

Introduction by the editors

and similar papers at core.ac.uk

provided by Dip

From 1997 to 2000 the *Grup de gramàtica teòrica* of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona developed the coordinate research project *The compositional nature of linguistic information and the interpretation of complex linguistic units. A comparative study of Spanish and Catalan*, funded by a DGICYT grant (PB96-1999-CO4). Four research groups were associated to the coordinate project. Two of them dealt with syntactic topics: *Verbal predication in Spanish and Catalan: the grammatical representation of supra- and infrasentential predicative relations* and *Adjuncts and the compositionality of predication in Spanish and Catalan*. The present volume presents a sample of the work developed in both syntactic projects.

One of the subjects of study was the licensing conditions of the so-called adjunct phrases. Following the working hypothesis, the analysis demonstrated that some principles accounting for the behavior of selected phrases play a role in explaining the properties of adjunct phrases. As a consequence, the traditional status of adjuncts as non-selected complements was reexamined.

Jaume Mateu i Fontanals, in his paper *Preverbs in Complex Denominal Verbs: Lexical Adjuncts or Core Predicates* argues, along the lines of Hale and Keyser's approach, that, in the lexical structure, prefixes adjoined to some denominal verbs like *vergärtnern* are to be viewed as heading a prepositional small clause part of the main predication, further adjoined to a higher verbal head because of his affixal status. This process has to be considered a syntactic, not a semantic one. This option of lexical building is only possible in satellite-framed languages, like English, Dutch or German, but not in verb-framed languages like Catalan, Spanish, French or Japanese, as was already stated in Mateu and Rigau (1999, 2000), who, within a minimalist framework which articulates the properties of lexical structure, developed an idea firstly put forward by Talmy (1991). Mateu's work is a step forward in Hale & Keyser's lexical-syntactic approach, in which a few number of lexical primitives can account for a large number of syntactic and semantic structures by means of a series of syntactic conflation and derivational processes independently motivated in grammatical theory.

A very different type of adjunct elements are analysed in the paper by Montserrat Pascual i Pou, *A Syntactic Analysis of Instrumental Prepositional Phrases*. The author analyses Instrumental Phrases as a much more complex structure, in which the preposition introducing the instrumental DP heads a small clause with an empty PRO subject. This instrumental small clause has to merge with a causative verb in

order to check an interpretable feature. The subject of the small clause is controlled by the agent argument of the verb. Pascual's analysis could be easily extended to other «semiadjunct» phrases such as Comitative ones.

The role and properties of two types of temporal adjunct headed by the quantifier *tot* in Catalan are analysed in the paper by Gemma Rigau i Oliver, *The Role of the Quantifier tot in Some Catalan Temporal Phrases*. An exhaustive description of the syntactic and semantic properties of the temporal adjuncts is given in the paper. Rigau points out that the quantifier selects an XP that denotes a period of time possibly followed by the complementizer *que*, and instantiated by a deictic adverbial phrase or DP, a definite description or a noun for a day of the week, a year, a month, etc., but not an indefinite NP expression of temporal measure, a temporal DP or adverbial with a punctual meaning or a durative temporal phrase. Just as instrumental phrases are restricted to predicates with a causative meaning, the temporal expressions headed by *tot* are only possible with predicates with an atelic *Aktionsart*. The lexical and syntactic properties of these modifiers correspond with a quantified semantic interpretation: extensive in the case of *tot XP que* and intensive in the case of *tot XP*. All these properties receive an integrated explanation in the framework of Rizzi (1997, 1999). The assumption that the left periphery of the sentence hosts the (functional) categories expressing the «interface between the propositional content (expressed by IP) and the superordinate structure (a higher clause or, possibly, the articulation of discourse» (Rizzi, 1997:283) allows the integration of the two types of temporal adjunct in a unitary way. These modifiers are generated in the specifier position of the Mod node. The *que* which appears with one type of temporals is generated in the Fin node, which expresses the temporal-aspectual value of the sentence, and so the extensive versus intensive value of the modifier together with its compatibility properties with the hodiernal or future past value of the tense of the verb in the sentence are given a natural explanation.

Xavier Villalba's *The Right Edge of Exclamative Sentences in Catalan* also deals with the properties of quantified expressions that are licensed by the peripheral discourse-linked heads of the sentence. Villalba explores the formal properties of some Catalan exclamative sentences that contain an apparently right dislocated adjective and the partitive clitic *en*. Villalba takes into consideration the informational status of these sentences, together with the obligatory appearance of a quantifier, and puts forward the hypothesis that they are better accounted for if we assume that the AP remains *in situ* and is not an instance of right dislocation. Following this, the partitive clitic is not licensed as a resumptive pronoun, but follows from the presence of an exclamative operator. The exclamative operator receives its content from the Degree Phrase (clitic pronoun) constructed as the predicate of a small clause from which the AP is the specifier. This paper provides a new argument for the proposal that the periphery of the sentence, more specifically, the functional categories hosting specific force markers can give a new insight into the semantics-discourse interface.

M. Came Picallo explores in her paper *Nominalized Clauses, Clausal Arguments and Agreement* the way in which minimalist assumptions about feature specifications can deal with argument and nominalized clauses. These clauses, traditional-

ly considered «neutral» from the point of view of *phi*-features, are argued by Picallo to be specified as [-Person], [-Number] and [-Gender] and to be subject to the operation *Agree* just like other arguments. The author presents theoretical arguments for this conclusion, showing that if clausal arguments were given no *phi*-feature specification at all, the derivation would crash, as the noninterpretable features of the functional TP and *v*P categories could not be deleted. She also gives empirical arguments for this analysis by taking into consideration the pronominalizations and agreement properties of these arguments.

The paper by M. Ángeles Escobar *The Age Factor in L2 Acquisition: An Empirical Investigation into the Choice of [- human] Relative Pronouns by Spanish Learners of English and the Resetting of Parameters* extends minimalist assumptions to the investigation of the acquisition of one particular linguistic phenomenon, relative clauses.

Finally, Carlos Sánchez, in his paper *The Evolution of the Old Spanish Adverbs ende and ý: A Case of Grammaticalization?*, discusses the process of grammaticalization undergone by the locative pronominal adverbs of Old Spanish *ende* and *ý*, lost in Modern Spanish.

Anna Bartra and Josep M. Brucart, editors