

Research Article

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Other-initiated repair in Italian

Abstract: This article describes the interactional patterns and linguistic structures associated with other-initiated repair, as observed in a corpus of video recorded conversation in the Italian language (Romance). The article reports findings specific to the Italian language from the comparative project that is the topic of this special issue. While giving an overview of all the major practices for other-initiation of repair found in this language, special attention is given to (i) the functional distinctions between different *open* strategies (interjection, question words, formulaic), and (ii) the role of intonation in discriminating alternative *restricted* strategies, with a focus on different contour types used to produce repetitions.

Keywords: other-initiated repair, Italian, repair initiators, intonation, repetition

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1 Introduction

Social interaction in any language necessitates a system for dealing with “problems in speaking, hearing and understanding” (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks 1977). This system involves both procedures for signalling problems and others for solving them. This study focusses on a central domain of this system in which the problem is signalled by the recipient of some talk and is solved by the speaker of that talk – what is referred to as *other-initiated repair* (OIR). The data used are video recordings of naturally occurring interaction among speakers of Italian – one of the languages investigated in the comparative project that is the topic of this special issue. After a brief description of the Italian language (§ 2) and of the procedures of data collection (§ 3), the article begins by illustrating the structure of OIR sequences (§ 4). It then surveys all the major practices for other-initiation of repair found in Italian (§ 5), covering various kinds of *open* and *restricted* strategies. In this survey, special attention is given to (i) the functional distinctions between different open strategies (interjection, question words, formulaic), and (ii) the role of intonation in discriminating alternative restricted strategies, with a focus on different contour types used to produce repetitions. Finally, the article overviews some of the morphosyntactic devices of Italian dedicated to OIR (§ 6) and the actions produced through OIR practices besides initiating repair (§ 7). The conclusion situates the findings in the cross-linguistic perspective pursued in this special issue.

2 The Italian language

Italian is spoken by over 60 million people in Italy, Southern Switzerland, and by migrant communities in several other countries including the United States, France, and Canada (Lewis, Simons, and Fennig 2014). Descriptions of the language can be found in many reference and pedagogical grammars (e.g. Lepschy

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and Lepschy 1988; Aust and Zollo 2006; Maiden and Robustelli 2007).¹ For a usage-based account centred around conversational functions, see also Proudfoot and Cardo (1996). While it is reasonable to treat Italian as one language, most speakers use regional and local varieties that are significantly influenced by the substrate Romance languages which have always coexisted with the national language (see Tosi 2001). The basic word order in all varieties of Italian is SVO, with subject pronouns being often dropped. Verbal morphology distinguishes person, number, tense and mood. And also nouns, pronouns, adjectives and articles inflect for gender and number. While Italian has both morphological and syntactic means to distinguish imperatives from other sentence types, these are generally not available to distinguish polar interrogative from declarative sentences. This lack, however, is compensated for by a systematic use of distinct intonation contours.²

A fair amount of research has been done on social interaction in Italian, including studies on family interaction and socialisation (e.g. Sterponi 2003; Fatigante 2007; Galeano and Fasulo 2009; Arcidiacono and Pontecorvo 2010), storytelling (Monzoni and Drew 2009), medical interaction (e.g. Pino and Mortari 2012; Mortari and Pino 2013), and basic domains of social organisation such as gaze behaviour (Rossano 2012), the mobilisation of response (Stivers and Rossano 2010), and — of special relevance to this article — the question-response system (Rossano 2010).

3 Data collection and corpus

The corpus on which this work is based was constructed in accordance with a set of guidelines developed by and for the members of the comparative project reported on in this special issue (see the introduction by Dingemans and Enfield for further information). Here are the key properties of the data:

Table 1: Key properties of the data collected for the studies in this issue

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- Recordings were made on video.
 - Informed consent was obtained from those who participated.
 - Target behaviour was spontaneous conversation among people who know each other well (family, friends, neighbours, acquaintances), in highly familiar environments (homes, village spaces, work areas).
 - Participants were not responding to any instruction, nor were they given a task—they were simply aware that the researcher was collecting recordings of language usage in everyday life.
 - From multiple interactions that were collected in the larger corpus, the selection for analysis in this study was of a set of 10-minute segments, taken from as many different interactions as possible (allowing that some interactions are sampled more than once), to ensure against any bias from over-representation of particular interactions or speakers.
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The video recordings were made by the author between 2009 and 2013 in several locations within the province of Trento and the urban area of Bologna (Northern Italy). 20 interactions were sampled, involving about 100 different speakers. A single 10-minute segment was taken from each interaction, for a total of 3 hours and 20 minutes. All the frequencies reported in this article are based on this core sample, though reference is occasionally made to cases found in the larger corpus. Finally, the analysis of intonation was restricted to the variety of Italian spoken in the province of Trento (Trentino Italian), as intonational systems can vary substantially across varieties.

¹ Among the most comprehensive grammars written in Italian are Serianni (1989), Renzi, Salvi and Cardinaletti (1991), Dardano and Trifone (1995). Also, the contributions in Sobrero (1993) cover all the main levels of linguistic description, including phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon and prosody.

² Some of the Romance languages that coexist with Italian, however, do use morphosyntax to distinguish polar interrogatives from declaratives (see Lusini 2013). In the Trentino language, for example, which is occasionally spoken in the video recordings used for this study (see Extract 3), polar interrogatives are marked by the position of subject pronominal elements: post-verbal (*ga-t* ‘do you have’) versus pre-verbal (*te gai* ‘you have’).

4 Sequential structure and OIR

4.1 Minimal OIR sequence

Extract (1) illustrates the typical structure of an OIR sequence. In line 1, Azio announces to Dad that they have run out of handkerchiefs. Instead of responding to Azio's announcement, Dad signals that he hasn't heard and/or understood what Azio has just said (*eh 'huh?'*). This prompts Azio to provide a solution to the problem, in this case by repeating his announcement again.³

Extract 1: Natale02_3164668

1	Azio	non ci son più- papà non ci son fazzoletti not EX be.3P more dad not EX be.3P handkerchiefs <i>there are no- Dad, there are no handkerchiefs</i>	T-1
2		(0.4)	
3	Dad	eh ITJ <i>huh?</i>	T0
4	Azio	non ci son fazzoletti not EX be.3P handkerchiefs <i>there are no handkerchiefs</i>	T+1

An other-initiation of repair (T0) establishes a retrospective sequential relation to a trouble source turn (T-1). At the same time, it also works prospectively by making relevant next the provision of a solution to the problem (T+1) (Schegloff 2007: ch. 11). In the comparative project that is the topic of this special issue, we find this basic sequential structure in all languages.

4.2 Non-minimal OIR sequence

Problems of hearing and understanding aren't always solved at the first go. Sometimes the repair offered by the initial speaker is inadequate or insufficient. In these cases, the minimal three-turn structure illustrated above gets expanded by further turns. Extract 2 is one such case.

Extract 2: Capodanno01_1813805

1	Ada	lo sai che il Michele si legge i notturni di Chopin Eva 3S.A know-2S CMP the NAME 3S.D read-3S the nocturnes of Chopin NAME <i>do you know that Michele reads Chopin's nocturnes, Eva?</i>	T-1
2	Remo	ho visto have-1S see-PSTP <i>I saw that</i>	
3		(0.5)	
4	Eva	che <i>what?</i>	T0 ₁
5		(0.7)	
6	Ada	si legge dei notturni di Chopin 3S.D read-3S some nocturnes of Chopin <i>he reads Chopin's nocturnes</i>	T+1 ₁

³ Transcripts in this article generally follow the conventions of conversation analysis (see Jefferson 2004), one exception being the use of punctuation, which here doesn't represent intonation. A question mark indicates that the utterance has an interrogative form, irrespective of the specific intonation contour used. When intonation is the focus of the analysis, it is represented with a pitch track and/or described in the text.

7	(0.5)	
8	Ada	pian pian[ino con la] destra e la sinistra= slowly slowly-DIM with the right and the left <i>little by little with the right and the left hand</i>
9	Eva	[chi] T0₂ <i>who?</i>
10	Ada	=il Michele T+1₂ the NAME <i>Michele</i>
11	Eva	ma dai but PCL <i>no way!</i>

In the trouble source turn (T-1), Ada reports an exciting fact to her sister Eva: Michele, their young nephew, has started learning to play piano by reading Chopin's nocturnes — a difficult genre for a beginner — to which Eva responds by initiating repair (*che* 'what?'). Ada then repeats the bulk of her telling ('he reads Chopin's nocturnes') and expands it by adding more details ('little by little with the right and the left hand'). As it turns out, however, Ada's repeat solves Eva's trouble only partially, which motivates her to initiate repair again. This time, instead of leaving the nature of the trouble undetermined, Eva narrows in on a particular aspect of Ada's telling: its subject (*chi* 'who?'), which the repair offered in line 6 has left underspecified. This second initiation elicits a name (*Michele*) that finally fixes the problem. At this point, Eva can go on to produce a fitted response to Ada's telling ('no way!'), thereby resuming the talk that was halted by the repair sequence.

Besides illustrating an extended OIR sequence, this case also shows that repair-initiation strategies differ in scope, that is, they locate the trouble with different degrees of specificity. It also shows that, when deployed in extended sequences, strategies tend to be ordered from wider (*che* 'what?') to narrower scope (*chi* 'who?') (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks 1977:369; Clark and Schaefer 1987:23) — a pattern that appears to hold cross-linguistically (Enfield, Drew, and Baranova in prep). This is one manifestation of the functional organisation of strategies in the domain of OIR. When using a repair initiator, people select it from a set of non-equivalent alternatives. In what follows, I explore some of the factors that influence the selection of repair initiators in the Italian language.

5 Formats for OIR

In this section, I survey the linguistic resources available in Italian for initiating repair in T0 position. While illustrating the range of forms that speakers use for this function, I also explore the contextual principles for selecting among them, as well as the functional outcomes that each formal type has — that is, the repair operations that the forms elicit in T+1.

In this project, we distinguish the following main types of repair initiator (see the introduction to this special issue):

Table 2: Some basic format types for other-initiation of repair

Open. Open type repair initiators are requests that indicate some problem with the prior talk while leaving open what or where the problem is exactly.

- *Interjection.* An interjection with questioning intonation.
- *Question word.* An item from the larger paradigm of question words in the language. Usually a THING interrogative, sometimes a MANNER interrogative.
- *Formulaic.* Expressions not incorporating interjection or question word, often managing social relations or enacting politeness.

Restricted. Restricted type repair initiators restrict the problem space in various ways by locating or characterising the problem in more detail.

- *Request type (asking for specification/clarification).* Typically done by content question words, often in combination with partial repetition.
- *Offer type (asking for confirmation).* Typically done by a repetition or rephrasing of all or part of T-1.
- *Alternative question.* Repair initiator that invites a selection from among alternatives.

Within restricted, *external* repair initiators address problems about unexpressed elements of T-1; this ‘external’ function can be performed by all of the listed format types for ‘restricted’.

The following Table shows the relative frequencies of these types in the Italian sample analysed in this study. The frequency of each type is given for i) all cases, ii) “first” cases – that is, single repair initiations generating a minimal sequence, or first repair initiations in a non-minimal sequence – and iii) “subsequent” cases – that is, repair initiations following the first in a non-minimal sequence.

Table 3: Types of repair initiators and their frequency in the Italian sample.

type	subtype	frequency in all cases	frequency in “first” cases	frequency in “subsequent” cases
Open	Interjection	15% (n=32)	22% (n=29)	4% (n=3)
	Question word	11% (n=22)	12% (n=15)	9% (n=7)
	Formulaic	4% (n=9)	6% (n=8)	1% (n=1)
Restricted	Request (seeking specification)	36% (n=74)	30% (n=39)	45% (n=35)
	Offer (seeking confirmation)	31% (n=64)	28% (n=36)	36% (n=28)
	Alternative question	1% (n=3)	2% (n=2)	1% (n=1)
Other ⁴		1% (n=3)	1% (n=1)	3% (n=2)
total		n=207	n=130	n=77

5.1 Open formats

Open formats of OIR leave relatively open what the problem is or where it should be located (Drew 1997). Their use prompts the trouble source speaker to repeat the repairable turn in full. In some cases, speakers make adjustments to the original turn they are repeating, thereby orienting to potential issues of appropriateness (see also Enfield this issue). In what follows, I illustrate the different open formats available in Italian and the environments in which they typically occur.

5.1.1 Interjection strategy

Like many – perhaps all – languages of the world (Enfield et al. 2013; Dingemanse, Torreira, and Enfield 2013), Italian provides its speakers with a monosyllabic interjection to initiate repair on others’ talk, which

⁴ The three cases classified as ‘other’ include two in which repair is initiated nonverbally and one in which the exact linguistic form is difficult to determine due to noise in the recording.

we already encountered in Extract 1 above. In standard varieties of Italian, this is composed of an open-mid, near-front, slightly elongated vowel [ɛ:], optionally preceded by a glottal stop. A perceptual and acoustic analysis of several tokens of the interjection shows that Italian speakers are consistent in aiming for the same articulatory target (Dingemanse et al. 2013). The interjection is uttered with a *low rising* intonation contour – one of the main interrogative contours (more on this below).

That said, one first observation is that the corpus at hand contains a number of instances in which the form of the interjection – more specifically, its vowel quality – is not the same. These are cases in which participants speak Trentino, a substrate Romance language that coexists with Italian in the main speech community examined in this study (see Cordin 1997). In this language, which is related to but distinct from Italian, the articulatory target for the interjection is a low-central vowel [a:]. Italian speakers that regularly code-switch to Trentino when talking to each other – such as Loretta and Piera below – vary the form of the interjection accordingly. This is in line with the claim made by Dingemanse et al. (2013) that OIR interjections are *words*, that is, lexical items with a conventional form, which may be distinct even in closely-related languages.

Extract 3: CampFamPrep_1079325

1	((Piera rummages in a kitchen cabinet))	
2	Loretta la (fa-) scade domam vera	T-1
	SCL () expire-3S tomorrow true	
	<i>it (fa-) it expires tomorrow right?</i>	
3	(0.4)	
4	Piera ah [a:]	T0
	ITJ	
	<i>huh?</i>	
5	Loretta la scade domam (vera)	T+1
	SCL expire-3S tomorrow (true)	
	<i>it expires tomorrow (right)?</i>	
6	Piera sì	
	<i>yes</i>	

Extract (3) also illustrates a common context in which the interjection is used as repair initiator: the recipient of the trouble source turn is engaged in a concurrent course of action that is potentially demanding on her attention (Dingemanse et al. under review). In this case, Piera is rummaging in a kitchen cabinet, her body leaning downward (Figure 1). Upon initiating repair, she leans back up and reorients her body to Loretta, thereby halting her ongoing activity and reallocating her attention (Figure 2). Note also that the trouble source turn is not connected to what the recipient is doing: Loretta's question is about perishable food kept in the fridge, whereas Piera is looking for a kitchen utensil.

Another example of OIR interjection – spoken in standard Italian – can be found in Extract (1). The context of use is very similar to that of Extract (3). Azio utters the trouble source turn ('there are no more- Dad, there are no handkerchiefs') from the living room, while Dad is walking back into the kitchen (Figure 3). The clash between the sequence initiated by Azio and Dad's concurrent course of action is visible in the design of the trouble source turn. Azio begins producing it with no explicit forms of addressing (Lerner 2003), but then self-repairs to insert a vocative ('Dad'). This displays Azio's understanding that Dad is leaving a context of mutual availability to engage in another activity, which makes extra work necessary to secure his reciprocity. Like in Extract (3), the recipient's bodily reorientation while initiating repair (Figure 4) is further evidence of his need to disengage from an ongoing course of action to attend to the speaker's talk.

The source of trouble illustrated in Extracts (1) and (3) is closely related to the cases of sequential disjunction discussed by Drew (1997). When the repairable turn performs an action that is disconnected from what the recipient is doing, or even initiates a course of action that disrupts the ongoing activity of the recipient, the OIR format used is likely to be an *open* one; and, as the cases above show, this will typically be the interjection.



Figure 1: Extract (3) lines 1-2. Piera rummages in a kitchen cabinet while Loretta asks her 'it expires tomorrow right?'.



Figure 2: Extract (3) line 4. Piera leans up and initiates repair ('huh?').



Figure 3: Extract (1) line 1. Dad walks into the kitchen while Azio says 'Dad, there are no more handkerchiefs'.



Figure 4: Extract (1) line 3. Dad walks back to the kitchen threshold while initiating repair ('huh?').

But this isn't the only context in which the interjection appears. The same form is used when the nature of the trouble is purely one of hearing. In the following extract, Furio asks Rino if he has found a file he has been looking for on the computer (line 1). The trouble source turn is Rino's answer to Furio ("no it's not here", line 3).

Extract 4: Precamp_1237403

1	Furio	l'hai trovato 3S.A=have-2S find-PSTP <i>did you find it?</i>	
2		(1.1)	
3	Rino	°no non c'è° no not EX=be.3S <i>°no it's not here°</i>	T-1
4	Furio	eh ITJ <i>huh?</i>	T0
5	Rino	non c'è ((increased loudness)) not EX=be.3S <i>it's not here</i>	T+1

The context here is clearly different from the cases we have analysed above (1 and 3). The trouble source turn is part of an already established course of action – it is the second pair part of a question answer-sequence. Given the position of the repairable turn, the source of trouble cannot be sequential, or due to the concurrence of diverging courses of action. Instead, it appears to be a hearing problem, due to Rino's delivery of his answer in a rather soft voice. This is evidenced by the design of T+1, where Rino repeats the answer with increased loudness.

5.1.2 Question word strategies

The question word strategy in Italian varies in the exact form it takes. First, the question word for 'what' comes in three variants: the compound *che cosa* (literally, 'which thing'), the word *cosa* (the second element of the compound taken individually), and the word *che* (the first element of the compound). All three of these variants can be translated with the English 'what'. While all three are attested in the corpus used for this study, they differ in frequency, *cosa* being the most frequent. Second, speakers of Italian appear to use *cosa* and its variants (the THING question words) and the alternative question word *come* 'how' (expressing MANNER) differently. In what follows, I present cases of both types of question word and suggest a functional distinction between them in the domain of OIR.

In Extract (5), Eva and Mirko are working in the kitchen. While doing the washing-up, Eva asks Mirko if a certain piece of crockery that is sitting next to the sink contains water for the cat (line 2). Mirko then initiates repair with *cosa* 'what?', uttered with rising intonation.

Extract 5: Natale01_167407

1		(55.0)	
2	Eva	quel:: coso lì èl quel del gat Mario uh Mirko that thingy there be.3S=SCL of-the cat NAME uh NAME <i>that:: thingy there is it for the cat, Mario, uh, Mirko?</i>	T-1
3	Mirko	cosa <i>what?</i>	T0
4		(0.3)	
5	Eva	quel piatim lì ((looks to plate)) that plate-DIM there <i>that little plate there</i>	T+1
6		(.)	

7 Eva	[èl del gat be.3S=SCL of-the cat is it for the cat?	T+1
8 Mirko	[sì yes	

Eva's question comes up "out of the blue", after around a minute of silence, and therefore potentially brings about the same sort of sequential trouble as many topic-initial turns (Drew 1997). However, the presence of self-repair at the end of the turn ('Mario, uh, Mirko?'), as well as the hesitation before mentioning the key referent of the question ('that:: thing there'), should in principle make up for its abruptness (Schegloff 1979:270–271; Drew 1997:76–77). That said, the clearest difference between this sequence and the interjection-based sequences examined above appears to be the repair operation performed in T+1, and its relation to the trouble source. Unlike cases (1), (3) and (4), the speaker does not just repeat the original turn, but adjusts it in a meaningful way, by replacing the vague term 'thingy' with the more specific term 'little plate'. In so doing, she orients to the inadequacy of the trouble source turn, which in this case contains an unclear reference.⁵ As we see in the next example, this is an important element of distinction between repair sequences initiated with the question word *cosa* 'what?' and those initiated with the question word *come* 'how?'

In Extract (6), Silvia and Clara are playing cards. The sequence takes place in the course of Silvia's move, after she finishes counting the points earned by her team in the current hand so far (line 1).

Extract 6: Circolo01_609007

1 Silvia	quarantazinqe novantazinqe <i>forty-five ninety-five</i>	
2	(1.7)	
3 Silvia	gat: re have-2S=2S.SCL king(s) <i>do you: have {any} kings?</i>	T-1
4	(1.8)/((Clara keeps staring at her own cards))	
5 Silvia	Clara NAME <i>Clara?</i>	
6	(0.3)/((Clara raises gaze to Silvia))	
7 Clara	come how <i>how? (=sorry?)</i>	T0
8 Silvia	re king(s) <i>{any} kings?</i>	T+1
9	(0.3)	
10 Clara	no <i>no</i>	

Silvia counts the points during her move, in order to determine what card combination she should play next. She and Clara have been consulting on this until a few seconds before Extract (6) begins. As Silvia's teammate, Clara can be expected to assist her in the decision process and to be ready to provide information that Silvia may need to make her move. However, after Silvia asks her question, Clara does not respond, but keeps staring at her own cards (line 4). After almost two seconds of silence, when it becomes clear that

⁵ Note that, although the reformulation of reference turns out to be sufficient for Mirko to answer the initial question (which he does in overlap in line 8), Eva goes on to produce a full repetition, orienting to the *open* scope of Mirko's *cosa* 'what?'

no answer is forthcoming, Silvia pursues response with a vocative (line 5). Clara then initiates repair (*come* ‘how?’), which Silvia supplies by repeating the main referent of her question (‘{any} kings?’). Note that this repair operation does not involve any replacement, rephrasing or insertion (cf. Schegloff 2013). In fact, Silvia omits the verb *gat* ‘do you have’, making the question elliptical. In so doing, Silvia repropose her original formulation, implying that it was adequate the first time round.

So here we have a T-1 turn with no apparent design flaw, which the recipient can be expected to pay attention to, but for some reason doesn’t. The responsibility for the trouble therefore belongs to the recipient, rather than to the speaker (Robinson 2006). This is, I argue, what motivates the selection of the question word *come* ‘how’ as repair initiator, in place of the alternative *cosa* ‘what’, which instead occurs when the original turn is treated as potentially inadequate (like in Extract 5). On this account, the repair initiator *come* can be appropriately translated with ‘sorry?’ (see Robinson 2006), which is the closest rendering of its interactional meaning.

5.1.3 Other open strategies

Besides interjections and question words, most other cases of *open* OIR involve a formulaic repair initiator. These cases include one instance of *prego* ‘pardon?’ (literally, ‘I beg’), two clausal forms involving *scusa* ‘excuse me’, and six instances of the form *non ho capito* ‘I don’t understand’, often embedded in a larger sentential construction. In this section, I focus on this last format.

Kurhila (2013) argues that verbalisations of non-understanding have a special status among open repair initiators. First, these forms appear to be “less open”: although they don’t target any specific element in the prior talk, they convey that the trouble is not one of hearing. So, while being unfocused, they do characterise the nature of the problem somewhat. Second, ‘I don’t understand’ forms normally elicit a multi-unit repair solution that goes beyond the immediately prior turn, reaching back to elements of the earlier talk.

Kurhila’s observations are based on occurrences of ‘I don’t understand’ in interactions between native and non-native speakers of Finnish. But many elements of her analysis appear to hold also in interactions between native speakers of Italian.

In Extract (7), people are gossiping about the love life of a common friend (Furio, mentioned in line 1). One participant, Marzia, is just back in town after a period of study abroad and is not up to date on all the details of Furio’s story. Her understanding of the gossip is made even more difficult by the fact that the others are talking in a jocular and deliberately cryptic manner.

Extract 7: Letto-Ed_39881

- 1 Enea eh che Furio se non sta con la Nadia dopo è triste
PCL CN NAME if not stay-3S with the NAME after be.3S sad
right ‘cause Furio gets sad if he can’t be with Nadia
- 2 ((Marzia and Rosa laugh))
- 3 Eva non era ‘A’ ((to Enea))
not be-IPF-3S ‘A’
wasn’t it ‘A’?
- 4 ((looks at Rosa))
- 5 ((Eva and Rosa laugh))
- 6 Enea sì no ma [sai=
yes no but know-2S
yea well but you know
- 7 Eva [()
- 8 Enea =A A per [A A per ‘dele’ [no eh
‘A’ ‘A’ for ‘A’ ‘A’ for ‘dele’ no PCL
A- A for... A- A for ‘dele’ was it

9	Eva	[A-	[e- esa(hh)tto exactly e- exa(hh)ctly	
10	Marzia	no questa me la devi spiegare non ho capito ((to Rosa)) no this 1S.D 3S.A must-2S explain-INF not have-1S understand-PSTP well this one you have to explain it to me, I don't understand		T0
11	Rosa	eh perché inizialmente aveva PCL because initially have-IPF-3S well because in the beginning he was		T+1
12		un qualche interesse per la Adele one some interest for the NAME somewhat interested in Adele		

After Enea hints at Furio's soft spot for a girl called Nadia (line 1), Eva mentions another girl to be brought into the gossip, whose name begins with 'A' ('wasn't it 'A?') line 3). Moments later, Enea pieces together the name of the girl: *Adele* (line 8), which gets confirmed by Eva ('*exa(hh)ctly*'). At this point, Marzia initiates repair. She does so by means of an explicit request for explanation ('well this one you have to explain it to me') followed by the phrase *non ho capito* 'I don't understand'. This OIR does not locate the trouble in any specific component of the prior talk. At the same time, it conveys that the trouble is not one of hearing, but of understanding. But what is its exact source? The repair solution provided by Rosa shows that it doesn't have to do with recognising Adele (whose name hasn't been topicalised), but rather with the background information presumed by Eva and Enea in introducing her as a character of the gossip. This information is not shared by Marzia, who has been out of town, and is made even less accessible by the jocular and cryptic character of the talk.

In sum, constructions that include *non ho capito* 'I don't understand' appear to be used to initiate repair when the source of trouble is a lack of common ground. This type of problem potentially scopes across a larger stretch of the prior talk than just the directly preceding turn – a feature that distinguishes *non ho capito* 'I don't understand' from other open repair initiators. Such a strategy elicits the provision of background information that was assumed but not made explicit in the prior talk.

5.2 Restricted formats

As we have noted already, repair initiators vary in how they locate the trouble and in how they identify its nature. So far we have been concerned with *open* initiators that leave mostly unspecified where and what the trouble source is, only varying in the extent to which they target the immediately preceding turn (interjection and question words) or a larger stretch of the prior talk (*non ho capito* 'I don't understand'). Of these strategies, only *non ho capito* 'I don't understand' appears to specify the nature of the problem to a certain extent by ruling out a hearing cause.

We now turn to another class of OIR formats characterised by a greater "strength" or "power" in locating the repairable (Schegloff et al. 1977:369). The design of these formats allows the repair-initiating participant to narrow in on a specific aspect of the prior turn, and to signal what kind of trouble this is causing. This class of *restricted* formats includes requests for clarification or specification of single components of a proposition – such as the person, place or thing being talked about – and also offers of a candidate understanding of what has been said, to be confirmed or disconfirmed. In what follows, I survey these types focussing on two aspects: the role of morphosyntactic frames in characterising the trouble, and the role of intonation in marking the function of content question words and repeats.

5.2.1 Requesting clarification

There are several aspects of a turn that a recipient can seek clarification or specification of. One concerns the components of the proposition conveyed by the turn, such as the subject or actor of an event (who?), the objects involved (what?), or the place or time at which it happened (where? when?). Like other languages, Italian provides a set of content question words, or "WH words" to initiate repair on these components. Table (4) gives a summary of the cases in the Italian sample in which clarification or specification is sought by means of a WH word. The cases are sorted by the ontological category being questioned — THING, PERSON, PLACE, or TIME (Ultan 1978; Cysouw 2005)⁶ — and by the WH word used. Not surprisingly, the two normally match, with one WH word (*quale* 'which [one]') being applicable to more than one ontological category.

Table 4: Frequencies of restricted repair initiators requesting clarification that feature WH words, distinguished by ontological category.

ontological category	WH word used	frequency
THING	<i>cosa</i> 'what'	35% ($n=19/54$)
	<i>quale</i> 'which'	4% ($n=2/54$)
PERSON	<i>chi</i> 'who'	26% ($n=14/54$)
	<i>quale</i> 'which'	2% ($n=1/54$)
PLACE	<i>dove</i> 'where'	7% ($n=4/54$)
TIME	<i>quando</i> 'when'	2% ($n=1/54$)
other		24% ($n=13/54$)

The next example illustrates the use of a WH word to seek specification of the thing being talked about. The trouble in this case is the referent of the pronoun *–la* 'it' (line 1). After the recipient initiates repair with *cosa* 'what', the speaker specifies the reference with a full noun phrase ('the scientific calculator').

Extract 8: Natale02_573197

1 Lisa	non ho ancora iniziato ad usarla not have-1S yet begin-PSTP to use-INF=3S.A <i>I haven't yet started using it</i>	T-1
2	(0.7)	
3 Gildo	<i>cosa</i> <i>what</i>	T0
4 Lisa	<i>la calcolatrice scientifica</i> <i>the scientific calculator</i>	T+1

The WH word used for this type of restricted repair initiation — *cosa* 'what' — is the same used for open repair initiation (see Extract 5). Like other languages, however, the Italian language allows for formally distinguishing the two uses of the word by means of intonation — the same happens in English (Schegloff 1997:516; Benjamin 2013:3), German (Egbert, Golato, and Robinson 2009) and Korean (Kim 1999), while other languages such as Chintang (Tibeto-Burman) and Murrinh-Patha (Southern Daly) mark the same distinction morphosyntactically (Dingemans, Blythe, and Dirksmeyer 2014).

The following figures illustrate the intonation contours of the two versions of *cosa* 'what' — open and restricted. Figure (5) shows the pitch track of the open *cosa* uttered by Mirko in Extract (5); Figure (6) shows

⁶ Elements categorised as THINGS here include concrete referents (e.g. a calculator, see Extract 8) as well as abstract ones (e.g. a story, or the name of a mountain trail). Elements that could not be assigned to any of the above categories are listed under "other" (including 5 cases of *perchè* 'why'). Cases in which the WH word is part of a format that doesn't target an ontological component of the proposition (e.g. *come x* 'what do you mean x', see below) are excluded from the count.

the pitch track of the restricted *cosa* uttered by Gildo in Extract (8). When used as an open repair initiator, *cosa* is produced with a *low rising* intonation contour. Following the conventions of autosegmental metrical phonology (Pierrehumbert 1980; Ladd 2008) and its adaptations to the analysis of Italian (Grice et al. 2005), this contour can also be transcribed as $L^* L+H\%$, where L^* stands for a low tone on the accented syllable (in this case, *co-*) and $L+H\%$ stands for a terminal rise (in this case associated with the second syllable of the word: *-sa*). On the other hand, when used as a restricted repair initiator, *cosa* is produced with a *falling* intonation contour (or $H^*+L L\%$), where the pitch begins high on the accented syllable *co-*, then descends, and stays low on the second and last syllable *-sa*.⁷

The association of these contour types with the two functions of *cosa* is not arbitrary. The *low rising* contour is the same used to produce other open OIR forms such as *eh* ‘huh?’ and *come* ‘how?’ (=‘sorry?’), whereas the *falling* contour is the same used to produce other restricted forms, including all the other WH words that seek clarification or specification (*chi* ‘who’, *quale* ‘which’, *dove* ‘where’, *quando* ‘when’).

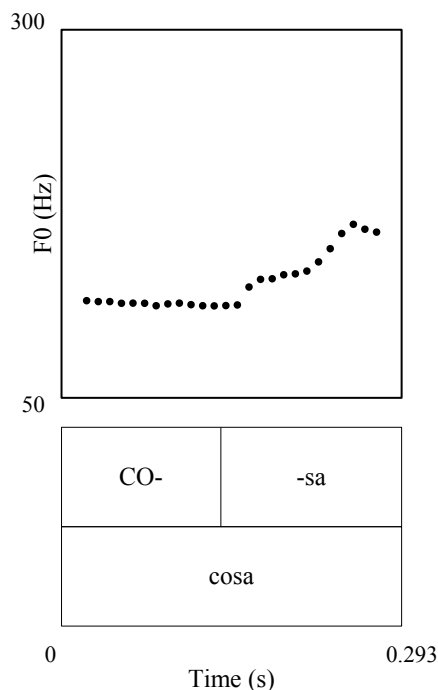


Figure 5. Open *cosa* ‘what’ produced by Mirko in Extract (5) with a *low rising* contour



▶ Sound clips are available as supplementary materials. To play the clips inside the PDF, right-click on the audio icon and select ‘View in floating window’.

We now turn to another strategy for seeking clarification: a request containing the partial or full repetition of the trouble source turn framed by a particular morphosyntactic device. In what follows, I focus particularly on (1) repeats prefaced or followed by *cosa vuol dire* ‘what does it mean’ and on (2) repeats prefaced by *come* ‘how’ (=‘what do you mean’). In both of these formats, the repeat locates the source of the trouble, while the frame specifies its nature.

In Extract (9), Anna and Diego are talking about Anna’s upcoming get-together with an old friend of hers. In lines 1-3, Diego warns Anna that her friend’s jealous girlfriend (the ‘pit bull’) is likely to give Anna a hard time, possibly leading to a tense situation (line 3). Anna’s response to Diego’s warning, which becomes the trouble source, is meant to reassure him that she won’t say anything flirty or unseemly that may spark the girlfriend’s jealousy.

⁷ The falling movement is late in the accented syllable. This motivates the notation H^*+L (cf. Grice et al. 2005).

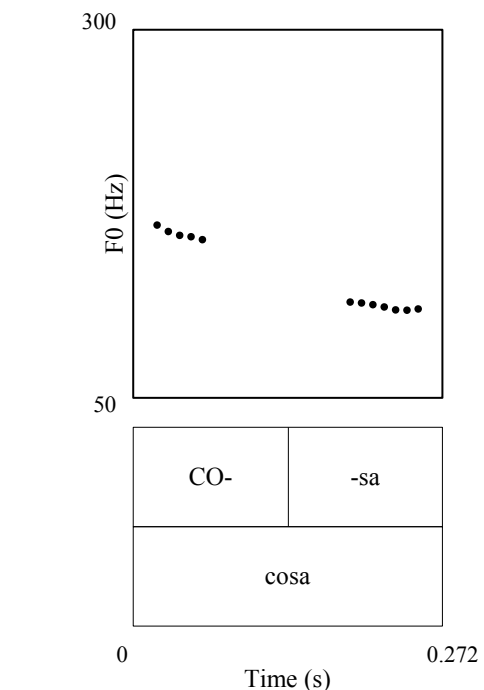


Figure 6. Restricted *cosa* ‘what’ produced by Gildo in Extract (8) with a *falling* contour



Extract 9: Diego&Anna_3007400

- 1 Diego sì così se c'è lì:: il pit- il pit bull
 yes like.this if EX=be.3S there the pit the pit bull
 right, so if he's the::re with the 'pit bull'...
- 2 (1.2)
- 3 Diego sbedebembem! ((mimics the sound of people brawling))
- 4 (1.2)
- 5 Anna non gli dico niente T-1
 not 3S.D say-1S nothing
 I won't say anything
- 6 (0.7)
- 7 Diego cosa vuol dire non gli dico niente T0
 what want-3S say-INF not 3S.D say-1S nothing
 what does it mean 'I won't say anything'?
- 8 (1.7)
- 9 Anna mica gli dico ciao amore della mia vita T+1
 PCL 3S.S say-1S hi love of-the my life
 of course I'm not going to tell him 'hi love of my life
- 10 voglio guzzarti cè
 want-1S fuck-INF=2S.A PCL
 I want to sleep with you', I mean
- 11 (0.9)
- 12 Anna lo saluto gli faccio gli auguri e basta
 3S.A greet-1S 3S.D make-1S the wishes and suffice-3S
 I'm going to say hi, give him my best wishes, and nothing more

Anna's T-1 *non gli dico niente* 'I won't say anything' is ambiguous between a commitment to not saying anything *at all* and a commitment to not saying anything *inappropriate*. As a reassurance to Diego, it fails to specify what it is that Anna will avoid saying to her friend. Diego's request for clarification targets the whole turn and encloses it in a particular clausal frame that literally questions the meaning of the repeated material. While in some cases this format is used to seek clarification of the "literal meaning" of an unfamiliar expression or word (e.g. *cosa vuol dire Kalashnikov* 'what does Kalashnikov mean?'), in other cases it targets the "intended meaning" of the utterance (Grice 1975, 1989). Extract (9) is one such case. In response to Diego's OIR, Anna explains what she meant by 'I won't say anything'. She unpacks the implications of her utterance by specifying just the kinds of things she won't say to her friend that would make his girlfriend angry ('hi love of my life I want to sleep with you'), and then, after a pause, also the kinds of innocuous things she will limit herself to saying (line 12).

A format that works similarly, though not equivalently, to *cosa vuol dire x*, is *come x* 'how x' (= 'what do you mean x'). Here, the preface used to introduce the repeat consists in the question word *come* 'how', which we have already encountered in section 5.1.2. Its use in this restricted format, however, is unrelated to its *open* function. When prefacing repeats (full or partial), *come* 'how' has a function that is illustrated in the next example.

Three sisters are talking about a handwritten music score that was recently found by a member of their family and then circulated to others. Since Cinzia received a copy of the score separately, at a later stage, she is not aware that her sisters, Ada and Eva, have already been able to inspect it. In line 1, Cinzia shows the score to them and asks if they recognise that it was written by their late father. As she looks at the score, Ada confirms her recognition of their father's handwriting ('sure it's Dad's writing') and then further asserts her appreciation of such a valuable object by reporting that she mentioned the very same thing to Magda (their young niece) in the morning. This second part of Ada's response becomes the trouble source.

Extract 10: Natale01_1049850

- 1 Cinzia e voi diseme se questa no l'è la scrittura del papà
and 2P.N say-NPST-2P=1S.D if this not SCL=be.3S the writing of-the dad
you guys now tell me: isn't this Dad's writing?
- 2 (1.1)/((Ada and Eva look at score))
- 3 Ada certo che è la scrittura del papà
certain CMP be.3S the writing of-the dad
sure it's Dad's writing
- 4 l'ho proprio [detto alla Magda stama]ttina T-1
3S.A=have-1S really say-PSTP at-the NAME this.morning
I told Magda just this morning
- 5 Cinzia [da:::i]
ITJ
aww:::
- 6 (0.6)
- 7 Ada questo è il papà che scrive certo
this be.3S the dad REL write-3S certain
this is Dad writing, of course
- 8 (0.6)
- 9 Cinzia come 'l'ho proprio detto alla Magda' T0
how 3S.A=have-1S really say-PSTP at-the NAME
how (=what do you mean) 'I told Magda'?
- 10 (0.2)
- 11 Ada alla Ma[gda stamattina in chiesa hanno cantato T+1
at-the NAME this.morning in church have-3P sing-PSTP
to Magda this morning in church, they sang-
- 12 Eva [perché anche noi adoperem ste partiture qua=
because also 1P.N use-1P these parts here
because we too use these parts here
- 13 Ada hanno canta[to:::] mm::
have-3P sing-PSTP
they sang::: mm::
- 14 Cinzia [°ah:::°]
ITJ
°oh:::°
- 15 Ada è la Emma che ha diffuso questa qui
be.3S the NAME REL have-3S diffuse-PSTP this here
it's Emma who circulated this

After Ada confirms her recognition of their father's handwriting, and in overlap with the second TCU of her turn (the trouble source), Cinzia produces an emotive interjection *da:::i* 'aww:::' (Wierzbicka 1999) conveying her affection for her father. In the next few seconds, Cinzia gazes and smiles at Ada, while Ada reconfirms her recognition and displays her epistemic authority ('of course'). At this point, Cinzia initiates repair using a *come x* format. Unlike all cases we have seen so far, this OIR is displaced from the trouble source turn. This is an affordance of repeat-based strategies, which allow for locating the repairable also from a non-adjacent position (Jefferson 1972:298–299). Cinzia's repeat singles out a specific part of T-1 that is problematic for her, while the preface *come* indicates the nature of the problem.

Unlike *cosa vuol dire x* 'what does x mean' *come* as a framing device is not transparent in characterising the recipient's trouble, but is rather "grammaticalised" with this function. Cases such as (10) suggest that *come* indicates that the repeated utterance is unexpected — in other words, that the repair-initiating participant lacks the presuppositions needed to understand its relevance or truthfulness.

Here the trouble seems to arise for two reasons. The first concerns the sequential placement of the trouble source utterance. After answering Cinzia's question ('sure it's Dad's writing', line 3), Ada adds the trouble source utterance ('I told Magda just this morning') to demonstrate her epistemic independence over the provenance of the music score (see Heritage and Raymond 2005; also Enfield 2013:127–128). By asserting that she reported the same piece of news to Magda already that morning, she gives evidence of her prior knowledge. However, this demonstration is not directly relevant to the progress of the course of action launched by Cinzia, which is rather aimed at sharing the discovery of the music score with her sisters. This misplacement is reflected in the fact that 'I told Magda just this morning' presupposes the recipient's access to events that haven't been yet introduced into the conversation. Cinzia is not aware that her sisters have already seen the music score (which is what motivates her showing it to them as news in line 1); nor is she aware of the context in which Ada may have explained the provenance of the music score to their niece Magda. This is what Ada needs to explain in the following talk: she met Magda that morning in church, where Magda regularly sings, together with Eva; on that occasion, they sang the song written by Cinzia's father, which was given to them by another family member (Emma).

The function of *come*-prefaced repeats in Italian is similar to that of *what do you mean*-prefaced repeats in English, as described by Schegloff (1997) and by Raymond and Sidnell (2013), who argue that this repair initiator signals that the assumptions required to understand an utterance are not shared by the recipient. Other languages such as German fulfil this function using the same semantic device as Italian: a repeat prefaced by the question word 'how', in German *wie* (Golato and Golato in press).

5.2.2 Offering a candidate understanding for confirmation

Another class of restricted OIR strategies are those designed to solicit the speaker's confirmation or disconfirmation of a candidate understanding put forward by the recipient (Schegloff et al. 1977:378–379; Heritage 1984a:318ff). In this section, I illustrate two types of candidate understandings: candidate *interpretations* and candidate *hearings* of the trouble source utterance (cf. Dingemanse et al. 2014:26). While *hearings* normally involve the repetition of all or part of T-1, *interpretations* typically involve rephrasing or adding to what has been said (possibly drawing on earlier turns). This is illustrated in Extract (11) below, where Furio is complaining to Sofia about his uncertain future.

Extract 11: BiscottiMattina01_1811155

1 Furio	e il prossimo anno sarò un barbone and the next year be-FUT-1S one hobo <i>and next year I'm going to be a hobo</i>	
2 Sofia	((laughs))	
3	(1.2)	
4 Furio	no a parte gli scherzi va' che ci sto pensando seriamente no at part the jokes look-IMP.2S CMP D stay-1S think-GER seriously <i>no, joking aside, I'm seriously considering it</i>	T-1
5 Sofia	a fare il barbone to do-INF the hobo <i>becoming a hobo?</i>	T0
6 Furio	sì yes	T+1

The trouble here appears to lie in a potential incoherence between the repairable turn and the speaker's earlier talk, which has consequences for the recipient's understanding of the anaphoric relation between the two. In line 1, Furio talks about becoming a hobo as something that is 'going to' happen to him (accidentally). But as he refers to it again in T-1, he characterises it as something he is 'considering' (purposely). This prompts Sofia to check her understanding by unpacking Furio's implied reference (*ci* 'it'). In doing this, she effectively offers a candidate repair, to be accepted or rejected by Furio.

As said above, candidate *interpretations* can be distinguished from another strategy for seeking confirmation: candidate *hearings*, which involve repeating (part of) the trouble source turn (Jefferson 1972; Schegloff et al. 1977:368). In Extract (12), Diego and Anna are talking about places where Anna has been on holiday.

Extract 12: Diego&Anna_3477229

1 Diego	com'è che si chiama il paese how=be.3S REL IM call-3S the village <i>what's the village called?</i>	
2	(0.5)	
3 Anna	Canonica NAME <i>Canonica</i>	T-1
4 Diego	Canonica NAME <i>Canonica?</i>	T0
5	(0.6)	
6 Anna	sì <i>yes</i>	T+1
7 Diego	ma dove stai guardando but where stay-2S look-GER <i>where are you looking?</i>	

The repetition of the trouble source turn here is aimed at checking if what is repeated was indeed said by the initial speaker. Like candidate interpretations, candidate hearings are normally responded to with confirmation ('yes', line 6) or disconfirmation.

It is also important to note that both types of candidate understandings seeking confirmation are normally delivered with the same *rising-falling* intonation contour. Figures (7) and (8) illustrate the contour as it is produced by Sofia in Extract (11) and by Diego in Extract (12). This consists of a rise on the last accented syllable of the utterance (L*+H) followed by a fall on the next unaccented syllable (H+L).⁸ This unaccented syllable may be final, as in *a fare il barBOne* (Figure 7), or not, as in *CaNOnica* (Figure 8), in which case the pitch stays low after it.⁹

⁸ The peak of the rise is reached relatively late in the accented syllable, thus the notation L*+H (see Grice et al. 2005:369).

⁹ If the last word of the utterance is an oxytone, that is, if it is accented on the last syllable, this is typically lengthened to allow for the production of both the rising and the falling movement within it.

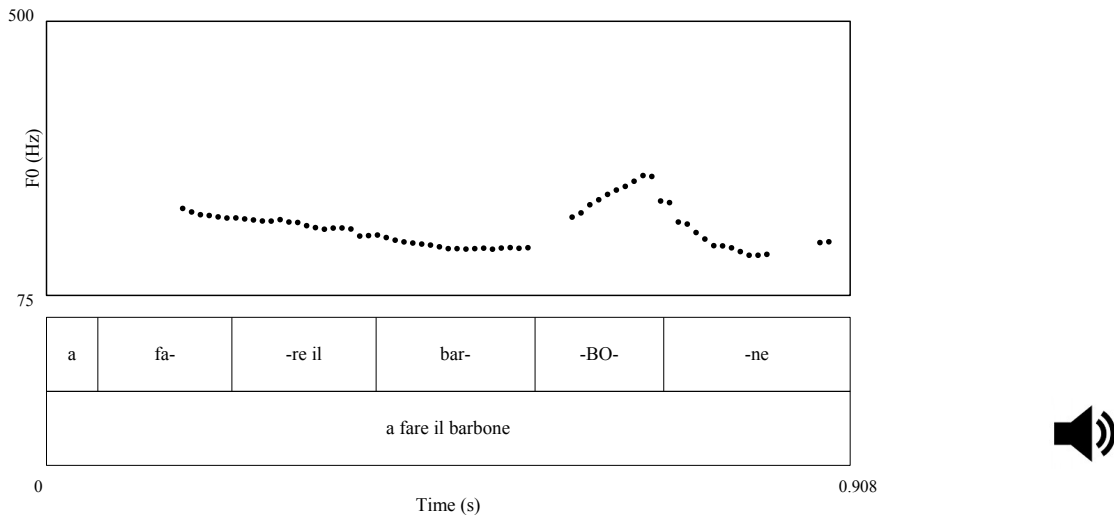


Figure 7. *Rising-falling* contour for seeking confirmation (‘becoming a hobo?’), produced by Sofia in Extract (11).

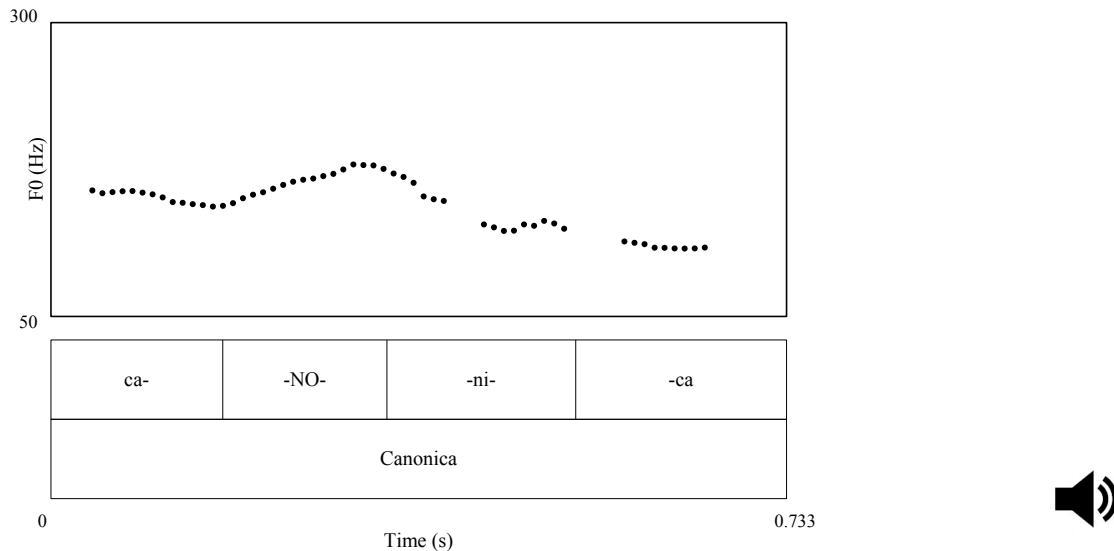


Figure 8. *Rising-falling* contour for seeking confirmation (‘Canonica?’), produced by Diego in Extract (12).

This *rising-falling* contour is a main interrogative contour in the variety of Italian represented in my data – Trentino Italian (cf. Grice et al. 2005; Savino 2012 on the same contour used in other varieties). In the larger question-response system, it is typically used to produce what linguists and phonologists of intonation refer to as “confirmation-seeking questions” (Bolinger 1989) or “checks” (Grice et al. 1995; Carletta et al. 1997). These stand in opposition to “information-seeking questions” or “queries”, which are traditionally defined as being about “new information” or, in more conversational terms, about referents or events that are generally not grounded in, or don’t proceed from, the immediately preceding talk. This has recently been reinterpreted as a distinction between questions that are prototypically *sequence-internal* – furthering a course of action or topic that is already on the table, typically led by questionee, or by questioner and questionee jointly – and questions that are *sequence-initial* – launching a new course of action or topic that is often part of the questioner’s own agenda (Torreira and Floyd 2012).¹⁰ Following Torreira and Floyd’s proposal, I carried out a preliminary analysis of 30 non-OIR polar question-response sequences drawn

¹⁰ Examples of these two question types can be found in Extract (4), line 1 (‘did you find it?’), where the question is preceded by a joint proposal of the participants to look for the files, and in Extract (5), line 2 (‘that thingy there is it for the cat, Mario, uh, Mirko?’), where the question is unrelated to any prior topic of talk and preceded by a long silence.

from the same sample used for this study. This showed a clear association of the *rising-falling* contour with sequence-internal questions, in opposition to a *low rising* contour, associated with sequence-initial questions (see below). This pattern is consistent with the role of the *rising-falling* contour in the OIR domain, where it is used with strategies that seek confirmation of a candidate understanding of the prior talk.

In the next section, we see that the *rising-falling* contour distinguishes requests for confirmation from other restricted types of repair initiation. This becomes especially important in the context of repetition.

5.2.3 The role of intonation in marking the function of repeats

In the previous section, we examined a repeat designed to seek confirmation of a candidate understanding by the speaker (Extract 12). Whereas other languages such as Mandarin and Lao mark repeats with this function with turn-final particles (Wu 2006; Enfield, this issue), Italian uses one of its main interrogative contours (in the variety documented here, a *rising-falling* one). I now focus on two other types of repair initiation done by means of a repeat and show that intonation is crucial for discriminating their function.

The following extract illustrates what we may refer to as a “hanging repeat”, functioning as a request for completion. The repair-initiating participant repeats the trouble source turn only up to a certain point as a way to prompt the speaker to “fill in the rest”.¹¹

Extract 13: Capodanno01_2094542

1	Eva	ho ascoltato il concerto de- i i W[iener have-1S listen-PSTP the concert of the the Wieners <i>I listened to the concert of- the the Wieners</i>	T-1
2	Ada	[ah-	
3		(0.5)	
4	Ada	a- e- i- il concerto the concert <i>a- e- t- the concert...?</i>	T0
5		(0.5)	
6	Eva	dei Wiener of-the Wieners <i>of the Wieners</i>	T+1

In T-1, Eva tells Ada that she listened to the concert of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, which she refers to as ‘the Wieners’. Ada’s partial repeat *il concerto* ‘the concert...?’ is aimed at eliciting the possessive phrase that complemented ‘the concert’ in the trouble source turn, which is supplied by Eva in T+1. Note that Ada’s repeat does not contain any preposition (e.g. *di* ‘of’) that would convey syntactic incompleteness. At a morphosyntactic level, then, such a repeat might in principle be used as a request for confirmation, just like in Extract (12). The crucial signal indicating that Ada does not want Eva to confirm *that* she said ‘the concert’, but instead to repeat again what she said *after* ‘the concert’, is the intonation contour she uses: a *high rising* contour (Figure 9). This consists of an early rise on the last accented syllable of the utterance (L+H*) followed by a higher terminal rise (H%).

¹¹ An analogous strategy used by (English) language teachers has also been described as a “designedly incomplete utterance” (Koshik 2002).

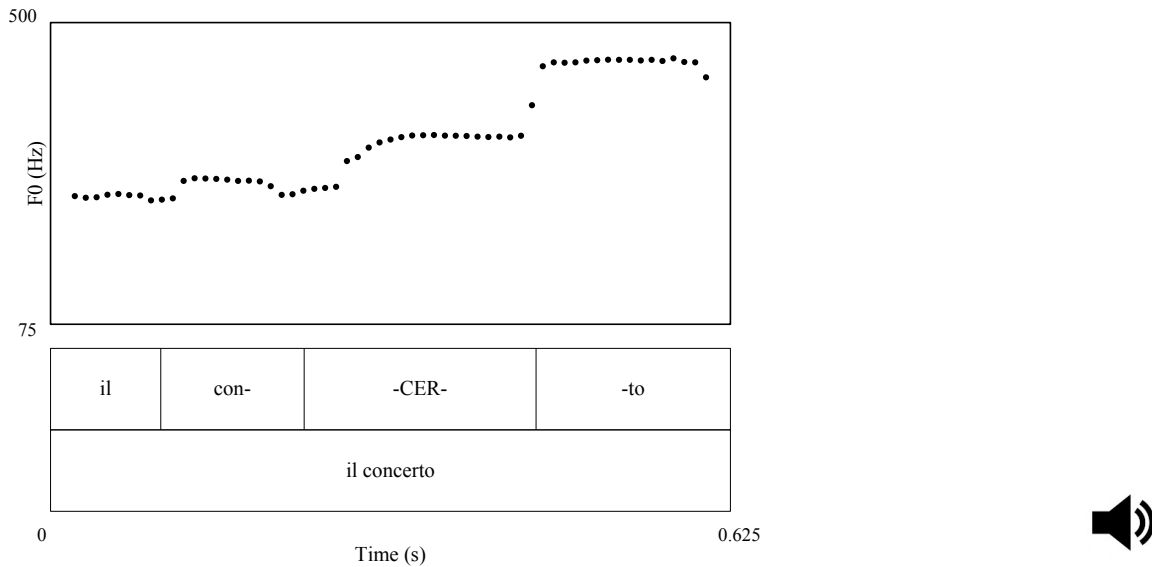


Figure 9. High rising contour for requesting completion ('the concert...?'), produced by Ada in Extract (13).

Repeats requesting completion do sometimes exhibit syntactic incompleteness (e.g. *mi sono dimenticata di* 'I forgot to...?'), which provides a further cue to their function. Also, it is possible to find cases in the larger Italian corpus in which the repeat is followed by an *in situ* WH word (e.g. *una che* 'a what?'), which functions as a placeholder for the material to be filled in. This latter format is the main way in which requests for completion are implemented in English (Schegloff et al. 1977:368), but appears to play only a marginal role in Italian.

The following example illustrates yet another type of repeat-based OIR. Pamela and Orfeo are sitting by a sledding slope, talking about the risks involved in sledding with bum sliders. In T-1, Pamela remarks that, for a man, one of the risks is to 'hit himself' with the bum slider in the groin ('there').

Extract 14: CampGioPlatea_371666

1	Pamela	se ti dai una palettata lì penso che faccia [male if 2S.D give-2S one small.shovel.hit there think-1S CMP do-SBJ-3S bad <i>if you hit yourself with the shovel there, I think it hurts</i>	T-1
2	Orfeo	[palettata small.shovel.hit <i>shovel?</i>	T0
3	(0.6)		
4	Pamela	la maniglia ((points to bum slider)) <i>the handle</i>	T+1

The trouble here arises from Pamela's use of the word *palettata* (literally, 'small-shovel hit'), which comes out as an unusual way to refer to a "bum slider hit". Like in a candidate hearing (Extract 12), Orfeo's repeat in T0 works as a "trouble-presenting repeat" (Dingemanse et al. 2014:24), which pinpoints the repeated material as the source of the trouble, as opposed to using it as a framing device (cf. Extract 13). The repair operation made relevant by the repeat here, however, is not confirmation. The function of the repeat isn't simply to ask "is this what you said?", but rather to question what has been said to solicit its emendation — what has been referred to as "questioning repeat" (Jefferson 1972). In this case, what is called into question is a lexical choice, which Pamela emends by replacing it with an alternative descriptor ('the handle'), coupled with a pointing gesture to the referent (the bum slider). In so doing, Pamela aligns with Orfeo in treating her initial reference as inadequate.

Repeats with a similar function have been identified in English (Jefferson 1972; Quirk et al. 1972; Robinson and Kevoe-Feldman 2010; Sidnell 2010; Robinson 2013), German (Selting 1996), Finnish (Sorjonen 1996), Chinese (Wu 2006), and Russian (Bolden 2009). Benjamin and Walker (2013) analyse a similar repeat practice in English, the function of which is to convey that the target utterance is “wrong and in need of correction” (p. 108). By using this practice the recipient conveys that the trouble goes beyond understanding and extends into matters of “acceptability” (cf. Svennevig 2008). Benjamin and Walker (2013) provide a detailed intonational profile of these repeats, which discriminates the practice from other repeat-based initiations of repair.

In Trentino Italian, questioning repeats are produced with a *low rising* contour, which we have already encountered in section 5.2.1. When the utterance contains more than two syllables, the contour is realised with a fall on the last accented syllable (H+L*) followed by a terminal rise (L+H%), as illustrated in Figure (10) for *palettata* (Extract 14).

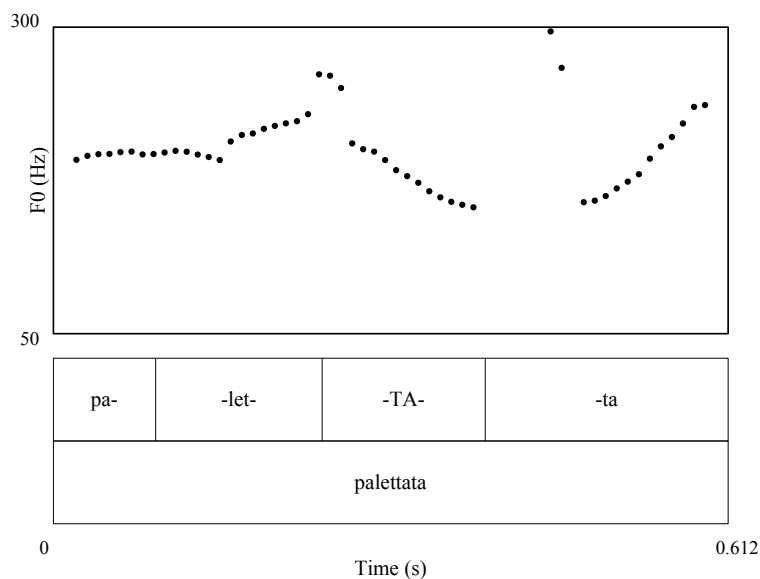


Figure 10. *Low rising* contour for questioning repeats, produced by Orfeo in Extract (14).

This is another main interrogative contour that is distinct from both the *rising-falling* and the *high rising* contours seen above. At the end of the previous section, we noted that the *low rising* contour is generally associated with sequence-initial questions, launching a new course of action or topic that is typically part of the questioner’s own agenda (Torreira and Floyd 2012). Given this role in the question-response system, the contour acquires a special meaning when used to produce repeats in the OIR domain. By definition, a questioning repeat is sequence-internal, in that it targets and topicalises a component of the immediately prior turn. This contrasts with the general function of the *low rising* contour, which is to deliver sequence-initial questions. Such a departure may be what underlies the “disbelief” conveyed by the repeat (cf. Torreira and Floyd 2012), as well as other uses of the same repeat format to display surprise, which sit on the edge between other-initiation of repair and other actions (cf. Benjamin and Walker 2013:133; Selting 1996).

Questioning repeats are sometimes responded to with confirmation. When this happens, however, such a response doesn’t have the same status it has after a confirmation-seeking repeat (Jefferson 1972:310–313; Sorjonen 1996:289; Benjamin and Walker 2013:123–124; cf. Robinson 2009). In Extract (12) above, the *rising-falling* contour used to produce the repeat (“Canonica?”) marks it as a straightforward, uncritical initiation of repair, which makes confirmation a preferred response. After this is provided, the conversation simply moves forward. In contrast, a questioning repeat produced with *low rising* intonation makes relevant the emendation or adjustment of what has been said. Here, a confirming response works to resist the projectable challenge.

In Extract (15), Furio and Sofia are eating mozzarella filled with creamy cheese. Before the extract begins, Furio has commented that the cheese is a bit too sour, to which Sofia responds by suggesting adding some oil to it (line 1).

Extract 15: BiscottiPome01_718642

1 Sofia	con un po' di olio è più buona se vuoi with one bit of oil be.3S more good if want-2S <i>with a bit of oil it's better if you like</i>	T-1
2	(0.6)	
3 Furio	olio <i>oil?</i>	T0
4	(0.5)	
5 Sofia	mh <i>mh</i>	T+1
6	(0.4)	
7 Furio	secondo me no following 1S.A no <i>I don't think so</i>	
8	(1.3)	
9 Furio	sulla ricotta non- cè sta qua sembra più ricotta quella dentro with the ricotta not PCL this here seem-3S more ricotta that inside <i>on the ricotta it doesn't I mean this one looks more like ricotta, the one inside</i>	
10	(0.6)	
11 Sofia	non è ricotta quella dentro not be.3S ricotta that inside <i>it's not ricotta the one inside</i>	

In T0, Furio initiates repair by repeating part of Sofia's turn with a *low rising* contour. Unlike the speaker in Extract (14), however, Sofia doesn't rephrase or adjust the trouble source utterance, but reasserts its adequacy with a confirmation token ('mh'). At this point, Furio goes on to produce an overt disagreement (line 7), backed up with a reason (line 9: the filling looks like ricotta, a type of cheese that should not be seasoned with oil). Sofia then responds with a remark that undermines Furio's argument and further displays her resistance to his challenge.¹²

6 Morphosyntactic devices used in OIR sequences

In OIR sequences, speakers of Italian make use of a wide range of morphosyntactic resources, many of which have other interactional functions. A few of them, however, stand out as being virtually dedicated to an OIR function. We have already encountered a number of these in the preceding sections. Among the devices for marking T0, there are:

- *non ho capito* 'I don't understand' (open format, see § 5.1.3)
- *cosa vuol dire x* 'what does x mean' (restricted format, see § 5.2.1)
- *come x* 'how x' (= 'what do you mean x') (restricted format, see § 5.2.1).

¹² The sequential context in which a repeat appears may, too, contribute to characterise it as questioning rather than seeking confirmation. In Extracts (14) and (15), the repeat comes after an initiating action that makes agreement relevant next. In this environment, initiating repair potentially implicates disagreement (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks 1977:380; Drew 1997; Schegloff 2007:102–106). By contrast, in Extract (12), repair is initiated on an answer to a question, which doesn't project agreement, but rather a receipt of information. That said, however, there are cases in which confirmation is sought after initiating actions similar to those in Extracts (14) and (15), including assessments, requests, and proposals, which expect alignment or disalignment. On the other hand, there are cases of questioning repeats produced after an answer to a question or in response to a telling. So while sequential context can contribute to discriminate the function of repeats, intonation maintains a crucial role.

These constructions make up 41% (n=15/39) of all instances of dedicated T0 marking. Another frequent format (23%, n=9/39) that appears to be intimately tied to an OIR function is *ah* ‘oh’ + candidate understanding, illustrated below.

Extract 16: Letto-Ed_425988

1	Rosa	e poi ne abbiamo almeno una settantina and then PRT have-1P at.least one about.seventy <i>and then we've got at least about seventy</i>	T-1
2		di pacchetti girato l'[angolo of packs turned the=corner <i>packs just around the corner</i>	
3	Marzia	ah quelli che hai comprato oh those REL have-2S buy-PSTP <i>oh those you bought?</i>	T0
4	Rosa	sì yes	T+1

Before the extract begins, Rosa has offered a handkerchief to another person, and reassured him that, should he need more, she is stocked with plenty of handkerchief packs. In lines 1-2, she adds that even more packs may be found ‘just around the corner’ (at a friend’s place). Marzia’s repair initiation consists of a candidate understanding prefaced by the particle *ah* ‘oh’. This *change of state* token marks Marzia’s understanding as based on knowledge she has just been able to retrieve (Heritage 1984a:321).

7 Actions

Cases in which repair initiation is used to do more than just remedying a problem of hearing or understanding have already been mentioned in section 5.2.3 when illustrating questioning repeats. The meaning of disbelief conveyed by a *low rising* repeat in Italian can be exploited to produce other actions, most importantly pre-disagreement (see Extract 15) and — in other cases not shown here due to space constraints — also surprise/astonishment (see Benjamin and Walker 2013:116; cf. Selting 1996).

But the *low rising* repeat isn’t the only format that is used in extensions of the basic OIR action. Another is *come x* ‘what do you mean x’, illustrated in section 5.2.1. Recall that the function of this type of framed repeat is to mark a component of the prior talk as unexpected, normally as a result of the recipient’s lack of presupposed knowledge that is required to understand it. In the Italian corpus, this format is also used to target unexpected *dispreferred responses* in the form of ‘no’ answers, which, rather than creating a trouble of understanding, constitute a problem of alignment or agreement (on *preference*, see Heritage 1984b:265–280; Schegloff 2007: ch. 5; Pomerantz and Heritage 2013).

In Extract (17), Furio and Sofia are making biscuits. Before the extract begins, they have been talking about why the dough shapes should be sprinkled with yolk (which is for the biscuits to brown in the oven).

Extract 17: BiscottiPome02_1204231

1	Furio	ma bisognerebbe dorarli anche sui lati quindi but necessitate-CND-3S gild-INF=3P.A also on-the sides therefore <i>so we should sprinkle them with yolk also on the sides then?</i>	
2		(0.8)	
3	Sofia	no <i>no</i>	T-1
4		(0.4)	

5 Furio	come no how no <i>how (=what do you mean) 'no'?</i>	TO
6 Sofia	ma no vabè but no PCL <i>well no it's alright</i>	T+1
7	(0.3)	
8 Sofia	perché se hai un pennello [va un po' because if have-2S one brush go-3S one bit <i>because if you have a brush it goes a bit</i>	
9 Furio	[eh- PCL <i>right-</i>	
10	appunto va anche sui lati PCL go-3S also on-the sides <i>exactly, it goes also on the sides</i>	

This extended use of *come x* exploits its OIR function to build a disagreement-implicating action (Schegloff 2007:151ff). The problem arises as Sofia gives an unexpected dispreferred response to Furio's question (line 1), the design of which strongly expects a positive response. Furio then uses a repair practice that normally signals a lack of presuppositions needed to make sense of the trouble source utterance (see Extract 10). This works as a "pre-challenge" giving an opportunity to Sofia to back down on — or otherwise revise — her dispreferred response. As it turns out, however, Sofia upholds a 'no' answer, thereby resisting the projectable challenge (see also Extract 15). This prompts Furio to pursue his disagreement by questioning Sofia's argument (lines 9-10).

This use of *come x* is analogous to the extended use of *what do you mean x* in English (Schegloff 1997:522–523; Raymond and Sidnell 2013) and further supports the cross-linguistic parallel made above between the two formats.

8 Conclusion

This article provides an overview of the main practices for other-initiation of repair found in Italian, with special reference to the north-eastern variety spoken in Trentino. Practices for signalling and dealing with problems of hearing and understanding are an essential component of human interaction. People construct these practices drawing on various formal resources offered by their language. The repertoire available to Italian speakers includes cross-linguistically widespread strategies such as interjections, question words (for both *open* and *restricted* OIR), and repetitions. At the same time, it also includes more language-specific forms such as *high rising* repeats to request completion and repeats prefaced by *come* 'how' (= 'what do you mean') to seek clarification. These forms appear to have close functional equivalents in other languages.

I have been especially concerned with intonation as a key component of the Italian OIR system. Intonation plays a crucial role in distinguishing alternative uses of the question word *cosa* 'what' (open vs. restricted) as well as in discriminating alternative repeat practices. While the formal resources are drawn from the intonation system of Italian (in this particular data set, of Trentino Italian), the basic functional oppositions are comparable to those found in other languages. Particularly, in the context of repeats, we find a cross-linguistically recurrent distinction between an "unmarked" intonational profile, used to simply seek confirmation, and a "marked" intonational profile that prompts more complex repair operations (such as adjustment or emendation), and that is often exploited to do more than initiating repair, extending into actions like disagreement or surprise.¹³

¹³ Interestingly, languages that don't use intonation in this way feature comparable paradigmatic oppositions realised by other means, such as interrogative particles (see Enfield, this issue).

These findings are evidence for other-initiated repair as a system of language use — a coherent functional domain that works as an organising logic for a set of linguistic resources.

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Abbreviations used in glossing

1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, A = accusative, CMP = complementiser, CN = connective, COND = Conditional, D = dative, DIM = diminutive, EX = existential, F = feminine, FUT = Future, GER = Gerund, IM = impersonal, IMP = Imperative, INF = Infinitive, IPF = Past Imperfect, ITJ = interjection, M = masculine, N = nominative, NAME = proper name, NPST = Non-Past, P = plural, PCL = particle, PRT = partitive, PST = Past, PSTP = Past Participle, REL = relativiser, S = singular, SBJ = Subjunctive, SCL = subject clitic.

In absence of other tense/aspect/mood glosses (FUT, GER, IMP, INF, IPF, NPST, PSTP), the unmarked verb inflection is Present Indicative (simple present).

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