

## *The position of the Subject in the early vernaculars of Italy*

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Recent research, especially within the generative framework, has devoted considerable attention to the inter-relationship between syntactic position and pragmatic function, with much debate since Rizzi (1997) about the respective ordering of Topic and Focus projections within an articulated CP, e.g. Benincà & Poletto (2004) in relation to modern Italian and Benincà (2006) to early Romance. A left periphery has also been proposed for the low IP area, as discussed in Belletti (2004) with regard to modern Italian and in Poletto (2006) for early Italian (Florentine). Drawing on data gathered from the many other early Italo-Romance vernaculars regarding the behaviour of lexical and pronominal subjects, this paper will consider how the pragmatic status of the subject (focal ~ topical) affects its syntactic position and whether there is necessarily a straightforward one-to-one correlation between the pragmatic and syntactic levels, since unexpected referents may be cast syntactically as Topics (Lambrecht 2000: 620, Benincà & Poletto 2004: 57), and thematic constituents may be part of the syntactic Focus (Lambrecht 1994: 130, 211-12, 250-51), as exemplified also by the Italian Anaphoric Anteposition construction (Benincà & Poletto 2004: 62).

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