On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study on expletive negation

Matteo Greco

ONLINE FIRST

Volume 35, Issue 3, 2017   ISSN 0167-806X

Natural Language & Linguistic Theory

Editor-in-Chief:
Julie Anne Legate

Springer

Springer

Springer

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences:
A case study on expletive negation

Matteo Greco[1]

Abstract Expletive Negation is widespread in human languages. Although many semantic, pragmatic and syntactic hypotheses about it have been advanced, it still remains puzzling. Two questions, particularly, need to be faced: (i) what are the contexts, mainly syntactic, where negation receives its vacuous interpretation? (ii) Is EN a phenomenon grammatically distinct from standard negation or are they the same one? In this article I will provide empirical and theoretical arguments to show that EN derives from a particular syntactic configuration by investigating a case of Italian EN, i.e. Surprise Negation Sentences. More specifically, I will propose that the Italian negative marker "*non*" ("not") has a twofold interpretation encoded in syntax: (i) when it is merged in the TP-area during the v*P-phase, it gives the standard negative interpretation reversing the truth-value conditions of a sentence; (ii) when it is merged in the CP domain and the v*P-phase is already closed, it gives the expletive interpretation shown in Snegs. From this point of view, the expletive reading of negation is just a reflex of the syntactic context in which negation is introduced.

Keywords Expletive negation · Standard negation · Phases · Left periphery

1 Introduction

Negation universally occurs in human languages. Although its logical function is quite clear (i.e. a one-place operator reversing the truth-value conditions of the sentence in which it occurs—cf. Bernini and Ramat 1996; Horn and Kato 2000; Speranza and Horn 2012—or, alternatively, a complement-set operator—cf. Krifka 2010 and Delfitto 2013), its role in natural languages is not always so transparent (Taglicht 1984). Consider, for instance, the following Italian sentence:

✉ M. Greco
matteo.greco@iusspavia.it

1 Scuola Universitaria Superiore IUSS Pavia, Piazza Vittoria 15, 27100 Pavia, Italy

🌀 Springer

(1)   Luca è più   alto di quanto   *non* sia Gianni.
      Luke is more tall of how.much NEG is   John
      'Luke is taller than John.'

According to Napoli and Nestor (1976) and Donati (2000), in (1) negation does not negate the propositional content constituting an example of *expletive negation* (EN) (cf. Jespersen 1917; Horn 1989, 2010; Yoon 2011; Makri 2013). Many semantic, pragmatic and syntactic hypotheses about EN have been advanced in literature (see, among others, Fischer 1992; Espinal 1992, 2000; Van Der Wouden 1994a, 1994b, 1997; Benincà 1996; Van der Wurff 1999; Donati 2000; Portner and Zanuttini 2000; Abels 2002, 2005; Zanuttini and Portner 2003; Yoon 2011; Delfitto 2013; Makri 2013; Delfitto and Fiorin 2014 and the references therein) but it still remains puzzling. Two questions, particularly, need to be faced: (i) what are the contexts, mainly syntactic, where negation receives its vacuous interpretation? (ii) Is EN a phenomenon grammatically distinct from standard negation or are they the same one?

The main aim of this article is to address these questions by analyzing empirical data from Italian syntax. More specifically, I will investigate a novel class of sentences, "Surprise Negation Sentences" (Snegs) (Greco 2019a, 2019b), which is illustrated by the following example:

(2)   E   non mi   è scesa dal   treno Maria?!
      and NEG CL.to me is got   off-the train Mary
      'Mary got off the train!'

The meaning of (2) could be fully paraphrased as 'That Maria got off the train is a surprise.' The sentence is affirmative regardless of the occurrence of the negative marker "*non*" ("not") and, therefore, it has to be considered an EN clause. Pragmatically, Snegs are limited to a restricted contest in which speakers are struck by surprised facts (hence, the label "Surprise") and they want to communicate it. Since Snegs display a marked intonation blending the acoustic features pertaining to both questions and exclamatives, they usually show the combined diacritic "?!".

Snegs display some peculiar properties that seem to have no immediate explanation. For example, they asymmetrically host discourse-related phenomena, i.e. topicalization and focalization (Rizzi 1997; Cecchetto 1999; Bocci 2007; Bianchi and Frascarelli 2010; Cruschina 2012 and the references therein): they allow the former (3a), but not the latter (3b).

(3)   a.   E   *il libro* non me   *lo*   ha dato a Luca?!   (Topical.)
           and the book EN ED.to me CL.it has given to Luke
           'The book, s/he gave it to Luke!'
      b.   *E   LA PENNA non mi   ha dato a Luca (non il   libro)?!
           and the pen   EN ED.to me has given to Luke not   the book
                                                                 (*Focal.)

To account for the pattern in (3) and many other phenomena (see below), I will propose a syntactic representation of Snegs that combines some crucial assumptions of the cartographic project (Rizzi 1997, 2004a, 2004b; Cinque 2002, 2006; Belletti

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study. . .

2004a, 2004b; Cinque and Rizzi 2010) and of the minimalist program (Chomsky 1995, 2001, 2008, 2013). More specifically, I will propose that the same Italian negative marker *not* can receive both the standard and the expletive interpretations depending on its syntactic derivation: when it is merged in the TP-area (cf. Belletti 1990; Zanuttini 1996, 1997; Frascarelli 2000) during the v*P-phase, it reverses the truth-value conditions of the sentence; when it is merged in the CP domain and the v*P-phase is already closed, it gives the expletive interpretation shown in Snegs. From this point of view, the expletive reading of negation turns out to be just a reflex of the syntactic context in which the negative marker *not* is merged, suggesting, among other things, that standard and expletive negations are different instances of a unique grammatical phenomenon.

This article is organized as follows: in Sect. 2 I will discuss the heterogeneous properties of Snegs; I will then consider the hypothesis that Snegs are different from any other types of EN clauses in Sect. 3; finally, I will argue for a syntactic representation of Snegs in Sect. 4.

2 Surprise Negation Sentences: Some defining properties

Italian displays a rich system of EN structures both in matrix and in subordinate clauses (cf. Napoli and Nespor 1976; Renzi and Salvi 1991; Donati 2000; Portner and Zanuttini 2000; Zanuttini and Portner 2003; Delfitto and Fiorin 2014; Greco 2017, 2019a, 2019b). Some of them are grammaticalized; some others are essentially a colloquial phenomenon. An example of this latter class is illustrated by the sentence (2), here repeated as (4):

(4)   E   non mi   è scesa dal   treno Maria?!
        and EN CL.to me is got   off-the train Mary
        'Mary got off the train!'

The sentence in (4) is affirmative—regardless of the presence of the negative marker *not*—and it carries a sense of surprise. Starting from this point, Greco and Moro (2015a, 2015b) called them *Surprise Negation Sentences* (Snegs). Let us consider a detailed analysis of Snegs showing that they represent a case of *strong* EN (Sect. 2.1) and that they display heterogeneous defining properties: syntactic properties (2.2), semantic/pragmatic properties (2.3) and intonational properties (2.4).

2.1 Weak vs. Strong EN

EN consists of distinct subtypes organized into a twofold classification between *weak* and *strong EN* (Greco 2019a, 2019b). Consider, for instance, two Italian EN cases: "*finché*" ("until") clauses (Renzi and Salvi 1991) and negative exclamatives (Zanuttini and Portner 2003; Delfitto and Fiorin 2014). They differ from standard negation (SN) clauses because they do not allow strong-NPIs,[1] like "*affatto*" ("at all") (5a–b), and the so-called "not-also conjunctions" like "*e ne-anche*" ("and not-also") (6a–b) (Delfitto and Fiorin 2014), whereas SN does (5c)–(6c):

---

[1]For a detailed discussion on the negative polarity items see, among many others, Espinal (1997); Israel (1997); Zeijlstra (2004); Giannakidou and Yoon (2010) and Giannakidou (2011).

(5)   a.   Rimarrai   qui finché non avrai
             stay.2SG.FUT here until   EN have.2SG.FUT
             (*affatto) capito.   (*Until-cl.*)
             at all understood
             'You will stay here until you have understood.'

        b.   Che cosa non ha (*affatto) capito   Gianni!   (*Exclamative*)
             what EN   has at all   understood John
             'What hasn't John understood!'

        c.   Gianni non ha *affatto* capito.   (*SN*)
             John   not has at all   understood
             'John did not understand at all.'

(6)   a.   Rimarrai   qui finché non avrai   finito gli esercizi *e*
             stay.2SG.FUT here until   EN have.2SG.FUT ended the exercises and
             *anche/*neanche* la traduzione del   libro.   (*Until-cl.*)
             also/ not-also   the translation of the book
             'You will stay here until you have finished the exercises and also the
             translation.'

        b.   Che cosa non ha fatto Gianni *e*   *anche* / *neanche* Luca![2]
             what   EN has done John   and also   not-also Luke
                                                      (*Exclamative*)
             'What hasn't John done and Luca either!'

        c.   Gianni non ha finito gli esercizi *e*   *neanche* la traduzione del
             John   NEG has ended the exercises and not-also the translation of-the
             libro.   (*SN*)
             book
             'John did not finish the exercises and neither the translation of the book.'

However, the two EN clauses behave differently when they co-occur with some other
polarity-sensitive phenomena, such as weak-NPIs and neg-words (cf. among others,
Rizzi 1982; Laka 1990; Zeijlstra 2004, 2006; and Chierchia 2013). More specifically,
only *until*-clauses license weak-NPIs, like "*alzare un dito*" ("lift a finger") (7a), and
neg-words, like "*nessuno*" ("nobody") (8a)—reproducing the SN pattern (7c)–(8c)—
whereas negative exclamatives do not (7b)–(8b):

(7)   a.   Rimarrai   qui finché non avrai   *alzato un dito*   per
             stay.2SG.FUT here until   EN have.2SG.FUT lifted a   finger for to
             aiutar-mi.   (*Until*)
             help-CL.me
             'You will stay here until you have lifted a finger to help me.'

        b.   *Chi non ha *alzato un dito*   per   aiutar-mi!   (*Exclamative*)
             who EN   has lifted a   finger for to help-CL.me

---

[2]This sentence can be rescued if the negative marker *not* were interpreted as standard negation, giving
the meaning 'What hasn't John done and Luke either!'. In fact, Italian displays the same negative marker
for both expletive and standard negation (see below); see Delfitto and Fiorin (2014) for grammaticality
judgments.

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...

Table 1 This matrix combines 4 syntactic constructions with 10 types of EN clauses

	Weak-NPIs	Strong-NPIs	Not-also	N-words
Until-clauses	+	-	-	+
Who knows-clauses	+	-	-	+
Unless-clauses	+	-	-	+
Indirect-Interrogatives	+	-	-	+
Comparative-clauses	+	-	-	+
Negative Exclamatives	-	-	-	-
Rhetorical Questions	-	-	-	-
Not…that-clauses	-	-	-	-
Rather than-clauses	-	-	-	-
Before-clauses	-	-	-	-

    c.   Gianni non ha *alzato un dito* per aiutarmi.   (*SN*)
         John   NEG has lifted a finger for to help-CL.me
         'John did not lift a finger to help me.'

(8)   a.   Rimarrai qui finché non arriverà *nessuno* ad
         stay.2SG.FUT here until EN come.3SG.FUT nobody to
         aiutar-mi.[3]   (*Until-cl.*)
         help-CL.me
         'You will stay here until someone comes to help me.'
    b.   *Che cosa non ha fatto *nessuno*!   (*Exclamative*)
         what   EN has done nobody
    c.   Non è arrivato *nessuno* ad aiutarmi.   (*SN*)
         NEG is came nobody to help-CL.me
         'Nobody came to help me.'

Starting from distributional and syntactic differences like the one in (5)–(8), Greco (2019a, 2019b) proposes that EN structures can be either *weak* or *strong* depending on whether they maintain some features typically associated with SN (for example, allowing weak-NPIs and neg-words) or not. Applying this label to our example, it follows that *until*-clauses fall into the *weak* EN class and negative exclamatives into the *strong* one. Crucially, Greco (2019a, 2019b) tested the polarity-sensitive elements seen above (weak/strong-NPIs, not-also conjunction, and Neg-words) in all the known Italian EN clauses confirming the twofold classification of ENs (see Table 1).

    Focusing on Snegs, it is easy to verify that they belong to the natural class of strong EN since they do not allow weak-NPIs (9a), neg-words (9b), strong NPIs (9c) and not-also conjunction (9d):

---

[3] As a reviewer points out, for some Italian speakers this sentence is ungrammatical because of "*nessuno*" and it is rescued by substituting it with "*qualcuno*" (someone). Crucially, Italian speakers to which I submitted this sentence judged it good with both the forms. Differences in grammaticality judgments are often associated with EN, particularly in languages in which the same negative marker realizes both EN and SN (see Tubau et al. 2017 for Catalan) and Italian falls under this class.

(9)   a.   *E   Maria non   mi ha *alzato un dito*   per aiutare Luca?!
              and Mary EN CL.to me has lifted a finger to help   Luke

    b.   *E   non   mi è sceso dal   treno *nessuno*?!
              and EN CL.to me is got   off-the train nobody

    c.   *E   non mi   è *affatto* scesa dal   treno Maria?!
              and EN ED.to me is at all   got   off-the train Mary

    d.   *E   non   mi è scesa dal   treno Maria *e*   *neanche* Gianni?!
              and EN ED.to me is got   off-the train Mary and not-also John

The fact that Snegs are strong-EN clauses leads us to two alternatives: (i) Snegs are different from any other member of the strong EN class; (ii) Snegs belong to another member of the strong EN class. I will leave aside this issue for now (see Sect. 3) because we first need to consider a detailed analysis of Snegs in order to have the necessary tools to face it.

2.2 Syntactic properties of Snegs

Snegs are syntactically codified. Consider three different facts: (i) the relation with Ethical Dative (ED); (ii) the interaction with discourse-related phenomena; (iii) their preference to be introduced by expletive elements.

(i) *The relation with Ethical Dative*. ED is a non-argumental clitic pronoun picking out a person, either the speaker or the hearer, who emotionally participates at the event expressed by the sentence. It generally takes the indirect case of dative (thus the name) and its distribution in Italian is restricted to the 1st (*mi*) and 2nd (*ti*) singular person indicating the emotional relation respectively with the speaker and the hearer:

(10)   Gianni *mi/ti*   ha scritto al   direttore.
        John   ED.to me/you has written to-the director
        'John wrote to the director.'

Since there is not adequate literature on the Italian ED, it is worth spending a few words on it. In fact, Italian displays a rich system of clitics (Russi 2008) in which the same clitic may instantiate different functions. For example, the clitics *mi* and *ti* can also realize benefactives and indirect objects, as well as ED:

(11)   a.   Gianni *mi/ti*   ha dato un libro.   (*Indirect objects*)
           John   CL.to me/you has given a   book
           'John gave me/you a book.'

    b.   Gianni *mi/ti*   ha stirato le camice.   (*Benefactive*)
           John   CL.for me/you has ironed the shirts
           'John ironed the shirts for my/your benefit.'

This is the reason why sometimes it is difficult to recognize whether *mi* and *ti* realize an ethical function or a different one. However, it is well known that nouns, pronouns and prepositional phrases can realize the same function of a clitic; crucially, ED does not allow this option, whereas a benefactive and an indirect object do. Consider, for example, an alternative form of (10)–(11), in which the clitic is substituted by the correspondent prepositional phrase (underlined part):

(12) a. *Gianni ha scritto al   direttore *a me*/te.   (*ED)
          John   has written to-the director to me/to you

      b. Gianni ha dato   un libro *a me*/te.   (*Indirect objects*)
          John   has given a   book to me/you
          'John gave me/you a book.'

      c. Gianni ha stirato le   camice *per me*/te.   (*Benefactive*)
          John   has ironed the shirts for me/you
          'John ironed the shirts for my/your benefit.'

Only ED cannot be realized by a prepositional phrase and I will use this property to select the ethical function of a clitic pronoun.

   ED is optional in Snegs even though it makes them more natural. Crucially, the co-occurrence of ED and the negative marker *not* always selects the Snegs reading. More specifically, *not* may instantiate either standard or surprise negation (13a), but, when it co-occurs with ED, only the Snegs reading is allowed, ruling out the standard one (13b) (I will use the diacritic # to point out that a specific interpretation of a sentence is impossible):

(13) a. Non è scesa dal   treno Maria(?!)
          NEG is got off-the train Mary
          . 'Mary got off the train!'   (Sneg)
          . 'Mary did not get off the train.'   (SN)

      b. Non *mi*/ti   è scesa dal   treno Maria *[a me / a te] (?!)
          NEG ED.to me/you is got   off-the train Mary [to me/ to you]
          . 'Mary got off the train!'   (Sneg)
          . #'Mary did not get off the train.'   (#SN)

The pattern in (13) shows that ED is both a diagnostic for Snegs and a clue for their syntactic codification given that ED is syntactically guided (see Cuervo 2003; Boneh and Nash 2012; Roberge and Troberg 2009; Franco and Huidobro 2008 for a detailed analysis).

   (ii) *The interaction with discourse-related phenomena.* Assuming Rizzi's (1997, 2001) position, CP is the landing site for elements carrying discourse-related features, such as topicalized and focalized phrases, and for some operator-like elements, such as relative and interrogative pronouns. Schematically, we can represent the multiple function of CP as follows:

(14)   CP... Force°... (TopP°)... Int°... (TopP°)... Foc°... (Top°)... Fin°... TP

Topicalized and focalized structures, as well as *Wh*-structures, are often taken to be criterial (Brody 1990; Rizzi 1997, 2001, 2006a; Frascarelli 2000; Cruschina 2009; Cinque and Rizzi 2010; Cardinaletti 2009; Haegeman 2012) with their associated constituents endowed with a proper uninterpretable feature that has to be checked by movement ("last-resort" operation, cf. Chomsky 1995, 2000) in a Spec-Head configuration with Top° and Foc°.

Generally, they can occur in both affirmative and negative sentences:[4]

(15) a. GIANNI (non) è sceso dal   treno (non Maria).   (Focus)
          John   not is got off-the train (not Mary)
          'John got off the train, not Mary.' / 'John did not get off the train, Mary
          did.'
      b. *Il libro* Gianni (non) *lo*   ha dato a Luca.   (Topic)
          the book John   not   CL.it has given to Luke.
          'The book, John gave it to Luke' / 'The book, John did not give it to
          Luke.'

According to Belletti (2001, 2004a, 2004b), Italian also displays a CP-like periphery inside TP immediately above VP. Therefore, it is possible to find topicalized and focalized elements even in a non-fronted position:

(16) a. (Non) È sceso dal   treno GIANNI (non Maria).   (Focus)
          NEG is got off-the train JOHN   (not Mary)
          'John got off the train, not Mary.' / 'John did not get off the train, Mary
          did.'
      b. Gianni (non) *lo*   ha dato a Luca *il   libro*.   (Topic)
          John   NEG CL.it has given to Luke the book
          'John gave the book to Luke.' / 'The book, John did not give it to Luke.'

Crucially, Snegs only allow topics, rejecting foci, both in fronted and in TP- internal position (18):

(17) a. E *il libro* non   me *lo*   ha dato a Luca?!   (Topic)
          and the book EN ED.to me CL.it has given to Luke
          'The book, John gave it to Luke!'
      b. *E   LA PENNA non   mi ha dato a Luca (non il   libro)?!
          and the pen   EN ED.to me has given to Luke not   the book
                                                              (*Focus)

(18) a. E Gianni non   me *lo*   ha dato a Luca *il   libro*?!   (Topic)
          and John   EN ED.to me CL.it has given to Luke the book
          'The book, John gave it to Luke!'
      b. *E   Gianni non   mi ha dato LA PENNA a Luca (non il
          and John   EN ED.to me has given the pen   to Luke not   the
          libro)?!   (*Focus)
          book

Since discourse-oriented phenomena are driven by syntactic transformations, their interaction with Snegs suggests that Snegs are syntactically encoded too, even though the asymmetry of Snegs allow them.

(ii) *The preference to be introduced by expletive elements*. Snegs are often introduced by elements that are considered expletive, such as the conjunction "*e*" ("and")

---

[4]The topicalized phrase is signaled by the co-reference with the resumptive clitic -*lo* in a left dislocated structure (see Cecchetto 1999; Bianchi and Frascarelli 2010); the contrastive focalized phrase is signaled by the uppercase font.

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study. . .

(Poletto 2005). The morpheme *e* is the logic operator corresponding to "*and*", generally coordinating two phrases (Johannessen 1998). However, in some cases, it does not seem to connect anything, as the following Old Italian sentence shows:

(19) *e* quando avea forbiti i piedi *ed* elli tornava   fuori *e*
      and when   had cleaned the feet and he came back outside and
      rinfangavalisi vie piu   *e* tornava   a ricalpitare il letto. *E*
      got mudded   more and more and came back to step on   the bed and
      partisi   e disse a Platone   (Poletto 2005:227)
      went away and said to Plato   . . .
      'and when he had cleaned his feet went back outside, put mud on them, came
      back inside and went up onto the bed. He left and told Plato. . . '

Generally, when more than two XPs are coordinated, only the last member is introduced by *and*; however, in (19) all sentences are preceded by it (regardless of their matrix or subordinate nature), instantiating a case of expletive "*e*" (EE). Modern Italian displays EE as well but just in colloquial use and in a non-standard variety:

(20) (*E*) che cosa dovrei   fare?
      and what thing should.1SG to do
      'What should I do?'

In (20) the particle *and* is optional (thus the brackets) and it occurs at the beginning of the sentence. Interestingly, the occurrence of EE in Snegs is very spontaneous for Italian speakers (here I repeated the sentence in (2) as (21)):

(21) *E* non   mi è scesa dal   treno Maria?!
      EE EN ED.to me is got   off-the train Mary
      'Mary got off the train!'

Like the left periphery and ED, the syntactic codification of EE (see the discussion in Sect. 4.2.7) further confirms the syntactic nature of Snegs that, therefore, cannot be exclusively considered a pragmatic phenomenon.

2.3 Semantics and pragmatics properties of Snegs

In order to complete the survey of the semantic properties of Snegs (Sect. 2.1), let us consider the relation with some other polarity items, such as "*al*-words" (Moscati 2010) and positive polarity items (PPI) (Giannakidou 2011).

Starting from the former, *al*-words are "used in the typical range of polarity licensing environments, as in negative contexts and in the scope of downward entailing operators in general" (Moscati 2010:91). They display the morphemes "*al*-" at the beginning of the word, as in "*al-cunché*" ("anything"), and they can only occur in sentences showing a negative context:

(22) Gianni *(non) ha trovato *alcunché* di importante nel   cassetto.
      John   NEG   has found anything of important in-the drawer
      'John did not find anything important in the drawer.'

Interestingly, Snegs cannot host *al*-words, showing the same pattern as with neg-words (see the sentence in (9b)):

(23)   a.   *E   Gianni non ti   ha   trovato *alcunché* di importante nel
              EE John   NEG CL.to me has found   anything of important   in the
              cassetto?!
              drawer

On the other hand, Snegs can host PPIs like "*già*" ("already") that, according to Giannakidou (2011), are "repelled by negation and tend to escape its scope" (p. 1664):

(24)   a.   *Gianni non ha *già*   finito   i   compiti.
              John   NEG has already finished the homework
      b.   E   Gianni non   mi ha *già*   finito   i   compiti?!
              and John   EN ED.to me has already finished the homework
              'John already finished the homework!'

Moreover, Snegs are not downward entailing operators either and, actually, the inferential relation usually associated with negative clauses (25a) (Chierchia 2013) is not allowed in Snegs (25b):

(25)   a.   Luca non ha mangiato una pizza. →
              'Luke did not eat a pizza.'   →
              Luca non ha mangiato una pizza ai peperoni.
              'Luke did not eat a pizza with peppers.'
      b.   E Luca non mi ha mangiato una pizza?! -/→
              'Luke ate a pizza!'   -/→
              E Luca non mi ha mangiato una pizza ai peperoni?!
              'Luke ate a pizza with peppers!'

To sum up, the pattern in (23)–(25) leads us to conclude that Snegs are not negative at all.

Turning now on the pragmatic point of view, the first notable fact is that the whole proposition in Snegs conveys completely new information. This appears clear when Snegs are employed as answers to questions:

(26)   A: Che cosa è successo?
              'What happened?'
      B: (E) non   mi è scesa dal   treno Maria?!⁵
              EE   EN ED.to me is got   off-the train   Mary
              'Mary got off the train!'

The whole sentence in Snegs conveys the information required by the question. However, not all questions seem to allow them as answers:

---

⁵As an anonymous reviewer pointed out, EE in this sentence is not as natural as in other contexts. This is due to some pragmatic requirements that EE needs to satisfy, such as a clear reference to the discourse context. The lack of full context may cause the lower acceptability in (26). I will deeply discuss this issue in Sect. 4.2.7.

(27)   A: Chi è sceso dal treno?
           'Who got off the train?'
    B: *(E) non   mi è scesa dal   treno Maria?!
          EE EN ED.to me is got   off-the train Mary

Greco (2019b) proposes that questions like (26A) only refer to events and questions like (27A) only refer to single entities, falling, respectively, into the class of "Propositional Questions" and "Entity Questions." The fact that Snegs are exclusively allowed in the former class shows that the whole proposition in Snegs—and not just a single constituent—carries new information.

    This is not the only interpretative feature of Snegs. Actually, they also carry a strong effect of unexpectedness and surprise. Snegs are successfully uttered only when the described fact is out of the blue or it is in contrast with some previous expectations. For example, compare the following dialogs, introduced by either the context (*i*) or (*ii*), in which a speaker asks for generic information from another one:

(28)   *Context* (*i*): Every morning the speaker B gets the train with Maria. As any other day, this morning s/he saw her
    A: Ciao, come va?
        'Hi, how are you?'
    B: *E non ti   ho   incontrato Maria sul   treno?!
        EE EN ED.to you have.1SG met   Maria on the train

    Context (*ii*): the speaker B had not seen Maria for 10 years. This morning s/he saw her on the train
    A: Ciao, come va?
        'Hi, how are you?'
    B: (E) non ti ho incontrato Maria sul treno?!
        'I met Maria on the train!'

The same Sneg sentence is fine with the context (*ii*), but not with (*i*). The difference between them is the likelihood that the event denoted by the sentence happens: in (*i*) it is high, in (*ii*) it is low. Snegs are, therefore, associated with a surprise effect because they denote unlikely events. Even though Snegs cannot be considered a mirativity phenomenon because they do not involve a specific morpheme,[6] the pragmatic effect is very alike: the hearer and the speaker of the utterance are stroked by the unexpectedness of the information.

2.4 Intonational properties of Snegs

Snegs show a particular intonational pattern that I previously indicated by the double diacritic "?!". Before investigating this aspect, let me introduce some basic aspects of the sentential intonation.

---

[6]According to DeLancey (1997, 2001) and Aikhenvald (2005), some languages display a specific morpheme to mark the unexpected nature of the information, something shocking or surprising the speaker. For example, Turkish shows the suffix *-mis* as a mark of unexpectedness. See Rett and Murray (2013) for a semantic analysis of mirativity and Cruschina (2012) for a discussion of Italian cases. For a discussion on Wh-interrogatives with a "surprise" value, see Obenauer (2006).

Fig. 1 (Avesani 1990:6): falling pattern of the Italian declarative 'I Rossi partiranno domani probabilmente' (the Rossi LEAVE.3.PL.FUT tomorrow probably; 'The Rossis will probably leave tomorrow')
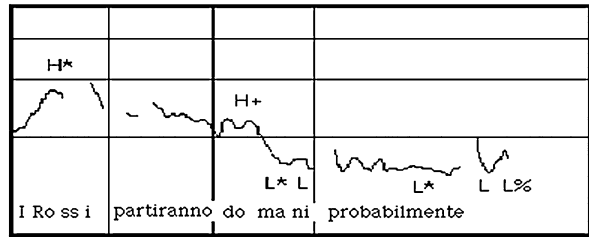

Fig. 2 (Avesani 1990:6): raising pattern of the Italian no yes-no question 'Fate un errore?' (DO.2.PL.PRS a mistake; 'Do you make a mistake?')
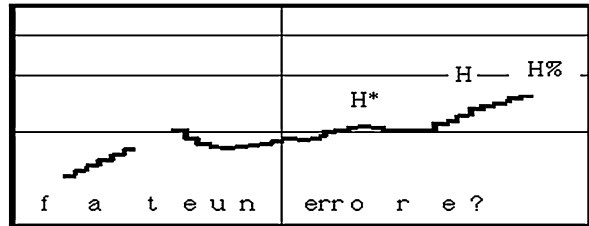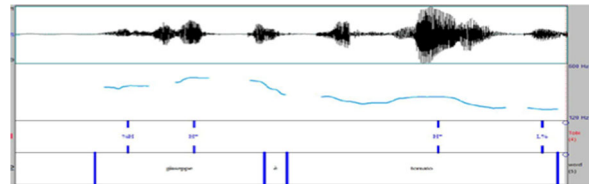

Fig. 3 (Sorianello 2011:320): falling pattern with an initial high start of the Italian exclamative 'Giuseppe è tornato!' (Giuseppe is came back; 'Giuseppe came back!')

According to Cresti and Firenzuoli (1999), an utterance realizes the fundamental frequency of sounds, F_0, to which the speakers are sensitive. Such a fundamental frequency describes the illocutionary intentions of the utterance and it is set up by changes in tone height (pitch accents and edge tones) (Hart et al. 1990; Beckman et al. 2005) that, roughly speaking, can be either high (H) or low (L). Let me clarify it with some examples. According to Chapallaz (1979), Avesani (1990) and Sorianello (2011), Italian declaratives (Fig. 1) are usually described as a sequence of "H* (or H*+L) L- L%" (falling pattern); yes-no questions (Fig. 2) as a sequence of "H* H-H%" (raising pattern) and exclamatives (Fig. 3) as a sequence of "%H H H* L%" (falling pattern with an initial high start).

Coming to Snegs, the record of their F_0 gives the following Fig. 4:

Fig. 4 Intonational pattern of the Sneg sentence "Il ragazzo non ha vinto un maiale?!" (The guy Sneg has won a pig!; 'The guy won a pig!')

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...
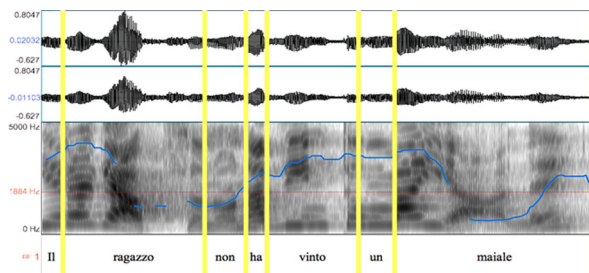
The F_0 starts with a high value exactly as in exclamatives. After a high start (%H), the F_0 falls and then it raises on the verb (H-H*); in the last part it falls again (L*) and it ends with a final raising (H%). The ending part looks like the intonational pattern of interrogatives in picture B. Since the F_0 in Snegs puts together some features of exclamatives and interrogatives, at least at the beginning and at the end of the utterance, the use of the double diacritic "?!" is correct in order to indicate their peculiar prosody.

Summarizing, in this chapter we discussed the basis features characterizing Snegs. Syntactically, we saw that they interact in a non-trivial way with both the ED, the discourse-related phenomena and the EE. Pragmatically, we saw that the whole sentence carries new and unexpected information, allowing Snegs to be answers to propositional questions. Finally, from the prosodic point of view, we saw that they truly blend intonational features of exclamatives and questions. We now have the tools to investigate whether Snegs differ from any other member of the EN class, instantiating a new case of EN, or whether they do not. This is a preliminary step that we need to take in order to approach the research questions of this article, i.e. asking what are the contexts, mainly syntactic, where negation receives its vacuous interpretation and whether EN is a phenomenon grammatically distinct from SN or the same phenomenon.

3 What Snegs are not: A justification of a dedicated structure

Let us concentrate on the natural class of strong ENs because Snegs belong to it (Sect. 2.1). According to Greco (2019a, 2019b) this class includes negative exclamatives, rhetorical questions, *not ... that*–clauses, *rather than*–clauses and *before*-clauses (see Table 1). Of course, Snegs cannot be considered a case of *rather than*-clauses, *before*-clauses or *not ... that*-clauses because Snegs display neither an adverbial particle nor a complementizer. On the other hand, no apparent impediment allows Snegs to be assimilated to the other two members of the strong EN class, i.e. negative exclamatives and rhetorical questions. Crucially, we already know that Snegs share the intonational pattern with them (Sect. 2.4); let us see if other similarities can be found.

3.1 Are Snegs rhetorical questions?

The class of interrogatives includes different types of clauses. The closest one to Snegs are the negative rhetorical questions (NRQs). More specifically, both NRQs and Snegs display the negative marker *not* and both realize the illocutionary force of an affirmative assertion (for a detailed discussion on NRQ, see Sadock 1974; Schmidt-Radefeldt 1977; Han 1998, 2002; Reese 2006 and Wang 2014). Interestingly, the similarities between these two structures are even higher. First at all, it is worth recalling that NRQs fall into the strong EN class too, rejecting weak/strong NPIs, neg-words and not-also conjunctions (for grammatical judgments, see Van Rooy 2003 and Guerzoni 2004):

(29) a. *Dopo tutto, Gianni non ha capito   *un tubo* della lezione?
          after all   John   EN has understood a   tube of the class
                                                            (strong NPI)

      b. *Dopo tutto, Gianni non ha *alzato un dito*   per aiutare Luca?
          after all   John   EN has lifted a   finger to help   Luke
                                                             (weak NPI)

      c. *Dopo tutto, non ha   telefonato *nessuno* per me?   (neg-word)
          after all   EN has called   nobody for me

      d. *Dopo tutto, Gianni non ha   aiutato Maria *e*   *neanche* Luca?
          after all   John   EN has helped Mary and neither Luke
                                                        (not-also conj.)

Moreover, NRQs legitimate PPIs and EE, exactly like Snegs:

(30) a. *E* dopo tutto, Gianni non ha *già*   finito   i   compiti?   (NRQ)
          EE after all   John   EN has already finished the homework
          'After all, hasn't John already finished the homework?'

However, although (i) NRQs belong to the strong class of EN, (ii) they have an affirmative interpretation and (iii) they are introduced by the EE, NRQs differ from Snegs in some crucial aspects. First at all, Snegs are coherent answers to questions (31B) whereas NRQs are not (31B′):[7]

(31) A: Sembri sconvolto. Cos'è successo?
          'You look shocked. What happened?'
      B: Non mi è scesa dal treno Maria?!   (Sneg)
          'Mary got off the train!'
      B′: *Dopo tutto, non è scesa dal   treno Maria?   (*NRQ)
          after all   EN is got   off the train Mary

Moreover, NRQs generally allow answers from the hearer, either for confirmation or refutation; Snegs do not:

(32) A: Dopo tutto, Gianni non è arrivato primo come avevo   detto?
          after all   John   EN is come   first as   had.1SG.PASS said
                                                                 (NRQ)
          'After all, hasn't John come in first as I said?'
      B: E si, hai   sempre ragione tu!
          'Yes, he did! You always are   right!'

(33) A: E non mi è scesa dal treno Maria?!   (Sneg)
          'Mary got off the train!'
      B: *E   si, hai   sempre ragione tu!
          EE yes have.2SG.PRS always right   you

---

[7]NRQs seem to be consistently inappropriate when they are employed as answers to questions. I thank the editor for drawing my attention to this fact.

Significantly, Snegs also do not accept stylistic elements generally associated with rhetorical questions (Han 1998, 2002), such as "*dopo tutto*" ("after all") and "*comunque*" ("anyway"):

(34)   a.   *Dopo tutto / Comunque*, Gianni non è arrivato primo?   (NRQ)
            after all   anyway   John   EN is come   first
            'After all/Anyway, hasn't John come in first?'
        b.   *E *dopo tutto/ comunque*, Gianni non mi   è arrivato primo?!
            EE after all   anyway   John   EN ED.to me is come   first
                                                   (Sneg)

Finally, Snegs and NRQs also differ in allowing Wh-elements: only NRQs do, Snegs do not.

(35)   a.   Dopo tutto, che cosa non ha fatto Maria per Gianni?   (NRQ)
            after all   what   EN has done Mary for John
            'After all, what hasn't Mary done for John?'
        b.   *E che cosa non mi   ha fatto Maria per Gianni?!   (*Snegs)
            and what thing EN ED.to me has done Mary for John

To conclude, on the one hand Snegs and NRQs are similar because they belong to the same (strong) EN class, they host PPIs, they show a comparable intonational pattern and they can be introduced by EE; on the other hand, they are different since only NRQs allow Wh-elements and expressions like *after all* and *anyway*—Snegs do not—and only Snegs are correct answers to questions—unlike NRQs. As a consequence, Snegs are not NRQs.[8] A possible alternative is to consider Snegs as instances of exclamatives because, again, they share some properties with them.

3.2 Are Snegs exclamatives?

We saw above that the intonational pattern of Snegs looks like both the interrogative one, at the end of the utterance, and the exclamative one, at the beginning of it. Since Snegs are not interrogatives, I wonder whether they are exclamatives indeed.

    Let us consider a propriety of exclamatives that has not been well discussed in literature (to the best of my knowledge): negatives exclamatives are ambiguous between two types, i.e. one in which the propositional meaning is negative and one in which it is affirmative (see Greco 2019b for a detailed discussion).

(36)   Che cosa non ha   mangiato Gianni!
        what NEG has eaten John
        a.   'What John did not eat!' (= John has not eaten something)
        b.   'What John ate!' (= John has eaten everything)

With the reading in (a) a speaker highlights that John did not eat something and negation is standard; with the reading in (b) a speaker communicates that John ate

---

[8]I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out another difference between NRQ and Snegs: in the former case the Italian negative marker "*non*" can be translated in English as "not," in the latter case this is not possible. This fact further reinforces the idea that the two structures are different (I will examine the nature of this difference in the Sect. 4).

everything and negation is expletive. I will call the first type "Negative Exclamative" (NE) and the second one "Expletive Negative Exclamative" (ENE).[9] Clearly, ENEs seem to be the proper target for the correct comparison with Snegs.

Snegs and ENEs share, at least, the fact that both belong to the strong EN class: ENEs do not license NPIs (both weak and strong), neg-words and *not-also* conjunction (Delfitto and Fiorin 2014; Greco 2017, 2019b), reproducing the same pattern that Snegs.

(37) a. *Chi non ha *alzato un dito*   per Gianni!   (weak NPI)
           who EN has lifted a finger for John

      b. *Che cosa non ha *affatto* regalato Gianni!   (strong NPI)
           what   EN has at all given   John

      c. *Che cosa non ha fatto *nessuno* per *nessuno*!   (neg-word)
           what   EN has done nobody for nobody

      d. *Che cosa non ha fatto Gianni e   *neanche* Luca!   (not-also conj.)
           what   EN has done John   and neither Luke

Moreover, ENEs allow PPIs too, exactly like Snegs:

(38) Che cosa non ha *già*   mangiato Gianni!
      what   EN has already eaten   John
      'What John already ate!'

Furthermore, ENEs carry a surprise evaluation for the event describing by the sentence as well (cf. Michaelis and Lambrecht 1996; Zanuttini and Portner 2003; Collins 2005 and the references therein), much like the one seen for Snegs.

Finally, ENEs can also be introduced by EE:

(39) Gianni è uscito a cena ieri   sera. *E* che cosa non ha
      John   is gone out to supper yesterday evening EE what   EN has
      mangiato! Del   caviale!
      eaten   of the caviar
      'John had a dinner in a restaurant yesterday night. What he ate! Caviar!'

Since ENEs and Snegs look alike in sharing (i) the type of EN, (ii) the behavior with PPIs, (iii) the surprise flavor and (iv) the possibility to be introduced by an expletive *and*, one can be tempted to consider Snegs and ENEs members of the same grammatical category. Once again, this is not the case. First of all, according to Grimshaw (1979) and Zanuttini and Portner (2003), exclamatives are factives and they can be embedded under factive predicates. In fact, only ENEs can be embedded, whereas Snegs cannot:

(40) a. È *incredibile* [che cosa non abbia   mangiato Gianni]!   (ENE)
           is incredible what   EN had.3SG.SBJ eaten   John
           'It is incredible what John ate!'

---

[9]Crucially, the two structures differ grammatically. See Greco (2019b) for a detailed discussion.

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study. . .

b. *È incredibile [che Maria non mi sia   scesa dal
 is incredible that Mary EN ED.to me was.3PRS.SBJ got off-the
 treno]!?   (*Snegs)
 train

This difference alone can distinguish Snegs from exclamatives. However, other phenomena can be considered, such as the fact that Snegs can be answers to questions, whereas ENEs cannot. According to Grimshaw (1979) and Zanuttini and Portner (2003), the unavailability to be used as answers is a distinctive property of exclamatives:

(41) A: Sembri sconvolto. Cos'è successo?
    'You look shocked. What happened?'
  B: *Che cosa non ha mangiato Gianni!
    what NEG has eaten John

Moreover, Snegs and ENEs also differ in allowing *Wh*-elements: only ENES do, Snegs do not.

(42) a. Che cosa non ha fatto Maria per Gianni!   (ENE)
    what EN has done Mary for John
    'What has Mary done for John!'
  b. *E che cosa non mi ha fatto Maria per Gianni?! (*Sneg)
    and what EN ED.to me has done Mary for John

To conclude, even though Snegs and ENEs share some properties, they differ in some other crucial respects: ENEs, but not Snegs, allow *wh*-elements and can be embedded under factive predicates; Snegs, but not ENEs, are correct answers to questions. These facts lead us to exclude that Snegs are ENEs. If Snegs are not NRQs, *rather than*-clauses, *before*-clauses and *not . . . that*-clauses either, then the only available possibility is that they instantiate an independent case of EN. The next step will be to find a unified way to account for their distinct properties.

4 Snegs and the left periphery

Before facing the core of this article, we need to shortly review some of the most important lines of research on EN (Sect. 4.1), since this will help us to find a correct analysis for Snegs. I will then address the syntactic representation of Snegs starting from the crucial fact that Snegs cannot host focalized phrases (Sect. 4.2.1). More specifically, I will discuss the syntax of the Italian negative marker *non* (Sect. 4.2.2), involving the theory of phase (Sect. 4.2.3) and the focalization process (Sect. 4.2.4). From this representation a series of consequences can be derived: Snegs are a root phenomenon (Sect. 4.2.5); their subject displays an unexpected interpretation (Sect. 4.2.6); and they interact with some expletive elements (Sect. 4.2.7). Finally, I will discuss some independent Italian structures that share some features with Snegs (Sect. 4.2.8) and some comparative perspectives and theoretical speculations (Sect. 4.2.9).

4.1 Previous analysis of EN

Many proposals on EN have been discussed in literature starting from the original observation in Jespersen (1917). Even though a deep discussion is beyond the aim of this article,[10] a sketch description is nevertheless necessary.

One of the most popular lines of research is to consider EN a member of a negative concord (NC) phenomenon, subject to the same licensing conditions of NPIs (van Der Wouden 1994a, 1994b, 1997) and neg-words. EN would share with them the same "vacuous" semantics or, alternatively, the permeability to the semantic value of the operator selecting it. For example, Fischer (1992) starts from the well-known fact that some languages display two different morphemes, one for EN and one for SN.[11] For example, Late Middle English employs *not* for SN structures and *ne* for EN ones:

(43) I drede *not* þat *ne* þe curs of God [. . .] wolde brynge me into a ful
      I doubt not that NEG the curse of God   would bring   me into a very
      yuel eende if I contynuede þus
      evil end   if I continued   thus

Fischer (1992) proposes that *ne* gets its vacuous semantics by being a member of a negative concord construction with *not*. Unfortunately, this approach does not explain what happens when EN occurs in matrix clauses or when there is only one negative element. Van der Wurff (1999) takes these issues into consideration by proposing that EN is syntactically realized by a NegP, in which the Specifier position is filled by a true-value operator and the head one is filled by a negative element. According to Haegeman and Zanuttini (1991, 1996), he assumes that both the specifier and the head of NegP must be filled by negative elements in order to give a negative meaning. Since in EN only the head displays a negative element and the specifier is a true-value operator, NegP is no more negative.[12] He also suggests that the Neg° can be covertly realized, as well as the Specifier, and this is the reason why the occurrence of negative markers in EN is optional. He also insists that EN only involves negative markers with a head status because the true-value operator always fills the specifier position. Coherently, French EN is realized by *ne*, which represents the Neg^0, and not by *pas*, which is generated in Specifier position (see Kayne 1989a, 1989b; Pollock 1989; Zanuttini 1997 and the discussion in Sect. 4.2.9); on the other hand, it predicts that Modern English does not involve EN at all since *not* is a negative adverb generated in [Spec, NegP]. However, the reason why a NegP is involved in this analysis remains

---

[10]See Yoon (2011) and Greco (2017).

[11]In order to adapt this hypothesis to languages displaying a unique morpheme for both standard and expletive negation—such as Italian—it has been proposed that the same negative marker realizes two different negations, Neg_1 and Neg_2.

(ii) Non lo   farà   a meno che Luca non lo   voglia.   (Italian)
      NEG1 CL.it make.3SG.FUT unless that Luca NEG2 CL.it wants.3SG.SBJ
      'S/he will not make it unless Luca wants it.'

[12]Donati (2000) and Delfitto (2013) pursue a similar idea proposing that EN is a scope-marker of an operator that can be either negative (Delfitto 2013) or focal (Donati 2000).

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...

opaque since negation is completely emptied of its negative meaning (see also Espinal 1992, 2000).

A second line of research considers EN either as an evaluative mood marker licensed by a non-veridical operator (Yoon 2008, 2011) or as an epistemic modal marker introducing a set of doxastic alternatives (Makri 2013). These approaches share the idea that negation can pursue different functions than the standard one, i.e. being a logical operator. Yoon (2011) notes that some languages, such as Japanese, display EN in sentences introduced by verbs like *hope, ask, demand*, etc. These verbs are neither negative nor non-veridical:

(44) John-wa Mary-ga ko-nai-ka(-to) kitaisi-te iru.   (Yoon 2011:66)
      John-TOP Mary-NOM come-NEG-NF.COMP hope-ASP
      'John hopes that Mary might come (although it is unlikely to happen).'

Speakers use EN because they are not sure about the truth of the proposition. From this point of view EN looks like the subjunctive modality, in which speakers express an evaluative uncertainty. Makri (2013) also discusses cases in which EN occurs in indicative, optative and infinitival clauses and it is realized by a complementizer:

(45) Anisiho *min* tu   simvi tipota.   (Greek, Makri 2013:29)
      worry   EN him.CL happen anything
      'I am worried that something might happen to him.'

She suggests that EN is limited to semantic contexts denoting a set of possible propositional alternatives. The fact that EN is realized by means of complementizers suggests that EN syntactically lays in the CP domain. This syntactic characterization has been independently proposed by Abels (2002, 2005) and Delfitto (2013). Abels discusses the different behavior between Russian standard and expletive negation: both license what it is called "*genitive of negation*" (46a–a′), a structural case depending on the presence of the negative marker *ne*, but only SN is able to license *ni*-phrases (46b), a particular class of negative concord items; EN does not (46b′):

(46) a.   Ivan ne čitaet zurnal /   *zurnala*.   (Abels 2002:5)
           Ivan SN reads journal$_{ACC}$ journal$_{DAT}$
           'Ivan does not read the journal/a journal.'
      a′. Ja bojus' kak by   Petr ne narusil *èksperimenta*
           I fear   how Mod Petr EN ruined experiment$_{GEN}$
           'I fear Peter might ruin the experiment.'
      b.   Ivan *ničego* ne znaet.
           Ivan NI-what SN knows
           'Ivan does not know anything.'
      b′. *Ja bojus' kak by čtoby *nikto*   ne opozdal
           I fear   how Mod that Ni-who EN was-late

He shows that *ni*-words are triggered by *ne* in a minimal syntactic domain within TP; on the contrary, the Genitive of Negation does not need such a local constraint. From this fact, he proposes that EN is only a descriptive term and that Russian displays a single negative marker *ne* with a twofold interpretation depending on its syntactic configuration and derivation. According to Brown and Franks (1995), he assumes

that *ne* is the head of NegP generated between TP and vP ($[_{CP}[_{TP}[_{NegP}[_{vP}[_{VP}]]]]]$). He proposes that the EN *ne* moves from NegP to CP in LF and, since it does not reconstruct by assumption, it cannot legitimate *ni*-words, which require a local government. On the contrary, the Genitive on Negation does not require this constraint and, therefore, it can occur in EN clauses. Moreover, in order to explain the relation with the subjective in subordinate clauses, he suggests that EN occupies a high functional projection of modality and, consequently, it negates the positive evaluation of a proposition rather than the proposition itself.[13]

A different approach is to treat EN as a presuppositional phenomenon. According to Benincà (1996), EN loses its ability to deny a proposition since it interacts with the presuppositional interpretation of the sentence. EN naturally co-occurs with other presuppositional negative elements, such as the Padoan *miga*:

(47)   *No* vien-lo   *miga*?
        NEG comes-s.CL NEG
        'He's not coming?'

Portner and Zanuttini (2000) and Zanuttini and Portner (2003) state that the Padoan *no* is the morphological realization of two different elements: an SN marker and a scalar implicature element. These elements display a different syntactic nature: the former is the head of NegP and the latter is an adjunct to the verb.[14] Zanuttini and Portner reject the idea that EN is not negative at all, linking its meaning to the implicature mechanism. More specifically, the meaning of EN clauses—they discuss the case of exclamatives—is associated with a scalar implicature composed of a set P of true negative propositions.[15] The alternative propositions are displaced on a scale of expectedness/likelihood from the least expected to the most expected. The role of EN is to affirm that only the "extreme" least expected proposition is true. Consider, for example, the following sentence:

(48)   a.   Cossa no ghe dise-*lo*!
             what   EN him say-s.CL
             'What things he's telling him!'

Its set P could be composed in the following way:

(49)   P = ('he didn't tell him he committed a murder' < 'he didn't tell him he is having trouble in his marriage'
        < 'he didn't tell him he dislikes his neighbor < 'he didn't tell him it is a nice day outside')

In this case, *no* imposes on the structure that only the "extreme" less expected proposition is true, i.e. 'he didn't tell him he committed a murder,' conveying "the fact that he did tell him many things, including the surprising proposition that he is having

---

[13]See Makri (2013) for a criticism to this proposal.

[14]This twofold classification takes into account the distribution of some phenomena, such as the subject-clitic inversion. See the original works for a detailed discussion.

[15]For a similar idea, see Villalba (2004).

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...

trouble in his marriage" (Zanuttini and Portner 2003:10). Since all propositions in P are negative, the uttered sentence shows a negative marker even though the meaning is affirmative.

Finally, Delfitto and Fiorin (2014) propose a purely semantic account for EN. They start pointing out that negative exclamatives and negative rhetorical questions express a sort of "universal quantification." In fact, both (50a) and (50b) states that Gianni has done *everything* he could do:

(50) a. Che cosa non ha fatto Gianni! (Exclamative)
          what   EN has done John
          'What has John done!' (John has done everything he could do)
      b. Che cosa non ha fatto John? (Negative Rhetorical Question)
          what   EN has done John
          'What hasn't John done?' (John has done everything he could do)

In order to give a common account for both exclamative and rhetorical clauses, they propose that negation reverses the order of informativity usually denoted by exclamatives and questions. More specifically, according to Hamblin (1973), they assume that a question denotes a set of propositions correspondent to every possible answer. According to Han (2002), they also assume that this set of alternative answers is structured within a Boolean algebra framework ordered by an entailment mechanism: if p entails q, then p is more informative than q and, according to Shannon's correlation between informativity and probability, p is less likely to be true than q. For example, suppose that (50a–b) denote a set of three objects {a,b,c} corresponding to the things that John could do. Boolean algebra ordered by an entailment mechanism could be represented in the following way:

(51)
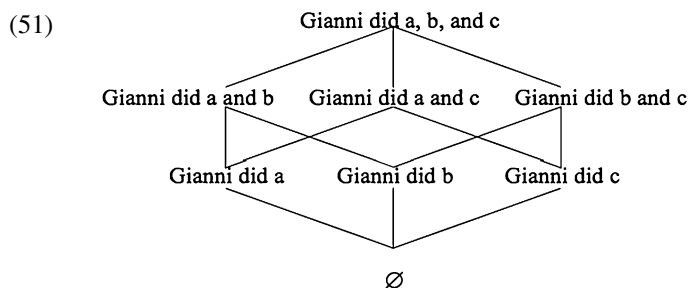
(Delfitto and Fiorin 2014:286)

The proposition "Gianni did a, b, and c" is the least likely to be true because it is the most informative and it entails the truth of all the other propositions; sentences like "Gianni did a," "Gianni did b," and "Gianni did c" are less informative and more likely to be true. Delfitto and Fiorin propose that the role of EN is to reverse this order of informativity and, therefore, of likelihood. With EN the proposition "Gianni did a, b, and c" becomes the less informative and, therefore, the most likely to be true; on the contrary, the propositions "Gianni did a," "Gianni did b," and "Gianni did c" are more informative and, therefore, less likely to be true. From this special semantics it also follows that NRQs and exclamatives convey the "universal quantification" that Gianni has done *everything* he could do.

Now we have different tools to give a formal account for the EN phenomenon. Of course, none of the approaches distinguish Snegs. In the next section I will propose a specific analysis for this specific construction.

4.2 Explaining Snegs

Let me start by recalling some basic properties of Snegs: they belong to the strong class of EN (they do not allow weak and strong NPIs, neg-words, not-also conjunction, etc.); their whole sentence carries new information making them correct answers to what I called "Propositional Questions"; they refer to surprising and unexpected events; and, finally, they are specifically associated with discourse-related phenomena, to the Ethical Dative (ED), to the Expletive *E* (and) (EE) and to the intonational pattern melting together some exclamative and interrogative acoustic features. The best syntactic representation of Snegs would be able to correctly predict all these facts or, at least, most of them.

4.2.1 A crucial observation

Here I want to expand an observation already discussed in Sect. 2.2 that is crucial for the syntactic definition of Snegs: they only allow topicalized phrases rejecting the focalized ones (I repeat the sentences in 3 as 52).

(52) a. E *il libro* Gianni non me *lo* ha dato a Luca?! (Topic)
and the book John EN ED.to me CL.it has given to Luke
'The book, John gave it to Luke!'
b. *E LA PENNA Gianni non mi ha dato a Luca
and the pen John EN ED.to me has given to Luke
(non il libro)?! (*Focus)
not the book

We can reasonably wonder whether this pattern only concerns one typology of focalized/topicalized structure or whether it works for every instance of them. More specifically, in our example the focalization carries the semantic feature of contrast (Rizzi 1997), but, as recent works show (see below), this is not always employed in Italian (although it is the most widespread interpretation). For instance, the contrastive flavor is absent, or at least extremely weak, in some other focalized clauses, such as anaphoric-anteposition (Benincà and Poletto 2004). If Snegs were banned even in these cases, we could have a strong clue that the syntactic structure of focus—and not (only) its semantic "contrastive" mechanism—plays a central role in the incompatibility with Snegs. A similar discussion holds for topics: it may be possible that Snegs only allow a specific type of topicalized structure, and not others. In fact, we know from the literature that there are many types of topics, each associated with its own semantic and pragmatic interpretation (see, among others, Benincà and Poletto 2004; Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl 2007). Therefore, I will compare Snegs with different types of focalized and topicalized phrases.

Starting from the topicalized ones, even though we consider the different cases discussed in Benincà and Poletto (2004), in Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007) and

in other works (cf. Benincà 1988; Cinque 1982, 1990; Cecchetto 1997, 1999; Cardinaletti 2002), the pattern does not change: Snegs are always allowed:

(53) a. E *Gianni*, gli amici, non gli   hanno   fatto un brutto scherzo?!
          EE John   the friends EN to-him have.3PL done a   bad   joke
                                                        (*Hanging Topic*)
          'John, his friends played a bad joke on him!'

      b. E *a Gianni*, gli amici, non gli   hanno   fatto un brutto
          EE to John   the friends EN to-him have.3PL done a   bad
          scherzo?!   (*Left Dislocation*)
          joke
          'To Mario, his friends played a bad joke on him!'

      c. E *domani* Gianni non mi   viene a trovare?!   (*Scene Setting*)
          EE tomorrow John   EN CL.me comes to see
          'Tomorrow John is coming to see me!'

      d. E *la frutta* non la   regaliamo   e *la verdure*   non
          EE the fruit EN CL.it give for free.3PL.PRS and the vegetables EN
          la   vendiamo?!   (*List Interpretation*)
          CL.it sell.3PL.PRS
          'We give fruit for free, while we sell the vegetables!'

      e. E *questo*, io ai   ragazzi non *l'*ho   detto direttamente?!
          EE this   I to-the boys   EN CL.it.have.1SG told directly
          'I told that fact to my students directly!'
                                        (*Aboutness, contr. and familiar topic*)

      f. E Luca non ha già   mangiato, *il gelato*?!   (*Marginalization*)
          EE Luke EN has already eaten   the ice-cream
          'Luke already ate the ice cream!'

      g. E Luca non   *l'*ha già   mangiato, *il gelato*?!   (*CLRD*)
          EE Luke EN CL.it has already eaten   the ice-cream
          'Luke already ate the ice cream!'

Now consider the focalized structures. We already know that Snegs cannot host focalized elements with a contrastive semantics. Crucially, this remains true also in other focalized structures without this semantic interpretation. Consider the cases of Mirative fronting focus (Cruschina 2012), Quantifier Fronting (Quer 2002; Benincà and Poletto 2004; Cruschina 2012) and Anaphoric Anteposition (Benincà and Poletto 2004):

(54) *Ora ricordo.   E [una sciarpa rossa]$_i$ non mi   ha
       now remember.1SG.PRS EE a   scarf   red   EN CL.to-me has
       regalato t$_i$ Gianni per Natale?!   (*Mirative fronting focus*)
       given   John for Christmas

(55) *E *qualcosa*$_i$ non mi ha concluso t$_i$ Luca stando qui?!   (*QP-fronting*)
       EE something EN ED has accomplished Luke being here

(56) A: Gianni è andato al bar invece di andare a scuola.
                                               (*Anaphoric Anteposition*)
           'John went to a bar instead going to school.'

B: *E *questo*ᵢ non mi ha fatto tᵢ Gianni?!
   EE this   EN ED has done John

According to Lonzi (2004), Brunetti (2004, 2008) and Cruschina (2012), in (54) the Mirative element *una sciarpa rossa* is moved to the fronted position of focus without a contrastive semantics. Snegs are ruled out in this case and, consequently, its ungrammaticality has to be related to the movement in the CP-field. The same is true with both Quantifier Fronting and Anaphoric Anteposition: the contrastive semantics does not play a central role in these structures and, therefore, the ungrammaticality with Snegs must be related to their syntactic configuration. Finally, sentences displaying contrastive focalized particles, such as "*solo*" ("only") (Brunetti 2004), further witness this fact. The particle can *only* occur either *in situ* (57a) or in a fronted focalized position (57b). Crucially, only the former option is available in Snegs (57c), the latter is ruled out (57d):

(57) a. Non ha mangiato *solo* la pizza Gianni.
            NEG has eaten   only the pizza John
            'John did not only eat pizza.'

     b. [FocP SOLO LA PIZZA]ᵢ non ha mangiato tᵢ Gianni
             only the pizza   NEG has eaten   John
            (non anche la pasta).
            (not also the pasta)
            'Only pizza John did not eat (also not the pasta).'

     c. E non mi ha mangiato *solo* la pizza Gianni?!
            EE EN ED has eaten   only the pizza John
            'John only ate pizza!'

     d. *E [FocP SOLO LA PIZZA]ᵢ non mi ha mangiato tᵢ Gianni?!
            EE   only the pizza   EN ED has eaten   John
            (non anche la pasta)
            (not also the pasta)

The cause of the ungrammaticality in (71d) has to be detected in the phrasal movement to the CP-field.[16]

    To sum up, we saw that Snegs allow topicalized structures but not focalized ones (regardless of the strength of the contrastive semantics). The discrimination seems to be their syntactic configuration and their relation with the CP-layer. This conclusion partially matches the observation in Rizzi (2004a) on the interaction between adverbs and Italian negation. He notes that adverbs like "*rapidamente*" ("rapidly") cannot be focalized in fronted position when they occur in negative sentences (58a), whereas they can be topicalized (58b):

(58) a. *RAPIDAMENTE i tecnici   *non* hanno   risolto il problema.
            rapidly   the technicians not have.3PL solved the problem

---

[16]This conclusion takes into consideration the pattern with topicalized and focalized phrases *in situ* as well (Belletti 2001, 2004a, 2004b;). According to Rizzi (1997), those elements display a (covert) movement to the left periphery (see also Calabrese 1992) and, therefore, their incompatibility with Snegs further confirms the centrality of the CP-layer in the Snegs syntactic definition.

b. Speravo proprio che potessero sbarazzarsi rapidamente di questo prob-
lema, ma devo dire che, *rapidamente*, non lo hanno risolto.
'I really hoped that they could rapidly get rid of this problem, but I must
say that, rapidly, they didn't solve it.'

This pattern led Rizzi to propose that negation and focalization display the same
kind of licensing features (i.e. quantificational) making (58a) ungrammatical by a
relativized minimality violation (see also Haegeman 1995, 2000 and Donati 2000).
In any case, what I want to emphasize here is the particular interaction between focus
and negation, further reinforcing the idea that they are the crucial ingredients for the
definition of Snegs.

4.2.2 The position of the negative marker not in Snegs

We have arrived at the core of this article. I recall that our aim is to find a syntactic
representation for Snegs from which their properties were derived in a unitary way.
To pursue this goal, I want to start from the relation with the left periphery and I want
to propose that in Snegs the Italian negative marker *not*, which is usually considered
as the head of a negative phrase, is externally merged in the CP-field where it selects
a FocP as its argument, which is filled by TP (internally merged there). The following
schema shows this proposal:

(59) $[_{CP} \ldots [_{X^\circ} \text{ non }] \ldots [_{TP} \text{ Foc}^\circ [\ldots t_{TP} \ldots]]]$

Let us consider this representation step by step starting from the nature of the negative
marker *not*.

It is generally assumed that the Italian negative marker *not* displays a head sta-
tus (Kayne 1989b; Haegeman and Zanuttini 1991; Zanuttini 1996, 2001; Merchant
2001).[17] I do not depart from this assumption because there are no theoretical or
empirical reasons to do so. Actually, Italian also displays a negative form having a
maximal projection nature, "*no*" ("not$_2$"), but Snegs refuse to occur with it:[18]

(60)   E   *non/*no* mi è scesa dal   treno Maria?!
        EE NEG not$_2$ ED is got   off-the train Mary
        'Mary got off the train.'

I just proposed that in Snegs the negative marker *not* is directly merged in the CP-
field instead of above the TP[19] as it is generally assumed when it realizes the standard

---

[17]For an opposite view, see Cinque (1999) and Rizzi (1990).

[18]According to an anonymous reviewer, in his/her variety of Italian it is possible to have the form "no" in
some colloquial sentences that are alike to Snegs:

(iv)   e no che la torta mi casca   per terra   sul   più bello della festa?!
        EE not that the cake ED fell-down to ground at-the best part of the party
        'The cake fell down at the best moment of the party!'

Unfortunately, this sentence is not fine to my informants or to me. A different linguistic substratum can
cause the differences in the grammatical judgments. Future research will shed light on this issue.

[19]This position is one of the two parametrical values proposed by Ouhalla (1990).

negation function (cf. Belletti 1990; Laka 1990; Zanuttini 1996, 1997, 2001). From this point of view, it is extremely economic to consider expletive and standard negation to be the result of different syntactic representations involving the same morphological element: when the negative marker *not* is merged right above the TP, it gives the standard negation reading; when it is merged in a higher position, i.e. the CP-field, it gives the expletive negation reading (at least, in the Snegs case). Therefore, in Snegs the negative marker *not* is always the expression of the Italian negation. Coherently, Snegs display the same restrictions as other Italian negative sentences. For example, *not* must be adjacent to the verb because of its clitic-like nature (cf. Belletti 1990; Zanuttini 1996, 1997),[20] not allowing TP-lacking structures—such as past participle clauses (61a) and Absolute Constructions (61b) (Kayne 1989b; Belletti 1992, 2006; Zanuttini 1996)—and reproducing the same pattern as SN clauses (61a′–b′):

(61)   a. *E non raggiunta Maria, siamo andati al   bar?!
              EE EN reached   Mary are.1PL went to-the bar

        a′. *Non raggiunta Maria, siamo andati al   bar.
              NEG reached   Mary are.1PL went to-the bar

        b. *E non arrivata in ritardo, Maria è stata sgridata   dalla maestra?!
              EE EN arrived in late   Mary is been reprimanded by-the teacher

        b′. *Non arrivata in ritardo, Maria è stata sgridata   dalla maestra.
              NEG arrived in late   Mary is been reprimanded by-the teacher

For the same reason, Snegs cannot accept elements located between *not* and the verb, like the subject *Mary* in (62a)[21] or the adverb "*ieri*" ("yesterday") in (62b), unless they were already adjunct to the verb as the pronominal clitic "*gli*" ("to him") in (62c):

(62)   a. *E non *Maria* mi è scesa dal treno?!
              EE EN Mary ED is got   off to-the   train

        b. *E Maria non *ieri*   mi ha telefonato?!
              EE Mary EN yesterday ED has phoned

        c. E Maria non *gli*   ha telefonato nel   cuore della notte?!
              EE Mary EN CL.to him has phoned   in the heart of-the night
              'Mary phoned him in the dead of the night!'

Just because *not* behaves like SN in Sneg, one could conclude that there is no reason to assume that it lays in CP-layer, as my proposal assumes, instead of at the edge of the TP area as in SN. Alternatively, it is also possible to follow a mixed-path, i.e. to consider *not* externally merged above TP and then moved to the CP-field (*a là* Abels 2002, 2005). However, some distributional reasons force the rejection of these alternatives.

---

[20]See Cinque (1999) and Frascarelli (2000) for an opposite view.

[21]According to the schema in (74), the word order *not>subject>verb* is the expected one in Snegs since the negative marker dominates the whole TP which host the subject in its specifier position (between negation and the verb).

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study. . .

Crucially, when *not* is generated above TP and eventually moved to CP by internal merge, it triggers all the negative-scope phenomena absent in Snegs: it triggers neg-words, strong and weak NPIs, not-also conjunction, etc. Consider, for example, the Aux-to-Comp phenomenon in which the negative marker *not* carries along the verb moving to the CP-field (but it is not generated there) (cf. Rizzi 1981, 1982; Cinque 1999):

(63) a. *Non* essendo   arrivato *nessuno*, siamo venuti da soli.   (neg-word)
          NEG be.gerund arrived nobody   be.1PL come by alone
          'Not having arrived anyone, we came by ourselves.'
      b. *Non* avendo alzato *un dito*   per aiutare Luca, Laura è stata
          NEG having lifted a finger to   help   Luke Laura is being
          sgridata.   (weak NPI)
          reprimanded
          'Not having lifted a finger to help Luca, Laura has been reprimanded.'
      c. *Non* avendo capito   *un tubo*, Laura è stata   bocciata all' esame.
          NEG having understood a   tube   Laura is being rejected to-the exam
                                                            (strong NPI)
          'Not having understood anything, Laura has failed the exam.'
      d. *Non* essendo arrivato Gianni e   *neanche* Luca, siamo venuti con
          NEG being   arrived John   and neither Luke be.1PL come with
          Maria (not-also conjunction).
          Mary
          'Not having arrived John and neither Luke, we came with Mary.'

Crucially, in all these cases the "negative" force of negation is still present, contrary to what happens in Snegs where negative-polarity elements are ungrammatical (see Sect. 2.1).[22] As a proof, Snegs cannot be implemented in Aux-to-Comp structures as well:

(64) *E   non essendo   arrivata Maria, siamo venuti da soli?!
       EE EN be.gerund arrived Mary   be.1PL come by alone

This fact could be easily caught if we assume that the negative marker *not* in Snegs is externally merged in the CP domain, and not in the TP one, when the v*P phase is already closed.

---

[22]This observation can also be extended to those cases in which the whole TP is moved to [Spec, FocP]. Consider, for example, strong and weak NPIs in answers to questions (I have to thank an anonymous reviewer for making me think of this case):

A: Com'è andata l'organizzazione della festa con Luca? (How was the organization of the party with Luke?)

B: [FocP [*Non* ha fatto *un tubo* per aiutar-mi]i [TP ti]].   *strong NPI*
        'He did not help at all.'

B′: [FocP [Non ha *alzato un dito* per aiutarmi]i [TP ti]].   *Weak NPI*
        'He did not lift a finger to help me.'

4.2.3 Snegs and Phases: theoretical issues

Assuming the theory of phases as formulated in Chomsky ([2000], [2001], [2004], [2008], [2013]),[23] I propose that in Snegs the negative marker *not* is merged in the CP-phase when the vP-one is already closed and transferred to the interfaces. Schematically, we can represent it as follows:

(65)   [$_{CP}$ ... [$_{X°}$ non] ... [$_{FocP}$ TP [Foc° [$_{TP}$ [$_{\underline{v*P}}$ [... v°...]]]$_i$]]]

The underlined elements represent the phase of the derivation:[24] when *not* is introduced in the CP-field, the domain of the vP is impenetrable and, therefore, negation cannot see inside it. From this fact it immediately follows that negation cannot trigger, for example, negative-scope elements (such as neg-words, weak/strong NPIs and not-also conjunctions) since, according to Giannakidou ([1997], [2000]) and Zeijlstra ([2004]), a negative operator must bind all free variables in the vP domain in order to allow them. If there is not an available negative operator, as in affirmative clauses, or if the v*P is already closed when negation is merged, as in the Snegs case, then this kind of binding fails and all negative operator-variable structures are excluded. For the sake of clearness, here I repeat some examples in ([9]) as ([66]), emphasizing the different phases:

(66)   a. *[$_{CP}$ E   Non [$_{v*P}$ mi è sceso dal   treno *nessuno*]]?!   (**neg-words*)
              and EN   ED is got   off-the train nobody
         b. *[$_{CP}$ E   non [$_{v*P}$ mi è *affatto* scesa dal   treno Maria]]?!
              and EN   ED is at all got   off-the train Mary
                                                                    (**strong-NPIs*)

In these sentences the negative marker *not* and the polarity elements occur in different phases yielding ungrammaticality.[25] On the other hand, Snegs can host PPIs because these elements refuse negative domains and this is exactly what my analysis predicts for Snegs:

(67)   [$_{CP}$ E   non [$_{v*P}$ mi è *già*   scesa dal   treno Maria]]?!
              and EN   ED is already got   off-the train Mary
         'Mary already got off the train!'

---

[23] See also López ([2009]); Gallego ([2012]) and Richards ([2011]) and the references therein; see Chesi ([2007]) for a critical view.

[24] I did not point out other phases like DP, PP, etc. I was only interested in the propositional phases, as referred to in Chomsky ([2000]). For other types of phases, see Bošković ([2002]) and Chomsky ([2008]).

[25] As the editor observed, weak-NPIs can generally be licensed from negations in higher clauses / phrases. This does not seem completely true in Italian. Consider, for example, the weak NPI *mai* (ever): it cannot be licensed from the higher-clause negation (a), requiring a clause-mate negation to be rescued (b):

(1)   a. *Non* mi   sorprende [che Gianni abbia *mai* visto Milano.
             NEG CL.to me astonished [that John   has   ever seen Milan
        b. Non mi   sorprende [che Gianni *non* abbia *mai* visto Milano.
             NEG CL.to me astonished [that John   NEG has   ever seen Milan
             'That John has not ever seen Milano did not astonish me.'

Unfortunately, a theoretical issue could arise at this point of the discussion. More specifically, according to Rizzi's split-CP hypothesis, CP consists of an array of functional heads each potentially running for the head of the CP-phase triggering the Transfer of the v*P. Defining which of them is the best candidate is beyond the aim of this article—and it is far from being clear in literature—but it has immediate consequences for my theory. For example, a possibility is to opt for Force° since it closes up the sequence of functional heads in the CP-layer (Rizzi 1997, 2001, 2006b). Unfortunately, in this way my proposal would turn out to be wrong because the vP-complement would still be open when negation is merged in the CP-field, as the following representation shows:

(68)   [_CP *Force°*. . . (TopP°). . . Int°. . . (TopP°). . . *Neg°*. . . Foc°. . . (Top°). . . Fin°. . . [_IP . . . [_v*P

Since only the head of the phase triggers the Transfer of the previous phase, the negative marker *not* in Snegs would still interact with the TP before the Force° is merged in the structure, allowing, among other things, negative polarity elements (this is a wrong prediction). An alternative option, leading to an opposite result, is to consider the other "extreme" head of the CP-field, the Fin°, as the phase-head (among others, cf. Barrie 2007; López 2009; Roberts 2012). This view would correctly predict the derivation of Snegs because *not* would be merged when the v*P has already been closed by Fin°. Another solution is to consider Top° as the phase-head (Totsuka 2013). My derivation of Snegs would still be unproblematic because, as in the previous case, *not* would be merged in the structure after the head of the CP-phase, which has already closed the v*P. Crucially, it has also been proposed that Foc° plays a central role in defining the CP-phase. For example, Shlonsky (2010) suggests that this is the head phase because the [Spec, Foc°] is the landing site of Wh-elements (according to the original proposal in Rizzi 1997). É. Kiss (2006) supports the same conclusion analyzing Hungarian data and Poletto (2006) emphasizes that in Old Italian the "features of a functional head as Focus are parameterized as phase independent properties" (both in vP and CP edges). The hypothesis that Foc° is the head of the CP-phase is coherent with my analysis too: negation dominates Foc° in Snegs and, therefore, when *not* is merged, the vP-domain has already been closed.

Some tests of phasehood support this conclusion. For example, Bošković (2014) states that phenomena like ellipsis prove the phase status of a phrase since it witnesses its phonetic and semantic autonomy. From this point of view, Italian focalized phrases can be considered a phase since they accept the ellipsis of the material in their domain. Consider, for example, the following dialogue:

(69)   A: Che cosa pensa Luca?
              'What does Luke think?'
         B: Che Roma sia   sporca.
              that Roma be.3SG.SBJ dirty
              'Rome is dirty.'

Extending Brunetti's (2003, 2004) analysis,[26] this kind of structure displays a pronounced part, which is moved to [Spec, FocP], and an unpronounced one, which is deleted by the ellipsis of TP:

(70)   [$_{FocP}$ Che Roma sia sporca$_i$ [Foc° [$_{TP}$ ~~Luca pensa~~ [t$_i$]]]]

According to Citko (2014), XPs whose heads are a phase-head can be both isolated and moved. Crucially, all these elements are present in (70) and, therefore, this seems to confirm the head-phase status of the Italian Foc°. Moreover, according to Gallego (2010), a head phase is a source of uninterpretable features and we know that Foc° is like that (cf. Rizzi 1997, 2001, 2006a, 2006b; Frascarelli 2000; Cinque and Rizzi 2010).

For all these reasons, I will consider from now on the Foc° as the head of the CP-phase in Italian. The major consequence for my hypothesis on Snegs is that the v*P has already been closed when the negative marker *not* is merged. The same conclusion would also turn out to be right if we consider Top° and Fin° as the head of the CP-phase. Anyway, the crucial point is that the closure of the v*P-phase correctly derives the impossibility of having negative-scope elements in Snegs and also takes into consideration some other phenomena, such as the fact that Snegs do not display the NEG-raising phenomenon.

As is well known (Jespersen 1917; Fillmore 1963; Horn 1989), when verbs like *to think* and *to want* select negative clauses as complements (71a), negation preferably appears in the matrix clause (71b) although it still denies the subordinate proposition:

(71)   a.   I think [Luca is not smart].
         b.   I do not$_i$ think [Luca t$_i$ is smart].

According to Collins and Postal (2014), the sentence in (71b) involves the raising of the negative marker from the embedded clause—where it is actually interpreted—to the matrix one. This syntactic approach has been challenged by several scholars (see, among others, Zeijlstra 2017 and the references therein), who adopt a pragma-semantic approach stating that negation is interpreted in its surface position, i.e. in the matrix clause.[27] Crucially, Snegs do not interact with the NEG-raising phenomenon at all, contrary to SN:

(72)   a.   Luca non$_i$ pensa che t$_i$ sia   scesa dal   treno Maria.   (SN)
                Luke NEG thinks that   be.3SG.SBJ got   off-the train   Mary
                'Luke thinks that Mary did not get off the train.'
         b.   E   Luca non$_i$ mi pensa che t$_{*i}$ sia   scesa dal   treno Maria?!
                EE Luke EN   ED thinks that   be.3SG.SBJ got   off-the train   Mary
                                                                                   (Sneg)
                . '#Luke think that Mary did not get off the train!'
                . 'Luke thinks that Mary got off the train!'

In the Snegs form (72b) the negative reading is completely ruled out—the only available reading is affirmative—and the content of Luca's belief is not denied. My hypothesis correctly predicts this pattern: *not* is merged in a different phase than both

---

[26]See below for a more detailed discussion.

[27]I leave to the original works the debate on these approaches.

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...

the matrix (pragma-semantic approach) and the subordinate (syntactic approach) TP; from there it cannot see inside the subordinate predicate because the v*P-phase is already closed and transferred.

To sum up, I proposed that in Snegs the nature of the negative marker is the same as the one in SN: it displays a head status and it must satisfy all the requirements usually associated with it (ex. the phonetic proximity to the verb). I hypothesized that the first notable difference in Snegs is that *not* is externally merged in the CP-field when the v*P-phase is exhausted by merging Foc°, the head of the CP-phase. In this syntactic configuration, I proposed that *not* is unable to see inside the argument of the vP, banning, as a consequence, the occurrence with NPIs, neg-words, NEG raising, etc. Let us now focus on the second part of my proposal in (59): the head *not* selects the FocP as its argument, which is filled by the whole TP.

4.2.4 The focalization of the whole TP

The second crucial aspect in my analysis is the focalization of the whole TP. From this point of view, we can write our original example as follows:

(73) [CP E   non [FocP [TP mi è scesa dal   treno
          EE EN   ED is got   off-the train
      Maria] [Foc°] [. . . tTP . . .]]]?!
      Mary
      'Mary got off the train!'

By proposing that TP is internally merged in the [Spec, FocP], a series of welcoming consequences follows. First of all, the negative marker *not* does not directly select the TP, as it usually does in SN clauses, but it selects the FocP that, in turn, hosts TP. This fact allows the phonological proximity of *not* to TP even though a more complex syntactic and interpretative structure is involved. More specifically, if negation selects a FocP as its argument, it plays a role on the presuppositional layer required by the focalization rather than on the propositional layer as in SN (even because the v*P-phase is already closed). This hypothesis goes in the same direction of Benincà (1996) and Abels (2002, 2005) (cf. Chap. 4). I follow Benincà (1996) in proposing that when negation is presuppositional, it loses its ability to deny a sentence and it interacts with presuppositional negative elements, such as the Padoan "*miga*" (here I repeat the sentence in (65c) as (94a); see Sect. 2.3 for a brief discussion) or its Italian counterpart "*mica*" (see Cinque 1976; Frana and Rawlins 2015):

(74) a. No vien-lo   *miga*?
          NEG comes-s.CL NEG
          'He's not coming?'
      b. E non mi è *mica* scesa dal   treno Maria?!
          EE EN ED is NEG got   off-the train Mary
          'Mary got off the train!'

The second consequence is that the focalization of TP prevents Snegs from hosting other focalized elements. More specifically, according to Rizzi (1997) and Cinque and Rizzi (2010), CP displays only one functional projection for FocP in Italian, whereas

it reserves multiple ones for TopP:[28] if FocP already hosts TP in Snegs, other focal-ized elements cannot be accepted, whereas there is no limitation for the topicalized ones. As we saw above, this is exactly what happens in Snegs (here I repeat the sentences in 3 as 75):

(75) a. E   [$_{TopP}$ *il libro$_i$* [Top°] non [$_{FocP}$ [$_{TP}$ me *lo*   ha dato t$_i$ a
          and   the book   EN   ED CL.it has given to
          Luca] [Foc°] [t$_{TP}$]]]?!   (Topic)
          Luke
          'The book, s/he gave it to Luke!'
      b. *E   [LA PENNA$_i$ non [$_{FocP}$ [$_{TP}$ mi   ha dato t$_i$ a
          and the pen   EN   ED.to me has given to
          Luca] [Foc°] [t$_{TP}$]]] (non il   libro)?!   (*Focus)
          Luke   not   the book

In (75b) the phrase *the pen* cannot be focalized because TP already occupies the [Spec, FocP], leaving no space for other foci. In (75a) this impediment is excluded because the fronted phrase *the book* has been moved to TopP. I argued above that Snegs are incompatible with focalized elements when they (overtly or covertly) move to the CP-field; Snegs are perfectly fine when they are not displaced (as with *only*, see Sect. 4.2.1). Once again, my proposal catches this pattern.

Another important consequence predicted by the focalization of the TP is that *Wh*-elements cannot occur in Snegs (76a) since, according to Rizzi (1997), both *Wh*- and focalized phrases compete for the same position, i.e. [Spec, FocP] (96b):

(76) a. *E da   quale treno non [$_{FocP}$ [$_{TP}$ ti è scesa
          EE from which train EN   ED is got
          Maria t$_i$] [Foc°] [t$_{TP}$]]]?![29]
          Mary
      b. *[$_{FocP}$ [A GIANNI]$_i$ [Foc°] che cosa hai   detto t$_i$ (non a Maria)?
                  to John   what   have.you said   not to Mary
                                                          (Rizzi 1997:291)

Crucially, for the same reason, Snegs should not legitimate the raising of quantifica-tional elements, like "*nessuno*" ("nobody") in subject position. This is actually the case:

(77) *E   *nessuno* mi   è sceso dal   treno?!
      and nobody   ED.to me is got off to-the train

---

[28]See the original studies for the detailed discussion.

[29] It is important to know that this sentence seems grammatical to some Italian native speakers. This is because it is easily interpreted as a rhetorical negative question and not as Sneg. In fact, for example, it cannot be employed as an answer:

(iv)   A: Che cosa è successo?
            'What happened?'
       B: *E   da   quale treno non [$_{FocP}$ [$_{TP}$ t$_i$ è scesa Maria t$_i$] [Foc°] [t$_{TP}$]]]?!
            EE from which train EN   ED is got   Maria

Moreover, assuming that TP lays in the [Spec, FocP] also suggests another remarkable fact: the whole predicate is the new information introduced in the context of the speech. More specifically, according to Alonso-Ovalle and Guerzoni (2004) and Brunetti (2004), what carries new information, at least in answers, lays in the focus domain of a sentence and we saw in Chap. 2 that Snegs are suitable answers for what I called *Propositional Questions*. Let us briefly consider Alonso-Ovalle and Guerzoni's (2004) and Brunetti's (2004) proposals.

Italian displays two different ways to answer questions: one "extended," in which speakers repeat part of the question under discussion (the topic/background) and add the new information (78B), and one "short," in which speakers only pronounce the part carrying the new information (78B′):

(78) A: Che cosa ha vinto Gianni?
          'What did John win?'
      B: [Una maglietta]$_{NEW}$ ha vinto Gianni.   (Extended form)
          a   shirt   has won   John
          'John won a shirt.'
      B′: [Una maglietta]$_{NEW}$ (Short form)
          'A shirt'

The "extended" form is redundant because it displays part of the background knowledge (in the example "*John won*"); the "short" one is more natural and preferred in oral contexts. Intuitively, the "short" form presents the ellipsis of a part of the sentence (the background information) and, according to Alonso-Ovalle and Guerzoni (2004) and Brunetti (2004), it is the TP that has been deleted leaving the pronounced part in FocP (escaping the ellipsis):

(79) [$_{FocP}$ [$_{DP}$ La maglietta]$_j$ [$_{TP}$ ~~ha vinto Gianni~~ [t$_j$]]]

The pronounced part is the new information and its displacement in FocP represents the traditional distinction between the topic and the focus as the old and the new information.[30] On the one hand, the fact that Snegs are suitable answers for questions suggest that a part of the sentence has been moved to the FocP; on the other hand, the fact that Snegs only instantiate answers to a subclass of questions, in which the whole sentence carries new information, suggests that the entire TP is the focalized part (here I repeat the dialog in (30) as (80)); my proposal exactly predicts this conclusion:

(80) A: Sembri sconvolto, cos'è successo?
          'You seem shocked, what happened?'
      B: [$_{CP}$ Non [$_{FocP}$ [$_{TP}$ mi è scesa dal treno Maria] [Foc°] [t$_{TP}$]]]?!
          'Maria got off the train!'

---

[30]Interestingly, Alonso-Ovalle and Guerzoni (2004) discuss cases in which a singular neg-word represents the short answer to a question. Consider, for example, the following dialog: A: Chi è venuto? ('Who came?'); B: Nessuno ('Nobody'). In order to explain the syntactic configuration of B, they propose that Foc° hosts a negative feature that is semantically active but phonologically empty. This would be the reason why neg-words occur in pre-verbal positions without a negative marker. The tight relation between focus and negation catches an aspect presented in my proposal as well.

Summarizing, the focalization of TP predicts several properties of Snegs: they display a negative marker playing a role on the presuppositional layer (interacting with *mica*) instead of on the propositional one (as SN does); they can host topicalized phrases but not the focalized ones (both in fronted and *in situ* position); they reject *Wh*-elements and Q-raising phenomena; and they are suitable answers to prepositional questions. Those predictions must be added to the ones related to the other part of my proposal, i.e. Snegs are strong-EN clauses (they do not allow negative-scope elements like NPIs, neg-words, etc.) and they do not legitimate NEG-raising phenomenon. Crucially, my hypothesis also predicts a series of other phenomena. I will discuss them in the next session.

4.2.5 Snegs are a root phenomenon

The schema in (59) also predicts some unexpected facts concerning Snegs as well as the ones we already considered. The first one is their impossible occurrence in subordinate clauses. We saw in Sect. 3.2 that Snegs cannot be embedded under factive predicates. Actually, this is true for any kind of predicate. Consider, for example, indirect questions (IQ), factive predicates (FP) and bridge verbs (BV):

(81)   a.   *Mi   *chiedo*   [se non mi sia   scesa dal
             CL.to me wonder.1SG.PRS if EN ED be.3SG.SBJ got   off to-the
             treno Maria]?!   (IQ)
             train Mary
       b.   *Mi   *spiace* [che non mi sia   scesa dal   treno Maria]?!
             CL.to me sorry   that EN ED be.3SG.SBJ got   off-the train Mary
                                                                    (FP)
       c.   *Luca *dice* che [non mi è scesa dal   treno Maria]?!   (BV)
             Luke says that EN   ED is got   off-the train Mary

This pattern shows that Snegs cannot be embedded under any kind of predicate even though nothing in the Snegs syntactic characterization seems to justify this outcome. Let us investigate this point.

It has been proposed (cf. Grewendorf 2002; Haegeman 2004, 2012) that some predicates, like factive verbs, select a reduced CP, i.e. a CP lacking some functional phrases such as FocP. An easy way to take the ungrammaticality with Snegs into account is to assume my hypothesis: since Snegs display the whole predicate in the [Spec, FocP], they cannot occur in FocP-lacking clauses because there is no way to satisfy the focus requirement. Unfortunately, this explanation just holds for factive predicates, but not for the other types seen above. For example, bridge verbs, like *to say*, select a full-fledge CP (cf. Featherston 2001; Benincà and Poletto 2004) displaying the whole array of functional projections (including the FocP) but Snegs are still ungrammatical.

An alternative is to assume Grimshaw's (1979) and Pesetsky's (1991) analyses on the selection requirement of a subordinate CP. Since verbs like t*o wonder* and *to say* require a [+Question]/[+Declarative] feature in their selected CP, Snegs are ruled out because they do not express these features but, actually, a [+Neg] one. This solution is appealing because in my proposal *not* realizes a

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...

real instance of negation. Unfortunately, we have to reject it for both theoretical and distributional reasons. In theory, nothing prevents CP from realizing both the [+Question]/[+Declarative] and the [+Neg] feature at the same time and, in fact, some languages display negative complementizers.[31] Moreover, Snegs are ruled out in clauses requiring a [+Neg] feature in the embedded CP as well. Consider the case of *to doubt* verbs. According to Progovac (1994) and Moscati (2010), those verbs impose a [+Neg] feature on the CP of the embedded clause legitimizing, among other things, strong NPIs (82a); however, Snegs yield ungrammaticality in such a context (82b).

(82)   a.   *Dubito*   [+Neg che Luca abbia   capito   *un tubo*
            doubt.1SG.PRS   that Luke have.3SG.SBJ understood a   tube
            del   piano].
            of-the plan
            'I doubt that Luke has understood anything of the plan.'

       b.   **Dubito*   [+Neg che non mi sia   scesa dal   treno
            doubt.1SG.PRS   that EN ED be.3SG.SBJ got   off-the train
            Maria]?!
            Mary

We should, therefore, reject the selection requirement as the cause of the impossibility for Snegs to be embedded.

    However, an independent observation on subordination seems to be the key: subordinated predicates allow the focalization of an internal TP-element but not of the entire TP. Consider the following dialogs in which speakers correct a previous assertion (A) focusing either a DP (B) or the whole TP (B′):

(83)   A: Mi   chiedo   [CP1 se i   turisti pensino   [CP2
            CL.to me wonder.1SG.PRS whether the tourists think.3PL.SBJ
            che Firenze sia   bella]].   (IQ)
            that Firenze be.3SG.SBJ beautiful
            'I wonder whether tourists think that Firenze is beautiful.'

       B: Mi   chiedo   [CP1 se [FocP [ROMA]i i   turisti
            CL.to me wonder.1SG.PRS whether   ROMA   the tourists
            pensino   [CP2 che ti sia   bella]] (non Firenze).
            think.3PL.SBJ   that   be.3SG.SBJ beautiful (not Firenze)
            'I wonder whether tourists think that ROME is beautiful
            (non Firenze).'

---

[31]Consider, for instance, the Irish case. It displays negative complementizers like *nach* (McCloskey 2001; Duffield 1995):

(2)   Creidim *nach*   gcuirfidh   sì   isteach ar an phost.
       I-believe NEG- COMP put   [FUT] she in   on the job
       'I believe that she won't apply for the job.' (McCloskey 2001:75)

B′: *Mi   chiedo   [CP1 se [FocP [ROMA SIA
CL.to me wonder.1SG.PRS whether   Roma   be.3SG.SBJ
PULITA_i] i   turisti   pensino [CP2 [t_TP]] (non Firenze sia
clean   the tourists think.3PL.SBJ   not Firenze be.3SG.SBJ
bella).
beautiful

(84) A: Mi   spiace [CP1 che i turisti   pensino   [CP1 che Firenza
CL.to me sorry   that the tourists think.3PL.SBJ   that Firenze
sia   brutta]]   (FC)
be.3SG.SBJ ugly
'I'm sorry that tourists think Firenze is ugly.'

B: Mi   spiace [CP1 che [FocP [ROMA_i] I   turisti   pensino
CL.to me sorry   that   Rome   the tourists think.3PL.SBJ
[CP2 che t_i sia   brutta]] (non Firenze)
that be.3SG.SBJ ugly   not Firenze
'I'm sorry that tourists think Rome is ugly (not Firenze).'

B′: *Mi   spiace [CP1 che [FocP [ROMA SIA   SPORCA] i
CL.to me sorry   that   Rome   be.3SG.SBJ dirty   the
turisti pensino   [CP2 [t_TP]] (non Firenze sia   brutta)
tourists think.3PL.SBJ   not Firenze be.3SG.SBJ ugly

(85) A: Luca dice [CP1 che i   turisti pensano   [CP2 che Firenze
Luca says   that the tourists think.3PL.SG   that Firenze
sia   bella]]   (BV)
be.3SG.SBJ beautiful
'Luca says that the tourists think Firenze is beautiful.'

B: Luca dice [CP1 che [FocP [ROMA]_i i   turisti pensano   [CP2
Luca says   that   Rome   the tourists think.3PL.SG
che t_i sia   bella   (non Firenze)
that be.3SG.SBJ beautiful (not Firenze)
'Luca says that the tourists think ROME is beautiful (not Firenze).'

B′: *Luca dice [CP1 che [FocP [ROMA SIA   PULITA]_i i   turisti
Luca says   that   Rome   be.3SG.SBJ clean   the tourists
pensano [CP2 [t_TP]] (non Firenze sia   bella).
think.3PL.SG   not Firenze be.3SG.SBJ beautiful

All predicates allow the focalization of a TP-internal element (B), rejecting the focalization of the entire TP (B′). To the best of my knowledge, this observation is original and it deserves further examination. Since I proposed that the focalization of TP is just one of the core properties of Snegs, it follows that Snegs cannot occur in contexts where focalization is excluded. Once again, my proposal takes into account this fact that, otherwise, would remain obscure.

4.2.6 The interpretation of preverbal subjects in Snegs

There is, at least, another fact predicted by the syntactic structure of Snegs: the topicalized interpretation of the subject. As it is well known, Italian displays the sentential

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...

subject both in pre-verbal and post-verbal position and Snegs do not depart from this pattern (for a discussion on preverbal subjects see Bianchi and Chesi 2014):

(86) a. E *Maria* non mi è scesa dal treno?!   (Pre-verbal subject)
          'Mary got off the train!'
      b. E non mi è scesa dal treno *Maria*?!   (Post-verbal subject)
          'Mary got off the train!'

When subjects in Snegs occur in the pre-verbal position, they show a "topic" nuance disappearing when they occur in the post verbal one. Their topic interpretation can also be syntactically marked by the co-referentiality with a resumptive pronoun usually reserved for the topicalized structures (cf. Cecchetto 1999):

(87) a. E   *Maria* non mi è scesa dal   treno, *lei*?!
          EE Mary EN ED is got   off-the train   her
          'Mary got off the train!'

We already know that Snegs can be used as answers to propositional questions because of the focalization of TP. Coherently, this is possible only when the subject occurs in the post-verbal position (889B), but not when it occurs in the preverbal one (88B′):

(88) A: Sembri   sconvolto. Cos'è successo?
           'You   seem shocked,   what happened?'
      B: Non ti   ho   incontrato in stazione *Maria*?!
           EN ED have.1SG met   in station   Maria
           'I met Maria at the train station!'
      B′: *Maria* non ti   ho   incontrato in stazione, (*lei*)?!
           Maria EN ED have.1SG met   in station   her

I assume from now on that the preverbal subject lays in [Spec, TopP] instead of in the [Spec, TP] as it usually does. From there, it receives the topicalized interpretation and, consequently, it cannot occur in contexts that only require new information—such as propositional questions. Crucially, the topicalization of the pre-verbal subject is predicted by my hypothesis on Snegs: the pre-verbal subject can only precede both the heads *not* and Foc° in the sequence of the CP-functional projections, occupying the higher available position [Spec, TopP], because *not* must be adjacent to the verb leaving no space for the subject:

(89)   [CP ... [TopP subject_k [X° non] [FocP [TP t_k]_i Foc°... [TP_i]

This schema correctly predicts both the word order *subject-not-verb* and the topic interpretation associated to the pre-verbal subject in Snegs.

4.2.7 A structural interpretation of the Italian expletive "e" ("and")

Finally, I would like to discuss the relation between Snegs and the expletive conjunction "*E*" ("and"). I diffusely associated EE with Snegs (Sect. 2.2), but I said nothing about its syntactic nature.

EE always occurs at the beginning of the sentence regardless of which functional projection is active in the CP-field. That could be Fin° in absolute small clauses (90a),[32] Top° in CLLD structures (90b), Force° in relative clauses (90c) and Foc° in Anaphoric Anteposition structures (91):

(90) a. [~~Fin° con~~] *E* [Fin° con] Gianni malato, è partita Maria!
                   EE   with John sick   is partita Mary
          'Mary has left even though John was sick!'

      b. [~~TopP i libri [Top°]~~] *E* [TopP i   libri [Top°] me li   porta Gianni]!
          the books   EE   the books CL.to me CL.them brings John
          'The books, John brings them to me!'

      c. [~~Force° coloro~~] *E* [Force° coloro] i   quali sono arrivati ieri
                     those EE   those the who are   arrived yesterday
          partiranno   domani!
          leave.3PL.FUT tomorrow
          'Those who arrived yesterday will leave tomorrow!'

(91) A: Gianni voleva comprar-si   un castello.   (Poletto 2005)
          'John   wanted to buy-CL.to himself a   castle.'

      B: *E* [FocP un castello [foc°] si   è comprato].
          EE   a   castle   CL.to himself is bought
          'And he bought himself a castle.'

      B′: *Un castello *e* si   è comprato.
          a   castle   EE CL.to himself is bought

We rationally wonder what EE coordinates since one of the two elements, at least, is missing.[33] The fact that the missing element in EE is the left one is predicted by Ross (1967): a conjunction forms a unit with the second conjunct but not with the first one,[34] which could be phonologically unrealized. Moreover, by the "law of coordination of likes" (Chomsky 1957; Williams 1978) we know that both the conjuncts must belong to the same syntactic category, as the following sentences show:[35]

(92) a. Luca ha mangiato [DP una mela] e [DP una pera].
          Luke has eaten   an apple and   a   pear
          'Luke ate an apple and a pear.'

---

[32]I took the following examples from Moro (2003).

[33]See Munn (1993), Kayne (1994) and Johannessen (1998) for a general discussion.

[34]Ross's (1967) analysis is based on the following contrasts:

(viii) a.   John left, and he didn't even say goodbye.
        b.   John left. And he didn't even say goodbye.
        c.   *John left and. He didn't even say goodbye.

See also Kayne (1994) and Progovac (1998, 2003).

[35]In literature this requirement has been contested and reformulated (see, among others, Goodall 1987 and Mayr and Schmitt 2017, and the references therein). I will not deepen here this discussion because it is beyond the aim of this article and I will adopt the standard analysis for coordination.

      b.   Luca ha mangiato [$_{\text{AdvP}}$ voracemente] e [$_{\text{AdvP}}$ abbondantemente].
           Luke has eaten   voraciously   and   abundantly
           'Luca ate voraciously and abundantly.'
      c.   *Luca ha mangiato [$_{\text{DP}}$ una mela] e [$_{\text{AdvP}}$ abbondantemente].
           Luke has eaten   an apple and   abundantly

The sentences in (a–b) display the coordination of two elements belonging to the same syntactic category: two DPs in (a) and two AdvPs in (b). The ungrammaticality of (c) follows from a violation of this requirement. Since, &Ps take their syntactic category features from their Specifier via Spec-head Agreement (Johannessen 1998; Chomsky 1995), the question of which is the element in [Spec, &P] becomes even more important in understanding why EE is so closely associated to Snegs.

    According to Poletto (2005), EE is a Topic marker "parasitic an already existing CP layer" and, therefore, it precedes it. She proposes the following syntactic representation:

(93)   [$_{\text{TopicP}}$ (Null) TopP [$_{\text{Topic0}}$ e [$_{\text{TopicP}}$ [CP]]]]

The conjunction takes its topic nature from the elements in its specifier, which is TopP. Moreover, she proposes that EE can only occur in structures sharing the activation of a specific functional projection in the CP-layer, i.e. FocP; quoting its words, "It would be tempting to assume that *e* can only represent the continuation of a Topic if there is a Focus layer active" (p. 230). Consider, for example, rhetorical questions, *non-echo* Wh-questions, and exclamative clauses. All these structures display the activation of FocP and, therefore, they can host EE:

(94)   a.   *E* cosa potrebbe fare in un frangente simile? (Rhetorical questions) (Poletto 2005:229–230)
          'And what could he do in such a case?'
     b.   *E* viene quando, allora? (Non-echo Wh-questions)
          'And come when, then?'
     c.   E che vestito che ti sei comprato! (Exclamative)
          'What a dress you bought!'

Crucially, this perfectly matches my analysis and it sheds light on the relation between EE and Snegs. More specifically, Snegs activate FocP, satisfying the requirement imposed by EE. Let me schematically show it:

(95)   [$_{\text{Top0}}$ *E* [non [$_{\text{FocP}}$ [mi è scesa dal treno Maria]$_{\text{TP}}$ [Foc°] ... [t$_{\text{TP}}$]]]]?!
        'Mary got off the train!'

To sum up, assuming my proposal in (59) allows us to derive a series of heterogeneous facts that are otherwise puzzling. We saw that the root status of Snegs is a consequence of an independent reason: subordinate clauses do not accept the focalization of the whole-TP. Since Snegs exactly display such a configuration, it follows that they cannot be embedded. I also stated that the topicalized flavor of the preverbal subject is a consequence of the Sneg syntactic configuration: *not* is externally merged in CP and has to be closed to the predicate forcing the subject to move to a higher available CP-position, i.e. TopP. Finally, I found in the analysis of EE a fur-

ther element supporting my hypothesis: since EE requires the activation of FocP, it naturally introduces Snegs because they display an active focalization. I would like to emphasize here that what I proposed for Snegs is not an ad-hoc hypothesis, but it catches some aspects already presented in other Italian structures.

4.2.8 Independent elements generated in CP and cases of TP-raising

The first fact I would like to discuss is that Italian displays other structures showing an element externally merged in the CP-field, i.e. the *why*-questions. Rizzi (2001) proposes that Italian *Wh*-questions usually require the inversion of the subject and the verb in the linear word order (96a) yielding ungrammaticality when it does not occur (96b); however, some particular *Wh*-questions, i.e. "*why*" questions, depart from this pattern showing both the standard and the inverted form (97a–b):

(96) a. Come *ha fatto* <u>Gianni</u>?   (Wh – *Verb* – <u>Subject</u>)
          how   has done John
          'How did John do?'
      b. *Come <u>Gianni</u> *ha fatto*?   (*Wh – <u>Subject</u> – *Verb*)
          how   John   has done

(97) a. Perché *è tornato*   a casa <u>Gianni</u>?   (Why – *Verb* – <u>Subject</u>)
          why   is come back to home John
          'Why did John come back home?'
      b. Perché <u>Gianni</u> *è tornato*   a casa?   (Why – <u>Subject</u> – *Verb*)
          why   John   is came back to home
          'Why did John come back home?'

Rizzi suggests that the order *Wh-element–subject–verb* is usually ruled out because the *Wh*-element and the verb move, respectively, to [Spec, FocP] and to [Foc°] in order to satisfy the *Wh-criterion* by a Spec-head agreement. In such a configuration a subject cannot occur between them making the sentence in (96b) ungrammatical. In (97b) this requirement seems to be absent and the order *Wh-element–subject–verb* is possible. To take into account the peculiarity of why-questions, Rizzi proposes that the adverb *why* is externally merged in the specifier of an Interrogative Head (INT°), intrinsically endowed with a Wh-feature and located in the CP-field:

(98)   FORCE° (TOP*) [$_{IntP}$ *perché* [INT° (TOP*) [$_{FocP}$ [FOC° (TOP*) FIN TP]]]]

This is why it does not trigger the movement of the verb to Foc° and, therefore, the inversion with the subject in the linear words order. Anyway, the crucial point for our discussion is that *why* is externally merged in the CP-field and this is exactly what I proposed for the negative marker *not* in Snegs. The fact that Wh-elements can be merged in both TP and CP mirrors what I proposed for negation.

Moreover, *why*-questions also display the TP raising to the CP domain in an Italian dialectal variety, i.e. Marchigiano spoken in Fano (Marche, Italy) (Moro 2011: fn. 4). Consider, for example, the following sentences:

(99) a. [$_{CP}$ [$_{IntP}$ Perché [$_{TP}$ sei   andato a casa]]]?
              why   is.2SG gone   to home
          'Why did you go home?'

    b.   [CP [Sei   andato a casa]ᵢ [IntP perché [Int° . . . [tTP]]]]?
            is.2SG gone   to home   why
            'Is it because you have gone home?'

In (99a) the adverb occurs in the fronted position preceding TP; in (99b) the order is the opposite one (giving a particular pragmatic interpretation). This pattern is considered if we assume that in the latter case the whole TP has moved to a functional projection above the INT° in the CP-layer, arguably the TopP. Crucially, I proposed that a similar movement occurs in Snegs with the major difference that the landing site for TP is FocP.

Italian displays, at least, another structure in which an element reveals the movement of the TP toward the CP-field: the "*tipo*" ("kind") clauses (Andrea Moro, p.c.). Consider, for example, the following dialog:

(100)   A: Ho speso tantissimo in spiaggia.
              'I spent a lot of money at the beach.'
        B: *Tipo* [CP che ti   hanno   fatto pagare anche l'acqua   del
              kind   that CL.to you have.3PL make pay   also   the water of-the
              rubinetto]?
              tap
              'Did they also make you pay for the tap water?'
        B′: [CP[TP Ti hanno   fatto pagare anche l'acqua   del   rubinetto]ᵢ
                 CL have.3PL make pay   also   the water of the tap
              tipo [tᵢ]?
              kind
              'Did they also make you pay for the tap water?'

The noun *kind* selects as its argument a yes-no question introduced by the complementizer "*che*" ("that") in standard form (100B).[36] However, the sentence may also displace the TP in a fronted position giving the scrambled order TP-*kind* (100B′). To the best of my knowledge no study has analyzed the syntactic structure of such a clause. I will assume that TP has moved to the CP-field, in analogy with other fronted elements, giving the inverted order TP-*kind*. The fact that TP can raise and land in CP is exactly what I proposed for Snegs.

Summarizing, both the patterns in *why*-clauses and in *kind*-clauses show that what I proposed for Snegs is not completely new on the panorama of the Italian syntax. Clearly, this does not prove that I am right, but, at least, it gives some support to my analysis.

4.2.9 Comparative perspectives and theoretical speculations

One of the major questions pending at the end of this article is what consequences and repercussions the analysis I gave may raise for both the theoretical approaches to EN and the attested cross-linguistic differences. These questions cannot be simple

---

[36]Italian shows other cases similar to *tipo che*, such as *si che/no che* (see Poletto and Zanuttini 2013). I have to thank an anonymous reviewer for this observation.

because Snegs are the result of the conspiracy of different factors: (i) they involve a negative morpheme α; (ii) α is a head; (iii) α is merged in the CP-phase when the v*P-phase is exhausted; (iv) TP is focused. Each of these factors plays an existential role in generating Snegs and, in first approximation, a language can express Snegs only if all the factors (i–iv) are met. Moreover, if the factors are parameterized, then each of their parameter settings could block the generation of Snegs. Beside this, some theoretical speculations can be made. Consider, for example, points (ii) and (iii).

The factor (ii) says that Snegs are triggered by the negative head *non*, and this "head" requirement seems to be a constant in the distribution of EN structures in general. Consider, for instance, the case of the Modern French (Muller 1978; Makri 2013) and of the Late Middle English (Van der Wurff 1999) we discussed in Sect. 4.1. Both the languages display two negative elements, one with the head status and one with the maximal projection status, but only the former instantiates the EN structure:

(101) a. Je ne nie   pas [que je   n'aie ètè   bien reçu].
           I NEG deny NEG that I   NEG have been well received
                                                              (Muller 1978)
           'I do not deny that I was received well.'
       b. I drede not þat ne   þe curs of God [...] wolde brynge me into a
           I doubt not that NEG the curse of God   would bring me into a
           ful   yuel eende if I contynuede þus
           very evil end   if I continued   thus
           (Testimony of William Thorpe 482 in Van der Wurff 1999)
           'I do not doubt that God's curse would bring me to a very evil end if I
           continued like this.'

As is well known (Kayne 1989a, 1989b; Pollock 1989; Zanuttini 1997), the French morphemes *ne* and *pas* constitute a single instance of negation by being generated in the same NegP: *pas* in [Spec, NegP] and *ne* in Neg^0. Crucially, EN in the subordinate clause 'je n'ai ètè bien reçu' only displays the negative head *ne*, excluding the element with the maximal projection status *pas*. Similarly, the Late Middle English sentence displays two negative markers syntactically different: the adverb *not* with a maximal projection status, and the negative marker *ne* with a head status. Again, only *ne* realizes EN. All these facts seem to suggest that the syntactic nature of a negative operator is the key feature that allows EN: those languages that display a negative head are suitable for EN, those that do not display it are not (for example Modern English). This observation goes with the one in Zeijlstra (2011) that "there is no language without Negative Concord that exhibits a negative marker that is a syntactic head" (p. 136). From this point of view, two apparently distinct phenomena, i.e. negative concord and EN, seem to be the reflex of a single parameter: the syntactic nature of a negative element.

Consider now the factor (iii): negative markers generated in CP instantiates a case of EN only when they are merged after the CP-phase head closing the v*P-phase, otherwise they instantiate a case of SN. I speculate that negative complementizers represents this latter alternative: they certainly lay in CP and they instantiate a standard negation phenomenon since there is not a phase head closing the v*P-phase that

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study. . .

was previously merged.[37] This could be the case of Irish negative complementizers we discussed in (52) (see Sect. 4.2.5) repeated here as (102):

(102) Creidim nach   gcuirfidh sì isteach ar an phost.
       I-believe NEG - COMP put [FUT] she in   on the job
       'I believe that she won't apply for the job.'   (McCloskey 2001:75)

Finally, an interesting comparative observation comes from Latin—the language from which Italian derives. Consider the interrogative particles *Nonne* and *Numne*. They elicit answers with a specific polarity (cf. Ernout and Thomas 1953; Gianollo 2016): *Nonne* requires affirmative answers; *Numne* negative ones.

(103)   a.   *Nonne* concedas   interdum ut excusatione summae
             nonne permit.2SG.SBJ sometimes that excuse.ABL highest.GEN
             stultitiae summae   probitatis   odium deprecetur?
             folly.GEN highest.GEN wickedness.GEN odium avert.3SG.SBJ
             'Can you not sometimes permit one to avert the odium of the greatest
             wickedness by the excuse of the most abysmal folly?'
                                                           (Pro Caecina, Cicero)
        b.   *Numne*, si Coriolanus   habuit   amicos, ferre contra
             numne if Coriolanus.NOM have.3SG.SBJ friends bring against
             patriam arma   illi cum Coriolano   debuerunt?
             homeland war.ACC there with Coriolano.ABL have.3.PASS.
             'If Coriolanus had friends, did they perhaps have to start a war against
             the homeland together with Coriolano?'   (De Amicitia, Cicero)

Nonne and *Numne* are compounds respectively set up by the negative marker *not* plus the interrogative clitic *–ne* and by the interrogative element *num* plus, again, the interrogative clitic *–ne*. Like other interrogative elements they occur in fronted positions syntactically codified in the CP-layer. Interestingly, the clitic *–ne* may also combine with topicalized pronouns (cf. Makri 2013), like "*ego*" ("I"), and with verbs (cf. Ernout and Thomas 1953):

(104)   a.   Ego-ne tu   interpellem?   (Makri 2013:80)
             I-NEG   you interrupt
             'What I interrupt you?'
        b.   Vidisti-ne   Romam?
             saw.2SG-NEG Roma
             'Did you see Rome?'

The order object–verb in (104a) is the standard one in Latin; in (104b) the order is inverted showing the raising of the verb in a fronted position. According to Kayne (1989a, 1989b) and subsequent works, I assume that clitics are heads and the clitic *-ne* shows up that it is the head of a high CP-phrase combined with either the negative morpheme *non/num*, with the topicalized pronouns *ego* or with the verb. I speculate

---

[37] This may also be the reason why Italian does not have negative complementizers since complementizers in Italian are often introduced in ForceP, a functional phrase that is merged after the phase-head Foc°.

that this head is Foc° and that *non* in *Nonne* is the equivalent of *non* in Snegs reproducing the same relation Neg-Foc. Moreover, the movement of the verb in (104b) is analogous to the movement of the TP in Snegs (factor iv).

5 Concluding remarks

In this article I tried to reduce a complex phenomenon, the Surprise Negation sentences, to a particular syntactic representation from which Snegs properties were derived in a unitary way. I used the following example to illustrate Snegs (here I repeat the sentence in (2) as (105)):

(105) E   non mi   è scesa dal   treno Maria?!
       and NEG CL.to me is got off-the train Mary
       'Mary got off the train!'

The meaning of (106) is affirmative—regardless of the presence of the negative marker *not*—and it could be fully paraphrased as 'That Maria got off the train is a surprise.' We saw that Snegs represent a new case of Italian EN and, according to the classification in Greco (2017, 2019a, 2019b), they fall in the *strong* EN class since they reject NPIs, not-also conjunctions and neg-words (Table 2).

We also saw that Snegs displays some other properties: (i) They allow PPIs; (ii) they do not allow negative markers with a maximal projection status (like the Italian "*no*"), but only the ones with a head status; (iii) they host presuppositional negative elements, like "*mica*"; (iv) they cannot support TP-lacking structures, such as past participle clauses and Absolute Constructions, and they cannot occur in Aux-to-Comp structures; (v) they do not allow NEG-raising phenomenon; (vi) they host topicalized phrases, both in a fronted and in *in-situ* position, but not the focalized ones; (vii) they are introduced by elements considered as expletive (ex. the conjunction "*e*"); (viii) the whole proposition in Snegs conveys completely new and unexpected information allowing them to be an answer to Propositional Questions; (ix) they are

Table 2 the whole scenario of Italian EN clauses

	Weak-NPIs	Strong-NPIs	Not-also	N-words
Until-clauses	+	-	-	+
Who knows-clauses	+	-	-	+
Unless-clauses	+	-	-	+
Indirect-Interrogatives	+	-	-	+
Comparative-clauses	+	-	-	+
Negative Exclamatives	-	-	-	-
Rhetorical Questions	-	-	-	-
Not…that-clauses	-	-	-	-
Rather than-clauses	-	-	-	-
Before-clauses	-	-	-	-
Snegs	-	-	-	-

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study. . .

a root phenomenon; (x) they cannot host *Wh*-elements and the Q-raising phenomena; (xi) their subject displays a topicalized interpretation when it occurs in a pre-verbal position, but not when it occurs in a post-verbal one.

Crucially, I proposed a syntactic representation for Snegs that combines some assumptions of the cartographic project of the minimalist program, from which it is possible to derive all the phenomena in *i–xi*:

(106)   [$_{CP}$ . . . [$_{X°}$ non] . . . [$_{TP}$ Foc° [. . . t$_{TP}$ . . .]]]

More specifically, I proposed that the same Italian negative marker *not* may receive both the standard and the expletive interpretations (at least, in Snegs) depending on its syntactic derivation: when it is merged in the TP-area during the v*P-phase, it reverses the truth-value conditions of the sentence; when it is merged in the CP domain and the v*P-phase is already closed, it gives the expletive interpretation shown in Snegs. From this point of view, the expletive reading of negation turns out to be just a reflex of the syntactic context in which the negative marker *not* is merged, suggesting, among other things, that standard and expletive negation are different instances of a unique grammatical phenomenon.

Publisher's Note   Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

References

Abels, Klaus. 2002. Expletive (?) negation. In *Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics (FASL) 10*, ed. Jindrich Toman, 1–21. Bloomington: Michigan Slavic Publications.

Abels, Klaus. 2005. "Expletive negation" in Russian: A conspiracy theory. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 13(1): 5–74.

Aikhenvald, Y. Alexandra. 2005. *Evidentiality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Alonso-Ovalle, Luis, and Elena Guerzoni. 2004. Double negation, negative concord and metalinguistic negation. In *Chicago Linguistics Society (CLS) 38–1: Main session*, eds. Andronis Debenport and Pycha Yoshimura, 15–31. Chicago: CLS Publications.

Avesani, Cinzia. 1990. A contribution to the synthesis of Italian intonation. In *International Conference on Spoken Language Processing (ICSLP) 1*, 833–836. Available at http://www.isca-speech.org/archive/icslp_1990. Accessed 27 August 2019.

Barrie, Michael. 2007. Control and Wh-infinitivals. In *The analysis of control and raising*, eds. William Davies and Stanley Dubinsky, 263–279. Dordrecht: Springer.

Beckman, Mary, Julia Hirschberg, and Stefanie Shattuck-Hufnagel. 2005. The original ToBI system and the evolution of the ToBI framework. In *Prosodic typology: The phonology of intonation and phrasing*, ed. Sun-Ah Jun, 9–54. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Belletti, Adriana. 1990. *Generalized verb movement*. Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier.

Belletti, Adriana. 1992. Agreement and case in past participial clauses in Italian. In *Syntax and the lexicon*, eds. Tim Stowell and Eric Wehrli, 21–44. New York: Academic Press.

Belletti, Adriana. 2001. "Inversion" as focalization. In *Subject inversion in Romance and the theory of Universal Grammar*, eds. Aafke Hulk and Jean-Yves Pollock. New York: Oxford University Press.

Belletti, Adriana. 2004a. Aspects of the low IP area. In *The structure of CP and IP: The cartography of syntactic structures*, ed. Luigi Rizzi. Vol. 2, 16–51. New York: Oxford University Press.

Belletti, Adriana. 2004b. *Structures and beyond: the cartography of syntactic structures*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Belletti, Adriana. 2006. (Past) participle Agreement. In *The Blackwell companion to syntax*, eds. Martin Everaert and Henk van Riemsdijk, 493–521. Oxford: Blackwell.

Benincà, Paola. 1996. La struttura della frase esclamativa alla luce del dialetto padovano. In *Italiano e dialetti nel tempo: saggi di grammatica per Giulio C. Lepschy*, eds. Paola Benincà, Guglielmo Cinque, Tullio De Mauro, and Nigel Vincent, 23–43. Roma: Bulzoni.

Benincà, Paola. 1988. L'ordine degli elementi della frase e le costruzioni marcate. In *Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione*, ed. Lorenzo Renzi. Vol. 1. 115–194. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Benincà, Paola, and Cecilia Poletto. 2004. Topic, focus and V2: Defining the CP sublayers. In *The structure of CP and IP: The cartography of syntactic structures*, ed. Luigi Rizzi, 52–75. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bernini, Giuliano, and Paolo Ramat. 1996. *Negative sentences in the languages of Europe: A typological approach*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Bianchi, Valentina, and Cristiano Chesi. 2014. Subject islands, reconstruction, and the flow of the computation. *Linguistic Inquiry* 45(4): 525–569.

Bianchi, Valentina, and Mara Frascarelli. 2010. Is topic a root phenomenon? *Iberia* 2: 43–88.

Bocci, Giuliano. 2007. Criterial positions and left periphery in Italian: Evidence for the syntactic encoding of contrastive focus. *Nanzan Linguistics (Special Issue)* 3: 35–70.

Boneh, Nora, and Léa Nash. 2012. Core and non-core datives in French. In *Variation in datives: A microcomparative perspective*, eds. Beatriz Fernández, and Ricardo Exteparre, 22–49. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bošković, Željko. 2002. A-movement and the EPP. *Syntax* 5:167–218.

Bošković, Željko. 2014. Now I'm a phase, now I'm not a phase: On the variability of phases with extraction and ellipsis. *Linguistic Inquiry* 45(1): 27–89.

Brody, Mihály. 1990. Some remarks on the focus field in Hungarian. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 2: 201–225.

Brown, Sue, and Steve Franks. 1995. Asymmetries in the scope of Russian negation. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 3: 239–287.

Brunetti, Lisa. 2003. "Information" focus movement in Italian and contextual constraints on ellipsis. In *West Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 22*, eds. Gina Garding and Mimu Tsujimura, 95–108. Somerville: Cascadilla Press.

Brunetti, Lisa. 2004. *A unification of focus*. Padova: Unipress.

Brunetti, Lisa. 2008. On the pragmatics of post-focal material in Italian (left peripheral focus looked at from the other side). In *Les linguistiques du détachement: Actes du colloque de Nancy (7–9 juin 2006)*, eds. Denis Apothéloz, Bernard Combettes, and Franck Neveu, 151–162. Bern: Peter Lang.

Calabrese, Andrea. 1992. Some remarks on focus and logical structures in Italian. *Harvard Working Paper in Linguistics* 1: 91–127.

Cardinaletti, Anna. 2002. Against optional and zero clitics: Right dislocation vs. marginalization. *Studia Linguistica* 56(1): 29–57.

Cardinaletti, Anna. 2009. On a (Wh-)moved topic in Italian, compared to Germanic. In *Advances in comparative Germanic syntax*, eds. Artemis Alexiadou, Jorge Hankamer, Thomas McFadden, Justin Nuger, and Florian Schäfer, 3–40. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Cecchetto, Carlo. 1997. Clitic right dislocation is not the mirror image of clitic left dislocation. Ms., Milan: DIPSCO.

Cecchetto, Carlo. 1999. A comparative analysis of left and right dislocation in romance. *Studia Linguistica* 53: 40–67.

Chapallaz, Marguerite. 1979. *The pronunciation of Italian*. London: Bell & Hyman.

Chesi, Cristiano. 2007. An introduction to phase-based minimalist grammars: Why move is top-down from left-to-right. *Studies in Linguistics CISCL Working Papers* 1: 38–75.

Chierchia, Gennaro. 2013. *Logic in grammar: Polarity, free choice, and intervention. Oxford Studies in Semantics and Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...

Chomsky, Noam. 1957. *Syntactic structure*. The Hague: Mouton.

Chomsky, Noam. 1995. *The minimalist program*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquiry: The framework. In *Step by step: Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, eds. Roger Martin, David Michaels, Juan Uriagereka, and Samuel Jay Keyser, 89–155. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2001. Derivation by phase. In *Ken Hale: A life in language*, ed. Michael J. Kenstowicz, 1–52. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2004. Beyond explanatory adequacy. In *Belletti 2004b*, Vol. 3, 104–131.

Chomsky, Noam. 2008. On phases. In *Foundational issues in linguistic theory*, eds. Robert Freidin, Carlos P. Otero, and Maria Luisa Zubizarreta. 133–166. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2013. Problems of projection. *Lingua* 130: 33–49.

Cinque, Guglielmo. 1976. Mica. *Annali della Facolta di Lettere e Filosofia* 1: 101–112 (reprinted in Cinque 1991).

Cinque, Guglielmo. 1982. Topic constructions in some European languages and connectedness. In *Connectedness in sentence, discourse and text: Proceedings of the Tilburg conference held on 25 and 26 January 1982*, eds. Konrad Ehlich and Henk van Riemsdijk, 7–41. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.

Cinque, Guglielmo. 1990. *Types of A' dependencies*. Cambridge: The MIT press.

Cinque, Guglielmo. 1999. *Adverbs and functional heads; A cross-linguistic perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cinque, Guglielmo. 2002. *Functional structure in DP and IP; The cartography of syntactic structures*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cinque, Guglielmo. 2006. *Restructuring and functional heads: The cartography of syntactic structures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cinque, Guglielmo, and Luigi Rizzi. 2010. The cartography of syntactic structures. In *The Oxford handbook of linguistic analysis*, eds. Bernd Heine and Heiko Narrog, 51–65. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Citko, Barbara. 2014. *Phase theory: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Collins, Chris, and Paul M. Postal. 2014. *Classical NEG raising: An essay on the syntax of negation*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Collins, Peter. 2005. Exclamative clauses in English. *Word* 56: 1–17.

Cresti, Emanuela, and Valentina Firenzuoli. 1999. Illocution and intonational contours in Italian. *Revue Française de Linguistique Appliquée* IV(2): 77–98.

Cruschina, Silvio. 2009. The syntactic role of discourse-related features. *Cambridge Occasional Papers in Linguistics* 5: 15–30.

Cruschina, Silvio. 2012. *Discourse-related features and functional projections*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cuervo, Maria Cristina. 2003. Datives at large. Ph.D. diss., MIT.

Delancey, Scott. 1997. Mirativity, the grammatical marking of unexpected information. *Linguistic Typology* I: 33–52.

Delancey, Scott. 2001. The mirative and evidentiality. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33(3): 369–382.

Delfitto, Denis. 2013. Negation as a low scope-marker in German bevor-clauses. *Lingue E Linguaggio* 7(1): 73–88.

Delfitto, Denis, and Gaetano Fiorin. 2014. Negation in exclamatives. *Studia Lingüística* 68(3): 284–327.

Donati, Caterina. 2000. A note on negation in comparison. *Quaderni del Dipartimento di Linguistica* 10: 55–68.

Duffield, Nigel. 1995. *Particles and projections in Irish syntax*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Ernout, Alfred, and Francois Thomas. 1953. *Syntaxe Latine*. Paris: Éditions Klicksieck.

Espinal, M. Teresa. 1997. Non-negative negation and Wh-exclamatives. In *Negation and polarity; Syntax and semantics*, eds. Danielle Forget, Paul Hirschbühler, France Martineau, and María Luisa Rivero, 75–93. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Espinal, M. Teresa. 1992. Expletive negation and logical absorption. *The Linguistic Review* 9(4): 333–358.

Espinal, M. Teresa. 2000. Expletive negation, negative concord and feature checking. *Catalan Working Papers in Linguistics* 8: 47–69.

Kiss, É. Katalin 2006. *Event structure and the left periphery: Studies on Hungarian*. Berlin: Springer.

Fillmore, Charles J. 1963. The position of embedding transformations in a grammar. *Word* 19: 208–231.

Featherston, Sam. 2001. Bridge verbs and V2 verbs: The same thing in spades? Ms., Tübingen University

Fischer, Olga. 1992. Syntax. In *The Cambridge history of the English language, vol. 2*, ed. Norman Blake, 207–408. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Frana, Ilaria, and Kyle Rawlins. 2015. Italian 'mica' in assertions and questions. In *Sinn und Bedeutung, vol. 20*, eds. Nadine Bade, Polina Berezovskaya, and Anthea Scholler, 234–251. https://semanticsarchive.net/sub2015/BOOKLET_SuB_20.pdf.

Franco, Jon, and Susana Huidobro. 2008. Ethical datives, clitic doubling and the theory of *pro*. In *Selected proceedings of the 10th Hispanic linguistics symposium*, eds. Joyce Bruhn de Garavito and Elena Valenzuela, 215–224. Somerville: Cascadilla Press.

Frascarelli, Mara. 2000. *The syntax-phonology interface in focus and topic constructions in Italian*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Frascarelli, Mara, and Roland Hinterhölzl. 2007. Types of topic in German and Italian. In *On information structure, meaning and form, generalizations across languages*, eds. Kerstin Schwabe and Susanne Winkler, 87–116. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Gallego, Ángel J. 2010. *Phase theory*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Gallego, Ángel J. 2012. *Phases: Developing the framework*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Gianollo, Chiara. 2016. The Latin system of negation at the syntax-semantics interface. *RGG. Rivista Di Grammatica Generativa* 38: 115–135.

Giannakidou, Anastasia. 1997. *The landscape of polarity Items*, PhD thesis, University of Groningen.

Giannakidou, Anastasia. 2000. Negative... concord? *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 18: 457–523.

Giannakidou, Anastasia. 2011. Negative and positive polarity items: Licensing, compositionality and variation. In *Semantics: An international handbook of natural language meaning*, eds. Claudia Maienborn, Klaus von Heusinger, and Paul Portner, 1660–1712. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Giannakidou, Anastasia, and Suwon Yoon. 2010. No NPI licensing in comparatives. In *Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS)*, eds. Timothy Grinsell, Adam Baker, Julia Thomas, Rebekah Baglini, and Jon Keane. Vol. 46. Available at https://www.semanticsarchive.net/Archive/DRjZTRlN/GiannakidouYoonCLS46.pdf. Accessed 4 October 2019.

Goodall, Grant. 1987. *Parallel structures in syntax: Coordination, causatives, and restructuring*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Greco, Matteo. 2017. Surprise negation sentences: Expletive negation and the left periphery. PhD diss., Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele Milano – IUSS Pavia.

Greco, Matteo. 2019a. A twofold classification of expletive negation. In *West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 36*, eds. Richard Stockwell, Maura O'Leary, Zhongshi Xu, and Z. L. Zhou. Somerville: Cascadilla, 165–175.

Greco, Matteo. 2019b. Is expletive negation a unitary phenomenon? *Lingue E Linguaggio* 1: 25–58.

Greco, Matteo, and Andrea Moro. 2015a. Surprise negation (Sneg) sentences. Poster session presented at the Götttingen Summer School on Negation. Germany: University of Göttingen.

Greco, Matteo, and Andrea Moro. 2015b. Surprise negation and ethical dative. Poster session presented at the 41st IGG. Perugia: Università per Stranieri.

Grewendorf, Günther. 2002. Left dislocation as movement. In *Georgetown university working papers in theoretical linguistics*, eds. Simon Mauck and Jenny Mittelstaedt. Vol. 2, 31–81.

Grimshaw, Jane. 1979. Complement selection and the lexicon. *Linguistic Inquiry* 10(2): 279–326.

Guerzoni, Elena. 2004. Even-NPIs in yes/no questions. *Natural Language Semantics* 12: 319–343.

Haegeman, Liliane. 1995. *The syntax of negation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Haegeman, Liliane. 2000. Negative preposing, negative inversion and the Split CP. In L. Horn and Y. Kato, eds., 2000.

Haegeman, Liliane. 2004. Topicalization, CLLD and the left periphery. In *Proceedings of the dislocated elements workshop*, eds. Benjamin Shaer, Werner Frey, and Claudia Maienborn. Vol. 35, 157–192. Berlin: ZAS Papers in Linguistics.

Haegeman, Liliane. 2012. *Adverbial clauses, main clause phenomena, and the composition of the left periphery*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Haegeman, Liliane, and Raffaella Zanuttini. 1991. Negative heads and the Neg criterion. *The Linguistic Review* 8: 233–251.

Haegeman, Liliane, and Raffaella Zanuttini. 1996. Negative concord in West Flemish. In *Parameters and functional heads*, eds. Adriana Belletti and Luigi Rizzi, 117–179. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hamblin, Charles L. 1973. Questions in Montague grammar. *Foundations of Language* 10: 42–53.

Han, Chung-Hye. 1998. Deriving the interpretation of rhetorical questions. In *West Coast Conference in Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 16*, eds. Emily Curtis, James Lyle, and Gabriel Webster, 237–253. Stanford: CSLI.

Han, Chung-Hye. 2002. Interpreting interrogatives as rhetorical questions. *Lingua* 11: 201–229.

Hart, Johan, René Collier, and Antonie Cohen. 1990. *A perceptual study of intonation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Horn, Laurence R. 1989. *A natural history of negation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Horn, Laurence R. 2010. *The expression of negation*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Horn, Laurence R., and Yasuhiko Kato. 2000. *Negation and polarity, syntactic and semantic perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Israel, Michael. 1997. The scalar model of polarity sensitivity: The case of the aspectual operators. In *Negation and polarity: Syntax and semantics*, eds. Danielle Forget, Paul Hirschbühler, France Martineau, and María Luisa Rivero, 209–229. Amsterdam-Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Jespersen, Otto. 1917. *Negation in English and other languages*. Copenhagen: A. F. Høst.

Johannessen, Janne Bondi. 1998. *Coordination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kayne, Richard Stanley. 1989a. Facets of Romance past participle agreement. In *Dialect variation and the theory of grammar*, ed. Paola Benincà, 85–103. Dordrecht: Foris.

Kayne, Richard Stanley. 1989b. Null subjects and clitic climbing. In *The null subject parameter*, eds. Jaeggli Osvaldo and Kenneth Safir, 239–269. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Kayne, Richard Stanley. 1994. *The antisymmetry of syntax*. Cambridge: Linguistic Inquiry Monographs, MIT Press.

Krifka, Manfred. 2010. How to interpret 'expletive' negation under bevor in German. In *Language and logos: Festschrift for Peter Staudacher on his 70th birthday*, eds. Thomas Hanneforth and Gisbert Fanselow, 214–236. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

Laka, Itziar. 1990. Negation in syntax: On the nature of functional categories and projections. Ph.D. diss., MIT.

Lonzi, Lidia. 2004. Contrastive intonation and its disguises of syntactic structure in Italian. *RGG. Rivista Di Grammatica Generativa* 29: 125–148.

López, Luis. 2009. *A derivational syntax for information structure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mayr, Clemens, and Viola Schmitt. 2017. Asymmetric coordination. In *The Blackwell companion to syntax*, eds. Martin Everaert and Henk van Riemsdijk. Oxford: Blackwell.

Makri, Maria-Margarita. 2013. *Expletive negation beyond Romance: Clausal complementation and epistemic modality*, MA thesis, University of York.

Mccloskey, James. 2001. The morphosyntax of Wh-extraction in Irish. *Journal of Linguistics* 37: 67–100.

Merchant, Jason. 2001. Why no(t). Ms., University of Chicago.

Michaelis, Laura Adrienne, and Knud Lambrecht. 1996. The exclamative sentence type in English. In *Conceptual structure, discourse and language*, ed. Adele Goldberg, 375–389. Stanford: CSLI.

Moro, Andrea. 2003. Notes on vocative case: A case study in clause structure. In *Romance languages and linguistic theory 2001*, eds. Josep Quer, Jan Schroten, Mauro Scorretti, Petra Sleeman, and Els Verheugd-Daatzelaar, 251–265. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Moro, Andrea. 2011. Clause structure folding and the "Wh-in-situ effect". *Linguistic Inquiry* 42: 389–411.

Moscati, Vincenzo. 2010. *Negation raising: Logical form and linguistic variation*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Muller, Claude. 1978. La negation expletive dans les constructions completives. *Langue Française* 39: 76–103.

Munn, Alann. 1993. *Topics in the syntax and semantics of coordinate structures*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Maryland.

Napoli, Donna Jo, and Marina Nespor. 1976. Negative in comparatives. *Language* 52: 811–838.

Obenauer, Hans-Georg. 2006. Special interrogatives—Left periphery, wh-doubling, and (apparently) optional elements. In *Romance languages and linguistic theory 2004: Selected papers from going Romance 2004*, eds. Jenny Doetjes and Paz González, 343–383. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Ouhalla, Jamal. 1990. Sentential negation, relativised minimality and the aspectual status of auxiliaries. *The Linguistic Review* 7: 183–231.

Pesetsky, David. 1991. Zero syntax, Ms., MIT.

Poletto, Cecilia. 2005. *Sì* and *E* as CP expletives in Old Italian. In *Grammaticalization and parametric variation*, eds. Montserrat Batllori, Maria-Lluïsa Hernanz, Carme Picallo, and Francesc Roca, 206–235. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Poletto, Cecilia. 2006. Parallel phases: a study on the high and low left periphery of Old Italian. In *Phases of interpretation*, ed. Mara Frascarelli, 261–294. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Poletto, Cecilia, and Raffaella Zanuttini. 2013. Emphasis as reduplication: Evidence from *sì che/no che* sentences. *Lingua* 128: 124–141.

Pollock, Jean-Yves. 1989. Verb movement, universal grammar, and the structure of IP. *Linguistic Inquiry* 20: 365–424.

Portner, Paul, and Raffaella Zanuttini. 2000. The force of negation in Wh exclamatives and interrogatives. In L. Horn and Y. Kato, eds. 201–239. 2000.

Progovac, Ljiljana. 1994. *Positive and negative polarity: a binding approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Progovac, Ljiljana. 1998. Structure for coordination: Part I and II. Glot International 3/7: 3–6 and 3/8, 3–9.

Progovac, Ljiljana. 2003. Structure for coordination. In *The second glot international state-of-the-article book*, eds. Lisa Cheng and Rint Sybesma, 241–287. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Quer, Josep. 2002. Edging quantifiers: On QP fronting in Western Romance. In *Romance languages and linguistic theory 2000*, eds. Claire Beyssade, Reineke Bok-Bennema, Frank Drijkoningen, and Paola Monachesi, 253–270. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Reese, Brian J. 2006. The meaning and use of negative polar interrogatives. In *Empirical issues in syntax and semantics, vol. 6*, eds. Olivier Bonami and Patricia Cabredo-Hofherr, 331–354.

Renzi, Lorenzo, and Gianpaolo Salvi. 1991. *Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione*, Vol. 2. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Rett, Jessica, and Sarah Murray. 2013. A semantic account of mirative evidentials. In *Proceedings of SALT*. Vol. 23, 453–472. Available at https://journals.linguisticsociety.org/proceedings/index.php/SALT/article/view/2687/2432. Accessed 2 October 2019.

Richards, Marc D. 2011. Deriving the edge: What's in a phase? *Syntax* 14(1): 74–95.

Rizzi, Luigi. 1981. Nominative marking in Italian infinitives and the nominative island constraint. In *Binding and filtering*, ed. Frank Heny, 129–158. London: Croom Helm.

Rizzi, Luigi. 1982. *Issues in Italian syntax*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.

Rizzi, Luigi. 1990. *Relativized minimality*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The fine structure of the left periphery. In *Elements of grammar, handbook of generative syntax*, ed. Liliane Haegeman, 281–337. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Rizzi, Luigi. 2001. On the position int(errogative) in the left periphery of the clause. In *Current studies in Italian syntax: Essays offered to Lorenzo Renzi*, eds. Gugliemo Cinque and Giampaolo Salvi, 287–296. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Rizzi, Luigi. 2004a. Locality and left periphery. In *Structures and Beyond: The cartography of syntactic structures*, ed. Adriana Belletti. Vol. 3, 223–251. New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rizzi, Luigi. 2004b. *The structure of CP and IP; The cartography of syntactic structures*. New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rizzi, Luigi. 2006a. On the form of chains: Criterial positions and ECP effects. In *Wh-movement: Moving on*, eds. Lisa Lai-Shen Cheng and Norbert Corver, 97–133. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Rizzi, Luigi. 2006b. Phase theory and the privilege of the root. In *Organizing grammar; Linguistic studies in honor of Henk van Riemsdijk*, eds. Hans Broekhuis, Ursula Kleinhenz, Norbert Corver, and Jan Koster, 529–537. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Roberge, Yves, and Michelle Troberg. 2009. The high applicative syntax of the datives commodi/incommodi in Romance. *Probus* 21: 249–289.

Roberts, Ian. 2012. Phases, head movement and second-position effects. In *Phases: Developing the framework*, ed. Ángel J. Gallego, 385–440. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Ross, John Robert. 1967. Constraints on variables in syntax. PhD diss., MIT.

Russi, Cinzia. 2008. *Italian clitics: An empirical study*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Sadock, Jerrold M. 1974. *Towards a linguistic theory of speech acts*. New York–San Francisco–London: Academic Press.

Schmidt-Radefeldt, Jürgen. 1977. On so-called "rhetorical" questions. *Journal of Pragmatics* 1(4): 375–392.

Shlonsky, Ur. 2010. The cartographic enterprise in syntax. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 4(6): 417–429.

Sorianello, Patrizia. 2011. Aspetti pragmatici e prosodici dell'atto esclamativo. *Studi Linguistici e Filologici Online* 9: 287–332.

Speranza, J. L., and L. Laurence Horn. 2012. A brief history of negation. In *Logic: A history of its central concepts*, eds. Dov M. Gabbay, Francis Pelletier, and John Woods. Vol. 11, 127–174. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Taglicht, Josef. 1984. *Message and emphasis: On focus and scope in English*. London: Longman.

Totsuka, Masashi. 2013. On phase head in split CP hypothesis. *English Linguistics* 30: 204–215.

Tubau, Susagna, Viviane Déprez, Joan Borràs-Comes, and M. Teresa Espinal. 2017. How speakers interpret the negative markers *no* and *no ... pas* in Catalan. *Probus*. https://doi.org/10.1515/probus-2017-0008.

Author's personal copy

On the syntax of surprise negation sentences: A case study...

van Der Wouden, Ton. 1994a. Negative contexts. Ph.D. diss., University of Groningen

van Der Wouden, Ton. 1994b. Polarity and illogical negation. In *Dynamics, polarity, and quantification*, eds. Makoto Kanazawa and Christopher J. Piñón, 17–45. Stanford: CSLI.

van Der Wouden, Ton. 1997. *Negative contexts: collocation, polarity and multiple negation*. London: Routledge Studies in Germanic Linguistics.

van Der Wurff, Wim. 1999. On expletive negation with adversative predicates in the history of English. In *Negation in the history of English*, eds. Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, Gunnel Tottie Wim van der Wurff, 295–328. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

van Rooy, Robert. 2003. Negative polarity items in question: Strength as relevance. *Journal of Semantics* 20: 239–273.

Villalba, Xavier. 2004. Exclamatives and negation. Ms., Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona. Available at https://www.semanticsarchive.net/Archive/2FkOWM1M/exclamatives&negation.pdf. Accessed 4 October 2019.

Wang, Xin. 2014. A cognitive pragmatic study of rhetorical questions. *English Language and Literature Studies* 4(1): 42–47.

Williams, Edwin. 1978. Across the board rule application. *Linguistic Inquiry* 9: 31–43.

Yoon, Suwon. 2008. Rhetorical comparatives: Polarity items, expletive negation, and subjunctive mood. *Journal of Pragmatics* 43(7): 2012–2033.

Yoon, Suwon. 2011. 'Not' in the mood: The syntax, semantics and pragmatics of evaluative negation. Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago.

Zanuttini, Raffaella. 1996. On the relevance of tense for sentential negation. In *Parameters and functional heads*, eds. Adriana Belletti and Luigi Rizzi, 181–207. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zanuttini, Raffaella. 1997. *Negation and clausal structure: A comparative study of Romance languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zanuttini, Raffaella. 2001. Sentential negation. In *The handbook of contemporary syntactic theory*, eds. Mark Baltin and Chris Collins, 511–535. Oxford: Blackwell.

Zanuttini, Raffaella, and Paul Portner. 2003. Exclamative clauses at the syntax–semantics interface. *Language* 79(1): 39–81.

Zeijlstra, Hedde. 2004. Sentential negation and negative concord. Ph.D. diss., University of Amsterdam.

Zeijlstra, Hedde. 2006. The ban on true negative imperatives. In *Empirical Issues in Formal Syntax and Semantics, vol. 6*, 405–424.

Zeijlstra, Hedde. 2011. On the syntactically complex status of negative indefinites. *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 14: 111–138.

Zeijlstra, Hedde. 2017. Does NEG-raising involve NEG-raising? *Topoi: An International Review of Philosophy*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11245-017-9461-0.