

Review by Valentina Bianchi

Does the paper make a novel contribution to the understanding of the topic under investigation? [max 250 words]*

The paper makes two claims concerning finite pseudorelatives embedded under direct perception verbs in Spanish:

(i) the ban on passivization of the 'antecedent' of the pseudorelative is one specific case of a more general ban on valence-changing structures that promote the antecedent to subject position;

(ii) the movement analysis proposed by Casalicchio & Herbert (2023, unpublished) for the ban on passivization is not general enough, and it meets with counterexamples.

The authors propose that a different approach should be sought, relating these phenomena to the obviation effect of subjunctive clauses: like subjunctive clauses, pseudorelatives have defective tense and mood.

Prima facie, one notices that the empirical scope of the paper is very limited and the target analysis is in an unpublished paper. My impression is that the empirical arguments provided could be developed into a much more ambitious paper. I give some suggestions below.

However, my task here is to evaluate the paper as it has been submitted. I find that some of the empirical arguments provided are very valuable (in particular, the counterexamples in (26) and (29) provide compelling evidence against the movement account), whereas others, although potentially relevant, are underdeveloped or not relevant.

Is the empirical content of the paper sound (i.e. the data are collected and presented properly, the experiments are well designed, the statistics is well done, the examples contain no spelling mistakes, etc)? [max 400 words]*

The original data are based on the author(s)' introspective judgements and/or informal consultation of other native speakers. I consider this an acceptable empirical basis.

Is the argument coherent and sound, with no major flaws and/or shortcomings, within the context of the theoretical assumptions made by the author? [max 500 words]*

The discussion is crystal clear, very well organized, and the line of argumentation is compelling.

If anything, some of the arguments provided are under-developed: I believe that they could provide the basis for a much more ambitious paper (I give some suggestions in the attached file).

I find only one major flaw in the argument, in the discussion of examples (43)-(45).

The discussion of 'mood dependence' around examples (43)-(45) is based on the wrong premise that the examples in (43) are pseudorelatives. I say 'wrong' because, independently of the 'relative' label which clearly does not apply to (43), in these examples the embedded

clause is temporally independent from the matrix clause. Therefore, the argument turns out to be self-defeating.

(43) are presumably embedded interrogative clauses with a topic preceding the interrogative particle/interrogative pronoun, as proposed in Rizzi (2001). Be this as it may, the data do not provide a valid argument for the author(s)' claim.

Are there any relevant scholarly works that have been overlooked by the author? If the answer is YES, please provide the full references.*

The literature on pseudorelatives is mostly semantic. I would add (at least) the following references:

Higginbotham, James. 1983. The logic of perceptual reports: An extensional alternative to situation semantics. *The Journal of Philosophy* 80:100–127.

Moulton, K. & N. Grillo. 2015. Pseudo-Relatives: Big and Direct. Proceedings of the Forty-fifth Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society. Thuy Bui and Deniz Ozyildiz, eds

Cinque, Guglielmo. 1995. The Pseudo-Relative and Acc-ing Constructions after Verbs of Perception. In *University of Venice Working Papers in Linguistics*, volume 92.I.2.

Have you seen this paper, its content, the proposed analysis, or the conclusions published in other venues? [If your answer is YES, please add the relevant reference.]*

No

If you accept the paper with minor revisions, please list the revisions you would advise (you are not required to proofread the paper) [max 500 words]

i) On p. 7, the reference to the Accessibility Hierarchy and to linear precedence gives the impression that the authors are purposefully avoiding reference to structural relations. As a matter of fact, in a movement account à la Casalicchio & Herbert, the unacceptability of (18) as opposed to (19) could be reduced to an intervention effect, whereby the direct object cannot be probed across an intervening subject. The argument against a raising derivation for (16) is only provided later in the discussion around (26): at this point, an intervention account is still a viable option. It is better to anticipate here that the movement analysis for (16) is ruled out later.

On the other hand, the data in (20) are very interesting: I find the EPP-defectiveness account quite convincing, whereas the account based on information structure is barely hinted at, and it involves a host of issues, so it is better to leave it out or reduce it to a footnote.

ii) P. 12 below (34): "This dissociation suggests that obviation, that is, an obligatory disjoint reference with the matrix subject, is the property that explains why perception verbs do not allow passivization when combined with pseudo-relatives." The reader is reminded here of the other constructions listed in (14), which allow for passivization: these involve non-finite clauses, whose 'salient argument' is presumably a controlled PRO. The contrasts in (14) provide support for the obviation account, but the author(s) fail to point out this connection. This finite/nonfinite contrast is also related to examples (37) and the surrounding discussion.

All in all, the discussion in §4.2 point out the importance of the finite/nonfinite opposition, and is one step away from a competition account of the obviation effect, e.g. Farkas (1992) (see below).

iii) pp 41-42, (41) and surrounding discussion: the discussion of imperatives is not directly related to the empirical argument, which is about Spanish, and it is not even relevant for the obviation account; I suggest omitting this part. (If the author(s) want to maintain it, they should specify what the language is of (41) – I suppose it is Slovenian). Similarly, the penultimate paragraph of §5 on imperatives should be omitted.

This is not to say that imperatives are irrelevant to the general point: I think that the connection between clause defectiveness and referential restrictions on the subject is a very interesting topic. There are specific accounts of this for imperatives (Zanuttini et al. 2012), but to the best of my knowledge, nobody has attempted to connect the restriction of imperatives with other instances of defectiveness. Again, this point could be developed in a more ambitious paper. Zanuttini, R. et al. 2012. A syntactic analysis of interpretive restrictions on imperative, promissive, and exhortative subjects. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 30:1231–1274.

iv) The discussion of 'mood dependence' around examples (43)-(45) is based on the wrong premise that the examples in (43) are pseudorelatives. I say 'wrong' because, independently of the 'relative' label which clearly does not apply to (43), in these examples the embedded clause is temporally independent from the matrix clause. Therefore, the argument turns out to be self-defeating.

(43) are presumably embedded interrogative clauses with a topic preceding the interrogative particle/interrogative pronoun, as proposed in Rizzi (2001). Be this as it may, the data do not provide a valid argument for the author(s)' claim.

'Mood dependence' is a phenomenon that concerns embedded polar interrogatives which, with certain verbs, are only allowed in polarity-licensing (downward-entailing) contexts, including interrogative contexts: see Mayr, C. 2017. Downward monotonicity in questions. *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung* 17. <https://ojs.uibk.ac.at/ojs/index.php/sub/article/view/349>. Another licensing environment is under matrix clause negation.

Possible developments (not mandatory revisions):

v) The authors mention in (6) different contexts that allow for pseudorelatives, some of which potentially constitute good evidence against a movement account : the prepositional object in (6a), the copulative structure in (6d) and the nominal modifier in (6f). The author(s) leave these structures aside, because they do not involve the ban on passivization; nevertheless, they would be quite relevant in a more general discussion of pseudorelatives.

vi) The distinction between the 'direct perception' and the 'epistemic' reading of perception verbs, discussed on p. 4, is taken up again much later in the discussion of examples (46). In (8b) the author(s) assume, following Campos (1994), that the epistemic reading does not

license pseudorelatives. Again, this point is under-developed and it would be worth pursuing as part of the author(s)' approach. They point out the temporal defectiveness of pseudorelatives, and they show in (46) that the epistemic reading instead allows for a temporally independent complement, contrary to the direct perception reading with the pseudorelative in (42). However, no syntactic characterization of this defectiveness is proposed. There are good reasons to assume that complements to epistemic verbs have a syntactically richer structure: following Hacquard (2010), they have a 'peripheral' epistemic layer that hosts epistemic modals (which are instead impossible in pseudorelatives).

Hacquard, V. 2010. On the event relativity of modal auxiliaries. *Natural Language Semantics* 18:79–114.

Vii) Discussion around (47): Following Farkas (1992), the obviation effect is due to a competition between the 'defective' finite clause and the infinitival clause, where the subject is necessarily 'coreferent' with a matrix argument (i.e., it is controlled). It is worth considering to what extent this approach could account for the data on pseudorelatives, which also are in competition with an infinitival clause. This might be a way to implement the author's central claim. This would also explain why the non-finite constructions allow for passivization : they show no obviation effect because they are not in competition with another (structurally more reduced?) nonfinite construction.

Farkas, Donka F. 1992a. On obviation. In *Lexical matters*, ed. I.A. Sag and A. Szabolcsi, 85–110. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications

Local comments

p. 4 " the direct object of perception verbs is coreferent with the subject of the pseudo-relative.": the term co-reference already implies an analysis in which no movement is involved. The author(s) should use a theory-neutral description of the data at this point.

(29): these data are reminiscent of the phenomenon of multi-headed restrictive relatives ('hydras' in Link's terms): Link, G. 1998. *Hydras : on the logic of relative clause constructions with multiple heads*. In *Algebraic semantics in language and philosophy*, Stanford, Calif. : CSLI Publications.

p. 11, data (31)-(32): the examples are incompatible with world knowledge, and footnote 4 actually suggests that this is the factor that determines unacceptability. It is better to provide examples that are compatible with world knowledge.

p 12, first line of §4.2. : " Literature on obviation in Spanish has focused primarily in subjunctive clauses": in--> on

p. 14, before (10): " Again, as observed for pseudo-relatives, these verbs give rise to legitimate sentences..." raise --> rise

p 16: (44c) is unacceptable with the interrogative interpretation indicated, but would it be acceptable with a declarative interpretation?