A DIACHRONIC APPROACH TO COMPLEMENTIZER DOUBLING IN ITALO-ROMANCE AND THE NOTION OF DOWNWARD REANALYSIS

Nicola Munaro
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

Abstract: *Building on previous relevant studies, in this work I will sketch a diachronic approach to the phenomenon of complementizer doubling attested in early and modern Italo-Romance varieties. It will be argued that the lower complementizer, originally lexicalizing a high functional head of the Topic field, which could attract adverbial clauses into its specifier, has been reanalyzed by the speakers as a lower Topic head and is being further reanalyzed as Fin°, the lowest head of the CP layer. The ultimate aim of the paper is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the functional articulation of the Topic field within the left periphery of embedded clauses, taking into account the implications of the observed diachronic developments for the notion of downward reanalysis.*

Keywords: *complementizer doubling, left periphery, clausal topics, downward reanalysis*

1. Introduction

In recent years the phenomenon of complementizer doubling attested in various Romance varieties has received considerable attention. It consists in the double phonetic realization of the subordinating complementizer, which appears preceding and following a preposed constituent of the embedded clause, typically the subject, as exemplified in (1) with a Ligurian dialect:

(1) Sperem *che* Gianni *ch*'u lese questu libru.
     'We hope that John reads this book'.   Borghetto di Vara (from Poletto (2000))

Within the split-CP approach initiated by Rizzi (1997), the first occurrence of the complementizer (*che1*) is generally interpreted as the lexicalization of Force°, the highest functional head of the left periphery, while the second occurrence of the complementizer (*che2*), which is always optional, has been repeatedly proposed to lexicalize the head Topic° of a Topic projection hosting the topicalized constituent in its specifier, or, alternatively, the head Fin°, the lowest head of the left periphery.

Building on some previous studies on complementizer doubling in (early) Italo-Romance, with this work I intend to contribute to a deeper understanding of the functional articulation of the Topic field within the left periphery of embedded clauses; at the same time I will examine the implications of the observed developments for the notion of reanalysis, challenging the traditional divide between the defining features of downward

and upward diachronic changes.[1]

The paper is organized as follows: in section 2 I present some previous analyses of complementizer doubling in early Italo-Romance according to which *che2* is identified as a Topic° head hosting the preposed protasis in its specifier; in section 3 I report some data from modern Italo-Romance varieties showing that only non clausal constituents can appear nowadays between *che1* and *che2*; in section 4 I argue, on the basis of independent evidence, for the necessity of splitting the Topic field into two distinct subfields and for a diachronic process of reanalysis to the effect that *che2* is reanalyzed as a lower Topic° head; in section 5 I present some data from modern Italo-Romance suggesting that *che2* may have been further reanalyzed as the Fin° head; in section 6 I discuss the compatibility of the diachronic process described in the previous sections with the formal notion of downward reanalysis developed in the literature; section 7 contains some concluding remarks.

2. *Complementizer doubling in early Italo-Romance:* che2 *as a Topic° head*

A descriptive overview of the phenomenon of complementizer doubling in early Italo-Romance has been undertaken by Vincent (2006), who provides numerous examples from early Tuscan where the protasis introduced by the subordinating complementizer *se* appears sandwiched between *che1* and *che2*:

(2) a. …ti priego *che*, se egli avviene ch'io muoja, *che* le mie cose ed ella ti sieno raccomandate.
   '…I ask you that, if it happens that I die, that my things and she be entrusted to you.'   (*Decameron*, 2,7,84, from Vincent (2006))
   b. …però vi priegho in lealtade e fede *che*, se ttue vuoli del mio avere, *che* ttu ne tolghi
   . '…but I ask you in loyalty and faith that, if you want my belongings, that you take some.'   (*Testi fiorentini* 155,26, ibidem)

Paoli (2005), (2007), discussing similar cases of complementizer doubling in early Romance - like the ones exemplified in (3) from 13th century Tuscan - takes the second occurrence of *che* to head the TopicP projection, which hosts the topicalized adverbial clause in its specifier:

(3) a. …si pensò ir re Pelleus *che*, se elli potesse tanto fare che Giason suo nepote volesse andare in quella isola per lo tosone conquistare, *che* mai non tornerebbe, e in tal manera si diliverebbe di lui.
   '…king Pelleus thought that, if he could do so that his nephew Giason wanted to go to that island to take that …, that he would never come back, and so he

could get rid of him'. (*Da un libro della distruzione di Troia*, XDIV 1, pg.152, 21-25, from Paoli (2005))

b. …e amava sò fforte mente che a llui sì era tutta via viso *che* quando persona neuna la sguardasse, *che* inmantenente iglile togliesse.
'..and he loved so intensely that to him it was shown that, when nobody was watching, that immediately he would take them off her'.
(*Il Tristano Riccardiano*, cap. 75, pg. 149, 25-28, ibidem)

According to Paoli, the overt realization of the complementizer in Topic° reflects a spec-head agreement relation between Topic° and the clausal constituent occupying Spec,TopicP.

Ledgeway (2005) discusses the following examples of Southern Italian varieties from the 14th-15th century: in (4) the clausal constituent appearing between the two complementizers is a conditional clause, while in (5) it is an adverbial clause of a different kind; Ledgeway interprets the first occurrence of *che* as the lexicalization of Force° and the second one as the phonetically realized trace left in the intermediate landing site Topic° by the complementizer raising from Fin° up to Force°:

(4) a. …le aveva ditto *che* se sua maistà voleva lo stato suo *che* se llo venesse a ppigliare co la spata in mano.
'…he had told him that, if his majesty wanted his state, that he should come and take it with his sword in hand'. (*Cronica*, 148 v.1-2, from Ledgeway (2005))

b. omni raxun dichi *ki* si homu ad homu fa fallu, *ki* sia tinutu a la debita satisfaccioni.
'all reason states that, if one man wrongs another, that he should remain in his debt.' (*Sposizione del Vangelo della Passione secondo Matteo* 44.14-5, ibidem)

(5) a. volimo et commandamote *che*, mantinente che per lictere nostre senteray essere nuy o a Melfe o a Troya, *che* dige ad nuy sencza dimorancza personalimente venire.
'we want and order you that, as soon as you hear thorugh one of our letters that we are in Melfi or Troy, that you should personally come at once to us.'
(*Lettera del re Luigi d'Angiò-Taranto…* 12-4, ibidem)

b. serrà bisogno *che*, dove ilo non mecte exemplo per lo quale poza bene essere intiso lo suo dicto, *che* eo mecta exemplo e declaracione per manifestare lo intendimento suo.
'it will be necessary that, wherever he fails to provide as example by which his words can be clearly understood, that I give an example and declaration in order to make his intention clearly understood.'
(*Libru de lu Dialagu de Sanctu Gregoriu* 3.1-3, ibidem)

As pointed out by Ledgeway, the following example, where the lower complementizer is preceded by a conditional clause and is followed by a focalized constituent, reinforces the hypothesis that *che2* lexicalizes a Topic° head, under the assumption that FocusP follows all the topic-related projections (cf. Benincà & Poletto (2004)):

(6) Eo penso bene *che*, se per lo tiempo passato avessemo voluto monstrare lo nostro ardire, *che* DERITAMENTE avessemo mandato ad asseyare Troya.
'I indeed think that, if in the past we had wanted to show our bravery, that STRAIGHTAWAY we would have gone to siege Troy.'

<div align="right">(Libro della destructione di Troya 140.21-3, ibidem)</div>

Hence, in early Italo-Romance varieties, *if*-clauses – and clausal adjuncts in general – were among the most plausible candidates to fill the position sandwiched between the two occurrences of the complementizer, the higher one heading Force°, the lower one heading Topic°, as represented in the following structure:[2]

(7) Main clause [ForceP [Force° *che1*] [TopicP adverbial clause [Topic° *che2*] …]]

We will see that the structural template exemplified in (7) will be lost in the course of time and is no more available in contemporary Italo-Romance.

3. *Complementizer doubling in modern varieties of Italo-Romance*

Within the Italo-Romance domain, complementizer doubling is still attested nowadays in some North-Western Italian varieties like some Piedmontese dialects of the Turinese area and Ligurian. As discussed in detail by Manzini & Savoia (2005) and by Paoli (2007), between *che1* and *che2* we can find a pronominal subject, as in (8), a nominal subject, as in (9), or a quantified subject, as in (10):[3]

(8) a. L'è miei *che* nui *ch'*al lavu.
Cl-is better that we that it-wash
'It is better that we wash it.'
 b. L'è miei *che* vuiac' *ch* i m la daghi.
Cl-is better that you that cl-me-it-give

---

[2] The hypothesis that the second complementizer lexicalizes a Topic head has been recently reproposed for the cases of complementizer doubling attested in modern Ibero-Romance, where the possibility for a topicalized constituent or an *if*-clause to intervene between two instances of *que* is still attested; according to Mascarenhas (2007), Villa-Garcìa (2012), and Gonzàlez i Planas (2013), the lower *que* lexicalizes a Topic° head which hosts the topicalized adverbial clause or the topicalized phrase in its specifier. If we accept the correctness of this approach, then the fact that preposed protases can easily enter the complementizer doubling construction can be seen as an empirical argument in favour of the hypothesis that they belong to the Topic field of the associated (embedded) clause, as independently proposed by Munaro (2005).

[3] D'Alessandro & Ledgeway (2010) point out that in Abruzzese the repetition of the complementizer *ca* optionally obtains when two or more topicalized (or focalized) phrases co-occur and/or when the fronted phrases are particularly heavy:

(i) Ji so ditte *ca* dumane, a Urtone, gni lu zie, (*ca*) nin gi da' ji.
'I told him that tomorrow he shouldn't go to Ortona with his uncle.'

<div align="right">Abruzzese (from D'Alessandro & Ledgeway (2010))</div>

They propose that in this case complementizer doubling functions as a form of topic marking, serving to demarcate the topic field sandwiched between both occurrences of the complementizer *ca*, although the overt realization of the lower complementizer always proves optional in these cases.

'It is better that you give it to me.'

Castellazzo Bormida (from Manzini & Savoia (2005))

(9) a. Maria a regreta *che* Giòrs *ch'*as ne desmentia.
Mary cl-regrets that George that cl-about.it-forget
'Mary regrets the fact that George forgets about it.'
  b. I veno volonté, basta mach *che* Gioann *ch'*a staga nen solo.
I come willingly, as long as that John that cl-stay not alone
'I will come willingly as long as John is not on his own.'

Turinese (from Paoli (2007))

(10) a. Maria a spera *che* gnun *ch'*as ne desmentia.
Mary cl-hopes that nobody that cl-about.it-forget
'Mary hopes that nobody forgets about it.'   Turinese (ibidem)
  b. A Margaitin a pensa *che* quarchedun *ch'*u l'aggia avuu in bun vutu.
Margaret cl-thinks that somebody that cl-have had a good mark
'Margaret thinks that somebody has got a good mark.'   Ligurian (ibidem)

Furthermore, the constituent sandwiched between *che1* and *che2* can be a nominal or prepositional left-dislocated argument of the embedded predicate, as in (11):

(11) a. A cherdo *che*, le fior, *ch'*a l'abia già cataje.
Cl-believe that the flowers that cl-have already bought
'They think that s/he has already bought the flowers.'
  b. Giòrs a veul parlé con un dotor *che*, ant la meisina auternativa, *ch'*a-j cherda.
George cl-wants speak with a doctor that in the medicine alternative that cl-believe
'George wants to speak to a doctor who believes in alternative medicine.'

Turinese (ibidem)

Finally, in Ligurian we can even find a contrastively focused phrase between *che1* and *che2*, as in (12):

(12)   I pensan *che* I TÖ *ch'*i nua suportan propiu, nu i mè.
Cl-think that the yours that cl-not-her-stand at.all, not the mine
'They think that it is your parents who cannot stand her, not mine.'

Ligurian (ibidem)

Interestingly, the possibility for a clausal adjunct – a central adverbial clause, adopting Haegeman's (2012) terminology – to appear between the two instances of the complementizer seems to have been lost with time in Italo-Romance to the effect that only non clausal phrasal constituents – most frequently, but not exclusively, the subject of the embedded clause – can now intervene between *che1* and *che2*. In the next section I will try to provide a formal account for this, at first sight puzzling, diachronic change.

4. *Two Topic subfields:* che2 *as a lower Topic° head*

We can account for the data presented above by suggesting that the left-peripheral Topic field should be split into at least two distinct Topic subfields, the higher of which dedicated to host topicalized clausal adjuncts, the lower one hosting topicalized non clausal phrasal constituents (see on this Munaro (2010)).

This hypothesis seems to be supported by the fact that a topicalized adverbial clause tends to precede a topicalized phrasal constituent, as witnessed by examples (13) and (14) from standard Italian. In (13a) a topicalized inverted conditional intervenes between the subordinating complementizer *che* and a left-dislocated argument of the embedded clause and the sequence is fully grammatical, while in (13b), where the preposed conditional clause follows the topicalized constituent, there is a considerable degradation of the grammaticality status:

(13) a.   Credo che, avesse Gianni rifiutato la nostra proposta, con Mario, avremmo dovuto parlare.
'I believe that, had John rejected our proposal, with Mario, we should have spoken.'
   b. ??Credo che con Mario, avesse Gianni rifiutato la nostra proposta, avremmo dovuto parlare.
'I believe that, with Mario, had John rejected our proposal, we should have spoken.'

If, like in (14), the conditional clause is introduced by the hypothetical complementizer *se*, the contrast is slightly weaker, but it is still clearly perceivable:

(14) a.   Credo che, se Gianni avesse rifiutato la nostra proposta, con Mario, avremmo dovuto parlare.
'I believe that, if John had rejected our proposal, with Mario, we should have spoken.'
   b. ?Credo che con Mario, se Gianni avesse rifiutato la nostra proposta, avremmo dovuto parlare.
'I believe that with Mario, if John had rejected our proposal, we should have spoken.'

Similar restrictions on the linear order of preposed adverbial clauses and left-dislocated constituents are found in the North-Eastern Italian dialects. For example, as thoroughly discussed in Munaro (2010), in Paduan a preposed adverbial clause must precede both a left-dislocated constituent and a *wh*-phrase, as witnessed by (15):

(15)   Fùsselo vegnùo anca Mario, a to sorèla, cossa garissito podùo dirghe?
'If Mario had come as well, to your sister, what could you have told?'   Paduan

If the adverbial clause follows the left-dislocated constituent, as in (16a), or even the *wh*-element, as in (16b), the grammaticality status of the sentence decreases considerably:

(16) a. ??A to sorèla, fùsselo vegnùo anca Mario, cossa garìssito podùo dirghe?
        'To your sister, if Mario had come as well, what could you have told?'
    b. *A to sorèla, cossa, fùsselo vegnùo anca Mario, garìssito podùo dirghe?
        'To your sister, what, if Mario had come as well, could you have told?'   Paduan

On the other hand, a preposed adverbial clause must follow a constituent interpreted as hanging topic, as witnessed by the Paduan contrast in (17):

(17) a. Mario, anca gavesseli telefonà in tempo, no garìssimo podùo dirghelo.
        'Mario, even if they had phoned in time, we couldn't have told.'
    b. ??Anca gavesseli telefonà in tempo, Mario, no garìssimo podùo dirghelo.
        'Even if they had phoned in time, Mario, we couldn't have told.'   Paduan

Summing up, on the basis of the evidence presented here we can identify the landing site of a preposed adverbial clause with a position of the Topic field located between the structural position hosting hanging topics and the one hosting non clausal clitic left-dislocated constituents. In particular, adopting Benincà & Poletto's (2004) decomposition of the Topic field into a Frame and a Thematization subfield, we can identify the landing site of topicalized adverbial clauses in the specifier of the SceneSettP belonging to the Frame subfield, while clitic left-dislocated constituents can be taken to target the specifier of the lower LeftDislP belonging to the Thematization subfield.

Under this approach, the impossibility in modern Italo-Romance to sandwich a clausal adjunct between two complementizers can be interpreted as a consequence of a diachronic process of downward reanalysis to the effect that *che2*, originally lexicalizing the higher head SceneSett°, as represented in (18a), has been reanalyzed by the speakers – due to the structural ambiguity of the linear string – as the lexicalization of the lower head LeftDisl°, namely the one associated with the specifier position hosting non clausal left-dislocated phrasal constituents, as represented in (18b):

(18) a. [ForceP [Force° *che1*] [SceneSettP adverbial clause [SS° *che2*] [LeftDislP [LD°]]]
    b. [ForceP [Force° *che1*] [SceneSettP adverbial clause [SS°] [LeftDislP [LD° *che2*]]
    c. [ForceP [Force°*che1*] [SceneSettP [SS°] [LeftDislP topicalized phrase[LD°*che2*]]]

We can surmise that, after the process of downward reanalysis of *che2* as the lower functional head LeftDisl° has been completed, only the corresponding specifier position remains accessible to non clausal left-dislocated constituents, as represented in (18c); at this stage the specifier of the higher SceneSettingP does not qualify any more as a potential landing site for preposed adverbial clauses, which correctly predicts that the possibility to be sandwiched between *che1* and *che2* in modern varieties is limited to topicalized non-clausal phrases, as exemplified in section 3 above.

5. The final step: che2 as a Fin° head

We can further speculate that the reanalysis process described in the previous section can apply recursively downwards so that *che2* is being further reanalyzed by the speakers as a lexicalization of Fin°, the lowest functional head of the left periphery according to Rizzi's (1997) seminal proposal, as represented here:

(19) [ForceP [Force° *che1*] [SceneSettP [SS°] [LeftDislP [LD°] [FinP [Fin°*che2*]]]]]

This hypothesis receives empirical support from the fact that in examples like (20) the presence of the lower complementizer systematically correlates with the use of the subjunctive in the embedded clause, as observed by Paoli (2005), (2007):

(20) a. Gioanin a spera *che* Ghitin *ch'*as ne vada tòst.
      John cl-hopes that Margaret that cl-cl-go soon
      'John hopes that Margaret leaves as soon as possible.'
  b. Majo a cherde *che* Luch *ch'*a sia desmentiass-ne.
      Mario cl-believes that Luke that cl-be-forgotten-cl
      'Mario believes that Luke has forgotten it.'
  c. Majo a pensa *che* Franchin *ch'*as n'ancorza.
      Mario cl-thinks that Frank that cl-cl-realize
      'Mario thinks that Frank will realize it'.

                                       Turinese (from Paoli (2005))

As pointed out by Paoli, *che2* is incompatible with the presence of present indicative, future indicative and present conditional in the embedded clause:

(21) a. A dis *che* Maria e Gioann (**ch'*) a mangio nen d'rane.
      Cl-says that Mary and John (*that) cl-eat not of-frogs
      '(S)he says that Mary and John do not eat frogs.'
  b. Giòrs a spera *che* Majo (**ch'*) as n'andarà tòst.
      George cl-hopes that Mario (*that) cl-cl-will.go soon
      'George hopes that Mario goes away soon.'
  c. Majo a pensa *che* Franchin (**ch'*) as n'ancorzerìa.
      Mario cl-thinks that Frank (*that) cl-cl-would.realize
      'Mario Thinks that Frank would realize it.'

                                            Turinese (ibidem)

According to Paoli, *che2* lexicalizes precisely the head Fin°, a syncretic head hosting both mood and finiteness features, and functions as a suppletive subjunctive marker expressing overtly the features that remain morphologically underspecified on the finite verb due to syncretism with the forms of the present indicative.[4]

---

[4] Paoli also claims that *che2* is not a complementizer but a particle encoding mood, which raises to Fin° from a lower position; in particular, she proposes that *che2* merges in the head of a Mood projection, one of the high modal heads located within the inflectional layer of the clause, and

If, as suggested by Paoli, *che2* is analyzed as the lexicalization of Fin°, the systematic correlation between *che2* and the subjunctive mood of the embedded clause follows straightforwardly from the assumption that Fin° is endowed with mood features, an assumption which has indeed been defended by various scholars.[5]

A second argument in favour of the hypothesis that *che2* in the modern North-Western Italian dialects lexicalizes Fin°, and not Topic°, comes from the fact that *che2* follows contrastively focalized constituents, as witnessed by the following example:

(22)   I pensan *che*, quella zuvena, I TÖ *ch'*i nua suportan propiu, nu i mè.
        Cl-think that that young the yours that cl-not-her-stand at.all, not the mine
        'They think that it is your parents who cannot stand that young woman, not mine.'
                                                                Ligurian (from Paoli (2007))

Under the assumption that focalized constituents must follow topicalized ones, the example in (22) provides evidence that *che2* does not occupy a structural head position internal to the Topic field, but a lower one, possibly Fin°.

Moreover, if *che2* occupies the functional head Fin°, as represented in (19), we expect the corresponding specifier to be accessible to lexical material extracted from the embedded clause. This prediction seems to be correct; in (23) we find two constituents sandwiched between *che1* and *che2*, the left-dislocated prepositional phrase *dle fior* and the quantified subject *gnun*:

(23) a.   Majo a spera *che*, dle fior, gnun *ch'*as ne desmentia.
          Mario cl-hopes that, of.the flowers, nobody that cl-cl-forgets
     b.   Majo a spera *che*, gnun, dle fior *ch'*as ne desmentia.
          Mario cl-hopes that, nobody, of.the flowers that cl-cl-forgets
          'Mario hopes that nobody forgets about the flowers.'
                                                                Turinese (ibidem)

According to Paoli (2007), in (23b) *gnun* receives a specific interpretation as it is itself left-dislocated to the left of the left-dislocated constituent *dle fior*. On the other hand, in (23a) *gnun* is analyzed by Paoli as expressing information focus; more generally, Paoli claims that in complementizer doubling constructions quantified subjects occupying a position to the right of left dislocated phrases represent information focus. However, this hypothesis seems to be incompatible with the absence of a left-peripheral contrastive focus projection in Turinese, if, as proposed by Benincà & Poletto (2004), the activation of information focus is parasitic on the presence of a contrastively focalized constituent in the left-periphery. Therefore, I suggest that *gnun* in (23a) should be more properly analysed as occupying the specifier of FinP, entering a spec-head agreement relation with *che2* merged in the Fin° head.

---

subsequently moves out of its original position and raises to Fin° to check its [+mood] features. I will not follow this part of her analysis.

[5] For example, Giorgi & Pianesi (1997) propose that a mood feature is codified in a low CP head; Rizzi (1997) assumes that Fin° encodes modality; Poletto (2000) argues for a modal feature located in a low C° position; Damonte (2010) claims that in subjunctive complements an uninterpretable mood feature is valued on the Fin° head.

The same analysis can be extended to the quantified subjects *gnun* and *quarchedun* in (10) above. Under this perspective, there is no need to assume, as Paoli does, that, when neither the Topic nor the Focus field is activated, the system projects a syncretic head carrying hybrid properties: the relevant head could be exactly Fin°, which is neutral from the point of view of the information structure function.[6]

The hypothesis that a lower complementizer can indeed occupy the Fin° head has been put forth by Ledgeway (2005), who interprets the lower complementizer *ca* in the following examples from early Salentino as the lexicalization of the trace left in the head Fin° by the complementizer *che* raised to Force° in order to activate the Topic field (which hosts a preposed adverbial clause):

(24) a. Et ancora li mandao a dire lo re *che* si li volia obedire alli sua comandamenti, *ca* li perdonara omne cosa.
    'And again the king had word sent to him that, if he wished to obey his orders, that he would forgive him everything.'(*Libro di Sidrac*2v.38-9,from Ledgeway (2005))
  b. et vedé *che* si illo non avesse lo consilho de Sidrac, *ca* illu non potea nulla fare.
    'and he realised that, if he did not receive Sidrac's advice, that he could not do anything.' (*Libro di Sidrac* 2v.21-2, ibidem)
   c. Nuy trovamo scripto in lo libro del servo de deo Noè *che* quando fu in l'archa in tempo del dilluvio, *ca* queste tre bestie foro più presso a lluy ca l'altre.
    'We found written in the book of God's servant Noah that, when he was in the ark at the time of the flood, that these three animals were closer to him than the others.' (*Libro di Sidrac* 46v.8-9, ibidem)

The same analysis is applied by D'Alessandro & Ledgeway (2010) to the lower complementizer *chi* in the following Abruzzese example:

(25)   Je mmeje *ca* dumane, a Urzogne, la schidine, (*chi*) nni li juche.
    Is better that tomorrow, at Orsogna, the pools, (that) not it-play
    'You'd better not play the pools tomorrow at Orsogna.'
                                        Abruzzese (from D'Alessandro & Ledgeway (2010))

According to these authors, in examples like (25) the form *chi* optionally spells out the lower first merge position in Fin° of the complementizer *ca* which raises subsequently through the left periphery to Force° in order to activate the Topic field.[7]

---

[6] More generally, adopting Cardinaletti's (2009) view that Spec,FinP can be an escape hatch for movement to the left periphery, the phonetic realization of *che2* can be interpreted as the optional overt marking of the intermediate landing site of a phrase displaced to the CP layer.

[7] Notice that even if we adopt an analysis of complementizer raising for the examples in (24)/(25), it is much less obvious to extend the same account to the following examples from Piedmontese dialects, where the subject can optionally appear between the higher complementizer *se* and the lower complementizer *che* in conditional clauses (in (i)) and embedded questions (in (ii)):

(i)   a. *Se* (lor) *ch*'i po, i ven.
        'If they can, they will come.'   Cavergno
        b. *Se* (ti) *ch*'i pudésat, i durmarésat.
        'If you could, you would sleep.'   S. Maria Maggiore
                                                (from Manzini & Savoia (2005))

Despite the apparent similarity, there are nonetheless some clear differences between the cases of complementizer doubling from early Salentino reported in (24) and the ones from modern North-Western Italo-Romance: firstly, in early Salentino the morphological form of the two co-occurring complementizers is different, the higher form being *che* while the lower form is *ca*; secondly, in early Salentino the verb of the embedded clause is in the indicative mood, and not in the subjunctive mood; thirdly, and most importantly, in early Salentino we can also find preposed adverbial clauses intervening between the two complementizers, while in modern Italo-Romance we can find only non-clausal phrasal constituents. These important differences might cast some doubts on the hypothesis that *ca* in early Salentino should be analyzed as the overt spell-out of the trace left by the raised complementizer in Fin°, the lowest head of the CP layer, and suggest instead that in the examples in (24) *ca* could be seen as the lexicalization of the (higher) Topic° head, in a previous diachronic stage in which the relevant specifier position was still accessible to adverbial clauses.[8]

6. An instance of downward reanalysis?

In this section I will try to embed the proposed analysis within a formal theory of diachronic change, basing my discussion on the implicit assumption that a link – albeit indirectly – can be established between the data from early Italo-Romance varieties reported in section 2 and the data from modern Italo-Romance varieties reported in section 3 and 5; in other words, in the absence of relevant diachronic evidence from the North-Western Italian dialects, I will assume that the data from early Central and Southern Italo-Romance discussed in section 2 can be taken as representative for the previous stages of other Italo-Romance varieties, thereby excluding the possibility of a parametric variation concerning the position of *che2* to the effect that the lower complementizer might have been in the Fin° head in North-Western Italo-Romance since the early stages.

If this indirect crosslinguistic connection can indeed be determined, we are forced to the conclusion that a process of downward reanalysis of *che2* has been applied by the speakers in the course of time along the functional skeleton of the left periphery; in particular, my proposal has tried to reconcile the two alternative views by assuming a diachronic process of downward reanalysis affecting the lower complementizer which, starting as the lexicalization of a high Topic° head, is progressively reanalyzed as the next

---

(ii)   a. A na l so mia *se* 'l Giuan *ch*'u ven.
         b. A na l so mia 'l Giuan *se ch*'u ven.
         'I don't know whether John is coming.'   Cavergno (ibidem)

[8] This interpretation of the data looks all the more plausible taking into account the functional motivation of the overt spell-out of the trace of the raised complementizer provided by Ledgeway (2005); he points out that a factor which typically plays a crucial role in triggering the appearance of the lower copy is the heaviness of the topicalized (or focalized) phrase sandwiched between the two instances of the complementizer: whenever the intervening constituent is particularly long and structurally complex the interpretive requirements of the LF component may override economy considerations of the PF component (demanding that the trace remains phonetically null) and favour instead the overt phonetic realization of the trace so as to facilitate the parsing of the sentence by demarcating more clearly the Topic field.

lower functional head, and is ultimately being interpreted as the Fin° head by the speakers of modern Italo-Romance varieties which still display complementizer doubling.

If the diachronic path outlined here is on the right track, it raises some questions concerning the notion of downward reanalysis as defined by Roberts & Roussou (2003). These authors sketch the defining characteristics of downward reanalysis as in (26), which covers the changes that involve loss of movement but are not instances of grammaticalization:

(26)   *downward changes*

    a.   apply to all members of Y;
    b.   do not change category of Y;
    c.   involve no semantic or phonological change to Y-roots;
    d.   cannot be cyclic.

Upward changes are instead defined as in (27), which includes the opposite properties typical of diachronic changes corresponding to instances of grammaticalization:

(27)   *upward changes*

    a.   apply only sporadically or to morphological subclasses of Y;
    b.   change category of Y;
    c.   are associated with semantic bleaching and phonological reduction;
    d.   can be cyclic.

If the lowering process investigated here does indeed qualify as an instance of downward reanalysis, it does not fit the template in (26) entirely, in so far as it affects only a subset of the members of the relevant class;[9] moreover, it seems to apply cyclically throughout the CP layer up to the lowest functional head. On the other hand, as predicted by (26), it does not change the category of the lexical item involved and does not have any interface effects. This means that the pattern in (26) is too restrictive and that we may indeed find instances of downward reanalysis characterized by mixed properties in the sense that the attested diachronic process is cyclic and applies only sporadically, although it does not entail any category change and any form of semantic bleaching or phonological reduction. More generally, on the basis of the present study one would be led to conclude that the divide between the defining features of downward and upward changes is not as clear-cut as it was traditionally supposed to be.

7. Conclusion

Relying on previous work on complementizer doubling in (early) Italo-Romance, in this article I have approached the phenomenon from a diachronic perspective, trying to reinterpret the different and conflicting analyses that have been proposed in the literature

---

[9] The reader is referred to Quinn (2009) for the hypothesis that downward reanalysis may affect individual lexical items rather than all members of a class.

concerning the location of the second complementizer within the left periphery of the clause.

More specifically, I have argued that the lower complementizer, originally lexicalizing a high functional head of the Topic field, which could attract adverbial clauses into its specifier, has been reanalyzed by the speakers as a lower Topic head and is being further reanalyzed as the head Fin°, the lowest head of the CP layer; as a consequence of this process of downward reanalysis, which entails the deactivation of the higher Topic head, in the few varieties of modern Italo-Romance that still display this peculiar syntactic structure only non clausal phrasal constituents can appear sandwiched between the two complementizers.

The theoretical relevance of the present work is twofold: on the one hand, it contributes to shed some light on the functional articulation of the Topic field within the left periphery of embedded clauses, which seems to be split into a higher region devoted to hosting preposed adverbial clauses and a lower space which includes the landing site of non clausal topicalized phrases; on the other hand, it has some interesting implications for the notion of reanalysis and in particular for the diachronic process of downward reanalysis as it was conceived of so far, showing that the traditional divide between upward and downward changes is much too restrictive and that additional instances of diachronic reanalysis must be acknowledged, which seem to be characterized by hybrid properties.

References

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

Cardinaletti, Anna. 2009. "On a (wh-)moved topic in Italian, compared to Germanic." In *Advances in comparative Germanic syntax*, ed. by Artemis Alexiadou, Jorge Hankamer, Thomas McFadden, Justin Nuger & Florian Schäfer, 3-40. Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

D'Alessandro, Roberta & Adam Ledgeway. 2010. "At the C-T boundary: investigating Abruzzese complementation." *Lingua* 120: 2040-2060.

Damonte, Federico. 2010. "Matching moods". In *Mapping the left periphery*, ed. by Paola Benincà & Nicola Munaro, 228-256. Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press.

Giorgi, Alessandra, and Fabio Pianesi. 1997. *Tense and aspect: from semantics to morphosyntax*. Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press.

Gonzàlez i Planas, Francesc. 2013. "On quotative recomplementation: Between pragmatics and morphosyntax". Manuscript, University of Girona.

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

Ledgeway, Adam. 2005. "Moving through the left periphery: The dual complementizer system in the dialects of Southern Italy". *Transactions of the Philological Society* 103.3: 339-396.

Manzini, Rita, and Leonardo Savoia. 2005. *I dialetti italiani e romanci – Morfosintassi generativa*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso.

Mascarenhas, Salvador. 2007. "Complementizer doubling in European Portuguese". Manuscript, Amsterdam ILLC/ NYU.

Munaro, Nicola . 2005. "Computational puzzles of conditional clause preposing" . In *UG and external systems*, ed. by Anna Maria Di Sciullo, 73-94. Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Munaro, Nicola. 2010. "Towards a hierarchy of clause types". In *Mapping the left periphery*, ed. by Paola Benincà & Nicola Munaro, 125-162. Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press.

Paoli, Sandra. 2005. "COMP: a multi-talented category: Evidence from Romance". In *Contributions to the 30th Incontro di Grammatica Generativa*, ed. by Laura Brugè et alii, 185-202. Venice: Cafoscarina.

Paoli, Sandra. 2007. "The fine structure of the left periphery: COMPs and subjects. Evidence from Romance." *Lingua* 117.6: 1057-1079.

Poletto, Cecilia. 2000. *The higher functional field – Evidence from Northern Italian dialects*. Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press.

Quinn, Heidi. 2009. "Downward reanalysis and the rise of stative HAVE got". In *Historical syntax and linguistic theory*, ed. by Paola Crisma & Giuseppe Longobardi, 212-230. Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press.

Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. "The fine structure of the left periphery". In *Elements of grammar*, ed. by Liliane Haegeman, 281-337. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Roberts, Ian, and Anna Roussou. 2003. *Syntactic change: a minimalist approach to grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Villa-Garcìa, Julio. 2012. "Recomplementation and locality of movement in Spanish". *Probus* 24.2: 257-314.

Vincent, Nigel. 2006. "Il problema del doppio complementatore nei primi volgari d'Italia", talk delivered at the University of Padua, April 2006.