

Iván Ortega-Santos
Foreign Languages and Literatures
Professional Development Assignment (PDA) Report

I was on Professional Development Assignment for the Fall 2014 semester completing a research project on word variation in the syntax of Spanish. The PDA allowed me to finish my research and the corresponding book manuscript *Focus-related operations in the grammar of Spanish*. It is worth noting that at the time I applied for the the PDA, this manuscript was already under contract with John Benjamins Publishing Company.

After two rounds of reviews and working on the proofs, etc., I am happy to announce that the book is appearing this semester. The book, which is part of their “Issues in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics” series, is already included in their online catalog:

<https://www.benjamins.com/#catalog/books/ihll.7/main>

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Focus-related Operations at the Right Edge in Spanish

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Syntactic movement is a pervasive phenomenon in natural language and, as such, has played a key role in syntactic theorizing. Nonetheless, an understanding of the mechanism that allows a constituent to appear to the right of its base-generated position has remained elusive. This groundbreaking research monograph aims to address this gap in our knowledge by expanding the inventory of languages and data sets traditionally considered in the literature. Specifically, Ortega-Santos analyzes the interplay between focus, word order and ellipsis in Spanish. A major finding that emerges from the analysis is that the tension between linearization requirements and rightward movement is diminished by ellipsis. Current debates on the syntax of the VOS order and preverbal subjects in Null-Subject Languages also figure prominently in the discussion, as novel empirical evidence for the existence of null expletives is provided: a non-trivial issue for our understanding of the Extended Projection Principle and subjecthood across languages.

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Focus-related Operations at the Right Edge in Spanish

Subjects and Ellipsis

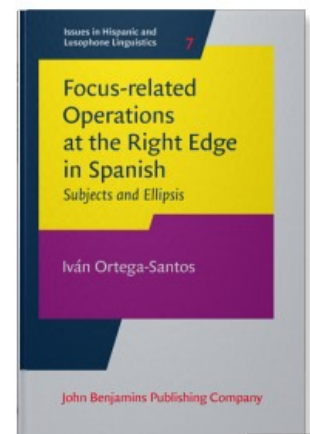
Quotes

“Focus is a notoriously difficult phenomenon to study, involving syntactic, phonological and discourse properties. In this book Ortega-Santos examines focus in Spanish, providing novel analyses of two quite understudied manifestations of focus, namely corrective focus at the right edge and rightward movement focus in ellipsis constructions. In so doing, he brings new evidence and arguments to bear on various questions of interest to theoretical syntacticians, such as the nature of the relationship between C and T and the computation of phases. He also tackles the long-standing debate on the status of the Extended Projection Principle in Spanish. His analysis of the relationship between rightward focus and ellipsis represents a significant contribution to our understanding of the interaction between narrow syntactic processes and PF-driven requirements on the linearization of phrases. It is a work that cannot be ignored by anyone interested in how syntax may be shaped by so-called third factors such as information structure and phonological demands.”

– Paula Kempchinsky, *University of Iowa*

“This monograph presents virtually everything you wanted to know about the right edge of Spanish clauses but were afraid to ask. Ortega-Santos goes well beyond focus constructions (into elliptical remnants, topicalization, the pre-verbal field, and more) in a precise, lucid and far-reaching way. The book will be relevant not just to Romance linguists, but to grammarians in general as well as to students of language that enjoy the careful lens of comparative studies - particularly those who appreciate theoretical import at large. A must read for specialists and a most enjoyable piece for the rest of us.”

– Juan Uriagereka, *University of Maryland, College Park*



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Additionally, this work figured prominently in an invited talk at the University of Barcelona and a joint poster with J. Villa-García (Vilanova University) in 2015 and a joint talk with M. Yoshida (Northwestern University) C. Nakao (Daito Bunka University) in 2016.. The details are included below:

2015 Ortega-Santos, I. On rightward movement and ellipsis in the syntax of Spanish - Invited talk at the Centre de Lingüística Teòrica (CLT) of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain.

2015 Ortega-Santos, I., J. Villa-García. On null expletives in the syntax of Spanish – Poster at the 25th Colloquium on Generative Grammar (CGG), IKER (Center for the Study of the Basque Language and its Texts (UMR 5478)), Bayonne, France.

2016 Ortega-Santos, I., M. Yoshida and C. Nakao. Rightward movement and ellipsis in the syntax of Spanish - 46th Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages (LSRL 46), Stony Brook University.

