

## ON THE DEFINITION OF BINDING DOMAINS IN SPANISH

# STUDIES IN THEORETICAL PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

VOLUME 11

## *Managing Editors*

Thomas Roeper, *Dept. of Linguistics, University of Massachusetts at Amherst*

Kenneth Wexler, *Dept. of Brain and Cognitive Science, M.I.T., Cambridge, Mass.*

## *Editorial Board*

Robert Berwick, *Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, M.I.T., Cambridge, Mass.*

Manfred Bierwisch, *Zentralinstitut für Sprachwissenschaft, Akademie der  
Wissenschaften der D.D.R.*

Merrill Garrett, *University of Arizona, Tucson*

Lila Gleitman, *School of Education, University of Pennsylvania*

Mary-Louise Kean, *University of California at Irvine*

Howard Lasnik, *University of Connecticut at Storrs*

John Marshall, *Neuropsychology Unit, Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford*

Daniel Osherson, *M.I.T., Cambridge, Mass.*

Yukio Otsu, *Tokyo Gakugei University, Tokyo*

Edwin Williams, *University of Massachusetts at Amherst*

*The titles published in this series are listed at the end of this volume.*

JOSÉ A. PADILLA

ON THE  
DEFINITION OF  
BINDING DOMAINS  
IN SPANISH

*Evidence from Child Language*



KLUWER ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

DORDRECHT / BOSTON / LONDON

Padilla, José A.

On the definition of binding domains in Spanish : evidence from  
child language / by José A. Padilla.

p. cm. -- (Studies in theoretical psycholinguistics ; 11)

Rev. and abridged version of doctoral dissertation (Ph. D.)--  
-Cornell University.

Includes bibliographical references (p. ).

ISBN-13: 978-94-010-7412-4 e-ISBN-13: 978-94-009-2033-0

DOI: 10.1007/978-94-009-2033-0

1. Anaphora (Linguistics) 2. Government-binding theory  
(Linguistics) 3. Language acquisition. 4. Spanish language--  
-Anaphora. 5. Spanish language--Acquisition. I. Title.  
II. Series: Studies in theoretical psycholinguistics ; v. 11.  
P299.A5P27 1990  
9--dc20  
[465]

90-34209

---

Published by Kluwer Academic Publishers,  
P.O. Box 17, 3300 AA Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

Kluwer Academic Publishers incorporates the publishing programmes of  
D. Reidel, Martinus Nijhoff, Dr W. Junk and MTP Press.

Sold and Distributed in the U.S.A. and Canada  
by Kluwer Academic Publishers,  
101 Philip Drive, Norwell, MA 02061, U.S.A.

In all other countries, sold and distributed  
by Kluwer Academic Publishers Group,  
P.O. Box 322, 3300 AH Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

*printed on acid free paper*

All Rights Reserved

© 1990 by Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, The Netherlands

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1990

No part of the material protected by this copyright notice may be reproduced or  
utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical,  
including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and  
retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner.

*To David, naturally*

“I think us here to wonder, myself. To wonder. To ast. And that in wondering about the big things and asting about the big things, you learn about the little things, almost by accident. But you never know nothing more about the big things than you start out with.”

From **THE COLOR PURPLE**, copyright © 1982 by Alice Walker. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

# Table of Contents

PREFACE	xv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xvii
CHAPTER 0. INTRODUCTION	1
0.1. Introduction	1
0.2. Universal Grammar	2
0.3. Anaphora	4
0.3.1. Definitions	4
0.3.2. Anaphora in Generative Grammar (GG)	6
0.4. Theoretical Motivation	10
Notes	12
CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	13
1.1. Introduction	13
1.2. Anaphors and Pronominals within PPs in Simple Sentences	13
1.2.1. Acquisition Issues	14
1.3. Referential Properties of Pronominal Subjects	15
1.3.1. The Disjoint Reference Requirement	17
1.3.1.1. Mood	18

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.3.1.2. Agreement of Tenses	19
1.3.1.2.1. Verbs of Uncertainty (Doubt and Expectation)	21
1.3.1.2.2. Verbs of Ignorance and Fear	22
1.3.1.2.3. Verbs of Denial and Regret	23
1.3.1.2.4. Verbs of Influence and Desire	24
1.3.1.2.5. Conclusion	26
1.3.1.3. The DRR as a Function of Lexical Properties of Main Verbs	26
1.3.1.3.1. Object Clauses	27
1.3.1.3.2. The DRR Linked to Subcategorization Pro- perties of Main Verbs	30
1.3.1.3.3. Object-Subject Corefer- ence	30
1.3.1.3.4. Summary	31
1.3.2. Acquisition Issues	31
Note	33
<b>CHAPTER 2. PREVIOUS ACQUISITION LITERATURE</b>	<b>35</b>
2.1. Development of Locality Principles and Binding Domains	36
2.2. The Role of Lexical Properties of Verbs in Grammatical Anaphora	45
2.3. Acquisition of the Subjunctive in Spanish	54
<b>CHAPTER 3. RATIONALE AND DESIGN</b>	<b>56</b>
3.1. Experimental Design: Overview	56
3.1.1. Binding Principles and Binding Domains	57
3.1.2. Inflection	58
3.1.2.1. Mood	58



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

xi

3.1.2.2. Tense	59
3.1.3. Lexical Properties of Verbs	61
3.1.4. Comparison of DR in Simple and Complex Sentences	61
3.2. Experimental Test: General Description	62
3.3. Experimental Design and Hypotheses	63
3.3.1. Base Study Design: Proform Type vs. Binding Domain	63
3.3.1.1. Base Study: Hypotheses	63
3.3.2. Inflection Study: (Mood $\times$ Tense Agreement)	65
3.3.2.1. Inflection Study: Hypotheses	66
3.3.3. Lexical Class Study: $\pm$ Volition $\times$ $\pm$ IT	67
3.3.3.1. Lexical Class Study: Hypotheses	68
3.3.4. Interpretation Tests: Design Summary	70
CHAPTER 4. METHODS AND PROCEDURES	71
4.1. Subjects	71
4.2. General Procedures	71
4.2.1. Reference Set	72
4.2.2. Pretraining	72
4.2.3. Scoring	75
CHAPTER 5. RESULTS	77
5.1. Introduction	77
5.2. Base Study	77
5.2.1. Success Rate	78
5.2.2. Interpretation of Proforms	80
5.2.2.1. Disjoint Reference Responses	82
5.2.2.2. Coreferential Responses	86
5.2.3. Coreference vs. Disjoint Reference by Age Groups	91
5.2.4. Overview Summary	94
5.3. Inflection Study	95
5.3.1. Success Rate	96

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

5.3.1.1. Success Rate for INFL (Mood × Tense Agreement × Age)	96
5.3.2. Interpretation of Null Subjects of Complement Clause: Disjoint Reference Responses	99
5.3.2.1. INFL (Mood × Tense Agreement)	100
5.3.3. Coreferential Responses	100
5.3.3.1. Inflection (Mood × Tense Agreement)	102
5.3.4. Coreferential vs. Disjoint Reference Responses by Age Groups	106
5.3.5. Overview Summary	109
5.4. Lexical Class Study	111
5.4.1. Success Rate	111
5.4.1.1. Success Rate for Lexical Class Study (IT × Volition)	111
5.4.1.2. Success Rate for Epistemics + Indicative Complements	113
5.4.2. Interpretation of Null Subject of Complement Clause: Disjoint Reference Responses	113
5.4.2.1. Lexical Class Study (IT × Volition)	114
5.4.2.2. Epistemic Verbs + Indicative/ Subjunctive Complements	119
5.4.3. Coreferential Responses	120
5.4.3.1. Lexical Class Study (IT × Volition)	121
5.4.3.2. Epistemic Verbs + Indicative/ Subjunctive Complements	123
5.4.4. Coreferential vs. Disjoint Reference Responses	125
5.4.5. Overview Summary	127
5.4.6. Analysis of Differences in DR Responses for Pronominals between Simple and Complex Structures	130
Notes	131

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

xiii

CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION	133
6.1. Overview Summary and Interpretation of Results	133
6.1.1. Theoretical Background	133
6.1.1.1. Anaphors/Pronominals within PPs	134
6.1.1.2. Subject-Subject Disjoint Reference Requirement	135
6.1.2. Simple Sentences	137
6.1.2.1. Summary of Results	137
6.1.2.1.1. The Nature of the Differentiation	137
6.1.2.1.2. Pronouns	138
6.1.2.1.3. Reflexives	139
6.1.2.2. Interpretation of Results	139
6.1.3. Complex Sentences	141
6.1.3.1. Summary of Results	142
6.1.3.2. Interpretation of Results	145
6.1.4. Development of DR in Simple and Complex Structures	146
6.2. Relation to Previous Acquisition Literature	148
6.3. Conclusions	150
 APPENDIX	 152
REFERENCES	157
INDEX	160

# Preface

Linguistic theory has recently experienced a shift in its conceptual approach from the formulation of descriptively adequate accounts of languages to the definition of principles and parameters claimed to reflect the initial structure of the language faculty, often termed *Universal Grammar* (UG). Linguistic experience is said to have the effect of guiding the child/linguist in fixing the unspecified parameters of UG to determine the grammar of his/her language.

The study of *anaphora* has been of central concern as it addresses directly the innateness vs. experience issue. On the one hand, it is a part of all natural languages that is largely undetermined by the data, and must therefore be included in the characterization of the initial state of the language faculty. On the other hand, although the principles that govern anaphora do not exhibit extreme variations across languages, a child/linguist must solve language specific issues for his/her language based on linguistic experience.

This book examines a set of linguistic structures from *both* a theoretical and an experimental perspective. The purpose is to

determine the roles of innateness and of experience in the development of a child's theory of anaphora for his/her language. Specifically, this book explores cases which are considered to be marked on theoretical grounds and therefore offer an excellent opportunity to capture the interplay of initial principles and of linguistic experience in child language. The experimental data support linguistic theory claims regarding abstract principles governing anaphora in the development of a grammar. The data also show that the definition of the domains within which these principles apply exhibits developmental modification to include exceptional (marked) cases.

Chapter 0 reviews the treatment of anaphora within the Government and Binding theory. Chapter 1 analyzes two marked instances of anaphora in Spanish within this framework. Chapter 2 reviews the pertinent previous acquisition literature. The Rationale, Design and Methodology of the child language experiments are covered in Chapters 3 and 4. The results of the series of experiments are presented in Chapter 5, followed by a discussion of the results and their implication for a theory of anaphora in Chapter 6.

JOSÉ A. PADILLA  
*Boston, Massachusetts*

## Acknowledgements

As this monograph is a revised and abridged version of the doctoral dissertation I presented at Cornell University, I would first like to thank all of the professors at this institution who in one way or another provided me with their help in the completion of the original work. I would particularly like to thank Dr. Barbara Lust for her invaluable help and incisive criticisms not only during the thesis writing stage, but also during the revision process. I am also grateful for the helpful comments and suggestions of two Kluwer reviewers. Any and all mistakes and/or omissions are, of course, solely my responsibility.

On the personal side, I thank Wendy Snyder and Anita Cañizares for their friendship and encouragement, and David Desorbo for his love and support always.