

# SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF "EQUIVALENT" SPANISH AND ENGLISH VERBS

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Puppet Theater, The San Francisco Music Theatre, Teatro Campesino, and Little Flaga Theater, the over 200 resident professional companies located throughout the country which have raised production quality and diversity to an unprecedented level, and writers such as Arthur Koppe, Imma Amari Paraka, Sam Shepard, David Rabe, Rochelle Owens, Ntozake Shange, and David Mamet, to name only a very few, testify to the strength and health of the contemporary theater. Without a mediating force, however, to expose, evaluate, and clarify its meaning, the theater's contribution to social and cultural process is diminished—diverted from the purpose it best serves.

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### 1. Introduction

Descriptive linguists, attempting to state explicitly what is or is not grammatical in a particular language, often compare the structures of grammatical and ungrammatical utterances. Some ungrammatical utterances especially interesting to teachers of English to native speakers of Spanish are the English grammatical errors of the students, since those errors point out differences in the structures of English and Spanish. An understanding of the causes of the errors has immediate practical application to pedagogical techniques.<sup>1</sup>

One problem area in English grammar for native speakers of Spanish, even advanced students, is the syntactic features of certain verbs, which determine the order and structure of the constituents that follow the verb. To know how to form all the major grammatical structures of English that commonly follow verbs is not necessarily to know which ones follow which verbs. And unless the correct combinations are explained or reinforced by exercises, errors will result.

The restrictions as to which elements can occur in which combinations are called the "syntactic features" of the lexical items.<sup>2</sup> Linking verbs can be followed by adjectives, other verbs cannot; transitives take direct objects, intransitives do not. The linking-

<sup>1</sup> Methods and results of such application are discussed in the final section of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> Noam Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1965), pp. 75-106.

verb/non-linking-verb distinction and the transitive/intransitive distinction are only two of a large number of syntactic features of verbs. Most of the others are seldom given with the verbs in dictionaries, especially bilingual dictionaries, abridged editions, and textbook glossaries.

According to the "standard" transformational-grammar theory, syntactic features are of two types: strict subcategorization features (which subcategorize the main syntactic categories such as noun, verb, and adjective) and selectional features (or co-occurrence features, which restrict the choice of lexical items that can be selected to occur in certain positions with respect to other lexical items).<sup>3</sup> Use of "inform" is limited to sequences consisting of "inform" followed by a direct object which is human, followed by a prepositional phrase consisting of "of" plus a noun phrase referring to information. The direct object and the "of" object may be any "human" noun phrase and any "information" noun phrase, respectively. The selectional features of the English "inform" is written in the conventional notation as

inform  
 $\left[ \begin{array}{cc} +\_ NP & \text{"of"} NP \\ [+human] & [+information] \end{array} \right]$

"He informed the president of his plan" is grammatical; "president" and "plan" do not violate the selectional restrictions of "inform," since they themselves have the appropriate strict-subcategorization features required by the selectional features of "inform," namely

president  
 $[+human]$

plan  
 $[+information]$

"He informed his plan to the president" is ungrammatical and violates the restrictions on the use of "inform." Yet the features of the Spanish *informar* is somewhat different from that of the English "inform,"

informar  
 $\left[ \begin{array}{cc} +\_ NP & \text{"a"} NP \\ [+information] & [+human] \end{array} \right]$

<sup>3</sup> Chomsky, p. 95. Chomsky places these restrictions in "strict subcategorization rules" and "selectional rules," respectively.

(i.e. the "information" noun phrase follows the verb and the "human" noun phrase follows *a*), since "Informó su plan al presidente" is grammatical, while "Informó al presidente de su plan" is not.

Students who learn a specific English verb as the "equivalent" of a specific Spanish verb tend to use the English verb in the same constructions the Spanish verb is used in, i.e., they "assume" (intuitively feel) that equivalent verbs have identical syntactic features. But in fact they do not. The following sequences are not grammatical English sentences, because they violate the syntactic features of the English verbs used. But they are similar in structure to the "equivalent" Spanish sentences. They were all used by persons who know English as a second language and whose native language is Spanish. The asterisk (\*) here and elsewhere indicates that the sentences are ungrammatical.

- (la) \*They operated my mother.
- (b) \*He informed his plan to the president.
- (c) \*We request you to be on time.
- (d) \*Pay the dinner.
- (e) \*I doubt about his sincerity.
- (f) \*John thinks to be a genius.
- (g) \*The president has shown to have no dignity.
- (h) \*They forced the pledges eat raw eggs.
- (i) \*Ruggedness aids Wayne to recover (newspaper headline)
- (j) \*The officer threatened that I might get a ticket.
- (k) \*The paper exposed that they were friends of the Rodríguez family.
- (l) \*It was considered that it was produced by a Negro culture.
- (m) \*Crespo avoided to study.
- (n) \*Rain prevented John to attend.
- (o) \*The sign prohibited that vehicles enter.
- (p) \*Rising costs hampered to increase tourism.
- (q) \*Carter made it clear his having committed the sin of lust.
- (r) \*We call plaza a place where people meet.
- (s) \*That accusation results insignificant.

The grammatical structures of a language, it has been suggested, are all learned before the age of five or six, but there is evidence to the contrary. Children who say (2a) seldom say (2b) and rarely if ever (2c).

- (2a) I have a book that I bought for one dollar.

- (b) I have a book for which I paid one dollar.
- (c) I have a book the first page of which I haven't read yet.

The latter, more sophisticated forms are learned later; their structures are more complex.

But the occurrence of certain structures is partly determined by syntactic features, and syntactic features are probably learned along with the words to which they apply. No native English speaker of any age is likely to say (3a) for (3b), or (4a) for (4b) or (4c).

- (3a) \*They operated my mother.
- (b) They operated on my mother.
- (4a) \*Mother told that you should come home.
- (b) Mother told you to come home.
- (c) Mother said that you should come home.

But for many adult students of a second language there is a continuous increase in potential errors due precisely to an increase in vocabulary: as new words continue to be learned, new sets of syntactic features must be learned for many of them, some never before encountered. The problem for native speakers is slight. They may hear or read a particular pattern several times before actually using it. They continue to be reinforced by practice in the correct pattern. They do not encounter the interference of a dissimilar form in a more familiar language. But students of a second language without specific instruction to the contrary are left with no alternative but to assume a similarity between their language and the second language.

In fact such assumptions are often safe: English has transitive verbs, intransitive verbs, linking verbs, and verbs that require special types of complements, just as Spanish does. English has passive voice, subject raising, relative pronouns at the head of relative clauses, etc., as Spanish does. One might also assume that all forms that follow a single pattern in one's native language also follow a single pattern in the second language, whether the pattern is similar or not. One might assume, for example, that the Spanish sequence VERB-INDIRECT OBJECT-DIRECT OBJECT would always have as its English equivalent the sequence VERB-DIRECT OBJECT "to" INDIRECT OBJECT. In fact it sometimes does—but not always. Even if two languages have the same patterns in some cases, the class of words in one language that fits into a specific pattern may not be the exact equivalents of those that fit into the same pattern in the other language. For example both English and Spanish have some verbs that take direct objects followed by indirect objects. But when a speaker assumes that

- (5a) Le informo su plan al presidente.

has as its English equivalent

- (5b) \*He informed his plan to the president.

he is assuming that "inform" has syntactic features similar to those of *informar*. When

- (6a) Lllaman "plaza" un lugar donde se encuentra la gente.

is translated

- (6b) \*They call plaza a place where people meet.

the speaker is assuming that "call" has the syntactic feature which allows application of the transformation that reverses the order of the direct object and second complement of a factitive verb, as does *llamar*.

According to the "standard" transformational-grammar theory, sentences which are paraphrases of each other are said to be derived from identical deep structures (or identical logical structures). Syntactic features must be restrictions on the co-occurrence of specific lexical items at the deep-structure level. Any deep structure which is ungrammatical because of a syntactic feature violation may have several paraphrases all of which are ungrammatical in the same way. "They operated my mother" and "My mother was operated" are both ungrammatical for the same reason—use of "operate" as a transitive verb in deep structure.<sup>4</sup>

In certain cases, though, the syntactic features do more than act as restrictions on deep structure. They also limit the transformations a given lexical item may undergo. (An alternate explanation would be that the transformations themselves are phrased so as to apply to structures containing only certain lexical items and not others.) For example "that"-SUBJECT-VERB, "for"-SUBJECT-"to"-VERB, SUBJECT-VERB, and "to"-VERB are all surface forms of sequences that are embedded sentences (i.e., SUBJECT-VERB) at the deep structure level. Yet they are not in free variation; which one can occur depends on adjacent lexical items. For example, "important" can be followed by a "that" clause or a "for \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_" phrase.

<sup>4</sup> Syntactic features might, however, restrict the co-occurrence of verbs and other elements at the level of logical structure, rather than syntactic deep structure. This was proposed by Charles J. Fillmore in "The Case for Case," pp. 1 ff. in Emmon Bach and Robert T. Harms, eds., *Universals in Linguistic Theory* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968). See also note 5.

- (7a) It is important that you be on time.  
 (b) It is important for you to be on time.

The second is derived from its deep structure by the "for \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_" transformation. But some embedded sentences cannot undergo this transformation, for example, those that follow the verb "request."

- (8a) We request that you be on time.  
 (b) \*We request for you to be on time.

Nor can the SUBJECT-"to"-VERB form be used with "request":

- (8c) \*We request you to be on time.

"Require" may be followed by the SUBJECT-"to"-VERB form, but that form may not occur with "it" and adjectives such as "important," "necessary," "desirable," etc.

- (9) We require you to be on time.  
 (10) \*It is important you to be on time.  
 (11) \*It is necessary you to be on time.  
 (12) \*It is desirable you to be on time.

The following is a classification and discussion of some of the syntactic features of some English verbs whose Spanish equivalents have different sets of syntactic features. Some are constraints on co-occurrence in deep structure (selectional features). Others are restrictions on what transformations certain combinations of lexical items may or must undergo.

## 2. Transitive verbs with intransitive equivalents

Some verbs that are transitive in one language have equivalents that are intransitive in another, the object of the transitive verb having as its equivalent the object of a preposition, while the semantic relation between verb and direct object is the same as that between the verb and the object of the preposition. Furthermore, given a particular verb, object, and semantic relationship between them, a specific preposition may be required which does not carry its usual "meaning". When a noun meaning "check" or "money" or "a person" is the object of "pay" or *pagar*, the object is direct and the verb is transitive. However when the object is a thing for which money is exchanged, it is in Spanish the direct object of *pagar* but in English the object of the preposition "for."

- (13a) Paga al camarero.

- (b) Pay the waiter.  
 (c) Paga la cuenta.  
 (d) Pay the check.  
 (e) Págame cinco pesos.  
 (f) Pay him five dollars.  
 (g) Paga la comida.  
 (h) \*Pay the dinner.  
 (i) Pay for the dinner.

The erroneous English sentence (h) is a word-for-word translation of (g), which is a grammatical sentence in Spanish. English "doubt" is always transitive.

- (14a) I doubt that he is sincere.  
 (b) I doubt his sincerity.  
 (c) \*I doubt about his sincerity.

Spanish *dudar* allows a direct object or (in some dialects) a prepositional phrase if the object is headed by a noun.

- (14d) Dudo que sea sincero.  
 (e) Dudo si sea sincero.  
 (f) ?Dudo de que sea sincero.  
 (g) ?Dudo de si sea sincero.  
 (h) \*Dudo su sinceridad.  
 (i) Dudo de su sinceridad.

The equivalents that are always one-to-one (one English form for each Spanish form and vice-versa) present no serious problems. A simple dictionary listing such as *quedarse con*, "keep"; *mirar*, "look at"; or *buscar*, "look for" suffices. But the chances of error are greater when inclusion or omission of the preposition depends on the form or semantic content of the object.

In some cases a verb in Spanish requires no direct object even though a "recipient of the action" is understood to be some unspecified person or persons, or people in general. For example, Spanish *invitar* has no direct object and no expressed "recipient of the action" in "Invitamos a nuestra venta especial," though the understood recipient is "you" or "the public." Omission of the direct object with "invite" is prohibited in English; thus "\*We invite to our special sale" is ungrammatical, the accepted form being "We invite you to our special sale."

### 2.1. Transitive verbs whose direct objects have different semantic relationships to the verb

In some cases, such as that of *informar*/"inform," a verb and its equivalent are both transitive, but the direct object of one is the

object of a preposition following the second, and the indirect object of the first is the direct object of the second. With most verbs which mean "transfer information," such as "say," "tell," "report," "reveal," and "disclose," the noun that refers to the information is the direct object and the person receiving the information is the indirect object or the object of the preposition "to."

- (15a) Dígame la historia.
- (b) Tell me the story.
- (c) Tell the story to me.
- (d) Infórmeme las noticias.
- (e) \*Inform the news to me.
- (f) Inform me of the news.
- (g) Report the news to me.
- (h) ?Report to me the news.

The Spanish *informar*, while it resembles "inform" in both form and meaning, has syntactic features similar to those of "tell," "relate," and "report."

The verb's syntactic features not only must indicate whether objects may occur and whether those that do occur are direct objects, indirect objects, or objects of prepositions (and in the latter case specify the preposition); the semantic features of each type of object of each verb must be mentioned also, i.e. the semantic relation of each type of object to the verb.

## 2.2. Different verb-specific prepositions expressing the same semantic relation

Verbs whose equivalents in Spanish and English both take optional prepositional phrases expressing equivalent semantic relations sometimes take prepositions that are not usually considered equivalent in meaning, for example *de* / "at" in *reirse de* / "laugh at." Good bilingual dictionaries and language texts almost invariably list such combinations as "idioms" under the main verb heading and generally they cause few problems other than the inconvenience of adding to the task of memorization.

## 3. Verb-specific features that refer to certain complement transformations

As mentioned earlier, in its various paraphrase forms a sentence employing a particular verb may or may not permit any of several types of complements. The following deals with verb-specific

features that require certain transformations, prohibit them, or specify them as optional.

### 3.1 Transformations that delete reflexive objects of specific verbs in English

Some verbs that are optionally intransitive in English are transitive verbs that optionally undergo transformations which delete expected (or "unmarked") reflexive objects without changing meaning.<sup>5</sup> Spanish equivalents of some such verbs cannot have the objects deleted and are known traditionally as "reflexive verbs."

- (16a) El barbero afeitó al cliente.
- (b) El barbero se afeitó.
- (c) \*El barbero afeitó.
- (d) The barber shaved the customer.
- (e) The barber shaved himself.
- (f) The barber shaved.

Example (f) is equivalent to (e) since "oneself" is the expected object of "shave." But in Spanish *se* is not deleted.

### 3.2 Transformations applying to deep-structure clauses which are the subjects or objects of certain verbs

There are several transformations that clausal objects may undergo. Here they are numbered for convenience.

- T<sub>1</sub> Unspecified-subject deletion
- T<sub>2</sub> Equi-subject deletion (deletes the subject of a dependent clause identical to that of the main clause)
- T<sub>3</sub> Subject raising (makes the subject of a dependent clause the direct object of the verb in the main clause)
- T<sub>4</sub> "For" complementation (inserts "for" before a raised subject)
- T<sub>5</sub> "To" complementation (inserts "to" before the verb in the dependent clause)
- T<sub>6</sub> "-Ing" complementation (adds "-ing" to the verb in the dependent clause)

<sup>5</sup> I was reminded by Marc Schnitzer that it is not necessary to specify every verb for every transformation it undergoes or for every selectional feature. Certain semantic classes of verbs typically occur in certain similar structures and are "unmarked." Only those that occur in constructions that are atypical for their class are "marked" to undergo the transformations necessary to produce the appropriate surface structures.

- T<sub>7</sub> "From" complementation (inserts "from" before the "-ing" form of the verb in the dependent clause)
- T<sub>8</sub> Nominalization of the verb (replaces the verb with its corresponding nominalized form, typically by adding "-tion," "-ure," etc.)
- T<sub>9</sub> Possessivization (substitutes a possessive for the subject preceding the "-ing" form or the nominalized form of the verb)
- T<sub>10</sub> "Of"-OBJECT complementation (places "of" before the object of the nominalized or "-ing"-complementized verb in the dependent clause)
- T<sub>11</sub> "Of"-SUBJECT complementation (places the subject of a dependent clause after its nominalized or "-ing"-complementized verb, with "of" preceding the subject)
- T<sub>12</sub> "That" complementation (places "that" before a dependent clause when no other type of complementation has occurred)

Clauses which are subjects or other noun constituents often undergo several of the above transformations as well as "it" insertion.

- T<sub>13</sub> "It" insertion (moves a noun clause to the position following a noun or adjective complement and places "it" in the original position of the clause)

It has been suggested that there are some transformations that apply only in the context of verbs having specific semantic features. However, in the case of some verbs that are similar in meaning, it seems necessary to assign to each verb a set of features indicating which transformations it may undergo (or else, conversely, to mark each transformation to show which verbs it applies to). Thus "prevent," "forbid," "prohibit," etc. allow or require different combinations of the above transformations, and a sequence of complements that is grammatical with one of them may be ungrammatical with another.

### 3.2.1. Subject deletion, subject raising, and various complements

With certain verbs in both English and Spanish, equi-subjects (see T<sub>2</sub>) are deleted. In English equi-subjects must be deleted after "want," may be deleted after "claim," and cannot be deleted after "show," "think" and "say." If undeleted, the subjects then may or may not (again depending on the main-clause verb) be "raised" (T<sub>3</sub>), i.e., take the objective case and become direct objects of the verb in the main clause. In English the "raised" subject is sometimes preceded by "for" (T<sub>4</sub>) (again depending on the main-clause verb). The subject-

less verb (either by deletion or by raising) is sometimes preceded by "from" (T<sub>7</sub>) and followed by "-ing" (T<sub>6</sub>), and it is sometimes uninflected, nominalized (T<sub>8</sub>), etc.

- (17a) Mary quiere que su hija sea doctora.  
 (b) \*Mary wants that her daughter be a doctor.  
 (c) Mary wants her daughter to be a doctor.  
 (d) Mary quiere ser doctora.  
 (e) Mary wants to be a doctor.
- (18a) John cree que su hijo es un genio.  
 (b) John thinks (that) his son is a genius.  
 (c) John believes his son to be a genius.  
 (d) John believes his son a genius.  
 (e) John cree ser genio.  
 (f) \*John believes to be a genius.  
 (g) John believes (that) he is a genius.  
 (h) John believes himself (to be) a genius.
- (19a) John dice ser genio.  
 (b) John says he is a genius.  
 (c) \*John says himself to be a genius.  
 (d) \*John says to be a genius.
- (20a) John declara ser genio.  
 (b) John claims he is a genius.  
 (c) \*John claims himself to be a genius.  
 (d) John claims to be a genius.
- (21a) El presidente ha mostrado que otros no tienen dignidad.  
 (b) The president has shown that others have no dignity.  
 (c) El presidente ha mostrado no tener ninguna dignidad.  
 (d) The president has shown that he has no dignity.  
 (e) The president has shown himself to have no dignity.  
 (f) \*The president has shown to have no dignity.

Several other English verbs can or must be followed by specific complements. The "to" complement (T<sub>5</sub>) is mandatory with "force," optional with "make," and prohibited with "aid." "For" (T<sub>4</sub>) is required with "say" (meaning "order") and prohibited with the other verbs of similar meaning. "Require" takes either "to" or "that" (T<sub>12</sub>), "request" can occur only with "that." "Require," "request," "help," and "aid" can also take a nominalized clause: "the consumption of

raw eggs by the pledges" in (25d) and 26c), and "Wayne's recovery" in (27e) and (28e); the other verbs do not. "Help" and "aid" can also take "in" before the nominalized or "-ing"-complemented verb, without possessivizing the subject (27c).

Some verbs that require subject raising take the "to" complementizer before the verb; some take "in\_\_\_\_\_ing"; some take uninflected verbs alone. "Say" (meaning "order") requires "for" before the raised subject.

- (22a) They forced the pledges to eat raw eggs.  
 (b) \*They forced the pledges eat raw eggs.
- (23a) ?They made the pledges to eat raw eggs. (Archaic)  
 (b) They made the pledges eat raw eggs.
- (24) They said for the pledges to eat raw eggs.
- (25a) \*They required for the pledges to eat raw eggs.  
 (b) They required the pledges to eat raw eggs.  
 (c) They required that the pledges eat raw eggs.  
 (d) They required the consumption of raw eggs by the pledges.
- (26a) \*They requested the pledges to eat raw eggs.  
 (b) They requested that the pledges eat raw eggs.  
 (c) They requested the consumption of raw eggs by the pledges.
- (27a) \*Ruggedness aids Wayne to recover (newspaper headline)  
 (b) \*Ruggedness aids Wayne recover  
 (c) Ruggedness aids Wayne in recovering  
 (d) Ruggedness aids Wayne in his recovery  
 (e) Ruggedness aids Wayne's recovery
- (28a) Ruggedness helps Wayne to recover  
 (b) Ruggedness helps Wayne recover  
 (c) Ruggedness helps Wayne in recovering  
 (d) Ruggedness helps Wayne in his recovery  
 (e) ?Ruggedness helps Wayne's recovery

### 3.2.2. Verbs that never have clausal objects

Some verbs are not restricted as to the subject of the clause that follows:

- (29) The officer  $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{implied} \\ \text{intimated} \\ \text{suggested} \end{array} \right\}$  that  $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{you} \\ \text{we} \\ \text{I} \end{array} \right\}$  might get a ticket.

"Threaten," however, has the feature [+NP<sub>1</sub> \_\_\_\_\_ NP<sub>1</sub> V], i.e., the noun phrase which is the subject of "threaten" must be identical to the noun phrase which is the subject of the dependent clause. The dependent clause, furthermore, must undergo equi-subject deletion (T<sub>2</sub>) and "to" complementation (T<sub>5</sub>).

- (30a) \*The officer threatened that he might give me a ticket.  
 (b) \*The officer threatened that I might get a ticket.  
 (c) The officer threatened to give me a ticket.  
 (d) The officer threatened me with a ticket.

Some verbs cannot take any object or subject that is a clause, but may take a phrasal object, or subject, one of the constituents of which is a clause, e.g. as an appositive. Thus "expose" and "consider" cannot have a clausal object, though they can have a noun phrase headed by "fact," "allegation," "possibility," etc. followed by an appositive which is a clause. If "expose" has a clausal object in the deep structure, either nominalization must occur (31b) or a head noun must be inserted and the deep structure clause transformed into an appositive (31c).

- (31a) \*The paper exposed that they were friends of the Rodríguez family.  
 (b) The paper exposed their friendship with the Rodríguez family.  
 (c) The paper exposed the fact that they were friends of the Rodríguez family.

In the case of "consider" the clause may seem to be the object. But if it occurs with an adjective such as "possible," "plausible," etc., the clause in deep structure is probably not the object of "consider" but the subject of "be possible." In that case "be possible" is preposed and nominalized or else "be" is deleted, "possible" preposed, and "it" added (T<sub>13</sub>). In any case English has no acceptable forms similar to the Spanish example given below.

- (32a) Consideraron que fue producido por una cultura negra.  
 (b) \*They considered that it was produced by a Negro culture.



- (c) \*It was considered that it was produced by a Negro culture.
- (d) They considered it to have been produced by a Negro culture.
- (e) It was considered to have been produced by a Negro culture.
- (f) They considered it possible that it was produced by a Negro culture.
- (g) They considered the possibility that it was produced by a Negro culture.
- (h) It was considered possible that it was produced by a Negro culture.
- (i) The possibility was considered that it was produced by a Negro culture.

All the sentences above, however, may not be equivalents of the Spanish sentence, since *considerar* (as well as "consider") has at least two meanings: (1) "to think over or take into account," and (2) "to conclude, believe or opine." Apparently only (d) and (e) are equivalent to the Spanish example, which has meaning (1) for *considerar*, with the clause as the direct object. (While "consider" in examples (f) - (i) also has meaning (1), the direct object is not the clause itself, but rather something like "CLAUSE-be-possible"; in this case not all the examples above are related to a common deep structure by transformations.)

### 3.2.3. Verbs that have specific complementizers with equi-subject deletion

When "avoid" is followed by a clause in deep structure, the clause must have an equi-subject. (An equi-subject is the subject of a subordinate clause which is identical to the subject of the main clause.) "Like" and "want" may or may not be followed by an equi-subject if their objects are clauses. In all three cases equi-subjects must be deleted ( $T_2$ ) and the remainders of the clauses must undergo some sort of complementizer transformation.

Like English with its "to"-VERB and VERB-"ing" forms, Spanish has VERB-"r" and VERB-"ndo", though only the first can function as subject or object. Either of the English forms can be subject or object, but some verbs restrict their verbid objects to one or the other when equi-subject deletion is required.

- (33a) Crespo wanted to study.
- (b) \*Crespo wanted studying.

- (34a) \*Crespo avoided to study.
- (b) Crespo avoided studying.
- (35a) Crespo liked to study.
- (b) Crespo liked studying.

It should be noticed that (34a) is a more likely error than (33b), probably because the English "to" complementizer is usually taught as the "equivalent" of the Spanish infinitive, and the "to" form is usually one of the possibilities if not the only possibility. Learning the typically English use of the "-ing" complementizer and then over-generalizing its use would produce errors like (33b).

### 3.2.4. Verbs whose clausal objects must undergo nominalization<sup>6</sup> or subject raising

"Prevent," "prohibit," "forbid," and "hamper" take either noun phrases or clauses as objects in deep structure. In clauses the subjects must be raised unless the clauses are nominalized ( $T_8$ ), "to"-complementized ( $T_5$ ) or "-ing"-complementized ( $T_6$ ).

- (36a) \*Rain prevented that he attend.
- (b) Rain prevented his attending.
- (c) Rain prevented his attendance.
- (d) Rain prevented him from attending.
- (e) \*Rain prevented him to attend.
- (f) \*Rain prevented for him to attend.
- (37a) \*The sign prohibits that vehicles enter.
- (b) The sign prohibits vehicles' entering.
- (c) The sign prohibits vehicles' entry.
- (d) ?The sign prohibits vehicles from entering.
- (e) The sign prohibits vehicles to enter.
- (f) \*The sign prohibits for vehicles to enter.
- (38a) \*I forbid that you leave.
- (b) \*I forbid your leaving.
- (c) \*I forbid your departure.
- (d) \*I forbid you from leaving.
- (e) I forbid you to leave.
- (f) \*I forbid for you to leave.

The "that" forms (a) are ungrammatical for all three verbs. The nominalized or "-ing"-complementized forms with subjects

<sup>6</sup> Some problems of nominalization are treated in detail in Noam Chomsky's "Remarks on Nominalization," pp. 184 ff. in Roderick A. Jacobs and Peter S. Rosenbaum, eds., *Readings in English Transformational Grammar* (Waltham, Mass.: Ginn and Co., 1970).

possessivized ((b) and (c)) are ungrammatical with "forbid." "Prevent" allows "from \_\_\_\_\_-ing" (d) but not "to" (e). The others allow "to" but not "from \_\_\_\_\_-ing."

"Hamper" allows objects which in deep structure are either noun phrases or clauses. But the clauses, if they exist, must be nominalized ( $T_8$ ), the subject, if specified, being in the possessive form ( $T_9$ ).

- (39a) Rising costs hampered their efforts.
- (b) Rising costs hampered efforts to promote tourism.
- (c) \*Rising costs hampered to promote tourism.
- (d) Rising costs hampered promotion of tourism.
- (e) Rising costs hampered Fomento's promotion of tourism.

"Attempt" also takes either a clausal or non-clausal object in deep structure. The clause must contain an equi-subject, which must be deleted, in which case the verb may be either complementized with "to" or nominalized.

- (40a) Fomento attempted to increase tourism.
- (b) Fomento attempted an increase in tourism.

#### 4. Complement placement and "it" insertion

Spanish usually places the adjective or adjective-phrase complement before the direct object following factitive verbs. The normal English order has the complement following the direct object except in certain cases when the complement is preposed or "it" is inserted ( $T_{13}$ ) or both. At least two transformations apply in English:

1. The adjective complement must precede the direct object if the direct object is a clause (see (e), (f), and (g) below), otherwise preposing is optional ((a) and (b)), except that preposing is required if the object is a long phrase (see (c) and (d)).
2. "It" must be inserted after the verb if the direct object is a clause ((e), (f), and (g)), and "it" cannot be inserted if the direct object is not a clause, regardless of length (see (d) and (h)).

- (41a) Carter made his sins clear.
- (b) Carter made clear his sins.
- (c) \*Carter made his having committed the sin of lust clear.
- (d) Carter made clear his having committed the sin of lust.

- (e) \*Carter made that he had committed the sin of lust clear.
- (f) ?Carter made clear that he had committed the sin of lust.
- (g) Carter made it clear that he had committed the sin of lust.
- (h) \*Carter made it clear his having committed the sin of lust.

The problems with noun-phrase complements and factitive verbs are somewhat related but not identical. Spanish typically places a noun-phrase complement before the direct object. English reverses the order.

- (42a) Llamamos "plaza" un lugar donde la gente se encuentra.
- (b) \*We call *plaza* a place where people meet.
- (c) We call a place where people meet a *plaza*.

Unlike English adjective complements, English noun complements cannot precede the direct object unless the direct object is a clause; and then the complement must be preceded by "it."

- (43a) We consider Hoover's having phones bugged a crime.
- (b) \*We consider a crime Hoover's having phones bugged.
- (c) \*We consider that Hoover had phones bugged a crime.
- (d) \*We consider a crime that Hoover had phones bugged.
- (e) We consider it a crime that Hoover had phones bugged.

#### 5. Linking verbs

Both Spanish and English have linking verbs (verbs that take predicate adjectives or predicate nouns). However the apparent cognate or equivalent of a linking verb in one language does not necessarily have the same syntactic features in the other. For example the Spanish *resultar* is a linking verb but the English "result" is an intransitive non-linking verb.

- (44a) La acusación resultó insignificante.
- (b) \*The accusation resulted unfounded.

Even though *resultar* (as a linking verb) and "result" (intransitive) have some semantic features in common, perhaps they are not entirely equivalent and thus should be considered false cognates. It may be impossible to rephrase (44b) using "result," though (44c) is grammatical and may be considered equivalent to (44a).

(44c) It resulted that the accusation was unfounded.

In any case it could be argued that (44a) has a deep structure similar to (44c), with *acusación* and *resultó* in an embedded sentence containing the copulative *ser*, and that the deep structure undergoes a transformation not permitted in English. The English phrase "turn out to be," though somewhat colloquial, can replace *resultó* without a reordering of the other elements of (44a).

(44d) The accusation turned out to be unfounded.

#### 6. Pedagogical applications

It was earlier mentioned that the analysis of grammatical errors, as described here has pedagogical applications. While not keeping statistical information, I have attempted to make use of such analysis at various levels of instruction in English. This has been done in several ways.

(1) When an error is discovered to have been due to a discrepancy between the syntactic features of the English verb and the common equivalent Spanish verb, the students are drilled on use of the correct structure for the English verb and are immediately presented with several other English verbs of similar features. The structure can thus be used several times. Special emphasis is placed on the verbs most frequently used. The drills can be in any of several forms, but they must elicit student responses as complete phrases or sentences.

(2) When such errors occur, responses are also elicited that use the correct structure in several of its variant forms. Thus to reinforce the fact that "operate" is intransitive and takes "on," appropriate responses would be those such as "they operated *on* my mother," "My mother was operated *on*," "Who was operated *on* in the hospital?" etc.

While the standard transformational-grammar theory distinguishes between the grammatical and the ungrammatical, it is also desirable, in casual speech as well as in creative writing, to distinguish between the mundane and the interesting, and between the natural and the unnatural. Considerations of stylistics are necessary. In English there are cases where the choice between two forms is optional, one form being more similar to that of Spanish but a predominance of which sounds very "un-English." One example is excessive use of the relative pronoun "that" where it is optional. Drills can be devised to encourage the alternate forms which, though quite "un-Spanish," sound more natural in English.

Analysis of syntactic features of verbs—formal or intuitive—has indeed gone into the making of second-language textbooks and to some extent dictionaries. But the instructor can become able to revise and expand his own mental textbook by formal analysis, so as to be able to devise on-the-spot remedial exercises. Such analyses and applications are not limited to verbs. Results in my own experience, though not overwhelming, have been encouraging.

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HARRIET MARTINEAU ON  
CHARLOTTE BRONTË

*Elizabeth Marie Arbutnot*