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# Disjunctive clauses with *o... o* ‘either... or’ in Spanish and clausal cosubordination

<https://doi.org/10.1515/flin-2018-0001>

Submitted May 3, 2016; Revision invited January 30, 2017;

Revision received May 8, 2017; Accepted October 16, 2017

**Abstract:** This paper examines disjunctive clauses marked with *o... o* ‘either... or’ in Spanish with a view to demonstrating that, in contrast to conventional analyses, *o... o*-clauses are actually cosubordinate: *o... o*-clauses are [+dependent, –embedded], they generally share clausal operators and they often denote an episode or a sequence of events showing some sort of continuity in space as well as participants. To this end, this paper will describe subordinate and coordinate clauses in accordance with several tests and will go on to outline the properties of *o... o*-clauses, focusing in particular on their similarities and differences with respect to coordinate and subordinate clauses. Finally, it will describe why *o... o*-clauses would be better classified as examples of clausal cosubordination.

**Keywords:** cosubordination, disjunction, complex clauses, Spanish

## 1 Introduction

Two clause combining types are widely accepted in the Spanish grammatical tradition: coordination and subordination. However, a significant number of linked clauses are not adequately encompassed by these two types (see Conti 2012; Conti 2014; for an overview).<sup>1</sup> Examples of clause linkages that resist the traditional analysis include adjunct clauses, adversative clauses, comparative

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is part of the ongoing research project *Problemas de demarcación en morfología y sintaxis: diccionario de unidades y construcciones de difícil adscripción en español* (HUM 673), sponsored by the Consejería de Innovación, Ciencia y Empresa (Junta de Andalucía). I am indebted to Prof. Elena Feliú as well as the two anonymous reviewers of *Folia Linguistica* for their useful comments. I am solely responsible for the errors that this paper may contain.

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constructions and distributive clauses (see Section 2). This paper aims to shed light on this complex area, focusing in particular on examples like (1)<sup>2</sup>:

- (1) *O estudias o trabajas.*  
 or study.PRS.2SG or work.PRS.2SG  
 ‘Either you study or you work’.

As this paper aims to demonstrate, two main features distinguish the type of clause shown in (1) from both coordinate and subordinate finite clauses: they are mutually dependent and they lack their own set of clausal operators. In view of these properties, *o... o*-clauses will be classified as examples of cosubordination, a third type of linkage that is widely accepted in cross-linguistic works but has yet to be applied to Spanish syntax. In fact, proposals offering alternatives to the “coordination-subordination” dichotomy in Spanish have failed to consider examples like (1), which thus far have been analyzed as coordinate clauses (Fukasawa 1985; RAE/ASALE 2009: 2445–2446). For instance, García-Berrio (1969–1970) considers comparative, consecutive and conditional clauses to be *interdependent*, i.e. mutually dependent, but does not address disjunctive constructions like (1), which are also reciprocally dependent. Similarly, Rojo (1978) (see also Narbona 1983; Narbona 1989; Blesa 1984; Moya 1996) argues that adverbial and adversative clauses are *interordinated* (semantically dependent but not integrated) but he does not take into account examples like (1).

This paper will use Conti’s tests (2014) to classify *o... o*-clauses and to determine the extent to which they are or are not coordinate. These tests are designed to recognize coordinate and subordinate clauses in Spanish and are based mainly on clause-level phenomena. Such phenomena are rarely employed to recognize linkage types in Spanish, despite the fact that several typologists have praised their usefulness in characterizing clause combinations cross-linguistically. In fact, the classificatory proposals for Spanish that have been put forward to date often hinge on the pre-established nature of the linking marker (e.g. coordinate vs. subordinate conjunctions). Only very occasionally do they rely on specific clause-phenomena (Conti 2014).

This paper will present some problematic linked clauses in Spanish before going on to describe subordinate and coordinate clauses according to Conti’s

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<sup>2</sup> The following abbreviations are employed in this paper: ART, article; AUX, auxiliary; COMPL, complete; COND, conditional; DAT, dative; F, feminine; FUT, future; IMP, imperative; IND, indicative; IPFV, imperfective; M, masculine; NEG, negation; OBJ, object; PASS, passive; POL, politeness; PRO, pronoun; PRP, preposition; PRS, present; PST, past; REFL, reflexive; REL, relative; S, subject; SBJV, subjunctive; SG, singular.

tests (2014). It will then illustrate the properties of *o...* *o*-clauses and demonstrate that they are cosubordinate before presenting the relevant conclusions and describing some future aims.

## 2 Complex sentences: classificatory problems in Spanish grammar

As noted above, adjunct clauses (2a)–(2b), comparative constructions (3), adversative clauses (4) and distributive clauses (5) have prompted several classificatory proposals in the Spanish literature dealing with the different clause-linkage types:

- (2) a. *Si hubiese estudiado*  
       if have.AUX.IPFV.PST.SBJV.1SG studied  
       *más, habría aprobado.*  
       more have.AUX.COND.IND.1SG passed  
       ‘If I had studied more, I would have passed’.
- b. *Aunque he estudiado*  
       although have.AUX.PRS.IND.1SG studied  
       *mucho, no he aprobado.*  
       a lot NEG have.AUX.PRS.IND.1SG passed  
       ‘Although I studied a lot, I did not pass’.
- (3) *Luis compró más libros que Juan*  
       Luis buy.PST.IND.3SG more books than Juan  
       *discos.*  
       albums  
       ‘Luis bought more books than Juan albums’.
- (4) a. *He estudiado mucho,*  
       have.AUX.PRS.IND.1SG studied a lot  
       *pero no he aprobado.*  
       but NEG have.AUX.PRS.IND.1SG passed  
       ‘I studied a lot but I did not pass’.
- b. *No es blanco, sino gris.*  
       NEG be.PRS.IND.3SG white but grey  
       ‘It is not white, but grey’.

- (5) *Ora reía ora lloraba.*  
 now laugh.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG now cry.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG  
 '(S)he laughed and cried' [Lit. Now (s)he laughed, now (s)he cried].

Most works consider adjunct clauses such as (2) to be subordinate (see, for instance, Alarcos 1994: 354–358 and Real Academia Española 2009: 3530), but they have been also classified as coordinate (Marcos-Marín 1980: 369–70 for conditionals) or as paratactic constructions (Jiménez-Juliá 1995: 25). Some scholars even argue that clauses such as (2) are neither subordinate nor coordinate but rather *interdependent* (García-Berrio 1969–1970: 225) or *interordinated* (Rojo 1978: 126–127; Narbona 1983; 1989; Blesa 1984: 41–42; Moya 1996: 38–40). In general terms, interdependency and interordination are intended to account for clauses that are mutually dependent (from either a semantic or a distributional perspective) but are not syntactically integrated into the main clause.

Comparative constructions like (3), which traditional grammars consider to be instances of clause subordination (RAE 1973: 543–546; Alarcos 1994: 340–347), have also been analyzed as coordinate structures (Sáez del Álamo 1999: 1144). In fact, comparative and coordinate constructions (in contrast to subordinate clauses) allow the ellipsis of non-focal constituents (e.g. *Luis compró dos libros y Pedro tres* ‘Luis bought two books and Pedro three’, *Juan compró más libros que Pedro* ‘Juan bought more books than Pedro [bought books]’).

The analysis of adversative clauses with *pero* 'but' (4) is also controversial. In contrast to academic grammars, which classify adversative constructions under coordination (Real Academia Española 1973: 510; Real Academia Española 2009: 2452), other scholars treat them as interordinated or interdependent, akin to adverbial clauses (Rojo 1978: 108; Narbona 1989: 111–112; Blesa 1984: 41–42; Moya 1996: 38–44). In the case of the exclusive adversative *sino* 'but not' (4b), only Echaide (1974–1975: 20) has noted its proximity to subordination, and even then only in passing.

The examples in (5) range from juxtaposition to coordination, depending on the treatment of the linking marker, which is interpreted as a lexical word in some works (Alarcos 1994: 317; Myre 1998: 31) and a coordinate conjunction in others (Real Academia Española 2009: 2414).

These classificatory problems beg some crucial questions regarding clause combining in Spanish. In particular, if a significant number of complex constructions cannot be easily classified as coordinate or subordinate, are coordination and subordination really sufficient to account for them? One possible solution, posited by several scholars (Haiman and Thompson 1984; Lehmann 1988; Van Gijn et al. 2011), is to consider coordination and subordination the poles of a scale. While some constructions match all of the properties attributed

to these poles, others, which only partially satisfy them, lie somewhere in between. According to Van Gijn et al. (2011: 7), this is the case with adjunct adverbial clauses, cosubordinate clauses and paratactic subordinate clauses.

Moreover, cosubordination has been proposed as a third linkage type within functional-typological grammar by Van Valin (1984), Van Valin and LaPolla (1997), Van Valin (2005) and Hengeveld and Lachlan Mackenzie (2008), to account for units that are dependent but are not integrated. As Sections 5 and 6 show, this paper adopts this theoretical assumption to explain *o...* *o* clauses and other related constructions.

## 3 Subordinate and coordinate clauses in Spanish

### 3.1 Subordinate clauses

Most scholars agree that subordinate clauses are dependent and embedded (see, among others, Van Valin 1984: 542; Foley and Van Valin 1984: 242; Van Valin and LaPolla 1997: 454; Van Valin 2005: 183–188; Hengeveld and Mackenzie 2008: 352; Van Gijn et al. 2011: 6) in contrast to coordinate clauses, which are typically characterized as independent and not embedded. The typical subordinate clause is one that depends prosodically, semantically, and grammatically on an element that it modifies. By contrast, a coordinate clause is independent and does not modify another element.

As I have argued in Conti (2014: 10–11), subordinate clauses in Spanish show specific traces of desententialization and grammatical dependency, but only some of them can be considered embedded. According to Conti, and as will be shown later on, subordinate clauses in Spanish may be embedded or not. Embedding is thus not an inherent and essential property of subordination.

As Lehmann notes (1988: 193–200), desententialized clauses have lost, if not all, at least some of the properties attributed to independent sentences. Although the way in which desententialization manifests itself in grammar varies from language to language, this process generally converges cross-linguistically into analogous phenomena: desententialized clauses show similar restrictions on clausal operators and quite often also share some formal and behavioral patterns pointing to a low degree of independence (Lehmann 1988; Comrie 1982; Comrie 2008).

It should be noted, however, that subordinate finite clauses in Spanish cannot readily be classified as desententialized constituents. They do not, for instance, show a special word order or specific internal marking in contrast to subordinate clauses in languages which display a different alignment (like Ancient Greek, according to Cristofaro 2003: 77) or a different word order (like

German or Danish, as observed by Verstraete 2005: 612). In fact, some typical signs of desententialization, such as occurrence of the subjunctive/irrealis mood and suppression of the subject in the case of referential identity as illustrated in (6a), can be seen in independent sentences in Spanish, as shown in (6b):

- (6) a. *Di-le* *que venga*  
 tell.IMP.2SG-PRO.OBJ.3SG that come.PRS.SBJV.3SG  
*mañana.*  
 tomorrow  
 'Tell him/her to come tomorrow'.  
 b. *Por favor, venga* *mañana.*  
 please come.PRS.SBJV.3SG tomorrow  
 'Please, come tomorrow'.

What essentially distinguishes *venga mañana* in (6a) from the same clause in (6b) is that in (6a) it cannot function as a sentence (e.g. it cannot express a command through the imperative mood, *Te digo que \*ven*), whereas (6b) is a sentence in the sense that it can hold all types of illocutionary force (note the use of the imperative in *Por favor, ven mañana*). Although the clauses in (6a) and (6b) look alike, they are different units from a syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic point of view.

In addition to the imperative mood restriction, which has already been described for Spanish by Moreno de Alba (1979), subordinate clauses show other constraints on clausal operators: they cannot be asserted (Van Valin 1984: 548; Cristofaro 2003: 31; Verstraete 2005: 618; and Van Gijn et al. 2011: 6) and their mood inflection often depends on a supra-ordinate element.<sup>3</sup> As illustrated in (7), subordinate clauses in Spanish cannot fall within the scope of sentential questioning. According to Cristofaro (2003: 33), this is evidence of their non-assertive nature:

- (7) *¿Te* *llamó* *cuando*  
 PRO.OBJ.2SG phone.PST.IND.3SG when  
*llegaron?*  
 arrive.PST.IND.3PL  
 'Did (s)he phone you when they arrived?'  
 —Sí ((S)he phoned when they arrived)/—Sí (\*They arrived).  
 'Yes, (s)he did'/ \*'Yes, they did'.

<sup>3</sup> According to Verstraete (2005: 618), "subordinate clauses are paradigmatically restricted to the declarative and are characterized by neutralization of the paradigm and absence of illocutionary force". Notice, however, that some complement clauses can be interrogative (e.g. *No sé quién vendrá* 'I don't know who is coming', *No sé qué hizo* 'I don't know what (s)he did').

On the other hand, the occurrence of the subjunctive mood and alternations between indicative and subjunctive in the dependent verb are also phenomena associated with subordinate clauses, as pointed out by Palmer in his 1986 classic work on modality. At least in Spanish, these phenomena can be understood as evidence of clause-dependency when mood is conditioned by the semantics of the main verb, as illustrated in (8), or by tense-modality correlations between clauses (9):

- (8) a. *Quiero* *que*  
 want.PRS.IND.1SG that  
*vengas*/\**vienes*.  
 come.PRS.SBJV.2SG/COME.PRS.IND.2SG  
 'I want you to come'.
- b. *Di-le* *que*  
 tell.IMP.2SG-PRO.OBJ.3SG that  
*viene*/*venga*.  
 come.PRS.IND.2SG/COME.PRS.SBJV.2SG  
 'Tell him/her to come'.
- (9) a. *Lláma-me* *cuando*  
 call.IMP.2SG-PRON.OBJ.1SG when  
*llegues*.  
 arrive.PRS.SBJV.2SG  
 (Imperative, non-factitive + subjunctive, non-factitive).  
 'Call me when you arrive'.
- b. *Me* *llamó* *cuando*  
 PRO.OBJ.1SG call.PST.IND.3SG when  
*llegó*.  
 arrive.PST.IND.3SG  
 (Past perfective, indicative, factitive + past perfective, indicative, factitive).  
 '(S)he called me when (s)he arrived'.

Tense correlations between dependent and main clauses are also cited in the literature as evidence of subordination (Lehmann 1988: 204). As Carrasco notes (1999: 3063–3066) for Spanish, interpretation of the so-called relative tenses, which mainly occur in subordinate clauses, depends on the absolute tenses that occur in the main proposition. For instance, the Conditional tense in (10) is interpreted as the past future of the Perfect tense in *dijo*:

- (10) *Dijo*                      *que llegaría*                      *tarde.*  
 say.PST.IND.3SG that arrive.PST.IND.3SG late  
 ‘(S)he said (s)he would be late’.

In contrast to the constraints on illocutionary force, mood, and tense described above, which are common to all desententialized clauses in Spanish, other indicators of subordination cited in the literature, such as subject suppression in the case of referential identity, the position of the subordinate clause and restrictions on questioning, are not so consistent. In particular, it seems that subordinate clauses in Spanish can be split into two types when these tests are employed (Conti 2012: 273, Conti 2014: 16–19): complement and relative clauses, on the one hand, and adjunct clauses, on the other. As we will see below, according to these tests the former group behaves as typically embedded clauses whereas the latter does not. Adjunct clauses are thus not so clearly integrated into a constituent.

In particular, subject suppression in the case of referential identity is obligatory in complement clauses (11a)–(11b) but not in some adjunct clauses, despite the fact that both types of clause are desententialized and dependent. In adjunct clauses such as (12) the controller may occur in the dependent clause as well as the main clause, while in complement clauses the controller must occur in the main clause. In addition, some adjunct clauses such as conditionals can code identical subjects in both clauses (see the correlative structure in [13]). In view of these variations, subject suppression in linked clauses is evidence of embedding in Spanish but not of subordination:

- (11) a. *Luis<sub>i</sub> dijo*                      *que llegaría<sub>i/j</sub>*  
 Luis say.PST.IND.3SG that arrive.COND.IND.3SG  
*tarde.*  
 late  
 ‘Luis<sub>i</sub> said that he<sub>i/j</sub> would be late’  
 b. \**Dijo<sub>i</sub>*                      *que Luis<sub>i</sub> llegaría*  
 say.PST.IND.3SG that Luis arrive.COND.IND.3SG  
*tarde.*  
 late  
 \*‘He<sub>i</sub> said that Luis<sub>i</sub> would be late’.
- (12) a. *Cuando llega<sub>i/j</sub>*                      *al*                      *trabajo,*  
 when arrive.PRS.IND.3SG at+ART work  
*María<sub>i</sub> me*                      *llama<sub>i/j</sub>.*  
 María PRON.OBJ.1SG call.PRS.IND.3SG  
 ‘When she<sub>i/j</sub> arrives at work, María<sub>i</sub> calls me’.



- b. *Cuando María<sub>i</sub> llega al trabajo,*  
 when María arrive.PRS.IND.3SG at work  
*me llama<sub>i/j</sub>.*  
 PRON.OBJ.1SG call.PRS.IND.3SG  
 'When María<sub>i</sub> arrives at work, she<sub>i/j</sub> calls me.'

- (13) *Si María quiere, María puede.*  
 if María want.PRS.IND.3SG María can.PRS.IND.3SG  
 'If María wants, María can.'

Desententialized clauses in Spanish also show two different clause-position patterns: complement and relative clauses occur in a fixed position (always postposed to the subordinator), see (14)–(15), whereas adjunct clauses can be anteposed (16a), postposed (16b) or interpolated (16c). Again, restrictions on position are closely related to the structural level of attachment of the dependent clause (embedded in the former group and adjunct in the latter):

- (14) a. *Dijo que llegaría*  
 say.PST.IND.3SG that arrive.COND.IND.3SG  
*tarde.*  
 late  
 '(S)he said that (s)he would be late'  
 b. *\*Que llegaría tarde*  
 that arrive.COND.IND.3SG late  
*dijo.*  
 say.PST.IND.3SG  
 '\*That (s)he would be late (s)he said'.

- (15) a. *El chico del que te*  
 ART boy of + ART REL PRO.OBJ.2SG  
*hablé.*  
 tell.PST.IND.1SG  
 'The boy that I told you about'.  
 b. *\*El del que te*  
 ART of + ART REL PRO.OBJ.2SG  
*hablé chico.*  
 tell.PST.IND.1SG boy  
 '\*The boy that I told you about' [lit. Him that I told you about boy'].

- (16) a. *Cuando llega al trabajo,*  
 when arrive.PRS.IND.3SG at+ART work  
*María me llama.*  
 María PRO.OBJ.2SG call.PRS.IND.3SG  
 ‘When she arrives at work, María calls me’.
- b. *María me llama*  
 María PRO.OBJ.2SG call.PRS.IND.3SG  
*cuando llega al trabajo.*  
 when arrive.PRS.IND.3SG at+ART work  
 ‘María calls me when she arrives at work’.
- c. *María, cuando llega al trabajo,*  
 María when arrive.PRS.IND.3SG at+ART work  
*me llama.*  
 PRO.OBJ.2SG call.PRS.IND.3SG  
 ‘María, when she arrives at work, calls me’.

Furthermore, desententialized clauses in Spanish can be divided into two types as regards questioning and focus domain, as noted by Van Valin (2005: 214–215) for English. In particular, complement clause constituents can be easily questioned as part of the focus domain (17b) but they cannot be questioned in adjunct clauses (18b):

- (17) a. *Me dijo que*  
 PRO.OBJ.1SG tell.PST.IND.3SG that  
*llegaría mañana.*  
 arrive.COND.IND.3SG tomorrow  
 ‘(S)he told me that (s)he would arrive tomorrow’
- b. *¿Cuándo te dijo*  
 when PRO.OBJ.2SG tell.PST.IND.3SG  
*que llegaría?*  
 that arrive.COND.IND.3SG  
 ‘When did (s)he tell you (s)he would arrive?’
- (18) a. *Me enfadé porque me*  
 get.angry.PST.IND.1SG because PRO.OBJ.1SG  
*llamó tarde.*  
 call.PST.IND.3SG late  
 ‘I got angry because (s)he called late’
- b. *\*¿Cuándo<sub>i</sub> me enfadé porque*  
 when get.angry.PST.IND.1SG because

*me*                      *llamó* \_\_\_i?  
 PRO.OBJ.1SG    call.PST.IND.3SG  
 \*‘When did I get angry because (s)he called?’

### 3.2 Coordinate clauses

As noted above, clause-level phenomena attributed to subordinate clauses have been studied in some detail from a cross-linguistic perspective, but these same phenomena have not yet been analyzed in depth in regard to coordinate clauses (see, however, Haspelmath 2004; Mauri 2008).<sup>4</sup> Scholars often assume that coordinate clauses are the opposite of subordinate clauses, i.e. that coordination is to some extent the negation of subordination. Although this assumption seems to be an adequate starting point, further analysis is needed in order to describe the grammar of coordinate clauses as we will see below for Spanish.

Unlike subordinate clauses, coordinate clauses in Spanish are not desententialized; each clause within the coordinate structure can be independently asserted or negated (19c)–(19d) and allows the imperative mood (20) (Conti 2014: 16–19). Thus, as Verstraete notes (2005: 618), coordinate clauses allow the full paradigm of basic clause types as regards illocutionary force<sup>5</sup>:

- (19) *¿Lo*                      *vendes*  
       PRO.OBJ.3SG.M    sell.PRS.IND.2SG  
*o lo*                      *alquilas?*  
       or PRO.OBJ.3SG.M    rent.PRS.IND.2SG  
       ‘Are you selling it or renting it?’  
   a. *Sí, las dos cosas.*  
       yes ART two things  
       ‘Yes, both things’.  
   b. *No, ni lo*                      *alquilo*  
       NEG nor PRO.OBJ.3SG.M    rent.PRS.IND.1SG

<sup>4</sup> Mauri’s work is the first attempt to characterize clause coordination across languages even though, as the scholar notes, the sample is mostly focused on European languages. Mauri (2008) gives a functional definition of coordination (defined as a functional parallelism of two joined states of affairs) but does not deal with the grammatical properties of joint clauses. As a result, some cosubordinate clauses are treated as coordinate in spite of the grammatical differences between the two.

<sup>5</sup> According to Verstraete (2005) and Mauri (2008), coordinate clauses are characterized by the presence of illocutionary force in contrast to subordinate clauses. See footnote 2 for discussion.

- ni lo vendo.*  
 nor PRO.OBJ.3SG.M sell.PRS.IND.1SG  
 ‘No, I’m neither renting it nor selling it.
- c. *No, lo alquilo,*  
 NEG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M rent.PRS.IND.1SG  
*pero no lo vendo.*  
 but NEG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M sent.PRS.IND.1SG  
 ‘No, I’m renting it but I’m not selling it’.
- d. *No, lo vendo,*  
 NEG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M sell.PRS.IND.1SG  
*pero no lo alquilo.*  
 but NEG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M rent.PRS.IND.1SG  
 ‘No, I’m selling it but I’m not renting it’.

- (20) *Estudia o trabaja.*  
 study.IMP.2SG or work.IMP.2SG  
 ‘Study or work.’

In addition, coordinate clauses tend to be symmetrical in relation to tense-mood (see [19]-[20] above), illocutionary force (21) and informative structure (see [22a] vs. [22b])<sup>6</sup>:

- (21) (Interrogative clause + interrogative clause)  
*¿Subes o bajas?*  
 go.up.PRS.IND.2SG or go.down.PRS.IND.2SG  
 ‘Are you going up or are you going down?’
- (22) a. *A Luis le*  
 PRP Luis PRO.OBJ.3SG  
*compré un libro*  
 buy.PST.IND.1SG ART book  
*y a Pedro le compré*  
 and PRP Pedro PRO.OBJ.3SG buy.PST.IND.1SG  
*una botella de vino.*  
 ART bottle of wine  
 ‘For Luis I bought a book and for Pedro I bought a bottle of wine’.

<sup>6</sup> Some constructions show asymmetrical illocutionary force as seen in *No está de acuerdo y ¿qué quieres que le haga?* ‘(S)he does not agree and what do you want me to do about it?’. According to Franchini (1986: 278), these are examples of coordination. Jiménez-Juliá (1995: 126), however, considers them to illustrate a use of *y* as a textual connector.

- b. ?A *Luis le compré*  
 PRP Luis PRO.OBJ.3SG buy.PST.IND.1SG  
*un libro y le compré*  
 ART book and PRO.OBJ.3SG buy.PST.IND.1SG  
*una botella de vino a Pedro.*  
 ART bottle of wine PRP Pedro  
 ?'For Luis I bought a book and I bought a bottle of wine for Pedro.'

The behavior of illocutionary force, tense, and informative structure in coordinate clauses may be related to the pragmatic and conceptual parallelism of coordinate clauses noted by Mauri (2008), which may in turn also be associated with structural parallelism among the coordinands (or the occurrence of the coordinands at the same representational level of the structure).<sup>7</sup>

However, other properties point to some structural asymmetries between the joint clause and the clause it is added to, at least in Spanish. Joint clauses show some patterns of distributional and grammatical dependency which do not occur in the clause that they are added to. For example, joint clauses always occur in a fixed position (23), as noted by Franchini (1986: 176), and must suppress their subject in the case of referential identity (24)<sup>8</sup>:

- (23) a. *Luis canta y María*  
 Luis sing.PRS.IND.3SG and María  
*toca el piano.*  
 play.PRS.IND.3SG ART piano  
 'Luis sings, and María plays the piano.'
- b. \*Y *María toca el piano,*  
 and María play.PRS.IND.3SG ART piano  
*Luis canta.*  
 Luis sing.PRS.IND.3SG  
 \*'And María plays the piano, Luis sings'.

- (24) a. *Luis<sub>i</sub> compró el libro*  
 Luis buy.PST.IND.3SG ART book  
*y lo envolvió<sub>i</sub>.*  
 and PRO.OBJ.3SG.M wrap.PST.IND.3SG  
 'Luis bought the book and wrapped it'

<sup>7</sup> According to Dik (1972: 30), "in a coordination all members occupy the same structural level or rank within the total structure in which they are embedded".

<sup>8</sup> See the next section for examples with identical emphatic pronouns in subject position.

- b. \**Compró<sub>i</sub> el libro y Luis<sub>i</sub>*  
 buy.PST.IND.3SG ART book and Luis  
*lo envolvió.*  
 PRO.OBJ.3SG.M wrap.PST.IND.3SG  
 ‘\*He<sub>i</sub> bought the book and Luis<sub>i</sub> wrapped it’.

Coordination has also been associated with the possibility of adding non-sentential statements to the clause, i.e. statements that do not have a sentence structure. For instance, the constituents *terminantemente prohibo dar gritos* (25a) and *en paz* (25b) are considered predicative statements lacking a finite verb. According to Borrego (2011: 282), non-sentential statements can normally be joined to clauses when they are coordinate but are quite rare (and semantically conditioned) when they are subordinate<sup>9</sup>:

- (25) a. *Vale, ponemos la tele,*  
 OK turn.on.PRS.IND.1PL ART TV  
*pero terminantemente prohibido dar gritos.*  
 but strictly forbidden to shout  
 ‘OK, we’ll turn on the TV, but [it is] strictly forbidden to shout’.
- b. *Lo hacemos mañana*  
 PRO.OBJ.3SG.M do.PRS.IND.1PL tomorrow  
*y en paz.*  
 and in peace  
 ‘We’ll do it tomorrow and that’s that’. [Lit. We’ll do it tomorrow and in peace].

Finally, three additional features seem to distinguish coordinate and subordinate clauses: questioning, which is allowed in at least some subordinate clauses but never in coordinate ones (Ross 1967) (26b); ellipsis of non-focal constituents (27), which has been associated with constructions featuring structural parallelism (Gallego 2011); and backward-control ellipsis (28) (Haspelmath 2004: 32).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Borrego (2011: 281) notes that subordinate clauses allow for non-sentential statements solely with specific verbal subordinators, such as report verbs (*Dijo que a las siete* ‘(S)he said that [something happened] at seven’) or weak assertive verbs (*Creo que a las siete* ‘I believe that [something happened/will happen] at seven’), among others.

<sup>10</sup> See conclusions for the problematic analysis of backward-control deletion constructions.

- (26) a. *Luis se durmió*  
 Luis fall.asleep.PST.IND.3SG  
*y llegó tarde.*  
 and arrive.PST.IND.3SG late  
 'Luis fell asleep and arrived late'.
- b. \*¿Cuándo<sub>i</sub> *Luis se durmió*  
 when Luis fall.asleep.PST.IND.3SG  
*y llegó* \_\_<sub>i</sub>?  
 and arrive.PST.IND.3SG  
 'When<sub>i</sub> did Luis fall asleep and arrive \_\_<sub>i</sub>?'
- (27) *María tomó sopa,*  
 María have.PST.IND.3SG soup  
*pero Pedro no.*  
 but Pedro NEG  
 'María had soup, but Pedro didn't'.
- (28) *El escritor redactaba* \_\_<sub>i</sub>,  
 ART writer write.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG  
*pero no revisaba las obras<sub>i</sub>.*  
 but NEG review.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG ART plays  
 'The writer wrote \_\_<sub>i</sub> but didn't review his plays'.

In summary, coordinate clauses and subordinate clauses in Spanish display the differences set out in Table 1.

### 3.3 Problematic combined clauses (still)

The test outlined in Table 1 does not explain the grammatical behavior of some complex constructions. Some examples of adverbial clauses in Spanish do not show traces of desententialization even though both the semantic-clause type they belong to and the linking marker they hold are typically associated with subordination. This is the case, for instance, with some constructions with *porque* 'because', in which the linked clause shows patterns of an independence/sentence-level nature, such as the occurrence of the imperative mood (29):

- (29) (González-Calvo 1983: 123)  
*No conseguirán nada,*  
 NEG achieve.FUT.IND.3PL nothing

**Table 1:** Subordinate clauses vs. coordinate clauses in Spanish.

	Subordinate clause	Coordinate clause
<i>Imperative mood</i>	No	Yes
<i>Assertive illocutionary force</i>	No	Yes
<i>Mood dependency</i>	Yes	No
<i>Tense dependency</i>	Yes	No
<i>Subject suppression in the linked clause in the case of referential identity</i>	Obligatory only in some types	Always obligatory
<i>Free position of the linked clause</i>	Only in some types	No
<i>Questioning</i>	Only in some types	No
<i>Ellipsis of non-focal elements</i>	No	Yes
<i>Backward-control ellipsis</i>	No	Yes

*porque sabed que nadie*  
because know.IMP.2PL that nobody

*confía en ellos.*  
trust.PRS.3SG on them

‘They will not achieve anything, because you must know [Lit. know you] that nobody trusts them.’

In addition, some constructions with *y* ‘and’ are not so clearly coordinate. For example, binary constructions like (30) and (31) seem to be desententialized:

- (30) *Estudia y aprobarás.*  
study.IMP.2SG and pass.FUT.IND.2SG  
‘Study and you will pass’.

- (31) *Él se lo guisa y él se lo come.*  
PRO.S.3SG.M REFL.3 PRON.OBJ.3SG  
cook.PRS.IND.3SG and PRO.3SG.M.S  
COMPL PRO.OBJ.3SG.M eat.PRS.IND.3SG  
‘He reaps the benefits of doing something by himself’. [Lit. He cooks it and he eats it].



In addition, y-clauses replacing relative clauses in oral discourse are also problematic (Rojas 1977: 239). For example, clauses like ...*se llamaba Blanca* in (32) are not assertive and their time operators behave similarly to those of subordinate clauses. In particular, interpretation of the imperfective tense in *se llamaba* seems to depend on the perfective tense of *vino*:

Vino una señora  
come.PST.IND.3SG ART lady  
y se llamaba Blanca  
and be.called.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG Blanca  
Lit. 'There came a lady and she was called Blanca'.

(33) a. *Si hubiera estudiado* *más, habría aprobado.*  
if have.AUX.IPFV.PST.SBJV.1SG studied  
more have.AUX.COND.IND.1SG passed  
'If I had had studied more, I would have passed'.

b. \**Si hubiera estudiado más* (with non-descendent intonation)  
\*'If I had studied more'.

c. \**Habría aprobado* (out of context)  
\*'I would have passed'.

**11** Constructions with emphatic pronouns as subjects tend to have a fixed meaning, as is the case in (31).

Similarly, the examples in (34)–(35) show different structures composed of at least two mutually dependent clauses. In (34) the correlation between the two clauses linked by *o* ‘or’ is conditioned by the occurrence of the subjunctive mood (also, these two clauses work as a concessive modifier of *saldré a la calle*). In (35) the correlation is established by the double marker *ya... ya* (lit. ‘already... already’):

- (34) *Saldré a la calle llueva*  
 go.out.FUT.IND.1SG PRP ART street rain.PRS.SBJV.3SG  
*o haga bueno.*  
 or do.PRS.SBJV.3SG nice  
 ‘I will go out whether it rains or [whether] it is nice’.

- (35) (Myre 1998: 14)  
*Ya paseaban los cuatro,*  
 already walk.IPFV.PST.IND.3PL ART four  
*ya se sentaban en los bancos*  
 already sit.IPFV.PST.IND.3PL PRP ART benches  
*de piedra que hay en la plaza...*  
 of stone REL be.PRS.IND.3SG PRP the square  
 ‘Already the four were walking, already they were sitting on the stone benches that are in the square’.

The properties attributed to coordinate clauses in Section 3.2 do not seem to work for clauses in structures such as (35). In particular, as the following section will show, a similar deviation characterizes double marking with *o... o*.

## 4. The special case of *o... o*-clauses

### 4.1 Note on the examples used

The examples that this article is based on were obtained by two means: introspection, where the aim was to assess the grammaticality or acceptability of certain constructions, and consultation of the twenty-first Century Spanish Corpus (CORPES XXI) published by the Royal Spanish Academy (Real Academia Española 2013-present), where the aim was to illustrate and analyze the grammatical properties of the constructions under consideration. The examples taken from CORPES XXI (102 in total, only a fraction of which are provided in this article) are from the subcorpus of fictional texts written in the Spanish of

Spain. Their use reflects the need to illustrate constructions which, like *o... o* constructions, are difficult to characterize in all of their complexity based on linguistic competence alone.

## 4.2 Grammatical description

Disjunctive clauses with *o... o* 'either... or' have been systematically classified as coordinate in the literature to date, as described in Section 2. However, there are numerous differences between *o*-clauses, which are clearly coordinate according to the tests set out in Table 1, and *o... o*-clauses, which are not. Firstly, as noted by Fukasawa (1985: 67), the occurrence of *o... o* with clauses in texts is significantly lower than the occurrence of *o*. According to the scholar, *o... o*-clauses are also more restricted semantically than *o*-clauses. Unlike *o*-clauses, which can express both excluding and non-excluding options (see 36a and 36b respectively), *o... o* clauses often express excluding events (Fukasawa 1985: 73), as illustrated by (37):

- (36) a. *Te regalan un nuevo*  
 PRON.OBJ.2SG give.PRS.IND.3PL ART new  
*carrete o te*  
 roll.of.film OR PRON.OBJ.2SG  
*regalan una ampliación (...).*  
 give.PRS.IND.3PL ART enlarged.photo  
 'They give you a free roll of film or they give you a free enlarged photo  
 or they give you a discount'.
- b. *Quizá vaya al cine*  
 maybe go.PRS.SBJV.1SG PRP + ART movies  
*o al teatro.*  
 or PRP + ART theatre  
 'I might go to the movies or to the theatre'.
- (37) *O es el peor*  
 or be.PRS.IND.3SG ART worst  
*o es el mejor (CORPES XXI).*  
 or be.PRS.IND.3SG ART best  
 'Either he is the worst or he is the best'.

The properties outlined in Section 3.2 demonstrate that, in contrast to coordinate clauses, *o... o*-clauses are mutually dependent (38b)–(38c) and display clear traces of desententialization. In point of fact, *o... o*-clauses reject the imperative

mood (39) and cannot be asserted independently (40), unlike coordinate clauses with *o* (see [41], [42], repeated here for the sake of convenience):

- (38) a. *O estudias o trabajas.*  
 or study.PRS.IND.2SG or work.PRS.IND.2SG  
 ‘Either you study or you work’.
- b. *\*O estudias.*  
 or study.PRS.IND.2SG
- c. *\*O trabajas.*  
 or work.PRS.IND.2SG
- (39) *\*O estudia o trabaja.*  
 or study.IMP.2SG or work.IMP.2SG  
 ‘Either study or work’.
- (40) *Los prisioneros o enfermaron*  
 ART prisoners or get.sick.PST.IND.3PL  
*o murieron en el mar, ¿verdad?*  
 or die.PST.IND.3PL at ART sea truth  
 ‘The prisoners either got sick or died at sea, didn’t they?’  
 —Sí ‘yes’ (the listener agrees with this alternative).  
 —No ‘no’ (the listener disagrees with this alternative).
- (41) *Estudia o trabaja.*  
 study.IMP.2SG or work.IMP.2SG  
 ‘Study or work’.
- (42) *¿Lo vendes*  
 PRO.OBJ.3SG.M sell.PRS.IND.2SG  
*o lo alquilas?*  
 or PRO.OBJ.3SG.M rent.PRS.IND.2SG  
 ‘Are you selling it or renting it?’
- a. *Sí, las dos cosas.*  
 yes ART two things  
 ‘Yes, both things’.
- b. *No, ni lo alquilo*  
 NEG nor PRO.OBJ.3SG.M rent.PRS.IND.1SG  
*ni lo vendo.*  
 nor PRO.OBJ.3SG.M sell.PRS.IND.1SG  
 ‘No, I’m neither renting it nor selling it.’

- c. *No, lo alquilo,*  
 NEG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M rent.PRS.IND.1SG  
*pero no lo vendo.*  
 but NEG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M sell.PRS.IND.1SG  
 'No, I'm renting it but I'm not selling it'.
- d. *No, lo vendo,*  
 NEG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M sell.PRS.IND.1SG  
*pero no lo alquilo.*  
 but NEG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M rent.PRS.IND.1SG  
 'No, I'm selling it but I'm not renting it'.

Conversely, the clauses in *o...* *o*-structures are similar to coordinate structures as regards the symmetry between operators: illocutionary force and tense are often the same in all clauses of the structure as seen in the examples above. Similarly, like coordinate structures *o...* *o*-clauses reject questioning (43b) and allow the ellipsis of non-focal elements (44). Backward-control ellipsis is also permitted, as shown in (45):

- (43) a. *O no venía*  
 or NEG come.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG  
*o llegaba tarde.*  
 or arrive.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG late  
 'Either (s)he didn't come or (s)he arrived late'.
- b. *\*¿Cuándo o no venía*  
 when or NEG come.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG  
*o llegaba \_\_i ?*  
 or arrive.IPFV.PST.IND.3SG  
 'When did s(he) either not come or arrive?'
- (44) *O está usted conmigo*  
 or be.PRS.IND.3SG PRO.3SG.POL with.me  
*o contra mí (CORPES XXI).*  
 or against me  
 'Either you are with me or against me'
- (45) *O eres o no eres*  
 or be.PRS.IND.2SG or NEG be.PRS.IND.2SG  
*de los nuestros (CORPES XXI).*  
 of ART ours  
 'Either you are or you are not one of us'.

As regards subject deletion in the case of referential identity, *o...* *o*-clauses show specific patterns that display some divergences from the restrictions observed for coordinate clauses. Specifically, if the controller of the reference appears, it occurs in an external position, outside the correlative structure and before a melodic pause (see *las cosas* in [46]). It should be noted, however, that when identical subjects are emphatic or contrastive, they can be coded in pronoun form within the correlative structure (47), i.e. the way they normally occur in wholly coordinate structures:

- (46) *Las cosas o se hacen bien*  
 ART things or PASS do.PRES.IND.3PL right  
*o no se hacen* (CORPES XXI).  
 or NEG PASS do.PRES.IND.3PL  
 ‘Things are either done right or they are not done’.

- (47) a. *O es usted*  
 or be.PRS.IND.3SG PRO.3SG.POL  
*un estúpido o (...) me*  
 ART stupid or PRO.OBJ.1SG  
*está insultando* (CORPES XXI).  
 be.AUX.PRS.IND.2SG insulting  
 ‘Either you are stupid or you are insulting me’.
- b. *O la dormían (...)*  
 or PRO.OBJ.3SG.F make.sleep.IPFV.PST.IND.3PL  
*o eran ellos*  
 or be.IPFV.PST.IND.3PL PRO.3PL.M.S  
*los que se iban a*  
 REL go.AUX.IPFV.PST.IND.3PL PRP  
*hacer compañía al difunto rey* (CORPES XXI).  
 accompany PRP+art deceased king  
 ‘Either they put her to sleep or they were the ones who were going to accompany the deceased king’.

Different subjects are also possible in *o...* *o*-structures as shown in (48)–(50). These subjects are often omitted when they are easily recoverable from discourse (48), but they can also be coded if they are part of the informative focus (see *el toro* in [49]) or if they are contrastive or emphatic pronouns (50):

- (48) *O espabilas o te*  
 or smarten.up.PRS.IND.2SG or PRO.OBJ.2SG

*espabilan.* (CORPES XXI)

smarten.up.PRS.IND.3PL

‘Either you smarten up or they smarten you up’.

- (49) *O te quitas tú*  
or PRO.OBJ.2SG move.PRS.IND.2SG PRO.2SG.S

*o te*

or PRO.OBJ.2SG

*quita el toro* (CORPES XXI).

move.PRS.IND.3SG ART bull

‘Either you move out of the way or the bull moves you out of the way’.

- (50) *O nos distribuyes*  
or PRO.OBJ.2PL distribute.PRS.IND.2SG

*tú o lo*

PRO.S.SG or PRO.OBJ.3SG.M

*hago yo* (CORPES XXI).

do.PRS.IND.1SG PRO.1SG.S

‘Either you position us or I do it’.

In summary, *o...* *o*-clauses display the properties shown in Table 2, which are contrasted against coordinate and subordinate clauses in Spanish.

## 5 An alternative analysis of *o...* *o*-clauses: Clausal cosubordination

According to several scholars, cosubordinate clauses are dependent, like subordinate clauses, but are not embedded, like coordinate clauses (see Van Valin 1984: 546; Foley and Van Valin 1984: 242; Van Valin and LaPolla 1997: 454; Van Valin 2005: 188). Furthermore, cosubordination is defined by operator dependence or conjunct illocutionary scope, as noted by Bickel (2010: 52). In particular, Van Valin (2005: 201) argues that cosubordinate clauses depend on the same matrix of clause operators, like evidentiality, status (epistemic modality, external negation), tense, and illocutionary force (Van Valin 2005: 8–11). Cosubordinate clauses also seem to denote an episode or a sequence of events showing some sort of continuity in time, space and participants (Hengeveld and Mackenzie 2008: 157).

**Table 2:** O... o-clauses vs. coordinate and subordinate clauses.

	Subordinate clauses	Coordinate clauses	O... o-clauses
<i>Imperative mood</i>	No	Yes	No
<i>Assertive illocutionary force</i>	No	Yes	No
<i>Mood dependency</i>	Yes	No	No
<i>Tense dependency</i>	Yes	No	No
<i>Subject suppression</i>	Obligatory only in some types	Obligatory (except with emphatic pronouns)	Obligatory in both clauses (except with emphatic pronouns)
<i>Free position of the linked clause</i>	Only in some types	No	Irrelevant
<i>Questioning</i>	Only in some types	No	No
<i>Ellipsis of non-focal elements</i>	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Backward-control ellipsis</i>	No	Yes	Yes

Cosubordinate clauses are commonly illustrated with medial clauses from Papuan languages (51).<sup>12</sup> Medial clauses are dependent and host verbs that lack some of the verbal categories (mainly mood) but they are not embedded. They are part of a sequence of clauses that ends with the so-called final clause, which, in contrast to medial clauses, contains a fully inflected verb that may function as a sentence. Quite often, medial verbs host a marker indicating whether the subject is co-referential with the subject of the final clause (like the sequential conjunction *-re* in [51]):

- (51) Chuave (*apud* Van Valin and LaPolla 1997: 448)  
*Yai kuba i-re kei si-re fu-m-e.*  
man stick get-SEQ.SP dog hit-SEQ.SP go-3SG-IND  
'The man got a stick, hit the dog and went away'.

<sup>12</sup> See, however, Foley (2010), who considers medial clauses from Papuan languages a subtype of coordination.



Even though Indo-European languages do not attest the sort of structures illustrated in (51), the notion of cosubordination has progressively spread to some constructions from English, French, and Spanish. For instance, Van der Auwera (1997: f. 3) suggests that mutually dependent clauses in correlative structures like *The harder you run, the sooner you will get home* are cosubordinate. For Spanish, Mora (2006: 46–47) notes in passing that juxtaposed clauses are cosubordinate, arguing that they share tense, modality, and polarity. More recently, Conti (2016: 21–22) has claimed that adversative clauses with *sino que* (restrictive *but*) are also cosubordinate: they allow the ellipsis of non-focal elements and backward-control ellipsis but reject the imperative mood and cannot be asserted independently.

Van Valin (2005) takes a more detailed look at other constructions from English and French, which he includes within clausal cosubordination. In particular, he considers clauses like *laughing loudly*, in *Pat ran down the hall laughing loudly, and bought some beer*, in *Leslie drove to the store and bought some beer*, to be cosubordinate (Van Valin 2005: 198). Notice that these clauses are prosodically dependent, suppress their subject, and depend on the operators of the previous clause.

Unlike English, in which cosubordinate clauses show internal marking of both grammatical and distributional dependency (like the occurrence of the converb in the former example and the subject suppression in the latter), Spanish clauses in *o... o*-structures are not so easily classifiable as cosubordinate: firstly, *o... o*-clauses may function as sentences outside of the correlative structure; that is to say, if we attend only to their form (leaving aside correlative markers), the clauses illustrated in Section 4.2 do not have any markers of dependency that indicate that they are defective. In addition, it is hard to imagine that fully inflected verbs like those in (36)–(50) above depend on just one matrix of clausal operators as is expected for cosubordinate clauses. In short, it seems necessary to employ additional grammatical criteria in order to demonstrate that the clauses in *o... o*-structures are both desententialized (like subordinate clauses) and not embedded (or structurally parallel, like coordinate clauses).

As shown above, *o... o*-clauses cannot express a command via the imperative mood and cannot be asserted independently. Thus, in contrast to coordinate clauses and like subordinate clauses, they are “defective” as regards illocutionary force. In addition, the fact that in most examples *o... o*-clauses share tense, mood, and illocutionary force may be evidence of their dependency on the same matrix of operators. However, it should be noted that clausal operator sharing does not always occur in *o... o*-structures. In particular, the occurrence of different tenses in examples like (52) suggests that the clauses within the structure have their own set of operators:

- (52) *O me lo*  
 or PRO.OBJ.1SG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M  
*dices por las buenas,*  
 tell.PRS.IND.2SG PRP ART good  
*o (...) me lo*  
 or PRO.OBJ.1SG PRO.OBJ.3SG.M  
*dirás por las malas. (CORPES XXI)*  
 tell.FUT.IND.2SG PRP ART bad  
 ‘Either you tell me by fair means or [you’ll tell me] by foul’.

In example (52) it is not possible to interpret both of the clauses as being dependent on the same matrix of operators, which suggests that (a) the units in the correlative structure are sentences and (b) the relationship between these sentences is not cosubordinate.<sup>13</sup>

## 6 Possible future additions to this study: Other cases of cosubordination in Spanish, with a particular focus on correlative constructions

Similarly to *o...* *o*-clauses, other correlative structures, traditionally classified as coordinate or juxtaposed, could be treated as instances of clausal cosubordination. In particular, other clauses with disjunctive or copulative correlative markers like *ni... ni* ‘neither... nor’, *bien... bien* ‘either... or’, *ya... ya* lit. ‘whether... or’, etc. (see *Ni estudia ni trabaja* ‘(S)he neither studies nor works’), as well as clauses that are part of lexical correlations (as in *Él se lo guisa y él se lo come* lit. ‘He cooks it and he eats it’ or *Uno reía, otro lloraba* ‘One was laughing, the other was crying’) are also symmetrical and desententialized: they are dependent on each other, cannot be asserted and tend to share tense, mood, and illocutionary force.

In addition, *y*-clauses in backward-control deletion structures like *El escritor redactaba \_\_\_<sub>i</sub> y revisaba las obras<sub>i</sub>* ‘(The writer wrote and reviewed his plays’), which are traditionally treated as cases of coordination, can also be classified in

<sup>13</sup> It is useful to bear in mind that, according to Van Valin (2005), cosubordination is not possible between sentences because there are no operators at the sentence level that can be shared. Van Valin (2005: 204) acknowledges that in some instances of cosubordination operator sharing is possible but not obligatory. See also Bickel (2010) and Foley (2010) for non-prototypical cases of cosubordination.

a different manner. Even though these clauses are not desententialized (in fact, they allow the imperative mood; *Limpia \_\_<sub>i</sub> y recoge tu cuarto<sub>i</sub>* 'Clean and tidy up your room'), backward deletion gives rise to a sequence of mutually dependent clauses. The former, which would hold the deleted complement, is dependent on the joint clause (see the incompleteness of *\*El escritor revisaba* 'The writer reviewed'). The latter, like other joint clauses, is also dependent from a distributional point of view (it cannot occur by itself, as seen in *\*Y revisaba las obras* 'And he reviewed his plays') and cannot be anteposed, *\*Y revisaba las obras, el escritor redactaba* 'And he reviewed the plays, the writer wrote'). Furthermore, unlike coordinate clauses these structures allow questioning: *El escritor redactaba \_\_<sub>i</sub> y revisaba las obras<sub>i</sub>, ¿Qué<sub>i</sub> redactaba y revisaba el escritor \_\_<sub>i</sub>?* ('The writer wrote and reviewed his plays', 'What did he write and review?').

In short, it seems that, in Spanish, the correlative constructions which have thus far been classified under coordination or juxtaposition display features of grammatical dependence that evince their hybrid nature. If we also take into account Spanish adversative clauses with *sino que* and restrictive *aunque*, which Conti (2016) treats as cosubordinate, then cosubordination would seem to be an interclausal relationship of enormous significance in Spanish grammar. Before this can be affirmed, however, each of the constructions highlighted must be studied in detail as many of the classification problems that still persist in grammatical studies of complex constructions in Spanish result from the use of few and often skewed examples that have not been obtained from samples of real language. Due to space constraints and for the purpose of explanatory expediency, detailed study of these constructions is beyond the scope of this paper.

Finally, it should be noted that the relevance of cosubordination in explaining and describing numerous complex Spanish constructions cannot be reduced solely to constructions originally considered coordinate or juxtaposed. Rather, it can be extended to other examples, such as the relationship between non-finite forms and main predicates in *Vi salir a María* – in which the infinitive is not a complement – and *Bajaba las escaleras llorando*, in which the gerund does not express manner.

## 7 Conclusions

*O... o*-clauses have been analyzed in the literature to date as coordinate structures, in accordance with the treatment of *o... o* as coordinating conjunctions. However, most instances of *o... o*-clauses behave differently from both coordinate and subordinate clauses. In contrast to coordinate clauses, *o... o*-clauses

show traces of desententialization: they are mutually dependent, reject the imperative mood and cannot be asserted. In contrast to Spanish subordinate clauses, *o...* *o*-clauses share illocutionary force, mood and tense. This means that, on the one hand, no clause in the structure can be interpreted as head; and on the other, all clauses are co-indexed and depend on the same matrix of clausal operators as is the case in clausal cosubordination. In summary, the fact that *o...* *o*-clauses are both desententialized and structurally parallel undoubtedly points to their special status within clause combining in Spanish.

These clauses, whose behavior is quite systematic and predictable, cannot be accounted for by traditional clause combining types. This paper has attempted to show that *o...* *o*-clauses (and probably other clauses with disjunctive or copulative correlative markers like *ni... ni* ‘neither... nor’) are most often cosubordinate, which in turn entails implicit acceptance of cosubordination as a relevant clause combining type in Spanish syntax.

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