

On the reality of constructions: the Spanish reduplicative-topic construction

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1. Introduction

Understood as the association of a recurrent pattern of linguistic elements with some communicative function or meaning, the notion of *construction* has always played a central role in traditional descriptive grammars. Time-honored examples such as the imperative construction, the passive construction, the resultative construction, etc. have always been the cornerstone of traditional syntactic analyses. This state of affairs was challenged, however, when Noam Chomsky proposed the principles and parameters model (Chomsky 1981, 1993). In light of this proposal, constructions suddenly lost their status as the fundamental unit of syntax in mainstream theoretical linguistics, as it was claimed that larger generalizations were available at the level of parametric principles.

With the apparent demise of grammatical constructions, language could be cleanly split into two components: (a) lexical items and (b) rules for their manipulation. The psycholinguist Steven Pinker summarizes this situation in this way:

“[T]here are two tricks: words and rules. They work by different principles, are learned and used in different ways and may even reside in different parts of the brain” (Pinker 1999: 2).

Under such a conception of language, constructions are second-order entities, or “epiphenomena.” That is, constructional patterns are not basic to grammar but are instead held to be inferrable from levels within the system, namely, from the interaction between rules and words. Obviously, if these assumptions are correct, constructions do not play an explanatory role in linguistics.

In more recent years, work within cognitive and functional linguistics (Langacker 1987, Lakoff 1987, Tomasello 2002, among others) has come to challenge the words-and-rules approach to syntax.¹ Leaving aside differences in detail, these frameworks all share a common outlook that grammatical constructions are central to syntax (Fillmore, Kay & O’Connor 1988, Kay & Fillmore 1999, Goldberg 1995, Langacker 1987, Croft 2002; Hilferty & Valenzuela 2001, Hilferty 2003). Constructions are not epiphenomenal, on this view, but basic. There are two reasons for this:

- (i) a system of general syntactic principles is far too impoverished to account for the many irregularities observed in syntax;

- (ii) purely syntactic principles disregard the many semantic and intonational constraints that are part of grammatical constructions.

Together, points (i) and (ii) suggest that grammar is based on conventionalized patterns of form/meaning pairings. Syntax is, in reality, a manifestation of the linguistic sign. This bears some explaining.

In contrast to the current Chomskyan tradition, which attempts to characterize syntactic patterns at the highest level of abstraction possible, construction-based approaches posit grammatical structures at varying levels of schematicity/specificity. Some constructional patterns may be based on specific lexical material and are, accordingly, highly specific both in their form and function. This would be the case in collocations, idioms, and conventional expressions such as *blue sky*, *and so on and so forth*, or *Don't just sit there! Do something!* Other constructions may be much more abstract and schematic, helping to sanction a wider segment of linguistic structures, e.g., the subject-predicate construction. Still other constructions fall in-between these two extremes, specifying certain lexical material in an otherwise schematic pattern. For example, the construction *Just because X doesn't mean Y* (Bender & Kathol *to appear*, Holmes & Hudson 2000, Hilferty 2003) shows a mix of specific words and open variables. Such a spectrum of possibilities lends credence to the constructional approach and casts doubt on the plausibility of a strict words/rules dichotomy.

In the present paper, we adduce further evidence for the reality of grammatical constructions by focusing on a highly idiosyncratic configuration from Spanish, which we call the REDUPLICATIVE-TOPIC CONSTRUCTION. First, we introduce the construction, with a general description of its form and function. We then move on to describe a special version of this construction in fuller detail. The thrust of our argument is that only a constructional approach can capture the range of facts needed to characterize this syntactic pattern. We conclude the paper by considering the implications of the constructional approach to syntax for linguistic theory.

2. The Reduplicative-topic Construction

In Spanish there exists a productive topicalization pattern in which the topic is formed by reduplication (cf. Barcelona 1986, Narbona 2000). Take, for instance, the examples in (1):

1. a. *Comer comer no come, pero bebe como un cosaco.*
To-eat to-eat no eats, but drinks like a cossack
'He doesn't eat very much, but he drinks like a fish.'
- b. *Hijos hijos no tengo, pero sí muchos sobrinos.*
Children children no have-I, but yes many nephews
'I don't have any children, but I do have many nieces and nephews.'
- c. *Despacio despacio no iba, pero tampoco iba hecho un loco.*
Slow slow no was-going, but neither was-going made a madman

‘He wasn’t going slow, but he wasn’t going outrageously fast either.’

d. *Cansado, cansado no estoy, pero sí quiero sentarme.*

Tired tired no am, but yes want-I sit-me
 ‘I’m not tired really, but yes I would like to sit down.’

e. *Hasta Madrid, hasta Madrid, no llegamos, pero nos quedamos muy cerca.*

Till Madrid till Madrid, no arrived-we, but us stayed very near.
 ‘We didn’t make it all the way to Madrid, but we came very close.’

Such topic structures are theoretically very interesting, not only because they possess an unusual syntactic configuration, but also because they are endowed with a specific phonology and semantics. In this paper we will concentrate on examples such as those in (1a), which topicalize an infinitival head. We shall see that this pattern is not merely the product of topicalization plus reduplication. Instead, this structure shows idiosyncrasies that are not entirely predictable from its component parts.

2.1. Functional factors

The claim that we would like to put forth in this paper is that reduplicative-topic structures are an example of “constructional hedging.”² By this we mean that the function of this construction is to qualify the membership of a category mentioned in a previous utterance. Consider the following exchange:

2. Speaker A: *¿Lloró la niña cuando nos fuimos?*

Cried the girl when us went-we
 ‘Did the girl cry when we left?’

Speaker B: *Llorar llorar, no lloró, pero hizo muchos pucheros*

To-cry to-cry no cried-she but made-she many poutings
 ‘She didn’t really cry, but she did pout a lot.’

Here, speaker B makes use of reduplicative topicalization in order to avoid categorizing the girl’s action as a full instance of crying. In other words, the reduplicative-topic construction is a grammatical resource for denying that the instance under consideration is actually a full member of the previously mentioned category. We will develop this idea as we proceed.

In terms of their internal organization, reduplicative-topic structures can be broken up into three syntactic periods, each with their own particular communicative function.

3.

<i>Llorar llorar,</i> To cry to cry	<i>no lloró,</i> she didn’t cry	<i>pero hizo muchos pucheros</i> but she pouted a lot
A	B	C

The initial syntactic period (period A) introduces a REDUPLICATED TOPIC. Unsurprisingly, this constituent refers back to some key piece of old information. It does so, however, by alluding to a prototypical or ideal state of affairs. That is, the reduplicated topic represents the *expected* interpretation. The second syntactic period (period B) is what we will call the COMMENT; it asserts an actual, *unexpected* state of affairs. The relationship between periods A and B is thus one of contrast. The third syntactic period, the EXPLANATION, clarifies why the speaker has related the comment (the non-prototypical state of affairs) with the topic (the prototypical state of affairs).

2.2. Phonological factors

As mentioned in the introduction, one of the defining characteristics of construction-based syntax is the inclusion of heterogenous types of information within the same structure. In this section we will concentrate on certain suprasegmental parameters; specifically, we will deal with (i) the construction's rhythmic pattern, (ii) its intonational curve, as well as (iii) an idiosyncratic constraint on constituent weight.

To start with, the three syntactic periods form three separate intonation groups. Period A must be rhythmically separate from period B (this is symbolized in (4) with the double slash “//”).

4. [[A] // [B] /// [C]]
Comer comer no come, pero bebe mucho
 To-eat to-eat no eats but drinks much
 ‘He doesn’t really eat that much, but he drinks a lot.’

Element B, on the other hand, must be separated from element C with an even longer pause (indicated in (4) with three slashes “///”). This is consistent with the fact that, within the context of the reduplicative-topic construction, period C is often optional, whereas period B is always obligatory (compare examples (5a) and (5b)).

5. a. [[A] // [B]]
Comer comer no come.
 To-eat to eat no eats
 ‘He doesn’t really eat much.’
- b. [[A] /// [C]]
 * *Comer comer pero bebe mucho.*
 To-eat to-eat but drinks much
 ‘Eat but he drinks a lot.’

Thus, the pause length correlates to the different levels of syntactic and semantic connectivity.

Some might doubt that this rhythm structure is actually part and parcel of the construction. We would disagree. If we attempt to impose a different rhythmic pattern

on the structure the result is unnatural and rather forced. For example, if we split the two elements that make up period A, let us call them A₁ and A₂, so that they are rhythmically separate, the result is anomalous:

6. [[A₁] // [A₂][B] /// [C]]
 ?? *Comer comer no come, pero bebe mucho*
 To-eat // to-eat no eats /// but drinks much
 ‘He doesn’t really eat that much, but he drinks a lot.’

This strongly suggests that rhythm is an integral part of the grammatical construction.

Just as this construction has a very specific rhythmic pattern, it also has a very specific intonation pattern. The first of the three intonation groups (period A) is associated with a slightly falling intonational curve:

7. *Comer comer (↘) no come (↓↓), pero bebe como un cosaco (↓)*
 To-eat to-eat no eats but drinks like a cossack
 ‘He doesn’t eat much but he drinks like a fish.’

Period B, on the other hand, has a strongly falling curve; and period C falls slightly less.

Interestingly, because elements A₁ and A₂ must be grouped together in the same intonation unit, there is a restriction to the amount of linguistic material which can be reduplicated. The limit seems to lie around four phonological words, as can be seen in the examples in (8):

8. a. *Comer, comer, no come demasiado.*
 To-eat to-eat, no eats too-much
 ‘He doesn’t really eat that much.’
- b. *Hablar mucho, hablar mucho, no habla, pero siempre tiene la palabra justa*
 To-speak much to-speak much, no speaks, but always has the word appropriate
 ‘He really doesn’t talk much but he always knows what to say.’
- c. *Hacer la comida, hacer la comida, no la he hecho.*
 To-make the meal to-make the meal, no it have-I done
 ‘To be truthful, I haven’t made lunch yet.’
- d. *?Jugar bien a billar, jugar bien a billar, no juega mal, pero es una caña jugando a los dardos.*
 To-play well at billards to-play well at billards no plays badly, but
 is a cane playing at the darts
 ‘He doesn’t really play pool that well, but he’s great at playing darts.’
- e. *??Sacar el examen con nota, sacar el examen con nota, no pude, pero al menos aprobé con un 6.*
 To-take-out the exam with grade to-take-out the exam with grade no could-I but
 at-the least passed-I with a 6
 ‘I really wasn’t able to get a good grade on the exam, but at least I got a C+.’

- f. * *Subir hasta el parque de atracciones, subir hasta el parque de atracciones, no lo hago, pero llego a Vallvidrera.*
 Climb till the park of attractions, climb till the park of attractions, no it do-I but arrive-I to Vallvidrera
 ‘I can’t really make it all the way up to the amusement park, but I can make it to Vallvidrera.’

Clearly, acceptability decreases as the quantity of reduplicated material increases. Nonetheless, as one might expect, when the elements contained within the topic conventionally co-occur, this constraint can be eased up somewhat. Consider, for instance, example (9), which contains the idiomatic expression *beber como un cosaco* ‘to drink like a fish’:

9. Speaker A: *Así que cuando te quedaste embarazada, descubriste que bebías como un cosaco.*
 Thus that when you stayed pregnant, discovered-you that drank-you like a cossack
 ‘So, when you got pregnant, you found out that you drank like a fish.’

Speaker B: *Hombre, beber como un cosaco, beber como un cosaco, no, pero he de reconocer que me gusta el vino.*
 Man, to-drink like a cossack, to-drink like a cossack, no, but have-I to-admit that to-me pleases the wine
 ‘Well, I wouldn’t exactly say that I drank like a fish, but I have to admit that I do like wine.’

The importance of an example such as (9-Speaker B) is worth stressing, in that it sounds more natural as compared to that of (8d) above. In our opinion, the most likely explanation is that set phrases such as *beber como un cosaco* ‘drink like a fish’ are preestablished units. It follows naturally from this that such structures are intonationally more “tightly packaged” than word strings of corresponding length that are assembled “on the fly.” Hence, conventionality seems to affect constituent weight.

2.3 Polarities

One of the more curious facts about the reduplicative-topic construction has to do with the polarity of the three syntactic periods. In general it is true that topics can be negated. This is shown by the following examples:

10. a. *No comer es lo que hacen las modelos para mantenerse delgadas.*
 No to-eat is the what do the models for maintain-themselves thin
 ‘Not eating is what models do to keep thin.’
- b. *En mi vida diría semejante cosa.*
 In my life say-would-I similar thing
 ‘Never in my life would I say something like that.’

- c. *Si no vienes, no te lo puedo dar.*
 If no come-you no to-you it can-I give
 ‘If you don’t come, I can’t give it to you.’

However, in the construction we are exploring, period A can never be negated:

11. * *No comer, no comer, no come.*
 No to-eat no to-eat, no eats
 ‘No eat, he doesn’t eat.’

The fact that this type of topicalization pattern cannot be negated is perhaps not so surprising since the parallel pattern with non-reduplicated topicalization cannot be negated either:

12. a. * *No comer, no come*
 No to-eat, no eats
 ‘No eat, she doesn’t eat’
- b. * *No comer, come*
 No to-eat, eats
 ‘No eat, she eats.’

What is surprising is the clear tendency of period B to be negative:

13. a. *Comer comer NO come mucho* (negative)
 To-eat to-eat no eats much
 ‘He really doesn’t eat that much.’
- b. ??*Comer comer SÍ come* (positive)
 To-eat to-eat yes eats
 ‘He really does eat a lot.’
- c. ??*Comer comer come mucho* (positive)
 To-eat to-eat eats much
 ‘He really eats a lot.’
- d. *Comer comer come POCO* (pseudo-negative)
 To-eat to-eat eats little
 ‘He eats very little.’

This contrasts with non-reduplicated topicalization, which, as the examples in (14) show, has little difficulty accommodating either polarity in period B:

14. a. *Comer, come un montón (y además bebe).*
 To-eat eats a lot (and besides drinks)
 ‘He eats tons (and drinks besides).’
- b. *Comer, no come demasiado.*

To-eat no eats too-much
'He doesn't eat that much.'

Now, this observation should not be taken as a claim that reduplicative topicalization can never take a positive-polarity main clause. Examples such as (15) would quickly show that this is not true:

15. *Beber, beber, sí bebe, pero no mucho y sólo en ocasiones absolutamente especiales.*
To-drink to-drink yes drinks but not much and on occasions absolutely special
'He does drink, but not a lot and only on special occasions.'

From the point of view of purely syntactic principles, such a situation is difficult to account for. The reduplicative-topic examples in (13b) and (13c) are of dubious acceptability, so why isn't the same true of (15)? The difference lies in the fact that the structure in (15) contains an explanation (period C). Hence, when the explanation is not stated, reduplicative topicalization must contain a negative-polarity main clause; on the other hand, if the explanation appears, then a positive-polarity main clause is possible. Let us expand on this point.

Depending on whether the case alluded to in the comment is to be included in or excluded from the category stated in the topic, the construction takes one of the following polarity patterns:

- PATTERN 1: [A[positive]] [B[negative]] [C[positive]] (=class exclusion)
PATTERN 2: [A[positive]] [B[negative]] [C[negative]] (=class exclusion)
PATTERN 3: [A [positive]] [B [positive]] [C [negative]] (=class inclusion)

These are exemplified in (16a-c), respectively:

16. a. [A_[POSITIVE]] [B_[NEGATIVE]] [C_[POSITIVE]]
Correr, correr, no corría, pero sí andaba muy deprisa
To-run to-run no ran-he but yes walked-he very quickly
'He wasn't exactly running, but he was certainly walking rather quickly.'
- b. [A_[POSITIVE]] [B_[NEGATIVE]] [C_[NEGATIVE]]
Correr, correr, no corría, pero tampoco andaba muy despacio
To-run to-run no ran-he but neither walked-he very slowly
'He wasn't exactly running, but he wasn't walking slowly either.'
- c. [A_[POSITIVE]] [B_[POSITIVE]] [C_[NEGATIVE]]
Correr, correr, corre, pero no lo suficiente para ganar la carrera
To-run to-run runs but not the enough to win the race
'He does run, but not enough to win the race.'

In cases of class exclusion, the actions in periods B and C do not count as instances of the category mentioned in period A. Note, however, that they are still not considered to be conceptually distant. For example, walking quickly (as in ex. 16a) or walking not

very slowly (ex. 16b) are conceptually quite close to running, so they are both acceptable possibilities. Cases such as (16c) are different, however. In such cases, the speaker asserts that the action in period B falls within the bounds of the category mentioned in period A, albeit as a non-prototypical instance.

Interestingly, the implicature of class inclusion is only possible if the polarity of period C is negative. That is, if all three syntactic periods have positive polarity, then the structure is unacceptable.

17. [A_[POSITIVE]] [B_[POSITIVE]] [C_[POSITIVE]]
 * *Comer, comer, come, pero sí lo suficiente*
 To-eat to-eat eats but yes the enough
 ‘He does eat, but certainly enough.’

The reason for this is simple: the hedging function of the reduplicative topicalization construction is to explain why the instance in period B cannot be a prototypical exemplar of period A. Consequently, some form of negation is necessary.

2.4 Agreement

As we have just seen, period C is expressed when it is necessary to explain or justify the contrast between A and B. Since period C is offered as an explanation of the comment presented in B, it depends on this period. It therefore must show agreement with its cohort verb in B in at least three respects.

To start with, the subject of the adversative clause in C must necessarily share the same subject as the verb in B:

18. a. *Comer, comer, no come, pero bebe mucho*
 To-eat to-eat no eats, but drinks much
 ‘He doesn’t eat much, but he drinks a lot.’
- b. **Comer, comer, no come, pero bebo mucho*
 To-eat to-eat no eats, but drink-I much
 ‘He doesn’t eat much, but I drink a lot.’
- c. **Comer, comer, no come, pero bebemos mucho*
 To-eat to eat no eats, but drink-we much
 ‘He doesn’t eat much, but we drinks a lot.’
- d. **Comer, comer, no come, pero beben mucho*
 To-eat to-eat no eats, but drink-they much
 ‘He doesn’t eat much, but they drink a lot.’

Note that the only acceptable sentence is (18a), in which the verb form of the B period (*come* ‘eats’) and that of the C period (*bebe* ‘drinks’) agree in person and number (in this case, third person singular). Cases such as (18b-d) are not possible since the person and number of the verb in periods B and C do not allude to the same co-referent. This

can be seen more clearly by comparing examples (19a) and (19b), which agree in person and number but which have different co-referential indexing:

19. a. *Comer, comer, no come_i, pero bebe_i mucho* ([i = Juan])
To-eat to-eat no eats-he_i but drinks- he_i much
'He_i doesn't eat much, but he_i drinks a lot.'
- b. **Comer, comer, no come_i, pero bebe_j mucho* ([i = Juan; j= Pedro])
To-eat to-eat no eats-he_i but drinks- he_j much
'He_i doesn't eat much, but he_j drinks a lot.'

Example (19b) is not acceptable because the verbs in periods B and C refer to different subjects even if the agreement features are the same.

There is, however, a slight wrinkle to this constraint when plural reference is involved. If the subject referent of period B is included in that of period C or, vice versa, then this general agreement constraint is relaxed:

20. Speaker A: *Sigue jugando tu marido a las máquinas tragaperras?*
Keeps playing your husband at the machines slot
'Is your husband still playing slot machines?'
- Speaker B: *Hombre... Jugar, jugar, ya no juega, pero gastamos muchísimo dinero en lotería.*
Man... to-play to-play, now no plays but spend-we much
money in lottery
'Well...he doesn't really play now, but we sure spend a lot of money on the lottery.'

In this case, reference to the husband is included in the first person plural marking of the verb-form *gastamos* 'spend-we' in period C, thus allowing the apparent disparity in agreement forms. Likewise, in example (21), the difference in agreement is allowed by the fact that reference to the husband is made in both periods B and C:

21. Speaker A: *¿Seguís jugando tú y tu marido a las máquinas tragaperras?*
Keep-you playing you and your husband at the machines slot
'Are you and your husband still playing slot machines?'
- Speaker B: *Hombre... Jugar, jugar, ya no jugamos, pero mi marido gasta muchísimo dinero en lotería.*
Man... to-play to-play, now no play-we but my husband spends much
money in lottery
'Well... we don't really play now, but my husband sure spends a lot of money on the lottery.'

The upshot of this situation is that the subjects in periods B and C must be referentially connected. This, as far as we can see, is an idiosyncratic constraint, since it does not seem to fall out from other parts of the grammar.

Secondly, the tense of the verb in C must also be the same as that of the finite verb in B. The following are a small sample of possibilities (and impossibilities).

22. a. *Comer, comer, no come, pero bebe mucho*
To-eat to-eat no eats, but drinks much
'He doesn't eat much, but he drinks a lot.'
- b. **Comer, comer, no come, pero bebía mucho*
To-eat to-eat no eats, but drank-he much
'He doesn't eat much, but he would drink a lot.'
- c. **Comer, comer, no come, pero beberá mucho*
To-eat to-eat no eats, but drink-will-he much
'He doesn't eat much, but he will drink a lot.'
- d. *Beber, beber, no bebe mucho, pero ayer se infló.*
To-drink to-drink no drinks much, but yesterday himself inflated
'He doesn't really drink much, but yesterday he got really faced.'

Note that only (22a) and (22d) are possible. As can be seen from (22b) and (22c), tense must be same in both periods B and C, unless period C contains an explicit temporal adverb.

Finally, there exists the possibility in some cases that the verb in the third period is elided. In such cases, when the hearer recovers the elided verb, the result will necessarily be the verb in period B:

23. a. *Beber, beber, sí bebe, pero sólo ([bebe]) en ocasiones absolutamente especiales*
To-drink to-drink, yes drinks but only ([drinks]) on special occasions absolutely
'Yes, he does drink but ([he drinks]) only on very special occasions.'
- b. **Beber, beber, sí bebe, pero sólo ([come]) en ocasiones absolutamente especiales*
To-drink to-drink, yes drinks but only ([eats]) on occasions absolutely special
'Yes, he does drink but ([he eats]) only on very special occasions.'

In this sense, the semantic interpretation of such gaps cannot change reference; the missing element triggers a process of anaphoric co-reference with the target verb.

3. Conclusion

In this paper we have concentrated on a highly idiosyncratic structure in the extended family of Spanish topicalization constructions. This construction, which we have christened the reduplicative-topic construction (infinitival version), is interesting in its own right, to be sure. Nonetheless, we would like to point out that the theoretical ramifications are anything but meager.

The data we have adduced herein are, quite clearly, at odds with words-and-rules approaches to syntax. There are two main reasons for this:

(i) Despite its unusualness, the reduplicative-topic construction is a highly productive syntactic pattern. In fact, it is impossible to pin the grammatical idiosyncrasies of the construction on a single lexical unit, since the three syntactic periods are made up of variables and no lexical constants. Therefore, it is not enough to supplement parametric syntactic principles with idiosyncratic lexical constraints in this case, as the idiosyncrasy belongs to the grammar fragment at hand.

(ii) A full account of this construction requires considering linguistic levels that fall outside of the realm of “syntax proper.” Without a doubt, syntactic and morphological properties play an important role in sanctioning the construction’s characteristic distribution. However, it is an inescapable conclusion that schematic semantic and phonological constraints also intervene in defining the overall shape of the construction.

The idea that idiosyncrasies exist in syntax and that grammar acts as an interface for heterogeneous types of information is something that lies at the heart of the constructional approach: syntax is based on conventional form/function assemblies.

In sum, the reduplicative-topic construction is a grammatical resource that speakers of Spanish have at their disposal in order to hedge on old information. We have argued that any attempt to characterize reduplicative-topic structures on the basis of only syntactic information would by necessity leave a great deal of facts unexplained. In this sense, this paper can be considered as an additional proof that the notion of *construction* is both substantive and necessary in grammatical explanations.

Notes:

¹ The constructionalist tendency can even be detected in some formalist circles such as HPSG (Ginzberg & Sag 2000, Sag 1997).

² The term *hedge* was introduced in Lakoff (1972); two classic studies of these expressions can be found in Kay (1983, 1997).

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Abstract

In the present paper, we adduce further evidence for the reality of grammatical constructions by focusing on a highly idiosyncratic configuration from Spanish, which we call the *reduplicative-topic construction*. This construction is a highly productive syntactic pattern that functions as a “constructional hedge”. The grammatical behaviors of this construction cannot be captured by syntactocentric approaches to grammar. Instead, co-occurring multiple constraints must be taken into account, including phonological (intonation and rhythm), morphosyntactic and semantic factors.

The thrust of our argument is that only a constructional approach can explain the facts needed to characterize this grammatical pattern. We conclude the paper by considering the implications of the constructional approach to syntax for linguistic theory.

Keywords: Construction grammar, topicalization, reduplication, Spanish syntax.

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Javier Valenzuela is a professor at the Department of English Studies at the University of Murcia (Spain), where he teaches Semantics and English-Spanish Contrastive Studies. His research concerns construction-grammar accounts of English and Spanish structures, contrastive studies of English and Spanish from a cognitive linguistic point of view, fictive motion in English and Spanish and psycholinguistic validations of cognitive linguistics notions.

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