Embedded Fragment Answers, Sluices and Referentiality in Spanish
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Introduction: Fragment answers, as in (1b) answering (1a), and sluicing, as in (2), have both received a TP ellipsis account by Merchant (2004), with TP ellipsis being licensed by [E].


(2) Someone stole the money, and I know who. They differ, however, as Merchant argues, in the final location within the left-periphery to which the remnants move. Sluicing remnants move to Spec,C, as in (3a), while fragment answer remnants move to Spec,F, a functional projection above CP, as in (3b). The intermediate landing site in Spec,C is claimed to be the key aspect of why (details aside) fragment answers are sensitive to islands while sluicing is not. See Saab (2008) for the same patterns in Spanish.

(3) a. …[CP [who] [C [C [E] [TP <who> stole the money]]]]
   b. …[CP [John], [C [C [E] [TP <John> stole the money]]]]

While matrix fragment answers have received a good deal of attention recently in the generative literature, to our knowledge, little has been said about embedded fragment answers, as in (4).

(4) Me dijeron/Repitieron/Parece/Creo *(que) Juan.
   To me they said/They repeated/It seems/I believe that Juan

Importantly, not all verbs allow embedded fragment answers. Observe the contrast between those in (4) that do (henceforth +EFA verbs), and those in (5) that do not (–EFA verbs).

(5) *Se/Recuerdo/Me enteré de/Descubri/me explicaron que Juan.
   I know/I remember/I found out of/I discovered/To me they explained that Juan

Interestingly, when it comes to sluicing we find the opposite patterns of grammaticality. +EFA verbs cannot partake in sluicing, as in (6b), while –EFA verbs can, as in (6c).

(6) a. Someone stole the money and…
   b. …me dijeron que/repitieron que/me parece creo quién.
      …to me they said/it seems/they repeated/I believe who
   c. …se/recuerdo/me enteré de/descubri/me explicaron quién.
      …I know/I remember/I found out of/I discovered/to me they explained who

In this paper, we adopt Merchant’s analysis of matrix fragment answers and sluicing, and apply it to these embedded contexts to account for these contrasts. We claim that: (i) the fragment answer contrast in (4) and (5) results from differences in structure between +EFA and –EFA verb complement clauses; +EFA verb complements have more structure that –EFA verb complements; (ii) the sluicing contrast in (6b) and (6c) results from a corresponding difference in semantics between +EFA and –EFA verb complement clauses; while –EFA verb complements are referential (essentially discourse linked); +EFA verb complements are non-referential; and (iii) the que that obligatory appears in fragment answers, and which is prohibited in sluicing, heads a non-referential CP which is structurally higher than FP in (3b).

Differences in structure: In her discussion of embedded wh-words, Suñer (1991) observes that a clitic left dislocated constituent can appear above the wh-word under some verbs, as in (7a), but not under others, as in (7b). These correspond to our +EFA verbs and –EFA verbs respectively.

(7) a. Le dije que (a su hijo) dónde lo iban a mandar los militares.
   Him said.1s that (to his son) where him go.3pl to send the militaries
      “He asked him where the military was going to send his son.”
   b. Sabía (*a Juan) qué le había prometido el decano.
      Knew.1sg (to Juan) what him had promised the dean
      “I knew what the dean had promised John.”

Merchant (2004) claims that fragment answer remnants move to the same position as clitic left dislocated constituents, indicated as Spec,F in (3a). (See Saab 2008 for related discussion.) If –EFA verb complements have less structure, lacking FP, and fragment answer remnants move to Spec,F, then we can straightforwardly account for why –EFA verb complements disallow both embedded fragment answers...
and embedded left dislocated constituents: they are less articulated than +EFA complements (see de Cuba 2006, Haegeman 2006, a.o. for CP truncation analyses).

**Differences in semantics:** Differences in structure alone cannot straightforwardly account for the contrast in sluicing since Spec,C is available for both complements of +EFA and –EFA verbs. We appeal to the observation in Chung et al. (1995) that remnants of (inner antecedent) sluicing tend to be discourse linked (in the sense of Pesetsky 1987). This is clear from (6b) from above, where quién refers to the individual introduced into the discourse context by alguien. Interestingly, we find strikingly similar observations from Suñer (1991 et seq.), illustrated in (8).

(8) a. (Te) recuerdo/se cuáles eran sus actores favoritos: Nicholson y Depardieu.
   You remind/know.1sg which were his/her actors favorite: Nicholson and Depardieu
   “I will tell/remind/know (you) who his/her favorite actors were: N and D.”
   b. Te digo/repito que cuáles eran sus actores favoritos: Nicholson y Depardieu.
   You ask/repeat.1sg. that which were his/her actors favorites: Nicholson and Depardieu
   “I’ll ask you which his/her favorite actors are: N and D.”

In (8a), with our –EFA verbs, cuáles is discourse linked to the answer which is supplied felicitously: Nicholson and Depardieu. N and D are the specific members of the set to which cuáles refers. In contrast, in (8b), cuáles does not refer to any specific members of a set; it is not discourse-linked. Thus, it is infelicitous to interpret it as referring to N and D as the answer.

In this respect, our –EFA verbs take *referential* complements, while our +EFA verbs take *non-referential* complements. We follow Cinque’s (1990) definition of referentiality and adapt it to the CP domain, along the lines of de Cuba & Úrögdi (2009), as in (9):

(9) a. **Referential CP:** denotes an accepted (or pre-established) proposition in the existing discourse which has no illocutionary force.
   b. **Non-referential CP:** denotes a speech act which introduces a proposition (or an open question) which is not yet accepted (or pre-established) in the existing discourse.

**The role of que:** We claim that the que which appears above the wh-words in (7a) and (8b), and the que which introduces embedded fragment answers in (4) both head a non-referential CP which itself is higher than FP in (3a) (structurally parallel to Rizzi’s (1997) ForceP: see also Demonte & Fernandez Soriano (2010)). As support, consider verbs that can appear with or without this que: decir “say” and repetir “repeat”. Suñer (1991) notes that these verbs can show the same pattern and interpretation as the verbs in (8a), but crucially, only when que is not present (data not shown here). As (8b) shows, it is only in the presence of que that the embedded wh-word is interpreted non-referentiality. Since sluicing remnants tend to be referential, we can explain why these verbs cannot appear in sluicing with que, as in (6b), but can when que is not present, as in (10), a continuation of (6a): que would make the remnants non-referential.

(10) …me dijeron/repetieron (tres veces) (*que) quién …to me they said/they repeated three times that who

The opposite is true of fragment answers - que must be present (4). The presence of que (heading CP) is an indication of the additional structure needed to house the remnant of fragment answers (FP is truncated along with cP in referential CPs). Since fragment answers are clauses, and since they introduce new information into the discourse (see (9b)), they are non-referential cPs.

**Selected References**