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Clear and well-organized, this textbook is an introduction to Spanish syntax, which assumes no prior knowledge of current theory. Beginning with a descriptive overview of the major characteristics of the grammar, it goes on to describe facts about Spanish, such as its word order, notions of “subject,” “direct object,” “auxiliary verb” and so on. The book combines traditional grammatical description with perspectives gained from recent research in the Principles and Parameters framework. It also presents useful theoretical notions such as semantic roles, Case and Predication.

Accessibly written, the book gives just enough background so as to allow the reader to understand the lines of investigation that have been pursued in accounting for such issues as clause structure and constituent order. It will be of use to students who are interested in grammar, Spanish, or in some of the basic results of modern, formal linguistic theory.

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For Heles

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Preface

This textbook is intended to present a broad view of Spanish syntax, one which takes into account the results of recent research, but which does not focus on theoretical discussion, nor assume familiarity with current theory. In order to describe insights based on recent research, it is of course necessary to introduce enough theoretical machinery so that the approaches that have been explored are understandable. Earlier discussions, especially Chapters 2 and 3, are framed within the assumptions of the Principles and Parameters framework as developed in Chomsky (1981, 1986). Chapters 4 and 5 introduce some basic elements of the Minimalist framework of Chomsky (1993, 1995). That discussion is largely informal, and rather than providing a comprehensive introduction to the theory, it is intended to give just enough background to allow the reader to understand the lines of investigation that have been pursued in accounting for such issues as clause structure and constituent order.

Chapter 1 presents a descriptive overview of the grammar, combining many generalizations of a traditional nature with some generalizations that arise within generative grammar. This description is intended to include both those generalizations that would be of particular interest to students of Spanish linguistics, and information of a broader nature for readers who are not Spanish specialists. Chapter 2 focuses on the Noun Phrase (NP). In the course of the discussion, basic theoretical mechanisms of the Principles and Parameters framework, such as Theta-role assignment, Case assignment and Predication are introduced, in order to account for the external distribution of NP. In examining the internal structure of NP, we introduce the “DP-hypothesis,” an important development which has a role in accounting for determiners, and for NP-internal constituent order. Chapter 3 discusses the Verb Phrase (VP) from a Principles and Parameters perspective. We begin with the external distribution of the phrase, focusing on Predication and the relationship between the Verb Phrase and Tense. In considering phrase-internal constituent relations, we return to Theta-role assignment, and introduce the distinction between “external” arguments and “internal” arguments, which, together with

Case features, determines the mapping of the grammatical subject and complements. The properties of these constituents are summarized, including how they differ from adjuncts.

Chapters 4 and 5 are concerned with the functional categories associated with VP. In Chapter 4, we examine the distribution of VP- and IP-adverbs, auxiliary verbs, clitics and negation. In each of these areas, we introduce certain empirical generalizations, then consider how the postulation of functional categories may account for them. Chapter 5 is devoted to the issue of the position of the clausal subject in declaratives, and, more generally, to the “flexible” order of constituents that is possible in Spanish declaratives. We will see how the idea that movement is not optional has affected the analysis of constituent order in a “flexible” constituent order language such as Spanish. We will also consider the hypothesis, developed in many recent studies, that the “information content” of constituents (reflected in such notions as “Topic” and “Focus”) is central to the analysis of declarative constituent order. We will summarize recent analyses, and finish with an overview of the “null subject parameter.” Finally, Chapter 6 discusses a variety of constructions whose standard analysis involves the uppermost part of the clause – the Complementizer Phrase – and whose derivation involves movement to a non-argument position such as the Specifier of the Complementizer Phrase. This chapter is primarily descriptive, as it discusses the constructions in Spanish which seem to have the properties of this type of movement.

Symbols and abbreviations

*	ungrammatical sequence
?	not fully grammatical
*()	ungrammatical in the absence of the parenthesized material
(*)	ungrammatical in the presence of the parenthesized material
V ^o	verb
P ^o	preposition
A ^o	adjective
N ^o	noun
D ^o	determiner
C ^o	complementizer (subordinating conjunction)
VP	Verb Phrase
PP	Prepositional Phrase
AP	Adjective Phrase
NP	Noun Phrase
DP	Determiner Phrase (a Noun Phrase introduced by a determiner, e.g., [the red car] is a DP)
CP	Complementizer Phrase (subordinate clause)
¿	an orthographic symbol which accompanies “?” to mark interrogatives
±	plus/minus: either value for a given feature
#	intonational juncture (pause)
m.	masculine
f.	feminine
neu.	neuter
1st.	first person
2nd.	second person
3rd.	third person
sg.	singular
pl.	plural
Refl.	Reflexive
CL	clitic (unstressed pronoun form)

xii	Symbols and abbreviations
Det	determiner
IO	indirect object
DO	direct object
inc.	inchoative
Nom.	Nominative
Gen.	Genitive
Dat.	Dative
Acc.	Accusative
Obl.	Oblique
PA	“Personal” (accusative) <i>a</i>
inf.	infinitive
fut.	future
cond.	conditional
pr.	present tense
pa.	past tense
imp.	past imperfect indicative
I	imperative
pret.	past preterite indicative
ind.	indicative mood
subj.	subjunctive mood
pas.	passive voice
prt.	present participle
pprt.	past participle