

# Criterial positions as diagnostics in Italo-Romance: some highs and lows\*

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## Abstract

This paper argues that not all  $[C > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  word orders in upper-southern Italo-Romance necessarily involve movement into the high left periphery. In at least some cases,  $XP_{\text{Top/Foc}}$  can be shown to occupy the low left periphery, instead. If correct, such criterial XPs cannot be used to diagnose the relative position of complementizer forms within the high left periphery, contrary to what is assumed in Cardullo (2021). I build this argument using novel data from two understudied varieties of Southern Lazio and Northern Campania. Given that the finite verb generally moves no higher than the lower adverb space in southern Italo-Romance, I use adverbs from Cinque’s (1999) hierarchy to show that at least some  $XP_{\text{Top/Foc}}$  in the above configuration occupy this same low adverb space as well, meaning they cannot be above the Fin position within the high left periphery. From their low position near the edge of  $vP$ , these criterial XPs can tell us nothing about whether a given C form is in Force vs. Fin; other diagnostics must be relied upon instead. In addition to providing a cautionary tale regarding the use of criterial XPs as positional diagnostics, this paper represents a first step toward mapping the low left periphery in southern Italo-Romance.

## 1 Introduction

Cardullo (2021; henceforth, *C2021*) describes the dual complementizer system of Eoliano, and concludes that the language provides evidence for a surprising CP structure. While the language’s C-system is by no means an outlier in the modern southern Italo-Romance context (e.g. upper-southern varieties) – indeed, it conforms to patterns already described in the literature on these languages (Colasanti (2018a,b); see also D’Alessandro and Ledgeway (2010); Ledgeway (2009a, 2012 *et seq.*)) – this invited commentary argues that the evidence in *C2021* is not dispositive.

In brief, *C2021*’s argument hinges on data from an Eoliano word order pattern with the following character:

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(1)  $[C_{ca/ch\grave{a}} > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$

On the basis of such orders, C2021 concludes that these C forms, *ca/ch $\grave{a}$* , must be in Force, on the crucial but unsupported assumption that XP-top/foc necessarily occupies the high left periphery (henceforth *HLP*; Rizzi (1997)). I argue against this assumption, and provide evidence from other upper-southern varieties that XP-top/foc likely occupies the *low* left periphery, instead (*LLP*; Belletti (2004)). Specifically, drawing on Cinque (1999), I show that these criterial XPs occupy positions within the low adverb space, and thus cannot be in the HLP.

Combined with the independent fact that the finite V stays especially low in these languages (unlike much of Romance; Schifano 2018), I show that word order facts of the sort in (1) are insufficient to sustain conclusions about the position of complementizer forms in the HLP. Essentially, XPs in the LLP have no diagnostic value in specifying the position of complementizer forms such as *ca/ch $\grave{a}$*  within the HLP, since even the lowest position of the HLP (Fin) asymmetrically c-commands every position within the LLP. While it may be that both Eoliano complementizers do in fact occupy Force, as C2021 claims, the evidence presented thus far does not establish this, and is equally consistent with competing analyses (e.g. where one or both of the C forms occupies Fin, not Force). Indeed, given the patterns that I present below from other upper-southern varieties,<sup>1</sup> such alternatives seem quite plausible for Eoliano, though more work will be necessary to settle this question. Regardless, the claims and data in C2021 highlight an important issue that I can only begin to address here: we do not yet have a complete understanding of – a complete “mapping” of – the low left periphery in Italo-Romance.

This paper is organized as follows: in section 2 I briefly describe the factors involved in complementation in southern Italo-Romance, in section 3 I review the relative order of Eoliano complementizers and topics/foci, and in section 4 I highlight how facts in C2021 underdetermine the position of the Eoliano complementizer. In section 5, I describe the use of HLP and LLP in Italo-Romance, in section 6 I present novel data on the use of the HLP and the LLP behind  $[C_{ca/ch\grave{a}} > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  word orders in upper-southern Italo-Romance. In section 7 I conclude.

## 2 Background: complementation in southern Italo-Romance

Upper-southern and extreme-southern Italian varieties constitute two homogenous groups at a macro level of linguistic variation; however, at a micro level, the two are highly heterogeneous. Microvariation in complementation systems is a case in point: its spectrum in southern Italo-Romance is broad and variegated. As first noted by Rohlfs (1969:190), modern extreme-southern and upper-southern varieties<sup>2</sup> generally show two sets of complementizer forms: one introducing realis (indicative) complements selected by SAY-verbs such as *say*, *report*, etc. (*ca*), and another introducing irrealis (subjunctive) complements selected by WANT-verbs such as *wish*, *want*, etc. (*ma/mu/mi* in southern Calabria and northeastern Sicily, *cu* in extreme-southern varieties, and *che/ch $\grave{a}$ /chi* in upper-southern varieties). In addition to SAY- and WANT-verbs, the complementizer systems of some upper-southern varieties also

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1. All data presented here were collected by the author except where noted otherwise.

2. Only with respect to Italo-Romance varieties, dual complementizer systems of this kind are also found in early extreme-southern and upper-southern varieties (Ledgeway 2005 *et seq.*). I will not consider these in this paper.



- (4) *Eoliano* (C2021, ex. (28), (29))
- a. V<sup>w</sup>ogghju (\*u libbru) **chə/c-** u libbru u catta Marju.  
 I.want the book COMP/COMP= the book it.ACC he.buys Mario  
 ‘I want Mario to buy the book.’
- b. V<sup>w</sup>ogghju (\*DDOMANI) **chə** DDOMANI arriva Maria no odd̂zə.  
 I.want tomorrow COMP tomorrow she.arrives Maria NEG today  
 ‘I want for Maria to arrive tomorrow, not today.’

From such examples, C2021 draws several conclusions about the structure of the HLP in *Eoliano*. Since C2021’s reasoning is based exclusively on the (im)possible orders of the finite complementizers, criterial XPs, and the finite verb (see C2021, fn. 30), it will be useful to schematize the crucial ordering of elements that C2021 appeals to below:<sup>5</sup>

- (5) [ $C_{ca/chə} > XP_{Top/Foc} > V$ ]

Based on the order in (5), C2021 concludes that both C forms occupy Force, on the crucial assumption that topics/foci necessarily occupy the HLP. The proposed structure is reproduced below in (6a). When no topicalization/focalization has taken place, C2021 assumes that the HLP is inactive; in such cases, it is argued that the C-layer in *Eoliano* is *syncretic* (presumably in the sense of Rizzi (1997:311 *et seq.*); see also Ledgeway (2009a:20)): only a single C head is projected, and it bears features normally associated with both the distinct Fin and Force positions. This is depicted in C2021’s Structure 6, reproduced here in (6b).<sup>6</sup>

- (6) a. **Eoliano ‘active’ CP** (Structure 5 in C2021)  
 [<sub>ForceP</sub> *ca/chə* [<sub>TopP</sub> [<sub>FocP</sub> [<sub>FinP</sub> Fin [<sub>IP</sub> ...]]]]]
- b. **Eoliano ‘inactive’ CP** (Structure 6 in C2021)  
 [<sub>CP</sub><sub>Force/Fin</sub> *ca/chə* [<sub>TopP</sub> [<sub>FocP</sub> [<sub>IP</sub> ...]]]]]

If we adopt C2021’s assumption that the topicalized/focalized XPs in the *Eoliano* data above do indeed occupy the HLP, then the reasoning about *ca/chə* seems sound: neither of these complementizer forms can follow such XPs, suggesting that they do not occupy Fin at the bottom of the HLP. (C2021 does not say whether *Eoliano* allows recomplementation, which would require at least one of its complementizer forms to arise in Fin; see Ledgeway (2005); D’Alessandro and Ledgeway (2010).)

However, if we do not adopt C2021’s assumption that the topicalized/focalized XPs in the *Eoliano* data necessarily occupy the HLP, then the ordering facts schematized in (5)

5. In (3b) and (4a) *u libbru* ‘the book’ is reported to be a clitic-left-dislocated topic, presumably because of the presence of the object clitic *u*. In order to draw any conclusion about these structures, we would need to specify the position of the clitic first. Note that, in general, clitics in southern Italo-Romance seem to stay especially low, within the low adverb space along with the verb (Ledgeway and Lombardi (2005), Ledgeway (2009b:319–320), Ledgeway (2020:394–396)). This means that such clitics are also unlikely to be helpful in specifying the position of the criterial XP.

6. Note that there is one way in which C2021’s sense of “syncretic C” is distinct from Rizzi’s (1997) original proposal. Both proposals involve a single C head bearing both Fin and Force features when the HLP is inactive; however, whereas Rizzi argues that an inactive HLP lacks projection of TopP and FocP entirely (due to structural economy: see his p. 314), C2021 seems to take such projections to be present, but empty (see her Structure 6, reproduced above in (6b)). This assumption potentially faces the problems of selection that Rizzi’s proposal was meant to avoid; but, since the structure of the inactive HLP is not the focus of the present article, I leave it aside.

become significantly less informative about the position of *ca/chə*. Specifically, the order of elements sketched in (5) does not conclusively show that *ca/chə* occupy Force (rather than Fin or a simplex C head), as C2021 claims it does. Indeed, it is not possible to identify the lower boundary of the Eoliano HLP on the basis of the data in C2021 alone. Conversely, it is also impossible to identify the precise position of these criterial XPs: they could principally occupy any of several positions within the large span of structure separating Force from the finite V (given the especially low position for the latter in southern Italo-Romance: see references above). As I argue below, there are compelling reasons to believe that these criterial XPs in fact occupy positions within the *low* left periphery, based on what we see in other southern Italo-Romance varieties (see section 6). If this is correct, then the data in C2021 are not sufficient to draw any clear conclusions about the position of *ca/chə* within the Eoliano HLP.

#### 4 The facts in C2021 underdetermine the position of the Eoliano complementizer

C2021 assumes that the adverb *ddomani* ‘tomorrow’ in (4b) (repeated below) is a focalized constituent which occupies the HLP because it precedes the inflected verb (C2021, fn. 30).

- (4b) V<sup>w</sup>ogghju (\*DDOMANI) **chə** DDOMANI arriva Maria no oddǝ̃.  
 I.want tomorrow COMP tomorrow she.arrives Maria NEG today  
 ‘I want for Maria to arrive tomorrow, not today.’

The abstract order sketched in (5) above, here realized as  $[C_{\text{Force}}(chə) > XP(ddomani) > V(arriva)]$ , is therefore taken by C2021 to require the structure in (7):

- (7)  $[_{\text{ForceP}} chə [_{\text{TopP}} (XP) \text{Top} [_{\text{FocP}} (DDOMANI) \text{Foc} [_{\text{Fin}} \text{Fin} [_{\text{IP}} \dots V [_{\text{VP}} \dots ]]]]]]]]$

Ledgeway (2009a:16) reports a similar word order in a closely related variety, Cosentino, where it is possible to find temporal adverbs such as *dumani* ‘tomorrow’ following the complementizer in WANT-contexts (8a).<sup>7</sup> However, Ledgeway concludes that this  $[C(ca) > XP(dumani) > V(partimu)]$  order requires the structure in (8b), in which the XP *dumani* is not within the HLP, but instead occupies a projection within the high adverb space (*HAS*) in the IP domain (cf. 7).

- (8) *Cosentino* (Ledgeway 2009a:16)  
 a. Vuonnu ca **dumani** partimu.  
 they.want ca tomorrow we.leave  
 ‘They want that tomorrow we’ll leave.’  
 b.  $[_{\text{CP}_{\text{Force/Fin}}} ca [_{\text{IP}} (dumani) V [_{\text{VP}} \dots ]]]]$

As mentioned previously, the Eoliano data in (3) and (4) are equally consistent with the structure in (8b) as they are with the structure that C2021 assumes in (7): either of them could yield the  $[C_{ca/chə} > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  word order we find in (4b) and (8a). We cannot rule out the structure in (8b) for Eoliano *a priori* – nor should we, given its presence in Cosentino.

7. Ledgeway (2009a:16) reports that this utterance has neutral prosodic contour, and in order to be interpreted as a contrastive focus, the adverb *dumani* needs to occur postverbally with the relevant contrastive contour. Cf. (4b), in which *ddomani* is reported to be a “fronted constituent” (C2021).

Crucially, the finite verb in Cosentino and other varieties of the South does not raise to T, unlike in Standard Italian; rather, it undergoes short movement to a position just outside of *v*P, within Cinque’s (1999) low adverb space (*LAS*; Ledgeway and Lombardi (2005, 2014), Schifano (2018:ch. 2)). This is shown in (9), in which the indicative verb does not raise higher than the presuppositional negation *mancu* ‘not even’ (in SpecNeg1P<sub>Presuppositional</sub>; (9a)), but does raise across the *LAS* adverb *buonu* ‘well’ (in SpecVoiceP; (9b)):<sup>8</sup>

(9) *Cosentino* (Ledgeway 2009a:13)

- a. [IP un vi [LAS *mancu parranu* [VP *t<sub>parranu</sub>* ]]]  
not to.you.PL *mancu* they.speak  
‘They don’t even speak to you.’
- b. [IP Isa mi [LAS *sempe cucina* *buonu* [VP *t<sub>cucina</sub>* ]]]  
Isa to.me always she.cooks well  
‘Isa always cooks well for me.’

In light of these Cosentino facts, and the low position of the finite verb in southern Italo-Romance generally, it is possible that topicalized/focalized constituents in Eoliano also come to occupy a position within the *LAS* (and thus not within the *HLP*). Specifically, it seems likely that Eoliano, like Cosentino (Ledgeway 2009a:16, 19–20), makes use of the *LLP*, which in Romance can host pragmatically salient dislocated constituents (i.e. topics/foci: Belletti 2004). In such a case, the embedded subjects *Marju* in (4a) and *Vit’fjenzu* in (3b) may be topicalized/focalized XPs within the *LLP* (see Belletti (2004:18–26) for the low position of postverbal subjects in Standard Italian). In other words, rather than the structure in (7) that C2021 assumes, the Eoliano word order in (5) might be taken to implicate the structure in (10), instead:

(10) [CP *chə* [IP ... [TopP (XP) Top [FocP (DDOMANI) Foc ... V [VP ... ]]]]]

Clearly, then, we need to run the relevant diagnostic tests on Eoliano, to determine which of these structures ((7) vs. (10)) is responsible for the observed orders schematized in (5). Specifically, the relative position of the dislocated XPs should be tested against adverbials in Cinque’s (1999) hierarchy. In short, we should conclude that these XPs occupy the *HLP* only if they can be shown to precede e.g. a full (non-criterial) DP subject (S) and *HAS* adverbs, as well as the verb (and *LAS* adverbs), as in (11). On the other hand, we can conclude that these XPs occupy the *LLP* if they are found to follow *LAS* adverbs (and/or a full DP subject), as in (12). Importantly, in the latter case, the low position of XP would tell us nothing about the position of the complementizer form within the *HLP*:

(11) C<sub>Force</sub> > **XP** > S > Adv<sub>HAS/LAS</sub> > V (XP in *HLP*)

(12) C<sub>Force/Fin</sub> > S > Adv<sub>LAS</sub> > **XP** > V (XP in *LLP*)

Without evidence favoring (11) over (12), the latter remains a likely possibility for Eoliano, based on what we see in closely related varieties in southern Italo-Romance (and see below).

8. Crucially, *interpolation* structures are possible in Cosentino (i.e. when the clitic-verb nexus can be broken up by a specific class of intervening adverbs; Ledgeway and Lombardi (2005:77); (9)). Only a subset class of *LAS* adverbs are reported to occur in those structures (between Neg1 and Asp<sub>SgCompletive</sub>). For details see Ledgeway and Lombardi (2005).

As long as this is the case, we cannot draw any firm conclusions about the status of the HLP – specifically, the positions of the complementizers within that space – in Eoliano. Simply put, more data are required to adjudicate between the possible structures for Eoliano in (11) and (12).

I am not in a position to test the status of (11) in Eoliano. However, in what remains of this commentary, I will show that, surprisingly, (12) correctly characterizes the structure of other southern Italo-Romance varieties. In so doing, I will examine word order facts which have been, to the best of my knowledge, mostly overlooked until now in the literature on these varieties. Focusing on the position of dislocated DPs (as opposed to adverbials),<sup>9</sup> I draw on data from certain Southern Lazio and Northern Campanian varieties which show the same [C/S > XP<sub>Top/Foc</sub> > V] word order found in Eoliano and Cosentino.

## 5 High and low peripheries in southern Italo-Romance

As reported for other Romance languages, pragmatically marked word orders are found in main and embedded clauses in southern Italo-Romance (see Cruschina (2012:ch. 2)). For example, focus fronting in Sicilian can give rise to pragmatically marked [S > XP<sub>Top/Foc</sub> > V] matrix word orders. In (13), *a Turiddu* ‘to Turiddu’ is an informational focus (IFoc);<sup>10</sup> dislocation of this PP yields a marked word order not found in Standard Italian, for instance, where IFoci are generally postverbal (i.e. *Gianni* in (14)):

(13) *Sicilian* (Cruschina 2012:39)

A: Who did Alfio kill?

B: Alfio A TURIDDU ammazzà.  
Alfio to.ACC Turiddu kill.PAST.3SG  
‘Alfio has killed Turiddu.’

(14) *Standard Italian* (Belletti 2004:21)

A: Who spoke?

B: Ha parlato GIANNI.  
has spoken Gianni  
‘Gianni has spoken.’

Setting aside topics for the moment, the Standard Italian HLP can only host contrastive foci (CFoc; Rizzi (1997); cf. Benincà and Poletto (2004)); informational foci are felicitous only postverbally within the LLP (Belletti 2004). In this way, there is evidently a division of labor between the HLP and the LLP in terms of information structure, as argued in Belletti ((2004); see also Ledgeway and Roberts (forthcoming:138)). Since languages can differ in their use of criterial projections in the HLP and in the LLP in this way, it comes as no surprise that we find (micro)variation of this sort among varieties of the South (and in Romance more generally; see Cruschina (2012:§3.3)).<sup>11</sup>

To conclude, there is enormous variation concerning the use of the HLP and the LLP in Italo-Romance, as exemplified by the Standard Italian and Sicilian data above. The extent

9. This avoids possible confounds with temporal adverbial XPs; see Ledgeway (2005:356, fn. 23) and references therein.

10. For definitions of informational and contrastive focus (IFoc and CFoc) based in Roothian alternative semantics, as well as aboutness topic and referential topic (ATop and RTop), see Cruschina (2012:11, 82).

11. Barese is also reported to allow pragmatically salient constituents to be moved to both the HLP and the LLP rather “freely” (Andriani 2017:38).

of this variation across Italo-Romance is a matter that still needs to be properly investigated. For instance, while focus positions in Standard Italian seem to be specialized (i.e., contrastive focus in the HLP vs informational focus in the LLP: Belletti 2004), in other Italo-Romance varieties like Sardinian, Sicilian, and Turinese, the focus positions in both the HLP and the LLP are not specialized for a particular type of focus (Cruschina 2012:103–104). In the light of these facts, it is essential that we have a reliable means of disambiguating the position of these criterial XPs as being in either the HLP or the LLP in other southern varieties allowing  $[S > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  orders, particularly if such criterial XPs are to be of value as diagnostics in their own right (for the position of complementizer forms in the HLP, for instance).

In what remains, I attempt to diagnose the position of such criterial XPs in two southern Italo-Romance varieties by examining their position relative to adverbials in Cinque’s (1999) hierarchy. Several varieties spoken in Southern Lazio and Northern Campania present not only  $[S > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  word order like Sicilian, but also embedded  $[C_{\text{Force/Fin}} > S > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  word orders of the kind found in Eoliano. For reasons of space, I will only focus on the latter, as those are relevant to the understanding of the position of the  $XP_{\text{Top/Foc}}$  found in Eoliano too (see section 4).

## 6 Low-peripheral XPs in embedded word orders

Pragmatically marked word orders are found in matrix and embedded contexts in Italo-Romance.<sup>12</sup> Of particular interest to us is the availability of  $[C_{\text{Force/Fin}} > S > DP_{\text{obj}} > V]$  order in certain varieties of the upper South (Colasanti 2018b). This can be seen for example in Carinolese (and in Arcese, left aside for reasons of space): below, the DP object *le pummarole* ‘the tomatoes’ is an IFoc in ((15a), (15b)) and a CFoc in ((15c), (15d)), and in both cases it follows a DP subject but precedes the verb. (Note that the contexts in the examples below control for the left-dislocated constituent type.)

### (15) *Carinolese*

Context: Paskale and Peppinu will go to the market to buy some food for Maria, who has no idea what Paskale is going to buy since she does not know him. Maria asks Peppinu:

- a. “What do you think that Paskale will buy?” Peppinu replies:  
 Creru ca Paskale LE PUMMAROLE accatta.  
 I.believe that Paskale the tomatoes he.buys  
 ‘I believe that Paskale the tomatoes buys.’ (IFoc)
- b. “What do you want that Paskale will buy?” Peppinu replies:  
 Vulesse che Paskale LE PUMMAROLE accattasse.  
 I.would.like that Paskale the tomatoes he.would.buy  
 ‘I would like it if Paskale the tomatoes would buy.’ (IFoc)
- c. “Do you think that Paskale will buy the oranges?” Peppinu replies:  
 Creru ca Paskale LE PUMMAROLE accatta, no le pertualle.  
 I.believe that Paskale the tomatoes he.buys not the oranges  
 ‘I believe that Paskale the tomatoes buys, not the oranges.’ (CFoc)

12. Carinolese and Arcese also exhibit  $[S > DP_{\text{obj}} > V]$  word orders, but I do not include them in this paper for reasons of space (but see Colasanti (in preparation)). Likewise, I leave aside topicalized XPs within the LLP, although they are attested in these varieties as well, as shown below (see also Colasanti (in preparation)).



- d. “Do you want that Paskale will buy the oranges?” Peppinu replies:  
 Vulesse che Paskale LE PUMMAROLE accattasse, no le pertuale.  
 I.would.like that Paskale the tomatoes he.would.buy not the oranges  
 ‘I would like it if Paskale the tomatoes he would buy, not the oranges.’ (CFoc)

If the subjects in (15) are in [Spec, TP], then this [S > XP<sub>Top/Foc</sub> > V] order diagnoses an especially low (i.e., LLP) position for XP<sub>Top/Foc</sub>. In principle, though, these subjects could actually be topics occupying the HLP, since they refer to given information in context; in that case, these orders would be less informative, since the object XP<sub>Top/Foc</sub> might then also occupy a position within the HLP.<sup>13</sup> These two structural possibilities are sketched in (16).

- (16) a. [<sub>ForceP</sub> Force [<sub>TopP</sub> Paskale Top [<sub>FocP</sub> LE PUMMAROLE Foc [<sub>FinP</sub> Fin [<sub>IP</sub> [<sub>LAS</sub> accattasse ... [<sub>vP</sub> ... [<sub>VP</sub> le pummarole]]]]]]]]]  
 b. [<sub>ForceP</sub> Force [<sub>TopP</sub> Top [<sub>FocP</sub> Foc [<sub>Fin</sub> Fin [<sub>IP</sub> Paskale [<sub>LAS</sub> LE PUMMAROLE accattasse ... [<sub>vP</sub> ... [<sub>VP</sub> le pummarole]]]]]]]]]

To overcome this potential confound, I attempt to identify the position of the object XP<sub>Top/Foc</sub> using Cinque’s (1999) LAS adverbs and their scope relations, which, for the relevant varieties investigated, are reported in (17).<sup>14</sup>

- (17) LAS adverbs<sup>15</sup>  
*manghə/mancu* ‘not/not even’<sup>16</sup> Neg1<sub>Presuppositional</sub> > *ggià* ‘already’ T<sub>Anterior</sub> >  
*piune/chiiù/ciù* ‘anymore’ Asp<sub>Terminative</sub> > *angorə/angora* ‘still’ Asp<sub>Continuative</sub> > *semprə/sempe* ‘always’ Asp<sub>Perfect</sub> > *ammalapena/aggi aggi* ‘hardly/barely’ Neg2 > *buonə/buonu/bónə* ‘well’, *malə* ‘badly’ Voice > *spessə/spesso* ‘often’ Asp<sub>Frequentative(process)</sub>

In what follows I will test the position of objects XP<sub>Top/Foc</sub> against Cinque’s (1999) hierarchy in (17). In section 6.1, I will diagnose the position of XP<sub>Top</sub>, particularly with respect to certain LAS adverbs: in brief, if XP<sub>Top</sub> precedes the LAS adverbs, then it is located in the HLP. On the other hand, if XP<sub>Top</sub> follows LAS adverbs (and precedes the verb), then it occupies the LLP. In section 6.2, XP<sub>Foc</sub> will be tested in the same way. We will see that, in Carinolese, these criterial XPs can appear in both the HLP and the LLP.

13. This confound would not hold for subjects in the WANT-contexts in (15b, d), however: according to Colasanti (2018b:22), the complementizer *che* lexicalizes Fin in such contexts.

14. I will not use HAS adverbs for reasons of space, but these could principally be used to make the point in this context too.

15. This LAS hierarchy for southern Italo-Romance is mostly based on previous work by Ledgeway and Lombardi (2005, 2014), Schifano (2018), and Colasanti (2018b), but it is a point of ongoing research (see Colasanti (in preparation)).

16. In the varieties (and the contexts) investigated, the negator *mancu/manghə* can be a scalar negative adverb (‘not even’; Rohlfs 1969:294), a plain negator (‘not’; Ledgeway (2009b:ch. 18), Ledgeway (2016)), or a presuppositional negation in interpolation structures (which are present in Carinolese too): see Ledgeway and Lombardi (2005) and Ledgeway (2016). I follow Ledgeway and Lombardi ((2005:§4.2); see also Ledgeway (2016:113)) in taking *mancu/manghə* to occupy the specifier position of Neg1P in all cases. Crucially, though, I do not rely on the positioning of *mancu/manghə* as a diagnostic (though it is present in some of the sentences for reasons of naturalness). This is because, as a member of the set of adverbs with a “focusing” use (see Cinque (1999:30–32)), its order is not always informative: rather than occupying a position on the clausal spine, such adverbs can optionally form a constituent with (and take scope only over) the DP adjacent to them. In such cases, it can be Focus-fronted or left-dislocated together with the accompanying DP (*ibid.*). Thus, I rely only on adverbials that do not allow this “focusing” use. (See also fn. 19, below.)

### 6.1 High and low topics in Carinolese

To begin, consider the data from SAY-contexts in Carinolese<sup>17</sup> below, involving the LAS adverbs *ciù* ‘anymore’, *angora* ‘still’, *sempe* ‘always’, and *buone* ‘well’. The XP<sub>Top</sub>, *la sausiccia*, can precede or follow the adverbs *ciù* ‘anymore’ (SpecAsp<sub>Terminative</sub>), *angora* ‘still’ (SpecAsp<sub>Continuative</sub>), and *sempe* ‘always’ (SpecAsp<sub>Perfect</sub>) and be interpreted as a referential topic (R<sub>Top</sub>). When *la sausiccia* follows those LAS adverbs, it occupies a position between them and the verb *fa* ‘he makes’ (which moves to a LAS position between Asp<sub>Perfect</sub> and Asp<sub>Prospective</sub>), which can be followed by the adverb *buone* ‘well’ (SpecVoice; (18c)). Here the left-dislocated XP *la sausiccia* is contextually-given information in the discourse, and thus interpreted as a R<sub>Top</sub>.

#### (18) Carinolese (R<sub>Top</sub>)

Context: Peppinu is the butcher in the town of Carinola, but Maria does not know him because she is from a different town. While she is walking with a friend from Carinola, they pass by Peppino’s butcher shop, and Maria asks her friend:

- a. “Does Peppinu make salami?”. Her friend from Carinola replies:  
 Nu creru ca Peppinu la sausiccia, (mancu) **ciù**, (la sausiccia)  
 not I.believe that Peppinu the sausage mancu anymore the sausage  
 fa.  
 he.makes  
 ‘I don’t believe that Peppinu (not even) makes salami anymore.’
- b. “Does Peppinu make salami?”. Her friend from Carinola replies:  
 Nu creru ca Peppinu, la sausiccia, **angora**, (la sausiccia) fa.  
 not I.believe that Peppinu the sausage still the sausage he.makes  
 ‘I don’t believe that Peppinu still makes salami.’
- c. “How well does Peppinu make salami?”. Her friend from Carinola replies:  
 Creru ca Peppinu la sausiccia, **sempe**, (la sausiccia) (la) fa  
 I.believe that Peppinu the sausage always the sausage it= he.makes  
**buone**.  
 well  
 ‘I believe that Peppinu always makes salami well.’

*La sausiccia* can be interpreted as a R<sub>Top</sub> in both the HLP and the LLP in SAY-contexts: when it precedes the adverbs *ciù* ‘anymore’, *angora* ‘still’, and *sempe* ‘always’, it is within the HLP. By contrast, *la sausiccia* is in the LLP when it occupies a position within the LAS between the adverbs *ciù* ‘anymore’, *angora* ‘still’, and *sempe* ‘always’ and the verb *fa* ‘he makes’ (followed by the adverb *buone* ‘well’; (18c)).

Turning to WANT-contexts, the left-dislocated DP object *la sausiccia* ‘salami’ cannot move across the LAS adverb *ciù* ‘anymore’ and be interpreted as a R<sub>Top</sub> (19):

#### (19) Carinolese (R<sub>Top</sub>)

Context: Peppinu is the butcher in the town of Carinola, but Maria does not know him because she is from a different town. While she is walking with a friend from

17. Carinolese retains final unstressed vowel distinctions and weakening of the initial voiced dental [d] to the alveolar flap [r] in some contexts (*pace* Colasanti 2018b, who indicates the presence of final [ə] and initial [d] in some Carinolese examples). I thank my consultants from Carinola for clarifying this point.

Carinola, they pass by Peppinu’s butcher shop, and Maria says to her friend: “From the look of his shop, I am betting that you would like it if Peppinu could make salami (well).” Her friend from Carinola replies:

Vulesse che Peppinu (\*la sausiccia) mancu **ciù**, la sausiccia  
 I.would.like that Peppinu the sausage mancu anymore the sausage  
 facesse (**buone**). Peppinu me sta ntipaticu!  
 he.would.make well Peppinu me= he.stands horrible  
 ‘I would like it if Peppinu wouldn’t make salami (well) anymore. Peppinu is horrible!’

*La sausiccia* can only be interpreted as a RTop (19) if it moves to a position below the LAS adverb *ciù* ‘anymore’ (SpecAsp<sub>Terminative</sub>), but higher than the lexical verb *facesse* ‘he would make’ (optionally followed by the adverb *buone* ‘well’ in SpecVoice).<sup>18</sup> Thus, in Carinolese, the dislocated DP *la sausiccia* can only be interpreted as a RTop (since it is contextually-given information) in the LLP, and not in the HLP, in WANT-contexts (cf. SAY-contexts in (18)).

## 6.2 High and low foci in Carinolese

Consider the data from SAY-contexts in Carinolese below in (20):

### (20) Carinolese (IFoc)

Context: Maria, who is from Carinola, is giving a tour of the town to her friend from Rome. As they pass by Peppinu’s butcher shop, Maria says: “Peppinu isn’t a very good butcher. He barely does cured meats well. For example...”

Creru ca Peppinu (LA SAUSICCIA), **aggi aggi**, (LA SAUSICCIA) fa  
 I.believe that Peppinu the sausage barely the sausage he.makes  
 (**buone**).  
 well  
 ‘I believe that (even) salami Peppinu barely does (well).’

In (20) *la sausiccia* is new information presupposed to be within the set of possible alternatives (i.e. the set of cured meats hypothetically makable by Peppinu), hence an IFoc. The speaker presupposes that salami-making is a very low-skill task for a butcher, and yet Peppinu can barely accomplish it; thus, the speaker is indirectly implying that there are not many types of cured meats that Peppinu makes (or makes ‘well’; i.e., being poor at salami-making entails being poor at cured meats-making in general). Thus, the left-dislocated XP *la sausiccia* can be interpreted as an IFoc in either the HLP (when it precedes the adverb *aggi aggi* ‘barely’ in SpecNeg2) or in the LLP (when it occupies a position between the adverb *aggi aggi* ‘barely’<sup>19</sup> and the verb *fa* ‘he makes’; optionally followed by the adverb *buone* ‘well’

18. In some Southern Lazio varieties (e.g. Cepranese; Colasanti (2018a)), there is an asymmetry between the movement of the embedded subjunctive vs indicative lexical verb due to the partial loss of the (imperfect) subjunctive; however, this is maintained in Carinolese (see Colasanti (2018b:29)).

19. Additional evidence that the adverbs *ciù* ‘anymore’, *sempe* ‘always’, *aggi aggi* ‘barely’, and *angora* ‘still’ are not focusing adverbs (i.e., do not only scope over the adjacent DP), but in fact occupy fixed LAS positions on the spine, comes from several diagnostics proposed in Cinque (1999:30–32). For instance, unlike typical focusing uses of adverbs (which form a constituent with the adjacent DP), *ciù* ‘anymore’ cannot undergo movement as part of its adjacent DP. In (i), [*ciù la sausiccia*] cannot be Focus-fronted (i.a) and cannot be used in cleft constructions (i.b) (cf. e.g. [*probabilmente DP*] in Standard Italian: Cinque (1999:31)). The

in SpecVoice) in Carinolese.

By contrast, *la sausiccia* can only be interpreted as an IFoc in WANT-contexts if it occupies a LAS position between the adverb in SpecNeg2 *aggi aggi* ‘barely’ and the verb *facesse* ‘he would make’ (optionally followed by the adverb in SpecVoice *buone* ‘well’; (21)). The DP object is informationally new in (21), but within the closed set of alternatives (i.e., it is a kind of cured meats that Peppinu could potentially barely do (well)). Thus, the left-dislocated XP *la sausiccia* can be interpreted as IFoc only in the LLP, not in the HLP. In fact, it is ungrammatical in WANT-contexts for *la sausiccia* to precede the adverb *aggi aggi* ‘barely’ and be interpreted as an IFoc. Note that in (21), the speaker presupposes that salami-making is a required skill that a butcher cannot lack, lest he go out of business (which would please the speaker, since she cannot stand Peppinu).

(21) *Carinolese* (IFoc)

Context: Maria, who is from Carinola, is giving a tour of the town to her friend from Rome. As they pass by Peppinu’s butcher shop, Maria says: “I’ve never gone to this butcher shop before because I can’t stand Peppinu. In fact I hope his business fails. It would please me if he could barely do cured meats well. For example...”

Vulesse che Peppinu (\*LA SAUSICCIA) **aggi aggi**, LA SAUSICCIA  
 I.would.like that Peppinu the sausage barely the sausage  
 facesse (**buone**). Peppinu me sta ntipaticu!  
 he.would.make well Peppinu me= he.stands horrible  
 ‘It would please me if (even) salami he could barely do well. Peppinu is horrible!’

The left-dislocated DP object *la sausiccia* ‘salami’ can be interpreted as a CFoc in SAY-contexts only when it moves between the LAS adverbs *sempe* ‘always’ (22a) and *aggi aggi*

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same holds for *sempe* ‘always’ (ii), *aggi aggi* ‘hardly’ (iii), and *angora* ‘still’ (iv). Such evidence makes it highly unlikely (though admittedly not impossible) that these adverbs have a focusing use available to them in Carinolese.

- (i) a. \*Nu credu ca [ciù LA SAUSICCIA] Peppinu fa buone.  
 not I.believe that anymore the sausage Peppinu he.makes well  
 b. \*Nu credu ca è [ciù LA SAUSICCIA] ca Peppinu fa buone.  
 not I.believe that it.is anymore the sausage which Peppinu he.makes well
- (ii) a. \*[Sempe LA SAUSICCIA] Peppinu fa buone.  
 always the sausage Peppinu he.makes well  
 b. \*È [sempe LA SAUSICCIA] ca Peppinu fa buone.  
 it.is always the sausage which Peppinu he.makes well
- (iii) a. \*[Aggi aggi LA SAUSICCIA] Peppinu fa buone.  
 barely the sausage Peppinu he.makes well  
 b. \*È [aggi aggi LA SAUSICCIA] ca Peppinu fa buone.  
 it.is barely the sausage which Peppinu he.makes well
- (iv) a. \*[Angora LA SAUSICCIA] Peppinu fa buone.  
 still the sausage Peppinu he.makes well  
 b. \*È [angora LA SAUSICCIA] ca Peppinu fa buone.  
 it.is still the sausage which Peppinu he.makes well

‘barely’ (22b) on the one hand, and the finite verb *fa* ‘he makes’ followed by the adverb *buone* ‘well’ on the other.

(22) *Carinolese* (CFoc)

Context: Peppinu is the butcher in the town of Carinola, but Maria has never been to his butcher shop before. She is giving a tour of the town to her friend from Rome. As they pass by Peppinu’s butcher shop, Maria’s friend says:

- a. “From the look of his shop, I am betting that Peppinu always does prosciutto well.” Maria replies: “Actually, ...”  
 Creru ca Peppinu (\*LA SAUSICCIA) **sempe**, LA SAUSICCIA fa  
 I.believe that Peppinu the sausage always the sausage he.makes  
**buone**, no ru presuttu.  
 well not the prosciutto  
 ‘I believe that Peppinu always does salami well, not prosciutto.’
- b. “From the look of his shop, I am betting that Peppinu can barely do prosciutto well.” Maria replies: “Actually, ...”  
 Creru ca Peppinu (\*LA SAUSICCIA) **aggi aggi**, LA SAUSICCIA fa  
 I.believe that Peppinu the sausage barely the sausage he.makes  
**buone**, no ru presuttu.  
 well not the prosciutto  
 ‘I believe that what Peppinu barely does well is salami, not prosciutto.’

Here, the focus type is contrastive: *la sausiccia* constitutes new information within the set of possible alternatives (i.e. the set of cured meats that Peppinu can hypothetically make) contrasting with known information (i.e. *ru presuttu* ‘the prosciutto’). Notice that in (22b) the speaker presupposes that salami-making is a very low skill for a butcher, and yet Peppinu can barely accomplish it. Hence, being poor at salami-making entails being not good at prosciutto making too, which requires higher skills for a butcher. In Carinolese, in SAY-contexts, *la sausiccia* is interpreted a CFoc when it is dislocated in the LLP (not the HLP). This is because the dislocated DP object is interpreted as CFoc only when it occupies a LAS position between the LAS adverb *aggi aggi* ‘barely’ (SpecNeg2) and the verb *fa* ‘he makes’.

In WANT-contexts, the left-dislocated DP object *la sausiccia* ‘salami’ cannot move across the LAS adverb *aggi aggi* ‘barely’ (SpecNeg2) to be interpreted as a CFoc, but it can move to a position below them which precedes the verb *facesse* ‘he would make’ (itself followed by the adverb *buone* ‘well’), as in (23) and (24).

(23) *Carinolese* (CFoc)

Context: Maria, who is from Carinola, is giving a tour of the town to her friend from Rome. As they pass by Peppinu’s butcher shop, Maria says: “This butcher Peppinu is always trying to perfect his prosciutto, but frankly I prefer the prosciutto that my grandpa does. So, while Peppinu would always like to do prosciutto well, frankly...”

- Vulesse che Peppinu (\*LA SAUSICCIA) **sempe**, LA SAUSICCIA facesse  
 I.would.like that Peppinu the sausages always the sausage he.would.make  
**buone**, no ru presuttu.  
 well not the prosciutto  
 ‘I would prefer it if Peppinu always did salami well, not prosciutto.’

(24) *Carinolese* (CFoc)

Context: Maria, which is from the town of Carinola, is giving a tour of the town to her friend from Rome. While they're passing by Peppinu's butcher shop Maria says: "I've never gone to this butcher shop before because I can't stand Peppinu. In fact I hope his business fails." Her friend from Rome says: "So I guess it would please you if he could barely do prosciutto well." But Maria knows that Peppinu makes all his money selling salami, so she replies: "Actually, ..."

Vulesse che Peppinu (\*LA SAUSICCIA) **aggi aggi**, LA SAUSICCIA,  
 I.would.like that Peppinu the sausages barely the sausage  
 facesse **buone**, no ru presuttu. Peppinu me sta ntipaticu!  
 he.would.make well not the prosciutto Peppinu me= he.stands horrible  
 'It would please me if Peppinu could barely make salami well, not prosciutto. Peppinu  
 is horrible!'

The speaker presupposes in (24) that salami-making is a required skill for a butcher. Given her distaste for Peppinu, she hopes he will lack that skill (and perhaps may thus have to close down). *La sausiccia* constitutes new information within the set of possible alternatives (i.e. the closed set of cured meats that Peppinu could potentially make), contrasting with known information (i.e. *ru presuttu* 'the prosciutto'). In Carinolese, the DP object can be interpreted as a CFoc only if it occupies a position between the LAS adverbs *sempre* 'always' (SpecAsp<sub>Perfect</sub>) or *aggi aggi* 'barely' (SpecNeg2) and the verb *facesse* 'he would make' (followed by the adverb *buone* 'well' in SpecVoice). In other words, *la sausiccia* is only interpreted as a CFoc when it occupies the LLP (and not the HLP, i.e. in a position preceding these LAS adverbs).

Summarizing the Carinolese data above in §6.1 and §6.2, we have evidence for the two structures in (25):

- (25) a. SAY-verb  $[_{CP} C [_{TopP} (Subj) Top] [_{FocP} (LA SAUSICCIA) Foc] [_{TopP} (la sausiccia) Top] [_{IP} (Subj) [_{Neg1P} mancu Neg1] [_{T_{AnteriorP}} ggìa T_{Anterior}] [_{Asp_{TerminativeP}} ciù ASP_{Terminative} [_{Asp_{PerfectP}} sempre ASP_{Perfect} [_{Neg2P} aggi aggi Neg2] [_{TopP} (la sausiccia) Top] [_{FocP} (LA SAUSICCIA) Foc] ... fa [_{VoiceP} buone Voice] [_{VP} la sausiccia]]]]]]]]]]]]]$   
 b. WANT-verb  $[_{CP} C [_{TopP} (*la sausiccia) Top] [_{FocP} (*LA SAUSICCIA) Foc] [_{IP} Subj] [_{Neg1P} mancu Neg1] [_{T_{AnteriorP}} ggìa T_{Anterior}] [_{Asp_{TerminativeP}} ciù ASP_{Terminative} [_{Asp_{PerfectP}} sempre ASP_{Perfect} [_{Neg2P} aggi aggi Neg2] [_{TopP} (la sausiccia) Top] [_{FocP} (LA SAUSICCIA) Foc] ... facesse [_{VoiceP} buone Voice] [_{VP} la sausiccia]]]]]]]]]]]]]$

In short, in SAY-contexts the DP object *la sausiccia* can be left-dislocated into the HLP and the LLP as a IFoc (20), or as RTop (18). When the DP object is in the HLP, the subject *Peppinu* is presumably topicalized into the HLP too ((18), (20)), as it is given information in the context. By contrast, in SAY-contexts the DP object can be interpreted as a CFoc only if it is left-dislocated to the LLP (22), not the HLP. This is schematized in the structure (25a). In WANT-contexts, *la sausiccia* can only be dislocated into a low position and be interpreted as a CFoc ((23), (24)) or an IFoc (21); it cannot be dislocated into the HLP. The same holds for RTop (19) in WANT-contexts, as schematized in the structure in (25b). Given that WANT-verbs select Fin-headed complement clauses in Carinolese (Colasanti 2018b:22), any left-dislocated element that does not precede the complementizer cannot occupy the HLP, but must have moved into the LLP instead.

These results from Carinolese are not entirely surprising, given the variation in the use of the HLP and the LLP in Italo-Romance (§5; see also Belletti (2004), Cruschina (2012:103–104); *i.a.*). Specifically, while it is not a novel finding that southern Italo-Romance makes extensive use of the HLP, the fact that Carinolese makes such robust use of the LLP as well is both novel and significant. In this variety (and in Arcese), it seems that there is a division of labor between the HLP and the LLP: the positions are specialized for particular information-structural interpretations (e.g. left-dislocated XPs are interpreted as CFoc only in the LLP), as argued for other southern varieties (see Cruschina (2012:103–104); cf. Standard Italian in Belletti (2004)).

Thus, the question arises: where are these left-dislocated DP objects in (18)–(23), if not in the LLP?<sup>20</sup> In fact, the existence of Top/Foc positions in the LLP would be a possible explanation for the contrastive/information-structural interpretation of those XPs in the LAS. However, the question of whether southern Italo-Romance varieties could make extensive use of the LLP in embedded contexts when we have  $[C > S > XP > V]$  word orders, and not only  $[C > S > V > XP]$ , is a matter that needs to be better investigated. Given this, the data in (15)–(23) are not totally unexpected: we already know that the verb stays very low in southern Italo-Romance; there could be pragmatic contexts in which the verb stays *very* low in the LAS. In these varieties, an  $XP_{\text{Top/Foc}}$  could come to occupy a preverbal position either by fronting to the HLP, as is traditionally assumed (as in C2021 for Eoliano), or by moving into the LLP, which the finite verb evidently need not raise across. This is a finding which needs to be more carefully investigated, making use of the full battery of diagnostics for mapping criterial positions in the clause.

Going back for a moment to the Eoliano facts described in §3 and §4, it is now evident that the exact positions of left-dislocated  $XP_{\text{Top/Foc}}$  in  $[C_{ca/ch\theta} > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  word orders is still an open matter (including the position of the complementizer forms).

## 7 Conclusions

In this invited commentary, I have taken a closer look at  $[C > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  word orders in some modern upper-southern Italian varieties, and shown that not all such orders necessarily involve movement into the high left periphery:  $XP_{\text{Top/Foc}}$  may, in fact, occupy the low left periphery instead. If this is correct, then such orders are not *prima facie* evidence for the position of complementizer forms within the high left periphery, contrary to what is assumed in Cardullo (2021) for Eoliano. Additional diagnostics are necessary if unambiguous conclusions are to be drawn.

Specifically, to draw clear conclusions about any of these elements, the variables that must be specified for a particular variety include the height of the finite verb (which remains quite low in the varieties of the South: Ledgeway and Lombardi (2005), Schifano (2018)),

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20. One rather dramatic alternative might be to assume that the  $[C > S > \text{Neg} > \text{Adv} > XP > V]$  word orders do not involve the LLP at all, but rather fronting of each individual element (save V) to the HLP (presumably into recursive Top positions in most cases). However, this approach would create more problems than it solves. Most obviously, such a derivation would seem to require multiple Relativized Minimality violations (Rizzi 1990), given all the crossing dependencies necessary to recreate the TP-internal word order (except for XP and V). Moreover, the information structure in the specified context does not support it: for instance, in (21) the subject *Peppinu* is a given topic, whereas the LAS adverbs *aggi aggi* or *sempe* would be under new information focus, and *la sausiccia* is a CFoc. In other words, this ‘mass migration’ to the HLP would require at least two distinct elements to undergo Focus-fronting, in violation of the uniqueness constraint on displaced Foci (Rizzi (1997); Belletti (2004); Cruschina (2012, 2021); Bocci (2013), *i.a.*). Since such a derivation seems to face serious challenges, I leave it aside, and pursue one that makes limited use of the LLP instead.

the position of  $XP_{\text{Top/Foc}}$  within either the low left periphery or the high left periphery (as diagnosed by its relative position with respect to overt subjects and various members of Cinque’s (1999) adverbial hierarchy), and, finally, the position of the complementizer forms within the high left periphery, most clearly diagnosed using material that *unambiguously* splits the Force and Fin positions (i.e., a criterial XP which can be positively shown to occupy not the low left periphery, but only the high one). To illustrate the importance of each of these components, I described and (partly) analyzed novel data from the upper-southern variety Carinolese (and Arcese) involving low-peripheral XPs in embedded word orders.

To my knowledge,  $[C > S > XP_{\text{Top/Foc}} > V]$  orders in southern Italo-Romance have received very little attention to this point. This is an oversight: it is precisely the fact that  $XP_{\text{Top/Foc}}$  may occupy a *low* left-peripheral position that makes such orders so intriguing, for their potential value in mapping this lower area of the Italo-Romance clause. The facts described in this commentary represent only the first step toward addressing this lacuna in southern Italo-Romance (but see Colasanti (in preparation)).

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