

## Review of “Imperatives and their interaction with VP-ellipsis in Spanish”

Recommendation: Accept with revisions.

Summary: The squib analyses certain cases of imperative sentences in Spanish that, according to Martins (1994), involve V-stranding VP-ellipsis. The author argues that this analysis is not correct and shows that these patterns are not derived by ellipsis, but they contain some sort of exophoric null objects. From a broader perspective, this paper argues against Martins’ generalization, which states that if a Romance language exhibits verb movement to  $\Sigma$ , then it also licenses VP-ellipsis.

Evaluation: The empirical point is correct. The author convincingly shows that Martins’ examples do not involve V-stranding XP-ellipsis but some kind of exophoric null objects, in the line of Masullo (2017). I consider that the squib makes a nice contribution both to the field of ellipsis and the theory of head movement in Spanish. I believe that the paper can be published only after some (minor) revisions are made. In what follows, I include some unordered observations that will hopefully be helpful to the author for revising the squib:

- I think that another argument in favor of the exophoric null object analysis comes from interrogative constructions. Note that these contexts also admit putative instances of V-stranding XP-ellipsis, similar to the cases discussed by Martins (1994):

- (A)    a. ¿Cerraste? (e.g. la puerta)  
              ‘Did you close (the door)?’  
          b. ¿Escuchaste? (e.g. la noticia)  
              ‘Did you hear (the news)?’

Now, unlike imperatives, questions in Spanish do not trigger enclisis: the clitic must precede the verb, e.g., *¿la cerraste?* (\*¿cerraste-la?) or *¿la escuchaste?* (\*¿escuchaste-la?). Therefore, an analysis of these patterns in terms of V-stranding XP-ellipsis à la Martins seems to be untenable. On the contrary, the approach presented in this squib can straightforwardly explain these cases: they involve exophoric null objects, just like the examples containing imperatives. Moreover, this kind of questions also show that clitic placement is irrelevant when it comes to definite null objects licensing.

- It is important to explicitly point out in the squib that, unlike Laka (1990), Martins is assuming that  $\Sigma$  is present in *all* affirmative clauses, and not only in those involving emphasis (1994: 176). Otherwise, the contrast between (4d) and (8a) could be misleading, since the former arguably includes polarity focus marking.
- In page 2, the author claims: “Martins’ account [...] takes as a starting point a clause structure for Portuguese which includes the functional category Sigma ( $\Sigma$ P) in its hierarchy”. Strictly speaking, Martins (1994: 176) assumes this structure not only for Portuguese, but for Romance languages in general.

- The author claims that the type of ellipsis that Martins discusses involves TP-ellipsis, and not VP-ellipsis. They argue that “otherwise, the adjoined clitic would remain undeleted once the ellipsis has taken place at the VP”. I have some doubts regarding this point. First, I am not sure why in these cases the ellipsis site should contain a clitic. Second, in page 3 the author says: “the correlation between enclisis and  $\Sigma$ -stranding TP-ellipsis is attested in short answers to *yes/no* questions. Both in (4) and (5), Portuguese and Galician show an enclitic pattern in questions (4b)-(5b) and  $\Sigma$ -stranding TP-ellipsis in *yes/no* short answers (4c)-(5c).” However, in page 5, they claim that the answers in (10) involve VP-ellipsis, and not TP-ellipsis. Probably I am missing something, but it seems to be contradictory.
- The example in (19) does not show that the referent of the exophoric null object must be anchored in the speech time. In fact, it is still unacceptable even if it is in present tense (\**Juan está viendo una película muy buena, pero no disfruta*). I think that this sentence just shows that the referent cannot be a linguistic antecedent, like the cases discussed in (21).
- It should be pointed out in the squib that the grammatical judgments in (15) correspond to Martins (1994).
- I strongly recommend reorganizing Section 1. I think that it can be divided into two sections: a short introduction, which presents the basic pattern and an advance of the proposal, and another section, which presents Martins’ analysis in detail.
- In page 4, the author claims: “In Martins’ analysis, if the answer consists of a single finite verb, the verb moves to  $\Sigma$  to check strong morphological features on  $\Sigma$  itself. However, if the answer includes an affirmative or negative word plus a verb, in European Portuguese, the former (*sim*) adjoins  $\Sigma P$  and the verb moves to  $\Sigma$ ”. I find this passage a bit confusing. Besides the adjunction of the affirmative particle, is there any relevant difference between the first scenario and second one?

#### Typos and minor issues:

- abstract: “...with **Masullo’s (2017) account**” (not: “Masullo’s account (2017)”).
- p. 2, last paragraph: “Here, I will **assume** that...” (not: “claim”).
- p. 7, example (13b): “**digasmelo**” (not: “digasme lo”)
- p. 11, first paragraph: “...in languages like **Hebrew**” (not: “Hebew”).