A Systemic Functional Micro-Grammar of Spanish Clitics

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Abstract

The word order patterns and participant role distribution of Spanish clitics are two well-known phenomena which have been thoroughly studied in Hispanic Linguistics from the perspective of both formal and functional grammars. Arús (2006) is a Sydney Grammar approach to the semantics of *se* but with no references to explicit realization rules or integration with the morpho-syntactic and semantic distributional properties of other clitics. Thus, there are currently no descriptions integrating these phenomena from the viewpoint of Systemic Functional Linguistics, let alone the Cardiff Grammar framework and the specifics of River Plate Spanish (RPS). A set of data illustrating the two phenomena is here accounted for adequately and elegantly in terms of the Cardiff Grammar framework (Fawcett 2000, 2008), more specifically within the new computational version of GeneSys, the Cardiff Grammar Generator of Fawcett & Castel (2006). The paper presents a micro-grammar capable of generating representations that capture both the patterns constraining word order and the expression of participant roles of RPS clitics.

1 Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to specify a micro-grammar of River Plate Spanish clitics (GSC) within GeneSys, the Cardiff Grammar (CG) environment for the development of generation oriented grammars (Fawcett et al 1993, Fawcett & Castel 2006). CG is a theoretical framework based on Halliday’s leading ideas on the systemic-functional approach to natural languages (Fawcett 2000, 2008).

Since the CG framework has not yet been applied to Spanish (Fawcett 2008: 3), let alone River Plate Spanish (RPS), this paper addresses the problem posed by the word order patterns and participant role distribution of RPS clitics from the CG perspective.¹

2 Word Order Patterns and Expression of Participant Roles

The word order constraints underlying the distribution of RPS clitics can be abbreviated by the schemas (1)-(3):

(1) III II I A/D, (Modified version of Perlmutter (1972)’s surface structure filter.)
(2) III II I A/D + V [non-imperative finite form],
(3) V [imperative or infinitive or gerund] + III II I A/D,

where ‘III II I A/D’ is a growing monotonic sequence in which roman numbers stand for clitic person values, ‘A/D’ is either an accusative (A) or dative (D) clitic, ‘V’ stands for a verb, the expressions within square brackets refer to forms of such a verb, and the sign ‘+’ marks the relative order between the clitic sequence and ‘V’. The schemas capture in an abbreviated way two aspects of word order: (i) patterns governing the occurrence of

¹ Arús (2006) is a Sydney Grammar approach to the semantics of *se* but with no references to explicit realization rules or integration with the semantic and morpho-syntactic properties of other clitics.
clitics with other clitics (cf. (1)), and (ii) patterns governing the occurrence of clitics with their governing verbs (cf. (2)-(3)).

According to (1), the sequences in Table 1 are all the possible well-formed clitic sequences that can occur in RPS clauses, i.e. any other clitic sequence is ill-formed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One clitic</th>
<th>Two clitics</th>
<th>Three clitics</th>
<th>Four clitics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>se</td>
<td>se te</td>
<td>te le(s)</td>
<td>se te me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>te se me</td>
<td>se le(s)</td>
<td>se me lo/a(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te</td>
<td>me se nos</td>
<td>nos le(s)</td>
<td>nos lo/a(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me</td>
<td>nos se le(s)</td>
<td>te le(s)</td>
<td>te nos le(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nos</td>
<td>lo/a(s)</td>
<td>le(s)</td>
<td>te nos lo/a(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lo/a(s)</td>
<td>se nos le(s)</td>
<td>me le(s)</td>
<td>me nos le(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le(s)</td>
<td>te me</td>
<td>nos le(s)</td>
<td>se nos le(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>te nos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Word Order Patterns among Clitics

Table 2 presents a few examples illustrating the well-formedness conditions captured by the schemas (2) and (3) on the occurrence of clitics in relation to their governing verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clauses satisfying (2)</th>
<th>Clauses violating (2)</th>
<th>Clauses satisfying (3)</th>
<th>Clauses violating (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Te las quieren regalar.</td>
<td>*Quieren te las regalar.</td>
<td>Quieren regalarátelas.</td>
<td>*Quieren te las regalar.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Word Order Patterns between Clitics and their Governing Verbs

The following table abbreviates a few core correlations between participant roles (PR), and the clitics and verb endings that express them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>me, Af-Ca lo, Af-Po regalo/ás/a, Ag</td>
<td>me, Af-Ca le, Af-Ca regalo/ás/a, Ag</td>
<td>me, Af-Po regalo/ás/a, Ag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te lo regalo/ás/a.</td>
<td>Te le regalo/ás/a.</td>
<td>Te regalo/ás/a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te, Af-Ca lo, Af-Po regalo/ás/a, Ag</td>
<td>te, Af-Po le, Af-Ca regalo/ás/a, Ag</td>
<td>te, Af-Po regalo/ás/a, Ag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spurious se:</td>
<td>Reflexive se:</td>
<td>Reflexive se:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se, Af-Ca lo, Af-Po regalo/ás/a, Ag</td>
<td>se, Af-Po le, Af-Ca regala, Ag</td>
<td>se, Af-Po regala, Ag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal se:</td>
<td>Impersonal se:</td>
<td>Impersonal se:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se, Af-Ca lo, Af-Po regala, Ag</td>
<td>se, Af-Ca regala, Ag</td>
<td>se, Af-Ca regala, Ag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Correlations between PRs, and Clitics and Verb Endings

Note that no examples are given of clauses containing three or four clitic sequences, for no provision is made here for ethical participants.
3 System Network and Realization Rules

The system network and the realization rules (RRs) needed to account for the data in §2 are given in Figures 1-7, and Figure 8, respectively. The RRs assume that the syntactic unit clause (Cl) filling the text-sentence element ‘Σ’ is made up of a certain number of places. When a ‘Cl’ is introduced into the linguistic representation being constructed, a structure like (4) is defined:

\[(4) \Sigma[[\text{selection_expression}] \text{Cl}[1, \ldots, 120]] \Sigma]\]

where ‘selection_expression’ is a variable ranging over semantic features selected from the system network (cf. Figures 1-7), and ‘…’ ranges over 2 through 119.\(^2\) RRs are defined for the elements Operator (O), Verb Root (M), and Verb Ending (Vnd) to occupy places 99, 100 and 101, respectively:

\[(5) \text{Cl}[95 \ldots 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 \ldots] \text{Cl} \text{Clt3 Clt2 Clt1 CltA O M Vnd Clt3 Clt2 Clt1 CltA CltD CltD}\]

The places 95-98 are reserved for the occurrence of clitics with non-imperative finite verb forms (cf. schema (2)), and 102-105 for the occurrence of clitics with imperatives (= proposal_for_action), infinitives and gerunds (cf. schema (3)). See lines L2-L3 of RRs 20.11-12, 20 and 20.2-3 of Figure 8, responsible for the exponence of ‘CltA’, ‘CltD’, ‘Clt3’, ‘Clt1’, and ‘Clt2’ as lo(a)s, le(s), se, melnos, and te, respectively. Note that only the clitic sequences in Table 1 are allowed.

GSC generates text-sentences like (6), (8) and (10), after deletion of unused places and stripping of the corresponding linguistic representations (7), (9), and (11), respectively:

\[(6) \text{Lo saludás. (Cf. *Saludálo. See second row in Table 2.)} \]
\[(7) \Sigma[[\ldots, \text{giver, \ldots}] \text{Cl}[1 \ldots 97 \text{CRAAG}[lo] 99 M[\text{salud}] \text{Vnd/Ag}[á] \ldots 119 s[l][]\Sigma]] \Sigma]
\[(8) \text{Saludálo. (Cf. *Lo saludá. See second row in Table 2.)} \]
\[(9) \Sigma[[\ldots, \text{proposal_for_action, \ldots}] \text{Cl}[1 \ldots 99 M[\text{salud}] \text{Vnd/Ag}[á] 102 103 104 \text{CRAAG}[lo] \ldots 119 s[l][]\Sigma]] \Sigma]
\[(10) \text{Se lo saluda. Impersonal se. (Cf. *Lo se saluda.)} \]
\[(11) \Sigma[[\ldots, \text{agent_and_affected, non_coref_rel_ag_af}, \text{agent_fcs}, \text{outsider_fcs}, \text{low_deixis_fcs}, \text{outsider_low_deixis}, \text{outsider_fcs_recoverable}, \ldots, \text{singular_fcs}, \ldots, \text{agent_stated}, \text{affected_stated}, \ldots, \text{ outsider_af_recoverable}, \ldots, \text{singular_af}, \text{high_deixis_af}, \text{least_active}, \text{outsider_high_deixis_least}, \text{non_feminine_af}] \text{Cl}[1 \ldots 94 \text{CRAAG}[se] 96 97 \text{CRAAG}[lo] 99 M[\text{salud}] \text{Vnd/Ag}[á] \ldots 119 s[l][]\Sigma]] \Sigma]

RR 20.11 of Figure 8 is triggered by the feature outsider_high_deixis_least. This feature corresponds to the meanings ‘other’, ‘high deixis’, and ‘least’ that García (1975) assigns to the clitics lo(a)s. The system of Figure 5 introduces it as a gate on the basis of the disjunctive features high_deixis_af and high_deixis_af_po subcategorizing outsiders and a subset of addressees in the semantic specification of the PRs Affected (Af) and Affected-Possessed (Af-Po), respectively. These PRs ‘Af’ and ‘Af-Po’ conflate with the element ‘CltA’ depending on whether the clause selection expression contains the feature high_deixis_af or high_deixis_af_po, respectively. Cf. L4-L5 of RR 20.11. The element ‘CltA’ is expounded by the lexical item lo(a)s, independently of the

\(^2\) It is assumed here that GSC requires 120 places for the clause.
position it occupies with respect to the governing verb, and also independently of whether it has been conflated with ‘Af’ or ‘Af-Po’. Cf. L6-L17 of RR 20.11. Whether the exponence of ‘CltA’ is lo, la, los, o las depends on the selection of specific features from the systems PERSON, NUMBER, GENDER, and TENOR. ‘CltA’ is expounded by lo (cf. L6-L8) if the clause selection expression contains either (i) a singular outsider (singular_af or singular_af_po), non-feminine (non_feminine_af or non_feminine_af_po), or (ii) a singular addressee (singular_addresssee_af or singular_addressee_af_po), non-feminine (non_feminine_af or non_feminine_af_po), and the tenor is formal. Mutatis mutandis, ‘CltA’ is expounded by la (Cf. L9-L11), los (Cf. L12-L14), and las (Cf. L15-L17).

The occurrence of se in (10) results from the application of RR 20, which is called by the feature outsider_low_deixis introduced by the rule of Figure 7. The features low_deixis_fcs, low_deixis_af, low_deixis_af_po, low_deixis_af_ca subcategorize outsiders and a subset of addressees in the semantic specification of the PRs ‘Ag’, ‘Af’, ‘Af-Po’, and ‘Af-Ca’, respectively. The rule in Figure 7 reduces the disjunction of features to the gate outsider_low_deixis and thus it captures García (1975)’s proposal that the meaning of se is made up of ‘other’ and ‘low deixis’, fulfilling in (10) a defocussing function.

4 Conclusions

The paper has presented the system network and realization rules of a generation oriented micro-grammar of RPS clitics. The specification is based on Castel (2007)’s rule typology of the Cardiff Grammar framework (Fawcett 2008, 2000; Fawcett et al 1993). GSC is written within GeneSys, the development environment of the Cardiff Grammar Generator (Fawcett & Castel 2006). GSC accounts for core phenomena of RPS clitics in simple clauses: the word order patterns governing the occurrence of clitics with other clitics and with their governing verbs, and the distribution of participant roles.

References

Figures 1-7: Systems Relevant for Clitic Realization Rules
20.11: outsider_high_deixis_least:
   [if not (proposal_for_action or infinitive or gerund) then CltA @ 98,
   else CltA @ 105],
   [if high_deixis_af then Af by CltA],
   [if high_deixis_af_po then Af-Po by CltA],
   [if (singular_af or singular_af_po or (formal and (singular_addressee_af
   or singular_addressee_af_po))) and (non_feminine_af or
   non_feminine_af_po) then CltA < "lo"],
   [if (singular_af or singular_af_po or (formal and (singular_addressee_af
   or singular_addressee_af_po))) and (feminine_af or
   feminine_af_po) then CltA < "la"],
   [if plural_af or plural_af_po or plural_addressee_af or
   plural_addressee_af_po and (non_feminine_af or
   non_feminine_af_po) then CltA < "los"],
   [if plural_af or plural_af_po or plural_addressee_af or
   plural_addressee_af_po and (feminine_af or feminine_af_po) then CltA < "las"].

20.12: outsider_high_deixis_less:
   [if not (proposal_for_action or infinitive or gerund) then CltD @ 98,
   else CltD @ 105],
   [if high_deixis_af_ca then Af-Ca by CltD],
   [if (singular_af_ca or (formal and singular_addressee_af_ca))
   and not outsider_af_po_recoverable then CltD < "le"],
   [if plural_af_ca or plural_addressee_af_ca and not
   outsider_af_po_recoverable then CltD < "les"].

20.3: singular_addressee:
   [if casual then [if not (proposal_for_action or infinitive or gerund)
   then Clt2 @ 96, else Clt2 @ 103],
   [if singular_addressee_af or (coref_rel_ag_af and
   singular_addressee_fcs) then Af by Clt2],
   [if singular_addressee_af_po or
   singular_addressee_fcs) then Af-Po by Clt2],
   [if singular_addressee_af_ca or
   singular_addressee_fcs) then Af-Ca by Clt2],
   Clt2 < "te"].