A biclausal analysis of recomplementation

We propose a biclausal analysis of recomplementation (i.e., double-complementizer) constructions in Spanish which solves a number of empirical issues raised by previous proposals, such as the prevalent TopicP account within Rizzi's (1997 *et seq.*) left periphery.

Ott (2014, 2015) proposes a biclausal analysis of Clitic Left-dislocations (CLLDs), according to which dislocated XPs are elliptical fragments that are linearly juxtaposed to their host clause (so that dislocate and host are related parenthetically and anaphorically), as in Spanish (1):

(1) [~~van a comprar~~ *ese coche*] *lo   van   a   comprar.*
       go to buy   that car   cl.ACC go   to   buy
       'That car, they are going to buy (it).'

The proposal, Ott argues, solves a number of problems for the analysis of CLLD cross-linguistically. More specifically, Ott claims that his biclausal approach circumvents *Cinque's Paradox*, according to which CLLDs display movement and non-movement properties concurrently. However, various issues are left open by this general approach. One such issue is the account of embedded dislocations, and specifically the phenomenon of *recomplementation*, where an embedded dislocate is followed by an additional instance of the complementizer, as in (2) (Villa-García 2015, 2019; Cerrudo & Gallego 2018; Martínez-Vera 2019, *i.a.*).

(2) *Dice que a   tu   hermana,* <u>*que*</u> *no le   van a   mandar nada.*
       says that DAT your sister   that not cl.DAT go   to send   nothing
       'S/he says that they are not going to send your sister anything.'

Ott (2015: 277) speculates that recomplementation sentences "arise in performance, owing to the prosodic fragmentation of the complex sentence as a result of parenthetical insertion." Departing from this suggestion, in this talk we argue for a biclausal analysis of recomplementation patterns à la Ott (cf. (1)). The proposal is sketched in (3), which is a simplified representation of (2) under Ott's system.

(3) *Dice que* ~~no le van a mandar nada~~ *a tu hermana, que no le van a mandar nada.*

The cartographic approach to sentences such as (2) adopts a left-peripheral template. The dominant analysis of recomplementation in Spanish is the TopicP account of Rodríguez-Ramalle (2003) and Villa-García (2015, 2019), as shown in simplified form in (4).

(4) Dice … [Force' que [TopicP a tu hermana [Topic' que [FinP …]]]]

The TopicP approach is for the most part empirically adequate and makes a number of correct predictions regarding the distribution of reduplicative complementizers. At the same time, however, it leaves certain questions about the construction unanswered, such as why the dislocate and recomplementation *que* are separated by an intonational boundary (Villa-García 2015, 2019; Radford 2018) and how a dative object like *a tu hermana* receives its case and theta-role, on the assumption that such sandwiched dislocates are directly merged in between *que*s (see Villa-García 2015, 2019 and Martínez-Vera 2019). The first property follows straightforwardly from the parenthetical relation between dislocate and host (see Dehé 2009 on parentheticals and intonational phrasing). Regarding the second question, the biclausal approach in (3) provides a natural answer as well: *a tu hermana* receives structural case and its thematic role in the canonical indirect-object position in the first, elliptical clause.

A further problem answered by our approach is the mysterious question of why a recomplementation sentence like (5) requires clausal negation (Martín González 2002).

(5) *Dice que a   ninguno de   los   niños,   que *(no) lo   invitó.*
       says that ACC none   of   the   children   that not   cl.ACC invited
       'S/he says that they didn't invite any of the children.'

Under the biclausal account, (5) follows from the fact that the second clause must have the same polarity as the first one (i.e., negative). Since *a ninguno de los niños* belongs to the first and not to the second clause under the biclausality proposal, as shown in (6), its negative word *ninguno*

does not suffice to render the second clause negative, and the presence of negation is thus compulsory for both clauses to be sufficiently parallel to one another for ellipsis to be licensed.

(6)   *Dice [que ~~no invitó~~ a ninguno de los niños], [que no lo invitó].*

An additional question is why embedded hanging topics must be followed by secondary *que*, as (7) indicates; note in contrast that this *que* is optional in the case of genuine CLLDs (González i Planas 2014, Etxepare & Grohman 2003, Villa-García 2015; see Fernández-Rubiera 2009 for a dissenting view). The answer, which is compatible with our proposal, is that case-less hanging topics are inserted parenthetically between both clauses, rather than generated internally to the first clause. Since in such cases the hanging topic belongs to neither clause, the secondary *que* must surface in order to signal that the embedded clause is resumed (see below).

(7)   *Me   dijo ella que Juan$_i$, *(que) no lo invitan al   loco$_i$.*
     cl.DAT said she that John   that not cl.ACC invite the.ACC madman
     'She told me that as for John, that they are not going to invite that madman.'

A further argument in support of the biclausal analysis comes from the possibility of having an epithetic correlate of a CLLDed XP, but only if the latter is flanked by complementizers (Villa-García 2019), as shown by (8). This is also unsurprising under the biclausal analysis: there is room in the second clause for an accusative argument that is not external to the clause (*a ese idiota*). Recall that the recomplementized one (i.e., *a Juanete*) in actuality belongs to the first, elliptical clause and is thus external to the second clause (cf. (8); see also (7) wrt. hanging topics). The parallelism required for ellipsis is sufficiently maintained in this case.

(8)   *Dice que ~~no llamaron~~ a   Juanete$_i$, *(que) no lo   llamaron a   ese idiota$_i$.*
     said that   ACC John   that not cl. ACC called   ACC that idiot
     'John, they said they didn't call that idiot.'

Furthermore, Villa-García (2019) argues that one of the various functions of recomplementation *que* is that of a discourse marker. Discourse markers signal a relationship between the element they introduce (i.e., the 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 CLLD under Ott's account. Hansen (1998: 236) argues that "semantically, markers are best seen as processing instructions intended to aid the hearer in integrating the unit hosting the marker into a coherent mental representation of the unfolding discourse." The fact that, as noted above, recomplementation *que* is preceded by an intonational boundary resonates well with this function, as discourse markers tend to follow intonational boundaries (Hirschberg & Litman 1993). Authors such as Casasanto & Sag (2008) and Frank (in prep.) claim that recomplementation aids processing. What is more, the complementizer can co-occur with an unambiguous discourse marker such as *pues* 'then/thus,' as in (9), in line with the observation that discourse markers tend to cluster in many languages (Hansen 1998, *i.a.*).

(9)   *Dice que como no hay dinero, <u>pues</u> que no   va   a   ir.*
     says that as   not have money then that not   goes to   go
     'S/he says that since there is no money, that s/he is not going.'

In the context of recomplementation clauses, it could be argued that the second *que* resumes a sentence after topical material has been introduced. This substantiates the claim that the sandwiched element is actually external to the second clause, wholly consistent with our analysis: if recomplementation involves two clauses cataphorically linked by ellipsis under identity (cf. (3)), the reduplicative complementizer serves the role of linking the two clauses, precisely as would be expected if one of its roles is to mark a discourse relation, thereby aiding processing. Overall, the arguments above support a biclausal analysis of recomplementation.

Selected references: Ott, Denis. 2014. An ellipsis approach to contrastive left-dislocation. *Linguistic Inquiry* 45(2). 269-303. // Ott, Denis. 2015. Connectivity in left-dislocation and the composition of the left periphery. *Linguistic Variation* 15(2). 225-290. // Villa-García, Julio. 2019. Recomplementation in English and Spanish: Delineating the CP Space. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 4(1): 56. 1-44. Ubiquity Press.