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## “Why” in situ in Northern Italian dialects

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### “Why” in situ in Northern Italian dialects

Trevigiano, a Venetan dialect, has two forms for “why”: *parché* and *parcossa*. Crosslinguistically, “why” has been argued to be merged directly in the Left Periphery (Hornstein 1995, Ko 2005, Rizzi 1990, 2001, Stepanov and Tsai 2008, Thornton 2008, Shlonsky and Soare 2011), so one does not expect it to appear sentence-internally. We show that *parché* behaves as a well-behaved ‘why’ but *parcossa* is merged sentence-internally.

#### Aims of this paper:

- Introduce novel data on *parché* and *parcossa* in Trevigiano;
- Study the different distributional properties of *parché* and *parcossa*;
- Explain how “why” is licensed sentence-internally in Trevigiano.

#### 1. Trevigiano

- (1) a. ***Chi*** *a-tu visto al marcà?*  
who have-you<sub>CL</sub> seen at.the market  
“Who did you see at the market?”  
b. *A-tu visto **chi** al marcà?*  
have-you<sub>CL</sub> seen who at.the market
- a'. ***Che profesor*** *a-ea visto al marcà?*  
what professor has-she<sub>CL</sub> seen at.the market  
“Which professor did she see at the market?”  
b'. *A-ea visto **che profesor** al marcà?*  
has-she<sub>CL</sub> seen what professor at.the market
- (2) a. ***Chi pens-ea [ che te ga visto al marcà ]?***  
who thinks-she<sub>CL</sub> that you<sub>CL</sub> have seen at.the market  
“Who does she think you saw at the market?”  
b. *Pens-ea [ che te ga visto **chi** al marcà ]?*  
thinks-she<sub>CL</sub> that you<sub>CL</sub> have seen who at.the market
- a'. ***Che maestra pens-ea [ che te ga visto al marcà ]?***  
what teacher thinks-she<sub>CL</sub> that you<sub>CL</sub> 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<sub>CL</sub> that you<sub>CL</sub> have seen what teacher at.the market

→ Bellunese: compulsory SCII; virtually all **non-D**-linked wh-phrases can **ONLY** appear “in situ” (Munaro 1995, Munaro et al. 2001, and related works).

→ French: D-linked and non-D-linked wh-phrases “in situ”; but “insituness” and SCII are NOT compatible (Mathieu 1999, Boskovic 2000, Cheng & Rooryck 2002) (3a-b). TV: “insituness” triggers obligatory Subject-Clitic Inversion (SCII):

- (3) a. \**As-tu mangé quand?* (FR)  
 have-you eaten when  
 “When did you eat?”  
 b. *T’as mangé quand?* (FR)  
 you’ve eaten when

North Italian dialects (Poletto 1993, Poletto & Vannelli 1993): *Clefting* is the most productive question formation strategy (4a-b):

- (4) a. *Chi ze-o che te a visto jeri?*  
 who COP-expl that you<sub>CL</sub> have seen yesterday  
 “Who is it that you saw yesterday?”  
 b. *Ze-o chi che te a visto jeri?*  
 COP-expl who that you<sub>CL</sub> have seen yesterday

### 1.1 Parcossa

*Parcossa* obligatorily triggers SCII (5a-b):

- (5) a. *Parcossa si-tu ndàa al marcà?*  
 parcossa is-you<sub>CL</sub> gone<sub>F</sub> to.the market  
 “Why did you go to the market?”  
 b. \**Parcossa te si ndàa al marcà?*  
 parcossa you<sub>CL</sub> is gone<sub>F</sub> to.the market

*Parcossa* is perfectly fine “in situ” in the true (as opposed to echo) question reading (5c), and it can be licensed both in regular (6a) and in reverse clefts (6b):

- (5) c. *Si-tu ndàa parcossa al marcà?*  
 is-you<sub>CL</sub> gone<sub>F</sub> parcossa to.the market  
 (6) a. *Parcossa ze-o che te me ciami a ste ore?*  
 parcossa COP-expl that you<sub>CL</sub> call me at these hours  
 “Why are you calling me so late?”  
 b. *Ze-o parcossa che te me ciami a ste ore?*  
 COP-expl parcossa that you<sub>CL</sub> call me at these hours

### 1.2 Parché

*Parché* CANNOT be combined with SCII (7a-b):

- (7) a. \**Parché si-tu ndàa al marcà?*  
 parché is-you<sub>CL</sub> gone<sub>F</sub> to.the market  
 “Why did you go to the market?”  
 b. *Parché te si ndàa al marcà?*  
 parché you<sub>CL</sub> is gone<sub>F</sub> to.the market

*Parché* is very marginal “in situ” in the non-echo reading (7c):

- (7) c. ??*Te si ndàa parché al marcà?*  
 you<sub>CL</sub> is gone<sub>F</sub> parché to.the market

*Parché* is ungrammatical in regular clefts (8a), and slightly degraded in reverse clefts (8b):

- (8) a. \****Parché ze-o*** *che te me ciami a ste ore?*  
 parché COP-expl that you<sub>CL</sub> call me at these hours  
 “Why are you calling me so late?”  
 b. ?***Ze-o parché*** *che te me ciami a ste ore?*  
 COP-expl parché that you<sub>CL</sub> call me at these hours

Summary:

	Parché	Parcossa
Ex situ + SCII	✗	✓
Ex situ NO SCII	✓	✗
In situ + SCII	✗	✓
In situ NO SCII	✗	✗
Regular cleft	✗	✓
“Reverse” cleft	?	✓

Table 1 : Distribution of *parcossa* and *parché* in TV

**1.3 The position of lexical subjects in questions with *parché* and *parcossa***

- (9) a. *Parcossa cant-ea, to mama?* (RD)  
 parcossa sings-she<sub>CL</sub> # your mother  
 “You mother, why is she singing?”  
 b. \**Parcossa to mama cant-ea?* ✗  
 parcossa your mother sings-she<sub>CL</sub>  
 “Why is your mother singing?”  
 a’. *Cuando cant-ea, to mama?* (RD)  
 when sings-she<sub>CL</sub> # your mother  
 “Your mother, when does she sing?”  
 b’. \**Cuando to mama cant-ea?* ✗  
 when your mother sings-she<sub>CL</sub>  
 “When does your mother sing?”  
 (10) a. *Parché a canta, to mama?* (RD)  
 parché she<sub>CL</sub> sings, your mother  
 “Your mother, why is she singing?”  
 b. ***Parché to mama a canta?*** ✓  
 parché your mother she<sub>CL</sub> sings  
 “Why is your mother singing?”

→ Standard Italian (StandIT) (Rizzi 2001), *perché* (11a-b vs. 12a-b):

- (11) a. *Perché ha parlato Gianni?* (StandIT)  
 perché has spoken Gianni  
 “Why did Gianni speak?”  
 b. *Perché Gianni ha parlato?* (StandIT)  
 perché Gianni has spoken
- (12) a. *Quando ha parlato Gianni?* (StandIT)  
 when has spoken Gianni  
 “When did Gianni speak?”  
 b. \**Quando Gianni ha parlato?* (StandIT)  
 when Gianni has spoken

Conclusion:

- *Parché* can be analysed as externally-merged in the left periphery.
- The different behaviour of *parcossa* can be attributed to its being externally-merged TP-internally and then (optionally) moved to the left periphery.

**2. The interaction of *parché* and *parcossa* with negation and focus**

**2.1 (In)compatibility with focus**

- (13) a. Why didn't you fix the car?  
 b. \*How didn't you fix the car?
- (14) a. *Parché no te si vignuo*  
 why NEG you<sub>CL</sub> are come  
 “Why didn't you come?”  
 b. \**Parcossa no si-tu vignuo?*  
 why NEG are-you<sub>CL</sub> come

In a bi-clausal sentence, both *parché* and *parcossa* can be construed either with the high or with low clause (15a-c):

- (15) a. *Parcossa dizi-tu [ che a ze vignua ]?* ✓short construal, ✓long construal  
 why say-you<sub>CL</sub> that she<sub>CL</sub> is come  
 “Why are you saying that she came?”  
 b. *Parché te dizi [ che a ze vignua ]?* ✓short construal  
 why you<sub>CL</sub> say that she<sub>CL</sub> is come  
 “Why are you saying that she came?”  
 c. *Parché dizi-tu [ che a ze vignua ]?* ✓long construal  
 why you<sub>CL</sub> say that she<sub>CL</sub> is come  
 “Why are you saying that she came?”

With negation (16 vs. 17):

- (16) a. \**Parcossa no dizi-tu che a ze vignua?* ✗short construal, ✗long construal  
 parcossa NEG say-you<sub>CL</sub> that she<sub>CL</sub> is come  
 b. *Parcossa dizi-tu che no a ze vignua?* ✓short construal, ✗long construal  
 parcossa say-you<sub>CL</sub> that NEG she<sub>CL</sub> is come

- (17) a. *Parché no te dizi che a ze vignua?* ✓short construal, ✗long construal  
 parché NEG you say that she<sub>CL</sub> is come
- b. *Parché dizi-tu che no a ze vignua?* ✓long construal  
 parché NEG say-you<sub>CL</sub> that she<sub>CL</sub> is come
- b'. *Parché te dizi che no a ze vignua?* ✓short construal  
 parché you say that NEG she<sub>CL</sub> is come

## 2.2 (In)compatibility with focus

- (18) a. ??*Cuando a-tu dato I POMI a Gianni?*  
 when have-you<sub>CL</sub> given THE APPLES to Gianni
- b. ??*Cuando a-tu dato i pomi A GIANNI?*  
 when have-you<sub>CL</sub> given the apples TO GIANNI
- (19) a. *Parché te ghe ga dato I POMI aa Maria?*  
 parché you DAT have given THE APPLES to.the Maria
- b. *Parché te ghe ga dato i pomi AA MARIA?*  
 parché you DAT have given the apples TO.THE MARIA
- (20) a. \**Parcozza ghe ga-tu dato I POMI aa Maria?*  
 why DAT have-you<sub>CL</sub> given THE APPLES to.the Maria
- b. \**Parcozza ghe ga-tu dato i pomi AA MARIA?*  
 why DAT have-you<sub>CL</sub> given the apples TO.THE MARIA
- (21) a. \**Ghe ga-tu dato parcozza I POMI aa Maria?*  
 DAT have-you<sub>CL</sub> given parcozza THE APPLES to.the Maria
- b. \**Ghe ga-tu dato parcozza i pomi AA MARIA?*  
 DAT have-you<sub>CL</sub> given parcozza the apples TO.THE MARIA

## 2.3 Parcozza can have a ‘pure’ reason interpretation

- (22) *But-ei parcozza i persegheri, de sta stajon?*  
 blossom-they parcozza the peach.trees, in this season  
 “Why are the peach trees blossoming so early?”

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