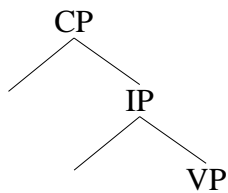


Rizzi, Luigi (1997). The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery

1 Introduction

Main point: Just as there was evidence to split IP up into several projections (TP, AgrSP, etc.), there is also evidence that CP likewise needs to be split.

(1) The clause structure of the olden days (mid '80s):

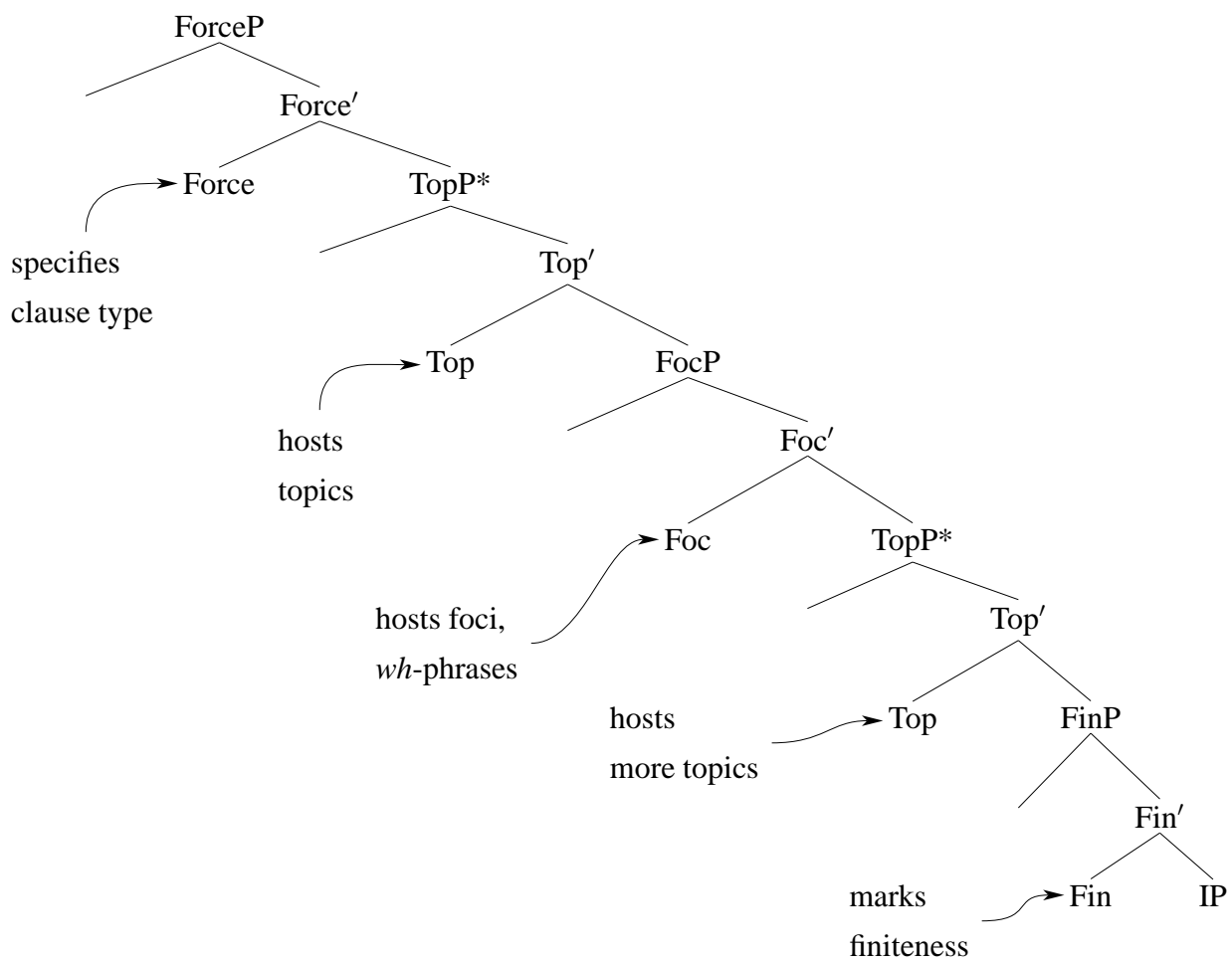


CP: force (declarative, interrogative)

IP: functional morphology (tense, agreement)

VP: lexical/thematic elements

(2) The fine structure of CP (Rizzi 1997):



2 The Force-Finiteness System

What is the role of the complementizer in the clausal structure? – It serves as the **interface** between the IP and the superordinate structure.

- Viewed from the *outside* (above), the complementizer indicates what *kind* of clause it is (declarative, question, exclamative, relative, comparative, . . .), i.e. the clausal Type or the specification of “Force” of the clause.
- Viewed from the *inside* (below), the complementizer shows a certain sensitivity to the finiteness of the IP. For example, *that* occurs with finite clauses, *for* occurs with nonfinite clauses (“agreement” between C and I w.r.t. the finiteness).

These appear to be two different functions, and could be expressed as properties of two different heads in the “CP system”. This gives Rizzi’s split an initial plausibility, evidence will follow that we can put things *in between* the Force position and the Finiteness position, forcing us to the position that we must at least split CP up into two.

Selection: The restriction that a lexical item places on its arguments (selection must be *local*).

- (3) Verbs can select for different *clause types*:
- a. *believe*: declarative clause
 - b. *wonder*: interrogative clause
 - c. *know*: either declarative or interrogative
- (4)
- a. John believes that Mary left.
 - b. *John believes who left.
- (5)
- a. *John wonders that Mary left.
 - b. John wonders who left.
- (6)
- a. John know that Mary left.
 - b. John knows who left.

The force-finiteness system expresses the selectional relations between a C system and the immediately higher and lower structural systems.

3 The Topic-Focus System

Another well-known use of CP (the left periphery) is as the area in which topics and foci appear.

- (7) a. Your book, you should give *t* to Paul (not to Bill). “Topicalization”
 b. YOUR BOOK you should give *t* to Paul (not mine). ”Focus fronting”

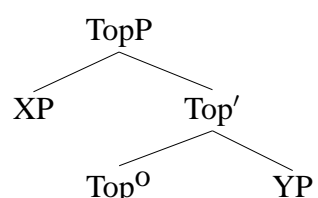
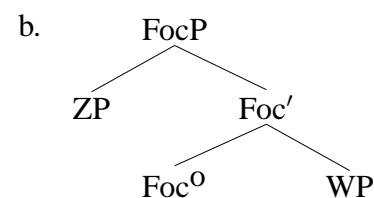
Topic: What the sentence is about. Topic is normally expressing *old information*, known from preceding discourse. Sometimes paraphrasable with *As for...*

Focus: What is *new* in the sentence.

At first sight, English appears to use basically the same position for both, but languages differ in this respect, and very often treat the two types of sentences differently.

- (8) ITALIAN

- a. Il tuo libro, **lo** ho letto Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)
 ‘Your book, I have read it. (Topicalization)
 b. IL TUO LIBRO ho letto (, non il suo) Focus preposing
 ‘Your book I read (, not his).’ (Focalization)

- (9) a. 
 XP = Topic
 YP = Comment
- b. 
 ZP = Focus
 WP = Presupposition

There are two dimensions here:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Topic–Comment | Topic (what the sentence is about) |
| | Comment (what the sentence says about the topic) |
| Focus–Presupposition | Focus (what is new in the sentence) |
| | Presupposition (what is old/presupposed in the sentence) |

- (10) **Topic and Focus Criteria:** A constituent endowed with topic or focus features must end up in a Spec-head configuration with Top or Foc, respectively.

If TopP and FocP are part of the CP, yet FinP must be the bottom and ForceP must be at the top (for selectional reasons), then it follows that TopP and FocP must be “sandwiched” between ForceP and FinP.

(11) ... Force ... (Topic) ... (Focus) ... Fin IP

Topic and foci give us our first evidence that CP must be split up this way, as they seem to come *between* the positions of Force and Fin.

ITALIAN: *di* introduces non-finite embedded clauses and *follows* topics

che introduces finite embedded clauses and *precedes* topics

- (12) a. Credo **che** loro apprezzerebbero molto il tuo libro.
 ‘I believe **that** they would appreciate your book very much.’
 b. Credo **di** apprezzare molto il tuo libro.
 ‘I believe **of** to appreciate your book very much.’
- (13) a. Credo **che** il tuo libro, loro lo apprezzerebbero molto.
 ‘I believe **that** your book, they would appreciate it a lot.’
 b. *Credo, il tuo libro, **che** loro lo apprezzerebbero molto.
 ‘I believe, your book, **that** they would appreciate it a lot.’
- (14) a. *Credo **di** il tuo libro, apprezzarlo molto.
 ‘I believe **of** your book to appreciate it a lot.’
 b. Credo il tuo libro, **di** apprezzarlo molto.
 ‘I believe your book **of** to appreciate it a lot.’

che manifests the force position, while *di* manifests the finiteness position.

(15) ... (*che*) ... topic ... (*di*) ... IP

Relative *wh*-words must *precede* Topics, interrogative *wh*-words must *follow* Topics.

- (16) a. Un uomo **a cui**, il premio Nobel, lo daranno senz’altro
 ‘A man **to whom**, the Nobel Prize, they will give it undoubtedly’
 b. *Un uomo, il premio Nobel, **a cui** lo daranno senz’altro
 ‘A man, the Nobel Prize, **to whom** they will give it undoubtedly’

- (17) a. ***A chi**, il premio Nobel, lo daranno?
 ‘**To whom**, the Nobel Prize, will they give it?’
 b. Il premio Nobel, **a chi** lo daranno?
 ‘The Nobel Prize, **to whom** will they give it?’

Relative operators occupy the highest specifier position, SpecForceP, while question operators can occupy a lower position within the Topic/Foc:

- (18) ... (Rel-*wh*) ... topic ... (*wh*-word) ... IP

Point: We cannot account for this if there is only one C and one SpecCP to do everything.

4 Differences between Topic and Focus

Topic and focus constructions are similar in several respects as A'-constructions involving the left periphery of the clause; but there is an important difference: **Focus is quantificational, Topic is not.**¹

4.1 Focus exhibits WCO effects (Topic does not)

- (19) a. Gianni_i, sua_i madre lei ha sempre apprezzato.
 ‘Gianni, his mother always appreciated him.’
 b. ??GIANNI_i sua_i madre ha sempre apprezzato t_i (non Piero).
 ‘GIANNI his mother always appreciated, not Piero.’

Weak Crossover is a distinctive characteristic of A' relations involving *true quantification*. That is, a relation involving a *null constant* (non-varying) trace will not trigger WCO.

- (20) a. ?*Who_i does his_i mother really like t_i (=vbl)?
 b. John, who_i his_i mother really likes t_i (=nc).

Focus involves quantificational A'-binding while Topic does not.

¹When Rizzi says “topic is not quantificational”, he means that the value which the trace gets in the interpretation *does not vary* – it is still assigned a value by the topic phrase, but the value is *constant*. Rizzi refers to traces of this kind (which are otherwise like variables except that their value *don't* vary) as **null constants**.

4.2 Topic has a resumptive clitic (Focus does not)

- (21) a. Il tuo libro, **lo** ho comprato.
'Your book, I bought it.'
b. *Il tuo libro, ho comprato *t*.
'Your book, I bought.'
- (22) a. *IL TUO LIBRO **lo** ho comprato (non il suo).
'YOUR BOOK I bought it (not his).'
- b. IL TUO LIBRO ho comprato *t* (non il suo).
'YOUR BOOK I bought (not his).'

Quantifiers must bind variables, and clitics interfere ((22-a)). The trace of an A'-movement must be bound by either a quantifier or an anaphoric operator.

4.3 Bare quantificational elements (*noone, all, etc.*) can be Foci (but not Topics)

- (23) a. *Nessuno, lo ho visto.
'Noone, I saw him.'
b. *Tutto, lo ho fatto.
'Everything, I did it.'
- (24) a. NESSUNO ho visto *t*.
'NOONE I saw.'
b. TUTTO ho fatto *t*
'Everything I did.'

The problem with (23) is that quantificational elements are *quantifiers* and as such they must bind a variable – but there is no variable in the topic structure. The clitic is a head and so leaves an X⁰-trace and not an XP-trace. Only XP-traces can be variables.

4.4 No limit on number of Topics (but only one Focus)

There can be indefinite number of Topics but only one structural Focus per clause in Italian.²

- (25) a. Il libro, a Gianni, domani, glielo darò senz'altro.
'The book, to John, tomorrow, I'll give it to him for sure.'
- b. *A GIANNI IL LIBRO darò (non a Piero, l'articolo).
'TO GIANNI THE BOOK I'll give, (not to Piero, the article).'
- (26) A Gianni, QUESTO, domani, gli dovrete dire.
'To Gianni, THIS, tomorrow, you should tell him.'

Topics can either/both precede and follow the focus:

- (27) ... C (Top*) (Foc) (Top*) ...

4.5 Topic is compatible with *wh*-words, Focus is not. Either is OK with relative operator.

Relative *wh*-words must precede Topics, interrogative *wh*-words must follow Topics.

- (28) a. Un uomo **a cui**, il premio Nobel, lo daranno senz'altro
'A man **to whom**, the Nobel Prize, they will give it undoubtedly'
- b. *Un uomo, il premio Nobel, **a cui** lo daranno senz'altro
'A man, the Nobel Prize, **to whom** they will give it undoubtedly'
- (29) a. ***A chi**, il premio Nobel, lo daranno?
'**To whom**, the Nobel Prize, will they give it?'
- b. Il premio Nobel, **a chi** lo daranno?
'The Nobel Prize, **to whom** will they give it?'
- (30) ... (Rel-*wh*) ... topic ... (*wh*-word) ... IP

²This does not seem to apply to some other languages, though. Rizzi tells us that focus and *wh*-words cannot co-occur, and the two foci cannot co-occur. But it is also true of Italian that two *wh*-words cannot co-occur. So you cannot ask *Who bought what?* in Italian (in that way). Maybe it is an Italian-specific restriction that is involved both in constraining *wh*-words and foci to one.

Conclusion: Relative *wh*-operators occupy SpecForceP (the one position which cannot be preceded by topics), while question *wh*-operators occupy a lower position, below topics.

Focus is incompatible with *wh*-words regardless of the order.

- (31) a. *A chi IL PREMIO NOBEL dovrebbero dare?
'To whom THE NOBEL PRIZE should they give?'
- b. *IL PREMIO NOBEL a chi dovrebbero dare?
'THE NOBEL PRIZE to whom should they give?'

This suggests that *wh*-words and focus compete for the same position, SpecFocP. As there is only one SpecFocP, you can only have one of {*wh*-word, focus}.

Relative operators can co-occur with focus but the relative operator must *precede* the focus.

- (32) a. Ecco un uomo **a cui** IL PREMIO NOBEL dovrebbero dare (non il premio X)
'Here is a man **to whom** THE NOBEL PRIZE they should give (not prize X)'
- b. *Ecco un uomo IL PREMIO NOBEL **a cui** dovrebbero dare (non il premio X)
'Here is a man THE NOBEL PRIZE **to whom** they should give (not prize X)'