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Cecilia Poletto
University of Venice and Padua

THE DIACHRONIC DEVELOPMENT OF SUBJECT CLITICS IN NORTH EASTERN ITALIAN DIALECTS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

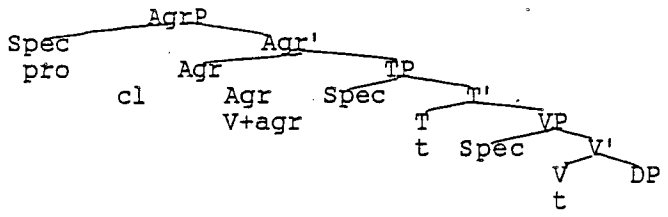
The aim of this paper is to provide some insight into the evolution of subject clitics of Northern Italian Dialects from the Renaissance period to the present stage. It will be shown that subject clitics are strictly related to the head of the Agreement projection. In particular it will be argued that subject clitics have been reanalyzed as heads that take on functions normally related to the Agr head in Standard Italian. From a relatively homogeneous stage Northern Italian Dialects have developed different systems in which subject clitics have specialized as the pro drop licenser head, or the Nominative Case assigning element, or can even occupy an additional Agr head. In section 2.1 and 2.2, the Renaissance Veneto dialects will be shown to be exactly parallel to Renaissance French, both in the treatment of subject clitics as well as subject DPs and in the pro drop system which is activated by the presence of a "strong" Agr or C head, (where strong is defined as carrying a particular grammatical feature). Section 2.3 deals with the Veneto dialect of the Sixteenth century which presents the system of a full pro drop language in which subject clitics are specified as pro licenser heads. Subject clitics can specialize not only as pro drop licensers, but as nominative Case assigners also, as is the Case for modern Trentino in section 3.1.

In the last two sections it will be shown that the spectrum of the functions played by subject clitics can be even wider: a special series of subject clitics will be shown to appear only with auxiliaries, in order to lexicalize a higher Agreement projection available only to auxiliaries as verbs that do not assign theta roles. The most advanced variety, namely Friulano, shows a very widespread use of subject clitics which signal the presence of another Agreement head that attracts clitics.
Northern Italian dialects seem to have reanalyzed subject clitics as a competing head that replaces some of the Agreement syntactic functions. The analysis of this phenomenon can thus help us to define the mechanisms that are involved in the syntactic mapping of the relation between a subject and its predicate.

1.2 SUBJECT CLITICS AS HEADS

Subject clitics of the Northern Italian Dialects (cfr. Brandi & Cordin (1989) and Rizzi (1986)) are considered in the literature as the realization of morphological agreement features placed under the head of the syntactic Infl node, and not as true subject DPs which appear in the Spec of IP. On the contrary French subject clitics are considered to be in the same position of subject DPs.
Adopting Belletti's (1990) hypothesis about the order of the functional projections, this analysis of subject clitics can be rewritten as in (1) where subject clitics appear in an adjunct position to the head of AgrP:

(1)



In (1) the head of AgrP assignes nominative Case to the subject, which is placed in its Specifier position. This is the position in which a null subject is licensed in Standard Italian. Northern Italian Dialects (from now on NIDs) are pro drop languages just as Standard Italian is. In (1) infact a pro is licensed in the SpecAgr position.

Nevertheless the Agreement structure of NIDs is more complex: a subject clitic appears adjoined to the head of AgrP, where the verb has moved from the V position through T in order to incorporate the tense and agreement morphemes placed respectively under T and Agr. <fn.1>

We will briefly review the arguments used by Rizzi (1986) and reported by Brandi and Cordin (1989) in order to show that subject clitics of the NIDs are heads, because these tests will be important for the following discussion about their development from the Renaissance period to their present status.

Subject clitics are considered to be heads because they appear to the right of the preverbal negative marker, while subject DPs and French subject clitics appear on the left:

(2) To mama no vien
Your mother not comes

(3) Elle ne vient pas
She not comes not

(4) No la vien
Not she comes

As the position of NIDs subject clitics is to the right of the preverbal negation marker, while subject DPs (and French subject clitics) appear on its left, (cfr. (2)-(4)), we cannot assume that NIDs subject clitics occupy the same position that DPs fill at S-structure. <fn.2> Another test that reveals the status of NIDs subject clitics as heads adjoined to Agr is Agr' coordination. It is a fact that NIDs subject clitics have to be repeated in coordinate structures, while subject DPs and French subject clitics can be omitted in the second conjunct of the coordination:

(5) Nane lese el giornale e _ fuma un toscan
John reads the newspaper and smokes a cigar

(6) Il lit le jounal et _ fume un cigare
He reads the newspaper and smokes a cigar

(7) El lese el giornal e *(el) fuma un toscan
He reads the newspaper and *(he) smokes a cigar

In (5) the subject DP Nane can be omitted in the second member of the coordination, the same is possible for French subject clitics as (6) shows, but in NIDs this is excluded. In (7) in fact,the sentence is grammatical only if the subject clitic is repeated. This contrast can be explained only accepting that the subject clitics in the NIDs are structurally closer to the inflected verb than a normal subject DP, and precisely that subject clitics occupy a position under Agr', while subject DPs accupy the SpecAgr position. This hypothesis can be expressed in syntactic terms as adjunction to the head of Agr as in (1). According to Belletti (1990), the inflected verb moves up to the Agr head position in order to incorporate the agreement morpheme. As (1)

shows, the subject clitics is adjoined to this head and this explains the reason why subject clitics cannot be separated from the inflected verb by any other element than other clitics.

In the dialects studied by Rizzi and Brandi & Cordin the subject clitic is always obligatorily expressed, even if a subject DP is present:

(8) La Maria la magna
The Mary she eats

(9) *La Maria magna
The Mary eats

Also the constrast between (8) and (9) (that correponds to Brandi and Cordin ()) suggests that the subject clitic is not a true subject but a sort of morphological specification that is always expressed on the head of Agreement, independently of the element that is realized in SpecAgr which can be a null subject or a phonetically realized DP. (cfr. footnote for variables)

In order to avoid the possibility of interpreting (8) as an instance of left dislocation of the subject DP, Rizzi observes that the subject clitic is obligatory even when the subject DP is a Quantifier phrase, which cannot be left dislocated: <fn.3>

(10) Tut *(l)'e` capita` de not
Everything it is happened by night

(11) Tout (*il) s'est passe' dans la nuit

While the trentino data in (10), the subject clitic has to cooccur with a quantifier subject, this is not possible in the French example (11).

Subject clitics of the NIDs are thus a part of the agreement morphology and not true subject pronouns. NIDs correlate

typologically with French, because they have subject clitics, but their structure is similar to Standard Italian because they are pro drop languages. This assumption also explains why the series of subject clitics is not complete for all persons in most NIDs, while it is complete in French, where subject clitics behave as subject DPs with respect to the tests presented here.

A closer examination of the distribution of subject clitics in other NIDs shows that not all subject clitics have the distribution described by Rizzi (1986) and by Brandi and Cordin (1989).

In particular, the tests in (4) and (7) are valid also for the subject clitics of Veneto that we will examine here, suggesting that they are all heads. On the contrary, the distribution of subject clitics can vary with respect to a subject DP. Not all subject clitics can appear when there is a phonetically realized subject DP in the sentence. As proposed in Poletto (1991a), I will assume that subject clitics in NIDs can be distinguished on the basis of a movement versus base-generation analysis.

As proposed by many authors (cfr. in particular Koopman and Sportiche (1988)) I will assume that the subject is generated inside the VP, and precisely in the SpecVP position, where it gets its theta role assigned and it is raised succssively to SpecAgr in order to get nominative Case. I will refer to this subject position inside the VP as the basic argumental subject position. When a subject clitic is generated in the basic argumental position inside the VP, it gets the subject theta role, which is assigned in that position and then moves to Agr. No other subject can occur in this structure because the basic

subject position is occupied by the trace of the subject clitic. If the subject clitic on the contrary is base generated in its surface position in Agr, it is an expletive, deprived of the subject theta role. The subject theta role is infact assigned into the lower position in the sentence structure inside the VP. As the basic subject position inside the VP is empty, it can be filled by another DP which absorbs the subject theta role.
So, subject clitics that are generated inside the VP and then moved to Agr, can receive the subject theta role and are argumental clitics, while subject clitics base generated in Agr are expletive elements, as they do not have any theta role.
The tests that permit us to distinguish between argumental versus expletive clitics are the following:

(12)a No l'ha parla' nisuni
Not cl speaks anyone

b *Nol parla nisuni
Not+cl speaks anyone

In (12a) the subject clitic can cooccur with a subject DP which is realized in the postverbal subject position, while the clitic in (12b) cannot. <fn.4> So the subject clitics described in (10) for Trentino can be assimilated to the expletive clitic in (12a) because they are compatible with a subject DP in argumental position.
Subject clitics of the type of el cannot appear if the subject DP has been moved through wh movement (as for instance restrictive relatives, topicalization or clefting), while subject clitics of the type l can: <fn.5>

(13)a El puteo che (*el) vien vanti...
The boy that (*he) comes along

b Ti che *(te) vien vanti
You that *(you) come along

(14)a NANE, che (*el) vien vanti...
JOHN, that (*he) comes along

b TI, che *(te) vien vanti
YOU, that *(you) come along

(15)a Ze Nane, che (*el) vien vanti
Is John, that (*he) comes along

b Te si TI, che *(te) vien vanti
You is YOU. that *(you) come along

(13), (14) and (15) represent respectively cases of restrictive relative clause, topicalization and clefting. In all these cases the third person subject clitic cannot cooccur with the variable trace, while the second person singular subject clitic can (indeed it must).

The explanation for the contrasts in (12), (13), (14) and (15) is that, as mentioned above, argumental subject clitics leave a trace in the basic subject position through which the subject theta role is transmitted. Hence they cannot cooccur with another subject, which would occupy the position of the trace.

Non-argumental subject clitics on the contrary are base generated in their superficial position, leaving the basic position free for another subject, which is the QP nisuni in (12) and the variable trace of wh movement in (13b), (14b) and (15b).

Some dialects have both expletive and argumental clitics; the Veneto variety that we used for the examples above is just such a one. Other varieties realize only one of the two possibilities.

From a diachronic point of view, it is interesting to investigate

how subject clitics of the NIDs have developed to reach their present status. Have they always been heads like today, or were they similar to French in some previous stages of evolution? Renzi (1989) has shown that Fiorentino of the XVIII century was like modern Standard French with respect to the distribution of subject clitics. If this is true, the same could be valid for North Eastern Italian dialects too, in particular for Veneto (cfr. Vanelli (1987)). In the following section the tests presented here will be applied to Veneto of the Renaissance in order to determine which syntactic status subject clitics have in this period.

2.1 THE VENETO VARIETY IN THE RENAISSANCE

The subject clitic system of Veneto of the fifteen century was complete for all persons as the schema in (16) illustrates: <fn.6>

(16)	1.	2.	3.	1pl.	2pl.	3pl.	espl.
	a/e	te/ti	m. el f. la	a/e	a/e	m. i f. le	l

As Vanelli (1987) notes, these subject clitics do not present any of the features that induced Rizzi and Brandi & Cordin to characterize subject clitics as heads and not as maximal projections. In other words the position of subject clitics of Renaissance Veneto (from now on RVe) does not correspond to (1): subject clitics do not form a cluster with the inflected verb within the head of AgrP. They seem to behave as true subject DPs as modern French subject clitics do. In fact they can be left out in a conjoined structure and never appear after the negative marker (cfr. section 1.2):

(17) El m'ha lago' le cavale (...) e si _ ando' in la'
He to me has left the mares and so _ went away
(Ruzante p.78)

(18)a E no podeva tior.. (Calmo p. 66)
I not could take..

b Che te no vissi ma` (Ruzante p. 91)
That you not see never

c La no vaga a mio conto (Calmo p.79)
She not goes on my count

d El no puol eser altrimenti ca benedeto (Calmo p. 94)<fn.7>
He not can be other than blessed

e E no se inganemo (Calmo p. 66)
We not ourself mistake

f Ch'un passo i non fare` (Ruzante p. 74)
That a step they no make (+future)

(17) and (18) show that subject clitics of this period are independent items that appear in the position that DPs fill, namely SpecAgr, and as such they can be left out in a coordinated structure. At this stage subject clitics do not seem to be different from modern French subject clitics.

Subject clitics are argumental clitics in the sense that they start out from the basic position of the subject inside the VP and absorb the subject theta role. In fact they are incompatible with a QP in the subject position, as (19) shows, and they never cooccur with a variable trace of the subject as in questions or in relative clauses: <fn.8>

(19)a Ognon vora` acomodarse de si bela stampa (Calmo p.66)
Everyone will take for himself this beautiful picture

b Chi volesse formar un teatro de bontae (Calmo p.96)
Who would like to be a theater of goodness

c Quante persone che vedera` ste cossete stampae (Calmo p.66)
How many persons that will see this little things printed

The subject clitic does not normally appear even when the subject

is an DP:

(20) Un'arma longa fa sta indrio el so nemigo (Calmo p.96)
A long weapon makes stay behind the enemy

The same is true if the subject is a tonic pronoun:

(21) Mi ve adoro (Calmo p. 128)
I (+stress) you adore

As we are examining a dead language, it is impossible to determine for sure if the sequence Quantifier-subject clitic or the sequence wh-subject clitic are ungrammatical. The only negative proof that can be given is the absence of such a sequence in the corpus examined, which consists of the first 100 pages from a play by the author Ruzante for the Paduan variety and of the first 100 pages from a letter collection by the author Calmo for the Venetian variety. From the fact that they alternate with the subject DP in SpecAgr, (cfr. (20) and (21)) we can conclude that subject clitics of the Veneto varieties of this period are not agreement morphology in the sense that they are not always obligatorily realized as verbal agreement morphology is, independently from the element that appears in the preverbal subject position SpecAgr.

On the basis of the examples regarding coordination and the position with respect to negation in (17) and (18) we can conclude that subject clitics of RVe are not heads that adjoin to the head of AgrP where the inflected verb is.

On the basis of the distribution of subject clitics with respect to a subject QP or to a subject variable trace, we can assume that subject clitics are true arguments in RVe, (cfr. (19)) because they absorb the subject theta role.

In RVe, as in the Fiorentino variety of the Eighteenth century

studied by Renzi (1989), subject clitics are not yet reduced to heads adjoined to Agreement, they are independent syntactic DPs as modern French subject clitics are.

The fact that subject clitics in RVe are similar to their modern French counterpart does not entail that RVe is a non pro drop language as modern French is. On the contrary, it is quite common to find examples of null subjects. <fn.9>

Nevertheless their distribution is complicated by the fact that the possibility of a null subject seems to vary with respect to the main versus embedded character of the sentence. In the following discussion we will consider separately main and embedded clauses. As Vanelli (1987) noted, null subjects are more numerous in embedded clauses than in main clauses. In particular they are found in embedded sentences when an element like si (if), a wh operator or a subjunctive complementizer occupies the head of the Comp projection. In the literature there are some well known cases of asymmetry between main and embedded sentences, as for instance the verb second phenomenon, and they are all treated as a function of the difference between the C head of a main clause, which is not selected and in some cases just not present and the C of an embedded clause, which is in some intuitive sense the head of a clausal argument. Then it seems reasonable to treat the difference noted with respect to null subjects in RVe as a function of the head C. Let's consider the data for first.

Expletive null subjects of verbs that do not assign a theta role to the subject are possible in both main and embedded clauses:

(22)a E` certo che... (Calmo p. 97)
Is sure that

b ...manco mal _ sarave a dir (Calmo p. 74)
...luckly (it) means that...

Neverthéless, null subjects are not obligatory: it is possible to find examples of expletive subject clitics realized in both main and in embedded contexts:

(23) El me par che' l sarave cossa giusta (Calmo p.111)
It to-me seems that it would be right thing

As in (23) the preverbal subject position is occupied by a subject clitic both in main and in embedded contexts, we have to state that RVe pro drop is in some sense "weaker" than that of modern Italian. In Italian the expletive element that occupies the preverbal subject position can only be a null element, while RVe has the choice between the two possibilities.

It is interesting to note that there is a difference between the distribution of expletive subject clitics in the case of a verb which does not assign a theta role to its subject and cases of expletive subject clitics with postverbal subjects. An expletive clitic with a postverbal subject can only be omitted in embedded sentences if the element in Comp is a wh-item, a si (if) or a subjunctive complementizer and never appears in main clauses, as (24) shows:

(24)a L'e` pur una dolce cossa (Calmo p. 99)
It is indeed a sweet thing

b Si _ no resta altro (Calmo p. 94)
If _ not remains (anything) else

In (24a) the expletive element is a subject clitic which occupies the SpecAgr position. No null subject is licensed in this structure. A pro subject can infact only be licensed in embedded

clauses with a particular type of complementizer, as (24b). The contrast between (24a) and (22a) indicates that there must be a difference between an expletive subject which does not get any theta role and an expletive subject which is coindexed with a postverbal thematic position. The difference noted between an expletive pro which is connected to a postverbal subject and an expletive of a verb which does not assign a theta role to its subject is the same that we find among the persons of the verb. Second person singular and third person singular and plural argumental null subjects can only be realized in embedded sentences if the Comp projection is filled by a wh-item, a si (whether) or a subjunctive complementizer.

In main clauses a second person singular or third person singular and plural subject is always realized as a subject clitic, never as a null element.

(25)a ..Com fa l'orsa quando _ se guz gi ongi (Ruz. p.105)
As does the bear when_ sharpens her claws

b Dire` a Ser Zuan che _ la guarda ben (Ruz. p. 107)
(You)willsay to Sir John that (he) look(+subj)at her

(26)a ..Che tuta la zente, co _ li vede, se ghe inchina (Calmo
..That all the people,when (they) them see,bow p.75)

b Si farae megio... (Ruz. p. 102)
Whether (they) would do better to..

In other words, the possibility of a pro depends on the features realized in C. In a main clause, C is not realized at all. Hence it cannot license anything, because it is not present. In an embedded clause, C is always realized, because it contains the selectional features assigned by the matrix verb. Nevertheless, not every C is able to license a null subject. Only a C marked by

some feature, as for instance the feature+wh, is strong enough to license a null subject. If C does not contain any particular feature, it cannot license the null element, then the subject has to be phonetically realized as in main clauses. This entails that the normal subcategorization traits assigned by the matrix verb to the embedded clause and which are supposed to be realized in C, do not count for C to be a pro licenser. The intuition is that C counts for the pro drop theory only if it is "visible" in some sense to define.

On the contrary, the distribution of argumental null subjects of first person singular and plural and second person plural does not seem to be dependent on any feature in C. There are examples of null subjects of first person and second person plural both in main and embedded sentences:

(27)a Ve suplico (Calmo p. 72)
(I) pray you

b Havemo buo notita che.. (Calmo p. 129)
(We) have had news that..

c Dire` a Ser Zuan che ..(Ruz. p. 107)
(You+plur.) will say to Sir John that...

(28)a Co avesse ben dissenao (Calmo p.111)
When (I) had well dined

b Quando aspetemo suto,...(Calmo p. 73)
When (we) await dry weather,...

c Si vole` scambiar tuto.. (Calmo p. 94)
If (you+plur) want to exchange everything..

(27) shows that a first person singular and plural and a second plural null subject is possible in a main clause. Hence, a particular type of Comp (as a +wh or a + subjunctive one) is not relevant for the licencing of the pro null subject. The relevant head that licenses and identifies the contentive features of the

null subject must then be the head of the Agreement projection. At this point we have two classes of null subjects. True expletives and first person singular and plural and second person plural null subjects can be licensed both in a main and in an embedded context. On the contrary expletives coindexed with an argumental subject position, second person singular and third person singular and plural null subjects are sensitive to the type of element which is realized in the Comp position: only a +wh or a +subjunctive Comp can license this type of pro. The situation can be resumed in the following schema:

(29)	MAIN CL.	EMBEDDED CL. -wh/-subjunct.	EMBEDDED CL. +wh/+subjunct.
expletive pro -theta	+	+	+
1.person sing.pro	+	+	+
1.person plur.pro	+	+	+
2. person plur. pro	+	+	+
2.person sing.pro	-	-	+
3.person. sing.pro	-	-	+
3.person plur.pro	-	-	+
expletive pro+postv.DP	-	-	+

Null subjects can thus be divided into two groups. We will refer to the first group of null subjects which are not sensitive to the type of Comp as extended pro drop. The second group of null

subjects which can only be licensed if the Comp projection has a particular type of feature (+wh or +subjunctive) will be termed as restricted pro drop.

Looking at the distribution of expletive subjects and argumental subjects in RVe, it is evident that the pro drop conditions in RVe are strongly reminescent of the situation in Renaissance French (from now on RFr) type of pro drop studied in Roberts (1990) (see also references quoted there).

In RFr the distribution of the null subjects as described by Roberts (1990) can be resumed as follows: expletive subjects, first person plural and second person plural null subjects can be found in both main and embedded clauses.

On the other hand first person singular, second person singular, and third person singular and plural can only be licensed in embedded contexts and only if there is a +wh-item in the Comp projection of the sentence.

The distribution of null subject in RFr is thus the following:

(30)	MAIN CL.	EMBEDDED CL. -wh/-subjunct.	EMBEDDED CL. +wh/+subjunct.
expletive pro	+	+	+
1.person plur.pro	+	+	+
2. person plur. pro	+	+	+
1.person sing.pro	-	-	+
2.person sing.pro	-	-	+
3.person. sing.pro	-	-	+

3.person plur.pro	+

The table in (30) shows exactly the same partitioning of table (29) between extended and restricted pro drop.

If we compare the distribution of null subjects in RFr with the distribution of null subjects in RVe, the similarity is striking: in RFr only first person plural and second person plural null subjects are admitted both in main and embedded clauses independently from the features of C. IN RVe only first person singular and plural and second person plural null subjects are admitted both in main and embedded clauses. The only difference concerns the first person singular, which behaves like a restricted pro drop in RFr, while in RVe it behaves as an extended pro drop. Once we have stated that RVe and RFr share the same double system of extended versus restricted pro drop, let's examine how the system can be formalized within the context of the theory of pro drop elaborated in Rizzi (1986a) that we are assuming here.

A simple observation regards the head that licenses a pro. Both C and Agr can be pro drop licensers. Hence we have to formulate the pro drop parameter for RFr and RVe as containing two licencing heads, namely C and Agr.

In both languages it seems that only a head marked with some special feature is able to license a pro. This observation is not only valid for C, but also for Agr. Infact, only a morphologically strong Agreement, as for instance second person plural is visible for the pro drop licencing condition, but a weak one, as for instance third person, is not.

Let's assume that it is so, namely that only if Agr or C are "strong" can they license a null subject. The definition of strong must include both a distinct phonetically realized morpheme as is the case for Agr and a particular feature like +wh or +subjunctive, as is the case for C.

So, if C is strong, as in +wh and +subjunctive embedded clauses, null subjects are licensed for every person. In main clauses, where C is not active, only a strong Agr can license a null subject: given that only first person and second person plural are strong, null subjects are possible only for these persons. Formalizing this idea we obtain:

(31)a C is a pro drop licenser if it is strong

b Agr is a pro drop licenser if it is strong

(32)a C is strong when it contains a +wh or + subjunctive feature

b Agr is strong when it contains a morphologically realized +person and +number feature

A system like that described in (31) and (32) generates the split between extended and restricted pro drop that we have seen in (29) and (30) for RVe and RFr.

So the difference between extended and restricted pro drop derives from the fact that C is not always marked with a strong feature, while Agr, once it selects a strong feature that includes both number and person, must always realize it.

The fact that C can be strong is thus determined by the syntactic environment, while this is not the case for Agr.

If the systems of RVe and RFr are really parallel, how is it that Veneto has developed following a different evolutionary line with respect to French? Why has Veneto become a pro drop language

where subject clitics are heads in Agreement, while French has developed into a non pro drop language?

I do not think that verbal morphology is of such a great importance in this matter, that we can attribute the different evolution of these two languages only to the difference in the number of the morphological distinctions on the inflected verb.

In other words, the richer morphological paradigm of the Veneto variety is not the only factor that has determined the evolution of this language into a pro drop language.

I would like to connect the different evolution of French and Veneto not only with the number of morphological specifications on the verbal head, but with the relative balance between verbal morphology and the paradigm of the subject clitics.

The different evolution of RFr and RVe is a particular case of a generalization formulated by Renzi and Vanelli (1983), which states that the subject person and number features must always be phonetically expressed by Agreement or by the subject itself.

In other words there must always be at least one element, verbal morphology or the subject pronoun itself that expresses the number and person features of the subject. This seems to be true for all Romance dialects examined by Renzi and Vanelli (1983).

Both RFr and RVe have a restricted system of pro drop and six subject pronouns which appear in the SpecAgr position.

But, in RVe the subject clitics of first person singular, plural and second person plural have the same form a or e depending on the variety. (cfr (16)) In RFr the series of subject clitics has a distinct element for all persons of the verb.

Hence even in RVe, not only in modern Veneto, the inflectional features are the only element able to identify the number and the person of the subject. Even if the subject clitic is in SpecAgr, it has no features that could convey informations about the subject.

As in RVe subject clitics are not always distinguished for person and number, so RVe has no other choice than to maintain the person and number features on Agreement, reinterpreting subject clitics as heads for the persons that are not fully specified by verbal morphology. French on the contrary, having a full discrete series of subject clitics, has been able to keep them as true DPs, further limiting the role of Agreement as pro drop licenser.

Hence, the factor that has determined the split between French and the Veneto variety (and probably other Northern Italian dialects as well) is not only the different number of morphological specifications on the verb. It is the relation between the number of morphological specifications on the verb and the number of morphological specifications on the subject clitics.

It is interesting to note, however, that both languages have evolved in a way that respects Renzi and Vanelli's generalization: the person and number features of the subject are realized at least once in both languages. The necessity of expressing these features can thus be considered not only as a synchronic property of Romance dialects in general, but also a diachronic tendency to maintain a sort of balance between the features expressed in Agr and in its Spec position.

In the next section we will examine a problem which is strictly connected with the pro drop system and the subject clitics distribution, namely postverbal subjects.

2.2 POSTVERBAL SUBJECTS

There is another quite interesting problem that is connected with the facts discussed up to now, namely the free inversion cases in RVe noted by Vanelli (1987) with a subject clitic in preverbal position.

Vanelli observes that examples like (33) constitute a puzzle for Case theory, given the hypothesis that subject clitics are true subjects in RVe (cfr. section 2.1):

(33)a El viene quel so fraelo (Ruz. p.94)
Cl comes that his brother

b L'e` sta suspeso le prediche al Sior Geronimo (Calmo p.15)
Cl is been suspended the sermons to Mr. Geronimo

(33a) presents a case of postverbal definite subject with an ergative verb and a subject clitic which is realized in preverbal position. On the basis of the discussion about the position of subject clitics it is clear that they cannot be considered as morphological affixes at this stage of evolution. They are true DPs which absorb the Case of the subject. The problem for the theory is presented by the fact that the definite subject in the postverbal position needs a Case too. It is generally assumed that two phonetically realized elements cannot absorb the same Case (cfr. Kayne (1983)). So, in this structure we need two distinct Cases, one for the subject clitic and one for the postverbal subject DP. <fn.10>

Looking at verbal agreement it seems that the nominative Case is

assigned to the subject clitic, because the verb agrees with the clitic and not with the subject DP. In (33b) the postverbal DP is feminine plural, but the verb is marked as masculine singular on the past participle and as singular on the auxiliary.

We will thus assume that the subject clitic in preverbal position absorbs the nominative Case, as the verbal morphology indicates. What about the postverbal DP? The Case assigned to the postverbal DP cannot be accusative, because the verb is an ergative one. It cannot either be the partitive Case postulated in Belletti (1988), because partitive is assigned only to indefinite DPs and the DPs in (33a/b) are both definite. So the Case assigned to the postverbal DP can be neither nominative through Spec-head agreement with the head of AgrP nor Partitive. In order to solve this problem, we have to consider how nominative Case is assigned. I will assume Roberts' (1990) idea that nominative Case can be assigned in two different configurations: Spec-head Agreement with the head of AgrP and Government by the head of TP. The possibilities of nominative Case assignment correspond thus to (34) (cfr. Roberts (1990) pag 29 ff.):

(34)a Agr assignes Case through Spec-head Agreement.

b T assigns Case through Government

Such a parameter of nominative Case assignment has been proposed by Roberts in order to explain the difference between languages such as French and Welsh. In French the subject appears in the preverbal subject position and it triggers morphological agreement of person and number with the verb. Following Roberts' hypothesis, French exploits the possibility expressed by (34a). Hence the subject DP moves from its base position inside the VP

to the SpecAgr position, where it is assigned Case and it triggers morphological agreement of number and person.

On the contrary, in Welsh the subject appears after the inflected verb and it does not trigger morphological agreement of person and number. This means that Welsh adopts (34b): the subject DP does not need to move to SpecAgr, on the contrary it must remain in situ, in order to get nominative Case assigned by the head of TP. Given that there is no Spec-head Agreement relation between the subject DP and the head of AgrP, there is no morphological agreement of number and person.

Roberts further assumes that in the Romance languages the subject can be in the postverbal position because both options in (34) can be selected: nominative Case can be assigned both by Spec-head Agreement with the head of AgrP or by Government from the head of TP. Nevertheless, languages like standard Italian always show morphological agreement of person and number between the subject DP and the verb, while Welsh never does. Roberts explains this difference on the basis of the observation that in Welsh AgrP is never active in nominative Case assignment, while it is in Romance. On the basis of this difference, a rule of cosuperscripting between the heads of AgrP and TP applies in Romance, but not in Welsh.

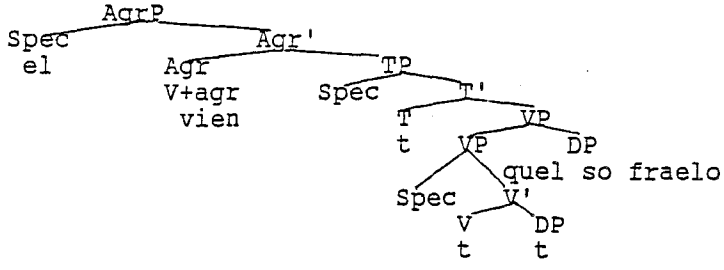
(35) Coindex Agr and T

A rule like (35) will thus be active in the Romance languages because both Agr and T are able to assign nominative, but it will fail to apply in Welsh, because Agr in Welsh is inert with respect to nominative Case assignment. This cosuperscripting

determines the passage of morphological agreement features of person and number so that the verb and the postverbal subject agree in person and number in Romance.

Let's now consider the structure of sentences like (33):

(36)



In (36) the subject clitic el is realized in SpecAgr, while the postverbal subject is inside the V governed by the head of TP. It is possible to think that in RVe, as in other Romance languages both mechanisms of Case assignment can be exploited, namely that the head T can assign Case to the postverbal subject DP through government and the head of AgrP can assign nominative through Spec-head Agreement. It is interesting to note, however, that in RVe (as in modern NIDs) no agreement of person and number between the verb and the subject DP appears to be active. In other words, RVe is more similar to Welsh than to standard Italian and other Romance languages.

We have to assume that the rule of cosuperscripting postulated in (35) for Romance languages does not apply here, but why? Also in RVe there are preverbal subjects that trigger morphological agreement of person and number with the verb. Hence also in RVe the AgrP projection is active for the nominative Case assignment, exactly as in other Romance languages. The fact that the rule of cosuperscripting fails to apply is it a mere coincidence or not?

And, if it is not, is it connected with other particular selectional choices that the grammar of the dialect in question makes? It seems plausible to think that the fact that rule (35) does not apply in RVe is somehow connected with the particular type of postverbal subjects observed in this dialect.

In other words, the fact that there is no cosuperscripting must be related to the problem of Case assignment to the postverbal subject in a structure like (36). We already excluded that the postverbal subject DP receives Partitive Case, because it is a definite DP. It cannot receive nominative Case through a chain with the expletive, because the expletive is a phonetically realized element, and it needs a Case of its own.

As assumed by Kayne (1983), two phonetically realized elements cannot be in the same chain and share the same Case, while an overt and a silent element can.

Considering the nominative Case assignment possibilities expressed in (34), we can make the hypothesis that Case is assigned to the postverbal subject DP by the head of TP, while the expletive in preverbal position receives nominative through Spec-head agreement with the head of AgrP.

At first sight, it might seem strange to assume that two nominative Cases are assigned at the same time, even in different structural configurations and by different heads.

Note however, that a system of nominative Case assignment like (34) does not specify anything about the possibility that both heads assign Case at the same time. In a language that selects both heads Agr and T as nominative Case assigners it could be the Case that the two heads are both active, and that two different

DPs get nominative Case, one through Spec-head agreement with the head Agr and one through Government by the head T.

This double mechanism of Case assignment is restricted by theta theory that admits only one DP for each thematic role assigned by the verb. So, even if there are two possible nominative Cases available, only one of the two will be realized, because there is only one subject theta role. If both nominative Cases are assigned to two distinct DPs, one of the two will be left without a thematic role, violating the theta criterion. There is only one case in which an DP can be left without a thematic role, namely the case of an expletive.

A structure with double Case assignment is thus possible only when one of the two elements is an expletive. Furthermore, the expletive element must be the higher one, because SpecAgr is the non-thematic position. If the expletive were realized in the postverbal position and the subject DP in the preverbal one, it would be impossible for the subject DP to receive the subject theta role, which is assigned inside the VP.

The only case in which the two nominatives can be assigned thus corresponds to a structure like (36) which does not violate the theta criterion. The subject clitic in SpecAgr is infact an expletive, and as such it does not absorb the subject theta role, while the postverbal subject DP does.

Hence, RVe has the possibility of exploiting both options expressed in (34) at the same time. Moreover, it must do so, otherwise one of the two elements would remain without a Case.

This does not seem necessary for languages such as standard

Italian or standard French. In standard Italian infact there is a null element in preverbal position, and not a phonetically realized one. In this case Kayne's restriction about the presence of two elements sharing the same Case does not apply, because one of the two is silent. Hence, standard Italian does not need to exploit both options of nominative Case assignment described in (34) at the same time. The same is true for French postverbal subjects in the case of Stylistic Inversion: in the preverbal position a pro is licensed probably by a +wh C (see Kayne and Pollock (1978)), and the subject DP receives Case directly from the head of TP.

Once we have seen how the mechanism of Case assignment works in a structure like (36), we can go back to the hypothesis that it may be connected to the difference that we noted before with respect to morphological agreement of person and number. In standard Italian and French postverbal subjects trigger morphological agreement with the verb, while in RVe this is not the case. In order to explain this fact, we assumed Roberts' cosuperscripting rule between the heads of AgrP and TP to be active in Romance but not in RVe. It seems that when the cosuperscripting rule applies, the two heads of AgrP and TP are treated as one, both with respect to the morphological features of person and number and with respect to the Case assignment.

We can thus assume that the rule of cosuperscripting blocks the independent Case assignment by the two heads that are able to assign it. Hence the double head constituted by Agr+T can only assign Case once: through Government or through Spec-head Agreement. On the contrary, when the cosuperscripting does not

apply, the two heads are considered as distinct elements by the grammar: they do not share morphological agreement features and can both assign Case independently.

In RVe the rule of cosuperscripting cannot apply, otherwise one of the two nominatives would get lost and the lexical expletive or the postverbal subject DP would remain without a Case.

Moreover, a structure like (36) is the one in which the possibility of a double Case assignment is realized, because it is the only Case which is not blocked by the theta criterion.

If the rule in (35) does not apply, no sharing of the morphological features between Agr and T is possible: hence the verb must agree with the preverbal expletive clitic and not with the postverbal DP. In particular, we expect that there will be no Cases of a lexical expletives in free inversion structures, in which the verb agrees with the postverbal subject. A structure like (37) should never be found:

(37) *L'e` vegnudi i to fradei
Cl are come+ plur. agr. your brothers

This seems to be true, in particular in the case of RVe, as far as I could test. As L. Vanelli pointed out to me this fact seems to be general in NIDs. The solution that we propose here for RVe inversion could possibly be adopted also for other languages, as for instance the Occitan varieties or the Fiorentino variety of XVIII century and modern popular French studied by Renzi (1989). The situation in Fiorentino seems to be more or less parallel to RVe, as Renzi (1989) has shown. Our prediction seems to be correct at the present state of knowledge concerning these languages.

There is another important consequence that derives from this analysis that deserves some brief commments.

The solution presented here infact does not directly connect pro drop and free postverbal subjects as consequences of the same parameter. This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by other Romance languages, as for instance Portuguese, which has the possibility of null subjects but does not show the possibility of free postverbal subjects.

This seems to be correct also on the basis of languages such as Occitan, and modern popular French which do not show null subject but admits free inversion. However, the mechanism exploited by RVe in structures like (36) must be a more marked choice in the grammar because two heads, which are normally very closely connected, are compelled to be kept separate and are independently active in assigning Case at the same time. In other words, it is probable that the unmarked choice for Romance corresponds to the cosuperscripting between Agr and T, given the generalized movement of the inflected verb up to both heads, and that a coalescence of morphological endings of Tense and Agreement is quite often observable in this group of languages. Therefore, the languages that exploit the mechanism described for RVe must be less numerous with respect to languages that exploit the standard Italian system, in which there is only one Case for the chain, given that one of the two elements is empty.

2.3 VENETO OF THE XVII CENTURY

In this section we will consider how subject clitics and the pro

drop system of RVe further developed into a variety which still survives in some very conservative areas. The text examined is the Oda Rusticale, (see. Tuttle (1983)) which dates from the (1688), about one century after the Calmo and Ruzante texts examined in section 2.1.

During this period subject clitics have developed one stage further, from phonological clitics to syntactic clitics.

They have become clitic heads as their modern counterpart and not subject DPs as RVe subject clitics.

The tests that reveal this change, are those used in section 2.1 for RVe: the order with respect to the preverbal negative marker and coordination of two VPs when the subject pronoun is deleted.

In the Veneto variety of the XVII century (from now on SVe) some subject clitics appear at the right of the preverbal negative marker:

(38) Perche` no la pole (Oda p. 441)
Because not she can

(39) No i te fa male (Oda p. 443)
Not they to-you do harm

In a sample of 145 sentences there are no cases of coordinated structures, so the second test cannot apply. We are thus compelled to base our analysis only on the fact that subject clitics appear at the right of the preverbal negative marker, and for this reason they are to be considered heads at S-structure.

As discussed in section 1.2, the fact that a subject clitic appears after the negative marker shows that subject clitics and subject DPs do not occupy the same position in the Syntax: subject DPs infact can only appear at the left and never at the

right of the negative marker. Hence, we can conclude that SVe subject clitics are analogous to their modern counterpart.

So, it seems that subject clitics have been reanalyzed, during the period between the XVI and the XVII century, as part of the inflectional head of AgrP. As already discussed in section 1.2, this does not mean that subject clitics at this point of their evolution are not arguments in the sense that they do not absorb the subject theta role. Even if they are heads, they can start out from a thematic position inside the VP and adjoin to the head of Agr blocking the insertion of another subject, because the thematic position is filled by the trace of the subject clitic.

Object clitics in Romance have normally the distribution of argumental heads: when the object clitics are inserted, no object DP can be phonetically realized and no variable can occupy the object position.<fn.11>

If we apply the tests already discussed in section 1.2, we are compelled to admit that subject clitics of this period are bound to an argumental position. A subject clitic is not required when a subject DP is present, as in (40):

(40) I to roere vale pi` che no valse qui de Hisperite
Your oak woods are more precious that not those of Hesp.
(Oda p.442)

Subject QPs always appear without a subject clitic and there is no subject clitic when the subject is marked +wh and moved outside the sentence:

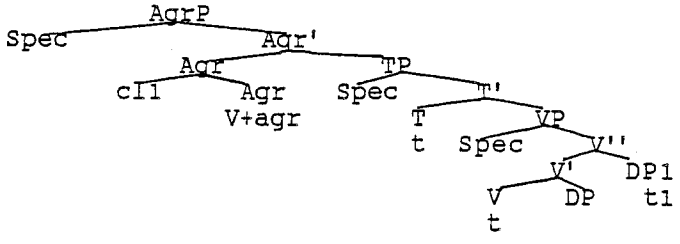
(41) Agno pomaro fea pumi indore` (Oda p.441)
Every apple tree made golden apples

(42) Agnun che bita dentro i tredese comun (Oda p.443)
Everyone that lives in the thirteen villages

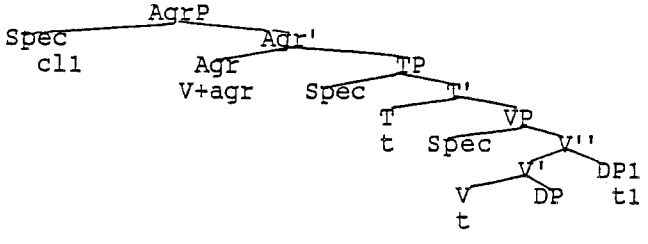
(43) Chi po far retirare el mare si' ingordo? (Oda p. 443)
Who can let retreat the see (which is) so greedy

(40), (41), (42) and (43) show that subject clitics in SVe are parallel to object clitics: they absorb the subject theta role and are incompatible with other subjects in argumental position. Therefore, the structure of a sentence with a subject clitic will be (1) (here repeated as (44)): <fn.12>

(44)



(45)

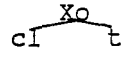


In (44) the subject clitic starts in the VP internal subject position as the trace t1 under DP1 indicates, and moves up to Agr. It ends up in an adjoined position to the the head of AgrP where the inflected verb is placed after having incorporated the affixes of Tense and Agreement. This kind of adjunction position is the same as that postulated for modern NIDs, (cfr. (1)). On the contrary (45) describes the situation that we found in RVe, in which subject clitics are still equivalent to maximal projections in the syntax and are clitics only at PF. The difference between (44) and (45) can be interpreted as a modufication of the subject clitic, which changes its categorial

status. It is no longer analyzed as an XP that does not branch, as it does not have a Specifier and a Complement position, but as a simple head. As the structure preservation principle states that all XPs must move to an XP position and all X must move to head positions, the subject clitic can no longer move to the SpecAgr position, which is an XP position, it can only move up to the head of this projection form the basic subject position inside the VP. Hence, the reanalysis of subject clitics as heads implies that they move to a head position.

As (44) illustrates, subject clitics move to the head of AgrP.

We can imagine different motivations that induce subject clitics to move just into this head: first of all no head containing a trace can host the subject clitic. T and V are both occupied by the trace of the verb which has moved to Agr. If the clitic adjoined to T or to V, it would induce minimality between the trace and the inflected verb in Agr, yielding a structure like (46):

(46) 

A configuration like (46) is excluded by Baker (1988),in fact the subject clitic would be a closer potential governor for the trace in T and it would prevent the correct relation between the verb in Agr and its trace in T.

Hence the subject clitic must adjoin to a head which is not filled by a trace, but by a phonetically realized element, and only Agr is such a head.

Second, the movement of the subject clitic to a left adjoined position to Agr recreates the same configuration at the X level

that subject DPs have with Agr at the XP level. Adjunction of the subject clitic is structurally similar to a relation of Spec-head Agreement, but at a lower level. <fn.13>

Third, if we consider Kayne's (1989) proposal that all syntactic clitics move to the head of AgrP in Romance, then also subject clitics, being syntactic clitics, will be attracted by this head. At this point we can ask if the reanalysis of subject clitics from purely phonological clitics as in RVe to syntactic clitics in SVe exerts some influence on other fields of the grammar.

In particular we expect that the processes connected with the AgrP projection are influenced by this readjustment of the structure of Agr. Let's for instance take into consideration the pro drop system. We saw that the pro drop system of RVe is fairly complex. Two heads are marked as possible pro licenser, namely C and Agr. But only in the case where they are filled by a particular feature are they visible for the pro drop licencing condition.

Looking at the data, it may seem strange to postulate a pro drop system for SVe, because in this dialect, there seem to be no cases of null subjects at all. Infact, a subject clitic or a subject DP is always phonetically realized.

(47)a Quand'a me tacco a cantare (Oda p. 440)
When I me begin to sing

b Te si ti solo " "
You are YOU alone

c La mormolla de ti " "
She murmurs of you

d A sagion darme.. " "
We know to give

e O golusi slecaizzi ch'a si` " "
Oh, greedy that you are

f Quel ch'i dise " "
What that they say

At a superficial glance, it seems that pro drop has completely disappeared from the language. Infact, there is a subject clitic which is obligatory for all the persons of the verb, a phonetically realized subject DP, or a variable in the case of wh-movement of the subject.

One may assume that the pro drop character of RVe has been completely lost during this century and that SVe is a non pro drop language. Things do not appear to be so simple if we consider that subject clitics are no lonver true subjects in SVe, but heads, as indicated by the tests in (38) and (39) and by structure (44). At this point three questions arise:

(a) If subject clitics are heads, what kind of element fills the SpecAgr position?

(b) Why are subject clitics obligatory, when there is no other phonetically realized subject DP?

(c) Why have pro drop phenomena disappeared?

On the basis of the Extended Projection Principle, we must assume that SpecAgr is filled by some element, because the preverbal subject position cannt be left totally empty in any language.

Hence, a null category must fill it: this category cannot be a variable, because it is not bound by any operator, it cannot be an DP-trace or a PRO, because it is a Case marked position.

The only category that can occupy the SpecAgr position is a pro. This element, as all null categories, has to be licensed by a

head which in RVe was Agr or C. We have seen that in SVe subject clitics are obligatory when there is no subject DP, but that they do not cooccur with subject DPs. If subject clitics appear only when a pro, and no subject DP occupies the SpecAgr position, we can make the hypothesis that the head that licenses the null subject is neither Agr nor C, but the subject clitic. The pro drop conditions of SVe are expressed in (48):

(48) pro is licensed by a clitic head in Agr through Spec-head agreement

The null subject is coindexed with the subject clitic which licenses it through Spec-head agreement.

We can thus answer the question (b): subject clitics are always obligatory when there is no phonetically realized subject DP because they license pro. If the subject clitic is omitted there is no head that can license pro and the sentence is ungrammatical.

At this point the answer to the third question is quite simple. Pro drop phenomena have not disappeared from the language at all. On the contrary, they are more widespread in the language than before. The change regards only the type of head that licenses the null subject. This head is neither C nor Agr as it was in RVe, but the subject clitic adjoined to Agr. The obligatory presence of a subject clitic simulates the requirement of a non pro drop language, in which a subject pronoun must always be present. The subject pronoun of SVe is nevertheless not a true subject DP, but a syntactic clitic in Agr. SVe is thus a pro drop language as standard Italian is, but it differs form standard Italian because the head that licenses pro is not Agr itself, but

a subject clitic adjoined to Agr.

The structural configuration is the same in the two languages, namely Spec-head agreement, but the head that licenses the null element is different.

SVe has lost both strategies of pro licencing that we found in RVe, neither C, nor Agr are possible pro drop licenser. It has developed into the direction of a simpler system, in which only one head can license pro and only through a unique structural configuration. We see that the evolution of French and the Veneto variety are in some sense parallel. Also Modern French has infact completely lost the possibility of pro drop licencing through Spec-head agreement with the head Agr: no first or second plural person null subjects are admitted in modern French as is the case in RFr. French has maintained the pro drop licencing from C through government, when C is marked +wh or + subjunctive, even if only for expletive subjects (cfr. Kayne and Pollock (1978)):

(49)a Quand pro viendra Jean?
When will come John?

b J'aimerais que pro sorte Paul
I wish that goes out Paul

SVe has lost both pro drop licencing from C or Agr, but it has developed a new system, in which another head has this function. Both SVe and French have developed into systems in which Agr is not a possible pro drop licenser. This is the reason why they both have maintained subject clitics. As has often been noted in the literature, the languages that have developed subject clitics are precisely those that, in their mediaeval stage, could only

license a pro through Government by Agreement, which had moved to C in accordance with the Verb Second constraint. Agreement was not able to license a pro through the configuration of Spec-head agreement. The similarity between French and SVe is to be found in the fact that in both languages Agr was not able to take up the function of pro licenser through Spec-head Agreement as it was the case in Southern Italian Dialects and other Romance languages as Spanish.

This weakness of Agr (which we assume to be syntactic and not only morphological) has brought about the development of an alternative system in SVe: a subject clitic licenses pro because Agr is not strong enough to do it in the relevant configuration of Spec-head Agreement.

This system is still adopted by some conservative varieties in isolated areas. This fact is very important because it permits us to study the licencing conditions of a dead language such as SVe more deeply and to check our predictions by constructing ungrammatical sentences.

One such variety is Rovignese spoken in Yugoslavia in the town of Rovigno. The subject clitic series of Rovignese is complete for all persons (cfr. Tekavcic (1986)):

(50)	1.	2.	3.	1plur.	2.plur	3.plur
	i	ti	el/la	i	i	i/le

When a subject DP is not realized, a subject clitic is obligatory:

(51)a Sa *(ti) me dive la paca
If you to-me give a hit

b *(A) ta par
It to-you seems

The subject clitic is not obligatory when there is phonetically realized subject DP:

(52)a Se Paron Giacomo gira furbo...
If Mr. Giacomo was clever

b La Francia gaviva tuchisto tira` veia suldadi de l'Istria
The France had had to take away soldiers from Istria

c La feila spativa
The girl waited

Indeed, subject clitics and subject DPs in SpecAgr must be incompatible. Infact if we substitute the definite subject DP with a QP, which cannot be left dislocated and can only occupy the SpecAgr position, the subject clitic cannot appear:

(53)a Qualunque pol meti la man sul fogo
Everyone can put the hand on the fire

b *Qualunque el pol meti la man sul fogo
Everyone he can put the hand on the fire

This case is analogous to SVe: in SVe a subject QP always appears without a subject clitic, but we don't know if the structure QP+subject clitic is excluded or simply is not realized in the corpus of data that we take into consideration.

If Rovignese has the same system that we outlined for SVe, we can check if subject QPs are really incompatible with subject clitics. (53b) shows that this is correct.

The type of system displayed by Rovignese seems to be quite common in the Southern part of Veneto, where subject clitics are obligatory for all persons and only possible when no subject DP is realized.

In SVe, as in Rovignese subject clitics have developed into syntactic heads specialized for the licencing of a null subject,

taking up the role that Agr and C had in RVe.

3.1 THE MODERN TRENTINO VARIETY

In this section we will examine another variety, namely modern Trentino, (TR) in which it seems that subject clitics have specialized for another function of Agr, namely nominative Case assignment. We can assume that also in TR subject clitics of the Renaissance period were XPs at S-structure as in all other NIDs (cfr. Vanelli (1987) for Friulano, Milanese and Piemontese). Subject clitics were then reanalyzed as heads, like in SVe (and probably in all NIDs) assuming the status of syntactic clitics. Furthermore, subject clitics of first person singular and plural and second person plural were lost, so that in modern TR subject clitics have a defective paradigm, as (54)shows:

(54)	1.	2.	3.	1.plur	2.plur	3.plur
	-	te	el/la	-	-	i/le

As only three persons have subject clitics, it is impossible to assume that the pro drop parameter selects a clitic as the head that licenses null subjects as it is the case in SVe. The first person and second person plural null subjects must be licensed by Agr, because there is no subject clitic in these cases.
Moreover, subject clitics in TR do not alternate with subject DPs. On the contrary they seem to be obligatory even when a subject DP is realized in SpecAgr:

(55)a La Maria la riva
The Mary she comes

b *La Maria riva
The Mary comes

It is interesting to note that when the preverbal subject is a

QP, the sentence is ungrammatical if a subject clitic is realized:

(56)a *Nisun el vien qua
Nobody he comes here

b ?Nisun vien qua
Nobody comes here

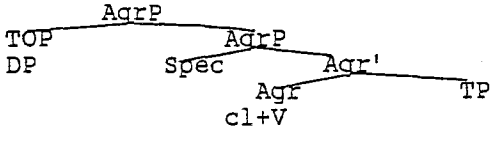
Indefinite DPs behave like definite ones, they always need a subject clitic:

(57)a Un putel el vien qua sempre
A boy he comes here

b *Un putel vien qua sempre
A boy comes here

This constrast between DPs and QPs is a well known fact, and has been interpreted (cfr. Giupponi (1988)) as an obligatory left dislocation of the subject. The structure of a sentence like (57) would be (58):

(58)



In (58) the subject DP is in a TOP position adjoined to the AgrP. This structure does not violate any general principle of the grammar, and is perfectly compatible with what we already know about Romance, but it is difficult to imagine a mechanism that renders Left Dislocation of the subject in the TOP position obligatory. Therefore, we will explore another way to explain why a subject clitic is always obligatory when a subject DP is realized in preverbal position.

We already noted that subject clitics in this dialect cannot be connected to the licencing of a null subject, because the series is incomplete and subject clitics are obligatory even when a

definite or indefinte preverbal subject DP is present.

Nevertheless subject clitics must have a function, otherwise their obligatoriness would remain unexplained, and this function must be somehow connected to the Agreement head to which the clitic is adjoined. It is interesting to note that postverbal subjects do not require any subject clitic (cfr. Brandi and Cordin (1981)). This is true for any type of subject DP, definite DPs, indefinite DPs and QPs:

(59)a Riva la Maria
Comes the Mary

b *La riva la Maria
She comes the Mary

(60)a No riva nisun
Not comes nobody

b *Nol riva nisun
Not+he comes nobody

The impossibility of subject clitics with postverbal subjects can give us a clue to solve the problem. In section 2.2 we briefly presented Roberts' analysis of postverbal Case marking in Romance. A postverbal subject DP is assigned Case by the head T through Government and not by the head Agr. Note that subject clitics appear only when Agr assigns Case, namely with preverbal subjects and never with postverbal subjects, when it is T that assignes Case.

A plausible explanation for the distribution of subject clitics is derived if we assume that subject clitics in TR contribute to nominative Case assignment to the preverbal subject position.

The mechanism of nominative Case assignment to preverbal subjects in Romance exploits the configuration of Spec-head agreement

between the subject DP and Agr.

If we think of Case in terms of a visibility requirement, that must be satisfied in order to map the right theta role onto the right DP, we can assume that a subject DP in preverbal position can be rendered visible in TR through a chain with a subject clitic. In some intutitive sense, the clitic is the element that expresses the same features of the subject DP, hence the Spec-head Agreement relation is established with the clitic.

Nevertheless, we cannot assume that it is only the subject clitic that assigns Case and that Agr does not play any role in the Case assignment, otherwise we would predict that a subject clitic and a preverbal subject DP can appear even in infinitival sentences, in which Agr is not marked with the person and number features.

In the cases in which no subject clitic is realized in TR, namely the first person singular and plural and the second person plural, we admit that tonic pronouns are always left or right dislocated, as in standard French, and are assigned Case in the normal way dislocated elements are. (cfr. Poletto in progress)

We can thus make the hypothesis that TR is different from standard Italian and other Romance languages, because it does not only need Agr to be in a Spec-head relation with the subject DP, but it requires also a morphological realization of the person and number features of the subject.

The Case chain of TR preverbal subject will thus be as in (61)

(61) C= DP, subject clitic, Agr

Under a strong interpretation of this proposal one may assume that the subject clitic is the nominative Case morpheme itself.

Now the fact that postverbal subjects do not require a subject

clitic, is perfectly comprehensible: the head involved in the nominative Case assignment is not Agr, but T. T assigns Case through Government to the VP internal subject position and the Agr projection is just not involved.

A quite important problem for this analysis of subject clitics as Case markers regards example (56), repeated here:

(56)a *Nisun el vien qua
Nobody he comes here

b ?Nisun vien qua
Nobody comes here

If the subject clitic contributes to nominative Case assignment to a preverbal subject DP, why does the presence of the clitic render the sentence ungrammatical?

We know that Case assignment through the clitic establishes a coindexing relation with the subject DP, that we expressed in the form of a chain as (61). The chain formed in (56a) will thus correspond to (62):

(62)a C= QP, clitic, Agr

b C= vbl., clitic. Agr

We know that a QP must move at LF to an A' position leaving a variable as its trace. Thus, at LF the first member of the chain in (62a) will be substituted by a variable as in (62b). This yields an incorrect result, because variables cannot be A-bound, but only A' bound by a Quantifier. A chain like (62b), in which the variable is A bound by the subject clitic is thus filtered out at LF. (cfr. also Jaeggli 91981) and Rizzi (1986) for discussion)

The only possibility is to omit the subject clitic, but in this

case how does the QP get Case in the preverbal position?
The problem does not seem to present a solution: if the subject clitic is realized, the structure is filter out at LF, if it is not realized, the QP does not get Case in preverbal position and the sentence is filtered out at S-structure.
A subject QP is surely grammatical in a preverbal subject position, even if it is not so natural as in the postverbal position (as the question mark in (56b) indicates). We can ask at this point what this preverbal position that the QP occupies is. Is it really the same position the DPs occupy or not? We know that there are at least three possible positions at the left of the inflected verb in Agr: SpecAgr, the position of a left dislocated element which we will define as TOP1 and the position of a topicalized element which we will call TOP2.
I will suggest that a preverbal quantifier can occupy only one of these three positions: it cannot clearly occupy a left dislocated position (as it is well known) because QPs cannot be bound to a pronominal element that appears in dislocated structures. For the same reason it cannot occupy the SpecAgr position, because in TR also this position is always coindexed with a pronominal element, namely the subject clitic.
A preverbal subject QP will thus be grammatical only in a topicalized position, hence in the TOP2 position. This explains why a sentence like (56b) has a restricted use. Topicalization infact can be used only in order to contrast the element that is moved at the left of the sentence in the TOP2 position (see Cinque forthcoming for an analysis of the TOP2 as SpecC). The normal position of a subject QP is the postverbal one.

This is just what we predict on the basis of the nominative Case assignment discussed in the previous section.

The postverbal subject position gets Case through government by the head T, and this Case configuration does not impose any coindexing with a pronominal category as the subject clitic in order to get nominative. From this position the QP can move and reach a topicalized position, but it can never move into SpecAgr or TOP1, where it would receive no Case or be bound to a pronominal category.

There are some independent facts that indicate that the SpecAgr position is not available to QPs. First of all, a strong tendency that we observe when we force the QP in preverbal position to realize a preverbal negative marker, as in (63):

(63)a Nisun no vien
Nobody not comes

b No vien nisun
Not comes nobody

This indicates that the preverbal structure has been derived from a postverbal one, in which a negative QP requires the negative clitic (cfr. Zanuttini (1988)) as scope marker. In other words a sentence like (63a) is derived from (63b) moving the subject QP into the TOP2 position.

Another fact that points in this direction has been noted by P. Beninca` (p.c.). In some varieties QPs are realized as plural forms, which should trigger past participle agreement in the case of passive, as all deep objects that move to the SpecAgr position:

(64)a La mama l'e` sta` vista in piassa
The mamy cl has been seen+agr in square

b *La mama l'e` sta visto in piassa
The mummy has been seen-agr in square

c E` sta visto la mama in piassa
Has been seen-agr the mummy in square

(65)a Nisuni l'e` sta visto in piassa
Nobody cl has been seen-agr in square

b *Nisuni l'e` sta visti in piassa
Nobody clhas been seen+agr in square

c No e` sta visto nisuni in piassa
Not has been seen-agr in square

d No ghe n'ho visto nisuni de bei
Not of-them (I) have seen noone+pl of nice+pl

In passive sentences the deep object triggers past participle agreement only when it is in the preverbal position (as in (64a). This agreement process is obligatory for all deep objects that move into the preverbal subject position, SpecAgr, as (64b) shows, but not when they stay in the postverbal position as in (64c). <fn.14>

On the contrary, a preverbal plural QP never triggers past participle agreement, as (65a/b) illustrate, as it is the case when it remains in the postverbal subject position (cfr(65c)). Note that in (65d) the QP agrees with the adjective bei, which shows a plural ending.

The preverbal QP behaves then as if it were in the postverbal position, both with respect to the negative scope marker and to past participle agreement. We can thus conclude that the preverbal QP position is not SpecAgr, as in the case of DPs, but a topicalized position to which the QP moves directly from the postverbal position.

Subject clitics in TR contribute to Case assignment to the SpecAgr position, which becomes a position for non-Quantifiers

only. Subject clitics have evolved differently in TR and in SVe. TR subject clitics have not specialized as pro drop licenser, as SVe subject clitics, but as nominative Case assigners. In both dialects we observe that the head Agr is in some sense weaker with respect to other Romance languages: in the case of SVe and modern French it cannot license pro, while in TR it is not sufficient to assign nominative.

Agr is thus not only morphologically weaker in these languages than in standard Italian, it is also weaker in a syntactic sense, because it needs the support of a clitic in order to license a pro or to assign nominative Case. We see now that the relation between Morphology and Syntax is quite strong in the sense that a morphologically weak head is in most cases also syntactically weak, but the conditions of this syntactic "weakness" can vary and must be rendered more precise.

3.2 CLITICS AND AUXILIARIES

In this section we will examine the distribution of subject clitics which appear with the two auxiliaries <u>have</u> and <u>be</u> in various NIDs. A first indication that subject clitics that appear with auxiliaries (ASC) are different from subject clitics that appear with main verbs (VSC) has been pointed out to me by P. Beninca` (p.c.). While VSC are incompatible with a preverbal QP, ASC are always obligatory both if the preverbal subject is an DP or if it is a QP:

(66)a Nisun l'e` vegnu`
Nobody he has come

b *Nisun e` vegnu`
Nobody has come

These data are well known and brought Rizzi (1986) and Brandi and Cordin (1989) to conclude that subject clitics are a part of Inflection, as they are always obligatory, independently of the element that occupies the SpecAgr position, be it a pro, an DP or a QP. If we compare (66) with (56) we obtain a minimal contrast:

(56)a *Nisun el vien qua
b ?Nisun vien qua

On the basis of this difference, it seems that subject clitics have a different distribution with respect to the presence versus absence of an auxiliary verb.

Another indication that forces us into this direction is constituted by the data of some Valdotain varieties studied by Roberts (1991). The subject clitic series which appears with auxiliaries is morphologically different from the subject clitic series that appears with other verbs: (Roberts (1991):(1b))

(67)a Yo ei minja`
I have eaten

b T'at minja`
You have eaten

c Y at minja`
He has eaten

d N'en minja`
We have aten

e Y ade minja`
You have eaten

f L'ant minja`
They have eaten

(68)a Minjo
Eat (I)

b Te minje
You eat

c Minje
Eats (he)

d Minjein
Eat (we)

e Minjade
Eat (you)

f Minjon
Eat (they)

While the subject clitic series that appears with main verbs is not complete, the paradigm of subject clitics that appears with auxiliaries is not only morphologically different, but it contains a subject clitic for every person of the verb.
This fact is a strong argument in favor of the idea that the two series of subject clitics must be distinguished.
In Piemontese two subject clitics appear when the verb is the auxiliary have, while only one is realized with all other verbs:

(69)a La maestra a sava nen tut
The teacher she knew not all

b La barca a l'a anda` a fond
The ship she cl has sunk

In the case of direct interrogative sentences, Roberts notes that the ASC remains at the left od the verb, while the VSC adjoins at the right of the inflected verb, as in (70): (Roberts (1991):(9b))

(70) L'est+e prest?
Cl is+cl realdy

In some Veneto varieties, (as for instance in the dialect of the town of Cornuda that we use for the examples) the subject clitics that appear with auxiliaries alternates with object clitics, while subject clitics of simple tenses never do <fn.15>:

(71)a Nisun l`a magna
Nobody he has eaten

b Nisun m'a visto
Nobody me has seen

c *Nisun el m'a visto
Nobody he me has seen

(72)a La mama la prepara el dolse
The mummy she prepares the cake

b La mama la lo prepara
the mummy she it prepares

In (71) the subject clitic l cannot be present if an object clitic is present. This fact holds independently on the person of the object clitic. (72), on the contrary, shows that a subject clitic that appears with a main verb is allowed to cooccur with an object clitic. Again, this does not seems to vary changing the person of the object clitic.

This distribution seems at first sight quite strange: why should a subject clitic be ungrammatical if an object clitic is present? This seems to suggest that they occupy the same position, or that they have the same function. However it is not clear at all in what sense a subject clitic and an object clitic should do the same work.

Another fact can help us to throw light on this intricate situation. In Venetian a clitic is always present only with auxiliaries, but it has the form of a locative clitic, not that of a subject:

(73)a El ga magna`
He cl has spoken

b *El a magna`
He has spoken

Also in Venetian older speakers use the alternation of this

oblique clitic with other object clitics that we noted in examples (72):

(74)a El ga visto Nane
He cl has seen John

b El m'a visto
He me has seen

Summarizing the facts, we have found at least six tests that distinguish ASV form VSC:

a) ASC are obligatory both with subject DPs and QPs, while this is not the case for VSC. (cfr Trentino in section 3.1)

b)ASC often show a morphological distinction with respect to VSC, as in Valdotain.

c)In some varieties ASC and VSC cooccur, as for instance in Piedmontese.

d)ASC never invert in main interrogative contexts, while VSC must do so.

e) In other varieties ASC alternate with object clitics (cfr. Northern Veneto).

f) In some cases, ASC do not even have the form of subjects but that of a locative clitic (cfr. Central Veneto).

Considering these facts, we must assume that subject clitics that appear with auxiliaries must be something different from subject clitics that appear with other verbs. The fact that they are not even realized as subjects but as locatives in some varieties leads us to think that they are not true subject clitics, in the sense that they are not connected with the preverbal subject position or with the thematic subject position inside the VP. The presence of a clitic must be necessary in order to satisfy a

condition imposed by the auxiliary verb. Some dialects realize this clitic as a subject, some others as an object or even create a new special series only for auxiliaries.

The question now is: what is this mysterious condition imposed by the auxiliary?

An interesting possible solution has been proposed by Belletti (1991), who proposes the hypothesis that auxiliaries have an additional functional projection that main verbs do not use. She bases her proposal on the different order that adverbs show with main verbs on the one hand and auxiliaries on the other. In particular, she observes that: " the range of distributional possibilities is wider in sentences containing a complex tense, in which the adverb can also appear between the auxiliary and the past participle and not only at the beginning of the sentence:

(74)a Lui ha probabilmente sbagliato
He has probably misteken

b Maria ha evidentemente rivelato il segreto
Mary has evidently told the secret

As (74a/b) (Belletti (1990) :(40)) show a sentence adverb appears between the auxiliary and the past participle.

As sentence adverb only adjoin to AgrP, Belletti assumes a recursion of AgrP in sentences like (74a/b). This additional AgrP has an empty head, to which only an auxiliary can move, as it is generally the case for movement to empty functional heads. Empty Agr heads infact are available only to Auxiliaries both in English tensed sentences, and in French infinitival sentences, as Pollock (1989) has shown.

Within Pollock's analysis, this is so because the movement to a non-selected head are opaque to theta role assignment and block

the possibility that the verb trace under V to assign theta roles to its complements. Auxiliaries do not have theta roles to assign. So they can move through non selected movement to an empty head that blocks the transmission of the theta roles, because they have none to assign. Main verbs on the contrary cannot move to an empty position, because they would not be able to assign the theta role to the arguments they select.

On the basis of Belletti's proposal about an additional functional projection we will try to explain the distribution of ASC.

We can thus assume that in some NIDs the head of this additional projection is rendered visible by the presence of clitics, which can have the form of normal subject clitics, or of particular subject clitics or even of obliques. Subject clitics are not equivalent to verbal morphology, because they are not X-1 categories as verbal morphology is (cfr. Rizzi and Roberts (1989)), but complete heads. Therefore they do not select a verb as agreement morphology does. The position is thus still opaque to theta role assignment, exactly as in Standard Italian.

Hence, even when this additional AgrP is rendered visible by a clitic, it blocks theta role assignment. So, also in NIDs this additional position is only open to auxiliaries and not to main verbs.

If ASC are "place-holders" it does not matter which form they assume: they can be subject clitics or locative (recall that expletive subjects have in many languages the form of a locative).

Furthermore, they are not sensitive to the type of subject, DP or QP that is in its Spec position, because they do not enter in a chain with it. As ASC are a sort of expletive elements that signal the additional Agr position, they alternate with other clitics. As soon as there is another clitic that can be interpreted as filling that position, they can disappear.
In particular I will assume Roberts' (1991) proposal about the alternation between subject clitics and object clitics: Agr1 is an intrinsic clitic position, where no more than one clitic can be realized. Hence, when there is an object clitic, the ASC disappears. <fn.16>
In the next section we will examine a dialect in which the Agr1 position is not only a position for auxiliaries, but also for main verbs.

3.3 FRIULANO

Friulano is another North Eastern variety, which is analyzed in Vanelli (1987) in its Renaissance period as having only phonological subject clitics, like RVe and RFr.
It seems that subject clitics in this dialect have developed into another system which is different from both SVe and TR.
Modern Friulano (from now on FR) subject clitics seem to be obligatory in every context that we have examined here. Subject clitics are obligatory both with preverbal subject DPs and QPs (cfr. Beninca` and Vanelli (1984)) :

(76)a Toni al ven
Toni he comes

b *Toni ven
Toni comes

(77)a Qualchidun al ven
Somebody he còmes

b *Qualchidun ven
Somebody eats here

They are obligatory even with postverbal subject DPs and QPs:

(78)a Al ven Toni
He comes Toni

b *Ven Toni
Comes Toni

(79)a Nol ven nisun
Not+he comes nobody

b *No ven nisun
Not comes nobody

They always cooccur with a subject wh trace:

(80)a Cui vegnial?
Who comes he?

b *Cui ven?
Who comes?

(81)a Il fantat ch'al ven
The boy that he comes

b *Il fantat che ven
The boy that comes

(82)a MARIO al ven
MARIO he comes

b *MARIO ven
MARIO comes

(83)a Al è MARIO, ch'al ven
It is MARIO that he comes

b *Al è MARIO, ch' ven
It is MARIO that comes

The distribution of subject clitics in FR (cfr, Beninca` and Vanelli (1984)) does not correspond to the SVe system, in which subject clitics are pro licenser, because FR subject clitics do not alternate with subject DPs.

The system is not the same as that illustrated for TR either,

because in FR subject clitics always cooccur with subject QPs and with wh traces. Nevertheless subject clitics must have a function and this is probably connected to the head of Agr.

As Beninca` and Vanelli (1984) noted subject clitics can alternate with object clitics or with the negative clitic.

A subject clitic must be omitted if there is an object clitic or a negative marker in Agr.

The data are complicated by the fact that they depend on the person of the verb: for the first person singular and plural and second person plural the subject clitic has to disappear if there is a negative marker or an object clitic:

(84)a I ai capit
I have understood

b Lu ai capit
It (I) have understood

c *I lu ai capit
I it have understood

d No ai capit
Not (I) have understood

e *I no ai capit
(I) not have understood

f *No i ai capit
Not I have understood

(85)a I vin capit
We have understood

b Lu vin capit

c *I lu vin capit

d No vin capit

e *I no vin capit

f *No i vin capit

(86)a I ves capit
You+plur. have understood

b Lu ves capit

c *I lu ves capit

d No ves capit

e *I no ves capit

f *No i ves capit

In the case of the third person the subject clitic is optional when there is an object clitic and obligatory when there is a negative marker:

(87)a Al viot la Maria
He sees the Mary

b Mi viot
Me sees

c Al mi viot
He me sees

(88)a Nol mange
Not+he eats

b *No mange
Not eats

The second person singular can never be omitted:

(89)a Tu lu metis
You it put

b *Lu metis
It put

(90)a No tu saludis nancie
Not you say hello not

b *No saludis nancie
Not say hello not

On the basis of this test we can distinguish two types of subject clitics in FR: subject clitics that alternate with object clitics, namely first person and second person plural subject clitics, and second person singular subject clitic, which do not

alternate with object clitics and with the negative clitic.
In the case of the third person the data are quite complicated: I will suggest that the optionality of the subject clitic when an object clitic is present is due to the fact that third person subject clitics can be interpreted as a clitic of the same type as second person singular or as a first person clitic.
Let's now concentrate our attention on FR subject clitics that alternate with object clitic. <fn.17> The phenomenon of alternation between subject clitics and object clitics has already been observed in section 3.2 for the case of ASC (Auxiliary subject clitics) in other NIDs.
On the basis of this test we could assume that FR subject clitics are equivalent to ASC of other NIDs. In section 3.2 six different tests have been presented in order to differentiate ASC form VSC. If the claim that FR subject clitics are equivalent to ASC of other NIDs is correct, also these tests should give a positive response. As ASC, FR subject clitics are obligatory with every kind of subject: the examples (76)-(83) show that subject clitics appear with subject DPs, QPs or even wh traces. Hence they cannot be coindexed with the SpecAgr position, otherwise they would yield an improper chain in which a variable is bound by a pronominal element and cannot be interpreted by its operator in A'position. We can conclude that FR subject clitics are not coindexed with the SpecAgr position just like ASC.
In some varieties ASC cooccur with VSC, (for instance in Piedmontese). This is true also for some FR varieties, as for instance the dialect of Casarsa, but the double clitic appears

with all verbs, not only with auxiliaries (cfr. Beninca` (1984)):

(91)a A nol ven
Cl not cl comes

b Tu i ti ciantis
You cl cl sing

Moreover in Valdotain the ASC remain at the left of the auxiliary in main interrogatives, while the VSC adjoins at the right of the Auxiliary:

(92) L'est+e prest?
Cl is+cl realdy

This is true also for FR subject clitics,and the phenomenon is extended to all verbs:

(93)a A ciantial?
Cl sings cl?

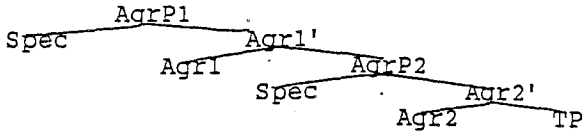
Summarizing the data: FR subject clitics alternate with object clitics, they are obligatory with every type of subject DP, they can duplicate, and in this case they remain at the left of the verb even in main interrogatives. We can thus assume that FR subject clitics are parallel to ASC of other NIDs. From an intuitive point of view, it seems that FR has extended a mechanism that is already exploited in a more restricted area in other dialects. We are now faced with the problem of translating this observation into structural terms.

In section 3.2 we mentioned Belletti's hypothesis that auxiliaries have an additional functional projection with respect to other verbs, and that clitics occupy just this position.

A similar conclusion has been reached by Cardinaletti and Roberts (1991) who assume a second AgrP projection in various languages (as in German, Icelandic and RFr) which is the landing site of

clitics.

(94)



Let's try to explain the FR data on the basis of a structure like (94) and on the basis of the assumption that the Agr1 position has always to be phonetically filled by a clitic. In section 3.2 we assumed Belletti's hypothesis that only auxiliaries move to a higher Agr projection, a claim that explains the different order that adverbs present in compound tenses and the fact that ASC in NIDs alternate with object clitics.

As FR subject clitics behave as ASC with all main verbs, it seems plausible to assume that all verbs in FR move to the higher Agr head, and not only auxiliaries. In other words, the additional Agr projection is not opaque to the transmission of the theta roles in FR. The difference between FR and other NIDs is the same difference observed between French and English Agreement: in one language the position is transparent to the theta role assignment, in the other it is opaque. In FR therefore, all verbs move to Agr1. This explains the similarity between FR subject clitics and ASC of other dialects.

The difference between NIDs and FR is now clear: in FR all verbs move to a higher position, which is accessible only to auxiliaries in other varieties.

4. CONCLUSION

The status and the distribution of subject clitics in Northern Italian Dialects is connected to, at least, three components of

the grammar: the pro drop parameter, the Case assignment conditions, and the visibility of empty Agreement heads.

It is possible to summarize the entire discussion about the development of subject clitics making a quite simple hypothesis regarding the relation between verbal morphology and subject clitics.

In standard French subject clitics have remained true subjects, which appear in the SpecAgr position like other subject DPs. On the contrary, in all Northern italian dialects subject clitics have been reinterpreted as a possible candidate to substitute agremeent in various syntactic mechanisms. In all these cases the function of agreement, both intended as a syntactic position and as morphological specification, is to identify the subject of a predicate. Subject clitics, starting as true subjects have slowly been reanalyzed as heads that interfere in the strict relation between the head and the Spec of Agreement. In SVe, for instance, subject clitics mimic the relation of Spec-head Agreement that Agr has with the subject adjoining to the head and licencing a pro in the SpecAgr position. In modern Trentino the situation is reversed, subject clitics do not take the place of the subject DP, but is the nominative Case morpheme itself. In Friulano a subject clitic is so similar to Agr that it can occupy an additional Agr position itself, to which the verb is attracted as it is by verbal morphology. The subject clitic constitues thus a new type of agreement morphology following Renzi and Vanelli's generalization that the subject features must be encoded at least in one of the two elements, but can also be

encoded on both.

FOOTNOTES

* Thanks are due to A. Battye, A. Belletti, G. Cinque, T. Guasti, I. Roberts, L.Rizzi,A. Tomaselli, R. Zanuttini, and in particular P. Beninca` and L. Vanelli for comments and discussion. All errors are naturally my own.

1. The term "agreement" is ambiguous, because it indicates both the inflectional morpheme and its structural position as head of AgrP. I will refer to the syntactic position of Agreement using the capital letter and to the morpheme as agreement in small letters.

2. Not all subject clitics appear at the right of the preverbal negative marker. For a detailed analysis see Poletto (1991a)

3. Cfr. 3.2 for sentence with compound tenses, that have a different series of subject clitics from sentences with simple tenses

4. The Veneto variety used for the examples is the dialect of Oderzo.

5. We use here the second person singular subject clitic, which behaves as the l clitic.

6. We will use examples from plays by Ruzante for the Paduan variety and from a letter collection by Calmo for the Venetian

variety.There are only some minor morphological distinctions between the two. In (16) the first form is the Paduan, the second corresponds to Venetian.

7. Ca seems to be a specialized form for the comparative complementizer which is found only in Venetian texts.

8. Subject clitics are still arguments also in Modern Veneto. They have lost their status of XPs, and are heads just like object clitics, but they never cooccur with subject QPs or subject variables neither in preverbal nor in postverbal subject position.

9. The pro drop system of the Renaissance French and Veneto is different from the Medioeval system. In their Medioval stage, this languages were V2. Pro drop was licensed by the verb in C, hence possible only in matrix V2 clauses. In the Renaissance period, French and NIDs have lost Verb Second, but the licencing of pro still comes from the C head. As the verb does not move anymore into C, this must be marked with a particular feature in order to be visible. Agr can only take up the function of pro licenser if it is morphologically strong.

10. The theory that we propose here cannot be applied to modern NIDs as it is formulated, here. NIDs subject clitics are infact heads, and it is not obvious that they need to be independently Case marked. We will not discuss the phenomenon of Quirky

Agreement (cfr. Battye (1990)) in modern NIDs here (cfr. Poletto in preparation)

11. We are not considering here the cases of clitic doubling, which are quite frequent in NIDs, but only with indirect object clitics.

12. From the diachronic point of view, it seems quite reasonable to admit that the change in the structure must happen by means of ambiguous strings of words (cfr. Lightfoot (1978) and Roberts (1990)) that give raise to a possibility of "misunderstanding" the structure of the sentence. This is surely not the only reason for the diachronic change, because there must be some parametric choices that "push" a language into a precise direction.
Anyway, the structures presented in (44) and (45) present just the case of ambiguity that seems to be implied in the reanalyzis of a structure. For instance a sentence like (i) can be interpreted as having the structure (44) or (45):

(i) El vien
He comes

This ambiguity must have been the "bridge" which permitted the reanalysis from (45) to (44)

13. It is interesting to note that there seems to exist a relation of mutual exclusion between nominative Case assignment thorugh Governement from Agr and nominative Case assignment through Government from T.

English, for instance, is a language that does not permit free inversion of the subject. Hence, following the parameter in (34) it does not select T as a possible nominative Case assigner. Nevertheless, in main interrogative sentences, Agr can assign nominative to the subject DP in SpecAgr , as in (i):

(i) What has John done?

Romance languages, on the contrary, select T as possible Case assigner, but do not permit nominative Case assigned by Agr in a sentence like (i):

(ii) *Qui a Jean vu?
Who has John seen?

So, we can observe, that a language can exploit a nominative Case assignment configuration only once: if the subject gets nominative form T, it cannot get it from Agr under the same type of Configuration. This could be valid not only for Governement, but also for Spec-head Agreement.

14. Subject clitics never appear when the subject is the variable left by wh movement. We assume here Rizzi's (1982) hypothesis that variables always occupy the postverbal subject position and never the preverbal one. Hence, subject variables, like postverbal DPs, receive Case from T and not from Agr. This is the reason why subject clitics are not present: they are the Case morpheme for the Agr-nominative, and not for the T-nominative Case assignment.

15. This happens also in Valdotain as noted by Roberts (1991)

16. For a detailed discussion on the alternation between subject and object clitics see Roberts (1991) section 3.

17. The fact that the second person singular behaves differently from other persons is not surprising. Second person singular subject clitics are different form other clitics also in other varieties (cfr. Poletto (1991a) for a detailed analysis)

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