[+a], [+p], [+c] - A typology of discourse in Spanish
Jose Sequeros-Valle, *University of Illinois at Chicago*

This project is an experimental attempt to investigate whether discourse determines word order and phonology, while discussing the implications of its findings to linguistic theory.

The test case is the Spanish left periphery; namely clitic-doubled left dislocations (CLLD), focus fronting (FF), and their canonical counterparts. Starting from canonical example in (1), FF involves fronting of a constituent (as in (2)), while CLLD involves the same fronting plus the addition of a clitic-doubling pronoun (as in (3)). In general terms, FF expresses contrastive focus and presents an emphatic phonology, while CLLD expresses topicality.
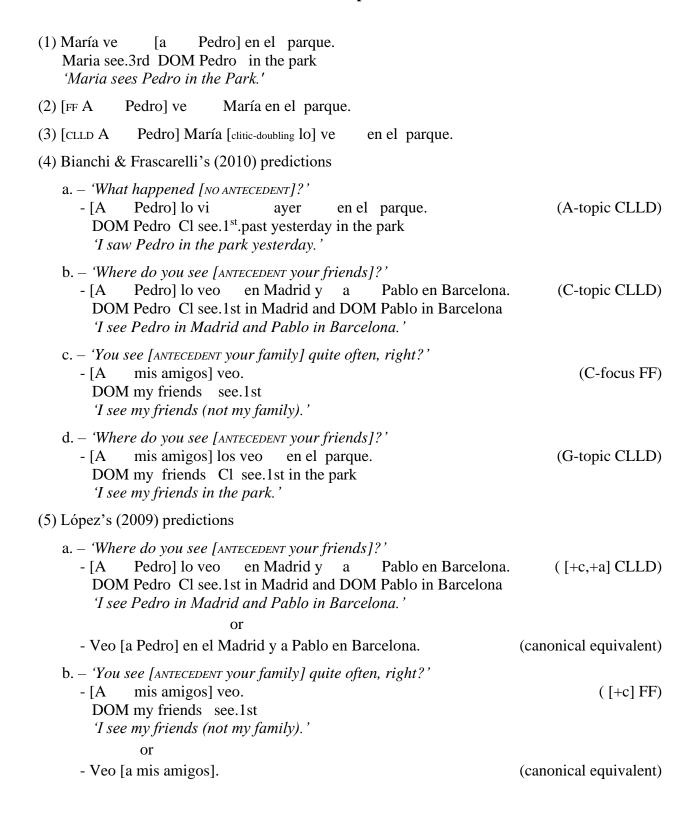
Despite this general description, previous accounts disagree on the details. First, Bianchi and Frascarelli (2010) argue that CLLD can fulfill multiple discourse contexts (see examples in (4)). Further, these discourse functions cannot be fulfilled by canonical utterances, and each interpretation corresponds to a unique intonation. In a second approach, López (2009) argues for a unique interpretation of FF and CLLD, and these discourse functions can be fulfilled by canonical utterances as well (see examples in (5)). Third, Rubio Alcalá (2014) argues for a completely interpretational freedom of all canonical and non-canonical utterances. Despite all these claims, none of the authors provide experimental evidence.

In order to fill this gap, this project presents three studies. Study 1 analyzes the Spanish section of the NOCANDO corpus (Brunetti, Bott, Costa, & Vallduví, 2011). Given some limitations in Study 1, I propose two additional experimental studies: In Study 2, participants provided their judgments on different word orders (CLLD vs. canonicals) in different discourse contexts. In Study 3, participants produced different word orders (CLLD vs. FF vs. canonicals) in order to learn about their phonology.

Results show that speakers produce and accept both CLLD and its canonical counterpart in multiple discourse contexts (contra both López, 2009a and Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010). However, CLLD does not work as an answer to a wh-word (contra Rubio Alcalá, 2014). Further, no specific intonation pattern is found for each discourse context (contra Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010; aligning with Gupton, forthcoming; Stavropoulou & Spiliotopoulos, 2011; Pešková, 2015, 2018). Instead, there is a pattern for contrastive focus (FF and its canonical counterpart) that includes contrastive stress, different from topics (CLLD and its canonical counterpart) that do not include any sort of emphasis (following Hualde & Prieto, 2015; Ladd, 2008; Pešková, 2015, 2018). In sum, these findings do not fully confirm any of the three previous models.

My theoretical alternative can be summarized as follows: Discourse features are morphemes from numeration merged as functional heads into the derivation. Under this morphological approach to discourse, discourse features such as [anaphora] or [contrast] are merged to the relevant constituent (e.g. [anaphoric-XP [anaphora] [XP]]). Further, an optional movement to the left periphery (CLLD and FF) is caused by an unvalued feature in C-head (e.g. [CP [[anaphoric-XP] [[unvalued-anaphora] [... [t(anaphoric-XP)]]]]]). This model simplifies discourse by the addition of only a small number of morphemes to the basic architecture of human language.

Examples

(1) María ve   [a   Pedro] en el parque.
   Maria see.3rd DOM Pedro   in the park
   'Maria sees Pedro in the Park.'

(2) [FF A   Pedro] ve   María en el parque.

(3) [CLLD A   Pedro] María [clitic-doubling lo] ve   en el parque.

(4) Bianchi & Frascarelli's (2010) predictions

   a. – *'What happened [NO ANTECEDENT]?'*
    - [A   Pedro] lo vi   ayer   en el parque.   (A-topic CLLD)
      DOM Pedro Cl see.1st.past yesterday in the park
      'I saw Pedro in the park yesterday.'

   b. – *'Where do you see [ANTECEDENT your friends]?'*
    - [A   Pedro] lo veo   en Madrid y   a   Pablo en Barcelona.   (C-topic CLLD)
      DOM Pedro Cl see.1st in Madrid and DOM Pablo in Barcelona
      'I see Pedro in Madrid and Pablo in Barcelona.'

   c. – *'You see [ANTECEDENT your family] quite often, right?'*
    - [A   mis amigos] veo.   (C-focus FF)
      DOM my friends   see.1st
      'I see my friends (not my family).'

   d. – *'Where do you see [ANTECEDENT your friends]?'*
    - [A   mis amigos] los veo   en el parque.   (G-topic CLLD)
      DOM my friends   Cl see.1st in the park
      'I see my friends in the park.'

(5) López's (2009) predictions

   a. – *'Where do you see [ANTECEDENT your friends]?'*
    - [A   Pedro] lo veo   en Madrid y   a   Pablo en Barcelona.   ([+c,+a] CLLD)
      DOM Pedro Cl see.1st in Madrid and DOM Pablo in Barcelona
      'I see Pedro in Madrid and Pablo in Barcelona.'
                         or
    - Veo [a Pedro] en el Madrid y a Pablo en Barcelona.   (canonical equivalent)

   b. – *'You see [ANTECEDENT your family] quite often, right?'*
    - [A   mis amigos] veo.   ([+c] FF)
      DOM my friends   see.1st
      'I see my friends (not my family).'
             or
    - Veo [a mis amigos].   (canonical equivalent)

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