

International Meeting

Null Objects from a Crosslinguistic and Developmental Perspective

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Organisation

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SONIA CYRINO

On the syntax of null objects in Brazilian Portuguese

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In this talk I will discuss the syntax of null objects in Brazilian Portuguese (BP), as compared to other languages. Null objects in BP have received the attention of several researchers for more than three decades (Duarte 1986, Kato 1993, Cyrino 1994, Cyrino 2016, Cyrino & Lopes 2016, among others). Drawing from the results of several studies, I show that the so-called anaphoric null object in BP is not similar to the null arguments found in other languages since it shows a set of specific properties. To witness, this null element allows strict/sloppy readings, its antecedent is [-animate], it cannot be the subject of a matrix sentence, and it allows disjunctive E-type readings (Cyrino 2013). Considering ellipsis are formally licensed by functional heads (Lobeck 1995), I have argued that the BP null object is the result of DP ellipsis (Cyrino 1994); this ellipsis is licensed by the verb moving to a low aspectual head, a possibility only found in this language (as opposed to other Romance languages, Cyrino & Matos 2005). The formal licensing of the elided object is only instantiated in certain configurations reminiscent of Differential Object Marking, where an inanimate DP stays *in situ* in the VP (Cyrino forthcoming). The prediction, then, is that those DPs that escape this position cannot be null; this is, in fact, the case of animate DPs. However, there are some sentences that allow animate null objects in BP, a fact that seems to defy this prediction. As I will show, those cases can be accommodated if we explore the distribution of null objects, full pronouns and object (indefinite) bare nouns in the language.

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VERA DVORAK

Generic and indefinite null objects (comparing Czech to Italian and English)

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This keynote is concerned with the syntax and related syntactico-semantic properties of two types of non-overt internal arguments, the generic null objects (GNO), as in *His movies always shock*____, and indefinite null objects (INO), as in *He reads*____ / *He is reading*____. Traditionally, these objects have been understood as standing on the opposite ends of a scale when it comes to their syntactic robustness. GNO were analyzed as null pronouns with an arbitrary reference that consist of a D-feature and/or a set of phi-features (Rizzi 1986, Authier 1992, Landau 2010). INO are typically analyzed as the result of lexical rules that existentially quantify the internal argument for given predicates (Dowty 1978, Bresnan 1978, and then many others).

Utilizing data from my native Czech, a language with rich inflectional and derivational morphology, I show that the distinction between the two types of null objects is much more subtle. GNO consist of a single syntactic node, little *n*, bearing just the gender feature, but no number or person features. Rather than fully-fledged pronominal DPs, GNO should be conceived as conceptually impoverished nouns (i.e. not containing any root), whereby their interpretable gender feature brings about their personal, [+human]-like meaning. Semantically, these *n*-heads introduce a variable that gets bound by a generic operator, along the lines of Krifka et al. (1995). INO, albeit syntactically unrepresented on their own, have to be derived by the generalized type-shifting λ -closure defined on a syntactic node little *v* (understood as a verbalizer in the sense of Marantz 2007, 2013). I show that this syntactic approach to intransitivization is the only possible if we want to account for INO's high productivity, their occurrence with the so-called secondary imperfectives in Slavic, and the fact that they appear only in the contexts that supply the kind/property of the existentially quantified argument. (I encode INO's contextual licensing as a presupposition for the application of the intransitivizing operation).

In the final part, if time allows, I outline the proposal for the observed incompatibility of INO with perfective, telic events denoting verbs, and these verb's contrasting compatibility with GNO. I explain it as a result of INO's inability to satisfy the unvalued EPP-like quantificational feature QP_f constituting the perfective aspectual head. The existence of QP_f is independently motivated by the quantificational requirements of perfective verbs in Czech, expressed in terms of a syntactic argument type or a quantificational prefix that they have to merge with (cf. Borer 2005). GNO, on the other hand, can overtly move to Spec, Asp, in accordance with their analysis as restrictors of the generic quantifier provided in the first part of the thesis.

ESTHER RINKE

Does animacy matter for the realization of null objects in European Portuguese? Evidence from monolingual and bilingual language acquisition and use

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It has been observed since the earliest studies on null object constructions in Brazilian Portuguese (BP), that their realization relates to the animacy of the antecedent (Omena 1978, Duarte 1989, Cyrino 1994): Null objects in BP preferentially have [-animate] referents. [+animate] antecedents are either perceived as ungrammatical (e.g. with an antecedent in subject position or in strong islands; Bianchi & Figueiredo Silva 1994) or severely restricted with null objects (e.g. to non-specific contexts (Cyrino 1994, Cyrino et al. 2000)) and preferentially realized as strong pronouns.

For European Portuguese, the situation is less clear. Duarte & Costa (2003) argue that in strong (but not in weak) islands, only inanimate null objects are grammatical (and only for those EP speakers who accept null objects in islands at all). A corpus investigation by Schwenter (2014) shows that inanimacy, indefiniteness, non-specificity and singular favour the realization of null objects in EP, whereas animacy, definiteness, and specificity favours an overt clitic pronoun.

This talk contributes additional empirical evidence showing that the animacy of the antecedent matters for the realization of null objects in European Portuguese (EP). Data from monolingual and bilingual acquisition show that animacy restrictions are acquired late by monolingual children (Flores et al. 2020) and with some additional delay in bilinguals (Rinke et al. 2019). A corpus-study with two generations of monolingual and bilingual speakers reveals an increase of null objects in the younger speakers and, in addition, an extension of null objects to animate contexts in the younger bilinguals.

I conclude that a) EP shows an animacy effect with null objects preferentially relating to inanimate and clitics to animate antecedents; b) the comparison of older and younger generations of speakers reveals a cross-generational change towards an extension of null objects in colloquial speech, and c) that bilingual speakers relax the animacy restriction existent in EP and extend the use of null objects along the referential hierarchy.

MARTA RUDA

Null Arguments and Diagnostic Issues: Argument Ellipsis vs. Null Pronouns

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Argument ellipsis (AE) has recently been gaining in prominence as the analytical tool employed to account for null object (argument) data, not only in work on East Asian languages (for recent discussions, see, a.o., Sato & Maeda 2018; Sakamoto 2019; Han et al. 2020; Takahashi 2020), but also beyond (a.o. Basque and Spanish in Duguine 2014; Brazilian Portuguese in Cyrino & Lopes 2016; Russian in Bailyn 2017; Landau 2020b; Hebrew, Hindi, and Portuguese in Landau 2018, 2020b; Egyptian Arabic in Soltan 2020; and even overt clitic structures in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian in Bošković 2018). Two competing derivational options are verb-stranding VP ellipsis (VSVPE) and null pronouns (in addition to topic-drop derivations, restricted to languages/contexts where only topical arguments can be null, see, e.g., Huang 1982, 1984; Raposo 1986; Sigurðsson 2011, 2019). While a number of careful discussions focus on diagnosing VSVPE (including VASpPE/VSTPE; for recent discussions see, e.g., Gribanova 2013a,b, 2017; Cyrino & Matos 2016; Bailyn 2017; Landau 2018, 2020a,b; Merchant 2018; Portelance 2019; Mendes 2020), the choice between an AE and a null pronoun analysis is frequently determined based on two types of data, namely, a comparison of the interpretive properties of the null argument and an overt pronoun (with the discussions usually showing a difference, hence

postulating AE); and the availability of null arguments in the absence of a linguistic antecedent (interpreted as showing that, at least in some contexts, a null pronoun is needed).

In this talk, I look more closely at the nature of the AE-null pronoun distinction, showing first that the frequently-employed diagnostics require reconsideration. I then probe more deeply into the actual representational differences between an AE and a null pronoun structure against the background of our current understanding of the internal structure of pronouns and the properties of elliptical constructions. This will lead the discussion towards considering the issue of the representation of null objects (arguments) with the language acquirer in mind, the complex picture of licensing null arguments observed both cross-linguistically and intra-linguistically potentially resulting from an interplay of different properties of the grammars of the particular languages. In fact, while considerations from the domain of language variation and language acquisition are rarely evoked to support a particular analysis of null objects (arguments) in a given language, they may contribute valuable guidelines in our search for missing arguments in the depths of morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic theory

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L2 Deficits or Delays? Acquisition of residual object drop in L2 Spanish

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This paper investigates European Portuguese (EP) speaking adult learners of Spanish and assesses their knowledge of (un)interpretable features which have been argued to lead to the possibility of object drop in Spanish. Ongoing debates about SLA have led in particular to two different hypotheses: the *Interpretability Hypothesis* (IH) (Hawkins & Hattori, 2006; Tsimpli & Dimitrakopoulou, 2007) argues that, while uninterpretable features will not be completely acquired if they are absent in the learners' L1, interpretable features will be, regardless of whether they are present or absent in the learners' L1; by contrast, the *Feature Reassembly Hypothesis* (FRH) (Hwang & Lardiere, 2013; Lardiere, 2009) proposes that all grammatical properties which require acquiring new features or feature reassembling raise challenges for L2 learners. To test these hypotheses, this study explores the acquisition of [+/-] interpretable features by investigating the acquisition of object drop in L2 Spanish.

Object drop in Spanish is a very constrained phenomenon, which involves interpretable features such as specificity and definiteness and is affected by syntactic restrictions (e.g. Campos, 1986): only non-specific direct objects can be dropped (1) and object drop is disallowed in strong islands (2), showing that the dropped object is not *pro* but rather a variable bound by a topic operator in SpecCP which must agree with [-definite, -specific] features in the D head of the object (Franco, 1993; Sánchez, 2004). Unlike Spanish, EP allows specific objects to be dropped (Raposo, 1986) (3). However, the fact that the null object in EP also exhibits island effects (4) suggests that it is also a variable bound by a null operator (Raposo, 1986) or, alternatively, a null definite D that selects a *pro* complement, which is identified by movement to a functional projection (Raposo, 2004). Adopting the same methodology as in the pioneer work by Bruhn de Garavito & Guijarro-Fuentes (2001), in this paper we present empirical data from two experiments testing the relevant semantic and syntactic properties associated with object-drop in Spanish. Both IH and FRH predict that the subjacency constraints should be acquired easily (as they may be transferred from the learners' L1), but they make opposing predictions regarding the definiteness/specificity restriction: difficulties are expected under FRH (as acquisition of this restriction involves feature reassembly), but not under IH (as the relevant features are interpretable). Besides a monolingual control group of 7 Spaniards from the Peninsula, one experimental group of 44 upper-intermediate/advanced EP learners of Peninsular Spanish was included (proficiency was determined by two independent tests).

Participants completed a 5-point-Likert-scale grammaticality judgement task (GJT) (70 items) and a sentence completion production task (PT) (35 items) testing the definiteness/specificity constraint on object drop and the island constraints.

The results suggest that learners are not sensitive to the semantic constraints: in the PT they drop objects both in [-definite, -specific] and in [+definite, +specific] contexts (41.8% and 30%, respectively), and in the GJT null objects are accepted in both [-definite, -specific] and [+definite, +specific] contexts (means: 3.39 and 3.26, respectively). As for subjacency, in the GJT the mean responses for the grammatical conditions were consistently higher than those for the ungrammatical conditions (3.66/2.54 for adjunct islands; 3.94/2.78 for complex NP islands; and 3.42/2.29 for sentential subject islands). Hence, our findings indicate that learners have sensitivity to the D-related features associated with object-drop phenomena in L2 Spanish, although not all features are acquired straightforwardly, as there is evidence of delays in the acquisition of the semantic constraints, which supports FRH. We will look at group and some individual data and discuss what they tell us in reference to current generative SLA debates and in particular to the role that (psycho-)typology may play in language development, questioning the anecdotal notion that knowing a Romance language as an L1 makes language development

relatively easy when learning another Romance language.

Examples:

- (1) a. – ¿Has comprado las entradas para el concierto? – Sí, *(las) he comprado.
have.2S bought the tickets for the concert / yes them have.1S bought
b. – ¿Compraste leche? – Sí, compré.
bought.2S milk / yes bought.1S
- (2) – ¿Carlos trajo cervezas a la fiesta? – *Sí, todos nos emborrachamos porque trajo.
Carlos brought beers to the party / yes, all REFL got.1P. drunk because brought.3S
- (3) – Compraste os bilhetes / leite? – Sim, comprei.
bought.2S the tickets / yes bought.1S
- (4) – O Rui trouxe cerveja para a festa? – *Sim, todos nos embebedámos porque trouxe.
The Rui brought beer to the party / yes, all REFL got.1P. drunk because brought.3S

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Külpmann, Robert

The Role of Sentence Type in German Argument Omission

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One of the central claims of valency grammar is the verb's fundamental role in the decision whether its arguments are definite omissible or not (e.g. Jacobs 1994, Zifonun et al 1997). For instance, in the German sentence under (1) the direct argument of abnehmen 'pick up / to answer the phone' can be omitted, while the direct argument of nehmen 'take' in (2) must be realized, otherwise causing inacceptability.

- (1) Klaras Telefon klingelt.
Sie nimmt (den Hörer) ab.
she.NOM picks.up the.ACC receiver.ACC VRB.PRT
'Klara's phone is ringing. She picks up the receiver.'
- (2) Udo reicht Klara den Einkaufskorb.
Sie nimmt *(den Korb).
she.NOM takes the.ACC basket.ACC
'Udo hands Klara the shopping basket. She takes (the basket).'

However, it hasn't gone completely unnoticed that in some sentence types a verbal argument can be omitted that has to be realized in a declarative sentence (eg. Fries 1983, Bender 1999, Jacobs 2016). If sentence (2) is exchanged for a directive imperative sentence as in (3), the argument of nehmen, which seemed to be obligatory on the basis of (2), can be omitted, with completely acceptable results.

- (3) Udo reicht Klara den Einkaufskorb.
Er sagt: "Nimm mal (den Korb)!"
take.IMP PRT the.ACC basket.ACC
'Udo hands Klara the shopping basket. He says: "Take (the basket)!"

Clearly, the verb cannot be responsible for the differences in acceptability between (2) and (3). For that reason, some researchers like Herbst & Roe 1996 and Herbst 2014 have argued that the possibility for AO in declarative sentences should not be regarded as a litmus test for the possibility for AO in other sentence types.

In my talk, I will argue that in addition to verb choice, the possibility for AO depends in some cases also on the choice of the sentence type the verb is realized in. My argumentation is based on a set of questionnaire studies, which were conducted in a project on argument omission founded by the DFG. The study includes acceptability ratings of approximately 1,400 participants, evaluating context-embedded sentences from a corpus of nearly 590 test items with 46 different verb lexemes and 12 sentence types.

In my talk, I will concentrate on assertive declarative sentences, directive imperatives, pseudo-imperatives coordinated with or and directive infinitives. I will show that these four sentence types indeed differ significantly on their tolerance of AO and I will give an outline how AO could be licensed: In declarative sentences, wherein the possibility for AO differs with the choice of the verb, AO is best licensed by the verb's valency, whereas in directive infinites the choice of a verb plays no role at all. Herein, AO can be licensed by a sentence type construction (e.g. Sag 2010, Jacobs 2016), which boasts AO as a specific property. For AO in directive imperatives and pseudo-imperatives coordinated with or, where an influence of the verbal valency properties

and the choice of the sentence type can be proved, I assume verb specific mini sentence type constructions (cf. Boas 2003).

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Testing the Variational Model: Null Subjects and Null Objects in L1 Chinese

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In the present study, we test Yang's (2002, 2004) variational model, which builds on input frequency, against the empirical domain of subject and object drop in Mandarin. To evaluate it, we conducted a corpus-based study of the speech of 47 typically developing, monolingual Mandarin-speaking children aged 1;2–6;5 (total: 4624 utterances), and their caregivers, from the CHILDES database. Child productions were grouped into nine 6-months intervals, and we compared the path of acquisition of subjects/objects by children and rates of these patterns in child-directed speech to evaluate the role of input. All the sentences analyzed included (overt/covert) subjects and objects and appropriateness to context was taken into consideration.

The results show that, although only null subject topics (1) and null object topics (2) occur at age 1;2, Chinese children converge quantitatively to the adult null subject and null object grammars at age 1;8 ($t(4) = 1.84$, $p > .05$ and $t(4) = -1.7$, $p > .05$). The mean percentage of sentences with null subjects and null objects by children is 48.98% and 33.19% respectively, while for adults it is 49.83% and 34.42%. By MLU 2.25, adult performance is attained in null subjects and null objects. However, the input frequency of null objects (8.6%) is very low compared to that of null subjects (21.5%), which means that the prediction of the variational model would be a significantly longer variational stage with null objects than with null subjects. But this is not the case.

Given that Chinese is a null topic language, object drop is legitimate. However, not all objects can be dropped in Chinese, in particular, the drop of objects in the *ba* construction is ungrammatical (3). Thus, we also examined its acquisition: despite its low frequency in the input (12.9%), all the sentences with *ba* produced by children included objects from the first occurrence at age 1;8. Again, the results of the *ba* construction are not fully anticipated under the variational model. Because if the + and – values of the Null Object parameter (namely [\pm Null] objects) were in competition, the variational learner would have non-zero chance of hypothesizing the +value.

Thus, if we assume that Chinese null subjects/objects are somehow linked, as both are bound by a null topic, then under the variational approach of probabilistic learning (Legate & Yang, 2007; Yang, 2016), by calculating the proportion of [\pm Null] subjects and [\pm Null] objects in the input, we can predict the time to acquire a Chinese-like [+Null Topic] grammar. Clauses with the *ba* construction, owing to the obligatoriness of the direct object (presumably attributed to another parameter), are excluded in the non-null object calculation. A numerical advantage of the non-null topic grammar was found (7%), which means, if we adopt Yang's model, that Chinese children should struggle for a long time to figure out the setting, since there is little disambiguating evidence (i.e. [–Null subject] and [–Null object], 53.5%) – see Table 1. However, Chinese children are performing at ceiling before age 2, which reveals that the parameter that governs null topics (as assessed on the basis of null subjects and null objects) is set from very early on. Our findings show that setting of these parameters is quick, despite how much (or little) unambiguous evidence there is in the input.

- (1) (Ø) chi luo-bo. (Xue'r, 1;8)
 eat radish
 '(The rabbit) eats radish.'

- (2) ma-ma na (Ø) hao. (Weiying, 1;8)
mom take well
'Mom, take it (it = pen) well.'
- (3) a. Ba da-hui-lang gan zou le. (Haohao, 1;8)
BA wolf drive away PERF.
'I drove the wolf away.'
- b. *ba gan zou le.
BA drive away PERF.
'I drove (it) away.'

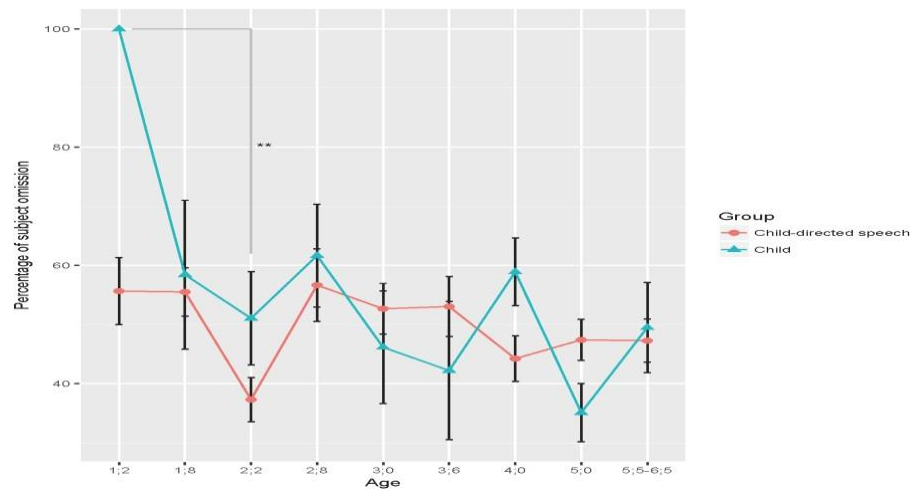


Fig. 1: Null subjects in child and child-directed speech, Chinese.

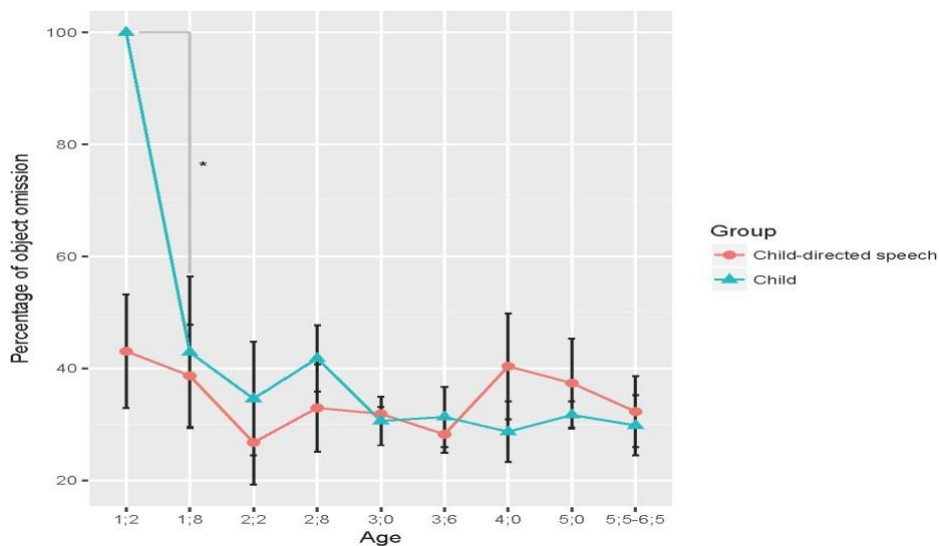


Fig. 2: Null objects in child and child-directed speech, Chinese (only transitive sentences considered).

Rewards [+Null subject]	1892/3797
Rewards [−Null subject]	1905/3797
Rewards [+Null object]	760/1910
Rewards [−Null object]	1150/1910
([−Null subject]+[−Null object]) – ([+Null subject]+[+Null object])%	(53.5–46.5) = 7%

Table 1: Quantitative evidence in child-directed Chinese in favor of the [−Null Topic] grammar.

Keywords: *variational model, corpus, null subjects, null objects, L1 Chinese.*

Kurafuji, Takeo

Some Extensions of a Choice Function Analysis of Null Arguments

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1. Aim

The purpose of this paper is to show the possibility of a uniform treatment of (almost) all kinds of Japanese null arguments (NAs). Specifically, it is argued that an analysis with (Skolemized) choice functions ((S)CFs) is applicable to cases which have not been discussed in the NA literature, such as partial interpretations of NAs (a.k.a. partially controlled PRO) and null donkey anaphora bound by quantificational adverbs, as well as to NAs in contrastive contexts.

2. Background

A typical NA sentence in Japanese is observed in contrastive contexts like “Ken washed self’s car. Erika washed \emptyset , too,” (examples are given in pseudo-English here) where the NA \emptyset is interpreted as either (i) (a) car(s) / (ii) some of Erika’s cars / (iii) one/some of Ken’s cars, whether the antecedent ‘self’s car’ is definite or indefinite. So, NAs are basically indefinite (cf. Hoji 1998, Tomioka 2003). XXXX (2019) argued that the interpretive variabilities of NAs can be best captured by (S)CFs, as shown in (1).

- (1) $\exists f[\text{Erika washed (i) } f(\text{CAR}) / \text{(ii) } f(\text{erika})(\text{CAR}) / \text{(iii) } f(\text{ken})(\text{CAR})]$

When the argument of a CF f is a set of cars (CAR is a set containing both atomic and plural individuals), $f(\text{CAR})$ denotes a car or cars. When a CF is Skolemized, it takes an individual and a set of cars, and returns one/some of Erika’s cars as in (ii), or one/some of Ken’s cars, as in (iii).

One of the strongest arguments for the semantic/pragmatic approach with (S)CFs is deep anaphora cases with an intermediate scope, which is regarded as evidence for CF analyses (cf. Winter 1997). Context: a new syntax book and a new phonology book are displayed in the library. Teachers A and B see them and A utters “Most of my students will be happy if \emptyset is easy to read.” Suppose A’s students are C, D and E, and they are interested in syntax, phonology, and semantics, respectively. C will be happy if the new syntax book is easy to read, D will be happy if the new phonology book reads easily, but E will be indifferent since these books are out of her interest. In this context, A’s utterance is felicitous, and the truth conditions should be something like (2), where BOOK is supplied extra-linguistically.

- (2) Most student x $[\exists f[x \text{ will be happy if } f(\text{BOOK}) \text{ is easy to read}]$

$\exists f$ applies out of the if-clause but below the QP, which represents the intermediate scope reading.

This supports the use of CFs. Notice that such missing antecedent cases cannot be accounted for by LF-copy or PF-deletion.

3. Extensions

CFs are useful for NAs in other types of sentences. Let us consider a case like “Every minister/2 hoped \emptyset /2+3 to gather in his/2 office,” the actual sentence of which is given in (3).

- (3) Dono daizin-mo/2 [\emptyset /2+3 zibun-no/2 situmusitu-ni atuma-ru] koto-o nozon-da.

As is well known, this is a case of partial control, where the embedded null subject is interpreted as a plural individual. Interestingly, (3) has the de re/de dicto ambiguity with respect to the people who the attitude holder wants to come to his office, as represented in (4a) and (4b).

- (4) a. de re:

every minister x [$\exists f[x \text{ hoped for } f(x)(\text{PEOPLE}) \text{ to gather in } x\text{'s office}]$]

b. de dicto:

every minister x hoped [$\exists f[\text{for } f(x)(\text{PEOPLE}) \text{ to gather in } x\text{'s office}]$]

In (4a), the scope of $\exists f$ is below the subject QP and above the attitude verb 'hope', so it is the intermediate (de re) scope. In (4b) $\exists f$ is below 'hope', which means the way of choosing an individual is in the attitude holder's mind. This yields the de dicto reading. The two readings are thus distinguished by the positions of $\exists f$. Partial control is possible only when the embedded subject is interpreted as de se (cf. Pearson 2016), which is captured by a SCF f taking x and PEOPLE, and returning people including x .

So far, we have seen indefinite readings of NAs. Now let us consider NAs bound by Q-adverbs, as in "If Mary writes a paper, mostly John reads \emptyset ." With a contextually given SFC, the truth conditions of this sentence are represented as (5).

(5) $\text{MOST } x[\text{paper}'(x) \ \& \ \text{write}'(x)(m)][\text{read}'(f(x)(P))(j)]$, where $P = \lambda y[\text{paper}'(y) \ \& \ \text{write}'(y)(m)]$

In this case, f serves as an identity function, taking an individual x and choosing an element identical to x from P . For example, if z is a paper by Mary, $f(z)(P) = z$. Note that if f is not Skolemized, $f(P)$ denotes a paper Mary writes, which gives us the existential reading of the donkey NA: If Mary writes a paper, John often reads \emptyset (= some of them). This indicates the usefulness of optional Skolemization of CFs.

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Object Drop in Greek

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Modern Greek is a pro-drop language with agreement inflection corresponding only to the subject. Nonetheless, it has been observed that in Modern Greek, not only the subject but also the object can be omitted. The following sentences prove this ability of object drop.

- (1) Ο Γιώργος **έφαγε** (μακαρόνια). (the content of the bracket is not obligatory)
'George ate (spaghetti).'
- (2) Αυτή η παράσταση **ενθουσιάζει** (τους θεατές).
'This show excites (the audience).'

After exhaustive research of two Modern Greek dictionaries (Μπαμπινιώτης, 2002; Χαραλαμπίκης, 2014) I came up with a list of 605 verbs from a total of 3.761 transitive verbs which allow object drop (the missing object is a Noun Phrase (NP)). This list of verbs was further tested in the corpora of the Hellenic National Corpus and it was confirmed that each of these transitive verbs can be found in a sentence without its object.

Following Rizzi (1986) I classified these verbs in three categories on the basis of the nature of the missing object. The first one includes 163 verbs, which have an arbitrary missing object (Rizzi, 1986; Belletti & Rizzi, 1988; Anagnostopoulou, 1996/1999). The notion "arbitrary" indicates the features [+ human, + generic] (sentence (2)). The feature [+ human] shows that the missing object of this sort is **animate** as in Portuguese and Hebrew (Cyrino, 2001; Erteschik-Shir et al., 2013).

The second category includes 245 verbs, the missing object of which has etymological or semantic relation with the verb. This missing object is a **definite** NP which is not available in the context and is **inanimate** (Massam, 1990; Lavidas, 2013) (unspecified object deletion) (sentence (1)).

The third category incorporates the rest of the verbs (197), the missing object of which is available in the context and is an **indefinite** NP or a pronoun (Grimshaw, 1979; Dimitradis, 1994) (null complement anaphora). The missing object of this class **can me animate but this is not necessary**. For example:

- (3) Ο Κώστας με έβριζε. Άρχισα κι εγώ να ~~τον~~ βαράω. (~~τον~~ is the missing object).
'Kostas was blackguarding me. I started hitting ~~him~~.'

It has been estimated that object drop is an option frequently attested in the early stages of language development, even in languages in which this phenomenon is not allowed (Pérez-Leroux et al, 2008). It has also been attested that children do not use an exhaustive list of theta roles when they try to understand the meaning of an unknown verb and its argument structure. Despite this, they do try to make use of semantic information and especially of Affectedness in order to achieve their goal. They also seem to associate the affected entity with the direct object (Gropen et al., 1990).

The missing object also poses serious problems in the status of the Theta Criterion. If the object is missing, the second principle of the theta Criterion is violated (Chomsky, 1981: 36: "Each argument bears one and only one θ -role, and **each θ -role is assigned to one and only one**

argument”). Following Rizzi (1986), I came to the conclusion that the missing object of Greek (in contrast with that of Italian) does not insert into Syntax at all (as *pro*).

Following Jackendoff (1990), Grimshaw (1990) και Ackema & Scoorlemmer (1994), I concluded that Affectedness plays a crucial role in the nonrealization of the object. Only when the object is affected by verbal meaning can it be recoverable by the meaning of the very verb and for this reason it needs not be inserted into Syntax. An affected argument can be detected by means of Cruse’s diagnostic criterion (1973: 13): What happened to X is Y. This affected object takes the actional role of Patient whatever its theta role is. The theta role, when the actional role is that of Patient, does not insert into Syntax and thus the Theta Criterion is not violated.

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Letuchiy, Alexander

Towards the analysis of the object argument of A-labile Verbs and in Antipassive Constructions

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What I study is the status of the omitted argument in the intransitive use of A-labile verbs or an antipassive construction in Russian and Kuban Kabardian (West Caucasian group). These two languages are chosen because they behave differently with object reference: in Kuban Kabardian, the object is cross-referenced, while in Russian, the verb does not agree with objects. Russian does not have a productive antipassive – the object omission is usually left unmarked. In Kabardian, the object omission is marked with the change of the final vowel of the stem or unmarked, and the object (absolutive) prefix slot is eliminated.

The key question is: if the verb, for example, ‘eat’ is used without an object or antipassivized, does the omitted object manifest itself in any syntactic tests (semantically, the patient-like argument is present: if the Agent eats, it obligatorily eats something)? I use two syntactic tests: namely, modification by ‘portion’ quantifiers and coordination.

One of possible tests is licensing quantifiers. For Russian, quantifiers with the meaning of portion, such as ‘by cups’, ‘by hundreds people’, and so on, was used. Logically, if something can be done by portions, the substance that is measured by these portions should be present in the structure (e.g., if it is possible to say ‘He ate by plates’, we expect that the substance he ate is present).

This test shows that constructions like this are possible only with some Russian verbs, and impossible with others. For instance, the verb *ubivat’* ‘kill’ is A-labile and can license a portion quantifier:

- (1) ... *gde ubiva-l-i tysjač-ami*
 where kill-PST-PL thousand-PL.INS
prosto za proisxoždenij-e
simply for origin-SG.ACC
 ‘... where people were killed **by thousands** just for their social origin.’

At the same time, with verbs like *est* ‘eat’, similar examples seem ungrammatical:

- (2) ??On est cel-ymi kastr’ul’-ami. he.NOM eat.PRS.3SG whole-PL.INS
 saucepan-PL.INS
 Intended: ‘He eats **by whole soucepans**.’

In Kuban Kabardian, the situation is clearer: antipassives allow quantification of the omitted object. Constructions like ‘by large portions’ (lit. ‘by much / many’) and ‘by small portions’ (lit. ‘few-few’) show it (these quantifiers are marked with peripheral cases and converbial forms in this language).

- (3) *de d-jə-wənaʁo-r cə k-šə mame teḵ^w-teḵ^w-ru /*
 we 1PL-POSS-family-ABS small-CONV mother few-few-CONV
kod-re me-gəḥ
much-CONV DYN-wash.clothes.AP.

‘Since we have a small family, my mother washes (something, antipassive) by **small** / **large** portions’.¹

In (3), it is possible to quantify the omitted object.

This means that both in Russian and in Kuban Kabardian, the omitted object can be found by the test.

The coordination test shows that the omitted object is not a real syntactic argument. Both in Russian and Kuban Kabardian, coordination of A-labile verbs / antipassives with verbs with contextually elided objects are impossible.:

- (4) ??*Ona často gotovi-l-a a potom vykidyva-l-a.*
she.NOM **often** **cook**-PST-SG.F **and** **then** **throw.out**-PST-SG.F
‘She often cooked and then throw it out.’

The verb *vykidyvat* ‘throw out’ is only transitive, and the object can only be omitted if mentioned before. Coordination with an A-labile *gotovit* ‘cook’ in the intransitive use is impossible: the omitted object of the A-labile cannot be an anchor for the syntactic ellipsis.

The same is true for Kuban Kabardian: example (5) is bad, because the omitted argument of the antipassive cannot be an anchor for an argument omission with the second verb:

- (5) ??*Şale-r me-λaşe jəč’ jə ʔw-j-e-hə-ž’.*
boy-ABS DYN-**wipe**.AP **and** LOC-3SG.A-DYN-**put**-RE
‘The boy is wiping (something, antipassive) and putting it on the shelf.’

Similar examples are possible if both verbs are transitive with an elided object:

- (6) *Şale-m j-e-λeş jəč’ jə ʔw-je-hə-ž’.*
boy-OBL 3SG.A-DYN-**wipe** **and** LOC-3SG.A-DYN-**put**-RE
‘The boy is wiping it and putting on the shelf.’

Thus, the test for anchoring ellipsis in a coordinate construction gives a negative result.

Therefore, the tests contradict each other: quantifiers ‘see’ the omitted argument of a labile verb / antipassive, while coordination do not. The reason can be that the criteria themselves are different: quantification is not a purely syntactic test – the quantifier like ‘by thousands’ can refer to the semantic argument of the verb. In contrast, only a syntactic argument can be an anchor of ellipsis. In the talk, I will show some other tests on the status of objects in the constructions under analysis.

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¹ The Kuban Kabardian data was collected in 2016 during the field trip organized by the Higher School of Economics and Russian State University for Humanities.

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The Effect of Animacy and Schooling in the Production of Co-referential Objects in the Acquisition of two Varieties of Portuguese

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This study focuses on the production of 3rd person anaphoric forms as direct objects by native-speaking children of Brazilian Portuguese (BP) in contrast with native-speaking children of European Portuguese (EP). In both varieties, these co-referential forms can be definite full DPs, pronominals and null forms, though there are differences between them in the type of pronoun and null object. Unlike EP, in which object pronouns are clitics, stressed pronouns predominate over the accusative clitics in oral, informal BP. The acquisition of clitics in this variety seems to be largely promoted by the late exposure to written language, still influenced by standard EP. BP and EP also differ in the status of null objects as bound variables or pro forms (although this is subject to debate). Hence, the conditions that determine the selection of lexical and null forms may differ in these two varieties of Portuguese. In EP, young children tend to omit clitics even in ungrammatical contexts (such as strong island contexts). A number of micro-parameters seems to guide the balance between clitics and null forms in the adult language (1,2,3). In BP, spontaneous production data suggest that *animacy* affects the distribution of null and stressed pronouns, null forms being preferred with [-animated] antecedents [4,5,6]. It is not clear whether restrictions might apply in island contexts since the status of null forms is not consensually established in the adult language [7, 8]. It is also unclear whether EP-speaking children are sensitive to *animacy*. The aims of this study are (i) to assess the effect of *animacy* in the use of null/stressed forms (BP) and null/clitics (EP); (ii) to compare the use of null forms in BP and EP in an island context; (iii) to assess the effect of *age/schooling* in the emergence of clitics. Elicited production experiments were conducted with BP-speaking children (4-15 years of age) and replicated with a smaller sample of EP-speaking children (6-15 years of age). Two tasks were used: a WH-question elicited the production of co-referential forms in simple sentences (task 1); a cloze task (task 2), the production of these forms in an island context (reason clause). The independent variables were *animacy* and *age/schooling*. In the BP-experiment, participants were preschoolers/literacy-class (aged 4-7); 1st segment (aged 8-11) and 2nd segment (aged 12-15) of Elementary School (ES). In the EP-experiment, participants aged 6-9 in the 1st, and 10-15 in the 2nd segment of ES. The distribution of stressed pronouns, clitics, null forms and full DPs in each variety is presented. The rate of null forms and pronouns (clitics in EP, and stressed forms in BP) were taken as dependent variables. Participants were 108 native speakers of BP, from the public schools in Rio de Janeiro (54 females, without cognitive/language dysfunctions), divided into 3 groups (36 participants each), and 20 native speakers of EP from the public education in the Lisbon area (7 females, without cognitive/language dysfunctions), divided into 2 groups (10 participants each). The material for each test consisted of 4 pre-test sentences, 2 introducing each type of task, and 12 experimental sentences. 28 pairs of Power Point slides were presented (4 for pre-test and 12 for each test). One slide presented the referents and the other, the event to be described in the child's response. In both tasks, an existential sentence introduced the relevant referents (E.g. *Here's a boy and a cart*). In task 1, a WH-question was formulated (e.g. *What did the boy do with the cart?*). In task 2, a simple sentence described the event (e.g. *Look, the girl is adorning the ballerina*), and a complex one, with a reason clause, should be completed by the child: (Ex. *Now the dancer will look beautiful because the girl...*). The two tasks were performed in the same experimental session. The experiment was conducted in isolated school rooms and took 5 minutes on average per child. The responses for each dependent variable were submitted to ANOVAs (factorial design) and to non-parametric tests. In BP, the effect of *animacy* was obtained on both null and stressed forms in the predicted direction in both tasks without restriction to

null objects in the island context. No effect of schooling was obtained on these forms. The number of clitics did not allow statistical analysis, but they occurred in the most advanced ES segments. Regarding EP, inanimate antecedents favored null objects, in task 1, mainly in the youngest group. In task 2, null objects were rare. *Animacy* did not significantly affect accusative clitics in task 1. There was a marginally significant effect in task 2, favoring inanimate antecedents. Dative clitics (as direct object) were also identified particularly with animate antecedents. These results suggest that at least from age 4, the differences between the two Portuguese varieties regarding the encoding of co-referential objects can be attested.

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Maddox, Matthew L.

Licensing Contexts for Null Objects in Rioplatense Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese

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Null objects (NOs) in Rioplatense Spanish (RioS) have received little attention compared with Brazilian Portuguese (BP). Schwenter (2006, 2014), building on previous studies (Farrell 1990, Suñer & Yépez 1988) observes that NO varieties of Spanish pattern with BP since animate objects are preferentially overt while inanimates are null. In this study I attempt to describe more accurately the conditions under which RioS allows NOs. RioS is of interest because unlike other varieties, it is not leísta and bilingualism with other NO languages is not a complicating factor. I provide novel data from RioS showing that not all inanimate NOs are acceptable.

Compared with BP, where NOs are much more freely available, I take this difference, following Maddox (2019), to be due to the status of the clitic. BP has “completed” grammaticalization and is losing object clitics. RioS is at an earlier stage of grammaticalization and thus NOs in RioS must be reinforced pragmatically while a linguistic antecedent appears to be sufficient in BP.

In conservative Spanish (ConS), NOs are typically allowed when non-specific or non-referential. In (1), from Schwenter (2006), *café* can be repeated by *pro* but not *el periódico*.

- (1) Fui a la tienda a comprar café_i / el periódico, pero no *pro*_i / **proj* tenían.
I-went to the store to buy coffee the newspaper but not it it they-had
‘I went to the store to buy coffee / the newspaper but they did not have it.’

Schwenter (2006) shows that in innovative varieties of Spanish such as RioS a specific, referential NO is allowed as in (2). This same type of NO is also allowed in BP as in (3).

- | | |
|---|---|
| (2) A: Queremos el postre.
want the dessert
‘We want the dessert.’
B: Ya traigo Ø.
now bring it
‘I’m bringing it now.’ | (3) A: Queremos a sobremesa.
want the dessert
‘We want the dessert.’
B: Eu já trago Ø.
I now bring it
‘I’m bringing it now.’ |
|---|---|

However, RioS (4) and BP (5) depart in the data below, adapted in part from Cyrino (1997):

- | | |
|--|---|
| (4) A: ¿Viste la nueva película?
saw the new movie
‘Did you see the new film?’
B: *Sí, fui a ver Ø con María.
yes went to see it with María
‘Yes, I went to see it with María.’ | (5) A: Você assistiu o novo filme?
you saw the new film
‘Did you see the new film?’
B: Sim, eu fui ver Ø com Maria.
yes I went see it with Maria
‘Yes, I went to see it with Maria.’ |
|--|---|

The objects are all inanimate and yet RioS (2) is allowed while (4) is not. This is surprising assuming animacy is the primary factor in the licensing of NOs per Schwenter (2006). Tense does differ between (2) and (4) but it does not seem to be a determining factor given RioS (6):

- (6) Situation: You and your partner are talking and your partner leaves to check on the children. S/he observes the children putting their away. S/he returns and you ask:
¿Guardaron Ø?

‘Did they put them (the toys) away?’

BP and European Portuguese (EP) exhibit variation vis-à-vis NOs as below per Cyrino (1994).

- (7) a. João descascou a banana, mas Pedro não descascou \emptyset . EP & BP okay
‘João peeled the banana but Pedro did not peel it.’
b. João descascou a banana, mas Pedro não comeu \emptyset . *EP; BP okay
‘João peeled the banana but Pedro did not eat it.’

The datum in (7a) is acceptable in EP and BP but only (7b) is acceptable in BP, which Cyrino takes to be a NO rather than ellision. Consider (8) below, my RioS adaptations of (7) above.

- (8) *Juan peló la banana pero Pedro no peló / comió \emptyset .
‘Juan peeled the banana but Pedro did not peel / eat it.’

RioS (8) is unacceptable with either *peló* or *comió* thus it also departs from BP in this context.

While animacy does appear to be implicated in the licensing of NOs in RioS, it does not account for all the patterns seen above. I propose there are two factors conspiring in the licensing of RioS NOs. First, following Maddox (2019, RioS is further ahead than ConS in the grammaticalization of object clitics; i.e., the Object Agreement Cycle. The endpoint of this cycle prior to renewal is that NOs be licensed via a D-feature on *v* per Maddox’s (2019) analysis. BP completed this process since object clitics are rarely used. However, that NOs are not as freely available in RioS as they are in BP suggests another factor may be involved. I propose that in RioS, a linguistic antecedent is not sufficient for the licensing of NOs but a pragmatic antecedent is. This is supported by the unacceptability of (8) and the acceptability of (6) above. Until RioS reaches a stage of the Object Agreement cycle where *v* has sufficient features to license NOs on its own, it must be reinforced by a pragmatic antecedent. Formally I take this to be a null topic that values a D-feature on *v*. D is on *v* due to the cycle that turns object clitics into agreement.

Roessler, Eva-Maria

On Null Object Licensing in Guaraní – An Account of Person-Split Pro-Drop (Tupí-Guaraní Family, *Paraguay/Brazil)

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Most generative accounts, in particular on European languages, treat null direct objects (NDOs) as a syntactic phenomenon distinct from null subjects (NSs). Only discourse anchored pro-drop systems, often encountered in East-Asian languages, are characterized as licensing both null subjects and objects in overall parallel fashion (Huang 1984, 1989; Robert & Holmberg 2010; Barbosa 2011a, b, 2018).

This talk discusses null object licensing in Guaraní languages, where null object licensing co-occurs with verbal object agreement and morphologically marked inverse argument alignment (Oxford 2015, 2017, Bejar and Rezac 2009). The Guaraní agreement system is guided by a 1>2>3 p(erson) hierarchy (Freitas 2011; Roessler 2015, 2019; Zubizarreta 2017).

The data in (1a) shows that in Guaraní languages referential, [+animate] and [+specific] direct object NPs not only may be null, but in certain cases must be omitted, since they abide to the Avoid Pronoun Principle (Chomsky 1981). In this respect, the subset of NDOs exemplified in (1a) appears to resemble subject pro-drop patterns of consistent null subject languages such as Spanish or Italian.

(1) Mbyá-Guaraní (Tupí-Guaraní Family, spoken in Paraguay)

- a. Kuña pro/ che-vy che-r-echa kuri
 woman pro/ pron_{1SG+DOM1|2} 1SG_B-R-see adv_{PAS}
- i. [+ pro-DO-drop] ‘This woman saw me.’ (unmarked reading)
 ii. [- pro-DO-drop] ‘This woman saw ME.’ (emphatic reading)
- | ALSP-PEC-2014-Q6-1.8.a, b
- b. Kuña o-h-echa kuri *Ø / (i)chu-pe
 woman 3P_A-R-see adv_{PAS} *pro / DEM_{+DOM1|2}
- i. [+ pro-DO-drop] [ungrammatical]
 ii. [- pro-DO-drop] ‘This woman saw him.’ (unmarked reading)
- | ALSP-PEC-2014-Q6-1.10.a, b

However, the picture is more complex. The evidence in (1b) shows that the licensing of null objects in Guaraní is asymmetrical with respect to person features. While 1P and 2P internal arguments may be null in discourse-independent matrix clauses, encoding a non-emphatic interpretation, third person NDOs are not allowed under such conditions. Third person internal arguments can be null in Guaraní, but must generally be identified by a discourse antecedent.

Although similar p-hierarchy based agreement systems are attested in many languages around the world, an in-depth account of associated NDO licensing is missing in generative theory. This talk starts filling this gap. The discussed null argument licensing is referred to as Person Split Pro-Drop. I show that current minimalist approaches to *pro* typologies naturally account for the overall pro-drop systems, while Person-Split Pro-Drop adds several innovative, empirical patterns to the theoretical debate. These cluster of grammatical properties have interesting implications also for parameter theory concerned with null argument licensing (Barbosa 2011a, b; Holmberg 2005; Roberts 2010; Roberts and Holmberg 2010).

The general aim in this paper is to enhance our formal understanding of null objects in languages, where null objects cluster with grammatical features such as person hierarchy, verbal object agreement, morphological marking of direct-inverse argument alignment, alongside differential object marking on exactly those nominals that under certain pragmatic conditions abide to the APP (see example 1a). Additionally, I observe an important link to the (partial) cancelling of certain subject–object asymmetries (Huang 1984) and agreement facts allowing for so-called indexical shifting in Guaraní languages. My research suggests that in order to clarify null object licensing in these languages, we need to include an explicit syntactic account on inverse alignment and the formal nature of the v^o and T^o probes. In Guaraní-style Person Split Pro-Drop ϕ -features under these agreement heads play a more decisive role for the licensing of null arguments than their respective grammatical function.

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Parallel Acceptability of Null Direct Objects in European and Brazilian Portuguese

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While considerable previous research (e.g. Cyrino & Matos 2002; Kato & Raposo 2005; Duarte & Costa 2013) has centered on the syntactic differences between null direct objects in European (EP) and Brazilian Portuguese (BP), Schwenter (2014) and Sainzmaza- Lecanda & Schwenter (2017) have offered analyses of naturally-occurring spoken data from both dialects showing that the underlying constraints on the variable use of null versus overt forms are similar in the two varieties. Indeed, both the constraint types and their ordering in the two dialects are nearly identical, with the obvious difference in the pronominal forms for third person referents across dialects: clitic (EP) versus tonic (BP). Moreover, this research showed clearly that the null object was the most frequent and unmarked option for direct objects in both dialects, in that it corresponded to direct objects with prototypical semantic/pragmatic features (-animate, -specific), while overt forms (clitic or tonic) were employed to mark direct objects with non-prototypical characteristics.

An open question in null object research, however, is whether speakers **evaluate** the acceptability of null forms vis-à-vis their overt pronominal counterparts in a positive fashion, and what semantic/pragmatic factors affect their judgments. For Portuguese, an additional question is whether, given the similarity in usage constraints across EP and BP (Schwenter 2014), speakers of the two dialects are also parallel in their evaluations of the different forms. Thus, are null objects stigmatized in either dialect? Are clitics ever preferred over null objects by EP speakers? Do BP speakers evaluate null objects as more acceptable than tonic pronouns for human referents?

We tested the hypothesis that null objects for third-person direct object referents in EP and BP are evaluated positively, and overall more positively than their overt pronoun counterparts, using an online experimental survey in Qualtrics consisting of 10 target items (plus 10 fillers) whose acceptability was rated on a seven-point Likert scale. We manipulated the animacy and specificity of the survey referents, following the well-known effects that these features have on anaphoric direct object realization in both dialects (Cyrino 1997; Schwenter & Silva 2003; Schwenter 2014).

Approximately 100 Brazilians and 100 native speakers from Portugal responded to the survey. Mixed-effects linear regression of participants' z-score normalized responses confirmed that, in addition to the research demonstrating the usage parallels between EP and BP (Schwenter 2014), speakers of the two dialects also evaluate null objects in nearly identical and, overall, highly positive fashion. Indeed, even though BP shows a much greater rate of null objects overall (ibid.), EP speakers rate them at comparable levels of acceptability as BP speakers do. Furthermore, while the features of animacy and specificity had clear effects on the acceptability of overt pronouns (tonic in BP and clitic in EP), these features were statistically insignificant when evaluating null objects, which were always rated higher than their overt counterparts. These results thus provide corroborating evidence for a shared grammar of object marking across Portuguese dialects, and more specifically for a system that takes null realization as the preferred variant for **all** third- person direct objects.

Soltan, Usama

On Null Objects in Egyptian Arabic: Evidence for Argument Ellipsis

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Introduction

Egyptian Arabic (EA) allows **null objects (NOs)** with strongly transitive verbs, but only when the antecedent of the NO is an indefinite nominal, as illustrated by the contrast between (1) and (2), where \otimes marks a NO coindexed with an antecedent.

1. Mona laʔ-it **kitāb_i** wi-Huda kamān laʔ-it \otimes_i
Mona found-SGF book and-Huda also found-SGF
‘Mona found a book, and Huda did too.’
2. Mona laʔ-it **?il-kitāb_i** wi-Huda kamān laʔ-it-*(**u_i**)
Mona found-SGF the-book and-Huda also found-SGF-*(it)
‘Mona found the book, and Huda found it too.’

This paper provides empirical evidence that NOs in EA are not instances of a null pro or variables A'-bound by a topic operator. Similarly, an analysis of NOs as derived via Verb-Stranding VP-Ellipsis is also shown to be empirically problematic. Rather, I argue that NOs are derived via **Argument Ellipsis (AE)**, an operation that targets arguments for deletion at PF under certain grammatical conditions. The AE analysis is then shown to account for the distribution of NOs in the language as well as a wide range of further empirical facts.

Three potential analyses of NOs and challenges to each.

First analysis: NOs as null pro: [_{antecedent_clause} ... **Obj_i**] [_{NO_clause} ... **pro_i**]. This analysis wrongly predicts that NOs can take definite nominals as antecedents, contrary to the data in (2), where an overt pronominal clitic is required in object position. Furthermore, this analysis cannot readily explain why NOs, unlike pronouns, are associated with a **different-entity interpretation**: (1), for example, has an interpretation where two different books were found, as opposed to the object clitic in (2), which has a same-entity interpretation.

Second analysis: NOs as variables A'-bound by a topic (Huang 1984): [[Topic] ... [NO_i]].

This analysis is challenged by the contrast in (1-2), and the definiteness requirement on Arabic topics (3-4) (Aoun et al 2010).

Also, NOs in EA can occur inside islands, as in (5b), in the presence of a linguistic (not pragmatic) antecedent (5a), indicating that such NOs are cases of surface, not deep, anaphora (Hankamer and Sag 1976).

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>3. ?il-kitāb_i Mona laʔ-it-u_i
the-book Mona found-SGF-it

‘The book, Mona found it.’</p> <p>5a. yīẓhar ?inn Mona laʔ-it wāẓiifa_i
seem.SGM that Mona found-SGF job
‘It seems that Mona found a job.’</p> <p>5b. ?aywa wi-fii [_{island} ?išāʕa ?inn Huda kamān laʔ-it Δ_i]</p> | <p>4. *kitāb_i Mona laʔ-it-u_i
book Mona found-SGF-it

‘A book, Mona found it.’</p> |
|--|---|

yes and-there rumor that Huda also found-SGF
 ‘Yes, and there is a rumor that Huda did too.’

Third analysis: NOs via Verb-Stranding VP-Ellipsis (VSVPE): [ellipsis_clause [TP T+[v+V]_i [VP t_j [VP t_i ~~Obj_j]]]]]~~

(Huang 1991, McCloskey 1991, Goldberg 2005). Under this analysis, V raises out of VP, followed by VP-deletion. A VSVPE analysis is challenged by the fact that EA does not have Aux-Stranding VP-ellipsis, as shown in (6). Also, if VP-ellipsis were involved, we expect all VP-internal material to get deleted, contrary to (7), where an indirect object surfaces after a NO.

6. Ahmad k̄ān bi-yilʕab koora wi-Ali kamān (*k̄ān)
 Ahmad was.3SGM ASP-play.3SGM soccer and-Ali also was.3SGM
 ‘Ahmad was playing soccer, and Ali too.’
7. Mona ʔidd-at **filūs**_i li-Ali wi Huda ʔidd-at ⊗_i **li-Hasan** kamān
 Mona gave-SGF money to-Ali and Huda gave-SGF to-Hasan too
 ‘Mona gave money to Ali, and Huda gave [money] to Hassan too.’

Proposed analysis: NOs are elided arguments:

antecedent_clause ... [VP **Obj_j**] ... [ellipsis_clause ... [VP **Obj_j**]].

In this paper, I argue that NOs are derived via **Argument Ellipsis (AE)**, whereby an indefinite object is PF-deleted under identity with an antecedent. This has immediate empirical advantages. **First**, it explains the different-entity reading of NOs (1). **Second**, it explains why VP-internal material such as an indirect object can follow a NO (7). **Third**, it is not surprising that NOs can occur inside islands (5b). **Fourth**, the (in)definiteness-asymmetry for NOs can be accounted for in terms of variance in case-licensing mechanisms: structural case for definite nominals and inherent case for indefinite nominals (cf. Saito’s 2007 Anti-agreement Hypothesis, and Cheng’s 2013 relativized phasehood hypothesis based on Bošković’s (2008, 2012) NP/DP distinction). This, in turn, has a **fifth** empirical consequence: We predict that PP and CP arguments, not needing structural case, can undergo AE, which is indeed the case, as shown by (8), which has a strict as well as a sloppy identity reading, a property often associated with ellipsis phenomena.

8. Eman baʕat-it filūs [PP li-ʔahla-hā]_i wi Huda baʕat-it hadāyā ⊗_i
 Eman sent-3SGF money to-family-her and Huda sent-3SGF gifts
 ‘Eman_i sent money to her family, and Huda_j sent gifts [to her_{i/j} family].’
 (✓Strict; ✓Sloppy)

Finally, the proposed analysis is also shown to account for the (in)animacy constraint on NOs in the language (not illustrated in this abstract) and the fact that null subjects are always instances of pro and never the result of AE.

Conclusion.

In sum, NOs in EA follow from an Argument Ellipsis operation that targets indefinite objects at PF. Such an analysis overcomes the challenges faced by alternative analyses and is shown to be empirically superior.

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Vazquez-Lozares, Almike

Case is Key: The Relevance of Case in Basque-Spanish Null Objects

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1. Introduction. I argue for a relation between case and referential null direct objects in the Spanish of the Basque Country (B-Spanish). I show that Differentially Object Marked (DOM-ed) objects, which I assume to be objects marked for (dative) case, cannot be null in B-Spanish, whereas those objects that are not DOM-ed can.

2. DOM and B-Spanish *leísmo*. Spanish is a language with DOM in the form of the adposition *a* for certain Direct Objects (DOs): typically, animate specific ones, as shown in (1) (see Torrego 1998, Rodríguez-Mondoñedo 2007, López 2012, Ormazabal & Romero 2013 a.o. for Spanish DOM).

- (1) Vieron **a** una niña en el parque.
Saw.3PL **DOM** a girl in the park
'They saw a (specific) girl in the park.'

In B-Spanish, DOM-ed objects are cliticized in the dative form of the clitic *le(s)*, instead of the accusative form *lo(s)/la(s)*. This phenomenon is known as *leísmo*.

- (2) **Le** vieron en el parque.
DO.DAT saw.3PL in the park
'They saw her/him in the park.'

3. Null objects in B-Spanish. Most varieties of Spanish do not allow referential null objects, but B-Spanish does. Traditionally, the availability of null objects has been linked to the inanimacy of the antecedent (Landa 1995, Landa & Franco 2000, Camus Bergareche & Gómez Seibane 2015, a.o.). As shown in (3), B-Spanish allows null objects in contexts where standard Spanish requires an accusative clitic *lo*.

- (3) Ya \emptyset he visitado.
Already \emptyset have.1s visited
'I have already visited it.'

Meanwhile, animate DOs, i.e., those that get DOM and *leísmo*, cannot be null.

- (4) *(Le) vieron en el parque.
Intended: 'They saw her/him in the park.'

The picture presented so far supports the view that null objects are related to animacy. However, two sets of exceptions in section 3 show that lack of case is responsible for null objects.

4. The role of case. In Peninsular Spanish, *leísmo* is blocked in Person Case Constraint (PCC) contexts (see Perlmutter 1971, Bonet 1991). In Spanish, the PCC blocks combinations of two clitics unless the second one is an accusative 3rd person *lo(s)*, *la(s)*. So, when a dative indirect object clitic is present, as in (5b), *leísmo* is precluded. In these cases, DO clitics need to be accusative regardless of animacy. In B-Spanish, this accusative animate DO may be null.

- (5) a. Ahí está el nuevo estudiante.
There is the new student
b. Sí, ya nosk *lei / loi / \emptyset i han presentado a la clasek.

Yes already IO DO.DAT DO.ACC \emptyset have.3PL introduced to the class
 ‘There’s the new student. Yes, they already introduced him to the class.’

Thus, when the DO clitic *cannot* have (dative) case, a null object is allowed. Interestingly, the lack of case is reflected in the lexical DP. In ditransitive constructions with two object DPs, the animate specific DO may optionally *not* get DOM, as noted first by Bello (1847).

- (6) Han presentado a- I / el nuevo estudiante a la clase.
 Have.3PL introduced DOM-the / the new student to the class

‘They introduced the new student to the class.’

These data relate lack of case (reflected in lack of DOM and *leísmo*) with the possibility to have null objects.

A second piece of support in favor of the relevance of case comes from the verbs in (7) which consistently assign DOM to inanimate DOs, as in (8).

- (7) *preceder, anteceder, suceder, seguir, sustituir, reemplazar, modificar, incluir, excluir, clasificar, caracterizar* (Fábregas 2013: 15).

- (8) El género caracteriza a los sustantivos.
 The gender characterizes DOM the nouns
 ‘Gender is characteristic of nouns.’ (Fábregas 2013: 15)

These inanimate DOM-ed objects cannot be null in B-Spanish, as shown in (9), and the dative clitic is chosen instead.

- (9) a. ¿Los verbos siguen a los sujetos?
 The verbs follow.3PL DOM the subjects
 b. ¡Claro que \emptyset / les siguen!
 Clear that \emptyset DO.DAT follow.3PL
 ‘Do verbs follow subjects? Of course they do!’

These data show that when dative case is involved, null objects are not allowed.

5. A glimpse of the analysis. I propose to adapt Arregi and Nevins’s (2012) analysis of Basque verbs to account for the B-Spanish data. For the sake of space, the basic idea is that all arguments can generate clitics in their functional projections (Participant Phrase or Case Phrase, or both). However, third person accusative arguments are –Part and –Case and so they lack the necessary projections to host a clitic. This results in null objects. Adapting such an analysis to B-Spanish reflects the fact that the presence of (dative) case in the DP (in the form of *a* marking), results in a clitic with dative case, while lack of case marking in the object DP results in lack of a Case Phrase and therefore lack of a clitic.

The fact that accusative clitics are optional in B-Spanish can be explained in terms of a competition between the B-Spanish grammar with null objects and the standard Spanish grammar with obligatory object clitics.

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