

LAGB 2021 – University of Sheffield – 9 September 2021

Recomplementation is indeed re-complementation

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Abstract

We argue for a biclausal account of *recomplementation* constructions in Spanish. We take left-dislocated XPs to be elliptical fragments that are linearly juxtaposed to their host clause (Ott 2014, 2015) and argue that the doubled complementizer in recomplementation functions as a discourse marker linking both clauses (Villa-García 2019), indicating a re-start in discourse. We show that this account sidesteps several problems for monoclausal analyses, which assume that dislocated XPs are in left-peripheral positions such as Spec-TopicP and that the doubled complementizer spells out Topic⁰ (Rodríguez-Ramalle 2005, Villa-García 2012 *et seq.*, a.o.).

1 The phenomenon of recomplementation (in Spanish)

Dislocations (e.g., Clitic Left-dislocations, CLLD) with an optional additional complementizer in spoken Spanish:

- (1) a. Dice que a tu madre (, **que**) la invitaron.
says that acc your mother that cl.acc invited
'S/He says that your mother, that they invited her.'
- b. Me contó que a Juan (, **que**) no le dan ayudas.
cl. told that dat John that not cl.dat give helps
'S/He told me that they don't offer relief to John.'

2 Monoclausal analyses

There are various accounts on the market which rely on CP recursion (2a) or on the Rizgian split CP, such as the TopicP account (2b):

- (2) a. ...[C' que [CP a tu madre [C' **que** [TP la invitaron]]]] (= (1a))
- b. ...[Force' que [TopicP a tu madre [Topic' **que** [FinP la invitaron]]]] (= (1a))

(For (2b), see Rodríguez-Ramalle 2005; Villa-García 2010, 2012a,b,c, 2015, 2016, 2019; *i.a.*; see Villa-García 2015: Ch. 2 for a review of the existing (monoclausal) analyses)

- (3) Major problems for monoclausal accounts such as those in (2):
- (i) intonation (3.1);
 - (ii) connectivity and anti-connectivity (3.2);
 - (iii) extraction (3.5);
 - (iv) discourse marker/dependence on first/high *que*: restart (3.6)
 - (v) same doubled complementizer (3.7)

3 Our proposal: a biclausal analysis - arguments

According to Ott (2014, 2015), dislocated XPs are elliptical sentence fragments linearly juxtaposed to their host clauses; the dislocate and its host are paratactically ordered but anaphorically related:

- (4) a. *Ese coche lo van a comprar en Sheffield.*
 that car cl.acc go to buy in Sheffield.
 'That car, they are going to buy (it) in Sheffield.'
- b. [CP₁ ~~van a comprar~~ ese coche] [CP₂ lo van a comprar...]
 go to buy that car cl.acc go to buy

One major advantage of this approach is that the obligatory co-occurrence of the clitic in CILD is no longer mysterious: the clitic is a pronoun that anaphorically refers to the XP in the first clause (CP₁).

- (5) Our biclausality proposal:
- (a) embedded CILD is achieved either by interpolation of the parenthetical fragment (= no recomplementation):
- (6) [CP₂ dice que... [CP₁ ~~invitaron~~ a tu madre] ... la invitaron]
 (= (1a) without second *que*)
- (b) Or by an elliptical fragment followed by a 'restart' (= recomplementation):
- (7) [CP₁ dice [que ~~invitaron~~ a tu madre]] [CP₂ dice [**que** la invitaron]]
 (= (1a) with second *que*, recomplementation)

It is of note that the type of ellipsis assumed in (7) is independently available in Spanish, as shown by (8); there is nothing special about the types of ellipsis instantiated in (7).

- (8) A: ¿A quién han invitado?
 acc who have invited
 'Who have they invited?'
- B: Me dijo Pedro que han ~~invitado~~ a María.
 cl. said Peter that have invited acc Mary
 'Peter said that they've invited Mary.'

Below are several arguments in favour of a biclausal account of recomplementation patterns.

3.1. Argument 1: intonation

The dislocated XP and the secondary *que* are typically separated by a salient intonational boundary, as shown again in (9) (Villa-García 2012, 2015, 2019; Radford 2018; Martínez-Vera 2019):

- (9) Me cuentan que a ese tipo, que no lo tragan.
 cl. tell that acc that guy that not cl.acc swallow
 'I am told that they can't stand that guy.'

This is wholly compatible with our assumption that the relation between fragment and host is paratactic, each clause forming a separate intonational phrase (cf. Dehé 2009 on parentheticals and intonational phrasing):

- (10) [IntonP dice que XP]_{fragment} [IntonP **que** ...]_{host}

3.2. Argument 2: connectivity and anti-connectivity

The dislocated XP displays theta/case-connectivity (for case, see (1a,b)), showing that it cannot be base-generated in its surface position sandwiched between the two *ques* (as claimed by some monoclausal accounts like Villa-García's (2012 *et seq.*) TopicP analysis in (2b)).

On the biclausal approach, these properties follow from the fact that ellipsis in CP₁ is licensed under identity with CP₂, so that the dislocate and the clitic share theta/case-properties. Focusing on the CILLED phrase flanked between *ques*, in an example like (1a), *a tu madre* receives case and a theta role canonically from the elided verb *invitaron* in CP₁.

- (11) [CP₁ dice [que ~~invitaron~~ a tu madre]] [CP₂ dice [que la invitaron]]



Furthermore, regarding Condition A, we observe reconstruction effects, as expected under (11):¹

- (12) %Me dicen que esa foto de sí mismo, que al
 cl. say that that photo of himself that king
 duque no le gusta nada.
 duke not cl.dat pleases nothing
 'They tell me that the king detests that picture of himself.'

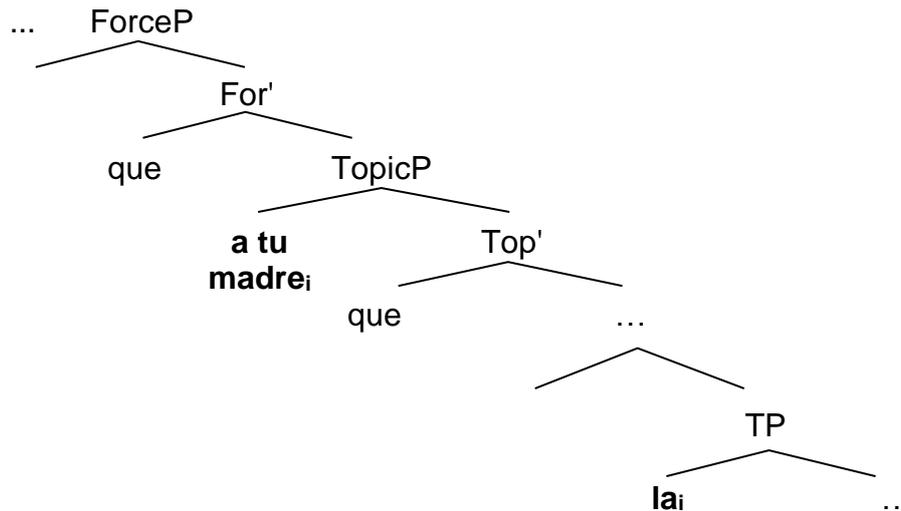
¹ See Villa-García (2012, 2015, 2019) for divergent results from bound-variable-interpretation cases, which may be related to word order and to the presence of a complementizer disfavoring bound readings, on which see Pasquareau (2018).

That the anaphor is bound inside CP₁ by *al duque* is shown schematically in (13):

- (13) [_{CP1} me dicen [~~que al duque no le gusta nada~~ esa foto de sí mismo]] [_{CP2} ~~me dicen~~ [**que** al duque no le gusta nada]]

At the same time, no Condition B effect arises that would be expected if the dislocate c-commanded its pronominal correlate in examples like (1a), as would be the case on a monoclausal analysis (see (2b) and (14)):

- (14)



Moreover, seemingly doubled subjects are licit in recomplementation patterns, which is generally impossible in null-subject languages such as Spanish (Barbosa 2009). Monoclausal analyses are forced to tolerate doubled subjects in such cases:

- (15) Dice que Hugo_i, **que** él_i no es así.
says that Hugo that he not is thus
'S/He says that Hugo, that he is not like that.'

(Villa-García 2019)

- (16) ...[Force' que [_{TopicP} **Hugo** [_{Topic'} *que* [_{FinP} **él** no es así]]]] (= (15))

On our analysis, by contrast, there is no subject doubling, as dislocate and correlate are in separate clauses, so the apparent problem fades away:

- (17) [_{CP1} dice [~~que no es así~~ **Hugo**]] [_{CP2} dice [*que* **él** no es así]] (= (15))

3.3. Argument 3: epithetic correlates

Unlike ordinary CILD (18a), recomplemented CILD (18b) readily permits epithetic correlates:

- (18) a. *%Cuentan que a María no la quieren
tell that acc Mary not cl. acc love

a la muy malvada.
acc the very evil
- b. Cuentan que a María, **que** no la quieren
tell that acc Mary that not cl. acc love

a la muy malvada.
acc the very evil
'They say that Mary, that they don't love that evil woman.'
(Villa-García 2019)

This is not surprising under a biclausal approach to recomplementation, where the dislocate and its correlate belong to separate CPs and are anaphorically related cross-sententially.

3.4. Argument 4: clausal negation

When negatively quantified dislocations occupy the sandwiched position, negation in the host clause is mandatory (Martín-González 2002; Villa-García 2012, 2015):

- (19) Dice que a ninguno de ellos, que*(no) lo llamó.
says that acc none of them that not cl.acc called
'S/He says that s/he didn't call any of them.'

Under the biclausal account, this follows from the fact that the host clause must have the same polarity as the elliptical clause to satisfy ellipsis parallelism; the neg XP does not negate CP₂: *no* 'not' is thus required in CP₂.

- (20) [CP₁ dice [que ~~no~~ llamó a ninguno de los niños]] [CP₂ dice [**que** no lo llamó
]] (= (19))

3.5. Argument 5: an extraction asymmetry

Regular CILD (without recomplementation) generally permits extraction across the dislocate into the main clause (Uribe Extebarria 1991; Rizzi 2004; Ott 2015, *i.a.*), but recomplemented CILD does not (Villa-García 2010, 2012, 2015, 2019; see also González i Planas 2014; Cerrudo-Aguilar & Gallego 2018; Radford 2018; Petersen O’Farril 2021; Torrego, in prep.):

- (21) a. %¿Qué_i me contaste que a tu novia
 what cl.dat tell that dat your girlfriend
 le habías regalado t?
 cl.dat had given
 ‘What did you tell me you had given to your girlfriend?’
- b. *¿Qué_i me contaste que a tu novia,
 what cl.dat told that dat your girlfriend
 que le habías regalado t?
 that cl.dat had given

This shows that the main clause is a separate fragmentary expression in recomplemented CILD, as in (23):

- (22) [CP₂ **qué_i** me contaste que... [... a tu novia ...] ... le habías regalado t]
 (= (18a), no recomplementation)
- (23) *[CP₁ **qué_i** me contaste [que ... a tu novia]] [CP₂ ... [**que** le habías
 regalado t]]
 (= (18b), recomplementation)

The attempted extraction in (21b) with two *ques* is cross-sentential, hence ruled out on principled grounds, as extraction cannot occur across sentences (i.e., parataxis, not hypotaxis).

Further, apparent cross-clausal binding reduces to ellipsis in CP₂:

- (24) Ninguno de los niños_i pensó que, por
 none of the boys thought that for
 navidad, **que** darle a su_i madre un libro era bueno.
 Christmas that give-cl. dat his mother a good was good
 ‘None of the boys_i thought that it would be a good to give his_i mother a
 book for Christmas.’

- (25) [CP₁...] [CP₂ ~~ninguno de los niños~~ pensó [**que** darle a **su** madre un libro
 era buena idea]]

3.6. Argument 6: *que*'s function as a discourse marker and the dependence of second *que* on the first one

Villa-García (2019) argues that one of the various functions of the additional occurrence of *que* is that of a discourse marker. Discourse markers signal a relationship between the element they introduce (i.e., the seemingly embedded clause) and the prior segment (i.e., the dislocated material).

Interestingly, the dislocate featured in recomplementation patterns is external to the clause introduced by recomplementation *que*, which is indeed the case even for regular CILD under Ott's account. The foregoing fact that recomplementation *que* is preceded by an intonational boundary resonates well with this function, as discourse markers are related to intonational boundaries (Hirschberg & Litman 1993).

For recomplementation clauses, it could be argued that secondary complementizers resume a sentence after topical material has been introduced. This possibility supports the claim that the sandwiched element is in fact external to the following clause, fully consistent with our analysis: if recomplementation involves two clauses cataphorically linked by ellipsis under identity (cf. (7)), then the second, reduplicative *que* serves to link the two clauses, by signaling a 'restart' in discourse, precisely as expected if this second *que* can mark a discourse relation. This is illustrated again in (26):

- (26) Que a Pedro, **que** lo contrataron en Oxford.
 that acc Peter that cl.acc hired in Oxford
 'Somebody says/I said that they hired Peter at Oxford.'
 (Inspired by Etxepare 2010)

Recomplementation is not the only case where a *that*-like element takes on this function:

- (27) A: What does no one believe?
 B: #(That) I'm taller than I really am.
 (Inconsistent on main-clause reading; Merchant 2004)

What is more, the second complementizer can co-occur with an unambiguous discourse marker such as *pues* 'then/thus,' as in (28); discourse markers tend to cluster together in many languages (Hansen 1998, *i.a.*).

- (28) Dice que como no hay dinero, pues que no va.
 says that as not have money then that not goes
 'S/He says that since there is no money, that then s/he is not going.'

Likewise, the biclausal proposal put forth here also offers a straightforward account of why the second *que* is contingent on the first one (i.e., the occurrence of second *que* depends on the occurrence of a higher *que*), an unresolved issue under the TopicP account observed by Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2014):

- (29) a. Dice que a tu madre, **que** la invitaron.
says that acc your mother that cl.acc invited
'S/He says that your mother, that they invited her.'
- b. Que a tu madre, **que** la invitaron.
that acc your mother that cl.acc invited
'S/He, I, or somebody says that your monther, that they invited her.'
- c. A tu madre, (***que**) la invitaron.
acc your mother that cl.acc invited
'They invited your mother/Your mother, they invited.'

3.7. Argument 7: same reduplicative complementizer

As observed by João Costa (pers. comm.), in cases of recomplementation across languages, it is always the same complementizer that occurs in both instances (e.g., *que – que*; *that – that*). This is mysterious under monoclausal analyses, where each occurrence of the complementizer occurs in a different left-peripheral head (e.g., Force⁰ for *que*₁ and Topic⁰ for *que*₂). In contrast, the fact that the doubled complementizer is always identical to the first one is straightforwardly accounted for under the biclausal analysis: the two underlying sentences are parallel to each other, the difference between them reducing to the fact that the selecting predicate is elided in the host/CP₂, hence the occurrence of the same complementizer:

- (30) [CP₁ dice/cuenta/piensa [**que** ... XP]] [CP₂ ~~dice/cuenta/piensa~~ [**que** ...]]

In this connection, Villa-García (2015, 2019) reports reduplicative interrogative complementizers in both English and Spanish (see also Radford 2018):

- (31) Preguntó **si** a la fiesta, **si** vais a ir.
asked if/whether to the party if/whether go to go
'S/He asked if you guys are going to the party.'

This naturally follows from the biclausal analysis, whereby the repeated interrogative complementizer is the complementizer selected by the predicate *preguntar* 'ask', elided in CP₂:

- (32) [CP₁ preguntó [~~si vais a ir~~ a la fiesta]] [CP₂ preguntó [**si** vais a ir]] (= (31))

The above is fully in line with the intuition behind the name originally given to the configuration in question: *re-complementation* (Higgins 1988).

Furthermore, in jussive/optative clauses featuring a subjunctive verb, the second *que* tends to be obligatory for most speakers, in contrast to the optionality of ordinary recomplementation (cf. (1)) (Villa-García 2012, 2015, 2016):

- (33) a. Dicen que si lo acosan, que denuncie.
say that if cl.acc harass that sue_{Subj.}
b. *%Dicen que si lo acosan denuncie.
say that if cl.acc harass sue_{Subj.}
'They say that he should sue them if they harass him.'
(Inspired by Villa-García 2012, 2015, 2016)

Subjunctive sentences are headed by *que* even in root contexts:

- (34) a. ¡Que denuncie!
that sue_{Subj.}
'I/He/She demanded that s/he sue them.'
b. *¡Denuncie!
sue_{Subj.}

The mandatory second occurrence of *que* for most speakers illustrated in (33a) is related to the obligatoriness of subjunctive *que* even in matrix environments.

4 Conclusions

A version of the biclausal account proposed by Ott for regular CLD overcomes many of the problems raised for monoclausal accounts of recomplementation configurations (e.g., TopicP under Rizzi's left periphery) and makes several correct predictions.

Overall, adopting a biclausal analysis of recomplementation naturally answers major questions posed by competing monoclausal proposals in a non-stipulative way. Further issues to investigate further in light of this approach include the issue of selection (e.g., in Spanish, factives such as *lamentar* 'lament' cannot take recomplemented clausal complements, as noted by Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2009, Villa-García 2012, González i Planas 2014, *i.a.*).

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