

Null Generic Subjects in Spanish and the Typology of Null Subject Languages

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Introduction

- Null generic third-singular subjects²:
 - ➔ allowed in partial null subject languages (pNSLs); Brazilian Port (1).
 - ➔ not allowed in consistent null subject languages (cNSLs); Spanish (2).

- (1) Naquele quarto *pro* dorme bem. (2) En ese cuarto *pro* duerme bien.
in-that bedroom one sleeps well in that bedroom s/he sleeps well
"In that bedroom one sleeps well." "In that bedroom s/he sleeps well."

- (3)a. Holmberg's (2005) Null Generic Subject Generalization (NGSG):
a. cNSLs have a D-feature in T; pNSLs lack a D-feature in T.
b. Since cNSLs have D-in-T, subject *pro* is always interpreted as referential.
c. Since pNSLs lack D-in-T, subject *pro* is typically interpreted as generic.

- b. Special Morphology Condition (SMC):
cNSLs can have generic null subjects when licensed by "special overt morphology" such as Spanish impersonal *se* and its correlates in other Romance and Slavic languages.

- Novel data from Spanish (4) and Italian (5):

- (4) Uno_i duerme bien, cuando *pro*_i duerme en ese cuarto.³
one sleeps well when one sleeps in that bedroom
"One sleeps well when one sleeps in that bedroom."

- (5) Uno_i non può pensare bene...dormire bene, se *pro*_i non ha mangiato bene.
one not can think well sleep well if one not has eaten well
"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one did not eat well."

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² "Generic" = potentially including the speaker; quasi-universal.

³ An overt *uno* is also acceptable in the adjunct clause, though *pro* is preferable.

Main claims:

1. Generic subject *pro* is licensed in cNSLs via topic-identification with generic *uno*.
2. Generic *uno* licensing generic subject *pro* is not accounted for under the SMC.
3. Subject *pro* can be generic even in the presence of a D-feature in T. Hence, this aspect of the generalization may be dispensed with.

Format of the presentation:

- Section 1 - Topic identification analysis of referential subject *pro*
- Section 2 - Extension of topic identification analysis to generic subject *pro*
- Section 3 - Special Morphology Condition: impersonal *se* and generic *uno*
- Section 4 - Implications for the Null Generic Subject Generalization
- Section 5 - Conclusion
- APPENDIX - Topic identification and object *pro*

1. Topic identification analysis of referential subject *pro*

1.1 Italian referential subject *pro* is identified by topic (Frascarelli 2007)

Cartography of Topics (Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl 2007):

- 1 - Aboutness topic (A-topic): introduces new topic into discourse.
 - 2 - Contrastive topic: creates oppositional pairs with respect to other topics.
 - 3 - Familiar topic: used to refer to background information or for topic continuity.
- Each type of topic is differentiated phonologically by a different tonal event.
 - The A-topic is the topic that identifies the content of *pro* via Agree. It is base-generated in Spec,Shift in the left periphery.

Topic Criterion

- Similar to Rizzi's (2006) Subject Criterion for the T-domain, Frascarelli proposes a Topic Criterion for the C-domain.

- (6) Topic Criterion
- [+Aboutness] is connected with an EPP feature in the high Topic field that yields a specific discourse-related property, namely "Aboutness."
 - The [+aboutness] Topic matches with an argument in the main clause through Agree.
 - When continuous, the [+aboutness] Topic can be null (i.e., silent).

Data and Analysis

(7) Il mio capo_i è un exreporter ... *pro*_i è stato in giro per il mondo...⁴
 the my boss is a former-reporter he is been on tour through the world
 "My boss is a former-reporter... He has been all over the world..."

(8) [_{ShiftP} ~~*Il mio capo*~~_[φ,α,Pn] Shift' [... [TP [_{VP} *pro*_[φ,α,Pn] [VP]]]]⁵

- Preverbal subjects are A-topics

(9a). Questa mattina, la mostra è visitata di Gianni_i. Più tardi egli_i/lui_i/**pro*_i
 this morning the exhibit was visited by Gianni more late he he he
 ha visitato l'università.
 has visited the-university
 "This morning, the exhibit was visited by Gianni. Later, he visited the university."

b. Questa mattina, Gianni_i ha visitato la mostra. Più tardi *pro*_i ha visitato
 this morning Gianni has visited the exhibit more late he has visited
 l'università.
 the-university
 "This morning, Gianni visited the exhibit. Later, he visited the university."

- In (9a), *pro* is unacceptable in the second sentence because *Gianni* is postverbal and, thus, not an A-topic.

Conclusion: In Italian, preverbal subjects are A-topics that can identify *pro* in subsequent clauses via a null copy in the left-periphery.

⁴ These data adapted from Frascarelli (2007:703).

⁵ The strike-through represents phonetically unrealized material.

1.2 Spanish referential subject *pro* is identified by topic

Hypothesis: Spanish, like Italian, is a cNSL and thus *pro* should be licensed in the same way per the NGSF.

(10)a. Esta mañana, la exhibición fue visitada por Juan_i. Luego, él_i/**pro*_i fue a la
 this morning the exhibit was visited by John later he went to the
 universidad.
 university

university

"This morning, the library was visited by John. Later, he went to the university."

b. Esta mañana, Juan_i visitó la exhibición. Luego, *pro*_i fue a la universidad.
 this morning John visited the exhibit later he went to the university

"This morning, John visited the library. Later, he went to the university."

(11) [ShiftP Juan_[φ,α,Pn] Shift' [... [TP [vP pro_[φ,α,Pn] [VP *fue a la universidad*]]]]]

Conclusion: In Spanish, preverbal subjects are A-topics that can identify referential *pro* in subsequent clauses via a null copy in the left-periphery.

2. Extension of topic identification analysis to generic subject *pro*

Hypothesis: Licensing of generic subject *pro* in Spanish takes place the same way seen for referential subject *pro* above.

(12) Uno_i duerme bien, cuando *pro*_i duerme en ese cuarto.
 one sleeps well when one sleeps in that bedroom
 "One_i sleeps well when one_i sleeps in that bedroom."

(13)a. Matrix: [ShiftP *uno* [TP <*uno*> [vP <*uno*> [VP *duerme bien*]]]]

b. Adjunct: [CP *Cuando* ShiftP *uno*_i [TP [vP *pro*_i [VP *duerme en ese cuarto*]]]]

- Generic *uno* is introduced as the A-topic in the first clause. A null copy is merged in Spec,Shift in the second clause, agreeing with *pro*.

2.1 Topics can be indefinite

- Holmberg et al (2009:70) *contra* Frascarelli (2007) - all A-topics are definite.

(14) ... se *uno*_i ... sbaglia qui, come *pro*_i fa a tornare indietro?"⁶
if one goes-wrong here how one makes to return back
"... if one goes the wrong way here, how does he get back?"

- In Italian (14), *uno* is the indefinite topic, coreferential with *pro* in the second clause.

(15) Cuando *uno*_i es rico, *pro*_i viaja frecuentemente. *pro*_i Viaja a Francia o
when one is rich one travels frequently one travels to France or
a Italia y *pro*_i bebe vino caro.
to Italy and one drinks wine expensive
"When one is rich, he travels frequently. One travels to France or to Italy
and one drinks expensive wine."

- In Spanish (15), *uno* is the indefinite topic coreferential with *pro* in each subsequent clause, even across full stops.

Conclusion: Topics can be indefinite.

2.2 Additional evidence: an ordering constraint on *uno* and *pro*

The pattern: *Uno* must precede *pro* in the discourse.

(16) *Uno*_i duerme bien, cuando *pro*_i duerme en ese cuarto.
one sleeps well when one sleeps in that bedroom
"One_i sleeps well when one_i sleeps in that bedroom."

(17) **Pro*_i duerme bien, cuando *uno*_i duerme en ese cuarto.
one sleeps well when one sleeps in that room

(18) Cuando *uno*_i duerme en ese cuarto, *pro*_i duerme bien.
when one sleeps in that room one sleeps well
"When one sleeps in that room, one sleeps well."

(19) *Cuando *pro*_i duerme en ese cuarto, *uno*_i duerme bien.
when one sleeps in that room one sleeps well

⁶ Adapted from from Frascarelli's (2007:705) example (14).

- (17) and (19) are unacceptable on the generic reading because there is no null A-topic identical to *uno* agreeing with *pro*. It must be first introduced overtly, as in (16) and (18).

(20)a. Matrix → [ShiftP *uno*_i [TP <*uno*>_i [vP <*uno*>_i *duerme bien*]]]

b. Adjunct → [CP *cuando* [ShiftP *uno*_i TP [vP *pro*_i *duerme . . .*]]]

(21)a. Matrix → *[ShiftP [TP [vP *pro*_i *duerme bien*]]]

b. Adjunct → [CP *cuando* [ShiftP *uno*_i [TP <*uno*>_i [vP <*uno*>_i *duerme . . .*]]]]

(22)a. Adjunct → [CP *cuando* [ShiftP *uno*_i [TP <*uno*>_i [vP <*uno*>_i *duerme . . .*]]]]

b. Matrix → [ShiftP *uno*_i [TP [vP *pro*_i *duerme bien*]]]

(23)a. Adjunct → *[CP *cuando* [ShiftP [TP [vP *pro*_i *duerme . . .*]]]]]

b. Matrix → [ShiftP *uno*_i [TP <*uno*>_i [vP <*uno*>_i *duerme bien*]]]

Conclusion: Generic null subjects in Spanish are licensed by a generic topic in the left-periphery that values its Aboutness, Person, and φ-features, resulting in a generic interpretation.

3. The Special Morphology Condition: impersonal *se* (Imp_{se}) and generic *uno*

- Imp_{se}, as in (24), is a functional head *v* or Voice that licenses the generic interpretation of subject *pro* (Otero 1986, Mendikoetxea 2008, MacDonald to appear, etc.)

(24) En ese cuarto, *se pro* duerme bien.
 in that room Imp_{se} one sleeps well
 "In that room, one sleeps well."

- Recall that Imp_{se} qualifies as part of the Special Morphology Condition (SMC) on the NGS. Does generic *uno* also qualify under this condition? If so, Imp_{se} and generic *uno* should display similar properties.

Hypothesis: Imp_{se} shows the same properties as generic *uno* with respect to the licensing of null generic subjects.

3.1 Coreferentiality diagnostics

- Generic *uno* and Imp_{se}-*pro* can be coreferential:

(25) Cuando uno_i trabaja duro, se_i *pro*_i gana mucho dinero.
when one works hard Imp_{se} one earns much money
"When one works hard, one earns a lot of money."

- The order can be reversed:

(26) Cuando se *pro*_i trabaja duro, uno_i gana mucho dinero.

- Imp_{se}-*pro* can be coreferential with Imp_{se}-*pro*:

(27) Cuando se *pro*_i trabaja duro, se *pro*_i gana mucho dinero.

- Imp_{se}-*pro* and bare third-singular *pro*:

(28) *Cuando se *pro*_i trabaja duro, *pro*_i gana mucho dinero.

(29) *Cuando *pro*_i trabaja duro, se *pro*_i gana mucho dinero.

- Compare (28) with (30):

(30) Cuando uno_i trabaja duro, *pro*_i gana mucho dinero.

Observation: Imp_{se} and generic *uno* display some similarities with respect to cross-clausal coreferentiality, but they differ in one critical way: Imp_{se} does not license a null generic subject in later clauses, while generic *uno* does⁷. Why?

⁷ Additionally, generic *uno* (i.) licenses a reflexive pronoun while Imp_{se} (ii.) does not.

(i.) *Uno*_i debe tener confianza en sí_i mismo.
"One should have confidence in oneself"

(ii.) **Se*_i debe tener confianza en sí_i mismo.

3.2 *Uno* can be an A-topic; *Imp_{se}* cannot be an A-topic.

- Recall the following data, repeated from above:

(31) Cuando uno_i es rico, pro_i viaja frecuentemente. pro_i Viaja a Francia o
when one is rich one travels frequently one travels to France or
a Italia y pro_i bebe vino caro.
to Italy and one drinks wine expensive
"When one is rich, he travels frequently. One travels to France or to Italy
and drinks expensive wine."

Observation: Generic *uno* identifies generic *pro* in subsequent topics as an A-topic.

- Compare (31) above with (32) below, where generic *uno* is replaced with *Imp_{se}*:

(32) *Cuando se_i pro_i es rico, pro_i viaja frecuentemente. pro_i viaja a
when *Imp_{se}* one is rich one travels frequently one travels to
Francia o a Italia y pro_i bebe vino caro.
France or to Italy and one drinks wine expensive
"When one is rich, he travels frequently. One travels to France or to Italy
and drinks expensive wine."

- Now compare (32) with (33) below, where each *pro* has a local *Imp_{se}*:

(33) Cuando se_i pro_i es rico, se pro_i viaja frecuentemente. Se pro_i
when *Imp_{se}* one is rich *Imp_{se}* one travels frequently *Imp_{se}* one
viaja a Francia o a Italia y se pro_i bebe vino caro
travels to France or to Italy and *Imp_{se}* one drinks wine expensive
"When one is rich, he travels frequently. One travels to France or to Italy
and drinks expensive wine."

Observation: *Imp_{se}* cannot be an A-topic. Why not?

Tentative explanation: *Imp_{se}*, as the spell out of little *v* or Voice, licenses *pro* (Mendikoetxea 2008, MacDonald to appear) but since it is a functional head it cannot serve as an A-topic. A generic operator binds *pro* and T, leading to a generic interpretation.

3.3 An additional problem for the SMC

- The SMC assumes that the *pro* licensed by special morphology in cNSLs and the bare *pro* that occurs in pNSLs are formally identical.

Prediction: Imp_{se}-*pro* in cNSLs and bare *pro* in pNSLs should have the same properties.

- One difference: BP generic *pro* requires a locative phrase for a generic or arbitrary reading (Carvalho 2016); Spanish Imp_{se}-*pro* does not.

(34) **Só pro* limpa essa mesa com detergente. (Braz. Port.)
only one cleans this table with detergent
Intended: "One only cleans this table with detergent."

(35) *Aqui só pro* limpa essa mesa com detergente (Braz. Port.)
here only one cleans this table with detergent
"Here one only cleans this table with detergent."

(36) *Solo se* limpia esta mesa con detergente. (Spanish)
only Imp_{se} cleans this table with detergent
"One only cleans this table this detergent."

Tentative conclusion: Spanish Imp_{se}-*pro* and Brazilian Portuguese generic *pro* do not appear to be formally identical⁸.

INTERIM SUMMARY

- Generic null subjects are licensed via a generic topic such as generic *uno*. When generic *uno* has not been introduced as the A-topic, a generic null subject can still be licensed by Imp_{se}.
- Generic *uno* does not qualify as part of the SMC.
- The SMC makes inaccurate crosslinguistic predictions about generic *pro*.

⁸ See Carvalho (2016), Chapter 6, for additional differences between null impersonals in BP and Imp_{se}, including predicate-type. Carvalho argues that there is no *pro* in null impersonal constructions and that the locative phrase is the external argument.

4. Implications for Holmberg's Null Generic Subject Generalization (NGSG)

- Holmberg (2005) observes that cNSLs do not allow null generic subjects while pNSLs do. He attributes this to the generalization in (37).

(37) Holmberg's Null Generic Subject Generalization (NGSG):

- a. cNSLs have a D-feature in T; pNSLs lack a D-feature in T.
 - b. Since cNSLs have D-in-T, subject *pro* is always interpreted as referential.
 - c. Since pNSLs lack D-in-T, subject *pro* is typically interpreted as generic.
- I have shown that, *contra* Holmberg's claim, cNSLs do have generic null subjects under conditions unrelated to a D-feature in T; i.e., the presence of a generic topic.
 - Is there any additional reason to maintain the D-in-T aspect of the NGSG? Holmberg and his coauthors build their analyses of the above interpretations of *pro* around the presence or absence of a D-feature.
 - Do we need the D-feature in order to account for:
 - a. referential *pro* in cNSLs? No; see Section 1.
 - b. generic *pro* in cNSLs? No; see Section 2.
 - c. referential *pro* in pNSLs?
 - d. generic *pro* in pNSLs?

4.1 Referential *pro* in pNSLs

Hypothesis: referential subject *pro* in pNSLs is licensed via topic-identification.

- In pNSLs like BP, a referential subject *pro* is only allowed when controlled by a higher DP argument, as in (38).

(38) O João_i disse que ele_i/*pro*_i tinha comprado uma casa.⁹
the João said that he had bought a house
"João said that he had bought a house."

⁹ This example taken from Holmberg et al (2009:65)

- Holmberg et al (2009), Holmberg & Sheehan (2010): in these cases, *pro* has an unvalued D-feature that is valued by the D-feature on the controller DP argument. BP being a pNSL, there is no D-feature in T.
- However, the data in (38) are very similar to what was seen above for referential subject *pro* in cNSLs; i.e., a previous argument identifies *pro*.

Proposal: the same analysis seen above for referential *pro* in cNSLs can be applied to referential *pro* in BP.

- (39)a. Matrix → [ShiftP *O João*_i [TP <*O João*>_i [vP <*O João*>_i *disse*]]]
- b. Embedded → [CP *que* [ShiftP ~~*O João*~~_i TP [vP *pro*_i *tinha comprado* . . .]]]

- In (39), the preverbal subject of the matrix clause, *O João*, is the A-topic. Its null copy is base-generated in Spec,Shift in the embedded clause, identifying *pro* via agreement.

A Potential Problem: BP referential *pro* is not licensed across full stops, as was seen for the Spanish and Italian data. Compare Spanish (40) and BP (41).

- (40) Esta mañana, Juan_i visitó la exhibición. Luego, *pro*_i volvió para sacar
 this morning John visited the exhibit later he returned to get
 otros libros.
 other books
 "This morning, John visited the library. Later, he returned to check out
 some other books."

- (41) Esta manhã, João_i visitou a biblioteca. Mais tarde, ele_i/**pro*_i voltou para
 this morning John visited the library more late he returned to
 pegar outros livros.¹⁰
 get other books
 "This morning, John visited the library. Later, he returned to check out
 some other books."

- A possible explanation, as Frascarelli (2007) suggests for non-null subject languages, is that *pro* in (41) must be spelled out because it is not at the phase edge. Rather it is in Spec,T in order to satisfy EPP.

¹⁰ Thank you Janayna Carvalho for this datum.

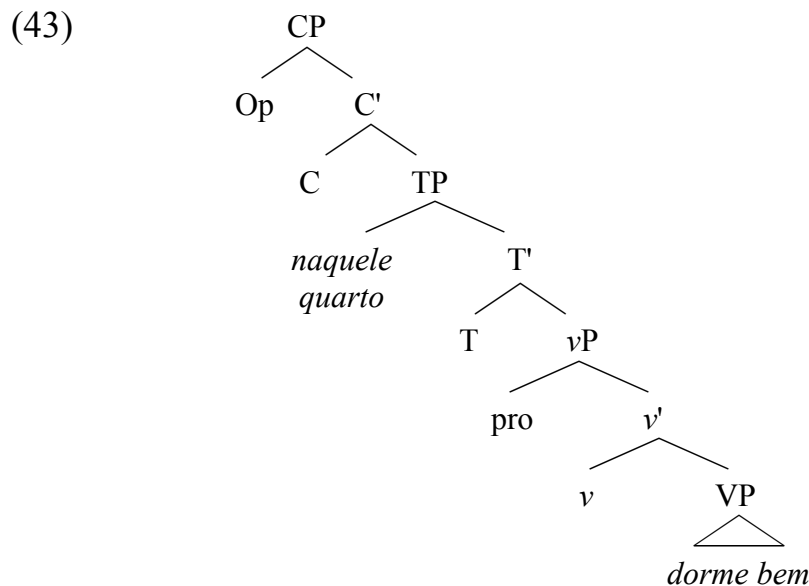
- Holmberg et al (2009) and Homberg & Sheehan (2010) have to posit an unvalued D-feature on *pro* in these constructions. A topic-identification analysis avoids this stipulation.

Tentative Conclusion: referential subject *pro* is licensed via topic-identification in BP, a pNSL.

4.2 Generic *pro* in pNSLs

- Holmberg's (2005, 2010) analysis, following Moltmann (2006), can be adopted here, with little modification.

(42) Naquele quarto *pro* dorme bem.
 in-that bedroom one sleeps well
 "In that bedroom one sleeps well."



- In (43), a generic operator in Spec,C binds T and *pro*, resulting in the generic interpretation of *pro*.
- The locative topic, *naquele quarto*, is required in Spec,T in order to check the EPP. In this way, a topic still has a role to play, but there is no Agree with *pro*.

Conclusion: both referential and generic subject *pro* are licensed in pNSLs by mechanisms unrelated to D-feature.

4.3 Revising the NGS

- Holmberg's original observation that cNSLs and pNSLs differ with respect to the distribution of null generic subjects is correct. However, these differences are not related to a D-feature.
- I propose that the NGS be revised as below in (44).

(44) Null Generic Subject Generalization (REVISED):

- a. cNSLs and pNSLs both allow referential and generic *pro*; they only with respect to licensing conditions.
- b. In cNSLs, referential and generic *pro* are licensed via agreement with a null referential or generic A-topic, respectively.
- c. In pNSLs, referential *pro* is licensed via agreement with a null referential topic. Generic *pro* licensed by a generic operator in Spec,C accompanied by a locative phrase in Spec,T for EPP.

5. Conclusion

- *Contra* Holmberg's (2005, 2010) claim, consistent null subject languages like Spanish and Italian do have null generic subjects.
- In cNSLs, null generic subjects are licensed via topic-identification. A null copy of a generic topic in the left periphery enters into Agree with *pro*, forming a topic chain resulting in generic interpretation.
- Unlike Imp_{se}, generic *uno* is not accounted for under Holmberg's Special Morphology Condition.
- Since generic null subjects are licensed in cNSLs in a way unrelated to the presence or absence of a D-feature in T, the revised version of the Null Generic Subject Generalization given above in (44) captures the different crosslinguistic distribution and licensing conditions on null subjects without making reference to this feature.

APPENDIX: Topic identification and null objects

Hypothesis: Assuming null subjects and null objects to be the same element, *pro*, they should be identified similarly; i.e., via A-topic.

A.1 Topic identification of null objects (Frascarelli 2007)

- Languages that allow referential null objects: Burmese, Finnish.

(45) Hkalei_k amei ahphyit *pro*_k tin-te lou htin-te.¹¹ (Burmese)
child mother blame him put-MOD COMP thinks
"The child_k thinks that Mum will blame him_k."

(46) Kalle_k väittää että Pekka uhkaili *pro*_{j/k}. (Finnish)
Kalle claims that Pekka threatened him
"Kalle_k claims that Pekka threatened him_{k/j}."

- In (45), the null object must be coreferential with the overt topic, *hkalei*.
- In (46), the null object is coreferential with the overt topic *Kalle* or the previously introduced A-topic, though the latter reading is extremely marginal.

Conclusion: In Burmese and Finnish, null objects, like null subjects, are identified via A-topic.

A.2 Spanish null generic objects: cross-clausal coreferentiality

- Spanish, unlike Burmese and Finnish, does not have referential null objects (in the absence of agreement). Spanish does have generic null objects.

(47) Algunas drogas conducen *pro* a la locura.¹²
some drugs lead one to the craziness
"Some drugs can lead one to craziness."

- Coreferentiality diagnostic:

¹¹ Examples (45) and (46) are cited in Frascarelli (2007:723) from Huang (2000).

¹² Data adapted from Suñer (1990)

- (48)a. Esta música alegra a uno_i porque deja a uno_i en un estado de éxtasis.
 this music makes-happy DOM one because leaves DOM one in a state of ecstasy
 "This music makes one happy when it leaves one in a state of ecstasy.
- b. Esta música alegra *pro*_i porque deja a uno_i en un estado de éxtasis.
- c. Esta música alegra a uno_i porque deja *pro*_i en un estado de éxtasis.
- d. Esta música alegra *pro*_i porque deja *pro*_i en un estado de éxtasis.

Observation: The acceptability of (48bc) suggests that generic null objects do not require a topic.

A.3 Spanish null objects in out-of-the-blue contexts

- Null generic objects are not identified via topic. More evidence comes from out-of-the-blue contexts.

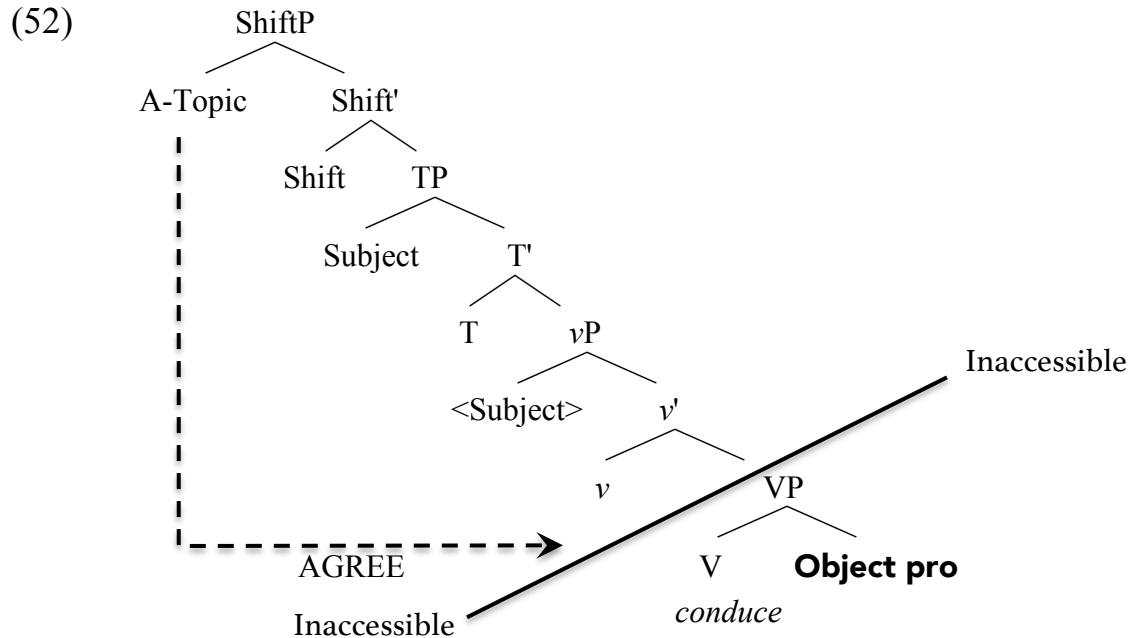
(49) Esta droga conduce *pro* a la locura. (out-of-the-blue)
 this drug leads one to the craziness
 "This drug leads to craziness."

(50) **Pro* toma esta droga frecuentemente. (out-of-the-blue)
 one takes this drug frequently

Observation: Null objects (49) are acceptable in out-of-the-blue contexts; null subjects are not (50). Hence, null objects do not require a topic. Why not?

(51) Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC):¹³
 In phase α with head H, the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside α , only H and its edge are accessible to such operations.

¹³ As formulated in Chomsky (2000).



Explanation: Object *pro*, not being at the phase edge, is not accessible for Agree with an A-topic per the PIC¹⁴. Null objects are generic in Spanish because they do not agree with a topic and they are bound by a generic operator.

Conclusion: Spanish null generic objects are not subject to topic-identification.

A.4 Spanish referential null objects can be identified via A-topic

- Clitics can be analyzed as agreement morphemes coindexed with *pro* in argument position (Landa 1995, Manzini & Savoia 2004, Mendikoetxea 2008, etc.). Hence, Spanish does have null referential objects, in the presence of object agreement.
- Typical object *pro* is generic as shown above in (47).
- Referential object *pro* can with coindexed topic without agreement clitic:

(53) *Juan_i tiene problemas con las drogas. Algunas drogas hacen *pro*_i loco.
 Juan has problems with the drugs some drugs make him crazy
 "Juan has problems with drugs. Some drugs make him crazy."

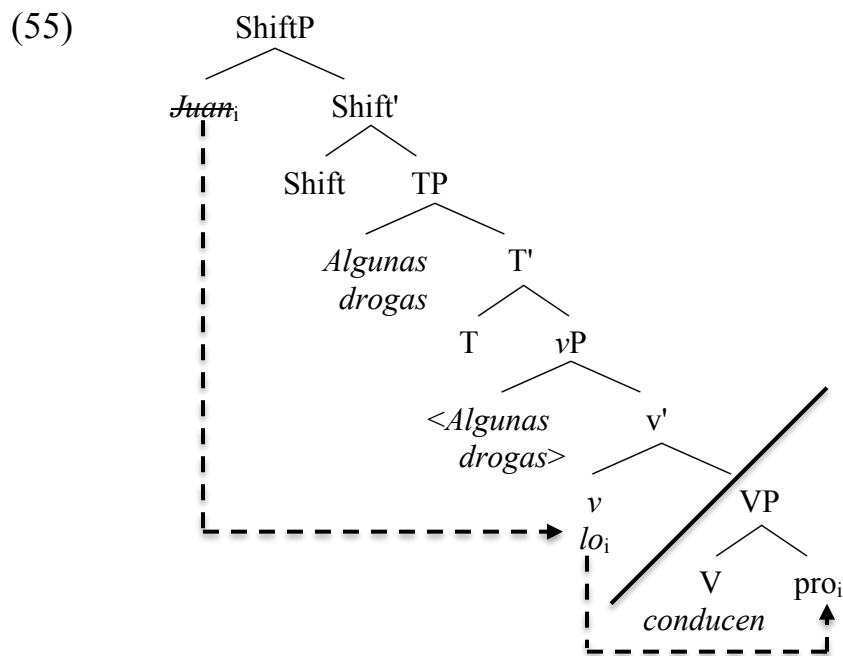
¹⁴ In (52) and (55) below, the dashed line represents Agree; the solid line represents the area of the structure unaccessible to Agree due to the PIC.

- Referential object *pro* with coindexed topic with agreement clitic:

(54) Juan_i tiene problemas con las drogas. Algunas drogas lo_i hacen
 Juan has problems with the drugs some drugs Acc-M-3S make
*pro*_i loco.
 him crazy
 "Juan has problems with drugs. Some drugs can lead him to craziness."

Observation: Referential object *pro* is acceptable when merged in conjunction with an agreement clitic. Why?

Hypothesis: The object clitic is the spell out of the *v* head, at the phase edge. The clitic allows the formation of a topic chain, mediating agreement between object *pro* and the topic across the phase boundary.



Appendix Summary:

- Null generic objects are licensed differently than null generic subjects. They do not require agreement with a generic topic. They receive a generic interpretation as a result of binding by a generic operator.
- Referential null objects are licensed via an agreement clitic, the spellout of *v* that agrees with the null A-topic and is coindexed with object *pro* resulting in a coreferential interpretation.

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