

Current Formal Aspects of Spanish Syntax and Semantics

Current Formal Aspects
of Spanish Syntax and Semantics

Edited by

Melvin González-Rivera and Sandro Sessarego

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

Current Formal Aspects of Spanish Syntax and Semantics,
Edited by Melvin González-Rivera and Sandro Sessarego

This book first published 2012

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2012 by Melvin González-Rivera and Sandro Sessarego and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-3898-5, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-3898-6

This book is dedicated to Amanda, Frandú,
and to our students.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	ix
List of Figures.....	x
Introduction	1
Melvin González-Rivera and Sandro Sessarego	
Chapter One.....	8
Predication, Complementation and the Grammar of <i>Dequeísmo</i> Structures	
Luis Silva-Villar and Javier Gutiérrez-Rexach	
Chapter Two	42
Spanish Clitic Placement: Direct Object Clitics are Markers of Epistemic Specificity	
Verónica González López	
Chapter Three	78
Relative and Possessive Features in Colloquial Spanish	
Manuel Delicado-Cantero	
Chapter Four	95
The Subject of Psych Verbs in Spanish	
Patricia Andueza	
Chapter Five	121
The Use of Demonstratives as Discourse Particles and the Dimension of Meaning	
Javier Gutiérrez-Rexach and Iker Zulaica-Hernández	
Chapter Six	147
Covert Exclamatives (in Spanish) and LF	
Pascual José Masullo	

Chapter Seven.....	179
On the Syntax and Semantics of Spanish Binominal Noun Phrases (cQBNPs)	
Melvin González-Rivera and Manuel Delicado-Cantero	
Chapter Eight.....	198
Characterizing Medial and Low Complementizers in Spanish: Recomplementation <i>que</i> and “jussive/optative” <i>que</i>	
Julio Villa-García	
Chapter Nine.....	229
The Contribution of Afro-Hispanic Contact Varieties to the Study of Syntactic Microvariation	
Sandro Sessarego	
Chapter Ten	251
Variation, Universals, and Contact Induced Change: Language Evolution across Generations and Domains	
Sandro Sessarego and Javier Gutiérrez-Rexach	
Chapter Eleven	271
Spanish PredNPs at the Syntax-Semantics Interface	
Melvin González-Rivera	
Contributors.....	302

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This volume would not have been possible without the support of several people from both an academic and a personal standpoint. We wish to thank the generous assistance of all of them: Amanda Talbert, Patricia Andueza, Grant Armstrong, Ksenija Bilbija, Lucy Ghastin, Grace Bloodgood, José Camacho, José Cárdenas-Bunsen, Marisa Carpenter, Alicia Cerezo, Loredana Comparone, Manuel Delicado-Cantero, Jason Doroga, Veronica González López, Timothy Gupton, Javier Gutiérrez-Rexach, Paula Kempchinsky, David Korfhagen, Nate Maddux, Pascual Masullo, Catalina Méndez-Vallejo, Iván Ortega-Santos, Alberto Pastor, Fernando Tejedo, Cathy Stafford, Julio Villa-García, Aurélie Rakotondrafara, Luis Silva-Villar, Iker Zulaica-Hernández, Bill Cudlipp, Rajiv Rao, Diana Frantzen, Bell Caitlin, Elizabeth Christianson, Stephanie Mondloch, Carly Nashban, Michelle Ruppert, Nicole Tautages, Sanam Salimi and Tammy Herbst-Koel. Thank you!

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 10-1: Gender Agreement Evolution in YS DP	259
Fig. 10-2: Gender Agreement Evolution in CVS DP	260

INTRODUCTION

MELVIN GONZÁLEZ-RIVERA
AND SANDRO SESSAREGO

The object of this introductory chapter is to summarize the content of the present book and, in doing so, provide food for thought on the current and future role of Spanish linguistics to the contribution of linguistic theory. During the last decades, there has been an increasing interest in Spanish related to theoretical and applied linguistics, especially in the United States. Much of the research done on this language has covered a wide array of areas, including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, language acquisition, biolinguistics, and sociolinguistics, among other linguistic subfields. Such an academic vitality has resulted in books, monographs, and articles addressing a variety of aspects of the aforementioned disciplines and encouraging researchers to adopt interdisciplinary approaches to address and answer shared questions on the nature of language. The current volume is representative of this trend. The research in our book points to a cohesiveness in Spanish linguistics that lies in the integration of up-to-date empirically-based linguistic research with current theoretical assumptions on the nature of syntax, semantics, and their interface.

Current Formal Aspects of Spanish Syntax and Semantics is a compilation of scholarly articles providing new perspectives on a variety of subjects that have been at the center of linguistic research for many years: *dequeísmo* and its relation to predication and complementation; clitic placement; the expression of possession in relative clauses; the nature of psych verbs' subjects; the meaning of demonstratives in discourse; the structure and interpretation of covert exclamatives; the essence of binomial noun phrases; the characterization of *que*-complementizers; nominal reference, phi-agreement, N-drop, and dialectal variation; Agree and the evolution of agreement; and the nature of predicative NPs.

In Chapter 1, Luis Silva-Villar and Javier Gutiérrez-Rexach develop an analysis of Spanish *dequeísmo* along the lines of predicate inversion -i.e.,

inverted embedded predication is a formal mechanism that *dequeísta* speakers use to convey differences related to information structure. The *deque-C* structure is headed by a semantically weak preposition *de* acting as DP-nominal inflection, along the lines of den Dikken (2006), Villalba (2007), Delicado-Cantero & González-Rivera (2011) among others. This nominal ‘copula’ articulates the subject-predicate relation. In other words, the *dequeísta* structure is the result of the predicative inversion of a constituent that takes the *que* construction as the underlying subject of the small clause. The insertion of *de* is required to obtain inversion, where *de* acts as a formal marker signaling the presence of a silent operator.

In Chapter 2, Verónica González López assumes a morphosyntactic approach to the analysis of direct object (DO) clitic placement in Spanish in which clitics are markers of epistemic specificity. One of the main objectives underlying the analysis developed in this article is the unveiling of the morphosyntactic and semantic features that guide the structural behavior and placement of Spanish DO clitics. González López argues that Spanish DO clitics are affix-type elements that mark the semantic notion of epistemic specificity. According to the author, the vast amount of cross-linguistic evidence together with data from adult second-language acquisition confirm the adequacy of postulating specificity as a universal semantic feature encoded in the grammar. In addition, the evidence presented in this paper further consolidates previous claims regarding the inherent status of clitics as specific elements (Suñer 1988; Uriagereka 1995). In particular, the current analysis argues that Spanish DO clitics are markers of epistemic specificity and head their own specialized functional projection in the CP-phase. One of the most relevant results that stems from this proposal is the elimination of clitic movement. This has important theoretical implications since it provides a new and more economical analysis of the phenomena under inspection.

In Chapter 3, Manuel Delicado-Cantero analyzes the structure *el cual su N* in Modern Spanish, which expresses possession in a relative clause in a variety of ways. Building on de Vries’ (2002) analysis of Dutch possessive relatives and den Dikken’s (1998) analysis of possessive structures, Delicado-Cantero argues that *el cual su N* derives via predicate inversion. As a result of this operation, the [+possession] feature materializes as the resumptive possessive *su*. Furthermore, following Haegeman (2000), Delicado-Cantero claims that the relative *el cual* is not extracted from the relative clause but rather merges directly in Spec,CP. The link with the inner possessive construction is maintained via a correferential *pro*.

In Chapter 4, Patricia Andueza examines the subject of psych verbs in Spanish and challenges previous accounts which suggested that the dative experiencer is a quirky subject. Andueza proves that what seemed to be a quirky subject is actually a left-dislocated constituent. She proposes that the nominative object can be analyzed as the cause, and the dative subject as the experiencer; given these assumptions, the former should be located in a higher projection than the latter. According to the author, the word order in these constructions does not correspond to the thematic structure, but rather obeys purely pragmatic factors (cf. Cuervo 1999; Fernández Soriano 1999; Masullo 1992).

In Chapter 5, Javier Gutiérrez-Rexach and Iker Zulaica-Hernández study the use of neuter demonstrative pronouns as a productive source of discourse particle formation in Spanish. They show that the use of these elements is commonly found in natural conversation. The approach to demonstratives developed in this paper integrates the descriptive and expressive meaning of these particles as a relation between semantic content and discourse context. Following previous research on the quantificational treatment of a set of Spanish reformulative entities, the authors propose a uniform characterization for these elements as operators with a tripartite structure connecting a proposition or set of propositions to the proposition that they introduce. Complex demonstrative particles can be seen as selective quantificational elements that bind an *abstract object variable* (event, fact, proposition, etc.) in their restriction. Such an object is associated with the relevant assertions or presuppositions in the common ground. The advantage of this characterization is that it allows for a reconciliation of the directly referential and quantificational uses of demonstratives, the discourse anaphoric properties of demonstrative pronouns, and their discourse particle nature (cf. Lewis 1979; Von Stechow 1994; Kadmon 2000).

In Chapter 6, Pascal Masullo addresses a seemingly heterogeneous class of words and constructions (mainly in Spanish) associated with an extreme degree feature. Although usually characterized as simply emphatic or “elative”, he proposes instead to analyze them as covert or implicit exclaimatives on the basis of a cluster of semantic and formal properties they share with overt exclaimatives. Not only are they factive and have “widening” effects, but they also resist negation and are incompatible with other operators in the same clause. The author argues that these elements move to Spec of Focus Phrase (Rizzi 1997) at LF, hence the noted incompatibility. The LF movement operation is sensitive to locality constraints such as Relativized Minimality/Minimal Link Condition. It is also shown that multiple exclaimatives are possible (even with some

restrictions), exhibiting Superiority effects, just like multiple questions, a fact that has gone unnoticed up till now.

In Chapter 7, Melvin González-Rivera and Manuel Delicado-Cantero examine several aspects of the syntax and semantics of Spanish comparative Qualitative Binominal Noun Phrases (c-QBNPs). Structurally, Spanish c-QBNPs involve two nominal/adjectival phrases joined via a linker *de* after predicate inversion (den Dikken 2006). While previous literature has mainly focused on the so-called Definiteness Agreement Effect (Español-Echevarría 1997, 1998), these authors argue that the syntax of this construction is instead subjected to Specificity agreement (cf. Villalba 2007). They provide further evidence that feature sharing properly explains the licensing of the phi-features involved (cf. Frampton & Gutmann 2000; Pesetsky & Torrego 2007). Their discussion on the syntax and semantics of Spanish c-QBNPs sheds light on the difference between syntactic and semantic definiteness. They provide cross-linguistic data in support of this analysis.

In Chapter 8, Julio Villa-García studies the issue of multiple homophonous complementizers in Spanish. The author argues that Spanish has two distinct medial/low complementizers, namely the recomplementation *que* and the jussive/optative *que*. The two complementizers radically differ from each other both distributionally and syntactically. Thus, what seem to be instances of the same element, in practice, constitute distinct complementizers occupying different left-peripheral heads and displaying different distributional and syntactic behavior. Following Rizzi's (1997 *et seq.*) architecture of the CP domain (i.e., ForceP (TopicP) (FocusP) FinitenessP), Villa-García argues that recomplementation *que* is a medial complementizer in the head of TopicP, and thus a topic marker, while jussive/optative *que* is a low complementizer in the head of FinitenessP, and thus the lexical realization of the subjunctive mood. In support of this hypothesis, he draws a systematic comparison between the two elements and points out to a variety of differences that receive a uniform account under the analysis presented in the paper.

In Chapter 9, Sandro Sessarego stresses the importance of microparametric studies on substandard dialects to test and refine linguistic hypotheses that have usually been built on standardized language data. In particular, he focuses on Afro-Hispanic contact varieties, as their close relatedness to standard Spanish (stSp) can provide linguists with a great empirically-based testing ground (cf. Kayne 1996). Sessarego provides examples from three case studies dealing with nominal reference, phi-agreement, and NP-ellipses in Afro-Bolivian Spanish (ABS). The empirical data presented challenge several aspects of current syntactic and

semantic theory on the nature of DP structure and interpretation. Among other findings, this study rejects the supposed universality of the Nominal Mapping Parameter (Chierchia 1998); it supports a version of Agree which removes the Valuation/Interpretability Biconditional relation (in line with Pesetsky & Torrego 2007); and it accounts for the grammaticality of certain elliptical constructions in ABS –and their parallel ungrammaticality in stSp– by postulating that the preposition *cun* ‘with’ in this Afro-Hispanic dialect shares many features with stSp *de* ‘of’ and therefore it heads complementizer-like structures (cf. Kayne 1994; den Dikken 2003).

In Chapter 10, Sandro Sessarego and Javier Gutiérrez-Rexach address two cases of contact-induced change, by focusing on parallel developments of gender agreement phenomena in two Afro-Hispanic contact varieties: Afro-Bolivian Spanish (Bolivia) and Chota Valley Spanish (Ecuador). This study shows how both biologically endowed operations (i.e., the syntactic operation Agree, cf. Chomsky 2000) and social constructs (i.e., linguistic stigma/prestige) combine to shape language, whose nature obeys universal rules and adapts to the external environment. Thus, they defend a mixed approach in which language change takes place along paths set by universal properties of grammar, but is triggered by external (sociohistorical) factors.

Finally, in Chapter 11, Melvin González-Rivera analyzes several aspects of the syntax and semantics of the so-called Spanish Predicative Noun Phrases (PredNPs). Spanish PredNP is a non-verbal construction that exhibits clausal properties. These clauses involve predication and clearly denote a proposition or <t> in Montague’s terminology. González-Rivera analyzes these constructions by assuming the presence of a RELATOR-head (den Dikken 2006), which is instantiated by the feature T(ense). In order to explain the internal structure of Spanish PredNPs, he argues that the XP-predicate moves to the left of the subject. This occurs in order to discharge the strong semantic feature *evaluativity*. The syntactic analysis is presented within the framework provided by Generalized Minimalist Grammar (GMG), as developed by Gutiérrez-Rexach (1997, 1998), and González-Rivera (2010).

The current volume is thus a collection of articles by scholars with a solid, long track of works in different topics of Spanish grammar, as well as by younger researchers applying the latest theoretical tools to the study of language phenomena. It is our foremost hope and endeavor that students and scholars in the departments of Spanish, Romance Languages and Linguistics specializing in syntax, semantics, and their interface may find this volume beneficial to their research and profit from it.

References

- Chierchia, Gennaro. 1998. Reference to kinds across languages. *Natural Language Semantics* 6, 339-405.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquiries. In Roger Martin, David Michaels & Juan Uriagereka (eds.), *Step by step : Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, 89-156. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Cuervo, María Cristina. 2002. A control-VS-raising theory of dative experiencers. In Perex-Leroux, Ana Teresa & Yves Roberge (eds.), *Romance Linguistics. Theory and Acquisition. Selected papers from the 32nd Linguistics Symposium on Romance Languages*, 111-30. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- de Vries, Mark. 2002. *The Syntax of relativization*. PhD dissertation, Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam.
- Delicado-Cantero & González-Rivera (2011). Feature sharing and (in)definiteness in the nominal domain. *Proceedings of the 34th Annual Penn Linguistics Colloquium* 17, (1) 125-134.
- den Dikken, Marcel. 1998. Predicate Inversion in DP. In Alexiadou, Artemis & Chris Wilder (eds.), *Possessors, predicates and movement in the Determiner Phrase*, 177-214. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- . 2003. The Structure of the Noun Phrase in Rotuman. *Lincom Studies in Austronesian Linguistics* 05. Munchen: LINCOM Europa.
- . 2006. *Relators and linkers. The syntax of predication, predicate Inversion, and copulas*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Español-Echevarría, Manuel. 1997. Inalienable possession in copulative contexts and the DP-structure. *Lingua*, 101, 211-244.
- . 1998. N/A of a N DP's. Predicate raising and subject licensing. In Armin Schwegler, Bernard Tranel, and Myriam Uribe-Etxebarria (eds.), *Romance Linguistics. Theoretical perspectives*, 67-80. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Fernández Soriano, Olga. 1999. Two types of impersonal sentences in Spanish: Locative and dative subjects. *Syntax* 2.2. 101-140.
- Frampton, John & Sam Gutmann. 2000. Agreement is feature sharing. Available at: <http://www.math.neu.edu/ling/pdffiles/agrisfs.pdf>.
- González-Rivera, Melvin. 2010. On the internal structure of Spanish verbless clauses. PhD dissertation, Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University.
- Gutiérrez-Rexach, Javier. 1997. Quantification, context dependence and generalized minimalist grammar. PhD dissertation, Los Angeles, CA:

- UCLA.
- . 1998. Generalized minimalist grammars. In Carlos Martín-Vide (ed.), *Issues in mathematical linguistics*, 19-52. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Haegeman, Liliane. 2000. The external possessor construction in West Flemish, *GG@G [@ ?] Generative Grammar in Geneva* 1, 1-19.
- Kadmon, Nirit. 2000. *Formal pragmatics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Kayne, Richard. 1994. *The antisymmetry of syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- . 1996. Microparametric syntax: Some introductory remarks. In Black, James R. & Virginia Motapanyane (eds.), *Microparametric Syntax and Dialect Variation*, ix-xxviii. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Lewis, David. 1979. Score-keeping in a language game. In: Bäuerle, Rainer, Egli, Urs & Arnim von Stechow, (eds.), *Semantics from different points of view*, 172-187. Berlin: Springer Verlag.
- Masullo, Pascual. 1992. Incorporation and case theory in Spanish: a crosslinguistic perspective, Ph.D. dissertation. Seattle, WA: University of Washington.
- Pesetsky, David & Esther Torrego. 2007. The syntax of valuation and the interpretability of features. In Simin Karimi, Vida Samiian & Wendy K. Wilkins (eds.), *Phrasal and Clausal Architecture: Syntactic derivation and interpretation*, 262-294. Amsterdam/Philadelphia. John Benjamins.
- Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The fine structure of the left periphery. In Haegeman, Liliane (ed.), *Elements of grammar*, 281-337. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Suñer, Margarita. 1988. The role of agreement in clitic-doubled constructions. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 6, (3), 391-434.
- Uriagereka, Juan. 1995. Aspects of the syntax of clitic placement in Western Romance. *Linguistic Inquiry* 26, (1), 79-123.
- Villalba, Xavier. 2007. True and spurious articles in Germanic and Romance. *Cuadernos de Lingüística del I.U. Ortega y Gasset* 14, 121-134.
- von Fintel, Kai, 1994. *Restrictions on quantifier domains*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts.

CHAPTER ONE

PREDICATION, COMPLEMENTATION AND THE GRAMMAR OF *DEQUEÍSMO* STRUCTURES

LUIS SILVA-VILLAR
COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY
AND JAVIER GUTIÉRREZ-REXACH
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

1. Introduction¹

The linguistic phenomenon traditionally called *dequeísmo* has been usually characterized as the insertion of a non-required prepositional marker *de* preceding standard sentential constituents headed by *que*. There are indeed instances in modern Spanish in which a verb selects for a sentential complement headed by the preposition *de*, as in *adolecer de que* ‘to have the bad habit (that)’, *provenir de que* ‘to originate from (that)’, *depender de que* ‘to depend on (that)’. There is another group of verbs selecting for sentential *que* complements, without a preposition: *pensar que* ‘to think that’, *creer que* ‘to believe that’, *estimar que* ‘to consider that’. The core group of verbs giving rise to *dequeísmo* (i.e. unselected *de*) belongs to this group: *pienso de que*, *creo de que*, *parece de que*, etc. Nowadays, *dequeísmo* is an interesting and distinctive characteristic of oral Spanish, Portuguese and Catalan (bilingual Catalans [Sp-Cat]).

Queísmo, which is more recently associated with *dequeísmo* after Rabanales (1974), is the omission of *de* where it would be required by the

¹ We would like to thank two anonymous reviewers for their extensive comments on this paper, as well as the audience at the 2006 *Hispanic Linguistics Symposium* (University of Western Ontario), where a previous version of this article was presented.

standard norms: *adolece que, proviene que*. As an initial remark, it can be observed that diachronic data provide evidence that what constitutes *dequeísmo* in a historical Period A may not do so in a (subsequent) Period B. Thus, the evolution of this phenomenon may provide important insights in helping us understand the *dequeísta* varieties of Spanish, although we will not deal with this aspect in the present paper. The examples in (1), from Cervantes (Golden Age Spanish), would be considered instances of *dequeísmo* in contemporary Spanish.

- (1)
 - a. Se acabó de confirmar *de que* aquel era su hermano. (1605, Cervantes, *Quijote*)²
 ‘In the end, it was confirmed that that one was his brother.’
 - b. Sepa el mundo...*de que* Camila no solo guardó la lealtad a su esposo, sino que le dio venganza del que se atrevió a ofendelle. (1605, Cervantes, *Quijote*)
 ‘Everybody should know... that Camila not only was loyal to her husband but also took revenge on the one who dared to offend him.’
 - c. Habéisme de prometer *de que* con ninguna pregunta ni otra cosa no interromperéis (sic) el hilo de mi triste historia. (1605, Cervantes, *Quijote*) (CORDE).
 ‘You should promise me that neither by questioning nor by any other means you will interrupt the thread of my sad story.’³

Some authors treat *dequeísmo* and *queísmo* as a unified phenomenon. For those who follow this approach, the expression or omission of *de* is explained by a single factor, and the unified phenomenon is labeled as *(de)queísmo* (García 1986). There is evidence, nevertheless, refuting this approach. First, it is well known that *queísmo* is not so strongly marked as uneducated (in all dialects). García Yebra (1988) remarks that *queísmo* is “menos tosco” ‘less unrefined’: “el queísmo no es [...] infrecuente en la

² Data are taken from a variety of sources, including detailed surveys with *dequeísta* speakers, several corpora (RAE, *Español culto*/CORDE, BYU/NEH), and internet search engines. Only a few samples have been created/modified within this project to accommodate to preexisting data, which have been indeed tested by *dequeísta* speakers, mostly from Spain (Valencia) and Latin America (Perú). We would like to note that *dequeísta* speakers sometimes do not agree with each other over grammatical judgments, which is not inconsistent with our findings, considering the wide extension of the phenomenon and its sub-standard nature.

³ In early 17th C. *prometer* used to select *de*.

lengua culta del español antiguo y contemporáneo” ‘*queísmo* is not so infrequent among old and contemporaneous educated Spanish speakers’. Second, speakers who are *dequeístas* are not necessarily *queístas* and vice versa. Furthermore, considering the extension of the phenomenon, *queísmo* has been reported to be more widespread. Gómez Molina & Gómez Devis (1995) observed that 69.8% of polled speakers consider *dequeísmo* a stigmatized phenomenon; on the other hand, only 15.4% reported the same opinion about *queísmo*. According to Rabanales (2005) only 32% show instances of both phenomena, while 45% have only *queísmo* and 11% only *dequeísmo*. See also Gómez (2009) for similar conclusions.

An independent argument supporting the split of both phenomena is that *queísmo*, contrary to *dequeísmo*, affects prepositions other than *de* (Gómez Torrego 1999). For example, in (2a) the preposition *en* is omitted (*confiar en*), and in (2b) the missing preposition is *a* (*apostar a*):

(2)

a. Confío que llegue pronto.

‘I am confident that s/he will arrive soon.’

b. Me apuesto lo que quieras que no ganas.

‘I bet you anything you like that you will not win.’

Furthermore, the syntactic contexts where they respectively occur are not identical. For example, *queísmo* is very common with relative clauses and it represents the omission not only of a simple preposition but also of combinations of prepositions plus an article (3); additionally, it is possible with pronominal verbs (4) and with adnominal complements (5):⁴

(3)

a. Este es el libro () que te hablé (del)

‘This is the book () that I talked to you about’ (of the)

b. Hay políticos () que les cuesta decir la verdad (a los)

‘There are politicians to whom it is hard to tell the truth’ (to the)

⁴ An anonymous reviewers suggests that, syntactically, it could be said that (3), shows the extension of the bare relative complementizer *que* to contexts which should otherwise be oblique relatives. In (5a) *cuenta* does not have a sentential complement; it has a DP with a relative clause.

- (4)
- a. No me acuerdo () quién era (de) (Arjona 1978)
‘I do not remember who s/he was.’ (of)
 - b. Se convenció () que no se podía recuperar (de)
‘S/he was convinced that it was not recoverable.’ (of)
- (5)
- a. No nos damos cuenta () los alcances que tienen
‘We do not realize the reach they have.’ (of)
 - b. Uno se queda con la idea () que ahí está
‘One accepts the idea that it is there.’ (of)

Based on these facts the right methodological approach seems to be to split *queísmo* and *dequeísmo* as two independent phenomena. Once we have clarified this point, we will focus on pure *dequeísmo*. This paper is organized as follows. Sections 2 to 4 review previous approaches. Section 2 deals with sociolinguistic approaches and section 3 with those of a pragmatic nature. Section 4 reviews formal studies on *dequeísmo*. The main conclusion from these sections is that these approaches do not offer comprehensive explanations for the phenomenon. Section 5 introduces a novel syntactic approach to *dequeísmo* that takes inverted embedded predication as the formal mechanism that *dequeísta* speakers follow to convey distinctions related to information structure in which what has been previously identified using different pragmatic labels is no more than a speaker’s assumption about the status of the predication process. Section 6 contrasts *deque* constructions with sentential complements of nouns and adjectives. Section 7 introduces *deque* complements of prepositions. Finally, the status of the null element triggering the operations deriving the *deque* structure is discussed in section 8.

2. Previous Accounts: Sociolinguistic Approaches

In this section we will examine several accounts of *dequeísmo* and discuss why they are problematic. There are several traditional explanations of *dequeísmo* depending on what is considered its trigger: (i) speaker errors; (ii) “confusion” in verb selection; (iii) an instance of “uneducated” or “improper” linguistic behavior, and so on (see Gómez Torrego [1999] for a very complete summary). Rabanales (1974, 2005) defines *dequeísmo* as “[la] tendencia a anteponer la preposición *de* al *que* [...], cuando la ‘norma oficial’ no hace esperar su presencia.” (‘the tendency to prepose the preposition *de* to *que* when the standard norm

does not favor its presence'). In the same vein, Nández (1984) states: "se entiende por dequeísmo la construcción 'viciosa' de la secuencia *de que* a causa de la presencia superflua de la partícula *de*." ('*dequeísmo* is commonly understood as the 'deviated' construction of the sequence *de que* produced by the superfluous presence of *de*'). Similarly, for RAE (*Diccionario*, 21ed, 1992), *dequeísmo* is "[el] empleo indebido de la locución *de que* cuando el régimen verbal no lo admite." '*Dequeísmo* is the improper use of the complex expression *de que* when the verb does not require it'. In sum, assessments such as 'lack of normativity', 'deviated construction', 'superfluous presence of *de*', 'non admissible selection of *de*', among other potential prescriptive labels, summarize the treatment of the phenomenon by normative grammarians.

A salient feature of *dequeísmo* is the prevalence of variation across dialects, and even within a single dialect or a single speaker. Although a systematic dialectal study is probably overdue, there are several factors that make it difficult to carry out. First, it is not clear whether the phenomenon varies strictly along a dialect-to-dialect axis, given that it seems to cut across dialects. In Peninsular Spanish, it is more common in the Eastern and Southern areas; in Latin American Spanish, in the Andean region, Southern-Cone dialects and (to a lesser extent) Mexico. Second, *dequeísta* speakers do not instantiate this construction systematically. The pressure of normative standards constrains its natural development. There is finally a clear scarcity of cross-dialectal studies (an exception is Del Moral 2003).

There have been several attempts to explain *dequeísmo* from a variety of approaches: sociolinguistic; pragmatic (functionalist); and syntactic. Let us start with the most prominent sociolinguistic proposal: Hypercorrection Theory. For Bentivoglio (1980-1981), lower middle-class speakers hypercorrect themselves to more prestigious varieties by inserting *de*. In other words, *dequeísmo* is perceived as a prestige device to correct the more generalized or less prestigious *queísmo*. An advantage of this theory is that it provides a relatively straightforward explanation of *dequeísmo* in bilingual contexts. Thus, by syntactic transfer, many speakers produce *queísta* structures (omission of *de* when it is required in Spanish), and hypercorrect to compensate that transfer. In Gómez Torrego's words: "Al percatarse muchos de ellos de que incurren en *queísmo* cuando hablan en castellano, tratan de corregir tal fenómeno para no ser *queístas* introduciendo la preposición *de*, pero, en muchas ocasiones, lo hacen allí donde esa preposición no está exigida por ningún elemento de la oración" ('When speakers realize that they incur in *queísmo* in Spanish, they try to correct it by inserting the preposition *de*

unnecessarily'). (Gómez Torrego 1999: 2127). For example, *dequeísmo* is common in the Valencia/Catalunya regions since in Catalan, like in French and Italian, the preposition *de* is not inserted before *que* in sentential complements of nouns and adjectives. In (6a), the *dequeísta* pattern would be with *acordarse de que* and in (6b) with *seguro de que*. Compare it with the Catalan version in (6c), with *segur que*. The *dequeísta* pattern would be (6d), where *creo que* would have been the normative alternative.

(6)

- a. Me acuerdo que vino ayer. (Valencia)
'I remember that s/he came yesterday.'
- b. Estoy seguro que va a llover. (Barcelona)
'I'm sure that it will rain.'
- c. Estic segur que pleura.
- d. Creo de que va a llover. (Barcelona)
'I believe it will rain.'

An important inconsistency in this theory is that in most (non-bilingual) areas, *dequeísmo* is normatively marked as uneducated. On the other hand, *queísmo* is viewed as substantively less problematic. Thus, all things being equal, one expects that the direction of the hypercorrection would be the other way around, in other words, from the normatively deviant structure to the one that is less marked. An additional weakness of *dequeísta* analyses is the lack of systematic studies of *queísmo/dequeísmo* in bilingual areas.

3. Pragmatic hypotheses on *dequeísmo*

There are several pragmatic/functionalist theories of *dequeísmo* (García 1986; De Mello 1995; Gómez Molina & Gómez Devís 1995; Schwenter 1999; Cornillie & Delbecque 2008). For these authors the insertion of *de* is pragmatically motivated. *De* is generally considered an "iconic" marker of relative distance: It signals that the speaker is less committed to —or more distant from— the propositional content expressed by the clause it introduces. The preposition *de* is used as a marker because of its "bleached" or multifunctional nature. As stated by García (1986: 50): "sabemos que el significado de *de* es extremadamente impreciso. Ello lo convierte en el candidato ideal para sugerir 'unión' y nada más, así como lo hace Ø —pero, claro, no tan directamente. Además, el valor prototípico del uso locativo de *de* sugiere separación y, por ello mismo, distanciamiento." ('*de* is not very precise in its meaning. This lack

of content makes it the ideal candidate to suggest union and nothing else, like Ø does, but of course, not so directly. Additionally, the prototypical value of the locative use of *de* suggests separation and, for this reason, distance.’). Supporting evidence for these theories comes from three alleged properties of the phenomenon: (i) *Dequeísmo* is preferred in 3rd person or impersonal/generic contexts; (ii) *Dequeísmo* is also preferred with past tenses —the respective ratios of the samples in Schwenter’s (1999) study have the following distribution: past (.68); present (.49); future (.47)—; (iii) finally, *dequeísmo* is preferred when there is intervening material between the verb and the complement. In her approach, Mollica (1995: 269) claims that “the *de* in *de que* functions as a link to establish the connection between the Verb head and the complementizer when that insertion has been made less salient.” Nevertheless, we believe that the evidence just described is problematic in several respects.

The data related to person preference is problematic because person results are not cross-tabulated with other parameters that critically determine the choice of grammatical subject: discourse/text type; mode (dialogue, narration, etc.). Thus, it is not clear when and if person choice is being used as a “distancing” device.⁵ Furthermore, some recent studies show that first person is progressively predominant in certain contexts (Del Moral 2003, 2008). Additionally, most “paradigmatic” examples of *dequeísmo* in Spanish are in the first person. A clear example is the (in)famous *pienso de que*, which was viewed as typical of certain politicians in Spain during the 80s (7a).

(7)

- a. Es el clásico “pienso de que”, un insolente ruido en la música del idioma. Un famoso transgresor fue el ministro Narcís Serra. (Amando de Miguel, *LD*, 6/02/2002)
 ‘It’s the classic “I think *de que*”, an insolent noise in the music of language. An infamous transgressor was the cabinet member Narcís Serra’

⁵ As pointed out by a reviewer, frequency of usage by person might be ultimately non-relevant. One can distance oneself if a 1st or a 3rd person is used, and *a priori* there is no reason to think that one or another person would be more prone to distancing. In languages with validational markers, it does not seem like they are restricted to one person or another.

- b. El pasado miércoles escribí un artículo en este periódico y me colaron una errata. Yo escribí: "Advierto que está llorando". Y ellos pusieron: "Advierto de que está llorando". [...] Me metieron un *deque* en el artículo. (Alex de la Iglesia, *El País*, 16/08/2006).
 'Last Wednesday I wrote an article in this newspaper and they spun a typo in it. I wrote: "I noticed that [que] s/he is crying". And they wrote "I notice DE that [deque] s/he is crying". [...] They introduced a *deque* in my article.'

We conducted our own survey of *dequeísmo*, combining 20 interviews of *dequeísta* speakers in Madrid and Valencia.⁶ In Madrid, 27% of speakers were only first-person *dequeístas*; in none of the two areas we found that the percentage of third-person-only *dequeístas* was significant. Interestingly, this is also true of a smaller sample comprising informants from Peru and México. In (8), a typical example taken from the survey in which the change of person—from first singular to third plural—has the effect of restricting the use of *deque*:

- (8) En cuanto a la política, *pienso de que* lo mejor es no hacer ni puto caso, [...] claro, que los hay que *creen que* eso no es lo cívico. [Madrid]
 'With respect to politics, I think that [*deque*] the best thing to do is not to pay too much attention, [...] although there are those who believe that [que] that is not what is civilized.'⁷

With respect to the preponderance of the past tense, a careful analysis of the evidence seems to suggest that this generalization is actually not correct. Studies showing a preference for past tense, as already mentioned, do not establish a fine-grained distinction across tenses (the broader groups [-present] vs. [+present]; or [present] vs. [past] vs. [future] are generally assumed). These taxonomies will not give accurate predictions, since there are proportionally more [-present] (or [+past]) tenses in the grammatical system of Spanish overall. For example, Martínez Sequeira (2000) observes a preference for [-present] tenses, but 53% of her tokens are in the present tense. Del Moral (2004: 197) notices that "in modern Spanish speakers resort preferably to present-tensed *dequeísta* clauses embedded by cognitive verbs" [...] "speakers tend to resort to past tense in

⁶ In the survey, speakers were given a set of discourses, each including several potential alternatives for choosing standard or *dequeísta* variants.

⁷ Del Moral's (2008) diachronic study shows the progressive increase of first person over the centuries, from Golden Age Spanish onwards.

dequeísta clauses when they are embedded by communication verbs.” Our study shows results that are partially similar to Del Moral’s⁸. The following distribution emerges in *dequeísta* clauses in our survey:

(9)

Cognitive verbs	Communication verbs
present: 53%	present: 28%
past: 37%	past: 61%
non-finite: 15%	non-finite: 11%

Nevertheless, the category [past] groups several tenses, and none of them had more than 20% tokens (with either cognitive or communication verbs). Thus, from our data, we can infer that the present tense seems to be the predominant tense with both types of verbs, although it is more so with cognitive verbs. Our survey also highlights the importance of discourse type in explaining tense use: spontaneous speech was predominant. This is a discourse modality that is first-person oriented in general, and the occurrence of communication verbs is more restricted overall.

Finally, although our results were not as conclusive with respect to the prevalence of intervening material in *dequeísta* structures, what seems to be clear is that there is not a necessary correlation between syntactic distance (linear separation) and pragmatic distance (speaker’s attitude). In the following discourse, the intervening material actually strengthens the speaker’s commitment to the truth of the proposition.

- (10) Y ahora confieso, pese a quien le pese, de que yo también soy gay.
 ‘And now I must confess, no matter who gets upset, that [*deque*] I am a gay too.’

In (10), the insertion of the parenthetical *pese a quien pese* ‘no matter who gets upset’ signals a stronger commitment on behalf of the speaker and the *dequeísta* construction is still selected, contra what the pragmatic theory would claim.

⁸ Following Del Moral, we understand that cognitive verbs are those expressing a cognitive relation between a subject and a proposition, such as *pensar*, *valorar*, *reflexionar*, etc. communication verbs are those predicated of an agent and the communicated object: *decir*, *afirmar*, *expresar*, etc.

4. Syntactic Theory and *Dequeísmo*

Two formal approaches within the generative tradition have explained the occurrence of *de* in *dequeísmo* structures by resorting to syntactic or semantic factors. The first one explores the correlation between *dequeísmo* and Case. Spanish and Portuguese propositional complements of nouns and adjectives, in contrast with the rest of Romance languages, need to be preceded by the preposition *de*:

- (11) a. La razón *(de) que vengas.
 DE that
 ‘The reason that you are coming.’
- b. Está deseoso *(de) que le vean en la tele.
 DE that
 ‘He is longing for them to watch him on TV.’

For some researchers (Campos & Kempchinsky 1991), who worked in the Principles & Parameters framework of the eighties and early nineties, *de* would be a case marker indicating the assignment (or absorption) of case to propositional complements in a similar fashion as it occurs with nominal and adjectival complements. In Spanish, sentential complements of nouns (*hecho, propiedad* in (12)) seem to require case —assigned by *de*— if we follow Plann’s (1986) arguments against Stowell’s (1981) case resistance principle.

- (12)
- a. El hecho *(de) que llegaste tarde.
 ‘The fact that you were late.’
- b. La posibilidad *(de) que vengas con nosotros.
 ‘The possibility that you come with us.’

Assuming that verbs absorb (accusative) case, it is proposed that *de* is inserted as a last resort device to prevent having a caseless sentence, i.e.; a violation of the Case Filter (Vergnaud 1977). In *dequeísta* structures, the verb would absorb accusative case and *de* would be inserted as a last resort device to assign case to the clause. Some additional evidence of the functional nature of *de* has been presented in the literature. The pronoun *lo* in (13), for example, can double the *deque* structure, as shown in (13), while a similar contrast is disabled when the preposition *de* is selected by the verb, as is the case with *acordarse de* ‘to remember’, and *depender de*

‘depend on’: (14a) and (14b) respectively. In other words, the relevant “Case chain” in (13) is alleged to be built with an accusative pronoun, not with an oblique one (cf. Bosque & Gutiérrez-Rexach 2009 for a survey of different approaches to case theory). Below, we will present an alternative explanation to these facts.

(13)

- a. Ya me lo pienso *de que no sólo hay rubias...*
 already ME LO think-I DE that not only there-are blondies...
 ‘I am beginning to think that there are not only blond ladies...’
- b. Ni siquiera *lo* pienso *de que remus no haya sentido la muerte*
 de sirius
 not even LO think-I DE that Rhemus not has felt the dead of
 Sirius
 ‘I don’t even think that Rhemus is not mourning the death of
 Sirius.’
- c. *Lo* lamento *de que se vaya*
 LO sorry-I DE that SE is-leaving
 ‘I regret that she is leaving.’

(14)

- a. Me (*lo) acuerdo *de que me debías dinero.*
 ME LO remember DE that me owned-you money
 ‘I can remember that you owed me some money.’
- b. (*Lo) depende *de que me lo des o no.*
 LO depends DE that me it give-you or not
 ‘It depends on whether you give it to me or not.’

Nevertheless, this approach does not explain why *de* occurs in structures where case identification is not required, such as copulative constructions (15), or following a preposition (16) —even the preposition *de* itself (17)— (Silva-Villar, 2005):

- (15) Lamentablemente el gran error de ambas partes *es de que* el personal para la limpieza cree que no importa que no lo hagan bien...
 ‘Unfortunately, the big mistake by both sides is that (DE QUE) the maintenance staff thinks that it does not matter if they do it well or not...’

(16)

- a. Esta medida se suma a la orden *para de que* la banca comercial establezca...,
'This measure is added to the decision that (FOR DE QUE) commercial banks establish...,'
- b. en el caso *en de que* el patrimonio documental conste por ejemplo de...,
'In case that (IN DE QUE) the archive documentation consists of, for example...,
- c. *sin de que* sean vistos...,
'Without DE QUE they are seen...,'
- d. *con de que* sea feliz...,
'With DE QUE s/he is happy...,'

(17)

- a. presenta signos *de de que* podría colapsar...,
'It shows signs that (OF DE QUE) it could collapse...,'
- b. la posibilidad *de de que* la inflexible postura...,
'The possibility that (OF DE QUE) the inflexible stance...,'

It is also the case that the *deque*-propositions coexist with the special predicative *lo* in copular structures:

(18)

Obvio que comunicacional y discursivamente Chávez le lleva una "morena" a Rosales, pero también *lo es de que* el primero no ha sido precisamente inteligente en la designación de su equipo de trabajo,... (*dequeísta* Spanish)
'[It's] obvious that communicatively and discursively Chávez goes into a fight with Rosales but it is also true that (LO ES DE QUE) the first one has not been very smart in appointing his cabinet members,...'

(19)

El tabaco no tiene por qué ser directamente responsable de que haya una agudización, pero sí *lo es de que* la inflación sea más resistente a los..., (*dequeísta* Spanish)
'Tobacco does not have to be directly responsible for the fact that there would be a worsening effect, but it certainly is for the fact that (LO ES DE QUE) inflation is more resistant to the...,'

If we assume Picallo's (2001) Minimalist approach on the agreement properties of sentences, a strict correlation between *dequeísmo* and case would not be necessary. According to Picallo, sentences are specified as [-Person, -Num, -Gen], i.e., they are not specified for case. Sentential complements would satisfy agreement with unvalued features, probably of a default nature, and the insertion of *de* would indicate that the checking (or identification/ matching) of these features is complete.

More recently, it has been argued that *de* is an *evidentiality marker* (Del Moral 2001; Demonte & Fernández Soriano 2005).⁹ Demonte & Fernández-Soriano claim that the main function of *de(que)* is checking an evidentiality feature. According to these authors, *deque* structures can be explained if we understand *de* as part of a complex modal/evidential projection in the left periphery of the embedded clause (Rizzi 1997, Cinque 1999), as shown in (20).

(20) [CP [Mod/EvP ... [+evidentiality] ...]]

If *de* checks the evidentiality feature, it is predicted that there will be high levels of incompatibility with evidential adverbs such as *evidentemente*. Nevertheless, there are numerous examples showing the opposite (Silva-Villar, 2005):

(21)

- a. ...negocios. *Evidentemente de que* las cifras que ellos hablan me parece que es imposible captar esa posibilidad para tanto recurso...
- '...business. Evidently (DE QUE) the numbers that they are talking about look to me as if it impossible to capture the possibility for so many resources...'

⁹ Evidentiality in Spanish is encoded through a variety of grammatical devices: lexical terms (*asegurar* 'assure', *constatar* 'verify', *ver* 'see', *jurar* 'swear', *radio-macuto* 'hearsay', etc.); idiomatic expressions (*dizque* 'somebody-says-that', *desque* 'since-that-moment onwards', *es que* 'it-is-that', *quesque* 'that-it-is-the-case-that', *y que* 'and-how-about', *como te lo cuento* 'as-true-as-I-am-telling-it-to you', *como lo oyes* 'as you can-hear-from-me-now', *palabrita del niño Jesús* 'as-if-Jesus-had-told-you', *oír campanas* 'as-talking-through-his-hat', *te lo juro* 'I-swear-you', etc.); adverbs (*evidentemente* 'evidently'); syntactic processes with evidential effects (pronoun raising, cf. Bermúdez, 2002), mood selection; parenthetical sentences; qualitative constructions/inverted predication (Rooryck 2001); certain special uses of grammatical tenses (imperfect, future, conditional); etc.