Dative arguments in psychological predicates in Spanish Paloma Carretero García pcarre@essex.ac.uk

University of Essex

In this paper, we will discuss the properties of psychological predicates with a dative experiencer argument in Spanish. Psychological predicates typically describe concepts such as *fear*, *enjoy*, *hate*, *worry*, *frighten*... and involve two arguments that have the role of experiencer and theme or stimulus/cause. However, these arguments map into different grammatical functions and so they have been traditionally grouped according to their mapping patterns. In English, verbs such as *fear* map the experiencer as SUBJ and the theme as OBJ and verbs like *frighten* show an 'inverted' mapping by which the experiencer is OBJ and the theme is SUBJ. A third class of verbs marks the experiencer argument with case or a preposition, such as the Italian *piacere* 'please'. Spanish displays all three patterns and also a fourth group of reflexive verbs with no specified theme but an optional phrase, for example a PP^1 :

| (1) Laura odia las películas | (3) Le gustan las plantas |
|--|---|
| Laura hate.3SG.PRS the.FPL movie.PL | 3SG.DAT like.3PL.PRS the.FPL plant.PL |
| románticas | |
| romantic.FPL | 'To him/her please the plants.' |
| 'Laura hates romantic movies.' | = 'S/he likes plants.' |
| (2) Los niños enfadan a | |
| the.MPL child.PL anger. 3 PL.PRS [+ANIM] their | (4) Los niños se aburren (en clase) |
| sus madres | The.PL child.PL REFL get.bored.3PL.PRS in class |
| mother.PL | |
| 'Children anger their mothers.' | 'Children get bored in class.' |

The dative argument in (3) can optionally be doubled by a full NP²:

(5) (A Juan_i) le_i gustan las plantas DAT Juan 3SG.DAT like.3PL.PRS the.FPL plant.PL 'To Juan please the plants.' =' Juan likes plants.'

The main issues arising from the configuration in (5) are: (i) what GF the dative argument maps to and (ii) how to deal with doubling. (i) has been the focus of much discussion as evidenced by the varied array of possible solutions that have been proposed in the literature. We will deal with (ii) by giving the dative NP and the dative weak pronoun distinct GFs.

Spanish is generally speaking an SVO language, so based on ordering, we could consider the dative phrase to be the SUBJ. However, SUBJ in Spanish agrees with the verb in PERSON and NUMBER and in (5), the verb is plural, agreeing therefore with the phrase at the end of the sentence - *las plantas*. This mismatch between ordering and agreement has been the basis for many arguments in the literature that consider the dative phrase as either SUBJ or as some other function. Basing their proposal on the treatment of the Icelandic passive by Zaenen et al. (1985), Masullo (1992) or Fernández Soriano (1999) claim the existence of some sort of *quirky* dative case in Spanish that would allow non-nominative subjects. Cuervo (2010) proposes a specialised applicative head that allows the experiencer to be added to the structure as an extra external argument which makes it similar to a SUBJ. Alarcos Llorach (1994) dismisses the possibility of the phrase being a SUBJ as he argues *a*-phrases are PPs and these can never be SUBJ. Mendívil Giró (2002) argues for a system for Spanish that maps the dative experiencer as an ergative SUBJ while the postposed argument is an absolutive direct object. Alsina (1996) and Vanhoe (2002) propose to treat the dative experiencer as OBJ.

We show that the experiencer dative argument is not a SUBJ by applying subjecthood tests that include the ability for the participants to be dropped. Spanish is a PRO-DROP language, so if an argument can get dropped without major

the.PL child.PL 3PL.ACC anger.3PL.PRS 'Children anger them.'

¹The class of verbs illustrated by (2) can also show the same mapping as the verbs exemplified by (3), which merits the creation of a fifth group for Vogel and Villada (1999). However, the pattern is identical so we will not consider it a separate class.

²Note that a in (2) marks the accusative argument as animate. Accusative case is however only visibly marked in pronominal elements: (i) Los niños las enfadan

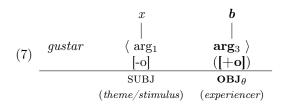
This contrasts with the a in (5), which is a dative marker.

implications, it is then the SUBJ. We can easily drop the theme but if we drop the experiencer, we have a completely different configuration that entails a lexical operation that turns *gustar* into a one-place predicate:

| (6) | a. | Le 3sg.dat <i>experience</i> | | las s the.FPL | plantas plant.PL <i>theme</i> | | |
|-----|----|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| | | | <i>ther please the plikes plants.</i> | plants.' | | | |
| ł | b. | | gustan like.3PL.PRS | | C | e. Gustan las plantas like.3PL.PRS the.FPL plant.PL | |
| | | | <i>her please they</i> likes them.' | .' | [dropped theme] | 'please the plants.' =' Plants please/are liked.' | [dropped experiencer] |

This test shows that the theme is SUBJ and further evidence will be provided by applying other tests such as the ability for the participants to be controlled or controlling arguments, their behaviour with raising and causative predicates, their binding properties and their ability to take part in passive constructions.

We argue that the dative experiencer is best characterised as OBJ_{θ} by taking advantage of the flexibility allowed by Kibort (2007)'s version of Lexical Mapping Theory. We have a participant that displays distinctive morphology (dative case) and is restricted to a particular thematic role (experiencer). Besides, it cannot become the SUBJ of a passive construction, which rules out the possibility of treating it as OBJ^3 . The frame for *gustar* will be as follows, mapping the theme as arg_1 and SUBJ and the experiencer as arg_3 and OBJ_{θ} :



We deal with the unexpected ordering of (5) by arguing that the *a*-phrase is a FOC that is semantically and syntactically bound to the OBJ_{θ} . We will show more instances of similar behaviour of *a*-phrases in ditransitive constructions and questions that support their role as FOC:

| (8) | PRED | 'LIKE< (SUBJ) (OBJ $_{\theta}$)>' | |
|-----|----------------|--|--|
| | | PRED 'PLANT' | |
| | SUBJ | INDEX NUM PL PERS 3 | |
| | | | |
| | | PRED 'PRO' | |
| | OBJ_{θ} | INDEX NUM SG PERS 3 | |
| | | CASE DAT | |
| [| | PRED 'JUAN' | |
| | FOC | $\left[\begin{array}{cc} \text{NUM} & \text{SG} \\ \text{PERS} & 3 \end{array} \right]$ | |
| | | CASE DAT | |

We then propose the following equation to ensure the two elements are bound:

(9) (\uparrow FOC CASE) =_c (\uparrow OBJ_{θ} CASE) (\uparrow FOC INDEX) =_c (\uparrow OBJ_{θ} INDEX)

³We acknowledge the possibility of treating the dative as an OBJ as proposed by Alsina (1996) who claims a unique GF OBJ could suffice to account for both direct and indirect objects by specifying case and implementing principles that prevent a dative OBJ from being a SUBJ. However, we discard this treatment as it involves extra principles that are not needed when treating it as OBJ_{θ} .

Semantically, we can account for binding in the fashion of Asudeh (2012)'s approach to resumptive pronouns that are syntactically active:

(10) $(\uparrow \text{FOC})_{\sigma} = ((\uparrow \text{OBJ}_{\theta})_{\sigma} \text{ ANTECEDENT})$

To summarise, this paper will argue that from an LFG perspective, we make the theoretical contribution that Spanish has an $OBJ_{\theta-exp}$ function and will propose a novel way to account for clitic doubling that can be extrapolated to instances of doubling in other configurations such as ditransitives.

References

• Alarcos Llorach, E. (1994). Gramática de la Lengua Española, Chapter XXI, pp. 266–276. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe. • Alsina, A. (1996). The Role of Argument Structure in Grammar: Evidence from Romance. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications. • Asudeh, A. (2012). The Logic of Pronominal Resumption. Oxford Studies in Theoretical Linguistics. Oxford University Press. • Cuervo, M. C. (2010). Some Dative Subjects Are Born, Some Are Made. In C. B. et al. (Ed.), Selected Proceedings of the 12th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium, Somerville, MA, pp. 26–37. Cascadilla Proceedings Project. • Fernández Soriano, O. (1999). Two types of impersonal sentences in Spanish: Locative and dative subjects. Syntax 2(2), 101–140. • Kibort, A. (2007). Extending the Applicability of Lexical Mapping Theory. In M. Butt and T. H. King (Eds.), Proceedings of the LFG07 Conference. CSLI Publications. • Masullo, P. J. (1992). Incorporation and Case theory in Spanish: A crosslinguistic perspective. Ph. D. thesis, University of Washington, Seattle. • Mendívil Giró, J. L. (2002). La estructura ergativa de *gustar* y otros verbos de afección psíquica en español. In Actas del V Congreso de Lingüística General. Universidad de León. • Vanhoe, H. (2002). Aspects of the syntax of psychological verbs in Spanish. A lexical functional analysis. In M. Butt and T. H. King (Eds.), Proceedings of the LFG02 Conference. CSLI Publications. • Vogel, C. and B. Villada (1999, December). An HPSG Analysis of Grammatical Relations, Syntactic Valency and Semantic Argument Structure in Spanish Psychological Predicates and other Instances of Quirky Case and Agreement. Technical report, Trinity College Dublin. • Zaenen, A., J. Maling, and H. Thráinsson (1985). Case and Grammatical Functions: The Icelandic Passive. Syntax and Semantics 24, 95–136.