

HISTORICAL SYNTAX

Stylistic fronting in Old Italian: A phase-based analysis

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STYLISTIC FRONTING (SF) is an optional syntactic phenomenon whereby a lexical item that may belong to various syntactic categories fronts to a pre-finite-V position, if no subject is merged in SPECIP. The literature reports that SF is productive in Icelandic and Old Scandinavian, and it is also attested in some Old Romance languages (Old Catalan, Old French). This article presents a phase-based analysis of SF in Old Italian. In this language, SF has some previously undiscussed characteristics. A corpus study shows that Old Italian displays a root/nonroot asymmetry in the typology of fronting items. In root clauses, nominal elements, such as nominal predicates with a special semantics, front more frequently than verbal elements (infinitives, past participles), which most frequently front in nonroot clauses. Since fronting in root clauses is intrinsically ambiguous with topicalization and focalization, it is not considered SF and is not extensively discussed in this article. By contrast, I analyze as proper SF the fronting operation that occurs in nonroot clauses, and I argue that this is a movement anchoring the event-structure (vP) semantic content to the context (FinP). This type of movement is possible only if vP is not a phase and no intervening agentive external argument is merged in SPECVP. The fronted material is pragmatically presupposed and interpreted as the SUBJECT OF PREDICATION. Pragmatics tests corroborate the argument.*

Keywords: diachronic syntax, phases, active/inactive verb structures, Old Romance

INTRODUCTION. In this article I focus on STYLISTIC FRONTING (SF) in Old Italian (OI) and argue that this syntactic phenomenon results from CP and vP phase properties. SF is movement to information structure and has a specific pragmatic function that explains its complementary distribution with clausal subjects of predication.

SF has been extensively discussed in the linguistic literature, although a unitary analysis and clear-cut definition are missing. It is still controversial whether SF productivity in a grammar depends on certain parametric properties rather than others, specifically on the presence of systematic V-to-C movement, which also characterizes OI among other Medieval Romance languages. The name ‘SF’ traditionally refers to a syntactic fronting to a pre-finite-V position if no overt subject is merged in SpecIP (henceforth the SUBJECT-GAP CONDITION; cf. Maling 1980, 1990). The syntactic categories that may undergo SF are several: Maling’s (1980, 1990) seminal work on Icelandic identifies as potential candidates ‘elements from the verbal domain’ (such as infinitival heads, past participles, and verbal particles), as well as phrasal adverbs. Crucially, fronting elements seem to obey an ACCESSIBILITY HIERARCHY that is determined by locality principles (see Maling 1980, 1990), as in 1.

- (1) ACCESSIBILITY HIERARCHY (Maling 1990):
negation/phrasal adv. > predicative adj. > past participle/verb particle

An example of SF in Icelandic is given in 2, where a past participle fronts to a pre-finite-V position in the subordinate clause.

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- (2) Þetta er mál sem **rætt** hefur verið.
 this is issue that discussed has been

‘This is an issue that has been discussed.’ (Icelandic; Thráinsson 2007)

In 2, the past participle can front because neither higher phrasal adverbs nor negation intervenes (i.e. being structurally higher, these elements would be ranked higher in the accessibility hierarchy). Holmberg (2000) further argues that DPs and PPs can also undergo SF in Icelandic.

SF was first attested in (Old) Icelandic, modern written Faroese, and Old Mainland Scandinavian languages.¹ A similar phenomenon is attested in some Old Romance languages like Old Catalan, Old French, and OI,² although many authors observe significant differences between Romance and Scandinavian SF. Example 3a below shows an OI embedded clause in which the past participle has fronted and precedes the inflected auxiliary, on a par with the Icelandic example in 2.³ Example 3b shows that an overt IP-peripheral subject preceding or following the stylistically fronted item is unattested in OI (NA = not attested, but cf. Labelle & Hirschbühler 2014a for differences in Old French).⁴

- (3) a. fu lli contato come **nodrito** era stato (Old Italian)
 was 3SG.DAT told how educated was been
 ‘it was told him how he had been educated’ (N, 5, 28)
 b. fu lli contato come (^{NA}elli) **nodrito** (^{NA}elli) era stato —
 was 3SG.DAT told how (he) educated (he) was been
 ‘it was told him how he had been educated’

A corpus-based study on OI reveals an interesting ROOT/NONROOT ASYMMETRY in the typology of fronted elements,⁵ which has not been attested in other languages (see §§1 and 4 below). Data show that while fronting in root clauses includes adverbs, arguments, and adjuncts, as well as other nominal elements such as predicative adjectives and nominal predicates (as in 4), most of the elements fronting in nonroot clauses are verbal, such as infinitives (as in 5) or past participles (as in 3).

- (4) **Buona** è detta quella favella che à in sé quattro cose
 good is said that word that has in self four things
 ‘That speech which contains four things is called good’ (FR, 5, 1)

¹ On Insular Scandinavian SF, see Maling 1980, 1990, Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson 1990, Jónsson 1991, Holmberg 2000, Thráinsson et al. 2004, Heycock & Sorace 2007, Thráinsson 2007, among others; on Old Mainland Scandinavian, Nygaard 1906, Platzack 1988, Falk 1993, Delsing 2001, Trips 2003, among others.

² For Old Catalan, see Fischer & Alexiadou 2001, Fischer 2010; for Old French, Dupuis 1989, Roberts 1993, Cardinaletti & Roberts 2003, Mathieu 2006, 2009, 2012, Labelle 2007, Labelle & Hirschbühler 2014a,b, 2017, Salvesen 2011, 2013; Franco 2009 on OI proposes a comparative analysis of SF in Icelandic and the OI variety spoken in Tuscany (Florence area), as is referred to in Renzi & Salvi 2010.

³ The word order in examples 2 and 3a without SF would be, respectively, as follows.

- (i) a. Þetta er mál sem hefur verið **rætt**.
 this is issue that has been discussed
 b. fu lli contato come era stato **nodrito**
 was 3SG.DAT told how was been educated

⁴ The following abbreviations are used: ACC: accusative, DAT: dative, EXPL: expletive, IMP: impersonal, INF: infinitive, PL: plural, PRT: particle, PST: past, REFL: reflexive, SBJV: subjunctive, SG: singular. See the list of sources at the end of the article for the abbreviations used in the identification of examples.

⁵ The distinction ‘root vs. nonroot’ is more appropriate than ‘main/subordinate’ since OI presents several cases of embedded V-to-C, typically in embedded root clauses; see §3.

- (5) col guadagno che **far** se ne dovea
 with.the gain that do.INF IMP of.it must.3SG.PST
 ‘with the gain that one should make of it’ (N, 97, 16–17)

The nominal elements that may front in root clauses have specific semantic properties: [+Q], [+EVAL], or [+EPIST] elements (cf. Cinque’s 1999 hierarchy), and they receive discourse prominence according to the specific discourse pragmatics when fronted. This type of fronting is essentially ambiguous with topicalization and Focus-fronting. Because of this ambiguity, I do not consider fronting in root clauses to be an instance of SF, and I do not discuss it at length in this article.

Instead, I identify SF with a type of fronting that occurs only in nonroot clauses (see §§2.1 and 3.1 below), and I argue that the productivity of SF in OI depends on its CP and vP phase properties. This type of fronting does not share the same interpretive properties of root-clause fronting. Verbal elements that front in nonroot subordinate clauses are predicates that lack an intervening agentive EXTERNAL ARGUMENT (EA) in SpecvP; that is, their vP is not a phase (see §3.2). I analyze this nonroot fronting as SF, and I define it as a phrasal movement to the CP that anchors the event-structure semantic content to the context, when no [+AGENT] EA intervenes (see 7 and 50 below). The complementary distribution of overt subjects and SF is explained by the hypothesis that both subjects and SF provide the clause with a presupposed SUBJECT OF PREDICATION. Specifically, the information that is fronted and backgrounded via SF corresponds to the Aktionsart semantics, namely, ‘what the speaker talks about’ (Bache 1995).

This analysis also accounts for SF optionality as a result of sentence pragmatics. The argument is supported by pragmatics tests showing that the stylistically fronted content is presupposed, on a par with clausal subjects in standard predicative constructions. This analysis not only reveals some unknown properties of SF in contrast to other languages in which it is attested, but also contributes to a deeper understanding of the parametric properties of OI.

The article is structured as follows: I first briefly discuss some previous analyses of SF in Old Romance (§1). I then illustrate in §2 the relevant syntactic properties of OI grammar, which involves the high (CP) and the low phase (vP) as well as the structural target of SF. Section 3 discusses the theoretical assumptions that are relevant for the analysis, while §4 presents OI SF data and the methodology used for the corpus-based study. A fine-grained analysis of SF, which is based on its syntactic and semantic properties, is given in §5, and the analysis of the interpretive properties of SF is refined in §6 by illustrating the results of some pragmatics tests. Finally, I summarize the article, highlight its contributions, and sketch some avenues for future research (§7).

1. PREVIOUS ANALYSES OF SF IN OLD ROMANCE. On a par with fronting phenomena in root clauses, SF in embedded clauses is optional in the sense that, under the same syntactic conditions, the same element may undergo SF in one clause and not in another one. Compare SF in 3a above with an analogous clause without SF in 6, where the unmoved candidate is in boldface. See also §6.

- (6) Lo re mandò in Ispagna ad invenire come fu **nodrito**
 the king sent in Spain to find.out how was educated
 ‘The king sent [them] to Spain to find out how he was educated’ (N, 2, 12)

This optionality is also attested for SF in other Old Romance languages and in Icelandic, despite some differences in its syntactic properties, and has been puzzling researchers ever since. As for Old Romance, it has been suggested that sentences with SF have a different pragmatics from sentences in which SF does not take place. SF is ana-

lyzed as a marked phenomenon in these languages: as either some kind of Focus or Topic movement. However, no previous analyses distinguish between fronting operations taking place in root and nonroot clauses. I illustrate below some relevant proposals about the interpretive properties of SF in Old Romance, and in §6 I discuss the pragmatic value of SF in OI.

Some scholars have argued that Old Romance SF, more specifically Old Catalan SF (Fischer & Alexiadou 2001), contributes to information structure, contrary to Icelandic SF, which apparently does not (Maling 1990, but see Hrafnbjargarson 2003). Fischer and Alexiadou (2001) and Fischer (2010) propose that Old Catalan SF is a strategy to check an emphatic feature. This feature is structurally encoded on a functional head between IP and CP, and can be negatively [+NEG] or positively [+V] valued, as Laka (1990) proposes. Fischer (2010) argues that SF is a strategy to check the positive, emphatic [+V] value by fronting a verbal head. As evidence for the hypothesis that V-fronting marks emphasis by checking [+V], she refers to the relative V-clitic order, observing that enclisis is never attested with negation. However, in §5.1 it becomes clear why this analysis does not directly apply to SF in OI. In Old Romance languages, enclisis is attested in main clauses as a consequence of V-to-C (whereby C, in V-cl orders, is arguably above Focus in the left periphery; cf. Benincà 1995, Poletto 2005, and see §5.1). Instead, SF is attested in nonroot contexts in OI, that is, in contexts where the inflected V does not move to CP (see §3.3). The different distribution and target of the moving elements in V-cl and SF orders is not relevant for Fischer and Alexiadou. Both constructions are claimed to check an emphatic feature that is allegedly encoded on the same structural head, but in §4.2 and following I show that root fronting and nonroot fronting have a different syntax. Even assuming that either SF or V-cl may alternatively check this emphatic feature, this idea cannot account for the root/nonroot asymmetry attested in OI.

Mathieu (2006 et seq.) analyzes SF in Old French as movement that is triggered by a CP head located below Focus and above Fin (cf. OI, §4.1). He calls this head Top+, to distinguish it from other Topic types. In his view, 'Top+ is unlike Top in that it does not host focused or presupposed elements but simply ASSERTED BACKGROUND TOPICS' (Mathieu 2006:247, emphasis mine). In Mathieu's analysis, SF does not modify the truth conditions of the proposition in which it occurs. This proposal contrasts with Fischer and Alexiadou's (2001) claim that SF in Old Catalan bears some 'emphasis', which does affect the truth conditions, since SF is arguably related to polarity marking.

Other alternative analyses have been proposed for what is known as SF in Old French (cf. also Salvesen 2011, 2013). Labelle and Hirschbühler (2014a,b, 2017) present a thorough study of left dislocations in Old French and argue that the label 'SF' covers at least three different constructions (pace Mathieu 2006, 2009). Labelle and Hirschbühler's data show that past-participle fronting in Old French is not subject to the same restrictions as in OI, since an overt pronominal subject may intervene between the fronted past participle and the inflected V (Franco 2009 shows that this is not possible in OI). Moreover, no root/nonroot asymmetry has yet been observed in Old French (Paul Hirschbühler, p.c.), Old Catalan, or even Icelandic. Nonetheless, Jónsson (1991) observes a difference between the interpretive properties of fronting in main and subordinate clauses,⁶ and the possibility that some sort of restrictions may apply to SF in embedded clauses in this language cannot be excluded (Halldór Sigurðsson, p.c.).

⁶ Jónsson (1991) claims that Icelandic SF is also common in main clauses, such as in impersonal constructions that are frequently used in news titles. In this context, the fronted element necessarily bears emphasis. SF

One further remark concerns the accessibility hierarchy of items undergoing SF. Beginning with Maling 1980, 1990, SF has been analyzed, in Icelandic at least, as a phenomenon that is regulated by a strict locality. Elements undergoing SF typically respect an accessibility hierarchy in Icelandic (e.g. lower elements, such as past participles or predicative adjectives, cannot front if structurally higher candidates, such as high phrasal adverbs, intervene; see 1 above, Maling 1990, Holmberg 2000, Hrafnbjargarson 2003, and Franco 2009 for discussion). The presence of an accessibility hierarchy in Old Romance is not so straightforward: although SF of past participles is generally not attested if the sentence contains intervening high phrasal adverbs, there are cases (at least in OI) in which the hierarchy is apparently not respected. As becomes clear in the analysis below, I attribute this difference to the possibility that SF may occur after the moved item has taken an intermediate step to the vP periphery in OI. This intermediate step recreates a different locality pattern, whereby the original accessibility hierarchy is no longer binding.

SF is thus conventionally defined as movement of an element that respects an accessibility hierarchy to a position preceding the inflected verb in IP or CP, if the subject of predication in SpecIP is lexically not realized. This definition does not help, however, with disambiguating real SF cases in OI from cases of TOPICALIZATION or FOCALIZATION in CP that do not have an overt pronominal subject in SpecIP. This type of topicalization/focalization is possible in Old Romance, as is clarified in §2.1 below. This potential confusion is a fundamental obstacle for defining the SF properties and syntax, as Labelle and Hirschbühler (2014a) observe for Old French. They point out that the term ‘SF’ is not accurate enough to define the various types of fronting attested in Old French. Nonetheless, their analysis does not directly apply to OI since OI SF is indeed restricted by the subject-gap condition, whereas Old French is apparently not constrained in the same way (Labelle & Hirschbühler 2014a, Salvesen 2011, 2013). For this reason, and in light of the state of the art presented above, I adopt 7 below as a first descriptive working definition for SF in OI.

- (7) SF is a fronting movement that is subject to locality conditions and is attested in NONROOT CLAUSES.⁷ SF moves a verbal element with semantic content to a position preceding the inflected verb (V), when the subject of predication in SpecIP is not realized lexically.

The locality conditions mentioned in 7 are a reformulation of the accessibility hierarchy in 1, in the sense that they are also meant to include cases that apparently do not respect the canonical hierarchy because of previous scrambling to the vP periphery (see above, and Poletto 2014).

Notice that, on the one hand, 7 restricts the definition of SF to nonroot clauses (the root/nonroot distinction is illustrated in §3.1 below), and, on the other hand, it does not cover all of the types of fronting attested in Old French, where elements like past participles can be fronted (though rarely) in the presence of a preverbal subject. However, Labelle and Hirschbühler (2014a et seq.), who identify these constructions, do not call this type of fronting SF.

is basically identified as the fronting of a lexical category (including verbal elements such as infinitivals and past participles; see Maling 1980) in the absence of an overt subject in SpecIP. On this basis, SF is distinguished from topicalization and focalization. See also Egerland 2010 for an account of Icelandic SF pragmatics.

⁷ At this point, no commitment is made about the nature of movement, that is, whether it is head or XP movement.

But the facts in §4 and the analysis provided in §5 below will contribute to a revised version of the definition in 7 using more appropriate terms (see 50 below). Before discussing the data (§4), I briefly illustrate the relevant syntactic properties of OI grammar (§2) and the theoretic assumptions that are necessary for the analysis (§3).

2. SYNTACTIC PROPERTIES OF OI. Poletto (2006, 2014) analyzes several fronting and scrambling operations affecting the CP, vP, and DP left periphery in OI, and she concludes that phases display parallel behavior since functional heads on all phase edges may trigger movement of one or more constituents. To account for the syntax of SF, I concentrate on CP (§2.1) and vP (§2.2) and illustrate the structural properties of SF (§2.3).

2.1. CP. At the CP level, OI displays V-TO-C in root clauses on a par with other Old Romance languages.⁸ Put differently, OI has a ‘V2’ property whereby one or more constituents precede the inflected verb in CP, which may result in XP-V-S order (i.e. ‘subject inversion’).⁹ This can be seen in the examples in 8, in which the subjects *l’anime* ‘the souls’ (8a) and *l’uomo* ‘one’ (8b) follow the inflected verb in C and precede the nonfinite lexical V (*tormentate* ‘tormented’ and *schifare* ‘to despise’, respectively).

- (8) a. Anche **sono** l’ anime tormentate nell’ inferno di dolorosi pensieri
 also are the souls tormented in.the hell of painful thoughts
 ‘Also, the souls are tormented in the hell by painful thoughts’
 (Bono Giamboni, *Trattato*, 152, 24)
- b. Ne la prosperità del secolo **dee** l’ uomo schifare la superbia
 in the prosperity of.the century must the man despise the arrogance
 e l’ orgoglio.
 and the pride
 ‘In the good times one must despise arrogance and pride.’
 (*Fior de’ Filosafti*, 156, 31)

Some have claimed that V-to-C licenses null subjects in OI (Benincà 1984; cf. Adams 1987, Vance 1988, 1997, Roberts 1993); that is, subject PRO-DROP is attested in root clauses (where V-to-C occurs), whereas subject pronouns are overt in clauses without V-to-C (nonroot clauses; see below). This asymmetry can be seen in 9. The first-person subject pronoun is null (___) in the main clause and overt in the subordinate clause (*io*).

- (9) manifestamente l’ hoe ___ veduto nelle cose [in ch’ **io**
 clearly 3SG.ACC have.1SG seen in.the things in that I
 t’ ho domandato].
 2SG.DAT have.1SG asked
 ‘I have seen it clearly in the things that I have asked you.’ (N, 2, 30–31)

However, this licensing hypothesis is slightly controversial, as the status of pro-drop in Medieval Italo-Romance vernaculars is not so clear cut. Benincà (1994) observes that the root/nonroot asymmetry for pro-drop was, strictly speaking, only attested in Northern varieties; that is, nonroot clauses (see §3.1 for a definition) always have overt pronominal subjects in these languages. In OI, by contrast, third-person subject pro-drop is also licensed in nonroot clauses. Put differently, third-person subject pro-drop displays no root/nonroot asymmetry in OI and is licensed across the board. Conse-

⁸ On OI see Benincà 1984, 1995, 2004, 2006, Vanelli 1986, 1999, Salvi 2004, 2011, Poletto 2006, 2010, and §3 below. On Old Romance, see Adams 1987, 1988a, Vance 1988, 1997, Fontana 1993, 1997, Roberts 1993, 2007, Ribeiro 1995, Foulet 1998, and Ledgeway 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, among others.

⁹ Old Romance V2 differs from Germanic V2 in that more than one constituent may precede the inflected V in CP. See Benincà 2006, among others.

Poletto (2014) shows that this scrambling operation targets the vP left periphery and argues that all OI phases display analogous structural and syntactic properties.¹¹ Poletto (2014:55) proposes that the v-field is articulated as follows (see also §3).

- (14) [vP [Topic1 [Topic2 [Topic3 ... [Operator ... VP] ...] (from Poletto 2014:55)

Some other phenomena affecting the vP periphery have been recently discussed in Franco & Migliori 2014. Among these, OI displays more widespread clitic climbing than Modern Italian (Cardinaletti 2010).¹² That is, clitic climbing in OI is permitted with predicates that in Modern Italian select control complements or purpose clauses; see 15. Clitic climbing in control complements and purpose clauses is impossible in Modern Italian; see 16.

- (15) a. *propuobile* *di dire*
 proposed:3PL.ACC of say.INF
 ‘I decided to say them [the words]’ (VN, 7, 10)
 b. *E quando udi che m’ era venuta per guerire*
 and when heard.1SG that 1SG.ACC was come for heal.INF
 ‘And when I heard that she had come to heal me’

(BG, *Libro*, 3–11; in Cardinaletti 2010:438)

- (16) (*Le) *Decisi di dir(le).* (Modern Italian)
 them decided.1SG of say.INF(3PL.ACC)
 intended: ‘I decided to say them.’

Both object or XP scrambling and clitic climbing are analyzed as movement to/through the vP edge (cf. Franco & Migliori 2014, Poletto 2014:45ff.). A functional head in the vP periphery triggers XP scrambling, whereas clitic climbing is movement through vP, and the clitic ends up on a functional head in the IP (or higher), together with the inflected verb (see §4.2). Moreover, both XP scrambling and widespread clitic climbing undergo diachronic change: XP scrambling disappears and clitic climbing is limited to certain constructions as soon as the vP-periphery functional heads (see 14 above) are no longer active (i.e. from the end of the eighth century).

Similar to the case of syntactic phenomena affecting the CP and vP edges illustrated above, I analyze SF following Poletto’s (2014) intuition about the parallelism among phases, but I additionally argue that not all vPs are phases, on the basis of a specific definition of phase head provided in §3 below. In this analysis, SF results from a parametric property of the features that are encoded on phase heads, which can be explained with the notion of STRENGTH. In §§4 and 5 I discuss how this property is held responsible for typical V2 orders (e.g. Topic or Focus-V-Subject), as well as for SF, which is movement to CP (see next section) and also sensitive to the strength of v.

2.3. SF AS MOVEMENT TO CP. Some have argued that SF in Icelandic is movement to SpecIP (Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson 1990, Holmberg 2000, Ott 2009, Biberauer 2010, among others). Others have argued that SF is movement to FocusP (Hrafnbjargarson 2003, 2004 for Icelandic) or to a low TopicP (Mathieu 2006 for Old French). Leaving aside the issue of whether SF is a crosslinguistically unitary phenomenon, I follow Franco 2009 and assume that IP is not the target of SF in OI and that, nonetheless, stylistically fronted items in OI do not move structurally as high as the Focus head in CP.

¹¹ The notion of ‘phase edge’ invoked here includes more than one functional head plus its specifier. This notion may seem controversial at first, but I explain it in §3.

¹² For a different view according to which clitics are base-generated and do not move, see Roberts 2010, among others.

The results of a syntactic test (Franco 2009:70ff.) show that SF is not movement to the IP but to the CP domain, and that a head as low as (or equivalent to) Focus is the probe.

The test is based on Benincà's (1995, 2006) Tobler-Mussafia law reformulation¹³ and on Poletto's (2005) analysis of CP expletives. This test consists of observing the distribution of SF and some CP particles, as well as of ENCLISIS and PROCLISIS on the inflected verb. Enclisis (V-cl) on the finite V in Old Romance is attested only when the inflected verb moves to a CP head that is higher than Focus, arguably to Topic (see Poletto 2014:17ff. for an overview). Enclisis is not necessarily related to V1 orders, but may follow some dislocated material (e.g. adverbial clauses, hanging topics, etc.).¹⁴ Thus enclisis is determined by a structural restriction in Benincà's analysis. Specifically, enclisis is triggered when the inflected verb moves above Focus in the left periphery. Benincà (2006) argues that if Focus triggers A-BAR OPERATOR MOVEMENT, V-movement to a higher head in CP is blocked and the resulting linear word order is cl-V (proclisis). Following Benincà's (1995) account, Poletto (2005) proposes that the connectives *e/ma* 'and/but' and the particle *sì* are reanalyzed as CP expletive markers in OI. Their exact location can be identified in relation to enclisis or proclisis. In 17, enclisis follows the *e* particle (*e feceli* 'and made them'), whereas only proclisis may follow *sì* (*sì illa present* 'PRT her presented').

- (17) tolse il signor molti danari d'oro, **e** feceli mettere in una
 took the lord many coins of gold PRT made.3SG:3SG.ACC put in a
 torta; **e**, quand'ella li venne dinanzi, **sì illa** presentò a
 cake PRT when it 3SG.DAT came before PRT 3SG.ACC presented to
 questo suo giullare
 this his jester
 'the lord took many golden coins and had them put in a cake; when it (the
 cake) came before him, he presented it to his jester' (N, 79, 309.4)

Poletto (2005) concludes that *e* and *ma* are Topic markers since enclisis may follow them, whereas *sì* is a Focus particle since it is only attested with proclisis, which means that the inflected V cannot move higher than Focus when *sì* is present.¹⁵ Her findings are summarized in 18.

- (18) a. *e/ma* + V-cl → *e/ma* = Top⁰ marker
 b. *sì* + cl-V/*V-cl → *sì* = FocP PRT

Because *sì* is not attested with enclisis, Poletto argues that it must occupy SpecFocusP. Alternatively, a lower CP head (Fin; cf. Ledgeway 2008) might trigger movement of *sì*, which would account for the expletive status of this particle (but see Poletto 2014 for a counterargument, and also against the analysis of *sì* as a head).

The test identifying the structural target of SF consists of a quantification of the SF occurrences in clauses with the above-mentioned CP particles, and with respect to verbal enclisis/proclisis. The results (see Franco 2009:71) reveal that SF is not attested with enclisis, but it is attested with proclisis, which suggests that SF moves to FocusP or

¹³ See also Salvi 2004.

¹⁴ An anonymous referee observes that this is not the case for Old French. Only up to the end of 1100 are clitics found postverbally in these contexts (i.e. in V1 orders and after some dislocated material). From 1200 on, proclisis begins to occur more frequently in several types of clauses; see, among others, Hirschbühler & Labelle 2000 for facts and a different proposal.

¹⁵ I follow Poletto (2005) and assume that the particle *sì* is Focus-fronted from a lower structural position, rather than being base-generated in CP, since it can also appear after the finite (and before the nonfinite) verb (see Poletto 2005 for data and discussion).

lower. This is expected under the hypothesis that enclisis is a root phenomenon and SF is not. However, SF is also in complementary distribution with *sì*. This distribution indicates that when a head in the low CP area probes the stylistically fronted element, the same (or another) head cannot probe *sì*.¹⁶ On the one hand, SF does not target SpecIP (pace Cardinaletti 2003). This is shown by the fact that, contrary to SF, overt pronominal subjects in SpecIP are not in complementary distribution with *sì*—that is, the order *sì*-V_{fin}-Subj is attested, as in 19.

- (19) **sì** vuole **elli** dire un poco
 PRT wants he say.INF a bit
 ‘so he wants to say’

(BL, *Rettorica*, 41, 12)

On the other hand, it seems that no elements undergoing SF are intrinsically quantificational or somehow contrastive/emphatic, on a par with Modern Italian high-left peripheral foci.¹⁷ This fact suggests that the probe of the stylistically fronted element does not coincide with Focus, a head that, according to Rizzi’s (1997) analysis of Modern Italian, encodes quantificational features. Moreover, Benincà (2006) provides evidence for the claim that the OI Focus field consists not only of a quantificational/contrastive focus, but also of a new Information Focus, which is structurally lower (see also Poletto 2014:28, ex. 12 for an example and discussion). As becomes clear in §6, stylistically fronted elements do not automatically coincide with a new Information Focus either, since they may carry presupposed discourse content.

In sum, the test shows that the SF probe in OI is located between the Focus field and Fin in CP (see the structure in 11). To determine the exact probe of the various stylistically fronted items, I explore the argument structure of fronted items in §5.1 and their syntax in §5.2, after illustrating my theoretic assumptions (§3) and study methods (§4).

3. THEORETIC ASSUMPTIONS. In this section I briefly clarify some notions that I adopt in my analysis of SF, and I illustrate my theoretical assumptions.

3.1. ROOT VS. NONROOT DISTINCTION. Benincà (1984, 1994, 2004, 2006) (cf. also Poletto 2014) argues that OI root clauses have V-to-C, whereas the inflected verb remains in the IP field in nonroot clauses (i.e. in embedded clauses not allowing for root phenomena, such as various kinds of syntactic islands; see also Adams 1988a,b, Dupuis 1988, 1989, Hirschbühler & Junker 1988, Hirschbühler 1990, Roberts 1993:132ff., 2007:61ff., Vance 1997:162–66 for Old French).¹⁸ However, a systematic study of OI embedded-clause typology is still missing from the literature. For the present purposes

¹⁶ A referee of a previous version of this article points out that, while SF looks very much like a phrasal category, *sì* in many respects looks like a simple head. Entering the debate on *sì*’s status in Old Romance (cf. Poletto 2005, 2014:29ff., Ledgeway 2008) is beyond the scope of this article, and I therefore limit my consideration to the following. Even under the assumption that *sì* is a head, the hypothesis that SF carries pragmatically relevant information accounts for the complementary distribution of SF and *sì*, since the pragmatic requirements that SF satisfies are not the same as those triggering expletive insertion, as becomes clear in §6. From this perspective, an expletive head cannot probe a stylistically fronted item, arguably an XP (see Franco 2009 and Salvesen 2011 for a similar proposal in Old French), because the respective feature specification is incompatible (see Egerland 2011 for a similar account of Icelandic SF).

¹⁷ This observation is based on the interpretation of the contexts in which SF occurs (cf. §4.2 and see the appendix of Franco 2009 for more examples), because it is of course impossible to test the prosodic properties and focalization of SF in OI.

¹⁸ An anonymous referee asks whether there is independent evidence for the nonfinite V position in embedded clauses—namely, whether adverbs, for instance, help distinguishing between a position in IP and one in vP. Unfortunately, adverbs are not a reliable test for determining the nonfinite V position, since they can be easily displaced and, in OI, can also undergo scrambling. Therefore I preferred not to use adverbs as a test, and rely on the above-mentioned literature for my assumptions about the embedded V position.

functional head. At this point a more exhaustive clarification of PHASE and PHASE EDGE is in order.

Following Roberts (2012), I assume that phase edges may not be limited to a single projection, consisting of a phase head with its specifier, but may instead consist of a CARTOGRAPHIC FIELD. According to Roberts's (2012:390) definition, a cartographic field is 'a sequence of structurally adjacent heads of equal formal weight'. The number of formal features (i.e. [CLAUSe TYPE], [T], [V]) that each head encodes gives the FORMAL WEIGHT. Roberts (2012:390) defines formal features as those features that are added by 'each core functional category of the clausal hierarchy, v, T and C'; see 22 below. Put differently, adjacent functional heads with the same number of formal features (that is, with the same formal weight) belong to the same cartographic field. For instance, all functional heads with a formal weight of, say, 3 (because their formal features are [CLAUSe TYPE], [T], and [V], such as Force and Fin heads) belong to the same cartographic field. Capitalizing on Richards's (2007) observation that phase heads alternate with nonphase heads, Roberts (2012) argues that heads whose formal weight is indicated by an odd number (e.g. 1 or 3) belong to phase edges. This is marked in bold-face in 22 below.

- (22) C[+CLAUSe TYPE, +T, +V], T[+T, +V], v[+V], V []
C = 3; T = 2; v = 1; V = 0

This proposal integrates phase theory into the cartographic approach and permits an account of the complex fronting phenomena that characterize OI and other Old Romance languages.²¹ The result of applying 21 to 22 is that Merge is required whenever [*] (cf. Chomsky 1995, Lasnik 1999) is present on a functional-head feature in a cartographic field. I accordingly assume that in OI a head is a phase head if an uneven number indicates its formal weight (i.e. C and v; see 22 above), AND if it encodes STRONG FORMAL features.²² I discuss below the consequences of this assumption.

Phases are subject to the PHASE IMPENETRABILITY CONDITION (PIC; Chomsky 2001). As a consequence, all of the material merged lower than the phase edge will be invisible to further probing operations from the higher phase. This means that if a vP is a phase, a CP head with [*] features, say Fin*,²³ cannot probe all of the material in the complement to the phase head (v*), unless this material is first moved to the vP phase edge, where it becomes visible. Nonetheless, not all vPs are phases (see discussion below).

From this perspective, the generalized V-to-C movement in OI results from the movement that [*] on a C-head feature triggers. That is, OI has Fin*, which imposes Merge in

²¹ An anonymous referee questions the importance of this proposal for the present analysis, suggests eliminating this assumption, and argues that all vPs are phases, without any active/inactive distinction. However, only a distinction between vP phases and nonphases accounts for (i) the apparent optionality of SF (i.e. its absence with active constructions) and (ii) cases of PP stranding, such as 45 below. In fact, the only other way to explain PP stranding without violating locality would be to resort to a long head-movement analysis, which, in turn, would not account for other cases of SF. Perhaps a different account integrating phase theory and cartography is possible, but I cannot discuss this possibility further here, since this is a general problem that falls outside the scope of the article.

²² Following Chomsky (2001), [*] on v indicates that v* is phi-complete. According to Richards (2012: 201), v* encodes [uPERSON] and [uNUMBER], whereas v, phi-incomplete, encodes only [uNUMBER]. Because of uninterpretable features on both v and v*, Richards argues that the notion of strength is not relevant for determining phasehood and proposes a solution based on feature inheritance. I assume that strength on v can only correspond to phi-completeness, since an approach based on feature inheritance does not work for OI, for reasons that I cannot discuss here as they are beyond the scope of the article. Notice that the notion of strength adopted here may also apply to SEMANTIC features that are encoded on other vP/CP-peripheral functional heads (e.g. Focus), but the existence of which does NOT determine phasehood (see discussion below).

²³ For ease of exposition I refer to the strong feature F* on a phase head H as H*, instead of H_[F*].

the CP phase. Specifically, the finite V moves to Fin (cf. Rizzi 1997), the head encoding SPATIOTEMPORAL DEIXIS—that is, where event location and time are interpreted in relation to the discourse context.²⁴ Moreover, Fin encodes nominal DEIXIS, meaning it is the clause's LOGOPHORIC CENTER, in which arguments are interpreted as discourse participants; that is, they are anchored to the discourse context (Bianchi 2003).²⁵

In a similar fashion, the phenomena affecting the low left periphery (cf. §2.2 above) also result from [*] on the features encoded on a functional head. Generalized scrambling is thus movement to a semantic [F*]-bearing head in a split vP periphery (cf. Belletti 2004). Recall the v-field proposed by Poletto (2014:55) in 14 above, repeated here for convenience.

(23) [vP [Topic1 [Topic2 [Topic3 ... [Operator ... VP] ...] (from Poletto 2014:55)

Depending on the pragmatic import of the scrambled constituent, movement may thus target a low Focus/OP head or a Topic head encoding the respective strong semantic feature.

While Poletto's cartography structurally accounts for vP-peripheral phenomena, such as scrambling in OI, scholars disagree about core event structure. Several questions can be raised about it: given that not all argument structures display phase properties (Chomsky 2001), what are the characteristics of a vP phase vs. a nonphase? More specifically, what is the highest head that behaves like a phase head whenever merged? These questions have been addressed in the literature, but an answer is beyond the scope of this article. I restrict the discussion to what may be significant for understanding the syntax of verbal SF. Chomsky (2001:6, 9) argues that only v* is a phase head, if v* is PHI-COMPLETE (see n. 22 above) and projects a specifier where an EA is merged. Various proposals have tried to account for the highest head's exact feature specification (thus for its label).²⁶ Moreover, it has been proposed that the semantics of the highest vP head depends on the choice of the event SUBJECT OF PREDICATION (Ramchand 2017). This observation is relevant for the verbal SF analysis, since I argue that elements undergoing SF are interpreted as the clausal subject of predication, when no agentive EA merges in SpecIP.

At this point, which head is the low phase head remains speculative. To account for the OI facts, I just assume that event structure syntactically behaves like a phase whenever the highest functional head in the argument structure assigns an Agent theta-role. I take this head to be v* for simplicity.²⁷

²⁴ Several proposals suggest two or more structural projections encoding TIME, with a corresponding semantics: EVENT TIME at vP-VP level, ASSERTION TIME (Klein 1995, Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2007, among others) at AspP level, REFERENCE TIME (Stowell 1995) at TP level, and SPEECH TIME (cf. Reichenbach 1947, Bianchi 2003, Sigurðsson 2004) at CP level.

²⁵ I follow Bianchi (2003) in assuming that Fin, rather than some higher CP head (cf. Sigurðsson 2004, 2011), is the logophoric center of the clause. Bianchi provides substantial evidence for her claim; moreover, Fin nominal properties have already been discussed in the literature; see for example Rizzi & Shlonsky 2006, 2007, Manzini & Savoia 2011, Shlonsky 2014, among others.

²⁶ Kratzer (1996), followed by Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1999, 2003, 2004), Alexiadou and Schäfer (2006, 2013), and Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou, and Schäfer (2006), among others, argues that the (agentive) EA is severed from the event structure and is merged in the specifier of Voice, the highest head in event structure. For a more minimalist view of vP, whereby the highest head assigning the Agent theta-role is v, see Baker 1988, Larson 1988, Grimshaw 1990, Folli & Harley 2005, 2007, Travis 2010, Harley 2013. Finally, Ramchand and Svenonius (2014) and Ramchand (2017) argue that the end of the lower phase is marked by Asp*, which sends its complement to spell-out.

²⁷ The analysis proposed in this article is compatible with various theories about event structure. My proposal can still be maintained if the highest head is (Outer) Aspect, or what Ramchand and Svenonius (2014) call V_{ENV}, or Voice (see n. 26), provided that the argument in its specifier bears the Agent theta-role.

Phase diagnostics independently support the hypothesis that vP is a phase in OI: OI displays VP ellipsis, and elements can be spelled out at the vP edge (Franco & Migliori 2014, Poletto 2014). In the present analysis, however, a strong SEMANTIC feature on a vP functional head does not suffice to render vP a phase. For vP to be a phase, v needs to encode [*] FORMAL features. Put differently, scrambling to the vP periphery may also occur with nonphasal vPs, which preserve their nonphasal properties. Cases like example 45 below confirm this observation (§5.2). This difference results from the fact that phasehood depends on FORMAL, and not SEMANTIC, weight of functional heads. This is also a point of departure from Poletto (2014), who analyzes all vPs as phases on the basis of movement that is driven by semantic features.

I modify Poletto's (2014) vP cartography in 23, assuming that Topic ... Operator heads precede a v head, which encodes PROCESS, and an INNERASPECT head (InAsp), which encodes TELICITY or RESULT.²⁸ The computation of these two heads yields the interpretation of the AKTIONART class of the lexical predicate in V (see Travis 2010:177 and references therein; cf. Dowty 1979).²⁹ The complete event structure is given in 24.³⁰

(24) [(Topic ... OP/Focus ...) vP EA_[AGENT] v* ... InAsp ... [V ...]]

A complete phase structure is illustrated in 24, in which an AGENTIVE EA is merged as specifier of the structurally highest THETA-ASSIGNING head v*. Put differently, Agent must be merged in event structure whenever the v features are [*] in OI, and [*] on v features marks the event structure as active. When vP does not require overt merger of a DP, the structure is inactive.

Active structures correspond to transitive and ergative predicates with a [+AGENT] EA, whereas inactive structures correspond to predicates without a [+AGENT] EA (such as unaccusatives, passives, and plausibly also predicates taking a [+CAUSER] argument instead of a [+AGENT] one).³¹ Thus the active/inactive distinction is given, respectively,

²⁸ Travis (2010) argues that causative interpretation depends on telicity, whereas Schäfer (2012) argues that the causative interpretation is not related to the predicate's telic aspect but to the predicate's resultative reading. Since this distinction is not crucial to the present analysis, I do not discuss this issue further.

²⁹ This is probably a rough analysis of the event domain. Ramchand (2008, 2017) and Ramchand and Svenonius (2014), for instance, propose a much finer-grained distinction of the first phase between a core event and a derived event. Since a fine-grained analysis of event structure in OI is outside the scope of this article, I just stick to the proposal outlined above, without excluding the possibility for further refinements.

³⁰ Poletto (2014) argues that the Topic field in the vP periphery is recursive (i.e. Top1 ... Top2 ... Top3; see 23 above), basing her claim on examples like (ii) and (iii) (Poletto 2005, ex. 25). This field can host both arguments and adjuncts simultaneously, as (i)–(iii) show.

- (i) già era il **malificio contra lui** **legittimamente** provato;
 already was the evil.spell against him legally proved (FF, 34, 11)
- (ii) ed ha' mi **la cosa molte volte** ridetta
 and has 1SG.DAT the thing many times retold (Bono Giamboni, *Trattato*, p. 131)
- (iii) e quand' ebbero così **chiaramente a ogni cosa** risposto
 and when had so clearly to every thing answered
 (Bono Giamboni, *Vizi e Virtudi*, 37, 24)

However, (i) is ambiguous between a construction in which *contra lui* 'against him' modifies *il malificio* 'the evil spell' and they form one constituent (that undergoes passivization), and a construction in which *contra lui* 'against him' is the fronted adjunct of the predicate. Notice moreover that in (i), as well as in (ii) and (iii), one scrambled constituent is an argument and the other vP-peripheral constituent is an adverbial, as is generally the case with multiple vP fronting. Whether adverbials are to be analyzed as a topicalized constituent is an open issue. For the time being and the present purposes, I just assume that Topic is a single head, but nothing in my analysis speaks against the possibility of Topic recursion. I thank an anonymous referee for raising this point.

³¹ The syntax of causative predication in OI requires further investigation. It is plausible that Causer arguments have a different syntax from Agents. Arguably, Causers are not severed from event structure and are

by the difference between a vP that is a phase (v*P), which is subject to the PIC, and a vP that is not a phase, which is a penetrable domain. The active/inactive distinction is visible at various syntactic levels in OI and more generally in Old Romance (La Fauci 1988, Formentin 1996, Parry 2007, Ledgeway 2012). The distinction between active and inactive structures, which respectively corresponds to the presence vs. absence of an agentive subject on the vP phase edge (SpecvP), explains the distribution of SF of verbal elements in OI. That is, the absence of a subject in SpecvP is a crucial SYNTACTIC condition for the realization of SF. By contrast, the complementary distribution between SF and a subject in SpecIP is due to the fact that SF and subjects in SpecIP have incompatible PRAGMATIC values, as is clarified in §6.

In the following sections I account for the syntax of SF and for the differences between fronting in root and nonroot clauses.

4. DATA: THE ROOT/NONROOT ASYMMETRY. On a par with what has been observed for other languages, several types of elements may front to a prefinite V position in OI. Examples 25–27 show some cases of fronting in OI, which have also been analyzed as SF in Icelandic, Old Catalan, and Old French (see n. 1 and 2 above). These are, respectively, fronting of a verbal particle (25), a past participle (26), and an infinitive (27).

- (25) e niuno era ardito che **su** vi sedesse ____
 and no.one was brave who on there would.sit
 ‘and there was no one who dared to sit on it’ (N, 11, 8–9)
- (26) per una grande pioggia che **venuta** era ____
 for a big rain that come was
 ‘because of a lot of rain that had come’ (N, 31, 11)
- (27) a colui che **offendere** lo vuole ____
 to who that offend.INF 3SG.ACC wants
 ‘to the one who wants to offend him’ (FR, 81, 33)

Other cases that have previously been analyzed as SF involve fronting of a nominal predicate or a predicative adjective in a root clause.³² Nominal-predicate fronting is ambiguous with copular inversion cases, which is productive also in grammars that do NOT permit SF (e.g. English *One problem was that we didn’t understand all the parameters*; Heycock 2012:219, ex. 35b). Nominal-predicate fronting is thus excluded from the definition of SF in 7 above, as these sentences could equally well represent cases of topicalization or focalization in a V2 clause without an overt subject. A similar ambiguity characterizes cases of predicative-adjective fronting, which can be Focus fronting in a

merged lower in the structure (cf. also Schäfer 2012, Harley 2013 for a separate Cause head, which is lower than the Applicative head; cf. Pytkäinen 1999).

³² These cases would correspond to (i)–(ii) and (iii), respectively.

- (i) **Mistiere** è di perdonare a molte.
 need is to forgive.INF to many.F
 ‘One ought to forgive many things.’ (FF, 25, 28)
- (ii) **Nobile e bella cosa** è le magioni delli alti baroni istare aperte per accogliere i
 noble and nice thing is the mansions of.the high barons stay.INF open to welcome the
 gentili viandanti.
 gentle wayfarers
 ‘That the mansions of high barons be open to welcome gentle wayfarers is a nice and noble thing.’ (FF, 20, 64)
- (iii) **Pacifico** ti mostri ai nemici.
 peaceful 2SG.REFL show.2SG to.the enemies
 ‘You show yourself peacefully to the enemies.’ (FR, 9,4)

subjectless V2 clause. The analysis proposed in this article thus concerns only nonroot clauses of the type shown in 25–27, as is motivated in the next subsection.

4.1. METHODOLOGY. A corpus search revealed an important asymmetry between root and nonroot clauses, with regard to the types of elements that may front to CP. The corpus study includes three medieval OI texts (the variety spoken in the geographic area around Florence, Italy, between 1150 and 1350), which are labeled N (*Il novellino*, Anonymous, 1281–1330), FF (*Fiori e vite de' filosofi e d'altri savi e d'imperadori*, Anonymous, 1271–1275), and FR (*Fiore di retorica*, Bono Giamboni, 1292 (1260?)). These texts differ in literary genre to ensure that the empirical basis is broad enough to include a diverse discourse pragmatics. However, all three texts are in prose and not in verse to exclude the possibility of the metrics influencing the syntax, as can happen with poetry, for example. Specifically, the texts are a collection of novels, a collection of biographies, and a rhetorical treatise, respectively. All three texts are philologically controlled and are not translations. In §4.2, I do not provide the data for each single text, but I collate them, given their fundamental homogeneity with respect to the investigated phenomenon (see Franco 2009 for further details).

I extracted all occurrences in which some element fronts and there is no (pronominal) subject in SpecIP, or between the fronted XP and the inflected V. I then distinguished between fronting occurring in root and nonroot clauses, since these two clause types present a different syntax in OI (§3.1). As mentioned above, only fronting in nonroot clauses is called SF. For additional tests and a corpus search, I used the *Opera del Vocabolario Italiano* (OVI) online database of nonparsed OI texts.³³

4.2. DATA. As Table 1 shows, elements that more often undergo fronting in nonroot clauses (such as relative and WH-clauses) are past participles (41% of the nonroot SF occurrences) and infinitival verbs (26%), followed by nominal predicates (24%). The latter have in fact a predicate function (see discussion below and in §5). The scarcity of verbal particles (4%) is simply due to a general lack of verb-particle productivity in OI.

	infinitive	past participle	SF CATEGORIES		
			verb particle	predicative adjective	nominal predicate
OCCURRENCES	14	22	2	3	13
%	26%	41%	4%	5%	24%

TABLE 1. SF categories in nonroot (non-V-to-C) contexts.³⁴

If we add the percentage of infinitive verbs to that of past participles and verb particles, we can see that 71% of the fronting occurrences in nonroot contexts are verbal. By comparing these data with the root-clause figures (see Table 2), we can see that the typology of fronted elements in root clauses is roughly the opposite of that in nonroot clauses.

In root contexts, 69% of the occurrences are nominal predicates (this percentage is strikingly similar to the 71% verbal elements in nonroot contexts), which, summed with

³³ OVI Gattoweb corpus, which contains nonparsed OI texts. Available online at [http://gattoweb.ovi.cnr.it/\(S\(5ch5a4u5req4ltfif1o21c45\)\)/CatForm01.aspx](http://gattoweb.ovi.cnr.it/(S(5ch5a4u5req4ltfif1o21c45))/CatForm01.aspx).

³⁴ The choice of representing all data in a single table, without giving a breakdown by clause type, is due to the fact that the selection of certain clause types as representative of nonroot contexts is already restrictive enough to provide a homogeneous set of results (see methodology in §4.1 above, and Franco 2009 for details). Put differently, there are no significant differences among the selected clause types.

	SF CATEGORIES				
	infinitive/VP	past participle	verb particle	predicative adjective	nominal predicate
OCCURRENCES	11	7	0	17	77
%	10%	6%	0%	15%	69%

TABLE 2. SF categories in root (V-to-C) contexts.

the 15% predicative adjectives, gives a total of 84% nominal elements. This is more than the 71% verbal elements fronting in nonroot contexts. Put differently, the spectrum of syntactic categories that front seems more fragmented in nonroot contexts than in root contexts.³⁵ This difference may be attributed to two factors. (i) In root clauses, nominal predicates may, at least in principle, undergo SF, or alternatively, topicalization or focalization (with a null subject). Given that this fundamental ambiguity cannot be solved (see above), root clauses are excluded from the analysis of SF. (ii) As I argue in §5, nonroot SF provides a subject of predication when no agentive EA is merged in the thematic structure, which may subsequently move to SpecIP. This is possible under the hypothesis that in addition to lexical subjects, verbal and nominal predicates may function as the subject of predication. This explains why nominal predicative elements may also front in nonroot clauses; see 28.

- (28) *il quale non avea reda nulla che suo figliolo fosse*
 the which not had.3SG heir none that his son were.SBJV
 ‘who didn’t have any heir who was his son’ (N, 30, 5)

Moreover, fronting in root clauses differs interpretatively in some important respects from fronting in nonroot clauses. The elements fronting in (subjectless) root clauses display particular semantic properties that those fronting in nonroot clauses generally do not share. Elements fronting in root clauses are often extracted modifiers or quantifiers (29), comparative forms (30), or elements with an epistemic or a deontic value,³⁶ as in 31 and 32. In 32 the adjective is nominalized by the generic noun *cosa* ‘thing’. Put differently, these elements are [+Q], [+EVAL], or [+EPIST] in the sense of Cinque’s (1999) hierarchy, so they are intensifiers, quantificational, or modal in nature.

- (29) *Molto m’ è __ dolce e soave il pensiero de li amici passati*
 much 1SG.DAT is sweet and gentle the thought of the friends past.PL
 dal secolo
 from.the century
 ‘The thought of passed-away friends is sweet and gentle to me’ (FF, 24, 233)
- (30) *meglio è tagliare che sviare*
 better is cut.INF than go.astray.INF
 ‘cutting is better than going astray’ (N, 13, 16)
- (31) *Perché la femina che corrompe il corpo suo di lussuria, bisogno*
 because the female that corrupts the body her of lust need
 fa __ che tema molte persone
 makes.3SG that fear.3SG.SBJV many people
 ‘Because the woman who corrupts her own body with lust must necessarily fear many people’ (FR, 12, 7–9)

³⁵ Since there is not yet a syntactically parsed corpus for OI, I could not compare the number of sentences with fronting to sentences in which fronting of a potential candidate does not take place. For this reason, I could not calculate the frequency of fronting. The numbers presented here show just a tendency.

³⁶ The clause in 29 also receives a deontic interpretation.

- (32) **Ottima cosa** è ___ la mediocrità nel vestire.
 best thing is the moderation in.the dressing
 ‘The moderation in the dressing style is the best thing.’ (FF, 20, 39)

In Old French some elements, such as intensifiers, may apparently undergo SF also in embedded clauses (Mathieu 2012, ex. 6). In OI the fronting of these elements seems to be a typical root phenomenon; that is, there is an interpretive difference between frontings that occur in nonroot clauses and frontings of the type in 29–32. Leaving aside the latter type of fronting, in the next two subsections I illustrate the data concerning SF of past participles and of infinitival predicates, which occur in nonroot clauses.

SF OF PAST PARTICIPLES. The corpus search revealed that SF involves neither elements with a deontic or epistemic value, nor quantified or degree-modified nouns (cf. 29–32 above). Moreover, the (verbal) predicates fronting in nonroot contexts all occur in inactive constructions, that is, in constructions that structurally lack an argument with the Agent theta-role. This is apparent from the fact that past-participle SF involves result states, such as *provato* ‘demonstrated’ in 33; passivized transitive achievements, such as *fatta li fosse* ‘done to.him was’ in 34; or unaccusative achievements, such as *venuta* ‘come’ in 35a and *morto* ‘died’ in 35b.

- (33) Imperciò che ssarebbe falso sì come **provato** è di sopra
 because that would.be false so how demonstrated is of above
 ‘Because this would be false, given what is demonstrated above’
 (*La sfera di Alfragano*, 1313–14 ch. II, 11)
- (34) Non volse parlare ne per paura ne per minacce ne per consa che
 not wanted talk.INF neither for fear nor for threats not for thing that
fatta li fosse.
 made 3SG.DAT were.SBJV
 ‘He did not want to speak either for fear, or under threat or for anything
 that was done to him.’ (FF, 28-Ri, 44)
- (35) a. per una grande pioggia che **venuta** era
 for a big rain that come was
 ‘because of a lot of rain that had come’ (N, 31, 11)
- b. Ciò fu lo buono T. di Leonis, che **morto** è ora tutto
 it was the good T. of Leonis who died is now all
 novellamente ...
 recently
 ‘It was the good T. of Leonis, who has just recently died ...’
 (*Tristano riccard.* App, 404.3)

In OI the verb *morire* ‘to die’, with *morto* ‘died’ as past participle, may undergo a transitive alternation and acquire the meaning of ‘to kill/assassinate’. When *morire* ‘to die’ is transitive (thus active), it selects HAVE as an auxiliary, as in 36, rather than BE (which generally signals inactive constructions; cf. 35b).

- (36) Messere, fammi diritto di quelli c’ a torto m’ hanno morto lo
 sir make.me right of those who to fault 1SG.DAT have.3PL died the
 mio figliuolo.
 my son
 ‘Sir, give me justice against those who have killed my son without reason.’
 (N, 69, 286.6)

After searching the entire OVI corpus for the entry *morto* ‘died’, I found no instances of SF with an active construction. I can thus conclude that predicates like *morto* ‘died’

undergo SF exclusively when they function as unaccusatives, which confirms the generalization that nonroot SF affects only inactive predicates.

This generalization covers further facts. Another corpus search revealed that stylistically fronted past participles do not undergo coercion; that is, they are never attested in combination with an Agent-related adverbial that explicitly refers to an intentional Agent (cf. Travis 2010). See 37 below (again, NA = not attested).

- (37) ^{NA} **morto** è volutamente
died is deliberately

SF OF INFINITIVES. Infinitive SF involves nonfinite verbs that are selected by a ‘light’ functional predicate, usually a modal, aspectual, or movement verb. These have traditionally been called RESTRUCTURING predicates, under the assumption that a restructuring operation affects a biclausal structure. However, in my analysis I follow Cinque (2004) and assume that these constructions are always monoclausal (see also Cardinaletti & Shlonsky 2004; cf. Wurmbrand 2001). The infinitive may undergo SF either in impersonal/passive constructions, as in 38a; or in constructions with a quirky subject (thus not an agentive one), such as *ci* ‘to us’, in 38b;³⁷ or in constructions with an extracted (agentive) subject, as in 38c.

- (38) a. **se fare** si puote
if do.INF SE can.3SG
‘if one can do it’ (FR, 61, 11)
- b. La natura dunque medesima c’ insegna che **fare** ci
the nature thus same 1PL.ACC teaches that do.INF 1PL.DAT
conviene
is.convenient
‘Thus nature itself teaches us that it is convenient to do (something).’ (FR, 82, 88)
- c. a colui che **offendere** lo vuole
to who that offend.INF 3SG.ACC wants
‘to the one who wants to offend him’ (FR, 81, 33)

Also with infinitive SF, no overt agentive EA is merged in the predicate structure. In §5 I offer an analysis of all these types of SF.

5. ANALYSIS.

5.1. STRUCTURE OF STYLISTICALLY FRONTED ITEMS. If we try to identify the target position and the related semantics of stylistically fronted items, we observe the following. Elements undergoing SF are typically verbal elements that do not share the interpretive properties of items fronting in root clauses (e.g. quantificational, epistemic, modal adverbials or predicates, or topicalized/focalized arguments; see §4.2). Moreover, even though noncontrastive focalization is possible in embedded contexts (cf. Benincà 2006 and Poletto 2014:10–12), it is unclear to what extent noncontrastive focalization is productive in island contexts (e.g. restrictive relative clauses and embedded WH-questions), because there has been no quantificational study, to my knowledge, on this aspect of OI syntax. Leaving this issue open for future investigations, I now turn to the semantic properties of the verbal elements undergoing SF.

³⁷ The predicate *convenire* is also a ‘restructuring’ predicate in OI, on a par with modals, for instance. OI employs a larger number of predicates as functional verbs, in comparison to Modern Italian. As noted above, clitic climbing in OI is allowed with predicates that in Modern Italian select control complements or purpose clauses, and with which clitic climbing is not possible (cf. Cardinaletti 2010, Egerland 2010, Kastelein 2012).

Recall that past-participle and infinitive SF affects nonroot clauses without an agentive subject in SpecIP, either because the predicate is in the impersonal or passive form or because the subject is extracted (as in subject relative clauses); see 26 and 38 above, repeated here for convenience as 39 and 40, respectively.

- (39) per una grande pioggia che **venuta** era ____
 for a big rain that come was ____
 ‘because of a lot of rain that had come’ (N, 31, 11)
- (40) a colui che **offendere** lo vuole ____
 to who that offend.INF 3SG.ACC wants ____
 ‘to the one who wants to offend him’ (FR, 81, 33)

While past-participle SF involves only inactive predicates, infinitive SF may also occur in transitive active structures (see discussion in §5.4).

As was illustrated in §4.2 above, past-participle SF involves inactive predicates (result states, passivized transitive achievements, and unaccusative achievements). Travis (2010:118) characterizes the Aktionsart along the lines of Dowty’s (1979) and Verkuyl’s (1989:44) analyses (cf. Vendler’s 1967 taxonomy). In this perspective, events are divided into [+PROCESS], namely ACTIVITIES (atelic) and ACCOMPLISHMENTS (telic), and [−PROCESS], namely STATES (atelic) and ACHIEVEMENTS (telic). According to Travis (2010), the [±PROCESS] feature expresses causation and, respectively, presence or absence of an Agent. This feature is encoded on the *v* head (which is called *V*₁ in Travis’s analysis). Only [+PROCESS] events, that is, activities and accomplishments, syntactically require merger of a [+AGENT] DP in SpecvP.³⁸ By contrast, state or achievement structure does not allow for a specifier. Specifically, Travis observes that achievements and states fall within the same Aktionsart class, according to a distinction regarding *v* content: both are [−PROCESS]. Travis characterizes achievements as follows: ‘What is important is the result, not the maneuver, to use Dell’s (1983) terminology’. Moreover, Ryle (1949:152) refers to achievements as follows: ‘They [achievement verbs] do not stand for performances, or ways of being occupied ... To put it crudely, they belong not to the vocabulary of the player, but to the vocabulary of the referee. They are not tryings, but THINGS got by trying or by luck’ (emphasis mine).

To assess whether SF affects only agentless, thus [−PROCESS], events, and semantically refers to a resulting object in the broad sense, two tests were run with a corpus search on the OVI database. First, the word order ‘lexical V-inflected V’ was checked for the combinations reported in Table 3 below. These combinations include a lexical *V* belonging to the activity or the accomplishment class in stylistically fronted position and an inflected auxiliary (HAVE) or a modal verb.³⁹ Some examples of expected results are given in 41.

- (41) a. ... colui che **mangiato/ distrutto/ venduto/ allontanato/ nociuto** ha ...
 that who eaten destroyed sold distanced harmed has
- b. ... colui che **mangiare/ distruggere/ vendere** vuole/ deve/ può ...
 that who eat destroy sell wants must can

³⁸ Accomplishments and activities may also involve a Causer, rather than an Agent, in cases such as ‘the sea destroyed the beach’ (although Travis 2010 does not discuss this possibility; cf. Folli & Harley 2005, Alexiadou et al. 2006). Event structures with a Causer, rather than an Agent, should behave as proper goals for SF. However, I did not find any such clear case in my corpus.

³⁹ The search was run for lexemes, so all finite and nonfinite forms were potential hits. Only the relevant ones (i.e. nonfinite lexical *V* immediately preceding a finite Aux/Mod in the same nonroot clause) were counted. Verse texts were excluded from the search in order to avoid metrics bias in the results. Boccaccio’s texts were also disregarded, since these texts sometimes present a syntax that is manipulated to imitate Latin classics or an artificial colloquial style.

LEXICAL V		INFLECTED AUX/MOD			
		avere 'have'	volere 'want'	dovere 'must'	potere 'can'
mangiare	'eat'	2	0	1	0
distruggere	'destroy'	1	0	0	0
vendere	'sell'	0	0	0	0
allontanare	'distance'	0	0	0	0
nocere	'harm'	0	0	0	0

TABLE 3. Occurrences of stylistically fronted activity/accomplishment Vs.

As Table 3 shows, SF of activity or accomplishment verbs is almost entirely absent from the entire corpus. The only cases ('destroy/eat + have' and 'eat + must') are in fact not relevant since these are all instances coming from *volgarizzamenti* 'vernacular texts', which are translations from Latin. A similar search with agentless [−PROCESS] predicates like *udire* 'hear' gives many examples. For instance, a search for *udire* 'hear' + the auxiliary *avere* 'have' gives twenty occurrences of SF, an example of which is given in 42.

- (42) quello che **udito** avesse in confessione
 that which heard had.SBJV in confession
 'what he had heard during the confession' (Specchio, 139,19)

The second test was aimed at detecting whether gerunds can also undergo SF in OI. Gerunds bear a [+PROGRESSIVE] feature encoded on OUTERASPECT (OutAsp), an IP functional head merged above the event structure. Travis (2010:15, 272–73) observes that the OutAsp features may 'coerce' event structure. For instance, a [+PROGRESSIVE] head always selects a [+PROCESS] vP, and even achievements, which are [−PROCESS], may be coerced into [+PROCESS] events and appear in the progressive form if a [+PROGRESSIVE] head selects them. Coerced [+PROCESS] events should then have an Agent in SpecvP, on a par with activities and accomplishments.

Assuming that Travis's idea about OutAsp coercion is correct, I have checked whether gerunds in progressive constructions can undergo SF. The test was again run on the OVI corpus: the search included three predicates that frequently undergo SF when they are nonprogressive forms: *dire* 'to say', *fare* 'to do', and *venire* 'to come'. An example of a potential result is given in 43.

- (43) ^{NA}... che **dicendo/ facendo/ venendo** stava
 that say do come.GER was.3SG

No cases of stylistically fronted gerunds were found, which confirms the hypothesis that only [−PROCESS] events/states may undergo SF in nonroot clauses.⁴⁰ I now analyze past-participle SF and then infinitive SF in more detail.

5.2. THE SYNTAX OF PAST-PARTICIPLE SF. I have assumed above that inactive predicates, that is, [−PROCESS] predicates lacking an Agent, are not phases. From this perspective, past-participle SF—which always affects inactive constructions—can be analyzed as movement to CP when no Agent intervenes. SF is restricted to inactive predicates because these vPs are not phases. Since nonphasal vPs are not subject to the PIC, they fall within the search space of the SF-probing H in CP. This probing H bears [*] features and requires movement of the probed element. In this respect, the asymmetry that characterizes the distribution of SF in OI—that is, its being restricted to nonroot

⁴⁰ The fact that [+PROCESS] events are excluded from the possibility of undergoing SF suggests that SF interpretation is dependent on a resultativity marking of InAsp (cf. Schäfer 2012 and discussion below).

contexts—raises a more fundamental question about the structural properties of the low phase in OI (in contrast to other Old Romance languages). These properties are thus worth deeper investigation in order to assess whether they also display such an asymmetry. At this point, the exact probe for this type of SF still must be identified.

Up to now we have seen that the stylistically fronted element does not share the semantic specification of quantifiers or intensifiers (see §4.2), and contrastive focalization is not attested in island contexts in which verbal SF is instead more productive. Nonetheless, SF might still be analyzed as movement to Information Focus. In many cases, however, the fronted past participle carries GIVEN information rather than new information, as becomes clear in §6. For this reason, I analyze past-participle SF as triggered by Fin* where DEIXIS is encoded (Bianchi 2003), that is, where arguments or predication structures may be interpreted as subject of predication (see Venier 2002) by checking a pragmatic [SUBJ(ECT)-OF-PRED(ICATION)] feature. Put differently, in OI a past participle may front to FinP to anchor the event-structure semantics to the discourse context, and check [SUBJ-OF-PRED*]. This may only happen if no [+AGENT] EA is merged, because the latter would be the structurally closer candidate for subject of predication (in this sense SF respects the accessibility hierarchy). The notion of ‘subject of predication’ hereby adopted is broader than the one proposed by Cardinaletti (2004). Cardinaletti refers specifically to subjects, thus nominal arguments, whereas in OI diverse lexical items may check [SUBJ-OF-PRED*], as long as their semantic content is relevant for spatiotemporal and/or nominal deixis (I come back to this point below).

In this analysis, SF is A-MOVEMENT of a phrasal chunk, on a par with what has been proposed before for OI and for Icelandic SF (Ott 2009, Egerland 2011; cf. also Franco 2009). In many cases the past participle does not front alone, but it pied-pipes complements and adjuncts that have previously undergone a ‘roll-up’ movement to the vP periphery, such as *nel novero dei luoghi* ‘in the count of the places’ in 44a, and *dalle genti quella cosa* ‘from the people that thing’ in 44b. This fact supports the analysis of SF as XP-movement rather than H-movement (cf. Holmberg 2000 for Icelandic). This type of scrambling to the vP periphery is largely attested in OI, as is discussed in Poletto 2006, 2014 (cf. §2.2 above; see Salvesen 2011 for Old French). In 44 the entire pied-piped vP undergoes SF.⁴¹

- (44) a. E acciò che nel novero de’ luoghi **ingannati** non siamo
 and so that in.the count of places deceived not are.1PL
 ‘So that we are not misled in counting the places’ (FR, 82, 33)
- b. che dalle genti quella cosa **lodata** non sia
 that from.the people that thing praised not be.3SG.SBJV
 ‘that that thing is not praised by people’ (FR, 80, 4)

The past participle may move (together with its complements), while adjuncts are stranded in a lower position; compare *in villa* ‘in the countryside’ in 45, although this happens more rarely.

- (45) quelli che **consumato** era in villa, non trovava luogo
 who that worn.down was in countryside not found place
 ‘the one who was wearing down in the countryside was restless’ (N, 99, 25)

Rather than analyzing 45 as a case of past-participle LONG H-MOVEMENT, I suggest that this is a case of phrasal movement of a smaller chunk (cf. Franco 2009). In this specific

⁴¹ The basic word order would be *siamo ingannati nel novero de’ luoghi* ‘we are misled in counting the places’ in 44a, and *non sia lodata quella cosa dalle genti* ‘that thing be not praised by people’ in 44b.

case, the chunk containing the past participle—vP (if one excludes any further vP-peripheral head to which the PP adjoins)—can undergo SF. This chunk corresponds to a nonphasal vP (a penetrable domain).

SF of a phrasal chunk corresponding to event structure fulfills the pragmatic requirement for a subject of predication. This requirement is structurally imposed at CP level, where the subject of predication needs to be interpreted (see above), and is formalized as follows: Fin encodes a [SUBJ-OF-PRED*] feature that various elements can value. This feature contributes to the interpretation of the sentential subject of predication, that is, ‘what the predicate is about’, and may probe the EA in SpecvP, if available, or another XP.⁴² InAsp features (which are computed together with those of v) are semantically a proper goal, since inner aspect typically codifies ‘what the speaker talks about’ (Bache 1995:74). Along with what I have proposed in §3.2, I assume that event structure includes an InAsp head and is c-commanded by an OutAsp head (cf. Travis 2010). A schematic SF derivation of a result state is given in Figure 1.⁴³ Crucially, no [+AGENT] EA is merged and may intervene in the structure, and vP is not a phase (here represented by the absence of SpecvP).

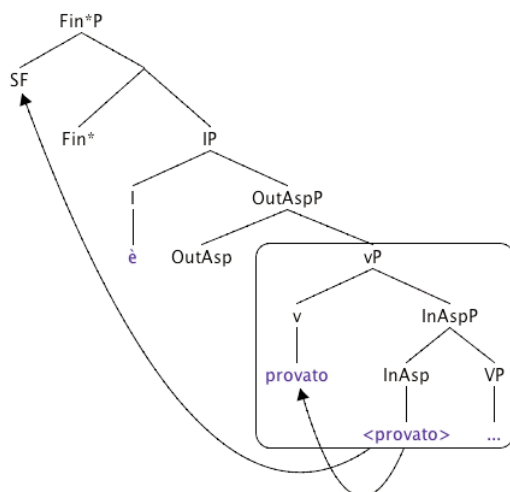


FIGURE 1. SF of a result state (*provato è* ‘proven is’).

We may thus consider SF to be a way of anchoring the event-structure (e.g. the result-state) semantic content to the context, when no agentive EA is merged. As a consequence, the fronted material (i.e. the state, being no longer in rhematic position) is interpreted as the subject of predication. To assess whether this analysis is correct, I investigate the pragmatic properties of nonroot SF in §6. Before doing so, I analyze the syntax of infinitival SF.

⁴² [SUBJ-OF-PRED*] on Fin may be checked by an EA in SpecIP under the assumption that feature sharing may happen via local c-command (Abels 2012, among others). For another proposal of this flavor see Rizzi & Shlonsky 2007.

⁴³ Here and below I assume that in nonroot clauses the inflected verb remains in IP, along the lines of Benincà (1994 et seq.); see §3.1 above. Nonetheless, as an anonymous referee points out, from a syntactic point of view, it is equally possible that the inflected verb raises to CP in these clauses. Since there is so far no syntactic test that can be used to discriminate the precise verb position, I just follow Benincà’s analysis and further associate V-to-C to an (embedded) root condition.

5.3. THE SYNTAX OF INFINITIVAL SF. On a par with SF of past participles, the strong features on Fin probe the vP containing the infinitive to anchor the event content to the context as subject of predication. Below I also discuss infinitives in clauses with subject extraction.

Recall first that infinitive SF may occur either with impersonal constructions or with constructions from which the subject is extracted. Most cases of infinitive SF involve impersonal/passive constructions, as in 38a (repeated as 46), in which the clitic *si* absorbs nominative case (cf. Cinque 1988, 2004, among others), so the predicate structurally lacks an Agent.

- (46) *se fare si puote*
 if do.INF SE can.3SG
 ‘if one can do it’ (FR, 61, 11)

Following Cinque (2004) and Cardinaletti and Shlonsky (2004), I take modal and aspectual verbs to be functional verbs selecting an infinitive and allowing for clitic climbing. These verbs do not have an independent argument structure, but inherit the argument structure of the selected lexical verb. Accordingly, the inflected verb (*puote* ‘can’ in 46) is not merged on a v* head, but directly on a functional head in the IP (e.g. Mood; cf. Cinque 1999:78–80). Since no agentive EA is merged anywhere in the structure in 47, the vP containing the infinitival can undergo SF, as in 46.

- (47) ... [_{FinP} [_{vP} fare]_{Fin}* [_{MoodP} si + puote [_{vP} ~~fare~~]]]

However, SF is also attested in constructions with an agentive EA. Consider for instance 40, repeated below as 48.

- (48) *a colui che offendere lo vuole*
 to who that offend.INF 3SG.ACC wants
 ‘to the one who wants to offend him’ (FR, 81, 33)

‘Offend’ is an active predicate with an agentive EA in the v*P specifier, as is illustrated in 49: OP_{colui} stands for the subsequently extracted EA.

- (49) [_{v*P} OP_{colui} v* offendere [... [_{vP} v offendere DO lo]]]⁴⁴

The antecedent of the extracted EA (OP_{colui}) is the relative-clause head *colui* ‘the one’. In this case Fin*P cannot probe INSIDE vP because the latter is a phase and is thus subject to the PIC.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, SF can occur because the probed material is on the vP edge (on v*), which behaves as an ESCAPE-HATCH (cf. Abels 2003, 2012, among others). Agentive subjects are also merged on the vP edge, in Specv*P, which makes them potential goals for extraction (see discussion below).

The derivation illustrated in Figure 2 is as follows. After the infinitive, the object and the EA are merged, and the verb moves to v*. The object clitic *lo* is visible to a higher

⁴⁴ SF without clitic climbing (i.e. with the clitic following the infinitive) is never attested, as (i) shows.

(i) ^NAcolui che offenderlo vuole
 the.one who offend.INF:3SG.ACC wants

This is arguably related to the fact that clitic climbing was by far more frequent in OI than it is in Modern Italian (Salvi 2010, among others). The clitic is probed by the inflectional head onto which it cliticizes; see (ii).

(ii) [_{Mood} lo + vuole [... [_{TopP} ~~lo~~ [_{v*P} OP_{colui} v* offendere [... [_{vP} v offendere DO ~~lo~~]]]]]]]

This respects the PIC.

⁴⁵ An alternative solution is based on a challenge to the assumption that 48 involves a [+AGENT] EA. Luigi Rizzi (p.c.) suggests that predicates like *volere* ‘want’ are similar to psych-verbs and do not select an Agent, but rather an Experiencer. If that is the case and the inflected verb simply combines with the infinitival root or with a nonphasal vP rather than with a full-fledged argument structure, the possibility of SF is straightforwardly explained.

Moreover, this analysis explains the attested SF optionality. SF does not license subject extractions, but SF is possible if the subject is A-bar extracted. This is because relative clauses can be derived by either option (i) or option (ii) above. In §6 I argue that these two options correspond to a different pragmatics.

5.4. FIRST INTERIM SUMMARY. In §§5.1–5.3 I have shown that SF has the following properties. On the one hand, it is phrasal movement of a (remnant) vP (chunk), the size of which depends on information structure and the possibility of scrambling to the vP periphery. This property explains why the stylistically fronted item is always left adjacent to the inflected verb. Moreover, the accessibility hierarchy for OI SF depends on the possibility of scrambling to the vP periphery. On the other hand, SF is in complementary distribution with agentive subjects, with the exception of subject relative clauses, which can (but need not) be derived by pied-piping the entire vP to CP and then extracting the subject. This distribution is explained by proposing that the fronted item is interpreted as the subject of predication in clauses that pragmatically require it (see the following section). In light of this analysis, the definition in 7 above can be refined as follows.

- (50) Stylistic fronting is a pragmatically driven movement of a (remnant) vP (chunk) in nonroot clauses that either structurally lack an agentive EA or from which the agentive EA is A-bar extracted.

Notice that the accessibility-hierarchy condition simply follows from the subject-gap condition as it is reformulated in 50: agentive subjects would be closer goals for the subject-of-predication probe.

6. INTERPRETIVE PROPERTIES OF SF. In this section I illustrate the presupposition tests that I ran in order to determine the pragmatics of SF. I have argued above that nonroot SF provides the clause with a subject of predication (i.e. the fronted event structure). If this is the case, the stylistically fronted item should pragmatically behave like a subject in a canonical predication construction (i.e. a clause with SV order); that is, it should be presupposed. However, if it is true, as Mathieu (2006) argues for Old French, that SF yields ‘assertion of background topics’ or that SF is not ‘backgrounded or presupposed’ (Mathieu 2012:340), presupposition tests on SF should fail. Put differently, tests should show that the stylistically fronted element is NOT presupposed. The tests below show that the latter hypothesis does not hold for OI; in fact, SF conveys presupposed information.

Let us consider first what the possible constructions in OI nonroot clauses are. OI has optional third-person singular expletive subjects with impersonal predicates, as in 51: when the expletive is inserted SF does not occur, but if the expletive pronoun is absent SF is possible, as in 53a. In subject extractions, no expletive can be inserted; thus the only two options are either SF, as in 53b, or a subject gap, as in 52, in which the unmoved candidate for SF is underlined.⁴⁹

-
- (i) quello che **udito** hanno
which that heard have.3PL
‘what they have heard’

(FR, 82, 22–23)

However, perception verbs like *udire* ‘hear’ are not to be considered active, since the subject is an Experiencer rather than an Agent. Therefore the EA is not merged in Specv*P, but somewhere lower in the structure. Subject-drop as in (i) is not attested with agentive predicates.

⁴⁹ Expletive pronouns are apparently optional in OI, and there is as yet no principled explanation for such optionality. Salvi (2010:170, translation mine) observes that ‘the usage of expletive subjects was however not obligatory and in impersonal and semi-impersonal clauses the subject position could remain empty, precisely as in the case of referential subject pronouns, the realization of which was not obligatory. The realization of

- (51) consigliavano ch' **elli** era meglio che la femina avesse due mariti
 suggested.3PL that EXPL was better that the woman had two husbands
 che l' uomo due mogli
 than the man two wives
 'they suggested that it would be better that the woman had two husbands,
 than the man two wives' (FF, 138, 7)
- (52) lo re che __ fosse preso in battaglia
 the king who were.SBJV caught in battle
 'the king who would be caught during the battle' (FR, 12, 27)
- (53) a. se **profetato** era __ ...
 if foretold was
 'if it were foretold ...' (FR, 31, 3)
- b. credendo che non fosse di Tristano e d' Ysotta quello che **detto**
 believing that not were of Tristan and of Isolde which that said
 era __
 was
 'believing that what was said was not about Tristan and Isolde'
 (N, 65, B, 42–43)

I illustrate below the two pragmatic tests.

6.1. PRESUPPOSITION TEST 1: CONSTANCY UNDER NEGATION. The first test, the CONSTANCY-UNDER-NEGATION test, is based on the assumption that negation does not affect presupposed information (see Birner 2012:147 for an overview). The test applies negation to a sentence. If the syntactic element that is being tested falls within the scope of negation, the information that this element carries is not presupposed. If it escapes negation, it is presupposed. Subjects in PREDICATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS (i.e. in sentences with SV order) are typically presupposed information and escape negation: negation affects only the predicate, not the subject.

- (54) John did not come to the party. John is my brother.

Example 54 is felicitous because the negation in the first clause does not deny John's existence. The same applies to OI: in 55 *elli* 'he' may win a battle because the negation in the subordinate clause does not deny the subject's existence. Negation only scopes over the embedded predicate, not over the (embedded) subject.

- (55) Elli vincerà leggermente questa battaglia che elli **non** vuole ...
 he win.FUT easily this battle that he not wants
 'He will easily win this battle that he does not want ...' (Z, *Esp.Pater*. 56.29)

PRESENTATIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS, by contrast, respond differently to this presupposition test. Presentational constructions are clauses with a null or an overt expletive pro subject (cf. 51) and with a lexical associate subject in VS order, thus forming an EXPLETIVE-ASSOCIATE chain (see Birner & Ward 1998, Venier 2002). In negated presentative constructions, the lexical subject, together with the predicate, is not presupposed. Negation affects the entire event/state, which includes the lexical subject as its participant. This means that negation scopes over the entire event structure.

expletive subjects is nonetheless rare in the Florentine of 1200, and becomes more frequent from 1300, which is a characteristic of spoken language'. We may accordingly hypothesize that the optionality of expletive subject pronouns in fact reflects an ongoing diachronic change from a system without subject (clitic) pronouns to a system with subject clitics, that is, Modern Florentine. Moreover, an anonymous referee suggests that optionality has to be reconsidered in light of the clause types containing the expletive subject pronouns.

- (56) *che elli non è dottanza che nella canzone*
 that it not is knowledge than in.the song
 ‘that there is no knowledge but in poetry’ (Z, *Esp.Pater.* 7.34)

In 56 the subject’s existence (*dottanza* ‘knowledge’) is also negated, together with the predicate ‘to be’.⁵⁰

To run the test with SF and determine whether SF escapes negation and is thus presupposed, I searched for a past participle that undergoes SF relatively frequently: *fatto* ‘done/made’. I searched for the past participle in SF position, together with a clausal negation. In the entire OVI corpus I found only fourteen occurrences, thirteen of which had an expletive negation, as in 57.⁵¹

- (57) *s’ avvisò di fare più oltre che fatto non era*
 REFL decided to do.INF more other that done not was
 ‘he decided to do more than had been done’
 (MdCS, *Cronaca fior.*, 1378–85, Rubr. 733, 283.11)

In sentences like 57, *fatto* ‘done/made’ is not negated, as the translation indicates: something had indeed been done. The lack of real negation with SF of a frequently stylistically fronted past participle like *fatto* ‘done/made’ indicates that SF cannot be negated, and it is thus presupposed information on a par with subjects of predicative clauses.

6.2. PRESUPPOSITION TEST 2: PERFORMATIVE VERBS. The second test I ran concerns so-called PERFORMATIVE verbs. Usually, performative speech acts are utterances containing a performative predicate in the first-person singular. However, since the test in-

⁵⁰ A referee asks whether postverbal subjects in general are predicted to be negated, thus not presupposed, differently from preverbal ones. A systematic presupposition test on pre- vs. postverbal subjects in OI would require too much time, given that the texts in the available database are not syntactically parsed. However, I have searched for postverbal subjects with the lexical unaccusative verb *venire* ‘to come’, which has unmarked postverbal subjects in positive sentences (but not in negative ones; cf. *non viene Pietro* ‘not comes Peter’, i.e. ‘It is Peter who doesn’t come’, entails, for example, that someone else is coming—but *Pietro non viene* ‘Peter not comes’, i.e. ‘Peter is not coming’, is okay in out-of-the-blue contexts, and the subject is presupposed). Of 117 results, only six are negative sentences with postverbal subjects, and in all cases these subjects contain a degree modifier (e.g. *meno* ‘less’, *molto* ‘more’), which is interpreted in the scope of negation.

- (i) *Che in troppo parlare non viene meno peccato*
 that in too.much talk.INF not comes less sin
 ‘That no less sin comes with too much talking’ (Tes. *Volg.* (Gaiter), 288, 17)

I cannot provide a full-fledged analysis of these cases here, but it is clear that postverbal negated subjects of this type are not presupposed. Negated sentences in which the subject unambiguously follows the inflected verb and precedes the nonfinite verb should also be considered, but I have to leave this interesting but time-consuming research for the future.

⁵¹ As Paul Hirschbühler (p.c.) kindly pointed out to me, comparatives like those in 57 are always attested with expletive negation in Old French. Expletive negation is also very frequent in OI comparatives. I thus take the example in 57 to confirm the hypothesis that SF is only attested where negation is expletive or in positive sentences, but not with real negation.

There is one exception, as follows.

- (i) *Altressi intendo ‘fatto’ quello che fece o che si crede ragionevolmente*
 equally mean.1SG done that that did.3SG or that IMP believe.3SG reasonably
che elli abbia fatto, avegna che fatto non sia
 that he has.SBJV done however that done not be.3SG.SBJV
 ‘Similarly, by “done” I mean what he did or what it is with good reason believed that he did,
 even though he might as well have not done it’ (BL, *Rettorica*, 57, 18)

An observation that may lead to a possible explanation for the negation in (i) is that it occurs in a hypothetical clause with an IRREALIS degree; thus Neg is not the only clausal OP, and its pragmatics results from a more complex scope interaction.

volves SF in embedded clauses, and more specifically relative clauses, I considered performative predicates in the third person. For the purposes of this test, I carried out a search of the OVI database involving performative verbs. Performative verbs are predicates that are employed in explicit performative utterances in order to perform an action (cf. Austin 1962), such as ‘promise’, ‘elect’, ‘forbid’; see Table 4 below. It has been argued that performatives are either states (e.g. when the speaker is not performing the action, but reporting a performative) or achievements, rather than activities (García-Carpintero 2013:4; cf. Rothstein 2004:15). Moreover, Gianollo (2010:41–42) suggests that the so-called *verba dicendi* and *verba affectuum* (which are also performatives) may lack an Agent, and the subject is instead interpreted as AFFECTED. The crucial assumption for the performative test on SF is that the subject of an explicit performative verb is NOT the subject of predication (Venier 2002, and references therein). Put differently, the performative-verb subject is not presupposed (Birner 2012), but is part of the PERFORMATIVE EVENT. This means that performative verbs lack a [+AGENT] EA, which makes them proper goals for SF. If this is the case, we should expect to find past-participle SF of performative predicates, regardless of what auxiliary verb accompanies them. A search of the OVI database confirms this prediction, as Table 4 (second and third columns) shows.

PAST PART. OF PERFORMATIVE VERB	+ ‘be’ AUX	+ ‘have’ AUX	TOTAL	SF + NEG
ordinato ‘ordered’	31	NA	31	NA
promesso ‘promised’	5	35	40	NA
comandato ‘commanded’	18	1	19	NA
impedito ‘forbidden’	1	1	2	NA
pregato ‘bidden’	1	2 ^a	3	NA
negato ‘denied’	2	2	4	NA
domandato ‘asked’	5	8 ^b	13	NA
eletto ‘elected’	2	NA	2	NA

TABLE 4. Occurrences of SF of performative verbs. NA = not attested.

^a Both of these occurrences are from Boccaccio’s texts. Boccaccio’s prose deviates from other contemporary texts, showing typical characteristics of poetry style. Moreover, Boccaccio’s editions are spurious, so they cannot be considered counterexamples.

^b Five out of eight of these occurrences are from Boccaccio’s texts.

The presupposition test involves the pragmatics of the stylistically fronted performative verb. We have seen above that performatives lack a subject of predication and, accordingly, may undergo SF. If performative past participles that have undergone SF function as the subject of predication for the clause to which they belong, on a par with the SF of other past participles, we expect that they cannot be negated or that negation, if any, must be expletive, in line with the observations made for the first test. This expectation is borne out: a search of all the predicates listed in Table 4 shows that no cases of past-participle SF occur in a negated sentence of the type in 58; see Table 4, last column.

(58) ^{NA}... che **comandato** non sia/ è
that commanded not be.3SG.SBJV is

Both tests show that past participles undergoing SF are presupposed information, on a par with DP subjects of predication in predicative structures. By contrast, clauses without a preverbal referential subject, such as expletive-associate constructions (with a preverbal null or overt expletive pro), have a different pragmatics since the lexical subject is not presupposed. In these clauses, Fin encodes no [SUBJ-OF-PRED] feature. This difference explains SF optionality (see 51–53 above): SF has the pragmatic effect of

making information contained in the event structure interpreted as presupposed, in contrast to clauses in which event structure is rhematic.⁵²

6.3. SECOND INTERIM SUMMARY. The presupposition tests that are illustrated in §§6.1–6.2 show that SF carries presupposed information and escapes the scope of negation. These results support the analysis of SF as giving a subject of predication if there is no other proper candidate that is structurally more local to the probe (agentive EA).

SF is productive in a grammar with [*] on the phase head features (e.g. in a V2 grammar), which imposes Merge. [SUBJ-OF-PRED*] on Fin may trigger event-structure movement (nonroot SF), and the event-structure semantic content becomes presupposed information. Put differently, SF, which is presupposed information, like preverbal subjects, generally has a specific pragmatics that distinguishes it from fronting to Focus or Topic and root fronting.

A relevant syntactic restriction for SF productivity is the active/inactive structural distinction on the lower phase (as a *v* property). The active/inactive distinction (i.e. *v** vs. *v*) marks a structural asymmetry visible at the higher phase, when Fin* probes down for a proper candidate as subject of predication.

In sum, both (i) V-to-C, which results from [*] on CP, and (ii) the active/inactive distinction on *v*P are necessary conditions for SF productivity in a grammar (this is confirmed crosslinguistically and explains why SF is absent in Modern Italian; cf. Franco 2009).

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS. In this article I have offered an analysis of SF in OI. When the typology of fronted elements is considered in various syntactic contexts and corresponds to different pragmatic requirements, an asymmetry emerges whereby real SF is attested in nonroot clauses, whereas fronting in root clauses is ambiguous with other types of CP-related movement/dislocations. In this sense, SF has a different function, as it provides a subjectless clause with a subject of predication. For this purpose, a *v*P containing an infinitive or a past participle may move to SpecFinP. In FinP, eventive structure is anchored to the discourse context and is interpreted as presupposed information, on a par with preverbal subjects in predicative constructions. Crucially, this possibility only involves clauses without a [+AGENT] EA, which is merged in Spec*v*P and which would intervene in the probing operation that searches for a subject of predication.

Several facts corroborate this analysis: presupposition tests confirm that stylistically fronted items are presupposed, on a par with preverbal subjects (§6). Additional preliminary studies on diachronic and synchronic facts seem to confirm the hypothesis that SF productivity relates to the phase-edge properties of OI—that is, SF coexists with the active/inactive distinction on *v*(*) and with V-to-C. Specifically, SF is absent from varieties that differ from OI in these properties; see for instance Renaissance Italian (1370–1500), which does display an active/inactive distinction (see Franco 2015a,b), but no longer has V-to-C.

The above-mentioned properties are also present in other Old Romance varieties, such as Old French and Old Catalan, in which SF is also attested. Nonetheless, previous analyses of SF in these languages have not reported any root/nonroot asymmetry. It remains to be assessed whether such asymmetry does exist but has been overlooked, or

⁵² See Kuroda 1972:154 on the related distinction between categorical judgments, which conform to the subject-predicate paradigm and in which the subject is presupposed, andthetic judgments, which only recognize or reject the material of a judgment (cf. also Ladusaw 2000:234, 236).

whether this asymmetry is indeed an OI peculiarity, perhaps depending on a microparametric difference. It would also be interesting to explore whether any other language with SF, such as Modern Icelandic, shows any such asymmetry. In relation to this point, is worth noting a parallel with the analysis that Egerland (2011) proposes for Icelandic and Sardinian SF. Egerland argues that Icelandic and Sardinian SF have a different pragmatics; that is, Icelandic SF is presupposed information (which he calls BACK-GROUNDING), and Sardinian SF is a type of focalization. In this respect, OI subsumes properties from both types of SF: OI SF is more similar to the Icelandic type of SF (which is typical of a V2 grammar), while OI root fronting is analogous to what Egerland calls Sardinian SF, which is crucially only displayed in ROOT contexts in Egerland's paper.

Finally, this article contributes not only to the understanding of SF as a nonroot phenomenon, which is worth further crosslinguistic comparisons, but also to the syntactic and discourse-related properties of OI grammar. On the one hand, the facts and the analysis of SF offered in this article clearly indicate that not all information-structure-related phenomena require a root clause to take place, along the lines of other works on the root/nonroot distinction (cf. Aelbrecht et al. 2012, among many others). On the other hand, the characteristic distribution of SF requires a more fine-grained analysis of phases. In this article I have attempted to combine a cartographic approach, which is a fit model to account for the complex syntactic behavior of OI and (Old) Romance in general, with a phase-based approach that properly accounts for derivation cyclicity. I have suggested that the distinction between semantic and formal features encoded on phase edges may be relevant for the definition of a phase. However, further research has to be done on the syntactic properties of phase edges in these languages and on their relation to the conceptual-intentional interface.

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