Insituness in Northern Italian Dialects: argumental, IP-internal or left peripheral?

Seminario di ricerca
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

Structure of the talk
1- Northern Italian Insituness. Classic derivations:
2- Northern Italian Insituness. Novel data:
   a. Trevigiano → IP-internal “insituness
   b. Comunnuovese (Donzelli, 2018) → Mixed insituness
3- More than one variety, more than one type of “insituness”

Introduction

(1) Chinese (adapted from Huang 1982, ex. 159, p. 253)
   a. Ni kanjian-le she?  
      you see-ASP who 
      'Who did you see?'
   b. * Shei ni kanjian-le?  
      who you see-ASP 

⇒ Real insituness (wh-words in argumental position - interpretation done at LF) (1c): subject to the same interpretation / scope as overtly moved wh-elements (English), yet constrained differently in terms of sensitivity to islands and intervention effects.

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1 This work was fully supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation, project n° 156160, “Optional Wh-in situ in French Interrogatives: Syntax and Prosody”.
(1)  **Chinese: wh-movement @ LF** (Huang 1982, ex. 160, p. 253)
   c. [[ shei ]] [ ni kanjian-le t, ]
   
   who  you see-ASP


(2)  **Trevigiano** (Bonan 2018, ex. 5-6)
   a. Cossa a-tu leto ___ ?
      
      what  have=you read
      'What did you read?'
   b. A-tu leto cossa? (moved? unmoved?)
      have=you read what


   The syntax of *optional insituness* actually varies greatly. Bellunese-like languages license only non-D-linked wh-words sentence-internally (Munaro 1999) (3-3'), Trevigiano-like languages both non-D-linked and D-linked (Bonan 2018;2019) (4):

(3)  **Bellunese:** distribution of D-linked wh-words (Munaro 1999, ex. 1.2-, p. 14)
   a. Che vestito à-tu sïèlt?
      
      what  dress  have=you\textsubscript{2PS} chosen
      'Which dress did you choose?'
   b. * À-tu sïèlt che vestito?
      Have=you\textsubscript{2PS} chosen what dress

(3') **Bellunese:** distribution of non-D-linked wh-words (adapted from Munaro 1999, ex. 1.56, p. 50)
   a. * Che à-tu parecià?
      
      what  have=you\textsubscript{2PS} prepared
      'What did you prepare?'
b. À-tu parecià che?
    have=you₂PS prepared what

(4) **Trevigiano: distribution of D-linked wh-words** (Bonan 2018, ex. 5&6)  (like French!)
   a. Ga-tu leto cuanti libri?
      have=you₂PS read how.many books
      'How many books did you read?'
   b. Cuanti libri ga-tu leto?
      how.many books have=you₂PS read

(4') **Trevigiano: distribution of non-D-linked wh-words** (Bonan 2018, ex. 5&6)  (like French!)
   a. Ga-tu leto cossa?
      have=you₂PS read what
      'What did you read?'
   b. Cossa ga-tu leto?
      what have=you₂PS read

In Bellunese-like languages “insituness” is a root phenomenon (Munaro 1999, Munaro et al 2001, Poletto & Pollock 2000-2015) (5), in Trevigiano-like languages it is fine both in long distance (6a) and in indirect (6b) questions:

   a. * À-tu dit [ che l'à sièlt che vestito ]?
      have=you₂PS said that he'has chosen what dress
      'Which dress did you say he chose?'
   b. * No so [ (che) l'ha comprà che ]
      NEG know₁PS (that) he'has bought what
      'I don't know what he bought'

(6) **Trevigiano** (Bonan 2018, ex. 18&13)
   a. Pensì-tu [ che i voje magnar cossa ]?
      think=you₂PS that they wantSUBJ eat what
      'What do you think they want to eat?'
b. Me domando [ se te ga magnà cossa ]
myself ask if you2PS have eaten what
' I wonder what you ate' (⇒ real wh-question, se is semantically void!)

“Insituness” is banned from weak (7a) and strong (7b) islands in Bellunese-like languages (Munaro 1999, Poletto & Pollock 2000-2015), yet it is fine island-trapped in Trevigiano (Bonan 2019) (8):

(7) Bellunese (Munaro 1999, ex. 1.105-1.107)
   a. * Te piase-lo [ i libri che parla de che ]? Wh-island
      you like=it the books that speak of what
      'You like books about what?'
   b. ?? No te-te-ricorda [ andé che von comprà che]? Complex-NP
      NEG you2PS=yourself=remember where that have1PP bought what
      'What is it that you don't remember where we bought?'

(8) Trevigiano (Bonan 2019, ex. 105&103)
   a. No te te ricordi [ se vemo comprà cossa ]? Wh-island
      NEG you yourself remember if have1PP bought what
      'What is it that you don't remember whether we bought?'
   b. Te gà comprà [ un porsel che peza quanto ]? Complex-NP island
      you have bought a pig that weights how much
      'How big a pig did you buy?'

Note that some NIDs also have “doubling” insituness (a.o., Munaro 1999, Poletto & Pollock 2004-2015, Manzini & Savoia 2005;2011), which can be of three types (classification by Poletto & Pollock 2015, slightly modified in Bonan 2019) (9):

(9) a. Type A doubling: Clitic pronoun-strong pronoun (Illasiano, P&P 2015, ex. 26)
   Sa eto dito che?
   what have=you2PS said what
   'What did you say?'
   b. Type B doubling: Weak pronoun - tonic pronoun (Mendrisiotto, P&P 2015, ex. 28)
   Cusa t'è fai cusè?
   what you2PS have done what
   'What have you done?'
c. **Type C doubling:** Invariant operator - wh pronoun (Mendrisiotto, P&P 2015, ex. 29)

    Che fè-t dàjel a chi?
    wh do-you₂₃₂₅ give=it to whom

    'To whom will you give it to?'

Note that (i) only non-D-linked wh-words can be doubled and (ii) the relative order between the higher and the lower wh-words of doubling constructions is unchangeable.

1. Northern Italian Insituness. Classic derivations

Two major, conflicting treatments of “insituness” in NIDs have been proposed over the years: *left peripheral* (fake) insituness (Munaro et al. 2001, Poletto & Pollock 2000-2015) (1.1) and (real) *argumental* insituness (Manzini & Savoia 2005;2011) (1.2).

1.1. Left peripheral “insituness”

Starting from Poletto & Pollock 2000 and Munaro et al. 2001, NI insituness has been claimed to be the result of (masked) movements to the LP (10-10’):

    (10) **Bellunese** (Poletto & Pollock 2000)

    Ha-tu parecià che?
    have=you prepared what

    ‘What did you prepare?’

    (10’)

    Input: [IP tu ha parecià che ]

    First step: [XP che, X° [IP tu ha parecià t₁ ]]

    Second step (oversimplified): [VP [IP tu ha parecià t₁ ], Y° [XP che, X° t₁ ]]

    ➔ “insituness” in Bellunese-like languages is *fake* insituness – the wh-element is moved; its movement is masked by further movements of the remaining IP to higher left peripheral projections.

The *Remnant-IP movement analysis* is based (i) Kayne's (1998) claim that there *cannot* be covert movement of any kind; and (ii) on the assumption that the different sequences displayed (minimally) by French and Bellunese at Spell Out cannot be random and must reflect the interplay of the invariant structure of the CP-domain (11-14):
(11) French *que* vs other non-D-linked wh-words
   a. Tu vas où?
you go where
   ‘Where are you going?’
b. * Jean a acheté que?
Jean has bought what
   ‘What did Jean buy?’

(12) Bellunese *che* (‘what’): only “in situ”
   a. Ha-tu magnà che?
      have=you eaten what
      ‘What did you eat?’
b. * Che ha-tu magnà?
      what have=you eaten

(13) French *que* (‘what’): only fronted + SCII
   a. Qu’a-t-il acheté?
      what’has=t=he bought
      ‘What did he buy?’
b. * Que il a acheté?
      what he has bought

Phenomena that push a treatment of “in situ” wh-words of Bellunese-like languages as moved:

(i) Morphological similarity between French *que* (only fronted) and Bellunese *che* (only sentence-internal) + SCII (11-13).

(ii) Strong and weak islands effects (previously 7, here 14):

(14)  * Bellunese (Munaro 1999, ex. 1.105-1.107)
   a. * Te piase-lo [i libri che parla de che]?
      Wh-island
      you like=it the books that speak of what
      ‘You like books about what?’
   b. ?? No te-te-ricorda [andé che von comprà che]?
      Complex-NP
      NEG you2=PS=yourself=remember where that have1PP bought what
      ‘What is it that you don’t remember where we bought?’
(iii) “order of internal arguments” → sentence-finality requirement (15):  

(15) *Bellunese* (adapted from Poletto & Pollock 2015, ex. 2, p. 139) 

a. Al ghe a dat al libro a so fradel 
   he DAT has given the book to his brother 
   ‘He gave the book to his brother’ 
b. * Ghe ha-lo dat che a so fradel? 
   DAT has=he given what to his brother 
   ‘What has he given to his brother?’ 

c. Ghe ha-lo dat che, a so fradel? 
   DAT has=he given what # to his brother 

“[…] the dative complement *a so fradel* is necessarily ‘de-accented’ in Bellunese *che* […] questions, though not in statements like [15a]; if *che* in [15b] was in the ordinary sentence internal object position in which *il libro* in [15a] is standing, such facts would be difficult to understand.”

“[…] strings like Bellunese *A-tu magnà che?* [have=you eaten what, ‘What did you eat?’] and French *Tu as mangé quoi?* [you have eaten what] are very misleading: both result from a conspiracy involving wh-movement and remnant IP movement. Neither language allow for ‘real’ *in situ* questions in which the wh-word would be standing in its argumental position.”

(Poletto & Pollock 2015, p. 151)

This model fails to predict (at least):

- a. non sentence-final “insituiness”; 
- b. embedded "insituiness"; 
- c. island-contained "insituiness".

→ However (a-c) are attested in Romance (see 2).

1.2. Argumental insituiness

Starting from Manzini & Savoia 2005 (up to 2011), the *remnant-IP movement hypothesis* has been severely criticized for (i) theory internal reasons and (ii) data-related reasons:

(i) the labels used (*GroundP*, *OpP*, *TopicP*, etc.) are “reconstructed backwards from the required movements, rather than motivated by genuinely independent needs”; the proposed analysis faces the restrictiveness problem that is generally imputed to Kaynian movement: that Chomsky’s (1995) *Economy Principle* (=movement is *possible* only if *necessary*) does not hold for them.

(ii) Data-related arguments against a derivation involving movement of the remnant-IP:
contrary to Bellunese, Lombard dialects show no sensitivity to islands in case of non-doubling insituness (16):

(16) Grumellese (Manzini & Savoia 2005, ex. 157, p. 587)
   a. Dig-ei che gë egnit i amis de chi? Subject island
      say=them that is come the friends of whom
      ‘Whose friends do they say that came?’
   b. Ta pjah i liber ch’i parla de cohè? Relative island
      you like the books that’they speak of what
      ‘What kind of books do you like?’
   c. L’è ndâʧ ivja hènha haludà chi?
      Adjunct island
      he’is gone away without greeting who
      ‘Whom did he leave without greeting?’

!!!!! Interestingly, if the sentence internal wh-phrase is doubled by its left peripheral counterpart, island effects appear (16’):

(16’) Grumellese (Manzini & Savoia 2005, ex. 157, p. 587)
   a. * De chi dig-ei che gë egnit i amis de chi? Subject island
      of whom say=them that is come the friends of whom
   b. * Dekòha ta pjah i liber ch’i parla de cohè? Relative island
      of what you like the books that’they speak of what
   c. * Chi l’è ndâʧ ivja hènha haludà chi?
      Adjunct island
      who he’is gone away without greeting who

insituness is NOT a root phenomenon – it is in fact widely attested in long distance (17) and in indirect questions (18):

(17) Grumellese (Manzini & Savoia 2005, ex. 155, p. 591)
   a. Krèdet che al hàbe indâʧ indoé?
      think2PS that he hasSUBJ gone where
      ‘Where do you think he went?’
   b. (Kòha) pènhet che l’abe fâʧ kohè?
      (what) think2PS that he’hasSUBJ done what
      ‘What do you think he did?’

2 The original examples are given in IPA. All translitteration errors are mine.
Grumellesse (Manzini & Savoia 2005, ex. 156, p. 592)

- a. Øle hai indó l’è ndàʧ (indoé)
  want,ps know where he’is gone (where)
  ‘I want to know where he went’

- b. Domânde-ga kòha l’â fäʧ (kohè)
  ask=him what he’has done (what)
  ‘Ask him what he did’

- no distributional asymmetry between D-linked and non-D-linked wh-words in Lombard;
- no direct correlation between the availability / unavailability of SClI and “insituness”, both regular and of the wh-doubling types.

Manzini & Savoia's conclusions (oversimplified):
- in the context of micro-variation among closely-related grammars, it is possible that in some grammars some reasons impel wh-movement in embedded sentences and not in others;
- different sensitivities to islands can be explained if one considers them to be related not to conditions on movement operations but rather conditions on LF interpretive construals;
- the parameter between wh-in situ and wh-movement in NIDs is a classical one between scope construal (insituness) and overt scope (wh-movement);
- wh-doubling grammars require an overt lexicalization both of the scope marker and its variable.

- In NIDs, sentence internal wh-words are literally in situ (= in their argumental position).

This model correctly predicts:
- a. island-contained "insituness".
- b. embedded "insituness";

This model fails to predict:
- c. moved "in situ" wh-words;
  ➔ However (c) is attested in Romance (see 2).

2. Northern Italian Insituness. Novel data

The phenomena that the classic derivations of “insituness” discussed in section 1 fail to predict (non sentence-final “insituness”, embedded “insituness”, island-contained “insituness”) are actually attested in NIDs. Let us consider the cases of Trevigiano (Bonan 2018;2019) (2.1) and Comunnuovese (Donzelli 2017;2018) (2.2).
2.1. Trevigiano

Bonan (2018;2019): in Trevigiano, a Venetan dialect closely-related to Bellunese, sentence-internal wh-words need not appear at the right edge of the clause\(^3\) \(\rightarrow\) they actually undergo **systematic wh-movement** from their unmarked declarative position to a position lower than the finite \(V\) (19):

\[(19)\] **Trevigiano** (Bonan 2018) \(\text{(not attested in Lombard dialects by M&S!)}\)

\[\text{a. Ga-tu magnà} \quad \text{cuando el dolse \_ \_?} \]

\[\text{have=you eaten when the cake} \]

‘When did you eat the cake?’

\[\text{b. * Ga-tu magnà el dolse quando?} \]

\[\text{have=you eaten the cake when} \]

Also, in Trevigiano "insituness" is indeed possible in long-distance (20a) and in indirect wh-questions (20b), the latter under a semantically vacuous *if-COMP*\(^4\), *se*:

\[(20)\] **Trevigiano** (Bonan 2018)

\[\text{a. Pens-\_ea chel ne ciamàr \_ \_?} \]

\[\text{thinks=he that=us call}^{\text{FUT}} \text{when} \]

‘When does she think he will call us?’

\[\text{b. A vol saver sel ne ciamàr \_ \_?} \]

\[\text{she wants know \_ \_wh=us call}^{\text{FUT}} \text{when} \]

‘She wonders when he will call us’

IP-internal wh movimiento (see 19) is compulsory also in embedded environments (21):

\[(21)\] **Trevigiano** (Bonan 2018)

\[\text{a. Pensi-tu che a voje metar \_ \_?} \]

\[\text{think=you that she want}^{\text{SUBJ}} \text{put where the vases} \]

‘Where do you think she wants to put the vases?’

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\(^3\) The DO *el dolse* in (20a) is **NOT** left dislocated. In Bonan (2018), I show that in Trevigiano dislocations are only possible in costruction with clitic resumption, and that *marginalization* (in the sense of Cardinaletti 2001 and 2002, Samek-Lodovici 2015) are excluded categorically.

\(^4\) See Bonan (2019) on the possibility of treating *se* as an instance of embedded wh-doubling of the *invariable operator-wh word* type (see 9c) à la Poletto & Pollock (2015).
b. A se domanda se l' piantarà dove i persegheri __________
   she herself asks se he plant$_{FUT}$ where the peach.trees
   ‘She wonders where he’ll plant the peach trees’

Bonan (2019): contrary to Bellunese (Munaro 1999), in Trevigiano,"in situ" wh-words are fine both inside of weak (22) and strong (23) islands:

(22) Trevigiano: Weak islands (Bonan 2019)
   a. Wh-island
      No te te ricordi [ se vemo comprà cossa ]?
      NEG you yourself remember if have$_{1PP}$ bought what
      ‘What is it that you don't remember whether we bought?’
   b. Negative island
      No te vol 'ndar dove?
      NEG you want go where
      ‘Where is it that you don't want to go?’

(23) Trevigiano: Strong islands (Bonan 2019)
   a. Subject island
      I te gà dito che [ i clienti de chi ] no i a pagà?
      they to.you have said that the clients of whom NEG they have paid
      ‘Whose clients are said to have left without paying?’
   b. Complex-NP island
      Te gà comprà [ un porsel che peza quanto ]?
      you have bought a pig that weights how.much
      ‘How big a pig did you buy?’

→ clearly, a derivation of "insituness" that includes wh-movement to the LP and further movement of the remnant-IP is incompatible with the syntax of Trevigiano.

2.1.1 IP-internal wh-movement

My proposal(s) (Bonan 2018):

- whatever the reasons, Trevigiano clearly derives “insituness” differently from Bellunese;
in Trevigiano, “in situ” wh-words undergo IP-internal wh-movement. Building on Kato (2013) treatment of Brazilian Portuguese sentence-internal wh-words and on Manzini’s (2014) intuition about NIDs → they target a focal position in vP, the one that was called FocP in Belletti (2004). I call it whP ("little whP") (24-24’):

(24) IP-internal wh-movement (Bonan 2018, ex. 25)

a. Si-tu [[ip ndà [whp cuando ... [vp al marcà ___ ]]]? are=you gone when to.the market ‘When did you go to the market?’

b. Ga-tu [[ip posà [whp dove ... [vp i ociai ___ ]]]? have=you put where the glasses ‘Where did you put the glasses?’

(24’) Position of whP inside vP (Bonan 2018, ex. 27)

…” [vp [whp:FocP wh-phrase [wh° [TopicP [Top° [vp [v° ___ ]]]]]]

My proposal(s) (Bonan 2019):

- the (un)availability of long distance “insituness” depends on the wh-projection that is exploited in the derivation thereof (left peripheral vs. IP-internal) → pairs Trevigiano and French;
- the (un)availability of indirect “insituness” depends on the presence of an “if”-COMP like seWH, which in turn seems linked to the necessity for indirect questions to be introduced by an overt COMP (→ sets Trevigiano and French apart) (25-26):

(25) Trevigiano – Indirect questions

a. El vol saver quando che te parti
   he wants know when that you leave
   ‘He wants to know when you’re leaving’

b. El vol saver se te parti quando
   he wants know se you leave when

(26) French – Indirect questions

a. Il veut savoir quand (*que) tu pars (but see rural French)
   he wants know when *that you leave
2. Is IP-internal wh-movement attested in other NIDs? (in French, it is possible, yet not the most natural option. See Tual 2017).

2.2. Comunnuovese

Donzelli (2017;2018): Comunnuovese, a Lombard dialect, has two different types of wh-words that can appear “in situ” – the “basic type” (like cosa, ‘what’) (27a) and the “è-type” (like cosè, ‘what’) (27b):

(27) Comunnuovese (Donzelli 2018)

a. Te vest cosa?
you saw what
‘What did you see?’
b. Te vest cosè?
you saw what

Interestingly, the former are excluded from embedded contexts (28a), yet the latter are fine (28b):

(28) Comunnuovese: Distribution of wh-words in embedded contexts (Donzelli 2018)

a. * Ma se domande al fa cosa
I myself ask he does what
‘I wonder what he’s doing / what he does’
b. Ma se domande al fa cosè
I myself ask he does what

Wh-words of the è-type have a Trevigiano-like behaviour - they are fine inside of islands (29):

(29) è-type: OK inside of islands (Donzelli 2018)

a. I ha est i omegn che i maja cosè? Complex-NP island
They have seen the men that they eat what
‘They saw the man who eat what’
b. I vol mia cosê?

They want NEG what

'What is it that they don't want'

However, quite surprisingly, wh-words of the è-type never undergo IP-internal wh-movement (30a), which is reserved to the wh-words of the basic type (30b):

(30) IP-internal wh-movement? (Donzelli 2018)

a. L’ha est ndôe / *indoè ol can ___ ?

he’has seen where the dog

‘Where did he see the dog?’

b. L’ha est ol can ??ndôe / indoè ECHO!!!!

he’has seen the dog where (as in Trevigiano5)

‘He saw the dog WHERE?!’

→ these facts, coupled with the observation that wh-words of the basic type are not fine inside of islands, show that the nature of wh-words plays an essential role in the way “insituness” is derived.

Conclusions: More than one variety, more than one type of “insituness”

- the degree of morpho-syntactic variation observed in Northern Italian insituness is great (doubling / non-doubling insituness; presence / absence of SCI; compatibility with islands, embedded environments; presence / absence of IP-internal wh-movement, etc.);
- the degree of variation is even larger if one looks at Romance varieties spoken outside of Italy: how to explain French? (also: why is “insituness” possible, yet rare in Spanish and Portuguese?)
- it is rather utopic to pursue a one-fits-all derivation.

To summarize:

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5 In Bonan (2018) I show that the wh-phrase can actually stay in its base position in Trevigiano, but this gives rise to echo questions – the interrogative syntax is lost all together (no SCI) (i):

(i) Te pà magnà el dolse cuando?!

You have eaten the cake when

‘You ate the cake WHEN?!’
Is it plausible to posit that different wh-words target different wh-projections? **YES.**

- NIDs: wh-doubling constructions: the relative order between doubling wh-elements is rigidly fixed!!
- Lombard varieties described by M&S and Trevigiano allow for D-linked wh-words sentence-internally, Bellunese-like varieties do no: could this be due to the wh-projection(s) targeted by “in situ” wh-words?
- The Comunnuovese data (Donzelli 2017;2018) clearly show that different wh-words have different distributional properties, not only cross-linguistically but also language-internally.

**My proposal:**

Contra (Poletto & Pollock 2000-2015) and Manzini & Savoia (2005;2011), I argue against the possibility of positing a one-fits-all derivation for “insituness” in NIDs (and more generally, Romance).

→ the wide range of morpho-syntactic variation is better explained if one considers “insituness” to be the result of:

(i) the wh-projections available as landing sites for “insituness” in each language;
(ii) the type(s) of wh-words that each language has at its disposal⁶.

→ the reasons behind the remaining, unexplained differences will have to be looked for at the Interfaces (see French and the puzzling lack of $SCII$, for example).

**Something like this:**

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{IP-internal “insituness”} & \text{Trevigiano-like languages} & \text{& wh-words of the basic-type in CN} \\
\text{all Romance varieties} & \text{& wh-words of the basic-type in CN} & \text{& wh-words of the basic-type in CN} \\
\text{left-peripheral “insituness”} & \text{Real, argumental insituness} & \text{Real, argumental insituness} \\
\text{Bellunese-like languages} & \text{M&S’s Lombard varieties} & \text{M&S’s Lombard varieties} \\
\text{+ movement of remnant-IP} & \text{& è-type in C} & \text{& è-type in C} \\
\end{array}
\]

I will leave the discussion of the WHYs and HOWs of everything seen throughout this work for my PhD dissertation.

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⁶ That language-specific inherent properties of wh-words might play a role in their distribution (= the position they target) has already been convincingly proven in Lee (1991) and Finer (2014) – they discuss Korean-English codeswitching data suggesting that wh-words in code-switched sentences maintain the same distributional properties as in the original language.
References


