

Toward a Syntactic Reinterpretation of Harris and Halle (2005)

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1.

Harris and Halle (2005, henceforth H&H) present a carefully worked out analysis of certain non-standard Spanish phenomena involving pronominal clitics and the verbal plural morpheme *-n*. In this paper, I will suggest, in agreement with Manzini and Savoia (2004), that their primarily morphological approach to these phenomena should be replaced by a more syntactic approach.

At issue for the most part are plural imperatives in combination with one or more object clitics. The Spanish plural imperatives in question, though second person in interpretation, are third person plural in form and in particular have the third person plural *-n* found in several verbal paradigms.¹ An example of such an imperative with a lexical DP object is:

(1) *Véndan el libro.* ('sell *-n* the book')

If the object is a pronominal clitic such as *lo*, the standard form is:

(2) *Véndanlo.* ('sell *-n* it')

The object clitic follows the verb and its associated agreement morphology, as is generally true in Romance in affirmative imperatives.

In addition to (2), there is a non-standard possibility of having:

(3) *Véndanlon.* ('sell *-n* it *-n*')

in which the third person plural agreement morpheme *-n* appears twice. In both (2) and (3) this *-n* reflects agreement with the silent plural subject of the imperative. In the standard version (2), this *-n* immediately follows the verbal form *vénda-*, in a familiar way. In the non-standard version (3), *-n* appears in addition following the object clitic, somewhat unexpectedly. H&H use for (3) the term 'reduplication'.

H&H use the term 'metathesis' to refer to another type of non-standard Spanish plural imperative, as in:

(4) *Véndon.* ('sell it *-n*')

in which the *-n* in question appears following the object clitic, as it does in (3), but does not also appear following the verbal form itself.²

H&H's choice of terminology reflects their proposed analysis, in which the syntax is taken to produce the order of morphemes seen in (2), with just one *-n*. A morphological operation of partial reduplication then produces (3), in which *-n* is 'reduplicated'. A related morphological operation of metathesis, also starting from (2), produces (4), having the effect of switching the relative order of *-n* and *lo*.

¹ This recalls in part German in general having third person plural for second person polite, as well as Italian in general having third person (feminine) singular for second person singular polite.

² Note that in both (3) and (4) each morpheme is pronounced in regular fashion, without any morphophonological quirks. This appears to be true of all the relevant examples.

H&H's proposal, elaborated within the D(istributed) M(orphology) framework (v. Halle and Marantz (1993)), has the property of creating a redundancy between morphology and syntax, insofar as having a morphological operation of metathesis³ able to change the relative order of *-n* and clitic (to produce (4)) amounts to having morpheme order regulated by both morphological and syntactic operations.

Similarly, having a morphological operation of reduplication that is not syntactic (and that is modeled on phonology) may turn out to be redundant with respect to syntactic copy constructions such as those involving two copies of the same object clitic, as found in various Romance dialects:

(5) (*)Juan lo quiere hacerlo. ('J it wants to-do it')

In standard Spanish this kind of example is not possible, but counterparts of it are possible in some Spanish, Catalan and Italian dialects.⁴ (The appearance of more than one *-n* in examples like (3) may also be close, or closer, to (13)/(60) below.)

In addition to redundancy, H&H's proposal faces a problem with respect to restrictiveness. If metathesis can apply to (2) to produce (4) by inverting the order of *-n* and object clitic, why could metathesis not apply to (2) and disrupt the syntax in a different way, by inverting other pairs, incorrectly producing, for example?:

(6) *Véndnalo.⁵

Although *vénda* is composed of root *vénd-* plus theme vowel *-a*,⁶ metathesizing this *-a* with *-n* is not possible.

Nor is:

(7) *Avéndnlo.

which would have been the result of metathesizing *-a-* with *vénd* itself. H&H's formalism (which I am not reproducing here) would also, as far as I can see, allow there to exist a rule of metathesis switching the relative order of *-a-* with the pair in *-nlo*, incorrectly yielding:

(8) *Véndnloa.

as well as one switching the relative order of the object clitic and the pair in *-an-*, incorrectly yielding:

(9) *Véndloan.

³ Which seems akin to permutation, as in early generative syntax; for some recent discussion, see Lasnik et al. (2000).

On redundancy within DM, cf. also Manzini and Savoia (2004), with which the present proposal has much in common.

⁴ See Kayne (1989, (text to) note 34); also now Cattaneo (2009).

⁵ This example has, relative to Spanish, an unusual sequence of consonants, but the same facts hold even when the imperative stem is vowel-final. Thus alongside the well-formed:

i) Léanlo. ('read *-n* it')

there is no:

ii) *Lenalo.

and similarly for:

iii) *Alénlo.

iv) *Lénloa.

v) *Léloan.

vi) *Léanalo.

vii) *Léloanlo.

viii) *Anléanlo.

⁶ On these theme vowels, see Massuet (2000).

A similar set of questions arises for their reduplication operation. If reduplication can, starting from (2), produce (3),⁷ why could it not also, starting from (2), produce:

(10) *Véndanalo.

via reduplication of *-a-*, or:

(11) *Véndloanlo.

via reduplication of *lo*, or:

(12) *Anvéndanlo.

via reduplication of *-an-*, etc.?

H&H go astray, I think, for several reasons. One is that they did not take into account the partial similarity between (3) and multiple agreement of the sort seen in Italian in:

(13) *Maria è stata lodata.* ('M is been praised' = 'M has been praised')

in which two past participles, *stata* and *lodata*, agree with the same subject (the suffixal *-a* here is feminine singular, with no reflex of person). Another is that they probably didn't think that the syntax could see inflectional morphemes like *-n* (here they are on common ground with some syntacticians). A third possible reason is that they (again like certain syntacticians) probably thought that there is a clear boundary between syntax and morphology such that the relations between (2) and (3) and (4) had to fall on the morphological side of things.

An alternative view is that the operations and principles involved in what is usually called word-formation are, especially when it comes to inflectional morphemes like verbal plural *-n*, essentially the same as those involved in syntax. Morphemes are combined (by Merge) and ordered⁸ in essentially the same way that phrases are combined and ordered.⁹ (Some DM work takes a position close to this one, but without completely disavowing morphology-specific operations such as 'fission'.)

That sub-word-level phenomena and phrasal phenomena are cut from one and the same cloth had already been suggested by Greenberg's (1966) Universal 27:

(14) Universal 27: Exclusively suffixing languages are postpositional. Exclusively prefixing languages are prepositional.

If Greenberg is correct here, the order of affix and stem/root must be regulated in a way close to (and strongly interacting with) the way in which the order of adposition and associated phrase is regulated.¹⁰

H&H 202 note that the metathesis and reduplication operations they propose must respect morpheme boundaries. Consider the non-standard:

(15) *Denlen eso.* ('give *-n* him/her *-n* that')

which is essentially like the reduplication example (3), although here the clitic *le* that is non-standardly followed by *-n* is dative rather than accusative. Close to (15) but parallel rather to the metathesis example (4), is:

⁷ It may be relevant that H&H's proposed reduplication operation here is nonlocal, in the sense that the two *-n* in examples like (3) are not adjacent to each other. The status of the kind of reduplication that is local in the sense of adjacency I leave an open question.

⁸ In a way that respects antisymmetry, if Kayne (1994) is correct.

⁹ See especially Koopman and Szabolcsi (2000) and Julien (2002), both of which question the relevance to syntax of the notion 'word' (cf. also Baker (1988), Manzini and Savoia (2002; 2007) and Myers (1987)).

¹⁰ On adposition order, see Kayne (2003, sect. 4).

(16) *Delen eso.* ('give him/her *-n* that')

H&H show that if bimorphemic *den* in (15) (*de+n*) is replaced by (singular) monomorphemic *ten*:

(17) *Tenle eso.* ('hold him/her that' = 'hold that for him/her')

then reduplication is impossible:

(18) **Tenlen eso.*

Similarly there is no counterpart to (16):

(19) **Telen eso.*

since in *ten*, the final *-n* is part of the root.

H&H's claim that morpheme boundaries must be respected here is certainly correct. Yet it seems to me that, since their formalism is based on a phonological one (intended to cover cases of reduplication that they consider not to respect morpheme boundaries), they have no real account of (18) or (19), i.e. their formalism could have accommodated (18) or (19) had Spanish allowed them.

Similarly, H&H 202 note a sharp contrast having to do with:¹¹

(20) *Háganlo mejor.* ('do *-n* it better')

(21) *Hagan lo mejor* ('do *-n* the best [thing]')

When *lo* is an object clitic, as in the standard (20), some non-standard Spanish allows reduplication, with *-n* appearing twice, as in:

(22) *Háganlon mejor.*

as well as metathesis (in their terms), with *-n* appearing only once, following the clitic:

(23) *Hágalon mejor.*

On the other hand, when *lo* is a definite article, as in (21), non-standard Spanish allows neither reduplication:

(24) **Hagan lon mejor.*

nor metathesis:

(25) **Haga lon mejor.*

Again, though, as far as I can see, their formalism does not lead one to expect this difference between clitic and definite article to hold.

A syntactic perspective on these facts will lead to a more straightforward account. Examples (18) and (19) are impossible because the plural *-n* at issue does not appear at all in a singular imperative like (17). Examples (24) and (25) are (as will become clearer below) impossible because definite articles (in particular those that are part of a larger overt DP) do not move to higher positions in the syntax with the freedom of object clitics, and cannot raise out of DP in a way that would have them precede the *-n* of plural subject agreement.¹²

2.

H&H's morphological approach to non-standard Spanish (3), (4), (15), (16), (22) and (23) also misses (because it sees morphology as more separate from syntax than it in fact is) a generalization having to do with subdistinctions among object clitics. H&H 210 observe for (4) (and they suspect the same holds for (3)) that there are dialect differences with respect to the question of precisely which clitics are allowed to

¹¹ For a somewhat similar contrast, see De Vogelaer et al.'s (2001, (12)) discussion.

¹² This is so even if Uriagereka (1996a; 1996b) is more correct on Galician than Otero (1996).

participate in ((3) or (4)).¹³ They display their results as follows, for the object clitics *se*, *me*, *le*, *lo*, *la*:

- (26) a. *se*
 b. *se*, *me*
 c. *se*, *me*, *le*
 d. *se*, *me*, *le*, *lo*, *la*

The top line refers to the most prevalent type of dialect, which allows only *se* to precede plural *-n*. The bottom line refers to the least prevalent type (which allows all the listed clitics to precede *-n*). Put another way, *se* is the clitic that across dialects most readily allows (3) or (4), i.e. *se* is the object clitic that most readily appears preceding plural *-n*.

A non-standard example like (3), but with *se* is (from H&H 205):

- (27) *Sírvansen*. ('serve *-n* refl. *-n'* = 'serve yourselves')

alongside the standard:

- (28) *Sírvanse*. ('serve *-n* refl.')

The object clitic that next most readily allows non-standard (3) or (4), cross-dialectally, is *me*, as in (again from H&H 205):

- (29) *Sírvanmen*. ('serve *-n* *me* *-n'*)

corresponding to the standard:

- (30) *Sírvanme*. ('serve *-n* *me*')

Least readily able to precede *-n*, cross-dialectally, are the accusative clitics *lo* and *la*,¹⁴ as in (3) itself, repeated here:

- (31) *Véndanlon*. ('sell *-n* it *-n'*)

Put another way, although (31) is found in some varieties of non-standard Spanish, it is found in only a subset of those that allow (29), which in turn is found in only a subset of those that allow (27).

Why should object clitics show differential behavior in this fashion? H&H's framework provides no answer. The array in (26) is, however, familiar. It recalls the order of Spanish object clitics when they cooccur with each other, as discussed within a generative framework going back most prominently to Perlmutter's (1971) work.¹⁵ The clitic *se* is the one that normally occurs first in a sequence of object clitics. The accusative clitics occur last in a clitic sequence.

Thus there is a correlation between the order of Spanish object clitics and their relative ability in non-standard dialects to precede plural *-n*. The earlier an object clitic

¹³ Postma (1993, 5) points out that Judeo-Spanish has the *se* case.

¹⁴ Plural clitics are prohibited from preceding *-n* for reasons that may be phonological, as suggested in H&H's footnote 14. Alternatively, there might be a link to the prohibition against plural *-s* in English deverbal OV compounds:

i) an avid magazine(*s)-reader

and/or to the *se...los* and *no...los* phenomena discussed in H&H, section 3.

The ability of third person accusative clitics to precede plural *-n* in some varieties of Spanish contrasts with the generalization proposed by Manzini and Savoia (2004) on the basis of Italian and Albanian dialects. Possibly, the third person character of *-n* itself is what allows a third person accusative to raise past it.

¹⁵ The limited divergence from this dominant clitic order discussed by Ordóñez (2002) is not directly relevant here since it is found only preverbally, while the HH cases involve only postverbal clitics.

occurs in a sequence of object clitics in Spanish, the more readily it can, across dialects, be followed by this *-n*.

The present, more syntactic perspective that I am pursuing can account for this correlation to a substantially greater extent than H&H's morphological approach, as I will now attempt to show. In so doing, I will need to broach at least two further questions of syntax. One concerns the constituent structure of clitic sequences. (Does a sequence of pronominal clitics form a constituent, or not?) The second concerns the status of plural *-n*. Let me begin with the first.

3.

The array in (26) can be (partially) recast in the following terms:

(32) The object clitic *se* precedes *-n* more readily (cross-dialectally) than the other object clitics.

(33) The accusative object clitics *lo* and *la* precede *-n* less readily (cross-dialectally) than the other object clitics.

The claim that I will continue to develop is that these two generalizations in turn correlate directly with the fact that Spanish clitic order, as discussed by Perlmutter (1971), has *se* first and *lo/la* last.

This correlation between clitic order and the ability of a clitic to precede *-n* will turn out to rest in part on the constituent structure status of clitic sequences. The key question is whether a sequence of object clitics does or does not form a constituent.

A basic consideration is that there are a number of clear cases in which object clitics can visibly be 'split' (i.e. in which they clearly do not form a constituent), despite originating in the same simple sentence. A French example given by Martinon (1927, 302) is:¹⁶

(34) *Voilà ce qui l'en a fait se souvenir.* ('here-is that which him thereof has made refl. to-remember = 'Here's what made him remember it')

In this example, both the reflexive clitic *se* and the pronominal clitic *en* ('thereof') originate within the infinitive clause. Only the latter raises up to precede the causative verb *fait*, however. The former remains low, directly preceding the infinitive. Clearly, in such examples, *en* and *se* do not form a constituent.

Chenal (1986, 398, 399) contains two examples of split clitics in a Franco-Provencal auxiliary - participle construction:

(35) *T'an-të prèdzà-nen?* ('you_{dat}-have they spoken thereof' = 'Have they spoken to you of it?')

(36) *T'an-të deut-lo?* ('you_{dat} have they said it' = 'have they said it to you')

In both of these, the dative clitic *t'* is raised to the left of the auxiliary *an* ('have'), while the other object clitic (*nen* or *lo*) stays lower down, in a position past which the

¹⁶ In this example, *en* comes to precede *se*, which is never possible in a simple sentence:

- i) *Jean s'en souvient.* ('J refl. thereof remembers' = 'J remembers it')
- ii) **Jean en se souvient.*

For relevant discussion, see Kayne (1975, chap. 6).

embedded past participle¹⁷ Again, it is clear that *t'* and *nen* or *lo* do not form a constituent in these examples.

Although contemporary French allows split clitics in causatives, as in (34), it does not otherwise allow them, e.g.:

(37) Jean veut te les montrer. ('J wants you_{dat} them to-show' = 'J wants to show them to you')

In this infinitival example, the clitics are not visibly split, nor can they be:

(38) *Jean te veut les montrer.

(39) *Jean les veut te montrer.

However, examples of split clitics with non-causative infinitives from seventeenth century French have been brought together by de Kok (1985, 594), and there are also modern dialect examples.¹⁸ (Contemporary French itself does not allow these if only because it does not allow clitic climbing with infinitives at all (outside of causatives).)

When two (or more) clitics are split as in (34)-(36) or in seventeenth century French or in dialect counterparts of (38) or (39), those clitics obviously do not form a constituent.

On the other hand, when two object clitics are adjacent, as in (37), the correct constituent structure is less immediate. In the spirit of Kayne (1994, sect. 4.3), Zanuttini (1997, 21), Stjepanovic (1998), Terzi (1999), Manzini and Savoia (2002), Ordóñez (2002) and Săvescu-Ciucivara (2007; 2009), however, let me adopt:

(40) There are instances of adjacent clitics that are split (i.e. that fail to form a constituent).

Everybody would agree that there are some such instances, e.g. in the Italian example:

(41) Farlo mi farebbe piacere. ('to-do it me would-do pleasure' = 'it would give me pleasure to do it')

where the clitic *lo* is embedded within the subject infinitive and the clitic *mi* is part of the matrix. *Lo* and *mi* in this example are adjacent, but clearly do not form a constituent.

In (37), on the other hand, both clitics are within the embedded infinitival sentence, and similarly for:

(42) Me les montrer serait une bonne idée. ('me them to-show would-be a good idea' = 'to show me them would be a good idea')

All seven of the authors just cited take there to be at least some cases like (37) or (42) in which (two) adjacent clitics do not in fact form a constituent, and similarly for simple finite sentences with two (or more) clitics, such as:

(43) Jean te les montrera demain. ('J you them will-show tomorrow')

In this kind of finite example, too, there are some cases in which there is reason to believe that the two clitics are split.

¹⁷ Similar examples have been attested for the nearby dialects studied by R. Harris (1969). See in addition Bürge (1998) on what she calls 'distribution répartitive'; the fact that her Vaudois French is more restrictive than the dialect described in Raymond & Bossard (1979) with respect to the question of which clitic can go higher remains to be understood.

¹⁸ Cf. the preceding footnote and the references cited in Kayne (1989, note 34). It needs to be ascertained whether any of the Occitan languages fall into this class.

For some discussion of restrictions that limit the range of cases in which clitics can be visibly split (including in Spanish), see Kayne (1991, sect. 1.3).

On split clitics, v. also Franks and King (2000, 243, 247, 334).

Of the authors just mentioned, Manzini and Savoia (2002) take the strongest position to the effect that all clitics are split, i.e. that sequences of clitics never form a constituent. Possibly, that is too strong position to take (but possibly not).¹⁹ For the purposes of this paper, the following intermediate position will be sufficient:

(44) Any pair of clitics that can cooccur can potentially be split.
(with a key question of course then being what the conditions are under which this can happen).

Take, for example, the pair *te lo* or *me lo*, as in simple Spanish sentences like:

(45) Juan *te lo* da. ('J you it gives')

(46) Juan *me lo* da.

According to (44), *te* and *lo* (or *me* and *lo*) in such examples might or might not be split. The case in which they are not (if such cases exist), i.e. in which they form a constituent (to the exclusion of the verb), would probably not be relevant to what follows.²⁰ Consider, then, the case in which they are split.

Let us set aside the (remote) possibility that *te* or *me* in such split clitic sentences forms a constituent with the subject *Juan* to the exclusion of everything else. If that is correct, then, by antisymmetry, *te* or *me*,²¹ since it precedes *lo*, must asymmetrically c-command *lo* in (45). This fits sentences like (35) and (36) in Franco-Provençal, too, as well as sentences in those Italian dialects that allow preverbal *te/me* and *lo* to be separated by a negative morpheme, as in the Cairese (Ligurian/Piedmontese, NW Italy) example:²²

(47) U *me n le* da 'nenta. ('he me neg. it gives not')

A key step toward understanding the Spanish facts brought to light by H&H is, I think, to see the similarity between sentences such as (47) and examples of theirs (H&H 206) that contain two object clitics, e.g.:

(48) Dénmenlo. ('give -n me -n it')

and in which the two object clitics are separated by an instance of plural *-n*. A related example also given by H&H 206 is:

(49) Démenlo. ('give me -n it')

again with plural *-n* separating the two clitics. (The absence in (49) of the first of the two *-n* morphemes present in (48) is not relevant here.)

In both (48) and (49), the clitic *me* precedes a plural *-n* that the other clitic *lo* follows. This is very much like what we see in (47), modulo the difference between the plural morpheme *-n* in (48) and (49) and the negative morpheme *n* in (47). In all of (47)-(49), as in the discussion of ((45) and) (46), I take *me* to asymmetrically c-command *lo* or *le*.

There is of course, in addition to the plural vs. negative morpheme one, a second difference between (47) and (48)/(49), namely that in the latter pair, the (imperative) verb precedes the two clitics (and the intervening *-n*), while in (47) the (non-imperative) verb follows the two clitics (and the intervening negative morpheme). In the spirit of the

¹⁹ Cf. Cardinaletti (2008a) and Cattaneo (2009, chap. 3) for recent arguments in favor of the existence of some instances of clitic clusters.

²⁰ If *te lo/me lo* can be a constituent, questions will arise as to the internal structure of that constituent.

²¹ Or, conceivably, a remnant phrase containing *te* or *me* but no other pronounced material.

²² Example from Parry (1997) as discussed by Zanuttini (1997, 20), that I have slightly altered to bring out the individual morphemes more clearly.

tradition illustrated by Emonds (1978), Pollock (1989) and others, I take this second difference to be due to a difference in verb movement that can be factored out, leaving us with an even more straightforward parallelism between (47) and (48)/(49).

The difference in verb movement here is itself a familiar one, insofar as there is a substantial tradition that takes Romance imperative verbs to move particularly high.²³ I draw from this the conclusion that (48) and (49) are to be understood as having a derivation that prior to imperative verb movement contains a stage like:

(50) *me -n lo de(n)*

in which *me* asymmetrically c-commands *lo*, just as in (47) *me* asymmetrically c-commands *le*.

A further natural conclusion is that in (50) and (48)/(49) the *-n* separating the two clitics asymmetrically c-commands the second clitic *lo* and that that *-n* is in turn asymmetrically c-commanded by the first clitic *me* (which is most likely in a specifier position higher than the position of *-n*).²⁴

This further conclusion leads to consideration of a more specific parallelism between (47) and (48)-(50). In the Ligurian/Piedmontese dialects in question, accusative third person clitics can never precede negation (Zanuttini (1997, 18)), in contrast to first and second person and reflexive clitics. This strongly recalls those varieties of Spanish characterized by line (b) of (26) above and in which *se* and *me* can precede plural *-n*, but in which accusative third person clitics cannot precede plural *-n*.²⁵

This Ligurian/Piedmontese fact and the parallel Spanish facts for the relevant dialects lend themselves to the following interpretation, much as in Zanuttini (1997, 21). In these languages/dialects, first and second person and reflexive clitics move higher than accusative third person clitics.

This difference in landing site has two strongly linked effects. The first effect is seen in H&H's (26), which shows how first and second person and reflexive clitics come to precede (i.e. raise to a position higher than) plural *-n* more readily than accusative third person clitics, and is simultaneously seen in the Ligurian/Piedmontese facts that are parallel to (26), with negation 'standing in for' plural *-n*, such that first and second person and reflexive clitics can raise to a higher position than negation in a way that accusative third person clitics cannot.

The second effect is the very fact that in both the Ligurian/Piedmontese dialects at issue and in Spanish, even in the absence of negation or of this plural *-n*, first and second person and reflexive clitics invariably precede accusative third person clitics when the two types cooccur.²⁶

As far as I can see, the unification of effects given in the previous paragraphs in terms of landing site differences is not expressible at all from the perspective of H&H's analysis.

²³ Cf. Zanuttini (1997, 129) and references cited there.

²⁴ Possibly, *me* is left-adjoined to *-n*, but that seems appreciably less likely; see (most of) the seven references cited earlier.

²⁵ Second person *te* does not appear at all in (26) due to an irrelevant Condition B/overlapping reference effect that bars a second singular object from occurring with a plural imperative - cf. H&H 211.

²⁶ A point made by Zanuttini (1997, 21) for Italian.

As usual, there remain further questions to be answered from the present perspective. How, for example, is one to understand the difference between those varieties of Spanish characterized by (26a,b), which do not allow accusative third person clitics to precede *-n*, and those characterized by (26d), which do? Whether one should think in terms of a higher possible landing site for accusative third person clitics in the (26d)-type dialects, or alternatively in terms of a lower position in those dialects for *-n* itself is unclear and I will leave the question open.

H&H's (26) shows an additional division within Spanish object clitics that I have not yet touched on. Third person dative *le* can precede *-n* more readily than accusative third person clitics can, but less readily than reflexive *se* can. Within Spanish it is difficult to pursue the contrast between third person dative and third person accusative, since the two types of clitics never cooccur.²⁷ Let me very briefly pursue, rather, the difference between *le* and *se*. Here, too, there is a sharp correlation with ordinary clitic order in Spanish (i.e. even in the absence of *-n*), in that when *se* and *le* cooccur, *se* always precedes *le*. As before, I conclude that the landing site of *se* is higher than the landing site of *le* (probably in all Spanish) and that in some dialects of Spanish this difference in landing site is visibly reflected in the fact that *se* can precede *-n*, but *le* cannot.²⁸

4.

H&H 205 point out that the *-n* morpheme that appears following object clitics in various dialects in positive imperatives, as in the examples discussed, never appears in negative imperatives. A pair of standard Spanish positive and negative imperatives, with *-n* directly following V, is:

(51) *Háganlo.* ('do *-n* it')

(52) *No lo hágan.* ('neg. it do *-n*')
 The positive one of these has a non-standard counterpart with post-clitic *-n*, as seen earlier in (22), essentially repeated here:

(53) *Háganlon.* ('do *-n* it *-n*')
 The negative one does not:

(54) **No lon hagan.* ('neg it *-n* do *-n*')
 The key difference appears to reside in the postverbal position of the clitic in positive imperatives, as opposed to its preverbal position in negative imperatives. Put another (and better) way, the postclitic *-n* in question is itself allowed to appear postverbally in some dialects, as in (53), but in no dialect is it allowed to appear preverbally, as shown by the general impossibility of (54).

This way of looking at things is supported by the fact that postclitic *-n* never appears preverbally in non-imperatives, either:

(55) *Lo(*n) hacen.* ('it (*-n*) they-do *-n*')
 The question now is why this postclitic *-n* is limited to occurring postverbally, across dialects of Spanish.

²⁷ For recent relevant discussion, see Manzini and Savoia (2002).

²⁸ Ordóñez (2002, 214) notes that even those varieties of Spanish in which *me se* is a possible order, *le se* remains impossible. (He also notes that any Romance language/dialect that has (the equivalent of) *le se* also has (the equivalent of) *me se* and *te se*.)

To a certain extent, the answer appears to be straightforward. In standard Spanish, this plural agreement *-n* is always postverbal:

(56) Los chicos hablan inglés. ('the kids speak *-n* English')

(57) *Los chicos nhabla inglés.

Another way of putting it is that this *-n* has the familiar property that we call being a verbal suffix. Somewhat more precisely put, *-n* requires that a (nearby, tensed) verb move up to its (immediate) left. This might be via head-adjunction, or it might, thinking especially of Koopman (2005) on Korean *tul*, be via (remnant) phrasal movement, which I will take to be the case (though what follows might be recastable in head-movement terms).

To say that the *-n* in question is a verbal suffix, and not just a suffix expressing plurality, is to think in part of the fact that *-n* never appears as a plural morpheme with adjectives or nouns:

(58) cinco chicos/*chicon inteligentes/*intelligenten ('five kids intelligent')

To say, more specifically, that *-n* induces verb (phrase) movement is in effect to say that the verb need not (contrary to the usual sense of the term 'suffix') appear to the immediate left of *-n*, insofar as the verb (phrase) might in some cases be able to move even further to the left. That is in fact exactly what happens, I think, in examples like (53). We reach, at a certain stage of the derivation:

(59) lo *-n* hagan

There are two instances of *-n*. The lower one has already induced movement of the verb *haga* to its (immediate) left. The higher *-n* is merged subsequently and the object clitic, in the relevant dialects and depending on the choice of clitic, moves past it, yielding (59).²⁹ As shown by the impossibility of (54) and (55) with postclitic *-n*, a derivation that stopped at (59) would not yield an acceptable sentence. The reason is that in (59) the higher *-n* has not yet been properly licensed, i.e. it has not yet induced verb (phrase) movement. When verb (phrase) movement does apply to (59), the higher *-n* has met its requirements and the resulting sentence (53) is acceptable.³⁰

It should be noted in passing that this analysis of Spanish plural *-n* successfully distinguishes it from Ligurian/Piedmontese negative *n*, which can, as in (47), follow a preverbal object clitic in a way that Spanish plural *-n* never can. The reason is that this negative *n* never induces or needs to induce verb (phrase) movement.³¹

The two instances of *-n* in (53)/(59) represent two instances of third person plural agreement with the (silent) subject of the imperative. In displaying two instances of the

²⁹ If moving past the higher *-n* is akin to non-causative, non-participle clitic climbing, then the expectation is that no French dialect will be able to match those Spanish dialects having an object clitic followed by *-n*. Ultimately, one will need to bring into the picture colloquial French sentences like:

i) Donne-moi-z'en ('give me z thereof')

on which, see Rooryck (1992) and Laenzlinger (1998, sect. 3.1.1).

³⁰ Possibly, *hagan* moves first to the left of the higher *-n* and subsequently, after the clitic moves to the left of *hagan*, *hagan* moves further to the left of the clitic.

Note that each *-n* is merged as an independent morpheme in the ordinary syntax; no morphemes are combined in any pre-syntactic fashion.

³¹ Leading to the question why negative morphemes are often preverbal in Romance (v. Zanuttini (1997)), while the verbal plural agreement *-n* never is (as far as I know).

same type of agreement with one subject, (53)/(59) recalls the Italian example (13) mentioned earlier and repeated here:³²

(60) *Maria è stata lodata.* ('M is been praised' = 'M has been praised')
 in which two past participles agree with one subject. In (60), it is natural to think that the subject *Maria* has moved up stepwise, licensing agreement at each step. The same might also hold of (53)/(59), in which the silent imperative subject might have moved up, licensing the phi-features of *-n* in stepwise fashion. Alternatively, thinking again of Koopman (2005) on Korean, it might be that in (53)/(59) the verb and subject move up together, with the subject licensing each *-n* in turn from its specifier position within the moved verbal constituent. I leave this question, which bears on how many uninterpretable features *-n* has, open.³³

H&H 206 note the existence in some non-standard Spanish of imperatives with three instances of *-n*:

(61) *Dénmenlon.* ('give *-n* me *-n* it *-n*')
 Pursuing the preceding reasoning, this kind of example can be understood in terms of a derivation involving three (remnant) verb (phrase) movement steps. As in (59), we reach (omitting traces/copies):

(62) *lo n den*
 which in turn leads to:

(63) *den lo n*
 n den lo n
 me n den lo n
 den me n lo n

with successive-cyclic-like movement of *de+n*. Remaining to be understood is why Spanish has no roll-up movement in imperatives of the sort discovered by Terzi (1999) for Greek. Were Spanish like Greek, the following would be possible in addition to (61):

(64) **Dénlo(n)me(n).*

though to judge by H&H's discussion (64) appears not to be found in any variety of Spanish.

Although the plural *-n* of the various Spanish imperative examples under discussion recalls the *-a* of Italian (60) in showing more than one instance of the same kind of subject agreement in a 'simple' sentence, there is a difference having to do with what H&H call metathesis examples such as (4), repeated here:

(65) *Véndalon.* ('sell it *-n*')

³² A striking instance of multiple agreement within DP is found in Italian in:

i) *troppi pochi libri* ('too few books')
 in which *tropp-* agrees with *libri* despite not being a modifier of it; see Kayne (2002, sect. 1.8) and Corver (2006). For recent discussion of multiple definite articles in Greek and of related Germanic agreement phenomena, see Leu (2008).

³³ An open question for the time being is why there is (apparently) no instance of *-n* in imperatives following an adverb:

ii) **Haga rapidamente-n eso!* ('do rapidly-*n* that')
 despite there being instances of (diminutive) agreement following an adverb in Occitan - Camproux (1958, 332); cf. also Koopman (2005, note 17) on Korean.

in which there is a non-standard instance of *-n* following an object clitic, but in which the normal *-n* following the verb itself fails to appear, contrary to:

(66) *Véndanlon*. ('sell *-n* it *-n*') (=3))

The Italian example (60) has no counterpart in which one of the *-a* agreement morphemes fails to appear:³⁴

(67) **Maria è stat vista*.

(68) **Maria è stata vist*.

Nor, to judge by H&H's discussion, is the absence of *-n* following *V* in (65) possible in the absence of the *-n* following the object clitic, in these plural imperatives. The following is possible (H&H 195), but only as a singular imperative:

(69) *Véndalo*. ('sell it')

The impossibility of (69) as a plural imperative is presumably due to the same factor that requires *-n* to appear with a plural subject in:

(70) *Los chicos habla*(n) inglés*. ('the kids speak *-n* English')

There must be an agreement morpheme in finite and in imperative sentences in Spanish (and third person plural must be spelled out as *-n* in the relevant paradigms).³⁵

This leaves open, however, the question whether (65) contains two instances of *-n*, one of which is silent, or just one instance of *-n*. In part because allowing a silent counterpart of plural *-n* would probably ultimately make it harder to understand the absence of (67)/(68), and in part because of further data from H&H, I tentatively prefer the latter option, i.e. the idea that (65) contains just one agreement morpheme.³⁶

The further data alluded to include:

(71) *Véndamelon*. ('sell me it *-n*')

with one *-n* following two object clitics. H&H 208 note that such examples are accepted only by speakers who also accept:

(72) *Véndamenlo*. ('sell me *-n* it')

with one *-n* between two object clitics. From the perspective of the proposals concerning (53) and (61) above, this fact can be understood as follows. Both (71) and (72) contain the non-standard higher *-n* of (59), without containing the ordinary/standard lower one. As discussed after (50), this higher *-n* (which may be akin to the agreement that follows complementizers in some Germanic³⁷) can be crossed with differing degrees of facility by different object clitics. The fact that (71) is less widely accepted than (72) is due to the fact that the object clitic *lo* has raised past this

³⁴ A question is whether these are to be found in any Romance language/dialect.

³⁵ If the *-a* in the singular counterpart:

i) *El chico habla inglés*. ('the kid speaks English')

is a theme vowel, and not an agreement morpheme, then Spanish must have a silent agreement morpheme in such third person singular sentences - cf. Harris (1969) (vs. Manzini and Savoia (2004)).

³⁶ Possibly, the other option, with a silent plural agreement morpheme, is excluded because agreement morphemes are unable to move (apart from being pied-piped by something else).

³⁷ For Germanic complementizer agreement, which cooccurs with verb agreement with the same subject, see, for example, de Vogelaer et al. (2001). It may also be that the high Spanish *-n* under discussion is itself in part akin to Korean *tul*, as analyzed by Koopman (2005).

Brandi and Cordin (1989, 132) have an example from Fiorentino in which what raises across this high *-n(o)* is a subject clitic.

high *-n* in the former, but not in the latter (and that cross-dialectally *lo* cannot raise across this *-n* as readily as *me* - cf. the discussion of (26)).³⁸

The high subject plural agreement *-n* at issue has so far been seen following an object clitic only in imperatives. In non-imperative finite sentences in Spanish, object clitics always precede the finite verb, which has the effect of prohibiting the appearance of this *-n*, for reasons given in the discussion following (55). Spanish object clitics also (apart from clitic climbing) follow the verb when the verb is an infinitive or a gerund and in fact H&H 213 give examples with a gerund and with an infinitive in which *-n* follows an object clitic:

(73) Están besándosen. ('they-are kissing *se -n*' = 'they are kissing each other')

(74) Quieren verme(n). ('they-want to-see me *-n*')
 They note that cross-dialectally these gerund and infinitive examples with postclitic *-n* do not seem to cluster with the imperative examples of postclitic *-n*. They also note that in these, as opposed to the imperative cases such as (71) and (72), the first *-n* cannot be omitted:

(75) *Está besándosen.
 (76) *Quiere verme(n).
 These two differences between the gerund/infinitive cases and the imperative cases suggest that in the former pair, i.e. in (73) and (74), the second *-n* is located within the embedded gerund or infinitive phrase. H&H think not, on the grounds that this second *-n* is impossible if the object clitic is absent (even when the first *-n* is present):

(77) *Están comiendon. ('they-are eating *-n*')
 (78) *Quieren comer(e)n. ('they-want to-eat *-n*')
 But this property is arguably shared with the high *-n* of imperatives, for which there is no clear example without a preceding object clitic. In particular, if imperatives could contain a high *-n* with no object clitic preceding it, we would be able to have imperative examples like the following (in which the second *-n* would be the high one):

(79) *Hagann eso! ('do *-n -n* that')

A unified account of (77)-(79) might be available if this high *-n* (the second one in each example) requires a (certain kind of) filled specifier.³⁹

The conclusion, then, is that those speakers who allow (73) and (74) allow this high *-n* to appear within a non-finite embedding and that that parametric property does not necessarily correlate with that *-n* being able to appear within imperatives. On the other hand, it seems likely that the way in which the object clitic in (73) and (74) comes to

³⁸ Although Spanish object clitics show differential facility in raising past the non-standard high *-n* in question, they do not display any differences, as far as I know, when it comes to raising past a matrix verb in so-called restructuring sentences like:

- (i) Juan me quiere ver. ('J me wants to-see')
- (ii) Juan lo quiere ver. ('J him/it wants to-see')

suggesting that it is the high landing site, relative to the normal position of the verb, that matters. Nor are split clitics possible in Spanish restructuring sentences:

- (i) Juan me lo quiere dar. ('J me it wants to-give')
- (ii) *Juan me quiere darlo.

For recent discussion of restructuring, see Cinque (2006).

³⁹ Which in turn might follow if Kayne (1998a) was correct to propose that functional heads must always attract something overtly to their Spec, though the contrast between these Spanish facts and the inflected infinitives of Portuguese needs to be looked into further; on the latter, see Raposo (1987).

precede *-n* tracks the way in which it does in (71) and (72). If so, we expect that (73) and (74) would be acceptable with a third-person accusative object clitic only to a proper subset of those accepting (73) and (74) with *se* or with *me*.⁴⁰

It is not clear from H&H's discussion whether there are any varieties of Spanish that have postclitic person agreement morphemes parallel to the postclitic number morpheme *-n*. If there are not, one would want to understand the reasons. It is in any event notable that Manzini and Savoia (2004) give Italian dialect (imperative) examples with exactly that, for example, from a Calabrian dialect:

(80) *da -m0- 'tI -II0* ('give me *tI* it')

where the third morpheme is a second person plural morpheme (agreeing with the silent subject of the imperative⁴¹), in a way that makes (80) look very much like (72), so that the derivation of (80) should probably track that of (61) fairly closely. There is, though, one difference worth mentioning between the derivations suggested by Manzini and Savoia and those favored here (cf. the discussion of (50)), namely that, for them (as for Sportiche (1995)), object clitics are inflectional heads merged in the sentential projection line, whereas I have been taking object clitics to be moved into a high(er) Spec position from an original merge position within the VP.⁴²

The question arises whether there are non-agreement functional heads that can split two object clitics in the manner of (72) or (80). To judge for Spanish by a quick Google search, there are quite a number of examples of:⁴³

(81) *compraserlo* ('buy *se -r* it')

(82) *daserlo* ('give *se -r* it')

in which the two object clitics *se* and *lo* are separated by the infinitival morpheme *-r*, which in the standard form would precede both clitics, as in:

(83) *comprarselo*

(84) *darselo*

The existence of these (assuming them not to be a quirk of Google) and similarly of some Italian (Google) counterparts:

(85) *compraglierla* ('buy him *-r* it')

(86) *daglierla* ('give him *-r* it')

alongside the standard:

(87) *comprargliela*

(88) *dargliela*

supports the idea that the infinitival morpheme *-r* is merged independently of the verb, whether it ends up next to it or not, and that in some varieties of Spanish and Italian

⁴⁰ H&H do not say whether this is so or not.

⁴¹ Which might, thinking of English, be PRO rather than pro.

⁴² If pronominal clitics are nominal, as opposed to verbal, then Manzini and Savoia's position (as well as Sportiche's) is incompatible with Kayne's (2008a) claim that nouns do not project.

⁴³ How to reconcile with Cardinaletti (2008b) these and all the earlier imperative examples of split postverbal clitics needs to be looked into.

infinitival *-r* can be merged high and can participate in derivations along the lines of those suggested for plural *-n*.⁴⁴

Conclusion.

A more syntactic approach to the range of phenomena discussed in this paper (which do not exhaust those discussed in H&H) seems more revealing and more likely to tie in to other aspects of Spanish grammar (and to aspects of the grammar of other languages/dialects) than the more morphological one developed by H&H. In certain respects this is similar to the argument in Kayne (2008b) that a certain instance of apparent morphological syncretism in North Italian object clitics is best reinterpreted in terms of a single clitic that sometimes cooccurs in the syntax with another, silent clitic (and sometimes does not). There is also a point of contact with the argument in Kayne (1998b) against covert/LF movement, insofar as H&H's use of morphological metathesis can also be seen as redundant relative to standard syntactic movement.⁴⁵

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⁴⁴ On the other hand, a quick Google search does not turn up corresponding non-standard examples with gerunds (in which the gerundive *-ndo* would split two object clitics), recalling the discussion of (6)-(12) above, as well as Manzini and Savoia's (2004) conjecture that no temporal, modal or aspectual morpheme could split two object clitics in this way. Perhaps this suggests that the infinitival *-r* has more in common with agreement morphemes along the dimension of (un)interpretability than these other functional morphemes do.

⁴⁵ Cf. Chomsky (2008).

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