

Spanish

Control Project Meeting Week 6

- Some of the interesting issues in Spanish Control/Raising:
 - Restructuring
 - Some control/raising verbs are restructuring triggers, others are not
 - Preposition + infinitive
 - Some control/raising verbs require particular prepositions to precede an infinitival complement.
 - The controller's position with object control verbs
 - The controller of an object control verb may precede or follow an infinitival complement.

- Data collection
 - 6 native speakers of Spanish from 3 different areas
 - grammatical judgments tasks to investigate:
 - ✓ validity of the control vs. raising distinction
 - ✓ validity of the restructuring diagnostics
 - ✓ speakers' preference with the position of the controller in object control

1. Restructuring/Clause Reduction

Aissen & Perlmutter (1976): some control and raising verbs are transparent with respect to normally clause-bound phenomena.

1.1. Clitic Climbing:

- pronominal clitics of an embedded verb' arguments may appear cliticized on some control/raising verbs:

1) a. Juan lo_i quiere comer ec_i
 J it_i want-3^{rdSg} eat ec_i
 'Juan wants to eat it.'

b. *Juan lo_i insiste en comer ec_i
 J it_i insist-3^{rdSg} in eat ec_i
 'Juan insists in eating it.'

1.2. Reflexive Passive:

- an embedded object can be the matrix subject with the reflexive pronoun SE in this impersonal construction:

2) a. Los mapas $_i$ se empezaron a preparar ec_i
 The maps $_i$ SE begin-3^{rdPL}-pst to prepare ec_i
 'They have begun to prepare the maps.'

b. *Las pirámides $_i$ se insisten en visitar ec_i
 The pyramids $_i$ SE insist-3^{rdPl} in visit ec_i
 'They insist to visit the pyramids.'

1.3. Long Passive:

- an object of an embedded verb can be passivized:

3) a. Estas casas $_i$ fueron empezadas a pintar t_i .
 These houses $_i$ be-3^{rdPl}-pst begin-F-Pl to paint t_i

‘These houses were began to paint.

b. *Estas casas fueron insistidas en pintar t_i.
 these houses be-3^{rdPl}-pst insisit-F-Pl in paint t_i

‘These houses were insisted in painting.

1.4. Tough construction (Object Raising):

➤ an embedded object can be “raised”

4) a. Estas casas_i son fáciles de empezar a pintar ec_i.
 these houses_i be-3^{rdPl} easy DE begin to paint ec_i
 ‘These houses are easy to begin to paint.’

b. *Estas casas_i son fáciles de insistir en pintar ec_i.
 these houses_i be-3^{rdPl} easy DE insist to paint ec_i
 ‘These houses are easy to insist in painting.’

Table 1: Aissen and Perlmutter’s list of trigger and non-trigger verbs:

Trigger Verbs	Non-trigger verbs
<i>sober</i> ‘tend’	<i>parecer</i> ‘seem’
acabar de ‘have just’	deber de ‘must’
querer ‘want’	insistir en ‘insist in’
tratar de ‘try’	soñar con ‘dream of’
poder ‘can’	decider(se) ‘decide’
deber ‘ought to’	evitar ‘avoid’
empezar a ‘begin’	sugerir ‘suggest’
terminar de ‘finish’	pedir ‘ask’
continuar ‘continue’	decir ‘say’
seguir ‘keep on’	afirmar ‘affirm’
dejar de ‘stop’	
volver a ‘re-verb’	
ordenar ‘order’	bold = unambiguous control verbs
permitir ‘permit’	<i>Italic</i> = unambiguous raising verb

• Some issues with restructuring:

1.5. Optimality:

➤ restructuring appears to be optional: embedded negation is possible with a downstairs clitic; it is prohibited with an upstairs clitic (Moore 1996):

5) a. *Juan **lo_i** quiere **no** leer *pro_i*
 J **it_i** want-3^{rdSg} Neg read *pro_i*

b. Juan quiere **no** leer **lo**
 J want-3^{rdSg} Neg read **it**
 ‘Juan wants to eat it.’

1.6 Variability:

➤ Trigger verbs do not uniformly show the transparent characteristics with all the diagnostics (Moore 1996):

▪ Only some verbs allow long passive:

6) *Estas casas_i fueron queridas a vender t_i.
 These houses_i be-3^{rdPl}-pst want-F-Pl to sell t_i
 ‘These houses are wanted to sell.

▪ Locally bound anaphora can’t be bound:

7) *Curro_i te lo permitió mardar-se_i a si mismo_i.
 C_i you it permitbe-3^{rdPl}-pst send-self_i to himself_i
 ‘Curro_i allowed you to send it to himself_i¹.

¹ For an account of the impossibility of passive and reflexive binding with restructuring trigger verbs, see Moore (1996).

2. Prepositional complements

- Many control/raising verbs take an infinitival complement with a specific preposition.

- Control verbs:
 - insistir **en** ‘insist in’
 - soñar **con** ‘dream of’
 - tratar **de** ‘try’
- Aspectual verbs
 - empezar **a** ‘begin’
 - terminar **de** ‘finish’
 - dejar **de** ‘stop’
 - volver **a** ‘re-verb’
 - acabar **de** ‘have just’
- Object control verbs
 - obligar **a** ‘require’
 - forzar **a** ‘force’

- What does the complement structure look like with/without a preposition?
- Notice that the prepositions do not have to be adjacent with the verb (at least with object control verbs)

8) Obligaron al editor a publicar el libro
 requir-3^{rdPl}-pst to-the editor A publish the book
 ‘They forced the editor to publish the book.’

- Whether restructuring is analyzed to involve verb raising/incorporation or reduced complement, the presence of these prepositions seems unexpected and problematic.

3. Object control verbs and the controller’s position

Spanish object control verbs like *ordenar* ‘order’ and *permitir* ‘permit’ allow the controller to appear either before or after an infinitival complement (i.e. Bordelois 1988).

9) a. El jefe ordenó trabajar a los hombres
 the boss order-3^{rdSg}-pst work to the guys

b. El jefe ordenó a los hombres trabajar.
 the boss order-3^{rdSg}-pst to the guys work
 ‘The boss told the guys to work.’

- Some have argued that these verbs take just an infinitival complement and the apparent controller belongs to the complement.
- Evidence suggests that the controller and the infinitive do not form a constituent (Moore 1998)²:
 - Sentential anaphora

10) Mi padre no me permite [salir por la noche];
 my father Neg me permit-3^{rdSg} [go-out for the night];
 pero mi madre sí me lo_i permite.
 But my mother yes me it_i permit-3^{rdSg}
 ‘My father doesn’t permit me to go out at night, but my mother does.’

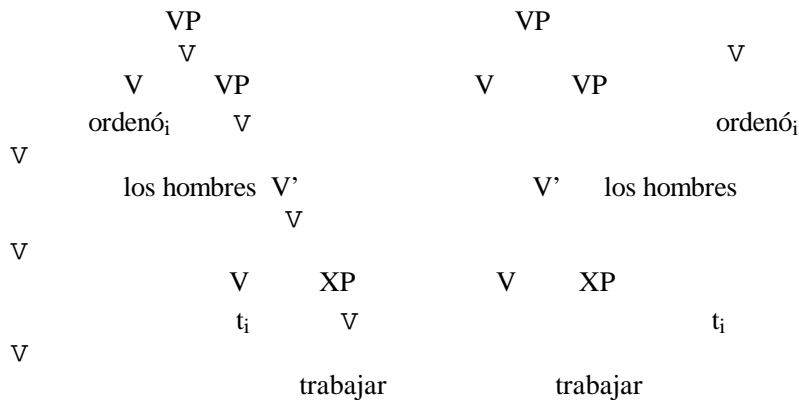
- Clefting

11) Lo que me permitió fue [barrar la vereda]
 What me permit-3^{rdSg}-pst was [sweep the sidewalk]
 ‘What s/he permitted that I do was sweep the sidewalk.’

² I don’t know whether the same diagnostics can be used with the non-pronominal controller.

- This suggests the following two options under the Larsonian analysis of object control (Larson 1991):

a) the controller+ infinitive b) infinitive + the controller



- Are there two directions for specifiers in Spanish?
 - Note that the subject can be either pre- or post-verbal in Spanish:

12) Compró el niño la bicicleta
 Buy-3rdSg-pst the child the bicycle
 'The boy bought the bicycle.'

- Is the movement analysis of control compatible with b)?

4. Data

4.1. Subjects:

- 6 participants from 3 different regions
 A, B, C, F = Argentina, D = Spain, E = Columbia
- They all came to the US as adults (two in their 20's, other in their 30's)
- They have been in the US for:
 A = 8 years D = 3.5 years
 B = 20 years E = 10 months
 C = 20 years F = 6 years

4.2. Tasks

- Grammatical judgment tasks
 - Section 1 & 3 assign each sentence:
 ✓ = a good Spanish sentence
 ? = ok but strange
 ✗ = a bad Spanish sentence or between these.
 - Section 2: truth value equivalence
 S = if a pair of sentences describe the same situation.
 D = if they describe two different situations.
- For section 1 & 3:
 - The given grammatical judgments are given points
 ✓ = 3
 ✓? = 2.5
 ? = 2
 ✗? = 1.5
 ✗ = 1
 - the lowest possible = 6; the highest possible = 18
 - based on the total score, the acceptability of each sentence is determined as follows:

6-9 = ✗ (ungrammatical)

10-14 =	? (questionable)
15-18 =	✓ (grammatical)

4.3. Results

4.3.1. Control vs. Raising

▪ **Selectional Restrictions:**

a) **Inanimate Subject**

✓	?	✗
poder 'can' deber 'should' empezar a 'begin' terminar de 'finish' seguir 'keep on' dejar de 'stop' volver a 're-do'	querer 'want' tratar de 'try' insistir en 'insist in' soñar con 'dream of' evitar 'avoid'	

b) **Inanimate Object**

✓	?	✗
ordenar 'order' + subjunctive permitir 'permit' + subjunctive		ordenar 'order' +object+ infinitive ordenar 'order' +object+ subjunctive permitir 'permit' +object+ infinitive permitir 'permit' +object+ subjunctive

Examples:

- ordenar + inanimate object+ infinitive:

*El jefe [ordenó] [las cajas] [ser mandadas a Los Angeles]. (7.5)
 the boss ordered the boxes be sent to LA

- ordenar + subjunctive:

El jefe [ordenó][que las cajas sean mandadas a Los Angeles].(16)

- ordenar + inanimate object + subjunctive:

*El jefe [ordenó][las cajas][que sean mandadas a Los Angeles] (6).

Comments:

- subjects are more tolerant with selectional restrictions on subjects than objects.
- subjunctive complement with and without an object are clearly different.

c) **Passive synonymy**

Verb	Same	Different
querer 'want'	0	6
tratar de 'try'	0	6
insistir en 'insist in'	0	6
soñar con 'dream of'	0	6
decider 'decide'	0	6
evitar 'avoid'	0	6
poder 'can'	2	4
deber 'should'	3	3
empezar a 'begin'	6	0
terminar de 'finish'	5	1
continuar 'continue'	6	0
seguir 'keep on'	6	0
dejar de 'stop'	6	0
volver a 're-do'	6	0
ordenar 'order' + infinitive	2	4
ordenar 'order' + subjunctive	3	3
permitir 'permit'+ infinitive	1	5
permitir 'permit' + subjunctive	3	3
pedir 'ask'	0	6

Comments:

- Clear division between the presumed control verbs and aspectual verbs.
- For some, modals are interpreted as root with active, epistemic with passive.

- Subjunctive and infinitive under the object control verbs are interpreted differently.

4.3.2. Restructuring phenomena

- The presumed trigger verbs:
tratar de 'try', *empezar a* 'begin'
- The presumed non-trigger verbs:
insistir en 'insist in', *parecer* 'seem'

Clitic Climbing

Verb	✓	?	✗	score
tratar de 'try' + object	*			16.5
tratar de 'try' + reflexive	*			15.5
insistir en 'insist in' + object		*		14.5
insistir en 'insist in' + reflexive			*	8
empezar a 'begin' + object	*			18
empezar a 'begin' + reflexive	*			18
parecer 'seem' + object			*	8
parecer 'seem' + reflexive			*	10
ordenar 'order' + object		*		12
permitir 'permit' + object		*		14

Reflexive Passive

Verb	✓	?	✗	score
tratar de 'try'		*		10
insistir en 'insist in'		*		10.5
empezar a 'begin'		*		14.5
parecer 'seem'			*	7.5

Long Passive

Verb	✓	?	✗	score
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tratar de 'try'		*		12
insistir en 'insist in'			*	7.5
empezar a 'begin'		*		12
parecer 'seem'			*	6

Tough movement

Verb	✓	?	✗	score
tratar de 'try'		*		11.5
insistir en 'insist in'			*	7
empezar a 'begin'		*		13.5
parecer 'seem'			*	6

Average scores:

tratar de 'try'	13.1	(trigger/control)
insistir en 'insist in'	9.5	(non-trigger/control)
empezar a 'begin'	15.2	(trigger/raising)
parecer 'seem'	7.5	(non-trigger/raising)

Comments:

- Except for **clitic climbing**, these constructions are **relatively marginal** irrespective of the type of the matrix verb.
- Overall, these diagnostics do differentiate trigger verbs from non-trigger verbs.
- Clitic climbing** with the trigger object control verbs, *ordenar* 'order' and *permitir* 'permit' were marginal.
- Clitic climbing** and **reflexive passive** failed to distinguish *tratar de* 'try', the trigger control verb, and *insistir en* 'insist in' the non-trigger control verb, while **long passive** and **tough movement** did differentiate them.
- The difference between *empezar a* 'begin' the trigger raising verb, and *parecer* 'seem', the non-trigger raising verb, appears to be clear.

- As has been discussed in the literature, *parecer* 'seem' is exceptionally clearly opaque.

--role of reflexive/middle in the selection of the complement

--interpretive differences between VO/OV orders in object control?

4.3.3. The object controller

- Both the controller + infinitive and infinitive + the controller are equally preferred:

- 13) El jefe ordenó [a los hombres] [trabajar]. (14)
The boss ordered [A the guys] [to work]
- 14) El jefe permitió [a los hombres] [trabajar]. (16)
The boss permitted [A the guys] [to work]
- 15) El jefe ordenó [trabajar] [a los hombres] (16)
- 16) El jefe permitió [trabajar] [a los hombres].(17)

References:

- Aissen, J and D. Perlmutter 1976. 'Clause reduction in Spanish', *BLS* 2; 1-30.
- Bordelois, I. 1988. 'Causatives: from lexicon to syntax', *NLLT* 6; 57-93.
- Larson, R. 1991. 'Promise and the theory of control', *LI* 22; 103-139.
- Moore, J. 1996. *Reduced Constructions in Spanish*. New York: Garland.
- Moore, J. 1998. *Object control restructuring in Spanish*. Ms. UCSD.

Outstanding questions:

--status of the prepositions in these structures

Are all the prepositions the same or do they represent different categories?

--differences between infinitival and gerundial complements

Syntactic?
Semantic?