

The construction with *es que* in Madrilenian youth language: between syntactic dislocation, insubordination and discourse markers

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This presentation investigates the construction with *es que* ('it is that') in contemporary Madrilenian Spanish youth language (e.g. *Ya pero es que Jennifer López es diva*, Lit. 'Yes but it is that Jennifer Lopez is a diva'). Besides the analysis of Fuentes Rodríguez (1997, 2015), this fixed, almost grammaticalized, pattern has not called much attention of scholars. The present study wants to uncover the full range of functions that the construction with *es que* can assume, by zooming in on its frequent occurrence in teenage talk.

The following two main objectives are addressed. First, our analysis wants to describe the full formal and functional features of the construction *es que* in contemporary Spanish teenage talk. Second, it aims to investigate the relationship between *es que* and discourse markers, a category in which it has been inscribed (Fuentes Rodríguez 1997; Remberger 2020). In order to accomplish these goals, data are collected from the CORMA corpus (Corpus Oral de Madrid), elaborated by Ghent University and recorded in 2016 and 2019 (Enghels et al. in press). The sample contains 365 occurrences of the construction *es que* obtained through close-reading of the conversations conducted exclusively among Madrilenian teenagers between the age of 12 and 18 years. These instances have then been subjected to a detailed functional and formal analysis including the following criteria: the function expressed by *es que* by distinguishing between the argumentative, metadiscursive and expressive function, the position of this element in the utterance and in the intervention and the collocation (e.g. *No viene porque es que se ha puesto enfermo*, 'He is not coming because it is that he is sick' (Fuentes Rodríguez 1997: 241)).

Although previous studies only mention argumentative functions of *es que* – mostly justification (Briz Gómez 2000; Fuentes Rodríguez 1997; 2015; Delahunty/Gatzkiewicz 2000; Romera 2009; Moliner/Riera 2016; Remberger 2020) –, the results reveal that *es que* can also assume more varied metadiscursive and expressive functions. This could be explained by the type of language under consideration, i.e. youth language, known for its creative uses (Zimmerman 2002). Furthermore, *es que* not only shares some functional characteristics with discourse markers, but also with insubordination, although it does not cover the whole functional spectrum of this phenomenon. *Es que* also assumes the functions of topicalization through left dislocation. However, unlike left dislocation, the construction with *es que* has the advantage of not intervening in syntactic word order.

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