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# The Interaction of Focus, Givenness, and Prosody

A Study of Italian Clause Structure

VIERI SAMEK-LODOVICI

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## The Interaction of Focus, Givenness, and Prosody

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# The Interaction of Focus, Givenness, and Prosody

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*A Study of Italian Clause Structure*

VIERI SAMEK-LODOVICI

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*To Raphael and Charlotte,  
A Pinuccia ed Emilio*



# Contents

<i>General preface</i>	xii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xiv
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Historic context and related issues	3
1.2 Main claims	8
1.2.1 Focalization in situ	11
1.2.2 Right dislocation determining apparent leftward focus movement	13
1.2.3 Right dislocation causing focus evacuation	13
1.3 Deepening the analysis	17
1.4 Marginalization and right dislocation	19
1.5 Layout	22
1.6 A methodological point	23
2 Marginalization	25
2.1 Introduction	25
2.2 Italian basic word order	26
2.3 In situ marginalization	29
2.3.1 Evidence from the ordering of negative phrases and NPIs	32
2.3.2 Evidence from anaphoric and quantifier binding	34
2.3.3 Evidence from agreement loss in regional Italian	36
2.3.4 Evidence from past participle preposing	37
2.3.5 Evidence from the ordering of lower adverbs	39
2.4 Conclusions	41
3 Contrastive focus and marginalization	42
3.1 Introduction	42
3.2 In-situ vs. left-peripheral focalization of postverbal foci	44
3.3 In-situ focalization vs. raising to an intermediate focus projection	50
3.3.1 Postverbal subjects and objects	51
3.3.2 Experiencer objects and infinitival complements	53
3.3.3 Postverbal subjects and infinitival complements	54
3.3.4 Floating quantifiers	56
3.3.5 Summary	58



3.4	Rightmost focus	58
3.4.1	Discourse-given phrases raising above higher foci	59
3.4.2	The role of focalization	61
3.4.3	Problems affecting the intermediate focus projection analysis	63
3.5	Further evidence for in-situ focalization and rightmost focus	65
3.5.1	Evidence from lower adverbs	65
3.5.2	Binding relations between postverbal focus and discourse-given phrases	67
3.5.2.1	Divergent binding relations with the universal quantifier ‘ogni’	71
3.6	Conclusions	73
4	Right dislocation	75
4.1	Introduction	75
4.2	The structure and properties of right dislocation	78
4.2.1	Right dislocation without clitic doubling	80
4.2.1.1	No null object clitics	84
4.2.2	The representation of right dislocation	87
4.2.2.1	The structure of $RD^-$	88
4.2.2.2	The structure of $RD^+$	90
4.2.2.3	Structural properties shared across $RD^-$ and $RD^+$	91
4.3	Right dislocation is located above TP	91
4.3.1	Clitic doubling	91
4.3.2	Relative order of marginalized and right-dislocated phrases	94
4.3.3	Failure in licensing n-words and NPIs	96
4.3.4	Binding	101
4.3.5	Right roof violations	105
4.3.6	Agreement loss in regional Italian	109
4.3.7	Some apparent exceptions	109
4.4	Right dislocation is movement-based	111
4.4.1	<i>NE</i> -cliticization	111
4.4.2	Absence of mandatory clitic doubling	115
4.4.3	Reconstruction	115
4.4.4	Wh-extraction	116
4.4.5	Dislocation to higher clauses from tensed and untensed domains	118
4.4.6	Inconclusive tests	121
4.4.6.1	Successive cyclicity	121
4.4.6.2	Parasitic gaps	123
4.4.7	Clitic-doubled $RD^+$ is movement-based too	124
4.4.7.1	<i>Ne</i> -cliticization	125
4.4.7.2	Reconstruction	127
4.4.7.3	Dislocation from tensed and untensed complements	128

4.4.7.4	Wh-extraction from RD <sup>+</sup> phrases	129
4.4.7.5	Evidence from López (2009) and Villalba (2000)	130
4.4.8	Summary	131
4.5	Alternative analyses of right dislocation and related issues	132
4.5.1	Clause-internal analyses	132
4.5.1.1	Problematic aspects of clause-internal analyses	133
4.5.1.1.1	NPI-licensing	133
4.5.1.1.2	Interaction with clause-wide focus	135
4.5.1.1.3	Reconstruction effects	136
4.5.1.2	Cecchetto's arguments against clause-external analyses	137
4.5.1.2.1	Right-roof effects	138
4.5.1.2.2	Proper binding	138
4.5.1.3	Other potential issues from Villalba (2000) and López (2009)	140
4.5.1.3.1	Condition C	140
4.5.1.3.2	Relativized minimality effects	141
4.5.1.3.3	Pronominal binding by quantified phrases	141
4.5.1.3.4	Interactions between CLLD and RD	146
4.5.2	Clause-external analyses	150
4.5.2.1	Potential issues from Frascarelli (2004)	152
4.6	Crosslinguistic variation	157
4.6.1	Variation in position	157
4.6.2	Variation with respect to movement	160
4.6.3	Summary	161
4.7	Conclusions	161
5	Contrastive focus and right dislocation	163
5.1	Introduction	163
5.2	The interaction between focalization in situ and right dislocation	165
5.2.1	The status of higher-generated phrases following postverbal focus	166
5.2.2	Scope asymmetries induced by right-dislocated indefinites	167
5.2.3	Scope asymmetries caused by right-dislocated adverbs	170
5.2.4	Order asymmetries caused by right-dislocated adverbs	172
5.2.5	Wh-extraction	173
5.2.6	Summary	175
5.3	Focus evacuation: the role of right dislocation in left-peripheral foci	176
5.3.1	Focus evacuation	179
5.3.2	Variation in the position of evacuated foci	183
5.3.2.1	Overgeneration in current cartographic analyses of focalization	187
5.3.3	Focus evacuation and the licensing of negative phrases	190

5.3.3.1	Focused negative phrases	190
5.3.3.2	Unfocused negative phrases following evacuated foci	191
5.3.3.3	The distribution of the neg-marker ‘non’	193
5.3.3.4	Problems raised by NPI-licensing to analyses positing fixed focus projections	194
5.3.4	The discourse status of constituents following evacuated left-peripheral foci	197
5.3.4.1	Evidence for the right-dislocated status of post-focus phrases	201
5.3.4.1.1	Preposition dropping	201
5.3.4.1.2	Epithet licensing	203
5.3.4.1.3	Sensitivity to strong islands	204
5.3.4.1.4	Contrastivity	205
5.3.4.1.5	Absence of clitic doubling	207
5.3.4.1.6	Availability of bare NPs	208
5.3.4.2	Clitic-doubled post-focus phrases	209
5.3.4.3	Free word order after evacuated focus	210
5.3.4.4	Conclusion	211
5.3.5	Existing analyses of post-focal phrases	212
5.3.5.1	PF-phrases are not focused—Benincà (2001) and Benincà and Poletto (2004)	212
5.3.5.2	Word order and prosodic contour—Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007)	215
5.3.5.3	Contrastive and corrective foci—Bianchi (2012) and Bianchi and Bocci (2012)	216
5.3.6	Parasitic gaps	218
5.3.7	A brief note on Müller’s principle of unambiguous domination	220
5.3.8	Summary	223
5.4	On the co-occurrence of focus and wh-phrases	224
5.4.1	Wh-chain outside right-dislocated phrases	225
5.4.2	Wh-chain across a right-dislocated phrase	226
5.4.3	Wh-chain contained in a right-dislocated phrase	230
5.4.4	Subordinate interrogative clauses	232
5.4.5	An aside on the position of right dislocation	234
5.4.6	Summary	235
5.5	Conclusions	235
6	The role of prosody	237
6.1	Introduction	237
6.2	General assumptions	239
6.3	Prosody shaping the distribution of Italian focus	241

6.3.1 Constraints	242
6.3.2 Marginalization and raising of lower unfocused phrases	244
6.3.3 Lack of movement when constituents share the same discourse status	247
6.3.4 Interaction with other constraints	251
6.3.5 Summary	255
6.4 Two interesting issues	256
6.4.1 Optionality	256
6.4.2 Movement vs. flexible base-generation	257
6.5 Additional syntactic patterns determined by prosodic constraints	260
6.5.1 Focused clauses	260
6.5.2 Left-shift above unfocused constituents that contain a focus	261
6.5.3 Left-shift outside VP	263
6.6 Prosodic phrasing shaping the distribution of left-shift	265
6.6.1 The relation between structure and movement	267
6.6.2 The different prosodic phrasing of specifier and head structures	270
6.6.2.1 The projection of <i>pp</i> -phrasing	271
6.6.3 How prosodic phrasing constrains left-shift	275
6.6.3.1 Specifier structures	276
6.6.3.2 Head structures	279
6.6.4 Post-focal quantified DPs	282
6.7 Right dislocation and focus evacuation	285
6.7.1 Constraints and assumptions	287
6.7.2 Right dislocation of constituents not containing a focus	288
6.7.3 Focus evacuation from right-dislocating constituents containing a focus	290
6.8 Conclusions	293
<i>Appendix A: Distribution and licensing of Italian N-words</i>	297
1 Main properties	297
2 Licensing under <i>c-command</i>	299
<i>Appendix B: Evidence for leftward right dislocation</i>	301
<i>Appendix C: Irrelevance of pp-phrasing for the analysis of marginalization and left-shift</i>	306
<i>References</i>	314
<i>Index</i>	327

## *General preface*

The theoretical focus of this series is on the interfaces between subcomponents of the human grammatical system and the closely related area of the interfaces between the different subdisciplines of linguistics. The notion of ‘interface’ has become central in grammatical theory (for instance, in Chomsky’s Minimalist Program) and in linguistic practice: work on the interfaces between syntax and semantics, syntax and morphology, phonology and phonetics, etc. has led to a deeper understanding of particular linguistic phenomena and of the architecture of the linguistic component of the mind/brain.

The series covers interfaces between core components of grammar, including syntax/morphology, syntax/semantics, syntax/phonology, syntax/pragmatics, morphology/phonology, phonology/phonetics, phonetics/speech processing, semantics/pragmatics, and intonation/discourse structure, as well as issues in the way that the systems of grammar involving these interface areas are acquired and deployed in use (including language acquisition, language dysfunction, and language processing). It demonstrates, we hope, that proper understandings of particular linguistic phenomena, languages, language groups, or inter-language variations all require reference to interfaces.

The series is open to work by linguists of all theoretical persuasions and schools of thought. A main requirement is that authors should write so as to be understood by colleagues in related subfields of linguistics and by scholars in cognate disciplines.

In this new monograph, Vieri Samek-Lodovici challenges the standard cartographic approach to the relationship between syntax and information structure, using the very domain (Italian topic and focus constructions) from which many of the original insights were derived. He argues that contrastive focus in Italian is always in situ, but that an independent process fronts focused elements when right-dislocation applies. At a theoretical level, this entails that there is no unique Focus Phrase projection in Italian, and opens up the question of the positions of other informationally marked elements in clausal structure. Samek-Lodovici argues that movement operations cannot always be motivated by feature-checking and he proposes, instead, a constraint-evaluation approach within Optimality Theory. The book weaves together syntactic, semantic, and prosodic arguments for an alternative approach to what has been thought, up to now, to be a well understood set of phenomena at the syntax–information structure interface.

David Adger  
Hagit Borer

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This work also greatly benefited from questions and comments from a variety of audiences. These include audiences at invited talks at the University of Cambridge, NYU, University of Oxford, Rutgers, UCL, Università Ca'Foscari di Venezia, Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca, Université Paris-Diderot, University of Konstanz, University of Manchester, University of Potsdam, Yale University, as well as audiences at the International Congress of Linguistics<sup>18</sup>, Going Romance 2007, LAGB 2013 and 2014, SFB 632 17<sup>th</sup> workshop, Doctoral School on Topic and Topicalization (University of Geneva), Workshop on Interfaces at the Left Periphery (Linguistic Institute, Michigan University), NELS 38, and SLE 2014.

This volume would not have been possible without the generous sabbatical leave that I received from University College London, for which I am extremely thankful. Sincere and deeply felt thanks also to the extremely efficient, thorough, and kind editorial team of Oxford University Press, who went out of their way to help me get the book published during this difficult final year. Many thanks also to Kirill Shklovsky for his free and elegant tree-structure drawing software.

Finally, I am grateful to my son Raffy, who learned to speak while this book was being written, and his four British cousins Posy, Dolly, Maisy, and Flo, who wanted me to entitle this book 'Funky Language'. Above all, I am grateful to Charlotte, who genuinely made this book possible through her constant love and support.

## *List of abbreviations*

$\phi_F$	Head of Focus projection
$\phi_R$	Head of Right dislocation projection
$\phi_{Topic}$	Head of Topic projection
$\phi_X$	Head of a generic XP projection
AP	Adjective phrase
AspV	Aspect phrase
CLLD	Clitic left dislocation
CP	Complementizer phrase
D	Determiner
DP	Determiner phrase
Dstr-RD	Destress-RD constraint
EPP	Extended Projection Principle constraint
$_F$	Focus
Hd-ip	Head-of-intonational-phrase constraint
Hd-pp	Head-of-phonological-phrase constraint
Hd-up	Head-of-utterance-phrase-constraint
HT	Hanging Topic
<i>ip</i>	Intonational phrase
LD	Left dislocation
$_M$	Marginalized
Marg	Marginalization constraint
NewF	New-information/presentational focus
NPI	Negative polarity item
Ob-Hd	Obligatory Head constraint
PF-phrase	Post Focus phrase
PP	Prepositional phrase
prt	Particle
<i>pp</i>	Phonological phrase
Q	Quantifier
$_R$	Right-dislocated
RD	Right dislocation

RD <sup>+</sup>	Right dislocation with clitic doubling
RD <sup>-</sup>	Right dislocation without clitic doubling
RDisl	Right Dislocation constraint
refl	Reflexive particle
Rem. mv.	Remnant movement
RP	Right dislocation phrase
SEC	Single Event Condition
SF	Stress-Focus constraint
T	Tense (head of TP)
Top	Topic
TP	Tense phrase
<i>up</i>	Utterance phrase
V <sup>-Fin</sup>	Non-finite verb
VP	Verb phrase
<i>ν</i> P	The phrase projected by little <i>ν</i> above VP
wh	Wh-phrase, interrogative phrase
XP	This term is used to indicate a generic projection, but also the projection immediately above RP in right dislocation structures
Y/N op	Yes/No operator
	Optimal structure/winning structure
	Harmonically bounded structure, losing across all rankings
	This symbol closes any preceding square brackets that are still open





# Introduction

This book challenges the current consensus on the analysis of Italian contrastive focalization. The most significant insights from a theoretical point of view are listed below. A detailed introduction to the analysis proper follows immediately after.

*Clause structure*—Italian contrastive focus will be shown to occur in situ. Deviations from this position will be shown to be systematic and always caused by the independently attested and highly productive process of right dislocation, which will be examined at length in its own right. As explained later in this introduction, when right dislocation applies to a constituent containing a focus, the focus is extracted from the right-dislocating phrase and eventually occurs at its left. As a result, a focus may occur in several distinct positions depending on what constituent is targeted by right dislocation.

If this analysis is correct, as this study of contrastive foci across several constructions would suggest, the commonly assumed view of Italian split CPs since Rizzi (1997) needs to be revised because, as will be amply demonstrated starting in this introduction, a unique fixed projection dedicated to contrastive focus cannot be posited. The consequences are substantial: if a focus projection is absent, then the analyses where it is used as a sign post for determining the position of other left-peripheral constituents and projections need to be reconsidered. This book starts addressing this issue by examining the syntactic status of the constituents immediately following left-peripheral foci. But more needs to be done and I hope the arguments presented here will prove both the necessity for such a re-analysis and its potential for further insights.

*Empirical coverage*—The analysis proposed in this book provides a unified and coherent account of the entire distribution of Italian contrastive focalization. It applies to clause-initial, clause-medial, and clause-final foci. It applies to moved and unmoved foci; to focused phrases but also focused heads, such as focused verbs; to familiar left-peripheral foci, but also to as yet unstudied TP-internal foci acting as left-peripheral foci relative to TP-internal constituents such as VPs and PPs. The same analysis also accounts for the discourse status and syntax of unfocused constituents following focus in each of the above cases.

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This extensive and comprehensive empirical coverage is an important property of the analysis proposed here. Analyses that work well on a large but structurally homogeneous set of cases may turn out to be untenable when the empirical coverage is further enlarged. As I will show, partly already in this introduction, there are strong reasons to believe that this is the case with focalization analyses positing a unique fixed focus projection. They successfully account for a large set of cases, but they will be proved unable to address in a unified and convincing way the larger distribution of focalization examined in this book.

*Cartographic hypothesis*—The evidence examined here excludes contrastive focus from the scope of the cartographic hypothesis. The multiple positions available to contrastive foci could be accounted for through multiple focus projections, but this would leave the original hypothesis with little explanatory and predictive power. We may wonder, however, whether the hypothesis still holds for other discourse-related projections. In this respect, the investigation of right dislocation is particularly interesting. The analysis proposed here will assume a dedicated projection above TP and could therefore be described as cartographic in spirit (Neeleman p.c.). Yet, on closer inspection right dislocation will turn out to be more dynamic than assumed and require a higher position with specific dislocated phrases. These cases are briefly discussed in Sections 4.4.4 and 5.4.5. They suggest that even apparently fixed discourse-related non-focal projections require more structural mobility than expected under a cartographic approach.

*Movement as feature checking*—Two important movement operations in this study appear to defy an analysis in terms of feature checking. The first, called ‘focus evacuation’ and discussed in Chapter 5, concerns the extraction of focus from constituents targeted by right dislocation. This movement is triggered by right dislocation and absent otherwise. Its ultimate cause can be debated (I will attribute it to the impossibility of leaving a stressed focus within a right-dislocated phrase, since right dislocation disallows for stress). But its dependency on right dislocation defies modelling in terms of feature checking because the same features forcing movement of the focused constituent when right dislocation is present would remain available and incorrectly trigger movement even when right dislocation is absent. The same issue emerges with a second phenomenon, called ‘left-shift’ and discussed in Chapter 6, where lower unfocused constituents move above a higher stressed focus, arguably to ensure a better alignment of stress with the right edge of the clause. When the higher constituent is not focused, and hence not stressed, the same movement is ungrammatical, arguably because it no longer serves any purpose. As before, feature checking appears unable to account for the fact that movement of one constituent here depends on the discourse-status of another. Here, I do not debate this issue further, since it would require a book of its own. But I consider it to be important that we note the existence of productive movement operations that appear to challenge a model of movement based on feature checking.

*The syntax-prosody interface*—Prosody and the fundamental design of grammar architecture become relevant when considering the ultimate causes determining the phenomena examined in this book. Why does focus occur in situ? Why must it evacuate from right dislocating constituents? How can its presence trigger left-shift in lower unfocused constituents? The first four chapters of this book concern the representation and syntax of Italian contrastive focalization and right dislocation and are cast in theory-neutral terms. The final chapter, however, argues that the best answer to the above questions emerges from independent prosodic requirements and requires a constraint conflict approach to grammar. Left-shift (including complex left-shift patterns studied here for the first time), focus evacuation, and significant aspects of the prosody of right dislocation and marginalization, will all be shown to emerge naturally from the interaction of simple conflicting constraints governing only the position and availability of prosodic stress, the position of right dislocation, the cost of movement. Constraint conflict makes it possible to model the derivative nature of these complex operations and properties, without directly encoding them in the grammar in any form, i.e. the grammar contains no features, principles, or constraints, that directly refer to ‘focus in situ’, ‘focus evacuation’, ‘left shift’, in their definitions.

*The study of focalization*—The last insight worth mentioning here is methodological in nature. This book shows that the syntax and representation of focalization cannot be properly understood without also analysing the discourse status and syntax of the non-focused constituents that surround contrastive foci. In Italian, the syntax of these constituents affects that of focalization. Ignoring them inevitably leads us to incorrectly attribute the effects they have on focus to focalization itself.

## 1.1 Historic context and related issues

Most of the data examined in this book concern Italian. This is intentional. Linguistic evidence constructed around Italian data has played a particularly significant role in shaping the current understanding of information structure and it is therefore essential to show how and why those same data must be reinterpreted and reanalysed.

Rizzi’s seminal 1997 study argued for the template in (1), where a unique focus projection dedicated to left-peripheral contrastive foci and *wh*-phrases is located above TP, preceded and followed by topic projections for discourse-given phrases (see also Rizzi 2004: 237). A parallel template was proposed in Belletti (2004) for new-information foci, with a dedicated projection situated between TP and VP potentially preceded and followed by topic projections as shown in (2) (Belletti 2004: 25). Since then, most studies in this area have systematically examined and revised the nature and number of the projections involved in these templates, but the existence and position of the two original focus projections have mostly been treated as a fundamental truth of clause structure (on Italian, see amongst others Benincá 2001;

Benincá and Poletto 2004; Brunetti 2004; Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl 2007; Cinque and Rizzi 2009; Bianchi 2012; Bocci and Avesani 2011).

- (1) ForceP TopicP\* FocP<sub>Contrastive</sub> TopicP\* FinP TP
- (2) TopicP\* FocP<sub>NewF</sub> TopicP\* VP

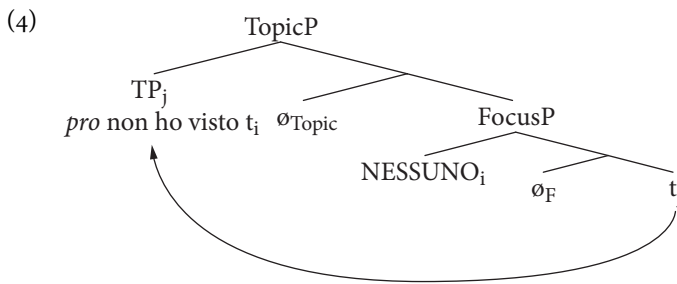
By distinguishing the position of focus and topic relative to each other, the templates shown in (1) and (2) have certainly helped scholars identify and clarify the properties distinguishing different types of topics and foci. Rizzi's template (1) also deepened our understanding of the internal structure of CP by distinguishing the position of finite and non-finite complementizers relative to each other and relative to the topic and interrogative items occurring in-between. Both templates have also been particularly influential in the establishing of the cartographic hypothesis and the related research programme (for a review see Cinque and Rizzi 2009). Under its strictest possible interpretation, proposed in Belletti (2001: 64; 2004: 17), the cartographic hypothesis would maintain that the posited focus projections are unique and have a fixed position in the syntactic representation of the clause. Consequently, contrastive and new-information foci would always need to raise to the relevant projection for interpretation purposes. This hypothesis, too, has proved seminal and with very few exceptions research on Italian information structure has been conducted under the assumption that these templates provide an accurate representation of the Italian clause.

My own research in this area, however, has led me to question the validity of templates (1) and (2) and, more generally, the presence of fixed dedicated projections for contrastive and new-information focus. Several problematic aspects will be highlighted in the chapters to follow, but let me introduce some important ones right away. A first reason for questioning template (1) concerns its inability to account for the distribution of contrastive focalization in its entirety. This distribution includes simple data that despite their run-of-the-mill status do not fit the template. Consider for example the contrastively focused negative object in (3) (The subscript 'F' henceforth denotes contrastive focus, while 'NewF' indicates new-information/presentational focus. Main stress on contrastive foci is shown in capitals).

- (3) Non ho visto NESSUNO<sub>F</sub>.  
(I) not have seen nobody  
'I saw NOBODY.'

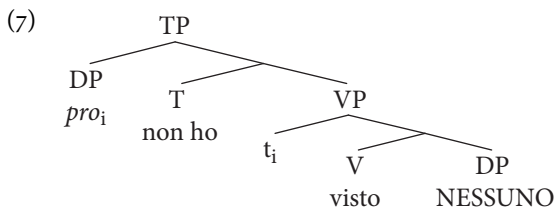
Like any other Italian postverbal negative phrase, the object must be licensed under c-command by the preceding neg-marker *non* (see appendix A). If we analyse it as a left-peripheral focus, as per template (1), we get the structure in (4), where the negative object moves to the specifier of FocusP and then the remnant TP moves to the specifier of a higher topic projection in order to preserve word order. This

structure is highly problematic. To begin with, focused negative objects fronted above TP do not need licensing, see (5) (Zanuttini 1991; Penka 2011). It is unclear why the negative object in (4) should be an exception to this extremely robust generalization. Second, as noted in Cardinaletti (2001), licensing of the negative object by the neg-marker *non* should fail because *non* in this structure does not c-command the object as required. The analysis would have to stipulate that licensing may obtain under reconstruction, but this is not possible in Italian, as shown by the impossibility of licensing wh-phrases containing negative items in (6). Note that both problems disappear when the negative object is analysed as being focalized in situ, since in this position it does require licensing and it can be licensed under c-command by the neg-marker as shown in (7).



- (5) NESSUNO<sub>F</sub>, ho visto.  
 NOBODY, (I) have seen  
 ‘NOBODY, I saw.’

- (6) \*Nessun articolo di chi, non hai letto?  
 No paper of who, (you) not have read  
 ‘No paper of whom, did you read?’



A similar problem emerges with parasitic gaps. In the data below, the parasitic gap in the second clause, represented as ‘\_\_\_’, is grammatical in (8)(a) but not (8)(b). If the focused object *nostro PADRE* must raise to the left-peripheral focus projection of template (1) in both sentences, it should c-command the parasitic gap in both (8)(a) and (8)(b), incorrectly predicting (8)(b) to be grammatical. Once again the problem disappears if the postverbal focused object in (8)(b) is analysed as in situ and therefore structurally too low to c-command and license the corresponding parasitic gap.

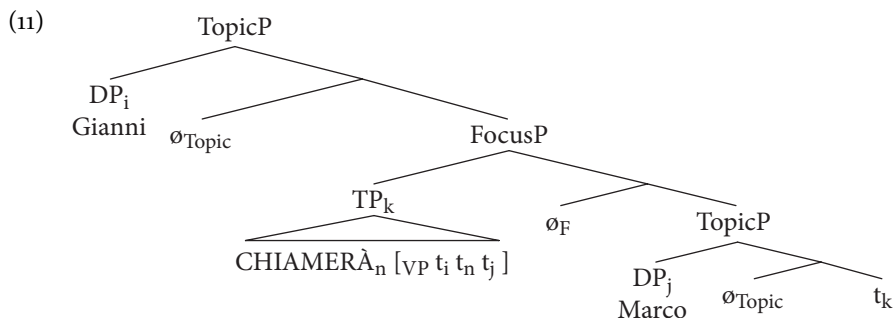
- (8) a. [Nostro PADRE]<sub>F</sub>, abbiamo cercato per mesi senza mai trovare \_\_\_ !  
 Our father, (we) have sought for months without ever to-find  
 ‘Our FATHER, we sought for months without ever finding!’  
 b. \* Abbiamo cercato per mesi [nostro PADRE]<sub>F</sub>, senza mai trovare \_\_\_!  
 (We) have sought for months our father, without ever to-find

Other data challenge the template for presentational focus in (2). For example, in the dialogue in (9) the initial focused object in answer A precedes the auxiliary head *ho* ‘have’. If the auxiliary is located in T, the focused object cannot occur in the focus projection of template (2), since in the template the focus projection follows T and thus the object could not precede the auxiliary.

- (9) Q: Dove hai dormito mentre eri a Roma?  
 Where (you) have slept while (you) were at Rome  
 ‘Where did you sleep while you were in Rome?’  
 A: [Da un AMICO]<sub>NewF</sub>, ho dormito.  
 At a friend, (I) have slept  
 ‘I slept at a friend’s place.’

It is also unclear how the templates in (1) and (2) extend to data where focalization affects a head rather than a phrase, since heads cannot move to a specifier position. Consider for example the focused verb in (10). As far as I can see, its focalization in FocusP would require raising the entire TP stripped of any unfocused constituent to specFocusP as in (11). The problem disappears if the verb is allowed to focalize in T, i.e. in the position obligatorily required by the independent process that forces Italian finite verbs to raise to T.

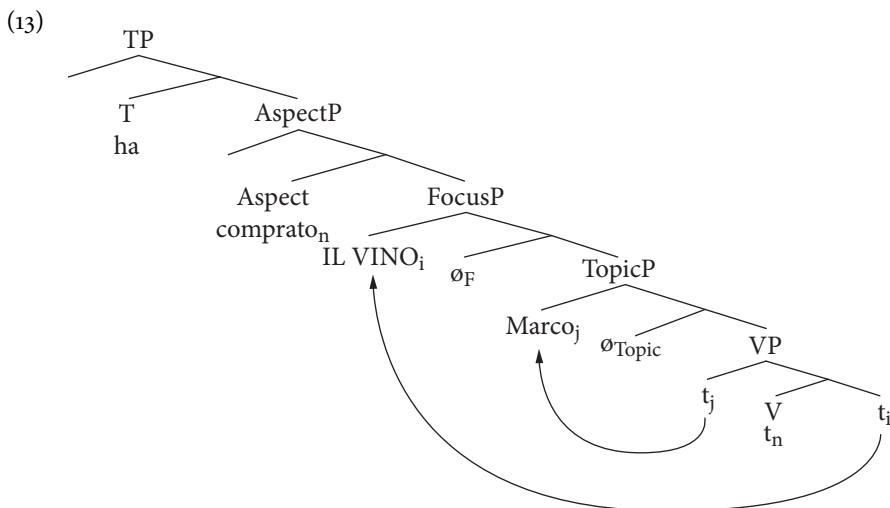
- (10) Gianni CHIAMERÀ<sub>F</sub> Marco (ma non lo incontrerà).  
 John will-call Mark (but (he) not him will-meet)  
 ‘John will CALL Mark (but he will not meet him).’



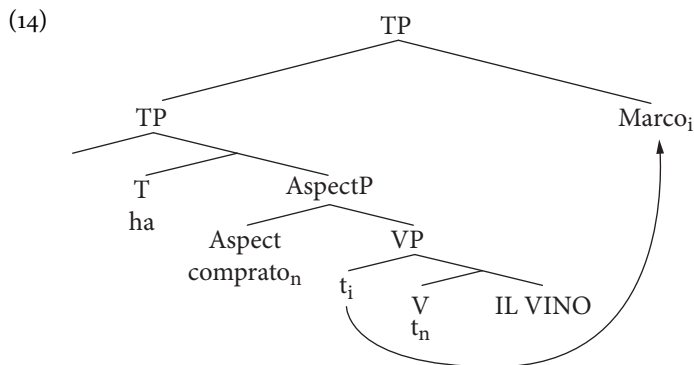
Another set of reasons for reconsidering templates (1) and (2) comes from the fact that important data presented as evidence in their support (including refined versions of them) also allow for different plausible alternative analyses that have not been proved false.

Consider for example (12), where a presentationally focused object precedes a postverbal subject giving the impression that the object has raised above the subject in accord with template (2). The conclusion that the object has moved to a higher focus projection hinges on what analysis is assigned to the subject. It is valid if the subject occurs in situ or has raised to the post-focus topic position made available by the template, see (13). But it is not a valid conclusion if the subject is right-dislocated TP-externally as in (14), since in this case the object might still occur in situ. Given the high productivity of Italian right dislocation (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002; Samek-Lodovici 2006), this is a very real possibility. Yet most literature on Italian focalization does not address this critical issue, usually simply assuming that discourse-given constituents following focus are located in situ. Their potential right-dislocated status is ignored, possibly due to the widespread but—as we will see—incorrect belief that the presence of right dislocation would be signalled by the presence of clitic doubling. (To facilitate discussion, right dislocation is here temporarily represented as rightward TP-adjunction. The more accurate but more complex antisymmetric analysis adopted in this book is introduced in Section 1.4 later in this introduction.)

- (12) Ha comprato il VINO<sub>NewF</sub>, Marco.  
Has bought the wine, Mark  
'Mark bought the wine.'







This book sprang from the realization that it is simply not possible to provide an accurate analysis of the syntax of focalization without also investigating its interaction with the syntax of discourse-given constituents. This is particularly true for Italian where discourse-given constituents are often ambiguous between a marginalized analysis, where they remain in situ, and a right-dislocated one, where they are dislocated above TP. Whenever a focus constituent is followed by a discourse-given constituent C, establishing whether C is marginalized or right-dislocated immediately affects what position can be hypothesized for the focused constituent itself. One of the goals of this book is to systematically examine what positions can be attributed to Italian focalized constituents once the position of post-focal discourse-given constituents is accurately established.

## 1.2 Main claims

The analysis of Italian contrastive focalization proposed in this book addresses the problematic aspects outlined above by taking into account the syntax of givenness and its effects on the syntax of focalization.

Following Rooth (1985, 1992), Krifka (2007, 2008), and Zimmermann and Onea (2011), I assume that focalization, whether contrastive or not, always evokes a set of alternatives. With Krifka, I will maintain that focalization is contrastive when it involves a contrast with one or more evoked alternatives that are already part of the common ground presupposed by speaker and hearers (but see Neeleman and Vermeulen 2012 for an interesting alternative where contrastivity, like focus, is assigned its own semantic import).

In more descriptive terms, I will consider contrastive foci from the following three classes of Krifka's (2007, 2008) classification: (i) corrective foci like (15) where focalization is used to correct a previously mentioned or implied proposition; (ii) exhaustive foci like (16) where focus identifies the unique referent within the set of evoked alternatives for which the stated proposition holds (cf. Kiss 1998); and (iii)

paralleling foci like (17) where foci signal the contrastive component within otherwise parallel expressions sharing an identical set of alternatives. I will not look for potential exceptional cases where exhaustivity might diverge from contrastivity (Repp 2010: section 2.1.3), but see Zimmerman (2008) amongst others for a possible analysis that reconciles these cases with Krifka's common-ground based notion of contrastivity.

This identifies a set of data sharing a similar semantics and, as I will claim for Italian, an identical syntax. By concentrating on contrastive focalization, however, I do not intend to implicitly exclude the possibility that the results in this book might also extend to a new information focus of the kind elicited in QA-pairs like (18), where the focused item provides the information requested by the wh-operator. Rooth (1985, 1992) showed that these foci, too, are associated with a set of alternatives and Brunetti (2004) showed that by and large Italian new information foci share the same syntactic properties of their contrastive counterparts. I believe that this convergence extends to the claims made in this book, too, but space limits prevent me from extensively testing this hypothesis. The results and arguments in this book, however, are likely to facilitate any future research in this area.

- (15) A: Avete dato il vino a Gianni.  
(You) have given the wine to John  
'You gave the wine to John.'
- B: No. Abbiamo dato il PANE<sub>F</sub>, a Gianni.  
No. (We) have given the bread, to John  
'No. We gave the BREAD to John.'
- (16) A: Avete dato il vino o il pane, a Gianni?  
(You) have given the wine or the bread to John  
'Did you give John the bread or the wine?'
- B: Abbiamo dato il PANE<sub>F</sub>, a Gianni.  
(We) have given the bread, to John  
'We gave the BREAD to John.'
- (17) A Gianni, daremo il PANE<sub>F</sub>, ma a Maria, daremo il VINO<sub>F</sub>.  
To John, we will-give the bread, but to Mary, we will-give the wine  
'We will give the BREAD to John but the WINE to Mary.'
- (18) A: Cosa avete dato a Gianni?  
What (you) have given to John  
'What did you give to John?'
- B: Abbiamo dato il PANE<sub>NewF</sub>, a Gianni.  
(We) have given the bread, to John  
'We gave the BREAD to John.'

Descriptively, Italian contrastive focus may occur in several positions, see for example (19) where the same focused object appears in clause-medial, clause-final, and clause-initial position across the three grammatical answers B1–B3. I will argue that a comprehensive analysis of the distribution of contrastive focalization in the clause<sup>1</sup> must consider its interaction with the independent operations of marginalization and right dislocation potentially affecting discourse-given constituents. Constituents will be assumed to be discourse-given when mentioned or entailed by previous discourse (or, more precisely, when entailed by the existential F-closure of a salient antecedent as discussed in Schwarzschild 1999: 151. See also Féry 2013: 1988).

- (19) A: Avete dato il vino a Gianni.  
 (You) have given the wine to John  
 ‘You gave the wine to John.’  
 B1: No. Abbiamo dato il PANE<sub>F</sub>, a Gianni.  
 No. (We) have given the bread to John  
 ‘We gave the BREAD to John.’  
 B2: No. Abbiamo dato a Gianni Il PANE<sub>F</sub>.  
 B3: No. Il PANE<sub>F</sub>, abbiamo dato a Gianni.

I will claim that in Italian contrastive focalization occurs in situ and that any linear displacement from this position not due to well-known independent processes such as V-to-T movement is determined by the operations listed in (20). While some of these operations are known, the in-depth assessment of their properties will challenge some widely assumed but incorrect notions, such as the assumption that right dislocation requires clitic doubling. Their analysis will also uncover as yet unstudied constructions such as the availability of TP-internal left-peripheral focalization relative to VP and PP. Eventually, all these operations will be shown to follow from the interaction of simple prosodic and syntactic constraints as described in Section 1.3 of this introduction.

- (20) Operations responsible for the distribution of contrastive focus in Italian

*Contrastive focalization*—Focalization occurs in situ. Contrastive foci do not move to higher positions for intrinsic reasons, thus excluding movement to higher focus projections triggered by focused status (see Costa 1998 for similar claims on new information focus in European Portuguese).

*Marginalization*—Discourse-given constituents generated *lower* than a contrastively focused constituent may optionally be marginalized, i.e. occur de-stressed in situ to the right of the focused constituent (cf. Cardinaletti 2001, 2002).

<sup>1</sup> The term ‘distribution in the clause’ refers to the set of positions taken by contrastive foci in a clause, thus excluding their DP-internal distribution (but see the studies in Aboh et al. 2010). I consider only unsplit foci, thus providing no in-depth study of the split foci discussed in Fanselow and Lenertová (2011), but see footnote 4 in Chapter 5 for a discussion of how they might fit the analysis proposed in this book.

*Left-shift*—Discourse-given constituents generated *lower* than a contrastively focused constituent may optionally move above it and precede it (Samek-Lodovici 2005; see also Costa 1998: 177, Zubizarreta 1998).

*Right dislocation*—Any discourse-given constituent, whether generated above, below, or containing a focused constituent, is potentially subject to right dislocation.

- Right dislocation allows for, but does not require, clitic doubling.
- Right dislocation involves movement.
- Right-dislocated constituents are situated outside TP (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002; Frascarelli 2004; Samek-Lodovici 2006).

*Focus evacuation*—A contrastively focused constituent  $A_F$  generated within a larger constituent  $C$  targeted by right dislocation will always evacuate  $C$  by raising immediately before it.

- Focus evacuation places  $A_F$  at the left-periphery of  $C$  in linear, descriptive, terms, but as we will see  $A_F$  does not c-command  $C$ .
- Focus evacuation follows from the need to stress focus. Italian right-dislocated phrases never carry main stress and therefore they cannot include any stressed foci.

The rest of this section describes in greater detail how the above operations will be claimed to determine the distribution of contrastive focus and the associated syntactic structures in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Section 1.3 will instead illustrate how in Chapter 6 the above operations will be shown to follow from simpler constraints governing movement, stress assignment, and the location of right dislocation.

### 1.2.1 Focalization in situ

In order to identify the authentic position or positions of contrastive focalization we need to consider data that are as much as possible free from interfering factors. For example, focused finite verbs raise to T despite their focused status. Their raising to T, however, is caused by the independent morphosyntactic requirements that force such movement in Italian whether the verb is focused or unfocused. For this reason, focused verbs are not the right items to investigate the intrinsic position of contrastive focalization (which is not equivalent to saying that the final analysis of focalization need not account for them; on the contrary, the interaction with V-to-T movement posits an important challenge that must be met).

For this reason, we need to consider data that are free from right dislocation, since as we saw above right dislocation can interfere with our ability to determine the position of focus. As the book will show, once these precautions are in place, Italian contrastive focalization turns out to occur in situ. This result will be supported by an array of tests showing that postverbal focused constituents never move leftwards when right dislocation is absent. Specifically, these tests show that for any two constituents  $A$  and  $B$ , with  $A$  generated above and before  $B$ , when  $B$  is focused it

necessarily follows A as in (21)(a). Moving B above A, as in (21)(b), is always ungrammatical. The subscript ‘M’ signals marginalization.

- (21) a.           A     B<sub>F</sub>  
       b. \*B<sub>F,i</sub> A<sub>M</sub> t<sub>i</sub>

Two examples are provided below. Example (22) involves a VP-internal negative subject and a focused object, with the subject preceding the object in (22)(a) but following it in (22)(b). Crucially, negative phrases resist right dislocation and therefore we can safely assume that the object–subject order in (22)(b) requires the focused object to be raised above the stranded subject. Informants who accept VP-internal negative subjects—the majority of my informants—perceive a clear contrast between the grammatical (22)(a) and the ungrammatical (22)(b), showing that when right dislocation is controlled for, short distance focus movement is ungrammatical. Informants who do not accept VP-internal negative subjects find both sentences ungrammatical, making this test uninformative for them, but crucially no informants find movement in (22)(b) grammatical.

- (22) Context: Nessuno ha invitato i Veneziani.  
           Nobody has invited the Venetians  
           ‘Nobody invited the Venetians.’
- a. No. Non ha invitato nessuno i I MILANESI<sub>F</sub>.  
    No. Not has invited anybody the Milanese  
    ‘No. Nobody invited the MILANESE.’
- b. \* No. Non ha invitato i MILANESI<sub>F</sub> nessuno<sub>M</sub>.  
    No. Not has invited the Milanese anybody

When negative subjects are not an issue, focus movement is deemed ungrammatical by all informants. Consider (23), which has the same structure as (22) but involves a discourse-given negative object and a focused infinitival complement. When both are in situ, as in (23)(a), the sentence is grammatical. When the focused complement moves above the object, as in (23)(b), the sentence becomes ungrammatical. Once again, right dislocation in (23)(b) is controlled for through a negative phrase.

- (23) Context: Non costringerete nessuno a testimoniare.  
           (You) not will-force anybody to testify  
           ‘You will not force anybody to testify.’
- a. No. Non costringeremo nessuno a CONFESSARE<sub>F</sub>.  
    No. (We) not will-force anybody to-confess  
    ‘No. We will not force anybody to CONFESS.’
- b. \* No. Non costringeremo a CONFESSARE<sub>F</sub> nessuno<sub>M</sub>.  
    No. (We) not will-force to-confess anybody

The pattern just examined is repeatedly observed across subjects, objects, sentential complements, lower adverbs, quantifiers, and discussed in detail in Chapter 3. It provides strong evidence for focalization in situ and it directly challenges the availability of overt movement to a dedicated focus projection, no matter where such projection is assumed to be located.

### 1.2.2 Right dislocation determining apparent leftward focus movement

When a higher-generated constituent A is dislocated to the right of a lower constituent B, the resulting linear order gives the misleading impression that B has moved above A even if B is in situ. For example, in (24) the focused object precedes a right-dislocated subject, giving the impression that the object has raised above the subject even if the object could still be, and will be shown to be, in situ. In languages with a highly productive right dislocation process, data displaying this order can be interpreted as evidence for focus movement only if right dislocation is controlled for, yet such controls are often missing. (The subscript ‘R’ marks right dislocation.)

- (24) Non ha invitato i MILANESI<sub>F</sub>, Gianni<sub>R</sub>.  
 Not has invited the Milanese, John  
 ‘John did not invite the MILANESE.’

Note, furthermore, how the dislocated subject is not doubled by an overt clitic, masking its right-dislocated status. As we will see in Chapter 4, right dislocation without clitic doubling is possible with any argument or constituent. For example, in (25) the object *i fiori* is certainly right-dislocated since it follows the clitic-doubled right-dislocated object *a Marco*. Yet the corresponding object clitic is missing. The optionality of overt clitic doubling will be shown to be a systematic property of Italian right dislocation and the possibility of null clitics will be also excluded.

- (25) [Maria non gli ha più PORTATO]<sub>NewF</sub>, a Marco<sub>R</sub>, [i fiori]<sub>R</sub>.  
 Mary not to-him has any-longer brought, to Mark, the flowers  
 ‘Mary no longer brought flowers to Mark.’

All cases of apparent focus movement will be shown to be a product of right dislocation and constitute no genuine challenge to focalization in situ.

### 1.2.3 Right dislocation causing focus evacuation

Right dislocation may also target phrases that contain a focused constituent. In these cases, the focused constituent evacuates the targeted phrase prior to the phrase’s dislocation. Focus will be claimed to move only as much as necessary to exit the dislocating phrase, never more, and to eventually occur at the left of the dislocated phrase.

An example is provided in (26). The focused indirect object *a MARCO* precedes a right-dislocated VP (only the DP *MARCO* is actually focused, but the entire PP is pied-piped because Italian disallows preposition stranding). Note that the right-dislocated status of the VP is certain, since the VP follows the right-dislocated indirect object *della guerra* that is clitic doubled by the clitic *ne*. The focused indirect object must thus have evacuated the VP before the VP's right dislocation.

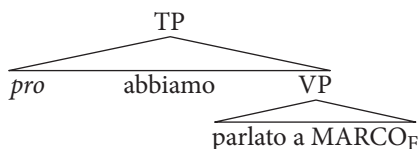
- (26) Context: Avete parlato della guerra a Maria?  
 (You) have spoken-of-the war to Mary  
 'Did you speak about the war to Mary?'  
 a. No. Ne abbiamo a MARCO<sub>F</sub>, della guerra<sub>R</sub>, [VP parlato]<sub>R</sub>.  
 No. (We) of-it have to Mark, of-the war, spoken  
 'No. We spoke to MARK about the war.'

When the right-dislocated indirect object *della guerra* is absent, as in (27), the evacuated focus immediately precedes the dislocated VP, giving the impression that focus has raised out of an unmoved VP. But once again this is a false impression. We know that leftward raising is absent when right dislocation is controlled for. The order in (27) is the product of the same operations at work in the more transparent (26), namely right dislocation of the VP forcing evacuation of the focused indirect object. Unlike (26), sentences like (27) offer no immediately visible cue for the right-dislocated status of the phrases originally containing the focus, but as we will see in Chapter 5 several pieces of evidence support their right-dislocated status, including the lack of c-command between the evacuated foci and the dislocated phrases.

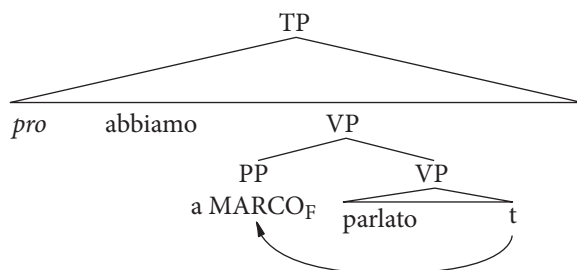
- (27) Abbiamo a MARCO<sub>F</sub>, [VP parlato]<sub>R</sub>.  
 (We) have to Mark, spoken  
 'We spoke to MARK.'

An illustration of the derivational steps involved with focus evacuation is provided in (28). Right dislocation is again temporarily modelled as right-adjunction to TP to facilitate this initial discussion. VP is the phrase targeted by right dislocation and the PP *a Marco* the focused indirect object. First, the PP evacuates VP by left-adjointing to it. Then the lower VP-segment is right dislocated outside TP, leaving the PP preceding VP but not c-commanding it. (Corresponding derivations under the leftward movement analysis of right dislocation introduced later in this introduction are provided in Section 5.3).

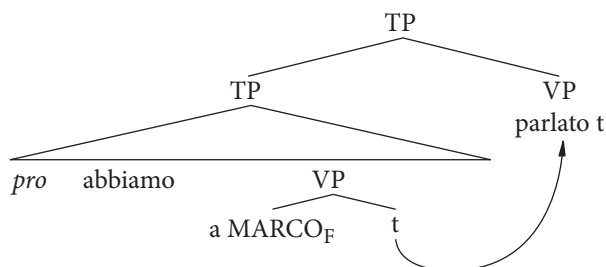
- (28) a. VP is discourse-given and targeted for right dislocation.



- b. The focused indirect object is evacuated above VP.



- c. Then VP is right dislocated; the indirect object is at its left but does not c-command it.



A focused constituent may be contained in several phrasal projections, each larger than the previous one. For example, a focused DP can be part of a PP, within a VP, within a TP. The focus evacuation operation just described predicts that each of these larger phrases can be targeted by right dislocation. As the size of the targeted constituent varies, so should the final position of the evacuated focus vary. This is indeed the case. Example (29) respectively shows focus evacuation from a PP, VP, and TP. Additional examples are provided in Chapter 5.

- (29) Context: Siete andati via da Firenze?

(You) are gone away from Florence

‘Did you go away from Florence?’

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| a. Siamo andati via [da MILANO] <sub>F</sub> , (non da Firenze).                  | No RD         |
| (We) are gone away from Milan, (not from Florence)                                |               |
| ‘We went away from MILAN, (not Florence).’  |               |
| b. Siamo andati [da MILANO] <sub>F</sub> , [via] <sub>R</sub> , (non da Firenze). | Dislocated PP |
| (We) are gone from Milan, away, (not from Florence)                               |               |
| c. Siamo [da MILANO] <sub>F</sub> , [andati via] <sub>R</sub> , (non da Firenze). | Dislocated VP |
| (We) are from Milan, gone away, (not from Florence)                               |               |
| d. [Da MILANO] <sub>F</sub> , [siamo andati via] <sub>R</sub> , (non da Firenze). | Dislocated TP |
| From Milan, (we) are gone away, (not from Florence)                               |               |



In all these cases, the evacuated focus immediately precedes the right-dislocated phrase. All these sentences have an identical interpretation, too, except for the expected discourse-given flavour of the phrase following focus in each sentence. As (29)(d) shows, when right dislocation targets TP, focus evacuation places focus immediately before the right-dislocated TP, giving rise to the familiar left peripheral focus patterns examined in Rizzi (1997) and many other studies since then. As I will show in Chapter 5, the underlying structure for these patterns is the one associated with focus evacuation, which differs from Rizzi's structure and other similar proposals in several ways. To begin with, the evacuated focus does not c-command the dislocated TP, whereas it does so in any analysis where focus has raised to the dedicated focus projection FocusP located above TP. Second, sentences like (29)(d) involving dislocated TPs have no special status. They are no more fundamental or revealing of the true position of focus than any other data discussed in this introduction. As the paradigm in (29) shows, sentences like (29)(d) identify just a subset of sentences within the more extensive distribution determined by focus evacuation, which is itself a subclass of the wider distribution of focus determined by right dislocation when freely applied (i.e. also including right dislocation affecting phrases not containing focus). The complete distribution of contrastive focus when conceived in linear terms is larger still, since it also includes any structure where right dislocation is absent and focalization occurs in situ (with or without left-shift of lower unfocused constituents).

The issue is whether it is possible to provide a unified, coherent, and comprehensive analysis of this rich distribution. The main claim of this book is that it is indeed possible, provided that focalization is maintained to always occur in situ except when forced elsewhere by independent factors such as the constraint forcing finite verbs to T, or right dislocation forcing focus evacuation in the manner described. It is these external independent factors that are responsible for widening the distribution of focus beyond in-situ focalization.

This view contrasts dramatically with the rigid templates described at the start of this introduction with their unique and fixed positions for all foci. Mapping the entire distribution of contrastive focus onto a single structural position inevitably requires positing an array of overt and covert operations whose only purpose is to match the rich array of linear orders observed in the empirical data against the chosen template; see for example again structure (11) involving focused verbs. In this book, I will repeatedly compare the analysis proposed here—namely focalization in situ plus focus evacuation whenever right dislocation targets constituents containing focus—with its strict cartographic alternative, showing how several properties, including word order, scope, wh-extraction, and NPI-licensing converge in support of the former.

### 1.3 Deepening the analysis

So far I have described the syntactic operations responsible for the distribution of contrastive focalization in Italian, claiming that focalization in situ and focus evacuation provide a better account of such distribution than the cartographic templates in (1) and (2).

But why does focalization occur in situ? Building on the main insight in Zubizarreta (1998), Costa (1998), Szendrői (2001, 2002, 2003), and Samek-Lodovici (2005), I will claim in Chapter 6 that focalization in situ follows immediately from the prosodic constraints requiring Italian stress to occur clause-rightmost. Focalization occurs in situ because this is the rightmost position available to the constituent being focalized and hence also the rightmost available position for the sentential stress associated with focalization. Any leftward movement of the focused constituent places stress further away from the right edge of the clause, decreasing stress alignment.

This analysis will be shown to be supported by the systematic asymmetry affecting the distribution of focus across a variety of constituents. As we already know, given two constituents A and B, with A generated above B, B cannot raise above A when B is focused, see (30). As (31) shows, movement of the lower constituent is also ungrammatical whenever A and B share the same discourse status (both discourse-given in (a), both contrastively focused in (b), both part of a larger presentational focus in (c)). Movement is optionally possible only when the higher-generated constituent A is focused and B is discourse-given, see (32).

- (30) a.           A    B<sub>F</sub>  
      b. \*B<sub>F,i</sub>   A    t<sub>i</sub>
- (31) a. \*B<sub>i</sub>       A    t<sub>i</sub>  
      b. \*B<sub>F,i</sub>   A<sub>F</sub> t<sub>i</sub>  
      c. \*[... B<sub>i</sub> A    t<sub>i</sub> ]<sub>NewF</sub>
- (32) a.           A<sub>F</sub> B  
      b. B<sub>i</sub>       A<sub>F</sub> t<sub>i</sub>

This complex paradigm follows straightforwardly from the constraints governing stress alignment. Movement is grammatical when it improves stress alignment with the right edge of the clause and ungrammatical when it does not. Consequently, the unstressed B may raise above the focused and stressed A<sub>F</sub> in (32)(b) because this improves stress alignment by removing the intervening unstressed B. Everywhere else movement is blocked because it does not improve stress alignment. Raising the focused B in (30)(b) decreases stress alignment because the unfocused A then intervenes between the stressed B and the clause right edge. In (31)(a), A and

B are unstressed and the cost of movement is not offset by an improved stress alignment. In (31)(b), A and B are both focused, making movement again irrelevant for stress alignment because stress always falls on whichever amongst A and B occurs rightmost. In (31)(c), stress falls rightmost within the larger focused phrase independently of the order of A and B, again turning movement of B into an unnecessary cost.

Disregarding the prosodic analysis just described in favour of a purely syntactic account is conceptually problematic. Consider the contrast between the grammatical (32)(b) and the ungrammatical (31)(a). They both illustrate movement of a lower-generated unfocused constituent B above a higher-generated constituent A. The two patterns tell us that this movement is possible when A is focused but ungrammatical when A is not focused. Movement of B thus depends on the discourse-status of A rather than the intrinsic properties of B. The prosodic analysis explains why this is the case: B's movement is beneficial for stress alignment only if A is stressed and A attracts stress only when focused. It is instead unclear how the same movement pattern could be accounted for on the basis of B's intrinsic properties alone or the positions involved, since both remain invariant across (31)(a) and (32)(b).

Furthermore, the proposed prosodic analysis will be shown to receive independent support from an interesting observation in Cinque (1999). Cinque noticed that lower unfocused adverbs may not raise above higher focused adverbs without pied-piping the material to their right. I will show that this pattern generalizes beyond adverbs and that it, too, follows from the need to provide the best possible stress alignment. Specifically, given a higher focused constituent A followed by an unfocused branching complement '[B C]', raising the entire complement as in (33)(a) leaves the stress on A closer to the right edge than raising B alone as in (33)(b) and is therefore the preferred option. The same prosodic analysis provided for patterns (30)–(32) thus also explains why raising the complement is the attested option in (33), showing that these are not distinct phenomena. As we will see, the same prosodic constraints also determine whether movement can affect C, which will turn out to depend on the internal structure of the complement '[B C]'.

- (33) a. [TP ... [B C]<sub>i</sub> A<sub>F</sub> t<sub>i</sub>]  
       b. \* [TP ... B<sub>i</sub> A<sub>F</sub> [t<sub>i</sub> C]]

Focus evacuation, too, will be shown to follow from prosodic constraints requiring the destressing of right-dislocated phrases. Since contrastive foci need stress, they cannot be destressed and must therefore evacuate any right-dislocating constituent containing them. The same constraints will also be shown to predict the wrapping of right-dislocated phrases into separate intonational phrases observed by Frascarelli (2000) and Bocci and Avesani (2011).

The impact of prosody on the syntax of contrastive focalization will be formalized in optimality theoretic terms, consistently with prior works in this area such as, amongst others, Szendrői (2001, 2002), Büring and Gutiérrez-Bravo (2002), Dehé (2005), Samek-Lodovici (2005), Downing (2006), Zerbian (2006), Hamlaoui (2008, 2011), and Cheng and Downing (2009, 2012). The analysis will exploit the conflict between purely prosodic constraints requiring rightmost intonational prominence and a lower ranked constraint Stay penalizing movement. As a result, when no other constraint requires it, movement is possible when it benefits stress alignment but not otherwise. This simple model will be shown to directly account for in-situ focalization and all the other properties touched upon in this section. As a result, the grammar of Italian should be conceived as free of any feature, constraint, or rule referring to the position of focalization, or governing the movement of lower constituents above focus (with or without pied-piping), or requiring the prosodic phrasing of right-dislocated constituents into intonational phrases of their own.

#### 1.4 Marginalization and right dislocation

Italian marginalization and right dislocation are examined at depth in separate self-standing chapters that can be examined independently from the rest of this book. The analysis concerns their syntactic properties and representation. As far as I can see, they share the same pragmatic import. Both affect discourse-given constituents and are licensed under similar pragmatic conditions, but a systematic study of their semantics and pragmatics is left to further research.

With respect to marginalization, I supply additional evidence for Cardinaletti's characterization of marginalized constituents as discourse-given and distressed in situ (Cardinaletti 2001, 2002). Eventually, in Section 6.3.2, their unstressed status will be shown to follow from the prosodic constraints associating stress with focus, showing that the term 'marginalization' need only be conceived as a convenient term for the status, position, and prosody of these constituents, not as an actual operation formally and independently encoded in the grammar of Italian.

With respect to right dislocation, I will provide a comprehensive investigation aiming at determining with a sufficient degree of confidence the obligatory or optional nature of the associated clitic doubling, the position of right-dislocated phrases, and their base-generated or moved status.

Clitic doubling will be shown to be optional and the presence of null clitics will also be excluded (with the exception of subjects doubled by *pro*, see Cardinaletti 2001, 2002).

I will also show that Italian right dislocation is movement-based, as advocated in Vallduví (1992), Zubizarreta (1994a), Kayne (1995), but contra Cardinaletti (2002), Frascarelli (2004), and Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007). This conclusion will be reached by adopting Cinque's (1990) tests for the base-generated status of clitic left