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SPATIAL PREPOSITIONS IN SPANISH

by

CAROLINA FRAGA

A master's thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Linguistics in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

2017

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Linguistics in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

Christina Tortora

Date

Thesis Advisor

Gita Martohardjono

Date

Executive Officer

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

ABSTRACT
SPATIAL PRESPOSITIONS IN SPANISH

by

CAROLINA FRAGA

Advisor: Christina Tortora

In this work I investigate the syntax and semantics of two groups of spatial prepositions in Spanish. The first group, which I term “small Ps,” includes forms like *bajo* ‘under’ (e.g. *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’), *tras* ‘behind’ (e.g. *tras la columna* ‘behind the column’) and *ante* ‘front’ (e.g. *ante la catedral* ‘front the cathedral’). The second group, which I term “big Ps,” is made up of the morphologically-related prepositions *debajo* ‘DE.under’ (e.g. *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’), *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ (e.g. *detrás de la columna* ‘DE.behind of the column’) and *delante* ‘DE.L.front’ (e.g. *delante de la catedral* ‘DE.L.front of the cathedral’). In this thesis I describe the different behaviors of the Ps in these two groups, illustrating first and foremost that “small” versus “big” Ps display a series of syntactic and semantic asymmetries, such as the ability (or lack thereof) to take bare nominals; the (un)availability of coordination and adverb intervention; and the (un)bounded interpretation of the nominal (among other differences). I propose that all of these apparently unrelated contrasts can be derived under the hypothesis that “small” versus “big” Ps project different structures. Specifically, I propose that “small” Ps select a single nominal complement, whereas “big” Ps select a more complex “Possessor-Possessum” structure, where the nominal occupies a specifier position, acting as a possessor of a silent PLACE element (in the spirit of Kayne 2004). Finally, I relate the contrast between “small” and “big” Ps to the contrast found with non-clitic doubled structures (e.g. *Vi a María* ‘saw.1SG A María’) versus their clitic-doubled counterparts (e.g. *La vi a*

María ‘CL_{ACC} saw.1SG A María’), showing that more abstractly, the syntactic and semantic parallels found across these seemingly unrelated phenomena further support the promise of the present proposal.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The present work forms part of the larger field of study of the syntax of space. The specific research topic I investigate here is the syntax and semantics of a group of spatial prepositions in Spanish. These prepositions have the property that they “come in pairs,” and both members of the pair are very often reported by native speakers to be equivalent in meaning. (1) below shows an example with the *bajo* ‘under’/ *debajo* ‘DE.under’ pair, (2) with *tras* ‘behind’/ *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ and (3) with *ante* ‘front’/ *delante* ‘DE.L.front.’

- (1) a. El libro está bajo la mesa.
the book is under the table
‘The book is under the table.’
- b. El libro está debajo de la mesa.
the book is DE.under of the table
‘The book is under the table.’

(2) a. Juan estaba escondido tras la columna.

Juan was hidden behind the column

‘Juan was hidden behind the column.’

b. Juan estaba escondido detrás de la columna.

Juan was hidden DE.behind of the column

‘Juan was hidden behind the column.’

(3) a. María se paró ante la catedral.

María SE stood front the cathedral

‘María stood in front of the cathedral.’

b. María se paró delante de la catedral.

María SE stood DE.L.front of the cathedral

‘María stood in front of the cathedral.’

The first thing that stands out is that the Ps in the (a) and (b) examples above have a different morphological “make-up.” In the (a) examples the Ps (*bajo* ‘under,’ *tras* ‘behind’ and *ante* ‘front’) are directly followed by a nominal complement (e.g. *la mesa* ‘the table,’ *la columna* ‘the column,’ *la catedral* ‘the cathedral,’ respectively). In contrast, in the (b) examples, the Ps appear prefixed by the morpheme *de* ‘DE’ (e.g. *debajo* ‘DE.under,’ *detrás* ‘DE.behind,’ *delante* ‘DE.L.front’), and the nominal complement is in turn introduced by *de* ‘of’ (e.g. *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table,’ *detrás de la columna* ‘DE.behind of the column,’ *delante de la catedral* ‘DE.L.front of the cathedral’). Because the Ps in the (a) examples appear to be “simpler” than those in the (b) examples, in this thesis I will be referring to them as “small”

Ps. Along the same lines, because the Ps in the (b) examples appear to be “more complex” than those in (a), I will be referring to them as “big” Ps.

The difference in morphology just addressed cannot be denied. However, if we just take examples like those in (1)-(3), with the provided glosses and translations, it would look like that is all that there is. In other words, it would look like we have two structures, with different morphological shapes, but which have the same meaning. But the presence of the first and second instances of *de* in the case of the “big” Ps calls for closer examination. This is precisely what I do in this work. I take a closer look, and reveal a series of contrasts that require an explanation.

1.2 The scope of this thesis

The contribution made by this thesis is twofold. In the first place, I show that in spite of the apparent synonymy between the (a) and (b) examples in (1)-(3), there are several contexts and syntactic environments in which the differences between “small” and “big” Ps come to light. In the second place, I propose that all the differences we observe can be explained if we postulate that the Ps in (a) and (b) project different structures. What this means is that the contribution made by this thesis is both empirical (new evidence is presented) and theoretical (a novel analysis of the data is proposed).

The thesis is organized as follows. In chapter 2 I present the first syntactic asymmetry between “small” and “big” Ps. I show that a bare nominal is possible as the complement of a “small” P, but is not possible as the complement of a “big” P. Example (4) illustrates this contrast for the *bajo* ‘under’/ *debajo* ‘DE.under’ pair.

(4) a. El pirata escondió el tesoro bajo **tierra**.

the pirate hid the treasure under earth

‘The pirate hid the treasure underground.’

b. *El pirata escondió el tesoro debajo de **tierra**.

the pirate hid the treasure DE.under of earth

‘The pirate hid the treasure underground.’

I propose that the ungrammaticality of (4b), with the bare nominal *tierra* ‘earth,’ is a direct consequence of a general requirement on the distribution of unmodified bare nominals inside the clause in Spanish. This requirement, formulated completely independently of the question of locative prepositions, states that bare nominals are banned from occupying A-specifier positions (as proposed by Cuervo 2003). Specifically, I claim in this chapter that the contrast between (4a) and (4b) can be explained if the nominal *tierra* ‘earth’ is a complement in (4a) but an A-specifier in (4b). With this fundamental complement/specifier difference in place, I go on to flesh out the analysis for “small” and “big” Ps. In particular, I postulate that in the case of “small” Ps (e.g. *bajo* ‘under’) “what we see is what we get”: the P selects a single nominal complement. In contrast, the structure of “big” Ps (e.g. *debajo* ‘DE.under’) is more complex: the complement of a “big” P is a functional projection whose specifier is the nominal (as confirmed by the bare nominal facts) and whose complement is a silent PLACE

element.¹ Inside this projection, the nominal (e.g. *(de) la mesa* ‘(of) the table’ in *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’) is interpreted as being the “possessor” of PLACE.²

Having established the structures for “small” and “big” Ps on the basis of the bare nominal facts, I then move on to chapter 3. In this chapter I present a series of syntactic and semantic asymmetries exhibited by “small” and “big” Ps. As I present the new data, I show how these contrasts lend support to the structures proposed in chapter 2. The syntactic asymmetries I address are coordination and adverb intervention. With respect to coordination, I point out that whereas the nominal complement of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ can be coordinated with another nominal, as shown in (5a), this is not possible for the nominal complement of “small” P like *bajo* ‘under,’ as illustrated in (5b).

- (5) a. Hay migas debajo [de la cama y de la mesa].
 have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under of the bed and of the table
 ‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed and the table.’
- b. *?Hay migas bajo [la cama y la mesa].
 have.PRES breadcrumbs under the bed and the table
 ‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed and the table.’

I explain the impossibility of (5b) by postulating the existence of a null Case-assigner in the complement of “small” Ps. I argue that this null Case-assigner is affixal in nature and needs to incorporate into a suitable host in the syntax (with P_{Loc} being such a host). Its failure to

¹ The postulation of the existence of a nonphonologically realized noun PLACE is in no way novel. It is first suggested by Kayne (2004) and then embraced in the syntax of spatial prepositions by authors such as Noonan (2010) and Terzi (2010), among others.

² Its status as a “possessor” is evinced, for instance, by the genitive morphology that surfaces when the nominal of a “big” P is replaced by a pronoun: *debajo de Juan* ‘DE.under of the table’/ *debajo suyo* ‘DE.under his’.

incorporate in (5b) allows us to account for the ungrammaticality of (5b). Apart from giving us an explanation for the coordination facts, the postulation of this null Case-assigner brings another welcome result. It allows us to explain why the nominal in the structure of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ is always introduced by an overt Case-assigner (*debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’), whereas the nominal in the structure of a “small” P like *bajo* ‘under’ is introduced by a null one (*bajo Ø la mesa* ‘under the table’). In short, the coordination facts serve a double function. On the one hand, they allow us to refine the analysis in chapter 2 (the nominal in the structure of both “small” and “big” Ps is reanalyzed as a “Case-assigner Phrase,” or “KP”). On the other hand, they seem to confirm that the nominal is a complement in the case of “small” Ps but a specifier in the case of “big” Ps.

The second syntactic asymmetry I address in this chapter is adverb intervention. Specifically, I draw attention to the fact that an adverb cannot intervene between a “small” P and its complement, as shown in (6a). However, when an adverb intervenes between a “big” P and its complement it results in mixed judgments, as shown in (6b).

- (6) a. *Hay migas bajo, *probablemente*, la cama.
 have.PRES breadcrumbs under probably the bed.
 ‘There are probably breadcrumbs under the bed.’
- b. %Hay migas debajo, *probablemente*, de la cama.³
 have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under probably of the bed
 ‘There are probably breadcrumbs under the bed.’

³ As is standardly done, I use the symbol “%” to represent speaker variation.

Following work on adjunction by McCloskey (2006), I account for these facts by arguing that the simpler structure projected by “small” P_s allows for a single site of adjunction for the adverbial, crucially, an impossible one. On the other hand, the more complex structure of “big” P_s allows for two potential sites of adjunction for the adverbial: one yielding a grammatical result, the other one an ungrammatical one. This explains the mixed judgments we observe in (6b). In sum, what the adverb intervention data seem to confirm is that the structure of “small” P_s is simpler than the structure of “big” P_s, just as was proposed in chapter 2.

In addition to the syntactic asymmetries, in this chapter I discuss two semantic asymmetries: the locative interpretation of the PP and the (un)boundedness of the nominal. With respect to the first contrast, it is clear that “small” PPs may have a locative interpretation, as shown in (1a), repeated here as (7a), as well as a non-locative one, as shown in (7b).

- (7) a. El libro está bajo la mesa.
the book is under the table
'The book is under the table.'
- b. Estos chicos están bajo mi responsabilidad.
these kids are under my responsibility
'These kids are under my responsibility.'

In contrast, “big” P_s can only have a locative interpretation, as shown in (1b), repeated as (8a). A non-locative interpretation is impossible, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (8b).

- (8) a. El libro está debajo de la mesa.
the book is DE.under of the table
'The book is under the table.'
- b. *Estos chicos están debajo de mi responsabilidad.
these kids are DE.under of my responsibility
'These kids are under my responsibility.'

I claim that the difference between (7b) and (8b) is due to the fact that the structure of “big” Ps contains a silent PLACE element. It is precisely silent PLACE that is responsible for the locative reading of these PPs. As “small” Ps do not contain a silent PLACE element as part of their structure, a locative reading is not forced on them.

The second semantic contrast I address is the bounded versus unbounded interpretation of the nominal. The nominal complement of a “small” P can be interpreted as bounded or unbounded. However, the nominal complement of a “big” P is always necessarily interpreted as bounded. This contrast in boundedness is illustrated in the examples below.

- (9) a. Me acosté a descansar bajo el sol.
CL.1SG lay to rest.INF under the sun
'I lay down to rest in the sun.'
- b. #Me acosté a descansar debajo del sol.
CL.1SG lay to rest.INF DE.under of.the sun
'I lay down to rest right underneath the sun.'

While (9a) is a perfectly felicitous sentence, (9b) feels semantically anomalous. (9a) can very well describe a situation in which the speaker lies down in the sun in the open air. In contrast, the only context in which (9b) would be felicitous would be one in which the speaker lies down under a fake sun, such as one made of cardboard in a play. What seems to be at play here is the following: whereas the nominal complement of a “small” P may be interpreted as bounded or unbounded, and is therefore compatible with an unbounded interpretation such as the one required by (9), the nominal complement of a “big” P is always interpreted as bounded, and can never receive an unbounded interpretation. As under the most natural context in (9) the sun is interpreted as unbounded, a semantic “clash” results. I suggest that this difference in boundedness also follows from the structures proposed in chapter 2. Specifically, I propose that the anomaly of (9b) is a direct consequence of the fact that the nominal complement of a “big” P is a possessor, whereas the nominal complement of a “small” P is not. I show that other possessive structures (such as datives and sentences with the verb *tener* ‘have’) also seem to exhibit a ban on unbounded possessors.

In chapter 4 I take the analysis developed thus far a step further and suggest that “big” PPs are actually the clitic-doubled variant of their “small” PP counterparts. Uriagereka (2000) insightfully observes that accusative clitic-doubled structures differ from their non-doubled counterparts in two important respects: doubled structures always have referential readings and are necessarily interpreted as delimited, whereas non-doubled structures can be interpreted as non-referential and as non-delimited. Interestingly, these two effects, namely referentiality and delimitedness/boundedness, were exactly the two semantic differences that we pointed out brought about a contrast in interpretation between “small” and “big” Ps. What I propose, in concrete, is that a “big” PP like *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’ is the clitic-doubled variant of a “small” PP like *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’ in the same way that *La vi a María*

‘CL_{ACC} saw A María’ is the clitic-doubled variant of *Vi a María* ‘saw A María.’ I also point out how such an analysis would allow us to explain many facts we observe, such as the co-occurrence of the first and second instance of *de* in *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’ (which I take to be a consequence of Kayne’s Generalization), and the animacy restrictions on the complement of “small” Ps, among others.

Finally, in chapter 5 I present the conclusions and some suggestions for future work.

1.3A note on the data and the data-collection process

The variety that I analyze in this work is Rioplatense Spanish.⁴ This variety is spoken mainly in the areas in and around the Río de la Plata Basin of Argentina and Uruguay, and it is the dialect I myself speak. As to the specific topic that concerns us here, “small” and “big” Ps, there seems to be a contrast between older and younger speakers of this variety. While older speakers generally use both “small” and “big” Ps in their speech, younger speakers tend to show a preference for “big” Ps in most contexts.⁵ However, although this preference is undeniable among this latter group of speakers, most of them still have very clear judgments with regards to all the syntactic and semantic contrasts exhibited by “small” and “big” Ps which are the focus of this thesis.

The data presented and analyzed in this work were collected on a field-trip to Buenos Aires at the end of 2015. The ten informants who participated in this study were given a written questionnaire with sentences containing “small” and “big” Ps. They were asked to

⁴ It is important to point out that although the data I analyze comes from Rioplatense Spanish, the existence of “small” and “big” Ps, and the contrasts they exhibit, is in no way exclusive to this variety. These “pairs” of Ps, and their corresponding asymmetries, exist in most European and American varieties of Spanish.

⁵ In my variety, the *a*-prefixed Ps *abajo* ‘A.under,’ *atrás* ‘A.behind’ and *adelante* ‘A.DE.L.front’ also tend to exist alongside the “big” Ps *debajo* ‘DE.under,’ *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ and *delante* ‘DE.L.front.’ Unlike other varieties, in Rioplatense Spanish these Ps can take nominal complements, so that a PP like *abajo de la mesa* ‘A.under of the table’ is perfectly grammatical for most speakers.

mark these sentences as: (1) acceptable (Ok), (2) unacceptable (X), or (3) somewhere in between (?) (this last option was naturally meant to cover those cases in which the speakers were not sure as to whether the sentence was acceptable or unacceptable).

1.4A brief comment on the glossing

Glossing is a complicated matter and, in particular, the glossing of many of the examples in this work has not been an easy task. The reason for this is that most of the Spanish morphemes that make up the Ps that are the object of this thesis do not have an obvious equivalent in the glossing language, English. This poses a challenge that affects both roots and affixes (to be concrete, in a P like *debajo* I take *bajo* to be a root and *de* to be an affix). In an effort to keep the glosses clear without sacrificing accuracy, I have decided to take a slightly different approach to one and the other. In the case of roots, I have always provided a gloss. In those instances when there was more than one option available, I simply picked the one that I personally considered to be the best gloss and kept it throughout the subsequent chapters. The glossing of the “small” P *bajo* as in *El libro está bajo la mesa* ‘the book is *bajo* the table’ is a case in point. When faced with the glossing of this morpheme, two alternatives appeared to me to be readily available: ‘under’ and ‘low.’ The first option had the advantage of stressing the translation of the word into English (the most natural translation of this sentence is ‘the book is *under* the table’). On the other hand, the second option seemed to me to put an emphasis on the morphological form of the word: *bajo* is an adjectival root, and *low* is an adjective (under this latter gloss, the *bajo/debajo* pair would most probably be glossed as the ‘low’/‘be.low’ pair). When faced with this kind of situation, I made a personal choice and opted for the first alternative: I favored translation over mere form (that is to say, I decided to gloss *bajo* as ‘under’). It may very well turn out to be the case that the alternative chosen was not the best

one, but this is hard to tell at this moment. This matter will only be settled, if ever, once we gain a better understanding of “small” and “big” Ps and their morphological “make-up.”

However, in the case of affixes I have been more cautious. In those instances when I was not able to find a suitable gloss for a given affix, or when I was not able to commit myself to one at a certain point in the discussion, I simply left the morpheme “unglossed” in SMALL CAPS.

Just to give an example, I glossed the pair *bajo/debajo* as ‘under’/ ‘DE.under.’ The reason why I left the morpheme *de* in *debajo* in small caps is that in Spanish this morpheme displays a high degree of polysemy: it can signal possession as in *el libro de Juan*, literally ‘the book of Juan’ (‘Juan’s book’); it can identify the source as in *María llegó de Paris*, literally ‘María arrived of Paris’ (‘María arrived from Paris’); it can be a Case-marker as in *la destrucción de la ciudad*, literally ‘the destruction of the city’ (‘the destruction of the city’), among many other things. What this means is that “Case-marker”, “source”, or maybe even “possessive morpheme” might have been possible glosses for *de* in *debajo*. However, choosing one of these options at the point when the examples were introduced would have implied taking an unjustified leap. Towards the end of the thesis, in chapter 4, I propose an analysis of this *de* and commit myself to a gloss. However, making a choice *before* this point in the discussion would have been premature, and not altogether fair on the reader. In contrast, leaving the morpheme in small caps (that is to say, “unglossed”) has the advantage of not biasing the analysis, thus allowing the reader to entertain alternative analyses.

Chapter 2

“Small” and “big” Ps

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I analyze the behavior of “small” and “big” Ps with respect to bare nominals. I use the label “small” P to refer to morphologically simple Ps like *bajo* ‘under’ and the label “big” P to refer to morphologically complex Ps like *debajo* ‘DE.under.’ In particular, I argue that the fact that “small” Ps allow bare nominals as their complement (e.g. *bajo tierra* ‘under earth’) whereas “big” Ps do not (e.g. **debajo de tierra* ‘DE.under of earth’) constitutes crucial evidence in favor of postulating that these Ps project different structures. The outline of the chapter is as follows. In section 2 I review some general observations about the distribution of bare nominals in Spanish inside the clause. I show how these facts are best captured if we assume, following Cuervo (2003), that “an unmodified common noun cannot be an A-specifier.” The relevance of this observation is that the distribution of bare nominals can now serve as a “diagnostic” to test further structures: if a bare nominal is not allowed in a certain structure, it is because it is occupying an A-specifier position and, conversely, if a bare nominal is allowed in a certain structure, then it follows that it is not occupying an A-specifier position. In section 3, I show how “small” and “big” Ps pattern differently with respect to the possibility of allowing a bare nominal as their complement. This will be taken as evidence that the nominal is a complement in the case of “small” Ps (*bajo tierra* ‘under earth’) but an A-specifier in the case of “big” Ps (**debajo de tierra* ‘DE.under of earth’). In section 4, I sketch a formal analysis of “small” and “big” Ps and argue for the need to postulate, following Terzi (2010 and earlier work) and others, the existence of an unpronounced noun PLACE in

the structure of “big” Ps. Finally, in section 2.5 I summarize the findings made in this chapter and conclude.

2.2 Unmodified bare nominals in Spanish

It has been widely observed in the literature (Suñer 1982, Contreras 1985, Bosque 1990, among others) that unmodified bare nominals in Spanish have a restricted distribution. Some examples of these restrictions are given in (10), (11) and (12) below [examples (10) and (11) are taken from Cuervo 2003, and example (12) from Bosque 1990].

- (10) a. Tus amigos trajeron vino/ copas.
your friends brought wine.ACC/ wine-glasses.ACC
‘Your friends brought wine/wine glasses.’
- b. *Vino es bueno para la salud.
wine.NOM is good for the health
‘Wine is good for the health.’
- c. El vino es bueno para la salud.
the wine.NOM is good for the health
‘Wine is good for the health.’

(11) a. Cayeron amigos.

fell friends.NOM

‘(Some) friends dropped by.’

b. *Amigos cayeron.

friends.NOM fell

‘(Some) friends dropped by.’

c. Algunos amigos cayeron.

some friends.NOM fell

‘(Some) friends dropped by.’

(12) a. Fue encontrado petróleo.

was found oil.NOM

‘Oil was found.’

b. *?Petróleo fue encontrado.

oil.NOM was found

‘Oil was found.’

c. Mucho petróleo fue encontrado.

much oil.NOM was found

‘A lot of oil was found.’

The contrast between (10a) and (10b) shows that the restriction on bare nominals applies to subjects (10b) and not to objects (10a). Sentence (10c) shows that when the subject is not a bare nominal the sentence is grammatical. The examples with unaccusatives and passives, in (11) and (12) respectively, show, furthermore, that the restriction applies to a “subset” of subjects, namely, preverbal ones. As we can see from the facts in (11) and (12), the sentences are grammatical if the bare nominal subjects *amigos* ‘friends’ and *petróleo* ‘oil’ appear postverbally ((11a) and (12a)), but they are ungrammatical if they appear preverbally ((11b) and (12b)).

The observation that bare nominals cannot appear as preverbal subjects has been captured by Suñer (1982) as The Naked Noun Phrase Constraint, whose formulation is given in (13) below.

(13) The Naked Noun Phrase Constraint

“An unmodified common noun in preverbal position cannot be the surface subject of a sentence under conditions of normal stress and intonation.” (Suñer 1982)

However, as Cuervo (2003) points out, the constraint in (13) needs to be refined. Although it accurately describes the asymmetries in (10) to (12), it fails to capture two important sets of facts: the impossibility of bare nominals as the subjects of unergative verbs and the impossibility of bare nominals as the subjects of small clauses. I will analyze each of these cases in turn, and show how Cuervo’s reformulation of (13) succeeds in accounting for these facts as well as those described above.

In (14) below we see an example where the bare nominal *chicos* ‘kids’ appears as the subject of the unergative verb *festearon* ‘celebrated’ [example taken from Cuervo 2003].

- (14) a. *Chicos festejaron.
kids.NOM celebrated
'Kids celebrated.'
- b. *Festejaron chicos.
celebrated kids.NOM
'Kids celebrated.'
- c. Los chicos festejaron.
the kids.NOM celebrated
'The kids celebrated.'
- d. Festejaron los chicos.
celebrated the kids.NOM
'The kids celebrated.'

In (14a) *chicos* 'kids' is a preverbal subject and the sentence is predicted to be ruled out by (13), which bans, precisely, bare nominals in preverbal subject position. In (14b), on the other hand, the subject *chicos* 'kids' appears *postverbally* and, according to (13), it would be expected to be grammatical (the formulation states that bare nominals are banned when they appear as *preverbal* subjects, and this is not the case in (14b), where *chicos* 'kids' appears postverbally). In other words, the formulation in (13) accounts for the facts in (10)-(12) but makes the wrong predictions for (14). Examples (14c) and (14d) serve to confirm that it is the bare nominal nature of the subject that leads to ungrammaticality: if the subject is not bare, as is the case with *los chicos* 'the kids', it can appear either preverbally (14c) or postverbally (14d).

Apart from this, there is a set of facts that is simply not covered by (13). This is the case of bare nominals as the subject of small clauses, an example of which is given in (15) [example from Cuervo 2003].

- (15) *Tu amiga consideraba interesantes películas. [cf. las películas]
your friend considered interesting movies.ACC
'Your friend used to consider movies to be interesting.'

In (15) we can see that a bare nominal like *películas* ‘movies’ cannot be the subject of a small clause (in this particular case, it cannot be the subject of *interesantes* ‘interesting’). In order for the ungrammaticality of this sentence to receive the same explanation as the ungrammaticality of the examples mentioned before, the formulation in (13) needs to be revised to include not only the subjects of verbs, but other subjects as well.

Cuervo (2003) concludes from the facts in (14) and (15) that the crucial notion needed to describe the behavior of bare nominals is that of “subject of predication,” and proposes to reformulate Suñer’s Naked Noun Phrase Constraint as follows:

- (16) The Naked Noun Phrase Constraint Revised

“An unmodified common noun cannot be *the subject of a predicate* under conditions of normal stress and intonation.” (Cuervo 2003)

Under (16), the contrast between (10a) and (10b) receives the same explanation as before (*vino* ‘wine’ is a subject in (10b) and is banned by (16), whereas it is an object in (10a) and therefore not subject to this constraint). However, the contrast in the behavior of bare nominals with respect to unaccusative and unergative verbs can now be made to follow from (16). Cuervo’s explanation of the facts is as follows. When the subject of an unaccusative verb

remains postverbally, the sentence is interpreted as a “presentational sentence” and there is no predication between the NP and the verb. In other words, *amigos* ‘friends’ in (11a) *Cayeron amigos* ‘(Some) friends dropped by’ is not a subject in the predicational sense. The sentence is thus predicted to be good, as it does not fall within the scope of (16). If, on the other hand, the nominal moves to subject position, it becomes the subject of predication, and the resulting sentence is predicted to be ungrammatical. In contrast, the subject of an unergative verb like *festejaron* ‘celebrated’ is always licensed as an external argument (that is to say, a “subject,” a “subject of a predicate”) and so a bare nominal is banned, independently of whether it appears preverbal or postverbally.

Apart from accounting for the ungrammaticality of (14b), as was mentioned before, by resorting to the notion “subject of a predicate” instead of “subject of a verb,” it is possible now to make the ungrammaticality of (15) follow from the same restrictions as the other examples. In other words, (15) is ungrammatical because the bare nominal *películas* ‘movies’ is “the subject of the predicate,” in this case a non-verbal predicate, the adjective *interesantes* ‘interesting.’

Finally, it is important to point out that, as Cuervo herself suggests, the constraint in (16) could be further generalized to “specifier position,” with a formulation as that given in (17).

(17) The Naked Noun Phrase Constraint Revised *Revised*

“An unmodified common noun cannot be an A-specifier.”⁶ (Cuervo 2003)

⁶ As in the section to follow I will be testing bare nominals in Possessor-Possessum structures, which are clearly not verbal, and not obviously predicational, I will be using Cuervo’s formulation in (17), rather than (16).

In the next section I discuss the asymmetric behavior of two groups of locative Ps (which I call “small” and “big” Ps) in their possibility to allow bare nominals. Following (17), I argue that this asymmetry can be explained if the nominal that follows a “small” Ps is its complement, whereas the apparent complement of a “big” P is really in an A-specifier position.

2.3 “Small” and “big” Ps and bare nominals

2.3.1 The data

As mentioned in chapter 1, it is a well-known fact that most varieties of Spanish display pairs of locative prepositions like the ones shown in the (a) and (b) examples below:

- (18) a. El libro está bajo la mesa.
the book is under the table
‘The book is under the table.’

b. El libro está debajo de la mesa.

the book is DE.under of the table⁷

‘The book is under the table.’

(19) a. Juan estaba escondido tras la columna.

Juan was hidden behind the column

‘Juan was hidden behind the column.’

b. Juan estaba escondido detrás de la columna.

Juan was hidden DE.behind⁸ of the column

‘Juan was hidden behind the column.’

⁷ For reasons discussed in chapter 1, section 1.4, I have decided to leave the first instance of *de* in *debajo de la mesa* in (18b) in SMALL CAPS (that is to say, “unglossed”). In contrast, I have decided to gloss the second instance of *de* as ‘of’. The reason for this is that while the status of the first *de* is not straightforward, there is little doubt about the status of the second *de* (and the fact that it corresponds roughly to English *of*). It has been argued in the literature (as, in for instance, Chomsky 1988 and others) that the second *de* in *debajo* PPs is a genitive Case-marker. This can be confirmed by the facts in (i).

(i) a. Escondí la carta debajo de Juan.

hid.1SG.PAST the letter DE.under of Juan

‘I hid the letter under John.’

b. Escondí la carta debajo suyo.

hid.1SG.PAST the letter DE.under his

‘I hid the letter under him.’

When the complement of a P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ is [+HUMAN], as is the case in (ia), it can be replaced by a genitive pronoun, as in (ib). This is enough evidence for me to safely assume that this second instance of *de* can be glossed as *of*.

⁸ The glossing of the P *detrás* raises similar issues as the glossing of the P *debajo* discussed in chapter 1, section 1.4. I have decided to gloss this P as ‘DE.behind,’ although this may not be the best option. It may very well be the case that the morpheme *de* in *detrás* corresponds to the morpheme *be* in *behind*, in which case a more accurate gloss for *detrás* would be *be.hind*, and not ‘DE.behind’. However, as at the time being I have no evidence that this correspondence in fact exists, I simply gloss *detrás* as ‘DE.behind’ here and in the examples to follow.

(20) a. María se paró ante la catedral.

María SE stood front the cathedral

‘María stood in front of the cathedral.’

b. María se paró delante de la catedral.

María SE stood DE.L.front⁹ of the cathedral

‘María stood in front of the cathedral.’

As mentioned in chapter 1, the (a) and (b) members of each of the pairs in (18) to (20) above are typically reported by native speakers to be identical in meaning. At first sight, then, the only difference between the Ps in the (a) and (b) examples seems to lie in their morphological “make-up”: whereas in the (a) examples the P is directly followed by its nominal complement (e.g. *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’ in (18a)), in the (b) examples the P is prefixed by *de-* (e.g. *debajo* ‘DE.under’) and the nominal complement is in turn introduced by *de* (e.g. *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’ in (18b)). As mentioned earlier, because the Ps in the (a) examples above have a “simple” morphological “make-up,” in other words, they are all monomorphemic, in the course of this thesis I will be referring to them as “small” Ps. As, on the other hand, the Ps in the (b) examples have a “more complex” or “richer” morphological make-up, I will be referring to them as “big” Ps.

It is fundamental to note that an unmodified bare nominal can appear as the complement of a “small” P like *bajo* ‘under’, as shown in (21).

⁹ Another apparent complication arises with the glossing of the morpheme (*el*) in *delante*. It may be the case that it corresponds to the definite article *el* ‘the.’ However, as this morpheme does not appear in other “big” Ps like, for instance, *debajo* (**delbajo*), another possibility is that it should be inserted for purely phonological reasons. Therefore, I have simply left this morpheme “unglossed” as “L.”

- (21) El pirata escondió el tesoro bajo tierra.
the pirate hid the treasure under earth
'The pirate hid the treasure underground.'

However, this is not the case for all Ps. A bare nominal cannot be the complement of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’(22).

- (22) *El pirata escondió el tesoro debajo de tierra.¹⁰
the pirate hid the treasure DE.under of earth
'The pirate hid the treasure underground.'

It appears to be the case, furthermore, that the difference in the availability vs. unavailability of bare nominals is not unique to the *bajo* ‘under’/ *debajo* ‘DE.under’ pair, but is, rather, a contrast exhibited by “small” and “big” Ps in general, as shown below. In (23) we can see one more example with *bajo* ‘under’ and *debajo* ‘DE.under.’ In (24) there are examples with *tras* ‘behind’/ *detrás* ‘DE.behind’, and in (25) and (26) examples with *sobre* ‘on’ and *encima* ‘on.top.’¹¹

¹⁰ As is expected from the behavior of bare nominals in general, examples like (22) tend to become considerably better if the bare nominal is modified or coordinated, as shown in (i) and (ii) respectively.

- (i) El pirata escondió el tesoro debajo de tierra muy húmeda.
the pirate hid the treasure DE.under of earth very moist
'The pirate hid the treasure under very moist earth.'
- (ii) El pirata escondió el tesoro debajo de tierra y arena.
the pirate hid the treasure DE.under of earth and sand
'The pirate hid the treasure under earth and sand.'

¹¹ Although the Ps in the *sobre* ‘on’/ *encima* ‘on.top’ “pair” are not morphologically related, I have decided to include them here too because they seem to exhibit the same contrast with respect to bare nominals as the other “small” and “big” Ps discussed in this work.

(23) a. La ciudad estaba enterrada bajo nieve.

the city was buried under snow

‘The city was buried in snow.’

b. *La ciudad estaba enterrada debajo de nieve.

the city was buried DE.under of snow

‘The city was buried in snow.’

c. La ciudad estaba enterrada debajo de la nieve.

the city was buried DE.under of the snow

‘The city was buried in the snow.’

(24) a. Había personas escondidas tras muros.

have.PAST people hidden behind walls

‘There were people hidden behind walls.’

b. ?Había personas escondidas detrás de muros.

have.PAST people hidden DE.behind of walls

‘There were people hidden behind walls.’

c. Había personas escondidas detrás de los muros.

have.PAST people hidden DE.behind of the walls

‘There were people hidden behind the walls.’

- (25) a. Me gusta pintar sobre madera.
CL_{DAT}.1SG. like paint.INF on wood
'I like to paint on wood.'
- b. *Me gusta pintar encima de madera.
CL_{DAT}.1SG like paint.INF on.top of wood
'I like to paint on wood.'
- c. Me gusta pintar encima de la madera.
CL_{DAT}.1SG like paint.INF on.top of the wood
'I like to paint on wood.'
- (26) a. Manuel puede caminar descalzo sobre clavos.
Manuel can walk.INF barefoot on nails
'Manuel can walk barefoot on nails.'
- b. *Manuel puede caminar descalzo encima de clavos.
Manuel can walk.INF barefoot on.top of nails
'Manuel can walk barefoot over nails.'
- c. Manuel puede caminar descalzo encima de los clavos.
Manuel can walk.INF barefoot on.top of the nails
'Manuel can walk barefoot over nails.'

What the data in (21)-(26) show is that whereas a bare nominal is possible as the complement of a “small P” like *bajo* ‘under,’ *tras* ‘behind’ and *sobre* ‘on,’ it is not possible as the complement of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under,’ *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ and *encima* ‘on.top.’ In

(23a) *bajo* ‘under’ is followed by the bare mass noun *nieve* ‘snow’ and the sentence is grammatical. On the other hand, in (23b) *debajo* ‘DE.under’ is followed by the same nominal (introduced by *de*) and the sentence is ungrammatical. In a similar fashion, *tras* ‘behind’ can be followed by the bare plural *muros* ‘walls,’ but a sentence where *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ is followed by *muros* ‘walls’ (again, introduced by *de*) is not possible. Finally, the P *sobre* ‘on’ can be followed by a bare mass noun like *madera* ‘wood’ or the bare plural *clavos* ‘nails.’ However, neither of these options is available for *encima* ‘on.top.’^{12,13}

¹² It seems to be the case that while both bare mass and bare plural nominals can be the complement of a P like *sobre* ‘on,’ bare plural nominals do not seem to be possible as the complement of a P like *bajo* ‘under’:

- (i) *Me gusta descansar bajo árboles. (cf. bajo los árboles)
CL_{DAT}.1SG like rest.INF under trees (cf. under the trees)
 ‘I like to rest under trees.’
- (ii) *Escondía sus monedas bajo alfombras. (cf. bajo las alfombras).
hid.1SG his coins under carpets (cf. under the carpets)
 ‘He/she hid his/her coins under carpets.’

Also, bare mass nouns do not seem to be possible as the complement of a P like *tras* ‘behind’:

- (iii) *Todas las obras de arte estaban tras vidrio.
all the works of art were behind glass
 ‘All the works of art were kept behind glass.’

I have no explanation for these facts. However, independently of how these examples are excluded, the fact that both types of nouns are possible as the complement of *sobre* ‘on’ (but not of *encima* ‘on.top’), and that bare mass and bare plural nominals are possible as the complement of *bajo* ‘under’ and *tras* ‘behind,’ respectively (but are not possible as the complement of *debajo* ‘DE.under’ and *detrás* ‘DE.behind’), seems to me to be enough evidence to safely assume that there is an important contrast between the availability vs. unavailability of bare nominals with “small” and “big” Ps, and that this is a reflex of the different structures they project.

¹³ An objection that might perhaps be raised to the data in (21)-(26) is that the “small” P + bare nominal strings presented here constitute “lexicalized phrases” of some kind. There is strong evidence, however, that this is not the case. I reserve discussion of these “small” P + bare nominal strings and their status as *non*-lexicalized phrases for the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

2.3.2 The nominal in the structure of a “big” PP¹⁴ is a specifier

In section 2 I discussed the distribution of bare nominals in Spanish inside the clause. In particular, I described how bare nominals were licit in some positions, and banned from others. I argued that Cuervo’s (2003) reformulation of Suñer’s (1982) Naked Noun Phrase Constraint fared better than Suñer’s (1982) original proposal in describing the facts, in that it was both more accurate (in, for instance, its description of the behavior of the subject of unergative verbs) and had wider empirical coverage (it could be extended to the subject of small clauses). Cuervo’s (2003) final reformulation of Suñer’s (1982) Naked Noun Phrase Constraint, which is the one I will be adopting in this work, was introduced in (17), and is repeated here as (27).

(27) The Naked Noun Phrase Constraint Revised *Revised*

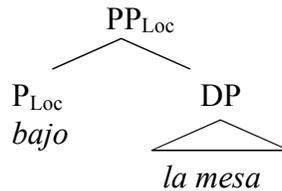
“An unmodified common noun cannot be an A-specifier.” (Cuervo 2003)

What I will suggest now is that (27) can provide us with a straightforward explanation for the facts in (21)-(26). Specifically, I propose that bare nominals are banned in the Spanish PPs in the (b) examples in (21)-(26) for exactly the same reason that they are banned inside the clause: unmodified bare nominals cannot be A-specifiers. This amounts to saying that the nominal that follows a “small” P like *bajo* ‘under,’ *tras* ‘behind,’ *sobre* ‘on’ is its complement, whereas the apparent complement of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under,’ *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ and *encima* ‘on.top’ is in specifier position. What I propose, then, is that while “small” Ps have the

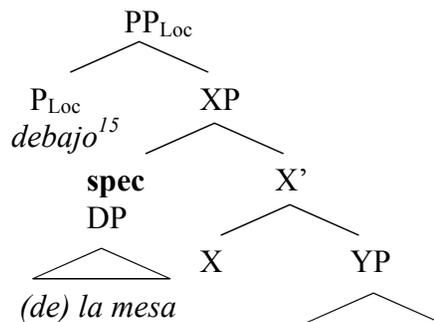
¹⁴ The reader may have noticed that I use both the terms “small” and “big” Ps and “small” and “big” PPs. However, I do not use them interchangeably. I reserve the terms “small” and “big” Ps to refer to the specific lexical items (e.g. *bajo* ‘under’/ *debajo* ‘DE.under’), and the terms “small” and “big” PPs to refer to the projections they head (e.g. *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’/ *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’).

structure in (28), “big” Ps have the structure in (29). I have used the “small” PP *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’ and the “big” PP *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’ as an example.

(28) Structure for *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’:



(29) Structure for *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’:



In the following section I motivate the structures in (28) and (29). Building on work by Terzi (2005, 2006, 2008, 2010) and others, I argue that (29) contains an unpronounced noun PLACE and that what is standardly taken to be the complement of the locative P, *(de) la mesa* ‘(of) the table’ in (29), is the “Possessor” of silent PLACE. In contrast, I argue that the P in (28) does not select a Possessor-Possessum structure with silent PLACE, but rather a simple DP. This is going to set the stage for Chapter 3, where we see that the numerous predictions made by these structures are borne out.

¹⁵ To keep matters simple at this point, in (29) the P *debajo* ‘DE.under’ is shown as an unanalyzed block. However, as mentioned before in this chapter, and as shown by the corresponding gloss, I consider this element to be bi-morphemic. The analysis of the morphological “make-up” of “big” Ps like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ is reserved for chapter 4.

2.4 “Big” Ps and silent PLACE

Authors like Terzi (2010, and earlier work) and Noonan (2010), among others, have argued that locative Ps contain as part of their structure an unpronounced noun PLACE¹⁶ (henceforth, “silent PLACE”). They have argued, furthermore, that what is standardly taken to be the complement of the locative P (e.g. *la mesa* ‘the table’ in *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’) is the possessor of silent PLACE. In this section, I very briefly go over the arguments put forward by Terzi (2010) to support her analysis.¹⁷ I conclude that while it is true that locative Ps can select a Possessor-Possessum structure headed by silent PLACE, this is not the case for all Ps. While “big” Ps like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ do select this structure, “small” Ps like *bajo* ‘under’ select a single DP complement. I argue that by proposing these different structures for “big” and “small” Ps, we can arrive at a straightforward explanation for a series of syntactic, semantic and morphological asymmetries exhibited by these groups of Ps. These asymmetries are the object of discussion of chapter 3.

One of the main pieces of evidence that leads Terzi (2010) to propose that there is a silent noun PLACE in the structure of locative Ps comes from genitive clitics in Modern Greek. In Modern Greek, when a clitic appears as the complement of a locative P it must necessarily appear in the genitive case, as shown in (30) and (31) below [examples taken from Terzi 2010].

- (30) Stathika piso tis.
 stood-1S behind she-CL-GEN
 ‘I stood behind her.’

¹⁶ As mentioned in chapter 1, the existence of a silent noun PLACE is first discussed in Kayne (2004).

¹⁷ As Noonan’s analysis builds on Terzi’s (2010) and differs from the latter in aspects that are not relevant to the discussion at hand, I will be referring to it only occasionally.

- (31) Kathomun epano tu.
was sitting-1S on he-CL-GEN
'I was sitting on him.'

As genitive case appears exclusively on the complement of nominals in Modern Greek, this seems to constitute strong evidence that a nominal element of some kind is involved in these structures.

Once having established the existence of a nominal in the structure of locative Ps, Terzi points out that there is a strong parallelism between adjectives and locative Ps.¹⁸ This leads her to propose that locative Ps are not themselves nouns, as has been argued for in the literature (Bresnan 1994, Marácz 1984, Collins 2004, Aboh 2010), but that they are rather modifiers, modifiers of a noun, specifically, they are modifiers of silent PLACE.

Terzi then extends her analysis of Greek locative Ps to Spanish locative Ps, and suggests that locative Ps in Spanish can also be convincingly argued to contain an unpronounced PLACE noun. The presence of this unpronounced noun is responsible for the “nominal flavor” of these Ps, a fact that has very often been reported in the literature, but that has never received a satisfactory explanation. Specifically, Terzi points out that the presence of silent PLACE might explain, among other things, why a locative PP headed by *debajo* ‘DE.under’ in Spanish can follow a P like *desde* ‘from’ as shown in (32) below, a distribution that is typical of nouns. It might also provide a straightforward explanation for why a locative P like *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ can be followed by a possessive, as shown in (33) [examples taken from Terzi 2010].

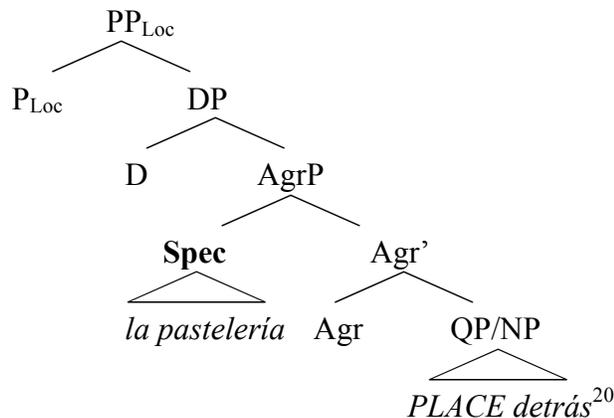
¹⁸ The main argument in favor of this parallelism comes from the similarities in the distribution of Greek clitics and full DPs with respect to adjectives and locative Ps, both synchronically and diachronically. As these facts are not directly relevant to the point under discussion, I will not go into the details of Terzi’s argumentation here.

(32) El gato me espiaba desde debajo de la mesa.
 the cat CL_{ACC}.1SG spy.PAST from DE.under of the table
 ‘The cat was spying on me from under the table.’

(33) Venía un hombre detrás mío.
 was coming a man DE.behind mine
 ‘A man was coming behind me.’

The analysis that Terzi arrives at is the one shown in simplified form in (34) below:

(34) Structure for *detrás de la pastelería*¹⁹ ‘behind the pastry shop’ (Terzi 2010)



My analysis of “big” and “small” Ps in Spanish will considerably build on Terzi’s analysis of Greek and Spanish locative Ps. My proposal will, however, differ from hers in certain important respects. I will assume with Terzi that it is necessary to postulate a silent noun

¹⁹ Under Terzi’s analysis the [QP/NP *PLACE detrás*] then moves to the specifier of DP triggering the appearance of *de* in D, thus yielding *detrás de la pastelería* ‘DE.behind of the pastry shop’ *behind the pastry shop*.

²⁰ Terzi takes a P like *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ to be an unanalyzed form. Here I will propose that *de* ‘DE’ and *trás* ‘behind’ are two independent morphemes originally occupying different positions in the structure. My analysis will have the advantage of, among other things, deriving the fact that morphologically complex Ps (“big” Ps) necessarily have their complement introduced by *de*: *debajo de x*, *detrás de x*, *delante de x*, whereas those Ps that are morphologically simple, “small” Ps, do not: *bajo x*, *tras x*, *ante x*. Under an analysis where both “small” and “big” Ps are unanalyzed blocks, this correlation is lost, and can only be stipulated.

PLACE in locative Ps. However, although Terzi suggests that silent PLACE is present in the complement of all locative Ps, I will propose that it is present in the complement of “big” Ps (e.g. *debajo* ‘DE.under’) but it is absent from the complement of “small” Ps (e.g. *bajo* ‘under’). For “big” Ps I will then propose an analysis à la Terzi, where what is traditionally taken to be the complement of the locative (e.g. *la mesa* ‘the table’ in *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’) is actually the “possessor” of silent PLACE. In contrast, for “small” Ps I will propose an analysis where “what we see is what we get”: the complement of the locative is just a DP.²¹ Interestingly, if we go back to the arguments put forth by Terzi to argue in favor of the presence of a silent noun PLACE in locatives in Spanish, we can see that the arguments presented to account for the ‘nominal flavor’ of locatives hold good of “big” Ps, as seen in (32) and (33) above, but not of “small” Ps, as shown below. (35) is considered marginal by most speakers, and (36) is rejected as ungrammatical.

- (35) ?El gato me espiaba desde bajo la mesa.²²
 the cat CL_{ACC}.1SG spy.PAST from under the table
 ‘The cat was spying on me from under the table.’

²¹ It is important to mention that the idea that some locative Ps select a complement with silent PLACE whereas others do not is entertained but later on dismissed by Terzi (pointed out in Terzi 2010).

²²The judgments of the grammatical (32) vs. the marginal (35) mirror those attributed by Pavón Lucero (1999) to the *encima* ‘on.top’/ *sobre* ‘on’ pair below:

- (i) Se lanzó desde encima del tejado.
 SE threw.3SG from on.top of.the tiled roof.
 ‘It threw itself from the tiled roof.’
 (ii) ??Se lanzó desde sobre el tejado.
 SE threw.3SG from on the tiled roof.
 ‘It threw itself from the tiled roof.’

- (36) *Venía un hombre tras mío.
 was coming a man behind mine
 ‘A man was coming behind me.’

I will therefore suggest that there is a silent noun PLACE in the complement of “big” Ps but not in the complement of “small” Ps.

Another important point in which my analysis will differ from Terzi’s is that I will not assume that the locative is a modifier of silent PLACE. I will propose rather that it is a P head, the head of PP_{Loc} in (34), selecting either a Possessor-Possessor structure (in the case of “big” Ps) or a single DP (in the case of “small” Ps). The reason for this is that although a locative-as-modifier analysis may be justified for Modern Greek, there is in principle no evidence that points in this direction for Spanish. As adjectives are the only words that can modify a noun directly in Spanish, I assume that under a locative-as-modifier analysis this is what locative Ps would need to be taken to be. However, “small” and “big” Ps in Spanish do not exhibit adjectival properties. For one thing, they do not allow comparatives and degree words, as shown in the (b) examples below.^{23,24}

²³ Apart from “small” and “big” Ps there seems to be a third group of elements morphologically related to the first two, which consists of the root prefixed by A. Some examples are: *abajo* ‘A.under,’ *atrás* ‘A.behind,’ *adelante* ‘A.DE.L.front,’ etc. As observed by Pavón Lucero (1999), in most varieties of Spanish, with the exception of some Latin American varieties, these locative Ps always appear without a complement, and they do, unlike “small” and “big” Ps, admit comparatives and degree words:

- (i) Colgaste el cuadro muy abajo.
 hang.2SG.PAST the painting very A.under
 ‘You hung the painting very low.’
- (ii) Paráte más atrás.
 stand.2SG.IMP more A.behind
 ‘Stand further back.’

²⁴ Noonan (2010), following Terzi (2010), also proposes an analysis for English and German where locative Ps are the modifiers of silent PLACE. She notes, however, that unlike their Greek counterparts, English locative Ps are not typically attested as nominal modifiers. Nevertheless, they can function as modifiers if they take a suffix, as shown below [examples from Noonan 2010].

(37) a. Pusimos los estantes sobre la mesada.

put.1PL.PAST the shelves above the counter

‘We put the shelves above the counter.’

b. *Si ponemos los estantes muy sobre la mesada no vamos a

if put.1PL.PRES the shelves very over the counter not going to

poder alcanzar los frascos.

be.able.to reach.INF the jars

‘If we put the shelves too high up above the counter we will not be able to

reach the jars.’

(38) a. María colgó un cuadro sobre la cómoda.

María hang.PAST a painting above the chest of drawers

‘María hung one painting above the chest of drawers.’

b. *María colgó un cuadro más sobre la cómoda que el otro.

María hang.PAST a painting more above the chest of drawers than the other

No se ve prolijo.

not SE look.3SG.PRES tidy

‘María hung one painting higher up above the chest of drawers than the other. It

doesn’t look tidy.’

-
- (i) the inner space
 - (ii) the outer space
 - (iii) the lower/upper half

There is, however, no evidence of this kind for Spanish.

(39) a. Juan se paró detrás de la columna.

Juan SE stood DE.behind of the column

‘Juan stood behind the column.’

b. *Juan se paró muy detrás de la columna.

Juan SE stood very DE.behind of the column

‘Juan stood a considerable distance behind the column.’

c. *Juan se paró más detrás de la columna que Pedro.²⁵

Juan SE stood more DE.behind of the column than Pedro

‘Juan stood further behind the column than Pedro.’

In sum, I have shown that at least in Spanish locative Ps do not exhibit adjectival properties. If it is only adjectives that can modify a noun directly in Spanish, and locatives are not adjectives, then, nothing else said, the null hypothesis is that they are not modifiers of a noun. In other words, they are not modifiers of silent PLACE. Although “small” and “big” Ps may diachronically derive from adjectives as seen in, for instance, the case of the locative P *bajo* (*bajo la mesa*, literally ‘low the table,’ *under the table*) and its adjectival counterpart

²⁵ This sentence has a grammatical reading under which the speaker is not comparing how far behind the column Pedro and Juan are, but is comparing, rather, whose position can be better described as ‘being behind the column.’ In other words, the interpretation would correspond to something like ‘Juan stood more *properly* behind the column than Pedro.’ A similar reading arises with degree words:

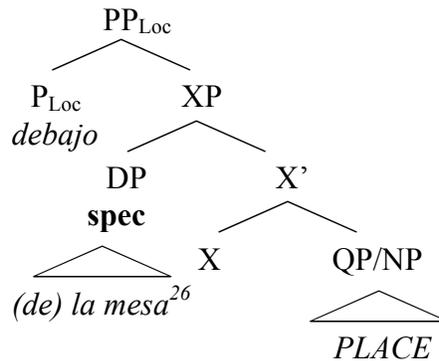
(i) Pegaste una hoja muy sobre la otra y no se ve el color de la de abajo.
glue.2SG.PAST a sheet very on the other and not SE see the color of the of A.under
‘You glued one sheet completely on top of the other one and it is not possible to see the color of the one underneath.’

In (i) the interpretation is again ‘very properly/exactly on top.’ As under these readings, words like *más* ‘more’ and *muy* ‘very’ are not comparing or measuring distances but seem to be acting as modifiers of (perhaps) this silent PROPERLY adverb (as suggested to me Christina Tortora (p.c)), I will not take these examples to imply that locative Ps in Spanish admit comparatives and degree words. Note also that even nominals, which clearly admit no comparatives, allow this comparative ‘properly’ reading, as in, for instance *This is more a magazine than a book*, where the interpretation seems to be roughly ‘This object should more *properly* be referred to as a magazine than a book.’

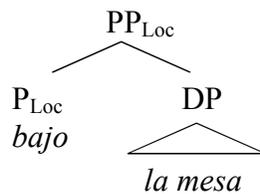
bajo/a (*una montaña baja* ‘a mountain low,’ *a low mountain*), synchronically they do not show any trace of adjectival behavior. I will thus simply take them to be Ps.

To summarize this section, in this work I propose an analysis where “small” and “big” Ps project different structures. For “big” Ps like *debajo* ‘DE.under,’ I follow Terzi and postulate that these Ps select a Possessor-Possesum structure where the apparent complement of the P is really the possessor of silent PLACE. In contrast, “small” Ps like *bajo* ‘under’ are argued to select a DP complement. The relevant structures for “big” and “small” Ps are shown below.

(40) Structure for *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’ (“big” P)



(41) Structure for *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’ (“small” P)



²⁶ The status of the *de* ‘of’ in *de la mesa* ‘of the table’ and the position it occupies in the structure will be addressed in chapter 3.

2.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter I have shown that “small” Ps like *bajo* ‘under’ and “big” Ps like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ display an asymmetric behavior with respect to bare nominals. Specifically, while bare nominals are possible as the complement of a “small” P (e.g. *bajo tierra* ‘under earth’) they are not possible as the complement of a “big” P (e.g. **debajo de tierra* ‘DE.under of earth’). I have suggested that these facts do not need an independent explanation, but are rather ruled out by the same requirement that rules out bare nominals inside the clause in Spanish: an unmodified common noun cannot be an A-specifier (Cuervo 2003). In other words, the apparent complement of a “big” P cannot be a bare nominal because this nominal is really in an A-specifier position. Once it has been uncovered that the apparent complement of a “big” P is a specifier, a more complex structure for these Ps is forced upon us. The next question I addressed was what specifier position the nominal of “big” Ps occupied. Here, I proposed, following Terzi (2010), that the nominal complement of a “big” P occupied the specifier position of a Possessor-Possessum structure whose complement was silent PLACE. On the other hand, I proposed that the complement of a “small” P was a simple DP: no Possessor-Possessum structure and no silent PLACE was involved in these cases. In chapter 3 I show how the postulation of these two different structures for “small” and “big” Ps has the great advantage of allowing us to account for a significant array of apparently unrelated syntactic and semantic phenomena.

2.6 Appendix

Against a lexicalized analysis of *bajo tierra* ‘under earth’ (and the other “small” P expressions presented in section 2.3)

2.6.1 Lexicalized expressions and the grammar

In this appendix I argue that the “small” P + bare nominal strings in (21) and the (a) examples in (23)-(26) are not lexicalized expressions. In particular, I show that these expressions are not “syntactic atoms” (or “syntactic blocks”) but rather that they are strings built by the grammar.²⁷ The relevance of this is that a string that has become fossilized, in other words, a “syntactic block,” may not necessarily reflect how elements combine freely in the grammar, at least not synchronically. An expression like *dar rienda suelta a algo*, literally ‘give rein loose to something’ is a case in point. Here, the verb *dar* ‘give’ takes as one of its complements the bare singular noun *rienda* ‘rein’ modified by an adjective, *suelta* ‘loose.’ Nevertheless, this verb cannot combine with bare singular nouns freely in the grammar, whether they are modified or not, as shown by the ungrammaticality of: **dar lápiz (negro) a un compañero* ‘give pencil (black) to a classmate’ / **dar regalo (lindo) al cumpleaños* ‘give gift (nice) to the birthday boy/girl’ etc. Going back to our data, what this means is that if expressions like *bajo tierra* ‘under ground’ turned out to be lexicalized, then it would not be wise for us to take them as evidence for the structure of “small” Ps. If, on the other hand, they turned out *not* to

²⁷ It is important to point out that the definition of “lexicalized expression” that I am using here is strictly syntactic. Although syntactic atomicity may be closely linked to other notions like low productivity, or idiosyncratic meaning (that is to say, lexicalized expressions *tend* to have low productivity and *tend* to be listed), these latter notions are independent of (and not relevant to) the matter under discussion here. It is only atomicity that matters if our goal is to discover how words are put together by the grammar.

be lexicalized, then we could confidently take them to be a true reflection of the grammar, thus reinforcing the validity of the data on bare nominals presented in this chapter.

2.6.2 A closer look at the data

The relevant data, presented in section 2.3.1, are repeated here as (42)-(46).

(42) El pirata escondió el tesoro *bajo tierra*.

the pirate hid the treasure under earth

‘The pirate hid the treasure underground.’

(43) La ciudad estaba enterrada *bajo nieve*.

the city was buried under snow

‘The city was buried in snow.’

(44) Había personas escondidas *tras muros*.

have.PAST people hidden behind walls

‘There were people hidden behind walls.’

(45) Me gusta pintar *sobre madera*.

CL_{DAT}.1SG like paint.INF on wood

‘I like to paint on wood.’

(46) Manuel puede caminar *descalzo sobre clavos*.

Manuel can walk.INF barefoot on nails

‘Manuel can walk barefoot over nails.’

Saying that a certain expression is “lexicalized” (in the terms we are using here, that it is a “syntactic block”), amounts to saying that it behaves like an atom to the purposes of the syntax. In other words, it means that the syntax will treat the whole expression as if it were an indivisible unit; it will treat it as a “word.” If lexicalized expressions are in this sense like words, then it follows that they should be subject to some version of the Lexical Integrity Hypothesis (Lapointe 1980) or the Atomicity Thesis (as in DiSciullo & Williams 1987). The Atomicity Thesis (DiSciullo & Williams 1987) is formulated in (47) below.

(47) The Atomicity Thesis

“Words are ‘atomic’ at the level of phrasal syntax and phrasal semantics. The words have ‘features,’ or properties, but these features have no structure, and the relation of these features to the internal composition of the word cannot be relevant in the syntax.”
(DiSciullo & Williams 1987)

A simple way of deciding whether the PPs in (42)-(46) are “syntactic blocks” is by testing if one of the elements that make up the expression can be modified. It follows from (47) that if a certain string is a “syntactic block,” or a word, such modification should not be possible. If, on the other hand, the string is the output of the grammar, such modification should in principle be possible.²⁸

As we can see below, all the bare nominals in (42)-(46) can take modifiers [modifiers in bold].

²⁸ What I am claiming here is that the impossibility of modification of the “parts” of a lexicalized expression would have the same explanation as for why, for instance, a degree word like *muy* ‘very’ cannot modify *dura* ‘hard’ in the compound *caradura* ‘cheeky’ (literally, ‘face.hard’), as illustrated in (i) below.

(i) *Juan es cara muy dura. (cf. Juan es muy caradura.)
 Juan is face very hard
 ‘Juan is very cheeky.’

(48) a. El pirata escondió el tesoro *bajo tierra húmeda.*

the pirate hid the treasure under earth moist

‘The pirate hid the treasure in moist earth.’

b. La ciudad estaba enterrada *bajo nieve espesa.*

the city was buried under snow thick

‘The city was buried in thick snow.’

c. Me gusta pintar *sobre madera rugosa.*

CL_{DAT}.1SG like paint.INF on wood rough

‘I like to paint on rough wood.’

Note that the behavior of the PPs in (42)-(46) contrasts sharply with the behavior of apparently very similar strings like *bajo llave*, literally ‘under key’ (49), *bajo techo*, literally ‘under roof’ (50) and *sobre rieles*, literally ‘on rails’ (51).

(49) a. María guarda las joyas de su abuela *bajo llave.*

María keeps the jewels of her grandmother under key

‘María keeps her grandmother’s jewels under lock and key.’

b. María guarda la joyas de su abuela **bajo llave segura.*

María keeps the jewels of her grandmother under key safe

‘María keeps her grandmother’s jewels safely under lock and key.’

(50) a. Podemos hacer el picnic al aire libre o *bajo techo*

can.1PL do.INF the picnic at.the air free or under roof

‘We can have the picnic in the open air or indoors.’

b. Podemos hacer el picnic al aire libre o **bajo techo resguardado*.

can.1PL do.INF the picnic at.the air free or under roof sheltered

‘We can have the picnic in the open air or in a sheltered indoors space.’

(51) a. Nuestro plan marcha *sobre rieles*

our plan goes on rails

‘Our plan is going smoothly.’

b. Nuestro plan marcha **sobre rieles rápidos*.

our plan goes on rails fast

‘Our plan is going very smoothly.’

The impossibility of modifying the nominal in the expressions in (49) to (51) shows that they are lexicalized strings, in clear contrast to the “small” P + bare nominal expressions presented in (42)-(46). Note, also, that the expressions in (49) to (51) all have an idiosyncratic or non-compositional meaning. *Bajo llave* (49) does not literally mean ‘under a key’ but it means ‘locked’. In a similar fashion, *bajo techo* (50) does not have the literal meaning ‘under a roof,’ but its meaning corresponds to something like ‘indoors.’ The meaning of *sobre rieles* (51) is, again, non-compositional: it corresponds to ‘smoothly.’ The fact that the expressions in (42) to (46) have compositional meanings and those in (49) to (51) do not, shows that there appears to be a strong correspondence between syntactic atomicity and listedness/idiosyncratic meaning. However, as mentioned earlier in this appendix, I will consider an expression to be “lexicalized” if it is a syntactic atom, regardless of whether it has an idiosyncratic meaning or not. This means that as long as a certain string is non atomic for the purposes of the syntax (as is confirmed by the possibility of modification of the strings in (42) to (46)), I believe it can be

safely taken as evidence for how the grammar works, independently of other related notions such as a (non)compositionality of meaning or productivity.²⁹

2.6.3 Conclusion to the Appendix

In this appendix we have briefly seen that the “small” P + bare nominal combinations presented in this chapter (such as *bajo tierra* ‘under earth,’ *bajo nieve* ‘under snow,’ etc.) are not lexicalized expressions. The fact that the bare nominals in these expressions admit modification (e.g. *bajo tierra húmeda* ‘under earth moist’) allows us to confidently state that these “small” P + bare nominal strings are not syntactic atoms. What this means, then, is that these expressions can confidently be taken as evidence in favor of the different structures we have postulated for “small” and “big” Ps.

²⁹ It is true that some “small” P + bare nominal combinations do not seem to be very productive. Just to give an example, all the speakers I consulted accepted *bajo tierra* ‘under earth’ and *bajo nieve* ‘under snow’ whereas only some accepted sentences with *bajo arena* ‘under sand,’ as in %*El pirata escondió el tesoro bajo arena* ‘The pirate hid the treasure under sand.’ However, I believe this not to be problematic in any way. As mentioned in the main text, by having shown that modification of the nominal is possible, we have already confirmed that these strings are the output of the grammar, and that is all we need to trust them to be a reflection of syntactic behavior.

Chapter 3

Some asymmetries between ‘small’ and ‘big’ Ps

3.1 Introduction

In chapter 2 I showed that “small” and “big” Ps displayed an asymmetric behavior with respect to the possibility of allowing a bare nominal as their complement. Specifically, I showed that a bare nominal was possible as the complement of a “small” P but was not possible as the complement of a “big” P. I argued that this contrast did not require an independent explanation but rather followed directly from the distribution of bare nominals inside the clause in Spanish. It has been observed (as in, for instance, Cuervo 2003) that an unmodified bare nominal cannot be an A-specifier. I suggested, then, that an unmodified bare nominal was not possible as the complement of a “big” P precisely because this nominal occupied an A-specifier position (in particular, I proposed that it was the specifier of silent PLACE). On the other hand, I argued that an unmodified bare nominal was possible as the complement of a “small” P because “small” Ps selected a much simpler structure in which the nominal occupied a complement position.

In this chapter I present a series of syntactic and semantic contrasts exhibited by “small” and “big” Ps. I argue that these otherwise puzzling phenomena can receive a natural explanation if we assume the structures proposed in chapter 2. The chapter is structured as follows. In Part I, I analyze the syntactic asymmetries exhibited by “small” and “big” Ps: namely, the (un)availability of coordination and adverb intervention facts. In Part II I discuss the semantic contrasts: in particular, the availability of (non)locative meanings and the (un)bounded interpretation of the nominal. Finally, in section 3.6 I summarize the findings

made in this chapter and show how all the evidence gathered taken together lends support to the structures proposed in chapter 2.

Part I

3.2 Coordination

In this subsection I show that “small” and “big” Ps behave differently with respect to coordination. Specifically, while the nominal selected by a “big” P can be coordinated with another nominal, this is not the case for “small” Ps. I propose that this fact can be explained if we postulate that the complement of a “small” P is actually “larger” than it looks: it is embedded in an “outer” KP layer headed by a null affixal Case-assigner.

3.2.1 Case-assigners and coordinate structures

One surprising contrast between “small” and “big” Ps is that whereas coordination of the complement of a “big” P is perfectly grammatical, coordination of the complement of a “small” P is considerably degraded, as illustrated in (52a) and (52b), respectively.

(52) a. Hay migas debajo de la cama.

have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under of the bed

‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed.’

b. Hay migas debajo [de la cama y de la mesa].

have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under of the bed and of the table

‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed and the table.’

(53) a. Hay migas bajo la cama.

have.PRES breadcrumbs under the bed

‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed.’

b. *?Hay migas bajo [la cama y la mesa].

have.PRES breadcrumbs under the bed and the table

‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed and the table.’

What makes this set of data particularly puzzling is the fact that phrases like *la cama* ‘the bed’ and *la mesa* ‘the table’ can easily be coordinated in other syntactic positions, as shown in (54).

(54) a. [La cama y la mesa] están en el depósito. (subject)

the bed and the table are in the warehouse

‘The bed and the table are in the warehouse.’

b. Tenemos que lustrar [la cama y la mesa]. (object)

have.PRES.1PL that polish.INF the bed and the table

‘We have to polish the bed and the table.’

c. [La cama y la mesa], preferiría comprarlos una vez que

the bed and the table prefer.COND.1SG buy.INF.CL_{ACC} a time that

hayamos arreglado la casa. (Topic)

have fixed the house

‘The bed and the table, I would prefer to buy once we have fixed the house.’

The unavailability of coordination in (53b) remains, therefore, somewhat of a mystery.

Interestingly, Demonte (1991) points out a context in which coordination of nominals is disallowed. Her example is given in (55) below.

- (55) *Visité *a* [mi hermana y la tía Enriqueta].
visited.1SG A my sister and the aunt Enriqueta
'I visited my sister and Aunt Enriqueta.'

Compare this with the following grammatical sentence:

- (56) Visité [*a* mi hermana] y [*a* la tía Enriqueta].
visited.1SG A my sister and A the aunt Enriqueta
'I visited my sister and Aunt Enriqueta.'

Demonte (1991) relates the contrast between (55) and (56) to Vergnaud's (1974) and Jaeggli's (1982) observation that Case-assigners cannot be omitted in coordinate structures. The unavailability of coordination in (55) follows, Demonte (1991) claims, if *a* (often referred to in the literature as “personal *a*”) is taken to be a Case-assigner in these examples.

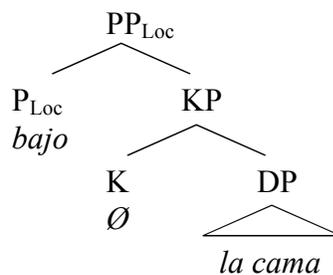
With this observation in mind, I will suggest that the ungrammaticality of (53b) receives the same explanation as the ungrammaticality of (55). In other words, I propose that in the complement of *bajo* ‘under’ there is actually more than meets the eye. Specifically, I claim that there is a Case-assigner, and that it is precisely the presence of this element in the structure that is responsible for the ungrammaticality of (53b). I outline the specifics of this analysis in the paragraphs to follow.

3.2.2 The complement of a “small” P is a KP

As discussed in chapter 2, Ps like *bajo* ‘under,’ *ante* ‘front’ and *tras* ‘behind’ do not seem to exhibit adjectival properties (for instance, they do not admit degree words or comparatives). However, it seems clear that they are diachronically derived from adjectives. We might argue, then, that although they are unlike adjectives in most regards, they still share with them the impossibility to directly Case-mark their complement. It might be possible then (and most probably likely, if Case is only assigned by function words) to postulate that the complement of a “small” P receives case not from P_{Loc} itself but from a Case-assigner that happens to be null. What this means is that positing a null Case-assigner in these structures may not only capture the facts, as we will see shortly, but might in fact, be theoretically welcome.

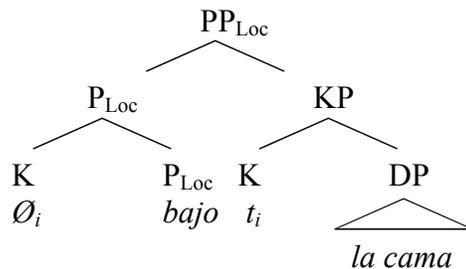
To be concrete, what I propose is that a “small” PP like *bajo la cama* ‘under the bed’ has the structure schematized in (57), where \emptyset represents a null Case-assigner.

(57) Structure of *bajo la cama* ‘under the bed’



I further propose that this null Case-assigner is affixal in nature and needs to attach to an appropriate host.³⁰ I take P_{Loc} to be such a host. In the example above, \emptyset undergoes head-to-head movement from the head position of KP and attaches P_{Loc} *bajo* ‘under.’ This is shown in (58).

(58) Attachment of \emptyset to P_{Loc} in *bajo la cama* ‘under the bed’



I now go on to show how, with these two assumptions in mind (namely, that there is a Case-assigner in these structures, and that this Case-assigner needs to attach to a host), the mystery of the ungrammaticality of (53b) suddenly dissolves. Example (53b) is repeated below as (59).

(59) *?Hay migas bajo [la cama y la mesa].
 have.PRES breadcrumbs under the bed and the table
 ‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed and the table.’

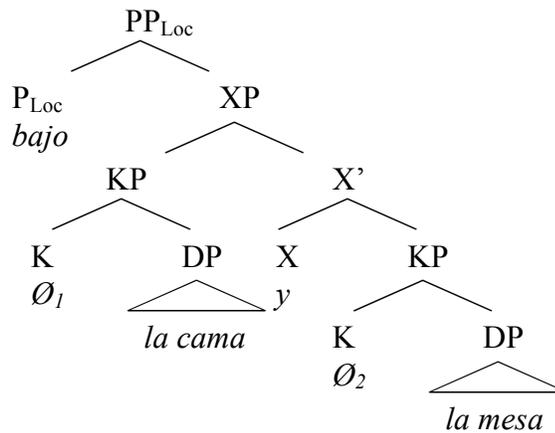
³⁰ The analysis of the null Case-assigner proposed here builds heavily on Pesetsky’s (1992) analysis of the null complementizer. Pesetsky (1992) proposes that the null complementizer is an affix that must undergo attachment to a lexical head. This affixation takes place through head movement of C to V. His account therefore explains, among other things, why the null complementizer is possible in (i) but not in (ii) [examples from Bošković & Lasnik 2003].

- (i) (?)It was widely believed [_{CP} C [_{IP} he liked linguistics]]
- (ii) *[[_{CP} C [_{IP} He liked linguistics]] was widely believed.

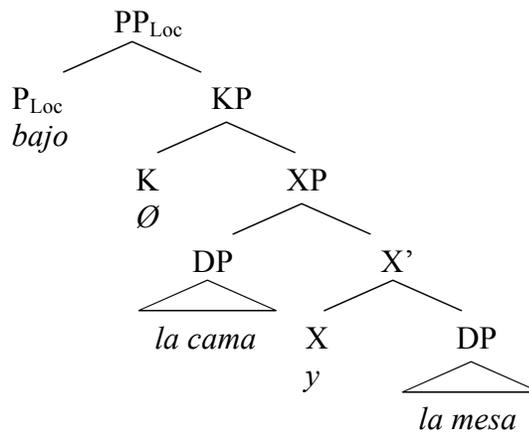
In (i), null C incorporates into V. However, (ii) is ruled out because in this structure null C would be moving out of an island (specifically, a subject).

As mentioned before, it has been observed (by Vergnaud 1974 and Jaeggli 1982 and Demonte 1991), that Case-assigners cannot be omitted in coordinate structures. What this means is that the structure of *bajo la cama y la mesa* ‘under the bed and the table’ has to necessarily be the one sketched in (60) and, crucially, cannot be the one in (61).

(60) **Structure (A)** for *bajo la cama y la mesa* ‘under the bed and the table’



(61) **Structure (B)** for *bajo la cama y la mesa* ‘under the bed and the table’ **[impossible tree]**



As the structure in (61) is not possible (because, as was mentioned above, Case-assigners cannot be omitted in coordinate structures) we are simply going to disregard it. We will therefore just focus on (60). By looking at the structure in (60) we can now get a clearer idea as to why *bajo la cama y la mesa* ‘under the bed and the table’ is ungrammatical. There are, as

a matter of fact, several reasons why the structure in (60) fails. Let’s review them. In the first place, it is clear that the first null Case-assigner (\emptyset_1) cannot extract without falling into a Left Branch Violation (KP is the specifier of X). In the second place, although the second Case-assigner (\emptyset_2) is in a position out of which it could in principle extract, nothing else said, it would not be able to incorporate into *bajo* ‘under’ without violating locality (there is an intervening head, namely, *y*). As one of these Case-assigners (\emptyset_1) and maybe even both, fail to incorporate, the structure is ruled out by some form of the Stranded Affix Filter (in the sense of Lasnik 1981). Finally, it is worth mentioning that even if both Case-assigners could extract (that is to say, in the unlikely event that we should be able to propose an alternative coordinate structure in which \emptyset_1 and \emptyset_1 could extract and incorporate) we would still be faced with a situation in which two affixes of exactly the same kind incorporate into a single host, something that is, at best, suspect.

With the ungrammaticality of (59) now explained, let’s take a brief look at (52b), the “big” P counterpart of (59), repeated here as (62).

(62) Hay migas debajo [*de* la cama y *de* la mesa].
 have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under of the bed and of the table
 ‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed and the table.’

Example (62) does not of itself tell us anything interesting about the structure of “big” Ps. Its grammaticality is fully expected, as coordination of elements of the same category (with the exception precisely of the nominals mentioned in this section) is assumed to be possible. However, notice that (63) is ungrammatical, on a par with (55) and (59).

- (63) *Hay migas debajo de [la cama y la mesa].
have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under of the bed and the table
‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed and the table.’

The ungrammaticality of (63) is more interesting because it seems to confirm the intuition that *de* ‘of’ in the complement of “big” Ps is also a Case-assigner. In other words, sentence (63) is ungrammatical on analogy with (59) (and Demonte’s (55)). What this means is that both the nominal in the complement of “small” Ps and the nominal in the complement of “big” Ps are embedded in an outer KP “layer”. One important difference between these KPs, though, is that the K in the complement of a “small” P is null, whereas the K in the complement of a “big” P is overt, a matter to which I return at the end of this section.

Finally, it is important to point out that the asymmetry in coordination facts exhibited by the *bajo* ‘under’ / *debajo* ‘DE.under’ pair is not unique to these Ps but, as expected, extends to the class of “small” and “big” Ps as a whole. That this is in fact the case is confirmed by the contrast between the (a’) and (b’) examples below.

- (64) a. Hay carpas tras las montañas.
have.PRES tents behind the mountains
‘There are tents behind the mountains.’
a’.?Hay carpas tras [las montañas y los árboles].
have.PRES tents behind the mountains and the trees
‘There are tents behind the mountains and the trees.’

b. Hay carpas detrás de las montañas.

have.PRES tents DE.behind of the mountains

‘There are tents behind the mountains.’

b’. Hay carpas detrás [de las montañas y de los árboles].

have.PRES tents DE.behind of the mountains and of the trees

‘There are tents behind the mountains and the trees.’

(65) a. Juan se paró ante la catedral.

Juan SE stood front the cathedral

‘Juan stood in front of the cathedral.’

a’. ?Juan se paró ante [la catedral y la casa de gobierno].

Juan SE stood front the cathedral and the house of government

‘Juan stood in front of the cathedral and the house of government.’

b. Juan se paró delante de la catedral.

Juan SE stood DE.L.front of the cathedral

‘Juan stood in front of the cathedral.’

b’. Juan se paró delante [de la catedral y de la casa de gobierno].

Juan SE stood DE.L.front of the cathedral and of the house of government

‘Juan stood in front of the cathedral and the house of government.’

(66) a. Apoyó el bolso sobre el dibujo.

place.PAST.3SG the bag on the drawing

‘He/she placed the bag on the drawing.’

a'. ?Apoyó el bolso sobre [el dibujo y la tarjeta].

place.PAST.3SG the bag on the drawing and the card

‘He/she placed the bag on the drawing and the card.’

b. Apoyó el bolso encima del dibujo.

place.PAST.3SG the bag on.top of.the drawing

‘He/she placed the bag on top of the drawing.’

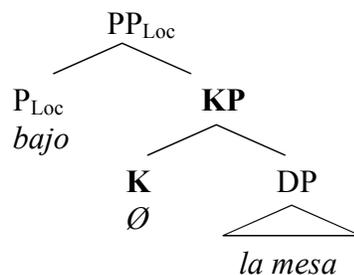
b'. Apoyó el bolso encima [del dibujo y de la tarjeta].

place.PAST.3SG the bag on.top of.the drawing and of the card

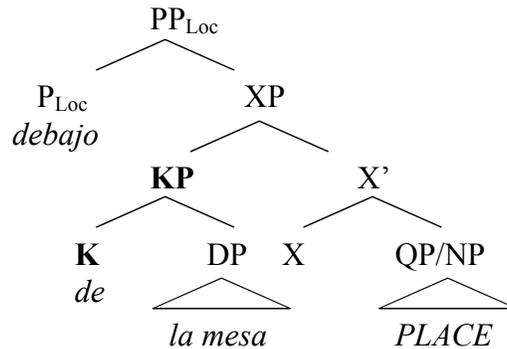
‘He/she placed the bag on top of the drawing and the card.’

In sum, the structures we end up with for “small” and “big” Ps (with the addition of the KP layer argued for here) are the ones schematized in (67) and (68) below.

(67) Structure of a “small” P like *bajo* ‘under’ in *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’



(68) Structure of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ in *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’



Before closing this section, I would like to point out a welcome consequence that might follow from the structures in (67) and (68). I proposed earlier that both the nominal selected by a “small” P and the nominal selected by a “big” P were KPs. I postulated that in “small” PPs K was null and affixal and I pointed out that in “big” PPs K was overt (in this latter case, spelled out as *de* ‘of’). However, I did not provide any explanation as to why K had to be null in one case and overt in the other. Interestingly note that in (67) KP is the *complement* of P_{Loc} but in (68) KP is the *specifier* of the complement of P_{Loc}. The “nullness” vs. “overtness” of K in one case and the other might very well follow from this fact. In (67) K is in a position out of which it can extract and subsequently attach to P_{Loc} by means of head movement. However, this is not the case in (68). In this latter structure K is embedded in a specifier. This means that extraction of K would inevitably result in a Left Branch Violation. This might be the reason why overt non-affixal *de* ‘of’ must surface instead. It would be possible then to say that the structures for “small” and “big” Ps proposed have the side advantage of explaining why (69a) is possible but (69b) is not.³¹

³¹ This brings us back again to the parallel between null K and null C mentioned in footnote (30). To be concrete, what I am claiming here is that the ill-formedness of (69b) receives the same explanation as the illformedness of (i).

(i) *_{[CP C} [_{IP} He liked linguistics]] was widely believed.

(69) a. El libro está debajo de la mesa.

the book is DE.under of the table

‘The book is under the table.’

b. *El libro está debajo la mesa.

the book is DE.under the table

‘The book is under the table.’³²

3.2.3 Interim summary

In this section I have proposed that the unavailability of coordination of the complement of a “small” P follows from the fact that there is a null Case-assigner in its structure. The observation made earlier in the literature (Vergnaud 1974 and Jaeggli 1982, Demonte 1991) that Case-assigners cannot be omitted in coordinate structures forces on us an analysis in which each coordinate string is headed by its own Case-assigner. This of itself does not cause the structure to fail, but we have proposed that this Case-assigner is affixal in nature (most probably due to the fact that it is null) and it needs to incorporate into a host. The unavailability of the coordination of the complement of “small” Ps is now explained: one

³² Note that, according to what we have said so far, we have an explanation for the grammaticality of (69a) and an explanation for the ungrammaticality of (69b). We have also provided an explanation for the availability of (i):

- (i) El libro está bajo la mesa.
the book is under the table
‘The book is under the table.’

(i) is grammatical because in this structure the null Case-assigner is in a position out of which it can extract and incorporate into its host. However, nothing that we have said up to this point allows us to account for the ungrammaticality of (ii), the fourth member of the paradigm.

- (ii) *El libro está bajo de la mesa.
the book is under of the table.
‘The book is under the table.’

In other words, we have provided an explanation for why the null Case-assigner *can* appear in the complement of a “small” P (as in (i)), but we have no explanation for why it looks like it *must* do so (ruling out (ii)). In chapter 4 I very briefly discuss the judgments in (ii) and make a comment about its ungrammaticality.

reason why the structure fails (among others, most probably) is that the Case-assigner in the first coordinate string is in a structural position out of which it cannot extract (it is, specifically, on a Left Branch). As this Case-assigner cannot extract, it cannot incorporate, and the structure is ruled out due to the presence of a stranded affix (a situation banned by some form of the Stranded Affix Filter). At the end of this section, I also suggested that the structures for “small” and “big” Ps we have been arguing for so far might also explain why the K in the complement of a “small” P is null, whereas the K in the complement of a “big” P has to be necessarily overt.

3.3 Adverb intervention

I will now present data that shows that when an adverb intervenes between a “small” P and its complement the sentence is ungrammatical, but when an adverb intervenes between a “big” P and its complement the sentence is acceptable to some speakers and unacceptable to others. I argue, once again, that these facts constitute evidence in favor of the structures presented in chapter 2.

3.3.1 McCloskey’s (2006) Adjunction Prohibition

Consider the following:

- (70) a. Hay migas bajo la cama.
 have.PRES breadcrumbs under the bed
 ‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed.’

a'. *Hay migas bajo, *probablemente*, la cama.

have.PRES breadcrumbs under probably the bed

‘There are probably breadcrumbs under the bed.’

b. Hay migas debajo de la cama.

have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under of the bed

‘There are breadcrumbs under the bed.’

b'. %Hay migas debajo, *probablemente*, de la cama.

have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under probably of the bed

‘There are probably breadcrumbs under the bed.’

What we can see from the facts above is that an adverb like *probablemente* ‘probably’ cannot surface between *bajo* ‘under’ and its complement *la cama* ‘the bed.’ However, when *probablemente* ‘probably’ occurs between *debajo* ‘DE.under’ and its complement (introduced by *de* ‘of’), some speakers find it grammatical and some others do not (as shown by the “%” symbol).

As expected, the same contrast is exhibited by the other “small”/ “big” P pairs, as shown below.

(71) a. Juan se escondió tras la columna.

Juan SE hid behind the column

‘Juan hid behind the column.’

a'. *Juan se escondió tras, *probablemente*, la columna.

Juan SE hid behind probably the column

‘Juan probably hid behind the column.’

b. Juan se escondió detrás de la columna.

Juan SE hid DE.behind of the column

‘Juan hid behind the column.’

b'. %Juan se escondió detrás, *probablemente*, de la columna.

Juan SE hid DE.behind probably of the column

‘Juan probably hid behind the column.’

(72) a. Deberíamos pararnos ante la estatua de mármol.

should.1PL stand.INF.CL front the statue of marble

‘We should stand in front of the marble statue.’

a'. *Deberíamos pararnos ante, *quizás*, la estatua de mármol.

should.1PL stand.INF.CL front perhaps the statue of marble

‘We should perhaps stand in front of the marble statue.’

b. Deberíamos pararnos delante de la estatua de mármol.

should.1PL stand.INF.CL DE.L.front of the statue of marble

‘We should stand in front of the marble statue.’

- b'. %Deberíamos pararnos delante, quizás, de la estatua de mármol.³³
 should.1PL stand.INF.CL DE.L.front perhaps of the statue of marble
 ‘We should perhaps stand in front of the marble statue.’

What I suggest here is that these facts can be easily accommodated if we assume the structures for “small” and “big” Ps proposed so far, and a general restriction on adjunction, such as McCloskey’s Adjunction Prohibition (McCloskey 2006).³⁴

McCloskey (2006) discusses the adjunction possibilities of a group of adverbs that typically occupy a left peripheral position in TP. This group of adverbs includes, among others, temporal modifiers at the sentential level such as *usually, in general, most of the time, yesterday, when he arrived*.³⁵ He observes that many of these adjuncts can appear on the left edge of TP, and many of them can also be adjoined to VP, as shown for *usually* in (73a) and (73b), respectively [examples from McCloskey 2006].

- (73) a. *Usually* I understand what he’s talking about.
 b. I would *usually* go to Bundoran for my holidays.

³³ The observation that an adverbial can appear between a “big” P and its complement, but cannot appear between a “small” P and its complement is made by Pavón Lucero (1999). She does not provide an example with a “small” P but her example with the “big” P *delante* ‘DE.L.front’ and the adverbial *precisamente* ‘precisely,’ is given below.

- (i) Se paró delante, *precisamente*, de tu puerta.
 SE stood DE.L.front precisely of your door
 ‘He/She stood precisely in front of your door.’

³⁴ I thank Christina Tortora (p.c.) for bringing to my attention McCloskey’s (2006) work on adjunction.

³⁵ McCloskey (2006) argues that these modifiers are adjoined and do not occupy a fixed position in the clause (as is, for instance, argued for by Cinque 1999). One reason he gives for this, among others, is that adverbs of the same distributional class can co-occur, and in any order, as shown for *in general* and *around Christmas time* in (i) below [examples from McCloskey 2006].

- (i) a. [_{TP} *In general* [_{TP} *around Christmas time* [_{TP} I go to my parents’ house.]]]
 b. [_{TP} *Around Christmas time* [_{TP} *in general* [_{TP} I go to my parents’ house.]]]

(79) The Adjunction Prohibition

“Adjunction to a phrase which is s-selected by a lexical (open class) head is ungrammatical.”³⁶ (McCloskey 2006)

I now go on to show how the Adjunction Prohibition can help us account for the different possibilities of adjunction for “small” and “big” Ps mentioned at the beginning of this section.

3.3.2 “Small” and “big” Ps and the Adjunction Prohibition

Let’s go back to the data in (70a’) and (70b’), repeated below as (80a) and (80b), and see how the Adjunction Prohibition can shed light on the patterns we observe.

- (80) a. *Hay migas bajo, *probablemente*,³⁷ la cama.
have.PRES breadcrumbs under probably the bed
‘There are probably breadcrumbs under the bed.’

³⁶McCloskey (2006) mentions that formulations similar to this one have been made in the literature before. One example is Chomsky (1986), who proposed that there was a general prohibition against adjunction to argument categories. However, an important difference between Chomsky’s proposal and McCloskey’s is that Chomsky’s condition was meant to apply solely to adjunctions derived by movement, whereas McCloskey’s condition, as he himself points out, should be interpreted as a restriction on all adjunctions.

³⁷ Other adverbials that seem to give rise to the same contrast we observe in (80) are *incluso* ‘even’ and *precisamente* ‘precisely’, as in for instance **bajo, incluso/precisamente, la cama* ‘under, even, the bed’ and %*debajo, incluso/precisamente, de la cama* ‘DE.under, even/precisely, of the bed.’ Nevertheless, it looks like these adverbs can indeed attach to arguments, as shown in (i) and (ii).

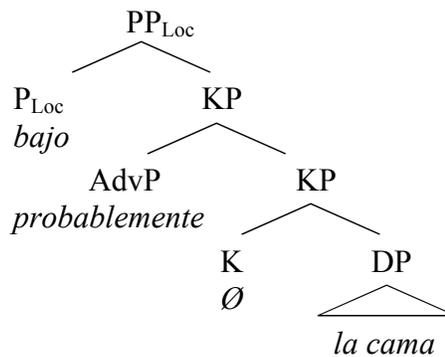
- (i) [*Incluso* [María]] vino a la fiesta.
even María came to the party
‘Even María came to the party.’
(ii) Juan limpió [*incluso* [las ventanas]].
Juan cleaned even the windows
‘Juan even cleaned the windows.’

It is therefore not clear if they should be subsumed under the Adjunction Prohibition. I therefore leave them aside in my examples, and use sentential adverbs such as *probablemente* ‘probably’ and *quizás* ‘maybe’ instead.

- b. %Hay migas debajo, *probablemente*, de la cama.
 have.PRES breadcrumbs DE.under probably of the bed
 ‘There are probably breadcrumbs under the bed.’

According to the structure we proposed for “small” Ps, in (80a) *probablemente* ‘probably’ would be adjoined to KP, as shown in (81) below.

(81) Adjunction of *probablemente* ‘probably’ in *bajo, probablemente, la cama* ‘under, probably, the bed’



Here, *probablemente* ‘probably’ is adjoined to a phrase s-selected by a lexical head.

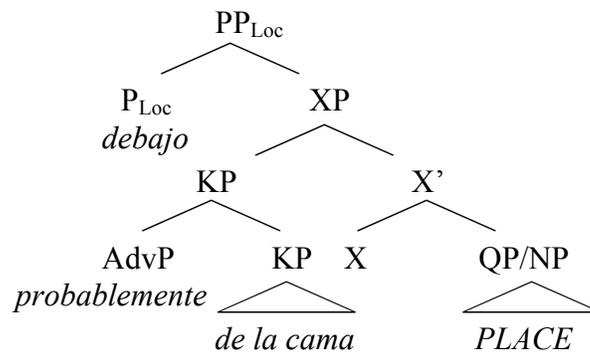
Specifically, it is adjoined to the complement of the lexical head *bajo* ‘under.’ This is precisely what the Adjunction Prohibition bans, so its ungrammaticality is expected.³⁸

³⁸ Note that I do not suggest that adjunction to DP is another possibility. In other words, I do not propose the following structure as another option for the attachment of the adverbial in (80a): *bajo* [_{KP}∅ [_{DP} *probablemente* [_{DP} *la cama*]]]. If this site of attachment were indeed possible, the sentence would be incorrectly predicted to be grammatical under this second parsing, as the adverbial would be attached to a phrase selected by a functional head (K) (something deemed to be possible by the Adjunction Prohibition) and not to a phrase s-selected by a lexical head. However, this second alternative (attachment to the DP complement of K) seems to be ruled out independently. It appears to be the case, at least at first sight, that adjunction to a constituent smaller than a KP is banned, regardless of whether the constituent is s-selected or not. Note that a string like **la, probablemente, cama* ‘under the, probably, bed’ (with adjunction of the adverbial to NP) is impossible, independently of its distribution. Also, adjunction of *probablemente* ‘probably’ to DP is ungrammatical in a string like **debajo de, probablemente, la cama* ‘DE.under of probably the bed.’ We can therefore conclude that adjunction of *probablemente* ‘probably’ to the DP in *bajo* [_{KP}∅ [_{DP} *probablemente* [_{DP} *la cama*]]] is to be disregarded, as it is not telling us anything about the external distribution of the string, which is precisely what we are interested in evaluating here.

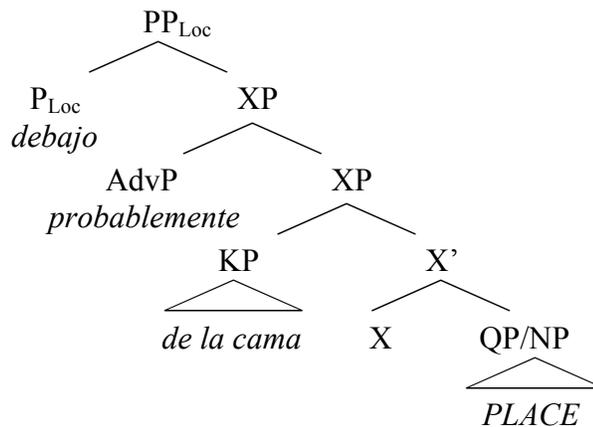
On the other hand, it follows from the structure we proposed for “big” Ps that for (80b), there should be two possible sites of attachment for *probablemente* ‘probably’, as schematized in (82a) and (82b) below.

(82) Adjunction of *probablemente* ‘probably’ to *de la cama* in *debajo, probablemente, de la cama* ‘DE.under, probably, of the bed’

a. *Possibility 1*



b. *Possibility 2*



In (82a) *probablemente* ‘probably’ is adjoined to the KP *de la cama* ‘of the bed.’ However, this is not the only option. As we can see from (82b), another possibility is that the adverb should be adjoined to the whole XP *de la cama PLACE* ‘of the bed PLACE.’ It looks like now we have an explanation for why some speakers find (80b) acceptable and others do not. The

adjunction in (82a) gives rise to grammaticality: the Adjunction Prohibition bans adjunction to a phrase which is s-selected by a lexical head, but as is clear from (82a) KP is not s-selected by *debajo* ‘DE.under’ (it is the specifier of its complement), so adjunction to KP is predicted to be possible. On the other hand, the adjunction in (82b) gives rise to ungrammaticality. In this latter case, *probablemente* ‘probably’ is adjoined to XP, and XP is s-selected by *debajo* ‘DE.under,’ it is its complement. This explains the mixed judgments.^{39,40}

³⁹ McCloskey (2006) himself describes a situation precisely like the one mentioned above, in which two different sites of adjunction give rise to tentative judgments. The examples he discusses are the following:

- (i) ?Ask them *when they were in Derby* if they lived in Rosemount.
- (ii) Ask them *when they were in Derby* did they live in Rosemount.

He argues convincingly that in both (i) and (ii) the complement of *ask* consists of a double CP layer (I will not go into his arguments for postulating this at this point as it would take us too far afield). He argues that in (i) the adverbial could be adjoined to the “higher” CP layer (in which case *if* could be either occupying the “higher” or the “lower” C position) or alternatively, it could be adjoined to the “lower” CP layer (in which case *if* would be occupying the “lower” C position). In the former case, the adverbial would be adjoined to an argument, in the latter case, it would be adjoined to a non-argument. Consequently, mixed judgments are exactly what we expect. For reasons that do not concern us here, he postulates that in (ii) *did* occupies the “lower” C position, and that the adverbial is unequivocally adjoined to the “lower” CP layer. Therefore, the only possibility is that it should be adjoined to a non-argument, and the sentence is predicted to be acceptable.

⁴⁰ As mentioned in the main text, the structures proposed in this work for “small” and “big” Ps predict that *bajo, probablemente, la cama* ‘under, probably, the bed’ should be ungrammatical, and that *debajo, probablemente, de la cama* ‘DE.under of the bed’ should receive mixed judgments. However, it is important to mention that there are alternative structures (different from the ones proposed here) that might account for this contrast as well. For instance, we might postulate that *bajo* selects a complement with a single functional layer (maybe a single KP layer), whereas *debajo* selects a complement with a double functional layer (maybe a double KP layer). In the first case, the only choice for the adverbial would be to adjoin to this single layer (leading to ungrammaticality, as the adverbial would be adjoining to a phrase s-selected by a lexical head). In the second case, there would be two options, with the adverbial adjoining to the “higher” KP layer (leading to ungrammaticality) or the adverbial adjoining to the “lower” KP layer (leading to grammaticality). As we have just seen, these alternative structures would also predict the judgments we observe. Furthermore, under an account such as this one, the two instances of *de* in *debajo de la cama* ‘DE.under of the bed’ might be taken to be the reflection of these two KP layers, in a parallel fashion to the double *that* structures discussed by McCloskey (2006). However, though such an analysis might seem promising, it would leave several facts unexplained, such as: the semantic asymmetries discussed in this chapter and the parallel between “big” Ps and doubling structures to be addressed in chapter 4.

3.3.3 Interim summary

In this section I have proposed an explanation for why an adverbial cannot intervene between a “small” P and its complement but gives rise to mixed judgments when it intervenes between a “big” P and its complement. As we have seen, if we assume the structures for “small” and “big” Ps proposed in chapter 2, there is one possible site of attachment for the adverbial in the complement of a “small” P, which is correctly banned by the Adjunction Prohibition, but two sites of attachment for the adverbial in the complement of a “big” P: one predicted to be possible by the Adjunction Prohibition and the other one predicted to be impossible. The (un)acceptability patterns we observe are, indeed, an accurate reflection of these attachment possibilities.

Part II

3.4 Locative vs non-locative reading of “small” and “big” PPs

Another important respect in which “small” and “big” Ps differ is that “small” Ps may give rise to PPs with a non-locative reading, whereas this is hardly ever the case for “big” Ps⁴¹. The examples below illustrate this asymmetry. Examples (83) to (85) show this contrast for *bajo* ‘under’ and *debajo* ‘DE.under,’ (86) and (87) for *tras* ‘behind’ and *detrás* ‘DE.behind,’ and (88) to (90) for *ante* ‘front’ and *delante* ‘DE.L.front.’

⁴¹ Although there is a strong tendency for “big” PPs to have an exclusively locative meaning, there appear to be some exceptions. The example below with the “big” P *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ is a case in point.

- (i) No hay que olvidarse que hay una familia detrás.
not have.PRES that forget.INF that have.PRES a family behind
‘We must not forget that he has a family.’

(83) a. Estos chicos están bajo mi responsabilidad.

these kids are under my responsibility

‘These kids are under my responsibility.’

b. *Estos chicos están debajo de mi responsabilidad.

these kids are DE.under of my responsibility

‘These kids are under my responsibility.’

(84) a. Las mascotas están bajo tu cuidado.

the pets are under your care

‘The pets are under your care.’

b. *Las mascotas están debajo de tu cuidado.

the pets are DE.under of your care

‘The pets are under your care.’

(85) a. No me gusta trabajar bajo tanta presión.

not CL.1SG like work.INF under so much pressure

‘I don’t like to work under so much pressure.’

b. *No me gusta trabajar debajo de tanta presión.

not CL.1SG like work.INF DE.under of so much pressure

‘I don’t like to work under so much pressure.’

(86) a. Nicolás decidió seguir tras los pasos de su padre y va a
Nicolás decided follow.INF behind the steps of his father and go.PRES to
estudiar medicina.
study medicine
‘Nicolás has decided to follow in his father’s footsteps and will be going into
medical school.’

b. *Nicolás decidió seguir detrás de los pasos de su padre y
Nicolás decided follow.INF DE.behind of the steps of his father and
va a estudiar medicina.
go.PRES to study medicine
‘Nicolás has decided to follow in his father’s footsteps and will be going into
medical school.’

(87) a. Tras su viaje a Roma, María se instaló otra vez en Paris.
behind her trip to Rome María SE settled another time in Paris
‘After her trip to Rome, María settled down in Paris again.’

b. *Detrás de su viaje a Roma, María se instaló otra vez en Paris.
DE.behind of her trip to Rome, María SE settled another time in Paris
‘After her trip to Rome, María settled down in Paris again.’

(88) a. Nos quedamos sin palabras ante su generosidad.

CL.1PL remained without words front his generosity

‘His generosity left us speechless.’

b. *Nos quedamos sin palabras delante de su generosidad.

CL.1PL remained without words DE.L.front of his generosity

‘His generosity left us speechless.’

(89) a. Los acusados tuvieron que declarar ante el tribunal.

the accused have.PAST.3PL that declare front the jury

‘The accused had to declare before the jury.’

b. #Los acusados tuvieron que declarar delante del tribunal.

the accused have.PAST.3PL that declare.INF DE.L.front of.the jury

‘The accused had to declare before the jury.’

(90) a. Es importante mostrar respeto ante los mayores.

is important show.INF respect front the elder

‘It is important to show respect towards your elders.’

- b. *Es importante mostrar respeto delante de los mayores.⁴²

is important show.INF respect DE.L.front of the elder

‘It is important to show respect towards your elders.’

This contrast can be explained if “big” PPs have in their structure a silent PLACE element. As “small” PPs do not have such an element, the locative interpretation is not forced on them.

This seems to me to constitute further evidence in favor of the structures presented in chapter 2.

Before closing this section, I would like to point out that if it is true that “small” PPs do not contain a silent PLACE element as part of their structure, and if it is also true that silent PLACE is responsible for the locative interpretation of PPs, then we still need to explain

⁴² The contrast observed above is also exhibited by the *frente* ‘front’/ *enfrente* ‘in.front’ pair. This pair is morphologically distinct from the other Ps discussed in the main text. In the first place, it consists of a nominal root *frente* ‘front’ (and not an adjectival one like *bajo*, literally ‘low’), and in the second place the complex member of the pair is introduced by the morpheme *en* ‘EN’ (and not the morpheme *de* ‘DE’): *enfrente*. However, as shown below, these Ps display, at least in this respect, the same pattern of behavior as the Ps in the main text, which might point to the fact this might also be a “small”/ “big” pair (the status of *frente* ‘front’/ *enfrente* ‘in.front’ as a “small”/ “big” P pair is taken up in chapter 5).

- (i) a. Es importante nunca desalentarse frente a las dificultades.
is important never discourage.INF.SE front to the difficulties
‘It is important never to feel discouraged on the face of difficulties.’
b. *Es importante nunca desalentarse enfrente de las dificultades.
is important never discourage.INF. IN.front of the difficulties
‘It is important never to feel discouraged on the face of difficulties.’
- (ii) a. Juan siempre se conmueve frente al dolor ajeno.
Juan always SE move.PRES.3SG front to.the pain somebody else
‘Juan always feels moved before other people’s pain.’
b. *Juan siempre se conmueve enfrente del dolor ajeno.
Juan always SE move.PRES.3SG IN.front of.the pain somebody else
‘Juan always feels moved before other people’s pain.’
- (iii) a. No todos los políticos realmente se comprometen frente a la desigualdad.
Not all the politicians really SE commit front to the inequality
‘Not all the politicians really commit themselves to solve inequality.’
b. *No todos los políticos realmente se comprometen enfrente de la
Not all the politicians really SE commit IN.front of the
desigualdad.
inequality
‘Not all politicians really commit themselves to solve inequality.’

where the locative interpretation comes from when “small” PPs such as *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table,’ do express location. In other words, if there is no silent PLACE in *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table,’ it would seem to follow that the interpretation should be non-locative, contrary to fact. Explaining how we get a locative interpretation in these cases (without silent PLACE) does not seem to be an easy task. Anyway, those who postulate a silent PLACE element for both what I call “small” and “big” Ps (as for instance, Terzi 2010) have to face the other side of the coin: how to somehow “suppress” PLACE in the non-locative examples with “small” Ps in (83)-(90). This task does not seem to me to be easy either. I leave this question open.

3.5 “Small” and “big” Ps and (un)boundedness

3.5.1 The data

There is another interesting respect in which “small” and “big” Ps differ. Although speakers typically report no difference in meaning between sentences like (91a) and (91b), they do report a contrast between the (a) and (b) examples in (92)-(94).

(91) a. Se paró bajo el toldo.

SE stood under the canopy

‘He/she stood under the canopy.’

b. Se paró debajo del toldo.

SE stood DE.under of.the canopy

‘He/she stood under the canopy.’

(92) a. Me gusta cantar bajo la lluvia.

CL_{DAT}.1SG like sing.INF under the rain

‘I like to sing in the rain.’

b. #Me gusta cantar debajo de la lluvia.

CL_{DAT}.1SG like sing.INF DE.under of the rain

‘I like to sing right underneath the rain.’

(93) a. Nos acostamos a descansar bajo el sol.

CL.1PL lay to rest.INF under the sun

‘We lay down to rest in the sun.’

b. #Nos acostamos a descansar debajo del sol.

CL.1PL lay to rest.INF DE.under of.the sun

‘We lay down to rest right underneath the sun.’

(94) a. Me gusta dormir bajo las estrellas.

CL.1SG like sleep.INF under the stars

‘I like to sleep under the stars.’

b. #Me gusta dormir debajo de las estrellas.

CL.1SG like sleep.INF DE.under of the stars

‘I like to sleep right underneath the stars.’

The (b) examples in (92) to (94) are not ungrammatical but feel semantically anomalous. The only contexts in which sentences like (93b) or (94b) would be acceptable would be, for instance, in a situation in which there is a fake sun and fake stars and the speaker decides to lie

right under them (as in, for instance, the case of glow-in-the-dark stars and a glow-in-the-dark sun in a child’s room). The intuition seems to be that for the (b) sentences to be felicitous, the Figure (the speaker’s body in (93b)) and the Ground (the sun in (93b)) need to be somehow “aligned.” In other words, it looks like the “big” P examples necessarily give rise to a more ‘punctual’ reading of the Ground, whereas in the “small” P examples the Ground can receive an ‘unbounded’ reading.^{43,44} Note that this effect is not exclusive to the *bajo* ‘under’/*debajo* ‘DE.under’ pair. The same effect is exhibited by other pairs of “small” and “big” Ps such as *ante* ‘front’/*delante* ‘DE.L.front’ and *sobre* ‘on’/*encima* ‘on.top,’ as illustrated below.

- (95) a. Juan se paró ante el lindísimo paisaje.
 Juan SE stood front the nice.INTENS landscape
 ‘Juan stood before the beautiful landscape.’
- b. #Juan se paró delante del lindísimo paisaje
 Juan SE stood DE.L.front of.the nice.INTENS landscape
 ‘Juan stood before the beautiful landscape.’
- (96) a. Hay escarcha sobre la pradera.
 have.PRES frost on the prairie
 ‘There’s frost on the prairie.’

⁴³ The idea that the category PLACE can be conceptualized as both bounded and unbounded is first discussed in Tortora (2008).

⁴⁴ Note that although the sun is in itself an entity with delimited boundaries, in expressions like *bajo el sol* ‘under the sun,’ it has an interpretation that seems to correspond roughly to “sunshine” or “the rays of the sun.” In other words, it is interpreted as unbounded. What I am pointing out here is that it is precisely this reading (the reading under which the sun is interpreted as unbounded) that is absent in “big” PPs like *debajo del sol* ‘DE.under of the sun.’

b. #Hay escarcha encima de la pradera.

have.PRES frost on.top of the prairie

‘There’s frost on the prairie.’

Sentence (95a) can normally describe a situation in which Juan stands before a beautiful landscape. (95b), on the other hand, requires a very specific context. It would be acceptable, for instance, if Juan is standing before a poster or a painting depicting a landscape, but would sound odd otherwise. In a similar fashion, whereas (96a) typically describes a situation in which there is frost on a prairie, (96b) seems to imply that the frost is on a prairie that is not real, such as the one on a drawing or a board game.

In other words, what examples (95) and (96) appear to confirm is that in a “big” PP the nominal is necessarily interpreted as bounded or delimited. Note that if the nominal already describes a surface that is delimited, no contrast arises between the pairs, as expected. This can be seen in the following example with the nominal *la mesa* ‘the table.’ As the surface of a table is intrinsically delimited, in other words, it has fixed boundaries (contrary to snow, water and others), there is no “clash” in interpretation between the “big” P and the nominal.

(97) a. Hay escarcha sobre la mesa.

have.PRES frost on the table

‘There is frost on the table.’

b. Hay escarcha encima de la mesa.

have.PRES frost on.top of the table

‘There is frost on the table.’

The question of course is why this contrast should arise. In other words, why is it that “big” Ps force a delimited/bounded reading of the nominal, while “small” Ps do not? I believe these facts can receive an explanation if we assume the structures for “small” and “big” Ps proposed in chapter 2. What I suggest, specifically, is that the semantic effect that we observe here is a direct consequence of the fact that the nominal is a possessor in the case of “big” Ps, but not in the case of “small” Ps. I believe taking a quick look at possessors in dative constructions may throw some light on this matter. In the next subsection I go on a brief excursus and make some independent observations about the behavior of possessors in dative constructions in Spanish. After the excursus, I come back and discuss the examples presented in this section.

3.5.2 An excursus: The possessor in dative constructions

As Cuervo (2003) points out, dative arguments in Spanish can appear with all types of verbs and can have different meanings. One of the meanings expressed by datives, as is standard in many languages, is that of goal or recipient, as exemplified in (98) and (99) below⁴⁵ [examples from Cuervo 2003].

⁴⁵ Other meanings of the dative in Spanish include those of benefactive, source, possessor, among others. Some examples are given in (i)-(iv) below [examples from Cuervo 2003].

- (i) Pablo nos preparó sandwichitos de miga a todos. *Benefactive*
 Pablo CL_{DAT} I.PL fixed tea sandwiches to all
 ‘Pablo fixed us all tea sandwiches.’
- (ii) Pablo le sacó la bicicleta a Andreína. *Source*
 Pablo CL_{DAT} took-away the bicycle to Andreína
 ‘Pablo took the bicycle from Andreína.’ (Lit. ‘Pablo took away Andreína the bicycle.’)
- (iii) Pablo le admira la paciencia/la campera a Valeria. *Possessor*
 Pablo CL_{DAT} admire the patience/ the jacket to Valeria
 ‘Pablo admires Valeria’s patience/jacket.’ (Lit. Pablo admires Valeria the patience/the jacket)
- (iv) A Daniela no le gustan los gatos. *Experiencer*
 To Daniela not CL_{DAT} like.PL the cats
 ‘Daniela doesn’t like cats.’ (Lit. ‘To Daniela don’t appeal the cats.’)

(98) Pablo le mandó un diccionario a Gabi
Pablo _{CL_{DAT}} sent a dictionary to Gabi
'Pablo sent Gabi a dictionary.'

(99) Pablo le puso azúcar al mate.⁴⁶
Pablo _{CL_{DAT}} put sugar to.the mate
'Pablo put sugar in the mate.' (Lit. 'Pablo put the mate sugar')

In this excursus I do not go into the specifics of Cuervo's analysis of datives. I simply just bring to light an observation that she makes when discussing recipient datives like (99) which I believe proves relevant to our understanding of the behavior of “small” and “big” Ps.

Cuervo suggests that the general condition for a dative goal is that it should be able to be interpreted as a recipient or intended possessor. This would explain why, although both (100) and (101) are perfectly grammatical, there is a contrast between (102) and (103) (example (99) is repeated as (102)).

(100) Pablo puso azúcar en el mate.
Pablo put sugar in the mate.

(101) Pablo puso azúcar en la mesa.
Pablo put sugar on the table.

(102) Pablo le puso azúcar al mate.
Pablo _{CL_{DAT}} put sugar to.the mate
'Pablo put sugar in the mate.'

⁴⁶ *mate* is a drink obtained from dry leaves of a medicinal plant.

(103) #Pablo le puso azúcar a la mesa.⁴⁷

Pablo CL_{DAT} put sugar to the table

‘Pablo put sugar on the table.’

Cuervo argues that the contrast between (102) and (103) arises because the sugar becomes part of the mate when added to it, but it cannot become part of the table. In other words, the reason why the sentence comes out anomalous is that, unlike the mate, the table is not a likely “recipient” or “intended possessor” for the sugar. The fact that *el mate* ‘the mate’ can be a possessor of the sugar, while *la mesa* ‘the table’ cannot seems to be confirmed by the *tener* ‘have’ sentences below [examples from Cuervo 2003].

(104) El mate tiene azúcar.

Lit. ‘The mate has sugar.’

(105) #La mesa tiene azúcar.

Lit. ‘The table has sugar.’

Although this observation seems to me to be correct, there is a contrast that still remains unexplained. Consider (106) and (107).

(106) Los pescadores tiraron petróleo en el mar.

the fishermen threw.3PL oil in the sea

‘The fishermen threw oil into the sea.’

⁴⁷ Cuervo marks examples such as this one with a star, but explicitly states that they are “semantically anomalous.” To avoid confusion, I will use the symbol “#” for semantic anomaly and reserve the symbol “*” solely for instances of ungrammaticality.

(107) # Los pescadores le tiraron petróleo al mar.
the fishermen CL_{DAT} threw.3PL oil to.the sea

‘The fishermen threw oil into the sea.’ (Lit. ‘The fishermen threw the sea oil.’)

In the situation described in (107) above, the oil *does* become part of the sea when it falls into it, in the same way that the sugar becomes part of the mate when it dissolves in it. It seems to me, then, that there is in principle no reason why example (107), with the clitic *le*, should not pattern with (102).

What appears to bring about the anomaly is that the sea is unbounded, and that for some reason, which needs to be explained, unbounded entities do not make good possessors.⁴⁸ That the unbounded nature of the possessor is what seems to be at issue appears to be confirmed by the grammaticality of (109) below.

(108) Juan tiró cloro en la pileta.

Juan threw chlorine in the swimming pool

‘Juan threw chlorine into the swimming pool.’

⁴⁸ Note that the hypothesis that unbounded entities do not make good possessors seems to be supported by the oddity of the *tener* ‘have’ possessor sentences below.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (i) #El mar tiene petróleo.
the sea has oil
‘There’s oil in the sea.’ | (cf. Hay petróleo en el mar.
‘There’s oil in the sea.’) |
| (ii) #El mar tiene muchos barcos.
the sea has many boats
‘There are many boats in the sea.’ | (cf. Hay muchos barcos en el mar.
‘There are many boats in the sea.’) |
| (iii) #La nieve tiene piedras.
the snow has pebbles
‘There are pebbles in the snow.’ | (cf. Hay piedras en la nieve.
‘There are pebbles in the snow.’) |
| (iv) #El desierto no tiene agua.
the desert not have water
‘There’s no water in the desert.’ | (cf. No hay agua en el desierto.
‘There’s no water in the desert.’) |

(109) Juan le tiró cloro a la pileta.

Juan CL_{DAT} threw chlorine to the swimming pool

‘Juan threw chlorine into the swimming pool.’

(Lit. ‘Juan threw the swimming pool chlorine.’)

The situation described by (109) is almost identical to the one described in (107): in both cases an element dissolves in a liquid and becomes part of it. The only difference between (107) and (109), which both contain the clitic *le*, and the reason for the anomaly of (107), seems to be that, unlike the sea, the swimming pool is a delimited recipient⁴⁹.

3.5.3 Back to “small” and “big” Ps

If the intuition that possessors cannot be unbounded is on the right track, then this might throw some light on the examples (92)-(96) presented at the beginning of this subsection. I have repeated example (93) as (110) for ease of exposition.

(110) a. Nos acostamos a descansar bajo el sol.

CL.1PL lay to rest.INF under the sun

‘We lay down to rest in the sun.’

b. #Nos acostamos a descansar debajo del sol.

CL.1PL lay to rest.INF DE.under of.the sun

‘We lay down to rest right underneath the sun.’

⁴⁹ It is relevant to point out that *mate* is a mass noun, but it is contained in a receptacle in the examples above. This explains why it is interpreted as delimited/bounded in these examples, thus counting as a suitable goal/recipient dative.

A possible hypothesis is that the anomaly of (110b) (and (92b), (94b), (95b), and (96b), for that matter) might be attributed to some kind of “semantic clash” between the unboundedness expressed by the nominals in these examples (*el sol* ‘the sun’ in (110)) and their insertion in a possession structure, which appears to force their delimited reading. If what I have been claiming so far is on the right track, namely that the nominal in “small” PPs is a complement, whereas the nominal in “big” PPs is a specifier and, crucially, a “possessor,” then this is exactly what we would expect.

3.5.4 Interim summary

In this section I have presented data that shows that the nominal selected by a “big” P necessarily receives a delimited/bounded interpretation, whereas this is not the case for “small” Ps. This difference is particularly salient in cases when “small” and “big” Ps select nominals such as *el sol* ‘the sun,’ *la lluvia* ‘the rain,’ *las estrellas* ‘the stars,’ in contexts in which they typically require an unbounded interpretation. In the sentences with “small” Ps the nominal receives the expected unbounded reading, but in the sentences with “big” Ps the bounded/punctual reading is forced on the nominal, and semantic anomaly results. I have related this effect to a very similar one observed elsewhere in the grammar, specifically, in possessor dative constructions. In these constructions, if the possessor is unbounded, the sentence also comes out anomalous. The picture that emerges from these two different sets of data is that there seems to be some kind of incompatibility between possessors and unboundedness. Under the analysis of “small” and “big” Ps proposed in this work, the nominal in the structure of a “big” P is a possessor, the possessor of silent PLACE, whereas the nominal in the structure of a “small” P is not a possessor. Therefore, the analysis proposed here predicts that an anomaly should arise for “big” PPs like *debajo del sol* ‘DE.under of the

sun’ but crucially not for “small” PPs like *bajo el sol* ‘under the sun.’ This seems to be precisely what we find.

3.6 Chapter summary: sum total of evidence gathered taken together

In this chapter I presented evidence in favor of the structures for “small” and “big” Ps proposed in chapter 2. In particular, I introduced a series of syntactic and semantic asymmetries and showed how each of these asymmetries lent support to the analysis put forth in this work. Part I was devoted to the syntactic asymmetries and Part II to the semantic asymmetries.

In this summary I do not go over the sections discussed in this chapter in the order in which they were presented. Rather, I go over what part of our analysis it is that each piece of evidence supports. Finally, I show how all the pieces of the “jigsaw” put together confirm the structures we have been arguing for so far.

Evidence that the structure of a “big” is more complex than the structure of a “small” P

In Part I I discussed adverb intervention facts. I pointed out that when an adverb such as *probablemente* ‘probably’ intervenes between a “small” P and its complement the sentence is ungrammatical, but when an adverb intervenes between a “big” P and its complement, it gives rise to mixed judgments. I attributed this contrast to the fact that “small” Ps have a “simpler” structure with only one possible site of attachment for the adverbial (resulting in ungrammaticality), whereas “big” Ps have a more “complex” structure with two possible sites of attachment for the adverbial (one leading to ungrammaticality, the other one to grammaticality).

Evidence that the nominal in the structure of a “small” PP is a complement and that the nominal in the structure of a “big” PP is a specifier

To explain the coordination facts presented in Part I, I proposed that the complement of a “small” P was a KP. This led to a unified analysis of both the nominal in “small” and “big” PPs as KPs, the difference being that in the case of “small” PPs, K is null, whereas in the case of “big” PPs, K is overt (and spelled out as *de* ‘of’). With this “enriched” structure of the nominal in place, I then hypothesized that the “nullness” versus the “overtness” of K in one case and the other could be made to follow from the hypothesis that the nominal is a complement in the case of “small” Ps, but the specifier of the complement in the case of “big” Ps.

Evidence that “big” PPs contain a silent PLACE element and “small” PPs do not

In Part II I discussed the presence versus absence of locative readings. I pointed out that “big” PPs are forced to have a locative interpretation, whereas “small” Ps can have locative or non-locative readings. I suggested that the obligatory locative reading is a direct consequence of the presence of silent PLACE: as silent PLACE is present in the structure of “big” PPs, these PPs necessarily have a locative interpretation. As “small” PPs do not have a silent PLACE element as part of their structure, the locative interpretation is not forced on them.

Evidence that the nominal in the complement of a “big” PP is a possessor and that the nominal in the complement of a “small” PP is not

In Part II of this chapter I observed that the nominal in the complement of “big” Ps has to be understood as delimited/bounded. In contrast, the nominal in the complement of a “small” P can be interpreted as delimited/bounded (as is the case with “big” PPs), but it can also receive an unbounded interpretation. I made some independent observations about possessors in dative constructions and drew attention to the fact that in these structures there is also a

requirement that the possessor should be interpreted as bounded/delimited. I therefore attributed this “delimitedness” effect to the fact that the nominal in “big” PPs is a possessor, the possessor of silent PLACE, whereas there is no possessor in the structure of “small” Ps.

To sum up, the evidence gathered in this chapter seems to show that: (1) the structure of “big” PPs is more complex than the structure of “small” PPs; (2) the nominal in the complement of “big” Ps is a specifier, whereas the nominal in the complement of “small” Ps is not; (3) the structure of “big” Ps, unlike the structure of “small” Ps, contains a silent PLACE element; (4) the nominal in the structure of “big” PPs is a possessor, whereas the nominal in the structure of “small” PPs is not.

These are precisely the structures I proposed in chapter 2.

Chapter 4

A doubling analysis of “big” Ps

4.1 Introduction

In chapter 2 I proposed two different structures for “small” and “big” Ps, respectively. In chapter 3 I showed that a series of syntactic and semantic effects could be made to follow directly from these structures. This final chapter is exploratory in nature. Specifically, I draw a parallel between clitic-doubling structures (and their non-doubled counterparts) and “big” (and “small”) Ps. In particular I point out that the semantic effects observed by Uriagereka (2000) in accusative clitic-doubling structures (as opposed to their non-doubled counterparts) bear a striking resemblance to the semantic effects we observed in the behavior of “big” Ps (as opposed to their “small” P counterparts). I therefore suggest a path of analysis under which “big” PPs are clitic-doubling structures, where, in an example like *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’ (in our new terms, the “doubled” variant of *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’), the first *de* is a clitic (*debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’) and the second *de* is a Case-marker (*debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’). This analysis has the advantage of providing a uniform account for the parallel semantic effects found in the prepositional and clitic-doubling domains. I also show how, if this analysis could be maintained, two other welcome results would directly follow from it. In the first place, we would get an explanation for why the two *des* in examples like *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’ co-occur: this would be a direct consequence of Kayne’s Generalization.⁵⁰ In the second place, this analysis might shed some light on why “small” Ps should exhibit animacy restrictions on their

⁵⁰Kayne’s Generalization: ‘An object NP may be doubled by a clitic only if the NP is preceded by a preposition.’ (Jaeggli 1980)

complement. Although a feature like animacy rarely determines ungrammaticality, it is believed to play a crucial role in the syntax of doubling. A doubling analysis might, therefore, help us begin to understand these otherwise puzzling data.

The organization of the chapter is as follows. In section 2 I briefly present Uriagereka’s (2000) analysis of accusative clitic-doubling. In section 3 I show the similarity between the syntax and semantics of accusative clitic-doubling and the syntax and semantics of “big” Ps arrived at independently in this work. In section 4 I sketch a doubling analysis of “big” Ps, and in section 5 I discuss some further advantages of the proposal. Finally, section 6 is a summary of this chapter.

4.2 Uriagereka (2000)

Uriagereka (2000) argues that sentences with verbs taking a direct object, and their clitic-doubled counterparts, have a different structure and can actually mean different things. In other words, he defends the idea that sentences like (111a) and (111b) below have a different syntax and a different semantics.

(111) a. Vi a María. (non-doubled variant)

saw A María

‘I saw María.’

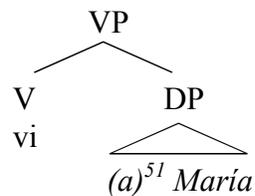
b. **La** vi a María (doubled variant)

CL_{ACC.FEM.SG} saw A María

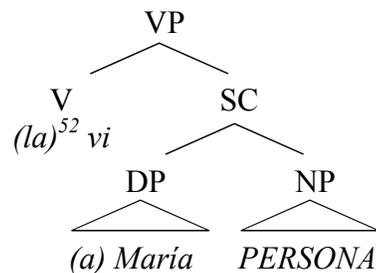
‘I saw María.’

In (111a), in Uriagereka’s words, “what we see is what we get,” that is to say, the verb selects a single DP complement (see footnote 51). In (111b), on the other hand, he proposes that the verb selects a Possessor-Possessum small clause with *María* as its subject and a silent classifier (specifically, the classifier PERSONA) as its predicate. The DP *María* is understood as being the possessor of her PERSONA. The different structures for the non-doubled and doubled variants are shown in simplified form in (112) and (113) below, respectively.

(112) Structure for *Vi a María* ((111a), non-doubled variant)



(113) Structure for *La vi a María* ((111b), doubled variant)



In section 4.2.1 I describe very briefly how it is that Uriagereka arrives at the structures above, and I then discuss the similarity between these structures and the structures for “small” and “big” Ps put forth in this work.

⁵¹ I leave the *a* between brackets and make no claims whatsoever as to whether it is present in the syntax (and what position it occupies in the structure, if this is the case) or whether it is added postsyntactically, as I believe this not to be strictly relevant to the observations made in this section.

⁵² I also leave aside here the issue of where the clitic originates and where it surfaces, as this is, like the status of *a* in footnote 51, not strictly relevant to the discussion at hand.

4.2.1 The motivation behind Uriagereka’s doubling analysis

Uriagereka’s hypothesis is that a possessive relation is present in every instance of doubling. The relation between doubling and possession is most evident in cases of possessor datives, which is why possessor datives serve as the starting point of his argumentation. Once his analysis of these structures is in place, he proposes to extend it to all instances of doubling. The possessor dative example he discusses in detail is the one shown in (114) below.

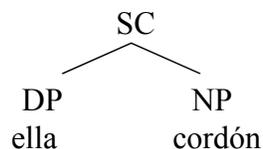
(114) (Yo) le vi el cordón a ella.

I CL_{DAT} saw the cord A her

‘I saw her cord.’

Uriagereka points out that there are several aspects of meaning present in (114) that an accurate syntactic representation of the sentence should reflect. One of them is that in (114) *el cordón* ‘the cord’ is understood as being inalienably possessed by the referent of *ella* ‘her.’ He suggests that this possession relation can be captured if *ella* ‘her’ and *el cordón* ‘the cord’ start out as the subject and the predicate of a small clause, respectively, as sketched in (115).

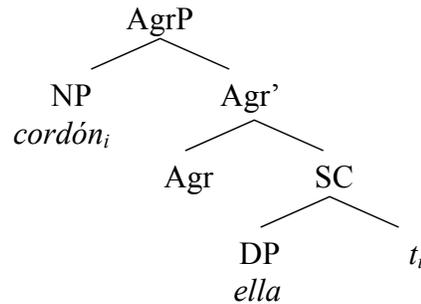
(115) Representation of inalienable possession in (114)



He further notes that the sentence is not true if the speaker simply noticed that the referent of *ella* ‘her’ had a cord; rather, it is only true if what the speaker saw was the actual cord itself. To ensure that the structure reflects that what the speaker saw was an entity and not a state of affairs (with this latter interpretation being the one that would result, he argues, if the verb simply selected the simple small clause in (115)), he proposes that *cordón* ‘cord’, moves to the

specifier position of an agreement projection with referential properties. Movement to this projection is sketched in (116).

(116) Representation of movement to [Spec, AgrP] in (114)

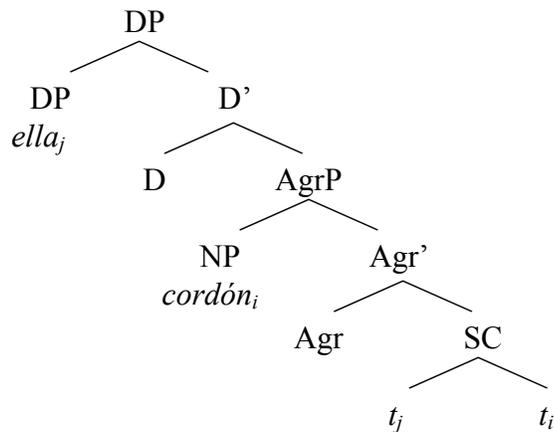


Finally, he points out a third meaning component present in (114). For this sentence to be true, the possessor and the thing possessed have to be attached at the moment of the event. As this is a necessary meaning component of (114), it should be derivable from the structure as well. Note that nothing we have said so far forces this interpretation. It is true that the small clause in (115) encodes inalienable possession, and it is also true that inalienably possessed parts are almost always attached to their possessors. However, as Uriagereka points out, this is not necessarily always the case. Example (114), which refers to an umbilical cord, is precisely a case in point. An umbilical cord is always inalienably possessed; it belongs to a unique possessor and to nobody else. However, it is perfectly possible to imagine a situation in which the cord is detached from its possessor: after it has been severed. Interestingly, sentence (114), with clitic-doubling, can never describe a situation in which the cord is detached. If there is no attachment, the alternative structure in (117), without doubling, has to be used.

(117) (Yo) vi el cordón de ella.
 I saw the cord of her
 ‘I saw her cord.’

In (117) there is inalienable possession (thus, *ella* ‘her’ and *cordón* ‘cord’ should also start out as the subject and the predicate of a small clause) and the complement of *vi* ‘saw’ also has to be a cord (thus, under Uriagereka’s (2000) analysis, there has to be movement of *cordón* ‘cord’ to the specifier of AgrP). However, as just pointed out, (114) and (117) are not equivalent in meaning: (114), unlike (117), requires attachment of the possessor and the thing possessed at the moment of the event. Uriagereka argues that this attachment should be derivable from an accurate syntactic representation of (114). He proposes that movement of the possessor *ella* ‘her’ to the specifier of DP has precisely this effect. The D specifier codes ‘context confinement’, and it is by means of this final step that the cord is not interpreted as a “decontextualized” cord, but as a cord “contextualized” to her. Movement of the possessor to the specifier of DP is shown in (118).

(118) Representation of movement to [Spec, DP] in (114)



To sum up, a possessor dative construction such as (114) has the following three meaning components: (1) there is a relation of inalienable possession between a possessor and a thing possessed; (2) the referent of the event is the thing possessed, and not a certain state of affairs, and (3) the possessor and the thing possessed have to be attached at the moment of the event. Uriagereka proposes that the syntax captures the fact in (1) by means of a small clause structure, the fact in (2) by means of movement of the thing possessed to the specifier of an AgrP with referential properties, and the fact in (3) by movement of the possessor to the specifier of DP, a context confinement site.

With his discussion of possessor datives in place, Uriagereka requests the reader to take a “leap of faith.” Taking this “leap of faith” involves assuming that *every* instance of doubling, not only the doubling of possessor datives analyzed above, involves the structure and movements described above for (114)⁵³. In other words, accusative clitic-doubling should receive the same analysis as the doubling of possessor datives. As mentioned earlier, in the case of possessor datives the possession relation is clear: in for instance, *(Yo) le vi el cordón a ella* ‘(I) CL_{DAT} saw the cord A her,’ *ella* ‘her’ is the possessor, and *el cordón* ‘the cord’ the thing possessed, so it stands to reason that they should occupy the “subject” and the “predicate” position of a Possessor-Possessum small clause, respectively. In contrast, in the case of accusative clitic-doubling as in, for instance, *La vi a María* ‘CL_{ACC} saw A María,’ the Possessor-Possessum relationship is much less straightforward. There is, to begin with, aside from the clitic, only one (overt) nominal, *María*. What Uriagereka suggests is that also in these cases, just as in the cases with possessor datives, there is a Possessum-Possessor small

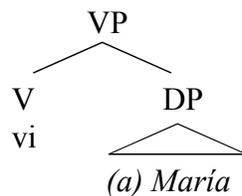
⁵³ Uriagereka (2000) refers to this assumption as The Inalienable Double Hypothesis, whose formulation is shown in (i).

(i) The Inalienable Double Hypothesis
 “All doubles stand in an inalienable possession relation with regards to the referent of the clitic they double.” (Uriagereka 2000)

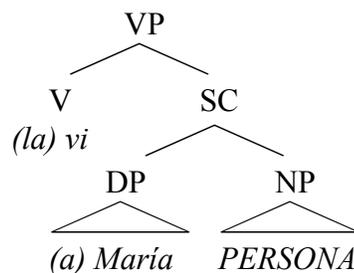
clause. *María* is understood as a possessor, and is the “subject” of the small clause. However, unlike the cases with possessor datives, in instances of accusative clitic-doubling, the possessum is not an overt nominal, but rather a silent formative, specifically, the silent formative PERSONA. In this structure *María* is understood as being the possessor of her PERSONA. Although, as Uriagereka himself points out, assuming this unified analysis for all doubling structures implies taking a “leap of faith” (in this case, a “leap” from possessor datives to accusative clitic-doubling), once this structure is assumed for accusative clitic-doubling as well, a series of semantic effects, which will be discussed shortly, start to receive an explanation.

To sum up, following Uriagereka’s argumentation, the structures of *Vi a María* ‘saw A María’ and *La vi a María* ‘CL_{ACC} saw A María’ would be the ones shown in simplified form in (112) and (113), and repeated here as (119) and (120), respectively.

(119) Structure for *Vi a María* ((111a), non-doubled variant)



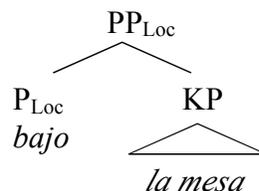
(120) Structure for *La vi a María* ((111b), doubled variant)



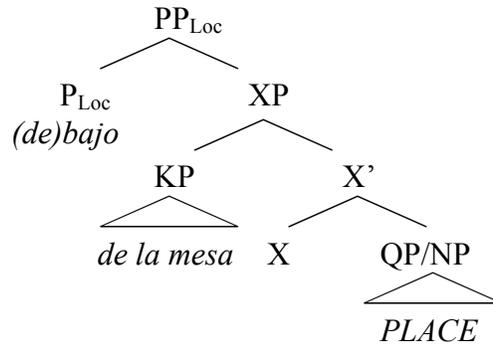
It is true that for (120) to mirror exactly the structure that Uriagereka proposes for a possessor dative like (114), we would need to assume a more complex structure. The SC should be embedded in an AgrP, and this AgrP should in turn be embedded in a DP. Movement of *PERSONA* to the specifier of AgrP would ensure referentiality, and movement of *María* to the specifier of DP would ensure “context confinement.” However, for the time being I will assume the simpler structure in (120) for two reasons. In the first place, (120) is exactly the structure we have postulated for “big” Ps, and keeping matters simple at this point will allow us to draw the parallel between Ps and doubling structures more easily. In the second place, not assuming Uriagereka’s more complex structure from scratch will allow us to think about whether the machinery he proposes is actually necessary in order to explain the semantic effects we observe, or whether we can make them follow directly from the much simpler structure in (120).

Before closing this section, I simply show, as a kind of preview, the similarity between the structures in (119) and (120) on the one hand, and the structures proposed in this work for “small” and “big” Ps, respectively. The structures for “small” and “big” Ps introduced in chapter 2 (and argued for in chapter 3) are shown in simplified form below [examples (67) and (68) from the previous chapter are repeated here as (121) and (122)].

(121) Structure of a “small” P like *bajo* ‘under’ in *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’



(122) Structure of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ in *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’



In (121), just as in Uriagereka’s (119), the head (in this case, the “small” P *bajo* ‘under’) selects a single nominal complement. Similarly, in (122), just as in Uriagereka’s (120), the head (in this case, the “big” P *debajo* ‘DE.under’) selects a Possessor-Possessum structure with the nominal as the possessor of a silent formative (silent PERSONA in one case, silent PLACE in the other).

In the remainder of this chapter I show that it is not only the representations that are strikingly similar; in addition, the semantic effects which follow from the structures in (119) and (120) are identical to the semantic effects we observed in the prepositional domain. This will lead me to suggest the possibility that the structure in (122) might be analyzed as the “doubled variant” of (121).

4.2.2 The semantics of accusative clitic-doubling

In this subsection I discuss the semantic effects that Uriagereka observes in accusative doubling structures. I then go back to the semantic effects we pointed out for “small” and “big” Ps in chapter 3, and show how similar they are to the ones he observes. This suggests the promise of an analysis in which “big” PPs are doubling structures.

4.2.2.1 Effect 1: Referentiality

Although the semantic difference between doubled and non-doubled variants is often “masked” (as is precisely the case in (111a) and (111b) above), and speakers may in fact use one sentence or the other apparently indistinctly, Uriagereka points out that a very salient contrast arises in sentences like (123a) and (123b) [examples adapted from Uriagereka 2000].

(123) a. Al verte a ti, vi a mi madre en tu sonrisa.
 upon see.CL A you saw.PAST.1SG A my mother in your smile
 ‘Upon seeing you, I saw my mother in your smile.’

b. #Al verte a ti **la** vi a mi madre en tu sonrisa.
 upon see.CL A you CL_{ACC} saw.PAST.1SG A my mother in your smile
 ‘Upon seeing you, I saw my mother in your smile.’

While (123a) is a very natural sentence, (123b) is semantically anomalous. Specifically, what the felicitous (123a) means is that a certain person, for instance, the speaker’s daughter, looks like the speaker’s mother when she smiles, and this is a perfectly natural interpretation. In other words, *mi madre* ‘my mother’ is interpreted as an *attribute*. In contrast, (123b) can only describe a bizarre situation in which the speaker literally sees his/her mother in his/her daughter’s smile, in Uriagereka’s words, as in “a reflection or hallucination.” That is to say, in (123b) *mi madre* ‘my mother’ necessarily receives a *referential* reading, and that is what gives rise to the anomaly. Uriagereka ascribes the referential interpretation in (123b), in the presence of the clitic *la*, to the silent classifier PERSONA. As there is no silent classifier in (123a), in the absence of the clitic *la*, the anomaly does not arise.

4.2.2.2 Effect 2: Delimitedness

Another example presented by Uriagereka to show how clitic-doubling brings about a clear difference in interpretation is the one shown in (124) below [examples from Schmitt 1995 mentioned in Uriagereka 2000].

- (124) a. Yo toqué esa sonata hasta las 7:00 _ diez veces durante horas!
 I played that sonata until the 7:00 _ ten times during hours
 ‘I played that sonata until 7:00 _ ten times for hours!’
- b. Yo **la** toqué a esa sonata hasta las 7:00 _ #diez veces durante horas!
 I _{CL_{ACC}} played _A that sonata until the 7:00 _ ten times during hours
 ‘I played that sonata until 7:00 _ #ten times for hours!’

The interpretation of (124a) (without the clitic *la*) is that the speaker practiced playing the sonata 10 times, and played every time a different token performance. On the other hand, (124b) (with the clitic *la*) can only be understood to mean that the speaker played an unreasonably long sonata and that this single performance lasted hours. Without the addition of the adjunct *diez veces* ‘ten times,’ this latter situation is unusual, but still possible. However, the inclusion of the phrase *diez veces* ‘ten times’ gives rise to anomaly. The reason for this is that *diez veces* ‘ten times’ contradicts the fact that it is necessarily one token of the sonata that was performed. What Uriagereka points out then, is that whereas in (124a), the “non-doubled variant,” *esa sonata* ‘that sonata’ denotes a *type*, in (124b), the “doubled variant”, it denotes a *token*. This difference in interpretation is made to follow from a structural difference: in (124b), unlike in (124a), there is a silent element (which he labels *pro*) with properties like those of the silent PERSONA in (111b). This silent element ensures that

the sonata refers to an individuated sonata⁵⁴, in other words, to a token, and not a type.

Summarizing Uriagareka’s findings, we can say that an accusative clitic-doubling structure differs from its non-doubled counterpart in two main respects. In the first place, the doubling structure has a necessarily referential interpretation. When the sentence forces a reading that is not referential (as in (123)), the doubled variant gives rise to anomaly. In the second place, the doubling structure forces a delimited interpretation. This is why when the sentence necessarily requires an unbounded or non-delimited interpretation (as in (124)), the doubled variant is infelicitous. Interestingly, these two semantic effects, referentiality and delimitedness, were the ones pointed out for “big” vs “small” Ps in chapter 3.

4.3 “Small” and “big” Ps and referentiality and delimitedness

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, in many cases clitic-doubling appears to be optional. In other words, speakers appear to use the doubled or the non-doubled variant of a given sentence indistinctly. Similarly, speakers also very often seem to use structures with “big” and “small” Ps indistinctly. A case in point would be the sentences in (125) below.

(125) a. El libro está bajo la mesa.

the book is under the table

‘The book is under the table.’

b. El libro está debajo de la mesa.

the book is DE.under of the table

‘The book is under the table.’

⁵⁴ As discussed earlier, under Uriagareka’s analysis, *esa sonata* ‘that sonata’ and the silent element (*pro*) move to the context confinement site mentioned earlier in this chapter. This context confinement site is an inner topic position which gives rise to the delimited, non-iterative reading.

However, anomaly/ungrammaticality arises in cases like (83), repeated here as (126).

(126) a. Estos chicos están bajo mi responsabilidad.

these kids are under my responsibility

‘These kids are under my responsibility.’

b. *Estos chicos están debajo de mi responsabilidad.

these kids are DE.under of my responsibility

‘These kids are under my responsibility.’

The reason for the failure of (126b) seems to be parallel to the failure of Uriagereka’s (123b). Silent PLACE is referential, just like silent PERSONA is. When the only reading possible is non-referential, the doubled variants ((123b) and (126b)) result in anomaly.

In chapter 3 I also pointed out that there was another instance in which “big” Ps were anomalous. A relevant example is given in (127) [example (93) from the previous chapter].

(127) a. Nos acostamos a descansar bajo el sol.

CL.1PL lay to rest.INF under the sun

‘We lay down to rest in the sun.’

b. #Nos acostamos a descansar debajo del sol.

CL.1PL lay to rest.INF DE.under of.the sun

‘We lay down to rest right underneath the sun.’

As mentioned in the previous chapter, (127a) can be used to describe a situation in which we lie outdoors in the sun. The sentence in (127b), on the other hand, cannot be used to describe this same situation. It would only be felicitous in a very specific context, for example if we are

lying under a fake sun (for instance, a cardboard sun in a play), but not otherwise. In other words, as we mentioned before, “big” Ps force a delimited reading of the nominal. The parallel with Uriagereka’s sonata example is clear. In the sonata example, the doubled variant gives rise to a delimited interpretation of the nominal (the sentence has to necessarily refer to a single individuated sonata) and is therefore not felicitous. On the other hand, in the non-doubled variant, an iterative (non-delimited/unbounded) interpretation is possible.⁵⁵

Before closing this section, I would like to discuss very briefly what it is in the doubling structure that is responsible for the two semantic effects we have been discussing: (1) referentiality and (2) delimitedness. Under Uriagereka’s analysis (1) is achieved by movement of the possessum to the specifier of an Agreement projection above the small clause (a projection he takes to be referential) and (2) is achieved by movement of the possessor to the specifier of DP, in his terms, a “context confinement site.” This is clearly a possibility.

However, Uriagereka himself states that the silent formative PERSONA is the element responsible for reference. If this is the case, then I would like to suggest that Uriagereka’s

⁵⁵ Interestingly, Cuervo (2003) also gives an example where doubling gives rise to delimitedness (in her case, the doubling of a dative argument), although she does not describe it in these terms. She points out that there is a difference in interpretation between (i) and (ii), its doubled variant.

- (i) Pablo admira la paciencia de Valeria.
Pablo admires the patience of Valeria
'Pablo admires Valeria's patience.'
- (ii) Pablo **le** admira la paciencia a Valeria.
Pablo CL_{DAT} admires the patience to Valeria
'Pablo admires Valeria for her patience.'

The difference is “temporal”, she says. Whereas for (i) to be felicitous it is necessary that Valeria should be a patient person, this is not a requirement in the case of (ii). The sentence in (ii) can very well be used to describe a specific situation in which Valeria is being patient even though she may not be a particularly patient person in general. These different interpretations, as suggested by Christina Tortora (p.c.), could be characterized as an “individual-level” versus “stage-level” interpretation of the predicate, respectively. Interestingly, there is a sense in which individual-level predicates seem to be “unbounded” (atemporal), whereas stage-level predicates appear to be “bounded” or “delimited” (true of a certain moment in time). The fact that the clitic is absent in (i), which has the individual-level (or “unbounded”) interpretation, but present in (ii), which has the stage-level (or “bounded”) interpretation, seems to me to reinforce the idea that doubling structures induce a delimited effect.

postulation of an AgrP above SC is unnecessary, as referentiality would already follow from the presence of the silent element. In a similar vein, I would like to suggest that Uriagereka's postulation of movement of the possessor to “context confinement” is also unnecessary. As such, I would hypothesize that the structure alone gives rise to the desired semantic interpretation, without the need for these further steps that Uriagereka proposes.

Recall my observation in chapter 2 that there appears to be a ban on unbounded possessors independently of the structure they appear in, so that both (128a) and (128b) are perfectly felicitous, whereas both (129a) and (129b) appear to me to be anomalous:

(128) a. Le tiré cloro a la pileta.

CL_{DAT} threw.1SG chlorine to the pool

‘I poured chlorine into the pool.’

b. La pileta tiene cloro.

the pool has chlorine

‘The pool has chlorine in it.’

(129) a. #Le tiré petróleo al mar.

CL_{DAT} threw.1SG oil to.the sea

‘I poured oil into the sea.’

b. #El mar tiene petróleo.

the sea has oil

‘The sea has oil in it.’

The (a) examples involve a doubling structure. The (b) examples transitive *tener* ‘have’ sentences with the possessor as the subject. Under Uriagereka’s view, we would need to postulate an AgrP and a DP responsible for context confinement above the SC structure which Uriagereka proposes for doubling structures (and which we have proposed for “big” Ps in this work). If instead the semantics we observe can be made to follow from the referential properties of silent PLACE and the incompatibility of possessors and unboundedness, then (by Occam’s razor), the simpler structure should be preferred.

If, on the other hand, Uriagereka’s approach turns out to be on the right track, my analysis (with the Uriagereka-like movements) would remain intact (except for the addition of these two extra layers and subsequent movements to them, to ensure we get the readings we observe).

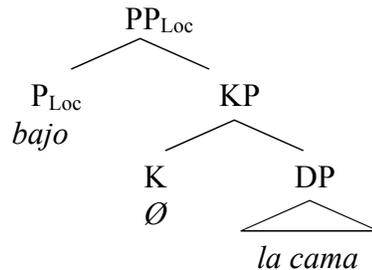
4.4 A brief sketch of a doubling analysis of “big” Ps

Having shown that the semantic effects we find in doubling structures bear a striking resemblance to the semantic effects we observe in “big” PPs, I now describe what a possible doubling analysis for “small”/“big” PPs would look like.

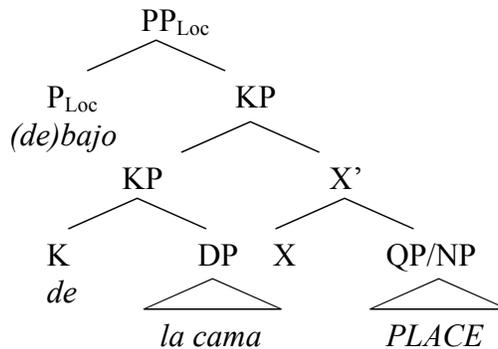
In the first place, it is important to mention that under this kind of analysis, “small” Ps (e.g. *bajo* ‘under’) and “big” Ps (e.g. *debajo* ‘DE.under’) would not be different lexical items, but rather there would be a single lexical item P_{Loc} for each “small”/ “big” pair. Just to give an example, for the *bajo* ‘under’/*debajo* ‘DE.under’ pair, there would be a single P_{Loc} : *bajo* ‘under.’ When *bajo* ‘under’ combines with a KP, we get the structure in (121), repeated here

as (130a). When it combines with the Possessor-Possessum structure we get the structure in (122), repeated here as (130b).⁵⁶

(130) a. Structure of a “small” P like *bajo* ‘under’ in *bajo la cama* ‘under the bed’



b. Structure of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ in *debajo de la cama* ‘DE.under of the bed’



As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, there are several positive consequences that would follow from an analysis such as this one. To begin with, as just mentioned, there would be a single P_{Loc} at the heart of each “small”/ “big” P pair, and this would lighten the burden of the lexicon. Apart from this, we would gain an explanation for the morphological “make-up” of “small” and “big” Ps, that is to say, for why “big” Ps are always bi-morphemic, whereas “small” Ps are always mono-morphemic. If, as we have been claiming, a “big” P is really

⁵⁶ As mentioned before, this chapter is exploratory in nature. This means that many questions about the specific implementation of the analysis will go unanswered. For instance, I will not be discussing here where the clitic originates, or what its final landing site is. However, these are questions that any doubling account must face (any account of accusative-clitic doubling, dative clitic-doubling, our new instance of doubling, etc.), and are not specific to the account developed here in particular.

made up of a clitic and a P_{Loc} , then it stands to reason that it should always be morphologically “larger” than its non-doubled, “cliticless” “small” P counterpart. Note that nothing in our analysis up to this point predicted the fact that “big” Ps should be morphologically more complex than “small” Ps. Under the analysis put forth in chapters 2 and 3, there was no reason why “small” Ps should not be morphologically more complex than “big” Ps, or why “small” or “big” Ps should not be equally morphologically complex, for that matter. This is therefore, a welcome consequence.

4.5 Some further advantages of a doubling analysis of “big” Ps

4.5.1 Clitic-doubling and Kayne’s Generalization

Another interesting consequence of a doubling analysis of locative Ps is that we might get an explanation for why we do not find an explicit Case-marker introducing the nominal complement of a “small” P, but we do find the Case-marker *de* ‘of’ introducing the nominal complement of a “big” P. The relevant examples are given in (131a) and (131b) below.

- (131) a. El libro está bajo la mesa.
the book is under the table
‘The book is under the table.’

- b. El libro está debajo de la mesa.
the book is DE.under of the table
'The book is under the table.'

I propose that under a doubling analysis of “big” Ps, the absence of Case-marker *de* ‘of’ in the complement of “small” Ps versus its presence in the complement of “big” Ps can be made to follow from what is known in the literature as Kayne’s Generalization.

In the next subsection I formulate this generalization and show that it seems to hold of accusative clitic-doubling and dative clitic-doubling alike. I then discuss how the absence versus presence of *de* ‘of’ in the complement of “small” and “big” Ps might simply be one more instance of this generalization.

4.5.1.1 Accusative and dative clitic-doubling and Kayne’s Generalization

Kayne’s Generalization was mentioned in the introduction to this chapter and is formulated in (132) below.

(132) Kayne’s Generalization

“An object NP may be doubled by a clitic only if the NP is preceded by a preposition.”
(Jaeggli 1980)

This statement simply captures the observation that in every instance of clitic-doubling the doubled DP has to be introduced by a P (or a K). The idea behind (132), when it was first formulated, was that clitics absorbed Case, and that therefore a Case-assigner was required in the structure. However, I do not discuss here why, if true, the generalization should hold. I simply point out that something like Kayne’s Generalization also seems to be true of the Ps we have been analyzing in this work.

Let’s first take a brief look at Kayne’s Generalization at work in standard cases of clitic-doubling. In Spanish, an accusative DP which bears the features [+animate]⁵⁷ and [+specific] is typically introduced by what is known in the literature as personal *a*. When personal *a* is present, doubling is possible, as shown in (133) below.

(133) a. **La** vi a María esta mañana.

CL_{ACC} saw A María this morning

‘I saw María this morning.’

b. Hoy **la** encontré a tu madre en el mercado.

today CL_{ACC} met A your mother in the market.

‘Today I met your mother in the market.’

If the DP does not satisfy both these requirements, in other words, if the DP is not both [+animate] and [+specific], then personal *a* does not appear in the structure, and doubling is not possible. This is exemplified in (134) through (136) [examples taken from Zdrojewski 2008].

(134) a. Juan compró la casa. [-animate, +specific]

Juan bought the house

‘Juan bought the house.’

⁵⁷ It may be the case that the feature involved in clitic-doubling is [+/- human] and not [+/- animate]. However, I will not make a distinction between these two features at this point.

- b. *Juan compró a la casa. [-animate, +specific]

Juan bought A the house

‘Juan bought the house.’

- c. *Juan la compró la casa. [-animate, +specific]

Juan CL_{ACC} bought the house

‘Juan bought the house.’

- (135) a. Juan busca una mujer que tenga anteojos. [+animate, -specific]

Juan looks for a woman that has.SUBJ glasses

‘Juan is looking for a woman who wears glasses.’

- b. *Juan busca a una mujer que tenga anteojos. [+animate, -specific]

Juan looks for A a woman that has.SUBJ glasses

‘Juan is looking for a woman who wears glasses.’

- c. *Juan la busca una mujer que tenga anteojos. [+animate, -specific]

Juan CL_{ACC} looks.for a woman that has.SUBJ glasses

‘Juan is looking for a woman who wears glasses.’

- (136) a. Juan busca una casa que tenga ventanas. [-animate, -specific]

Juan looks.for a house that has.SUBJ windows

‘Juan is looking for a house that has windows.’

- b. *Juan busca a una casa que tenga ventanas. [-animate, -specific]

Juan looks.for A a house that has.SUBJ windows

‘Juan is looking for a house that has windows.’

- c. *Juan la busca una casa que tenga ventanas. [-animate, -specific]
 Juan CL_{ACC} looks.for a house that has.SUBJ windows
 ‘Juan is looking for a house that has windows.’

In the examples above either the [+animate] requirement, or the [+specific] requirement, or both of them are not met. As a consequence, personal *a* is not present in the structure and doubling is banned, just as predicted by Kayne’s Generalization. Just to review each example in turn, in the (a) examples we see that it is *possible* for [-animate] and/or [-specific] DPs not to be introduced by personal *a*. In the (b) examples we see that this *necessarily* has to be so (the presence of personal *a* leads to ungrammaticality). In the (c) examples we see that doubling is not possible in the absence of personal *a*. The unavailability of the (c) examples is precisely what Kayne’s Generalization means to capture.

As expected, in cases of dative clitic-doubling, Kayne’s Generalization seems to hold, too. Doubling is only possible if the doubled DP is introduced by dative *a*, just as the generalization predicts. We saw above that in accusative clitic-doubling the doubled DP had to be [+animate] [+specific]. In contrast, dative clitic doubling does not seem to impose any animacy or specificity requirements on the doubled DP. Below we can see that it is possible to double the [-animate] DP *la biblioteca* ‘the library’ and the [-specific] DP *una bibliotecaria* ‘a librarian’ [examples from Cuervo 2003].

- (137) Hugo le devolvió los libros a Juana/ a la biblioteca.
 Hugo CL_{DAT} returned the books to Juana/ to the library
 ‘Hugo returned the books to Juana/ to the library.’

(138) Hugo **le** quiere devolver los libros a una bibliotecaria.

Hugo _{CL_{DAT}} wants return.INF the books to a librarian

‘Hugo wants to return the books to a librarian.’

4.5.1.2 “Small” and “big” Ps and Kayne’s Generalization

In the case of “big” Ps, we also find co-occurrence of the “clitic” *de* ‘DE’⁵⁸ and the Case-marker *de* ‘of.’

(139) El libro está **debajo de** la mesa.

the book is DE.under of the table

‘The book is under the table.’

If the Case-marker *de* ‘of’ is absent, “the clitic” (*de* ‘DE’) cannot appear, in conformity with Kayne’s Generalization, as illustrated in (140).

(140) *El libro está **debajo** la mesa.

the book is DE.under the table

‘The book is under the table.’

Note, by the way, that Kayne’s Generalization as formulated in (132) is a one way entailment.

It states that doubling (the presence of the clitic) requires that the doubled DP be introduced by a preposition (or what is standardly known in the literature as a Case-marker), and this rules out (140). However, this generalization makes no claims as to whether the presence of the Case-marker requires the presence of the clitic. In other words, whereas Kayne’s

⁵⁸ Note that in many of the examples presented here the “clitic” is realized as *de* ‘DE.’ However, there also seem to be cases in which this “clitic” appears to be realized as *en* ‘IN,’ as in for instance *enfrente de la casa* ‘in.front of the house.’ This matter will be taken up very briefly in chapter 5.

Generalization predicts that (139) should be grammatical and that (140) should be ungrammatical, it makes no predictions for the contrast below.

(141) El libro está bajo la mesa.

the book is under the table

‘The book is under the table.’

(142) *El libro está bajo de la mesa.

the book is under of the table

‘The book is under the table.’

In chapter 3 I provided an alternative explanation for the contrast between (139) and (140). I proposed that there were two Ks, one null and the other one overt (in a parallel fashion to Pesetsky’s (1992) analysis of the null complementizer *that* and its overt counterpart). I suggested, along the lines of Pesetsky (1992), that null K was affixal and needed to attach to a suitable host by means of head movement in the syntax. The ungrammaticality of (140) then followed from the impossibility of extraction out of a left branch (under our analysis, *de la mesa* ‘the table’ in (140) is on a left branch; it is occupying an A-specifier position; it is the possessor of silent PLACE). This left overt non-affixal *de* ‘of’ as the only option for this structure, as shown in (139). However, we also found no explanation for the contrast between (141) and (142). The distribution of null K is restricted because it needs to incorporate (thus accounting for the impossibility of (140)), but overt *de* ‘of’ does not need to incorporate (and that is why it is licit in (139), for instance), so there is in principle no reason why it should be banned in (142).

What is interesting is that we pursued two completely independent explanations (an analysis of Case-markers à la Pesetsky, and an analysis in terms of Kayne’s Generalization) and we arrived at exactly the same place: we have an explanation for (139) vs (140) but no explanation for (141) vs (142). This cannot be a coincidence. My intuition is that the ill-formedness of (140) is different from the ill-formedness of (142). Although this needs to be confirmed with more extensive experimentation, I predict (142) to be possible in some varieties but not in others. If this turns out to be the case, then we would need to explain the impossibility of (140), which we can already do. However, instead of accounting for the impossibility of *de* ‘of’ in (142), we would need to account for its optionality, or its presence in some varieties and not in others, which seems to be what an analysis à la Pesetsky (1992) (and in terms of Kayne’s Generalization) would predict.

4.5.2 A brief note on animacy

I end this chapter by making a very tentative observation about “small” and “big” Ps and animacy. As mentioned earlier, in some instances of doubling there seems to be a relation between whether a DP is [+/- animate] (or [+/- human]) and whether it can be doubled by a clitic. For instance, in many dialects, only animate DPs can be doubled by an accusative clitic, so that in these varieties whereas a sentence like (143a) is possible, a sentence like (143b) is not.

(143) a. La visité a María.

CL_{ACC} visited. 1SG A María.

‘I visited María.’

b. *Lo visité al museo. (Cf. Visité el museo)

CL_{ACC} visited. 1SG A.the museum

‘I visited the museum.’

Note that interestingly Ps also appear to exhibit animacy effects. Although example (144a) with a “small” P appears to be ungrammatical, example (144b) with a “big” P is perfectly acceptable, according to my own judgments.

[*Context*: We are playing a game in which somebody has to hide an envelope under somebody else. The others have to guess who is sitting on it.]

(144) a. Creo que pusiste el sobre *bajo la señora/

think.PRES.1SG that put.PAST.2SG the envelope under the lady/

*bajo María.

under Mary

‘I think you put the envelope underneath the lady/underneath Mary.’

b. Creo que pusiste el sobre debajo de la

think.PRES.1SG that put.PAST.2SG the envelope DE.under of the

señora / debajo de María.

lady / DE.under of Mary

‘I think you put the envelope underneath the lady/underneath Mary.’

What we can see from the facts in (144) is that when an animate DP appears as the complement of a “small” P, the sentence is ill-formed. In contrast, an animate DP can very well be the complement of a “big” P.

That there exists an animacy restriction for the complement of “small” Ps seems to be furthermore confirmed by the fact that when the complement of the P is a pronoun, a non-animate reading is forced with “small” Ps, but not with “big” Ps.

(145) a. Creo que pusiste el sobre bajo ella
 think.PRES.1SG that put.PAST.2SG the envelope under her
 ‘I think you put the book under it/her.’
 (ok if *ella*= *la mesa*/* if *ella*=*María*)

b. Creo que pusiste el sobre debajo de ella
 think.PRES.1SG that put.PAST.2SG the envelope DE.under of her
 ‘I think you put the book under it/her.’
 (ok if *ella*=*la mesa*, ok if *ella*=*María*)

In (145a), the “small” P example, *ella* ‘her’ has to necessarily refer to an inanimate entity. On the other hand, in (145b), the “big” P example, *ella* ‘her’ can refer to either an animate or an inanimate entity.

Finally, examples (146) and (147) with *tras* ‘behind’/*detrás* ‘DE.behind’ and *ante* ‘front’/*delante* ‘DE.L.front,’ respectively, show that the animacy restriction is not an idiosyncratic property of the *bajo* ‘under’/*debajo* ‘DE.under’ pair but seems to be a general property of “small” and “big” Ps as a group.

(146) a. Juan estaba parado *tras la señora/*tras María.
 Juan was.IMPERF standing behind the lady/ behind María
 ‘Juan was standing behind the lady/behind María.’

b. Juan estaba parado detrás de la señora/ detrás de María.

Juan was.IMPERF standing DE.behind of the lady/ DE.behind of María

‘Juan was standing behind the lady/behind María.’

(147) a. Juan se sentó *ante la señora/* ante María.

Juan SE sat.3SG front the lady/ front María

‘Juan sat in front of the lady/in front of María.’

b. Juan se sentó delante de la señora/ delante de María.

Juan SE sat.3SG DE.L.front of the lady/ DE.L.front of María

‘Juan sat in front of the lady/in front of María.’

Although the animacy effect in the PP domain is evident, I have no explanation for the specific fact of why animates are not possible as the complement of “small” Ps. It is true that animacy sometimes plays a role in the syntax of clitic-doubling, as is the case with accusative clitic-doubling.⁵⁹ However, the relation between animacy and doubling in these cases seems to be that animates are optionally doubled in some dialects, and not doubled at all in some others (Uriagereka 2000). That is to say, doubling of animates is either *optional* or *impossible*.

However, according to the data we have just reviewed, in the PP domain the doubling of animates seems to be *obligatory* (note again the contrast between the **bajo María* ‘under María’ and *debajo de María* ‘DE.under of María’). I leave the relation between doubling and animacy in one domain and the other as a matter for future research.

⁵⁹ I do not raise instances of dative clitic doubling here because, as mentioned earlier, animacy seems to play no role in these cases of doubling.

4.6 Chapter summary

In this chapter I have explored a line of analysis under which “big” PPs are actually the “doubled counterpart” of their corresponding “small” PPs. The similarities between “big” PPs and doubling structures (and in particular accusative clitic-doubling structures) are striking. On the semantic front, both “big” PPs and doubling structures exhibit the same effects: namely, referentiality and delimitedness. These two effects are interestingly absent from “small” PPs and non-doubled structures. I also discussed how, if a doubling analysis of “big” Ps were to be pursued, a series of welcome consequences would follow directly from it: in the first place, we would gain an explanation for why “big” Ps are always morphologically more complex than “small” Ps; in the second place, we might explain the co-occurrence of the two *des* in “big” PP structures and in the third place, we might begin to understand why we find unexpected animacy effects in the complement of these locative Ps. As mentioned in this chapter, many questions still remain. However, the similarities observed between one domain and the other are too evident to be missed. To me, they seem to constitute strong evidence that an analysis along these lines might be promising. I will continue to explore these correlations in future work.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In this thesis I have analyzed the behavior of two groups of spatial prepositions in Spanish. One group is made up of items like *bajo* ‘under,’ *tras* ‘behind’ and *ante* ‘front.’ I labeled the Ps in this group “small” prepositions (or “small” Ps). The other group includes items like *debajo* ‘DE.under,’ *detrás* ‘DE.behind’ and *delante* ‘DE.L.front.’ These Ps I labeled “big” prepositions (or “big” Ps). The morphological difference between “small” and “big” Ps is clear: “big” Ps are morphologically just like “small” Ps with the difference that they are prefixed by *de* ‘DE’ and have their complement in turn introduced by *de* ‘of’ (e.g. *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’). What I proposed in this work was that these morphological “pieces” present in the structure of “big” Ps, namely the first and second instance of *de* in, for instance, *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table,’ constituted evidence that “small” and “big” Ps projected different structures. I argued that once we assumed the structures for “small” and “big” Ps proposed in this work, a series of syntactic and semantic asymmetries between the groups shifted from the realm of the mysterious to that of the utterly predictable.

In chapter 2 I presented the first asymmetry between “small” and “big” Ps. Specifically, I pointed out that an unmodified bare nominal was possible as the complement of a “small” P like *bajo* ‘under’ (e.g. *bajo tierra* ‘under earth’) but was impossible as the complement of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ (e.g. **debajo de tierra* ‘DE.under of earth’). I drew attention to the fact that it had been observed independently in the literature (Cuervo 2003) that unmodified bare-nominals could not be A-specifiers. I therefore attributed this contrast between “small” and “big” Ps to the fact that the nominal was a *complement* in the

case of “small” Ps but the *specifier* of the complement in the case of “big” Ps. With this crucial difference in place, I went on to propose two different structural representations for “small” and “big” Ps. I postulated that “small” Ps had a simple structure: they selected a nominal complement. I argued that, in contrast, “big” Ps selected a more complex structure, specifically, a Possesor-Possessum structure whose specifier was the nominal (e.g. *de la mesa* ‘of the table’ in *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’) and whose complement was silent PLACE.

In chapter 3 I presented some other syntactic and semantic asymmetries between “small” and “big” Ps and proposed an explanation for each one of them that supported the structures postulated in chapter 2. The first asymmetry I addressed was coordination. I showed that the nominal complement of a “small” P like *bajo* ‘under’ could not be coordinated with another nominal (e.g. **bajo [la cama y la mesa]* ‘under the bed and the table’), whereas the nominal complement of a “big” P like *debajo* ‘DE.under’ could (e.g. *debajo [de la cama y de la mesa]* ‘DE.under of the bed and of the table’). I also presented data showing that an adverb could not intervene between a “small” P and its complement (e.g. **bajo, probablemente, la cama* ‘under probably the bed’) but that it could intervene, at least for some speakers, between a “big” P and its complement (e.g. *%debajo, probablemente, de la cama* ‘DE.under probably of the bed’). On the semantic front, I discussed two issues: (non)locative readings of the PP and (un)boundedness. As to the first contrast, I showed that “small” PPs could have either a locative interpretation (e.g. *bajo la mesa* ‘under the table’) or a non-locative one (e.g. *bajo mi responsabilidad* ‘under my responsibility’), whereas the non-locative interpretation was banned for “big” PPs (e.g. **debajo de mi responsabilidad* ‘DE.under of my responsibility’). As regards the second semantic contrast, I argued that while the nominal complement of a “small” P could be interpreted as bounded or unbounded, the nominal complement of a “big” P was

forced to receive a bounded interpretation. I suggested that it was precisely this difference in boundedness that gave rise to the anomaly of a PP like #*debajo del sol* ‘DE.under of the sun,’ whose interpretation corresponds roughly to ‘right underneath the sun,’ as opposed to the perfectly acceptable *bajo el sol*, literally ‘under the sun.’ In sum, the goal of this chapter was to analyze each of the syntactic and semantic asymmetries mentioned above and to show that, if we simply assumed the structures proposed in chapter 2, these facts ceased to be puzzling but were, rather, exactly what we would expect.

After having established the different structures for “small” and “big” Ps (chapter 2), and after having confirmed that the predictions made by these structures were borne out (chapter 3), in chapter 4 I decided to bring the analysis a step further. I pointed out that the semantic effects we observed in the behavior of “big” Ps (as opposed to their “small” P counterparts), namely the contrast in (non)locative readings and the (un)bounded interpretation of the nominal, bore a striking resemblance to the semantic effects observed by Uriagereka (2000) in accusative clitic-doubling structures (as opposed to their non-doubled counterparts). This led me to suggest that “big” Ps were in fact the “doubled variants” of their “small” P counterparts. This new refinement in the analysis brought two important consequences. In the first place, it allowed me to confirm that the structures for “small” and “big” Ps proposed in this work, which practically mirrored Uriagereka’s (2000), were on the right track. In the second place, it provided me with an explanation for a correlation that my analysis had left unexplained up to this point: the co-occurrence of the first and second instance of *de* in the structure of “big” PPs (e.g. *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’). I suggested that if “big” PPs were doubling structures, then this correlation could be made to follow from Kayne’s Generalization. I also pointed out that “small” Ps, unlike their “big” P counterparts, appeared to exhibit animacy effects (**el libro está bajo Juan* ‘the book is under

Juan’ vs *el libro está debajo de Juan* ‘the book is DE.under of Juan’). Interestingly, animacy has been observed to play a role in clitic-doubling, too. This seems to me to constitute a further piece of evidence that a uniform analysis of these two apparently unrelated structures (“big” PPs and clitic-doubling structures) might be promising.

There are of course many questions that still remain open. For instance, I have proposed in this work that *de* ‘DE’ in *debajo de la mesa* ‘DE.under of the table’ is a clitic. This raises several questions, such as: Where does the clitic originate? Where does it surface? Why is its shape *de* in the first place? I leave these questions for future work.

Another issue worth exploring is the relation between animacy and doubling. As mentioned in chapter 4, in accusative clitic-doubling, the doubling of animates tends to be either *optional* or *impossible* (depending on the variety), whereas in the PP domain the doubling of animates seems to be *obligatory*. An interesting question to investigate would be why this should be so. A related, deeper question still, is why should animacy matter for doubling at all.

Finally, I also mentioned in passing in this work that the contrasts exhibited by “small” and “big” Ps also seem to be exhibited by other pairs of Ps such as *frente* ‘front’/*enfrente* ‘in.front’ and *sobre* ‘on’/*encima* ‘on.top.’ These pairs differ morphologically from those that are the main focus of this work. The members of the *frente* ‘front’/*enfrente* ‘in.front’ pair are morphologically related but, unlike the members of the *bajo* ‘under’/*debajo* ‘DE.under’ pair: (1) the root is nominal (*frente* ‘front’) and not adjectival (*bajo*, literally ‘low’), and (2) the prefix introducing the “big” P is not *de* ‘DE’ but *en* ‘IN.’ In the case of the *sobre* ‘on’/*encima* ‘on.top’ pair, the Ps are not morphologically related at all. It would certainly be fruitful to carry out further experimental work to find out if these other pairs of Ps do indeed exhibit all the contrasts described here for “small” and “big” Ps, and if they do (or if they do not), to

refine the analysis developed here to accommodate these other pairs of Ps.

I leave all these questions (and others) for future research.

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