Negotiation of speech acts: evidence from Spanish*

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Abstract: In this paper I propose to analyze the Spanish discourse marker *no?* as a form that allows the speaker to postpone commitment to an illocutionary act. This is achieved via *projected sets*, which are individualized for each discourse participant and for each type of speech act. I claim that all the functions observed in the previous literature and the non-propositional distribution of *no?* can be explained if we analyze it as a signal that the speaker is postponing commitment to the illocutionary act.

Keywords: discourse markers, Spanish, conversational models

1 Introduction

The Spanish discourse marker (DM) *no?* has attracted the attention of linguists that have focused on its sociolinguistic (García Vizcaíno 2005; Rodríguez Muñoz 2009) and functional (Móccero 2010) properties. They all agree about two observations: (a) this marker seeks confirmation; (b) it allows the speaker to avoid confrontation by doing so. A prototypical example of *no?* seeking confirmation of a fact is exemplified in (1):[1]

(1) Bueno, tú tienes un buen coche, no?[2]
well 2sg.NOM have.2g a good car no
'Well, you have a good car, [no]?'

However, as will be discussed in Section 2, the distribution of *no?* goes beyond the confirmation of a fact. I will use these data to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of two different formal models of conversation (the conversational scoreboard Farkas and Bruce 2009, Malamud and Stephenson 2015, and the dialogue gameboard Beyssade and Marandin 2006). I will posit that utterances with *no?* place the utterance in projected sets instead of present sets, hence avoiding a present commitment. This explains data such as in (2), where the felicity conditions of promises *require* that the speaker makes a present commitment:

(2) #Te lo prometo, no?
2sg.DAT 3sg.ACC promise.1sg no
'I promise, [no]?'

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[1]The next example is taken from Rodríguez Muñoz (2009).
[2]I will disregard the Spanish orthographic convention of using an opening question and exclamation mark for formatting reasons.

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This analysis also explains the use of *no?* as a politeness strategy. In (3), the speaker wants to mitigate the harshness of the imposition by avoiding to commit to it: only if the addressee does not challenge the command will she commit fully to the imposition:

(3) {I am lying on the couch, after a long day, and I see you are going to the kitchen. . . }

Tráeme una cervecita, no?
bring.me a beer.DIM no
'Bring me a beer, [no]?'

This last example is also important in showing another part of my analysis of *no?*: unlike other DMs, it can appear with non-declaratives – in this case, with an imperative. I will combine both observations (avoidance of commitment and distribution with non-declarative content) in my analysis, which I present in the next section.

2 Reasons for a combined model: evidence from *no?*

This section presents an analysis of *no?*: it signals that the speaker postpones her commitment to the illocutionary act by placing it in her projected sets. We need therefore to explain two things:

a. How the DM manages non-declarative content.

b. How the speaker can postpone her commitment to the utterance.

No previous formal analysis can successfully explain both. In this section, I will give evidence for both claims, and that only through a combination of previous formal models can we give an account of DMs like *no?*. I will focus on two main theoretical models: conversation as a game (Beyssade and Marandin 2006), and conversation as a scoreboard (Farkas and Bruce 2009; Malamud and Stephenson 2015).

2.1 To each speech act its own commitment: Beyssade and Marandin

Inspired by the taxonomy presented in Zaefferer (2001), Beyssade and Marandin (2006) (B&M) claim that different illocutionary forces are linked with different commitments. The main divide between speech acts comes in the split between non-expressives and expressives (which B&M equate with exclamations). In their analysis, this corresponds to the difference between CONVERSATIONAL MOVE TYPES (CMT): non-expressives require an interactive move, i.e. be accepted in both the speaker's (S) and the addressee's (A) commitment sets, whereas exclamatives are associated with a commitment to only the speaker, and are therefore non-interactive.

What does this mean for the dialogue gameboard (DGB), where all moves and changes in a dialogue are registered and kept by each participant? B&S adopt a model inspired by Game Theory and works such as Ginzburg (1996, 2012). From the work of this last author they keep the elements listed in (4) from (a)–(c), and add the ones from (d)–(f); the model is sketched in Figure 1:

(4) a. SHARED GROUND (SG), which is a partially ordered set of propositions that have been accepted by all participants. It can be incremented by uttering an assertion.

b. QUESTION UNDER DISCUSSION (QUD), a partially ordered set of questions. It can be incremented by uttering a question.

c. TO-DO-LIST (TDL) for each participant. It is an ordered list of "descriptions of situations the actualization of which depends on the Addressee and towards which the Speaker is positively oriented" (Beyssade and Marandin 2006:55). TDL(A) can be incremented by uttering a directive.

d. CALL-ON-ADDRESSEE (COA), which registers the type, as well as the content, of S's call on Addressee, the element that elicits a response from the addressee. It contains only one element, unlike SG, QUD, and TDL, which has to be updated each time a new utterance is made.

e. LATEST MOVE contains the very last conversational move.

f. SPEAKER-ONLY-COMMITMENT (SP-ONLY-CMT) is a set that contains commitments that pertain only to the speaker, such as exclamations. Since exclamatives only concern S's own opinion, they do not require the commitment of the addressee.

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{DGB} & \begin{bmatrix} \text{INTERACTIVE-CMT} & \begin{bmatrix} \text{SG} \\ \text{QUD} \\ \text{TDL} \end{bmatrix} \\ \text{SPEAKER-ONLY-CMT} & \\ \text{CALL-ON-ADDR} & \\ \text{LATEST MOVE} & \end{bmatrix} \end{bmatrix}$$

Figure 1: Dialogue gameboard (Beyssade and Marandin 2006)

What is important for my own analysis of *no?* is that each illocutionary force is linked to a different type of commitment, and crucially to a different set: assertives commit the speaker to a proposition *p* and call for an update of the DGB by adding *p* to the SG. Questions commit the speaker to an issue and call for an update of the DGB by adding a propositional abstract *q* to the QUD. Directives commit the speaker to an outcome *o* and call for an update of the DGB by adding *o* to the TDL(A). Finally, exclamatives are different from the rest of speech act types in so far as they are only concerned about the S's commitment and don't try to update the DGB by requesting anything from A.

2.2 Declaratives and beyond: the need for different types of commitments

The literature on *no?* already remarks that although this marker appears with declaratives, it is also quite often found accompanying non-declaratives, where some authors claim its function is to check the "opinion" of the addressee regarding a subjective evaluation (García Vizcaíno 2005:92).[3] In fact,

[3] According to her corpus based study, this is the function of *no?* in 20.5% of the cases she identifies, whereas the function of *no?* as a verifier of the truth of the proposition takes up to a 40% of all cases.

no? can accompany all four types of speech acts enumerated in Zaefferer (2001) and Beyssade and Marandin (2006). Table 1 gives an overall view of the co-occurrence of *no?* with different types of speech acts:[4]

Table 1: Summary of co-occurence of *no?* with different speech act types and clause types

Speech act type	Clause type	Judgement	Example
ASSERTIVE	declarative	✓	(5)
QUESTION	wh-interrogative	✓	(6)
DIRECTIVE	imperative	✓	(7)
(COMMISSIVE)		✗/✓	(8)/(9)
EXPRESSIVE	exclamative	✓	(10)

(5) {Two friends are chatting, and one starts talking about another friend's fancy car.}

Bueno, tú tienes un buen coche, no?
well 2sg.NOM have.2g a good car no
'Well, you have a good car, [no]?'

(6) {A and B are friends and cat-people; they are sitting in a pub with C, who is going on and on about how dogs are awesome. A says to B:}

De qué está hablando, no?
about what be.3SG talking no
'What is he talking about, [no]?'

(7) {A couple of friends are having some drinks at a patio, and it is getting cold:}

Venga, vamos a otro sitio, no?
come.SUBJ go.1pl to another place no
'Come on, let's go somewhere else, [no]?'

(8) {A opens the door for a child. The child says:}

#Muchas gracias, no?
many thanks no
'Thank you very much, [no]?'

(9) {A mother to her child, who has not thanked A:}

Muchas gracias, no?
many thanks no
'Thank you very much, [no]?'

[4]Examples (4), (6) and (9) are taken from Rodríguez Muñoz (2009). He uses the Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual (CREA), ['The Reference Corpus of Current Spanish'], developed by the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language.

(10) {A couple of friends are having some drinks at a patio, and it is getting cold:}

Oye, qué frío hace aquí!, no?
hear.2sg.IMP what cold make.3sg here no
'Hey, it's freezing in here, [no]?'

Most analyses of similar particles, such as tag questions in English, claim that their function is to ask for confirmation of a proposition (Cuenca 1997; Malamud and Stephenson 2015; Reese and Asher 2007; a.o.). But evidence that what the speaker is putting forth is not a proposition is the way the addressee may reply to these utterances. Let us take the exclamative (11) as an example.

(11) *A: Oye, qué frío hace aquí!, no?*

a. B: Ya ves!
already see.2sg
'Totally!'

b. B: Tú que eres del sur!
you that be.2sg from-the south
'You're such a Southerner!'

c. B: ?Sí, es verdad.
yes be.3sg truth
'Yes, it is true.'

d. B: #No es verdad, hace calor.
NEG is truth, makes.3g heat
'It's not true, it's warm.'

There are four ways in which one could respond to an exclamation (assuming an analysis of exclamatives in which their emotive attitude is triggered by an unexpected fact or degree (Andueza 2011; Repp 2013; Rett 2011): agree or disagree with the propositional content, and agree or disagree with the exclamation as a whole. In (11) we can see that in the more natural responses (11a) and (11b) the speaker is either agreeing with the exclamation as a whole, or refuting it, but crucially she is not denying the truth of the proposition (in this case, that is it cold). This means that the addressee is not targeting the propositional content, but the illocutionary force.[5]

We conclude then that *no?* signals that the whole illocutionary act is being targeted, and not the propositional content. This fact is usually left out of formal models that tend to revolve around propositions and propositional content; however, Beyssade and Marandin (2006) propose a model in which different types of speech acts are associated with different commitments.

[5]When the exclamation is not followed by *no?* answering with (11d) is not as infelicitous as with the DM:

(i) *A: Oye, qué frío hace aquí!*

B: ?No es verdad, hace calor.
'It's not true, it's warm.'

Another point to take into account for claiming that this particle targets not only the propositional content, but also the force content, comes form the fact that it can also co-occur with imperatives and interrogatives.

2.3 The need for projected sets: The conversational scoreboard

Farkas and Bruce (2009) (F&B) propose a scoreboard structure for discourse that revolves around a TABLE. This, and all other elements of their model are defined in (12) and illustrated in Table 2:

(12) a. The TABLE is how F&B rename the Questions Under Discussions (QUD) proposed by Ginzburg (1996). The items on the Table are syntactic objects paired with their denotations, and form a stack. One of the forces that drives conversations is emptying the Table, that is, reaching a stable state.

b. DISCOURSE COMMITMENTS (DC) for each participant (following Gunlogson (2008)), which are sets of propositions to which each participant has committed.

c. The COMMON GROUND (cg) contains all the propositions that have been accepted by all participants, and also a set of background propositions. The second force that drives conversations is to increase the *cg*.

d. The PROJECTED SET *(ps)* is a superset of the *cg*, composed of future common grounds.

Differences in how many future common grounds are projected in the *ps* explain the differences between assertions and polar questions. Whereas assertions only project one future *cg*, namely the one in which *p* is added to the *cg*, polar questions project a non-singleton set of CGS, since the input on the Table is not a single *p* but a non-singleton set.

Table 2: Conversational scoreboard by Farkas and Bruce (2009)

A	**Table**	**B**
DC_A	*S*	DC_B
Common Ground *cg*	Projected Set *ps*	

Malamud and Stephenson (2015) (M&S) modify this model to include projected sets for each discourse participant's commitments, as shown in Table 3.[6] They defend this modification based on three types of evidence in English: reverse-polarity tags (RP-tags), same-polarity tags (SP-tags), and non-interrogative rising intonation (NI-rise). I will focus on the first two.[7]

Table 3: Conversational scoreboard as seen by Malamud and Stephenson (2015). Elements with an asterisk (*) are projected.

DC_A	DC^*_A	DC_B	DC^*_B
Table *S*			
CG		CG*	

[6]This is my own visual version of their model. I have tried to make the two conversational scoreboards as similar as possible.

[7]This is mainly due to how the declarative/rising declarative/absolute (Y/N) interrogative distinction works in Spanish. There is no syntactical or lexical distinction between a declarative and a Y/N question, only differences in intonation differentiate them. That is, a formally declarative sentence with interrogative intonation corresponds only to a rising declarative in English, but it corresponds – at least – to a default Y/N question in Spanish.

M&S's main evidence comes from the differences in distribution between the three aforementioned structures and predicates that undoubtedly ask for only one of the participants' judgments, that is, only one of the discourse commitment sets is at play. These are taste predicates (13) and vague scalar predicates (14). M&S argue that taste predicates only access S's discourse commitments, since they rely on the subjective evaluation of a judge, who by default is the speaker (they follow Stephenson 2007 for this analysis). In (13), A can actually use the declarative form in (13d) because the context states that both interlocutors know Bill:

(13) *Context: A and B are discussing various traits of their mutual acquaintances. B says, "I think Bill, more than anything else, is just a really nice guy." A replies:*

a. ^{ok}A: (But) he's attractive too, isn't he?

b. #A: He's attractive too, is he?

c. #A: He's attractive too?

d. ^{ok}A: He is attractive.

In examples such as (14), the discourse participants are arranging items according to a previously established scale. However, there comes a point when an item is hard to categorize (hence the vagueness): in this case, A and B are sorting paint cans in a red-orange scale when B finds a color that could fit both categories. Since the previously established scale does not work anymore, what B is asking of A is to come up with a new scale on her own. Therefore, A is reluctant to impose her scale, and projects her commitment to it by using an RP-tag:[8]

(14) *A and B are sorting paint cans in a store into a "red" bin and an "orange" bin. B points to orangish-red paint and says, "What color would you say this is?" A replies:*

a. ^{ok}A: It's red, isn't it?

b. #A: It's red, is it?

c. ^{ok}A: It's red?

d. $^{ok\,\square}$A: It's red.

By using this RP-tag, A is adding p to her projected discourse commitments, and signals that unless the addressee disagrees, she will commit to it in the next conversational move. This is illustrated with the following set of scoreboards in Table 4.

2.4 The need for projected sets: Avoiding commitment with *no?*

The idea of the avoidance of commitment is central to Malamud and Stephenson (2015), and it plays a major role in the discussion of the functions of *no?* in the literature: the idea that the speaker is asking for ratification of the truth of what she is saying hints at this direction (García Vizcaíno 2005; Móccero 2010; Rodríguez Muñoz 2009). Ortega (1985) observes that a speaker who utters *no?* seems not to want to commit to the addressee. But what do we mean by "avoidance of commitment"? M&S choose predicates that cannot enter the present common ground, and the speaker has

[8] I will follow Malamud and Stephenson (2015) in their use of $^{ok\,\square}$ to mark that an utterance is felicitous but does not express A's intended uncertainty.

Table 4: M&S's model before (above) and after (below) A utters *p* with an RP-tag, assuming that the proposition *q* was already in the discourse. Again, elements with an asterisk (*) are projected.

DC_A	$DC*_A$	DC_B	$DC*_B$
Table			
CG *q*		CG* *q*	

DC_A	$DC*_A$ *p*	DC_B	$DC*_B$
Table *p*			
CG *q*		CG* *q, p*	

to avoid committing to its truth at the time of utterance.[9] Does the same idea help us understand the function of Spanish *no?*?

The "Borderline Case Context" illustrated in the previous section illustrates how *no?* can be used to signal that the speaker wants to delay committing to the truth of what she's saying. In (15) I replicate this same context, but in Spanish. The same idea applies: A is asked to commit to a categorization of a vague example on her own without being able to first agree upon it with her interlocutor. Therefore, her answer cannot be a plain declarative as in (15c), since she wants to convey uncertainty. By uttering an assertion with *no?*, the speaker is avoiding to commit to assigning a position in a scale to the color without the ratification of the addressee:[10]

(15) *A and B are sorting paint cans in a store into a "red" bin and an "orange" bin. B points to orangish-red paint and says, "What color would you say this is?" A replies:*

a. ^{ok}A: Rojo, no?
'Red, [no]?'

b. ^{ok}A: Rojo?
'Red?'

c. $^{ok\,\square}$A: Rojo
'Red.'

The question that the data in (15) raise is: what is the difference between a plain declarative and a declarative with *no?*. I claim that the key to this question lies in the possible replies to both utterances. According to the scoreboards model, once an assertion is made, *p* is put in four spaces: (i) Table; (ii) CG*; (iii) DC_A; (iv) $DC*_A$. However, if commitment is avoided, it is only added to three: (i) Table; (ii) CG*; and (iii) $DC*_A$. In terms of number of conversational moves that the addressee should make to refute the utterance, this means that a plain assertion should be harder (or

[9] One could argue that this example is another instance of a vague scalar predicate, since attractiveness can be seen as a scale. It has proven difficult to find a non-scalar taste predicate. For the time being and after reading Eco and McEwen (2010) *History of Beauty*, I will assume that attractiveness is a more subjective type of scale.

[10] Again, this resonates as Gunlogson's notion of *contingency*.

more confrontational) to disagree with than an assertion with *no?*.[11] This is indeed what happens, as shown below in Table 5:

Table 5: Negative answers to utterances with and without *no?*

Type of reply	**Reply**	**"*Rojo, no?*"**	**"*Rojo*"**
DENEGATION (explicit denial)	No. 'No.'	☹	☹☹
MITIGATED DENEGATION (not a direct denial, subject to S's opinion)	Yo creo que no. 'I don't think so.'	😐	☹
QUESTIONING OF ASSESSMENT (implicit denial, S questions judgment)	En serio? 'Really?'	☺	😐

What Table 5 shows is that it is indeed harder to reply negatively to an assertion without *no?* (indicated here by a double ☹). In fact, even a mitigated denegation of an assertion without *no?* seems more confrontational than a denegation of an assertion with *no?* (indicated here by a ☹ as opposed to a 😐, respectively).

Both models discussed in this section (the dialogue gameboard and the conversational scoreboards) complement each other: while B&M's model explains the interaction between *no?* and non-propositional content, F&B's and M&S's model implement projected sets, which successfully explain most of the functions that have been attributed to *no?* in the literature. In the next section I will combine these two strengths in a hybrid, or combined, model.

3 A combined model

In this section I will combine the strengths of both the gameboard and the scoreboard model taking into account the Spanish data regarding *no?*. I will list the components of the model with their definitions, and show how the model is schematically implemented. Then, I will use it to give to compare utterances with and without *no?*.

3.1 Elements and moves in a combined model

The combined model that I propose has the components listed in (16). All components are projected except for the TABLE; all components are individualized for each participant except for the COMMON GROUND and the TABLE –the individualization of commitments allows the speakers not to introduce non-shared information to the present Common Ground (for example, taste predicates), whereas projections allow speakers not to commit to a proposition until the next move:

(16) a. **COMMON GROUND**
As in the conversational model and other formal models, it is a set of propositions shared by all the participants.

b. **QUESTION SET**
Takes the role of the QUD in B&M's model: it is composed of sets of questions. It is

[11] I am making the assumption that more moves in the model in order to correct a mistake is harder to do, and therefore asking another speaker to do this is confrontational.

individualized for each participant, and is incremented when the participant utters an interrogative sentence.

c. **TO-DO-LIST**
Is the same as in B&M's model (who follow Portner 2004): it is a set of outcomes that is incremented when a directive is uttered. The distinction between TDLs for each participant follows from the fact that all components (except CG and the TABLE) are individualized for each speaker.

d. **EXCLAMATION SET**
Is the set of exclamations, individualized for each participant. As exclamation I understand an illocutionary act that expresses the violation of the speaker's expectation (following Repp 2013; Rett 2011)), including exclamatives and sentence exclamations.

e. **ASSERTION SET**
Is a set of assertions individualized for each participant in the conversation, and takes the role of the SHARED GROUND in B&M's model, and of DC_A and DC_B in M&S's model.

f. **TABLE**
Although I keep the name, I distance myself from the idea that it is a stack of propositions, as presented in the conversational scoreboard model (F&B, M&S). In this case, the Table resembles more the LATEST-MOVE element in B&M's model, the element that registers the moves in the conversation. The elements that may be put on the table, therefore, are not restricted to propositions, and can include illocutionary force operators.

I understand **commitment** as the move a speaker makes when she accepts an utterance from the projected sets into her current sets. There does not have to be any tracking of whose commitment it is, like Cohen and Krifka (2014) postulate, but it follows from the fact that all utterances are added to individualized sets. Visually, I have chosen to follow the scoreboard model by F&B, since I believe it is very intuitive. I have modified it so that each speaker has their own individualized sets.

In the following subsection I will describe step by step how this is analysis looks like.

3.2 Applying the model

My main hypothesis is that *no?* marks two things:

a. the whole illocutionary act (illocutionary force and proposition) is being placed on the TABLE

b. it is also placed in the speaker's projected sets

These points show the influences of the two models: B&M highlight the importance of different types of speech acts and the illocutionary force they introduce, while F&B and M&S focused on the importance of having projected sets. Before other types of speech acts are discussed, I will show what the difference is between a declarative sentence with and without the DM *no?*. Table 6 shows what the model looks like when a declarative is followed by *no?*: the whole illocutionary act is put on the TABLE and in the projected sets of the speaker. However, if the declarative was not followed by *no?*, A would not postpone her commitment to the assertion, and therefore ASSERT(p) would be placed also in A's current ASSERTION SET.[12]

[12]It is especially difficult to distinguish between placing ASSERT(p) or just *p* on the TABLE when a declarative

Table 6: A utters an assertion with *no?*

Speaker A					Speaker B			
ES	**TDL**	**QS**	**AS**	**CG**	**AS**	**QS**	**TDL**	**ES**
				TABLE ASSERT(p)				
ES*	**TDL***	**QS***	**AS*** ASSERT(p)	**CG***	**AS***	**QS***	**TDL***	**ES***

The next step involves the addressee: if she doesn't oppose the speaker's move (either explicitly or implicitly), ASSERT(p) will make it into the Speaker's current discourse commitments.

This differs from an uttered assertion without *no?* in the following way: without *no?*, the speaker places ASSERT(p) directly in her current discourse commitments (in the tables, red marks the directly placement of an element in a set), as Table 7 shows. In fact, this table resembles how the model would look like after an utterance with *no?* if the addressee does not oppose this move. The only difference is where the speaker places the illocutionary act with her first move: whereas with *no?* she places it in her projected discourse commitments (as in Table 6), without *no?* she places it in her current discourse commitments (as in Table 7):

Table 7: A utters an assertion **without** *no?*

Speaker A					Speaker B			
ES	**TDL**	**QS**	**AS** ASSERT(p)	**CG**	**AS**	**QS**	**TDL**	**ES**
				TABLE ASSERT(p)				
ES*	**TDL***	**QS***	**AS*** ASSERT(p)	**CG***	**AS***	**QS***	**TDL***	**ES***

Let us discuss step by step what the model would look like for the examples in (5) through (10), starting with the exclamation repeated here as (17):

(17) Oye, qué frío hace aquí!, no?
hear.2sg.IMP what cold make.3sg here no
'Hey, it's freezing in here, [no]?'

Speaker A utters (17), and puts forth the denotation of the exclamative, which I assume includes the illocutionary force operator E-FORCE(p) following Rett (2011).[13]By doing this, A puts

is not followed by *no?*; although I have decided to use a parallel analysis to other types of speech acts, I am aware that this needs to be developed.

[13] E-FORCE(p) is defined as follows (Rett 2011:429):

(i) E-FORCE(p), uttered by *Sc*, is appropriate in a context *C* if *p* is salient and true in w_c. When appropriate, E-FORCE(p) counts as an expression that *Sc* had not expected that *p*.

E-FORCE(p) on the Table and in her projected Exclamation Sets (ES). If B does not react negatively to this move, A will commit to the exclamation (i.e., move it from the projected sets to the current sets). This is shown in Table 8:

Table 8: A utters an exclamative with *no?*

Speaker A					**Speaker B**			
ES	**TDL**	**QS**	**AS**	**CG**	**AS**	**QS**	**TDL**	**ES**
				TABLE E-FORCE(p)				
ES* E-FORCE(p)	**TDL***	**QS***	**AS***	**CG***	**AS***	**QS***	**TDL***	**ES***

The postponement of commitment is missing in the same utterance without *no?*, as Table 9 shows. When A utters and exclamative without the marker, she is committing presently to it and conveying that it is in her current ES.

Table 9: A utters an exclamative without *no?*

Speaker A					**Speaker B**			
ES E-FORCE(p)	**TDL**	**QS**	**AS**	**CG**	**AS**	**QS**	**TDL**	**ES**
				TABLE E-FORCE(p)				
ES* E-FORCE(p)	**TDL***	**QS***	**AS***	**CG***	**AS***	**QS***	**TDL***	**ES***

A question followed by *no?* – for instance, (6), repeated here as (18) – turns into a kind of rhetorical question, showing that when A utters it, she is not asking for an answer, for actually she wants to confirm that both participants share the same question. If we were to paraphrase it, the use of *no?* would be "Do you ask yourself the same question?". This hints at the fact that what A is putting in the projected sets is not the resolution of the question, but the question itself. This is shown in Table 10, where the whole illocutionary act is being placed in the projected QUESTION SETS:

(18) {A and B are friends and cat-people; they are sitting in a pub with C, who is going on and on about how dogs are awesome. A says to B:}

De qué está hablando, no?
about what be.3SG talking no
'What is he talking about, [no]?'

With an imperative, what is put forth is a command. Therefore, when A utters an imperative followed by *no?* as in (19) and, as I propose, places the whole COMMAND(p) in B's projected TO-DO-LIST, she is allowing B to disagree with the command, or to refuse to comply to it: this explains

Table 10: A utters a wh-question **with** *no?*

Speaker A					Speaker B			
ES	**TDL**	**QS**	**AS**	**CG**	**AS**	**QS**	**TDL**	**ES**
				TABLE QU(p)				
ES*	**TDL***	**QS*** QU(p)	**AS***	**CG***	**AS***	**QS***	**TDL***	**ES***

why this marker has sometimes been argued to avoid face threatening acts and has been talked about in terms of politeness (García Vizcaíno 2005).

(19) {A couple of friends are having some drinks at a patio, and it is getting cold:}

Venga, vamos a otro sitio, no?
come.SUBJ go.1pl to another place no
'Come on, let's go somewhere else, [no]?'

Table 11: A utters an imperative **with** *no?*

Speaker A					Speaker B			
ES	**TDL**	**QS**	**AS**	**CG**	**AS**	**QS**	**TDL**	**ES**
				TABLE COMMAND(p)				
ES*	**TDL*** COMMAND(p)	**QS***	**AS***	**CG***	**AS***	**QS***	**TDL***	**ES***

In Table 12 we can see how a bare imperative introduces the command not only in the projected TO-DO-LIST as Table 11, but also in the current TO-DO-LIST: this makes the command more urgent, and B is less inclined not to comply.

Table 12: A utters an imperative **without** *no?*

Speaker A					Speaker B			
ES	**TDL** COMMAND(p)	**QS**	**AS**	**CG**	**AS**	**QS**	**TDL**	**ES**
				TABLE COMMAND(p)				
ES*	**TDL*** COMMAND(p)	**QS***	**AS***	**CG***	**AS***	**QS***	**TDL***	**ES***

This explains one of the many effects of the use of *no?*, that is to avoid confrontation, more specifically, avoid a situation where disagreement might ensue. A is *explicitly* allowing B to react to the utterance, if not actively asking him to do so. This is related to the context of 'agree to

disagree' in Farkas and Bruce (2009) and the similar – but crucially different – situation of 'faultless disagreement' explored in Déchaine et al. (2015). In the former, there is a tension that arises from a situation where A commits to p, but B commits to $\neg p$. Even though none of those options gets to the CG, and the participants "agree to disagree", it makes the conversation unstable. On the other hand, a situation of *faultless disagreement* arises when both p and $\neg p$ can co-exist because there is no expectation of either of them making it to the CG.

I claim that the use of *no?* is a way for agree-to-disagree languages to arrive at a point *similar* to that of faultless disagreement. Utterances with *no?*, by avoiding to commit (to the assertion, to the exclamation, to the command, and to the question) are a way to arrive at that state where no CG obliges the participants to agree upon p or $\neg p$. At no point is the CG affected, and all the discourse movements are done in the elements individualized for each participant.

4 Conclusions and future research

My main aim in this paper has been to modify the existing conversational models so that the distribution and use of the discourse particle *no?* in Spanish could be explained. In Section 2 I have compared two different models: the conversational scoreboard model (Farkas and Bruce 2009; Malamud and Stephenson 2015), which uses projected sets of commitments and CG to account for avoidance of commitment to a proposition; and the dialogue gameboard (Beyssade and Marandin 2006), where different types of commitments are linked to different types of clauses and speech acts. I assessed the strengths and weaknesses of each, and concluded that Spanish data of the discourse particle *no?* begs for a reconciliation of both.

In Section 3 I propose how to implement these changes. I claim that we need separate four individualized sets that are linked to the different commitments that B&M identify –namely an Assertion Set for assertions, a Question Set for questions, an Exclamation Set for exclamations, and a To-Do-List for directives. Similar proposals have been made, a.o., by Lam et al. (2013). These sets and their projected counterparts allow for the possibility of negotiation of the conversational moves regarding illocutionary forces, which in turn explains the many functions that *no?* has been said to have.

It remains to be fleshed out if and how propositions that are in these sets make it to the Common Ground. The idea of the CG has been recently questioned (Barr and Keysar 2005; Epley et al. 2004; Keysar 2008; Tonhauser et al. 2013) (and defended recently by Stalnaker 2014) and what exactly is the nature of the CG is under much debate. Fleshing out this model, as well as its possible impact (or not) for Information Structure is an exciting, but future, endeavor.

Another area that I haven't been able to explore is the relationship between the particle and intonation. Most previous literature (the most explicit is Rodríguez Muñoz (2009)) agrees in saying that one of the functions of *no?* is phatic, that is, it serves as a means by which the speaker checks if the addressee is still there, and this function can be distinguish from all other by its falling intonation. It is my hunch that there is more to say about this than just a mere distinction between phatic/non-phatic function, and that may be extended and even touch upon the source of the evidence. Just as Gunlogson (2008) remarks in her paper, there is an obvious link between evidentiality and this discourse marker, a link which I would like to explore in the future.

A clear issue with a model like the one I have described is the number of individualized sets. This problem was also identified by Zimmermann (2007) in his comment about Potts (2007) idea of expressives: he argues that there are various sub-classes of expressions without truth-conditional

effects (expressives and discourse particles), which this undefined number of sub-classes was undesirable from a unifying perspective (Zimmermann 2007:254). Although I have no empirical evidence from Spanish that suggests a four way division of speaker A and speaker B's individualized sets (remember that I took that from B&M's model), the model does predict that there will be a language that uses different markers to target these different sets. Only future research can investigate if this prediction is borne out. If there is indeed such a language, it will be interesting to see what is the partition it makes –one of the problems in the literature, and that I have probably not been able to avoid myself, is the confusion obetween clause type and speech act type. It would be interesting to see what notion is the one that marks the division (if there is one). Another possibility is that the division is much simpler: one between declaratives/assertives, and the *elsewhere* case. This account would be much simpler and elegant, but it needs further exploration into the nature of "bare" speech acts, whereas I have focused here on a kind of meta-speech act.

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