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Phasehood and embedded gapping in Spanish

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This paper argues that the phasehood of the embedded CP determines the possibility of embedded gapping and accounts for the difference between English and Spanish in this regard. I argue that phasehood inheritance plays a central role in licensing embedded gapping along the lines of Wurmbrand's (2017) phase-based approach to embedded stripping and provides a principled account of how languages differ in this respect. Assuming that ellipsis targets the complement of a phase head (Van Craenenbroeck 2004; 2010; Gengel 2009; Rouveret 2012), I argue that Spanish allows embedded gapping in which FocP is a phase, and the ellipsis site is the complement of Foc (i.e., TP). In contrast, English does not allow gapping in embedded clauses with overt complementizers, in which case CP is a phase, and the node targeted by ellipsis is FocP rather than TP. However, the absence of the complementizer renders embedded gapping acceptable; if CP loses its phasehood by deleting the complementizer, FocP becomes a derived phase, and the ellipsis site is TP. In this view, the crosslinguistic variation with respect to embedded gapping is attributed to the phasehood of the embedded CP, which sheds new light on the No Embedding Constraint on gapping.

1 Introduction

Gapping is an ellipsis typically found in coordinate structures. While gapping has been extensively studied in the literature, some aspects of its syntax are still poorly understood, in particular with regard to the No Embedding Constraint according to which gapping cannot occur in embedded clauses (Hankamer 1979; Neijt 1979; Johnson 2009; 2017; 2018):

(1)   a.   John drank a tea, and Mary (drank) a coffee.
       b.   John drank a tea, and I think that Mary *(drank) a coffee.

This fact has led researchers to conclude that gapping is a root phenomenon, in contrast to other types of ellipsis such as VP-ellipsis, pseudogapping, fragments and sluicing, all of which can occur in embedded contexts. However, the validity of the No Embedding Constraint is challenged on empirical grounds, since embedded gapping is acceptable in languages like Farsi (2) and Spanish (3) (see Erschler 2018 for a survey of typologically different languages that allow embedded gapping):

(2)   (Farudi 2013: 76–77)
       a.   Māmā chāi xord   va fekr mi-kon-am   bābā qahve.
            mother tea ate.3SG and think IMPFV-do-1SG father coffee
            'Mother drank tea and I think father (drank) coffee.'

       b.   Jiān be Sārā   gol   dād   va fekr mi-kon-am   ke Ārtur be
            Jian to Sarah flower gave.3SG and think IMPFV-do-1SG that Arthur to
            Giti   ketāb.
            Giti   book
            'Jian gave flowers to Sarah, and I think that Arthur (gave) books to Giti.'

(3)   a.   Mi madre tomó   un té, y   creo   que mi padre un café.
           my mother took.3SG a   tea and think.1SG that my father a   coffee
           'My mother drank a tea and I think that my father (drank) a coffee.'

       b.   Juan le   dio   a Susana unas flores, y   creo   que
           Juan CL.DAT.3SG gave.3SG to Susana some flowers and think.1SG that
           Luis   a María unos libros.
           Luis   to María some books
           'Juan gave flowers to Susana, and I think that Luis (gave) books to María.'

This poses a series of questions as to whether the No Embedding Constraint is consistent and robust enough to cope with data like (2) and (3), and if so, how it can be circumvented in languages where embedded gapping is allowed. Previous studies have shown that there is a correlation between the acceptability of embedded gapping and the type of matrix predicates (see Saab 2008; Fernández-Sánchez 2017; Bîlbîie & de la Fuente 2019; Bîlbîie & Faghiri 2022).

However, the reason why English differs in this respect from Spanish (or Farsi) is still unknown and needs to be addressed in a way that reflects crosslinguistic variation.

This paper seeks to examine why embedded gapping is allowed in some languages but not in others, and how this variation can be accounted for in a principled way. I show that the possibility of embedded gapping is related to the phasehood of the embedded CP, assuming that the ellipsis site corresponds to a phasal complement. Crosslinguistic variation in phasehood inheritance is shown to determine whether embedded gapping is grammatical across languages.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the No Embedding Constraint and its implications for the analysis of (embedded) gapping. Section 3 examines the possibility of embedding stripping within and across languages, showing that Wurmbrand's (2017) phase-based approach to embedded stripping can be successfully extended to embedded gapping. Section 4 provides an account of the difference between English and Spanish with respect to embedded gapping, and claims that phasehood inheritance along the lines of Citko (2020) accounts for the possibility of embedded gapping in these languages. Section 5 explores the implications of this proposal for gapping and (pseudo)stripping in embedded clauses in which English and Spanish behave differently. Section 6 concludes the paper.

2 The validity of the No Embedding Constraint

The No Embedding Constraint in (4) is aimed to capture the fact that neither the gap nor its antecedent may be embedded:

(4) *The No Embedding Constraint*   (Johnson 2017: 6, (22))
     Let A and B be conjoined or disjoined phrases, and β be the string elided in B whose antecedent is α in A. Then α and β must contain the highest verb in A and B

Johnson (2017) claims that if an ellipsis is affected by this constraint, it is gapping as defined in (5), with the exception of gapping in Farsi which, as Farudi (2013) shows, does not follow the constraint in (4):

(5) *Gapping*   (Johnson 2017: 9, (32))
     In a structure A c B, where c is *and* or *or*, Gapping deletes a string in B that is identical to a string in A and satisfies the No Embedding Constraint

According to Johnson (2017), the No Embedding Constraint may vary from language to language; gapping in Farsi may be subject to a different type of constraint on embedding which seems to be related to movement out of CP (see Farudi 2013 for discussion).

The literature on gapping has also claimed that the No Embedding Constraint is the result of the syntax of low coordination (Toosarvandani 2013; 2016). If gapping involves low coordination

below TP, it naturally follows that there is no embedded gap (or antecedent) within their conjunct (Johnson 1996/2004; 2009); coordination at the vP-level does not, and cannot, make room for embedding in such cases. However, the data given in (2) and (3) do not support such a view because of the possibility of embedding within the second conjunct. In fact, a growing body of work suggests that gapping may involve either clausal coordination or low coordination (see, e.g., Repp 2009 for German; Saab 2008 and Centeno 2011 for Spanish; Dagnac 2016 for French; and Potter, Frazier & Yoshida 2017 for English). Evidence of this comes from scope facts (Siegel 1984; Oehrle 1987; McCawley 1993):

(6)   (Potter, Frazier & Yoshida 2017: 1125, (4))
    a.   James can't order caviar and Mary chili.
    b.   Wide scope $\neg\Diamond\ (P \wedge Q)$
    c.   Distributive scope $\neg\Diamond P \wedge \neg\Diamond Q$

Potter, Frazier & Yoshida (2017) claim that the scopal ambiguities in (6) can be captured directly by suggesting that each scope interpretation has a different source; the wide scope reading (6b) originates from small conjunct gapping, as in (7a), whereas the distributive scope reading (6c) comes from large conjunct gapping, as in (7b):

(7)   (Potter, Frazier & Yoshida 2017: 1125, (6–7))
    a.   James$_1$ can't [t$_1$ order caviar] and [Mary$_2$ chili$_3$ t$_2$ ~~order t$_3$~~]
    b.   [James can't order caviar] and [Mary$_1$ chili$_2$ t$_1$ ~~can't order t$_2$~~]

There are also cases where gapping must be analyzed as deletion of constituents larger than just VP. Consider the following example in Spanish, where gapping does not tolerate tense mismatches between the ellipsis site and its antecedent (Brucart 1987; Murguia 2004; Saab 2008; 2010; 2016; Brucart & MacDonald 2012):

(8)   (Saab 2008: 326, (254a))
    *Juan fue   al   cine   hoy   y   Ana   ~~va a ir~~ al   teatro   mañana.
    Juan   went to.the cinema today and Ana   will go to.the theater tomorrow
    'Juan went to the cinema today and Ana will go to the theater tomorrow.'

This indicates that the category affected by ellipsis is at least TP. Similarly, when gapping occurs in Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD) contexts, as in (9), the conjuncts must be large enough to host dislocated elements at the left-periphery:[1]

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[1] Note that gender mismatches of clitics are tolerable in gapping (Depiante 2004a); clitics are dissociated morphemes that are inserted later in morphology (in the spirit of Embick & Noyer 2001), so the identity condition applies prior to insertion of dissociated morphemes (see Saab 2008 for a discussion of partial identity in predicate ellipsis).

(9)　El　periódico　Juan　lo　　　　compró,　y　la　revista　Luis
　　　the　newspaper　Juan　CL.ACC.3SG　bought.3SG　and　the　journal　Luis
　　　~~la　　　　　compró.~~
　　　CL.ACC.3SG　bought.3SG
　　　'The newspaper Juan bought, and the journal Luis (bought).'

The object *la revista* of the second conjunct is CLLD-ed, given that the ellipsis clause receives the same semantic and information-structural interpretation as its antecedent (Winkler 2013: 470), and that the linear order of the remnants must be the same as that of the correlates (Johnson 2018: 596). In (9), the ellipsis site is arguably TP insofar as CLLD-ed elements in Spanish are adjoined to TP, (10a) (Zubizarreta 1998), or located in dedicated positions in the CP-area, (10b) (López 2009):

(10)　a.　… and [$_{TP}$ Obj$_i$ [$_{TP}$ ~~CL$_i$ V~~ … Subj]]
　　　b.　… and [$_{XP}$ Obj$_i$ [$_{TP}$ ~~CL$_i$ V~~ … Subj]]

The same is true for gapping in clitic doubling contexts, since clitics in Spanish adjoin to T (or a clitic projection above TP) to which the finite verb moves:

(11)　*Rioplatense Spanish* (adapted from Depiante 2004a; Saab 2008)
　　　Ana　lo　　　　contrató　a　　Juan　y　Paula　~~lo~~　　　　~~contrató~~
　　　Ana　CL.ACC.3SG　hired　　DOM　Juan　and　Paula　CL.ACC.3SG　hired
　　　a　　Pedro.
　　　DOM　Pedro
　　　'Ana hired John and Paula (hired) Pedro.'

Given these facts, it is fair to say that there are indeed two source structures for gapping. If this is true, the very existence of embedded gapping in languages like Farsi and Spanish does not cast doubt on the relevance of the No Embedding Constraint itself. Rather, there must be syntactic variation on the structure of the embedded clause in which gapping occurs; some languages may circumvent the No Embedding Constraint, whereas others may not.

3 Embedded stripping and gapping

Stripping is a type of ellipsis in which everything from a clause is elided except one constituent (Hankamer & Sag 1976; Lobeck 1995; Depiante 2000; Johnson 2018). What is of interest to us is the fact that stripping, like gapping, cannot occur in embedded clauses:

(12)　(Lobeck 1995: 27, (66b), (72b))
　　　a.　Jane loves to study rocks, and geography too.
　　　b.　*Jane loves to study rocks, and John says that geography too.

Thus, it is claimed that both elliptical constructions are subject to the same constraint, namely the No Embedding Constraint by which gapping was analyzed either through VP-ellipsis (Coppock 2001) or Across-The-Board (ATB) movement of VP under low coordination (Johnson 2009). However, stripping involves clausal ellipsis (Depiante 2000; 2004b; Merchant 2003; Vicente 2006; Kolokonte 2008; Saab 2008; Ortega-Santos, Yoshida & Nakao 2014), similar to sluicing, which is derived via *wh*-movement to [Spec, CP] followed by TP-ellipsis (Merchant 2001). Under Merchant's (2001) [E]-feature approach to ellipsis, example (12a) can be analyzed as follows:[2]

(13)   … and [$_{FocP}$ geography$_i$ [$_{Foc'}$ Foc$_{[E]}$ [$_{TP}$ ~~Jane loves to study t$_i$~~]] too].

This kind of analysis, though widely adopted in the literature, does not have anything to say about the possibility of embedded stripping in English. Wurmbrand (2017) reports data like (14) illustrating that embedded stripping is possible when the complementizer is absent:

(14)   (Wurmbrand 2017: 344, (5))
      a. *Abby claimed (that) Ben would ask her out, but she didn't think *that* Bill (too).
      b. Abby claimed (that) Ben would ask her out, but she didn't think Bill (too).
      c. *Jane loves to study rocks, and John says *that* geography too.
      d. Jane loves to study rocks, and John says geography too.

She claims that the presence or absence of the complementizer plays a key role in the acceptability of embedded stripping, and suggests the following generalization:

(15)   *Embedded Stripping Generalization*   (Wurmbrand 2017: 345, (8))
      Stripping of embedded clauses is only possible when the embedded clause lacks a CP

To account for the contrasts in (14), Wurmbrand (2017) assumes a dynamic approach to phasehood—the phasal status of a phrase may depend on its syntactic context (Felser 2004; Bobaljik & Wurmbrand 2005; Den Dikken 2007; Gallego & Uriagereka 2007; Bošković 2013; 2014)—and proposes that the possibility of embedded stripping is associated with the phasehood of the embedded CP. Specifically, Wurmbrand (2017) claims that the difference between matrix and embedded stripping lies in how ellipsis is constrained by phasehood in each case, assuming that ellipsis targets the complement of a phase head (Van Craenenbroeck 2004; 2010; Gengel
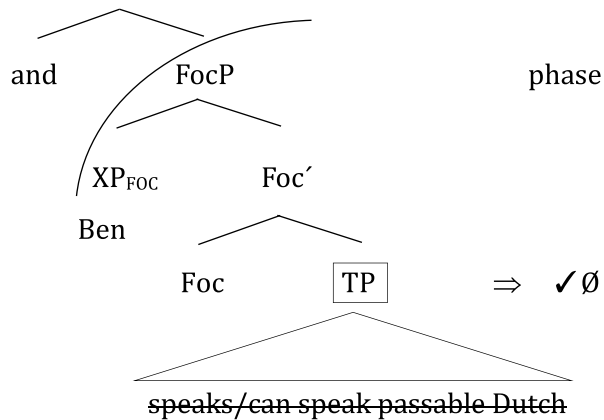
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[2] Following Depiante (2000) and Merchant (2003), I assume that the remnant of stripping is located in FocP, similar to the fragment, which is not topic-like, but focal in nature (see Merchant 2004). In this paper, I will discuss only contrastive stripping and leave aside non-contrastive stripping (see Griffiths & Lipták 2014 for a discussion of contrastive and noncontrastive fragments in terms of parallelism).

2009; Rouveret 2012). The derivation of matrix stripping (16a) is illustrated in (16b), where FocP is a phase, and the spell-out domain is TP which corresponds to the ellipsis site:[3]

(16)   (Wurmbrand 2017: 349, (16a–b))
    a.   Abby speaks passable Dutch, and BEN, too.
    b.

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        and        FocP                    phase
              XP_FOC        Foc′
              Ben
                     Foc    [TP]    ⇒   ✓Ø
                        speaks/can speak passable Dutch
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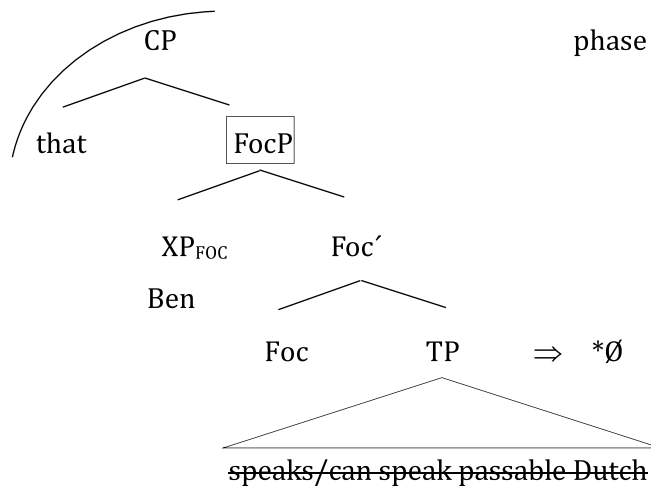
Embedded stripping (17a), by contrast, has the structure in (17b), where CP is a phase, and the spell-out domain is FocP which does not correspond to the ellipsis site (i.e., TP):

(17)   (Wurmbrand 2017: 349, (16c–d))
    a.   *Abby claimed Ben would ask her out, but she didn't think that Bill (too).
    b.

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            CP                          phase
        that      [FocP]
              XP_FOC        Foc′
              Ben
                     Foc    TP    ⇒   *Ø
                        speaks/can speak passable Dutch
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[3] Throughout the paper, I will use the following conventions for syntactic trees: the semicircle line indicates phasehood, boxes are spell-out domains, and strikethrough represents the ellipsis site.

As for the contrast in (14), Wurmbrand (2017) claims that when the matrix verb takes a CP-complement, the spell-out domain is not TP but FocP, as in (18a). In contrast, when the matrix verb takes a CP-less clause as its complement, FocP is a phase, and the spell-out domain (i.e., TP) corresponds to the ellipsis site, as in (18b):

(18) (Wurmbrand 2017: 350, (17))
    a. *… but she didn't think [$_{CP=phase}$ that [$_{FocP=SOD}$ Bill *[$_{TP}$ ~~would ask her out~~]]]
    b. … but she didn't think [$_{FocP=phase}$ Bill ✓[$_{TP=SOD}$ ~~would ask her out~~]]

Thus, under this analysis, whether or not FocP constitutes a phase is crucial for the possibility of embedded stripping in English. As it stands, though, the generalization in (15) does not hold for languages like Spanish; the presence of the complementizer *que* is required in embedded clauses, regardless of whether ellipsis occurs or not:[4]

(19) a. María quiere   estudiar física, y   Juan cree   *(que) Luis también.
        María want.3SG study   physics and Juan think.3SG   that Luis too
        'María wants to study physics, and Juan thinks that Luis (wants to study physics) too.'

    b. María quiere   estudiar física, y   Juan cree   *(que) Luis también
        María want.3SG study   physics and Juan think.3SG   that Luis too
        quiere   estudiar física.
        want.3SG study   physics
        'María wants to study physics, and Juan thinks that Luis wants to study physics too.'

Wurmbrand (2017) claims that if a language employs *wh*-movement to [Spec, FocP] (e.g., Hungarian), embedded stripping is possible even if there is an overt complementizer:

(20) *Hungarian* (Van Craenenbroeck & Lipták 2006: 260, (26a–a´))
    a. János meghívott valakit   és   azt   hiszem hogy BÉLÁT   [*e*].
        János pv.invited someone.ACC and that.ACC think   that Béla.ACC
        'János invited someone and I think it was Béla whom he invited.'

    b. [$_{CP}$ hogy [$_{FocP}$ Bélát$_{[+Op]}$ [$_{Foc´}$ Foc$_{[+Op][E[+Op]]}$ [*e*]]]]

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[4] In Spanish, factive predicates may allow the complementizer to be omitted when the subject of the embedded clause is null or postverbal (Torrego 1983: 561–562):

(i) a. Lamento   (que) no esté   (Carmen) contenta con su trabajo.
        regret.1SG (that) not is.3SG.SUBJ Carmen happy   with her work
        'I regret that Carmen is not happy with her job.'

    b. *Lamento Carmen no esté contenta con su trabajo.

However, these cases are highly restricted to formal register (RAE 2009), and I will not discuss them any further, since in Spanish, embedded gapping and stripping are disallowed under factive predicates (see Saab 2008).

In contrast, if a language employs *wh*-movement to [Spec, CP] (e.g., English), embedded stripping is not possible when the complementizer *that* is present (see (18a)). Given the phase-based analysis of embedded stripping in (18b), in Hungarian-type languages Foc is the phase head that licenses the ellipsis of its complement (i.e., TP) despite the presence of an overt complementizer. This would mean that the crosslinguistic variation with respect to embedded stripping lies in the phasal status of FocP below CP, an issue I return to in Section 4.

Last but not least, Wurmbrand (2017) tentatively suggests that the same reasoning could apply to embedded gapping in English, which is acceptable for some speakers when the complementizer is absent:

(21)   (Wurmbrand 2017: 361, (43))
      a. *Some will eat mussels and she claims that others ~~will eat~~ shrimp.
      b. %Some will eat mussels and she claims others ~~will eat~~ shrimp.

(22)   (Weir 2014: 333, (680))
      a. ?John ate oysters and I think Mary swordfish.
      b. ?John ate oysters and I believe Mary swordfish.
      c.   John ate oysters and I suspect Mary swordfish.
      d.   John ate oysters and I imagine Mary swordfish.

Although the acceptability judgments for embedded gapping are less clear than for embedded stripping, there is little doubt that the absence of the complementizer does affect the acceptability of embedded gapping (Wurmbrand 2017: 361). Given the similarity in this respect between gapping and stripping, let us consider whether the following generalization holds for embedded gapping:

(23)   *Embedded Gapping Generalization*
      Gapping in embedded clauses is only possible when the embedded clause lacks a CP

This means that the No Embedding Constraint will not apply to all cases; in English, embedded gapping is possible only if the matrix verb takes a CP-less clause as its complement (see (18b) above). However, the generalization in (23) cannot apply to Spanish for the same reason as (19); in embedded gapping, the matrix predicate must take a CP-complement headed by the complementizer *que*:

(24)   Juan comió las ostras y   creo   *(que) María el   pez espada.
      Juan ate.3SG the oysters and think.1SG   that   María the   swordfish
      'Juan ate the oysters and I think that María (ate) the swordfish.'

This holds true irrespective of whether the matrix predicate is factive or non-factive (see footnote 4). Before moving on to the analysis of embedded gapping, I now discuss some complications regarding the mood in the embedded clause and its relation to gapping in Spanish.

It is claimed that factive predicates do not allow embedded gapping, (25a), in contrast to non-factive ones, (25b) (Bosque 1984; Brucart 1987; Saab 2008; Fernández-Sánchez 2017; Bîlbîie & de la Fuente 2019):

(25) (Fernández-Sánchez 2017, (24))
    a. *Alfonso robó   las esmeraldas y   {lamento   /me encanta / odio / … }
        Alfonso stole.3SG the emeralds   and   regret.1SG / love.1SG   / hate.1SG
        que Mugsy las perlas.
        that Mugsy the pearls
        'Alfonso stole the emeralds and I {regret/love/hate} that Mugsy (stole) the pearls.'

    b. Alfonso robó   las esmeraldas y   {creo   /imagino
        Alfonso stole.3SG the emeralds   and   think.1SG /imagine.1SG
        /supongo / … } que Mugsy las   perlas.
        /suppose.1SG   that Mugsy the pearls
        'Alfonso stole the emeralds and I {think/imagine/suppose} that Mugsy (stole) the pearls.'

However, as noted by Saab (2008), it is not entirely clear whether the ungrammaticality of (25a) is due to embedding *per se*, or mood mismatches in TP-ellipsis in general; tense, aspect and mood (TAM) in the antecedent clause and the ellipsis clause must be identical. Accordingly, (25a) is ungrammatical because of the TAM mismatch:

(26) (Bîlbîie & de la Fuente 2019: 5, (12))
     Alfonso robó   las esmeraldas y   lamento   que Mugsy {??robó
     Alfonso stole.3SG the emeralds   and regret.1SG that Mugsy stole.IND
     / robara}   las perlas.
     / stole.SUBJ the pearls
     'Alfonso stole the emeralds and I regret that Mugsy stole the pearls.'

This in turn means that the grammaticality of (24b) is attributed to TAM matching:

(27) Alfonso robó   las esmeraldas y   creo   que Mugsy {robó
     Alfonso stole.3SG the emeralds   and think.1SG that Mugsy   stole.IND
     /*robara}   las perlas.
     / stole.SUBJ the pearls
     'Alfonso stole the emeralds and I think that Mugsy stole the pearls.'

Yet, the issue is not as simple as it seems. Embedded gapping is still impossible under factive predicates even though the verbs in the antecedent clause and the ellipsis clause are strictly identical:[5]

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[5] I thank an anonymous reviewer for bringing this example to my attention.

(28) *Me   encantó   que Ana comprara   un libro de Borges, pero
      CL.DAT.1SG   loved.1SG that Ana bought.3SG.SUBJ a   book of Borges but
      lamenté   que Juan ~~comprara~~   uno de Cervantes.
      regretted.1SG that Juan bought.3SG.SUBJ one of Cervantes
      'I loved that Ana bought a book of Borges, but I regretted that Juan bought a book
      of Cervantes.'

The question that arises here is: what rules out this kind of examples? While this issue needs some attention, it seems plausible that the subjunctive verb cannot serve as an antecedent if it is included in an embedded clause. More generally, the antecedent of gapping cannot be embedded (Hankamer 1979: 19):

(29) (Johnson 2009: 293)
      *She's said Peter has eaten his peas, and Sally her green beans, so now we can
      have dessert.
      Intended: 'She has said that Peter has eaten his peas; Sally has eaten her green beans.'

In view of this, (28) is ruled out presumably for the same reason as (29). However, it should be noted here that mood mismatches are tolerable in certain elliptical contexts such as pseudostripping.[6] Brucart (1987; 1999), Depiante (2004b), and Saab (2008) observe that in Spanish, embedded pseudostripping is possible under epistemic predicates, (30), while it is not possible under factive predicates, (31):

(30) (Brucart 1987: 136)
      María no   sabe   ruso,   pero es posible que Luis sí
      María not know.3SG.IND Russian but   is possible that Luis yes
      ~~sepa   ruso.~~
      know.3SG.SUBJ Russian
      'María does not know Russian, but it is possible that Luis know Russian.'

(31) (Brucart 1999: 2827)
      *María tiene   razón, pero lamento   muchísimo que Luisa no
      María has.3SG.IND reason but   regret.1SG very much that Luisa not
      ~~tenga   razón.~~
      has.3SG.SUBJ reason
      'María is right, but I regret very much that Luis is not right.'

Saab (2008) claims that this contrast has to do with whether the projection responsible for the subjunctive mood is included in the ellipsis site or not, which is crucial for structural isomorphism

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[6] Pseudostripping is the term referring to TP-ellipsis in which the remnant precedes the polarity marker (Depiante 2000).

between the elided TP and its antecedent. He proposes that the subjunctive feature of epistemic predicates is encoded in C, so TP does not contain it, as in (32a), whereas the subjunctive feature of factive predicates is in T and thus included in TP, as in (32b):

(32)   (Adapted from Saab 2008: 299, (194))
        a. $[_{CP}\ [_{C'}\ C_{[subj]}\ [_{TP}\ [_{T'}\ T\ [_{AspP}\ \dots\ ]]]]]$
        b. $[_{CP}\ [_{C'}\ C\ [_{TP}\ [_{T'}\ T[_{subj}]\ [_{AspP}\ \dots\ ]]]]]$

In this view, the mood mismatch in (30) is illusory, and there is no syntactic mismatch between the ellipsis site and its antecedent. Instead, the contrast between (30) and (31) is due to the interaction between syntax and morphology concerning the subjunctive mood (see Saab 2008 for more details). Though I leave a detailed discussion of this issue for future work, I tentatively suggest that the difference between factive and non-factive predicates in embedded gapping can be explained as follows; in (25a), the subjunctive feature is included in the ellipsis site, giving rise to a mood mismatch with its antecedent, while in (25b), the indicative feature is encoded in T, so mood mismatches are immaterial.

To summarize, we need a different way of looking at the possibility of embedded gapping in Spanish, since, unlike in English, it does not hinge on the presence or absence of the complementizer. In the next section, I provide a phase-based analysis of embedded gapping along the lines of Wurmbrand's (2017) claim that the possibility of embedded stripping is related to the phasehood of the embedded CP.

4 Embedded gapping in terms of phasehood inheritance

Previous work on phase theory has claimed that, contrary to Chomsky's (2000; 2001) original conception that only vP and CP are phases, phasal domains are not fixed and can be varied depending on syntactic contexts (see, e.g., Den Dikken 2007; Gallego 2007; 2010; Gallego & Uriagereka 2007; Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou & Wurmbrand 2014). In particular, Chomsky (2015) proposes that downward inheritance of phasehood is possible and provides a phase-based account for *that*-trace effects. He claims that if C is deleted at the phase level, phasehood of C is inherited by T; T becomes a derived phase, and the complement of T is transferred for labeling purposes. Citko (2020) also discusses another case of downward inheritance of phasehood to account for the difference between English and Polish with respect to the Sluicing-COMP generalization.[7] The mechanism of phasehood inheritance proposed in Citko (2020) is given in (33), where the Foc

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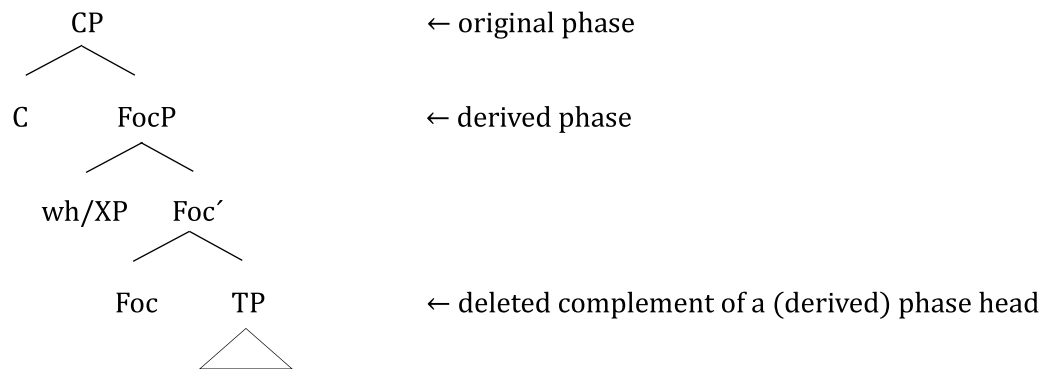[7] *Sluicing-COMP generalization*   (Merchant 2001: 62)
In sluicing, no non-operator material may appear in COMP.

This captures the fact that overt complementizers cannot occur to the left of the *wh*-remnant in sluicing (see Van Craenenbroeck & Lipták 2008 for the *wh*/sluicing-correlation on Sluicing-COMP generalization).

head below CP inherits phasehood from C, and the target of ellipsis is the complement of the derived phase, leaving the complementizer intact:

(33)   *Phase Inheritance*   (Citko 2020: 46, (25))

```
            CP                          ← original phase
           /  \
          C    FocP                     ← derived phase
              /    \
          wh/XP     Foc´
                   /    \
                 Foc     TP             ← deleted complement of a (derived) phase head
                        /__\
```
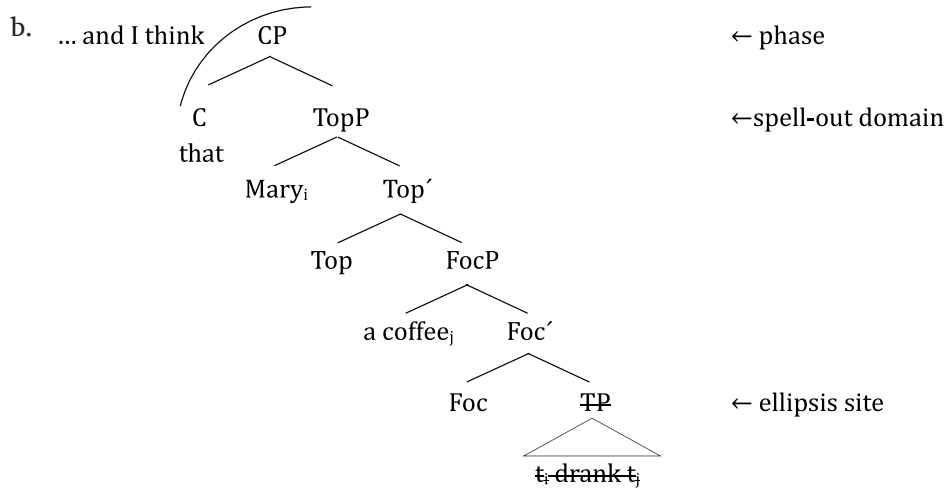
Citko (2020: 47) claims that phasehood inheritance is an extreme case of feature inheritance, and if the original phase head does not have any uninterpretable features left, it does not have to keep on being a phase head (see also Gallego 2010 for a similar claim). In (33), the uninterpretable *wh*-feature on C is inherited by Foc; thus, CP is no longer a phase.[8] For shifted phasehood, Citko (2020) provides evidence from sluicing in languages like Hungarian and Polish, where the *wh*-remnant moves to [Spec, FocP], and claims that in such cases, Foc is the phase head that licenses TP-ellipsis, despite the presence of an overt complementizer in C (see (20)). In this section, I adopt this proposal and apply it to embedded gapping, assuming that ellipsis targets the complement of a phase head (Van Craenenbroeck 2004; 2010; Gengel 2009; Rouveret 2012), and that the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) renders spell-out domains inaccessible to further operations (Chomsky 2000; 2001).[9] I argue that spell-out domains for ellipsis may vary depending on phasehood inheritance, and this accounts for crosslinguistic variation: English and Spanish differ from each other in terms of the spell-out domains when gapping occurs in embedded clauses. Specifically, English disallows embedded gapping, (34a), since CP is a phase, and therefore the spell-out domain is TopP rather than TP, as in (34b):[10]

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[8] I follow Citko (2014: 53) in assuming that the countercyclic nature of downward inheritance of phasehood does not matter so much if derivations are evaluated at phase levels and all operations take place simultaneously at the phase level (see Chomsky 2001; 2004). As will be shown later, the difference between English and Spanish with respect to phasehood inheritance in embedded gapping lies in whether the complementizer is overt or null.

[9] *Phase Impenetrability Condition*   (Chomsky 2000: 108)
In phase α with head H, the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside α; only H and its edge are accessible to such operations
Since the discussion in this section does not hinge on a specific version of the PIC, Chomsky's (2001) PIC is also compatible with the analysis presented in the text.

[10] Following Ai (2014), Winkler (2015), and Potter, Frazier & Yoshida (2017), I assume that prior to TP-deletion, the subject remnant undergoes movement to [Spec, TopP] and the object remnant to [Spec, FocP].
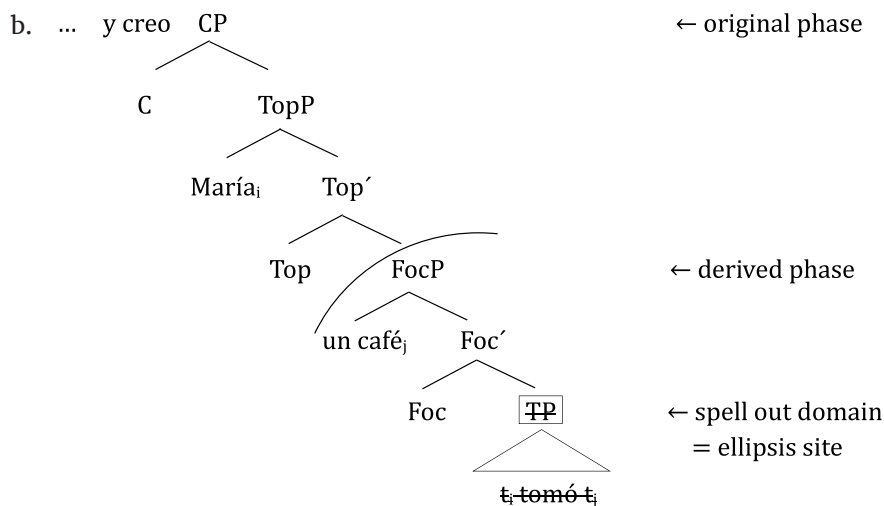
(34)   a. *John drank a tea, and I think that Mary a coffee.

      b. ... and I think [tree diagram]

The tree (34b):

- ... and I think — CP   ← phase
  - C / that — TopP   ←spell-out domain
    - Mary$_i$ — Top′
      - Top — FocP
        - a coffee$_j$ — Foc′
          - Foc — ~~TP~~   ← ellipsis site
            - ~~t$_i$ drank t$_j$~~

In this structure, TopP is what should be elided in line with the approach that phase heads trigger ellipsis of their complements. Thus, the ungrammaticality of (34a) is due to the fact that the ellipsis site does not match the spell-out domain.[11]

    In contrast, Spanish allows embedded gapping, (35a), in which case a lower head below CP constitutes a phase; phasehood of C is inherited by Foc, thereby rendering TP the spell-out domain, as in (35b):

(35)   a. ✓Juan tomó un té, y creo que María un café.

      b. ... y creo [tree diagram]

The tree (35b):

- ... y creo — CP   ← original phase
  - C — TopP
    - María$_i$ — Top′
      - Top — FocP   ← derived phase
        - un café$_j$ — Foc′
          - Foc — ☐~~TP~~☐   ← spell out domain = ellipsis site
            - ~~t$_i$ tomó t$_j$~~

In (35b), I assume that C does not transfer its phasehood directly to Foc; the phasal status of FocP is attributed to Top which inherits phasehood from C. Since gapping involves a contrastive topic-contrastive focus structure in which Foc is the licensor of TP-ellipsis (Gengel 2013; Winkler 2015), phasehood inheritance cannot stop at Top; it must go all the way down to Foc.

Under the current proposal, the phasehood of the embedded CP is what determines the possibility of embedded gapping; in Spanish, FocP is a phase that allows the ellipsis of its complement (i.e., TP), whereas in English, TP is not the target of ellipsis, since CP is a phase. The question, then, is why in Spanish, Foc can inherit phasehood from C. Following Van Craenenbroeck & Lipták (2006; 2013), I argue that the availability of *wh*-movement to [Spec, FocP] is related to the phasal status of FocP. In fact, Spanish is similar to Hungarian in that the [E]-feature is linked to the operator feature in Foc rather than the *wh*-feature in C; in indirect questions where the *wh*-element follows the complementizer *que*, the former moves to [Spec, FocP], while the latter is the head of ForceP of the split-CP structure (see Demonte & Fernández-Soriano 2009). Wurmbrand (2017: 361) claims that the distribution of complementizers in Spanish provides initial evidence for the phasal status of a lower head below CP; in double-complementizer constructions like (36), the locality effect with the doubled *que* (in boldface) associated with TopP or FocP is expected if FocP is a phase:
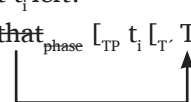
(36)   (Villa-García 2012: 283, (41))

    a. Me dijeron que si llueve, **que** no vienen a la fiesta, y que si
        CL said.3SG that if rains that not come to the party and that if
        nieva, **que** tampoco.
        snows.3SG that neither
        'They told me that they will not come to the party if it rains or snows.'

    b. Dijeron que Pedro, **que** ayuda a todos, y me contó Juan
        said.3PL that Pedro that helps.3SG all and CL told.3SG Juan
        que María, **que** también.
        that María that too
        'They said Pedro helps everyone and Juan told me María does too.'

Since left-dislocated elements are topics (López 1999), in (36a–b) the relevant head that licenses TP-ellipsis is Top, irrespective of whether it is null or lexicalized as *que* (see Villa-García 2012; 2015). This would mean that TopP constitutes a phase that allows its complement (i.e., TP) to be elided under the phase-based approach to embedded gapping and stripping.[12]

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[12] As an anonymous reviewer points out, the proposed analysis can probably not be extended to all ellipsis phenomena; pseudogapping is one such case, since what is elided is VoiceP (or vP), the complement of the non-phase head T (see Merchant 2008; 2013; Bošković 2014). Although this issue requires further investigation, I follow Wurmbrand (2017) in analyzing embedded gapping and stripping as deletion of a phasal complement.

Given the analysis in (34b), the question now is how the present analysis accounts for the fact that in English, embedded gapping is possible when the complementizer is absent (see (21)–(22)). One possible explanation for this is that the acceptability of embedded gapping in such cases is related to the absence of the complementizer.

Chomsky (2015) claims that example (37a) is grammatical because C-deletion transfers its phasehood to T, rendering TP labeled, as in (37c), whereas example (37b) is ungrammatical because of the failure of labeling; English T is too weak to label and traces are ignored for the purpose of labeling, so TP cannot be labeled if the subject *wh*-phrase moves from [Spec, TP] to [Spec, CP]:

(37) a. Who$_i$ do you think t$_i$ left?
      b. *Who$_i$ do you think that t$_i$ left?
      c. Who$_i$ do you think [$_{CP}$ ~~that~~$_{phase}$ [$_{TP}$ t$_i$ [$_{T'}$ T$_{phase}$ [$_{vP}$ t$_i$ left]]]?

Phase inheritance

Under Chomsky's (2015) dephasing of C whereby T inherits all the features of C, including phasehood, what is crucial is that the embedded CP loses its phasehood by deleting *that*.[13] I propose that the ungrammaticality of (38) is similarly attributed to phasehood inheritance as a consequence of dephasing of the original phase head C; if phasehood is inherited by Top and subsequently by Foc, TP is the spell-out domain to be elided, as in (39):

(38) ✓John drank a tea, and I think Mary a coffee.

(39) ... and I think   CP   ← original phase

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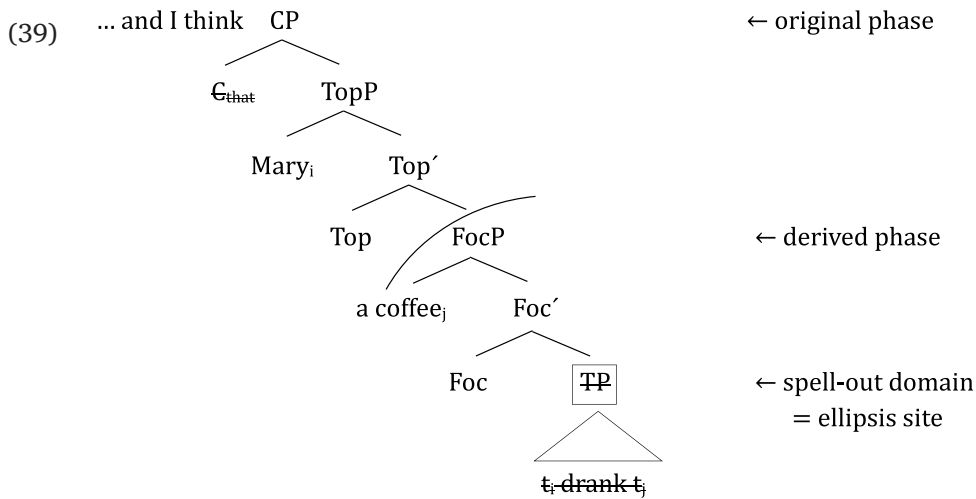
[13] This analysis traces back to Chomsky & Lasnik (1977) who proposed that (37a) was derived from (37b) via *that*-deletion (see Rizzi 2015 for a different account in terms of freezing in subject position).

I assume that the matrix verb takes a CP complement with a null complementizer (Pesetsky & Torrego 2001; 2004; 2007; Bošković & Lasnik 2003) and thus depart from Wurmbrand's (2017) claim that the matrix verb takes a CP-less clauses as its complement in embedded stripping without complementizers (cf. (18b)). Given the analysis in (39), the acceptability of (38) is not due to the lack of a CP-layer in embedded clauses; rather, the absence of the complementizer comes as a result of C-deletion which makes a lower head inherit phasehood, similar to Chomsky's (2015) account of the lack of the *that*-trace effect, given that phases are relevant domains for syntactic operations as well as PF-processes.

One may also claim that the contrast between (34) and (38) is related to the truncated structure of CP (Rizzi 2006; 2010; Haegeman 2006; Rizzi & Shlonsky 2007; Shlonsky 2014). Rizzi & Shlonsky (2007) propose that Criterial Freezing and the Subject Criterion are crucial ingredients for the left-periphery of the sentence. The former is a structural requirement on subjects; an element satisfying a criterion is frozen in place, and the latter implies that once moved an element to [Spec, Subj(ect)P], it cannot undergo further movement (Rizzi 2006; 2010). The gist of this proposal is that subjects move to criterial positions in which they are frozen. According to Rizzi & Shlonsky's (2007) analysis of truncation of CP-structure, an embedded clause containing the complementizer *that* involves the structure in which *that* undergoes head movement from Fin to Force under Rizzi's (1997) split CP-structure, since it conveys both finiteness and declarative force. In contrast, an embedded clause without a(n overt) complementizer involves a truncated structure which lacks FinP and ForceP. If there are no such layers, the subject does not have to move to [Spec, SubjP]; Criterial Freezing does not apply in such cases. Evidence for truncation in cases of complementizer deletion in English comes from that fact that the deletion of *that* is incompatible with topicalization or focalization:

(40) (Rizzi & Shlonsky 2007: 151, (85), adapted from Grimshaw 1997)
    a. She thought *(that) this book, you should read.
    b. She thought *(that) never in her life would she accept this solution.

If this is correct, the contrast between (34) and (38) could be attributable to two different structures of CPs; full-fledged CP vs. truncated CP:

(41) a. *... and I think [$_{ForceP}$ that$_i$ [$_{FinP}$ t$_i$ [$_{TopP}$ Mary [$_{FocP}$ a coffee [$_{SubP}$ ...]]]]].
    b. ✓... and I think [$_{TopP}$ Mary [$_{FocP}$ a coffee [$_{SubjP}$ ...]]].

However, the absence of FinP and ForceP does not expect that embedded gapping is compatible with topicalization even when there is an overt complementizer. This is shown by the fact that in embedded gapping, the presence of *that* yields ungrammaticality:

(42) a. A tea, John drank, and I think *(that) a coffee, Mary drank.
      b. A tea, John drank, and I think (*that) a coffee, Mary.

In view of this, Rizzi & Shlonsky's (2007) proposal does not help much to find out why the presence or absence of the complementizer has an effect on the acceptability of embedded gapping in English, nor provides any clue for the difference between English and Spanish with respect to embedded gapping. Alternatively, one might consider that in English, there is no embedded gapping *per se*, and suggest that the string containing the subject and the verb in the leftmost position of the second conjunct is an instance of epistemic/evidential parenthetical, thus explaining the contrast between (43a) and (43b–c) (see Rooryck 2001 for discussion of parenthetical clauses as evidential modifiers):

(43) (Weir 2014: 333, (680))
      John ate oysters …
      a. and I {?think/?believe/??hope/suspect/?was told/imagine} Mary swordfish.
      b. and I {?*found out/*remember/*deny/?*know} Mary swordfish.
      c. and I {*am proud/*am angry/*am surprised} Mary swordfish.

While it is beyond the scope of this paper to fully explore the parenthetical account of embedded gapping in English, it is noteworthy that while epistemic/evidential parentheticals typically have a first-person subject, there is no such restriction in (43a):

(44) John ate oysters and {Bill/my mother/they/?you} think(s) Mary swordfish.

This is much the same as embedded fragments:

(45) (Weir 2014: 221, (450))
      a. Who left?
          Well, [$_{CT}$ Mary] thinks [$_F$ John].
      b. Who is responsible for the 9/11 attacks?
          Well, [$_{CT}$ Michael Moore] believes [$_F$ Bush].

Weir (2014) notes that in (45), the matrix subject, if it differs from the first person, must have the rise-fall-rise contour of contrastive topic, and claims that these examples involve true syntactic embedding and do not pattern with parentheticals. The same holds true for (44). Though I leave a detailed investigation of factivity and embedded gapping for future work, I follow Wurmbrand (2017) in claiming that embedded gapping in English can be treated in the same way as embedded stripping (see Wurmbrand 2017: 344 for arguments against the parenthetical analysis of embedded stripping in English).

To summarize, under the current proposal, embedded gapping is analyzed in the light of the phasehood of the embedded CP, which may vary across languages. The analysis proposed here provides a straightforward account of the Embedded Gapping Generalization:

(46)　*Embedded Gapping Generalization (revisited)*
　　　In embedded clauses, gapping is possible only if the embedded CP is not a phase; i.e., dephased.

In the next section, I explore the consequences and challenges of the current proposal.

5 Implications of phasehood inheritance in embedded gapping and (pseudo)stripping

As discussed in Section 3, Spanish allows embedded pseudostripping in which the polarity/focus particle follows the remnant:

(47)　a.　Ana　quiere　　estudiar física,　y　Juan　cree　　　que Luis　no.
　　　　　Ana　want.3SG　study　　physics　and Juan　believes.3SG　that Luis　not
　　　　　'Ana wants to study physics, and John believes that Luis does not want to
　　　　　study physics'

　　　b.　Ana　quiere　　estudiar física,　y　Juan　cree　　　que Luis　también.
　　　　　Ana　want.3SG　study　　physics　and Juan　believes.3SG　that Luis　also
　　　　　'Ana wants to study physics, and John believes that Luis also wants to
　　　　　study physics'

This contrasts sharply with embedded stripping, which is disallowed in Spanish:

(48)　a.　*Ana　quiere　　estudiar física,　y　Juan　cree　　　que　no　Luis.
　　　　　Ana　want.3SG　study　　physics　and Juan　believes.3SG　that not Luis
　　　　　'Ana wants to study physics, and John believes that Luis does not want to
　　　　　study physics'

　　　b.　*Ana　quiere　　estudiar física,　y　Juan　cree　　　que　también　Luis.
　　　　　Ana　want.3SG　study　　physics　and Juan　believes.3SG　that also　　Luis
　　　　　'Ana wants to study physics, and John believes that Luis also wants to study physics'

Thus, it is fair to say that pseudostripping, in contrast to stripping, behaves like gapping with respect to the No Embedding Constraint. In this section I argue that the generalization in (46) can be extended to pseudostripping, and discuss some issues that arise from phasehood inheritance in embedded clauses.

Previous research has shown that not only focus particles such as *también* 'too' and *tampoco* 'neither' but also polarity particles like *sí* 'yes' or *no* 'no' can license TP-ellipsis in Spanish (Bosque 1984; Brucart 1987; 1999; Laka 1990; López 1999; Depiante 2000; 2004a,b; López & Winkler 2003; Vicente 2006; Saab 2008). In particular, Depiante (2004b) and Saab (2008) claim that pseudostripping involves an underlying CLLD structure where the remnant is analyzed as a CLLD-ed element in TopP.[14] Under this analysis, pseudostripping (49a) is derived along the lines of (49b), where TP-ellipsis is licensed by the polarity particle in ΣP, a projection proposed by Laka (1990) to host polarity elements:

(49) a. Juan leyó Hamlet, pero María no.
          'John read Hamlet, but not Mary'

      b. … pero [$_{\text{TopP}}$ María$_i$ [$_{\Sigma P}$ [$_{\Sigma'}$ no [$_{\text{TP}}$ t$_i$ leyó Hamlet]]]]

If this is so, Σ is similarly the phase head that allows TP to be elided in embedded pseudostripping. However, this goes against Wurmbrand's (2017) claim that FocP is a phase in languages like Hungarian and Spanish where embedded (pseudo)stripping is allowed. As far as the current proposal goes, there are in principle two functional categories (i.e., Top and Σ) eligible to be a phase head in (47a) and (47b):

(50) … pero creo [$_{\text{CP}}$ que [$_{\text{TopP}}$ remnant$_i$ [$_{\text{Top'}}$ **Top** [$_{\Sigma P}$ [$_{\Sigma'}$ **no** [$_{\text{TP}}$ … t$_i$ …]]]]]]
              < Phase > < Phase >

The question here is which head should be the licensor of TP-ellipsis in embedded pseudostripping. One possibility is that Σ is not a phase head when it merges with TP, and the polarity particle *no* undergoes head movement to the phase head Top; the 'Top-*no*' complex head is what licenses ellipsis of its complement, as in (51):
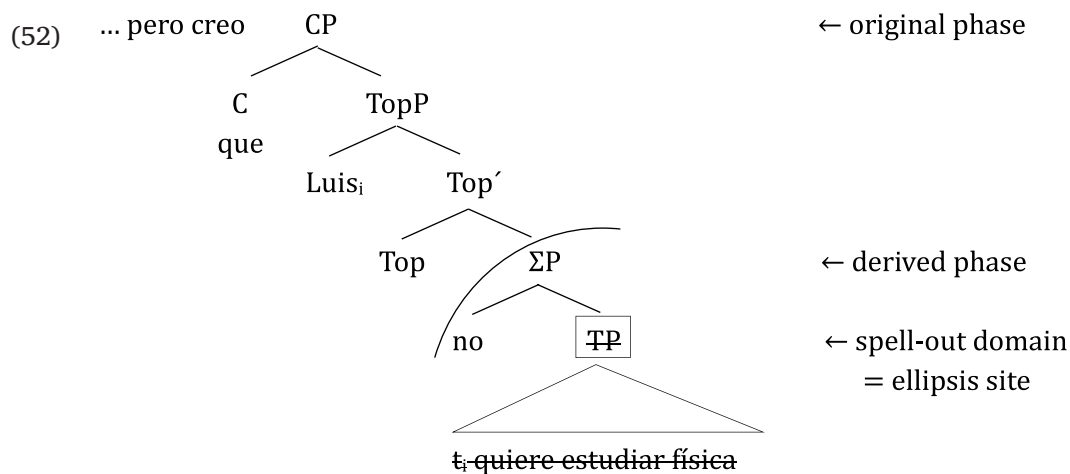
(51) … pero creo [$_{\text{CP}}$ que [$_{\text{TopP}}$ remnant$_i$ [$_{\text{Top'}}$ **Top-no**$_j$ [$_{\Sigma P}$ [$_{\Sigma'}$ t$_j$ [$_{\text{TP}}$ … t$_i$ …]]]]]]
              < Phase >

This is reminiscent of X-stranding XP-ellipsis, since the polarity particle has moved out of the ellipsis site (i.e., ΣP). However, this does not follow Lasnik's (1999: 158) generalization; XP-ellipsis is prohibited if XP has lost its head. Lipták & Saab (2014) argue that, for a language to display headless XP-ellipsis, it must independently show both X-movement and XP-ellipsis.

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[14] Fernández-Sánchez (2019) argues against Depiante's (2000) unified account of polarity ellipsis and shows that not all instances of polarity ellipsis come from the same source structure. He claims that the string 'Neg-XP' does not involve ellipsis but constituent negation. In this section, I will limit myself to discussing the string 'XP-Neg' which involves clausal ellipsis.

However, this claim is not entirely correct and has been refuted by Sailor (2018) showing that in Mainland Scandinavian, VP-ellipsis is possible even though there is no V-to-T movement. Leaving aside the issue of Σ-movement, it is not clear whether the structure in (51) is suitable for Spanish due to the lack of evidence that ΣP rather than TP is elided, given that polarity particles such as *sí* and *no* are related to the propositional content (i.e., TP).
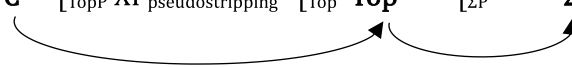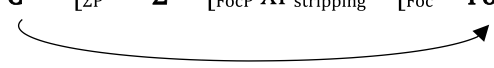
The phase-based analysis proposed in the previous section claims that phasehood inheritance allows for gapping in embedded clauses. I extend this analysis to (47a) and (47b): phasehood of Top is lowered onto Σ. Assuming that the remnant of pseudostripping is located in TopP (Depiante 2004b; Saab 2008; 2010), I propose that Top, like Foc, inherits phasehood from C in embedded pseudostripping. This is not much different from the analysis of embedded gapping in the sense that phasehood is inherited from a phase head to a non-phase head. Specifically, Σ is not originally a phase head; it inherits phasehood from Top, and therefore the complement of Σ is the spell-out domain to be elided. The derivation of (47a) is given in (52):

(52) … pero creo   CP   ← original phase

                      C   TopP

                 que

                Luis$_i$ Top′

                  Top   ΣP   ← derived phase

                      no   ~~TP~~   ← spell-out domain
                                                  = ellipsis site

                    ~~t$_i$ quiere estudiar física~~

The same applies to (47b) without further discussion. At this point, the question arises as to why stripping in Spanish cannot occur in embedded clauses (see (48)). According to the current proposal, in Spanish, C transfers its phasehood to a lower head (e.g., Foc), so licensing embedded gapping is a particular instance of TP-ellipsis. In a similar vein, the examples in (48) should be grammatical, contrary to fact. I suggest that the reason for this is that only Top and Foc, which are related to the information-structural properties of the remnants, can be the target of phasehood inheritance in embedded (pseudo)stripping. Following Vicente (2006), I assume that the remnant of pseudostripping is in TopP, whereas the remnant of stripping is in FocP:

(53)   [$_{TopP}$ XP$_{pseudostripping}$ [$_{ΣP}$ Neg/Aff [$_{FocP}$ XP$_{stripping}$ [$_{TP}$ ~~…~~]]]]
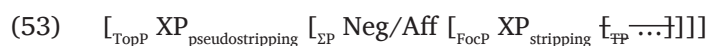
In embedded pseudostripping, the phasal status of ΣP is attributed to the derived phase head Top; it is by virtue of Top that phasehood of C is transferred to Σ, as in (54a). In embedded stripping, by contrast, phasehood of C cannot be transferred to Foc, since Σ does not inherit phasehood from C, as in (54b):
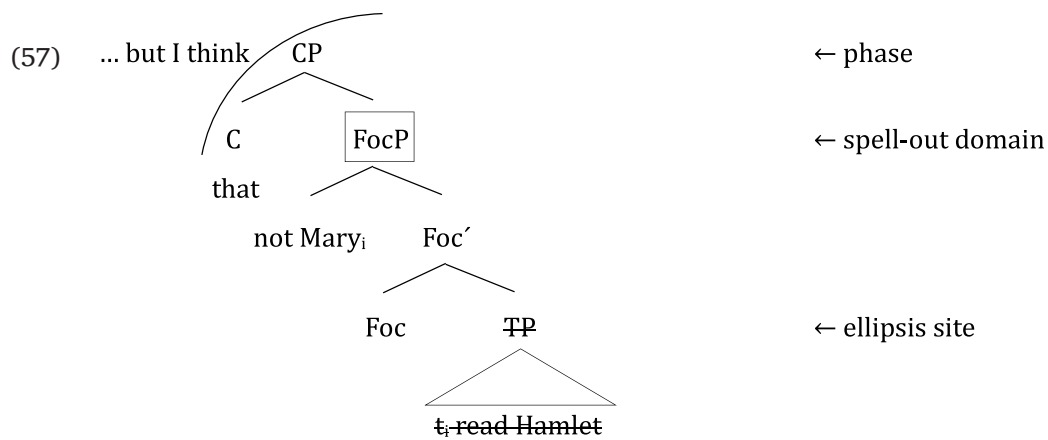
(54) a. $[_{CP}$ **C** $[_{TopP}$ XP$_{pseudostripping}$ $[_{Top'}$ **Top** $[_{ΣP}$ Σ $[_{TP}$ ... $]]]]]$

b. *$[_{CP}$ **C** $[_{ΣP}$ Σ $[_{FocP}$ XP$_{stripping}$ $[_{Foc'}$ **Foc** $[_{TP}$ ... $]]]]$

As an anonymous reviewer points out, pseudostripping is a type of non-local surface anaphora, similar to VP-ellipsis in English (Depiante 2000; 2004b; Saab 2008); thus, the remnant and its antecedent need not be clause-mates, in contrast to stripping (see Brucart 1987 for a similar claim for gapping in Spanish). Note that pseudostripping behaves differently from stripping with respect to backward ellipsis; the former can operate backwards, (55a), like VP-ellipsis, (56), whereas the latter cannot, (55b) (see Brucart 1999):
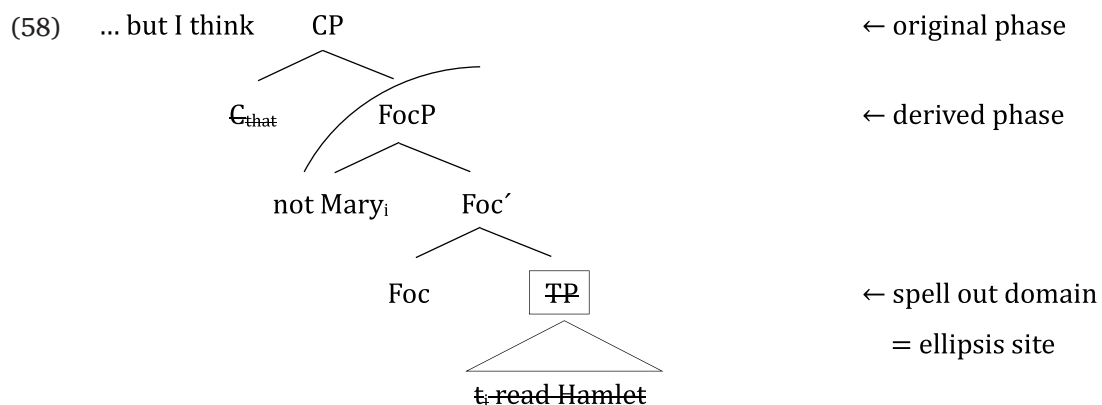
(55) a. Aunque Juan no, Pedro estudiaba física y química.
Although Juan not Pedro studied.3SG physics and chemistry
'Although Juan did not ~~study physics and chemistry,~~ Pedro studied physics and chemistry'

b. *Aunque no Juan, Pedro estudiaba física y química.

(56) a. Although John didn't, Peter studied physics and chemistry.
b. Peter studied physics and chemistry, though John didn't.

This may lend support to the claim that pseudostripping does not obey the clause-mate condition. If this is so, then the similarity between gapping and pseudostripping with respect to the No Embedding Constraint would be superficial. I leave this issue for future research.

The analysis proposed above also provides an account of why embedded *not*-stripping is impossible in English. Merchant (2003) suggests that the licensor of TP-ellipsis in matrix *not*-stripping is Foc rather than the negation in [Spec, NegP] (Haegeman 1995) or adjoined to ΣP (Ladusaw 1992). In this case, the negative marker *not* forms a constituent negation with the remnant in FocP (Depiante 2000; Merchant 2003). Assuming this to be the case, I suggest that in embedded *not*-stripping, the ellipsis site is not TP but FocP, which is the complement of the phase head C:

(57)   ... but I think   CP   ← phase

                    C   FocP   ← spell-out domain

                   that

                        not Mary$_i$ Foc′

                                  Foc   ~~TP~~   ← ellipsis site

                                      ~~t$_i$ read Hamlet~~

As discussed in Section 4, Chomsky's (2015) phase-based account of the absence of the *that*-trace effect suggests that the deletion of C transfers its phasehood to T. Similarly, if C is deleted in embedded *not*-stripping, Foc becomes a derived phase; in this case, Foc inherits phasehood directly from C, since there is no ΣP projection. This is illustrated in (58), which is not much different from embedded gapping when the complementizer is absent (cf. (42)).

(58)   ... but I think   CP   ← original phase

              ~~C$_{that}$~~   FocP   ← derived phase

                   not Mary$_i$ Foc′

                            Foc   ~~TP~~   ← spell out domain
                                                           = ellipsis site

                                 ~~t$_i$ read Hamlet~~

If this line of reasoning is correct, we would expect examples like (59) to be acceptable:

(59)   a.   ?John read Hamlet, but I think not Mary.
              (cf. *John read Hamlet, but I think that not Mary)
        b.   ?John read Hamlet, but I think not El Quijote.
              (cf. *John read Hamlet, but I think that not El Quijote)

For most speakers consulted, embedded *not*-stripping is acceptable if there is no overt complementizer. This would indicate that the deletion of the complementizer plays a crucial role in the acceptability of embedded *not*-stripping, just as in the case of embedded stripping discussed in Wurmbrand (2017) (see also Section 3).

Under the current proposal, it is also expected that if the embedded CP loses its phasehood, and unless there is a new phase edge for intermediate movement, long-distance extraction will be banned due to the PIC which forces movement to proceed successive-cyclically through phase edges, as schematized in (60a–b):

(60)   a.   ✓... *wh*-phrase$_i$ ... V [$_{CP=phase}$ t$_i$ [$_{C'}$ that [$_{TP}$ ... V ... t$_i$]]]
       b.   * ...   *wh*-phrase$_i$ ... V [$_{CP=phase}$ —   [$_{C'}$ that [$_{TP}$ ... V ... t$_i$]]]

To see this, consider the following examples, where one of the remnants is a *wh*-element:

(61)   a. ¿A   quién   quiere   María, y   a   quién   Susana?
          to   whom   like.3SG   María   and   to   whom   Susana
          'Who does María like, and who does Susana like?'

       b. ¿A   quién   quiere   María, y   a   quién   crees   (tú)   que   Susana?
          to   whom   like.3SG   María   and   to   whom   think.2SG   (you)   that   Susana
          'Who does María like, and who do you think that Susana likes?

Although the data look like what Ortega-Santos, Yoshida & Nakao (2014) call sluice-stripping, I assume that (61a–b) involve gapping in *wh*-questions. Note that similar examples like (62) cannot be viewed as sluice-stripping, since they contain two non-*wh*-remnants (along with a *wh*-remnant), which does not fit with the term *stripping*:

(62)   a. ¿A   quién   dio   el   libro   Juan, y   a   quién   Luis   el   disco?
          to   whom   gave.3SG   the   book   Juan   and   to   whom   Luis   the   disk
          'Who did Juan give the book and who did Luis give the disk?'

       b. ¿A   quién   dio   el   libro   Juan, y   a   quién   crees   que   Luis
          to   whom   gave.3SG   the   book   Juan   and   to   whom   think.2SG   that   Luis
          el   disco?
          the   disk
          'Who did Juan give the book and who do you think that Luis gave the disk?'

These examples are better suited to gapping as far as the number of the non-*wh*-remnants is concerned; gapping with three remnants is allowed in Spanish (Brucart 1987), though English does not easily allow three remnants if all of these are arguments of the elided verb (see, e.g., Jackendoff 1971: 25). Given that both conjuncts in (61) and (62) are interpreted as two independent *wh*-questions, they involve their own *wh*-movement to [Spec, CP] (see Corver & van Koppen 2018 for similar data from Dutch). In these cases, gapping cannot be analyzed under low coordination and must be derived through TP-ellipsis. Under the phase-based analysis of embedded gapping, I argue that (61b) is unacceptable due to long-distance *wh*-movement in

violation of the PIC; Foc inherits phasehood from C, and the Spec of the embedded CP is no longer the phase edge. Thus, in (61b), the *wh*-element would move directly from the embedded [Comp, VP] to the matrix [Spec, CP], skipping the embedded [Spec, CP]. However, this movement is not successive cyclic, violating the PIC:

(63)   *... [$_{CP}$ a quién$_i$ [$_{TP}$ crees [$_{CP}$ ___ [$_{C'}$ que [$_{FocP=phase}$ ~~[$_{TP}$ ... V ... t$_i$]~~]]]]]

In (63), when TP merges with Foc, it is transferred to PF, and further movement to [Spec, CP] is not available due to cyclic transfer (e.g., Uriagereka 1999). Note that the non-elliptical counterpart of (61b) does not violate the PIC, since long-distance *wh*-movement passes through the edge of a phase (i.e., the Spec of the embedded CP) on its way to the matrix clause:[15]

(64)   a.   ¿A quién   quiere   María, y   a   quién   crees   (tú)   que   quiere
             to whom   like.3SG   María   and   to whom   think.2SG   (you)   that   like.3SG
             Susana?
             Susana
             'Who does María like, and who do you think that Susana likes?

        b. ^{OK} ... [$_{CP}$ a quién$_i$ [$_{TP}$ crees [$_{CP=phase}$ t$_i$ [$_{C'}$ que ~~[$_{TP}$ ... V ... t$_i$]~~]]]]]

Given this, the grammaticality of (61b) needs to be accounted for under the current proposal. I suggest that in (61b), the *wh*-element undergoes movement to [Spec, FocP], the edge of the derived phase, and then moves further to [Spec, CP] of the matrix clause:

(65)   ... [$_{CP}$ a quién$_i$ [$_{TP}$ crees [$_{CP}$ [$_{C'}$ que [$_{FocP=phase}$ t$_i$ [$_{Foc'}$ Foc ~~[$_{TP}$ ... V ... t$_i$]~~]]]]]]

That is, long-distance extraction is possible out of embedded gapping even though the embedded CP loses its phasehood; [Spec, FocP] serves as a new phase edge for intermediate movement.[16] The question then arises as to whether English also behaves similarly to Spanish in this respect. All else being equal, long-distance extraction should be possible in English, passing through [Spec, CP], but the result is ungrammatical. The reason is that the embedded CP is a phase, and

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[15] In Spanish, subject-verb inversion is optional in embedded clauses (Torrego 1984: 113):

(i)   ¿Qué   libro$_i$ dice   María   que   (Ana)   le   ha   regalado t$_i$ (Ana)?
       what   book   says   María   that   (Ana)   CL   has   presented   (Ana)
       'What book does María say that Ann has bought her?'

However, given the parallel ordering of constituents within the conjuncts, I assume that in (64a), *wh*-movement out of the second conjunct passes through the embedded [Spec, CP] on its way to the matrix [Spec, CP].

[16] Aboh (2004) claims that long-distance *wh*-movement in Gungbe (a Kwa language) does not pass through [Spec, FocP] but through [Spec, ForceP] of the split CP-structure. I leave this issue for future work.

the spell-out domain (i.e., FocP) does not match the ellipsis site (i.e., TP), as argued in Section 4. Given the account proposed here, the derivations of (61b) and (64) are not the same; while long-distance *wh*-movement is possible in both cases, the path of successive-cyclic movement is different depending on its phasal domain, as schematized in (66):

(66) a. *Long-distance wh-movement out of embedded clauses with gapping*
$[_{CP}$ *wh*-phrase$_i$ $[_{TP}$ … V $[_{CP}$ $[_{C'}$ C $[_{\mathbf{FocP=phase}}$ t$_i$ $[_{TP}$ ~~… V t$_i$~~]]]]]

  b. *Long-distance wh-movement out of non-elliptical embedded clauses*
$[_{CP}$ *wh*-phrase$_i$ $[_{TP}$ … V $[_{\mathbf{CP=phase}}$ t$_i$ $[_{C'}$ C $[_{TP}$ … V t$_i$]]]]]

6 Conclusion

The existence of embedded gapping in languages like Farsi and Spanish poses some challenges to the crosslinguistic validity of the No Embedding Constraint: why is gapping subject to this constraint in some languages but not in others, and if so, how can embedded gapping be accounted for in a principled way? Recent research suggests that the possibility of embedded stripping is related to the phasal status of embedded CP (Wurmbrand 2017), coupled with phasehood inheritance in these contexts (Citko 2020). If gapping and stripping are similar in terms of their restriction to coordinate structures, the difference being the number of the remnants, the same structural constraint for embedded stripping may also apply to embedded gapping and lead to the same empirical consequences.

In this paper, I have argued that the possibility of embedded gapping is determined by whether the embedded CP is a phase or not, on the assumption that the ellipsis site corresponds to a phasal complement. The difference between English and Spanish with respect to embedded gapping lies in the phasal status of the embedded CP. English does not allow gapping in embedded clauses with overt complementizers, since CP is a phase, and therefore the target of ellipsis is TopP rather than TP. However, embedded gapping is allowed in English when the complementizer is absent; if CP loses its phasehood by deleting the complementizer, FocP below CP becomes a derived phase, and TP is the target of ellipsis. In contrast, Spanish allows embedded gapping, since FocP constitutes a phase after phasehood inheritance, rendering TP the ellipsis site. The current proposal shed new light on the correlation between the phasehood of the embedded CP and the possibility of embedded gapping, in particular how the No Embedded Constraint can be circumvented in Spanish, and even in English when the complementizer is absent. I have extended the proposal to embedded pseudostripping in which Σ inherits phasehood from C by virtue of Top, and the complement of Σ is the target of ellipsis. Finally, I have shown that long-distance *wh*-movement is possible out of embedded gapping when FocP is a phase, in which case [Spec, FocP] is a new phase edge for intermediate movement on its ways to the matrix [Spec, CP], yielding successive-cyclic movement.

Although this paper attempts to show how the phasehood-inheritance-based proposals provide a plausible account of embedded gapping in Spanish and other languages, there are still open questions regarding the deeper nature of the variation in the patterns of phasehood inheritance across different languages, in particular in relation to overt and null complementizers, as well as the phasal status of FocP (or TopP). I leave these issues for future research.

Abbreviations

1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, CL = clitic, ACC = accusative, DAT = dative, DOM = differential object marking, IMPFV = imperfective, IND = indicative, SUBJ = subjunctive, F = feminine, M = masculine, SG = singular, PL = plural

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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