

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/20563> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Lusini, Sara

Title: Yes-no question/marking in Italian dialects : a typological, theoretical and experimental approach

Issue Date: 2013-02-27

1. Introduction

As discussed in chapter 2, some yes/no question-marking devices found in Italian dialects pose a challenge for typological classifications à la Dryer (2005). More specifically, it was shown that Tuscan, Central and Southern *che fare* questions are hard to fit into a specific typological category. Their interpretation suggests that they should be analyzed as polar questions headed by a sentence-initial QP. However, the fact that *fare* may share the features of the lexical verb shows that we are not dealing with a single, invariable QP. The aim of this chapter is to provide a detailed description of the syntax and of yes/no questions in Sienese (and related Central and Southern varieties) and to account for their underlying structure from a theoretical perspective. A previously undiscussed set of data will be presented, following up on other accounts of yes/no question-marking strategies in other Central and Southern Italian dialects (cf. Rohlf, 1969; Poletto & Vanelli, 1995; Obenauer, 2004; Damonte & Garzonio, 2008, 2009; Cruschina, 2008) as well as in other Romance varieties (Ronjat, 1913; Bouzet, 1951; Wheeler, 1988; Campos, 1992; Prieto & Rigau, 2005, 2007).

As shown in chapter 2, yes/no questions are introduced by *che* in Sienese, as opposed to Standard Italian. *Che* is homophonous with the *wh*-word corresponding to *what*. An example is given in (1.a). Furthermore, *che* can optionally be followed by a finite form of the verb *fare* ‘do’, as shown in (1.b):

- 1) a. Che andasti al mare?
 che go-PAST.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’
- b. Che facesti andasti al mare?
 che do-PAST.2.Sg go-PAST.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’

[Sienese]

A similar pattern is found in Sicilian and in many other Central and Southern Italian dialects (Cruschina, 2008), as opposed to in Northern Italian dialects. Some examples from Southern, Central and Northern Italian dialects are given in (2) and (3):

- 2) a. Ci (è) steve a chiove?
 ci be-PRES.3.Sg stay-PAST.3.Sg to rain-INF
 ‘Was it raining?’ (Andriani, p.c.)

[Barese]

- b. Che (fa) ci si jite a the
che do-PRES.3.Sg there.CL be-PRES.2.Sg go-PP to lu
 mare?
 sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’ (D’Alessandro, p.c.)

[Abruzzese]

- 3) a. Varde -lo?
 look-PRES.3.Sg he.Subj.CL
 ‘Is he looking?’ (Munaro, 2001:154)

[Bellunese]

- b. Magne -li?
 eat-PRES.3.Pl they.Subj.CL
 ‘Are they eating?’ (Munaro, 2001:155)

[Paduan]

The aim of this chapter is to provide a detailed description of the syntax and of yes/no questions in Sienese and to account for their underlying structure from a theoretical perspective.

At this point, some preliminary considerations need to be made before getting to the details. Many recent works on the syntax of Italian Dialects have focused on the role played by some particles in the Left Periphery of the clause in the semantic interpretation of questions (cf. Poletto and Munaro, 2002; Obenauer, 2004; Garzonio, 2004; Damonte & Garzonio, 2009; Garzonio & Obenauer, 2010, Garzonio, 2010).

Obenauer (2004) proposes a typology of *Special Questions*, which are characterized by two main aspects; namely, they are always introduced by some particle in the Left Periphery and they do not have an interrogative illocutive force proper. According to Damonte & Garzonio (2009), Garzonio & Obenauer (2010), and Garzonio (2010), Florentine yes/no questions introduced by *che* fall under the typology proposed in Obenauer (2004).

In light of the recent and ongoing studies just presented, it is necessary to stress that no special interpretation is associated with *che fare* questions. The verb *fare* does not make any additional semantic contribution to the interpretation of the yes/no question in Sienese, nor does *che*. As far as their semantics is concerned, they are just standard yes/no questions, which do not fall under the proposed typology of Special Questions. The same is true for Sicilian yes/no interrogative constructions analyzed by Cruschina (2008).

The chapter is organized as follows: in section 1, the basic Sienese data will be discussed. Other Central and Southern dialects will also be illustrated there, with special reference to Sicilian. An analysis of the syntactic properties of Sienese yes/no questions follows in section 2. Sienese yes/no interrogative constructions seem to involve a biclausal discourse containing two questions. A minimal pair of a yes/no question and the corresponding biclausal discourse is given in (4.a-b):

- 4) a. Che fai piangi?
che do-PRES.2.Sg cry-PRES.2.Sg
 ‘Are you crying?’

- b. Che fai? Piangi?
 what do-PRES.2.Sg cry-PRES.2.Sg
 ‘What are you doing? Are you crying?’

[Sieneſe]

On the baſis of proſodic and ſyntactic evidence it is ſhown that this is not the caſe. Section 3 is dedicated to an in-depth diſcuſſion of the agreement relations that characterize Sieneſe yeſ/no queſtions and their relevance for Syntactic theory. Tene, Mood and Aſpect feature-sharing is alſo diſcuſſed in detail. Finally, ſection 4 explores a hypothesis aſ to how the ſyntactic ſtructure of yeſ/no queſtions developed diachronically over time in Sieneſe and poſſibly in other Central and Southern Italian dialects. Section 5 preſents the concluſions.

2. The baſic data

As diſcuſſed in chapter 1, yeſ/no queſtions are introduced by *che* in Sieneſe, which can be optionally followed by a finite form of the verb *fare* ‘do’. An example is given in (5.a-b), :

- 5) a. Che partisti ieri?
 che leave-PAST.2.Sg yesterday
 ‘Did you leave yesterday?’
- b. Che facesti partisti ieri?
 che do-PAST.2.Sg leave-PAST.2.Sg yesterday
 ‘Did you leave yesterday?’

[Sieneſe]

Fare and the lower predicate ſhare the ſame tene and phi-features. This is illuſtrated by (5.b), where both *fare* and *partire* have 2nd perſon ſingular features and paſt tene features. *Fare* ſeems to be completely optional; there is no ſemantic difference between the ſentence in (5.a) and that in (5.b).

The aim of the following ſubſection is to ſhow the reſtrictions on the occurrence of the verb *fare* in yeſ/no queſtions in Sieneſe. Beſides, a comparison with Sicilian and other Southern and Central Italian dialects which ſhow a ſimilar pattern will be provided.

2.1 Reſtrictions on the occurrence of *fare* in Sieneſe yeſ/no queſtions

As already mentioned, *fare* does not add any meaning to the interpretation of yeſ/no queſtions. It behaves aſ ſome ſort of light, ſupportive verb, which is devoid of its original lexical meaning.

Fare is compatible with transitive verbs (ſee 6.a), unaccuſative verbs (ſee 6.b) and unergative verbs (ſee 6.c):

- 6) a. Che facesti vedesti Gianni?
che do-PAST.2.Sg see-PAST.2.Sg John
 'Did you see John?'
 [transitive verbs]
- b. Che hanno fatto hanno parlato con Gianni?
che have-PRES.3.Pl do-PP have-PRES.3.Pl talk-PP with John
 'Did they talk with John?'
 [unergative verbs]
- c. Che ha fatto è andata al mare?
che have-PRES.2.Sg do-PP is-PRES 3.Sg go-PP to-the sea
 'Did she go to the sea?'
 [unaccusative verbs]

The stative/eventive distinction does not seem to play a role; *fare* is perfectly compatible with both stative and eventive verbs, as shown in (7.a-b):

- 7) a. Che fa si tinge i capelli?
che do-PRES.3.Sg REFL.CL dye-PRES.3.Sg the hair
 'Does she dye her hair?'
 [eventive verbs]
- b. Che fa assomiglia al su babbo?
che do-PRES.3.Sg resemble-PRES.3.Sg to-the his/her father
 'Does (s)he look like his/her father?'
 [stative verbs]

Moreover, *fare* is also compatible with habitual interpretations; indeed, the sentence in (7.a) can be interpreted both as having a habitual and an eventive reading. Animacy of the subject does not seem to matter either. As shown in (8.a-b), *fare* is perfectly compatible with inanimate subjects:

- 8) a. Che fa perde il rubinetto?
che do-PRES.3.Sg leak-PRES.3.Sg the tap
 'Is the tap leaking?'
 [inanimate subjects]
- b. Il camper che fa consuma parecchio?
 the camper *che* do-PRES.3.Sg consume-PRES.3.Sg much
 'Does the camper burn much gas?'
 [inanimate subjects]

In addition, *fare* can also occur in sentences with a conjoined subject and with alternative questions, as shown respectively in (9.a) and (9.b):

- 9) a. Che fanno vengano anche il tu babbo
che do-PRES.3.Pl come-PRES.3.Pl too the your dad
 e la tu mamma?
 and the your mom
 ‘Are your mom and dad coming too?’
 [conjoined subjects]
- b. Che fanno vengano o no?
che do-PRES.3.Pl come-PRES.3.Pl or not
 ‘Are they coming or not?’
 [alternative questions]

However, some interesting asymmetries emerge with respect to the verb *essere* ‘be’ when stage-level and individual-level predicates come into play:

- 10) a. Che fa è stanco?
che do-PRES.3.Sg be-PRES.3.Sg tired
 ‘Is he tired?’
 [*be* + stage-level predicates]
- b. *Che fa è intelligente?
che do-PRES.3.Sg be-PRES.3.Sg intelligent
 ‘Is (s)he intelligent?’
 [*be* + individual-level predicates]

As shown by the ungrammaticality of (10.b), *fare* is incompatible with the verb *be* when it is combined with an individual-level predicate, but not when it is combined with a stage-level predicate (see 10.a).

2.2 Comparing Sienese and Sicilian yes/no questions

As discussed in chapter 2, Sicilian displays a yes/no question-marking strategy similar to Sienese. As pointed out by Cruschina (2008), yes/no questions are introduced by *chi* in Sicilian (see 11.a). As in Sienese, *chi* is homophonous with both the finite complementizer and the wh-word corresponding to *what*.¹ Leone (1995) and Cruschina (2008) indicate that *chi* can also be followed by a finite form of the verb *fare*, as shown in (11.b).

- 11) a. Chi vennu?
chi come-PRES.3.Pl
 ‘Are they coming?’

¹ Cruschina (2008) points out that in some varieties of Sicilian *chi* is only homophonous with the *wh*-word corresponding to *what* but not with the finite complementizer.

- b. Chi ffà vennu?
Chi do-PRES.3.Sg come-PRES.3.Pl
 ‘Are they coming?’

[Sicilian]

Despite the apparent similarities, there are in fact some substantial syntactic differences between Sicilian and Siennese. As opposed to Siennese, *fare* is frozen in the 3rd person singular present form in Sicilian, disregarding of the tense and phi-features of lower predicate.

A clear example of this mismatch is provided in (12.a), where *fare* occurs in the 3rd person singular present form, while the lower predicate displays 2nd person singular phi-features and past tense features. Agreement between *fare* and the lower predicate yields ungrammaticality in Sicilian, as shown in (12.b).

- 12) a. Chi ffa ci jisti a mari?
chi do-PRES.3.Sg there.CL go-PAST.2.Sg to sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’
- b. *Chi ffacisti ci jisti a mari?
chi do-PAST.3.Sg there.CL go-PAST.2.Sg to sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’

[Sicilian]

By contrast, *fare* must share the same phi- and tense- features of the lower verb in Siennese. Lack of agreement yields ungrammaticality, as shown by the contrast between (13.a) and (13.b):

- 13) a. *Che fa andasti al mare?
che do-PRES.3.Sg go-PAST.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’
- b. Che facesti andasti al mare?
che do-PAST.2.Sg go-PAST.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’

[Siennese]

The differences between Siennese and Sicilian yes/no questions are not only syntactic. In fact, *fare*-insertion is completely optional in Siennese. By contrast, Sicilian *fa* always triggers some expectation/presupposition towards the propositional content of the question (see the discussion in chapter 2). More specifically, *chiffà* questions are usually uttered in Sicilian when the speaker expects a positive answer, although they are by no means rhetorical questions. As a matter of fact, no such distinction can be found in Siennese because questions with and without *fare* have exactly the same semantics.

2.3 On the optionality of *fare*

It seems that there is an alternation between a covert and an overt version of *fare* in Sienese. The overt form will be referred to as the *che fare* question and the covert form will be referred to as the *che* \emptyset_{fare} question. This alternation seems not to be sensitive to syntactic constraints. At first sight, it looks like the size of the constituent(s) which follow *che* play a role in determining the alternation between the covert and the overt form. A couple of examples are shown below in (14):

- 14) a. *Che piove?
 che rain-PRES.3.Sg
 ‘Is it raining?’
- b. Che fa piove?
 che do-PRES.3.Sg rain-PRES.3.Sg
 ‘Is it raining?’
- c. Che piove domani/ a Firenze?
 che rain-PRES.3.Sg tomorrow in Florence
 ‘Is it raining tomorrow/in Florence?’

[Sienese]

As shown by the ungrammaticality of (14.a), the covert form cannot be used when the following predicate is restricted to a single inflected verb. There are two possible ways to make the sentence in (14.a) grammatical: either by inserting *fare* after *che* (as in (14.b)), or by inserting some other lexical item after the lexical verb (as in (14.c)). It does not matter what kind of element appears after the lexical verb: it could be an adverb, as well as a PP. This shows that syntax is not involved in the alternation between the overt and the covert form.

The size of the constituent(s) which follow *che* does not determine the alternation either. Indeed, *che* is followed by four syllables² in (15.a), one more than (15.b), but the sentence is still ungrammatical.

- 15) a. *Che [me] [lo] [da] [i]?
 che to.me.CL it.Obj.CL give-PRES.2.Sg
 ‘Are you giving it to me?’

[4 syllables]

- b. Che [fa] [pio] [ve]?
 che do-PRES.3.Sg rain-PRES.3.Sg
 ‘Is it raining?’

[3 syllables]

In order to account for the alternation between the overt and the covert form it is necessary to look at the prosody of *che fare* questions in Sienese. Sienese *che fare* questions have in fact a special intonation pattern which requires the sentence to have

² Square brackets indicate syllable boundaries in the examples in (15.a-b).

two intonation units with one pitch accent³. The presence of one pitch accent in both units is obligatory. If the *che* \mathcal{O}_{fare} question does not include two words that can possibly be stressed, as in (14.a) and (15.a), the result is ungrammatical. *Fare* always receives stress, if present. *Che* cannot receive stress, which accounts for the ungrammaticality of (14.a), where it is only possible to have a pitch accent on the lexical verb *piove* ‘rains’. The ungrammaticality of (15.a) depends on the fact that the two clitics which occur after *che* cannot receive stress. Since *che* cannot receive stress either, it is only possible to have one pitch accent (on the lexical verb *dai* ‘give’), which violates the prosodic requirements of Siennese *che fare* questions.

These considerations about prosodic requirements cannot be extended to Southern Italian dialects, such as Sicilian. Indeed, the covert form can be employed also when the following predicate is restricted to a single inflected verb (Cruschina, 2008):

- 16) Chi veni?
chi come-PRES.3.Sg
 ‘Is he coming?’

[Sicilian]

This suggests that Sicilian yes/no questions have a different prosody, which probably does not require two peaks of stress in the same questions.

Another piece of evidence to support the idea that syntax is not involved in the alternation between the overt and the covert form is provided by the absence of meaning alternation in Siennese. There is no semantic difference whatsoever between *che fare* questions and *che* \mathcal{O}_{fare} questions in Siennese.

The situation looks quite different in Sicilian. As pointed out by Cruschina (2008), the alternation between *chi ffà* and *chi* $\mathcal{O}_{ffà}$ corresponds to a different interpretation of the yes/no question in Sicilian. Cruschina (p.c.) points out that *chi fare* questions have a presuppositional meaning. Namely, the *chi fare* question is only employed if the speaker expects a positive answer, while the *chi* \mathcal{O}_{fare} question is just a standard yes/no question, with no associated presuppositional meaning. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the alternation between the two forms is semantically driven in Sicilian.

In fact, the interpretation associated with *chi fare* questions in Sicilian is not exceptional in yes/no questions. As discussed in chapter 2, it can be found in other European languages as well, such as English and French. In these languages, the presuppositional meaning of yes/no questions which expect a positive answer is marked through both syntax and intonation. As far as their syntax is concerned, they are characterized by a lack of subject-verb inversion. Besides, they have a raising intonation, which differs

³ This prosodic pattern is not as surprising as it might look at first sight. As it will be shown in chapter 4, *che fare* questions share the same structure of their corresponding biclausal discourses when it comes to prosodic phrasing. Namely, they are both characterized by the presence of two intonational units with a falling pitch at the end. This leads us to think that the prosodic structure of *che fare* questions might in fact be derived from that of biclausal discourses, which would explain the presence of a double intonational unit in monoclausal *che fare* questions.

from the intonation of standard yes/no questions. A couple of examples are shown below in (17.a-b):

- 17) a. You are cooking tonight? [English]
- b. Tu cuisines ce soir?
 you cook-PRES.2.Sg this evening
 ‘You are cooking tonight?’ [French]

Both (17.a) and (17.b) expect a positive answer; they couldn’t be uttered out of the blue, in a context where the speaker does not have any presupposition regarding the answer. The same considerations can be extended to Sicilian *chiffà* questions, as opposed to Sienese *che fare* questions.

2.4 Brief comparison with other Central and Southern Italian varieties

As discussed in chapter 2, the yes/no question marking strategy illustrated above is found in most Central and Southern Italian dialects. Some examples from other Central varieties are provided below:

- 18) a. Che (vu fate) vu c’ andate ?
che you.Subj.CL do-PRES.3.Pl you.Subj.CL there.CL go-PRES.3.Pl
 ‘Are you going there?’
- b. *Che la fa vu c’
che she.Subj.CL do-PRES.3.Pl you.Subj.CL there.CL
 andate?
 go-PRES-3.Pl
 ‘Are you going there?’ [Florentine]
- 19) a. Qu’ (ae fatto) ce si gido
que have-PRES.2.Sg do-PP there.CL be-PRES.2.Sg go-PP
 al mare?
 to-the sea
 ‘Did you go the sea?’
- b. *Que (fa) ce si gido al
que do-PRES.3.Sg there.CL be-PRES.2.Sg go-PP to-the
 mare?
 sea
 ‘Did you go the sea?’ [Marchigiano]

The example in (18.a) is taken from urban Florentine (Garzonio, p.c.), while the example in (19.a) is taken from *Marchigiano*⁴ (Peverini, p.c.). As in Siennese, agreement between *fare* and the lower predicate is required in order for the sentence to be grammatical. Lack of agreement yields ungrammaticality in these varieties too, as shown in (18.b) and (19.b).

A different pattern is shown in the following examples. The sentences illustrated in (20.a) and (21.a) are taken respectively from Abruzzese and Urban Barese⁵, which display the same agreement pattern of Sicilian yes/no questions. Indeed, *fare* is frozen in the 3rd person singular present form. As in Sicilian, marking agreement on *fa* yields ungrammaticality, as shown in (20.b) and (21.b) below:

- 20) a. Che (fa) ci si jite a lu mare?
che do-PRES.3.Sg there.CL be-PRES.2.Sg go-PP to the sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’
- b. *Che fai ci si jite a lu mare?
che do-PRES.3.Sg there.CL be-PRES.2.Sg go-PP to the sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’
- [Abruzzese]

- 21) a. Ci (è) stève a cchiòve ?
ci be-PRES.3.Sg be-PAST.3.Sg to rain-INF
 ‘Was it raining?’
- b. *Ci era stève a cchiòve ?
ci be-PAST.3.Sg be-PAST.3.Sg to rain-INF
 ‘Was it raining?’
- [Barese]

There seems to be a clear-cut distinction between the agreeing, Siennese-like varieties and the non-agreeing, Sicilian-like varieties.

Florentine and Marchigiano behave like Siennese, while Abruzzese and Barese behave like Sicilian. In fact, Florentine and Marchigiano are geographically and linguistically closer to Siennese. Instead, Abruzzese is a Southern dialect, despite its geographically central location. Barese is a typically Southern Dialect.

3. The analysis

This section proposes an analysis of the syntactic properties of yes/no questions in Siennese. As already discussed, in Siennese *fare* shares the same phi- and tense features of the lower lexical verb, while in Sicilian it is invariable:

⁴ Marchigiano is a Central Italian Dialect. The Marchigiano data are taken from a Central Marchigiano variety, namely from the Sassoferrato/Fabriano area in the province of Ancona.

⁵ Abruzzese is an Upper-Southern Italian Dialect; the Abruzzese data are taken from the variety spoken in Arielli, in the Province of Chieti. Barese is an Upper Southern Italian Dialect too.

- 22) a. Che andasti al mare?
che go-PAST.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’
- b. Che facesti andasti al mare?
che do-PAST.2.Sg go-PAST.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘Did you go to the sea?’

[Sienese]

- 23) a. Chi vennu?
chi come-PRES.3.Pl
 ‘Are they coming?’
- b. Chi ffa vennu?
chi do-PRES.3.Sg come-3.Pl
 ‘Are they coming?’

[Sicilian]

The Sicilian form in (23.b) is unproblematic. As discussed in chapter 2, it can be analyzed as a single complex interrogative C, similar to invariable *est-ce que* in French (e.g. Rooryck 1994). Just like in French cleft interrogatives, the verb *fare* is frozen in the 3rd person singular present form, independently from the features of the lower lexical verb and its subject.

- 24) a. Est -ce que Euphrasie est arrivée ?
 be-PRES.3.Sg -it.CL that Euphrasie be-PRES.3.Sg arrive-PP
 ‘Did Euphrasie arrive?’ (Rooryck, 1994:216)
- b. *A -ce été que Euphrasie est
 have-PRES.3.Sg -it.CL be-PP that Euphrasie be-PRES.3.Sg
 arrivée ?
 arrive-PP
 ‘Did Euphrasie arrive?’

[French]

The Sienese form in (22.b) is instead more interesting. At first sight, it might look like a biclausal discourse containing two separate questions: *What did you do? Did you go to the sea?*

Contra *prima facie* evidence, I will argue that the underlying structure of (22.b) is monoclausal and should be given an analysis as in (25), where *facesti* in C and *andasti* in T agree with the subject in SpecvP:

- 25) [CP *che* [C *facesti* [TP *andasti* [_{VP} *pro* [_{VP} ~~*andasti*~~ [PP *al mare*]]]]]

The four arguments below show some syntactic restrictions which would apply to a biclausal discourse involving two separate questions. However, it is shown that they do not hold for the Sienese interrogative constructions with *fare*, which provides strong evidence for their monoclausality.

3.1 Establishing monoclausality

In the present section I will explore four syntactic arguments in favor of a monoclausal analysis of Sienese yes/no questions. Sienese yes/no questions show four syntactic restrictions that do not apply to a biclausal discourse containing two questions.

The first argument involves agreement of phi-, tense, mood and aspect features. The second argument is based on negation. The third argument is provided by the position of the subject and the fourth argument relies on some considerations regarding theta-roles.

3.1.1 Phi-, tense, mood and aspect feature-sharing

The first argument in favor of a monoclausal analysis is provided by the obligatory match between the phi-, tense, aspect and mood features of *fare* and those of the lower predicate. *Fare* must always have the same phi-, tense, mood and aspect features of the lower lexical verb. This restriction does not apply to a biclausal discourse, where the restrictions affecting phi-, tense, mood and aspect features are less strict or non-existent.

- **Phi-feature sharing:** As shown in (26.a), both *fare* and *uscire* ‘go out’ have 2nd person plural features. This match is not required in a biclausal discourse involving two questions, such as (26.b). (26.b) is characterized by a mismatch between the 2nd person singular feature of *fare* and the 3rd person singular feature of *uscire*.

- 26) a. Che fai esci?
 che do-PRES.2.Sg go.out-PRES.2.Sg
 ‘Are you going out?’
- b. Che fate? S’ esce?
 what do-PRES.2.Pl we.Subj.CL go.out-PRES.1.Pl⁶
 ‘What are you doing? Are we going out?’

[Sienese]

- **Tense sharing:** As with phi-features, *fare* and the lower predicate must always share the same tense features. As shown in (27.a), *fare* has a present tense feature and so does the lower verb, *preparare* ‘make’. A tense mismatch yields ungrammaticality, as shown in (27.c). However, this condition is not required in a biclausal discourse involving two questions, where switching from a tense to another is allowed to a certain extent. As shown in (27.b), *fare* has present tense

⁶ A morphosyntactic phenomenon found in Sienese and many other Tuscan dialects is the personal use of a particle identical to the impersonal particle *si* for the first person plural. The verb agrees with the subject *si*; as a result, it always displays third person singular morphology, although it is interpreted as a first person plural verb. For this reason, the gloss in 26(b) indicates that the verb is a first person plural rather than a third person singular.

features and *preparare* has past tense features, and both sentences are grammatical in this order.

- 27) a. Che fai prepari una torta?
che do-PRES.2.Sg make-PRES.2.Sg a cake
 ‘Are you making a cake?’
- b. Che fai? Preparasti una torta?
 what do-PRES.2.Sg make-PAST.2.Sg a cake
 ‘What are you doing? Did you make a cake?’
- c. *Che fai preparasti una torta?
che do-PRES.3.Sg make-PAST.2.Sg a cake
 ‘Did you make a cake?’

[Sienese]

- **Mood sharing:** Another restriction that affects Sienese yes/no questions is provided by mood feature sharing. Indeed, *fare* and the lower predicate must always share the same mood features.

- 28) a. Che avresti fatto avresti
che have-COND.PRES.2.Sg do-PP have-COND.PRES.2.Sg
 parlato?
 talk-PP
 ‘Would you have talked?’
- b. Che fai? Parleresti?
 what do-IND.PRES.2.Sg talk-COND.PRES.2.Sg
 ‘What are you doing? Would you talk?’
- c. *Che fai parleresti?
che do-IND.PRES.2.Sg talk-COND.PRES.2.Sg
 ‘Would you talk?’

[Sienese]

In (28.a), both *fare* and *parlare* ‘talk’ have a conditional mood feature. Again, this restriction does not apply to a biclausal discourse involving two questions, as shown by the grammaticality of (28.b), where *fare* is an indicative present and *parlare* is a conditional present. Such a mismatch cannot be maintained in *che fare* questions, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (28.c).

- **Aspect sharing:** As with Phi-, Tense and Mood features, *fare* and the lower predicate need to share the same Aspect features:

- 29) a. Che facevi dormivi?
che do-IMPF.PRES.2.Sg sleep-IMPF.PRES.2.Sg
 ‘Were you sleeping?’

- b. Che facevi? Hai dormito?
 what do-IMPF.PRES.2.Sg have-IND.PRES.2.Sg sleep-PP
 ‘What were you doing? Have you slept?’
- c. *Che facevi hai dormito?
what do-IMPF.PRES.2.Sg have-IND.PRES.2.Sg sleep-PP
 ‘What were you doing? Have you slept?’

[Sieneese]

In (29.a), both *fare* and *dormire* ‘sleep’ occur in the present imperfective form. This requirement would not hold for a biclausal discourse made of two questions, as shown in (29.b). Indeed, *fare* is a present imperfective while *dormire* is an indicative perfect tense, and yet the sentence is grammatical. This is not allowed in *che fare* questions, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (29.c).

3.1.2 Negation

Another reason to distinguish Sieneese yes/no questions from a biclausal discourse involving two questions is provided by their different behavior with respect to negation. Only one negation can occur in Sieneese yes/no questions, as expected in a monoclausal structure. Negation can only precede the lower predicate, as shown in (30.a). No such restriction applies to biclausal discourse, as shown in (30.b), where one negation occurs before *fare* and one before *mangiare* ‘eat’. This is not allowed in *che fare* questions, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (30.c).

- 30) a. Che fai un mangi la carne stasera?
che do-PRES.2.Sg neg eat-PRES.2.Sg the meat tonight
 ‘Aren’t you eating meat tonight?’
- b. Che un fai? Un mangi la carne
 what neg do-PRES.2.Sg neg eat-PRES.2.Sg the meat
 stasera?
 tonight?
 ‘What aren’t you doing? Aren’t you eating meat tonight?’
- c. *Che un fai un mangi la carne stasera?
che neg do-PRES.2.Sg neg eat-PRES.2.Sg the meat tonight
 ‘Aren’t you eating meat tonight?’

[Sieneese]

That only one negation can occur in Sieneese yes/no questions strongly suggests that their underlying structure is indeed monoclausal.

3.1.3 Subject position

A further argument in favor of a monoclausal analysis for Sienese yes/no questions is represented by the position of the subject. As shown in (31.a), subjects can only occur either before *che* or after the lower predicate. Crucially, they can never occur between *fare* and the lower predicate, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (31.c). This requirement does not apply to the biclausal discourse, where subjects can occur after *fare* (see 31.b).

- 31) a. (La tu mamma) che fa dorme (la tu
the your mother *che* do-3.PRES.Sg sleep-PRES.3.Sg (the your
mamma)?
mother)
'Is your mother sleeping?'
- b. Che fa la tu mamma? Dorme?
what do-PRES.3.Sg the your mother sleep-PRES.3.Sg
'What is your mother doing? Is she sleeping?'
- c. Che fa (*la tu mamma) dorme?
che do-3.PRES.Sg the your mother sleep-PRES.3.Sg
'Is your mother sleeping?'

[Sieneſe]

Similar considerations can be made with respect to any kind of adverbs; as shown in (32.a-b), adverbs can only occur either before *che* or after the lower predicate, but not between *fare* and the lower predicate.

- 32) a. (Oggi) che fai esci (oggi)?
today *che* do-PRES.2.Sg go.out-PRES.2.Sg today
'Are you going out today?'
- b. *Che fai oggi esci?
che do-PRES.2.Sg today go.out-PRES.2.Sg
'Are you going out today?'

[Sieneſe]

Only clitics are allowed to occur between *fare* and the lower predicate are clitics, as shown in (33.a-b) below.

- 33) a. Che faceſti ci parlaſti?
che do-PAST.2.Sg with.him.CL talk-PAST.2.Sg
'Did you talk with him?'
- b. Che fai lo compri?
che do-PRES.2.Sg it.Obj.CL buy-PRES.2.Sg
'Are you buying it?'

[Sieneſe]

3.1.4 Theta-roles

The last piece of evidence in support of a monoclausal analysis of *che fare* questions comes from some considerations regarding theta-roles.

In *che fare* questions, *fare* appears to be deprived of its core lexical meaning and agentive theta-role. It can combine with verbs that assign a non-agentive theta role to their subjects and also with verbs that do not assign a theta role to their subject at all (see 34.a and 35.a, respectively). This is not possible in the biclausal discourse, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (34.b) and (35.b).

- 34) a. Che fai c' hai freddo?
che do-PRES.2.Sg there.CL have-PRES.2.Sg cold
 'Are you cold?'
 b. *Che fai? C' hai freddo?
 what do-PRES2.Sg there.CL have-PRES2.Sg cold
 'What are you doing? Are you cold?'
- 35) a. Che fa piove?
che do-PRES.3.Sg rain-PRES.3.Sg
 'Is it raining?'
 b. *Che fa? Piove?
che do-PRES.3.Sg rain-PRES.3.Sg
 'Is it raining?'

[Sienese]

3.2 The syntactic structure of *che fare* questions

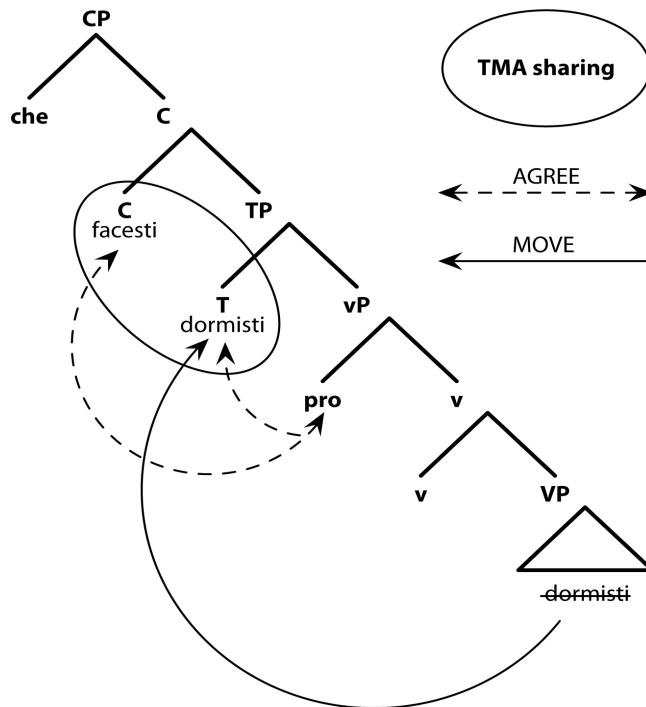
In the previous section, the underlying syntactic structure of *che fare* questions has been shown to be monoclausal. As opposed to what it might look like at first sight, Sienese *che fare* questions turn out not to share the same syntactic behavior of a biclausal discourse made of two questions. More specifically, it has been shown that there are some specific syntactic restrictions which do not apply to biclausal discourse but which do apply to Sienese yes/no questions. In fact, the differences between *che fare* questions and their corresponding biclausal discourses are not only of a syntactic nature. In addition to different syntactic restrictions, they are also marked by a number of different phonetic cues. A detailed discussion of the phonetic realization of these two constructions will be provided in chapter 4.

The aim of the present section is to illustrate how the derivation *che fare* questions proceeds and to analyze the agreement relations that characterize this configuration. The structure of the present section is as follows: a possible derivation is proposed in subsection 3.2.1, where each step is discussed in detail. Subsection 3.2.2 includes some notes on AGREE and multiple feature-checking, while subsection 3.2.3 deals with Tense, Mood and Aspect feature-sharing between *fare* and the lower predicate.

3.2.1 The derivation of Siense *che fare* questions

I assume the derivation of a *che fare* question like (36), to proceed as follows:

- 36) Che facesti dormisti?
che do-PAST.2.Sg sleep-PAST.2.Sg
 'Did you sleep?'



- the verb *dormire* is merged with *v* → label: *v*
- *v* is merged with *pro*, which enters the derivation with interpretable phi-features and uninterpretable and unvalued case-features → label: *vP*
- the *vP* is merged with *T*, which enters the derivation with uninterpretable and unvalued phi-features and valued case-features → label: *TP*
- the verb *dormire* moves to *T*
- *TP* is merged with the light verb *fare*, a head which enters the derivation with uninterpretable phi-, Tense, Aspect and Mood features and no case-assigning potential → label: *C*

- once the phase head *fare* is merged, the phase is completed and everything is sent to PF for Spell-out
- AGREE takes place simultaneously as soon as the phase is completed: *dormire* in T and *fare* in C are probes that look down for a goal to enter an AGREE relation with. *Pro* is the first goal with the appropriate phi-features in their c-command domain; *fare* and *dormire* enter an AGREE relation with *pro*: the uninterpretable phi-features of the probes T and C are valued by the goal *pro* and then deleted; the unvalued case-features of *pro* is valued by *dormire* and then deleted. *Fare* does not assign case to *pro*, which has already received its case from *dormire*. The AGREE relation is not strictly reciprocal here because *pro* values *fare*'s phi-features but *fare* does not assign its case to *pro* in exchange.
- *fare* and *dormire* entertain a relation that results in Tense, Mood and Aspect feature-sharing.
- C is merged with *che* → label: CP

At least two problems arise in the derivation proposed above, where two probes agree with same goal at the same time. Firstly, it is necessary to explain why the verb *dormire* in T does not intervene in the AGREE relation between the verb *fare* in C and the subject in SpecvP. If the phi-features of *dormire* have been valued by the subject, then *dormire* should be the first element with the appropriate features that the probe *fare* encounters in its c-command domain. Therefore, *fare* would be expected to agree with *dormire* rather than with the subject. Nevertheless, *dormire* is not a potential goal for *fare* because it does not have an uninterpretable case feature. Hence, it is predicted to be inactive as it does not satisfy the Activity Condition (Chomsky, 2001). However, it could still intervene according to the Defective Intervention Constraint (cf. Chomsky 2000:123), which prohibits the establishment of an AGREE relation when a closer but inactive goal intervenes between a probe and another goal.

In addition, the subject *pro* is predicted to be inactive by the Activity Condition because its case feature has already been valued by *dormire*. This would prevent it from entering another AGREE relation with *fare*.

In order to overcome these problems, I assume that AGREE is delayed until the next phase head is merged, as proposed by Chomsky (2001) in his revision of the PIC. When the phase is complete, everything is sent to PF for Spell-out and AGREE takes place. The two AGREE relations between the probes *fare* and *dormire* and the goal *pro* are established simultaneously, which prevents *dormire* from intervening in the AGREE relation between *fare* and the subject *pro*. This means that the subject's unvalued case feature is also checked by *dormire* at the same time, hence the subject still has an uninterpretable case feature when the AGREE relation with *fare* is established. As a consequence, it is predicted to be an active goal by the Activity Condition.

Further, it is necessary to spell out another assumption that I make in order to derive *che fare* questions. I assume that the subject does not move to SpecTP because T does not have an EPP feature in Siense *che fare* questions. From an empirical point of view, this assumption seems to be able to capture the pattern observed in Siense yes/no questions: the subject can never appear between *fare* and the lexical verb. Rather, it must appear after the lexical verb, which suggests that it stays in its base-generated position in SpecvP. Alternatively, it can move to TopP (i.e. to some projection to the

left of *che* in the left periphery) if it is topicalized. Without postulating a similar restriction on the lexical nature of T, it would be very problematic to derive *che fare* questions without getting the word order wrong or assuming additional reasons for the subject to move out of SpecTP and move downwards once the EPP feature is checked. Another issue which needs to be discussed is TMA sharing, which takes place between *fare* and the lexical verb. Usually, complementizers in C have a [+/- D] features and select a [+/- finite] verb in T (see section 3.2.3)⁷. However, the element in C is a verb in this case, so it does not only select the feature [+/- finite], but also the other core features that characterize a verbal head, namely Tense, Aspect and Mood. This mechanism can predict the kind of TMA sharing found in Sienese without overgenerating unwanted agreement patterns between C and T. It predicts that whenever the element in C is of a verbal nature, it will not only select [+/- finiteness] but also Tense, Mood and Aspect. On the contrary, when the element in C is of a [+/- D] feature it will only select [+/- finiteness]⁸. In fact, the TMA-identity requirement that characterizes *che fare* questions should not be considered an additional assumption in the analysis. Rather, it should be understood as a corollary of the more general C-T identity requirement described in Chomsky's (2005, 2006) feature-inheritance model.

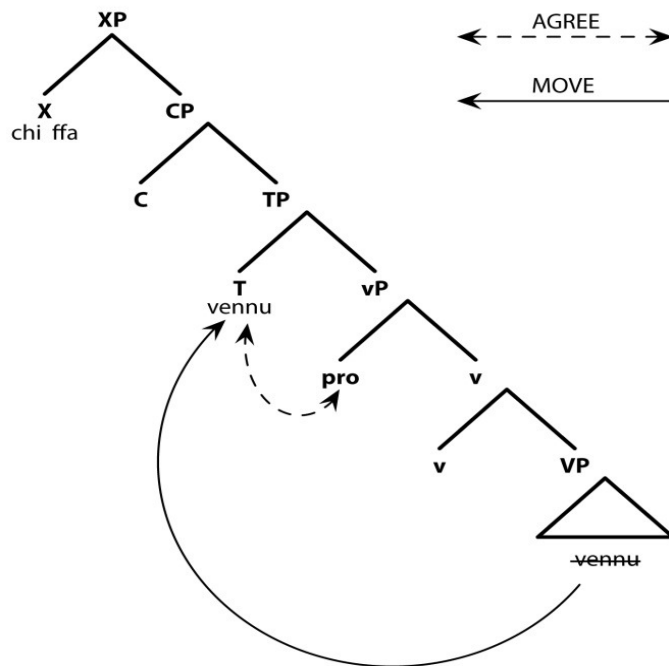
3.2.2 The derivation of Sicilian *chiffà* questions

Sicilian *chiffà* questions are less problematic to derive than Sienese *che fare* questions. As already mentioned in section 3, I argue that *chiffà* should be analyzed as a high, complex adverbial element in the Left Periphery of the clause. I assume the derivation of a Sicilian *chiffà* question like (37) to proceed as follows:

- 37) Chiffà vennu?
 QP come-PRES.3.Pl
 'Are they coming?'

⁷ See a.o. Aboh (2004) and Haegeman (2004) for a discussion of the parallelism between definiteness (in the nominal domain) and finiteness (in the clausal domain).

⁸ A potential counterexample to this generalization would be a language where a complementizer that has a [D] feature agrees for TMA with the verb in T, or where a verbal element in C agrees with the verb in T for phi-features but not for TMA features. I am not aware of any such cases.



- the verb *venire* is merged with *v* → label *v*
- *v* is merged with *pro*, which enters the derivation with interpretable and valued phi-features and uninterpretable and unvalued case features → label *vP*
- *vP* is merged with *T* which enters the derivation with uninterpretable and unvalued phi-features and valued case-features → label: *TP*
- the verb *venire* moves to *T*
- the verb *venire* enters an AGREE relation with *pro*; *pro*'s case feature is valued by *venire* and then deleted, and the uninterpretable phi-features of *venire* are valued by *pro* and then deleted.
- *TP* is merged with *C*
- *CP* is merged with a higher projection whose head is *chiffà*.

Only one AGREE relation is established in Sicilian *chiffà* questions, i.e. between the lexical verb and its subject. *Fare* is located in a high projection in the Left Periphery rather than in *C*. Therefore, it cannot interact with *T* because it is in a different phase and does not have access to the previous phase, as opposed to Siense.

As for Sienese, I still assume that T does not have an EPP feature and therefore the subject does not move to SpecTP⁹. Rather, it stays in its base-generated position in SpecvP. Again, this assumption allows us to derive *che fare* questions without getting the word order wrong, or assuming additional reasons for the subject to get out of SpecTP and move downwards once the EPP feature is checked.

3.2.3 A note on AGREE and multiple feature-checking

The structure of Sienese *che fare* questions provides additional evidence for AGREE not to be necessarily limited to one-probe-one-goal relations, as widely attested in recent literature (cf. Hiraiwa, 2001; Adger & Harbour, 2008; Béjar, 2003; Béjar & Rezac, 2009, Carstens, 2001; Carstens & Kinyalolo, 1989; van Koppen, 2005; Nevins 2007, 2011; Rezac, 2007, 2008).

One of the most discussed and well known case of multiple feature-checking is provided by Japanese raising constructions:

- 40) John-ga/ni [mada Mary-ga kodomo-ni amaku]
 John-NOM/DAT still Mary-NOM children-DAT lenient-INF
 kanji -ta.
 feel -PAST

‘Mary seems to John to be still lenient to children.’ (Hiraiwa, 2001:76)

[Japanese]

The sentence in (40) is an example of Raising-to-Subject construction. Since infinitives in Japanese cannot check structural case, the nominative Case of the embedded subject DP in (40) is checked via AGREE with the matrix T (Hiraiwa, 2001). As a consequence, the matrix T agrees with the matrix subject and with the embedded subject at the same time. For this reason, Japanese raising constructions are taken to show an AGREE relation where two goals agree with the same probe at the same time. Other examples of similar AGREE relations involving one probe and two goals are instantiated by the Cyclic Agree cases discussed in Béjar & Rezac (2009) and Rezac (2007, 2008), and by the Multiple Agree cases discussed in Nevins (2007, 2011).

As opposed to these constructions, however, Sienese *che fare* questions display a case of AGREE which involves two probes and one goal rather than two goals and one probe. In fact, this configuration is not uncommon in the world’s languages. Another example of two probes agreeing with a single goal at the same time is provided by the so-called Bantu Compound Tense (CT) structures, where the subject agrees with two verbal heads at the same time:

- 38) Juma a- li- kuwa a- me- pika chakula
 Juma 3.Sg- PAST- be 3.Sg- PFV- cook food
 ‘Juma had cooked food.’ (Carstens, 2001: 3)

[Swahili]

⁹ Sienese *che fare* questions and Sicilian *chiffà* questions behave the same with respect to the position of the subject, i.e. the subject can only occur either before *chiffà* or after the lexical verb. It cannot occur between *fare* and the lexical verb.

Carstens & Kinyalolo (1989) and Carstens (2001) analyze CT constructions as raising structures. They argue that the subject moves through the specifier of the lower verbs before reaching its final landing site in the specifier of the higher verb. In this kind of constructions both verbs carry full agreement with the subject, i. e. both agreement relations are spelled out as agreement morphology on the verbs.

A further example of two probes agreeing with one goal comes from Complementizer Agreement in West Germanic (cf. Bayer, 1984; Law, 1991; Haegeman, 1992; Zwart, 1993, 1997; van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen, 2002b; van Koppen, 2005), which is also taken to instantiate a case of two probes (the complementizer and the verb) agreeing with the same goal (the subject). An example of a sentence displaying Complementizer Agreement is provided in (39) below:

- 39) a. ...datt-e we naar Leie gaan.
 that-Pl we to Leiden go-PRES.3.Pl
 ‘...that we are going to Leiden.’ (van Koppen, 2005: 33)

- b. [CP datt-e(u φ) [TP we(i φ) [VP naar Leie [VP ~~we~~ [v gaan(u φ)]]]]

[Katwijk Dutch]

A similar analysis was developed for Long Distance Agreement (Bhatt, 2005) in Hindi-Urdu, in order to account for the phenomenon of a verb agreeing with an argument that is not its own. The subject of the embedded clause agrees both with the embedded and the main verb in Hindi-Urdu. An example is given in (40) below:

- 40) a. Vivek-ne kitaab par:h-nii chaah-ii
 Vivek-ERG book.F read-INF.F want-PFV.F.Sg
 ‘Vivek wanted to read the book.’ (Bhatt, 2005: 760)

- b. [TP Vivek-ne [VP kitaab(i φ) par:h-nii(u φ)] chaah-ii(u φ)]]

[Hindi-Urdu]

To summarize, the analysis proposed in section 3.2.1 accounts for the fact that the subject of the lower predicate agrees with two different heads within the same clausal domain. Two different agreement relations are established. Namely, one between the subject of the lower predicate and the lower predicate itself and one between the subject of the lower predicate and *fare*. Both relations happen under the syntactic mechanism of AGREE (Chomsky, 2000; 2001a, b). Potential problems caused by the Activity Condition and the Defective Intervention Constraint are ruled out by assuming that AGREE is delayed until the next phase head is merged (*fare* in C, in this case).

As briefly discussed in the present section, this configuration is in line with what has been previously observed for other constructions where an AGREE relation is established between more than one goal and one probe. The proposed analysis shows how a surprising case of variation in yes/no questions is in fact amenable to general principles of the grammar.

3.2.4 Tense, Mood and Aspect features

As discussed in Chomsky's (2005, 2006) feature-inheritance model, there is a strong connection between C and T. More specifically, T is considered to inherit all of its features from C so that it only acts as a Probe derivatively, by virtue of its relationship with C. This relationship results in a number of different correlations which provide evidence for C and T having a strong connection. As already discussed in section 3.2.1, I consider the TMA-identity requirement that characterizes *che fare* questions to be a corollary of the more general C-T identity requirement.

In fact, the presence of multiple tensed verbs in the same clausal domain which share the same Tense, Mood and Aspect features is very pervasive across various languages. I will first discuss some data which provide evidence in favor of the C-T connection (Chomsky, 2005, 2006). Then I will present some data from West African, Swedish (Wiklund, 2007), English (de Vos, 2005), Afrikaans (de Vos, 2005) and Sicilian (Cardinaletti & Giusti, 2000), which involve a similar spreading of inflectional morphology. However, a detailed analysis of the syntactic mechanism through which Tense, Mood and Aspect features actually spread on different verbal heads is beyond the scope of this paper.

3.2.4.1 The C-T connection

A strong piece of evidence in favor of the C-T connection is complement clause selection. As widely described in the literature (cf. Grimshaw, 1979; Philippaki-Warbuton, 1992; Manzini, 2000; Rizzi, 2001; Adger & Quer, 2001; Roussou, 2010), complementizers select specific types of complement clauses. This selection operation has some direct consequences for the morphology of the verb in the complement clause. More specifically, it affects the verb with respect to finiteness (finite vs. non-finite forms) or mood choices (e.g. indicative vs. subjunctive), as widely discussed by a number of scholars (cf. Rizzi 1997). Some examples from Catalan and Sienese are provided respectively in (41.a-d) and (42.a-d) below:

- 41) a. Han confessat que s' hagin
 have-PRES.3.PL confessed that REFL.CL have.PRES.SUBJ.3.PL
 endut diners?
 take-PP money
 'Did they confess if they took the money?'
 b. *Han confessat que s' han
 have-PRES.3.PL confessed that REFL.CL have-PRES.IND.3.PL
 endut diners
 take-PP money?
 'Did they confess if they took the money?'

- c. Han confessat si s' han
 have-PRES.3.Pl confessed if REFL.CL have.PRES.IND-3.Pl
 endut diners?
 take-PP money
 'Did they confess if they took the money?'
- d. *Han confessat si s' hagin endut
 have-PRES.3p confessed if REFL.CL have.SUBJ-3.Pl take-PP
 diners?
 money
 'Did they confess if they took the money?' (Adger & Quer, 2001:111)
- [Catalan]

The Catalan examples in (41.a-d) show a Mood alternation, determined by the selection operated by the complementizer. The complementizer *que* selects the subjunctive, as in (41.a). The indicative yields ungrammaticality, as shown in (41.b). Instead, the complementizer *si* selects the indicative, as in (41.c). A subjunctive form would be ungrammatical in this context, as shown in (41.d).

- 42) a. M' hanno consigliato d' andà a Murlo.
 to-me.CL have-PRES.3.Pl suggested to go-INF to Murlo
 'They suggested me to go to Murlo.'
- b. *M' hanno consigliato di vo a
 to-me.CL have-PRES.3.Pl suggested to go-PRES.IND.1.Sg to
 Murlo
 Murlo.
 'They suggested me to go to Murlo.'
- c. Mi sa che vo a Murlo.
 to-me.CL taste-PRES.3.Pl that go-PRES.IND.1.Sg to Murlo
 'I think I will go to Murlo.'
- d. *Mi sa che andà a Murlo.
 to-me.CL taste-PRES.3.Pl that go-INF to Murlo
 'I think I will go to Murlo.'

[Sieneese]

As opposed to the Catalan examples in (41.a-d), the Sieneese examples in (42.a-d) show a finiteness alternation. The complementizer *di* selects a non-finite verb, as shown in (42.a). A finite verb would be ungrammatical in this position, as shown in (42.b). Similar story for the complementizer *che*: it selects a finite verb, as in (42.c). A non-finite verb yields ungrammaticality, as shown in (42.d).

3.2.4.2 TMA-spreading

One of the most prototypical examples of TMA-spreading is provided by pseudo-coordinative constructions. Pseudo-coordinative constructions are found in many variants of spoken Swedish (cf. Anward, 1988; Josefsson, 1991; Wiklund, 1996, 2007; Julien, 2003), as well as in some spoken varieties of Danish, Faroese and Norwegian. An example from Swedish is provided in (43) below:

- 43) a. Han börjar o skriver dikter
 he start-PRES.3.Sg and write-PRES.3.Sg poems
 'He starts writing poems.' (Wiklund, 2007:3)
- b. Han började o skrev dikter
 he start-PAST.3.Sg and write-PAST.3.Sg poems
 'He started writing poems.' (Wiklund, 2007:3)
- c. Börja o skriv dikter!
 start-IMP and write-IMP poems
 'Start writing poems!' (Wiklund, 2007:4)
- d. Han hade börjat o skrivit dikter.
 he have-PRES.3.Sg start-PP and write-PP poems
 'He had started writing poems.' (Wiklund, 2007:4)
- [spoken Swedish]

The examples in (43.a-d) are characterized by what looks like a coordination of two tensed verbs which share the same morphology. This construction type is possible with any kind of Tense, Mood and Aspect. The sentences in (43.a-d) show it respectively with present tense, past tense, imperative mood and past participle. Of course, this configuration differs very much from *che fare* questions, where no conjunction-like element is present. Beside, this construction is only possible with a restricted class of verbs, which includes control verbs and aspectual verbs like *börja* 'start', *sluta* 'stop' and *fortsätta* 'continue'.

Despite the obvious differences, it somehow still remind us of Sienese *che fare* questions because both constructions are characterized by the presence of two tensed verb in the same clausal domain, which share the same Tense, Mood and Aspect features.

Another example of a pseudo-coordinative structure comes from English (Shopen, 1971; Carden & Pesetsky, 1977; Cardinaletti and Giusti, 2000; de Vos, 2005):

- 44) a. John goes and looks busy every time his boss arrives. (de Vos, 2005:26)
- b. John went and read the constitution. (de Vos, 2005:32)
- c. It could go and rain today. (de Vos, 2005:33)
- 45) a. John and Mary try and eat apples.

- b. John will try and eat an apple.
- c. *John has tried and eaten an apple. (de Vos, 2005:57)

In English it is possible to have a pseudo-coordination of tensed verbs, which reminds us of the Swedish examples in (43). As in Swedish, this phenomenon is restricted to the class of aspectual verbs, such as *go* (see 44.a-c) and *try* (see 45.a-c). In addition, not all Tenses, Moods and Aspects can occur in this construction type. For instance, *go* licenses all Tenses, Moods and Aspects while *try* only allows present and future Tense. Interestingly, American English displays a similar construction that lacks a conjunction-like element:

- 46) a. I go buy bread.
- b. John will go visit Harry tomorrow.

A slightly different case of pseudo-coordination is found in Afrikaans (de Vos, 2005). An example is provided in (47.a). In Afrikaans pseudo-coordinative structures, however, the verbal string may be interrupted by certain XPs (see 47.b) Also, it can occur in the second position of the clause, which is usually meant for single verbs (see 47.c).

- 47) a. Jan sal die boeke sit en lees.
 Jan will the books sit-INF and read-INF
 'Jan will sit reading the books.'
- b. Jan sit die boeke en lees.
 Jan sit-PRES.3.Sg the books and read-PRES.3.Sg
 'Jan sits reading the books.'
- c. Jan sit en lees die boeke.
 Jan sit-PRES.3.Sg and read-PRES.3.Sg the books
 'Jan sits reading the books.' (de Vos, 2005:2)

[Afrikaans]

A further construction type where two inflected verbs occur within the same clausal domain is provided by Sicilian¹⁰ (Cardinaletti & Giusti, 2000):

- 48) a. Vaju a pigghiu u pani.
 go-1.PRES.Sg to fetch-1.PRES.Sg the bread
 'I'm going to fetch bread.'
- b. Va pigghia u pani!
 go-IMP.2.Sg fetch-IMP.2.SG the bread
 'Go to fetch bread!' (Cardinaletti & Giusti, 2000:12)

¹⁰ The Sicilian variety described by Cardinaletti and Giusti (2000) is *Marsalese*.

- 49) a. *Ii a pigghiai u pani.
 go-PAST.1.Sg to fetch-PAST.1.Sg the bread
 'I went to buy bread.'
- b. *Emu a pigghiamu u pani.
 go-PRES.1.Pl to fetch-PRES.1.Pl the bread
 'We went to buy bread.' (Cardinaletti & Giusti, 2000:12)

[Sicilian]

As pointed out by Cardinaletti & Giusti (2000), there are some restrictions on the class of verbs that can participate in this construction, which in fact is limited to motion verbs. In addition, not all Tense, Mood and Aspect are allowed: only present tense (see 48.a) and imperative mood (see 48.b) can in fact occur in this configuration. Past indicative (see 49.a), Imperfect indicative and Subjunctive Mood are all ungrammatical. Besides, there are also some restrictions on the person feature of the subject, which can only be 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular and 3rd person plural. No 1st and 2nd person plural subjects are allowed, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (49.b).

There are certainly many differences between the Marsalese constructions discussed in Cardinaletti and Giusti (2000) and Sienese *che fare* questions. Still, the Sicilian examples in (48) provide evidence for a further construction where two tensed verbs occur in the same clausal domain.

A different example is provided by Serial Verb Constructions, which are very common in many West African languages. They are characterized by the presence of two or more verbs which share subject, object, aspect and tense markers, and are not connected by any kind of conjunction.

As pointed out by many scholars (Baker, 1989; Lee, 1992; Jaeggli & Hyams, 1993; Pollock, 1994; Collins, 1997), the Swedish, English and Afrikaans construction types presented so far are not parallel to Serial Verb Constructions because they lack object sharing.

Let us consider the following examples from Logba (Dorvlo, 2007), a Kwa language spoken in south-eastern Ghana:

- 50) a. A- bobi- e o- tò- klé fɛ a- táwalibiwo
 CM- moon- the Subj.CL- HAB- shines exceed CM- stars
 'The moon shines brighter than stars.' (Dorvlo, 2007:6)
- b. Owusu ɔ- lɔ- nɛ a- fúta tá o- gà
 Owusu Subj.CL- PRES.PROG- buy CM- cloth give CM- wife
 'Owusu is buying cloth for his wife.' (Dorvlo, 2007:7)

[Logba]

There are two verbs in the examples in (50.a-b): *klé* 'shine' and *fɛ* 'exceed' in the former, *nɛ* 'buy' and *tá* 'give' in the latter. The TMA-markers appear only once; they attach as a prefix to the first verb. However, the second verb receives the same interpretation as the first one. The verb *klé* 'shine' is preceded by a habitual marker in (50.a), while the verb *nɛ* 'buy' is preceded by a progressive-aspect marker. Although this

construction type is certainly different from Sieneese *che fare* questions, it still instantiates a case of a monoclausal structure with two tensed verb.

A different case of Tense feature spreading is provided by the so-called Sequence of tenses, known in Latin as *Consecutio Temporum*. *Consecutio Temporum* is a phenomenon which requires tense feature identity between the verb of the main clause and the verb of the subordinate clause. Although it does not concern monoclausal domains, it is still relevant because it provides evidence for a mechanism for spreading features other than phi.

It is found in many languages, among which classical Greek, modern standard Italian and, to a certain extent, English too. A couple of examples are provided in (51) and (52):

- 51) a. *Iam faciam quodcumque voles.*
by.now do-FUT.1.Sg everything want-FUT.2.Sg
'By now I will do everything you want.' (Tibullus, *Liber 4*, Carmen 13:3)
- b. **Iam faciam quodcumque vis.*
by.now do-FUT.1.Sg everything want-PRES.2.Sg
'By now I will do everything you want.'
- [Latin]
- 52) a. *Volevano che parlassi.*
want-PAST.3.Pl that talk-PAST.3.Pl
'They wanted me to talk.'
- b. **Volevano che parli.*
want-PAST.3.Pl that talk-PRES.3.Pl
'They wanted me to talk.'
- [Italian]

In (51.a), the verb of the main clause, *facere* 'do' has a future tense feature, which must be present on the verb of the subordinate clause in order for the sentence to be grammatical. The sentence in (51.b) is ungrammatical because the verb of the subordinate clause, *velle* 'want' has a present tense feature.

Same story for the examples in (52.a-b): the verb of the main clause, *volere* 'want', has a past tense feature in both sentences. The verb of the subordinate clause, *parlare* 'talk' has a past tense feature in (52.a), while in (52.b) it has a present tense feature. Therefore, (52.a) is grammatical while (52.b) is not.

Finally, I would like to mention another piece of evidence in favor of the idea that feature-spreading is not limited to phi-features. Tortora (2009) proposes a mechanism for feature spreading in order to account for the different adjunction sites of object clitics in Piedmontese dialects. Namely, she proposes a mechanism for spreading the feature [+finite] from the T-head in the Infl-domain to the next lower head, say F1, which then provides the same feature to the next lower functional head, say F2, an so on. By doing so, the feature [+finite] spreads all the way down into the lower functional field. If a functional heads acquires the feature [+finite], then it cannot host object clitics.

To account for the different object clitic adjunction sites in different Piedmontese dialects, she suggests that the left periphery of the lower functional field acts as a barrier to feature spreading in those dialects where object clitics can be adjointed to a functional head in the lower functional field. Instead, it does not act as a barrier in those dialects where object clitics cannot occur in the lower functional field.

The examples in (53.a-b) show the different adjunction sites for object clitics. In Borgomanerese the object clitics adjuncts to a functional heads in the lower functional field, which means the lower functional field functions as a barrier for spreading of the feature [+finite]. The reverse is true in Turinese, where object clitics can only adjunct to functional heads in the higher functional field.

- 53) a. I vònghi piö- *lla*.
 I.Subj.CL-1.Sg see-PRES.1.Sg anymore- her.Obj.CL
 ‘I don’t see her anymore.’ (Tortora, 2009:5)
[Borgomanerese]
- b. I *lo* presento a Giors.
 I.Subj.CL him.Obj.CL introduce-PRES.1.Sg to Giorgio
 ‘I’ll introduce him to Giorgio.’ (Tortora, 2009:5)
[Turinese]

Although Tortora’s (2009) proposal is meant to account for a different set of phenomena, it still provides evidence for a mechanism for spreading features other than phi-features.

4. The diachronic development of yes/no questions

Hitherto, an analysis has been proposed which can account for the syntax of *che fare* questions from a synchronic point of view. However, it is also necessary to investigate the diachrony of this construction in order to have a better grasp on its syntax and semantics. Therefore, I will now put forth a working hypothesis concerning the diachronic development of *che fare* questions over time. First, I will briefly discuss some preliminary evidence in favor of my hypothesis. Then, I will provide some examples of similar diachronic processes which are attested in other languages.

4.1 A working hypothesis

As amply discussed in the previous sections, the syntactic structure of Sienese *che fare* questions is very peculiar for at least two reasons:

- although they are yes/no questions, they are introduced by a *mb*-element;
- there are two tensed verbs in the same clausal domain, which share the same phi-, Tense, Mood and Aspect features.

For these reasons, I believe that the complex structure of yes/no questions in Sienese might find its origin in a biclausal discourse, which was eventually reanalyzed

monoclausally over time. More specifically, *che fare* questions might be the result of a process of reanalysis which merged a wh-question with a yes/no question proper. If this explanation is on the right track, then the apparently biclausal nature of *che fare* questions would be automatically accounted for. As already mentioned in section 3, *che fare* questions might look like two questions rather than one single question at first sight:

- 54) a. Che *fai* *vai* al *mare?*
 che do-PRES.2.Sg go-PRES.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘Are you going to the sea?’
- b. Che *fai?* *Vai* al *mare?*
 what do-PRES.2.Sg go-PRES.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘What are you doing? Are you going to the sea?’

[Sieneese]

The example in (54.a) shows a *che fare* yes/no questions, while the example in (52.b) shows the interpretation that it might receive at first sight. Although I showed extensively in section 3.1 that this is not correct, I still believe that it cannot be entirely coincidental. If my hypothesis concerning the diachronic development of yes/no questions in Sieneese proves correct, then any trace of accidentality disappears. Another piece of evidence in favor of a diachronical analysis comes from the incompatibility of *che fare* questions with *essere* ‘be’ when individual-level predicates (see section 2.1) are involved.

- 55) **Che fa* è *intelligente?*
 che do-PRES.3.Sg be-PRES.3.Sg intelligent
 ‘Is (s)he intelligent?’

[Sieneese]

The ungrammaticality of (55) shows that *fare* probably still retains some of its original lexical, agentive meaning. This suggests that *fare* is likely to have started out as a lexical verb proper, and not as a light, auxiliary-like verb as it is today. Therefore, a diachronical analysis seems to be a promising approach for capturing this meaning shift.

After all, the idea of a biclausal structure being reanalyzed as a monoclausal structure *per se* is not new. As a matter of fact, there is plenty of such cases which have been very well described in the literature. One example is provided by focalization/topicalization structures in languages such as Breton, Japanese, Migrelian, Somali and Xopian (Harris & Campbell, 1995). In the next two subsections, I will briefly explore two cases of reanalysis through which a biclausal structure developed into a monoclausal structure.

4.1.1 Somali

In Somali and other Cushitic languages, the morphology of the verb changes according to the information structure of the sentence. Namely, it is sensitive to the subject and the object being a focus. Therefore, these morphological alternations have been labeled as ‘subject focus conjugation’ and ‘object focus conjugation’. However, the verb displays 3rd person singular masculine agreement (i.e. default agreement) with 2nd person singular and 2nd and 3rd person plural. Let us take a look at the following examples from Somali:

56) a. Anigu muuska baan cunayaa.
 I banana FOC eat
 ‘I am eating a banana.’ (Antinucci & Puglielli, 1984:19)

b. Aniga baa muuska cunaya
 I FOC banana eat
 ‘I am eating a banana.’ (Antinucci & Puglielli, 1984:19)

[Somali]

57) a. Adigu muuska baad cunaysaa
 you banana FOC eat
 ‘You are eating a banana.’ (Antinucci & Puglielli, 1984:19)

b. Adiga baa muuska cunaya.
 you FOC banana eat
 ‘You are eating a banana.’ (Antinucci & Puglielli, 1984:19)

[Somali]

The examples in (56.a-b) show an example of subject and object focus conjugation with 1st person singular. Those in (57.a-b) illustrate subject and object focus conjugation with 2nd person singular. The verb occurring in (57.a) is a default form of the verb *eat*, which does not agree with the subject.

According to, among others, Hetzron (1974) and Harris & Campbell (1995), the pattern illustrated by the subject focus conjugation in Somali and other East-Cushitic languages derives from a process of reanalysis, through which a biclausal cleft structure developed into a monoclausal construction. The apparent lack of agreement with some persons follows from this assumption. Indeed, if the subject originated as the subject of the embedded copular clause in the cleft construction, then the verb of the main clause is not expected to agree with it. As for the agreeing persons, they are considered to be an innovation in this construction.

4.1.2 Laz

Another example of reanalysis which transformed a biclausal structure into a monoclausal one comes from a Xopian dialect of Laz, a Kartvelian language spoken in the Southern Caucasian region.

In some dialects of Laz, there is a cleft-like structure which marks Topic rather than Focus. Unlike regular cleft structures, the subordinate clause contains the topicalized element and the copula. An example from the Vic'Arkab dialect is shown in (58) below:

- 58) Mažura- pe- na en, va uc'mess.
 second- Pl- NOM.COMP it.be neg he.speak.to.them
 Lit. translation: 'The others that are, he does not speak to (them).'
 'As for the others, he does not speak to them.' (Čikobava, 1936b:19, 32)
 [Vic'Arkab dialect of Laz]

In the Xopian dialect, this biclausal construction has been reanalyzed as a single clause. An example is given in (59):

- 59) Ia k'ulani- muši- nay patišais komeču.
 that daughter- his- TOP ruler he.gave.her.to.him
 'As for his daughter he gave her to the ruler.' (Asatiani, 1974:4, 12)
 [Xopian dialect of Laz]

The topic is marked by the particle *nay*, which is the contraction of the relative particle *na* and the verb *be*.

4.2 Stages of reanalysis

The process of reanalysis is of course a very long and gradual one. It is always composed of different stages, through which a construction gradually loses its features to acquire new ones, until it reaches its final stage.

Harris & Campbell (1995) proposed a grammaticalization cline for cases of reanalysis of biclausal structure into monoclausal structures:

Stage 1: The structure has all of the superficial characteristics of a biclausal structure and none of the characteristics of a monoclausal one.

Stage 2: The structure gradually acquires some characteristics of a monoclausal structure and retains some characteristics of a biclausal one.

Stage 3: The structure has all the characteristics of a monoclausal structure and no characteristics of a biclausal one. (Harris & Campbell, 1995: 166)

Although the constructions discussed by Harris & Campbell (1995) are different from Siense *che fare* questions, they still involve reanalysis of a biclausal construction into a monoclausal one. Therefore, I will try and see whether their generalizations concerning the stages of reanalysis can possibly apply to my data.

- **Stage 1:** *The structure has all of the superficial characteristics of a biclausal structure and none of the characteristics of a monoclausal one.*

I assume the initial stage of the reanalysis of *che fare* questions from monoclausal to biclausal constructions to be as in (60):

- 60) Che facesti? Andasti al mare?
 what do-PAST.2.Sg go-PAST.2.Sg to-the sea
 ‘What did you do? Did you go to the sea?’

At this stage, the construction doesn't have any characteristics of a monoclausal structure. It is a biclausal discourse composed of two questions: a *wh*-question and a yes/no question proper. *Fare* is a fully lexical verb, which assigns theta-roles and case to its arguments. Therefore, it complies with Harris & Campbell's (1995) generalization concerning the first stage of reanalysis of biclausal constructions into monoclausal ones.

- **Stage 2:** *The structure gradually acquires some characteristics of a monoclausal structure and retains some characteristics of a biclausal one.*

I assume the second stage of reanalysis of *che fare* questions from monoclausal to biclausal constructions to be instantiated by Sienese. Indeed, Sienese *che fare* questions have some characteristics of a monoclausal structure but at the same time still retain some features of a biclausal one. As discussed in subsections (3.1.1-3.1.4), Sienese *che fare* questions are monoclausal because of the following reasons:

- *Fare* and the lower lexical verb must share the same phi-, Tense, Mood and Aspect features;
- only one negation can occur;
- the subject cannot occur between *fare* and the lower verb;
- *fare* is compatible with verbs which do not assign an agentive theta-role to their subject.

In addition, *fare* cannot assign case and theta-roles to its argument anymore. However, Sienese *che fare* questions still retain a property of a biclausal structure; namely, there are two tensed verbs. As shown in subsection 3.2.3.2, this is not uncommon in many languages of the world. However, it is quite uncommon in Indo-European languages, unless a conjunction-like element is present, which is not the case in Sienese.

For these reasons, it is possible to conclude that Sienese *che fare* questions fall under the requirements of the second stage.

- **Stage 3:** *The structure has all the characteristics of a monoclausal structure and no characteristics of a monoclausal one.*

I assume the third stage of reanalysis of *che fare* questions from monoclausal to biclausal constructions to be instantiated by Sicilian. Indeed, the *wh*-word *chi* and the verb *fare* have clearly undergone a process of grammaticalization, through which they developed into some kind of complex, adverb-like element in the Left Periphery of the clause. Evidence for this is provided by three facts:

- As opposed to Sienese, *fare* does not agree with the subject of the lower lexical verb in Sicilian; it always occurs in the 3rd person singular present form, disregarding of the phi-features of the subject and of the Tense, Mood and Aspect features of the lower lexical verb;

type in *che fare* questions, disregarding of the theta-roles assigned by the lexical verb. On the basis of these arguments, I showed that *che fare* questions are in fact monoclausal constructions.

As far as the syntactic structure of Sienese *che fare* questions is concerned, I argued that the agreement morphology showing up on *fare* and the lexical verb is the result of two AGREE relations. Following Chomsky (2001), I assumed that AGREE is delayed until phase completion. Once the phase head *fare* is merged in C, AGREE takes place: both *fare* and the lexical verb simultaneously establish an AGREE relation with the subject, as it is the only element with the appropriate features in their c-command domain. As a consequence, potential problems related to the Activity Condition and the Defective Intervention Constraint do not come into play. I assumed that the subject does not move out of SpecvP because T lacks an EPP feature in Sienese *che fare* questions. This was done in order to account for the word order of *che fare* questions without postulating additional reasons for the subject to move out of SpecTP. A final assumption concerns the nature of *fare*, which is argued not to be able to assign case to the subject because it is a light verb. As a result, the subject is prevented from receiving case from both the lexical verb and *fare*.

Finally, a tentative hypothesis concerning the diachronic development of *che fare* questions was proposed. Despite their different syntactic behavior, *che fare* questions seem likely to have originated from biclausal discourses, which were reanalyzed as monoclausal constructions over time. Cases of reanalysis of biclausal constructions into monoclausal ones are in fact widely attested in the literature. Sienese is taken to display an intermediate stage between biclausal discourses and Sicilian *chiffà* questions, as *fare* has become a light verb but still retains some of its original verb features.

The loss of agreement morphology on *fare* in Sicilian *chiffà* questions suggests that Sicilian might instantiate a further stage in the reanalysis process, where *fare* has lost all the features of a verb to become a high adverbial element in the Left Periphery.

To summarize, I have argued in this chapter that *che fare* questions are distinct from biclausal discourses, as they are subject to different syntactic restrictions. However, this argument raises another issue that needs to be addressed in order to unambiguously establish the syntactic status of *che fare* questions. Namely, it is necessary to find out how *che fare* questions can be distinguished from their corresponding biclausal discourses in the absence of any morphosyntactic cue. If they are two distinct constructions, we would expect them to systematically correlate with different distinctive prosodic properties. This would provide empirical evidence to support the theoretical claims made in this chapter about their underlying structure. Chapter 4 will tackle this issue.

