

Allora as an Italian discourse particle*

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Abstract

This article investigates the use of *allora* as an Italian discourse particle establishing a parallel with the German modal particle *denn*: both elements can namely be used in interrogative contexts to link the question in which they appear to the context and have a lot of phonological and syntactic properties in common calling for a unified treatment of these two elements. From a syntactic point of view however, Italian *allora* cannot be treated on a par with German *denn* for it has a different distribution within the clause: in fact, whereas *denn* always appears in the middle field of the clause just like most German modal particles, Italian *allora* can occur either sentence-initially or sentence-finally. Following previous works on sentence-initial and sentence-final discourse particles in Italian, I argue that the two instances of *allora* are not one and the same element and provide different syntactic analyses for both occurrences of this discourse particle: whereas sentence-initial *allora* is a CP-element sitting in the Force-domain, sentence-final *allora* is base-generated in the IP-area and ends up in the final position of the clause as a result of roll-up movement of the constituents that would otherwise follow the particle.

1 Introduction

The Italian temporal adverb *allora* (lit. ‘at that time’) has developed several non-temporal interpretations which have recently become object of research in functional linguistics (cf. Bosco/Bazzanella 2005; Bazzanella et al. 2007; Bazzanella/Borreguero Zuloaga 2011; Ghezzi/Molinelli 2020). The literature on the topic mainly recognizes three semantic cores in *allora*: an original temporal-anaphoric meaning, a consequential-logical meaning and a so-called correlative meaning. Depending on the meaning associated with this element, *allora* can be analysed as a temporal adverb, a logical connector, and a parenthetical, respectively.

Besides these functions however, this element also displays a peculiar interpretation very similar to that provided by the German modal particle *denn* in interrogative contexts, which I will refer to as “evaluative meaning” (cf. Thurmair 1989: 164–170; Diewald 1997: 88; Cognola/Moroni 2022: 34). I argue that this similarity is not merely a coincidence and that evaluative *allora*

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can be considered an Italian discourse particle since it shares a lot of phonological, syntactic and semantic properties with its German counterpart.¹ At a first glance however, as far as the syntax of this element is concerned, it does not seem possible to treat *allora* on a par with German *denn* for they occupy different positions in the structure: in fact, whereas German modal particles traditionally appear in the middle field of the sentence (that is, in the IP-domain), Italian *allora* appears either as a sentence-initial or a sentence-final element in the clause.

Even though sentence-initial and sentence-final particles like *allora* have not received much attention in the generative literature, two main approaches to their analysis can be distinguished: the first one, discussed in Munaro/Poletto (2004), considers both sentence-initial and sentence-final particles to be CP-particles, whereas the second one takes only sentence-initial particles to be CP-particles and sentence-final particles to be IP-particles (cf. Cardinaletti 2011, 2015). In this paper, I will follow the latter to try to provide a syntactic analysis for both occurrences of evaluative *allora*.

This paper is organized as follows: after providing a brief overview of the different functions displayed by *allora* in Italian, section 2 describes the use and the properties of evaluative *allora* comparing them to those of its German counterpart *denn*; section 3 and 4 are dedicated to the analysis of sentence-initial and sentence-final *allora*, respectively; section 5 briefly discusses the grammaticalization status of *allora*; finally, section 6 concludes the article.

2 Italian *allora*: its main functions and contexts of use

Allora is an extremely polyfunctional element in Italian. In the following, I will give a brief and by no means exhaustive overview of its main functions, paying specific attention to its use as a discourse particle. For a thorough discussion on the pragmatic functions and semantic values of Italian *allora* from a functionalist perspective, I refer to Bazzanella's work (cf. a. o. Bosco/Bazzanella 2005; Bazzanella et al. 2007; Bazzanella/Borreguero Zuloaga 2011) and to Ghezzi/Molinelli (2020).

As already mentioned in the introduction, the functional literature has distinguished mainly three semantic cores for *allora*: a temporal-anaphoric meaning (1), a consequential meaning (2), and a so-called correlative meaning (3).

¹ I make here a distinction between the terms *discourse particle* and *modal particle* in line with Coniglio/Zegrean (2012: 235): whereas I use the former as an umbrella term to indicate all sorts of clause-integrated particles (that is: both CP- and IP-particles), I employ the latter to refer to the delimited group of German and German-like particles traditionally confined to the IP-domain (whence IP-particles). According to this terminology, all modal particles are discourse particles, but not all discourse particles can be considered modal particles since not all clause-integrated particles appear in the IP-domain, necessarily.

It is worth mentioning that not only is the definition itself of *discourse/modal particle* subject to change depending on the approach one takes and the characteristics one wants to emphasize when analysing such elements, but it is also possible to find other terms in the literature to refer to these elements, like “Abtönungspartikeln”, “Discourse Markers”, etc. (cf. Hentschel 1986; Thurmair 1989; Abraham 1991b, 1995; Meibauer 1994; Ormelius-Sandblom 1997a, b; Bazzanella 2006a; Coniglio 2011; Remberger 2021).

- (1) a. Gianni è nato nel 1950. **Allora** non c'era internet.
Gianni is born in.the 1950 then not there-was internet
'John was born in 1950. **At that time** there was no internet.'
- b. A: Verrò a trovarti fra un mese.
I.will.come to visit-you in a month
'I'll come to visit you in a month.'
- B: Chissà se **allora** saremo ancora amici!
Who.knows if then we.will.be still friends
'I wonder whether we will still be friends **then!**'
- (2) a. Ho visto che la porta era chiusa **allora** ho bussato.
I.have seen that the door was closed therefore I.have knocked
'I saw that the door was closed, **therefore** I knocked.'
- (3) a. **Allora**, dimmi, cos'è successo?
so tell.me what-is happened
'**So**, tell me, what happened?'
- b. Ok, **allora**, domani dovrei esserci.
Ok so tomorrow I.should be-there
'Ok, **so**, tomorrow I should be there.'

In its original meaning exemplified in (1), *allora* is a temporal adverb that anaphorically refers to a past (1a) or future (1b) time frame previously mentioned in the context. If such an indication of time is missing, the information conveyed by the sentence featuring *allora* is fragmentary, leading the interlocutor to ask *quando?* 'when?' (cf. Bazzanella/Borreguero Zuloaga 2011: 14).

A second meaning associated with *allora* is a consequential-logical meaning: with this interpretation, *allora* is used as a synonym of *quindi/dunque/perciò* ('so', 'therefore') and hence analysable as a logical connector. As exemplified in (2b), consequential *allora* can optionally appear in combination with *se* 'if' to introduce the apodosis in hypothetical clauses leading to the formula *se A allora B* ('if A then B'). Though deprived of its temporal reading, consequential *allora* is similar to its temporal counterpart in that it is intrinsically anaphoric, linking the proposition to explicit and/or presupposed information recoverable from the context (cf. Bazzanella/Borreguero Zuloaga 2011: 16).

The third and probably most common usage of *allora* in contemporary spoken Italian is what the functional literature classifies as "correlative meaning" (3): this *allora* has no lexical meaning at all, it is used as a "mere" filler word to structure the conversation and organize the turn-taking. According to Bazzanella/Borreguero Zuloaga (2011: 25–31), by means of correlative *allora* the speaker can introduce a new (sub)topic, self-select as the new speaker, or maintain their right to speak. A distinctive trait of correlative *allora* is the fact that it is never integrated in the sentence: due to its non-integration in the clause, correlative *allora* can be considered on a par with those elements usually referred to as paren-

theticals in the literature that, though appearing within an utterance (i. e. a host clause), are structurally independent from it (cf. Dehé/Kavalova 2007).²

In addition to these three semantic cores identified by the functionalist literature, Italian *allora* seems to display a fourth one which, to my knowledge, has never been discussed before in the literature on the topic and which I will refer to as “evaluative meaning”: with this interpretation, only available in interrogative contexts, Italian *allora* conveys the speaker’s mental attitude towards a state of affairs and it does so by linking the question in which it is embedded to the (previous) context.

Consider the following context: two speakers, A and B, want to spend some time together, for this reason A proposes doing some activities together, which B invariably turns down. After numerous suggestions turned down by B, A bursts out:

- (4) (Ma) (**allora**) cosa facciamo adesso (**allora**)?
 (but) (PRT) what we.do now (PRT)?
 ‘What do we do now, then?’³

In this context, *allora* still retains some sort of consequential-logical reading due to its anaphoric nature. However, differently from the examples in (2), *allora* in (4) provides the sentence with an additional subjective (i. e. evaluative) layer: specifically, given the previous context, speaker A is not satisfied with B’s answers and uses *allora* to express their impatience and/or irritation for they want a definitive response. By means of evaluative *allora*, the speaker can also show interest (5) or scepticism (6) towards a state of affairs.

- (5) (Ma) (**allora**) l’hai vinto il concorso (**allora**)?
 (but) (PRT) CL-you.have won the contest (PRT)
 ‘Well, have you won the contest, then?’
 (6) (Ma) (**allora**) che significa tutto questo (**allora**)?
 (but) (PRT) what means all this (PRT)
 ‘What does this all mean, then?’

As illustrated by the examples above, in Italian it is possible (though not obligatory) to add the adversative particle *ma* (lit. ‘but’) to reinforce the proposition: this element *ma* is very similar

² Among the different instances of correlative *allora*, Bazzanella/Borreguero Zuloaga (2011: 27) recognize a prosodically integrated variant used to signal the end of an interaction as exemplified in (i).

(i) ok perfetto, (**allora**) ti faccio sapere (**allora**)!
 ok perfect then CL I.let know then
 ‘Wonderful, I’ll let you know, then!’

My intuition as an Italian native speaker (also shared by Bazzanella/Borreguero Zuloaga 2011: 12) is that this *allora* can be paraphrased with a *questo punto* (lit. ‘at this point’) as in *se le cose stanno così* (‘if this is the case’): given this reading, I would classify this instance of *allora* as consequential rather than correlative for it can be interpreted as a logical connector that links the sentence in which it appears to an implicit (i. e. silent) hypothetical clause, emphasizing the condition under which the proposition is true (cf. Bosco/Bazzanella 2005: 449).

³ Since discourse particles have no lexical meaning per se but acquire meaning from the context, I will limit myself to gloss evaluative *allora* as prt (particle) throughout the paper. Note also that the English translations are not to be taken as literal for it is difficult to convey the interpretation of discourse particles in languages that do not make use of such elements or that use different means to obtain similar interpretations.

to the one analysed by Giorgi (2018a) appearing in evaluative contexts, more specifically in surprise and/or counter-expectational questions.

Whereas the English translation does not do justice to the Italian expression featuring *allora*, a language like German can make use of the modal particle *denn* to convey a similar (if not the same) evaluative interpretation expressed by *allora* in Italian: *denn* is also a polyfunctional element in German with an intrinsic anaphoric nature that started out as a temporal adverb meaning ‘then’ and then developed other non-temporal interpretations among which a modal/discursive one only available in interrogative contexts (cf. Cognola/Moroni 2022: 122). Similarly to evaluative *allora*, the basic function of German modal particle *denn* is to link the question in which it appears to the context (cf. Thurmair 1989; Diewald 1997, 2011; Cognola/Moroni 2022). In fact, *allora* is sometimes found as a possible translation of German *denn* (examples taken from Cognola/Moroni 2022: 202, English translation is mine).

(7) *Liebst du ihn **denn** nicht, den Phyleus?*

Non lo ami **allora**, Fileo?

‘Don’t you love Phyleus, then?’

(Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *Herkules und der Stall des Augias*, cit. in Masi 1996: 169)

(8) a. Um wieviel Uhr kommt **denn** der Zug?

at what time arrives PRT the train

b. Ma **allora** quando arriva il treno?

but PRT when arrives the train

‘When does the train arrive, then?’

(ibid.: 194)

Interestingly, the modal particle *denn* in interrogative clauses expresses the speaker’s emotional involvement in the form of astonishment, lively interest, or impatience, suggesting that also *denn* adds an evaluative layer to the sentence, just like its Italian counterpart (cf. Thurmair 1989: 163–170). Accordingly, the Italian examples featuring *allora* in (4), (5) and (6) can be translated in German by means of *denn* retaining the original evaluative interpretation.

(9) Was machen wir **denn** jetzt?

what do we PRT now

‘What do we do now, then?’

(10) Hast du **denn** den Wettbewerb gewonnen?

have you PRT the contest won

‘Have you won the contest, then?’

(11) Was soll das **denn** bedeuten?

what shall this PRT mean

‘What does this all mean, then?’

Not only may *allora* and *denn* be considered semantically and pragmatically equivalent in interrogative contexts, but they also share many phonological, syntactic and semantic properties which hint at the fact that *allora* cannot be analysed as a temporal adverb, a connector or a parenthetical in these contexts, but rather as a discourse particle. In the next subsections, I will compare the properties of the two elements to demonstrate that *allora*, when used in interrogative contexts, can be conceived as an Italian discourse particle.

2.1 Evaluative *allora* and German *denn*

The notion “particle” in itself is very loose since many different elements can be potentially classified as such. What is peculiar of discourse particles from a phonological point of view is the fact that they are generally integrated in the clause, in other words there is no prosodic break that intervenes between the particle and the rest of the sentence, differentiating these elements from parentheticals and interjections. As a matter of fact, evaluative *allora* can also be found and used as an independent prosodic unit in Italian; however, for reasons of space, this paper will only take into consideration instances of evaluative *allora* as in (4–6), leaving other non-integrated evaluative uses for future research.⁴

2.1.1 Phonological properties

As far as phonological properties are concerned, discourse particles cannot bear contrastive stress (12a) and cannot be contrasted with negation (12b) (cf. Cardinaletti 2011: 498). We can observe the same tendency in (13a) and (13b) with Italian *allora*.

- (12) a. A: Was können wir **nur** machen?
 A: what can we PRT do
 ‘What can we possibly do?’
 B: (Nein.) *Was können wir **DENN** machen?
 B: (no) what can we PRT do
- b. *Was können wir nicht **DENN** sondern *nur* machen?
 what can we not PRT but PRT do
- (13) a. A: (Ma) cosa possiamo fare **tanto**?⁵
 (but) what we.can do PRT
 ‘There is nothing we can do.’
 B: (No.) *Cosa possiamo fare **ALLORA**?
 (no) what we.can do PRT
- b. *Ma cosa possiamo fare non **allora** ma **tanto**?
 but what we.can do not PRT but PRT

⁴ Some instances of prosodically disintegrated *allora* are exemplified in sentences like (i) and (ii): in the first case, *allora* is interpreted by the hearer as a greeting from the speaker who is also manifesting interest in how their interlocutor is doing; in the second example, *allora* co-occurs with the coordinating conjunction *e* (‘and’) giving rise to a non-canonical question: even though the speaker inquires about the consequences of their actions, they do not care about it and use *e allora?* to express their indifference towards a situation or state of affairs.

(i) **Allora?** (Come va?)
 well (how goes)
 ‘Well? (How are you doing?)’

(ii) (L’ho fatto) e **allora**?
 (CL.I.have done) and so
 ‘(I did it) so what?’

⁵ *Tanto* is an Italian discourse particle very similar to *allora* in that it can appear either sentence-initially or sentence-finally: when used as a discourse particle, *tanto* behaves in the same way as *allora* with respect to the phonological, syntactic and semantic properties I mentioned, therefore I chose to include it in my examples and in the analysis in 3.2. For a detailed analysis of Italian *tanto* as a sentence-initial discourse particle I refer to Dohi (2020).

Normally, German modal particles also do not bear sentence stress, though this is not a universal property of discourse particles: for example, Italian discourse particle *pure* (lit. ‘also’) can bear it (cf. Cardinaletti 2011: 499), and so can sentence-final *allora*. This, however, is not to be ascribed to particular phonological properties of the particles at issue, but rather to sentence nuclear stress in Italian.

- (14) a. Entra **P**Ure!
 come.in PRT
 ‘Please, come in!’
 b. Ma cosa facciamo **alL**Ora?
 but what we.do PRT
 ‘What do we do, then?’

2.1.2 Syntactic properties

The term *modal* particle is employed by Coniglio (2011) to refer to those particles that occupy a position in the structure between Cinque’s (1999) MoodPs and ModPs (Mood Phrases and Modality Phrases, respectively), which are projections situated in the IP-domain. In fact, German and German-like modal particles are to be found in the middle field of the sentence, other positions are usually excluded (cf. Cognola/Moroni 2022).⁶

- (15) a. Was können wir **denn** machen?
 what can we PRT do
 ‘What can we do, then?’
 b. *Was können wir machen (,) **denn**?
 c. ***Denn** was können wir machen?

Even though in Italian there is no distinction between *Vor-*, *Nach-* and *Mittelfeld*, *allora* can clearly appear either sentence-initially or sentence-finally, differently from modal (i. e. IP-) particles.⁷

- (16) a. (Ma) (**allora**) cosa (***allora**) facciamo (***allora**) adesso (**allora**)?
 (but) (PRT) what (*PRT) we.do (*PRT) now (PRT)
 ‘What do we do now, then?’

Except for its positioning in the clause, *allora* shows the same behaviour as modal particles with respect to other syntactic properties: discourse particles cannot be coordinated (17a), nor modified (17b), nor replaced by a pronominal form (17c), nor used in isolation to answer a question (17d) and so cannot *allora* (18a–d).

⁶ The German sentence is traditionally divided into *Felder* (lit. ‘fields’) delimited and identified by the discontinuous positioning of the verbal complex: the position preceding the finite verb/auxiliary is the *Vorfeld* (‘prefield’); the position between the finite verb/auxiliary and the non-finite verb is the *Mittelfeld* (‘middlefield’); finally, the position following the non-finite verb is called *Nachfeld* (‘postfield’) (cf. Wöllstein 2014).

⁷ Coniglio (p. c.) accepts a sentence like (i), in which *allora* appears in a central position. Even though I also marginally accept this sentence, this *allora* sounds particularly marked and unnatural to me.

- (i) L’hai **allora** letto il libro?
 CL.you.have PRT read the book
 ‘Well, have you read the book, then?’

- (17) a. Was machen wir **denn** (*und) **nur** jetzt?
 what do we PRT (and) PRT now
 b. *Was machen wir wirklich **denn** jetzt?
 what do we very PRT now
 c. *Was machen wir es jetzt? (=denn)
 what do we it now (=PRT)
 d. Wie machen wir das? *Denn!
 how do we it PRT
- (18) a. Ma **tanto** (*e) **allora** cosa facciamo?
 but PRT (and) PRT what we.do
 b. *Ma proprio **allora** cosa facciamo?
 but really PRT what we.do
 c. *Ma **ciò** cosa facciamo? (=allora)
 but it what we.do (=PRT)
 d. Come dovremmo fare? *Allora!
 how we.should do PRT

Evaluative *allora*, exactly like German *denn*, is only compatible with a specific clause type, i. e. interrogative clauses. In other non-interrogative contexts, the evaluative interpretation of *allora* is excluded and replaced either by a temporal or a consequential meaning, hinting at the fact that *allora* loses its evaluative interpretation and cannot be analysed as a discourse particle in these contexts.

- (19) a. *Ich habe das **denn** gesehen.
 I have it PRT seen
 b. *Sieh' das **denn**!
 see it PRT
- (20) a. (**Allora**) l'abbiamo visto (**allora**).
 (allora) CL.we.have seen (allora)
 'At that time, we saw it.' Temporal-anaphorical meaning
 'Therefore we saw it.' Consequential-logical meaning
 '#We saw it, then.' #Evaluative meaning
- b. (**Allora**) fallo (**allora**)!
 (allora) do.it (allora)
 '#Do it at that time!' #Temporal-anaphorical meaning
 'Do it, then!' Consequential-logical meaning
 '#Do it, then!' #Evaluative meaning

In some exclamative contexts, *allora* can appear with the adversative particle *ma*, an element typically present in evaluative contexts (21a–b). In these, as well as in all other contexts, *allora* links the proposition in which it appears to a “pragmatic pretext” (in the sense of Diewald 1997: 77) being an anaphoric element by nature. However, as it was also mentioned above and pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, *allora* in these contexts does not convey the mental attitude of the speaker, hinting at the fact that this element cannot be considered a discourse particle here but “merely” a (logical) connector (cf. (21a) with (22)).

- (21) a. (Ma) (**allora**) vattene (**allora**)!
 (but) (then) go.away (then)
 ‘Well, go away, then!’
- b. (Ma) (**allora**) sei scemo (**allora**)!
 (but) (then) you.are stupid (then)
 ‘You’re an idiot, then!’
- (22) a. (Ma) (**allora**) te ne vai (**allora**)?
 (but) (PRT) you.leave (PRT)
 ‘Would you please leave, then?’

2.1.3 Pragmatic properties

Discourse particles generally display very little or no lexical meaning at all even though they have the form of a homophonous lexical element or derive from a lexical word; nonetheless, they are able to modify the illocutionary force of a proposition in which they appear, assigning a subjective reading to it. Being intrinsically anaphoric, both German *denn* and Italian *allora* are used in interrogative clauses to link the question in which they appear to the context (cf. Cognola/Moroni 2022 and references therein). Additionally, by means of *allora/denn*, the speaker exhorts the interlocutor to think of an answer or a solution to a problem, transforming a simple information-seeking question into a request (cf. Hinterhölzl/Munaro 2015: 55). By using *allora/denn* the speaker also expresses emotional involvement ((5) and (10) repeated as (23) below) or scepticism ((6) and (11) here repeated as (24)) towards a state of affairs as well as impatience due to an insufficiency of answers from the interlocutor (24).

- (23) (Ma) (**allora**) l’hai vinto il concorso (**allora**)?
 (But) (PRT) CL-you.have won the contest (PRT)
 Hast du **denn** den Wettbewerb gewonnen?
 Have you PRT the contest won
 ‘Well, have you won the contest, then?’
- (24) (Ma) (**allora**) che significa tutto questo (**allora**)?
 (But) (PRT) what means all this (PRT)
 Was soll das **denn** bedeuten?
 What shall this PRT mean
 ‘What does this all mean, then?’
- (25) (Ma) (**allora**) dove stiamo andando (**allora**)?
 (But) (PRT) where we.are going (PRT)
 Wohin gehen wir **denn**?
 Where go we PRT
 ‘Where are we going, then?’

When used sentence-finally, evaluative *allora* acquires an additional component to its evaluative meaning that denotes some sort of hopelessness caused by the fact that both speakers have run out of alternatives and that there is (seemingly) no solution to a particular problem. This interpretation is also available when *allora* is used sentence-initially, though not straightforward. This nuance of despair can be translated in German with a combination of two modal particles, namely *denn* and *nur*: when these two particles are used together in German, the

interpretation of the proposition as a “mere” information-seeking question is ruled out in favour of a reading that shifts its focus on the fact that the speaker(s) has run out of alternatives, hence they urgently need to make an effort to think of a solution (cf. Hinterhölzl/Munaro 2015: 55). Consider the following situation depicted in Hinterhölzl/Munaro (2015: 55): the speaker is searching for their keys and has already looked in all the places where they usually keep their keys. Having run out of places where to look, the speaker utters:

- (26) Wo sind **denn nur** meine Schlüssel?!
 Where are PRT PRT my keys
 ‘Where (else) could my keys possibly be?!’

To illustrate the pragmatic contribution of evaluative *allora*, as well as the slight difference in interpretation between sentence-initial and sentence-final *allora*, consider the sentences in (27) with a context similar to the previous one, i. e. the speaker searching for their keys: whereas (27a) is a simple information-seeking question, (27b) and (27c) sound more like requests and/or exhortations to the interlocutor to think about an answer or a solution to a problem posed by the speaker, namely that they cannot currently find their keys. In both sentences featuring evaluative *allora*, the mental attitude of the speaker is present; however, whereas in (27b) the speaker sounds upset and exhorts the interlocutor to tell them where to look, in (27c) the speaker sounds somewhat hopeless for all the alternatives have been exhausted.

- (27) a. Dove sono le mie chiavi?
 Where are the my keys
 Wo sind meine Schlüssel?
 Where are my keys
 ‘Where are my keys?’
- b. **Allora** dove sono le mie chiavi?
 PRT where are the my keys
 Wo sind **denn** meine Schlüssel?
 Where are PRT my keys
 ‘Where are my keys, then?’
- c. Dove sono le mie chiavi **allora**?
 Where are the my keys PRT
 Wo sind **denn nur** meine Schlüssel?
 Where are PRT PRT my keys
 ‘Where (else) could my keys possibly be?’

2.2 Sentence-initial vs. sentence-final particles in the literature

The previous subsections showed that evaluative *allora* can be considered an Italian discourse particle for it shares a lot of properties with the German modal particle *denn* with the only exception of its position in the clause, which is not a trivial issue *per se*.

Sentence-initial and sentence-final discourse particles (as in (27b) and (27c), respectively) have been addressed in two different ways in the literature: on the one hand, Munaro/Poletto (2004) take both elements to be CP-particles that can appear sentence-finally as a result of topicalization of the whole clause; on the other hand, Cardinaletti (2011, 2015) argues for an

analysis of sentence-initial particles as CP-particles and of sentence-final particles as IP-particles. In the following, I will briefly sketch the two approaches to find the most suitable for the analysis of evaluative *allora*.

2.2.1 Munaro/Poletto (2004)

Munaro/Poletto (2004) discuss the syntactic and semantic properties of some discourse particles in Venetian and Pagotto that can occur both sentence-initially and sentence-finally and propose to analyse such elements as CP-particles (cf. Munaro 2026): the two scholars take such elements to be base-generated in the head position of a functional projection in the left periphery of the clause which takes the whole CP as its complement. The sentence-final position of such elements is the result of the movement of the CP to the specifier position of this functional projection (cf. Munaro/Poletto 2004: 385).

$$(28) \quad [{}_{FP} CP_i [{}_F \text{particle}] [{}_{CP} t_i]]$$

Considering that some discourse particles can co-occur in a strict order and that each particle delivers a particular interpretation, Munaro/Poletto (2004) argue that such elements can occupy head-positions of different functional projections situated in the left periphery of the clause ((30) and (31) are possible word order derivations of the Pagotto sentence in (29) as in Munaro/Poletto (2004: 386), *italic is mine*).

(29) Quando eli rivadi **po**, **ti**?
 When are. CL arrive PRT PRT
 ‘When did they arrive?’

- (30) a. [[**ti**] [**po**] [{}_{CP} quando eli rivadi]]
 b. [[**ti**] [[{}_{CP} quando eli rivadi]_x [**po**] t_x] t_x
 c. [[[[[{}_{CP} quando eli rivadi]_x [**po**] t_x]_y [**ti**] t_y]]
- (31) a. [[**po**] [**ti**] [{}_{CP} quando eli rivadi]]
 b. [[**po**] [[{}_{CP} quando eli rivadi]_x [**ti**] t_x] t_x
 c. [[[{}_{CP} quando eli rivadi]_x [**po**] t_x [**ti**] t_x]

The two scholars remain agnostic as to the exact ordering of these discourse particles and the functional projections in which they are situated, leaving the issue to future investigations. However, what is important for the present discussion is that Munaro/Poletto (2004) consider sentence-initial and sentence-final discourse particles to be one and the same element, namely CP-particles.

2.2.2 Cardinaletti (2011)

The analysis first proposed in Cardinaletti (2011) and then revived in Cardinaletti (2015) mostly concentrates on Italian verb-based discourse particles such as *guarda* (‘look’) and *sai* (‘you know’), which can occur both sentence-initially and sentence-finally. Contra Munaro/Poletto (2004), sentence-final particles are analysed differently from sentence-initial particles, namely as IP-particles. The scholar finds Munaro/Poletto’s (2004) proposal problematic both from a theoretical and an empirical perspective: on the theoretical side, the movement of the entire clause to the specifier position of the functional projection that hosts the particle should not be possible in line with Abels (2003) since the whole CP is the complement selected by the particle itself. Moreover, this movement appears to be rather optional

- (34) a. Ma **allora** cosa facevate **allora**?
 But PRT what you.did then
 ‘What did you do at that time, then?’
- b. **Tanto** non è il caso di preoccuparsi **tanto**.
 PRT not is the case to worry much
 ‘There is no need to worry so much.’

In principle, it could also be possible to treat sentence-initial and sentence-final *allora* as one and the same element assuming that sentence-final particles are actually IP-particles which can move to the CP-domain (and not the other way round in line with Kayne’s (1994) antisymmetric framework): in this case it would not be the whole CP that moves, but rather the particle itself, originating in the IP-domain and then moving to the left periphery of the clause. However, this line of reasoning is also problematic in at least two respects: in the first place, as it will also be clearer in the next sections, the movement towards the left periphery of the clause does not seem to be justified since IP-particles can interact with the highest portion of the structure remaining *in situ* (cf. Coniglio/Zegrean 2012); in the second place, the movement of *allora* is not always subject to reconstruction as already illustrated in (16), here repeated as (35).

- (35) (**Allora**) cosa (***allora**) possiamo (***allora**) fare (***allora**) adesso (**allora**)?
 ‘What can we do now, then?’

On account of these observations, I will provide a syntactic analysis of evaluative *allora* that rests on the difference between its sentence-initial and sentence-final occurrence in the clause as proposed in Cardinaletti (2011).

3 Sentence-initial *allora*

Assuming that sentence-initial discourse particles (including *allora*) are CP-elements is somewhat uncontroversial. However, not many researchers have dedicated themselves to determining the exact position of these elements in the structure.

Sentence-initial *allora* precedes all sorts of wh-elements (it can even precede *perché* ‘why’, which sits very high in the structure).

- (36) a. (Ma) **allora** che cosa (***allora**) facciamo?
 (But) PRT what (PRT) we.do
 ‘What do we do, then?’
- b. (Ma) **allora** dove (***allora**) andiamo?
 (But) PRT where (PRT) we.go
 ‘Where do we go, then?’
- c. (Ma) **allora** perché (**allora**) sei venuto?
 (But) PRT why (PRT) you.are come
 ‘Why have you come, then?’

Sentence-initial *allora* also precedes left-dislocated elements that typically resides in the topic field.

- (37) (Ma) **allora** il libro, a Gianni, gliel’hai regalato?
 (But) PRT the book to Gianni to.him.it-you.have given
 ‘Did you give the book to John, then?’

Even though sentence-initial *allora* occupies a very high position in the structure, it is still an element generated clause-internally: in other words, *allora* is not an external element, and this can be demonstrated by the fact that it cannot appear before the adversative particle *ma*, which is analysed by Giorgi (2018a) as a head of an external projection called Discourse Phrase (Disc-P).

- (38) (***Allora**) ma **allora** cosa facciamo?
 (PRT) but PRT what we.do
 ‘What do we do, then?’

Furthermore, sentence-initial *allora* usually follows other typical external elements such as hanging topics (39a) and vocatives (39b).

- (39) a. (***Allora**) Gianni, Maria gli ha regalato il libro?
 (PRT) Gianni Maria to.him she.has given the book
 ‘Did Mary give the book to John?’
 b. (***Allora**) Gianni, cosa facciamo?
 (PRT) Gianni what we.do
 ‘(So,) John, what do we do?’

It is important to note that (39a) and (39b) could potentially be grammatical sentences in Italian, but only if *allora* is used (and pronounced) as a parenthetical (that is, prosodically non-integrated).⁹

3.1 Coniglio/Zegreans’s (2012) split ForceP hypothesis

Before delving into the analysis of sentence-initial *allora* proper it is necessary to introduce the hypothesis which lies at its base, namely the so-called split ForceP hypothesis proposed by Coniglio/Zegrean (2012). This hypothesis assumes that the highest projection in a split CP à la Rizzi (1997) (namely ForceP, the projection that encodes both pragmatic and syntactic information about the illocutionary force and the clause type of the sentence, respectively) should be split into two different projections: ILLP (Illocutionary Phrase) and CTP (Clause Type Phrase).

Discourse particles interact with the illocutionary force of the proposition and are compatible with specific clause types, so it safe to assume that CP-particles occur in ForceP; what is less straightforward is why we need to postulate the existence of two different projections in the ForceP domain, each one of them exerting different syntactic functions. A first, indirect piece

⁹ I personally find the examples in (38a–b) unnatural without a prosodic break between *allora* and the hanging topic/vocative, especially if I try to use *allora* with an evaluative meaning. The evaluative interpretation of *allora* becomes available again if the adversative particle *ma* is added at the beginning of the sentences in (38a) and (38b).

- (i) Ma **allora** Gianni, Maria gli ha regalato il libro?
 But PRT Gianni Maria to.him she.has given the book
 ‘(So,) did Mary give the book to John, then?’
 (ii) Ma **allora** Gianni, cosa facciamo?
 But PRT Gianni what we.do
 ‘(So,) John, what do we do, then?’

However, examples (i) and (ii) do not constitute evidence to the fact that sentence-initial *allora* is a base-generated external element, but rather that it can move outside the clause.

of evidence comes from Haegeman (2002, 2010 et seq.), who postulated the existence of two different types of adverbial clauses, namely central adverbials (40a) and peripheral adverbials (40b) (examples from Haegeman 2002: 117).

- (40) a. If it rains we will all get terribly wet and miserable.
 b. If [as you say] it is going to rain this afternoon, why don't we just stay at home and watch a video?

According to Haegeman (2002 et seq.), not only do these two types of clausal adverbials differ with respect to their level of attachment to the main clause, but also with respect to the shape of their left peripheries: whereas peripheral adverbials display a full-fledged left periphery, central adverbials have a reduced left-periphery that lacks, among other things, the ForceP projection (cf. Haegeman 2006: 1663; here adapted and schematized in (41)).

- (41) Central adverbials: Sub Mod Fin
 Peripheral adverbials: Sub Force Top* Focus Mod* Fin
 Root clauses: Force Top* Focus Mod* Fin

Coniglio (2006, 2007, 2008 et seq.) noticed that modal particles, which usually appear in root environments, can also occur in peripheral adverbials (42b), whereas they are excluded from central adverbials (42a), suggesting that these latter constructions lack a projection that encodes information about the illocutionary force (examples from Coniglio 2008: 114).

- (42) a. [Se il libro non ha (***poi**) il successo previsto,]
 If the book not has (PRT) the success foreseen
 non verrà ristampato.
 not will.be reprinted
 ‘If the book hasn't the foreseen success, it won't be reprinted.’
 b. [Se il libro non ha **poi** il successo previsto,]
 If the bool not has PRT the success foreseen
 perché verrà ristampato?
 why will.be reprinted
 ‘If the book hasn't the foreseen success, why will it be reprinted?’

Central adverbials do not possess an independent illocutionary force, albeit they do have a clause type which is encoded somewhere in their internal structure. For this reason, it is reasonable to assume two distinct projections in the highest portion of the structure: the first one, ILLP, responsible for encoding the illocutionary force, which can be absent in central adverbials, and the second one, CTP, responsible for encoding information about the clause type.

Another piece of evidence for splitting ForceP into two different projections comes from rhetorical questions and other similar kinds of sentences that normally show a mismatch between the concrete realization of their clause type and their illocutionary force, hinting at the fact that maybe the two pieces of information are coded in different places in the structure.

- (43) Can you please shut up? (*Yes, I can)
 ILL = directive; CT = interrogative

As far as the ordering of the two projections is concerned, ILLP is taken to be the highest projection in the left periphery for it can (and must) interact with the discourse and encodes the coordinates of the speaker, which, in line with Giorgi (2010), are traditionally represented in the highest portion of the structure. CTP, on the other hand, interacts with FinP and IP so it has to be lower than ILLP.

3.2 Licensing sentence-initial *allora*

To my knowledge, the very first attempt to analyse an Italian adverb-based, sentence-initial discourse particle similar to *allora* in a generative framework has been made only recently by Dohi (2020): the researcher examines the discourse particle *tanto* and proposes a syntactic analysis based on Coniglio/Zegrean's (2012) split ForceP hypothesis and Zimmermann's (2004) covert movement analysis of German modal particles.¹⁰

Given the ability of discourse particles to interact with the illocutionary force and the clause type of a sentence, it is not controversial to assume that also IP-particles have to move to or to enter in an Agree relation with the ForceP-domain in order to have access to the information stored in that projection, but whereas such particles can only move covertly since they are confined to the IP-domain, Dohi (2020) assumes that CP-particles are directly base-generated in the left periphery of the clause. Specifically, they originate in the specifier of CTP before moving to SpecILLP in the spirit of Coniglio/Zegrean (2012). This two-step derivation explains as follows: sentence-initial discourse particles are base-generated in the specifier position of CTP so that they can enter in a Spec-Head relationship with the CT head, which contains information about the clause type that must be compatible with the particle; subsequently, the particle moves to the specifier position of ILLP in order to be able to modify the illocutionary force of the sentence. Without this movement, the original illocutionary force of the clause does not change. The derivation is exemplified in (45) with *tanto*: in this context, *tanto* originates in the specifier position of a declarative CTP and then moves to the specifier of an assertive ILLP which is changed by the particle into a concessive one (cf. Dohi 2020: 17).

- (44) **Tanto** non succederà mai.
 PRT not will.happen never
 'It will never happen in any case.'
- (45) a. [ILLP assertive [CTP **Tanto** decl(arative) [IP non succederà mai]]]
 b. [ILLP **Tanto**_i assertive [CTP t_i decl [IP non succederà mai]]]
 c. ASSERTIVE (CONCESSIVE)

Since *tanto e allora* share a lot of properties when used as sentence-initial discourse particles, we can presuppose the same derivation for *allora*: the particle always originates in the specifier position of an interrogative CTP before moving to SpecILLP. Once landed there, *allora* transforms a simple information-seeking question (represented as “?”) into a request.

- (46) a. [ILLP ? [CTP **Allora** int(errogative) [CP cosa facciamo?]]]
 b. [ILLP **Allora**_i ? [CTP t_i int [CP cosa facciamo?]]]
 c. ? (REQUEST)

¹⁰ See also 4.1 for a feature-based account of the interaction between modal particles and the left periphery of the clause as in Coniglio/Zegrean (2012).

As for the status of *allora*, *tanto* and discourse particles in general, I take them to be weak phrases in the sense of Cardinaletti/Starke (1999) due to their syntactic behaviour (cf. 2.1.2) in line with recent works on discourse particles (cf. a. o. Cardinaletti 2011, 2015; Cognola/Cruschina 2020, 2021; Cruschina/Cognola 2021; Cognola/Moroni 2022; Coniglio 2022).

Adopting a split ForceP hypothesis and assuming this two-step derivation à la Dohi (2020) allows us to account for the (apparent) co-occurrence of two sentence-initial discourse particles in Italian: since both *allora* and *tanto* are compatible with interrogative clauses, the two elements can co-occur in a strict order (*tanto* > *allora*) (47).

- (47) a. Ma **tanto allora** cosa possiamo fare?
 But PRT PRT what we.can do
 ‘What can we possibly do, then?’
 b. *Ma **allora tanto** cosa possiamo fare?

(47a) looks superficially like an information-seeking question whose meaning is actually that of a rhetorical question translatable as in (48): the illocutionary force of the proposition is modified by the discourse particles, causing a mismatch between the concrete realisation of the proposition and its corresponding speech act.

- (48) Non c’è niente che possiamo fare.
 Not there.is nothing that we.can do
 ‘There’s nothing we can do.’

Taking a closer look at (47a) however, it is possible to notice that it is not the case that both sentence-initial particles interact with (and hence modify) the illocutionary force of the sentence: in fact, if we isolate the two particles, it becomes clear that they actually provide different semantic contributions to the proposition and that it is the clause featuring *tanto* that gives the same interpretation as in (48).

- (49) a. Ma **allora** cosa possiamo fare?
 ‘What can we do, then?’
 b. ILL = Request (= ‘We haven’t listed all alternatives yet, therefore I beg you to think of alternatives.’)
 (50) a. Ma **tanto** cosa possiamo fare?
 ‘There’s nothing we can do.’
 b. ILL = Assertion (= ‘It is useless to think of alternatives because we cannot do anything for sure.’)

In light of this observation, we can assume a structure like (51) for (47a) in which *tanto* sits in SpecILLP while *allora* is confined to SpecCTP.

- (51) a. [ILLP **Tanto** ? [CTP **allora** int [CP cosa possiamo fare?]]]
 b. ? (ASSERTIVE)

Since *allora* does not have access to ILLP in (47a) and hence is not able to modify the illocutionary force of the sentence, we can speculate further that this element is not a discourse particle in this context but rather a logical connector: just like sentence-initial discourse particles, connectors have not received much attention in the generative literature, and their exact cartography is still unknown. Even though I have tentatively positioned consequen-

tial *allora* in the specifier position of CTP, I will remain agnostic on whether it is its exact position in the structure and leave this issue for future works.

4 Sentence-final *allora*

According to Cardinaletti (2011), sentence-final discourse particles are (weak) phrases that originate in the specifier position of a functional projection YP situated in the IP-domain, more precisely in the Mood-/Mod-field of the clause. The functional head Y takes ZP as a complement, which must obligatorily move to the specifier position of another (higher) functional projection XP which in turn takes YP as its complement. The movement of ZP is triggered by features of the X head and is responsible for the “unconventional” sentence-final position of the particle (cf. Cardinaletti 2011: 520f.).

- (52) a. È venuto **allora?**
 he.is come PRT
 ‘Has he come, then?’
 b. [_{YP} **allora** [_Y Y [_{ZP} è venuto]]]
 c. [_{XP} [_{ZP} è venuto][_X X [_{YP} **allora** [_Y Y [_{ZP} è venuto]]]]]

Evidence of the occurrence of sentence-final discourse particles in the IP-domain comes from the possibility for such elements to be followed by right-dislocated constituents: if we take the final order “particle > right-dislocated elements” as a mirror effect of the applications of roll-up movement, then the selection order should be as in (52b), meaning that sentence-final discourse particles are merged lower than the projection that hosts right-dislocated constituents (i. e. FamiliarTopic projection, cf. Frascarelli/Hinterhölzl 2007). In the same fashion, we can take the ability of sentence-final particles to precede an IP-adverbial à la Cinque (1999) like *forse* (lit. ‘perhaps’) as a sign for them to be merged in a lower, IP-internal position. The examples featuring right-dislocated constituents and *forse* provided in (53) and (54), as well as the derivations in (55) and (56) are adapted from Cardinaletti (2011: 521f.).¹¹

- (53) a. L’ha comprata, **allora,** la casa?
 CL.has bought PRT the house
 ‘Did she buy the house, then?’
 b. la casa > **allora** > ZP
 (54) a. L’avrà comprata, **allora,** forse, la casa?
 CL.will.have bought PRT perhaps the house
 b. *L’avrà comprata, forse, **allora**, la casa?
 ‘Did she perhaps buy the house, then? (I’m wondering)’
 c. la casa > forse > **allora** > ZP
 (55) [_{TopicP} [_{XP} l’ha comprata **allora**] Topic [_{FamTopicP} [_{DP} la casa] FamTopic [_{XP} [_{ZP} l’ha comprata] X [_{YP} **allora** Y [_{ZP} l’ha comprata la casa]]]]]

¹¹ The structure for wh-questions featuring sentence-final discourse particles originally provided in a footnote by Cardinaletti (2011: 523) does not adopt a split-ForceP hypothesis, for this reason the derivation in (56b) has been slightly revisited and adapted to the framework pursued here. Coniglio/Zegrean (2012) argue that the feature which is responsible for the interpretation of a clause as declarative or interrogative (cf. Adger 2003) is encoded in CT; accordingly, it is possible to assume that the wh-element *cosa* (‘what’) moves to SpecCTP instead of SpecForceP.

- (56) a. Cosa gli hai detto allora a Gianni?
 What to.him you.have told PRT to Gianni
 ‘What have you told Gianni, then?’
- b. [_{SpecCT} Cosa [_{TopicP} [_{XP} gli hai detto allora] Topic [_{FamTopicP} [_{PP} a Gianni] FamTopic
 [_{XP} [_{ZP} gli hai detto cosa] X [_{YP} allora Y [_{ZP} gli hai detto cosa]]]]]]]

4.1 The interaction of sentence-final particles with ILLP and CTP

In spite of their occurrence in the IP-domain, sentence-final particles must have access to the left periphery of the clause to modify the illocutionary force of the sentence. In other words, adopting Coniglio/Zegrean’s (2012) split-ForceP hypothesis, sentence-final particles must have a way to interact with both ILLP and CTP. Building on Pesetsky/Torrego (2007), the two scholars propose a feature-based account which states that modal particles (that is, discourse particles occurring in the IP-domain according to the terminology adopted here) possess two uninterpretable, valued features: one feature [*utype*] that refers to the clause type with which they are compatible, and one feature [*uintent(ionality)*] which refers to the intentions of the speaker, hence to the final, modified illocutionary force of the proposition (57a). CT, on the other hand, possesses an interpretable feature [*itype*] which is unvalued [] and needs to gain a value from the presence of another similar feature in the derivation (57b). Lastly, ILL has two uninterpretable, unvalued features [*utype*][] and [*uintent*][] (57c).

- (57) a. Particle [*utype*][val]; [*uintent*][val]
 b. CT [*itype*][]
 c. ILL [*utype*][]; [*uintent*][]

The operation Agree is triggered by the presence of unvalued features F in ILL and CT that look for other instances of those features in their c-command domain (cf. Pesetsky/Torrego 2007). Since ILL possesses two unvalued features, there will be two probes on the same head. The resulting operation is illustrated as follows (cf. Coniglio/Zegrean 2012: 248f.).

- (58) a. ILL [*utype*] [] / [*uintent*] []
 > CT [*itype*] []
 > Prt [*utype*] [val] / [*uintent*] [val]
 AGREE →
- b. ILL [*#type*] [val] / [*#intent*] [val] ← intentionality valued
 > CT [*itype*] [val] ← clause type valued
 > Prt [*#type*] [val] [*#intent*] [val]

Thanks to this mechanism, the particle can interact with ILLP and CTP without necessarily moving overtly to the left periphery of the clause.

5 Discourse particles and grammaticalization

It has been shown that evaluative *allora* can be considered an Italian discourse particle and, accordingly, two different analyses have been proposed depending on whether it occurs as a sentence-initial or a sentence-final element in the structure. Even though it has been demonstrated that evaluative *allora* shares a lot of properties with discourse particles, this element is still very peculiar in some respects.

Adverb-based discourse particles are traditionally analysed as weak elements deriving from strong adverbs which gradually lost their lexical meaning over time in favour of a more pragmatic/discursive meaning (among many others, cf. Abraham 1991a; Diewald 1997, 2011; Wegener 2002; Cardinaletti 2011; Coniglio 2022); being weak elements, discourse particles usually display reduced phonology and are semantically bleached, which is not entirely the case for evaluative *allora*: in the first place, *allora* is a trisyllabic word, which is very rare for discourse particles; secondly, even when used as a discourse particle, *allora* still conveys some sort of consequential meaning derived from its anaphoric nature, suggesting that whatever process of grammaticalization is in place, it has not come to a conclusion yet. Based on the grammaticalization path suggested by Abraham (1991a) here schematized in (59), Coniglio (2022) showed that German and Italian modal particles developed from lower temporal adverbials (in the sense of Cinque 1999) that were first reanalysed as logical connectors and finally as discourse functional elements.¹²

(59) (Localistic) > temporal > logical > illocutive / discourse functional

It is not unreasonable to assume a similar grammaticalization path for *allora*: the etymology of the word is usually led back to the Latin expression *ad illam hora* (lit. ‘at that time’) or, possibly, to the ablative *illa hora* (also ‘at that time’, cf. Bazzanella et al. 2007b: 12), which explains the temporal-anaphoric nature of this element (cf. Coniglio 2026). On the one hand, its current, almost predominant use as a logical connector and as a parenthetical is a sign that a grammaticalization process took place; on the other hand, its evaluative interpretation still carries some residues of consequential meaning, hinting at the fact that this mechanism may be still ongoing.

If the line of thought pursued in this paper is on the right track and hence sentence-initial and sentence-final *allora* are indeed two different elements, one could wonder what process(es) yielded two distinct *allora*-particles: if sentence-final *allora* can be considered an Italian discourse particle occurring in the IP-domain, is it possible to assume the same grammaticalization path proposed by Coniglio (2022) for this element? If yes, what about sentence-initial *allora*? Does it derive from a different (temporal) adverbial as compared to sentence-final *allora*? These and other issues should be further investigated in order to better understand the nature of these elements that have largely been ignored by the literature on discourse particles.

6 Conclusion

In this paper, I have examined a peculiar, “evaluative” interpretation of Italian *allora* that was largely neglected by generative studies and that reminds of the one provided by the German modal particle *denn*. Not coincidentally, when compared to *denn*, *allora* shows the same behaviour with respect to its phonological, syntactic and semantic properties, hence it is possible to affirm that in some (interrogative) contexts *allora* acts as a discourse particle.

¹² Diewald (1997: 98) suggests another, slightly different grammaticalization process for German modal particles (reported here in (i), English translation is mine), even though she does not exclude the possibility for such elements to be derived from adjectives, degree particles and conjunctions.

(i) Spatial/concrete meaning > temporal meaning > textual-linking abstract meaning > pragmatic-linking abstract meaning

Differently from modal particles, which can only appear in the middle field of the clause, *allora* occurs either sentence-initially or sentence-finally: taking into consideration some prosodic and interpretive differences between sentence-initial and sentence-final *allora*, as well as their different behaviour when co-occurring with their adverbial counterpart, it has been concluded that these two elements are not one and the same *allora* and that, accordingly, they need a separate analysis in line with Cardinaletti (2011).

Adopting Coniglio/Zegrean's (2012) split ForceP hypothesis and building on Dohi's (2020) analysis of sentence-initial *tanto*, I suggested that sentence-initial *allora* originates in the specifier position of CTP and then moves to SpecILLP in order to be able to modify the illocutionary force of the sentence. This two-step derivation implicitly rules out the (apparent) co-occurrence of two (clause-integrated) sentence-initial discourse particles: future studies should pursue this issue further as I am not aware of languages that potentially display this phenomenon.

Following Cardinaletti (2011, 2015), sentence-final *allora* is taken to be a discourse particle originating in the specifier position of functional constituents located in the IP-domain, precisely between Cinque's (1999) MoodP and ModP. The sentence-final position of *allora* results from the roll-up movement of the constituents that usually follow the particle, giving rise to a prosody which reminds that of right-dislocated constituents.

Although I provided evidence to treat evaluative *allora* as an Italian discourse particle, this element clearly displays some atypical phonological and semantic properties for such elements: a plausible explanation for this could be that *allora* is (still) undergoing a grammaticalization process, whence the difficulty in some contexts to clearly distinguish between an evaluative interpretation and a "bare" consequential-logical one.

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