic evidence shows that there is a great deal of variation in the realization of contrast.

According to some scholars, contrast is to be considered a linguistically relevant phenomenon, but we have also to take into account the fact that “this notion is important to a different degree – depending on which language and which specific structure is considered” (Mólnar, 2002: 106).

4.4.2 Contrast as an independent notion

If contrast is considered an autonomous information-structure notion, it means that it has a role in defining linguistic expressions and their interpretation. In order to understand if it can have this role, it is important to look at the ways in which it is realized: if a language employs formal markings to underline a contrastive interpretation, it should be considered an independent notion. It is therefore necessary to understand whether phonology, morphology or syntax are systematically involved.

As far as Italian is concerned, there are no morphology markers for such a feature, but prosody and syntax are used: a contrastive notion is usually signaled with special prosodic properties. These were already described in section 2.3.2: a CF is realized with pitch accents systematically different from those of IF. Syntax is used as well, but it is not a mandatory requirement: a contrastive interpretation can be either in the left periphery or in situ.

One of the strongest pieces of evidence is provided by the properties of Hungarian preverbal focalization. As seen above, this position is connected to a special interpretation: exhaustivity gives rise to overt movement to the left (É. Kiss 1998).

Finnish is helpful as well: apparently in this language there is a dedicated projection for contrast in the domain of CP, which can be used not only by focused constituents, but also by topicalized ones. According to Vallduví & Vilkuna (1998), we can talk about a functional feature, which they call *Kontrast*, obligatorily realized in the left periphery. *Kontrast* can only host a constituent referring to salient alternatives within a closed set. The assumed derivation is in (16), where a feature K is responsible for the licensing of the constituent in its specifier position.

(16) [ForceP [KontrP [TopP* [FocP [TopP* [FinP]]]]]]

In Vallduví & Vilkuna (1998), *Kontrast* is used in an underspecified and general definition, namely it is a cover term to refer to several interpretations, such as contrastive focalization, exhaustive focalization, contrastive topicalization and even wh-questions.

The fact that contrast can appear both with focus and topic lead some scholars (Mólnar 2002, Vallduví & Vilkuna 1998) to claim that it is not an inherent property of topicalization or focalization, but rather an independent notion (supported by the fact that contrastive focus and contrastive topic cannot co-occur). This is the claim made also for Italian by Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007), who state that contrast is a functional feature that needs to be licensed in an A' position in the CP domain.

4.4.3 *Contrast as context dependent*

According to several scholars, though, contrast has to be considered as dependent on context or on semantics effects (Rooth, 1985, 1992, Hartmann, 2008).

Authors who support this view, also claim that a unified approach for focus is correct, rejecting the possibility of focus typology. In fact, if contrast can be reduced to a pragmatic use, “any interpretive effect that is not strictly related to this property – such as contrast – is not a matter of focus, but it is the result of the discourse context in which focus occurs” (Brunetti, 2004:74).

Such an approach could be considered on the right track if there were no languages realizing contrast with a systematic formal marking of some type, which instead seems to be the case of Hungarian and Finnish.

Hartmann (2008) claims that there is no grammatical evidence supporting a linguistic category dedicated to contrast. From a prosodic point of view, in intonational languages contrast is signaled only through pitch accents, whose range is gradual with respect to their excursion. Pitch accents are different only from a gradient point of view, rather than a categorial one, and the lack of a sharp transition from a non-contrastive focus accent to a contrastive one proves that contrast has not a dedicated projection. Contrast is simply considered an emphatic realization and therefore the choice of which pitch realization should be used depends on pragmatic and paralinguistic factors, which cannot enter the syntactic structure. Moreover, the fact that the realization with a stronger accent is not mandatory proves that contrast is not a category on its own: focus can be interpreted contrastively even with a non-contrastive accent.

Data regarding a syntactic realization of contrast are not sound as well, according to Hartmann's account: as far as Hungarian is concerned, some authors (Roberts 1998, Wedgwood 2007) weaken the systematic connection of emphatic focus with the preverbal position. Apparently there is evidence that exhaustive focus can also be realized in positions other than the preverbal one. Moreover, the postverbal position is sometimes considered pragmatically or intonationally marked, whereas the preverbal one can host more material than the exhaustive constituent, and also less than focus. Finally, focus in a preverbal position can be interpreted not only as an exhaustive focus, even though this is the most common interpretation⁴⁸.

Even if the data regarding Hungarian were true, there is no explanation for the Finnish ones. It would be extremely difficult to support the claim that contrast depends entirely on context, and that it does not affect the syntactic (or prosodic) realization. Therefore, it seems that "the notion of contrast has a crucial impact on linguistic forms, in many languages demanding an obligatory formal realization" (Mólnar, 2002: 106).

4.4.4 A different analysis

Zimmermann (2007) claims that contrast should be considered a "discourse-semantic phenomenon with grammatical reflexes". In his view we have to come to terms with a degree of subjectivity because contrast is connected to an utterance, which, according to the speaker, the hearer will consider unexpected or unlikely. For this reason the speaker uses additional markings, which could have phonological reflexes or syntactic ones. In this way she will get the hearer's attention and obtain a smooth update of the common ground. "Contrastivity defined in this way depends on the speaker's assumptions about what the hearer considers to be likely or unlikely. [...] The less expected a given focus constituent α is in a particular context – according to the speaker- the more likely it is to get a contrastive marking" (Zimmermann, 2007:3).

(17) *Contrastive Focus Hypothesis*

Contrastive marking on the focus constituent α expresses the speaker's assumption that the hearer *will not consider* the content α or the speech act containing α *likely to be(come) common ground*.

⁴⁸ For a much more detailed analysis see Hartmann (2008).

(17) states that a contrastive focus does not mark a contrast between a focused constituent and some alternatives, but rather a contrast between the uttered information and the assumed expectation state of the hearer.

4.4.5 More features

Even if we consider contrast as an independent notion that can trigger focus movement, we still cannot explain the several interpretive effects that a focused constituent in fronted position can have. An additional problem is the fact that not all contrastive focused constituents can actually move (Bianchi & Bocci 2012). As already discussed in 4.3.4, the trigger of movement is not always assigned to the role of contrast, but also to another feature, namely exhaustivity. According to Horvath (2007, 2010) movement of focus occurs depending on the quantificational operator connected to this feature. However, as proved by Brunetti (2004), there is no such thing as exhaustivity in Italian sentences (at least not without particles), and therefore the role of an exhaustive feature would not be able to explain why movement of focused constituents occurs in Italian. Considering that there are (at least) three more focus interpretations, how can we account for these data? How can we explain exhaustive, corrective and mirative focus?

Cruschina (2012) claims that in certain cases, focused constituents can have a special ‘contextual effect’, which is due to an emphatic characterization and is connected to the notion of *relevance*⁴⁹. In such a case, focus can move to a higher position in the CP. Therefore, a fronted focus position is connected to relevance: when a CF (and an IF, in the case of Sicilian) is realized with a particular emphasis, it is usually fronted.

In this way, we can explain why focus fronting does not always involve a contrastive interpretation (Cruschina 2012, Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a): rather, a fronted constituent always expresses relevance⁵⁰. In his theory such a notion is not syntactically encoded and cannot be the trigger of a movement, but it describes the pragmatic value of a focus in the left periphery and of the feature [+ focus] which is the

⁴⁹ Cruschina (2012) follows the Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1995), which was based on the distinction between old and new information. The latter being not only new, but in some cases even completely unconnected with anything in the individual’s representation of the world” (Sperber & Wilson, 1995:48).

⁵⁰ In particular, taking into account Sicilian data, where focus fronting is claimed to be always emphatic and realized with a special intonation.

actual trigger of movement.

Relevance therefore substitutes contrast (Vallduví & Vilkuna, 1998), in that it can cover (and embody) all the functions and interpretations of focus fronting. In fact, the head of the FocusP projection in the left periphery assigns relevance to the fronted constituent; on the other side, any specific interpretation is inferred from the context, and hence pragmatically derived.

4.4.6 *Conventional Implicatures*

Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b) follow a different path, and claim that mirativity and correction are not “features”, but rather *Conventional Implicatures* (CI). The same proposal was made by Frey (2010) with reference to A'-moved items. According to her, a notion like emphasis is part of the German grammar, and movement to the left periphery is associated with a CI encoding the emphatic interpretation of the moved constituent.

In both cases, the reference to CIs follows the definition made by Potts (2007), who proposed that their role lies in contributing a separate dimension of meaning, and precisely in defining “a dimension of meaning that, though conventionally encoded, is separate from the primary semantic content” (Potts, 2007:2). CIs add an additional meaning to the one expressed by the descriptive meaning, namely “what was said” (also called ‘at-issue entailment’). These are not to be confused with the pragmatic information, which is instead conveyed in conversational implicatures. Some of CIs properties described by Potts (2007) are listed below:

- Malleable: they are deeply influenced by the context, the knowledge of the interlocutors and additional pragmatic information;
- Reinforceable: given their malleability, they often generate doubts regarding what they were meant to say; the speakers therefore specify them outright;
- Part of the conventional (lexical) meaning of words;
- They are commitments, and give rise to entailments: this means that the speaker must be committed to the implicatures she is uttering;
- They are not backgrounded (contrary to presuppositions);
- They are not deniable: the speaker cannot cancel what she has already said;
- Scopally inert: they are not sensitive to higher operators.

The proposal by Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a) is that the corrective and mirative focus are conventional implicatures. In fact they share the main properties: first of all, the speaker is committed to the implicatures, either when the antecedent is incompatible with the corrective claim, or when the asserted proposition is less likely than an alternative. They are not already part of the common ground and they are not deniable, as can be seen in (18b) (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a:11):

(18) a. Avete visto Gianni, vero?

have (you) seen Gianni, true

‘You saw Gianni, didn’t you?’

b. MARCO abbiamo visto. # E anche Gianni, certo.

Marco (we) have seen and also Gianni, sure

‘We saw MARCO. # And Gianni as well, of course.’

(18b) is pragmatically infelicitous: the second part of the sentence is logically inconsistent with the preceding one (namely with the implicature). Finally, they are not sensible to higher operators.

As we will see in the following chapter, the proposal is that CIs have a dedicated projection in the left periphery below ForceP. The head of this functional projection hosts an implicatures-triggering feature.

4.5 Conclusions

In this chapter feature-driven approaches to focus were discussed, as well as non-feature driven ones. The former assume that focus is syntactically encoded in a functional projection in the left periphery (Brody 1990, Rizzi 1997, 2004, Belletti 2004, among others), following therefore a cartographic approach and explaining movement with the need of checking the [+ focus] feature of the constituent. According to a non-feature driven one, discourse-related properties are not dependent on syntax, but on prosody. Prosodic requirements are responsible for the placement of the focused constituent (Reinhart 1995, 2006, Szendrői 2001, 2003, Samek-Lodovici 2005, 2006, 2015).

These analyses have both several problems, the major one being that syntactic-based approaches cannot account for instances of focus realized in situ, whereas a

prosody-based analysis often fails to justify why in a language like Italian, focus can move to the left periphery of the sentence. Another problem is the fact that the T-model of grammar developed by Chomsky (1995) is not respected because a link between PF and LF is a necessary condition.

The question regarding the relation between syntax and prosody is not a simple one, and it goes beyond the aim of this chapter. We have to consider that “the relation between stress and structure becomes a complex issue, raising questions about the visibility of the covert structure to PF rules. [...] The more information that is captured covertly, the more mysterious it is that speakers are able to understand each other” (Reinhart, 2006:43). Data of focalization are extremely important in accounting for the relation between syntax and prosody.

Focalization shows that a full independence between the two cannot be maintained, and somehow they have to be linked (a hypothesis which is problematic for the T-model, though). This is proved especially by data of focus fronting of Italian, Hungarian and Finnish. At the same time, “CF prosody and interpretation cannot be assigned independently of the relevant syntactic configuration” (Bocci, 2013:75). Moreover, if it is correct to follow a focus typology as in chapter 3 above, any approach not taking into account the notion of focus for grammar is not able to explain the reason why we can obtain several interpretive effects in a focalized constituent.

In fact, neither a feature-driven approach nor a prosody-based one explain why and how different interpretations of a focused element can be obtained. That is, why IF can be realized in a low position, as well as CF, corrective focus and mirative focus, whereas the same is not possible for the fronted position. Focus fronting in fact is possible only in the case of corrective or mirative foci in Italian, and exhaustive foci in Hungarian. What gives rise to such interpretive effects?

We saw that the notion of contrast by itself is not sufficient to explain focus movement, no matter how we consider contrast. In fact, if we say that contrast can induce movement, we cannot explain why a sentence with a CF realized in situ is perfectly fine. Furthermore, not all kinds of contrastive focus can be moved, since merely contrastive focus has to stay in situ (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a).

As noted by Cruschina (2012), however, a general notion which can embody and cover all the possible interpretive effects would be much more preferable to the option of assuming the existence of as many focus categories as interpretations.

The proposal by Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b) is in some way similar to

the one by Horvath (2000, 2007, 2010) and her quantificational operator EI-Op, which is active in the syntactic computation and triggers the movement of focus. Their hypothesis is that we can consider correction and mirativity as conventional implicatures, resembling the analysis of Frey (2010) for exhaustive focus in Hungarian. In fact these share the same properties identified by Potts (2007); apparently they have a dedicated projection in the left periphery, whose specifier hosts some kinds of foci, as we will see in the following chapter.

5. THE POSITION(S) OF FOCUS

The position of focus is still a debated question, as well as the number of projections dedicated to focus that should be present in a sentence. In order to get to a solution, we have to take into account some of the crucial properties of focused constituents, explained in the previous chapters:

(i) focus has to be syntactically encoded in some way, if we don't want to change the T-model of Chomsky (1995). In fact, approaches based only on prosody constraints (as the one of Samek-Lodovici 2005, 2006, 2015) hypothesize a connection between PF and LF after Spell-Out;

(ii) there is a focus typology: foci can have different interpretations, as proved by prosodic, pragmatic and syntactic differences. How can we account for the presence of more than one focus type?;

(iii) different kinds of focus have distinct properties, and we find some asymmetries with respect to the position they can, or cannot, occupy. As noted by Bianchi (2013) a lower position is in fact more constrained than a higher one.

Most of the previous analyses do not account for all the properties described above. The major hypotheses for focalization, as far as Italian is concerned, can be divided into three groups which I will discuss in the following sections.

According to the first one, focused elements always move to the left periphery of the sentence, inside the CP (Rizzi 1997, 2004, Brunetti 2004). Other scholars (Samek-Lodovici 2005, 2006, 2015) state that focus stays in situ, whereas some others (Belletti 1999, 2001, 2004, Beninca' & Poletto 2004, Bianchi 2013, 2015, Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a, 2015b) hypothesize the existence of two different positions for focused constituents. The first one being high in the CP, and the second one lower in the clause.

Not only there is no agreement with regard to movement, or lack of it, of a focused constituent, but also on how many positions for focus we can find in a sentence, as well as their order. Every approach comes with some problems.

5.1 Focus in a left peripheral position

The main account of focus movement is the one by Rizzi (1997, 2004): in his view, once a constituent is focused, it must move to the left periphery of the sentence. This is due to the fact that focus bears a feature [+ focus], which determines the interpretation of the category bearing it and of its constituents, functioning as a scope marker. In this case movement, which is always considered ‘last resort’ following Chomsky (1995, 2000, 2001), takes place in order to satisfy the criterial model (seen in section 4.2.1). Therefore the focused constituent must enter into a spec-head configuration with the relevant head, so that the feature is checked.

Following the criterial model, this is true also for negation, wh- questions and topicalization: they have all features with interpretive imports and which must be checked. For this reason, they must move to their dedicated projection in the left periphery inside the CP.

However, as far as Italian is concerned, there is a big difference with regard to these features: some of them always move, as in the case of wh- operators, which can never stay in their base position, otherwise the sentence is ungrammatical. In other instances movement seems rather optional. This is the case of contrastive focalization: a focused element can either be realized in a fronted position, or in situ, as seen in (1a) and (1b) respectively.

(1) a. IL PANINO ha mangiato Gianni (, non la torta).

the sandwich has eaten Gianni, not the cake

b. Gianni ha mangiato IL PANINO (, non la torta).

Gianni has eaten the sandwich, not the cake

The hypothesis of Rizzi (1997) can easily explain sentence (1a), where the focused object moves from its base position inside the VP, to the FocP position in the CP, where its [+focus] feature is checked thanks to the spec-head agreement with a head carrying the same features.

In the case of (1b) the focused object apparently stays in situ, but in such a case, the criterial model would not be satisfied. It is for this reason that focus in situ is taken to be moved anyway: otherwise the feature-checking relation would not be correct. Rizzi (1997) postulates that the focal element moves at LF, namely that movement is covert. As already mentioned in 4.2.3, movement at LF creates a bigger problem: how can main

stress, a PF element, be assigned to an element at LF?

Once again the problem has to do with the T-model and the connections between the interfaces: as in the case of prosody-based approaches, in Rizzi's account we need to assume that PF and LF can communicate even after Spell-Out, otherwise stress could not be assigned if movement occurs at LF.

In subsequent accounts, the focused constituent moves to its projection and is then followed by remnant movement of the rest of the sentence, so that the linear order is satisfied.

The explanation of Rizzi for focus in a low position, however, is not sufficient and still cannot account for several data, such as licensing of n-words, and parasitic gaps (which we will see later).

Moreover, under his hypothesis only contrastive focalization is taken into account, whereas information foci are not considered. Note that IF can never be in a fronted position in Italian, as seen in section 2.1.1. Rizzi does not explain whether they have to move in the left periphery or can stay in situ.

Brunetti (2004) develops a similar approach, taking into account IF as well. According to her, every focused element moves to a higher position. In this case, however, movement is not due to feature-checking: Brunetti follows a prosody-based account, and questions the legitimacy of the [+ focus] feature⁵¹. Moreover, according to her proposal, the phenomenon of focus has a uniform behavior: there is no distinction between IF and CF or other focus types. This implies that they both have to move, following the same rules. In fact, IF and CF are claimed to be identical with respect to prosody, semantics and syntax.

We have already seen how the proposal of Brunetti (2004) works as far as syntax is concerned, namely the focus movement and ellipsis hypothesis. According to such a view, movement always occurs either with IF or CF, but in the former case often we cannot see it because of the intervention of ellipsis. Frequently this is the case of fragment answers, where only a constituent is present: the claim of Brunetti is that, after the movement of the focused element to the left periphery, ellipsis applies to the rest of the sentence, and for this reason we are not aware of movement. Note that ellipsis is grammatical only when it has an antecedent in the background material.

⁵¹ Although Brunetti (2004) states also that focus cannot depend entirely on prosody not involving anything else, which is instead the claim of the typical prosody-based approaches, as in the case of Reinhart (1995, 2006) and Szendrői (2001, 2003).

However, we have already seen that such an approach does not solve the problem of the position of focus, in that we do not always find ellipsis with IF. In fact, when a sentence containing IF is not a fragment answer, movement clearly does not apply, and the focused constituent has to be in a final position. Furthermore, CF can be fronted but the position in situ is systematically preferred over its counterpart with displacement, as proved by the experiment of Bianchi & Bocci (2012).

The final proposal by Brunetti (2004) is that in a focused element both syntax and prosody are crucial, and a special role is assigned to an intonational morpheme working as an independent lexical entry. In this way, there is no need to postulate a connection between PF and LF, and the matching between stress and prosody is assigned before Spell-Out. Moreover, the [+ focus] feature is inherently possessed by the intonational morpheme itself, which can also project its own position once it is merged in the syntactic derivation.

But, as in the case of Rizzi (1997), Brunetti's (2004) theory faces several problems: for instance the optionality of focus movement, as well as the intervention of ellipsis, already discussed in 2.4.

A major problem is that Brunetti (2004) argues in favor of a unified account for IF and CF, which, as discussed in chapter 2 and 3, is problematic: this approach cannot explain why focus fronting is possible only with some kinds of focus, since a single projection is not able to account for the differences existing among the several kinds of foci.

5.2 In situ focalization

Samek-Lodovici (2005, 2006, 2015) supports the idea that focus occurs in situ. His basic hypothesis is that the focused constituent is always in its base position, and when it appears on the left, the rest of the sentence has moved; therefore, it is right dislocated, or marginalized in situ. In this way, constituents preceding and following focus have a major role in the analysis of focalization.

One of the main consequences of such a proposal is that there is no unique and fixed projection dedicated to focus: it won't move to the specifier of FocP, neither in the left periphery (Rizzi 1997, Brunetti 2004), nor in the area above VP (Belletti 1999, 2001, 2004). Remember that in such cases, the focused constituent has to move in order to check its [+ focus] feature, following the criterial model (or the relation Agree, as in

Chomsky 2001). In the analysis of Samek-Lodovici (2015) focus does not have to move, because it does not have to check any feature. The main role is assigned to prosody, which establishes its position in the sentence. Basically, this approach follows the step of prosody-driven analyses described in section 4.3.

The position of focus is here determined by two concomitant factors, namely stress assignment and right dislocation. The latter has a crucial role in establishing the position of focus in the sentence, considering that in Italian stress is assigned rightmost (Zubizarreta 1994, 1998) and all the prosodic constraints push it in that direction.

When focus is contained in a right dislocated element, it must be moved: in such a case, it cannot obtain main stress and therefore ‘evacuates’ the phrase and moves to a higher position⁵². Right dislocation (RD, from now on), establishes how far focus can occur from the place where stress is assigned, namely the right edge of the clause. We can then state that prosody is mainly responsible for the position of focus.

5.2.1 Optimality Theory and prosodic constraints

In Samek-Lodovici (2015) the interaction between prosody and syntax is considered from the perspective of Optimality Theory: grammar consists of a set of universal constraints, and OT provides a theory of their interaction. These constraints are universal, but freely ranked, and different grammars are generated by different rankings of the constraints, which are differently prioritized: higher constraints take precedence over lower ones. Different rankings establish different resolutions of the available constraints conflict.

Constraints, in fact, are not always compatible with each other; on the contrary, they often conflict, as expected given the mutual independency of the interfaces. In such a view, a structure can be defined grammatical “when it meets the demands of the corresponding constraints ranking optimally, i.e. better than any competitor (or more precisely, not worse than any other competitor, so that competitors performing identically on all constraints are equally grammatical)” (Samek-Lodovici, 2015:240). Different rankings select different structures, and cross-linguistic variation depends on “the different rankings available for the universal constraints governing human language, not on separate parametrized properties. Each ranking identifies a grammar,

⁵² Note that in this case, the trigger of movement is considered the givenness nature of the constituent in which focus was born.

that is, a way to solve the conflicts that exist among the UG constraints” (Samek-Lodovici, 2013:455).

Focus, as well as other phenomena, is governed by syntactic and prosodic constraints, where the latter govern the mapping of syntactic structures into prosodic constituents, and the position of prosodic heads. In (2) and (3) some of those reported by Samek-Lodovici (2005, 2015:242) are listed.

(2) **Stay** – No traces⁵³.

EPP – Clauses have subjects⁵⁴.

(3) **Wrap** – Each lexically headed XP is contained inside a phonological phrase P⁵⁵.

Stress XP – Each lexically headed XP must contain a *phrasal stress* (where ‘phrasal stress’ refers to the head of a phonological phrase P)⁵⁵.

Stress-Focus – For any focused phrase XP_F and for any YP in the focus domain of XP_F, XP_F is prosodically more prominent than XP.⁵⁶

Head-intonational-phrase (Hd-ip) – Align the right boundary of every intonational phrase with its head.

When focalization is involved, prosodic and syntactic constraints conflict with each other: the best position for main stress does not necessarily match the best syntactic position dedicated to a focused constituent⁵⁷. Hence, one of the two has to give up its best position and some constraints have to be violated, following the rules of OT (namely, the best alternative will be the chosen one).

In Italian, such a conflict is particularly evident when focus appears clause-internally and clause-initially, namely when it occupies a non-final position. In these cases, either the canonical syntactic position is preserved, or stress maintains its rightmost position and focus occurs clause-finally.

Finally, note that according to Samek-Lodovici (2005) prosodic and syntactic constraints can and do intermingle: against the predictions of the T-model, PF and LF are again taken to be connected.

⁵³ As in Chomsky (1995): movement is penalized. The constraint is violated once by each movement.

⁵⁴ Chomsky (1982) and Grimshaw (1997).

⁵⁵ As in Truckenbrodt (1995)

⁵⁶ See Jackendoff (1972).

⁵⁷ Namely EPP conflicts with Hd-ip.

5.2.2 Accounts of focalization

As we have already seen, in Italian focus can appear in several different positions: at the end of the sentence, as well as at the beginning and clause-internally.

Focus in a clause-final position can be easily explained, since it coincides with the typical position of stress assignment. It is the most frequently used order for focus, given that it is the only possible position for an entire focused sentence, as in (4), and can be used either for IF, as seen in (5), or CF as in (6a) and (6b):

(4) What happened?

[Gianni e Sara sono andati in luna di miele]_f

Gianni and Sara have gone in honeymoon

‘Gianni and Sara went on honeymoon.’

(5) Context: Where did you go last year?

L’anno scorso sono andata a Lisbona.

the year last (I) am went to Lisbon

‘Last year I went to Lisbon.’

(6) a. L’anno scorso sono andata in SPAGNA (non a Lisbona)

the year last (I) am went to Spain (not to Lisbon)

‘Last year I went to SPAIN (not to Lisbon).’

b. Ha letto il libro MARIA.

has read the book Mary

‘MARY read the book.’

In these sentences, focus matches the position of stress, even in a case like (6b), where the focused constituent is the subject. This is in a clause-final position and violates therefore a syntactic constraints, i.e. EPP⁵⁸.

According to Samek-Lodovici, whenever focus is the last constituent of the clause, there has been leftward scrambling of any material generated to its right. This ‘left shift’ is due to the requirement that stress is assigned to the right edge of the clause, and therefore any material intervening between the canonical position of stress and focus moves to a higher position.

⁵⁸ In optimality theoretic terms, this means that the prosodic constraint requiring stress to be assigned rightmost has priority over the syntactic ones.

It is not so simple if we take into account sentences where focus is clause-internal ('rightward but non-rightmost position'). According to Samek-Lodovici (2005), this happens when focus co-occurs with right dislocation, as in (7) and with focused quantifiers in (8):

(7) Non ha invitato i MILANESI, Gianni.

not has invited the Milanese Gianni

'John did not invite the MILANESE.'

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:13, ex 24)

(8) a. How many cherries have you given to Maria?

b. Ho dato a Maria TRE ciliegie.

(I) have given to Maria three cherries

'I have given THREE cherries to Mary.'

(Samek-Lodovici, 2005:13, ex 27)

Note that in (7) focus must precede the right dislocated element, otherwise the sentence is ungrammatical; in (8), the quantifier has to precede the noun it is referred to⁵⁹.

In a sentence like (7), it seems that the focused object, which has raised above the subject, has moved; actually, the object is in its in situ position, whereas the subject has moved through right-dislocation⁶⁰.

Once again, the position of focus depends on the main stress: it is pulled rightmost in order to satisfy the stress-assignment requirement and "whenever higher-ranked constraints prevent stress from occurring rightmost, the prosodic constraints do not cease to push stress as far to the right as possible, producing rightward but non-rightmost focalization" (Samek-Lodovici, 2005:14).

Focus in clause-internal position, hence, is actually focus in a clause-final position occurring with the right dislocation of the constituents following it. The proposal of Samek-Lodovici (2006) is given in (9c):

⁵⁹ Even though there can be an example of quantifier following the noun, as in (i):

(i) Di ciliegie ne ha mangiate TRE.

of cherries (she) has eaten three

⁶⁰ In Samek-Lodovici (2015) right-dislocation can be obtained either with rightward movement or with leftward movement. The latter is preferred over its counterpart, as predicted by an antisymmetric approach (Kayne, 1994). See Samek-Lodovici (2015) for further details on this point.

(9) a. L'ho VISTO, Gianni.

(I) him have seen, Gianni

'I SAW Gianni.'

b. [_{TopP} Gianni_i Ø_{Top} [_{IP} l'ho VISTO t_i]]

c. [_{XP} [_{IP} l'ho visto t_i]_k Ø_X [_{TopP} Gianni_i Ø_{Top} t_k]]

(Samek-Lodovici, 2006:4, ex 3, 4a,b)

The RD item moves first to the specifier of TopP, and is then stranded in a rightmost position, given the leftward raising of the IP. This analysis predicts that focus has not a fixed position, and therefore it stays in a functional projection XP above TopP.

“The more numerous the dislocated constituents the closer focus will appear to the sentence left edge, determining its apparent positional freedom” (Samek-Lodovici, 2006:33), as can be shown in sentences below.

(10) Context: Will you give Gianni the flowers and the other presents today?

a. No. Regaleremo i fiori a Gianni insieme agli altri regali DOMANI.

no. (we) will give the flowers to Gianni along with the other presents tomorrow

b. No. Regaleremo i fiori a Gianni DOMANI, insieme agli altri regali.

no. (we) will give the flowers to Gianni tomorrow along with the other presents

c. No. Gli regaleremo i fiori DOMANI, a Gianni, insieme agli altri regali.

no. Them (we) will give the flowers tomorrow, to Gianni, along with the other presents

d. No. Glieli regaleremo DOMANI, i fiori, a Gianni, insieme agli altri regali.

no. to him them (we) will give tomorrow the flowers, to Gianni, along with the other presents

e. No. DOMANI, regaleremo i fiori a Gianni insieme agli altri regali.

no. tomorrow, (we) will give the flowers to Gianni along with the other presents

We can see here that the position of the focus constituent changes according to the constituents which are right dislocated: from no constituent at all in (10a), to all of them in sentence (10e).

Finally, not even when focus is in a clause-initial position can we state that movement applied. In fact, right dislocation intervenes once again: the constituents following focus are actually moved from their base position, and the derivation described by Samek-Lodovici (2006:49) is as in (11):

(11) a. MARCO, abbiamo visto.

Marco (we) have seen

b. [_{IP} *pro* abbiamo visto [_{focus} Marco] _{right dislocation}]

c. [_{Marco_n} [_{IP} abbiamo visto t_n]]

d. [_{TopP} [_{IP} *pro* abbiamo visto t_n]_i ∅_{Top} [_{Marco_n} t_i]]

e. [_{XP} [_{Marco_n} t_i]_k ∅_X [_{TopP} [*pro* abbiamo visto t_n]_i ∅_{Top} t_k]]

In (11c) we can see the movement of the focused object out of the IP, followed in (11d) by the IP which goes to SpecTopP and finally in (11e) focus gets in its final position in the XP projection.

This is a rather complicated analysis, where the focused constituent is claimed to not move to a dedicated projection. For this reason, an additional projection is created in order to host focus. Moreover, in this case focus moves not only once, but twice, and remnant movement of the rest of the sentence has to be postulated, as in (11d); this occupies the specifier of a topic position, exactly as in the analysis of Rizzi (1997) for focus in a clause-internal/clause-final position.

Sentence (11a) is particular in Samek-Lodovici's (2015) account, in that it represents the only possibility of focus movement, namely when it is contained in a RDed constituent. In such a case, in order to satisfy stress alignment, the focused constituent raises outside RD, an operation called 'focus evacuation'. This has to do with prosodic requirements: stress cannot be assigned to an element inside a right-dislocated phrase, given the fact that RD cannot bear sentence main stress, whereas focus has to.

Its final position is established according to the constituents targeted by RD, and it thus has not a fixed projection to get to. The movement has to be the shortest possible one to get focus to the left of RD.

As a result, focus moves in order to be able to have stress. It is the case of (12) and (13):

(12) Context: Alice saw Paris.

No, MADRID [ha visto]_R.

no, Roma (she) has seen

'No. She saw ROME.'

(13) Abbiamo a LUCA, [raccontato tutto]_R (, non a Marco).

(we) have to Luca told everything, not to Marco

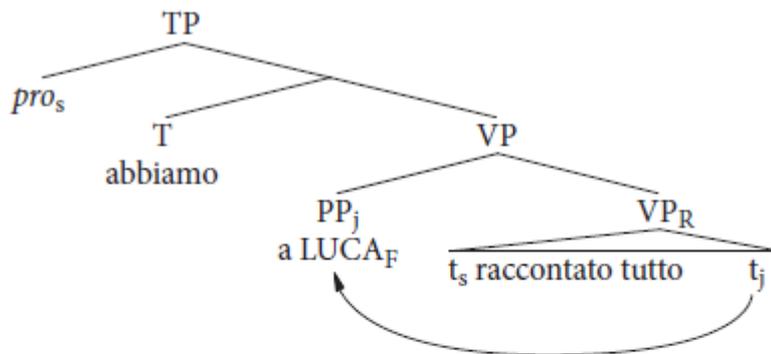
‘We told everything to LUCA (, not to Marco).

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:181, ex 32)

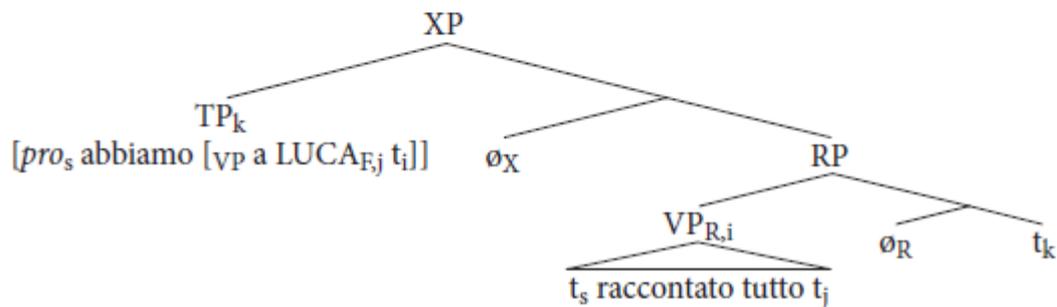
In the case of (13), RD targets a VP; therefore, the object evacuates and adjoins to the IP. This movement is followed by the movement of the VP, which reaches the specifier of RP in a clause external position. Focus is hosted in a functional projection XP, as the derivation in (14) taken from Samek-Lodovici (2015:181) shows.

(14)

a. Focus evacuation of the indirect object *a Luca*



b. Right-dislocation of the past-participle VP



Considering focus as realized in situ in (almost) every realization, helps us in the explanation of the structures involving negative words licensing, parasitic gaps and wh-constituents co-occurring with focus. Such sentences were problematic for a left peripheral account (see Rizzi, 1997).

5.2.3 N-words licensing

One of the major problems in a left peripheral analysis of focus is licensing of negative words, as noted by several authors (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002, Samek-Lodovici 2005, 2006, 2015).

In Italian, n-words must have a licenser c-commanding them when lower than IP, whereas there is no such need when the n-word occurs preverbally. When the negative word c-commands the finite verb, it can occur as the only negative element in the clause, whereas such possibility is not open for a negative word following the finite verb (Zanuttini, 1991), as the sentences in (15) show.

- (15) a. *Ho visto *nessuno*
(I) have seen nobody
b. *Non* ho visto *nessuno*
not (I) have seen anybody
c. *Nessuno* ha detto *niente*
nobody have said anything
d. *Nessuno* ho visto.
nobody (I) have seen

The licenser can either be the negative marker *non*, or another n-word, as in (15c). When a sentence contains more than one negative element with the interpretation of a single instance of negation, we have a ‘negative concord’ effect, which is the case of sentences (15b) and (15c). Italian is a negative concord language: two negative elements do not trigger a double negative interpretation, which is what happens in English.

The licensing required depends on a c-command relation between licenser and licensee. Note that c-command must hold at surface, and not under reconstruction (Samek-Lodovici, 2015:299).

Thus, the same properties are expected to be valid when focalization is involved, and therefore in a sentence like (16) the focused negative phrase *nessuno* has to be in a c-commanding relation with its licenser, in this case *non*.

- (16) Non ho visto NESSUNO.
not (I) have seen nobody
‘I saw NOBODY.’

Such a relation is not expected under a left-periphery analysis of focus: in Rizzi (1997) in fact, the focused phrase moves to SpecFocP, whereas the rest of the sentence remnant-moves to the SpecTopP preceding the focus projection. Therefore, this hypothesis fails to explain why the sentence is grammatical, since *non* does not c-

command the negative phrase. (16) would be similar to (17), where the negative word occurs in a preverbal position, and hence does not require licensing.

- (17) NESSUNO, ho visto
nobody (I) have seen
'NOBODY, I saw.'

Sentences similar to the ones in (18) show that focus has to be in a position lower than the head of I, if we want the correct licensing relation between the negative marker and the negative focused constituent. Under an analysis like the one of Rizzi (1997), these sentences should be ungrammatical.

(18) Context: We were told that they gave Mary some beautiful flowers.

- a. No. Non le hanno regalato NULLA/ALCUNCHÉ.
no (they) not to her have given anything/anything
'No. They did not give her ANYTHING.'
- b. No. Non le hanno regalato NULLA/ ALCUNCHÉ, a Maria.
no (they) not to her have given anything/anything, to Maria
'No. They did not give ANYTHING to Maria.'

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:15, ex 41, 43)

Samek-Lodovici's (2005, 2006, 2015) explanation of right dislocation can instead account for the licensing of n-words. The properties of negations are expected: being in situ, the focalized negative word is also c-commanded by the negative marker, as required.

A problematic case is the alternation between (19a) and (19b), where the sentence is grammatical only when the focused negative phrase is at the end of the clause (in which case it also need licensing), or when it is the only NPI occurring in the sentence. If IP contains another NPI, then the sentence is ungrammatical, as in (19b).

- (19) a. [Nessuno ha visto NULLA]_f
nobody has seen anything
- b. * NESSUNO ha visto nulla.
nobody has seen anything

Note that in (19a) the whole sentence is focused and presents negative concord. Its

counterpart in (19b), where only the subject is focused, is ungrammatical.

Under the analysis of Rizzi (1997), it shouldn't be so: the negative object is c-commanded by the negative marker, namely the focused subject. According to a left peripheral analysis, *nessuno* occupies a SpecFocP projection and is thus perfectly able to license the object. On the contrary, if we consider the remnant IP as right dislocated (as in Samek-Lodovici 2005), the ungrammaticality is explained, being RD clause-external, and namely outside the c-commanding domain of the licenser.

Moreover, remember that n-words allow for marginalization, but resist right dislocation. The hypothesis developed by Samek-Lodovici (2006, 2015) can account for such an asymmetry, in that if we right dislocate a negative word, this occupies a position outside the TP, and is therefore outside the licensing domain.

5.2.4 Parasitic gaps

Another piece of evidence used by Samek-Lodovici (2015) is the licensing of parasitic gaps. A parasitic gap is a gap that depends on the existence of another gap in the same sentence⁶¹: it is parasitic on the presence of a syntactic gap in the sentence. Therefore, a parasitic gap can be used only when it is licensed by the antecedent of another real gap created by movement.

Note the asymmetry between (20) and (21):

(20) [Nostro PADRE], [abbiamo cercato t per mesi] [senza mai trovare t]!

our father, (we) have sought for months without ever to-find

'Our FATHER, we sought for months without ever finding!'

(21) * Abbiamo cercato per mesi [nostro PADRE], senza mai trovare ___ !

(we) have sought for months our father, without ever to-find

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:218, ex 136a,b)

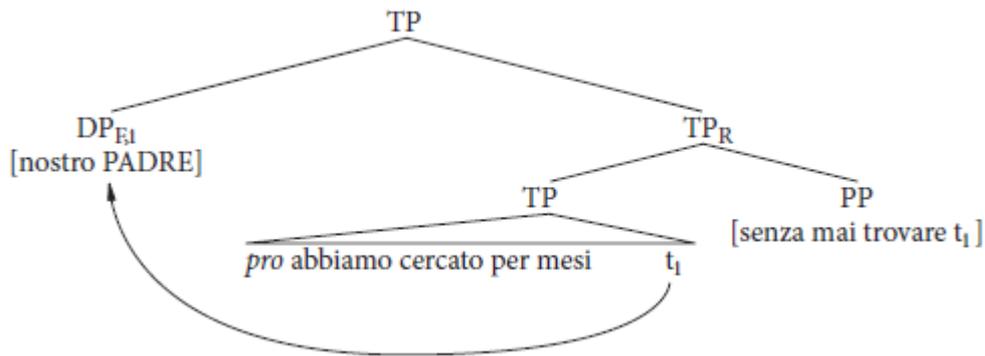
A parasitic gap can be licensed by a clause-initial focus, but not by a postverbal focus; such an asymmetry cannot be explained following (Rizzi 1997), where the focused object c-commands the parasitic gap in both (20) and (21), given its left peripheral position. This cannot explain why (21) is ungrammatical.

⁶¹ A gap is defined as an "empty node that is necessarily controlled by a lexical phrase somewhere in the sentence" (Engdahl, 1983:5).

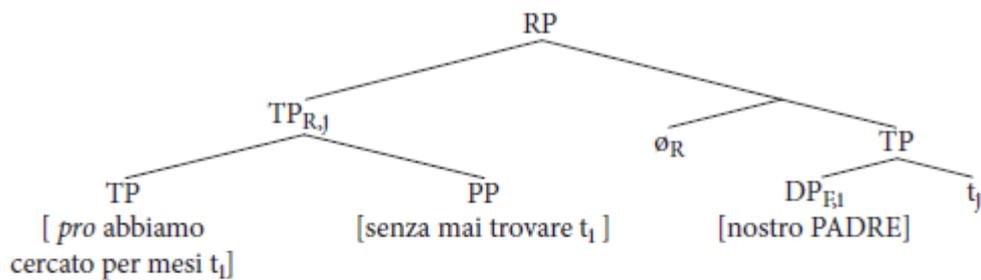
The problem is instead solved if we consider focus in situ: in (21) it would be too low to c-command the parasitic gap, and the ungrammaticality of the sentence follows directly. In (20), on the contrary, it precedes the auxiliary (being an evacuated focus followed by RD): its position is adjoined to the TP, and therefore it can license the parasitic gap. The derivation in (22) is proposed by Samek-Lodovici (2015:218).

(22)

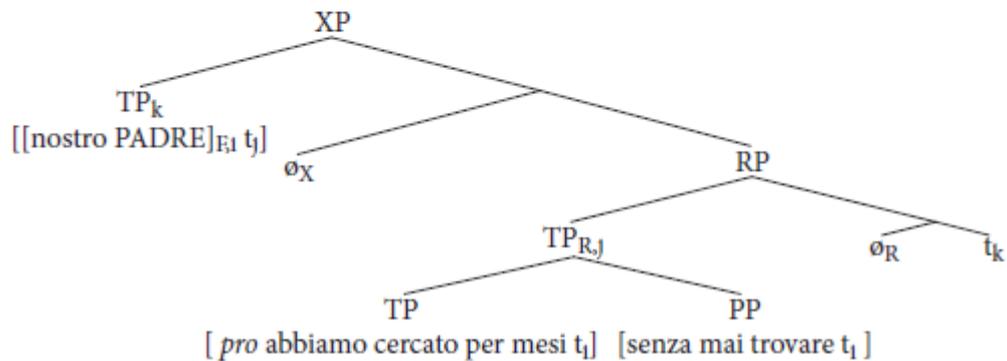
a. Focus evacuation



b. Right dislocation of TP_R



c. Movement of remnant TP_k



5.2.5 *Wh- constituents and focus*

Rizzi (1997) claims that *wh-* elements and focus are in a complementary distribution: “a *wh* operator in main questions is compatible with a topic in a fixed order, whereas is incompatible with a focus” (Rizzi, 1997:291). They compete for the same position, and therefore are not able to occur in the same clause.

Bocci (2013) presupposes as well an incompatibility relation between the two elements, stating that *wh-* elements can be considered foci⁶², and for this reason cannot appear in the same sentence, as proved by (23):

(23) * IL LIBRO quando hanno consegnato a Leo?

the book when (they) have delivered to Leo (Bocci, 2013:18, ex 19)

Such a constraint seems to be connected only to some of the *wh-* operators: neither *perché* (why) nor *come mai* (how come) are restricted in their occurrence with focus (Rizzi, 2001). Probably this property is connected to the fact that these *wh-* elements apparently target a higher position within the left periphery (Rizzi, 2001).

(24) Perché QUESTO LIBRO hai comprato a Anna?

why this book (you) have bought to Anna

However, Samek-Lodovici (2015), proved that in many sentences a *wh-* constituent and a focused one actually can and do appear together, as in the case of (25).

(25) Context: I already told you which witness saw the body.

Sì. Ma quale testimone ha visto l'ASSASSINO? (Non il corpo).

yes but which witness has seen the murderer (not the body).

‘Yes. But which witness saw the murderer? (Not the body).’

(Samek-Lodovici, 2006:21, ex 63)

In Samek-Lodovici (2015) the focused constituent occupies the XP projection above TopP, whose specifier hosts the dislocated part of the sentence containing the *wh-* element.

⁶² The same hypothesis is typical of several analyses of focalization, see Rochemont (1986) and Rizzi (2006), and is apparently supported by cross-linguistic evidence. In fact in Gungbe, focus and *wh-* constituents are both followed by the same focus marker, and the two elements cannot co-occur (Aboh 2004).

Prosodic evidence is also used, in that *wh-* elements in main questions are associated to main prominence, the same way of focused elements, following Bocci & Avesani (2011).

5.2.6 *In sum*

What results from the hypothesis of Samek-Lodovici is a completely different notion of focus, which has no fixed and unique projection, and stays in situ (except when contained in a right dislocated constituent). Its distribution depends on the ordering of some prosodic and syntactic constraints basically stating that focus is stressed, that it occurs rightmost and that movement is costly.

Furthermore, there is no need for feature checking, which was instead the main argument for Rizzi's (1997) left peripheral focus: prosody has the main role in determining the distribution and properties of focalization. Basically, everything depends on the fact that in Italian stress is assigned rightmost (Zubizarreta, 1998). Since there is no dedicated focus projection, the Split-CP of Rizzi (1997) is here modified: the FocP disappears.

However, Samek-Lodovici does not take into account focus typology: his arguments are based on contrastive focus only. With such an hypothesis, probably there would be no difficulties in the distinction of other kinds of foci, since none of them would have a dedicated projection. This approach cannot explain why the availability of the fronted position is open only to some of the focus interpretations, namely why only corrective, mirative and exhaustive foci can be moved to a higher position whereas merely contrastive and new information ones cannot. Such an asymmetry cannot be due to the right dislocated status of the constituent following focus: focus interpretations cannot be reduced to marginalized and right dislocated elements. Moreover, being a prosody-based approach, it comes with the problems already discussed in section 4.3.4: the modification of the T-model (Chomsky, 1995). Prosody and syntax are connected and can communicate, since prosodic and syntactic constraints can and do intermingle in Samek-Lodovici (2015).

5.3 Two projections for focus

Several accounts explaining the properties of Italian focalization postulate the existence of (at least) two separated projections, which can contain a focused constituent. This is the case of Beninca' & Poletto (2004), according to whom a double position FocP is present inside the CP, and of Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004) as well. The latter proposal is different in that the two projections are in distinct parts of the structure: a higher one inside the CP and a lower one above VP/vP. Finally, a third proposal is the one of Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b), who account for the different interpretations focus may have, and the rules connected to them.

5.3.1 Beninca' & Poletto (2004)

Beninca' & Poletto (2004) propose an interesting modification in Rizzi's (1997) analysis. The Split-CP in (26) becomes a structure similar to the one in (27):

(26) [ForceP [TopP [FocP [TopP [FinP [IP...]]]]]]

(27) [ForceP [TopP [FocP₁ [FocP₂ [FinP [IP...]]]]]]

One of the projections assumes a completely different value: what was first analyzed as topic is now seen as the second focus of a sentence. One of their main arguments has a cartographic nature: each syntactic projection should have its own syntactic and semantic properties. In Rizzi (1997), however, topics were said to be recursive, namely they could either precede focalization or follow it, with no apparent constraints.

Beninca' & Poletto (2004) propose that recursion is not an option, and that there cannot exist two identical projections, either for topic projection or for focus. There have to be some differences between heads, at least from a semantic point of view.

For this reason, the second projection of TopP in Rizzi (1997) is not really a topic, but we are rather dealing with focus: according to them, constituents which can be found within this projection (namely postfocal elements) have properties in common with focalization and not with topicalization: they have operator-like properties. In fact, these cannot be clitic doubled, as can be seen in (28) , and have WCO effects, as in

sentence (29)⁶³.

(28) * A GIANNI, un libro di poesie, lo regalerete.

to Gianni, a book of poetry, (you) it will give

‘You will give a book of poetry to JOHN.’

(Beninca’ & Poletto, 2004:54, ex 3a)

(29) * A MARIA_i, Giorgio, sua_i madre presenterà.

to Maria, Giorgio, his mother will-introduce

‘Giorgio will introduce his mother to Maria.’

(Beninca’ & Poletto, 2004:57, ex 11a)

Consequently, there cannot be a topic after a focused elements: topics can only precede foci, and are therefore placed above FocP. This field hosts phrases expressing the background information, already known by the interlocutors.

On the other hand, FocP is not to be analyzed as a single node, but rather as a field containing different projections; focus can then host more than one element. Their conclusion is that the focus field has to be activated by explicitly marked elements, and it can be split into two parts: the one dedicated to contrastive focus and the other to information focus. The projection of CF precedes that of IF, so that the semantic order of the sentence is respected: the known information is constrained to the first part of a sentence, whereas the new information to the last one, and in between we find contrastive information, which does not necessarily have to be new (Rochemont, 1986). Moreover they claim that CF is actually a subfield⁶⁴.

In such an analysis, a sentence like (30) is said to contain two foci:

(30) A GIORGIO, questo libro, devi dare.

to Giorgio this book you must give

‘You must give this book to Giorgio.’

(Beninca’ & Poletto, 2004:61, ex 26)

⁶³ Remember that the WCO effects is considered a diagnostic test for movement; as seen in section 1.4.1 above. According to Rizzi (1997), only focus shows WCO effects, whereas topic does not. This was one of his main arguments for focus movement, given that WCO effect seems to be the prove that something has moved to another part of the sentence.

⁶⁴ Their proposal regarding the focus field is based on (i) the fact that in V2 Medieval Romance, as well as in some dialects (see Sicilian, Cruschina, 2012), IF can be in sentence initial position and (ii) in Rhaeto-Romance a sentence seems to contain (at least) two CFs.

The first constituent is the CF, as signaled by the contrastive intonation⁶⁵; *questo libro* is again a focus, which occupies the projection below FocP₁ and behaves like an operator-moved element, rather than as a topic.

In such a proposal, the CP can be divided into two main fields: the higher one dedicated to topics, in which the known information is expressed and is considered base-generated (in fact, it does not show WCO effects). The other is the focus field, containing new information, divided in CF and IF and whose constituents are moved, as shown by the WCO effects.

However, as noted by Samek-Lodovici (2015) the evidence used to show that second focused elements have an operator-like behavior is not completely correct. First of all, it is not true that a post-focal element does not allow clitic doubling: the sentence in (28) was given without an appropriate context, and hence the ungrammaticality status cannot be considered correct. In fact, once we furnish a background, we can have a completely grammatical sentence, as proved by (31):

(31) Context: Ma a chi li avete DATI, i fiori? A Marco?

but to whom (you) them have given the flowers? To Marco?

‘Who did you give the flowers to? To Marco?’

No. A MARIA, i fiori, li abbiamo dati. Non a Marco!

no to Mary the flowers (we) them have given, not to Marco

‘No. We gave the flowers to MARY. Not to Marco!’

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:209, ex 113)

The same can be said for the WCO effect: if the appropriate context is provided, we will find the sentence correct, as in (32):

(32) Context: I suoi_i genitori l’hanno mandato a studiare a ROMA, Marco_i.

the his parents him have sent to study in Rome, Marco

‘Marco, his parents have sent him to study in Rome.’

No. A MILANO, Marco_i, i suoi_i genitori l’hanno mandato a studiare.

no to Milan, Marco, the his parents him have sent to study

‘No. Mark, his parents have sent him to study in Milan.’

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:214, ex 129)

⁶⁵ Note that the intonation is not considered a valid test for focalized elements in Beninca’ & Poletto (2004): the typical intonation of CF can be found in contrastive topic as well. Furthermore, an element that is not intonationally marked can be inside the focus field. It is the case of *questo libro* in sentence (30).

Furthermore, if stating a double position for focus is an interesting proposal, we cannot say the same about the position chosen by Beninca' & Poletto (2004): if IF and CF have both a dedicated projection in the CP, the position of IF cannot be explained. Even if in V2 Medieval Romance it was possible to find IF in a left peripheral position, it is not a good reason for stating that it has a specified projection in the CP. This would mean that in every sentence containing IF there has to be remnant movement so that the linear order is respected and the focused constituent reaches its position.

A double projection in these terms would not solve any of the problems pointed out before: neither the various focus interpretations (even if something similar is proposed), nor the feature-checking or the optionality of movement. Above all, this last problem is the most serious one: we are forced to say that focus has always to move to the left periphery, not only when it is contrastive, but also when expressing new information. We would consider once again the typical problems of the left peripheral accounts of focus.

5.3.2 Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004)

Belletti hypothesizes a double periphery in each sentence: the area preceding VP/vP is parallel to the one of the CP. Thus, beside a FocP and recursive TopPs (following Rizzi 1997) in the left periphery, we can also find the same projections in a clause-internal position. Therefore, focus can occupy two distinct projections, but with a crucial difference with respect to Beninca' & Poletto (2004): it can either be in a high position in the CP or in a lower one, immediately above VP.

Her main evidence supporting such a proposal is provided by postverbal subjects, and the VS order that reverses the canonical SV type. In order to explain these sentences, we cannot take into account a lowering operation, since rightward (and downward) movement has been ruled out (Kayne 1994). According to some scholars, these subjects are rather licensed in situ: the subject doesn't have to move and reach the left periphery, or the SpecIP, but it can simply occupy the specifier of a focus position, which is then the licenser of the subject.

The fact that these subjects are really low in the structure can be seen in sentences with adverbs: subjects follow low adverbs (Cinque, 1999), as can be seen in the contrast between (33a) and (33b):

- (33) a. ? Cpirà completamente Maria.
 will understand completely Maria
- b. * Cpirà Maria completamente.
 will understand Maria completely

(Belletti, 2004:165, ex 3a, 4a)

The partial grammaticality of sentence (33a) contrasts with the ungrammatical status of (33b); the preference for an order of the type V Adv S over the counterpart V S Adv is clear.

That postverbal subjects are in a low position can be seen not only from low adverbs, but from the comparison with a similar phenomenon of French, namely Stylistic Inversion⁶⁶.

In order to prove that there is the intervention of focalization, the distinction between new information focus and contrastive one is crucial: remember that only CF can be found in a fronted position, whereas IF is low. In Belletti's account, a postverbal subject is to be analyzed as a new information focus, since only the postverbal position can carry new information, and hence the order VS is expected.

The question is then how the subject can be licensed in such a position: it has not to do with the assignment of Case by focus, as stated in Belletti (2001)⁶⁷, but rather with economy considerations. In a sentence with postverbal subject, there is an additional element: an expletive *pro* which is not present in sentences with a preverbal subject, and thus the Lexical Array gets bigger. Note that a Lexical Array bigger in size should be used only if "this choice has a reflex on the outcome" (Belletti, 2004:172), and focalization represents one of those cases.

Belletti takes into account other instances of VS order with a complement of V, which can either be an object (34) or a PP (35):

⁶⁶ As described by Kayne and Pollock (2001), Stylistic Inversion (SI) is triggered by the subjunctive status of a sentence, as the one in (i), (Belletti, 2004:163, ex 2e).

(i) Le jour où a parlé/est parti Jean.

The day when has spoken/is left Jean

The general assumption is that the subject moves to a higher position in the left periphery, and it is followed by remnant movement of the rest of the sentence, which reaches a higher position. Hence, the subject occupies a high position in the structure.

According to Belletti, a clause-internal analysis is much more preferable for Italian Free Inversion, since "remnant-type movements [should] be limited to those cases where interpretive/intonational factors seem to call for them" (Belletti, 2004:164).

⁶⁷ Given the Agree relation (Chomsky, 2001), where Case assignment is available at distance.

(34) *Ha comprato Maria il giornale
has bought Maria the newspaper

(35) ? Ha parlato uno studente col direttore
has spoken a student to the director (Belletti, 2004:173, ex 20b,c)

In the case of (34), if the sentence is uttered in an out-of-the-blue context, and with no particular intonation, it results ungrammatical, whereas under the same conditions (35) is almost fine, in Belletti's opinion. According to Belletti this has to do with the assignment of Case, in that DPs need Case, but PPs do not⁶⁸, and furthermore they are licensed in situ. The order VSPP is fine, but both VSO and VOS are ruled out.

The proposal of Belletti (2001) is that other arguments of the verb can follow the subject, but only if they remain in their original VP internal complement position, which is possible with PPs (and CPs as well), but not with DPs⁶⁹.

In some cases, the order VOS is allowed thanks to the use of contrastive stress (and to the presence of a context), as in (36):

(36) Ha mangiato un panino GIANNI (non Maria).
has eaten a sandwich Gianni (not Maria)

In a sentence involving contrastive focalization, the analysis of Belletti (2001, 2004) resembles the one of Rizzi (1997): the focused constituent has to move to the left periphery, and the rest of the sentence moves to a higher topic position.

In fact, following Belletti, IF and CF must be separated because of their different properties concerning not only prosody, but also pragmatics. Therefore, they both have dedicated projections: IF does not need to move to the left, because its projection is contained in the low periphery. Such position is dedicated to new information, and for this reason it is the projection of postverbal subjects.

On the other side, CF allows more orders than IF, thanks to its special prosodic and

⁶⁸ The ungrammaticality of (35) is then explained in terms of Relativized Minimality: if the DP needs Case, it should move to an appropriate position located outside VP, and hence higher than the focus internal position, namely the projection dedicated to postverbal subject. The crossing of the object over the subject is not allowed because of RM.

⁶⁹ Even though there are some exceptions: the order VOS can be used in answering a wh- question, as in (ib), where the subject is preceded by the known information:

(i) a. Chi ha vinto un libro?
who has won a book?
b. Ha vinto un libro Marco.
Has won a book Marco

pragmatic contour. Since the interpretation of contrastive focalization is available only in the left periphery, movement is mandatory, either when focus is in a fronted position or when it is clause-internal. In the latter case, in order to obtain the correct linear order, Belletti postulates remnant movement of the rest of the sentence, which occupies the position of topic preceding FocP.

The main problem of Belletti (2001, 2004), beside the ones described by Brunetti (2004)⁷⁰ and Samek-Lodovici (2015)⁷¹, is that her hypothesis cannot account for focus typology and is not able to explain why only certain sentences allow for the fronted position. Postulating that CF always has to move to the left periphery, even when it is realized clause-internally, has the same problems of Rizzi (1997). Probably both the high FocP position and the one located above VP should be taken into account without the strict division between IF and CF, at least as far as their projections are concerned.

5.3.3 Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b)

As already seen in chapter 3 above, focus can have more than two interpretations. According to Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b) as far as Italian is concerned, we have to consider (at least) two more types of foci: corrective (a subtype of the contrastive one) and mirative. Moreover, in certain languages, such as Hungarian (É. Kiss, 1998), there is also exhaustive focus.

To solve the problem, it is crucial to take into account the several interpretations of focus. In fact, these affect not only the pragmatic part, but also the prosodic and the syntactic one.

In particular, Bianchi (2013) was one of the first who noted the asymmetries between the low position for focus, and the higher one – which turned out to be more

⁷⁰ Who states that some of the sentences used by Belletti are considered ungrammatical or marginal because of the lack of context, and the difference in grammaticality depends on a minor/major difficulty in recovering such a context. Furthermore, Brunetti (2004) disagrees on the role of remnant movement as well, and on the final position of SpecTopP of the rest of the sentence which remnant moves.

⁷¹ According to Samek-Lodovici (2015), if we postulates a double position for focus, more orders than the ones allowed should be possible. In particular, we would expect an order $\langle B_F A_M \rangle$ to be accepted, since the focused phrase should be able to raise to an intermediate projection and therefore preceding the marginalized constituent. According to him, this is not possible, though.

constrained: only corrective and mirative foci can be in the fronted position⁷². This means that the overt movement restricts the possible interpretations of focus, which are instead open in its in situ position.

What about their position, then? Following Belletti (2001, 2004), we cannot account for these asymmetries. In fact, the remnant movement hypothesis cannot explain them, and on the contrary, it would predict the reverse situation, in that “the extra remnant movement step should be triggered by some interpretively relevant ‘left-peripheral’ feature” (Bianchi, 2013:209).

This hypothesis developed by Bianchi (2013, 2015) was first based on the differences between merely contrastive and corrective foci (Bianchi & Bocci, 2012), where only the latter is accepted in a fronted position. The main difference is that contrastive focus involves contrast within utterances, whereas with corrective focalization the contrast is across utterances.

Corrective focus is therefore said to implement a specific conversational move, namely a speech act, which must be expressed by a root clause. In fact, according to Bianchi (2013, 2015), any Information Structure phenomenon affecting the conversational dynamics has to be licensed in the left-periphery of a root clause, namely syntactically unembedded, but in some cases even embedded ones, ‘quasi-subordinate’. Some of these, as in the case of non-factive verbs of saying and opinion, bear context update potential, even though syntactically embedded.

(37) a. Maria pensa [che affideranno l’incarico a lei.]

Maria thinks that (they) will assign the task to her

b. No, lei pensa [che [A TE] lo affideranno _].

no, she thinks that to you (they) it will assign

‘No, she thinks that they will assign it to YOU.’

(Bianchi, 2015:66, ex 8a,b)

These sentences are claimed to have a richer left periphery, given the presence of the illocutionary Force, and carry discourse-active features, namely the potential to convey a speech act. and following therefore the IRR in (38):

⁷² In Hungarian, exhaustive focus must be considered as well: such an interpretation is apparently obtained only in a fronted position.

(38) Interface Root Restriction

Information Structure (IS) phenomena that affect the conversational dynamics must occur in clauses endowed with illocutionary Force.

(Bianchi, 2015:60)

This is precisely what corrective and mirative foci do: they update the conversational context, and therefore they should only be licensed in clauses endowed with illocutionary Force (Bianchi, 2015).

On the contrary, there is no such requirement for other types of foci: since they do not affect directly the discourse context, there is no need to follow the IRR, and therefore, focus fronting is not possible.

Under Bianchi & Bocci's (2012) analysis, the positions dedicated to such projection are two: a lower one which can be occupied by all kinds of foci, and a higher one in the left periphery. The latter is more constrained: it can be occupied only by corrective and mirative foci, which are possible only under certain requirements (see the IRR). Their proposal implies that the left periphery always carries a main role with corrective focus: even though this is *in situ*, it enters a dependency with the left peripheral position.

However, such an account has once again the problem of optionality, given the fact that the position *in situ* is always the favorite one (as proved by Bianchi & Bocci, 2012), not only with foci which require this position (information and contrastive), but also when corrective focus is taken into account.

The apparent optionality cannot be explained through the presence of both covert and overt movement (which was instead the explanation of Rizzi 1997 for focus *in situ*), because otherwise Procrastinate would be violated (Alboiu, 2004).

The alternative hypothesis is that optionality depends on the syntax-prosody interface, and takes into account a copy deletion theory. Focus movement always takes place, and both copies are present at PF, which has then two copies to choose from. The optionality depends on an alternative linearization of one of the copies of the movement chain: copy deletion can be applied either to the higher or the lower copy. In the latter case, focus *in situ* is obtained, whereas in the former, focus fronting⁷³.

Since focus fronting is not the favorite (or even possible, in certain cases) option, there can be an interface effect: "spelling out the *ex situ* position gives rise to a more marked prosodic structure with respect to the *in situ* position" (Bianchi & Bocci, 2012:15).

⁷³ Such an hypothesis has evidence in languages where multiple *wh*- constituents are pronounced.

Furthermore, according to Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b), corrective and mirative foci have to be considered *conventional implicatures* (CIs), as described in 4.4.6 above. CIs can have a role in the syntax of a sentence, and can thus be projected in the structure. Their projection is below the position encoding illocutionary force, given the role of IRR in determining the grammaticality of a sentence presenting focus fronting⁷⁴.

Moreover, the corrective and mirative implicatures have to be connected to a focus structure, as stated by Beaver and Clark (2008: 274), according to whom the level where implicatures are introduced “must have a focused constituent inside its syntactic scope in order to generate a pragmatically acceptable meaning. If there is no such focus, then the focal meaning of the clause [...] is a singleton set”. This also means that the focused structure must be realized at the propositional level, in the scope of the implicature trigger. The compositional layers identified by Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a:13) are in (39):

(39) [α IllocF ... [β [mir]/[corr] [γ YP_{FOC} ... [TP ... <YP_{FOC}>]]]]

Therefore, correction and mirativity are conventional implicatures, since they affect the semantics and the prosody of a sentence. In order to maintain the T-model of grammar, there must be some active features in the syntactic structure triggering them, and providing instruction for the prosodic component as well. Note that if we do not assume the presence of active features, we postulate a connection between prosody and syntax after Spell-Out, generating once again the problem of the connection between PF and LF.

Hence, CIs are associated with the activation of a left peripheral functional projection, whose head bears an implicature-triggering feature, called FAI, i.e. ‘focus-associated implicature’ (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2015a). This head activates a FocP below it, triggering the movement of a focus constituent to the Spec of the criterial Foc.

(40) [_{FP} Force ... [_{FaiP} FAI⁰_{[mir]/[corr]} [_{FocP} YP_{i[+ foc]} Foc⁰_[+ foc] ... [TP ... <YP_i> ...]]]]

To explain the fact that a mirative or corrective interpretations does not always imply focus movement, they assume that FAI and Foc heads are always activated, and the optionality depends on which copy is spelt out.

⁷⁴ This is referred mostly to corrective focus (see Bianchi 2015), but the hypothesis is valid also for mirative focus, since the mirative import affect only the proposition expressed by the main sentence.

5.4 Hypothesis applied to several structures

5.4.1 *The hypothesis*

Let us discuss in detail the derivation in (40): ForceP is the illocutionary layer already proposed by Rizzi (1997). In order to allow for the presence of a mirative/corrective focus, the clause has to be discourse-active respecting the IRR (Bianchi, 2015).

Focus has a double projection: the first one is dedicated to low focus, and can host all types of focus: information and contrastive (which cannot occur anywhere else), but also corrective and mirative ones. Its position is not specified in Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b).

The other projection of focus is in the left periphery, but in Italian this can be used only by corrective and mirative foci, which are either fronted or in situ. These interpretations are considered conventional implicatures and affect the speech act. In order to explain a connection with syntax and not only with prosody, they have a feature which needs checking. For such a reason a functional projection is added below ForceP, the so-called FAI, that is always realized overtly and is considered an implicature trigger. It can activate the focus projection immediately below, allowing for focus fronting. Corrective and mirative focus are realized in both projections, and the optionality is connected to the spelling out of one of the two copies of the focused element: if the lower one is pronounced, then we obtain focus in situ. On the contrary, if the higher copy is spelt out, we have fronted focalization.

We still have to figure out the position of the lower focus. Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b) do not specify it, and we have two possibilities: it can either be in situ, or occupy the FocP projection inside the low periphery, following the proposal of Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004). In that case, it would be in between the TP and the VP, and it could be preceded (and, according to some analyses, followed) by topics. First of all, note that the double periphery has been proposed by many other scholars after Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004). It is the case of Jayaseelan (2001), Aboh (2007), Drubig (2007), and López (2009), according to whom the parallelism between CP and IP can be observed in many properties.

According to some scholars (Belletti 1999, 2001, 2004, Drubig 2007), the division between an internal and an external periphery is proved by the different interpretations

of focus. In fact, in Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004) IF and CF occupy the lower and the higher periphery, respectively; thus, they have distinct projections. However, this is not the case of the analysis pursued here: as seen in chapter 2, IF and CF are to be considered different, but not from a syntactic point of view. This means that they can occupy the same projection, and their differences are respected anyway (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2015a, 2015b, Aboh 2007).

However, low focus could also be considered in situ. In this case, we obtain a different realization of focused elements, where a low focus does not have to occupy a dedicated projection, whereas a fronted one does.

The proposal described here therefore solves not only the problem of optionality of movement, but can also account for focus typology, and for the connection between the position of focalization and its interpretation.

It remains to be checked whether (40) can also solve the problems raised by Samek-Lodovici, concerning first of all the licensing of NPIs and of parasitic gaps, but also the co-occurrence of *wh*- operators and focused elements, as well as some minor issues. I will now take into account the major ones.

5.4.2 NPIs licensing

Remember that a left peripheral account of focus (as in Rizzi, 1997), as well as the proposal of Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004) cannot account for licensing of *n*-words in sentences below.

(41) a. Non ha dormito NESSUNO

not has slept anybody

‘NOBODY slept.’

b. * Ha dormito NESSUNO

has slept nobody

(42) NESSUNO ha dormito

nobody has slept

Under the preceding analyses, (41a) should be ungrammatical: the obligatory movement of the focused *n*-word states that this does not need licensing as in (42), contrary to what

expected. In this case the focused element in (41a) would share the same position as the one in (42).

Moreover, licensing here should be impossible, given the position of focus and negation (the former preceding the latter, and thus not c-commanding it). However, we can see in (41b) that this is not correct: a proper licenser is needed in order to account for (41a), and hence the focused constituent does not have to move.

The hypothesis in (40), instead, correctly predicts the need for licensing of the focused element: in fact the n-word in this case is in a low position (be it in situ, or within the low periphery above VP), and therefore it has to be licensed by the negative marker *non*, which correctly c-commands it.

(42) can be explained as well: here focus is fronted, and it occupies the higher position; therefore licensing is not needed.

In a sentence like (43a), however, the situation is much more problematic.

- (43) a. * NESSUNO, ha visto nulla.
nobody has seen anything
b. Nessuno ha visto nulla
nobody has seen anything
c. NESSUNO non ha visto nulla
nobody not has seen anything
d. *Non ha NESSUNO visto nulla
not has nobody seen anything

- (44) a. * A NESSUNO fa paura niente.
b. ? A NESSUNO niente fa paura
c. A NESSUNO non fa paura niente

The hypothesis in (40) cannot account for the ungrammaticality of (43a): the n-word *nulla* is in the expected c-command relation with a negative marker, i.e. the focused n-word *nessuno*, and the sentence should be grammatical; however, this is not the case. Its counterpart in (43b), where no constituent is focused, is grammatical, as well as sentence in (43c) where we have an additional negation: the negative marker *non* following the focused n-word and licensing the object. Furthermore, (43d) is ungrammatical: here, the c-commanding relation between *non* and *nulla* should give

rise to a grammatical sentence, but the focused n-word makes it ungrammatical⁷⁵.

(43a) and similar sentences are an anomaly: “if a negative quantifier has independent checking reasons to overtly move to a variable-suitable pre-Infl position (e.g. if it is a subject or is focused), it appears to be able to check Neg⁰ anyway” (Longobardi, 2014:249). In (43a) the n-word is the focused subjects, but the licensing relation for some reasons is not correct, as can be seen in (44a) and (44b) as well. Apparently, the negative marker is mandatory if a focused subject is present in the clause.

We have to understand whether this is due to properties typical of focalization, or of negation. As far as the former is taken into account, it may depend on the interpretive effects of focus over its lower constituents, and in particular to the scope it may have over them. As pointed out by Giorgi (p.c.), an interesting point would be to understand whether it may affect the numeral interpretation of lower constituents (wide scope over local). See sentences below (Cinque p.c.).

(45) a. Tre kamikaze hanno scoppiato una bomba.

b. UNA BOMBA hanno scoppiato tre kamikaze.

(46) a. Una bomba è scoppiata in tre città.

b. UNA BOMBA è scoppiata in tre città.

In (45a) the interpretation is ambiguous: it might be the case that three kamikaze blew up one bomb, but also that the bombs were three. The same does not hold for (45b), where the first constituent is focused: the numeral interpretation here seems restricted and is not ambiguous. In fact, the bomb can only be one (Cinque, p.c.). In such a case, we could conclude that the interpretation of focus over its lower constituents is limited, and its scope is rather local. Hence, this could be the reason why (43a): a focused element is not a proper licensing element⁷⁶.

⁷⁵ Samek-Lodovici (2005) noted that the licensing is interrupted whenever n-words are preceded by focus. His explanation is again that constituents following focus are right dislocated and hence are outside the TP and are not c-commanded by anything.

⁷⁶ Note that according to Samek-Lodovici (2015:194), such an effect does not depend on focalization interfering with licensing, otherwise we cannot explain the licensing in (i):

(i) Context: They did not give the water to anybody.

No, non hanno dato il PANE a nessuno_M.

5.4.3 Parasitic gaps

As far as parasitic gaps are concerned, the problem under a left-peripheral analysis is that it cannot account for the asymmetry between sentences (20) and (21), here repeated as (47) and (48).

(47) [Nostro PADRE], abbiamo cercato per mesi senza mai trovare ___ !

our father, (we) have sought for months without ever to-find

‘Our FATHER, we sought for months without ever finding!’

(48) * Abbiamo cercato per mesi [nostro PADRE], senza mai trovare ___ !

(we) have sought for months our father, without ever to-find

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:218, ex 136a,b)

In fact, if we assume that a focused element has always to move to the left periphery, in both sentences the parasitic gap would be c-commanded by it, and therefore either sentences should be grammatical. However, this is not the case, since (48) is considered ungrammatical by Samek-Lodovici (2015).

The proposal in (40), can account for such a difference: only in (47) the focused object is raised in a left peripheral position, and can license the parasitic gap respecting the c-commanding relation required. It is not the same with (48), where the focused object occupies the lower SpecFocP in the left periphery of VP (if it is not in situ), and is therefore too low to c-command and license the parasitic gap, in the same way described by Samek-Lodovici (2015:218) with his focus evacuation and right dislocation analysis.

5.4.4 Wh- operators and focused elements

Rizzi’s (1997) claim that wh- elements and focus are in complementary distributio was disputed by Samek-Lodovici (2015), who proved that in many sentences a wh- constituent and a focused one actually can and do appear together (as seen in 5.2.5), as in the case of (49).

(49) Tutti conoscevano la vittima. Ma chi conosceva l'ASSASSINO?

all knew the victim. But who knew the murderer

'(Everybody knew the victim). But who knew the murderer?'

(Samek-Lodovici, 2015:225, ex 149)

The hypothesis in (40) can account for sentences where *wh*- elements and focused ones co-occur, as in (49), either if we consider *wh*- as a focused element (as in Rizzi 2006, Marotta 2000 and Bocci 2013, among others), or not. In the former case, the *wh*- word *chi* could be in the higher left periphery hosted by SpecFocP, and the focus in the lower position inside the periphery above VP. However, such an account also predicts that each sentence can have more than one focus.

We can postulate that the usual projection dedicated to *wh*- is present anyway. Note in fact that among previous accounts, only Rizzi (1997) and Bocci (2013) stated that the two cannot co-occur, while no other scholar dealt with this issue.

Moreover, a sentence like (50) proves that they cannot occupy the same SpecFocP:

(50) A GIANNI, cosa hai raccontato, non a Marco!

to Gianni, what have (you) told, not to Marco

'What did you tell to JOHN, not Marco!'

(Samek-Lodovici, 2006:22, ex 66)

This sentence was proposed by Rizzi (1997:291, ex 25a) as well, but considered ungrammatical. According to Samek-Lodovici (2015), (50) is grammatical only with a particular intonation, which cannot be signaled by means of a question mark (used by Rizzi, 1997), but only with an exclamatory mark. In his analysis, the focused constituent occupies the XP projection above the TopP one, whose specifier is occupied by the dislocated part of the sentence containing the *wh*- element.

Note that the question in (50) is not an echo question, but a real one, as can be seen in the dialogue below.

(51) A: Cosa hai raccontato a Gianni l'altra sera?

B: A Marco ho raccontato la favola di Cappuccetto Rosso.

A: Ma no! A GIANNI cosa hai raccontato, non a Marco!

B: Ah! A Gianni ho raccontato quella di Biancaneve.

The crucial point here is that not only wh- element and focus can co-occur in two different projections in distinct peripheries, but also in the same periphery.

Nothing prevents us from creating a projection dedicated to the moved wh- constituent in the left periphery, and the hypothesis in (40) can account either for sentences where the focused element is at the left of the sentence (in the minority of cases) and for those where it occupies a lower position.

5.4.5 *The case of Hausa*

However, the structure in (40) may have a problematic aspect: the presence of a projection dedicated only to non-visible elements: the head of FAI is never filled by anything, since there are no overt elements connected to Conventional Implicatures. As noted by Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015b: 40) “the choice of implementation is strongly conditioned by one’s general theoretical preferences, e.g. a preference for maximally transparent mapping from the syntactic structure to the compositional interpretation, versus a preference for avoiding covert elements in the syntax”.

Cross-linguistic evidence can be helpful on this aspect: there might be languages in which this head can be overtly filled by a functional element. This seems to be the case of Hausa, a Chadic language belonging to the Afro-Asiatic family. In fact, in such a language, focused constituents are marked by the particles *nee/cee*. This, however, has some special properties, either when focus is in situ or fronted: it is optional, and it can associate with the focus at a distance (Hartmann & Zimmermann, 2007). If *nee/cee* is really the focus marker in Hausa, these properties are unexpected. Note that *nee/cee* is dependent on focus: when it is used, a focus must occur in the sentence.

Interestingly, it seems to trigger an exhaustive interpretation: “the presence or absence of *nee/cee* does not change the truth-conditions of clauses. However, if *nee/cee* is dropped, the exhaustivity effect disappears. This shows that the semantic effect is detachable” (Hartmann & Zimmermann, 2007: 257). Crucially, this is a typical property of conventional implicatures.

The proposal of Hartmann & Zimmermann (2007) is in fact that the particle *nee/cee* is not a focus marker, but rather a marker of exhaustivity, triggering conventional implicature. If this was the case, we may assume that such a particle represents the overt

realization of the FAI head postulated in Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2015a, 2015b)⁷⁷. Investigating the properties of other languages using focus markers would be extremely helpful in order to understand if this hypothesis is on the right track.

5.4.6 *Postfocal constituents*

There are several examples which cannot be accounted for under (40), and they generally have to do with focus in a clause-internal position, and therefore followed by some constituents.

We have already seen the importance of constituents surrounding focus in order to understand its position. In particular, defining the status of what follows focus seems crucial: are we dealing with marginalization, or right dislocation?

According to Samek-Lodovici (2005, 2006, 2015) every postfocal constituent is to be considered RDed⁷⁸. The movement of focus is to be attributed to prosodic constraints: align focus with main prominence, or make elements containing given information unaccented, i.e. external to the core sentence material. For these reasons, focus is followed by an intonational phrase boundary (Szendrői 2001, Samek-Lodovici 2006, 2015).

Moreover, such a proposal considers elements following focus as extra-prosodic, similar to previous accounts (Vallduví 1992, Frascarelli 2000⁷⁹, Szendrői 2002, Reinhart 2006). In such a way, focus fronting does not represent an exception to rightmostness: “postfocal elements fail to be assigned metrical and intonational prominences above the word-level, and, in this sense, are extrametrical” (Bocci & Avesani, 2011:1357). In such a way, every instance of focus appears to be as near as possible to the right edge, respecting stress alignment.

However, according to some scholars, there cannot be such an analysis for every postfocal constituent. For instance, according to Beninca’ & Poletto (2004) they can be

⁷⁷ Note that if this is true, a linearization problem may arise, since the particle has to follow the focused element. In the hypothesis explained here, though, the projection FAI precedes the one of FocP. Whether the focused constituent moves to the SpecFAIP or not, is impossible to state here: much more analysis is needed with regard to this topic.

⁷⁸ Supported by Vallduví (1992), who noted that arguments and adjuncts following focus are freely ordered, and by Brunetti (2009), who states that postfocal constituents and RDed elements have the same pragmatic functions.

⁷⁹ In this account, postfocal constituents form an independent I-phrase on their own, following a typical behavior of RD.

considered focus. Bocci & Avesani (2011) and Bocci (2013), state that in no way can we reduce constituents following focus to RDED, as proved by prosodic evidence.

5.4.6.1 Prosodic evidence

One major piece of evidence regarding post-focal material is furnished by prosody. The claim that postfocal elements are extra-prosodic (Vallduví 1992, Szendrői 2002) is not shared by many scholars, both for Italian varieties (see Marotta & Soriano 1999 for Tuscan varieties, D'Imperio 2000 for Neapolitan, Grice et al. 2005, Bocci & Avesani 2011, Bocci 2013) and for crosslinguistic evidence (Gussenhoven 2004, Frota 2000 for European Portuguese, Face 2006 for Castilian Spanish).

In fact, it was shown that in Southern varieties of Italian, postfocal constituents systematically associate with pitch accents, despite the fact that they represent background information: they are not invisible to intonation.

The same can be said of Tuscan, thanks to the experiments by Bocci & Avesani (2011) and Bocci (2013), who explored the phonological status of postfocal elements in several sentences containing different kinds of foci. According to them, postfocal material is neither extrametrical nor independent from intonation. On the contrary, they claim that the material following focus is phrased, stressed and systematically connected to a pitch accent.

In their experiments, Italian speakers had to read some sentences containing a fixed restructuring verb and an infinitive, combined with broad focus, IF and CF (which share the structure in (52)), fronted CF with object in situ as in (53), and fronted CF with RD, as in sentence (54).

(52) Ermanno vorrebbe invitare Romana.

Ermanno would like to invite Romana

(53) ERMANNO vorrebbe invitare Romana.

Ermanno would like to invite Romana

(54) ERMANNO la vorrebbe invitare Romana.

Ermanno her would like to invite Romana

(Bocci, 2013:173, table 12)

In sentences like (52) the infinitive *invitare* is part of the focus projection and can associate with a prenuclear PA, whereas in sentence (53) it follows the focused element (it should be part of the same phonological phrase of the object) and hence is realized with a low and flat pitch contour. Finally in (54) the last word, which is RDED, is assumed to be phrased in an independent prosodic constituent, as well as the verbal complex, which should also be followed by a boundary.

The results proved that postfocal constituents are realized with a low and flat pitch contour. According to Bocci (2013) what looks like a deaccenting in postfocal position is rather a systematic usage of the same PA, namely L*, and can then be considered as a phonological specification grammaticalized by the linguistic system, rather than the lack of intonational events⁸⁰.

Focus in situ and fronted focus have the same focus-background articulation, but the constituents surrounding them systematically receive different phonological properties: in the first case the material preceding focus is accented as H+L* (as seen in section 2.3.2), whereas in the latter, constituents following focus associate with L*.

In fact, in both Bocci & Avesani (2011) and Bocci (2013), L* is associated with whatever element follows the focused constituent until the end of the utterance, no matter of the discourse-related properties connected to it.

(55) Marianna, la dobbiamo avvisare, quando arriva PIERANGELO.

Marianna her (we) must inform when arrives Pierangelo

(56) Quando arriva PIERANGELO, Marianna, la dobbiamo avvisare.

when arrives Pierangelo, Marianna her (we) must inform

(Bocci, 2013: 149, ex 168, 169)

Sentences (55) and (56) represent the same situation and contain the same constituents in a different order: in (55) the CF is in situ, whereas in (56) it is fronted. The pitch contour of these sentences is different, though: in (55) the constituent preceding focus bears a H+L* PA, and in (56) the same elements in a postfocal context are marked with L*, as expected⁸¹.

⁸⁰ The use of L* for Italian was already noted by other scholars, as Avesani (2005), Grice et al. (2005) for elements following focus, and by Marotta & Sardelli (2003) for non focused postverbal subject in yes/no questions.

⁸¹ Note that the same result is reached with sentences involving the same discourse-related properties in the same postfocal position, as in the case of RDED elements. See Bocci (2013) for more details.

The correlation between stress and constituents following focus occurs systematically: in all cases, no matter of the length of the RDed elements, these associate with L* only when in a postfocal position. Constituents in a prefocal position are instead associated to a H+L* PA in the 80% of the cases.

We can then define L* as a marker dedicated to the right side of the focus phrase, which signals the constituents at its right as non-focal. For this reason, it is also considered a marker inserted to define the focus phrase. “Focus fronting to the left periphery does not seem to impact in any way on the discourse-related properties of the sentence” (Bocci, 2013:144).

Once we take into account these results, it becomes difficult to propose that postfocal material is extrametrical and that given information undergoes destressing as claimed by Samek-Lodovici (2005, 2006, 2015), among others.

Moreover, results show that default prosodic rules apply to the infinitive verb, namely a given element, which is taken to constitute a phrasal head and in fact bears a higher degree of prominence. Phonetic evidence such as pre-boundary lengthening effect, as well as durational increase of vowel and syllable, local hyper-articulation and spectral scope/balance effect proved the higher prominence. This does not depend on discourse-related properties, since in Italian “postfocal material, even if given and presupposed, bears phrasal heads simply by virtue of its position within the prosodic representation” (Bocci, 2013:184).

Finally, according to Bocci & Avesani (2006, 2011) and Bocci (2013), focus does not necessarily have to be followed by an intonational phrase boundary. On the contrary, the perceptual analyses showed that fronted focus is part of the same ι along with the rest of the clause.

Focus fronting, hence, does not trigger the insertion of an intonational phrase boundary, and this affects the assignment of stress: whenever focus is fronted, we obtain an intonational phrase whose head is not assigned to the rightmost element. “Italian allows intonational phrases whose metrical head is not aligned with the rightmost element” (Bocci, 2013:162) and this is particularly evident with focalization, which can create prosodic structure violating rightmostness.

If we follow this account, Samek-Lodovici’s (2005, 2006, 2015) hypothesis cannot be maintained: focus is not driven by prosodic constraints governing stress alignment with the right edge, because such condition can be, and in fact is, violated.

5.4.6.2 Syntactic status of postfocal elements

The different status of postfocal elements is crucial in order to define the position of focus itself. First of all, we must distinguish between right dislocated elements and marginalized ones (which, according to Samek-Lodovici (2015) can be the only elements following focus other than RD). They both follow the element carrying main stress and never carry stress themselves, but they have different properties. RD is usually introduced by an intonational break, allows clitic doubling, and its constituents may appear in any order. Moreover, according to some scholars (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002, Samek-Lodovici 2015) RDed elements are clause-external, namely they appear above TP.

Marginalization, instead, does not allow for clitic doubling and its constituents are in a base-generated position, which means that their order is fixed and it has to follow the canonical order of Italian <S V O IO>. This is one of the main cues that help us in distinguishing between the two, together with the presence/absence of clitic doubling, and negative items (which resist right dislocation and therefore are possible only with marginalized elements).

However, the approaches to RD are several, and according to the one we follow, its properties and rules change drastically: we may follow a clause-internal analysis (Cecchetto 1999, Belletti 2004, Bocci, 2013) or a clause external one (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002, Samek-Lodovici 2006, 2015)⁸².

Approaches considering RD as internal to the clause claim that this is hosted in the topic projection of the low periphery. According to Cecchetto (1999) and Bocci (2013), such an analysis accounts for the fact that a pronoun contained into a RD constituent can be bound, but cannot be coindexed with a referential expression (basically, that the analysis can account for Principle B and C effects). Moreover, RD is also considered as subject to the right roof constraint (Ross, 1967) and can precede focus in certain occasions.

Bocci's (2013) conclusion is that we cannot consider RD as a device to assign focus, especially given the fact that such phenomenon is not restricted to contexts in which what precedes RD has to be a focus. On the contrary, RD is independent from focus, as proved by the prosodic evidence above.

A clause-external analysis considers RD phrases merged into the specifier of a topic in the left periphery, whereas the rest of the clause remnant-moves to a higher

⁸² For a complete discussion of the properties of RD see Cecchetto (1999), Frascarelli (2000), Cardinaletti (2001, 2002), Belletti (1999, 2001, 2004), Bocci (2013), Samek-Lodovici (2006, 2015).

projection.

Samek-Lodovici (2006, 2015) argues that only a clause-external approach can explain the properties of binding and licensing relations (especially as far as n-words are considered), and can account for agreement loss in regional Italian (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002).

Within clause-external approaches to RD, there is disagreement regarding whether this constituent is moved (Samek-Lodovici 2015) or not (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002). Relevant evidence is based on *ne* cliticization, wh-extraction, reconstruction effects and on the fact that clitic doubling is not obligatory⁸³.

5.4.7 *In sum*

Depending on the RD approach taken into account, the properties and rules of focalization can change completely, and several structures can (or cannot) be accounted for.

Unfortunately, a complete discussion of the properties of constituents surrounding focus is not possible in the present dissertation. However, several phenomena can be investigated only with a full knowledge of what is around focus. In fact, right dislocation and marginalization affect (or seem to affect) the position of focalization because of their independent properties. Not in the way described by Samek-Lodovici (2015): not every postfocal constituent is RDed because of prosodic rules, and focus does not have to move only when contained in an RDed element. Rather, focus can occupy either FocP in the left, or the projection in the lower periphery; moreover, (some of) the constituents following it are placed in that position because of their properties, which are independent from focus, do not affect directly focus, and cannot be explained through prosodic constraints only.

The hypothesis in (40) alone, therefore, cannot be enough in order to account for all the instances of Italian focalization. To do so, properties of RD and marginalization must be analyzed in detail, but this goes beyond the scope of the present work.

⁸³ Whereas following Cardinaletti (2001, 2002) is not true: RD must be doubled by a clitic.

CONCLUSIONS

The present dissertation has taken into account some of the major problems concerning focus, especially as far as Italian data are considered. I have grouped them into three categories: (i) how many focus types exist, (ii) what is the trigger of focus movement, (iii) how many projections are dedicated to focus in the structure. Many minor issues were then connected to these debated questions, considering also cross-linguistic evidence.

The first aspect I have considered concerns the different status of information focus (IF) and contrastive focus (CF). In many analyses, only CF is taken into account (Rizzi 1997, Samek-Lodovici 2015, *inter alia*), but in such a way we cannot have a complete analysis of the phenomenon, since the two foci tend to behave differently. By examining their differences, I have proposed that a unified analysis of IF and CF is not correct, *contra* Brunetti (2004).

In fact, IF and CF are distinct in their pragmatic role, in that the former has to be connected to new information, whereas the latter to a contrast between alternatives. The two functions are not linked: new information is not affected by contrast, and contrastive information does not have to be necessarily new (although it often is), as proved by the fact that pronouns can be focused (Rochemont, 1986). Moreover, IF is present in every sentence (Gundel, 1999), contrary to CF, and the two are not felicitous in the same contexts: pragmatic contexts do distinguish between the two foci.

Interestingly, prosody is affected as well, as proved by Avesani & Vayra (2004), Bocci & Avesani (2011), and Bocci (2013). The experiments showed a systematic pattern: IF is realized with a H+L* pitch accent, and in the minority of cases as H* (often considered as an unmarked accent which signals new information); on the other hand, CF triggers a special intonation of the L+H* kind, either when focus is *in situ*, or when it is fronted. Similar results were obtained in cross-linguistic analyses⁸⁴.

However, given the fact that the distinction is signaled only by means of different pitch accents, and no other prosodic properties seem to be involved, some scholars (Hartmann, 2008) refuse their prosodic differences. Therefore, further study is required, investigating several languages, and, as far as Italian is considered, more varieties (since the analyses were conducted on Central Italian varieties) and using more speakers in

⁸⁴ It is the case of Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg (1990) and Selkirk (2002) for English, but also of Frota (2000) for Portuguese and of Face (2006) for Spanish.

order to obtain statistical relevance.

As far as syntax is concerned, the main difference is that IF cannot be in a fronted position, whereas CF can, and often does undergo movement. The main piece of evidence showing that IF and CF differ syntactically as well, comes from Sicilian and Sardinian, dialects where movement of IF to the fronted position is allowed (Cruschina, 2012). In fact, we can compare their syntactic behavior once they are displaced in the same position. As described in section 2.4.1, the two differ for many properties and, therefore, we cannot follow a unified approach (contra Brunetti, 2004).

Focus typology is linked to the difference between IF and CF. We have to take into account at least two more focus types, as far as Italian is concerned, but probably more, once we consider cross-linguistic evidence. The different interpretations of focus, in fact, are not only based on pragmatic or semantic differences (such as the ones described by Krifka, 2008), but on prosody and syntax as well.

As explained above, there are some asymmetries between the fronted position and the low projection of focus, in that the former is much more constrained than the latter. In fact, the lower position is systematically preferred over its fronted counterpart, as proved by the experiment of Bianchi & Bocci (2012). Moreover, in order to have a felicitous sentence, only the low position of focus can be always used, whereas there are many cases in which focus displacement generates an inappropriate sentence. This happens with corrective focus, a subtype of CF, and with mirative focus.

The difference between corrective and contrastive foci has been explored by Bianchi & Bocci (2012), who noticed that merely contrastive focalization is not felicitous when fronted, whereas corrective focus is. Note that the main difference between the two is that the former involves contrast within the same utterance, and the latter across utterances, namely two different sentences are involved. Therefore, their distinction is not purely pragmatic, but it involves syntax as well. As explained in section 4.3 above, corrective focalization has to satisfy some requirements (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2013, van Leusen 2004), that are not necessary in a merely contrastive focus.

Mirative focus has a completely different pragmatics: it is used in unexpected or surprising situations. Nonetheless, it can still be considered a focus (Zimmermann, 2007), since two alternatives are present, even though only one is explicit, whereas the other can be inferred from background information, or from context.

The difference does not only concerns pragmatics, but also a different prosodic contour (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina 2013, 2015): corrective focus associates with a L+H*

pitch accent, whereas mirative focus with H* in the majority of cases. Such a difference shows that their distinction is grammatically encoded, and that they cannot be reduced to the same phenomenon.

The case of Hungarian is helpful, since it detects a further focus interpretation that is not possible in Italian: exhaustivity. Such an interpretation is allowed only if the focused constituent is moved at the beginning of the clause (É. Kiss, 1998).

Focus fronting associates with special interpretations of focus, and this is a crucial data: any approach of focus has to consider this property, in order to explain which is the trigger of movement, the second problem I have considered.

For instance, the trigger cannot be focus itself (Jackendoff 1972, Chomsky 1971), otherwise we would expect any focused constituent to be able to appear to the left of the clause, and this prediction is not borne out. For the same reason we cannot accept the feature driven approach by Rizzi (1997): the movement of focus cannot depend on the presence of the [+focus] feature, since focalization in situ is not explained, as well as other issues (see the violation of the Inclusiveness Condition).

The same is true for prosody-driven approaches: besides the violation of the T-model (Chomsky, 1995), they cannot account for the displacement of focus to a fronted position. Therefore, we cannot take into account the proposal of Reinhart (1995, 2006) and Szendrői (2001, 2003). This is also the main claim against Samek-Lodovici (2005, 2006, 2015), according to whom the trigger of focus movement is the givenness nature of the postfocal material.

The role of trigger of displacement has also been assigned to exhaustivity (Horvath 2000, 2007, 2010), or to contrast (Vallduví & Vilkuna, 1998): these are considered operators active in the syntactic derivation. However, neither exhaustivity, nor contrast are enough in order to account for the Italian data.

The proposal hypothesized here follows the ones by Frey (2010) and Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina (2013, 2015): some of the interpretations of focus affect the speech act, and are associated to conventional implicatures, in the sense of Potts (2007). These are grammatically encoded in the syntactic derivation and activate a functional head in the left periphery, called FAI (Bianchi, Bocci & Cruschina, 2013). Its position is in between ForceP and FocP, a projection activated by FAI whenever a CI is involved.

Apparently, the head of this projection does not host an overt element, at least not in Italian. However, there are some languages in which an overt particle may be involved: it is the case of Hausa (Zimmermann & Hartmann, 2007). This language uses the

particles *nee/cee* to mark some focused constituents; given its properties, it is considered a marker of exhaustivity which triggers conventional implicature. If this is true, we can consider such a particle the overt realization of the functional head FAI.

According to this hypothesis what needs checking, and is therefore moved, is the conventional implicature. Optionality of focus movement, which has always been one of the main problems in the analyses of focalization⁸⁵, here disappears. In fact, when focus fronting is allowed, both copies are realized but only one is spelt out, so that the alternative linearization depends on the pronunciation of one of the copies in the chain.

Only foci updating and influencing the speech act can, and do, activate the head FAI and the projection of FocP immediately below, whereas the other types of focus cannot, and are hence constrained in the lower position.

This hypothesis accounts for the licensing relation of n-words and parasitic gaps discussed by Samek-Lodovici (2015); in fact, the expected licensing relation is respected, and the structure derived from the hypothesis provides a satisfactory account. There seems to be an exception, though: the ungrammaticality of sentences where the n-words is the fronted focused constituent preceding another n-word is not explained, as in (57):

(57) a. * NESSUNO, ha visto nulla.
nobody has seen anything

In fact the licensing relation is respected. The explanation given here has to do with the scope properties of focalization, which seem to be only local, in that the interpretation of focus over its lower constituent is limited: as seen in 5.4.2, we do not obtain multiplication effect.

Moreover, the co-occurrence of wh- elements and focused ones is accounted for, either when focus is adjacent to the wh- elements, or when it is low in the structure.

Some questions remain open, though: the position of the lower focus, as well as the status of postfocal constituents. My claim here is that focused elements are not actually affected by the surrounding constituents (Samek-Lodovici, 2015), since these have their own properties - which are still a debated issue – and have nothing to do with the placement of focalization.

⁸⁵ “Given that movement should be avoided when possible, we do not expect optional displacements in natural languages due to a simple syllogism: if displacement is required to avoid a crash, it should always occur; on the other hand, if lack of movement would not engender a crash, displacement should never occur” (Alboiu, 2004: 53).

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