

NOMINAL ELLIPSIS AS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT^{*}

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ABSTRACT. Following fundamental minimalist assumptions, this study aims to explain the distribution of nominal ellipsis (NE, henceforth) in Spanish as the result of last resort constraints at different components of the grammar. The current proposal is that NE in Spanish is a special case of trace deletion that results from the creation of an imperfect/defective/smaller copy, which must be interpreted as an anaphora (concretely, as a (definite) pronoun) at the semantic interface (hence, SEM) due to its 'reduced' size. Therefore, the structure created in narrow syntax will be interpreted as any other copy at the phonological interface (hence, PHON), where it is not pronounced, but it will be interpreted as a (definite) pronoun at SEM. This approach derives the partitive character of the NE construction and the impossibility of having NE with some Determiners and pronominal Adjectives as the result of an SEM clash between the presence of the anaphora and the meaning of the Determiner.

Keywords. ellipsis, syntax, semantics, copy, interfaces, determiners, adjectives

RESUMEN. Este trabajo analiza la distribución de la elipsis nominal (EN, desde ahora) en español como el resultado de restricciones de último recurso en diferentes componentes de la gramática. La propuesta es que la EN en español es un caso especial de borrado de huella que resulta de la creación de una huella defectiva o menor, que debe ser interpretada como una anáfora (concretamente, como un pronombre definido) en el interfaz semántico (desde ahora SEM) debido a su tamaño reducido. Por lo tanto, la estructura creada en el componente sintáctico será interpretada como cualquier otra copia en la interfaz fonética (FON), donde no se pronunciará, pero será interpretada como un pronombre definido en SEM. Este acercamiento permite derivar el carácter partitivo de la construcción de EN y la imposibilidad de tener EN con algunos determinantes y adjetivos pronominales como el resultado de un desajuste entre la presencia de la anáfora y el significado del determinante.

Palabras clave. elipsis, sintaxis, semántica, copia, interficies, determinantes, adjetivos

1. Introduction

Under a minimalist approach, a successful linguistic expression must fulfill requirements at different components of the faculty of language. The derivational character of the current model of grammar enables a grammatical expression to satisfy apparently contradictory requirements imposed at different points of the derivation. This paper follows up on this minimalist assumption and aims to explain the distribution of a particular grammatical construction, nominal ellipsis (NE, henceforth) in Spanish, as the result of last resort constraints at different components of the grammar. More concretely, the analysis proposes that NE is created as the consequence of a suboptimal numeration, which triggers a copy operation at narrow syntax to save the derivation, followed by an anaphora-reduction at the semantic interface to ensure the interpretation of the illicit copy generated in narrow syntax.

^{*} Thanks are due to two anonymous reviewers for their valuable suggestions. Special thanks are also due to A. Fábregas for his patience during the revision process of this paper.

Two main analyses compete to explain the different distributions and properties of the omission of the noun and (some of) its modifiers in Spanish and cross-linguistically¹. On the one hand, structural approaches focus either on the existence of a licensor for the construction (cf. Lobeck 1995, Bernstein 1993, among others) or on the need for a particular structural configuration (cf. Kornfeld & Saab 2004, Saab 2009, 2010, Ticio 2005, 2010, among others) to explain NE restrictions. Structural approaches have difficulty accounting for the apparent lack of a licensor in some NE constructions or for the impossibility of some licensors in licensing NE in particular instances. On the other hand, semantic/pragmatic approaches argue that the pragmatic-semantic properties (definiteness, anaphoricity or partitivity) of a functional category (or of the overall structure) license the presence of the phonetically unrealized element (cf. Eguren 2010, Kester 1996, López 2000, Sleeman 1996, among others). The semantic/pragmatic approaches have difficulty explaining why semantic notions are not always a sufficient condition to license the construction, which leads them to (implicitly or explicitly) assume syntactic devices to guarantee the NE licensing. In essence, neither of the two main competing analyses seems to be fully adequate to account for the distribution of NE.

In addition, the two competing analyses hold, in many cases, opposite views on two crucial orthogonal discussions that are present in any ellipsis analysis; namely, the nature of the ellipsis gap and the relation between antecedent and gap. For the first question, different (structural and semantic) analyses have argued that the gap is generated as a pro-form or that it contains structure in syntax, independently on the licensing mechanism adopted. Finally, the different types of licensors proposed for the structure influence the assumptions regarding the type, timing (namely, the grammatical component that verifies the antecedent-gap relation), and properties (i.e., identity/no-identity between antecedent and gap) of the antecedent-gap relationship.

The main claim of this study is that a middle-ground solution can be achieved. Accordingly, the current analysis of NE in Spanish takes as departure points Chomsky's (1995) insights on ellipsis as a sub-case of trace deletion and Baltin's (2012) recent proposal (based on Elbourne 2008) that some gaps can be re-created during the derivation and interpreted as anaphora. The current proposal is that NE in Spanish is a special case of trace deletion that results from the creation of an imperfect/defective/smaller copy, which must be interpreted as an anaphora (concretely, as a (definite) pronoun) at the semantic interface (hence, SEM) due to its 'reduced' size². Therefore, the structure created in narrow syntax will be interpreted as any other copy at the phonological interface (hence, PHON), where it is not pronounced, but it will be interpreted as a (definite) pronoun at SEM. This approach derives the partitive character of the NE construction and the impossibility of having NE with some Determiners and pronominal Adjectives as the result of an SEM clash between the presence of the anaphora and the meaning of the Determiner.

From this point of view, NE presents different properties depending on the particular point of the derivation we examine, but in general, it is no more than the result of a chain of last resort solutions applied by the different components of grammar to rescue a suboptimal derivation.

¹ Nominal ellipsis has been analyzed from a myriad of perspectives. It is not the place of this paper to ponder all the alternative approaches, and references will be severely constrained to ease the exposition. For a more detailed review of research on nominal ellipsis, the reader is referred to Lobeck (2005).

² As it will be evident later in the text, 'reduced' size refers to copies smaller than the entire nominal expression, which are considered 'incomplete copies' at the semantic component (SEM). Cf. section 3 for a detailed discussion on this.

The combination of strategies employed in the analysis enables us to overcome the problems posed to semantic and structural analyses without resorting to the introduction of any additional feature, movement, or interpretative mechanism. To the extent that it is correct, the solution advanced in this paper is a more minimalist explanation than any other presented thus far.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In section 2, the paper reviews previous approaches to NE in Spanish while illustrating the main distribution of NE in Spanish. Section 3 makes the current analysis explicit. This section starts with some preliminary assumptions of the analysis to detail the main mechanisms of the analysis component-by-component. The section closes by exploring some additional predictions. Section 4 summarizes the conclusions and notes further research that is needed to refute this line of inquiry.

2. NE in Spanish

2.1. The data

NE (i.e., the omission of the noun and (some of) its modifiers in nominal expressions) is a fairly productive construction in Spanish, although it also has some restrictions. The examples of NE in (1) illustrate that this construction is possible with different types of Determiners (hence, D) and modifiers, while the examples of (2) show that NE is not possible, for instance, in constructions with unstressed possessives and with the definite article and certain modifiers in Spanish.

- (1) a. María vendió varios libros de recetas y Ana compró algunos (libros)³ de terror
 María sold several books of recipes and Ana bought some (books) of horror
 b. María vendió varios libros azules y Pepe compró tres (libros) rojos
 María sold several books blue and Pepe bought three (books) red
- (2) a. *María vendió varios libros de lingüística y Pepe compró mis (libros)
 María sold several books of linguistics and Pepe bought mine (books)
 de matemáticas
 of math
 b. *María vendió varios libros con ilustraciones y Pepe compró los (libros)
 María sold several books with illustrations and Pepe bought the (books)
 sin ilustraciones
 without illustrations

In addition, the examples in (3) show that NE can affect different elements in the nominal expression; namely, it can omit the entire nominal expression to the exception of the D, (3a), or it can affect some parts of the nominal expression, leaving some remnants, (3b).

- (3) a. Compramos tres libros de matemáticas y vendimos dos (libros de
 (we)-bought three books of math and (we)-sold two (books of
 matemáticas)
 math)

³ I represent the omitted part of the nominal expression in grey and in parentheses.

- b. Compramos tres libros de matemáticas de Luis y vendimos dos
 (we)-bought three books of math of Luis and (we)-sold two
 (libros de matemáticas) de María
 (books of math) of María

Different approaches have aimed to account for the distribution of NE in Spanish. The next section succinctly reviews the main lines of research for this construction and their challenges. In this review, the Spanish examples presented will offer a view of the distribution of NE in this language.

2.2. *Previous Approaches*

This section briefly reviews the main lines of the analyses presented to account for NE, paying special attention to the data in Spanish and to its main cross-linguistic differences. The section is divided into three main subsections. Section 2.2.1 details the different approaches to the nature of the gap in NE. Section 2.2.2 focuses on the different licensing conditions proposed for NE. Both sections present examples in Spanish, together with a discussion of the challenges the analyses face in accounting for the relevant empirical data. Finally, 2.2.3 summarizes the discussion.

2.2.1. On the nature of the omitted elements.

There are two opposing views regarding the nature of the gap left in elliptical constructions. On the one hand, some analyses consider that there is a silent lexical item in the gap position (pro-form approach) (including Lobeck 1995 and Depiante 2000, among many others). On the other hand, some authors (Ross 1969, Merchant 2001, among many others) have claimed that there is some type of mechanism that prevents the structure created under the elliptical construction from being pronounced (silent structure approach). Both approaches have been pursued in the NE Spanish literature. Although standard analyses assume that this construction consists of a base-generated null nominal (see Brucart 1987, 1999; López 2000), it has also been proposed that nominal ellipsis is the result of a deletion process (see Raposo 1999, Masullo & Depiante 2004 and Ticio 2005, 2010, among others) or of the lack of the insertion of phonological matrices at the level of PF (Kornfeld & Saab 2004, Saab 2009, 2010). The general literature on ellipsis is filled with arguments supporting each view (cf. Merchant 2001, for an overview). In what follows, we offer a few crucial remarks to help us characterize the main properties of NE in Spanish from this perspective.

Proponents of the pro-form approach to Spanish NE base their proposals on cases such as (4), where the omitted element is pragmatically controlled (cf. Hankamer & Sag 1976, among many others, regarding the properties of the different anaphor types); that is, ‘uno’ (a/one) and ‘dos rojos’ (two red (ones)) refer to a discourse antecedent, namely, ‘balloon’:

- (4) [Una madre y su hijo pasan por delante de un señor vendiendo globos.]
 [A mom and her son pass by a man selling balloons]
 M: ¿quieres uno?
 Want-2ps one
 C: Sí, quiero dos rojos
 Yes, want-1ps two red

The lack of linguistic antecedent in (4) can only be accounted for as the consequence of the existence of a pro-form in the ellipsis site. The silent structure approach to

Spanish NE dismisses these examples in general because they are considered unrelated to NE (cf. Eguren 2010 for a discussion regarding this point).

Furthermore, the silent structure approach claims that a pro-form approach would not be able to account for the different sizes of the gaps unless they propose a variety of pro-forms to account for the data:

- (5) a. Ana compra libros de recetas y María vende (libros) de ordenadores
 Ana buys books of recipes and María sells (books) of computers
 b. Ana sale con algunos amigos de Juan, pero no sale con
 Ana goes-out with some friends of Juan, but neg she-goes out with
 ese (amigo de Juan)
 that (friend of Juan)

For instance, the pro-form in (5a) should include only the N, while that in (5b) should also be able to accommodate the presence of modifiers.

Similarly, the pro-form account will face difficulties explaining some NE restrictions in Spanish, such as the impossibility of having NE with the definite article and a modifier headed by a Preposition other than ‘de’ (of), as illustrated in (6):

- (6) a. *Vimos al amigo de Madrid, pero no al amigo con gafas
 (we)-saw to+the friend of Madrid, but no to+the friend with glasses
 b. Vimos al amigo de Madrid, pero no al amigo de gafas
 (we)-saw to+the friend of Madrid, but no to+the friend of glasses

Note that if the presence of the pro-form is licensed in the ‘de gafas’ case, there is no straightforward answer as to what renders the ‘el con gafas’ ungrammatical because *a priori* the elements involved in the structure are syntactically equivalent to the ones involved in the grammatical cases.

As shown, the silent structure proposals claim that data such as those in (5) and (6) would trigger a proliferation of pro-forms in the Spanish lexicon to account for the NE distribution.

In addition, the strongest evidence of syntactic structure underlying the elliptical site comes from examples in which an element is extracted out of the nominal ellipsis gap⁴, as the examples in (7) illustrate:

- (7) ¿De quién compramos un libro de mate de-quién y nos regalaron
 Of whom bought-1ppl a book of math of-whom and CL_{DAT}-1ppl gave-3ppl
 uno de ling de-quién?
 one of ling of-whom

Examples such as (7) show that the elided construction must contain some internal elements in syntax if we can extract something from it. Therefore, it cannot be a mere pro-form at that level.

Note that, although in the relevant literature on NE in Spanish the two positions outlined above have been typically portrayed as exclusive, recent research (cf. Baltin 2012; and to some extent Aelbrecht 2009) has noted the possibility of combining the two types of entities. More concretely, Baltin’s (2012) analysis of the properties of the

⁴ I am following here the standard analysis to extraction data in Romance. Cf. Bosque & Gallego (2012) for a different (non-movement) approach to extraction data.

British English ‘do’ construction has shown that the distinction between pro-forms and deleted constituents is too rigid, in that at least some pro-forms can involve deletion in their formation. This combined approach to the nature of the gap is one of the main assumptions explored in this paper and will be pursued in detail in section 3 below.

2.2.2. Licensing of the gap: formal licensing/semantic-pragmatic licensing.

There is a popular line of research (cf. Lobeck 2005 for a survey) that postulates that the distribution of NE can be explained by resorting exclusively to formal conditions. In other words: these analyses assume that there is a functional category (either D or some instantiation of Agreement) in charge of licensing the elided element or there exist only a particular structural configuration susceptible to the operation resulting in nominal ellipsis. This line of research faces important challenges, some of which will be outlined below.

Since Brucart 1987, many authors (Torrego, 1987; Contreras, 1989 and Kornfeld and Saab, 2004, and many others) have argued that NE in Spanish is always licensed by D or its equivalent. However, the presence of D is not always required in NE, as the examples in (8) illustrate⁵:

- (8) a. No compramos ningún cuadro de Pedro, pero sí compramos (cuadros) de
Neg (we)-buy no picture of Pedro but Afir buy-2ppl (pictures) of
Juan
Juan
‘We didn’t buy any of Pedro’s pictures, but we did buy John’s’
- b. Nos gusta hablar con chicos simpáticos más que hablar con (chicos)
CL like-3ps to-talk with guys friendly more than to-talk with (guys)
antipáticos.
unfriendly
‘We like talking to friendly guys more than talking to unfriendly ones’

Note that a proposal based on D as the NE licensor in Spanish would be forced to assume the existence of D at some level in (8), that is, to assume that NE without D behaves as a quantified expression with an unpronounced quantifier licensing the construction. However, as Eguren (2010) conclusively shows, there is no implicit or null D in these cases, and NEs without D in Spanish behave as bare plurals with no quantifier force. For instance, both bare plurals and NE with no D are grammatical in the presence of adverbials such as ‘a miles’ (by the thousands) that are interpreted as quantifiers over a noun, cf. (9a-b). The presence of existential quantifiers is ungrammatical with these adverbials, cf. (9c), due to the ban on vacuous quantification.

⁵ As one of the anonymous reviewers notes, the sentences in (8) sound more natural if they have also gapping. The relevant examples are below in (i):

- (i) a. No compramos ningún cuadro de Pedro, pero sí (compramos) (cuadros) de Juan
Neg (we)-buy no picture of Pedro but Afir (we-buy) (pictures) of Juan
‘We didn’t buy any of Pedro’s pictures, but we did buy John’s’
- b. Nos gusta hablar con chicos simpáticos más que (hablar) con (chicos) antipáticos
CL like-3ps to-talk with guys friendly more than (to-talk) with (guys) unfriendly
‘We like talking to friendly guys more than talking to unfriendly ones’

Note that the presence/absence of gapping is not relevant for the current analysis. The speculation is that they are better due to lack of redundancy, but the examples in (8) are considered grammatical too.

- (9) a. Está vendiendo libros a miles.
 ‘She is selling books by the thousands’ (Eguren 2010: his 13a)
 b. Él vende muchos libros grandes y yo vendo __ pequeños a miles.
 ‘He sells many big books and I sell small ones by the thousands’.
 (Eguren 2010: his ia, fn 7)
 c. *Está vendiendo algunos libros a miles.
 ‘She is selling some books by the thousands’ (Eguren 2010: his 13c)

In addition, it seems that the presence of a D is not the only requirement for nominal ellipsis because the presence of certain Ds does not guarantee the possibility of omission of the nominal expression. Cf. (10^a) and (10b) to this respect:

- (10) a. *El estudiante de matemáticas invitó al (estudiante) con gafas a su casa
 The student-masc of math invited to-the (student) with glasses to his home
 ‘the math student invited to the one with glasses to his home’
 b. Un estudiante de matemáticas invitó a uno (estudiante) con gafas a su casa
 A student-masc of math invited to a (student) with glasses to his home
 ‘A math student invited to one with glasses to his home’

Following a similar line, Lobeck (1995) develops a cross linguistic analysis of NE based on the idea that only the Strong Agreement (i.e., phonetically ‘visible’) of D or Num can license this construction. In this way, the cross linguistic differences in (11) are accounted for as different properties of Agreement in Spanish (i.e., strong agreement) versus English (i.e., weak agreement):

- (11) a. Juan compró la camisa roja, pero no compró la (camisa) negra
 John bought the shirt red, but neg (he)bought the (shirt) black
 b. John bought the red shirt, but he didn’t buy the black *(one)

Therefore, according to Lobeck (1995), the possibility of having different forms of the definite article in Spanish, which obey the strong agreement displayed in the lexical item, allows for a licensing mechanism that is impossible in languages such as English, which does not express agreement in the D and needs to include an explicit pro-form ‘one’ to produce a similar construction. Although in principle this type of approach is successful in explaining the fundamental difference between (11a) vs. (11b), the extension of this analysis to the Spanish data below poses important problems (see also Eguren (2010) for a detailed discussion of this point).

- (12) a. *Juan compró la camisa con botones rojos, pero no compró la (camisa)
 John bought the shirt with buttons red, but neg (he)bought the (shirt)
 con botones negros
 with buttons black
 ‘John bought the red buttoned shirt, but he didn’t buy the black buttoned one’
 b. Juan compró cuatro camisas rojas/ con botones rojos, pero no compró
 John bought four shirt red/with buttons red, but neg (he)bought
 dos (camisas) con botones negros
 two (shirts) with buttons black
 ‘John bought the red buttoned shirt, but he didn’t buy the black buttoned one’

In the examples in (12), we can see that the expression of strong agreement does not seem to be required in some cases to license the NE construction, such as (12b), while the expression of strong agreement does not suffice to allow for the NE in (12a). In other words, the existence of cases such as those illustrated in (12) casts doubts on Agreement as the licenser for NE, and questions its validity in general. The restrictions on NE discussed above cannot be explained under this approach, as Spanish shows the same Agreement (or lack of Agreement) in all the cases mentioned above.

A related proposal is that advanced by Bernstein (1993) with her ‘uno’ approach. Building her approach on the grounds of a Word Marker licensing the constructions, Bernstein also resorts to the idea of a morphological licenser as the key to explaining nominal ellipsis in Spanish. In fact, she interprets that the impossibility of having ‘un’ and the need to add –o to the indefinite article in elliptical contexts (see the contrast in (13)) as evidence for this approach.

- (13) Compramos un libro de matemáticas y {*un/uno} (libro) de lingüística
 (we)-bought a book of math and a/a+o book of linguistics
 ‘We bought a math book and a linguistics one’

However, as mentioned in Ticio (2010), for instance, this approach seems to be restricted to the indefinite article NE because it is not applicable to some others Ds that do not display the ‘ø/-o’ alternance in Spanish NE, such as definite article (14a) or demonstratives in (14b), although the ‘-o’ form is morphologically available in the language, as (14c-d) shows.

- (14) a. Compramos el libro de matemáticas y {el /*lo} (libro) de lingüística
 Bought-2ppl this-masc book of math and this-masc/this+o book of linguistics
 ‘We bought this math book and this linguistics one’
 b. Compramos este libro de matemáticas y {este /*esto} (libro) de lingüística
 Bought-2ppl this-masc book of math and this-masc/this+o book of linguistics
 ‘We bought this math book and this linguistics one’
 c. Lo bueno es difícil de obtener
 the-neuter good is difficult to get
 d. Esto es difícil de entender
 This-neuter is difficult to understand

Furthermore, examples such as those in (15) show that it is not only the omission of the N that triggers the presence of the long/short form; other Quantifiers and Adjectives present this alternation with Ns, as in (15). The examples in (15) further weaken the predictions of this proposal and point to a phonological factor as a possible explanation of the long/short alternations (cf. Hernanz & Brucart 1987 for a similar explanation):

- (15) a. hombre alguno vs. algún hombre ‘some man’
 Man any any man
 b. un libro cualquiera vs. cualquier libro ‘any book’
 a book any any book

Still, under the formal licensing approach it has been proposed that the licensing of NE in Spanish is related to the particular structure targeted by the ellipsis process (cf. Ticio (2005, 2010) for a proposal based on NP, Saab (2010) for a proposal based on *n*P). To illustrate how these approaches work, let us assume that NE is an NP-limited

construction⁶; that is, it cannot affect anything that is not within the NP node. This assumption explains the possibility of having some elements out of the ellipsis site because they are generated outside of the NE domain and the ellipsis process misses them, as is the case of the non-argumental modifier ‘con ventanas azules’ in (16)⁷.

- (16) Compramos una casa con ventanas azules y vendimos
 (we)-bought a house with windows blue and (we)-sold
 tres (casas) con ventanas azules
 three (houses) with windows blue

This type of proposal does not postulate any independent NE licenser, but it links the possibility of having some elements as remnants with their overall syntactic properties and their generation site. This line of research, along with a non-uniformity approach to attributive adjectives (cf. Bernstein 1993, 2001; Demonte 1999, Ticio 2010, and Valois 1991), can account for the distribution of NE with attributive adjectives. In other words, prenominal adjectives, such as (17a), must be included in the ellipsis target because, according to the independent analysis of their properties, they are generated within the NP. In contrast, postnominal As, commonly assumed to be generated outside the NP, can survive the ellipsis process⁸.

- (17) a. *Visitamos el gran edificio de 4 plantas pero no el gran (edificio) de 5 plantas
 (we)-visited the big building with 4 floors but no the big (building) with 5 floors
 b. Visitamos el edificio grande de 4 plantas pero no el (edificio) grande de 5
 (we)-visited the building big with 4 floors but no the (building) big with 5
 plantas
 floors

Under this approach, the challenge is to explain why some elements assumed to be generated within the NP, such as the object in (18), can be optionally left as Spanish NE remnants.

- (18) a. Compramos el libro de matemáticas pero no compramos el (libro) de
 (we)-bought the book of math but neg (we)-bought the (book) of
 lingüística
 linguistics

To address this issue, authors such as Ticio (2005, 2010) need to resort to ‘stylistic’ movements to remove elements from the NE target, which undermines the analysis.

⁶ I illustrate this line of research with the NP limitation, as the existence of nP is not standardly accepted.

⁷ One could make more contrastive this example, as one of the reviewers suggests:

- (i) Compramos una casa con ventanas azules y vendimos tres (casas) con ventanas verdes
 (we)-bought a house with windows blue and (we)-sold three (houses) with windows green

Note that the example in the text is considered grammatical too, and it is maintained in the text because it follows maximally the parallelism antecedent-consequent.

⁸ Obviously, different assumptions about the position of the adjectives will render different predictions regarding the adjectives that can/cannot be remnant elements after NE applies. Given that the vast amount of proposals to account for the position of the attributive adjectives (cf. Cinque 2010 and references therein), it is not possible to be exhaustive at this point and we just provide an example of how this NE line of research is able to predict some data following some particular assumptions.

To summarize, syntactic approaches to Spanish NE have been very common in the literature. *A priori*, these analyses have been successful in explaining as language-specific properties the cross-linguistic variation found in this phenomenon. However, as shown in this section, the link between a general language-specific property and the distribution of nominal ellipsis in a particular language does not account for all the data, and additional extensions of these analyses are needed to provide a complete empirical coverage of the phenomenon. Furthermore, the language-specific property typically invoked to analyze the construction (for instance, strong/weak agreement) also produces problems when faced with languages with very similar formal properties (Italian/French) while displaying different NE distributions.

More recent approaches to NE have focused on the semantic and pragmatic properties of NE. Grounding their proposals on the particular contrastive and anaphoric relation that is established in ellipsis constructions, several authors have postulated an information approach to this phenomenon (based on Merchant's 2001 e-GIVENness notion and similar works). To instantiate this line of research, some authors have proposed that the remnant elements must move in overt syntax to a Focus position (Corver and van Koppen 2009, Ntelitheos 2004, among others), while some others have proposed the introduction of features in the structure carrying the relevant semantic information and licensing the possibility or impossibility of having an ellipsis (cf. Sleeman 1996, Merchant 2001, among others). The remainder of this section addresses these approaches and their challenges.

Eguren (2010) condenses and applies the main assumptions of this line of research to Spanish NE. Eguren's proposal is that there is a contrastive focus condition on the remnant of the ellipsis, which regulates the distribution of Spanish NE. More concretely, he argues that NE remnants establish a set-subset relation between the items of the same descriptive class denoted by the antecedent, which allows for the content of the elided nominal to be recovered. The conclusion then is that only elements that can create a partitive relation (understood in a very broad sense as a set-subset relation, following Sleeman's (1996) original proposals) can enter into an NE construction.

This proposal is then able to explain the differences of grammaticality illustrated in the sentences in (19) as the result of the incompatibility of the notion of contrastive focus with non-intersectional adjectives such as prenominal adjectives, or with quantifiers and Ds such as 'tales/sendos/cada'.

- (19) a. Esta comunicación está bien, pero la siguiente (comunicación) es mejor.
'This talk is OK, but the next (talk) is better.'
- b. Pedro ha revisado el primer capítulo y Juan ha revisado el segundo (capítulo).
'Peter has revised the first chapter and John has revised the second (chapter)'.
(Eguren 2010: his (48))
- c. Estos cuentos cortos son más divertidos que esos (cuentos) largos.
'These short stories are more amusing than those long ones'.
- d. Estos cortos cuentos son más divertidos que esos largos *(cuentos).
'These short stories are more amusing than those long stories'.
(Eguren 2010: his (50))
- e. Algunos artículos tratan de la elipsis. *{Tales/Dichos} (artículos) son fundamentales para tu estudio.
'Some papers talked about ellipsis. {Such/The above-mentioned} (papers) are crucial for your study'.
- f. Dos amigos de Roma escribieron cartas a sendos *(amigos) de Madrid.
'Two friends from Rome wrote letters to one friend from Madrid each'.

- g. Dos estudiantes vinieron a la fiesta. *Cada (estudiante) trajo a su acompañante.

Two students came to the party. Each (student) brought his companion

Then, the contrastive lexical meaning displayed by serial adjectives, such as ‘siguiente’ (next), ordinals, such as ‘segundo’ (second), or restrictive adjectives, such as the size adjective ‘largos’ (long), is what necessarily presupposes the existence of a set of reference from which they choose an alternative or subset. All these types of adjectives allow for NE (see (19a-c)). However, non-restrictive adjectives, such as the prenominal Adjective ‘largos’ above, cannot be associated to with a set of reference, and they produce ungrammaticality when they appear in NE contexts.

Similarly, discourse demonstratives such as ‘sendas’, ‘dichos’ or ‘tales’ do not refer to an alternative set in the discourse due to their anaphoric properties. In other words, according to Eguren (2010), only those determiners and (kinds of) adjectives that can belong to a contextually given set of equivalent alternatives (i.e., only those that can be contrastively focused) can appear in NE constructions in Spanish.

Although this line of analysis is successful at explaining data that have resisted satisfactory explanation under purely syntactic approaches, it does not have complete empirical coverage. For instance, data such as that below, adapted from Saab (2010) and Masullo and Depiante (2004), pose difficulties for semantic analyses:

- (20) a. ?Vimos al hermano de Juan y a la (hermana) de
 (we)-saw to+the-masc_sg brother of Juan and to the-fem_sg sister of
 Ana.
 Ana.
 b. **Vimos al padre de Juan y a la (madre) de Ana
 (we)-saw to+the-masc_sg father of Juan and to the-fem_sg mother of Ana

The examples in (20) show different degrees of ungrammaticality depending on the type of gender formation in the N, with suppletive forms being more ungrammatical than nonsuppletive forms. Note that both gender formation mechanisms are simply different ways to convey similar semantic information, and no semantic difference can be attributed to these examples. Hence, no purely semantic analysis (à la Merchant 2001 and related works) can explain the differences in grammaticality in the examples in (20) without proposing an additional mechanism to account for them.

Additionally, if the standard assumption is that phonological matrices do not count at SEM (i.e., after Spell Out), then a semantic account would also have difficulty explaining the impossibility of data such as (21a) and the possibility of data such as (21b).

- (21) a. *Compramos tus libros de matemáticas y tú compraste
 (we)bought your books of math and you bought
 mis (libros) de lingüística
 my (books) of linguistics
 b. Compramos tus libros de matemáticas y tú compraste
 (we)bought your books of math and you bought
 los (libros) {míos de lingüística/ de lingüística míos}
 the (books) {mine of linguistics/ of linguistics mine}

The examples in (21) illustrate that it is impossible to have NE with unstressed possessives in Spanish, while the stressed possessives are possible in the same context. Note that although some minor semantic differences could be attributed to the differences between unstressed and stressed possessives (cf. Contreras's 1986 discussion on the definiteness of prenominal possessives), they are not related to the core semantic notions discussed in the semantic-based approaches to NE and cannot explain the contrast at hand. Therefore, the presence of a syntactic mechanism to aid in the explanation⁹ is required.

In addition, the last examples with possessives seem to be related to some general criticisms (cf., for instance, Alexiadou and Gengel 2012) of semantic-based analyses of ellipsis. The main gist of these criticisms is that semantic notions such as contrastive focus cannot 'rescue' the construction. Consider the examples in (22), where capitals stand for contrastive focus.

- (22) a. Hemos comprado MI libro no TU libro
 (we)-have bought MY book no YOUR book
 b. ??Hemos comprado el libro MIO no el libro TUYO
 (we)-have bought the book MINE no the book YOURS
 c. Hemos comprado *MI libro no TU (libro)/ MI libro no el (libro) tuyo
 (we)-have bought MY book no YOUR (book)/MY book no the (book) yours

Note that we can focus the unstressed possessive, but we cannot elide the following N even when the possessive is focused. In other words, no matter how much we emphasize the prenominal possessive, which can be accomplished, the result is ungrammatical with ellipsis of the N (although it is fine without NE).

In the same line of thought, the notion of contrastive focus also cannot account for the grammaticality differences in (23) with demonstratives. Crucially, assuming that postnominal demonstratives display focus properties¹⁰ (Bernstein 2001), the differences found in (23) are completely unexpected under some of these semantic based analyses:

- (23) a. Compramos este libro pero no aquel (libro)
 (we)-bought this book but no that (book)
 b. *Compramos el libro este pero no el (libro) aquel
 (we)-bought the book this but no the (book) that
 c. Compramos el libro este pero no aquel (libro)
 (we)-bought the book this but no that (book)

⁹ Note that phonetic/phonological conditions cannot be involved here (contrary to earlier claims by Bruccart (1999), given that the data cannot be rescued by preposing an element between the gap and the unstressed possessive, as in (i):

- (i) a. *Compramos tus dos libros y vendimos mis tres (libros)
 we-bought your two books and we-sold my three (books)
 b. *Compramos tus aburridas fotografías y vendimos mis interesantes (fotos) de paisajes
 we-bought your boring pictures and we-sold my interesting (pictures) of scenes

The ungrammaticality of the examples in (i) points to a truly syntactic restriction as the most probable cause for the restriction of unstressed possessives in ellipsis contexts. See section 3 below for an explanation of this distribution based on the syntactic properties of the possessives.

¹⁰ Note that we are assuming here Bernstein's proposal. Cf. Roca's (2009) analysis of Spanish demonstratives for an alternative to Bernstein's position.

As illustrated in (23), only preN Demonstratives are allowed in NE contexts, which is precisely the opposite of what the semantic approach predicts, given that the postN Demonstratives are assumed to be those susceptible to being contrastively focused (i.e., those with the higher contrastive meaning), and the partitive/discourse-related meaning of the two types of Demonstratives is similar.

The evidence exemplified in (20)-(23) is also supported by the fact that the presence of a contrast or partitive relation between the antecedent and ellipsis site, which is taken as a requirement for ellipsis under these approaches, is not always readily available. The example in (24) illustrates this point.

- (24) Todos los estudiantes han participado en las manifestaciones
 All the students have participated in the demonstrations
 y todos (los estudiantes) han gritado las mismas consignas.
 and all (the students) have shouted the same slogans

Cinque (2013) denies the requirement of a contrast notion in ellipsis constructions on the basis of examples similar to (24) above. Note that there is no partitive relation or contrast in the data in (24), as the antecedent and the elided element refer to the same group of students. Therefore, a semantic meaning of contrast cannot license these nominal ellipsis constructions because there is none. In contrast, the presence of a contrast notion cannot save truly ungrammatical NE cases, cf. (25).

- (25) a. *El (niño) bajo conoció al niño alto
 The (boy) short met to+the boy tall
 b. El niño bajo conoció al (niño) alto
 The boy short met to+the (boy) tall

A universal requirement of NE (cf. Cinque 2013) is that the antecedent must precede the gap¹¹. Note that there is an evident contrast meaning, and the semantic relationships established are similar in both examples in (25). However, in (25a) the gap precedes the antecedent, which rules out the sentence, while the change of linear order in (25b) renders it grammatical. In both examples, it seems that some syntactic notion needs to be implied to account for the ungrammatical sentences.

To summarize, under standard semantic approaches, the pragmatic-semantic properties (givenness, contrast/focus or partitivity) of a functional category or the overall structure license the presence of the phonetically unrealized element (Eguren 2010, Kester 1996, López 2000, Sleeman 1996, among others). This section has shown evidence that a strictly semantic approach to Spanish NE cannot fully predict its distribution. Given these difficulties, semantic approaches have resorted to the presence/absence of semantic features, such as partitive or E-given features, to license the construction. Note that, given that these features are linked to the presence of a

¹¹ Note that the precedence notion alluded to here is structural precedence, not linear precedence, as (i) shows:

- (i) Aunque el bajo no vino a la fiesta, el niño alto sí vino
 Although the boy short NEG came to the party, the boy tall AFIRM came
 ‘Although the short one didn’t come to the party, the tall boy came indeed’

(i) shows that the concessive adjunct clause is generated in a structurally lower position and then moved to preclausal position via A' movement.

particular semantic notion, some of the difficulties noted above arise. Finally, let me mention here that if we assume some type of feature to license the empty slot, we need to enter such an element in the syntax and explain how structures conveying apparently similar semantic meanings behave substantially differently regarding NE.

In conclusion, although there is some semantic relation involved in most cases of Spanish NE, such as a partitive relation, this can be seen as one of the results of NE, not as the cause of NE.

2.3 *Conclusion*

This section has examined the major lines of research pursued to account for Spanish NE; namely, structurally or semantically based analyses. It has been illustrated that the distribution of Spanish NE is not fully explained by any of the analyses discussed so far. There does not seem to always be a formal licenser available for the construction, and the semantic requirements involved in elliptical constructions do not suffice to account for the Spanish NE distribution. Consequently, analyses in both approaches must resort to ‘ad hoc’ additional mechanisms to provide empirical coverage of this phenomenon.

This paper aims to combine syntactic and semantic approaches in its analysis. This proposal is based on the assumption that the architecture of the current theoretical proposals allows us to implement different strategies to analyze Spanish NE depending on the derivational stage. The combined solution helps us expand the empirical coverage of the analysis and avoid the introduction of extraneous mechanisms in our grammar.

3. NE as a collaborative effort

Given the evident difficulties the NE distribution poses for previous analyses, this paper tries a middle-ground solution, taking as points of departure Chomsky’s (1995) insights on ellipsis as a sub-case of trace deletion and Baltin’s (2012) recent proposal (based on Elbourne 2008) that some gaps can be re-created during the derivation as anaphoras. The main claim is that NE is a case of copy deletion that results from an imperfect/defective copy that is deleted as any other copy at PHON and interpreted as a pronoun at SEM. A secondary claim is that it is the interaction of different components of the grammar that produces the phenomenon known as Spanish NE. For ease of exposition, this section is divided into three subsections focusing on the treatment of the phenomenon in each of the grammatical components.

3.1. *NE and narrow syntax*

Under current assumptions, the input to a syntactic derivation starts with a set of elements that are contained in an initial set of lexical items extracted from the lexicon, the numeration. The reference set, the numeration, contains the lexical items to be used in the derivation (see an example in (26a) below). The lexical items in the numeration, conceived as bundles of phonological, semantic, and syntactic features, carry an index that specifies the number of times the lexical item is used in the utterance. The role of the derivation is to reduce the indexes in the numeration to zero and to remove the elements’ uninterpretable features using the operation Merge.

Furthermore, the currently standard adoption of Nunes’s (2004) Copy theory of movement makes unnecessary the notion of trace in our theory of grammar because, under this theory, traces are the result of applying the operation Merge to maximal or minimal syntactic objects. In other words, they are copies created during the derivation. According to the Copy Theory of Movement, traces are neither included in the initial

numeration nor appear in the index assigned to the lexical item in the numeration, as illustrated in the input to the syntactic derivation of ‘John was kissed’ below.

- (26) a. {John₁; was₁; kissed₁}
 b. [John [was [kissed ~~John~~]]]

Note that, under this approach, the numerations can be ‘expanded’ via applications of Merge that target a lexical item already merged in a structure and copy it into a new location. The additional copy is deleted due to linearization constraints operating at PHON (cf. Nunes 2004 and discussion below for more details on deletion of copies at the interfaces), but it is present (although not interpreted) at SEM.

Therefore, the standard narrow syntax mechanisms allow us to duplicate some lexical items during the derivation, which results in the creation of a duplicated structure in narrow syntax. The current analysis capitalizes on this standard mechanism and proposes that what surfaces as the ellipsis gap is a fully developed syntactic structure that is copied to satisfy the requirements of some elements in the numeration. Let us consider the derivation in (28) proposed for an NE case such as (27) under the current analysis, where DWS stands for Derivational Work Space and refers to the multiple sub-derivations undertaken concurrently, prior to being merged as a larger single structure:

- (27) a. El amigo de Juan conoce al (amigo) de Pedro
 The friend of John knows to+the friend of Pedro
 b. {el₂; amigo₁; de₂; Juan₁; Pedro₁; conoce; a₁; v; T; C}
- (28) a. DWS₁: [el[amigo-de-Pedro]] → Merge ‘amigo’ → DWS₂: [*amigo*-Juan]
 b. DWS₁: [T[v[conoce [el[amigo-de-Pedro]]]]]
 DWS₂: [el[amigo-de-Juan]]
 c. Merge DWS₂ and DWS₁
 [_{CP} C[_{TP} [el[*amigo*-de-Juan]]][T[_{VP} v[_{VP}[el[*amigo*-de-Juan]]] conoce [el[amigo-de-Pedro]]]]]

Note that the numeration in (27b), simplified for ease of exposition¹², only has an index 1 in the noun ‘amigo’ (friend), which is precisely the element affected by the elision process (that is, what is unpronounced but understood in (27a)). As discussed in the previous section, under the Copy theory of movement we have the possibility of copying an element and placing it in some other part of the structure if it is selected. This operation is performed without resorting to the items contained in the original lexical array or numeration but by using the items already inserted in one of the Derivational Working Spaces. Therefore, under these premises, we can assume that a standard derivation for (27a) with the numeration (27b) will proceed as illustrated in (28a-c). As illustrated in (28a), the derivation starts with a DWS in which the nominal expression ‘el amigo de Pedro’ (the friend of Pedro) is generated. Simultaneously, a second DWS starts merging the nominal expression ‘el amigo de Juan’ (the friend of Juan). To create this expression, the derivation must either select another occurrence of

¹² Through the entire paper’s derivations, any irrelevant details have been omitted for ease of exposition. In addition, I insert ‘de’ (Genitive marker) and ‘a’ (Accusative marker) as PF elements, understanding that they are simply the manifestation of Case. The relevant literature (cf. Giorgi & Longobardi’s 1991 pioneering insights on this issue; cf. Ticio 2010 for a summary and additional evidence) has already independently established that neither ‘de’ or ‘a’ are real prepositions in Spanish and do not project a Prepositional Phrase.

‘amigo’ from the numeration or copy ‘amigo’ from DWS_1 . The first option is not available because the N ‘amigo’ is entered with the index 1, and the derivation opts for the second option to avoid a derivational crash. (28c) shows the stage in which both DWSs have been merged and the structure continues as a single DWS, before being sent to the interfaces.

This derivation assumes the existence of parallel derivations and the possibility of merging elements from one derivational space to the other. None of these assumptions are novel. First, parallel derivations¹³ are required to obtain, among others, common complex Specifiers such as ‘your friend’ in simple sentences such as ‘your friend ate bananas’, and they are standardly assumed. Second, the adoption of the copy theory of movement implies the possibility of applying the copy process from one derivational space to other. This type of movement has been explored since Nunes’s (2004) original ‘sideward movement’ proposal in many multidominance analyses based on the notion of ‘parallel Merge’ put forward by Citko (2005, 2011), among many others. This line of argumentation has been used to derive an abundant number of expressions so far, crucially all of them somewhat related to coordination/adjunct structures (in all cases, structures not directly related to the main ‘command unit’ derivation), but without showing apparent displacement¹⁴.

Regarding what triggers the creation of an extra copy of the N ‘amigo’, note that it seems to be needed to satisfy the features in the lexical items ‘Juan’ and ‘el’ (the) and its extended projections¹⁵. That is, the N ‘Juan’ needs to establish its dependency from an N (most likely, this is the feature that surfaces as ‘de’ (of)), and the D ‘el’ requires an N without the ‘genitive’ feature¹⁶. In addition, the relevant features checked in these merging operations between ‘amigo’ (friend) and the D and the N that surfaces as the PP are interpretable and are not deleted; thus, the element is still active to be copied if needed.

A straightforward prediction of this line of analysis is that PHON will treat these copies as any other copy generated in narrow syntax, and one of them will have to be omitted at PHON. This consequence will be explored in detail in the next section; here, it will be assumed that lower copies of NE are deleted following the standard copy deletion process. Therefore, for the current purposes, as the derivation in (28c) reaches PHON, the lowest copy of ‘amigo’ (friend) is deleted.

The corresponding derivation for the sentence without nominal ellipsis will be as detailed in (29)-(30):

¹³ Recent research (cf. Fernández-Salgueiro (2011)) argues for a serial approach to derivations; namely, the impossibility of deriving two DWSs simultaneously. This paper departs in principle from this view and follows Citko (2011) and others on the possibility of having more than one DWS active at the same time.

¹⁴ Cf. also Bošković (2011), among others, for an analysis that shows that copy deletion and ellipsis deletion have exactly the same rescuing effect on locality violations.

¹⁵ I am oversimplifying here, but I am assuming a typical internal DP structure, containing a series of functional projections in the extended projection of the N (for instance, *nP*, GenderP, NumberP etc.). Cf. Alexiadou (2001), among others, on the functional structure in the DP.

¹⁶ At this point, it is unclear to me what particular feature the N ‘Juan’ will carry to trigger the merge with another N, given the discussion regarding the argumenthood in Ns (cf. Alexiadou et al. (2007) for an overview). However, it is certain that this feature is what surfaces as ‘de’ (of), and it is interpretable in the N that does not carry that feature and in the N ‘amigo’ in the current example. Note that the N ‘amigo’ does not assign Case, so there must be a kind of predication relation.

- (29) a. El amigo de Juan conoce al (amigo) de Pedro
 The friend of John knows to+the friend of Pedro
 b. {el2, amigo2, de2, Juan1, Pedro1, conoce, a1, v, T, C}
- (30) a. DWS₁: [el[amigo-de-Pedro]] → Merge ‘amigo’ → DWS₂: [amigo-Juan]
 b. DWS₁: [T_v[conoce [el[amigo-de-Pedro]]]]
 DWS₂: [el[amigo-de-Juan]]
 c. Merge DWS₂ and DWS₁
 [CP C_{TP} [el[amigo-de-Juan]] [T_{VP} v_{VP}[el[amigo-de-Juan]] conoce [el[amigo-de-Pedro]]]]

Under the current analysis, the crucial difference between (27), a NE example, and (29), an example without NE, is that the NE example in (27) has a reduced index in one of the lexical items in its initial numeration.

Note that this similarity between the two derivations does not affect the referential properties of the relevant nominal expressions involved in these structures, which denote different individuals in the real world in both examples. This is so because the denotation of a nominal expression is established via its D, instead of its N, which only introduces a property. Therefore, the copy of the N does not restrict in any relevant way the denotation of the antecedent or the consequent in the NE examples, as the copy does not affect the D heading the nominal expression.

Before introducing further details of the analysis, let us discuss some possible differences between ellipsis and the deletion of traces noted in the relevant literature. Nunes (2004) summarizes three major criticisms of Chomsky’s (1995) original insight regarding the similarities between ellipsis and the deletion of traces. First, it was argued that ellipsis and trace deletion cannot be similar phenomena because deletion of traces is obligatory, while ellipsis is not. Under the proposal just outlined, this problem dissipates because ellipsis is obligatory in a derivation that has a numeration containing reduced indexes for some of its lexical items. Second, a question for the ‘ellipsis-as-deletion-of-traces’ approach was the possibility of unifying the elements in both phenomena; that is, the deletion of traces was assumed to operate with traces/copies (elements that are not distinct in the initial numeration), while ellipsis was assumed to operate with elements that are morphologically identical but distinctively specified in the numeration elements. The current analysis makes ‘deletion of traces/copies’ and ‘ellipsis’ fully identical¹⁷ by assuming they both operate with copies made during the initial stages of the derivation. Finally, the last criticism put forward of this line of analysis is that there are instances of ellipsis that are not grammatical with the ellipsis gap pronounced. Again, the current proposal can resort to the different initial numerations to accommodate this incompatible behavior between elliptical and non-elliptical constructions. Taking this discussion seriously, there is no evidence to disregard the similarities between ellipsis and deletion of traces. Therefore, the simple assumption of different numerations for elliptical and non-elliptical constructions solves the three questions originally raised for this line of research.

Given that the main difference so far between elliptical and non-elliptical constructions resides in their different initial numerations, a natural question at this point is how we determine the lexical items that form part of an initial derivation. According to Chomsky (1995:227), the generation of a numeration is completely unrestricted and it is the result (namely, the derivation interpreted by the interfaces) that

¹⁷ Note that this is not entirely desirable, taking into consideration examples that show that ellipsis and non-elliptical constructions are not fully interchangeable. The next sections will refine this idea and state that ellipsis and copy are identical only in narrow syntax.

determines whether the initial numeration was well-formed. Note that this should be the relevant answer, assuming that syntax is merely a derivational component, with the mission of exhausting the numeration and eliminating features at the same time. Then, in principle, any lexical element can appear in a numeration, and it is only at the interfaces that we are able to evaluate the initial set.

A more strict answer to the elements that can compose a numeration has been pursued in recent research (cf. Fernández-Salgueiro 2011)), which proposes restricting the generation of the initial numeration. According to Fernández-Salgueiro (2011), the elements included in a numeration must either be selected or must select something. This strict version of what constitutes a numeration is not an issue under the current approach because if we examine the items that compose a numeration for an ellipsis site, all lexical items are selected or being selected, as required, and the number of tokens of each lexical item are encoded in the subscripts appearing in each lexical item.

Thus far, the current analysis seems to be unrestricted in narrow syntax. In principle, any element in the initial numeration selected by another element in the structure can be copied and merged in another DWS. However, under the assumption that an element cannot check its features against itself, narrow syntax excludes a syntactic object such as $K = \{\alpha_i, \alpha_i\}$, where α has merged with a copy of itself. This prediction is borne out in some previously unnoticed Spanish NE restriction cases, such as (31a) below, which suggests the validity of the current analysis:

- (31) a. *Conocimos al amigo del (amigo) de Juan
 (we)-met to+the friend of+the (friend) of Juan
 b. Conocimos al amigo del amigo de Juan
 (we)-met to+the friend of+the (friend) of Juan
 ‘we met John’s (friend)’s friend’

Under the current analysis, the derivation would proceed as detailed in (32)

- (32) $N = \{v, T, \text{conocer}_1, \text{el}_2, \text{amigo}_1, \text{Juan}_1\}$
 DWS1: amigo-Juan,
 DWS1: el-amigo-Juan
 DWS2: amigo-amigo
 Merge DWS1 and DWS \rightarrow DWS3 amigo-el-amigo-Juan
 Merge el and DWS3: el-amigo-el-amigo-Juan

Considering the derivation in (32), the cause of the ungrammaticality is that the N ‘amigo’ must simultaneously be the selecting item and the item to be copied, the selected copy. This is so because it is the head of the construction and part of its immediate complement. The problematic step is the initial step in DWS2 (marked in bold) and the ungrammaticality of the examples supports the overarching restriction about merging an element to a copy of itself in narrow syntax.

Furthermore, there is additional evidence to support that it is a truly narrow syntax restriction triggering the ungrammaticality in (32). Furthermore, note that the examples in (32) cannot be considered as the consequence of a ban on linear adjacency because examples such as (33) are perfect.

- (33) Presentaron el amigo de Juan al (amigo) de Pedro
 (they)-introduced the friend of John to+the (friend) of Pedro

The grammaticality of (33) can also be explained under the current approach. In this case, it is the N ‘Juan’ that needs to be merged to an N to establish a relation with it. In this case, a copy of the N ‘amigo’ can be selected. Note that this line of analysis predicts that a case such as (33) in which the direct object ‘el amigo de Juan’ appears without complement (namely, a nominal expression ‘el amigo’) should also be grammatical because the N ‘amigo’ would not be forced to act as the selector and selectee because the copy of ‘amigo’ would be selected by the D. This prediction is borne out in examples such as (34):

- (34) Presentaron ese amigo al (amigo) de Pedro/algún amigo al (amigo) de Pedro¹⁸
 (they)-introduced that friend to+that (friend) of Pedro/some (friend) of Pedro

Another piece of evidence in favor of the current analysis is that the addition of structural distance between the nominal expressions involved turns the sentence in (32) into the grammatical (35), where the Adjective ‘distinto’ (different) mediates between the two nominal expressions headed by the N ‘amigo’ (friend):

- (35) Vimos a un amigo distinto del (amigo) de Juan
 (we)-saw to a friend different of the (friend) of Juan

To summarize, in all the grammatical cases above, ‘amigo’ (friend) does not perform two roles (selector and selectee) in the same step of the derivation. It is copied and merged to different lexical items, but not to itself. Spanish NE seems to be subject to the general ban that prevents an element from being merged with a copy of itself.

Although the examples above point to a restriction on what one could call the lower bound of the locality of NE (that is, how close we can find the antecedent and gap in an NE construction), note that the usual antilocality constraints do not operate in Spanish NE. For instance, Grohmann (2003) showed that a thematically marked element may not move to another theta position, as in (36), and that movement from a Case-position to another, as in (36b), results in an illicit derivation.

- (36) a. * John likes.
 a'. # [vP John v [VP likes John]]
 b. * Him likes she/her.
 b'. # [TP him T [AgrOP him AgrO [vP him v [VP likes she/her]]]]

Note that this is not the case in NE examples such as (37):

- (37) a. El coche de Juan tiene el (coche) de Pedro encima
 The car of Juan has the (car) of Pedro on top
 b. El amigo de Juan vio al (amigo) de Pedro en el cine
 The friend of Juan saw to+the (friend) of Pedro in the movies
 c. Juan puso el libro de Ana sobre el (libro) de Pepe
 Juan put the book of Ana over the (book) of Pepe

¹⁸ The case ‘Presentaron el amigo al de Pedro’ (they introduced the friend to Peter’s (friend)) sounds worse to me; I assume this is related to the pragmatic/semantic properties of the definite article.

As shown in (37), within the clause we can have the NE gap in any of the major argumental positions¹⁹. Interestingly, the current analysis predicts this NE behavior regarding antilocality constraints. This phenomenon occurs because the NE copies, being internal to the XP, are not involved with uninterpretable features such as Case or Theta roles. In addition, the checked features do not force us to have antilocality domains because they are checked in parallel DWSs. This is only possible because NE copies are smaller than DPs, which means they would not be checking theta features or Case against the main predicate and, hence, not subject to anti-locality effects.

The previous discussion is centered on one of the fundamental properties of Spanish NE, namely, that the elided element must leave a remnant (i.e., the D or a modifier). More generally, what this means is that we are deleting a structure that is not a complete nominal expression. The cases in (38) illustrate this point.

- (38) a. *Compramos el libro y vendimos (el libro)
 (we)-bought the book and (we)-sold (the book)
 b. Compramos el libro y vendimos ese (libro)
 (we)-bought the book and (we)-sold this (book)
 c. Compramos libros de mate y vendimos (libros) de fotografía
 (we)-bought books of math and (we)-sold (books) of photography

This is also crucial to derive the possible locality conditions of NE constructions, as, under standard assumptions, the type of features checked and the locality constraints expected depend on the size and category of the moved element. In fact, it is well known that nonphrasal movement is constrained by locality conditions other than those constraining phrasal movement (cf. Roberts' (2011) overview on head movement).

In light of the previous discussion, we do not expect Spanish NE to be completely subject to standard locality conditions. Therefore, it is the size of the trace, which makes NE avoid locality constraints typically associated to movement operations affecting phrasal movement, what represents the most relevant difference between NE and movement. In fact, it has been shown in proposals by Lasnik (1995) and Richards (2001) that ellipsis can circumvent the need for some features/constraints to be checked. Further research is needed to determine the type of locality condition operating in each case of NE in Spanish, a topic that will be put aside in this paper

To summarize, the current proposal is based on the possibility of creating copies in narrow syntax. It has been shown that this approach can explain some unnoticed NE restrictions as the result of general narrow syntax properties and of the smaller-than-DP size of the elements copied. Under the approach put forward so far, Spanish NE is simply plain syntax. The next sections will show that the NE restrictions come from the interaction of the structure created at narrow syntax with the PHON and SEM components.

¹⁹ As long as there is c-command from the antecedent to the gap, as (i) shows. Cf. below for a discussion on this:

- (i) a. *El (coche) de Juan tiene el coche de Pedro encima
 The (car) of Juan has the car of Pedro on top
 b. *El (amigo) de Pedro vio al amigo de Juan en el cine
 The (friend) of Juan saw to+the friend of Pedro in the movies
 c. *Juan puso el (libro) de Ana sobre el libro de Pepe
 Juan put the (book) of Ana over the book of Pepe

3.2. NE and PHON

Under standard minimalist assumptions, the structure built by narrow syntax is transferred to PHON cyclically²⁰ to ease the computational burden at narrow syntax. Then, at some point of the derivation, part of the structure (i.e., the domain of a phase à la Chomsky (2001) or a c-command unit à la Uriagereka (1999)) is shipped to PHON, and the constraints at this component operate in the Spelled out portion of the derivation.

Moreover, the Copy theory of movement assumes that all but one copy of an element X undergoing overt movement are deleted due to linearization constraints operating at PHON (cf. Nunes 2004, among many others). It is typically assumed that a chain is pronounced in the head position, with lower members deleted in PHON, unless pronunciation in the head position leads to a PHON violation (Bošković & Nunes 2007). This assumption seems to predict what happens in cases such as (39)

- (39) El amigo de Luis vino con el (amigo) de Juan
The friend of Luis came with the (friend) of John

In (39), the lower copy of the N ‘amigo’ is deleted at PHON, given that its pronunciation will not incur in any PHON violation²¹.

Thus, the current analysis accounts for standard Spanish NE cases in which the deletion occurs in the structurally lower copy because Copy theory assumes that the tails of chains are typically deleted. However, this tendency can be overridden when the deletion of the lower copy conflicts with the phonological requirements of the language (cf. Stepanović 1999, Bošković 2001, Reglero 2007, among many others). A valid question arises at this point regarding some restrictions on NE in Spanish analyzed by the relevant literature as the result of the interaction between syntactic and phonetic properties of some Determiners. The relevant cases are illustrated in (40)-(41).

- (40) Vimos a varias chicas con sombrero y a las chicas con gafas
(we)-saw to several girls with hat and to the girls with glasses
(41) *Vimos a varias chicas con sombrero y saludamos a las (chicas) con gafas
(we)-saw to several girls with hat and (we)-greeted to the (girls) with glasses

More concretely, Eguren (2010), Raposo (1999), and Ticio (2005, 2010) agree that the ungrammaticality of (41) is derived from the clitic-like character of the definite article in Spanish. Evidence for this analysis based on the clitic-like character of the definite article in Spanish comes from data such as (42), which illustrates that the presence of a valid host is sufficient to license the NE in these cases:

- (42) a. Vimos a varias chicas con sombrero y a las (chicas) de Madrid con gafas
(we)-saw to several girls with hat and to the (girls) of Madrid with glasses

²⁰ The Spell Out points vary depending on the author. Some authors (Chomsky 2001) argue that some fixed categories trigger the spell out point, but according to other authors (Uriagereka 1999) any complex c-command unit can trigger it. Here, we take the most conservative approach to this debate and assume that only CP and vP are Spell Out points.

²¹ I assume here that PHON is able to recognize that it is dealing with a copy when it receives the first chunk of material shipped. Note that Nunes’s (2004) original mechanism may not be applicable here because we are not dealing with maximal categories, and they cannot appear with standard unchecked uninterpretable features. However, I assume there must be a similar mechanism to derive head movement copies, which should apply in the cases under discussion.

- b. *Vimos a varias chicas con sombrero y a las tres (chicas) con gafas*
 (we)-saw to several girls with hat and to the three (girls) with glasses

The derivation proposed for the sentence in (41) under the current analysis would produce the representation in (43), where the lexical item ‘chicas’ (girls) has been copied from its initial merged position, as shown in (43). Two possibilities seem to be available to us: delete either the higher copy of ‘chicas’ or the lower copy.

- (43) [[*Vimos [a varias chicas [con sombrero]]]*] y [*saludamos [a las chicas [con gafas]]]*]]

The question is obviously why it is not possible to pronounce the N in (43) in its original position, which would not create a PHON violation; yet it seems to be mandatory to produce it in the position in which the derivation crashes. The ungrammaticality of (41) is unexpected unless we assume that the order of operations at PHON precludes the alternative derivation. The assumption we must adopt at this point is that cliticization of the definite article follows deletion of traces or lexical insertion of phonological features. In other words, the application of the deletion process in a bottom-up fashion causes the tail of the chain to be deleted. This deletion produces irreparable damage, leaving the clitic without a host.

Evidence from the proposed ordering comes from the following examples, which Kornfeld & Saab (2004) discuss to prove their late-insertion analysis for Spanish NE:

- (44) El aula chica está vacía, pero la /*el (aula) grande no.
 the.m.sg room.f.sg small is empty but the.f.sg./*the.m.sg. room.f.sg big neg

Spanish requires the use of the determiner *el* before feminine nouns with a stressed vowel, such as *aula*. The examples in (44) illustrate that Spanish NE seems to overcome this requirement. Kornfeld & Saab’s (2004) explanation of these facts is based on their proposal that NE is the result of a late-insertion approach (instead of PF-deletion), which indicates that, given that no stressed vowel is present when the definite article must be inserted, the default feminine form *la* can be inserted. For our purposes, the examples above show that either PF deletion or late-insertion have made the lower copy of the N at PHON disappear prior to the materialization of the definite article; therefore, the clitic-like needs of the definite article must necessarily be satisfied at a later moment in PHON.

Therefore, the analysis proposed provides evidence for the assumption that cliticization is a late PHON process that cannot cross the boundaries of the Spell Out unit sent to PHON. For the last claim, note that, although it has been traditionally considered that this cliticization is sensitive to the syntactic features/category of the element to which it cliticizes (cf. to this respect Bruccart & Gràcia’s (1986) claim that the Spanish definite article must cliticize to a category that is [+N]), the crucial facts can be restated as prosodic categories. In other words, assuming a strict derivational approach, PPs headed by the P ‘de’ (of) and PP headed by Ps other than ‘de’ (of) project different types of constituents (nominal vs. prepositional constituents²²), and are shipped at different points to PHON, which results in different prosodic properties for

²² The lack of prepositional properties of some prepositions appearing within the nominal expressions has been well-established since Giorgi & Longobardi’s 1991 pioneering insights on this issue in Romance DPs. Cf. Ticio 2010 for a summary and additional evidence showing that ‘de’ (of) is not a real preposition in Spanish and does not project a Prepositional Phrase.

each of them. Then, the grammaticality status of the expressions below is derived from whether it is possible to cliticize the article within its prosodic phrase:

- (45) a. Las tres (chicas) con gafas
 The three (girls) with glasses
 b. Las (chicas) de Madrid con gafas
 The (girls) of Madrid with glasses
 c. *Las (chicas) con gafas
 The (girls) with glasses
 d. Los ‘sin casa’ llegaron en grupos
 The without home (=homeless) arrived in groups

Because the article can only be cliticized within its Spell out unit, which will become its prosodic phrase at PHON, the deletion of part of the clitic host prior to the creation of the prosodic phrase triggers the ungrammaticality of the examples above. In other words, when the deletion of the lower copy creates a conflict, it is too late to delete the upper copy, and the derivation crashes.

To summarize, this section has discussed the workings of the proposed analysis at PHON and showed that some restrictions in NE in Spanish (namely, the atypical behavior of the definite article) can still be explained as the interaction of standardly assumed copy deletion (no-insertion) mechanisms and the clitic-like phonological properties of the definite article in Spanish.

3.3. NE and SEM

Assuming that the transfer to semantic interpretation also proceeds by shipping parts²³ of the derivation to SEM and that there is a bottom up transfer to SEM, it is now the case that we send the ellipsis gap to SEM prior to sending its antecedent. Therefore, SEM receives the tail of a chain, the ellipsis gap, which must be interpreted with respect to an antecedent that is not available at that point to SEM. This sequence is expected in a derivational model, and it is commonly assumed (cf. Ruys (2011) for a discussion regarding this point) that the presence of some type of unchecked uninterpretable feature indicates to SEM that the element is a copy/trace.

Under standard implementations of the copy theory of movement, only a copy of the chain must be retained at SEM as well. Typically, deleting or ignoring the higher copy at SEM, as in (46), will yield narrow scope reconstructed readings in cases such as (46).

- (46) someone is likely [TP someone to arrive]

Under previous frameworks, traces were interpreted as elements bound to the moved element, and their semantic type was <e> (see Heim and Kratzer 1998:186), which can serve as the input or output of a semantic function but cannot perform any semantic action on its own. The Copy theory of movement leads us to interpret each copy as identical to the copied element. According to this theory, the NE site, containing the ellipsed element(s) and being identical to the DP antecedent, must be interpreted as an individual, again an <e> type.

²³ I am abstracting away here from the particular nature of the chunks sent to the interfaces (namely, phases, c-command units, etc.). Cf. the discussion in the previous section.

However, note that the discussion in previous sections has already established that the NE gap must be smaller than the entire DP, which is the <e> type. Therefore, to be able to interpret the initial copy created in NE constructions, we must be able to combine it with the elements remaining in the DP to derive the semantics of the construction.

When considering the effects of non-maximal movement in SEM, we find that this type of movement never affects interpretation. Thus, Chomsky (2001:37) claims that “the semantic effects of head-raising in the core inflectional system are slight or non-existent, as contrasted with XP-movement”. Matushansky (2006) explains the lack of reconstruction effects with head-movement, deriving them from the nature of the element displaced, namely, because verbs are predicates, they do not reconstruct. The lack of SEM effects, together with some other problems, has led many researchers to look for alternatives to the earlier approach to head-movement, either by eliminating it altogether, treating it as something outside the core computational system of narrow syntax (Boeckx & Stepanović 2001), or radically redefining it (cf. Roberts (2011) for a detailed summary of the treatment of head-movement).

It seems that a non-maximal movement, such as the one proposed in this paper, creates conflict to be interpreted at SEM. A possible solution is to assume Elbourne’s (2008) interpretation of ellipsis sites as definite descriptions. This approach follows Postal (1966), Longobardi (1994), Luján (2000), and other works in assuming that pronouns are basically determiners with a silent complement. In particular, the proposal is that pronouns are definite articles whose complements can be phonologically null and are of type <e,t>. For example, according to Elbourne (2008) the interpretation of a third person pronoun such as ‘he’ consists of the determiner and an index. The index is assigned a value via a variable assignment mapping. Assuming that the index receives the value ‘John’, the interpretation of the pronoun plus the index will be ‘the unique x such that x is identical to John’, or, in other words, ‘John’.

Recently, Baltin (2012) has made use of a similar proposal to analyze British English DO constructions. The claim is that the deleted category is incorporated into the category that selects it at SEM, namely, that there is a process that ‘creates’ a pro-form out of a syntactic structure and is interpreted as such. According to Baltin’s (2012) proposal, ‘a pro-form is a functional head whose complement is deleted’. The underlying reasoning is that deletion creates an illegitimate object and that the system eliminates those illegitimate objects by incorporating them into higher heads²⁴. For our purposes, we assume that the silent structure forms a complete <e> expression with the D²⁵, possibly by incorporation of the ellipsis site into one of the functional categories within the DP left-periphery.

Consequently, under the current approach SEM interprets the original copy as a pro-form and not as a copy. This fact is most likely derived from the impossibility of interpreting the original copy as a full copy (namely, the <e> type). Therefore, the system finds a ‘defective’ copy in the ellipsis site and attempts to assign the copy an

²⁴ Baltin’s approach assumes that there is deletion in ellipsis but that it happens in syntax as soon as the elements are merged in the phase. This paper offers an alternative view of these proposals, based on the size of the elision site as the most relevant issue here in an attempt to keep the deletion process a truly phonological operation. This prevents adding an operation to narrow syntax. On the other hand, this forces the system to be able to recognize the original copy as a ‘defective’ element, most likely as the result of a failed attempt of applying the standard interpretation process to the copy.

²⁵ As expected, in cases in which there is no D in the nominal ellipsis construction, the resulting semantic type of the nominal expression including the gap will not be <e> after the semantic combination of the copy and the functional categories over it.

<e> type, which produces an SEM clash and, to save the derivation, opts for the next available category, the pro-form.

At a later stage, the null pro-form created in SEM must be linked to its antecedent. The null pro-form derives its meaning from the antecedent by general mechanisms governing the recovery of meanings from context (the same mechanisms by which pronouns derive their meaning from an antecedent). Precisely, the fact that the pro-form element must be bound by its antecedent, as in (47), explains what is considered a universal in NE, namely, the impossibility of having the ellipsis site c-command the antecedent, as in (47).

- (47)
- a. *El (coche) de Juan tiene el coche de Pedro encima
The (car) of Juan has the car of Pedro on top
 - b. *El (amigo) de Pedro vio al amigo de Juan en el cine
The (friend) of Juan saw to+the friend of Pedro in the movies
 - c. *Juan puso el (libro) de Ana sobre el libro de Pepe
Juan put the (book) of Ana over the book of Pepe

To summarize thus far, the current analysis proposes that the structure created in syntax will be interpreted as any other copy at PHON, where it is not pronounced, but will be interpreted as part of a definite expression at SEM, given its size. In other words, we only assumed that copies smaller than the entire nominal expression are considered ‘incomplete copies’ at SEM, where they are given the character of the complement of a pronoun, following Elbourne’s insights, and can be interpreted as the index of a definite expression referring to a previous group. This approach has two immediate benefits: first, we are able to overcome the problems that semantically based analyses have posed to syntactically based analyses without resorting to the introduction of any additional feature, movement or interpretative mechanism. Second, the pronominal nature of the element derives the partitive character of the NE construction because the pro-form is looking for an antecedent, which acts as the set over which the remnant elements restrict.

Finally, this line of research predicts that, from a semantic point of view, the NE distribution would also have a SEM restriction, depending on which elements allow or disallow the presence of the pro-form as their complements. This prediction links to the cases discussed by Eguren (2010), which illustrate the impossibility of having NE with certain Ds/Qs and pronominal As, given an SEM clash between the anaphor meaning and these elements’ meaning. The relevant data are repeated below:

- (48)
- a. Esta comunicación está bien, pero la siguiente (comunicación) es mejor.
‘This talk is OK, but the next (talk) is better.’
 - b. Pedro ha revisado el primer capítulo y Juan ha revisado el segundo (capítulo)
‘Peter has revised the first chapter and John has revised the second (chapter)’.
(Eguren 2010: his (48))
 - c. Estos cuentos cortos son más divertidos que esos (cuentos) largos.
‘These short stories are more amusing than those long ones’.
 - d. Estos cortos cuentos son más divertidos que esos largos *(cuentos).
‘These short stories are more amusing than those long stories’.
(Eguren 2010: his (50))
 - e. Algunos artículos tratan de la elipsis. *{Tales/Dichos} (artículos) son fundamentales para tu estudio.

‘Some papers talked about ellipsis. {Such/The above-mentioned} (papers) are crucial for your study’.

f. Dos amigos de Roma escribieron cartas a sendos *(amigos) de Madrid.

‘Two friends from Rome wrote letters to one friend from Madrid each’.

g. Dos estudiantes vinieron a la fiesta. *Cada (estudiante) trajo a su acompañante.

Thus, the incompatibility of NE and some prenominal As and some Ds noted by Eguren (2010) is derived from the impossibility of having the pro-form with those remnant elements, which explains their grammaticality status.

3.4. Additional predictions of the analysis

After the basic workings of the current analysis have been presented, this section focuses on a series of properties of NE in Spanish that seem to have an exclusively syntactic base and are predicted under this approach. First, we discussed earlier the impossibility of having unstressed possessives in NE constructions in Spanish. The data are given in (49)

- (49) a. *Compramos tus libros de matemáticas y tú compraste
 (we)bought your books of math and you bought
 mis (libros) de lingüística
 my (books) of linguistics
 b. Compramos tus libros de matemáticas y tú compraste
 (we)bought your books of math and you bought
 los (libros) {míos de lingüística/ de lingüística míos}
 the (books) {mine of linguistics/ of linguistics mine}

These examples illustrate that it is impossible to have (Full or Partial) NE with unstressed possessives in Spanish, while the stressed possessive is fine in the same context. In section 2, it was discussed that the semantic differences between the two types of possessives could not account for the NE distribution with possessives. In addition, note that phonological constraints do not seem to be involved either, as the data in (50) below show, given that the presence of a suitable host does not improve the grammaticality status of the sentences:

- (50) a. Compramos tus libros de matemáticas y tú compraste
 (we)bought your books of math and you bought
 mis libros de lingüística
 my books of linguistics
 b. *Compramos tus libros de matemáticas y tú compraste
 (we)bought your books of math and you bought
 mis tres (libros) de lingüística [cf. los tres (libros) de lingüística míos]
 my three (books) of linguistics
 c. Compramos tus primeros libros de matemáticas y tú compraste
 (we)bought your first books of math and you bought
 mis últimos libros de lingüística
 my last books of linguistics

- d. *Compramos tus primeros libros de matemáticas y tú compraste
 (we)bought your books of math and you bought
 mis últimos (libros) de lingüística [cf. Los últimos (libros) de lingüística míos]
 my last (books) of linguistics

Under the current approach, we can explain these contrasts as the result of the different syntactic properties of unstressed poss. Authors such as Contreras (1986), Brugé (1996), among others, proposed that postnominal possessives are generated in a lower position and can undergo XP movement from this initial position to the D position, where they surface as unstressed possessives. Assuming this line of analysis, the impossibility of having an unstressed possessive as an NE remnant lies in the non-identity of the conjuncts at stake. More concretely, (51) shows how a derivation will proceed (irrelevant details omitted):

- (51) a. *compramos mi libro y tu (libro)
 (we)-bought my book and your (book)
 b. {C, T, v, pro, comprar, mio, libro₁, tuyo}
 c. DWS1={libro+tuyo} stage 1
 d. DWS2 = [[libro+tuyo]mio]—First possibility
 e. DWS2=[libro+mio]

Two possibilities arise under the current analysis.

First, we could move the possessive in DWS1 and later on copy the N+possessive to derive the DWS2; however, this would not result in an acceptable derivation because the N would end up with two possessive adjectives, as in (51d).

An alternative would be to only copy the N ‘libro’ to DWS2, as shown in (51e). Assuming that both possessives move at an ulterior moment, the relevant (simplified) derivation looks as in (52) when it is ready to be shipped to the interfaces.

- (52) [mi libro ~~mio~~] ...y ...[tu libro ~~tuyo~~]

The ‘conversion’ of the lower NP in (52) into an anaphor will trigger the ‘incorporation’ of the lower copy of the possessive within the pronominalized part of the NP. Then, if the copy of the moved possessive is contained in the pro-form to be interpreted, there is a clash at SEM between the person denoted by the unstressed possessive right before the gap, the unstressed possessive, and the one the pronominal element retrieves from the antecedent.

Note that this analysis predicts a grammatical status for cases in which movement of the possessive is not involved, as the possessive would not form part of the pro-form. This prediction is borne out in examples such as (53):

- (53) Compramos mi libro y el (libro) tuyo.
 (we)-bought my book and the book yours

Thus, the unstressed possessive pronouns’ distribution with NE in Spanish, which had been a mystery so far, can now receive a straightforward explanation. This explanation is also based on Cinque’s (2013) observation that, cross-linguistically, all material following the ellipsis site must be elided unless it is distinctive.

Furthermore, the line of analysis developed above is coherent with Sáez’s (2011) proposal for analyzing some unstressed possessives as generated in a higher position of

the nominal expression. As Sáez (2011) notes, and as expected under the current analysis, these constructions are grammatical with nominal ellipsis as the examples below show:

- (54) Vimos a tus estudiantes de semántica, pero hablamos con
 (we)-saw to your students of semantics, but (we)-talked with
 mis tres (estudiantes) de sintaxis
 my three (students) of syntax

According to Sáez (2011), the relevant fact here is that some unstressed possessives do not undergo movement from an inner nominal expression position, but select a reduced relative ‘tres estudiantes de sintaxis’. Under the current analysis, the grammaticality of this example is derived precisely from the lack of movement of the unstressed possessive.

Additional support for a syntactic analysis of the possessive ellipsis data comes from the data in (55).

- (55) ¿De quién compramos un libro de mate de-quién y nos regalaron
 Of whom (we)-bought a book of math of-whom and CL_{DAT-1pp1} (they)-gave
 uno de ling de-quién?
 one of ling of-whom

Sentences such as (55), which illustrate that there is extraction in the presence of NE, seem to have an unnoticed semantic restriction. The interpretation is that both books have the same author. A possible explanation of this fact comes from the recoverability of the information of the copy embedded within the pro-form.

Finally, the subtle differences regarding gender (cf. Saab 2010) can also be explained as the result of the existence of an identical syntactic structure at some point of the derivation, and the need of non-distinctiveness is accounted as the origin of the gap being a copy. The examples are repeated below:

- (56) a. ?Vimos al hermano de Juan y a la (hermana) de
 (we)-saw to+the-_{masc_sg} brother of Juan and to the-_{fem_sg} sister of
 Ana.
 Ana
 b. **Vimos al padre de Juan y a la (madre) de Ana
 (we)-saw to+the-_{masc_sg} father of Juan and to the-_{fem_sg} mother of Ana

The examples in (55) show that the relevant identity is a formal identity (namely, identity in the formal features present in the lexical items to be copied) rather than a phonological or morphological identity, which can also explain the lack of NE in cases with identical forms at the surface, such as those shown below:

- (57) a. Allá verás al burro de Juan y al burro de Pedro (epithet/ possessive)
 There you-will-see to+the donkey of J. and to+the donkey of P.
 ‘Juan’s donkey and Pedro’s’
 b. Allá verás al burro de Juan y al (burro) de Pedro (*epithet/ possessive)
 There you-will-see to+the donkey of J. and to+the donkey of P.

Therefore, we agree with Saab (2010) that identity is resolved in syntactic terms, but we differ from him in establishing *nP* as the only domain of NE in Spanish.

4. Conclusions and further research

This paper had as its main premise that there is no unified analysis for NE because it involves many different components. The analysis in this paper explains the distribution of NE in Spanish as the interaction of different factors playing independent roles in the theory of grammar. On the one hand, the Copy theory of movement is assumed, and it is proposed that NE constructions are generated in a similar fashion to the usual movement construction; that is, narrow syntax is allowed to duplicate some elements in the structure to satisfy feature checking requirements otherwise unsatisfied in the functional categories.

On the other hand, both interfaces treat differently the structure created by syntax, given the different properties the structure displays at each interface. First, the PHON interface deletes one of the nondistinctive copies created by syntax, which produces the phonetic gap as a result. Second, the SEM component turns the smaller-than-DP element into a pro-form, which results in the partitive/constrastive meaning usually assigned to these constructions.

Apart from various empirical advantages noted in the text, this combined approach is able to derive fundamental properties of the construction such as the non-distinctiveness requirement from the origin of the gap being a copy and the notion of givenness as the result of the pronominal properties of the defective copy. In addition, the current analysis is able to account for the distribution and properties of NE without the need for additional devices (E feature, Deletion, ellipsis operation) explicitly assumed to derive ellipsis constructions or for additional overt movements to create a configuration, and without resorting to the need to have particular licensors, such as D, Number, or Classifier, *per se* in the elliptical construction.

Given the exploratory character of this proposal, many questions are left open in this paper and are in need of further research. Nevertheless, to the extent that it is correct, the solution advanced in this paper is better grounded on the architecture of current theoretical proposals than any other presented thus far because it enables us to expand the empirical coverage of the analysis without introducing extraneous mechanisms in the grammar.

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