On non in situ “in situ” wh-elements

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Abstract

Trevigiano, a Venetan dialect, licenses both fronted and sentence internal wh-phrases. This property, along with the systematic combination of “insituness” and Subject clitic Inversion, makes it different from more widely studied languages like Bellunese (Munaro (1999), Munaro et al. (2001), Poletto and Pollock (2000) and subsequent works) and French, hence worth studying. In this presentation, I argue that the relative distribution of sentence internal wh-adverbs and V-selected arguments of Trevigiano shows that what wh-phrases “in situ” actually undergo partial IP-internal wh-movement. I also show that “insituness” in this language is not only a root phenomenon, and present novel data on a special “if”-complementizer used in this language to licence sentence internal wh-elements in indirect questions. Finally, I argue in favour of a low landing site for wh-movement, located in the low periphery of the clause, and of a left peripheral WhP (Rizzi (2006)) active (at least) in indirect wh-questions.

Introduction

Venetan is a Romance language used as a native language by about 3.9 million people. It is spoken mostly in the Veneto region, where most of the 5 million inhabitants can at least understand it. It is also spoken in Trentino, Friuli and Venezia Giulia, Istria, and some towns of Dalmatia:

Commonly referred to as an Italian dialect, Venetan is a separate language. It descended from Vulgar Latin, and has only been partially influenced by Standard Italian.
There exist many different varieties of Venetan, which are mutually intelligible to a very high degree, including the most diverging ones (the Central and the Western varieties). The main regional varieties of Venetan are: (i) the **Central variety** (Padua, Vicenza, and the Polesine area); (ii) the **Eastern/Coastal** variety (Venice, Trieste, Grado, Istria, and Fiume); (iii) the **Western** variety (Verona and some areas of the Trentino region); (iv) the **North-Central** variety, spoken in the “Destra Piave” of the Province of Treviso and most of the Province of Pordenone; (v) the **Northern** variety, spoken in the “Sinistra Piave” of the Province of Treviso (including Belluno, but also Feltre, Agordo, Cadore, and Zoldo Alto):

Here, and more in general in my work, I only take into consideration the varieties and sub-varieties spoken in the Province of Treviso, the “Destra Piave” and the “Sinistra Piave” varieties. The light yellow area in the map is the region in question, where 885,447 people live and have either an active or a passive competence in Trevigiano.

1 The Interrogative Syntax of Trevigiano

**SCII and the “ex situ-in situ alternation”**

SCII is compulsory in genuine direct questions:

(1) a. Ga-tu catà causchedun al marcà?
   Have-you\textsubscript{CL} met someone at the market
   “Did you met someone at the market?”

   b. * Te gà catà causchedun al marcà?
   You\textsubscript{CL} have found someone at the market

Wh-phrases can appear fronted or sentence-internally:
(2) a. Chi ga-tu catà al marcà?
   who have-you_{CL} found at the market
   “Who did you meet at the market?”

   * Chi te gà catà al marcà?
   You_{CL} have found who at the market

(3) a. Ga-tu catà chi al marcà?
   have-you_{CL} met who at the market
   “Who did you meet at the market?”

   * Te gà catà chi al marcà?
   You_{CL} have found who at the market

Also D-linked wh-phrases can appear both fronted or sentence-internally (4):

(4) a. Che profesor a-ea visto al marcà?
   what professor has-she_{CL} seen at the market
   “Which professor did she see at the market?”

   b. A-ea visto che profesor al marcà?
   has-she_{CL} seen what professor at the market

The same patterns are found in long-distance questions (5-6):

(5) a. Chi pens-ea che te gà visto al marcà?
   who thinks-she_{CL} that you_{CL} have seen at the market
   “Who does she think you saw at the market?”

   b. Pens-ea che te gà visto chi al marcà?
   thinks-she_{CL} that you_{CL} have seen who at the market

(6) a. Che maestra pens-ea che te ga visto al marcà?
   what teacher thinks-she_{CL} that you_{CL} have seen at the market
   “Which teacher does she think you saw at the market?”

   b. Pens-ea che te ga visto che maestra al marcà?
   thinks-she_{CL} that you_{CL} have seen what teacher at the market

Predictably, SClI is a root phenomenon (7):

(7) a. Chi pens-ea che te ga visto al marcà?
   who thinks-she_{CL} that you_{CL} have seen at the market

   * Pens-ea che ga-tu visto chi al marcà?
   thinks-she_{CL} that have-you_{CL} seen who at the market

Similar, yet different from Bellunese and French

Bellunese (Munaro (1995), Poletto and Pollock (2015) and previous related works, Munaro et al. (2001)): obligatory SClI. However, non-D-linked wh-phrases can ONLY appear sentence-internally (8), and D-linked wh-words are only compatible with wh-fronting (9):
(8) a. Ha-tu magnà che?
   have-you eaten what
   “What did you eat”
   (Bellunese)
b. * Che ha-tu magnà?
   What have-you eaten

(9) a. Che libro ha-tu ledest?
   what book have-you read
   “Which book did you read?”
   (Bellunese)
b. * Ha-tu ledest che libro?
   have-you read what book

French (Mathieu (1999), Bošković (2000), Cheng and Rooryck (2002)): both D-linked and non-
D-linked wh-phrases are licensed sentence-internally. However, in French “insituness” and SCII
are NEVER compatible (10):

(10) a. * As-tu mangé quand?
      have-you eaten when
      “When did you eat?”
      (French)
b. T’as mangé quand?
      You’have eaten when

2 “Insituness” in Trevigiano

Matrix questions

Word order in declaratives: V arguments > ADJ_{time} > ADJ_{place} (11):

(11) a. Giani el gà magnà pomíDO seri seral al ristoranteP
    John he has eaten apples yesterday evening at.the restaurant
    “Yesterday evening, John ate apples at the restaurant”
b. ? Giani el gà magnà pomíDO al ristoranteP seri seral
    John he has eaten apples at.the restaurant yesterday evening
   c. * Giani el gà magnà seri seral pomíDO al ristoranteP
    John he has eaten yesterday evening apples at.the restaurant
   d. * Giani el gà magnà al ristoranteP pomíDO seri seri
    John he has eaten at.the restaurant apples yesterday evening

“In situ” wh-items appear moved from the unmarked position (12) - they follow the lexical V:

(12) a. Ga-tu magnà quando el dolse t?
    Have-youCL eaten when the cake t
    “When did you eat the cake?”
b. Ga-tu visto dove a Maria t?
    Have-youCL seen where the Maria t
    “Where did you see Maria?”
c. Ghe ga-tu dato a chi₆ a tecia t₆?
DAT have-youCL given to who the saucepan t
“Who did you give the saucepan to?”
d. Ga-εa visto cossa₆ a Maria t₆?
Has-sheCL seen what the Maria t
“What did Maria see?”

The unmarked order is ungrammatical in genuine questions (13):

(13) a. * Ga-tu magnà el dolse cuando?
Have-youCL eaten the cake when
“When did you eat the cake?”
b. * Ga-tu visto a Maria dove?
Have-youCL seen the Maria where
“Where did you see Maria?”
c. * Ghe ga-tu dato a tecia a chi?
DAT have-youCL given the saucepan to who
“Who did you give the saucepan to?”
d. * Ga-εa visto a Maria cossa?
Has-sheCL seen the Maria what
“What did Maria see?”

Wh-phrase in its base position: echo reading. The interrogative syntax is lost altogether (no SClI) (14):

(14) a. Te gà magnà el dolse cuando?!
You have eaten the cake when
“You ate the cake WHEN?!” (ECHO)
b. Te gà visto a Maria dove?!
You have seen the Maria where
“You saw Maria WHERE?!” (ECHO)
c. Te ghe gà dato a tecia a chi?!
You DAT have given the saucepan to who
“You gave the saucepan TO WHO?!” (ECHO)
d. A Maria a gà visto cossa?!
The Maria she has seen what
“Maria saw WHAT?!” (ECHO)

...in case you were wondering! The examples in (12) are not right-dislocations (15 and 16):

(15) a. O ga-tu magnà cuando, el dolse?
ItCL have-youCL eaten when the cake
“The cake, when did you eat?” (RD)
b. A ga-tu vista dove, a Maria?
SheCL have-youCL seen where the Maria
“Mary, where did you see?” (RD)
c. Ghe a ga-tu data a chi, a tecia? DAT itCL have-youCL givenP to who # the saucepan “The saucepan, who did you give it to?” (RD)

(16) a. Ghe o ga-tu regae`a quando, {aa Maria}, l’anel? DAT it have-youCL given when # to.the Maria # the’ring “The ring, when did you give to Maria?” (RD)
b. Ghe ga-tu regae`a quando *{aa Maria} l’anel {aa Maria}? DAT have-youCL given when to.the Maria the’ring to.the Maria “When did you give Maria the ring?”

Please notice that the possibility of having emargination in Trevigiano is excluded by the possibility of having structures like (11c-11d)!

⇒ Working hypothesis

In Trevigiano, what we call “in situ” wh-phrases actually undergo partial wh-movement to a very low wh-position (17).

Maybe FocusP, in Belletti (2004)’s words?

(17) …[{vP [FocP wh-phrase] [foc0 [TopicP [Top0 [V0 [V0 tf]]]]]]

The complementizers of Trevigiano

The LP of Trevigiano is very Italian-like (18):

(18) a. Penso de ndar da Toni stasera Think1PS to go at Toni tonight “I think I’ll go to Toni’s tonight” Fin0

b. Me domando se l ndar`a da Toni doman Myself ask1PS if heCL goFUT at Toni tomorrow “I wonder whether he’ll go to Toni’s tomorrow” Int0

c. Penso che l vae da Toni doman Think1PS that heCL goSUBJ at Toni tomorrow “I think he’ll go to Toni’s tomorrow” Force0

d. Quando pensi-tu che l vae da Toni? When think2PS-you that heCL goSUBJ at Toni “When do you think he’ll go to Toni’s?”

Insituness in indirect questions: the “if”-complementizer

In Trevigiano se appears also in non-echo indirect wh-questions when the wh-element is “in situ” (seWH) (19a-19c):

(19) a. Me domando se te ga magn`a cossa Myself ask seWH you have eaten what “I wonder what you ate”
b. A se domanda se \( \text{v} \) egnerà \( \textit{cuando} \)
   She herself asks se\( _{wh} \) he \( \text{come}_{FUT} \) when
   “She wonders when he’s going to come”

c. Voria \( \text{sa} \ve \text{v} \text{a} \) \( \text{se} \) \( \text{c} \text{a} \text{t} \) \( \text{d} \text{o} \ve \)
   Would\( _{1PS} \) know se\( _{wh} \) yourselves meet where
   “I wonder where you’ll be meeting”

doesn’t give rise to a yes/no interpretation!

Even under se\( _{wh} \), the distribution of wh-adjuncts with respect to arguments patterns that observed in matrix clauses (20a-20b):

\[
(20) \begin{align*}
\text{a. } \text{Me domando se te ga magnà} \textit{cuando} \text{ i pomì t}^{\text{cuando}} \\
& \text{Myself ask se you have eaten when the apples t} \\
& \text{“I wonder when you ate the apples”}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } \text{A se domanda se \( \text{v} \) egnerà} \textit{dove} \text{ i persegheri t}^{\text{dove}} \\
& \text{She herself asks se he \( \text{plant} \)\( _{FUT} \) where the peach.trees t} \\
& \text{“She wonders where he’ll plant the peach trees”}
\end{align*}
\]

In the absence of partial wh-movement, the questions are very marginal. Wondering again?? (20a-20b) are clearly NOT instances of RD (21):

\[
(21) \begin{align*}
\text{Me domando se te ì ga magnaj} \textit{cuando, i pomì} \\
& \text{Myself ask se you them have eaten}^{\text{mascPL}} \text{when # the apples} \\
& \text{“The apples, I wonder when you ate” (RD+cl-resumption)}
\end{align*}
\]

If the wh-element of indirect questions moves “ex situ”, the insertion of se becomes ungrammatical (22a). \textit{Che} (‘that’) must be used instead (22d):

\[
(22) \begin{align*}
\text{a. } \ast \text{ Me domando cossa se te ga magnà} \\
& \text{Myself ask what se you have eaten} \\
& \text{“I wonder what you ate”}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } \text{Me domando cossa \textit{che} te ga magnà} \\
& \text{Myself ask what that you have eaten}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{c. } \text{Me domando se te ga magnà} \\
& \text{Myself ask se you have eaten} \\
& \text{“I wonder whether you ate”}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{d. } \ast \text{ Me domando \textit{che} te ga magnà} \\
& \text{Myself ask that you have eaten} \\
& \text{“I wonder whether you ate”}
\end{align*}
\]

\( \Rightarrow \text{Working hypothesis} \)

The \textit{che} and \textit{se} just discussed might be only \textit{homophonous} to the C that introduce embedded clauses and indirect yes/no questions.
Insituness in long-distance questions

In Trevigiano, embedded “insituness” is licensed also in long-distance wh-questions:

(23) a. Pensi-tu che vegnàrə catarne chi?
Think-youCL that comeFUTURE see.us who
“How do you think will visit us?”
“in situ”
b. Pensi-tu che i voje magnar cossa?
Think-youCL that they wantSUBJ eat what
“What do you think they want to eat?”

(24) a. Chi pensi-tu che vegnàrə catarne?
Who think-youCL that comeFUTURE see.us
“How do you think will visit us?”
“ex situ”
b. Cossa pensi-tu che i voje magnar?
What think-youCL that they wantSUBJ eat
“What do you think they want to eat?”

Partial wh-movement of “in situ” wh-phrases is clearly at play here too (25):

(25) Pensi-tu che magnaremo quando i fighi tcuando ?
Think-youCL that eat1PP,FUTURE when the figues WHEN
“When do you think we will eat the figues?”

In the absence of partial wh-movement:

(26) a. *Pensi-tu che magnaremo i fighi quando?
Think-youCL that eat1PP,FUTURE the figues when
“When do you think we will eat the figues?”
b. Pensi-tu che i magnaremo quando, i fighi?
Think-youCL that them eat1PP,FUTURE when # the figues
“The figues, when do you think we’re going to eat?”
(REF)
c. Te pensi che magnaremo i fighi quando?!
Think-youCL that eat1PP,FUTURE the figues when
“You think we’re going to eat the figues WHEN?!”

3 Low(er) landing Sites for Wh-Movement

IP-internal ‘little whP’

“Partial wh-movement” targets an IP-internal wh-projection, little whP (27):

(27) a. Si-tu [IP ndà [whP cuado ...[VP al marcà tcuando ]] alternately]
are-youCL gone when to.the market
“When did you go to the market?”
b. Ga-tu [IP posà [whP dove ...[VP i ociai tdove ]]]
have-youCL put where the glassess
“Where did you put the glasses?”
Where’s whP? Lower than the position targeted by the finite V (28):

(28) a. Pensi-tu che Toni el vegnarà quando da nojaltri?  
think-youCL that Toni heCL comeFUT when at ours  
“When do you think Toni will come over?”

b. El vol saver se me mare a vegnarà quando da ti  
He wants know seFUT my mother sheCL comeFUT when at yours  
“He wants to know when my mother will come at your place”

“When little whP” must lie in the low periphery, vP (29):

(29) a. Pensitu che [SubjP Toni [Subj0 el [TP vegnarà [whP cuandoj [VP tS tV da nojaltri tJ]]]]?  

b. El vol saver se [SubjP me mare [Subj0 a [TP vegnarà [whP cuandoj [VP tS tV da ti tJ]]]

This position is very likely FocP in Belletti (2004) (vP/CP correspondence - wh-phrases target focal positions):

(30) ...[vP [whP/FocP wh-phrase, [whP0 [TopicP [Top0 [V P V0 tS tP tV tS tV da ti tJ]]]]]]

Low left peripheral WhP

The distribution of seWH/chewH and seYN/cheyN:

1- seYN and a topic like sto libro (“this book”):

(31) a. [Sto libro], me domando se te o gà za leto  
this book myself ask1PS seYN youCL itCL have already read

b. Me domando se te o gà za leto, [sto libro]  
myself ask1PS seYN youCL itCL have already read this book

c. Me domando, [sto libro], se te o gà za leto  
myself ask1PS this book seYN youCL itCL have already read

d. Me domando se, [sto libro], te o gà za leto  
myself ask1PS seYN this book youCL itCL have already read

(32) topicLejD [CP topic ...seYN ...topic ] topicRightD

2- seWH, wh-element “in situ” and a topic like sto libro:

(33) a. [Sto libro], me domando se te ghe o gà regaeà a chi  
this book myself ask1PS seWH youDAT it have given to who  
“I wonder who you gave this book to”

b. Me domando se te ghe o gà regaeà a chi, [sto libro]  
myself ask1PS seWH youDAT it have given to who this book

c. Me domando, [sto libro], se te ghe o gà regaeà a chi  
myself ask1PS this book seWH youDAT it have given to who

d. ?? Me domando se, [sto libro], te ghe o gà regaeà a chi  
myself ask1PS seWH this book youDAT it have given to who
(34) topic_{Le,jD} [CP topic ... se_{WH} ... ??topic wh-phrase ] topic_{RightD}

3- che_{WH}, wh-element “ex situ” and a topic like sto libro:

(35) a. [Sto libro], me domando dove che te o gà leto
This book myself ask_{1PS} where che you_{CL} it_{CL} have read
“I wonder where you read this book”

b. Me domando dove che te o gà leto, [sto libro]
Myself ask_{1PS} where che you_{CL} it_{CL} have read this book

c. Me domando, [sto libro], dove che te o gà leto
Myself ask_{1PS} this book where che you_{CL} it_{CL} have read

d. ?? Me domando dove, [sto libro], che te o gà leto
Myself ask_{1PS} where this book che you_{CL} it_{CL} have read

e. ? Me domando dove che, [sto libro], te o gà leto
Myself ask_{1PS} where che this book you_{CL} it_{CL} have read

(36) topic_{Le,jD} [CP topic ... wh-phrase ??topic che_{WH} ... ?topic ] topic_{RightD}

4- Surrounded by topics:

(37) a. Me domando, [sto libro], se, [jeri], te o gà leto
I wonder this book se_{YN} yesterday you_{CL} it_{CL} have read
“I wonder if you read this book yesterday”

b. * Me domando, [sto libro], se, [jeri], o gà leto chi
I wonder this book se_{WH} yesterday it_{CL} has read who
“I wonder who read this book yesterday”

c. * Me domando, [sto libro], chi che, [jeri], o gà leto
I wonder this book who che yesterday it_{CL} has read

(38) [CP topic ... se_{YN} / *se_{WH} / *che_{WH} ... topic ]

5- Co-occurrence with focus:

(39) a. Me domando se STO LIBRO te ga leto (no staltro)
Myself ask_{1PS} se_{YN} THIS BOOK you_{CL} have read (not other)
“This BOOK I wonder if you read (not the other one)”

b. * Me domando STO LIBRO se te ga leto (no staltro)
Myself ask_{1PS} THIS BOOK se_{YN} you_{CL} have read (not other)

(40) a. Me domando STO LIBRO se o ga leto chi
Myself ask_{1PS} THIS BOOK se_{WH} it_{CL} has read who
“This BOOK I wonder who read”

b. *Me domando se STO LIBRO o ga leto chi
Myself ask_{1PS} se_{WH} THIS BOOK it_{CL} has read who
(41) a. Me domando STO LIBRO chi che o gà leto
   I wonder THIS BOOK who it_CL has read
   "THIS BOOK I wonder who read"
b. * Me domando chi STO LIBRO che o gà leto
   I wonder who THIS BOOK che it_CL has read
c. ?? Me domando chi che STO LIBRO o gà leto
   I wonder who che THIS BOOK it_CL has read

(42) a. *focus > se_{Y/N} > focus  
   focus > se_{WH} > *focus 
   focus > wh-phrase *focus che_{WH} > *focus

Making sense of the data:

The distribution of the three Cs with respect to topics and focus is summarized in (43):

(43) a. Topic > se_{Y/N} > Focus > Topic  
   b. Focus > Topic > se_{WH} 
   c. Focus > Topic > che_{WH}

Se_{Y/N} is likely to realize Int^{0}, as its Italian counterpart (Rizzi (2001)).

Se_{WH} appears to occupy the head of a very low left-peripheral projection - lower than the last TopP - and it is in complementary distribution with che_{WH}. The Spec of the latter seems to be a landing site for wh-movement, whereas that of the former is not.

⇒ Working question

Could se_{WH} and che_{WH} head two different projections? NO.

This is theoretically undesirable:

➢ Imagine that se is there for locality reason, and is inserted as a last resort operation to “save” the structure: why not moving the wh-phrase, instead of projecting a FP?

➢ Why isn’t ke able to “save” the structure on its own?

➢ If ke is selected by the V, and se “saves” the in situ structure, why can’t they appear together?

My (tentative) proposal: se_{WH} and ke_{WH} are two phonetic realizations of Wh^{0}

The V-selected C of indirect questions surfaces either as se_{WH} or as che_{WH} (44):

(44) matrix V ... [ForceP(emb) Force^{0} ... [FP se_{WH}/che_{WH} [FinP Fin^{0} [IP I^{0} ]]]]]]

The alternation between se_{WH} and che_{WH} can be attributed to the presence/absence of a relevant wh-feature: as in French que/qui alternation (Rizzi (1990), RRizzi and Shlonsky (2007)), se_{WH} surfaces as che when it is crossed by wh-movement, thus being endowed with a [+WH] feature.

Let us call the relevant wh-projection WhP, borrowing Rizzi’s terms (QembP in Rizzi and Bocci (2016)) (45a-45b):
Conclusions

In this presentation I showed that:

- what looks like “insituness” in Trevigiano is actually an instance of IP-internal wh-movement;
- the targeted position is the Spec of the focal projection of the low periphery (Belletti (2004)), which I call whP;
- embedded insituness is indeed possible, both in long distance and in indirect wh-questions;
- in indirect wh-questions, the V selects and embedded LP whose landing site for wh-movement stands very low - I called it WhP (as in Rizzi (2004));
- WhP seems one of the “root/non-root asymmetries” involving the LP of the clause, and its head has two phonetic realizations, se and che;
- I proposed the se-che alternation be treated as se surfacing as che when crossed by wh-movement, thus being endowed with a [+WH] feature.

And now...?

It is tempting to try to explain “insituness” in Romance as a combination of morpho-syntactic and prosodic phenomena: (no) SCII, special wh-prosody (and lack therof), internal structure of wh-words (Poletto and Pollock (2000) and refinements), (un)availability of certain Wh-positions.

A number of questions and predictions are raised by my claims. Hopefully, further systematic cross-linguistic comparison among Romance varieties will shed light on the complex natures of insituness and linguistic optionality (if any) - and on the ways morphology, syntax and prosody interact to licence sentence-internal wh-phrases.

References


