

Week 11

Negation and coordination

June 29, 2009

1 Today's topic

What is difference between these two sentences?

- (1) Juan no comió una manzana **sino** tres plátanos
Juan not ate an apple but three bananas
- (2) Juan comió una manzana **pero** tres plátanos
Juan ate an apple but three bananas

ANSWER: it's the same difference as we have in these two sentences:

- (3) a. Hans hat nicht drei Bananen gegessen, **sondern** einen Apfel.
b. Hans hat drei Bananen gegessen, **aber** (nur) einen Apfel.

There are two types of adversative coordination

- *sino/sondern* is corrective coordination: it means that the information in the first conjunct is false, and it should be replaced with the information in the second conjunct.
- *pero/aber* is counterexpectational coordination: it means that the both conjuncts are true but, given the information of the first conjunct, the second one is unexpected.

The defining property of corrective *but* is that it always requires a sentential negation in the first conjunct.

- (4) a. * Juan comió tres plátanos sino una manzana.
Juan ate three bananas but one apple
b. * Hans aß drei Bananen sondern einen Apfel.
- (5) a. * Esto es imposible sino meramente improbable
this is impossible but merely improbable
b. * Es ist unmöglich sondern nur unwahrscheinlich.

In contrast, counterexpectational *but* is insensitive to the presence/absence of negation in the first conjunct.

- (6) a. Esto es imposible pero apasionante
this is impossible but fascinating

b. Es ist unmöglich aber faszinierend.

In summary:

- *sino/sondern*: obligatory sentential negation in the first conjunct, denial of the truth of the first conjunct.
- *pero/aber*: no negation necessary, both conjuncts are true.

The syntax is also different.

- *sino*: always coordinates two full clauses: if the second conjunct doesn't look like a clause, that's because *ellipsis* has applied.

(7) Juan no comió tres plátanos sino [que Juan comió] una manzana
Juan not ate three bananas but that Juan ate an apple

- *pero*: can coordinate two DPs without resorting to ellipsis.

(8) Juan comió [tres plátanos pero una manzana]
Juan ate three bananas but one apple

How do we know that this is correct? We'll see some evidence:

1. Scope of negation.
2. Coordination of preverbal subjects.
3. Coordination of attributive adjectives.
4. Agreement patterns.

In all cases, the second conjunct of *but* coordination behaves as though it is in a different clause from the first conjunct.

2 Scope of negation

With *sino*, the negation of the first conjunct cannot take scope over the second conjunct.

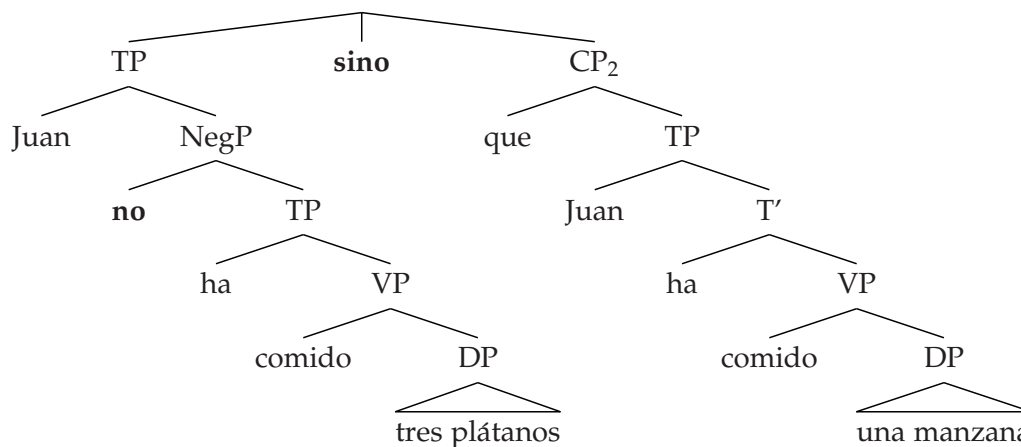
(9) Juan no ha comido tres plátanos sino una manzana
Juan not has eaten three bananas but one apple
✓ $[\neg(p) \wedge q]$ reading: "It is false that Juan has eaten three bananas, and it is true that he has eaten one apple"
* $[\neg(p \wedge q)]$ reading: "It is false that Juan has eaten three bananas, and it is also false that he has eaten one apple"

This is the same reading we get when the second conjunct is a full clause.

(10) Juan no ha comido tres plátanos sino que Juan ha comido una manzana
Juan not has eaten three bananas but that Juan has eaten one apple
✓ $[\neg(p) \wedge q]$ reading: "It is false that Juan has eaten three bananas, and it is true that he has eaten one apple"
* $[\neg(p \wedge q)]$ reading: "It is false that Juan has eaten three bananas, and it is also false that he has eaten one apple"

This is both conjuncts are full clauses, therefore the negation in the first one cannot affect the second one.

(11)



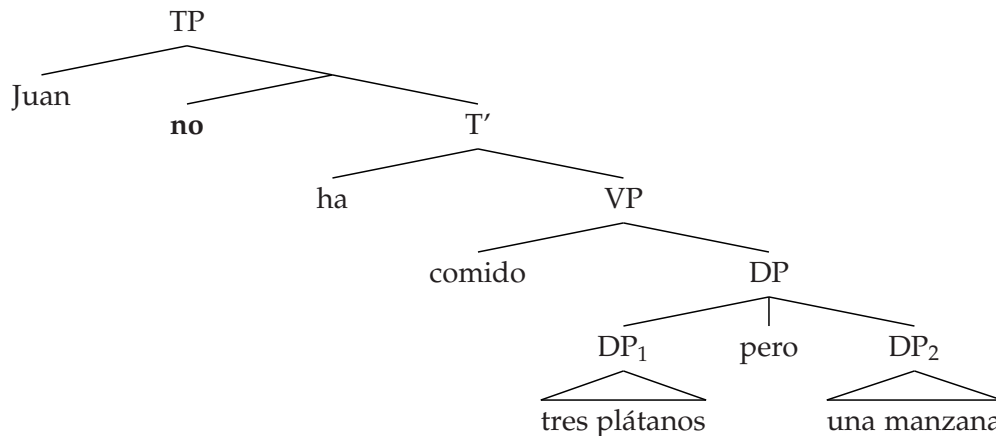
In contrast, with *pero*, a negation in the first conjunct necessarily takes scope over both conjuncts. This indicates that the coordination point is low.

(12) Juan no ha comido tres plátanos pero una manzana
 Juan not has eaten three bananas but one apple

✓ $[\neg(p \wedge q)]$ reading: it is not the case that Juan ate both three bananas and one apple

* $[\neg(p) \wedge q]$ reading: it is not the case that Juan ate three bananas, but he ate one apple.

(13)



3 Attributive adjective coordination

Adjectives can be either attributive (modifying a noun) or predicative (acting as the predicate of a copular clause).

(14) a. El pianista **brillante** tocó una sonata
 the pianist brilliant played a sonata
 [attributive]

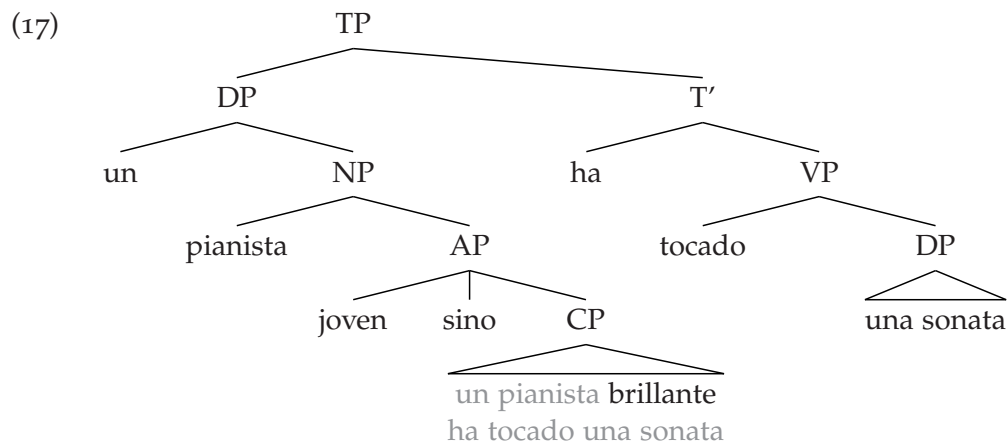
b. El pianista es **brillante**
 the pianist is brilliant
 [predicative]

Attributive adjectives cannot be coordinated with *sino*.

- (15) * Un pianista joven **sino** brillante tocó una sonata
 a pianist young but brilliant played a sonata

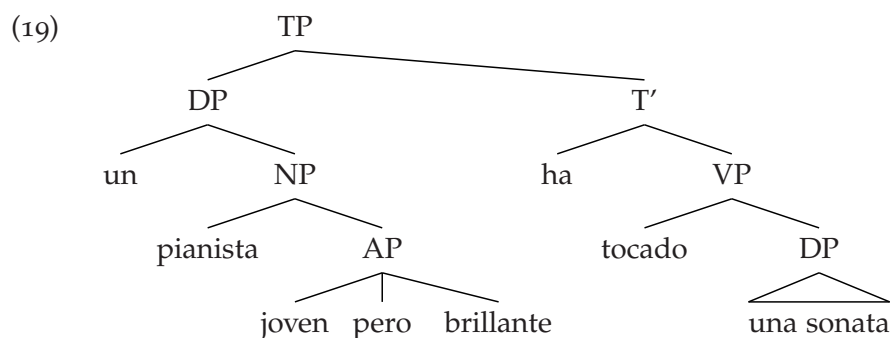
The reason this example is wrong is because the second conjunct of *sino* is a clause, and we cannot stick a clause inside a DP because of the Law of Coordination of Likes.

- (16) *Law of Coordination of Likes*
 Conjuncts must be of the same category.



In contrast, *pero* allows coordination of attributive adjectives. Since it allows coordination of small categories without ellipsis, it doesn't violate the Law of Coordination of Likes.

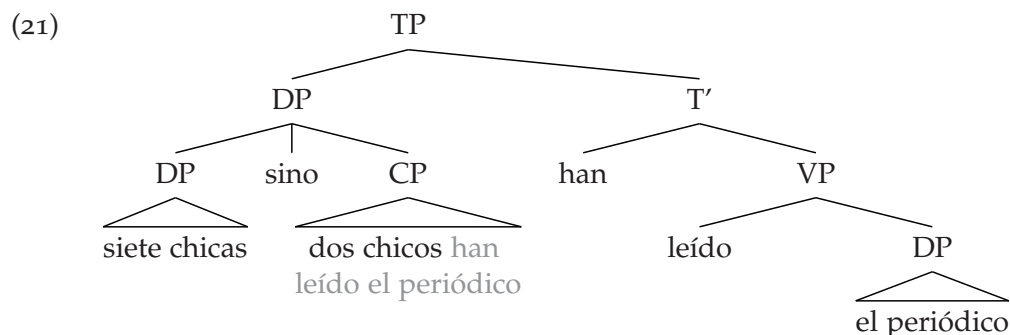
- (18) Un pianist joven pero brillante ha tocado una sonata
 a pianist young but brilliant has played a sonata



4 Coordination of preverbal subjects

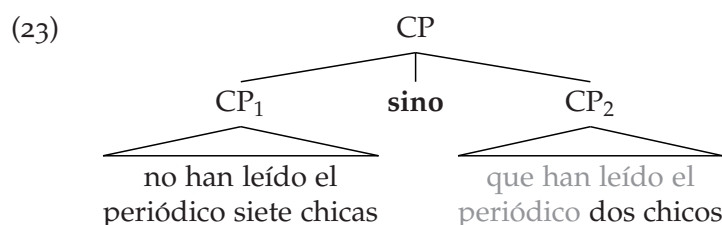
Preverbal subjects cannot be coordinated with *sino*, for the same reasons as attributive adjectives: this would require us to coordinate a DP with a full CP, in violation of the Law of Coordination of Likes.

- (20) * Siete chicas **sino** dos chicos no leyeron el periódico
 seven girls but two boys not read the newspaper



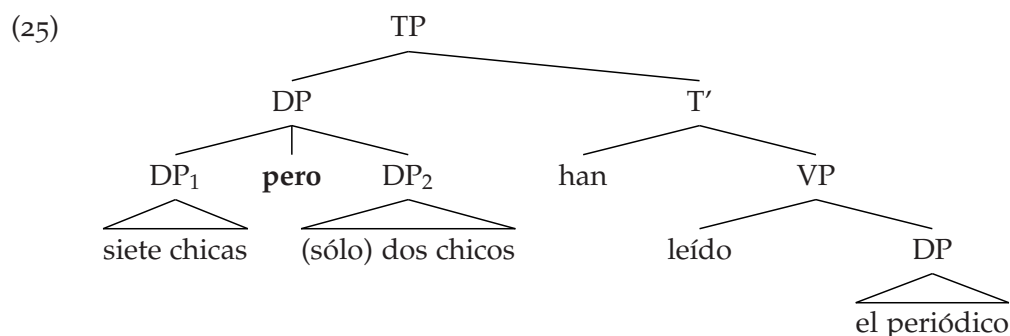
However, coordination of postverbal subjects with *sino* is possible, because in this case we can get a structure where we coordinate clauses.

- (22) No han leído el periódico siete chicas sino dos chicos.
not have read the newspaper seven girls but two boys



In contrast, preverbal subjects can be coordinate with *pero* because in this case we are coordinating two DPs.

- (24) Siete chicas pero (sólo) dos chicos han leído el periódico.
seven girls but only two boys have read the newspaper

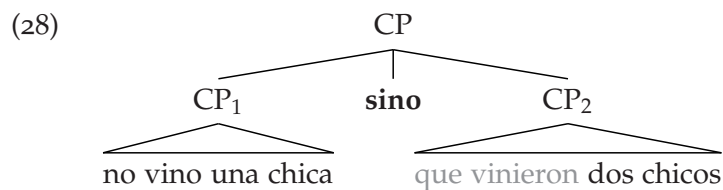


5 Agreement

We have seen that *sino* can coordinate two postverbal subjects. When this happens, though, agreement on the verb is controlled exclusively by the first conjunct.

- (26) No **vin** una chica sino dos chicos.
not came.3SG a girl but two boys
- (27) * No **vinieron** una chica sino dos chicos.
not came.3PL a girl but two boys

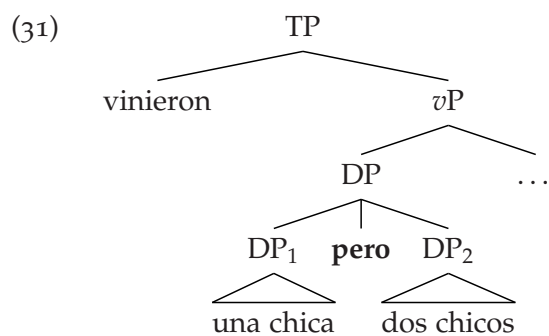
This happens because the second conjunct is actually a separate clause, and therefore cannot affect agreement in the first conjunct verb.



In contrast, with *pero*, both conjuncts contribute to agreement, because we are coordinating two DPs within a single clause.

(29) * **Vino** una chica pero dos chicos.
 came.3SG a girl but two boys

(30) **Vinieron** una chica pero dos chicos.
 came.3PL a girl but two boys



6 Summary

	<i>sino</i>	<i>pero</i>
obligatory negation	yes	no
negation scopes over first conjunct only	yes	no
attributive adjective coordination	no	yes
preverbal subject coordination	no	yes
first conjunct agreement effects	yes	no

7 For next week

- Figure out if German *aber* and *sondern* behave in the same way as *pero* and *sino* with respect to the tests we've seen today. Write down your judgements and give them to me at the beginning of the next class.
- Read chapter 2, section 4 (pages 30-48) of Marcela Depiante's dissertation (*The syntax of deep and surface anaphora*), which I'll distribute later.