

Case Competition under ECM. Evidence from Spanish dialects.

1. GOAL: This paper argues that ECM subjects in Spanish may receive structural or inherent Case, depending on the categorial status of the embedded clause (cf. Chomsky 1986). Building on Ormazabal & Romero (2007), we argue that if the embedded clause is a TP, the ECM-ed DP receives inherent Case (INH) while if the embedded clause is an XP (where X is a predicative category, V, Asp or P), then the ECM-ed DP receives structural Case (STR).

2. BACKGROUND DATA: The literature on Case has extensively argued that DOs can become subjects if the structure is modified (cf. Woolford 2006 and references therein). That's one of the hallmarks of passives, which show that accusative Case qualifies as *bona fide* STR:

- (1) a. French people elected *Macron* b. *Macron* was [[elected t_{Macron}]]

The same holds in ECM structures, as shown in (2) and (3), as long as the embedded clause is a TP, which is signaled by *to*:

- (2) a. I made [_{VP} *Mary* leave] (3) a. I saw [_{VP} *Mary* leave]
b. *Mary* was made [_{TP} t_{Mary} *(to) leave] b. *Mary* was seen [_{TP} t_{Mary} *(to) leave]

This indicates that, somehow, the type of Case that the ECM-ed DP is assigned (STR or INH) depends on the category of the clausal complement (here, TPs vs. vPs). Under the assumption that only CPs and TPs (but not vPs, AspPs, PPs, etc.) receive Case, this reveals some kind of “Case competition” within the relevant domain—the v*P. Ormazabal & Romero (2007) phrase this into the *Object Agreement Constraint* OAC, arguing that only one DP agrees with v*, which amounts to only one DP receiving STR—the other being licensed by an alternative strategy involving INH.

3. SPANISH DATA: These very observations apply to Spanish, but this time with interesting twists. To begin with, causative and perception verbs license an ECM dependency (as (4) and (5) show respectively); however, notice that only causative verbs allow for gerunds and participles:

- (4) Alguien vio [a *María* pelear / peleando / peleada] (Spanish)
someone saw ACC *María* fight fighting fought
'Someone saw *María* fight/fighting/angry (at someone)'
- (5) Alguien hizo [a *María* pelear / *peleando / *peleada] (Spanish)
someone made ACC *María* fight fighting fought
'Someone made *María* fight/fighting/angry (with someone)'

Given the intricacies of causative verbs (cf. Treviño 1994, Guasti 2006, Harley & Folli 2004, Torrego 2010), we concentrate on perception predicates in this paper. What is relevant for us is that passivization is worse with infinitives than it is with gerunds (cf. Fernández Lagunilla 2005):

- (6) *María* fue vista {?*pelear / peleando / peleada} (Spanish)
María was seen fight fighting accompanied
'*María* was seen fight/fighting/angry (at someone)'

An additional interesting observation is that the ECM-ed DP *María* in a sentence like (6) oscillates between accusative and dative only when it is base-generated within an infinitival clause, which we analyze as a TP: gerunds and participles rule out accusative Case assignment.

- (7) a. La vi [t_{la} {pelear / peleando / peleada}] b. Le vi [t_{le} {pelear / *peleando / *peleada}]
cl_{ACC} saw fight fighting fought cl_{DAT} saw fight fighting fought
'I saw to her fight/fighting/angry (at someone)'

What (6) and (7) reveal should be clear (the presence of an infinitival makes the ECM-ed DP receive INH, not STR), how to account for it is not. We provide a solution below.

4. MAIN IDEA: We would like to argue that the facts above follow from Ormazabal & Romero's (2007) OAC, which is spelled-out in (8):

- (8) *Object Agreement Constraint* (OAC): If the verbal complex encodes object agreement, [only one] argument can be licensed through verbal agreement.

The OAC was designed to deal with ditransitive-like configurations, where there is more than one potential agreeing element. In the context of the present discussion, we take the OAC to tell us that the category of the clausal complement may vary so that the DP (DO) vs. PP (IO) rivalry is replicated. Instead of DP and PP, we argue that the relevant competing dependents are TP and XP (where X = a predicative category: V, P or Asp). This can be seen in (9), where we submit that the

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ECM-ed DP (*Indiana*) receives STR if the embedded clause is an XP (taking gerunds and participles to involve a predicative projection; cf. Gallego 2009, Gallego & Hernanz 2010).

(9) [I saw v* [*Indiana*_{STR} [XP X (= P) [open-**ing** the Ark]]] clause = XP (receives INH)

As for (10), we assume that the DP receives INH (from matrix V), which follows from the embedded clause, a *bona fide* TP, being part of an Agree dependency with v*.

(10) [I saw v* [*Indiana*_{INH} [TP T [open the Ark]]] clause = TP (receives STR)

Given Romero & Ormazabal's (2007) AOC, and the varying categorial status of the complement, we can account for the fact that the DP receives STR and INH.

5. CONSEQUENCES AND ITS PARAMETERS: The main conclusion to be drawn from the previous section is that the ECM-ed DP of infinitival clauses receives INH (as the TP itself receives STR, under the OAC), and thus cannot be passivized. This is true of datives in Spanish more generally, but there are two pieces of crosslinguistic variation that threaten this observation: datives can be passivized in English (for which a parameter must be invoked; Harley 2003, McGinnis 2004, among others), and in certain dialects of Spanish too. The latter case is particularly relevant for our proposal. Consider the data in (11) and (12), discussed in Montalbetti (1999):

(11) a. Juan le vendió una casa a María b. *María fue vendida una casa (Spanish)
 Juan cl_{DAT} sold a house to María María was sold a house
 'Juan sold a house to María' 'María was sold a house'

(12) a. Juan le prohibió a María [TP leer el libro] (Peruvian Spanish)
 Juan cl_{DAT} prohibited DAT María to-read the book
 'Juan prohibited to María to read the book'
 b. María fue prohibida [XP de leer el libro] (Peruvian Spanish)
 María was prohibited of to-read the book
 'María was prohibited of to read the book'

The data in (11) illustrate the (well-known) impossibility for IOs to passivize in Spanish. Interestingly (and surprisingly too), (12) shows that *IOs can undergo passivization if (IF) the DO is clausal in Peruvian Spanish*. What is yet more interesting is that the embedded clause must then be introduced by a preposition: *de* (Eng. 'of'). We would like to argue that such preposition qualifies as X, which entails that the clausal complement receives INH, making it possible for the otherwise IO to receive STR. This alone accounts from passivization under our OAC-based approach.

So-called 'deista Spanish' provides an important piece of evidence that *de* is an INH-marker and not the mere PF realization of C or T (or Fin, in a cartographic analysis). As Camus (2013) reports, in this variety of Spanish, *de* can optionally introduce clauses selected by perception verbs. Crucially for our purposes, *de* blocks extraction; this can be seen in (14), a case of clitic climbing:

(13) a. Te vi [TP traerla] (Spanish) (14) a. Te vi [XP **de** traerla] (deista Spanish)
 cl_{DAT} saw bring-her cl_{DAT} saw of bring-her
 b. Te **la** vi [XP traer t_{la}] (Spanish) b. *Te **la** vi [XP **de** traer t_{la}] (deista Spanish)
 cl_{DAT} cl_{ACC} saw bring cl_{DAT} cl_{ACC} saw of bring
 'I saw you bring her' 'I saw you bring her'

If nothing else, Camus' (2013) data in (14) simply reveal that clauses introduced by *de* pattern like PPs (INH-marked dependents), thus providing more evidence that there is a "Case competition" situation like those where Ormazabal & Romero's (2013) OAC applies.

6. CONCLUSIONS: This paper has argued that ECM structures in Spanish provide new evidence that the assignment of structural Case is subject to locality constraints. We have phrased this in terms of the OAC here (following Ormazabal & Romero 2007), but there are similar alternatives: minimality (Rizzi 1990), distinctness (Richards 2010), etc. We have further built on dialectal data to show that the relevant constraint seems to be parametrized. This is already known for datives crosslinguistically, but dialectal data pose further questions about the structural / inherent cut.

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