

On emphatic affirmative polarity markers and predicates of truth:

sí and *sí que* in Spanish

Abstract. The paper aims to account for a host of syntactic and semantic contrasts between the emphatic polarity particle *sí* ‘yes’ and its putative counterpart with an instance of the complementizer *que* –*sí que* ‘yes that.’ Even though the two constructions appear to be synonymous in certain contexts, closer inspection reveals that the two elements display a number of non-trivial asymmetries and should therefore be treated differently. Building on Hernanz (2007 and subsequent work), we propose that *sí*, which marks focal affirmative polarity, originates in ΣP and then moves to FocusP. By contrast, *sí que* is directly merged in AssertiveP in the left periphery, since it emphasizes the truth of the proposition. Thus, we argue that *sí que* involves more CP structure than *sí*, which makes a variety of correct empirical predictions. Additionally, several facts indicate that *sí que* behaves much like a predicate of truth, which further substantiates the AssertiveP analysis advocated here. We then investigate the possibility that *que* in such contexts also performs an echoic function, along the lines of Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2014). More generally, the findings reported here allow us to draw a more accurate mapping of the Spanish left periphery, a topic of much discussion in the Romance literature.

Keywords: positive polarity, predicates of truth, left periphery, complementizer, quotatives

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the emphatic positive polarity marker *sí* ‘yes’ (illustrated in (1a)) and the sequence *sí que* ‘yes that’ (exemplified in (1b)), which have on occasion been deemed interchangeable in present-day Spanish, as suggested by (1), where the meaning of the two sentences appears to be almost the same at first sight:

(1) (a) *María sí vino.*

María yes came

‘*María did come.*’

(b) *María sí que vino.*

María yes that came

‘*María certainly came.*’

We submit that the apparent optionality of *que* in cases like (1) disguises different syntactic structures, which correlate with both syntactic (i.e., distributional) and semantic differences. We argue that *que* is not always optional, since its optionality would mean that *sí* and *sí que* should be equivalent in all contexts, contrary to fact. Our major claim is that the sentence in (1b) involves more syntactic structure, namely a more complex left periphery/CP domain. Our major proposal is outlined in (2).

(2) (a) [ForceP [TopicP [FocusP *sí* [Σ P ~~*sí*~~ [TP ...]]]]] [Hernanz 2007: 144]

(b) [ForceP [TopicP [AssertiveP *sí* [Assert° *que* [TopicP [FocusP [Σ P [TP ...]]]]]]]]

The different analyses proposed in this paper for *sí* on the one hand (see (2a)) and *sí que* on the other (see (2b)) account for a number of novel semantic and syntactic contrasts between the two configurations in a unified way. Building on previous investigations (Hernanz 2007; Batllori & Hernanz 2013), we provide a number of arguments to the effect that *sí* is an emphatic polarity marker (in FocusP), whereas *sí que* is a predicate of truth that underpins the truth value of the proposition; consequently, we submit that *sí que* occupies AssertiveP in the left periphery. Additionally, we investigate the role of the complementizer *que* in *sí que* configurations and pursue the hypothesis that it may be an instance of echoic *que* (Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2014). A more general result of this paper is that the constructions at issue enable us to further our understanding of the delineation of the Spanish left periphery, a topic of heated debate in the Romance literature in the last two decades.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 summarizes competing proposals, including the evidence adduced in the existing works; Section 3 outlines the account advocated here and investigates its syntactic predictions; Section 4 takes the analysis pursued here further and explores the view that *sí que* semantically functions as a truth predicate; Section 5 looks into the complementizer *que* in *sí que* sequences and draws a parallelism between this *que* and echoic *que*; Section 6 concludes the paper and offers directions for future research.

2. EXISTING ACCOUNTS

Before we present our proposal, we will outline a previous account for the structures in (1); in particular, the analysis in question is presented in Hernanz (2007) and Batllori & Hernanz (2008, 2013), where the authors similarly argue that the constructions in (1a)

and (1b) are not equivalent and therefore propose a different syntactic structure for each.¹ These authors adopt the split-CP system proposed by Rizzi (1997 et seq.), whose basic geometry is furnished in (3) (* indicates that the functional projection in question is recursive, i.e., it can be iterative):

- (3) ForceP > TopicP* > FocusP > FinitenessP > TP...

Assuming this structure, Batllori and Hernanz propose that when the complementizer is absent, the polarity marker *sí* is (externally) merged in Σ /Sigma Phrase, the polarity-encoding projection proposed by Laka (1990), and then moves further up to Focus Phrase, as shown in (4a). On this view, when the complementizer follows *sí*, both elements are merged in Force Phrase. According to these authors, *sí* occupies the specifier of this projection while the complementizer is located in its head position, as shown in (4b).

- (4) (a) [_{ForceP} [_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} *sí* [_{Σ P} ~~*sí*~~ [_{TP} ...]]]]]
 (b) [_{ForceP} *sí* [_{Force°} que] [_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} [_{Σ P} [_{TP} ...]]]]]

Batllori and Hernanz offer a variety of arguments in favor of the structure in (4a), that is, in support of the movement of *sí* from Σ P to FocusP. These authors argue that this operation is related to the features encoded by the emphatic positive polarity marker *sí*: [+Polar] and [+Emphatic]. The second feature is responsible for the particle moving from Σ P (where it originates because of its [+Polar] feature) to FocusP. This analysis naturally accounts for several syntactic properties of the marker *sí*, such as the word

order triggered by this particle, which displays operator/wh-/focus-like properties. By way of illustration, Spanish is a “free” word order language, as is well-known. Although there are syntactic-pragmatic differences, Spanish accepts, among others, the word orders in (5):

(5) (a) Juan compró la tarta. (SVO)

Juan bought the cake

(b) Compró Juan la tarta. (VSO)

bought Juan the cake

(c) Compró la tarta Juan. (VOS)

bought the cake Juan

All: ‘Juan bought the cake.’

However, these possibilities are restricted if a constituent receives a contrastive focus reading, and is fronted and stressed as a result, as shown in (6). In these examples, *LA TARTA* ‘the cake’ is focalised and occupies FocusP. The presence of this contrastive focus constituent forces subject-verb inversion and thus the subject must appear in a position below the verb, as indicated by the contrast in (6).

(6) (a) **LA TARTA* (y no el periódico) Juan compró.

the cake and not the newspaper Juan bought

(b) *LA TARTA* (y no el periódico) compró Juan.

the cake and not the newspaper bought Juan

‘Juan bought the cake, not the newspaper.’

The same behavior is displayed by the particle *sí* (see (7)). This can easily be explained under Batllori and Hernanz's account: given that *sí* is placed in FocusP, it forces subject-verb inversion in much the same way as uncontroversially focalised constituents do.

- (7) (a) **Sí* Juan compró la tarta.
 yes Juan bought the cake
 (b) *Sí* compró Juan la tarta.
 yes bought Juan the cake
 (c) *Sí* compró la tarta Juan.
 yes bought the cake Juan
 ‘Juan did buy the cake.’

A (dislocated) subject can appear before the polarity marker *sí*, as shown by (8b). It is important to note that this is by no means a counterexample to Batllori & Hernanz's proposal. In fact, they convincingly argue that in these cases, the subject is not in the specifier of TP –the canonical subject position– but in TopicP, which is higher than FocusP (see (3)). Note that if the subject precedes *sí*, it cannot be a quantified DP such as *todos los padres* ‘all the parents/fathers’ (see (8a)), since bare quantifiers and non-specific quantified DPs cannot be topicalized (Rizzi 1986, Cinque 1990, among others). This does not hold for a non-quantified DP such as *Juan*, which is able to appear in a topical position (see (8b)).

- (8) (a) *Todos los padres sí compraron la tarta.
 all the parents yes bought the cake
 ‘All the parents did buy the cake.’
- (b) Juan sí compró la tarta.
 Juan yes bought the cake
 ‘Juan did buy the cake.’

Another argument in favor of the movement analysis of *sí* to FocusP comes from its incompatibility with *wh*-phrases and contrastive foci, as shown in (9). The ungrammaticality of these sentences is immediately accounted for by Batllori & Hernanz’s analysis. Since *sí* moves to FocusP, it occupies the same projection as *wh*-phrases and contrastive foci. Therefore, these elements compete for the same syntactic position, on the assumption that in languages like Spanish, only one focal phrase can occur per clause (see Ortega-Santos 2016 for relevant discussion).

- (9) (a) *EN LA HABITACIÓN sí leyó el libro.
 in the room yes read the book
 ‘He did read the book IN THE ROOM.’
- (b) *¿Qué alto sí es!
 how tall yes is
 ‘How tall he is!’

For all these reasons, we adopt Batllori & Hernanz’s analysis of the marker *sí* when the complementizer is not present (see (4a)). However, we do not agree with the

structure that these authors propose for the sequence *sí que* (see (4b)), the reason being that this analysis makes a wrong prediction. Under the structure in (4b), *sí que* should not be preceded by a topic, since this sequence occupies the highest projection of the split-CP structure, namely ForceP, and therefore, there is no available slot to introduce a constituent before it. Nevertheless, as shown in (10), the sequence *sí que* can be preceded by a topic (see also López 2009 for the proposal that the *sí que* sequence actually provides a test for topichood, in that the material preceding *sí que* must be topical in nature).

(10) (a) Con ese chico *sí* *que* trabajan.

with that guy yes that work

‘They certainly work with that guy.’

(b) En el jardín *sí* *que* fuman.

in the garden yes that smoke

‘They certainly smoke in the garden.’

That *sí que* can be preceded by topical material is further corroborated by quotative contexts and embedded contexts where topics can be followed by an instance of recomplementation *que* (which Villa-García 2015 argues heralds TopicP). In these environments, *sí que* is also legitimate after (sandwiched) topics, as shown in (11).

(11) (a) Que con ese chico (, *que*) *sí* *que* trabajan.

that with that guy that yes that work

‘I say/somebody says that they certainly work with that guy.’

- (b) Dice Conchi que en el jardín, (que) sí que fuman.
 says Conchi that in the garden that yes that smoke
 ‘Conchi says that they certainly smoke in the garden.’

Note also that *sí que* can appear in embedded clauses without a preceding topic, as illustrated in (12a), which is similar to the corpus examples reported in Batllori & Hernanz (2013) (see also (12b)). If the complementizer that heads the embedded clause is placed in ForceP (more specifically, in Force^o), there is no available slot in this projection to introduce *sí que* under (4b). Yet, Batllori & Hernanz point out that these examples are not a problem for their proposal. According to these authors, such examples involve a structure in which ForceP splits into two levels (see (13)). However, as far as we can see, there is no independent reason to argue that ForceP can be recursive (and not FinitenessP, for instance) and therefore, such reduplication should be avoided.²

- (12) (a) Dice que sí que llovió.
 says that yes that rained
 ‘He says that it certainly rained.’

- (b) ... por considerar que sí que actuó como cómplice
 for consider that yes that acted as accomplice
 ‘Since X considers that s/he certainly participated as an accomplice.’

[*Telediario*, Spanish Radio and Television (RTVE), Spain, 5 November 2016]

- (13) [_{ForceP1} que [_{ForceP2} sí que ...]]

Furthermore, the proposal in (13) is at odds with the data in (11), which involve embedded topics that can even co-occur with recomplementation *que*. Unless three ForcePs are invoked, which is not a desirable assumption, such data cast doubt on the validity of (13). Consequently, we argue for an alternative analysis of *sí que* that captures the data in (10)-(12) as well as the additional properties of this sequence that we investigate below.

3. THE PROPOSAL

As noted, we adopt Batllori & Hernanz analysis of *sí* when this particle is not followed by *que*. Consequently, we assume that *sí* is merged in ΣP , since it is a positive polarity maker, and moves to FocusP in order to satisfy the [+Emphatic] feature (see (14a)). However, we differ from these authors with respect to the structure of *sí que*, which they place in ForceP. We also propose that *sí que* occupies a higher position than *sí*, but a modification of Batllori & Hernanz's analysis is in order to account for the possibility of having topics before the *sí que* sequence (as noted in the previous section), as well as to accommodate the empirical evidence to be furnished. We contend that this sequence involves more syntactic structure, namely a more complex left periphery/CP domain. We also submit that it is not just the position, but also the properties of *sí que* that call for a different analysis from the one put forward by Batllori & Hernanz. The analysis we pursue for *sí que* is furnished in (14b):

(14) (a) [_{ForceP} [_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} *sí* [_{ΣP} *sí* [_{TP} ...]]]]] [based on Hernanz 2007: 144]

(b) [_{ForceP} [_{TopicP} [_{AssertivP} *sí* [_{Assert°} *que* [_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} [_{ΣP} [_{TP} ...]]]]]]]]]

Sí que is placed in AssertiveP, a projection originally proposed by Ambar (2002). According to a suggestion in Martins (2014), this position is the locus of some metalinguistic negative particles.³ Ambar claims that this projection is located between TopicP and FocusP, which fits in with our proposal. In fact, the data to be presented further confirm this claim. Moreover, we assume that AssertiveP can be followed by CP-related material, which we show is well motivated empirically.

3.1 *Syntactic predictions*

In what follows, we provide empirical support for the claim that *sí* and *sí que* mask different syntactic structures and that *sí que* involves a more complex CP domain. The relevant empirical evidence comes from several correct predictions of the analysis outlined in (14).

3.1.1 *Topics, foci and sí/ sí que*

The first prediction made by our account is related to the possibility of introducing topics before the *sí que* sequence, as mentioned in Section 2. The structure in (14b) allows *sí que* to be preceded by a topic, contrary to what happens under Battlori & Hernanz's proposal, which assumes that *sí que* is hosted in ForceP (see (4b)) (unless we stipulate that topics can be external to ForceP). As indicated by (10), repeated here as (15), this prediction is borne out, which supports our account.⁴

(15) (a) Con ese chico sí que trabajan.

with that guy yes that work

‘They certainly work with that guy.’

- (b) En el jardín *sí* que fuman.
 in the garden yes that smoke
 ‘They certainly smoke in the garden.’

In this regard, *sí* does not differ from *sí que*, as shown in (16). This naturally follows from our proposal, since *sí* is placed in FocusP and TopicP is higher in the structure (see also (3) and (8b)).

- (16) (a) Con ese chico *sí* trabajan.
 with that guy yes work
 ‘They do work with that guy.’
 (b) En el jardín *sí* fuman.
 in the garden yes smoke
 ‘They do smoke in the garden.’

However, according to (14), *sí que* and *sí* should differ regarding the elements that can appear after them. *Sí que*, unlike *sí*, can in principle be followed by CP-related phenomena including topics and focalised constituents alongside preverbal subjects. This is actually what happens, as illustrated in (17). First, the example in (17b) shows that *sí que* can be followed by preverbal phrases like left-dislocated topics, as noted by Batllori & Hernanz (2013: 28) (see also the corpus sentence in (17c)). In contrast, *sí* displays focus-like properties (such as triggering subject-verb inversion) and therefore cannot be followed by any overt material apart from the (clitic+)verb (RAE 2009) (see

(17a)). The reader is also referred to Villa-García (2016) for a host of arguments that polarity particles like *sí* are focal.

(17) (a) *Pedro *sí* al final lo va a llamar.

Pedro yes at.the end ACC goes to call

(b) Pedro *sí* que al final lo va a llamar.

Pedro yes that at.the end ACC goes to call

‘Pedro will eventually call him.’

(c) Ahora *sí* que sus lágrimas corrían.

now yes that his/her tears ran

‘Now s/he was truly crying.’

[CREA, Jesús Fernández Santos, *Extramuros*, Barcelona, Seix Barral, 1994]

The contrast in (18a) and (18b) illustrates that a similar situation is found with respect to focalised constituents. As pointed out by Batllori & Hernanz, *sí* is incompatible with this type of constituents (see (18a)), which is due to the fact that they compete for the same structural position –FocusP. *Sí que* does not exhibit this restriction (or, at least, the outcome is less degraded; in any case, there is a clear contrast between (18a) and (18b)), as shown by (18b), for this sequence occupies a higher position, AssertiveP (see (14b)) (see Section 3.1.5 for further evidence).

(18) (a) *En agosto *sí* SOLO TRES PERSONAS viven en esa casa.

in August yes only three persons live in that house

‘In August, ONLY THREE PEOPLE do live in that house.’

- (b) ?En agosto sí que SOLO TRES PERSONAS viven en esa casa.
in August yes that only three persons live in that house
‘In August, ONLY THREE PEOPLE certainly live in that house.’

We now shift our attention to the presence/absence of reconstruction effects in the context of *sí* and *sí que*.

3.1.2 Reconstruction effects

Villa-García (2015) has argued that low *ques* in contexts such as recomplementation (i.e., multiple-complementizer configurations) constitute islands/barriers for extraction. If this property is exhibited by low *ques* more generally, our analysis makes predictions regarding the possibilities of reconstruction effects in the context of *sí que* and *sí*. Let us briefly summarize Villa-García's hypothesis. This author focuses on non-high *ques*; in particular, he deals with recomplementation *que* (see (19a)) and jussive/optative *que* (see (19b)). The former appears (optionally) before left-dislocated constituents in embedded clauses, most commonly with communication verbs in the indicative mood. The latter is found in subjunctive desiderative/exhortative clauses embedded under a verb of communication.

- (19) (a) Digo que, como está nevando, (*que*) viene ahora.
 say that since is snowing that comes-3SG-IND now
 ‘I say that s/he’s coming now, since it’s snowing.’

- (b) Digo que, como está nevando, *(*que*) venga ahora.
 say that since is snowing that come-3SG-SUBJV now
 ‘I demand that s/he come now, since it’s snowing.’

[Villa-García 2015: 6]

Villa-García claims that elements preceding low complementizers are base-generated in their surface position, since low complementizers induce an island/barrier for extraction. One of the arguments provided in favor of his proposal is that such phrases do not display reconstruction effects, unlike their counterparts without a low *que*. The data in (20) test this prediction. In (20a), where recomplementation *que* is not present, the bound-variable interpretation of *en su hijo* is possible, which shows that the Clitic-Left Dislocated (CLLDed) phrase can reconstruct to a low position from which it is c-commanded (i.e., bound) by *todo el mundo*. In (20b), the bound reading of *en su hijo* is not possible, showing that when a low *que* is present, the CLLD is base-generated in the CP position (it cannot have moved to the pre-recomplementation-*que* position due to locality of movement; thus, there is no low position to which it could reconstruct, with the result that the bound reading is unavailable when *que* is present).

- (20) (a) Dice que en su hijo_{i/j} todo el mundo_i tiene que creer.
 says that in his son all the world has that believe
 ‘S/he says that everybody should believe in his son.’

(b) Dice que en su hijo_{i/j}, que todo el mundo_i tiene que creer.

says that in his son that all the world has that believe

‘S/he says that everybody has to believe in his/their (= somebody else’s) son.’

[Villa-García 2015: 7]

Assuming Villa-Garcia’s hypothesis and extending it to low *que* complementizers in general, our analysis predicts that dislocated elements appearing before *sí* should (not) show reconstruction effects depending on whether *que* is realized below *sí* or not. If *que* is present, then we should only be able to interpret the left-dislocated element in its surface position, while both interpretations should obtain when *sí* appears without *que*. Let us begin by focusing on *sí* cases. As predicted, a sentence such as (21) can in principle be assigned two readings: in the former, which is paraphrased in (21a), the CLLD is interpreted in its derived position, TopicP, and as a result, it takes scope over the universal quantifier. In the latter, we have the inverse scope relation, for the CLLD is interpreted in the position in which is externally merged. The fact that this element displays reconstruction effects explains why it can have narrow scope with respect to the universal quantifier (see (21b)), which contrasts with the surface order in which the existential quantifier is higher than the universal one (21a)).

(21) (Dijeron que) una mujer sí ganó todas las carreras.

said that a woman yes won all the races

‘(They said that) a woman did win all the races.’

(a) ‘There is a woman that won all the races.’ $\exists > \forall$

(b) ‘For every race there is a woman that won that race.’ $\forall > \exists$

By contrast, when *que* follows *sí*, the only available reading is the one in which the dislocated element (the existential quantifier) has wide scope over the universal quantifier. The alternative scope (see (22b)) is not available, which is now explained by the inability of the dislocated phrase to reconstruct in (22).

(22) (Dijeron *que*) una mujer *sí que* ganó todas las carreras.

said that a woman yes that won all the races

‘(They said that) a woman certainly won all the races.’

(a) ‘There is a woman that won all the races.’ $\exists > \forall$

(b) *‘For every race there is a woman that won that race.’ $*\forall > \exists$

Therefore, although *sí que* and *sí* can both be preceded by a dislocated element, as shown in the previous section, this phrase does not exhibit the same behavior regarding reconstruction effects in each case. Villa-García’s proposal makes a further prediction regarding long-distance movement, a matter to which we turn in the following subsection.

3.1.3 *Movement across sí and sí que*

The proposal developed by Villa-García (2015) also allows us to make another prediction concerning the behavior of *sí* and *sí que*. The author argues that low complementizers block movement across them, as shown by the contrast in (23) (see also the examples in the previous subsection). Long-distance extraction of *qué* ‘what’ is allowed in (23a), where recomplementation *que* does not appear, but is impossible in (23b), which contains recomplementation *que*.

- (23) (a) ¿Qué dice que a Pedro le dio ~~qué~~?
 what says that to Pedro DAT gave
 ‘What does s/he say that he did give Pedro?’
- (b) *¿Qué dice que a Pedro, que le dio ~~qué~~?
 what says that to Pedro that DAT gave

Since under our analysis, *que* in the sequence *sí que* is a low complementizer, movement across this sequence should also be banned, in much the same way as CLLD cannot move to pre-*que* position (see the previous section). This is actually confirmed by (24), which shows that extraction across *sí* is out only when *que* is present. (Note that this is tested by using CLLDed phrases, which López 2009 argues are derived by movement; hanging-topic NPs have not been used, since such constituents are standardly assumed to be derived by direct merge in their surface position).

- (24) (a) ¿Qué dice que a Pedro *sí* le dio ~~qué~~?
 what says that to Pedro yes DAT gave
 ‘What does s/he say that s/he did give Pedro?’
- (b) *¿Qué dice que a Pedro *sí* que le dio ~~qué~~?
 what says that to Pedro yes that DAT gave

As the careful reader will note, the analysis defended here makes two predictions regarding wh-questions in the same clause as *sí/sí que*. On the one hand, *bona fide* questions should be incompatible with *sí*, as both items are focal. This is corroborated

by (25) (which concurs with the judgments reported in Batllori & Hernanz 2013; see also Villa-García 2016):

(25) *¿Cuándo sí viene?

when yes comes

‘When is s/he really coming?’

As for *sí que*, the prediction is that such questions should also be ungrammatical, even if *sí que* is not a focal constituent. This is shown in (26). In this case, the reason for the ungrammaticality of such sequences is that the low *que* induces a barrier/island for movement. Note, incidentally, that since AssertiveP, the locus of *sí que*, is situated between TopicP and FocusP, in (26) there is actually no focus-appropriate position above *sí que* to host a focal constituent.

(26) *¿Cuándo sí que viene?

when yes that comes

‘When is s/he really coming?’

Interestingly, if a question such as (25) carries a rhetorical or echoic interpretation, its status improves (e.g., (25) would be possible in a context in which the interlocutors are talking about a third person who never shows up at meetings; in this scenario, if somebody says that X did not come to a given meeting, one of the interlocutors could utter (25), which would reinforce the idea that X never attends meetings). This comes as no surprise, since under such readings, the relevant sentences

do not contain genuine questions and therefore the *wh*-items may not involve (focus) movement. In the same spirit, note that the grammaticality of (27a) does not constitute a problem for our proposal, despite the presence of a *wh*-phrase above *sí que*. The reason is that the *wh*-phrase featured here is D(iscourse)-linked and as a result, it may not move from its base position to FocusP (Buesa-García 2008, among others; see Rizzi 2001 on the ability of *por qué* ‘why’ to be base-generated where it surfaces). In this context, the *wh*-phrase may involve a different derivation from canonical *wh*-items (i.e., D-linked phrases may be directly merged in the CP domain and they may occupy a different slot from canonical *wh*-items).⁵ Note that if the *wh*-phrase is non-D-linked and therefore, it is uncontroversially focal, the outcome is ungrammatical, as expected. This is illustrated in (27b), where *demonios* ‘demons’ forces a radically non-D-linked reading:

- (27) (a) ¿Quién *sí* que sabe conducir?
 who yes that know to.drive
 ‘Who does certainly know how to drive?’
- (b) *¿Quién *demonios* *sí* que sabe conducir?
 who demons yes that know to.drive
 ‘Who the hell does certainly know how to drive?’

In the following subsection, we return to yet another prediction of the analysis proposed in this paper.

3.1.4 *Sí que sí constructions*

The fact that elements preceding non-high *ques* are base-generated in their surface position is in line with our analysis of the sequence *sí que*, which is directly merged in AssertiveP (see (14b)). If *sí* in *sí que* sequences never moves from ΣP to the projection hosting it (i.e., AssertiveP in (14b)), then there should be room for a lexicalized polarity element in ΣP , which could furthermore be independent from the positive polarity putatively indicated by *sí* in *sí que* sequences. This prediction is indeed borne out, as shown by the contrast in (28). (28a) is ungrammatical because *sí* is initially merged in ΣP (see (14a)) and as a result, there is no space for introducing a second polarity particle (recall that the claim is that it then moves to FocusP to satisfy the [+Emphatic] feature). In (28b,c), on the contrary, the presence of two instances of *sí* does not yield an ungrammatical outcome because the sequence *sí que* is placed in AssertiveP, whereas the second instance of *sí* is merged in ΣP and then moves to FocusP, as illustrated in (29) (note that the fact that since *sí* can occur below *sí que* in turn confirms our claim that FocusP can be projected below AssertiveP).

- (28) (a) *Ahora *sí* *sí*.
 now yes yes
 ‘Now it is truly the case.’
- (b) Ahora *sí* *que* *sí*.
 now yes that yes

[based on Batllori and Hernanz 2013]

- (c) No acostumbro a compartir estas cosas, pero hoy sí que sí
 not tend to share these things but today yes that yes
 ‘I don’t usually share these things, but today I am certainly sharing this
 [post]’

[Facebook post, Principality of Asturias, Spain, November 2016]

- (29) [ForceP [TopicP [AssertiveP sí [Assert° que [FocusP sí [ΣP ~~st~~ [TP ...]]]]]]]]

Note that although the sequence *sí que sí* is possible, the second instance of *sí* cannot be followed by *que*, as indicated by (30). This shows that *sí* in *sí que* sequences and *sí* when it occurs alone are in different positions (i.e., it is not just a matter of the complementizer being present or absent).

- (30) (a) Ahora sí que sí te ayudaré.
 now yes that yes ACC will.help
 ‘Now I will really help you.’
 (b) *Ahora sí que sí que te ayudaré.
 now yes that yes that ACC will.help

In Section 4, we resume the discussion of sentences akin to (30b), with special attention to their negative counterparts. For the time being, we turn to the consequences of assuming that *sí que* introduces more structure.

3.1.5 CPs with a deficient left periphery

As shown in the analysis in (14b), our claim is that *sí que* involves a more sophisticated

left periphery, unlike *sí*. Therefore, our analysis leads us to ask the question of whether *sí que* can occur under verbs that take a deficient (i.e., truncated) left periphery. We show that, as expected, the answer to this question turns out to be negative.

Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2009) and de Cuba & MacDonald (2013) show that the complement of certain verbs has a more limited CP layer. In this sense, de Cuba and MacDonald distinguish between two semantic types of embedded clauses: referential CPs and non-referential cPs. The definition of these CPs is the following:

- (31) (a) Referential CP: denotes an accepted (pre-established or resolved) proposition in the existing discourse/common ground (shared by the speakers), which has no illocutionary force.
- (b) Non-referential cP: denotes a speech act, which introduces a new proposition (or an open question) that is not yet accepted (or pre-established) in the existing discourse.

[based on Cuba & MacDonald 2013: 314]

De Cuba and MacDonald furnish the context in (32) in order to illustrate these two types of complements. In this situation, a teacher and a parent discuss the illegal appropriation of lunch money at school on the part of the child.

- (32) (a) Teacher: Your son stole the lunch money.
- (b) Parent: I regret that my son stole the lunch money.

The parent's response to the educator includes the factive verb *regret*, whose

complement is a referential CP referring back to a resolved proposition part of the existing discourse. Suppose, however, that the parent responds to the teacher using (33), instead of (32b).

(33) Parent: #I think that my son stole the lunch money.

This response is infelicitous, since non-factive *think* embeds a non-referential cP; therefore, it cannot refer back to the teacher's proposition. The oddity of (33) in this specific discourse context stems from the fact that the parent is introducing a proposition as unresolved when in fact it is already established as part of the common ground shared by the parent and the teacher.

As noted by de Cuba & MacDonald (2013: 130–131), the inverse patterns of felicity are found in out-of-the-blue contexts. Consequently, in a context where the teacher does not know anything about the theft, it is awkward for the parent to walk up to the teacher and utter (34).

(34) Parent to teacher: #I regret that my son stole the lunch money.

Given that the proposition *my son stole the lunch money* is not part of the common ground shared by parent and teacher, no reference can be made to a resolved proposition. This contrasts with the complement of *regret*, which is referential. However, in an out-of-the-blue context, (35) would be appropriate.

(35) Parent to teacher: I think that my son stole the lunch money.

Since the (non-referential) complement of *think* is not referring back to any pre-established proposition (in fact the parent is introducing this proposition in the common ground for the first time), no infelicity problem arises.

Crucially, de Cuba & MacDonald (2013) argue that the referential status of sentential complements correlates with a structural difference: referential CPs have less structure than non-referential cPs. As shown in (36), they propose that non-referential cPs have a rich left-periphery structure whereas referential CPs lack ForceP and TopicP:

(36) (a) Non-referential cPs

[ForceP [TopicP [FocusP [FinitenessP]]]]

(b) Referential CPs

[FocusP [FinitenessP]]

[based on Villa-García 2015: 39-40]

The authors argue that their system accounts for a number of syntactic differences between referential and non-referential clausal complements; for example, they point out that their proposal naturally explains why factive verbs cannot take recomplementation structures (see (37)) (Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2009, Villa-García 2015). The embedded clause of *lamentar* ‘to regret’ lacks TopicP and this is precisely the projection in which recomplementation *que* is placed.⁶

- (37) Lamento que en esa tienda (*que) no compren discos.
 regret that in that shop that not buy-3PL-SBJV records
 ‘I regret that they don’t buy records in that shop.’

Assuming Cuba & MacDonald’s account and our analysis of *sí que* (see (14b)), it is expected that this sequence should be impossible under verbs that take a referential CP. If the sequence *sí que* is located in a projection above FocusP, (36b) predicts that it should not appear in clauses that lack projections above FocusP, as is the case with embedded clauses of factive verbs (i.e., with referential CPs). The particle *sí*, for its part, should not show such a restriction, since there is no point in the derivation in which it occupies a higher position than FocusP (see (14a)). This prediction is borne out, as shown by the contrast in (38).

- (38) (a) Lamentó que sí estuviera enfermo.
 regretted that yes be-3SG-SBJV sick
 ‘He regretted that he WAS sick.’
 (b) *Lamento que sí que estuviera enfermo.
 regretted that yes that be-3SG-SBJV sick

Now, consider the examples in (39). These sentences show that the contrast above does not arise if the main verb selects a non-referential *cP* and consequently, the embedded clause displays a rich left-peripheral structure.

(39) (a) Creo que sí está enfermo.

think that yes is sick

‘I think that he IS sick.’

(b) Creo que sí que está enfermo.

think that yes that is sick

‘I think that he is certainly sick.’

The different distributional possibilities exhibited by *sí* and *sí que* in embedded contexts depending on the selecting predicate demonstrate that *sí que* involves a more elaborated left-peripheral structure, which lends further support to the account pursued here. (We return to further restrictions in subordinate clauses in Section 4).

3.1.6 Interim (schematic) summary

The following table summarizes our findings so far:

Table 1. Syntactic (a)symmetries between *sí* and *sí que*

	<i>Sí</i>	<i>Sí que</i>
focus-like properties (e.g., obligatory S-V inversion)	✓	✗
(related to previous) can be followed by left-peripheral material and preverbal subjects	✗	✓
can be preceded by topics	✓	✓
island-creating properties (i.e., lack of reconstruction effects of the preceding topic and impossibility of long-distance extraction)	✗	✓
possibility of a co-occurring polarity marker in a lower projection	✗	✓
can occur in deficient CPs (e.g., those selected by factives)	✓	✗

Having explored a number of existing and novel empirical arguments militating in favor of a different characterization of *sí* and *sí que* sequences in Spanish (see Table 1), in the following section we entertain the view that *sí que* displays peculiar semantic properties, leading to the conclusion that it is a truth predicate hosted in AssertiveP in the CP domain.⁷

4. *SÍ QUE* AS A PREDICATE OF TRUTH

This section is devoted to analyzing an important semantic difference between *sí* and *sí que*. We will endorse Hernanz's (2007) intuition about the meaning contribution of *sí que* and offer new evidence in its favor. According to Hernanz, *sí que* is not semantically equivalent to *sí*, which is consonant with the syntactic analysis put forward here. In her own words, *sí que*, on a par with *bien que* ['well that'] rather than merely stressing that the event denoted in the proposition did take place, serves to emphasize the truth value of the proposition (Hernanz 2007: 160). Under our account, *sí que* heralds AssertiveP, which captures the semantic nature of this sequence.⁸

As noted by Hernanz, the compatibility between the sequence *sí que* and the negative polarity marker *no*, which is illustrated in (40), is immediately accounted for by her suggestion. The negative polarity particle contributes to the propositional meaning of the sentence, since it denotes that the event did not take place; in other words, it is responsible for the sentence being negative. The sequence *sí que* therefore does not determine the polarity value of the construction –it is not a polarity marker– but modifies the whole proposition emphasizing its true value, that is, that the event of calling Mary did not take place. (Recall from Section 3.1.4 that *sí* can also appear

instead of *no* in a sentence like (40), in which case it marks emphatic affirmative polarity, as has been seen).

(40) A María *sí* que no la llamaron.

to María yes that not ACC called

‘They certainly did not call María.’

The fact that the polarity value of (40) is established by the negative marker, and not by *sí que*, is demonstrated by (41). We can refer to the sentence in (41) with *tampoco* ‘(n)either,’ which is related to a previous sentence that must be negative (see (42a)), but not with *también* ‘too’, which is necessarily linked to a previous positive sentence (see (42b)) (Brucart 1999). This confirms that the polarity of (40) is in fact negative, in spite of the appearance of *sí que* in the sentence.

(41) A María *sí* que no la llamaron, y a Pedro {*tampoco*/ **también*}.

to María yes that not ACC called and to Pedro neither too

‘They certainly did not call María, and they didn’t call Pedro either.’

(42) (a) (*No) llamaron a María y a Pedro *también*.

not called to María and to Pedro too

(b) *(No) llamaron a María y a Pedro *tampoco*.

not called to María and to Pedro neither

The situation in (43) mirrors that in (41), the only difference being that the polarity value of the sentence is established by the particle *sí* or by the null polarity operator involved in neutral positive polarity sentences in Spanish.⁹ Not surprisingly, such patterns require *también* rather than *tampoco*. *Sí que*, much like in (41), modifies the whole proposition.

- (43) A María *sí* *que* {*sí*/ \emptyset } la llamaron (y a Pedro *también*/**tampoco*).
 to María yes that yes ACC called and to Pedro too / neither
 ‘They certainly {did call/ called} María (and Pedro too).’

As explained in Section 3.1.5, our syntactic analysis accounts for the compatibility between *sí que* and polarity markers. The former is placed in AssertiveP whereas the latter is merged in Σ P and, if the marker in question happens to be emphatic, as in the case of *sí*, it moves to FocusP (see (44)).¹⁰

- (44) [_{ForceP} [_{TopicP} [_{AssertiveP} *sí* [_{Assert°} *que* [_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} *sí* [_{Σ P} ~~*sí*~~/ *no*/ \emptyset [_{TP} ...]]]]]]]]]

From this, it follows that *sí que* and *sí* are not equivalent, despite the fact that they are interchangeable in a context like (45), where B’s response can –but need not– include the complementizer. When the complementizer is not present, *sí* functions as the polarity operator of the sentence, that is, it determines its emphatic affirmative value. The emphatic flavor is due to the fact that *sí* refutes a previous negation; it changes the polarity value of the sentence (Hernanz 2007; González Rodríguez 2009, 2016). When *sí* is followed by *que*, this sequence co-occurs with the null polarity

operator (\emptyset), which is responsible for the positive value of the sentence (see fn. 9). As mentioned above, *sí que* emphasizes the truth value of the proposition, which explains why *sí que*, like *sí*, involves an emphatic flavor.

(45) A: No llamó a María.

no called to María

‘S/he did not call to María.’

B: Sí llamó a María / Sí que \emptyset llamó a María.

yes called to María yes that called to María

‘S/he did call María.’ / ‘He certainly called María.’

The fact that *sí que* and *sí* also mask semantic differences is corroborated by the existence of contexts where *sí que* cannot be replaced by *sí* (Hernanz 2007). Consider, for example, the context in (46), which involves sentences that bear positive polarity values. In this case, B can employ *sí que* –but not *sí*– in order to emphasize the true value of the construction uttered by A. *Sí* does not change the polarity value of the sentence in A (in opposition to what happens in (45)), so it is infelicitous in this context. Since both sentences are positive, it is only the truth value of A that is reinforced in B; accordingly, the sequence *sí que* is the only felicitous option.

(46) A: Está lloviendo mucho.

is raining heavily

‘It is raining heavily.’

B: #Sí está lloviendo mucho / Sí que está lloviendo mucho.

yes is raining heavily yes that is raining heavily

‘It IS RAINING heavily.’ / ‘It is certainly raining heavily.’

[Data from a WhatsApp conversation, Principality of Asturias, Spain, November 2016]

Thus, we contend that the sequence *sí que* is a predicate of truth, in much the same way as modal adverbs such as *desde luego* ‘of course,’ *ciertamente* ‘certainly,’ and *obviamente* ‘obviously’ (see (47a)) and the *la verdad* ‘the truth’ construction (see (47b)) (Torrego & Uriagereka 1992; Etxepare 1997; Hinzen 2003). As can be seen in the examples, these elements, like *sí que* (see Section 3.1.4 and the preceding data), can co-occur with polarity particles.¹¹

- (47) (a) Desde luego, {sí/ no / Ø} llamaron a María
of course yes not called to María
‘Of course, they {did certainly call/ didn’t call/ called} María.’
- (b) La verdad es que {sí/ no/ Ø} llamaron a María.
the truth is that yes not called to María
‘The truth is that they {did certainly call/ didn’t call/ called} María.’

Hernanz (2007) establishes an association between the sequence *sí que* and these elements, although she does not draw a comparison between them, a task that we undertake below. By comparing *sí que* with unambiguous predicates of truth, we will show that *sí que* exhibits the same behavior as modal adverbs and *la verdad*.

Consequently, our discussion will provide new empirical support for Hernanz's contention.

Before we proceed, however, a caveat is in order. The sentence in (47b) is ambiguous because the *la verdad* construction can receive two readings (Etxepare 1997: 53). Under one interpretation, the sentence denotes that there is a single truth: that they called Mary. This interpretation must be excluded throughout this paper, since we are interested in the alternative reading, which Etxepare calls *attitudinal*. Under this second interpretative possibility, the speaker expresses an attitude toward their calling Mary. Note that this reading is the only interpretation available if *la verdad* appears in parenthetical position, as in (48).

- (48) {Sí/ no/ Ø} llamaron a María, la verdad.
 yes not called to María, the truth
 ‘In fairness, they {did call/didn’t call/called} María.’

We now turn to the behavior of predicates of truth in order to show that the sequence *sí que* patterns with such modifiers. In order to make this comparison, we will take as our basis Etxepare's characterization of modal adverbs along with the *la verdad* construction as predicates of truth.¹²

4.1 Yes/no questions

The first phenomenon that argues in favor of treating *sí que* as a predicate of truth is its behavior in *yes/no* questions. Etxepare (1997) notes that predicates of truth cannot appear in said questions. Given that *yes/no* questions ask about the truth of the proposition, it is not possible to introduce a predicate that evaluates it. As a result,

modal adverbs and the *la verdad* construction, which according to Etxepare are predicates of truth, are disallowed in *yes/no* questions. This is illustrated in (49) (note that (49b) is grammatical but not under the relevant reading, namely the attitudinal one).

- (49) (a) *¿Leíste, desde luego, esa novela?
 read of course that novel
 ‘Of course, did you read that novel?’
- (b) #¿Es la verdad que leíste esa novela? [#attitudinal reading]
 is the truth that read that novel
 ‘Is the truth that you read that novel?’

If we apply this test to the sequence *sí que*, the outcome is also ungrammatical (see (50)), which is indicative that *sí que* is a truth predicate (note that this is not the case with *sí*, which is possible in a genuine *yes/no* question).¹³

- (50) ??¿Sí que leíste esa novela?
 yes that read that novel
 ‘Did you certainly read that novel?’

We now shift our attention to conditional sentences.

4.2 *Embedded clauses*

In section 3.1.5, we showed how our syntactic analysis accounts for the incompatibility between *sí que* and factive complements, as illustrated in (38b), repeated here again in (51). We have advanced an explanation based on the fact that these complements lack

projections that are higher than FocusP; since *sí que* is placed above FocusP, it cannot appear in factive complements.

(51) *Lamento que sí que estuviera enfermo.

regretted that yes that be-3SG-SBJV sick

‘I regretted that he was certainly sick.’

There are other embedded clauses in which *sí que* yields an ungrammatical sentence as well, namely in clausal complements of volitional verbs (see (52a)) and verbs of command (see (52b)). However, the reason for the ungrammaticality of (51) cannot be applied to (52). This is because volitional verbs and verbs of command, unlike factive verbs, do not take a referential CP. Recall that referential CPs “denote an accepted (pre-established or resolved) proposition in the existing discourse/common ground (shared by the speakers)” (de Cuba & MacDonald 2013: 314). This characterizes the clausal complements of factive verbs, but not the ones in (52). As a result, the embedded cPs of these sentences are non-referential and therefore should have a rich left periphery.

(52) (a) *Quiere que sí que pases de curso.

wants that yes that pass-2SG-SBJV of course

‘S/he wants you to certainly pass the course.’

(b) *Ordenó que sí que pases de curso.

ordered that yes that pass-2SG-SBJV of course

‘S/he ordered that you certainly pass the course.’

The question of immediate relevance to our current purposes is what makes the utterances in (52) ungrammatical. This incompatibility is actually not surprising if we assume that *sí que* is a predicate of truth. As noted by Etxepare (1997), these predicates display the same restriction, as shown in (53) and (54), which feature a modal adverb and the *la verdad* construction, respectively.

(53) (a) *Quiere que ciertamente, pases de curso.

wants that certainly pass-2SG-SBJV of course

‘S/he wants you to certainly pass the course.’

(b) *Ordenó que ciertamente, pases de curso.

ordered that certainly pass-2SG-SBJV of course

‘S/he ordered that you certainly pass the course.’

(54) (a) *Quiere que la verdad sea que pases de curso.

wants that the truth be-3SG-SBJV that pass-2SG-SBJV of course

‘S/he wants for the truth to be that you pass the course.’

(b) *Ordenó que la verdad sea que pases de curso

ordered that the truth be-3SG-SBJV that pass-2SG-SBJV of course

‘S/he ordered that the truth be that you pass the course.’

In glaring contrast, in other embedded contexts such as those selected by verbs of saying and epistemic verbs, it is legitimate to have the sequence *sí que*, modal adverbs, and the *la verdad* construction (see (55)).

(55) (a) {Dice/ cree} que sí que pasarás.

says thinks that yes that will.pass

‘S/he says/believes that you will pass.’

(b) {Dice/ cree} que ciertamente, pasarás.

says thinks that certainly will.pass

‘S/he says/believes that you will certainly pass.’

(c) {Dice/ cree} que la verdad es que pasarás.

says thinks that the true is that will.pass

‘S/he says/believes that the truth is that you will pass.’

The contrast between (52)-(54), on the one hand, and (55), on the other hand, shows that the problem is not that predicates of truth cannot appear in embedded clauses in general. The question that immediately arises, therefore, is why predicates of truth are disallowed in dependents of volitional verbs and verbs of command (see (52)).¹⁴ Although we will not explore this issue here, leaving it open for future research, we take the fact that *sí que* patterns with modal adverbs and *la verdad* construction as evidence in favor of our claim that this sequence constitutes a predicate of truth.

4.3 *Negative counterparts*

An additional property of modal adverbs and the *la verdad* construction is that they do not have a negative counterpart, as indicated by the contrast in (56) and (57), respectively (Etxepare 1997).

(56) (a) Ciertamente, veré la película.

certainly will.see the movie

‘Certainly, I will see the movie.’

(b) *Inciertamente, veré la película.

uncertainly will.see the movie

‘Uncertainly, I will see the movie.’

(57) (a) La verdad es que veré la película.

✓attitudinal reading

the truth is that will.see the movie

‘The truth is that I will see the movie.’

(b) #La verdad no es que veré la película.

#attitudinal reading

the truth not is that will.see the movie

‘The truth is not that I will see the movie.’

The same happens with *sí que*, where the negative particle *no* cannot precede the complementizer (see (58b)).¹⁵

(58) (a) Sí que veré la película

yes that will.see the movie

‘I will certainly see the movie.’

(b) *No que veré la película.

not that will.see the movie

‘I will uncertainly see the movie.’

We now shift our attention to the *es que* ‘is that’ construction.

4.4 *The es que construction*

Etxepare (1997) argues that the *es que* ‘is that’ construction, like *la verdad*, has an attitudinal reading in examples like (59):

- (59) (a) Es que le duele la cabeza.
 is that DAT hurts the head
 ‘I tell you, he has a headache.’
- (b) Es que no le gusta esa película.
 is that not DAT like that movie
 ‘I tell you, he doesn’t like that movie.’

As noted by Etxepare, the *es que* construction behaves like *la verdad* in several respects. First, *es que* is compatible with complements embedded under verbs of belief and verbs of communication (see (60)), but it cannot appear in dependents of volitional verbs and verbs of command (see (61)):

- (60) (a) Dice que es que limpió la casa.
 says that is that cleaned the house
 ‘S/he says, I tell you, that s/he cleaned the house.’
- (b) Creo que es que limpió la casa.
 think that is that cleaned the house
 ‘I believe, I tell you, that s/he cleaned the house.’

- (61) (a) *Quiero que es que {limpia/ limpie} la casa.
 want that is that cleans-3SG-IND clean-3SG-SBJV the house
 ‘I want him/her to clean the house.’
- (b) *Ordenó que es que {limpia/ limpie} la casa.
 ordered that is that cleans-3SG-IND clean-3SG-SBJV the house
 ‘S/he ordered that s/he clean the house.’

Second, the *es que* construction does not have the attitudinal reading when negated, as shown in (62):

- (62) #No es que esté trabajando. #attitudinal reading
 not is that be-3SG-SBJV working
 ‘It is not the case that s/he is working.’

However, Etxepare notes that the *la verdad* and the *es que* constructions also differ in an important sense: the requirements they impose on their clausal complement. *La verdad* takes complements that can be evaluated in terms of truth or falsity; *es que*, in contrast, does not impose this prerequisite and instead selects speech acts. This asymmetry is shown by (63) and (64), where the embedded clause cannot be evaluated in terms of truth or falsity, namely a question (see (63a) and (64a)) and a command (see (63b) and (64b)).

(63) (a) *La verdad es que quién te pidió eso?

the truth is that who DAT asked that

‘The truth is, who asked you for that?’

(b) *La verdad es que ven antes, hombre!

the truth is that come earlier man

‘The truth is, come earlier, man!’

(64) (a) Es que quién te pidió eso?

is that who DAT asked that

‘I ask you, who asked you for that?’

(b) Es que ven antes, hombre!

is that come earlier man

‘I tell you, come earlier, please!’

[Etxepare 1997: 104-105]

According to Etxepare, the selectional restrictions of *la verdad* determine that if this construction and *es que* co-occur in a sentence, the latter must precede the former:

(65) (a) Es que la verdad es que me duele la cabeza.

is that the truth is that DAT hurts the head

‘I tell you, the truth is that I have a headache.’

(b) *La verdad es que es que me duele la cabeza

the truth is that is that DAT hurts the head

Although Etxepare does not observe the behavior of modal adverbs in this regard, they pattern with the *la verdad* construction. The same situation is also found with *sí que*, which is again symptomatic that this sequence is a predicate of truth.

(66) (a) Es que sí que me duele la cabeza.

is that yes that _{DAT} hurts the head

‘I tell you, I truly have a headache.’

(b) *Sí que es que me duele la cabeza.

yes that is that _{DAT} hurts the head

The preceding discussion provides corroborating evidence that *sí que* is a truth predicate. This further substantiates the analysis in (14b), which places *sí que* in AssertiveP. Put differently, the semantic properties displayed by *sí que* are naturally captured by the syntactic structure proposed here. In the remainder of the paper, we investigate the role of the complementizer *que* alone in *sí que* sequences.

5. THE COMPLEMENTIZER *QUE* IN *SÍ QUE* SEQUENCES

The literature has related the sequence *sí que* to echoic constructions. This connection tends to be based on two facts. On the one hand, the sequence *sí que* is not readily uttered in out-of-the-blue contexts (Etxepare 1997, 2010; Hernanz 2007), that is, (67) cannot be used in a context where nobody has spoken about Mary helping a particular person or where this information is not presupposed.

(67) *María sí que te ayudó.*

María yes that ACC helped

‘*María did certainly help you.*’

On the other hand, Etxepare (2010) and Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2014) note that, Spanish, like other languages, displays root complementizers that encode an echoic meaning (see (68)).¹⁶

(68) (a) *Que no tiene hambre.*

that not has hunger

‘*Somebody says/said/I said that s/he is not hungry.*’

(b) *Que qué guapo es.*

that how handsome is

‘*Somebody exclaims/exclaimed/I exclaim(ed) that he is so good-looking.*’

(c) *Que si me ayudas.*

that if ACC help

‘*I ask(ed) you whether you could help me.*’

In what follows, we explore the nature of *que* in the sequence *sí que*; in particular, we entertain the idea that this complementizer is the same that appears in echoic structures such as the ones illustrated in (68). In fact, Etxepare and Demonte and Fernández Soriano include among their examples the structure *sí que*. This is not surprising, since *que* in *sí que* shares (at least some of) the properties of echoic *que*. Both *que* in *sí que* and echoic *que* cannot appear in out-of-the-blue contexts, as noted

before. Another characteristic of echoic *que* is that it can have the speaker or the hearer as the source of the statement (see (69)). As illustrated by some of the examples offered in Demonte and Fernández-Soriano, this property also applies to *que* in *sí que* (see (70)).

(69) (a) Moment A:

- Viene el autobús.

comes the bus

‘The bus is coming.’

Moment B:

- Que viene el autobús (¿no me oyes?)

that comes the bus not ACC you-hear

‘I said that the bus is coming (can’t you hear me?)’

(b) Speaker A:

He votado al PP. / María es estupenda.

I-have voted to.the PP María is great

‘I voted for the Popular Party.’ ‘María is great.’

Speaker B (scornfully / angrily):

¡¡Que has votado al PP!! / ¿Que María es estupenda?

that you.have voted to.the PP that María is great

‘¡How come you voted for the Popular Party (PP).’/ ‘María great?’

[Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2014: 239]

(70) Speaker A:

- No te irás nunca

not you.will.leave never

‘You’ll never leave.’

Speaker B:

- Sí/ naturalmente que me iré.

yes naturally that I.will.leave

‘Of course/Naturally I will leave.’

[Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2014: 239]

Moreover, echoic *que* can be preceded by adverbs such as *francamente* ‘frankly’ (see (71)) (Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2014). The complementizer that follows *sí* in *sí que* configurations patterns again with echoic *que*, as illustrated in (72).

(71) {Francamente/ honestamente}, que no tengo hambre.

frankly honestly that not have hunger

‘Frankly, I told you/am telling you that I am not hungry.’

(72) Francamente, sí que tengo hambre.

frankly yes that have hunger

‘Frankly, it is the case that I am hungry.’

Despite the similarities just described, *que* in *sí que* sequences differs from echoic *que* with respect to the ability of echoic *que* to precede fragments, foreign words, and

onomatopoeias. As shown by the contrast between (73) and (74), echoic *que* can precede this type of sequences, whereas *que* in *sí que* cannot.

(73) Que mañana / que post-/ que oui / que ja

that tomorrow that *post-* that oui that ha

[Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2014: 245]

(74) *Sí que {mañana/ post-/ ja}

yes that tomorrow post- ha

However, we would like to point out that this asymmetry is due to the semantic requirements of *sí que* and as a result, it does not pose a threat to a unified analysis of *que* in echoic constructions and in *sí que* environments. Given that *sí que* modifies the truth value of the proposition, as argued in Section 4, it must precede a sequence susceptible of being evaluated in terms of truth or falsity. And this requirement is not satisfied in (74), which is a fragment, rather than a proposition.

If the *que* that follows *sí* is the same that appears in echoic constructions, they should be in the same syntactic position. Demonte & Fernández-Soriano content that echoic *que* is in ForceP (recall that the same idea appears in Hernanz 2007 and Batllori & Hernanz 2013, with specific reference to *sí que*):

(75) [_{ForceP} que [_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} [...]]]]

Nevertheless, this proposal does not fit in with the structure proposed and argued for in this paper (see (14b), repeated here in (76)), wherein *sí que* is lower than ForceP (in fact, as has been argued, *sí que* displays properties associated with AssertiveP, not ForceP).

(76) [ForceP [TopicP [AssertiveP *sí* [Assert° *que* [TopicP [FocusP [ΣP [TP ...]]]]]]]] (= (14b))

We take the data in (77) and (71), repeated here in (78), to lend further credence to our syntactic analysis (see (14b)/(76)) and to argue against the proposal in (75). The contrast in (77) shows that *francamente* ‘frankly’ cannot precede a complementizer placed in ForceP. The possibility of introducing this adverb before echoic *que* (see (78)), however, provides evidence against the structure in (75) while arguing in favor of that in (76).

(77) (a) Juan dice que francamente, no tiene hambre.

Juan says that frankly not has hunger

‘Juan says that, frankly, he is not hungry.’

(b) #Juan dice francamente que no tiene hambre.¹⁷

Juan says frankly that not has hunger

(78) {Francamente/ honestamente}, que no tengo hambre.

frankly honestly that not have hunger

‘Frankly, I told you/am telling you that I am not hungry.’

Yet another argument against placing echoic *que* in ForceP comes from the possibility of having a topic before this *que*, which is illustrated in (79).

(79) (a) Este, que si está cansado, que si no quiere comer.

this that if is tired that if not want to.eat

‘This one, always saying he’s tired, he doesn’t want to eat...’

(b) A mi madre, mañana, que hoy no hemos tenido clase.

to my mother tomorrow that today not have had class

‘We will tell my mother tomorrow that we didn’t have class today.’

In light of the above, it seems plausible to propose that the *que* that follows *sí* is echoic *que* (which has been suggested by Hernanz 2007 and Batllori & Hernanz 2013) and that this kind of *que* is placed in AssertiveP, not in ForceP, contra previous proposals. A question which arises is whether *que* in *sí que* patterns can both be a predicate of truth and instantiate echoic *que* at the same time. In principle, this does not seem problematic, since it has been shown that in Spanish, the same *que* complementizer can realize multiple functions simultaneously (see Villa-García 2015: 91-92 for evidence and discussion).

6. CONCLUSION

This paper took as its point of departure sentences involving the positive polarity marker *sí* and their counterparts with an instance of *que* (the *sí que* sequence). Despite the fact that they are superficially similar in contexts such as (1), we have shown that the two constructions display radically different syntactic and semantic behavior.

Building upon the initial evidence provided in Hernanz (2007) and Batllori & Hernanz (2008, 2013) and upon novel data brought to light in this paper, we have provided a number of empirical arguments (summarized in Table 1 in Section 3.1.6) that *sí* and *sí que* should be treated differently in the syntax. We thus proposed the following left-peripheral structures for each element:

- (80) (a) [ForceP [TopicP [FocusP *sí* [Σ P ~~*sí*~~ [TP ...]]]]] [Hernanz 2007: 144]
 (b) [ForceP [TopicP [AssertiveP *sí* [Assert° *que* [TopicP [FocusP [Σ P [TP ...]]]]]]]]]

We have shown that (80) makes various correct predictions regarding the syntax of *sí* and *sí que* in Spanish, and the analysis in (80b) actually opened the way to investigating the semantic behavior of the *sí que* construction. Drawing on Hernanz's (2007) intuition that *sí que* highlights the truth value of the proposition it selects, we made a systematic comparison with unambiguous predicates of truth, such as the *la verdad* construction, investigated by Etxepare (2007). Our conclusion is that the behavior of *sí que* mirrors that of predicates of truth, which provides empirical support for Hernanz's suggestion and leads to the conclusion that *sí que* is a predicate of truth. This is in keeping with the analysis in (80b), which actually places *sí que* in AssertiveP, and argues against proposals that locate *sí que* in the highest left-peripheral projection, namely ForceP. We have thus furnished converging syntactic and semantic arguments for the account in (80a) for *sí* and for that in (80b) for *sí que*.

We then went on to explore the nature of the complementizer *que* in *sí que* cases and drew a comparison between *que* in *sí que* contexts and echoic *que* (Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2014). The parallelism between the two *ques* suggests that they

should be treated as one and the same element. Put differently, *que* in *sí que* sequences is also an instance of echoic *que*. Therefore, this *que* can perform different functions concurrently, since it is part of the predicate-of-truth configuration and functions an echoic marker at the same time. In characterizing the differences between *sí* and *sí que*, this paper has contributed to the mapping of the much-debated Spanish/Romance left periphery.

One natural extension of the findings of this paper would be to test the behavior of the equivalent of *sí* and *sí que* in those varieties where the two exist (especially in Romance), a task that will determine if the conclusions of this paper hold beyond Spanish and will surely shed new light on the intriguing contrasts between the polarity marker *sí* and the sequence *sí que*.

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FOOTNOTES

¹ See Rodríguez Molina (2014) and Batllori (2016) for a diachronic study of polarity particles in Spanish. Specifically, Rodríguez Molina (2014) argues that the *sí que* construction arose in the syntax of Spanish after its *que*-less counterpart. According to this author, *sí que* is not attested in Spanish until the 15th century. Martins (2013) studies emphatic polarity in Portuguese.

² Batllori & Hernanz argue that it has been noted in the literature that clauses embedded under assertive and semifactive verbs have a more complex structure than clauses embedded under factive verbs. However, as we will discuss in Section 3.1.5., this difference is not related to a recursive ForceP but to the presence of projections placed above FocusP.

³ It must be highlighted that our main concern is not the label of the projection where *sí que* is placed but the necessity of postulating this projection. In Section 4, we actually argue that AssertiveP is indeed in agreement with the semantic behaviour of *sí que*.

⁴ Hanging topics (HTs/HTLDs) can also be featured above *sí que*, as shown in (i), which contains an epithet that constitutes the real accusative object of the verb *invitar* ‘to invite,’ a hallmark of HTLD. Poletto (2016) observes a contrast with the Italian counterpart *si che*, which cannot be preceded by instances of HTs.

(i) Tu prima, *sí que* no la pienso invitar a la muy mezquina
 your cousin yes that not ACC think invite to the very petty
 ‘As for your cousin, there is no way I will invite her (since she is so petty).’

⁵ D-linked wh-phrases may constitute a sort of topical constituent. This is not arbitrary, since in D-linked contexts, the answer is old information in the sense that it must be picked from an existing set.

⁶ Recomplementation-less topics are possible, but here the position of topics may be TP-related (see Villa-García 2015 for much relevant discussion).

⁷ Aritz Irurtzun (p.c.) points out that a further argument in favor of treating *sí* and *sí que* as different constructions comes from the behavior of *ya* (lit. ‘already’) in present-day Basque Spanish. This particle has acquired the ability to signal verum focus (i.e., emphasizing the polarity of the sentence), as shown in (i) (see Camus Bergareche 2012 for the behavior of *ya* in Basque Spanish and Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal 2009 for an analysis of verum focus in Spanish). However, for Basque-Spanish speakers, *ya* cannot be followed by *que* under this interpretation.

- (i) En casa *ya* fuman
 in house smoke

‘They smoke *a lot* at home.’

Daniel Vergara (p.c.) further points out that Spanish Basque *ya* can actually occur under *sí que*, as in (ii).

- (ii) En Bilbao *sí* *que* *ya* llueve
 in Bilbao yes that rains

‘In Bilbao, it certainly rains *a lot*.’

⁸ Accordingly, the sequence *sí que* cannot be separated by intervening material. In other words, *sí que* functions as a unit, which Poletto (2016) claims also happens in the Italian construction *sì che*.

⁹ For the sake of clarity, the different polarity possibilities are summarized in (i) (González Rodríguez 2009, Batllori & Hernanz 2013, Villa-García 2016).

-
- (i) (a) Pedro no baila [Negative polarity]
 Pedro not dances
 ‘Pedro does not dance.’
- (b) Pedro baila [Positive polarity]
 Pedro dances
 ‘Pedro dances.’
- (c) Pedro sí baila [Emphatic positive polarity]
 Pedro yes dances
 ‘Pedro does dance.’

In principle, *no* differs from *sí* in not being emphatic. The question is whether it can be focal. Villa-García (2016) investigates this issue with particular attention to TP-ellipsis cases with a polarity particle, and concludes that in some contexts, *no* can also be emphatic. Likewise, as noted by an anonymous conference abstract reviewer, *Peter NO baila*, with focus stress on *NO* is possible (for such cases, it would be reasonable to propose an analysis of focal negation akin to that proposed for *sí* in (14a)).

¹⁰ See González Rodríguez (2008, 2016) and Martins (2014) for an analysis of metalinguistic negation along the same lines as emphatic positive polarity.

¹¹ It is of note that *sí que* can appear in a sentence featuring the *la verdad* construction or a modal adverb (see (i)). Since modal adverbs and *la verdad* can also co-occur (see (ii)), the grammaticality of (i) does not constitute evidence against treating *sí que* as a predicate of truth. It would in principle be possible to assume that predicates of truth are not a uniform class and that they may differ in some regards. We leave this issue for future research.

-
- (i) La verdad es que sí que llamó a María / Posiblemente, sí que llamó a
 the truth is that yes that called to María possibly yes that called to
 María.

María

‘The truth is that s/he did call María.’ / ‘Possibly, s/he did call María.’

- (ii) La verdad es que posiblemente llamó a María
 the truth is that possibly called to María

‘The truth is that s/he possibly called María.’

¹² Etxepare distinguishes between modal adverbs and *desde luego* ‘of course,’ his distinction being based on the contrast between (i) and (ii). However, if we introduce a complementizer between the adverb and the polarity particle in (ii), the sentence is grammatical:

- (i) Posiblemente {sí/ no}

possibly yes not

- (ii) *Desde luego {sí/ no}

of course yes not

¹³ Olga Fernández-Soriano (p.c.) notes that the sentence in (50) improves if *esa novela* precedes *sí que* (that is, if the sequence is preceded by a topic). Antonio Fábregas (p.c.) however points out that such cases are confirmatory rather than genuine *yes/no* questions.

¹⁴ Interestingly, volitional verbs do not allow recomplementation *que* (Villa-García 2015), which could be taken to mean that such complements also have an impoverished left periphery.

¹⁵ Catalan does allow the sequence *no que*, as pointed out by Rigau (2012). Simone De Cia (p.c.) and Poletto (2016) note that *non che* is also licit in Italian, provided that negation appears below *non che*.

¹⁶ Etxepare treats these structures as quotative constructions, while Demonte and Fernández-Soriano distinguish between reportative *que* and echoic *que*.

¹⁷ This sentence is grammatical if *francamente* modifies the main verb, but this reading is not relevant to the discussion at hand.