Features and Interfaces in Romance

EDITED BY

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Essays in honor of Heles Contreras

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ESSAYS IN HONOR OF HELES CONTRERAS

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To Heles

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PREFACE

This volume represents recent research on the structure of Romance languages as well as studies of languages which provide significant comparisons with Romance, such as English and Basque. The title of the volume reflects two recurrent themes in these studies. Grammatical features have taken on an increasingly central role in syntax and morphology, particularly (though not exclusively) in the Minimalist framework, where they have become crucial in acounting for basic properties of syntactic derivations. The success of the framework depends on the adequacy of the characterization of features, a matter which is addressed in many of these studies. Likewise, the possibility that neither Deep Structure nor Surface Structure exists as a grammar-internal level of representation has renewed interest in problems of the grammar-internal interfaces. Many of the studies in this volume are concerned with the interaction of different components of the grammar. The studies which follow explore these and related problems in the analysis of Romance (French, Spanish and Italian), English and Basque.

Six of the articles in the collection focus on morpho-phonological features and their interface with syntax and semantics. These articles cover a range of topics, from Argentinian intonation to the first language acquisition of determiners.

Harris' "Reflections on *A Phonological Grammar of Spanish*" re-examines the topic of Spanish rhotics, arguing that Saporta and Contreras' (1962) *Phonological Grammar* (*PG*) syllabic treatment remains the most elegant analysis, even though it is unable to accommodate certain exceptional data. *PG*'s single rhotic proposal anticipates by two decades an explicit theory of syllable structure; Harris compares *PG* with the "standard generative analysis," concluding that *PG* attains greater generality in its rules.

Kaisse's "The Long Fall: An intonational melody of Argentinian Spanish" describes a virtually unexplored intonational pattern in Argentinian Spanish. The pattern is investigated through a detailed examination of a corpus recorded by Kaisse in Argentina. She provides a close acoustic

analysis, finding two discourse contexts for it, both of which link directly to semantics.

Klausenburger's "The Morphologization and Grammaticalization of French Liaison" re-examines the topic of liaison in Modern French, proposing that it is best analyzed as prefixation of liaison consonants to the vocalic initial stem. In reviewing the development of liaison in diachronic terms, it highlights the centrality of morphology to the syntax and phonology interfaces.

Lleó's "Determining the Acquisition of Determiners: On the innateness of functional categories" deals with the innatist vs. the constructivist debate in first language (L1) acquisition. Lleó presents new data to argue for the innatist view. While dealing with the issue of syntactic development, she also addresses the syntax-morphology-phonology interfaces, since at early stages (1-2 years) of language development the three components are not clearly differentiated.

Martínez-Gil's "Sonority as a Primitive Phonological Feature: Evidence from Spanish complex onset phonotactics" uses Spanish phonotactic data to show that the notion of sonority must be a phonological primitive, not a phenomenon derived from binary features. It also argues that the Spanish "dilemma" of complex onset phonotactics can be resolved by redefining the Spanish sonority hierarchy for obstruents in terms of the feature [continuant].

Saltarelli's "The realization of number in Italian and Spanish" proposes an analysis of nominal plurality in Spanish and Italian within an Optimality Theory framework, taking into account both synchrony and diachrony. It argues that the common feature of coronality (segmental for [s] and featural for [e], [i]) characterizes number marking of nouns in Latin, Spanish ([s]) and Italian ([e], [i]). The specific realization in the daughter languages is determined by competing rankings of morpho-phonological constraints.

Twelve additional articles are concerned with syntactic and semantic issues. Artiagoitia's "Seemingly Ergative and Ergatively Seeming" investigates a class of Basque *seem*-type verbs, which unexpectedly display transitive properties, including ergative case and the transitive auxiliary. Artiagoitia shows that these verbs are not in fact transitive, and argues that their "seeming" transitive behavior is due to a feature, [-absolutive], which overrides the standard mechanisms for activating ergative Case.

Bosque's "On the Weight of Light Predicates" explores the syntax and semantics of Spanish light verbs and light nouns. Bosque shows that these predicates are not simply the lexical support of morphological content. Rather, they also have several semantic properties, especially related to

aspectual structure. Bosque demonstrates that there are distinct sub-classes of light predicates, and extends the analysis to light nouns.

Camacho's "On the Interpretation of Focus Features" argues that cleft-focus has properties distinct from other types of focus, and proposes an account of this fact based on the syntax of a [focus] feature. In clefts, this feature is attracted by a probe on the copular verb. Camacho then proposes that differences between cleft focus and other kinds of focus, such as adverbs like *always*, *only*, follow from the fact that their [focus] feature does not delete.

Demonte and Fernández-Soriano's "'Dequeísmo' in Spanish and the Structure and Features of CP" deals with the dialectal parameter involving the use of *de que* in embedded tensed clauses. They argue that the use of *de que* is a result of the parametric option of spreading CP-features across two functional heads: CP, and a higher head.

Eguren's "Evaluative Suffixation in Spanish and the Syntax of Derivational Processes" develops a syntactic account of evaluative suffixation in Spanish that is consistent with antisymmetry in syntax. The morphological approach reduces the notions of "suffix" to head and "prefix" to leftward adjunction. Although evaluative suffixation appears to be a counter-example, Eguren shows that it can be accommodated straightforwardly.

Emonds' "The Lower Operator Position with Parasitic Gaps" proposes that the null operator in PG constructions moves not to Spec, CP, as is commonly assumed, but in (non-casemarked) Spec, IP—and in some cases, Spec, DP. This accounts for a number of often overlooked restrictions on the occurrence of PGs. Among these are the tense restriction on adjunct-internal PGs, the non-occurrence of PGs in clauses with overt subjects, and the lack of PGs in bare adverbial participials.

Gutierrez-Rexach and Mallen's "NP Movement and Adjective Position in the DP Phases" deals with the issue of the syntactic distribution of adjectives and the relationship between position and interpretation. In particular, although the unmarked position for Spanish adjectives is postnominal, certain adjectives may appear both pre-nominally and post-nominally, and the position contributes to interpretation. They propose that DP may express two separate phases: the predicative D phase, and a separate "propositional" D phase, activated by the presence of Topic, Focus and Force features in DP.

Kempchinsky's "On the Position of Preposed PPs in English and Spanish" examines the nature of PP preposing in these two languages, and argues that while the properties of English locative inversion follow from locality

requirements for satisfaction of EPP, Spanish locative inversion has properties of A'-type movement. Kempchinsky shows that the PPs involved in these constructions are all topics, but of different types.

Ordóñez and Olarrea's "Weak Subject Pronouns in Caribbean Spanish and XP Pied-piping" investigates the parameter which distinguishes dialects whose subject pronouns can appear pre-verbally in interrogatives. They analyze the phenomenon in terms of the status of these pronominals as weak pronouns, and argue also that interrogative movement involves remnant XP movement of the verb instead of head movement.

Sánchez's "Discourse Topic Constraints on Left Dislocated Subjects and CLLD Structures" examines a contrast in discourse between preverbal subject DPs and null subjects on the one hand, and overt object DPs in Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD) on the other. Sánchez proposes an account for the fact that when overt subjects and objects compete for the same position, the subject prevails over the object: there is an abstract operator which binds subject agreement. This determines the default nature of subjects as topics in discourse.

Suñer's "The Puzzle of Restrictive Relative Clauses with Conjoined DP Antecedents" investigates restrictive relative clauses (RRCs) with coordinated DP antecedents (e.g. *Most of the bronzes but few of the oils that were auctioned on Saturday fetched good prices*). RRCs can have coordinated antecedents which may be preceded by a quantifier, a definite determiner, or both. In these cases, the restrictive relative pronoun modifies the NP, but leaves the strong determiner outside of its scope. Suñer proposes that an obligatory deletion in the first conjunct is conditioned by the relation that holds between the structure of the relevant sentences and the function that they perform.

Tellier's "Definite Determiners in French and Spanish: Features and extraction" examines a parametric difference between Romance and Germanic DPs, the possibility of WH-extracting from a definite DP in the former (e.g. *De quelle ville as-tu vu la photo?*). It argues that extraction is not simply a function of definiteness or specificity as been earlier claimed, but rather is due to an interplay of expletive vs. lexical definite determiners, and raising of the expletive from AgrD to D. Extending suggestions of Longobardi and Vergnaud & Zubizarreta, Tellier clarifies the distinction between generic and referential DPs, the role of functional categories with DP, morpho-syntactic features, and parametric differences between Romance and Germanic.

We would like to thank a number of colleagues for their assistance in serving as anonymous reviewers for articles in the volume: Judy Bernstein, Joe Emonds, Javier Gutierrez-Rexach, Jim Harris, Ellen Kaisse, Jurgen Klausenburger, Amaya Mendikoetxea, Antxon Olarrea, Paco Ordoñez, Jon Ortiz de Urbina, Lisa Reed, Liliana Sánchez, Carol Stoel-Gammon, Magui Suñer, Christine Tellier and Bernard Tranel. We also wish to convey our thanks to the series editor, Konrad Koerner for his support, both intellectual and technical, and to Olivia Herschensohn and Jessica Giesler for technical assistance.

This volume is in honor of our friend and colleague, Heles Contreras. The articles herein are inspired by his contributions to linguistic theory, and to Romance linguistics in particular. The topics in this volume testify to the influence that Heles' work has had on scholarship in phonology as well as in syntax. His observations in *A Phonological Grammar of Spanish* (1962) anticipated the importance of syllable structure by twenty years. In syntax, he has made important scholarly contributions on numerous topics. In the last few years alone, he has researched aspects of the grammar ranging from multiple questions, small clauses, exclamatives and relative clauses, to bare noun phrases, non-predicative noun phrases, and extraction from noun phrases. His work has explored such theoretical issues as binding, islands, closed domains, subjacency, weak crossover, and properties of Merge. The body of his work is a required preliminary reading list for anyone attempting to explore any issue of Romance Linguistics. We find ourselves returning time and again to his books and articles for consultation and illumination, always increasing our scope of knowledge and clarifying issues relevant to current theory. His more recent research in negation, subject position and parasitic gaps has challenged traditional wisdom, leading to new lines of investigation—as the articles herein illustrate.

But perhaps most important of all are his contributions to individual scholars whom he has mentored for decades. Heles has been exceedingly generous with his help to generations of linguists, providing guidance and feedback on written and presented work in progress. His intellectual acuity and insightful argumentation are matched by his discretion and kindness in critical comments. We dedicate this volume to his life's work, with love and appreciation.

SEEMINGLY ERGATIVE AND ERGATIVELY SEEMING[*]

XABIER ARTIAGOITIA
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0. *Introduction*

Basque is traditionally regarded as a language with an ergative case system but nominative- accusative syntax. I present the ergative case marking in (1):[1]

(1)　a.　*Ana-k Jon ikusi du*
　　　　Ana-E Jon see　has
　　　　"Ana has seen Jon."
　　b.　*Ana erori da*
　　　　Ana fall　is
　　　　"Ana has fallen."
　　c.　**Ana-k erori {da / du}*

In (1a), the verb *ikusi* 'see' selects the transitive auxiliary *edun* 'have', the subject *Ana* bears the ergative case-mark *–k*, and the object *Jon* bears the absolutive case-mark, namely ϕ. In (1b), the intransitive verb *erori* 'fall' selects the auxiliary *izan* 'be', and its sole argument bears absolutive case;

[1] The following abbreviations are used in the glosses: ART = article, AUX = auxiliary, A = absolutive, D = dative, E = ergative, GEN = genitive, nom = nominalizer, PART = partitive. PL = pluralizer, PN = postposition, P = present, R = root. When person markers are irrelevant for the discussion, I simply gloss the auxiliary verb as "AUX".

(1c) shows the impossibility of an ergative pattern for *erori* with either auxiliary.

Many unergative verbs in Basque conform to the pattern noun + *egin* 'do':

(2)   *Ana-k gaizki lo   egin du*
      Ana-E badly sleep do   has
      "Ana has slept badly."

Traditional grammar considers this verb class as a canonical transitive structure. I assume this approach to the noun + *egin* 'do' verb class is correct.

The Basque verb also has subject, object and indirect object agreement. The order of the verbal affixes is absolutive-root-dative-ergative. Some examples illustrate this:

(3)   a.   *ikusi z- a- it- u- t baina ez n- a-u-zu ezagutu*
           see   2A-P- PL-R-1E but   not 1A-P-R-2E know
           "I've seen you but you haven't recognized me"
      b.   *Zinema-ra z- oa-z? Ni ere ba-n- oa!*
           movie- to 2A-go-PL 1A too *ba*-1A-go
           "Are you going to the movies? I am also going."
      c.   *Gero emango d-i- zu-t   /gero emango d-i- zki-zu-t*
           after give   A-R-2D-1E   after give   A-R-PL-2D-1E
           "I'll give it to you later "   / "I'll give them to you later"
      d.   *Zer irakuri d-u-zu? Atxagaren   poemak irakurri d-it- u-zu?*
           what read   A-R-2E Atxaga-GEN poems read   A-PL-R-2E
           "What have you read? Have you read Atxaga's poems?"
      e.   *Ikusi d- u- ∅*   */ ikusi d-u-te*
           see   A-R-3E   see   A-R-3E/PL
           "she has seen (it)"   "they have seen (it)"

The prefix *z-* in (3a) and (3b) identifies a second person absolutive argument (object in 3a, subject in 3b); the prefix *n-* identifies a singular first person absolutive argument (object in 3a, subject in 3b). In addition, the pluralizers *–it-* and *–z* indicate that the absolutive argument is plural in (3a-b). In (3c), we find the first person singular marker for an ergative argument (*-t*), the second person singular marker for a dative argument (*-zu-*) and a plain ∅ for the absolutive argument; grammarians take the prefix *d-* as a dummy element that fills in the spot for absolutive agreement; given that this dummy element

varies for every tense (e.g. *d-oa* "goes", *z-ihoan* "she went"), it's likely to be a reflection of tense itself. The third person marker is ϕ for ergative, absolutive or dative arguments, but a plural marker identifies any third person plural; this is the situation in (3d-e). Basque generativists assume that agreement markers license *pro*; this makes Basque a null subject *and* null object language, an assumption I adopt.[2]

The subject matter of this article is a subclass of verbs that I will term *irudi* 'seem' verbs, *irudi* verbs henceforth. This class includes *irudi* itself, the verb *eman* 'seem' and *iduri* 'picture'.[3] Here are the relevant examples:

(4) a. *Horrela jantzita, (lagun) zintzoa   ematen d-u-zu.*
      so   dressed person honest-ART seem A-R-2E
      "Dressed like that, you seem (an) honest (person)."

    b. *Jonek dotore   ematen   d-u-ϕ jaka horrekin.*
      Jon-E elegant   seem   A-R-3E jacket that-with
      "John looks elegant with that jacket on."

    c. *Jonek poz-ik   ematen d-u-ϕ*
      Jon-E happy-PN seem   A-R-3E
      "John seems happy."

(5) *Jonek (lagun) zintzoa   d-irudi-ϕ*
    Jon-E person honest-ART A-R-3E
    "John seems (an) honest (person)."

(6) *Plazak   arroltze bat iduri d-u-ϕ*
    square-E egg   one seem A-R-3E
    "The square resembles an egg."

The verbs *eman* (literally 'give') and *irudi* may appear with DP, AP, PP and, less frequently, NP or AdvP predicates. DP predicates, headed by the article, are individual-level and may themselves "hide" AP or NP predicates. Some variation exists depending on dialect and predicate type.

What is interesting about this class of verbs is that they all display an ergative pattern: they select the transitive auxiliary *edun* 'have' and their subjects have ergative case. The verb *irudi* is one of the few Basque verbs which have a synthetic conjugation, i.e. it doesn't require a periphrasis (participle + auxiliary). Its person markers correspond to the ergative series:

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[2] See Laka (1993b) and Gomez & Sainz (1995) for a description of the Basque verb forms.

[3] *Iduri* is a dialectal variation of *irudi* but retains its noun category, it takes no verb affixes.

(7) ˙*zuk   zintzoa d-irudi-zu baina guk   ere zintzoak   d-irudi-gu*
     you-E honest A-seem -2E but   we-E too honest-ART A-seem- 1E
     "You seem (to be) honest but we also seem (to be) honest."

Some relevant questions arise regarding *irudi* verbs: why do these verbs follow an ergative pattern? Do the relevant predicates count as true internal arguments of the *irudi* verb? Do they get case from the latter somehow? If not, in what sense is Basque an ergative language?

We cannot limit the discussion to these data alone, however. *Irudi* verbs also allow sentential finite complements (the transitive auxiliary is again selected):[4]

(8)   *Jon nekatuta d-ago-ela {ematen d-u-ϕ   / d-irudi-ϕ}*
      Jon tired   A-R- that seem   A-R-3E   A-seem-3E
      "It seems that John is tired."

If (8) and (4-7) are derived from a single lexical entry, we reach a near contradiction: in view of the impersonal character of (8), *irudi* verbs seem to be monoargumental, but the ergative pattern in (4-7) suggests a transitive analysis. Interestingly, besides (8), most speakers accept sentences like the following, where the ergative pattern re-emerges:

(9)   *Jonek nekatuta d-ago-ela {ematen d-u-ϕ   / d-irudi-ϕ}*
      Jon-E tired   A-R- that seem   A-R-3E   A-seem-3E
      literally: "John seems that (he) is tired."

Now, the questions posed above become even trickier for, ideally, one would like to claim that the ergative pattern observed in (9) is connected with the one observed in (4-7), yet we also have to account for the variation between examples (8) and (9). In what follows, I claim (a) that *irudi* verbs are mono-argumental across the board and select either a small clause (4-7) or a finite clause (8-9); (b) that the ergative case-marking in (4-7) is a result of raising the subject of a small clause to [spec, T] with no checking of absolutive case; and (c) that the contrast between (8) and (9) reduces to a choice of expletive ergative pronoun *versus* raising (copy-raising in Ura's (1996) terms). All

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[4] They reject non-finite complements, however. The most productive non-finite form of complementation in Basque are nominalizations and these seldom have a propositional interpretation.