

Mapping the Fine Structure of the C-system of the Greek and Romance Dialects of the Extreme South of Italy

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Following centuries of language contact, there are a number of unmistakable parallels in the complementizer systems of the Greek and Romance dialects of the extreme south of Italy. In particular, both language groups distinguish formally and structurally between three finite complementizers. In this talk, I shall map the positions of these three complementizers within a cartographic approach to the left periphery adopting a version of Rizzi's (1997) conception of the structure of the C-domain enriched and augmented by many of the insightful modifications proposed in Roussou (2000) on the basis of Standard Modern Greek along the lines of the representation in (1).

(1) [C_{Sub} [Topic + Foc [C_{Type} [Neg [C_{Mod} [IP (Neg) V...]]]]]]

This extended functional space contains three complementizer positions each with its own dedicated functions and characteristic properties. The lowest position, C_{Mod}, is a modal position corresponding to Rizzi's Fin(iteness) and represents the position in which irrealis complementizers are first-merged. The middle position, C_{Type}, is a clause-typing position (corresponding in part to Rizzi's Force and Int(errogative) positions) which hosts realis complementizers and interrogative and hypothetical complementizers variously typing the clause, for instance, as an embedded declarative, interrogative, or hypothetical. The highest complementizer position, C_{Sub}, is where the so-called factive complementizers are generated, a position dedicated to marking subordination (only partially overlapping with Rizzi's Force position) which connects the clause externally to a higher selecting predicate or the wider discourse. Finally, between the lower and the middle complementizer positions occur irrealis negators and between the middle and the highest complementizer positions are situated topicalized and focalized constituents (in that order).

My examination of the fine structure of the left periphery will reveal a remarkable degree of structural and pragmatico-semantic parallelism in the distribution and functions of the complementizer systems of Italo-Greek and their neighbouring Romance varieties which cannot but be the product of centuries of intense and extensive language contact from Greek on Romance. Irrespective of lexical variation, all varieties distinguish between an irrealis complementizer (ItGr. *na*, Cal. *mu/ma/mi*, Sal. *cu*), a realis complementizer (Gre. *ti*, Gri. *ka(/ti)*, SItRo. *ca*), and a factive complementizer (ItGr. *pu*, Cal. *chi*, Sal. *ci*) generated, respectively, in three distinct C-positions within the left periphery: a low C_{Mod} position, a medial C_{Type} position, and a higher C_{Sub} position (2), respectively. Each of these three positions endows the complementizers with their essential characteristics: *na*, *mu/ma/mi*, and *cu* are modally marked (viz [-realis]) elements, *ti*, *ka*, and *ca* are consequently modally unmarked elements characterized as simply typing their clauses as [+dependent], and *pu*, *chi*, and *ci* signal a general relation of subordination either to a selecting predicate (or nominal in the case of relatives) or to the general discourse as in the case of marked illocutionary force values such as the optative. I informally characterize this subordination feature as [+anaphoric], inasmuch as it serves to anaphorically connect the clause either to a higher selecting predicate or to the preceding discourse.

(2) [C_{Sub} THAT_{FCT} [Top/Foc [C_{Type} THAT [Neg [C_{Mod} THAT_{IRR} [IP V...]]]]]]

The map in (2) will be shown to provide a straightforward explanation for a number of structural differences between Italo-Greek and Romance, as well as between the individual dialects of these two groups. Among other things, we shall see that the realis and irrealis complementizers undergo head movement in specific contexts, accounting, in turn, for the different linearization of topics and foci with respect to different complementizers, the variable position of irrealis negation in different Italo-Greek and Romance varieties, and the availability or otherwise of clause-typing particles.