## UNAGREEMENT AND SPANISH PSYCH-VERBS: EVIDENCE FROM A TWITTER DATABASE

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- **1. GOAL**: This paper explores a case of number agreement variation in Spanish psych-verb structures. We will see that data from Twitter show that in cases of DAT-NOM patterns of psych-verbs (such as *gustar* 'like', *molestar* 'annoy', *sorprender* 'surprise', etc.) some speakers accept a lack of agreement with the internal argument (IA) in plural when it contains a relative clause (RC) as a modifier. For these cases, we propose that, even though the nominal antecedent is external to the clause, it is not visible for Agree so the main verb shows default 3<sup>rd</sup> singular inflection. This is possible under a raising analysis à la Kayne (1994) in which the antecedent is based-generated and moves to the SPEC,CP of the RC, so matrix T cannot access it as a target of any checking relation.
- **2. DATA**: In Spanish, type III psych-Vs (cf. Belleti & Rizzi 1988) require a DAT clitic (that doubles a DAT DP that can be covert) carrying the experiencer role. T obligatorily agrees in number with the IA (see (1)) or shows 3<sup>rd</sup> singular default form if the IA is a clause (see (2)):
- (1) a. (A ti) te gusta el libro

to you  $DAT_{2SG}$  like<sub>3SG</sub> the book

'You like the book'

(2) (A ti) te **gusta** [que los niños lean libros] to you DAT<sub>2SG</sub> like<sub>3SG</sub> that the kids read<sub>3PL</sub> books 'You like that the kids read books'

b. (A ti) te gustan los libros

to you DAT<sub>2SG</sub> like<sub>3PL</sub> the books

'You like books'

However, data from different Spanish varieties show that some speakers can obviate agreement when the DP is modified by a RC:

(3) a. Me sorprendió las cosas que se dijeron

[from Martínez 1999, fn. 32]

DAT<sub>1SG</sub> surprised<sub>3SG</sub> the things that<sub>REL</sub> SE<sub>impersonal</sub> said<sub>3PL</sub>

'I was surprised by the things that were said'

b. Le **preocupa** las complicaciones [...] que existen en Europa [CORPES, Spain] DAT<sub>3SG</sub> worry<sub>3SG</sub> the complications that exist<sub>3PL</sub> in Europe

'The complications that<sub>REL</sub> exist in Europe worry him'

c. me **gusta** las cosas que se realizan con mucho amor y empeño [Twitter, Colombia] DAT<sub>1SG</sub> like<sub>3SG</sub> the things that<sub>REL</sub> SE<sub>impersonal</sub> make<sub>3PL</sub> with much love and determination 'I like the things that are done with love and determination'

Only the cases similar to (3a) in which there is a possible exclamative reading of the embedded clause have been considered in the literature (cf. Martínez 1999, Contreras 1999, Brucart 1999). In fact, an embedded exclamative equivalent is possible (cf. (4a)), but it is impossible in the cases of (3b) and (3c), as (4b) and (4c) show in turn:

(4) a. Me sorprendió [qué cosas se dijeron]

[from Martínez 1999, fn. 32]

lit. 'I am surprised by what things were said'

- b. \*Le preocupa [qué complicaciones existen en Europa]
  - lit. 'He is worried by what complications exist in Europe'
- c. \*Me gusta [qué cosas se realizan con mucho amor y empeño]
  - lit. 'I like what things are done with love and determination'

For the cases of concealed exclamatives it has been argued that the IA is a nominal clause with propositional interpretation. In the cases of psych-Vs as *gustar* or *preocupar* this is not that clear since the exclamative interpretation is impossible.

- **3. PROPOSAL**: To explain the data in (3), we will propose that the nominal head in such cases is in a position where main T cannot reach it as a target of Agree triggering the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular form of the verb. A suitable explanation is Kayne's (1994) raising analysis of RCs (see also Bianchi 1999, i.a.) in which the nominal antecedent moves to Spec,CP of the embedded clause. The relevant difference between a 'regular' RC, which triggers agreement, and the unagreement data is the locus of the head D in the structure. As we see in (6) for the sentences in (5):
- (5) a. Me **gustan** [las cosas que haces] regular RC 'I like<sub>3PL</sub> the things that you do'
  - b. Me **gusta** [las cosas que haces] unagreement RC
  - 'I like<sub>3SG</sub> the things that you do'
- (6) a. Me T gustan<sub>3PL</sub> [**DP** [**D** las] [CP [cosas]<sub>i</sub> [C' [C que] [TP haces  $t_i$ ]]]]

  b. Me T gusta<sub>3SG</sub> [**CP** [**DP** las cosas]<sub>i</sub> [C' [C que] [TP haces  $t_i$ ]]]

While in (6a) the CP with the moved nominal head in Spec,CP is the complement of D, in (6b) the whole DP (with the determiner) stays in Spec,CP, leaving the whole RC as a CP, inaccessible for Agree from the matrix clause.

- **4. CONSEQUENCES:** A consequence of this analysis is that the IA becomes a CP, which could be equated to the canonical argument illustrated in (2b). The crucial difference is that in the case of regular CP arguments the embedded verb is obligatorily in subjunctive mood, while in the unagreement cases the verb has to be in indicative:
- (7) a. Me gusta [las cosas que {haces<sub>IND</sub> / \*hagas<sub>SUBJ</sub>)] unagreement RC b. Me gusta [que {\*haces<sub>IND</sub>/hagas<sub>SUBJ</sub>} las cosas] regular CP argument

This is not a trivial difference, since it has been proved that subjunctive clauses have a closer relationship with the matrix clause as opposed to indicative clauses (Torrego & Uriagereka 1992, Uriagereka 2015, i.a.). This difference explains why only regular CP arguments (in subjunctive) can be fronted: the relationship of the main clause with the unagreement RC is very weak so the clause it is not fully licensed and has to remain in situ:

- (8) a. [Que hagas cosas] me gusta
  - b. \*[Las cosas que haces] me gusta
- **5. CONCLUSIONS**: This paper has investigated structures whereby T does not agree with the IA as it would be expected in NOM-DAT psych-verb patterns in Spanish. This happens when the IA has a relative clause as a modifier. Regarding the data, exploring the Syntactic Atlas of Spanish, with access to social networks database, and other corpora available has allowed us to discover that this phenomenon is present in very different varieties of Spanish and that it is possible with a full class of verbs, description that was not included in the reference grammars of Spanish. These data do not only seem to provide further support for a raising analysis of relative clauses but also raises questions about the variation in agreement and the structure of clausal modifiers in Spanish.
- REFERENCES: Belletti, A. & L. Rizzi. 1988. Psych Verbs and Theta Theory. Natural Language and Linguistic Theory 6. 291-352. **Bianchi, V. 1999.** Consequences of Antisymmetry. Headed Relative Clauses. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. RAE. **CORPES** [http://web.frl.es/CORPES/]. Gallego, A. 2014. Atlas Sintáctico del Español. (ASinEs) [http://twitter.asines.org]. Kayne, R. S. 1994. The Antisymmetry of Syntax. Cambridge (Mass.): MIT Press. Martínez, J. A. 1999. La concordancia. In I. Bosque & V. Demonte (eds.), Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española, 2695-2786. Madrid: Espasa Calpe. Torrego, E. & Uriagereka, J. 1992. Indicative dependents. Ms, UMass Boston/UMD. Uriagereka, J. 2015. Subordinación: indicativos y subjuntivos. In Á.J. Gallego (ed.), Perspectivas de sintaxis formal, 265-298. Madrid: Akal.