

The Syntax of Spanish

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Overview of the grammar

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 *The extent of Modern Spanish*

Modern Spanish is spoken by just under 300 million people worldwide, and is thus one of the three or four most widely spoken languages, after Mandarin Chinese, English and possibly Hindi.¹ Spanish is the primary or official language in numerous countries, including Spain and its dependencies, Equatorial Guinea, eighteen countries of Central and South America, and the US protectorate of Puerto Rico.² Spanish is robust as a first or second language in many areas of the southwestern United States, as well as in other agricultural areas of the US, and urban areas such as Miami and New York. According to the 1990 census, about 17.3 million people over the age of five speak Spanish at home in the US.

Many countries in which Spanish is the official or primary language are linguistically diverse, with bilingualism a common, but not universal, phenomenon. In the north of Spain, primary languages include Basque, Catalan and Galician.³ In Latin America, many indigenous languages are used alongside Spanish. In Bolivia, for example, at least half the population speaks either Aymara or Quechua natively, and it is estimated that 40% of these speakers

¹ Mandarin has well over 700 million speakers, English over 400 million. Estimates for Spanish speakers range from 266 million (Bright 1992) to 290 million (Green 1992), and estimates for Hindi range from 182 million (Bright 1992) to 290 million (Décsey 1986).

² Spanish is the official language of most countries of Latin America. In Peru, both Spanish and Quechua are official languages. In Bolivia, Spanish, Quechua and Aymara are all official languages.

Although Spanish is the official language of Equatorial Guinea, it is estimated that only 4–5% of the population speaks Spanish (Kurian 1992:600).

³ Galician or Gallego is considered more closely related to Portuguese than to Spanish. Catalan is more closely related to Occitan than to Spanish. Basque is a linguistic isolate.

do not speak Spanish (Grimes 1988:85–87; Kurian 1992:184). In Paraguay, Guaraní is spoken by over 3 million speakers, with a majority of rural speakers being monolingual (Grimes 1988:125). Relatively large populations of speakers of indigenous languages are also found in Peru (Ayacucho Quechua and Cuzco Quechua), Guatemala (Mayan languages) and Ecuador (Quichua). Many other indigenous languages are spoken, by populations numbering from dozens of speakers to tens of thousands. Relatively small populations speak Creole languages in Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Panama.⁴ English is growing as a second language in some parts of the Caribbean, such as the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, in northern Mexico, and in urban areas elsewhere in Latin America.

Dialects of Modern Spanish on the Iberian peninsula include Castilian, the northern dialect families of Navarro-Aragonese, Leonese and Asturian, and the southern, Andaluz dialects.^{5,6} *Ladino* or *Judeo-español* is a dialect of Spanish spoken by Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain at the end of the fifteenth century. It is a “fossil” dialect in that it retains characteristics of the pronunciation of that time. In Latin America, the problem of defining dialect boundaries is a complex one.⁷ The grammar is differentiated along phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical lines, but the degree of variation makes classifying “discrete” dialect boundaries extremely difficult. Latin America is more conveniently described in terms of dialect “areas” which are associated loosely with general linguistic patterns. These include such areas as the River Plate region of Uruguay and Argentina, the Andean highlands, and the Caribbean. Section 1.7 below summarizes general patterns of syntactic variation in these areas.

1.1.2 *The spread of the Castilian dialect*

Although Spanish is spoken over an extremely broad geographical expanse, it is nevertheless relatively uniform syntactically. This is due in part

⁴ In Belize, 25–40% of the population is Spanish-speaking, and most of the population speaks an English-based Creole (Kriol). The official language of Belize is English. Statistics on the occurrence of Creoles are based on Grimes (1988) and Kurian (1992).

⁵ For detailed discussion of Iberian dialects see Alvar (1996), Otero (1971).

⁶ Among Andaluz dialects, which are characterized by weakening of word-final *-s*, there are areas in which final *-s* appears to be disappearing. This (eventually) may have syntactic consequences with respect to the “richness” of features for number and person, since *-s* distinguishes plurality in nominals and distinguishes 2nd person in verbal paradigms.

⁷ For detailed discussion of the problem of classification of Latin American dialects see Lipski (1994).

to the early political unification of Spain, and to the spread of the Castilian dialect throughout the unified area. This unification was a consequence of the drive to re-conquer the peninsula after its occupation by the Moors in the early eighth century. The area from which the reconquest was launched was Castilla la Vieja (Old Castille). In the course of the centuries-long battle against the Moors, the Castilian dialect spread throughout much of modern Spain. Castilian thereby coexisted with other Spanish dialects that had evolved in various areas, and largely replaced them over the course of time.

Most of Iberia had been Romanized during the period of the expansion of spoken Latin.⁸ With the decline of Rome, the peninsula was invaded by successive waves of Germanic tribes, and eventually came under the control of Visigothic kingdoms during the fifth to eighth centuries. This period marks a transition during which spoken Latin was initially similar enough to the written form of Classical Latin to remain viable for administrative purposes.⁹ Meanwhile the increasing political weakness of the Visigothic kingdoms and the beginnings of feudalism accelerated the growth of local Romance varieties. This was especially characteristic of northern and northwestern Iberia, where Romanization was never extensive, urbanization was minimal, and Romance coexisted with Basque, and perhaps other indigenous languages.

With the Moorish conquest, Iberia was for a time severed from the rest of Europe, where emerging monasteries provided a linguistic and cultural counterweight to feudal isolation. Throughout much of Iberia, Mozárabe¹⁰ became the standard form of Romance. The mountainous north, however, which the Moors never successfully settled, retained its dialect diversity (Alatorre 1989:108). As Moorish control of the peninsula receded, the north and northwest became Christian strongholds with renewed ties to the rest of Europe. Santiago de Compostela was an important destination for Christians from throughout Europe, and monasteries and cathedrals emerged. At the

⁸ Although spoken Latin was in use and undergoing evolution from much earlier times, the period of its great geographic expansion might be taken to begin around 100 BC, when Latin replaced Oscan as the official language of central Italy, to AD 200, when the empire reached its broadest expanse. Although Romanization of the Hispanic peninsula began earlier with the Second Punic War, the legionnaires (and colonizers) of this period were perhaps not predominantly Latin speakers. Lapesa (1981:94–101) notes that significant numbers may have been speakers of the Oscan–Umbrian subfamily of Italic, which was spoken in southern regions of Italy.

⁹ The question of whether speakers considered their spoken and written languages to be one and the same has been debated in recent studies. For discussion and references see Wright (1991).

¹⁰ The term “Mozárabe” refers either to Christians who lived in Moorish-controlled Spain, or to the variety of Spanish spoken by Christians (and non-Christians). See Galmés de Fuentes (1996).

southern periphery of Asturias (the then kingdom of Oviedo), a relatively unpopulated area known previously as Bardulia (Alvar 1994:81) had been newly settled and fortified with *castiellas* against Moslem raids. By the ninth century the area was known as “the place of the castles,” or Castille. According to Lloyd (1987:177), Castille was populated by settlers from different areas, who abandoned peculiar features of pronunciation associated with their origins. Castille was also an area where Basque was spoken, and some features of Spanish, such as initial *f*>*h* have been attributed to Basque influence.

Over the subsequent centuries, Castille became a dominant power in the north, and was the center from which the reconquest of the peninsula was launched. Although Castilian was not a prestige dialect, it gradually spread southward and became dominant as Spain was politically unified and Christianized.¹¹ The religious zealotry which followed the reconquest included linguistic “purification,” as Arabic books were burned in Granada, and the use of Arabic (and even Arabic borrowings) was increasingly condemned throughout the sixteenth century. Between 1609 and 1614, as many as 300,000 *moriscos* (non-assimilated or partially assimilated Moors and their descendants) were expelled from Spain.

The form of the language that took root in Latin America was affected by a number of unifying influences. One of these was the social climate of conformity – including linguistic conformity – which held sway in Spain at the time of colonization. This tendency was made concrete policy with respect to colonization, as the monarchs prohibited emigration of Jews and Moors to the new world (Sánchez-Albornoz 1984:15). Another factor that minimized diversity during the era of colonization was the relatively short time frame during which much of the settlement occurred. Immigration was most extensive before 1650, and dropped off sharply by the 1700s.¹² Colonization also coincided with the introduction of the printing press, the first of which was brought to Mexico City by the 1530s (Alatorre 1989:138). Subsequent influences, such as ongoing commerce with Spain, the independence movements, bilingualism and the growth of mass media, have resulted in a rich range of

¹¹ Lloyd (1987:179–180) suggests that “reverse prestige” may have enhanced the spread of Castilian, given the role of Castille in the liberation of the peninsula from the Moors. An additional factor in the spread of Castilian was migration. An economic breakdown in the north triggered significant migration from northern Castille to the south during the sixteenth century, which reinforced the spread of Castilian.

¹² Sánchez-Albornoz (1984:15–16) estimates that from 200,000 to 243,000 people immigrated during the sixteenth century, and an almost equal number during the first half of the seventeenth century. The extent of immigration is small overall, compared with immigration to the United States from other countries.

phonological and morphological variations in the grammar, but less variation in the syntax.

1.1.3 *The evolution of Spanish syntax*

The evolution of spoken Latin into proto-Romance was characterized from early on by simplification of inflectional paradigms for nouns, adjectives and verbs, and emergence or broader use of periphrastic constructions which fulfilled some of the same grammatical functions. The nominal case paradigms were reduced to a Nominative/Accusative distinction, and prepositions emerged as markers of other cases. Definite and indefinite articles evolved (from Latin demonstrative *ille* “that” and the cardinal *unum* “one,” respectively). Periphrastic comparative forms of adjectives replaced synthetic forms. In the verbal paradigms, simplification of Classical inflections included the loss of the future tense, of synthetic passives, and of diverse non-finite forms. Many of these changes were incipient or well underway in spoken Latin, and some were accelerated as a result of phonological changes such as loss of many word-final consonants and loss of distinctive vowel quantity. The most stable inflectional features were person, number and masculine/feminine gender markers, and the [\pm PAST] inflection for verbs.

The “break-up” of proto-Romance into the early differentiated Romance languages is generally dated from the point at which written Latin was no longer comprehensible to the Romance speaker, roughly between the fifth and ninth centuries.¹³ Characteristics of early Spanish are deduced from documents dating from the eleventh century. Grammatical changes during this period continued those trends described above: inflectional simplification and grammaticalization of functional and quasi-functional morphemes; in many instances these changes were common across languages. For example, nouns lost their Nominative/Accusative distinction. In western varieties of Romance, accusative plural *-s* was reanalyzed as a plural marker. Object pronouns were de-stressed and became clitics. Verbal auxiliaries evolved in passives, compound perfect, future and conditional tenses. The clitic *se* (Latin 3rd.sg./pl. Refl.) was grammaticalized, first as a detransitive (anti-causative) morpheme, then as a marker of middles, and (in Spanish) as a marker of passive voice (Hanssen 1945:230–231).

¹³ Because classical Latin was used as a written form under the Visigothic administrations, it is more difficult to date the transition from proto-Romance to Romance in the Iberian peninsula than elsewhere. In France, by contrast, “translations” began to occur in 813 (cf. note 8; see also Palmer 1954:178–179). Only in the eleventh century did Carolingian writing replace the Visigothic system (Lapesa 1981:169).

One syntactic innovation from this period is the emergence in Spanish of the “personal *a*,” a marker of specific, human direct objects. Personal *a* occurred most consistently at first with proper names and pronouns, less consistently with common nouns (Lapesa 1981:213). Torrego (1998:42; citing Lapesa 1968) mentions an additional factor which governed the distribution of personal *a* around the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. *A* appeared with the complements of verbs that denote an action that affects an individual physically or psychologically. Only later did it occur with non-affected animate direct objects.

The constituent order of Old Spanish differs from that of Modern Spanish in several respects. In Old Spanish, only phrases headed by closed class items (such as articles, complementizers and prepositions) were clearly head-initial. Lexical, or “open class,” heads of phrases (nouns, adjectives and verbs) allowed both complement–head and head–complement order. The basic order of the verb and its objects is analyzed as having switched from OV to VO order (Otero 1975; Saltarelli 1994). It is interesting to note that auxiliary–main verb complexes gradually evolved from verb–auxiliary to auxiliary–verb (Rivero 1993; Lapesa 1981:217; Hanssen 1945:249, 251). The constituents of clauses also patterned differently in Old Spanish. Fontana (1993) argues that Old Spanish is a V2 (verb second) language, not of the German type (which exhibits second-position verbs in main clauses only), but of the Icelandic type: with verbs occupying second position in subordinate clauses also. Fontana terms this “symmetric V2.”

Another difference between Old Spanish and Modern Spanish concerns the behavior and the placement of pronominal clitics. Modern Spanish clitics attach only to verbs, and either precede or follow the verb according to whether the verb is finite or non-finite. Old Spanish pronominal clitics occupied second position in the clause, and were phonologically dependent on the preceding constituent – whether that constituent was a verb or not. This is shown by the fact that they could not occur clause-initially following a pause.¹⁴ In this respect, the pronominal clitics behaved like other atonic elements, including *non* “not,” conjunctions and some auxiliaries. Auxiliaries mostly lost this restriction during the period of Old Spanish (cf. Hanssen 1945:251–252).

Old Spanish displayed auxiliary switch, similar to that of Modern French and Italian (Vincent 1982). Auxiliary *ser* “to be” alternated with *aver* “to have” in the compound perfect tenses. In these tenses, *ser* was generally used with unaccusatives and “reflexive” (anticausative) intransitives, and *aver* with

¹⁴ For detailed discussion of the syntax of Old Spanish clitics see Rivero (1986, 1991), Wanner (1987), Fontana (1993).

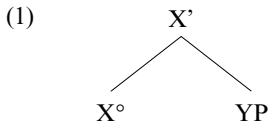
transitives (Lapesa 1981:212; Hanssen 1945:230–233). The compound perfect tense also displayed past participle agreement with the object. However, both auxiliary switch and past participle agreement were inconsistent.¹⁵

1.2 General characteristics of the syntax

Many characteristics of Spanish syntax are typical of the Indo-European family, including the relative richness of verbal morphology compared with nominal morphology, and the overt movement of interrogative phrases and of noun phrases (e.g., in passives). Other characteristics are prevalent within the Romance family. These include head-initial constituent order, pronominal clitics, negative concord, rich agreement morphology and null subject phenomena. Two characteristics of Spanish which are relatively isolated within Romance include the so-called “personal *a*” which precedes animate direct objects under certain conditions,¹⁶ and clitic “doubling” of indirect objects (and dialectally, direct objects). This section summarizes features of Spanish syntax which place the language typologically, and which provide an introduction for subsequent discussion.

1.2.1 Constituent order

Modern Spanish is a head-initial language. As shown in (1), the construction of a phrasal head, or X° with a complement, gives the order: head-complement. Thus, nouns, adjectives, verbs and prepositions precede their complements. Examples are in (2):



- (2) a. *construyeron un puente* [V° – NP]
 built a bridge
 “(they) built a bridge”

¹⁵ Lapesa (1981:212) notes the inconsistent usage of *ser* and of past participle agreement, and notes that “contradictory uses” due to foreign influences were not uncommon.

¹⁶ Lapesa (1981:94–101) observes that the use of “personal *a*” is one of several grammatical features which Iberian dialects share with Sicilian and other southern Italian varieties.

b. con un martillo	[P° – NP]
with a hammer	
c. estudiante de física	[N° – PP]
student of physics	
d. leal a los ideales	[A° – PP]
loyal to the ideals	

Functional categories also precede the lexical categories which they govern, for example determiners precede noun phrases, and complementizers precede clauses. Auxiliary verbs, which might be considered functional or quasi-functional items, also precede the main verb of the clause:

- (3) a. Habíamos hablado del problema.
 had spoken of+the problem
 “(We) had spoken about the problem.”
 b. *Hablado habíamos del problema.

The order of adjuncts, or optional modifying phrases, relative to the head varies according to several factors. All of the positions in (4) are possible with normal (unbroken) intonation:

- (4) [(adjunct) head (adjunct) complement (adjunct)]

Structurally complex adjuncts typically follow the head and its complements. Several factors condition the availability of pre-head adjuncts, including structural and lexical properties of the adjunct as well as the category of the head. Adjunct order is discussed in relation to the Noun Phrase (Chapter 2), the Verb Phrase (Chapter 4) and the clause (Chapter 5). The order of subjects is addressed below (1.3.) and in Chapter 5.

1.2.2 Case

Spanish has a Nominative/Accusative case system. Case is not manifested morphologically on lexical nouns or determiners; only personal pronouns and some relative pronouns retain vestiges of Latin case distinctions. The strong (i.e., tonic, or stressed) personal pronouns display morphologically distinct forms to the extent shown in (5), illustrated with the 1st person singular form:

- (5) a. Nominative: yo “I”
 b. Objective: mí “me”
 c. Genitive: mí(o/ a (s)) “my”¹⁷
 (m./f.(pl.))

¹⁷ The strong forms of possessive pronouns agree in number and gender with the modified noun.

Objective Case in (5) is the form common to objects of prepositions. The weak pronouns (Section 1.2.4) may have different form and distribution depending on whether the object is direct or indirect. These differences lead to subclasses of Objective: (a) Accusative (direct object of V^o), (b) Dative (indirect object of V^o) and (c) Oblique (object of P^o). The following discussion will briefly summarize the contexts for Nominative, Genitive and the three subcases of Objective case.

Nominative is the case of subjects of finite clauses, both indicative and subjunctive; of predicative NPs linked to the clausal subject; and of subjects of participial and infinitival adjunct clauses. The example in (6) illustrates that pronominal subjects of both indicative and subjunctive clauses appear in Nominative form:

- (6) Insisto **yo** en que lo hagas **tú**.
 Insist-pr.ind.1st.sg. I on that it do-pr.subj.2nd.sg. you
 “I insist that you do it.”

Predicative NPs with Nominative form are shown in (7):

- (7) a. El campeón eres **tú**.
 “The champion is you(Nom.)”
 b. Lo que encontraron era **yo**.
 “What (they) found was I(Nom.)”

In (7), the verb agrees in person and number with the predicative pronoun (cf. English “It *is/am* I”).

Adjunct clauses with Nominative subjects are shown in (8):

- (8) a. [Llegada **ella**] empezó la fiesta.
 arrived-f. she(Nom.) began the party
 “(With) her arrived, the party began.”
 b. [Habiendo llegado **ella**], empezó la fiesta.
 have-prt. arrive-pprt. she(Nom.) begin-pret. the party
 “With her having arrived, the party began.”
 c. [Al cantar **tú**], empezó la fiesta
 upon+the sing-inf+it you(Nom.) began the party
 “Upon your singing it, the party began.”
 d. [De ganar **ellos**] los felicitaremos.
 of win-inf. they (Nom.) CL(DO) congratulate-fut.1st.pl.
 “If they win, we will congratulate them.”

In the above constructions, the participle or infinitive must precede the subject, but some dialect variation occurs (see 1.7). The participial clause in (8a) shows number and gender agreement with the subject; the participial clause (8b) and infinitives (8c), (8d) are non-agreeing forms.¹⁸

¹⁸ Rigau (1992) shows that constructions like (8c), which appear to be nominalized, are in fact clausal.

Genitive is the case assumed by the subject of a noun phrase, and is marked either by the preposition *de* with a non-pronominal, as in (9), or by the Genitive form of a pronominal, as in (10). Genitive pronominals have both weak (pre-nominal) and strong (post-nominal) forms, illustrated in (10a) and (10b) respectively:

- (9) el retrato de Josefina
 the portrait of J.
 “Josefina’s portrait”
- (10) a. mis libros
 my-pl. book-m.pl.
 “my books”
 b. los libros míos
 the-m.pl. book-m.pl. my-m.pl.
 “my books”

In (9), the *de*-phrase is ambiguous between possessor, agent, and subject of the portrait. This illustrates that Genitives are not necessarily possessors, and also that *de* is not exclusively Genitive. The examples in (10) illustrate that Genitive pronominals agree in number (and gender) with the possessed noun. In contrast with Italian, determiners do not co-occur with a pre-nominal possessive (**los míos libros* “the my books”) in most dialects of Spanish. In contrast with English, “double genitives” of the form “a book of his” (**un libro de suyo*) do not occur. Post-nominal genitives show either *de*, as in (9), or genitive morphology, as in (10b).

Relative pronouns display a distinguishable Genitive form, although interrogatives do not. This is illustrated by the contrast between the relative pronoun in (11a) and the interrogatives in (11b, c):¹⁹

¹⁹ Interrogative forms do not show case distinctions in general. *Qué* “what,” and *quién* “who,” for example, serve as both Nominative and Accusative arguments:

- (i) a. ¿Qué pesa 7 kilos?
 What(Nom.) weigh-pr.3rd.sg. 7 kilos
 “What weighs 7 kilos?”
 b. ¿Qué dijo Susana?
 what(Acc.) said Susana?
 “What did Susana say?”
- (ii) a. ¿Quién trabaja aquí?
 “Who works here?”
 b. ¿(A) quién buscan?
 PA who(Acc.) look-for
 “Who are they looking for?”

The case of non-Nominative interrogatives is marked by prepositions, including personal *a*, as in (iib).

- (11) a. la persona **cuyo** coche se venderá
 the person whose car CL(pas.) sell-fut.
 “the person whose car will be sold”
 b. *¿**Cuyo** coche se venderá?
 Whose car CL(pas.) sell-fut.
 “Whose car will be sold?”
 c. ¿Se venderá el coche **de quién**?
 pas. sell-fut. the car of who
 (Lit.) Will be sold [the car of who]?
 “Whose car will be sold?”

As shown in (11b), the genitive pronoun *cuyo* is not possible as an interrogative form. In (11c), the interrogative phrase *de quién*, which remains “in-situ” – not moved to the beginning of the clause – is marked as Genitive by *de* rather than by the form of the pronoun.

Genitives do not occur as the subject of nominalized clauses corresponding to English gerunds. Nominative subjects are possible instead:

- (12) a. [El hacer eso **tú**] sería buena idea.
 the do-inf. that you(Nom.) be-cond.3rd.sg. good idea
 “For you to do that would be a good idea.”
 b. *[**Su** hacer eso] sería buena idea.
 your(Gen.) do-inf. that be-cond.3rd.sg. good idea
 “Your doing that would be a good idea.”

The three types of Objective case are distinguished on the basis of whether or not they co-occur with clitic pronouns, and, if so, the form which the clitic takes. Oblique case occurs as the complement of most prepositions,²⁰ both in prepositional phrases which are adjuncts and those which are prepositional

²⁰ The prepositions *hasta* “even,” *como* “like/as” and *entre* “between” govern Nominative:

- (i) a. Todos bailaron en la fiesta, hasta yo/*mí.
 all dance-pa.3rd.pl. at the party, even I/*me
 “Everyone danced at the party, even I (did).”
 b. Nadie baila como yo/*mí.
 nobody dance-pr.3rd.sg. like I/*me
 “Nobody dances like I (do).”
 c. Entre tú y yo/*mí, ...
 between you and I/*me

Depending on its environment, the preposition *a* can mark Accusative, Dative or Oblique (*al mediodía* “at noon”). Likewise, *de* can mark Genitive or Oblique: *un amigo de Madrid* “a friend from Madrid.”

complements of verbs.²¹ Oblique complements of a verb do not admit weak (clitic) forms of pronouns, as shown in (13):²²

- (13) a. Hablaron [de Juan/él].
 spoke-3rd.pl. of Juan/him
 ‘‘They talked about Juan/him.’’
 b. *Le hablaron.
 CL(3rd.sg.) spoke-3rd.pl.
 Lit.: (They) him-spoke
 ‘‘They talked about him.’’

Non-oblique objects of verbs do accept (or require) clitic forms. Accusatives require a clitic when the object is anaphoric or pronominal. For example, compare the reflexive objects in (14a), (14b):

- (14) a. *(Me) vi a mí misma.
 CL(1st.sg.Acc.) saw-1st.sg. PA my self
 ‘‘I saw *(CL) myself.’’
 b. *(Me) hablé de mí misma.
 CL(1st.sg.Acc.) spoke about my self
 ‘‘I talked *(CL) about myself.’’

As shown in (14a), a reflexive direct object requires a clitic double. Oblique reflexives, as in (14b), disallow a clitic double.

An additional characteristic of Accusative case is that Accusative phrases

²¹ As noted above, Oblique, Accusative and Dative strong pronouns all have the same morphological form. One exception is the forms occurring with the preposition *con* ‘‘with’’: *conmigo*, ‘‘with me’’; *contigo*, ‘‘with you’’; *consigo* ‘‘with him/her/you (formal).’’ These forms consist of *con*+pronoun+*go*; *-go* is the residue of Latin *cum* ‘‘with.’’

²² A possible instance of oblique clitic-doubling with certain motion verbs is shown in (ic):

- (i) a. María fue al parque.
 M. went to+the park.
 ‘‘Maria went to the park.’’
 b. María se fue.
 M. CL(3rd.sg.) went
 ‘‘Maria went away.’’
 c. María se fue al parque.
 M. CL(3rd.sg.) went to+the park
 ‘‘Maria went off to the park.’’

Both PPs and clitics can express the Goal of the verb. In (ic), both are present. Other verbs which behave similarly are *escaparse* ‘‘to escape’’ and *fugarse* ‘‘to flee’’ (which allow both Goal and Source PPs). Unlike standard cases of clitic doubling, the clitic in (ic) agrees in person and number with the subject of the clause, not with the NP in the prepositional phrase.

are, under certain conditions, “marked” by a particular morpheme, often referred to as “Personal *a*” (PA). “Personal *a*” is, superficially, a preposition, identical to the preposition *a* which marks Dative case.²³ Personal *a* occurs primarily when the direct object is [+HUMAN] and [+SPECIFIC], as illustrated in (15) and (16). Compare (15a), with a [+HUMAN] object, with (15b), with an inanimate object. The contrast between specific and non-specific objects is shown in (16):

- (15) a. En el mercado vi *(a) los vecinos.
 at the market saw-1st.sg. PA the neighbors
 “At the market (I) saw the neighbors.”
 b. En el escritorio vi *(a) los papeles
 on the desk saw-1st.sg. PA the papers
 “On the desk (I) saw the papers.”
- (16) a. (Yo) busco a una secretaria.
 (I) look for PA a secretary
 “I am looking for a (specific) secretary.”
 b. (Yo) busco una secretaria.
 (I) look for a secretary
 “I am looking for a (non-specific) secretary.”

The contrast between (16a) and (16b) concerns whether a specific individual is sought (16a), or whether anyone who happens to be a secretary is sought (16b). Personal *a* may be used also with non-human animate direct objects, if the object is interpreted as specific and individual (as with pets, for example), or is in some manner personified.²⁴ Personal *a* also occurs with inanimate direct objects (from Hanssen 1945:296):

- (17) a. El adjetivo modifica al (=a+el) sustantivo.
 the adjective modifies PA the noun
 “The adjective modifies the noun.”
 b. ¿Y a eso llamaban libertad?
 and PA that call-pa.3rd.pl. liberty
 “And they called that liberty?”

In (17a), both subject and object are inanimate; in (17b) the verb *llamar* “call” selects a nominal small clause complement – in effect a double Accusative,

²³ Torrego (1998) argues that the choice of morpheme is not arbitrary. She observes that languages as diverse as Spanish and Hindi mark Accusatives using a morpheme that otherwise marks Dative Case.

²⁴ Hanssen (1945:296) gives the examples *Llamó a la muerte* and *Llamó la muerte* “S/He called out to death,” which differ only in the presence or absence of personal *a*. The difference in interpretation might be described in terms of whether one calls out to an abstraction (perhaps an event), or personifies the abstraction.

where both subject and predicate nominal of the small clause are inanimate.²⁵ Zubizarreta (1994) notes that the distribution of personal *a* in cases such as these suggests that *a* is not so much a marker of [+HUMAN] as it is a direct object marker in constructions in which two arguments are animate or two arguments are inanimate. That is, when animacy differences do not independently do so, *a* identifies a unique Accusative argument. It is otherwise difficult to account for examples such as (17).

Turning now to Datives, these indirect objects of verbs occur in the context of the preposition *a*, and may co-occur with a clitic double, even if the argument is non-pronominal, non-anaphoric.

- (18) Juan le mandó un paquete a José.
 Juan CL(Dat.) sent a package to(Dat.) José
 “Juan sent a package to José.”

The preposition *a* in (18) marks Dative case; its presence is not contingent on any particular features of the argument, such as animacy (cf.: *Le mandé el formulario al departamento* “I sent the form to the department”). The dative clitic (*le*) in (18) is often characterized as required. However, Demonte (1995) observes that there are conditions which favor omission of the clitic. In particular, the clitic is, for many speakers, omissible if the transfer expressed by the verb is not asserted to have been completed.²⁶

1.2.3 *Inflectional morphology*

The major types of affixal inflections in Spanish, and the types of elements which can exhibit them are summarized in (19):

- (19) a. NUMBER, GENDER:
 amigo amiga amigos amigas
 friend(m.sg.) friend(f.sg.) friend(m.pl.) friend(f.pl.)
 (nouns, demonstratives, definite and indefinite determiners,
 quantifiers, personal pronouns [strong and clitic], interrogative and
 relative pronouns, reflexive/reciprocals, adjectives, passive participles,
 absolutive past participles)

²⁵ Personal *a* is optional for some speakers in cases like (17a). This may be due to aspectual characteristics of the verb *modificar* “modify.” Torrego (1998:17 ff.) notes that predicates may differ in whether or not they require personal *a* on the basis of their aspectual properties.

²⁶ The contrast in interpretation associated with the presence versus absence of the Dative clitic is similar to the contrast between the English Dative shifted construction, *I sent him the package*, versus the non-shifted construction, *I sent the package to him*. The former sentence disfavors a reading in which the transfer is not completed, while the latter is compatible with this reading.

- b. PERSON:
- | | | |
|------------|--------------|-----------------|
| yo | tú | él/ella |
| I(1st.sg.) | you(2nd.sg.) | he/she(3rd.sg.) |
- (personal pronouns [strong and weak], reflexive/reciprocals, finite verbs)
- c. CONJUGATION CLASS:
- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| I | II | III |
| cantar | temer | escribir |
| sing-inf. | fear-inf. | write-inf. |
- (finite and non-finite verbs)
- d. PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE:
- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| canto | canté | cantaré |
| sing(pr. 1st.sg.) | sing(pa. 1st.sg.) | sing(fut. 1st.sg.) |
- (finite verbs)
- e. PRETERITE/IMPERFECT TENSE:
- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| canté | cantaba |
| sing(pret. 1st.sg.) | sing(imp. 1st.sg.) |
- (finite verbs)
- f. PERFECTIVE AND PROGRESSIVE ASPECT:
- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| ha cantado | está cantando |
| has(pr.) sing(pprt.) | is(pr.) sing(prt.) |
| “has sung” | “is singing” |
- (non-finite verbs)
- g. MOOD:
- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| cantas | cantes |
| sing(pr.ind.2nd.sg.) | sing(pr.subj.2nd.sg) |
- (finite verbs)
- h. VOICE:
- | |
|-----------------------------|
| fue cantado |
| be(pret.3rd.sg.) sing(pas.) |
| “was sung” |
- (participles)

As (19) suggests, many elements display number and gender agreement. Verbs display the broadest array of inflections. Other quasi-inflectional affixes include a diminutive suffix and an intensifier for adjectives (residue of Latin superlative suffixes). Neither adverbs, prepositions nor conjunctions display affixal inflection or contextually induced allomorphs.

1.2.4 Clitics

The term “clitic” refers to elements which are syntactically independent words or phrasal constituents, but which are phonologically dependent. Phonological dependence typically implies that the clitic undergoes phonological word-formation so that it joins a constituent which bears stress. For example, English contracted auxiliaries cliticize to a preceding constituent (e.g., *She'll leave*). Phonological and syntactic conditions of cliticization vary

from language to language, as do the inventories and properties of particular clitics.²⁷ Spanish, and Romance in general, developed a robust system of clitics, derived from Latin demonstrative *ille* and from strong pronouns and reflexives. The inventory of Spanish clitics is shown in (20)–(22), organized according to their form when they correspond to subject, object and indirect object arguments:

- (20) Nominative:
 se 3rd. sg. “one”
- (21) Accusative:
- | | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <i>me</i> | 1st.sg. | <i>nos</i> | 1st.pl. |
| <i>te</i> | 2nd.sg. | (<i>os</i>) | 2nd.pl. ²⁸ |
| <i>lo</i> | 3rd.sg.m. | <i>los</i> | 3rd.pl.m. |
| <i>la</i> | 3rd.sg.f. | <i>las</i> | 3rd.pl.f. |
| <i>se</i> | 3rd. sg./pl. refl. | | |
- (22) Dative:
- | | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|---------------|---------|
| <i>me</i> | 1st.sg. | <i>nos</i> | 1st.pl. |
| <i>te</i> | 2nd.sg. | (<i>os</i>) | 2nd.pl. |
| <i>le</i> | 3rd.sg. | <i>les</i> | 3rd.pl. |
| <i>se</i> | 3rd.sg./pl. ²⁹ | | |

Spanish clitics are sometimes referred to as pronominal clitics. However, they are neither uniformly pronominal or anaphoric, nor necessarily related to verbal arguments. These same clitics may represent non-arguments (e.g., benefactives), and have other grammatical functions, including formation of middles and passives, and marking lexical aspect.

A simplified summary of the clitic “template” is given in (23), based on Perlmutter (1971):

- (23) [se] – [2nd.] – [1st.] – [3rd.(dat.)] – [3rd.(Acc.)]
- a. For sequences of non-reflexive 3rd person clitics, Dative precedes Accusative;
 - b. Non-3rd person clitics precede 3rd person;
 second person precedes first person; i.e.: II – I – III;
 - c. *Se* precedes other clitics;
 - d. Sequences of phonetically identical clitics are excluded.

The first position clitic *se* may be the subject clitic, a reflexive 3rd person direct or indirect object, or an “inherent” clitic (not corresponding to an argument).³⁰

²⁷ See Zwicky (1977) for an overview of clitic types. For detailed analysis of English auxiliary clitics see Kaisse (1983).

²⁸ Second person plural inflections and clitics are restricted to peninsular dialects.

²⁹ Dative *se* is both a reflexive/reciprocal clitic and an allomorph of (pronominal) *le*. *Se* replaces *le* if a third person Accusative clitic follows (e.g., *le+lo* → *selo*).

³⁰ A thorough description of clitic sequences and functions is found in Strozer (1976). See also Bonet (1991, 1995).

The only true subject clitic in Spanish is “impersonal” *se* “one.”³¹ Impersonal *se* clauses show 3rd person singular verb forms. Subject *se* does not “double” an overt subject:

- (24) a. *Uno/él, se trabaja demasiado allí.
 one/he, CL(Nom.) work-3rd.sg. too much there
 “One, one works a lot there.”
 b. *El hombre, se piensa demasiado.
 the man, CL(Nom.) think-3rd.sg. too much
 “Man, one thinks too much.”

Turning to Accusative and Dative clitics, 1st and 2nd person forms are identical in the two cases.³² In some dialects, forms from one case encroach partially or wholly on the functions of the other.³³ Elsewhere, the syntactic conditions governing the appearance of direct and indirect object clitics remain distinct. As was shown in the previous section, a clitic is required for a pronominal or anaphoric direct object; clitics co-occur with indirect objects even when the object is non-pronominal, non-anaphoric.

Spanish does not have clitics corresponding to Oblique (prepositional) arguments, including locatives. Expressions corresponding to French locative/directional *y* are *allí*, *ahí*, *allá* “there,” which are strong, non-clitic forms.

Modern Spanish clitics are always immediately adjacent to a verb, and never occur in construction with other grammatical categories. Clitics follow positive imperatives, infinitives and gerunds, as shown in (25)–(26). Notice that the orthographic conventions show enclitics as part of the verb, while proclitics (those preceding the verb) are orthographically separated:

- (25) a. Hazlo ahora.
 Do-I.+CL(Acc.) now
 “Do it now!”
 b. Intentó mandármelo.
 try-pa.3rd.sg. send-inf.+CL(Dat.)+CL(Acc.)
 “(S/he) tried to send it to me.”
 c. Estaba cantándolo.
 be(imp.3rd.sg.) sing-prt.+CL(Acc.)
 “(S/he) was singing it.”

³¹ The overt forms of personal pronouns are strong (stressed) forms (see 1.7 on Dominican Spanish).

³² The 1st and 2nd person clitics derive from Latin pronouns, with normal phonological changes producing merger of Accusative and Dative forms. Non-reflexive 3rd person forms derive from demonstrative *ille*, which had the *-ol-a* inflectional ending in the Accusative and *-e* in the Dative.

³³ These are known as “Leísmo” (dative *lelles* are used also for masculine human Accusatives), “Laísmo,” “Loísmo” (replacement of 3rd person Datives by Accusative forms).

- (26) a. ***Lo** haz ahora. (=25a)
 b. *Intentó **me lo** mandar. (=25b)
 c. *Estaba **lo** cantando. (=25c)

Clitics precede negated imperatives (27) and other finite verbs (28):

- (27) No **lo** escriba ahora.
 not CL(Acc.) write-I. now
 “Don’t write it now!”
- (28) a. María **lo** escribió ayer.
 M. CL(Acc.) write-pa.3rd.sg. yesterday
 “Maria wrote it yesterday.”
 b. *María **escribiólo** ayer.

In progressives, clitics may either precede the auxiliary or follow the participle, as shown in (29); clitics cannot follow past or passive participles, as shown in (30b), (31b):

- (29) a. Juan **lo** estaba preparando.
 J. CL(Acc.) was prepare-prt.
 “Juan was preparing it.”
 b. Juan estaba preparánd**olo**. (=29a)
- (30) a. María ya **lo** había preparado.
 M. already CL(Acc.) have-pa.3rd.sg. prepare-pprt.
 “Maria had already prepared it.”
 b. *María ya había prepará**dolo**. (=30a)
- (31) a. La carta ya **te** fue mandada.
 the letter already CL(Dat.) was send-pprt.
 “The letter was already sent to you.”
 b. *La carta ya fue mandá**date**. (=31a)

Spanish shares with Italian the phenomenon of “Restructuring,” or “clitic climbing,” in which clitics related to a subordinate infinitive appear in construction with a “semi-auxiliary” matrix verb. Both (32a) and (32b) are grammatical:

- (32) a. Susana quiere verte.
 S. want-pr.3rd.sg. see-inf.+CL(Acc.)
 “Susana wants to see you.”
 b. Susana **te** quiere ver. (=32a)

In addition, Spanish restructuring also includes verb-participle sequences:

- (33) a. María seguía cantá**dolo**.
 M. continue-pa.3rd.sg. sing-prt.+CL(Acc.)
 “Maria kept on singing it.”
 b. María **lo** seguía cantando. (=33a)

Clitics are an ongoing topic of investigation in Spanish syntax. Among the issues debated are such fundamental matters as the position in which clitics are generated, the manner in which they are grammatically linked to an argument position, and their syntactic features. General issues and proposals are introduced in Chapter 4. The phenomenon of restructuring has also been controversial with respect to the structure of the infinitive or participle. These issues will be considered in Chapter 6.

1.2.5 *WH- and NP-movement*

Interrogative phrases appear in clause-initial position in both direct and indirect questions. Compare the position of the direct object in the declarative in (34a), and the corresponding interrogative in (34b), (34c):

- (34) a. Juan leyó **ese libro**.
 J. read that book
 b. ¿**Qué libro** leyó Juan?
 which book read J.
 “Which book did Juan read?”
 c. María no sabe [**qué libro** leyó Juan].
 M. not knows which book read J.
 “Maria doesn’t know which book Juan read.”

Multiple interrogatives are possible, and require one interrogative constituent to appear in clause-initial position, while the rest remain *in situ*:³⁴

- (35) a. ¿**A quién** le mandó **qué libro**?
 to(dat.) whom CL(Dat.) sent which book
 “To whom did (s/he) send which book?”
 b. ¿**Qué libro** le mandó **a quién**?
 what book CL(Dat.) sent to(Dat.) whom
 “What book did (s/he) send to whom?”

Processes such as passivization and subject-to-subject raising also show derived positions for NPs. However, since subjects have a degree of freedom of order relative to other elements, the effects of these processes are not always transparent. For example, consider the passives in (36):

³⁴ More than one interrogative constituent may move if a second clause-initial “landing-site” is available:

- (i) ¿**Qué libro** no sabe Juan [**quién** compró]?
 what book not know J. who bought
 “What book doesn’t Juan know who bought?”

The grammaticality of this type of extraction out of an indirect question depends on the grammatical function of the constituents extracted. See Torrego (1984) for detailed discussion.

- (36) a. **El artículo** fue publicado.
 the article was published
 b. Fue publicado **el artículo**
 was published **the article**

The order in (36a) shows that an object may move to pre-verbal subject position. In (36b), it appears that no movement has taken place. However, the phrase *el artículo* may occupy a structurally higher position than direct object – a position available for subjects even when a direct object is present, as in (37):

- (37) Analiza las preposiciones **el artículo**.
 analyzes the prepositions the article
 “The article analyzes prepositions.”

Example (37) shows that post-verbal subjects can occupy a position other than direct object position, since the latter is occupied by the phrase *las preposiciones* “the prepositions.” Whatever position is available for the subject *el artículo* “the article” in (37) should therefore be available in principle also in (36b). In Chapter 3 (Section 3.3) and in Chapter 5 this issue is examined further.

1.2.6 Determiners

Determiners and demonstratives agree in number and gender (masculine or feminine) with nouns. Forms of the indefinite and definite determiners are shown in (38) and (39):³⁵

- (38) un(o) m.sg.³⁶ unos m.pl.
 una f.sg. unas f.pl.
- (39) el m.sg. los, m.pl.
 la f.sg.³⁷ las, f.pl.

³⁵ Demonstratives, which also agree in number and gender with a noun, distinguish three degrees of proximity to the speaker: *este libro* “this book”; *ese libro* “that book”; *aquel libro* “that (distant) book.”

³⁶ The final vowel in *uno* is elided before an overt noun. Compare (i) and (ii):

- (i) Dame **un** lápiz.
 give-I.2nd.sg.+CL(Dat.) a(m.sg.) pencil(m.sg.)
 “Give me a pencil.”
- (ii) Dame **uno**.
 give-I.2nd.sg.+CL(Dat.) a(m.sg.)
 “Give me one.”

³⁷ For feminine nouns beginning with stressed *a*, such as *agua* “water”, *la* is replaced by *el*: *el agua*, “the water,” *las aguas* “the waters.” Feminine *el* and *la* both derive from *ela* (<*illa*).