

**Der Innsbrucker Linguistische Arbeitskreis (ILAK)  
und das Institut für Romanistik der Philologisch-Kulturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät  
sowie das Institut für Fachdidaktik der Fakultät für LehrerInnenbildung**

**laden herzlich ein zum Vortrag von**

**Dr. Davide Garassino**

(Universität Zürich, Romanisches Seminar &  
Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften)

## ***T'as dit quoi ? Hai detto cosa? A discourse-pragmatic analysis of French and Italian *wh-in situ* questions***

**Dienstag, 1.12.2020, 19.00 Uhr – Link zum Online-Vortragsraum:  
<https://webconference.uibk.ac.at/b/nic-5j3-mwy-sp6>**

**Abstract:** The aim of this presentation is to analyze the licensing conditions of *wh-in situ* questions and their pragmatic functions in French and Italian. The data on which I rely are drawn from the French and Italian sections of the C-ORAL-ROM corpus (Cresti & Moneglia 2005) as well as the Italian PERUGIA CORPUS (PEC, Spina 2014) and are representative of spontaneous and, partly, scripted speech.

My analysis is based on two discourse-pragmatic parameters: the activation status of the propositional content of the question (cf. Dryer 1996; Larrivée 2019) and a set of functions put forth by Rosemeyer (2018) and (2019) for the analysis of Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese data. The results of my corpus-based study reveal that French and Italian *in situ* differ dramatically both in their frequency and functional properties. First, *in situ* are far less frequent in Italian than in French. Secondly, the propositional content of most Italian *in situ* are 'primed' by the preceding context, as in (1), whereas French *in situ* display looser licensing conditions, since their propositional content tends to be inferable or non-activated, as in (2):

(1) A: *Camilla è cambiata tantissimo in quest'ultimo periodo.*  
Camilla is.PRS.3SG change.PST.PTCP very much in this last period

B: *Ma cambiata come?*  
But change.PST.PTCP how

'A: Camilla has changed a lot lately. B: How?' (PEC)

(2) BET: *et alors tu commences la journée en faisant quoi ?*  
and then you start.PRS.2SG the day while do.PRS.PTCP what

'What do you do to get your day started?' (C-ORAL-ROM, *fpubd106*)

These different licensing conditions have a strong impact on the pragmatic functions of the structure: in French, compared to Italian, *in situ* are preferentially used to introduce new topics in discourse, while in Italian they mostly elaborate on a proposition already present in the discourse context.

Finally, an explicit analysis of the discourse structure using a Question Under Discussion model (cf. Riester et al. 2018) will also permit to explain the "expectedness" and "predictability" which are often associated with the use of these questions (cf. Myers 2007; Boucher 2010).

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## Short academic biography:

Davide Garassino is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Zurich (Institute for Romance Studies) and a lecturer at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW, Department of Applied Linguistics). His main research interests concern implicit communication, information structure and prosody. He is also interested in methodological aspects of corpus-based and experimental research as well as in the use of quantitative methods in linguistics.

