

Declarative complementizers under the microscope

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Complementizers vary as to what information they lexicalize cross-linguistically (Roussou 2010, a.o). For example, French *que* 'that' does not have a single analogue in Modern Greek (MG) but a number of different instantiations: *oti* introduces 'non-factive' complements, *pu* factive complements, while *na* is not a subordinator, but a mood particle marking subjunctive clauses (Giannakidou 2009) – presumably no complementizer is pronounced in subjunctive clauses (see also Serbo-Croatian for a similar construction, Socanac 2011). So French *que* unites properties of multiple items in MG, raising the questions of how these heads get compiled and spelled-out as morphemes and how these morphemes are represented in the lexicon.

I argue that there are three complementizers in French, which are camouflaged by all being phonetically realized as /kə/. I claim that *que* 'that' is in fact not a morpheme on its own, but a lexical item structured in organized semantico-syntactic features. It can be the spellout of at least three different subtrees. Hence what we see as a uniform complementizer *que* corresponds in fact to different feature structures of various syntactic sizes. Complementizers are then complex. Based on a typological study, I argue that complementizers are light nouns, i.e., with nominal features above them, as in Franco 2012 (see also Manzini&Savoia 2003, Roussou 2010).

I propose that what governs the distribution of French *que* is *veridicality*: the three different *ques* are each contingent on the classes of verbs that select them, whose properties are tied to veridicality (Giannakidou 2009). I claim that (i) verbs of cognition (*remember*, *know*) are strong veridical, in that they require that the embedded proposition be absolutely true both from the point of view of the Speaker and of the Subject; (ii) factive emotive predicates (*regret*) are relative veridical (Giannakidou (1998) in that they require that the embedded proposition be true from the point of view of the Subject, but not (necessarily) from the point of view of the Speaker (cf. Schlenker 2005); (iii) predicates of assertion (*say*) and desiderative/affective predicates (*prefer*) are non-veridical in that they do not embed a proposition whose truth must be inferred either by the Subject or the Speaker.

I propose that the three types of veridical predicates select three types of nominal-like complementizers: strong veridical predicates select specific *ques*, relative veridical predicates select partitive *ques* and non-veridical predicates select non-specific non-partitive *ques*. This analysis is extended to MG *pu/oti/∅* and Serbo-Croatian *da/što/∅*. (note that Serbo-Croatian distinguishes between specific and partitive complementizers: *da* vs. *što*).

I also draw a parallelism between wh-elements and the nominal-like complementizers, and show that the latter have different properties sensitive to quantificational features. These properties interact with wh-/focus-extraction phenomena under Relativized Minimality (RM), provided that RM is understood as a constraint on (a hierarchically organized bundle of) features rather than on 'structural types' (Starke 2001). I account for the island effects (or lack thereof) attested with so-called factive complements and conclude that size matters: bigger complementizers block extraction and act as interveners in quantificational chains, smaller don't.

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