On typological correlates and pure syntax: evidence from expletives in Romance-based creoles.

Tonjes Veenstra (Berlin)

Expletive *pro* can be seen as problematic from a conceptual point of view because a numeration should only contain material that has an effect on either the articulatory-perceptual system (PF interface) or the conceptual-intentional sytem (LF interface). Expletive *pro* cannot have an effect on the PF interface because of lack of phonetic content, and its characterization as a "filler" prevents it from having an effect on the LF interface. As such, a legitimate question to ask is whether such elements actually exist (e.g. Mohr 2004).

As noted by Chomsky in a number of recent publications (e.g. 2000, 2001a, 2001b), the investigation of expletives cross-linguistically has been pivotal in recent research because they are, in a sense, manifestations of pure syntax, virtually devoid of meaning yet satisfying requirements of EPP and Case. Therefore, we focus on expletive constructions in Romance-based creoles in order to find out what these languages can tell us about typological correlates of pure syntactic properties that have been proposed in the literature.

With respect to the first issue, data from Papiamentu unequivocally shows that this language does exhibit an expletive *pro* (see also Kihm (1994) on Kriyol, and Baptista (2002) on Cape Verdean). The effects this element has on the interface systems involve a low position for the subject in these languages (otherwise well-known for their rigid word order) and a definiteness effect on the associate.

Having established the existence of expletive *pro*, we now turn to the profiles and typology of null subject (NS) languages. As is well-known from the typological literature (e.g. Gilligan 1987), the classical NS profile in the sense of Rizzi (1982) does not stand up to typological exam. A comparison of different Romance-based creoles only reinforces this point. But, as noted in Haider (2001) and Kaiser (2004), both van der Auwera (1984) and Gilligan (1987) state that only the correlation between *pro-drop* and the lack of subject expletives holds without any exception. In an AGR-free framework (Chomsky 1995, Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 1998, etc.) the syntax of expletive constructions in Papiamentu provide strong evidence against this absolute correlation. Only if we treat pronouns as independent Agreement heads licensing null subjects (see Veenstra (1994) for Saramaccan), one can save this correlation. This, in turn, implies that one has to come up with an extended and thoroughly reorganized typology of NS languages.

Another typological generalization, posited by Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (2001, 2006) concerns the placement of arguments by Spell-Out, centering the discussion on principles that force arguments to leave the VP across languages. The empirical domain they cover consists of constructions where subject movement is not required for reasons related to the Extended Projection Principle, expletive constructions being one of them. In these environments, one of the arguments must vacate the VP. They argue that argument externalization is related to Case Theory. Data from Papiamentu cast doubt on the claim that the Subject-in-Situ generalization should be accounted for in terms of Case Theory. In the approach of Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (2001), it is crucial that NP and PP arguments pattern differently, since only the former are dependent on the *v*-V complex for their Case. In Papiamentu NP and PP arguments do not exhibit different patterns. In both cases the subject-in-situ option is not possible. This is a strong argument against the Case-theoretic approach. Furthermore, PP arguments and PP adjuncts do pattern differently. Only in the latter case, the subject can remain in

situ. This indicates that the argument/adjunct distinction is an important factor in the analysis of expletive constructions in Papiamentu.

In addition, the discussion allows us to make the following points. First, Papiamentu has verb movement, although it has no affixal TMA markers (Baptista 2000). This argues against the correlation between "rich" Agreement and verb movement (cf. Bobaljik 2001). It also shows that there is much more variation between creole languages wrt verb movement: (i) movement to a high position in the I-domain (presumably T, e.g. Cape Verdean); (ii) movement to a low position in the I-domain (presumably Asp, e.g. Berbice Dutch); (iii) movement to a high position in the lexical domain (presumably Pred, e.g. Papiamentu, Kriyol); (iv) no verb movement at all (e.g. Saramaccan). Second, the behavior of serial verbs in expletive constructions shows that one has to distinguish two types of them in Papiamentu: compound and syntactically built serial verb constructions. Data from predicate cleft constructions show the same effect.

Data from Papiamentu

(1)   a.   A zona un bos.
        INDEF
              ASP sound DET voice
              'There was a voice.'
        b.   *(Di repente) a zona e bos (nan).   *DEF
              suddenly ASP sound DET voice PL

Transitivity restriction

(2)   a.   Den Yanuari hopi hende ta pasa eksamen.   Expl
S V O

              P January many people ASP pass exam
              'In January, many people pass their exam.'
        b.   *Den Yanuari ta pasa hopi hende eksamen.   *Expl
V S O

              P January ASP pass many people exam
        c.   *Den Yanuari ta pasa eksamen hopi hende.   *Expl
V O S

              P January ASP pass exam many people

PP-adjuncts and inherently Case-marked (but non-argumental) NPs are possible

(3)   a.   Riba e isla aki ta bini hopi hende <u>ku vakashon</u>.   Expl
              V S PP$_{ADJ}$
              LOC DET island DEM ASP come many people P vacation
              'On this island, many people come on vacation.'
        b.   Den Yanuari ta bai hopi hende <u>Korsow</u>.   Expl
              V S NP$_{+CASE}$
              P January ASP go many people Curaçoa
              'In January, many people go to Curaçoa.'

*Argumental PPs are **not** possible*

(4)   a.   Na skol, algun stüdent so ta skucha loke mener/jùfrou ta bisa.
              P school few pupil just ASP listen to=WH teacher ASP say
              At school there are just a few pupils listening to what the teacher says.'
        b.   *Na skol, ta skucha algun stüdent so loke mener/jùfrou ta bisa.   *Expl
              V S PP$_{ARG}$
              P school ASP listen few pupil just to=WH teacher ASP say
         c.   *Na skol, ta skucha loke mener / jùfrou ta bisa algun stüdent so   *Expl
              V PP$_{ARG}$ S
              P school ASP listen to=WH teacher ASP say few pupil just

Serial Verb Constructions

(5)   a.   Den Yanuari ta **bula bai** hopi hende Korsow.
              P January A fly go many people Curacao.
              'In January, many people fly to Curacao.'
        b.   *Den Yanuari ta **bula** hopi hende **bai** Korsow.
              P January A fly many people go Curacao.

(6)   a.   *Den kaso di kandela ta **kore sali** hopi hende for di sino.
                 P case P fire A run leave many people P DET cinema
        b.   Den kaso di kandela ta **kore** hopi hende **sali** for di sino.
                 P case P fire A run many people leave P DET cinema
                 'In case there is fire, many people run out of the cinema.'

Predicate Cleft
(7)   a.   Ta **bula bai** nos ta **bula bai** Hulandes.
                 A fly go 1PL A fly go the Netherlands
                 'We flew to the Netherlands (as opposed to go by boat).'
        b.   *Ta **kore sali** nos ta **kore sali** for di sino.
                 A run leave 1PL A run leave P DET cinema

References

Alexiadou, A. & E. Anagnostopoulou (1998) "Parametrizing AGR: Word Order, Verb-movement and EPP checking." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 16.3: 491-539.

Alexiadou, A. & E. Anagnostopoulou (2001) "The Subject-in-Situ Generalization and the Role of Case in Driving Computations." *Linguistic Inquiry* 32.2, 193-231.

Alexiadou, A. & E. Anagnostopoulou (2006) The Subject-In-Situ Generalization Revisited. To appear in Uli Sauerland & Hans-Martin Gärtner (eds) *Interfaces + Recursion = Language? Chomsky's Minimalism and the View from Syntax and Semantics*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.

Baptista, M. (2000) "Verb movement in four Creole Languages: a comparative analysis." In J. McWhorter (ed.) *Language Change and Language Contact in Pidgins and Creoles*, 1-34. John Benjamins, Amsterdam.

Baptista, M. (2002) *The Syntax of Cape Verdean Creole: The Sotavento varieties*. Amsterdam, John Benjamins.

Bobaljik, J. (2001) The rich agreement hypothesis in review. Ms., McGill University.

Chomsky, N. (1995) *The Minimalist Program*. MIT Press, Cambridge.

Chomsky, N. (2000) "Minimalist inquiries: The framework". In: Martin, R., Michaels, D.& Uriagereka, J. (eds.) *Step by Step. Essays on Minimalist Syntax in Honor of Howard Lasnik*, 89-151. MIT Press, Cambridge.

Chomsky, N. (2001) "Derivation by Phase". In: Kenstowicz, M. (ed.). *Ken Hale: A Life in Language*, 1-52. MIT Press, Cambridge.

Gilligan, G. (1987) A Cross-Linguistic Approach to the Pro-Drop Parameter. Doctoral dissertation, USC, Los Angeles.

Haider, H. (2001) "Parametrisierung in der Generativen Grammatik", Haspelmath, M., E. König, W. Oestereicher & W. Raible (eds.): *Language Typology and Language Universals*. Volume I. 283-293. de Gruyter, Berlin.

Kaiser, G. (2004) "Overt and empty expletives in French". Paper presented at the Colloquium "Expletive Subjects in Romance and Germanic Languages", Universität Konstanz, 11. - 13. November 2004.

Kihm, A. (1994) *Kriyol Syntax*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam

Mohr, S. (2004) *Clausal Architecture and Subject Positions*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam.

Rizzi, L. (1982) *Issues in Italian Syntax*. Foris, Dordrecht.

Van der Auwera, J. (1984) "Subject vs. non-subject asymmetries in the relativization of embedded NP's". In: W. de Geest & Y. Putseys (eds.), *Sentential complementation*, 257-269. Foris, Dordrecht.

Veenstra, T. (1994) "The Acquisition of Functional Categories: The Creole Way", In D. Adone and I. Plag (Eds.), *Creolization and Language Change,* 99-115. Max Niemeyer, Tübingen.