

Overview

- *The problem:*

It is assumed that the base word order of Spanish is *svo*, but it also allows *vso* and *vos* orders under certain conditions (*e.g.*, for focus and in *wh*-questions).

- *Why it's a problem:*

It is unclear exactly what accounts for these orders, syntactically speaking: Right-adjunction of the subject, or movement of the object?

I'll add a different possibility: VP movement.

- *Previous work:*

Previous work assumed right-adjunction of post-verbal subjects to VP in *vos* orders. These approaches therefore propose that the subject is structurally higher than objects in the *vos* order and that therefore the *vso* and *vos* orders should display similar behavior.

- *Ordóñez says:*

In light of advances in verb movement and the internal subject hypothesis, right-adjunction is unnecessary and even makes the wrong predictions. Empirically, it can be shown that objects are structurally higher in *vos* orders, suggesting a connection to scrambling in other languages.

An underlying theme here is [Kayne's \(1994\) Linear Correspondence Algorithm](#), which bans right-adjunction.

- *Why is it important?:*

This shows that objects undergo movement to some position in the middle field. For us, in this seminar, it shows that we do not have VP movement as a plausible derivation for *vos* orders in Spanish.

As far as I'm aware, this view is still current. See, *e.g.*, [Gallego 2007](#) and [Depiante and Vicente 2012](#).

Today

Today I will go over some of the main points from the paper:

Also in the paper: *vso/vos* in questions, multiple *wh*-questions, and effects of scrambling on clitic doubling.

a. Pronominal binding

b. Principle C effects

c. Reconstruction

d. Interpretation of indefinites

- I focus less on right-adjunction and instead I include my own commentary on where there are problems for a VP fronting account.

Ordóñez was concerned with showing that right-adjunction of subjects was not plausible. I think we can agree to set that aside for now.

A note on discourse

There are typically discourse reasons for postponing subjects.

- If the *object* receives focus in vso order, then this focuses either just the object or both the object and the subject.
- If the *subject* receives focus in vso order, then the subject is the only focus.
- In vos order, the subject receives stress and is the only possible focus.

1 Summary of the analysis

The basic Spanish word order is svo, as can be seen in the embedded clause below:

- (1) Espero que [*Juan* te devuelva el libro].
 I hope that Juan CL.2.SG return the book
 'I hope Juan returns the book to you.'

The subject is italicized throughout. As best as I know, Spanish clauses are never verb-final. Clitics like *te* are ignored for the purposes of determining basic word order.

Ordóñez (1998) argues that post-verbal subjects in Spanish remain in their base positions.

- (2) Espero que [te devuelva *Juan* el libro].
 I hope that CL.2.SG return Juan the book
 'I hope Juan returns the book to you.'
- (3) Espero que [te devuelva el libro *Juan*].
 I hope that CL.2.SG return the book Juan
 'I hope Juan returns the book to you.'

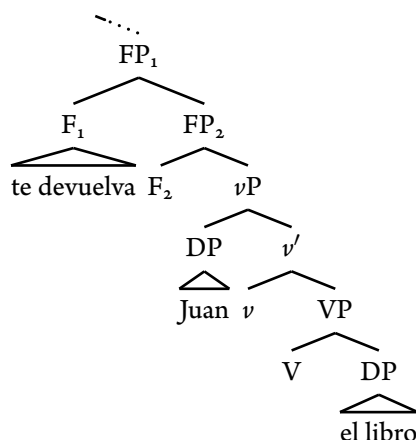
Throughout, I've amended Ordóñez's glosses to clarify them, and added (intended) translations where they were missing.

Ordóñez 1998:313, (2)

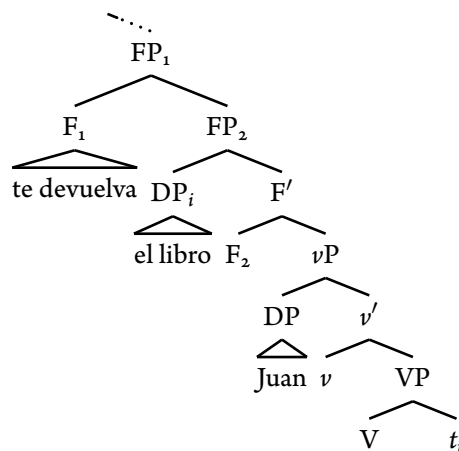
Ordóñez 1998:315, (5)

- Verbs always move to the highest head position.
- vso is derived by leaving the subject and object *in situ*.
- vos involves moving the object to some middle field position.

vso:



vos:



F_1 is probably I^0 /Agr 0 . SpecFP $_2$ is argued to be the scrambling position in German, Hindi.

2 Evidence

2.1 Pronominal binding

- Assumption: For a pronoun to be interpreted as a quantificationally bound variable, the pronoun must be in the c-command domain of a quantifier.
- We can see this in typical SVO clauses in Spanish. The possessive pronoun *su* in the subject cannot be bound by the object quantifier:

(4) * *Su_i madre le presentó a cada niño_i al director.*
 his mother CL.DAT.SG introduced DOM each boy to.the director.
Intended: ‘His mother_i introduced each boy_i to the director.’

- The same fact holds of post-verbal subjects in VSO orders:

(5) * *Aquí presentó su_i madre a cada niño_i.*
 here introduced his mother DOM each boy
Intended: ‘Here, his mother_i introduced each boy_i.’

- However, in VOS order, the subject may be bound by the object.

(6) *Aquí presentó a cada niño_i su_i madre.*
 here introduced DOM each boy his mother
Intended: ‘Here, each boy_i introduced his mother_i.’

- Following the assumption above, in (6) (a) *cada niño*, ‘each boy’, must c-command *su madre*, ‘his mother’.
- Ordóñez draws a parallel here between scrambling in other languages, including German and Hindi.

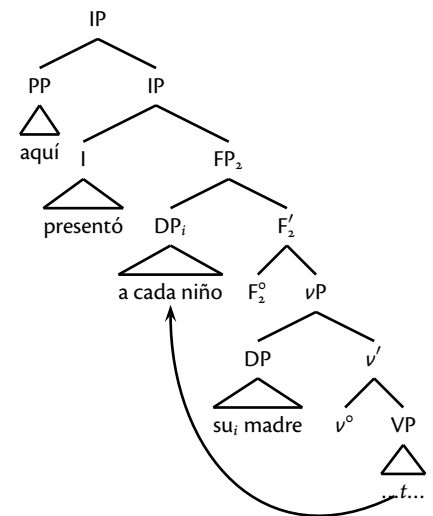
(7) *Ich glaube, daß {jedem_i} sein_i Vater {*jedem_i} das Bild*
 I think that everybody.DAT his father the picture
gezeigt hat.
 shown has.

(8) {sab-ko_i} *unkii, bahin* {*sab-ko_i} *pyaar hartii thii.*
 everyone their sister love do.IMP.F be.PST.F

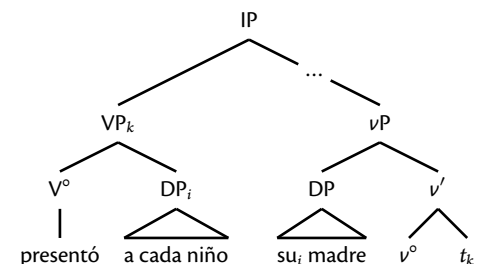
- Notice that if this were some sort of VP fronting, we could not easily explain the binding facts, since the quantificational DP would never c-command the subject.

2.2 Principle C effects

- Principle C precludes an r-expression from being c-commanded by an antecedent.
- In SVO and VSO clauses, the subject argument may contain an R-expression that is coindexed with an object, in this case the indirect object *a ella*, ‘for her’.



No pronominal binding with VP movement:



- (9) *Los hermanos de Eva_i le compraron el libro a ella_i.*
The brothers of Eva CL.DAT bought.3.PL the book to her
'Eva's brother bought the book for her.'
- (10) *El libro, se lo compraron los hermanos de Eva_i a ella_i*
the book, CL.DAT CL.3.SG bought.3.PL the brothers of Eva to her.
The book, Eva's brother's bought for her.

- This presumably shows that the name *Eva* is not c-commanded by the pronoun in either SVO or VSO orders.
- However, in VOS order the co-indexation is impossible:

- (11) **El libro, se lo compraron a ella_i los hermanos de Eva_i*
the book, CL.DAT CL.3.SG bought.3.PL to her the brothers of Eva.
The book, Eva's brother's bought for her.

- This follows if the indirect object *a ella* c-commands the subject.
- Similar effects are found in German scrambling. It is not possible to scramble a pronoun to a position where it c-commands a co-indexed DP:

- (12) ...daß { *ihm_i } *die Brüder vom Hans_i { ihm_i } das Bild gezeigt haben.*
that the brothers of Hans him.DAT the picture shown have
'... that the brothers of Hans have shown him the picture.'

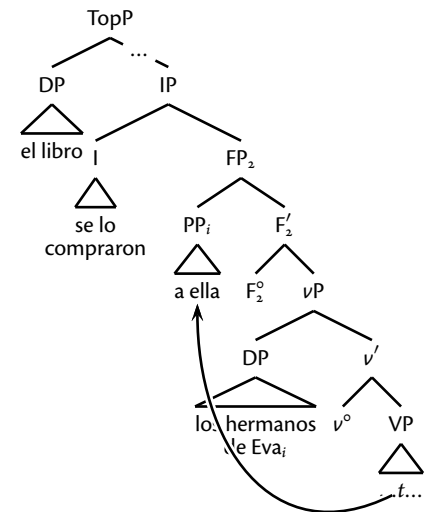
- Note, again, that this fact does not receive a straightforward explanation of a VP-fronting account.

2.3 Reconstruction

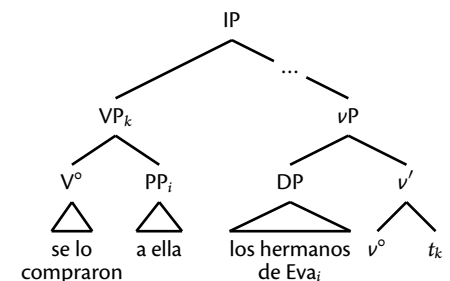
- One issue with this view is that reconstruction of objects is possible.
- In particular, objects may reconstruct to a position where they were bound. Thus there is no interpretational difference between the following VSO clause and the VOS clause:

- (13) *Aquí besó cada niña_i a su_i amiga.*
here kissed every girl DOM her friend
- (14) *Aquí besó a su_i amiga cada niña_i.*
here kissed DOM her friend every girl
'Here, every girl kissed her friend.'

- The fact that the object can be bound by the subject in (14) indicates that it must have been below the subject at some point.



No Condition C effects with VP movement:



Note, though, that this is consistent with a VP-movement analysis.

- One question: Why are reconstruction effects obtained only in some cases? Presumably because binding is calculated derivationally.
- This means that, for the sake of quantificational binding, as in (6), binding can take place at any stage of the derivation as long as an appropriate c-command relation is established.
- However, moving the (indirect) object to a position where it c-commands a coindexed r-expression, as in (11), will put them in a configuration where Principle C is violated, so that movement is ungrammatical.
- Moving the object above the subject in (14) does not actually violate any binding conditions, and since the c-command relation between the subject and object is established at an earlier point in the derivation, the sentence should be grammatical.

2.4 Interpretation of indefinites

- An indefinite following a subject in a vSO clause may receive either a wide-scope specific interpretation or a narrow-scope non-specific interpretation:

(15) Estos libros, se los dieron *todos los estudiantes* a un profesor.
 These books, CL.DAT CL.3.PL gave all the students to a professor

a. *Specific*

$\exists y. \forall x (\text{student}(x) \wedge \text{professor}(y)) (\text{give} - a - \text{book}(x, y))$

b. *Non-specific*

$\forall x. \exists y (\text{student}(x) \wedge \text{professor}(y)) (\text{give} - a - \text{book}(x, y))$

- However, an indefinite (indirect) object that appears before the subject in a VOS clause may only receive a wide-scope, specific interpretation:

(16) Estos libros, se los dieron a un profesor *todos los estudiantes*.
 These books, CL.DAT CL.3.PL gave to a professor all the students

a. *Specific*

$\exists y. \forall x (\text{student}(x) \wedge \text{professor}(y)) (\text{give} - a - \text{book}(x, y))$

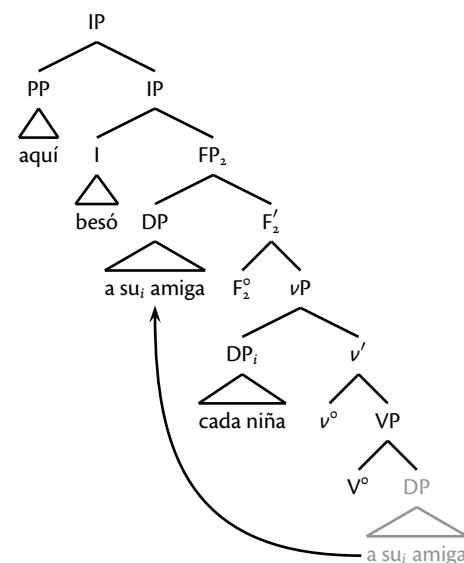
b. **Non-specific*

$\forall x. \exists y (\text{student}(x) \wedge \text{professor}(y)) (\text{give} - a - \text{book}(x, y))$

- Furthermore, inherently non-specific object DPs may not appear in VOS clauses, including those with the free choice item *qualquiera*, ‘whichever’.

(17) El libro de matemáticas, se lo dará el profesor a un
 the book of math, CL.DAT CL.SG give.FUT the teacher to a
 estudiante cualquiera.
 student whichever
 ‘The math book, the teacher gave to some student or other.’

(18) ?? El libro de matemáticas, se lo dará a un estudiante
 the book of math, CL.DAT CL.SG give.FUT to a student
 cualquiera el profesor.
 whichever the teacher



Similar effects can be shown when scrambling an indirect object over a direct object.

- Following [Diesing \(1992\)](#), this suggests that the object arguments are moving out of the verb phrase where they receive specific interpretation. Diesing reports similar effects for German scrambling.

3 On verb movement in Spanish

- One of the main assumptions underlying [Ordóñez's \(1998\)](#) analysis is the idea that verbs are moving to a position above where subjects merge.
- Indeed, this seems to be the only way to really make sense of how the object could be in a higher position than the subject and yet still follow the verb.
- It has standardly been assumed that verbs move to an inflectional position of some sort, and this is related to the notion that verbs must move to this position in order to receive the associated inflection
- Independent evidence for this is hard to come by. The usual adverb-placement diagnostic for determining where verbs are in English, French, and Germanic languages does not work.
- The problem is that in Spanish, medial adverbs may appear either pre- or post-verbally.

(19) *Adverb placement in Spanish:*

- a. Manuel lee *a menudo* novelas policíacas.
Manuel reads often novels of police
'Manuel often reads detective novels.'
- b. Un blogger *a menudo* lee otros blogs.
a blogger often reads other blogs
'A blogger often reads other blogs.'

- Subject placement in vSO clauses has instead become prime evidence that the verb is moving out of ν P since it's not really clear how else to explain vSO order.

3.1 Movement to C° ?

- There is a separate, difficult issue here regarding how far verbs actually move. A common assumption is that they do not move as far as C° .
- As shown in (1)–(3), vSO orders are possible in embedded clauses, and this order co-exists with overt complementizers.
- Additionally, there is the point I made last week that subjects usually have to follow all verbs when they are post verbal.

(20) Ha estado comiendo Juan las manzanas.
has been eating Juan the apples.
'Juan has been eating the apples.'

(21) Ha estado comiendo las manzanas Juan.
has been eating the apples Juan.
'Juan has been eating the apples.'

This section is based on some discussion in [Depiante and Vicente 2012](#).

[Pollock 1989](#), [Vikner 1995](#), a.o.

[Depiante and Vicente 2012:90–91](#); my glosses and translations. *A menudo*, 'often', should behave similarly to the equivalent *souvent* in French or *ofte*, in Danish.

However, recall that embedded V2 in Scandinavian also preserves the complementizer.

Non-pronominal subjects cannot intervene between verbs ([Ordóñez 2007](#)). I'll return to this issue next week.

(22) * Ha Juan estado comiendo las manzanas.
has Juan been eating the apples.

- It is often assumed that pre-verbal clitics are adjoined to a functional head somewhere in the inflectional layer (Uriagereka 1995).
- In imperatives, clitics follow the verb unless there is negation, in which case the imperative takes the form of a subjunctive clause.

(23)	¡Leélo tú! leé=lo tú read=CL.SG you 'Read it!'	(24)	¡No lo leas! NEG it read.SUBJ.2SG 'Don't read it.'
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- Assuming that C° is the locus of illocutionary force, Rivera and Terzi (1995) propose that in (positive) declaratives, the verb must move to C° , moving past/through the head to which the clitics are adjoined. However, negation blocks this movement, forcing the verb to remain in T° .

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