

On the attachment site of adverbial causal clauses in Italian
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This paper investigates the syntax of adverbial causal clauses in the history of Italian by comparing three causal clauses introduced by *perché*, *siccome*, *poiché* ‘because/since’. We argue that adverbial causal clauses are merged at different heights in the superordinate clause and their merge position depends on the internal structure of their complex subordinate markers.

Perché/siccome/poiché are complex subordinate markers diachronically evolved from at least two independent morphemes: a preposition *per* ‘for’ plus a wh-pronoun in *perché*, an adverbial *si/poi* ‘so/then’ plus a wh-pronoun in the case of *siccome/poiché*. All three markers introduce a subordinate clause which encodes the cause of the event, the proposition or the speech act expressed in the superordinate clause (Frenguelli 2002; Dardano 2020; on other languages: Sweetser 1990; Frey 2016; Charnavel 2017). Although the three CPs encode similar causal relations, they exhibit different syntactic properties. (i) While *siccome/poiché*-CPs can both precede and follow the superordinate clause, *perché*-CPs can only follow it (1). (ii) Only *perché*-CPs can be fragment answers to ‘why-which reason’ CPs (2). (iii) While *perché*-CPs can be focalized (3a), can be in the scope of the focus particle *solamente* ‘only’ (4a), and can be clefted (5a), *siccome/poiché*-CPs cannot (3-5b).

- (1) a. **Siccome/Poiché/*Perché** mi hai invitato, sono venuto a cena da te.
 b. Sono venuto a cena da te, **siccome/poiché/perché** mi hai invitato.
- (2) **Per quale motivo** sei arrivato tardi?
Perché/*siccome/*poiché ero in palestra.
- (3) a. Sono venuto a cena da te **PERCHÉ MI HAI INVITATO E NON PERCHÉ NE AVESSI VOGLIA.**
 b. *Sono venuto a cena da te, **SICCOMO/POICHÉ MI HAI INVITATO E NON SICCOMO/POICHÉ NE AVESSI VOGLIA.**
- (4) a. Sono venuto a cena da te **solamente perché** hai insistito tanto.
 b. *Sono venuto a cena da te **solamente siccome/poiché** hai insistito tanto.
- (5) a. **È perché hai insistito tanto che** sono venuto a cena da te.
 b. ***È siccome/poiché hai insistito tanto che** sono venuto a cena da te.

We derive the differences between the three causal CPs in (1-5) from the internal structure of their subordinate markers. Extending the analysis in Haegeman (2006, 2007), we propose that all three adverbial causal clauses are relative clauses modifying the null nominal REASON. As in Cinque (2013, 2020), relative clauses are double headed: an internal head which is the XP merged inside the relative clause and an external head, non-distinct from the internal one, which is the XP modified by the relative clause itself. We provide diachronic evidence to claim that in both *poiché* and *siccome*-CPs the external head is lexicalized, i.e., *poi* ‘then’ and *si* ‘so’ respectively. In *perché*-CPs, the external head is null: the antecedent is the event/proposition/speech act of the superordinate CP (6).



