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Chapter 11

Economy of Interpretation: Patterns of Pronoun Selection in Transitional Bilinguals

TERESA SATTERFIELD

A productive area of syntactic research in generative grammar and second language acquisition (SLA) research for 20 years has been the pro-drop parameter (White, 1985, 1989; Pinker, 1987; Lieber, 1987, among others). The basic syntactic description is that non-pro-drop languages such as English require a surface subject to appear in a tensed form. Thus, we have to say he loves and not just loves. Pro-drop languages (the vast majority of the world’s languages), however, do not require a surface subject; so in Spanish E3 ama is possible, as well as O ama. In other words Spanish can have null subjects, symbolised in underlying structure by pro (e.g., pro ama) but not corresponding to phonetic information in the surface sentence. One aspect of the null subject discussion that receives little treatment concerns the surface distribution of overt and empty pronominal elements within bilingual speech patterns; that is to say whether or not bilingual speakers maintain a pro-drop setting in their L1 when it differs from their L2. This chapter formulates an analysis of a class of pronominal phenomena, represented by bilingual speakers whose English competence has come to dominate their near-native proficiency in Spanish. It works within the Minimalist Program— the current version of Chomsky’s theory (Chomsky, 1995, 1998, 2000), which attempts to reduce language to a few powerful principles such as Economy.

Introduction

The current work offers a syntactic-sematic characterisation of pronouns, deriving largely from Lipski’s pilot study, one can tentatively conclude that there are two predictable differences between monolingual Spanish speakers and those individuals who exhibit greater competence in English, yet who are not L2 learners of Spanish, as they acquired the language natively.

- The bilinguals do not maintain the same distribution of non-overt and lexical subjects in their speech.
- They do not exhibit the same rigid focus/contrastive distinctions with regard to pronominal interpretation as do the Spanish monolinguals.

Consider the examples in (1):

(1) (a) Ella, habla el inglés que *ella, / pro sabía.
                       She speak (5 sg/impr) the English that *she/3 know (5 sg/impr)
        (monolingual Spanish)

(b) Ella, habla el inglés que ella, sabía.
                       She speak (3 sg/impr) the English that *she/3 know (3 sg/impr)
        (bilingual Spanish) (Lipski, 1996)

When the null subject pro and ella are equally acceptable within the subordinate clause in syntactic terms, monolingual Spanish speakers intuit the occurrence of the overt pronominal as signaling a contrastive, or disjoint, reference between the antecedent subject in the matrix clause and the embedded pronoun. As shown in (1a), pro is uniformly perceived by these speakers as the neutral or unmarked reading that must co-refer with the overt subject. The datum in (1b) suggests that unlike the ‘standard’ Null Subject Language (NSL) distribution of pronominals, these bilingual speakers permit the overt pronoun to appear in areas typically reserved for pro, where it takes on the null subject’s unmarked and non-contrastive interpretation as well.

The investigation of bilingualism is important, since the standard L2 acquisition explanation cannot be called upon to capture all the grammatical facts. The data do not indicate that these bilingual speakers merely experience interference or transfer effects from a dominant English to a recessive Spanish. Nor does it appear to be the case of Spanish attrition, as the speakers do not seem to completely adopt non-NSL tendencies into their Spanish grammar. Instead, we argue that a unique status for lexical pronouns seems to be emerging in the bilingual grammar, one that involves an optimal interplay between universal properties of language and syntactic operations. Moreover, the existence of this new class of subject may not be confined solely to contexts of bilingualism or language contact.
Background

The nominal chain, or 'crystal', is an expression of the noun phrase, such as 'a book' or 'a man'. It is formed by a series of nominal elements, each of which consists of a noun followed by its determiner(s). The nominal chain is a fundamental feature of noun phrase structure in many languages, and is crucial for the expression of possessive and other semantic relationships.

The nominal chain is also important for the expression of topic and focus. In English, for example, the nominal chain is used to express the topic of a sentence, as in 'The book is on the table'. The nominal chain is also used to express the focus of a sentence, as in 'The book, which is on the table, is mine.'

The nominal chain is a fundamental feature of noun phrase structure in many languages, and is crucial for the expression of possessive and other semantic relationships. The nominal chain is also important for the expression of topic and focus.
as stabilised patterns in monolingual Brazilian Portuguese (Kempchinsky, 1984; Negri & Müller, 1996; Tarallo, 1983) and Italian dialects such as Neapolitan (Ledgewax, 2000) can be shown to parallel certain features of Lipski's bilingual corpus.

To the extent that the syntactic and referential lines designating overt subjects and their null counterparts are erased for particular groups of speakers, the occurrence of such intralinguistic variation represents fertile ground for rigorously testing claims put forth in current linguistic theory. One particularly intriguing question concerns assumptions of general principles of Economy (Chomsky, 1991, 1995, 1998, 2000), and how to reconcile types of redundant or optional linguistic rules with the notion of costliness of derivation. The main purpose of the work is to offer a principled explanation, framed largely within Minimalism, for the pronominal distributions uncovered. Within a wider scope, we wish to account for why convergence based on multiple solutions (multiple syntactic-semantic structures) within the same grammar may actually be the most optimal choice for speakers. The claims advanced here serve to demonstrate how the need to preserve grammatical resources may drive speakers to minimise even those operations considered central to the computational system, such as Merge or Agree, whenever possible. We attempt to go beyond the conventional wisdom that null subjects are preferable, since they are inherently less costly to the system than overt elements. Instead, we argue that the conditions of economy are not absolute: they allow for a range of behaviours that encompasses both zero and lexical pronouns, adapting to conditions present in the grammar in order to maximise the most referentiality for the least computational effort.

The organisation for the rest of the chapter is as follows: the next section briefly sketches the structural and interpretive functions of NSL pronouns, with emphasis on the behaviour of focus subjects. We then profile bilingual patterns, relying primarily on data from the Lipski (1996) corpus. Next, we propose an economy-based analysis that accommodates a large pool of speakers and may provide new insights into the conceptual underpinnings of Economy, as well as supplying a more articulated characterisation of Spanish/English bilingual speakers. The final section offers some additional implications and ends with concluding remarks.

**Background**

As is well known, a sentence such as (2a) below is inadmissible in English or French, while its counterpart (2b) is the norm in standard NSLs, such as Spanish:

(2a) *Were injured (some men).*
(b) *Fueron heridos (unos hombres).*

In terms of learnability, Rizzi (1982, 1986) and Jaeggli and Safir (1989) provide seminal explanations for this state by invoking the Null Subject Parameter. Within the [+ null subject] option, it would initially appear that the sentence pairs in (3) present themselves as freely interchangeable:

(3)(a) *Pro hablan español e ingles.*
(b) *Ellos hablan español e ingles.*

*(They) speak Spanish and English.*

Despite the L2 pedagogical claim that lexical subject pronouns are always optional in Spanish, the fact is that in particular environments, the null subject must generally be present instead of an overt form of the subject, such as in impersonal and quasi-argument constructions, as well as for expletives (i.e. *dummy subject* pronouns such as English *it* and *there*). See Silva-Vilares (1997) for an analysis of expletives attested in a small group of historically null subject languages.

(4)(a) *Ello/* *El/Pro, me han vendido un libro viejo en ese negocio.*

*It/* *he/* to me + have-pres(3pl) + sold a book old in that store

(b) *They have sold an old book to me in that store.*

(5)(a) Antes *él* *Un* *ellos* / *pro* hacía más calor.

*Before he/* *it/* *he* made past (3sg) more hot

(b) *It was hotter before.*

(6)(a) *El/* *Ello* / *Pro* es cierto que *él*/*ella*/*pro* baila bien.

*He/* *he/* *he* / *it* is true that *he*/*she*/*he* dance-pres (3sg) well

(b) *It is true that he/* *she*/*he* dances well.*

Because of numerous conditions imposed by binding relationships and structural restrictions, there are also cases that require the presence of an overt subject, for example, when the head of the relative clause subject is [-animate]:

(7) *La mujer, que él/* *pro ama (pro)* oda a Juan.*

*The woman that he/* *she* love-pres (3sg) *he* hate-pres (3sg) part + Juan

*The woman that he loves hates Juan.*
In addition to the above syntactic contexts that are distinguished with respect to null versus non-null arguments, the property most germane for what follows is the case of seemingly unrestricted alternation between a null and an overt subject. Below, when pro and el are equally acceptable in syntactic terms, native speaker intuitions suggest a disjoint reference between the full DP subject Juan and the overt pronoun, such that el is understood as a focused element, instead of binding with Juan:

(8)a. Cuando pro, / el, trabaja, Juan, no bebe.
    When Ø/ he works (3sg) Juan neg drink pres (3sg)
    'When he works, Juan does not drink.'

(b) Cuando Juan, trabaja, pro, / el, no bebe.
    'When Juan works, Ø/ he doesn't drink.'

Moreover, (8) illustrates that, regardless of their relative placement in either the main or the embedded clause, the unbound reading obtains between the lexical subject and the overt pronoun. Similarly, in sentences such as the Spanish equivalent to 'When Juan is working, (el) HE doesn't get anxious, though HIS WIFE does,' the presence of lexical he (él) would still trigger a non-coreferential reading with Juan, even when contrastive with another referent, such as his wife. Native speaker intuitions suggest that, in the default interpretation, both pro and HIS are bound to the antecedent Juan for reference, whereas an intermediate el signals a disjoint reading with Juan, while establishing co-reference with the following pronoun el.

In these instances, Chomsky (1981) presumes the operation of a simple pragmatic metric known as the Avoid (Lexical) Pronoun Principle (APP), which confines the choice to the topic null-subject preference rather than to the focus overt pronoun, in the context where both classes of pronouns may potentially appear. Since this contrastive distinction does not derive from intonation-based cueing in NSLs, it would be possible to use the overt pronoun co-referentially in a hyper-emic manner, given phonological stress.

It must also be noted that overt Spanish pronouns do not possess implicit contrastive status, nor are they uniformly stressed, independent of their syntactic context. When the lexical subject is part of a conjunct or when the pronoun appears as the object of a preposition, the null option is not available. The realised pronouns are then perceived as non-contrastive or non-emic, with their anaphoric possibilities converging to neutral forms rather than to stressed ones:

The relevant cases however, the semantic effect of the syntactic selection is such that the occurrence of a non-stressed lexical pronoun provides contrast, whereas only pro is judged as bound when present with the overt subject DP; hence, the early appeal of the APP.

The APP proves to be a heavy-handed reflex, in the light of noteworthy data that further distinguish the distribution of overt lexical pronouns and zero elements in terms of their distinct interpretative behaviors. Insights behind the Spanish overt-null alternation facts are found early on in accounts by Zubizarreta (1982), Luján (1986), Soriano (1989), and subsequently Lason and Luján (1992). Larson and Luján, by essentially positing a quantification analysis of focus, provide a principled explanation for the perception of overt pronouns as focused in contexts where both null and lexical pronouns can occur. By analogy with focus phrases with only (él) in Spanish in (10a) below, Lason and Luján (1992) suggest that an expanded quantifier phrasal construction houses the null-subject in (10b), such that the lexical pronoun behaves like the focused element in (10a). The exception is in the latter example, where the head of QP is equivalent to a phonologically unrealised quantifier expression. (10c) illustrates that, while the surface configuration of the overt pronominal and pro appear to coincide, the two classes of pronouns actually occupy different prasal positions in the syntactic structure, and also require distinct licensing and identification mechanisms in order to be licit in the syntax. To wit, the contrastive reading implies a sort of syntactic complementary distribution according to Larson and Luján (Note that capitals denote emphatic, contrastive):

(10a) [el Only HE], [nobody] [he believes] [it, is completely happy]]

(b) [he Ø] [el] trabaja
    he work-pres (3sg)
    'HE works.'

(c) [el Pro] trabaja
    'He works.'

Economy of Interpretation
Economy of information

Furthermore, the specialised final structure available for isolation purposes depends on the inherent difficulties between null and exclusive pronouns, null for English and exclusive for Spanish. While these previous analyses make sound empirical predictions for the non-occurrence of full pronouns in null subjects, such as those in (1a), this analysis predicts that full pronouns will occur in (1b) following a null subject.

(1) a. (null are) [I, also, John] (exclusive)
   b. [I, also, John] (null are)

The difference in prediction is due to the fact that in (1a), the subject is null, and the full pronoun is necessary to maintain the subject-verb agreement. In (1b), the subject is full, and the full pronoun is not necessary.

The Nature of the Bootstrapped Problem

Lipski (1984) extends the Chomsky (1982) view that the bilingual speaker has to learn two grammatical frameworks, one for each language, and then bootstrap the two grammars together. This process is complex and requires careful attention to the details of each grammar. The challenge is to ensure that the two grammars are aligned properly and that they function together seamlessly.

Many students find that they are not intelligent, as shown in (2a), but they are intelligent, as shown in (2b).

(2) a. [I am not] [I am]
   b. [I am] [I am not]

The difference lies in the role of the subject: in (2a), the subject is null, and the full pronoun is necessary to maintain the subject-verb agreement. In (2b), the subject is full, and the full pronoun is not necessary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while there are some similarities between English and Spanish, there are also significant differences that must be carefully considered. The bilingual speaker must be able to adapt these differences to ensure successful communication.

Who thinks that (a) is intelligent?
Who thinks that (b) is intelligent?

(a) (null am I)
(b) (null am)

Many students find that they are not intelligent, as shown in (2a), but they are intelligent, as shown in (2b).

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Effects of the Second Language on the First}

The two languages are not isolated; they are in constant contact and influence each other. This contact can be observed in various ways, such as the borrowing of words, grammatical structures, and lexical items. For example, loan words like "espresso," "pasta," and "gelato" have entered the English language from Italian, while "bouillabaisse" and "macaroni" are examples of French borrowings.

Cross-linguistic influences can also be seen in the grammatical structures. In Spanish, the use of "hablar" to express "to speak" is similar to the English verb "speak," but the Spanish verb is often used in a more habitual or repetitive sense. Similarly, the English "do" and "does" are often replaced by "hacer" or "hará" in Spanish, reflecting the same action or event.

Another aspect of cross-linguistic influence is seen in the pronunciation of words. Words like "máquina," "leaf," and "father" show the influence of Spanish pronunciation rules. The English pronunciation of such words is often adapted to conform to Spanish norms, which can be a challenge for English learners when they try to pronounce these words correctly.

In conclusion, the second language can have a significant impact on the first language, influencing vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Understanding these cross-linguistic influences is crucial for effective learning and teaching.
Economy of representation

The effects of the second language on the first

(i) When I was in Cuba, I said that if I was back in Cuba, I would....

(ii) They told the boys that they knew that the majority of you were Latis."

(iii) As well as illustrating the similar status of non-essential local pronouns

(iv) As well as illustrating the similar status of non-essential local pronouns

(v) As well as illustrating the similar status of non-essential local pronouns

A working hypothesis of economy-driven subjects

Working within a Mannheim paradigm, it is hypothesized that there is a social and cultural difference between bimodal bilinguals and monolingual counterparts, as well as bimodal bilinguals and English-background bilinguals, that is reflected in the economy of subject selection in language switching. The hypothesis predicts that bilinguals will exhibit more subject economy than monolinguals, and that this economy will be more pronounced in situations where the switch to the dominant language is less transparent. The hypothesis is tested using a elicitation task where subjects are presented with sentences in a mixed-language context and asked to judge whether the subject is appropriate for the verb in the target language. The results support the hypothesis, suggesting that bilinguals are more sensitive to the economy of subject selection in language switching than monolinguals. However, the results also show that the effect of economy-driven subject selection is not uniform across all language combinations, and that there are significant differences in the degree to which economy is observed in different language pairs.
relevant for the syntactic presence of pro. However, in opposition to
Chomsky (1995), we show that the AgrS projection is still necessary in
NSLs for the interpretation of the subject argument selected. Rizzi
(1997) offers examples of two null subject environments in Italian: only in the first
do the verb display overt agreement and permit a [+referential reading].
In the subsequent two examples, the non-referential interpretation stands:

(16a) Gianni ritiene [che ... sia simpatica]
    ‘Gianni believes that ... is nice (from/to)’

(16b) Gianni ritiene [che ... sia probabile que ...]
    ‘Gianni believes that ... is likely that ...’

On the basis of the same theory-driven constraints, the point can further
be argued that only pro in non-referential contexts actually economises the
derivation to any extent. When pro is used within a [+referential] context, the
null element consequently must undergo movement operations that
formally identify and recover the referential features that are specified
through Agreement with respect to phi-features, as in (18):

(18a) Pro/Elia va a regresar a la oficina.
    Ω / She goes (1 sg-pres prog) to + return to the office

    ‘She is going to return to the office.’

Along the lines of Piccallo (1994) and Larson and Lugm (1992), we posit
that overt subjects inherently possess minimal referential [phi] features in
the lexicon and need not rely on identification and recovery
mechanisms to regain this information, while [+referential] pro must
recover these features entirely in the syntax. It thus seems logical that,
while a null subject is referential material may be more efficient at the
interface level of PF, a non-focused overt subject may actually be less costly
in terms of the number of computational operations that it requires to be
fully visible in the syntax. Point-by-point, the benefits of null versus overt
subjects can be determined as equivalent in overall derivational cost.

The most economic choice may very well be when no specific reference
in terms of phi-features is expressed in the subject position of the sentence.
Here, [+null subject] languages might then be said to gain an edge with the
occurrence of [+referential] pro, which need not be identified and
recovered for the referential content to be fully licit in the grammar, but instead can be

purely merged into the derivation. (See Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou
(1998) for similar conclusions derived from an independent analysis.)
Perhaps peremptive pro enjoys such wide usage across languages precisely
because it is more efficient than invoking an overt pleonastic counterpart. It
is independently clear that in Icelandic, German or Yiddish (Prince, 1998),
where [+referential pr] is not permitted, these V-2 grammars implement
[-referential] pr in imprecise contexts and certain sub-constructions.
The crux of these examples is that speakers do not appear to merely
‘avoid (lexical) pronouns’, as many have previously claimed. Instead, we
propose that speakers ultimately seek to avoid costliness (in this case, the
cost of identification and recovery operations in the syntax) to whatever
degree possible. To the extent that such a reflex is on the right track, it is
important to note that in language, as in many biological spheres, avoid-
ance of one operation is often merely an exercise in displacement, and not
one of overall simplification or reduction. For reasons of survival, valuable
traits are jealously retained by the organism. Likewise for a grammar, what is
of optimal use cannot be phased out, but must surface elsewhere in the
derivation, even at the risk of compromising, or settling for less economical
adaptations at secondary or minor junctures in the structure.

In the light of our working hypothesis, if both lexical pronouns and
+[referential] pro within the same interpretive context incur about the same
cost, then why is the overt option not characteristic for other NSLs besides
transitional Spanish? One reason may be that the ‘savings’ gained with
low-cost non-contrastive lexical subjects cannot be reconciled with the
necessary expression of focus features in typical NSLs. From the previous
monolingual examples, recall that an overt pronoun attains contrastive
interpretation based on the nature of its antecedent and its subject status in
the syntax. The same possibility does not hold for phonetically unrealised
pro, which cannot acquire a focused reading. Suppose that, in order to
recover their full subject status beyond agreement features and thematic
content, all pronominal subjects must be identified as well as licensed. Iden-
tification of overt pronouns would not entail matching phi-features, but
instead identifying a [focus] feature on the DP that must be matched for
+[focus] in [Spec, T].

It is widely held that bilingual speakers must organise and manipulate
multiple syntactic systems, on some level(s) of the language module. Then
in the interest of reducing computational complexity, it stands to reason
that the bilingual would seek to minimise the cognitive burden in ways that
the unilingual counterpart may not need to resort to. Thus, suppose that
what has occurred for the transitional Spanish is an increased avoidance of
syntactic identification operations. This circumstance could account for the
attested lower incidence of [+referential] pro. Moreover, less reliance on identification mechanisms could also explain the presence of unfocused lexical pronouns. By relaxing identification, the overt subject pronoun, by default, now becomes unspecified for focus, and it will not automatically obtain a [+focus] contrastive reading, as will become apparent from its more compact syntactic configuration. Representationally, we envisage a subject architecture as shown in (19) below:

Given this simplified diagram, we claim that subject elements come to be situated in specialized areas in the specifiers of C, Ag, and T as determined on the basis of cost. Owing to the flexibility of the economy principles to regulate a given grammar, the minimum amount of structure is utilised for the derivation in question. Unlike similar analyses offered by Cardinaletti and Starke (1994), Cardinaletti (1997) and Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998), this representation is distinguished, not according to a strong-weak typology of pronominals, but rather by the accumulation of operations that supply the appropriate quantity of referentiality. The subjects found lower in the tree are by default less costly because they do not require as much identification of agreement features to be visible in the syntax. Hence, the most economical structure is [+referential] pro, since it can be met and must only undergo licensing (minimally, this would entail pure merge for EPP-features in T and maximally, the checking of D-features and Nomina
tive Case.) and would not require PF operations. The next economical choice is also found in [Spec, T]. Unlike the non-referential element however, the non-contrastive lexical pronoun is endowed with its referential material intact and certified in the lexicon, and must undergo a costlier movement operation by raising to [Spec, T]. In essence, Agr contains the identification component that would be found in NSLs, and is structurally more costly, but has no PF cost. [Spec, Agr] is for [+referential] pro, where the null subject must undergo its series of checking operations by raising to its target in Agr where identification takes place. Finally, an overt pronoun destined to be the subject does not identify agreement features in Agr; but must be identified for [focus] to recover its full subject reference. Following Chomsky (2000), we posit that no additional information can be supplied in the derivation; that is to say, the [focus] feature would come as part of the set of lexical information, according to the Inclusiveness Principle. Furthermore, it seems logical to adhere to Chomsky (2000: 318) in terms of the notion that outside of TP are systems deemed peripheral to the 'narrow syntax,' but which provide richer systems. In the context of this particular analysis, we find that pro undergoes A' movement, as one would predict for richer systems targeting the edge of the phrase. Likewise, if this subject must recover more emphatic content such as to express internationally-marked focus, then the structure would extend to accommodate the further raising of the overt pronoun to a higher C projection, thus exacting even greater derivational cost. In the light of the possible options, Table 11.1 summarises the costs expended across the range of observed transitional bilingual Spanish pronominals:

| Table 11.1 Feature Checking Operations and 'Economy of Derivation' in transitional Spanish |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| Contrastive Pronoun | Pro [+referential] | Overt Pronoun | Pro [+referential] |
| D-feature | D-feature | D-feature | D-feature |
| Agreement | X | X | X |
| +Focus | X | X | X |
| PF | X | PF | X |
| Cost: ++++ | +++ | +++ | (+) |
For transitional bilingual Spanish, the emphatic lexical pronoun comes at the absolute highest cost, based on the number of checking operations involved. Non-contrastive overt pronounals and null subjects generate lower costs in the final analysis, with explicative pro as the most efficient subject element. Including interface operations outside of the syntax, non-focus overt subjects require less computations than either [+referential] pro or a contrastive subject. In typical monolingual pro-drop languages by comparison, the overt subject inevitably emerges as much more costly than [+referential] pro, since in these grammars further identification of the phonologically realised subject is integral when both elements are equally acceptable in the syntax. Thus, lexical pronouns implicitly carry an identifiable [+focus] component to elicit the disjunct reference reading, whereas pro is implicitly unable to check for focus.

Concluding Remarks

In sum, Lipski (1996) succeeds in providing a theoretically relevant and documented account of bilingual null subject patterns. Given the tentative conclusions of his pilot study, a more in-depth analysis reveals that, in order to reduce their cognitive ‘load,’ transitional bilinguals have relaxed those operations in their Spanish grammar that drive identification and recovery of null subject information, and also those that signal syntactically-marked focus. The current analysis is advantageous, since standard ‘LI-IL effects’ explanations cannot be called upon to capture all the pronominal subtleties or distributional facts illustrated by the transitional, and monolingual accounts are not unified cross-linguistically.

On the basis of our hypothesis, further issues can now be addressed with respect to subject distribution. We now see why facts in transitional Spanish appear on the surface to line up with the configurations of English, consequently attracting pronouncements of interference or transfer. The absence of pro in English causes an overt subject pronominal to be judged as non-stressed when it co-refers to its antecedent, while the phonologically stressed, emphatic pronoun is deemed contrastive.

(20) When he/*He works, John, doesn’t drink.

(Amaral & Jackendoff, 1970)

The key difference is that English achieves these interpretations through contextually identified operations that are conceptually avoided in transitional bilingual Spanish. Without access to the null subject, it seems logical that English-type languages displace the cost of licensing and identifying pro in Agr. Instead, contrastive subjects must undergo even greater identifi-

cation (i.e. raising to a higher projection) in order to obtain the fully stressed, interonationally-marked reading. Transitional Spanish, in keeping with the proposed analysis, may not necessarily exhibit this less economic English focus strategy:

(21) Ellos, venden y ellos, van.

‘They sell and they go.’

The datum in (21) contrast with (20) in that the transitional speaker produces no phonetically-based contrast between the overt non-contrastive pronouns, thus demonstrating the expected avoidance of identification for focus features. Predictions for transitional Spanish can perhaps now be confirmed empirically in future studies: when syntactically acceptable, non-emphatic lexical subjects and [+referential] pro should be most frequently selected as the optimal subject elements in transitional bilingual syntactic structures, allowing for the bilingual speaker to most efficiently utilise the computational system.

Lastly, while it is difficult to predict in its current state if transitional bilingual Spanish pronouns will follow the route of Old French, conditions for maintaining this expanded pronominal inventory at present appear relatively stable. Transitions are not forsaking Romance language options offered by use of pro, nor are they adopting a complete non-NSL structure that may ultimately resemble English. Instead a unique status of non-contrastive lexical pronouns that reflect an optimal interplay between universal properties of syntax-semantics and morphology seems to be emerging, based on the bilingual grammatical resources of these particular speakers.

Notes

1. As Pérez-Leüns and Glass note:
   Speakers’ intuitions on OPC effects are subtle. Some speakers do not have clear intuitions, and the strength of the overt/null contrast may vary with different types of operators involved. Variation in judgements aside, the effects of the OPC are consistently present in [Spanish] grammar. (Pérez-Leüns and Glass, 1997: 153)

2. Along these lines, a reviewer suggests that speakers generally attempt to avoid phonetics, and that is, they minimise phonetic content, such as dropping initial consonantal segments in (British) English: (he, him, etc. To the extent that this notion is distinct from Procrastinate, a syntactic operation that seeks to limit the effects on PF, we find such a stipulation a bit extreme, in that its consequences seem difficult to generalise and may be more conducive to a ‘one-fell-swoop’ approach.
3. It is true that monolingual Italian also appears to possess this capacity with pre-
and egl, but in limited contexts:
Giam. partirá quandopro/"/lu/egl, avr finit il lavoro (Cardinaletti & Starke, 1994).
"Giam. will leave when pro/"/he will have finished the work.
The distribution of overt and null pronouns in monolingual Brazilian Portuguese
strikingly parallels that of translinguual bilingual Spanish:
Alguns convencionam, disseram que eles/"/vou trazer uma garrafa de vinho.
Some invitees say pastel-pli that they /go pastel-pli bring(in a) bottle of wine
"Some guests said that they are going to bring a bottle of wine" (Negri, 1997).

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