

## The Colombian Spanish from the Andes. A case of a basically argument indexing variant

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Spanish is considered a dependent-marking language, in terms of the typological distinction first introduced by Nichols (1986). However, it also shows an important head-marking feature: namely, the fact that there can be clauses without an independent referential phrase, where the person and number features of the verbal inflexion function as an argument (Bresnan and Mchombo 1987; Belloro 2004, 2007; Van Valin 2005, 2013; Kailuwiet 2008), in what is called the pro-drop parameter, as in (1):

- (1) *Rompió el=vaso.*  
break-PST.3SG ART.DEF.SG=glass  
'(He/She) broke the glass.'

Some authors (Belloro 2004, 2007; Kailuwet 2008) have gone beyond and have proposed that the accusative and dative clitics also behave like arguments in the absence of referential phrases (RP), as in (2a), in contrast with (2b), where there are full RPs functioning as the arguments:

- (2) a. *Se=la=di-o.*  
3.DAT=3.ACC=give-PST.3SG  
'(He/She) gave it to him/her.'
- b. *Rogelio le=di-o la=noticia a=Pedro.*  
Rogelio 3.DAT=give-PST.3SG ART.DEF.SG=news DAT=Pedro  
'Rogelio gave the news to Pedro.'
- c. *La=Tere lo=cuid-ó al=Guagua.*  
ART.DEF.SG=Tere 3.ACC=take.care-PST.3SG ACC=ART.DEF.SG=Guagua  
'La Tere cared for the kid'.

Still, Spanish remains basically considered a dependent-marking language, because, it seems, the RPs are flagged by analytical case markers, as the dative *a* in *a Pedro* (2b), and the accusative *a* in *al Guagua* in (2c).

In this work, we analyze the Colombian Spanish from the Andes (CSFA), with a special focus on its clitic system, and argue that its behavior is better explained if, getting rid of the traditional view, we consider it as a head-marking variant, or better, as an argument indexing variant, in Haspelmath's (2013) terms. In order to prove this, we elaborate on the following characteristics, among others:

- a) As in other Spanish variants, RPs are most frequently not coded. The verbal word functions by itself as the clause and the arguments are the verbal inflexion and the clitics attached to the same verbal form (indexes). The typical analysis where the arguments are absent RPs, do not do justice to this fact. So, we argue, in the basic and initial spirit of RRG, that this variant is better

described in terms of the data and not in terms of a tradition coming from the description of other different languages.

b) When the RPs appear, the clitic indexes, both dative and accusative, most frequently remain coded. It is not a complementary system, but a double marking one, where the RPs double the indexes and not the other way around. Following Siewierska (2004) and Haspelmath (2013), we argue that the CSFA has a cross-referencing or cross-indexing system, where the indexes on the verb are always the syntactic arguments and the RPs are referent or semantic specifiers in extra-core slots (Van Valin 2013).

c) There is not really a case system for the marking on the dependent at all; privileged syntactic arguments are always unmarked, undergoer RPs do not have flagging; the ‘accusative *a* in (2c) is really a differential marking; and datives are beginning to lose its *a* marking in some contexts – (Ø)Él le dieron la noticia ‘(to) him, they gave the news’–.

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