

Chapter 4

Long distance agreement in Spanish dialects

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This paper discusses data from various dialects of Spanish manifesting agreement between an inflected verb and a PP-internal NP in the context of non-paradigmatic SE (e.g., *Se vieron a los niños* – Eng. ‘Children were seen’). An analysis is put forward in terms of Long Distance Agreement (cf. Chomsky 2000; 2001) between T (the locus of nominative Case) and an NP Goal within a KP/PP. It is shown that this derivational possibility is subject to different microparametric layers teasing apart varieties allowing agreement across dative-like Case assigners (in differential object marking) and other prepositions that do not obviously participate in standard Case-agreement dependencies—thus giving rise to a pattern that qualifies as a pseudopassive of sorts.

1 Introduction

It is an old observation that languages of the Spanish type fail to deploy both preposition stranding and pseudopassives, as the examples in (1) and (2) below show (cf. Law 2006 and references therein for discussion).

- (1) * Spanish (Campos 1991: 741)
 Quién contaron todos con?
 who counted.3PL all with
 ‘Who did everybody count on?’
- (2) * Spanish (Campos 1991: 741)
 José es contado con por todos.
 José be counted.3SG with by everybody
 ‘José is counted on by everybody.’



Plausibly, the factor responsible for (1) is also behind (2), at least if the key element for both processes to take place is the category P, a locus of parametric variation (cf. Hornstein & Weinberg 1981; Kayne 1984; 1994; 2005; Abels 2003; and references therein). In more abstract terms, we seem to be dealing with two constraints affecting prepositions and blocking both A and A-bar dependencies, which is what (3) is meant to capture:

- (3) In the context Probe » P » XP (» = c-command)
- ii. ... XP cannot move (no P-stranding)
 - iii. ... XP cannot be a Goal (no pseudopassives)

This paper discusses data from certain dialects of Spanish that depart from (3) in the context of passive SE sentences, at least for agreement cases. In particular, it will be shown that Long Distance Agreement (LDA) is possible between T (the locus of Nominative Case; cf. Chomsky 2000; 2001) and a DP Goal within a PP. I will compare the data with previously reported evidence involving the Differential Object Marking preposition *a* (cf. Torrego 1998; López 2012) in order to argue that there are three types of prepositions when it comes to the possibility for external Probes (φ -complete T) to bypass them.

The paper is organized as follows. §2 reviews the agreement options of passive SE sentences. §3 discusses the main properties of two patterns where T can agree with a DP introduced by a preposition; the first pattern covers what RAE-ASALE (2009) dubs the ‘hybrid pattern’ (agreement across the differential marker *a*), whereas the second pattern involves agreement in the context of more full-fledged prepositions; §4 puts forward a Probe-Goal analysis of the facts (cf. Chomsky 2000; 2001) that makes use of the idea that P can undergo incorporation (cf. Hornstein & Weinberg 1981; Law 2006). §5 contains the main conclusions.

2 Agreement properties of SE sentences in Spanish

Passive/impersonal SE sentences have been the focus of much research (cf. Mendikoetxea 1992; 1999; Raposo & Uriagereka 1996; D’Alessandro 2007; López 2007; among others). If we concentrate on Spanish, it has been noted that the clitic SE can be part of structures where T agrees with the internal argument (IA, henceforth) (so-called Passive SE; see (4)), but it can also be part of structures where agreement fails (so-called Impersonal SE; see (5)), where T shows default agreement and the IA may or may not be headed by a Case marker, which depends on independent factors:

(4) Spanish

Se criticaron los recortes.

SE criticize.3PL the cuts

‘Budget cuts were criticized.’

(5) Spanish

a. Se criticó los recortes.

SE criticize.3SG the cuts

‘Budget cuts were criticized.’

b. Se criticó a los políticos.

SE criticize.3SG DOM the politicians

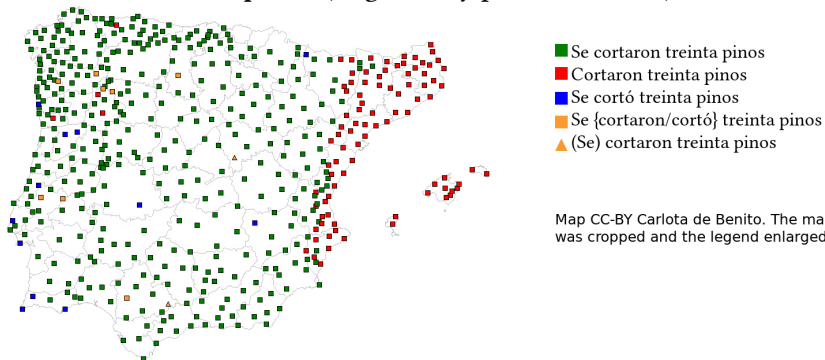
‘Politicians were criticized.’

Consider the patterns above. The sentence in (4) contains a φ -defective v that cannot Case-license the IA *los recortes* (Eng. ‘the budget cuts’). As argued by both Raposo & Uriagereka (1996), SE may be taken to occupy the external argument position (cf. López 2007), thus behaving like an expletive of sorts (an idea that has been applied to spurious SE in clitic combinations; cf. Kayne 2000: 160; Gallego & Uriagereka 2017). The sentences in (5) are not *bona fide* passives: in such cases, v is presumably φ -complete, and the IA receives accusative Case, which can be differentially marked (as in (5b)) or not (as in (5a)); as expected, T shows defective (3rd person singular) agreement.

The two agreeing patterns of sentences involving SE have also been reported in traditional atlases such as the ALPI (Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica). The following data, taken from de Benito (2010), show this:¹

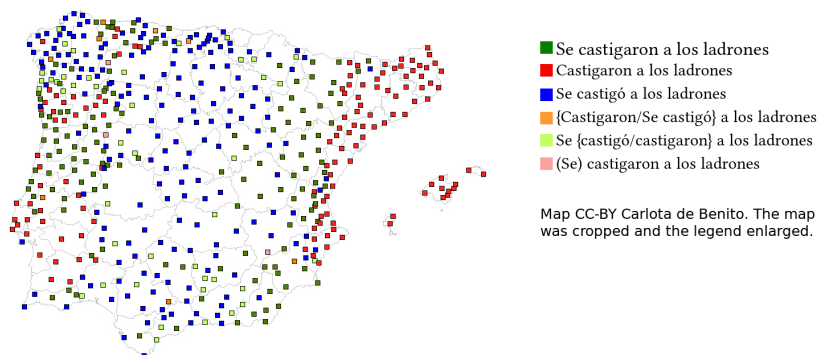
(6) (de Benito 2010: 8, 14)

a. Se cortaron treinta pinos. (Eng. ‘Thirty pines were cut.’)



¹Just to address a question by an anonymous reviewer, although the ALPI also collects information from Portugal, here I am focusing on Spanish data alone.

b. Se castigó a los ladrones (Eng. ‘Thieves were punished.’)



As a closer look at the data in (4) and (5) reveals, passive and impersonal SE sentences have a common base – they have the same argument structure, the only difference being agreement. In this context, Mendikoetxea (1999: §26.3.2.2) observes that passive SE sentences can manifest full or partial (defective) agreement, as illustrated in (7a) and (7b) respectively (cf. Martín Zorraquino 1979 for discussion):

(7) Spanish

- a. En este país se dicen muchas gilipolleces.
 in this country SE say.3PL many bullshit
 ‘People say bullshit in this country.’
- b. En este país se dice muchas gilipolleces.
 in this country SE say.3SG many bullshit
 ‘People say bullshit in this country.’

Although (7a) is clearly better to my ear, the patterns in (7) are both possible, and there is no consistent dialectal tendency, as far as I can tell. The φ -defective configuration has been reported in Old Spanish texts, and it is also present in varieties of present-day European and American Spanish (cf. Mendikoetxea 1999).² The φ -complete configuration involves unproblematic local agreement between

²RAE-ASALE (2009) discusses a series of factors that may be behind the lack of agreement in such cases (the category of the internal argument, its preverbal/postverbal position, the presence of dative arguments, etc.). I put these issues aside here.

T and the IA – a situation also displayed in DAT-NOM structures, whose intricacies I put aside here (cf. López 2007; Chomsky 2008).³

There are more interesting cross-clausal cases, where agreement takes place at a distance. Thus, matrix T can long-distance agree with the IA of an embedded infinitive. This is well-known in the case of auxiliaries, but the pattern covers semi-auxiliaries and other verbs:

- (8) a. [T [SE V_{AUX} [INF XP]]] [AUX = can, should, etc.]
 b. [T [SE V_{SEMI-AUX} [INF XP]]] [SEMI-AUX = try, need, etc.]

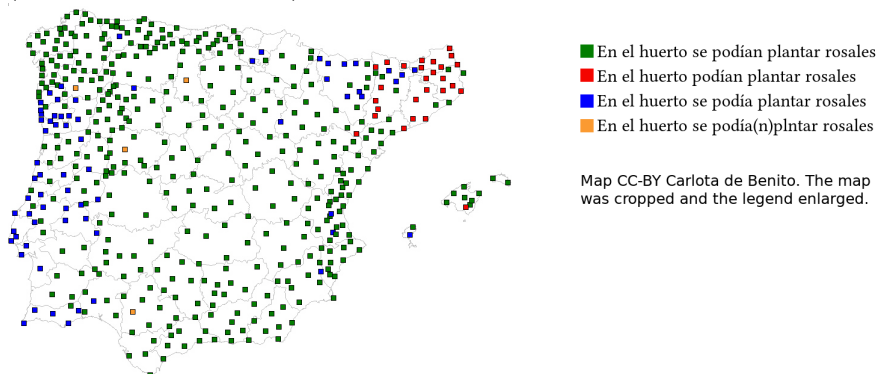
Consider the following (RAE-ASALE 2009: Chapter 28), where I indicate Probe and Goal (the agreeing elements) with bold letters.

- (9) Spanish
- a. Se **intentan** [eliminar **ciertas leyes**].
 SE tried.3PL eliminate.INF certain laws
 ‘Certain laws are tried to be eliminated.’
 - b. Se **necesitan** [conocer **sus propiedades**].
 SE need.3PL know.INF their properties
 ‘Their properties are needed to be known.’
 - c. No se **supieron** [usar **esos recursos**].
 not SE knew.3PL use.INF those resources
 ‘Those resources were not known to be used.’
 - d. Se **han** querido [manchar **reputaciones**].
 SE have.3PL wanted damage.INF reputations
 ‘Reputations were wanted to be damaged.’

Evidence like that provided by RAE-ASALE (2009) has also been collected by dialectologists working on atlases:

³An anonymous reviewer points out that we should not forget about discourse features and their valuation, as these are key in DAT-NOM constructions. It is unclear what the reviewer means here. If he/she is referring to notions like topic or focus, I simply do not assume they are features in the Probe-Goal sense (for discussion, see Chomsky 2001; 2008; Chomsky et al. 2017; Ott & Šimík 2016). The fact that IOs participate in an agreement relation before DOs (or internal arguments more generally) can be accounted for without resorting to any discourse feature.

- (10) En el huerto se **podían** plantar **rosales**.
 in the garden SE could.3PL plant rose.bushes
 ‘Rose bushes can be planted in the garden.’
 (from de Benito 2010: 13)



Interestingly, LDA situations go beyond SE scenarios, as shown in (11). As before, the φ -Probe on T scans into the embedded clause, displaying a phenomenon we can dub “hyperagreement”.⁴

- (11) a. Siempre nos **tocaron** [resolver **problemas**].
 always to.us be.our.turn.3PL solve problems
 ‘We always had to solve problems.’
 b. Nos **faltan** [hacer **dos goles**].
 to.us lack.3PL make two goals
 ‘We still have to score two goals.’

Notice that, in both SE and SE-less cases, agreement is only in number, not person (cf. Etxepare 2006), but there seems to be robust evidence that we are dealing with syntactic LDA.⁵ To conclude, consider previously unnoticed situations in which intervention-like effects arise in the context of an auxiliary:

⁴Fernández-Serrano (2016) provides a detailed analysis of the data above based on the idea that agreement takes place whenever the embedded clause projects fewer layers of structure (undergoing a restructuring of sorts, but from a phase-theoretic perspective; cf. Gallego 2009), which has morphological and interpretive consequences.

⁵A reviewer suggests that agreement is also for third person here, but this is not accurate, as this is a default value. If agreement was complete (number and person), then one would expect

- (12) a. ? Me **faltaron** [corregir **esos exámenes**].
 to.me lacked.3PL mark those exams
 ‘I couldn’t mark those exams.’
 b. ?* Me **faltaron** [haber corregido **esos exámenes**].
 to.me lacked.3PL have marked those exams
 ‘I couldn’t have marked those exams.’

A second piece of evidence comes from clitic climbing (cf. Gallego 2016; Paradís 2016; and references therein). As (13) shows, LDA is worse if a clitic stays in situ:

- (13) a. Se **pueden** [leer **esos libros**].
 SE can.3PL read those books
 ‘Those books can be read.’
 b. Se (me) **pueden** [leer(?*me) **esos libros**].
 SE to.me can.3PL read to.me those books
 ‘Those books can be read to me.’

Let us conclude. This section has reviewed the main properties of SE sentences in Spanish, paying attention to the various agreement patterns they display in the different varieties of Spanish. Two main patterns have been identified, following the literature. One features a ϕ -defective v , which explains the lack of accusative Case (and thus agreement with T). The other features a ϕ -complete v , which blocks Agree (T, IA). As we have seen, the alternation between agreeing and non-agreeing options is not subject to any systematic dialectal logic (there is no “isogloss” telling us where agreement stops), so we seem to have a case of

to find, for instance, SE sentences with 1st or 2nd person agreement; however, as López (2007) points out, this is impossible in Spanish:

- (i) Spanish (López 2007: 127)
- a. * Se vimos unos lingüistas en el mercado ayer.
 SE saw.1PL some linguists in the market yesterday
 ‘Some linguists were seen in the market yesterday.’
 (intended meaning: Some of us linguists were seen in the market)
- b. * Se visteis unos lingüistas en el mercado ayer.
 SE saw.2PL some linguists in the market yesterday
 ‘Some linguists were seen in the market yesterday.’
 (intended meaning: Some of you linguists were seen in the market)

optionality – with a tendency towards full agreement, a murky issue that seems to have semantic consequences in biclausal scenarios (cf. Martin & Uriagereka 1998; Fernández-Serrano 2016).

As we have seen, such optionality is frequent whenever the IA is not differentially marked. However, agreement has also been reported in cases where the DO is preceded by a Case marker, a pattern I would like to refer to as hybrid, which I discuss in the following section.

3 Agreement across P in Spanish

3.1 Introduction

This section considers two configurations in which agreement between T and the complement of a preposition can take place in Spanish. The first one involves the differential marker *a* (cf. Torrego 1998; López 2012) and the second one involves full-fledged prepositions. Roughly, the relevant abstract patterns are as in (14), where K and P give rise to Case and P projections.⁶

- (14) a. [SE T(Probe) [_{VP} V ... [K XP (Goal)]]] [K = differential marker]
 └──────────────────────────────────┘ ↑
 b. [SE T(Probe) [_{VP} V ... [P XP (Goal)]]] [P = full-fledged preposition]
 └──────────────────────────────────┘ ↑

After briefly discussing the case of agreement across DOM (namely, (14a)), I turn my attention to (14b), suggesting that P undergoes incorporation, giving rise to a P-stranding-less version of pseudopassives. In terms of parametric tendencies, the second scenario is unexpected, given the properties of Romance languages. This should explain its limited availability, which seems to be largely restricted to American varieties.

3.2 Agreement across DOM

We have already seen that SE sentences can be passive (with agreement) and impersonal (without agreement). Above we saw the relevant data in (4) and (5), repeated as (15) and (16):

- (15) Spanish
 Se criticaron los recortes.
 SE criticize.3PL the cuts
 ‘Budget cuts were criticized.’

⁶The distinction between K and P is equivalent to that between functional or lexical prepositions (see van Riemsdijk 1990 and references therein for discussion).

(16) Spanish

- a. Se criticó los recortes.
SE criticize.3SG the cuts
'Budget cuts were criticized.'
- b. Se criticó a los políticos.
SE criticize.3SG DOM the politicians
'Politicians were criticized.'

As noted, if v is φ -complete (the (15) example), the IA presumably receives accusative Case, which can be coupled with the differential marker a , as in (16b). This is precisely the pattern in which agreement is most unlikely to happen – for the same reason agreement does not bypass prepositions more generally. That said, agreement does seem to be possible in some cases, even in the context of DOM; this variant of the pattern in (16b), to which I return below, is called “hybrid” by RAE-ASALE (2009).⁷

The v of (16) should be φ -complete v , therefore v^* in the sense of Chomsky (2001). However, it is not immediately obvious that *bona fide* Accusative Case is assigned in the two examples offered in (16). Consider the contrast in (17), where the accusative clitic *lo* (Eng. ‘it’) can only be used if the antecedent is animate (a *Trump* – Eng. ‘Trump’):⁸

- (17) a. * Los poemas, se los recita en clase de literatura.
the poems SE it.ACC.M.PL read.3SG in class of literature
'Poems, we read them in literature class.'
- b. ? A Trump, aquí se lo ve como a un matón.
DOM Trump here SE it.ACC.M.SG see.3SG like to a thug
'Trump, he is seen as a thug here.'

⁷Variation in this domain does not seem to adhere to any clear-cut geographical distinction. For some speakers, agreement is optional, and has no interpretive consequences. Planells (2017) approaches the facts by taking T to agree optionally with SE or the (shifted, for DOM reasons) internal argument – which are responsible for partial and complete agreement respectively. The approach makes use of Chomsky’s (1995) *equidistance* (cf. Gallego 2013 for discussion), but the facts could also be handled by the approach to variation put forward in Obata & Epstein (2016), where parameters boil down to SMT-compliant derivations whose order of operations varies.

⁸As an anonymous reviewer rightly points out, there is non-trivial variation concerning the case of clitics in these constructions, even within European varieties of Spanish. Taking into account all the dialectal subtleties that concern clitics is beyond the scope of this paper.

The asymmetry in (17) looks consistent, so let's assume the following generalization, taking it for granted that only DOM signals Accusative Case assignment:⁹

- (18) If the IA is differentially-marked (*a* XP), then SE *v* is *v** (φ -complete).

An interesting piece of evidence indicating that accusative Case may not be at play even in the presence of DOM comes from the observation that *leísta* varieties of Spanish show a preference for the dative clitic *le* (Eng. 'to him/her') in the presence of SE, as in (19):

- (19) a. Non-*leísta*/American Spanish
 Se **lo** critica.
 SE CL.ACC criticize.3SG
 'He is criticized.'
 b. *Leísta*/European Spanish
 Se {?lo / le} critica.
 SE CL.ACC CL.DAT criticize.3SG
 'He is criticized.'

This raises the more general question whether differentially-marked IAs receive true accusative. If the answer is negative, this would explain the restricted availability of *lo/la* (only with animates), and the preference for *le* in European Spanish. The tendency to have a *lo* > *le* shift in the context of SE is noted by Ordóñez (2004):

- (20) European Spanish
 Si hay que fusilar-**lo**, SE **le** fusila.
 if there.be.3SG that shoot-CL SE CL shoot.3SG
 'If he must be shot, he is shot.' (from P. Preston, *Franco*, cited by Ordóñez 2004)

This accusative-dative connection would naturally align with *leísmo*, which seems to be present in the only Romance language with consistent DOM: Spanish. Colomina et al. (2017) in fact argue that DOM involves a process of accusative Case displacement, assuming that the structure that underlies (21) is (22):

⁹Although (18) is stable across dialects, there are well-known exceptions. In particular, the pattern is more restricted in European Spanish. In non-European varieties, on the other hand, RAE-ASALE (2009: §41.12m) observes that *v** can assign Accusative Case to inanimate IAs in the Andean, Chilean, and River Plate areas (cf. Gallego 2016).

- (21) Spanish
 Nadie visitó a Trump.
 nobody visited.3SG DOM Trump
 ‘Nobody visited Trump.’

- (22) [_{VP} nadie *v* [_{VP} PROVIDE [(to) Trump [P VISIT]]]]

In this context, it is interesting to note that Mexican Spanish, which is not *leísta*, becomes (obligatorily) *leísta* if SE is introduced. In fact, as (23) reveals, this type of *leísmo* is more general than the one present in European varieties, for it applies to both masculine and feminine DPs (as in *bona fide* datives, as emphasized by Colomina et al. 2017).

- (23) Mexican Spanish
- a. A tu amigo SE le ve preocupado.
 DOM your friend.M.SG SE him.DAT.M.SG see.3SG worried
 ‘Your friend, he looks worried.’
- b. A tu amiga SE le ve preocupada.
 DOM your friend.F.SG SE her.DAT.F.SG see.3SG worried
 ‘Your friend, she looks worried.’

Gallego (2016) builds on the previous description of the facts to argue that impersonal SE sentences can be divided into two broad dialects:

- (24) a. Dialect A: *v* is φ -defective
 b. Dialect B: *v* is φ -complete

The morphological distinction targeting *v* implies the following:

- (25) a. *Leísta* Spanish
 Dialect A: [_{VP} *v* [_{VP} V [_{PP} $\overset{\uparrow}{a}$ [DP OBLIQUE]]]]
- b. Non-*leísta* Spanish
 Dialect B: i. [_{VP} $\overset{\uparrow}{v\varphi}$ [_{VP} V [_{KP} *a* DP ACC]]]
- c. Hybrid pattern
 Dialect B: ii. [... T φ ... [_{VP} *v* [_{VP} V [_{KP} $\overset{\uparrow}{a}$ DP NOM]]]]

The key distinction between A and B dialects is whether Accusative Case is assigned or displaced. If the latter is the case, some oblique (dative, if some version of Marantz’s (1991) Dependent Case approach is at work) assigner takes care of the IA.

The most intriguing pattern is (25c), which is reported by Ordóñez & Treviño (2007). As these authors note, Mexican and Argentinian varieties of Spanish feature what RAE-ASALE (2009) calls the ‘hybrid’ pattern (cf. Planells 2017 and references therein for discussion).

(26) (Ordóñez & Treviño 2007: 12)

- a. Mexican Spanish
Finalmente, se **castigaron** a los culpables.
finally SE punished.3PL to the culprits
‘Finally, the culprits were punished.’
- b. Argentinian Spanish
Se **evacuaron** a más de 120.000 damnificados.
SE evacuated.3PL to more of 120,000 damaged
‘More than 120,000 damaged people were evacuated.’

These data are not expected if the IA is inactive, after receiving accusative Case. In order to account for them, we would need to assume that: (i) the IA is Caseless (otherwise the φ -Probe on T could not match it) and (ii) the Case marker *a* cannot give rise to a PP or a KP projection. It must in fact be analyzed as an element inserted in the NS \rightarrow PF wing of the derivation – in other words, as a dissociated morpheme (cf. Halle & Marantz 1993).

Now that we have reviewed agreement across differential markers, in the next section I pay attention to situations where agreement is rampant, and in fact ignores elements that are not mere functional Case markers, but are seemingly full-fledged prepositions.

3.3 Agreement across full-fledged P

We have just discussed data where the φ -Probe on T within SE sentences matches a differentially marked IA. Such cases, though subject to a rather unclear dialectal distribution, fall into place if Spanish *a* can be considered a functional element, not a preposition in its own right. Surprisingly, some American Spanish dialects seem to allow a pattern of agreement that can also ignore prepositions other than *a*. Consider the examples in (27), taken from internet searches:

(27) American Spanish

- a. Dijo que se **hablaron** con las autoridades.
said.3SG that SE talked.3PL with the authorities
‘He said that the authorities were talked to.’
[http://www.santiagodigital.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=](http://www.santiagodigital.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13837&Itemid=17)
[view&id=13837&Itemid=17](http://www.santiagodigital.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13837&Itemid=17)

- b. En Santiago anoche se **informaron** de cuatro homicidios.
 in Santiago last night SE informed.3PL of four homicides
 ‘Four homicides were reported last night in Santiago.’
<http://www.periodismoglobal.cl/2006/08/la-democracia-de-la-udi.html>
- c. El comercio online sumó [...] 100 millones de transacciones.
 the trade online added.3SG 100 millions of transactions
 [...] cuando se **llegaron** a los 74,3 millones de operaciones.
 when SE arrived.3PL to the 74.3 millions of operations
 ‘The online trading added 100 million transactions when 74.3 million operations were reached.’
http://www.elpais.com/articulo/economia/comercio/electronico/volvio/batir/record/2010/elpepueco/20110506elpepueco_7/Tes
- d. En realidad se **dependen** de tantos factores que esto provoca
 in reality SE depend.3PL of so.many factors that this provokes
 una extrema dificultad
 a extreme difficulty
 ‘Actually, one depends on so many factors that it makes things extremely difficult.’
<http://diegotenis9.wordpress.com/>

Analogous data can be obtained from searches in both the CREA data bank and on Google:

(28) (from CREA: <http://corpus.rae.es/creanet.html>)

- a. El Salvador
 Sólo se **disponen** de datos de matrículas ...
 just SE dispose.3PL of data of registration
 ‘We just have data on registration ...’
- b. Costa Rica
 Aunque no se **disponen** de cifras exactas ...
 although not SE dispose.3PL of numbers exact
 ‘Although we don’t have exact numbers ...’
- c. Spain
 Sí se **saben** de diversos factores que influyen ...
 yes SE know.3PL of diverse factors that influence
 ‘We do know factors that influence ...’

- (29) a. Mexico
 Todavía se **confían** en los milagros.
 yet SE trust.3PL in the miracles
 ‘They still believe in miracles.’
<http://www.sinembargo.mx/30-03-2014/947521>
- b. Chile
 Cuando se **hablan** de las **supuestas desigualdades**
 when SE talk.3PL of the alleged asymmetries
 ‘When they talk about the alleged asymmetries’
<http://blog.lanacion.cl/2014/03/11/desigualdades-de-genero-en-el-emprendimiento/>

These data have not been described in reference grammars of Spanish (cf. Bosque & Demonte 1999; RAE-ASALE 2009), plausibly because they can be regarded as production errors. The data have, however, also been reported by the Syntactic Atlas of Spanish (ASinEs) (see Figure 1).

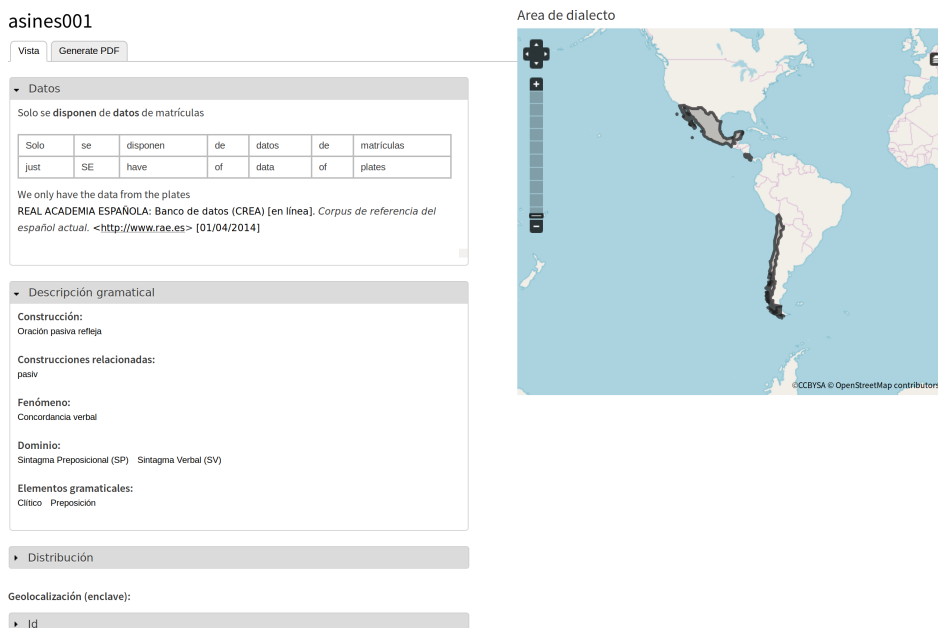


Figure 1: Syntactic Atlas of Spanish. (Gallego 2018)

Furthermore, note that the texts from which I have gathered the examples are not oral, and they are not isolated online hits. The fact that this type of evidence can also be found in the CREA database seems to me enough to regard it as part of the speakers' competence. Therefore, what one could plausibly conclude from these examples is that American dialects of Spanish display a restricted variety of pseudopassives (modulo P-stranding). Let us refer to this process as "P-phasing", merely to indicate that the P undergoes a change of state that allows the φ -Probe on T to match the DP.

4 A Probe-Goal analysis of the facts

Some questions arise if, as I have argued, the prepositions in the examples can be bypassed by a φ -Probe. To begin with, one may wonder whether the same phenomenon is found not only with SE passives, but also with periphrastic (BE) passives. The answer is negative, as examples like the following are ruled out by American Spanish speakers who accept the data in (27), (28) and (29):

(30) American Spanish

- a. * **Fueron habladas** con las autoridades.
be.3PL talked.F.3PL with the authorities
'The authorities were spoken to.'
- b. * **Fueron informados** de cuatro homicidios.
be.3PL informed.M.3PL of four homicides
'Four homicides were reported.'

The process of P-phasing might further be related to the prepositional-transitive alternation, illustrated in (31), that many prepositional verbs undergo in Spanish (cf. Demonte 1991; García-Miguel 1995; Gallego 2010; and references therein):¹⁰

(31) Spanish

- a. He pensado (en) la respuesta.
have.1SG thought in the answer
'I thought of the answer.'

¹⁰Plausibly too, the speakers that allow for P-phasing also accept P-stranding in Spanish (cf. Depiante & Thompson 2013; Lemos 2013; and references therein).

- b. Hemos discutido (de) ese asunto en la reunión.
 have.1PL discussed about that matter in the meeting
 ‘We discussed that matter in the meeting.’

This very point takes us back to a second question posed by the data above. What is the relevant parameter that makes agreement possible across prepositions? I will assume that the T head is morphologically equivalent in all the Spanish dialects under consideration – hence, there is no parametrically ‘tweaked’ version of T that allows for a deeper search (cf. Chomsky 2001). I will instead argue that it is the status of P that varies, as whatever happens in these dialects affects the *v*P syntax. There are three specific alternatives to implement the idea that the parameter is anchored to P:

(32) Parametrizing P

- a. P is external to the VP (as in Kayne’s 2004 analysis of causatives)
- b. P is inserted at PF (as a dissociated morpheme)
- c. P is reanalyzed with V

The first option is tempting in the case of the hybrid pattern, where the preposition has a clear-cut functional nature – like complementizers, as Kayne (2004) argues. This is in fact the approach that Ordóñez & Treviño (2016) put forward in their analysis of DOM, whose derivation is reproduced in (35) for a sentence like (34):

(33) Spanish

Vimos a María.
 saw.1PL DOM María
 ‘We saw María.’

- (34) a. ... [_{vP} v [_{VP} vimos [_{DP} María]]] DP [+anim, +spec]
 Merge of *a*
 b. ... a [_{vP} v [_{VP} vimos [_{DP} María]]]
 Movement to Spec
 c. ... [_{aP} [María]_i a [_{vP} v [_{VP} vimos [_t]_i]]]
 Merge of W
 d. ... W [_{aP} [María]_i a [_{vP} v [_{VP} vimos [_t]_i]]]
 Head raising

- e. ... [a_j+W] [a_P [María]_i t_j [v_P v [v_P vimos [t]_i]]]
 Remnant movement
- f. ... [WP [v_P v [v_P vimos [t]_i]]]_k [a_j+W] [a_P [María]_i t_j t_k

Suppose that, following the logic of these authors' analysis, the differential marker is introduced above the TP (not the vP), then there is no obstacle preventing T's φ -Probe from matching the IA. It is not obvious, though, that the same idea should be adopted for prepositions that have a semantic flavor, like many of those featured in the examples above. For this very reason, it is not obvious that the analysis in (34) can be phrased in terms of PF insertion: the prepositions in (27), (28) and (29) are not dissociated morphemes. We are left, therefore, with some variant of the reanalysis approach (cf. Hornstein & Weinberg 1981; Kayne 1975; 2004, among many others). Of course, notice that it must be the case that the preposition is not heading an adjunct, since these seem to block agreement at all costs. Hence, the examples in (36) are totally out:

(35) Spanish

- a. * Se **trabajaron** en las **reuniones**.
 SE work.3PL in the meetings
 'People worked in the meetings.'
- b. * Se **criticaron** al Presidente por **varias razones**.
 SE criticize.3PL DOM-the president for various reasons
 'The President was criticized for various reasons.'

Consequently, the V-P reanalysis option seems to be necessary with some prepositions. Accordingly, the process depicted in (36) seems to be relevant for capturing the data in (27), (28) and (29):

- (36) a. [SE T(φ -Probe) [v_P V ... [P XP (Goal)]]] (P = full-fledged
 preposition) ↑
- b. [SE T(φ -Probe) [v_P [V-P] ... [t XP (Goal)]]] (P = full-fledged
 preposition) ↑

Literally, what (37) is saying is that P is incorporated into V so that the XP Goal is probeable by T and agreement can take place. This raises interesting typological questions of the sort involved in teasing apart satellite-framed and verb-framed languages (cf. Mateu 2012 and references therein). An observation to keep in mind in order to support the Probe-Goal analysis is that, again, agreement is only in number (cf. Etxepare 2006), as the following asymmetries reveal:

(37) * Spanish

Se {pensa-mos/-áis} en {nosotros / vosotros}.

SE think-1PL/-2PL in we / you.PL

‘We/you are thought about.’

Finally, there is evidence arguing against the existence of a non-referential (indefinite) 3PL pronoun (cf. Suñer 1983; Cabredo Hofherr 2003). These pronouns can be spelled out, and then the non-referential reading is lost. However, these sentences reject the spell-out of a pronoun. So, the following is possible:

(38) Spanish

En España, (ellos) se acuestan tarde.

in Spain they SE go.to.bed.3PL late

‘In Spain, (they/people) go to bed late.’

But the following is not:

(39) Spanish

En la reunión, (*ellos) se hablaron de temas muy importantes.

in the meeting they SE talked.3PL of topics very important

‘Very important topics were talked about in the meeting.’

And the same holds if the subject is indefinite, which can also trigger the impersonal reading that the sentences we are considering deploy:

(40) Spanish

En la reunión, (*algunos) se hablaron de temas muy importantes.

in the meeting some SE talked.3PL of topics very important

‘Very important topics were talked about in the meeting.’

Nonetheless, definiteness does seem to be relevant when it comes to the Goal of the agreement process. Consider the following examples, which indicate that the more indefinite it is, the more possible the agreement dependency becomes:

(41) Spanish

a. ? Se evacuaron a mas de 200.000 damnificados.

SE evacuate.3PL DOM more of 200,000 affected

‘More than 200,000 affected were evacuated.’

- b. ?? Se castigaron a los culpables.
 SE punished.3PL DOM the culprits
 ‘The culprits were punished.’
- c. ?* Se castigaron a ellos.
 SE punished.3PL DOM them
 ‘They were punished.’

Although I cannot go into the details, all of this suggests that there are deeper layers of analysis around this phenomenon, indicating that the type of Goal has a role in determining how good agreement is.

5 Conclusions

This paper has discussed new data from Spanish dialects concerning agreement in SE sentences. Although this is a well-known topic in the literature, the previous pages have shown that along with the “hybrid pattern”, some dialects of Spanish display a pseudopassive structure of sorts. Needless to say, a more careful empirical study is needed, and the factors to control for are the following: (i) the type of verb (non-pronominal, agentive, etc.) that allows pseudopassives, (ii) the preposition that allows agreement, (iii) the type of Goal (DP, NP, bare plural, etc.), and (iv) the source from which the data have been obtained.

I have argued against the possibility that the facts can be considered as typos or oral errors. There are various arguments for rejecting that possibility: the pattern does not appear in isolated online hits (we could add more examples to the data in (27), (28) and (29)), one cannot find analogous examples with adjuncts (see (36)), and similar agreement facts are found with DOM and partitive prepositions, as noted by Treviño (2010) for Mexican Spanish:

- (42) Mexican Spanish
 Por aquí **pasaron** de **esos** **aviones**.
 by here passed.3PL of those planes
 ‘Some of those planes passed by here.’

The descriptive and theoretical consequences of the discussion above are not minor. It forces us not only to reconsider the distinction between different types of prepositions in Spanish (and other languages; cf. Demonte 1987; 1991; 1995; Abels 2003; Cuervo 2003; Pesetsky & Torrego 2004; Romero Morales 2011), but also to sharpen our analysis of how micro- and macroparameters interact. Since

the agreement data reported here align with phenomena that concern the V-P connection, we are in a good position to improve our understanding of linguistic variation, typological correlations, and language contact.

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