

SPANISH STRIPPING REVISITED: IN FAVOR OF AN ELLIPTICAL ANALYSIS

1. INTRODUCTION. This presentation examines the syntax of *stripping* (Hankamer and Sag, 1976). Descriptively, this phenomenon, illustrated in (1), involves a sentence coordinated with an XP (*ensalada* ‘salad’, in (1a), *a Roma* ‘to Rome’, in (1b)), accompanied by a preceding adverbial element (typically *no* ‘no’). In particular, we provide novel evidence to argue against a non-elliptical analysis of this construction (e.g., Fernández-Sánchez 2019), and defend the view that this constitutes a true case of clausal ellipsis (e.g., Depiante 2000).

- (1) a. Sonia comió pizza, pero no ensalada. b. Sonia viajó a Paris, pero no a Roma.
 Sonia ate pizza but not salad Sonia traveled to Paris but not to Rome
 ‘Sonia ate pizza, but not salad.’ ‘Sonia traveled to Paris, but not to Rome.’

2. AGAINST A NON-ELLIPTICAL ANALYSIS OF STRIPPING. The non-elliptical analysis of stripping claims that a sentence like (1) consists of a single clause containing a coordinate structure, where the second conjunct involves constituent negation. Thus, a sentence like (1) would have the underlying structure in (2):

- (2) Non-elliptical analysis: [_{TP} ... comió ... [_{&P} [_{DP} pizza] [_& pero [_{DP} no ensalada]]]

The first piece of evidence against this type of analysis comes from examples in which the alleged coordinated conjuncts are phrases of different category (3a)—such as a DP and a PP—; it is well known that asymmetric coordinations of similar type are ungrammatical in Spanish (3b):

- (3) a. Sonia vio a Bruno, pero no con Ana. b. *Sonia vio a Bruno y con Ana.
 Sonia saw DOM Bruno but not with Ana Sonia saw DOM Bruno and with Ana
 ‘Sonia saw Bruno, but not with Ana.’ Int: ‘Sonia saw Bruno and with Ana.’

A second argument comes from the fact that stripping allows sprouted XPs (4a). Under the analysis in (2), this would involve coordination with an empty element, which is usually not possible (4b):

- (4) a. Sonia comió, pero no pizza. b. *Sonia comió y pizza.
 Sonia ate but not pizza Sonia ate and pizza
 ‘Sonia ate, but not pizza.’ Int: ‘Sonia ate, and (what she ate was) pizza.’

In addition, stripping allows for the remnant to combine with sentential adverbs like *probablemente* ‘probably’ or *quizás* ‘maybe’ (5), which are usually claimed to attach at the sentence level; these adverbs cannot combine with other XPs such as DPs (6):

- (5) Sonia comerá pizza, pero {probablemente | quizás} no ensalada.
 Sonia will.eat pizza but probably maybe not salad
 ‘Sonia will eat pizza, but {probably | quizás} not salad.’
 (6) *Sonia comerá [probablemente ensalada].
 Sonia will.eat probably salad
 Intended: Sonia will eat (something that it’s) probably salad.’

What is more, the non-elliptical account relies on the existence of constituent negation, that is, it claims that negation can combine with an XP such as a DP or a PP. This predicts we should be able to see NEG+XP combinations in other contexts, which is not the case (7):

- (7) a. *Sonia comió no ensalada. (cf. 1) b. *Sonia viajó no a Roma. (cf. 1b)
 Sonia ate not salad Sonia traveled not to Rome
 Int.: ‘Sonia ate (something that is) not salad.’ Int.: ‘Sonia traveled not to Rome.’

Furthermore, it’s possible to have two remnant XPs. In these cases negation scopes over both elements. Since they don’t form a constituent, this suggests that negation takes scope over the TP:

- (8) Sonia tomó vino con Bruno, pero no cerveza con Ana.
 Sonia drank wine with Bruno but not beer with Ana
 ‘Sonia drank wine with Bruno, but not beer with Ana.’

Finally, Saab and Zdrojewski (2021) demonstrate that asymmetric DOM, i.e., coordinate structures with two DPs in which only one is DOM-marked, does not exist in Spanish. According to them, alleged asymmetric DOM constructions in the language, (9), involve coordination of a larger structure plus TP-ellipsis, (10):

- (9) Vi una mujer y a Sonia. (10) [_{&P} [_{PolP} ... DP₁] &⁰ [_{PolP} DOM-DP₂ <[TP ... t₂ ...]>]
 saw a woman and DOM Sonia
 ‘I saw a woman and Sonia.’

Stripping displays a similar behavior: the second (alleged) coordinate may be DOM-marked:

- (11) Entrevisté una transeunte, pero no a Sonia.
 interviewed a passerby but not DOM Sonia ‘I interviewed a passerby, but not Sonia.’

Cases in which only the first coordinate is DOM-marked, e.g., (12a), do not involve asymmetric DOM, as the DOM-marker *a* has scope over the whole coordination. Interestingly, stripping is not acceptable in these scenarios, e.g., (12b), which suggests it does not involve coordinate DPs:

- (12) a. Entrevisté a Sonia y Bruno. b. *Entrevisté a Sonia, pero no Bruno.
 interviewed DOM Sonia and Bruno interviewed DOM Sonia but not Bruno
 ‘I interviewed Sonia and Bruno.’ ‘I interviewed Sonia, but not Bruno.’

For all these reasons, we claim that a non-elliptical analysis of stripping in Spanish is on the wrong track.

3. AN ELLIPTICAL ANALYSIS OF STRIPPING. We contend that stripping involves the coordination of two sentential structures, where the second one undergoes clausal ellipsis. Negation is, as standardly assumed, the head of a polarity projection above TP. As in other cases of clausal ellipsis, we claim that the *C* head bears and [E]-feature that triggers deletion of its complement. Following Stigliano (2022), we argue that remnants do not need to move to escape ellipsis (contra the original proposal in Merchant 2001), and survive deletion in virtue of being F- or Top-marked elements. Specifically, we assume that polarity heads (and related elements) are F-marked, while the remnant XP is marked as a (Contrastive) Topic.

- (13) [_{&P} [_{CP} Sonia comió [_{DP} pizza]] [_& pero [_{CP} C_[E] [_{PolP} no_[F] [_{TP} ~~comió~~ [_{DP}_[Contrastive Topic] ensalada]]]]]

An immediate prediction of this proposal is that stripping does not trigger island effects (which is usually taken as an argument for a non-elliptical analysis of this construction). As (14) shows, this prediction is borne out:

- (14) Sonia vio una película [_{Adjunct} mientras comía pizza], no ensalada.
 Sonia saw a movie while ate pizza not salad
 ‘Sonia saw a movie while she was eating pizza, not salad.’

Importantly, this contrasts with a similar phenomenon available in Spanish, which is usually referred to as *pseudostripping*, where the order between the XP and negation is reversed (i.e., XP-NEG, as in (15a)), which does show island effects (15b). Crucially, the accepted analysis of pseudostripping involves movement of the remnant to yield the attested word order (e.g., Depiante 2000; Fernández-Sánchez 2019):

- (15) a. Sonia comió pizza, ensalada no. (cf. 1a)
 Sonia ate pizza salad no ‘Sonia ate pizza, not salad.’
 b. *Sonia vio una película [_{Adjunct} mientras comía pizza], ensalada no.
 Sonia saw a movie while ate pizza salad not
 Intended: ‘Sonia saw a movie while she was eating pizza, not salad.’

Another piece of evidence that the remnant doesn’t need to move comes from the fact that it is possible to have remnant XPs that cannot undergo movement:

- (16) a. *[Gordo]_i, Sonia besó a un amigo _____i.
 fat Sonia kissed DOM a friend
 b. Sonia besó a un amigo feo, pero no besó a un amigo gordo.
 Sonia kissed DOM a friend ugly but not kissed DOM a friend fat
 Lit.: ‘Sonia kissed an ugly friend, not fat’ (Int.: ‘...she didn’t kiss a fat friend.’)

4. CONCLUSIONS. We have examined a range of empirical diagnostics—all incompatible with a constituent negation + coordination analysis. We have argued, therefore, that this construction involves clausal ellipsis.

SELECTED REFERENCES. Depiante (2000). *The syntax of deep and surface anaphora*. | Fernández-Sánchez (2019). Against a clausal ellipsis account of all stripping strings in Spanish. | Stigliano (2022). *The Silence of Syntax*.