SUBJECT POSITIONS IN NICOTERESE

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Abstract. This paper deals with the question of subject positions in Nicoterese (VV). Recalling previous analyses of subject positions, it will be determined whether the canonical preverbal position ([Spec, TP] in the generative literature is available to host subjects in Nicoterese, thereby satisfying the EPP requirement, or whether, as has been proposed in several previous analyses, notably Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998), all preverbal subjects are left-dislocated – a property argued to be intrinsically associated with Null Subjects Languages (NSLs). Two significant questions will be addressed: first whether subjects are invariably clitic left-dislocated (CLLD) to the left periphery, and secondly the quantity of potential sentential core (TP-internal) positions available to host subjects in Nicoterese.

Keywords:subject position, Nicoretese, EPP.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nicoterese is a dialect of the Extreme South of Italy (ESID) spoken in the towns of Nicotera, Nicotera Marina, Comerconi, Badia di Nicotera and Preitoni within the province of ViboValentia (Southern Calabria). The primary concern of this paper is the asymmetry observed between the way the subject requirement can be checked in root and embedded irrealis clauses in the dialect. Cardinaletti (2004: 121) claims that pro checks nominative case and phi features in SpecAgrSP. It is assumed here for expository convenience that [Spec, TP] is a cover term that subsumes both of Cardinaletti's subject positions (viz. [Spec, SubjP] and [Spec, AgrSP]). At the same time, Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998: 494) propose that in languages displaying overt high verb movement (Romance, Arabic, Celtic, and Greek), the requisite nominal feature to satisfy the subject requirement is located on the verb by way of its rich personal agreement. Thus, they assume that the verb moves to a position in the inflectional domain (AgrS (p. 519)) and establishes a relation which satisfies the subject requirement. No invisible expletive (pro) is generated in these languages. This analysis does not account for the Nicoterese distributional facts observed in root and *ca* clauses, in which the

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extreme low movement of the verb excludes the possibility that the same checking relation (with an Agr' position) satisfies the subject requirement. This paper will provide an overview of these approaches, both of which prove insufficient on their own to account for the whole picture in Nicoterese, and will develop an alternative analysis which accounts for all the observed empirical facts. The next section contains data from Nicoterese to illustrate word order.

2. SUBJECT POSITIONS IN NICOTERESE

There is an asymmetry in the availability of pre-verbal subjects in root and embedded irrealis clauses in Nicoterese. Pre-verbal subjects are permitted in root clauses (1a), in embedded *ca*-clauses (1b), and in *pemmu*-clauses (1e) but not in bare- MODO embedded clauses (1c), or following *nommu* (1d). Consider the variable position of the subject with respect to MODO and its reflexes (*u, nommu, pemmu*) in the sentences in (1a–e):

(1) a. Gianni mangi u pani
Gianni eats the bread
'Gianni eats the bread.'

b. Non vogghiu ca Gianni mangi u pani
not I=want that Gianni eats the bread
'I don't want Gianni to eat the bread.'

c. Non vogghiu u (*Gianni) mangia u pani Gianni
Not I=want MODO Gianni eat the bread Gianni
'I don't want Gianni to eat the bread.'

d. Vogghiu pemmu nommu (*Gianni) mangi
I=want for=MODO not=MODO Gianni eat
u pani Gianni
the bread Gianni
'I don't want Gianni to eat the bread.'

e. Vogghiu pemmu Gianni nommu mangi
I=want for=MODO Gianni not=MODO he=eats
u pani
the bread
'I don't want Gianni to eat the bread.'

The subject *Gianni* in both (1a) and (1b) apparently occurs in the same preverbal position (presumably [Spec, TP]), but in (1c) and (1d) the subject obligatorily occurs in a clause-final position and is prohibited from occurring in the same preverbal position as that in (1a–b). Note further that while it is impossible for the subject to occur between MODO and the verb in (1d), it can apparently occur in the left periphery between *pemmu* and *nommu* in (1e). In (1b) the typical irrealis complementiser MODO is replaced by *ca* when the subject is left-peripheral. It is

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also interesting to note how examples like (1b) compare to examples like (1e), which are synonymous but where the complementisers realise different heads. It is clear from distributional contrasts such as those in (1a–e) that it is essential to investigate which positions are targeted by the subject, especially in relation to the left periphery, because it will shed light on the status and positions of left peripheral elements such as *u*, *nommu* and *pimmu* (reflexes of MODO). The distributional contrast in word order in the sentences observed in (1a–e) cannot be attributed to the variable position of the verb, so to account for the variation it must be assumed that the subject can occupy a number of distinct positions. What follows is an exploration of the canonical subject positions in root, *ca*, and MODO clauses.

It is assumed that the unmarked word order in Nicoterese is manifested in sentence-focus contexts. In such contexts, each constituent compositionally conveys new information such that the focus extends over the entire sentence. Sentential responses to the question 'What happened' (2a) are invariably rhematic or thetic because every possible argument in the response to such a question is previously unknown information.

In Nicoterese, as in other Romance languages, then, there are three primary unmarked orders, depending on the requirements of the verb: SVO (2b) for transitive (the vast majority of) constructions, VS (2c) in unaccusative constructions (intransitives whose external argument is not a semantic agent), and SV with unergatives (2d). All Nicoterese data in this section is attested and has been collected from informants who have been able to spontaneously provide variants of the structures that were asked of them, and were able to contrast the distinctions between these variants:

(2) a. Chi succediù?
what happened
'What happened?'

b. U zzitu nci rigalau na gulera
the fiancée to=her gave a necklace
'Her fiancée gave her a necklace.'

c. Arrivau l'idraulicu
arrived the=plumber
'The plumber arrived.'

d. Gigi scrivi
Gigi writes
'Gigi writes.'

In spontaneous utterance contexts, however, it is not necessarily the case that the unmarked word order will appear. Typically in conversation, old information is presupposed, and new information is added to it. It is well known that the ESIDS make extensive use of a syntactic focus-marking strategy (i.e. informationally and

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contrastively focused constituents are typically fronted and their pragmatic role is then indicated by their position within the sentence, rather than through phonological discourse-marking strategies such as stress and intonation alone (Ledgeway 2010: 262; Cruschina 2011)). Therefore the position of lexical items in these dialects often has little to do with their thematic role and more to do with signalling pragmatics. For example, any one of the following sentences is possible given the appropriate pragmatic context (all topics are underlined, informational focused constituents in bold, and contrastively focused constituents in small caps):

(3) a. (context: Chi succidiu?)
what happened
'What happened?'
I crapi mi struggiru menza vigna
the goats me destroyed half vinyard
'The goats destroyed half of my vinyard!' (SVO)

b. (context: I crapi struggiru nu quartudavigna?)
thegoats destroyed aquarterofvineyard
'The goats destroyed a quarter of the vinyard?'
MENZA VIGNA mi struggiru i crapi
half vineyard me destroyed the goats
(OVS)

c. (context: I crapi struggiru chi?)
the goats destroyed what
'The goats destroyed what?'
menzavigna i crapi mi struggiru
half vineyard the goats me destroyed
(OSV)

d. (context: I crapi toi sugnu ben addestrati)
the goats your are well tamed
'Your goats are well behaved.'
I crapi **menza** **vigna** mi struggiru
the goats half vineyard me destroyed
(SOV)

e. (context: chi ti struggiru menza vigna?)
what you they=destroyed half vinyard
'What destroyed half your vinyard?'
Mi struggiru I crapi **menza** **vigna**
me destroyed the goats half vineyard
(VSO)

f. (context: Cosa fecero i crapi?)
What they=did the goats
'What did the goats do?'
Mi struggiru menza vigna, **i** **crapi**
me they=destroyed half vineyard the goats
(VOS)

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The sentence in (3a) takes a wide focus interpretation in response to the question *chi succediu* ('what happened'), and displays the expected unmarked position with the subject and object preceding and following the verb respectively. The sentence in (3b), by contrast, exhibits OVS order; the object receives a contrastive focus interpretation (*menzavigna* ('half a vineyard') as opposed to *nu quartu da vigna* ('a quarter of the vineyard'), and the subject *i crapi* ('the goats') receives a topic interpretation since it is old information (as revealed by the preceding sentence *I crapistruggiru nu quartu da vigna?* ('The goats destroyed a quarter of the vineyard?') which contains the same subject). Usually in the case the topical subject is null. The subject is repeated here for illustrative purposes. The sentence in (3c) exhibits OSV order; the object receives an informational focus interpretation, and the subject lexicalises the canonical subject position [Spec, T] receiving no special pragmatic emphasis. In (3d), on the other hand, the subject receives a topic interpretation, and the object receives an informational focus interpretation, resulting in SOV order. In (3e) the subject again receives a topic interpretation and the object is informationally focused; the variable position of the verb in (3e) in contrast to (3d) is due to the fact that in (3e) both arguments lexicalise positions within the lower vP left periphery (cf. Belletti 2004), and the subject and object in (3d) lexicalise positions within the CP left periphery. The subject in (3f) receives an information focus interpretation, while the object receives a topic interpretation; again these arguments occur postverbally due to their vP left-peripheral positions. The thematic roles of the constituents in the sentences in (3) map identically – i.e. *i crapi* is the semantic subject for each despite the extensive word order variation observed.

It is important to note that all topics are dislocated constituents. Similar to Sicilian, as discussed in Cruschina (2011: 40), all topic constituents must be dislocated to dedicated functional projections. As such, it is never the case that topics occur in thematic positions, but rather they obligatorily move to peripheral positions, i.e. functional projections at the periphery of a phase head, in Nicoterese, but not necessarily so for other varieties (e.g. Italian). Indeed, all non-focused constituents, with the exception of the finite verb, obligatorily move to left-peripheral (A') positions (this does not preclude, however, focused constituents and so-called 'finite' VPs from being optionally dislocated for pragmatic motivations). Given the attestation of this distributional fact in at least Sicilian and Nicoterese, it is hypothesised here that the same might be true for other ESIDs, and that indeed this may be a common feature of these dialects.

In line with other NSLs, the subject in Nicoterese is found both in pre-and postverbal positions (cf. (3a) and (3f), respectively). Without regard to the unergative/unaccusative distinction, the variable position of the subject is directly correlated to the discourse role that it plays in the moment of utterance context. Whether preverbal subjects in Nicoterese should be analysed as occupying the traditional [Spec, TP] (A-) position (Rizzi 1982; Cardinaletti 2004), or as an

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obligatorily dislocated constituent to a peripheral (A'-) position (Anagnostopoulou 1998) is debatable. Sheehan (2006) discusses this issue at length with respect to the other Romance NSLs.

Given the existence of quirky subjects, Rizzi (2005) convincingly argues that neither Case nor agreement checking can be the motivating impetus triggering subject movement to the canonical subject position ([Spec, TP]) based on evidence from psych-verb constructions (Belletti,Rizzi 1988). Crucially, the constructions contain DPs which bear dative Case and which do not trigger subject-verb agreement, even though these DPs occupy [Spec, TP]:

(4)	A	Gianni	piacciono	queste	idee	(Rizzi 2005: 207)
	to	Gianni	like=them	these	ideas	
	'Gianni likes these ideas.'					

Rizzi (2005: 212) argues that subjects and left-dislocated topics are similar inasmuch as they equally exhibit an aboutness feature (i.e. the described event is 'about' these categories). At the same time he observes that while a subject requires discourse-linking, evidenced by the fact that they can occur in out-of-the-blue contexts, unlike topics which cannot. On the basis of this distinction between 'subjects' and 'topics', Cardinaletti (2004) creates two separate structural positions.

In root and *ca*-clauses in Nicoterese, the subject moves to the canonical preverbal subject position, then if required continues to the left periphery. In MODO clauses it is assumed that this is not the case. Evidence from floating quantifiers confirms that these generalisations are true; witness the contrast in the following sentences:

(5)	a'.	Dumani	[tutti	i	studenti]		si	vidunu
		Tomorrow	all	the	students		they	see
		curu	presidi					
		with=the	headmaster					
	a.	[i studenti]$_i$	dumani,		tutti	t_i	si	vidunu
		the students	tomorrow		all		they	see
		curu presidi						
		with=the headmaster						
		'All the students will see the headmaster tomorrow.'						
	b'.	Vogghiu ca	dumani		[tutti	i	studenti]	
		I=want	that	tomorrow		all	the	students
		si vidunu	curu		presidi			
		they see	with=the		headmaster			
	b.	vogghiu	ca	[i studenti]$_i$		dumani, tutti		t_i
		I=want	that	the students		tomorrow		all
		si vidunu	curu		presidi			
		they see	with=the		headmaster			
		'I want all the students to meet with the headmaster tomorrow.'						

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c. *I studenti dumani vogghiu [$_{FinP}$ u [$_{TP}$ [$_{Spec}$tutti~~[i studenti]~~]
the students tomorrow I-want MODO all
[$_{v\text{-}VP}$ si vidunu curu presidi]]]
they see with=the headmaster

d'. dumani vogghiu tutti i studenti u si
tomorro I=want all the students MODO they
vidunu curu presidi
see with=the headmaster

d. *I studenti dumani vogghiu [$_{FocP}$[$_{Spec}$tutti~~[i studenti]~~]] [$_{TP}$ [$_{T'}$
the students tomorrow I-want all
u [$_{v\text{-}VP}$ si vidunu curu presidi]]]
MODO they they=see with=the headmaster

e. dumani tutti i studenti vogghiu u si
tomorrow all the students I=want MODO they
vidunu cu ru presidi
see with=the headmaster
'Tomorrow I want all of the students to meet with the headmaster.'

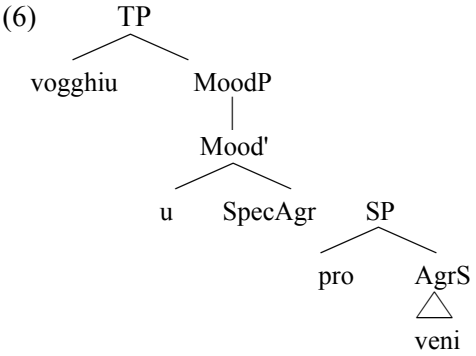
The construction in (5a') contains a quantifier phrase in the canonical subject position. In the root clause construction in (5a), the subject phrase moves to the left periphery, stranding the quantifier *tutti* in the canonical subject position (see Sportiche 1988: 426) SpecTP. The discontinuous subject constituent in the *ca* clause in (5b) is presumably derived in a similar fashion, but rather than moving to the left periphery of the root clause the subject DP of the embedded clause moves to the embedded clausal left periphery, as witnessed by its position to the right of *ca* which lexicalises the head of ForceP. The constructions with the embedded bare MODO clauses in (5c–d) are ungrammatical, for two different reasons. (5c) is ungrammatical due to the fact that since SpecTP cannot be generated the quantifiers cannot be generated and the subject cannot land in this position. In (5c–d) *i studenti* is topicalised to the matrix left periphery, and *tutti* is ungrammatical to the immediate right of bare MODO (5c), since there is no available SpecTP position to host a stranded quantifier (5d) is ungrammatical for reasons of economy. Essentially this movement would be non-economical because *tutti i studenti* would first need to be raised to the embedded SpecFoc (which is possible; see 5d'). From there, *I studenti* would need to be raised to the matrix SpecFoc, but if *(tutti) i studenti* has already checked its Focus feature in the embedded SpecFoc it would not be possible for it to be probed by the matrix SpecFoc. The whole QP must be frozen in place in the embedded SpecFocP. This is why it is possible to produce (5d'), in which the quantified embedded subject is probed by the embedded FocP. This is also why sentences such as (5e) are permitted, in which the quantified embedded subject is now probed by the matrix FocP.

Now to the question of whether both of Cardinaletti's preverbal subject positions are lexicalised in a syncretic position by MODO. Cardinaletti (2004: 121) specifically proposes that *pro* raises to SpecAgrSP. If it is assumed that only the

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subject of predication projection is subsumed by the lexicalisation of MODO, but not SpecAgrSP, it is possible to then assume that *pro* exists in MODO clauses; this would explain why there is no canonical subject position but still person and Case are able to be checked:

(6)



The fact that SpecAgrSP is a lower projection within the T-domain (Cardinaletti 2004: 147) is compatible with the assumption that *pro* exists in bare MODO clauses. In this case, the subject requirement could be satisfied by *pro,* rather than by a D feature on the verb. It would appear that there is no real data to suggest that either this analysis or that proposed by Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998) for MODO clauses is to be preferred. The former analysis, however, will be chosen for the sake of the current discussion. In this paper [Spec, T] is taken to be a cover term that subsumes both of Cardinaletti's subject positions.

3. PRE-VERBAL SUBJECT IN NICOTERESE

Evidence from Nicoterese suggests that a preverbal subject position does indeed exist in this language, and similar to that proposed both by Cardinaletti (2004) and Rizzi (2005), this position occurs at the left edge of the T-domain. The assumption that the subject position occurs at the left edge of the T-domain is derived from the observation that it never occurs after a non-left-dislocated adverb, either in root or embedded *ca* clauses. In the root clause (7), the left periphery is maximally filled and excludes the possibility of focalised adverbs. At the same time, when the adverbs occur after the subject (in the T area) the sentence is grammatical. Indeed, both a HAS adverb ('probably') and a LAS adverb ('already') co-occur in a construction containing a focalised object ('half a vineyard') and the only position these adverbs can instantiate is their base-generated one in the T-domain:

(7)	MENZAVIGNA	(*PRUBBABILMENTI		GIÀ/	*prubbabilmenti
	halfvineyard	probably$_{FOC}$		already$_{FOC}$	probably
	già) i	capri	prubbabilmenti	già	
	alreadythe	goats	probably	already	

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mi distruggiru
me destroyed
'The goats probably already destroyed half of my vineyard!'

A similar distribution can be seen in embedded contexts introduced by the complementiser*ca*; witness the construction in (8a) in which the adverb is unable to occur between the focalised object and the subject due to the lack of an available position, or indeed the construction in (8b) which shows that a focalised adverb is permitted before the subject, but a pragmatically unmarked adverb, on the other hand, is not:

(8) a. Daniela dicìaca A PIZZA (*apparentementi) Filippu
Daniela said*ca* the pizza apparently Filippu
apparentementi si mangiava
apparently he ate
'Daniela said that apparently it was the pizza that Filippu ate.'

b. Marco dicìa ca (TIPICAMENTI/*tipicamenti)
Marco said *ca* typically$_{FOC}$ typically
fraita (tipicamenti) si cumportau comu
brother=your typically he behaved like
nu stunzu
a jerk
'Marco said that your brother typically behaved like a jerk.'

The presence of the focalised prepositional object in (9a) accounts for the fact that it is impossible for there to be a focalised adverb since there is no focus position available in which it could sit. The same pattern can also be witnessed in (9b), in which the focalised object excludes the possibility of a focalised adverb preceding the subject, and a non-focalised adverb is excluded as typically expected:

(9) a. Andrea pensa ca PI NENTI (*SEMPRE) Peppi
Andrea thinks *ca* for nothing always$_{FOC}$ Peppi
(sempre) larma
always quarrels
'Andrea thinks that Peppi always quarrels for no reason.'

b. Maria eni cuntenta ca NU BRACCIALI
Maria is content that a bracelet
(*FINALMENTI/*finalmenti) u zzitu
finally$_{FOC}$ finally the fiancé
(finalmenti) nci rigalau
finaly to=her gave
'Maria is pleased that her fiancé finally gave her a bracelet.'

Essentially, these data show that neutral adverbs cannot precede subjects in root and embedded *ca* contexts. In these latter constructions the adverb cannot

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move to an already-filled focus position because, unlike topics, there can only be one focus constituent per utterance (cf. Lambrecht 1994: 201), thus any pre-subject adverb is disallowed. Similarly it can be seen that in embedded *ca* clauses an identical situation ensues: in (9b) the direct object ('a bracelet') to the verb ('to give (a gift)') is pragmatically marked, i.e. occurs in narrow focus, and found in a left-peripheral focus position. These structural conditions result in the impossibility of fronting the adverb ('finally'), which is then forced to remain in its first-merged position. It can therefore be assumed that the subject in both scenarios is constrained to remain in the canonical subject position and is indeed not dislocated, since there is no position beneath the focalised nominal constituent to which it can move.

Finally, and important to note is the absence of a canonical preverbal subject position in bare MODO clauses (10):

(10) a. Vogghiu u veni Maria
I=want MODO come Maria
'I want for Maria to come.'

b. Giuseppevoli u si mangia a torta Gianni
Giuseppewants MODO him eat the cake Gianni
'Giuseppe wants for Gianni to eat the cake.'

Indeed, no intervening material is available at all between bare MODO and the verb except clitics and negation. For example, nominal objects to verbs embedded under bare MODO cannot be moved for pragmatic motivations (11a) even if such a configuration is allowed involving that same verb when embedded under *ca* (11b) or root C (11c). Note, however, that it can be fronted to the matrix CP (11d), in which *Giuseppe* is in the canonical subject position of the matrix clause:

(11) a. Giuseppevoli *(A TORTA) u *(A TORTA)
Giuseppewants thecake MODO the cake
simangia Gianni
him eat Gianni

b. Giuseppe voli caA TORTA si mangia
Giuseppe wants thatthe cake him eat
Gianni
Gianni

c. A TORTA si mangia Gianni
the cake him eat Gianni
'Gianni ate the cake.'

d. A TORTA Giuseppe voli u si mangia
the cake Giuseppe wants MODO him eat
Gianni
Gianni
'Giuseppe wants Gianni to eat the cake.'

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The only ostensible cause for the contrast in the unavailability of the left periphery in (11a) and the transparency effects in (11d) is structural. The left periphery in (11a) is not available because the embedded complement clause is reduced. Following Cinque's (2006) proposal, it is assumed in this thesis that all restructuring clauses are monoclausal. Restructuring verbs are uniformly assumed to lexicalise functional heads in the sentential core of the clause. It is assumed that their verbal complement originates in VP, and that there is no clausal boundary between TP and VP.

4. MARKED CONSTRUCTIONS

The marked/unmarked distinction first discussed in §1 is useful in understanding why some sentences are grammatical even when they do not conform to certain linear word orders that are anticipated given assumptions about canonical structures. Syntactic markedness refers to deviation from standardly accepted structural models, thus a syntactically unmarked position refers to the current consensus of what the canonical position is. Indeed, the propositional content of a set of sentences may be the same, yet there may be differences between marked and unmarked sentences which are understood as "pragmatic" distinctions. This is illustrated by the contrasts between the Italian sentences in (12), from Benincà (1988: 115):

(12) a. Io non conosco Giorgio
I not I=know Giorgio
'I do not know Giorgio.'

b. Giorgio, io non lo conosco
Giorgio I not him I=know

c. GIORGIO non conosco
Giorgio not I=know

d. Non lo conosco, Giorgio
not him I=know Giorgio

The propositional content of all the sentences in (12) is the same, the constituents comprising the construction in (12a) all occupying the so-called canonical or unmarked positions.

The distinction between syntactic and pragmatic markedness gives rise to the possibility that apparent syntactically unmarked constructions are not necessarily pragmatically unmarked. Given a clause in SVO order, it is possible that the subject is pragmatically marked either phonologically or syntactically. Phonological marking involves stress on the marked constituent in whichever structural position it occurs, but syntactic markedness, as previously discussed, always involves displacement. So, in a construction such as the one in (13), in

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which each constituent superficially appears in its canonical position, if the subject ('Stefano') receives contrastive stress then it is obligatory that it is not in the canonical subject position but rather a left-peripheral one. This is shown in (13), which illustrates that whether the subject is in the canonical position or in the left dislocated position is superficially indistinguishable:

(13) [$_{TOP}$ (STEFANO)[$_{SpecTP}$(Stefano) [$_{TP}$ ha mangiato[$_{DP}$ la mela]]]]
Stefano Stefano has eaten the apple
'Stefano has eaten the apple.'

Benincà (1988: 117) notes, for example, that a previously mentioned nominal constituent, even in the immediately preceding sentence, can be reintroduced as new information depending on the discourse properties of the new sentence. She demonstrates this with the following examples (from p. 117):

(14) a. Giorgio è arrivato ieri
Giorgio be arrived yesterday
'Georgio has arrived yesterday.'

b. GIORGIO/Giorgio potrebbe essere la persona
Giorgio could to=be the person
adatta
suitable
'Giorgio could be the right person.'

If the sentence in (14a) precedes either possible sentence in (14b) (i.e. with or without contrastive intonational stress on 'Giorgio'), it would superficially appear that any occurrence of 'Giorgio' in (14b) is old information. However, the stressed constituent ('GIORGIO') indicates that new information is being conveyed (connoting that Giorgio, to the exclusion of any other possible person, could be the right person).

Benincà also discusses interrogative contexts as ones in which repeated information occurs as new information. In these contexts, what is new is the fact that the constituent occurs in the given propositional context (whatever properties may be ascribed to it by the predicate of the question). This is illustrated by the sentences in (15):

(15) a. Quale pizza ti piace di più tra
which pizza you like=it of more between
la margheritae la parmigiana?
the margheritaand the parmigiana
'Which of the pizzas do you prefer, the margherita or the parmigiana?'

b. Preferisco la parmigiana
I=prefer the parmigiana
'I prefer the parmigiana.'

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c. La parmigiana
‘The parmigiana’

d. LA PARMIGIANA mi piace di più
theparmigiana me like=it of more
‘I prefer the parmigiana.’

e. #La parmigiana mi piace di più
The parmigiana me like=it of more
‘I prefer the parmigiana.’

An appropriate response to (15a) can be any of those found in (15b–d), but crucially (15e) is unacceptable because the lack of phonological stress on *la parmigiana* renders it old information here and thus unavailable in the preverbal position. Although it would appear that the constituent should be able to occur in an old information context since it was indeed previously mentioned, given that the context in which it occurs is new, it cannot.

In a syntactically unmarked sentence, the new information can be a constituent of any size, with the new information being either prosodically unmarked or marked. Consider, for example, the ditransitive construction in (16a) in relation to the questions in (16b–e):

(16) a. Flavio ha messo il libro sul tavolo
Flavio has put the book on=the table
‘Flavio has put the book on the table.’

b. Dove ha messo Flavio il libro?
where has put Flavio the book
‘Where has Flavio put the book?’

c. Cosa ha fatto Flavio?
what has done Flavio
‘What has Flavio done?’

d. Cosa è successo?
What is happened
‘What happened?’

e. Che cosa ha messo Flavio sul tavolo?
What thing has put Flavio on=the table
‘What has Flavio put on the table?’

If (16a) is uttered in response to (16b), then only the indirect object (*sultavolo* ‘on the table’) is new. If, on the other hand, (16a) is uttered in response to (16c), then both the direct (*il libro* ‘the book’) and indirect (*sultavolo* ‘on the table’) objects are new information. Additionally, if (16a) is uttered in response to (16d), as has been previously discussed, then the entire sentence is implicitly understood as being new information. Interestingly, the response in (16a) is inappropriate to the question in (16e) because the required new information (i.e. the direct object to the verb) occurs between two old information constituents, thus

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disrupting the structure in which the old information must occur. The only way to answer a question like (16e) is to dislocate all the old information to the left periphery (though in Italian it would be possible to prosodically highlight only the direct object to indicate its new information status). Interestingly, in Italian, this prosodic emphasis is optional if syntactic dislocation of the focalised constituents occurs (Benincà 1988: 119), but is obligatory if elements stay in place – something which is not possible in Nicoterese, in which movement is obligatory.

5. POSTVERBAL SUBJECTS

In Italian there are certain structural contexts in which the subject occurs postverbally, essentially showing the same behaviour as objects (cf. The following examples from Benincà and Salvi 1988: 123):

(17) a. È arrivato Piero
is arrived Piero
'Piero has arrived.'

b. È stato arrestato mio fratello
is been arrested my brother
'My brother was arrested.'

c. Si conoscono tuttii componenti della banda
they they=know eachthe components of=the band
'The band members are known.'

d. È affondata la nave
is sunk the ship
'The ship has sunk.'

The constructions in (17) are pragmatically unmarked, as are the ones in (18) which are not unaccusative:

(18) a. Ha telefonato Masiero
has telephoned Masiero
'Masiero called.'

b. Ha suonato il postino
has rang the postman
'The postman rang [the doorbell].'

Benincà (1988: 124) makes the interesting observation that although the postverbal subjects do indeed, as shown above, appear unmarked pragmatically, if followed by an adjunct constituent these very same constructions become unacceptable outside of very particular contexts (or, in Italian, a marked prosodic structure):

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(19) a. ?? È arrivato Piero a Roma
is arrived Piero to Rome
'Piero has arrived in Rome.'

b. ?? È stato arrestato mio fratello in Germania
is been arrested my brother in Germany
'My brother has been arrested in Germany.'

c. ?? Si vendono i cavoli in piazza
They they=sellthe cabbages in plaza
'They sell cabbages in the plaza.'

d. ?? È affondata la nave alle cinque
is sunk the ship at=the five
'The ship sank at five.'

e. ?? Ha telefonato Masiero all'avvocato
has telephoned Masiero to=the=lawyer
'Masiero has called the lawyer.'

f. ?? Ha suonato il postino due volte
has rang the postino two times
'The postman rang [the doorbell] twice.'

Interestingly, however, these constructions become acceptable if the subject is indefinite:

(20) a. È arrivato un marziano a Roma
is arrived a martian to Rome
'A martian has arrived in Rome.'

b. È stato arrestato un giornalista in Germania
is been arrested a journalist in Germany
'A journalist has been arrested in Germany.'

c. Si vendono appartamenti a Londra
They they=sell appartments to London
'They sell apartments in London.'

d. Ha telefonato una ragazza all'avvocato
has telephoned a girl to=the=lawyer
'A girl has called the lawyer.'

e. Ha suonato un mormone due volte
has rang a Mormon two times
'A Mormon rang [the doorbell] twice.'

Intransitive unergatives can take a postposed subject in unmarked pragmatic contexts. Indeed, the unergatives shown here which allow postposed subjects must be interpreted with an implicit deictic locative or temporal argument anchored to the here and now of the speaker (e.g. *qui* 'here', *ora* 'now'). A sentence such as the one in (20) is only pragmatically unmarked if *Masiero* has called the speaker, the

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place where the speaker is or was, but not if *Masiero* has telephoned just anywhere (Sheehan 2006: 63).

Even a classic postverbal subject with unaccusative verb constructions such as in (21) can only occur if it is understood that *Gianni* is arriving at the place where the speaker is at the moment of utterance, or at the very least that the speaker bears some relation with the place at which *Gianni* is arriving, but it is not possible for this sentence to mean that *Gianni* is arriving anywhere (Pinto 1997: 49):

(21) Arriva Gianni
arrives Gianni
'Gianni is arriving.'

Postverbal subjects pose a problem for a theory of syntax which distinguishes thematic positions (the Spec of lexical projections) from Case positions (the Spec of functional projections). This means that postverbal subjects cannot occur as complement to V, a thematic position. A costly covert movement analysis in which the subject remains in its thematic position at PR then moves to a Case position at LF might thus be proposed, or a less costly *pro*-insertion analysis involving an Agree relation between the inserted *pro* and the subject. Rizzi (1982) proposed that VOS order is the result of the subject right-adjoining to the VP, which could be either base-generated or, indeed, a rightward movement operation (see also Cornilescu 2000: 83). An alternative and more widely accepted view involves the subject remaining in SpecVP where it receives Case. Yet another possibility arises when phasal domains are considered.

If Belletti's (2001; 2005) and Poletto's (2006) idea that the left periphery of the vPphasal domain comprises the same richly articulated structure as the left periphery of the CP is accepted, several issues surrounding postverbal subjects are easily and economically resolved. This vP left periphery is associated with a series of discourse-related projections available to host constituents dislocated for pragmatic motivations (cf. Ledgeway forthc.: § 2.3). Given the availability of this recently proposed structure, the focus reading of the subject (shown in bold) in (22a) and the topic reading of the subject in (22b) is accounted for via structural considerations:

(22) a. Chi ha presentato? Ha presentato **Erin**
who has presented has presented Erin
'Who has presented? Erin has presented.'

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b. Cosa ha fatto Gianni? Ha letto, **Gianni**
what has done Gianni has read Gianni
'What has Gianni done? Gianni has read.'

The discourse-strategic properties associated with the postverbal subjects in (22) are directly licensed and expected assuming that the proposed vP left-peripheral structural configuration exists. It is also necessary to assume that leftward movement of the material that precedes the final subject.

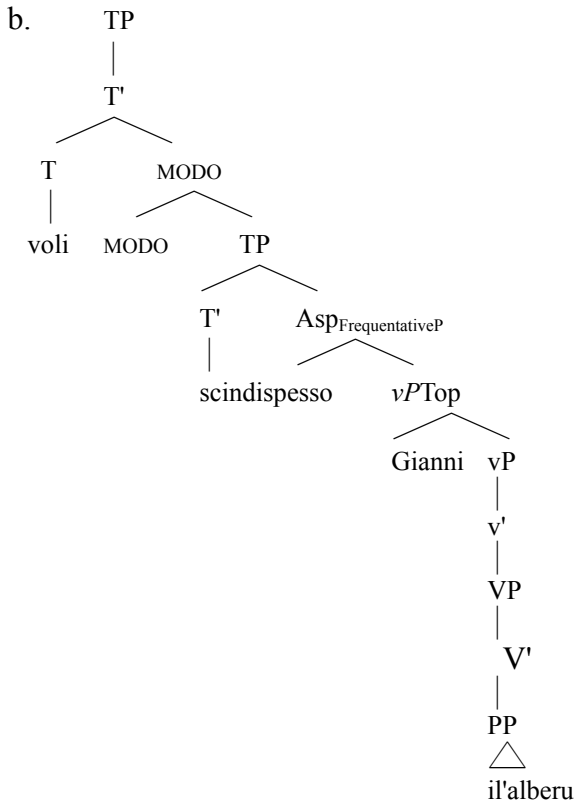
In addition to the evidence related to the pragmatic properties discussed above, structural evidence from adverbial syntax can be observed. Witness, for example, the Nicoterese sentence in (23a) containing adverbs from the far right edge of the lower adverb space (LAS) which precede the subject. In this construction, the subject precedes the prepositional object to the verb (which presumably remains in its first-merged position in VP). The very low adverbs ($Asp_{Frequentative}$ and $Asp_{Repetitive}$, respectively) preceding the subject exclude the possibility that the subject occurs in the T-domain given the absence of available projections below these categories in which the subject might occur:

(23) Voli u scindi spessu/addinovu Gianni i l'alberu
wants MODO descend often/again Gianni prep the=tree
'Gianni wants to climb down the tree often/again.'

The pragmatic interpretation of the embedded subject *Gianni* in (24a) is one of a topic, and it is assumed, following Cruschina (2011: 40), that all topic constituents must be dislocated to dedicated functional projections. Indeed, topics never occur in thematic positions and, in Nicoterese, move to functional projections at the periphery of a phase head (cf. p. 119). It thus follows that *Gianni* should necessarily be left-dislocated. Its position below the lower adverbs *spessu*/*addinovu* ('often/again') exclude the possibility that it occupies [Spec, SubjP]. This puzzle is solved by assuming that *Gianni* lexicalises a topic position within the left periphery of vP, and that the locative complement *l'alberu* has not been extraposed and thus occupies its base position within the VP:

(24) a. Voli [u scindi*i* spessu/addinovu [*vP*Top
wants MODO descend often/again
Gianni [PP i l'alberu]]]]
Gianni the=tree
'Gianni wants to climb down the tree often/again'

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Note also that since the embedded clause in (24b) is a MODO clause, and MODO subsumes the CP left periphery, no CP left-peripheral position is available at all to host the embedded subject. Since *Gianni* definitely does not occupy either a CP- or TP-related position, and, as previously stated, as a topic is required to be dislocated to a peripheral functional projection, it is necessary to conclude that *Gianni* has moved to a topic projection in the vP left periphery.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Cardinaletti (2004: 121) claims that *pro* checks nominative case and phi features in SpecAgrSP. In this paper [Spec, T] is taken to be a cover term that subsumes both of Cardinaletti's subject positions; thus, the current description of the structural properties of MODO clauses excludes the possibility that *pro* lexicalises SpecAgrSP because such a position is ostensibly not generated. Under these conditions, only an analysis such as that of Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998), in which the verb possesses a D feature and the EPP is satisfied through

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high V raising to T (EPP is checked by Head raising rather than XP raising). It is possible to assume that Cardinaletti's analysis is correct for root and *ca* clauses. It is assumed that SpecAgrSP is generated in root and *ca*clauses, thus available to host *pro*,and *pro* is required since the verb does not raise. At the same time, in irrealis clauses a Greek-style analysis is required in which the null subject is licensed differently than in indicative clause types. In MODO clauses the verb contains a D feature.

In short, MODO checks the EPP, and MODO and the verb form a discontinuous unit, which explains why the subject in MODO clauses is freer, unlike the subject in *ca* or root clauses where there is a grammatical requirement for the subject to raise to SpecTP (before possibly moving to left-peripheral positions. Among the features integrated in the projection occupied by MODO is an uninterpretable nominal feature which is typically instantiated by the subject in AgrSP, licensing subject-verb agreement with the lexical verb. In contrast to other southern Calabrian dialects (Ledgeway 1998; Damonte 2010) it is argued in this paper that the EPP feature is satisfied directly by merging MODO (together with the verb raising to the position just below it) in the higher portion of the HAS (see Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's (1998) similar argument for Greek-style languages). In these languages, the EPP is checked by the verb (with pronominal Agr) raising to T, thereby precluding the projection of SpecTP. If EPP is checked by MODO + V then it frees up the subject which, although it cannot move to SpecTP, can move to other positions for pragmatic purposes. On the other hand, in root and *ca* clauses the EPP is checked in SpecTP, and therefore must move through this position at some stage during the derivation of the sentence.

In conclusion, it has been shown that a preverbal subject position does exist in Nicoterese lexicalising the left-edge of the T-domain, but that it is only available in root and *ca* clauses. Furthermore, in the great majority of live utterances, the canonical subject position is phonologically empty due to the highly active use of syntactic movement as a device to express pragmatic features. EPP satisfaction occurs in root and *ca* clauses via [Spec, SubjP], which is unavailable in MODO clauses. In these latter structural contexts, the EPP is satisfied by a checking relation between MODO and V, which bears a D feature on V.

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