SMALL CLAUSES IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH*

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the structure of sentences like those in (1).

(1)a. Considero claro el asunto.  
    *I consider clear the matter*  
    I consider the matter clear.

b. Dejamos limpios los cubiertos.  
    *We left clean the silverware*  
    We left the silverware clean.

Recent literature on comparable sentences in English and other languages treats them as involving either "small clauses" (SCs) (Stowell 1981, 1983, Chomsky 1981) or predication (Williams 1980, 1983). The SC analysis assumes that the constituent structure is as in (2), whereas the predication analysis assumes constituent structure (3).

(2)a. [Considero [claro el asunto]]
    b. [Dejamos [limpios los cubiertos]]

(3)a. [Considero [claro] [el asunto]]
    b. [Dejamos [limpios] [los cubiertos]]

I will argue for the small-clause analysis, and address some of the recent arguments against it. More specifically, I will argue in favor of Stowell's (1983) version of the SC analysis, which treats a small clause as a maximal projection of its predicate, not as S, as suggested by Hornstein and Lightfoot (1984) and Chomsky (1986), nor as Š, as suggested by Kitagawa (1985). Finally, I will consider the implications of the SC analysis for the so-called 'subject of S'. I conclude that since VP, like other projections of lexical categories, can have a subject, there cannot

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be an independently generated subject of S. S can acquire a subject at S-structure only through raising from VP. I will not be centrally concerned with adjunct small clauses as in [4].

(4)a. Cantamos la canción inspirados.
   *We sang the song inspired.*

b. Prefiero la carne bien cocida.
   *I prefer the meat well done.*

2. FOR SMALL CLAUSES

Chomsky's (1981) original argument for structures like (2) is based on the Projection Principle and it goes like this: Since there must be a subject-predicate relationship between el asunto 'the matter' and claro 'clear' at LF, it must be the case that that relationship holds at all levels; consequently, at D- and S-structure, the subject and the predicate must form a constituent. This argument, however, begs the question, since it assumes that the subject-predicate relationship is necessarily structural. Given the plausibility of Williams' (1980) definition of subject as involving coindexing of a predicate with a c-commanding NP, a different type of argument is needed. In the following two sections I discuss arguments based on subcategorization and on the Binding Theory in favor of the small-clause analysis in (2).

2.1. Distributional Evidence for Small Clauses

Direct evidence for the constituent structure of SCs is hard to come by. This fact is no doubt responsible, at least in part, for the widespread skepticism regarding the existence of small clauses.

Safir (1983) presents sentences like (5) as evidence that SCs are in fact constituents.

(5) *Workers angry about the pay* is just the situation that the ad campaign was designed to avoid.

Since nonconstituents do not occur in that position, as shown in (6), this argues for structures of type (2).

(6) *A book to John* is something I'll never send.

This argument can be duplicated in Spanish, as shown by the contrast between (7) and (8).