

Spanish PredNPs and the Left Periphery

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1. Introduction

This paper proposes an analysis of Spanish Predicative Noun Phrases (PredNPs) (1) as structures related to the left periphery and argues against a right-dislocated analysis of PredNP Clauses.

- (1)
- a. Un verdadero idiota_{NP}, el camarero este.
'A real idiot, this waiter.'
 - b. Extremadamente caro_{AP}, aquel vino.
'Extremely expensive, that wine.'

As these examples show, Spanish PredNPs consist of two expressions: an initial XP acting as a predicate and a DP that is interpreted as the subject of the predicative expression. The predicate or head phrase of the expression can be a Noun Phrase (1a), or an Adjectival Phrase (1b). There are other similar constructions in Spanish, but here we will focus our attention on structures like the ones in (1) above. The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In section 2 we discuss the grammar of Spanish PredNPs. In section 3 we examine previous syntactic accounts of this predicative structure. In section 4 we argue that PredNPs are better understood if we assume that the XP-predicate moves to the left of the DP-subject to a focus position where the former may check its affective feature (cf. the AFFECT-criterion; see Brody 1990; Haegeman 1995). Finally, section 5 presents our conclusions.

2. The grammar of Spanish PredNPs

PredNPs are verbless utterances which are not discourse fragments and display clausal properties (Vinet 1991; Laurens 2008). For example, each one of the expressions in (1) may be interpreted as full sentences, as the paraphrases in (2) show:

- (2)
- a. ⇒ El camarero este ES un verdadero idiota.
'This waiter IS a real idiot.'
 - b. ⇒ Aquel vino ES extremadamente caro.
'That wine IS extremely expensive.'

A reasonable hypothesis would be that this is possible because of the presence of a semantically empty or light verb in the verbless correlates of these sentences or, alternatively, of a functional projection. These clauses involve predication and they actually denote a complete proposition, i.e. they are expressions of type <s,t> in Montague's terminology. Their clausal content type can be easily demonstrated by the fact that Spanish PredNPs can be coordinated with full verbal clauses (3a, b) and also participate in sentential VP ellipsis constructions (3c), as noted by a reviewer:

- (3)
- a. Un verdadero idiota, el camarero este, aunque es un buen empleado.
'A real idiot, that waiter, even though he is a good employee.'
 - b. Extremadamente caro, aquel vino, pero es la mejor opción para esta noche.
'Extremely expensive, that wine, but it is the better option for tonight.'
 - c. Inteligente este chiquillo, pero este otro no.
'Smart, that kid, but this other one is not (smart).'

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2.1. The XP-predicate

There are some restrictions at work in the licensing of Spanish PredNPs. Some of them were pointed out previously by Hernanz & Suñer (1999) (cf. also Vinet 1991). Firstly, the XP-predicate position, when instantiated by an adjectival category, allows only predicative evaluative adjectives of a gradable nature. Thus, non evaluative and non-gradable adjectives or predicates are not allowed:

- (4)
- a. *Solar, este sistema.
'Solar, this system.'
 - b. *Numerable, este conjunto.
'Countable, this set.'

There is a wide variety of modifying non-evaluative adjectives and terms: professional names, relational adjectives, nouns of relationship, etc. –cf. Bosque & Picallo (1996) and Bosque (1999). None of them are allowed in this construction either, as (5a, b) shows. This restriction also applies to complements, since they are classifying and referential and they do not behave as modifiers (5c, d):

- (5)
- a. *Padre, mi hermano.
'Father, my brother.'
 - b. *Chileno, este vino.
'Chilean, this wine.'
 - c. *De McCain, esta derrota.
'McCain's, this defeat.'
 - d. *De Estados Unidos, el embargo a Cuba.
'United States', Cuba's embargo.'

Second, whereas individual-level predicates are allowed as predicates in Spanish PredNPs (6a, b), stage-level predicates are banned (6c, d). Nevertheless, the presence of adverbs of quantification or Q-adverbs (Lewis 1975) such as *siempre* 'always' and *nunca* 'never' seems to license stage-level predicates (7). Individual-level predicates by contrast do not allow adverbs of quantification (8):

- (6)
- a. Inteligente, Pepe
'Intelligent, Pepe.'
 - b. Fea, la candidata a Miss.
'Ugly, the beauty contestant.'
 - c. *Cansado, Pepe.
'Tired Pepe.'
 - d. *Disponible, el profesor.
'Available, the professor.'
- (7)
- a. Siempre cansado, Pepe.
'Always tired, Pepe.'
 - b. Nunca disponible, este profesor.
'Never available, that professor.'
- (8)
- a. *Siempre inteligente, Pepe.
'Always intelligent, Pepe.'
 - b. *Nunca idiota, el profesor.
'Never an idiot, the professor.'

According to Kratzer (1995), individual-level predicates do not project an event variable –i.e. they are not associated with a spatio-temporal parameter—, while stage-level predicates do have a variable ranging over eventualities. If individual-level predicates do not project an event variable, and Q-adverbs quantify over situations, then there will not be an appropriate variable for the adverb to bind. In the case of stage-level predicates, the insertion of a Q-adverb gives the sentence a generic or universal reading, and the predicate can be interpreted as characterizing (Carlson 1980).

Third, predicates in these clauses must correspond to the expression of a personal opinion. Usually, the speaker mentions something outstanding about an individual or event, as in (9-10).

- (9) a. ??Normal, este vino.
 ‘Normal, this wine.’
 b. Muy normalito, este vino.
 ‘Very average, this wine.’
- (10) a. Riquísimo, este vino.
 ‘Delicious, this wine.’
 b. Muy rico, este vino.
 ‘Very delicious, this wine.’
 c. Espectacular, la victoria de Obama.
 ‘Spectacular, Obama’s victory.’
 d. Increíble, la última peli de Almodóvar.
 ‘Incredible, Almodóvar’s last film.’

For example, (9a) is odd if we are just stating that the wine is of standard quality. On the other hand, *muy normalito* ‘very average’ indicates that the quality of the wine is below what was expected. It follows, then, that adjectives in these clauses are not merely evaluative-affective adjectives, but also ones that place such evaluation at a high or extreme point in a scale –i.e. the XP-predicate must denote something extraordinary about the subject. Following Lasersohn (2005), we can view these adjectives as predicates of personal taste. What is characteristic of these predicates is that their interpretation is dependent on a “judge”, the one who determines the extent of the attributed property. For example, *riquísimo* in (10a) or *espectacular* in (10c) can only be interpreted from the perspective of the speaker of the relevant utterance. In other words, something is *rico* ‘tasty’ because it is tasty for an individual who acts as the relevant judge evaluating the property. In Spanish PredNPs the judge has to be the utterance’s speaker. Furthermore, as we have stated, the relevant judge places the property at a very high point on the degree scale associated with the denotation of the predicate. Thus, the predicates in these clauses are high or extreme-degree predicates (Gutiérrez-Rexach 1999).

This hypothesis also predicts the fact that not all frequency adverbials can combine with the preposed element. Those indicating standard frequency or periodicity are not allowed, since there would not be anything outstanding or salient about the stated property (11a). In some dialects, sentences such as (8a) also improve if evaluative/affective elements are added (11b,c). Similarly, several apparent exceptions to the second generalization above, in which an individual level predicate combines with a universal adverb of quantification, can be explained along related lines (11d, e):

- (11) a. *Normalmente/usualmente cansado, el estudiante de atrás.
 ‘Normally/usually tired, the student at the back.’
 b. Siempre tan caritativo, el bueno de Pepe.
 ‘Always so giving, good Pepe.’
 c. Siempre cansado, el vago de Pepe.
 ‘Always tired, that lazy Pepe.’
 d. Siempre cortas, nuestras vacaciones.
 ‘Always short, our holidays.’
 e. Nunca suficientes, las horas de trabajo en esta empresa.
 ‘Never enough, the working hours in our company.’
 f. Siempre generoso, este Pepe.
 ‘Always generous, Pepe’.

For example, *cortas* ‘short’ in (11d) is normally a characterizing/individual-level predicate, but here it is used to express a subjective evaluation on the part of the speaker, namely, that holidays always feel too short. Thus, it can be assumed that the universal adverb of quantification binds a time variable associated to the judge (the speaker), indicating that in his assessment holidays are always deemed to be short, not to characterize an intrinsic property of holidays. A similar reasoning can be

applied to (11e), which becomes fine precisely because *suficientes* ‘enough’ is a perspectival adjective interpreted as ‘enough for us, those who work at the relevant company’. Thus, the universal adverb of quantification is associated to a contextual time variable linked to the contextually relevant judge.

In sum, the predicate in Spanish PredNPs is a modifier with an evaluative/affective interpretation. Also, individual-level predicates are preferred in this construction. Recall that individual-level predicates attribute properties to individuals and they express properties of individuals that are permanent or tendentially stable (Chierchia 1995). These clauses denote properties or states of affairs that are individualizing or characterizing and are also dependent on the subjective evaluation of a contextually established judge. These restrictions explain there is not the same range of predicative attributes as those in other predicative structures, such as copular sentences or participial constructions which, for example, allow unrestricted combinations of adjectives and frequency adverbials:

- (12)
- a. Juan es siempre {amable / inteligente / divertido}.
‘Juan is always {kind/intelligent/funny}.’
 - b. Siempre {ocurrente/divertido/inteligente}, Juan volvió a entusiasmar al público que lo escuchaba.
‘Always fast/funny/smart, Juan again galvanized the attending audience.’

2.2. The DP-subject

The DP-subject of these constructions imposes certain restrictions as well. First, the subject must be strong in Milsark’s (1974) terminology. This is a direct consequence of the selection requirements of the XP-predicate: individual-level predicates select strong determiners (Milsark 1974; Chierchia 1995). Thus, indefinite DPs and bare plurals are not allowed in this construction:

- (13)
- a. Muy simpática, está/la chica.
‘Very nice, this/the girl.’
 - b.*Muy simpática, una chica cualquiera.
‘Very nice, any girl.’
 - c.*Muy simpática, alguna chica.
‘Very nice, some girl.’
 - d.*Muy simpáticas, chicas.
‘Very nice, girls.’

Second, most quantified DPs are disallowed from the subject position, namely monotone increasing or decreasing quantifiers, i.e. non principal-filter denoting (Gutiérrez-Rexach 2012a), so the DP subjects of PredNPs behave like right-dislocated subjects (Vallduvi 1992; Laurens 2008):

- (14)
- a. *Un genio, ningún estudiante.
‘A genius, none of the students.’
 - b.*Unos genios, pocos estudiantes.
‘Genius, few students.’
 - c. *Un genio, todo estudiante.
‘A genius, all student.’
 - d.*Unos genios, todos los estudiantes.
‘Genius, all of the students.’
 - e. Muy sabio, el decano.
‘Very clever, the dean.’
 - f. Interesante, la solución del problema.
‘Interesting, the solution of the problem.’

However, a sentence such as (14b) improves if the quantified DP is modified (Paul & Stainton 2006). The DP-subject becomes now a principal filter quantificationally, rendering the sentence grammatical –i.e. the modifier forces a strong reading of the quantifier (cf. Gutiérrez-Rexach 2004):

- (15) a. Unos genios, todos los estudiantes de física.
 ‘Genius, all students of physics.’
 b. Unos genios, todos los estudiantes allí sentados.
 ‘Genius, all students seated over there.’

Fourth, in many Spanish PredNPs a deictic determiner is present in the DP-subject:

- (16) a. Maravilloso, el piso este.
 ‘Marvelous, this apartment.’
 b. Siempre averiado, este maldito ascensor.
 ‘Always broken, this damn elevator.’

As pointed out by Silva-Villar & Gutiérrez-Rexach (2001), demonstratives, especially postnominal ones, tend to associate with informational elements and, furthermore, have characteristic affective uses, of an appreciative or depreciative nature. In this case, the demonstrative would indicate whether a given topic is presented as subjectively valued by the speaker or not. These are all characteristics that will be central in our account, as shown below.

Summarizing, the subject DP in Spanish PredNPs must be strong and constitute a principal-filter denoting nominal. It follows that non-specific DPs, bare plurals and monotone decreasing quantifiers are not allowed. In a majority of instances a deictic determiner is present. Notice that the determiner-strength constraint on these clauses is not necessarily a language-specific constraint. As in Spanish, non-verbal or verbless clauses in Modern Standard Arabic require the subject to be definite. Furthermore, in Mina and Hdi, two languages spoken in Cameroon, the subject of verbless clauses carries a high tone (cf. Frajzyngier, Johnston & Edwards 2005; Frajzyngier & Shay 2001), which is interpreted as involving referent identifiability, as in Spanish PredNPs.

2.3. Syntactic structure of Spanish PredNPs

Spanish PredNPs may only appear in root contexts, so they cannot be embedded by a predicate (17a, b). This property is expected since the complementizer *que* ‘that’ requires a finite complement (17 c, d) (Laurens 2008). Thus, this suggests that a lexical category (e.g., a verb) does not mediate between the XP-predicate and the DP-subject of Spanish PredNPs.

- (17) a. *Pienso que inteligente el profe.
 ‘I think smart the professor.’
 b. *Sé que un malandro este chiquillo.
 ‘I know a thief this boy.’
 c. Pienso que inteligente es el profe.
 ‘I think smart is the professor.’
 d. Sé que un malandro es este chiquillo.
 ‘I know a thief is this boy.’

Another characteristic of Spanish PredNPs is the fact that these constructions license anaphors in the predicate position. The subject, however, cannot be coindexed with a pronoun in such a position (Conditions A and B of Chomsky’s Binding Theory). This could be argued to be strong evidence in favor of considering the XP-predicate as originating in a position to the right of (c-commanded by) the DP-subject:

- (18) a. Siempre obsesionado consigo mismo_i este chiquillo_i.
 ‘Always obsessed with himself, this boy.’
 b. *Siempre obsesionado con él_i, este chiquillo_i.
 ‘Always obsessed with him_i, this boy_i.’

At the derivational point where binding theory applies (either at the base generation point or after reconstruction), the DP has to c-command the XP, thus suggesting that the overt position of the XP is a

derived position. Finally, while positive polarity items (PPIs) are possible in the predicate constituent (19a), a negative subject does not license a negative polarity item (NPI) in that same predicate (19b):

- (19) a. Bastante incrédulas, estas chicas.
 ‘Quite incredulous, these girls.’
 b. *Santo de mi devoción, ningún estudiante de pragmática.
 Lit.: ‘Saint of my devotion none of the pragmatics students.’
 ‘I don’t like any of the pragmatics students.’

The ungrammaticality of (19b) could alternatively be explained as follows: *ningún estudiante de pragmática* ‘none of the pragmatic students’ is a non-specific or weak DP, henceforth its presence is banned from the subject position of Spanish PredNPs. However, this conclusion is inadequate since the partitive *de pragmática* ‘of pragmatics’ would be incompatible with strict non-specificity (Gutiérrez-Rexach 2004). Another solution would be based on the monotonicity requirement on the quantifier. Recall that monotone decreasing quantifiers are not allowed in Spanish PredNPs:

- (20) a. *Muy sabios, pocos estudiantes.
 ‘Very clever, few students.’
 b. *Muy sabios, menos de cinco estudiantes.
 ‘Very clever, less than five students.’
 c. *Muy sabios, como máximo cinco estudiantes.
 ‘Very clever, at least five students.’

NPIs occur within the argument of a monotonic decreasing function but not within the argument of a monotonic increasing function (Gutiérrez-Rexach 2012a). If monotone decreasing quantifiers are not allowed in the subject position of Spanish PredNPs, then it follows that NPIs cannot be licensed in the predicate constituent. The same reasoning applies here. The NPI in the XP in (19b) would have to be in a position within the scope of a decreasing quantifier in order to be licensed, and the predicate constituent would be the scopal domain of such quantifier. Since decreasing quantifiers are not good subjects, the NPI *santo de mi devoción* is not licensed, whereas *nadie* is with a non-decreasing subject:

- (21) Generoso con nadie, este gobierno.
 ‘Generous with nobody, this government.’

The explanation for these facts follows the same lines as the explanation of the occurrence of negative elements of a minimal nature in exclamative, interrogative and emphatic constructions, especially under the rhetorical interpretation (Andueza & Gutiérrez-Rexach 2010):

- (22) a. ¡Eres generoso con nadie!
 ‘You are generous with nobody!’
 b. ¿Quién ha dicho nada de interés?
 ‘Who has said nothing of interest?’

There are several approaches to these sentences, in which an NPI occurs in the absence of an overt licenser. The covert element (operator) has been claimed to be negative, decreasing or non-veridical in nature. What is relevant for our purposes in this paper is that sentence-level operators may license NPIs under certain circumstances, especially associated to emphatic and rhetorical readings. This is also the case in (21), so there is no need to postulate a licenser in the DP-subject position.

2.4. The information structure of Spanish PredNPs

The DP-subject in Spanish PredNPs is a background topic and expresses presupposed information and the predicate XP is the informational focus. The predicate presents new information and the subject is old information and must be salient (Paul & Stainton 2006). The subject, in other words, must be linked to a topic in the common ground or background context (Vallduví 1992; Lambrecht 1994). For example, the dialogue in (23a) is felicitous as long as the epithet is linked to the discourse

topic *Juan*. Similarly, (23b) would be felicitous if *el novio* is accommodated, by a bridging process (Clark 1975), and related to the discourse topic (the party).

- (23) a. Speaker A: ¿Qué piensas de Juan?
 ‘What do you think of this guy?’
 Speaker B: Un idiota, el tío este.
 ‘An idiot, this guy.’
 Un idiota_{focus} el tío este_{topic}
- b. Speaker A: ¿Qué piensas de la fiesta?
 ‘What do you think of this party?’
 Speaker B: Un idiota, el novio.
 ‘An idiot, the groom.’
 Un idiota_{focus} el novio_{topic}

The topic nature of the subject of Spanish PredNPs has important consequences for the strong referential constraint on the subject, namely that the subject must be specific (von Stechow 2002). It follows then that when a quantifier shows a specific/non-specific alternation, the more specific the quantifier is the more suitable it will be to occupy the subject position (Diesing 1992; Liu 1992; Gutiérrez-Rexach 2004). This is confirmed by the following contrast:

- (24) a. *Inteligente, todo estudiante.
 ‘Intelligent, every student.’
 b. ?Inteligentes, todos los estudiantes.
 ‘Intelligent, all of the students.’

Summarizing, Spanish PredNPs are a type of non-verbal or verbless predication structure with a fixed syntactic order. An initial XP-predicate precedes the DP-subject of the clause. There is usually no verb between the two expressions. These constructions have several properties: (i) they typically have a predicate with an evaluative/affective interpretation followed by a DP headed by a strong determiner; (ii) the predicate constitutes new information (focus); (iii) the subject needs to be strong; (iv) the DP and the XP can be connected via binding and polarity-licensing relations; and (v) the subject needs to be interpreted as a background topic. Finally, there is another property that has not been discussed so far and that is the obligatory presence of a prosodic or intonational break between the initial XP-predicate and the DP-subject. The high tone over the predicate may suggest that when a Spanish PredNP is uttered the speaker is expressing a strong emotional reaction towards the entity that is being described (Bosque 1984) –cf. the AFFECT-criterion mentioned above.

3. Previous syntactic accounts

3.1. Right-dislocated DP

In a right-dislocated DP analysis, a sentence such as (25a) would have the underlying sequence in (25b) as its derivational starting point and the bare representation in (25c):

- (25) a. Bellísima, aquella mina.
 ‘Very beautiful, that girl.’
 b. Aquella mina es bellísima.
 ‘That girl is very beautiful.’
 c. [[~~aquella mina es bellísima~~] aquella mina;_i]

Derivationally, two operations would be required: one of deletion of the subject and the copula, and another one right-adjoining a copy of the subject to the maximal constituent. Vinet (1991) pointed out several problems with this analysis: first, the semantic distinction between individual and stage-level predicates cannot be captured since this analysis would allow the generation of (26a):

- (26) a. *Cansado, este chico.
 ‘Tired, this guy.’
 b. ~~este chico está cansado~~ este chico.
 ‘It’s tired, this guy.’

Second, according to Paul & Stainton (2006), we must explain why deletion affects a non-constituent –i.e. the subject and the verb undergo ellipsis (Shopen 1972). A reviewer points out that in some cases certain ellipsis processes (gapping) can target a non-constituent, but in these cases there are derivational or syntactic motivations that appear to be absent in this case (Johnson 2010). Third, this analysis cannot account for the fact that these sentences cannot be embedded not only in Spanish (27a), but also in other languages: English (27b) and French (27c):

- (27) a. *Yo sé que ~~este es~~ inteligente este estudiante.
 b. *I know that ~~this student is~~ intelligent this student.
 c. *Je sais que ~~cet étudiant est~~ intelligent cet étudiant.

Nevertheless, the right-dislocated DP analysis has some advantages: It explains why the DP-subject cannot contain a restrictive operator like *sólo* ‘only’ (28a). Note that a right-dislocated subject in a finite sentence in Spanish cannot contain *sólo* either (28b). In this respect, right-dislocated subjects and the subject DP of Spanish PredNPs behave alike:

- (28) a. *Muy guapa, sólo María.
 ‘Very handsome, only María.’
 b. *Ella/esta es guapa, es decir, sólo María.
 ‘She’s handsome, namely, only María.’

On the other hand, right-dislocated subjects in Spanish cannot be quantified determiner phrases (29a). This pattern is only reproduced partially in Spanish PredNPs, as we mentioned before, given that a subclass of quantified determiner phrases are good subjects (the strong ones):

- (29) a. *Ellos/estos son inteligentes, es decir, todos los niños.
 ‘They are intelligent, namely, every kid.’
 b. Inteligentes, todos los estudiantes de la clase.
 ‘Intelligent, every student in class.’

3.2. Subject-Predicate movement

In this analysis, there are two possible syntactic derivations for Spanish PredNPs (Paul & Stainton 2006). In the first one, known as the subject-movement analysis, the DP-subject is adjoined to the right of the Tense Phrase (TP). Afterwards, the verb is elided. The derivation of (30a) would be as in (30b):

- (30) a. Extremadamente alto, tu hijo.
 ‘Extremely tall, your son.’
 b. [[t_i ~~es~~ extremadamente alto] [tu hijo]_i]

Another possible derivation would be based on the assumption that the predicate and the subject have both been fronted, an operation followed by TP ellipsis –i.e. first, we have movement and then deletion of the main verb (cf. Merchant 2004). Thus, (31a) would be derived as in (31b):

- (31) a. Un bastardo, tu hijo.
 ‘A bastard, your son.’
 b. [[un bastardo]_i [tu hijo]_j [t_j ~~es~~ t_i]

In this analysis, the missing verb needs to be the copula, which predicts the lack of predicative content outside the displaced element. The movement analysis has several additional advantages: It explains several semantic restrictions on the predicate. If the moved predicate carries a strong semantic

feature [+AFFECTIVE], then the movement of the XP-predicate is due to the satisfaction of a feature-checking requirement. The predicate would move to a focus position where this feature can be checked. Vinet (1991) reaches a similar conclusion for French PredNPs, but with just one difference. She analyzes French PredNPs as exclamative sentences. If we assume that Spanish PredNPs are in fact a type of exclamative construction, something that we will discuss below in more detail, then the following holds: The moved predicate can be considered to be associated to an exclamatory operator and, under this assumption, only predicates that are associated to such operators at Logical Form (LF) may be moved to an adjoined position at Spell-Out where they have scope over the whole clause.

3.3. Two independent clauses

Under this analysis, the non-verbal clause would consist of two independent clauses. Even though this account does not face some of the problems faced by the previous two analyzes (e.g., the ellipsis problem), it wrongly predicts the occurrence of sentential adverbs, such as *probablemente* ‘probably’, between the two clauses (32). Their occurrence is possible because sentential adverbs are allowed as modifiers of non-sentential clauses in general, as illustrated in (33) (Paul & Stainton 2006):

(32) *Un buen hablador, probablemente tu amigo Bill.
‘A good talker, probably your friend Bill.’

(33) Speaker A: ¿Quién viene?
‘Who’s coming?’
Speaker B: Probablemente tu amigo Bill.
‘Probably, your friend Bill.’

Furthermore, this analysis does not recognize that these clauses carry T(ense) specification, even though a lexical verb does not occur overtly. Thus, whereas (34a) can be interpreted only in the present tense, (34b) may be interpreted either in the present or in the past tense. Indeed, (34b) can have a past tense reading in a context where the writer is dead (e.g., Cervantes), as well as the more explicit (34c).

(34) a. Muy sabio, este escritor.
‘Very wise, this writer.’
b. Muy sabio, aquel escritor.
‘Very wise, that writer.’
c. Muy sabio, aquel escritor que era manco.
‘Very wise, that writer who was one-handed.’

In this case, it can be hypothesized that temporal specification is associated to proximal/distal deixis, a phenomenon not uncommon in Spanish (Silva-Villar & Gutiérrez-Rexach 2001). Following this line of reasoning, it would be claimed that in (34b) tense specification is contextually associated to the distal feature of the demonstrative, and in (34c) it is derived from the one in the relative clause. The proposition expressed is a single one, with a single temporal parameter. The clearest cases of temporal association with deixis are those involving non-demonstrative deixis, i.e. when making reference to entities not in the visual or perceptive demonstrative field. There is also a restriction on the temporal specification of Spanish PredNP: the lack of prospective Spanish PredNPs, namely, those specified with a [future] tense value, as the following examples illustrate:

(35) a. *Un éxito, tu próximo libro.
‘A success, your forthcoming book.’
b. *Inteligente, tu futuro hijo.
‘Smart, your next son.’
c. *Divertidísima, la fiesta del sábado que viene.
‘Extremely fun, next Saturday’s party.’

This property follows from the affective and semi-exclamatory nature of Spanish PredNPs. The speaker expresses an evaluative attitude toward a fact, as happens with exclamatives (we will discuss

this issue in more detail in the last section). But facts are true propositions about a given event or property that has already taken place. Thus, prospective Spanish PredNP would not be factive and are ruled out. Summarizing, the independent clause analysis does not seem to be helpful in elucidating several of the most important semantic restrictions and properties of the proposition, the predicates involved or the DP-subject.

3.4. *Small clause analysis*

According to this analysis, the subject DP and the predicate in Spanish PredNPs form a syntactic constituent. If we assume den Dikken's (2006) hypothesis about the RELATOR PHRASE (RP) then there seems to be a strong argument for analyzing Spanish PredNPs as sentences involving a subject DP as the specifier of the RELATOR and the predicate as its complement. The base syntactic representation of sentence (36a) is provided in (36b):

- (36) a. Un cobarde, el sargento.
 'A coward, the sergeant.'
 b. [_{RelP} el sargento [_{Rel} REL un cobarde]]

The RELATOR is a functional category, which makes possible the asymmetrical small clause, and creates an asymmetrical c-command relationship between the predicate and the subject. A RELATOR mediates the relationship between a predicate and its subject in the base representation of predication structures (den Dikken 2006). In the case of (36b), the RELATOR is empty and it does not have a phonological representation. Even though this analysis is structurally attractive, it says nothing about the nature of the predicate and the subject in Spanish PredNPs and the important semantic restrictions that we have listed above.

Summarizing, the analyses discussed so far seem to explain some properties of the Spanish PredNP, but fail to explain others. The right-dislocated analysis correctly predicts the nature of the subject DP, but fails to explain the restriction on the predicate. The subject/predicate movement proposal correctly analyzes the nature of the XP predicate, but forces us to assume an underlying copula verb. Furthermore, neither approach succeeds in explaining how a non-constituent needs to be elided in the course of the syntactic derivation. The two-independent-clauses hypothesis does not block the occurrence of sentential adverbs between the subject and the predicate and cannot explain the interpretation of T. Finally, the small-clause analysis reveals little about the nature of the predicate and the subject –for example, the definiteness restriction over the DP-subject. In the following section, we build upon these analyses and present a new syntactic account of the derivation for Spanish PredNPs.

4. Toward a new proposal

In order to explain the syntactic structure of Spanish PredNPs, we will assume that the XP-predicate moves to the left of the subject, as an instance of predicate inversion. The target for this movement operation is a focus position where the XP can check the [+AFFECTIVE] feature. Paul (2006), following den Dikken (2006), invokes a similar strategy of predicate inversion for the interpretation of verbless utterances of this type, but for a different reason. In her view, the predicate moves to Spec,TP in order to license the null copula head. If the copula is overtly realized, then movement is blocked. In Paul's proposal, (37a) would be represented as (37b):

- (37) a. Beautiful, your girlfriend.
 b. [_{TP} [_{PredP} [beautiful]]_j T [_{RP} [_{DP} your girlfriend] R⁰ t_j]]

There are problems with Paul's account because predicate inversion is possible even when the copula is overtly realized:

- (38) a. John is the tallest man in this building.
 b. The tallest man in this building is John.

- (39) a. Mary is a good professor.
b. A good professor is (in fact) Mary.

Predicate inversion is possible only when the clause is interpreted predicatively, which would explain the ungrammaticality of (40-41):

- (40) a. Mary is beautiful.
b. *Beautiful is Mary.
- (41) a. Mary is a woman.
b. *A woman is Mary.

Thus, according to Paul (2006), only predicative adjectives are allowed in this type of verbless clauses. However, this is not true since stage-level adjectives can be used predicatively, but still are not allowed in PredNPs, as we have seen in this paper:

- (42) a. *Available, the doctor.
b. *Tired, your friend.

Furthermore, Paul's (2006) argument suggests that if the copula were non-null then predicate inversion would not apply. This prediction is not borne out, as shown by (43):

- (43) a. Muy inteligente es ese profesor.
'Very intelligent is that professor.'
b. Es muy inteligente ese profesor.
'It is very intelligent that professor.'

It is possible to argue that (43a-b) are constructions of a different type, but even if this is the case—at least from the point of view of the representation of information structure—, there is still the fact that predicate inversion can happen in the absence of a null copula. In fact, Moro (1997) does not link predicate raising to the presence of a null copula. Thus, Paul's argument does not seem completely motivated. However, more importantly, the idea that predicate inversion precisely takes place to license the null copula is diametrically opposed to den Dikken's (2006) central argument. In den Dikken's view, as a matter of fact, predicate inversion leads precisely to the obligatory overtness of the RELATOR (or copula in this case):

- (44) a. I consider John (to be) the best candidate for the job.
b. I consider the best candidate for the job *(to be) John.

In this paper we will assume that what motivates predicate inversion in Spanish PredNPs is not the absence of the copula, but a strong feature (Chomsky 1995), which needs to be checked overtly in the course of the syntactic derivation. We will assume furthermore that there is a RELATOR between the DP-subject and the XP-predicate, but contrary to the small clause analysis (3.4.), this RELATOR is not empty and it can accommodate the tense feature. The default tense in Spanish PredNPs is the present tense, but a past tense interpretation is also possible. Recently, Benmamoun (2008) has argued that tense is universally projected, even though it does not need to co-occur with a verbal head in all languages. He provides evidence from Hebrew and Arabic, two well-known languages with verbless clauses. Along the same lines, we propose a similar account for Spanish PredNPs: in this case, even if there is no verbal head, tense can be interpreted. Thus, sentence (45) is derived as represented in (46):

- (45) Caro, el coche ese.
'Expensive, that car.'

- (46) $[_{\text{DegP}} \text{OP} + \emptyset [_{\text{XP}} [_{\text{FOC}} [_{\text{AP}} \text{caro}]_i [_{\text{X} + \text{FOC}} + \emptyset [_{\text{RP}} [_{\text{DP}} \text{el coche ese}] \text{R}^\circ \text{t}_j]]]]]$

In the initial configuration, *el coche ese* and *caro* are respectively the specifier (subject) and the complement (predicate) of a predication structure (RelP) headed by a null relator. The adjective *caro* is specified as [+affective]. This feature associates with focus and triggers movement to a left-peripheral projection headed by X+Focus –cf. also Zagana 2002, and Villalba & Bartra 2010 for similar configurations; for simplicity purposes we do not represent here the semantic structure associated with focus, namely, whether there is an additional operator involved, etc. This configuration would derive the desired Spell-Out order without a copular element and with the predicate in a preposed position. It would also predict the root nature of this constructions, since they have structural layers related to speech-act interpretation, including exclamative aspects argued below. As it is obvious, the presence of a copula would block movement to the left periphery, so the absence of an overt copular element becomes essential in deriving the proper configuration. Nevertheless, there are other elements and properties of the construction that still need to be accounted for. First, as mentioned before, preposed adjectives in Spanish PredNPs are always gradable and the scalar value they associate with is high or extreme. This critical property is captured in (46) by the fact that the adjective has to be under the immediate scope of a degree operator. Such operator would require to associate the relevant value at a very high/extreme point. Thus, sentence (47) would be ungrammatical, because *muerto* is not gradable.

- (47) *Muerto, el soldado ese.
'Dead, that soldier.'

Additionally, recall that the preposed predicate in sentences such as (48a) is normally interpreted as a high-degree term. Thus, the sentence tends to be interpreted as similar or equivalent to (48b). Sentences such as (48c), where the modifier *razonablemente* would indicate mid-lever scalar attribution, are not felicitous –unless coerced into an ironic reading.

- (48) a. Normalita, la película.
'Average, the movie.'
b. Muy normalita, la película.
'Very average, the movie.'
c. #Razonablemente normalita, la película.
'Reasonably average, the movie.'

The high degree requirement is also a constraint that exclamative sentences have to satisfy (Gutiérrez-Rexach 1996; Villalba 2004; Castroviejo 2006; Rett 2011). As expected (cf. also Vinet 1991), Spanish PredNPs may have the sentential force of an exclamatory sentence, so they can be considered expressives rather than standard truth-conditional propositions (Grosz 2011). When uttering a sentence such as (48a) a speaker is expressing an emotive attitude toward the fact that the movie that he has just watched is very average or more average than he expected. The difference with other exclamatory constructions is that Spanish PredNPs do not seem to be exclamatives obligatory, in contrast to other well-known exclamative constructions:

- (49) a. ¡Qué alto que es Juan!
'How tall Juan is!'
b. ¡Qué normalita, la película!
'How average, the movie.'

The sentences in (49) have an unambiguous exclamatory force. On the other hand, (48a) is not unambiguously exclamative. It might be uttered as a reply to question such as (50):

- (50) ¿Qué te pareció la sesión de cine?
'What do you think about the movie session?'

This would contrast with a discourse such as (51) where the use is clearly exclamatory:

- (51) A mí me gusta mucho ir al cine pero aquí ¡muy muy normalita la película!
'I love going to the movies, but in this case: 'how average the movie was!'

Nevertheless, one might hypothesize that even in more neutral cases, such as the dialogue (49-48a), Spanish PredNPs are not completely neutral devices for assigning focus prominence or emphasis. There is always an additional content of an expressive nature, which might be the by-product of the associated high-degree requirement. These interpretations can be due to its mixed exclamative nature (Gutiérrez-Rexach 2012b). In addition to the emphatic content, there is a clear significant content belonging to the expressive dimension. If this idea is correct, the propositional denotation of Spanish PredNPs would be either a set of worlds (type $\langle s, t \rangle$) or a function from propositions to evaluative attitudes (type $\langle s, t, E \rangle$), cf. Potts & Roeper (2006) and Grosz (2011). In the latter case, the degree operator would have expressive content associated to it. Thus for P a Spanish PredNP and EX a degree operator with expressive features, we would say that an utterance of $EX_i(P)$ would convey that the speaker at the point of utterance has an emotion e (or at least an evaluative attitude e) towards P . The speaker intends to express e , rather than describe e . This evaluative attitude involves a scale S on which P exceeds a salient threshold. EX would only combine with scales that are anchored to the speaker and are evaluative/emotive. There are instances where the preposed element does not appear to be a high-degree term:

- (52)
- a. Un poco arriesgada, esta propuesta.
'Slightly risky, your proposal.'
 - b. Bastante interesante, tu idea.
'Quite interesting, your idea.'
 - c. Algo tontita, la niña esta.
'Somewhat dumb, this girl.'
 - d. Medio lelo, tu primo.
'Semi idiotic, your cousin.'
 - e. Nada irrelevante, aquel comentario.
'Not irrelevant at all, that comment.'

Although it is true that the adjectives in the examples above are modified by quantificational elements that are not at a high point of a scale by themselves (*un poco* 'a little', *algo* 'some', *medio* 'half', etc.), when placed in a Spanish PredNP they all involve a salient threshold related to the speaker's emotions. As such, they might be used as understatements (52 a, b) or in ironic statements (52 c, d). For example, (52e) highlights that for the speaker the comment under discussion is not irrelevant at all, i.e. it can be very relevant. What this property seems to be suggesting is that, independently of the standard value of the modifying degree element occurring in the Spanish PredNP, by virtue of the EXC operator, the preposed XP is interpreted as salient with respect to the relevant emotional state of the speaker, thus giving rise to a high-degree interpretation.

5. Conclusion

This paper has provided a syntactic and semantic analysis for Spanish Predicative Noun Phrases. The most relevant aspects of this analysis are the following: Spanish PredNPs can be analyzed in terms of predicate inversion (cf. Vinet 1991 for French, and Paul 2006 for English). XP predicate movement is triggered by the strong [+AFFECTIVE] feature, which needs to be checked in the course of the syntactic derivation. This also accounts for the fact that the DP-subject must obligatorily be strong and that predicate fronting requires the DP-subject to be topical.

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