

THE SYNTAX OF GASCON CLAUSE-TYPE PARTICLES*

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ABSTRACT

Bearnese Gascon uses particles (the so-called “enunciative particles”) to mark declarative, interrogative, and exclamative clauses. In this article it is shown that those particles are in the left periphery and that their interaction with Force, Topic, and Negation presents us with two puzzles. First, in embedded clauses, those particles can co-occur with a complementiser only in the presence of a topic. Second, although those particles and the negative marker are mutually exclusive, the negative marker can actually co-occur with a complementiser in the absence of a topic. To solve the first puzzle, it is proposed that the Topic head has blocking effects because it has the right features to induce a relativised minimality effect; to solve the second puzzle, it is proposed that the negative marker and the enunciative particles occupy the same syntactic position, but have a different syntactic behaviour because they have different inherent features.

Key words: Gascon, enunciative particles, topic, negation

RÉSUMÉ

En gascon béarnais, les propositions déclaratives, interrogatives et exclamatives sont marquées par des particules dites “énonciatives”. Dans cet article, il est démontré que ces particules se situent dans la périphérie gauche et que leur interaction avec Force, Topique et Négation présente deux énigmes. Premièrement, dans les propositions enchâssées, ces particules apparaissent en co-occurrence avec un complémenteur seulement en présence d’un topique. Deuxièmement, bien que ces particules et le marqueur de négation soient mutuellement exclusifs, ce dernier peut se trouver en co-occurrence avec le complémenteur même

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en l'absence d'un topique. Dans le premier cas, il est proposé que la tête Topique a un effet de blocage parce qu'elle comporte les traits nécessaires pour induire un effet de minimalité relativisée; dans le deuxième cas, il est proposé que le marqueur de négation et les particules énonciatives occupent la même position syntaxique, mais se comportent différemment parce que leurs traits inhérents sont différents.

Mots-clés : gascon, particules énonciatives, topique, négation

1. INTRODUCTION

This article treats clause-type markers in Gascon, an Occitan dialect spoken in the southwest of France. In most languages, clause-type markers are not spelled out. Other processes are used (for example, English uses inversion to mark interrogatives), and the declarative is generally the unmarked type of clause. In Gascon, however, clause types are marked by so-called "enunciative particles".

In this article, I will (i) look at the properties of clause type particles in Gascon and show they are in the left periphery; (ii) show how these particles interact with other elements in the left periphery, most notably with Force, Top(ic), and Neg(ation). This paper is divided into six sections. In the first two sections I give the distribution of the particles in main and embedded clauses. In the third section I address the interactions between the particles and Force and Top. I will show that in Gascon there is a peculiar dependency of the particles to Top and Force in embedded clauses: the particles can only be pronounced in Fin(iteness) if Top and Force are overt. I will give an account of this dependency. In the fourth section, I present the distribution of the negative marker in Gascon, and in the fifth section I discuss the interaction of the particles with Neg. I will show that although the negative marker and the clause type particles occupy the same syntactic position, they have different syntactic properties, and I will give an account of this contrast. The sixth section presents the conclusions.

2. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PARTICLES IN MAIN CLAUSES

To mark declarative, interrogative, and exclamative clauses, Bearnese Gascon uses a set of particles, called enunciative particles in the literature (Bouzet 1932; Pusch 2001; among others).¹ These particles are *que* for declarative, *e* for interrogative,

¹Other previous studies of Gascon enunciative particles include Joseph (1992), who focuses on their diachronic origin, Pusch (2002), who studies their pragmatic aspect, and Campos (1986, 1992), who observes that "[t]he presence of the enunciative in a Gascon sentence seems to be a grammatical rather than a pragmatic necessity [...]" (Campos 1992:916) and analyses the particles as inflectional elements. This article presents an alternative to Campos' syntactic account, more in line with Poletto (2000), with the particles analysed as C elements.

and *be* for exclamative clauses.² As we will see, they are obligatory in main clauses, provided the clause is affirmative, and their position is in front of the [clitic + verb] sequence and after the topic if there is one.³ Examples of Gascon declarative clauses are given in (1).

(1) *Declarative clauses:*

- a. *Que* *parli* gascon.
DECL speak:1SG Gascon
'I speak Gascon.'
- b. *Maria que* *parla* gascon.
Mary DECL speaks Gascon
'Mary speaks Gascon.'
- c. **Que* *Maria parla* gascon.
DECL Mary speaks Gascon
'Mary speaks Gascon.'
- d. **Parli* gascon.
speak:1SG Gascon
'I speak Gascon.'
- e. **Maria parla* gascon.
Mary speaks Gascon
'Mary speaks Gascon.'
- f. *Maria que* *l' a legut.* (lo libe)
Mary DECL it has read (the book)
'Mary has read it.'

In (1a), we see that the particle *que* precedes the verb, *parli*. In (1b), it also precedes the verb, *parla*, but follows the subject, *Maria*. Example (1c) shows that the particle is not allowed to immediately precede the subject, and examples (1d) and (1e) indicate that omission of the particle leads to ungrammaticality in Bearnese Gascon. In (1f), we see that the particle *que* precedes the object clitic, *l'*. Thus, examples in (1) show that the particle *que* must occur before the clitic and the verb, but after the subject.

In (2), we can see that the distribution is the same for the interrogative particle, *e*.

²Since I am interested in the particles, and the imperative clauses are marked not by a particle but, as in many languages, by a particular type of syntax, that is, verb raising, I am leaving them aside.

³As an anonymous reviewer pointed out, the distribution shown in (1) could be accounted for by positing V-to-Comp movement. The ungrammaticality of examples like (i) eliminates this possibility.

- (i) **Que* *parla* *Maria* gascon
DECL speaks Mary Gascon
'Mary speaks Gascon.'

(2) *Interrogative clauses:*

- a. *E parlatz gascon?*
Q speak:2PL Gascon
'Do you speak Gascon?'
- b. *Maria e parla gascon?*
Mary Q speaks Gascon
'Does Mary speak Gascon?'
- c. **E Maria parla gascon?*
Q Mary speak Gascon
'Does Mary speak Gascon?'
- d. **Parlatz gascon?*
speak:2PL Gascon
'Do you speak Gascon?'
- e. **Maria parla gascon?*
Mary speaks Gascon
'Does Mary speak Gascon?'
- f. *Maria e l' a legut? (lo libe)*
Mary Q it has read (the book)
'Has Mary read it?'

Examples (2a) and (2b) show that the particle *e* also precedes the verb and follows the subject, when there is a pre-verbal one. In (2c), we see that the particle *e*, like the particle *que*, may not immediately precede the subject, and (2d) and (2e) show that it may not be omitted; (2f) shows that the particle *e* also precedes the object clitic.

Examples in (3) show that the same holds for the exclamative particle, *be*.

(3) *Exclamative clauses:*

- a. *textitBe cantes plan!*
EXCL sing:2SG well
'How beautifully you sing!'
- b. *Maria be canta plan!*
Mary EXCL sings well
'How beautifully Mary sings!'
- c. **Be Maria canta plan!*
EXCL Mary sings well
'How beautifully Mary sings!'
- d. **Cantes plan!*
sing:2SG well
'How beautifully you sing!'
- e. **Maria canta plan!*
Mary sings well
'How beautifully Mary sings!'
- f. *La toa pelha be m' agrada!*
the your dress EXCL me please
'How I like your dress!'

Thus, we see that the particles *que*, *e*, and *be* always precede the clitic and the verb and follow a pre-verbal subject.

Since Pollock's (1989) influential work, IP has been considered as a functional field composed of several functional projections, and Rizzi (1997) has shown evidence for a similar expansion of CP. Since it has been established that clitics mark the upper boundary of the IP domain (Kayne 1991; Sportiche 1998), the fact that the enunciative particles precede the object clitic leads me to assume, like Poletto (2000), that they head a projection in the CP domain, or left periphery, as in (4).

- (4) [CP ... /e / be [IP clitic + verb ...]]

In (1b), (2b), and (3b), we have seen that the subject can precede the enunciative particle, but the examples (1c), (2c), and (3c) show that it cannot immediately follow it. Moreover, examples like (5b) show that other constituents than subjects can occupy such a position. (Example (1b) is repeated in (5a) for convenience.)

- (5) a. Maria *que* parla gascon.
 Mary DECL speaks Gascon
 'Mary speaks Gascon.'
- b. Aus mainatges *que* los va parlar Maria.
 to.the children DECL them will talk Mary
 'To the children, Mary will talk.'

In (5b), there is no pre-verbal subject, but an indirect object, *aus mainatges* ('to the children'), precedes the enunciative particle *que*, as the subject does in (5a).

Given our assumption on the position of enunciative particles, and given that a pre-verbal subject precedes these particles, it is clear that the subject in (5a) and the indirect object in (5b) occupy a position in the CP domain. I assume that they occupy the specifier of a Top projection, as in (6). Therefore, the projection headed by the enunciative particle must be in the CP domain, but lower than Top.

- (6) [CP ... [TopP topic ... /e / be [IP clitic + verb ...]]]

The fact that the particles *que*, *e*, and *be* have the same distribution seems to indicate that they occupy the same syntactic position. Another indication that they might occupy the same syntactic position comes from the fact that they are mutually exclusive (Bouzet 1932; Morin 2005).

To sum up: In main clauses, the enunciative particles are obligatory, they precede the [clitic + verb] sequence and they follow a topicalised constituent.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PARTICLES IN EMBEDDED CLAUSES

In embedded clauses, the particles have the same distribution as in main clauses, that is, they precede the clitic and they follow the topic. Thus, in (7a), the enunciative particle, *e*, follows the topicalised subject, LO GAT. (The topic is indicated in small caps, and the embedded clause is inside square brackets.) In (7b), the enunciative particle *que* follows the topic, LA SETMANA QUE VIEN, and precedes the

clitic, *la*.⁴ In (7c), the particle *que* also follows the topic, LAS ARHAGAS, and precedes the verb, *son*.

- (7) a. Que 'm demandi [se LO GAT *e* drom].
DECL me ask if the cat Q sleeps
'I wonder if the cat sleeps.'
- b. Que pensi [que, LA SETMANA QUE VIEN, *que* la vederèi].
DECL think that the week that comes DECL her see:FUT
'I think that, next week, I will see her.'
- c. Que soi segur [LAS ARHAGAS *que* son maduras].
DECL am sure the strawberries DECL are ripe
'I am sure the strawberries are ripe.'

However, we see in (7a) and (7b) that, unlike in main clauses, the particles in embedded clauses can co-occur with a complementiser, that is, with *se* and *que*, respectively, and it seems that the topic is obligatory, as can be seen by comparing (7a) with (8a) and (7b) with (8b). Example (8a) is just like (7a) except that there is no topic and it is ungrammatical; in (8b), we see that the enunciative particle *que* following the complementiser *que*, with no topic in between, is also ruled out.

- (8) a. *Que 'm demandi [se *e* drom lo gat].
DECL me ask if Q sleeps the cat
'I wonder if the cat sleeps.'
- b. *Que convienem [que *que* m' apèras].
DECL agree:1PL that DECL me call:2SG
'We agree that you call me.'

Example (9), however, seems to show that the topic can be missing, but then only one *que* must be present.

- (9) Que soi segur [que son maduras las arhagas].
DECL am sure (que) are ripe the strawberries
'I am sure that the strawberries are ripe.'

To sum up: The enunciative particles and everything that precedes them are in the left periphery. In main clauses, the verb is preceded by a particle, and this is independent of the presence of a topic; in subordinate clauses, it seems that the particle is spelled out only if the topic is spelled out.

In the next section, I propose a solution to the "Topic" puzzle raised by the contrast between (7) and (8), where the occurrence of the enunciative particle seems to depend on the presence of a topic.

⁴Note that similar interactions between such particles and topics have been observed in other Romance languages (see, for example, Uriagereka 1992). My thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

4. INTERACTIONS OF THE PARTICLES WITH TOPIC

According to Rizzi (1997, 1999), the left periphery of the clause is composed minimally of the Force and Fin projections, which mark respectively the upper and lower boundaries of the complementiser system, and may include Int(errogative), Top and Foc(us) projections, if these projections are activated, that is, if they are needed to accommodate a topicalised or focused constituent. The Force projection distinguishes clause types (declarative, interrogative, exclamative, relative) and may be selected by a verb in a higher clause; the Fin projection distinguishes between finite and non-finite clauses and selects the appropriate IP. Since the enunciative particles are only found in finite clauses, it is not unreasonable to place them in Fin.⁵ The proposed structure, following Rizzi (1997), is given in (10).

- (10) [_{ForceP} [_{TopP} topic [_{FinP} *que* / *e* / *be* [_{IP} clitic + verb ...]]]]

The intuition concerning the dependency between the topic constituent and the enunciative particle is that the presence of a Top projection makes it necessary for both Force and Fin to be spelled out. Technically, this can be implemented by assuming that (i) the Force head has an uninterpretable strong Force feature; (ii) the Top head has, in addition to a Topic feature, an uninterpretable ClauseType feature; (iii) the Fin head has an interpretable Force feature and an interpretable ClauseType feature.⁶

The consequence of this is that the Fin head will be attracted by the uninterpretable ClauseType feature on Top and, as I will show, will be prevented from further raising to Force. Therefore, another element will be needed to satisfy the strong Force feature on Force.

I will first look at cases such as (9), where there is no topic, and then come back to the contrast presented in (7) and (8).

4.1. Embedded clauses without a topic

An example of an embedded clause without a (fronted) topic was given in (9), and is repeated here in (11). Given the existence of examples like (7b), repeated in (12), the *que* in (11) could be either the higher *que* or the lower one.

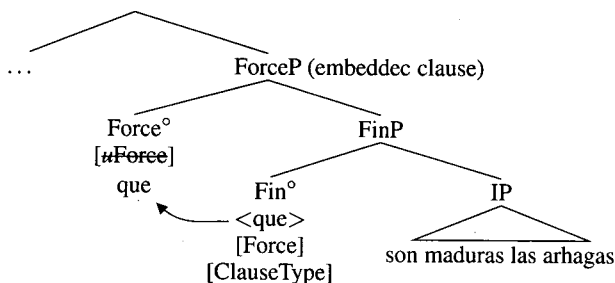
- (11) *Que soi segur [que son maduras las arhagas].*
 DECL am sure (que) are ripe the strawberries
 'I am sure that the strawberries are ripe.'
- (12) *Que pensi [que, LA SETMANA QUE VIEN, que la vederèi].*
 DECL think that the week that comes DECL her see:FUT
 'I think that, next week, I will see her.'

⁵As Campos (1992:917) notes, "[t]he enunciative *que* does seem to be related to the finiteness of INFL as it appears only in those constructions where the verb appears with an inflection."

⁶A "strong" feature is a feature that must be checked under sisterhood (Chomsky 1995).

I propose that the *que* in (11) is the declarative particle *que* and that *que* raises to Force to check a strong Force feature, as in (13).

(13)



In (13), we see that the declarative particle *que*, which has merged in Fin, is attracted by the strong uninterpretable Force feature on Force and therefore raises to Force.

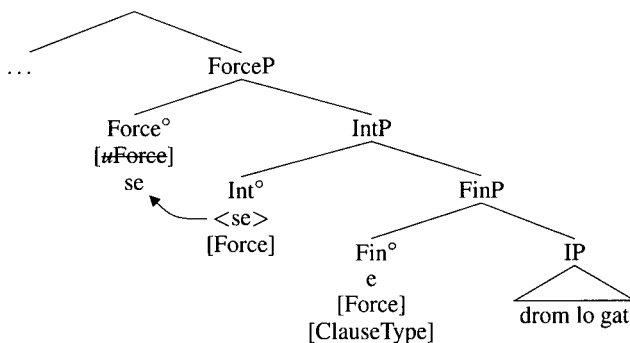
Thus, I propose that the enunciative particle *que* can actually occur without a topic in embedded clauses, provided it has raised to Force. This sheds some light on the contrast between (11) and (12). Movement of *que* to Force in (12) is obviously not possible, since another complementiser is merged in Force.

If this is on the right track, we expect that in corresponding interrogative clauses it would be the lower interrogative particle that would introduce embedded clauses without topics. However, it is not, as can be seen in (14).

- (14) Que 'm demandi [se drom lo gat].
 DECL me ask if sleeps the cat
 'I wonder if the cat sleeps.'

Following Rizzi (2001), I assume that embedded interrogative clauses have an Int(errogative) projection, which is lower than Force but higher than Fin, and that in Gascon embedded interrogative clauses the Int head is always filled by *se*. Furthermore, I propose that *se* bears the necessary Force feature to check the uninterpretable Force feature on Force, as shown in (15).

(15)



Here it is *se*, not *e*, that raises to Force, given the Minimal Link Condition: since both Int and Fin bear the Force feature and Int is closer to Force than Fin, it is Int that is attracted by Force, not Fin.

I assume, then, that in (15) the interrogative particle *e* really is in Fin, and that a phonological rule deletes one of the two /e/s of the sequence /se + e/.⁷ This explains straightforwardly why sequences such as (8a), repeated here in (16), are ungrammatical.

- (16) *Que 'm demandi [se e drom lo gat].
 DECL me ask if Q sleeps the cat
 'I wonder if the cat sleeps.'

No examples of embedded exclamatives are provided, since the particle *be* never occurs in embedded clauses.

4.2. Embedded clauses with a topic

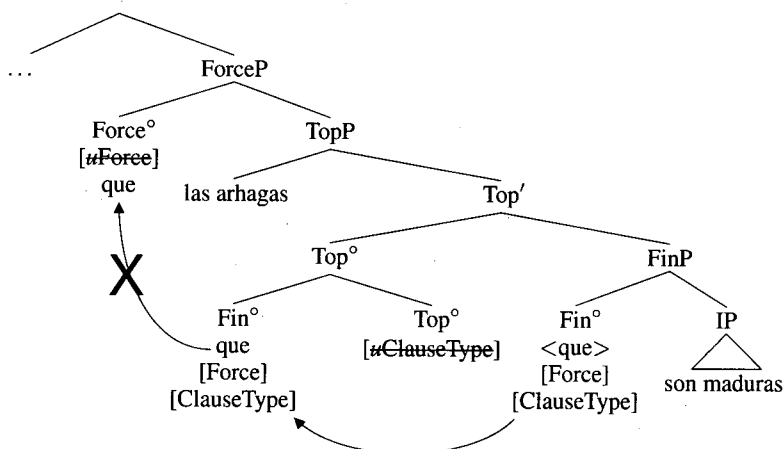
In embedded clauses with a topic like the one in (17), the intuition is that the head of the intervening TopP blocks direct movement of the particle *que* from Fin to Force. The particle then stays in a position lower than Force, and the Force head is filled with an independent complementiser *que*. Merging an independent complementiser is the only available option for checking the uninterpretable Force feature. This is illustrated in (18).

- (17) Que soi segur [que LAS ARHAGAS que son maduras].
 DECL am sure that the strawberries DECL are ripe
 'I am sure that the strawberries are ripe.'

⁷Given sequences like (i), I assume that it is the first /e/ that gets deleted:

- (i) s' as acabat ([sazakabat]; *[sezakabat])
 if have:2SG finished
 'if you are finished'

(18)



In order to capture the intuition that Top blocks movement of Fin to Force, I propose that Top has the right features to induce a relativised minimality effect, as defined by Rizzi (1990, 2004). In other words, I propose that Top has an uninterpretable ClauseType feature. This means that the tree in (18) will contain two uninterpretable features: one in Force, and one in Top. The Fin head has the potential of checking both of them, since it contains both an interpretable Force feature and an interpretable ClauseType feature. However, it will check the one on Top because of locality.

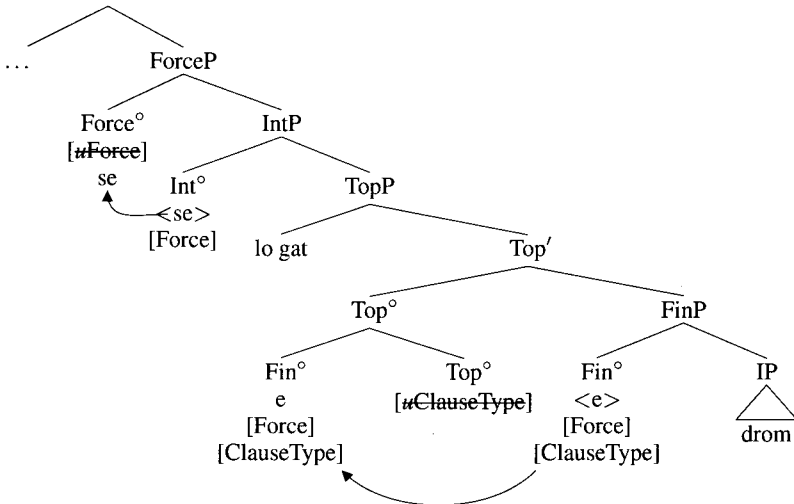
Assuming that head movement results in an adjunction configuration as proposed by Chomsky (1995) and as illustrated in (18), Fin is now adjoined to Top, so the Force head can no longer “see” the features of Fin. Hence, I propose that under head adjunction, the features of the adjunction site, in this case, Top°, are still visible by the higher head, but the features of the adjoined node are not.⁸ Therefore, Fin stays in the head of TopP, and an element must be drawn from the numeration to satisfy the strong Force feature on Force.

Let us now move to embedded interrogative clauses with a topic. An example of such a clause is given in (19). Here again, as shown in (20), I propose that the Fin head moves to Top to check the uninterpretable ClauseType feature on Top just as in embedded declarative clauses with a Top. Crucially, I assume that this Top is lower than Int. The Fin head containing the particle *e* is now adjoined to Top and thus not visible by Force. Instead, an independent lexical head, *se*, will check the strong uninterpretable Force feature on Force. Unlike in embedded declaratives, where an independent complementiser is merged directly in Force, in interrogative clauses I propose that the strong feature on Force is checked by *se*, which is merged in a lower position, in Int, and then raises to Force.

⁸In the case of I to C movement, for instance, the features on I are still visible after adjunction of another head like *v* or Aux, since I is the adjunction site.

- (19) Que 'm demandi [se LO GAT e drom].
 DECL me ask if the cat Q sleeps
 'I wonder if the cat sleeps.'

(20)



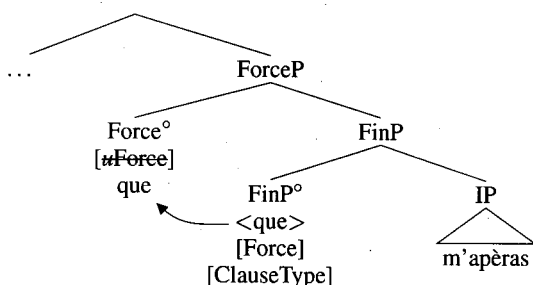
To sum up: The presence of Top blocks movement of the enunciative particle to Force. Blocking occurs because Top induces a relativised minimality effect and because of the adjunction created by head movement.

Now, we still have to account for the ungrammaticality of sentences like (21), that are introduced by a complementiser, but where no topic is present.

- (21) *Que convenim [que que m' apèras].
 DECL agree:1PL that DECL me call:2SG
 'We agree that you call me.'

In order to account for (21), I am assuming a preference for Move over Merge, following Richards (2002). Once we reach the point in the derivation where the Force head is merged, we have a choice: Move or Merge. Assuming a preference of Move over Merge means that in the tree in (22) Fin will raise to Force in order to check the strong uninterpretable Force feature, instead of an element being merged in Force. This explains why the sequence *que que* in (21) is ungrammatical, since the derivation in (22) yields the sentence in (23) instead.

(22)



(23) Que convenem [que m' apèras].

DECL agree:1PL DECL me call:2SG

'We agree that you call me.'

To sum up: In embedded clauses, the declarative particle must co-occur with a complementiser and with a topic, unless it can move to Force. Whenever movement can take place, it will, and the strong Force feature on Force will be satisfied. Only when a topic is present, since, as we have seen, the Top head blocks movement, will an independent complementiser, *que*, show up in the Force head of embedded declarative clauses. In embedded interrogative clauses, it is always the complementiser *se*, which merges in the Int head, that checks the uninterpretable Force feature on Force.

Two other constructions are found, that have not been accounted for by the proposed analysis. The first one is given in (24a). Sentence (24a) seems to be problematic in that it apparently lacks a complementiser, in spite of the uninterpretable Force feature we posited in Force. Remember however that Gascon has two *que*'s: a complementiser and a particle. In principle, the *que* in (24a) could be either the declarative particle or the complementiser. However, sentences like (24b) indicate that we are not dealing with a particle, but with a complementiser (what shows up is *se* and not *e*).

(24) a. Que soi segur [LAS ARHAGAS que son maduras].

DECL am sure the strawberries DECL are ripe

'I am sure the strawberries are ripe.'

b. Que vau véder [LAS ARHAGAS se son maduras].

DECL go:1SG see the strawberries if are ripe

'I am going to see if the strawberries are ripe.'

In the second construction, shown in (25), there seem to be a complementiser and a topic, but no particle. These sentences are problematic because the Clause-Type feature on Top seems to remain unchecked in the absence of an enunciative particle.

(25) a. Que soi segur [que las arhagas son maduras].

DECL am sure that the strawberries are ripe

'I am sure the strawberries are ripe.'

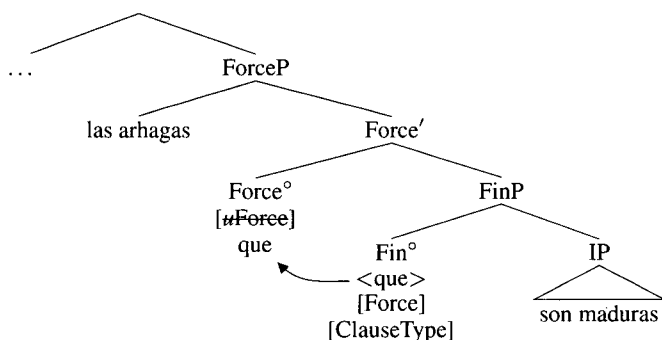
- b. ?Que 'm demandi [se lo gat drom].
 DECL me ask if the cat sleeps
 'I wonder if the cat sleeps.'

Now, there are two possibilities. Either these constructions are generated by the same Gascon grammar which generates the examples with two *ques* like the one seen in (17) and must therefore be accounted for, or they are generated by a different grammar.

This latter possibility is far from being unlikely, as Gascon speakers are nowadays fluent in French. It is therefore plausible that constructions like the ones in (24) and (25) reflect either an evolution of the language towards the loss of particles, or simply a different register.⁹

If these constructions indeed need to be taken into account in the analysis presented so far, here is what I propose. In the case of the sentences in (24), I propose that the topic position is not the same as the one illustrated in (18) and (20), but a different one. The topic in these cases is in Spec of ForceP. This is illustrated in (26) for (24a).

(26)



Since, in (26), the topic is in the Spec of ForceP, nothing intervenes between Force and Fin, and therefore Fin can raise to Force to check the strong uninterpretable Force feature on Force. This correctly yields the sentence in (24a).

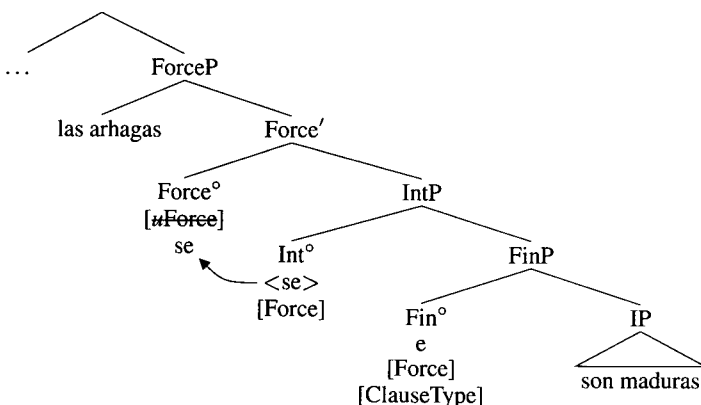
The complementiser *se* in (24b), just as we have seen before, is generated in Int, and raises to Force to check the strong uninterpretable Force feature on Force. Example (24b) is illustrated in (27).

⁹Note that the pattern in (24) is not exclusive to Gascon: we see in (i) that it is also possible in a dialect of Occitan that lacks a particle equivalent to *que*. (Example in Pusch 1992.)

- (i) Calguèt los òmes qu' anèsson trabalhar.
 was_necessary the men that go work
 'It was necessary that the men went to work.'

(Sauzet 1989:247)

(27)



The tree in (27) shows that the Int head raises to Force to check the uninterpretable Force feature and that the interrogative particle *e* is in Fin, although it is not pronounced since the phonological rule deletes it.

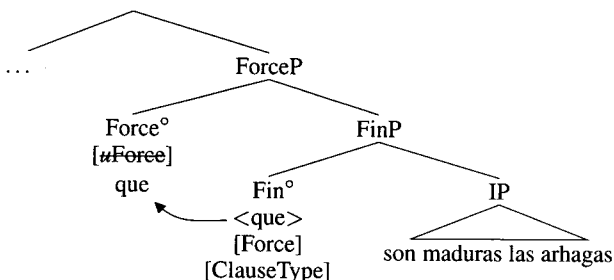
Positing two topic positions for Gascon is not without parallel; examples with more than one topic position can be found in Rizzi (1997). Some sort of confirmation for proposing that this topic is higher than the topic in (18) and (20) comes from the fact that sequences like (28) are ungrammatical.

- (28) *Que vau véder [LAS ARHAGAS *e* son maduras].
 DECL go-1SG see the strawberries Q are ripe
 'I am going to see if the strawberries are ripe.'

Thus, if the topic in (24a) were the same as the one in (18) or (20), and the *que* were actually an enunciative particle, there is no reason why (28) would be ungrammatical, since both sentences would have the same structure, that is, an enunciative particle in Fin, which would raise to Top, and therefore become invisible to Force, and thus both sentences would be missing a complementiser.

In the case of the construction illustrated in (25), where there seem to be a complementiser and a topic, but no particle, the pre-verbal subject could in principle be in Spec, TP. In fact, I propose that it is. Example (25a) is illustrated in (29).

(29)



In (29), we see that the enunciative particle *que*, in Fin, can raise to Force to check the strong uninterpretable Force feature, since there is no intervening topic, the subject remaining in the IP domain (which I have simplified in this tree).

To sum up: The presence of Top blocks movement of the enunciative particle from Fin to Force. In embedded declarative clauses, the particle *que* must co-occur with a complementiser and with a topic, unless it can move to Force. In embedded interrogative clauses, it is always the complementiser *se* that checks the strong Force feature on Force. Whenever movement can take place, it will, and that Force feature will be satisfied.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF THE NEGATIVE MARKER

Let us now see what happens in negative clauses. Negation does not mark a type of clause; rather, it brings a distinction on top of clause type, but it interacts with clause type particles in an interesting way.

An example of a negative declarative matrix clause is given in (30a), and we see that the particle *que* does not show up. Not only is the enunciative particle not required in negative clauses like (30a), but its presence leads to ungrammaticality, as we can see in (30b–30d).

- (30) a. Maria *ne* l' a pas legut. (lo libe)
 Mary NEG it has NEG read (the book)
 'Mary has not read it.'
- b. *Maria *que ne* l' a pas legut.
 Mary DECL NEG it has NEG read
 'Mary has not read it.'
- c. *Maria *ne que* l' a pas legut.
 Mary NEG DECL it has NEG read
 'Mary has not read it.'
- d. *Maria *e ne* l' a pas legut?
 Mary Q NEG it has NEG read
 'Has Mary not read it?'

The fact that the negative particle *ne* cannot co-occur with an enunciative particle indicates that those particles may occupy the same syntactic position, as in (31).

- (31) [_{CP} ... *que / e / be / ne* [_{IP} clitic + verb ...]]

Similarly, in embedded clauses, the enunciative particles do not surface under negation, as illustrated in (32). This indicates that *ne*, *que*, and *e* occupy the same syntactic position.

- (32) a. *Que 'm demandi [se LO GAT *e ne* drom pas].
 DECL 1SG ask if the cat Q NEG sleeps NEG
 'I wonder if the cat doesn't sleep.'

- b. Que 'm demandi [se LO GAT *ne* drom pas].
DECL 1SG ask if the cat NEG sleeps NEG
'I wonder if the cat doesn't sleep.'
- c. *Que soi segur [que LAS ARHAGAS *que ne* son pas maduras].
DECL am sure that the strawberries DECL NEG are NEG ripe
'I am sure that the strawberries are not ripe.'
- d. Que soi segur [que LAS ARHAGAS *ne* son pas maduras].
DECL am sure that the strawberries NEG are NEG ripe
'I am sure that the strawberries are not ripe.'

Examples (32a) and (32b) show that the presence of the enunciative particle *e* leads to ungrammaticality, which we expected since the enunciative particles and the negative marker are mutually exclusive. Note that (32a) would also be ungrammatical if the enunciative particle were after the negative marker *ne*. Examples (32c) and (32d) show that the presence of the particle *que* also leads to ungrammaticality.

However, the marker *ne* seems to have a different syntactic behaviour than *que* and *e*; in particular, *ne* is not dependent on the presence of a topic in embedded clauses, as we can see in (33).

- (33) a. *Que soi segur [que *que* son maduras las arhagas].
DECL am sure that DECL are ripe the strawberries
'I am sure that the strawberries are ripe.'
- b. Que soi segur [que *ne* son pas maduras las arhagas].
DECL am sure that NEG are NEG ripe the strawberries
'I am sure that the strawberries are not ripe.'

Although the enunciative particles and the negative marker are mutually exclusive, the negative marker can appear without a topic, as in (33b), while the enunciative particle *que* cannot, as we see in (33a). This means that if the enunciative particles and the negative marker compete for the same syntactic position, their syntactic behaviour must differ in some way so that the grammar generates (33b) but not (33a).

Notice that nothing tells us that the *que* which is present in (33b) is a complementiser and not an enunciative particle. However, comparing (33b) with (33a) gives us the intuition that it is indeed a complementiser. I will show that it is the case.

To sum up: The negative marker *ne* may appear between the complementiser *que* and the verb, as in (33b), whereas the enunciative particle *que* may not, as seen in (33a). In the next section I will give an account of this asymmetry.

6. INTERACTION OF THE PARTICLES WITH NEGATION

In order to solve the "Negation" puzzle, I propose that the Fin head has Polarity features in addition to clause type features.¹⁰ In other words, I propose that it plays

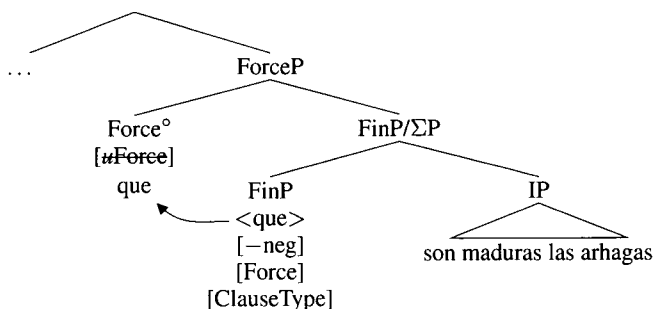
¹⁰Note that positing a Polarity feature on Fin makes sense, since all the lexical items that show up in Fin can reasonably be assumed to have a Polarity feature (*que*: [–neg]; *e*:

the role of a Σ (Polarity) projection, along the lines defined by Laka (1994). Moreover, I propose that the enunciative particle *que* marks affirmative in addition to marking declarative clauses. That is, it has a Polarity feature set as $[-neg]$.

In the tree in (35), which illustrates example (34), we see that the enunciative particle *que* moves to Force. Since it bears the interpretable Force feature, it checks the strong uninterpretable Force feature on Force.

- (34) Que soi segur [que son maduras las arhagas].
 DECL am sure that are ripe the strawberries
 'I am sure that the strawberries are ripe.'

(35)



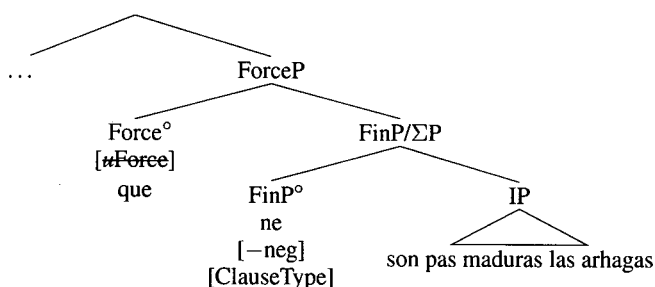
To account for the asymmetry shown in (33a) and (33b), I propose that *ne* does not have an interpretable Force feature, and therefore cannot raise to Force, while *que*, as we just saw, has such a feature. This makes sense, since *ne* does not mark a type of clause, while *que* does.

Example (36) is illustrated in (37). We see that *ne*, in the head of Fin, has its Polarity feature set as $[+neg]$. Force has to check its strong uninterpretable Force feature, but since *ne* does not bear an interpretable Force feature, it cannot move to Force. Therefore, the complementiser *que* merges in Force to check the strong Force feature required by the higher embedding head.

- (36) Que soi segur [que *ne* son pas maduras las arhagas].
 DECL am sure that NEG are NEG ripe the strawberries
 'I am sure that the strawberries are not ripe.'

$[+neg]$; *ne*: $[+neg]$; *be*: $[-neg]$). Indeed, the particles *que* and *be* only appear in affirmative contexts.

(37)



Thus, we have seen that, although they compete for the same syntactic position, namely the head of FinP/ΣP, *que* and *ne* have a different syntactic behaviour because they have different inherent features: *que* bears an interpretable Force feature, while *ne* does not.

7. CONCLUSIONS

I have shown that the clause type particles in Gascon are in the left periphery and that they interact with Force, Top, and Neg. In particular, there is a peculiar dependency of the particles to Top and Force in embedded clauses: The particles can only be pronounced in Fin if Top and Force are overt. To account for the interaction between clause type particles and Force and Top, I proposed that the Top head has blocking effects because it has the relevant feature to attract the Fin head and that the adjunction configuration created by head movement prevents Fin from further raising to Force.

To account for the interaction of the particles with negation, I proposed that the negative marker and the enunciative particles occupy the same syntactic position, but have a different syntactic behaviour because they have different inherent features.

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