

## INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURES IN FIORENTINO

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### 1. BICLAUSAL INTERROGATIVES IN FIORENTINO

Fiorentino avails itself of a special type of interrogative formed by a question introduced by *icché* ‘what’ and a final tag. Although the interrogative pronoun *icché* usually means ‘what’, in the construction under discussion this item seems to be able to take the meaning of other wh-expressions, as long as it matches the meaning of the tag<sup>1</sup>. The following examples illustrate the point.

(1) a. Icché è arrivato, Gianni?  
what is arrived G.  
'Who arrived, Gianni?'

b. Icché inizia oggi, il festival?  
what starts today the festival  
'What starts today, the festival?'

c. Icché vuoi, quello blu?  
what (you) want.2.SG. that blue  
'Which one do you want, the blue one?'

d. Icché vive, a Firenze?  
what (she) lives in Florence  
'Where does (s)he live, in Florence?'

e. Icché è partito, ieri?  
what is left yesterday  
'When did he leave, yesterday?'

f. Icché andate, in treno?  
what (you) go.2.PL. by train  
'How are you going, by train?'

g. Icché costa, solo venti euro?  
what costs only twenty euros  
'How much does it cost, only twenty euros?'

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<sup>1</sup>All speakers I have consulted accept both *icché* and the reduced form *che*. Notice that Fiorentino also realizes the interrogative complementizer which introduces matrix polar question (which is in turn homophonous to the declarative complementizer) as *che*. This fact may lead to assume that the structure under discussion is actually a polar question. I will show below that the interrogative pronoun *icché* and the complementizer *che* cannot be one and the same item.

h. Icché è stato licenziato, perché era sempre in ritardo?  
 What (he) is been fired because (he) was always late  
 'Why was he fired, because he was always late?'

Apart from (1b) where *icché* has its canonical meaning of *what/which one*, dropping the tag induces agrammaticality in all other examples. In other words, it is the very presence of the tag that allows this special interpretation of the wh-word. In order to account for this fact, I tentatively take *icché* to be lexically ambiguous between *icchè<sub>1</sub>*, i.e. the Tuscan counterpart of *what*, which I take to be always followed by a silent head *THING* (à la *Kayne 2005*), and *icchè<sub>2</sub>* which could instead be compatible with more silent heads (*PLACE*, *TIME*, etc.) giving raise to its extended meaning<sup>2</sup>. Example (1e) above, for instance, would have the structure in (2):

(2) Icché TIME è partito, ieri?  
 'What TIME did he left, yesterday?'

Here the functional head specifies the range of the variable, among which there is the denotation of the tag<sup>3</sup>.

*Arregi (2010)* discusses so called *split questions*, that is questions formed by a wh-part which corresponds to a standard wh-question and a tag which constitutes a possible answer for that wh-question. *Arregi* convincingly argues that questions of this type are formed by two distinct clauses, a wh-question and a non wh-question (a polar question, etc.). In the latter the *XP* which matches the wh-phrase of the wh-question undergoes Focus fronting and the remnant *TP* undergoes ellipsis. In the following I will argue that the structure under discussion is indeed a split question and that *Fiorentino*, differently from the languages discussed by *Arregi*, has the possibility of realizing all wh-expressions with *icché*<sup>4</sup>.

The main argument in favour of a biclausal analysis of split questions comes from the parallel behaviour of tags and other allegedly elliptical structures (in particular fragment answers) with respect to the presence, or absence, of *connectivity effects* (*Brunetti 2004*, *Merchant 2004*). For instance, in wh-question/answer pair, the wh-phrase and the corresponding *XP* in the answer must bear the same thematic role and, when *DPs*, also the same morphological case. Crucially, the same happens if one replaces the full answer with a fragment. *Merchant (2004)* takes this to signal the presence of *silent structure* in fragment answers. In (3), for example, the fact that the pronoun in the fragment answer requires accusative case can be naturally interpreted as indicating that this element is the direct object of *vedere* 'see' inside an elided *TP*.

<sup>2</sup> I owe this idea to Valentina Bianchi (p.c.).

<sup>3</sup> All wh-expressions but adjectival *what* and *which* (respectively *che* and *quale*) can be replaced by *icché*. Notice that *icché* can only be used as a pronoun in standard wh-questions as well (\**Icché libro stai leggendo* 'What book are you reading?'). Notice further that some speakers require or strongly prefer that when *icché* is meant to replace a *PP*, the governing *P* must be unpronounced (??*A icché hai parlato, a Gianni?* 'To whom did you speak to, to Gianni?').

<sup>4</sup> Notice that the possibility of interpreting *icché* as a wh-word different from 'what' is not totally unconstrained. A condition which affects the possibility of realizing the wh-word as *icché* is the "distance" between it and the matching tag. In examples (1 a-b-c) below *icché* is meant to replace *chi*, 'who', and a *DP* or *PP* 'intervene' between it and the tag, making the examples ungrammatical<sup>4</sup>.

(1) a. \* Icché ha portato la cena, Sara?  
 what has brought the dinner S.  
 b. ?\* Icché è arrivato ieri, Gianni?  
 what is arrived yesterday G.  
 c. ?\*. Icché si è trasferito a Milano, Gianni?  
 what himself<sub>CL</sub> is moved in Milan G.

(3) Q. Chi hanno visto?  
       who (they) have.3.PL. seen?  
 A. Me/\*Io.  
       me/I

The same applies straightforwardly to *icché*-questions:

(4) Icché hanno visto, me/\*io?  
       what (they) have.3.PL. seen, me/\*I?

Recall that under the present analysis (4) is indeed a sequence of two questions, namely *Who/What PERSON hanno visto?* ('Who did they see?') and *Hanno visto me?* ('Did they see me?'). The fact that the pronominal DP in the tag bears accusative case suggests that it has been generated as the object of *vedere* 'to see' inside the elided part.

Tags and fragments pattern in a parallel way for the purposes of binding theory as well. In the fragment answer in (5b), the reflexive must be interpreted as co-referent to *Gianni* in (5a).

(5) a. Con chi *pro<sub>i</sub>* ha detto che Gianni<sub>j</sub> stava parlando?  
       with who (he<sub>i</sub>) has said that Gianni<sub>j</sub> was.3.SG. speaking  
 b. Con se stesso<sub>j/\*i</sub>.  
       with himself<sub>j/\*i</sub>

The same interpretation is forced in the *icché*-question (6) parallel to (5).

(6) Icché *pro<sub>i</sub>* ha detto che Gianni<sub>j</sub> stava parlando, con se stesso<sub>j/\*i</sub>?  
       what (he<sub>i</sub>) has said that Gianni<sub>j</sub> was.3.SG. speaking with himself<sub>j/\*i</sub>

On the other hand, coindexing between a pronoun in the tag and a referential expression in the elided part is possible, which violates Condition C. This is not unexpected under the present analysis: in fact, it is independently known that in elliptical contexts a referential expression in the elided material can be c-commanded by a coreferential pronoun (so called 'Vehicle Change', Fiengo & May 1994).

(7) Icché l' ha corretto l'articolo di Gianni<sub>j</sub>, lui<sub>i</sub>?  
       what it.CL. has corrected the article of Gianni he

Extra evidence in favour of a biclausal analysis comes from the distributional patterns of subjects and objects. Consider example (8). If *Sara* and *the dinner* were generated in the same clause, with *icché* playing the role of a complementizer, the grammaticality of the example in (8) would be problematic given that Italian generally disallows VSO (Belletti 2004).

(8) Icché ha portato Gianni, la cena?  
       what has brought Gianni, the dinner?

## 2. POLAR QUESTIONS

It has been mentioned above that Fiorentino speakers accept both *icché* and its reduced form *che*<sup>5</sup> in

<sup>5</sup> When this possibility becomes relevant for the discussion I will refer to the interrogative pronoun in both forms with *(ic)ché*.

wh-questions. As for polar questions, they can be optionally introduced by the morpheme *che* but are not consistent with *icché*<sup>6</sup>. In fact, it is never possible to realize the particle introducing polar questions as *icché*. This is shown by the following example:

(9) Che/\*Icché dormi?  
that/what (you) sleep.2.SG.

Example (9), with the unergative verb *dormire* ‘to sleep’, clearly shows that (*ic*)*ché* cannot replace the interrogative complementizer. The possible confusion between polar questions headed by *che* and split questions introduced by (*ic*)*ché* may be favoured by the fact that the interpretation of the two structures (which have nonetheless a different intonation) is similar (see Botteri 2018 for in-depth discussion on the semantic import of split questions). There is however compelling evidence that polar questions and split questions have a completely different structure, monoclausal the former and biclausal the latter. Consider the following minimal pair:

(10) a. (Che)/\*Icché hai visto Giulio?  
that/what (you) have.2.SG. seen G.  
'Did you see Giulio?'  
b. \*(Che/Icché) hai visto, Giulio?  
what (you) have.2.SG. seen G.  
'Who did you see, Giulio'

Example (10a) is a polar question (‘Did you see Giulio?’), as shown by the fact that *che* can be omitted. On the other hand, (10b) is a split question (translatable as ‘Who did you see, Giulio?’) and (*ic*)*ché* cannot be omitted, as expected given that it is the internal argument of *vedere*.

Extra evidence supporting a different analysis for pairs like (10a) and (10b) comes from clitic resumption and island sensitivity. First, it is never possible to resume the correlate of the wh-phrase in a split question, as shown in (11a). No similar restriction on clitic resumption is found in polar questions (11b).

(11) a. \*(Ic)ché l' hai visto, Giulio?  
what (you) him<sub>CL</sub> have see, G.?  
b. Che l' hai visto Giulio?  
that (you) him<sub>CL</sub> have.2.SG. seen G.

Under the present analysis, in both parts of a split question, island sensitive A-bar movement occur (12a). Predictably, no similar constraints are found in polar questions – the complementizer *che* has no relation with the island contained material.

(12) a. \*(Ic)ché ti dà fastidio il fatto che abbia visto, Gianni?  
'Who bothers you the fact that I have seen, Gianni?'  
b. Che ti dà fastidio il fatto che abbia visto Gianni?  
'Does the fact that I have seen G. bother you?'

Interestingly enough, a closely related variety as Sienese seems to always have *che* in place of *icché* so that the problem of disambiguating minimal pairs like the one proposed in (10-12) is even more relevant. Crucially, also in Sienese *che* can be omitted when is a *bona fide* complementizer but

<sup>6</sup> Apparently, the (optional) presence of *che* doesn't affect the meaning of a question.

not when it is an argument<sup>7</sup>. Keeping this in mind, let us now consider a related structure attested in Sienese and discussed by Lusini (2013), which is constituted by a question introduced by *che* and a tensed form of *fare* ‘do’<sup>8</sup>.

(13) Che fate andate a Roma?  
 what (you) do.2.PL. (you) go.2.PL. to Rome  
 ‘What are you doing? Are you going to Rome?’

Lusini (2013) calls these structures ‘*che fare* questions’ and treats them as polar questions headed by *che* and optional occurrence of *fare* as a functional, non contentful verb. However, there is evidence that they should rather be analysed as biclausal. I argue that they should be analyzed as pairs formed by a wh-question and a non-wh question with broad focus (and no ellipsis) in the non wh-question. First of all, it must be noticed that the morpheme introducing these questions cannot be the interrogative complementizer. We have just seen that *che* can usually be omitted as a complementizer. Omission of *che* is however not possible in the case at hand:

(14) \* (Che) fate andate a Roma?

This can be explained assuming that structures like these are formed by a wh-question with *che* as the internal argument of *fare* (which explains why it cannot be omitted) and a non wh-question.

Extra evidence in support of this hypothesis comes from cross-linguistic comparison. We saw above that Fiorentino realizes the wh-word corresponding to pronominal *what* as *(ic)ché*. In all cases of putative *fare* insertion, *che* can be replaced by *(ic)ché* (15a). This substitution is never possible when *che* introduces a plain polar question<sup>9</sup> (15b).

(15) a. Icché fa piove?  
 what (it) does (it) rains  
 b. \* Icché piove?<sup>10</sup>  
 what (it) rains

There is a last piece of evidence in favour of a biclausal treatment of this type of questions. Like “canonical” (i.e. elliptical) Split Questions, *che-fare* questions cannot be embedded, even when *che* is replaced by *se* ‘whether’, which usually introduces embedded polar questions.

(16) \* Non so che/se fate, andate a Roma?  
 (I) don't know that/whether (you) do.2.PL. go.2.PL. to Rome

In a monoclausal analysis the impossibility of embedding this type of questions would remain unexplained. On the other hand, if questions of this type (and split questions in general) are indeed a

<sup>7</sup> As expected, in all the cases in which *che* is an interrogative pronoun the word-by-word translation in Fiorentino allows *icché*, which is never case when *che* is a complementizer. The cliticization and island-sensitivity tests used in the discussion above apply consistently to Sienese too.

<sup>8</sup> The same structure is found also in Fiorentino, modulo the possibility of realising *che* as *(ic)ché*.

<sup>9</sup> According to Lusini (2013) the possibility of forming *che fare* questions with verbs which do not assign any thematic role, as (15a), should prove that in these structures *che* is not extracted from any clause-internal position (as expected in her monoclausal analysis). However this is questionable given the possibility, in Tuscan dialects, as well as in substandard varieties of Italian, of questions like *Che fa domani?*, lit. ‘What does tomorrow’, with the meaning of ‘What’s the weather like tomorrow?’. Here it is apparent that *che* is extracted from a thematic position available in the transitive construction of *piovere* ‘to rain’ given that Standard Italian does not have an interrogative complementizer (but for optative questions such as *Che sia proprio lui?*, lit. ‘that be.SUBJ.3.SG.he’.)

<sup>10</sup> Agrammatical in the intended reading ‘Is it raining?’. The reading ‘What is it raining?’ is irrelevant here.

sequence of questions, the ban on embedding is readily explained<sup>11</sup>.

### 3. BIASED QUESTIONS AND INTERROGATIVE PARTICLES

The availability of interrogative particles in Italian dialects has been widely documented. In most cases, the literature has reported that these particles are used in both neutral information-seeking questions and in biased questions, with a great range of variability. When they occur in biased questions, they usually express the speaker's surprise or disapproval towards the propositional content. Examples of question particles of this type are Northern Italian *po/pa* (Manzini & Savoia, 2005), Calabrian *ca* (Damonte & Garzonio, 2009), and Sardinian *a* (Jones, 1993, Manzini & Savoia, 2005, Bentley, 2010). Fiorentino, as well as other Tuscan varieties such as Sienese and Livornese marks several types of questions with the particle *o* (Garzonio 2005). According to Garzonio (2005), *o* occurs in a number of "non standard" questions, that is questions which are not used or not only used to inquiry for something but also express the speaker's attitude towards the propositional content. *O* can occur in matrix questions (17a-b) but not in embedded contexts (17c):

(17) a. O in do' è andato?!  
           PRT in where (he) is gone  
   b. O che lo sai in do' è andato?!  
           PRT that it<sub>CL</sub> (you) know in where (he) is gone  
   c. \* Non so o in do' è andato.  
           (I) not know PRT in where (he) is gone

Garzonio (2005) reports that the particle *o* introduces several types of questions among which he mentions *can't find the value* questions, surprise interrogatives, and exclamative interrogatives. *Can't find the value questions* (Obenauer 1994) convey the speaker's bias that a plausible answer cannot be found in the relevant domain.

(18) O quando l' ho perso?!  
           PRT when (I) it<sub>CL</sub> have.1.SG. lost  
           'When did I lost it?'

In (18) the speaker cannot find a plausible value for x in "I have lost it at time x"; thus she cannot come up with a plausible answer for the question. According to Garzonio, 'surprise questions are questions in which «the speaker expresses an attitude of astonishment toward the propositional content, often with a negative orientation»' (Garzonio 2005:4). Consider the following example:

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<sup>11</sup> According to Lusini, several Italian dialects avail themselves of a variant of *che fare* questions that employ the verb *essere* ('be) instead of *fare* ('do').

(2) Roman:  
   Che è state a veni?  
   what is (you.PL) stay.PR.2.PL. to come  
   'Are you coming?'/What are you doing, are you coming? (Lusini 2013: 73b)

(3) Barese:  
   Ci è a chiang sta?  
   what is to rain (it) is  
   'Is it raining?'/What is it doing? Is it rain? (Lusini 2013: 72b)

The fact that *essere* 'to be' always occurs in an invariable form, disregarding the agreement and tense features of the lexical verb, suggests that these structures might be biclausal.

(19) O icché tu ascolti?!

PRT what you listen.2.SG."

'What on earth are you listening to?'

Intuitively, the meaning of (19) is something like 'you are listening to x, x is the most surprising among the contextually relevant alternatives' (that is, the other plausible things that the addressee could have been listening to according to the speaker's beliefs). Contrarily to *can't find the value questions*, which might be genuine requests of information (in fact they might require an answer by the addressee, although the speaker might address the question to herself as well), surprise interrogatives don't need to be answered. Rather, they elicit a comment or a follow-up by the addressee. Notice that some wh-phrases may receive a degree interpretation, giving raise to what Garzonio calls *exclamative interrogatives*:

(20) O quanto bevi?!

PRT how-much (you) drink.2.SG.

In this case the rough interpretation is 'you are drinking at degree x, x is such a high degree that it exceeds the speaker's expectations'. The general characterization of this family of question seems to be that they convey the speaker's bias that the most plausible answer is also the most surprising one<sup>12</sup>.

*O* can also introduce polar questions, both positive and negative. In the positive form, *o*-polar questions tend to convey a negative flavour, in the sense that the affirmative answer is felt to be the less expected or the less desirable, as in (21) when Gianni was expected to arrive later (maybe because the speaker and her addressee(s) are preparing a surprise party for him).

(21) O che è arrivato Gianni?

PRT INT is arrived G.

'Has Gianni arrived?'

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<sup>12</sup>Notice that Fiorentino is not the only variety where surprise questions have a syntactic marking. Munaro and Obenauer (1999) discuss Pagotto, a sub-variety of Bellunese, which has two different *what*-words: *che* and *cossa*. The former appears in argumental position (according to the authors as a result of movement of *che* followed by remnant movement of the TP to a higher position in the CP area) and is restricted to standard questions, whereas the latter occurs in sentence initial position and is used in contexts in which the speaker expresses his attitude of surprise or dismay towards the propositional content:

(4) Pagotto:  
 Cossa sé-tu drio magnar (che) ?  
 what areCL you behind eat.INF (what)  
 'What on earth are you eating?' (Munaro and Obenauer 1999:8)

The authors report that Pagotto has another way to express roughly the same meaning, that is a *what*-exclamative:

(5) Pagotto:  
 Cossa che te sé drio magnar  
 what that youCL are behind eat.INF  
 'The things you are eating!' (Munaro and Obenauer 1999:9)

As these examples clearly show, the two structures differ under several respects. First, as (5) shows, the exclamative structure allows the insertion of the finite complementizer *che*, which in Pagotto can cooccur with bare wh-item. Second, the exclamative structure does not allow auxiliary-clitic inversion. Third, the subject clitics belong to two different paradigms in the two cases.

On the other hand, *o*-polar questions convey a positive expectation in the negative form:

(22) O un è arrivato Gianni?  
 PRT (he) not is arrived G.  
 'Hasn't Gianni arrived?'

Uttering (22), the speaker asks for confirmation of the fact that Gianni has arrived, which is the proposition more likely to be true according to the evidence available. Uttering the *o*-question, in fact, the speaker conveys that Gianni is likely to have arrived, contrarily to what the addressee may have assumed or simply ignored. For instance, a question like (22) might be uttered in response to a question like *Quando viene Gianni?* ('When is G. coming?'). In this case the speaker's surprise would not be addressed to the propositional content *per se* (it is not surprising that Gianni has arrived) but to the fact that, despite the evidence available, the addressee has not yet accepted the truth of the proposition *Gianni è già arrivato*, ('G. has already arrived'). Another example is provided below:

(23) O un sono andati a Roma?!  
PRT (they) not are gone to Rome

Uttering (23) the speaker conveys that the people she is speaking about are likely to have gone to Rome. This question could be felicitously uttered in response to a question like *Dove sono andati?* ('Where have they gone?'), reminding the hearer what she is supposed to already know.

The fact that negative questions might take a positive flavour is not surprising. Since Ladd (1981), it has been observed that polar negative questions are ambiguous between a negatively-biased reading and a positively-biased reading. Ladd (1981) dubs the negation which occurs in interrogatives of the first type *inner negation* and the negation which occurs in the second type of interrogatives *outer negation*. According to Ladd (1981), inner negation is used by a speaker who has inferred that  $\neg p$  and wants to check the inference whereas an interrogative with outer negation of the form  $\neg p$  is used when the speaker believes  $p$  and wants confirmation for  $p$ . Ladd (1981) and Büring & Gungolson (2000) observe that the two interpretations correlate with different morphosyntactic devices. So for instance, inner negation licenses NPIs whereas outer negation licenses PPIs. Polarity sensitive particles forces the interpretation towards one of the two readings: (24a) conveys the speaker's expectation towards a positive answer whereas (24b) conveys the speaker's bias that Jane is not coming:

(24) a. Isn't Jane coming too? (outer negation reading)  
b. Isn't Jane coming either? (inner negation reading)  
(Büring & Gungolson 2000: 13)

In English *some*, which has the distribution of Positive Polarity Items, cannot occur in the scope of negation. However, *not some* is possible in a negative polar question, which in this case has, crucially, the *outer negation* reading, as in *Isn't there some vegetarian restaurant around here?* (Büring & Gungolson 2000: 11a). In German polar questions the sentential negation *nicht* and the indefinite article *ein* might or might not amalgamate, whereas the amalgamated form *kein* is otherwise mandatory. Crucially, the non-amalgamated form has the *outer negation* interpretation (as in *Gibt es nicht ein vegetarisches Restaurant in dieser Ecke?*, 'Isn't there any vegetarian restaurant around here?', Büring & Gungolson 2000: 7a).

Another morphosyntactic difference between the two types of negative questions is discussed in Delfitto & Fiorin (2014). In Paduan, negation blocks clitic inversion, in interrogative and other contexts. Inversion is however allowed only in positively-biased negative polar questions (Benincà

1996) where it co-occurs with the negative marker *miga*:

(25) a. \* No ve-to?  
not go you<sub>CL</sub> (Benincà 1996:9)  
b. No vien-lo miga?  
not comes-he.<sub>CL</sub> NEG (Delfitto & Fiorin 2014: 61a)

Another context where negation conveys a positive expectation is rhetorical questions. As the literature has often pointed out, rhetorical questions are not uttered to inquiry for new information. Answers to rhetorical questions provided by the addressee are generally felt redundant however, as Caponigro & Sprouse (2007) point out, either the speaker or the addressee might follow up. Consider the following example:

(26) Scenario: *Two scholars are speaking about a recent Syntax workshop.*  
a. C'erano solo poche persone al convegno sul movimento wh.  
'There were only few people at the workshop on wh-movement'  
b. (D'altra parte) a chi interessa la linguistica?  
'After all, who cares for linguistics?'

Intuitively, the meaning of the question is that for every *x* in the relevant domain, the proposition '*x* cares for linguistics' is less likely to be true than '*x* doesn't care for linguistics', from which the negative flavour of the question. Suppose that linguistics is not among the things that people normally care for and that this information is available to the participants in the conversation. By replying with the rhetorical question (26b), the second speaker is implicitly suggesting that the content of the first speaker's assertion (namely that there were only few people at the meeting) is expected, given standard expectations on what people care for. As a matter of fact, the rhetorical question can be felicitously uttered because, according to the normal course of events (what people believe/wish, etc.), things are running as expected<sup>13</sup>. More generally, the meaning of a rhetorical question seems to be that one of the propositions which constitute a complete answer to the question (in ex. (26) the proposition formed by the conjunction of all propositions in the form '*x* doesn't care for linguistics') is most likely to be true according to what people normally think, do, know etc. In a nutshell, the answer is obvious because both speakers share background information about how things are normally supposed to work.

Whereas positive rhetorical questions might be biased towards the negative answer or not (Caponigro & Sprouse 2007), negative rhetorical questions are usually biased towards the positive answer:

(27) (Dopo tutto) Gianni non ha fatto di tutto per i suoi figli?  
After all G. not has done all for the his children

<sup>13</sup> Although rhetorical questions are often uttered as a reply to a previous, possibly implicit, statement confirming it, on the basis of what is expected to be the more 'normal' situation (see example 26), rhetorical questions might also be uttered to implicitly deny a previous statement<sup>13</sup>:

(6) Scenario: *A child and his mother are speaking.*  
a. Mamma, avevi promesso di portarmi al parco!  
'Mom, you promised to bring me to the park!'  
b. E quando l'avrei detto?  
'When on earth did I say that?'

Here the normal course of events is that mothers don't promise to their children to take them out under certain circumstances (for example when they are very busy or when children don't behave). By uttering (b), the mother is denying the content of (a), namely that she had made the promise. Notice that only the former type of rhetorical questions (the 'confirming' type) can be introduced by *dopo tutto* ('after all').

According to Delfitto & Fiorin (2014) the semantic function of so called *expletive negation*, morphosyntactically different from standard negation, is to impose a reversed order of informativity upon the set of propositions denoted by the question. Delfitto & Fiorin (2014) take the denotation of a question to be a Hamblin-Kartunnen style proposition set. They further adopt Han's (2002) view according to which the propositions in a proposition set are ordered by entailment. For instance, suppose that yesterday night John wanted to watch a movie. He could choose between three possibilities: "*Rear window*" (*RW*), "*The Fortune Cookie*" (*FC*) and "*What ever happened to Baby Jane?*" (*BJ*). The propositions which belong in the denotation of question "*What did John watch yesterday night?*" will be ordered in scale of informativity according to the following:

(28) Entailment relations in a proposition set:

- a. *John watched RW and John watched FC and George watched BJ*
- b. *John watched RW and FC; John watched RW and BJ; John watched FC and BJ*
- c. *John watched RW; John watched FC; John watched BJ*
- d. *John didn't watch RW and John didn't watch FC and John didn't watch BJ.*

Given two propositions *p* and *q* belonging in the proposition set, 'if *p* entails *q* (without *p* being equivalent to *q*), *p* is necessarily true in a proper subset of the situations in which *q* is true, and is thus more informative than *q*. In a nutshell, the proposition at the top of the structure in (95) is more informative than the propositions at the lower layers, and qualifies thus as the most unlikely to be true [according to information theory]' (Delfitto & Fiorin 2014: 39). So, for instance, the proposition '*John watched FC and BJ*', at level *X* in the scale, is more informative than '*John watched BJ*', at level *X-1*, because it is true in a proper subset of the possible words where '*John watched BJ*' is true (for instance it will be true in those possible words where '*John watched BJ*' is true but '*John watched FC*' is not). Delfitto & Fiorin (2014) argue that the role of negation in biased and rhetorical questions (and exclamatives as well) is to reverse such order of informativity (and, therefore, of likelihood) to the effect that the proposition at the bottom of the scale is the more informative, and the less likely to be true, whereas the proposition at the top of the scale the less informative, and more likely to be true. But negation cannot reverse the direction of informativity within the structure built from non-exhaustive answers, since the bottom-up direction of informativity is an inherent logical property of the structure. Accordingly, Delfitto & Fiorin (2014) argue that non-exhaustive answers are mapped into exhaustive answers, through the application of the exhaustivity operator ('*only*'), determining a partition in the class of possible answers to the question. Notice that in this novel structure there isn't any inherent direction of informativity among the different classes. For instance *John only watched FC and BJ* doesn't entail *John only watched FC*. The negation which occurs in negative RQs and negative exclamatives applies to the structure that results from this mapping. After this mapping from non-exhaustive to exhaustive answers, in fact, negation applies, inducing a Top-Down informativity order. This allows us to predict the correct interpretation of structures with expletive negation. For instance, in a rhetorical question such as *Who didn't like pizza?*, the most likely answer will be *Everyone likes pizza*, which is the less informative proposition and thus the proposition that is most likely to be true. In the case of (27), we come out with "*Gianni did everything for his children*" at the top and the negative proposition "*Gianni didn't do everything for his children*" at the bottom; accordingly the questions will be biased toward the answer "*Gianni did everything for his children*".

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

In this article I have analyzed some peculiar interrogative structures in Fiorentino. This variety avails itself of a peculiar type of question introduced by *icché* ('what') with a tag in final position as in (*Ic)ché è venuto, Gianni?*, 'Who came, John?', (lit. 'What came, John?'). Although structures of this type could be analyzed as polar questions headed by an interrogative complementizer, several tests

(complementizer omission, clitic resumption, island sensitivity) suggest that they should be analyzed as split questions, modulo the possibility of realizing the wh-item as *what*, independently of the content of the tag.

The other issue the article deals with is *o*-questions. The general interpretation of wh- and positive polar questions introduced by *o* is that the answer which is the more likely to be true, according to the evidence available to the speakers, is the less expected (the most surprising) or desirable (the most unpleasant). Negative *o*-questions, on the other hand, have a different interpretation, where negation displays semantic properties familiar from other interrogative contexts such as rhetorical questions.

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