

ETHICAL DATIVE, PSEUDO-EXPLETIVE NEGATION, AND MIRATIVE GO IN ITALIAN. A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF STACKABLE MARKERS OF MIRATIVITY*

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Abstract. The linguistic strategies to express the unprepared mind of the speaker towards the events narrated, which can convey a sense of surprise, astonishment, wonder, regret, or scandal, are referred to in the literature as “miratives” (DeLancey 1997). Cross-linguistically, mirative strategies can be realized via a number of linguistic means besides mere intonation. As regards Italo-Romance, Spoken Italian seems to be able to resort to the highest number of mirative markers, which are generally stackable without yielding any redundancy. These are: i) different types of Ethical Datives, ii) the expletive negation within a rhetorical question, iii) the functional verb *andare* ‘go’ in some verbal periphrases. In this paper we discuss the syntactic properties of these mirative markers and account for their ability to cooccur in one and the same sentence.

Keywords: Mirativity, Mirative markers, Italian, Ethical Dative, Pseudo-expletive negation, Functional GO.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The adjective ‘mirative’, previously attested also as ‘admirative’ (see Freedman 2003; 2010; 2012), does not have a long tradition in the literature (Aikhenvald 2012: 435), only having been around for almost 50 years. Moreover, it has not always enjoyed a status of its own, being too often considered as a sort of subset of evidentiality⁴. DeLancey (1997: 33) describes mirativity as a category that regards the “status of the proposition with respect to the speaker’s overall knowledge structure”. This category marks both “statements based on inference and statements based on direct experience for which the speaker had no psychological representation” (DeLancey 1997: 35). Mirativity can be also defined as the speaker’s expression of exceeded expectations (DeLancey 1997, 2001). The feelings related to these expectations can go in both directions: i) positive feelings, such as surprise, wonder or astonishment; ii) negative feelings, such as irritation, regret, resentment, or scandal.

But the range of mirative meanings is wider than the concept of exceeded expectations. Aikhenvald (2012: 437) lists the following values, which can be realized in different ways across languages and can be encoded in different ways in one and the same language, according to the different meanings they carry within the mirative range⁵:

- sudden discovery, sudden revelation or realization by the speaker, the audience/addressee, or the main character in a reported speech;
- surprise of the speaker, the audience/addressee, or the main character in a reported speech;
- the unprepared mind of the speaker, the audience/addressee, or the main character in a reported speech;
- counter-expectation to the speaker, the addressee, or the main character in a reported speech;
- information new to the speaker, the addressee, or the main character.

Coming to evidentiality, although evidentials – whose major function is to express the source of the information by means of grammatical marking (see, a.o., Aikhenvald 2015 and references therein) – may have some mirative extensions, especially in the 1SG, there are reasons to claim that evidentiality and mirativity should be kept separate⁶. In this respect, Aikhenvald (2012) reports that⁷:

- According to Watters (2002: 296), “mirativity [...] makes no claims about the source of information – it occurs with first-hand observation, inference, or

⁴ See, e.g., the discussion in DeLancey (1997: 374) for Lhasa Tibetan and Turkish.

⁵ In a wider use of ‘mirativity’ as a cover term, for some scholars (see, e.g., Van Linden, Davidse and Matthijs 2016 for Old English) it can also refer to the absence of surprise, as found in expressions corresponding to *It’s no wonder* or *This is little wonder*.

⁶ Aikhenvald (2012: 437-438) adds that mirativity should be kept separate also from tense-aspect and exclamative markers. See also DeLancey (1986; 1997; 2001; 2003; 2012; Peterson 2013; Bianchi, Bocci and Cruschina 2016) for discussions on the independence of mirativity as a linguistic category.

⁷ See also the discussion in Simeonova (2015) for Bulgarian.

hearsay” (apud Aikhenvald 2012: 436; see also Jacobsen 1964). As a consequence, there are many languages in which the strategies to express mirativity are not connected to evidential systems.

- Mirative markers can co-occur with evidentials, occupying different positions in the verbal structures or being in paradigmatic opposition with them, as in Galo (a Tibeto-Burman language from Arunachal Pradesh; Post 2007 apud Aikhenvald 2012: 458).
- Mirative markers and evidentials are interrelated to different other categories, such as negation or counter-expectations (see also Aikhenvald 2004, Gates 2010, and DeLancey 2001: 370-371).

Moreover, Karagjasova (2021: 2) states that the Bulgarian mirative marker (‘admirative’ in her terms) is not tied to the exclamatory illocutionary force of the sentence, since it can be used in exclamatives as well as in declaratives. This is a property that it shares with other languages.

Beside being realized through lexical means, mirativity can also be encoded, cross-linguistically, through:

- verbal affixes or particles, such as, e.g., the particle *la(a)ka* in Galo, the morphemes *la* and *sa* in Dhimal, a Tibeto Burman language of southeastern Nepal (the latter is referred to as ‘apparentive’ by King 2009), or the particle *le* in Balti, a western Tibetan language (Bashir 2010);
- complex verbal constructions (usually as Serial Verb Constructions; see Aikhenvald and Dixon 2006), as in Tibeto-Burman languages, northeast Caucasian languages, and in Tariana, an Arawak language from Amazonia (but see also the verbo-pronominal constructions in Italian; Masini 2012);
- a special series of pronouns, such as in Shilluk, a Western Nilotic language, which features 3rd person independent mirative pronouns (Miller and Gilley 2007), or in Hone, a Jukunoid language from the Benue-Congo family, which also features specialized mirative pronouns, while lacking specialized evidential pronouns (Storch 2012), or in Wapha (a language related to Hone), whose mirative pronouns are specifically used to describe something extraordinary or miraculous accomplished by the subject (Storch 1999);
- other non-lexical means (for an overview, see Aikhenvald 2012: 457-458).

The primary aim of this paper is to bring to light the fact that mirative markers can be stacked without producing redundancy. This study is also conceived of as a starting point of a research project to map all the mirative strategies across regional Italians and the other Italo-Romance varieties spoken in Italy.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In Section 2 we explore what strategies of mirativity marking are found in Italian, with special attention to the oral dimension, considering those markers in detail as separate and then in various combinations within a sentence. In Section 3 we provide a tentative syntactic account refining a previous analysis by Tsiakmakis and Espinal (2022). In Section 4 we draw the conclusions and propose some avenues of future research.

2. STRATEGIES OF MIRATIVITY MARKING IN ITALIAN

In light of the fact that Italian is a *Dachsprache* of several, diversified regional varieties,⁸ it displays a much higher number of mirative markers than any other local Italo-Romance variety (see, e.g., Cruschina 2022 for an overview). Beside the exploitation of prosodic means such as exclamatory intonation, other mirative strategies can be identified in spoken Italian, namely⁹:

- different types of 1SG and 2SG Ethical Datives;
- a pseudo-expletive negation triggering an interrogative intonation;
- a periphrasis featuring functional *andare* ‘go’ (V1) and a lexical verb (V2) in a monoclausal construction (either as an infinitival construction or as a Pseudo-Coordination).

All these strategies are accompanied by a special mirative intonation, which is common to all the types listed.

Let us have a closer look at all these strategies, first individually and then in various combinations. As said strategies are heterogeneous in nature, for the sake of clarity we will consider the following context, shown in (1):

- (1) I was sitting on a bench in Central Park, when two guys that looked alike and were dressed alike hugged each other right in front of me and they started talking friendly. One was blonde and the other was dark-haired. After some minutes...

The context proposed in (1) regards a speaker who witnesses an event causing in them a reaction of surprise, namely the fact that the blond guy slaps the dark-haired guy, without any apparent reason. Note that the slapping occurs without any event of motion from the agent. The two people in the narration are close and right in front of the narrator.

In reporting the fact to an ideal hearer, the speaker can utter the sentence in (2a) or can flavour it with mirative adverbs such as *suddenly* or *inexplicably* (or related adverbial expressions), as in (2b).

- (2) a. (e) il biondo dà uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond gives a slap to-the dark-haired
 ‘The blond hit the dark-haired!’
 b. (e) improvvisamente/inspiegabilmente il biondo dà uno schiaffo
 and suddenly inexplicably the blond gives a slap

⁸ A *Dachsprache* (lit. ‘roof language’) serves as a standard language or written norm over several dialects or closely related languages that may not be mutually intelligible (cf. Kloss 1967).

⁹ Other mirative strategies seem to be at play in written Italian, which tends to exploit more frequently the lexical material revolving around the concept of ‘surprise’, such as the verb *sorprendere* ‘surprise, astonish, amaze’, the adjective *sorprendente* ‘surprising’, the noun *sorpresa* ‘surprise’ (in the expression *È una vera sorpresa che...* lit.: ‘It is a real surprise that...’) (see Mocini 2014 for a discussion).

al moro!
 to-the dark-haired
 ‘All of a sudden, the blond hit the dark-haired!’

Alternatively, the speaker can choose among other mirative strategies, which will be discussed in Sections 2.1 to 2.4.

2.1. Different types of Ethical Datives

The special use of dative unstressed pronouns to indicate the speaker’s emotional participation or involvement with respect to the event they are reporting is generally referred to as ‘Ethical Dative’ (from Latin *Dativus Ethicus*), henceforth ED. Evidence of ED traces back to Early Biblical Hebrew (see Givón 2013 and references therein), where, however, it occurred only with intransitive telic verbs of sudden motion,¹⁰ or with transitive verbs where it took on a benefactive role. In its different semantic functions, ED can be found in several languages, such as Akkadian, Aramaic, Tamil, Polish, Modern Greek, Spanish, Italian, and many Italo-Romance varieties.¹¹

Cross-linguistically, ED seems to follow the grammaticalization chain shown in (3) (from Givón 2013: 43), although Givón (2013: 43) points out that the real source of Early Biblical Hebrew ED is not the dative itself but the reflexive-benefactive. The lack of dative as a source for ED in Tamil should be taken as evidence that grammaticalization chains might be the result of smaller pieces of grammaticalization processes,¹² and that the association of ED with dative might be only indirect.

(3) allative > dative > benefactive > reflexive-benefactive > ethical dative

Michelioudakis and Kapogianni (2013: 345) describe EDs as elements that do not affect the truth conditions of the event (which distinguish them from all the other types of datives), featuring the following defining properties: i) they have to refer to a discourse participant, who can be the speaker (1SG), the hearer (2SG), or a reported speaker (3SG); ii) they denote some kind of (non-truth-evaluable) relation to the referent of the ED and the described event.

In the Italian linguistic tradition, EDs have been defined in different ways, according to their functions, among which non mirative ones must be acknowledged too. Consider the following Italian examples¹³:

(4) a. Mi sono bevuto una birra.
 to-me am drunk a beer
 ‘I drank/had a beer.’

¹⁰ Rohlfs (1969: § 482) reports the same phenomenon for Latin and Late Latin with motion verbs such as *GO*, *COME* and *FLEE*.

¹¹ See Borik and Teomiro (2023) for several uses of Ethical Datives in Spanish and Russian.

¹² Givón (2013: 65) defines the grammaticalization chain regarding ED as ‘an accidental epiphenomenon’.

¹³ All the examples in (4) are from Masini (2012). Examples (4a-c) are originally in Simone (1993), with some adaptation, while examples (4d-e) are originally in Salvi (2001). The English rendition is ours.

- b. Mi sono fatto un lungo viaggio.
to-me am done a long travel
'I took myself a long trip / I had to take a long trip.'
- c. Mi sono visto un bel film.
to-me am seen a good film
'I've watched a good film.'
- d. Mi si è ammalata una sorella.
to-me REFL is be-sick.PPT a sister.
'A sister of mine got sick.'
- e. Mi hanno investito un gattino.
to-me have.3PL run-over.PTT a kitten
'A kitten of mine has been run over.'

For some scholars, the uses of the dative 1SG *mi* in the examples in (4) fall into those of ED (see, e.g. Simone 1993; see also the discussion in Serianni 1988 and Salvi 2001), but none of the EDs in (4a-c) has a mirative flavour, while (4d-e) are proposed as cases of dative clitics used to express a possessor related to personal space.¹⁴ In particular, the EDs in (4a-c) are analyzed as instances of middle voice, featuring the following characteristics (see Simone 1999; Salvi 2001):

- the verb is always transitive;
- the verb has no additional indirect complements;
- the subject takes on the role of Agent (possibly [+animate], showing the willingness to perform the action/event and control over the action/event), never of Experiencer;
- the dative clitic is not argumental (or it is 'weakly argumental', in the sense of Kazenin 2001).

Capitalizing on the classification proposed in Serianni (1988), Masini (2012) distinguishes an Ethical Dative proper from a Conversational Dative (henceforth CD) and puts both of them in the group of non-reflexive clitic constructions labelled as 'verbo-pronominal constructions'. The lexical choice for CD is justified by the fact that, by using

¹⁴ The 1SG datives in (4d-e), actually, are ambiguous between a possessor reading and a mirative reading. Thus, (4d) could also be translated as 'Unexpectedly/To my surprise, a sister of mine got sick!' and (4e) as 'Unfortunately/Sadly, a kitten of mine got run over!' (however, as an anonymous reviewer noted, the possessive reading remains also in the mirative interpretation of (4d-e)). Also consider the following example discussed in Masini (2012), which can have two different readings, according to the interpretation of the dative clitic (English rendition is ours):

- (i) Ed ecco che Maria ti stira le camicie di Piero
and ECCO that Maria to-you irons the shirts of Piero
senza pretendere un compenso.
without expect.INF a payment
a. 'Surprisingly, Maria has ironed Piero's shirts on your behalf without asking for a payment!'
b. 'Maria has ironed Piero's shirts. You should be surprised!'

Prosodically speaking, however, the two readings bear different intonative contours, which disambiguate them.

the 2SG clitic *ti*, the speaker wants to draw the addressee's attention to a surprising event, and thus involve them emotionally. So, whereas ED can feature dative clitics of different persons (as in (5)), CD is always limited to 2SG (as in (6)), given its dialogic nature.¹⁵

- (5) a. Luca mi ha persino vinto la gara.
Luca ED.1SG has even won the race
'Luca has even won the race (to my surprise).'
- b. Luca ti ha persino vinto la gara.
Luca ED.2SG has even won the race
'Luca has even won the race (to your surprise).'
- c. Io ti ho persino vinto la gara.
I ED.2SG have even won the race
'I have even won the race (to your surprise).'
- d. Tu gli hai persino vinto la gara.
You ED.3SG.M have even won the race
'You have even won the race (to his surprise).'
- (6) a. Entro nel bar e sai chi ti vedo?
enter.PRS.1SG in-the bar and know.PRS.2SG who CD see.PRS.1SG
'I entered the bar and you wouldn't believe whom I saw!'
- b. Entro nel bar e ti vedo Maria!
enter.PRS.1SG in-the bar and CD see.PRS.1SG Maria
'I entered the bar and saw Maria! (of all the people I could see there)'
- c. Entra nel bar e ti vede Maria!
enter.PRS.3SG in-the bar and CD see.PRS.3SG Maria
'He entered the bar and saw Maria! (of all the people he could see there)'

Masini's (2012) Ethical Dative proper displays less restrictions than the datives found in other verbo-pronominal constructions. Its main features are summarized as follows:

- It can combine with a wider number of verb classes: transitive verbs with a [+Agent] subject, transitive verbs with a [-Agent] subject, unergative verbs, unaccusative verbs, pronominal unaccusative verbs, transitive verbs with indefinite covert object, ditransitive verbs.
- It can combine with other verbo-pronominal constructions, such as the transitive middle construction (cf. (4a-c)), the reflexive CPE and the direct reflexive¹⁶.

¹⁵ The examples in (4), (5) and (6) are adapted from Masini (2012). The English rendition is ours.

¹⁶ CPE (from Italian *Costruzioni a Possessore Esterno* 'External Possessor Constructions') are those apparently reflexive verbo-pronominal constructions, typical of European languages, in which i) the object of the verb is not coreferent with the subject but denotes something the subject possesses (see Jezek 2005: 242-243); ii) the dative is not a real argument of the verb but it (or the corresponding full DP) cannot be omitted. On the other hand, Masini (2012) distinguishes two types of CPE: reflexive and non-reflexive CPE, as shown in (i) (adapted from Masini 2012), of which only the reflexive CPE can be considered as a verbo-pronominal construction, since the non-reflexive CPE can admit a full DP replacing the clitic pronoun.

- It can combine with both relational and non-relational nouns functioning as internal argument of the verb.
- It can never be paraphrased with a full PP, as is the case for datives used as benefactives or goals¹⁷.

CD shares some characteristics with (mirative) ED, as both of them i) are typical of spoken language, ii) are non-argumental, and iii) can be combined with many other constructions.

In this paper, we will follow Masini's (2012) distinction between (mirative) ED and CD, since it is essential for our thorough investigation of the interaction between the two mirative markers. Moreover, we will limit the ED to 1SG *mi*,¹⁸ and the CD (which is always the 2SG *ti*) to the case in which the subject of the utterance is a 1SG (thus excluding cases like that shown in (6c)).

Let us now consider again the conversational context shown in (1). If we add ED and CD, respectively, to (2a) the results are those shown in (7) and (8):

- (7) (e) il biondo mi dà uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond ED gives a slap to-the dark-haired
 'The blond up and hit the dark-haired!'
- (8) (e) il biondo ti dà uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond CD gives a slap to-the dark-haired
 'The blond up and hit the dark-haired! (Could you believe that?)'

Both (7) and (8) add a mirative nuance to (2a), but the difference lies in the degree of involvement of the addressee, which is greater in the case of CD in (8), hence the added expression (*Could you believe that?*) in the English rendition.

2.2. The pseudo-expletive negation within rhetorical interrogative sentence

In some languages of the world there are some contexts in which negation receives a vacuous interpretation. When the expletive negation triggers an interrogative intonation, it (partially) loses its semantics of negation and gets a mirative flavour. This is the case of the Italian negative marker *non* 'not', which can be found in combination with an interrogative intonation in what Greco and Moro (2015a, 2015b) (see also Greco 2019a; 2019b; 2020a;

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- (i) a. Luca si mangia le unghie. (Reflexive CPE)
 Luca REFL.3SG eat.PRS.3SG the nails
 'Luca bites/is biting his nails.'
- b. Luca ti taglia i capelli. (Non-Reflexive CPE)
 Luca REFL.2SG cut.PRS.3SG the hair
 'Luca cuts/is cutting your hair.'

¹⁷ Consider the following example (adapted from Masini 2012):

- (i) Mi scrivi una lettera?
 ED.1SG write.PRS.2SG a letter
 'Would/will you please write a letter on my behalf / for me / to me?'

¹⁸ For this reason, the relevant 1SG dative in the examples will be glossed simply as ED.

2020a) call ‘Snegs’ (i.e. Surprise Negation Sentences). The sentences in (10) (adapted from Greco 2020b: 781) show the two possible readings of the negation applied to (9): (10a) instantiates a real negation, while (10b), formally identical, gets a mirative reading.

- (9) Maria è scesa dal treno.
 Maria is got-off from-the train
 ‘Maria got off the train.’
- (10) a. Non è scesa dal treno Maria.
 NEG is got-off from-the train Maria
 ‘Maria did not get off the train.’
- b. Non è scesa dal treno Maria?!
 NEG is got-off from-the train Maria
 ‘Maria got off the train!’

The negative marker *non* (together with the interrogative intonation) apparently provides no semantic contribution in (11) too, which is the example in (2a) with the addition of the expletive negation (NEG in the glosses):

- (11) (e) il biondo non dà uno schiaffo al moro?!
 and the blond NEG gives a slap to-the dark-haired
 ‘The blond up and hit the dark-haired!’

In Section 3.1 we build on Tsiakmakis and Espinal (2022) to argue that the negation does actually provide its semantic contribution, reversing the truth value of the propositions in the speaker’s epistemic base (i.e., negating the speaker’s expectations) and thus showing that there is no semantic redundancy in the combination NEG + ED.

2.3. Functional *GO* as a mirative marker

GO as a functional verb is found in a high number of verbal periphrases across the languages of the world, where it can take on semantically disparate functions.¹⁹ It can be used as a temporal marker, mostly to mark future (see Fleischman 1982; Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994; Hopper and Traugott 2003), with the notable exception of Catalan (see Squartini 1998; Cruschina 2022a), as a passive marker (as in Italian; see Sansò and Giacalone Ramat 2016), as an exhortative marker, or, crucially, as a mirative marker (see, a.o., Sornicola 1976; Stefanowitsch 1999; Wiklund 2009; Josefsson 2014; Cruschina and Bianchi 2021; Ross 2016; 2021).

In this latter function, *GO* (as V1) can be usually found in two different configurations: i) followed by an infinitival lexical verb (as V2), introduced or not by a preposition (we will call it the Infinitival Construction, or InfCo; cf. Cardinaletti and Giusti 2001; 2003; Amenta and Strudsholm 2002; Di Caro 2019a)²⁰; ii) followed by an inflected

¹⁹ Functional *GO* is very frequent as first verb of (asymmetrical) Serial Verb Constructions (see Aikhenvald and Dixon 2006; Aikhenvald 2011).

²⁰ We include in this group also the mirative ‘Go for Construction’ (see Leone 1995 and Cruschina 2018 for Sicilian).

lexical V2, introduced or not by a coordinator (we will call it Pseudo-Coordination, or PseCo; cf. Giusti, Di Caro and Ross 2022 and references therein)²¹.

The GO InfCo is probably the most versatile periphrasis in Italian, since GO can retain its semantics of motion, or can be used functionally for different purposes, namely passive voice, inchoativity and mirativity. The GO InfCo in (12) is among the possible ways to convey the unexpectedness of the action by the narrator, especially in spoken Italian.²² Note, however, that the mirative meaning must be inferred from the context, since a motion reading of GO is generally always possible in those cases (cf. Sornicola 1976; Cruschina 2022a).

- (12) (e) il biondo va a dare uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond GO to give.INF a slap to-the dark-haired
 ‘The blond up and hit the dark-haired!’

In the case of (12), it is the specific context of the event introduced in (1), namely that the two people involved in the slapping scene are very close to each other and no event of motion is necessary, that forces the mirative reading of GO.

PseCo with functional V1 GO is very common in many Extreme Southern Italo-Romance varieties (see Cardinaletti and Giusti 2001, 2003; Manzini and Savoia 2005; Cruschina 2013; Di Caro and Giusti 2015; 2018; Giusti, Di Caro and Ross 2022), where it is preferred to the InfCo (especially in the imperative; Di Caro 2019a: 129).²³ In Italian, it is much less common. Nevertheless, it is still productive, especially in the spoken language (cf. (13)).

- (13) Adesso vado e gliene dico quattro!
 now go.PRS.1SG and to-him+NE say.PRS.1SG four
 ‘I’ll give him a piece of my mind now!’

As already said for the GO InfCo in (12), the GO PseCo in (14) is generally ambiguous between an andative and a mirative reading and only knowledge of the context can lead to the correct reading of the motion V1 (cf. Di Caro and Molinari 2024 for a first systematic description of such constructions used with a mirative reading).

²¹ The syntactic properties of PseCo are briefly discussed in Section 3.2. We refer the interested reader to Giusti, Di Caro and Ross (2022: Ch.1) and references therein (see also Di Caro 2019a).

²² Cruschina (2022: 135) reports that mirative GO InfCo is also found in French (cf. (ia) from Tellier 2015: 159), and that mirative nuances can be found in some constructions with conative GO in English (cf. (ib) from Dalrymple and Vincent 2015):

(i) a. Esther est allée s’imaginer que tu l’aimais.
 Esther is gone REFL imagine.INF that you her=love.IMPF.2SG
 ‘Esther had this crazy idea that you were in love with her.’
 b. He went to answer her, but she shook her head dismissively.

²³ It is also attested in Spanish (see Soto Gómez 2021).

- (14) (e) il biondo va e dà uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond GO and gives a slap to-the dark-haired
 ‘The blond up and hit the dark-haired!’

PseCo with functional TAKE is very productive in spoken Italian (Masini, Mattioli and Vecchi 2019; Giusti and Cardinaletti 2022), much more than its GO counterpart.²⁴ It is also found in many Italo-Romance varieties (e.g. in the western Sicilian variety spoken in Marsala; Giusti and Cardinaletti 2022), in Spanish (Soto Gómez 2021), and in Romanian (Bleotu 2022). TAKE PseCo applied to (2a) yields the mirative result shown in (15):

- (15) (e) il biondo prende e dà uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond TAKE and gives a slap to-the dark-haired
 ‘The blond up and hit the dark-haired!’²⁵

The example in (15) also provides evidence of an important property of PseCo (either with functional GO or TAKE) cross-linguistically, which emerges only when the construction is mirative: V1 need not be in the past tense even when the meaning of the whole construction needs a past tense reading (cf. Cruschina 2013: 279 for GO PseCo in the Sicilian dialect of Mussomeli).²⁶

However, since the syntactic structure of TAKE PseCo is considerably different from that of GO PseCo (see Giusti and Cardinaletti 2022 for a discussion), we did not take it into account in describing the combination of mirative markers in Section 2.5.

2.4. The combination of different mirative strategies

As anticipated in Section 2, all the mirative strategies discussed here can be found in a number of combinations involving two or even three of them in one and the same sentence, remarkably without causing any semantic redundancy or incompatibility.

- (16) a. NEG + ED:
 (e) il biondo non mi dà uno schiaffo al moro?
 and the blond NEG ED gives a slap to-the dark-haired
 ‘The blond up and hit the dark-haired!’
 b. NEG + CD:
 (e) il biondo non ti dà uno schiaffo al moro?
 and the blond NEG CD gives a slap to-the dark-haired
 ‘The blond up and hit the dark-haired! (Could you believe that?)’

²⁴ In the regional Italian of many northern areas, TAKE can also surface as *prender(e) su* lit. ‘take on’ (Giusti and Cardinaletti 2022).

²⁵ As TAKE PseCo is also attested in English, an alternative to the English rendition of (12) is ‘The blond took and hit the dark-haired!’. See, however, the discussion in Ross (2016: 4) on the semantic differences between mirative *go and*, *up and* and *take and* constructions in English.

²⁶ This property is even more evident in Sicilian, where V1 TAKE can remain in the present indicative while the lexical V2 is in the imperfect or preterite indicative, as is the case of the dialect of Delia (cf. Di Caro 2022: 109).

c. ED + GO:

(e) il biondo mi va a dare uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond ED GO to give.INF a slap to-the dark-haired
 'The blond up and hit the dark-haired!'

d. CD + GO:

(e) il biondo ti va a dare uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond CD GO to give.INF a slap to-the dark-haired
 'The blond up and hit the dark-haired! (Could you believe that?)'

e. NEG + GO:

(e) il biondo non va a dare uno schiaffo al moro?
 and the blond NEG GO to give.INF a slap to-the dark-haired
 'The blond up and hit the dark-haired!'

f. NEG + ED + GO:

(e) il biondo non mi va a dare uno schiaffo al moro?
 and the blond NEG ED GO to give.INF a slap to-the dark-haired
 'The blond up and hit the dark-haired!'

g. NEG + CD + GO:

(e) il biondo non ti va a dare uno schiaffo al moro?
 and the blond NEG CD GO to give.INF a slap to-the dark-haired
 'The blond up and hit the dark-haired! (Could you believe that?)'

The combinations shown in (16) are all possible in spoken Italian. The only combinations that seem problematic, according to our preliminary fieldwork, are those combining ED and CD, shown in (17):

(17) a. ED + CD

??(e) il biondo mi ti dà uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond ED CD gives a slap to-the dark-haired

b. ED + CD + GO

??(e) il biondo mi ti va a dare uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond ED CD GO to give.INF a slap to-the dark-haired

c. NEG + ED + CD

??(e) il biondo non mi ti dà uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond NEG ED CD gives a slap to-the dark-haired

e. NEG + ED + CD + GO

??(e) il biondo non mi ti va a dare uno schiaffo al moro!
 and the blond NEG ED CD GO to give.INF a slap to-the dark-haired
 'The blond up and hit the dark-haired! (Could you believe that?)'

However, the acceptability of the combination of ED and CD without other mirative markers (cf. (17a)) seems to be subject to diatopic variation, with Northern speakers more likely to accept it. Further dedicated research is needed to assess the effect of diatopic factors in the selection of mirative strategies.

3. A SYNTACTIC ACCOUNT

In recent literature there have been attempts to account for the syntactic position of the mirative markers we have discussed so far, although they are treated separately. The goal of this section is to treat them together, i.e., in the instances in which they co-occur. First, we will present some recent accounts for NEG + ED (Section 3.1), GO constructions (Section 3.2), and oblique clitics (Section 3.3). Then we will build on these previous accounts and refine them to give a complete picture of the syntax of a sentence with stacked mirative strategies (Section 3.4).

3.1. The syntax of NEG and ED

As previously stated, the possibility of combining the negative marker *non* with the ED to express a surprise effect in Italian has not gone unnoticed. This topic has been investigated in detail by Greco and Moro (2015a, 2015b) and Greco (2019a; 2019b; 2020a; 2020b), who operate a distinction between Snegs (structures of the type NEG + ED) and other structures containing what they define “expletive” negation.

In previous literature, the nature of the “expletive” negation has received different accounts, e.g., a scope marker (Donati 2000, a.o.), an epistemic operator (Makri 2013), a presuppositional negation (Portner and Zanuttini 2000; Zanuttini and Portner 2003 a.o.), or a standard negation occupying a higher position (Abels 2002, 2005) (cf. Greco 2020: 41ff. for an overview).

The nature of the ED has also been investigated (see Section 2.1 for details) but has been kept separate from NEG. Greco (2020a, b) puts together these two ingredients (although focusing on NEG), elaborating a proposal to syntactically account for the “expletive” nature of NEG (expletive as it does not reverse the polarity of the sentence) and the mirative semantics of Snegs. The structure proposed by Greco (2020a: 799) for such constructions follows the cartographic assumption of a split CP (cf. Rizzi 1997) and is reported in (18).

(18) [CP ... [X° non] ... [FocP TP Foc° [... t_{TP} ...]]]

Greco considers “expletive” and standard negation as two sides of the same coin. The difference between them is rooted in syntax: there is only one negative marker *non* in Italian, but its semantics depends on its merging point. If *non* is merged within the TP when the νP^* -phase is still active, it negates the propositional content of the νP ; if *non* is merged in the CP after the νP^* -phase is already closed, it cannot reverse the truth-conditions of the sentence and acquires its “expletive” status typical of Snegs. The structure in (18) displays in fact *non* as being merged in a functional projection X° in the Left Periphery. Moreover, the whole TP is focalized and moved in a Focus projection in the CP-field. This is meant to account for the fact that Snegs convey new information (in fact they can be used to answer questions) and can contain topicalized elements.

The structure in (18) also reveals Greco’s focus on the negative marker, relegating the ED to the role of an element which typically accompanies NEG in Snegs. The author, in fact, does not discuss the position of ED, but treats it as any other clitic which is merged in the TP.

More recently, Tsiakmakis and Espinal (2022) have put forth the idea that the elements that are traditionally conceived as being expletive develop a pragmatic enrichment effect. In order to strengthen their claim, they take into account several cases of expletiveness, including the case of expletive negation in Italian Snegs. For this purpose, they adapt Greco's (2020a, b) account to Cohen and Krifka's (2014) and Krifka's (2015, 2017, 2023) theory of Speech Act, which is also rooted in a cartographic view of the Left Periphery. The Speech Act framework follows a Fregean notion which presupposes the existence of an asserted proposition p , upon which a judgement is subsequently made²⁷. The asserted proposition p is contained within TP, which is in turn dominated by a rich Left Periphery that makes room for at least three projections. The top-most one is the Act Phrase (ActP), which relates the p to the common ground of the discourse and contains an operator ASSERT which turns p into an assertion. A Commitment Phrase (ComP) headed by the operator \vdash indicates that the speaker publicly commits to the truth of p . The judgement on p is contained within a Judgement Phrase (JP), "representing subjective epistemic and evidential attitudes" (Krifka 2023: 1). The head J turns p into a judgement, which is logically translated by Krifka into " $x J- \varphi$ " (Krifka 2023: 6), where φ in this case indicates the asserted proposition. The resulting configuration is given in (19), which translates into an assertion through which the speaker publicly commits to the individual judgment that the proposition p is true, which is then added to the common ground.

- (19) [ActP [Act ASSERT] [ComP [Com \vdash] [JP [J $J-$] [TP p]]]]

Given the compatibility of Greco's approach with the Speech Act framework, and since the former remains vague about the position of NEG in Snegs (generically located in the CP field), Tsiakmakis and Espinal (2022) provide their own structural proposal, reported here in (20b). The source example, taken from Greco (2019b: 18), is given in (20a). The fact that the content of the TP is moved in a focus position comes from the property of Snegs (as described in Greco 2020b) of conveying new information (hence, being all-focus sentences).

- (20) a. E non mi è scesa dal treno Maria?!
and not to-me is got off-the train Mary
'Mary got off the train!'
b. [ActP [Act ASSERT] [ComP [Com \vdash] [JP [J non- $J-$] [FocP mi è scesa dal treno Maria [Foc \emptyset]
[TP ~~mi è scesa dal treno Maria~~]]]]]

Tsiakmakis and Espinal (2022) adopt Greco's (2020a, b) idea that i) the expletive negation is merged in the CP domain, and that ii) the whole TP moves to the specifier of a Focus projection in the CP. In addition, they individuate a precise position for NEG, arguing that it is left-adjoined to the head $J-$ (i.e., the head containing the set of propositions included in the speaker's epistemic universe). This assumption straightforwardly derives the speaker's surprise effect, in that *non- $J-$* comes to indicate the set of propositions not included in the speaker's epistemic universe, i.e., those that are

²⁷ Cf. Frege (1897, 1918).

unexpected (see Section 3.4 for further details). Put in other words, the structure in (20b) equals to saying that the speaker publicly commits to the unexpected truth of the proposition contained in the TP (*mi è scesa dal treno Maria*). Furthermore, under this approach, NEG is not expletive at all (Tsiakmakis and Espinal argue in favour of the view that there are no expletive elements at all) in that it reverses the truth-conditions of the set denoted by *J*–.

3.2. The syntax of *GO* constructions

Although the syntax of verbal periphrases featuring *GO* has been a debated issue in the literature, to the best of our knowledge the structure of such constructions as mirative markers in Italian still remains unaccounted for. In the present section, we are going to give a brief overview of some salient aspects of the syntax of *GO* InfCo and related constructions.

The verbal periphrases featuring functional *GO* have been analyzed as monoclausal constructions, with the exception of *GO ePseCo*, which structurally (but not semantically) instantiates a real coordination, featuring the still productive coordinator *e* (< Lat. ET) ‘and’, hence the label *ePseCo*. For such analyses we refer the reader to Cinque (2001, 2006) (see also Rizzi 1982) for functional *GO* in the InfCo, and to the work by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2001; 2003; 2020; see also Giusti and Cardinaletti 2022; Di Caro 2015, 2018, 2019a) for *GO aPseCo* (i.e. the *PseCo* featuring the connector *a*).²⁸

InfCos are structures involving a possibly tensed V1 linked with an infinitival V2 by a linker (in Italian, typically either *a* or *di*). Rizzi (1982) analyzes such constructions as normally involving two separate clauses, with the linker having the status of a complementizer. An example of InfCo and the corresponding construction are reported in (21) from Rizzi (1982: 94).

- (21) a. Proverò a lavorare di più.
 try.FUT.1SG to work.INF of more
 ‘I will try to work more.’
 b. ... v [S' [COMP P] [S NP infinitive vP]
 proverò a lavorare

The peculiarity of such InfCos, already recognized by Rizzi (1982), is that in some instances (typically whenever clitic climbing applies) they are subject to “restructuring” which “creates a syntactic constituent “verbal complex”” (ibid.: 38). Extending this view, Cinque (2006: 33), contends that restructuring verbs are always functional and, as such, enter a monoclausal configuration (even in absence of clitic climbing). In particular, Cinque (2006) analyzes the itive verb *venire* ‘come’ as merged in the TP domain (in AndativeP) within a monoeventive restructured verb complex in which the two verbs (i.e. the andative and the lexical verb) must share the subject, and which displays clitic climbing onto the andative (cf. (22) adapted from Cinque 2006: 13).

²⁸ See Manzini and Savoia (2005), Manzini, Lorusso and Savoia (2017), Manzini and Lorusso (2022), who propose a biclausal analysis for *aPseCo*. For Ledgeway (2016), only the cases without the connector *a* are analyzed as monoclausal.

- (22) [_{CP} io [_{AndativeP} ti verrò [_{VP} a parlare [di questi problemi.]]]]
 I to-you come.FUT.1SG to talk.INF of these problems
 ‘I will come to talk to you about these problems.’

On the other hand, *PseCos* owe their name to the fact that V1 and V2 appear in a coordination (either coordinated by an overt element or in an asyndetic configuration) but syntactically and semantically behave as a single predicate displaying mandatory single event interpretation (thus preventing V2 from being negated separately) and clitic climbing onto V1, and disallowing insertion of elements other than the coordinator between the two verbs (Cardinaletti and Giusti 2001; 2003; 2020).

In *aPseCo* (i.e. in *PseCo* featuring the connector *a*) GO is taken as a semi-lexical verb merged as functional head in *t*, a head immediately higher than T, where it can either copy parasitically Person and Tense features from the lexical verb moved (or remerged) to T or it can appear in a (reduced) invariable form (Cardinaletti and Giusti 2001; 2003; 2020).²⁹ This structure is very productive in Southern Italian dialects, e.g., in the variety spoken in Delia (central Sicily) exemplified in (23a). It is however impossible in standard Italian.³⁰ A structural representation is given in (23b), taken from Giusti and Cardinaletti (2022: 40).

- (23) a. Jivu a ffici la spisa du voti.
 go.PAST.1SG A do.PAST.1SG the shopping two times
 ‘I went to do the shopping twice.’ [Delia; Di Caro and Giusti (2018: 58)]
 b. [_{IP} V1 [_{IP} (a) [_{TP} V2 [_{VP} ~~V2~~ ...
 jivu a ffici

Differently from *aPseCo*, *ePseCo* is present in Italian. However, the latter is assigned a different structure with respect to the former. Giusti and Cardinaletti (2022) adopt for *ePseCo* Soto Gómez’s (2021) analysis of the Spanish “speaker-oriented” (i.e., mirative) *yPseCo*. The Italian and Spanish constructions present several similarities: i) they are generally found with either TAKE or GO as V1; ii) both can be used with a mirative reading. Soto Gómez’s (2021) proposal hinges on the assumption that the V1 has a function similar to that of a contrastive focus (in that it contrasts the speaker’s expectations against the actual facts). This is possible because the V1 is directly merged in a Left Peripheral Focus projection. TAM sharing is instead achieved by a mechanism of feature transferring from the V2 to the V1 via C. An example of *ePseCo* and its structural representation are provided in (24a) and (24b), respectively (from Giusti and Cardinaletti 2022: 40ff.).

- (24) a. Ha preso ed è partita.
 has taken and is left
 ‘She suddenly left.’

²⁹ For a cartographic discussion of the interaction of functional GO in *aPseCo* with Cinque’s (2006: 90) andative see Di Caro and Giusti (2018: 64-65).

³⁰ More precisely, Ledgeway (1997: 256) reports that a once productive instance of *PseCo* in the imperative in (regional) Italian has lexicalized as a fossilized expression, namely *vattelappesca* ‘goodness knows!’ (lit. ‘go and fish it!’).

- b. [_{FocP} V1 [_{CP} e [_{TP} V2 [_{VP} V2 ...
 ha preso e(d) è partita

The analysis provided in (24b) is only one possible structural implementation for *ePseCo*. However, it has at least two important drawbacks. One is that it would represent the only case of tensed verb merged in the Left Periphery. The other is that TAM sharing is suspicious in that V1 can take auxiliaries (as in the case of (24a)), which are arguably projected as independent heads.³¹ Despite the fact that the structure differs for each construction, we believe that the analyses presented so far provide good insights for the discussion of *GO aInfCo* when it is used as a mirative strategy. We will turn to it in Section 3.4.

3.3. Clitics and the speaker: obliques, ϕ -features, and auxiliary selection

In the present work, we will treat oblique clitics in mirative contexts as zonally including the speaker and their expectations. This idea of zonal inclusion in obliques comes from an assumption which sees obliques as possessors, where possession is treated as a part-whole relation (Manzini and Savoia 2015; 2017). In relation to our data, this means that the speaker possesses an expectation, which is then unmet: \neg [EXPECTATION], resulting in the speaker's unprepared mind. As (18) shows, Tsiakmakis and Espinal (2022) do underline that the negation (\neg) scopes over the speaker. This ensures that, in the syntax, i) the negation is not expletive, as originally pointed out by Greco (2019; 2020): it simply does not scope over TP, but rather over JP, which contains the speaker's expectations;³² The oblique case is thus a relator linking the speaker and their expectations, and the relation is inclusional, and consequently, zonal.³³ Andatives in miratives can similarly be understood in zonal terms, and specifically as movement away from the speaker's expectations, in the sense that the unfolding of the main event is removed from what the speaker expects.³⁴ The negation as well seems to fulfil this role.

³¹ We thank an anonymous reviewer for this observation.

³² For a justification of JP as including the speaker's expectations see §3.4.

³³ As an anonymous reviewer points out, also second person oblique clitics can be understood in zonal terms, and relating the hearer with their expectations, which the speaker attributes to them (i).
 (i) Hai visto? Gianni ti ha vinto la gara!
 Have.2SG seen Gianni CD has won the race
 'Did you see? Gianni has won the race (and you didn't expect that)'

³⁴ An anonymous reviewer points out that this explanation is not tenable, as propositions do not move, and rather suggests that the mirative meaning is related to the temporal meaning "suddenly", and *GO* is used to stress the change-of-state, the shift to an unexpected situation. We acknowledge this temporal derivation of the surprise effect contributed by *GO* and propose that the two alternatives do not exclude each other, but that they are in a consequential relationship where movement is a consequence of the change-of-state. Given this, we adopt Ross's (2016) explanation, as it aligns well with the zonal relation encoded by mirative markers and allows us to follow Tsiakmakis and Espinal's (2022) proposal that there are no real expletives. Furthermore, in Ross's terms, it is not the proposition which moves. It is rather the speaker who metaphorically moves away from their expectations. Note that a metaphorical interpretation of *GO* is equally required also under the change-of-state reading of the andative.

In mirative contexts, we have two events. The first corresponds to the building of the speaker's expectation, which is then realized, as we said, through a person clitic. The other event is instead the main event in TP (Maria getting off the train, for example). That the two are separate events is also witnessed by the fact that the event in TP can be self-subsisting as in simple, affirmative sentences, and when it does, it does not include the oblique clitic, which is only present in ED or mirative contexts. The mirative structure, on the other hand, depends on the existence of the main event in TP, and cannot be realized without a main event taking place. Mirative strategies function as comments on the main event. Furthermore, we construe mirative obliques as non-core arguments, i.e., as adjuncts. This treatment of mirative obliques is in line with that of ED obliques, which, in the literature, are often seen as a result of adjunction (Maling 1986, Franco and Huidobro 2008). The surprise interpretation is linked to the fact that mirative clitics are surprising in their function as adjuncts, i.e., unlike (26b), mirative sentences select adjunct clitics even with verbs that would not normally select them.³⁵

According to Horn (2008), EDs cannot be topicalized, passivized, and cannot alternate with full NPs (see also Tigău 2018 on Romanian). Furthermore, according to him, EDs are semantically relevant, but without affecting the utterance's truth conditions (see also Michelioudakis and Kapogianni 2013). While Horn's work focuses on English, and not on mirativity, the constraints he found on topicalization and alternation with full NPs (or strong person pronouns) also hold for the Italian case, either with a prototypical ED (25a), or in cases in which the oblique clitic has more of a mirative semantics (25b, 25c, 25d).

- (25) a. *A me sono comprata una borsa.
 to me am bought a purse
 'I have bought myself a purse.'
- b. *A me è scesa dal treno Maria.
 to me is got-off from-the train Maria
 'Maria got off the train.'
- c. *A lui ha vinto una gara.
 to him has won a race
 'He has won him a race.'
- d. *A Lucia è scesa dal treno Maria. (le è scesa dal treno Maria)
 to Lucia is got-off from-the train Maria
 'Maria got off the train.'

³⁵ Witness the difference between a malefactive (i) and a mirative (ii). In (i), the subject *piede* 'foot' is owned by the speaker and a malefactive interpretation is retrieved, unlike in (ii), where the subject *Luigi* is not the speaker's *possessum*. This is also linked to the part-whole interpretation attributed to obliques as discussed at the beginning of §3.3, i.e., a marginal zonal interpretation for the oblique clitic.

- (i) Il piede mi è diventato gonfio.
 the foot ED is become swollen
 'My foot got swollen.'
- (ii) Luigi mi è diventato scemo!
 Luigi ED is become idiot
 'Luigi has gone stupid!'

On the other hand, contrary to what found by Horn (2008) for English, passivization in Italian is instead possible, both in mirative obliques (26a) and in pure EDs (26b).

- (26) a. Non mi è stata ammazzata Maria?!
 NEG to-me is been murdered Maria
 ‘To my surprise, Maria was murdered!’
 b. Mi è stata comprata una borsa.
 to-me is been bought a purse
 ‘A purse was bought (for me).’

As for auxiliary selection, this seems correlated with mismatches in the person and number features of the oblique clitic and the auxiliary. Let us take, for instance, a simple transitive configuration, *comprare il quadro* ‘to buy the painting’, with a 3SG auxiliary, which is *avere*, ‘have’: *ha comprato il quadro* ‘s/he has bought the painting’ (27a). The corresponding mirative configuration is as follows (27b):

- (27) a. Ha comprato il quadro.
 has bought the painting
 ‘S/he has bought the painting.’
 b. Non mi ha comprato il quadro?!
 not to-me has bought the painting
 ‘To my surprise, s/he has bought the painting.’

The clitic has 1SG features, while the auxiliary has 3SG features, i.e., their features do not match. In this case, then, the auxiliary stays the same (HAVE) in both configurations.

Let us now do the same, but with a 1SG clitic and a 2SG auxiliary.

- (28) a. Hai comprato il quadro.
 have.2SG bought the painting
 ‘You have bought the painting.’
 b. Non mi hai comprato il quadro?!
 NEG to-me have.2SG bought the painting
 ‘To my surprise, you have bought the painting.’

As in (28b), the clitic and the auxiliary have mismatching features. We should add that features include not only person, but number as well.

- (29) a. Hanno comprato il quadro.
 have.3PL bought the painting
 ‘They have bought the painting.’
 b. Non mi hanno comprato il quadro?
 NEG to-me have.3PL bought the painting
 ‘To my surprise, they have bought the painting.’

- c. Non gli/le hanno comprato il quadro?!
 NEG to-him/her have.3PL bought the painting
 ‘To my surprise, they have bought his/her painting.’
- d. *Non gli/le sono comprati il quadro?!
 NEG to-him/her be.3PL bought the painting

Let us now, instead, show examples where the oblique clitic and the auxiliary have matching features. As with the preceding examples, we will also show the corresponding non-mirative configuration. As the example shows, when the clitic and the auxiliary have matching features, BE is selected instead. Not only that: the selection of HAVE is not grammatical at all. In these instances, what we have is essentially an Ethical Dative configuration. The clitic in the above example is not mirative, but ethical. So in cases with matching features, the clitic is not interpreted as mirative. Mirative semantics is instead expressed by the negation alongside interrogative intonation. This is clear if we think that unambiguously Ethical (Advantage) Datives require an auxiliary shift (cf. (30b-c)), while miratives do not. While *mi* itself can be both ethical and mirative, it can only realize one feature at once, but *mi*_{Mirative}-*mi*_{Ethical} strings are not allowed (cf. (30d)), in spite of the two having different functions. The selection of BE is then only triggered by *mi*_{Ethical}. We can understand this in terms of feature sharing, in which the auxiliary agrees with the ethical semantics contained within the clitic.

- (30) a. Ho comprato una borsa.
 have.1SG bought a purse
 ‘I have bought a purse.’
- b. Non mi sono comprata una borsa?!
 NEG to-me be.1SG bought a purse
 ‘To my surprise, I have bought myself a purse.’
- c. *Non mi ho comprato una borsa?
 NEG to-me have.1SG bought a purse
 ‘I have bought a purse.’
- d. *Non mi mi sono comprata una borsa?/?!
 not to-me to-me be.1SG bought a purse

Having discussed oblique clitics in both contexts, we now turn to presenting our proposal detailing the possibility of a unified account for the co-occurrence of different mirative strategies.

3.4. A unified account

This section aims to present a unified analysis considering the possibility of mirative strategies to stack up. The final structure should be able to account for the co-occurrence of different strategies which, as is already clear, do not compete for the same position. In order to achieve this goal, we build on the accounts presented in the previous sections and integrate them into a unique proposal. To anticipate the following discussion, we argue that NEG is the only mirative strategy found in the Left Periphery (following Greco 2020 and Tsiakmakis and Espinal 2022), while mirative ED (and CD) and mirative GO

are TP-internal. These TP-internal strategies, despite retaining their semantic contribution, do not modify the propositional content of the proposition, but are computed as contributing to the non-at-issue content, i.e., the speaker's expectations. The same goes for exclamative intonation. Put this way, mirativity is neither a syntactic feature located somewhere in the structure, nor is it a semantic feature associated with each mirative strategy. Since there is no [+mirative] feature which gets interpreted multiple times, no redundancy arises even in the case where multiple mirative strategies are stacked. Mirativity only arises as a pragmatic by-product of the manipulation of the speaker's expectations in syntax.

The need for a new account derives from the fact that each of the preceding ones focuses only on a single aspect of the phenomenon, without looking at the greater picture. Greco's (2020a, b) and Tsiakmakis and Espinal's (2022) proposals, despite contributing to the understanding of the syntax of NEG, overlook the role of the ED as another mirative marker which could in principle do the same job as NEG. As for *GO aInfCo*, the accounts described in Section 3.2 were not meant to account for the mirative semantics of such a construction, this still being an open issue.

Our proposal aims to address the complete picture of the stackability of the mirative markers discussed in Section 2, at the same time accounting for the issues left open by previous works. Let us start with the syntactic representation of NEG and ED. To this end, we will build on and slightly modified Tsiakmakis and Espinal's account.

We agree with Tsiakmakis and Espinal's (2022: 25) analysis of NEG as being left-adjunct to the head $J-$. Recall that $J-$ encodes the set of propositions in the speaker's epistemic universe, and that its presence is implied although it does not receive an overt realization.³⁶ In this way we follow Tsiakmakis and Espinal's assumption that there is no such a thing as "expletive negation". In fact, NEG is a real negation which is adjoined to the speaker's expectations and reverses them. Here a clarification is needed. Since $J-$ is defined as containing the set of propositions in the speaker's epistemic universe, $J-$ refers not to the current epistemic state of the speaker (which includes p , i.e., the proposition presented as surprising), but to a previous state (in fact, expectations are prior to the event itself).³⁷ The head $J-$, however, contains $\neg p$ (as the event in p is unexpected). This means that the content of p is arrived at compositionally, at the same time deriving the surprise effect. Since NEG is not expletive, we obtain $\neg(\neg p)$, i.e., p .

³⁶ An anonymous reviewer wonders why JP should be associated with mirativity, given the explanation provided by Krifka (2023: 11): "I assume that operators in the JP relate to the epistemic and evidential modifications of the proposition that the speaker is committed to. I understand evidentiality as relating to the source of evidence for a proposition, and epistemicity as relating to the level of certainty". The reviewer's objection here is that mirativity has nothing to do with either, as the speaker does not present the sentence as certain or probable, or as reported or based on direct evidence. However, we contend that mirativity is indeed related to evidentiality, in line with a series of studies on the topic which argue for a link between the two (Hill 2012; Rett and Murray 2013; Brugman and Macaulay 2015; Peterson 2016; Lau and Rooryck 2017 *i.a.*). Indeed, in many languages, mirativity and evidentiality are expressed by the same linguistic means (see, e.g., Hengeveld and Olbertz 2012 for examples). Furthermore, Krifka's JP is a theoretical construct which by its nature lends itself to different interpretations and allows further refinements. The set of elements proposed by Krifka as occupants of JP (Krifka focuses on German) does not exclude that there may be other elements sitting in this projection in different languages.

³⁷ We thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out to us.

Tsiakmakis and Espinal's proposal, as mentioned before, does not consider the role of the ED as an alternative mirative strategy which could potentially clash with NEG (or produce a redundancy effect). As such, they treat the ED as a clitic on a par with other clitics. Without further specifications, their account predicts that the speaker "publicly commits to the unexpected truth of the proposition corresponding to *mi è scesa dal treno Maria*" (Tsiakmakis and Espinal 2022: 25). As anticipated above, we believe that analyzing *mi* as a canonical clitic together with the rest of the TP is not the right move, for mainly two reasons:

- a) The proposition whose unexpected truth the speaker commits to is *è scesa dal treno Maria* (lit. 'has got off the train Maria'), excluding *mi* (lit. 'to me'). In fact, it is not clear what the semantic import of the ED in such a proposition should be. On the one hand, we know that it cannot be interpreted as a benefactive (**Mary got off the train for me*). On the other hand, treating it as a mirative strategy amounts to saying that the speaker faces the paradox of committing to the unexpected truth of a proposition which is already marked as surprising (or, at best, they would be judging the unexpectedness of the proposition as unexpected, cancelling out the surprise effect).
- b) The ED does not cluster with other clitics (cf. (31)), hence it should be kept separate from them.

(31) [A friend told me he took a bath in dirty water that was left after his dog's bath]

- a. Non mi [ci si] va a lavare?!
NEG ED STRUM= REFL= GO.3SG to wash.INF
- b. ?Non mi va a lavar[ci si]?!³⁸
NEG ED GO.3SG to wash.INF-STRUM=REFL=
- c. *Non [mi ci] va a lavar[si]?!
NEG ED STRUM= GO.3SG to wash.INF-REFL=
- d. *Non [mi si] va a lavar[ci]?!
NEG ED REFL= GO.3SG to wash.INF-STRUM=
'He up and took a bath in it (= the dirty water)!'

For the above reasons we propose that the ED is somehow independent from *p*, i.e., the propositional content which is judged by the speaker as being unexpected and which is contained in the TP. Despite being interpreted independently of the content of *p*, the ED cannot be as high as NEG, since the former can be found in enclisis on the infinitive (32).³⁹

³⁸ We decided to mark the example in (31b) with the question mark ? since the clitic cluster in enclisis on the infinitive seems to be perfectly well-formed for speakers from Northern Italy, but is perceived as odd by speakers from Southern Italy. In any case, even for the latter group (31b) is considerably better than (31c)-(31d).

³⁹ A dedicated study would be necessary to verify what the frequency of appearance of the enclitic mirative ED is if compared with the proclitic one. Intuitively, enclisis seems to be a more marked option. For example, in (32), enclisis of the ED seems to be favoured by the presence of a heavy constituent conveying the surprising information (as in *con i pantaloni ancora abbassati*) with its low position being justified by its necessity to be found closer to the unexpected piece of information.

- (32) Non va a scendermi dal treno con i pantaloni
 NEG GO.3SG to get.off-ED.1SG from-the train with the trousers
 ancora abbassati Maria?
 still lowered Mary
 ‘Mary got off the train with her trousers still down!’

As mentioned in Section 3.3, we take the mirative ED to instantiate an inclusion relation between the speaker and their expectations (the same holds for the mirative CD, denoting an inclusion relation between the hearer and the expectations assigned to them by the speaker; see fn.33). Since the semantic import of the mirative ED is not *per se* sufficient to derive the surprise effect, we attribute the latter to the unexpected selection of an ED given the thematic grid of the lexical verb. This allows the ED to be computed as contributing not to the propositional content of *p*, but rather to the not-at-issue content related to the speaker’s expectations. In this sense, the mirative ED functions like the mirative adverbs (e.g., *sorprendentemente* ‘surprisingly’) which but do not contribute to the at-issue content of the proposition. This is also the case for mirative GO, which we now turn to.

The last ingredient of our analysis is the position of the mirative GO *aInfCo*. Let us start from the observation that in GO *aInfCo* the V1 is clearly a functional verb whose andative semantics looks bleached. Ross (2016), capitalizing on Stefanowitsch (1999), derives the mirative semantics of such functional andative verbs as expressing a “motion away from expectation” (Ross 2016: 10), where the speaker’s expectation is the “deictic centre” in the set of possible outcomes of an event.⁴⁰ Under this view, GO retains its andative semantics, which is however applied not to the subject of the sentence but to the speaker’s expectations (they are in a zonal relation, see Section 3.3). This view is advantageous as it allows us to keep the non-expletive nature of mirative GO (supporting Tsiakmakis and Espinal’s 2022 idea that there are no expletive elements), and to obtain the mirative reading of the sentence compositionally, as with NEG and ED.

Let us consider the position of GO in the GO *aInfCo*. This verb retains its andative semantics, although it is not applied to the main event, but rather contributes to the non-at-issue content by producing a surprise effect. Echoing Greco’s (2020a, b) proposal concerning negation, we conceive GO as being merged not in the core *v*P*-phase, where the thematic relations are created, but only once that phase is closed. The semantic contribution of GO is thus not part of *v*P*. It is tempting to claim that GO is merged higher, in the Left Periphery, just like NEG. However, there are no cases of tensed verbs directly merged in CP. The only possible exception would be Soto Gómez’s (2021) analysis of *ePseCo* which is, however, problematic (see Section 3.1). In any case, even assuming Soto Gómez’s account, it could not be applied to the case of the GO *aInfCo*, as the V2 appears as [-tense], so the two verbs cannot possibly share TAM features. Furthermore, GO bears the tense of the main event, locating it in time, hence it necessarily needs to be merged in the TP. There is, however, an important observation to be made, which emerges by analyzing the periphrasis in the spirit of Cinque’s (2006) split-TP analysis (see Section 3.2). We report the relevant example in (22) here as (33) for convenience.

⁴⁰ See fn.34 for the integration of Ross’s (2016) idea of the speaker moving away from their expectations as a consequence of the change of state metaphorically indicated by GO.

- (33) [CP io [AndativeP ti verrò [vp a parlare [di questi problemi.]]]]
 I to-you come.FUT.1SG to talk.INF of these problems
 ‘I will come to talk to you about these problems.’

In Cinque’s terms, a periphrasis like *venire a parlare* ‘come to talk’ is analyzed as being composed of the andative V1 in one of the split TP-projections (AndativeP) with the V2 sitting lower in the VP. The peculiarity of mirative GO is that its position is higher than that of normal andatives (e.g., *partire* ‘to leave’) as it can precede them (34a).⁴¹ Moreover, according to Cinque’s (2006: 89) hierarchy, the highest projections are $Asp_{habitual} > Asp_{prepositional} > Asp_{repetitive(I)} > Asp_{terminative}$. We have evidence that mirative GO is higher than these highest projections, but cannot combine with the first three ($Asp_{habitual}$, which is instantiated by verbs like *solere* ‘to be used to’, $Asp_{prepositional}$ instantiated by, e.g., *tendere a* ‘to tend to’, and $Asp_{repetitive}$ by, e.g., *tornare a* ‘do again’), as they would create “heavy” periphrases in combination with GO and would therefore be perceived as borderline (if not unacceptable at all).⁴² $Asp_{terminative}$ is exemplified by *finire* ‘to finish’ (34b).

- (34) a. Gianni è andato a partire per Ibiza senza dire niente!
 John is gone to leave.INF for Ibiza without say.INF nothing
 ‘John up and left for Ibiza without saying anything!’
 b. Maria è andata a finire la serie TV senza di me!
 Mary is gone to finish.INF the TV-series without of me
 ‘Mary up and finished the TV series without me!’

This high position of GO is perfectly in line with its functional nature, as it neither modifies the *Aktionsart* nor constitutes a separate action. GO has thus

⁴¹ As in the case of the ED *mi*, which can take over both the ethical dative and the mirative function but cannot realize them in the same sentence, adjacent sequences of mirative and andative GO are disallowed.

⁴² Note that the incompatibility between mirative GO and the verbs instantiating $Asp_{prepositional}$ and $Asp_{repetitive}$ is not a semantic one: in fact, using a different mirative marker (e.g., ED) is perfectly acceptable (i)-(ii). Using mirative GO would give rise to a complex periphrasis with three verbs (e.g., (iii)) which is arguably computationally “heavy”, hence disfavoured.

- (i) Gianni mi tende a cadere dal letto mentre dorme!
 Gianni ED tends to fall.INF from-the bed while sleeps
 ‘Gianni tends to fall from the bed while he sleeps (with my surprise)!’
 (ii) Gianni mi è tornato a drogarsi!
 Gianni ED is came-back to take-drugs.INF
 ‘Gianni is back on drugs (with my surprise)!’
 (iii) ??/*Gianni è andato a tornare a drogarsi!
 Gianni is gone to came-back to take-drugs.INF
 Intended: ‘Gianni is back on drugs (with my surprise)!’

The case of $Asp_{habitual}$ is instead further complicated by the archaic flavour of the verb *solere* ‘to be used to’. In general, habituality is not *per se* incompatible with mirativity. Note that, in the case of repeated actions (subsuming $Asp_{habitual}$, $Asp_{prepositional}$, and $Asp_{repetitive}$), the object of surprise is not the action itself (because it is repeated, hence predictable and not likely to trigger surprise) but the very fact that the action is repeated.

grammaticalized into a functional (mirative) marker. From this perspective, the status of *GO* meets the requirement of grammaticalization, described in Kuryłowicz (1965: 52) as a process that “consists in the increase of the range of a morpheme advancing from a lexical to a grammatical or from a grammatical to a more grammatical status”. *GO* has shifted from being a lexical verb (lexical status) to a mirative marker (grammatical status). Such a process clearly has structural correlates: the higher position of mirative *GO* is in line with Roberts and Roussou’s (2003) theory, where grammaticalized items undergo a shift upwards in the functional hierarchy and end up being merged higher. This is precisely the case for mirative *GO*, which is merged in a high TP position, above lexical verbs. This can be given the sketched representation in (35), where we label the projection *XP*.

- (35) [TP [_{XP} *è andata* [_{Asp-terminative} *a finire*_i [_{VP} *t_i la serie TV.*]]]]

At first glance, it seems counterintuitive to have mirative strategies like *ED* and *GO* merged in the TP, which contains the proposition *p* that is judged as being surprising by the speaker. Let us consider the sentence in (36a), whose syntactic sketch is provided in (36b).

- (36) a. Non mi è andata a scendere dal treno Maria?!
 NEG ED is gone to get off-the train Mary
 ‘Mary got off the train!’
 b. [_{ActP} [_{Act} ASSERT] [_{Comp} [_{Com} *†*] [_{JP} [_J non-J–]] [_{TP} [_{XP} *mi è andata*] *a scendere dal treno Maria?!*]]]]

The representation in (36b) would amount to saying that the speaker commits to the unexpectedness of the proposition *mi è andata a scendere dal treno Maria*, lit. ‘went to get off the train Mary’. This is, however, not the correct prediction, as the unexpected proposition roughly corresponds to *è scesa dal treno Maria*, lit. ‘has got off the train Mary’, excluding *ED* and *GO*, but keeping the Tense reference of the latter.⁴³ In tackling this issue, one should consider that there is a discrepancy between syntax and interpretation: it is not necessary for mirative strategies to be merged higher than the TP to be interpreted above it. Mirativity cannot be below Tense: it is not the case that unexpectedness holds at a time prior to speech time when the tense is Past and at speech time when the tense is Present.⁴⁴ This shows that Tense is interpreted below the mirative, although mirative strategies can be TP-internal.

The properties of these mirative strategies perfectly align with those of the elements triggering conventional implicatures (CIs), e.g., expressives like English *damn* (Potts 2005; Gutzmann 2019, *i.a.*). In fact, as argued by Potts (2005: 11), CIs “are speaker-oriented comments on a semantic core (at-issue entailments)”. Furthermore, CIs cannot be negotiated or cancelled, and the elements triggering them are integrated into the syntactic structure as regular modifiers.

⁴³ As justly noted by an anonymous reviewer, although the object of surprise is the event itself and not its relationship with the speech time, the temporal specification of the event is still relevant for surprise (e.g., *Why would he open the umbrella only now, when the rain has stopped?*).

⁴⁴ We thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

Let us briefly inspect the mirative markers to verify whether they display the aforementioned properties. Consider again sentence (36a). The mirative markers, as shown so far, are syntactically integrated in the sentence. Mirative GO is a particularly clear example, as it bears the Tense of the event despite not contributing to the main event. Moreover, since NEG, ED, and GO all convey the speaker's surprise, they are trivially speaker-oriented. The speaker's surprise stems from the asserted event, hence these markers are comments on the at-issue content.⁴⁵ As for the impossibility of negotiation or cancellation, the fact that the speaker is surprised cannot be questioned. Indeed, answering (36a) by uttering "*That's not true, you are not surprised!*" would be pragmatically odd. At the same time, the answer "*That's not true!*" would not question the speaker's surprise, but rather the uttered event, i.e., it would question the fact that Mary got off the train.

This means that the TP-internal mirative markers are not computed as part of the at-issue content, as they trigger CIs. Although being integrated into the syntactic structure of the sentence they appear in, they are successfully individuated as CI-triggers because their contribution would clash with the at-issue content. It was argued in Section 3.3 that the mirative ED appears with verbs that would not select a dative clitic as part of their thematic grid. The same can be said for mirative GO, which is often applied to verbs denoting actions which do not involve movement.⁴⁶ This clash is thus resolved by applying the meaning of these mirative markers to the not-at-issue content, which is computed separately from the at-issue one (Potts 2005; Gutzmann 2019). As presented so far, the current proposal correctly predicts that the mirative markers retain their original meanings which are, however, applied to the speaker's expectations (i.e., to the non-at-issue content). This is also consistent with the view that "CIs are part of the conventional meaning of the words" (Potts 2005: 11).

To conclude this overview of mirative strategies, we need to briefly consider intonation which itself constitutes an independent mirative strategy. In fact, exclamatory intonation can by itself distinguish between a neutral and a mirative reading (cf. the contrast between (37a)-(37b), where exclamatory intonation is signaled by the presence of the exclamation mark !). However, whenever one or more other mirative strategies are present, exclamatory intonation is obligatory (37c)-(37d).

- (37) a. Maria è scesa dal treno.
 Mary is got-off from-the train
 'Mary got off the train.' (neutral interpretation)
- b. Maria è scesa dal treno!
 Mary is got-off from-the train
 'Mary got off the train (to my surprise)!' (mirative interpretation)
- c. *Maria mi è scesa dal treno.
 Mary ED.1SG is got-off from-the train
- d. Maria mi è scesa dal treno!
 Mary ED.1SG is got-off from-the train

⁴⁵ See similar phrasings given in Potts (2005): "CIs are comments upon an at-issue core" (p. 36), "CIs are comments upon an asserted core" (p.57).

⁴⁶ Note that the impossibility of obtaining a mirative reading of the ED in absence of NEG in (27b) – (30b), as well as the semantic ambiguity of GO when appearing with V2 compatible with an adative semantics (e.g., *andare a comprare*, lit. 'go to buy') provide evidence for this claim.

‘Mary got off the train (to my surprise)!’

The obligatoriness of exclamative intonation with other mirative markers stems from the fact that “it functions primarily as a signal for non-at-issue content” (Potts 2005: 37).⁴⁷ Since the surprise effect is derived compositionally from the meaning of each mirative strategy, the same holds true for intonation as well, which compositionally contributes to the interpretation of the sentence. The use of exclamative intonation to convey the speaker’s surprise caused by their unmet or exceeded expectations is known in the literature (see, e.g., Zanuttini and Portner 2003; Rett 2011; Unger 2019 *i.a.*). Since pragmatics comes into play in this domain, it is worth noting that intonation and the mirative strategies discussed so far have in common the fact that they are non-canonical ways of expressing the target proposition *p*. In this sense, the use of both exclamative intonation and the other mirative strategies is regulated by the M(anner)-Principle (38), elaborated by Levinson (2000) in relation to Grice’s (1975) maxim of Manner.

(38) *The M-Principle*

Speaker’s maxim: Indicate an abnormal, nonstereotypical situation by using marked expressions that contrast with those you would use to describe the corresponding normal, stereotypical situation.

Recipient’s corollary: What is said in an abnormal way indicates an abnormal situation, or marked messages indicate marked situations [...].

(Levinson 2000: 136)

Under this perspective, exclamative intonation, on a par with the other mirative markers, would suggest to the hearer that the speaker is communicating *p* “using marked expressions”, either lexical or suprasegmental. Note that the M-Principle, having to do with non-stereotypical situations, particularly fits in the case of mirativity, given that “surprise entails a judgement by the speaker that a given situation is noncanonical” (Michaelis 2001: 1039).

The last issue left open in our account is the surprising possibility of stacking up these strategies without obtaining any semantic redundancy effect. To a closer examination, however, this issue is only apparent. As anticipated, if our analysis is on the right track (as well as the preceding ones, since we share the same premises), mirativity is neither a semantic feature that is associated with each mirative marker, nor is it a syntactic feature linked to a specific structural position. It is rather a pragmatic inference (on this see also Michelioudakis 2016) arising as the by-product of the manipulation of the speaker’s expectations. It is possible either to negate them or to metaphorically move away from them, resulting in the inference of surprise (in zonal terms, both strategies correspond to a non-inclusion relation between the speaker and their expectations)⁴⁸. Given the absence of a

⁴⁷ The same holds for Snegs, where an interrogative-like contour is triggered. It probably supports the hearer in the disambiguation of NEG as only scoping over the speaker’s expectations. In such a case, the intonation plays an important pragmatic function in line with Grice’s (1975: 46) Maxim of Manner: “Avoid ambiguity”.

⁴⁸ Something similar happens with ironic communication, where the aim of the message is to convey something different from what is actually said (see Kaufer 1981 for details).

[+mirative] feature in the structure, the problem of redundancy does not even arise. It is not the case that the mirative reading is “interpreted” multiple times; such an interpretation of the statement can only be more or less emphasized depending on the number of mirative markers. It is thus possible to stack multiple markers, as long as they do not compete for the same position in syntax. Note that the same stackability to convey a greater degree of speaker’s involvement is found with expressives,⁴⁹ which reinforces the parallel between them and mirative markers as triggering CIs.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND AVENUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In this paper we have discussed the main strategies to express mirativity in spoken Italian, let aside the mere intonation and the resorting to lexically specialized adverbials. We have shown that 1SG clitic *mi* (Ethical Dative), 2SG clitic *ti* (Conversational Dative), pseudo-expletive negation within a rhetorical question, and functional GO can, to different degrees, combine in a number of constructions to convey mirative meanings. The stacking of these different markers is surprising, since the sentence in which they co-occur generally preserves the same mirative meaning, without being deemed redundant by native speakers of Italian, although some diatopic preferences for given markers emerge.

We have built on different previous accounts considering the role of NEG (Greco 2020a, b and Tsiakmakis and Espinal 2022) and of the ED (Masini 2012) and the structural representation of verbal periphrases such as the GO *aInfCo* (Cinque 2006; Cardinaletti and Giusti 2001; 2003; 2020; Giusti and Cardinaletti 2022). We follow Tsiakmakis and Espinal (2022) in assuming that NEG is not expletive (and that there are no expletives in syntax), but its role is negating the speaker’s expectations. Building on Tsiakmakis and Espinal’s proposal, who in turn exploit Krifka’s (2023) model, we take the speaker’s expectations to be represented in a Judgement Phrase (JP) projection found in the Left Periphery. Moreover, we follow these authors also in assuming that NEG is merged in the head *J-* of JP, from which it reverses the speaker’s expectations, compositionally deriving in this way the speaker’s surprise. In our proposal, however, mirative ED *mi* is conceived as a relator (on this, see Manzini and Savoia 2015, 2017) whose function is linking the speaker with their expectations, which are in a zonal relation (analogously, mirative CD *ti* relates the hearer with their expectations, attributed to them by the speaker). An analogous zonal relation is entertained by functional GO, which we conceive of as retaining its andative semantics but as applied to the speaker’s expectations, resulting in a metaphorical movement of the speaker away from their expectations (Ross 2016). This has the same effect of NEG, resulting in a lack of inclusion between the speaker and their expectations. However, the characterization of the ED (as we defined it here) indicates possession of the expectations by the speaker, resulting in the opposite zonal relation. In this case, the mirative effect is arrived at given the thematic grid of the verb, i.e., the ED occurs with a verb which would normally not select it. Since mirative ED can be enclitic on the infinitive, it was argued that this oblique clitic is merged inside the TP. The same applies to mirative GO, which is nevertheless merged in a

⁴⁹ A telling example is *Anyway, we met with Ian again to talk some more about shitty fucking crappy stupid journalism* (<https://www.vice.com/en/article/what-an-omnishambles-v10n12-1/>, accessed October 31st, 2024).

TP-projection higher than the regular andative GO (as a result of its grammaticalization which has triggered its movement upwards in the functional hierarchy). These TP-internal strategies were argued to trigger conventional implicatures (CIs) in the sense of Potts (2005), i.e., speaker-oriented comments on an at-issue core, which are not cancellable/negotiable and contribute to the non-at-issue content. ED and GO, on a par with NEG, retain their semantic contribution, which is however applied not to the at-issue content, but rather to the non-at-issue one. Exclamative intonation, which can by itself convey the speaker's surprise and is obligatory in the presence of mirative markers, goes in the same direction as it signals the presence of non-at-issue content. In general, since mirativity interfaces with pragmatics, all the discussed strategies lead to the application of Levinson's (2000: 136) M-Principle, which requires the speaker to convey non-stereotypical situations using non-stereotypical means. As a consequence, the hearer interprets the utterance as describing a noncanonical situation.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that the co-occurrence of the different mirative strategies is allowed by their different structural positions. Moreover, in our system, the issue of redundancy only looks apparent. In fact, we do not postulate the existence of several mirative features, each one of which is associated with a different mirative marker that would run the risk of being interpreted multiple times. In our proposal, the mirative interpretation only arises as a side effect of the manipulation of the speaker's expectations, which can be either negated or can be deviated from. Since the surprise reading arises as a pragmatic inference, it cannot be redundant but can only be perceived as more or less intensified depending on the communicative means used by the speaker.

The proposal offered in this paper just looked at a subgroup of mirativity markers without exhausting the full array of means available to Italian. In fact, tackling all of them at the same time would require much more space. Furthermore, it seems that not all the strategies can be freely stacked (e.g., mirative GO *aInfCo* does not seem to easily co-occur with mirative TAKE *ePseCo*). The (im)possible combinations, and the reasons for their (im)possibility, is left open for future research. Despite this open issue, the present proposal is the first one to tackle the issue of stackability of mirative markers in Italian. Our hope is that this piece of work could stimulate the discussion on mirativity and promote further work in the field to arrive at a greater understanding of the phenomenon.

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