

# In Search of the Spanish Personal Infinitive

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One of the most striking syntactic peculiarities found in certain dialects of Spanish is the use of the verbal infinitive with preposed expressed subject following a preposition, instead of the more usual combination of a subordinate clause with subjunctive verbal element:

- (1) a. *cuando me empezaron a dar trabajo para yo hacer maquinilla*  
"When they began to give me work, for me to make shavers"  
b. *Pasó antes de yo mudarme para acá*  
"That happened before I moved here"  
c. *Se trata de tú ir y decirles*  
"It's a matter of your going and telling them"

Such combinations are not attested in normative or descriptive Spanish grammar manuals (Hernanz Carbó 1982: 343), are neither taught nor acknowledged in courses in Spanish as a second language throughout the world, and are rarely commented in Spanish-speaking societies. Curiously, constructions such as the ones just given are as commonplace and unremarkable in some regions as they are bizarre and unacceptable in others, which is doubtless responsible for both the controversy and the silence which alternately surrounds this use of the infinitive with expressed subject. In general, the subject of the infinitive does not have to be coreferential or logically related to any other element of the sentence as in (1a).<sup>1</sup>

Broadly speaking, constructions like (1) are most common in the Caribbean dialects of Spanish, including Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Venezuelan, Panamanian and coastal Colombian.<sup>2</sup> There is evidence of

sporadic usage in Golden Age Spanish (Keniston 1937: 550), and as a marginal form in contemporary Spanish dialects other than in the Caribbean region (Kany 1960: 126, Toscano Mateus 1953: 260, Alonso 1964: 266), in the latter cases usually associated with popular speech registers. My personal research suggests that the geographical distribution is somewhat broader, as shown by the following examples:

- (2) **Trinidad** (Lipski 1985c, Moodie 1973, Thompson 1957):  
*Anteh de ella casá (casarse)*  
 "before she got married"  
*pa un hombre hacé la vida*  
 "so that a man can get by in life"  
*quieren eso pa ello poné sobre su casabe*  
 "they want it for them to put on their casabe"  
*pa una mujé hacé hijo*  
 "for a woman to have a baby"
- (3) **Louisiana isleño Spanish:**<sup>3</sup>  
*Eso no é pa loh pato poné lo huevo*  
 "that's not so that ducks can lay their eggs"  
*El pagaba pa gente dí en la cubierta*  
 "he paid people to go out on the deck"  
*Era difícil para yo jablar con eso niñoh ingleses*  
 "it was hard for me to talk with those American kids"  
*Para tí tené un bote tieneh que ser sosedano americano*  
 "in order for you to have a boat, you have to be an American citizen"
- (4) **Other Latin American:**  
*saber lo que es bueno y lo que es malo para yo no decidir por mí misma*  
 "to know what is right and wrong so that I can decide for myself" (Guadalajara, Mexico)  
*Me invitaron por mi papá estar en el magistrado*  
 "I was invited because my father was a judge" (Buga, Colombia)  
*Para usted sacar cualquier cosa del Carchi*  
 "for you to move anything out of Carchi" (Carchi, Ecuador)

- Yo simplemente vine a ponerme en contacto con ellos, para yo saber*  
 "I just came to get in contact with them, to find out" (Tegucigalpa, Honduras)  
*Es cuestión de la gente organizarse*  
 "it's a matter of people organizing" (Asunción, Paraguay)  
*la falta de facilidades para ellos practicar*  
 "the lack of facilities for them to practice"  
*es una forma de los padres estar en los deportes*  
 "it's a way for parents to participate in sports"  
*me daba la oportunidad de yo comunicarme en mi idioma*  
 "it gave me the chance to communicate in my language" (Ovalle, Chile)  
*El profesor quiere para mí hablar siempre en español*  
 "The teacher always wants me to speak Spanish" (vestigial Cuban-American, Lipski 1985c).
- (5) **Spain/Canary Islands/Philippines** (Lipski 1985c, 1987b, Forthcoming a):<sup>4</sup>  
*Pa yo sacá*  
 "for me to take" [El Hierro]  
*Pa usted llevar*  
 "for you to carry" [El Hierro]  
*dinero pa uno comprá*  
 "money for one to buy" [La Gomera]  
*no me queda mah remedio que cada uno libraloh como puédamos*  
 "there's no choice but for each one of us to free himself the best he can"  
*pero pa yo dir a ber un partido d'ehto no bengo mah nunca*  
 "but for me to go and see another match like this, I'll not come ever again" [Tenerife (Lorenzo Ramos (1976: 87, 93))]  
*Ante de yo ver*  
 "before I saw" [Motril, Granada]  
*quieren para los alumnos aprender sólo el pilipino*  
 "they want the students to only learn Tagalog" (Philippines)

- (6) **Spanish/Portuguese creoles:**<sup>5</sup>  
*quiere le para bo ayudá kanamon*  
 "he wants you to help us" (Philippine Creole Spanish)  
*mi ta desea pa bo bini cerca mi awenochi*  
 "I want you to come to me tonight" (Papiamentu)  
*ele á kelé p'í jugá ku moná ele*  
 "she wants me to play with her children" (Palenquero)  
*una luta política pa nó pidi tuga no independensia pa ka nó impregá arma*  
 "a political struggle to ask Portugal for independence without our having to take up arms" (Guinea-Bissau creole)  
*sandê luz, sã pa vós pôde olá*  
 "turn on the light so you can see" (Macau creole)  
*pa yo jasé uno pintura*  
 "for me to paint a picture" (Afro-Cuban ca. 1860)  
*êl falá pâl fkâ*  
 "he told him/her to stay" (Cape Verde creole)  
*ele ja fazê cabeça chomá com nós bai brincá*  
 "he called to us to come play" (Malacca creole Portuguese)  
*eu mais não dá casião per elle per fallá minha culpas*  
 "I give him no more chance to mention my faults" (19th century Ceylon creole Portuguese)  
*desa-m pa m-ba pe sô*  
 "let me go to town" (São Tomé creole)  
*naxiolo fe pa m'an saf*  
 "I hope I am not" (Annobon creole)
- (7) **Spanish child language** (Gili Gaya 1960, 1972, Hernández Piña 1984, Canellada 1968-70):  
*Eso es para tú ayudar*  
 "that is for you to help"  
*Para yo andar contigo*  
 "for me to go with you"

Within contemporary syntactic theory, Suñer (1986) interprets such combinations as the result of weakening of AGR in infinitival clauses, thus placing a lexical subject of the infinitive (instead of the more usual PRO) in a position not subject to government. This status is in turn related to other observed characteristics of Caribbean Spanish dialects, including high fre-

quency of normally redundant subject pronouns caused by loss of word-final consonants,<sup>6</sup> or non-inversion of the fundamental subject-verb nucleus, such as in WH-questions (Lipski 1977, Lantolf 1980, Núñez Cedeño 1983): *¿Qué tú quieres?* "What do you want?" However, the lack of total coincidence among presence of non-inverted questions, infinitives with lexical subjects and weakening of syllable- and word-final consonants in Latin America casts a certain measure of doubt on the necessary connection among these phenomena.<sup>7</sup>

Given the partial intersection between various Spanish, creole and Portuguese dialects, it is profitable to address the issue of the Portuguese inflected infinitive, whose syntactic combinatory possibilities are virtually identical to those of the Spanish infinitive with lexical subject, except for the lack of morphological inflection in the latter case. Brakel (1980) concludes that the optional nature of subject postposing and subject upgrading in Portuguese vs. the obligatory nature of these transformations in Spanish is responsible for the lack of an inflected infinitive in the latter language. In Portuguese, when these transformations are not applied "the canonical pattern of the embedded sentence remains and the infinitive, because it occurs in an SVO construction, must be inflected" (90). This in turn is related to the fact that Spanish provides more syntactic resources for differentiating subject and object, including the "personal *a*" and totally distinct sets of pronouns, unlike many popular varieties of Portuguese, where "subject" pronouns are used as objects. Brakel concludes that "the construction NP + VP (Subject + Verb) is an endocentric entity which compels verbs to agree in person and number with their subject" (90).<sup>8</sup>

Remaining purely within the Spanish language, we search for a possible route of evolution that would result in infinitives with lexical subjects. Suñer (1986: 194) observes that such constructions are overwhelmingly most frequent following the preposition *para*, but feels this is merely due to the status of *para* as the most frequent introducer of normal infinitival clauses in Spanish. However, combinations with *para* + object pronoun are equally common in Spanish, and in conjunction with infinitival constructions, give rise to:

- (8) *es difícil para mí hacer eso*  
 "it is hard for me to do that"

In such sentences, *para* is not causative but rather benefactive, the "subject" of *hacer* is impersonal PRO, and the prepositional phrase may be displaced away from the infinitive:

- (9) para mí es difícil hacer eso/es difícil hacer eso para mí

However, such a combination involves a pivotal ambiguity, which in weakly monitored situations such as child language and isolated vestigial speech (Dorian 1977, Chaudenson 1978, Romaine 1984), can pass to the next stage, use of the infinitive with objective case "subject," as in the *isleño* example *para tí tené un hote ...* "for you to have a boat ..." Nonstandard Brazilian Portuguese exhibits identical cases of pivotal ambiguity, this time using objective case subjects of true personal infinitives (Sabatini 1984: 247, Amaral 1955: 75):

- (10) *ela trouxe um livro para mim [eu] comprar*  
 "she brought a book for me to buy"  
*êle trouxe unas fruta pra mim comê*  
 "he brought some fruit for me to eat"

Once the objective pronoun or (uninflected) noun is reinterpreted as the subject of the infinitive, a grammatical tension is set up between the case-assignment of the preposition, demanding oblique case, and the analysis of the pronoun as subject of S (i.e. the infinitive), requiring nominative case; the latter appears to always predominate except in vestigial speech, possibly influenced by English, since the combination pronoun + infinitive (i.e. S) is reinterpreted as the object of the preposition. At this point, the reanalysis can be extended to other prepositions, resulting in the widespread appearance of infinitives with nominative case "subjects".

The preceding remarks have postulated one likely route of internally-motivated evolution of infinitives with preposed subjects in Spanish, but the geographical distribution in contemporary Spanish dialects suggests dialect mixing and external influences as well. The Canary Island background is particularly strong in the island nations of the Caribbean, whence the influence was gradually transmitted to mainland regions. Ultimately, the Galician-Portuguese element may be equally as important, either via the intermediate stage of Canary Island transfer, or through use of some variety of Portuguese as a maritime lingua franca for several centuries. Also important is the possible pidgin/creole influence, for the nations in question are precisely those in which Afro-Hispanic linguistic contacts were most prolonged, and where incontrovertible evidence exists of prolonged use of Spanish-based creoles or at least pidgins, both in the earliest periods of colonization and following the last massive importation of slaves as the result of the 19th century sugar plantation boom (Alvarez Nazario 1974, Othegu

1975, Perl 1982, Lipski 1986b, 1987c). It is not to be expected that creole languages strongly influenced educated Spanish in the nations in which creole-speaking slaves and laborers were imported, but such language behavior would reinforce already existing incipient tendencies, and would filter upward via direct contacts with creole and nonstandard Spanish speakers. The appearance of constructions based on infinitives with preposed lexical subjects in nearly all Romance-based creoles underscores the unmarked, a fact which is corroborated by the observation of similar structures in child language. In the Hispanic Caribbean, the orientation of the local and regional economies toward cash-crop production was often incompatible with the establishment of a local educated form of "received speech". Attitudinal questions may have come into play, as Spanish speakers from more prestigious regions, then as now, regarded the Caribbean territories as "backward" and "ill-spoken", at the same time making no attempt to acknowledge legitimate linguistic innovations found in these areas. Finally, the potpourri of non-standard varieties of Spanish, including pidgin/creole Spanish, would be favored by conditions of linguistic abandonment and the pressure to adopt maximally usable common denominators.

Before concluding, we return briefly to the syntactic analysis of "personal" infinitive constructions in contemporary Spanish. I have suggested that constructions such as (1)-(3) have several sources in Latin American Spanish, including Canary Island influence, carryover of an archaic Spanish form, and possible pidgin/creole structures, as well as spontaneous generation. In every case, what were at one time sociolinguistically marginal regions and/or those characterized by contacts with other languages and with non-native varieties of Spanish resulted in an originally substandard construction being incorporated into the regional standard. It is appropriate to search not for an explanation within established grammatical patterns of standard Spanish, but rather for the addition of a syntactic subcomponent which potentially uses different rules and/or constraints, to handle the incorporation of extra-standard forms. In essence, we have a hybrid grammar, such as is found in creole continua where speakers variably alter syntactic structures using fundamentally different parameters, in order to produce the range of structures spanning the gap between basolect and acrolect. Bilingual code-switching between highly similar languages (e.g. Spanish and Portuguese, Galician, Catalan or Italian) produces similar

results, at times stabilizing in such combinations as Galician *castrapo*, Uruguayan *fronterizo* and Argentine *cocoliche*. If the influence of nonstandard, foreign and pidginized varieties of Spanish was instrumental in adjoining constructions such as (1) to Caribbean Spanish grammar and sporadically in other dialects, then we should look for characterizations which make maximal use of universal grammar, i.e. maximally unmarked configurations which may be acquired by the child and the adult second-language learner through a minimal exposure to a corpus of standard Spanish.

In the innovative counterproposal of Suñer (1986), which implicitly recognizes the need to go beyond standard Spanish grammatical constraints, nominative case is assigned to the subject of the infinitive not by INFL but rather by the simple juxtaposition of constituents. Based on the assumption that constructions like (1) result from maximally unmarked processes, I very tentatively propose an even more radical extension of this proposal, namely:

- (11) a. replace PRO by [NP, +lexical]; or, equivalently:  
b. adjoin [NP, +lexical] to any Infinitive

PRO, which is the usual "subject" of infinitives, is by definition ungoverned and caseless, hence (11) represents a potential violation of the Case Filter for Spanish. In this instance, I suggest that the element inserted by (11) is maximally unmarked, and that at the time of case assignment, universal principles assign the case marking associated with unmarked case in Spanish, which is nominative.<sup>9</sup> In support of this proposal, we consider other examples of lexically specified elements occurring as the subject of isolated infinitives, and then evidence that nominative case is maximally unmarked in Spanish.

Most varieties of Spanish permit a lexical subject of infinitives in exclamatory or admiring expressions; the subject may be preposed or postposed (Ramsey and Spaulding 1956: 352-55, Gili Gaya 1961: 188-9, Neale-Silva and Nelson 1967: 94-5):

- (12) ¿yo hacer eso?  
"Me do that?!"

Weakly monitored or nonstandard (particularly Caribbean) Spanish provides many examples following *al* or standing alone (Suñer 1986: 197, Toscano Mateus 1953: 268, Morales 1986: 73):

- (13) *bueno, yo oír la música la disfruto muchísimo*  
"well, for me to listen to music, I enjoy it a lot"  
*pues al yo casarme y no tener hijos*  
"upon getting married, and not having children"  
*vaya, que me entiendan y yo entender*  
"you know, for them to understand me and for me to understand" (Cuban)

Nonstandard Dominican Spanish is noted for its use of the neuter pronoun *ello* as the subject of impersonal sentences, and in other null subject slots (Henríquez Ureña 1939, 1940: 226-8):<sup>10</sup>

- (14) *ello hay maíz*  
"There is corn"  
*ello es fácil llegar*  
"It is easy to get there"

In support of the unmarked status of nominative case in Spanish, we observe that pleonastic or annexed pronouns, whether or not coreferential with an element of the matrix sentence, are invariably in nominative case:

- (15) *Yo, lo que pienso es que...*  
"Me, what I think is..."  
*Tú, lo que te conviene es...*  
"What's good for you is..."  
*Es imposible vivir aquí, tú/vos*  
"It's impossible to live here [you understand]" (Haverkate 1984: 108-9)

In nonstandard Spanish, nominative case (usually in the first person singular, *yo*) frequently replaces oblique case, as object of preposition or as (redundant) indirect object (Padrón 1948, Kany 1960: 99):

- (16) *Yo me gusta escuchar música*  
"I like to listen to music"  
*Se rieron de yo*  
"They laughed at me"

Evidence from Spanish child language, where nominative case pronouns are usually the first to appear (Hernández Piña 1984: 241, Gili Gaya 1960: 22), and from Spanish-based creoles, where nominative case pronouns appear as the maximally unmarked element,<sup>11</sup> extended across the entire paradigm, round out the demonstration of nominative case as unmarked in

Spanish; this contrasts with English, where presumably because of the quasi-clitic nature of subject pronouns, it is the objective case which often appears as more unmarked:

- (17) *Me, I don't believe that*  
*Him and me are going to the store*  
*I'm too cold. Me too!*

Naturally, (11) must be restricted, since not every PRO-slot permits adjoining a lexical subject:

- (18) *Juan quiere (\*María/ella) salir*  
 "John wants \*(Mary/her) to go"  
*Juan no sabe (cómo) (\*María/ella) hacer una torta de fresas*  
 "John doesn't know how \*(Mary/her) to make a strawberry cake"

The ultimate determination of restrictions will involve the syntactic peculiarities of individual verbs, including  $\theta$ -role assignment, obligatory control and in general semantic coherence. From a purely distributional standpoint, at least the following hierarchy of contexts must be specified:

- (19) a. prep [<sub>S</sub> Ø [<sub>S</sub> PRO Infinitive ... ]]  
 b. [<sub>S</sub> Ø [<sub>S</sub> PRO Infinitive ...]] where S' is the matrix sentence  
 c. verb [<sub>S</sub> 0 [<sub>S</sub> PRO Infinitive ...]].

If we accept the possibility of S'-deletion in the context [+V\_\_\_] (cf. Bouchard 1984: 166-7) then (19c) can be reformulated as:

- (19) d. verb [<sub>S</sub> PRO Infinitive ...]

Alternatively, it may be possible to use the criterion of an accessible subject and/or a filled COMP node to generally exclude cases like (18). In any event, (19a) covers cases like (1), including *al*, while (19b) accounts for (12)-(13). A further subdivision may be necessary, since while sentences like (12) are heard in all Spanish-speaking areas, sentences like (13) are more nonstandard, since more is involved than a simple NP + Infinitive tag. (19c), which would generate sentences like (18), is not part of the grammar of any dialect of Spanish; it is a transitional stage in Spanish child language and figures prominently in many varieties of Spanish "foreigner talk", including those representing English interference.<sup>12</sup>

Infinitives with lexical subjects are normally regarded as a highly marked configuration (van Riemsdijk and Smith 1986: 136), carrying a higher "cost" in the language learning environment. This is undoubtedly

true within a fully ramified grammar, since the recoverability system is unduly strained, but (11)/(19) operates at a para-grammatical level, automatically generating an S-node via the juxtaposition of maximally unmarked elements: a nominative case NP and an infinitive.<sup>13</sup> Global markedness conventions are then responsible for providing appropriate case and infinitive markings. This type of rule, which completely bypasses systematic case marking,  $\theta$ -role assignment, control and government and generates S-structure by brute force, is much too powerful to serve as a template for constructing an entire grammar, except for the most rudimentary pidgin or transitory interlanguage. However, natural languages permit occasional introduction of formally unparseable or nonrecoverable strings, which resemble those found in child speech and pidgin/creole language. Such examples may only be "generated" by postulating rules which break other rules: at such point as corrective feedback and social monitoring relaxes to accept these combinations into everyday speech, we must revise our formal descriptions to include some type of exceptional phonological, lexical or syntactic marking.

In Caribbean Spanish dialects where adjunction of lexical subjects to infinitives is the rule rather than the exception, it is quite likely that this construction has become parameterized. Within contemporary syntactic theory, there is growing evidence that in the INFL node, the parameters Agr and Tense should be separated, giving rise to four possible configurations (e.g. Raposo 1987, Vinet 1985, Picallo 1984, Reuland 1983). The Portuguese inflected infinitive is generally specified as [-Tense, +Agr] (Raposo 1987: 92-3, Picallo 1984: 81-2), a configuration which is also associated with the Spanish/Portuguese subjunctive and, in English, with nominative absolute (-ing) constructions (Reuland 1983: 126-7). We propose that in Caribbean Spanish, the combination [-Tense, +Agr] eventually comes to characterize nominative subjects of infinitives (thus providing proper government and case assignment in the usual fashion, since Agr is assumed to assign nominative case: Chomsky 1981: 170), with Agr given a null realization. This analysis brings the constructions in (1) in line with parallel examples involving the Spanish subjunctive or the Portuguese personal infinitive, also specified [-Tense, +Agr]: lack of overt agreement follows from the lack of available morphological machinery in Spanish to effect such inflection.<sup>14</sup> In defense of a [+Agr] specification with no overt realization, we note that in nonstandard, weakly monitored, vestigial, isolated and creolized varieties of Spanish, as well as among speakers who

have learned Spanish as a second language through natural immersion, there is evidence for partial erosion of verbal agreement, asymptotically approaching the third person singular form (cf. Lipski 1985c):

- (20) *yo bailo y come [como]*  
 “I sing and dance”  
*viene [vienen] mis tíos del rancho d’él*  
 “my aunt and uncle come from his [sic] ranch”  
*yo tiene [tengo] cuarenta ocho año*  
 “I am 48 years old”  
*yo no sabe [sé] bien*  
 “I don’t know very well”  
*nosotros saben [sabemos] trabajá junto*  
 “we know how to work together”  
*cuando vino [vinieron] los japoneses*  
 “when the Japanese came”  
*Omar y yo no eh [somos] mucho amigo*  
 “Omar and I are not good friends”  
*mi mamá y mi papá eh [son] bueno*  
 “my parents are good”  
*esos pajaritos se metió [metieron] adentro*  
 “those birds got inside”  
*ellos fue [fueron] allá*  
 “they went there”

Also observed is the analogical movement of /n/ as a plural marker to clitic pronouns attached to infinitives, imperatives, etc.: *díganle* > *dígalen* “tell him”, *callense* > *callesen* “be quiet”, *antes de sentarse(n)* “before [they] sit down”, which is structurally similar to the Portuguese inflected infinitive (Kany 1960: chap. 4, Malkiel 1973). On the other side of the balance, in situations where Hispanic creole languages are undergoing partial decreolization through contact with contemporary varieties of Spanish, conjugated verb forms alternate with the uninflected (infinitive-based) stem in the constructions under study: this may be observed in Papiamentu, Colombian Palenquero (Friedmann and Patiño Rosselli 1983, Megenney 1986) and Philippine Creole Spanish (Lipski 1987a, 1987b). In all these examples, weakening of the overt signalling of Agr is not the result of accidental phonetic erosion, as in the Caribbean cases surveyed above, but of the choice of the morphologically least marked member of the respective verbal paradigm.

It is unlikely that constructions like (1) arose completely spontaneously in the Caribbean, since they are found in early Spanish and among the Galician Canary Island dialects which had a strong impact on the formation of Caribbean Spanish. The interlocking influence of regional and local Spanish varieties, of African bozal and pidginized speech, of sociolinguistic drift, and of contact with other Caribbean-based languages, provide some of the pieces, which must be considered in any overall solution.

### Notes

1. Morales (1986: 73-88, 101-14) has suggested that in Puerto Rican Spanish fluent Spanish speakers prefer a coreferential subject of the infinitive as in (1a) (given by Morales), while noncoreferential infinitive subjects, usually representing an avoidance of subjunctive clauses, are preferred by speakers with strong English interference. In other dialects, this observation does not appear to hold, since noncoreferential subjects of infinitives occur as freely as “redundant” lexical subjects (although Bentivoglio 1987 suggests a disambiguating function for many examples of *para* + lexical subject + infinitive).
2. Sources of information include: Alvarez Nazario (1972, 1974, 1982), Cuervo (1947), Flórez (1946, 1965), Henríquez Ureña (1940), Jiménez Sabater (1975), Kany (1960), Lipski (1985a, 1985b), Lorenzo Ramos (1976), Mondéjar (1970), Morales (1986), Navarro Tomás (1948), Padrón (1948, 1949).
3. MacCurdy (1950), Lipski (1985c, 1986a, Forthcoming b). Currently, the grammatical influence of English is considerable among the *isleños*, the youngest of whom speak little or no English, and even the oldest community residents, who were raised speaking little or no English, now commonly transfer English syntactic patterns over to Spanish on those occasions when they use the latter language (Lipski Forthcoming a). Nonetheless, even those *isleños* who evidence no substantial interference from English use combinations of infinitive with expressed subject in examples such as the ones just given, leading to the supposition that this mode of speaking is not a recent Anglicism or spontaneous innovation, but rather part of the original linguistic heritage of the *isleños*.
4. Similar constructions are found in Galician Spanish, perhaps through bilingual interference from Galician, which does permit constructions involving both the personal infinitive and an uninflected infinitive with preposed subject (Carballo Calero 1966: 309-12, Porto Dapena 1977: 197). The Galician/Portuguese influence was very strong in the Canary Islands (Torres Stinga 1981, Pérez Vidal 1944, 1965), and also in the Hispanic Caribbean, where *gallegos* and *isleños* made up the bulk of 19th century and early 20th century immigrants (Hernández García 1981, Alvarez Nazario 1972). In other areas of Spain, such constructions are rare, although Gili Gaya (1961: 189) states that “no es rara, sin embargo, en la lengua hablada, la construcción *sin yo saberlo*.”
5. For Chabacano, cf. Lipski (1987a, 1987b), Frake (1980). For Papiamentu, Goilo (1972:70-72); for Palenquero, Friedmann and Patiño Rosselli (1983: 173); for Guinea-Bissau, Scantamburlo (1981: 85); for Macau, Ferreira (1978: 37); for Afro-Cuban, Cruz

- (1974: 241); for Cape Verde, Lopes (1957: 187); for Malacca, Silva Rego (1943: 15); for Ceylon, Dalgado (1900: 111); for São Tomé, Ferraz (1978: 246); for Annobon, Barrera (1957: 53). French-based creoles exhibit similar configurations (although the preposition has usually been reinterpreted as a complementizer), as exemplified by Haitian creole (Koopman and Lefebvre 1981: 204): *li difisil pu m fe sa* "it is difficult for me to do this".
6. This situation occurs in fact in many varieties of Andalusian Spanish (Mondéjar 1970), and is incipient in some regions of the Canary Islands (Alvar 1959, 1972, Lorenzo Ramos 1976, Lipski Forthcoming a); in both instances, reliance on explicit subject pronouns as well as increased dependence on context, prevents any large-scale disruption of normal communication. See also Hochberg (1986), Morales (1986: 73-114), Poplack (1979, 1980, 1981), Ferrell (1977, 1979).
  7. Unlike combinations involving infinitives with expressed subjects, non-inverted questions are not found in all Caribbean Spanish dialects: they are less common in Venezuela, virtually nonexistent in Colombia and are only starting to penetrate Panamanian Spanish. Louisiana *isleno* Spanish makes frequent use of non-inverted WH-questions, as do rural dialects of the Canary Islands, and in all these dialects may ultimately result from Galician-Portuguese influence, since Galician and Portuguese dialects routinely use non-inverted questions. Among Hispanic creole dialects, non-inverted questions are the rule rather than the exception, suggesting both a preference for a uniform word order for statements and questions, and a possible earlier Spanish and/or Portuguese source where non-inverted questions were commonplace.
  8. Naturally, constructions such as those found in Caribbean Spanish (which Brakel does not acknowledge for any variety of Spanish) violate the above constraint, and should logically force some type of inflection on the Spanish infinitive, which of course never occurs. The reasons are most probably a direct result of historical evolution, since the Portuguese inflected infinitive did not arise spontaneously, but rather assumed the forms of an earlier Latin subjunctive (variously imperfect or perfect) and has been used since the earliest stages of the Portuguese language. Moreover, in regular verbs, the inflected infinitive coincides with the future subjunctive, and the first and third person singular forms are also identical with the uninflected infinitive, thus providing considerable morphological ambiguity. Spanish abandoned these Latin paradigms, and assuming that constructions with lexical subjects of infinitives are relative latecomers in Spanish syntactic evolution, there was no ready paradigm to be revitalized.
  9. In effect, this could be considered a type of "quirky case" assignment as found in some other languages; cf. Bouchard (1984: 192) and the references therein.
  10. Suñer (1982: 344-51) has given interesting arguments in favor of considering sentences with impersonal *haber* as not containing PRO but rather a null subject  $\emptyset$ .
  11. The exceptions are creoles with a Portuguese base, including Papiamentu, Palenquero and the earliest (15th century) Afro-Hispanic texts, influenced by continental Afro-Portuguese speech. All these languages, as well as the less decreolized Portuguese creoles, use the disjunctive pronouns (*a)mí*, (*a)bos*, etc. This may well be due to the fact that in Portuguese, unlike Spanish, subject pronouns may be unstressed, e.g. quasi-clitic (cf. Zubizarreta 1982: 93). In French, subject pronouns are always unstressed, and thus all French creoles have adapted disjunctive pronouns for the entire paradigm.

12. Bouchard (1984: 137 n.35) mentions the possibility of such sentences in English child language, and perhaps other languages.
13. In full sentences (namely those specified [+Agr]), there is considerable evidence, based on child language, creoles and cross-linguistic comparisons, that the third person singular verb form is the minimally unmarked element (Bybee 1985: 54-60, Bybee Hooper 1980: 166-8; Lipski 1985a, 1985b, 1986b). However, in the case of simple NP + VP utterances, especially those with null subjects or representing fragmented thoughts, the infinitive is preferred even in full varieties of Spanish, and forms the basis for verb "paradigms" in child speech, pidgins and creoles. In addition to sentences like (12), Spanish requires the infinitive for impersonal commands (*salir por la puerta lateral* "leave through the side door"), in exhortative commands (*¡a trabajar!* "let's get to work") and in (quasi-fossilized) interjections (*¡joder!* "damn it"), as well as in combinations which were originally elliptical reductions of full sentences (e.g. *haberlo sabido* "if I had only known", from *de haberlo sabido ...*). Mattoso Câmara (1957: 284) gives examples from children's speech errors in Brazilian Portuguese (which are further aided by frequent loss of word-final /r/) such as *êle estar [está] olhando* "he-to be- [is] looking."
14. Vinet (1985: 419-20) proposes a similar characterization for partially similar cases from dialectal French, adding an abstract underlying marker G' which represents the infinitive and directly governs a subject NP and assigns nominative case. While such an analysis may be extended integrally to Caribbean Spanish, we prefer to do without such a powerful diacritic marking, which if unrestrained would massively overgenerate. At the same time, Jaeggli (1982: 137) discusses the possibility of freely assigning Nominative case to any NP; however, the [+NOM] NP must agree in person/number with the verb, thus ruling out (in Jaeggli's analysis) Spanish infinitives with nominative subjects, while permitting such constructions in Portuguese. In the present analysis, assuming [+Agr] with null realization, combined with free [+NOM] assignment, is logically equivalent to the possibility discussed by Jaeggli.

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