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AN ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHING OF OBJECT PRONOUNS IN ELEMENTARY
SPANISH TEXTBOOKS:
A GENERATIVE APPROACH

by

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**An Analysis of the Teaching of Object Pronouns in Elementary
College Spanish Textbooks:
A Generative Approach**

I. Introduction

The ease with which native speakers use object pronouns compared with the difficulty English speakers have in acquiring these forms poses the basic premise for this paper.¹ I will use some basic rules of transformational grammar (TG) to show how these apply to the teaching of object pronouns using phrases appropriate to elementary Spanish at the college level. I will show how object pronouns are generated and how the rules are ordered in simple Spanish phrases, compare this to the order of presentation in the selected textbooks, and then suggest a method of instruction based on a more natural order using simple classroom commands.

The paper is divided into four sections. The first section, the Introduction, describes the purpose of the paper and how it is structured. In Section II I discuss the

¹ Bill VanPatten, "Learner's Comprehension of Clitic Pronouns: More Evidence for a Word Order Strategy." Hispanic linguistics, 1(Spring), No. 1, (1986), 57. VanPatten states that "often ignored in teaching (and in research in second language acquisition) is the comprehension aspect of grammatical structures, in this case clitic pronouns."

rules of TG that describe the generation of object pronouns in simple subject-verb-object phrases that are typically found in college elementary Spanish textbooks. This section provides the reader with a basic understanding of the Spanish object pronoun system. In Section III I compare the ordering of TG rules from Section II to the order in which Spanish textbooks present object pronouns. The textbooks reviewed in Section II are structured for the college level, therefore, I make no claims as to the practicality of using the method of instruction suggested in this paper for the elementary or secondary school level. Similar analyses should be done on texts designed for these levels. In addition, empirical research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of this method in comparison with other methods. In the last section I propose a re-ordering of the transformations and suggest an approach that would allow teachers to introduce object pronouns much earlier in the textbook through simple classroom commands. This method provides input to the student that is similar to what a child hears in the early stages of language acquisition.

The transformations presented in this paper are intended to describe basic structures that are normally introduced in beginning level Spanish classes. As the students progress, they will find that many of these transformations will be inadequate to describe more complex structures. The transformations will have to be modified as

the level of language acquisition becomes more advanced. These later transformations fall outside the scope of this paper.²

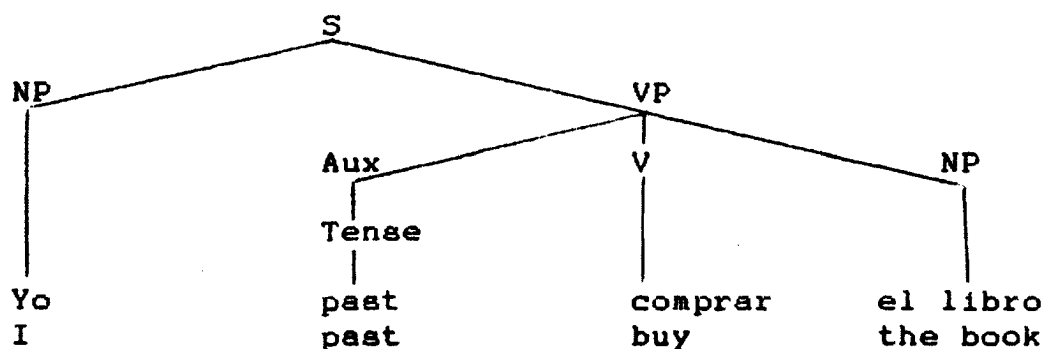
Recent research has promoted TG for its insight toward understanding and describing the steps that native speakers of a language use to acquire their knowledge of the grammaticality of the language and its variously stated implications to foreign language instruction. However, little attention has been paid to the applicability of TG to methods of instruction in the foreign language classroom. There is an important link missing in the research that would bring together the linguistic rules of TG with the pedagogy for application to classroom instruction. The teaching method I suggest at the end of this paper will provide one link for the application of theory to pedagogy.

² Moreover, the writer does not presume to show a definitive treatment of TG rules here. Analyses are constantly being re-evaluated. The language is not static but slowly evolving. Lloyd, (1979) states that "language is characterized by its flexibility."

II. Overview of Linguistic Structures

The phenomena selected for application here are the Accusative and Dative Pronominalization, Negative Insertion, and Enclisis rules. Object pronouns occur in Spanish more frequently than in English and many times both the object pronoun and the full object noun phrase are used in the same sentence. This redundancy may strike the English speaker as repetitious but it is often used for emphasis or clarification (especially with 3rd person pronouns when the context provides an ambiguous referent). In Spanish the object noun phrases and pronouns can be placed in many different positions within the same sentence. Take for example the following sentences involving the movement of the accusative noun phrase.

Accusative Pronoun



- I. a. Compré el libro ayer
 I-bought the book yesterday
- b. El libro lo compré ayer
 The book it I-bought yesterday
- c. Lo compré ayer
 It I-bought yesterday
- d. *Lo compré el libro ayer
 It I-bought the book yesterday
- e. *Compré el libro lo ayer
 I-bought the book it yesterday

If we compare sentences Ia - d, the ungrammatical sentence occurs when both the accusative NP and pronoun are present in the same sentence but don't occur side by side. It seems that in order to produce a grammatical sentence with an accusative NP, one of three possibilities must be met. 1) The accusative NP occurs alone (Ia), 2) the accusative pronoun occurs alone (Ic), or 3) both the accusative NP and pronoun occur together (Ib). But if this were sufficient for grammaticality, then Ie should also be a grammatical sentence. The problem is that further conditions must be met: the accusative NP and pronoun must be in a pre-verbal position and must also be placed in the correct linear order (Ib). We can begin to formulate a rule that will generate the accusative pronoun to the right of the accusative NP. The pronoun must agree in person, number and gender with the accusative NP.

Since sentence Ia is grammatical, the generation of accusative pronoun, which would generate the ungrammatical

sentence Ie, is an optional transformation. Another transformation will be necessary to move the accusative NP and pronoun into the correct position. The rule generating the accusative pronoun can be stated as:

1. **Accusative Pronominalization:** Copy the appropriate pronoun that agrees with the accusative NP in person, number, and gender immediately to the right of the accusative NP.

This still generates the ungrammatical sentence Ie. The accusative pronoun must be moved to the left of the finite verb. A movement rule similar to Dative Movement is necessary.

2. **Accusative Pronoun Movement:** Move the accusative pronoun to the immediate left of Aux.

This transformation still leaves us with the ungrammatical sentence Id:

*Lo compré el libro ayer
It I-bought the book yesterday

Two transformations can make this sentence grammatical. One would be to move the accusative NP to the left of the verb.

- 3. Accusative NP Movement:** Move the accusative NP to the immediate left of Aux.

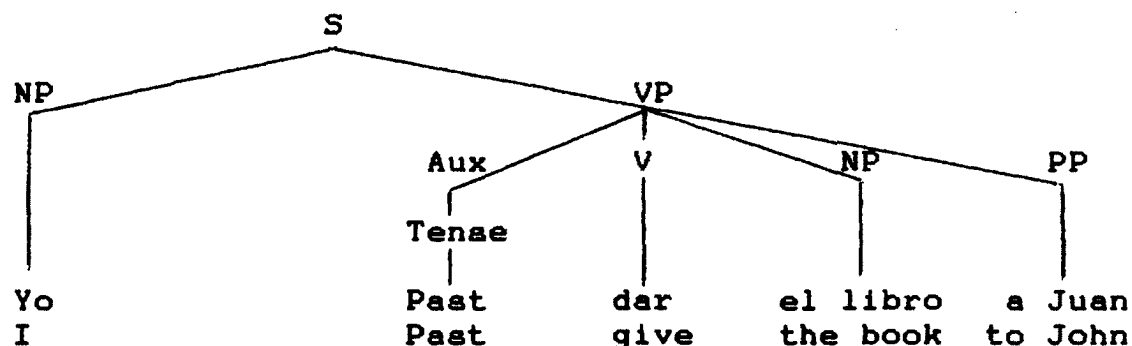
El libro lo compré ayer
The book it I-bought yesterday

If there is another pronoun present to the left of Aux, then the order of pronouns will be determined by surface ordering of pronouns (Dinnsen, on Perlmutter) and not by another transformation.³ The other transformation would be simply to delete the accusative NP, generating sentence Ic:

- 4. Accusative NP Deletion:** Delete the accusative NP.

Lo compré ayer
It I-bought yesterday

Dative Pronoun



The dative noun phrase (NP) moves much like the accusative. Consider the following sentences:

³ Daniel A. Dinnsen, "Additional Constraints on Clitic Order in Spanish," In Casagrande, et al., 1972, p. 176.

11. a. Di el libro a Juan
I gave the book to John
- b. Le di el libro a Juan
Him I gave the book to John
- c. Le di a Juan el libro
Him I gave to John the book
- d. *Le a Juan di el libro
Him to John I-gave the book
- e. A Juan le di el libro
To John him I-gave the book
- f. Le di el libro
Him I-gave the book

If we compare sentences 11a and 11b, we see that the dative NP must occur in conjunction with a dative pronoun, otherwise an ungrammatical sentence occurs. In sentences 11b - 11e, the dative NP has been moved to the left. Only one of the derived sentences is unacceptable. The only place where the dative NP may not occur is between the dative pronoun and the verb (sentence 11d). The acceptable sentences include 11f, where the dative NP has been entirely omitted, but the dative pronoun has remained behind.

Notice that in all the grammatical sentences, the dative pronoun is in the same position relative to the verb, regardless of what the position of the dative NP may be.* If we assume that sentence 11a is the underlying structure

*Quentin A. Pizzini, "The Positioning of Clitic Pronouns in Spanish," *Lingua*, 57, (1982), 47. "The work done by transformations can be greatly reduced if clitic pronouns are generated adjacent to their verbs by the phrase structure rules."

from which the rest of the sentences are derived, we can formulate a rule that will generate grammatical sentences with the pronoun in the correct position. Since in all of the grammatical sentences a dative pronoun that corresponds in person, number, and gender with the dative NP appears to the left of the finite verb, the following rules can apply.

5. Dative Copy Rule: Copy the appropriate pronoun that agrees in person, number, and gender with the dative NP, immediately to the right of the dative NP.

6. Dative Pronoun Movement: Move the dative pronoun to a position immediately to the left of Aux.

This generates a grammatical sentence without moving the dative NP. The next step is to generate sentences IIc and IIe without generating the ungrammatical sentence IId. It appears that the dative pronoun is attracted to the finite verb and won't let any other elements appear between it and the verb. This is what makes IId ungrammatical. A movement rule is necessary to account for the different positions of the dative NP. Since the base sentence (IIb) for this rule is grammatical, movement of the dative NP is not required. It will be an optional transformation consisting of two parts. In order to derive sentence IIc,

Le di a Juan el libro
Him I-gave to John the book

the movement rule must allow placement of the dative NP directly after the finite verb. To generate sentence IIe:

A Juan le di el libro
To John him I-gave the book

the movement rule must also allow for the placement of the NP to the left of the dative pronoun. Rather than writing two separate rules, both movements can be combined into a rule that generates two structural changes from one structural description. Since the rule will be optional, it will generate either of the two sentences (IIc or IIe). The rule can be stated as:

7. Dative Movement (optional): Move the dative NP to a position directly after the main verb, or move the dative NP to a position directly before the dative pronoun.

In sentence IIc,

Le di el libro
Him I-gave the book

the dative NP has been deleted and still results in a grammatical sentence. This can be done by applying an optional deletion rule at any point after Dative Pronoun Movement.

8. **Dative Deletion** (optional): Delete the dative NP.

Negative Insertion

Consider the following sentences.

III.

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Compré el libro ayer
I-bought the book yesterday | a'. No compré el libro ayer
Not I-bought the book
yesterday |
| b. El libro lo compré ayer
The book it I-bought yesterday | b'. El libro no lo compré ayer
The book not it I-bought
yesterday |
| c. Lo compré ayer
It I-bought yesterday | c'. No lo compré ayer
Not it I-bought yesterday |
| d. El libro se lo di a Juan
The book him it I-gave to
John | d'. El libro no se lo di a Juan
The book not him it I-gave
to John |

I could go on listing more sentences, but I believe these are sufficient to demonstrate the pattern. Both lists of sentences are grammatical. Any change of location of "no" will result in an ungrammatical sentence. In sentence IIIa' the Negative occurs directly before the finite verb. In the rest of the sentences, the Negative occurs before an object pronoun or before two object pronouns as in sentences IIIc and IIId. As was stated earlier, object pronouns are positioned to the left of Aux, so Negative is inserted to the left of Aux and to the left of any object pronouns.

Each of the above sentences was generated by applying one or more of the rules already covered, with the exception of IIIa which has not undergone any transformations. The negative can be inserted into any grammatical sentence and can be stated as:

9. Negative Insertion (optional): Insert "no" to the left of Aux, and to the left of any object pronouns, if present.

Enclitic Pronouns

Certain Aux and V constructions in Spanish affect object pronoun placement in ways that are quite different from what has been discussed thus far. Traditional textbooks explain that there are three types of main verbs that generate the object pronouns to their right and are attached to them. These pronouns are called enclitic pronouns. They are attached to the verb when the pronoun is the object of (a) an infinitive, (b) a present participle, or (c) an affirmative command. Consider the following sentences:

IV.

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----|--------------------------------------|
| a. | Quiero comprar el libro
I-want to buy the book | a'. | Quiero comprarlo
I-want to buy+it |
| b. | Estoy leyendo el libro
I-am reading the book | b'. | Estoy leyéndolo
I-am reading+it |

Since the object noun phrase was already in post verb phrase position, the only transformations needed were Accusative Pronominalization, Accusative Noun Phrase Deletion, and Pronoun Enclisis.

There is one other verb form that will take enclitic pronouns. That is the imperative. The location is similar to that of the infinitive and present participle: enclitics are attached to the right of the main verb. Consider these sentences:

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--|----|--|
| V. | a. | Come la comida
You-eat the food | g. | Démelo a mí
You-give+me+it to me |
| | b. | Traigan los libros
You-bring the books | h. | Ponedla
You-set+it |
| | c. | Deme el libro a mí
You-give+me the book to me | i. | *La come
It you-eat |
| | d. | Poned la mesa
You-set the table | j. | *Los traigan
Them you-bring |
| | e. | Cómela
You-eat+it | k. | *Me lo dé a mí
Me it you-give to me |
| | f. | Traiganlos
You-bring+them | l. | *La poned
It you-set |

Sentences i - l are ungrammatical as direct commands because the object pronouns have been placed to the left of the verb. In this way, commands differ from pronoun placement with infinitives and present participles. The object pronouns in commands can only be placed to the right of the

verb, according to the above sentences. But now consider these sentences:

VI.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. No comas la comida
Not you-eat the food | g. No me dé el libro a mí
Not me you-give the book to me |
| b. *No cómasla
Not you-eat+it | h. *No démelo a mí
Not you-give+me+it to me |
| c. No la comas
Not it you-eat | i. No me lo dé a mí
Not me it you-give to me |
| d. No traigan los libros
Not you-bring the books | j. No pongáis la mesa
Not you-set the table |
| e. *No tráiganlos
Not you-bring+them | k. *No pongáisla
Not you-set+it |
| f. No los traigan
Not them you-bring | l. No la pongáis
Not it you-set |

In these negative commands, the position of the object pronouns has been changed. By placing the object pronouns to the right of the verb in a negative command, an ungrammatical sentence occurs. If the pronouns are placed to the left of the verb, the sentence is grammatical. Where we had the option of locating object pronouns on either the right of an infinitive or present participle, or to the left of Aux., in commands it is obligatory to locate them to the right of the verb in an affirmative command, and to the left in a negative command. An informal rule can be stated to generate affirmative commands.

10. Pronoun Enclisis (obligatory): Attach the object pronoun to the verb on its immediate left.

In order to generate the enclitic pronouns in infinitive constructions, present participles, and affirmative commands, the following transformations are required. Take the following sentences:

Quiero comprar el libro
I-want to buy the book

Estoy leyendo el libro
I-am reading the book

Come la comida
You-eat the food

Apply Accusative Copy Rule:

*Quiero comprar el libro lo
I-want to buy the book it

*Estoy leyendo el libro lo
I-am reading the book it

*Come la comida la
You-eat the food it

Apply Accusative NP Deletion:

*Quiero comprar lo
I-want to buy it

*Estoy leyendo lo
I-am reading it

*Come la
You-eat it

Apply Pronoun Enclisis:

Quiero comprarlo
I-want to buy+it

Estoy leyéndolo
I-am reading+it

10. Pronoun Enclisis (obligatory): Attach the object pronoun to the verb on its immediate left.

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Quiero comprar el libro
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Estoy leyendo el libro
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Come la comida
You-eat the food

Apply Accusative Copy Rule:

*Quiero comprar el libro lo
I-want to buy the book it

*Estoy leyendo el libro lo
I-am reading the book it

*Come la comida la
You-eat the food it

Apply Accusative NP Deletion:

*Quiero comprar lo
I-want to buy it

*Estoy leyendo lo
I-am reading it

*Come la
You-eat it

Apply Pronoun Enclisis:

Quiero comprarlo
I-want to buy+it

Estoy leyéndolo
I-am reading+it

Cómela
You eat it

Or, apply Pronoun Movement:

Lo quiero comprar
It I-want to buy

Lo estoy leyendo
It I-am reading

*La come
It you-eat

Applying Pronoun Movement creates an ungrammatical sentence for the imperative construction where it doesn't in the infinitive or progressive. In this case the rule applies as an optional rule for infinitive and progressive constructions but is blocked by the imperative. If we take the same grammatical sentences and apply Negative Insertion we generate the following sentences.

Quiero comprarlo -> No quiero comprarlo -> No lo quiero comprar

Estoy leyéndolo -> No estoy leyéndolo -> No lo estoy leyendo

Cómela -> *No cómela -> No la comas

Cómpramelo -> *No cómpramelo -> No me lo compres

The insertion of "no" creates a grammatical sentence in either structure of the infinitive or progressive, but creates an ungrammatical sentence in the imperative unless

the accusative pronoun is moved to pre-verbal position. For Negative Insertion to apply to an affirmative command, Pronoun Movement must first apply obligatorily. It seems that upon inserting "no" into an affirmative command, there is an automatic triggering of the Pronoun Movement Rules. It was stated earlier that Negative Insertion can be applied to any grammatical sentence. This still holds true in the imperative since the movement of the object pronouns is automatically triggered by Negative Insertion at the surface structure level.

The foregoing descriptions of object noun phrase movement list the rules in an order that generally follows the way they are introduced in traditional Spanish textbooks: from a basic sentence structure of Subject-Verb-Object to Subject-Object-Verb. The strategy generally used to explain this phenomenon is to instruct the students to substitute the appropriate pronoun for the direct object noun phrase and place it before the conjugated verb form. Once the students have become used to generating direct object pronouns in pre-verbal position, they are then told that the direct object pronouns may be attached to an infinitive or a present participle. Now they have to move the pronoun back to post-verbal position where it was to begin with. They have to remember that it "may" be attached to an infinitive or present participle or "may" be left in pre-verbal position, but only in such a non-finite

construction. With a finite verb it must be in pre-verbal position. Then they are introduced to indirect object pronouns which go through the same processes again, but with indirect object pronouns it is also common to include the indirect object noun phrase in the same sentence. Later in the text they are introduced to object pronouns with commands which, in some cases, use the subjunctive form. They learn that with commands the object pronouns change location again. With affirmative commands the object pronoun must be attached to the verb, whereas with negative commands the pronoun must be in pre-verbal position. Even later, double object pronouns are introduced and all of these rules apply again when both direct and indirect object pronouns occur in the same sentence. This complicated sequence of rules can be difficult for a beginning student. By re-ordering the TG rules to a sequence which reflects their order in natural acquisition we will accomplish two things: We will simplify the learning of object pronouns and also suggest that they be introduced much earlier in the textbook.

Much of a child's first exposure to language is in the form of commands. These are often simple commands that require no spoken response, such as: 'smile,' 'smile for daddy,' 'sit,' 'sit down,' 'come,' 'come here,' 'come to mommy,' 'eat,' 'eat your food,' 'eat it,' 'don't,' 'don't do that,' 'give it to me,' Why then do Spanish textbooks

delay the teaching of commands until much later? If our first goal is to teach listening and comprehension, commands are well suited for this. They are simple in structure and only require a response in the form of an action and not in the form of speech.⁵

Most texts do introduce some commands at the very beginning as classroom expressions to facilitate doing business without having to rely on English. They are taught as monomorphemic, idiomatic expressions: *Conteste* (answer), *repitan* (repeat), *escuche* (listen), *lea* (read), *escriba* (write), *abran los libros* (open your books), *cierren los libros* (close your books), *levante la mano* (raise your hand), etc. This is as far as most of them go until many chapters later.

⁵ James J. Asher, "Fear of Foreign Languages," Psychology Today, August, (1981), pp. 54-55. "...use of the imperative makes second language acquisition accessible and enjoyable for both children and adults."

III. Application to Texts

A fundamental element of language acquisition is the speaker's creative ability to produce an infinite number of utterances that he has never heard before. Transformational grammar is a system of rules that was developed to try to explain the process by which speech emerges through natural acquisition. TG tries to explain with a finite number of rules how a speaker can produce grammatical phrases that he has never heard before. As a speaker's competence in the language improves, the complexity of the rules change. According to Schroten, "the conditions in which one's native language is learned only require a limited number of rules to make learning possible. The rest of the rules are much more complicated and it is difficult to believe that the native speaker was aware of them at the moment he began to acquire his language."⁶ It is possible then to work with a limited number of basic sentence structure rules commonly found in beginning Spanish textbooks to describe the acquisition of object pronouns. Groos agrees saying that "Only if the number of possible grammar rules is limited can

⁶ Jan Schroten, "Sobre la sintaxis de los pronombres atonos del español," Diálogos Hispánicos de Amsterdam, 1, (1980), 7.

we then explain how a child is able to construct the grammar of his language with the information available to him."⁷

Transformations are, therefore, described by a series of specific rules that are acquired subconsciously and used automatically by native speakers but which may be learned consciously by second language learners. The pedagogical goal then of using TG rules should be to follow as closely as possible the natural order of language acquisition in teaching Spanish. According to Molina, "It is also obvious that when the students learn to generate each transform, they have precisely the same control of this segment of the Spanish system as the native."⁸ A native speaker does not have a conscious understanding of all the rules of a language, but once a rule becomes "acquired" it is no longer in the consciousness of the speaker but in the subconscious. Its use then becomes automatic. As Pilleux states, "A native speaker does not have to think about which rules he needs to apply to generate a particular phrase. These rules are automatic and form part of the speaker's linguistic competence."⁹

⁷ Anneke Groos, "La interpretación de los clíticos en la teoría transformacional," Diálogos Hispánicos de Amsterdam, 1, (1980), 39.

⁸ Hubert Molina, "Transformational Grammar in Teaching Spanish," Hispania, 51, (1968), 286.

⁹ Mauricio Pilleux, and Hernán Urrutia, Gramática transformacional del español, (Madrid: Ediciones Alcalá, S.A., 1982), p. 146.

In the following sections I will discuss how selected textbooks introduce object pronouns and in what order.

- * How do the exercises and activities reflect language acquisition through communicative activities?
- * Does the way in which they are presented reflect the natural way that a child learns a first language?
- * Is it a grammar based syllabus or a notional/functional one, and is there much of a difference in the activities and exercises from one to another?
- * Do they succeed in carrying out what they profess in relation to the teaching of object pronouns?

The following texts were reviewed and examined according to the foregoing criteria.

Lengua y cultura. 1973, José Rubia Barcia. Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

La lengua española. 1974, Matilde O. Castells & Harold E. Lionetti. Charles Scribner's Sons.

¿Habla español? 1976, Edward David Allen, Lynn A. Sandstedt, Mary Wegman. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Puntos de partida. 1989, Marty Knorre, Thalia Dorwick, Bill VanPatten, Hildebrando Villarreal. Random House.

¿Habla español? The Essentials. 1990, Teresa Méndez-Faith, Mary McVey Gill. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Don't mind me. 1990, Tracy D. Terrell, Magdalena Andrade, Jeanne Egasse, Elías Miguel Muñoz. McGraw-Hill.

¿Ha comprendido? 1990, Matilde Olivella de Castells. Macmillan Publishing Co.

The order in which the object pronouns are introduced in the above texts is fairly consistent with a few minor exceptions. Most texts present them in the following order:

1. Direct Object
2. Indirect Object
3. With Commands
4. Double Object Pronouns

Some texts switch this order with regard to commands and double object pronouns. *Das mundos* switches the presentation of direct object and indirect object also. Most texts introduce these four topics in whole chunks. *Das mundos* and *Puntos de partida* spread out each topic more and re-introduce them using a different structure each time. For example, the placement of object pronouns with finite verbs is introduced in an earlier chapter and in a later chapter with infinitive constructions. The same is true of commands. Formal commands are introduced first and in a later chapter, informal commands are taught.

What is interesting, and more relevant to this paper, is the introduction of object pronouns with commands. Except for in a few classroom expressions, commands are left for much later chapters. By that time the vocabulary and sentence structure is more complicated than would be necessary in earlier chapters. If the goal of language learning is to comprehend before speaking, then the use of commands in a natural approach and using Total Physical

Response (TPR) (Asher) ¹⁰provides a good means for classroom interaction without the pressure of being forced to speak.

The exercises and activities are noticeably different in some texts, although others in use today still use simple substitution exercises that rely on rote memory (Ellis).¹¹ Some are disguised by contextualizing the activity, which makes it more topic oriented but still relies on rote memory which does little to improve language acquisition (Ellis).

An example of one effective way to learn object pronouns without relying on rote memorization is through a method that Krashen calls hidden subject matter teaching. This consists of making the students think they are practicing one topic when in fact they are practicing another, unknowingly. By not being aware of the hidden subject, they are acquiring it subconsciously. For example, in *Das mundos* the following activity is found:

p. 174: Actividad 14. Diálogos abiertos: Las presentaciones

Preséntele su nuevo amigo (nueva amiga) a otro amigo (otra amiga)

¹⁰Asher, pp. 54-55.

¹¹Rod Ellis, Understanding Second Language Acquisition (Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 274-275.

E1: Sr./Sra. _____, quiero presentarle a mi
amigo/a _____. Es_____.

E2: _____ en conocerlo/la.

E3: _____.

While the students concentrate on filling in the blanks correctly (with vocabulary they already know), they are also practicing the indirect and direct object pronouns.

Another type of activity that allows for a variety of responses is the open-ended activity. The answers are not known in advance by the teacher and therefore, makes it a more communicative activity (Terrell, 1990). Here is an example from *Puntos de partida*:

p. 220: C. ¿Qué va a pasar? Dé varias respuestas.

1. Su amiga Elena está en el hospital con un ataque de apendicitis. Todos le mandan... Le escriben... Las enfermeras (nurses) le dan... De comer, le sirven...

As with the previous fill-in activity of *Dos mundos*, the main effort goes into completing the sentences, but at the same time they are practicing indirect object pronouns.

The text *¡Ya comprendo!* introduces direct object pronouns using pictures which seem very effective in illustrating the generation of object pronouns. However, by generating the pronoun from post verbal noun phrase directly to a preverbal clitic pronoun, many steps are omitted in

this process that could be better shown through a series of commands that generate the pronoun in post verbal position before making the transformation to pre verbal.

For example:

p. 130: The text shows Juan washing a car and the statement;

Juan lava el auto. -> Juan lo lava.

Instead, the following method could be used:

Juan, lava el auto. -> Juan, lávalo.

This will be discussed more thoroughly in the section on teaching object pronouns.

Examination of Texts

A. *¿Hacia español? An Introductory Course.* 1976.

Introduction

The syllabus of this text is a grammatical one. The Preface states that it contains "concise grammar explanations with abundant examples" and only introduces "one grammatical structure at a time".

Some other features of the text that categorize it as grammar based are mini-dialogues with English translations, oral drills, and directed oral and written activities that reinforce the grammar topics. The main dialogue exposes the student to all the grammatical structures of the chapter at once before moving to each individual grammar structure. Vocabulary is carefully controlled so that new words are introduced gradually.

Class recitation of oral drills is optional since the same drills are included in the lab tape program. The lab program consists of pronunciation exercises, dramatic readings, listening comprehension questions, dictation, oral drills and additional grammar exercises.

Presentation of Object Pronouns

Chp. 7	p. 136	direct object
Chp. 8	p. 159	indirect object
Chp. 8	p. 169	double object
Chp. 10	p. 212	w/commands

Explanations of object pronouns with examples are given in English. The text then goes on to explain the Spanish pronoun system in English and gives Spanish examples with translations. It describes the position of the pronoun as being attached to an infinitive or placed before the conjugated verb form. This is a typical explanation in most texts.

Types of Exercises

These consist of substitution exercises where the object noun phrase is replaced by the pronoun. They use simple sentences that are unrelated in context.

p. 138:

Exercise 1: ¿Apoyas a este candidato? -> Sí, lo apoyo.

Exercise 2: ¿Dónde están los regalos? -> ¿Los regalos?
Yo no los tengo.

Exercise 3: La voy a llamar. -> Voy a llamarla.

Exercise 4: José necesita el libro. -> José lo
necesita.

Then questions are used to elicit the appropriate answer by changing the pronoun.

¿Nos busca Enrique? -> Sí, los busca.

¿Tienes que llevar a los niños? -> Sí, tengo que llevarlos.

The same structure for introducing indirect object pronouns and double object pronouns is used with similar exercises.

In the teaching of object pronouns with commands the text uses English explanations with Spanish examples and translations. The grammar section explains that object pronouns are attached to affirmative commands in the same order as with statements. In negative commands, the pronouns are placed in pre-verbal position.

This construction should be taught before the other object pronoun constructions. It makes it easier to see where object pronouns are generated from and are easy to practice. This is more like native language acquisition in that much of the input given to children in the very early stages is in the form of commands. Students can respond to many commands without having to say anything (See section on teaching object pronouns).

The book uses the following type of sentence to demonstrate.

Cómprame un auto. -> Cómpramelo.

Although this construction is more complicated since it uses a double object pronoun, it could be simplified at first by using only a single object.

Abre el libro. -> Ábrelo.

Levanta la mano. -> Levántala.

Borra la pizarra. -> Bórrala.

Negative commands can then be presented to show movement of the pronoun to the pre-verbal position. The same pattern of pronoun generation and movement can then be shown with infinitive and progressive constructions. Commands can later be re-introduced with double object pronouns.

In a paper by Terrell¹² he states that "almost one third of the exercises (in *Habla española*) consist of audiolingual pattern drills." This fact, combined with about three fourths of the exercises not being contextualized or communicative, shows that this is basically a grammar driven text. The fourth edition of *Habla española*¹⁷ has changed considerably in some areas but not in others (See below).

¹²Tracy D. Terrell, "Trends in the Teaching of Grammar in Spanish Language Textbooks," Hispania, 73, March, (1990), 206.

B. *¿Habla español? Essentials*. 4th edition, 1989.

Introduction

In the introduction, the text states that it is "ideal for instructors who favor eclectic teaching methods; there is ample material for developing all language skills."¹³ It also states that "the key is contextualization," but as we shall see, many of the exercises in the object pronoun sections are still not contextualized. According to Terrell, "*¿Habla español?*" is still a relatively conservative text with a heavy grammar component,"¹⁴ although it has dramatically increased its contextualization of exercises. He goes on to say that "the authors have not increased the number of open and/or interactive exercises." Open exercises are more interactive and provide more opportunity for communication. Contextualization by itself then is not sufficient. It must be combined with communicative activities. Otherwise, the activities end up as substitution drills with a related theme.

¹³The term "eclectic" can be misleading. It makes it easy for a text to claim relevancy to many language learning theories and thereby appeal to a larger audience. If the goal of elementary Spanish courses is to teach oral communication, then a text should concentrate its means toward that end.

¹⁴Terrell, 1990, *Hispania*, p. 206.

Presentation of Object Pronouns

Chp. 5	pp 114-117	direct object
Chp. 6	pp 128-131	indirect object
Chp. 6	pp 138-140	double object
Chp. 9	pp 198-201	w/gustar
Chp. 11	pp 249-252	w/commands

Explanations are basically the same as in the first edition; even some of the examples are the same. The exercises are more contextualized although many of them are still basically simple substitution exercises.

Types of Exercises

This is an example of a dialogue in which they are asked to relocate the object pronoun to the right of the infinitive.

p. 116: A. Al revés. (Backwards) Change position of the pronouns in italics.

Modelo: ¿Cuándo *lo* vamos a visitar?

¿Cuándo vamos a visitar*lo*?

RAFA: Ese café es muy bueno. ¿*Lo* vas a comprar? (¿Vas a comprar*lo*?)

HUGO: Sí, creo que Susana *nos* va a visitar. (...va a visitar*nos*.)

RAFA: ¿Quién *la* va a invitar? (¿Quién va a invitar*la*?)

This dialogue is an improvement over the first edition's substitution drills. Although basically a substitution exercise, the activity is made less rote by incorporating it into a meaningful dialogue.

One of the questions students are asked to answer may be rather confusing to them:

¿Contestas las preguntas del profesor?

This question can be answered in several ways:

Sí, las contesto. ("las" referring to "las preguntas")

Sí, le contesto las preguntas.

("le" referring to el profesor)

Sí, se las contesto. ("se" referring to "el profesor")

The question contains both a direct and an indirect object and the students have not been introduced to indirect objects yet. This may not create too much difficulty if they are able to differentiate between the direct and indirect objects. The following is an exercise which involves substitution of the direct object with a pronoun.

p. 251:

B. "No lo compre, señora." You are a tourist guide in an open-air market and realize that one of the ladies in your group is about to make some bad purchases. Advise her not to buy these items because the prices are too high. Follow the model.

Modelo: un reloj de oro

No lo compre, señora.

1. unos sombreros (No los compre, señora).
2. un vestido (No lo compre, señora).
3. una blusa típica (No la compre, señora).

(etc)

On the same page is the following exercise that is a substitution exercise but is not contextualized:

C. ;Háganlo ahora! Replace the nouns with object pronouns.

Modelo: Escribe la carta, Susana.

Escríbela, Susana.

1. Lee tu lección, Pablo. (Léela, Pablo).
2. Compra frutas, Carmela. (Cómpralas, Carmela)

(etc)

On page 140 there is a translation exercise of a short dialogue where students must work with partners and use object pronouns. This is reminiscent of the "Grammar-Translation Approach" where comprehension and assimilation of the language were measured in the student's ability to convert his native language into the target language.¹⁵ In

¹⁵Kenneth Chastain, Developing Second Language Skills, (Harcourt brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1988), p. 87.

the section of the Introduction called "Planning Lessons", the text encourages instructors to "draw from the notional-functional lists of expressions...and make use of them in any way they can." It is true that there are some good suggestions in these sections, but the text does not follow a notional-functional syllabus. Throughout the introduction are suggestions that the instructor briefly explain the grammar. The way the grammar explanations are located in the text distract the students from the communicative efforts of the teacher by having the English explanations readily visible to the student. This causes the student to fall back on the explanation whenever difficulties arise. Unless the book is closed, the distraction is always there. In addition, translations of many of the Spanish dialogues are given under each dialogue. These are not unique to *Habla español*. They occur in most Spanish textbooks. It does not give the student the opportunity to acquire the meaning naturally by listening to the context of the situation.

Most of the exercises have been improved over the first edition. Many simple substitution and translation exercises have been replaced by contextualized exercises. The indirect object section contains an exercise where the student must provide the entire answer from what is seen in a picture, and an interview where the person being interviewed must keep the book closed. These are good

examples of what Terrell calls "open/closed" or "divergent/convergent" exercises,¹⁶ where the answers are not known in advance by the teacher or partner.

¹⁶Terrell, 1990, Hispania, p. 203. "A 'closed' activity/exercise has specific answers known in advance by the instructor."

3. *Journal of Spanish Language Acquisition*, 1990.

Introduction

The Introduction states that "the "Actividades Orales" remain the core of the text and grammar is still an adjunct, and aid to the language acquisition process." This de-emphasizing of grammar to a supporting role is apparent in the organization of each chapter and is the thing that makes this text stand out from all the others. The grammar explanations and homework exercises are at the end of each chapter while the classroom activities and extensive vocabulary list is at the beginning.¹⁰

The introduction goes on to give an overview of the hypotheses of Krashen's theoretical model of language acquisition of which Terrell's Natural Approach to language instruction is a product. The main difference between *Des niveles* and other Spanish texts is that the materials in *Des niveles* are "all intended to provide comprehension experiences with new material before production is expected." Traditionally, Spanish texts have concentrated on generating immediate student response by using drills to

¹⁰Beth L. Losiewicz, "An Introduction to New Ideas in Language Teaching: An Annotated Bibliography for Teachers." *Hispania*, 71, March, (1988), 164. *Des niveles* contains excellent classroom speaking activities in which real information is communicated.

practice specific grammar points. *Dos mundos* emphasizes the Natural Approach, whose goal is to "develop proficiency in communication skills. Grammatical correctness is a part of communicative proficiency, but it is neither the primary goal nor a prerequisite for developing proficiency."¹⁹ This is a direct contradiction to the importance of grammar as stated in *lengua y cultura* (see below). The Instructor's Manual offers a more detailed explanation of the Natural Approach and the language acquisition process and how to apply it in the classroom.

Presentation of Object Pronouns

The presentation of object pronouns in *Dos mundos* is spread throughout the text and they are re-introduced with various applications in a number of chapters. For this reason I will not include the list of chapters here. *Dos mundos* does not formally introduce object pronouns until chp. 6 (there are 18 chapters). However, the pronoun forms are introduced in chp. 1 with the verb *gustar* and a few classroom commands using the reflexive pronoun "se" introduced in the vocabulary list of Paso A. In Paso B one other command is used with an indirect object pronoun; "muéstre(n)me", with no explanation given at this time.

¹⁹Tracy D. Terrell, 1990, *Dos Mundos*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., 1990). Instructor's Manual. p. 15. (Instructor's Manual is bound at the end of the textbook).

This is an unthreatening way of introducing object pronouns with "gustar" since it is a common verb that is used almost exclusively with indirect object pronouns. Giving the students ample practice with "gustar" will accustom them to the Object Pronoun-Verb structure.

Object pronouns are spread throughout the text which allows the students to acquaint themselves well with one form at a time, rather than being exposed to all of them at once.

The grammar explanations are basically the same as in other texts although these are relegated to the end of the chapter and are not in plain view of the students during the oral activities. In this way the students cannot immediately fall back on the English translations or explanations. There is no English used in the activity sections.

Types of Exercises

In the introduction of object pronouns (direct object) these are some of the activities.²⁰

p. 174:

Diálogos abiertos: Las presentaciones

²⁰Reflexive pronouns are introduced first in this text. By the time direct object pronouns are presented, the students have had several opportunities to become familiar with the pronoun forms and some of the positions in which they may occur.

Preséntele su nuevo amigo (nueva amiga) a otro amigo (otra amiga).

E1: _____, quiero presentarte a mi amigo/a _____.

Vive en _____.

E2: Mucho gusto.

E3: _____.

The benefit of this type of activity is that the words they will be using to fill in the blanks are words that they are already familiar with. The hidden practice is the use of the object pronouns. Since they will be concentrating on filling in the blanks correctly, they will at the same time be practicing the object pronouns.

The exercises in the back of the chapter are fill-in where the student must complete the blank with the appropriate D.O. pronoun.

p. 186:

Modelo: ¿Conoces a Marta Muñoz?

Sí, la conozco.

1. ¿Conocen ustedes a los señores Ramírez?

Sí, _____ conocemos muy bien.

Commands are introduced in chapter 11 but the use of object pronouns with them are only a small part of the activities. The teacher, however, can take advantage of the

suggestions in the marginal glosses to expand the amount of practice with pronouns.

D. *Hispania*, 53, 1990, p. 211. 3rd edition, 1989.

Introduction

Hispania 53rd edition advocates teaching for communicative competence and proficiency. It states that "the overall goals of the third edition are... to help students develop proficiency in the four language skills essential to truly communicative language learning," thereby appealing to those preferring an eclectic approach.

A substantial portion of the exercises are written to tell a story or form a logical sequence. According to Terrell, almost all of the activities (97%) have been contextualized while just slightly over half (53%) are communicative.²¹ This indicates that nearly as many are grammar exercises. Since the book emphasizes the development of the four language skills, this would seem appropriate. However, if the goal, as the introduction also states, is to develop communicative competence, the number of grammar exercises should be reduced. Pattern practice has been moved to the Instructor's Edition marginal glosses, where they are available as an option should the instructor choose to use them.

²¹Terrell, 1990, Hispania, p. 211.

Presentation of Object Pronouns

Chp. 6	p. 196	direct object
Chp. 7	p. 218	indirect object
Chp. 7	p. 229	w/commands
Chp. 8	p. 260	double object
Chp. 15	p. 422	tú commands

The object pronoun sections begin with a dialogue that introduces the pronouns, followed by a grammar explanation in English similar to most other texts. It gives a few examples of some Spanish sentences with English translations, and includes infinitive and present participle constructions in this section. Many of the exercises have been contextualized and lend themselves well to communicative practice.

Types of Exercises

p. 197:

Ex: Escenas en un restaurante. The following description of a dinner out at a restaurant contains much repetition. Rephrase sentences, changing direct object nouns to pronouns as needed.

1. El camarero trae los vasos y pone los vasos en la mesa.

This sentence could be used as a departure point for many conversational questions. Even though the activity starts out as re-phrasing exercises, it is easy to expand them into conversational practice once the noun phrases have been changed into pronouns and relocated.

¿Quién trae los vasos? -> El camarero trae los vasos.

¿Qué trae el camarero? -> Trae los vasos.

¿Quién los trae? -> El camarero los trae.

There are 10 more sentences in this activity that take the students through a restaurante experience.

2. Luego trae el menu y los señores leen el menu.

8. Todos prefieren vino tinto. Por eso el señor pide vino tinto.

11. Por fin la señora toma la cuenta y paga la cuenta.

The following are more examples of exercises which are essentially substitution exercises but are disguised by a question.

p. 198: ¿Qué comiste anoche? Con otro/a estudiante, haga y conteste preguntas según el modelo.

Modelo: tacos -> ¿Comiste tacos anoche?

Sí, los comí. (No, no los comí).

1. jamón 2. zanahorias (etc)

This seemingly simple exercise involves processes that the student must carry out in order to select the appropriate pronoun. They must first understand the question, decide whether to answer 'yes' or 'no', determine the gender and plurality of the noun phrase, and finally, by applying the appropriate rules, generate the object pronoun in the correct position.

Some of the exercise instructions are in Spanish, others are in English. The instructions could be written in Spanish and use model sentences to explain the activities. Every opportunity should be taken to expose the students to as much Spanish as possible. As will be seen later in this section, *Lengua y cultura* takes this to an extreme.

Object pronouns with formal commands are first introduced in chapter 7 with the present subjunctive. Exercises in this section include only a few for object pronouns, and some of these are included as part of subordinate subjunctive clauses. The problem with introducing object pronouns with commands at the same time as the subjunctive is that the subjunctive does not apply to all commands. Teaching commands earlier in the text would gradually expose the students to the subjunctive and lessen the difficulty later. One of the exercises is simple classroom commands:

p. 232:

D. Imagine que Ud. es el profesor (la profesora) hoy.

¿Qué mandatos debe dar a la clase?

Modelo: hablar español -> Hablen Uds. español.

hablar inglés -> No hablen Uds. inglés.

1. llegar a tiempo
2. leer la lección
4. abrir los libros
7. traer los libros
- (etc)

Some of these could be modified to be used as classroom commands at the very beginning of the class.

abrir los libros -> abran los libros -> ábranlos -> no
los abran

leer la lección -> lean la lección -> léanla -> no la
lean

Informal commands with (tú) are not introduced until almost 200 pages later. This text introduces (tú) commands later than any of the others. The activities are similar to the ones mentioned above.

E. ... 1974.

Introduction

The syllabus design of this text is strictly grammatical. Some of the statements in the introduction describe the book's intent very clearly. The text contains "over 100 sections of self-testing to permit individual students to work effectively on their own". It goes on to say that "great care has been taken to make each basic structure that is presented readily understandable, even to the student who is working largely on his own." The text refers several times to the student working on his own. If this were a communicative text, more emphasis would be placed on classroom oral comprehension and participation. Self-testing exercises do little for oral proficiency but "allow the student to determine the extent of his comprehension of the grammar."

There are short dialogues at the beginning of each chapter and numerous pictures of the Hispanic world throughout the book, all with English translations. In the footnotes under each dialogue are literal translations of phrases that are unfamiliar to the student. It provides a comparison to English structures that the student would be more familiar with. It also stresses the importance of

memorizing vocabulary from the dialogues and from vocabulary lists. This is indicative of a grammar-translation approach to language instruction. Throughout the text there are constant comparisons between the native and target languages and little concern with the students being able to communicate orally in the target language.²²

The text summarizes its intent: "This multifaceted presentation of grammar is designed to increase the efficiency of the student's study time at home and, by lessening the instructor's need to explicate overly concentrated grammatical material in class, to free class time for communication and expression." It is interesting to note that all the texts emphasize the importance of developing communication skills. The difference lies in the methods they use to attain these objectives.

Presentation of Object Pronouns

Chp. 9	p. 121 direct object
Chp. 11	p. 154 indirect object
Chp. 12	p. 164 double object
Chp. 26	p. 344 w/commands

Each chapter begins with a short dialogue that introduces the grammar structures to be presented in the chapter. It includes an English translation of the dialogue

²²Chastain, 1988, p. 87.

followed by questions specific to the dialogue and then general questions of a more personal nature following the same general topic. The grammar explanation comes next with an English explanation and a short section of exercises. The section on direct object pronouns is nearly three pages long. It begins with an explanation of basic sentence structure; "Each sentence...is composed of three basic elements: a) the subject..., b) the verb..., c) the direct object..." It then continues with in depth explanations of Spanish object pronouns.

Types of Exercises

The types of exercises are consistent throughout the text. They consist of substitution drills, patterned responses, phrase expansion drills (él me busca. -> él me busca a mí.), and phrase reduction drills (¿Termino la lección? -> Sí, terminela.). None of the exercises are contextualized and most are closed activities:

p. 125: E. Direct object noun -> direct object pronoun

Model: Andrés estudia la lección.

Andrés la estudia.

Ellos leen el menú.

Ellos lo leen.

Ella escribe los números.

Ella los escribe.

Juan llama al camarero.

Juan lo llama.

(etc)

This chapter on commands is very similar and contains the same type of exercises:

p. 244: a. Affirmative > negative

Model: Entre usted.

No entre usted.

Acuéstate.

No se acueste.

Háblele.

No le hable.

Levántense.

No se levanten.

These drills would be very useful at the beginning of the book to solicit physical responses from the students without requiring any speech production. Presenting them so late in the book is not making very good use of a simple teaching tool.

There are not many allowances made for developing the student's creativity in such a rigid grammatical format. The students are guided through each grammar explanation which is carefully ordered and controlled. This is a book that the students could study at home and learn the grammar without ever having to attend class.

In addition to the self-tests after each grammar topic, there is a review section after every three chapters. They contain reading and writing exercises and a larger self-test on the material covered in the last three chapters. The tests consist mainly of filling in the blanks.

This text is good for teaching grammatical structures, but provides few opportunities for developing oral proficiency. It is interesting to note that the co-author of this text is also the author of *¡Ya comprendo!* published sixteen years later (see below).

F. *¡Ya comprendo!: A Communicative Course in Spanish*. 1990.

Introduction

¡Ya comprendo! claims to be a communicative text that develops language proficiency by leading the students to "develop the complete spectrum of language skills and a readiness to use Spanish for personally meaningful communication." The introduction emphasizes interaction among students in a variety of settings.

The text emphasizes working with fewer structures at a time and mastering those before moving on to more complex structures. The use of Total Physical Response (TPR) is advocated as "one of the many ways to develop listening comprehension." The Actividades Preliminarias in each chapter relate "TPR activities to classroom situations. Language production...in this initial stage consists of one-word answers or short phrases." The text does a good job of using TPR with simple classroom commands at the beginning of

the text (p.1). It uses a series of drawings and Spanish phrases to convey the messages. The only pronouns used are a couple of reflexives. This would be a good opportunity to do some generating of object pronouns with the commands already included:

pp. 1-3: Some of the commands used are;

(Drawing of a girl erasing a chalkboard)

Borre la pizarra. -> Bórrela

(Drawing of a boy opening a book)

Abra el libro. -> Ábralo.

Cierre la ventana. -> Ciérrela.

Levante la mano. -> Levántela

By presenting object pronouns in this way the students are progressing from "skill getting" to "skill using" activities. First they learn the meaning of the command/object pronoun before they are expected to use the structure themselves.

Each chapter is organized with a short text that introduces grammatical structures. English translations are provided in early chapters. Later, only selected words are glossed in the margin (beginning on chapter 4). This is followed by a short grammar explanation and then the activities. In later chapters, the grammar explanation follows the activities. Many of the activities are

substitution exercises although contextualized. The marginal glosses offer additional suggestions for communicative exercises.

Presentation of Object Pronouns

Chp. 5	p. 130	direct object
Chp. 6	p. 153	w/progressive
Chp. 7	p. 174	indirect
Chp. 8	p. 201	w/commands
Chp. 16	p. 403	double object

The object pronoun section begins with pictures, dialogues, or readings demonstrating the use of object pronouns. No English is used except to translate new vocabulary. Following this is an English grammar explanation, Spanish examples and their translations, and an activity section. The instructions are all in Spanish. Most are substitution-type exercises although contextualized, with some communicative exercises using partners, i.e., completing dialogues or interviews.

Types of Exercises

The following exercises involve answering simple questions in Spanish.

p. 132: A. Conteste las siguientes preguntas sobre sus responsabilidades en la casa. Use pronombres en sus respuestas.

Modelo: ¿Sacas la basura?

Sí, la saco. No, no la saco.

1. ¿Limpias tu cuarto? 2. ¿Limpias la cocina? ¿y el garage?

3. ¿Lavas los platos? 4. ¿Secas los platos? (etc)

This a communicative activity although it would be considered closed because the students can only respond in one of two ways; yes or no. Another example of a good communicative activity is:

p. 177: F. Este mes es el cumpleaños de varias personas.

Diga qué les va a regalar usted y qué les va a regalar su amigo Pedro.

Modelo: María Cristina

Yo le voy a regalar (voy a regalarle) una bufanda.

Pedro le va a regalar un libro.

nuestro entrenador mi hermana Ricardo Silvia

This activity involves vocabulary recall as well as object pronoun use. It is an open activity because the

student has the freedom to choose his own gift to give which is not known in advance by the teacher or other students.

The grammar explanations are in English and located just before the activity section, however, the majority of the chapter is in Spanish and English is relegated to a supporting role. The combination of good communicative activities, short grammar explanations, and the abundant use of Spanish make this a good text for teaching for oral proficiency.

G. *Lengua y cultura*. José Rubia Barcia, 1973.

Introduction

The thing that stands out most in this text is that it is completely in Spanish; even the vocabulary lists contain no English equivalents. On the surface that would seem to be an advantage to the student, but it is very much a grammatical text. "A lesson in applied grammar alternates with a reading lesson". "'Principios Gramaticales'...deal with general syntactical problems and will be of use to students who require supplementary grammatical work." "Each lesson in applied grammar is composed of a list of 'frases basicas'" followed by a section ... "which takes up the 'frases basicas' in order and develops them

inductively...followed by a series of exercises." Inductive learning involves the memorization of a rule and then applying that rule to a given situation. This type of learning doesn't allow for creative thinking since the student is always trying to apply the rule and if it doesn't fit then another rule must be found. The process is slow and does not promote communicative skills. This text cannot be considered a grammar-translation text since there is no translation of anything and certainly no translation exercises. It is however an audio-lingual text. It consists of lists of complete paradigms that the student must study and become familiar with:

p. 149: El banco me presta dinero a mí.
 El banco te presta dinero a tí.
 El banco le presta dinero a usted.
 El banco le presta dinero a él. (etc)

The text makes an interesting statement in the introduction about language learning: "We do not learn our native language by means of grammar because it is impossible to do so. The child...is learning to speak. This is quite a different process. Grammar remains as a result the mainstay of the foreign language course." This statement serves to demonstrate the complete change in language learning theory over the past eighteen years. Today the

focus is to de-emphasize grammar instruction in favor of more natural methods that follow the sequence of native language acquisition. The text goes on to say that "the advantage of teaching in the foreign language is that it obliges the student to conceptualize and to feel in Spanish. If this radical decision is not made, English will remain in the foreground and the number of Spanish contact-hours will be greatly reduced. There is no need to teach in English." This statement could just as easily have come from any of the modern textbooks that emphasize oral communication. The difference is in the way those contact-hours are used. The book goes on to say that "it is true that languages can be learned at great cost without grammar; but it is equally true that they cannot be learned without it in the school situation. *Lengua y Cultura* has consequently adhered rigorously to an inductive presentation of grammar."

The grammar explanations are similar to other texts, only in Spanish. This requires a lot of effort on the part of the students to try to understand the grammar explanations at a very early stage in their language learning. The idea of a text completely in Spanish has merit, although the grammar explanations need to be simplified and perhaps relocated.

The text is not very visually motivating. It contains no pictures, drawings, or other realia. After each eight chapters there is a section with several pages of pictures

of various areas of the Hispanic world. These are for appearance only since they contain only small captions and no explanations of their significance.

Presentation of Object Pronouns

Chp. 9	p. 70	direct object
Chp. 17	p. 134	direct object
Chp. 19	p. 149	indirect object and w/gustar
Chp. 21	p. 162	double object pronouns
Chp. 31	p. 253	w/commands

Direct object pronouns are introduced very early (chp 9; there are 48 chapters). Each chapter introduces various grammar points and discusses them all first. At the end of each chapter is a set of exercises covering the material in the chapter. All of the grammar points and examples are introduced first and then exercises covering all the points are grouped at the end of the chapter.

Types of Exercises

Many of the exercises are simple substitution although the introduction claims to the contrary. "The exercises themselves are never of the simple substitution variety."

p. 72: C. Omitase los nombres-complementos de las frases siguientes substituyéndolos con los pronombres correspondientes.

Ejemplo: Ana hace el desayuno.

Ana lo hace.

1. Pablo no estudia química.
2. Visita el museo con frecuencia.
3. Juan hace el ejercicio.
4. No lea usted el libro.

(etc)

Object pronouns with commands are introduced very late in the book and are not the main point of the lesson. Exercises for pronouns with commands cover both direct and indirect object pronouns in the same exercise. This method may work well in this book since it comes so late, but it is too complicated for use in earlier chapters. It would require simplification.

p. 262: B. Escribanse en forma negativa.

1. Dame la respuesta. -> (No me des la respuesta).
2. Llévale esta carta. -> (No le lleves esta carta).

Then asks that they be pronominalized.

1. Dame la carta. -> (Dámela).

2. Llévale la carta. -> (Llévasela).

Then asks that these be made negative.

1. Dámela. -> (No me la des).

2. Llévasela. -> (No se la lleves).

This exercise could be made more communicative by contextualizing and simplifying them. Again, it should be introduced at the beginning of the book.

Summary of Texts

The intent of every text is to develop communication skills. The promise of communication is attractive to any new student but it says nothing of the real emphasis taken in a given text. The difference lies in the methods used for developing these skills.⁴³ Most of the texts reviewed still rely heavily on grammar explanation, although they vary on how much emphasis it is given. From the purely grammatical syllabus of *La lengua española* to the more notional/functional syllabus of *Dos mundos*, is apparent the big difference in the importance placed on grammar.

Many of the newer texts use communicative activities using object pronouns throughout the text. These could be left in their present locations, but, as I will suggest in the next section, the introduction of object pronouns at the beginning of the text through simple commands may make it easier for the student to learn more complex structures later.

According to Chastain, most teachers favor an eclectic approach to teaching languages. He lists some reasons for this which include criticism of grammar-translation and

⁴³Losiewicz, 1988, p. 164. Textbook publishers have been remarkably slow in responding to new trends in language learning theory, perhaps afraid to take the publishing risk. (Random House's Natural Approach text *Dos Mundos* is a notable exception).

audio-lingual approaches, conflicting opinions among theorists and teachers, uncertainty of how to implement new approaches, and concern with maintaining student interest over developing a sequence leading to communicative skills.²⁴ He does, however, leave out one important point. Teachers have been limited to the approaches presented by most textbooks, which are designed with the four basic skills in mind; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Since the eclectic approach is used in the materials available, it follows that the teachers would also use the same approach. As more materials become available to reflect recent trends in research, teachers will begin adopting them for classroom use.

There is some support for a re-ordering of the presentation of object pronouns in Spanish textbooks. Dulay and Burt (In Ellis, 1985) did research on the order of acquisition of morphemes by grouping together features that are acquired at approximately the same time and categorizing them in stages. Ellis states that "the case distinction between subject and object pronouns is acquired at the same time as basic subject-verb-object word order and together they constitute the first stage of development."²⁵ This research is in second language acquisition of learners of English but is supported by Van Naerssen's (In VanPatten,

²⁴Chastain, 1988, p. 109.

²⁵Ellis, 1985, p. 56.

1986) study of the order of emergence of morphemes in foreign language learners of Spanish.²⁶ The results show that the dative morpheme is an early-to-mid acquired item (she doesn't include the accusative morpheme in her results). It is acquired before the present indicative. Although the order is not rigid and variability exists among individual learners, it should be noted that the acquisition of certain grammatical items are governed by factors beyond instructional presentation (VanPatten, p. 209). Most textbooks deal with the present indicative almost exclusively in the early chapters while the object pronouns are introduced later. VanPatten goes on to say that teachers should not expect learners to produce mid- and late- acquired items in the first two years of instruction. Although this goes against the syllabus of most textbooks, it does help to give the student and teacher a better understanding of the reasons for progress in certain areas while others require more time. Perhaps this indicates a need for restructuring the order of presentation of certain grammatical structures in future textbooks of Spanish if further research validates present theories of order of acquisition.

²⁶Bill VanPatten, "Second Language Acquisition Research and the Learning/Teaching of Spanish: Some Research Findings and Implications." Hispania, 69, March, (1986), 209.

IV. Teaching object pronouns through commands: A proposal for restructuring

Having evaluated certain textbook presentations against the communicative and generative criteria expressed in Section III, I will now propose a pedagogical sequence that I feel is motivated by natural order. We can re-order the transformations to begin with a command that would be similar to the type that a child hears in the very early stages of language acquisition. It could be something like

Come la comida.

In reality this sentence would probably be shortened to "Come" or "Cómela". A sentence like

El niño come la comida. -> El niño la come.

is probably not the first structure addressed to a child, although most of the Spanish texts introduce object pronouns in this way. It is more natural to hear "Cómela" with "la" referring in context to "la comida". Ellis (1985) agrees. In discussing the role of input on child language acquisition he suggests that the way mothers talk to their children influences how rapidly they acquire the language. "It is the mother's choice of discourse function (e.g. commands rather than questions) ...which provide the right kind of data to foster development."²⁷

²⁷Ellis, 1985, p. 131.

We can apply these real life situations to language instruction in the classroom. Even though we may try to contextualize material and put it into communicative settings, I don't believe that children begin to learn a language by taking a statement and converting the noun phrase into a pronoun and then moving it to its correct position. The whole time a child is in his pre-speech stage, he is acquiring language skills through what he sees and hears around him. In the classroom we can speed up the process by using some TPR with commands. We shouldn't expect language production at this point but, neither should the students just sit there waiting to absorb the language. They should be active participants and this can be achieved by using commands. VanPatten states that "teachers and curricula should not place undue emphasis on the development of formal, morphological accuracy in communication and should incorporate activities centered on the nonlinguistic aspects of communication."²⁸ A learner must first comprehend the language before he can be expected to produce it. For example, we can use sentences similar to "Come la comida":

Abre el libro. -> Ábrelo.

Once the context for "el libro" has been established, the student can easily make the transition to "Ábrelo". This command has combined two quick transformations to change the

²⁸VanPatten, 1986, Hispania, p. 211.

object noun phrase to a pronoun and attach it to the verb. The act of attaching the pronoun is necessary only for teaching the correct written form. In oral communication you can't see that the pronoun is attached; it is merely in post-verbal position. The transformations used are:

Abre el libro

(Pronominalization)

Abre el libro lo (this is where contextualization occurs)

(Accusative NP Deletion)

Abre lo

"Abre lo" is a grammatical sequence in spoken Spanish although its written form is not acceptable. Since what we are trying to teach is conversation skills, it is unnecessary to include the transformation of Pronoun Enclisis.

The only response necessary is for the student to carry out the command. No English is necessary to explain what "el libro" is or what "abre" means. It can all be demonstrated in the target language. No grammar explanations should be offered either in English or Spanish. This same pattern can be expanded to include many other commands. For example:

Cierra el libro. -> Ciérralo.

Levanta la mano. -> Levántala.

and plural

Abran los libros. -> Ábranlos.

Cierren los libros. -> Ciérrenlos.

Levanten las manos. -> Levántenlas.

¡Ya comprendo! does a good job of introducing commands with only a series of drawings of students carrying out certain requests. No English is used. The context of the action can be seen in the drawings. The text refers to these as TPR activities. These same commands could be demonstrated by the teacher and then by the students. These commands could easily be expanded to include object pronouns. They include "Siéntese", "Levántese", and "Deme el lápiz". Since these forms are already included, other commands that they use could be adapted to using pronouns.

Escriba su nombre. -> Escríbalo.

Borre la pizarra. -> Bórrela.

Deme el lápiz. -> Démelo.

Unfortunately, *¡Ya comprendo!* then leaves object pronouns until page 131, chapter 5 (there are 17 chapters) and goes back to the traditional way of introducing object pronouns.

Juan lava el auto. -> Juan lo lava.

To test comprehension of the commands the following approach could be used. First identify the object then give the command. For example; point to the window and say the name. Then pronominalize the command.

(la ventana) -> Ábrala.

If the student comprehends and carries out the action, he has been able to contextualize the command "Ábrala" by associating "la" with "la ventana". By doing this, the student has been able to acquire the knowledge of the two rules of transformation mentioned above through contextualization without going through each transform separately.

The change to pre-verbal position of object pronouns can also be introduced using commands, this time with negatives. The students already know that "Abra la ventana" becomes "Ábrala", but now by inserting "no" it becomes

Ábrala. -> No la abra.

In this case the transformation of Negative Insertion has been applied to generate the negative command. As was mentioned in the section on transformations, the insertion of "no" automatically triggers the fronting of the object pronoun. This will make the fronting of pronouns easier for the student to understand later when infinitive and progressive constructions are introduced in the text.

There is no need to point out to the students that some commands use the subjunctive form. Many students have heard

of it before and have been told how different it is so they already have a preconceived fear of it. Others won't know what it is anyway so it won't mean anything to them. By not mentioning the subjunctive, it may make learning it later much easier.

For example:

No la abra. -> Quiero que no la abra. -> Quiero que la abra.

This takes us away from the main topic of this paper. It is mentioned to show how the application of this method to later structures may justify its presentation in the beginning chapters of the text.

How do we get from commands to declaratives using object pronouns? As is stated in all texts, the object pronouns are placed in front of a conjugated verb. One suggestion is to set up situations in class where, by using commands, a specific action is carried out. Afterward, the class can discriminate whether it was being done or not.

(la ventana) -> Juan, abra la ventana.

Teacher: ¿Abre Juan la ventana?

Class: Sí. (No).

Teacher: Sí, la abre. (No, no la abre).

If we refer to the drawings in *¡Ya comprendo!*, it would not be difficult to convert the existing sentences into a

more communicative exercise using commands. Take for example the previous sentence "Juan lava el auto". We can generate a series of sentences to demonstrate the movement of the object pronoun.

Juan, lava el auto. -> Sí, lávalo ahora. -> Juan, no lo laves, va a llover. -> Juan no lo lava.

Abran los libros. -> Sí, ábranlos. -> No, no los abran. -> No los abren.

Once the students get used to the movement of object pronouns with commands, their positions have been basically established. It then makes it easier to understand the positioning with progressive and infinitive constructions.

As I have shown by personal observation as well as with results from previous research, it is valid to suggest a restructuring of object pronoun presentation in Spanish textbooks. By using the same subconscious rules that a native speaker uses in acquiring his first language and applying them to second language learning, it may be possible to facilitate foreign language instruction in the classroom. These rules combined with the natural order of acquisition, as described in Ellis (1985) and VanPatten (1986), lend support to the proposals I have presented in this paper. This method should be subjected to empirical investigation to evaluate its effect on the acquisition of

object pronouns in second language learners and compare these results to those from other methods of instruction. I have shown that most textbooks do not adhere to a natural order hypothesis and generally present an order that is easier for the teacher to follow rather than one that may be more natural for the student. By applying the subconscious rules of language acquisition we may be able to speed up the process. In this paper I have presented an alternative for teaching a portion of the language system: the generation and positioning of object pronouns. These methods and theories, if applied to other language structures, may make it necessary to do further re-structuring to reflect the natural order of acquisition.

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