The Syntax of 'Subject Right Dislocation' in Modern Greek

EVI SIFAKI
University of York, UK

1. INTRODUCTION
The purpose of this paper is to investigate Extended Projection Principle (EPP) satisfaction through VP movement to the [Spec, IP] position. To substantiate the claim that EPP can be checked and deleted by verbal categories, we will look at the position of subjects in VS and VOS constructions in main and subordinate clauses in Modern Greek (henceforth MG), and we will argue that the most plausible analysis of these structures is that they involve VP-preposing rather than subject-right dislocation or V-raising.

The paper is organised as follows. In section 2, we outline the theoretical assumptions that are relevant to our analysis. In sections 3 and 4, we review two possible analyses of these constructions: First, the pragmatically motivated analysis offered by Valioulis (1994) in terms of Rightward Movement (RM) - the only analysis in the literature addressing specifically these constructions -, and, second, an analysis in terms of V-Raising. We show in section 4 that the focus properties of VS and VOS simple clauses together with adverb placement facts offer enough evidence to rule out both the RM and the V-Raising analysis. The next section looks into a uniform treatment for the above constructions namely, through VP-Preposing. Additional evidence is also provided in section 5 from subordinate *an* (if), *oti* (that), and *na* (subjunctive) clauses. Section 6 points out the theoretical implications of our proposal.

2. THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS
In this section we outline the aspects of the framework of Chomsky (1995, 2000) that are relevant to our analysis. In Chomsky (1995), the EPP is reformulated as involving categorial D feature checking in I. Since [D] in I is an uninterpretable feature, it must be checked and deleted. It therefore attracts a D-marked category to its checking domain. D-marked categories include DPs, including definite noun phrases, pronouns and pronominal clitics, and in some languages, the verb agreement morpheme. The idea that verb agreement, as a parametric option, can be D-marked, like a pronoun or clitic, is elaborated by Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998). We will adopt the suggestion of Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998), who state
that the verbal agreement morpheme in pro-drop languages can check and erase the EPP feature available at I.

Following Chomsky (1995, 2000), we assume that the computational system by using certain operations (Attract F and Move), manipulates a set of universal features to generate expressions. The operation Move involves matching of features between the target and the raised constituent. Attract F followed by Move affects the phrase that is closest to the target and has the appropriate properties. Appropriateness depends on whether or not a feature F of the moved constituent may enter into a matching relation with a feature of the target. The notion of attract closest falls under the Minimal Link Condition (MLC), which has been formulated as follows:

(1)  

\textit{Minimal Link Condition} (Chomsky 1995: 355-356)

A Feature F attracts the closest feature that can check F.

To describe how VS and VOS constructions are derived, we need to take into account how the syntactic structure interacts with prosodic properties in these cases (cf. section 4). Dealing with the prosodic properties of the constructions under investigation, we will make use of widely held assumptions that the new information in the discourse context constitutes the focused element(s) of the clause (for a detailed argumentation along these lines, see Selkirk, 1995; Erteschik-Shir, 1999; Cinque, 1999). The focused constituent is assigned the main stress, whereas the old/presupposed information is characterised by flat intonation. The stress pattern emerging through these constructions will provide additional evidence on the structural position of the clausal elements and the movement operations which take place to satisfy the Focus properties available in the clause. Discourse configurational languages—namely languages which are topic and/or focus prominent—may use either grammatical means to single out the topic or focus constituents (i.e., the topic marker \textit{wa} in Japanese) or have syntactically fixed positions under which the topic and focus elements are located (cf. Tsimpli, 1995; Kiss, 1998). For example, Hungarian is a focus prominent language in the sense that Hungarian sentences have a fixed, syntactically marked focus position. It has been argued that MG is a focus prominent language with available projections, which the focus element(s) occupy and are assigned the main stress. Tsimpli (1995), argues that in MG there is an available Focus Projection, namely FP. This focus projection is associated with the focus properties, encoded as [+stress]. In fact, the prosodic properties evident in VS and VOS constructions observe a systematic pattern. This in itself suggests that in the structural system of MG there is some available [+stress] feature. However, for reasons of economy of representation we will avoid the postulation of a separate Focus Projection in
these cases. We will postulate instead, that the Focus/stress assignment takes place in IP.

3. AGAINST VALIOLI'S ANALYSIS OF RIGHT-DISLOCATION

In this section we consider Valioli's pragmatically based analysis. The typical Clause-final subjects that Valioli considers follow the pattern in (2)-(4):

(2) EFIGE, o adelpos mou
left-3sg  the-MDA  brother of-mine
  'my brother left'  (Valioli 1994:56)

(3) Pire  kenourgio AFTOKINITO, i ksaedelfi sou
bought-3sg  new  car  the-FDA  cousin  of-yours
  'your cousin bought a new car'  (Valioli 1994:65)

(4) METAKOMISAN, i Tsilipakides;
moved-3pl  the-MDA  Tsilipaki-family
  'has Tsilipaki family moved out?'  (Valioli 1994: 69)

The bold small capitals indicate where the stress falls whereas the italicised XPs constitute what Valioli (1994) takes to be the right-dislocated elements. The comma suggests that there is a pause between the focused element and the subject, which constitutes old information. Under Valioli's analysis of these constructions, examples (2)-(4), would be assigned a structure as in (5):

5.
According to Valiouli (1994), the postponing of the subjects is for pragmatic reasons; the subjects convey old information and cannot receive the main stress. Consequently, she assumes that these constructions dislocate the nominal in order to destress it and at the same time shift the stress to the element which constitutes the new information. The main point to remember here is that Valiouli (1994) does not provide any syntactic arguments for the movement or the final target of the movement (i.e. the structural position of the subject in the syntactic tree).

Let us assume that Valiouli (1994) is correct, in that intonation would be the only way to indicate focus in Greek, and that focus/stress assignment is a PF-related operation (i.e. taking place at PF without any overt reflex at the syntactic component). Problems arise in that MG, as a discourse configurational language, encodes Focus properties in the syntax (through available focus projections or through a [+stress] feature in I). We are therefore faced with a difference of opinions regarding the focus/stress assignment.

If we accept that the RM analysis is triggered for feature-checking, then the problem that arises is that the feature would be checked in a right specifier. Although, theoretically, it is possible for a feature to be checked in a right specifier, this does not seem to be an option that languages choose. Even in uniformly head-final languages, specs are on the left, and although the order of H-compl. seems to be a matter of parametric variation, this is not the case for the order between Spec + X'.

Following Chomsky (1995, 1998) the checking of the formal features in various functional categories takes place by 'attract closest'. In the case of RM, the attracting feature is [stress] in I, attracting the closest available focused element. In accordance with the MLC, the closest element to be attracted in this case is the subject situated at the [Spec, vP]. However, the subject is the least appropriate candidate to check and delete the EPP-feature and satisfy the [+Stress] feature, which replaces a Focus projection for reasons of economy of representation. It may be able to do both, but the result would be semantically/pragmatically inappropriate. To avoid being attracted as the closest element available by the Focus properties of IP, the subject has to perform a movement to the right, leaving the verb as the next available candidate to satisfy the Focus properties of IP.

Also, if the nominal has moved to the right to avoid any attraction by the IP, that means that the EPP-feature would remain unchecked and the Focus properties of the IP unsatisfied. In this case the derivation would crash. Additionally, the stress pattern in this case would be characterised by flat intonation. However, (2) and (4), indicate that the main stress has fallen
on the verb, disallowing the derivation to crash. This suggests that the movement of the nominal is unmotivated\(^1\).

In the next section we provide evidence from simple V S and V O S clauses and then test their status through the insertion of adverbials. This provides evidence against the V-Raising analysis.

4. **FOCUSING THE VERB IN VS CONSTRUCTIONS**

Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998, 2001), have argued that one-argument VS and two-argument VOS constructions involve raising of the verb as in (6):

6. \[
\text{IP} \\
\text{spec} \\
\text{I'} \\
\text{I} \\
\text{vP} \text{spec} \\
\text{verb} \\
o \text{adelfos mou} \triangle \text{t}_{\text{verb}}
\]

The motivation for a V-raising analysis is triggered for the checking of the EPP-feature, which pro-drop languages have the option of checking through the verbal agreement morpheme.

**Limitations of the V-Raising Analysis:** Let us consider the behaviour of mono-argumental verbs in VS constructions after the insertion of manner adverbials.

(7) Efige GRIGORA, o adelfos mou left-3sg quickly the-MDA brother of-mine ‘my brother left quickly’

(8) *EFIGE, o adelfos mou grigora left-3sg the-MDA brother of-mine quickly ‘my brother left quickly’

\(^1\) The RM analysis of the subject does not observe the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) (Kayne 1994), which strictly bans any type of Rightward Movement in the model of Grammar.
What a V-raising analysis fails to capture in the patterns that emerge in examples (7)-(10) is the intonational contour which is followed in a systematic way. The focused/stressed element alternates between the verb and the adverb; if there is no adverb present, then the stress falls on the verb, otherwise the adverb is marked with the sentential stress. The stress is assigned to the most deeply embedded constituent in the VP-sequence in accordance with the Nuclear Stress Rule (Cinque 1993).

4.1 Focusing the Most Deeply Embedded Constituent in VOS Constructions
In this section we provide distributional evidence through the insertion of manner adverbials, which will be seen in relation to the position of participles.

The pattern that emerges, through the insertion of manner adverbials in VOS constructions, involves two aspects:

a. the structural aspect, which indicates that the adverb cannot occur in any other position except immediately after the verb and

b. the intonation aspect, which suggests that the stress is received by the object in all these constructions as the most deeply embedded constituent
in the V Adverb \( O \) sequence.

If we postulate that the above examples can be analysed in terms of \( V \)-raising, there are problematic facts we have to account for. As has already been argued (see Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1998), a \( V \)-raising analysis (\( V-I \)) would be triggered for the EPP satisfaction, the EPP-feature being available at \( I \). The stress pattern evident in examples (11)-(14) cannot be accounted solely through the raising of the verb. In the postulation of a [stress]

feature, available at \( I \), the satisfaction of the stress feature will have only one possible candidate; the verb. However, the verb in VOS and V Adverb O S constructions is not associated with new information. The adoption of a \( V \)-raising analysis would allow for the following false prediction; the stress would be received in all cases by the verb. On the other hand, as we have already argued, if VOS constructions were analysed in terms of RM of the subject, the prediction made with respect to the stress pattern would be flat intonation. Consequently, we need to propose a unified account, accommodating all the set of data, since RM and the V-Raising analyses cannot explain the above data. The table in (15) summarises the prosodic factual situation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Intonation</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( RM )</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( V-Raising )</td>
<td>Verb= + Stress</td>
<td>V S word order/mono-argument verbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 AN ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

All the above facts can be correctly described in terms of VP-preposing. According to the VP-preposing analysis, the whole VP has preposed to [Spec,IP]. In what follows we illustrate how our proposal works by looking at the derivations of the constructions in section 4.

In the position of the adverbs, I follow Adger and Tsoulas (2000). They propose that the manner adverbials are licensed lower down in the syntactic tree by some AspP. Also, in their analysis the verb is originated in the RootP and the object (if any) right next to the verb. We will assume that the verb moves from RootP via AspP to V, and that the object also moves out of the RootP to get assigned case available at [Spec, AspP]. As for the subject, it is originated in the [Spec, \( vP \)] where it actually stays, since it satisfies the Case Theory. To accommodate the adverb, we postulate that there are two specifier positions at AspP and that the adverb is situated in the highest spec. The lower [Spec, AspP] would not be suitable for the adverb, since it is associated with the formal feature of case, satisfied by the raising
of the object. The checking of the inflectional properties of I is achieved through Agree in-situ by the verb before the application of VP-Preposing. After this set of movements has taken place the derivation of V O S or V Adverb O S order, is achieved by the movement of the whole VP (including the AspPs and the RootP) to the [Spec, IP]. The schematic representation of the above mentioned VP-Preposing analysis, illustrating the constituent structure of example (11), is as follows:

(16)

(16) depicts where all the elements are initially located.

(17)
The representation in (17), is after the relevant movements have taken place and before the VP-Preposing analysis is applied. The application of the VP-Preposing analysis is shown in (18):

(18)

Our proposal has two desirable consequences, namely:
(a) it allows for the strict adjacency requirement between the verb and the adverb, when present,
(b) it makes the correct prediction regarding the Focus/stress assignment at I, the most deeply embedded constituent in the sequence V Adv. O receiving the main stress in accordance with the Nuclear Stress Rule.

There are a number of subordinate clauses in MG, namely an (if), oti (that), and na (subjunctive) clauses, which display V O S order. A similar state of affairs as in main VS and VOS clauses is found in these subordinate clauses.

5.1 Additional Evidence in Favour of the VP-Preposing Analysis
The following examples reinforce the VP-Preposing analysis:

(19) an pantreftike aperiskefta TON PETRO i Maria
    if married without-thinking the-MDA-acc Peter the-FDA Mary
    ‘if Mary married Peter without thinking’

(20) *an pantreftike ton Petro i Maria aperiskefta
    if married the-MDA-acc Peter the-FDA Mary without-thinking
    ‘if Mary married Peter without thinking’
Examples (20), (22) and (24) are ruled out due to the position of the manner adverbs. Information-wise, in an, oti, and na-clauses, the stress is received by the rightmost element in the VP-sequence.

6 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

The VP-Preposing analysis is a contribution to the parametrization on the checking of the EPP feature (cf. Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou, 1998; Holmberg, 2000). The pattern that was shown through the mono-argumental and the two argument clause-final subject constructions suggests that in MG the EPP satisfaction can take place not only through nominal categories, but also through the verbal agreement morphology.

Our proposal is also a contribution to the researchers who have looked into the discourse configurational character of MG. The fact that these constructions display a focused element and in fact observe a standard pattern when it comes to the focus/stress assignment, clearly indicates that Greek is a focus prominent language under our analysis with a [stress] feature available at I. It is also quite important, here, to refer to the realisation of the discourse-configurational character of MG; encoded not through grammatical means but through a systematically followed stress pattern available in the form of a [+stress] feature at I.
REFERENCES