

Subordinated Gapping and Polar Fragments in Spanish

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Several works, like Carlson (2001) and Merchant (2013) have pointed out that English fragments such as gapping and polar fragments cannot be embedded, as it is illustrated by (1) and (2) respectively. Nevertheless, Spanish seem to differ from English on this point, since it seems to accept these subordinations, as it is suggested by the examples of Jimenez Julia (1995) (3), (4):

- (1) *John will have caviar, although others beans.
- (2) *John won't come to the party but I think Anne yes.
- (3) Francisco quiere estudiar en la Universidad C, y creo que Javier en la A.
'Francisco wants to study in the Universidad C and I think Javier in the A.'
- (4) Andrés estudia Filología en Santiago, y me han dicho que Manolo no.
'Andres studies Philology in Santiago and I have been told that Manolo not.'

Jimenez Julia's claim is supported by corpus data. In fact, the CORLEC corpus of contemporary oral Spanish (Marcos Marin, 1992) provides evidence which supports this claim: gapping and polar fragments are indeed frequent in subordination in oral Spanish. Among the 63 thousand utterances which compose this corpus, one can find 543 cases of subordinated fragments, with a higher frequency in dialogic than in monologic genres (390 vs. 153 examples), and particularly in the genre informal conversation (183 examples). Examples of gapping in subordination are less frequent, but corpus data show a significant distribution: 43 cases in dialogic and 26 in monologic genres.

This communication aims to present the syntactic diversity and corpus frequency of subordinated gapping and polar fragments in Spanish, as shown by the data in the CORLEC corpus. It will focus on the syntactic structures that can be found, the part of speech of the head of gapping fragments, and the syntactic type and illocutive value of the clause where the fragment is embedded. As for the part of speech, gapping fragments can be headed by a noun (5), by a preposition (3), by an adjective (6) or by an adverb (7). They can be embedded by both verbal (5) and non-verbal heads (6), (7):

- (5) se lo va a comer todo pero me parece que yo solo un poco.
'She is going to eat everything but I think that I only a little.'
- (6) El viaje será largo hoy pero seguro que mañana corto.
'The trip will be long today but sure that tomorrow short.'
- (7) Luisa ha estado en ese club muchas veces pero por supuesto que yo nunca.
'Luisa has often been in this club but of course that I never.'

Concerning the syntactic variety, polar fragments display a wide range of structures, such as head only (8), head – complement (9), head – adjunct (10) and head – peripheric (4), whereas gapping are restricted to the head – peripheric structure (3). This account of the syntactic variety of subordinated gapping and polar fragments in Spanish will be completed by noticing the syntactic features which seem possible but are not found in the corpus.

- (8) Quería ir a verla pero me dijeron que no.
'I wanted to see her but they told me that not.'
- (9) Seguro que sí que vienen a tu cumpleaños.
'Sure that yes that they come to your birthday.'
- (10) Viene mucho a verme pero todos los días no.
'He comes to see me often but everyday not.'

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