The Structure of Complementizerless Clauses in Classical Portuguese

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Abstract: This chapter examines the structure of declarative complement sentences lacking the complementizer *que* in Classical Portuguese. The goal is to investigate whether such clauses manifest a CP-domain. We present a set of facts related to the position of subjects and adverbs showing that complementizerless clauses do display a left periphery layer, as a result of V-to-C movement. Following a split CP view (Rizzi 1997), we also propose that sentences without *que* are structures in which verb movement to the embedded C-system makes the peripheral heads Force and Fin to be projected syncretically, thus preventing the activation of discursive projections like TopP or FocP.

Keywords: Complementizerless Clauses; Classical Portuguese; Verb Movement; Syncretic Projections.

1.   *Introduction*

In this paper, we examine the structure of finite declarative complement sentences lacking the complementizer *que* 'that' in Classical Portuguese (henceforth ClaP).[1] More specifically, we investigate whether such clauses manifest a CP-domain or not, a topic not yet discussed in the literature about this language.

Here, we address three main aspects of complementizerless clauses: (a) the obligatoriness of post-verbal subjects, (b) the fact that finite verbs necessarily precede adverbs, and (c) the impossibility of fronted phrases. Aspects (a) and (b) are presented as general evidence of our central

hypothesis, namely, the idea that complementizerless sentences do display a left periphery structure, due to verb movement to the embedded C-system. Aspect (c) is addressed in the light of a possible counter-evidence against this hypothesis. As already proposed for Spanish, the impossibility of derivational processes requiring the presence of a CP, such as topicalization, is taken to be an indication of the absence of a left periphery layer (Brovetto 2002). Following a split CP view (Rizzi 1997), we propose that sentences without *que* are structures in which V-to-C movement makes the peripheral heads Force and Fin to be projected syncretically. This mechanism prevents the activation of discursive projections like TopP or FocP, thus explaining the ban on dislocated phrases in clauses lacking *que*.

2.   *Complementizerless Clauses in Classical Portuguese*

In ClaP, the complementizer *que* can be omitted in finite declarative complement clauses selected by different kinds of verbs. Basically, the governing heads are verbs of propositional attitude, like *parecer* 'to seem', volitional verbs, like *querer* 'to want', semi-factive verbs, like *entender* 'to understand', and verbs of saying, like *dizer* 'to say'.[2] In (1a), we have an example of a clause introduced by *que*, while in (1b) we have a counterpart example showing no complementizer.[3]

(1) a. ***parece*** [*que representava estabilidade e   firmeza*]
        it.seems   that it.represented stability   and firmness
        "it seems that it represented stability and firmness"

    b. ***parece*** [*não há   mister   prova*]
        it.seems   not   there.is forceful proof
        "it seems that there is no forceful proof"

In the generative tradition, a question often raised is whether, in the absence of an overt complementizer, the governing head selects for a CP-complement or just a bare finite TP. This debate is well illustrated with the discussion around the structure of examples like (2) in English.

(2)   Judy believes [(that) she will leave tomorrow]

Pesetsky & Torrego (2001) assume the view that embedded sentences without *that* manifest a CP periphery. In their analysis, *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 within the CP-layer. In *that*-less clauses, this feature is checked via subject raising to [Spec,CP].

Bošković (1997), on the other hand, argues that no CP category is present in complementizerless sentences. For him, *that*-less clauses are TP 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 claims that 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.

Concerning complementizerless sentences in ClaP, there is no previous research systematically investigating the structural makeup of these clauses. Thus, in what follows, we will try to determine if sentences lacking *que* can be analyzed as constructions involving the presence of a left periphery layer or simply as bare finite TP-complements.

3.   *The Presence of the CP-system*

In this section, it is proposed that complementizerless clauses in ClaP manifest a left periphery structure. More specifically, we give two evidences that, in this context, the CP-system is present because of V-to-C movement to the periphery of the embedded sentence.

3.1   *The Position of Subjects*

In finite complement clauses introduced by *que*, overt subjects can appear in pre or in post-verbal position. These two possibilities can be seen in (3) and (4), respectively.
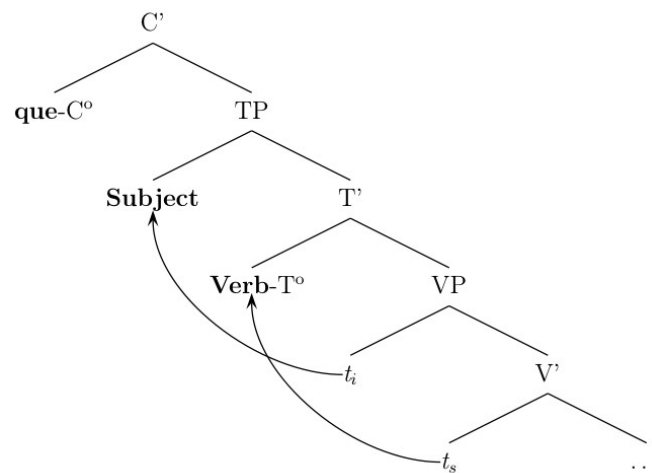
(3)   *dizia*   [*que* <u>*Deus*</u>   **dera**   *à*   *sagrada*   *Ordem*
        he.said   that God   had.given to.the sacred   Order
        of.the
        dos   *Pregadores*]
        of.the   Preachers
        "he said that God had given to the sacred Preachers Order"

(4)   *diz*   *a*   *Escriptura,* [*que* **descançou** <u>*Deus*</u> *de tudo o*
        says the Scripture   that rested   God of all   the
        que   *tinha*   *obrado*]
        which he.had made
        "the Scripture says that God rested from all he had made"

Antonelli (2011) claims that at least two structural positions are available for overt subjects in ClaP. The author points out that subjects can either be raised to [Spec,TP] or remain *in situ*. Relying on the proposal of Costa (2004) for Modern European Portuguese, Antonelli argues that the position where the subject surfaces is determined by discursive factors. The idea is that, when the subject is an informational focus, it stands within the
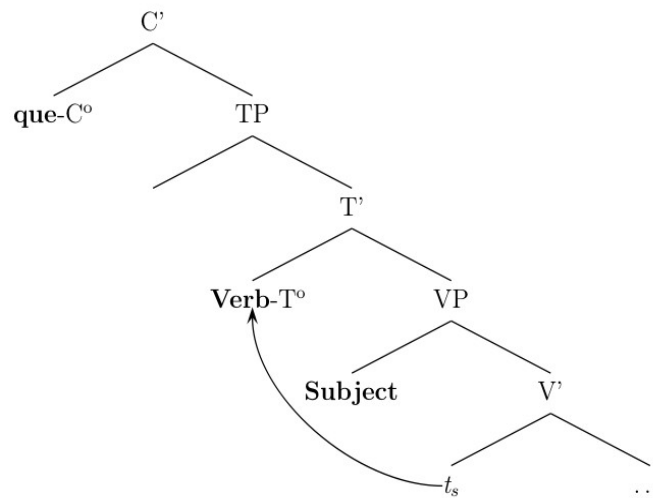
VP-domain. But, if not focused, it raises to [Spec,TP].

Having this proposal in mind, the alternation between pre and post-verbal subjects in *que*-clauses can be straightforwardly accounted for. Let us assume that the finite verb moves from V to T — such an idea is reasonable since ClaP presents a rich inflectional system. Thus, a subject raised to [Spec,TP] occurs pre-verbally, given that, in structural terms, the verb is below the subject (see the representation in (5)). But, if discursively required to remain *in situ*, the subject appears post-verbally, in that the verb is hierarchically higher than the subject (see the representation in (6)).[4]

(5)

```
                    C'
              ┌─────┴─────┐
          que-Cº          TP
                     ┌─────┴─────┐
                 Subject         T'
                            ┌─────┴─────┐
                        Verb-Tº         VP
                               ┌─────────┴─────────┐
                              tᵢ                    V'
                                              ┌──────┴──────┐
                                             tₛ            …
```

t_i, t_s

(6)

Unlike what is attested in clauses with the overt complementizer, sentences lacking *que* show the subject categorically in post-verbal position, as exemplified in (7).[5]

(7) a. *pedia* [*lhe* **desse** *o Arcebispo a praça*]
        he.asked to.him gave the archbishop the vacancy
        "he asked the Archbishop to give him the vacancy"

If we take the hypothesis that complementizerless clauses are bare finite TPs, it becomes puzzling why we do not find pre-verbal subjects just like in senteces introduced by *que*. Assuming that the finite verb would also be located in T, post-verbal subjects are easily accounted for, since [Spec,VP] is structurally available. But the TP proposal also predicts the availability of [Spec,TP], so a subject raised to this position should appear pre-verbally, contrary to the facts.

Here, we propose that ClaP manifests verb movement to the left periphery in complementizerless clauses. Consequently, this implies the presence of a CP-system. Our hypothesis is that V-to-C movement is

triggered in the absence of *que*.[6] In structural terms, this means that the subject is always licensed in a position lower than that occupied by the verb, regardless of being in [Spec,TP] (see (8)) or in [Spec,VP] (see (9)). Thus, we derive the obligatoriness of post-verbal subjects.

(8)
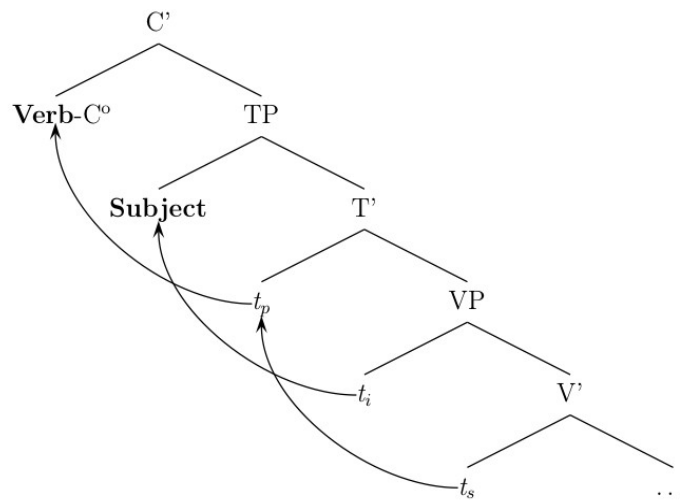
(9)
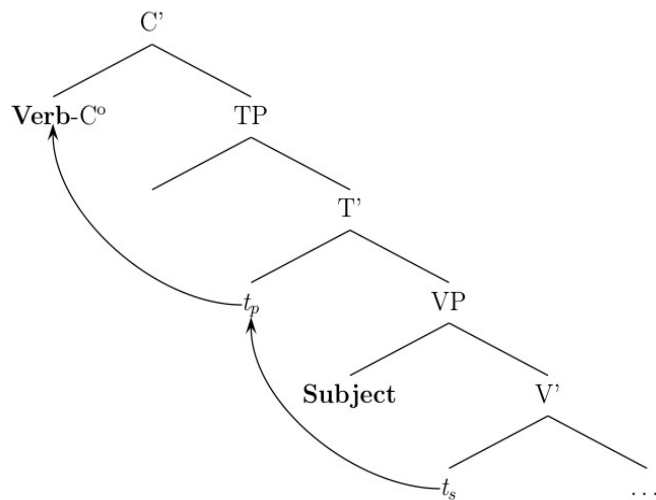
The following examples are an evidence in favor of this

hypothesis.

(10) *entendendo* [*lhe* **teria** *ela* **encomendado** *esta*
understanding to.her would.have she asked this
deligencia]
task
"thinking that she would have asked her this task"

(11) *parece* [**pódem competir** *os milagres*]
it.seems can compete the miracles
"it seems that the miracles can compete"

In (10), the subject appears between the auxiliary verb *ter* and the lexical verb *encomendar*, displaying what can be called Germanic inversion. In (11), the subject is preceded not only by the inflected modal verb *poder*, but also by the lexical verb, displaying an example of Romance inversion. It could be said that in (10) the subject is located in [Spec,TP], as it is usually proposed for cases of Germanic inversion (Rizzi 1996), while in (11) the subject remains inside the VP-domain, as it is usually proposed for cases of Romance inversion (Belletti 2004).

3.2   *The Position of Adverbs*

Another property of clauses lacking *que* concerns the linear order of adverbs. Our data show that, in this context, the verb necessarily precedes adverbs. This is exemplified in (12) with the adverb *logo* 'soon'.

(12) *lhe respondeo Dom Duarte* [**seria** *logo*
to.her answered don Duarte she.would.be soon
obedecida]
obeyed

"Don Duarte answered that she would be obeyed soon"

In *que*-clauses, however, the verb is not only followed by adverbs, but also preceded, as illustrated in (13).

(13) a. *folgaria* [*que **fosse** <u>logo</u>*]
I.wanted   that it.was soon
"I wanted it to take place soon"

b. *mandando-lhe* [*que <u>logo</u> **despisse**   o   habito*]
prescribing-her   that soon she.took.off the habit
"prescribing her to take off her habit soon"

Here, the reasoning is similar to what we said about the linear order of subjects. Let us assume that adverbs are generated in different specifier positions within the inflectional domain (TP), each position corresponding to the semantic notion conveyed by the adverbial constituent (Cinque 1999). Concerning clauses with *que*, as already said, we can say that the finite verb is also in the inflectional domain. Assuming that an adverb can be associated to different interpretations (Jackendoff 1972) and, consequently, to different structural positions, the variation between the word order 'verb-adverb' and 'adverb-verb' derives from the possibility of having the same adverb in a position lower or higher than that occupied by the verb in the inflectional domain, depending on the semantic meaning attributed to the adverb.

As for complementizerless sentences, the TP-hypothesis predicts a pattern identical to the one found in clauses with *que*. In fact, if no C-system is present, we have to assume that finite verbs and adverbs are still positioned in the same functional domain. Thus, some adverbs are expected to be in a place structurally lower than that where the verb is located,

deriving the sequence 'verb-adverb', while others are expected to be in a position higher than that occupied by the verb, giving rise to the word order 'adverb-verb'. As we saw, this is a wrong prediction, since the only option attested is that with adverbs following the verb.

On the other hand, the CP-hypothesis linked to the idea of V-movement makes a right prediction. If the finite verb really raises to the C-system, it follows that any adverb, regardless of its semantic interpretation, is in a place lower than that where the verb is positioned. Thus, we derive the obligatoriness of the linear sequence 'verb-adverb'.[7]

4.   ***On the Impossibility of Fronted Phrases***

In this section, we discuss a potential counter-evidence against the hypothesis that complementizerless clauses manifest a CP-domain. Brovetto (2002) shows that, in Spanish, embedded sentences lacking *que* do not allow a dislocated phrase, while an XP can be fronted if the complementizer is present. This asymmetry is exemplified in (14).

(14) *Lamento* [**(que)* **con   tu   trabajo**, *no   estés*

       I.lament   that with your job   not you.are-2p.s

       contenta]

       happy

       "I lament that, with your job, you are not happy"

Brovetto explains this word order pattern by assuming that, in sentences with a dislocated phrase, a projection designed to host topics is present. She follows the cartographic proposal of Rizzi (1997), where it is developed an articulated system for the C-system, as schematized in (15).

(15)

```
ForceP
├── Force°
└── TopP
    ├── Top°
    └── FocP
        ├── Foc°
        └── TopP
            ├── Top°
            └── FinP
                ├── Fin°
                └── TP
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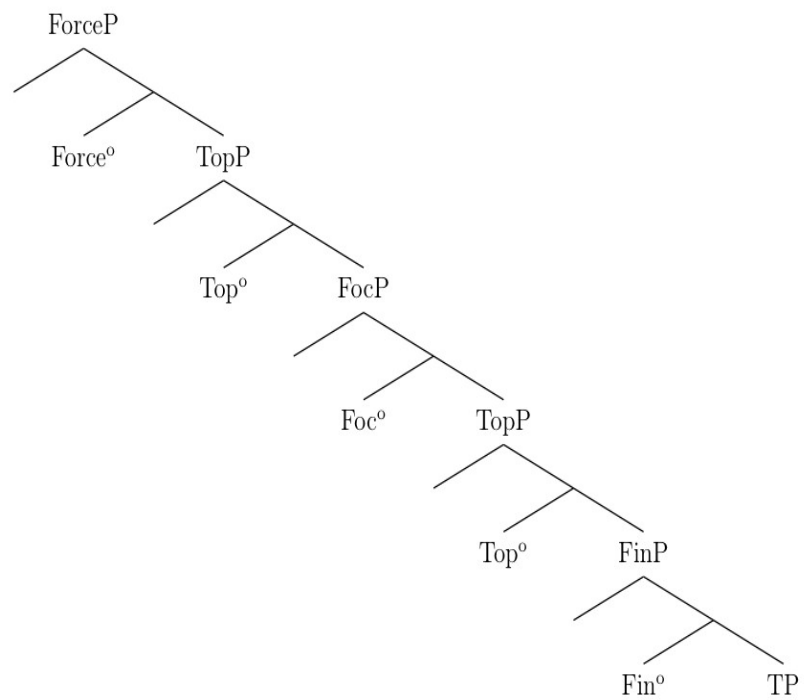
For Brovetto, in *que* clauses with a fronted phrase, the complementizer is merged in the highest head, namely, Force, thus preceding the dislocated element hosted in [Spec,TopP]. This hypothesis is represented in (16).

(16)

```
                    ForceP
                   /      \
                  /        \
          que-Force°       TopP
                          /    \
                         /      \
                con tu trabajo   \
                            Top°   FinP
                                  /    \
                                 /      \
                               Fin°      TP
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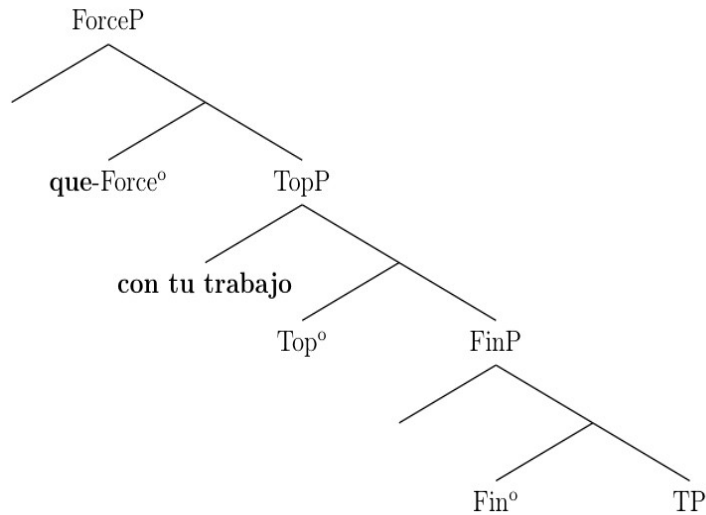
Brovetto argues that the obligatory presence of *que* in clauses with a fronted phrase is an evidence that, when an element activates TopP (or FocP, depending on the informational status of the dislocated XP), the projection of the whole CP-system is consequently required. Concerning complementizerless clauses, she claims that no left periphery structure is present. In fact, under Brovetto's analysis, if an XP could activate TopP or FocP, the presence of the complementizer would be needed as well. Actually, in her proposal, any derivational process involving TopP/FocP triggers the projection of the CP-domain in a thorough way, including the highest head where the complementizer *que* is merged.

In ClaP, we observe similar facts. Clauses introduced by *que* allow the fronting of a constituent (see (17)). In complementizerless clauses, however, we attested no example displaying a dislocated XP. So, it is tempting to extend Brovetto's analysis to ClaP as well. That is, in clauses with *que*, the complementizer would be merged in Force. Its presence would be derived from the activation of TopP/FocP, which causes the projection of the whole C-system. In the case of clauses without *que*, the impossibility of

fronted phrases would be the result of the absence of the CP-domain, just like in Spanish.

(17) *recear* [*que **com a vida** perdesse a alma*]
    to.fear   that   with the   life   he.lost   the soul
    "to fear that he could lose his soul with his life"

Here, however, we will show that extending Brovetto's analysis to ClaP is not satisfactory. In sentences with *que*, the complementizer is the element responsible for signalling that the embedded clause is declarative. Let us assume that this clausal type information is specified in Force, where the complementizer is merged (Rizzi 1997). If this is correct, the following question raises: assuming that complementizerless sentences are TP-complements, how is the clausal type interpretation signalled?

One alternative is to say that clauses without *que* are actually root structures (i.e., a case of parataxis), and not subordinate ones (i.e., a case of hypotaxis). Thus, we could say that no CP periphery is needed for signaling the declarative clausal type meaning because such information would be assigned by default, in accordance with the idea that the declarative meaning is a kind of preselected choice in root sentences (Bošković 1997).

However, the proposal that clauses lacking *que* are root structures (not showing a CP-system, under the TP-hypothesis) faces a problem related to the possibility of extraction. Several authors have shown that extraction requires the presence of an empty [Spec,CP] in the subordinate clause which can be used by the extracted constituent as an escape hatch on its way into the superordinate clause (see, for instance, Petersson 2009). Under this condition, clauses introduced by *que* are true embedded domains, since they allow for extraction, as illustrated in (18).[8]

(18) <u>*este*</u>ᵢ *mandava*   [*que os curas que não eram*

this he.commanded   that the priests who not were

letrados fossem lendo   t$_i$ *a   seus fregueses*]

literate   were   reading t   to their parishioners

"he commanded that priests who were not literate should read this (book) to their parishioners."

Let us assume that the possibility of extraction is a reliable test to determine if a clause is a subordinate structure or not, pressuposing a left periphery system. So, concerning the status of complementizerless clauses in ClaP, if they are root structures (in accordance with the TP-hypothesis), extraction of an XP to the main clause is not expected. On the other hand, if they are subordinate configurations (thus favoring the CP-hypothesis), the possibility of extraction is expected. In (19), we see that clauses lacking *que* do allow the extraction of an XP, thus confirming the idea that these structures are really subordinate ones.

(19) *Tanto amor*$_i$ *sabem aqueles Índios* [*lhes   têem os*

much love   know   those   Indians to.them have the

Padres t$_i$]

priests t

"Those indians know that the priests have much love for

them"

But, if clauses without *que* behave as true CP-complements, how do we account for the impossibility of fronted phrases? Such a question is particularly intriguing especially if we assume an articulated left periphery system like the one developed in Rizzi (1997), where specific projections are available for dislocated XPs. To solve this problem, we rely on the following assumptions:

a. the heads Force and Fin are split only if necessary (Rizzi 1997);

b. a finite declarative complement CP, with or without *que*, always comes specified with a set of two unvalued features: a declarative sentential feature in Force and a [+ finite] tense feature in Fin;

c. the features in Force and Fin are valued either by a complementizer (in clauses with *que*) or by the finite verb (in complementizerless clauses).

       With these assumptions in mind, our analysis runs as follows. Firstly, we show why the fronting of phrases is allowed in sentences with *que*. In our proposal, the complementizer *que* is merged in Force, the place where the sentential feature is valued. When *que* is selected for a derivation, we claim that a lower homophonous complementizer, overt or not, but always present, is also selected and inserted in Fin, where the tense feature is checked. The hypothesis of two different complementizers (let us call them *que1* and *que2*) is conceivable given that ClaP admits multiple-complementizer constructions, as illustrated in (20) (Ribeiro & Torres Morais 2012).

    (20) *diz* [***q.*** *deuos* ***q.*** *não pode perdoar pecados*]
          said that god that not can to.forgive sins

       Since two different complementizers are merged in the C-domain, we 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 shown in (21).

(21)

```
                    ForceP
                   /      \
          que1-Force      TopP
                         /     \
                       XP       \
                               /    \
                            Top      FinP
                                    /     \
                             (que2)-Fin    TP
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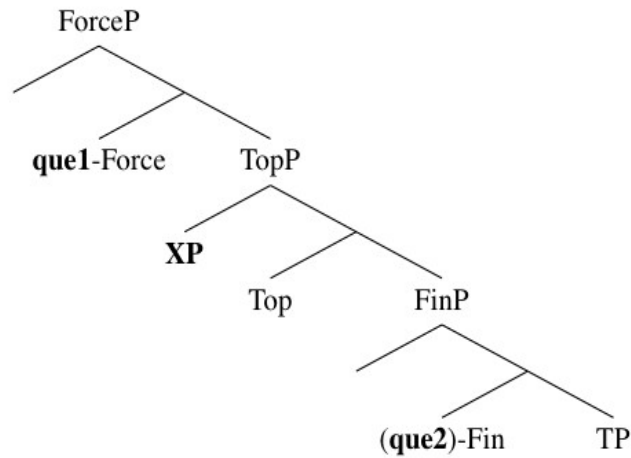
Concerning complementizerless clauses, we propose that, in the absence of *que1* and *que2*, there is V-movement to the C-domain.[9] Our hypothesis is that the numeration of sentences lacking an overt complementizer presents a syncretic CP-layer from the start. This happens because, if the complementizers are not present, V-movement to the embedded periphery is able to value the sentential feature associated to Force and the tense feature associated to Fin. This would be an instance of alternative checking (Zanuttini 1997), an idea that can be formulated in the following terms: if two different elements are in complementary distribution, they can satisfy one same feature. Taking these ideas into consideration, the proposal of syncretism between Force and Fin is schematized in (22).[10]

(22)

```
            ForceP/FinP
           /          \
     V-Force/Fin       TP
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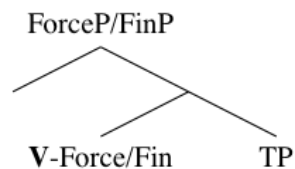
One of the consequences of this proposal is that, since ForceP and FinP are not split, there is no space for the activation of a TopP or FocP category. Such a result straightforwardly accounts for the impossibility of fronted XPs in complementizerless clauses. In other words, the absence of dislocated XPs in clauses lacking *que* follows not because these sentences do not manifest a CP layer, but because the peripheral domain is projected syncretically as a consequence of V-to-C movement.[11]

5. *Conclusion*

In this chapter, we looked at *que*-less sentences in ClaP.[12] Our goal was to determine if this kind of clause manifests a CP-domain or not. We presented evidences that complementizerless clauses are structures displaying verb movement to the left periphery, thus implying the presence of a C-system. We also showed that the impossibility of fronted phrases in complementizerless sentences derives from a syncretism between heads Force and Fin whenever there is V-movement to the left periphery.

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