

*Received 27 April 2018.*

*Accepted 21 November 2018.*

## THE LACK OF SUBJECT INVERSION IN PUERTO RICAN INFINITIVE CLAUSES

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### Abstract

This paper explores the syntactic variation in Spanish focusing on a difference between European and Puerto Rican Spanish: the lack of subject-verb inversion in Puerto Rican infinitive clauses. Whereas infinitive subjects must follow the verb in European Spanish, they can also appear in preverbal position in Puerto Rican Spanish. On the one hand, this paper provides a detailed description of the phenomenon; for example, it determines what type of subjects can occupy the preverbal position in Puerto Rican Spanish. On the other hand, it offers empirical evidence for the following claim: this asymmetry between European and Puerto Rican Spanish is derived from infinitive subjects occupying different positions in these varieties, but not from the verb moving from T(ense) to C(omplementizer) in European Spanish.

### Keywords

syntactic variation, subject position, infinitive clauses, Puerto Rican Spanish

### LA FALTA DE INVERSIÓN DEL SUJETO EN LAS CLÁUSULAS DE INFINITIVO EN EL ESPAÑOL DE PUERTO RICO

### RESUMEN

Este trabajo explora la variación sintáctica en español a partir de una diferencia que existe entre el español europeo y el de Puerto Rico: la falta de inversión sujeto-verbo en las cláusulas de infinitivo en el

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español hablado en Puerto Rico. Los sujetos de infinitivo deben seguir al verbo en español europeo, mientras que en el de Puerto Rico también pueden aparecer en posición preverbal. Por un lado, este artículo ofrece una descripción detallada del fenómeno; por ejemplo, determina qué sujetos pueden ocupar la posición preverbal en el español de Puerto Rico. Por otro lado, proporciona evidencia empírica a favor de la siguiente propuesta: esta asimetría entre el español europeo y el de Puerto Rico obedece a que el sujeto ocupa posiciones diferentes en estas variedades, y no a que el verbo se desplaza desde el ST(tiempo) al SC(omplementante) en español europeo.

### Palabras clave

variación sintáctica, posición del sujeto, cláusulas de infinitivo, español de Puerto Rico

## 1. Introduction

This paper deals with the lack of subject inversion in Puerto Rican infinitive clauses (Navarro 1966; Morales 1986, 1999; Suñer 1986; Pérez-Leroux 1999; Toribio 2000; Ortiz López 2016). As shown in (1), in European Spanish (ES), the lexical subject of an infinitive must occur in postverbal position; Puerto Rican Spanish (PRS), in contrast, allows preverbal subjects in that context.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a. Al tú marcharte, nos pidieron ayuda. (\*ES/ PRS)  
           to.the you leave-INF NOS they.asked help  
       b. Al marcharte tú, nos pidieron ayuda. (ES/ PRS)  
           to.the leave-INF you NOS they.asked help  
           ‘When you left, they asked us for help’.

The grammaticality of (1a) in PRS is treated as a peculiarity of this variety in the literature. However, if we take into account the fact that Spanish is a free word order language, as illustrated in (2), the marked situation seems to be the impossibility of having preverbal subjects in ES.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are other Spanish varieties that allow preverbal subjects in infinitive clauses. However, since our data are exclusively from Puerto Rican Spanish, we will focus only on this variety.

<sup>2</sup> As is well known, the examples in (2) involve semantic differences regarding the informative structure.

- (2) a. Juan compró la comida.  
Juan bought the food
- b. Compró Juan la comida.  
bought Juan the food
- c. Compró la comida Juan.  
bought the food Juan  
'John bought the food'.

Interestingly, Old Spanish patterns with PRS, but not with ES, since preverbal subjects were allowed in adjunct infinitive clauses (Mensching 2000; Sitaridou 2009), as shown in (3a). Postverbal subjects were also possible (see (3b)), but they were less frequent until the 15th century (Sitaridou 2009).<sup>3</sup>

- (3) a. Me han por loco por yo vestir tales paños commo estos.  
ME have for mad for I wear-INF such clothes like these  
'They take me for mad because I wear such clothes'.  
(*Libro del caballero Zifar*)
- b. Ca por escapar yo agora dela pena delos omnes.  
for escape-INF I now from.the punishment of.the men  
'Because for having now escaped the punishment of the men after the death I would not be frightened by them'.  
(*General Estoria* V, Alfonso X)

[from Sitaridou 2009: 45-46]

The pattern illustrated in (1) is also found in interrogative sentences, which require subject-verb inversion in ES. Thus, in this variety, the subject must follow the verb, that is, (4b) is fine but (4a) is out.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, PRS lacks obligatory inversion between the subject

<sup>3</sup> The reader is referred to Suñer (2015) for a diachronic study of word order in participle clauses.

<sup>4</sup> As noted by Torrego (1984), some wh-phrases allow the lack of inversion.

(i) ¿Por qué Juan lloró?  
why John cried?  
'Why did John cry?'

and the verb in this type of sentences; in other words, speakers of this variety accept (4a) as well as (4b). In the former, the subject precedes the verb; in the latter, the subject follows the verb. It is important to point out that in PRS, (4a) is more frequent than (4b).

- (4) a. ¿Qué tú quieres? (\*ES/ PRS)  
       what you want  
       b. ¿Qué quieres tú? (ES/ PRS)  
           what want you  
           ‘What do you want?’

This paper studies the contrast in (1). On the one hand, the phenomenon is described showing, for example, what type of infinitive subjects can appear in preverbal position in PRS. Infinitive clauses, unlike interrogative sentences, do not show restrictions in this regard, which argues against a unified analysis of (1) and (4). On the other hand, two ways of deriving the different word order between PRS and ES regarding infinitive subjects are explored. In particular, it is shown that this asymmetry is not due to the fact that the verb moves from T(ense) to C(omplementizer), but to the fact that infinitive subjects occupy different positions in PRS and in ES. Although both proposals have been adopted in order to explain the postverbal position of infinitive subjects in ES, they have not been explored regarding the contrast illustrated in (1). This paper addresses this issue and provides evidence for the claim that subjects can be in T(ense)P(hrase) in PRS but not in ES.

In order to collect the data, we made an online survey in which participated 107 speakers from Puerto Rico. In the survey, speakers were asked about the acceptability of the examples. The sentences were scrambled in order to avoid that the speakers could be tempted to choose between the different options. Since the survey offered very systematic judgments, the statistical percentages of the results are not offered here.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the phenomenon studied here in more detail. Firstly, we show that having preverbal subjects in PRS can be related to the word order but also to the infinitive-subjunctive alternation. Secondly, we describe what type of infinitive subjects can appear in preverbal position in PRS. Section 3

introduces two hypotheses in order to derive the asymmetry between ES and PRS regarding subject-verb word order: (a) the verb moves from T to C only in ES; (b) the subject must remain in v(erb)P in ES, but not in PRS. Section 4 provides evidence in favor of the second hypothesis. Section 5 concludes the paper.

## 2. Preverbal infinitive subjects in Puerto Rican Spanish: the data

This section is devoted to providing a detailed description of the lack of subject-verb inversion in infinitive clauses in PRS. Section 2.1. shows that the possibility of having preverbal infinitive subjects can be related to different reasons. Section 2.2. establishes what type of subjects can appear in preverbal position.

### 2.1 Two phenomena

PRS, unlike ES, allows preverbal subjects in infinitive clauses headed by different prepositions/complementizers, as shown in (5) and (6).

- (5) a. *Al Juan llamar, me asusté.*<sup>5</sup> (\*ES / PRS)  
           to.the John phone-INF ME I.got.scared  
           ‘Since John phoned, I got scared’.
- b. *De ella haber estado allí, no hubiera sucedido.* (\*ES / PRS)  
           of she have-INF been there not it.had happened  
           ‘If she had been there, it would have not happened’.
- (6) a. *Para su padre quejarse, tiene que portarse muy mal.* (\*ES / PRS)  
           for his father complain-INF he.has that behave-INF very bad  
           ‘In order to his father complains, he has to behave very badly.’
- b. *Con vosotros venir, es suficiente.* (\*ES / PRS)

<sup>5</sup> *Al* is the contraction of the preposition *a* ‘to’ and the article *el* ‘the’. Here I will not study why the article occurs in these constructions.

with you come-INF it.is enough

'If you come, it is enough.'

- c. Sin María saberlo, fue a su casa. (\*ES / PRS)

without Mary knows.it-INF he.went to her house

'Without Mary knowing it, he went to her house'.

Despite the fact that the contrasts illustrated in (5) and (6) are superficially similar, they cannot be explained in the same way. Let us explain why. In (5), ES requires a postverbal subject in order to be grammatical (see (7)). Thus, in these examples, the only difference between PRS and ES is the subject-verb word order.

- (7) a. Al llamar Juan, me asusté. (ES / PRS)

to.the phone-INF John ME I.got.scared

'Since John phoned, I got scared.'

- b. De haber estado ella allí, no hubiera sucedido. (ES / PRS)

of have-INF been she there not it.had happened

'If she had been there, it would have not happened.'

However, the situation is more complex in (6). It is true that if we change the subject position in ES, we get a grammatical sentence (see (8)). But the contrast between these varieties can be also based on the infinitive/subjunctive alternation that takes place in PRS. Note that (6) cannot only be related to (8) and therefore, to the word order, but also to (9), where the infinitive clause has been replaced by a subjunctive clause.

- (8) a. Para quejarse su padre, tiene que portarse muy mal. (ES / PRS)

for complain-INF his father he.has that behave-INF very bad

'In order to his father complains, he has to behave very badly'.

- b. Con venir vosotros, es suficiente. (ES / PRS)

with come-INF you it.is enough

'If you come, it is enough'.

- c. Sin saberlo María, fue a su casa. (ES / PRS)  
without knows-INF-it Mary he.went to her house  
'Without María knowing it, he went to her house'.
- (9) a. Para que su padre se queje, tiene que portarse muy mal. (ES / PRS)  
for that his father SE complain-SBJV he.has that behave-INF very bad  
'In order to his father complains, he has to behave very badly.'
- b. Con que vosotros vengáis, es suficiente. (ES / PRS)  
with that you come-SBJV it.is enough  
'If you come, it is enough'.
- c. Sin que María lo supiera, fue a su casa. (ES / PRS)  
without that Mary it knows-SBJV he.went to her house  
'Without María knowing it, he went to her house'.

The data in (9) indicate that the contrast between PRS and ES shown in (6) could be due to the infinitive/subjunctive alternation; in particular, to the fact that in PRS, both verbs can appear in contexts where ES only allows the subjunctive, as illustrated in (6) and (9). It is important to mention that (10), unlike (6), does not become grammatical in ES as long as the infinitive subject occurs in the postverbal position (see (11a)). The grammatical counterpart of (10) in ES is a sentence in which the infinitive is replaced by the subjunctive, as shown in (11b), where it must be noted that the subject position is preverbal, like in PRS (see (10)).

- (10) El Diario Económico constituyó un instrumento para los (PRS / \*ES)  
the journal economic was an instrument for the  
criollos expresar sus opiniones.  
creoles express-INF their opinions  
'The Economic Journal was an instrument for creoles to express their opinions.'
- [from RAE 2009: 1994]

- (11) a. El Diario Económico constituyó un instrumento para (\*ES)  
 the journal economic was an instrument for  
 expresar los criollos sus opiniones.  
 express-INF the creoles their opinions.
- b. El Diario Económico constituyó un instrumento para (ES)  
 the journal economic was an instrument for  
 que los criollos expresaran sus opiniones.  
 that the creoles expressed-SBJV their opinions.  
 'The Economic Journal was an instrument for creoles to express their opinions.'

The data in (10) and (11) provide evidence in favor of the possibility of treating the contrast in (6) in terms of the infinitive/subjunctive alternation. Thus, the difference between PRS and ES illustrated in (6) can be related to this alternation or to the word order. In contrast, the asymmetry exemplified in (5) can only be associated with the word order. In this case, the infinitive/subjunctive alternation is not at play, since the prepositions *a* 'to' and *de* 'of', unlike *para* 'for', *con* 'with' and *sin* 'without' (see (6)), cannot be followed by a subjunctive clause, as shown in (12).

- (12) a. \*Al que Juan llame, me asusté. (\*ES/ \*PRS)  
 to.the that John phone-SBJV ME I.got.scared  
 'Since John phoned, I got scared'.
- b. \*De que ella hubiera estado allí, no hubiera sucedido. (\*ES/ \*PRS)  
 of that she have-SBJV been there not it.had happened  
 'If she had been, it would have not happened'.

Given that the contrast in (5) and (6) do not constitute obligatorily a single phenomenon, I will deal only with (5), that is, with the different word order between PRS and ES regarding subject position, leaving the contrast in (6), where another factor (the infinitive/subjunctive alternation) could be regulating the difference between these varieties, for future research.



## 2.2 Pronominal vs. non-pronominal subjects

This section is devoted to determining what type of subjects can appear in preverbal position in Puerto Rican infinitive clauses. Ordóñez & Olarrea (2016) show that Caribbean interrogative sentences reject non-pronominal subjects in preverbal position. However, as far as I know, the literature has not determined whether infinitive clauses allow non-pronominal subjects in preverbal position. In this regard, the survey I have conducted clearly shows that speakers are not sensitive to the (non-)pronominal nature of infinitive subjects. 100% of the speakers allow all type of preverbal infinitive subjects. They admit pronominal subjects, without restrictions regarding the person or the number of the pronoun, and lexical subjects. Therefore, according to my survey, Puerto Rican speakers do not reject any of the sentences in (13) and (14). Note also that (14) includes different types of lexical subjects: referential DPs, non-referential DPS and quantificational DPs.

- (13) a. Al yo saberlo, se asustó.  
to.the I know-INF-it SE he.got.scared  
'When I knew it, he got scared'.
- b. Al tú saberlo, se asustó.  
to.the you know-INF-it SE he.got scared  
'When you knew it, he got scared'.
- c. Al él saberlo, se asustó.  
to.the he know-INF-it SE he.got.scared  
'When he knew it, he got scared'.
- d. Al nosotros saberlo, se asustó.  
to.the we know-INF-it SE he.got.scared  
'When we knew it, he got scared'.
- e. Al vosotros saberlo, se asustó.  
to.the you know-INF-it SE he.got.scared  
'When you knew it, he got scared.'

- f. Al ellos saberlo, se asustó.  
to.the they know-INF-it SE he.got.scared  
'When they knew it, he got scared'.
- (14) a. Al el jefe sugerírselo, aceptó.  
to.the the boss suggest-INF-it he.accepted  
'Since the boss suggested it to him, he accepted'.
- b. Al su hijo caerse, empezó a gritar.  
to.the his son fall-INF he.started to shout  
'When his son fell, he started to shout'.
- c. Al Juan ganar la competición, le felicitaron.  
to.the John win-INF the competition LE they.congratulated  
'Since John won the competition, they congratulated him'.
- d. Al un alumno quejarse, se preocupó.  
to.the a student complain-INF SE he.worried  
'Since a student complaint, he started to be worried'.
- e. Al poca gente votar, ganaron las elecciones.  
to.the few people vote-INF they.won the elections  
'Since few people voted, they won the elections'.

Unlike infinitive clauses, Puerto Rican interrogative clauses tend to reject non-pronominal subjects in interrogative clauses. Based on field work, Ordóñez & Olarrea (2006) establish that the lack of subject-verb inversion in Caribbean interrogative sentences is possible with pronominal subjects and, specially, with second person. In contrast, a very small percentage of speakers (15%-18%) allow preverbal subjects with lexical DPs. My survey confirms the judgments offered by Ordóñez & Olarrea, since the speakers rejected systematically non-pronominal subjects in interrogative sentences. In contrast, they do allow this type of subjects in infinitive sentences. This asymmetry between infinitive and interrogative clauses argues against a unitary analysis of the lack of inversion in these sentences. Thus, the possibility of applying Ordóñez & Olarrea's hypothesis to infinitive clauses will not be explored in this paper. The reader is referred to

their work for a proposal that derives the lack of inversion with pronominal subjects in interrogative clauses.<sup>6</sup>

It is important to mention that some speakers of ES also allow preverbal subjects, but there is a crucial difference between these speakers and Puerto Rican speakers: for these European speakers of Spanish, infinitive subjects cannot always occur in preverbal position. Two types of restrictions determine whether preverbal subjects are allowed. Firstly, the possibility of having preverbal subjects depends on the preposition that introduces the infinitive clause. Some speakers allow preverbal subjects only when the preposition *sin* 'without' heads the infinitive clause, whereas others also admit preverbal subjects with the prepositions *con* 'with' and *para* 'for'. If the infinitive clause is introduced by *de* 'of' or *al* 'to the', preverbal subjects are usually rejected. Secondly, European speakers that allow preverbal subjects in infinitive clauses show a clear preference for pronominal subjects. Thus, they tend to reject lexical DPs in the preverbal position. These restrictions indicate that even though some European speakers allow preverbal subjects under certain conditions, the possibility of having preverbal subjects in PRS is much more extended than in ES.

### 3. Two ways of deriving the different word order in PRS and ES

This section introduces two hypotheses that allow us to derive the different word order in Puerto Rican and European Spanish. I assume a clausal structure in which postverbal subjects occupy the Spec-vP position, where they are merged (see (15)),

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<sup>6</sup> Gutiérrez-Bravo (2008) points out that full DPs can also occupy the preverbal position in Caribbean Spanish, contrary to the results obtained by Ordoñez & Olarrea's (2006) survey and the judgments of my informants. But even if one assumes that full DPs do not require inversion in Caribbean interrogative sentences, Gutiérrez-Bravo's analysis cannot be extended to infinitive clauses. This author argues that wh-phrases can occupy Spec-TP and Spec-CP in Caribbean Spanish. If the wh-phrase is in Spec(ifier)-CP, the subject can move to Spec-TP, yielding the word order subject-verb. When the wh-phrase is placed in Spec-TP, the subject must remain in postverbal position. In ES, wh-phrases can only occupy the Spec-TP and thus, subject inversion is mandatory. Since the crucial point of this proposal is the position of wh-phrases, the lack of inversion in infinitive clauses cannot be accounted for in the same way.

whereas preverbal subjects are placed in Spec-TP (see (16)), since they move from Spec-vP to that position.

- (15) a. El niño corre.  
           the child runs  
           ‘The child runs’.  
       b.  $[_{CP} [_{TP} \text{el niño corre } [_{VP} \text{el niño corre } [_{VP} \text{corre}]]]]]$

- (16) a. Corre el niño.  
           runs the child  
           ‘The child runs’.  
       b.  $[_{CP} [_{TP} \text{corre } [_{VP} \text{el niño corre } [_{VP} \text{corre}]]]]]$

Given that structure, there are two possibilities to derive the difference regarding the word order between Puerto Rican and European Spanish in infinitive clauses.

First, the difference could be due to the fact that T must move to C in ES (see (17a)). This proposal has been adopted, for example, in Rigau (1993, 1995) for ES.<sup>7</sup> This linguist argues that subject-verb inversion in infinitive clauses headed by *a/* is due to the fact that the verb moves to C and as a result, the subject occupies a postverbal position. Although Rigau does not study the lack of subject inversion in PRS, subject-verb order could be derived by proposing that in this variety, T-to-C movement is also possible but not obligatory, since the verb could remain in TP, as illustrated in (17b). The subject would be placed in Spec-TP and as a result, we would derive its preverbal position:

- (17) a.  $[_{CP} \text{correr } [_{TP} \text{el niño } \text{correr } [_{VP} \text{el niño } \text{correr } [_{VP} \text{correr}]]]]]$  (ES/ PRS)  
       b.  $[_{CP} [_{TP} \text{el niño } \text{correr } [_{VP} \text{el niño } \text{correr } [_{VP} \text{correr}]]]]]$  (\*ES/ PRS)

Second, the asymmetry could arise because subjects of infinitive clauses are placed in different positions in Puerto Rican and European Spanish. The idea is that subjects (can) move to Spec-TP in PRS, whereas subjects occupy a lower position, Spec-vP, in ES. This

<sup>7</sup> Hernanz (1991, 1994) also argues for T to C movement in absolute constructions.

possibility is illustrated in (18). (18a) would be the structure of ES, where the verb moves from vP to TP, and the subject remains in vP. Remember that PRS also accepts the word order corresponding to this structure, since in this variety, the subject can occur in postverbal position. However, PRS also allows the word order in (18b), which is rejected in ES. Here, the subject does not remain in vP; it moves from that projection to TP, unlike what happens in (18a). The verb, like in (18a), moves from vP to TP.

- (18) a. [CP [TP correr [vP el niño ~~correr~~ [vP ~~correr~~]]]] (ES/ PRS)  
b. [CP [TP el niño correr [vP ~~el niño correr~~ [vP ~~correr~~]]]] (\*ES/ PRS)

López (2000) and Mensching (2000), among others, have proposed the structure in (18a) in order to account for subject inversion in ES. These authors do not focus on PRS, but the same structure is adopted in the work of Suñer (1986) and Toribio (2000), who do study the differences between ES and Caribbean Spanish (CS) regarding the subject-verb word order. These scholars associate the lack of subject inversion with other properties of subjects in PRS such as the presence of pronominal subjects without emphatic interpretation, that is, in contexts where ES tends to use null subjects. This phenomenon is illustrated in (19).<sup>8</sup>

- (19) *Él estaba donde Eugenia, y yo creo que él se va a quedar allí.* (#ES/ CS)  
he was where Eugenia and I think that he SE goes to stay-INF there  
'He was at Eugenia's, and I think that he is going to stay there'.

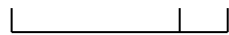
[from Toribio 2000: 319]

Suñer (1986) and Toribio (2000) propose a weakening of nominal AGR(ement) features in CS. Since in this variety, the final -s that distinguishes second person forms from third person forms is aspirated or lost, they propose that the nominal AGR features are weaker. The weakening of AGR features entails different ways of assigning nominative case in European and Caribbean Spanish. I will not discuss the details of their proposals

<sup>8</sup> Note that this example involves a change of topic (*él* 'he' / *yo* 'I' / *él* 'he') that could favor the occurrence of pronominal subjects.

here, but there are at least two problems that can be noted without a more detailed explanation. First, Suñer and Toribio's analysis could account for the use of pronominal subjects in finite clauses, where AGR features play a crucial role in order to license the subject, but it is not obvious their role in nonfinite clauses. Second, their proposals are based on mechanisms that are not available in the current system: government and weak/strong features. Within the current framework, (nominative) Case assignment does not require movement to Spec-T, since it can be assigned by (long-distance) Agree, as illustrated in (20). Thus, Case assignment cannot account for preverbal subjects in CS.

(20) [CP C [TP T<sub>[3.SG]</sub> [VP John<sub>[3.SG]NOM</sub> v [VP jump]]]]



A third problem is that this hypothesis makes wrong predictions with respect to another Spanish variety, Andalusian (AS) (Camacho 2008).<sup>9</sup> In this variety, like in PRS, the final endings of the verbal paradigm have been reduced and the use of pronominal subjects has also proliferated (RAE, 2009). The sentence in (21), which contains an overt pronominal subject, *tú* ('you'), sounds natural in PRS and AS but not in ES.

(21) Tú me ayudaste ayer. (#ES/ PRS / AS)  
 you ME helped yesterday  
 'You helped me yesterday'.

Suñer and Toribio's analysis predicts that AS patterns with PRS regarding the word order in infinitive clauses. However, this prediction is not borne out. Whereas PRS allows preverbal subjects in infinitive clauses, ES and AS reject them. Thus, (22) is fine in PRS but not in ES nor in AS.

(22) Al ese chico recibir el premio, María se puso celosa. (\*ES/ PRS/ \*AS)  
 to-the that boy get-INF the prize Mary SE got jealous.  
 'When that boy got the prize, Mary got jealous'.

<sup>9</sup> Bosque & Brucart (in press) point out that the same problem arises regarding Chilean Spanish.

Despite the fact that these problems call for an alternative analysis of the lack of inversion in PRS, I argue that like Suñer and Toribio assume, infinitive subjects occupy different positions in PRS and ES. Thus, although the lack of inversion in PRS cannot rely on a weakening of AGR features, the idea of placing subjects of PRS and ES in TP and vP, respectively, can be maintained. Suñer and Toribio do not offer arguments for this fact, but in the next section I will provide evidence for (18).

Before proceeding, it is worth pointing out that both options, the subject remaining in vP (see (17)) and the verb moving to CP (see (18)) in ES, are not incompatible (Rigau 1993). There is nothing that prevents having both possibilities, that is, that in ES, unlike PRS, the verb moves from T to C and the subject remains in vP. As can be seen in (23), this also captures the different word order.

- (23) a. [CP correr [TP ~~correr~~ [vP el niño ~~correr~~ [vP ~~correr~~]]]] (ES/ PRS)  
b. [CP [TP el niño correr [vP ~~el niño correr~~ [vP ~~correr~~]]]] (\*ES/ PRS)

Nevertheless, the proposals in (17) and (18) make different predictions regarding the behavior of subjects in ES and PRS. Under the analysis in (17), there should not be asymmetries between subjects of infinitive clauses in these varieties, since the subject is placed in the same position and the difference is due to T-to-C movement. In contrast, the proposal in (18) does predict asymmetries between infinitive subjects in ES and PRS; in particular, that the type of subjects that can occupy the Spec-TP, but not the Spec-vP, should be accepted in PRS whereas they should be rejected in ES. I investigate these predictions in the next section.

#### 4. Evidence in favor of two subject positions

In what follows, I provide empirical support for the claim that infinitive subjects occupy different positions in PRS and ES. The relevant empirical evidence comes from

several correct predictions of the analysis outlined in (18). These predictions are based on some asymmetries displayed by Puerto Rican infinitive subjects and infinitive subjects in ES. Whereas these contrasts are expected under the proposal in (18), the analysis in (17) cannot account for them.

#### 4.1 Quantified subjects such as *‘toda clase de gente’* (*‘every kind of people’*)

The first piece of evidence in favor of infinitive subjects being in different positions comes from quantified subjects such as *toda clase de gente* (*‘every kind of people’*). Grohmann & Etxepare (2003) observe that this type of subjects cannot occur in postverbal position. They must appear in preverbal position. This fact is illustrated in (24).

- (24) a. \*Compró toda clase de gente un Volkswagen.  
           bought every type of people a Volkswagen  
       b. \*Compró un Volkswagen toda clase de gente.  
           bought a Volkswagen every type of people  
       c. Toda clase de gente compró un Volkswagen.  
           every type of people bought a Volkswagen  
           ‘Every kind of people bought a Volkswagen’.

[from Grohmann & Etxepare 2003: 215]

In PRS, these subjects can appear in preverbal position in infinitive clauses (see (25a)), which shows that they occur in Spec-TP (see (25b)). In ES, this type of quantifiers cannot be the subject of an infinitive clause, regardless of whether they precede or follow the direct object, as illustrated in (26).

- (25) a. Al toda clase de gente oponerse a los recortes (PRS)  
           to.the every type of people be.against-INF to the cuts  
           presupuestarios, el gobierno retiró la propuesta.  
           budget the government withdrew the proposal  
           ‘Since every kind of people was against the budget cuts, the government withdrew the proposal.’



- b. [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> toda clase de gente oponerse [<sub>VP</sub>...]]]

- (26) a. \*Al oponerse toda clase de gente a los recortes (ES)  
to.the be.against-INF every type of people to the cuts  
presupuestarios, el gobierno retiró la propuesta.  
budget the government withdrew the proposal
- b. \*Al oponerse a los recortes presupuestarios toda (ES)  
to.the be.against-INF to the cuts budget every  
clase de gente, el gobierno retiró la propuesta.  
type of people the government withdrew the proposal

Note that the hypothesis in (17), that is, the one that derives the different word order between PRS and ES from T-to-C movement, does not account for the contrast of grammaticality between (25a) and (26). If the only difference between these varieties were that T moves to C triggering subject-verb inversion in ES, but not in PRS, the subject would occupy the same position in (25a) and (26) (Spec-TP) and, as a result, there would not be any asymmetry like this.

#### 4.2 Negative words

The second phenomenon that argues in favor of infinitive subjects being in different positions in PRS and ES is the possibility of introducing negative words. Negative words also support the analysis in (18), that is, that infinitive subjects occupy different positions in PRS and ES. As is well known, negative words can appear in preverbal position without a negative particle, as shown in (27a). However, if they are in postverbal position, they require the presence of *no*, which is illustrated by the contrast between (27b) and (27c). (27b) is out because there is not a preverbal negation licensing the negative polarity item. (27c) is fine since *no* licenses that item.

- (27) a. Ninguno de mis amigos ha visto la película.  
none of my friends has seen the movie

- b. \*Ha visto la película ninguno de mis amigos.  
has seen the movie any of my friends
- c. No ha visto la película ninguno de mis amigos.  
not has seen the movie any of my friends  
'None of my friends has seen the movie'.

Negative words can be preverbal subjects of infinitive clauses in PRS (see (28a)), as expected under the description given. As illustrated in (28b), negative words are not in Spec-TP, but in Spec-PolP, where they are licensed by a null negative head.

- (28) a. Al nadie contestar, se enfadó. (PRS)  
to.the nobody answer-INF, SE he.got.angry  
'Since nobody answered, he got angry.'
- b. [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>PolP</sub> nadie [<sub>TP</sub> se enfadó [<sub>VP</sub>...]]]

The predictions regarding ES are different depending on whether we assume the account in (17) or the one in (18). Under the former, negative words would be licensed in infinitive clauses such as the one in (29a), despite the absence of *no*. The reason is that according to this analysis, *nadie* would be in the same position than in (28), since the different word order between (28) and (29a) is derived via T-to-C movement in (29a). However, that prediction is not borne out. As illustrated in (29b), the negative word requires the presence of *no* in order to be licensed, which indicates that the negative word is in the vP domain and therefore, provides evidence in favor of (18).

- (29) a. \*Al contestar nadie, se enfadó. (ES)  
to.the answer-INF nobody, SE he.got.angry
- b. Al no contestar nadie, se enfadó. (ES)  
to.the not answer-INF nobody, SE he.got.angry

#### 4.3 Floating quantifiers

Another piece of evidence in favor of (18) comes from floating quantifiers. These are compatible with preverbal subjects but not with postverbal subjects (see (30)) (Sánchez López 1999: 1071; Sheehan 2007: 91).

- (30) a. Los niños hablaron todos con el director.  
the children talked all to the director  
b. \*Hablaron los niños todos con el director.  
talked the children all to the director  
c. \*Hablaron todos con el director los niños.  
talked all to the director the children  
'The children talked all to the director'.

Given that, if we assume that infinitive subjects occupy Spec-TP in PRS as well as in ES, these subjects would allow floating quantifiers in both varieties, contrary to fact (see (31)) and (32)). The impossibility of having a floating quantifier in (32) shows that subjects in ES, unlike PRS, are not placed in Spec-TP but in vP. In other words, the contrast between PRS and ES regarding the possibility of having floating quantifiers in infinitive clauses supports the claim in (18), where infinitive subjects occupy different positions in these varieties. The proposal in (17) cannot account for that asymmetry. If the subject in (32) were placed, as in (31), in Spec-TP and the inversion were due to T-to-C movement, the subject would license floating quantifiers.

- (31) a. Al los niños hablar todos con el director, se tranquilizaron. (PRS)  
to.the the children talk-INF all to the director SE they.calmed.down  
'When the children talked all to the director, they calmed down'.  
b. [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> los niños hablar [<sub>vP</sub>...]]]
- (32) a. \*Al hablar los niños todos con el director, se tranquilizaron. (ES)  
to.the talk-INF the children all to the director SE they.calmed.down

- b. \*Al hablar todos con el director los niños, se tranquilizaron. (ES)  
 to.the talk-INF all to the director the children SE they.calmed.down

#### 4.4. Subject position in Catalan

Catalan provides additional evidence in favor of (18), that is, of the idea that infinitive subjects occur in different positions in PRS and ES. In Catalan, word order is more restricted than in Spanish. Bonet (1988) and Ordóñez (2000) observe that Catalan postverbal subjects cannot appear between the verb and the object. They must follow the object. This fact is illustrated in (33).

- (33) a. \*Va córrer en Lluís la Marató. (Catalan)  
           ran Lluís the marathon  
       b. Va córrer la Marató en Lluís. (Catalan)  
           ran the marathon Lluís  
           ‘Lluís ran the marathon’.

[from Bonet 1988]

In Catalan, infinitive subjects must be postverbal. If we apply the proposal in (17) in order to derive the subject-verb inversion in these sentences, we should expect the subject to precede the direct object, since it is placed in Spec-TP and the inversion arises from T-to-C movement. However, this prediction is not borne out (see (34)). Catalan infinitive subjects must follow the object, which indicates that they remain in Spec-vP.

- (34) a. \*/??En tocar en Joan aquella canço, es va emocionar. (Catalan)  
           in play-INF John that song he.got.excited  
       b. En tocar aquella canço en Joan, es va emocionar. (Catalan)  
           in play-INF that song John he.got.excited  
           ‘When John played that song, he got excited’.

The preceding discussion provides new evidence that infinitive subjects occupy different positions in PRS and ES (see (18)). Put differently, the asymmetries displayed by

subjects in these varieties are naturally captured if they move from vP to TP in PRS whereas they remain in vP in ES. Importantly, the arguments provided in favor of this proposal do not argue against T-to-C movement in ES. There could be T-to-C movement in this variety, but what is crucial for our purposes is that this movement will not account for the difference between PRS and ES regarding subject-verb inversion. If this difference were related to T-to-C movement, the subjects would not show any difference in PRS and ES, contrary to what happens.

## 5. Conclusions

This paper has dealt with the different position of infinitive subjects in PRS and ES: whereas PRS allows preverbal subjects in infinitive clauses, ES rejects them. Firstly, it has been established that the possibility of having preverbal subjects in PRS can be related to a different word order or to the infinitive-subjunctive alternation. Focusing on the cases in which the infinitive-subjunctive alternation does not play any role, preverbal subjects can be pronominal and non-pronominal. Secondly, several arguments have been provided in favor of the fact that the contrast between PRS and ES regarding the position of infinitive subjects arises because these subjects must remain in Spec-vP in ES, but can move to Spec-TP in PRS.

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