Island effects under recomplementation in Spanish:

A derivational account*

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1. The facts

Villa-García (2015) observes that long distance A-bar extraction is barred under

recomplementation in Spanish (cf. Villa-García 2012 and references therein for original

discussion). This is shown in (1) below, where the presence of the second que (Eng. 'that'),

placed right after a topic, prevents wh-movement from the embedded clause:

(1) a. Quién me dijiste que a tu perro lo vacunó?

who cl.to-me said that to your dog cl.it vaccinated

'Who did you say vaccinated your dog?'

b. *Quién me dijiste que a tu perro, que lo vacunó?

who cl.to-me said that to your dog that cl.it vaccinated

'Who did you say vaccinated your dog?'

[from Villa-García 2015:171-172]

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Villa-García (2015) provides an explanation that capitalizes on the "that-t filter," thus presumably reducing (1) to an ECP violation (cf. Rizzi 1990; Sobin 1987, 2002; cf. Bošković 2015 for recent discussion). Given the shortcomings of such an account (discussed in section 2), this paper puts forward an alternative approach whereby recomplementation does not involve an optional process of *que* insertion at PF, but triggers a different derivation altogether. To be precise, we claim that the presence of *que* is not to be regarded as a mere phonological fact, but a syntactic phenomenon that turns the embedded clause into a specifier (a non-complement). If correct, (1b) is the consequence of a CED—not an ECP—effect (cf. Huang 1982, Uriagereka 1999).

2. A that-t effect based analysis

In order to address the asymmetry in (1), Villa-García (2015) aligns the Spanish data with the "that-t filter" (an ECP violation; cf. Chomsky & Lasnik 1977, Lasnik & Saito 1992), arguing that its effects may vary, affecting either local subject extraction (in English) or any dependent (in Spanish) (cf. Villa-García 2015:185-186).¹

Though sound at first glance, the correlation above is problematic. First, Villa-García (2015:187 and ff.) does not provide a precise formulation of the putative ECP effects, merely noting that wh-movement must stop in an A-bar position below the second *que*, creating an island effect that is analogous to that of "that-t filter" effects (a freezing effect, in current

¹ Villa-García (2015) compares the situation of Spanish recomplementation to (simple) complementation in Slavic languages, where indicatives block extraction (cf. Khomitsevich 2007). We return to this issue.

terminology; cf. Chomsky 2013, Rizzi 2006).² Villa-García (2015) builds on examples like (2) to argue that the relevant post-*que* A-bar position exists:³

(2) Me preguntó que mi madre, que **cuándo** podría venir cl.to-me asked that my mother that when could come 'S/he asked me when my mother could come' [from Villa-García 2015:187]

The scenarios we are considering are depicted in (3), where, following Villa-García (2015), we analyze the second *que* as the head of a topic projection (TopP) and leave open the precise status of the projection targeted by the wh-element:

² Importantly for our purposes, the fact that the locality problem is not selective (i.e., subject vs. object, argument vs. adjunct) makes it a bad candidate for an ECP-based violation.

³ Villa-García (2015) follows Bošković (2011) in considering (1b) as an island marked by a * diacritic, but leaves open the precise locality factor behind the effect. To be more specific, he argues that "[Bošković (2011)] takes locality of movement rather broadly in order to include both sorts of analysis, which is also what we will do here for the Spanish facts, *leaving open how exactly the locality of movement violation is to be implemented* [OUR EMPHASIS]" (p.192). Under this approach, the island in (1b) seems to align with output filters at PF, and not a constraint on movement in and of itself. In any event, regardless of being syntactic or phonological, the relevant problem of (1b) is not identified.

Under closer inspection, the similarities between these structures are not compelling, though. In recent analyses, island effects within the A-bar realm typically require for the moving XP to 'halt' (or be involved in the checking of some criterial feature; cf. Rizzi 2006). Given that [Spec, ZP] in (3b) qualifies as a regular successive cyclic movement position (an "escape hatch"), with no feature checking involved, postulating a locality effect is not obvious.

Second, the parallelism drawn by Villa-García (2015) with other languages (Russian, Polish, etc.) when it comes to locality effects triggered by complementizers does not carry over to Spanish recomplementation. Indicative dependents of Slavic languages do block whovement, but recomplementation is not involved. In other words, a more appropriate counterpart for what happens in Russian is (1a), not (1b)—but (1a) is grammatical.⁴

To recap so far, we have seen that Spanish features an island effect when a secondary *que* appears. This is a fact. Villa-García (2015) offers a representational account that adopts some version of Rizzi's (2006) freezing effects, understood as a PF constraint. We have just pointed out some arguments to be skeptical about such an account. The next section develops an alternative approach whereby recomplementation and non-recomplementation structures do

⁴ One other loophole concerns a second variety of optional *que* in Spanish, dubbed "jussive *que*" by Villa-García (2015). As can be seen in (i), this *que* also blocks long distance A-bar movement:

⁽i) *Quién dices tú que a tu madre, que la llame?

who say you that to your mother that cl.her call-3.sg.subj

^{&#}x27;Who are you ordering to call your mother?' [from Villa-García 2015:210] The problem here is as follows: Villa-García (2015) takes the *que* in (i) to spell out Rizzi's (2006) Fin, which amounts, by the logic in (3) above, to the wh-phrase passing through [Spec, TP]. Now, this is standardly analyzed as an A-position, so it is not clear how the freezing effect is at stake (recall that the island effect is not selective, it affects subjects, objects, and adjuncts), nor why it is gone by not inserting the relevant *ques*. For space reasons, we leave aside a deeper investigation of subjunctive dependents here.

not merely differ with respect to the spell-out of a functional projection (Rizzi's 2006 Topico, in Villa-García 2015), but actually deploy a different derivation.⁵

3. A derivational account of island effects under recomplementation

Let us go back to the contrast offered by Villa-García (2015) in (1), repeated below as (5):

- (4) a. Quién me dijiste que a tu perro lo vacunó?

 who cl.to-me said that to your dog cl.it vaccinated

 'Who did you say vaccinated your dog?'
 - b. *Quién me dijiste que a tu perro, que lo vacunó?who cl.to-me said that to your dog that cl.it vaccinated'Who did you say vaccinated your dog?'

[from Villa-García 2015:171-172]

The hegemonic approach to recomplementation takes the secondary *que* to be the (optional) spell-out of a projection within the left periphery (cf. Uriagereka 1995, Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2009, 2013, López 2009). Here we would like to argue that "recomplementation *que*" is indeed within the left periphery, but not an optional element. More precisely, we argue that the derivations behind (4a) and (4b) are crucially different.

argue that it involves two different derivations. For additional discussion on recomplementation, see

Martínez Vera (2017).

⁵ Villa-García (2015) claims that there is no optionality in recomplementation structures too: we have two complementizers when the sandwiched CLLD is base-generated, whereas, if the CLLD is generated by movement, the second complementizer is deleted in PF, precisely because it creates a barrier for extraction. We agree with the idea of no optionality in recomplementation, but we will

Consider the derivation of a non-interrogative version of (4a), in (5), adopting the phase-based framework of Chomsky (2000, 2001):

(5) Me dijiste que a tu perro lo vacunó María cl.to-me said that to your dog cl.it vaccinated María You told me that María vaccinated your dog

Suppose that the derivation has reached the CP phase, and then the topicalized DP *a tu perro* (Eng. 'your dog') is merged (either externally or internally; this is irrelevant for now).

(6) [? a tu perro [CP C [TP T lo vacunó María]]]

The step in (6), where two maximal projections are merged, gives rise to an unlabeled object (cf. Chomsky 2013, 2015), which we dub "?" for expository purposes. Following Blümel (2013) and Chomsky (2005, 2007), we assume that syntactic objects that do not enter into further computation need not be labeled.⁶ If ?P is a root clause, then the derivation stops. However, ?P can apparently be embedded, as seen in (5). Suppose that C undergoes Internal Merge (IM) so that this element provides a label to the whole structure (for arguments in favor of C movement, see Ledgeway 2005):⁷

⁶ Notice that this is not to say that labeling is a prerequisite for entering into computation (as noted in

Chomsky 2005: 14, 2007:11, there are unlabeled SOs that can be merged, on the assumption that the labeling conflict will be fixed later in the computation). Rather, what this says is that if a given syntactic object does not enter into computation, labeling is not mandatory, on economy grounds (cf. Blümel 2013).

⁷ Notice, however, that this does not solve the labeling conflict in (6), for the {XP, YP} structure is still there. In order to tackle this problem, we assume that indicative dependents behave as root

(7)
$$[CP C ? a tu perro [CP < C > [TP T lo vacunó María]]]]$$

The configuration of (7) is labeled "C" given Chomsky's (2013, 2015) LA, and on fairly standard assumptions regarding chain formation (cf. Nunes 2004) only the higher copy of C is pronounced—as *que* in Spanish. This gives us (5).

Let us turn our attention to (8), a recomplementation structure:

(8) Me dijiste que, a tu perro, que lo vacunó María cl.to-me said that to your dog that cl.it vaccinated María You told me that María vaccinated your dog

As already noted, cartographic approaches take (8) to involve the derivation of (5), plus the spell-out of the a lower C-related head, whose precise nature varies from author to author: Fin, Top, F, etc. Notice that it is crucial that higher and lower *ques* be different lexical items, not occurrences (hence, not a chain), under the fairly standard assumption that only one occurrence of a chain feeds PF.⁸ Consider the scenario depicted in (6), adding the matrix verb on top:

clauses, and thus need not be labeled (cf. Blümel 2013, Chomsky 2004:108, 2013:fn.25). This must of course assume that the apparently embedded topic is part of the root clause. For empirical arguments that indicatives behave as root clauses, we refer the reader to Torrego & Uriagereka (1992) and San Martin (2004). The overall approach is also consistent with Ott's (2014) analysis of dislocation, whereby topics are the ellipsis remnants of an independent (matrix) clause.

⁸ Nunes (2004) discusses various cases where more than one occurrence is pronounced. Cf. also Aboh (2004) and Landau (2006).

(9) $[_{v*P} v*[_{VP} V[_? a tu perro[_{CP} C[_{TP} T lo vacunó María]]]]]$

Before merger with V, the CP is still unlabeled (it is ?P), and should thus create a problem at the semantic component, under the assumption that labels are needed for interpretation (more particularly in this case, for selection purposes; cf. Chomsky 2013, 2015). In (6) above, this situation was solved by IM of C to the root of the tree. We would like to argue that, in the case of recomplementation, C undergoes IM with matrix V, creating a complement position (an option argued for by Pesetsky 2007 and Uriagereka 2010 on independent grounds). The order of operations of the relevant derivations are offered in (10):⁹

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(10) Step 1: EM (V,?P)
[VP V [? a tu perro [CP < C > [TP T lo vacunó María]]]]
Step 2: EM (v*,VP)
[V*P V* [VP V [? a tu perro [CP < C > [TP T lo vacunó María]]]]]
Step 3: IM (V, C)
[V*P V* [VP [V V C] [? a tu perro [CP < C > [TP T lo vacunó María]]]]]
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This derivation has welcome consequences. To begin with, the chain created after IM of C no longer allows for the higher occurrence to c-command the lower ones, which, we claim, prevents the interface to treat it as a single non-trivial chain (cf. Nunes 2004). Instead, we

⁹ The process in (10) assumes countercyclic operations (thus violating the Extension Condition), but within the phase. This is not too different from Chomsky's (2008) analysis of subject raising to SPEC-T, which takes place after C is merged. Similar non-cyclic derivations have been put forward for whmovement (cf. Richards 1997). Notice that this local (phase-internal) tampering is meant to go hand-in-hand with a traditional idea, namely that *that* can be a pronoun (cf. Kayne 2011, Torrego & Uriagereka 1992).

have two chains feeding PF, so we expect for the highest occurrence of both chains to be pronounced. We use bold letters to indicate the copies that feed PF.

A second effect of (10) concerns islandhood. After C moves to V, the so far assembled structure (the entire CP) becomes a second dependent of V (a specifier, in X-bar theoretic terms), and thus an island for extraction (cf. Huang 1982, Uriagereka 1999), as (12) shows more clearly. In particular, since ?P becomes a specifier, it will no longer be in the complement domain of v*, which will leave it out of the phase edge—its terms thus becoming invisible.¹⁰

¹⁰ This analysis has been put forward to account for the island status of clitic-doubled complements in Romance. As Uriagereka (2010) argues, the effect that clitic doubling has on islandhood can be captured if the clitic becomes the complement (first-Merge dependent) via IM, leaving the internal argument as a specifier.

The original formulation of the CED is provided in (13):

(13) Condition on Extraction Domain

A phrase A may be extracted out of a domain B only if B is properly governed

[from Huang 1982:505]

What we are suggesting here is a derivational reformulation of (13) along the lines of Uriagereka's (1999) Multiple Spell-Out proposal. Therefore, given that government is not available in the current framework, the problem to extract from a given domain should be derived in a different way. We follow Epstein (1999), Uriagereka (1999) and Chomsky (2008) in assuming that that the locality requirements for extraction can only be met if the moving element is a sister (Merge-mate) of the relevant Probe (target of movement, landing site, etc.). In the representations in (14), XP (the moving element) is in the complement domain of Y (the Probe) only in (14a), where a direct dependency can be established; in (14b), XP is not part of Y's complement, so no direct syntactic dependency can emerge:

Due to this derivational twist, any A-bar dependent that moves above or below the topic in (9) above will be trapped within the ?P, being unprobeable by the next phase head (matrix v*), and thus unable to move to the next phase edge. Notice that this phase-based derivation does not quite capture the island effects, since the subject of the embedded clause (*María*) could have raised first to the CP edge and then to the matrix v*P edge before *que* moved to V. More precisely, either *María* or *a tu perro* could escape if it had moved before C did, so the

timing in (11) is crucial, as in Chomsky (2015) (*pace* Chomsky 2008, where all operations are regarded as taking place simultaneously).¹¹

It is important to notice that the CP is still unlabeled in (10). This is in fact welcome if it aligns with matrix clauses, as noted above. Notice that we are assuming that embedded indicative clauses are root (label-less) clauses, regardless of recomplementation. What recomplementation does, we argue, is turning this root domain into a specifier, which is responsible for islandhood. One could argue that islandhood of these clauses is related to their unlabeled status, but the lack of label alone does not seem enough to entail islandhood. There are at least two problems with that option. First, topicalization always yields an unlabeled structure (i.e., {TOP, XP}, cf. (6) above), which predicts that extraction out of XP would be impossible (contrary to fact), at least in Spanish. Second, extraction is also possible in short wh-movement across unlabeled structures like (15):

(15) What did the politician say?

Here the wh-phrase *what* can escape from within the structure in (16), an unlabeled {XP, YP} structure, since neither the subject nor the TP move. 12

(16) [$_{?P}$ [$_{DP}$ the politician], [$_{TP}$ T, [$_{v*P}$ t [v*, [$_{VP}$ V, **what**]]]]

¹¹ The same must be at stake in order to capture the distinction between indicatives in, say, Russian (where they block extraction) vis-à-vis Spanish (where they do not). This poses a parametric nuance (not a derivational one) of the sort that also concerns V movement (English vs. French), wh-movement (Chinese vs. Italian), etc.

¹² This of course departs from Chomsky's (2015) analysis, where phi-features are said to be the label of such exocentric structures. The possibility that features label structures are problematic, especially if lexical items are regarded as atomic (a view held by Chomsky 2013, 2015; cf. Chomsky 1995 for additional problems of the possibility that lexical items and features behave on a par).

Therefore, we are led to conclude that the presence of the second complementizer (which is in turn connected with the derivational fate of the C head) plays a crucial role in extraction business

We must address one final issue before concluding. In the present approach, recomplementation does not affect the way in which the embedded topic is generated (movement and base generation). However, in Villa-García (2015), it is claimed that it does: topics are base generated in the CP area under recomplementation, which predicts the absence of reconstruction effects. The basic contrast is as follows:

- (17) a. Dice que a su_{i/j} hijo, todo el mundo_i lo tiene que dejar fuera (Spanish) say that A her son all the world CL have to leave outside

 S/he says that everybody gas to leave his/their son outside
 - b. Dice que a $su_{i/j}$ hijo, que todo el mundo $_i$ lo tiene que dejar fuera (Spanish) say that A her son that all the world CL have to leave outside S/he says that everybody gas to leave his/their son outside

[from Villa-García 2015: 145-146]

Some comments are in order. First, Villa-Garcia's (2015) reasoning assumes that lack of reconstruction effects entails lack of movement, but as Boeckx (2007) argues at length, such a connection does not seem to be bullet-proof. In particular, as this author points out, "all we can conclude from the absence of reconstruction is either that there is no copy present, or that a copy was created, but for some (perhaps interpretive) reason cannot be interpreted in the relevant position" (p.58). Boeckx (2007) offers various empirical arguments to sustain his claim. Consider here a case of A'-movement in (16) (from Boeckx 2007), since we are

dealing with topicalization:

(18) [CP] Which of his_{1/*2} pictures doesn't Bill₁ think [CP] that everyone₂ liked t [CP]?

The problem here is that *which of his pictures* can move, but *his* cannot be bound by *everyone*. What one can deduce from this is that, although reconstruction effects signal movement, anti-reconstruction effects do not necessarily signal lack of movement.

Second, though significant, the reconstruction effects in (17) are not so robust among speakers (at least in European varieties of Spanish). They all agree there is a contrast, but they do not think that binding is impossible in (17b). Furthermore, reconstruction seems possible for idiom interpretation, Principle C effects, and variable binding:

- (19) a. El hielo, te aseguro que, en cada reunión, que los estudiantes lo rompen the ice classure that in each meeting that the students cl break

 I assure you that, in every meeting, students break the ice
 - b. Dicen que, las bromas de Ana_i , que $pro*_{i/j}$ no las encaja bien say that the jokes of Ana that not CL take well Ana's jokes, they say that she does not take well
 - c. Dicen que, a su_i tutor, que todo estudiante_i lo respeta say that to his/her tutor that every student cl-him/her respects

 They say that, his/her tutor, every student respects him/her

¹³ We have asked 16 native speakers (7 women, 9 men) of European Spanish, 11 of them of the Madrid area and the rest of the Barcelona area. All of them agree that the relevant asymmetry is admittedly murky, and becomes sloppier under repetition, presumably due to satiation.

In (19a) "lo rompen" is understood as "romper el hielo" (Eng. *break the ice*). Likewise, *pro* in (19b) cannot bind *Ana*, which is unexpected if reconstruction fails, and in (19c) the pronoun *su* (Eng. 'his') is bound by the QP *todo estudiante* (Eng. 'every student'). ^{14, 15}

4. Conclusions and further questions

The previous pages have explored the observation, first discussed by Villa-García (2015), that wh-movement is ruled out under recomplementation in Spanish. We have put forward a derivational account of the facts arguing that clauses with and without recomplementation involve different derivations. More accurately, we have argued that (18a) and (18b) differ not only with respect to *que*'s overt realization, but at a syntactic level.

- (20) a. Me dijiste que, a tu perro, lo vacunó María cl.to-me said that to your dog cl.it vaccinated-3.sg María 'You told me that María vaccinated your dog'
 - b. Me dijiste que, a tu perro, que lo vacunó María cl.to-me said-3.sg that to your dog that cl.it vaccinated-3.sg María 'You told me that María vaccinated your dog'

(2014) argues. If this author's analysis is tenable, then the distinction in (4) vanishes.

¹⁴ Note that we put aside strong pronouns, since it has long been observed that they fail to yield Principle C effects, even in simpler sentences such as *Qué libros de Ana ha comprado ella?* (Eng. 'What books of Ana has she thrown?') (cf. Larson & Luján 1989, Fernández-Soriano 1989).

¹⁵ Another problem for Villa-García's (2015) proposal, which we put aside here for space reasons, concerns the possibility that clitic left dislocation receives a biclausal analysis involving ellipsis, as Ott

Our approach makes two assumptions: on the one hand, the embedded CPs in (20) to be label-less (and thus root) clauses; on the other hand, recomplementation involves an additional derivational step whereby the complementizer is merged as a first-dependent of the matrix verb. Such a step turns the embedded clause into a specifier, which by the logic of phase theory becomes out of sight for extraction purposes.

There are more properties of recomplementation, apart from island effects, that are predicted by our account, concretely by the proposal of the double-complementizer clause being a truly root clause, not selected by the matrix verb. The most striking of them (since it has been repeatedly noticed in the literature but has received no explanation, with the exception of González i Planas 2014) is probably the fact that recomplementation is only possible with assertive predicates. Factive matrix verbs that select subjunctive are totally out (see (21) cf. Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2013).

- (21) a. *Me *encanta* que los platos que ya los hayas fregado.

 cl.me love that the dishes that already cl.them have-subj washed.

 I love that you have already washed the dishes
 - b. *Lamento que ese vestido que no te quede bien.regret that that dress that not cl.you suit-suj goodI regret that that dress doesn't suit you

If one considers this together with the fact that matrix clauses with a *quotative* complementizer (Etxepare 2010) also license this construction (as shown in (22)), recomplementation falls naturally under the umbrella of the so-called *Main Clause Phenomena* (cf. Aelbrecht, Haegeman and Nye 2012 and references therein).

(22) Que tu madre que ha llamado cien veces.

that your mother that has called a-hundred times

*Reporting: Your mother has called you a hundred times.

Furthermore, recomplementation is compatible with elements that typically appear in the left periphery of matrix clauses, as speaker oriented adverbs (*francamente* in (23a)) or emphatic markers (*si* in (23b)). The presence of the second complementizer is even obligatory with other kind of elements: speech act particles (*oye* and *bueno* in (24)) and *hanging topics* (as in (25), cf. Villa-García 2015).

- (23) a. Dijo que, esos libros, que francamente (que) no los leyó Clara. said that those books that frankly that not cl.them read Clara S/he said that those books, frankly, Clara didn't read them
 - b. Dijo que, esos libros, que sí (que) los leyó Clara.said that those books that yes that cl.them read ClaraS/he said that those books, Clara did read
- a. Mi profesora me dijo que, *bueno*, *(que) cómo no podía ...

 my teacher cl.to-me said-3.sg that well that how not could-3.sg know that

 ... saber que la tierra era redonda.

 know that the Earth be-3.sg round
 - 'My teacher said to me: Well, how come you don't know that the Earth is round?'
 - b. Mi profesora es una bromista. Ayer me dijo que, *oye*, ... my teacher be-3.sg a joker yesterday cl.to-me said-3.sg that hey ... *(que) la tierra es plana, o eso dijo Aristóteles that the Earth be-3.sg flat or that said-3.sg Aristotle.
 - 'My teacher is a joker. Yesterday she said to me: hey, the Earth is flat, or at least Aristotle said that'
- (25) Juan dice que, el tenis, *(que) ese deporte le gusta.

 Juan say-3.sg that the tennis that that sport cl.him like-3.sg

 Juan says that, that sport, he likes

A detailed research on the syntax-pragmatics interface of the examples above is in order to fully understand the contribution of recomplementation to the overall interpretation of the clause. For the time being, we just wanted to point out that our account seems like a good point of departure to approach recomplementation as a Main Clause Phenomenon.

Another question raised by our proposal dwells on the nature of indicative dependents, which have already been shown to display root properties in the absence of recomplementation—all of them except for overt movement (cf. Torrego & Uriagereka 1992). If this is correct, then it means that the relevant CED-inducing factor is parametrized (cf. note 12). The blocking of overt extraction seems to appear by default in the case of Slavic languages, but requires recomplementation in Spanish (where otherwise islandhood is postponed to LF):

(26) a. *[CP Kogo ty dumaeš, [čto Maša ljubit t]]? (Russian)
whom you think that Masha love
Who do you think that Masha loves?
b. [CP A quién cress [que María ama t]]? (Spanish)
to who think that María love
Who do you think that Masha loves?

This (re)opens the (old) question of why certain processes bleed or feed others, with interesting ramifications for our understanding of parameters.

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