



A diachronic corpus analysis of sentence-initial *Lo que*. A constructionist approach

Anja Hennemann*

*University of Potsdam, Potsdam, Germany
henneman@uni-potsdam.de

Abstract

The present paper is concerned with sentence-initial *Lo que* ‘What’ – a so-called “copulativa enfática de relativo” (NGLE 2009: 3024). The focus marker *Lo que* is considered a construction because its form, function and even meaning are not strictly predictable from its component parts. The work with the CREA and CORDE shows that the construction’s frequency has increased over time so that the construction can nowadays be said to occur “with sufficient frequency” (Goldberg 2006: 5; cf. also Hilpert’s concept of constructional change, 2013).

1 Introduction

In this quantitative and qualitative corpus study I am concerned with sentence-initial *Lo que* ‘What’ – with a “copulativa enfática de relativo”, according to the *Nueva Gramática de la Lengua Española* (NGLE 2009: 3024). Obviously, this definition does not respect its sentence-initial use, which is the focus of the present analysis.

Generally speaking, the study of the diachronic development of focus marking constructions in Romance languages such as sentence-initial *Lo que* is still a research desideratum (but see Van den Steen 2005, Agar Marco 2014 on pseudo-clefts, Helfrich 2003 for a diachronic study of clefts and pseudo-clefts or Leonetti / Escandell 2009 on other focus structures). With regard to Romance focus markers in general especially the development of French *C’est* has been investigated extensively so far (cf. Stark 1997, Van den Steen 2005, Dufter 2008 or Atayan / Wienen 2014). The function of focus marking constructions is said “to put forward a particular linguistic entity, which contrasts with other possible entities” (Van den Steen 2005: 279) or, in other words, “to mark focus on the clefted constituent” (Dufter 2008: 31; cf. also Gabriel 2007: 14-15).

In the present paper the focus marker *Lo que* is considered a construction because its form, function and even meaning are not strictly predictable from its component parts (Goldberg 2006: 5). However, the framework of Construction Grammar (CxG) is still not often applied in Romance linguistics (but see De Knop et al, eds., 2013 or Boas et al, eds., 2014).

So this paper adopts a constructionist approach in terms of frequency and entrenchment to the rise and development of the focus marking construction *Lo que*. Further goals of the study are to describe the construction in more detail, showing its use and its different functions.

In detail, the paper is structured as follows: the theoretical background is divided into two parts. In the first part, I deal with the object of investigation, with sentence-initial *Lo que* (section 2.1), and in the second part I illustrate the linguistic background, the cognitive-constructionist approach (section 2.2). The corpus analysis also consists of two parts, a quantitative analysis (section 3.1) and a qualitative analysis, dealing with the questions of the rise and development of *Lo que* (section 3.2.1) and giving examples as well as focusing on the different functions of the focus marker (section 3.2.2). These functions are also summarized in the conclusion, which also contains a few outlook ideas (section 4).

2 Theoretical Background

Nearly every study dealing with functional sentence perspective or information structure – “[...] the techniques that optimize the form of the message with the goal that it be well understood by the addressee in the current attentional state” (Féry / Krifka 2008: 123) – starts out explaining the notions of theme and rheme as defined by the Prague school. On the one hand, I do *not want* to do so as well, and on the other hand, I *cannot* do so because of reasons of space. Contreras (1976: 15) describes the Prague school as the only structuralist school which has paid its attention to word order, and the studies by Mathesius (1939, 1966) or Daneš (1974), among others, could be mentioned exemplarily.

In the following I am concerned with a particular part of information structure, i.e. “the packaging of information to satisfy the immediate communicative needs” (Féry / Krifka 2008: 123; see also Chafe 1976) – with the focus marking construction *Lo que*.

2.1 On *Lo que*

According to the Real Academia Española *lo que* is a “copulativa enfática de relativo” (NGLE 2009: 3024) or, in other words a “loc. pronom.”, which introduces “una oración relativa explicativa con antecedente oracional expreso” like in the provided example *Recibió un gran aplauso, lo que le animó a seguir*. (CORPES XXI, <http://dle.rae.es/?id=UkbUarn>). It is obvious that these definitions do not respect the sentence-initial position of *Lo que*.

According to Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla (2010: 345), a frequent syntactic (non-prosodic) mechanism to realize the focus function in Spanish “is the use of the so-called special focus constructions”. These are constructions which combine the theme and the focus functions into one syntagmatic structure to achieve characteristic textual effects (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 345). They differentiate two main types, namely *Thematic Equatives* and *Predicated Themes*.

The former are identifying clauses which have a thematic nominalization in it, and they identify what the theme of the clause is, and they equate it with the rheme (introduction of something new) (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 345). *Thematic Equatives* “are introduced by a *lo que* nominalized clause as *Theme* and equated with a clause or an inanimate entity as *Rheme*” (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 345). The following example is provided in order to illustrate a *Thematic Equative*:

- (a) *Lo que queremos es SABER EL TÍTULO.* (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 345)

Relying on the provided example (a), the functions of the *Lo que* clause in initial position are summarized as follows:

- it identifies the theme usually relating it to material in the preceding discourse, thus having a cohesive function
- the relative clause introduced by *lo que* usually presents inferable information (often contrastive or anticipatory)
- the material following the copular verb is highlighted as the information focus, often with a component of 'exclusiveness' or 'uniqueness'
- the infinitival clause *saber el título* is highlighted as the focus of new information (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 346)

However, it is also possible to have the reverse type of arrangement like in example (b):

- (b) *ESO* [thematic field, focus] *es lo que pienso de la familia* [rhematic field]. (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 346)

This reverse type of arrangement is *not* part of the present study just as the second main type of the so-called special focus constructions – the *Predicated Theme*: “Formally, this construction consists of two parts – (a) an initial thematic segment consisting of the copular verb followed by the element in *Focus*; and (b) a rhematic segment realized by a relative-like clause” (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 346):

- (c) *Fue ALLÍ donde murieron muchos soldados*. (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 347)

In sum, in the present study only the *Thematic Equative* with sentence-initial *Lo que* is analyzed.

As it is a cognitive-constructionist approach which is adopted to the analysis of sentence-initial *Lo que*, in the following a few words should be dedicated to the framework of CxG.

2.2 Cognitive CxG

Above all, the studies by Goldberg (1995, 2006) are associated with Cognitive CxG (Boas 2013: 233). Constructions are described as form-meaning pairings (Goldberg 2006: 5; Boas 2013: 234), and are to be found at all linguistic levels:

[...] all levels of grammatical analysis involve constructions: learned pairings of form with semantic or discourse function, including morphemes or words, idioms¹, partially [lexically] filled and fully lexical patterns [see also Goldberg 2006: 5]. This means that even the most general syntactic constructions have corresponding general rules of semantic interpretation (they are symbolic units). (Boas 2013: 234)

The smallest unit in Cognitive CxG are constructions. Thereto belong constructions with a concrete meaning such as content words as well as constructions with an abstract meaning such as ditransitive, resultative or passive constructions (Goldberg 2006: 5; Boas 2013: 235), i.e. constructions which are fully schematic and whose slots are to be filled if used. Hence, structures are not only constructions if the meaning (or a part of them) is not compositional (cf. Goldberg 1995 or Fillmore 2013 on the Berkeley CxG framework) but also if they are used with 'sufficient frequency' (Goldberg 2006: 5): “patterns occurring with sufficient frequency are stored as constructions alongside more general linguistic generalizations even when they are fully compositional and predictable [...]” (Boas 2013: 247).

¹ On the continuum of idiomaticity, i.e. the gradience of idiomaticity see, for instance, Kay / Michaelis (2011: 2274-2276).

Between content words and fully schematic constructions constructions which are partly schematic such as the *X let alone Y* construction (Fillmore / Kay / O'Connor 1988) or the *What's X doing Y* construction (Kay / Fillmore 1999) are to be found. In the original framework of CxG, in Berkeley CxG, partly schematic constructions were the only constructions recognized to exist (cf. Fillmore 2013). Fillmore (2013), for example, explains that a phrase such as *She loves me* cannot be considered a construction since valency structures represent fully schematic constructions, which are not constructions in Berkeley CxG because "[...] everything we know about such a sentence, including the case forms of the two pronouns, can be explained by what we know about valence, two patterns for valent realization, grammatical function and the case form of personal pronouns etc." (Fillmore 2013: 126). The cognitive-constructionist approach, however, is characterized as follows: "What makes a theory that allows constructions to exist a 'construction-based theory' is the idea that the network of constructions captures our grammatical knowledge of language *in toto*, i.e. it's constructions all the way down" (Goldberg 2006: 18). And De Knop / Mollica (2013: 12) also explain that every construction, from morpheme to sentence, is considered a potentially independent, symbolic unit, which also shows its own formal rules and rules of content.

Constructions are "conventionalized pairings of form and function" (Goldberg 2006: 3; see also Fischer 2006: 1-2). Any construction represents a conventionalized form-meaning pair "unabhängig davon, wie schematisch oder konkret die jeweilige Form- oder Bedeutungsseite sein mag" ('no matter how schematic or concrete its respective form or meaning may be'; Fischer 2006: 2). Hilpert (2013: 5) even speaks about constructions as being "mentally represented along a continuum of schematicity". De Smet / Cuyckens (2007) explain that a construction is an "automated routinized chunk of language that is stored and activated by the language user as a whole, rather than 'creatively' assembled on the spot" (De Smet / Cuyckens 2007: 188; see also Hennemann 2013b: 166). These routinized chunks of language can also be considered "building blocks of grammar":

Constructions can be informally characterized as the 'building blocks' of grammar, as they can be combined to form phrases, sentences, and larger stretches of discourse. Most commonly, constructions are understood as signs, that is, symbolic pairings of a form and a meaning that display structural idiosyncrasies or a high level of entrenchment [...]. (Hilpert 2013: 4-5)

All things considered, the present paper adopts the following definition of construction with regard to the focus marker *Lo que*:

Any linguistic pattern is recognized as a construction as long as some aspect of its form or function is not strictly predictable from its component parts or from other constructions recognized to exist. In addition, patterns are stored as constructions even if they are fully predictable as long as they occur with sufficient frequency. (Goldberg 2006: 5)

So grammatical constructions are – such as lexemes – conventionalized, learned pairings of form and meaning or form and function (cf. Goldberg 2013: 15). Formally, the construction under survey consists of a pronoun (*lo*) and a conjunction (*que*). The construction *Lo que* itself is not schematic. However, since "it's constructions all the way down" (Goldberg 2006: 18), the construction is then partly schematic if it is combined with other constructions that form [p]. Hence, the structure [*Lo que* + [p]] can be considered a partly schematic construction because [p] as a slot has to be filled. The meaning of *Lo que* 'What' is *not* compositional in the sense that *Lo* + *que* would express the addition of their component parts' meaning. Furthermore, if relying on the criterion of entrenchment, namely "the number of times an item occurs – its token frequency" (Goldberg 2006: 93), *Lo que* can doubtlessly be considered a construction.

In his study on constructional change Hilpert (2013) distinguishes between absolute frequency (or token frequency), relative frequency and type frequency. "Absolute frequency measures how often a construction occurs within a fixed amount of running text. Trivially, a construction may become more or less frequent over time." (Hilpert 2013: 7). Relative frequency, by contrast, "measures how often a construction occurs in comparison to some alternative construction" (Hilpert 2013: 7). And "type frequency (or dictionary frequency) measures the number of different lexical elements that enter a constructional schema" (Hilpert 2013: 7). Clearly, absolute frequency is what is interesting for the quantitative part of the corpus analysis.

3 Corpus Analysis

3.1 Quantitative Analysis

The work with the CREA and CORDE – search "en todos los medios, en España" – shows that the construction's frequency has increased over time so that the construction can nowadays be said to occur "with sufficient frequency" (Goldberg 2006: 5):

Corpus	Years	Tokens	in X documents
CORDE	1100-1200	10	4
CORDE	1200-1300	110	37
CORDE	1300-1400	97	48
CORDE	1400-1500	588	241
CORDE	1500-1600	4220	676
CORDE	1600-1700	3127	621
CORDE	1700-1800	1255	214
CORDE	1800-1900	4004	650
CREA	1900-2000	11.774	4928
CREA	2000-2004	2502	896

Table 1: Search for sentence-initial *Lo que* "en todos los medios, en España"

Even though the corpora do not comprise exactly the same amount of texts per century, it is obvious that the frequency of *Lo que* has increased, which also lead to an increasing entrenchment of this focus marking construction.

3.2 Qualitative Analysis

3.2.1 Rise and development of sentence-initial *Lo que*

The *Lo que* construction already existed in Latin. Spanish *Lo que* obviously derived from Latin *quod* ('what' / 'which'), which is already found in Latin and already used sentence-initially, as the following examples illustrate:

- (1) *Quod Erat Demonstrandum.* ('Which was to be proven.')
- (2) *Quod aliquis intellegit, de hoc potest loqui.* ('What a Person understands, he can speak about.')

² http://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/quod_erat_demonstrandum (27/02/2016).

³ <https://quizlet.com/86929528/latein-sprichworte-flash-cards/> (27/02/2016).

- (3) *Quod sumus, hoc eritis. Fuimos quandoque, quod estis.* ('What we are now, You will be. What You are now, We used to be.')
- (4) *Quod licet Iovi, non licet bovi.* ('What is allowed to Jupiter is not necessarily allowed to an ox.')

As the earliest texts in CORDE are from around 1100, and as *Lo que* was already used in the present form at that time (see the examples below), no 'bridging contexts' could be found. By 'bridging contexts' I mean forms of the construction, which could be described as 'something in between' Latin *quod* and Spanish *Lo que*, i.e. Old Spanish *Lo* (in the sense of *Lo que*) or Old Spanish *Que* (in the sense of *Lo que*). It seems as if *Lo que* directly derived from Latin *quod*.

3.2.2 Examples and functions of *Lo que*

As the examples demonstrate, in case of the *Lo Que* construction the clefted constituent is usually not only a noun phrase or nominalized verb phrase. This is mostly the case with, for instance, topic markers (cf. also the examples in Zubizarreta 1999: 4221 or see Hennemann 2015a, 2015b). The clefted constituent is, by contrast, far more complex, as the following examples from the CORDE and CREA partly demonstrate.

Examples (5)-(10) contain sentence-initial uses of *Lo que* from the 12th and 13th century. Examples (5)-(9) have in common that the focus marking construction is used "to put forward a particular linguistic entity, which contrasts with other possible entities" (Van den Steen 2005: 279), that is, the clefted constituent is marked as focus. Here, I would highlight the fact that we obviously deal with a 'thematic focus': the *Lo que* phrase sets the scene of what is talked about (thematic focus within a broader theme). This assumption is compatible with the fact that the material following the first predicate "is highlighted as the information *Focus*" (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 346). Hence, 'thematic focus' and 'information focus' should be kept separate:

- (5) *Essora dixo mio Cid: - Lo que vós queredes plazme.* (Anónimo, *Poema de Mio Cid*, c 1140)
- (6) *Lo que las pesquisas deuen dezir en el escripto que dieren a los alcalldes sobre pleyto delas muertes, deue seer fecho por algunos delos [...]* (Anónimo, *Fuero de Soria*, c 1196)
- (7) *Lo que el Criador pusiere en mi boca, esso hablaré [...]* (Almerich, *La fazienda de Ultra Mar*, c 1200)
- (8) *Lo que dixo el Cid a todos los otros plaz [...]* (Anónimo, *Poema de Mio Cid*, 1140)
- (9) *Lo que una vegada a Dios es ofrecido [...]* (Berceo, Gonzalo de, *Vida de Santo Domingo de Silos*, c 1236)

Example (10) contrasts with examples (5)-(9) insofar as *Lo que* fulfils another function: the construction introduces an elliptic sentence, which represents a complement to the provided information in the sentence before. In other words, *Lo que* introduces additional, complementing information:

- (10) [...] porque pudo entrar el Rey Nabuchodonosor a egypto & destroyr la. **Lo que** non pudiera fazer dotra guisa. (Alfonso X, *General Estoria. Cuarta parte*, c 1280)

Examples (11)-(16) are text passages from the 14th and 15th century. Example (11) also contains an instance of *Lo que* fulfilling a complementing function, just as example (10):

⁴ <http://www.latein-zitate.de/tod.html> (27/02/2016).

⁵ http://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/quod_licet_iovi_non_licet_bovi (27/02/2016).

- (11) [...] de los plazos que son puestos para oyr sentencia. **Lo que** es dicho desuso en el capitulo ante deste del que es aplazado para oyr sentencia quel deue atender el alcalle. (Anónimo, *Leyes de estilo*, c 1310)

Examples (12)-(16), by contrast, can be analyzed in similar terms as examples (5)-(9), whereby in example (15) we already find two predicates in the clefted constituent (*fue y es*) and the second *es* introduces the 'information focus'. So *Lo que siempre fue y es* represents the 'thematic focus' and *es fuerça que siempre sea* etc. is seen as the 'information focus':

- (12) **Lo que** tenían de ant' era todo comido et gastado en aquesta huest [...] (Fernández de Heredia, Juan, *Gran crónica de España*, III. BNM, ms. 10134, 1376 - a 1391)
- (13) **Lo que** contesçier' de aquí adelante será lo que Dios ya tien' ordenado [...] (Villasandino, Alfonso de, *Poesías [Cancionero de Baena]*, 1379 - a 1425)
- (14) **Lo que** a mí fizo venir a vervos así fue el deseo grande que vos avía. (Corral, Pedro de, *Crónica del rey don Rodrigo, postrimero rey de los godos (Crónica sarracina)*, c 1430)
- (15) **Lo que** siempre fue y es es fuerça que siempre sea [...] (Torre, Fernando de la, *Libro de las veynte cartas e quistiones*, 1449)

In example (16) we find a somehow 'recurring structure' so that [*Lo que* + {...} *es lo siguiente*] is considered a more complex and partly schematic construction on its own. It is partly schematic because one slot has to be filled – the slot following *Lo que*:

- (16) **Lo que** los dichos testigos y cada uno dellos dexieron e deposyeron para sus dichos y deposyçiones **es lo siguiente**: [...] (Anónimo, *Sentencia [Documentos del Monasterio de Santa Clara de Villalobos]*, 1495)

This construction is also to be found in examples (17) and (18) from the 16th century:

- (17) **Lo que** todos estos rreynos de vuestra Magestad y los procuradores dellos que aqui estamos suplicamos en su nombre, **es lo syguiente**: [...] (Anónimo, *Ordenamiento de las Cortes de Toledo del año 1525*, 1525)
- (18) **Lo que** han de leher los cathedráticos de vísperas de cánones **es lo siguiente**: [...] (Anónimo, *Lecturas [Documentos para la historia de la Universidad de Salamanca]*, 1548)

Examples (19)-(23) also contain instances of sentence-initial *Lo que* from the 16th and 17th century. In these text passages, The *Lo que* phrase sets the thematic scene ('thematic focus') and the material following the first predicate can be described as 'information focus':

- (19) **Lo que** vos, Pedro Martir, nuestro enbaxador, hablareys, de nuestra parte, al Tangaribardino, es esto: [...] (Anónimo, *Instrucciones a Pedro Mártir de Anglería* [...], 1501)
- (20) **Lo que** puedo asegurar es, que los españoles cuidan grandemente [...] (Anónimo, *Relación que hizo a la República de Venecia Simon Contareni* [...], 1605)
- (21) **Lo que** dexamos dicho en el libro pasado, pide que tratemos en éste del estado [...] (Solórzano y Pereira, Juan de, *Política indiana*, 1648)
- (22) **Lo que** contenian las cartas, era decir: [...] (Valencia, Juan Antonio de, *Diario de noticias de 1677 a 1678*, 1677-1678)
- (23) **Lo que** resultó fué que entró en la fortaleza y se salió con sus soldados [...] (González, Sebastián, *Carta [Cartas de algunos padres de la Compañía de Jesús, I]*, 1636)

Example (23) is of special interest because *Lo que* + *resultar* / *pasar* / *ocurrir* can be counted as a co-occurrence as *Lo que* seems to combine comparatively often with verbs expressing a happening / an event (see also examples 28, 32, 38 and 39 below).

The following eight examples are extracted from texts from the 18th and 19th century:

- (24) **Lo que** la pólvora aumentó de ruina en las piedras, ahorró de estrago en las vidas. (Feijoo, Benito Jerónimo, *Teatro Crítico Universal* [...], 1734)

What examples (25)-(27) and (30)-(31) have in common is that they all contain the structure [*Lo que* + VP + *es (que)*]. This structure is also considered a partly schematic construction, which might be of different complexity, depending on the complexity of the VP following *Lo que*:

- (25) **Lo que** es más extraño **es que** no vivan acariciados de esta golosina [...] (Torres Villarroel, Diego de, *Visiones y visitas de Torres con Don Francisco de Quevedo por la corte*, 1727-1728)
- (26) **Lo que** te espanta **es** tu misma sombra con la mía [...] (Cadalso, José, *Noches lúgubres*, c 1771)
- (27) **Lo que** ciertamente debe asombrar **es que** entre tales cómicos hayan sobresalido algunos [...] (Fernández de Moratín, Leandro, *Poesías completas (poesías sueltas y otros poemas)*, 1778-1822)
- (28) **Lo que pasa** de esta línea a ninguno lo pide ni lo manda, solamente lo aconseja. (Blanco White, José María, *Diálogos argelinos*, 1813)
- (29) **Lo que** traslado á V. de real órden para su inteligencia y cumplimiento. (José Cienfuegos, *Ministerio de la guerra*, 1822)
- (30) **Lo que** siento **es que** lo tomé a broma [...] (Pérez Galdós, Benito, *Los Ayacuchos*, 1900)
- (31) **Lo que** principalmente ahora me inquieta **es** el estado de abatimiento de la pobre Gracia [...] (Pérez Galdós, Benito, *Los Ayacuchos*, 1900)

Example (29) represents a further use of *Lo que* fulfilling a complementing function since *Lo que* obviously introduces additional information to the preceding information in elliptic form.

The last examples contain extracted text passages from texts from the 20th and 21st century:

- (32) **Lo que ocurre es que** algunas gentes pensaron, al votar a la República, que ésta les iba a solucionar [...] (Sandoval, Luis de, *Gestos y posturas* [Región, 4 de mayo de 1933], 1933)
- (33) **Lo que** no nos ha gustado es el "elocuente ademán que prometía resarcimiento" [...] (Francamor, *Caza eutrapielias* [Torneo. Semanario deportivo, 4 de junio de 1944], 1944)
- (34) **Lo que** hizo el hombre europeo fue marcharse hacia la cuenca mediterránea [...] (Anónimo, *El carbono 14: Un reloj nuclear para los arqueólogos* [El Correo de la Unesco, julio de 1968], 1968)
- (35) **Lo que** antes del partido era una seria amenaza, se convirtió en 90 minutos en una pesadilla [...] (El Diario Vasco, 14/12/2000)
- (36) **Lo que** hablamos queda entre nosotros. (El Diario Vasco, 19/12/2000)
- (37) **Lo que** quería saber de ella ya lo sé. (Giménez Bartlett, Alicia: *Serpientes en el paraíso. El nuevo caso de Petra Delicado*, 2002)
- (38) **Lo que pasa es que** ahora lo he recuperado [...] (La Luna del siglo XXI, 14/02/2003)
- (39) **Lo que resultó** con Marruecos no ha servido para Angola. (La Voz de Galicia, 29/12/2004)

In examples (32)-(39) *Lo que* is – as already mentioned – used to put forward the ‘thematic focus’, to set the (thematic) scene, to frame what is talked about. In line with (Lavid / Arús / Zamorano-Mansilla 2010: 346), the information that follows is regarded the ‘information focus’.

4 Conclusion and Outlook

The qualitative analysis of the *Lo que* examples has shown that the focus marking construction may fulfil other functions apart from the focus marking function. The elliptic use or its complementing function – as in the following example, for instance – has nothing to do with focus marking:

- (40) P. ¿Qué hace aparte del tenis? R. **Lo que** cualquier chico de 21 años [...] (El País, 04/06/2003)

Furthermore, the sentence-initial use in titles of newspaper articles should be considered a special case of the use of *Lo que*, as newspaper titles constitute a particular text type on its own:

- (41) **Lo que** no se vio (y fue lo mejor) de la entrevista de Bertín Osborne a Rajoy⁶
 (42) **Lo que** se puede⁷
 (43) **Lo que** es importante para nosotros⁸

Additionally, it was demonstrated that *Lo que* often combines with other recurring structures to form a more complex construction. These different types are summarized below, whereby I raise no claim to completeness:

- *Lo que* with verbs – without *es / es que*
- (44) **Lo que** resultó con Marruecos no ha servido para Angola. (La Voz de Galicia, 29/12/2004)
- *Lo que* in the partly schematic construction: *Lo que* (+ {...}) + VP in Present Tense (+ {...}) + copular in Present Tense (+ *que*)
- (45) **Lo que importa es** no tener lesiones [...] (La Voz de la Afición, nº 19, 2002)
 (46) **Lo que se busca con este local es que** tengan [...] (El Diario Vasco, 31/01/2001)
- *Lo que* (+ {...}) + VP in Past Tense (+ {...}) + copular in Past Tense (+ *que*)
- (47) **Lo que más me entretuvo**, en aquellos días, **fue** observar [...] (Torres, Maruja, *Hombres de lluvia*, 2004)
 (48) **Lo que distinguía** la de Valeria del resto de [...] **era que** [...] (Torres, Maruja, *Hombres de lluvia*, 2004)
- With emphatic *sí*
- (49) **Lo que sí me molesta es que** [...] (Tiempo, 16/07/1990)
 (50) **Lo que sí parece claro es que** [...] (El País, 02/08/1984)
 (51) **Lo que sí que es cierto es que** hay en España [...] (El Mundo, 17/02/2003)
- *Lo que pasa / ocurre es que* as a construction

⁶ http://www.vanitatis.elconfidencial.com/television/2016-03-20/lo-que-no-se-vio-y-fue-lo-mejor-de-la-entrevista-de-bertin-osborne-a-rajoy_1171202/ (24/03/2016).

⁷ <http://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/opinion/lo-que-se-puede.html> (24/03/2016).

⁸ <http://nuestropandiarario.org/acerca-de-rbc/lo-que-es-importante-para-nosotros/> (24/03/2016).

- (52) **Lo que pasa es que** como séptimo hombre [...] (La Voz de Galicia, 13/12/2000)
 (53) **Lo que pasa es que** ésta tenía dinero [...] (La Voz de Galicia, 30/10/1991)
 (54) **Lo que ocurre es que** yo creo que todo el mundo [...] (Triunfo, 25/06/1977)
 (55) **Lo que ocurre es que** uno no sabe qué hacer [...] (La Vanguardia, 30/11/1995)

Finally, *Lo que* already existed in Latin in the form of *quod*. Concerning the constructions' development, it seems as if there is more functional diversity in texts from 1900 onwards.

Future studies should (again) be concerned with the question whether Spanish *lo que* directly derived from Latin *quod*. Other sources might contain 'bridging contexts'. A further question is whether there are still more functions of sentence-initial *Lo que* to be detected, as my proposed list raises no claim to completeness.

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