

WORD ORDER IN UNACCUSATIVE STRUCTURES: THE ROLE OF CORE-INTENTIONAL FEATURES

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This paper explores the role of information structure in determining the order of the constituents in Spanish, in particular in unaccusative structures. I distinguish between standard pragmatic features such as topic and focus, and what I term core-intentional features (CIFs), which codify new and old information relationally, regardless of a particular speaker-hearer exchange situation. CIFs are edge features whose role in the derivation is totally equivalent to that of formal features like Agree or Case; accordingly, their valuation will be regulated by the computational mechanism.

Expectedly, there must be (at least) one CIF in each relevant phase: one in v*P to mark the informational focus of the sentence and one in CP to mark the point of departure of the proposition. I'll label the latter [DI] (*discourse intention*) and propose that it actually serves to organize the information as a double judgement –where an entity is named and something is predicated about it (i.e. a categorical statement), or as a single logically-unstructured complex which merely expresses a state of affairs located in some spatio-temporal coordinates (i.e. a thetic statement).

I will also assume that CIFs are part of the inventory of UG and therefore subject to parametric variation. Since Spanish is a discourse prominent language, [DI] is inherited by T, which then becomes a probe in search of an adequate goal to be internally merged in TP (i.e. [DI] produces effects on the narrow syntax).

The paper addresses a number of facts which follow from proper valuation of core-intentional features in sentences whose verbal predicate lacks an external argument. Among others: a) the SV and VS orders in these structures (*El tren nocturno ha llegado a la estación central* / *Ha llegado el tren nocturno a la estación central*), the prominence restrictions on these orderings (*Juan ha llegado a la estación central* vs *?Ha llegado Juan a la estación central*), the role of grammatical aspect in the valuation of [DI], the use of (quasi-)expletives in these constructions (unstressed *Ahi* in Castilian Spanish; *ello* in Dominican Spanish) or the phenomenon of the so-called locative inversion.