

# On the Left Periphery of Spanish Complementizerless Clauses

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## 1. Introduction

As already noted in Torrego (1983), Spanish admits the optional omission of the complementizer *que* ‘that’ in finite declarative complement clauses selected by certain classes of verbs. Typically, verbs such as *lamentar* ‘to lament’ and *preocuparse* ‘to worry’ allow a clausal complement not headed by an overt complementizer, as illustrated in (1) and (2).<sup>1</sup>

- (1) Lamento (**que**) no estás contenta con tu trabajo.  
I.lament that not you.are happy with your job.  
‘I lament that you are not happy with your job.’
- (2) Nos preocupa (**que**) hayas estado malo.  
to.us it.worries that you.have been sick  
‘We worry about your being sick.’

This is not an exclusive property of Spanish. In fact, many other languages also license finite declarative complementizerless clauses, as exemplified in (3) and (4) for English and Italian, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

- (3) Judy believes (**that**) she will leave tomorrow.
- (4) Mario crede (**che**) sia partito.  
Mario believes that he.is left  
‘Mario believes that he left.’

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<sup>1</sup> One of the reviewers has pointed out that many speakers only accept such omissions in almost formulaic expressions. For instance, formal requests would be a context in which the absence of the complementizer is fine, as can be seen in (i):

- (i) Rogamos (**que**) nos envíen el formulario.  
we.request that to.us they.send the form  
‘We request that the form be sent to us.’

Although uncommon for some speakers, the fact is that clauses lacking *que* are completely grammatical, thus requiring an explanation. In this paper, I will not address the different levels of acceptability of these structures.

<sup>2</sup> Certainly, the majority of analyses of this phenomenon have focused on English (see, among others, Stowell 1981; Pesetsky 1995; Bošković 1997; Doherty 1997; Pesetsky and Torrego 2001; Bošković and Lasnik 2003). For Italian, the interested reader can find important contributions in Poletto (2001) and Giorgi and Pianesi (2004). In relation to the other languages where complementizerless clauses are also attested, see, among others, Arteaga (2009) for Old French, Antonelli (2012) for Classical Portuguese and Kishimoto (2006) for Japanese.

The absence of an overt complementizer has led many researchers to argue that complementizerless clauses do not manifest a left periphery layer. For instance, one proponent of this idea is Bošković (1997), who investigates the structural makeup of *that*-less sentences in English. He proposes that complementizerless clauses are IP structures due to what he calls the Minimal Structure Principle. This principle says that, when two representations manifest the same lexical structure and are employed in the same function, preference is given to the syntactic choice which has less projections. Assuming the view that declaratives are a kind of default interpretation, in that no complementizer is needed to convey a declarative meaning, Bošković argues that declarative complement clauses without *that* should be understood as IP structures because the presence of a CP projection would lack either a semantic motivation or a lexical requirement. Thus, in *that*-less clauses, a representation showing only an IP structure is to be preferred to a representation displaying a CP one (see also Doherty 1997).

For Spanish, the same idea has been advocated by Broveto (2002), albeit based on different assumptions. In fact, just like proposed by Bošković (1997) for *that*-less clauses in English, Broveto also argues that embedded sentences lacking *que* in Spanish are IP complements, showing no CP-domain. In this paper, my goal is to challenge this view focusing specifically on Spanish, since the properties of complementizerless contexts in this language are different from those found in English (see Llinàs-Grau and Fernández-Sánchez 2011), a fact that, *per se*, could be taken as an evidence that both phenomena are not necessarily amenable to the same kind of analysis. Here, assuming the split C-system developed by Rizzi (1997), I will propose that sentences without *que*, despite appearances, do manifest a left periphery layer. In my analysis, the particularity of complementizerless clauses is that, contrary to sentences where the complementizer is overtly realized, the peripheral heads Force and Fin are projected in a syncretic way.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2, firstly I introduce a piece of evidence discussed by Broveto (2002) in favor of the IP-hypothesis. Subsequently, I present some problems of her analysis. Section 3 is dedicated to an alternative proposal, where I develop the idea that complementizerless clauses in Spanish do show a C-system. Section 4 concludes the paper and suggests directions for future research.

## 2. The IP-hypothesis

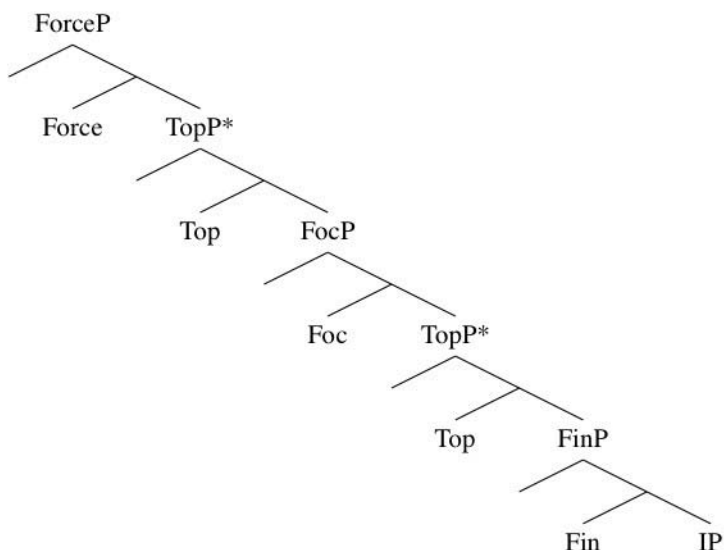
In her investigation of clauses without complementizer in Spanish, one of the main points discussed by Broveto (2002) is related to topicalization. She shows that, whenever a topic phrase appears in a finite complement clause, the presence of *que* is obligatorily required, as the contrast between (5) and (6) shows.

(5) Lamento **que**, *con tu trabajo*, no estés contenta.  
 I.lament that with your job not you.are happy  
 ‘I lament that, with your job, you are not happy.’

(6) \*Lamento, *con tu trabajo*, no estés contenta.

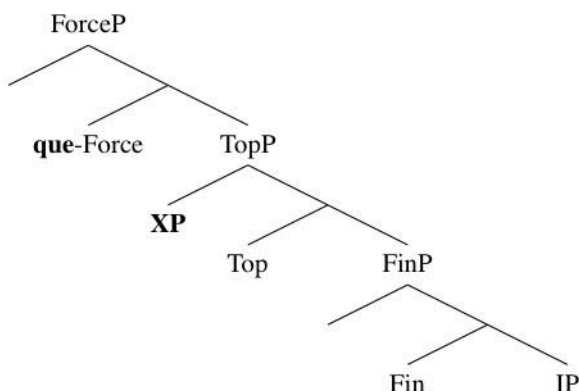
In order to explain this asymmetry, the author assumes the split periphery developed in Rizzi (1997), where the CP-layer is decomposed into four different projections, namely: Force, Topic, Focus and Finiteness. This schema is represented in (7).

(7)



Brovetto claims that, if any XP belonging to the C-system (like a topic or a focus phrase) is selected in a specific derivation, the complementizer field as a whole is activated, and therefore *que* becomes obligatory. In an example like (5), the relative position of the topic and the complementizer is accounted for assuming that *que* is the head of the highest projection, ForceP, and the fronted phrase lands in the specifier of any of the TopP projections below ForceP. This proposal is represented in (8).

(8)



In the absence of a topic, the C-field is not activated, so that the embedded clause only projects the IP-level, thus explaining why complementizerless sentences are incompatible with a topicalized phrase. Under this configuration, there is no TopP available.

Brovetto adds another point. She shows that, if the fronted phrase is spelled out in the C-system of the matrix clause, the complementizer *que* of the embedded sentence may be omitted, as shown in (9).

- (9) *Con tu trabajo*, lamento **(que)** no estés contenta.  
 with your job I.lament that not you.are happy  
 ‘With your job, I lament that you are not happy.’

In (9), the topic phrase is hosted in the domain of the main CP. However, since no XP is located in the lower C-system, Brovetto’s analysis predicts that this embedded complementizer field may be completely absent, as suggested by the omission of *que*.

Here, I address two problems faced by this proposal. The first one relates to the dependency between fronted phrases and the possibility of a complementizer. For Brovotto, the activation of a fully articulated CP (including the head where *que* is merged) is determined by derivational processes involving discursive projections like TopP (or FocP, depending on the informational status of the dislocated XP). This line of reasoning predicts that complement clauses not hosting a topic or a focus phrase in their left periphery will not manifest the complementizer *que*. As can be seen in (1) and (2), repeated as (10) and (11), the presence of the complementizer occurs regardless of the activation or not of discursive projections. In other words, the absence of a dislocated phrase does not rule out the merger of *que*, contrary to what is expected under Brovotto's proposal.

(10) Lamento **que** no estés contenta com tu trabajo.  
 I.lament that not you.are happy with your job  
 'I lament that you are not happy with your job.'

(11) Nos preocupa **que** hayas estado malo.  
 to.us it.worries that you.have been sick  
 'We worry about your being sick.'

Another problem is related to adverb placement. Gallego (2007) shows that, in matrix clauses, some adverbs can appear in pre and in post-verbal linear position, as exemplified in (12).

(12) Luis (siempre) **canta** (siempre).  
 Luis always sings always  
 'Luis always sings.'

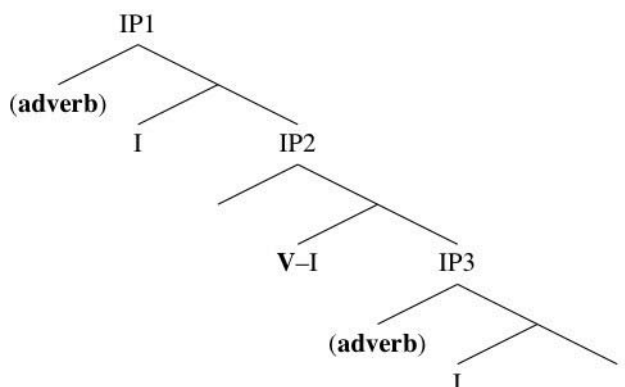
One interesting aspect of complementizerless clauses is that only post-verbal adverbs are possible. This fact is illustrated in (13).

(13) Lamento (\*siempre) **cante** (siempre) Luis.  
 I.lament always sings always Luis  
 'I lament that Luis always sings.'

Cinque (1999) proposes that adverbs are generated in different specifier positions within the inflectional domain (IP), each position conveying a specific semantic interpretation. Following this view, the alternation illustrated in (12) could be understood as a case in which the same adverb is associated to different interpretations (see Jackendoff 1972), and, consequently, to different structural positions. Assuming that in matrix clauses the finite verb is also located in the inflectional domain, the variation between the word order "verb-adverb" and "adverb-verb" derives from the possibility of having the adverb in a position higher or lower than that occupied by the finite verb in the IP layer, depending on the interpretation attributed to the adverbial element. A representation of this proposal is shown in (14).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> It is beyond the scope of this paper to define the labels of the projections involved in (14). See Cinque (1999) for a detailed discussion of the full cartography of the IP-domain.

(14)



Concerning complementizerless clauses, BrovETTO's analysis predicts a similar alternation. Actually, if these sentences are IP complements, it is necessary to assume that the finite verb, just like adverbs, is positioned in the inflectional domain. Under this situation, it would be expected to find some adverbs in a position structurally lower than that where the verb is located, deriving the sequence "verb-adverb", but also some adverbs in a position structurally higher than that occupied by the finite verb, giving rise to the linear order "adverb-verb". This prediction, however, is not borne out, since the only attested option in complementizerless clauses is the one with adverbs in post-verbal position.

### 3. A new analysis: syncretic CP and verb movement

#### 3.1. Some assumptions

Before presenting my alternative analysis for complementizerless clauses in Spanish, I will introduce a set of assumptions. A first point is related to a property shared by clauses with *que* and clauses lacking the complementizer. Both kinds of sentences are necessarily declarative. In the split periphery of Rizzi (1997), clausal type information is assumed to be encoded in Force, the highest head of the CP-domain (see also Aboh 2004 and Bayer 2004). Here, in relation to the Spanish facts under investigation, I assume that a declarative embedded CP, with or without *que*, always comes specified with a sentential feature [+declarative] in the Force head.

A second point to be emphasized is related to the mood of complementizerless clauses. As noted by BrovETTO, there is a clear correlation between the omission of *que* and the conveying of a meaning of uncertainty or an irrealis meaning by the embedded proposition. For instance, she notes that the absence of the complementizer is possible if the finite verb of the dependent clause takes subjunctive morphology, as the contrast between (15) and (16) exemplifies.

(15) Espero **(que)** se *solucionen* pronto los problemas causados por el huracán.  
 I.hope that SE solve-SUBJ soon the problems caused by the hurricane  
 'I hope that the problems caused by the hurricane will be solved soon.'

(16) Confieso **\*(que)** he mentido repetidamente  
 I.confess that I.have-IND lied repeatedly  
 'I confess that I have lied repeatedly.'

In (15), the embedded finite verb is in the subjunctive mood. In (16), the embedded verb is in the indicative mood. For BrovETTO, this contrast supports the view that the conveying of an irrealis meaning is a relevant restriction on the licensing of complementizerless clauses, since the subjunctive is standardly correlated with unreality or possibility. I take these facts as an evidence that embedded clauses allowing the optional omission of *que* would also be specified with an irrealis meaning. In my proposal, this feature is encoded in Fin, the lowest head in the C-system (see Rizzi 1997).

Another assumption is that the sentential feature and the irrealis feature are valued either by a complementizer (in clauses with *que*) or by the finite verb (in complementizerless clauses). This would

be an instance of alternative checking (see Zanuttini 1997 and Obenauer 2001), an idea that can be formulated in the following terms: if two different elements are in complementary distribution, they can satisfy one same feature.<sup>4</sup>

As a final assumption, I follow the notion that the heads Force and Fin are split only if necessary (see, for instance, Rizzi 1997 and Shlonsky 2006). This proposal is in accordance with several recent works that have explored the idea that the C-system is not uniformly projected to the same level across different kinds of clauses (see, among others, McCloskey 2006; Carrilho 2008; Cardinaletti 2009; Haegeman 2012).

### 3.2. Deriving the alternation

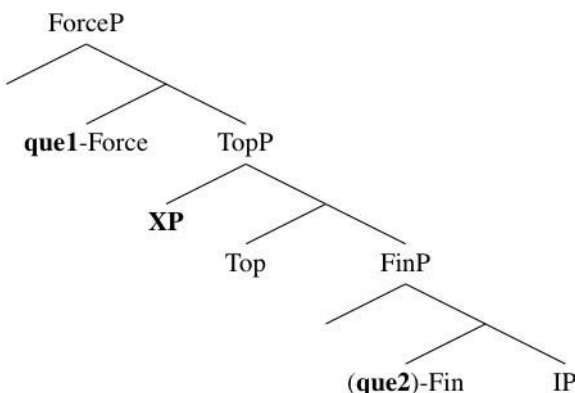
Having in mind the assumptions presented above, firstly I will show how clauses with an overt complementizer are derived. I propose that *que* is directly merged in Force, where the clausal type feature is valued. In this sense, my analysis is like the one developed by Brovotto (2002). I depart from her proposal by arguing that, in this specific configuration, there is also a lower homophonous complementizer, overt or not, but always present when Force is occupied by *que*. The lower complementizer would be directly merged in Fin, where the irrealis feature is valued. The hypothesis of two different complementizers (let us call them *que1* and *que2*) is conceivable given that Spanish admits multiple-complementizer constructions (see, among others, Demonte and Fernández Soriano 2009; Villa-García 2012). This fact is illustrated in (17) and (18).

(17) Dice mamá **que** a tu hermana **que** no la dejes salir.  
 said mom that to your sister that not her you.let go.out  
 ‘Mom says that you should not let your sister go out.’

(18) Ordeno **que** esos árboles **que** los talen.  
 I.order that those trees that them cut  
 ‘I order to cut those trees.’

Since two different complementizers are merged in the C-domain, I argue that there is a split between ForceP and FinP. It follows then that a potential discursive projection, like TopP, can be activated, thus allowing the fronting of XPs. This would explain why fronted phrases are licensed in embedded clauses introduced by *que*. A representation of this process is presented in (19).

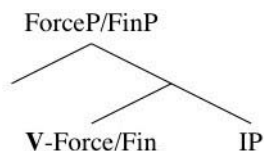
(19)



<sup>4</sup> Pesetsky and Torrego (2001) have entertained an analysis for *that*-less clauses in English that invokes a mechanism that could be classified as a manifestation of alternative checking. They propose that the complementizer *that* is not a true complementizer, but an instance of the T head that has moved to C in order to satisfy an uninterpretable T feature on C. In *that*-less clauses, the uninterpretable T feature on C would be satisfied via subject raising to [Spec,CP].

Concerning complementizerless clauses, I propose that, in the absence of *que1* and *que2*, there is V-movement to the C-domain.<sup>5</sup> My hypothesis is that the numeration of sentences lacking an overt complementizer presents a syncretic CP-layer from the start. This would happen because, if the complementizers are not present, V-movement to the embedded periphery is able to value the sentential feature associated to Force and the irrealis feature associated to Fin.<sup>6</sup> The idea that the verbal element is able to check a Force feature comes from typical V2 languages like German, for instance. It has been shown that in this language the verb always moves to the left periphery when the complementizer is absent, thus suggesting that the complementizer and the verb raised to the C-domain do the same job in the left periphery (see, among many others, den Besten 1983; Vikner 1995). Since complementizers in German usually specify the clausal type meaning of the embedded sentence (see Migdalski 2012), it seems natural to think that the verb is also able to check clausal type information when a proper complementizer is not present. Concerning the idea that V-movement also values an irrealis feature in complementizerless clauses, this seems logical considering that the embedded finite verb in Spanish shows subjunctive morphology, thus matching with the featural specification conveyed in the C-domain. Taking these ideas into consideration, the proposal of syncretism between Force and Fin is schematized in (20).

(20)



One of the consequences of this proposal is that, since ForceP and FinP are not split, there is no space for the activation of a TopP or FocP category. Such a result straightforwardly accounts for the impossibility of fronted XPs in complementizerless clauses. In other words, contrary to what has been proposed by Brovetto, the absence of dislocated XPs in clauses lacking *que* follows not because these sentences do not manifest a CP layer, but because the peripheral domain is projected syncretically.<sup>7</sup>

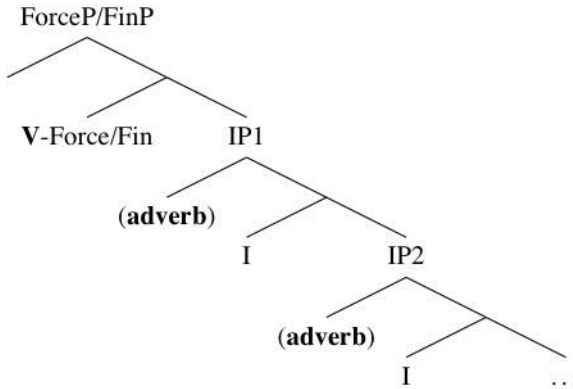
As I have shown, the hypothesis of syncretism between Force and Fin relies mainly on the possibility of verb movement to the left periphery. The idea of V-raising is supported by the facts related to the ordering of adverbs. As I showed earlier, in complementizerless clauses adverbs can appear only in post-verbal position. If V-movement is really an alternative option for the valuing of the sentential feature and the irrealis feature when there is no complementizer in the embedded C-domain, it follows then that, in clauses lacking *que*, the finite verb will always be structurally higher than any adverb. This hierarchy is represented in (21).

<sup>5</sup> A point not discussed here is why this optional alternation is possible. In fact, it could be asked to what extent the omission of *que* is really an optional mechanism. At present, I do not have an answer to this question, but a work to be done is to investigate, for instance, whether clauses with *que* show the same illocutionary force as clauses lacking the complementizer (see Meinunger 2006 about a similar debate on the illocutionary force of German embedded clauses with an overt complementizer and embedded clauses not showing a complementizer).

<sup>6</sup> As one of the reviewers has pointed out, it would be interesting to observe to what extent a possible clitic nature of the relevant C heads is determinant in the motivation for V-movement to the left periphery. This is an interesting aspect considering that, for a language like Italian, where the phenomenon of complementizerless clauses is quite productive, it has been argued that the complementizer *che* 'that' presents a clitic status (see Manzini and Savoia 2003). For a discussion of the interplay between verb movement and the clitic nature of empty heads in a specific language, see Zwart (1997) for Dutch.

<sup>7</sup> I do not present details of the mechanism triggering this process of syncretism. One motivation that comes to mind is the Minimal Structure Principle elaborated by Bošković (1997). As already presented in the introduction, this principle says that preference is given to the syntactic choice that has less structural material. I leave this topic for future research.

(21)



In terms of linear order, once the verb is positioned above the domain where adverbs are generated, the result is that finite verbs will always precede adverbs, regardless of the semantic interpretation conveyed by any adverb.

Another evidence supporting the view of V-movement to the left periphery comes from the position of subjects. Brovotto notes that clauses introduced by *que* allow pre and post-verbal subjects, as illustrated in (22) and (23), respectively.

(22) Lamento que *Maria/ella* no **esté** contenta con su trabajo.  
 I.lament that Maria/she not is happy with her job  
 ‘I lament that Maria/she is not happy with her job.’

(23) Lamento que no **esté** contenta *Maria/ella* con su trabajo.

On the other hand, clauses lacking *que* only license post-verbal subjects, as the contrast between (24) and (25) shows.<sup>8</sup>

(24) \*Lamento *Maria/ella* no **esté** contenta con su trabajo.  
 I.lament Maria/she not is happy with her job  
 ‘I lament that Maria/she is not happy with her job.’

(25) Lamento no **esté** contenta *Maria/ella* con su trabajo.

<sup>8</sup> In fact, the whole picture is a bit more complex. One of the reviewers has pointed out that the pronoun *usted* ‘you’ can be licensed in pre-verbal position, as exemplified below.

- (i) Lamento mucho *usted* **sufra** de esa terrible enfermedad.  
 I.lament much you suffer from this terrible disease  
 ‘I am sorry that you suffer from this terrible disease.’

This is what happens in one variety of Italian as well. Giorgi and Pianesi (2004) have reported that Italian speakers can be divided into two groups concerning the possibility of pre-verbal subjects in complementizerless clauses. While a group admits any kind of overt subject (lexical or pronominal) preceding the finite verb, another group only allows the second personal pronoun *tu* ‘you’ in pre-verbal position, as exemplified in (ii).

- (ii) Credeva *tu* **fossi** arrivato in tempo.  
 he.believed you had arrived on time  
 ‘He believed that you had arrived on time.’

These crosslinguistic data point to the importance of a more detailed investigation of the syntactic nature of personal pronouns in Italian and Spanish, a fact that is beyond the scope of this chapter.



For Broveto, one possible explanation for this restriction is related to case assignment. Exploring the proposal that no C-domain is present in clauses without *que*, she argues that a pre-verbal subject, standing in [Spec,IP], would inadequately get accusative case from the matrix verb. Since the subject has a nominative feature to be checked against the Infl head, the way found to avoid a clash in case assignment is to leave the subject in post-verbal position. In this configuration, the subject receives nominative case *in situ*, presumably within the VP-domain. With respect to clauses introduced by *que*, the presence of the C-system would prevent an improper process of accusative case assignment from the matrix verb to an embedded overt subject in [Spec,IP], thus explaining why pre-verbal subjects are fine when *que* is phonetically realized in the left periphery.<sup>9</sup>

Notice that Broveto's analysis assumes two subject positions, one in [Spec,IP] and other lower in the structure. Given that in her proposal the embedded verb remains in Infl, the prediction is that there is available only one post-verbal subject position, namely, the lower place inside VP. However, as the examples in (26) and (27) show, complementizerless clauses present at least two post-verbal sites for subjects.<sup>10</sup>

(26) Lamento **haya usted tenido** estos problemas.  
 I.lament have you had these problems  
 'I lament that you have had these problems.'

(27) Lamento **haya tenido usted** tan malos profesores.  
 I.lament have had you such bad teachers  
 'I lament that you have had such bad teachers.'

In (26), the subject appears between the auxiliary verb *haber* and the lexical verb *tener*, displaying what can be called Germanic inversion. In (27), the subject is preceded not only by the auxiliary verb, but also by the lexical verb, displaying an example of Romance inversion. Accepting that complementizerless clauses present V-raising to the left periphery, as I propose, it follows then that two post-verbal subject positions are available. It could be said that in (26) the subject is located in [Spec,IP], as it is usually proposed for cases of Germanic inversion (see Rizzi and Roberts 1989; Rizzi 1996), while in (27) the subject remains inside the VP-domain, as it is usually proposed for cases of Romance inversion (see Belletti 2001, 2004).<sup>11</sup> The point to be emphasized here is that, regardless of the specifier position where the subject is hosted, the finite verb will always be in a position structurally higher, thus explaining why a subject is obligatorily preceded by the verb in embedded sentences lacking *que*. Besides that, an advantage of such a proposal is that it also accounts for the availability of two post-verbal subject positions, a fact not clearly derived under Broveto's proposal.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> A second possible explanation presented by Broveto for the agrammaticality of pre-verbal subjects in complementizerless clauses is developed assuming that, when preceding a verb, subjects in Spanish are specified with a topic feature (see Contreras 1991; Zubizarreta 1998). Under a cartographic view of the left periphery, this means that pre-verbal subjects occupy a topic position within the C-domain. As already observed, Broveto argues that the merger of *que* in the Force head is dependent on the activation of discursive projections like TopP or FocP in the left periphery. In sentences with a pre-verbal subject, the presence of a topic (in this case, a subject bearing a topic feature) triggers the presence of the whole left periphery, including the complementizer in Force. In complementizerless clauses, no pre-verbal subject activates TopP, and consequently the whole CP-layer is not projected. Here again I point out that this kind of analysis is problematic, since the absence of a dislocated phrase does not rule out the merger of the complementizer (see again the examples (1) and (2)).

<sup>10</sup> Thanks for one of the reviewers for providing these helpful examples.

<sup>11</sup> A question that naturally arises is what determines the alternation between those two post-verbal subject positions. Antonelli (2011) has shown that, in Classical Portuguese, where the same kind of alternation is found in complementizerless clauses, the choice between [Spec,IP] and a lower position within VP is determined by discursive factors. Post-verbal subjects conveying new information remain *in situ*, while post-verbal subjects not conveying new information are raised to [Spec,IP]. It could be the case that a similar process takes place in Spanish. In Belletti (2001, 2004) and Costa (2004), the interested reader can find important discussion on how discursive factors impact the choice of subject positions in Romance languages.

<sup>12</sup> It seems that lexical subjects can occupy only one post-verbal position. The following data presented by one of the reviewers are illustrative.

One of the reviewers presents a possible evidence against the hypothesis of V-movement to the left periphery. Many authors have argued that raising of the verb to a specific head in the CP-domain triggers enclisis, i.e., the linear order in which a pronominal clitic is preceded by the verb (see, among others, Raposo and Uriagereka 2005 for enclisis in European Portuguese and Fernández Rubiera 2009 for enclisis in Asturian, Galician and European Portuguese). If this is the whole story about enclisis, my analysis of V-movement to the left periphery in Spanish complementizerless clauses predicts that, in this context, enclisis is the expected pattern of clitic placement. However, as the example (28) shows, proclisis (cl+V) is the linear order licensed (see also the example (15)).

- (28) Rogamos *nos llame* urgentemente.  
 we.request us you.call urgently  
 ‘Please call us urgently.’

It should be noted that this kind of syntactic analysis for enclisis is not consensual. For instance, in relation to the enclitic pattern in European Portuguese, different authors have opposed to this view and have argued that the linear order V+cl is the result of a complex interplay between syntax and phonology, and not from a purely syntactic mechanism of V-movement to the C-system (see Barbosa 2000 and Galves and Sandalo 2004). In view of this open debate on how to derive the enclitic pattern, it seems premature to connect the proposal of V-raising in complementizerless clauses with the derivation of enclisis.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this paper I have addressed the phenomenon of complementizerless clauses in Spanish. More specifically, I have looked at finite declarative complement sentences not introduced by the complementizer *que*, trying to determine whether these clauses manifest a CP layer. Contrary to what has been advocated by Broveto (2002), I have argued that sentences lacking an overt complementizer cannot be analyzed as IP complements. I have shown that, just like clauses introduced by *que*, complementizerless sentences also present a C-system, albeit with an important particularity. While the peripheral heads Force and Fin are split in clauses with *que* (despite appearances, I have proposed that these sentences manifest two complementizers, a higher one merged in Force and a lower one merged

- 
- (i) *María Luisa* siempre viene.  
 María Luisa always comes  
 ‘María Luisa always comes.’
- (ii) Siempre viene *María Luisa*.
- (iii) \*Siempre *María Luisa* viene.
- (iv) Lamento venga siempre *María Luisa* cuando me llamas.  
 I.lament comes always María Luisa when me you.call  
 ‘I lament that María Luisa always comes when you call me.’

These examples pose a tricky challenge: if (iii) is bad, why is the order *siempre* + subject good when the verb presumably moves to the left, as in (iv)? A possible solution is to assume that, in Spanish, [Spec,IP] is not available for lexical subjects, a property possibly extended to all null subject languages (see Barbosa 1995; Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1998; Kato 1999). The idea is that, somehow, the EPP feature on Infl is satisfied by verbal morphology, dispensing with subject raising to [Spec,IP]. Under this view, a standard pre-verbal location for subjects would be a topic position in the left periphery (see footnote 9). Thus, in (i), the subject occupy a position in the C-system, while the adverb and the verb are located in the Infl domain (note that, if it is assumed that adverbs are generated in specific layers within IP, the verb cannot be in the left periphery). The example (ii) would be structurally different from (i) in that the post-verbal subject occupies a position inside VP. The sentence in (iii) is bad because it implies that the pre-verbal subject is in [Spec,IP], i.e., in the same domain where adverb and verb are positioned. The example (iv) would be fine because, even though the linear order *siempre* + subject is licensed, just like in (iii), it is possible to say that there is a structural resemblance to the sentence (ii), since the subject would be located in VP. The only difference is that in (iv) the embedded finite verb has moved to the left periphery, while in (ii) the matrix verb has remained in the Infl domain.

in Fin), complementizerless clauses present a syncretism between Force and Fin. I have argued that, in the absence of the complementizers, there is verb movement to the CP field as a way of valuing a declarative sentential feature in Force and an irrealis feature in Fin. Once the same element is able to check two distinct features, it follows that ForceP and FinP are projected in a syncretic way. A point to be developed in future research, for instance, is to investigate to what extent this kind of analysis can shed light on the phenomenon of complementizerless clauses in other languages, related or not to Spanish.

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