Lessons from overtly-headed exclamatives in Spanish varieties: implications for the account of obligatory subject-verb inversion

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Abstract

Inverting wh-exclamative sentences with an overt complementizer in languages like Spanish pose a serious challenge to traditional accounts of obligatory subject-verb inversion. Such analyses assume either T-to-C movement or Spec,TP as an A-bar position capable of hosting wh-phrases and subjects alike. The optional presence of a complementizer in the head of CP in exclamatives prevents the verb from moving to CP, which argues against an analysis of inversion wherein the verb moves to Cº. Regarding the Spec,TP-as-an-A-bar-position account, if the wh-phrase sits in Spec,TP and competes with the subject for that position, the presence of a complementizer below wh-phrases in exclamatives is then rather mysterious, since *que* 'that' is standardly assumed to signal the presence of CP structure –not IP/TP structure.

However, for those cases in which the complementizer occurs, a combined approach consisting of a modification of the Spec,TP-as-an-A-bar-position account which assumes further movement of the exclamative wh-phrase to a CP-related/left-peripheral projection headed by the complementizer is shown to be empirically superior to the competing proposals on the market. Furthermore, dialect data show that the presence of *que* is sensitive to the type of exclamative phrase in its specifier. The inverting exclamative data with overt *que* also indicate that it is the full projection consisting of the exclamative wh-phrase in the specifier plus the overt complementizer in the head that needs to be adjacent to the verb in such environments.

1. The contentious analysis of obligatory subject-verb inversion in questions and beyond
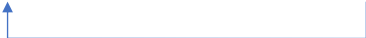
Traditional accounts of mandatory subject-verb inversion in Romance languages like Italian and Spanish within the transformational generative tradition (cf. (1), inspired by Rizzi 1996 and Barbosa 2001, amongst others) assume an analysis whereby the verb moves to the CP domain, in analogous fashion to what happens to the modal/auxiliary in English direct questions, as in (2), where strikethrough indicates deleted copies of moved elements:

(1)   a. *Che   cosa   *Maria*   dice?
           what   thing   Mary   says
       b. Che   cosa   dice   *Maria*?
          what   thing   says   Mary
          'What does Mary say?'
       c. *¿Qué   *María*   dice?
            what   Mary   says
       d. ¿Qué   dice   *María*?
          what   says   Mary
          'What does Mary say?'

(2)   What does *the Primer Minister* ~~does~~ advocate?

More specifically, (1)b and (1)d are standardly accounted for by appealing to movement of the occupant of the head of INFL(ection)/T(ense)P to the head of C(omplementizer)P, as in the highly simplified derivation in (3). In languages like Italian and Spanish, it is customary to assume that the lexical verb moves from the VP domain to T° (and then to C°, under this account), while in present-day English (cf. (2)), the lexical verb stays in the VP; the auxiliary is hosted in T° and from there it moves to C°.[1]

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[1]   The equivalent analysis within Rizzi's (1997 et seq.) left periphery generally assumes that the wh-phrase and the moved verb are hosted in FocusP: [$_{ForceP}$ [$_{TopicP}$ [$_{FocusP}$ wh-phrase [$_{Focus'}$ V [$_{TP}$ ~~V~~]]]]]. I return to this issue in due course.

(3)   [CP *che cosa/qué* [C' *dice/dice* [TP Maria/María [T' ~~*dice/dice*~~ *...*]]]]

This analysis has been adopted by several authors, including Torrego (1984), Rizzi (1996), and Gallego (2010), *inter alia*. In fact, Torrego treats obligatory inversion as the result of a *Verb Preposing Rule* which, as the name indicates, preposes the verb from T to C. Under Rizzi's (1991 et seq.) criterial approach, the phrase in the specifier of CP and its head (to which the verb has moved) establish a spec-head relationship.

However, this type of analysis has been contested for wh-interrogatives in Romance languages like Portuguese and Spanish by many authors, based on a variety of arguments (Bonet 1990; Goodall 1992, 1993; Solà 2002; Suñer 1994; Guasti 1996; Barbosa 2001; Ordóñez 1997; Uriagereka 1999; Cardinaletti 2004, 2021; Zagona 2002; Ordóñez & Olarrea 2006; Buesa-García 2008; Grinstead et al. 2018, among others).

If the verb does not move all the way up to C°, then it will have to stay within the inflectional domain (e.g., in T°) and the subject will not be in the canonical Spec,TP position, but in a lower position, presumably in the VP area, as shown in (4) for Spanish (1)d above:

(4)   [CP *qué* [C' C° [TP dice [vP *María...*]]]]

Indeed, an influential alternative proposal to the CP analysis of wh-phrases in interrogatives which indeed assumes that the verb stays in T° has been advocated by authors like Groos & Bok-Bennema (1986), Goodall (1992 et seq.), Zubizarreta (1998), Barbosa (2001), and Gutiérrez-Bravo (2008). On this view, the specifier of IP/TP can host wh-phrases, as it can be occupied by either A-moved or A-bar moved phrases. Since this is the canonical (preverbal) subject position, movement of the wh-phrase to Spec,TP makes that slot unavailable for the subject (on the assumption that multiple specifiers are barred for Spec,TP). The subject must then stay postverbally (e.g., in its base-generated position in Spec,*v*P), as in (5), which is the analysis of (1) under this type of account. Thus, the wh-phrase and the subject compete for the preverbal position.

(5)   [… [TP *che cosa/qué* [T' *dice/dice* [vP *Maria/María* [v' ~~*dice/dice*~~ *...*]]]]]

However, authors such as Bosque & Brucart (2019) observe that this analysis is problematic in that Spec,TP is a nominative (subject) position, and wh-phrases may bear different cases (e.g., accusative).[2] Thus, it it important to grant dual A/A-bar status to Spec,TP for this type of account to be feasible.

Now, most of the literature on obligatory inversion has concentrated primarily on constituent questions, although it is a well-known fact that exclamatives and focal phrases alike also trigger mandatory inversion in general Spanish (see Hernanz &

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[2]   There have been proposals to the effect that phrases bearing other cases (e.g., datives) may sit in Spec,TP (see, e.g., Fernández-Soriano 1999 on the dative constituent of psychological verbs).

Brucart 1987 for how focal phrases mirror the behavior of wh-phrases). The relevant constructions are in fact typically collapsed into a category that involves focus constructions, inversion being a hallmark of focus in languages like Spanish. The Spanish data in (6) and (7) illustrate (the first two examples come from Bosque & Gutiérrez-Rexach 2009: 448):

(6) a. *¡Qué   extraños   cuentos   *Onetti*   escribe   a veces!
         what   strange   tales   Onetti   writes   sometimes
     b. ¡Qué   extraños   cuentos   escribe   a veces   *Onetti*!
         what   strange   tales   writes   sometimes   Onetti
         'Onetti occasionally writes very odd tales.'
     c. *¡Qué   ropa   más   buena   *tu   esposa*   lleva!
         what   clothing   more   good   your   wife   wears
     d. ¡Qué   ropa   más   buena   lleva   *tu   esposa*!
         what   clothing   more   good   wears   your   wife
         'What beautiful clothing your wife wears!'

(7) a. *SOLO A   CINCO AMIGOS   *la   pareja*   invitó   a su   boda.
        only   acc. five   friends   the   couple   invited   to their wedding
     b. SOLO A   CINCO AMIGOS   invitó   a su   boda   *la   pareja*.
        only   acc. five   friends   invited   to their wedding   the   couple
        'Only five friends did the couple invite to their wedding celebrations.'

The data above point to the inescapable conclusion that inversion is not a feature confined to (wh-)interrogatives (Francom 2012), but a feature of preposed focal phrases more generally. Moreover, it follows from the generalization that focus is the culprit of inversion that the source of inversion in focal contexts including wh-interrogatives and wh-exclamatives must be one and the same.[3]

Given the generalization that in languages like English and Spanish only one focal phrase can occur per sentence (cf. uniqueness of focus), authors such as Rizzi (1997 et seq.) have made the proposal that wh-interrogatives, wh-exclamatives, and foci target Spec,FocusP (or Spec,CP), which accounts for the fact that these constituents are mutually exclusive and hence cannot co-occur, as shown in (8).

(8) *¿¡Cuándo   qué   ropa   más   buena se   ha   comprado!?
         when   what   clothing more   good   cl   has   purchased
     '*When what great clothing has he or she purchased!?'

That the inversion displayed by wh-interrogatives and wh-exclamatives in Spanish-style languages should be analyzed uniformly is further supported by dialectal variation data. In Caribbean varieties such as Puerto-Rican Spanish, it is a well-documented fact that inversion of the verb and the subject is not compulsory, especially with pronominal subjects, as indicated by (9) (Ordóñez & Olarrea 2006, among many others):

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[3]   However, languages like present-day English display no inversion with exclamatives, for instance (though see Kim 2018 for cases of inverting exclamatives from corpora).

(9) ¿Qué   *tú*   quieres?
    what   you   want
    'What do you want?'

    Importantly, González-Rivera, Iglesias Vázquez & Guzmán Alcántara (2017) have shown that exclamatives featuring non-inverted pronominal subjects, as in (10), are used far more often than their inverting counterparts (although the inverting pattern is acceptable as well):

(10) ¡Qué   bruto   *tú*   eres!
    what   ignorant you   are
    'How ignorant you are!'

    The fact that the same type of variation is observed with interrogatives and exclamatives between non-Caribbean (or obligatorily inverting varieties) versus their Caribbean (i.e., non-inverting) counterparts additionally strengthens the parallelism between the type of inversion found with wh-interrogatives and wh-exclamatives, and with preposed focused constituents more generally (see fn. 6 for much relevant discussion).

    In what follows, I submit that the syntactic behavior of wh-exclamatives in languages like Spanish is key to the analysis of the obligatory S-V inversion patterns found with focal phrases in Romance. The data lead to a refinement of our extant analyses of the cartography of the left periphery and verb movement, not least because exclamatives exhibit inversion despite the potential occurrence of a pleonastic (but licit) complementizer below the exclamative phrase in many varieties, as shown by (11):

(11) ¡Qué   guapo   *que*   es   tu   bebé!
    what   good-looking   that   is   your   baby
    'Your baby is so beautiful!'

    The evidence from exclamatives like (11), whose head can be overtly realized by means of the complementizer *que* and yet inversion still occurs regardless of the presence of *que*, indicates that neither the traditional T-to-C movement analysis in (3) nor the Spec,TP analysis in (5) can be correct; the data call instead for a substantial modification of said accounts. At any rate, the right account must be consistent with the fact that it is the head of CP, or the whole CP projection, that needs to flank the verb(al cluster) in wh-exclamatives with pleonastic *que* (i.e., [wh-exclamative *que*] V subject).

    Hence, the evidence from exclamatives has far-reaching implications for a longstanding debate in Romance linguistics spanning almost four decades. Needless to say, since the different accounts of inversion to date have concentrated mainly on data from wh-interrogatives, it comes as no surprise that data from exclamatives have not been given sufficient attention in the field so far (though see Bosque 2017 and the collection of papers therein). I address this issue herein.

    The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 discusses exclamatives with pleonastic *que* in different Spanish varieties and focal phrases triggering inversion more generally. The implications for prior accounts are also addressed, and both non-

split-CP and split-CP accounts are critically reviewed. Set against this background, Section 3 advances an analysis which partly reconciles existing proposals, and which is shown to fare with the data in a promising fashion. Section 4 concludes the paper.

2. Lessons from exclamatives and previous analyses

Although the syntactic parallelism between interrogatives and exclamatives in languages like Spanish has been noted by numerous authors (e.g., Bosque 1984; Brucart 1993; Rizzi 1997 et seq.; Bosque & Gutiérrez-Rexach 2009; Hernanz 2010), one important asymmetry in Spanish-type languages concerns the possibility of having an instance of complementizer *que* below an exclamative wh-phrase in spoken varieties, as the following examples indicate:[4]

(12) a. ¡Qué   pequeño   *que*   es   el   mundo!
          what   small   that   is   the   world
          'Small world!'
      b. (Bosque & Gutiérrez-Rexach 2009: 725)
          ¡Qué   cuentos   *que*   te   traes!
          what   tales   that   cl   bring
          'The stories you have!'
      c. (Lyrics from the song 'Durante una mirada', *Un susurro en la tormenta*, La
          Oreja de van Gogh, Spain, 2020)
          ¡Qué   lentas   *que*   pasan   las   horas!
          what   slow   that   pass   the   hours
          'Time goes by so slowly!'

        Some authors refer to wh-exclamatives that occur with pleonastic *que* as relativized exclamatives (e.g., Francom 2012). However, relative sentences routinely modify nouns. As shown by examples like (12)a,c, exclamatives may feature categories other than nominals, which weakens the relative-clause approach. Furthermore, the fact that the complementizer can be omitted also goes against a relative account, as Spanish relatives categorically disallow the omission of the complementizer (see Villa-García 2023 for a recent review of the relativized-exclamative analysis).
        At any rate, it is of note that in all the examples in (12), *que* can be omitted without obvious semantic consequences; the examples in (12) are felicitous under the same circumstances as their *que*-less counterparts in (13), although some speakers intuitively report added emphasis when *que* is present.

(13) a. ¡Qué   pequeño   es   el   mundo!
          what   small   is   the   world
          'Small world!'

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[4]   Note in passing that certain varieties of spoken English also permit *that* below an exclamative phrase, as the below example, from Sir Terry Wogan, BBC Radio 2, cited in Radford (2018: 159), demonstrates:
        (i) What a mine of useless information *that* I am!

    b. ¡Qué   cuentos   te   traes!
        what   tales   cl   bring
        'The stories you have!'
    c. ¡Qué   lentas   pasan las   horas!
        what   slow   pass   the   hours
        'Time goes by so slowly!'

Across the Spanish-speaking world, there is a high degree of dialectal variation with respect to the occurrence of pleonastic *que* in exclamatives (see, e.g., RAE-ASALE 2009: 3206 and Villa-García 2018, 2023 for a recent summary).

Importantly, as (14) shows, Spanish interrogatives generally disallow the occurrence of the complementizer, in stark contrast to exclamatives (cf. (12)). Formally, therefore, the presence of *que* is typically employed to distinguish a root wh-exclamative from a root wh-interrogative (Villalba 2016b, 2019).

(14) a. *¿Cuánto   dinero   *que*   tiene?
          how-much money   that   has
    b. ¿Cuánto   dinero   tiene?
        how-much money   has
      'How much money does she or he have?'

Nevertheless, as noted by an anonymous reviewer and by Villa-García (2023: 13), novel corpus data from CORPES XXI refute the generally held assumption that interrogatives in Spanish altogether lack pleonastic *que*. In dialects like the Spanish spoken in Chile, Colombia, Cuba, and Uruguay, interrogatives like the following are attested (see also Villa-García, to appear):[5]

(15) a. Colombia
      ¿Por   qué   *que*   no   fuiste   a   rescatarnos?
        for   what   that   not   we   to   rescue-us
      'Why didn't you go to rescue us?'
    b. Uruguay
      ¿Cuándo fue   y   dónde   *que*   ocurrió   este
        when   was   and   where   that   occurred   this
      descubrimiento
      discovery?
     'Where was it and where did discovery occur?'

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[5]   Other Romance varieties, including Brazilian Portuguese, Canadian French, Lamonat, and Venetan, have been reported to allow (the equivalent of) *que* to co-occur with an interrogative phrase, as indicated by the Brazilian Portuguese data in (i), from Oushiro (2011: 145):

    (i) Onde   *que*   você   mora?
        where   that   you   live
        'Where do you live?'

Note, however, that varieties such as Brazilian Portuguese do not observe obligatory inversion (Villalba 2019), much like Caribbean-Spanish dialects, illustrated in (9)/(10) above.

Such examples are reminiscent of the well-documented cases of non-inverting interrogatives featuring complex wh-phrases and rhetorical questions with *por qué* 'why'/*cómo* 'how come' (see, e.g., RAE-ASALE 2009 and Grinstead et al. 2018; see also fn. 6). At any rate, their structure and behavior remain understudied in the field.

As far as the issue of inversion with focal phrases like interrogatives and exclamatives is concerned, in much the same way as with wh-interrogatives, subject-verb inversion is generally observed with wh-exclamatives, as suggested by the examples in (12) and by the unacceptability of the following examples, which stand in glaring contrast to the Puerto-Rican Spanish example in (10) in Section 1 above:[6]

(16) a. *¡Qué   pequeño   *el   mundo*   es!
          what   small   the   world   is
          'Small world!'
      b. *¡Qué   guapa   *tu   casa*   ha   quedado!
          what   tales   your house   has   ended-up
          'Your house now looks great!'
      c. *¡Qué   rápido   *el   tiempo*   pasa!
          what   fast   the   time   passes
          'Time goes by so quickly!'

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[6]   A reviewer provides the examples in (ii), suggesting that much like in the case of interrogatives (see, e.g., RAE-ASALE 2009 and Grinstead et al. 2018), exemplified in (i), we find (scarce, but still attested) examples of non-inverting exclamatives with certain exclamative phrases:

(i) ¿Cómo   *Pedro*   pudo   hacerme   esto?
    how   Peter   managed   do-cl   this
    'How could Peter do this to me?'
(ii) a. (CREA)
    ¡Y   cuántas   cosas   *el   pueblo   allí,   en el   trabajo*
     and how-many   things   the   village   there in the   job
    mismo,   soluciona!
    itself   resolves
    'And look at how many things the village, in the job itself, solves!?
     b. (Francom 2012: 543)
    ¡Qué libros   más   difíciles   *Juan*   nos   asignó   leer!
    what books   more   difficult   John   cl   assigned   reading
    'How difficult the books assigned by John are!'

Francom (2012: 543) notes that non-inverting exclamatives are confined to complex wh-phrases (as shown by (ii)a, b) and to *cómo* 'how,' showing that the parallelism with wh-interrogatives (cf. (i)) is robust.

In fact, Jiménez-Fernández (2015) provides instances of focalization in Southern Spanish where inversion does not occur either. This indicates that there are cases of non-inverting focal phrases more generally, and across varieties we find examples of non-inverting interrogatives, exclamatives, and focused constituents alike. This in turn further substantiates the claim made in the main text that it is focus that triggers inversion in Spanish, and, as expected, there are cases of no inversion (in the particular case of interrogatives and exclamatives, with restricted types of phrases) documented in the three major sorts of focal constituents found in Spanish.

d. *¡Qué   de   coches   *Pedro*   se   ha   comprado!
    what of   cars   Peter   cl   has   bought
    'Peter has bought so many cars!'

Crucially, inversion between the subject and the verb occurs in exclamatives irrespective of the presence of the complementizer *que*:

(17) a. *¡Qué   pequeño   que   *el   mundo*   es!
    what small   that   the   world   is
    'Small world!'
b. *¡Qué   guapa   que   *tu casa*   ha   quedado!
    what tales   that   your house   has   stayed
    'Your house now looks great!'
c. *¡Qué   rápido   que   *el   tiempo* pasa!
    what fast   that   the   time   passes
    'Time goes by so quickly!'
d. *¡Qué   de   coches   que   *Pedro*   se   ha   comprado!
    what of   cars   that   Peter   cl   has   bought
    'Peter has bought so many cars!'

As a potential counterexample, Brucart (1993: 88) provides the following contrast, showing that a preverbal element other than a subject may potentially intervene between the complementizer and the verb (the judgments are those reported by Brucart):

(18) a. [?]¡Qué   cosas   que   siempre dice   María!
    what things   that   always   says   Mary
b. *¡Qué   cosas siempre dice María!
    'The things that Mary always says!'

However, 10 native speakers from different parts of Spain consulted for purposes of the current paper point out that there is no acceptability difference between (18)a and (18)b, although it is true that two note that they also have the subtle contrast reported by Brucart (see Castroviejo 2006 and Villalba 2019 on data displaying obligatory inversion despite the presence of *que* in both Catalan and Spanish). I return to this contrast in Section 3.

Below, I will concentrate on the analysis of exclamatives featuring inversion notwithstanding the presence/absence of a complementizer in Spanish. The next section actually discusses the consequences that the data have for the much-debated analysis of inversion.

2.1. Implications for extant accounts of obligatory S-V inversion
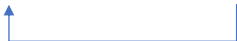
Now, given that inversion in wh-exclamatives generally occurs even in the presence of *que* in non-Caribbean-Spanish-style varieties, the question arises as to what the consequences are for the analysis of obligatory inversion triggered by preposed focal constituents.

As noted above, two major syntactic accounts have been advanced in the literature to explain obligatory inversion: T-to-C movement and Spec,TP as an A/A-bar position. In the next subsection, I review these and other potential accounts within a non-split CP approach; I return to a more articulated left periphery in Section 2.1.2. Ultimately, a new proposal is put forth in Section 3.

2.1.1. Non-split CP accounts

2.1.1.1 T-to-C movement

Regarding the T-to-C-movement analysis, this account is outlined again in abstract form in (19). This proposal has been entertained for Spanish exclamatives by authors like Bosque (1984), Brucart (1993), and Masullo (2012):

(19)   [$_{CP}$ wh-phrase [$_{C'}$ V [$_{TP}$ subject [$_{T'}$ V̶ ...]]]]

As noted, though, inversion in wh-exclamatives with a pleonastic *que* provides an additional argument against such a Germanic-style T-to-C analysis. The head position of CP (Cº) would be occupied by the complementizer, which is standardly assumed to be directly merged in that position.[7] Therefore, unless ancillary stipulations are made, there would be no room for the verb to move to CP, thus forcing it to stay lower in TP, with the subject presumably in Spec,TP; however, the subject cannot occur preverbally in such cases, as has been noted, since inversion must be observed, as shown in abstract form in (20)a and for example (11) in (20)b. The derivation in (20) fails to capture the inversion attested and would indeed predict that the subject should be able to surface preverbally in such contexts, contrary to fact.

(20)   a. [$_{CP}$ wh-phrase [$_{C'}$ complementizer [$_{TP}$ subject [$_{T'}$ V̶ ...]]]]
       b. [$_{CP}$ qué guapo [$_{C'}$ que [$_{TP}$ tu bebé [$_{T'}$ es ...]]]]

Unless we adopt the undesirable assumption that the verb(al cluster) becomes a unit with the complementizer under Cº (i.e., … [$_{C'}$ complementizer+V […]]), as hinted at by Zanuttini & Portner (2003: 72-73) for Paduan, the T-to-C account of inversion is further weakened by the exclamative facts, thus adding to the host of arguments militating against T-to-C-movement accounts of Spanish inversion more generally (see Section 1).

2.1.1.2 Spec TP as an A bar position hosting focal constituents

Turning now to a Barbosa-style account wherein Spec,TP can host wh-phrases and subjects alike, the exclamative facts once again call this type of analysis into question. Recall that under this account, the incompatibility between the wh-phrase and the subject in the preverbal slot stems from the fact that they both target Spec,TP. Since

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[7]   See Villa-García (2023) on Cº realizations in different constructions along the left-peripheral spine in (varieties of) English and Spanish.

the wh-phrase occupies this position in wh-questions, the subject must stay in the postverbal field (by hypothesis, in its base-generated position):

(21) [… [$_{TP}$ wh-phrase [$_{T'}$ V [$_{vP}$ subject V̶ ...]]]]

As noted by an anonymous reviewer, this type of account has to date only been applied to wh-interrogatives, not to exclamatives (though see fn. 16). However, given that all focal phrases trigger the same type of inversion, as has been shown, it is reasonable to pursue a unified account of the inversion facts, which should also capture exclamatives.

However, once we try to apply the account in (21) to the wh-exclamative facts that constitute the object of study of this paper, it is easy to see that such an analysis, if taken at face value, falls short of capturing the data: in the relevant exclamatory sentences, the wh-phrase is followed by a complementizer, which is generally associated with the CP domain (though see Campos 1992, among others, for the claim that similar markers in Gascon and Occitan are IP/TP elements). For such an analysis to be maintained, we would need to stipulate that the head of TP can be occupied by a complementizer, which would beg a number of pressing questions, including the issue of where the verb would sit:

(22) [… [$_{TP}$ wh-phrase [$_{T'}$ complementizer … V(?) [$_{vP}$ subject V̶ ...]]]]

By contrast, the wh-exclamative data suggest that the wh-phrase in cases involving pleonastic *que* is in the CP domain, since it is followed by an overt complementizer (Castroviejo 2006). I conclude that the inversion facts involving wh-exclamatives followed by a complementizer in Spanish (and Catalan) strongly argue against an analysis of inversion according to which the wh-phrase and the subject (or other preverbal elements) compete for the same slot –Spec,TP. However, a far more promising modification of this analysis will be offered in Section 3.

Overall, the wh-exclamative facts that this paper capitalizes upon argue against both traditional types of account of obligatory inversion. I review other potential accounts within a non-split CP in the next two subsections.

2.1.1.3 Cº as a null affix

As an alternative to the two types of account just discussed, Buesa-García (2008) and Villa-García (2015) have argued that interrogative Cº in wh-questions is a null interrogative affix (Af) that needs to be P(honetic)F(form)-adjacent to the verb(al cluster), as shown in (23):

(23) [$_{CP}$ wh-phrase [$_{C'}$ Af [$_{TP}$ ___ [$_{T'}$ V subject]]]]

When the subject intervenes, PF-adjacency between Af and V is disrupted, causing the derivation to fail, as the null interrogative Af is left stranded (i.e., it finds no suitable verbal host):

(24) [$_{CP}$ wh-phrase [$_{C'}$ Af [$_{TP}$ subject [$_{T'}$ V s̶u̶b̶j̶e̶c̶t̶]]]]

Is this type of account compatible with the exclamative facts reviewed above? It could be assumed that Cº is occupied by the complementizer, but that it also contains the non-overt affix, which is verbal in nature, and thus needs to be PF-contiguous to a verb (hence rendering the complementizer ineligible to act as a host), as in (25):

(25) $[_{CP}$ wh-phrase $[_{C'}$ complementizer+Af $[_{TP}$ $[_{T'}$ V subject $]]]]$

Prima facie at least, it seems that this system would accommodate the wh-exclamative facts less stipulatively than the T-to-C movement and the Spec,TP-as-an-a-bar-position accounts discussed previously, but it provides no real insight into the construction at issue. Most importantly, it is not at all obvious how Cº could be affixal in nature and be lexicalized as a complementizer simultaneously.

2.1.1.4 Minimality

Another formal account which may in principle be consistent with the exclamative facts reviewed here is Zubizarreta's (2001: 185) minimality proposal. Leaving technical details aside, this author argues that the reason why the wh-phrase in interrogative sentences cannot co-occur with a preverbal subject below it is that the left-peripheral wh-phrase binds a trace inside the VP. Because under this account the preverbal subject is directly merged in a C1-operator position located between CP and TP, this gives rise to "a minimality effect from which the preverbal subject constraint follows immediately" (i.e., *wh-phrase$_i$ subject … trace$_i$).

For wh-exclamatives, a similar solution may be proposed, the difference being that the head of the projection containing exclamatives can be overtly realized via *que*, but this in principle would not interfere for operator-binding purposes. Thus, the wh-exclamative facts involving an overt complementizer neither support nor refute the minimality hypothesis, and again the account does not offer a direct answer to the facts at stake.

Whatever the case may be, the next subsection tackles a natural question to raise at this juncture: can an account assuming an exploded CP account explain the exclamative-plus-complementizer facts?

2.1.2. Split-CP accounts: the left periphery

So far, our assumption has been that the left edge of a sentence consists of a CP projection above TP (CP > TP > VP). However, it is natural to pose the question of what an analysis that assumes a more complex left-peripheral domain, as assumed in much work since the advent of the fine structure of the left periphery (Rizzi 1997), can do to capture the wh-exclamative facts at issue, and whether this can be accomplished in a non-stipulative fashion.

Since the seminal work of Rizzi (1997 et seq.), the CP layer has been split into several functional projections (e.g., ForceP > TopicP > FocusP > FinitenessP), which are devoted to different functions. Exclamatives with overt Cº in Romance languages like Spanish have received different treatments in the literature. The major accounts proposed within the split-CP approach are summarized in (26):

(26) a. (Hernanz & Rigau 2006)

$[_{FocusP}$ wh-excl. $[_{Focus'}$ **que** $[…]]]$

     b. Rizzi & Bocci (2017)

       [$_{ExclP}$ wh-excl. [$_{Excl'}$ **que** […]]]

     c. Zanuttini & Portner (2003); Tirado (2016); see also Benincà (1996)

       [$_{CP2}$ wh-excl. [$_{C2'}$ [$_{CP1}$ [$_{C1'}$ **que** […]]]]]]

     d. Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2009)

       [$_{FocusP}$ wh-excl. [$_{Foc'}$ [$_{FinitenessP}$ [$_{Fin'}$ **que** […]]]]]]

     e. Gutiérrez-Rexach (2001 et seq.)

       [$_{ForceP}$ qué [$_{Force'}$ [$_{FocusP}$ Adj./Adv./N … [$_{Topic'}$ **que** […]]]]]]

     f. Villalba (2016a, 2019)

       [$_{ForceP}$ wh-excl. [$_{Force'}$ **que** [$_{FocusP}$ ~~wh-excl.~~ [$_{Focus'}$ V [… ~~V~~]]]]]

     The proposals in (26)a,b are by and large identical to the more traditional [CP wh-excl. [C *que* …]] kind of account outlined in Section 2.1.1.1 and can thus be considered to be terminological variants of the same analysis, hence running into the same types of problems discussed in that subsection.

     The analyses in (26)c,d are equivalent to each other as far as the structure is concerned, and they differ from one another only in the labels chosen. In this type of account, the wh-exclamative and the complementizer are in separate projections, which is also the case in (26)e. This is not trivial, as detaching the wh-phrase from the complementizer is problematic considering dialectal variation across Spanish. More specifically, in some dialects of Spain (e.g., in Asturian Spanish), pleonastic *que* does not occur in *qué* + N/Adj/Adv exclamatives, illustrated in (11), a pattern that is otherwise widely attested in many parts of the Spanish-speaking world (see, e.g., RAE-ASALE 2009: 3206).

     By contrast, in Asturian Spanish, exclamatives featuring the qualifying determiner *vaya* display variation even within Asturias (the same applies to *menudo*$_{masc.}$-*menuda*$_{fem.}$ + N):[8] as observed by Villa-García (2018, 2023), some varieties of Asturian Spanish tend to require *que* (for instance, in the Spanish spoken in Avilés and Gijón) as in (27)a, while others (e.g., Oviedo and the hamlets around it) use it only optionally, as in (27)b (note that, once again, inversion is compulsory in either case):

(27) a. ¡Vaya/menuda   casa *que* tiene   tu   prima!
        what   house that has   your cousin
      b. ¡Vaya/menuda   casa tiene tu   prima!
        'What a house your cousin has!'

     This means that the presence of pleonastic que is sensitive to the type of exclamative element involved (e.g., *qué* vs. *vaya-menudo/a*), suggesting a more intimate relationship (namely a spec-head relation between the wh-phrase and the complementizer) than that assumed by the accounts in (26)c-e. This also goes on to show that dialectal data can be crucial when teasing apart competing accounts. Be that as it may, what the proposals in (26)a-e have in common is that they do not directly address the issue of the obligatory inversion effect observed with wh-exclamatives accompanied by overt complementizers in languages like Spanish and Catalan.

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8   See Espinal, Real-Puigdollers & Villalba (2022) on *vaya* more generally.

By contrast, of all the accounts in (26), only Villalba's (2016a, 2019) proposal in (26)f seriously takes into consideration the non-trivial issue of obligatory inversion in exclamatives. This author contends that *que* is a Force element, and that wh-exclamatives move to FocusP in the first instance. From the specifier of FocusP, wh-exclamatives end up positioned in the specifier of ForceP, since they occur to the left of the pleonastic complementizer. Focus° is the position where the verb ends, having previously moved from V° to T° on its way to the left periphery.

Appealing as this account may seem to be at first sight, it is challenged by a host of issues. First, it is not clear why the exclamative phrase needs to move above FocusP, since this is already a criterial position (Rizzi 1996 et seq.) and the wh-exclamative constituent is inherently exclamative; it should not need to move further up –it should be 'frozen' in place there. Similarly, the question arises as to why the exclamative phrase would have to move all the way to ForceP, although in fairness, ForceP may be related to the checking of exclamative features or the marking of exclamative force. Besides, it not fully clear why *que* would only be related to Force and not to other left-peripheral heads (see Villa-García 2023). What is more, exclamatives with *qué* and *vaya* can be embedded under communication verbs like *decir* 'to say' and yet be preceded (and followed) by an instance of *que*:[9]

(28) a. Dijo   Juanqui   que   qué   malo   que   eras.
         said   Johnny   that   what   bad   that   were
         'Johnny said that you were truly evil.'
      b. Dice   Nora   que   vaya   casa   que   tiene   tu   prima.
         says   Nora   that   what   house   that   has   your   cousin
         'Nora has exclaimed what a house your cousin has.'

Data like those in (28) indicate that the (secondary) complementizer featured under wh-exclamatives cannot be in Force°, as claimed by (26)f. As Villalba (2016b: 224) himself notes, it is possible to have an embedded topical/Clitic-Left Dislocated XP (e.g., *tu prima* 'your cousin') in between the high complementizer and the complementizer below the exclamative, which would require postulating a topic projection higher than force. This move would still face the issue of where the highest *que* would be in the structure:[10]

(29) a. Dice   Nora   que   tu   prima   (que) vaya   casa   que   tiene.
         says   Nora   that   your   cousin   that what   house   that   has
         'Nora has exclaimed what a house your cousin has.'

---

[9]   Although exclamatives are embeddable under verbs of saying, several authors have pointed to the conclusion that exclamatives are a root phenomenon and thus that embedded exclamatives are interpreted as exclamatory by virtue of the selecting verb, since in embedded contexts subcategorized by predicates other than verbs of communication, exclamatives are basically interrogative clauses as far as their form is concerned (see Bosque 1984, Tirado 2016 and references therein; see Masullo 2017: 13, however, for evidence that wh-exclamative phrase + *que* sentences are possible in varieties of Argentinean Spanish under verbs like *mirar* 'to look', which is symptomatic of diatopic variation in terms of the embeddability of *que* exclamatives).

[10]   On the bracketed *que* in (29), an instance of recomplementation, see, e.g., Villa-García (2015, 2023).

b. Verb [?? *que* [TopicP XP (*que*) [ForceP wh-excl. [Force' *que* [FocusP ~~wh-excl.~~ …]]]]]

And finally, the analysis assumes movement of the verb to Focusº, which in effect is equivalent to assuming T-to-C movement, an account that has been widely contested more generally for Spanish, as noted. In fact, while this account leaves room for the verb to move to the left edge (as Focusº is not occupied by the overt complementizer), it runs up against all the empirical evidence adduced in the literature against T-to-C/Foc accounts of obligatory inversion, with a range of arguments indicating that the verb does not vacate the TP space despite outward appearances (see, for instance, Ordóñez & Olarrea 2006). In other words, this proposal directly inherits the issues posed by T-to-C accounts regarding verb movement in the focal contexts at hand.

All in all, the inescapable conclusion that the above discussion leads to is that the fine structure of the left periphery does not straightforwardly solve the problems raised by the most influential non-split-CP analyses reviewed above in relation to the theoretical treatment of obligatory inversion with wh-exclamatives with *que*. In the next section, a novel proposal is adumbrated to account of the facts at stake.

3. A proposal: toward an account

The proposal outlined herein to account for wh-exclamatives followed by *que* draws on the analysis advanced in the work of Barbosa (2001) for wh-interrogatives in Romance, which was reviewed in Section 1 and Section 2.1.2, but with relevant modifications, as kindly suggested by an anonymous reviewer. Note again that this line of analysis has hitherto been applied to wh-interrogatives, but not explicitly to exclamatives (though see fn. 16 below).

Focusing first on interrogatives, note once more that on Barbosa's view, subject inversion in Romance null-subject languages in contexts involving constituent questions arises from the verb moving to Tº (as is standardly assumed) past the in-situ *v*P/VP-internal subject, as shown schematically in (30) (see also (5) and (21) above):[11]

(30) [… [TP   [T' V [*v*P subject ~~V~~ … wh-phrase]]]]

Remember that under this type of account, Spec,TP in such languages is not a dedicated subject position; instead, it has dual A/A-bar status and as such it can house constituents other than *bona fide* subjects (Groos & Bok-Bennema 1986, Uribe-Etxebarria 1991, Goodall 1992, Zubizarreta 1998, Barbosa 2001, and Gutiérrez-Bravo 2008, *inter alia*). The preverbal subject position can then host the wh-phrase (and satisfy the wh-criterion with the wh-feature of tense in a spec-head configuration), yielding the desired wh-phrase + verb + subject order:

(31) [… [TP wh-phrase [T' V [*v*P subject ~~V~~ ... ~~wh-phrase~~]]]]

---

[11]   Brucart (1993) and Villa-García (2015) provide evidence from adverb placement that in wh-interrogatives with inversion, the subject is indeed not in Spec,TP, but in a lower position, possibly within the VP domain, which is wholly compatible with the account sketched in (30).

The prohibition against preverbal subjects in this environment follows straightforwardly from the analysis in (31), which is one of its major advantages: Spec,TP is no longer available to accommodate the subject. An added benefit of this account in the case of wh-interrogatives is that the availability of inversion in subordinate clauses is explained away: the presence of a high complementizer does not interfere with inversion (even if a simple, non-split CP is adopted); inversion occurs regardless. This is shown for (32)a in (32)b:

(32) a. Preguntó   que   qué   bebida   quería   Isabel.
          asked   that   what   drink   wanted   Elizabeth
          'He or she asked which drink Elizabeth wanted.'
      b. [… que [$_{TP}$ qué bebida [$_{T'}$ quería [$_{vP}$ Isabel ~~quería~~ ... ~~qué bebida~~]]]]

Similarly, as noted, this analysis evades the need to move the verb to the CP domain, which is a rather welcome result in light of the robust evidence against T-to-C movement adduced in the literature (see Section 2.1.1.1).

At this juncture, the question arises as to how to analyze exclamatives with pleonastic *que* under this type of account. First of all, it is important to note that ordinary exclamatives without *que*, illustrated in (13) above, are in principle amenable to an account like that in (31) without further ado, in analogous fashion to their interrogative counterparts above (with the qualification that instead of wh$_{interrog.}$-features of tense, we would be dealing with wh$_{excl.}$-features):

(33) [… [$_{TP}$ wh-phrase$_{exclamative}$ [$_{T'}$ V [$_{vP}$ subject ~~V~~ ... ~~wh phrase$_{exclamative}$~~]]]]

Let us assume that pleonastic-*que* exclamatives, in contrast to their *que*-less homologs, involve more complex structure. In other words, wh-phrase + *que* exclamatives are not just run-of-the-mill exclamatives with a pronounced head, but they mask a more elaborated underlying structure. Suppose then that in exclamatives with *que,* the derivation proceeds in parallel fashion to that in (33), but then the exclamative wh-phrase undergoes a further step of A-bar movement to a left-peripheral position (CP or FocusP, for instance), as in (34):[12]

(34) [$_{FocusP}$ wh-phrase$_{exclamative}$ [$_{TP}$ ~~wh phrase$_{exclamative}$~~ [$_{T'}$ V [$_{vP}$ subject ~~V~~ ... ~~wh-phrase$_{exclamative}$~~]]]]

On this view, it is now possible to realize the head of FocusP by means of the complementizer *que*, as shown in abstract form in (35):[13]

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[12]   Movement of a constituent from a TP-internal subject position to a left-peripheral one (e.g., Spec,TP to Spec,CP) is assumed by different authors, such as Radford (2016) and references therein for subject wh-phrases followed by *that* in cases like (i) (see also Poletto's work, e.g., Poletto & Pollock 2009 for Romance):
      (i) (Eddie Irvine, BBC1 TV, kindly provided by Andrew Radford)
          We'll have to see what *that* happens.
[13]   Villa-García (2023) addresses the issue of having a CP-related projection whose head and specifier are simultaneously lexicalized (in flagrant breach of the traditional Doubly-Filled Comp Filter proposed in generativism to account for the standard-English wh- facts).

(35) [FocusP wh-phrase_exclamative [Focus' complementizer [TP ~~wh-phrase~~_exclamative   [T' V [_vP
      subject ~~V~~ ... ~~wh-phrase~~_exclamative]]]]]

The presence of *que* in the initial numeration creates a criterial position in the
left periphery (e.g., Spec,CP/FocusP); en route to its final landing site (FocusP), the
moving wh-exclamative transits through Spec,TP, which is an A-bar/A position,
leaving a trace/deleted copy in that position, which accounts for the mandatorily
postverbal occurrence of the subject.[14]

To make the foregoing discussion more concrete, consider a wh-exclamative
with *que* like that in (36)a. Under the currently pursued account, this sentence would
receive the analysis in (36)b (simplified again by ignoring potential projections in
between FocusP and TP, such as FinitenessP):

(36) a. ¡Qué   casa   *que*   tiene   tu   pareja!
         what   house   that   has   your   partner
         'Your partner has such a beautiful/big house!'
      b. [FocusP qué casa [Focus' que [TP ~~qué casa~~ [T' tiene [_vP tu pareja ~~tiene qué casa~~]]]]]

In particular, *qué casa* undergoes movement to a left-peripheral position
through the A/A-bar position Spec,TP, whose head is occupied by the verb, having
moved there from the *v*P/VP layer. The final landing site of the wh-phrase is a left-
peripheral specifier whose head is lexicalized as *que*. The subject, which cannot move
to the already-occupied Spec,TP position, remains in its postverbal position (see fn.
11 for evidence), accounting for the inversion effect observed.

Overall, wh-exclamatives in languages like Spanish are analyzed under the
proposal put forth herein thus, contingent on whether the pleonastic complementizer
occurs or not:[15]

(37) a. *Exclamatives without a pleonastic complementizer* (cf. (13))
         [... [TP wh-phrase_exclamative [T' V [_vP subject ~~V~~ ... ~~wh-phrase~~_exclamative]]]]
      b. *Exclamatives with a pleonastic complementizer* (cf. (12)/(36)a)
         [FocusP wh-phrase_exclamative [Focus' complementizer [TP ~~wh-phrase~~_exclamative [T' V
         [_vP subject ~~V~~ ... ~~wh-phrase~~_exclamative]]]]]

As I show momentarily, this analysis constitutes a major improvement over
competing accounts of exclamatives with *que* (on which see Section 2.1).[16]

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[14]   See Bošković (2007 et seq.) for a variety of arguments that feature-checking with
intermediate heads does not occur (hence no freezing effects are observed in intermediate
positions in the course of A-bar movement).
[15]   I deliberately ignore potential low intermediate positions of the moving wh-phrase
(e.g., an outer specifier of *v*P).
[16]   As noted by an anonymous reviewer, the analysis proposed herein bears some
resemblance to the account proposed by Castroviejo (2006: 43) for Catalan exclamatives. For
this author, although wh-interrogatives target Spec,TP (á la Barbosa 2001), wh-exclamatives
"move one step farther," as witnessed by the possibility of realizing the head of CP by means
of *que*. Thus, to Castroviejo's mind, wh-exclamatives transit through Spec,TP, leaving a
trace/copy, but unlike interrogatives, exclamatives (with and without *que*) always move to
Spec,CP, whose head can optionally be spelled out as *que*.

For one thing, the desired order (wh-exclamative + complementizer + V + subject) is obtained straightforwardly. Similarly, *que* is an element in the CP area under this account, which dispenses with the unwanted stipulation that *que* would occupy a position in the inflectional domain (see Section 2.1.1.2). What is more, the wh-exclamative and the attending complementizer stand in a spec-head configuration in (37)b, which explains why the presence of the complementizer is sensitive to the wh-phrase in its specifier (see Section 2.1.2). More concretely, in Asturian-Spanish varieties such as that spoken in Avilés, under the current account *qué*-exclamatives feature the simpler derivation in (33)/(37)a, whereas their *vaya* counterparts, which appear with concomitant *que*, involve the more complex one in (35)/(37)b.

Moreover, the impossibility of preverbal subjects follows naturally from the fact that Spec,TP is already occupied by the trace/deleted copy of the exclamative wh-phrase: the subject must therefore stay in the *v*P/VP area and cannot show up preverbally. Put differently, the account of inversion is the same irrespective of the type of exclamative involved (cf. (37)): Spec,TP is occupied (overtly or non-overtly) by the (moving) exclamative phrase, thus preventing the subject from moving into that position. Consequently, the fact that the account of inversion is unified further substantiates the analysis entertained here.

The currently-pursued proposal is furthermore wholly compatible with the possibility of having a high *que*, as in (38). (Note that this fact is a non-trivial problem for Villalba's 2019 account in (26)f).[17]

(38) a. Dice   que   qué casa   *que*   tiene   tu   pareja.
        says   that   what house   that   has   your   partner
        'He or she exclaimed that your partner has such a beautiful/big house!'
     b. Dice… [Force' que [FocusP qué casa [Focus' que [TP ~~qué casa~~ [T' tiene [*v*P tu pareja
        … ~~tiene qué casa~~]]]]]]

Additionally, this account can easily accommodate wh-exclamatives that do not trigger inversion, as in (39), from Francom (2012: 543) (see also fn. 6):

(39) ¡Qué   libros   más   difíciles   *Juan*   nos   asignó   leer!
      what   books   more   difficult   John   cl   assigned   reading
      'How difficult the books assigned by John are!'

Such complex wh-phrases are likely not genuine focal phrases, which is why they do not trigger inversion (see Villa-García, to appear, and references therein). As such, they may be placed in non-focal positions (e.g., in a TopicP position in the periphery, possibly arising via base-generation). Since the relevant phrases do not occupy –or move through– Spec,TP, this position is in principle available for the subject, which ends up surfacing preverbally in cases like (39).

The Brucart contrast in (18), where an adverb like *siempre* 'always' is deemed more acceptable for some speakers when pleonastic *que* is present (i.e., ?wh-phrase + *que* + *siempre* + V) than when it is not (i.e., *wh-phrase + *siempre* + V), is also amenable to an analysis along the lines of (35)/(37). To be more precise, the

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[17]   The account can also successfully capture cases of topics above the exclamative (see the discussion surrounding (29)), since TopicP dominates FocusP.

construction featuring *que* has a more sophisticated underlying structure, which effectively means that there exist potential adjunction sites for the adverb. This contrasts markedly with the *que*-less case, which assumes that the wh-phrase and the verb are in the same projection (TP) in a spec-head configuration, as claimed by (33), leaving no room for intervening adjuncts.

Likewise, this account also deals with the novel dialectal wh-interrogative plus *que* cases in (15), in parallel fashion to the exclamative cases discussed here (cf. (37)).

A last point in favor of the account pursued herein concerns exclamatives featuring expressions other than wh-phrases. Such cases include well-known configurations like the following:

(40) a. ¡Los libros *(que)   lee!
         the   books   that   reads
         'The books he or she reads!'
      b. ¡Lo   lento *(que)   conducen!
         the   slow that   drive
         'How slowly they drive!'

These examples differ crucially from wh-exclamatives in that *que* is now obligatory across varieties of Spanish (Brucart 1993, among others). The pre-*que* phrases in question are not possible as Spec,TP occupants, because they are not genuine A-moved subjects or wh-phrases stemming from A-bar movement: *los libros* and *lo rápido* are not inherently wh-, which precludes them from being interpretable as exclamatives directly (or, put another way, they do not bear $wh_{excl.}$-features). The only way for the relevant sentences to be properly marked as exclamatory is to create an unambiguous left-peripheral criterial position that will unmistakably lead to the interpretation of the utterance as exclamative. Since this occurs in the periphery (by hypothesis, in FocusP), then *que* is called upon (in the spirit of Platzack's 1998 Visibility Condition for the C-domain). Thus, the desired result is accomplished under the derivation in (37)b, with *que*, as shown by (40) above, but not under (37)a, which would yield the ungrammatical and unintelligible example in (41):

(41) *¡Lo   lento   conducen!
        the   slow   drive
        Intended meaning: 'How slowly they drive!'

In sum, a modification of Barbosa's Spec,TP-as-an-A-bar-position analysis which assumes that wh-exclamatives followed by a complementizer further move to a left-peripheral projection headed by *que* is technically feasible and goes a long way to explain a rather complex set of data, to the detriment of competing accounts.[18]

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[18]   That wh-exclamative + complementizer sentences involve more structure than their complementizer-less counterparts is indicated by the following piece of data:
      (i) (*4 Estrellas*, episode 107, Spanish Radio & Television Corporation, RTVE, 26 October 2023)
         ¡Qué cariñoso ¿no? que   estás!
          what loving   not   that   are
         'How loving you are today, aren't you?'

Moreover, the analysis makes several correct empirical predictions and explains the data without further stipulation, which should be taken as a strong argument in its favor.[19]

4. Conclusions

This paper has revisited a long-standing issue in Spanish and Romance syntax: the contentious analysis of obligatory inversion, which came into focus in the generative tradition with the seminal work of Torrego (1984). There are several syntactic accounts of the ban on preverbal subjects in focused phrases such as wh-questions on the market, with the T-to-C movement account and the Spec,TP-as-an-A-bar position account as the most influential ones.

I have capitalized on the fact that inversion is not an intrinsic property of wh-interrogatives; inversion should instead be attributed to preposed focused phrases more generally. Therefore, inversion affects other focal phrases, including wh-exclamatives. Importantly, these constructions can feature an overt complementizer after the wh-phrase in different dialects of Spanish, and yet inversion is observed regardless in most cases.

This provides a new argument against both the T-to-C and the Spec,TP-as-an-a-bar-position accounts. I have also reviewed extant accounts of wh-exclamatives within Rizzi's articulated left periphery and concluded that these proposals do not provide a satisfactory account of obligatory inversion (amongst other properties of overtly-headed exclamatives) either.
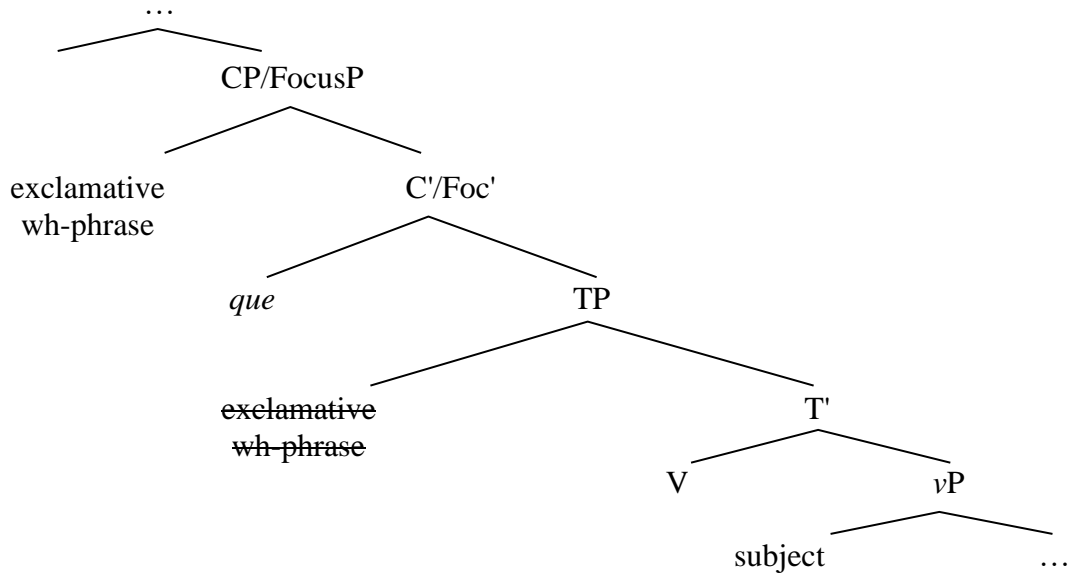
Set against this background, I have put forward a proposal which assumes a combination of the major existing accounts: on the one hand, the analysis adopts Barbosa's (2001) claim that Spec,TP can host a moved wh-phrase which, I argue, can also be exclamative (not just interrogative). That position is therefore unavailable for the subject, which must stay in situ in the VP area. The verb, for its part, standardly moves to T°. Once exclamatives with *que* are brought into the picture, the analysis proposed has been shown to involve a more intricate structure. More specifically, such exclamatives involve additional movement of the exclamative wh-phrase to a left-

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In (i), a questioned negation intervenes between the wh-exclamative phrase and *que*. Speakers who accept *qué*-exclamatives plus *que* find the counterpart of (i) without *que* ungrammatical (and in fact, difficult to interpret): **¡Qué cariñoso ¿no? estás!*. It is not clear how data like (i) should be analyzed, as the questioned negation intervenes between the wh-phrase and *que*, and the example seems to involve a restart at the point when *que* occurs, symptomatic of some sort of blend/bipartite structure involving the wh-exclamative on the one hand and then a sentence heralded by *que*, on the other. At any rate, the data in question are in principle compatible with a more elaborated structure, which is actually the claim made here for *que* exclamatives (cf. (37)b), in contrast to their homologs without *que*, which feature less structure (cf. (37)a).

[19]   For this analysis to work, there is no need to invoke a Rizzian approach to the leftmost part of the clause; a CP-recursion analysis would suffice to account for cases like (38), involving a high *que* above the wh-phrase plus *que* sequence. What matters for our purposes is that we do not need to make a commitment to either type of account of the clausal left edge, as the proposal put forward herein is compatible with both sorts of analysis.

peripheral specifier (e.g., FocusP/CP), whose head is ultimately spelled out as *que*, as shown in (42):

(42)

```
                    …
              ／＼
          CP/FocusP
          ／＼
  exclamative        C'/Foc'
  wh-phrase        ／＼
               que        TP
                       ／＼
             exclamative      T'
             wh-phrase      ／＼
                         V        vP
                               ／＼
                          subject    …
```

On this view, the difference between exclamatives with and without *que* does not reduce to a mere pronunciation difference (i.e., realize/do not realize the complementizer, as would be the case in comparable proposals such as Castroviejo 2006); the two sentences mask two different –though related– underlying derivations:

(43)   a. *Exclamatives without a pleonastic complementizer*
       [… [$_{TP}$ wh-phrase$_{exclamative}$ [$_{T'}$ V [$_{vP}$ subject V̶ ... w̶h̶-̶p̶h̶r̶a̶s̶e̶$_{exclamative}$]]]]
    b. *Exclamatives with a pleonastic complementizer* (= (42))
       [$_{FocusP}$ wh-phrase$_{exclamative}$ [$_{Focus'}$ complementizer [$_{TP}$ w̶h̶-̶p̶h̶r̶a̶s̶e̶$_{exclamative}$ [$_{T'}$ V [$_{vP}$ subject V̶ ... w̶h̶-̶p̶h̶r̶a̶s̶e̶$_{exclamative}$]]]]]

This analysis solves a number of problems for extant accounts, including the spec-head relation established between the exclamative constituent and the complementizer, which is sensitive to the phrase in its specifier, as shown by dialectal variation data; the possibility of keeping the complementizer in CP and thus voiding the need to adopt the far-fetched stipulation that *que* is a TP-related element; the inversion observed, since there is no empty preverbal position to which the subject could move (and which is furthermore the same analysis adopted for inversion without pleonastic *que* and for wh-interrogatives more generally, which coheres well with the prospect of a unitary account of the inversion facts); the verb staying in the inflectional domain, which dispenses with the need to move the verb to the CP layer –one of the most controversial aspects of traditional T-to-C accounts; the possibility of having exclamative phrases that are both preceded and followed by an overt complementizer; the sparse cases of non-inverting exclamatives attested in different dialects; as well as exclamatives without an intrinsic wh-phrase, which necessitate the complementizer.

An open question at this point is how a clause is typed as interrogative or as exclamative, since they both target Spec,TP in the *que*-less case, and whether this

follows directly (or solely) from the syntactic structure (on which, see, in addition to the preceding discussion regarding different interrogative vs. exclamative features, Zanuttini & Portner 2003).

An important observation stemming from the foregoing discussion is that the facts concerning inverting wh-exclamative phrases with a complementizer show that it is the wh-phrase + head sequence (the full projection) that needs to be contiguous to the verb(al cluster) in inversion environments in languages like Spanish.

All things considered, the paper urges future researchers to consider the facts from exclamatives across different varieties as well as other preposed focal phrases in any analysis that tries to capture the much-debated phenomenon of subject-verb inversion observed with preposed focused constituents in languages like Spanish. Put another way, future proposals attempting to explain the obligatory S-V inversion effect with preposed focal phrases in Spanish will certainly need to take into consideration the evidence from inverting wh-exclamatives containing overt complementizers.

Acknowledgments

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