Nominative Clitics in Biellese - Morphological
and Distributional Survey.

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1. Verbal conjugation and pre-verbal markers.

      If he were asked to conjugate the indicative present tense of a common verb like fe (make), kan'te (sing) or pur'te (carry) -- a very unusual request since Piedmontese dialect is not taught at school and grammars of it are not available in every day situations -- a native speaker of the Biellese[1] variety of this dialect would probably answer by the forms in (1):

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(1) mi i fak               mi i 'kant
    ti at fɛ               ti at 'kante
    tʃ øl al fa            tʃ øl al 'kanta
    'tʃ øla a la fa        'tʃ øla a la 'kanta
    nyj i 'fuma            nyj i kan'tuma
    'vjawte i fej          'vjawte i kan'tej / 'vjawte i 'kante
    lor a(j) faŋ           lor a(j) 'kanto

    mi i pɔrt
    ti at 'pɔrte
    tʃ øl al 'pɔrta
    'tʃ øla a la 'pɔrta
    nyj i pur'tuma
    'vjawte i pur'tej / 'vjawte i 'pɔrte
    lor a(j) 'pɔrto
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      Compared with their etymological sources, these forms differ not only in the changes undergone by the phonetic material (cantant > kanto) but also because before the verb proper we find a short expression, i (for the first person, both singular and plural, and for the second person plural), at (for the second person, singular), al/a la (for the third person singular, masculine and feminine, respectively), a or aj (for the third person, plural).

Just as an easy way of referring to these forms, we take as a distin-
guishing feature the fact that they show up precisely before the verb, and we call
them without any special commitment "pre-verbal markers". How generalised is the use
of pre-verbal markers henceforth PVM in Biellese?

1.1. Under very specific lexical, syntactic and morphophonemic conditions, Biellese
verbs do not take pre-verbal markers as indicated at the outset.This is the cas
at least:

(a) with the simple forms of impersonal verbs 'pjowe (to rain), fe
kawt (to be warm), fju'ke (to snow); these verbs are constructed either without pre-
verbal markers or with a special pre-verbal marker a that reminds the English form
it used with impersonal verbs:

(2) a. pjow, 'fjɔka
rains, snows
(it rains, it snows)

b. a pjow, a 'fjɔka
PVM rains, PVM snows
(it rains, it snows)

c.* al pjow, al'fjɔka.

(b) with verbs like'zmia (it seems), 'venta (it is mandatory, it is
needful), kun'veŋ (it is suitable), when they are used impersonally and take a com-
plement sentence. These verbs either do not take pre-verbal markers, or they take a,
like the verbs in the preciding group:

(3) a. 'zmia ka'vɔja'pjowe
seems that want to-rain
(it will probably rain)

b. a 'zmia ka 'vɔja 'pjowe
PVM

c.* al'zmia ka'vɔja 'pjowe

d.* al a'zmija ka'vɔja 'pjowe

Compare the examples in (4) with the personal use of 'zmia in (11):

(4) al 'pero al a-'zmia moʃ .[2]
the Peter PVM seems crazy
(Peter seems crazy)

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(5) a. 'venta k at 'vage a l uspi'dal
         it-is-mandatory that PVM you-go to the hospital
         (you must go to a hospital)

     b. a 'venta k at 'vage a l uspi'dal

     c.* al 'venta k at 'vage a l uspi'dal

          (c) with certain simple forms of copula verbs like 'εse (to be), zmi'e
(to seem), diven'te (to become), when they are followed by an adjective resulting in
a verbal expression that takes a complement sentence:

(6) a. sa'rijza buŋ ki'fejzo ran'dʒe la 'makina
         would-be good that-PVM we-make fix the car
         (it would be good to have the car fixed)

     b. a sa'rijza buŋ ki 'fejzo ran'dʒe la 'makina

     c.* al sa'rijza buŋ ki 'fejzo ran'dʒe la 'makina

(7) a. al ε buŋ ki'fago ran'dʒe la 'makina
         PVM is good that PVM we-make fix the car
         (it will be good to have the car fixed)

     b.* a ε buŋ ki 'fago ran'dʒe la 'makina

     c.* ε buŋ ki'fago ran'dʒe la 'makina

In these impersonal constructions, the choice among the three ways discussed so far of
constructing the verb (namely: 1) with the typical 3rd person pre-verbal markers al,
ala,cp.(1) 2) with the special pre-verbal marker a, cp. examples in subsections   (a)
and (b); 3) without any pre-verbal marker) seems to obey the following hierarchy: the
pre-verbal marker is dispensed with, or is a if the verb begins with consonant;   the
pre-verbal marker is al (never ala) if the verb begins with a vowel.

          (d) with certain relative clauses with a generic antecedent ("free re-
latives"), for instance:

(8) a. ka 'kusta lon ka 'kusta,la 'vεsta a la sa'ra 'prunta sta'sera that
         it-costs that which it-costs the dress PVM will-be ready this evening
         (the dress will be ready this evening at any cost).

     b.* k al 'kusta lon k al 'kusta la 'vεsta a la sa'ra 'prunta sta'sera

(9) a. tʃi ka fa ŋku'py alɛ 'sempe kuy 'parlo '.ieno
         who that makes the-most PVM is always those who PVM talk the least

     b. ?tʃi k al fa ŋkupy ...

        In this environment, a different interpretation could reconstruct __ka__
as the agglutination of __ke__ and __a__, analysed respectively as the relative pronoun and
the special pre-verbal marker of which we have given several examples is this section.

1.2. Piedmontese has a fairly articulated system of periphrastic tenses, based on the
     auxiliaries 'ɛse (to be) and a'vejre (to have); if these periphrastic forms are
     considered, a very simple and very different pattern emerges for the pre-verbal
     position, namely __al__ is the obligatory pre-verbal marker for the third person
     singular, Compare the following examples:

     (10) 'tʃøl al a fatʃ na ka
           he PVM he-has made a house
           (he has made a house)

     (11) 'dʒiλi al a kan'ta la bo'ɛm
           Gigli PVM he-has sung la Boēm
           (Gigli has sung La Bohēme)

     (12) al a pju'wy
           PVM it-has rained
           (it has rained)

     (13) al a zmi'a k aw'rijza'pjowe /* a a zmi'a... /* a zmi'a
           PVM it-has seemed that it-wanted to-rain
           (It seemed that it would rain)

     (14) alɛ 'statʃ buŋ fe ran'dʒe la 'makina /* a ɛ statʃ /* ɛ statʃ
           PVM is been good to-make to-fix the car
           (It was good to have the car fixed)

     (15) tʃi k al a fatʃ aŋku'py al a tʃa'pa ŋku'py /* tʃi k a a fatʃ
           who that who PVM has done the-most PVM has earned the-most
           (Those who worked the most got paid the most).

        The two rather exceptional environments that we have just described
being the only ones where pre-verbal markers can be dispensed with, thay appear as a
regular feature of Biellese sentence. How is their syntactic role to be explained? We
shall attempt at answering by looking more closely to their distributional properties;

two alternative accounts will emerge: according to the first, that we will reject , they classify as agreement morphemes; according to the second one, that we will argue for, they are clitics in the nominative case. Sections 2 and 3 will be concerned with these alternative accounts.

2. Pre-verbal markers as verbal agreement.

2.1. Pre-verbal markers are not affected by the presence of a full third person NP subject, not by the presence of a tonic pronoun acting as subject (cp. the paradigms in (1)); they are not replaced by such subjects - sentences where the subject is a pronoun or a full NP must still have a pre-verbal marker:

(16) ti at 'mandʒe ma'gari ŋ muŋ
 you PVM eat even a brick
 (you could eat a horse)
 *ti 'mandʒe ma'gari ŋ muŋ

(17) 'tʃøla li a la 'kanta
 she there PVM sings
 (she sings)
 *'tʃøla li'kanta

(18) al dʒu'an al 'gwida beŋ
 the John PVM drives well
 (John is a good driver)
 *al dʒu'an 'gwida beŋ

2.2. Pre-verbal markers appear in a fixed position, immediately before the verb. Some dependency on the verb is indicated by the fact that expressions that could appear almost anywhere in the sentence, for instance, time, place and manner adverbs, cannot be inserted between the pre-verbal marker and the verb:

(19) a. i kant du'maŋ
 PVM I-sing tomorrow

 b. du'maŋ i kant

 c.* i du'maŋ kant

(20) a. aŋ kumpa'ñia mi i mandʒ ma'gari ŋ muŋ
 in company I PVM eat even a brick
 (when I am with friends I eat more)

 b. mi aŋ kumpa'ñia i mandʒ ma'gari ŋ muŋ

 c.* mi i aŋ kumpa'ñia mandʒ ma'gari ŋ muŋ

(21) a. par lo 'menɔ l dʒu'an al 'gwida beŋ
         at least   the John PVM drives well
         (At least John is a good driver)

     b. al dʒu'an par lo 'menɔ l 'gwida beŋ

     c. al dʒu'an al 'gwida par lo'menɔ beŋ

     d.* al dʒu'an al par lo 'menɔ 'gwida beŋ

2.3. A peculiar feature of Piedmontese syntax is that with all periphrastic conjuga-
     tions (for instance the conjugation consisting of a'vejre (have) plus the past
     participle of a main verb)clitics are placed after the main verb. In these en-
     vironments, pre-verbal markers precede the auxiliary, cp.

(22) a. i u vist lo jer
         PVM I-have seen him Yesterday
         (I saw him yesterday)

     b.* u vist i lo jer,

         Since pre-verbal markers differ in person, and since they seem to be
necessarily bound to the verb according to our remarks in 2.1.,2.2., we could be
tempted to treat them as a part of the verb itself, namely as person agreement mor-
phemes. The most compelling evidence for this account is in 2.3.: it is well known
that in Romance languages agreement morphemes are attached to the auxiliary,not to the
participle form of the main verb. Adopting this view, we would look at Biellese as one
more instance of a prefixal conjugation in a Romance language. As the reader will re-
member, the hypothesis of a prefixal conjugation was raised for French in von Wartburg
(1964); cp. the discussion in Lambrecht (1982)).
         Yet, treating pre-verbal markers as a proper part of the verb would
conflict with some other noticeable regularities of Biellese. The following section is
concerned with them.

3. Pre-verbal markers as clitic pronouns.

3.1. Between the pre-verbal markers and the etymological form of the verb, words of a
     very special class can be inserted, namely clitic pronouns, as in (23),a paradigm
     of reflexive conjugation that is the translation of "I make myself a house" etc.,
     as well as in (24):

(23) mi i m fak na ka
      ti at at fɛ na ka
      tʃøl as fa na ka
      'tʃøla as fa na ka

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nyj i s̲ 'fuma na ka
'vjawte i w̲ fej na ka
lor as̲ faŋ na ka
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(24)   la mij'ziŋa i w la duma nyj
         the medicine PVM to-you it give we
         (we̲ give you the medicine)

         The clitic pronouns that can be inserted between the pre-verbal markers
and the verb differ in case, gender and reflexivity, in addition to person; as for
case, third person singular distinguishes accusative lo̲,la̲, dative (a)j locative (a)j
and partitive na̲; the third person plural distinguishes accusative ja and dative (a)j;
as for gender, third person singular accusative distinguishes masculine lo̲ and femi-
nine la̲; third person clitics are lo̲, la̲, (a)j, ja when non-reflexives, and (a)s when
reflexive; surprisingly enough first person plural clitics are distinguished   for
reflexiveness: is̲ is the reflexive form; (a)ŋ is the non-reflexive form.

3.2. When they are placed in pre-verbal position, clitics undergo several contraction
     phonomena with pre-verbal markers, cp.

     (25)   al da'via al 'pjano
            PVM gives away the piano
            (He gives the piano away)

     (26)   am da l 'pjano
            PVM+to me gives the piano
            (He gives me the piano)

     (27)   i'duma 'via l 'pjano
            PVM we-give away the piano
            (We give the piano away)

     (28)   it 'duma l 'pjano
            PVM+to you we-give the piano
            (We give the piano to you)

         When clitics are placed after the verb, which occurs obligatorily with
infinitives, gerunds and periphrastic tenses, special allomorphs must be used; most of
these allomorphs are one-syllable particles ending in e:me, te, je, ne, ve, se;   the
only exceptions are lo̲ and la̲.The existence of two positional variants for each clitic
is a striking fact of Piedmontese and was already noticed by Aly Belfādel (1933).
         As it could be expected, the clitics of the post-verbal series do not
undergo the contractions we exemplified in (25)-(28); compare:

(29)　al a datʃ 'via l 'pjano
　　　PVM he has given away the piano
　　　(He has given the piano away)

(30)　al a'dame l 'pjano
　　　PVM he-has given to-me the piano
　　　(He has given me the piano)

(31)　i uma datʃ 'via l 'pjano
　　　PVM we-have given away the piano
　　　(We have given the piano away)

(32)　i uma'date l 'pjano
　　　PVM we-have given to-you the piano
　　　(We have given the piano to you)

3.3. A striking feature of the interaction between clitics and pre-verbal markers is exemplified in

(33)　al tram (a) na pia suta dyj
　　　the streetcar (PVM) of them takes over two
　　　the streetcar runs over two persons.

(34)　al pero (a) la kuñɔs neŋ
　　　the peter PVM her knows not
　　　Peter doesn't know her

(35)　al pare (a)j parla
　　　the father PVM to him talks
　　　the father talks to him

　　　Third person pre-verbal markers can be omitted after a full NP subject if a clitic precedes the verb. If (33)-(34) were rephrased in such a way that the clitic be replaced by a full NP object, the pre-verbal marker would be compulsory.

3.4. In section[2] above, we raised the possibility of explaining Biellese pre-verbal markers as a prefixal conjugation, a variant of the hypothesis von Wartburg argued for about French subject pronouns. In our previous descriptions, three strong counter-evidences to this approach can be recognized:

　　　(a) As we saw in 1., at least for the third person singular, pre-verbal markers are distinct in gender. If the pre-verbal markers are described as morphemes of a prefixal conjugation, we will have to admit that person morphemes differ in gender, which sounds bizarre for Romance languages; apparently, von Wartburg who had

the same problem with French /iʃā:t / vs. /ɛlʃā:t/paid no attention to this possible objection.

(b) As far as the markedness for case in concerned, Piadmontese clitics have specific forms for accusative, dative, locative and genitive. The richness   of this paradigm suggests that it be completed with nominative forms. Indeed, it is intuitively in a nominative function that pre-verbal markers are interpreted when they hold an anaphoric relation to the subject and when they point deicticly to some referent in the discourse setting:

(36)   al 'pero al veŋ 'sybit
       the Peter PVM he-comes immediately
       (Peter is coming immediately)

(37)   Speaker I
       an'te k al ɛ l 'pero?
       where that PVM=he is the Peter?
       (Where is Peter?)

       Speaker II
       al ɛ nt al su'le
       PVM = he is in the attic
       (He is in the attic).

(38)   Speaker I, talking to Speaker II who has not noticed fresh paint on a
       bench:
       fa ten'sjuŋ
       (watch out!)

       Speaker II
       al ɛ 'bjaka
       PVM is paint
       (It is paint)

(c) Some writers (for instance Quicoli (1980)) have pointed out that in languages which display a complex clitic system, some morphophonemic facts can usually be pointed out that occur only in a clitic environment and nowhere   else at word boundaries. This reinforces the idea of a "clitic solidarity" that would be operative in those languages. Some such morphophonemic facts can surely be found in Piedmontese, for instance, the sequence consisting of pre-verbal marker al + clitics j and lo can be pronounced both as ajlo or aλo, cp.

(39)   al pare, l 'libɛr ajlo / aλo da al maz'na
       the father, the book PVM to-him-it gives to the boy
       (The father gives the boy the book)

In

(40)   al tran'vaj lo 'pia 'suta
        the streetcar him takes under
        (The streetcar runs over him)

aj + lo would never yield aλo:

(41)*   al tran'vaλo 'pia 'suta.

In a similar way (42) yields (43), but (44) would not yield (45):

(42)   al 'pia i pas'tiλe e ajna da'due al ma'lave
                            PVM
        PVM takes the pills and to-him-of-them gives two to the sick-person
        (He takes the pills and gives two of them to the sick person)

(43)   ... aña da due ...

(44)   al tran'vaj na 'pia'suta dyj
        the streetcar of-them takes over two
        (The streetcar runs over two persons)

(45)*   al tran'vaña 'pia'suta dyj.

        The contractions we described in 6. are at least as exceptional in the
overall morphological system of Piedmontese as the ones that occur with clitics; it
is tempting to treat them as one more aspect of the clitic solidarity described by
Quicoli (1980).
        The optional occurrence of third person pre-verbal markers in a clitic
environment (Section 3.3.) is one more fact for the description of which it is useful
to have PVMs and clitics included in the some syntactic sub-system.
        For all these reasons, the pre-verbal markers seem to be better ex-
plained if they are taken not as a part of the verb, but as a part of the clitic se-
quence that precedes it. Indeed, markedness for gender and case as well as solidarity
are the best criteria for clitichood available in the literature (see Kayne   1975,
Jaeggli 1981, Safir 1981; other available criteria refer rather to the classification
of particles as NPs.)
        If we take pre-verbal markers to be nominative clitic pronouns we get
descriptive gains on three different grounds: we become able to explain why pre-verbal
markers differ in person and case; we get a paradigm of clitic pronouns that contains
all the cases that are usually distinguished for pronouns in Romance language, and we
mark a domain within which Piedmontese morphophonemics is clearly exceptional. With
this last remark we want to make it clear that in our opinion classifying a group of
forms as clitics or flections is a theoretical decision that has to do with the degree
of organicalness, simplicity and elegance attained by the grammatical description as

a whole. In this paper, we will hot try to be exhaustive on the arguments supporting
our claim that by treating pre-verbal markers as clitics we can attain a higher de-
gree of generality and abstraction in the overall description. We refer the reader
interested in this theoretical approach to a forthcoming paper of ours, "Clitics in
Romance Languages from the point of view of Biellese".

In deciding to treat pre-verbal markers as nominative clitics, a com-
parison with what is going on in present days French may be helpful: looking to non-
standard French from the point of view of standard French, one has no doubt in rec-
ognizing the forms that precede /pā:s/in / pā:s/,/typā:s/ /ipā:s/,/ɛlpā:s/ as the
unaccented standard pronouns je, tu, il(s), elle(s); it is very likely that the dif-
ference between je chante and moi je chante is analogous to the difference between
i kant and mi i kant, even though it is impossible to resort to the evidence of a
standard language, for recognizing i, at, al, etc. as nominatives (Italian, or even
Torinese are not the standardized forms of the Biellese variety).

Against our approach, one could argue that the distinction we are draw-
ing between verbal flections and clitics has been loosing its importance in Chomskyian
generative transformational grammar. In Kayne (1975) clitics were generated in the
deep structure under an NP node; nevertheless, Kayne (1975) moved clitics through a
"clitic placement transformation" that associated them directly to the verb node, pre-
cisely to indicate a sort of "intimacy" between the verb and the clitics in the sur-
face structure. The same intuition is present in Hagit Borer (1981), who generates
clitics through a "spelling out" of case features of the phrase. (As far as Romance
languages are concerned, what is spelled out are the features of the VP . The clitics
are then described as "features of the verb", associated with the thematic slots by
which the verb is related to its arguments(cp. Stowell 1981), Daniel Everett (19)
devises a reversible historical process that turns pronouns, i.e., autonomous noun
forms, into clitics depending on the verb, and then into actual verbal flections; he
cites Piedmontese (with reference to the facts that we have been discussing here) as
one language in which the last step of evolution is currently in progress.

Still, a grammatical analysis of pre-verbal markers will be more ad-
quate if we attach them to the overall system of clitics of Biellese, since they obey
the same abstract principles (relating to the same modular theories of thematic func-
tions, government and case assignment, as well as of function and function chains).
Moreover, verbal flections are so clarly differenciated in Biellese (kant, 'kante ,
'kanta, kan'tuma, kan'tej, 'kanto), that any theory would have to assign the pre-ver-
bal markers special functions, lest it be reduced to a mere affirmation of redundancy.

4. Concluding remarks

In this final section, we shall try to see the distributional remarks
that we have made so far on Biellese pre-verbal markers in the light of some wider
descriptive issues. Only after these connections are made explicit can the interest
of the preceding data be correctly appreciated.

4.1. It seems important to us to have recorded a certain amount of information on the Biellese geographical variety, even though this was not the basic purpose of the paper. Of course, Biellese dialect shares many important features with the dialects of the same geographical area, but it also differs to a considerable extent from the other Northern Italian dialects for which records are available. Aly-Belfādel (1933), Spiess (1975) and Clivio (1976) all describe morpho-syntactic facts that are in some way related to the clitic system of Biellese and to subject doubling but none of these descriptions fits Biellese completely. Recording data on a changing linguistic reality is important in itself.

4.2. We claimed that the "pre-verbal markers" of Biellese conjugation should be treated as clitic pronouns in the nominative case. In doing so, we are merely giving a long available solution to an old problem; the obligatory occcorrence of pre-verbal markers in Northern Italian dialects was observed by Biondelli (1853) and was pointed out as an etymological problem in the Piedmontese grammar of Aly-Belfādel (1933).

The arguments that we put forward for classifying pre-verbal markers as nominative pronouns are structural in their nature, not etymological; however, reccognizing the structural and distributional properties of a class of words is a necessary part of the work needed to ascertain their origin: if we accept that Biellese pre-verbal markers are nominative clitics doubling the sentence subject, it becomes obvious, at least as a working hypothesis, to look for their origin in the system of Vulgar Latin, and two main problems are left: 1) retracing the phonetic evolution through which they arrived at their current form: 2) explaining the "doubling" construction itself, i.e., finding a rationale for the development of a double subject system since such a system is not obligatory.

4.3. We have not tried to work out a solution for the first problem, even though are convinced that a simple and elegant one could be offered: certain pre-verbal markers resemble clearly, in form, latin nominative pronouns or demonstratives:

(46)   ego, eo $>$ i
        ille $>$ l
        illa $>$ la

The first person plural form $\underline{i}$, one of those that could be pointed to as a counter example to the nominative origin of pre-verbal markers, can probably be explained as an extension of the first person singular: $\underline{j'avons}$ for $\underline{nous\ avons}$ was quite common in seventeenth century spoken French - it was a regular feature of the speech of Molière peasants and it occurs in many songs of the popular French tradition.

4.4. We believe on the contrary that we could grasp a reasonable understanding of the

doubling construction, but in order to do so we had to enlarge the scope of our analysis in several respects:

a) first of all, doubling by clitics is not limited to the subject NP in Biellese; although the literature on Northern Italian Dialects has dwelt on the "repetition of subject" (see for instance Spiess 1956 and references therein), repetition is a general tendency, affecting almost all NPs relating to the verb in an argumental role. For instance, repetition is compulsory for dative NPs and for accusative NPs under specific conditions. Therefore, in talking about doubling, one has to take into account the overall clitic system, not only the pre-verbal markers that we have identified as nominative clitics.

b) In talking about doubling by clitics, as a matter of tact, we take into account the overall syntactic structure of Biellese sentence. Doubling is a counterpart of dislocation. Some cases of doubling are triggered only by dislocation, and, in general, the doubling by a clitic frees the constituent order from the task of indicating syntactic functions, hence the commonness of dislocations in this dialect.

c) Three major types of dislocation can be distinguished in Biellese: they are exemplified in (47)-(49), in contrast with (50):

(47)   tʃol, al 'parla
(48)   al 'parla, tʃol
(49)   al 'parla tʃol
(50)   tʃol al 'parla
        that-one PVM talks
        (that one talks

From a syntactical point of view, these sentences contrast sharply from each other ; therefore, we can use "topic", "antitopic", and "new marking" as convenient unambiguous labels for the role of tʃol in (47)-(49); but from a pragmatical point of view very little is gained when we give ourselves these labels -- in a sense they conceal rather than explain what is the point for the speaker in choosing among sentences (47) through (50). We have applied ourselves to this problem in a separate paper (Ilari and Franchi, 1985), and we shall avoid anticipating here its data and conclusions. But we would like to point out that the three major types of dislocation that we have distinguished play very different pragmatic roles.

In this broader perspective, subject doubling in a peripheral albeit typical aspect of the syntactic and pragmatic functioning of Biellese sentence; from a historical point of view, it seems reasonable to admit that subject doubling was incorporated into Biellese grammar as a part of a wide grammatical resettlement

through which doubling became a regular way of indicating functions, and NPs in argumental roles were allowed to express by dislocation specific pragmatic functions.

4.5. In De Saussure's Cours de Linguistique Générale we can read the following advise, reminiscent of the Neo-grammarian tradition: in order to understand what the evolution of a language was in the past, look al what is happening in the languages you can observe nowadays. Our attention was drawn to Biellese pre-verbal markers by Knud Lanbrecht's work on case/topic agreement in non-standard Franch; nevertheless, treating Biellese pre-verbal markers as case agreement morphemes would be misleading in our opinion (the issue, it should be clear, is not a terminological one); still more misleading would be treating them as agreement morphemes in the traditional sense. Here is where Saussure's advise turns ou to be a charade: looking at what is going on in (present day) languages is always looking at them through some theory or other; row data are no explanations at all, and competing explanations (as Wartburg's and Lambrecht's) could be considered - on the most unexpected grounds - to account satisfactorily for the same data.

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