

Towards a unified analysis of root clause complementizers

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This paper focuses on the properties of Spanish root clauses that are introduced by the complementizer *que* (for instance, (I) *Que Juan viene*. ‘(someone said that) Juan is coming.’ (II) *Que venga*. ‘He/She should come.’ (III) *Sí que viene*. ‘He/She DOES come.’). In these contexts the complementizer is not a prototypical subordinator. So the aim of this paper is to investigate its function, determine the syntactic position that it occupies and describe the interpretations associated with the different constructions. This contribution relates to the topic of the workshop by analyzing the syntax and pragmatics of root clause complementizers and its interaction with information structure.

I propose that the different constructions containing a root clause complementizer can be reduced to three types: (in)subordinating *que* (I) in ForceP (Rizzi 1997), directive *que* (II) in MoodP (associated with clause typing, cf. Lohnstein 2015) and presuppositional *que* (III) in FinP. The fact that the complementizer occupies different positions in the different constructions motivates the idea that the syntactic structure has an impact on the interpretation.

The phenomenon of root clause complementation has been studied from a generative (for instance Demonte & Fernández Soriano 2009) and functional perspective (for instance Gras 2010, Rodríguez-Ramalle 2015). The innovative aspect of this contribution is that it proposes a unified analysis, taking into account a variety of different constructions and discussing not only their syntax but also their interpretation. Finally, this paper also aims at contributing to the discussion on the categorial properties of complementizers. I argue that there is only one lexical element *que* in Spanish that is underspecified and that acquires different interpretation depending on the syntactic position it occupies (contra for instance Demonte & Fernández Soriano 2014, Etxepare 2010, Corr 2015).

Referencias

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