

# NULL OBJECT CONSTRUCTIONS IN STANDARD SPANISH REVISITED\*

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## Abstract

Most of the literature of null objects has accounted for the categorial status of these empty constituents by resorting to categories such as PRO, pro, NP-trace or wh-trace, and most recently, null epithet (Lasnik & Stowell, 1991). These categories are shown to be insufficient to describe null objects in standard Spanish. Therefore, a new type of empty category seems to be necessary in this language to account for null non-definite bare direct object constructions. This paper also specifically examines subjunctive and indicative constructions that contain null objects in complement clauses. The difference between these two types of constructions is looked at in terms of operator-variable binding and subjacency effects. In this regard, it is shown, following a suggestion by Campos (1986), that subjunctive and infinitive constructions constitute a weak bounding node for subjacency while indicative constructions constitute a strong bounding node. I claim that subjunctive and indicative constructions are better characterized as [-Tense] by being devoid of time features whereas indicative is characterized as [+Tense]. A number of reasons and relevant data are put forward to support the conjoined analysis of subjunctive-infinitive as opposed to indicative.

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First, I show that the already existent categories in the Principles and Parameters framework are insufficient to describe null objects and thus, that a new type of empty category needs to be formulated in standard Spanish to account for null non-definite direct object constructions such as that in (1)<sup>1</sup>:

- (1) \* $[_{IP} \text{pro}_j \text{ pienso } [_{CP} \text{OP}_i \text{ que } [_{IP} \text{pro}_j \text{ le traje } e_i \text{ a } \text{pro} \text{ (I) think OP that pro cl-3sg brought e for } \text{Mary} \text{ 'I think I brought } e_i \text{ for Mary'}$

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<sup>1</sup> As pointed out to me by María Luisa Zubizarreta and Mario Saltarelli (p.c), the null direct object in (1) could be an indefinite pro. However, I tentatively suggest a possibility along the lines of Zubizarreta (1996) -see section 2-

Secondly, I show, following a suggestion made by Campos (1986) for standard Spanish, that subjunctive and infinitive constructions in complement clauses constitute a **weak bounding node** for **subjacency**, while indicative constructions constitute a **strong bounding node**<sup>2</sup>. The interpretation of these facts has some interesting consequences to explain the contrast in grammaticality in null object constructions illustrated in (2) and (3):

(2) [<sub>IP</sub> pro<sub>j</sub> no creo [<sub>CP</sub>OP<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub>que [<sub>IP</sub>María traiga e<sub>i</sub>]]]]  
 pro not (I) think OP<sub>i</sub> that Mary will bring e<sub>i</sub>  
 'I don't think Mary will bring (any) (SUBJ)'.

(3) ?? [<sub>IP</sub> pro no creo [<sub>CP</sub>OP<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub>que [<sub>IP</sub> María trae e<sub>i</sub>]]]]<sup>3</sup>  
 pro not (I) think OP<sub>i</sub> that Mary is bringing/will bring e<sub>i</sub>  
 'I don't think Mary will bring (any) (IND)'.

The different grammaticality judgements in (2) and (3) with respect to the tense-mood being used in their embedded complements follows as an automatic consequence of the internal specification of **tense**. Null object constructions in standard Spanish with a [-Tense]<sup>4</sup> IP node seem to produce better sentences than those with a [+Tense] IP node. In this sense, subjunctive and infinitive are characterized as [-Tense] by being devoid of time features and indicative is

2 See Torrego, E & J. Uriagereka (1990).

3 Interestingly enough, the sentence seems to improve in grammaticality if new elements are added after the empty category:

(i) pro no creo que María trae e<sub>i</sub> nunca  
 pro not think that Mary brings e<sub>i</sub> never  
 'I don't think that Mary never brings e<sub>i</sub>'.

(ii) pro no creo que María trae e<sub>i</sub> en la cartera  
 pro not think that Mary brings e<sub>i</sub> in her wallet  
 'I don't think that Mary brings e<sub>i</sub> in her wallet'.

I am indebted to Myriam Uribe-Etxebarria for bringing this to my attention.

4 Note that in Spanish there is a use of the subjunctive that expresses a future action. In this sense, the subjunctive construction will be [+Tense]:

(i) pro quiero que pro vengas  
 pro want that pro come  
 'I want you to come'.

characterized as [+Tense]<sup>5</sup>. A number of reasons will be given to support this specification.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 investigates a number of possibilities to account for the null object empty category *e* in (1). Section 3 examines the phenomenon of **subjacency** in standard Spanish. As claimed above, I follow Campos (1986) in his proposal of weak bounding nodes (subjunctive and infinitive) playing a role in the licensing of null objects. I further extend his assumption to additional constructions taking subjunctive and indicative in their complement clauses. Section 4 deals with the difference in grammaticality between these two structures. In section 4.1 I provide some analyses of subjunctive clauses proposed in the literature. Section 4.2 establishes a fine-grained distinction between subjunctive and indicative constructions and argues for a conjoined analysis of subjunctive-infinitive as opposed to indicative. Section 5 summarizes the analyses and provides final remarks.

## 2. A note on Campos' (1986) "Indefinite Object Drop" Squib

Campos (1986) analyzes **indefinite object drop constructions** in standard Spanish. According to him, direct objects in Spanish may be dropped when they are non-definite. Consider the following example:

- (4) a. ¿Trajiste libros<sub>i</sub> ?  
'Did you bring (any) books<sub>i</sub>?'  
b. Sí, traje e<sub>i</sub>  
'Yes, I brought (some)<sub>i</sub>.'

Speakers of standard Spanish agree on the grammaticality of (4b) as an answer for (4a). In the same variety of Spanish, a sentence like (5b) will not be acceptable as an answer for (5a):

- (5) a. ¿Trajiste el libro<sub>i</sub> ?  
'Did you bring the book<sub>i</sub> ?'

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<sup>5</sup> For a similar interpretation of these facts see A. Terzi (1992) and L. Progovac (1992). Progovac's work focuses on NPs and subjunctive in Serbo-Croatian. She examines the possible correlation between negation and subjunctive in that language. For a detailed discussion the reader should refer to Progovac's (1992) work.

- b. \*S<sub>i</sub>, traje e<sub>i</sub><sup>6, 7</sup>  
 'Yes, I brought e<sub>i</sub>'

Campos--as already pointed out in the introduction--gives the status of a variable to the empty category occupying the position of the verb's internal argument in (4b). According to Chomsky (1982), a variable is defined as an element that is locally A-bar bound by an operator<sup>8</sup>. This operator is assumed to move in the syntax (as in (6)), and therefore, to meet the restrictions that apply to movement<sup>9</sup>:

- (6) S<sub>i</sub> OP<sub>i</sub> [traje e<sub>i</sub>]  
 Yes OP<sub>i</sub> (I) brought e<sub>i</sub>  
 'Yes, I brought.'

Before establishing that nonarbitrary bare direct objects in standard Spanish are variables, Campos analyzes a number of other possibilities. He considers that in a structure like (4b), the analysis of the empty category as PRO must be discarded since e in that position is governed by the verb "traer" and according to the PRO Theorem (Chomsky 1982:21) "PRO must be ungoverned". NP-trace as a

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6 Since the object of "traer" is interpreted as definite, an empty category cannot occur in this position. For (5b) to be grammatical in standard Spanish the clitic "lo" needs to be uttered in order to satisfy both the argument structure of "traer" and the Projection Principle postulated by Chomsky (1981).

7 This sentence, however, will be grammatical in the Spanish variety spoken in the Basque Country. In this variety of Spanish, as pointed out by Landa & Franco (1992) and Landa (1995), arbitrary null objects as well as referential null objects are acceptable.

8 "Locally A-bar bound" means that the nearest binder for the variable (x) is an operator, even if that binder is quite distant.

9 I assume, following Campos (1986) that the OP moves in SS. The reader should consult Campos (1986) for a detailed discussion of this position. He provides five reasons which illustrate that the dropped indefinite object in Spanish is the trace of an OP that has moved in the syntax. Briefly, he supports his position by resorting to the Complex NP constraint, the Sentential Subject constraint and the Doubly Filled Comp. Indefinite object drop constructions in SS seem to follow the above mentioned constraints. Furthermore, Campos provides evidence from ergative verbs to support his claim and finally, he shows that non-definite null object constructions can be found in adjunct clauses. The reader should refer to Campos' work for examples of the above mentioned tests.

plausible status for the empty category in indefinite object drop constructions in standard Spanish is also discarded by Campos. *e* is not bound by an A-position but by an A-bar position, occupying the Spec of CP. Therefore, *e* “must be either pro or wh-trace” (Campos 1986: 355). Pro<sup>10</sup> is eliminated as a possibility since according to Chomsky (1982) pro is always interpreted as being definite in reference<sup>11</sup>. Campos, following Chomsky (1982), states that since direct objects in standard Spanish can only be omitted when they are indefinite in reference, pro cannot be a plausible analysis for the empty category occupying the argument position of the verb in (4b)<sup>12</sup>.

According to Campos (1986) the only possibility left for the null object in (4b) is wh-trace. As there is no overt operator, he claims along the lines of Chomsky (1982), Huang (1982) and Raposo (1986), that *e* is bound by the operator OP that, as claimed above, moves in the syntax. Yet an analysis of indefinite direct objects as variables in standard Spanish poses a problem for a sentence like (8):

- (7) [<sub>CP</sub> Qué [<sub>IP</sub> pro<sub>j</sub> crees [<sub>CP</sub> t [<sub>C</sub> que [<sub>IP</sub> pro<sub>k</sub> le compré t<sub>i</sub> a María?  
 What pro think t that pro CL-3sg (I) bought t for Mary?  
 ‘What do you think that I bought t<sub>i</sub> for Mary?’

10 Landa & Franco (1992) put forward the analysis of referential non-arbitrary null objects as pro in the variety of Spanish spoken in the Basque Country.

11 This claim, as pointed out by Landa (1996), has been contradicted for Spanish subject pro in Jaeggli (1986). Such a falsification is illustrated in (i):

- (i) *pro* llamaron a la puerta  
*pro* called-3p to the door  
 ‘They/someone called at the door’

In (i) the subject can, but it need not be definite.

12 This analysis, however, has been proposed in the literature. Rizzi (1986) accounts for the null direct object in (1) by postulating an indefinite *pro*.

- (8) \* $[_{IP} \text{pro}_j \text{creo } [_{CP} \text{OP}_i \text{ que } [_{IP} \text{pro}_j \text{le compré } e_i \text{ a María}]]]$ <sup>13,14</sup>  
 pro (I) think OP that CL-3sg (I) bought e for Mary  
 'I think I bought e<sub>i</sub> for Mary.'

The most obvious difference between (7) and (8) is the null versus the overt status of the operator that locally binds the empty category in object position. At first sight, the structure is grammatical when the empty category occupying the direct object position is locally A-bar bound by an overt operator that has moved in the syntax. The structure, however, becomes ungrammatical when e is locally A-bar bound by a null operator<sup>15</sup>. Therefore, other possibilities need to be explored in

13 Sentence (8) repeated here as (i) contrasts with (ii):

- (i) \* $[_{IP} \text{pro}_j \text{creo } [_{CP} \text{OP}_i \text{ que } [_{IP} \text{pro}_j \text{le compré } e_i \text{ a María}]]]$   
 pro (I) think OP that pro CL-3sg (I) bought e for Mary  
 'I think I bought some for Mary'
- (ii)  $[_{IP} \text{pro}_j \text{creo } [_{CP} \text{OP}_i \text{ que } [_{IP} \text{pro}_j \text{ compré } e_i ]]]$   
 pro (I) think OP that pro (I) bought e  
 'I think I bought some'

The difference in grammaticality between (i) and (ii) seems to suggest that a construction containing an indirect object with a non-definite null object is not allowed in standard Spanish. If the I.O. is not present, the structure is grammatical and the empty category in the direct object position is accounted for by the *variable* analysis proposed by Campos (1986). Thus, the I.O. also plays a role. As suggested to me by Myriam Uribe-Etxebarria (p.c) the presence of the D.O. clitic in (8) could be producing some kind of minimality effects.

14 Again, if new material is added the sentence grammaticality seems to improve:

- (i) A: ¿Has visto esto, alguna vez?  
 Have seen this<sub>i</sub> ever?  
 'Have you ever seen this?'
- B: Sí, pro creo que le compré e<sub>i</sub> a María por su cumpleaños el año pasado.  
 Yes, pro think that cl.3sg bought e for Mary for her birthday the year past.  
 'Yes, I think I bought e<sub>i</sub> for Mary's birthday last year'.

The sentence seems to become better when more material is added after "María". In this way, the object becomes more specific. Specificity effects seem to play a role here. I will return to this question later on.

15 Yet a relative structure like (i) stands as a problem for a contrast that relies on the overt/covert nature of the operator:

order to account for this contrast in grammaticality between (7) and (8).

The analysis put forward by Campos (1986) for nonarbitrary bare direct objects as variables accounts for the empty category in (7). Following Chomsky (1982:35) the empty category is a variable since "it is in an A-position and it is locally A-bar bound by an operator". In this case the OP is overt: "que" and it has moved in a cyclic fashion from the argument position of the verb, an A-position, to the Spec of CP, an A-bar position from which it c-commands the empty category in object position.

Sentence (7) is grammatical and does not violate any module of the grammar. Subjacency, a constraint on syntactic movement, is not violated since only one bounding node<sup>16</sup> has been crossed: CP<sup>17</sup>. The ECP (Empty Category Principle), a constraint on LF representation as assumed by Huang (1982) and Lasnik & Saito (1992), is not violated either since the empty category in the argument position of the verb is properly governed by being lexically governed by the verb "comprar"<sup>18</sup>. Therefore sentence (7) complies with the analysis postulated by Campos (1986). Yet a construction like (8) stands as a problem for his analysis. If we maintain Campos' variable analysis for indefinite object drop constructions in standard Spanish a sentence like (8) should be grammatical. Yet, it is not.

I explore a number of possible analyses for the empty category in object position in (8). I reach the conclusion that (8) stands as a problem for the Principles and Parameters framework (Chomsky 1981, 1982, 1986a, 1986b, 1989; Chomsky & Lasnik 1993) since none of the categories postulated within this framework seem to account for the situation present in the sentence under discussion.

I agree with Campos that the null object can be neither PRO nor NP-trace, for the reasons noted above. However, the empty category could not be a variable either, as postulated by Campos because this analysis would predict the sentence in (8) to be grammatical. Two additional possibilities could be proposed: pro or null epithet<sup>19</sup>. Pro, a [+pronominal, -anaphoric] empty category has been postulated by

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(i) [<sub>NP</sub> Los libros [<sub>CP</sub> OP<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub> que [<sub>IP</sub> pro creó [<sub>CP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub> que [<sub>IP</sub> pro le compré t<sub>i</sub> a María]]]]]]]  
'The books that I think I bought e<sub>i</sub> for Mary'

16 I adopt Chomsky's (1973 and later work) proposal that in English S and NP are boundaries for movement.

17 For Spanish, Subjacency will be postulated in the following fashion (Chomsky, 1982):

'A single instance of movement can cross one bounding node, where bounding nodes are CP and NP'.

18 On this topic see Torrego (1984) who claims that the object cannot be lexically governed by the verb in Spanish.

19 On null epithet constructions see Demirdache (1993). She offers a very

Rizzi (1986), Farrell (1990) and Landa & Franco (1992) to account for the empty categories in object position in Italian, Brazilian Portuguese and Basque Spanish respectively 20, 21, 22. An analysis of pro for standard Spanish does not seem plausible taking into account that pro being a pronominal empty category is subject to condition B of the Binding Theory which establishes that a pronoun should be A-free in its governing category<sup>23</sup>. The governing category for pro in (8) is the lower clause S since that clause contains the null pronominal, its governor -the verb "comprar"- and an accessible SUBJECT to it, which is [+AGR]<sup>24</sup>. Therefore, and according to condition B, the null pronoun is coindexed outside its governing category with the OP in Spec of CP. If we pursue this analysis for the null object in (8) the sentence should be grammatical. Yet, it is not. Hence, the empty category occupying the object position in (8) cannot be a null pronoun.

An alternative analysis for the empty category *e* in (8) is that of null epithet<sup>25</sup>; which according to Lasnik & Stowell (1991) is defined as a "null R-

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interesting solution that accounts for the examples involving null epithets for which Lasnik & Stowell (1991) could not find a solution.

20 The term Basque Spanish to refer to the Spanish variety spoken in the Basque Country was first used by Landa (1990).

21 According to Landa & Franco (1992) and Landa (1995) in Basque Spanish referential non-arbitrary null objects are pro. Jevonis (1996) puts forward an analysis of these empty referential categories as null epithet for the same variety of Spanish.

22 Along the same lines, Cinque (1984, 1990) argues that the empty category in parasitic gap and tough constructions are not variables. He treats them as null pronominals (pro).

23 Chomsky (1981:226) defines governing category as follows: 'The governing category is the minimal NP or S containing  $\alpha$ , a governor of  $\alpha$  and a SUBJECT accessible to  $\alpha$ '.

24 Only AGRS is considered to play a role here. I disregard Franco's (1993) proposal that states that object clitics in Spanish should be analyzed as object agreement morphemes on the verb.

25 Lasnik & Stowell (1991) distinguish between two types of locally A-bar bound traces: null variables and null epithets and they claim that "They differ from each other in that null variables are locally bound by a true quantifier (...) whereas null epithets are locally bound by an element that is not a true quantifier" (709). As Ortiz de Urbina (p.c.) pointed out to me, this distinction between a true and a non-true quantifier is crucial, although, clearly, a topic-like element assigning antecedence to an operator would not count as a true quantifier.



expression, with binding properties analogous to those of names and definite descriptions (“epithets”) rather than to those of variables” (692)<sup>26</sup>. Non-variable R-expressions are treated by Lasnik & Stowell (1991) as a default case, that is, as [-a, -p] elements that fail to satisfy the requirements to be a variable. But null epithets, like other epithets, fall under condition C of the Binding Theory. Then, if the empty category in (8) is a null epithet, the sentence will be predicted to be grammatical and again, contrary to facts.

In view of these data and having pursued a number of different possibilities to account for the status of the empty category in (8), one is led to claim that the ungrammaticality of this sentence stands as a problem for the theory. Tentatively I suggest, along the lines of Zubizarreta (1996), an alternative account based on the **focus/prosody** relation.

As pointed out by Zubizarreta (1996) questions in Spanish begin with a High pitch. The main stress, however, falls at the end of the Intonational Phrase. When addressing wh-in-situ and superiority in Spanish, Zubizarreta mentions the following examples:

- (9) a. ¿Qué le compró QUIEN?  
 ‘What CL-3sg bought WHO?’  
 b. ¿Qué bebida trajo QUIEN?  
 ‘What drink bought WHO?’  
 c. \*Dime que cosa escondió QUIEN.  
 ‘Tell me which thing hid WHO.’

Zubizarreta claims that “the acceptability status of such examples is degraded if there is a phrase following the wh-subject quien within the same intonational phrase” (Chapter 3, 46)<sup>27</sup>. In this regard, (10) is provided by Zubizarreta:

- (10) a. \*¿Qué le compró quién a MARIA?  
 ‘What CL-3sg bought who to MARIA?’  
 b. \*¿Qué bebida trajo quién a la FIESTA?  
 ‘What drink brought who to the PARTY?’  
 c. \*Dime que cosa escondió quién debajo de la CAMA  
 ‘Tell me what put who under the BED’

According to her, the last phrase in the IntP in (10) is the target for main stress assignment but such phrases are not part of what she calls the F-set<sup>28</sup> in those sentences. Therefore, the FPCP (Focus/Prosody Correspondence Principle)

26 On such constructions see Demirdache (1993).

27 Extractions when something else follows are sometimes degraded.

28 As defined by Zubizarreta (1996, Chapter 2:32) ‘the F-set of constituents of an IntP<sub>i</sub> is constituted solely by constituents of IntP<sub>i</sub> that are marked [F] and by the terminal elements that such constituents dominate’ (32).

is violated. This principle is defined in the following fashion: 'the F-set of an IntP<sub>i</sub> must contain the word that bears main prominence within IntP<sub>i</sub>' (Zubizarreta 1996:Chapter 2,32).

The phenomenon addressed by Zubizarreta (1996) seems to explain why (8), repeated here as (11), is ungrammatical while (12) is not:

(11) \*Creo que le compré e<sub>i</sub> a María  
'I think I bought some for Mary'

(12) Creo que le compré e<sub>i</sub>  
'I think I bought e'

When the benefactive "a María" is added and forms part of the same Intonational Phrase, the sentence becomes ungrammatical. Yet if the PP complement is left dislocated or if it is analyzed as a distinct prosodic phrase, then the resulting sentence becomes more acceptable:

(13) ?A María, creo que le compré e<sub>i</sub>  
'For Mary, I think I bought e'.

A more in depth study of this phenomenon with respect to **prosody, word order and focus** (in the spirit of Zubizarreta, 1996) is required to help explain this contrast.

### 3. Subjacency in standard Spanish: Weak and strong bounding nodes

Campos (1986) accounts for the ungrammaticality of sentences (14b) and (15b) by resorting to **Subjacency**:

(14) a. ¿Juán traerá cerveza<sub>i</sub> a la fiesta?  
'Will John bring beer<sub>i</sub> to the party?'

b. \*Existe el rumor de que traerá e<sub>i</sub>  
'There exists the rumor that he will bring (some).'

(15) a. ¿Quién trajo cerveza<sub>i</sub> a la fiesta?  
'Who brought beer<sub>i</sub> to the party?'

b. \*No conozco al muchacho que trajo e<sub>i</sub>  
'I don't know the boy who brought (some).'

In (16), according to Campos (1986:355), "the OP cannot be related to the variable x since they are separated by two bounding nodes, NP and S".

(16) \*OP<sup>29</sup><sub>i</sub> ...[<sub>CP</sub>...[<sub>NP</sub>...X ...]...]<sup>30</sup>

**Subjacency**, as postulated by Chomsky (1982) establishes that:

(17) A single instance of movement can cross at most one bounding nodes where the bounding nodes are CP and NP<sup>31</sup>.

As pointed out by Lasnik & Saito (1992) “there seems to be parametric variation in the bounding nodes for Subjacency” (12). In this sense, see Rizzi (1980), Sportiche (1981-82) and Torrego (1984) for Italian, French and Spanish respectively. According to Rizzi’s proposal, Subjacency does not allow movement out of embedded questions in English since S is a bounding node in this language. Such an extraction, however, is permitted in Italian and Spanish since in those two languages S’ and not S counts as a bounding node.

For Spanish, Torrego (1984) shows how the effect of V-preposing proves to be relevant to determining the choice of bounding nodes for subjacency in this language: CP and NP. **Subjacency** for Spanish is captured in the following definition:

(18) Movement cannot cross more than one bounding node, where bounding nodes are CP and NP.

Given (18) **subjacency** cannot account for the contrast between (7) and (8), repeated here as (19) and (20) for ease of exposition:

(19) [<sub>CP</sub> *¿Qué* [<sub>IP</sub> *pro*<sub>j</sub> *crees* [<sub>CP</sub> *t*<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub> *que* [<sub>IP</sub> *pro*<sub>k</sub> *compré* *t*<sub>i</sub> *a María*]]]]]  
 ‘What do you think I bought for Mary?’

Taking into account that movement is “successive cyclic” as established by Chomsky (1973), the movement of the wh-phrase “que” in (19) from the argument position of the verb “comprar” to the lower Comp and from that Comp to the next higher Comp is local. Neither the first nor the second movement violates (18). Thus, subjacency is respected in (19) since I have assumed, following Campos, that the OP moves at the level of SS and not at LF where subjacency will play no role. Turning now to (8) repeated here as (20):

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29 Campos offers no explanation for the location of the OP so high in the clause. I will assume that the OP occupies the first available Spec of CP.

30 As pointed out in section 2, I assume, following Campos, that the OP moves at SS and therefore, follows subjacency. Note that if the OP moves at LF it will not have to obey subjacency since subjacency operates at the level of SS.

31 This definition of subjacency does not apply in Spanish since the bounding nodes in this constraint on movement differ from language to language, being IP and NP in English—see footnote 17—for bounding nodes in Spanish.

- (20) \* $[_{CP} OP_i [_{IP} pro \text{ creo } [_{CP} t_i [_{C} que [_{IP} pro_j \text{ le compre } t_i \text{ a María}]]]]]$   
 'I think I bought  $e_i$  for Mary'

**Subjacency**, as claimed above, is not violated in this sentence either. First, the empty category moves to the lower Comp in one single step. That movement does not cross any bounding node, being S' and NP the relevant bounding nodes in Spanish. Secondly,  $e$  moves from the lower Comp up to the higher clause without violating (18). Yet the sentence is ungrammatical. Two possibilities seem plausible to account for the ungrammaticality of (20): Either the empty category in object position in (20) is not a variable as postulated by Campos (1986) and as examined in section 2, or the definition of **subjacency** needs to be reformulated so as to rule out a derivation like (20). Yet subjacency helps Campos explain the ungrammaticality of sentences (14) and (15), repeated here as (21) and (22) <sup>32</sup>:

- (21) a. ¿Juán traerá cerveza<sub>i</sub> a la fiesta?  
 'Will John bring beer<sub>i</sub> to the party?'  
 b. \*Existe el rumor de que traerá  $e$ ,<sup>33</sup>  
 'There exists the rumor that he will bring (some)'
- (22) a. ¿Quién trajo cerveza<sub>i</sub> a la fiesta?  
 'Who brought beer<sub>i</sub> to the party?'  
 b. \*No conozco al muchacho que trajo  $e_i$   
 'I don't know the boy that brought (some)'

<sup>32</sup> Sentences (21b), (22b) and (23) are grammatical in the variety of Spanish spoken in the Basque Country, as pointed out by Landa (1996) and Jevenois (1996).

<sup>33</sup> Several factors could be playing a role in (21b). On one hand, the determiner 'el' is making 'el rumor' definite. Non-definite NPs seem to improve the grammaticality of the sentences:

- (i) pro he oído rumores de que pro traerá  $e_i$   
 pro have heard rumors that pro will bring  $e_i$   
 'I have heard rumors that he will bring  $e$ '.
- (ii) Existen rumores de que pro trajeron  $e_i$   
 There are rumors that pro brought  $e_i$   
 'There are rumors that they brought  $e$ '.
- (iii) pro oímos/Hay rumores de que pro ha traído  $e_i$   
 pro heard/There are rumors that pro has brought  $e_i$   
 'We heard/ There are rumors that he has brought  $e$ '.

Specificity and not subjacency could be playing a role here. On the other hand, the use of the future 'traerá' could be acting as a barrier.

Campos points out in a footnote that “if the complement S’ contains a verb in the subjunctive, the sentence is better for some speakers” (355).

- (23) ?Existe la posibilidad de que traiga e<sub>i</sub>  
‘There exists the possibility that he may bring (SUBJ) (some)’

In the same footnote Campos further claims that subjunctives seem to follow a pattern like infinitives<sup>34</sup>:

- (24) ?Existe la posibilidad de traer e<sub>i</sub>  
‘There exists the possibility of bringing (INF) (some)’

These data led Campos to the suggestion that S’ in subjunctives and infinitives is a weaker bounding node” (356)<sup>35</sup>. Yet Campos’ suggestion is limited to Complex NP constructions. I support his proposal by showing the effects of weak bounding nodes in the licensing of null objects, and I extend his analysis to other constructions, particularly to those associated with declarative predicates like “decir” (“to tell”), “declarar” (“to assert, to declare”), “afirmar” (“to affirm”) and epistemic predicates like “creer” (“to believe”), etc... Consider the following two sentences:

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34 This proposal will be examined in depth in section 4.

35 Campos’ proposal seems to have sprung from a suggestion made by Rizzi (1982). Rizzi (1982) noticed that infinitives and tensed clauses seem to have a different status for **subjacency**. He mentions sentences such as:

- a. \*Quest’ uomo, che non so se ritieni che Mario conosca abbastanza bene, ci potrebbe essere molto utile.  
‘This man, who I don’t know whether Mario knows well enough, could be very useful to us’.
- b. ?Quest’ uomo, che non so se ritieni di conoscere abbastanza bene, ci potrebbe essere molto utile.  
‘This man, who I don’t know whether you believe to know well enough, could be very useful to us’.

Such a contrast between (a) in which the clause embedded under the wh-island is a tensed sentence and the (b) sentence in which the clause is an infinitive seems to indicate that the S’ of infinitive is not a bounding node. Although Rizzi does not explicitly pattern subjunctive with indicative as regards to extraction, I tentatively show that his suggestion might have been the basis for Campos’ proposal.

(25) [<sub>IP</sub> pro<sub>j</sub> no creo [<sub>CP</sub>OP<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub> que [<sub>IP</sub> pro<sub>k</sub> traiga e<sub>i</sub>]]]]  
 pro not (I) think OP that pro (he/she) bring some]]]]  
 'I don't think that he/she may bring (SUBJ) e<sub>i</sub>.'

(26) ??[<sub>IP</sub> pro no creo [<sub>CP</sub>OP<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub> que [<sub>IP</sub> pro trae e<sub>i</sub>]]]]]<sup>36</sup>  
 pro not (I) think OP that pro (he/she) bring some]]]]  
 'I don't think that he/she brings (IND) e.'

The contrast in grammaticality between (25) and (26) will be the focus of the following section. A brief note of explanation seems to be needed at this point. The most obvious difference between (25) and (26) is the different moods that have been used in the embedded complements. In (25) the verb "no creer" subcategorizes for subjunctive in the embedded clause while in (26), the same verb subcategorizes for indicative. The contrast in grammaticality between these two types of clauses in Spanish seems to call for a structural distinction that will be primarily formulated in terms of **bounding nodes**<sup>37</sup>. I claim, following Campos' (1986) proposal that S' in a subjunctive clause constitutes a **weak bounding node**<sup>38</sup>. This bounding node does not violate subjacency. An S' that contains a verb bearing indicative mood constitutes a **strong bounding node** for extraction and renders the sentence less acceptable and in some cases, even ungrammatical. In section 4, I provide a fine-grained distinction between the two structures. This distinction may become very productive in languages that allow for both subjunctive and indicative in complement clauses.

#### 4. A fine grained distinction in standard Spanish: Structural differences between subjunctive and indicative with respect to null objects.

Constructions like "ser necesario" ("=to be necessary") and "ser posible" ("=to be possible") subcategorize for subjunctive and not for indicative in their subordinate clauses:

36 The addition of new elements after the empty category seems to improve grammaticality of (26):

(i) pro no creo OP que pro trae e<sub>i</sub> en el bolsillo  
 pro not think OP that pro brings (IND) e in his pocket  
 'I don't think that he brings e in his pocket'.

I owe this example to Myriam Uribe-Etxebarria (p.c).

37 See Torrego, E. & J. Uriagereka (1990).

38 I return to this question in the next section.

- (27) a. No hay pan<sub>i</sub> para comer.  
 'There is no bread<sub>i</sub> for lunch'.  
 b. \* Es necesario que compres e<sub>i</sub><sup>39</sup>  
 'It is necessary that you buy (IND) (some)'.  
 c. Es necesario que compres e<sub>i</sub>  
 'It is necessary that you buy (SUBJ) (some)'.
- (28) a. María no ha hecho muy bien el examen<sub>i</sub> aunque estudió muchísimo.  
 'Mary did not do well in the exam<sub>i</sub> although she studied a lot'.  
 b. \*Es posible que no apruebe e<sub>i</sub>  
 'It is possible that she will not pass (IND) (it)'.  
 c. Es posible que no apruebe e<sub>i</sub>  
 'It is possible that she will not pass (SUBJ) (it)'.

The difference between (27b) and (28b) on the one hand, and (27c) and (28c) on the other, lies in the tense-mood of the subordinate verb: (27b) and (28b) are in the **indicative** and (27c) and (28c) in the **subjunctive**. Such a contrast in grammaticality calls for an explanation. In this section I provide a syntactic approach for the indicative/subjunctive contrast present in (27) and (28).

Next, in section 4.1, I examine some analyses of the subjunctive proposed in the literature. Section 4.2 puts forward the idea that subjunctive clauses are unspecified for tense in contrast to indicative clauses which are characterized by the feature [+Tense]. I provide a number of reasons to account for this contrast between subjunctive and indicative clauses in Spanish. I argue for Spanish that subjunctive and infinitive structures seem to follow a similar pattern in a wide variety of contexts claiming for a [-Tense] characterization as opposed to indicative structures which are characterized as [+Tense]. I briefly refer to the so-called "disjoint reference requirement" (Kempchinsky 1985, 1986, 1990) which seems to be operating in subordinate clauses in Spanish as well as in other Romance languages.

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39 According to Campos (1986), sentences (27) and (28) are ungrammatical if the sentential subject is not topicalized. In the variety of Spanish spoken in the Basque Country structures with both topicalized and non-topicalized sentential subjects are grammatical.

#### 4.1 Some analyses of subjunctive clauses in the literature<sup>40</sup>

Two different approaches to the study of the contrast between **indicative** and **subjunctive** clauses have been presented in the literature: a semantic/pragmatic approach and a syntactic approach.

The semantic/pragmatic analyses have attempted to relate the choice of mood in the complement clauses to the meaning of the verb in the main clause. In other words, as Kempchinsky (1986) claims, these semantic/pragmatic analyses are based on discourse factors or presuppositions of truth value in the matrix clause. This is the approach pursued in most traditional grammars of Spanish where it is stated that verbs of emotion, affectedness, doubt and denial subcategorize for a subjunctive verb in the embedded clause. Within more technical works, one can mention Hooper & Terrel (1974), Oviedo (1974), Guitart (1977, 1978, 1980). These works explore the pragmatic factors involved in complement mood choice. One of the weaknesses common to all these works is that although they offer "pragmatic" or "semantic" explanations of the choice of mood, they lack a comprehensive pragmatic or semantic theory and what is more, they ignore the interaction that exists between pragmatics and grammar. In other words, following Kempchinsky (1986) "they fail to explain how it is that these pragmatic choices have purely grammatical consequences" (36).

Previous **syntactic approaches** (before GB analyses) to account for the contrast between indicative/subjunctive in embedded clauses propose that the subjunctive is a morpheme that is conditioned by the main verb, taking that condition or subcategorization as a purely syntactic matter, where semantic considerations do not enter. Along these lines, one finds the works by Lakoff (1968), Calboli (1971) and Lozano (1972) who recognize that subjunctive verbs in complement clauses have to be subcategorized for by the matrix verb.

Within the **Government and Binding syntax**, one can mention the works by Kempchinsky (1985, 1986, 1990), Johnson (1984), Picallo (1984, 1985), Jacobowicz (1984), Meireles & Raposo (1983), Raposo (1986), Suñer & Padilla-Rivera (1984) and references therein. All of them adopt the idea that subjunctive clauses do not have an independent tense but they seem to depend on that of the matrix verb. In this sense, Picallo (1984) and Raposo (1986) among others claim for the existence of a [Tense] operator in the Comp position of complements associated with certain kinds of verbs<sup>41</sup>. For Picallo, the value of the [Tense] operator in subordinate clauses "cannot be specified within a given set of points in

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40 In this section I will draw heavily on Kempchinsky's (1986) work. She offers a detailed summary of pre-GB analyses of subjunctive clauses as well as some analyses of the same phenomena carried out within the GB framework. See Kempchinsky (1986), section 2.1.

41 The reason that led these authors to postulate the existence of a subjunctive operator in Comp comes from the assumption that subjunctive clauses are tenseless. Along the same lines, Kempchinsky (1986) proposes the existence of a subjunctive operator in Comp whose identifier is the [TNS/AGR] node in INF (see footnote 50).



time, leaving undetermined whether the event expressed in V has occur or will occur" (86). The claim that the tense morphology of subjunctive verbs is determined by that of the indicative verb in the matrix clause has been traditionally referred to as *consecutio temporum*.

In my analysis, I adopt a syntactic approach to account for the contrast between subjunctive/indicative in subordinate clauses. My proposal is based on a structural distinction between subjunctive and indicative. My assumption--contrary to Kempchinsky's (1986)<sup>42</sup>--is that **subjunctive** is characterized as [-T] for Spanish. In this sense it patterns with **infinitive** while **indicative** is characterized as [+T]. The features of [+Tense], as pointed out by Picallo (1984:83), "will specify a moment in time or a time span, out of a given set of points in time, in which the event indicated by VP takes place".

#### 4.2 A structural account for the indicative/subjunctive contrast in complement clauses in standard Spanish.

The following two sentences in standard Spanish show the contrast I am trying to account for:

- (29) a. María ha pedido a Pedro que encuentre tickets<sub>i</sub> para el cine pero  
 'Mary has asked Peter to find tickets<sub>i</sub> for the cinema'.  
 b. No creo que encuentre e<sub>i</sub>  
 'I don't think he will find (SUBJ) (any)'.  
 c. \*No creo que encuentra e<sub>i</sub>  
 'I don't think he will find (IND) (any)'.

My proposal to characterize **subjunctive** as [-T] and **indicative** as [+T] in subordinate clauses in Spanish--as suggested in 4.1-- springs from Campos' (1986) suggestion that "S' in subjunctives and infinitives is a weaker bounding node" (356). According to Campos, **subjunctive** in complement S seems to pattern like **infinitives** as opposed to **indicative**. The following sentences from Campos (1986) illustrate this proposition:

- (30) a. ¿Juán traerá cerveza<sub>i</sub> a la fiesta?  
 'Will John bring beer<sub>i</sub> to the party?'  
 b. \*Existe el rumor de que traerá e<sub>i</sub>  
 'There exists the rumor that he will bring (some)'.  
 c. ?Existe la posibilidad de que traiga e<sub>i</sub>  
 'There exists the possibility that he may bring (SUBJ) (some)'.  
 d. ?Existe la posibilidad de traer e<sub>i</sub>  
 'There exists the possibility of bringing (INF) (some)'.

A detailed analysis of these and similar constructions involving subjunctive and

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42 The reader should refer to Kempchinsky's work.

indicative in Spanish seems to call for a subjunctive/infinitive versus indicative contrast in standard Spanish, based on a [ $\pm$  Tense] distinction.

I provide a number of reasons to support the above mentioned analysis:

1. Subjunctive clauses like infinitives as pointed out by Picallo (1984) can only appear in subcategorized positions and never as root sentences:

(31) \*Que Jon haya traído e<sup>43</sup>  
'John has brought (SUBJ) e'.

(32) \*[pro] haya traído e<sup>44</sup>  
'(He/she) has brought (SUBJ) e'.

2. A second piece of evidence suggesting for a conjoined analysis of subjunctive and infinitive comes from the fact that in Spanish some subjunctives--basically second person singular and plural-- are used as **imperatives**<sup>45</sup>. Consider a verb like "venir" whose subjunctive conjugation follows:

(33) yo venga  
      **usted venga**  
      el/ella venga  
      nosotros vengamos  
      **ustedes vengán**  
      ellos vengán

The fact (see footnote 44) that subjunctive clauses do not need to be subcategorized in imperative expressions seems to support the fact that imperatives share some properties with subjunctives<sup>46</sup>.

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43 These examples are translations from Picallo's (1984) examples in Catalan.

44 Picallo (1984) states that "a subjunctive clause can appear nonsubcategorized in exclamatory or imperative expressions such as:

(i) Y que lo diga  
'That (he/she) say it! (cf. I/we wish that he/she say it)' (85).

45 The standard assumption is to consider imperatives as [-Tense].

46 Huntley (1984) proposes for English an account to group together imperatives and subjunctives. In his argumentation he states that "the most salient feature in common" of imperative and subjunctive clauses is their lack of a full auxiliary, in particular, their lack of tense and modals. He concludes that both imperatives and subjunctives lack temporal indication. Huntley's proposal supports the idea that

3. Another reason for the contrast subjunctive-infinitive versus indicative in Spanish can be found in purposive clauses<sup>47</sup>. In Spanish purposive clauses select either infinitive or subjunctive:

(34) A: ¿Qué hace esto<sub>i</sub> aquí?

'What is this doing here?'

B: Su dueño lo ha traído para que limpiemos e<sub>i</sub>  
limpiar e<sub>i</sub>

'Its owner has brought it for us to clean (it)'.

(35) A: ¿Quién ha dejado ropa<sub>i</sub> encima de la cama?

'Who has left clothes<sub>i</sub> on the bed?'

B: Miranda la ha dejado para que planches e<sub>i</sub>  
planchar e<sub>i</sub>

'Miranda has left it for us to iron (it)'.

4. Badia-Margarit (1962) and Luján (1979) among others, have noted, with regard to [Tense] feature specification, that subjunctive clauses do not express a value in time-frame coordinates. In this sense, they claim that they are similar to infinitives. Consider the following examples:

(36) a. Jon y María no pueden ir a la opera porque Jon no encontró entradas<sub>i</sub>.

'John and Mary cannot go to the opera because John could not find any tickets<sub>i</sub>'.

b. Jon se lamenta de que Pedro no encontrara e<sub>i</sub>;  
'John regrets that Peter does not find (any)'<sub>i</sub>.

c. Jon deseaba que Peter encontrara e<sub>i</sub>.  
'John wished that Peter had found (some)'<sub>i</sub>.

According to Picallo (1984) and Kempchinsky (1986), a subjunctive alone cannot denote time. It rather is assigned a value via coindexing with the matrix verb. In this sense, Picallo (1984) claims that "the Infl. node of a subjunctive clause lacks the features necessary to be fully specified as [+T]" (88). For her, the inflection node of a subjunctive clause should be abstractly characterized as [-T,+AGR].

5. Another piece of evidence central to the subjunctive/ indicative contrast is found

imperatives and subjunctives seem to have some syntactic property in common

47 My argument seems to support Landa's (1995) claims for the variety of Spanish spoken in the Basque Country where non-phonologically identified null objects are commonly found after infinitives and/or final clauses.

in Portuguese. Portuguese speakers as pointed out by Picallo (1984) seem to consider inflected infinitives and subjunctives as stylistic variants of one another:

- (37) a. Nao importa eles terem (INF) muito atraso<sup>48</sup>  
b. Nao importa que eles tivessem (SUBJ) muito atraso  
'It does not matter for them to be late'.
- (38) a. Mandei os alunos entrarem (INF)  
b. Mandei que os alunos entrassem (SUBJ)  
'I asked for the students to enter'.
- (39) a. Era hora que nos saimos (INF)  
b. Era hora que nos saissimos (SUBJ)  
'It is time for us to leave'.

The Portuguese examples constitute another argument in favor of the basic abstract untensed character of subjunctive forms and show how **infinitive** and **subjunctive** seem to share a number of characteristics in contrast to **indicative** forms, mainly a [ $\pm T$ ] distinction.

6. The fact that [Tense] is devoid of time features in the subjunctive is supported by the so-called "disjoint reference effect" (Kempchinsky 1985, 1986, 1990; Raposo 1986)<sup>49</sup>. This phenomenon, very common in Romance languages, and among them, Spanish, is obligatory between a complement subject pronoun and a matrix subject when the matrix predicate belongs to a certain semantic class. Non-factive emotives like "temer" ("to be afraid, to fear"), verbs of volition like "querer" ("to want"), "desear" ("to wish") and verbs of influence and permission like "recomendar" ("to recommend"), "exigir" ("to require"), "ordenar" ("to order") among many others are distinguished by the fact that their subcategorized complement clauses "are characterized by the feature [-T] in their Comp position" (Raposo 1986:80)<sup>50, 51</sup>.

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48 These examples are taken from Picallo (1984).

49 On this topic see also Fukui & Speas (1986). What could be happening with some subjunctives is that they may lack an independent time of reference. The reader is also referred to Enc (1987) for a discussion of functional and lexical categories as closed and open categories in terms of barriers.

50 Kempchinsky (1986) proposes that subjunctive complements to volitional predicates (as well as verbs which subcategorize for controlled infinitival complements) are characterized by the existence of a subjunctive/indicative OP in Comp. At LF this operator must be identified by the element which overtly marks subjunctive in a given language. In a language like Spanish where subjunctive is marked by the Infl., Infl. moves to Comp at LF to identify the operator.

A conjoined analysis of subjunctive and infinitive<sup>52</sup> is supported by verbs like those mentioned in the previous paragraph since in Spanish verbs of volition like “querer” (“to want”) or “desear” (“to wish”) and verbs of influence or permission like “recomendar” (“to recommend”) or “exigir” (“to require”) subcategorize for both infinitive and subjunctive. Infinitive is chosen when the subject of the matrix clause coincides with that of the infinitive:

- (40) María quiere [PRO ir a París]  
 ‘Mary wants PRO to go to Paris’.

An apparently disjoint requirement obtains between the subject of the subjunctive clause and the subject of the matrix clause, producing the so-called “subjunctive disjoint reference effect” (SRD) (Kempchinsky 1985, 1986):

- (41) \*María quiere que [pro ] vaya a París  
 ‘Mary wants that [PRO ] to go to Paris’.

Thus, one can claim that subjunctive and infinitive have the referentiality of the subject in complementarity<sup>53</sup>.

In Spanish the contrast between subjunctive and infinitive on the one hand and indicative on the other with respect to the internal specification of tense follows as an automatic consequence of the fact that in this language non-factive emotive verbs, verbs of volition, influence or permission can subcategorize for both infinitive and subjunctive forms in their dependent clause while in English the same class of verbs are only allowed to take infinitive.

51 A similar phenomenon seems to take place with control versus ECM verbs. See Stowell (1981).

52 It has been claimed in the literature that some infinitives are [+Tense]. In this sense, Stowell (1981,1982) argues that infinitives as well as finite clauses are [+TNS]. According to him, the temporal interpretation of the infinitive can be captured on the assumption that Tense is an operator that must move to COMP by LF. However, infinitives do not always need COMP. Then, according to his account, infinitives without COMP will be tenseless since they offer no landing site for the Tense operator. Infinitives in COMP, however, do allow for some Spec of T. Stowell’s proposal will not be followed in my argumentation.

53 Yet, a sentence like (i) contradicts this proposal:

(i) pro<sub>i</sub> dudo que [pro<sub>i</sub> vaya a Gerona]  
 ‘I doubt that I will go (SUBJ) to Girona’.

(42) pro no compré ninguna bebida, porque  
'pro not bought any drink<sub>i</sub> because'

- a. I expected him to bring (some)
- b. Esperaba que trajera (SUBJ) e<sub>i</sub>
- c. Esperaba traer (INF) e<sub>i</sub>

(43) a. No creo que vaya a haber suficiente cerveza<sub>i</sub> para la fiesta.

'I don't think there is going to be enough beer<sub>i</sub> for the party. I want Peter to bring (some)'

- b. Quiero que Peter traiga (SUBJ) e<sub>i</sub>
- c. Quiero traer (INF) e<sub>i</sub><sup>54</sup>

7. Subjunctive is not attested as a productive verbal form in English. A number of verbs, however, can be said to license subjunctive in embedded clauses: "advice", "ask", "be", "necessary", "beg", "crave" and "demand"<sup>55</sup>. When sentences containing verbs like these are translated into Spanish, two different translations are offered, one with an infinitive and another one with a subjunctive. Consider the following sentence:

- (44) a. I demanded that John leave for Hawaii  
b. Exigió que Jon saliera (SUBJ) hacia Hawaii  
c. Exigió salir (INF) a Jon hacia Hawaii

This fact has some interesting consequences for the object central contrast between subjunctive and infinitive versus indicative with respect to the internal features of [Tense]. These seven reasons seem to call for an analysis of subjunctive clauses as [-T] for Spanish. This specification seems to support the improvement of a null object construction with the subjunctive and the absence, therefore, of a [+Tense] feature. A [-Tense] IP node produces better sentences.

To summarize this section, infinitive clauses follows a similar pattern to subjunctive predicates by being [-T]<sup>56</sup> as opposed to indicative complements that

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54 One must bear in mind that in constructions like (42b) and (43b) the subjunctive subject must be disjoint in reference with the subject of the dominating S. On the contrary, in (42c) and (43c) the subject of the infinitive must have the same reference as the subject of the matrix clause.

55 In this sense, it has been claimed (Emonds, 1976) that "for" in English is an identifier of subjunctive. In Kempchinsky's (1985, 1986, 1990) account "for" will be the realization of a subjunctive operator.

56 Infinitives, however, differ from subjunctive by being [-AGR]. Infinitives are fully characterized by the features [-T,-A] while subjunctives are characterized as [-T,+AGR]. I disregard the [AGR] features since they have a nominal character. The

are characterized as [+T] in Spanish. This distinction seems to support Campos' (1986) suggestion of subjunctives patterning like infinitives with respect to **subjacency**. One could examine whether Campos' proposal of subjunctive and infinitive as weak bounding nodes works in other Romance languages. I leave this question for further research.

## 5. Conclusions

This paper has attempted to show that any of the four empty categories in the Principles and Parameters framework is insufficient to explain the distribution of null objects in Spanish null non-definite direct object constructions such as that in (8) repeated here as (45):

- (45) \* $[_{IP} \text{ pro } _i \text{ creo } [_{CP} \text{ OP } _i \text{ que } [_{IP} \text{ pro } _i \text{ compré } e_i \text{ a María}]]]$   
 'I think I bought  $e_i$  for Mary'.

It was tentatively suggested that the ungrammaticality of a sentence like (45) could be accounted for, firstly, by the appearance of the direct object clitic 'le' producing some kind of minimality effect and secondly, by the presence of the benefactive 'a María' since extractions when something else follows are sometimes degraded. The sentence, however, seemed to be improved by either adding new material after the benefactive NP or by deleting it. Furthermore, if the word order was altered, the sentence seemed to become better. In this respect, an account on prosody, word order and focus along the lines of Zubizarreta (1996) was briefly suggested as a solution for the problem posited in (45).

In analyzing the status of non-definite direct object constructions in standard Spanish, an operator was assumed to bind the empty element. I posit, following a suggestion by Campos (1986) that this operator moves at the level of SS and therefore, it meets the restrictions that apply to movement and consequently, subjacency<sup>57</sup>. Furthermore, I adopt Campos' proposal that subjunctive and infinitive constructions in complement clauses in standard Spanish constitute a weak bounding node for subjacency while indicative constitutes a strong bounding node. A number of examples were offered to support this assumption. A fine-grained distinction between these constructions was pursued and a conjoined analysis of subjunctive and infinitive as opposed to indicative was presented. This contrast was claimed to have its source on the internal specification of [Tense]. In this way, I claimed for a characterization of subjunctive and infinitive as [-Tense] and indicative as [+Tense].

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features of [Tense], however, are basically "verbal".

<sup>57</sup> See Fernández Soriano (1989) for examples in which the analysis via extraction of the OP does not work since according to this author, there are violations of subjacency. According to María Luisa Zubizarreta (p.c), if one pursues this analysis the difference between indicative and subjunctive as weak/strong bounding nodes would not be pertinent.

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