On some contrasts between the sequence 

\[ \textit{si} \quad \textit{que} \] and the emphatic affirmative polarity particle \( \textit{si} \) in Spanish

The emphatic positive polarity marker \( \textit{si} \) ‘yes’ (cf. (1a)) and the sequence \( \textit{si} \ \textit{que} \) ‘yes that’ (cf. (1b)) have been considered interchangeable in Spanish, as suggested by (1), where the meaning of the two sentences seems to be the same, irrespective of the presence of \textit{que}.

(1) a. María \( \textit{si} \) vino
   Mary \( \textit{yes came} \)
   ‘Mary did come.’

   b. María \( \textit{si} \ \textit{que} \) vino
   Mary \( \textit{yes that came} \)
   ‘Mary did come.’

We show that the apparent optionality of \textit{que} in cases like (1) disguises different syntactic structures, which correlate with both semantic and syntactic (i.e., distributional) differences.

We argue that \textit{que} is not always optional, since its optionality would mean that \( \textit{si} \) and \( \textit{si} \ \textit{que} \) should be equivalent in all contexts, contrary to fact. Our major claim is that the sentence in (1b) involves more syntactic structure, namely a more complex left periphery/CP domain. The analysis pursued in this paper for each of the cases in (1) is furnished in (2).

(2) a. \( \ldots [\text{ForceP} \ [\text{TopicP} \ [\text{FocusP} \ \textit{si} \ \textit{[\Sigma P \ \textit{si} \ \text{T \ P \ \ldots \ ]}]]) \] \) - (\( \textit{si}, \) cf. (1a)) [Hernanz 2007]

   b. \( \ldots [\text{ForceP} \ [\text{TopicP} \ [\text{XP} \ \textit{si} \ \textit{[\textit{X} \ \textit{que} \ \textit{[\text{TopicP} \ [\text{FocusP} \ [\Sigma P \ \text{T \ P \ \ldots \ ]}]])]} \] \) - (\( \textit{si \ que}, \) cf. (1b))

The analysis sketched in (2) predicts that \( \textit{si \ que} \) should be impossible under verbs that take a deficient (i.e., truncated) left periphery. Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2009) and de Cuba & MacDonald (2013) show that factive verbs have a more limited CP layer. For instance, they cannot take recombination (\textit{que} topic/CLLD \textit{que}) structures (Villa-García 2015). As shown by (3a) and (3b), \( \textit{si} \) is possible in factive environments, while \( \textit{si \ que} \) is not.

(3) a. El hecho de que \( \textit{si} \) vayas me gusta
   the fact of that you \( \textit{please} \)
   ‘I like the fact that you \( \textit{are} \) going (there).’

   b. *El hecho de que \( \textit{si \ que} \) vayas me gusta
   ‘The fact of that yes \( \textit{that} \) \( \textit{please} \)

   ‘What does s/he say that s/he did give Peter?’

Villa-García (2010 et seq.) claims that non-high \textit{que} complementizers in Spanish (e.g., in recombination contexts) create strong islands for movement. According to (2b), \textit{que} in \( \textit{si \ que} \) is a low complementizer and as a result extraction out of \( \textit{si \ que} \) should be banned. This is actually confirmed by (5), which shows that movement across \( \textit{si} \) is out only if \textit{que} is present.

(5) a. ¿Qué dice que a Pedro si le dio \textit{qué}? \quad b.*¿Qué dice que a Pedro si que le dio \textit{qué}?
   what says that to Peter \( \textit{yes cl. gave} \)
   what says that to Peter \( \textit{yes that cl. gave} \)
   ‘What does s/he say that s/he did give Peter?’

Villa-García (2015) claims that elements preceding non-high \textit{ques} are base-generated in their surface position, as shown by the fact that such phrases do not display reconstruction effects, unlike their counterparts without a low \textit{que}; these elements cannot move past \textit{que}, as it creates an island. If this is correct, then \( \textit{si} \) in \( \textit{si \ que} \) sequences is merged where it surfaces; it cannot move from a lower projection to the left of \textit{que}. In contrast, the emphatic affirmative particle \( \textit{si} \) in cases like (1a) moves from \( \Sigma \text{P} \text{XP} \) to \( \text{FocusP} \) (cf. (2a)), since it marks both polarity (associated with \( \Sigma \text{P} \)) and emphasis (associated with \( \text{FocusP} \)) (González Rodríguez 2008,
Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.


Hernanz 2007, and Batllori & Hernanz 2013. If sí in sí que sequences never moves from ΣP to the projection hosting it (i.e., XP in (2b)), then there should be room for a lexicalized polarity element in ΣP (cf. (2b)). This prediction is borne out, as shown by the contrast in (6).

(6) a. *Ahora sí sí now yes yes ‘Now it is the truly the case.’

b. Ahora sí que sí now yes that yes [based on Batllori & Hernanz 2013]

Unsurprisingly, (6a) is ungrammatical, for sí originally occupies ΣP and then FocusP (note that in principle, two copies of the same moved item are not normally overtly realized). In (6b), on the contrary, sí never moved from ΣP to the specifier of que, thus allowing ΣP to host a polarity particle. Our account (cf. (2b)) further predicts that the polarity value encoded by ΣP need not be positive in sí que contexts. This expectation is fulfilled, as indicated by (7).

(7) a. *Pedro dice que ahora, sí no van Pedro says that now yes not go

b. Pedro dice que ahora, sí que no van Peter says that now yes that not go ‘Peter says that now they will certainly not go.’ [based on González Rodríguez 2008]

In (7b), the polarity of the embedded clause is indeed negative. This is confirmed by TP-ellipsis cases, which feature polarity particles like también ‘too’ and tampoco ‘(n)either’ (Gallego 2016, i.a.). In this context, these particles must bear the same polarity value as the antecedent clause. Note that only a negative element (tampoco) is possible here (cf. (8)). Recall (4d), where the negative adverb nunca follows sí que, its polarity being also negative.

(8) Pedro dice que ahora, sí que no van y que mañana, tampoco/†también Peter says that now yes that not go and that tomorrow neither too ‘Peter says that they are certainly not going now, nor will they go tomorrow.’

The data above suggest that sí in sí que structures is not a polarity marker. In cases like (1b), it can be interpreted as a reinforcement of positive polarity, since ΣP does contain a positive polarity marker (which is not morphologically manifested when not emphatic in Spanish: María ∅ vino ‘Mary came’). However, in cases where the negation occurs (cf. (7b) and (8)), sí que appears to establish a contrast between the constituent that precedes sí and a constituent of a previous statement or a presupposition. Thus, (9b) expresses a contrast between the garden (where they do not eat) and other places (where they may eat: the kitchen, the dining room, etc.). As a result, if sí que is not preceded by a contrastive topic in these cases, the sentence is infelicitous (cf. (9a)) (see RAE 2009 on the unelidability of contrastive topics).

(9) a. #Sí que no comen yes that not eat

b. En el jardín sí que no comen in the garden yes that not eat

Inten. meaning: ‘They certainly don’t eat.’ ‘They certainly don’t eat in the garden.’

Lastly, we argue against Batllori & Hernanz’s (2013) contention that sí que, which allows CP-related material to its right (cf. (4b,d)), sits in (a split) ForceP. (10) shows that, instead, the analysis in (2b) is more promising: sí que can occur after recomplementation que, which has been argued to lexicalize a high Topº (Garrett 2013; Villa-García 2010 et seq.; i.a.).

(10) Pedro dice que a Barna, que si que van a ir Peter says that to Barcelona that yes that go to go ‘Peter says that they are certainly going to Barcelona.’