



The Raising of the Thematic Finite Verb in Bogotan Spanish.

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Abstract

By assuming the framework of Syntactic Cartography, this paper analyses the nature of verb raising in Colombian Spanish. It aims at determining the position of the thematic verb in this language. It takes the adverbs from the Cartographic Universal Hierarchy of Functional Projections as diagnostics for movements.

Key words:

Verb movement, colombian spanish, syntactic cartography

Introduction

The grammatical theory from which the syntactic cartography descends is the X-bar theory, which is a hypothesis on the form of constituents in all languages. In the 80's, the developments of the generative theory by Pollock (1989) gave us the now prevalent theory on the raising of the lexical verb. If one accepts this proposal, they have that adverbs are fixed elements within the sentence structure. The other elements raise across the positions where adverbs are merged. Thus, they can be used as diagnostics for verb movement. Within the Principles and Parameters Theory of generative grammar, the Cartography framework is a well-established line of research for the analysis of verb raising as it proposes that for each semantic class of adverb there would be a head position matching semantically the content of the corresponding adverb. In view of these considerations, the work intends to enrich the descriptive literature on Colombian Spanish, this time analyzed through cartographic lenses.

The following table shows the judgment on the order of the elements: (A)dverb, (O)bject and the (V)erb – in the Present (PR), Past (PS) and in the future (FT). The results are summarized for three adverbs from the three portions of the hierarchy, beginning with low adverbs on the bottom (“bien” ‘well’) and ending with the highest adverb “sinceramente” ‘sincerely’. The comma in the order V-O,A indicates pause (and, subsequently, a change in scope).

Lexical Item	Class	A-O-V			A-V-O			V-A-O			V-O-A			V-O,A		
		PR	PS	FT	PR	PS	FT	PR	PS	FT	PR	PS	FT	PR	PS	FT
<i>Sinceramente</i>	MoodSpeechAct				✓	✓	✓	?	?		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Afortunadamente</i>	MoodEvaluative				✓	✓	✓	?			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
<i>Evidentemente</i>	MoodEvidential				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Ya</i>	TAnterior				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?			
<i>Ya no</i>	AspTerminative				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Aún</i>	AspContinuative				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Obligatoriamente</i>	MoodObligation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Todo</i>	PICompleteive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Bien</i>	Voice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 1. The position of the thematic verb w.r.t. adverbs of the three portions, low, medial and high from bottom to top

Results and Discussion

The paper turns to grammaticality judgment tests to detect the position of the verb in simple tenses: past, present and future. It considers the Universal Hierarchy of Cinque to detect the height where the verb in each specific tense raises to. The hierarchy was divided into three portions, a lower, medial and higher portion. One of the central elements of the cartographic program is that of the *Universal Hierarchy of Functional Projections* (Cinque 1999), according to which there would be almost 30 semantic classes of adverbs rigidly ordered across languages. It is shown in (1), below.

(1) The Universal Hierarchy of Functional Projections of the IP (Cinque (1999, p.106), modified in Cinque (2006))

[frankly Mood_{SpeechAct} > [surprisingly Mood_{Evaluative} > [luckily Mood_{Evaluative} > [allegedly Mood_{Evidential} > [probably Mod_{Evidential} > [once T_{Past} > [then T_{Future} > [perhaps Mood_{Evidential} > [necessarily Mod_{Necessity} > [possibly Mod_{Possibility} > [usually Asp_{Habitual} > [finally Asp_{Delayed} > [tententially Asp_{Predpositional} > [again Asp_{Repetitive} > [often Asp_{Frequency} > [willingly Mod_{Volition} > [quickly Asp_{Continuative} > [already T_{Anterior} > [no longer Asp_{Thematic} > [still Asp_{Continuative} > [always Asp_{Continuative} > [just Asp_{Autospective} > [soon Asp_{Proximate} > [briefly Asp_{Quative} > [(?) Asp_{Quative/Progressive} > [almost Asp_{Prospective} > [suddenly Asp_{Locative} > [obligatorily Mod_{Obligation} > [in vain Asp_{Prospective} > [(?) Asp_{Quative} > [completely Asp_{Completeive} > [tutto Asp_{Completeive} > [well Voice > [early Asp_{Continuative} > [(?) Asp_{Locative} > [again Asp_{Repetitive} > [often Asp_{Frequency} > ...]

Image 1. The Universal Hierarchy of Functional Projections (Cinque, 1999; adapted from Tescari Neto, 2015)



Conclusions

In view of the results it seems that the behavior of the verb in relation to the lower portion of the universal hierarchy of functional projections in Colombian Spanish favors orders in which the verb precedes the adverbial phrase. This argues in favor of the existence of verb raising among lower adverbs in Colombian Spanish. While both the medial and superior portions have a behavior that needs further analysis, the idea that the movement of the verb depends on verbal tense cannot be completely disregarded.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank a grant from CNPq (PIBIC/PRP-UNICAMP).

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