

On the Position of Subjects in Spanish

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0. Introduction

In this paper I analyze the contrast between the pre and postverbal subject positions in Spanish under the guidelines proposed in The Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995). I will claim that preverbal subjects are Clitic Left Dislocated constructions, i.e. base-generated adjuncts to the maximal inflectional projection coindexed with an empty pronominal in argument position. As a result, sentences with preverbal subjects and sentences with postverbal subjects will be analyzed as the result of different numerations. In the former case there is a *pro* element in the numeration that is absent in the latter. I will then propose that the positions of subjects in Spanish interrogative sentences and relative clauses can be accounted for if we assume that there is covert I-to-C movement in Spanish. Left-dislocated constituents block I-to-C movement and render preverbal subjects in interrogative constructions ungrammatical. Since this type of movement is not present in relative clauses the left-dislocated constituents (preverbal subjects, for instance) are ruled in. This hypothesis also predicts that Wh-elements that are base-generated need not be licensed by covert I-to-C and therefore will allow the presence of preverbal subjects.¹

1. Pre and Postverbal Subject Positions in Declarative Sentences in Spanish

1.1. Theoretical Introduction: The VP-internal Hypothesis

Null Subject Languages (NSLs) have been traditionally characterized as having a specific set of properties that parametrically differentiate them from languages that do not allow null subjects. Among these of properties NSLs are said to allow Free Subject Inversion, the possibility of having a subject either preceding or following the predicate. Spanish, a pro-drop language, allows for a fairly unrestricted ordering of the subject in simple and embedded declaratives (1) and in relative clauses (2):

(1) The research presented here is based on chapters 2 and 4 of Olarrea 1996. I am thankful to Heles Contreras, Paco Ordoñez-Lao and Karen Zagona for their invaluable comments on earlier versions. My deepest gratitude to Xabier Artiagoitia for his wise advice, his support and his comments on this article.

- (1) a. Juan mira la televisión
 "John watches TV"
 b. Mira la television Juan
 c. Mira Juan la televisión
 d. María cree que Juan llegó
 "Mary believes that John arrived"
 e. María cree que llegó Juan
- (2) a. Ese es el hombre que vio Juan
 That is the man that saw John
 "That is the man that John saw"
 b. Ese es el hombre que Juan vio

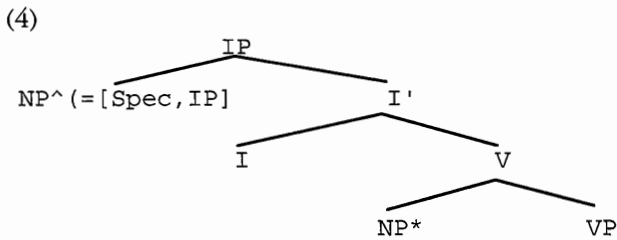
Preverbal subjects are much more restricted in interrogative sentences, as shown in the examples in (3):

- (3) a. *¿Dónde Juan vive?
 Where John lives?
 b. ¿Dónde vive Juan?
 "Where does John live?"
 c. *¿Qué Juan quiere?
 What John wants?
 d. ¿Qué quiere Juan?
 "What does John want?"
 What wants John?
 e. ¿Por qué Juan vino?
 Why John came?
 "Why did John come?"
 f. ¿Por qué vino Juan?

In this section we will focus our attention in the constructions in (1), the contrast between the pre and postverbal position of Spanish subjects in declarative sentences.² I will leave the discussion of the preverbal slot in interrogatives (3) and relative clauses (2) for section 2.

In the Principles and Parameters framework, the position of subjects in a sentence had been satisfactorily explained by the Internal Subject Hypothesis, ISH, (Zagona 1982, Koopman & Sportiche 1991, among others), as a result of parametric variation in the mechanisms of Case assignment. The ISH claims that subjects are generated within the maximal projection of the predicate, preverbal subjects being the result of raising of the subject to [Spec, IP], as shown in (4):

(2) For an analysis of the frequency of the different word orders in Spanish *vid.* Ocampo (1989) and Bentivoglio and Weber (1985) and references therein.



Koopman and Sportiche propose that nominative Case may be assigned either under government or by agreement. Under the former mechanism, INFL assigns Case to an NP that is governed by it. Under the latter, Case is assigned by a head to an NP in its specifier position as a reflex of the general process of Spec-Head agreement. According to this hypothesis there exists parametric variation among languages with respect to the obligatoriness versus the optionality of the movement of the internal subject to [Spec, IP], due to a distinction in the mechanism of structural Case assignment: in languages like English, where INFL assigns Case by agreement, the VP-internal subject must raise to [Spec, IP] to satisfy the Case Filter, as in (5).

(5) [_{IP} John [_I Pres, 3 psg] [_{VP} [_{NP} t][_{VP} watches T.V.]]]

In languages like Spanish, INFL is rich enough to be considered lexical, VP is L-marked and the subject NP* in (4) is governed by INFL. The postverbal subject can then be directly assigned nominative Case under canonical (left to right) government by INFL. Movement of the subject to the preverbal ([Spec, IP]) position is then optional, VOS and SVO orders being both possible in declarative sentences (6, a, b)³

(6) a. [_{IP} [_I Pres, 3 psg] [_{VP} [_{VP} mira la televisión] [_{NP} Juan]]]
 b. [_{IP} Juan [_I Pres, 3 psg] [_{VP} [_{VP} mira la televisión] [_{NP} t]]]

There are two underlying assumptions in the ISH that will be of concern in this section: first, that there are parametric variations in the overt syntax (languages differ with respect to the mechanisms of Case assignment by INFL); and second, that there is optionality in the application of movement rules in specific cases (in Spanish the VP-internal subject can optionally move to [Spec, IP]). These assumptions, commonly accepted in the Principles and Parameters framework, are challenged by the MP. The Minimalist Program proposes a system in which parametric variations must be reduced to morphological properties of lexical items and in which movement must be considered legitimate only if necessary for convergence. If we are to account for the optionality in the positions of subjects in Spanish under minimalist assumptions we face, first, a theoretical problem. Overt movement of the VP-internal subject to [Spec, IP] in (6b) should be forced by the presence of a [+strong] nominal feature in [Spec, AgrSP], as discussed earlier in chapter 1. If this feature is [+strong]

(3) For ease of exposition I have opted to place the subject to the right of the predicate in the examples under consideration. The reason is merely visual: the subject is generated in preverbal position but Spanish presents V-to-I movement, the result being the postverbal position of the subject. In this section I will put aside the question of the subject in Spanish being generated as an adjunct unordered with respect to the predicate, as has been proposed in the literature (Contreras 1991).

in Spanish, all subjects should move to [Spec, AgrSP] before Spell-Out and the post-verbal position of the subject would remain unexplained.

Another issue is in order at this point. In the MP nominative Case and agreement are always checked in Spec-head configurations. It may seem at first glance that minimalist assumptions would allow us to get rid of K&S's disjunction in the formulation of our theory of case assignment. It could be claimed that the differences between SV and VS orders in Spanish are the reflex of two different specifications of the nominal features of AgrS. In the SV order, the nominal categorial feature of this functional head is specified as [+strong], forcing the movement of the VP-internal subject to [Spec, AgrSP] in the overt syntax. In the VS order, on the other hand, the nominal of AgrS is [-strong] and the subject need not raise to [Spec, AgrSP] until after Spell-out. Raising of the subject in the SV order is overt but it is covert in the VS order. In either case the subject will be in a Spec-head configuration at LF with a head whose formal features include nominative Case and these features will be checked.

It may seem that this analysis allows us to get rid of a disjunctive formulation, since it is no longer necessary to postulate that structural case can be assigned *either* by government *or* by agreement. But in order to do so it has been necessary to replace this disjunction with a different one, not purely syntactic but somehow lexical and, as it is presently stated, of a very unclear formulation: Languages like Spanish that allow both pre- or postverbal subjects are the result of the presence of nominal features in AgrS that can be specified as *either* [+strong] *or* [-strong]. It is then legitimate to question the degree of theoretical insight we have gained with what seems to be merely a substitution of disjunctive formulations. A more precise explanation of the mechanisms of agreement and Case assignment in Spanish under minimalist assumptions will be needed in order for the analysis to be satisfactory.

Besides the theoretical problem described previously, the ISH analysis of Spanish subjects faces also an empirical problem. Recent work in the literature on Romance languages has claimed that subjects do not occupy [Spec, AgrSP],⁴ and, parallel to this claim, that [Spec, AgrSP] is not a Case position in these languages. In the first section of this section I will discuss the empirical evidence that supports this claim with a precise goal in mind: I will show that the analysis proposed in Contreras (1991) in which preverbal subjects are left-dislocated is not only compatible with the empirical evidence provided but also that his analysis receives a straight-forward interpretation within minimalist assumptions. More precisely, it will be claimed that preverbal subjects are instances of Clitic Left Dislocation in the sense of Cinque (1991). I will show that under this analysis the phenomena of agreement and nominative Case in Spanish are indeed best explained as manifestations of a structural relation between a functional head and its specifier position, as proposed by Chomsky (1992). The core of the analysis will be presented in section 1.3. In this section I will argue that the nominal categorial features of AgrS in Spanish are uniformly [-strong] while the verbal categorial features of this inflectional head are [+strong], a charac-

(4) Vid. Barbosa (1993), Bok-Bennema (1992), Contreras (1991) and (1994), Dobrovie-Sorin (1993), Rigau (1991), among others.

teristic of pro-drop languages. Under minimalist assumptions it will be then possible to explain the phenomenon traditionally called Free Subject Inversion, characteristic of pro-drop languages, without resorting to the existence of categorial features of a non-substantive head specified with two different values for a given language, therefore abandoning the theoretical disjunction in the mechanisms of case assignment discussed previously.

This analysis presents also another advantage: the restrictions imposed on the type of constituents that may occupy the preverbal slot in Spanish and their semantic interpretation can be derived from the general properties of CLLD structures. A discussion of the properties that characterize this construction and a classification that will serve to differentiate it from other types of Left Dislocation in Spanish will be provided in section 1.4.

1.2. The position of preverbal subjects in Spanish

In this section we will analyze the empirical evidence for the claim that Spanish preverbal subjects are not in [Spec, AgrSP]. But before doing so, it will be necessary to review several basic assumptions that will help clarify the analysis. First, I will assume with Kayne (1994) and Chomsky (1995) that VP-internal subjects are universally generated as left specifiers of the verbal projection. The basic order is then SVO.⁵ Second, I will take as uncontroversial the claim that languages like English and languages like Spanish differ with respect to verb-to-INFL raising. Standard Spanish has an obligatory rule of overt verb raising that characterizes Null Subject Languages while English only raises auxiliary verbs (cf. Emonds 1976, Pollock 1989, Chomsky 1989, among others). Third, I will assume against Torrego (1984) that there is no overt I-to-C movement in Spanish. Torrego claims that in interrogative sentences the postverbal position of the subject is the result of raising of the verb all the way up above the subject, leaving this in its canonical position, [Spec, IP]. There is strong empirical evidence against this claim (Arnaiz 1992, Bok-Bennema 1992, Goodall 1991, Ordoñez 1996, Suñer 1994, Toribio 1993, among others). I will review this evidence in detail in section 2, when discussing the position of subjects in interrogative and relative constructions in Spanish. For the purposes of this section, and since word order in interrogatives will be used to argue the position of other syntactic constituents, I will follow standard assumptions and claim that Wh-phrases are always in [Spec, CP] in Spanish.

1.2.1. *Subjects are not in {Spec, IP}*

The claim that preverbal subjects are not in [Spec, IP] in Spanish finds empirical support in the analysis of the position of sentential adverbs in Spanish (Bok-Bennema 1992 and Zubizarreta 1992) and in the relative position of functional categories in this language (Contreras 1994). Bok-Bennema points out that Spanish allows adverbials to appear between the subject NP and the finite verb:

(5) For analyses in which the subject is generated as a Spec whose ordering with respect to VP is free, vid. Contreras (1991).

- (7) a. Juan probablemente leyó el libro
 "John probably read the book"
 b. Juan apenas / ya / casi ha leído el libro
 "John barely / already / almost has read the book"

This type of adverbial can intervene between the Wh-phrase and the verb, as shown in (8):

- (8) ¿Qué libro apenas/ya ha leído Juan?
 What books barely already has read John?
 "What books has John barely read?"

In this analysis adverbials are assumed to be adjuncts to maximal projections.⁶ If the adverb precedes the verb in a language with overt V-to-I raising, it must be assumed to be adjoined to the the highest inflectional projection of the functional category to which the verb raises to, in our case adjoined to AgrSP. This raises the question where the subject NP occurs. In (8) the preverbal adverb shows that there is no I-to-C movement in Spanish. The postverbal subject in this sentence cannot be then in [Spec, AgrSP], the canonical subject position. Since in (7) the subject DP precedes the adverbial adjoined to AgrSP, it must occur to the left of this position. It is then reasonable to assume that subjects followed by adverbials are indeed not in their canonical position. This claim, argued for in Bok-Bennema (1992) and Zubizarreta (1992) forces these authors to assume that there is an extra functional head between C and AgrS. More specifically, to assume that the properties traditionally assigned to AgrS must be split over two heads. In their analyses, the highest is the nominative marker and the lowest the affixal Agr element to which the verb is adjoined.

In either case, a minimalist account of the preverbal position as the result of movement to the Spec of a projection higher than AgrSP (AgrS-1 in Bok-Bennema, FP in Zubizarreta) would still have to explain why movement to the specifier of this functional projection is optional, a problem identical to the one discussed for the more traditional ISH approach.

1.2.2. *Preverbal subjects are left-dislocated*

Instead of assuming that preverbal subjects are in the specifier of a projection that dominates AgrS, several proposals have been made recently to claim that preverbal subjects are adjoined to a clausal projection (Barbosa 1994, Contreras 1991 and 1994, Otero 1993). I will summarize here arguments from Contreras (1994). These arguments are based on the relative order of negation and other functional projections. Laka (1990) and Bosque (1992) argue convincingly that what differentiates English from Spanish is the relative order of the functional heads with respect to negation. In Spanish, NegP dominates AgrSP, while in English NegP dominates TP:⁷

(6) This claim is not uncontroversial. For an analysis in which different types of adverbs are generated as specifiers of different functional projections, vid. Zagona (1988).

(7) It is important to point out that in the two analyses reviewed here, preverbal subjects occupy the canonical [Spec, AgrSP] position, so their arguments are consistent with the present arguments.

- (9) a. English: [_{CP} [_{AgrSP} [_{NegP} [_{TP} [_{VP}...]]]]]]
 b. Spanish: [_{CP} [_{NegP} [_{AgrSP} [_{TP} [_{VP}...]]]]]]

Based on this distinction, Contreras (1994) argues the contrast in (10) shows that the subject never occupies [Spec, AgrSP] in Spanish since preverbal subjects precede negation:

- (10) a. *Creo que María no ha trabajado hoy*
 Believe-1st sing. that Mary not has worked today
 "I believe that Mary has not worked today"
 b. **Creo que María ha no trabajado hoy*

In (10a) the subject follows the complementizer and precedes negation. The sentence is ruled in. But if negation follows the Aux in AgrSP the sentence is ungrammatical. It can be claimed that, at least in negative sentences, the preverbal subject is not in [Spec, AgrSP] but higher in the structure. Consider now the following sentences:

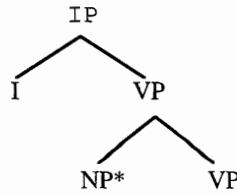
- (11) a. *¿Qué libros_i no lee t_j Juan?*
 which books not read John
 "Which book doesn't John read?"
 b. **¿Qué libros Juan lee?*
 c. **¿Qué libros no Juan lee?*

In Spanish Wh-interrogative sentences, the subject follows the verb (11a). When the subject precedes the verb, the sentence is ungrammatical (11b). This subject inversion in interrogatives cannot be due to the fact that the wh-phrase *qué libros* and the subject *Juan* compete for the same position, [Spec, AgrSP]. If this were the case, we would predict (11c) to be grammatical: The wh-element occupies [Spec, CP], negation dominates VP, and the subject is base-generated in [Spec, VP]. But (11c) is ruled out, and the contrast between (11a) and (11b) shows that Wh-movement is not to Spec of AgrSP. We thus have to assume that the wh-element in (11a) is not in that position and that [Spec, AgrSP] is not filled. Incidentally, the fact that the negative element *no* in NegP precedes the verb suggests again that there is no I-to-C movement in Spanish. If I-to-C movement were allowed, (12) should be grammatical:

- (12) **¿Qué libros lee no Juan?*

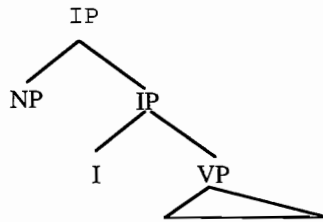
(12) shows that the verb does not raise to C. As a consequence, Contreras claims that the subject in Spanish cannot occupy [Spec, AgrSP], as shown by the examples in (10-12). What then is the position of preverbal subjects in Spanish? Contreras (1991; 1994a/b) argues that AgrS (Infl) in Spanish is [+lexical], and therefore projects no specifier, according to Fukui and Speas' (1986) proposal. In his framework, subjects are generated as VP-internal adjuncts whose order with respect to the predicate is not specified:

(13)



The internal subject receives nominative Case under government by INFL, since INFL L-marks the higher VP. Spanish SVO order is then the result of adjunction to INFL.

(14)



This adjunction of the NP subject to IP can be produced either by movement, as in (15), or by base-generation, as in the case of long movement of the subject in (16) (examples from Contreras 1991: 65):

(15) [_{IP} María_i [_{IP} sabe_k [_{VP} [_{VP} t_k la lección] t_i]]]
 “Mary knows the lesson”

(16) [_{IP} Esos futbolistas_i [_{IP} no sé [_{CP} cómo se puede saber [_{CP} cuánto dinero ganan pro_i]]]]]
 “Those soccer players I don’t know how you can know how much money they make”

In (15), the subject position is subjacent to the adjoined phrase and the structure *may* result from movement.⁸ But in (16) the deeply embedded subject is not subjacent to the NP adjoined to IP, since both CPs in (16) are barriers. This sentence

(8) By assuming that adjuncts are licensed at S-structure only if they are canonically governed, and that otherwise they are licensed at LF, Contreras (1991) correctly predicts several contrasts between languages like English, whose INFL is [-lexical], and Spanish, whose INFL is [+lexical]. In English topicalization is possible, while it is impossible in Spanish; Spanish shows postverbal subjects while English lacks them; English does not allow null empty subjects, and both languages show “contrasting ranges of closed domain facts” that receive a satisfactory explanation under the Close Domain Condition, i.e., the contrast between (i) and (ii):

- (i) *¿Qué lección María sabe? / What lesson does Mary know?
 (ii) La lección que María sabe / The lesson that Mary knows

The theoretical framework developed in this chapter differs from Contreras (1991). An attempt to explain the desirable results of Contreras’ analysis mentioned above within the Minimalist framework is described in Section 2.

cannot be the result of movement and the most embedded subject cannot be a trace: It has to be a resumptive empty pronominal and the initial phrase has to be left-dislocated. Evidence that left-dislocation of the subject is possible in Spanish can also be found in raising structures, as first proposed in Rivero (1980). Consider the following example in Spanish and its English counterpart.

- (17) a. Parece [que Juan come mucho]
 b. It seems [that John eats a lot]

The verb *parecer* ('seem') is a raising verb. It does not assign a q-role to its external argument. In English, the subject position has to be filled by an overt expletive (17b). In Spanish, a pro-drop language, the subject of *parecer* is a covert expletive *pro expl* (17a). But when the embedded clause is non-finite, its subject does not receive Case and has to raise to the subject position of the main verb, as shown in (18), to avoid a violation of the Case Filter. The relevant contrast is illustrated in (18).

- (18) a. Juan parece [comer mucho]
 b. John seems [to eat a lot]

Now consider the contrast in (19).

- (19) a. Juan y Pedro parece [que comen mucho]
 b. *John and Peter seems [that eat a lot]

In (19a) the plural subject in the Spanish example cannot be the subject of the main verb *parece*, in third person singular, as shown by the fact that there is no subject-verb agreement. The sentence is interpreted with the initial phrase as the subject of the embedded verb *comen*, third person plural. But movement of this subject from the embedded position to the subject position of the main clause is not motivated: the verb in the embedded sentence is finite and can assign nominative Case to its subject. It is reasonable to assume that (19a) is a left-dislocated structure, and that the subject of the embedded clause is an empty referential pronoun that dictates the agreement with the embedded subject. The initial phrase is adjoined to the main IP, whose subject is a null expletive, like in (18a).

There is further evidence that Spanish preverbal subjects are left-dislocated and coindexed with an empty resumptive pronoun in argument position. This evidence comes from the analysis of another construction that, similarly to the raising construction analyzed in (19a) shows lack of subject-verb agreement. It has been pointed out in the literature that certain subject NPs in Spanish trigger agreement in first, second or third person when they refer to a group that may include the first or the second person (Hurtado 1986; Fernández Soriano 1989). This phenomenon is exemplified in (20).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (20) | a. tenemos |
| Los estudiantes de Lingüística | b. tenéis que ser pacientes. |
| | c. tienen |
| | a. have-1pl |
| "the students of Linguistics | b. have-2pl to be patient-pl" |
| | c. have-3pl |

Under a Left Dislocation analysis we could claim that the preverbal subject “los estudiantes de Lingüística” is adjoined to the highest inflectional projection and coindexed with an empty resumptive pronoun in argument position, as Contreras proposed for (16). This empty *pro* dictates agreement with the verb. Evidence from the existence of an empty pronominal that agrees with the verb comes from cases in which an anaphor is present. In these cases, the anaphoric element has to agree in person number and gender with the features of *pro* and not with those of the left dislocated constituent.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| (21) | a. tenemos | | nosotros mismos |
| Los estudiantes | b. teneis | un alto concepto de | vosotros mismos |
| | c. tienen | | sí mismos |
| | a. have-1pl | | ourselves |
| “the students | b. have-2pl | a high opinion of | yourselves” |
| | c. have-3pl | | themselves |

Similar evidence can be found in control structures:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| (22) | queremos | {PRO matarnos} |
| Los estudiantes | quereis | {PRO mataros}. |
| | quieren | {PRO matarse} |
| | want-1pl. | {PRO to-kill-ourselves} |
| “the students | want-2pl. | {PRO to-kill-yourselves}” |
| | want-3pl. | {PRO to-kill-themselves} |

In (22) the null subject pronoun, rather than the preverbal NP, is the controller.

Once we posit that Spanish preverbal subjects are base-generated as IP adjuncts we have established the basis for a minimalist analysis of agreement and nominative Case in Spanish. Under such an analysis, the structure of (15) can be considered to be (23):

- (23) [_{AgrSP} Maríaⁱ [_{AgrSP} [_{AgrS} sabe_k [_{TP} t_k [_{VP} proⁱ [_V t_k la lección]]]]]]

In the next section I will describe this analysis in detail and outline an account of the cases of person agreement loss in Spanish.

1.3. A Minimalist Analysis of SV/VS orders in Spanish

We can account now for both the VS and the SV orders in Spanish in a uniform way. The verbal features of T and AgrS in Spanish are [+strong], forcing the overt raising of the verb. The nominal categorial features of AgrS, on the other hand, are [-strong]. Subjects are generated in [Spec, VP] and will raise covertly to the position in which their inflectional features are checked, [Spec, AgrSP].⁹

(9) I am not ready to make any claims about the value of the N-related feature of T in Spanish or about the possibility of this functional head projecting a specifier position. For the purposes of this chapter, it is sufficient to assume that the nominal features of AgrS are [-strong], and that in consequence the VP-internal subject will check its features at LF. Independently of the strength of the features of T, and due to the fact that the subject raises to AgrS covertly, the result is always the postverbal position of the thematic subject in the overt syntax, since V raises to AgrS. As mentioned in chapter 1, I will assume, with Jonas & Bobaljik (1993) that Spanish does not project a specifier in TP. A study of the interactions between the movements of the internal arguments in VSO and SVO orders in Spanish would confirm this hypothesis.

A VS sentence is thus the result of V adjunction to AgrS, via cyclic adjunction to the intermediate functional heads. This movement is the product of the [+strong] verbal categorial features of AgrS. This strong feature attracts the categorial feature of the verbal head. The movement is overt and takes place before any further structure is created by a new application of Merge. Before Spell-out, then, the representation of a VS sentence in Spanish is then:

$$(24) \{_{AgrSP} \{_{AgrS} \text{sabe}_k \{_{TP} \text{María}_i \{_{T'} \text{t}_k' \{_{VP} \text{t}_i \{_{V'} \text{t}_k \text{la lección}\}}\}}\}}\}$$

In the overt syntax, the verb will always precede the thematic subject. At LF, the subject will raise to [Spec, AgrSP] to be attracted by the nominal categorial feature of AgrS, a feature that I have assumed to be specified as [-strong].¹⁰ This movement at LF is the result of the principle Procrastinate which rules out overt movement of the subject when there is no [+strong] nominal features that attract it. Movement at LF is more “economical” than overt movement. The resulting LF configuration is, then,

$$(25) \{_{AgrSP} \text{María}_i \{_{AgrS} \text{sabe}_k \{_{TP} \text{t}_i' \{_{T'} \text{t}_k' \{_{VP} \text{t}_i \{_{V'} \text{t}_k \text{la lección}\}}\}}\}}\}$$

In (25), both the subject and the verb are in the checking domain of the AgrS head, and the q-features of both the subject and the verb can be checked. If these features are identical the derivation converges and agreement obtains.

In the SV order, the thematic subject is a null referential pronoun that follows the verb in the overt syntax. This null resumptive pronoun is coindexed at LF with a NP base-generated as an AgrSP adjunct. This position is broadly L-related, i.e., a non-argument position.¹¹ Before Spell-out, then, an SVO sentence in Spanish presents the following configuration:

$$(26) \{_{AgrSP} \text{María} \{_{AgrSP} \{_{AgrS} \text{sabe}_k \{_{TP} \{_{T'} \text{t}_k' \{_{VP} \text{pro}_i \{_{V'} \text{t}_k \text{la lección}\}}\}}\}}\}$$

At LF, the thematic null pronominal raises to [Spec, AgrSP] to check the [-strong] nominal feature of AgrS. At this level of representation, the left-dislocated subject and the null pronominal are coindexed. The thematic null pronominal and the verb are in the checking domain of AgrS and agreement is between the verb and the pronominal subject. The relevant structure is exemplified in (27).

$$(27) \{_{AgrSP} \text{María} \{_{AgrSP} \text{pro}_i \{_{AgrS} \text{sabe}_k \{_{TP} \{_{T'} \text{t}_k' \{_{VP} \text{t}_i \{_{V'} \text{t}_k \text{la lección}\}}\}}\}}\}$$

In both the VS and SV orders, the configurations in which agreement and nominative Case are checked are the same Spec-head configurations. This is shown in the abstract sentence structure in (28).

(10) In the model proposed in Chapter 4, Chomsky claims that this covert movement is only of the set of Formal Features of the subject (FF(SU)). These formal features will adjoin to the AgrS head and will be therefore in the minimal domain of both a sublabel of AgrS and the complex [T+V]. For ease of exposition I will stick to the pre-chapter-4 model in which covert movement of a maximal projection is phrasal movement to the Spec of the inflectional head. There are no different empirical predictions with respect to these two systems, but the syntactic markers are easier to describe in the earlier model.

(11) The definition of the preverbal subject position as an A'-position seems to predict correctly the asymmetry in terms of scope ambiguity between pre and postverbal subjects in Spanish, as discussed in Uribe-Etxebarria (1992). I will discuss this possibility at the end of the section.

(28) Before Spell-Out

- (a) VS order: $[_{AgrSP} [_{AgrS} V+T] [_{TP} [_T t_T [_{VP} NP [_V tv]]]]]$
 (b) SV order: $[_{AgrSP} NP [_{AgrSP} [_{AgrS} V+T] [_{TP} [_T t_T [_{VP} PRO [_V tv]]]]]]]$

Subject agreement is checked in a Spec-head relation between the subject NP or *pro*, and the complex $[_{AgrS} V+T]$. The preverbal NP in the SV order gets interpreted at LF by coindexation with the thematic *pro*. Both elements, the adjoined NP and the null pronominal, must share their *f*-features.¹² This is exemplified in the abstract sentence structures in (29).

(29) After Spell-Out

- (a) VS order: $[_{AgrSP} NP_i [_{AgrS} V+T] [_{TP} [_T t_T [_{VP} t_i [_V tv]]]]]$
 (b) SV order: $[_{AgrSP} NP [_{AgrSP} PRO_i [_{AgrS} V+T] [_{TP} [_T t_T [_{VP} t_i [_V tv]]]]]]]$

I have argued that the preverbal subject in Spanish is not the result of movement, but rather left-dislocated and coindexed with an argumental empty resumptive pronoun that dictates the agreement with the verb and that, according to our analysis, checks the nominal categorial feature of AgrS and nominative Case by Spec-head agreement at LF. In the next section I will analyze the characteristics of Left Dislocation structures in Spanish in an attempt to derive most of the properties of the preverbal subject construction from properties of Left Dislocation structures in this language.

1.4. Clitic Left Dislocation in Spanish

In the previous section I have argued that Spanish preverbal subjects are base generated as adjuncts to the highest inflectional projection. To be more precise, I will claim that Spanish sentences with preverbal subjects have all the characteristic properties of what Cinque (1991) calls Clitic Left Dislocation constructions. These properties differ in certain important aspects from those of ordinary LD found in English. There is also a certain terminological disagreement in the literature with respect to the classification and description of the properties of Left Dislocated structures in Spanish, and their differences with respect to what some scholars claim to be instances of Topicalization. In what follows I will differentiate between three constructions in which the most prominent element in the sentence occupies the absolute initial position, as shown in (30)

- (30) a. Las rosas, me encantan esas flores (LD)
 The roses, to-me are pleasing those flowers
 "Roses, I love those flowers"
 b. Las flores las compré ayer (CLLD)
 The flowers them I bought yesterday
 c. ESAS FLORES compré ayer (FC)
 "THOSE FLOWERS I bought yesterday"

(12) This feature sharing is constrained in certain ways, which account for the possibility of loss of person agreement in examples like those in (21) and (22). I will come back to this issue in the next section.

In an attempt to clarify the issue I will follow Cinque and claim that there are two different types of LD constructions in Romance Languages, exemplified in (30a) and (30b). Following his terminology, I will refer to the structure in (30a) as Left Dislocation (LD) and to the construction in (30b) as Clitic Left Dislocations (CLLD). I will claim also that the constructions in (30a) and (30b) contrast minimally with the construction exemplified in (30c). Borrowing from Uriagereka's (1992) terminology I will refer to this type of sentence as Focus Construction. I will begin by arguing that CLLDs and LDs are indeed two different constructions, based on pragmatic, stylistic and syntactic considerations.

1.4.1. *Left Dislocation vs. Clitic Left Dislocation*

The constructions exemplified in (30 a/b) can be differentiated according to several syntactic properties. The following argument is partially adapted from Cinque (1990), Dolci (1986) and Hernanz and Brucart (1987): In the LD construction the left dislocated element can only be an NP (DP):

- (31) a. Juan, no me acuerdo de él
 John, I don't remember (of) him
 b. *De Juan, no me acuerdo de él
 Of John, I don't remember (of) him
 c. Juan, lo vimos a él en la fiesta
 d. *A Juan, lo vimos a él en la fiesta.
 John, (clitic-him) we saw him in at the party

while in CLLD any phrasal type can be dislocated:

- (32) a. A Juan lo vimos en la fiesta
 b. De Juan no me acuerdo
 c. Con Juan no he podido hablar de esas cosas.
 With John (I) have not been able to talk about those things
 d. Rápido sí que es Michael Johnson.
 Fast is indeed what is Michael Johnson
 e. Que Maria haya podido decir eso no puedo creerlo
 That Mary could have said that I can't believe.

In (32a, b and c) a PP is dislocated, while in (32d), the dislocated element is an AdjP. Since there are no PP or AdjP clitics in Spanish, it could be claimed that (32 a-d) are instances of the construction exemplified in (30.c), Focus Fronting, a construction that does not allow the presence of a clitic. I will come back to this issue later. (30e) shows that a CP can be dislocated in this type of construction. The coreferential element in LD constructions can be a phrase or a pronoun, either a clitic or a tonic pronoun:

- (33) a. El baloncesto, ese deporte le encanta a tu hijo (phrase)
Basketball, that sport is loved by your son
“Basketball, your son loves that sport”
- b. John Coltrane, este saxofonista me encanta. (phrase)
John Coltrane, that sax player I love.
- c. Miles Davis, él sí que me fascina (tonic pronoun)
Miles Davis, he is indeed fascinating to me.
- d. En cuanto a Buddy Guy, hace años que no lo veo en concierto (clitic)
As for Buddy Guy, it’s been years since I (don’t) see him in concert.

In CLLD the coreferential element has to be an empty pronominal (licensed by agreement or by a clitic), never a tonic pronoun or a phrase:

- (34) a. En Juan no es posible confiar
In John not is possible to trust
“It is impossible to trust John”
- b. *En Juan no es posible confiar en él
In John not is possible to trust in him
- c. A Maria no la vi nunca tan enfadada
To Mary not her I saw never so irritated
“Mary, I have never seen her so irritated”
- d. *A Maria nunca ví a esa chica tan enfadada
To Mary not her I saw that girl never so irritated

The LD constituent can be preceded by what Contreras (1978) calls “topicalizing expressions”: *en cuanto a*, *por lo que afecta a*, *hablando de*, etc.¹³ CLLD constructions are ruled out when preceded by expressions of this type:

- (35) a. En cuanto a Antxon, él no va a terminar su tesis
“As for Antxon, he will never finish his dissertation”
- b. *Te he dicho que en cuanto a Juan lo vi ayer
“I have told you that regarding John, I saw him yesterday”
- c. En cuanto a esos futbolistas, no se cómo se puede saber cuánto dinero ganan ellos.
“As for those soccer players, I don’t know how you can know how much money they make”
- d. *Te he dicho que en cuanto a esos futbolistas no se cómo se puede saber cuánto dinero ganan.

(13) These expressions are, roughly, the Spanish equivalents of the “As for...” constructions in English.

LDs cannot be embedded. They have to appear in absolute first position:

- (36) a. *Todos dicen que John Coltrane, ese saxofonista es el mejor.
 "Everybody says that John Coltrane, that sax player is the best"
 b. *No me sorprende que Miles Davis, él sí que supo desafiar a sus críticos.
 "It does not surprise me that Miles davis, he indeed knew how to challenge his critics"

While CLLDs can be freely embedded:

- (37) a. Todos piensan que de Juan no deberíamos hablar
 everybody thinks that of John we should not talk
 "Everybody thinks that we shouldn't talk about John"
 b. No me sorprende que de Maria nadie se haya quejado
 "It is not surprising that about Mary nobody has complained"
 c. Juan y Pedro parece que todos piensan que vendrán a la fiesta
 John and Peter (it) seems that everybody think that (they) will attend the party.
 "It seems thath everybody thinks that John and Peter will attend the party"

The contrast between (36) and (37) shows that LDs cannot be embedded while CLLDs constructions can appear as complements to verbs that subcategorize for a CP. There is obligatory identity of Case and subcategorization between the dislocated element and the resumptive pronoun in CLLDs. Cinque (1987) refers to this obligatory identity as "connectivity". But this is not the case in LD constructions. We can understand connectivity as coreference between two syntactic constituents in a configuration in which one c-commands the other. Connectivity is then manifested in the syntax by identity of Case and subcategorization. Compare the following examples:

- (38) a. Nosotros, nadie nos ha visto
 we, nobody us has seen
 b. Juan, estaba pensando en él en ese momento.
 "John, (I) was thinking about him right this moment"
 (39) a. A nosotros no nos han dicho nada
 b. *Nosotros no nos han dicho nada
 to us nobody said anything
 "Nobody told us anything"
 (40) a. En Juan estaba pensando en este momento
 b. *Juan estaba pensando en *en* este momento

In (38) the dislocated element does not share either the Case (accusative in (38a)) nor the subcategorization (the verb *pensar* "to think" selects for preposition *en*) of the

coreferential element within the sentence. In the CLLD constructions in (39), the dislocated element must bear an accusative marker (the preposition *a*) in order for the constructions to be correct. In (40), the need for identity of subcategorization is shown. Cinque (1987) claims that connectivity allows for the dislocation of idiomatic expressions. This is possible only in CLLD constructions, as shown in (41):

- (41) a. *La pata, ese hombre estiró (esa) ayer
 the leg, that man stretched (that one) yesterday
 “The bucket, that man kicked (that one)yesterday”
 b. La pata la estiró el hombre ayer
 the leg it stretched the man yesterday

Furthermore, the lack of connectivity in LD structures can be shown by the possibility of having a left dislocated element that does not agree in gender and number with the coreferential element. This is ruled out in CLLD constructions:

- (42) a. El ordenador, yo odio esas máquinas infernales
 “The computer, I hate those evil machines”
 b. *El ordenador las odio.
 the computer them I hate

Cinque (1990) also claims that it is impossible to dislocate a pronoun bound by a quantifier when there is no connectivity. As predicted, LDs cannot dislocate a bound pronoun, as shown in the following contrasting structures:

- (43) a. *Su_i madre, cada chico_i le regalará flores a ella.
 his mother, each child will give her flowers
 b. A su_i madre cada chico_i le regalará flores
 to his mother each child will give her flowers

While these two constructions under analysis here, CLLDs and LDs, present a whole set of distinctive syntactic properties, they also share others. In both constructions more than one constituent can be dislocated, as shown in (44):

- (44) a. En cuanto al dictador y al pueblo, éste repudia a aquél (Contreras
 1978)
 “As for the dictator and the people, the former hates the latter”
 b. En cuanto a María y a su marido, es evidente que él le pega a ella
 “As for Mary and her husband, it is obvious that he hits her”
 c. Ese libro a Pedro no se lo dió nadie.
 that book to Peter did not give it to him nobody
 “Nobody gave Peter that book”
 d. A María esa película no le interesa.
 to Mary that movie not interests her
 “That movie is not appealing to Mary”

But notice that the LD construction requires the presence of a conjoined phrase. If the dislocated elements are not conjoined, only one dislocated phrase is allowed:

- (45) a. *Juan, el libro, él no lo ha comprado
 "John, the book, he hasn't bought it"
 b. *El libro, Juan, este no ha comprado aquél

Crucially, when both types of dislocation are present, the LD constituent must precede the CLLD:

- (46) a. En cuanto a Juan, esa carta se la escribió Pedro.
 as for John, that letter to him it wrote Peter
 "As for John, Peter wrote him that letter"
 b. *Esa carta en lo que se refiere a Juan, se la escribió Pedro
 this letter as for John, to-him it wrote Peter

Based on this difference in their ordering, I will claim that LD constituents are adjuncts to CP, while CLLD are AgrSP adjuncts and therefore should appear after the LD constituent when both are present in a sentence. This will also explain while only the latter, but not the former, can be embedded. If we assume with Chomsky (1986) that a constituent cannot be adjoined to a head that is subcategorized the contrast in (36) is accounted for. Furthermore, this analysis will predict that LD constituents will appear in embedded position in those constructions in Spanish in which a complementizer can be followed by a Wh-word. This prediction is born out, as shown in (47):

- (47) a. Me pregunto que quién trajo el vino.
 I wonder that who brought the wine
 "I am wondering who brought the wine"
 b. Me pregunto que a Juan, quién lo llamó.
 I wonder that to John, who him called
 "I am wondering who called John"

Another similarity between the two constructions is the fact that either can precede a Wh-word. Notice the following contrast:

- (48) a. En cuanto a Juan, ¿qué quiere comer hoy?
 as for John, what wants to eat today?
 "As for John, what does he feel like eating today?"
 b. *¿En cuanto a Juan qué le pasa?
 "As for John what is the matter with him?"
 c. ¿A Juan qué le pasa?
 to John what to-him is happening
 "What is the matter with John?"
 d. ¿Tu hermano qué quiere?
 your brother what (he) wants?
 What does your brother want?

Even though both types of left dislocation can precede a Wh-word in Comp, there are clear differences between the sentences in (48). The main one is based on

the fact that there is a long pause between the LD element and the sentence (48a), while no pause is necessary in the CLLD examples (48c/d). The fact that a long pause is present in LDs but not in CLLD has been shown in all the previous examples of both types of constructions. The second difference is that the LD structure is somehow “external” or peripheral with respect to the interrogative sentence, while the CLLD is not. This seems to support the claim that LDs are adjoined to CP. Sentence (48b) is a clear example of LD (it is introduced by a “topicalizing expression”, *en cuanto a,*) in which there is no pause and the dislocated element is internal to the interrogative. The sentence is ruled out. (48d) shows that subjects behave like any other CLLD element, and that they can precede a Wh-word in Comp. If we assume that CLLD constituents are adjuncts to AgrSP, we should also assume that it is possible to have a Wh-word in [spec, IP] in Spanish, as shown in these sentences. This may seem to present a problem for our analysis. I will come back to this issue in section 2.

Another way of differentiating both constructions is based on their different behavior with respect to Island Constraints. While LDs are insensitive to strong and weak Islands, CLLDs are insensitive only to weak islands. Consider the following examples:

- (49) a. En cuanto a ese trabajo, no puedo aceptar la idea de que ya lo ha conseguido.
 as for that job, I can't accept the idea that they have already got it
- b. Hablando de “Freaks”, un amigo que ha visto esa película me ha dicho que es magnífica.
 as for “Freaks”, a friend who has seen that movie has told me that it is great
- c. Por lo que se refiere a ese libro, te tomas un par de días de descanso y seguro que lo acabas.
 as for that book, you take a couple of days off and it is obvious that you finish it.

These are clear examples of LDs, as shown by the fact that they are introduced by a topicalizing expression and by the presence of a coreferential phrase or a pronominal. They represent coreference with an element within a Complex Noun Phrase, a relative clause and a Coordinate Island respectively. If we try to embed these sentences, their acceptability seems to be questionable:

- (50) a. ?Ya te he dicho que [el dinero no puedo aceptar la idea de que ya lo han conseguido.]
- b. ?Me contó que [“Freaks” un amigo que la vio le dijo que era magnífica]
- c. ?Te aseguro que [el libro te tomas un par de días de descanso y te lo acabas.]

Even if they are not embedded, a CLLD constituent cannot be coreferential with a clitic inside a strong island:¹⁴

- (51) a. ??A Juan no acepto la idea de que lo hayan despedido.
to John I don't accept the idea that to-him they have fired
- b. ??A María alguien que le dió un regalo no me saludó
en la fiesta.
to Mary somebody who to-her gave a present not to-me say
hello at the party
"Someone who gave Mary a presentt didn't greeted me at the
party"
- c. ??A María vienes a la fiesta y le das un regalo.
to Mary you attend the party and to-her(you) give a present

On the other hand, both LD and CLLD structures can be constructed with a coreferential element inside a Wh-island (a weak island), as shown in (52):

- (52) a. Dinero, me pregunto que quién tiene. (LD)
- b. María, me pregunto que quién la ha visto. (LD)
- c. A esos espías no sé cómo se puede saber
quién los traicionó. (CLLD)

The fact that both constructions can present the coreferential element within a Wh-island has been adduced to claim that neither of these constructions is the result of movement, even though they may present some of the idiosyncratic properties of Wh-movement, as shown in (50). Rivero (1980) refers to LDs as Topicalizations and reserves the term Left Dislocation for our CLLDs. She claims that the only Topicalizations that are the result of movement are those in which the dislocated element is a bare NP, as in (53):

- (53) Dinero, no creo que tengan
Money, I don't believe they have

Contreras (1991) claims that this is not an example of Topicalization, but rather a Left Dislocation structure. In other words, that the preverbal position of the leftmost constituent in (53) is not a result of movement but rather a constituent base-generated in that position. His argument is based on two facts: the gap in (53) can occur inside a syntactic island (54a) and the structure allows for the type of introductory material that characterizes Left Dislocations (54b):

- (54) a. Dinero, no conozco a nadie que tenga mucho
money not-I-know nobody that has much
"Money, I don't know anybody who has much"
- b. En cuanto a dinero, no creo que tengan.

(14) The acceptability of the sentences in (50) and (51) varies enormously, according to my informants. I will not attempt to account for this fact here.

Contreras claims that the absence of a resumptive clitic is attributable to the nonspecific nature of the left dislocated constituent. Based on his analysis of (54), he claims that one of the characteristics of Spanish is its lack of Topicalization structures, a fact that differentiates Spanish from languages like English in which the left dislocated element is the result of the application of "Move α ".¹⁵

1.4.2. *Clitic Left Dislocation vs. Focus Movement*

As we have seen in all our examples, LDs may or may not be constructed with a clitic, while CLLD require the obligatory presence of one¹⁶ to license the gap. In this respect these two constructions can be differentiated from the constructions that I called Focus Construction at the beginning of this section, exemplified in (55):

(55) ESAS FLORES quiere María

In this construction, the leftmost phrase constitutes the melodic peak of the sentence (represented here by capitalization), triggers Subject-Verb inversion (56a) and cannot license a resumptive pronoun (56b):¹⁷

- (56) a. *ESTOS ANILLOS María quiere
 b. *ESTOS ANILLOS los quiere María

It is important to point out again the strict correlation between the emphasis and the obligatory inversion in (55), unless, of course, the element in Focus is the subject. In this respect, the construction is identical to the constructions analyzed in Piera (1987) in which an adverb or an adverbial expression occupies the leftmost position and triggers inversion of the subject:

(57) a. TEMPRANO / POR LA NOCHE / EN ESTA CIUDAD / CANSADA salía Julia de
 casa
 early / at night / in this city / tired / left Julia home.

(15) The terminological problem that one faces when trying to analyze all these constructions in which the leftmost constituent occupies a position of prominence should be obvious by now. Rivero (1980) uses the term Topicalization for all the constructions that I have referred to as Left Dislocation, even though she argues convincingly that these constructions are not the result of movement but rather base-generated. She reserves that term Left Dislocation for our CLLDs. Contreras (1991) assumes that all of them are LDs, and does not distinguish between Focus Construction (in which the clitic is necessarily absent) and the other two structures. Hernanz & Brucart (1987) use the term "rematización" instead of Left Dislocation (and oppose it to Topicalization) when referring to both types, LD and CLLD. They remark in a footnote that both constructions should be analyzed differently since they present different properties (fn. 12, page 83) but then they fail to do so and construct their argument mixing examples of both LDs and CLLDs. Campos and Zampini (1990) distinguish between Informational and Contrastive Focus constructions, a classification that cuts across our typology. And the list goes on...

(16) Recall that in our analysis, the presence of strong agreement is what licenses the empty resumptive pronoun in cases of CLLD of the subject, since Spanish has no subject clitics. The parallels between strong Agr and clitics in the Romance Languages has been pointed out in several works since Rizzi (1982).

(17) Hernanz and Brucart (1987) refer to this construction as "rematización".

- b. LIMPIA COMO UNA PATENA tenía Julia la casa.
 clean as a slate a had Julia the house
- c. CANTANDO EN LA DUCHA estaba Julia cuando llegué
 singing in the shower was Julia when I arrived

These preposed adverbs are in complementary distribution with a preposed subject (58):

- (58) a. *TEMPRANO / POR LA NOCHE / EN ESTA CIUDAD / CANSADA Julia salía de casa.
 b. *LIMPIA COMO UNA PATENA Julia tenía la casa.
 c. *CANTANDO EN LA DUCHA Julia estaba cuando llegue

There are then several characteristics that distinguish this construction from CLLDs, besides the obligatory absence of a clitic and the inversion of the subject. In FC, only one constituent is fronted, as partially shown in the previous examples with subjects. With constituents other than the subject this generalization also holds:¹⁸

- (59) a. *LA CARTA a Juan escribió Pedro
 b. *A JUAN la carta escribió Pedro

It is crucial to point out also that the Focus element in these examples is interpreted as a quantifier, as argued in Hernanz & Bru cart (1987) and Cinque (1990):

- (60) LAS ACELGAS detesta María (Example from H&B, p. 88)
 (The) chards hates Mary
 "Chards, Mary hates them"
 For all x, x= chards [IP María hates x]

Cinque (1990) argues convincingly that the obligatory presence/absence of a clitic that opposes Focus Constructions from CLLDs correlates strictly with the presence / absence of syntactic movement. Following his argument I will maintain that CLLDs are base-generated adjuncts to AgrSP, while Focus constituents have moved from their base position to [Spec, FP].¹⁹ This is an operator position that can not license the presence of a clitic, in the same way that a Wh-phrase in [Spec, CP] cannot license a direct object clitic in Spanish interrogatives:²⁰

(18) Notice that in this respect, FCs pattern with LDs (cf.(45 a/b)).

(19) This FP projection corresponds to an intermediate projection between CP and AgrSP, as argued in Uriagereka (1992) and Uriagereka and Raposo (1990).

(20) Indirect objects are obligatorily doubled in Spanish, and therefore can be found in interrogatives:

- (i) ¿A quién le diste un regalo?
 to whom to-him (you) gave a present?
 "To whom did you give a present?"

The different conditions in the licensing of direct vs. indirect object clitics are not being discussed here. For that reason, and for ease of exposition, I have been limiting the examples of Left Dislocation and Focus Movement to constructions in which a non-animate direct object (that does not require clitic doubling) is dislocated.

- (61) a. ¿Qué detesta María?
 what hates Mary?
 “What does Mary hate?”
 b. *¿Qué las detesta María?
 what them Mary hates?

Focus movement, as opposed to CLLD, does not obey either strong nor weak islands, which also supports the idea of this constructions being the result of movement. Relevant examples, with weak islands so we can contrast them with the CLLD examples in (51), are the following:

- (62) a. *LAS ACELGAS no se quién detesta
 b. *LAS ACELGAS no se cómo se puede saber cuándo María detesta

The parallelism noted above between Wh-phrases (and operators/quantifiers in general) and preverbal focus constituents can also account for the fact that only one constituent can be fronted, as discussed in (59).

The fact that LD constructions allow only one element to be fronted, like FCs and Wh-elements, could also support an analysis in which these constructions (the ones that I have referred to as Left Dislocations) are the result of movement. This apparent identity in construction between Left Dislocations and Focus Constructions is pushed when assuming that Left Dislocations are characterized for not being able license a clitic, a claim that seems to go against the data, as shown in examples (38a; 46a; 49a/c; 52b.) An analysis of this sort is proposed in Zubizarreta (1994). At the same time, the fact that they do not obey weak islands provides support for a base-generated analysis, as in Contreras (1991), Rivero (1980) or Hernanz & Brucart (1987), among others. It is not my goal here to provide a detailed account of all these three types of “prominence” constructions in Spanish, but only to establish clear syntactic criteria to differentiate them. The goal of this section is just to show that Spanish preverbal subjects are instances of CLLD, and that their properties can be derived from the properties of this type of structure.

A new issue needs to be discussed at this point. It may seem that there is a contradiction in claiming that SVO order in Spanish is the result of dislocation, since it is uncontroversial that SVO is the unmarked, pragmatically neutral order in this language. On the other hand, other types of dislocated structures, object CLLDs for example, are generally considered marked. Why is SVO the neutral order in Spanish? If we assume with Kayne (1994) that the basic universal order is SVO, it is not clear how the basic unmarked order in a language should be defined in minimalist terms. It could be argued that the notion of basic word order receives no interpretation in a framework in which the distinction between the two previous levels of analysis, D-structure and S-structure, is no longer relevant. On the other hand, it could be claimed that the basic word order in a language is the one that corresponds to the most economical derivation of the syntactic constituents by Spell-out. We would then have to claim that Spanish is a VSO language: V-to-AgrS movement is overt, while the thematic subject remains in [Spec, VP] by Spell-out. To claim that Spanish is

VSO is somehow counter-intuitive and not without problems. Furthermore, if we follow this line of argumentation the question still remains as to why the SVO order is pragmatically unmarked in Spanish.

Barbosa (1996) proposes to answer this question in the following way: she assumes with Kayne that the basic universal order is SVO. She then claims that one of the ways of preserving this 'basic' order in Spanish is by left-dislocating the subject. Even though not stated explicitly, this seems to imply that any means of preserving the basic SVO order would result in an unmarked surface order. She also provides evidence to the claim that *any* left-dislocated element in Romance can be pronounced without any phonological clue that would differentiate it from what would be a 'true' non-dislocated subjects, i.e. a subject in [Spec, AgrSP].²¹ The argument is then twofold: on the one hand, there are no phonological indications of markedness that would dislocate form non-dislocated elements in sentence initial position. Then, it is assumed that any means of preserving the basic universal SVO order would result in pragmatically unmarked constructions. This proposal would predict that SVO is the unmarked order in all languages, a claim that would require further empirical support. I have nothing to add here to this problematic issue.

In this section I have shown that several syntactic properties differentiate among three separate constructions in which an element that receives some sort of prominence appears in the leftmost position of a sentence in Spanish, Left Dislocation, Clitic Left Dislocation and Focus Construction (Focus Movement). The goal of the next section is to show that several of the properties that characterize Spanish preverbal subjects can be derived directly from the characteristic properties of CLLD constructions in general.

1.5. Preverbal Subjects and the properties of CLLD constructions

In section 1.2. I argued that preverbal subjects in Spanish are adjuncts to the maximal inflectional projection and coindexed with an empty resumptive pronoun in argument position. As a consequence, preverbal subjects do not occupy an A-position, only postverbal or null subjects do. At the same time, this analysis receives a straightforward interpretation within Minimalist assumptions, as argued in section 1.3. The analysis has immediate advantages over the more traditional analyses of the preverbal subjects position discussed in 1.1. The first one is that it correctly predicts the different distribution of preverbal subjects and empty pronominal subjects in Spanish. Consider the following contrast:

(21) Barbosa also shows that it is not true that a sentence with a left-dislocated element cannot be uttered in an "out-of-the-blue" context, or as a sentence which is a natural answer to "What is happening?" I also adhere to this claim. For our purposes it should be enough to point that clear examples of left-dislocation of the subject, like the one in (i) can be a felicitous answer to the question "¿Qué pasa?", "What is happening?", and that this sentence does not require any special intonation or pause:

(i) Pedro y Juan parece que están cansados

Recall from section 1.2 that raising constructions like this are clear examples of subject left-dislocation. It is not clear then that all left-dislocated arguments are pragmatically marked.

- (63) a. ¿Qué quieres?
 what (*pro*) want-2sing?
 "What do you want?"
- b. *¿Qué Juan quiere?
 what Juan wants?
 What does Juan want?

While an empty subject in an interrogative sentence is allowed (63a), the presence of a preverbal subject renders the sentence ungrammatical (63b). In an analysis in which both the preverbal subject and *pro* occupy the same position, i.e., the canonical position [Spec, AgrSP], an account for the contrast in (63) would require further speculation. The contrast is directly derived from the fact that empty subjects are in [Spec, VP] prior to Spell-Out and by the fact that preverbal subjects and empty pronominal never occupy the same position in Spanish, as predicted in our analysis.²² I will come back to this issue in more detail in section 2.3. In a similar fashion, our analysis predicts that preverbal subjects and left dislocated internal arguments will pattern alike in several respects. This prediction is born out if we consider first the fact that CLLD constituents, like preverbal subjects, cannot intervene between the Wh-word and the verb in interrogative sentences, as shown in (64):

- (64) a. *¿Dónde estos libros los compraste?
 where those books them you-bought?
 cf. "Where did you buy those books?"
- b. *¿Quién a tus hermanos los vió?
 who to-your-brothers them saw?
 cf. "Who saw your brothers?"

Second, as noted in Ordoñez & Treviño (1995), Spanish allows ellipsis with subjects and clitic left dislocated objects, direct or indirect. This parallel behavior is possible in declarative sentences:

- (65) a. Juan le dió un libro a María y Pedro también
 Juan to-her gave a book to Mary and Pedro too [gave a book to M.]
- b. A María le dió Juan un libro y a Pedro también
 to Mary to-her gave Juan a book and to Peter too
- c. El libro se lo dió Juan a María, y la maleta también
 the book to-her it gave Juan to Mary and the suitcases too

but also in embedded declaratives:

- (66) a. Juan le dió un libro a María y me han dicho que Pedro también
 Juan to-her gave a book to Mary and to-me have said that Peter too

(22) This is true only of what is referred to as "Standard Spanish", as opposed to Caribbean Spanish, in which the presence of a pronominal element preceding the verb in an interrogative is perfectly grammatical:

- (i) ¿Qué tú quieres?

I have nothing to say here about this dialectal difference at this moment. For a detailed account of this phenomenon, vid. Toribio (1994) and references therein and Olarrea & Ordoñez (in progress).

- b. A María le dio Juan un libro y me han dicho que a Tomás también to Mary to-her gave Juan a book and to-me (they) have said that to T. too
- c. El libro se lo dió Juan a María y me han dicho que la maleta también the book to-her it gave Juan to Mary and to-me (they) have said that the suitcase too.

and in relative clauses:

- (67) a. Luis no sabe traducir pero conozco a una alumna que sí Luis not know (how to) translate but I know somebody who does
- b. Hay personas a quienes les puedes decir todo y a personas a quienes no. there is people to whom to-them can say jokes and there is people to whom not.

(All examples 63-65 are from Ordoñez & Treviño 1995)

We have seen that preverbal subjects and left-dislocated elements present identical properties in two different syntactic constructions: in interrogatives and in syntactic environments in which ellipsis is possible. This behavior is easily captured in our analysis since preverbal subjects are treated as CLLD constructions. There is another advantage to treating preverbal subjects as left dislocations. The analysis correctly predicts that the preverbal slot occupied by preverbal subjects in Spanish will behave as a non-argument position (a non L-related position in early minimalist terms). This has been claimed in Uribe-Etxebarria (1992) and Vallduví (1992), among others. In what follows I will summarize arguments from Uribe-Etxebarria that show the asymmetry in terms of scope ambiguity between pre and postverbal subjects in Spanish. Consider the following sentences:

- (68) a. ¿Cuántos pacientes crees que cada doctor examinó?
“How many patients do you believe each doctor examined?”
- b. ¿Cuántos pacientes crees que examinó cada doctor?
- c. No sé cuántos pacientes examinó cada doctor.
“I don’t know how many patients each doctor examined”
- d. No sé cuántos pacientes cada doctor examinó.

(68b) presents two possible interpretations: according to the first one, the Wh-element has wide scope over the embedded postverbal subject; thus, an appropriate answer for these examples could be “It is John that each doctor examined”. Under the second interpretation, the embedded subject can have wide scope over the Wh-phrase. Under this interpretation, pair readings can be obtained: “Doctor Ramírez, examined Juan, Dr. Fernández examined María,...” However, when the quantified subject appears preverbally, in [Spec, AgrSP], (68a) one of the readings disappears and the only possible interpretation is that in which the Wh-phrase has necessarily wide scope over the quantified subject. The fact that a preverbal subject only has

scope over the embedded IP can be explained, according to Uribe-Etxebarria, if the preverbal subject is in an A' -position, as predicted in our analysis. An A' -position is a position from which scope can be taken. Once scope is taken, it cannot be changed by subsequent movement at LF.

Besides the properties analyzed above, Cinque (1990) provides a detailed account of the properties of CLLD constructions in Italian. The essential properties that he discusses are the following:

- (69) (i) The dislocated NP is adjoined to IP
 (ii) The number of CLLD constituents in a sentence is not restricted to one.
 (iii) Phrases other than NPs can be dislocated.
 (iv) The dislocated NP is coindexed with a null pronominal argument.
 (v) The NP and the pronominal form an A-bar chain
 (vi) This chain does not have the properties of movement
 (vii) The dislocated NP must be intrinsically referential.

We have already discussed properties (i) and (iv). The fact that the number of CLLD constituents is not restricted to one can be shown by the following contrast:

- (70) a. *Creo que Juan a María dió un regalo
 I believe that John to Mary gave a present
 b. *Creo que a María Juan dió un regalo
 c. *Creo que Juan un regalo dio a María
 d. *Creo que un regalo Juan dió a María

In (70a/b) two different maximal projections, the subject “Juan” and the indirect object “a María” are in preverbal position. The result is always ungrammatical. In a parallel fashion, simultaneous presence in a preverbal position of the direct object and the subject is also ruled out, as shown in (70c/d). But if a resumptive pronoun is present, i.e., if the constructions are Clitic Left Dislocations, the sentences are grammatical:

- (71) a. Creo que Juan a María le dió un regalo
 I believe that John to Mary to-her gave a present
 “I believe that John gave Mary a present”
 b. Creo que a María Juan le dió un regalo
 c. Creo que Juan un regalo se lo dio a María
 d. Creo que un regalo Juan se lo dio a María

The fact that phrases other than NPs can be Clitic Left Dislocated is trivial when dealing with subjects. It may be necessary to point out, though, that CPs and some PPs can be preverbal subjects in Spanish:

- (72) a. [Entre Juan y Pedro] arreglarán el coche (PP)
 between John and Peter (they) will fix the car.
 b. [Que tú no vayas a terminar la tesis] es increíble
 (CP)
 that you are not going to finish your dissertation is incredible

The basic property associated with (v) has been discussed above under the term "connectivity". Cinque (1990) shows that dislocated NPs in Italian act as though they occupied the position of the licensing pronoun for the purposes of binding and anaphora. In (43) we saw some examples of binding through connectivity. Crucially, Cinque (1990) assumes that the chain that licenses a CLLD constituent is a predication chain and he claims that "reconstruction" is a property of chain relationships only, but not necessarily only of movement chains.²³ Recall that CLLDs are not the result of movement and therefore do not involve an operator-variable chain. The fact that CLLDs in general, and preverbal subjects in particular, do not obey weak islands accounts for the property (vi). As we saw in section 1.2., the basic empirical evidence that Contreras (1991) provides in order to support the claim that Spanish preverbal subjects are left-dislocated is the fact that they can be constructed with a coreferential element inside a Wh-island.

This connectivity effect mentioned above is also responsible for the property described in (vii). For a predication chain to be licensed, the dislocated phrase and the resumptive pronoun must share certain features or properties. The first feature that the elements in this type of chain must share is their referentiality. Since empty pronominal subjects are referential, the dislocated phrase must also be referential (Cinque 1990: 8-20). If we assume with Chomsky (1995: 353) that the functional category D is the locus of Specificity, and that there is a strict correlation between specificity and referentiality, we can account for the fact that bare NPs are never licensed as preverbal subjects in Spanish, since bare NP lack a referential index:^{24,25}

- (73) a. Llegaron alumnos
 (there) arrived students
 b. *Alumnos llegaron

This property also accounts for the impossibility of having a nonreferential quantifier in a CLLD construction:

(23) In this way, we can account for all the examples of reconstruction of the subject in Zubizarreta (1994), examples which she claims are the result of movement.

(24) This accounts only for the absence of bare NPs in preverbal position, a fact discussed in detail in Suñer (1982). For an analysis of the distribution of bare NPs in postverbal position in Spanish, *vid.* Contreras (1994b).

(25) As far as I know, only conjoined bare NPs can, under certain conditions, appear as preverbal subjects:

(i) Jóvenes y viejos bailaron en la fiesta

I would have to assume that the presence of the conjunction imposes a specific reading on the preverbal NP.

- (74) a. A alguien (*lo) vi
 b. Algo (*lo) haré
 c. A nadie (*lo) vi
 d. Nada (*lo) haré

while referential quantifiers can co-occur with a clitic if they receive a referential (specific/partitive) interpretation:

- (75) a. A todos los estudiantes los vi en la asamblea
 to all the students to-them I saw at the meeting
 b. A ninguno de ellos lo perdonarán
 to none of them to-him they will forgive.

For the same reason, a nonspecific quantifier subject cannot be left-dislocated, unless it receives a strong (partitive/specific) interpretation:

- (76) a. Alguien vino a la fiesta
 someone came to the party
 b. Alguien le trajo un regalo a María
 someone to-her brought a present to Mary

In both sentences in (76), the interpretation of the subject is clearly partitive and specific (a certain person, one person in a group of people). This is not necessarily the reading when the quantifier is postverbal:

- (77) a. Vino a la fiesta alguien b. Le dió un regalo a María alguien

In postverbal position, *alguien* can receive a non-specific interpretation (some person or other). The contrast is clearer if we consider the sentences in (75):

- (78) a. [Alguien que te quiere] vendrá a la fiesta
 [someone who to-you loves-IND] will come to the party
 b. Vendrá a la fiesta [alguien que te quiere]
 c. *[Alguien que te quiera] vendrá a la fiesta
 [someone who to-you loves-SUBJ] will come to the party
 d. Vendrá a la fiesta [alguien que te quiera]

The subject of the sentences in (78) is a relative clause. If the verb in the relative clause is in Indicative it imposes a definite interpretation in the antecedent. The relative clause subject can either precede (78a) or follow (78b) the verb. If the verb in the relative clause is in the Subjunctive mood, on the other hand, the antecedent is necessarily interpreted as non-specific. The preverbal position of the subject relative clause is ruled out (78c). Similarly, we can account for the fact that indefinite subjects must receive a specific interpretation in Spanish. In (79) only the preverbal subject receives obligatorily a specific interpretation:

- (79) a. Un hombre llegó
 a man arrived
 b. Llegó un hombre.
 arrived a man

We have just discussed the specificity/referentiality constraints imposed by CLLD constructions as constraints derived from the mechanisms that license the dislocated element. These mechanisms are not restricted to identity of referential properties. Crucially, I will claim that for a dislocated element to be licensed (interpreted) in Spanish, it has to share not only the inherent referential properties of the resumptive pronoun, but also its Case and number features. This can account for the cases of person agreement loss discussed in section 1.2.2, examples 20-22, repeated here as (80-82):

- | | | | |
|------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| (80) | Los estudiantes de Lingüística | a. tenemos
b. tenéis
c. tienen | que ser pacientes. |
| (81) | Los estudiantes | a. tenemos
b. teneis un alto concepto de
c. tienen | nosotros mismos
vosotros mismos
sí mismos |
| (82) | Los estudiantes | queremos
queréis
quieren | [PRO matarnos]
[PRO mataros].
[PRO matarse] |

The fact that in Spanish the left-dislocated NP has to match its case features against the case features of the resumptive pronoun, as shown in the examples of clitic left-dislocation of objects in (83):

- (83) nos
- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----------------|
| a. A los estudiantes no | os | ha visto nadie. |
| | los | |
| | nos | |
| b. * Los estudiantes no | os | ha visto nadie. |
| | los | |

One question remains unsolved. This lack of person agreement in the examples in (80-83) cannot be found when the preverbal subject is singular:

- (84)
- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| El estudiante de Lingüística | a. *tengo
b. *tienes
c. tiene | que ser paciente. |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|

Because this ungrammaticality occurs only with subjects that may receive a collective interpretation, I have to assume that is due to discourse factors, and that the predication relation between the left-dislocated subject and the pronominal is restricted to matching of gender and Case features. I have to stipulate that the derivation that results in sentence (84) is a convergent derivation, but it is interpreted as gibberish at the LF interface.

In the following section I will review empirical evidence from Baker (1996) that shows that Clitic Left Dislocation constructions are parametrically differentiated among languages with respect to the set of *f*-features that are obligatorily shared by the left dislocated element and the resumptive pronoun.

1.6. Not all preverbal subjects are CLLDs

In the previous section we saw that only referential phrases can be dislocated in CLLD constructions. But since non referential quantified subjects can appear in preverbal position, the question is obvious: Are all subjects left-dislocated? In this section I will argue that it is necessary to differentiate among three different types of preverbal subjects in Spanish: negative subjects, referential non-negative subjects and non-referential non-negative quantifiers. As has been argued above, referential non-negative subjects are CLLD constructions. In what follows I will argue that neither of the other two categories is licensed as an adjunct to AgrSP.

1.6.1. *Preverbal negative quantifiers.*

Preverbal negative subjects do not present that much of a problem if we assume with Bosque (1992) and Laka (1990) that Negation heads its own projection and negative quantifiers in preverbal position are in [Spec, NegP] in Spanish in accordance with Haegeman and Zanuttini's (1991) Neg-Criterion:²⁶

(85) Neg Criterion:

- a. Each Negative head must be in a Spec-head relation with a negative operator
- b. Each Negative operator must be in a Spec-head relation with a Negative head.

According to (85), a negative subject must appear in [Spec, NegP] at some point in the derivation. Since the negative head *no* and a preverbal negative subject are not compatible in Spanish, the analysis assumes that negative subjects are in [Spec, NegP] by Spell-Out when the negative head is not present or that they move to [Spec, NegP] at LF when the negative head is present. This contrast is shown in (86):

- (86) a. No ha leído este libro nadie
not has read this book nobody
"nobody has read this book"
- b. Nadie ha leído este libro
- c. *Nadie no ha leído este libro.

(26) This point is also made explicitly in Contreras (1994).

The fact that negative subjects are in [Spec, NegP] correctly predicts that, first, they should follow CLLD constituents, if we take these to be adjuncts to the highest inflectional projection (in this case NegP):²⁷

- (87) a. A María nadie la escucha
 to Mary nobody listens
 b. De Juan nadie habla
 about John nobody talks

It also predicts that non-negative subjects will have a different distribution than negative subjects. This has been pointed out in Contreras (1994):

- (88) a. ¿Qué libros nadie lee?
 what books nobody reads?
 b. *¿Qué libros Juan lee?
 what books John reads?

While it is obvious that postverbal subjects and negative subjects occupy the same position:

- (89) a. ¿Qué libros no lee nadie?
 b. ¿Qué libros no lee Juan?

Recall that under our analysis postverbal subjects (negative or non-negative) are in {Spec, VP}. A simple stipulation could account for the distribution of preverbal subjects within minimalist assumptions:

- (90) A Null Negative head has strong categorial features while an overt Neg head has [-strong] categorial features.²⁸

This distribution of features will force the presence of a Neg phrase in {Spec, NegP} by Spell-Out only when the negative head projected from the numeration is null. If this head is non-null, the Neg Criterion will be satisfied at LF in accordance with the economy principle of Procrastinate. Movement of the negative subject to {Spec, NegP} is not optional, but necessary for convergence when Neg is null. In this way, a minimalist analysis allows us to avoid the problem of the optionality of movement.

(27) We have to consider NegP part of the extended projection of Infl, as in Grimshaw (1991). CLLD constructions are then adjuncts to the highest node within the extended projection of Infl.

(28) The parallelism between Neg heads and Complementizers is, then, obvious. In the same way that an overt complementizer cannot be preceded by a Wh-word in Spanish, a negative head cannot be preceded by a negative quantifier. Unless, of course, there is a negative element in contrastive focus position, [Spec, FP], a possibility that contrast with the example (86c) in which the negative did not receive a contrastive interpretation:

(i) NADIE no leyó eso.
 NOBODY not read that
 ‘There was nobody who didn’t read that’

When the head (Comp or Neg) is null, the presence of a quantifier (Wh-P or NegP) is obligatory. The similarities between Wh-operators and Neg quantifiers receives a detailed analysis in Bosque (1994).

1.6.2. Nonreferential preverbal subjects

It is uncontroversial that nonreferential quantifiers cannot be dislocated in CLLD constructions.²⁹ The question is, then, what is the position of preverbal non-referential quantified subjects. I will claim in this section that they are in the same position occupied by Focus Movement constituents, i.e. [Spec, FP]. I will also claim that constituents in this position are the result of movement in the overt syntax forced by the presence of a [+strong] categorial (nominal) feature associated with these functional projection.

A focus phrase may be fronted in Spanish and other Romance languages. As pointed out in Zubizarreta (1994), the FP bears main stress and the highest pitch, the material to the right of the focus is deaccented and the fronted focus, unless the dislocated phrase in the CLLD construction is not subject to a specificity constraint. In the examples in (74), repeated here as (91) for convenience:

- (91) a. A ALGUIEN (*lo) vi
 b. ALGO (*lo) haré

the element in Focus position must receive main stress and also a non-specific interpretation. In this case, the gap in the sentence cannot be licensed by a clitic pronoun since this gap is necessarily interpreted as a variable bound by a quantifier operator in a non-argument position.

With subjects, the contrast between referential/non-referential quantifiers is a little bit harder to construct, since most quantifiers in Spanish allow for a strong (partitive/specific) interpretation. I will exemplify the problem with the case of *todos*, "everybody". In a sentence like (92):

- (92) a. Todos vinieron a la fiesta
 Everybody came to the part

todos can refer to a group of people that the speaker and hearer have in mind. As pointed out in Franco (1993), the facts are obscured by the ambiguous usage of the word in Spanish, which can mean "everybody" and "everyone". Uribe-Etxebarria (1992) remarks that there is a colloquial expression in Peninsular Spanish that can disambiguate the meaning of *todos*. In our dialect that expression is *todo dios*, while in another dialects is *todo quisque*. These two expressions can only have a non-referential interpretation. Interestingly, only *todos* in preverbal position can show lack of person agreement, an indication of its status as a left-dislocated element, as argued above:

- (93)
- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| a. Todos | a. tenemos | |
| | b. tenéis | que ser pacientes. |
| | c. tienen | |
| | a. have-1pl | |
| all (of us, you, them) | b. have-2pl | to be patient-pl' |
| | c. have-3pl | |

(29) Vid. Belletti (1986) for Italian examples. Barbosa (1996) shows that the quantifiers that cannot be left-dislocated cannot be differentiated in terms of the strong/weak distinction.

- (94)
- | | | |
|------------------|------------|--------------------|
| a. *Todo quisque | a. tenemos | |
| | b. tenéis | que ser pacientes. |
| | c. tienen | |

Similarly, only *todos*, but not *todo quisque* can be constructed with a coreferential clitic in CLLDs:

- (95) a. A todos los comprendo
to everybody to-them I understand
“I understand everybody”
- b. *A todo quisque lo comprendo
to everyone to-him I understand

In this section I have analyzed the contrast between the pre and postverbal subject positions in Spanish declarative sentences under minimalist assumptions. I have claimed that preverbal subjects are Clitic Left Dislocated constructions, i.e. base-generated adjuncts to the maximal inflectional projection coindexed with an empty pronominal in argument position. As a result, sentences with preverbal subjects and sentences with postverbal subjects have been analyzed as the result of different numerations. In the former case there is a *pro* element in the numeration that is absent in the latter. I have then analyzed the properties of preverbal subjects in Spanish as derived from the general properties of Clitic Left Dislocated constructions. The last subsections have been devoted to the claim that not all preverbal subjects are left-dislocated. I have claimed that preverbal negative subjects, nonreferential quantifiers and contrastive focus phrases must occupy a different position from other preverbal constituents.

Section 2: Pre/postverbal Subjects and Wh-movement in Spanish

As we have seen in section 1, Spanish allows for a fairly unrestricted ordering of the subject in simple and embedded declaratives. This free word order is also attested in relative clauses (96):

- (96) a. Ese es el hombre que vio Juan
That is the man that saw John
“That is the man that John saw”
- b. Ese es el hombre que Juan vio

In (96) the subject *Juan* can either precede the verb or follow it. Preverbal subjects are much more restricted in interrogative sentences, as shown in the examples in (97):

- (97) a. *¿Dónde Juan vive?
Where John lives?
- b. ¿Dónde vive Juan?
“Where does John live?”
- c. *¿Qué Juan quiere?
What John wants?

- d. ¿Qué quiere Juan?
 What wants John?
 “What does John want?”
- e. ¿Por qué Juan vino?
 Why John came?
 “Why did John come?”
- f. ¿Por qué vino Juan?

While interrogative sentences with postverbal subjects are always grammatical (97b/d/f), the presence of a preverbal subject renders the question ungrammatical in some constructions (97a/c) but not in others (97e). In this section I will provide an account of the restrictions imposed on preverbal subjects in Spanish interrogatives and an explanation for the contrast between questions and relative clauses with respect to the position of subjects. This account is based on two claims: first, that preverbal subjects are CLLD constructions, a hypothesis developed in detail in the previous section; and second, that there is covert I-to-C movement in Spanish interrogatives.

The organization of the section is as follows: I will first review previous proposals in the literature that have tried to account for the absence of preverbal subjects in Spanish interrogatives. I will start by reviewing the seminal works of Torrego (1984) and Rizzi (1991) as the basis for the discussion of several proposals concerning the word order in interrogatives. Then I will focus on two proposals that adopt Rizzi’s Wh-criterion and modify it to account for the Spanish data, Suñer (1994) and Toribio (1993). These two proposals share the claim put forward in Torrego (1984) that there is an absolute argument/adjunct asymmetry in Spanish interrogatives: preverbal subjects are ruled out only in cases of argument Wh-extraction. The next subsection is dedicated to analyze two proposals that do not assume that this asymmetry between argument and adjunct extraction accounts for the data in Spanish, Contreras (1989, 1991) and Goodall (1991). I will provide further empirical evidence along these lines. In the last section I will propose a minimalist account of the word order in interrogatives based on the assumption that there is covert I-to-C movement in Spanish, this movement being blocked after Spell-Out by the presence of any preverbal base-generated adjunct.

2.2. Previous Accounts: Why are preverbal subjects ruled out in Spanish interrogatives?

2.2.1. V-Fronting (Torrego 1984)

Torrego (1984) analyzes the VSO order in Spanish as derived from a basic SVO order—in which the subject is in [Spec, S]—by a rule of V-fronting: V adjoins to S when a thematic Wh-element moves to Comp. Subject-verb inversion in interrogatives is then the automatic result of such a fronting rule, as shown in (98)

- (98) ¿[_{Comp} Dónde_i [_S vive_i; [_S Juan [_{VP} t_i t_i]]]]?
 “Where does John live?”

In a more developed P&P framework in which functional categories have a structure parallel to lexical ones, as proposed in Chomsky (1986), Torrego's basic analysis can be reinterpreted in the following way: Comp ceases to be a unitary node and projects a specifier; Wh-phrases can occupy this position, [Spec, CP], leaving the head position open to receive the verbal head. V-fronting and consequently Subject-verb inversion can be thus analyzed as substitution rather than adjunction: the verbal head in Infl raises to C while the Wh-phrase occupies [Spec, CP]:

(99) ζ [_{CP} Dónde_i [_C vive_j]_i]_{IP} Juan [_I t_j t_i]]?

Torrego proposes that this V-fronting rule that accounts for Subject inversion is not always obligatory: only argument [+wh] elements trigger it while adjuncts never do.³⁰ This accounts for the fact that interrogative adjuncts allow the presence of preverbal subjects, as shown in the following examples from Torrego (1984):

- (100) a. ζ Por qué Juan quiere salir antes que los demás?
 "Why does John want to leave before the others?"
 b. ζ Cuándo Juan consiguió por fin abrir la puerta ayer?
 "When did John finally get to open the door yesterday?"
 c. ζ Cómo Juan ha conseguido meter allí a su hijo?
 "How has John managed to get his son there?"

In the examples in (100), a subject is allowed to appear between the non-argumental Wh-element (*por qué*, *cuándo*, *cómo*) and the inflected form of the verb.

There are several theoretical and empirical objections to this analysis that have been widely discussed in the literature. To begin with, it is necessary to point out that this analysis implies a similarity between Spanish and the standard V2 and Sub-Aux inversion phenomena of Germanic languages. This parallelism is not without problems. Before discussing these problems in detail I will review the analysis of Sub-Aux inversion in interrogatives proposed in Rizzi (1991) with a double goal in mind: first, Rizzi's account will provide the basis for a comparison between Spanish and Germanic languages; second, it will also serve to set the discussion of several proposals based on modifications of the Wh-Criterion that account for the position of subjects in Spanish interrogatives.

2.2.2. Rizzi's Wh-Criterion

Rizzi (1991) explains the fact that some languages do not allow the subject to intervene between a Wh-element and the inflected verb in main questions by resorting to the Wh-Criterion, a general well-formedness condition on Wh-structures which is responsible for the LF interpretation on Wh-operators. Following standard

(30) The claim that V-preposing is obligatorily triggered by argument [+wh] elements predicts that Subject-Verb inversion will occur in every instance in which an argument Wh-element or its trace is in [Spec, CP]. This assumption also implies that the rule would apply necessarily both in embedded and non embedded interrogatives in cases of argument Wh-movement if this movement is successive-cyclic in Spanish, as Torrego argues.

practice, Rizzi assumes that the complementizer in an interrogative sentence is marked by the feature [+wh]. This feature in a head designates the fact that the projection of that head is a question. Rizzi states the Wh-Criterion as follows:

(101) The Wh-Criterion

- (i) A Wh-Operator must be in a Spec-head configuration with a [+wh] head.
- (ii) A [+wh] head must be in a Spec-head configuration with a Wh-Operator.

(101) states that at the appropriate level of representation³¹ interrogative operators must be in the Specifier position of projections that are interpreted as questions, and, reciprocally, that projections interpreted as questions must have interrogative operators in their Spec positions. Crucially, Rizzi (1991: 26) proposes that among other specifications, the main Infl in a sentence can also be specified as [+wh]. By making the assumption that Infl may carry this [+wh] feature he can account for the functional role of Subject-Aux inversion: in languages with I-to-C movement this movement will carry the [wh] specification high enough to allow satisfaction of the Wh-Criterion. This can be exemplified in English by the characteristic I-to-C movement of the Aux in interrogatives:

(102) *_C [_{IP} Mary [_I has seen who]_[+wh]]

The previous structure constitutes a violation of clause (ii) of the Wh-Criterion: the [+wh] feature in the Infl head is not in a Spec-head configuration with a Wh-operator. Now, if I-to-C applies, Infl carrying [+wh] is moved to C, the operator is moved to [Spec, CP] and the required configuration is met:

(103) [_{CP} who [_C has [_{IP} Mary [_I t seen t]]]_[+wh]

The obligatory Subj-Aux inversion in English interrogative sentences, a residual case of the Verb Second phenomenon that characterizes Germanic languages, is thus explained by the same principle that is responsible for the distributional properties of Wh-operators. The assumption that Subject-Aux inversion involves I-to-C movement in English accounts for cases of extraction of the object like the one presented in (103). It still remains to be explained how the Wh-Criterion accounts for cases in which I-to-C does not apply, as is the case with Wh-movement of the subject. Consider the following contrast:

- (104) a. *Who does love Mary?
 b. Who loves Mary?

(31) Rizzi (1991: 24) points out that the satisfaction of the Wh-Criterion may take place at LF in certain languages, like Chinese, or prior to that level of representation in other languages, like English. In minimalist terms, the Criterion can be satisfied either overtly or covertly.

If the application of “do support” is a clear indication that I-to-C movement has applied in (104a), we must provide an account of how this type of movement is not allowed to apply in (104b) without violating the Wh-Criterion. Rizzi points out that a first possible approach would be to assume that the subject does not move at all in example (104b), whose representation would be simply as follows:

(105) [_{IP} Who [_I Infl [_{VP} loves Mary]?
 [+wh]

In this case, the configuration required by the Wh-Criterion would be met and the sentence would be ruled in. Rizzi remarks that there are three problems with this approach. First, under his framework, Infl is associated with the inflected verb through Affix Hopping in English. If this is the case, as Rizzi claims, the [+wh] feature would be also lowered into the VP and the desired Spec-head configuration would not obtain. Second, the subject position in (105) should be allowed to count as an A-bar position. Finally, there is no obvious position for a variable bound by the Wh-operator in the sentence under consideration. Rizzi proposes as a solution the requirement that the *chain* of the relevant head position bears the [+wh] feature, not necessarily the head position itself. In (105), the relevant chain is obtained by coindexation between the subject-Wh in [Spec, CP], Comp, and [+wh]-Infl lowered to V:

(106) [Who_i C_i [t_i I_i love-s Mary]
 [+wh]

I will not pursue this line of argumentation here. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasize that initially the three objections listed above do not seem to pose significant difficulties for a minimalist account of the structure in (105). First, as we saw in section 1, minimalist assumptions allow us to get rid of the lowering rule of Affix Hopping in English. Second, even though this is a claim that I will maintain in this article only for Spanish, it was shown in section 1.5. that subject positions show properties associated with A-bar positions.³² And finally, the adoption of the VP-internal Hypothesis allows for a position for the variable associated with the subject in (105), namely [Spec, VP]. Let us first consider this last possibility in order to set up subsequent arguments for an analysis of VSO orders in Spanish interrogatives.

As we discussed in section 2, the adoption of the VP-internal Hypothesis (Zagona 1982 and subsequent work), opens different theoretical possibilities for ascertaining the position that the verb occupies in VSO orders. It could be that in interrogatives V is in C, as claimed by Torrego for Spanish, but it is also possible to claim, from a strictly theoretical point of view, that the verb remains in Infl. In both cases, movement of a Wh-phrase to [Spec, CP] would result in the desired word order since the subject can remain in its base-generated position [Spec, VP].

(32) The claim the [Spec, IP] can count as an A-bar position has been defended by Diesing (1989) and much subsequent work (Bonet (1989), Uribe-Etxebarria (1991), Masullo (1993), Bok-Bennema (1992) for Spanish, among others).

Suñer (1994) argues convincingly that in Spanish V stays within the functional projections of IP without ever raising to Comp in declarative or in interrogative sentences. I will briefly summarize some of her arguments here as a complement to the arguments presented against overt I-to-C in Spanish earlier in section 1.2. In that section the relevant empirical evidence against I-to-C movement in Spanish was based on the relative position of functional categories, specifically between NegP and AgrSP. To those arguments, Suñer (1994) adds arguments based on the position of adverbials and on sluicing data.

In Spanish, adverbs like *apenas* ('barely') and *jamás* ('never') strongly prefer the position to the immediate left of the conjugated verb in INFL as, shown in (107):

- (107) a. La viejita apenas puede leer los periódicos
 "The dear old woman barely can read the newspapers"
 b. Los estudiantes jamás terminaron el examen
 "The students never finished the exam" (Suñer 1994: 344)

Given that V must at least rise to Infl in Spanish (cf. section 1.2.1) the adverbials in (107) must occupy a position higher than Infl. If I-to-C were to apply in Wh-questions we should expect the V to the left of the adverb, which would remain in its base position. This prediction is not borne out, as shown in (108):

- (108) a. *¿Desde qué asiento veía apenas Juan la pantalla?
 from which seat saw barely John the screen
 "From which seat could John barely see the screen?"
 b. *¿A quién ofenderías jamás tú con tus acciones?
 whom never would offend you with your actions
 "Whom would you never offend with your actions? (Suñer 1994: 345)

The contrast between the sentences in (108) and their correspondent glosses clearly shows that while in Spanish V is in Infl, in English the auxiliary verb moves to C, leaving the adverb behind. Consider now the IP ellipsis data in (109)

- (109) a. Este verano leí varias novelas, pero no recuerdo cuántas.
 "This summer I read several novels but I don't remember how many"
 b. Se fue de vacaciones, pero no dijo adónde
 "S/he left on vacation, but s/he didn't say where

The question is what licenses the Wh-phrases *cuántas* in (109a) and *adónde* in (109b). Suñer claims that if they were to be licensed by I-to-C, the sentences would show the verb in Comp, contrary to fact.³³ The evidence against I-to-C movement in Spanish interrogatives weakens considerably the parallelism between the Spanish case and the standard V2 phenomenon of Germanic languages. This difference between Germa-

(33) Suñer claims that the licensing mechanism involved is Rizzi's Dynamic Agreement. I will come back to this issue in section 2.4.

nic V2 and Romance interrogatives in general is also pointed out in Ordoñez (1996). Ordoñez argues that the order Verb-Clitic in Germanic interrogatives is an indication of V-to-C movement. While in Germanic the object clitic necessarily follows the verb in second position, this possibility is ruled out in Spanish, as shown in the contrast in (110):

- (110) a. ¿Qué le regaló Juan?
 what to-him/her gave as a present John?
 "What did John give him/her as a present?"
 b. *¿Qué regaló le Juan?

In this respect Spanish differs from the cases of V-2 in Germanic. The basic claim in Ordoñez (1996) is the idea that verbs have moved further up in the V-clitic order than in the order clitic-V. He finds further arguments for this hypothesis in the fact that in imperative constructions in Spanish, in which according to Rivero (1994) and Rivero and Tarzi (1995) the verb has actually moved all the way up to C to get its illocutionary force, the order V-clitic obtains. This is shown in example (111):

- (111) a. ¡Cómpra-lo!
 Buy- it!
 b. */Lo-comptra! (as an imperative)

It is obvious from the previous discussion that the mandatory VSO order in Spanish interrogatives cannot be explained as an instance of V-to-I-to-C movement that leaves the subject in its alleged canonical position, [Spec, IP]. There are two questions that are still to be answered: why preverbal subjects are ruled out in cases of argument extraction and how the Wh-Criterion is satisfied in Spanish. A first solution is proposed in Groos & Bok-Bennema (1986). These authors assume that Infl in Spanish is specified as [+wh] and that Wh-movement is to [Spec, IP]. Recall that this theoretical possibility was already present in Rizzi's analysis of subject Wh-movement in English. The ordering Comp-Wh that appears in some Spanish embedded interrogatives seems to initially support this idea:

- (112) a. Me preguntó [_{CP} que [_{IP} quién trajo el vino]]
 s/he asked me that who brought the wine
 "S/he asked who brought the wine"
 b. Me preguntó [_{CP} que [_{IP} dónde vivía María]]
 s/he asked me that where lived Mary
 "S/he asked where Mary lived"

If the landing site of Wh-movement in Spanish is [Spec, IP], the fact that preverbal subjects are ruled out in main interrogatives in Spanish receives now a straightforward interpretation: a preverbal subject in [Spec, IP] and a moved Wh-phrase will compete for the same position. Wh-movement will then be possible only when the subject remains in its base-generated position, [Spec, VP], the position occupied by preverbal subjects being now available as a landing site for movement of an interrogative operator.

Several objections can be made against this analysis. First, there is empirical evidence for the claim that Spanish Wh-movement is always to [Spec, CP]. This evidence was discussed in detail in section 1.2., and I will not repeat it here.³⁴ It was also argued in that section that Spanish preverbal subjects are not in [Spec, IP]. Furthermore, even though sentences like the ones presented in (112) seem to indicate that a Wh-element may land in [Spec, IP], the restricted set of verbs in Spanish that may select for a complementizer followed by a Wh-phrase (verbs like *preguntar*) can also appear in constructions in which two complementizers are in sequence, as shown in the following example:

- (113) Me preguntó [que si vendría a la fiesta].
 s/he asked me [that if I would come to the party]
 "S/he asked me if I would come to the party"

Based on (112) it seems that we can find a complementizer (*que*) followed by a Wh-element (*quién, cuándo*) that has moved to [Spec, IP]. But then we should assume that in (113) the complementizer *si* is also in [Spec, IP], either by movement or base-generation, an analysis not without problems. From this we can safely state two basic facts: [Spec, CP] is the landing site for Wh-elements in Spanish and Subject-verb inversion is not the result of I-to-C movement. In the following subsection I will review two analyses of the relative order of constituents in interrogatives that share these two assumptions, Suñer (1994) and Toribio (1993), and propose specific modifications of the original Wh-Criterion in order to account for the Spanish data.

2.2.3. Argument Agreement Licensing and the Operator Criterion.

2.2.3.1. Argument Agreement Licensing. (Suñer 1994)

Suñer (1994) accounts for the mandatory Wh-V-Subject order in Spanish interrogatives by assuming that while argumental and adjunct Wh-phrases in Spanish obey the Wh-Criterion, only the former must also comply with a language-specific condition that she refers to as the Argumental Agreement Licensing Condition. This condition, that applies to Spanish, is formulated as follows:

- (114) *Argumental Agreement Licensing Condition (AALC)*
 (i). Argumental Wh-phrases must be licensed through symmetric Argument-Agreement between a (= [Spec, CP]) and b (=Comp).
 (ii). b Argument-agrees with y (V) only if b and y are Arg-marked and no other Argument-marked element is closer to y.

The above condition is motivated by the uniformity requirement on chains, understood here as a relational notion that implies uniformity with respect to a certain property. In this case, the relevant property is Argumental Marking, a property

(34) To account for the examples of the order Comp-Wh in (1112) I will adopt Rivero's (1990) analysis, in which she proposes that the Wh-element is in the Spec of a lower CP, this node being recursive in Spanish:

(i) Me preguntó [_{CP} [que [_{CP} quién [trajo el vino]]]]

of verbal arguments that is reflected in the feature system of the language. Argumental Wh-phrases in Spanish are marked as [+arg] while adjuncts are negatively marked for this feature. This feature is also present in verbs, since verbs select their arguments. The process involved here is a process of feature matching between the verb and its argumental elements. Furthermore, the feature matching mechanism is also present as an instance of Head-Head agreement between the predicate and the element in C. An interrogative C will also have a feature [+arg] as a result of this agreement (or index-sharing) process.

The crucial assumption in Suñer's analysis is that Minimality in the sense of Rizzi (1990) relativizes not only to heads and their projections, but also to articulated systems of features that include the feature [+arg]. By Relativized Minimality the Head-Head agreement mechanism between V and C will obey a strict locality condition in the sense that no other [+arg] element may occur between C and V in Infl. Let us see now how this proposal works for cases of argument Wh-movement in Spanish interrogatives, exemplified in (115):

- (115) a. $\zeta_{[CP \text{ Qué}_j \text{ C } [_{IP} [_{I'} \text{ compró}_i [_{VP} \text{ Juan } t_i \text{ } t_j]]]]}$?
 +arg +arg +arg +arg
 'what bought John?'
 "What did John buy?"
- b. $*\zeta_{[CP \text{ Qué}_j \text{ C } [_{IP} \text{ Juan } [_{I'} \text{ compró}_i [_{VP} \text{ } t_{sub} \text{ } t_i \text{ } t_j]]]]}$?
 +arg +arg +arg +arg

In the case of Spanish, when Wh-phrases move from an argumental position they move to a [Spec, CP] which must enter into a Spec-head relationship with a C that is also marked [+arg] to satisfy condition (i) of the AALC. Obligatory subject-verb inversion in (115a) is the means used to enforce locality between the CP and V in Infl. As a consequence of this locality requirement, Spanish does not allow an argumental subject to intervene between C and Infl in (115b) because it will cause a violation of Minimality in terms of the feature [+arg], blocking the relation between the argumental phrase in [Spec, CP] and the argumental feature of V in Infl, i.e., a violation of clause (ii) of the AALC.

Nonargumental Wh-phrases in Spanish do not need to comply with the AALC because since the Wh-phrase is [-arg] no Argument Agreement is possible between the two relevant elements. Therefore subjects may or may not appear between the Wh-phrase and V in Infl, as shown in (116):

- (116) a. $\zeta_{[CP \text{ Por qué } \text{ C } [_{IP} [_{I'} \text{ compró}_i [_{VP} \text{ Juan } t_i \text{ un regalo}]]]]}$?
 --arg +arg
 'why bought John a present?'
 "Why did John buy a present?"
- b. $\zeta_{[CP \text{ Por qué } \text{ C } [_{IP} \text{ Juan } [_{I'} \text{ compró}_i [_{VP} \text{ } t_{sub} \text{ } t_i \text{ un regalo}]]]]}$?
 -arg +arg

The same argument holds for yes/no questions, where both preverbal and post-verbal subjects are permissible:

- (117) a. ¿Compró Juan un regalo?
 "Did John buy a present?"
 b. ¿Juan compró un regalo?

Since this type of question does not involve movement of an argumental Wh-element, the preverbal position of the subject is predicted to be grammatical.³⁵ A similar approach to the basic word order in Spanish interrogatives is proposed in Toribio (1993). Let us now review the similarities between both proposals before discussing the empirical problems that the two analyses pose.

2.2.3.2. *The Operator-Criterion (Toribio 1993)*

Toribio (1993) proposes a criterion on well-formedness which differs significantly from Rizzi's Wh-Criterion in that it extends to other operator types which must stand in a Spec-head relation with an appropriate head. Operators are understood here as phrases in an A-bar specifier which head an A-bar chain and bind a variable. The Operator Criterion is defined as follows:

(118) *The Operator Criterion*

- (i) Operators must be properly licensed.
- (ii) An operator [a] is properly licensed if it stands in a Specifier-head relation with a [a] head. (Toribio 1993: 58)

Parametric variation among languages with respect to operator movement is explained by the different [\pm operator] specifications of Infl and C in the respective grammars. For instance, Toribio proposes that in English matrix environments Infl will be specified as [op] in agreement with any operator phrase in the clause. Wh-movement, a particular type of operator movement, is in this language to [Spec, CP], where the operator is licensed by the raising of the relevant feature in Infl to C via I-to-C movement. By contrast, in Standard Spanish, matrix Infl is specified as [op] only in agreement with an argumental operator that appears in its clause. Toribio thus proposes to account for the argument/adjunct asymmetry in Spanish interrogatives by positing different specifications on Infl, depending on whether the operator phrase in the clause is argumental or not. In this sense, her proposal is similar to Suñer's: an argumental Wh-phrase will mark Infl as [op] in Spanish, while a non-argumental Wh-phrase will not do so.

The basic difference between the two proposals is the following. Since there is no I-to-C movement in Spanish, Toribio claims that the Operator Criterion can be satisfied by Spec-head agreement between an argumental Wh-phrase in [Spec, IP] and a [+wh] Infl. This argument is consistent with both Rizzi (1990) who assumes that Infl in English carries the relevant feature for operator licensing (cf. section 2.2.2),

(35) The same argument applies also to embedded interrogatives, as discussed in Suñer (1994:363), once we assume with Lasnik and Saito (1984) that intermediate traces are never [+wh] and that the AALC is relevant only for Wh-phrases with phonological content, not for their possible traces in intermediate CP nodes.

and with Suñer (1994), who assumes that the feature specification of V in Infl is responsible for this licensing condition (cf. 2.2.3.1). Thus, in Spanish matrix interrogatives Wh-arguments will move to [Spec, IP] and the Wh-Criterion, subsumed now under the Operator Criterion, will be satisfied as shown in (119):

- (119) $\zeta\{\text{IP Qué ordenador}_i\ [\text{I compraste } [\text{VP t}_u\ \text{t}_v\ \text{t}_c]]\}$
 +wh +wh
 what computer bought-2s you
 ‘‘What computer did you buy?’’

For matrix adjunct extraction a CP is projected and the adjunct Wh-phrase may be moved directly into [Spec, CP], since in cases of non-argument extraction Infl may not be specified as [+wh] and the Operator Criterion need not be satisfied in IP:

- (120) $\zeta\{\text{CP Por qué } [\text{IP funciona ese televisor}]\}$?
 why functions that TV?
 ‘‘Why does this TV work?’’

Since preverbal subjects are in [Spec, IP] under this analysis, the intermediate step to [Spec, IP] is blocked in cases of argument Wh-movement by the presence of a preverbal subject, as shown in (121a).³⁶ A subject in [Spec, IP] will not block non-argument extraction because this type of movement may land directly in [Spec, CP], as in (121b):

- (121) a. $*\zeta\{\text{IP Qué ordenador tú compraste}\}$?
 b. $\zeta\{\text{CP Por qué } [\text{IP ese televisor funciona}]\}$?

In embedded contexts, Toribio assumes that C is specified [+wh] ([+op]) by selection, and that Infl shares this specification by Head-Head agreement, as in Suñer (1994). Consequently, Wh-arguments move to [Spec, CP] through [Spec, IP]:

- (122) María no sabe $[\text{CP qué}_i\ [\text{IP } t_i\text{' estudia } [\text{VP Juan } t_v\ t_i]]]$
 ‘Mary not knows $[\text{CP what } [\text{IP } \text{studies } [\text{VP John}]]]$ ’
 ‘Mary doesn’t know what John studies’

Again, since there is an intermediate landing site for Wh-movement that can be occupied by a preverbal subject, in Standard Spanish an argumental Wh-phrase and a subject preceding the verb cannot co-occur (123a). This is not the case when the Wh-phrase is non-argumental and the intermediate landing site has been skipped (123b):

- (123) a. $*\text{María no sabe } [\text{CP qué}_i\ [\text{IP Juan estudia } [\text{VP } t_{\text{subj}}\ t_v\ t_i]]]$
 b. $\text{María no sabe } [\text{CP por qué } [\text{IP Juan estudia}]]]$

(36) This sentence is grammatical in Caribbean Spanish (cf. fn. 20). Toribio claims that the difference between Standard and Caribbean Spanish is that only in the former does [Spec, IP] count as an A-bar position. As a consequence, Wh-movement of arguments in Caribbean Spanish will always be to [Spec, CP], the intermediate [Spec, IP] position not being a possible landing site for this type of movement.

- (128) a. ¿Cuándo llegó María?
 b. *¿Cuándo María llegó?

The contrasts in (127) and (128) show that certain non-argumental Wh-phrases (*dónde* ‘where’ and *cuándo* ‘when’, for example) do not allow the presence of a preverbal subject, contrary to what the analyses discussed in the previous section would predict. Furthermore, in Spanish the non-argumental Wh-phrase *cómo* receives two different interpretations. It can be translated as ‘how’ in certain cases and as ‘how come’ in others. Interestingly, when the interpretation is the latter, the order Wh-Subject-Verb is ruled in, as shown in (129):

- (129) a. ¿Cómo Juan dijo que iría a Seattle?
 ‘how John said that would-go-3s to Seattle’
 “How come John said that he would go to Seattle?”
 b. ¿Cómo dijo Juan que iría a Seattle?

But when *cómo* is interpreted as ‘how’ —in these cases it cannot be substituted for *cómo que* ‘how is that’—, the presence of a preverbal subject renders the sentence ungrammatical, as shown in the contrast between (130a) and (130b). This also supports the idea that not all non-argumental W-phrases in [Spec, CP] allow the presence of a preverbal subject.

- (130) a. ¿Cómo dijo Juan que iría a Seattle?
 ‘how said John that would-go-3s to Seattle’
 “How did John say that he would go to Seattle?”
 b. *¿Cómo Juan dijo que iría a Seattle?
 “How did John say that he would go to Seattle?”

It is uncontroversial that preverbal subjects are not allowed in Spanish in cases of argument Wh-movement:

- (131) a. ¿Qué compró Juan?
 “What did John buy?”
 b. *¿Qué Juan compró?

But it should also be noticed that the “heaviness” of a Wh-phrase increases the acceptability of preverbal subjects in interrogative sentences in Spanish (in both adjunct and argument extraction cases):³⁷

- (132) a. *¿Dónde Juan compró el regalo para María?
 ‘where John bought the present for Mary’
 “Where did John buy the present for Mary?”
 b. ¿En cuál de esas tiendas Juan compró el regalo para María?
 ‘in which of those stores John bought the present for Mary’
 “In which of those shops did John buy the present for Mary?”

(37) This fact is also pointed out in Ordoñez and Treviño (1995).

- (133) a. *¿Cuándo Pedro llegó a Seattle?
 ‘when Peter arrived in Seattle’
 “When did Peter arrive in Seattle?”
- b. ¿En qué mes Pedro llegó a Seattle?
 ‘in what month Peter arrived in Seattle’
 “In what month did Peter arrive in Seattle?”

The sentences in (132b) and (133b) show that the presence of a preverbal subjects is grammatical when the non-argumental Wh-phrase is complex. Simple adjunct Wh-phrases in (132a) and (133a), on the other hand, do not allow for preverbal subjects, as predicted under Suñer’s and Toribio’s accounts. The same argument can be constructed for cases of Wh-movement of an argument. A simple argumental Wh-phrase does not allow for a Wh-Subject-Verb order, while complex argumental operator does, as shown in (134):

- (134) a. *¿Qué Juan compró para María?
 ‘what John bought for Mary’
 “What did John buy for Mary?”
- b. ¿Qué disco de John Coltrane Juan compró para María?
 “‘What record by John Coltrane did John buy for Mary?’”

The data above seems to indicate the argument/adjunct asymmetry proposed by Suñer and Toribio cannot account for the facts related to the position of subjects in interrogatives in Spanish. Following an argument first proposed in Contreras (1986) for Spanish and developed in Rizzi (1990) for French, it has been proposed that the possibility of having a preverbal subject in Spanish interrogatives is not related to the distinction between argument/non-argument extraction, but rather to the distinction between Wh-phrases base-generated in CP, like *por qué* and *cómo* in the sense of ‘how come’ and Wh-phrases that are the result of movement.

Rizzi (1990) shows that French in-situ Wh-questions are allowed with all Wh-words except *pourquoi* ‘why’ and claims that it is reasonable to assume that *pourquoi* is based-generated in CP and does not undergo movement. The argument for Spanish can be constructed in a similar way. As shown in (135), simple Wh-phrases, either argumental (135a/b) or not (135c/d) are allowed in-situ:

- (135) a. ¿Juan ha visto qué?
 “John has seen what?”
- b. ¿Esa película la ha visto quién?
 ‘that movie cl. has seen who?’
- c. ¿El ha estudiado dónde?
 “‘He has studied where?’”
- d. ¿Juan vino cuándo?
 “John came when?”

Non-argumental Wh-phrases that allow preverbal subjects in interrogatives, on the other hand, cannot appear in-situ in Spanish. This is the case in Spanish with *por qué* and *cómo (que)*:³⁸

- (136) a. *¿Juan ha elegido esa película por qué?
 “John has chose that movie why”
 b. *¿Juan ha ido a Seattle cómo?
 “John has gone to Seattle how”

Furthermore, the ‘heavier’ the Wh-phrase is, the harder it is to construct it in-situ, independently of its argumental/non-argumental status, as shown in (137):

- (137) a. ¿Quién eligió qué?
 “Who selected what?”
 b. *¿Quién eligió cuál de los dos?
 “Who selected which of the two?”

(137b) shows that a complex Wh-phrase *cuál de los dos* is ungrammatical in-situ, contrary to what happens with the argumental Wh-word *qué* in (137b). It could be claimed then that at least certain complex Wh-elements are base-generated in CP, following the argument proposed in Contreras (1986). The parallelism between (136) and (137) is not at all clear, though. While the sentences in (136) are out as echo questions, the sentences in (137) are only out as multiple questions but could be considered grammatical as echo interrogatives. I return to this issue in section 2.3.4.

The claim that the asymmetry between base-generated versus moved Wh-phrases is directly related to presence/absence of preverbal subjects in Spanish interrogatives has been maintained in Contreras (1989, 1991) and Goodall (1991). Since I will develop an account which is consonant with the characterizations offered by both Goodall and Contreras, I will review their proposals in the next section.

2.2.4. Base-generated vs. moved Wh-phrases

2.2.4.1. The Closed-Domain Condition. (Contreras 1989 & 1991).

Contreras (1989) proposes a principle of Universal Grammar according to which certain S-structure constituents cannot contain unlicensed elements. These constituents are referred to as “closed” constituents and the principle that constrains them as the Closed Domain Condition:

- (138) *Closed Domain Condition* (Contreras 1989: 178)
 A closed domain X cannot contain any elements not licensed in X.

Based on the CDC, Contreras offers an account of why Spanish preverbal subjects are compatible with relative clause operators but incompatible with wh-question

(38) The example (136b) is perfectly grammatical in Spanish if *cómo* is interpreted as ‘how’ and not ‘how come’, as expected.

operators. Two assumptions are crucial for the development of his argument. First, Contreras defines the A-bar chain consisting of a Wh-phrase and its trace as a closed domain.³⁹ From this definition and the CDC it follows that interrogative sentences cannot contain unlicensed elements at S-structure, the level of representation at which the CDC applies. The A-bar chain in a relative clause, on the other hand, constitutes an open domain. Contreras claims this to be so because the coindexation between a relative operator and the head of the clause necessary for its full interpretation takes place at LF, following Chomsky (1982). Therefore, the appearance of unlicensed elements in relative clauses will not violate the CDC.

The second crucial assumption in Contreras (1989) is that Spanish preverbal subjects are licensed at LF, while postverbal subjects are licensed at S-structure. This assumption is based on the claim, developed in detail in Contreras (1991) and reviewed earlier in section 2, that Spanish preverbal subjects are base-generated adjuncts to IP. If we assume that adjuncts in non-canonical position are licensed at LF, we can now explain the contrast in (139):

- (139) a. Esta es la novela Op_i que María escribió t_i
 'This is the novel that María wrote'
 b. *Me pregunto [*dónde*, Juan ha puesto la mesa t_i]
 'I wonder where Juan has put the table'
 c. Me pregunto [*dónde*, ha puesto Juan la mesa t_i]
 'I wonder where Juan has put the table'

In order for the relative clause in (139a) to be fully interpreted the relative operator Op_i must be coindexed with the head NP *la novela*. This coindexation takes place at LF. At S-structure the chain headed by the relative operator does not contain all the elements necessary for its interpretation and constitutes an open domain. The A-bar chain headed by the operator can thus contain the unlicensed preverbal subject *María* without violating the CDC. In (139b), where *dónde* binds a variable in the embedded clause, the relevant A-bar chain contains all the elements necessary for its interpretation and is therefore closed. The unlicensed preverbal subject *Juan*, a noncanonical adjunct, violates the CDC and renders the sentence ungrammatical. The postverbal subject in (139c) is in its canonical position and is therefore licensed at S-structure. The sentence is grammatical.⁴⁰ Incidentally, the contrast between (139 b and c) shows again that adjunct Wh-phrases like *dónde* do not allow preverbal subjects.

Let us now consider how Wh-phrases that are base-generated are analyzed under Contreras' proposal:

(39) More precisely, the Closed Domain Condition is formulated in terms of chain links. Closed domains include not only A-bar chain links headed by interrogative operators but also A-chains and NPs (op. cit., page 164).

(40) I will not discuss here what the actual "canonical" position of the postverbal subject *Juan* in (53c) is. Either if we assume that it occupies [Spec, VP] or that it is generated as a "canonical adjunct" to the right of VP, as proposed in Contreras (1991), it is only necessary to postulate that this postverbal subject is licensed at S-structure for the argument to go through.

The examples (53b/c) are of embedded questions. The same argument applies to main interrogatives.

- (140) a. *¿Cómo Juan volvió?
 “How did John return?”
 b. ¿Cómo (que) Juan volvió?
 “How come John returned?”

We can account for the difference between the two sentences in (54) by assuming that only in (140a) is there an A-bar chain and that in (140b) *cómo* binds no variable, being base-generated in [Spec, CP]. The Wh-word in (140b) will be then interpreted as an operator (as opposed to a quantifier). The CDC applies only to (140a), ruling out the preverbal subject *Juan* in this construction. Notice that Contreras' account of the word order in Spanish interrogatives assumes crucially that preverbal subjects are left-dislocated, a proposal that we have defended and reinterpreted in minimalist terms in this article. But it is also necessary to point out that the Closed-Domain Condition has to make use of licensing conditions that apply either at S-structure or at LF, a basic assumption that is not compatible with the Minimalist framework adopted here.

2.2.4.2. Wh-Movement to {Spec, CP} through {Spec, IP}. (Goodall 1991)

Goodall accounts for the ungrammaticality of preverbal subjects in interrogative sentences by assuming that a Wh-phrase must move into [Spec, IP] before moving into [Spec, CP] in Spanish. This assumption is based in two claims: Goodall claims that [Spec, IP] is not only a q-position but also a potential A'-position. He also argues, based on some of the arguments already presented in this section, that Spanish Wh-phrases are in [Spec, CP]. Preverbal subjects are then ruled out in cases of Wh-extraction because a moved Wh-phrase will compete with the subject for the [Spec, IP] position. Recall that this analysis is almost identical to the one proposed in Toribio (1993) for embedded interrogatives, as was shown in example (122) repeated here as (141):

- (141) María no sabe [_{CP} qué_i [_{IP} t_i' estudia [_{VP} Juan t_v t_i]]]
 'Mary not knows [_{CP} what [_{IP} studies [_{VP} John]]]'
 “Mary doesn't know what John studies”

The difference between the two analyses is that Toribio (1993) applies hers only to cases of extraction of argumental Wh-phrases in embedded clauses, as in (141). Goodall assumes this same analysis for both main and embedded interrogatives, independently of whether the Wh-phrase is argumental or not:

- (142) a. María no sabe [_{CP} dónde_i [_{IP} t_i' estudia [_{VP} Juan t_v t_i]]]
 'Mary not knows [_{CP} what [_{IP} studies [_{VP} John]]]'
 “Mary doesn't know what John studies”
 b. *María no sabe [_{CP} dónde_i [_{IP} Juan estudia [_{VP} t_{sub} t_v t_i]]]

While (142a) is grammatical, (142b) is ruled out because the preverbal subject occupies a position already occupied by the intermediate trace of the nonargumental

Wh-phrase *dónde*. This account also predicts that in those cases in which the Wh-phrase has been generated in [Spec, CP] the subject will be able to move to [Spec, IP] since no Wh-phrase will move through that position:

- (143) a. ¿[_{CP} Por qué [_{IP} Luis Miguel trabaja [_{VP} t_{sub} t_v tanto]]]?
 b. ¿Por qué trabaja tanto Luis Miguel?
 “Why does Luis Miguel work so much?”

I pointed out earlier that Contreras’s CDC is based on assumptions that are not compatible with the MP. It should also be pointed out that Goodall’s proposal poses a problem for a possible minimalist account: if we assume that WH-phrases move to [Spec, CP] through [Spec, IP] in Spanish, a minimalist analysis should have to motivate each of these steps in the derivation of an interrogative sentence. Even if we assume that [Spec, IP] is an A-bar position and that Infl can be specified as [+wh], it is not clear why Wh-phrases in [Spec, IP] should move to [Spec, CP] once the Wh-Criterion can be satisfied in the former position.

In the next section I will develop a minimalist account of Spanish interrogatives which is consonant with some of the characterizations offered by Contreras. It should not come as a surprise that I will claim with the latter that Spanish preverbal subjects are not in [Spec, IP] but rather left-dislocated.

2.3. A Minimalist Analysis: Covert I-to-C in Spanish

2.3.1. Descriptive generalizations for Spanish interrogatives

The characterization of the relevant properties of Spanish interrogatives that arises from the discussion in the previous sections can be summarized as follows:

- (a) V raises to Infl overtly in Spanish. There is empirical evidence against overt I-to-C movement in this language.
- (b) Wh-movement in Spanish is always to [Spec, CP]. This claim is based on the assumption that CP is recursive, which accounts for the possible C-Wh order in indirect questions with verbs of communication (cf. fn 35).
- (c) Preverbal subjects are not allowed in Spanish interrogatives unless the Wh-phrase is generated in [Spec, CP].
- (d) Preverbal subjects are allowed in relative clauses.

2.3.2. Assumptions

In order to account for the previous empirical generalizations I will make the following assumptions:

- (i) Infl (AgrS) in Spanish can be optionally specified as [+wh], as proposed in Rizzi (1991), Toribio (1993) and Goodall (1991), among others. This feature is referred to in the Minimalist Program as [Q] (Chomsky 1995: 289). For ease of explanation, and to facilitate the comparison between our analysis and the analyses discussed in previous sentences, I will still refer to this feature

as [wh]. A sentence whose Infl is specified for this feature will be interpreted as a question. This feature is not specified as [strong] in Spanish.⁴¹

- (ii) Movement of a Wh-phrase to [Spec, CP] is forced by the presence of a strong nominal (categorical) feature in C, as proposed in Chomsky (1995). This D-feature is present only when the C-head selected from the numeration has no phonetic content. In this case, the presence of this strong feature will force overt raising of the appropriate phrase to cancel it. A C-head with phonetic content, a lexical complementizer, is never specified as having a strong categorical feature, and overt movement of a phrase to [Spec, CP] is ruled out when a Complementizer is present. This accounts for the fact that Wh-phrases never precede an overt complementizer:⁴²

- (144) a. *¿Quién que trajo el regalo a María?
 ‘who that brought the present for Mary?’
 b. * Me preguntó cuándo que llegó Juan
 ‘s/he asked me when that John arrived”

- (iii) From the two previous assumptions it can be postulated that there is *covert* I-to-C movement in Spanish. This movement is forced by the need to satisfy the Wh-Criterion after Spell-Out. The Formal Features of the inflectional head AgrS, which include the feature [wh] (FF_{wh}), adjoin to C after Spell-out and enter into a Spec-head relation with the FF_{wh} feature of the Wh-phrase in [Spec, CP].⁴³ In other words, I am proposing here that the Wh-Criterion is satisfied covertly (at LF) in Spanish.

Let us see how this works in cases of Wh-movement of the subject. A subject Wh-phrase is base-generated in [Spec, VP]:

(145) *Step 1:*

{_{VP} Quién {trajo el vino}}?

Step 2: (by Merge AgrS and Move V)

{_{AgrS} AgrS trajo {_{VP} Quién {trajo_{copy} el vino}}}

Step 3: (by Merge C and Move Subj.)

{_{CP} Quién C._[AgrS] trajo {_{VP} Quién_{copy} {trajo_{copy} el vino}}}

Step 4 (Covert: Move FF(AgrS))

{_{CP} Quién {_C.FF({_{AgrS} trajo})} {_{AgrS} trajo_{copy} {_{VP} Quién_{copy} {trajo_{copy} el vino}}}

“Who brought the wine?”

(41) Chomsky (1995: 289) claims that the feature [Q] ([wh]) is nominal in nature. Languages differ with respect to its [±strong] specification. Since we have assumed that the nominal categorical features of AgrS in Spanish are [-strong], it would be contradictory now that the nominal feature of this functional head receives a different specification.

(42) This claim is also compatible with the hypothesis that verbs of communication like *preguntar* can select for a recursive CP. Movement of a Wh-phrase will be to the Spec of the C-head that has no phonetic content. Cf. fn 35.

(43) This covert I-to-C movement is also proposed in Ordoñez (1996) for Spanish and Catalán.

In (145), step 2 is motivated by the assumption that the verbal categorial of AgrS in Spanish is [strong], forcing overt V-to-I movement. The categorial nominal features of this functional head, which include [wh], is [-strong] and the subject Wh-phrase will not rise to [Spec, AgrSP] in the overt syntax. Step 3 is forced by the presence of a strong nominal categorial feature in C, as claimed before. The subject, carrying among others its own [wh] feature, will raise overtly to [Spec, CP]. After Spell-out the Formal Features of the complex [_{AgrS} AgrS+V] will adjoin to the head C. As a result, the subject Wh-phrase and the FF (AgrS) will enter into a checking configuration. If both elements share the feature [wh] the derivation will converge at LF, by satisfaction of the Wh-Criterion, and the construction will be interpreted as an interrogative sentence.⁴⁴

Covert I-to-C movement seems to be desirable in order to explain why subject Wh-phrases agree in number with the verb in Spanish:

- (146) a. *¿Quiénes llegó?
 “Who-pl arrived-sing?”
 b. *¿Quién vinieron?
 “Who-sing. arrived-pl?”

Under the analysis sketched above, a Wh-phrase in [Spec, CP] is in the checking domain of AgrS after Spell-out, and agreement between both elements should obtain. But consider the following contrast:

- (147) a. ¿Quiénes pensó Pedro que llegaron tarde a la fiesta?
 ‘who-pl thought-3sg. Peter that arrived-pl late to the party’
 “Who did Peter think that arrived late to the party?”
 b. *¿Quién pensó ellos que llegó tarde a la fiesta?
 ‘who-pl thought-3sg. they that arrived-sg. late to the party’
 c. *¿Quiénes pensaron Pedro que llegó tarde a la fiesta?
 ‘who-pl thought-3pl. Peter that arrived-sg late to the party’

It is obvious that the Wh-phrase must check its agreement features in the lower clause, and that these features have had to be erased. Otherwise, they could be checked against the features of the main Infl node and (147b/c) should be grammatical. We have to assume that the FF of the copy of the Wh-phrase adjoins to the AgrS head in which the Wh-phrase is generated after Spell-out. This movement is consistent with our proposal in chapter 2 that the nominal categorial features of AgrS are not strong in Spanish. The derivation of (147a) should then be as in (148), abstracting from the steps that are not relevant for our purposes:

(44) The [wh]/[Q] feature is obviously Interpretable, and as such need not to be checked. But mismatching of features in this configuration will cause the derivation to crash, as proposed in Chomsky (1995: 310).

(148) *Step 1:*

$\{_{VP}$ Pedro pensó $\{_{CP}$ que $\{_{AgrS}$ AgrS llegaron $\{_{VP}$ quienes llegaron_{copy} a la fiesta}}]\}

Step 2: (by Merge AgrS and Move V in the main clause)

$\{_{AgrS}$ AgrS pensó $\{_{VP}$ Pedro pensó_{copy} $\{_{CP}$ que $\{_{AgrS}$ AgrS llegaron $\{_{VP}$ quienes llegaron_{copy} a la fiesta}}]\}\}

Step 3: (by Merge C and Move Subj.)

$\{_{CP}$ Quiénes C. $\{_{AgrS}$ AgrS pensó $\{_{VP}$ Pedro pensó_{copy} $\{_{CP}$ que $\{_{AgrS}$ AgrS llegaron $\{_{VP}$ quienes_{opy} llegaron_{copy} a la fiesta}\}

Step 4 (Covert: Move FF(quiénes_{copy}), FF (AgrS))

$\{_{CP}$ Quiénes $\{_{C}$.FF($\{_{AgrS}$ pensó)}\}) $\{_{AgrS}$ pensó_{copy} $\{_{VP}$ Pedro pensó_{copy} $\{_{CP}$ que $\{_{AgrS}$ $\{_{FF}$ (quiénes_{opy}) llegaron $\{_{VP}$ quienes_{opy} llegaron_{copy} a la fiesta}\}

In (148), step 4, the [Q] feature of the Wh-phrase is checked covertly in the minimal domain of the AgrS in C. This feature is interpretable and needs not to be erased. The Case and number features of the Wh-phrase are checked, also after Spell-Out, in the minimal domain of the lower AgrS, and agreement obtains between the embedded verb *llegaron* and the interrogative phrase *quiénes*. These features are not interpretable and are erased: they cannot enter into a matching relationship in the upper checking configuration. The Wh-phrase then agrees in Case and number with the verb of the lower clause in which the Wh-word was generated, but always checks its [wh] feature in the main clause.

(iv) Spanish preverbal subjects are CLLD constructions, i.e., they are base-generated as adjuncts to the maximal inflectional projection and coindexed with an empty pronominal in thematic position, (cf. chapter 2). The derivation of a declarative sentence with a preverbal subject in Spanish is that of (149), previously (28) and (29) in section 1.

(149) Before Spell-out: $\{_{AgrSP}$ NP $\{_{AgrSP}$ $\{_{AgrS}$ V+T}\} $\{_{TP}$ $\{_{T}$ t_T $\{_{VP}$ pro $\{_{V}$ tv}}]\}\}\}

After Spell-out: $\{_{AgrSP}$ NP $\{_{AgrSP}$ pro_i $\{_{AgrS}$ V+T}\} $\{_{TP}$ $\{_{T}$ t_T $\{_{VP}$ t_i $\{_{V}$ tv}}]\}\}\}

Based on this assumption, the question that arises is why preverbal subjects are not allowed in Spanish interrogatives unless the Wh-phrase is generated in [Spec, CP]. At this point I have to speculate that IP-adjuncts (i.e. preverbal subjects or sentential adverbs) block covert I-to-C movement. As a result, preverbal subjects are not allowed in Spanish when there is a fronted Wh-phrase in [Spec, CP]: Infl cannot raise covertly to C and the required configuration for the satisfaction of the Wh-Criterion is not met. The derivation will crash at LF due to the presence of a preverbal adjunct independently of the argumental-nonargumental status of the Wh-phrase. Consider the following contrast:

- (150) a. Generalmente/todos los días Pedro compra salmón en el mercado
 “Usually/every day Peter buys salmon at the market”
 b. *¿Qué generalmente/todos los días compra Pedro en el mercado?
 What generally /every day buys Peter at the market?
 c. ¿Por qué generalmente/todos los días compra Pedro salmón en el mercado?

A sentential adverb like *generalmente* or *todos los días* is ruled out in instances of Wh-movement, as shown in (150b). When the Wh-phrase is base-generated in [Spec, CP], as in (150c), the sentence is grammatical as predicted.

Parallel to the previous speculation I will have to assume then that Wh-phrases generated in [Spec, CP] (*por qué* and *cómo (qué)*) satisfy the Wh-Criterion by inducing a [wh] feature in C, an instance of Dynamic Agreement, as in Rizzi (1991). In these cases there is no need for covert I-to-C in order to satisfy the Wh-Criterion and preverbal subjects are allowed. The contrast in interpretation between the following two sentences can now be explained:

- (151) a. ¿[CP Por qué cree Pedro [CP que Juan no vino a la fiesta]?
 b. ¿[CP Por qué Pedro cree [CP que Juan no vino a la fiesta]?
 Why does Peter believe that Juan didn't come to the party?"

The Wh-phrase *por qué* can be base-generated in either of the two [Spec, CP] positions of the sentences above, according to our hypothesis. But it is reasonable to assume that only in the higher clause, whose C needs to be specified as [wh] for the structure to be interpreted as a question, this specification will be the result of dynamic agreement; furthermore, this type of agreement is only possible in the projection in which the Wh-phrase is base-generated. If base-generated in the lower clause, *por qué* can raise to the higher [Spec, CP] but the sentence will be grammatical if and only if there is I-to-C movement, i.e., only when there is no preverbal subject in the higher clause. This is the case in (151a), when there are two possible interpretations of the sentence: *por qué* is associated either with the lower verb *vino* and the answer can be “Juan did not come to the party because he was sick” or is associated with the higher verb *cree* and the answer can be “Peter believes so because he was not there”. In (151b), on the other hand, the presence of a preverbal subject indicates that the Wh-phrase has been generated in the matrix [Spec, CP] and the interpretation in which *por qué* modifies the lower verb *vino* is not available. It is interesting to notice that this double interpretation is not available if we substitute *por qué* with *cómo (que)* in the previous examples. It could be the case that while *por qué* is generated in [Spec, CP], *cómo (que)* is generated in C, and movement from the lower clause to the higher C would constitute a violation of the Head-movement constraint.⁴⁵

(45) For empirical evidence and a discussion of the claim that ‘how come’ is generated in the head of CP in English vid. Collins (1991).

Following the same line of argumentation we can account for the grammaticality of preverbal subjects in relative clauses. In relative clauses Infl is not specified for the feature [wh]. There is no covert I-to-C movement and again preverbal subjects are allowed. Licensing of the Wh-operator is done by coindexation by predication after Spell-out between the operator and the head of the relative clause (Toribio 1993: 167). Recall that preverbal sentential adverbs are ruled out in 'movement' Wh-questions, as we saw in (150b). Consider now (152):

- (152) Ese es el pescado que generalmente compra Pedro
 'that is the fish that usually buys Peter'
 "That is the fish that Peter usually buys"

Not only preverbal subjects, but also sentential adjuncts are allowed to intervene between the relative C and the verb, as claimed in this section.

2.3.3. Predictions

There are a couple of interesting predictions made by our proposal that should be mentioned here. The first one is that it correctly predicts the different distribution of preverbal subjects and empty pronominal subjects in Spanish.⁴⁶ Consider the following contrast:

- (153) a. ¿Qué quieres ?
 what pro-want-2sing ?
 "What do you want?"
 b. *¿Qué Juan quiere?
 what Juan wants?
 What does Juan want?

While an empty subject in an interrogative sentence is allowed (153a), the presence of a preverbal subject renders the sentence ungrammatical (153b), as expected. In analyses, like those of Toribio (1993), Suñer (1994) or Goodall (1991), in which both the preverbal subject and *pro* may occupy the same position, [Spec, AgrSP], an account for the contrast in (153) would require further speculation since the mechanisms that in those analyses block the presence of a preverbal subject in an interrogative sentence should also apply to *pro*. In our analysis, the contrast is directly derived from the fact that empty subjects are in [Spec, VP] prior to Spell-Out and adjoin to AgrS after this point in the derivation, while preverbal subjects are adjuncts to IP. According to this proposal, preverbal subjects and empty subject pronominals never occupy the same position in Spanish and the contrast in (153) is explained. The second prediction is that satisfaction of the Wh-Criterion at LF will take place only in the highest clause in cases of extraction from embedded clauses like the one in (154):

(46) A similar claim is found in Ordoñez (1996).

(154) ¿[_{CP} Qué dijo Juan [_{CP} que Pedro había dicho [_{CP} que María le había dado *t_i*]]]?

“What did John say that Peter had said that Mary had given to him?”

For the sentence to be interpreted as an interrogative only the higher AgrS has to be specified as [wh]. As a consequence, covert I-to-C will apply only in the highest clause and a preverbal subject will be ruled out only in the main clause. Preverbal subjects are allowed in any of the embedded clauses, as shown in (154). There is no motivation for long distance extraction in Spanish to occur successive-cyclically: the intermediate Cs have phonetic content—they are overt complementizers, like *que*—and therefore are not specified as [+strong] according to our assumption in (ii). Movement of the Wh-phrase to the intermediate CPs is not morphologically motivated and only the presence of a nominal categorial feature in the higher AgrS will attract the Wh-element (cf. fn 32).

2.3.4. *Residual problems*

The analysis proposed in this section is not unproblematic and requires further refinement. A few comments are in order. In the first place, it is not at all clear what is the exact mechanism by means of which a preverbal adjunct (a phrase) blocks covert I-to-C (head-to-head movement). At this point I will propose this idea as a mere speculation, but I will have to leave the exact description of the theoretical principles at work behind it for future research. Secondly, it remains to be explained why ‘heavy’ Wh-phrases also allow preverbal subjects, as was shown in examples (132b, 133b and 134b), repeated here as (155):

- (155) a. ¿En cuál de esas tiendas Juan compró el regalo para María?
 “In which of those shops did John buy the present for Mary?”
 b. ¿En qué mes Pedro llegó a Seattle?
 “In what month did Peter arrive in Seattle?”
 c. ¿Qué disco de John Coltrane Juan compró para María?
 “What record by John Coltrane did John buy for Mary?”

It could be claimed that these complex phrases are also base generated in [Spec, CP]. This assumption will correctly predict that preverbal subjects should be possible in these constructions following our argumentation.⁴⁷ We could assume then that they are interpreted at LF not as operator-variable constructions, but rather that as quantifiers. This interpretation would result from adjunction of the Wh-word to the CP in which the Wh-phrase is generated, as proposed in Chomsky (1995: 32). The previous complex Wh-phrases would be interpreted as follows:

(47) This account is similar to the one proposed in Ordoñez (1996), in which these complex phrases are not in [Spec, CP] but are “left-dislocated”. Since there is no Wh-Criterion to be satisfied by these Wh-phrases preverbal subjects are allowed. Ordoñez assumes, though, that preverbal subjects are in a topic position, a Spec position that they occupy as the result of movement. In that respect his proposal is different from ours. This section has benefited enormously from his comments.

- (156) a. [_{CP} En cuál *x* [_{CP} *x* una de esas tiendas]]
 "In which *x*, *x* one of those shops"
 b. [_{CP} En qué *x* [_{CP} *x* un mes]]
 "In what *x*, *x* a month "
 c. [_{CP} Qué *x* [_{CP} *x* un disco de John Coltrane]]
 "What *x*, *x* a record by John Coltrane"

Interestingly, these phrases seem to correspond to what Pesetsky (1987) refers to as D(iscourse)-linked Wh-phrases. Pesetsky differentiates between phrases like *Which N'*, that must refer to members of a set that both the speaker and hearer have in mind, and are in that sense linked to the discourse, and non-D-linked Wh-phrases like *who* or *what* that can do so only under certain conditions. Based on the assumption that only non-D-linked Wh-phrases are operators he shows that this distinction accounts for the different behaviors of both types of Wh-phrases with respect to the standard tests for movement in English.

We have now basis to assume that the 'heavy' Wh-phrases in the Spanish examples in (156) are D-linked, and to claim that D-linked Wh-phrases in Spanish are base-generated in [Spec, CP] and not interpreted as operators. To this consideration we must add that one of the tests that Pesetsky proposes to differentiate between Wh-phrases that are linked to the discourse and Wh-phrases that are not is the impossibility of adding to the former a phrase like *the hell* or *on earth* ('What the hell...' vs. '*Which book the hell ...'). In my Spanish dialect a similar behavior can be found with the phrase "*leches*" (literally "milks", which can be loosely translated as "on earth");⁴⁸

- (157) a. ¿Dónde leches compró Juan el regalo para María?
 'where on earth bought John the present for Mary'
 "Where on earth did John buy the present for Mary?"
 b. *¿En cuál de esas tiendas leches Juan compró el regalo para María?
 'in which of those stores on earth John bought the present for Mary'

But if we assume with Pesetsky that "which one" (*cuál* in Spanish) is D-linked, we would predict that the sentences in (158) should not only be grammatical, but that both should have the same degree of acceptability:

- (158) a. ??¿Cuál Juan destruyó?
 b. ¿Cuál de los dos libros Juan destruyó?

If the grammaticality of (158a) is dubious, there could be other intervening factors, beside the notion of D-linking. I will also leave this matter for future research.

(48) Being a speaker of Peninsular Spanish, the first appropriate phrase that comes to mind to construct these examples is quite different from the one used here.

3. Conclusions

In this section I have sketched a minimalist account of the subject positions in Spanish interrogatives and relative clauses based on the assumption that there is covert I-to-C movement in Spanish and that Spanish preverbal subjects are CLLD constructions. I first reviewed the empirical and theoretical problems that previous analyses pose for a minimalist account of the restriction on preverbal subjects in interrogatives. I proposed that these constructions receive a better explanation if we assume that there is covert I-to-C movement in Spanish. The main claim defended in this section is that left-dislocated constituents block I-to-C movement and render preverbal subjects in interrogative constructions ungrammatical. Since this type of movement is not present in relative clauses the presence of left-dislocated constituents (preverbal subjects, for instance) is grammatical. This hypothesis also predicts that Wh-elements that are base-generated need not be licensed by covert I-to-C and therefore will allow the presence of preverbal subjects.

The proposal defended here is also related to one of the theoretical problems that has recently arisen with the adoption of the basic principles of the Minimalist Program, the problem of the optionality of syntactic movement. One of the basic assumptions in the Principles and Parameters framework was that the application of "Move a" was optional, this rule constrained at the output of its application by a set of representational constraints that applied at the relevant levels of representation. In the Minimalist Program, on the other hand, syntactic movement is never optional but legitimate only if necessary for convergence and forced by the presence of specific morphological features.

Consequently, the phenomenon of Free Subject Inversion that characterizes Null Subject languages like Spanish, and whose explanation has been traditionally based on the notion of optionality of movement, presents a problem for a minimalist account. I have proposed in this paper that the problem of optionality of movement specifically related to Free Subject Inversion in pro-drop languages can be solved once we assume that sentences with preverbal subjects and sentences in which the subject appears in postverbal positions are the result of two different numerations. This solution is based on the analysis of preverbal subjects as CLLD constructions. A convergent SV derivation is the most economical output of a numeration that presents both a *pro* and a noun (and therefore an NP) that shares with it its morphological features. This empty pronominal is absent in a numeration whose most economical output will result in a VS ordering in which the subject is lexical.

There is another issue related to the problem of optionality of syntactic movement that must be mentioned here. In this research I have focused on the contrast between pre and postverbal subject positions in Spanish, i.e., on the basic differences between SV and VS orders. But Spanish presents two different VS orders, VSO and VOS. By assuming that subjects are generated in [Spec, VP] and that the verbal related features of AgrS in Spanish are [+strong], forcing overt V-to-AgrS movement, while the nominal features of this functional projection are [-strong], and therefore movement of the thematic subject will always be covert, my proposal has in fact contrasted SVO versus VSO word orders in Spanish. An account of the VOS order has yet to be proposed.

There are three possible theoretical paths that could be followed in an attempt to account for the VOS order in Spanish and that I would like to sketch here: first, it could be claimed that Spanish VOS is the result of Object Scrambling, as proposed in Ordoñez (1994). Under this analysis the object raises to a position from which it will asymmetrically c-command the subject in [Spec, VP]. Second, under a VP-shell analysis like the one proposed in Chomsky (1995: chapter four), it could be claimed that the VP constituent formed by the verb and the object raises to adjoin one of the inflectional projections, either TP, AspP or FP, leaving the subject in its base-generated position. This would also result in a VOS order. Third, by making an absolute parallelism with the analysis of subject positions proposed here, it could be claimed that in the VOS order the object is a base-generated adjunct to AgrOP, licensed by predication with a resumptive element in argument position.

The first two possibilities also face the problem of optionality. It should be necessary to explain what motivates the overt movement of either the object in the first analysis or the whole VP in the second. The third analysis faces an empirical problem: evidence to support it is hard to construct. I consider these questions to be of extreme interest for a future and more complete account of word order variation in Spanish under minimalist assumptions. I would like to address these topics in future research.

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