On the position of dative DPs in Spanish middle-passive sentences

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Abstract

This paper examines external possession between a dative possessor and a relational noun in Spanish middle-passive configurations. The dative DP in these contexts must surface preverbally in out-of-the-blue contexts, either by itself –presumably in preverbal subject position–, or along with the theme containing the possessee. When the dative precedes the theme, it cannot be assumed that the former is left-dislocated while the latter sits in preverbal subject position, for this would imply a violation of locality under a low applicative analysis of dative possessors: T° would skip the possessor argument in Spec,ApplP to probe the possessee in Applº's complement position to its specifier. Rather, I provide data showing that preverbal DPs –dative or otherwise– in Spanish middle-passive contexts are clitic left-dislocations co-referring with empty pronouns in argument position. I offer a biclausal analysis of these configurations that avoids any potential intervention effects, while at the same time accounting for the extra-sentential properties of these constituents.

Keywords: middle-passive, clitic left-dislocations, dative arguments, locality.

1. Introduction

This paper aims to delve into the much-discussed position preverbal subjects and dative DPs occupy in Spanish (Contreras 1976; Rivero 1980; Masullo 1992; Olarrea 1996; Fernández Soriano 1999; Ordóñez and Treviño 1999; Tubino 2007; Fernández

Soriano and Mendikoetxea 2013; Villa-García 2015; Fábregas et al. 2017; Jiménez-Fernández 2020, among others) by examining data from Spanish middle-passive sentences containing dative possessor DPs. These unaccusative structures denote inherent properties of the verb's internal argument, which surfaces as the grammatical subject. The reason why these predicates are relevant for assessing issues of word order is the fact that their grammatical subject must necessarily be a definite DP, never a bare nominal, and always occurs preverbally in out-of-the-blue contexts (1). Traditionally, these characteristics have been considered diagnostics for the internal argument's externalization from the VP (Suñer 1982; Fernández Soriano 1999), and its role as a sentence topic (Fodor 1982; Mendikoetxea 1999; Sánchez López 2002; Suárez-Palma 2019).

(1)   *What happens?*
    a. (Que) *(las) novelas policiacas se   leen fácilmente.
        that   the   novels   police   RFL read easily
        '(That) thrillers read easily.'
    b. ?(Que) se   leen las novelas policiacas fácilmente.
          that RFL read the novels   police   easily

In this respect, middle-passive sentences differ from other unaccusative *se*-sentences, like anticausatives (2a) and reflexively marked passives (2c), whose grammatical subject unmarkedly surfaces after the verb. Furthermore, in reflexively marked passives, this argument may be a bare NP.

(2)   *What happens?*
    a. (Que) se   rompieron *(los) espejos por sí   solos.   (Anticausative)
        that RFL broke   the mirrors by RFL alone
        '(That) the mirrors broke by themselves.'
    b. ?(Que) los espejos se rompieron por sí solos.
    c. (Que) se   fabricaron   (los) coches.   (*Se*-Passive)
        that RFL manufactured the   cars
        'That (the) cars were manufactured.'
    d. (Que) los coches se fabricaron.

Subjects of middle-passive sentences may denote a body-part noun; these are considered relational nouns, having an indivisible relationship with their possessor, a phenomenon known as inalienable possession. Inalienable possessors can take the form of a dative clitic that can be optionally doubled by a dative DP, in an external possession configuration (Kliffer 1983; Demonte 1988; Kempchinsky 1992; Gutiérrez Ordóñez 1999; Picallo and Rigau 1999; Guéron 2006; Sánchez López 2007; Conti 2011; Suárez-Palma 2024). In middle-passive sentences, the unmarked order of these phrases is preverbal.

(3)   *What happens?*
    a. (Que) a Raúl$_i$ se   le$_i$ peina [la melena]$_i$ fácilmente.
        that   Raúl.DAT RFL 3SG.DAT combs the long-hair   easily
        'Raúl's long hair combs easily.'
    b. (Que) [la melena]$_i$ a Raúl$_i$ se le$_i$ peina fácilmente.

      c.   (Que) a Raúl$_i$, [la melena]$_i$ se le$_i$ peina fácilmente.

      d.   ?#(Que) [la melena]$_i$ se le$_i$ peina a Raúl$_i$ fácilmente.

By adopting an applicative analysis of external possession (Cuervo 2003), whereby the possessor DP merges in the specifier of a low applicative projection responsible for establishing the relationship of possession between that argument and the possessee sitting in its complement position, one could assume that the dative DP in (3a) has been probed by T° to its specificier to check its EPP feature; this hypothesis would explain why the theme DP *la melena* remains inside the VP (4a). On the other hand, in (3b), it seems that the same derivation is at play: the dative DP sits in preverbal subject position, while the theme DP is left-dislocated and corefers with an empty pronominal in argument position (4b). However, (3c) poses a challenge to this rationale; if we assume that the dative DP is the left-dislocated constituent in this derivation, while the theme DP sits in preverbal subject position, we run into a problem of intervention effects: the theme would be probed to Spec,TP over the empty pronominal that stands for the possessor in Spec,ApplP (4c). In other words, minimality would not be respected.

(4)   a.   [$_{TP}$ **a Raúl$_i$** [$_T$ se le$_i$ peina [$_{vP}$ v [$_{√P}$ [$_{ApplP}$ t_i [$_{Appl}$ ~~le~~ [$_{DP}$ la melena]]] √*~~pein~~*-]]]]

      b.   **La melena$_k$** [$_{TP}$ a Raúl$_i$ [$_T$ se le$_i$ peina [$_{vP}$ v [$_{√P}$ [$_{ApplP}$ t_i [$_{Appl}$ ~~le~~ [$_{DP}$ ***pro$_k$***]]] [√ ~~pein~~-]]]]

      c.   a Raúl$_i$ [$_{TP}$ la melena$_k$ [$_T$ se le$_i$ peina [$_{vP}$ v [$_{√P}$ [$_{ApplP}$ ***pro$_i$*** [$_{Appl}$ ~~le~~ [$_{DP}$ t_k]]] [√ ~~pein~~-]]]]]

Rather, I will provide evidence showing that preverbal all dative and theme DPs in (3) are left-dislocated constituents doubling empty pronominals in argument position, thus avoiding any intervention effects. Additionally, I will propose a biclausal analysis of these configurations that accounts for their extrasentential properties without encountering the challenge that cartographic approaches are subjected to, known as Cinque's Paradox (Ott 2014, 2015, 2017), i.e. the fact that left-dislocated constituents merge outside the sentence, yet they show properties that make it appear as though they have moved to their surface position from inside of it.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 summarizes the main structural properties of middle-passive sentences in Spanish; Section 3 explores the different ways inalienable possession can be encoded in Spanish, including external possession by means of dative possessor arguments and how they interact with middle-passive contexts; Section 4 develops the analysis and explains how a paratactic approach overcomes the limitations of cartographic accounts; finally, Section 5 concludes the paper.

2. Spanish middle-passive sentences

Middle-passive constructions are generic unaccusative sentences predicating inherent characteristics of the verb's internal argument, which surfaces as the grammatical subject due to the lack of an explicit external argument (Ackema & Schoorlemmer 2006, *inter alia*). Because there exists variation as to how languages encode the middle voice in their grammars, numerous syntactic (Keyser and Roeper 1984; Hale and

Keyser 1986; Roberts 1987; Stroik 1992; Schäfer 2008), semantic (Dixon 1982; Chierchia 2003), and lexicalist (Fagan 1992; Ackema and Schoorlemmer 1995) analyses have been proposed to explain this phenomenon.

In Spanish, the stative, non-episodic nature of middle-passive sentences favors that only non-perfective tenses can appear in these contexts, i.e. present and imperfect. Moreover, the presence of the reflexive clitic *se* in these contexts appears to be connected to the impossibility of explicitly realizing an external argument in them, although the participation of a generic agent in the event is inferred. Additionally, modification by an adverbial is required in most cases (Mendikoetxea 1999; Sánchez López 2002; Suárez-Palma 2019; Fábregas 2021).[1]

(5)   Los   artículos de sintaxis se   escriben fácilmente (*por Inés).
      the   papers   of syntax RFL write   easily   by Inés
      'Syntax papers are easy to write.'

Mendikoetxea (1999) notes that only transitive verbs whose external arguments are agents can enter these configurations, i.e. those denoting activities or achievements; on the other hand, verbs subcategorizing for an experiencer as their external argument, such as durative accomplishments (6), would be ungrammatical.

(6)   Mendikoetxea (1999: 1656)
      *La historia de España se   sabe   de memoria.
       the history   of Spain RFL knows of memory
      Intended: "Spain's history is known by heart.'

Interestingly, Spanish middle-passive constructions (6a) differ from other unaccusative reflexively marked sentences like *se*-passives (6c) in that the grammatical subject cannot be a bare noun, and its unmarked position is preverbal. These properties have been interpreted as evidence for this argument's externalization from the VP (Suñer 1982; Fernández Soriano 1999),[2] which stems from its role as a sentential topic (Fodor and Sag 1982; Mendikoetxea 1999; Sánchez López 2002; Suárez-Palma 2019).

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[1]   Sánchez López (2002) points out that adverbial modification becomes optional in the context of negation (i) or when the verb's internal argument stands for a type (ii).
   (i) Este   tejido no   se   mancha.
       this   fabric not   RFL   stains
       'This fabric is stain-free.'
   (ii) Este   tejido se   lava.
        this   fabric RFL   washes
       'This fabric is washable.'

[2]   Suñer (1982: 209) proposed the Naked Noun Phrase Constraint to account for the naked NPs' inability to surface as preverbal subjects in Spanish:
   (i)   The Naked Noun Phrase Constraint: 'An unmodified common noun in preverbal position cannot be the surface subject of a sentence under conditions of normal stress and intonation.'

(6)   *What happens?*
    a. (Que) *(los) artículos de sintaxis se   escriben fácilmente.
       that   the papers of syntax RFL write   easily
    b. *(Que) se escriben los artículos de sintaxis fácilmente.
    c. (Que) se   escribieron (los) artículos de sintaxis.
       that   RFL wrote   the papers of syntax
       '(That) (the) syntax papers were written.'
    d. *(Que) (los) artículos de sintaxis se escribieron.

Finally, middle-passive sentences are considered to confer a modal value (Mendikoetxea 1999; Sánchez López 2002), enhanced by the modification of the adverbial adjunct, for they can be rephrased with canonical modal structures: *anyone is able to write syntax papers easily*. For instance, Bruening (2024), based on Fagan (1992), affirms that a crucial component of all middle sentences is a modal semantics of ability, which has an actuality entailment in the past and the progressive aspect, identical to that of the modal 'be able to.'

In light of these data, Suárez-Palma (2019, 2020) proposes the following derivation for Spanish middle-passive sentences like (5).

(5)   a. Los artículos de sintaxis se escriben fácilmente.
    b.
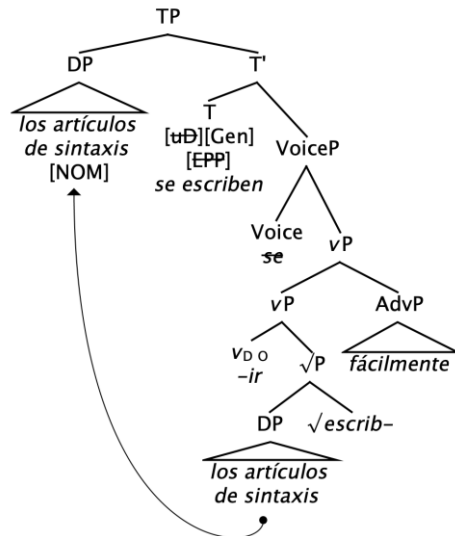
In (5b), a Voice projection spelled out by the reflexive clitic *se* is unable to introduce an external argument in its specifier (Kratzer 1996; Schäfer 2008); Voice° takes an activity subevent v_{DO} as its complement, which is responsible for verbalizing the root √*escrib-*, which, at the same time, takes the DP *los artículos de sintaxis* as its internal argument. The combination of an uninterpretable [D] feature and a generic operator (Gen) in T° causes the probing of the only DP in the derivation, the theme *los libros de sintaxis*, to its specifier; as a result, the theme becomes the grammatical subject, valuing nominative case and triggering agreement with the verb. The latter undergoes head movement to T°, incorporating the reflexive clitic on its way. In the next section, I move on to the different strategies Spanish offers to encode (in)alienable possession.

3. (In)alienable possession in Spanish

Possessors in Romance languages can be encoded internally, i.e. inside the possessum DP, by means of a possessive determiner (6a), a weak (6b) or a strong possessive (6b);[3] alternatively, the possessor can surface inside an adjoined genitive PP (6c).

(6) a. Su   pelo.   (Spanish)
         his.SG hair
         'His hair.'
     b. Els   seus   cabells.   (Catalan)
         the.PL his.M.PL hairs
     c. El pelo suyo.   (Spanish)
         the hair his.M.PL
     d. El pelo de Mario.   (Spanish)
         the hair of Mario
         'Mario's hair.'

Additionally, possessors can be encoded externally, as one of the verb's arguments, in a sentential configuration; thus, the possessor can be the verb's external argument, marked with nominative case (7a), the internal argument, bearing accusative case (7b), or as a dative argument (7c); the latter is common with inalienably possessed nominals, such as body parts, personality traits, or items of clothing[4] (Kliffer 1983; Demonte 1988; Kempchinsky 1992; Gutiérrez Ordóñez 1999; Picallo and Rigay 1999; Cuervo 2003; Guéron 2006; Sánchez López 2007; Conti 2011).

(7) a. Mario$_i$ levantó [las cejas]$_i$.
         Mario raised the eyebrows
         'Mario raised his eyebrows.'
     b. Agarró   a Mario$_i$ por [el pelo]$_i$.
         he-grabbed Mario.ACC by the hair
         'He grabbed Mario by the hair.'
     c. Le$_i$ cortó [el pelo]$_i$ [a Mario]$_i$.
         3SG.DAT he-cut the hair.ACC Mario.DAT
         'He cut Mario's hair.'

Dative possessors are in complementary distribution with internal possessors in most Spanish dialects (8) (Demonte 1988; Kempchinsky 1992; Picallo and Rigau 1999; Gutiérrez Ordóñez 1999), with the exception of some Latin American contact varieties (Escobar 1992; Rodríguez Mondoñedo 2019; Giancaspro and Sánchez 2021).

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[3]   Cardinaletti (1998) distinguishes between clitic (6a), weak (6b) and strong (6c) possessive pronouns in Romance languages.
[4]   Cuervo (2003) shows that dative possessors are also compatible with alienably possessed nouns, where these phrases also acquire a benefactive or affected connotation.
         (i)   Le$_i$ lavé   [el coche]$_i$ a Aitana$_i$.
                3.SG.DAT   I-washed   the car   Aitana.DAT
                'I washed Aitana's car.'

(8) Carlos le$_i$ cortó [*su$_i$/el$_i$ pelo (de Mario$_{*i/j}$)]$_i$ a Mario$_i$.
     Carlos 3SG.DAT cut   his/the   hair of Mario   Mario.DAT
     'Carlos cut Mario's hair.'

   Inalienable possession between a dative argument and a body part noun in Romance has been extensively discussed and analyzed as instances of binding and control (Guéron 1983, 1985; Demonte 1988), predication (Vergnaud and Zubizarreta 1992), possessor raising (Demonte 1995; Sánchez López 2007; Nakamoto 2010; Rodrigues 2010, 2023; Suárez-Palma 2022), applicatives (Cuervo 2003), or a combination of the two last approaches, namely possessor raising to an applicative projection (Armstrong 2021; Suárez-Palma 2024).
   Cuervo (2003) argues that dative possessors in Spanish are akin to goal and source dative arguments in double object constructions (9), in that they share the same case, hierarchical position, word order and spell-out form, namely a dative clitic, optionally doubled by a dative DP; moreover, these arguments are syntactically associated with the verb, but semantically connected with the theme.

(9) Carlos le$_i$ regaló un videojuego a Noelia$_i$.
     Carlos 3SG.DAT gave   a   videogame Noelia.DAT
     'Carlos gave Noelia a videogame.'

   Given said parallelism, Cuervo assumes Pylkkänen's (2002) analysis of double object constructions as being low applicative configurations, where the goal or source argument merges in the specifier of the applicative head, which relates it to the theme in its complement position; the entire ApplP would subsequently merge as the verb's complement. According to Pylkkänen, the specific semantics of the low applicative head determine whether the argument in its specifier is interpreted as the goal (10a), or the source (10b) with respect to the theme. Moreover, Cuervo proposes a third type of low applicative head for Spanish, one of possession (10c), which would be at play in constructions with dative possessors; the semantics of this third type denote a static relationship of possession.

(10) a. APPL$_{TO}$ (Goal applicative):
         $\lambda x.\lambda y.\lambda f_{<e<s,t>>}.\lambda e\ f(e,x)$ & theme (e,x) & to-the-possession-(x,y)
     b. APPL$_{FROM}$ (Source applicative):
         $\lambda x.\lambda y.\lambda f_{<e<s,t>>}.\lambda e\ f(e,x)$ & theme (e,x) & from-the-possession-(x,y)
     c. APPL$_{AT}$ (Possessor applicative):
         $\lambda x.\lambda y.\lambda f_{<e<s,t>>}.\lambda e\ f(e,x)$ & theme (e,x) & in-the-possession-(x,y)

   Cuervo suggests that a sentence with a dative possessor like (11a) would be derived as shown in (11b).

(11) a. Cuervo (2003: 76; example (86a))
         Pablo le$_i$ envidia [la paciencia]$_i$ a Valeria$_i$.
         Pablo 3SG.DAT envies   the patience   Valeria.DAT
         'Pablo envies Valeria for her patience.'

b.
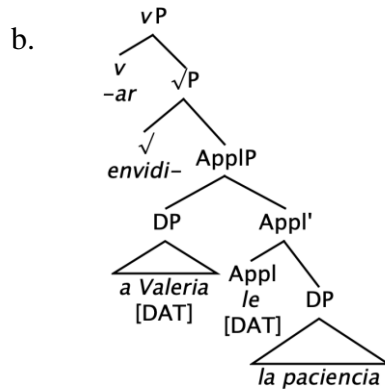
In (11b), the low applicative of possession head relates the possessor DP *a Valeria* originating in its specifier, with the possessee *la paciencia* in its complement position; finally, the entire applicative projection merges as the complement of the root *envidi-*. This exact derivation would also be applied to contexts where a dative possessor appears related to a common noun, i.e. when no inalienable possession effects arise. However, Cuervo does not specify how such construal comes about. Instead, I propose that internal and dative possessors originate inside the possessum DP. Ticio (2005) shows that internal possessors block the extraction of argument and argument-like PPs from inside the possessee, because the former merge in a higher position that interferes with the path of the latter in their extraction out of the DP (12).

(12) a. Sujeté [DP varios sombreros [de plástico]Arg   [de Samuel]Poss].
          I-held   several hats   of plastic   of Samuel
          'I held several of Samuel's plastic hats.'
      b. *¿[De qué (material)]ᵢsujetaste [DP varios sombreros *t*ᵢ [de Samuel]Poss?
              of what material   you-held   several hats   of Samuel

In (12b), the argument-like PP *de qué (material)* cannot exit the DP *varios sombreros de plástico de Samuel*, because the possessor PP is higher, and blocks the extraction. If dative possessors also merge inside the possessum DP, in a higher position than argument(-like) PPs, we would expect the same effects as in (12). This hypothesis is borne out (13).

(13) a. Leₖ   vi [DP varias heridas [de bala]ₖ [a Samuelₖ]Poss].
          3SG.DAT I-saw several wounds of bullet   Samuel.DAT
          'I saw several of Samuel's bullet wounds.'

b.   *¿[De qué (tipo)]ᵢ leₖ   viste [DP varias heridas *t*ᵢ [a Samuelᵢ]Poss?⁵
     of what kind   3SG.DAT you-saw several wounds   Samuel.DAT

In (13b), the dative possessor *a Samuel* blocks the argument-like PP *de bala* out of the possessum DP *varias heridas de bala a Samuel*. Therefore, I assume that dative possessors also originate inside the possessum DP, not in Spec,ApplP, contra Cuervo (2003); instead, I will pursue a possessor raising analysis, whereby dative possessors are the result of these arguments' being unable to obtain case inside the possessee, so they raise to the specifier of an applicative possession to be case-licensed with dative case (Armstrong 2021). To do so, I will adapt Alexiadou et al.'s (2007) proposal of the internal structure of the DP, shown in (14).

(14) 1. Lexical DP possessives   *John's book*   (English)
      2. Clitic possessives   *Su libro*   (Spanish)
      3. 'Weak' possessives   *El seu llibre*   (Catalan)
      4. Post-nominal strong possessives *El libro suyo* (Spanish)
      5. Alienable possessors
      6. Inalienable possessors
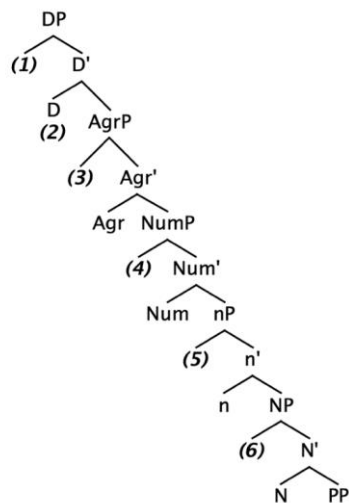
(Adapted from Alexiadou et al. 2007: 575)

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⁵   An anonymous reviewer questions the validity of the idea that the ungrammaticality of (13b) stems from the fact that the dative possessor intervenes in the extraction of the argument-like PP *de qué tipo*, and points out that the example below, without an explicit dative DP, is also ungrammatical:

(i)   */?? ¿De qué tipo le   viste   varias heridas?
         of what type 3SG.DAT you-saw several wounds

While I share the same judgment regarding (i) as this anonymous reviewer, I do not think this challenges my claim, but quite the opposite. The presence of the dative clitic in (i) demonstrates that a dative possessor argument is present in the structure; this time, this argument must be instantiated as an empty pronominal in Spec,ApplP, in order to comply with the semantic definition of the possessor applicative in (10c). Just like full dative possessor DPs (cf. (13b)), empty ones also block the extraction of argument-like PPs in (i).

Español-Echevarría (1997) and Fábregas (2011) propose that inalienable possessors are more embedded than alienable ones; therefore, I will assume that these arguments originate in Spec,nP in the case of alienable possession, and in Spec,NP in the context of a body part or relational noun.[67] In (15), I show the derivation of an internally possessed body part noun.

(15) a. Nuestro pelo.
         our.M.SG hair
   'Our hair.'

b.
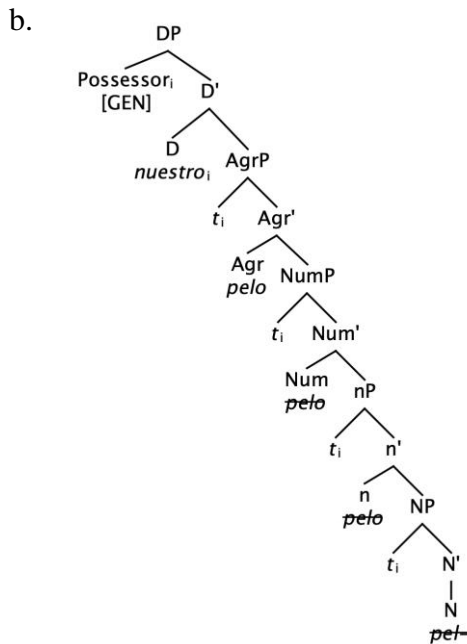
In (15b), the inalienable possessor originates in Spec,NP as a null pronoun. In addition to its phi-features, this argument also contains uninterpretable number and gender features, which need to be checked against the nominal; to do so, the possessor must raise to Spec,NumP and Spec,AgrP, respectively. Agr° is also in charge of assigning genitive case to the possessor. In languages like Catalan, where weak possessors are possible (e.g. *els nostres cabells*, 'our hair'), the possessor would raise to Spec,AgrP and remain there, which explains why the determiner and the weak possessive are spelled-out independently. In Spanish, on the other hand, the possessor further raises to Spec,DP, possibly due to the presence of an EPP feature in D°; when lexical insertion takes place, the possessor, together with D°, is spelled out as the possessive determiner *nuestro*. Fábregas (2011) demonstrates the contrastive nature of strong possessors; the null possessor in those cases raises to and stays in Spec,NumP

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⁶   This idea has been proposed for other linguistic families, including Northern Dene (Athabaskan) languages. Saxon & Wilhelm (2016) show that inalienably possessed nouns in Dene languages are relational, in that they cannot be interpretable without a possessor, which is obligatory, as in Spanish. Therefore, these authors conclude that these nouns take a possessor as an argument, to which they discharge the theta role of RELATUM; for this to be possible, inalienable possessors must merge within the scope of N, i.e. inside NP, whereas alienable possessors are licensed in the specifier of nP.

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to check a [focus] feature in this head. In that scenario, the null possessor is case-licensed by Agr° via Agree. Finally, when the possessor argument is a full pronoun or DP, it gets case-licensed by means of a genitive preposition *de* (e.g. *el cabello de él/Mario*, 'his/Mario's hair').

When it comes to dative possessors, the assumption is that these arguments – null or full– are unable to be case-licensed inside the possessum DP, and must therefore vacate it to reach the specifier of an applicative projection where they are marked with dative case. In (16), I show what the derivation of a sentence containing a dative possessor would look like.

(16) a. Carlos nos$_i$ cortó [el pelo]$_i$.
         Carlos 1PL.DAT cut   the hair
         'Carlos cut our hair.'

  b.
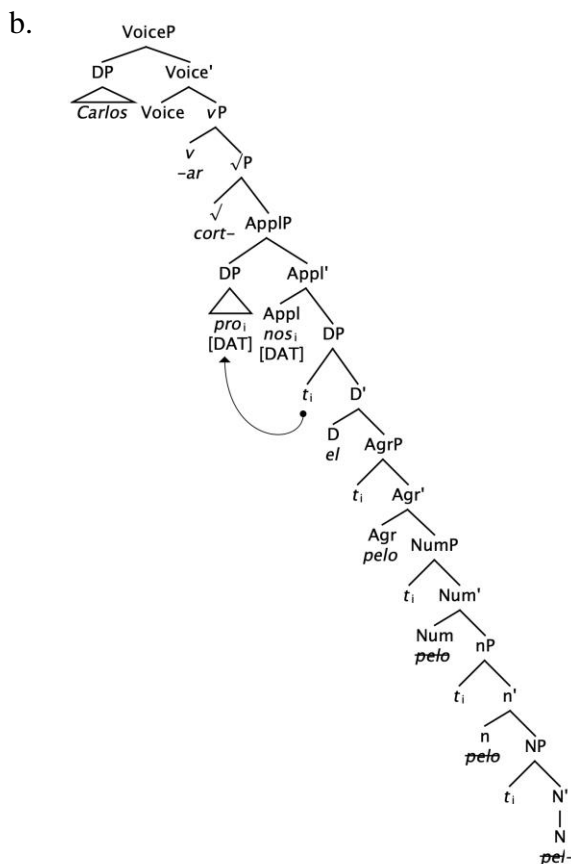
In (16b), the inalienable possessor originates as a first-person plural null pronoun in the specifier of the body part noun *pelo*. The latter undergoes head movement to Agr°, establishing all the necessary agreement relations; the possessor, on the other hand, raises to Spec,AgrP, where it is unable to check its uninterpretable case feature. Therefore, it keeps moving until it reaches the specifier of the low applicative head of possession, where it is marked with dative case; consequently, Appl° is spelled out as the first-person plural clitic pronoun *nos*. Finally, the verb's external argument is introduced in the specifier of an active Voice head.

In this section, I have shown that dative possessors, like internal ones, originate inside the possessum DP; I proposed an analysis of internal possession that is also applicable to external possession, specifically to dative possessors. These arguments

are unable to be case-licensed inside the possessee, and must raise to the specifier of an applicative projection where they are marked with dative case. In the next section, I will show how dative possessors interact with Spanish middle-passive constructions.

4. Dative possessors in Spanish middle-passive contexts

In the literature of Spanish, the position that dative DPs occupy has received a lot of attention (Masullo 1992; Fernández Soriano 1999; Tubino-Blanco 2007; Fernández Soriano and Mendikoetxea 2013; Fábregas et al. 2017, to name a few). For instance, in his recent study of preverbal and postverbal datives in Spanish, Jiménez-Fernández (2020) claims that dative possessors always occur postverbally in unmarked contexts (17) because they are introduced by a low applicative head, as Cuervo (2003) suggested.

(17) *What's up?*
     a. Le$_i$ besé   [la mano]$_i$ a María$_i$.
        3SG.DAT I-kissed the hand   María.DAT
        'I kissed María's hand.'
     b. ?A María le besé la mano.

      While this is true in active contexts, in middle-passive sentences, dative possessors unmarkedly occur preverbally (18); the lack of an external argument in these configurations that could be probed to preverbal subject position seems to motivate this phenomenon.

(18) *What happens?*
     a. A Martín$_i$ se le$_i$ corta [el pelo]$_i$ fácilmente.
        Martín.DAT RFL3SG.DAT cuts the hair   easily
        'Martín's hair is easy to cut.'
     b. A Martín, el pelo se le corta fácilmente.
     c. El pelo, a Martín se le corta fácilmente.
     d. ?El pelo se le corta a Martín fácilmente.

      In this regard, dative possessors in middle-passive contexts resemble dative experiencers, which also occur preverbally (19a). Masullo (1992) explains that negative quantifiers inside these arguments lose their scope when left-dislocated, thus being interpreted referentially (19b);[8] consequently, Masullo proposes that preverbal dative experiencers must sit in an A-position, i.e. in Spec,TP.

(19) *What happens?* Masullo (1992: 90)
     a. A nadie   le   gusta la música pop en esta casa.
        nobody.DAT 3SG.DAT likes   the music pop in this house
        'Nobody likes pop music in this house.'

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[8]   The idea that quantifiers cannot be dislocated also appears in Cinque (1990), Dobrovie-Sorin (1990), Rizzi (1997), Barbosa (2000) and Arregi (2003).

b. *A nadie, le gusta la música pop en esta casa.
'*Nadie* likes pop music in this house.'

Similarly, we find the same effects in middle-passive sentences where a dative possessor contains a negative quantifier.

(20) a. A nadie$_i$ se le$_i$ corta [el pelo]$_i$ fácilmente.
         Nobody.DAT RFL 3SG.DAT cuts the hair   easily
         'Nobody's hair is easy to cut.'
     b. *A nadie, el pelo se le corta fácilmente.
         '*Nadie*'s hair is easy to cut.'

In (20a), the preverbal dative possessor DP must sit in an A-position, since the quantificational reading of *nadie* obtains; we can assume that Tº has probed the dative possessor DP to its specifier, forcing the theme to remain inside the VP. On the other hand, the dative possessor DP appears left-dislocated in (20b), while the theme DP *el pelo* seems to be the constituent sitting in Spec,TP; as a result, the negative quantifier *nadie* loses its scope, and is interpreted referentially, i.e. as a proper noun. Although this is the case for (20b), dative possessor DPs may indeed be left-dislocated when they do not contain a quantifier, as shown in (18b) above. Given all this, one could assume that a possible derivation for (18a) would be the following.

(21) a. A Martín se le corta el pelo fácilmente.
     b.
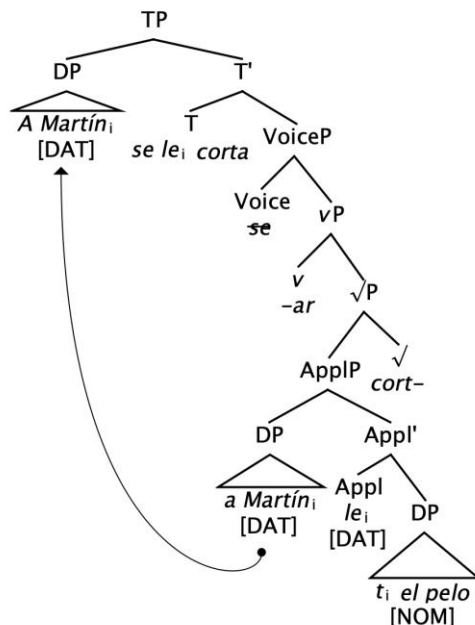
In (21), the possessor DP *Martín* exits the possessum DP containing the body part noun because it is unable to find case inside it; it raises to the specifier of an applicative head where it is marked with dative case, and the applicative head is spelled-out as the third-person singular dative clitic *le*. The entire ApplP merges as the complement of the root √*cort-*; a Voice projection is spelled-out by the reflexive pronoun *se*. Tº probes the closest DP to its specifier to check its EPP feature, namely,

the dative DP; the possessum DP is marked with nominative case via Agree by T°, and triggering verbal agreement.

Moreover, it may be the case that both the theme DP and the dative DP occur preverbally, the former preceding the latter, as in (18b) above. In that case, and given the derivation in (21), one could assume that the theme DP is left-dislocated outside of the sentence and the dative DP sits in preverbal subject position. Adopting a cartographic approach *à la* Rizzi (1997), the theme DP would merge in a topic position in the left periphery, while co-referring with an empty pronoun in argument position; in other words, this would be an instance of a clitic left dislocation (henceforth, CLLD) (Cinque 1990). This derivation is shown in (22)

(22) a.   El pelo, a Martín se le corta fácilmente.

b.
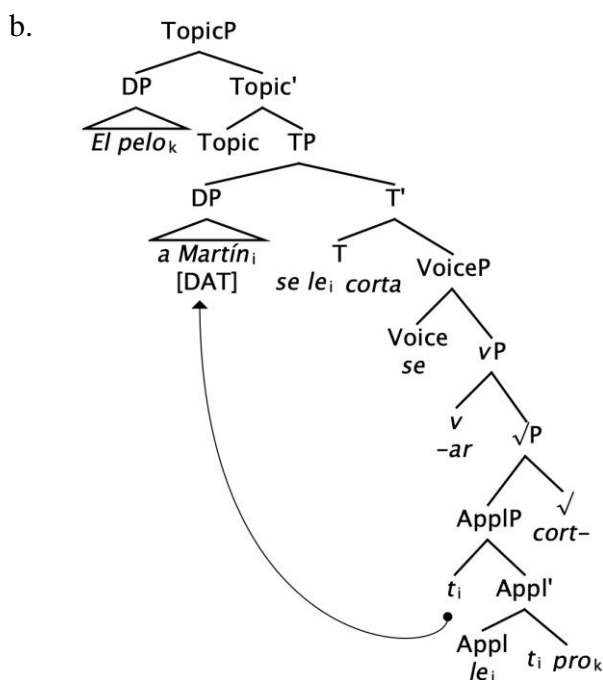
Although the derivations in (21) and (22) successfully account for the configurations where the dative DP is the closest preverbal constituent to the verb, a conflict arises when examining structures like (18c), where the dative DP and the theme also occur preverbally, but this time the former precedes the latter, as shown in (23).

(23) a.   A Martín, el pelo se le corta fácilmente.

b.
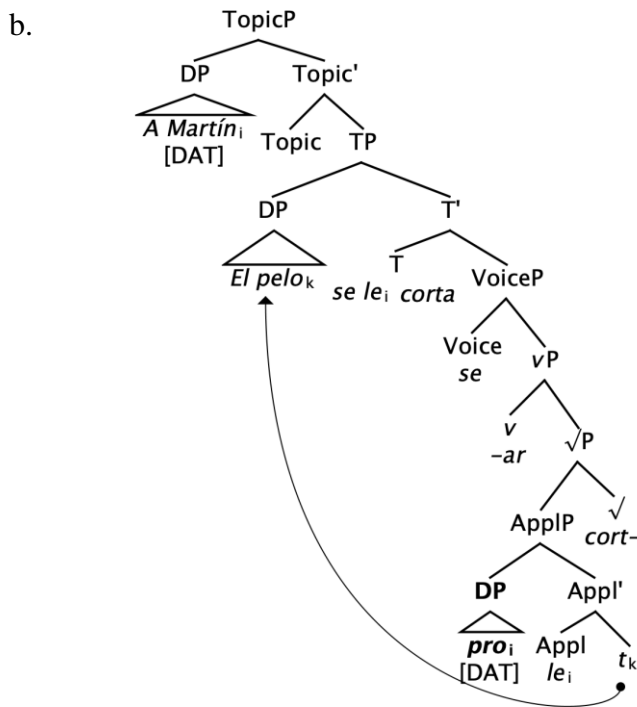
In (23), the dative possessor DP *a Martín* merges in a topic projection outside TP, and is co-referencing with an empty pronoun in Spec,ApplP that stands for the inalienable possessor of the body part noun; note that this pronominal must sit in that position to abide by the semantic definition of the low applicative of possession, given in (10c) above. When T° looks down to probe the closest DP to its specifier, it would find the empty pronoun before the possessum DP; in other words, skipping the possessor DP to probe the possessee would imply a violation of minimality (Rizzi 1990). In the next section, I will argue that neither the dative DP nor the theme DP are in Spec,TP when they occur preverbally; instead, I will show that both phrases are CLLDs, co-referring with empty pronominals inside the sentence, which avoids any problem of intervention effects.

4.1. Preverbal datives and subjects as CLLDs

In the previous section, I explained how an applicative analysis of dative possessors in middle-passive sentences whereby full dative possessor DPs are licensed in Spec,ApplP runs into a minimality violation when accounting for the derivation where the dative DP precedes the theme DP preverbally if we assume that the former is left-dislocated and the latter is in preverbal subject position, presumably Spec,TP; if that was the case, T° would probe the theme to its specifier over the empty pronominal in Spec,ApplP standing for the possessor. To avoid such technical difficulty, I am going to show that these preverbal phrases are both left-dislocated constituents, based-generated outside of the sentence, and co-referring with empty pronominals in argument position, as sketched in (24). If this hypothesis is correct, the null possessor DP in Spec,ApplP, being the higher argument, will always raise to Spec,TP in these contexts, thus avoiding any minimality violation.

(24) [TopP A Martíni][TopP el pelok][TP *pro*i [T se lei corta [VoiceP s̶e̶ [vP [√P c̶o̶r̶t̶- [ApplP *t*i [Appl l̶e̶ [*pro*k]]]]]]]]

Rigau (1988) examined the distribution of lexical subjects and *pro* in Spanish, concluding that the latter's behavior is equivalent to that of clitics, not strong pronouns. Olarrea (2012), on the other hand, shows that CLLDs must corefer either with an empty pronominal licensed by agreement, or a clitic pronoun, but never with a tonic pronoun or a full phrase (25).

(25) *Para Elisai, compré varios regalos para Elisai/ellai.
        for   Elisa   I-bought several gifts   for   Elisa/her
        'I bought several presents for Elisa/her.'

Additionally, Baker (1995) claimed that lexical DPs arguments are adjoined to a peripheral position and associated with a *pro*, which is the true argument; according to Baker, lexical DPs would be computed representationally through coindexation, rather than being derived by movement, following Cinque's (1990) assumptions for CLLDs. In order to assess whether this hypothesis applies to Spanish middle-passive sentences, let us examine the data more carefully.

(26) a. [El pelo]i, a nadiei   se lei   corta fácilmente.
          the hair   nobody.DAT RFL3SG.DAT cuts   easily
          'No one's hair cuts easily.'
      b. [**El pelok**]i, [TP a nadiei se lei corta ***prok*** fácilmente]

In (26a), the negatively quantified dative possessor DP *a nadie* appears to be sitting in an A-position, because it is interpreted quantificationally; assuming this position is the preverbal subject position, i.e. Spec,TP, this means that the theme DP *el pelo* merges in a higher position than the dative DP's. According to base generation analyses of CLLDs (Cinque 1990; Frascarelli 1997, 2000), if this constituent is indeed extrasentential, it must co-refer with an empty third-person singular pronoun in the applicative's complement position; this null pronoun later becomes the sentence's grammatical subject, triggering agreement with the verb, via Agree (26b). The dislocate and *pro* would share the same case and theta role because they would enter a binding chain (Cinque 1990). Furthermore, data from recomplementation structures seem to corroborate this idea (Demonte and Fernández Soriano 2009; López 2009); Villa-García (2012, 2015) claims that CLLDs that are sandwiched between two complementizers, each of them heading a Topic projection, are base-generated and fail to show reconstruction effects, which is the opposite of what happens with left-dislocated constituents without recomplementation. On the other hand, contrastively focused phrases, negative quantifiers, and *wh*-items in indirect questions cannot precede the complementizer *que*. In (27), the theme DP *el pelo* occurs between two complementizers, thus suggesting that this phrase is left-dislocated. Moreover, (27) also proves that the negatively quantified dative DP loses its scope when it is followed by a complementizer, reinforcing the idea that this position is extrasentential.

(27) Dice   que el   pelo, que a nadie   (*que) se   le   corta
he-says   that the   hair that nobody.DAT that RFL   3SG.DAT cuts
fácilmente.
easily
'He says that the hair, that nobody's, that nobody's hair is easy to cut.'

On the other hand, when no negative quantifiers are at play, both the theme DP and the dative DP can occur between complementizers, as shown in (28).

(28) a. Dice que a Martín, que el pelo (que) se le corta fácilmente.
       b. Dice que el pelo, que a Martín (que) se le corta fácilmente.

One of the most intriguing properties of CLLDs is their sensitivity to strong islands, including complex NPs (29a) and adjuncts (29b), while they are insensitive to weak islands (e.g. wh-islands (29c)) (Zubizarreta 1999; Bosque and Gutiérrez-Rexach 2009; Olarrea 2012, inter alia).

(29) a. *Complex NP island*
          *Estoy seguro de que **a Martín**ᵢ   la directora se   reunió
           I=am sure   of that Martín.ACC the director RFL   met
          con el periodista que **lo**ᵢ   entrevistó.
          with the journalist that him.RFL interviewed
          'I am certain that the director met the journalist who interviewed Martín.'
       b. *Adjunct island*
          *Me   parece bien que **a Martín**ᵢ   lavemos el coche antes de
          1SG.DAT seems well that Martín.ACC we-wash the car   before of
          recoger**lo**ᵢ del   aeropuerto.
          pick-him of-the airport
          'I think it is best we wash the car before we pick Martín up from the airport.'
       c. *Wh-island*
          A Martínᵢ no sé   cómo podrías   saber quién **lo**ᵢ   entrevistó.
          Martín.ACC not I-know how   you-could know who   him interviewed
          'Martín, I don't know how you could figure out who interviewed him.'

If preverbal theme and dative DPs in Spanish middle-passive sentences are CLLDs, one would expect to find the same effects with respect to weak and strong islands. In (30), I show that this hypothesis is borne out.

(30) *Complex NP island*
       a. *Estoy convencida de que **el pelo**ᵢ   el peluquero conoce
           I-am convinced   of that the hair.ACC the hairdresser knows
          al chico al que se le   corta *pro*ᵢ fácilmente.
          the guy whom RFL 3SG.DAT cuts   easily
          'I am certain that the hairdresser knows the guy whose hair is easy to cut.'

b. *Estoy convencida de que **a Martín**ᵢ   el peluquero lavó
I-am convinced   of that Martín.DAT the hairdresser washed
el pelo que se   **le**ᵢ   corta fácilmente.
the hair that RFL 3SG.DAT cuts easily
'I am convinced that the hairdresser washed Martín's hair that cuts easily.'

Adjunct island

c. *Me   parece bien que **el pelo**ᵢ   lavemos el coche antes de
1SG.DAT seems well that the hair.ACC we-wash the car   before of
que se   le   corte *pro*ᵢ a Martín   fácilmente.
that RFL 3SG.DAT cuts   Martín.DAT easily
'I think it is best we wash the car before Martín's hair cuts easily.'

d. *Me   parece bien que **a Martín**ᵢ   lavemos el coche antes de
1SG.DAT seems well that Martín.DAT we-wash the car   before of
que se **le**ᵢ   corte el pelo fácilmente.
that RFL 3SG.DAT cuts the hair easily
'I think it is best we wash the car before Martín's hair cuts easily.'

Wh-island

e. **El pelo**ᵢ   no sé   cómo podrías   saber si a Martín
the hair.ACC not I-know how   you-could know if   Martín.DAT
se   **le**ᵢ   corta *pro*ᵢ fácilmente.
RFL 3SG.DAT cuts   easily
'As for Martín's hair, I don't know how you could figure out whether it cuts easily.'

f. **A Martín**ᵢ no sé   cómo podrías   saber si se **le**ᵢ
Martín.DAT not I-know how   you-could know if RFL 3SG.DAT
corta el pelo fácilmente.
cuts the hair easily
'As for Martín, I don't know how you could figure whether his hair cuts easily.'

     Having established that preverbal theme and dative DPs in Spanish middle-passive sentences are extrasentential, it is time to determine what position these phrases occupy. In the next two sections I will consider two possible analyses for these configurations, namely a cartographic approach, on the one hand, and a biclausal one, on the other. Moreover, I will point out the obstacles the former analysis faces, and how the latter overcomes these shortcomings, thus being a superior alternative.

4.2. A cartographic analysis of preverbal DPs in Spanish middle-passive sentences

Rizzi (1997) proposed that CP must be split into at least two different functional projections, namely ForceP at the top of the tree, which is in charge of specifying the derivation's force (e.g. declarative, interrogative, imperative, etc.), and FinitenessP, which would mark the sentence as [±finite] and determine its mood features (e.g. indicative or subjunctive). Between these two projections one would find TopicP and FocusP, which would host dislocated and fronted material, respectively; interestingly, TopicP would be recursive, given that a sentence can contain more than one dislocated constituent, whereas there would only be one FocusP per clause, since focalization can

only take place once in each sentence. Additionally, Rizzi (2001) introduces InterrogativeP, which is the locus of interrogative complementizers. The split-CP hypothesis is sketched in (31).

(31) ForceP > (TopicP > InterrogativeP > TopicP > FocusP) > FinitenessP > TP...

In light of the above, the accurate derivation of a middle-passive sentence where the dative and the theme DP both surface preverbally, the former preceding the latter, as in (23) above, is shown in (32).

(32) a.   A Martín, el pelo se le corta fácilmente.
       b.
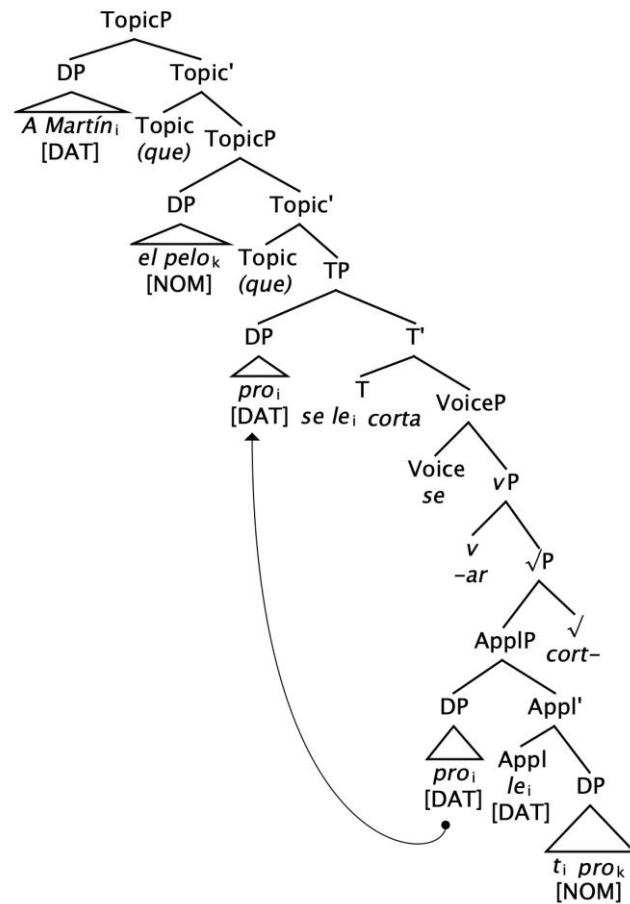
In (32), the dative possessor DP *a Martín* and the theme DP *el pelo* merge extrasententially in two recurring Topic projections. These two phrases bear an identity relationship with two null pronouns inside the sentence: the dative DP with a *pro* in Spec,ApplP, and the theme DP with one in Appl's complement position. T° probes the null dative possessor argument to its specifier to check its EPP feature, and marks the null theme with nominative case via long-distance Agree. This derivation successfully accounts for the desired word order, while avoiding any minimality violations. This analysis is reminiscent of classic analyses of Spanish preverbal subjects arguing that these phrases are instances of CLLDs, including Contreras (1976), Olarrea (1996), Ordóñez and Treviño (1999), or Barbosa (1996) for European Portuguese.

Before concluding this section, it is still necessary to address what happens in middle-passive contexts where the theme DP contains a negative quantifier and surfaces preverbally, as in (33a). In this context, the negatively quantified theme necessarily raises to preverbal position due to the lack of a higher negation projection that would license it in situ (33b).

(33) a. Dice   que   a Martín$_i$,   (que) [ninguna pierna]$_k$ (*que) se   le$_i$
         he-says   that Martín.DAT   that   none   leg   that RFL   3SG.DAT
         depila   fácilmente.
         waxes   easily
         'He says that none of Martín's legs are easy to wax.'
     b. Dice   que   a Martín$_i$,   (que) no se   le$_i$ depila [ninguna
         he-says   that Martín.DAT   that not RFL 3SG.DAT waxes none
         pierna]$_i$ fácilmente.
         leg   easily

In (33), the negatively quantified theme DP *ninguna pierna* occurs preverbally in what seems to be the preverbal subject position, for a quantificational reading is obtained so long as a complementizer does not appear after it.[9] This might seem to pose a challenge to our analysis since the theme appears to be probed over the empty pronominal licensed in Spec,ApplP and coreferring with the extrasentential dative DP *a Martín*. However, Barbosa (2009) shows that in European Portuguese there exists a subset of quantificational expressions that are fronted via A'-movement without needing contrastive focus, and this is one of those cases. Thus, I suggest that the theme in (33) is fronted and adjoined to an A'-position, namely Spec,FocusP, above the null possessor in Spec,TP. Evidence for this claim is the fact that when both the dative DP and the theme DP contain negative quantifiers, it is ungrammatical for both of them to surface preverbally (34a,b).[10] This ungrammaticality stems from the fact that both constituents would be targeting the same position, when only one of them can fill it, the other one having to remain in argument position (34c); this phenomenon mirrors the impossibility of focalizing more than one constituent in other contexts (34d).

(34) a. *Digo que   a nadie   ninguna cicatriz se   le   ve
         I-say that nobody.DAT none   scar   RFL   3SG.DAT sees
         fácilmente.
         easily
         'I say that no one's scar is easy to see.'

---

[9]   Preverbal negative polarity items in Spanish incorporate negation.

[10]   Some native speakers find a contrast between (34a) and (34b), whereby the former is more ill-formed than the latter. My suspicion is that for these informants the dative negative quantifier commonly sits in Spec,TP; however, in (34a), this constituent is competing for the specifier of FocusP, which is already occupied by the theme. On the other hand, (34b) would be slightly better since the dative DP remains in Spec,TP while the theme is the only argument targeting Spec,FocusP. I leave this issue open for further inquiry.

b. ?Digo que ninguna cicatriz a nadie   se   le   ve
   I-say that none   scar   nobody.DAT RFL 3SG.DAT sees
   fácilmente.
   easily
   'I say that no one's scar is easy to see.'

c. Digo que a nadie   se   le   ve   ninguna cicatriz
   I-say that nobody.DAT RFL 3SG.DAT sees none   scar
   fácilmente.
   easily

d. *A MARTÍN, LAS CICATRICES se   le   ven fácilmente.
   Martín.DAT the   scars   RFL 3SG.DAT see easily
   'Martín's scars are easy to see.'

Further support for the fact that this constituent undergoes A'-movement comes from the fact that in languages like Asturian or European Portuguese (Barbosa 2009), these fronted constituents trigger proclisis (35c), as in other contexts where A'-movement occurs (35d).[11]

(35) a. El pelo córtase-y   fácil.
   the hair cuts.RFL-3SG.DAT easy
   'His hair is easy to cut.'

b. A Martín córtase-y   el pelo fácil.
   Martín.DAT cuts.RFL-3SG.DAT the hair easy
   'Martín's hair is easy to cut.'

c. Diz   que a Martín,   que nengún pelo se-y   corta fácil.
   he-says that Martín.DAT that none   hair RFL-3SG.DAT cuts easy
   'He says that none of Martín's hairs are easy to cut.'

d. A MARTÍN   se-y   corta'l pelo fácil.
   Martín.DAT   RFL-3SG.DAT cuts-the hair easy
   'It is Martín's hair that is easy to cut.'

According to Rizzi's fine structure of the left periphery in (31), the single FocusP occurs below TopicP, the locus of secondary *que* in recomplementation configurations (Villa-García 2012); this predicts the fact that the negative quantifier in (33a) cannot be followed by a complementizer. The derivation for (33a) is given in (36).

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(36) a. Dice que, a Martín, (que) ninguna pierna se le depila fácilmente.

b.
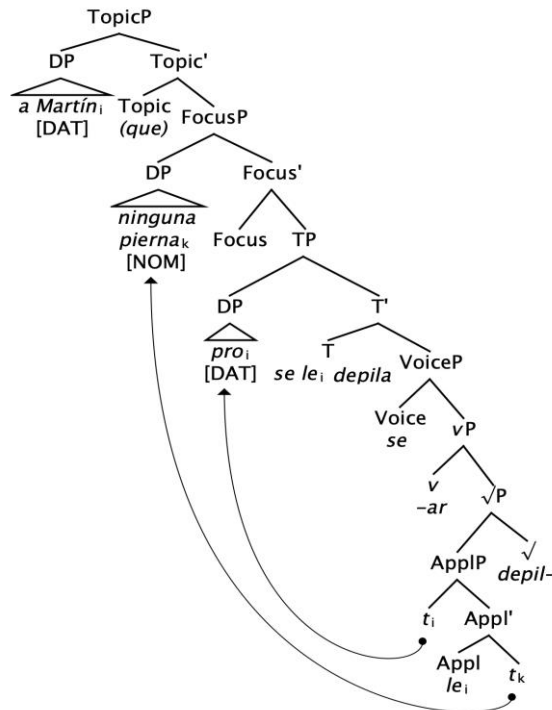
        In (36), the dative DP *a Martín* is generated in the specifier of a TopicP, whose head may optionally be lexicalized as a secondary *que* in recomplementation structures; this argument corefers with an empty null pronominal standing for the possessor of the relational noun, which is case-licensed in Spec,ApplP, and later on raises to Spec,TP to check its EPP feature. Finally, the lack of a Neg° head, triggers the raising of the negatively quantified theme *ninguna pierna* to the specifier of FocusP via A'-movement. Lastly, the derivation of (34c) is shown in (37), where the dative negative quantifier occurs preverbally, licensing the postverbal negatively quantified theme.

(37) a. Dice que a nadie se le ve ninguna cicatriz fácilmente.

   b.
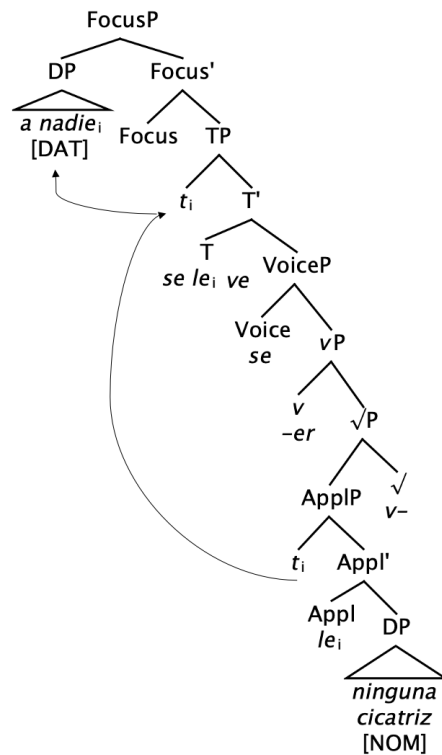
In (37), on the other hand, the dative argument also contains a negative quantifier, which, in lack of negation, is able to license the one inside the theme DP in argument position. After the dative DP raises to Spec,TP to check its EPP feature, it further climbs to Spec,FocusP, being the closest argument to that position.

In this section, I have presented evidence supporting the idea that preverbal subjects and dative DPs in Spanish middle-passive sentences are instances of CLLDs; additionally, I showed how a cartographic analysis would account for these configurations, whereby those preverbal phrases merge in the specifier of Topic projections outside of TP, and corefer with empty pronominals in argument position. This proposal avoids a minimality violation to which low-applicative analyses of dative possessors in these configurations is subjected to. Next, I will explore how these structures could be analyzed under a biclausal/paratactic approach (Ott 2014, 2015, 2017; Villa-García & Ott 2022), and I will explain the advantages of such proposal over a cartographic model.

4.3. A biclausal analysis of preverbal DPs in Spanish middle-passive sentences

Two types of cartographic analyses of CLLDs can be distinguished in the literature: on the one hand, base generation accounts, contending that left-dislocated XPs are extrasentential elements, generated in the specifier of a Topic projection; on the other, movement analyses claiming that left-dislocated constituents are generated inside the sentence, and later raise to the left periphery. Both approaches are challenged by what some authors refer to as Cinque's Paradox (Cinque 1990; Iatridou 1995; Ott 2015), i.e. the fact that left dislocated phrases show properties compatible with movement and non-movement analyses simultaneously. For instance, base

generation accounts stipulate that the dislocated constituent and its correlate inside the sentence enter a special type of binding relation –a binding chain (Cinque 1990)– to explain their sensitivity to strong islands, as well as the identity relationship these two elements bear, i.e. they both share the same case and theta role. On the contrary, movement analyses must address the fact that CLLDs are insensitive to weak islands, lack weak crossover effects, can license parasitic gaps, and do not trigger subject-verb inversion in languages like Spanish (Ott 2014, 2015); moreover, while syntactic movement commonly leaves a gap in the host clause, sentences containing CLLDs are syntactically complete.

In order to solve this conundrum, Ott (2014, 2015, 2017) proposes a biclausal analysis of CLLDs whereby the dislocated phrase (henceforth Σ) and its correlate (κ, hereafter) belong in two separate clauses that are paratactically ordered but endophorically related by means of ellipsis; in other words, the sentence containing Σ undergoes clausal ellipsis at PF, Σ being what is left of it after reduction takes place. This is sketched in (38).

(38) [$_{CP1}$ ~~Nunca habíamos visto~~ [$_{\Sigma}$ **esta película**]$_i$]

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ [$_{CP2}$ nunca [$_{\kappa}$ **la**]$_i$ habíamos visto]

$\qquad$'This film, we had never seen it.'

According to Ott, in (38) both CPs are semantically equivalent, only differing in that CP1 contains Σ, while CP2, which is a reformulation of CP1, contains κ instead, a free pronoun that resumes Σ as an element of the immediately preceding discourse. This parallelism between the two clauses makes the deletion of redundant material in CP1 felicitous, since it is recoverable from CP2. Moreover, the fact that Σ and κ share the same case and theta role is straightforwardly accounted for under this approach: both elements obtain their case and thematic notation from identical assigners in their respective clauses. Likewise, because Σ and κ belong in different clauses, they are mapped onto separate prosodic domains, which explains the fact that Σ and the host clause are separated by an intonational break, often realized as a pause.

Another advantage of the biclausal analysis is that it can explain certain binding inconsistencies like the one in (39a), where the anaphor *sí misma* appears to c-command the R-expression *María* that binds it; under a base generation monoclausal analysis of CLLDs, this would imply a violation of Principles A and C. However, a paratactic approach overcomes this difficulty since the anaphor would be bound in CP1 by the elided R-expression which, like the one in CP2, is free (39b).

(39) a. La foto   de sí   misma$_i$, María$_i$ la rompió   ayer.
$\qquad\quad$ the photo of RFL same   María it broke   yesterday
$\qquad\quad$ 'María broke the picture of herself yesterday.'
$\quad$ b. [$_{CP1}$ ~~María$_i$ rompió~~ [$_{\Sigma}$ la foto de sí misma$_i$]$_k$ ~~ayer~~]

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\quad$ [$_{CP2}$ María$_i$ [$_{\kappa}$ la]$_k$ rompió ayer]

Similarly, biclausality would predict why Σ cannot be linked to κ if the latter is inside a strong island. Ott (2015), based on Merchant (2004), suggests that sentence fragments remaining after clausal ellipsis have undergone leftward movement prior to deletion. Therefore, the reason why *a Miguel* cannot be left-dislocated in (40a) would

be that this constituent cannot move leftward in CP1 for being inside an island boundary, as sketched in (40b).

(40) a. *A Miguel$_i$, Sonia conoce a la profesora   que lo$_i$ suspendió.
           Miguel.ACC Sonia knows the teacher.ACC who him failed
           'Sonia knows the teacher who failed Miguel.'
     b. [$_{CP1}$ [a Miguel$_k$]$_i$ [$_{TP}$ ~~Sonia conoce a [la profesora [que suspendió t_i]]]]~~
                                   [Sonia conoce a la profesora que lo$_k$ suspendió]

      Finally, it is known that non-specific quantifier phrases cannot be dislocated (Cinque 1990; Dobrovie-Sorin 1990; Rizzi 1997; Arregi 2003), as exemplified in (41a); however, the moment some lexical restriction is added, dislocation is allowed (41b).

(41) a. *Algo,   Juan lo leyó ayer.
           something.ACC Juan it read yesterday
           'Juan read something yesterday.'
           (Arregi 2003)
     b. Catalan, Villalba (2000)
        A cap d'aquests alumnes de què   em   parles, no l' he   vist
        any of-those   students of whom to.me talked not him I-have seen
        avui.
        today
        'I haven't seen any of the students you talked to me about.'

      Ott explains that non-specific QPs are not good discourse antecedents because they lack an established referent. Thus, in the biclausal analysis, for a constituent to be dislocated it must be able to be a legitimate antecedent for a free proform in the following CP; in a similar fashion, dislocation of *wh*-phrases would be banned because they cannot be resumed by a free pronoun.

      Having briefly discussed some of the advantages of a paratactic analysis of CLLDs,[12] we can now explain how Spanish middle-passive sentences containing dative possessor DPs can be analyzed under this approach. Since preverbal dative and theme DPs in these contexts are instances of CLLDs, a biclausal analysis of these configurations would involve three juxtaposed CPs, the third of which would contain two free proforms, i.e. two κs, one resuming the dative possessor DP, and another one resuming the theme DP containing the body part noun, as in (42). The cluster of the three DPs explains why these sentence fragments can occur between complementizers in recomplementation structures (Villa-García and Ott 2022).

(42) a. A Martín, el pelo se le corta fácilmente.
           'Martín's hair is easy to cut.'

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[12] I encourage the reader to consult Ott (2015) for a thorough description of the biclausal approach.

b.   [$_{CP1}$ (que) [$_{\Sigma 1}$ a Martín$_i$] ~~se le corta el pelo fácilmente~~]
      [$_{CP2}$ (que) ~~a Martín$_i$ se le corta~~ [$_{\Sigma 2}$ el pelo$_k$] ~~fácilmente~~]
            [$_{CP3}$ (que) [$_{\kappa 1}$ *pro*$_i$] se le corta [$_{\kappa 2}$ *pro*$_k$] fácilmente]

On the other hand, in contexts where the theme DP precedes the dative DP would be derived in the following way.

(43)   a.   El pelo, a Martín se le corta fácilmente.
      'Martín's hair is easy to cut.'
   b.   [$_{CP1}$ (que) ~~a Martín$_i$ se le corta~~ [$_{\Sigma 2}$ el pelo$_k$] ~~fácilmente~~]
      [$_{CP2}$ (que) [$_{\Sigma 1}$ a Martín$_i$] ~~se le corta el pelo fácilmente~~]
            [$_{CP3}$ (que) [$_{\kappa 1}$ *pro*$_i$] se le corta [$_{\kappa 2}$ *pro*$_k$] fácilmente]

Both (42) and (43) still capture the fact that the dative possessor –be it null or full– is always higher than the theme and raises to Spec,TP, therefore being consistent with the possessor raising analysis of dative possessors and inalienable possession presented here. In other words, no minimality violation is induced under a biclausal approach either.

5. Conclusions

The goal of this paper was twofold: first, to demonstrate that dative possessors, like internal ones, originate inside the possessum DP, and therefore must be analyzed under a possessor raising approach; second, to use data from Spanish middle-passive sentences containing dative possessor DPs to investigate the position these phrases and preverbal theme DPs occupy in the derivation, concluding that they are both instances of CLLDs. I have provided an analysis of alienable and inalienable possession in Romance whereby the possessor argument is licensed internally when it is able to be case-marked inside the possessee; on the contrary, when case is not available, the grammars of Spanish and other Romance languages resort to a low applicative head of possession whose role is to case-license the possessor DP that has vacated the possessee.

I have also shown that a low applicative analysis of these arguments is at risk of running into intervention effects in configurations where the dative DP and the theme DP surface preverbally, the former preceding the latter; if we assume that the theme DP sits in Spec,TP, it would imply that this argument has been probed to that position over the dative possessor DP, inducing a violation of minimality. Instead, I have proven that these phrases are extrasentential, and what actually sits in argument position are indeed null pronouns, in line with classic proposals by Baker (1995), Contreras (1976), Olarrea (1996), Ordóñez and Treviño (1999), or Barbosa (1996), which contend that preverbal subjects are left-dislocated constituents. This analysis avoids a minimality violation, for it is always the null possessor DP in Spec,ApplP that is probed to Spec,TP, independently of the order in which the extrasentential dative and theme DPs occur. Finally, I have explored how these configurations could be successfully analyzed under a biclausal analysis of CLLDs. In sum, the data and analysis presented here aims to contribute to the existing literature examining the position of subjects and dative DPs in Spanish and Romance.

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