Complementizer Deletion Structures: Against a Romance–English Unified Account

Mireia Llinàs–Grau & Javier Fernández–Sánchez

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*

1 Introduction

From its foundation, one of the main objectives underlying the Minimalist Program (MP hereafter, Chomsky 1995 and subsequent work) has been to reduce the technical complexity of syntactic theory and discharge it of unnecessary, theory–internal constructs. The Principles and Parameters framework (P&P) and its most successful formulation, Government and Binding (Chomsky 1981), constituted an attractive theory of grammar which regarded language as a set of universal linguistic universal principles and language–specific parameters that differed according to the way children fixed them given a certain input. However, the desire to make the theory suitable for as many languages as possible provided the theory with several independently unmotivated technicalities which did not reduce the complexity of the language faculty, hence making it hard to adapt such a theory to the so–called Logical Problem of Language Acquisition (Chomsky 1986), that is, the fact that children acquire a system that allows them to generate an infinite number of utterances given a relatively reduced – and impoverished – input.

This new line of linguistic inquiry set up by Chomsky in the mid 90s, the MP, starts from the assumption that language is an optimally designed system that operates under the principle of linguistic economy: language has no redundancies or theory–internal constructs and does not udergo unnecessary and unmotivated operations. It takes P&P as a starting point: as Boeckx puts it, "minimalism proposes investigating (…) how much of the P&P architecture follows from general properties of optimal, computationally efficient systems" (2006:8). For example, principles like Last Resort are responsible for the licensing of movement operations only if these allow the elimination of

* This research was partially financed by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (FFI2009-09349).

uninterpretable features. Linguistic expressions are ultimately regarded as the optimal outcome of interface conditions, the articulatory–perceptual ones (PF) and the conceptual–intentional ones (LF).

One problem that arises in this minimal and optimal context are optional phenomena, like the ones illustrated in (1), where *wh*–movement seems to be optional in French and (2), where the complementizer can be optionally deleted in English embedded complement clauses, a phenomenon which we will now refer to as C–deletion[1] (CD henceforth). In this report we will focus on the latter case:

(1) a. Qui_1 as-tu vu t_1?
who have-you seen
b. Tu as vu qui_1?
You have seen who
'Who did you see?'

(2) a. I think that John is a fool.
b. I think 0 John is a fool.

Müller (1999), his (4) and (1) respectively.

In order to address the issue of optionality, we should first define what it means for a derivation to be optimal. As we have sketched just a few lines above, a linguistic derivation is the maximally simple syntactic computation that satisfies the requirements of PF and LF. Adopting the notation that Hornstein et al. (2006) propose, a derivation has the form (π,λ) where π stands for PF and λ corresponds to the LF representation. This derivation is the result of a series of operations on a given set of lexical elements, which is called numeration. Chomsky (1995) assumes that two derivations can be compared on economy grounds only if they share the same numeration at a starting point. In this respect, the optionality that arises in (1) is indeed a problem, because syntax should rule out the less economical – thus less optimal – derivation. Chomsky (2001) suggests that the problem is sorted out by claiming that, in fact, the two sentences in (1) do not share the same numeration, since the v^* in (a) is associated with a formal EPP–

[1] This name makes reference to traditional approaches to the phenomenon, where the complementizer is "deleted" *à la* Chomsky 1981, where he addressed the issue in terms of "S/S'–deletion". After exploring the issue more in depth, we will refer to it in different terms.

feature responsible for the movement of the *wh*–element out of the lexical layer, which the (b) counterpart lacks.

The most interesting fact about (2), CD, is its apparent pure optionality, which is also difficult to embrace in a minimalist setting. Actually, it has been one of the goals within the minimalist tradition to claim that whatever seems optional in language, is not indeed. A good solution to the puzzle of CD would be to say that (2a) and (2b) do not share the same numeration, and hence the sentences cannot compete in optimal terms, as Chomsky would suggest. However, this is not a simple assumption to make: most approaches have referred to the phenomenon as a case of "deletion" (see fn. 1), hence implying that *that* is at some point present, but then rejected in the derivation. If we assume that *that* is a complementizer, and that all object complement clauses like (2) are CPs, we need to assume that there is also a null C in our lexicon, which may be introduced in the numeration as an alternative to phonologically overt C. In the next section we explore a different solution which also questions real optionality in this construction.

In section 2 we provide a descriptive account of the facts of English together with a reference to the proposals that have been posited to account for CD, and explain the data that make us consider the CD phenomenon non–optional. In section 3 we consider the apparently equivalent construction in Spanish and Catalan, and in section 4 we offer a temptative conclusion.

Before we begin to consider the construction under analysis, we want to note that optionality phenomena involving presence or absence of elements are found in child language as well. The speech of children under three is partly characterized by the lack of elements that are essential in the utterances of adult speech. Two elements that are frequently missing in child language are sentential subjects and the inflection of verbal forms. These two phenomena are interesting for our study as they have both been analysed as the result of a certain type of optionality in the grammars of children. This optionality, though, has been questioned by Hyams (2001), who finds certain determining factors in the child choice, and much higher percentatges in one of the two options, thus invalidating real free variation. Her results are desirable from a theoretical

point of view. We will not pursue the issue of acquisition here, but take the basic message in Hyams' critical approach to optionality as an inspiring discovery.

2 CD in English

2.1 Accounts of CD: From GB to MP

The deletion of the complementizer in English is commonly understood to be an optional phenomenon[2] involving object complement clauses of the type in (2), reproduced here again in (3):

(3) a. I think that John is a fool.

b. I think 0 John is a fool.

However, there are a series of contexts in which the presence or absence of the complementizer is not optional. Extraction of subjects from embedded *that*–clauses bars non–CD constructions. This is a phenomenon which was studied at the beginning of the seventies and was known as the *That*–trace Effect. Basically, it amounted to saying that in English, *that* could not be followed by a trace (4). Conversely, extraction of objects is licensed (5):

(4) a. Who_i did you say [$_{CP}$(*that) t_i called Peter]?

b. $John_i$ is the one I think [$_{CP}$ (*that) t_i called Peter].

(5) Who_i did you say [$_{CP}$(that) Mary called t_i]?

As far as we know, the *that*–trace effect phenomenon is the only case in English that requires *that* to be absent. Apart from this phenomenon, whenever there is a non–optional context for *that*, the complementizer is required. This is the case in complement clauses occupying a preverbal position:

(6) a. *(That) John came didn't surprise Mary.

CD does not occur here, as (6) shows. Stowell (1981) first argued that a null C in postverbal cases (as in (3b)) is allowed because it constitutes an empty category which is

[2] By optional we mean that the two constructions are equivalent because they yield the same semantic interpretation. We will consider the choice of *that*–deletion or retention to be dependent on certain variables in section 2.3.

properly governed by the finite verb in the matrix clause. Hence, in (6) CD is not allowed because the null complementizer is not properly governed.

Pesetsky (1992) considers null C to be an affix. Bošković & Lasnik (B&L, 2003), using a suggestion in Bošković (1997), modify Pesetsky's account minimally to accomodate the proposal so that it covers the complete paradigm of impossible C deletion contexts. This minor modification implies regarding C to V as a kind of Affix Hoping (Chomsky 1957) that Bošković & Lasnik refer to as PF Merger. PF Merger requires an affix to be adjacent to its host in PF, as stranded affixes make a construction ungrammatical. This is the case in impossible *that*-deletion contexts, such as, subject clauses (6), topicalization (7) and pseudo-clefting (8), gapping (9), Right Node Raising (10) and extraposition (11). In all these examples there is a stranded C affix:

(7) [*(that) John likes Mary] Jane didn't believe.
(8) [What the students believe is [*(that) they will pass the exam].
(9) Mary believed (that) Peter finished school and Bill *(that) Peter got a job.
(10) They suspected and we believed [*(that) Peter would visit the hospital].
(11) It seemed at the time [*(that) David had left)].

(Bošković & Lasnik 2003, their (3))

Other authors also point out the ungrammaticality of CD in non-adjacent V–CP constructions, such as the following:

(12) a. We had hoped, in a moment of optimism, that the government would look favourably on our case.

b. *We had hoped, in a moment of optimism, the government would look favourably on our case.

(Examples from Quirk & Greenbaum (1982))

An exploration of CD along the lines of truncation (Rizzi 1993) could account for this latter case. Rizzi and Shlonsky (R&S, 2007) argue that "*That* expresses both finiteness … and (declarative) Force, so if the complete CP system involves the structure [Force [Fin [IP…]]], the normal derivation of a *that* clause is one in which *that* is first merged in Fin, to express finiteness, and then moves to Force to check the Force feature" (R&S 2007:32). For these authors, CD constructions are truncated structures akin to ECM or

raising predicates. However, Force and Fin cannot be truncated if Top and/or Foc are activated, as in (12)[3]. R&S, thus, adapt the mechanism of truncation, proposed to account for child data, to adult constructions. They consider that finite declarative clauses which lack an overt complementizer in English do not contain a complete Finite–Force structure but are reduced, truncated, structures. The declarative interpretation is assigned by default. CD structures are assumed to be cases of deeper truncation, which implies the absence of a SubjP layer[4]. To us, truncation makes sense for child language analyses but is questionable for adult grammars in that it is not sufficiently explanatory. In fact, there have been recent attempts to derive truncation from locality conditions of movement (see Haegeman 2011). Therefore, we will not take this mechanism to be the relevant one for CD constructions.

An important proposal in the MP framework that accounts for CD and relates different structures in English involving C and T is Pesetsky & Torrego (P&T, 2001). This proposal, though, is based on a reanalysis of *that* as a T element, which we find questionable. Nevertheless, P&T provide a unified explanation of a set of hereto unexplained contrasts in English which cannot be disregarded: (i) the *that*–trace effect (4,5), (ii) the *that*–deletion asymmetry (optional omission of *that* only in complement clauses) as the ungrammaticality of (6) shows, and (iii) their T–to–C asymmetry, as in (13):

(13) a. What did Mary buy?
b. *What Mary bought?
c. *Who did buy the book? (where *did* is not focused)

[3] van Gelderen (2001) provides some data concerning *illocutionary adverbs* which may challenge R&S's statement. She argues that these adverbs prevent a sentence from being headed by an overt complementizer:
(i) *I know that frankly she should be concerned.
(ii) *I know frankly that she should be concerned.
She takes Koopman's Generalized Doubly Filled Comp Filter, i.e. the fact that the specifier and head positions of a functional projection cannot be simultaneously lexicalised, to lie behind the ungrammaticality of (i) and (ii), as she assumes that these adverbs must sit in Spec, ForceP position and the complementizer is in the head position of the same phrase.
These data may challenge R&S in the sense that the left periphery is activated by the presence of the illocutionary/speech act adverb but when this is the case the complentizer is deleted. For R&S, CD is equal to truncation of the Force Phrase, thus unavailable for the adverbs in question. We leave the issue open.

[4] R&S's aim in the article is to explain how certain languages allow subject extraction. They propose different strategies that languages have for subjects to skip the criterial position (Spec, SubjP) and thus avoid Criterial Freezing. English allows deep truncation; the clause stops at IP and the absence of freezing effects allows the raising construction.

d. Who bought the book?

P&T (2001), their (5)

To achieve this they have to modify certain notions in the theory such as the conception of nominative case. For them, nominative case is *u*T in D and they posit that C contains a *u*T feature which may be checked by either a nominative D element or a T element that raises to C (and is pronounced as *that*).

We believe there is a simpler analysis of CD which inverts the logic of deletion (or truncation) to one of insertion. Moreover, given the real production of *that* in English, where the absence of *that* is far more frequent than its presence (see section 2.3), this analysis seems more plausible. Before we explain this proposal, though, we want to note that both P&T's an R&S's account do away with a proper CP in CD structures. R&S reduce the structure via truncation, and P&T allow a nominative DP in Spec, CP, which is a questionable step[5]. Assuming a TP nature of embedded clauses in CD constructions from the onset (as in Franks 2005) is a simpler more advantageous option. We come back to this idea in the following paragraphs.

2.2 A PF–insertion alternative

So far we have seen: a) optional cases like the ones in (3); b) situations where the complementizer is obligatorily omitted, as in *that*–trace effect contexts (4); and c) the *that*–obligatory paradigm in (6) through (12). It should also be noted that there are some verbs which take object complement clauses that do not allow CD:

(14) a. Jason whispered *(that) the phoenix had escaped. (Adger, D. 2003:239, his (10)).

b. Billy quipped (*that) he saw a ghost. (Franks, S. 2005:8, his (9b))

Franks (2005) claims that this is true of "non–bridge" verbs. This is a rather small universal set of verbs, which express "manner of speech" and include *murmur, whisper, quip, grieve, reflect, gloat, scream, squeal, whistle* and *chuckle* (Doherty 1993). A special

[5] Gallego (2007) notes in relation to a DP subject in Spec,CP valuing a uT in C that "it is certainly odd for A-chains to end in Spec, C, they are typically taken to terminate in Spec, TP". (Gallego 2007;100). Gallego analyses *que*, following P&T, as an instance of T to C. For reasons we will explain in section 3, we want to maintain a difference between *que* and *that* and thus will not adapt Gallego's proposal in this report.

property of these verbs is that they do not allow extraction from their complements (from Franks (2005), his (11)):

(15) a. What$_i$ did Billy say [$_{CP}$ (that) [$_{TP}$ he saw t$_i$]]?

b. ?*What$_i$ did Billy quip [$_{CP}$ that [$_{TP}$ he saw t$_i$]]?

The facts in (15) can be explained by assuming that verbs like *say* or *think* form a bridge between the clause they select and the verb so that material from the subordinate can move to the left periphery of the main clause. In contrast, verbs like *quip* do not form this bridge. Franks (2005) proposes that *that* is inserted at PF after bridge verbs, thus considering the phenomenon as one of insertion rather than deletion (henceforth CI). The claim that follows is that the nature of the category that bridge and non–bridge verbs select is different. From a logical point of view, a Complementizer Insertion (CI) account seems more plausible to us given the huge amount of *that*–absence with respect to *that*–retention in English bridge verb constructions in oral speech (see section 2.3).

Elaborating on Doherty (1997), Franks (2005) claims that a complement clause without *that* in verbs like *think* is not a CP but a TP (16a). This is because for him, a phrase which does not have content at all – semantic or phonological – cannot exist. Conversely, a complement clause of a non–bridge verb is a full CP (16b):

(16) a. I think [$_{TP}$ John is a fool].

b. Jason whispered [$_{CP}$ *(that) [$_{TP}$ the phoenix had escaped]].

The obvious question that remains is: What happens to complement clauses of bridge verbs that are headed by an overt complementizer? Frank's proposal is that they are TPs in the syntax, drawing a similarity with ECM structures in English[6]. The *that* we see is inert, inserted in PF and syntactically inactive. He postulates two ways in which this idea can be formally expressed.

One view involves claiming that *that* is inserted into a C node which is a product of an optional rule of the morphological component of the grammar which he refers to as TP–fission. Fission is an operation within the framework of Distributed Morphology (DM, Halle & Marantz 1993), by which a syntactic head is split in two. In essence, Frank's proposal boils down to saying that complements to bridge verbs can be TPs in the

[6] The crucial difference between ECM and CI constructions lies in the finiteness of the embedded TP. Rizzi & Shlonsky (2007) make a similar point.

syntax, although they must be morphologically more complex and larger, in the sense that C will only project in the morphology. Another different view gets away with having to postulate any CP at all in the morphology, and assumes that CI operates to "demarcate the beginning of a TP complement clause" (2005:19) under specific intonational considerations.

Independently of what the correct formal expression of CI is, we take this analysis to be more justifiable given the real production of this construction.

2.3 An approach to 'that' in use

We have stated that we take TP to be the default selection of bridge verbs in embedded complement clauses and that this seems to go hand in hand with the production of finite complement clauses by English speakers. Providing data which hint that this is indeed the default case is, thus, in order. Nevertheless, we must first explain the type of context of data collection as speech register crucially relates to usage of *that*.

Descriptive grammars refer to use or non–use of *that* as an optional phenomenon. Nevertheless, they all mention two factors that favour its absence or its presence. Formal registers and written contexts favour *that*–retention, whereas informal and oral evironments disfavour its presence. Following these suggestions, we considered oral and written production and discovered that both are indeed determining factors.

We analysed object complement clauses from five children files in the Manchester folder in CHILDES that were selected by the verbs *think*, *say* and *know*, as they were the top three verbal tokens capable of selecting for a complement clause, as produced by the mothers. We chose the data in CHILDES as it constitutes a realistic sample of informal oral data. We did not consider the children data, as they typically miss functional categories during the language acquisition process, but their mothers'. Out of the 3288 sentences we analysed, we found that *that* was absent in over 97% of the cases, in a ratio of almost 36:1. The ratio was not exact across–the–board, as certain verbs tended to show more *that*–retention in certain speakers, but overall, *that*–absence was statistically overwhelming. The following chart (17) shows a breakdown of the data:

(17)	Think		Know		Say		Total	
	Ret	Del	Ret	Del	Ret	Del	Ret	Del
Aran files	10	865	13	118	16	76	39	1059
Anne files	7	680	1	26	1	81	9	787
John files	2	237	0	29	4	10	6	276
Warr files	2	423	13	29	1	20	16	472
Ruth files	6	523	10	34	3	44	19	605

With these figures at stake, it seems to us difficult to talk about *deletion* of the complementizer. Is it plausible to assume a a deletion rule that applies so frequently? The CI option fares better than the CD option once we take real production data into account.

Data from written contexts seem to further support such an analysis. We analyzed 78 letters to the editor in *The Economist* journal and realized that *that*–retention was more frequent than its absent counterpart, with a ratio of 4.75:1. We think the degree of formality in the letters to editor of such a journal plays a role in allowing *that* insertion.

Formality is often associated with written language, although oral language may also be formal especially if it is a delivered speech, previoulsy prepared or a piece of spoken news. Formal language implies a more careful choice of words and phrases. Vocabulary choice is one of the essential differences between formal and informal language. Another essential difference that grammarians relate to formal as opposed to informal is the complexity of sentences, informal language tends to be simpler, sentences shorter and words and phrases also pronounced in a shortened way, if the medium is oral.

These characteristics of formal language, vocabulary choice, complexity of sentences, and the presence of more elements seem relevant to our study. In a formal style, specific verbs may be chosen, which require the presence of *that*, and *that* insertion may be favoured if complexity is related to number of elements. We are aware these considerations on "formality" of language are not sufficiently precise but for the purposes of this paper they are enough to provide support to the idea that the phenomenon we are analyzing is not really optional but triggered. Therefore, the use of *that* instead of a bare–TP complement clause is no longer open to choice but rather driven by a specific style of speech.

These pragmatic considerations of *that*–facts can be supported with Sorace (2005)'s ideas of gradient learnability. She claims that certain linguistic properties, precisely those that "involve the complex interplay of syntactic and discourse conditions" (2005:65) are harder – or utterly unlikely – for very advanced (near-native) learners of a given L2 to acquire because of L1 interference. These are called "soft constraints" and have to do with "the mapping between syntax and lexical-semantics, pragmatics and information structure" (2005:55). Conversely, "hard constraints" are related to structural properties of language – i.e. they are purely syntactic features that L2 learners have to deal with – but in very advanced speakers, the production of these constraints is similar, if not identical, to native speakers' production. In Llinàs–Grau & Fernández (2011) we analyzed the production of elicited object complement clauses in informal contexts by Catalan and Spanish speakers who were very advanced students of English and retention amounted to 75%, whereas native speakers of English only retained the complementizer in 8% of the cases. These retention data of *that* by almost native L2 English speakers reveal *that*–deletion as a soft constraint allowing an explanation of the phenomenon in terms of mechanisms in the outer edges of the grammar. Pure syntactic explanations, like the ones provided by P&T and R&S, seem less adequate in this light.

3 CD in Spanish and Catalan

That–less embedded clauses have also been attested in some Romance Languages, mainly those that allow *pro*–drop. Hence, Brazilian Portuguese or French never exhibit CD structures, whereas Spanish, Catalan or Italian do[7]:

(18) Preguem (que) esperin a ser atesos.
'Please wait to be seated'

(19) Deseamos (que) tenga usted una feliz estancia.
'We wish you a nice stay'

(20) Solicito (que) me seja concedida uma bolsa. (Ambar, M. *et al.* (2007) their (2a)).
'I request to be given a subsidy'

(21) Gianni credeva (che) avesse telefonato Maria. (Giorgi, A. (2006) her (2)).
'Giannni believed that Maria called'

In this section we want to focus on Spanish and Catalan, (18) and (19). As a comparative analysis between English on the one hand and Spanish and Catalan on the other suggests, although apparently similar, the deletion of the complementizer seems to be a radically different phenomenon in these languages. In fact, we claim that a deletion process may only occur in Romance, CI being the preferred option for English. This idea is based on the assumption that *that*–less embedded clauses in Spanish or Catalan are far more restricted in context and occur statistically less than their English counterparts[8].

First, in Romance it is the subjunctive mood of the embedded clause that allows *que* to drop, as shown in (22). Bonet (2002:2348) argues that subjunctive must be present in *que*–less clauses irrespective of the mood that the embedded would show were it to be headed by an overt *que*:

(22) a. Dedueixo [sigui/*és] una bona ocasió.
'I deduce it is a nice occasion'

[7] The phenomenon has been attested also in other non–related languages, see Saito (1981) for data from Kansai, a variety of Japanese, which also exhibits CD.

[8] Authors like Brucart (1993) and Hernanz & Rigau (2006) have considered structures which allow *que*-deletion in Spanish and Catalan. The type of constructions considered are of the following type:

(i) ¡Qué cosas (que) dices!
(ii) Que bé (que) balla!

These constructions, though, are not related to the ones analyzed here as they are exclamative constructions which project a FOC Phrase.

b. No pensava [pogués/*podia] fer–ho.

'(I) didn't think (I) could do it'

c. Em temo no [convingui/*convindrà] que sàpiga.

'I am afraid he'd better not know about it'

This is the opposite we find in English where subjunctive of the embedded clause disallows CD:

(23) *The dictator ordered they be sentenced to death.

(24) Last week, he ordered that the mural be taken down and that Labor Department conference rooms named for labor leaders be renamed for mountains, counties or something else perceived as neutral. (NY Times, March 28th 2011)

The semantic group of verbs that allow CD in Spanish or Catalan does not embrace the so–called bridge verbs as in English, but extends to all those predicates that can take subjunctive in their subordinate clause, hence the ungrammaticality of (25):

(25) *Sabemos llegará usted puntual.

'We know he will arrive on time'

The impossibility to have CD with bridge verbs in Spanish or Catalan may also relate to mood: these verbs typically take embedded clauses in indicative mood.

Second, in contrast with English CI contexts, extraction phenomena show that extraction of an argument from a *that*–less embedded clause in Spanish turns out to be impossible (26a), but possible when *that* is phonologically present:

(26) a. *¿Qué$_i$ deseamos [tenga usted t_i]?

'What do we wish you have?'

b. ¿Qué$_i$ deseamos [que tenga usted t_i]?

Thus, the restricted contexts where Spanish allows *que*–deletion, do not license extraction if *que* has been deleted. In contrast, the absence of *that* in English, does not block extraction, on the contrary, witness *that*–t effects. A unified account of the phenomenon in both languages makes the explanation of this contrast difficult if not impossible.

Third, it seems that *that*–less embedded clauses in Spanish or Catalan are restricted to contexts where the subject of the matrix is a first person:

(27) a. Espero se solucionen pronto los problemas. (from Brovetto 2002)

'I hope the problems sort out soon.'

b.* Esperan se solucionen pronto los problemas.

(28) a. Preguem esperin a ser atesos.

'Please wait to be assisted.'

b. *El doctor prega esperin a ser atesos.

'The doctor asks you to wait to be assisted.'

The fact that a certain grammatical person is responsible for allowing CD is difficult to express formally. However, it makes sense if we consider the type of verbs that allow this construction. Although we have seen that predicates selecting for a subjunctive embedded clause can drop the complementizer, it is significant that most of the examples we find are related to verbs expressing "fear, will and wish" (Delbecque & Lamiroy 1999:2005)[9]. Again, whereas this may be hard to express formally, we take it as indicative that the phenomenon of CD in Spanish and Catalan relying heavily on the semantics of the selecting verb, is fundamentally different in nature from English.

Considering the environments where the Spanish and Catalan examples would occur, it seems that CD in Romance may be identified with highly formal contexts and seldom found in oral speech. This contrasts clearly with English, where *that*–less clauses are related to informal oral production (see section 2.3), although the presence of an overt complementizer is not *per se* indicating that we are dealing with a formal context. In a sense, reducing optionality to the choice of elements in the lexicon works for Spanish and Catalan in a clear–cut way, but not for English. In other words, the correlation between lack of *que* and formal degree is straightforward in Spanish or Catalan, but the presence or absence of *that* does not tell us the register we are using in English in such a crystal–clear way.

[9] They further claim that "it seems difficult to delete *that* when the animate subject of the embedded clause is overtly expressed" (1999:2006, fn.):

(i) Temo que/*0 los invitados estén enojados.

However, it seems to us that the sentence becomes acceptable if we invert the order of subject and verb:

(ii) Temo estén los invitados enojados.

4. Conclusion

To conclude we can say that the phenomenon of *that* presence/absence in English and *que* presence/absence in Spanish and Catalan cannot be unified. There are many contrasts that suggest that each language follows a different strategy. English is a CI language whereas Spanish and Catalan are CD languages. We have concluded this essentially because of the contrasting properties that we find between the two sets of languages with respect to the phenomenon. A crucial fact is that *que*-less clauses are much less frequent than *that*-less clauses. A CI analysis matches production data in English much better and it also relates more easily to the fact that in English the obligatoriness of *that* is restricted to specific syntactic constructions - (6) through (12) - and one specific verb type (non-bridge verbs). Complement clauses of bridge verbs are TPs, a case of a finite clause without a proper CP projection. The insertion of an inert *that* (Franks 2005) is triggered by pragmatic factors external to core syntax, a fact supported by data from almost native speakers, following Sorace (2005).

Finally, we would like to conclude that an exploration of *that* in terms of *complementizer insertion* places linguistic variation at the PF side of the grammar and not in the narrow syntax, which is ultimately desirable in a minimalist framework.

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Mireia.Llinas@uab.cat

jfdezsanchez@gmail.com