Predication and passive*

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0. INTRODUCTION

In classical analyses of clausal structures lacking inflection and the copula it has been assumed, either implicitly or explicitly, that these structures fall into two well-distinguished sets: subcategorized or argument small clauses and non-subcategorized (sometimes called adjunct) small clauses. (1) illustrates the former set, (2) shows non-subcategorized structures:

(1)   The news made [Mary happy]

(2)   a. He left the room [tired]
        b. She eats the meat [raw]

To a certain extent, subcategorized structures are the core cases for the "small clause" analysis of this type of construction (Stowell 1981, 1983, Chomsky 1981, and Contreras 1982 for Spanish) while non-subcategorized are the nucleus of the "predication" analysis (Williams 1980, 1983, Rothstein 1983).

In this paper we will try to explain some properties of the second type of structures (those illustrated in (2)) and we will refer to them indiscriminately as predicates and/or small clauses. In particular, the way adjectival predication is licensed in passive sentences will be the focus of our study.

1. SOME FORMAL PROPERTIES OF SUBJECT-ORIENTED AND OBJECT-ORIENTED PREDICATES

There are two subclasses of non-subcategorized small clauses which are well distinguished in the literature: object-oriented and subject-oriented predicates. Examples of them are shown, respectively, in (3) and (4):

(3) a. Comió la carne cruda
'He ate the meat raw'
b. Goya pintó a la maja desnuda[1]
'Goya painted the woman naked'
c. Encontré las sardinas secas
'I found the sardines dry'
d. Juan pintó la casa roja
'Juan painted the house red'
e. Cortó la hierba corta
'He mowed the grass short'

(4) a. Pedro lloraba desconsolado
'Pedro cried disconsolate'
b. La soprano cantó el lied adormilada
'The soprano sang the lied sleepy'
c. María confesó ingenua que su hija la engañaba
'Maria confessed naively that her daughter lied to her'
d. El bote se hundió lento
'The boat sank slowly'
e. María volvió contenta
'Maria returned happy'

What the category label of the non-subcategorized adjectival predicates is and where they are attached, are two aspects of the analysis of these structures which are controversial. (See Chomsky 1981 and Stowell 1983 for arguments related to the former topic, and Williams 1981 and 1983 with regard to the latter.) However, we will not enter into this controversy in any detailed fashion in this paper. Now, to set a point of departure for our analysis we will maintain, for the time being, the following three assumptions first established in Williams' (1980) analysis of predication:

(i) Subject-oriented predicates are daughters of INFL" (= S) and they are grammatically governed.
(ii) Object-oriented predicates are in the VP and they are thematically governed.
(iii) The NP subject of the predication must c-command the adjective predicate.

Assumption (iii) can be easily justified by mentioning the fact that there are no small clauses or predicates of indirect objects, as (5) shows:

(5) *Juan le regaló el libro [$_{PP}$ a su hermano] [contento]
'Juan gave the book to his brother happy'

Indirect objects being PP's–as is usually assumed for English and Spanish (see Jaeggli 1982)–there is no possible c-command relation between the NP in the indirect object–the subject–and its predicate. (More evidence for this structural requirement will be provided when we consider predication in passives.)

Assumptions (i) and (ii) now follow from (iii) and thus the facts of (3) and (4) are accounted for. To avoid circularity, though, they can be independently motivated, albeit sketchily.

In brief, productivity and contiguity are two aspects of the formal structures of sentences under which both types of predicate seem to diverge.

1.1. Regarding the productivity of the two types of structures, it should be noted that the adjectival predications of (3) appear only with a restricted set of transitive verbs-approximately those listed in (3) and a few others lexically connected to them: *devorar* 'to devour', *beber* 'to drink', *vender* 'to sell', *fotografiar* 'to photograph'. These adjectival predicates, on the other hand, always refer to a state which is a phase in a process and which can be seen either as temporary or final. Predicates like those in (3a)-(3c) have been named "depictives", while the ones in (3d) and (3e) are considered "resultatives" (see Simpson 1983 and Rothstein 1983).

The contrast with subject-oriented predicates is clear in this regard. They constitute a very productive class. Almost all verbs which assign a thematic role to their subjects license an adjectival predication: (4a) is an intransitive non-ergative verb; in (4b) and (4c) there are transitive verbs taking, respectively, an NP and a sentential object; (4d) is an inchoative or anticausative construction; and (4e) is a lexically ergative verb.[2]

The descriptive generalization which seems to underlie this difference is that object-oriented predicates are in some sense selected by the main verb while subject-oriented predicates are unselected. The former are similar, in this regard, to subcategorized small clauses, as the comparison between (6) and (7) suggests. ((6) is a causative sentence whose main verb presumably s-selects a small clause; (7) is our previous (3d).)

(6) a. Tu sugerencia hizo [viable la solución]
'Your suggestion made the solution viable'
b. *Tu sugerencia hizo [elaborada la solución]   (*cf.* una solución elaborada)
'Your suggestion made the solution elaborated'

(7) a. Pintó la casa roja
'She painted the house red'
b. *Pintó la casa enorme   (*cf.* una casa enorme)
'He painted the house enormous'

1.2. A second shallow property which seems to establish a sharp distinction between the two types of predicates is what we have called "contiguity". It is illustrated by the contrasts in (8):

(8)   a. Juan le devolvió [el perro] [muerto] a Enrique
           'Juan returned the dog dead to Enrique'
       b. Juan le devolvió a Enrique [el perro] [muerto] y a Luis se lo
           devolvió vivo
           'Juan returned Enrique the dog dead, but he returned it to Luis
           alive'
       c. *Juan le devolvió [el perro] a Enrique [muerto]

Actually, (8c) shows that a thematically oriented predicate appearing in an active sentence must be adjacent to its subject for the predication relation to be correctly licensed, as it is in (8a) and (8b). This contiguity requirement, however, does not need to be met when the predicate is subject oriented, as all the examples in (4) illustrate.

A principled explanation for this difference would take us too far afield of the goal of this paper, so we will put this question aside (see Demonte 1985). But the existence of the distinction is enough, for the time being, to justify the claim that subject-oriented and objected-oriented predicates attach to different nodes.

2. AGENT ORIENTED PREDICATES IN PASSIVES

2.1. The standard analysis of passive constructions in the present theory of formal syntax establishes that one of the defining properties of passive morphology is its capacity to absorb the θ-role which the verb generally assigns to its external argument. When this θ-role is also present in the *by* phrase optionally subcategorized by the passive morphology, it is assumed that a strategy of transmission of the θ-role from the verb through the preposition is at work.

This general conception has been instantiated in different ways. In recent work, Jaeggli (1984) interprets the notion of "absorption" of the θ-role in the sense that the passive suffix is in fact assigned this θ-role. Actually, as Chomsky (1984, Fall lectures) has pointed out, there appears to be interesting evidence for the claim that there are no passives with implicit or understood agents (or whatever other role the transitive verb assigns to its external argument), and that in a sentence like:

(9)   Los culpables fueron castiga*dos*
       '(The) guilty ones were punished'

The passive morpheme has to be taken as an overt argument which bears the θ-role assigned by *castigar* 'to punish' to its external argument, namely, θ-role of agent.

More explicitly, it has been shown (Jaeggli 1984, Baker and Johnson 1985) that agent-oriented adverbs, (10a), control effects, (10b), and binding configuration, (10c), can appear in certain passives licensed presumably by the agent passive morpheme:

(10)   a. Los culpables fueron castigados deliberadamente
           'The guilty ones were punished deliberately'
       b. Los culpables fueron castigados para mostrar el poder de la
           policía
           'The guilty ones were punished to show the power of the police'
       c. No es sano ser castigado por el placer de uno mismo
           'It is not wise to be punished for one's own pleasure'

One crucial idea of Baker and Johnson's analysis is that the passive morpheme *-en* is generated under INFL, separate from the main verb, and that there it receives the θ-role of agent which the verb generally assigns outside the VP. The verb then moves up, attaches to the suffix, and assigns case to the passive morpheme. A second important point of this hypothesis is that *-en* can either be an argument or not, its argumental nature being derived from other independently motivated principles.

With this general framework in mind, let us now study how adjectival predication is realized in passive sentences.

2.2. Consider, to begin with, the following agent-oriented predicates appearing in passives in which the *by* phrase is absent and with which some arbitrary agent interpretation can be associated:

(11)   a. El aria del acto III de Turandot debe ser cantada emocionado
           'The aria of act III of Turandot should be sung with emotion'
       b. Una regañina no puede ser oída contento
           'A scolding cannot be listened to happy'
       c. El Papa puede ordenar que la misa sea dicha dormido
           'The Pope could order that mass be said sleepy'

These sentences appear to contrast with similar ones in which a *by* phrase appears. As a matter of fact, what the (i) examples in (12) indicate is that predication is not possible in passives with a *by* phrase, although a predicative-like constituent formed by an adjective preceded by a modifier, the (ii) examples, in (12), is licit in this configuration:

(12) a. La carrera $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{fue ganada} \\ \text{puede ser ganada} \end{array} \right\}$ por el corredor belga   (i) #agotado
(ii) extemadamente ago-
tado

'The race $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{was} \\ \text{could be} \end{array} \right\}$ won   by the Belgian racer   (extremely) exhausted'

(12) b. La canción $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{fue cantada} \\ \text{debe ser cantada} \end{array} \right\}$ por la soprano   (i) #borracha
(ii) completamente borracha

'The song $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{was} \\ \text{should be} \end{array} \right\}$ sung   by the soprano   (completely) drunk'

(12) c. Juan no $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{fue despertado} \\ \text{debe ser despertado} \end{array} \right\}$ por María   (i) *angustiada
(ii) angustiada por la noti-
cia

'Juan $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{was not} \\ \text{should not be} \end{array} \right\}$ awakened   by María   excited (by the news)'

(The # in the preceding examples indicates that the predication interpretation is not available although other readings are possible.)

Examples (13), parallel to those in (12), reveal that the order relation between the NP in the *by* phrase and its hypothetical adjectival predicate differ from the pattern of order which some adjectival predicates exhibit in Spanish. In fact, in many cases these predicates can precede their subjects; consider, for instance, *Juan toma caliente el café* or *Encontró completamente rota la vajilla*.

(13) a. La carrera fue ganada (*agotado) por el corredor belga
b. La canción fue cantada (*borracha) por la soprano
c. Juan fue despertado (*excitada) por María

The explanation for the facts in (11) follows straightforwardly if our assumption (i) is taken together with the hypothesis that the passive morpheme is an explicit external argument bearing the θ-role of agent. (14), which carries a slight modification of our assumption (i), is the underlying structure of sentence (11a):

(14) $[_{\text{INFL}''} [_{\text{NP}} \text{El aria} \ldots_i] [_{\text{INFL}'} [_{\text{INFL}} \text{modal } -en_j] [_{\text{VP}} \text{ser cantada } e_i]$
$[_{\text{Pred}} \text{emocionadao}]]]$

Note, incidentally, that in (14) we generate the predicate under INFL'. This representation (together with the assumption that the internal branching of the INFL head does not count for the effects of c-command) seems to be necessary if we want to use a strict definition of c-command, i.e., c-command up to the first branching node, to characterize the relation subject-adjectival predicate. However, up to this point there does not seem to be a principled

way of choosing between the above-mentioned possibility and that of using Aoun and Sportiche's (1983) extended definition of c-command, that allows c-command up through the maximal projection. If this second alternative is taken, our initial assumption (i) can be maintained without modification and the predicate in (14) could be generated as a daughter of INFL".

Coming back now to the core of our discussion, the same set of assumptions that explains (11) could account for the lack of predication in the (i) sentences of (12) if some qualification is made with regard to the hypothesis that *-en* can be plus or minus argumental. Suppose that *-en*, being a clitic-like element, forms a chain with another NP similarly to regular clitics which enter into doubling configurations in Spanish. If the second member of the chain is lexical, a preposition will have to be inserted for the NP to receive case in an appropriate way (Kayne's generalization; see Jaeggli 1982), similarly, again, to what happens in configurations of clitic doubling. Furthermore, if the *by* phrase is present, the clitic will transfer to it its argumental properties through the transmission of the θ-role of agent which the clitic would otherwise bear. This transmission is necessary in order to avoid a violation of the Theta Criterion. If this is the situation, what will qualify now as the subject of the predicate is the NP in the prepositional phrase and not the passive morphology. But this NP will not be able to be coindexed with the adjectival predicate, thus licensing the predication relation, for given that it is within a PP it will not c-command its potential predicate. This is the reason why the (i) sentences of (12) are ruled out.

This analysis, then, automatically classifies the heavy final constituents of the (ii) sentences of (12) as non-predication. This result, I believe, is not implausible.

Although there were no clear ways of distinguishing between predications and normal adverbials, there are some reasons in this case to think that this adjective-plus-modifier sequence could be an adverbial. Note, first, that this will be the only case, among the many contexts in which predication occurs, in which a predicate will *have to* be modified in order to be licensed. Of course predicates *may* be modified, as sentence (15), a variant of (11a), shows:

(15) El aria del acto III de Turandot debe ser cantada muy emocionado
'The aria of act III of Turandot should be sung with a lot of emotion'

Secondly, there appears to be a clear contrast between sentences like those in (11) and the (ii) sentences in (12) with regard to intonational breaks. Those sentences which are characterized by our analysis as instances of predication do not accept any comma break between the predication and the preceding constituent, as is usual in this type of structure:

(16) ??El aria del acto III de Turandot debe ser cantada, emocionado

The comma intonation is not only possible but preferred in the (ii) sentences in (12).

2.3. As the alert reader will have noticed, we have built our argument for the analysis of agent oriented-predicates in passives taking into consideration only passive sentences inserted under a modal verb. (Observe the data in (11).) As a matter of fact, predication does not seem to be possible in bare passives, as the corresponding sentences of (11) appearing in (17) suggest:

(17)   a. ?El aria del acto III de Turandot fue cantada emocionado
       b. *La regañina fue oída contento
       c. *La misa fue dicha dormido

The same contrast, incidentally, is found in English, where, for instance, binding effects do not occur in bare passives with "implicit arguments" but do not appear in passives within a modal:

(18)   a. *The boat was sunk for oneself
       b. The boat shouldn't be sunk for oneself

These facts, nevertheless, should not be a problem for our analysis if we think that in certain sentences with passive morphology the speaker is computing a chain formed by a clitic and an NP position. In fact, in recent developments of generative syntax (Rizzi 1984, Fall lectures), it has been argued that *pro* with arbitrary interpretation can be licensed in non-subject contexts if it is supposed that licensing and interpretation of *pro* are independent conditions.

We could assume, then, that in the cases in (11) there is a *pro* inside the VP to which a generic (rather than simply arbitrary) interpretation is associated.[3] In other words, this *pro* will be licensed by the verb and will be identified by the passive morpheme (and presumably by other features appearing in INFL). In non-modal sentences like (17) the presence of this generic *pro* is not very plausible, because the elements in INFL do not have the required features to identify this *pro*.

Our underlying structure (14) could then be modified as in (19), where we assume that the *pro* doubled by the clitic occurs in the same position in which the *by* phrase would appear, i.e. at some level inside VP:

(19) $[_{INFL''} [_{NP}$ El aria . . .$_i] [_{INFL'} [_{INFL}$ modal -en$_j] [_{VP}$ ser cantada e$_i$ pro$_j]$
       $[_{Pred}$ emocionado]]]

This formalization implies that when the passive clitic is linked to a *pro* it retains its argumental properties, thus acting as subject of the adjectival predicate, and that it only transmits or loses its capacity to act as an argument

when it is linked to an element in a *by* phrase. The deep reason for this strategy is not clear to us at this moment; but observe that the same contrast seems to be found in sentences with clitic doubling where adjectival predication can be found only when the clitics are in a chain with an empty position ((20a) and (21a)), but not when they appear in a true clitic doubling configuration ((20b) and (21b)):

(20)   a. La$_i$ encontré e$_i$ cansada
          'I found her tired'
       b. ??La$_i$ encontré a la mujer$_i$ cansada
          'I found the woman tired'

(21)   a. Pedro la$_i$ come e$_i$ hervida
          'Pedro eats it (fem.) boiled'
       b. ??Pedro la$_i$ come a la gallina$_i$ hervida
          'Pedro eats the chicken boiled'

In summary, what we have tried to say is that in some cases (for instance, in generic type sentences) *-en* should be coindexed with some element to get its right interpretation. In sentences with indefinite reading like *Fue vendida la casa* 'The house was sold', this would not be necessary. It is precisely in the former type of sentences where predication is possible. It appears then, intuitively speaking, that adjectival predicates need a subject strong enough from a semantic point of view–much stronger, actually, than the implicit agent required by controlled PRO and agent-oriented adverbs, which sound perfectly natural in modal and non-modal contexts.

2.4. Note, finally, that contrasts like those we have observed in sentences with passive morphology do not seem to be so neat in *se*-passive or *se*-middle sentences:

(22)   a. Estas canciones $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{se cantan} \\ \text{pueden cantarse} \end{array} \right\}$ emocionado   (en las fiestas de año nuevo)

          'These songs $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{are sung} \\ \text{may be sung} \end{array} \right\}$ with emotion   (at New Year's parties)'

       b. Las informaciones $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{se presentan} \\ \text{deben presentarse} \end{array} \right\}$ documentado   (en un lugar como éste)

          'The information $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{is presented} \\ \text{should be presented} \end{array} \right\}$ with documentation (in a place like this)'

       c. En esta casa, los invitados $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{se reciben} \\ \text{deben recibirse} \end{array} \right\}$ contento

          'In this house, guests $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{are received} \\ \text{should be received} \end{array} \right\}$ happy'

As a matter of fact, but with some lexical idiosyncrasies which need to be explored, adjectival predicates sound quite natural in bare *se*-middle sentences and are perfect when the *se*-middle construction is under a modal verb. This difference could be related to the fact that the *se* is always argumental, for it is a true pronominal.

3. THEME-ORIENTED PREDICATES

3.1. To complete our study of predication in passives, we want to consider now how the predication relation is set when the adjectival predicate is connected to the theme argument of the passive verb, i.e. when the predicate is thematically governed.

Consider, to start with, the following minimal pair of passive sentences:

(23)   a.   Las frutas fueron comidas maduras
             'The fruits were eaten ripe'
       b.   #Fueron comidas las frutas maduras
             'The raw fruits were eaten'

(The # in (23b) indicates, again, that *maduras* is not a predicate of *las frutas*, though the modifier reading is of course available.)

The question which immediately arises looking at these data is why we cannot construe a thematically oriented predicate when the subject is "inverted". And the answer to this question is not obvious, given that we find thematically oriented predicates in active sentences of similar configurations (recall sentences (3) above) and that other types of predicates are available in sentences with inverted subjects such as in *Telefoneó mi amiga angustiada* 'My friend phoned distressed'.

Two lines of explanation could be given to explain the contrast in (23). Intuitively speaking, we might think that these facts derive from some generalization related to the syntactic properties of the subject of the predication, or we can suppose that it is the predicate itself which cannot act as such in (23b). We will explore both possibilities in this section, but before entering into the lines of argumentation we want to add other data to the minimal pair in (23).

Relevant evidence which could be taken into consideration comes from other sentences with inverted subjects in which blocking of the predication relation also holds. Consider the following structures. (24) is a *se*-middle construction, (25) is a *se*-inchoative structure:

(24)   a.   Los coches se vendieron nuevos
             'The cars were sold new'
       b.   #Se vendieron los coches nuevos[4]
             'The new cars were sold'

(25)   a.   El bote se balancea tranquilo
             'The boat swings quiet'
       b.   #Se balancea el bote tranquilo
             'The quiet boat swings'

3.2. Let us consider now the possibility that for some reason the potential subject of the predication is not visible at the appropriate level so that the predication relation cannot be correctly established.

A property shared by sentences (23)-(25) is that in all of them the grammatical manifestation of the agent external argument is in some sense blocked. More precisely, the role of the external argument is, let us say, reconverted through two different mechanisms: "absorption" by some element of the morphology of the sentence (a concept which we have examined in the preceding section) and "deletion" (probably in the lexicon, see Zubizarreta 1983) in (25). As a consequence of such absorption or deletion, the canonical position of the external argument–the position of the grammatical subject— becomes dethematized and is left available for movement. As discovered by Burzio (1981), assignment of thematic role to the subject and assignment of case to the object are mechanisms which interact in a principled way. Actually, what happens in sentences like (23)-(25) is that objective case is not assigned to the theme argument of the main verb. Now how does the theme NP get case, if it is not through the verb which governs it? We can assume that in pro-drop languages, where by parametric option the position of the external argument can be occupied by an empty pronominal, case assignment to the theme NP can proceed in either of the following two ways: either the theme is moved to receive case in preverbal position (the canonical position of the external argument) or it remains in situ and an expletive *pro* is inserted in D-structure forming an expletive-argument chain where the first member has case and the second receives a theta-role, and where case is presumably "transferred" from the head to the terminal position of the chain to void a Case filter violation.

Suppose now, following Chomsky (forthcoming), that these expletive-argument chains–which actually involve a coindexing distinct from that involved in the Binding Theory, i.e. superscripting–have to share the properties of true chain links, and suppose also that this requirement follows from the Binding Theory, which is assumed now to be restricted (at least some part of it) to LF. This requirement, together with a principle of Full Interpretation that stipulates that every element of LF and PF must receive an appropriate

interpretation, compels us to assume that the expletives should be, so to say, eliminated at LF. More explicitly, it could be said that in structures like the ones we are considering, the movement which did not take place in the syntax takes place at LF, where the argumental NP substitutes for the expletive, thus forming a true A-chain (with an argument as a head) which satisfies Principle A of the Binding Theory.

Applying this analysis to (23)-(25) we can say that the relevant difference between (a) and (b) of each pair is that in the (a) cases the NP with the theta role of the [NP, VP] is moved to the canonical position of the grammatical subject (the grammatical external argument), while in the (b) cases such movement does not take place in the syntax. A central assumption of all analyses of predication structures is that coindexing is not possible in the (b) sentences of (23)-(25) because, since the expletive-A chain has not yet been rebuilt, the potential subjects are still not visible at this level of the analysis.

Now, the first thing to say with regard to this hypothesis is that it is extremely strong and that it carries undesirable consequences for the notion of visibility: actually it implies that visibility is checked at different levels for different types of syntactic relations. It seems hardly plausible, for instance, that a constituent which is visible for control effects could not be active in the same way for predication, and control is possible in passives with inverted subjects:

(26)   Fue invitada María a [PRO dar una conferencia] y Pedro a [PRO organizar la exposición]
        'Maria was invited to give a lecture and Pedro to organize the exhibi-tion'

I do not see any independently motivated argument which could support such a claim.

On the other hand, any solution which attributes the contrasts in (23)-(25) to the interaction between case and theta assignment will need to explain why such a contrast does not appear in ergative sentences. Actually, as (27) shows, ergative constructions in Spanish do not pattern like passive, middle, and inchoative sentences; i.e. predication is possible when the subject appears inverted:

(27)   a. Volvió María cansada
            'Maria returned tired'
        b. Llegaron los hombres derrotados
            'The men arrived defeated'

3.3. We can begin the second line of explanation suggested above by asking what the descriptive generalization is which captures the difference between

ergatives, on the one hand, and passive, middle, and inchoative construc-tions, on the other.

If the analysis that we have proposed in the preceding section is correct, we can say that in the second type of construction (inchoative, passive, and middle sentences) there are two positions available for the attachment of the external argument, following from the lexical properties of transitive verbs tied to the properties of passive, middle, and inchoative morphology: the dethematized canonical positions of the grammatical subject, and the one under INFL in which lexical external arguments (*se* and *-en*, for instance) could appear. This situation does not hold with ergative verbs that assign just one θ-role-the θ-role of the internal argument-and that have only one position for the externalization of the internal argument-the dethematized position of the grammatical subject.

Recalling that there are only two types of adjectival predicates which can occur in the sentences of the language, i.e. grammatically oriented and thematically oriented predicates, we could assume that the following stipula-tion holds in the grammar of predication:

(28)   Attach predicates to external arguments if they are available

where stipulation (28) could be paraphrased by the statement that predicates tend to be subject oriented (i.e. grammatically governed) in the unmarked case.

Suppose now that the level of attachment of adjectival predicates does not follow only from the requirement of c-command between the subject and the predicate, but rather that such a requirement is a consequence of our quasi-principle (28). The last two statements taken together imply that in those structures in which a theme can appear as external argument, its predicate will probaby not be in the VP, but in a position in which it could be c-commanded without ambiguity by an external argument, i.e. outside the VP and outside INFL', which is the domain of the other external argument. If this is the situation, then the lack of predication in (23b)-(25b) follows from the fact that a potential lexical subject will not be in a position from which it could c-command the predicate, and the other available external arguments will not be able to play the role of subject of the predicate: the element under INFL' because it cannot be coindexed with the predicate, and the expletive *pro* because it is not argumental and as such cannot act as subject of a predicate.

From this stipulation it follows also that the regular level of attachment of adjectival predicates in active sentences (our assumptions (i) and (ii) in section 1) is in some sense inverted in passive sentences, a consequence which, anyhow, can be derived also from the properties of passive morphology. If the Theme can move (and in some languages *must* move) to the position of the

external argument, it is expected that the predicates of the Theme in passive and similar structures could be grammatically governed.

Independent evidence that the thematically oriented predicates in passive sentences attach to the level of the grammatically external argument and are not inside the VP comes from the contrast which arises between active and passive sentences with regard to the occurrence of the two types of adjectival predicates. Observe the following pair of sentences:

(29)   a.   Juan toma el café caliente relajado
            'Juan drinks the coffee hot relaxed'
       b.   *El café debe ser tomado caliente relajado
            'Coffee must be drunk hot relaxed'
            (cf.El café debe ser tomado caliente
               El café debe ser tomado relajado)

(29a) suggests that there exists a still poorly understood principle of the grammar of predication that precludes the simultaneous occurrence of two predicates associated to external argument positions of a single verb, although they appear alternatively in independent sentences. It does not happen in (29a), where the predicates are coindexed to subjects which bear a different argumental relation to the main verb: one is an internal argument (although it behaves as external with regard to the adjectival predicate; see Williams 1983), the other is external both with regard to the main verb and with regard to the predicate.

In the case of the ergative sentences, now, we want to say that the c-command relation holds when the ergative subject appears after the verb, and there seem to be two ways to obtain this result. One way is to assume that in ergative sentences, due to lexical properties of verbs of this type, the position after the verb *is* the position of the external argument, given that subjects normally appear inverted in ergative sentences. This assumption, however, would predict significant differences between ergative and non-ergative verbs with regard to those principles of the grammar in which the notion of lexical government is relevant, but these implications are still unexplored for Spanish. It seems more natural to assume, then, that ergatives behave like all the verbs of the language which carry one and only one slot for the external argument, i.e. if the predicate is thematically governed it appears in the VP. If the predicate is in the VP, now it will be predicated of the Theme of an ergative structure both when it remains internal to the VP and when it moves to the grammatical position of the external argument, because in both cases it will be c-commanded by a coindexed subject and there will be no other intermediate external argument which could force the option to become grammatically governed.

The solution that we propose, then, seems to account for the data of

(23)-(25) and (27) without recourse to ad hoc reformulations of basic principles of the theory. The problem with it, however, is that it remains in part at a stipulative level and that the interesting step of relating it to other principles of the grammar is still to be taken.

3.4. Let us consider, finally, certain sentences which appear to be counter-examples to the generalization that we have just proposed. In fact, there are passives in Spanish in which the subject appears after the verb and where the predication interpretation nevertheless obtains. Do they contradict our claims?

There are two possible configurations which could be brought up in this regard:

(30)   a.   Me dijo que fueron devueltos destrozados todos los coches
            me (he) said that were returned smashed all the cars
            'He said to me that all the cars were returned smashed'
       b.   En esta fiesta disparatada, fue servida la sopa fría, la carne quemada y la fruta pasada
            in this crazy party, was served the soup cold, the meat burned and the fruit rotten
            'In this crazy party, the soup was served cold, the meat burned and the fruit rotten'

A reasonable hypothesis is that (30a) is a case of subject inversion, a rule of Spanish grammar which applies with many verbs of the language. This configuration presumably interacts with the rule or process which locates the adjectival predicate immediately after the verb. Some contrastive interpretation is usually added to this configuration. Example (30b), on the other hand, shows a characteristic pattern of subject-verb inversion triggered by the presence of an adverbial constituent sentence initially (see Piera 1982). In both cases, then, it could be assumed that the postposed subject has been landed previously in the position of the grammatical subject, thus licensing the predication relation and satisfying our stipulation (28).

4. SUMMARY

In the first section of this paper we reviewed certain descriptive properties of subject-oriented and object-oriented predicates in active sentences which motivate the assumption that the two types of predicates have different levels of attachment. In the second and third sections we studied the licensing of both types of predicates in passive structures. Two empirical and analytical contributions arise from this study. First, if it is assumed that the external

agent argument is overtly expressed in passive morphology, there is an explanation for why predicates of implicit agents are construed in passive sentences while predicates of the Theme NP in situ are not. Second, the study of predication in passives indicates that the attachment of predicates to grammatical external arguments is the core case in the grammar of predicates, while attachment to internal arguments seems to be more restricted. The descriptive properties pointed out in the first section follow from this analysis.

NOTES

1. This *a* should not be confused with the identical preposition appearing in indirect objects. This *a*, named "*a* personal" by traditional grammarians, is obligatory in front of animate direct objects. Following the standard line of analysis among generative grammarians, we will assume that the (possible) insertion of this *a* does not change the categorial nature of the direct object; i.e. this is an NP.

2. The initial "almost" is not accidental. Some verbs of psychological state which select a Theme subject do not seem to allow this type of small clause. Observe: *??Le temo al terremoto despierto* 'I fear the earthquake awake' or *??Me gusta la música cansado* 'I like music tired'. (I owe this observation to L. Rizzi.) Actually, there seems to be in Spanish a complementary distribution between subject- and object-oriented predicates with regard to the semantic nature of their subjects: object-oriented predicates have subjects which are always theme, while subject-oriented predicates admit all kinds of semantic subjects except Themes. Recall the preceding examples and observe the following ones:

(i)   **Este libro* pertenece a Pedro *roto* (subject theme)

(ii)   *Pedro* recibió el premio *feliz* (subject goal)

(iii)   *Pedro* canta *contento* (subject agent)

(iv)   **Despojaron *al libro limpio* de su cubierta (object source)

3. This idea was suggested to me by M. Baker and K. Johnson.

4. These examples should be distinguished from those in which strong comma intonation precedes the adjectival predicate. In these cases the predication reading is always available. We assume, as usual, that these sentences have a different analysis.