

On the Referential Status of Embedded Polarity Answers in Spanish

Carlos de Cuba and Jonathan E. MacDonald

1. Introduction

A number of recent papers have examined the syntactic status of *Polar Answers*, as in (1b) answering (1a) (Holmberg 2012, Kramer & Rawlins 2011, among others). However, since the discussion in Laka 1990, comparatively little has been said about *Embedded Polar Answers* (EPAs), as in (2), also answering (1a) (although see Sailor 2012 for some discussion).

- (1) a. ¿Llegaron a tiempo?
Arrived at time
“Did they arrive on time?”
- b. Sí/No.
Yes/No
- (2) a. Creo que sí/no.
I.think that yes/no
“I think so.”
- b. Me parece que sí/no.
Me it.seems that yes/no
“It seems so to me.”

The focus of this paper is the syntax and semantics of EPAs. As a starting point, take Laka’s (1990) proposal that *sí* and *no* in EPAs head a polarity projection she calls a ΣP , as illustrated in (3).

- (3) a. Creo [CP que [ΣP sí/no]]
I.think that yes/no
“I think so.”
- b. Me parece [CP que [ΣP sí/no]]
Me it.seems that yes/no
“It seems so to me.”

While we follow Laka 1990 with respect to the position of *sí/no*, certain aspects of her structure must be modified, since as it stands, it says nothing about why the following predicates (traditionally called *factives*) cannot take EPAs, as illustrated in (4).

- (4) a. *Lamento que sí/no.
I.regret that yes/no
“I regret so.”
- b. *Me desagrada que sí/no.
Me it.displeases that yes/no
“It is displeasing so to me.”

In fact, there are a host of verbs that disallow EPAs, indicated in (5a) as –EPA verbs. In (5b), we provide a list of verbs that do allow EPAs, referred here to as +EPA verbs.

* Carlos de Cuba, University of Calgary. Jonathan E. MacDonald, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Author names listed alphabetically. We would like to thank the audience at HLS 2012 at The University of Florida as well as two anonymous reviewers for helpful comments and suggestions.

- (5) a. **-EPA verbs:**
lamentar “regret”, *odiar* “hate”, *gustar* “like”, *arrepentirse* “resent”, *saber* “know”,
explicar “explain”, *sentir* “be sorry”, *encantar* “love”, *duscribir* “discover”, *darse cuenta*
“notice”
- b. **+EPA verbs:**
suponer “suppose”, *imaginarse* “imagine”, *sospechar* “suspect”, *pensar* “think”, *decir*
“say”, *contestar* “answer”, *susurrar* “whisper”, *gemir* “whine”, *repetir* “repeat”, *exclamar*
“exclaim”

In this paper, we make the following four claims:

- (i) The *que* that appears in these EPAs in Spanish is the same *que* that precedes fronted *wh*-phrases in Suñer’s (1991, 1993, 1999) “indirect questions”, as in (6). We refer to this *que* here as ‘extra-*que*’.
- (ii) Extra-*que* heads a Non-Referential *cP* (*referentiality* to be defined below) which itself contains a CP, as illustrated in (7a) and (7b) respectively (see de Cuba & MacDonald 2013, de Cuba & Ürögdi 2009).
- (iii) Only verbs that can take a non-referential *cP* can take EPAs; thus, the structure for EPAs is as in (8), where *si/no* heads Laka’s (1990) ΣP . We also assume that in EPAs, TP ellipsis is involved, indicated by the strikethrough.
- (iv) Verbs that do not allow EPAs are unable to do so because they can only take Referential CPs, not Non-referential *cPs*.
- (6) María preguntó (**que**) dónde iba su marido todas las noches.
 María asked.3s (**that**) where go her husband all the nights
 “Mary asked where her husband went every night.”
- (7) a. Non-referential *cP*: [c_P extra-*que* ... [c_P C]]
 b. Referential CP: ... [c_P C]]
- (8) a. Creo [c_P extra-*que* ... [c_P Ø [ΣP sí/no [TP̄]]]]
 b. Me parece [c_P extra-*que* ... [c_P Ø [ΣP sí/no [TP̄]]]]

The structure of the paper is as follows. In section 2, we provide a working definition of referentiality in the clausal domain based on Cinque 1990 and de Cuba & Ürögdi 2009. We also illustrate how this definition differentiates +EPA verbs from –EPA verbs. In section 3, we argue that polar answers are non-referential, giving an explanation for why embedded polar answers are limited in distribution. We also show that a TP-ellipsis account alone is insufficient to handle the facts. In section 4, we discuss extra-*que*; we see that its presence is associated with non-referentiality and more structure, as discussed in de Cuba & MacDonald 2013. In section 5, we briefly discuss embedded fragment answers. What we see is that only +EPA verbs can embed fragment answers; -EPA verbs cannot. We discuss how this fact can provide support for the present analysis. Section 6 is the conclusion.

2. Clausal referentiality

2.1. A working definition

Cinque 1990 shows that referential *wh*-phrases are able to escape weak islands, while non-referential ones cannot. The example in (9) from Szabolcsi (2006:496) serves to illustrate this.

- (9) a. *How many books are you wondering <whether to write ___ next year>?
 b. How many books on the list are they wondering <whether to publish ___ next year>?

Unlike the ungrammatical example in (9a), the grammatical example in (9b) involves a contextually established set of books. The data in (9) show that referentiality plays an important role in syntax. Cinque defines referentiality as “the ability to refer to specific members of a set in the mind of the speaker or pre-established in the discourse” (1990:16). Based on this, and along the lines of de Cuba & Ürögdí 2009, we propose the definition of clausal referentiality in (10).

- (10) a. **Referential cP:** Denotes an accepted (or pre-established) proposition in the existing discourse which has no illocutionary force.
- b. **Non-referential cP:** Denotes a speech act, which introduces a proposition (or an open question) which is not yet accepted (or pre-established) in the existing discourse.

2.2. An illustration

With this definition in mind, let us consider two different discourse contexts which give rise to distinct behaviors by +EPA and –EPA verbs. Their different behaviors can be explained by their difference in referential status. Consider a first discourse context, where a parent and a teacher are discussing the theft of money from a professor. In (11a) the teacher makes an assertion, and in (11b), the parent responds by using *lamentar/desagradar/odiar* “regret/displease/hate”¹, all –EPA verbs.

- (11) Teacher
- a. Tu hijo robó el dinero de un profesor.
Your son stole the money from a professor
“Your son stole a professor’s money.”
- Parent
- b. Lamento/odio/me desagrada que mi hijo robara el dinero.
I.regret/I.hate/me it.displeases that my son stole the money
“I regret/hate/it is displeasing to me that my son stole the money.”

Having stated *your son stole a professor’s money*, the teacher has introduced this proposition into the discourse. Once introduced, it is pre-established in the discourse for later reference. This is what the complement of the –EPA verbs does in (11b): It refers to the proposition introduced into the discourse by the teacher, i.e. *your son stole a professor’s money*. In other words, –EPA verbs take referential complements.

Now consider *creer/suponer/parecer/pensar* “believe/suppose/seem/think”, +EPA verbs, in the same discourse context in (12).

- (12) Teacher
- a. Tu hijo robó el dinero de un profesor.
Your son stole the money from a professor
“Your son stole a professor’s money.”
- Parent
- b. #Creo/supongo/pienso/me parece que mi hijo robó el dinero.
I.believe/suppose/think/me it.seems that my son stole the money
“I believe/suppose/think/it seems to me that my son stole the money.”

As a response to the teacher, the parent’s utterance is infelicitous, because the complements of these +EPA verbs cannot denote a proposition that has already been pre-established in the discourse. Stated differently, +EPA verbs introduce a not yet established proposition into the discourse, and it is odd to introduce a proposition as not yet established when the same proposition has already been pre-established by the teacher. In other words, +EPA verbs take non-referential complements.

¹ *Saber* “know” patterns with –EPA verbs in this discourse context and in the out-of-the-blue discourse context.

Now consider a second discourse context, where a parent walks up to a teacher, without previous mention of stealing money or that the parent's son is involved (an 'out-of-the-blue' context). In this context, the use of a –EPA verb leads to infelicity, as indicated in (13).

- (13) Parent to teacher, out-of-the-blue:
 #Lamento/odio/me desagrada que mi hijo robara el dinero de un professor.
 I.regret/I.hate/me it.displeases that my son stole the money of a professor.
 “I regret/hate/it is displeasing to me that my son stole a professor's money.”

Here, there is no pre-established proposition corresponding to *my son stole a professor's money* that these referential complements can denote, thus, they are infelicitous in this out-of-the-blue context.² In contrast, in the same out-of-the-blue context, +EPA verbs are perfectly felicitous, as illustrated in (14).

- (14) Parent to teacher, out-of-the-blue:
 Creo/supongo/pienso/me parece que mi hijo robó el dinero de un professor.
 I.believe/suppose/think/me it.seems that my son stole the money of a professor
 “I believe/suppose/think/it seems to me that my son stole a professor's money.”

The parent introduces the proposition corresponding to *my son stole a professor's money* into the discourse, which is perfectly felicitous in an out-of-the-blue context. This can be done since +EPA verbs take non-referential complements, so there is no need for the proposition to be pre-established in the discourse.

3. Answering questions

A question introduced into the discourse does not constitute a proposition that later propositions in the dialogue can refer back to. Thus, an answer does not refer back to the question to which it is an answer. This includes polar answers: they either affirm or deny the positive declarative answer to the question to which they are an answer (see Laka 1990 for matrix answers). They introduce an affirmed or denied proposition into the discourse. In this respect, according to (10b), EPAs and answers in general are non-referential. Consequently, it is not at all surprising that full clausal complements of +EPA and –EPA verbs pattern the same as EPAs themselves. That is, a full clausal complement to a –EPA verb cannot serve as an answer to a question. This is illustrated below, where the question in (15) cannot be answered using the –EPA verbs in (16a), but can be answered using the +EPA verbs in (16b).

- (15) ¿Se marcó algún gol en el partido de anoche?
 se scored some goal in the game of last.night
 “Were there any goals scored in last night's game?”
- (16) **–EPA verbs**
 a. #Lamento/odio/me sorprende que Mario marcara dos goles.³
 I.regret/hate/me it.surprises that Mario scored-SUBJ two goals
 “I regret/hate/it surprises me that Mario scored two goals.”
- +EPA verbs**
 b. Creo/supongo/dijeron que Mario marcó dos goles.
 I.believe/suppose/they.said that Mario scored two goals.
 “I believe/suppose/they told me that Mario scored two goals.”

² Note that with *regret* there does exist a reading (meaning roughly “I regret to inform you...”) that does allow out-of-the-blue non-referential complements. For more on this rather restricted use of *regret*, see Haegeman (2012:258).

³ The answer *Sé que Mario marcó dos goles* “I know that Mario scored two goals” is felicitous, but requires special intonation, indicating that the speaker knows *only* about these goals: there might be other goals scored.

Full clausal complements of +EPA verbs can constitute answers to questions, while full clausal complements of -EPA cannot (See Sailor 2012 for similar observations). If +EPA verbs take non-referential clausal complements, while -EPA verbs take referential clausal complements, as we concluded above, then we can explain these contrasts as well as the contrasts from (1) to (4).

3.1. EPAs & TP ellipsis

EPAs affirm or deny a proposition, one that has yet to be established in the discourse, and one that corresponds to a full clausal complement. That is, the answer in (17b) to the question in (17a) corresponds to the full clausal answer in (17c).

- (17) a. ¿Llegaron a tiempo?
they.arrived at time
“Did they arrive on time?”
- b. Creo que no.
I.think that no
“I think not”
- c. Creo que no llegaron a tiempo.
I.think that no they.arrived at time
“I think that they didn’t arrive on time.”

Since the full clausal complements of +EPA and -EPA verbs show the same answer patterns that EPAs themselves show, we claim that: (i) EPAs are non-referential *c*Ps (our claim) and (ii) they are derived from their corresponding full clause via TP ellipsis, as illustrated in (18).⁴

- (18) a. Creo [_{CP} que [_{CP} Ø [_{SP} sí [_{TP} ~~llegaron a tiempo~~]].
I.think that yes they.arrived at time.
- b. Creo [_{CP} que [_{CP} Ø [_{SP} no [_{TP} ~~llegaron a tiempo~~]].
I.think that no they.arrived at time.

3.2. Three points regarding the TP ellipsis account

Before proceeding, it is important to point out a few issues related to the TP ellipsis analysis of EPAs. First, we expect TP ellipsis to be licensed across sentences, since this is exactly what we see in EPAs. In fact, it has already been observed that TP ellipsis in Spanish can be licensed across sentences, as illustrated in (19) and (20) from Bruccart (1999:2822) and López (1999:266) respectively.

- (19) a. Ya tengo ganas de que comiencen las clases.
Already I.have desire of that start the classes
“I am looking forward to classes starting.”
- b. Pues yo no.
Well I no.
“I’m not.”
- (20) a. ¿Susana leyó *Guerra y Paz*?
Susana read War and Peace
“Did Susana read *War and Peace*?”
- b. No. *Guerra y Paz* no. Leyó *Crimen y Castigo*.
No. War and Peace no. She.read Crime and Punishment.
“No. Not *War and Peace*. She read *Crime and Punishment*.”

⁴ TP ellipsis has been independently proposed for matrix polar answers (see Holmberg 2012, Kramer & Rawlins 2011).

Second, as is often noted, polarity items (elements which are contained in ΣP , such as *no*, *sí*, *también* and *tampoco*: see Brucart 1999, Brucart & MacDonald 2012, Saab 2008) license TP ellipsis, as illustrated above in (19) and (20), and below in (21). Note that the remnants of TP ellipsis in Spanish move to a left peripheral position above TP, following López 1999.

- (21) María leyó *Guerra y Paz* y Jose también [_{TP} ~~leyó Guerra y Paz~~].
 María read War and Peace and Jose also [_{TP} ~~read War and Peace~~]
 “María read *War and Peace* and Jose did too.”

Third, the ungrammaticality of –EPA verbs as answers cannot be a question of TP ellipsis per se, since –EPA verbs can undergo TP ellipsis, as illustrated in (22).

- (22) a. María dijo que Pablo leyó *Guerra y Paz*, pero me sorprende
 María said that Pablo read War and Peace, but me it.surprises
 que Jose también [_{TP} ~~leyera Guerra y Paz~~].
 that Jose also [_{TP} ~~read War and Peace~~].
 “María said that Pablo read *War and Peace*, but it surprises me that Jose did too.”
- b. María dijo que Pablo acabó el libro, pero lamento que
 María said that Pablo finished the book, but I.regret that
 Jose no [_{TP} ~~acabara el libro~~].
 Jose no [_{TP} ~~finished the book~~].
 “María said that Pablo finished the book, but I regret that Jose did not.”

Since –EPA verbs allow TP ellipsis, a TP ellipsis analysis alone is not sufficient to explain the ungrammaticality of –EPA verbs in answers. Our claim is that it is their inability to take non-referential clausal complements that precludes them from providing answers to questions. Since CP referentiality is not directly relevant for TP ellipsis, our account does not predict referentiality to generally block –EPA complements from participating in TP ellipsis.

4. Extra-*que*

It has been observed (see Brucart 1993, Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2009, Lahiri 2002, Plann 1982, Suñer 1991, 1993, 1999, Rivero 1980, 1994) that Spanish has a complementizer *que* that embeds fronted *wh*-words under some verb classes, represented by *preguntar* “ask” in (23a), but not under other verb classes, represented by *saber* “know” in (23b).⁵ We refer to this *que* in (23a) as “extra-*que*”. Suñer calls complements like the one in (23a) “indirect questions”, and complements like the one in (23b) “semi-questions”.

- (23) a. Me preguntaron **que** a quién invitarás tú al concierto.
 Me they.asked **that** to whom will.invite you to.the concert
 “They asked me whom you will invite to the concert.”
- b. Juana no sabía (***que**) cuándo visitaría a sus abuelos.
 Juana not know (***that**) when would.visit to her grandparents
 “Juana didn’t know when she would visit her grandparents.”

It has also been observed that there are variable behavior verbs like *decir* “say”, *susurrar* “whisper”, *gemir* “moan”, and *repetir* “repeat”, among others, which can appear with or without extra-*que*: they can take either an indirect question or a semi-question complement. When they appear with extra-*que*, they pattern with *preguntar* in (23a), and when they do not appear with extra-*que*, they pattern with *saber* “know” in (23b) (Lahiri 2002, Rivero 1994, Suñer 1991, 1993, 1999). This dual

⁵ Plann’s (1982) original observation was that only verbs that can be followed by a direct quote can take what we are referring to extra-*que*. We believe that our proposal is consistent with this observation.

pattern will be discussed below in more detail. For now, observe the presence vs. absence of extra-*que* in (24) with *decir* “say” and *repetir* “repeat”. The examples are from Suñer (1991:289).

- (24) a. Dije/repetí **que** a quién habían detenido.
I.said/repeated **that** to whom they.had arrested.
- b. Dije/repetí a quién habían detenido.
I.said/repeated to whom they.had arrested.

There are three important points to be made with respect to the relation between extra-*que* and EPAs. First, we will see that –EPA verbs do not allow extra-*que*, while +EPA do. Second, in the presence of extra-*que*, non-referentiality arises. Third, in the presence of extra-*que*, there is evidence for more structure. We address the first two points in section 4.1, and the third point in section 4.2.

4.1. Indirect questions vs. semi-questions: a difference in referentiality

As Suñer (1993:57) observes, although there is a fronted *wh*-phrase in (25), there is no real question (it is what she calls a semi-question).⁶ The answer is already known by the speaker, so the speaker can provide it.

- (25) (Te) digo/repito/recuerdo/se cuáles eran sus actores favoritos: Nicholson y Depardieu.
You I.say/repeat/remind/know which were his/her actors favorite: Nicholson and Depardieu
“I (will) tell/repeat/remind/know (to you) who his/her favorite actors were: N and D”

In other words, the existence of the proposition corresponding to *Nicholson and Depardieu are his/her favorite actors* is pre-established for the speaker (see (10a)). Thus, it is perfectly felicitous for the speaker to explicitly provide this answer. Observe, significantly, that extra-*que* is not present here. In contrast, extra-*que* is present in (26), and there is a real question (what Suñer calls an indirect question).

- (26) (Te) [?]digo/repito/pregunto **que** cuáles eran sus actores favoritos: #Nicholson y Depardieu.
You I.say/repeat/ask that which were his/her actors favorites: #Nicholson and Depardieu.
“I’ll ask (repeatedly) (you) which his/her favorite actors are: Nicholson and Depardieu.”

In (26), there is no pre-established proposition for the speaker corresponding to *Nicholson and Depardieu are his/her favorite actors*, as the answer is not known to the speaker. Since the answer is not known by the speaker, there is an open question (see (10b)). That is, both *decir* and *preguntar* are interpreted as “ask”, while *repetir* is interpreted as “ask repeatedly”. Thus, it is not natural to provide the answer explicitly.

Our claim is that it is the presence of extra-*que* that is central to the contrasts. When extra-*que* is not present, as in (25), the proposition corresponding to *who are his/her favorite actors* is referential. When extra-*que* is present, as in (26), the proposition corresponding to *who are his/her favorite actors* is non-referential.

Importantly, observe that both *repetir* “repeat” and *decir* “say”, examples of variable behavior verbs mentioned above, appear in both (25) and (26). When appearing without extra-*que*, as in (25), they take referential complements, while when appearing with extra-*que*, as in (26), they take non-referential complements. In (27b), observe that these variable behavior verbs can only introduce EPAs in the presence of extra-*que*.

⁶ Suñer (1991, 1993, 1999) has a series of arguments that show that sentences like the one in (26) pattern with questions, while sentences like the one in (25) pattern with non-questions. We do not go through all of them here, but refer the reader to Suñer’s work for ample discussion. Note also that we have added verbs to Suñer’s original examples and modified the glosses for consistency throughout the paper.

- (27) a. ¿Llegaron a tiempo?
they.arrived at time
“Did they arrive on time?”
- b. Me dijeron/repitieron (tres veces) *(que) sí.
Me they.said/repeated (three times) *(that) yes.
“They said so (three times).”

Thus, whenever *extra-que* appears, there is non-referentiality. This is the same pattern we find with polar answers: when there are EPAs, there is non-referentiality. We conclude that the *que* in EPAs is the same *extra-que* that embeds fronted *wh*-phrase complements in Suñer’s indirect questions.

4.2. More structure with *extra-que* complements

Not only is *extra-que* related to non-referential semantics, it is associated with more structure, as claimed by Lahiri (2002), Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2009), Plann (1982) and Suñer (1991, 1993, 1999). Observe that complements with *extra-que* allow a clitic left dislocated constituent in a position structurally higher than the *wh*-word, as in (28), while complements without *extra-que* do not, as in (29). The data is from Suñer (1999: 2173).⁷

- (28) a. Me preguntaron que **a Juan** qué le había prometido el decano.
Me they.asked that to Juan what him had promised the dean
“They asked me what the dean promised John.”
- b. Le dije que **a su hijo** dónde lo iban a mandar los militares.
Him I.said that to his son where him they.go to send the military
“He asked him where the military was going to send his son.”
- (29) a. *Sabía **a Juan** qué le había prometido el decano.
I.knew to Juan what him had promised the dean
“I knew what the dean had promised John.”
- b. *Decidieron **a su hijo** dónde lo iban a mandar los militares.
I.decided to his son where him they.go to send the military
“They decided where the military was going to send his son.”

Now consider variable behavior verbs like *decir* “say” and *susurrar* “whisper”. As illustrated in (30), in the presence of *extra-que*, clitic left dislocation is grammatical. The examples are from Campos & Zampini (1990:62).

- (30) a. Dicen **que a Pedro** lo vieron en la biblioteca.
they.say that to Pedro him they.saw in the library.
“They say that, as for Pedro, they saw him in the library.”
- b. Susurró **que a Pedro** lo habían visto en la biblioteca.
they.whispered that to Pedro him they.had seen in the library.
“He whispered that, as for Pedro, they had seen him in the library.”

Crucially, when *extra-que* is removed, these verbs pattern with (29) and disallow clitic left dislocation, as in (31).

- (31) a. *Dicen **a Pedro** lo vieron en la biblioteca.
they.say to Pedro him they.saw in the library.
“They say, as for Pedro, they saw him in the library.”

⁷ Glosses have been modified for consistency throughout the paper.

- b. *Susurró a Pedro lo habían visto en la biblioteca
 they.whispered to Pedro him they.had seen in the library.
 “He whispered, as for Pedro, they had seen him in the library.”

In (32), note that verbs like *susurrar* and *decir* need to take an overt *que* complement when they do not take an embedded *wh*-word. This could be an independent reason for their ungrammaticality in (31).

- (32) a. Dicen *(que) lo vieron en la biblioteca.
 they.say that him they.saw in the library.
 “They say that they saw him in the library.”
- b. Susurró *(que) lo habían visto en la biblioteca
 they.whispered that him they.had seen in the library.
 “He whispered that they had seen him in the library.”

Nevertheless, observe in (33) that even in the presence of an embedded *wh*-word, when extra-*que* is removed the sentence is ungrammatical.⁸

- (33) *Le dije **a su hijo** dónde lo iban a mandar los militares.
 Him said.1s to his son where him go.3pl to send the military
 “He asked him where the military was going to send his son.”

We take these facts to indicate that, in the presence of extra-*que*, there is more structure in the embedded left periphery.⁹ Since it is not clear how the basic *cP*-*CP* split would accommodate left-dislocated constituents, we appeal to a Rizzian (1997) left periphery. Concretely, (along the lines of Demonte & Fernandez-Soriano 2009), we claim that what we have been calling *cP* maps to Rizzi’s ForceP and what we are calling *CP* maps to Rizzi’s FinP. Further, we claim that the truncation point is between TopP and FocP.

- (34) [ForceP extra-*que* [TopP XP Top [FocP *wh* Foc [FinP Fin]]]]
-
- EPA verb complements
- +EPA verb complements

We assume that assuming that *wh*-words are in Spec,FocP, and that clitic left dislocation is in TopP. Since we assume that clitic left dislocation involves TopP, and that TopP is also truncated in referential CPs, we have an explanation for the clitic left dislocation patterns in this section.¹⁰

⁸ The sentence is ungrammatical on the interpretation that *a su hijo* is not the goal of saying, but the theme of the sending.

⁹ As an anonymous reviewer points out, matrix clauses are non-referential and they allow topics. This is consistent with our proposal.

¹⁰ Further support for the truncation point being between TopP and FocP comes from recent work from Villa-García (2012) regarding “recomplementation” in Spanish. He argues that in cases of recomplementation, as in (i), the higher *que* heads ForceP and lower *que* heads TopP, with the left-dislocated constituent *a los alumnos* in Spec,TopP. Data from Villa-García (2012:258).

(i) Susi dice **que** a los alumnos, **(que)** les van a dar regalos.
 Susi says that the students that CL go to give presents
 “Susi says that they are going to give the students presents.”

As noted by Demonte & Fernandez-Soriano 2009, while recomplementation can occur under our +EPA verbs, it never occurs under factive verbs, our –EPA verbs. If Villa-García’s analysis is on the right track, then the unavailability of recomplementation under factives falls out directly from our proposal, since –EPA verbs take complements that lack ForceP and TopP.

5. Embedded fragment answers

We have thus far argued that we can distinguish classes of verbal clausal complements both structurally and semantically in a variety of contexts. Specifically, +EPA verbs take non-referential clausal complements that have more structure than the referential clausal complements that –EPA verbs take. As a final note, observe that embedded fragment answers seem to pattern in the same way as embedded polar answers: +EPA verbs allow embedded fragment answers, while –EPA verbs do not. This is shown in (35), where (35b) is a possible answer to (35a), but (35c) is not.

- (35) a. ¿Quién robó las joyas?
 who stole the jewels
 “Who stole the Jewels.”
- b. Creo/supongo/me imagino/pienso que tu hijo.
 I.believe/suppose/imagine/think that your son
 “I believe/suppose/imagine/think your son did.”
- c. #Lamento/se/me sorprende/me desagrada (que) tu hijo (que).
 I.regret/know/me it.surprises/me it.displease (that) your son (that)
 “I regret/know/it surprises me/it displeases me your son did.”

Many analyses of fragment answers assumes TP ellipsis (see Merchant 2004), where the remnant moves out of the ellipsis site to a focus or topic position, since it is an answer. Although we leave the details for further investigation, allow us to just point out at this stage that whichever is the ultimate landing site for the remnant, a focus or a topic position, our analysis of EPAs finds support.

First, if the final landing site is Spec,FocP (or Spec,CP), then we cannot rule out (35c) based on the structure alone, since we know these verbs allow complements with fronted *wh*-words (which presumably are in Spec,FocP (or Spec,CP), as illustrated in the grammatical version of (23b) above). There has to be another reason: On our account this reason can be argued to be the same as with polar answers: the complement clause of –EPA verbs need to be referential, so the problem with (35c) is that we need a non-referential complement to answer a question.

A second possible account for the ungrammaticality of (35c) also arises from our analysis. If the final landing site of the remnant is Spec,TopP, then we might appeal to the reduced structure in the clausal complements of these verbs, as discussed above. There simply would not be a position for the remnant to move to.¹¹ We leave the details of an account of embedded fragment answers open for future research.

¹¹ Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2009:47) present a potentially problematic example for the truncation solution for fragment answers. We see in (i) an example of a –EPA verb taking a left dislocated constituent.

- (i) Lamento que ese coche (*que) no lo compres.
 I.regret that that car (*that) not it buy.
 “I regret that this car you are not buying.”

One possibility is that (i) is another case involving the “I regret to inform you...” reading discussed in footnote 2. Although a possibility, when *informarte* “inform you” is added, the resulting sentence is ungrammatical: **Lamento informarte que ese coche no lo compres*. “I regret to inform you that this car you are not buying.”

Another possibility is that *ese coche* in (i) is actually in a lower position. Observe that this left-dislocated constituent is below the complementizer *que*. If we are correct and this *que* heads CP, and not *cP* (since it is not extra-*que*) then we would have to say that there is a lower topic position available below CP (on our story), or below Rizzi’s Fin, for all verbs in Spanish, perhaps the same position where preverbal subjects in Spanish are located (as in Ordóñez & Trevino 1999). If this were not the case and this topic position is in fact above FocP, then we might expect structurally that exclamatives could also appear, assuming them to be in Spec,FocP (following Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2009). Nevertheless, it is not so clear that they can, as illustrated in (ii) from Brucart (1993:95).

- (ii) *Luis sabe que qué bien (que) habla María el inglés.
 Luis knows that how well (that) Mary speaks the English.
 “Luis knows that how well (that) Mary speaks English.”

We leave these questions open for future research.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we have presented an analysis for the distribution of embedded polar answers in Spanish. We claim that EPAs have full sentential syntactic structure involving TP ellipsis, and that they are structurally Non-referential *c*Ps. We argue that the *que* that appears in these EPA constructions in Spanish is the same *que* that precedes *wh*-words in Suñer's (1991, 1993, 1999) indirect questions, and we refer to it as 'extra-*que*'. Extra-*que* heads a Non-Referential *c*P which itself embeds a Referential CP, making non-referential clauses structurally more complex than referential ones. We observe that only verbs that can take a Non-referential *c*P can take EPAs, ruling out EPAs under referential complement taking verbs (-EPA verbs). We also claim that the structural difference between the complement types is supported by differing patterns of clitic left dislocation under +EPA and -EPA verbs. We have also provided a working definition of referentiality in the clausal domain based on Cinque 1990 and de Cuba & Ürögdi 2009, and have illustrated how this definition differentiates +EPA verbs from -EPA verbs. Finally, we briefly discussed how our account may be extended to account for embedded fragment answer patterns. We leave the details of such an account for future research.

References

- Brucart, José María. 1993. Sobre la estructura de SCOMP en español. In: *Sintaxi: Teoria y Perspectives*. Amadeu Viana (ed.). Lleida: Pàgès 59-102.
- Brucart, José María. 1999. La elipsis. In: *Gramática Descriptiva de la Lengua Española*. Violeta Demonte and Ignacio Bosque (eds.). 2787-2866. Madrid: Espasa.
- Brucart, José María and Jonathan E. MacDonald. 2012. Empty Categories and Ellipsis. In: *The Handbook of Hispanic Linguistics* [Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics series]. Jose Ignacio Hualde, Antxon Olarrea, and Erin O'Rourke, (eds.). Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell. 579-602.
- Campos, Hector & Mary Zampini. 1990. Focalization strategies in Spanish. *Probus* 2.1:47-64.
- Cinque, Guglielmo. 1990. *Types of A'-Dependencies*. MIT Press
- de Cuba, Carlos and Barbara Ürögdi. 2009. Eliminating factivity from syntax: Sentential complements in Hungarian. In: *Approaches to Hungarian: Vol. 11*. Marcel Den Dikken and Robert Vago (eds.). John Benjamins. 29-63.
- de Cuba, Carlos and Jonathan MacDonald. 2013. Referentiality in Spanish CPs. In: *Information Structure and Agreement*. M. Victoria Camacho Taboada, Ángel Jiménez Fernández, Javier Martín González and Mariano Reyes Tejedor (eds.). *Linguistik Aktuell* Vol. 197. John Benjamins. 117-140.
- Demonte, Violeta and Olga Fernández-Soriano. 2009. Force and finiteness in the Spanish complementizer system. *Probus* 21:23-49.
- Haegeman, Liliane. 2012. *Adverbial Clauses, Main Clause Phenomena, and the Composition of the Left Periphery: The Cartography of Syntactic Structures, Volume 8*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Holmberg, Anders. 2012. On the syntax of yes and no in English. In: *Newcastle Working Papers in Linguistics*, Vol. 18. David Iorio (ed.). Centre for Research in Linguistics and Language Sciences (CRILLS). Newcastle University. 52-72.
- Kramer, Ruth and Kyle Rawlins. 2011. Polarity particles: an ellipsis account. In: *NELS 39: The Proceedings of the 39th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society*. Suzi Lima, Kevin Mullin and Brian Smith (eds.). GLSA.
- Lahiri, Utpal. 2002. *Questions and Answers in Embedded Contexts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Laka, Itziar. 1990. *Negation in Syntax: On the Nature of Functional Categories and Projections*. Doctoral Dissertation. MIT, Cambridge, Mass.
- López, Luis. 1999. VP-ellipsis in English and Spanish and the features of auxiliaries. *Probus* 11(2): 263-297.
- Merchant, Jason. 2004. Fragments and ellipsis. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 27.6:661-738.
- Ordóñez, Francisco and Esthela Treviño. 1999. Left dislocated subjects and the pro-drop parameter: A case study of Spanish. *Lingua* 107:39-68.
- Plann, Susan. 1982. Indirect questions in Spanish. *Linguistic Inquiry* 13.2:297-312.
- Rivero, María-Luisa. 1980. On left dislocation and topicalization in Spanish. *Linguistic Inquiry* 11:363-393.
- Rivero, María-Luisa. 1994. On indirect questions, commands and Spanish quotative *que*. *Linguistic Inquiry* 25.3: 547-554.
- Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery. In: *Elements of Grammar. A Handbook in Generative Syntax*. Liliane Haegeman (ed.). Kluwer: Dordrecht. 281-337.
- Saab, Andrés Leandro. *Hacia una Teoría en la Identidad Parcial en la Elipsis*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Buenos Aires.

- Sailor, Craig. 2012. On Embedded Polar Replies. Paper presented at the *Workshop on the Syntax of Answers to Polar Questions*, 9 June 2012, Newcastle University. Handout.
- Suñer, Margarita. 1991. Indirect questions and the structure of CP: Some consequences. In: *Current Studies in Spanish Linguistics*. Hector Campos and Fernando Martinez-Gil (eds.). Georgetown University Press. 283-312.
- Suñer, Margarita. 1993. About indirect questions and semi-questions. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 16:45-77.
- Suñer, Margarita. 1999. La subordinación sustantiva: La interrogación indirecta. In: *Gramática Descriptiva de la Lengua Española*. Violeta Demonte and Ignacio Bosque (eds.). 2149-2195. Madrid: Espasa.
- Szabolcsi, Anna. 2006. Strong and weak islands. In: *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax*. Vol. IV. Martin Everaert and Henk van Riemsdijk (eds.). Blackwell. 479-571.
- Villa-García, Julio. 2012. Recomplementation and locality of movement in Spanish. *Probus* 2012: 24(2): 257-314.

Selected Proceedings of the 16th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium

edited by Jennifer Cabrelli Amaro,
Gillian Lord, Ana de Prada Pérez,
and Jessi Elana Aaron

Cascadilla Proceedings Project Somerville, MA 2013

Copyright information

Selected Proceedings of the 16th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium
© 2013 Cascadilla Proceedings Project, Somerville, MA. All rights reserved

ISBN 978-1-57473-459-1 library binding

A copyright notice for each paper is located at the bottom of the first page of the paper.
Reprints for course packs can be authorized by Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Ordering information

Orders for the library binding edition are handled by Cascadilla Press.
To place an order, go to www.lingref.com or contact:

Cascadilla Press, P.O. Box 440355, Somerville, MA 02144, USA
phone: 1-617-776-2370, fax: 1-617-776-2271, sales@cascadilla.com

Web access and citation information

This entire proceedings can also be viewed on the web at www.lingref.com. Each paper has a unique document # which can be added to citations to facilitate access. The document # should not replace the full citation.

This paper can be cited as:

de Cuba, Carlos and Jonathan E. MacDonald. 2013. On the Referential Status of Embedded Polarity Answers in Spanish. In *Selected Proceedings of the 16th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium*, ed. Jennifer Cabrelli Amaro et al., 312-323. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. www.lingref.com, document #2943.