

# On New Information Focus, Sentence Stress Assignment Conditions and the Copy Theory: A Spanish Conspiracy

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## Abstract

This paper shows how the Copy Theory (Chomsky, 1995) together with Sentence Stress Assignment conditions (e.g., Zubizarreta, 1998, following Chomsky, 1970, Cinque, 1993 and Jackendoff, 1972) clarify the properties of postverbal subjects and, more generally, the syntax of new information focus in Spanish. Under an approach to ‘copy deletion’ as a PF phenomenon, there is a preference for the retention of the highest copy. Nonetheless, under conflicting PF requirements a lower copy may be pronounced (e.g., Bošković, 1999, Nunes, 2004 or Pesetsky, 1997). Drawing on work by Stjepanović (1999), this research argues that non-presupposed arguments constitute lower copies being pronounced in order to meet Sentence Stress Assignment Conditions. This approach captures both the prosody and syntax of new information focus in Spanish going beyond a mere coding while making use of only independently needed technology. Additionally, this account provides evidence for the overarching Copy Theory of Movement (Chomsky, 1995).

## Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to show how the Copy Theory (Chomsky, 1995) together with Sentence Stress Assignment conditions (e.g., Zubizarreta, 1998, following work by Chomsky, 1970, Cinque, 1993, and Jackendoff, 1972) may clarify the properties of *postverbal subjects* and the syntax of *new information focus* in Spanish. Specifically, the central mechanism to be explored in this paper is the following: Under an approach to ‘copy deletion’ as a PF phenomenon, different pieces of research suggest that there is a preference for the retention of the highest copy. Nonetheless, under conflicting PF requirements a lower copy may be pronounced (Bošković, 1999, Nunes, 2004 or Pesetsky, 1997). Drawing on work by Stjepanović (1999), I will focus on the status of new information of sentence final postverbal subjects and the fact that they bear sentence stress in order to argue that they constitute lower copies being pronounced. Assuming that all arguments (and the verb) vacate VP, the default retention of the highest copies would apply to all the arguments but the subject, resulting in its final position in the sentence. Why should this be the case? PF would face the following conflicting requirements when the subject is new information: On the one hand, the default retention of the highest copy is supposed to apply. On the other hand, Sentence Stress Assignment Conditions favor the pronunciation of the lower copy. Under such circumstances, the lower copy is pronounced. This approach also applies to objects constituting new information focus. Crucially, new information

consistently comes last in the sentence and bears sentence stress in Spanish, as seen in the contrast between (1) and (2-4).

- (1) Qué ocurre?  
 ‘What has happened?’  
 Pedro le dio un libro a MARIA      *Neutral word order*  
 ‘Pedro gave a book to María’
- (2) Quién le dio un libro a María?  
 ‘Who gave a book to María?’  
 A María le dio un libro PEDRO.      *Subject: new info + sentence stress*  
*To María gave a book Pedro*
- (3) Qué le dio Pedro a María?  
 ‘What did Pedro give to María?’  
 Pedro le dio a María un LIBRO.      *Acc. object: new info + sentence stress*  
*Pedro gave to María a BOOK*
- (4) A quién le dio Pedro un libro?  
 ‘To whom did Pedro give a book?’  
 Pedro le dio un libro a MARIA.      *Dat. object: new info + sentence stress*  
*Pedro gave a book to MARIA*

This suggests that the syntax of postverbal subjects should be considered within the context of the syntax of new information focus in general and that, moreover, the same mechanism is at work in the case of narrow focus on the subject and on other arguments. In turn, adverbs which constitute new information presumably come to be last as a result of relevant arguments moving past them, or right adjunction if such operations exist in the grammar.

On the empirical side, binding facts will provide evidence for the claim that both subjects and objects (and the verb) vacate VP in this language (arguably for Case checking purposes in the case of the arguments) irrespective of whether the highest copies or lower ones are pronounced. This approach to the syntax of postverbal subjects and new information focus is appealing for the following reasons: i. It helps integrate the prosodic and information-structure characteristics of postverbal subjects, going beyond a mere coding as in hypothetical analyses in terms of the presence of weak/strong features in T (Chomsky, 1995) or the presence/absence of an EPP feature in T (Chomsky, 2000); ii. It incorporates the syntax of postverbal subjects into the syntax of new information focus in general (e.g., the same mechanism can be applied to derive objects which constitute new information) making use of independently motivated technology (‘copy erasure’) and dispensing with p(rosodic)-movement as movement out of focus position (Zubizarreta, 1998); iii. If the present approach is on the right track, it provides

evidence for the overarching Copy Theory of Movement, in the sense first thoroughly explored in Chomsky (1995).

In addition, this approach will be refined by giving a unified analysis to the following phenomena: i. the thematic/categorical contrast depending on the postverbal/preverbal position of the subject; and ii. certain asymmetries in the distribution of Negative Polarity Items and a variety of other phenomena that also depend on the preverbal vs. postverbal position of the subject. Specifically, I follow Uriagereka (1999) and Gallego (2004) in claiming that TP is a phase in Romance. The way such a view on phases in Spanish interacts with the copy-theory approach to postverbal subjects/new information focus is the following: Let's assume that Spanish provides three different positions for subjects – TP-AgrS-VP (see Zubizarreta (1994), Cardinaletti (1997) and Ordóñez (2000) for related claims)-. Then the copy theory approach applies to the two lower sites, not involving the highest, Spec TP. This is if 'surface semantics' arise at phase edges, associating to the head of a chain (Chomsky, 2000, 2001a and 2001b); as a consequence, a given element moves to a phase edge (in this case TP) if the head of the chain is going to be pronounced (i.e., if this head is going to end up supporting the surface semantics). This separates between: i. subject chains with the highest copy sitting at Spec TP, whose copy has to be pronounced to support the surface semantics, (yielding e.g., a categorical reading, according to (Gallego, 2004); and ii. subject chains involving only AgrS and VP, which fall under the copy-theory approach to postverbal subjects alluded to above. This rich array of possibilities accords well with the facts analyzed in this paper.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 1 includes the proposal which I refer to as the 'copy-theory account'. Sections 2 and 3 deal with the evidence for the proposal. Section 4 investigates the interaction between current phase theory and this approach. Finally, Section 5 evaluates the merits of this approach in the context of the previous proposals.

## **1 The basic proposal**

In this paper, I will make the following claims about the syntax and prosody of Spanish, adapting the copy-theory approach to new information focus developed by Stjepanović (1999) for Serbo-Croatian:

- i. A correlation exists between new information and sentence final stress (e.g., Zubizarreta, 1998)
- ii. The fact that new information follows presupposed material is to be captured by a correlation between information structure and the choice of which copy is pronounced, so as to meet the requirement in (i)

The way this approach gives us an understanding of the syntax of new information focus in Spanish is the following: Let's assume that a (ditransitive) sentence in Spanish looks like this prior to Spell-out:

- (5) a. Pedro le dio un libro a María.  
*Pedro gave a book to María*  
 b. [TP Pedro le dio [AgrS Pedro dio [AgrDO un libro dio [AgrIO a María dio [V1 Pedro dio [V2 un libro dio a María]  
*[TP Pedro gave [AgrS Pedro gave [AgrDO a book gave [AgrIO to María gave [V1 Pedro gave [V2 a book gave to María]*<sup>1,2</sup>

In the case of neutral information structure, the highest copies are retained resulting in the SVO order.

- (6) [TP Pedro le dio [AgrS ~~Pedro dio~~ [AgrDO un libro ~~dio~~ [AgrIO a María ~~dio~~ [V1 ~~Pedro dio~~ [V2 ~~un libro dio a María~~  
*[TP Pedro gave [AgrS ~~Pedro gave~~ [AgrDO a book ~~gave~~ [AgrIO to María ~~gave~~ [V1 ~~Pedro gave~~ [V2 ~~a book gave to María~~*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> One comment on this structure is in order: I include TP, AgrS and AgrO as in Chomsky (1991), taking DPs to check their (structural) Case outside their theta domain. Following Chomsky 1995 one could keep this insight without positing the existence of Agreement heads. Therefore, its presence is not crucial to the current argumentation. Nonetheless, I follow Belletti (1999), Cardinaletti (1997), Ordóñez (2000), and, Zubizarreta (1994) in considering that Spanish has two different positions for the subject outside vP. Notice that nothing hinges so far on the relative ordering of TP and AgrS. I will take up this point later once it becomes relevant in fn. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Inasmuch as the present proposal piggybacks on Case, one prediction it makes is that sentence final postverbal subjects should only be possible following: (a) elements generated outside VP, say adjuncts; (b) the verb, that raises for independent reasons; (c) arguments that need to check Case outside VP. As a consequence, the present approach might seem to predict that (postverbal) subjects will not be able to follow complement clauses (finite or non-finite), small clauses or PP complements, contrary to the fact. Still, as far as complement clauses are concerned, it has been argued at least since Plann (1984) that clauses do check case, at least in Spanish (see Picallo (2002) and Uriagereka (forthcoming) for a recent perspective). In fact, the existence of postverbal subjects following infinitivals / infinitival clauses not only is consistent with the Case marking of infinitives or infinitival clauses but also with the Movement Theory of Control (Hornstein, 1999). With regard to small clauses, Koster's (1993) independently motivated approach of movement of such elements into a Predicate Phrase would be able to accommodate the facts. Lastly, as far as PP complements are concerned, Hornstein (1995) includes an independently motivated approach which involves movement of the PP object to the Spec position of a higher Agr node. If this view is indeed tenable, NP complements and PP complements would not differ from each other in terms of the predictions regarding the distribution of postverbal subjects. Given the above considerations, this approach would be able to predict the full range of the distribution of postverbal subjects in Spanish. See Stjepanović (1999: ch.3) for related discussion.

<sup>3</sup> Alternatively, the same surface word order (SVO) can be achieved if all elements remain in situ. Nonetheless, such derivation would conflict with standard tests on the position of the verb (cf. Pollock 1989), which suggest that the verb raises in Spanish (and, therefore, the preverbal subject,

In the case of marked information structure –sentences including focused elements– the following happens: Once the sentence is divided into presupposed material and new information, all the highest copies are pronounced except in the case of the focused element, whose lowest copy is retained as a way of satisfying the requirement that elements constituting new information carry sentence stress in sentence final position.<sup>4</sup>

For instance, this is a structure where the subject constitutes new information:

- (7) [TP ~~Pedro~~ le dio [AgrS ~~Pedro~~ dio [AgrDO un libro dio [AgrIO a María dio [V1 Pedro dio [V2 un libro dio a María]  
 +Focus  
*[TP Pedro gave [AgrS Pedro gave [AgrDO a book gave [AgrIO to María gave [V1 Pedro gave [V2 a book gave to María]]<sup>5</sup>  
 +Focus*

Of course, whereas (5) can give us a rationale for the SVO order and (7) for the VOS order, we are faced with the question of how to account for the VSO order. This order corresponds to cases where both the subject and the object are part of the assertion structure (as opposed to the presupposed material), or only the object is part of the assertion, as shown by the following contrast:

- (8) a. Quién te dio qué ayer?  
 ‘Who gave you what yesterday?’  
 Ayer me dio Pedro un libro.  
*Yesterday me gave Peter a book*  
 ‘Peter gave me a book yesterday’  
 b. Qué te dio Pedro ayer?  
 ‘What did Pedro give you yesterday?’  
 (#)Ayer me dio Pedro un libro.  
 c. Qué ocurrió ayer?

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too). It is also worth mentioning that any alternative way of achieving the final word order discussed here and in the examples below are banned by economy considerations which dictate retention of the highest copies by default (Nunes, 2004) whenever Sentence Stress Assignment Conditions are met.

<sup>4</sup> For the exact mechanism which allows low copies to be spelled-out, see Nunes (2004). Another plausible alternative is to consider such low copies constituting new information focus to be licensed by information structure as suggested by languages like Japanese or Korean, where topic markers are in complementary distribution with Case markers (Martins 1994: 389).

<sup>5</sup> Once I include into the picture the interaction between phase theory and the current approach, I will argue that postverbal subjects in the VSO and VOS (surface) order raise to AgrS, but not to TP. See Section 4 for details.

‘What happened yesterday?’  
 #(Ayer) me dio Pedro un libro.

Following researchers who claim that Spanish (or Romance) provides three different positions for subjects –i.e. TP-AgrS-VP (see Zubizarreta, 1994, Cardinaletti, 1997 and Ordóñez, 2000 for related claims)– I assume that in the VSO order the subject is in the middle one, AgrS:

- (9) ... dio [AgrS Pedro ~~di~~ [AgrDO un libro ~~di~~ [AgrIO a María ~~di~~  
 [V1 Pedro ~~di~~ [V2 un libro ~~di~~ a María]  
 ...gave [AgrS Pedro ~~gave~~ [AgrDO a book ~~gave~~ [AgrIO to María ~~gave~~  
 [V1 Pedro ~~gave~~ [V2 a book ~~gave~~ to María]

Next, I include the derivations of the focused direct object and indirect object, for the sake of illustration:

- (10) *Focused direct object*  
 [TP Pedro le dio [AgrS Pedro ~~di~~ [AgrDO un libro ~~di~~ [AgrIO a María ~~di~~  
 [V1 Pedro ~~di~~ [V2 un libro ~~di~~ a María]  
 (11) *Focused indirect object*  
 [TP Pedro le dio [AgrS Pedro ~~di~~ [AgrDO un libro ~~di~~ [AgrIO a María ~~di~~  
 [V1 Pedro ~~di~~ [V2 un libro ~~di~~ a María]

Notice that a crucial assumption in this discussion is that all the arguments (and the verb) vacate VP in Spanish. The next section provides the relevant evidence in this direction.

## 2 Leaving VP

In order for the proposal to work, it is necessary that all elements leave their base-generated position in VP, so that prosody can choose which copy to pronounce. To put it in other words, at the point that the sentence is sent to PF, the material within VP should consist of copies. This section focuses on objects, arguing that there is evidence that these arguments move out of VP to a functional projection, possibly AgrO.<sup>6</sup> Two sets of facts argue that this is indeed the case in Spanish: binding facts in the case of adverbials and adverbial scope.

Currently, it is generally assumed that VP adverbs are generated higher than objects. Therefore, for an object to be able to bind into an adverbial, the object should move past the adjunction position of the adverb. This seems to be the case in Spanish:

<sup>6</sup> See fn 3 for evidence regarding verb and subject raising. See Reglero (2004: ch.2) and references therein for closely related research supporting this view.

- (12) *Binding into VP-adverbs*
- a. Pedro fotografió a ciertos terroristas<sub>i</sub> en sus<sub>i</sub>/las<sub>i</sub> actividades cotidianas.  
*Pedro took pictures of certain terrorists<sub>i</sub> in their<sub>i</sub>/the<sub>i</sub> daily routine*  
‘Pedro took pictures of a number of terrorists in their daily routine’
  - b. Pedro sacó fotografías a cada terrorista<sub>i</sub> en las<sub>i</sub>/sus<sub>i</sub> actividades cotidianas.  
*Pedro took pictures (to) every terrorist<sub>i</sub> in the<sub>i</sub>/his<sub>i</sub> daily routine*
  - c. Pedro/Quién sacó fotografías a quién<sub>i</sub> en las<sub>i</sub>/sus<sub>i</sub> actividades cotidianas?  
*Peter/Who took pictures to whom<sub>i</sub> in the<sub>i</sub>/his<sub>i</sub> daily routine?*

The fact that such movement affects A-binding can be taken as evidence that we are dealing with movement into A-positions.

In addition, evidence from adverbial scope facts points in the same direction, even though judgments are subtle. As Stjepanović discusses (following Andrews, 1983, Bošković, 1997 and Pesetsky, 1989), judgments concerning the relative scope of adverbs can be taken as evidence about the direction of adverb adjunction. Under the standard assumption that scope is determined by c-command relations, in (13)a, the scope relation entails that the adverbs are right adjoined, so that *twice* comes to c-command *intentionally*. In contrast, in (13)b the relevant scope relation is obtained if the adverbs are left adjoined, so that *intentionally* c-commands *twice*.

- (13) a. John [[[ knocked on the door] intentionally] twice]  
twice > intentionally
- b. John [intentionally [twice [knocked on the door]]]  
intentionally > twice<sup>7</sup>

Bošković (1997) shows that these judgments can be used to determine whether elements base-generated within VP have moved outside VP. I illustrate this with Spanish data:

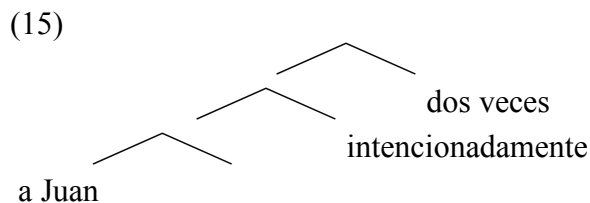
- (14) *Adverbial scope*
- a. Pedro le falló intencionadamente dos veces a Juan.

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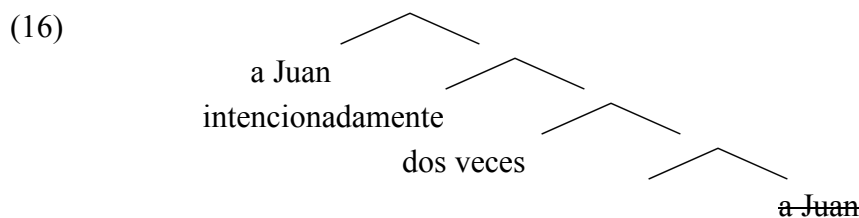
<sup>7</sup> In this discussion I follow closely Stjepanović (2003). This data, discussed by Pesetsky and Andrews in their respective works, is included in Stjepanović (2003). Native speakers might find it useful to replace ‘intentionally twice’ with ‘twice three times’, as judgments are more straightforward (N. Hornstein p.c.).

- Pedro failed intentionally twice Juan*  
intentionally > twice
- b. *Pedro le falló a Juan intencionadamente dos veces.*<sup>8</sup>  
*Pedro failed Juan intentionally twice*  
intentionally >< twice.

The first sentence is unambiguous - only the first adverb takes scope over the second. In the second sentence, the scope is ambiguous. The latter case is particularly relevant here. In the interpretation where *twice* scopes over *intentionally*, it is possible (though not necessary) to maintain that the object is in situ as long as the adverbs are right adjoined. This would give us the desired c-command relations and word order.



Still, in the interpretation where *intentionally* scopes over *twice* –that is to say, where *intentionally* c-commands *twice*– the only way to obtain the right c-command relation and word order is if the adverbs are left-adjoined and the object has moved past them (Bošković, 1997 and Stjepanović, 1999):



Therefore, one can conclude that objects may move out of VP in Spanish, a necessary step towards adopting the present proposal.

To sum up, in this section I have shown that Spanish objects move out of Spanish VP.<sup>9, 10</sup> The present approach makes a number of predictions with regard

<sup>8</sup> (14)a shows focus on the object (i.e., as an answer to the question ‘Who did Pedro fail intentionally twice?’). The adverbs would be left-adjoined, hence the scope relations, and the object would correspond to a low copy. In contrast, (14)b shows focus on the adverbs.

<sup>9</sup> Further evidence for the movement of arguments out of theta-position comes from the generalization that in a number of languages in situ elements do not trigger agreement as opposed to elements that have moved into a Spec,Head configuration (e.g. in French, a language closely

to binding and scope. The next section shows that such predictions are fulfilled, hence providing additional evidence for the present proposal.

### 3 Predictions

With regard to scope, Zubizarreta (1998: 143) points out that the SVO, VSO and VOS order do not differ from one another in Spanish. Within an approach to Quantifier binding as determined by A-chains (Hornstein 1995), the state of affairs just described is actually expected under my proposal, inasmuch as binding possibilities are determined by the following configuration, where the subject c-commands the objects and the objects c-command into the subject (and each other), irrespective of which copy/ies end up being pronounced:

- (17) [TP subject verb [AgrS subject verb [AgrDO object verb [V1 subject verb  
[V2 object verb]

With regard to the data that Zubizarreta uses, this researcher hints at the idea that in the VOS order the subject is focused. Therefore, a proper comparison between these three word order possibilities should have the subject focused in the other two patterns, that is to say, SVO and VSO. Given the properties of focus in Spanish, for that to be the case in the VOS instance we would be dealing (most likely) with new information focus, whereas in the SVO and VSO orders we would be dealing with contrastive focus instead. The following examples illustrate how an object can bind into a subject in the SVO, VSO and VOS orders.

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related to Spanish; see Hornstein et al (2005: ch.4) for an overview). If that is right, one can argue that in Spanish movement always takes place given that agreement is found irrespective of whether a given element is pronounced in situ or in a displaced position. This is true generally speaking for the subjects and also for objects in the case of participial agreement.

<sup>10</sup> There is an assumption in the literature that moved constituents are islands (e.g., Takahashi, 1994 and Boeckx, 2003). Within the current approach, it is advocated that direct objects always move. Therefore, the present approach might be predicting that direct objects in Spanish should be islands, contrary to the fact. Still, it should be noted that the descriptive adequacy of the standard view that moved elements are islands is compromised by a number of instances. See Chomsky (2005) for relevant data and discussion.

(18) *Binding Tests*

- a. El primer día de escuela, su MADRE deberá acompañar a cada niño. SVO
- a.’ El primer día de escuela, acompañará su MADRE a cada niño. VSO
- a.’’ El primer día de escuela, acompañará a cada niño su MADRE. VOS
- The first day of class, her mother should accompany every child*  
[Binding: OK] (Zubizarreta, 1998)
- b. El primer día de escuela, su MADRE no deberá acompañar a ninguno de estos niños. SVO
- b.’ El primer día de escuela, no acompañará su MADRE a ninguno de estos niños. VSO
- b.’’ El primer día de escuela, no acompañará a ninguno de estos niños su MADRE. VOS
- The first day of class, her mother should not accompany no child*  
[Binding: ?] (Zubizarreta, 1998)

To the extent that my approach predicts the lack of binding asymmetries between the SVO, VSO and VOS orders, the theory under discussion gains further credence.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ordóñez (2000) claims that there are scope asymmetries between the SVO, VSO and VOS. The asymmetries are the following:

- i. \*Su<sub>i</sub> amigo le regaló un libro [a cada niño]<sub>i</sub>  
his friend cl-dat gave this book to every child
- ii. \*Este libro se lo regalo su<sub>i</sub> amigo [a cada niño]<sub>i</sub>.  
this book cl-dat cl-acc gave his friend to every child
- iii. Este libro se lo regalo [a cada niño]<sub>i</sub> su<sub>i</sub> amigo.  
this book cl-dat cl-acc gave to every child his friend  
‘His friend gave a book to every child’

Nonetheless, in such data the focus factor is not controlled. Notice that a plausible alternative to the claims made by Zubizarreta could be to argue that the judgments in (i-iii) are indeed representative of scope relations in Spanish whereas the judgments in (20) are only an artifact of focus. Still, the fact that focusing does not necessarily change binding relationships across languages (e.g. see Winkler and Göbbel 2002 for Romanian) undermines such interpretation. Additionally, Ordóñez (2002) shows an asymmetry between the VSO and the VOS order with regard to Principle C Effects

- iv. a. El libro, se lo compraron los hermanos de Eva<sub>i</sub> a ella<sub>i</sub>.  
the book bought the brothers of Eva<sub>i</sub> to her<sub>i</sub>
- b. \*El libro, se lo compraron a ella<sub>i</sub> los hermanos de Eva<sub>i</sub>.  
the book bought to her<sub>i</sub> the brothers of Eva<sub>i</sub>

In addition, it is worth saying that the theory under discussion predicts that subjects should be able to bind into the objects irrespective of which copy is pronounced (Norbert Hornstein, p.c.). This is indeed the case:

- (19) a. El primer día de escuela, cada madre acompañará a su hijo. SVO  
 a.' El primer día de escuela acompañará cada madre a su hijo. VSO  
 a.'' El primer día de escuela acompañará a su hijo cada madre. VOS  
*The first day of class, each mother should accompany her child*  
 [Binding: ok]
- b. El primer día de escuela ninguna madre acompañara a su hijo. SVO  
 b.' El primer día de escuela acompañara ninguna madre a su hijo. VSO  
 b.'' El primer día de escuela acompañara a su hijo ninguna madre. VOS  
*The first day of class no mother will accompany her child*  
 [Binding: ok] (my data)

Moreover, given that Spanish allows both the order 'direct object + indirect object' and 'indirect object + direct object', my proposal entails that both orders should show the same binding possibilities among the objects, because both would c-command each other at LF (through different copies). This seems to also be the case.

- (20) a. Yo di su<sub>x/i</sub> foto a cada<sub>x</sub> estudiante.  
*I gave his<sub>x/i</sub> picture to every<sub>x</sub> student*  
 b. Yo di a cada<sub>x</sub> estudiante su<sub>x/i</sub> foto.  
*I gave to every<sub>x</sub> student his<sub>x/i</sub> picture*

To sum up, a number of binding and scope facts provide evidence for the approach advocated so far. In the next section, I am going to now focus on the syntax of preverbal subjects. refining the analysis made so far by recasting my discussion in terms of Phase Theory.

#### 4 On Phases and Spell-out

Recent syntactic work has focused on the importance of Phases and Spell-out for a derivational model of grammar. Drawing on this research, I will follow

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Nonetheless, it might well be the case that PPLE C is not be reducible to c-command relationships as shown among others by Feigenbaum (2004) and Uriagereka (1988) and that PPLE C is a pragmatic constraint as argued elsewhere in the literature. See ftn 19 for further discussion of the seminal research carried out by Ordóñez (2000) regarding the VSO and VOS order.

Uriagereka (1999a and 1999b) Gallego (2004) in arguing that TP constitutes a phase in Romance pro-drop languages. This will allow me to address important aspects of the syntax of such Romance languages: i. the thematic/categorical contrast that depends on the postverbal/preverbal position of the subject; and ii. certain asymmetries in binding, NPI-licensing and a variety of other phenomena depending on the preverbal vs. postverbal position of the subject. To the extent that I succeed in giving such a unified analysis of these different phenomena, one that is compatible with and even natural within a copy-theory approach to postverbal subjects, further support will emerge for my proposal.

**4.1 The Nature of TP in Spanish** Uriagereka (1999a and 1999b) and Chomsky (2000, 2001a and 2001b) put forward closely-related approaches to phases and Spell-Out. Uriagereka (1999a) advocates an approach in terms of Multiple Spell-out, deduced from a stream-lined version of the *Linear Correspondence Axiom* (Kayne 1994). Within this theory of dynamic syntax, certain chunks of structure are sent to PF, resulting in multiple instantiations of spell-out. Moreover, for reasons that I will not go into now, Uriagereka (1999b) argues that the presence of heavy agreement –as the one licensing pro-drop in Romance– also results in TP being a spell-out domain (see also Gallego 2004, following Uriagereka).

In turn, Chomsky (2000, 2001a and 2001b) proposes a theory of phases built from sub-numerations. Each phase, defined as ‘propositional’, is spelled-out/transferred separately. In this case, the motivation behind the proposal is the desire to reduce computational complexity, in the sense that such transfer would certainly free up operational memory space. In Chomsky’s terms, phrases escape phases by checking an EPP feature, whose presence is optional. Such optional EPP assignment can apply only when necessary to yield a new outcome (Chomsky (2001a: 34), in the sense of Reinhart (1997) and Fox (1995, 2000)) for a critique). Finally, according to Chomsky, both  $v^*P$  and CP constitute phases, inasmuch as they are ‘propositional’.

Within both Uriagereka’s and Chomsky’s proposal, a relevant research question is what are the domains of spell-out and why. Within Chomsky’s approach it is not exactly clear what would preclude TP from being a phase. In this context, I will be arguing that TP is in fact a phase in Romance (Uriagereka, 1999a and 1999b, Gallego, 2004).

**4.1.1 The Categorical vs. Thetic Distinction**<sup>12</sup> With regard to the thematic vs. categorical distinction, Uriagereka (2002) shows that (21)a is a categorical

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<sup>12</sup> Categorical predication introduces the standing characteristic of a category (which in semantic models allowing for a variety of ontological complexities for lexical notions is taken as an

judgment about a given individual, whereas (21)b is athetic judgment expressing a mere event:

- (21) a. El rey ha muerto.  
*the king has died*  
b. Ha muerto el rey.  
*has died the king*

Given Chomsky's system, where surface effects are found at phase edges/phonological borders of phases, one way to capture this distinction is to posit that TP is a phase, having the categorical nature of (21)a be a case of 'surface semantics' that arises at the edge of the TP phase (see on this Uriagereka (1999a and 1999b) and Gallego (2004)).<sup>13</sup>

**4.1.2 Further Contrasts between Preverbal and Postverbal Subjects** I would like to relate another property of Spanish to the understanding of Spec TP in this language that I have advocated so far. In particular, there seem to be certain asymmetries between the preverbal and postverbal subject position that go beyond thethetic/categorical distinction. Indeed, one does find such asymmetries in the case of Negative Polarity Items (NPI) licensing:

- (22) *Negative Polarity Items*  
a. Ayer, nadie llegó.  
*yesterday, nobody arrived*  
b. Ayer no llegó nadie.  
*yesterday no arrived nobody*  
'Nobody arrived yesterday'

Given the Copy-Theory approach, the syntax prior to spell-out and the LF's of the examples in (22)a and b are identical to one another, respectively. Therefore, such asymmetries are unexpected. Still, when one takes into account the argumentation developed so far regarding Spec TP, everything falls into place. Given that 'surface semantics' arise at phase edges and are assigned to the head of a chain (Chomsky, 2000, 2001a and 2001b), if a given element that moves to a phase edge

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'individual-level' predicate), whereas thethetic predication introduces a non-standing characteristic of a standard subject argument ('stage-level' predication, in the models just alluded to) (see Raposo and Uriagereka (1995) on the differences between these approaches). The crucial point for me here is that in languages like Spanish and many others, this actually correlates with different word orders.

<sup>13</sup> See also Ortega-Santos (2005) for an approach where the phase nature of T in rich agreement languages follows from computational dynamics of the interfaces, more specifically, from the incremental nature of production.

is the head of the chain, it would have to be pronounced so that it can support the surface semantics. Certainly this can be related, for instance, to the impossibility of having a semantic effect as Contrastive Focus apply to a phonetically null element (see Kahnemuyipour (2004) on this). If this logic is right, having a copy of the subject in Spec TP should be incompatible with new information focus, as it involves the pronunciation of a low copy. This would draw the line between a subject chain with the highest copy sitting at a phase edge where surface semantics are assigned (TP in Spanish under my approach), and a non-trivial subject chain not involving the Spec TP (e.g., a chain formed by a subject in Spec,AgrS and Spec,VP). The latter chain would be liable to the copy-theory approach to postverbal subjects.

That is to say, if as already noted we assume that Spanish provides three different positions for subjects, i.e. TP-AgrS-VP, the copy-theory approach would not be able to apply to any chain that involves Spec TP/surface semantics, as opposed to chains that do not involve any such surface semantics (e.g., a chain involving AgrS and Spec,VP). In keeping with this idea, in cases of VSO (or VOS) as (22)b, we have a derivation where the subject would only have moved up to AgrS.

(23) [TP Aquí no llegó [AgrS nadie ~~llegó~~ [V1 ~~nadie~~ ~~llegó~~ [V2 ~~llegó~~ ~~nadie~~]]<sup>14</sup>

Within this system, the only case in which a subject moves to TP is in the SVO order. This is so because Spec,TP in Spanish does entail surface semantic effects – i.e., the categorial reading (Gallego, 2004). In the case of VSO and VOS orders, since no copy would be pronounced in TP, if the subject moves to Spec TP, the surface semantics would not be supported, leading to a derivational crash upon evaluation.

If this logic is right, the syntax prior to spell-out and the LF's of (22)a and b actually differ from one another. Additionally, we would have found a rationale as to where the copy-theory approach applies and where it does not, and why – certainly a welcome result.<sup>15</sup>

For the sake of completeness, I show how this system would apply to a sentence in the different word orders, SVO, VSO and VOS:

(24) a. Pedro le dio un libro a María. *SVO*  
*Pedro gave a book to María*

<sup>14</sup> For the sake of simplicity, I abstract away from the movements that the adverb undergoes in the structure.

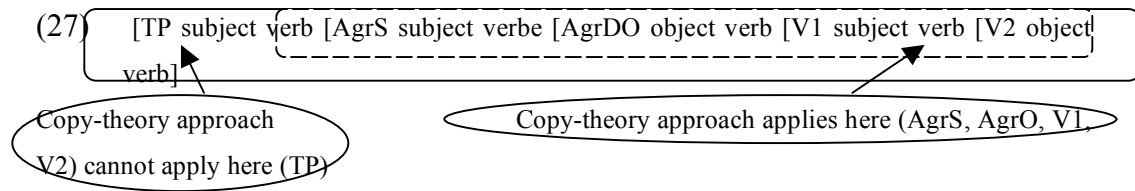
<sup>15</sup> This would allow us to capture how in Portuguese proclisis/enclisis correlates with whether certain elements precede or follow the verb (see Martins (1994) for a proposal compatible with the present approach).

- b. [TP Pedro le dio [AgrS ~~Pedro~~ dio [AgrDO un libro dio [AgrIO a María dio [V1 ~~Pedro~~ dio [V2 un libro dio a María]  
 [TP Pedro [AgrS ~~Pedro~~ gave [AgrDO a book gave [AgrIO to María gave [V1 ~~Pedro~~ gave [V2 a book gave to María]
- (25) a. UN LIBRO le dio Pedro a María. VSO  
*A BOOK gave Pedro to María*
- b. [TP UN LIBRO le dio [AgrS Pedro ~~dio~~ [AgrDO un libro ~~dio~~ [AgrIO a María ~~dio~~ [V1 ~~Pedro~~ dio [V2 un libro dio a María]  
 [TP A BOOK [AgrS Pedro gave [AgrDO a book gave [AgrIO to María gave [V1 ~~Pedro~~ gave [V2 a book gave to María]
- (26) a. El libro se lo dio a María Pedro. VOS  
*the book gave Pedro to María*
- b. [TP El libro se lo dio [AgrS ~~Pedro~~ dio [AgrDO el libro ~~dio~~ [AgrIO a María ~~dio~~ [V1 Pedro ~~dio~~ [V2 un libro dio a María]  
 [TP the book [AgrS Pedro gave [AgrDO the book gave [AgrIO to María gave [V1 ~~Pedro~~ gave [V2 the book gave to María]<sup>16</sup>

The crucial point of both the VSO and VOS orders is that, in those cases, the subject would only move up to AgrS –not to Spec TP. The reason why in such derivations the subject has not moved to Spec TP is that the surface semantics arguably assigned at the phase edge would not be supported, and thus would not yield a new output, this being a requirement for optional surface semantics assignment.<sup>17, 18</sup> Schematically:

<sup>16</sup> This would be a case of Clitic-Left Dislocations. As such, there is some controversy as to whether Clitic-Left-Dislocated elements are generated in situ or moved to their final landing position. The origin of the controversy seems to lie in the fact that whereas such elements are insensitive to weak islands (e.g. wh-islands), they have been argued to be sensitive to strong islands (e.g., relative clauses). For instance, see Olarrea 1995 and Zubizarreta 1998, the former arguing that they are generated in situ, whereas Zubizarreta considers them to be the result of movement. I remain neutral on this issue, pointing out the possibility that such elements satisfy the EPP, as argued in Zubizarreta 1998.

<sup>17</sup> If it is indeed the case that postverbal subjects do not move all the way up to TP, one wonders whether the EPP is satisfied in such cases. Similarly, one might wonder what the licensing mechanism of subject copies in SpecTP and SpecAgrS is, as opposed to the copies in VP which would be spelled-out for PF reasons irrespective of their licensing mechanism. A unified answer can be given to both questions. With regard to the licensing of the subject copies, we can posit that in the SVO order the subject copy is licensed by Case. Nonetheless, the licensing of the subject copy in the VSO order would remain unexplained. An option to provide a licensing mechanism for both copies is the following: The SVO order correlates with some semantic effects as far as the subject is concerned. Hence, one may conclude that such semantic effects underlie the licensing of the copy in this configuration. If we accept this assumption, we still need a candidate to license the pronounced copy in the VSO order. Case can do the work. This would entail the following: Given the assumption that AgrS is responsible for licensing Nominative Case, which in turn I have linked to the licensing of the subject copy in the VSO order, this suggests that AgrS is lower than



## 5. Evaluation of the Alternatives to the Copy-theory Approach

I would now like to briefly comment on some alternatives to the analysis just discussed, to evaluate whether they can match its virtues. The

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TP in Spanish in contrast to languages as English. While this ordering is slightly atypical in the field, similar analyses of the relative ordering of inflectional heads have already been proposed for Spanish (Zubizarreta 1994) and for other languages as Icelandic (Harley 2000) or Irish (McCloskey 1996).

This view, in fact, has some interesting consequences for the study of the EPP in Spanish: The literature includes the idea independently motivated that the EPP effects involving the final landing site of A-movement follow from Case Theory (Fukui and Speas 1986 and Bošković 2002 among others). If indeed Case Theory (the Inverse Case Filter) is responsible for such EPP effects, this effectively draws the line between English-like languages and Spanish. In the former languages, the Inverse Case Filter applies at the highest functional projection of the clause and gives raise to EPP effects. In contrast, in Spanish TP is not related to Case (cf. Masullo 1992), hence, it does not need to be obligatorily filled. Notice that this view links together Case, Agreement, the pro-drop parameter and the phase nature of TP following seminal research by Uriagereka (1999). In turn, Serbo-Croatian would be a mixed system where surface subjects in postverbal position have moved all the way up to TP (Stjepanović 1999) even though it is a pro-drop language.

It is also interesting to mention that the specific relation that TP arguably bears to Nominative Case in English-like and Spanish-like languages enforces a specialization of TP for Nominative arguments (and, possibly, locatives) in the former language but not in the latter one. This is a welcome result, since it has been argued that in Spanish *wh*- and focused elements either occupy Spec,TP or else move through it (see Goodall (2001) and Zubizarreta (1998)), a fact again in keeping with the relative ordering of TP and AgrS I advocate. See Ortega-Santos (2006) for further discussion on the EPP in Spanish.

<sup>18</sup> Additionally, the question of why does new information focus appear to the right instead of to the left merits some attention. Crosslinguistically, there is a tendency for old information to appear to the left of the sentence and new information to the right. The parsing literature provides an insight into this issue. In such literature the notion of an incremental grammatical encoder is fairly standard. Under such a view, the surface word order would reflect the order of arrival of the syntactic constituents (Levelt, 1989). Old information would become available earlier than new information and therefore, it would be linearized earlier, provided that the grammar of the relevant language allows it, e.g. Spanish does as opposed to English (Kempen and Harbusch, 2003 among others). Under this view surface word order inconsistent with incrementality is not ruled out per se, but it is associated with bigger processing efforts (Ferreira, 1996). Preverbal contrastive focus in Spanish would be a case in point.

preverbal/postverbal (SVO/VOS) distribution of subjects in what may be thought as ‘topic-driven’ or free word order languages is captured by positing:

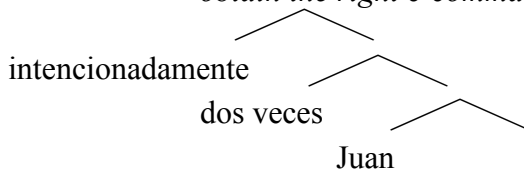
- i. Regular movement of the subject to TP vs. right adjunction to some projection (Torrego, 1984)
- ii. Regular movement of the subject to TP vs. remnant movement (Kayne and Pollock 1999 for French and Ordóñez (2000) for Spanish) or object scrambling past an insitu subject (Ordóñez 2000)
- iii. Regular movement of the subject to TP vs. licensing in discourse-related projections at the VP periphery (Belletti 1999)
- iv. Presence / absence of a null expletive in SpecTP (Bosque, 1989 and Rizzi, 1982)
- v. Presence of strong / weak features in TP (e.g. in the framework of Chomsky, 1995)
- vi. Presence / absence of an EPP feature in TP (e.g. in the framework of Chomsky, 2000)
- vii. Discourse-driven syntax of preverbal subjects - argued to be topics – vs. insitu subjects (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou, 1998)
- viii. Regular movement of the subject to TP vs. p(rosodic)-movement out of focus position past the subject (Zubizarreta, 1998)

With regard to the right adjunction analysis of postverbal subjects, it is worth noticing that even if we allow right adjunction into the system (against Kayne, 1994), it is not clear what would drive this operation or, more generally, what would determine the choice between right and left adjunction. Norbert Hornstein (p.c.) suggests a consistent interaction between new information focus and right adjunction, a link that would avoid such criticisms. Still, I find problems with such a view. First, the Nuclear Stress Rule (Zubizarreta, 1998), which is responsible for sentential stress, is sensitive to c-command, i.e., the node lower in the syntactic asymmetric c-command ordering is more prominent / the focused one. Or to put it in a different way: the ‘rightmost’ requirement of the Sentence Stress Assignment Conditions and Kayne’s LCA would conspire to bar this possibility. This is the case because right adjunction does not alter the c-command relationships of the phrase structure tree and, therefore, does not generate the right word order (where focused elements appear sentence finally). Secondly, the binding facts discussed above would remain problematic for this view of things. Thirdly, Stjepanović provides an argument against such an approach when applied to Serbo-Croatian, which extends to Spanish. This is the reasoning: If we assume that scope is determined by c-command relations, as is standard in the literature, and, even if we accept for the sake of the argument that right adjunction might generate the right word order, the following examples give us evidence on the direction of adverb adjunction:

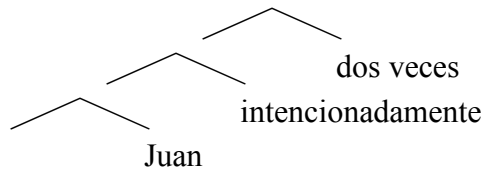
- (28) A Pedro le falló intencionadamente dos veces Juan.  
*Pedro-acc failed intentionally twice Juan*  
 ‘Juan intentionally twice failed Pedro’  
 intencionadamente > dos veces      \*dos veces > intencionadamente

The scope facts here provide evidence that *intentionally* c-commands *twice*. The implication of this kind of judgment is the following, according to Stjepanović:

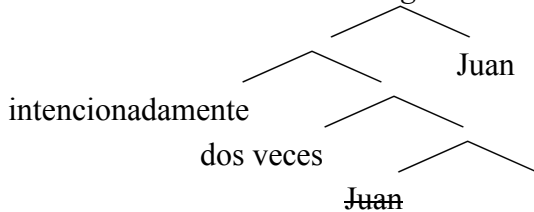
- (29) a. *if the subject stays in-situ and the adverbs are left adjoined, we obtain the right c-command relations and linear order*



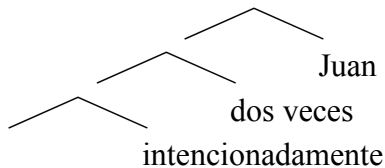
- b. *if the subject is in-situ and the adverbs are right adjoined, we obtain the incorrect c-command relations and linear order*



- c. *if the subject is right-adjoined and the adverbs are left-adjoined, we obtain the right c-command relation and the right word order*



- d. *if both the subject and adverbs are right adjoined, we obtain linear order but not the right c-command relation*



Only (29)a, where the subject is pronounced *in situ*, and (29)c, where it is right adjoined, produce the desired results. However, (29)c, the instance of right adjunction which is in keeping with Hornstein's view, should be eliminated, according to Stjepanović, because, if we allow this structure, nothing would prevent us from generating (29)d as well. That is to say, we would wrongly predict the scope to be ambiguous, contrary to fact. As a consequence, we can conclude that the subject is not right adjoined but rather in a Spec position below the adverbs, possibly *in situ*. If this logic is right, there would be no right adjunction of subjects in Spanish against the plausible hypothesis that Focus might correlate with right adjunction.

An approach in terms of remnant movement (e.g., Kayne and Pollock, 1999 for French and Ordóñez, 2000 for Spanish), or object scrambling (Ordóñez, 2000) clearly faces the problem of what motivates the necessary movements to derive the postverbal subject position, an issue that does not arise under the present approach.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ordóñez (2000: ch. 2) offers some pieces of evidence in favor of the scrambling account. In particular, Spanish would pattern with scrambling languages in terms of scope, PPLe C effects, the distribution of *wh*-elements and pronouns, and the interpretation of indefinites. The reader can see fn 11 for some discussion of the scope facts and PPLe C effects. With regard to the distribution of *wh*-elements, Ordóñez claims the contrast in (i) follows from the fact that *wh*-elements cannot be scrambled (cf. the behavior of German *wh*-phrases).

- i. *Distribution of wh-elements* (Ordóñez 2000)
- a. Qué compró quién?  
what bought who?
  - b. Qué le compró quién a quién?  
what bought who to whom?
  - c. \*?Qué le compró a quién quién?  
what bought to whom who

In turn, the contrast in (ii) would follow from the fact that pronouns have to be obligatorily scrambled (cf. Scandinavian Object Shift).

- ii. *Distribution of pronouns in questions* (Ordóñez 2000)
- a. Qué les compró él a sus hermanos?  
what bought he to his brothers?
  - b. ??Qué les compró a sus hermanos él?  
what bought to his brothers he?

If Ordóñez's analysis is on the right track, such facts would provide evidence that sentence final subjects are derived via scrambling. Still, as Reglero (2004: ch.2) shows there is extensive evidence against the scrambling account of sentence final *wh*-elements. Furthermore, the distribution of pronouns does not show such constraints in statements, a fact that weakens Ordóñez's claim:

The Minimalist or economical nature of the present account also stands out when compared to an approximation in terms of clause internal topic / focus projections at the VP-periphery (Belletti 1999).

In turn, the null expletive analysis (Bosque, 1989 and Rizzi, 1982) faces the problem of the lack of evidence for its existence in, at least, Spanish (a point explicitly raised already in Hoffman (1996)).<sup>20</sup> Therefore, even though this approach is in keeping with the EPP understood as a universal requirement, it is difficult to deny a certain ad hoc character of the proposal.

Additionally, the null expletive analysis suffers from a more general problem, which it shares with those based on the weak/strong feature distinction (Chomsky, 1995), the presence/absence of an EPP feature (Chomsky, 2000) or the discourse function of preverbal subjects (e.g. Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou, 1998). These three approaches, even though successful in deriving the data, can be argued to merely code the facts, rather than to give us an understanding of the distribution of subjects. In particular, inasmuch as postverbal subjects (in the V(O)S order) clearly constitute new information, they should be part of more general dynamics that articulate Spanish sentence structure, so that new information comes last in the sentence, irrespective of the element that happens to be focused. Since these analyses fail to put both these (sorts of) facts together, they seem to be

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- iii. Hoy compró un libro él.  
today bought a book he

As far as the interpretation of indefinites is concerned, Ordóñez claims that scrambled indefinite objects become specific (cf. (iv) a and b), again one of the hallmarks of scrambling languages.

- iv. *Interpretation of indefinites* (Ordóñez 2000)
- a. Estos libros, se los dieron todos los estudiantes a un profesor.  
these books gave all the students to a teacher
- b. Estos libros, se los dieron a un profesor todos los estudiantes.  
these books gave to a teacher all the students

Still, this is not always the case:

- v. Todos los días compran un libro todos los estudiantes.  
all the days buy a book all the students

Given this observation, the facts in (iv) might result from the fact that presupposed elements (e.g. the object in VOS order) have a tendency to be definite.

In sum, since the evidence in favor of the scrambling / remnant movement account either comes from sentences that do not enter into the dynamics of new information focus (e.g., questions) or else is questionable or liable to a different account (i.e., the interpretation of indefinites or PPLE C effects, respectively), I favor the copy-theory approach as it captures the phenomena under discussion by means of independently motivated machinery and feature checking operations.

<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, see Picallo 1998 for some conceptual reasons against the existence of null expletives.

missing some general principle working in Spanish syntax and other topic-prominent languages, where information-structure notions correlate with different word orders.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, proposals focusing on the discourse function of preverbal subjects which take these to be topics in languages as Spanish (e.g., Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998), an idea already explored in Barbosa (1991) for Portuguese)), run into problems with the fact that sentences including preverbal subjects are grammatical as answers to out-of-the-blue questions –e.g., (1), as opposed to unambiguous topics as preverbal objects, e.g., (30)a and b (Goodall, 2001 among others).<sup>22</sup>

- (30) Qué ocurre?  
What has happened?  
a. #A María le dio un libro (Pedro).  
b. #Un libro le dio a María (Pedro).  
*Pedro gave a book to MARIA*

With regard to Zubizarreta (1998)'s framework -where the focused elements come to be last as a consequence of prosodically-motivated movement that scrambles non-focused elements past the focused element if necessary, so that new information focus and sentence final stress converge, it is worth mentioning that within the present proposal the addition of such a mechanism to the grammar is unnecessary (see Kahnemuyipour (2004) for related criticisms). This is the case because the movements that allow us to derive the above word order have been independently motivated, e.g. as movement for Case checking purposes. In addition, the machinery used at PF, Copy Erasure and retention of low copies under conflicting PF requirements, is independently motivated as well. Lastly, the present analysis allows us to keep movement as a feature-checking operation.

To sum up, previous analyses of postverbal subjects present certain shortcomings either because they do not give us an understanding of their syntactic properties and, more generally, of the syntax of new information focus that postverbal subjects are part of, or else because of the very nature of the technical implementation. In contrast, my proposal overcomes such problems. Given these considerations, it is reasonable to adopt a Copy-Theory approach to postverbal subjects and new information structure in Spanish.

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<sup>21</sup> In addition, it is not clear how such proposals would explain the binding facts discussed in Section 3 under the plausible assumption that neither covert movement nor AGREE affect binding relations, as argued in detail by Lasnik (1999).

<sup>22</sup> See Ortega-Santos (2006) for more extensive discussion of Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's proposal in Spanish.

## 6 Conclusion

In this paper I have addressed the challenge that topic-driven languages posit to syntactic theory. From the descriptive point of view, new information consistently comes last in the sentence and bears sentence stress in Spanish. Following the analysis of Stjepanović (1999) for Serbo-Croatian, I have presented an approach to postverbal subjects and new information focus in Spanish that relies on the Copy Theory (Chomsky, 1995) together with Sentence Stress Assignment conditions (e.g., Zubizarreta 1998, following work by Chomsky, 1970, Cinque, 1993 and Jackendoff, 1972). Different pieces of research suggest that there is a preference for the retention of the highest copy. Nonetheless, when PF faces conflicting requirements a lower copy may be pronounced (Bošković, 1999, Nunes, 2004 and Pesetsky, 1997, among others). The way this perspective is implemented is the following: Assuming that in Spanish all arguments (and the verb) vacate VP –an assumption consistent with certain facts of the language– the default retention of the high copy applies to all the arguments but the focused one, resulting in its final position in the sentence.

This approach: i. helps integrate the prosodic and information-structure characteristics of postverbal subjects, going beyond a mere coding; ii. incorporates the syntax of postverbal subjects into the syntax of new information focus in general (e.g., the same mechanism can be applied to derive objects which constitute new information), while making use of independently motivated technology ('Copy Erasure') and dispensing with p(rosodic)-movement as movement out of focus position (Zubizarreta, 1998); iii. provides evidence for the overarching Copy Theory of Movement, in the sense first thoroughly explored in Chomsky (1995). Additionally, this approach also provides support for a derivational model of grammar (Uriagereka, 1999 and Chomsky, 2000, 2001a and 2001b), as my proposal interacts with such a model in a non-trivial way. Specifically, this research supports the view that TP is a phase in Romance (as in Uriagereka (1999) and Gallego (2004)), since this view provides a rationale for the thematic/categorical contrast depending on the postverbal/preverbal position of the subject and for certain asymmetries in NPI licensing and a variety of other phenomena. Assuming that Spanish provides three different positions for subjects –TP-AgrS-VP (see Cardinaletti, 1997, Ordóñez, 2000 and Zubizarreta, 1994 for related claims), then the copy theory approach applies to the two lower sites, not involving the highest, Spec TP. This is if 'surface semantics' arise at phase edges, associating to the head of a chain (Chomsky, 2000, 2001a and 2001b); as a consequence, a given element moves to a phase edge if the head of the chain is going to be pronounced (i.e., if this head is going to end up supporting the surface semantics). This draws the line between i. subject chains with the highest copy

sitting at Spec TP, whose copy has to be pronounced to support the surface semantics, (yielding e.g., a categorical reading, according to Gallego (2004)), and ii. subject chains involving only AgrS and VP, which fall under the Copy-Theory approach to postverbal subjects alluded to above. The strength of my proposal correlates with the success of my giving a unified analysis of the above situations, while keeping it compatible with a copy-theory approach to postverbal subjects.

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