**Introduction.** This work offers an analysis of the so-called C(ognate) O(bject) C(onstructions) (eg. *He sighed a weary sigh*) in a theory of lexical syntactic decomposition based on the works of Mateu & Rigau (2000) and Mateu (2002). In this paper I will explore the conditions upon which CO are licensed. Specifically, I will compare Romance Languages with English. This study focuses on the reasons why COCs are not attested in Romance in contrast with English [examples from Jones (1988) (1) and Massam (1990) (1)b and (1)c]. Conversely, Romance prefers other strategies as the use of cognate adjuncts (cf.(3)a and (3)b) or structures with a light verb and a nominal complement (cf. (3)c).

1. COC IN ENGLISH
   a. Bill sighed a weary sigh
   b. Rosamond cried a good long cried
   c. Henleigh smiled a wicked smile

2. COC IN ROMANCE
   a. *María sonrió una sonrisa malévola* (Spanish)
   b. *Juan murió una muerte terrible*

3. OTHER STRATEGIES IN ROMANCE
   a. María sonrió con una sonrisa malévola
   b. Juan murió de una muerte terrible
   c. Juan tuvo una muerte terrible

**The Puzzle.** COCs have received a widespread attention in the lexical-syntax-semantics literature. The discussion has been focused on the status of COs regarding the argument/adjunct dichotomy. Accordingly, they have been analyzed as adjuncts (Jones 1988, Zubizarreta 1987, Moltmann 1989) or as arguments (Massam 1990, Hale & Keyser 1997) or as both (Pereltsvaig 1998 or Nakajima 2006). Crucially, Massam (1990) argues that two kind of constructions must be distinguished: (true) COC and T(ransitivized) O(bject) C(onstruction), which display different properties.

4. COC ADJUNCT-LIKE PROPERTIES
   a. *A silly smile was smiled* [Passivization]
   b. *A silly smile, nobody smiled* [Topicalization]
   c. Maggie smiled a silly smiled and then her brother smiled [Pronominalization]
   d. *He smiled the smile for which he was famous* [Definiteness Restriction]
   e. *What did he die?* [Questioning]
   f. *He died a death* [Modifier obligatory]
   g. *He died a suicide/ a murder* [Object necessarily cognate]

5. TOC ARGUMENT-LIKE PROPERTIES
   a. The Irish jig was danced by Bernardette Dooley [Passivization]
   b. The Irish jig, nobody danced [Topicalization]
   c. I sang the aria then Tosca sang it [Pronominalization]
   d. Fred danced the slow number [Definiteness Restriction]
   e. What did he sing? [Questioning]
   f. She sang a song [Modifier obligatory]
   g. He sang an aria / a song [Object necessarily cognate]
Now, if we look at Romance languages the only cognate-like objects we may find fit into the TOC [(3)].

(6) **TOC IN ROMANCE**

a. El sueño Americano fue vivido con gran fervor [Passivization]

b. María cantó una canción, y luego la, cantamos nosotros [Pronominalization]

c. Bailamos el baile que nos indicó la profesora [Definiteness Restriction]

d. Juan vive la vida [Modifier obligatory]

e. María baila el tango estupendamente [Object necessarily cognate]

In conclusion, despite argument and adjunct COs, we find another kind of construction, the so-called TOC, where the object is in a hyponomous relation with the conflated verbal root. This construction must be distinguished from the true argumental COC present in English and absent in Romance Languages.

**Proposal.** I will show that real COCs do not exist in Romance and what seems COCs are in fact TOCs. The differences in the spreading of such constructions in Romance and English are related to the well-known elasticity of English verbs meaning, allowing unergatives to appear in transitive-like constructions, such as resultatives. As shown in Mateu & Rigau (2000), the difference between verb-frame languages (Romance) and satellite-frame languages (English) depicted by Talmy (1991, 2000) is due to a process of lexical subordination of the manner into a transition relation. The contrast between Romance languages and English regarding COs can be explained in similar terms. Thus, I will propose that COC in English are derived from a process of lexical subordination of the manner into a transitive structure similar to that of a light verb of creation and an object [(7)].

(7) **COGNATE OBJECT CONSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH**

![Diagram of a wicked smile in English](attachment://diagram.png)

In contrast, Romance Languages do not allow never lexical subordination processes. The cognate-like constructions present in Romance are obtained by inserting the object in the root place after conflation of the root into the verbal head, as proposed by Hale & Keyser (1997). This operation requires the object to be in a hyponomous relation with the verbal root [(8)].

(8) **TRANSITIVIZED ROMANCE CONSTRUCTION IN ROMANCE**

![Diagram of una sardana in Romance](attachment://diagram.png)
Conclusion. The impossibility of CO in Romance languages is due to their impossibility to have manner incorporation, theoretically instantiated as the syntactic operation of lexical subordination (cf. Mateu 2002). The few CO cases attested in Romance languages are obtained in two ways. By adjunction, an option always available in most languages, or by inserting a DP, with an hyponomous semantic relation with the verbal root, into the object position, leading a normal direct object, a TOC in Massam’s term. Our proposal also predicts the correlation of resultative constructions and CO as it may be proved to be the case.

Selected References