

# Evidentials *dizque* and *que* in Spanish. Grammaticalization, parameters and the (fine) structure of Comp\*

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ABSTRACT. In this paper we study one type of Spanish *que* (the equivalent to the complementizer “that”) that can be shown to belong into the crosslinguistically restricted list of evidentials. In particular, we will claim that it encodes the (most basic) marks of non-first-hand or *indirect* (reported) evidence. Our point of departure is certain (apparently) independent clauses of Spanish headed by an overt complementizer (*que*). Some tests will be presented that support the idea that that one type of *que* introducing a well specified subset of root sentences shares most of the properties that have been claimed to characterize reportative evidentials in languages such as Quechua (Faller 2002, 2006). As for the properties of reportative *que*, it will be further shown that it does not encode any features related to epistemic modality (reliability or (im)probability) and we will propose that it is better analyzed as an illocutionary operator, affecting the illocutionary force (in line with Faller 2002 among others) and not as an epistemic modal (Izvorsky 1997 among others). In order to determine the nature of this reportative element and its origin, we contrast it with an old Spanish form, *dizque*, which exists nowadays in certain modern American varieties. This particle also has the properties of an evidential but behaves as an epistemic modal. In the last sections, we will propose that both evidential particles (*que* and *dizque*) are the result of a process of grammaticalization (i.e. ‘upward reanalysis’, or categorial change, of functional material, in the sense of Roberts and Roussou 2003) of the complex structure headed by a communication verb, *dicen que* “they say that”. We will tentatively describe such process and introduce a hypothesis as to the nature and role of the parameter involved in the claimed reanalysis.

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## 1. Introduction

In this paper we will study one type of Spanish *que* (complementizer “that”) and propose that has to be incorporated into the crosslinguistically restricted list of ‘evidentials’. Our point of departure is certain (apparently) independent clauses of Spanish which are headed by an overt complementizer, as those in (1).

- (1) a. ...de repente se oye detrás: oye, **que** Manolo puso la bandera.  
 (CREA, ORAL Spain)  
 ...suddenly it is heard from behind, listen *that* Manolo put the flag
- b. (Oye), **que** ha dimitido el decano.  
 Listen, *that* the dean has resigned

Those in (1) are root clauses which can be discourse initial (pronounced out-of-the blue, as can be seen in (1a)). The semantic contribution of *que* is to incorporate reference to a speech event heard (and reported) by the speaker. So the sentence in (1b) is used in a context where the dean has resigned and someone (different from the speaker and the hearer) actually *said* it. We will hypothesize that *que* in this particular construction is an (indirect) ‘reportative’ grammatical evidential, similar to the ones that have been identified for American Indian languages, as well as for languages like Turkish, Balkan languages, Tibetan, Japanese, Korean, etc. (Chafe & Nichols 1986, Aikhenvald 2006).

This paper is organized as follows. In section 2 we define evidentiality and we briefly summarize the three semantic views on the conceptual nature of evidentials. In section 3 we present and describe the Spanish evidential *dizque*. We trace its origins from Old Spanish to some present forms in American Spanish and we also justify the meanings and functions of this form, which, as an evidential, is better characterized as an epistemic modal. In section 4, mainly based on Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (in

press), we introduce a set of diagnoses that allow us to analyze the Spanish *que* appearing in well specified Spanish root sentences as a reportative (indirect) evidential. In 6 we develop a syntactic and semantic-pragmatic formal analysis of this form which we define as an illocutionary operator (as opposed to the form *dizque*). Finally, in section 6 we introduce the view of grammaticalization in formal grammar and we hypothesize that there is a path from *dicen que* “they say that” to *dizque* and *que* and that it meets the main features of a case of grammaticalization (‘upward reanalysis’). We finally present a conjecture as to the parameter that could be involved in this process.

## 2. Evidentiality. Three views on evidentials

Evidentiality is a linguistic category encoding speaker-oriented qualifications of propositions in terms of the evidence they are based on. All languages have a way of expressing the speaker’s source of information by lexical devices such as adverbs like *allegedly*, *reportedly*, etc., verbal constructions such as *it is said*, *I heard*, and other lexical means. These are called ‘evidentiality strategies’ (Aikhenvald 2004). But only some languages grammaticize evidentiality and encode it in their (inflectional) morphology or in their particle system (complementizers, for instance) (cf. Willett 1988, Palmer 1986). Evidentials are thus generally morphological (verbal) markers or particles, some derived from verbs like *see*, *hear* and *say* (Gordon 1986, Aikhenvald 2006). As Speas (2004: 255) puts it “some languages have evidential morphemes which mark the Speaker’s source for the information being reported in the utterance”. As an example we will take evidentials in Quechua, as described in Faller (2002). Quechua has three types of evidentials (which are always enclitic): direct, reportative and conjectural.

### (2) Para-sha-n-mi/-si/-ch´a.

rain-prog-3-bpg/rep/conj

‘It is raining.’

-**mi**<sub>EV</sub>: s sees that it is raining.

-**si**<sub>EV</sub>: s was told that it is raining.

-**ch´a**<sub>EV</sub>: s conjectures that it is raining. (From Faller, 2006)

We will be concerned with what have been called ‘indirect’ evidentials. Izvorsky (1997) examines the meaning of indirect evidentials such as the perfect of evidentiality of languages like Bulgarian, Turkish and Norwegian and compares it to English adverbs like *apparently*. Essentially, this author analyzes evidentials as “epistemic modals with a universal modal force and a more restricted domain of quantification than that of ‘ordinary’ epistemic operators” (1997:225. See also Chung 2007, Matthewson *et al.* 2007, Rullmann *et al.* 2008). Basically evidentials would mark the speaker’s degree of certainty and/or the necessity/possibility of the truth of the propositional content.

In an alternative view, evidentials are not considered as epistemic modals but have been analyzed as encoding illocutionary modifiers (e.g., Faller 2002, 2006, 2007) which affect the illocutionary force, including the illocutionary points and sincerity conditions. According to Faller, evidentials “add to or modify the sincerity conditions of the act they apply to” (2002: 231), they are functions from speech acts to speech acts. Conceptually the marking of the speaker’s degree of certainty and/or the necessity/possibility of the truth of the propositional content would be clearly distinct from the kind of evidence a speaker has, although the later may of course often determine the former. The view of evidentiality as a conceptual category distinct from epistemic modality does however not preclude the possibility (which is well attested in the world’s languages, see for example Willett (1988), Chafe and Nichols (1986), Aikhenvald and Dixon (2003), and Aikhenvald (2004)) that specific linguistic markers may combine both. There is also an intermediate position (e.g., Garrett 2001), according to which evidentiality can be encoded as epistemic modals in some morphemes and as illocutionary operators in others (See Lim 2010).

Going back to the examples in (1), we have to note that these sentences do not involve any kind of modality, in the sense that the notion of doubt is not present in their meaning, not even as a pragmatic inference. The sentence introduced by what we will prove to be an evidential *que* is presented as a (true) assertion that has been previously heard by the speaker. This suggests that evidential *que* is an illocutionary operator.

In order to justify the previous claim and at the same time clarify the status of the *que* in (1) we will first compare it to an old form, which remains

in some modern varieties of (American) Spanish. In particular, we will now analyze the form *dizque*, derived from *dicen que* “they say that” which, being an evidential is not identical to our *que*, in the sense that its main properties are clearly those of an epistemic modal.

### 3. The form *dizque* as an evidential

#### 3.1 Historical Data

As Kany (1944) points out, Old Spanish form *diz que* stood for *dicen que* “they say that” or *se dice que* “it is said that”. It was common in the old language and it began to decline shortly after 1500. The author also notes that

[...] nevertheless *diz que* did not become obsolete; it became dialectal, provincial, or rustic. At the beginning of the seventeenth century Covarrubias (*Tesoro*, 1611, p. 324) registered it as “palabra aldeana, que no se deve usar en Corte.” It lingered on in regional literature and speech into the nineteenth century. Even today it is occasionally heard in restricted areas of Spain, but only as an archaism in familiar or jocose style. (Kany 1944: 168).

As can be seen in the following example of a narrative the meaning of this form is that of source of information, that is usually attributed to reportative evidentials.

(3) ... vase a la comedia, que **diz que** estaba cuajá de señorío prencipal . . . fuéronse a ver a la enferma, que **diz que** paecia un sol. (Pereda, *Obras completas*, VI, Madrid, 1897, p. 140, 409, from Kany 1944, fn. 1).

‘(He) goes to the comedy that *was said* to be crowded with gentry... they went to see the sick woman who *they say* looked like a sun.’

There are many other cases of *dizque*<sup>1</sup> with a reportative evidential value. In CORDE, we found 84 cases out of 54 Spanish documents. Some are given below:

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<sup>1</sup> This form has many variants in Latin America: *izque*, *isque*, *i que!* y *que*, *es que*, *quizque*, *quesque* among others.

- (4) E Cartagena le respondió, que con el mejor marinero de la nao le habia salvado, y que quizá otro dia le salvaria con un page. Y **dizque** dende, en tres dias el dicho Cartagena no lo tornó á saludar. [1521, López de Recalde, J.: *Carta del contador Juan López de Recalde al Obispo de Burgos*]  
 ‘And Cartagena answered him that he had saved him with the best sailor in the ship and that maybe another day he would save him with a page. And *it is said* that since then the above mentioned Cartagena did not say hello to him for three days’.
- (5) & a Nós es fecha relación que [...] los dichos alcaldes de la tierra no visitan commo deuen, ni exsecutan en ella, la nuestra justicia, ni oyen los querellosos commo deúan; antes, **dizque** ponen su<sup>2</sup> tenientes en las dichas alcaldías ombres legos, escuderos & otras personas no vsadas de tener judgado, los quales **dizque** fazen injusticias & estorsiones a los vezinos. [1492, Anónimo: *Ordenanzas reales de la ciudad de Sevilla*]  
 ‘And to us was reported that ... the mentioned mayors of the land do not visit as they ought to, nor do they execute in it, our justice, nor do they listen to the complainants as they should; on the contrary, *it is said that* they put as their lieutenants in the above mentioned [...] mayoralities, laymen, squires and other people not used to having judged, who *it is said that* make unfair things and extortion to the neighbours’.
- (6) ¡Con induztria **dizque** le engolda! [1617, Suárez de Figueroa, C.: *El pasajero*]  
 ‘With industry *they say that* he feeds him’.

It is important to notice that in all these cases the *dizque* has the added meaning of “doubt” or uncertainty about the proposition it introduces. Crucially, as Kany observes, “... in many instances their force is reduced to that of an adverb of doubt.” (Kany op. cit. p. 171). In this sense it contrasts with the reportative *que* in (1) that we will analyze in section 3. First we

<sup>2</sup> For a better understanding and a relatively different and clearer version of this *Ordenanza*, see I. Carrasco Cantos & P. Carrasco Cantos, *Estudios lingüísticos de las Ordenanzas de Sevilla de 1492*. Málaga, Universidad de Málaga, where it reads:

(i)[...] antes/ diz que ponen **por** sus tenjentes en las dichas alcaldias onbres/ legos, escuderos & otras personas non vsadas de tener juzgados los/ quales diz que hasen ynjusticias & extorsiones a los vezinos de la tierra [...]

Nothing crucial for our purposes hinges upon the text chosen.

will concentrate on the properties of the form *dizque* in modern American Spanish.

## 2.2 *Dizque* in American Spanish

Laprade (1976) analyzes the form *dizque* (as well as the use of certain verbal forms) as expressions of evidentiality (non-first hand information) in the area of La Paz (see also Hardman 1986, Klee & Ocampo 1995) and relates this use in the Andean variety of Spanish zone to contact with Quechua and Aymara, which have evidentiality systems. Travis (2006) also analyzes this evidential form in Spanish spoken in Colombia (where there is no contact with languages with evidentiality systems). The important fact for our purposes is that, as Travis notes:

The range of use of *dizque* extends from functioning as a purely evidential marker, encoding reported speech and hearsay with a notion of doubt implied in some contexts, to a marker of epistemic modality, encoding extensions of the notion of doubt implied in its evidential use and nothing about source of information" (Travis 2006: 1269).

Travis distinguishes thus a true reportative evidential encoding source of information, which can carry an added value of doubt. That value, according to Travis "is available as a pragmatic inference according to the context, but is not inherent in the semantics of *dizque* itself" (2006: 1272). In a second case *dizque*, a kind of adverbial form as can be seen, for instance, from its position within the sentences, is only a marker of epistemic stance, "source of information is no longer encoded, and the notion of doubt has been conventionalized and has even been extended to one of nonvolitionality." (Travis 2006: 1272). Examples are given below of some of the different values carried by *dizque*:<sup>3 4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Travis (2006) describes other related values, such as "labeling". See the cited work for details.

<sup>4</sup> Treviño (2008) reports another use of *que* in Spanish spoken in México, whose distribution seems to be similar to *dizque*. This *que* is subject to prosodic restrictions. The author provides the following examples:

- (i) a. Lo ponen así **que** para ver los nervios.  
They put it like that *que* to see the nerves  
b. ¿Dónde lo habrá conseguido? —Lo compró **que** en Sanborns.  
Where did he get it? — He bought it *que* in Sanborns  
c. (Reading the label of a product)  
- **Que** hay que guardarlo **que** en el congelador.  
Que it has to be stored *que* in the freezer

*Reportative value* [with an added value of doubt]:

- (7) Por ejemplo, el a – aquí el alcalde, Todo lo que ha hecho, Y...y ahorita, **dizque** ya lo están investigando.

'For example, the mayor here, all that he's done, and now, *dizque* he's under investigation.' (Travis 2006: ex. 12)

*Dubitative/mirative value*:

- (8) . . . se abrió **dizque** a comerciar. Comerciar era llegar a los almacenes, pedir, no pagar, y exigir dinero de vuelta. . . les sacaban dinero **dizque** de vuelta.

' . . . she began *dizque* to do business. Do business was to go into the shops, make an order, not pay, and demand change. . . they would get money out of them *dizque* in change.' (Travis 2006, ex. 24 *apud* Castro Caycedo 1994: 100–101)

The diachrony of *dizque* appears thus to be the following. Basically *dizque* started as a pure evidential, which encodes source of information (the most extended value); from there it extended its meaning to mark the information as doubtful (or even false). In this case, it can take first person subjects, as opposed to the pure reportative evidential use (see below). This is a more restricted use. From this notion of doubt it evolved into a pure epistemic modality marker. Travis (2006: 1270) notes:

[...] the semantic change from reported speech to doubt is a regular crosslinguistic pattern that has been widely commented on in grammaticized evidential systems. [...] This is related to the nature of reported speech: attributing an utterance to someone else allows the speaker to distance him/herself from the material being presented, and thus such an utterance can take on overtones of speaker doubt about the veracity of the information.

In the following section we will turn to sentences in (1) in order to complete our view of the Spanish set of evidentials.



#### 4. Non subordinate *que* in Spanish. A reportative evidential

##### 4.1 Two types of non subordinate *que*

In Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (in press) sentences like (1) are analyzed. Other similar examples are provided in (9):

- (9) a. **Que** el Barça ha ganado la Champions. [Etxepare 2007: 25-26]  
That the Barça has won the Champions
- b. (Bueno, pues estaba una mañana en Interview y me llamó mi well, so I.was one morning in Interview and to-me called my hermano y me dice:) Oye, **que** ha sido depuesta Benazir. brother and to.me tells: listen that has been deposed Benazir  
'Well, one morning I was in Interview and my brother calls and says: hey, Benazir has been deposed.' (CREA, oral, Spain)
- c. En la cena nos llama un compañero, oye **que** está nevando en el at the dinner us calls a companion, listen that is snowing at the campo de vuelo. field of flying  
'At dinner a colleague calls and says, hey it is snowing at the flying field'. (Taken from the Internet)

These sentences, as opposed to the corresponding versions without *que*, refer to a speech event reported by the speaker. Another property of these structures is that they are matrix clauses which can (and most often are) discourse initial (pronounced out of the blue). Our claim is that *que* in these cases is a reportative evidential. In this two aspects they are different from sentences of the type in (10) that we would like to briefly present just to clarify the data:

- (10) a. Moment A:  
- Viene el autobús  
Comes the bus  
Moment B:  
- **Que** viene el autobús (¿no me oyes?)  
that comes the bus (can't you hear me)

- b. Sí/naturalmente **que** me iré.  
Yes/naturally that I.will.leave
- c. Speaker A:  
- He votado al PP / María es estupenda.  
I.have voted to.the PP/ Mary is great  
Speaker B (scornfully / angrily):  
- ¡**Que** has votado al PP!! / ¡**Que** María es estupenda?  
That you-have voted to-the PP/ That Mary is great
- d. Y él, **que** llegábamos tarde, **que** no se podía salir con nosotros...  
And he that we-arrived late that not one-can get-out with us  
'And he kept saying that we were late, that you cannot meet up with us'
- e. (Vamos/ vaya) **que** no aguantas más  
(In-sum...) that not you -bear anymore  
'In sum, you cannot bear it anymore, right?'

In Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (in press) we show that these are echoic structures, where: "the speaker does not report a particular state of affairs but reproduces or refers to another utterance or thought to show her reaction" (Wilson 2006). Different from the sentences with an evidential *que* that we will analyze in the following subsection the sentences in (10) are instances of root sentences introduced by *que*, similar to other 'in subordinate' sentences<sup>5</sup> (Demonte & Fernández Soriano in press), some of them depending on a silent verb and where *que* had the added echoic value. The structure proposed for those cases is the one in (11):

(11) (V) [ForceP [**que**... [TP...]]]

In what follows we will come back to the *que* in (1) and (9) and show that is a reportative evidential similar to the ones in Quechua, which appears above the left periphery.

<sup>5</sup> Some of these cases have been reported in some varieties of spoken English. Radford (2013) provides data such as the following, taken from English broadcast media:

(i) a. *Obviously that* the Achilles was giving him a bit of a problem (Ian Chappell, BBC Radio 5)  
b. *Inevitably that* there'll be some temptation there for cricketers (Gus Fraser, BBC Radio 5 Sports Extra)

#### 4.2 Properties of reportative *que*

a) Reportative evidentials never report a speaker's or a hearer's saying. Reportative *que* also shows this property. This is, in fact, a very clear restriction: the president of a nation, for example, cannot report his own war declaration (which may well be a speech event) headed by this *que*.

(12) #Ciudadanos, **que** {se ha/ hemos} declarado la guerra.

Citizens that it has been/ we have declared the war

b) Another property of reportative evidentials is that they are restricted to declarative sentences. More specifically, Aikhenvald (2004:242) notes that declarative sentences are the most natural environment for evidentials to occur cross-linguistically. Evidentials can also occur in questions, at least in a subset of the languages which possess an evidential system. They seem quite infrequent in commands (Aikhenvald, 2004:250). Aikhenvald does not comment on other minor clause types, such as exclamatives. As can be seen in (13), all these clause types are incompatible with reportative *que*:

(13) a. #Oye, **que** ¡qué bonito día hace!

Listen, that what nice day it is

b. #Oye, ¿**Que** hemos ganado la liga?<sup>6</sup>

listen, that we have won the league?

c. ??Oye, **que** !andando/ a comer / que nos vayamos!

Listen that walking / to eat / that we go

c) Faller 2002 shows that reportative evidentials do not allow for the speech eventuality they imply to be accessed by linguistic operations bearing on propositional truth, such as negation/dissent. Negation/dissent can only access the proposition introduced by the evidential, not the "source of the information" it refers to. Once again, reportative *que* behaves on a par with (indirect) evidentials in this respect: the source of information introduced by *que* cannot be affected by negation/dissent. This is why

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<sup>6</sup> Faller (2006) and other authors show that some evidentials can be under the scope of interrogatives, giving rise to particular evidence "shifts" (see Lim (2010)). Davis, Potts and Speas (2007) argue that this contribution is genuinely pragmatic.

the second part of the following dialogue cannot mean that the speaker did not actually hear that Madrid has won the Champions league but only that the proposition itself (that Madrid has won) is false, as the impossibility of (14b) indicates:<sup>7</sup>

- (14) - Oye, **que** el Madrid ha ganado la Champions.  
 Listen, that Madrid has won the Champions  
 - No, qué va, no pueden haber ganado.  
 No, no way, they cannot have won.  
 - #No, hombre, no has escuchado eso en ninguna parte.  
 No, man, you have not heard that anywhere.

d) It has been noted that indirect/reportative evidentials are common in folklore tales (see Lim 2010). As Aikhenvald (2006:324) notes: “the genre of the text may determine the choice of an evidential. Traditional stories are typically cast in reported evidentials”. In this sense, it is interesting that, in the (orally transmitted) Spanish literature, one can trace some examples of reportative *que* like the following:

- (15) **Que** de noche lo mataron / al caballero. La gala de Medina, la flor de Olmedo.  
 That of night CL they-killed / To-the knight / The jewel of M the flower of O  
 ‘For at night they killed/ That noble soul/ The jewel of Medina / The flower of Olmedo’ (*El Caballero de Olmedo*, Lope de Vega)

e) First person effect. Aikhenvald (2006) notes that reportative evidentials carry additional meanings if the proposition they heard has a first person subject. These are basically new information, ‘unprepared mind’ and surprise. In other words, when the subject of the prejacent is first person, the sentence carries an additional implication that the speaker is not aware of her act, or does not believe what she is asserting (Lim 2010:60-63). This kind of effect is also found in the Spanish *que* under analysis, as shown by

<sup>7</sup> In this sense they are different to epistemic modals. But see Faller (2006) for a further observation suggesting that what has to be taken into consideration is also “external scrutability”.

the following examples:

(16) a. Scenario: Listening to the lottery results, someone suddenly hears his number:

(Oye,) **que** he ganado la lotería.

Listen that I-have won the lottery [Surprise]

b. Scenario: Someone receives a letter saying that she has been nominated Dean:

(Oye,) **que** soy la nueva decana.

Listen that I-am the new dean [Unawareness]

c. Scenario: There is a party, the bell rings, a neighbor complains about the noise:

(Oye,) **que** somos muy ruidosos y tenemos que irnos.

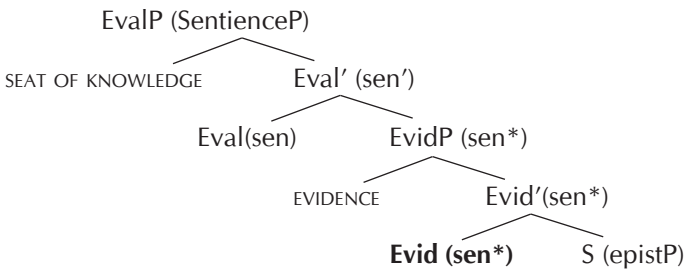
Listen that we-are very noisy and we-have to leave

[Surprise, disagreement]

5. The syntactic and semantic/pragmatic analysis of evidential *que*

In this section we will propose a syntactic structure for the constructions headed by the just described evidential *que*. Our point of departure is the approach to discourse markers proposed by Speas & Tenny (2003). Within this framework, evidentials head an Evidentiality Phrase inside a Speech Act Phrase, as depicted in (17). It is our contention that *que* is the head of this EvPhrase.

(17) [Speech Act Phrase [ SPEECH ACT [CP ...]]]



As for the semantics of evidential *que*, we have already suggested that it is better characterized as an illocutionary operator, which modifies the illocutionary force of the sentence. We thus adopt Faller's analysis in (18):<sup>8</sup>

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 (18) & \text{ASSERT}(p) & \text{PRESENT}(p) \\
 & \text{que} & \longrightarrow \\
 & \text{SINC} = \{Bel(s,p)\} & \text{SINC} = \{\exists s_2[\text{Assert}(s_2, p) \wedge s_2 \notin \{h,s\}]\}
 \end{array}$$

(Faller 2002:200)

(18) corresponds to Faller's representation for Quechuan indirect evidential *-si*. The illocutionary act in (18), that Faller calls Presentation, would be defined by the sincerity condition (SINC) that someone distinct from the speaker and the hearer has asserted the content of the report. No correlation exists between the presence of reportative *que* and the degree of certainty with which the speaker believes (*Bel*) the embedded proposition, however. Its use is entirely compatible with a situation in which a speaker is convinced that the prejacent proposition is true, as well as with a situation in which the speaker is convinced that it is false (see the first person effect cases).

This would explain its initial position, always restricted to sentential scope. Another fact that would be accounted for under the analysis proposed is the incompatibility of *que* with other evidentials (and not with epistemic modals such as *posiblemente*, as in (19a)), as expected. Example (19b) shows that reportative *que* cannot coappear with conditional mood, which behaves as a reportative evidential in journalist style:

- (19) a. Oye, **que** *posiblemente* el Banco Central ha sido asaltado esta mañana por unos adolescentes.  
 Listen, that probably the Bank Central has been assaulted this morning by some teenagers
- b. #Oye, **que** el Banco Central *habría sido asaltado* esta mañana por unos adolescentes

<sup>8</sup> As Faller (2006) notes, the illocutionary operator nature of evidential *que* should indicate that it could occupy a position higher than Speech Act rather than below it. We will not pursue this issue here.

Listen, that the Bank Central would-have been assaulted this morning by some teenagers  
Intended meaning: The speaker reports what the news give as reported information.

As a final remark, let us say that since evidential *que* is restricted to root clauses and only takes declarative structures, the possibility of embedding under conditionals is precluded, as seen in (20):

- (20) \*Oye, si **que** el decano ha dimitido, no hay que preocuparse.  
Listen, if that the Dean has resigned there is no anything to be worried about

Faller claims this to be a property characteristic of illocutionary operators, which crucially distinguishes them from epistemic modals. The reasons why illocutionary operators cannot be under the scope of conditionals are however more complex (see Faller 2006 for a detailed explanation). The behavior of *que* with respect to negation also indicates that it behaves like illocutionary operators. The same is true for the assent/dissent test.

## 6. Variation and change: from *dicen que* “they say that” to reportative *que*. A case of grammaticalization

As said above, it is an extended idea that *dizque* derives from the construction ‘verb *decir* ‘say’ plus complementizer *que*.’ In this section we will set this descriptive generalization into Robert & Roussou (2003) theory of grammaticalization and we will suggest a process whose final step is the bare evidential *que* that we have just identified.

### 6.1 The notion of grammaticalization

According to standard definitions, grammaticalization is seen as the creation of new functional material through the reanalysis of other existing either functional or lexical material (Lehmann 1985). A typical example of grammaticalization is that of the evolution of English main verbs to auxiliaries; another relevant case would be the evolution from Latin functional demonstrative *ILLE* to Romance article *il/le/el*. In functionalist

approaches, grammaticalization is conceived as a specific path of change. In formal grammar, the most conspicuous approach to linguistic change and grammaticalization is Roberts & Roussou (2003) (henceforth R&R). These authors argue for the strong hypothesis that grammaticalization is a regular case of parameter change rather than an isolated or specific type of change. Thus in this view grammaticalization is seen as an epiphenomenon of other more general processes. We will adopt this general view in our attempt to explain the evolution from *dice que* to *dizque* and possibly to *que*.

R&R (2003) give two main properties of grammaticalization:

- a) "Grammaticalization is *upward* reanalysis due to parameter resetting."
- b) "Grammaticalization is reanalysis [that] gives rise to a new exponent for a *higher* functional head X." (R&R 2003: 300) (our italics)

These properties locate the main features of grammaticalization processes, mostly accepted by all approaches, inside the frame of a parametric theory of linguistic change. We will refer to this approach as 'formal grammaticalization'. In general terms, grammaticalization goes along with:

- a) (Syntactic) Reanalysis: (Upwards) categorial change of lexical or functional material,
- b) (morpho) phonological reduction (from *ILLE* to *le*, for instance),
- c) semantic bleaching (cf. Hopper & Traugott 1993: 87): loss of a semantic property (demonstrative property, in the case of articles) or "change in the meaning of the reanalysed element." (R&R 2003: 219).

More specifically, reanalysis and grammaticalization consist in the formation of new functional material that carries a category change and a structural simplification (R&R 2003:2). Crucial to this theory of change is then the idea that functional heads (Comp, *v*, T, Det, Ev, etc.) are present in all languages, although they may not be realized morphophonologically, and that this P(honetic) F(orm) realization may be achieved either by (external) Merge or by Move (material from other node in the clause



structure is moved to the functional head). Things being that way, language change is the result of change in the PF realization of functional heads; syntactic change is caused by phonological change and semantic change. Change occurs, according to these authors, when the trigger experience for a parameter setting (e.g., whether a functional head is realized by Merge or Move) is ambiguous or obscure.<sup>9</sup>

In the next subsections, we will present in a very schematic and tentative way our proposal that the evolution from *dicen que* to reportative *que* fits into this general frame and is thus a case of formal grammaticalization. We are aware that complete development of this hypothesis needs a thorough empirical study as well as a more careful approach to the question of parameter resetting in Spanish.

## 6.2 Our case: from *dicen que* to *dizque / que*

To sustain our hypothesis we rely on Rizzi's (1977) theory of the structure of sentence left-periphery (see below the structure in (23)) extended with Speas and Tenny's proposal about encoding of pragmatic features in syntactic structures (see above (17)). We also accept the extended idea that functional categories bear syntactic features which trigger syntactic operations. With these provisos, we postulate a process in the terms that follow.

Whatever its order in the whole story might be, a crucial step is the loss of features of the functional category Comp. Roussou (2000) has shown that the Force head of Rizzi's (1997) ForceP splits into two (sub) heads: "the clause-typing one, which is essentially an Operator (Op) head [...], and an even higher C head that has the properties of a 'subordinator' (in the sense that it functions as a clause-linking element)" [R&R 2003: 78]. We believe that it is the subordinator feature that is lost in the evolution under study. Although this assumption is in need of further testing and clarification, it appears to us that in a certain period there is ambiguity between the two meanings and uses (we also contend that together with the loss of the categorial feature in Comp the meaning of *decir* is blurred). Recall the example in (4) that we repeat below as (21); in this sentence *dizque* may be understood as the complex V+Comp or as a report of the speaker uncertainty in front of the reported sentence (i.e., as pure evidential).

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<sup>9</sup> "A change occurs when the trigger experience for a parameter setting provided by the input has become obscure or ambiguous. This can happen in a variety of ways, for example through language contact, morphophonological erosion, etc." (R&R 2003: 12)

(21) E Cartagena le respondió, que con el mejor marinero de la nao le habia salvado, y que quizá otro día le salvaría con un page. Y **dizque** dende, en tres días el dicho Cartagena no lo tornó á saludar. [1521, López de Recalde, J.: *Carta del contador Juan López de Recalde al Obispo de Burgos*]

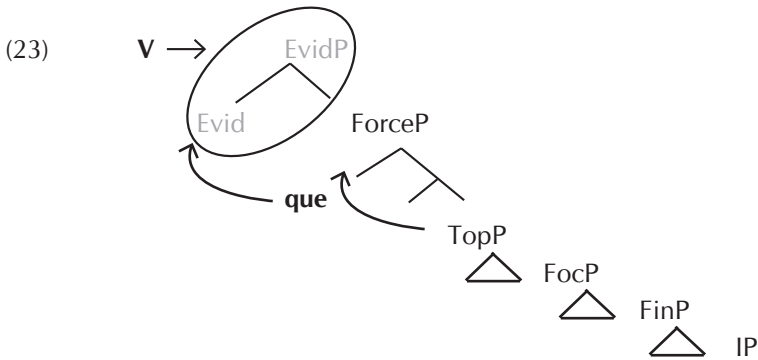
'And Cartagena answered him that he had saved him with the best sailor in the ship and that maybe another day he would save him with a page. And *it is said* that since then the above mentioned Cartagena did not say hello to him for three days'.

In (22), from Travis (2006: 1286) *dicen que* and *dizque* coexist in the same text but "while *dicen que* 'they say that' presents objectively what is put forward by theories of witchcraft ("it is said that things change their properties"), *dizque* implies that the material it introduces is a belief that is more open to question ("supposedly they take on magic properties").

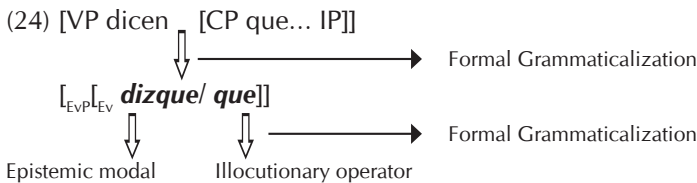
(22) En brujería dicen que todas esas cosas cambian sus propiedades por los rezos y las alumbradas que se les hacen y **dizque** se convierten en sustancias mágicas, ¿me entiendes?

'In witchcraft they say that all these things change their properties through the devotions and illuminations that are done to them and *dizque* they become magic substances, you see?' (Castro Caycedo 1994: 118, from Travis 2006, ex. (16))

The provisional syntactic analysis which correlates with the semantic bleaching and semantic ambiguity is that the *que* with an operator feature moves upwards to the matrix verb, now with no lexical content. The fusion of two heads gives rise to another functional node [Evid], situated in EvidP (above ForceP). The result is a root sentence with an activated Ev node (whose head is occupied by *dizque* or, alternatively, *que*) in its periphery. This is shown in the following diagram, based on Rizzi's (1997) "left periphery":



To summarize, the cause of grammaticalization would be the reduction of a feature in the head of ForceP (ForceP = Sub > Op → Op). This reduction involves formation of new functional material (*dizque / que*) and a categorial change. This change implies a ‘structural simplification’, which appears to be a central property of grammaticalization processes (R&R 2003:2). A structural representation is simpler (and therefore less marked) than another iff it contains “fewer formal feature syncretism” (Lash 2012: 197), where syncretism, generally speaking, is resolution of features in conflict. That is, grammaticalization of an element implies that the representation associated with it is simpler. In this framework, “simplicity” refers to feature content (including being negatively marked for a feature). This would be the case of the evolution under study, where the subordinate feature of Force is lost together with the verbal features associated to *decir*. But structural simplification also refers to the choice between (external) merge vs. move (internal merge). Merge ([X\*merge] in R&R formalization) is simpler (less marked) than move ([X\*move]), since movement is featurely more complex. We will come back to this concept in the next section. The following diagram intends to summarize the steps of the whole process and be a graphic recapitulation of the change we have analyzed:



The examples presented up to now show, though, that the distributional behavior of *dizque* and *que* is not identical. *Que* appears only in the initial position of independent sentences, *dizque* appears more frequently in subordinate structures (or taking scope over the VO when it is simply an adverb). As we have seen, *dizque* (as well as the form *que* present in Mexican Spanish analyzed by Treviño (2008) (see fn. 4)) has the properties of an evidential which is also an epistemic modal. The epistemic modal value, moreover, is the only value which is present in the adverbial form *dizque*, which can modify any sentence constituent. The standard Spanish form *que* has no features related to modality but presents the properties of an evidential which behaves as an illocutionary operator, this would explain its being restricted to root contexts.

### 6.3. Parameter resetting?

In this section we will give a rather tentative explanation of how and why parameter resetting has taken place in the evolution from *dicen que* to (*diz*)*que* in Spanish. Our basic claim is that the change to a [Evid] might be related to the value of the parameter which determines the movement of the head of Fin to the head of Force. Or, put it in more formal terms, to the (simpler) properties of the category Force, which would change from  $[C^*_{\text{move}}]$  to  $[C^*_{\text{merge}}]$  (from “attract” to “(external) merge”). Let us go step by step. First, it is usually assumed that the heads Fin and Force conflate together in languages like English (Rizzi 1997):  $C [+Fin_{\text{move (to Force)}}]$ . It is our contention that this process does not take place in Spanish ( $C [-Fin_{\text{move}}]$ ) and therefore both Force and Fin can be licensed by (independent) Merge (see the representation in (23)).

Second, as for the nature of Fin, Pesestky & Torrego (2000) show that, as a result of movement of T to C, the complementizer *that* in English is not a real complementizer but the spell out of I(nf). In Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2005, 2009) we show that in Spanish this movement does not take place and that *que* (in Fin) is, in this sense, a real, “independent” complementizer.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, movement of Fin to Force (with the apparent “single Comp” structure) does not take place either, so there is also a

<sup>10</sup> We refer the reader to the mentioned work for further details.

possibility for the complementizer to be independently generated in Force.<sup>11</sup> A piece of evidence which supports this claim is that Spanish *que* can in certain cases materialize both in Fin *and* in Force, giving rise to structures such as (25):

- (25) Prefiero [<sub>SForce</sub> **que**, [<sub>STop</sub> ese chico, [<sub>SFin</sub> **que** [se vaya]]]]  
I.prefer that that boy that leaves

At a certain point, the parameter might have changed from Force[+move] (attraction of Fin by Force) to Force[+merge]. The trigger, as is usually the case for grammaticalization (see R&R 2003), may have been the appearance of ambiguity, in this case between (*dice* +) *que*<sub>Fin</sub> and *que*<sub>Force</sub>. This might have also paved the way for the appearance of recomplementation (as a reinforcement of Force (Villa García 2012)), as in cases like (26) (see Demonte and Fernández Soriano (2009) for details):

- (26) a. Nos regaña mucho porque dice **que** desde que somos ricos,  
desde que tenemos piscina, **que** ya no vamos al pueblo tanto...  
S/he scalds us a lot because s/he says that since we are rich,  
since we have a swimming pool that we do not go to the village  
as much as we used to
- b. ... y me dijo **que** cuando se tomaba coñac **que** creías que eras  
inmortal.  
... and s/he told me that when you drank cognac that you  
thought you were immortal (CREA Oral, España)

Another hallmark of grammaticalization as a result of parameter resetting is that it does not affect all the instances of the category which undergoes the process, only those cases that appear in the relevant contexts. This is certainly the case of Spanish *dicen que* to *dizque* and *que*, which did not affect relative *que*, for instance, nor all the cases of bisentential *decir+que* cases. So we can claim to have a genuine case of grammaticalization in R&R senses, that is, upward reanalysis of features along the clausal spine (the left periphery in our case), associated with parameter change.

<sup>11</sup> As Ledgeway (2005) shows, in certain Italian dialects movement of Fin to Force may leave (visible), intermediate copies. See Demonte & Fernández-Soriano (2013) for the contrast of these data with Spanish cases.

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