¡*Mira!* The grammar-attention interface in the Spanish left periphery

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Abstract. In this paper, we focus on Spanish hearer-oriented particles like the highly frequent verb-based particle *mira* (lit. 'look'). We provide a detailed syntactic account for these particles by demonstrating (i) that they must be distinguished from both vocative/appellative and expressive/exclamative particles, and (ii) that they feature illocutionary restrictions familiar from the class of discourse particles in languages other than Spanish. Since our proposal locates *mira* in the information-structural layer of the clause and, at the same time, demonstrates its sensitivity to the illocutionary component of sentence interpretation, we thus raise more general questions about the interaction between the syntax of speech acts and the syntactic encoding of information structure.

Keywords. information structure; particles; Spanish; speech-act syntax; vocative

1. Introduction

Most of the current literature on Romance languages distinguishes between two classes of particles that can appear in the left periphery of the clause and that encode information at what can be called the 'grammar-attention interface': vocative/appellative particles, which encode attention on the part of the hearer (1), and exclamative/expressive particles, which encode attention on the part of the speaker (2). The following examples are taken from Spanish, but this distinction has been used to account for the inventory of particles of other Romance languages as well

(e.g., Espinal 2013a, 2013b; Stavrou 2014; and many others); particles are given in italics:

(1) a. *Eh*, papá, ¿te acuerdas de Ana?

PART dad you remember of Ana

'Hey, dad, do you remember Ana?'

b. *Hey,* ¿adónde te crees que vas?

PART where you think that go.2NDPERSON

'Hey, where do you think you are going?'

(2) a. ¡*Oh*! ¿Qué me está pasando?

PART what me_DAT is happening

'Oh! What is happening to me?'

b. ¡*Ah*! ¿Qué puedo hacer?

PART what can-I do

'Ah! What can I do?'

In this paper, we focus on a class of particles that is often left out the picture: hearer-oriented so-called 'phatic' particles. In Spanish, these particles are highly frequent, and the most famous cases are probably the particles *mira* and *oye*. Both particles are verb-based particles (imperative forms of the verbs *mirar* 'to look' and *oír* 'to hear',

respectively), and, according to López Bobo (2002), these particles are used to 'maintain the contact between speaker and hearer':[1]

(3) a. *Mira*, no entiendo qué te pasa.

      PART don't understand what you happens

      'Look, I don't understand what is with you.'

   b. *Oye*, a mí no me hables así

      PART to me don't me talk like-that

      'Look, don't talk to me like that.'

The present article provides a detailed syntactic account for these particles by demonstrating (i) that they must be distinguished from both vocative/appellative and expressive/exclamative particles, and (ii) that they feature illocutionary restrictions familiar from discourse particles in other languages. These restrictions suggest that, although phatic particles like *mira* contribute a separate speech act, there has to be a link to the illocutionary force of their host clause. We will claim that this link connects the information-structural layer of the clause (where those phatic particles occur in, according to our approach) with its illocutionary force. In this paper, we thus raise more general questions about the interaction between the syntax of speech acts and the syntactic encoding of information structure.

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[1] This is the use of these particles we are focusing on in this paper. However, we do not neglect that these particles can also feature other readings and functions. We know from the literature on particles like Spanish *ah* that these elements can express a variety of different meanings (e.g., López Bobo 2002: 30 et seq.)—depending on context, intonation, and many more factors. It thus comes as no surprise that also different usages of particles like *mira* and *oye* are documented in the literature. For instance, *oye* can also function like an appellative particle as in *Oye, ¡préstame atención!* ('Hey, pay attention to me!'; see Rodríguez Ponce 2005: 15). Again, we do not neglect that there are many more other readings and felicitous uses of these particles, but our driving premise in this paper is that the use exemplified in (3) poses interesting challenges for work at the grammar-attention interface.

Our paper is structured as follows. In Section 2, we will first introduce our notion of particles and, on this basis, demonstrate that phatic particles like *mira* have to be distinguished from both vocative (Section 2.1) and expressive (Section 2.2) particles. In particular, we will discuss data showing that the syntactic distribution of phatics cannot be captured by claims that have been proposed for the other types of particles.

Based on this discussion, Section 3 asks the question where in the functional hierarchy of the clause phatic particles should be located. Section 3.1 will first explore an already existing hypothesis, namely that phatic particles are 'intrusive' watershed elements in the sense that they partition the utterance at the level of information structure. On this basis, Section 3.2 then addresses another property that distinguishes phatics from other types of particles: unlike vocative and exclamatives particles, particles like *mira* feature illocutionary restrictions. We will discuss this aspect of *mira* in the context of cross-linguistic work on discourse particles, which are known for restrictions in this domain—and we show how our analysis can capture this interesting interaction between information structure on the one hand and restrictions to particular speech-act types on the other hand. Finally, in Section 4 we will draw some more cross-linguistic conclusions and point out future avenues of research.

2. Core distributional properties of phatic particles

In this section, we will show to what extent the syntactic distribution of phatic particles like *mira* has to be distinguished from both vocative (Section 2.1) and expressive

(Section 2.2) particles. Before turning to these distinctions in more detail, let us clarify how we use the term 'particle' in the following sections.

Traditionally, 'particle' refers to uninflected words more generally, including, e.g., prepositions, verb particles in particle verb constructions, and many more (e.g., see Huddleston & Pullum 2002 for English). However, there is also a huge class of uninflected elements that does not impact the levels of argument structure, spatial semantics, etc., but rather concerns the discourse level of an utterance. In this domain, we find notions like 'discourse particles' (e.g., Zimmermann 2011), 'pragmatic particles' (e.g., Foolen 1996), or 'modal particles' (e.g., Coniglio 2011); the particles in these discussions all express some relevant meaning at the level of discourse; that is, they refer to epistemic and/or attitudinal states of the speaker, the hearer, or both.

In this context, it is worth noting that also interjections—being uninflected and referring to a particular attitude/state of the speaker in a given discourse—are often referred to as 'particles' or, more specifically, as 'expressive particles' (McCready 2008). One prominent way to look at interjections is to categorize them as pragmatic markers (Norrick 2009; no matter if cases of interjections are 'simplex' or 'secondary', i.e., derived from other lexical categories); hence we can safely conclude that they function as discourse elements too. The same holds for so-called vocative particles, whose pragmatic and discourse properties are at the center of research dealing with those elements (Hill 2007).

In what follows, we will thus use the term 'particle' to refer to the subclass of the particle inventory in natural language that operates at the discourse level of utterances (i.e., expressive particles/interjections, vocative particles, discourse particles, etc.). Here, we hypothesize that so-called 'phatic' particles like Spanish *mira* are par-

ticularly interesting and not fully accounted for so far when we look at their syntactic and pragmatic behavior.[2]

To illustrate these theoretical blind spots, the following two sections will compare *mira* with vocative (Section 2.1) and expressive (Section 2.2) particles. The Spanish literature already mentions that particles like *mira* are different from the other classes of particles insofar as *mira* and similar particles are used to 'maintain the linearity of the discourse' and/or to 'preserve the contact with the addressee and to maintain open the channel' (see López Bobo 2002: 27; our translations).[3] In the next two sections, we will first focus on syntactic (i.e., distributional) differences; we will then discuss the pragmatic properties and restrictions of particles like *mira* in more detail in Sections 3 and 4 below.

2.1 Phatic particles and vocative particles

According to the descriptive literature on Spanish, vocative particles like *¡eh!, (h)ey, ¡ea!, ¡aúpa!, ¡hala!* are used to "to call the attention of the addressee with the intention to encourage him/her to do something, or to awake in him/her different feelings or attitudes" (RAE/ASALE 2009: §32.1h; our translation).[4] In what follows, we focus on particles like the ones cited above and thus concentrate on a subgroup that is also often referred to as being 'appellative' because these particles are explicitly calling for

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[2] In what follows, we focus on the prime example *mira*, but we would like to point out that the class of derived 'phatic particles' (i.e., particles coming from other word classes) is much broader (e.g., *fíjate, oye, bueno,* etc.). Also, simplex particles like Spanish *¿eh?* are also sometimes classified as phatic particles (see López Bobo 2002: 24; RAE/ASALE, 2009: §32.2a).

[3] Original Spanish text: "A estos tres grupos, últimamente se han añadido las […] *fáticas*; entre éstas se encuentran un pequeño número de formas, cuyo único cometido es mantener la linealidad del discurso o preservar el contacto con el interlocutor para que el canal siga abierto" (López Bobo 2002: 27).

[4] Original Spanish text: "Se dirigen a algún destinatario […] con intención de moverlo a la acción o de despertar en él sentimientos o actitudes diversas" (RAE/ASALE 2009: §32.1h).

the attention of the hearer in contrast to fixed expressions ('formularia' in Spanish descriptive grammars) like ¡*Salud*! or ¡*Buenos días*! (see, again, RAE/ASALE 2009: §32.6).

In the context of these 'appellative' vocative particles, the theoretical syntactic literature has proposed that those elements are situated in the specifier of a Vocative Phrase (VocP); see Hill (2007, 2014), Espinal (2013a), and others.[5] The head of this projection, Voc^0, features the deictic constraint that the phrase must refer to an addressee (which has to be grammatically encoded by second-person inflection in pronominal cases):

(4) [$_{VocP}$ {(*h*)*ey*/*eh*} [$_{Voc°}$ [DX] DP]]

The syntactic claim that vocative particles are not heads but phrases makes sense for several reasons, well-documented in the literature (see Espinal 2013a on the following remarks). The basic assumption is that the functional head Voc^0 can be specified by a particle, and that Voc^0 selects a DP. For instance, consider Moro's (2003: 263) observation that vocative expressions (5a) can be coordinated (5b), but the particle can appear only once, as we can see in (5c):

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[5] Note that this phrasal account is also able to capture cross-linguistic variation in this domain. For instance, according to Hill (2014), if the vocative is expressed by bound morphemes (e.g., *-be* in Bulgarian, which is attached to a proper name), these morphemes are instantiating the head of this functional projection. In other cases, like in the examples given above, the vocative is expressed by free morphemes (like ¡*eh!* in Spanish); these items are located in SpecVocP.

(5) a. O Maria, Gianni è arrivato.

      PART Maria Gianni is arrived

      'Maria, Gianni is arrived'

  b. O Maria e Pietro, Gianni è arrivato.

      PART Maria and Pietro Gianni is arrived

      'Maria and Pietro, Gianni is arrived'

  c. * O Maria e o Pietro, Gianni è arrivato.

As a consequence, Espinal (2013a) argues, vocative particles cannot be analyzed as heads of VocP and must be represented separately from the DP complement of the head Voc^0.

    Let us now briefly illustrate the deictic constraint, which is a typical feature of vocative phrases (D'Alessandro & Van Oostendorp 2016; Espinal 2013a, 2013b; Hill 2007). Vocative expressions only allow the presence of structures compatible with a second-person feature (6a). This is why first-person as well as third-person pronouns are ruled out in these structures (6b):[6]

(6) a. (H)ey tú/niño, ¿cómo te va?

      PART you/boy how you goes

      'Hey man! How are things going?'

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[6] Exceptions are proper names, common nouns, and adjectives:
  (i) (H)ey, Celia/niña/bonita, ¿quieres tranquilizarte?
     PART Celia/girl/pretty, want-you calm-down
     'Hey Celia/girl/sweetie, would you please calm down?'
Those cases can appear with vocative particles since they are not specified for person features and thus compatible with the deictic constraint mentioned above.

b. * (H)ey yo/ella, ¿cómo te   va?

    PART I/she   how   you goes

Let us now start to look at *mira*. We can easily see that the deictic constraint also holds for phatic particles like *mira*; observe (7), which is adapted from Sánchez López (2017: 492):

(7) Mira niño (*yo/ella), tienes   que beber   la leche

    PART boy   I/she,   have.2SG that drink.INF the milk

    'Hey boy, you have to drink the milk.'

Also, particles like *mira* cannot be coordinated, similar to what we have seen for vocative particles and their non-head status in (5) above:

(8) a. Mira Diego, hoy   no estoy de humor.

      PART Diego, today not I-am of mood

      'Hey Diego, today I'm not in the mood.'

    b. Mirad Diego y   Antonio, hoy no estoy de humor.

      PART Diego and Antonio today not I-am   of mood

      'Hey Diego and Antonio, today I'm not in the mood.'

    c. * Mira Diego y mira Antonio, hoy no estoy de humor

With these two parallels of vocative particles and *mira* in mind, we can now illustrate a first feature that distinguishes *mira* from vocative particles, namely that the verb-

based particle *mira* displays agreement patterns when it is used with vocative constructions, as Sánchez López (2017) has recently pointed out. In particular, we can thus find *mira* with singular inflection when it is combined with *Antonio* (9a), or with plural inflection (*mirad*) when it appears with *chicos* (9b):[7]

(9)   a.   <u>Mira, Antonio,</u> las cosas no funcionan así.

'Look Antonio, things don't work like this/in this way.'

   b.   <u>Mirad, chicos,</u> a casa no os podéis llevar eso

'Look boys, you cannot bring this to my house.'

Examples like these show that *mira* and the vocative expression enter a close phrase-structural relationship, and that this relationship—due to the verbal origin of *mira*—can be expressed by agreement morphology that is unavailable in vocative particles. One could thus claim that both vocative particles and *mira* (when occurring with vocatives) occupy the same structural position (Spec of VocP), and Spec-Head agreement can either be expressed by the deictic constraint alone or, in the case of verb-based *mira*, by verbal agreement. However, a closer look at the distributional properties of *mira* indicates that this cannot be the whole story.

More specifically, we also observe cases where phatic particles (in what follows, in bold) can co-occur with vocative particles such as *eh* (in italics). In these contexts, the phatic particles show a strong tendency to follow vocative particles (cf.

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[7] The same holds for other verb-based phatic particles like *oye* (*oye/oíd*) or *fíjate* (*fíjate/fijaos*), but we continue to focus on *mira* as our key example. Note that these agreement patterns are also documented in further Romance languages: *mira/mire, oes/oiches* (Galego); *olha/olhe, vê/veja, ouve/ouçam lá* (Portuguese), *mira/miri* (Catalan); see Corr (2016: 42).

[10a] vs. [10b]). This suggests that phatics and vocative particles may occupy different positions in the structure:

(10) a.   *Eh*,   **{mira,oye}**,   a mí   no   me hables así.

PART   PART PART   to me don't me talk   like-this.

'Hey, MIRA/OYE, don't talk to me like that!'

b. ?? **{Mira, Oye}**, *eh*, a mí no me hables así.[8]

This brief discussion already indicates that particles like *mira* might form a syntactic class of their own and, although sharing many features with related particles, are distinct in many respects. When we now turn to comparing *mira* with expressive particles, we see even more features that fit neither the class of vocative nor other classes of particle elements.

2.2 Phatic particles and expressive particles

Spanish has a rich inventory of expressive (also often called 'exclamative') particles (see RAE/ASALE 2009: §32.7); these particles can express a variety of emotions like annoyance, dislike, or disappointment (11a), surprise or incredulity (11b), or admiration and approval (11c):

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[8] This structure would be grammatical if *eh* would be interpreted as an interrogative element: *Mira, ¿eh?, a mí no me hables así.* However, in these cases *¿eh?* would clearly feature a different intonation (see the '*Dictionary of recursive particles in Spanish*'/*Diccionario de partículas recursivas en español* for detailed discussion and distinctions between different version of *eh*).

(11)   a.   *¡Maldición!* Me he quedado sin batería.

       'Damn! I've run out of battery.'

   b.   *¡Ostras*, Pepe! Me has asustado: no sabía que estabas aquí.

       'Jeez, Pepe! You scared me: I didn't know that you were here.'

   c.   *¡Bravo, bravo!* Sabía que lo conseguirías.

       'Well done! I knew that you would achieve it.'

According to Stavrou (2014), these expressive particles have a relatively free syntac-tic distribution in any language—and, accordingly, also in Spanish:

(12)   a.   *¡Maldición!* Sabía   que   iba   a   ocurrir   esto.

       PART   I-knew   that   was   to   happen   this

       'Damn! I knew that this was going to happen.'

   b.   Sabía que me iba a ocurrir eso, *¡maldición!*

This property—either appearing clause-initially (12a) or clause-finally (12b)—clearly distinguishes expressive from vocative particles because these can only occur clause-initially (13a) and never at the end of a clause (13b):

(13)   a.   *¡Eh!*   Déjala   en   paz

       PART   Leave-her in   peace

       'Hey! Leave her alone!'

   b. * ¡Déjala en paz, *eh!*

Let us now look at *mira*. Concerning its syntactic flexibility, it behaves more like expressive and not like vocative particles; that is, it can appear at the beginning of the sentence or at the end, as has recently been pointed out by Sánchez López (2017: 492-493; examples adopted from her):

(14)   a. *Mira,* tenéis   que   marcharos ahora.

PART   have.IMP   that   leave   now

'You have to leave now.'

b. Tenéis que marcharos ahora, *mira.*

In addition to this more flexible syntactic distribution, observe now that expressive particles can co-occur with one another, with no ordering restrictions (15); this does not hold for vocative particles (16):[9]

(15)   a. **¡Ah!, ¡oh!**, ¡ya lo tengo, ya lo tengo!, ¡ya lo he recordado!, ya sé lo que

tengo que decirles y sé cómo empezar, ya lo sé, y es tan sencillo...

Ah! Oh! I already have it, I already have it! I already remembered it! I already know what I have to tell them and I know how to start, I already know, and it is so simple…

[CREA 1991, Sergi Belbel, *Esla Schneider*]

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[9] CREA (*Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual*: 'Reference Corpus of Present-day Spanish) is a corpus of data created by the Royal Spanish Academy. It contains a huge variety of documents from both European Spanish (60%) and American Spanish (40%). As for the American varieties, 40% of the data is from Mexican areas (Mexico, southwestern United States, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador), 20% from the Andean region (Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia), 17% from the Caribbean area (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panama, Dominican Republic, the coasts of Venezuela and Colombia, and northeastern United States), 14% from the River Platte area (Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay), 6% from Chile, and 3% from the central zone (Nicaragua and Costa Rica).

b. **Oh... Ah...** vuelo... Mm, qué olores... humo, perfumes

Oh… Ah…. I'm flying…. Mm, what smell, smoke, perfume

[CREA 1991, Sergi Belbel, *Esla Schneider*]

(16) a. ?? **Eh, anda,** mira lo que he encontrado.

'Eh, look what I've found here.'

b. * **Anda, eh,** mira lo que he encontrado.

'Eh, look what I've found here.'

In this context too, *mira* and other phatic particles pattern more with expressive and not with vocative particles. That is, in contrast to vocative particles, *mira* and *oye*, for instance, can be stacked and display no ordering restrictions when they co-occur with each other:

(17) a. […] **mira, oye**, a mí la verdad que me daría igual que fuera un sueco.

'Look, hey, actually I would care if he was a Swedish man.'

[CREA, oral, radio, 1991]

b. […] ¡No!, es cierto, **oye, mira**, yo lo que pienso es […]

'Don't! It is true, hey, look, what I think is […]'

[CREA, oral].

Let us now briefly summarize our syntactic observations from Section 2.1 and the present Section in the following table:

particle type	agreement patterns (person and/or deictic)	stacking	free distribution
vocative	+	-	-
expressive	-	+	+
phatic (e.g., *mira*)	+	+	+

Table 1. Distributional properties of particle types.

We see that particles like *mira* differ from both vocative and expressive particles, and we therefore hypothesize in the following sections that phatics like *mira* form a particle class of their own. That means that the empirical phenomenon of *mira* may require an analysis that differs from the other two types of particles at the grammar-attention interface. In the next section, we will turn to such an analysis and explore the hypothesis that particles like *mira* are in fact information-structural particles, in contrast to both vocative and expressive particles. We thereby give more empirical and theoretical substance to the traditional and descriptive intuition that these particles are generally used to 'maintain the linearity of the discourse' and/or to 'preserve the contact with the addressee and to maintain open the canal' (López Bobo 2002: 27); see already our remarks above.

3. The particle *mira:* Information structure and illocutionary restrictions

In this section, we will analyze the Spanish particle *mira* as an information-structural element and propose a detailed syntactic account that captures its semantic and pragmatic properties. In particular, Section 3.1 first deals with its role as 'intrusive' discourse partitioner at the level of information structure; we will discuss to what extent

this component of *mira* can be related to the 'watershed' function that has been observed for other types of particles in languages other than Spanish. Based on this discussion, Section 3.2 then turns to the interesting observation that the particle *mira*—in contrast to closely related particle classes (see Section 2 above)—features illocutionary restrictions. We will demonstrate how this can be accounted for based on the particle's information-structural role pointed out in Section 3.1, and we will present a syntactic analysis that captures all these semantic and pragmatic aspects of *mira*. Let us now start with clarifying why we think that *mira* can be characterized as information-structural element.

3.1 Intrusive *mira* and information structural partitioning

When we now turn to the question of where in the utterance *mira* can occur and what kind of partitioning role it might play there, we first would like to highlight that phatics can only occur (and therefore partition) the utterance at one single position in the clause. To see this, let us refer back to our stacking data in Section 2.2 above. We observed that *mira* and other phatics can co-occur—and if they do, no ordering restrictions can be observed (18a/b). Crucially now, in those stacked cases no other phrase can intervene between the co-occurring particles; (18c-f) are ungrammatical word order options:

(18)   a.   **Oye**,   **mira**,   esto   es   una   tontería.

PART   PART   this   is   a   silliness

'This is a silliness.'

b.   **Mira**, **oye**, esto es una tontería.

c. * **Mira**, esto, **oye**, es una tontería.

d. * **Oye**, esto, **mira**, es una tontería.

e. * **Oye**, francamente ('honestly'), **mira,** es una tontería.

f. * **Mira**, esto es una tontería, **oye**.

The data in (18) clearly suggest that, no matter what ordering of the particles or what kind of intervening phrase (demonstrative [18c/d], speaker adverb [18e], or a whole clause [18f]), the stacked particles must always occur adjacent. As a first structural hypothesis, we can thus say that the relevant projection for *mira* and similar phatics is recursive, without any other phrasal projection intervening between the phatics.

Let us now turn to the more central question of where *mira* appears in the functional hierarchy of the clause. We claim that *mira* is essentially an information-structural element because, as we will show, it partitions the utterance into topical and focal information. As a first step, let us therefore assume a representation like the following to sketch this central assumption that will drive our discussion in what follows (we use MiraP as pars-pro-toto for *mira* and similar particles like *oye* and refrain from using PhaticP because our approach ultimately will diverge from the more traditional accounts and characterizations mentioned in Section 2):

(19)   … [TopP … **[MiraP…** [FocP…[FinP…]]]]

A first question that might come to mind immediately is how we can then explain the use of *mira* together with vocatives, which, as we have shown in Section 2, always

appear at the outermost portion of the left periphery, with *mira* preceding them. Our answer is that in those cases, there simply is no further topical material preceding *mira*, and MiraP is merely introducing the fact that focal information is to follow. On this basis, it is but a short step to argue that even the occurrence of *mira* with vocatives dovetails nicely with our approach: *mira* partitions the utterance at the level of information structure, and material occurring to the right of *mira* can be considered focal, while (potentially) material to the left of the *mira* phrase is topical. In the case of the vocative, it is just that there is no topical material occurring to the left of *mira*. We can analyze this as in (19'), where a more complex MiraP (i.e., *mira* and similar particles occurring with the vocative) is analyzed in parallel to VocPs because we have seen that in both cases we have to account for agreement patterns: deictic agreement in the case of VocP and person agreement in the case of MiraP (see Section 2.1 above):

(19') … [$_{TopP}$ ∅ [$_{MiraP}$ *{mira/oye}* [$_{Mira°}$ **[PRS]** *Maria*] [$_{FocP}$…[$_{FinP}$…]]]]

So far, this may seem like a mere (speculative) hypothesis about the role *mira* plays in the functional hierarchy of the clause. Let us therefore turn to some key data illustrating the information-structural role of *mira*. Look at the following patterns:

(20) a. CONTEXT: Laura is explaining to David how to analyze a sentence

   based on a concrete example. She therefore asks David:

   Laura: ¿Has entendido el ejemplo?

     'Do you understand the example?

David: El ejemplo, *mira*, no hay quien lo entienda.

'The example, PART, there is no one that understands it.'

b. CONTEXT: Santi and Álvaro are looking for someone who is calm enough to do a specific job. Santi therefore asks Álvaro:

Santi: ¿Quién es una chica calmada?

'Who is a calm girl?'

Álvaro: *<u>María</u>, *mira*, es una chica calmada.

'Maria, PART, is a calm girl.'

Example (20a) demonstrates that *mira* is perfectly fine with a clearly topical constituent (*el ejemplo*) to its left. On the other hand, *mira* cannot be used like in (20b); here, *María* is the narrow-focus term to the question asked in (20b), and so it cannot occur to the left of *mira*. Based on this core observation, we can characterize *mira* as an 'intrusive' element that partitions the utterance in a topic and a focus—or, as Taglicht (1984) uses the term 'intrusive' element, in a 'rheme' and a 'theme'.

Similar information-structural configurations have also been observed in the domain of clause-level particles in other languages. For instance, we can easily draw parallels from patterns we see with *mira* to the behavior of German CP-level particles such as the particle *denn* (lit. 'then'), which is typically found in interrogative sentences.

In the examples in (21), for instance, movement across the particle *denn* results in shrinking the focus domain of the clause; that is, constituents which appear to the left of the particle are interpreted as topical material. When only the lexical verb remains in the focus domain to the right of the particle, as in (21d), the verb receives

heavy stress (i.e., […] *in der Stadt denn GEGESSEN?*). In all of the examples in (21), *denn* itself cannot be focused and receive stress (see parallel examples in Bayer & Obenauer 2011):

(21) a. Was hat denn Andreas gestern   in der Stadt gegessen?

what has PART Andreas yesterday in the   city   eaten

b. Was hat Andreas denn gestern   in der Stadt gegessen? SHRINKING

what has Andreas PART yesterday in the city   eaten   OF

c. Was hat Andreas gestern   denn in der Stadt gegessen? FOCUS

what has Andreas yesterday PART   in the   city   eaten   DOMAIN

d. Was hat Andreas gestern   in der Stadt denn gegessen?

what has Andreas yesterday in the   city PART eaten

Bayer & Obenauer (2011) provide additional evidence for this discourse-partitioning function of the discourse particle by showing that weak and clitic pronouns obligatory precede *denn*:

(22) Hat {es/'s} denn {*es/*'s} jemanden interessiert?

    has it   PART it   someone interested

    'Did someone take an interest in it?'

Observations like those above for *denn* have also been made for many more prominent cases of particles (also declarative ones) in German. For instance, Grosz (2016) has recently proposed that these particles have an information-structural 'watershed' function (Grosz adopts this term from Krivonosov 1977). This is illustrated in (23); examples from Grosz (2016: 338):

(23) a. weil   Riko ja   eine Frau   geküsst hat

      because Riko PART a   woman kissed   has

      '(…) because Riko has [JA] kissed a woman.'

    b. weil   {man ja /   *ja   man} arbeitet

      because one   PART PART one   works

      '(…) because one is [JA] working.'

In (23a), the proper name *Riko* is intended to express 'old/topical' information, and the indefinite NP *eine Frau* should convey 'new/focal' information. A non-focusable

phrase such as the arbitrary pronoun *man* cannot appear to the right of the particle *ja*; such elements obligatorily precede the particle (23b). The same is true of the particle *mira*; in Spanish constructions akin to the use of the arbitrary pronoun in (23b), *mira* cannot be followed by the impersonal part of the construction ('one should know…'):

(24)   a.   Uno debería conocer sus opciones antes de tomar una decisión.

           'One should know their options before making a decision.'

       b. * Una decisión, mira, uno debería saber.

We can thus see that regarding its information-structural function, *mira* seems to behave like discourse particles in non-Romance languages like German. In other words, it acts as an information-structural 'watershed' element inside the clause. However, there is a clear difference to the discourse-particle patterns above: while particles like German *denn* etc. are prosodically fully integrated into the clause, *mira* functions more like what has recently been called a 'parenthetical partition' (see recent syntactic work by Slocum 2016 and González López 2019). That is, it can structurally be compared with the following English cases (see Taglicht 1984: 22 for the original discussion and the following examples):
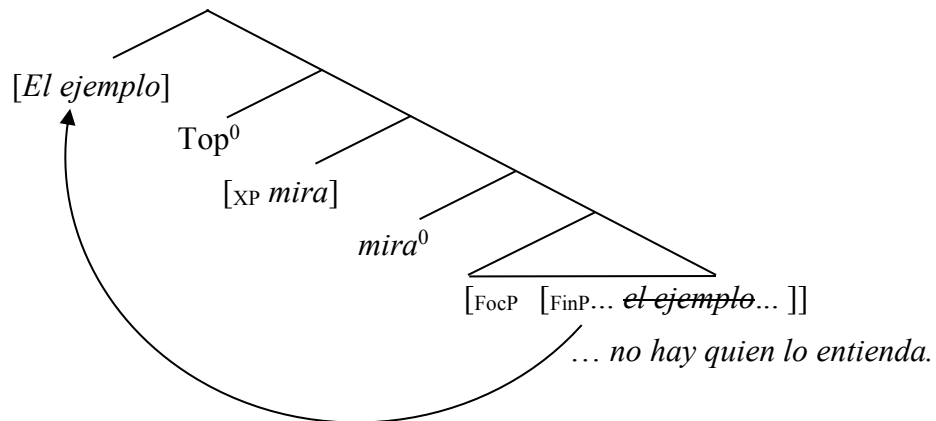
(25)   a.   [That shed], *my dear*, [will have to be painted].

       b.   [John], *you know*, [has painted the shed].

This corresponds to the fact that verb-based *mira* functions as a separate speech act, in contrast to non-verb-based particles like discourse particles in German. However, the

information-structural role is the same: expressions like *you know* and *my dear* typically occur with topical material to their left and focal material to their right (Slocum 2016), indicating that the information-structural partitioning also holds for those clause-internal uses.

Given all the data introduced above, we can now see why our proposal already sketched in (19) could make sense: when used clause-internally like in (20a), particles like *mira* are situated between material that has been dislocated to a topical projection and the rest of the clause, which, in those cases, is all focal; see our sample analysis in (26). Since *mira* can co-occur with related particles such as *oye* (but nothing can intervene between them), we further signal recursivity of the relevant projection by the '*' symbol in (26'):

(26)　　Example tree for clause-internal occurrence in (20a):

[*El ejemplo*]

Top^0

[$_{XP}$ *mira*]

mira^0

[$_{FocP}$　[$_{FinP}$... ~~*el ejemplo*~~...]]

... no hay quien lo entienda.

(26')　... [$_{TopP}$ ... **[$_{MiraP}$*...** [$_{FocP}$...[$_{FinP}$...]]]]

However, there are additional facts that need an explanation. In particular, unlike vocatives and exclamative particles, phatic particles such as *mira* seem to feature illocutionary restrictions. As separate speech acts, *mira* (and related parenthetical partitions

such as English *you know*) are distinguished from syntactically and prosodically fully integrated discourse particles in languages other than Spanish; the illocutionary restrictions of *mira*, however, again bring this Spanish element closer to those particles from other languages. Let us now turn to this observation and these parallels in more detail.

3.2 Information-structural *mira* and illocutionary restrictions

After having detailed an analysis that captures the role that *mira* plays at the level of information structure in a clause, we now turn to another interesting observation that has not been accounted for in the previous literature on *mira* and related particles: *mira*—no matter if appearing clause-internally or clause-initially—can appear with declarative, exclamative, or imperative, but not with interrogative sentences:

(27) a. <u>Mira,</u> no sé qué te pasa.   [*declarative*]

        'Mira, I don't know what happened to you.'

    b. <u>Mira,</u> ¡qué pesado eres!   [*exclamative*]

        'How pushy you are!'

    c. <u>Mira,</u> cállate de una vez.   [*imperative*]

        'Shut up only once!'

    d. * <u>Mira,</u> ¿cuánto cuesta eso?   [*interrogative*]

        'How much is that?'

    d'. ¿Cuánto (*, mira,) cuesta (*, mira,) eso (*, mira)?

Note that this restriction does not really depend on the syntactic form of the interrogative ('clause' or 'sentence' type) but seems to be associated with its illocutionary force. This becomes clear when we look at rhetorical questions. We postulate that rhetorical questions like (28) are equivalent to assertions semantically, in which case the clause type (= interrogative) does not determine the semantic value or discourse function, and we refer to a rich tradition in the syntax-semantics literature in order to support this assumption (going back at least to Sadock 1971 and recently discussed in great detail by Giannakidou & Mari 2018). Look at the following interrogative, which is perfectly fine with *mira*:

(28) Mira, ¿quién pensaba que   Juan se iba   a casar?
      PART   who   thought that Juan was-going to marry
      'Who thought that Juan would get married? (Nobody!)'

This illocutionary restriction provides additional support for the claim that *mira* is indeed part of the functional hierarchy of the clause and not just a parenthetically inserted element that has no structural impact on the host clause whatsoever. In other words, although the verb-based *mira* might be seen as a separate speech act (with directive force; i.e., telling the addressee to pay attention), there has to be a link to the illocutionary force of the host clause, explaining the incompatibility we observe in (27d).

    This, again, is reminiscent of discourse particles in languages other than Spanish. Look at the following German examples, where we can see that the denotation of

the assertive particle *ja*, already introduced above, is incompatible with Q(question) Force:

(29) a. Andreas spricht **ja**   Spanisch.

Andreas speaks PART Spanish

'(As you and I already know,) Andreas speaks Spanish.'

b. * Warum spricht Andreas **ja**   Spanisch?

why   speaks Andreas PART   Spanish

Given data patterns like (29), it has been proposed for discourse particles that the connection between force/sentence mood and the particles can be modeled by agreement of illocutionary features like [+assertive]. In particular, Bayer & Obenauer (2011) have proposed an analysis that leaves the particle in situ (in the so-called 'middlefield'/IP zone) and that rests on agreement at a distance, so-called 'probe-goal agreement' (Chomsky 2000, 2001).

Take for instance the assertion in (29a). It is clear that assertive force in this case is independent of the discourse particle *ja*. In other words, the particle contributes to/modifies the illocutionary reading (i.e., signaling the 'uncontroversiality' of the assertion in our case), but it does not constitute the illocutionary force and can only serve as a 'communicative cue' (Grosz 2014), together with intonation and potentially further features.

This connection between any type of force/sentence mood (here: assertive) and the particles can be accounted for by adopting a feature-sharing version of Agree (Pesetsky & Torrego 2007), allowing a mechanism where Force^0 (e.g., ASSERT) does

not have a Prt feature, but the respective particles are likely to have a feature matching the Force. This mechanism is needed because many other particles that do not have an assertive feature (e.g., question particles like *denn* in [21] and [22] above) are ruled out in assertions. Look at the following representation where an interpretable feature probes an uninterpretable matching feature; adopting a notational convention, in (30c) agreement is expressed by an arbitrary value that fills the empty slot in [   ]:

(30) a. $[_{ForceP}$ Force^0 $_{i}$ASSERTForce [ ] $[_{TopP}$ ... **[Prt** $_{u}$ASSERTForce [ ] ...]]]

$\Rightarrow$

b. $[_{ForceP}$ Force^0 $_{i}$ASSERTForce [ ] $[_{TopP}$ ... **[Prt** $_{u}$ASSERTForce [ ] ...]]]

AGREEMENT

$\Rightarrow$

c. $[_{ForceP}$ Force^0 $_{i}$ASSERTForce [4] $[_{TopP}$ ... **[Prt** $_{u}$ASSERTForce [4] ...]]]

Via agreement, Prt becomes part of C^0 and its illocutionary components (e.g., *ASSERT, Q, IMP*, etc.), according to Bayer & Obenauer (2011) and more recent work adopting their approach (Bayer & Trotzke 2015; Trotzke & Monforte 2019; and many others).

We would like to suggest that we can adopt exactly the same approach to account for the distribution of *mira* across illocutionary forces. In particular, we can model the incompatibility of *mira* with Q Force as follows:

(31) a. $[_{\text{ForceP}} \text{Force}^0 {}_{i\text{QForce}[\ ]} [_{\text{TopP}} \ldots [_{\text{MiraP}} \textit{mira} {}_{u\text{QForce}[\ ]} \ldots]]]$

$\Rightarrow$

b. $[_{\text{ForceP}} \text{Force}^0 {}_{i\text{QForce}[\ ]} [_{\text{TopP}} \ldots [_{\text{MiraP}} \textit{mira} {}_{u\text{QForce}[\ ]} \ldots]]]$

AGREEMENT

As a next step, one might wonder what meaning component of *mira* is it exactly that renders *mira* compatible with Forces like assertive, exclamative, and imperative, but incompatible with questions. We propose the following:

(32) a. $[\![\textit{mira}]\!]$ = 'S knows p and wants to draw attention of H to p.'

b. $[\![Q]\!]$ = 'S does not know p (or parts of p) and wants the hearer to provide p (or parts of p).'

From (32) it follows that the speaker cannot draw attention to p in a question by using *mira*. On the other hand, *mira* is predicted to be perfectly fine with other Force operators because in assertives and exclamatives, the speaker already knows about p (either because p is asserted or p is backgrounded/presupposed as in exclamatives); in imperatives, p has not already come about, but, just as in assertives and in exclamatives, the speaker is not missing parts of p because he knows about all the components of the action that he wants to see to come about.

All in all, we have seen in this section that the illocutionary restrictions of *mira* can syntactically be analyzed according to proposals for discourse particles that have already been put forward in the literature—discourse particles being the most prominent cases where we can observe such illocutionary restrictions. Together with our

account in Section 3.1, where we claim that *mira* and related particles act as watershed elements at the level of information structure, we can now turn to some general conclusions about the interaction between information structure and the syntax of speech acts.

4. Conclusions

In this paper, we provided a detailed syntactic account of Spanish hearer-oriented particles like the highly frequent verb-based particle *mira* (lit. 'look'). We demonstrated (i) that they must be distinguished from both vocative/appellative and expressive/exclamative particles (Section 2), and (ii) that they interact with both the information-structural configuration and the illocutionary force of the clauses they occur in (Section 3). We have highlighted at several points that these characteristics of *mira* are very much reminiscent of the core features that have been proposed for so-called discourse particles in the literature. In particular, both the information-structural watershed function and the illocutionary-force agreement that have been claimed for discourse particles dovetail nicely with our observations about *mira*.

Based on our analysis of locating *mira* in the information-structural layer of the clause, let us now turn to some more general questions about the interaction between the syntax of speech acts and the syntactic encoding of information structure. We would like to suggest (as we already did throughout the paper) that 'parenthetical partitions' (Slocum 2016; González López 2019) are indeed separate performatives at the level of speech acts. For *mira*, we have proposed an illocutionary meaning that can be paraphrased as 'S knows p and wants to draw attention of H to p'. Note now that at

the grammar-attention interface, we find many more means that can be considered as actually performing separate speech acts (always in the imperative mood; i.e., S wants to draw someone's attention to *p*/parts of *p*). For instance, Hanging Topics (HT), according to Portner (2004), also involve separate performatives. Look at one of his examples and the respective paraphrases:

(33)   Maria, I like her very much.

At-issue: 'I assert that I like Maria very much.'

Not-at-issue: 'I hereby request that you activate your mental representation of Maria (Maria $\in p$).'

According to this view, the syntactic layer of information structure also encodes illocutionary meaning (at the not-at-issue level), and in many cases like in our examples with the Spanish particle *mira*, this illocutionary component can clearly be identified as soon as we observe an interaction between the at-issue Force and the not-at-issue Force (see Section 3, where we modelled this interaction in terms of probe-goal agreement). Accordingly, as we have already proposed in Section 3 above, *mira* involves something similar to (33):

(34)   Mira, (Antonio,) las cosas no funcionan así.

At-issue: 'I assert that ($_p$ things don't work like this).'

Not-at-issue: 'I hereby request Antonio's attention towards *p*.'

In sum, our paper thus demonstrates that particles like *mira* contribute a separate speech act, but as part of the information-structural layer of the clause, and not by being located in the illocutionary domain of the clause itself (like it has been proposed for comparable particles in other languages; see Haegeman 2014; Hill 2007; and many others). Accordingly, we hypothesize that the interaction and similarity between information-structural and illocutionary meaning is even closer than often suggested in the syntactic literature, and we hope that our paper encourages and initiates further research in this domain.

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