D+CP

Overt Determiners on CP

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1 Recall

(1) [El que creas que hay fantasmas] carece de lógica. (Spanish)
    `That you believe that there are ghosts is illogical.' (Picallo 2002 (6a))

(2) [to oti lei psemata] ine fanero (Greek)
    `That she tells lies is obvious' (Roussou 1991 (45b))

(3) man [ in-o ke Ramin miād emshab ] shenid-am. (Persian)
    `I heard that Ramin is coming tonight.' (Farudi 2007)

also Hebrew, Russian, Danish...

D+CP constructions do not need to be factive:

(4) [To oti ine plusios] ine psema.
    `That he is rich is a lie'. (P. Pappas, p.c.)

(5) #The fact that he is rich is a lie.

(6) man [ in-o ke Ramin miād emshab ] na-shenid-am. (Persian)
    `I didn’t hear that Ramin is coming tonight.
    He may or may not come.’ (A. Farudi, p.c.)
D is highly restricted:

(7)  *ena oti efighe...
    a. that left-3sg
    ‘A that he left...’

(8)  *[Un(a) que creas que hay fantasmas en la azotea] carece de lógica.
    A C believe.2sg that there-is ghosts in the attic lacks of logic
    ‘That you believe that there are ghosts in the attic is illogical.’

(9)  Persian only allows in ‘this’ or un ‘that’ (Farudi 2007)

Is this due to something more general about D+NP+CP?

(10)  a. the fact/idea/rumour/notion that he was a candidate
      b. #a fact/idea/rumour/notion that he was a candidate

There is a general difficulty of talking about distinct rumours/beliefs/etc. with the same content. This seems to something we can overcome, at least with an overt N:

(11)  a. Various rumours (are circulating) that Sam is going to retire.
      b. I heard about a belief (going around) that Sam is going to stay on.

Whatever is going on here, it’s nowhere near as categorical as the restriction against definites/demonstratives in the D+CP cases.

**Outstanding Question:**

- D in D+CP must be demonstrative/definite and this seems not to follow from the semantics of D+NP+CP. Why? (This is not a trivial issue since below I will show that at least some D+CP probably involve a null N, and hence the prohibition on strong/def. dets should mirror that D+NP+CP constructions.)

1.1 Some syntax

To makes a CP a DP. In Greek, this lets it be a subject:

(12)  [ *(to) oti lei psemata] apodhiknii tin enohi tis.
      the-NOM that tell-3SG lies-ACC prove-3SG the-ACC guilt her-GEN
      ‘That she tells lies proves her guilt.’

Same restriction after P:
P *(to) oti....

In object position: Roussou says it’s bad (14a) but notices an exception (14b):

(14) a. *ksero to oti efighe.
    know-1 the-ACC that left-3SG
    ‘I know that he left.’

b. dhen amfisvito to oti efighe
    not dispute-1SG the-ACC that left-3SG
    ‘I do not dispute the fact that he left’.

But to dispute a fact/claim, that must be somehow already on the table...

- this should be familiar from Korean: response stance verbs like dispute take DP/definite CPs (e.g. in Korean)

And indeed with the same types of contexts as Korean, we get a contrast (Giorgos Spathas, p.c.)

(15) Context 1 (ϕ not asserted)

a. CHILD: Why can’t I go outside to play?

b. MOTHER: #Pistevo to oti dhen exis teliosi ta mathimata su.
    believe.1P the that not have.2P finished the homework yours
    ‘I believe that you have not finished your homework.’

(16) Context 2 (ϕ asserted)

a. CHILD: Don’t you believe I finished my homework?

b. MOTHER: Pistevo to oti exis teliosi ta mathimata su.
    believe.1P the that have.2P finished the homework yours.
    Apla ine ora gia vradhino.
    Simply is time for dinner
    ‘I believe that you have not finished your homework. It’s just that it’s time for dinner.’

The non-to-clause is ok here, too, perhaps preferred (Spathas, p.c.)

Doesn’t work with nomízo ‘think’ though which probably doesn’t have a response stance life.
What is the right analysis of the cases with D? (and, by extension, the nominalized ones?)

1. D complement
   \[D \ [CP]\]

2. A null N
   \[D \emptyset_N \ [CP]\]

3. CP is a sentence adjoined element (or afterthought) to D(P)
   \[DP]...[CP]\n
4. DP and CP form a constituent but are in apposition (e.g. My sister, Alice, where CP adjoins at the DP level)

Similar questions arises for es-correlates of CPs in German:

(17) Hans glaubt es, [dass Sydney die Haupstadt von Australien ist].

H. believes it that Sydney the capital of Australia is.

- See the the recent volume Frey, Meinunger, and Schwabe (2016) for lots of interesting papers on this.

Kornfilt and Whitman 2011 argue against option #3 (for Greek at least) becuase the D+CP forms a constituent.

(18) [To oti efighe] dhe amfisvito
    the.ACC that left.3.SG NEG dispute.1.SG
    ‘I do not dispute that he left’ (Lit.: ‘That he left I do not dispute.’)

(19) A: Ti se stenoxori?
    what you.ACC upset.3.SG
    ‘What upsets you?’

B: To oti efighe.
    the.ACC that left.3.SG
    ‘That he left.’

Can es+CP be a fragment answer:¹

(20) a. Was glaubst/bedauern du?
    what believes/regret you
    ‘What do you believe/regret?’

b. *Es dass Uli krank ist.
    it that Uli sick is.
    ‘it that Uli is sick.’

¹Andreas Haida suggested (p.c.) that these fragments might be out because the es would required stress and es doesn’t like such stress.
In any event, \textit{es+dass} does not form any obvious surface constituent like \textit{D+CP to+oti}:

(21) a. Bedauerst du es, dass Uli krank ist oder (*es) dass Maria unglücklich ist?
    Do you claim it that Uli is sick or that Maria is unhappy?
    ‘Do you claim it that Uli is sick or that Maria is unhappy?’

b. Ich bedauere es, dass Uli krank ist und (*es) it dass Maria unglücklich ist.
    I have it that Uli is sick is believed.
    ‘I thought it that Uli is sick.’

c. *Ich habe es, dass Uli krank ist, geglaubt.
    ‘I have it that Uli is sick.’

This seems to be different from \textit{to+oti}:

(22) The determiner \textit{to} and \textit{oti} always have to be adjacent. (N. Angelopolous, p.c.)

a. dhen amfisvito to (*ADVERB) oti efighe
    not dispute-1SG the-ACC that left-3SG
    ‘I do not dispute it (ADVERB) that he left’.

Farsi

Farsi D+CP constructions in some ways work like German \textit{es+dass}: D can be separated from CP:

(23) man [\text{in-o} ] shenid-am [ke Ramin miād emshab]
    I this-OBJ heard.Past-1SG that Ramin come.Pres.3SG tonight]
    ‘I heard that Ramin is coming tonight.’ (Farudi 2007))

But they can also sit in the middle field position as a constituent (compare to the German (21c) above) and be subjects.

(24) a. man [\text{in-o ke} Ramin miād emshab ] shenid-am.
    I this-OBJ that Ramin come.Pres.3SG tonight ] heard.Past-1SG
    ‘I heard that Ramin is coming tonight.’ (Farudi 2007))

b. [\text{in [ ke to u-ra da?vat na-kard-i]] mādar-at-ro nārā}
    this that you he-OBJ invitation NEG-DID-2SG] mother-2sg-obj upset
    DID.3SG
    ‘That you did not invite him made your mother upset.? Darzi (1995:50,8b)

Also unlike \textit{es+dass} constructions (right Andreas?) an overt N is possible:

(25) man [\text{in (vaqi’at)} [CP ke Giti mi-ā-d]] mi-dun-am
    I this (fact) that Giti DUR-come-3SG DUR-know-1SG
‘I know (this) that Giti is coming.’ (Farudi 2007)

**Outstanding Question:**

- What distinguishes German *es+dass* from Farsi *in+ki* constructions and those from D+CP (Greek *to+oti* and Spanish *el+que*) constructions?
1.2 Arguments for D+CP in Greek

Roussou gives a number of arguments that there isn’t a null Noun in the to+CP constructions, i.e. that (26a) does not have (26b) as its source:

(26) a. to oti efighe...
   the-NOM that left-3SG...

b. to gheghonos oti efighe
   the-NOM fact that left-3SG...
   ‘the fact that he left...”

Na-clauses

to can appear with na-clauses, which don’t complement gheghonos ‘fact’:

(27) a. to na ehis ipomoni ine proson
   the-NOM PRT have-2SG patience-NOM be-3SG advantage-NOM
   ‘That you have patience is an advantage’

b. *to gheghonos na ehis ipomoni...
   the-NOM fact PRT have-2SG patience-NOM
   ‘the fact to have patience’

(Presumably na-clauses are semantically compatible with the N ‘fact’, otherwise this could just show that the null N in na-clauses is too irrealis to deliver facts...we all should read Iatridou 2014.)

D+wh-clauses

wh-clauses can appear with D, but not with nouns:

(28) a. to poso kostise...
   the-NOM how much cost-3SG
   ‘How much it costs...’

b. *to gheghonos poso kostise...
   the-NOM fact how much cost-3SG

- but maybe these are more like free relatives, which are usually assumed to have a D+CP structure anyway, and so maybe not part of the same class as to-oti clauses)
Gender

The gender of D is always neuter to, even though CP taking Ns can be gendered (using i)

\[(29)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{i } \text{fimi } \text{oti } \text{eghine } \text{ipurghos} \\
& \text{the-FEM.NOM rumour that became-3SG minister-NOM} \\
& \text{‘The rumour that he became minister’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{*i } \text{∅ } \text{oti } \text{eghine } \text{ipurghos} \\
& \text{the-FEM.NOM } \text{that became-3SG minister-NOM} \\
& \text{‘The that he became minister’}
\end{align*}
\]

Maybe not so fast...

- Rousseau’s arguments speak against there being a null N for each type of overt N. But maybe there is a null N that just refers to some thing with propositional content, like Korean kes can.
- Nikos Angelopolous (UCLA, PhD prospectus) shows that know doesn’t take overt D+fact:

\[(30)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{*I } \text{Ekavi kseri to } \text{oti } \text{efighes.} \\
& \text{the Ekavi know the that you left} \\
& \text{‘Ekavi knows that you left’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{*I } \text{Ekavi kseri to } \text{jeghonos oti } \text{efighes.} \\
& \text{the Ekavi know the fact that you left} \\
& \text{‘Ekavi knows the fact that you left’}
\end{align*}
\]

- Angelopolous says that this pattern would follow if indeed there is a null N in these constructions.
- I want to develop another argument that there is indeed a null N here, based on a contrast in Spanish.
2 Spanish D+CP

All data from Picallo (2002), unless otherwise noted.

(31) a. [El [ that creas that hay fantasmas en la azotea] carece de logic.

‘That you believe that there are ghosts in the attic is illogical.’

b. Lamento mucho [ el [ PRO haberme visto obligado a explicar todo esto]] regret.1sg lot the to-have seen forced to explain all this ‘I regret a lot to have been forced to explain this.’

As with Greek, earlier authors said there was a null noun hecho ‘fact’ here (Demonte 1977, Plann 1981, Iatridou and Embick 1997).

Picallo argues against this using an interesting counter-part to D+CP constructions: Lo+de+CP.

• In traditional grammar, lo is neuter (el is masc.).

(32) a. Lo de ir a Mallorca este verano no nos convence. ‘The (idea/proposal) of going to Mallorca this summer does not convince us.’

b. Lo de que se tenga que pagar un impuesto adicional provocará un unanimous revolt.

‘The (idea/proposal) that people have to pay an additional tax will cause a unanimous revolt.’

Note that de is required when a CP complements N in the language.

(33) Lamento el hecho *(de) que no me saludara. regret.1sg the fact of that not me greet.3sg ‘I regret the fact that he did not greet me.’

But de is disallowed in the D+CP construction (with an exception I’ll show below):

(34) Lamento el (*de) que no me saludara. regret.1sg the of that not me greet.3sg ‘I regret that he did not greet me.’

So Picallo’s argument is that there must not be an N in the el-que (D+CP) constructions, but there is one in the lo-de-que constructions.
• In *el-que* constructions we have a clear and established instance of D+CP.

One thing to note further is that the *lo-de-que* constructions do not appear to involve an *elided* N. Those *also* exist in the language, e.g. with a stranded *el*:

(35) Consideró varios **hechos** independientemente. El [e] de que hubieran considerado.3SG several facts independently the of that had.3PL apoyado tal propuesta era el más conspicuo. supported such-a proposal was the most conspicuous ‘S/he considered several facts independently. The (fact) that they had supported such a proposal was the most conspicuous one.’

The noun *hecho* ‘fact’ in first clause antecedes N-ellipsis.

You can also get masc. (and fem.) NPs (with their gendered Ds) antecedent N-ellipsis:

(36)

a. [La hipótesis de que las oraciones tienen Caso] y [la
   the hypothesis of that the sentences have Case and the
   hipótesis de que no tienen rasgos φ] eran consideradas,
   hypothesis of that not have φ features were.3PL considered
   las dos, incompatible.PL
   the two.FEM incompatible.PL
   ‘The hypothesis that sentences have Case and the (hypothesis)
   that they do not have φ-features were, the two of them,
   considered incompatible.’

No similar linguistic N antecedent is needed (so far as I can tell) in a *lo de que* constructions. I have not systematically tested this though. The impression I have is that (36) is * if there isn’t an overt N antecedent.

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**Tentative conclusion:**

• Do *el/la+de+que* constructions require a linguistic antecedent whereas *lo+de+que* do not?
Interim Summary

• in Lo+de+CP, there is probably a null N (Picallo’s conclusion; I agree)

And crucially:

• Lo+de+CP is not factive:

(37) [Lo de que María compró una casa nueva] es una mentira.
The of that Maria bought a house new is a lie
‘That Maria has bought a new house is a lie.’ (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

And it can complement propositional attitude verbs:

(38) No me creo lo de que María compró una casa nueva.
Not me believe.1SG the of that Maria bought a house new
‘I don’t believe that Maria bought a new house’. (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

N.B. Preliminary testing suggests here, like Greek to-oti or Spanish kes-clauses, there’s a constraint such that there is an asserted antecedent clause.

• BUT: el que cannot be predicated of is a lie nor can it complement standard propositional attitudes:

(39) *[El que María haya comprado/compró una casa nueva] es una mentira.
The that Maria has.SUBJ bought/bought.INDIC a house new is a lie
‘That Maria has bought a new house is a lie.’ (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

(40) *Dijo/pensa/sabe el que María estaba en la tienda.
said/thought/knew.3SG the that M. was in the store
‘He/she said/thought/knew that Maria was in the store.’ (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

This contrast suggests that el que does not denote things with propositional content, but that lo de que does.

• This should make us really re-question Roussou’s conclusions about Greek:
  – Perhaps Greek has a null N in to oti, at least in those cases were it denotes propositional content.
  – Given the presence of a Null content noun in Spanish, why couldn’t that exist in Greek?

• And, correlatively, this all suggests that D+CP constructions (lacking N) can’t denote propositions of the normal sort (what they do denote, we’ll talk about later).
3  D+CP vs. D+N+CP

Proposal: Greek and Spanish lo+de+que have a null content noun (always neuter):

\[(41) \quad [\text{Lo } \emptyset_{\text{Content}} \text{ de que } \text{María compró una casa nueva}] \text{ is una mentira.}
\]

‘That Maria has bought a new house is a lie.’ (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

Following Kratzer 2006, Moulton 2009, 2013, 2015, content nouns are things with propositional content and CPs are predicates that modify such nouns.


A: The Parallelism Hypothesis


\[\text{che lavoro} \text{ ‘which job’; that job: } \text{che}/\text{that} = \text{a D or like a D}\]

B: The Predicate Hypothesis


\[\text{The guy}/\text{Il ragazzo that/che I saw/ho visto: che}/\text{that} = \text{always a relativizer}\]

Some arguments for the predicate hypothesis

CPs are not nominal or DP-like (Emonds 1972, Stowell 1981, Grimshaw 1982).

\[(42)\]

a. John is aware of that.
   \[\text{DP-only taking verb}\]

b. *John is aware of that Fred left.
   \[\text{CP-only taking verb}\]

\[(43)\]

a. This captures the fact that he’s appreciated.
   \[\text{DP-only taking verb}\]

b. *This captures that he’s appreciated.

\[(44)\]

a. *John complained that.
   \[\text{CP-only taking verb}\]

b. John complained that she left.

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2This view is supported by the historical development of Old English ‘pæt’ from demonstrative to complementizer

3This view is supported by the common identity between complementizers and relativizers (Arsenijevic 2009).
In OV languages, we can see how CPs distribute differently from DP:

Hans has this lie spread about
‘Hans has spread this lie’

Hans has that Joachim Marlene loves spread about

c. Hans hat verbreitet [CP dass Joachim Marlene liebt].
‘Hans has spread about that Joachim Marlene loves.’

CPs can combine with nouns, while DPs need rescuing by Case-assigning of.

(46) a. The destruction *(of) the city.
    [ N *(P) DP ]

b. The idea *(of) that Fred would leave.
    [ N CP ]

Moulton 2009, 2013, 2015: C doesn’t “turn” a clause into an argument semantically, but rather into a predicate.

CP complements to N cannot be arguments—these Ns don’t take proposition-denoting arguments at all:

(47) a. He claimed that./*his claim of that
b. I believe the story./*the belief of the story
    (Zucchi 1989, 14 (28c))
    cf. lexical P belief in the story


(48) a. *Which depiction [of John’s face] does he hate most?
    argument

b. Which book [from John’s library] did he read?
    modifier

c. Which book [that John hated most] did he read?
    modifier

(49) a. The fact that [John has been arrested] he generally fails to mention.

b. Whose allegation [that Lee was less than truthful] did he refute vehemently?
    (Kuno 2004: 335(72))

(50) The CP Predicate Hypothesis (Moulton 2009, 2015, Kratzer 2006)
    Complementizers turn closed sentences into predicates of various semantic types
(51) *Traditional Relative clauses:* predicates of individuals (derived by movement)

The story [ that John told ]

[ that John told ] \( \sim \) \{ \( x \): John told \( x \) \}

[ story ] \( \sim \) \{ \( x \): story \( x \) \}

[ the story that John told ] \( \sim \) THE \{ \( x \): \( x \) is a story & John told \( x \) \}

(52) *Traditional Complement clauses:* predicates of individuals with propositional content

(no movement)

The story that John is a liar \( \sim \) THE \{ \( x \): \( x \) is a story & the content of \( x \) is that John is a liar \}

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{NP} \\
\text{NP} \quad \text{restricted predicate} \\
\text{CP} \quad \text{predicate} \\
\text{C} \\
\text{S/TP} \\
\text{clause} \rightarrow \text{predicate} \\
\text{clause}
\end{array}
\]

3.1.1 The proposal in more detail

Content nouns describe individuals with propositional content, \( x_c \).

(53) \[ \text{idea} = \lambda x_c \lambda w. \text{idea}(x_c)(w) \]

- Such things can be old, mean, and funny.

Kratzer (2006): CPs identify the propositional content of such an individual

(54) \[ \text{that Bob is a fraud} \] = \( \lambda x_c \lambda w [\text{cont}(x_c)(w) = \lambda w'. \text{Bob is a fraud in } w'] \)

\( \text{cont}(x_c)(w) = \{ w' : w' \text{ is compatible with the intentional content} \)

\text{determined by } x_c \text{ in } w \} \) (after Kratzer 2013, 195(25))

CPs combine with content nouns by predicate modification.
\(\iota x_c \lambda w [\text{idea}(x_c)(w) \land [\text{cont}(x_c)(w) = \lambda w'. \text{Bob is a fraud in } w']]\)

\[\leadsto \text{‘the idea the content of which is that Bob is a fraud’}\]

It’s “like” a relative clause (insofar as it involves predicate modification with an N—but no abstraction or movement creating gaps, cf. Arsenijevic et al.; see De Cuba (2017) for arguments against the relation to relatives.)
Argument against Apposition analysis of N+CP

Stowell 1981 said the CP was in apposition (e.g. *My sister, Alice*). See also Potts 2002.

You can marginally extract from CP complements of N (Ross 1967) (55a), just as with some relative clauses (55b). But you cannot extract from appositives (56).

(55) a. The money, which I have {hopes/a feeling} that the company will squander t, amounts to $400,000 (Ross 1967:85(4.45a))
   b. Then you look at what happens in languages that you know and languages, that you have a friend who knows t,. (McCawley 1981p.108)

(56) a. The press never liked Katherine Hepburn, [the winner of 4 oscars].
   b. *How many Oscars, did the press never liked Katherine Hepburn, [the winner of t].

No stacking

You can’t stack CP ‘complements’ unlike relatives:

(57) a. *The claim [that John left] [that he was angry]
   b. The claim [that John made _] [that Sally didn’t buy _]

(57a) is ruled out because the proposition *that John left ≠ that he was angry*, which is required by the analysis of CPs.

This won’t work for mathematical statements (the proposition that 2+2=4 *is equal to* the proposition that 1+1=2)

Some issues to think about

Patrick Elliott (UCL, handout): It can’t be the C itself that introduces the CONT function:

(58) John made the claim that Mary left and that Sally is upset.
    cont(x) = λw’. Mary left in w’ & cont(x) = λw’. Sally is upset in w’

But this would say the two propositions are equivalent, which isn’t not right.

Patrick Elliott suggests locating the CONT function separately from *that*, so that you can simply conjoin (s,t) propositions as usual and then apply CONT to that. *That* is vacuous.
But what is the coordination?

There is also something to consider about non-intersective conjunction of propositions.

Relevant here is McCloskey 1991: conjoined sentential subjects CPs can trigger plural agreement if they are somehow distinct propositions:

(59) That the president will be reelected and that he will be impeached are equally likely at this point.

(60) a. That UNO will be elected and that sanctions will be lifted is now likely.

b. ??That UNO will be elected and that sanctions will be lifted are now likely


Maybe we want to make a plurality of things with content? If we did we might expect a plural D, but I don’t think we ever get this, but this would require asking about plural determiners on clauses. And I don’t have any data for that.

Picallo does report that in the McCloskey style contexts, there is a contrast between D+de+que and el+que: the latter never shows plural agr on verb even if the events are distinct.

(61)

a. [La hipótesis de que las oraciones tienen Case] y [la hipótesis de que no tienen rasgos ϕ] eran considered, las dos, incompatible.

(62)
3.2 But why a null N?

Recall that only the constructions with a postulated null N could be interpreted as fully “propositional” where el+que cannot, using is a lie as a diagnostic.

(63)  [Lo de que María compró una casa nueva] es una mentira.
     The of that Maria bought a house new is a lie
     ‘That Maria has bought a new house is a lie.’ (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

(64)  *[El que María haya comprado/compró una casa nueva] es una mentira.
     The that Maria has.SUBJ bought/bought.INDIC a house new is a lie
     ‘That Maria has bought a new house is a lie.’ (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

The question, though, is why an N is needed

- The predicate analysis could just involve D selecting a bare content-predicate CP
- We know such things are independently possible given the el+que construction (and various types of free and raising relative clauses)

So perhaps the CP predicate analysis is wrong:

- If CPs are just type ⟨s,t⟩, then perhaps putting a D on it won’t return a proposition (just a situation)
- The N would be needed to give D something that returns a proposition-like entity

Alternatives:

- N selects CP of propositional type as a complement (but what about the evidence that it doesn’t?)
- CP is a “referential” in close apposition (De Cuba 2017)
- Or a completely different structure (See Mikkelsen (2014) for a very different approach to a certain class of content DP constructions)
3.3 Implications for Chierchia (1984)

There is an influential proposal due to Chierchia (1984) that propositions can be nominalized by a type shifter NOM, that maps type $\langle s,t \rangle$ into $e$, the latter he dubs the individual correlate of a proposition.

- Regardless of the ontological claims...
  - if Chierchia’s NOM is available, it cannot be available freely (there needs to be a noun)
  - we would have to say that Chierchia’s NOM is the noun (....I thought these type-shifters are usually maps to Ds, if they’re mapped to anything)
  - I don’t see how the type-shifting analysis explains the the presence of a syntactic N....
3.4 D+CP: no null N

Recall that *el+que* do not combine with propositional attitude verbs or content predicates (e.g. *is a lie*):

(65) *[El que María haya comprado/compró una casa nueva] es una mentira.\[\text{The that Maria has bought/bought a house new is a lie} \]

‘That Maria has bought a new house is a lie.’ (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

(66) *Dijo/pensa/sabe el que María estaba en la tienda.\[\text{said/thought/knew the that M. was in the store} \]

‘He/she said/thought/knew that Maria was in the store.’ (P. Menéndez-Benito, p.c)

As far as I can tell, *el+que* clauses only combine with predicate that in English can take gerunds:

(67) Predicates that combine with *el+que* in Spanish (from Picallo):

a. ___ pleases X
b. ___ is surprising
c. ___ lacks logic
d. regret ___
e. ___ shows
f. ___ seem important/irrelevant/amazing
g. demonstration/observation of ___
h. ___ made him suspect to the police
i. ___ triggered

A too simple idea:

El+que (D+CP) clauses not refer to contents or possibilities, but to (actual) situations:

(68) A CP denotes a set of (possible) situations:

\[that \text{ John left } \leadsto \lambda s. \text{ John left in } s \] (the set of possible situations in which John left)

\[\text{type } \langle s,t \rangle\]

(69) Possible situations (Kratzer 1989, et seq): Situations are parts of possible worlds; a world being the limiting case

- In this way, situation semantics generally allows propositions to be /describe sets of “smaller things” than whole worlds.
- Simple idea: if you stick a (definite/ maximalizing /choice functional) determiner on top of a situation description, you get a (possibly unique/salient) member of that set: (Interesting questions about where the CP can denote pluralities of situations...)

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With individual denoting DPs:

a. NPs denote sets of individuals \(\langle e,t \rangle\)
   \[\text{dog} \leadsto \lambda x. \text{x is a dog}\]
b. determiners can convert this to an individual type \(e\)
   \[\text{the dog} \leadsto x: \text{where x is a dog.}\]
   (could involve an iota, max, type-shifters, etc. and carry various presuppositions, like uniqueness etc.)

\[s: \text{s is a situation in which he left}\]
\[\text{D} \quad \langle s,t \rangle\]
\[\text{que he left}\]

If \(el+que\) constructions denote individual situations, these are not the things that can be lies:

\[\#[\text{el que he left}]\text{ is a lie}\]
\[\text{s is a lie (where s is a situation in which he left)}\]

Nope! Concrete situations cannot be lies! See with English gerunds:

\[\#/*\text{John’s leaving was a lie.}\]

But you can regret such things or be surprised by them:

\[\text{John’s leaving was regrettable/surprising.}\]
\[\text{Lamento el que no me saludara}.\]
\[\text{regret.1SG the that not me greet.3SG}\]
\[\text{‘I regret that he did not greet me.’}\]

However, we need to make a distinction between just plain particulars (situations, events) and \(El que\) constructions, are semantically opaque: (76) does not entail (77) (but note that my consultant prefers the subjunctive over the indicative in the embedded clause—this could be very relevant).

\[\text{Lamentaba el que María estuviera bailando tango}\]
\[\text{lament.3SG the that Maria was.SUBJ dancing tango}\]
\[\text{‘He regretted that Maria was dancing the tango.’}\]
\[\text{Lamentaba el que María estuviera bailando}\]
\[\text{lament.3SG the that Maria was.SUBJ dancing}\]
‘He regretted that Maria was dancing.’

And they can’t sit where we generally get semantically transparent situation/event denoting complement: direct perception!

(78) *Vi el que María estaba bailando.
    Saw.3SG the that Maria was dancing.
    ‘He saw that Maria was dancing.’

Isn’t this just a factive/non-factive distinction?

- Should we that *el+que constructions denote FACTS, whatever those are, as distinct from PROPOSITIONS and EVENTS? (Asher 1993, Peterson 1997, Ginzburg and Sag 2000)

- We’re getting close to very difficult philosophical questions about ontology and the role of information content in natural language, something that was central to debates between possible world semanticists and certain brands of situation semantics.

- This is hard stuff, so I’d rather use the natural language/linguistics as a guide before entertaining these more abstract issues.

And in any event, I don’t see how these semantic/philosophical proposals is going to connect with the syntax, which is my interest.

And it’s not so clear that we are dealing with facts here. Zucchi 1989 shows that the arguments of verb like regret and surprise are more than just facts. Let’s talk about these constructions next.

4 References


Farudi, Annahita. 2007. An Anti-Symmetric Approach to Persian Clausal Complements. Ms, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.


